

# Practices and Achievements of Local Governments in the Conservation of Buddhist Heritage and Culture

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## Abstract

*Lumbini Province, the birthplace of Buddhist civilization, is the historic region from which Buddhist heritage and culture emerged and spread across the world. The ancient Shakya-era republics of Kapilavastu and Koliyan flourished here, leaving behind numerous sites associated with the life of the Buddha. Lumbini, as the Buddha's birthplace, and Kapilavastu, his capital, have received sustained national and international support and are being developed under structured master plans. Alongside these efforts, the provincial government has taken active steps to promote and preserve the Buddhist heritage of Lumbini, Kapilavastu, and Ramgram. Since the advent of federalism, local governments have shown growing commitment to conserving and promoting Buddhist heritage, recognizing its role in shaping local identity and its potential for tourism development. They have also initiated collaboration with provincial, and, federal government, and international organizations to strengthen heritage conservation and Buddhist education. This article analyses the work being done by various municipalities in Lumbini Province in the field of Buddhist heritage and culture conservation and promotion, highlighting the challenges they face. It helps stakeholders working in the field of Buddhist heritage and culture to coordinate their efforts, contribute to the revival of Buddhist civilization, and provide a roadmap for the development of Buddhist heritage tourism.*

*Keywords: Buddhist heritage, culture, conservation, local government, monument, tourism*

## Introduction

Siddhartha Gautama was born in 623 BCE in Lumbini. At the age of 29, Siddhartha, who left the comforts of the state in search of peace, attained Buddhahood at the age of 35 and became Gautama Buddha. Gautama Buddha preached peace, truth, non-violence, compassion, and salvation for 45 years. Buddha's sermons and guidance have spread widely in the form of Buddhist philosophy. There are several teachings delivered by Buddha in order to reform society that make people happy and help society to become prosperous. Likewise, Kanakamuni and Krakuchhand Buddha, who were born in Kapilavastu, are also revered by Buddhists.

The physical and spiritual heritage associated with the life of Gautama Buddha, his teachings, and the development of Buddhism is Buddhist heritage. An important part of human civilization, art, architecture, and philosophy, is included in Buddhist heritage. Monastery, stupa, and chaitya, statues and artwork, inscriptions and

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manuscripts, and historical sites of the Buddhist period are the main physical heritage, while philosophy and teachings, worship and rituals, festivals, art, and music are the main non-physical Buddhist heritage. The concept of Greater Lumbini Area (GLA) has been introduced by encompassing the districts of Kapilvastu, Rupandehi, and Nawalparasi, which are home to four major Buddhist sites Kapilvastu, Lumbini, Devdaha and Ramgram. Many Buddhist heritage sites are being identified within this area, and some of the heritage sites have been destroyed due to the ignorance of the locals and the neglect of the state. The number of Buddhists in GLA is very small (Kandel 28). Due to this, work such as the expansion of Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist practice in lifestyle, and the preservation and development of Buddhist artifacts is being done to a very limited extent.

Heritage is a broad and evolving concept that includes both tangible and intangible elements shaped by human activities and their interaction with nature (Perez et al., 2010). The community has been practicing the construction, promotion, and conservation of heritage for a long time. Local participation in heritage helps in making sustainable decisions regarding heritage. Community participation plays a very important role in the conservation of historical heritage (Nurhadi et al. 197). Active community involvement in efforts to conserve historical heritage can increase the understanding, appreciation, and conservation of cultural and historical values (Ahamad 416). Many communities are participating in the conservation of historical heritage through participation in activities such as heritage maintenance and conservation, collection and documentation, and education and awareness about the importance of conserving historical heritage ( Kadijah et al. 1-22).

The Constitution of Nepal 2015 has given the local government the right to protect and develop art, culture, and heritage. By exercising this right, the municipalities have obtained the legal basis to protect and develop Buddhist heritage and culture. The national policies related to heritage, culture, and education have also given the local government the responsibility of promoting culture. Within such a policy and legal framework, the municipalities around Lumbini are preparing programs to protect, develop Buddhist heritage, and preserve Buddhist culture and derive spiritual and tourist benefits. This article discusses such work being done by the local government in the field of Buddhist heritage and culture, and its impact.

