

LECTURE

# SEISMIC SAFETY

INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES FOR ASSESSING RESILIENCE  
AND PATHWAYS TOWARDS THE REHABILITATION OF THE CULTURAL  
HERITAGE OF KATHMANDU IN POST-EARTHQUAKE NEPAL



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The 2015 Gorkha Earthquake was a human tragedy but it was also a cultural catastrophe, damaging 403 monuments across Kathmandu. Exceptional architectural and artistic achievements, Kathmandu's medieval cities and shrines play vital roles of cohesion in thousands of lives, representing portals where heavens touch earth and people commune with guiding deities. For this reason, and their contribution of 7.6% to Nepal's GDP through tourism, has led to pressure to reconstruct swiftly.

Although US\$2.5 billion has been pledged for rehabilitation, there is tension between Sendai's 'Build Back Better' framework and obligations to preserve the authenticity and intangible values of Kathmandu's UNESCO sites. This lecture will discuss these tensions and present a series of case-studies demonstrating that we urgently need more research into interdisciplinary approaches for assessing seismic safety and into the success (or failure) of traditional methods of seismic adaptation.



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