नेपाली राजदूतावास
Embassy of Nepal
Brussels, Belgium

Press Release

'Art for SDGs: The Mithila Heritage'

The Embassy of Nepal in collaboration with Mithila Centre USA and with support of European External Action Service (EEAS) organised an opening ceremony of the Mithila Art Exhibition entitled *'Art for SDGs: The Mithila Heritage'*, in the premises EEAS, Brussels today. Around hundred distinguished guests, including Ambassadors, Representative from Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, high-level EU officials, diplomats, Mithila Artists, media person and Nepali diaspora, joined in marking the occasion.

Presenting Mithila heritage through the lens of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the event forged a remarkable connection between indigenous cultural heritage and the global development agenda.

The formal program commenced with playing of the national anthem of Nepal and EU. It was followed by the joint lighting of Panas by H.E Ms. Sewa Lamsal, Ambassador of Nepal to the BENELUX Countries and Head of Mission to the European Union, Mr. Dominic Porter, Deputy Managing Director for Asia and the Pacific at EEAS, H.E. Mr. Pierre Cartuyvels, Head of Protocol at the Belgian FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation and Mr. Amit Pratap Shah, Founding President and Executive Director of Mithila Center USA.

H.E Ms. Lamsal, in her opening remarks, welcomed the guests and presented an overview of rich and colourful Mithila art tradition. She underscored the importance of Mithila art not merely as a cultural asset but as a development tool, a diplomatic instrument, and a wellspring of national pride. Tracing its origin to the ancient civilisational heartland of the Mithila region, the birthplace of Goddess Sita, she recalled how women painted on earthen walls and mud floors centuries before the existence of galleries or museums, using natural pigments derived from turmeric, indigo, rice powder, and lampblack. Highlighting Nepal's commitment to preserving this living heritage, the Ambassador warmly invited the international community to visit Nepal to experience the art form in its truest element. She also expressed her gratitude to the EEAS for their support in organising the event. Further, she thanked Mithila Center USA for their vital support and advocacy in keeping this profound

tradition alive and paid tribute to the generations of women artists whose nameless contributions sustained this living heritage.

Mr. Porter from EEAS congratulated Ambassador Lamsal and team for bringing the beauty and profundity of Mithila heritage to Brussels. While acknowledging Nepal's sustained commitment to achieving the SDGs by 2030 he reaffirmed the commitment of EU as a steadfast partner of Nepal in achieving the goals.

H.E. Mr. Cartuyvels from Belgian MFA highlighted the warm and cordial relation of Nepal and Belgium and expressed his admiration for the artworks created by the Mithila women artists.

Mr. Shah, representing the Mithila Centre USA, shared his personal journey of Mithila Art, and its representation in the international stage, including at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Looking ahead, Mr. Shah shared the organization's visionary objective to establish permanent Museums of Mithila Arts across global regions.

Following the remarks, H.E Ms. Lamsal honoured the Mithila artists and representatives from Mithila Center USA, Mr. S.C. Suman, Mr. Amit Pratap Shah, Mr. Nawal Kishor Yadav, Mr. Prateek S. Rayamajhi and Ms. Shivangi Singh with Mithila *Khada; imprinted scarf with traditional Mithila Folk art*, for their significant contribution in promoting the Mithila art. Along with the above mentioned artists, the artworks of Ms. Manisha Shah and Ms. Sunaina Thakur were also on the display during the exhibition.

The distinguished speakers and the Ambassadors were also presented with the Mithila *Khada*, as a token of honour.

The program also featured a live cultural performance by the Nepali and Mithila artists. Dressed in traditional attire, the artists performed in traditional Maithili Dance *Jhihjiya* and Nepali folk dance, captivating the audience with their magnificence.

The program concluded with a taste of Mithila cuisine, which included *Thekuwa, Kachari, Makhana Chat, Phopi, Fulauri, Mango and Lassi.* The distinguished guests engaged warmly with the colourful and intricate Mithila paintings and toured the exhibition with great interest.

The exhibition showcased a total of 33 Mithila artworks, which will remain on display until 20 June 2026.

Following the conclusion of formal opening ceremony, H.E. Ms. Lamsal is hosting Mithila Dinner at Nepal House on 10 June and 12 June for high-ranking dignitaries including Ambassadors and senior representatives from the Belgian MFA and EU.

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9 June 2026