

Sambodh

IBC Newsletter

VOLUME I • ISSUE 1 • DECEMBER 2014



INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST CONFEDERATION

Collective Wisdom United Voice

COUNCIL OF PATRONS

- His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara Sangharaja
Supreme Patriarch, Thailand
- His Holiness Phra Achan Maha Phong Sanghrajra
Acting President
Lao Buddhist Fellowship Organisation, Laos
- His Holiness Thich Pho Tue
Supreme Patriarch
National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, Vietnam
- His Holiness Samdech Preah Agga Maha Sangharajadhikari Te Vong
The Great Supreme Patriarch of Cambodia
- His Holiness Dr. Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa Sangharaja
Chairman
State Sangha Mahanayak Committee, Myanmar
- His Holiness Aggamaha Pandita Davuldena Gnanissara Mahanayaka Thero
Supreme Prelate
Amarapura Mahanayak Committee, Myanmar
- His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama Tenzing Gyatso
- His Holiness Jinje-Beopwon
13th Supreme Patriarch
Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, South Korea
- His Eminence Khamba Lama Damba Ayushev
Supreme Head of Russian Buddhists,
Buryat Republic, Russian Federation
- His Holiness Sanghanayaka Sudhananda Mahathero
President, Bangladesh Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha and Lord Abbot, Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery, Bangladesh
- His Eminence Rev. Khamba Lama Gabju Chojjamts Demberei
Supreme Head of Mongolian Buddhists, Mongolia

With the blessings of all our Patrons, and with great joy in our hearts, we present this first issue of the Newsletter of the International Buddhist Confederation

Like the lotus flower, this newsletter will grow and bloom, taking in fresh ideas, spreading the fragrance of peace and joy as it gradually evolves into a platform for sharing the multi-faceted activities of all IBC organizations/members, their ideas, views on global developments or simply a means to remain in touch with each other.

Recognition of IBC by Govt of India

THE IBC has been accorded the status of 'Cultural Organization with National Presence' by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. This recognition has been accorded to only a handful of other non-governmental organizations in the country.

The IBC has also been included in the Steering Committee of the Project for the Infrastructure Development of the Buddhist Circuit that includes the sacred Buddhist sites of Bodhgaya, Rajgir, Nalanda, Vaishali, Sarnath, Sravasti and Kushinagar. This Steering Committee has been set up by the Ministry of Tourism, Government

of India (GOI). Other members of this committee are the Ministries of Tourism of the states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, and international institutions, namely the International Finance Corporation and the International Development Agency of the World Bank.

The Government of Gujarat has invited the IBC to partner in the building of a Grand Relic Vihara at Devni Mori in Gujarat. This Vihara will house the Buddha relic discovered at the site in the early 1960s. The relic is presently displayed in a museum in Vadodara. ■

IBC welcomes the Sri Lanka Chapter

Taking forward the mandate of the IBC conclave for an inclusive and participatory body with representations of all traditions that reflect the aspirations of Buddhists worldwide, Sri Lanka, that has been at the forefront of this development, took the first step forward by establishing an IBC Chapter. Secretary General, Ven. Lama Lobzang was present to witness the historic occasion.

Mr. Jagath Sumathipala, President of the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress, was unanimously selected as the President of the Sri Lankan chapter of the IBC. Dr Damenda Porage will be the Coordinator of the chapter.

During the visit, from June 28 to July 2, 2014, the Secretary General also called on the Mahanayakas and His Excellency Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka, discussions with whom included the proposed celebrations to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Anagarika Dharmapala in India and the possibility of a visit to India next year by the President of Sri Lanka to mark the event.



Secretary General, Ven. Lama Lobzang calls upon His Excellency Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka

In these meetings the Secretary General was accompanied by the Vice President of the IBC, Ven. Banagala Upatissa Thero, Deputy Secretary General, Mr. Harsha Kumara Navaratne and Executive Director (Communication), Mr. Kishore Thukral. ■



IBC mourns the passing away of His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara Suvaddhana Mahathera, the 19th Supreme Patriarch of Thailand

Patron of the International Buddhist Confederation, His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara Suvaddhana Mahathera was the guiding light towards the whole initiative of the IBC. Ever since its formative days prior to hosting the Global Buddhist Congregation 2011, when it was simply an idea and the concept was being discussed, the Supreme Patriarch was actively involved as one of our esteemed Patrons.

