

## **Lion Motif used in the Buddhist Architecture of Ancient Bangladesh**

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**Abstract:** Lion is the king of the animal world. They live in the plains and grassy hills. The male lion's job is to protect the clan from enemies. However, lions do not have any natural enemies. Due to these characteristics the lion has been considered through all ages in the world as a symbol of royalty and protection as well as of wisdom and pride. In Buddhism lions are symbolic of the Bodhisattvas. In Buddhist architecture, lion motifs were used as protectors of Dharma and therefore support the throne of the Buddha's and Bodhisattvas. The lion motifs were also used at the entrance of the monasteries and shrines possibly for the same reason. In Bangladesh, there are various types of Lion motifs used in terracotta plaques of AnandaVihara, Rupbhanmura and ShalbanVihara at Mainamati in Comilla district, VashuVihara, Mankalirkundo at Mahasthangarh in Bogra district and SomapuraMahavihara at Paharpur in Naogaon district. This paper aims to address the cultural significance of the lion motif in Buddhist architecture of ancient Bangladesh and relates it to various types of representation to understand its origin and evolution.