

Archaeologists at Angkor Wat find large buried statue

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In this July 30, 2017, image made available by the Apsara Authority of the Cambodian Government, archaeologists examine a 1.9-meter (6-foot, 3-inch) tall, 58-centimeter (23-inch) wide statue at Angkor Wat in Siem Reap, Cambodia. Working with experts from Singapore's Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, the Apsara Authority said the 12th or 13th century statue is one of the largest to be unearthed in recent years. (Apsara Authority via AP)

Archaeologists at Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple complex studying the site of a hospital from eight to nine centuries ago say they have found a large statue in their excavations.

The government agency that oversees the complex, the Apsara Authority, said on its website that the 1.9-meter (6-foot, 3-inch) tall, 58-centimeter (23-inch) wide statue was discovered Sunday by its team, working with experts from Singapore's Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. It is one of the largest statues from the era to be unearthed in recent years.

The agency said the statue, believed to be from the 12th or 13 century, is thought to have been a symbolic guardian of the entrance of the hospital. It was found buried 40 centimeters (16 inches) under the ground, and will be put on public exhibition in the museum in the northwestern province of Siem Reap, where Angkor is located.

In late 2011, archaeologists at the temple complex unearthed the two largest Buddhist statues found there in eight decades.

Angkor was the capital of the Khmer Empire, which flourished from approximately the 9th to 15th centuries. Large numbers of architectural and religious artifacts have been looted from there and sold overseas, while others were buried for safekeeping during a civil war in the 1970s.



In this March 20, 2015, file photo, the sun rises behind Angkor Wat on the northern outskirts of Siem Reap province, some 230 kilometers (143 miles) northwest of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Archaeologists at Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple complex studying the site of a hospital from eight to nine centuries ago said they found a large statue in their excavations Sunday, July 30, 2017. (AP Photo/Heng Sinith, File)



In this Feb. 19, 2017, file photo, tourists take photos of the sunrise at the Angkor Wat on the northern outskirts of Siem Reap, Cambodia. Archaeologists at Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple complex studying the site of a hospital from eight to nine centuries ago said they found a large statue in their excavations Sunday, July 30, 2017. (AP Photo/Heng Sinith, File)

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