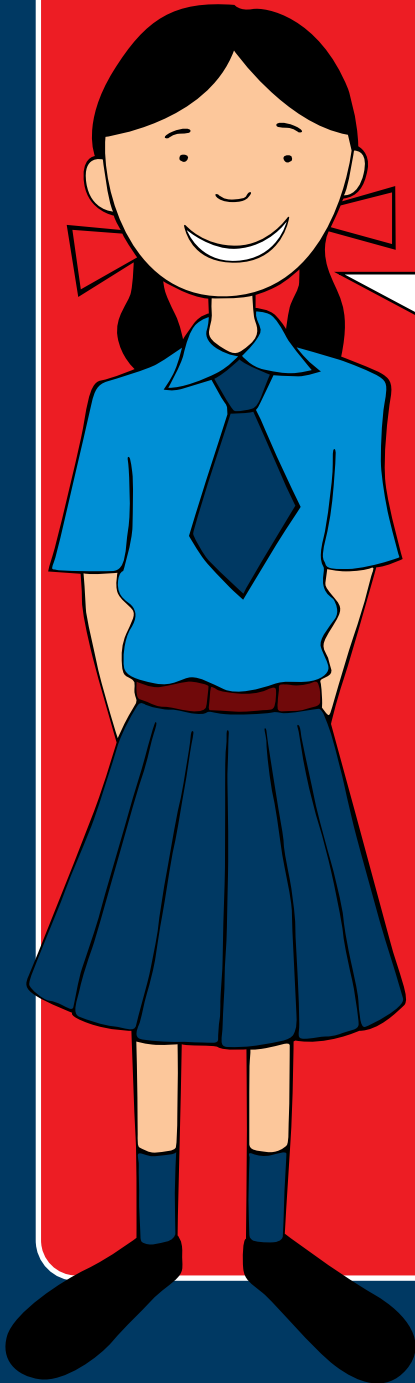


Our Heritage:
Our Pride, Our Responsibility
Explore Nepal's World Heritage
Sites with Fulmaya and Pasang





World Heritage

Namaste. I am Fulmaya and he is Pasang.

We are part of one family and live in one village. And this village is very big.

We have to cross many forests, mountains, lakes and deserts to get from our houses to yours. That is why we have not played together before. Animals and plants of all shapes, sizes and colours live with us. Some of them like the tigers and the one-horned rhinos live near us in Chitwan National Park. It makes us very sad that these neighbours are losing their jungle homes.

Our village also has many old palaces, statues and cities built by our ancestors. You may have heard about beautiful places like the Pyramids of Egypt and the Taj Mahal of India. But did you know that Nepal also has many incredible places?

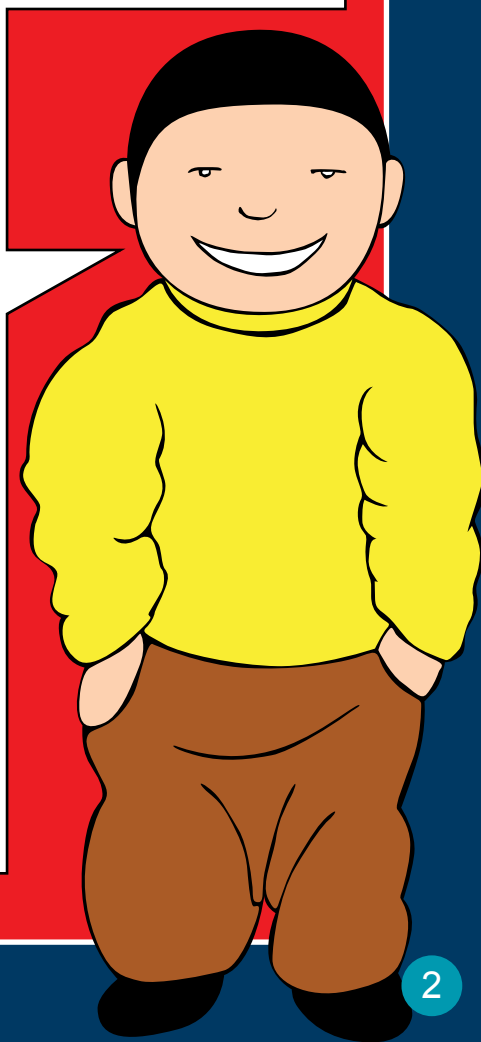
All these places including cities and forests are our heritage.

