

KNOW NEPAL

LUMBINI

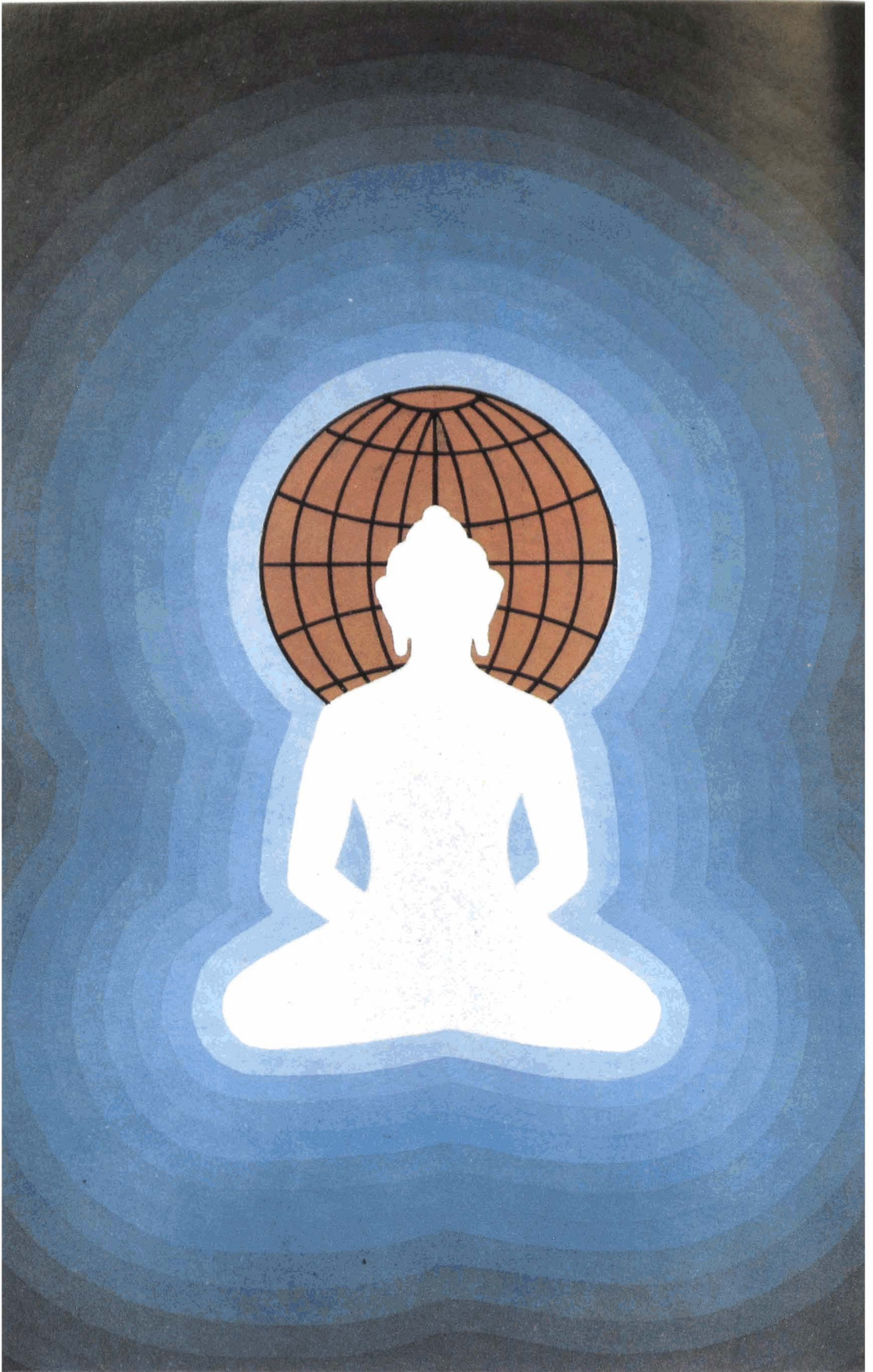
THE BIRTH PLACE OF BUDDHA

(PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE)



‘Here the Tathagata was born.
This Ananda, is one place that
will be pleasant and inspiring
to faithful householders.’

**BHIKKHU SUGANDHA
&
T.C.MAJUPURIA**



Vision of Buddhism in the world.

LUMBINI

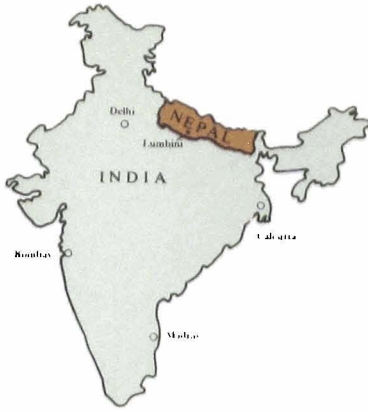
(PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE)



A serene image of the Buddha in the Theravadin monastery at Lumbini.

‘Lumbini is the place where the Tathagata was born. It is the place which should be visited and seen by a person of devotion and which would cause awareness and apprehension of the nature of impermanence.’

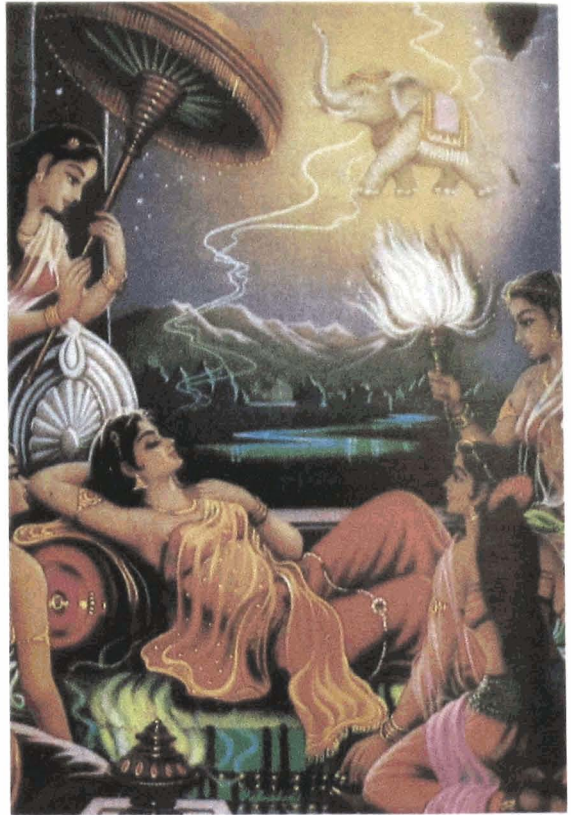
Tathagata – One who found the truth. A synonym referred to the Buddha himself or to the other Buddhas.



Location of Lumbini.

Lumbini* is a sacred place where Gautam Buddha, the apostle of peace, compassion, non-violence and universal brotherhood, was born in 624 B.C.¹ He was born on the full moon day of the sixth month of the lunar calendar i.e. *Vaisakha Purnima*, eighty years before the Buddhist Era. Gautam Buddha founded Buddhism. He attained transcendental wisdom and showed the people a way out of this world of pain and suffering to one of peace and harmony beyond, to an undying world where man finds liberation, attains wisdom and observes righteousness. He is a man and not a god, a teacher and not a saviour, his life is based on love of humanity. The ideal of salvation and the discipline of devotion and service to the universal good.

* Mauryan Emperor Ashoka had engraved the word 'Lummini' on the stone pillar that he got erected at this place. The Chinese pilgrim traveller Fa-Hian used the word 'Lummin' whereas to Hiuen Tsang it was 'La-pha-ni'. According to Rockhill, Lumbini was the name of the king's consort and the place was named in her honour. According to the historian S.P. Joshi the Lumbini Garden is named after Maya Devi's mother or the Buddha's grand mother. According to the *Devadaha Sutta Vannana*, the Buddha himself visited and lived at Lumbini which proves that Lumbini was not only a garden but a quiet place suitable to live. Lumbini became a place of pilgrimage after passing away of the Buddha and later on became a habitation as Lumbini village is also mentioned in the Ashokan inscription.

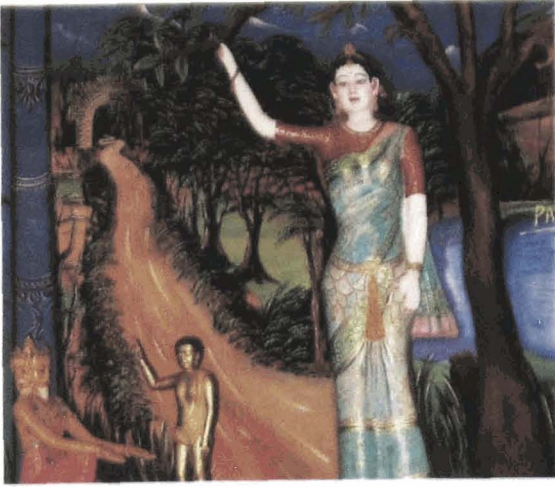


Maya Devi's dream of white elephant.

The birth of Gautam Buddha has been interestingly described in several Buddhist scriptures. After acquiring all the pre-requisites of Buddhahood in course of his previous births, he finally descended from one of the heavens (*Tusita*) and entered into the womb of Queen Maya Devi or Mahamaya.

Queen Maya Devi had a dream in which her bed was taken to the highest peak of the Himalaya and was placed under the shade of a sal tree. She was given a bath in the Mansarovar lake

¹ Regarding the year of the birth of Gautam Buddha, some scholars give 623 B.C. However, the difference by a year is due to the fact that the Thai, Cambodian and Laotian Buddhist Era is behind by one year than that of Burma, Srilanka and India. The difference is due to the fact that later countries regard the year of *Mahaparinirvana* as the Buddhist era, the former takes it to be the first anniversary after the Buddha's passing away. In Nepal, the counting of the Buddhist era is the same as that of in Burma, Sri Lanka and India. Anyway the Buddha's birth could be traced back either to 623 or 624 B.C.



Brahma received Siddhartha after birth.

(Anottata-Pali), purified from impurities to which man is prone and besmeared with scents and then she was placed on a celestial bed guarded by deities. Lord Buddha appeared in the form of a white, six-tusked elephant which entered from the right side of her womb. Maya Devi was horrified and she narrated the story to King Suddhodana.

King Suddhodana, who was Gautam Buddha's father, was the king of Kapilavastu (Kapilavatthu-Pali), a small but prosperous kingdom. He belonged to Shakya (Sakya-Pali) dynasty of the Kshatriya clan and the solar race.