His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara Suvaddhana Mahathera was the 19th Supreme Patriarch of Thailand. He assumed the position in 1989, and held it till the time of his passing away on 24 October 2013.

During more than seventy years as a monk, Somdet Nyanasamvara held a variety of posts in the Thai ecclesiastic hierarchy. In these roles, he was always involved in promoting education, both religious and secular. He assisted in the founding and construction of numerous schools, as well as sponsoring campaigns to build schools, temples and hospitals in rural



OBITUARY

communities. As abbot of Wat Bovoranives, he oversaw the renovation and expansion of this famed century-old monastery. Wat Bovoranives is known as one of several monasteries in Thailand where Westerners can not only study, but also ordain either as full bhikkhu or for a limited term (such as vassa) as a novice (samanera). Long interested in the meditation techniques of the Thai forest monks, His Holiness helped make his temple residence in Bangkok a centre for meditation study and instruction, himself delivering lectures on meditation and Buddhist teachings on two Uposatha days each month.

He was also active in teaching both non-Thais and the international Thai emigrant community. His recorded sermons and teachings are distributed among Thais living outside Thailand, particularly in areas where there is no access to temples or Theravada monks. He also encouraged non-Thais to study Buddhism. A number of his books and talks have been translated into English. ■

Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism to be the IBC Chapter in Korea



Secretary General, Ven. Lama Lobzang meeting the President of Jogye Order, His Eminence Jaesung Sunim

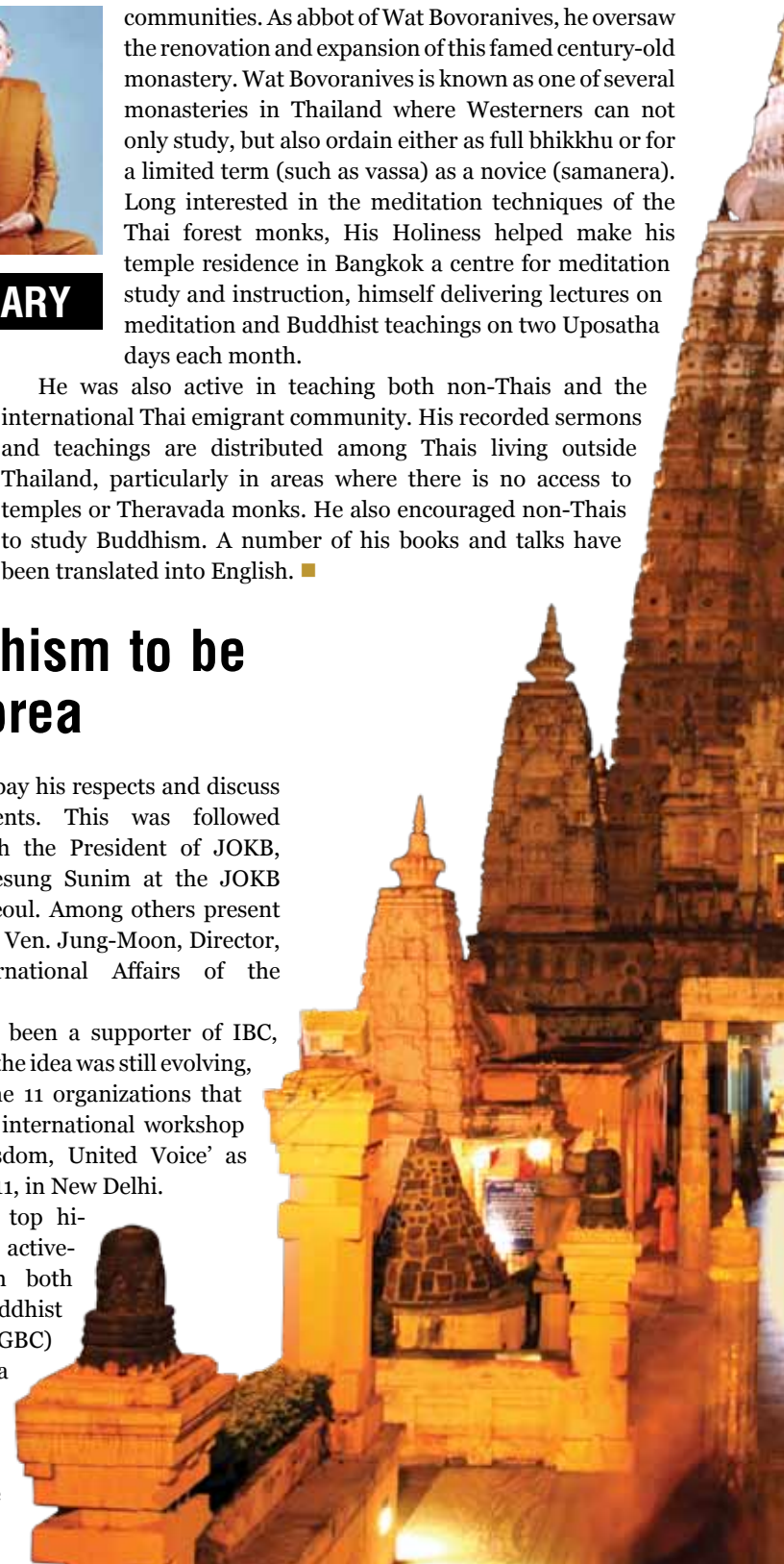
Carrying forward the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism's (JOKB) active support to the IBC and its active involvement, it was agreed during Secretary General, Ven. Lama Lobzang's visit to Korea in October 2014 that the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism will be the IBC chapter in Korea.