Our parents and their parents and their parent's parents have looked after our heritage for hundreds of years. They took care of it so that today we can enjoy the beautiful nature and the great monuments. Now our whole village must work together to watch over our heritage for our children and grandchildren.

Many of these sites and monuments are so special that people all over the world are trying to protect them. What a great loss it would be if they were destroyed!

Luckily, UNESCO helps us. It has written an important text with a complicated name: Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. We can call it the World Heritage Convention. There is also the World Heritage List with almost one thousand of the most important sites and monuments. The World Heritage Convention and the World Heritage List are there to protect our heritage.

The World Heritage Committee with its members from 21 countries watch over the sites. But they cannot do this without us. We want to help UNESCO preserve our heritage. And we want you to help too. Let's first see these heritage sites, then we can talk more. We're going to have so much fun!



WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN NEPAL

Here we have a map of Nepal. Can you see the four World Heritage sites? There are two natural sites, the Chitwan National Park and the Sagarmatha National Park.

We also have two cultural World Heritage sites, Lumbini, the birthplace of the Lord Buddha and the Kathmandu Valley. Come, let's discover all of them together.

Let's start with a visit to Lumbini, the birthplace of the Lord Buddha. From there, we'll go to Chitwan National Park to see crocodiles and rhinos. Then, we'll leave the low-lands of the Terai to go up to the high mountains to Sagarmatha National Park. It's my home, and my old, wise grandpa is there waiting for us.

Then we'll explore the Kathmandu Valley. That's my home. My friends and I will show you the seven monument areas that make up the Kathmandu Valley World Heritage site. First, we'll go to the three durbar squares in Hanuman Dhoka, Patan and Bhaktapur. Then we'll visit Pashupati and Changu Narayan, the two Hindu temples. We'll end the day with visits to Swayambhu and Bauddhanath, which are Buddhist stupas. Ready?



Lumbini,
the Birthplace of
the Lord Buddha

Chitwan
National Park

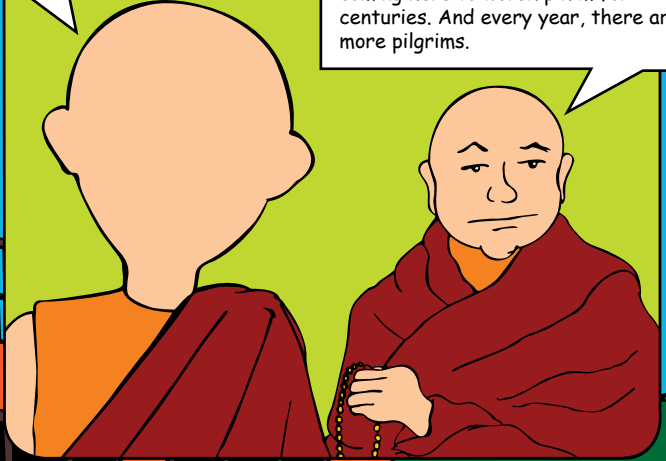
Kathmandu
Valley

Sagarmatha
National Park

LUMBINI, THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE LORD BUDDHA

Venerable Tsewang, is it true that the Buddha was born around 2600 years ago in this beautiful garden?

Yes, Karma, Lord Buddha was born here in Lumbini. This is why it is one of the most holy places in the world. Pilgrims from everywhere have been coming here to worship him for centuries. And every year, there are more pilgrims.



Incredible! Have the monuments linked to Lord Buddha's birth always been so nicely kept at Lumbini?



Sadly, no. The area was not looked after for many years. A lot of work has been done in the last 100 years to improve it. That is why we can see today what the place looked like during ancient times. Do you see the viharas and stupas? And look over there, the inscription on the Ashoka Pillar. It is written in a very old language. The inscription says that the Buddha was born here. You must also go into the Maya Devi temple and see the marker stone. It shows the exact spot where Maya Devi gave birth to Lord Buddha.

