

Examining heritage as a soft power: Indian experience

N. K. Kumaresan Raja

Associate Professor, Department of Politics & International Studies, Pondicherry University

Asian heritage would be the best possible name to identify the cultural landscape of Asia. When the cartography of the modern world divided the heritage landscape as the Nation States, India still has the pride of being the cradle of major religions of the world. The spread of Hinduism and Buddhism across South and South East Asia, the presence of Indian Diaspora across the globe, has been a significant vehicle for exercising Soft power. The 'Know India Programme' of the Ministry of External affairs for overseas fourth generation Indians attracts them towards visiting their forefather's land with its rich cultural heritage. This paper would examine India's soft power through its cultural heritage on (1) The cultural connect with South and South East Asia through heritage and (2) The connect with the rest of the world through heritage sites as a place of re-establishing their cultural connect.

Keywords: *Indian, soft power, heritage, landscape*