The visit by Ven. Lama Lobzang proved successful both in terms of discussions and exploring joint activities in the future with the Jogye Order. Ven. Lama Lobzang called upon the Supreme Patriarch, His Holiness

Jinje-Beopwon to pay his respects and discuss further engagements. This was followed by a meeting with the President of JOKB, His Eminence Jaesung Sunim at the JOKB headquarters in Seoul. Among others present at the meeting was Ven. Jung-Moon, Director, Social and International Affairs of the Jogye Order.

The JOKB has been a supporter of IBC, since the time that the idea was still evolving, and was among the 11 organizations that participated in an international workshop on 'Collective Wisdom, United Voice' as early as August 2011, in New Delhi.

Thereafter the top hierarchy of JOKB actively participated in both the Global Buddhist Congregation (GBC) 2011, which was a precursor to IBC, and the first Founding Members Conclave of the IBC in 2013. ■



IBC mourns the passing away of Dr Ananda Wahihana Palliya Guruge

Dr Ananda Wahihana Palliya Guruge, known as Ananda W.P. Guruge was a Sri Lankan diplomat, Buddhist scholar and writer. He was Chairman of the IBC's Electoral Committee and the Standing Committee on Heritage, Conservation, Preservation and Development.

A former Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Sri Lanka to UNESCO, France, and the United States (with non-resident accreditation to Spain, Algeria and Mexico) from 1985 to 1994, Dr. Guruge was very active in international Buddhist leadership. He was Vice President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, Patron of the European Buddhist Union, and the Dean of Academic Affairs and Director of the International Academy of Buddhism at the University of the West in Rosemead, California. He was also an adjunct professor of Buddhism, Hinduism and Peace Studies at California State University, Fullerton. Dr. Guruge was also the Liaison Officer to the United Nations and UNESCO for the World Fellowship of Buddhists, and was the Chairman of the World Buddhist University Council. He also served as an editor of Hsi Lai Journal of Humanistic Buddhism.