Being here feels like having travelled back in time to the Buddha's life. I'm so glad that our forefathers have preserved it for us. I think we should do the same for our children.



I am so happy that you see how important it is to preserve, cherish and treasure our inheritance.

CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK

Wonderful Wilderness...

I have heard that our Chitwan National Park is Nepal's first national park.

Does this mean that my friends cannot come here to visit me?

No, not at all. You must invite them to come. Tell them there are only a few other places in the world where they still can see one-horned rhinos and Royal Bengal tigers.

Yes, it was established in 1973. See the forests and the grasslands - they are all part of the park. It became a World Heritage site in 1984. We really have to protect it.

You must also take them to see the Gharial crocodiles. And don't forget all the birds. People say that this park is one of the last surviving homes for all these creatures. They have been living here for hundreds of years.

What about our village, right next to the park?

We, the Tharus, have been living here for a very long time. The Tharus have always worked together to protect the park and help the animals and plants survive. Many tourists come here today to see the park and the wildlife. They also visit our villages to enjoy our songs and dances.

Do you remember the huge festival at Bikram Baba's temple inside the park last year? There were so many pilgrims! I will definitely bring my friends here. I want to show them everything and explain why we have to protect this piece of paradise.

Wonderful! But don't forget to tell them that this park doesn't only belong to us, but to all humanity, now and in the future.



SAGARMATHA NATIONAL PARK

Our Paradise in the Skies...

Grandpa, father says you are 100 years old. How old is that?

Very old. But not as old as the Mount Everest, which is million years old and the highest mountain in the world.

Wow! What about the Sherpas, our people? Have we always been living here?

Our ancestors have been living here for more than four hundred years. Today there are about six thousand of us in more than 20 villages.

Grandpa, will you live forever? What about our village and the snowfield near the glacier lake?

We also have preserved our people's old traditions. You'll not find such a place anywhere else in the world. We all need to protect Sagarmatha National Park, so that nature will also take care of us.

Well, Pasang, I'll not live forever. But I'm certain that nature here will, if we take good care of it. Our people have preserved this place ever since we first settled here. That is why we can still see so many animals and enjoy the beauty of some of the highest mountains on earth.



KATHMANDU VALLEY



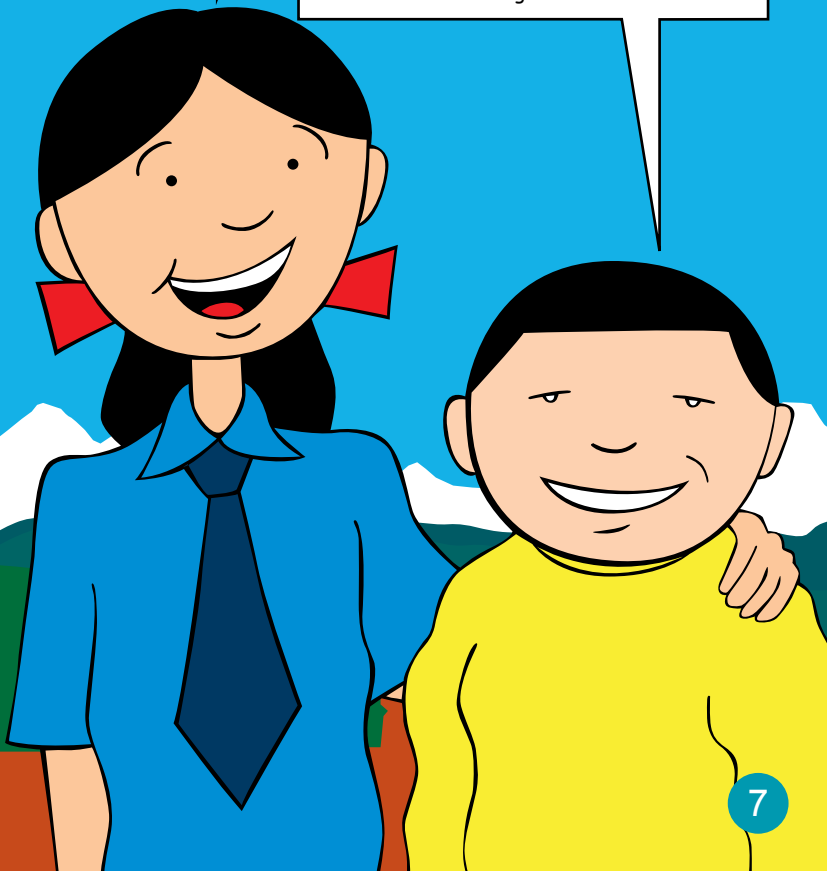
Fulmaya, did you know that Kathmandu Valley became a World Heritage site in 1979 because it is so special?

