

UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, Nepal Government: Preserve The World Heritage Lumbini – The Buddha’s birthplace

URBAN DEVELOPMENT – “NEW WORLD PEACE CITY” PLAN –

THREATENS THE BUDDHA’S BIRTHPLACE & ITS WORLD HERITAGE STATUS

- Lumbini is the Buddha’s birthplace – an archaeologically rich and sacred site located in southern Nepal. It is one of the four major pilgrimage sites of Buddhism (one of the world’s great religions), which the Buddha himself identified in the Mahaparinibbana Sutta.
- At such a significant site, devoted pilgrims have come to Lumbini for the centuries and continue to do so in the present time. Here they pay homage at the place where the Buddha was born – a place that now contains important archaeological evidence about the nature of Buddhist pilgrimage centers from the very earliest times.
- A Master Plan for the Development of Lumbini, which was prepared by the Japanese architect Kenzo Tange, emphasizes the pilgrimage aspect of Lumbini. This was approved by the UN and the Government of Nepal in 1978. The plan includes a buffer zone of twenty-two square miles to support the serenity and protection of Lumbini.
- In 1997, Lumbini was declared as UNESCO’s World Heritage Site in recognition of its unique importance.

WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?

- On January 20th, 2012, the Government of Nepal and the Government of the Rep. of Korea signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the preparation of the Lumbini World Peace City Preservation and Development plan. This new plan is to be designed within one and a half years by KWAAK E.S.P.R.I. and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).
- This World Peace City for 200,000 inhabitants will be built **inside the Buffer Zone.**
- This agreement has been signed without informing UNESCO’s World Heritage Centre.

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE WORLD PEACE CITY BEING BUILT?

- A negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage site, particularly in terms of identity, authenticity, and integrity. Lumbini could most likely be placed on UNESCO’s danger list, threatening its World Heritage listing.
- Lumbini will be affected by increased air pollution, water pollution, and noise pollution.
- The loss of twenty-two square miles of a restricted and agricultural buffer zone, with human encroachment and the impact of urbanization on the ecosystem.
- An increasing emphasis of the future development of Lumbini as a population centre – “World Peace City” – rather than as the Birthplace of the Buddha. Resources will be directed towards this urban development, and its ongoing infrastructure maintenance needs, neglecting the preservation of the sacred and historic qualities of Lumbini.

We strongly urge the UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki Moon and the Government of Nepal to drop the Lumbini World Peace City plan and continue to support Kenzo Tange’s master plan. This Lumbini World Heritage Site must be preserved for future generations.

Link to the Internet petition can be found at: www.save-buddhist-heritage.org OR www.savebh.org - Please Sign - Thank you