Maya Devi gave birth to her son in the forest of Lumbini which is about 22 km west of Siddharthanagar (also called Bhairhawa in the Rupandehi district of Lumbini Zone of Nepal). Lumbini is situated at the foothills of the Himalayas and the Churia (Shiwalik) range of hills which rise abruptly from the gentle plains of the Terai and present a rugged landscape.

In Buddha's days, Lumbini was a beautiful garden lined with green and shady sal (*Shorea*) trees. The garden with all its tranquil environs was owned by the Shakyas to which King Suddhodana, father of the Buddha, belonged and by the Koliyas who lived in a neighbouring principality where the father of Maya Devi ruled.

Queen Maya Devi carried the baby in her womb for full ten months. When she expressed her desire to go to Devadaha, her parental home, Suddhodana by way of fulfilling her desires arranged for her visit. On the way, as already said before, on the full moon day of the month of *Vaisakha* in the year 624 B.C. she stopped at Lumbini. It happened to be Friday. She entered the garden with her sister Prajapati Gautami to relax for some time and beat the heat of summer. The beauty of Lumbini is described in Pali and Sanskrit literatures. Maya Devi was spellbound to see the natural grandeur of Lumbini. While she was standing, she had labour pain and caught hold of a drooping branch of a sal (*Shorea robusta*) tree and the baby, the future Buddha, was born. Immediately that spot was hidden by a miraculous curtain. Brahma took the baby in his hands and other gods and angels waited on him. At that time two springs of water one hot and the other cold came down from the sky to wash the baby. A small river which had oily water also appeared to be used by the queen for cleaning herself after the delivery. This rivulet with its oily character still exists and is called Ol or Telar which flows south-east of the Ashokan Pillar.

At the time of the birth it was apparent that he was the spiritual leader. He was golden-coloured and stood erect. He looked in all directions, towards the east, south, west, upwards and downwards. Finally he looked towards the north and took seven steps. At every step he took, one lotus flower appeared on the ground. The gods and angels followed him. At that time he proclaimed, "Foremost am I in the World, Seniormost am I in the World, Best am I in the World. This is my last birth. No more am I to be born." At this time, several miracles appeared. The earth quaked all around, the wind ceased to blow, birds took shelter in



D. B. Chitrakar

A scene of the birth of Siddhartha.

their nests. Trees bore fruits and flowers bloomed. Peace and silence reigned all around.

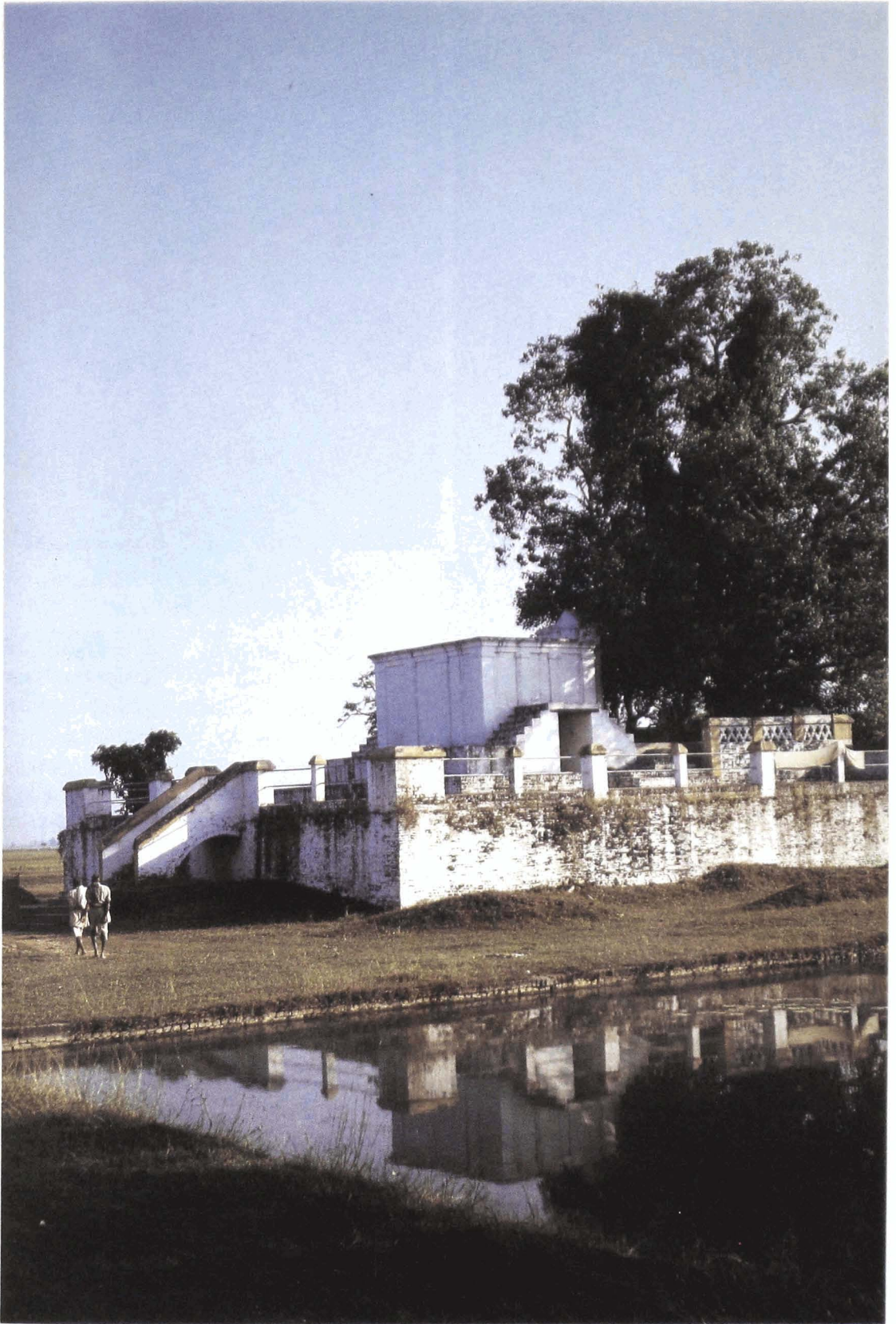
There are several versions of stories about the birth of Buddha. According to some, Maya Devi gave birth to a premature child. Some write that when Maya Devi was taking her bath in the pond she had labour pain. The branches of the trees drooped down to support her and she delivered the child while standing. When Gautama was born then Mahamaya's sisters, Prajapati Gautami and others, watched the scene and ablutions were done by two *Naga* (Serpent) Kings.

The child was named Prince Siddhartha which means 'he who has accomplished his aims'. But to the people he was generally known by his second name as Gotama (Gautama) Having learnt about the birth of the prince, Asita, a famous seer, came to see Suddhodana and said to him with tears in his eyes, "Your son is born to attain supreme knowledge. He will renounce the Kingdom and become averse to

worldly objects, will acquire by strenuous efforts the knowledge of the highest truths and will shine in the world as the sun of knowledge to disperse the darkness of ignorance."

Lumbini was in its grandeur for several centuries. Believers of the Buddhist faith were visiting the Lumbini garden and were getting several monuments constructed around it. But the religious conflict of the medieval times ruined the sacred site. In 249 B.C. when Emperor Ashoka visited Lumbini, it was a flourishing village. Two famous Chinese Buddhist travellers Fa-hien (Fifth Century) and Hiuen Tsang (Seventh Century) described the grandeur of Lumbini. Lumbini was having a beautiful bathing tank and the old sal tree, the branch of which was gripped by Maya Devi. Ashok constructed four stupas and erected a stone pillar with the figure of a horse on the top. Both the Chinese travellers saw the tree which probably survived upto the beginning of the 7th Century. Fa-hien (A.D. 403) and Hiuen Tsang (A.D. 636) visited Lumbini and Kapilavastu. At that time, the whole region was in ruins with many dilapidated stupas, monasteries and palaces. Hiuen Tsang also saw the Ashokan Pillar split into two when it was struck by lightning. In 1895*, Feuhrer, a famous German archeologist, reported about the great pillar while wandering about the hills of Churia (Shiwalik) range. It is known that the whole region had numerous stupas, monasteries and palaces in the past. The splendour of the holy seat of Buddhism is evident from various old monasteries, sculptures and archeological objects. Lumbini remained neglected for more than 600 years. Further exploration and excavation of the surrounding area revealed the existence

* Some authors give 1866 as the year of discovery of the Ashokan Pillar in Lumbini.



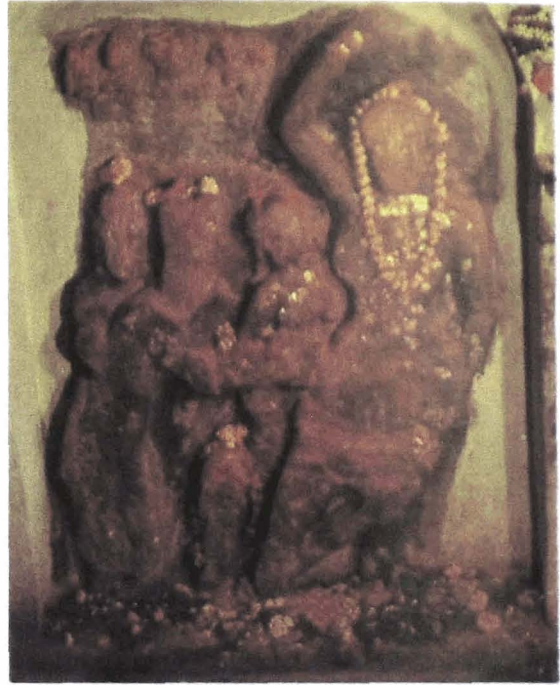
Lumbini has a special meaning as a place of meditation and spiritual renewal, a centre of cultural exchange and a symbol of peace.



Nativity scene believed to be of 3rd century, recently renovated.

of a brick temple and a sandstone sculpture within the temple itself which depict the scenes of the Buddha's birth. A pond said to be one in which Maya Devi took her bath before the delivery is situated nearby. Many monuments in ruins still surround the Maya Devi temple. By the side of the Ashokan Pillar, still flows the Ol or Telar river. The Lumbini garden is beautifully surrounded by various tropical trees such as Sal (*Shorea robusta*), Ashoka (*Saraca indica*), Pipal or Bodhi tree (*Ficus religiosa*), Mango (*Mangifera indica*), Amalak (*Emblia officianalis*), Kadam (*Anthocephalus cadamba*), Gul-mohar (*Delonix regia*), etc.