## **Statement of the Problem**

In this research, the following questions were considered as problems:

1. How has the focus on Lumbini core marginalized peripheral Buddhist heritage sites?
2. What factors limit local governments from fulfilling their constitutional

- role in heritage governance?
3. Which socio-economic or infrastructural challenges hinder the promotion of Buddhist culture in the Greater Lumbini Area?
  4. How can collaboration between local governments and academic institutions enhance sustainable development and socio-economic benefits of Buddhist heritage?

## Objectives

The main objective of this study is to highlight the work being done by local governments for the identification, preservation, development, and promotion of Buddhist heritage. Similarly, this study aims to analyze the efforts being made by municipalities through their policy programs and educational programs in the construction of Buddhist culture and their results.

## Literature Review

Although Nepal has practiced decentralized governance since 1950, federalism is recent, spanning the last decade. Local governments, as the third tier, implement localized policies, yet research has largely focused on economic and infrastructural performance, leaving their role in heritage and cultural conservation underexplored.

The study *Buddhist Culture and Heritage*, published by Lumbini Buddhist University, underscores the immense cultural wealth of the Kapilvastu, Rupandehi, and Nawalparasi districts. The research highlights the global significance of this region, as it encompasses the birthplace of the Buddha, his ancestral home, and sites associated with his maternal lineage and sacred relics (*astu*). Although the study provides a detailed inventory of tangible heritage sites and prevalent Buddhist rituals, it notes that the systematic practice and promotion of Buddhist culture remain underdeveloped. Furthermore, while the report suggests that local governments could leverage these assets for tourism, it fails to document the specific efforts undertaken by these authorities to preserve or utilize this heritage.

In a similar context, Giri offers a comprehensive analysis of the “sacred complex” of the Lumbini region, emphasizing the synergy between tangible structures and intangible traditions. He argues that traditional festivals and local rituals are fundamental to maintaining the spiritual and cultural dignity of the site. According to Giri, the development of Lumbini must transcend physical construction to embrace living cultural practices (142-149). He highlights that promotional activities coordinated by local governments act as a vital bridge, integrating the local community into the broader development process and reinforcing the interdependence between religious landmarks and local life (159-165).

However, the implementation of the Lumbini Master Plan has faced criticism for its narrow geographical focus. Rai et al. argue that confining economic benefits to the immediate project area risks isolating the World Heritage Site from its surrounding social and geographical context. They advocate for a shift in perspective, suggesting that Lumbini's development should be viewed through the lens of sustainable regional development rather than being restricted to Buddhist philosophy alone (19-46). Their research emphasizes the necessity of a district-level integrated plan that coordinates activities across the surrounding municipalities (formerly VDCs), buffer zones, and agricultural areas to ensure holistic growth.

The legal and structural challenges facing local authorities are further discussed by Neel Kamal Chapagain. He points out that despite being primary stakeholders, local governments are often hindered in their conservation efforts by the restrictive provisions of the *Lumbini Development Trust Act* and the *Ancient Monuments Preservation Act*. Chapagain suggests that, in line with the principles of decentralization, legal frameworks must be revised to grant local bodies greater autonomy, ensuring that both the government and the community can directly benefit from the preservation of their heritage (19).

Ramesh Rai's *60 Years of Heritage Management* provides a historical overview of the policy practices in Nepal since 1950. Rai observes that while the responsibility for heritage conservation has nominally been devolved to the local level, the absence of a robust policy and legal foundation has rendered these efforts largely ineffective. To illustrate a successful alternative, he cites the management of the Patan Durbar area, where a collaborative model involving the central government, local authorities, and the community resulted in effective heritage governance.

Kiran Shrestha explores how Buddhist principles shape rural development in Nepal's Himalayan Buddhist belt, offering a framework to assess local government roles in heritage conservation. The study highlights "monastic social capital" as key to community cohesion and sustainable resource management. Buddhist-led initiatives in Solukhumbu and Mustang promote inclusive economic growth and environmental stewardship. By documenting traditional governance, Shrestha underscores opportunities for municipalities to move beyond symbolic recognition toward active collaboration. Formalizing Buddhist institutions' role in local planning can bridge state policy and grassroots cultural identity, ensuring heritage functions as a resource for contemporary development (124-131).

Despite growing research on Nepal's Buddhist heritage and decentralization, key gaps remain. Studies often focus on Lumbini while overlooking other sites. There is limited analysis of local governments' roles, practices, and challenges in conservation, and even municipal reports tend to undervalue heritage. While tourism

is well studied, its broader social, economic, and governance impacts at the local level remain underexplored, leaving grassroots contributions largely unexamined.

