

***Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management:
Challenges and Opportunities***

Gyanin RAI

LUMBINI NEPAL: THE BIRTHPLACE OF LORD BUDDHA
A CULTURAL WORLD HERITAGE SITE



Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management: Challenges and Opportunities

(A case of Lumbini: The Birthplace of Lord Buddha, a Cultural World Heritage Site, Nepal)

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4th International Conference on Remote Sensing in Archaeology
24-26 October, 2012 Beijing, China

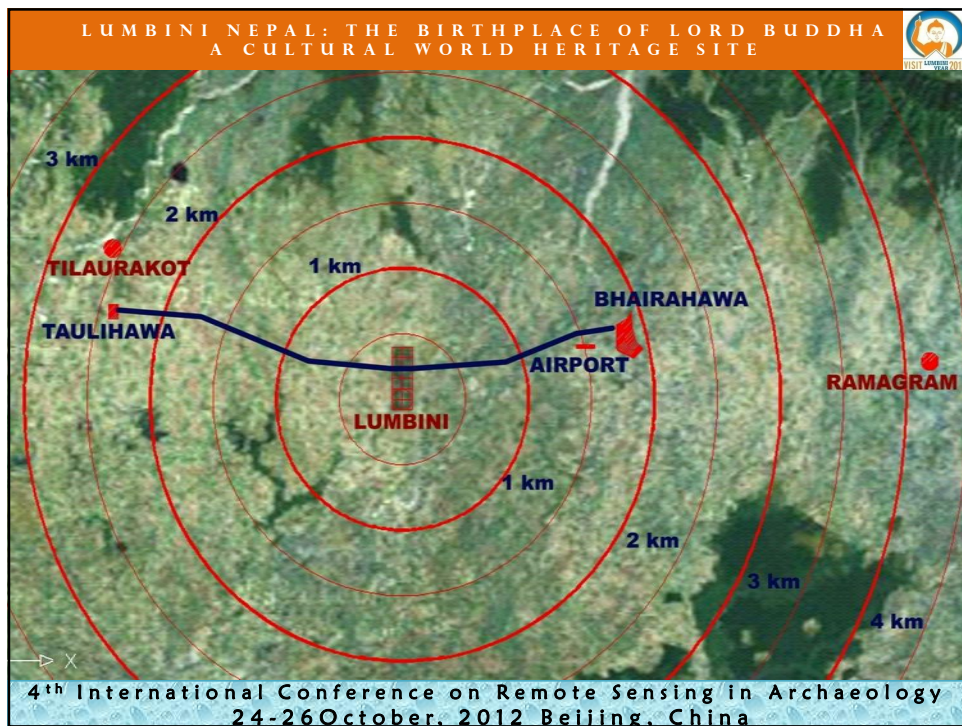
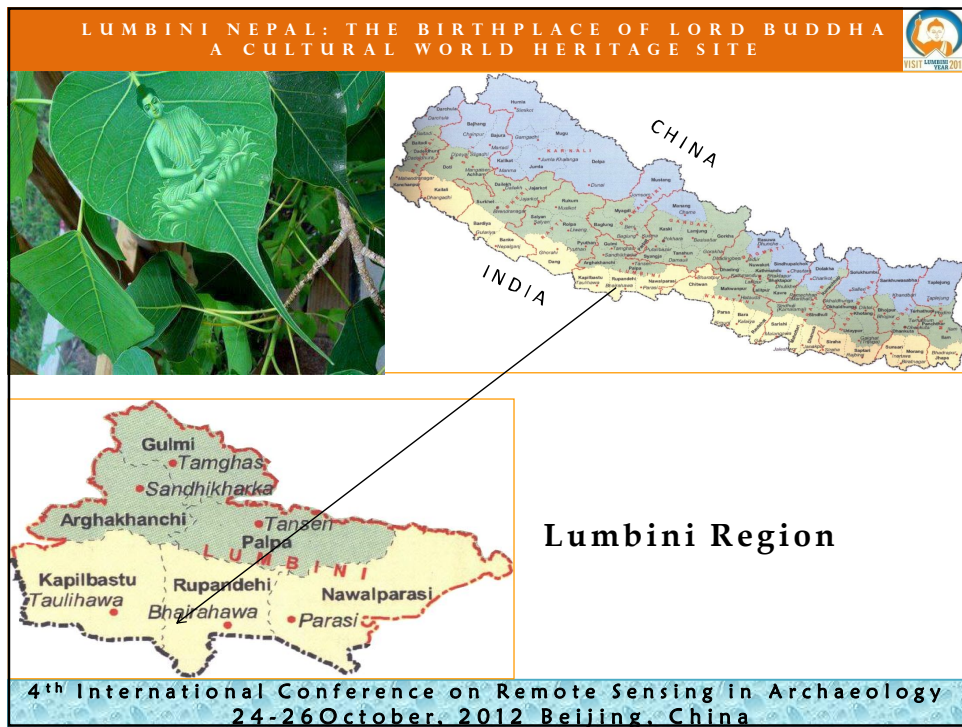
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Nepal in Asia