Lumbini is the Mecca of a Buddhist. A reputed author and scholar



Preteap Khatri

The old sculpture of Nativity scene before renovation.

has aptly written "As millions of Christians take to Jerusalem for inspiration, as millions of Muslims turn to Mecca, so do the three hundred million Buddhists, see in the sacred kingdom of Nepal, a hallowed thicket marked by a pillar left by Ashoka, the Great, Buddhists know that it was the place where the Sakyamuni* was born in Nepal"

The history as well as the ancient remains of the Sakya period and the faded magnificence of Lumbini is a challenge to the archaeologists and historians. Its importance is added by the fact that the United Nations has taken interest in the development of the area under the U.N. Development Project. In 1967, United Nations Secretary General U. Thant made Lumbini Development Project an international concern when he visited the birthplace of Lord Buddha. The Kings of Nepal have shown deep interest in the development of Lumbini. In 1958, King Mahendra donated more

* Sakyamini – Another name of the Buddha, the sage of the Sakya clan.

than one hundred thousand rupees (Nepalese currency) for the development of Lumbini. The late King Mahendra himself visited the sacred place in February 1956. A Mahendra Pillar made of marble was specially erected to commemorate the royal visit.



Mahendra Pillar was erected to commemorate the Royal visit of King Mahendra in 1956.

It can be seen by visitors in the courtyard of the sacred garden. In keeping with the ideas of the great apostle of peace, King Birendra has shown a deep interest in the development of Lumbini as is evident from his occasional directives, sanctions and grants. For the development of this place, a Lumbini Development Committee was also formed. The year 1979 was also declared as the Lumbini Year by the International Buddhist Conference held in Japan in November, 1978.

At present, major restoration and development work is ahead under the aegis of the Lumbini Development Trust which is formed under the chairmanship of His Royal Highness Prince Gyanendra.

Recently some beautiful shrines have been constructed in Lumbini and funds for the Lumbini Development Project have been pouring in from several countries in the form of specific and general donations. Specific donations are for particular projects while

general donations are for use in any way for development.

The visit to Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha and to Kapilavastu 20 km to the west which is the home town of Buddha and where the prince spent his early 29 years is not only for spiritual enlightenment but also for solace and satisfaction that one normally gets in a calm, peaceful and sanctified place like it. Besides Lumbini and the whole region of Kapilavastu reveal such antiquities which date back to the early Christian era.

PILGRIMAGE

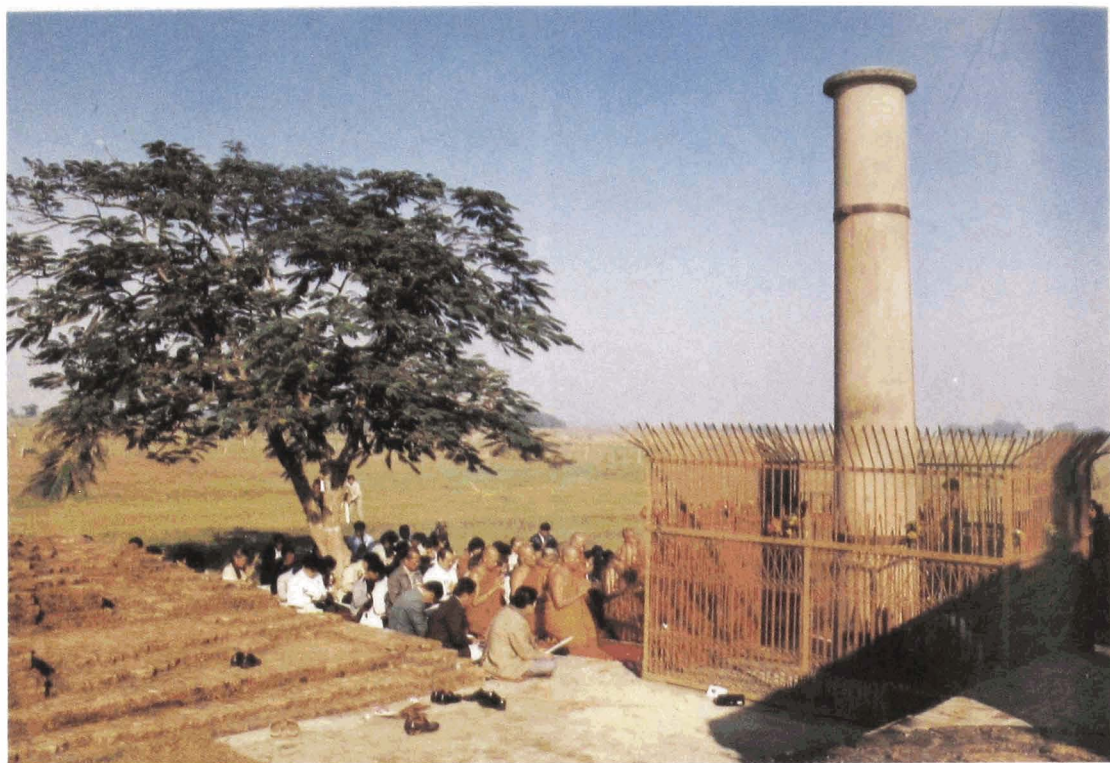
When a pilgrim reaches Lumbini and enters the sacred garden by taking any of the pathways he sees a big open area which has the Ashokan Pillar and a temple. When Lumbini development project is completed the entrance will be from Lumbini Village.

The Ashokan Pillar

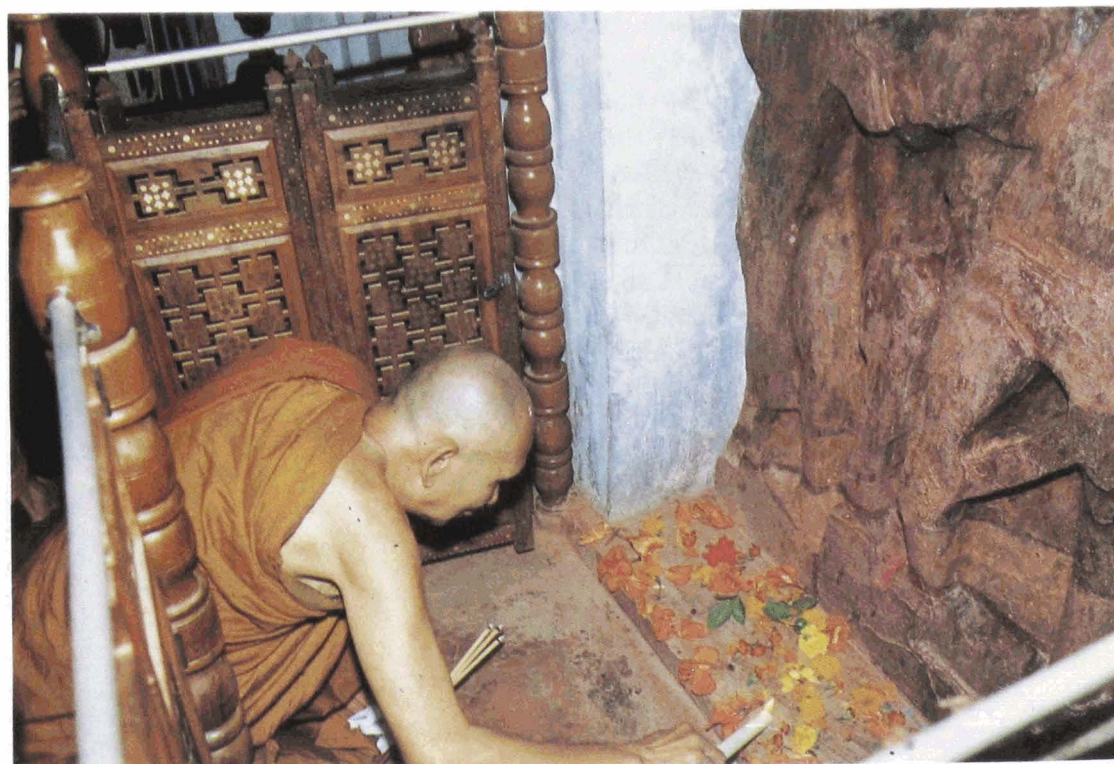
It is the most important relic in Lumbini. As already said it was reported in 1895 by Feuhrer. This stone pillar was erected by King Ashoka



A stone pillar got erected by Ashoka to pay homage to the birthplace of the Buddha.

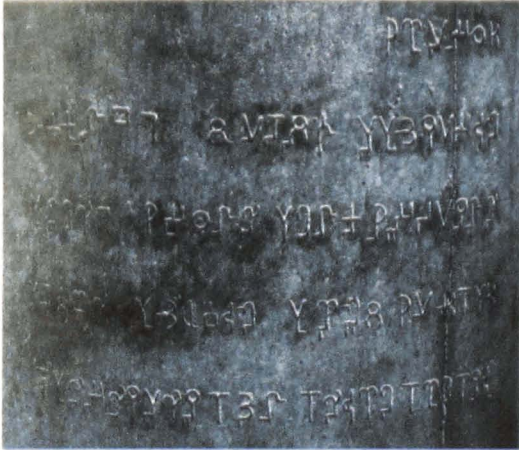


His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyansamvara, the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand leading a group of prayer-chanting devout people in front of the Ashokan Pillar.