## Methodology

### a. Study area

This study has been conducted in 6 municipalities of Kapilvastu, Rupandehi and Nawalparasi (West). Out of 33 municipalities in these three districts, 4 municipalities with major Buddhist sites, one municipality with a large Buddhist population and one municipality connecting the Buddhist circuit have been selected. The demographic situation of these municipalities is shown in the table.

Table 1: Demographic Situation of Study area and distance from Lumbini

Municipalities	Population	Buddhist Population	Distance from Lumbini *
Kapilvastu	88874	150	23 km West
Lumbini Cultural	87383	76	0
Siddharth Nagar	74436	2528	20 East
Devdaha	72457	6063	57 North- east
Ramgram	64017	411	47 East
Sainamaina	78393	2315	27 North

Source: Population Census 2021 Report \*google map

### b. Research Design and Data Collection

A descriptive study method has been adopted in this research. The annual policies and programs of the municipalities with major Buddhist sites in the GLA have been taken as the primary source. The work done by the municipalities has been observed on-site and, as necessary, facts have been sought by interviewing residents and local government representatives.

## Limitations

Kapilvastu, Rupandehi, and Nawalparasi have many Buddhist heritages. Even the municipalities in the Buddhist circuit where Buddhist heritages are not identified are seen to be doing some work by connecting to the Buddhist circuit. However, for this research, only Kapilvastu, Lumbini Cultural, Sainamaina, Siddhartha Nagar, Devdaha, and Ramgram municipalities have been selected, and only the policy programs of these municipalities for the last 5 years have been studied. The work done by the federal government, state government, and other bodies in the field

of heritage and culture in the municipalities selected for the study has not been included in this research.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **A. Local Government Rights in Heritage Conservation: Analysis of Laws and Policies**

#### **Constitution of Nepal**

Article 32 of the Constitution of Nepal provides for the rights related to language and culture (Constitution of Nepal, p.15). Article 51 of the Constitution includes the policy related to social and cultural transformation, which includes the protection and development of the language, culture, script, literature, art, and heritage of different castes and communities based on equality and coexistence, while maintaining the cultural diversity of the country, and the adoption of a multilingual policy. Schedule 8 of the Constitution lists the rights of the local government. It gives the local government the right to protect and develop language, culture, and fine arts.

#### **Ancient Monuments Conservation Act, 1956 ( 2013 BS)**

The conservation and development of heritage in Nepal are guided by the Ancient Monuments Conservation Act, 1956. The Act authorizes the Government of Nepal to classify ancient monuments based on ownership into public and private categories, and by significance into international, national, provincial, and local levels (Section 3A1 and 3A2). The Department of Archaeology is responsible for the conservation, repair, and restoration of public monuments. In the case of privately owned monuments outside protected areas, such responsibilities are carried out at the municipal level or by concerned individuals under the Department's guidance (Section 3C3).

Furthermore, the Act provides for the transfer of ancient monuments of local importance, previously managed by the central government, to the respective municipalities (Section 3H). Local governments are then required to manage these monuments in accordance with criteria set by the Department of Archaeology. In addition, municipalities are empowered to declare protected monument areas to ensure the effective preservation and management of such transferred heritage sites.

#### **Local Government Operation Act, 2017( 2074 BS)**

The Local Government Operation Act, 2074 BS provides the legal framework for the functioning of local governments in Nepal. Section 3 of Chapter 2 authorizes the determination of the number and boundaries of rural municipalities and municipalities based on linguistic, cultural, and other relevant criteria. Section 9 empowers local governments to designate areas within their jurisdiction as cultural

or tourist zones. Furthermore, Section 11 outlines the functions, duties, and powers of municipalities, including the protection and promotion of language, culture, and fine arts. It also mandates the formulation and implementation of local policies, laws, standards, and plans, along with monitoring and regulation mechanisms. Provisions are also made for managing traditional festivals and undertaking activities related to cultural preservation.

Section 24 emphasizes that municipal planning should promote linguistic and cultural values while strengthening social harmony and unity. Additionally, Section 26 allows municipalities to promote tourism, technology, and culture through partnerships or joint management, enabling local governments to both preserve heritage and derive economic benefits from it.