Yes, it is really very unique. It has seven culturally very rich places. The three durbar squares at Hanuman Dhoka, Patan and Bhaktapur, the two Buddhist holy places, Swayambhu and Baudhanath, and the two Hindu temples, Pashupati and Changu Narayan.

But I feel that the seven sites are somehow linked. Maybe, is it because they have such a special spiritual and historical atmosphere?

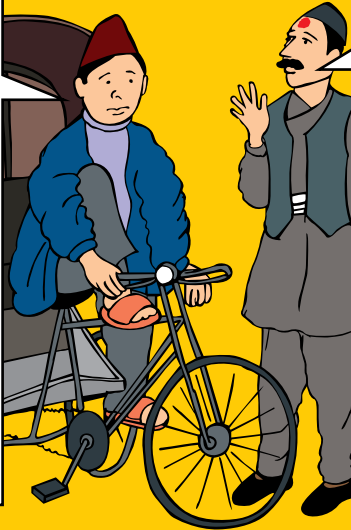
Yes, certainly. But also because we can see in all of them the same amazing work of the carpenters, masons and metal craft makers. There are not many people elsewhere in the world, who are as good at this job as they were. Their skills are also part of our heritage.

The architecture is so beautiful. Let's go visit each of the places. I'm sure that the people there have interesting stories to tell us.



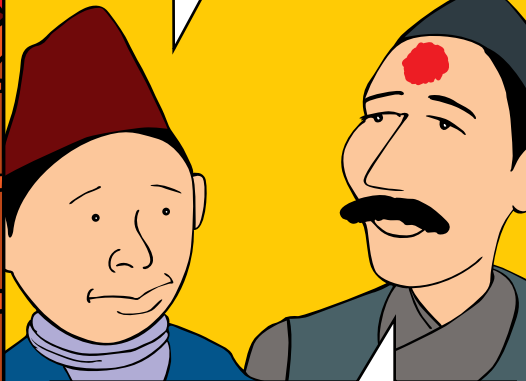
Hanuman Dhoka: The door to Kathmandu's glorious history

Oh Baje, I bring many visitors here to Hanuman Dhoka. This is the heart of old Kathmandu, where kings used to live and were crowned. Visitors find it a wonderful place to get a feel for the city. Many of them are amazed by the buildings around, particularly this beautiful wood pavilion, the Kasthamandap. Is it true that it was built from the wood of one single tree?



Yes, brother, according to the legend, it was built from the wood of the kalpa vriksha, a divine tree. The Kasthamandap is one of the oldest buildings in Kathmandu. People say it was built more than 800 years ago. At that time, it was a rest house for travellers and traders passing through the city.