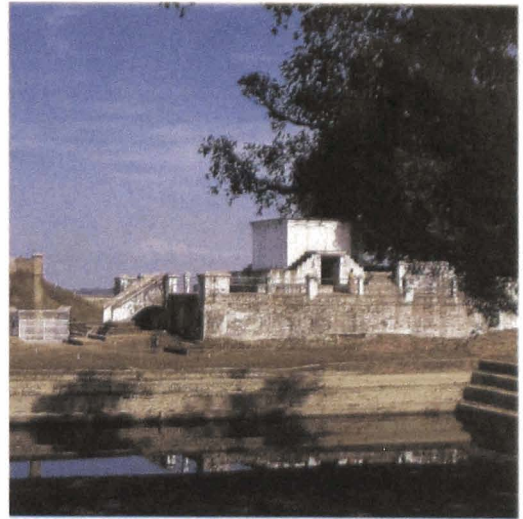
His Holiness Somdet, the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand revering the nativity idol at Lumbini.

who reigned in India in the third century B.C. He visited Lumbini Garden in 250 B.C. to pay homage to the birthplace of Buddha, in the 20th year of his coronation. The stone pillar bears an inscription in the ancient (Brahmi) script which runs as follows



The inscription in the Brahmi script on Ashokan pillar

“King Piyadasi (Ashoka). The Beloved of Gods, in the twentieth year of the coronation, himself made a royal visit. Buddha Sakyamuni having been born here, a stone railing was built and a stone pillar erected. The *Bhagavan* (Another name of the Buddha) having been born here, Lummini (Lumbini) village was tax freed and entitled to the eight part”. The pillar is about 7.79 m. tall with the circumference of 2.78 m. King Ripu Malla of Western Nepal inscribed his name on the Ashokan Pillar when he visited Lumbini in 1314 A.D. This pillar was also struck by lightning. Sometimes back, Nepalese archeologists dug out one of its sides to find out the root of it and found the Mauryan railing at the ground level. However, religious-minded scholars were not very happy with that idea for fear that it could weaken the base of the pillar, Anyway this spot authenticates the exact place where Queen Maya Devi gave birth to prince Siddhartha.



Prateep Khatri

The temple of Maya Devi , believed to be about 2300 years old.

Temple of Maya Devi

Besides the Ashokan Pillar, another most famous monument is the temple of Maya Devi, which is about 2300 years old. It has a stone relief having the nativity scene of the Buddha, which is worshipped from the beginning of the Christian era. The bas relief depicts Maya Devi with her right hand holding on to a branch of a sal tree with a new-born child standing upright on a lotus pedestal, shedding an oval halo, around his head. This nativity scene of future Buddha was installed by Malla Kings of Naga dynasty who ruled over one of the two states which flourished from about 11th to 15th century in the Karnali zone of Nepal. Recently Maya Devi sculpture is restored by archeologists. The nativity scene is worshipped both by Buddhists and Hindus. Hindu barren women used to touch the image with the hope of fertility. Therefore now a wooden frame is fixed at the base to avoid people within the reach of the sculpture.

Beside the original nativity scene in the centre is also placed in a niche on

the right hand side a sculpture which is a true marble copy of the original one, made by a famous Nepalese artist and sculptor, late Chandra Man Maskey in about 1956.



A true marble copy of the sculpture made by a Nepalese artist.

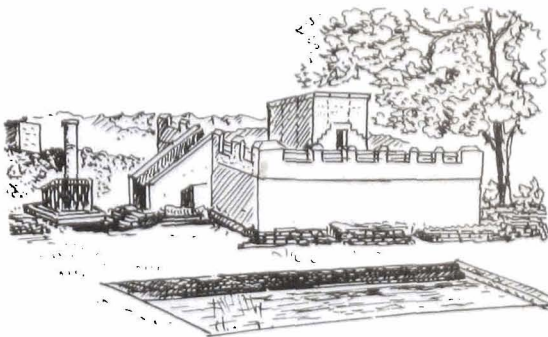
On the left hand niche are placed some old unidentified sculptures, together with some metallic images of Ganesh, Durga, etc. A small metallic image of child Buddha in a standing pose with raised fingers was presented by a Japanese devotee a few years back. The



Metallic images of child Buddha.

temple is worshipped on a regular basis by a Hindu priest.

This temple is situated under the shade of a pipal or bo (*Ficus religiosa*) tree. Around the temple are placed some broken pieces of Ashokan pillar and animal like figures. On the north of the temple is a big image of a Hindu goddess, probably Varahi.

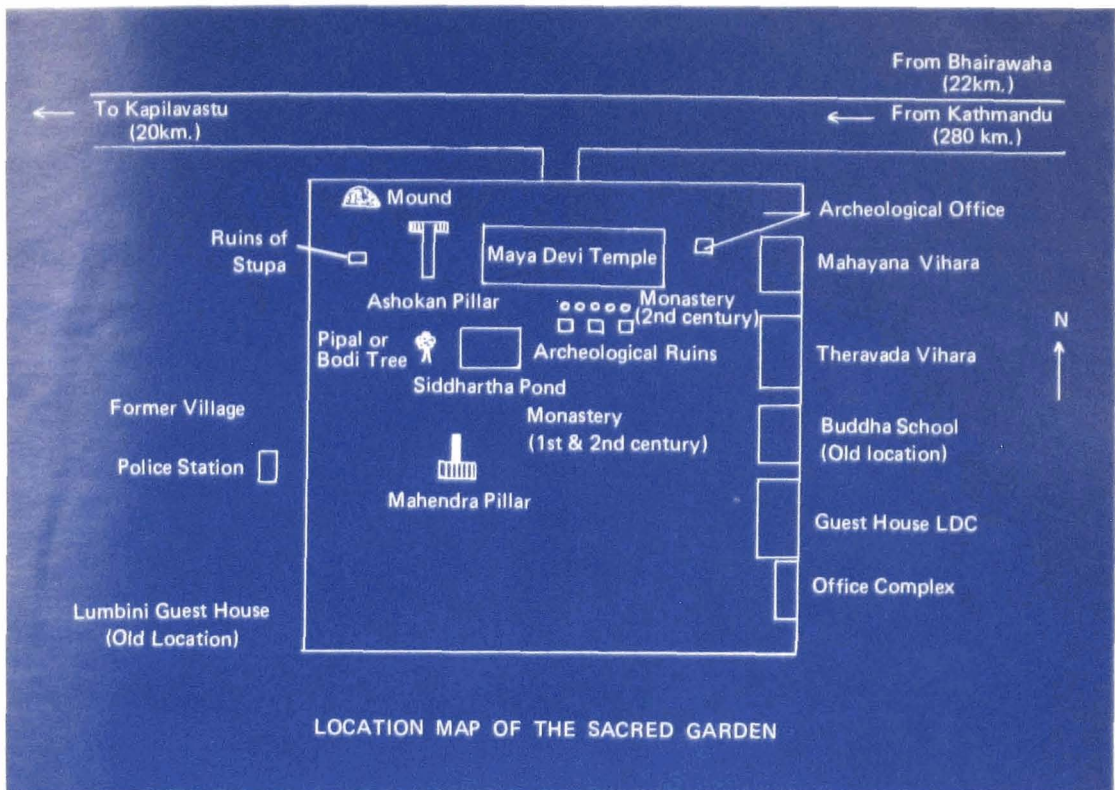


The temple of Maya Devi and Siddhartha tank.

The first construction of the Maya Devi temple is of the Mauryan period, the second is of Sunga dynasty, while the third is of the Gupta period. But in other places the third construction is of the Kushan period. Thus it is evident that the temple of Maya Devi was constructed over the foundation of more than one earlier temple or stupa. Scholars opine that this temple was probably built on an Ashokan Stupa itself which Ashoka got constructed during his visit.



Plinth of Maya Devi temple.



Sacred Pond

On the south of the Maya Devi temple is the famous sacred pond known as Puskarni. It is believed that Maya Devi took a bath in this pond before delivery. The structure is of a circular nature and has three projecting terraces in a descending order and is revetted with fine brick masonry. Now for making it attractive living biota are introduced. The legendary Lumbini pond was oval but now it is a square of about 50 ft each side. This pond was recovered during 1933-34 excavation.

Archeological Ruins

Several ancient structures in ruins and mounds of the 2nd to the 9th century can be found lying in the area. One is a big square stupa of the 2nd century B.C. and a group of 16 stupas of the 8th and 9th century A.D. A stupa has been excavated and repaired with the donations of Mr. Pat Prabhavivadhana of Thailand in the memory of his father, Mr. Chunprabha Vivadhana.

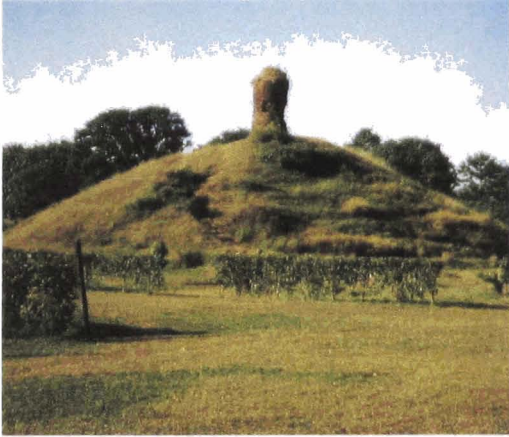


A view of recently excavated and repaired stupas and viharas.

Stupas sing the glories of a bygone era entombed underneath. Some of these are excavated recently and they all add to the hallowed memories of the historic Lumbini. One can imagine the glory when Gautam was born here, Brahma received the baby aloft in his arms, Naga kings helped in ablutions and the courtesans jingled and there was great rejoicing.

Mounds of Sand

On the back and front of the temple one can see two mounds of sand in the form of stupas but actually they are simply heaps of sand accumulated which was dug out during excavations so as to make the site look fascinating. However, these are of no archeological importance.



Mound of sand looks like a stupa but it is of no archeological significance. It is however, a source of great attraction for visitors.

Buddhist Shrines

Outside the main complex of the sacred garden some shrines exist at present.

Theravadin Monastery

It was built by His Majesty's Government of Nepal and is of a typical Nepalese style. The entrance gate has 8 auspicious signs together with sun, moon, holy vase, etc. It houses three beautiful big images of Buddha. The central one is in a touching-the-ground pose; on the left side of it is a marble Buddha from Burma while on the left is a metallic image from Thailand. Below the central image is placed another image of Buddha in a teaching pose. The main hall has a few unique paintings of the wheel of existence, welcome of Buddha, Dhritarastra etc. A dome-shaped structure is above the central image. It is of a usual architecture of the Nepalese stupa.



The main entrance of the Theravadin monastery.

Besides, there is an open courtyard where there are two famous Chaityas, one of which is that of Shri Dharmlok Malasthavir (1890–1967) who dedi-

cated his life for renovation of Lumbini and establishment of Theravada school. There are some rooms where pilgrims can stay.



The inner view of the Theravadin monastery.



A painting in the Theravadin monastery showing welcoming of the Buddha.



The images of the Buddha from Thailand presented to the Theravadin monastery.



The image of the Buddha from Burma in the Theravadin monastery.