### **National Cultural Policy, 2067**

The National Cultural Policy seeks to promote cultural unity in Nepal by preserving both tangible and intangible heritage of diverse ethnic groups and communities. It emphasizes fostering mutual respect, harmony, tolerance, and social dignity. The policy highlights increasing the role and participation of concerned communities in the conservation and management of ancient monuments (Strategy 9.63) and assigns responsibility to local bodies and communities for heritage preservation (Strategy 9.66). It also proposes that local governments and communities take responsibility for safeguarding local customs and festivals.

Additionally, the policy calls for detailed documentation of folk customs and festivals of different castes and communities, with systematic listing and classification (Strategy 9.29). These traditions are to be categorized as national, local, or group-based, with corresponding responsibilities for their recognition, protection, and management (Strategy 9.28). The policy further recommends incorporating subjects that promote harmony and tolerance among diverse groups into educational curricula at various levels. Overall, it clearly assigns local governments a central role in local cultural preservation and promotion.

### **B. Buddhist heritage in Local Government's policies and programs**

Heritage is realizing and acknowledging the relative, reflective, and relational nature of heritage is crucial because it is culturally ascribed, socially conditioned, and not intrinsic to objects, places, or things. It is also crucial to understand heritage as a social and cultural practice (Park 11). Heritage sites such as museums and monuments can serve as a source of learning and understanding about the past, and also as a platform for exchanging ideas and knowledge between different cultures. This can foster understanding, tolerance, and respect among different cultural and social groups, which is essential for development (Subedi 277). Since Buddhist heritage is

the basis of residents' faith, practice, and local prosperity, local governments have taken the lead in the field of heritage and culture. The policies and actions of local governments can be mentioned as follows.

### **Involvement of local government in monument protection**

Monuments are structures, buildings, or sites of historical, cultural, or artistic significance that commemorate notable events or figures and embody collective identity and heritage (Ahmad 16). In Lumbini Province, several municipalities engage with such heritage, though their roles vary within a complex institutional framework.

Lumbini Cultural Municipality (LCM), encompassing the Buddha's birthplace, operates alongside the Lumbini Development Trust (LDT), which holds primary responsibility for preservation and development (Chapagain 9). As a result, the municipality's direct role in heritage conservation remains limited and evolving. Kapilvastu Municipality, which includes the ancient capital of the Shakyas Republic and key sites such as Tilaurakot, Gotihawa, Niglihawa, and Kudan, has consistently proposed master plans for conservation and promotion, though a comprehensive plan is yet to be finalized. It has, however, actively pursued recognition of Tilaurakot on the UNESCO World Heritage List and has tried its best to develop the area around it as a tourist hub.

Devdaha Municipality, associated with the Koliya kingdom and the Buddha's maternal lineage, prioritizes excavation and conservation at sites like Bhawanipur, Kanyamai, and Khaydanda. Devdaha Municipality has taken a policy of taking initiatives to discover, develop, and promote the civilization of the Rohini River, which has the identity of the Buddhist period. Ramgram Municipality, home to the Ramgram Stupa—one of Nepal's major Buddhist sites has adopted policies for its development, infrastructure expansion, and potential World Heritage listing, in coordination with national bodies. Similarly, it has been cooperating with the Department of Archaeology and the LDT in conducting "Geophysical Survey" and excavation work in the Panditpur area, which is considered the capital of the Koliya kingdom.

Although Siddharthanagar lacks major archaeological sites, it promotes a Buddhist identity through urban monuments and symbols. The municipality is trying to link the physical development of the city, reflecting the identity of the "City of Buddha". Similarly, Sainamaina Municipality is developing an "Open Museum" concept, preserving artifacts and planning a local museum in coordination with relevant institutions such as LDT and the Department of Archaeology.

Local governments are trying to preserve and promote monuments to gain recognition

and benefits. However, the Ancient Monument Preservation Act gives the main authority for the excavation and preservation of monuments to the Department of Archaeology; local governments have not been able to work effectively. The Local Self Governance Act, on the other hand, gives the local governing bodies certain authority that might contradict the Lumbini Development Trust Act (Weise 47).

## **Buddhist Culture**

Culture represents the intangible dimension of heritage, encompassing practices, beliefs, and traditions that give meaning to social life (Harrison 9). Buddhist fairs and festivals are integral to this cultural fabric, reflecting social customs, religious values, artistic traditions, and even economic conditions (Giri 142). However, increasing migration and the decline of the Buddhist population in the region have led to the gradual loss of many such practices (Kandel 36).

