

## Outrage over new 'National Emblem'

### What is the issue?

The first look at the new emblem atop the new Parliament House has disappointed many with its alleged inaccuracies in depiction.

### What are some details about the new emblem?

- This 6.5-metre new emblem, made up of bronze, is part of the Central Vista Project.
- It was designed by Sunil Deore and Romiel Moses.
- The new emblem is placed at the top of the Central Foyer of the new Parliament building.
- The lions on the new emblem is found to look 'angry', with their fangs visible, as opposed to the grace and glory of the original.

**Lion Capital  
of Sarnath**



**National Emblem**



**National Emblem  
on New Parliament**



### What is the history behind the national emblem?

- The National Emblem is an adaptation of the Lion Capital of Mauryan emperor Asoka at Sarnath.
- It was built in 250 BC to commemorate the first sermon of Gautama Buddha, where he is said to have shared the Four Noble Truths of life.
- In the original, there are four Asiatic lions, mounted back to back, on a circular

abacus, which itself rests on a bell-shaped lotus.

- The 7-feet tall sculpture made of polished sandstone represented courage, power and pride.
- The frieze of the abacus has sculptures in high relief of an elephant, a horse, a bull and a lion, which are moving in a clockwise direction.
- These animals are separated by intervening **Dharma Chakras** or wheels, representing the Dharmachakra of Buddhism, on all four sides.
- This abacus was mounted on an inverted lotus, which is a symbol of Buddhism.
- **Historical significance** - Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang has left a detailed account of pillar in his writings.
- The pillar was part of Asoka's plan to spread Buddha's teachings.

### Why was the Sarnath pillar embraced as the national emblem?

- The Constituent Assembly decided on the Sarnath pillar as the national emblem as the pillar epitomised the power, courage and confidence of the free nation.
- The emblem depicts a 2-D sculpture with the words Satyameva Jayate (truth alone triumphs) written below it, taken from the Mundaka Upanishad, written in Devanagari script.
- Five students of renowned artist Nandalal Bose created the emblem.
- On January 26, 1950, the Lion Capital of Asoka at Sarnath officially became the national emblem of India.
- The emblem represents the seal of the Republic of India.

### What is the controversy behind the latest replica?

- In the latest replica, the lions looked "too aggressive", which amounted to tampering with the original in a hurry to meet the deadline of the Central Vista Project.
- The original emblem has a mild expression.
- The designers countered the criticism about the lions looking aggressive by insisting that it was a matter of perspective.
- The original structure was 1.6 m tall whereas the new depiction is 6.5 m high.
- Also, the original Lion Capital was at the ground level while the latest depiction is at a height of 33 metre from the ground.

### Reference

1. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/why-is-there-anger-over-the-new-national-emblem/article65657766.ece?homepage=true>
2. <https://knowindia.india.gov.in/national-identity-elements/state-emblem.php>
3. <https://www.newindianexpress.com/opinions/columns/2022/jul/20/roaring-lion-of-the-national-emblem-2478470.html>