Dharma Swami Maharaj Buddha Vihar

Another shrine named as Dharma Swami Maharaj Buddha Vihar was established in 1968, by the most Venerable Guru Chogyi Trichen Rinpoche. Some say the construction was made by Mustang Raja of Nepal. This shrine belongs to the Mahayana cult and has a typical Tibetan style. It houses the central main image of Buddha in his touching the ground pose. On both sides there are some statues of teachers or *gurus* of Mahayana cult. In the middle there is a seat of an abbot. About 30 monks live there at present. Many pilgrims from Tibet stay here.

However, now under the Lumbini Development Trust, on the east and west of the central canal, monastic zones are allocated for construction of monasteries. Regulations have already been made for the development of the monastic zone.



Dharma Swami Maharaj Buddha Vihar at Lumbini. This shrine belongs to the Mahayana cult.

Lumbini Development Project

In 1970, the beginning was made for the development of Lumbini. Thirteen nations took part in the preparation of the master plan. The

plan which was completed in 1978 was made by a World famous Japanese architect Professor Kenzo Tange. This project is under implementation with the objective of developing Lumbini as a creative centre of spiritual and cultural force representing the Buddha's teachings. Some basic features of the Master Plan are : Transformation of 4.8 square Km of land. The rectangular project area about 19 Km west of the city of Bhairahawa is located on a north-south axis. The design landscape represents circles enclosing squares which symbolises the universe for purity, simplicity of *mandala* or mystic designs: square and circular shapes in the lay-out extend to the peaceful landscaped gardens, and find place in the vaulting arches of the monumental buildings and in the tranquil network of canals and ponds. The project includes three zones each covering 1.6 km. and the three zones are joined by 1,474 meter long pedestrian walkway and canal. The plan includes: 1. Lumbini Village 2. The Monastic Zone and 3. The Sacred Garden. On the extreme north there will be a Lumbini Village which will be a gateway. It will have hotels, lodges, restaurants, camping places, etc. for pilgrims. At present, a pilgrim accommodation is already built by Sri Lankan Government with 188 beds. Besides, a four star Japanese Hotel by Hokke club of Japan will be completed in 1990. The 56 room hotel will accommodate 126 visitors. Other tourist accommodations are also under plan. A modern camping ground which lies in a pleasant mango grove will provide rest-rooms, amphitheatre and parking facilities and these are financed by donations from Singapore. Other amenities will include a bank, post office, medical center, administrative offices, parking place for buses and taxis. A high school is financed with donations from Malaysia, Nepal and other funding agencies.

Nearby there is a cultural centre which includes an auditorium, research institutions, library and museum. The construction of the library and the museum are already under completion. The construction of the library and the museum has been efficiently undertaken by the Sambu Construction Co. of Korea.

The Sacred Garden

The sacred garden includes the area related to the birth of Gautam Buddha and it reflects the great ideals of peace, compassion, purity and brotherhood. This will develop international friendship, good-will and inter-cultural relationships. The sacred garden will include the temple of Maya Devi, Ashokan Pillar, various stupas, chaityas and old remains of the garden and trees.

The Eternal Flame

After passing the walkway and on approach to the sacred garden there is a place where an eternal flame is kept lit up. This eternal flame symbolises peace and was graciously lit up by the

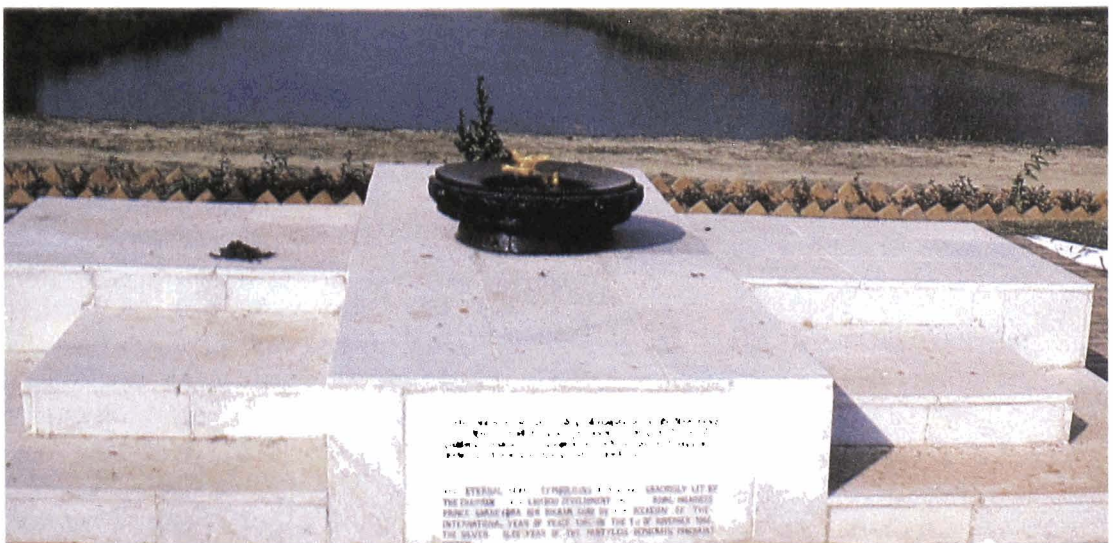
Chairman of the Lumbini Development Trust H.R.H. Prince Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah on the occasion of the International Year of Peace on 1st November, 1986 to mark the silver jubilee year of Partyless Democratic Panchayat System. Credit really goes to H.R.H. Prince Gyanendra for active and fast development of Lumbini under the patronage of His Majesty King Birendra.

The Green Areas

The green areas are also covered by the project and they include groves of Pipal, Sal, Banyan, Kadamb and Mango trees to provide shelter and protection. This area will include conservation of nature and human environment. The flowering bushes will restore the beautiful landscape of Lumbini. The sacred monuments will give a sublime look, marked by elegance and timelessness.

Crucial Earthwork

The most significant work at Lumbini is the flood control for protection of ancient monuments of the Sacred Garden from floods which once



The eternal flame lit up by H.R.H. Prince Gyanendra to mark the occasion of the International Year of Peace.

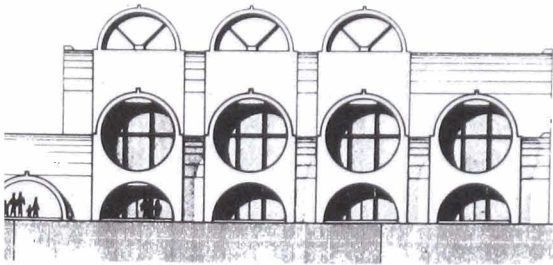
were inundating the whole area almost each year. For the same 5.44 km. diversion canal and a 2.77 km. circular earthen level around the archeological site will serve to protect the area from flood.

International Brotherhood

After the completion of this plan, Lumbini will acquire a great significance not only as a place of pilgrimage but also as one of tourist attraction. It will be a centre of cultural exchanges that will promote the spirit of tolerance, faith and international brotherhood. Thus Lumbini is a gem of culture and historical importance and there is much of it for all of us to see.

The U. Thant World Peace Auditorium

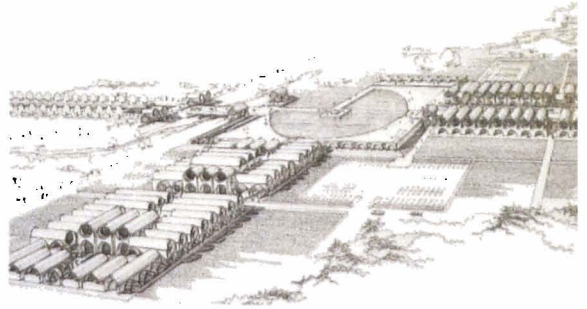
It is a 420 seat multipurpose assembly hall. It includes 6 balconies for pressmen and observers and 6 booths for simultaneous translation. This project is financed by the National Committee for the development of Lumbini in the U.S.A.



The U Thant Peace Auditorium

The Research Institution and Library

The Library is financed by Reiyukai Foundation of Japan. The advanced research institution will include facilities for study of culture and philosophy of Buddhism by scholars. It will include lecture rooms a large



The Cultural Centre.

meeting room, a 24-room dormitory and 4 residential quarters for professors.

The Museum

Financial assistance of 10 million Indian rupees has been made available by the Government of India for the construction of the museum. It has a large number of antiquities that have been discovered by archeologists at Lumbini. The museum will also include administrative offices and an archeological research laboratory cum-workshop.

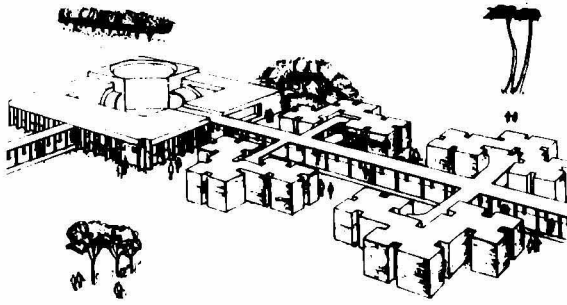


The Museum financed by Government of India.

Monastic Zone

The Monastic zone will be for worship and study. This will provide pilgrims an ideal atmosphere which has a touch of spiritual character about it and which expresses Buddhist unity of mind and thought. In this zone 41 plots of land are set aside under a green forest cover near the sacred garden. This place is reserved for stupas and vihars to be erected by individuals.