OBITUARY

Dr Guruge was educated at Dharmaraja College, and went on to graduate from the University of Ceylon in 1947 with a BA first class Honours in Sanskrit. Thereafter he was awarded a government scholarship for a PhD at the University of London. He joined the Ceylon Civil Service, taking the civil service exam at the age of 23 and was posted to the Jaffna Kachcheri as cadet.

During his career he also served in the Prime Minister's Office. From 1952, he served Prime Ministers Dudley Senanayake and Sir John Kotelawela as the senior Assistant Secretary until he was chosen to head the government programme to celebrate the 2500th Buddha Jayanti.

Dr. Guruge authored 53 books in Sinhala and English, including *What In Brief Is Buddhism*, *Free At Last in Paradise*, *Serendipity of Andrew George*, *Peace At Last in Paradise* and *The Unforgettable Dharmapala*. He published over 175 research articles on Asian history, Buddhism and education, and translated the Mahavamsa into English in 1989. Dr. Ananda Wahihana Palliya Guruge will be greatly missed. ■

Formation of IBC Chapter in Nepal



It was a happy occasion when the Secretary General, Ven. Lama Lobzang visited Nepal late November. The occasion was the coming together of the three major Buddhist religious traditions in Nepal.

The three traditions—Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana—came together to form the IBC chapter in Nepal. The three Core Team members are Ven. Phupu Chhembe

Sherpa (Mahayana), President, Nepal Buddhist Federation, as Coordinator, and Ven. Dharma Murti (Theravada), Vice President, All Nepal Bhikkhu Federation and Ven. Prof. Dr. Nareshaman Vajracharya (Vajrayana), President, Nepal Traditional Buddhist Association as members.

The Core Team will work out future events and activities of the IBC in Nepal. ■



3rd International Festival of Buddhist Heritage of Ladakh proves a big draw

In collaboration with the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre (MIMC), Leh, Ladakh, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Bihar and the Ministry of Tourism, Government of Jammu and Kashmir and the Hemis Monastery in Ladakh, the IBC organized the 3rd IFBHL in Leh, Ladakh this year from August 24 to 30, 2014.

On the occasion an illustrated talk on 'Spiritual and Cultural Renaissance' and an exhibition on Atisha Dipankar Srijnana, the Great Saint Philosopher and the Great Translator, Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo were also organized.

The exhibition was inaugurated by Mr. Kiren Rijju, the Honourable Minister of State for Home, Government of India. The festival drew enthusiastic response from local audiences, and was attended by many eminent delegates from all over the world.

The International Festival of Buddhist Heritage of Ladakh is one of its kind. Besides promoting Ladakh as a special pilgrimage destination worldwide, especially in the South East Asian countries, the festival

also aims to foster an understanding and appreciation of the diverse ethnic and cultural repository of the different regions and tribal communities of Ladakh, and its ancient and vibrant Buddhist heritage, art and philosophy through multifarious events such as performance of Chham, the holy ritual mask dance, talks by eminent masters and scholars, seminar, ethnic exposition, screening of international Buddhist films, photo, book and handicrafts exhibitions, culinary festival, prayer for world peace, and local and international cultural performances.

Every year this unique Festival attracts huge participation including high-ranked eminent monks of Ladakh, ambassadors of foreign countries, renowned scholars, masters and artists from within the country and abroad.

Post-festival Heritage Tours are organized for guests and delegates of the festival who wish to visit places of interest in Ladakh such as the Nubra Valley, Pangong Lake, Sham Valley, Tingmosgang village and so on. ■



Inner Path: A Festival of Buddhist Film, Art and Philosophy

In November 2014, the IBC and NETPAC India jointly organized the third edition of "The Inner Path: Festival of Buddhist Film, Art and Philosophy" in New Delhi.

The four-day event included screening of films, art, creative demonstrations, discourses and musical performances. The festival opened to a recital by the internationally renowned singing nun from Nepal, Ven. Ani Choying Drolma. Sixteen feature and documentary films, by filmmakers from across the globe, were screened during the festival. These included 'Little Note' and 'Popiah' by Singapore-based filmmaker, Royston Tan, and 'Dharma River', 'Prajna Earth' and 'Vajra Sky Over Tibet' –by US-based filmmaker John Bush.



