



International Conference
on
**Global Diplomacy and Regional Cooperation:
India-Nepal Partnership in Buddhist Heritage**

Date: January 30-31, 2026

at
Seminar Hall I & II, Kamala Devi Complex,
India International Centre, Max Muller Marg, New Delhi

Organised by

South Asia Foundation-Nepal

Lumbini Buddhist University, Nepal

NMCPCR- Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi, India

Siddharth University, Uttar Pradesh, India

Partner Institutions:

- Nalanda University, Nalanda, Bihar, India
- CNAS-Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal
- Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India
- MIT- World Peace University, Pune, India
- India International Centre, India





About the Conference

In an increasingly interconnected yet complex world, diplomacy today extends beyond political negotiations and economic agreements to embrace culture, heritage, and shared civilizational values. Against this backdrop, the theme “*Global Diplomacy and Regional Cooperation: India–Nepal Partnership in Buddhist Heritage*” holds profound contemporary relevance. The enduring Buddhist legacy shared by India and Nepal offers not only a historical bond but also a meaningful framework for fostering dialogue, peace, and cooperation at regional and global levels.

India and Nepal are uniquely connected through the life and teachings of Lord Buddha, whose message of compassion, non-violence, and wisdom continues to inspire humanity across borders and generations. Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha in Nepal, and the sacred sites of Bodh Gaya, Sarnath, and Kushinagar in India together form a spiritual continuum that transcends national boundaries. This shared heritage has emerged as a powerful instrument of cultural diplomacy, strengthening bilateral relations while contributing to regional integration and global outreach.

This international conference provides a timely platform to explore how Buddhist heritage can serve as a bridge between nations, promoting people-to-people connections, academic collaboration, sustainable tourism, and intercultural understanding. By bringing together scholars, policymakers, diplomats, practitioners, and cultural experts from across the world, the conference seeks to examine the role of heritage diplomacy in addressing contemporary global challenges and enhancing regional cooperation.

Through thoughtful deliberations and interdisciplinary dialogue, this gathering aims to highlight best practices, share insights, and chart future pathways for deepening the India–Nepal partnership in Buddhist heritage. More broadly, it aspires to reaffirm the relevance of Buddhist values in shaping a more peaceful, inclusive, and cooperative international order.





Themes of the Conference

Theme1. Foundations of Shared Heritage and Diplomacy

Themes 2: From Historical Roots to Cultural Connectivity

Theme 3: *Buddhism as a Diplomatic Pillar for Regional Harmony*

Sub-Themes:

- Trans-regional spread of Buddha's teachings,
- Monastic and scholastic networks
- Sacred Buddhist Geography: Lumbini, Bodh Gaya, Sarnath, Kushinagar

Theme 4: Cultural Diplomacy through Intercultural Understanding

Sub-Themes:

- Cultural diplomacy and people-to-people connectivity
- Festivals, exchanges, and soft power
- Role of multilateral platforms (UN, UNESCO)

Theme 5: Leveraging Regional Cooperation for Educational Ties: India and Nepal Collaboration

Sub-Themes:

- Universities and Institutions
- Academic exchanges and fellowships
- Heritage-based peace education

Theme 6: Religious Tourism and Sustainable Development





Sub-Themes:

- Buddhist pilgrimage circuits
- Infrastructure and community livelihoods
- SDG-aligned tourism models

Theme 7: From Ethics to Empowerment

Theme 8: Ancient Buddhist Wisdom for Contemporary Regional Harmony and Sub-Themes:

- Non-violence and dialogue
- Conflict resolution
- Global challenges: geoeconomics, climate change, inequality

Theme 9: Nurturing Shared Heritage:

Sub-Themes:

- Conservation of Buddhist heritage sites
- Joint research and documentation
- Community-led heritage management

Theme 10: Global Peace Perspective: Youth, Governance, and Peace through Buddha's teachings

Sub-Themes:

- Peace governance frameworks
- Youth leadership and innovation
- Policy recommendations for India–Nepal cooperation

Adoption of the "New Delhi-Lumbini Declaration"





Eminent Speakers



Amb. Harsh Vardhan Shringla
Member of Parliament and
Former Foreign Secretary GoI



Prof. Subarna Lal Bajracharya
Vice-Chancellor
Lumbini Buddhist University



Prof. Kavita Shah
Vice-Chancellor
Siddharth University



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Chairman, Board of Trustees
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Prof. Mazhar Asif
Vice-Chancellor
Jamia Millia Islamia University



Mr. Kazunori Sasaki
The International Research Institute
for Advanced Buddhology
Soka University, Japan



Amb. Pankaj Saran,
Former Indian Ambassador to
Russia and former Dy. NSA



Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi
Vice-Chancellor
Nalanda University



H.E. Dr. Shankar P. Sharma
Ambassador of Nepal to India



Prof. Dr. Dhruva Kr. Gautam
Vice Chancellor
Mid-West University



Prof. Anjoo Sharan Upadhyaya
Global Fellow
Peace Research Institute Oslo



Prof. Achyut Prasad Wagle
Vice Chancellor
Kathmandu University



Amb. Manjeev Singh Puri
Former Indian Ambassador to Nepal



Dr. Uttam Kumar Sinha
Senior Fellow. IDSA. India



Prof. Priyanka Upadhyaya
UNESCO Chair for Peace, BHU
Senior Advisor, MIT World Peace University



Prof. Abuzar Khairi,
Director, NMCCPR,
Jamia Millia Islamia





Amb. Jayant Prasad
Former Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan
and Nepal and Former DG, MP-IDSA



Dr. Mrigendra Bahadur Karl
Executive Director, CNAS,
Tribhuvan University



Amb. Ashok K. Kantha,
Former Indian Ambassador to China



Prof. Abhay Kumar Singh
Dean and Former VC
Nalanda University



Amb. Ranjit Rae
Former Indian Ambassador
Hungary, Vietnam and Nepal



Prof. Basanta Bidari
Lumbini Buddhist University
and Archaeologist, Nepal



Sh. Pradeep Gupta
Former Special Secretary
Government of India



Amb. Amarendra Khatua
Former Ambassador and
Former DG, ICCR



Dr. Gautam Chikerman
Senior Vice President, ORF



Dr. Ajay Yadav
Banaras Hindu University



Sh. Anil Chitrakar
Conservationist, Nepal



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