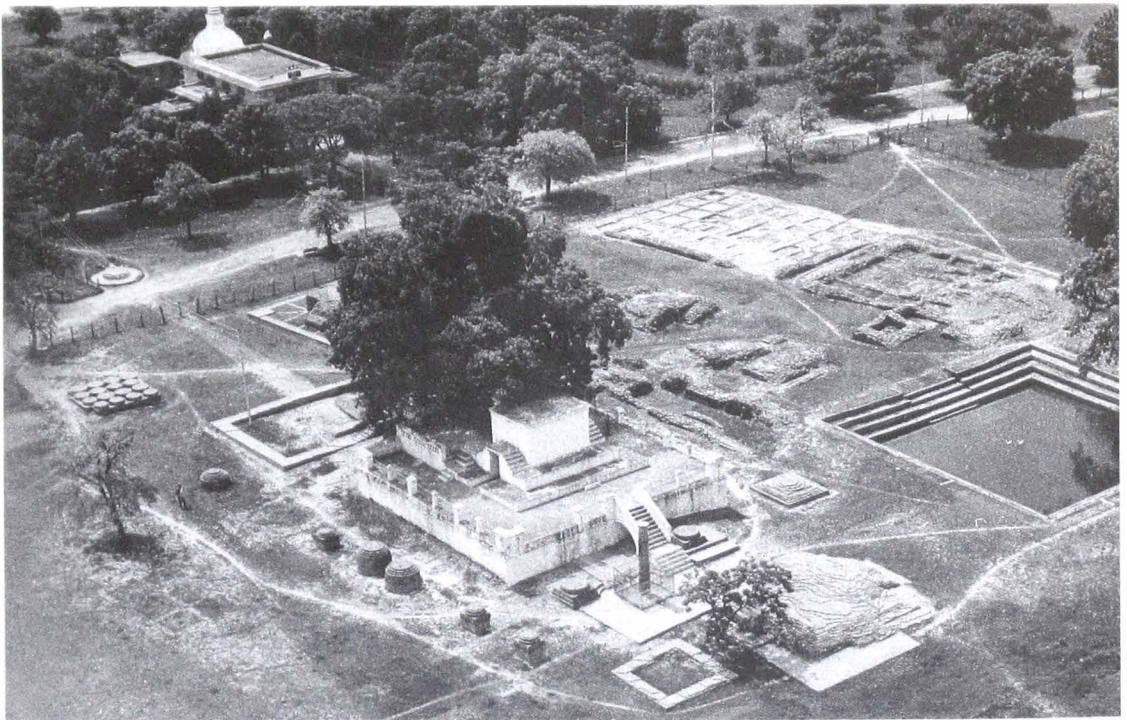
associations and countries. These sponsors will be allowed to build places of worship according to their ideals and styles. This will be divided into the East Monastic zone and the West Monastic zone of both Theravada and Mahayana cults. Each centre will include 12 meditation cells which will enable about 144 students of Buddhism to work toward self-knowledge. There will be spacious assembly halls too.



The Meditation centre.

The Central Link

The sacred garden can be reached either on foot or by boat along a colonnaded walkway. It has a tranquil environ with trees of Kadamb (*Anthocephalus cadamba*) on both sides. This central link canal serves as a walkway which is 64 meter wide, including walkway. Pilgrims can walk along the sculpted curves and arches of monumental buildings, tranquil ponds, graceful pavilions, quiet squares and circular plazas. At several points there will be toilets, benches, drinking water facility, etc. The old and handicapped pilgrims can avail themselves of the facilities of the boat. The central link bridge is constructed with partial funds received from the World Fellowship of Buddhists. This central link symbolically represents transition to the sacred garden.

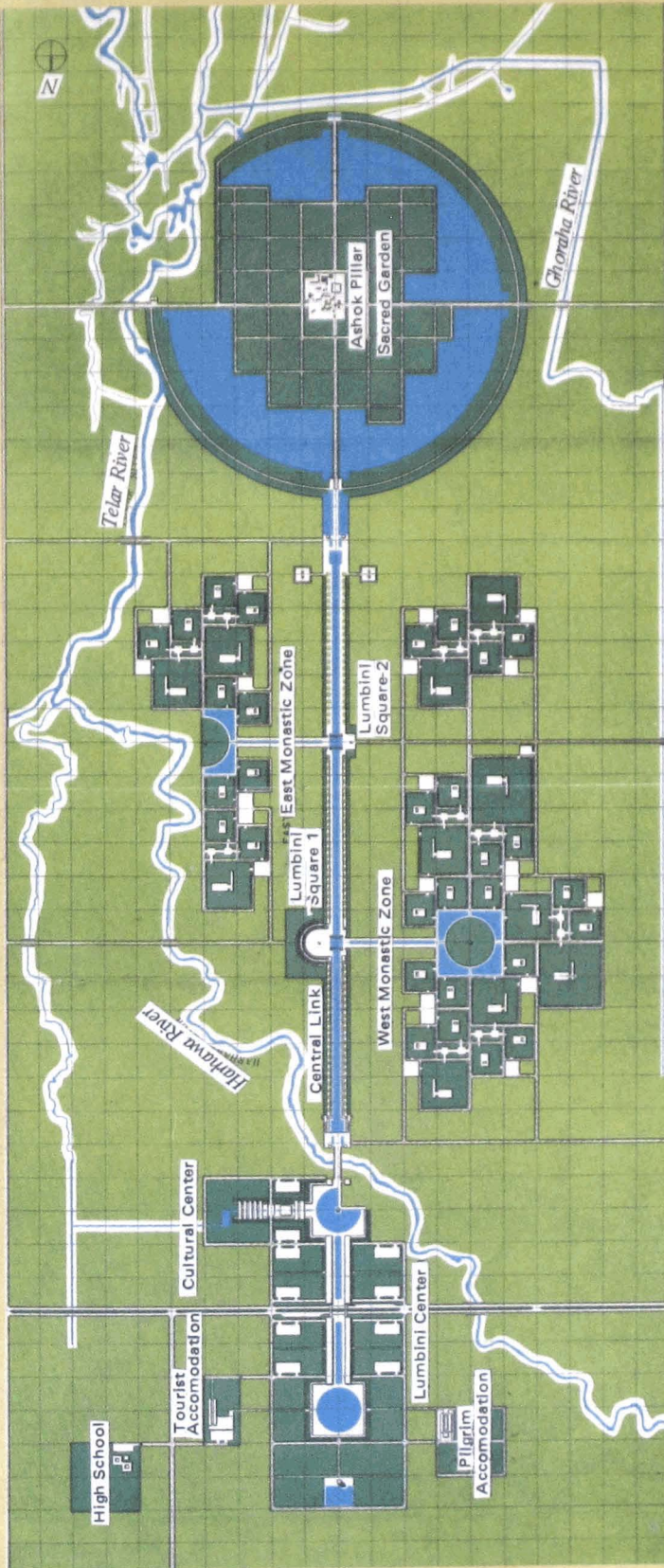


Lumbini Development Trust

An aerial view of the Sacred Garden.

Upagupta, Ashoka's counsellor said, 'Your Majesty, this is the sanctified spot where Lord Gautam was born. We ought to do something to retain its memory to posterity.'

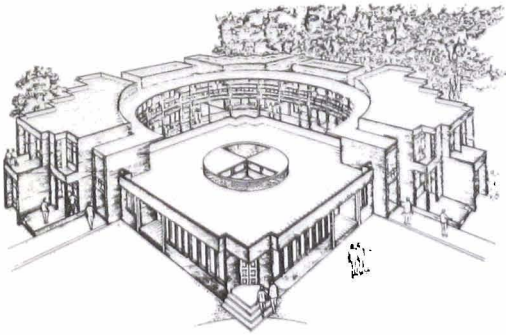
THE MASTER PLAN OF LUMBINI



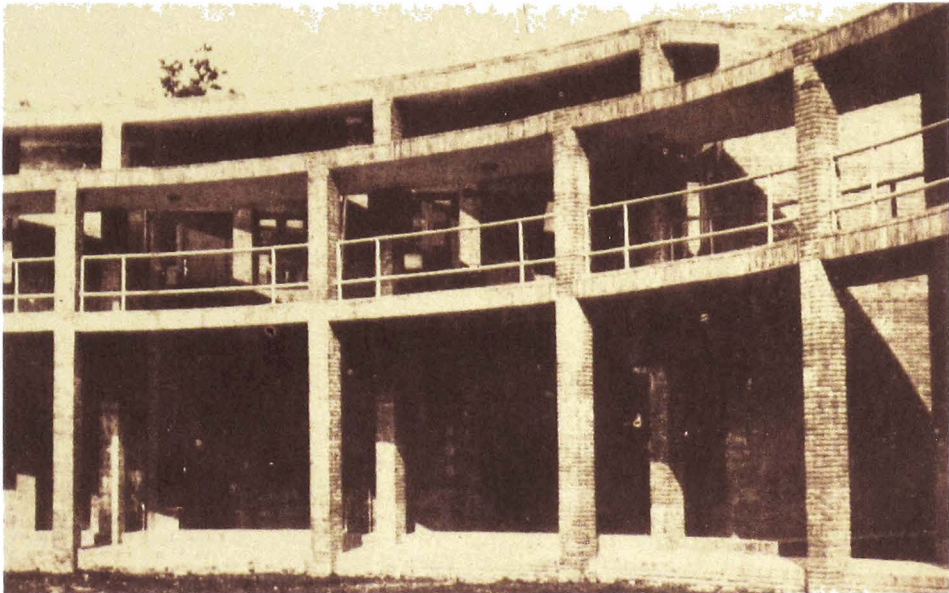
The plan is designed by Mr. Kenzo Tange. It has an objective to restore an area of about 4.8 square km known as the Sacred Garden and to develop an additional area of 40 square km. in its support.

Where to Stay?

Visitors of every budget size can comfortably stay in Lumbini. At present 188-bed pilgrim lodge has already been constructed and is in operation. It has attached kitchens, toilets, etc. At present, Lumbini Garden Guest House has 8 double bedrooms and other beds with all facilities to accommodate 80. Tariff-Double U.S.\$ 20 and Single-U.S.\$ 14. Dormitory U.S.\$ 10 each. For middle budget visitors a 2 star hotel is planned. A 4 star hotel by Hokke Club of Japan will be in operation in 1990.



Perspective view of Pilgrim Accommodation.



Interior view of Pilgrim Accommodation, funded by the Government of Sri Lanka.

A Hewa restaurant is in operation where food is available at a moderate price range. Besides there are several rooms in the monasteries for lodging purposes. Restaurants, shops and full tourist facilities are available. It is advisable to stay in the calm and tranquility of Lumbini. However, visitors can also stay comfortably in Bhairahawa at the newly constructed Yeti Hotel near the bus stand. It is of an international standard. The tariff is about Rs 150 per person.

How to Reach?

Lumbini can be reached both from Nepal and India. Royal Nepal Airlines flights on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday connect Kathmandu with Bhairawaha. The one way fare is U.S.\$ 60. Flight duration is about 40-45 minutes. From the airport, transportation can be arranged directly to Lumbini. If you want to save a few bucks and have time a bus is available at

NEPAL



a road junction which has a Panchayat Silver Jubilee Pillar. A rickshaw charges only Rs 2 (Nepalese) to reach the bus stop. Buses run every hour to Lumbini. The distance is about 22 km. The fare is about Rs 5.50 (Nepalese). Do not mind the shabby condition of buses at present as you are on a pilgrimage.