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Lord Buddha highlighted the significance of Lumbini and he said to Ananda:

"Ananda! This (Lumbini) place is where the Tathagata was born, this is a place which should be (visited and) seen by a person of devotion, and which would cause awareness and apprehension of the nature of impermanence.

- Mahaparinibbana Sutta

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Condition of the Birthplace of Lord Buddha, when UN Secretary General U Thant visit in 1967




U. Thant discussed with Late King Mahendra



Dr. Kurt Waldeim visit Lumbini in 1981



Javier Prez de Cuellar visit Lumbini in 1989



Baan Ki Moon visit Lumbini in 2008

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MASTER PLAN OF LUMBINI

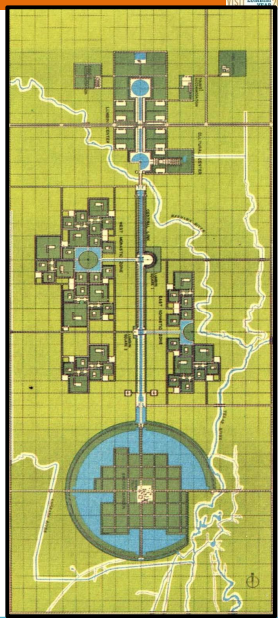
United Nations reward to Prof. Kenzo Tange of Japan to Prepare Lumbini Master Plan in 1972 and was completed in 1978

Total Area 777 hectors (1150 Bigahas)

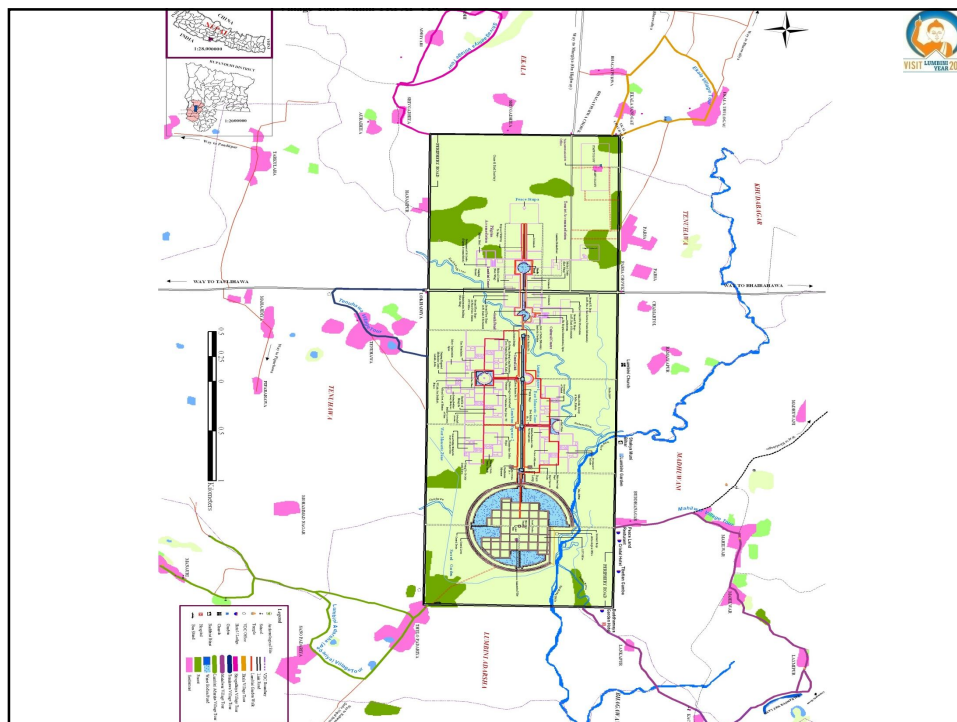
North-South 3 miles, East-West 1 mile

The Master plan covers an area of 1 X 3 sq. miles, comprising three zones of a square mile each, these are:

1. Sacred Garden
2. Monastic Zone
3. New Lumbini Village



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1) Sacred Garden: The ultimate objective of the design of sacred garden is to create an atmosphere of spirituality, peace, universal brotherhood and non-violence consistent with the time and Buddha's message to the world. and this zone shelters the ancient monuments at the centre in a freshly restored atmosphere of serene and lush forest and water body surrounding the complex.



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2) Monastic Zone: This zone is for worship and study Buddha's teaching of universal peace, humanity and compassion can be applied to life in today's world. Here 42 plots of land are set aside (13 to the east and 29 to west), sheltered within a green forest near the Sacred Garden.





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3) Cultural Section : The auditorium, research institution, library and museum of Lumbini's cultural centre raised in arches along the shaded canal walkway, a place of meeting, study and work dedicated to the pursuit of world peace.



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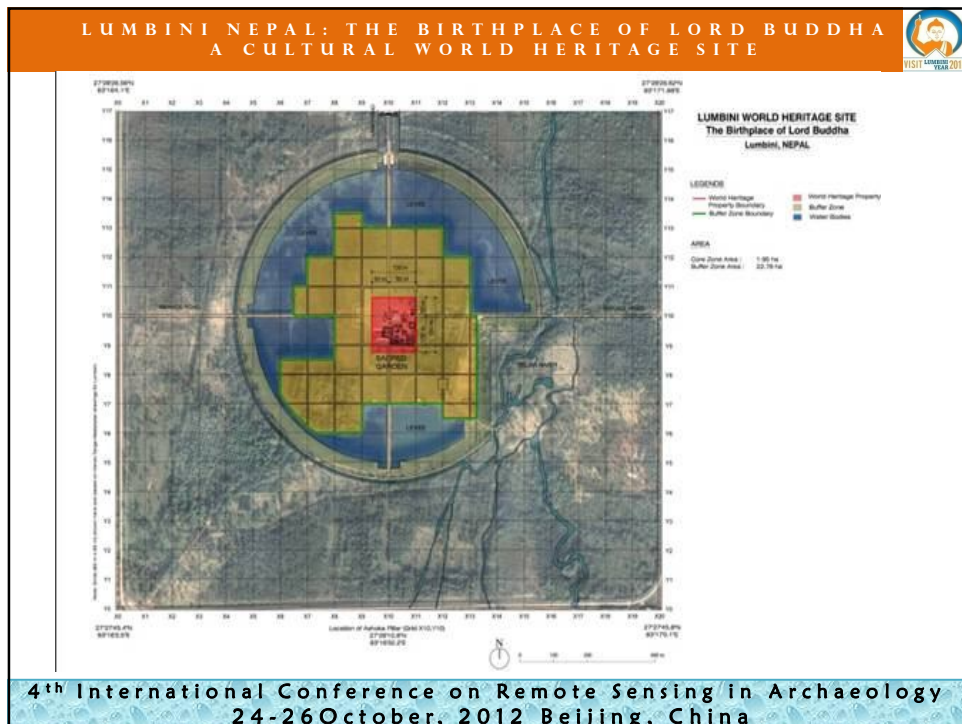
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Lumbini, was inscribed on the list of World Heritage Site in 1997

Criterion (iii): As the birthplace of the Lord Buddha, testified by the inscription on the Asoka pillar, the sacred area in Lumbini is one of the most holy and significant places for one of the world's great religions.

Criterion(vi): The archaeological remains of the Buddhist viharas (monasteries) and stupas (memorial shrines) from the 3rd century BC to the 15th century AD, provide important evidence about the nature of Buddhist pilgrimage centres from a very early period.

