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UNESCO and Japan join forces to conserve birthplace of Buddha in Nepal



Lumbini, a World Heritage site, is the birthplace of Buddha

28 July 2010 – The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)) and Japan have partnered to conserve and manage the birthplace of Buddha in southern Nepal.

The world-renowned pilgrimage destination of [Lumbini](#) has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1997.

Siddhartha Gautama, who later became Buddha, was born in 623 B.C. in the famous gardens of Lumbini. The Indian emperor Ashoka, a pilgrim to the site, erected a commemorative pillar there.

“This project is a significant step forward that will enable the Government of Nepal to reinforce its effort in the protection, enhancement and sustainable development of Lumbini, which as a major pole of international pilgrimage tourism in Nepal is a major source of national income,” [said](#) Axel Plathe, UNESCO’s Representative to the country.

The Japan-funded project will focus on conserving the Ashoka Pillar, the Marker Stone and the Nativity Sculpture. It will also, among other activities, review the current state of the Sacred Garden and set up a management plan for the entire property.

It will be coordinated by UNESCO's office in the capital, Kathmandu, and will be implemented with Nepal's Department of Archaeology and the Lumbini Development Trust.

Bishnu Karki, who heads the Department of Archaeology, expressed "the gratitude of the Nepali people to all those who work with us to safeguard Lumbini," which he called "one of the most emblematic places in the world and has tremendous value for our people and for the global community."

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