



# नेपाली महाबाणिज्यदूतावास, न्यूयॉर्क Consulate General of Nepal, New York

## Press Release: The Metropolitan Museum of Art to Return Stone Sculpture to Nepal

The Consulate General of Nepal in New York and The Metropolitan Museum of Art announced today the return of a tenth century stone sculpture, *Shiva in Himalayan Abode with Ascetics*, to the Government of Nepal. An agreement to this effect was signed by Bishnu Prasad Gautam, Acting Consul General, and Daniel H. Weiss, President and CEO, on behalf of the Government of Nepal and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, respectively.

The sculpture depicts Lord Shiva, a revered Hindu deity, with his two ascetic disciples in a mountain abode at Mount Kailash in the Himalayas. The sculpture, which is approximately 13 inches high, was given to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1995 and remained in the collection until recent Museum research—based on that of renowned Nepali scholar Lain Singh Bangdel and his book, *Inventory of Stone Sculptures of Kathmandu Valley*--determined that the object belonged to the Kankeswari Temple (Kanga-Ajima) in Kathmandu, Nepal, and that it should be returned to Nepal. The Museum contacted the Government of Nepal earlier this year to offer the return of the sculpture, and is arranging for the object to be transported to Nepal.

Speaking on the occasion, Acting Consul General said, “We are deeply grateful to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, its President and Chief Executive Officer, the Board of Trustees, the Museum’s scholars and officials for their initiative and cooperation in returning this lost artifact back to Nepal. We also offer thanks to many supporters and interested parties for their love of Nepali art.” He further remarked, “We appreciate the Museum’s ongoing dedication and commitment to working for the preservation and promotion of world cultural heritage. The warm cooperation we have received from the Museum has deeply contributed to Nepal’s national efforts to recover and reinstate its lost artifacts, including the Museum’s initiative to return two Nepali artifacts--*Uma Maheshwara* (Shiva and Parvati), and *Standing Buddha* in 2018. The Consulate looks forward to working closely with the Museum for the promotion of art and culture, as these collaborative efforts truly contribute to preservation of the cultural heritage, and further strengthen the long-standing ties between the peoples of Nepal and the United States of America.”

The Metropolitan Museum of Art President and CEO remarked, “The Museum is committed to the responsible acquisition of archaeological art, and applies rigorous provenance standards both to new acquisitions and the study of works long in its collection in an ongoing effort to learn as much as possible about ownership history. In returning this sculpture to Nepal, the Museum is acting to strengthen the good relationship it has long maintained with scholarly institutions and colleagues in Nepal and to foster and celebrate continued cooperation and dialogue between us.”

At a signing ceremony hosted at the Museum today, the Consulate General honored Met officials with ceremonial Nepali *dhaka* scarves (*khada*), in appreciation of the Museum’s contribution to preservation and promotion of world cultural heritage, including Nepali art. Museum senior officials, Consul Mr. Ganesh Prasad Adhikari from the Consulate General, were also present during the ceremony.

Consulate General of Nepal, New York  
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