In response, local governments have undertaken initiatives to revive and sustain Buddhist cultural traditions. According to the Local Government Operation Act, 2074 BS, the local government is responsible for preserving and promoting local culture. In accordance with this responsibility, municipalities in the GLA are also carrying out work to promote Buddhist culture. LCM has given continuity to ancient culture by organizing the Purnima Fair every year. This municipality, in coordination with the LDT, prioritizes cleaning and beautification plans to maintain a Buddhist spiritual environment within the city. However, due to the very low Buddhist population within the municipality and the LDT's monopoly on Buddhist culture and heritage-related work in Lumbini, the municipality's work has not been effective. Kapilvastu Municipality has adopted a policy to preserve the ancient original culture, language, and costumes within the municipality. This also includes local traditions related to Buddhist philosophy and education. Budget allocations have been made for the maintenance of Buddhist monasteries in various wards and for encouraging education (Dhamma education) conducted there.

Devdaha municipality has declared Devdaha a "spiritual municipality" and has adopted a policy of assimilating the Buddha's philosophy of the Eightfold Path, peace, and non-violence. Devdaha has been carrying out activities such as organizing fairs in Bhawanipur, conducting religious pujas at Devdaha Pond, and supporting local monasteries. Ramgram Municipality has adopted a policy of organizing discourses and spiritual awareness programs at various times in coordination with Buddhist monks and scholars. Siddharthanagar has adopted a policy of promoting Buddhist philosophy by organizing religious and cultural festivals on Buddha Purnima and other special occasions every year. Sainamaina Municipality has adopted a policy of prioritizing exhibitions of Buddhist art and culture in festivals organized in the municipality and preserving its cultural identity by naming various gates, streets,

and squares in the municipality related to Buddha and Buddhist philosophy.

### **Promotion of Buddhist Environment**

Local infrastructure and environment play a crucial role in promoting Buddhist heritage and culture. Places that reflect a strong spiritual ambiance and provide adequate facilities tend to attract more pilgrims and tourists. Recognizing this, municipalities in the study area have incorporated such priorities into their policy frameworks. The slogan of LCM is “Pure Buddha Rishi Mind, Prosperous City, Happy City Residents, Our Campaign”. This municipality, in coordination with the LDT, has prioritized cleaning and beautification plans to maintain the Buddhist spiritual environment within the city.

Kapilvastu Municipality has coordinated the establishment of road networks and information centers under the concept of “Buddha Circuit” connecting Lumbini, Kapilvastu, and Ramgram, and has conducted programs and cleaning campaigns such as “One Person, One Fruit Plant” to make the environment around religious places clean and green. Devdaha Municipality, declared a “Spiritual Municipality,” promotes yoga, meditation, and spiritual centers, though its tourism policies remain somewhat uncoordinated (Tamang 169). Ramgram Municipality has adopted a policy to organize discourses and spiritual awareness programs at various times in coordination with Buddhist monks and scholars, to develop Ramgram as a “Buddha Circuit” by connecting Lumbini, Kapilvastu and Devdaha and to build various infrastructures (such as parks, gardens and roads) to extend the stay of tourists, and to adopt multilingual information centers and digital media.

Siddharthanagar has adopted a policy to link the physical development of the city with Buddhist identity. Under this, priority has been given to beautifying the roads with Siddhartha Gate and Buddha statues to welcome tourists coming to Lumbini and provide a sense of the Buddhist environment. A policy has been adopted to reflect the identity of the “City of Buddha” by constructing Buddhist monuments, stupas, and Buddha statues in the main squares of the city. Similarly, Sainamaina Municipality promotes itself as a stopover destination by developing Buddha-themed gardens, forest areas, and supporting the construction of monasteries that prioritize the exhibition of Buddhist art and culture during festivals organized in the municipality.

### **Local Curriculum and Buddhist Education**

The National Curriculum Framework-2076 allows local subjects to be taught from grades 1 to 8, emphasizing respect for local professions, skills, and cultural practices. Schedule 8 of the Constitution of Nepal grants local governments authority over education up to the secondary level. Similarly, the National Education Policy 2076 (Policy 10.8.3) mandates local governments to preserve and promote mother

tongues, scripts, literature, and culture through education. The National Cultural Policy 2067 mentions that cultural heritages of national importance in different parts of the country should be included in the educational curricula of various levels and make arrangements for teaching (Strategy 9.71).