Geshe Jangchup Choeden Dato Ananda Kumaraseri

An art and photography exhibition, featuring the works of 20 artists hailing from varied regional and personal backgrounds, was also set up. Titled 'Looking Inward', it delved into the creative process, exploring each artist's search for a deeper meaning as well as inspiration for their work.

On display were also some very highly personal calligraphy inspired by Buddhist philosophy, and paintings by the 12th Kenting Tai Situpa who is also a writer, philosopher, educator and painter.

At 'Beyond Painting: Manifestation of Spirit', a thangka painting demonstration, well-known Indian artist Sidharth shared his years of experience in this creative process. Most Ven. Geshe Jangchup Choeden, Khen Rinpoche, Abbot of the Gaden Shartse Monastery delivered a discourse on 'Introduction to Vajrayana Buddhism', and Ambassador Dato G.K. Ananda Kumaraseri, former Director General of ASEAN, presented a talk on 'Practice and Practical Application of Buddhism in Daily Life'. ■



Bihar, where Buddha attained sambodhi-prapti, home to rich Buddhist heritage and several important sites associated with the life of Lord Buddha, occupies a very special place in the spiritual and cultural life of India.

With a view to showcasing and promoting Buddhist heritage and pilgrimage sites of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, organized the 4th International Buddhist Conclave in Bodhgaya and Sarnath, in collaboration with the state governments of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh respectively.

It was an honour for the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) to have been asked by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India to nominate three key speakers for the two panel discussion sessions at the Conclave.

The three speakers, who gave excellent presentations, were Datuk Seri Dr. Victor Wee, Chairman of the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board and the former Secretary General of the Ministry of Tourism, Mr. Tsutomu Sato, Director of Japan Association of Travel Agents and Dr. Praneeth Abhayasundere, Educationist and Deputy President of the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress, Sri Lanka.

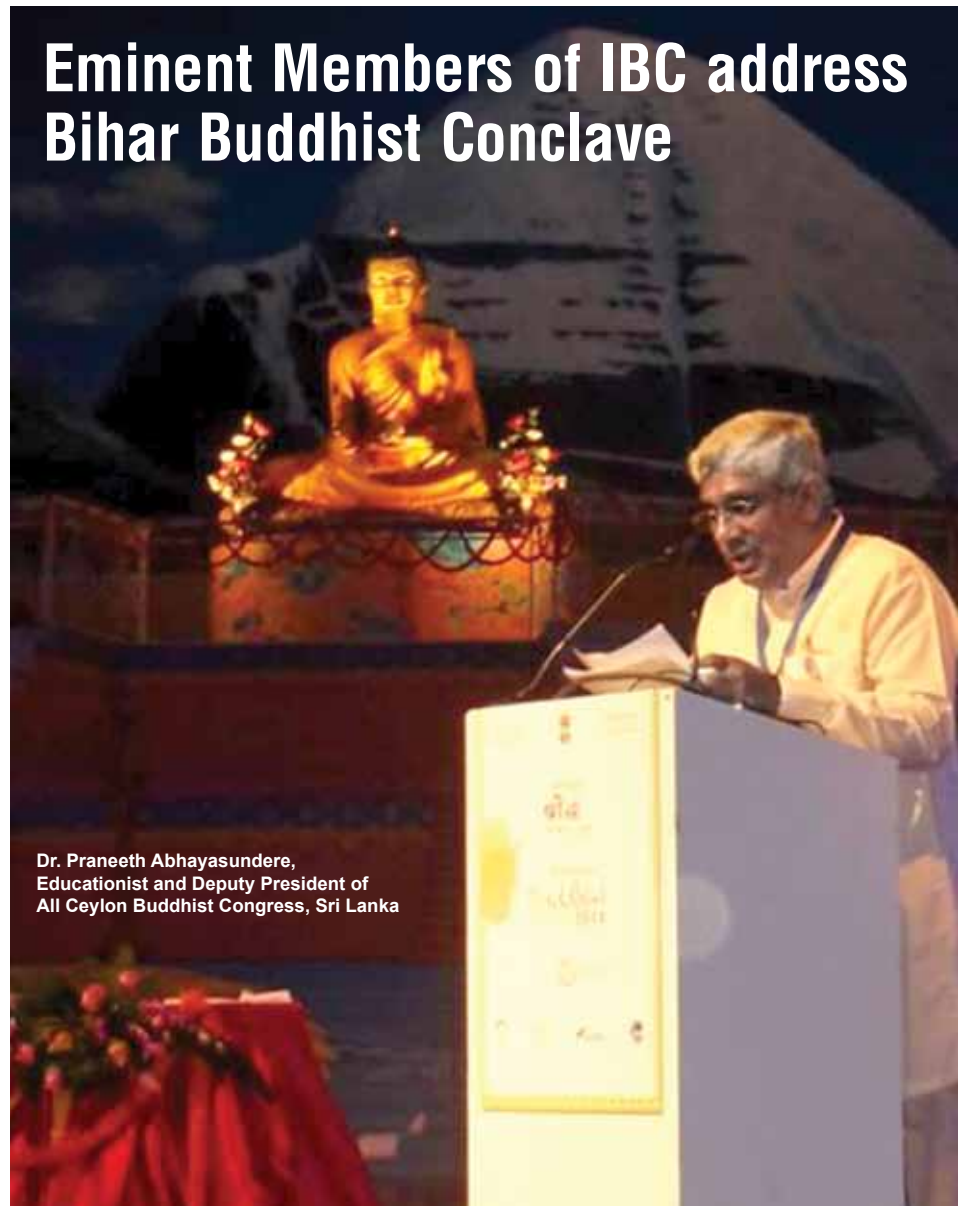
The event was a grand success, and saw participation by nearly 300 international and domestic tour operators, travel writers, journalists, opinion makers, scholars, learned monks and other stakeholders who shared their experiences and also held Business meetings. The participants included 120 international delegates from 32 countries.