Quite a few day and night buses leave from Kathmandu to Bhairahawa. It is a 9 hour trip which costs about Rs 57 (Day service) and Rs 71 (Night Service) one way*. From Pokhara one can reach Bhairahawa in about 5-6

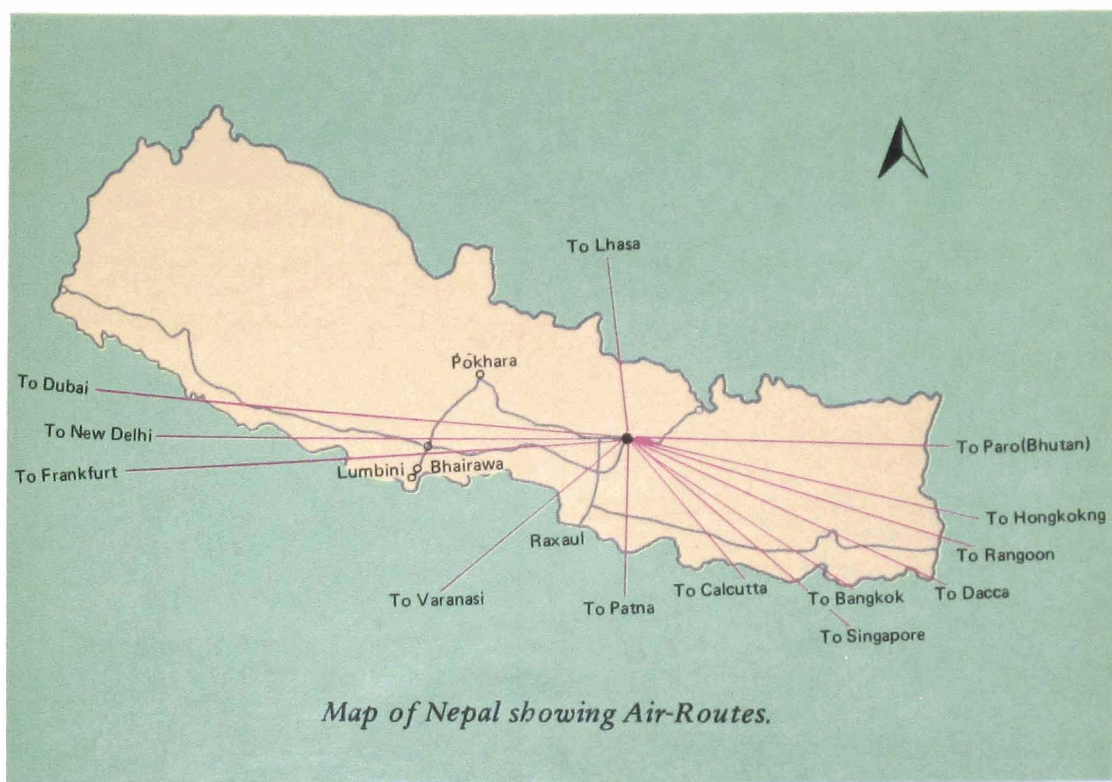
hours. The distance from Pokhara to Bhairahawa is 176 km and the bus fare is Rs 44.

From Kathmandu, Lumbini is about 280 km. For more information contact: **Continent Travels & Tours, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal. Tel. 224299, 223912 & 414187.** They can arrange for your comfortable and fast visit to Lumbini.

Lumbini can also be reached from the Indian side. The nearest airports are Lucknow and Varanasi, from where direct buses run to Sunauli.

Varanasi – Sunauli. The distance is 314 km. The journey takes 9-10 hours. The fare is Rs 45 (Indian)

Lucknow – Sunauli. The distance is 376 km. The journey takes about 10-11 hours. The bus fare is Rs 57 (Indian).



* 1 U.S.\$ = 26 Nepalese Rupees approximately.



Map showing location of Lumbini and adjacent areas.

Delhi – Sunauli. The distance is 1012 km. The bus fare is Rs 105 (Indian).*
(Several comfortable buses operate along this route).

From Gorakhpur one has to go to Sunauli by bus. The distance is about 96 km and the bus fare is Rs 15 (Indian). From Sunauli Bhairahawa is about 4 km. The bus takes Re 1 while the rickshaw charges about ten rupees. From Bhairahawa you can also take a bus as already said before. By train Lumbini can be reached upto Naugarh Railway Station which is on the Gonda-Gorakhpur line. Lumbini is about 35 km by road from Naugarh Railway Station. Buses ply between Naugarh and Lumbini. (However, the train is very slow and this is not the direct,

and comfortable route). From Kapilavastu or Taulihawa, Lumbini is about 20 km along a new metalled road.

Confidence Travel Service Co., Ltd.

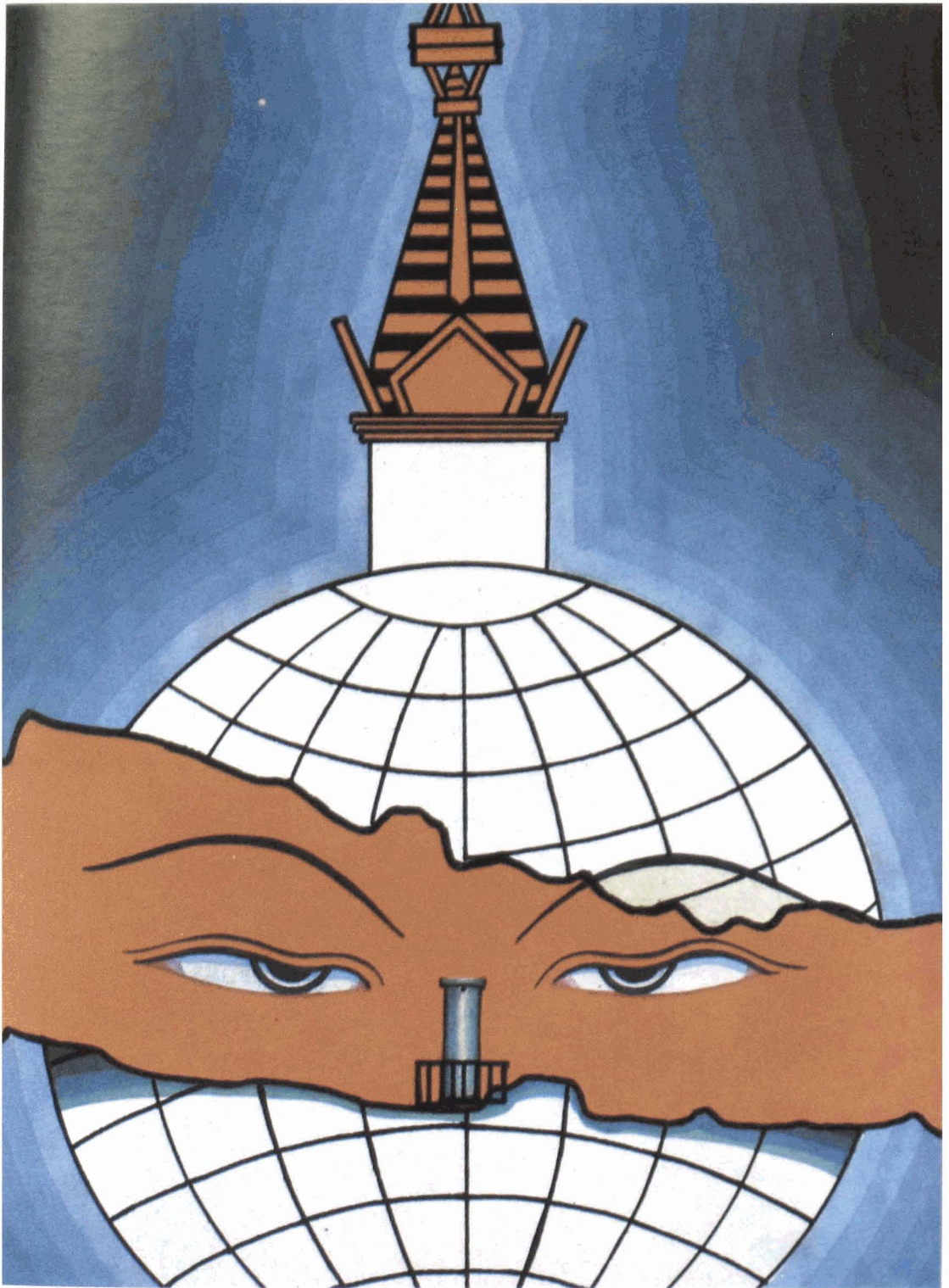
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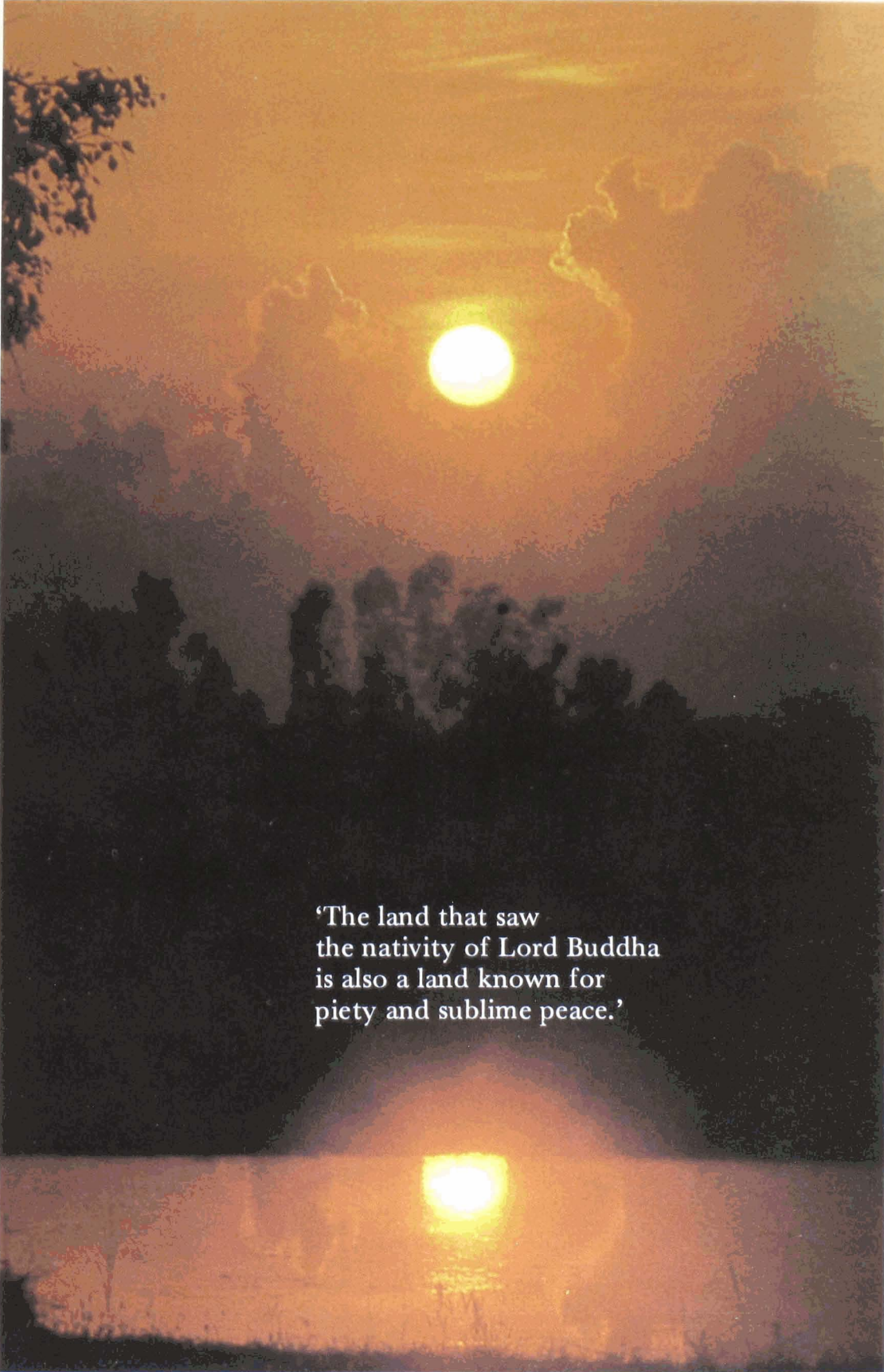
**300/9 Makut Arcade,
Krungkasem Road,
Bangkok, 10200,
Thailand**