In this context, municipalities in the Greater Lumbini Area have integrated Buddhist education into local curricula. Lumbini Cultural Municipality, in collaboration with Lumbini Buddhist University, is developing a curriculum focused on the life and teachings of the Buddha, alongside awareness programs aimed at fostering ethical citizenship. The municipality is developing a local curriculum that includes topics related to Buddhist education and the life of Buddha, and preparations are underway to implement this curriculum in schools across the municipality starting this academic session. Kapilvastu Municipality has introduced materials such as *Our Kapilvastu* (grades 6-8), incorporating the Shakya kingdom, Buddha's biography, and local heritage.

Devdaha Municipality has been trying to institutionalize Buddhist education from the school level since its establishment. Initially, the municipality had prepared and implemented a local curriculum called "Devdaha Prachichay Ra Buddha Shiksha" from grades 1 to 8. It has been changed, and now a local curriculum called *Our Devdaha* has been implemented. It includes the biography of Buddha, Buddhist philosophy, and the historical importance of Devdaha. Devdaha Municipality has adopted a policy of developing Devdaha as a "hub" of Buddhist education and operating higher education programs in collaboration with Lumbini Buddhist University. Devdaha has introduced programs such as coordinating scholarships for city residents who wish to study at the master's degree or higher at Lumbini Buddhist University.

Ramgram Municipality has tried to connect local history in the field of education. Ramgram Municipality has prepared and implemented both the local curriculum and textbook on the subject of 'Our Ramgram'. It emphasizes tourism, culture, and the historical and religious importance of Ramgram and Panditpur at the school level. Siddharthanagar Municipality is preparing and teaching the book 'Our Siddhartha Nagar' under the local curriculum. This book includes introductions to major Buddhist sites like Lumbini and Devdaha, Buddhist philosophy, yoga, major festivals, and lessons related to tourism. Sainamaina Municipality has included the biography of Buddha, the message of peace, and the historical importance of this region as compulsory subjects in the local curriculum from grades 1 to 8 under "Our Sainamaina". Similarly, Sainamaina has adopted a policy of conducting moral education and yoga-meditation classes based on Buddhist philosophy in schools to build the character of students.

## **Conclusion**

The analysis of Nepal's legal and policy framework from the Constitution to the Local Government Operation Act, 2074, indicates a clear shift toward decentralization in heritage governance. With the transition to federalism, local governments have gained authority to actively protect and promote local culture, language, and heritage. Although the Ancient Monuments Conservation Act, 2013 BS retains central oversight through the Department of Archaeology, it also allows for the transfer of locally significant monuments to municipal management.

The findings from the Greater Lumbini Area-Lumbini Sanskritik, Kapilvastu, Devdaha, Ramgram, Siddharthanagar, and Sainamaina-shows varying levels of engagement. Municipalities like Devdaha and Sainamaina have successfully integrated Buddhist heritage into their branding through "Open Museum" concepts and specialized local curricula. However, overlapping authority between local bodies and institutions like the Lumbini Development Trust remains a major challenge. While some municipalities view their heritage as a primary driver of prosperity, others still struggle to move from policies into actionable plans. Ultimately, the integration of Buddhist philosophy into local education and urban aesthetics suggests that heritage is being used not just as a historical relic but as a tool for social harmony and moral education.

To strengthen this progress, local governments need greater legal and technical empowerment, alongside coordinated efforts with the Department of Archaeology and the Lumbini Development Trust. Revising master plans to incorporate municipal heritage, promoting Buddhist-based curricula, and incentivizing community-led conservation are essential. Lumbini Buddhist University should prepare a curriculum that includes Buddhist heritage and culture and support the municipalities here in adopting the Buddhist pedagogy.

Following the strategies outlined in the National Cultural Policy 2067, local governments should introduce tax incentives or grants for private homeowners and local communities who preserve traditional architecture or maintain private ancient monuments. Beyond physical monuments, municipalities should invest in the "intangible" environment. Additionally, investment in intangible heritage-such as meditation centers, yoga hubs, and green circuits-can enhance tourism and deepen pilgrims' spiritual experiences.

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