To enlarge the canvas for exposure to the



Datuk Seri Dr. Victor Wee, chairman of the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board and the former Secretary General of the Ministry of Tourism

Eminent Members of IBC address Bihar Buddhist Conclave



Dr. Praneeth Abhayasundere, Educationist and Deputy President of All Ceylon Buddhist Congress, Sri Lanka

ancient legacy of Buddhist heritage found all over India, 16 state governments had put up elaborate stalls exhibiting the various sites found in their respective regions in India. Besides Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the state governments participating in the Conclave included Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Telangana and West Bengal. The highlights of the Conclave were prayers at the Mahabodhi Temple, and visits to the Pragbodhi Caves, Nalanda and Rajgir, followed later by visits to Sarnath and Varanasi.

A spectacular cultural show of fusion dances, to the chanting of around 50-child-

monks, with the backdrop of a giant statue of Lord Buddha in a meditative posture in the midst of the snow-covered Mount Everest enthralled the audience on the opening day.

The grand event was inaugurated in the presence of the Chief Minister of Bihar, the Minister of State for Tourism and Culture, Government of India, the Minister of Tourism, Government of Bihar, the Tourism Secretary, Government of India and the Principal Secretary Tourism, Government of Bihar.

The event gave the participants an opportunity to interact, promote, package and sell pilgrimage itineraries of the Buddhist sites in the country, for overseas visitors. ■

IBC organizes Joint Prayers in Japan

JAPAN | NOVEMBER 3-8, 2014

As part of the Festival of India in Japan, a 12-member delegation of senior Buddhist monks from India, under the banner of IBC, visited Kumamoto, Kyoto, Hiroshima and Fukushima to offer joint prayers with Japanese priests for “Peace and Well-being of All Sentient Beings” and in memory of the victims of the nuclear bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the nuclear disaster and tsunami in Fukushima, and all other natural calamities.