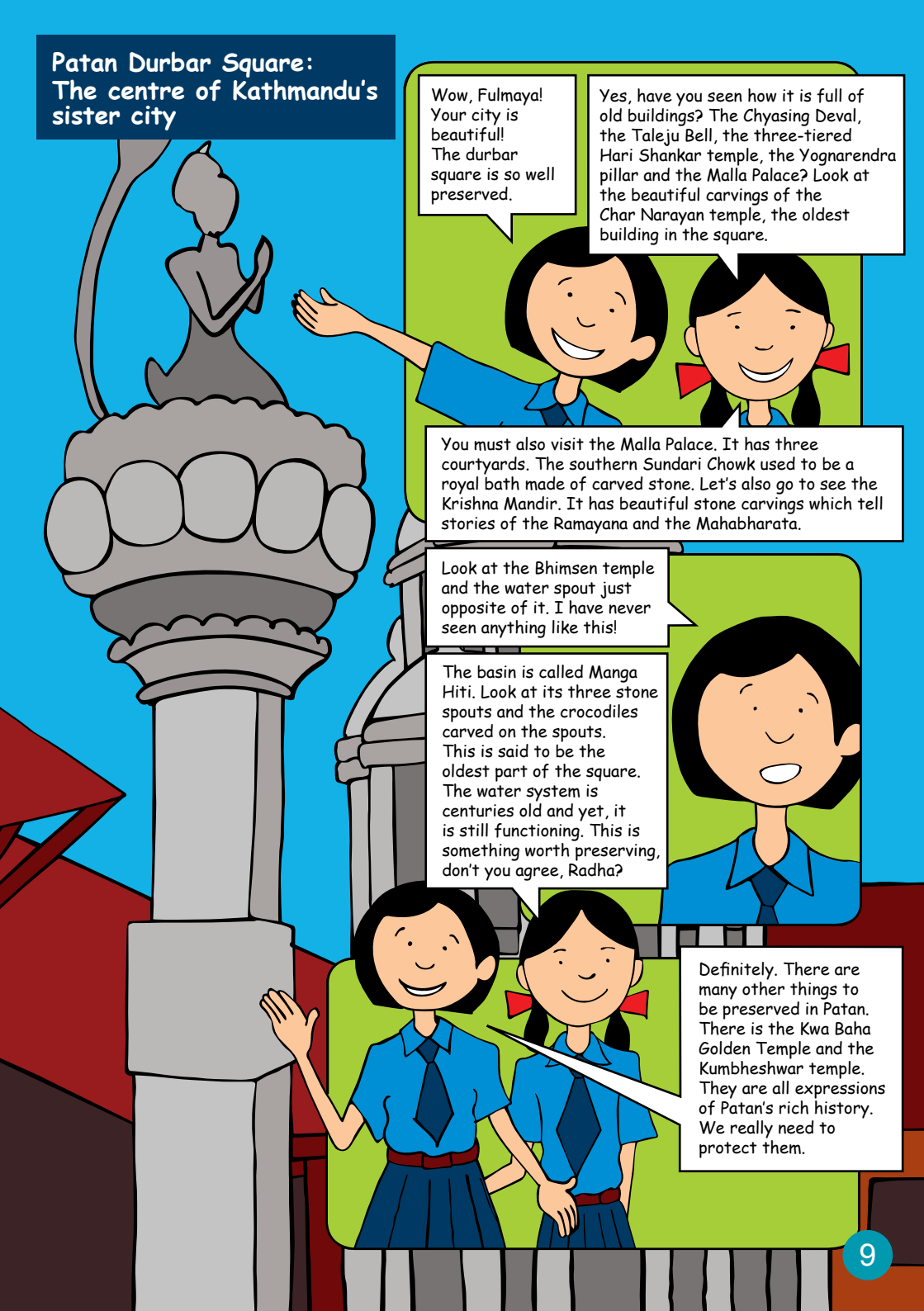
When I show visitors around in my rickshaw, they are surprised to see so many beautiful old buildings in Hanuman Dhoka.



Look at the statue of Hanuman next to the palace gate, it is wonderful! For me, the Taleju temple is the most gorgeous. It is over 35 meters high and the tallest building here. You should tell your guests that these monuments are all important links to our past. We, the Nepalis, and our guests from other countries, must protect them together.



Patan Durbar Square: The centre of Kathmandu's sister city



Wow, Fulmaya!
Your city is
beautiful!
The durbar
square is so well
preserved.

Yes, have you seen how it is full of
old buildings? The Chyasing Deval,
the Taleju Bell, the three-tiered
Hari Shankar temple, the Yognarendra
pillar and the Malla Palace? Look at
the beautiful carvings of the
Char Narayan temple, the oldest
building in the square.