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Major Events

- 623 BC Birth of Lord Buddha
- 249 BC Emperor Asoka visited Lumbini and erected famous Asoka Pillar
- 350-375 AD Chinese Traveler Seng Tsai visit to Lumbini
- 409 Chinese Traveler Fa Hsien visit to Lumbini
- 636 Famous Chinese Traveler Hiuen Tsang visit to Lumbini
- 1967 Secretary General of United Nations U. Thant's visit to Lumbini
- 1970 UN International Committee for Development of Lumbini
- 1978 Approval of Master Plan by Government of Nepal & UN jointly
- 1981 Secretary General of United Nations Dr. Kurt Waldeim visit
- 1985 Government of Nepal established Lumbini Development Trust

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- 1992-96 Excavation at Mayadevi Temple by LDT/DoA/JBF
- 1996 Marker Stone Found(Pinpoints the exact birth spot of Lord Buddha)
- 1997 Lumbini enrolled in World Heritage Site
- 1998 The First World Buddhist Summit held in Lumbini
- 2001 The International Buddhist Conference held in Lumbini
- 2003 Restoration of Mayadevi Temple by Government of Nepal
- 2004 Second World Buddhist Summit held in Lumbini
- 2005 UN International Committee for Development of Lumbini Meeting
- 2008 Secretary General of United Nations Ban Ki Moon visit to Lumbini
- 2011 First Gautam Buddha International Peace Award distributed
- 2011 Greater Lumbini National Steering Committee
- 2012 Visit Lumbini Year 2012

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Monuments and other attractions

- Master Plan
- The Mayadevi Temple
- The Marker Stone
- The Nativity Sculpture
- The Puskarini (*Holy Pond*)
- The Asokan Pillar
- Various Buddhists Monasteries
- Natural Biodiversity

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**WORLD HERITAGE MASTER PLAN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE PILGRIMAGE SITE**

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Findings of the study

- The importance of Lumbini has both national and international dimensions. On the national plane, it has provided the distinct identity to Nepal and Internationally, Lumbini represents a civilization and culture centering on ultimate peace and harmony.
- Constant increase of visitors has both positive and negative sides:
 - Positive: Promotion of heritage conservation in terms of financial resources
 - Negative: Management faces a challenge to create a balance between pilgrims' activities and the protection of the archaeological sites.
- There is an immediate need to develop an Integrated Management Plan as well as establish flexible marketing strategy to enhance sustainable heritage management
- Extensive research and excavation of Lumbini and other related sites has to be carried out
- Anthropogenic pressure, natural hazards such as a possible Telar river flooding, earthquake and lightning, which can cause damage to the properties, pose great challenges to the management & conservation of the site.

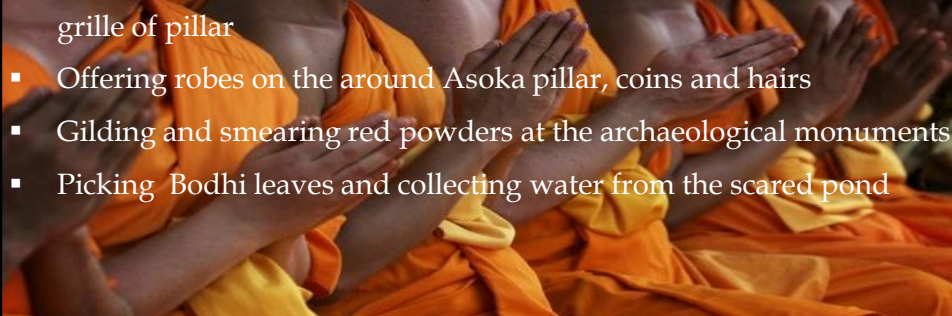
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Rituals vs. Preservation

- Pilgrims Chanting, Dhamma talks, Prayer and Meditation
- Monk ordination, Novice initiation
- Lighting candles, incenses, offering oil and butter lamp, milk, scented water hanging lines of prayer flags, placing grille of pillar
- Offering robes on the around Asoka pillar, coins and hairs
- Gilding and smearing red powders at the archaeological monuments
- Picking Bodhi leaves and collecting water from the scared pond



