

Todai-ji Temple, Nara



Tōdai-ji (東大寺 *Tōdai-ji*[?], meaning the Eastern Great Temple) is a Buddhist temple complex located in the city of Nara, Japan. Its Great Buddha Hall (大仏殿 *Daibutsuden*), reputedly the largest wooden building in the world, houses a colossal bronze statue of the Buddha Vairocana, known in Japanese simply as the *Daibutsu* (大仏). The temple also serves as the Japanese headquarters of the Kegon school of Buddhism. The temple is a listed UNESCO World Heritage site as "Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara," together with seven other sites including temples, shrines and places in the city of Nara. Sika deer, regarded as messengers of the gods in the Shinto religion, roam the grounds freely.



The beginning of building a temple where the huge Tōdai-ji complex sits today can be dated to 743, when Emperor Shōmu (701–756, the 45th Emperor) established Kinshōsen-ji (金鐘山寺) as an appeasement for Prince Motoi, his first son with Empress Kōmyō. Prince Motoi died a year after his birth. Empress Kōmyō also set up institutions for the poor, sick and orphans after the death of her son. During the Tempyō era, Japan suffered from a series of disasters and epidemics. It was after experiencing these problems that Emperor Shōmu issued an edict in 741 to promote the construction of Provincial temples throughout the nation. Tōdai-ji (still Kinshōsen-ji at the time) was appointed as the Provincial temple of Yamato Province and the head of all the Provincial temples. With the alleged coup d'état by Nagaya in 729, an outbreak of smallpox around 735 – 737, worsened by consecutive years of poor crops, then followed by a rebellion led by Fujiwara no Hirotsugu in 740, the country was in a chaotic position. Emperor Shōmu had been forced to move the capital four times, indicating the level of instability during this period.

<Todai-ji Temple Welfare Foundation>

Todai-ji Temple was a pioneer in welfare of Japan as Empress Komyo set up institutions for poor and sick people and orphans in 723.

The foundation was founded in 1955 by Todai-ji Temple as a commemoration enterprise of the 1200th anniversary from the Great Buddha erection and run following business.

★Hospital

★Rehabilitation facilities for children with severe disabilities

★Junior high and high school

★Library

Accessible route for wheelchair users



Barrier free toilets are also equipped.

Stony road for wheelchairs equipped in 2005