You must also visit the Malla Palace. It has three
courtyards. The southern Sundari Chowk used to be a
royal bath made of carved stone. Let's also go to see the
Krishna Mandir. It has beautiful stone carvings which tell
stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

Look at the Bhimsen temple
and the water spout just
opposite of it. I have never
seen anything like this!

The basin is called Manga
Hiti. Look at its three stone
spouts and the crocodiles
carved on the spouts.
This is said to be the
oldest part of the square.
The water system is
centuries old and yet, it
is still functioning. This is
something worth preserving,
don't you agree, Radha?

Definitely. There are
many other things to
be preserved in Patan.
There is the Kwa Baha
Golden Temple and the
Kumbheshwar temple.
They are all expressions
of Patan's rich history.
We really need to
protect them.

Bhaktapur Durbar Square: A Living Museum

Welcome to Bhaktapur, Gyankaji. You look like the famous wrestler Jaimal!

And you look like Pattha, my friend! Even though Bhaktapur is the smallest of the three valley cities, it was the capital of the Malla Kingdom until the 15th century. It feels like time has stopped on its squares: the durbar square, the Taumadi with its two main temples, the Nyatapola and the Kasi Biswanath. There is also the Dattatreya Square on the other end. In Bhaktapur, you can still see how the Newars lived hundreds of years ago.

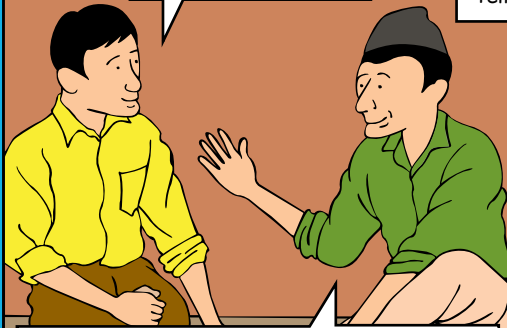
It's really great! You also don't see much of the damages from the big earthquake in 1934 (1990 BS). They have restored almost everything, even the 55-windows palace. The carvings on the wooden windows are amazing. Look how the golden gate sparkles in the sun. This must be the entrance to the palace.

Yes it is. But you should also visit the Naytapola temple, the five-storied building over there. It was built by King Bhupatindra Malla. The king himself carried bricks for its construction. Have you taken photos of the Dattatreya Square, with the famous Dattatreya temple and the peacock window at the eastern wing of the Pujari Math? It is the largest and most famous religious institution in Bhaktapur. A masterpiece in wood!

Yes, of course I have. Bhaktapur really has great wood and metal work. More importantly, you can really see the history of its people. It is so much better than a museum with the temples, the streets and the squares full of life.

Pashupati: A Sacred Place by the River

Why do so many people come to Pashupati?



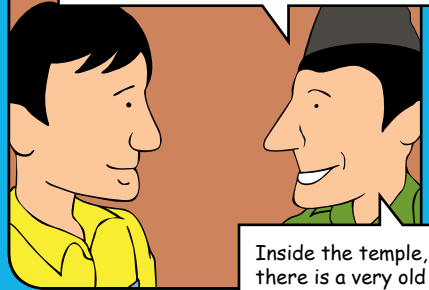
It is one of the most important Shiva temples in Asia. Many devotees and wandering holy men, the Sadhus, come here from India and other parts of the world. But it is also a place that is venerated by Buddhists. There is quite a beautiful Buddha statue on the bank of the Bagmati River. It is a great example of harmony among the religions.

Do only pilgrims come here?

Not only pilgrims, but also visitors come to see the many architectural, archaeological, historical and natural sights in and around the temple.

Tell me more about what we can see here.

You see the temple with the two-storied gilded roof and the carved struts in the middle of the courtyard? This is the main temple. Only Hindus can go into the temple. Others can get a glimpses of the backside of the mighty golden Nandi, Shiva's bull.



Inside the temple, there is a very old Jyotirlingam of Shiva. The architecture of the temple is unique, just look at the four silver and golden side doors, the wooden windows and the magnificent wooden and metal carvings. Around the main temple, there are many smaller shrines, shikharas and the burning ghats. They are used for ritual bathing and for cremations. And there are many more temples, statues and other objects in the Pashupati area that you should really visit. The holy Bagmati River is now very dirty. But this river, along with the Slesmantak forest as a whole is very important for the worshippers.