**Tel: 2800662-3
2828700-4 Ext.110**

* 1 U.S. \$ = Indian Rs 15 approximately.



Lumbini means different things to different people. To Buddhists, Lumbini Garden symbolize reverence for the birthplace of the founder of a major world religion.

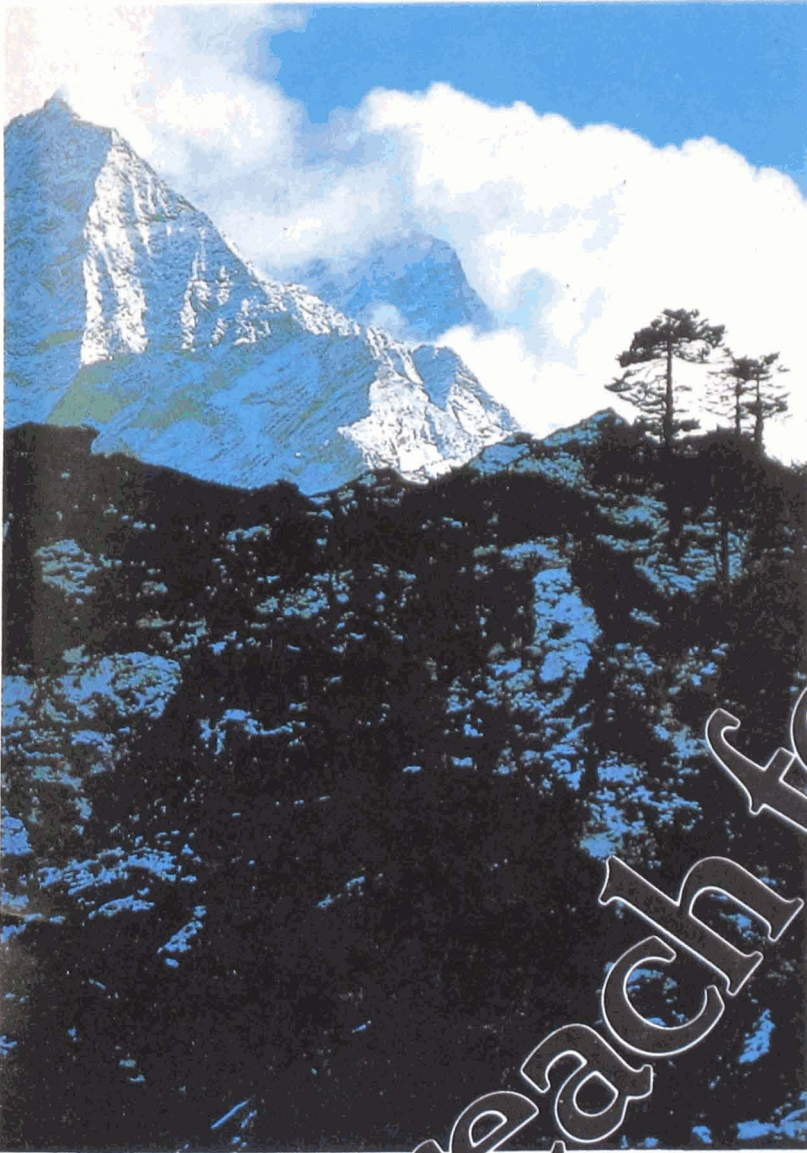


‘The land that saw
the nativity of Lord Buddha
is also a land known for
piety and sublime peace.’

[This booklet on ‘Lumbini’ was launched by His Holiness, the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand with the kindness of H.E.Prof. Ram Chandra Bahadur Singh, the Nepalese Ambassador to Thailand and translated in the Thai language by Dr. Chirapat Pratandvidya of Silpakorn University, Bangkok.]

20 YEARS IN KATHMANDU.

Thai International is the most experienced foreign airline in Nepal. It links the Himalayan capital of Kathmandu to Bangkok – "The Hub of Asia" – every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Saturday. Thai offers travellers connections to more Asian countries than any other airline and flies to 70 cities in 34 countries around the world.

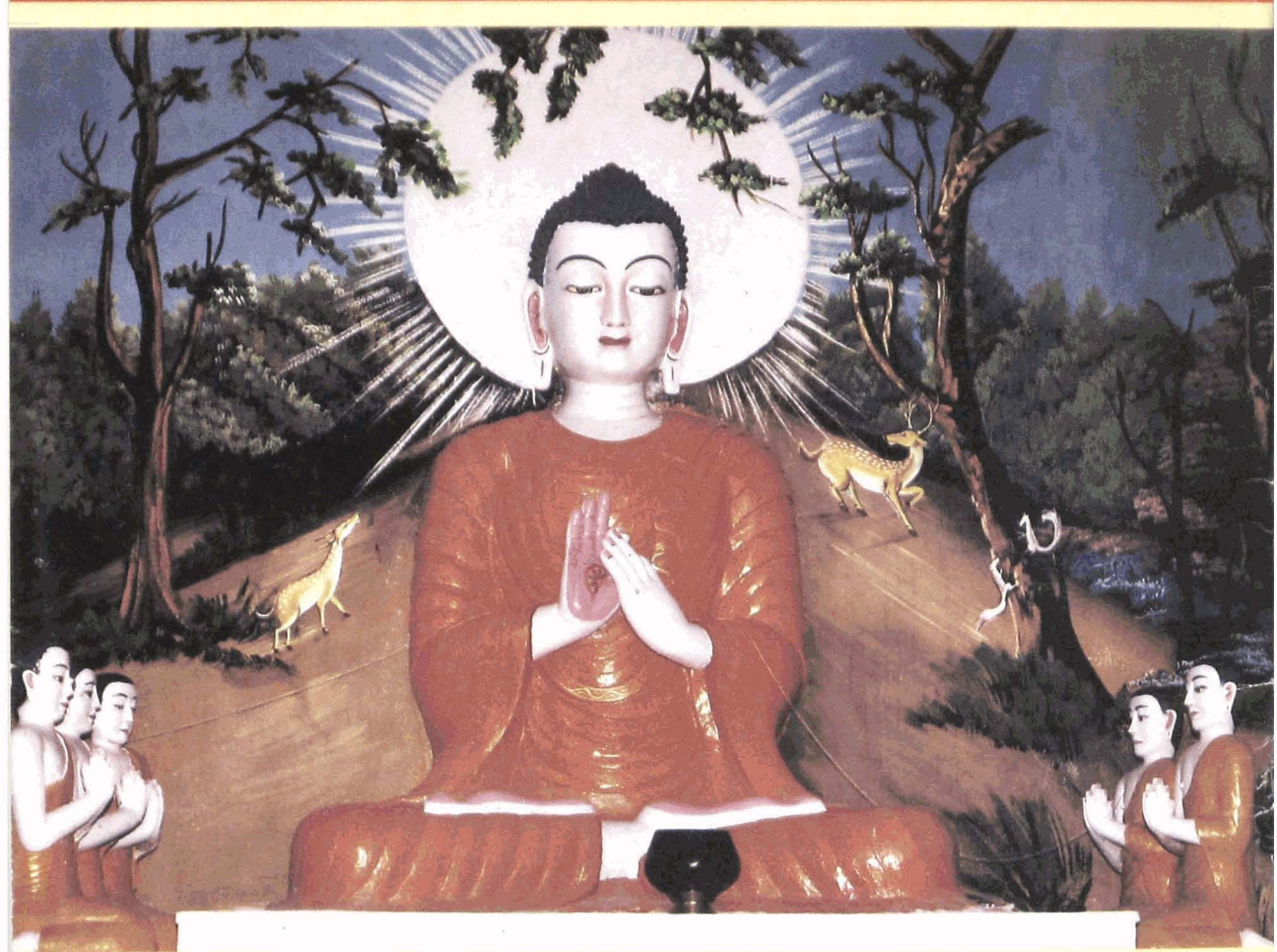


We reach for the sky.



For more information, please contact Thai International, Annapurna Arcade,
Palace Road, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu. Tel. 224917, 224387

Buddha's message of compassion & devotion to the service of humanity is more relevant today than at any other time in history.



Acknowledgments:

Mr. Pratap Khatri, Kathmandu
Mr. Gaja Sundar Pradhan, Kathmandu
Mr. Veera Suyanandana, Bangkok
Mr. A.K. Biswas, Bangkok
Lumbini Development Trust.

Text:

Bhikku Sugandha, Bangkok
Professor Dr. T.C. Majupuria, Kathmandu

Editor:

Bhikku Sudarshan, Kathmandu

Printer:

Craftsman Press, Bangkok