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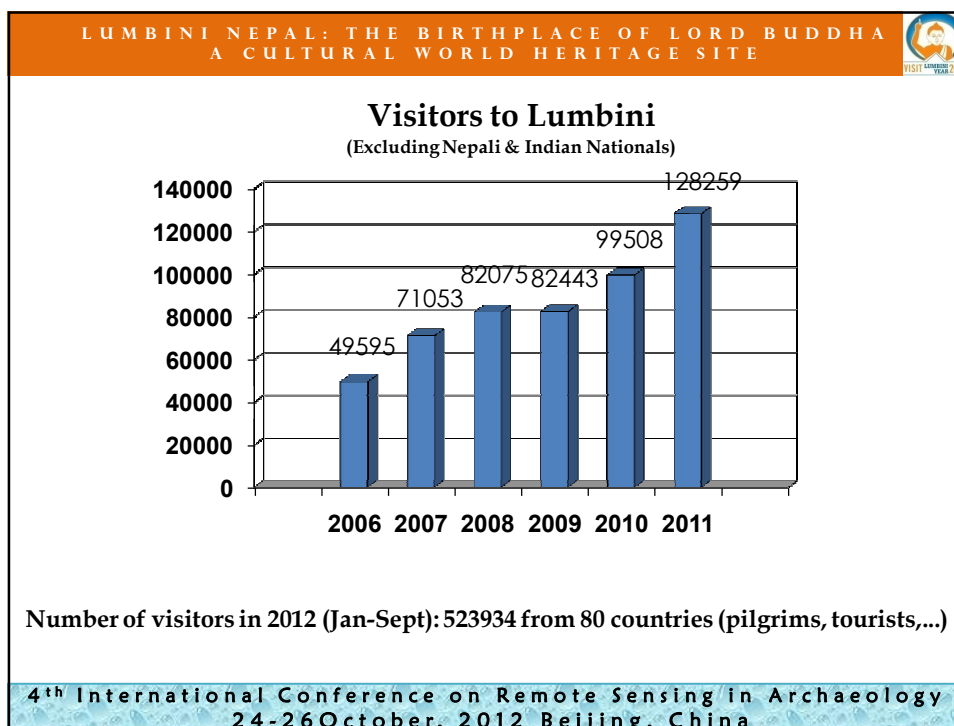


Negative impacts by visitors

- Stepping, sitting and relaxing on the archaeological remains
- Splashing milk, chemical based perfumed, water and throwing coins to the Asoka pillar
- Lighting candles and burning incenses very close to the ancient monuments
- Unauthorized taking away of the ancient bricks of the archaeological remains
- Unauthorized taking away of soil from the base of the ancient monuments



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Recommendations

- Integrated Management Plan , incorporating Disaster Risk and Tourism Management
- Identify and monitor negative human and natural factors
- Study on protection of river eco system and suggest emergency evacuation plan and procedures
- Vulnerability assessment and identification of hazards level related to potential seismic activities
- Conservation plan to enable zero ecological footprint and manage ecological balance

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- Provide heritage impact assessment
- Provide more information of the ancient monuments and archaeological sites
- Strengthen awareness among pilgrims on preservation of the heritage
- Provide more and suitable spaces for the visitors inside the Maya Devi Temple



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Remote sensing and Lumbini

Remote sensing envisages vast possibilities in terms of new scientific approach for heritage sites.

Management, conservation and restoration
Exact digital documentation via various means and methodology of RS technology for:

- The historic Buddhists site and its geo-landscape
- Specific components of the site
- RS based and GIS mapping of the site
- 3d modeling and VR

Various study and research of:

- Cultural layers to further enrich the historical background of the site
- Detection of more related sites
- Geological natural disaster simulation and setting up of necessary measures
- Identification and analysis of possible pressures and impact either natural or human

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Remote sensing and Lumbini

Problems related to the application of RS in Lumbini

- The high cost of the final satellite images and provision of them in a systematic way

Satellite vs. Aerial

- Aerial Photogrammetry can help to make a precise 3D model of Lumbini region

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*May Peace and Happiness
Prevail on Earth*



Thank you for your attention !

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