Changu Narayan: Vibrant and Living Monuments of Art in the Valley

Hello sir, may I help you? I can tell you something about my home village. You know, I live just near the entrance of the Changu Narayan temple. Have you seen the incredible view that we have of the Valley?

I'm Peter Smith from Australia, I'm here to do research on living heritage. You're so right! When I went up to Changu Narayan, I was struck by the beautiful surroundings. The view of Langtang, Dorjay Lakpa and other snow-capped mountains is wonderful. Please do tell me more about this site.

The site is very old. It is believed to be one of the valley's earliest settlements. It is one of the most visited pilgrimage sites for the worship of Lord Vishnu.

Is it true that there is no better place to visit than Changu Narayan if you want to see the beautiful arts of the valley?

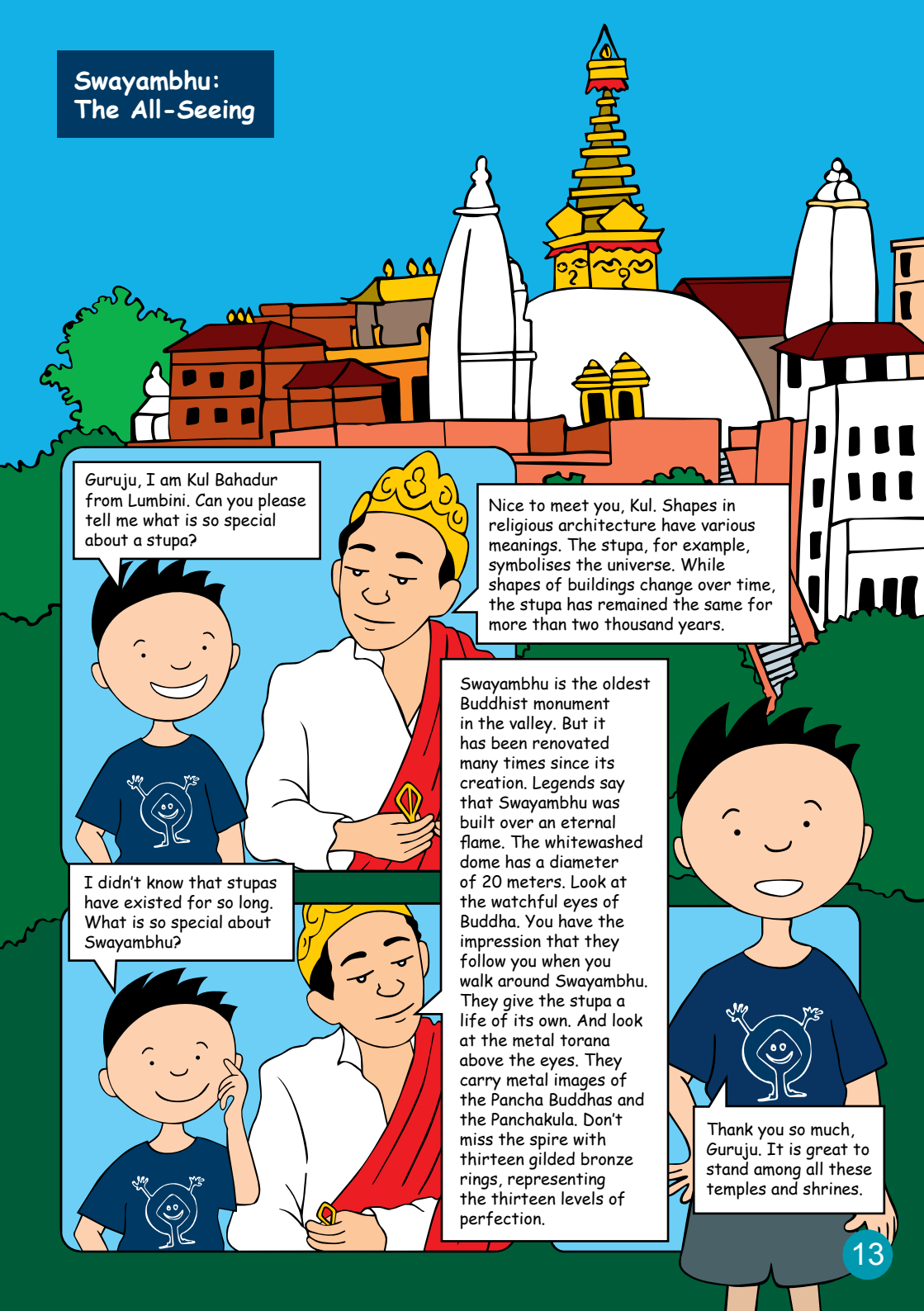
Yes, Peter-ji, Changu Narayan is really the best place to see beautiful examples of indigenous architecture. Most wonderful are the stone carvings in the idols in the main temple courtyard, such as the Garud Narayan, the Sridhara Vishnu, the Vishnu Vaikuntha, the Vishvarupa, the Vishnu Vikranta and the Narasingha.