The delegation of Indian monks included His Holiness the 102nd Ganden Trizong Rinpoche (Head of the Gelug Order), His Eminence Tenzin Kalsang Lochen Tulku Rinpoche (19th lineage holder of the tradition of the Great



Joint prayers at the Khayonako Ji Zen Temple in Fukushima

Translator Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo), His Eminence Guru Tulku Rinpoche (Abbot of the Tawang monastery in the northeast Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh) and Ven. Lama Lobzang, Secretary General of the IBC.

The IBC delegation of Indian monks offered joint prayers and performed the Gingrhak (*hawan*) ceremony with Japanese monks at the Rengein Tanjyoji Temple in Kumamoto, the Island Temple Daisho-In of the Shingon sect in Hiroshima, and the Khayonako Ji Zen Temple in Fukushima. They also visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Dome and Museum. His Holiness Ganden Tri Rinpoche placed a flower wreath in front of the memorial on behalf of the IBC. This was followed by a visit to Sanjusangen-do (National Treasure) in Kyoto, the temple visited by the

Honourable Prime Minister of India during his recent visit to Japan. The delegates were received by the Chief Administrative priest and the monks of the temple. The delegates offered prayers in the main hall that contained 1,000 enshrined, standing Avalokitesvara statues and a huge principal statue of Ekadasamukhasahasrabhuja Avalokitesvara with 11 faces, 1,000 arms and an eye on each palm. The delegation also visited the National Museum at Tokyo and offered joint prayers. The IBC team was given a warm welcome by the monks of the museum. Most Rev. Eiha Kinoshita and all other monks performed a prayer in colourful traditional monks’ costumes, playing religious musical instruments. A short video screening accompanied the performance. A good number of devotees were also present. ■

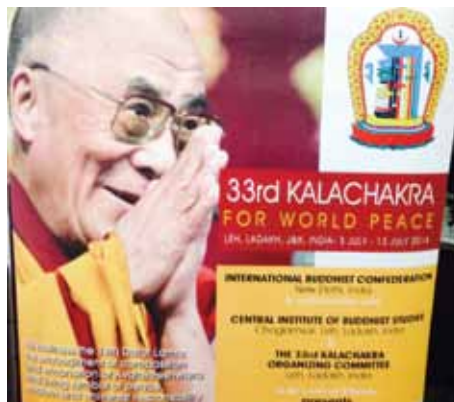


His Holiness the 102nd Ganden Trizong Rinpoche with other senior monks proceeding to Rengein Tanjyoji Temple in Kumamoto

Explanatory talk during Kalachakra Initiations in Ladakh

On the occasion of the 33rd Kalachakra for World Peace initiations by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama in Ladakh in July, the IBC organized Explanatory Talks by Andy Wistreich. These talks on ‘Preparatory Teachings and Receiving the Kalachakra Empowerment’ were held later in the day in English and were based on the morning Kalachakra initiations.

Andy Wistreich has taken refuge, lay vows and bodhisattva vows. He is a UK educator with a long-term commitment to making the compassion and wisdom



teachings of Lord Buddha accessible, and teaches worldwide. In 1988, he and David Reigle set up the International Kalachakra Network, which through the internet has become a major source of information and support for Kalachakra practitioners around the world.

These talks were organized by the IBC in collaboration with the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies, Choglamsar, and the 33rd Kalachakra Organizing Committee, both based in Leh, Ladakh, India. ■

'Divinity in Syllables'

An Exhibition of Buddhist Bhoti and Islamic Calligraphy

The International Buddhist Confederation organized a unique Calligraphy exhibition and talk featuring Buddhist Bhoti and Islamic Calligraphy in August 2014 to highlight creativity as the highest form of spirituality at the India International Centre, New Delhi.

The exhibition titled, 'Divinity in Syllables' featured works of the two foremost calligraphers of our times, Jamyang Dorjee (Bhoti) from Sikkim and Anis Siddiqui (Urdu) from Delhi. Their works brought out the history and spiritual links of this art form cutting across different cultures.

Promoting inter-faith understanding is among the prime focus areas of the IBC. In keeping with the above theme, the IBC brought together the sublime unity of this divine thought in the exhibition.

