

**Report of One-day workshop on
Archaeology and Buddhist Archaeological Sites
held on 29th February 2016
at UniGlobe College,
Kamaladi Ganeshthan, Kathmandu**

Introduction

The study of archaeology is one of the important aspects of the Buddhist Studies as the artifacts recovered from Buddhist archaeological sites throughout the region are the solid evidences that helped in proving historicity of Buddha his teachings. Moreover, they are also instrumental to trace out scientific history that facilitates the study of past human civilization. Realizing the need for study of Archaeology subject LBU has planned to introduce PGD and MA in Archaeology and Buddhist Sites aiming to produce high level technical manpower in the field of Archaeology who can undertake archaeological exploration and excavation, competent in working as advisor, field archaeologist in public and NGO, INGOs, undertake archaeological research and work as university teachers. It has scheduled to commence PGD level course from this academic year. As a preparatory work in connection with introducing PGD in Archaeology and Buddhist Archaeological Sites, LBU has conducted a one-day workshop on the subject to discuss on various aspects of proposed curriculum amongst the subject experts. The objective of this course is to equip the students with theoretical and practical knowledge and skill in Archaeological Explorations, Excavation, Exhibition, Publication and Conservation and Preservation, in addition to a general knowledge of the development of the Buddhist activities and artifacts such as art, architecture, Paleography, Epigraphy and Numismatics.

Aims and Objectives

This workshop was organized as a preparatory work for introducing the course on Museology and Buddhist Collections with the following aims and objectives.

1. To discuss on need for higher level of technical expertise in the field Archaeology and Buddhist Archaeological Sites in present context and need for higher level manpower required for the country.
2. To discourse on relevance and significance of study of Archaeology subject in LBU
3. To discuss on proposed curriculum of PGD in Archaeology and Buddhist Archaeological Sites

Expected Outcome

1. Clarity on context and purpose of introducing Archaeology and Buddhist Archaeological Sites in LBU.
2. Realization of the relevance and significance of study of Archaeology and Buddhist Archaeological Sites.

3. Identification of potential areas of contribution of LBU towards study of Archaeology in general and Buddhist Archaeological Sites in particular by producing higher level manpower to undertake Archaeological exploration and excavation, archaeological research, conservation and preservation of archaeological sites, etc.
4. Inputs from subject experts to make the proposed curriculum of international standard.

Participants

The workshop was participated by subjects experts from home and abroad which includes officials from Department of Archaeology (DoA), Department of National Archive, UNESCO, Archaeologists, cultural experts, art historians, teachers from Central Department of Nepalese History, Culture and Archaeology, teachers from Central Department of Buddhist Studies, retired university teachers.

Workshop procedure

The workshop is divided into two segments. The first segment will be inaugural session and the second segment will be paper presentation by subject experts on five different subjects followed by floor discussion.

The workshop was jointly inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya, Vice Chancellor of LBU and Mr. Bhesh Narayan Dahal, the Director General of Department of Archaeology jointly. In his welcome speech, Prof. Dr. Bajracharya highlighted the main objectives of the workshop as to discourse on relevance and significance of study of Archaeology subject under the academic programme of LBU, to discuss on potential contribution of LBU in the field of Archaeology by producing higher level manpower required for the country and to present and discuss on the outline of proposed PGD course in Archaeology and Buddhist Archaeological Sites.

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Dahal congratulated Vice Chancellor of LBU on the launch of Archeology subject and assured the collaboration of his department with LBU. The second session of the workshop was chaired Prof. Dr. Robin Coningham of Durham University, UK in which Mr Ram Bahadur Kunwar, on behalf of subject committee presented an outline of proposed “PGD in Archaeology and Buddhist Archaeological Sites” course which was prepared by Prof. Dr. Dinesh Chandra Regmi, Mr. Kosh Prasad Acharya, Mr. Bhesh Narayan Dahal and Mr. Ram Bahadur Kunwar. The presentation was followed by a floor discussion.

Prof. Coningham, from the chair of the session, highly appreciated LBU's effort to introduce study of Archaeology in LBU as this very timely step as Nepal is in need for expertise in the field of Archaeology ever than before. Moreover he also suggested to make the course accessible to working professional to update their knowledge by providing selective courses applicable to enhance their knowledge and skills in the subject. Moreover has assured to help LBU in whatever way possible to make this academic programme more resulted oriented or fruitful.

Discussion

Following issues are apparently come out of the floor discussions subsequently held after the presentations of outlines of the curriculum.

- Curriculum should be in competent with courses being offered by other universities in this subject.
- The curriculum does not follow standard format, it looks like lecture note
- Units are not proportionally balanced
- References or Suggested Readings are not mentioned
- Use of unfamiliar words to denote Vajrayana
- Unit heading and sub-heading not precise
- Include Buddhist Archaeological Sites of whole of South Asia rather than merely India and Nepal.
- Nepal should come first and subsequently India and so on...
- Use Theravada instead of Hinayana
- Include Kankrevihar of Surkhet in the list of Buddhist archaeological sites
- What about setting up archaeological lab?
- Time allocated for writing technical report is not sufficient, and so on.

During the floor discussion, above issues were thoroughly discussed and some of the issues were clarified in due course of discussion while most of issues raised were well received by the presenters as well as University authorities. At the same time the subject experts highly appreciated all the participants who contributed with their valuable suggestions and comments and assured that they will try to incorporate as much application suggestions and comments as possible/applicable to make the curriculum much more result oriented and of international standard. In the midst of the discussion Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Bajracharya put forward an outline of course titles for further consideration to the floor which was well received by participants. At the end of discussion on behalf of subject committee, Mr Kosh Prasad Acharya express his gratitude to all the participants who have contributed with their valuable insights, comments and suggestion and assured to accommodate most of the issues raised from floor.

Concluding Remarks

The LBU effort to introduce new academic course entitled Archaeology and Buddhist Archaeological Sites was overwhelmingly appreciated as it is very timely step as country is desperately need for expertise in Archaeology and Buddhist Archaeological sites who can undertake archaeological excavations, involve in preservation and conservation of the archaeological sites and artifacts found therein and who are able to interpret about the finding in scientific manner. Moreover, LBU's endeavor to bring together related experts from home and abroad including UNESCO on board to discuss on various aspects of Archaeology and archaeological studies prior to introduction of the course is highly appreciated by participants.