And what does the inscription say, the one on the pillar of Manadeva, to the left of the main entrance?

It tells us much about the temple. But it also tells us about the history and the culture of the entire Kathmandu Valley. The temple as we can see it today was built in the 16th century.

What is really beautiful about these temples is that they are living places where many people, both Hindus and Buddhists, still gather for pujas. I'm glad that your community looks after them and understands how important it is to maintain them to preserve Nepal's art, heritage and religions. Let me take few photos to show my son in Australia.

Swayambhu: The All-Seeing




Guruju, I am Kul Bahadur from Lumbini. Can you please tell me what is so special about a stupa?

Nice to meet you, Kul. Shapes in religious architecture have various meanings. The stupa, for example, symbolises the universe. While shapes of buildings change over time, the stupa has remained the same for more than two thousand years.

Swayambhu is the oldest Buddhist monument in the valley. But it has been renovated many times since its creation. Legends say that Swayambhu was built over an eternal flame. The whitewashed dome has a diameter of 20 meters. Look at the watchful eyes of Buddha. You have the impression that they follow you when you walk around Swayambhu. They give the stupa a life of its own. And look at the metal torana above the eyes. They carry metal images of the Pancha Buddhas and the Panchakula. Don't miss the spire with thirteen gilded bronze rings, representing the thirteen levels of perfection.

I didn't know that stupas have existed for so long. What is so special about Swayambhu?

Thank you so much, Guruju. It is great to stand among all these temples and shrines.



Bauddhanath: The Stupa of Serenity

I don't know why, but I feel so calm here.

It's because the stupa of Bauddhanath has so much sacred energy. Some people believe that it houses a piece of the Buddha's bone.

I understand now why there are so many lamas circling the stupa and why they are paying respect by laying down. It must really be an important place for Buddhists.

Yes, it is one of the largest stupas in the world. Its base is covered by a sixteen-sided low wall made of stone and filled with 735 metal prayer wheels. Do you see the steps there on the northern side? They lead to the first level of the three-tiered mandala. From the mandala on the top, you can see the giant whitewashed hemisphere rising.

It is so beautifully done! All these parts in the stupa must be a symbol?

With all its parts, the stupa reflects the enlightened mind of the Buddha and all the five cosmic elements: the square base is the earth, the round dome symbolizes water, the cone shaped top is fire, the canopy is air and the volume as a whole is space.

It really is an important part of the Kathmandu Valley. We must take good care of all these sacred places.

Dear friends, wasn't our journey worth it? Doesn't our heritage make us feel proud? Where else on earth can you find a place like Lumbini, the birthplace of the Lord Buddha? And the Chitwan National Park in the Terai plains with its animals and forests! And my home in the skies, Sagarmatha, what a beauty, what a purity! And the wonderful places in the Kathmandu Valley! If we don't take care of all these places, who will? Let's make a solemn promise, Fulmaya.

Hurray! Let's do our best to preserve our heritage, our pride. And teach ourselves and others about its value. Come and enjoy, appreciate and guard these priceless treasures for the future!



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