Islamic calligraphy evolved as an artistic form of reverence, and it was through the art of writing that the Holy Quran, the word of God as revealed in revelations to Prophet Mohammad, was recorded and disseminated to the humanity. Through the centuries it has been continuously refined and imaginatively embellished to become the most recognizable visual form of Islamic art.

Buddhist calligraphy too had its roots in the dissemination of the teachings of the Buddha dharma. It evolved as an



integral and independent art form along with other forms of Buddhist art such as a very rich iconography as exemplified by its murals, frescos, thangkas and sculptures. The Buddhist calligraphy on display was in Bhoti language which has its roots in the Gupta, Sanskrit and Brahmi script of the shared Indic culture.



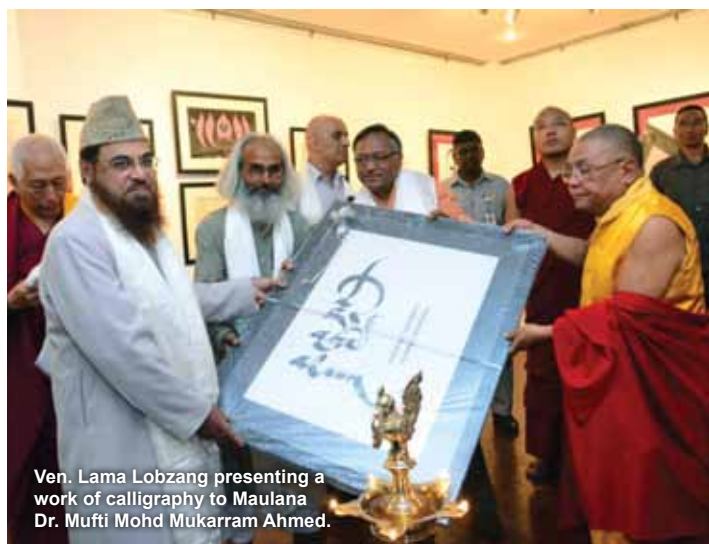
His Holiness the Karmapa with Mr. Parvez Dewan, Secretary Tourism, inaugurating the exhibition.

The art of calligraphy has been integral to the dissemination of Buddha's teaching and is also a proof of the richness of the Bhoti language.

The exhibition was inaugurated by Mr. Parvez Dewan, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. The Guests of Honour were His Holiness the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, Supreme head, Karma Kagyu tradition, Maulana Dr. Mufti Mohd Mukarram Ahmed, Shahi Imam, Masjid Fatehpuri, Delhi, Most Ven. Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, Chancellor, Sanchi University of Buddhist and Indic Studies, Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh, Mr. Shahid Siddiqui and Prof. Farida Abdulla Khan, Member, National Commission for Minorities. ■



Mr. Kiren Rijju (right), the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs of India, at the exhibition



Ven. Lama Lobzang presenting a work of calligraphy to Maulana Dr. Mufti Mohd Mukarram Ahmed.



INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST CONFEDERATION
Collective Wisdom United Voice

What is IBC

The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) is a Buddhist umbrella body that serves as a common platform for Buddhists worldwide. It currently has a membership comprising more than 300 organizations, both monastic and lay, in 39 countries.

Headquartered in New Delhi, the IBC is the outcome of the historic Global Buddhist Congregation held in November 2011 in New Delhi, wherein 900 delegates from all over the world, representing the entire Buddhist world, resolved to form an umbrella Buddhist world body based in India, the land of Buddha's enlightened awakening and origins of Buddha dharma. The leadership of the IBC comprises the

supreme religious Buddhist hierarchy of all traditions and countries as Patrons and members of our Supreme Dhamma Council.

As per its motto, "Collective Wisdom, United Voice", the IBC provides a common platform to all followers of the Buddha Dharma worldwide to address issues that are of both Buddhist and global concerns.

"Promoting inter-faith understanding is among the main areas of focus of the IBC, and it therefore endeavours to promote the universal nature of the basic goodness of all religions, interdependence and universal responsibilities," says Venerable Lama Lobzang, Secretary General, IBC.