



REPORT ON VIRTUAL CELEBRATION OF ASADHA POORNIMA 2020

International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) successfully hosted a Virtual celebration of Asadha Poornima 2020 (also known as Esala Poya/ Asanha Bucha) as Dharma Chakra Day on 4th July 2020 commemorating Budha's turning of wheel of Dhamma.

It was on this sacred day that Tathagata Gautama Buddha, after his Enlightened Awakening in Bodhgaya came to Risipattana in present day Sarnath, near Varanasi in India, and gave the teaching of Dharma Chakra Pravattana Sutra to his first five disciples and formed the first Sangha. The teaching comprised of Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path.

IBC has decided to celebrate Dharma Chakra Day annually as its flagship event in association with its member organizations in 36 countries.

The commemoration of Asadha Poornima - Dharma Chakra Day began with chanting of Dharma Dharma Chakra Parvattana Sutra by Theravada and Mahayana Sangha from the Mulagandhakuti Vihara temple, Sarnath which was live-streamed for the global audience.

The formal inauguration of Dharma Chakra Day was held at Rashtrapati Bhawan (Presidential Palace) in New Delhi. Hon'ble President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated it and also gave the keynote address. The Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, also addressed the event via video. The Hon'ble Minister of Culture Shri Prahlad Singh Patel, Hon'ble Minister of State for Minority Affairs, Kiren Rijiju, Member Parliament and President, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, also addressed. Ambassador Mongolia in India H. E Mr. Gonching Ganbold read the message by H.E Mr Khaltmaagiin Battulga, President of Mongolia. Video address by HRH Princess Norodom Arunrasmy was also streamed. The Theravada and Mahayana Sangha from Dhamma Deepa Vihara, Tripura, India, Gandan Tegchenling monastery, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia and Buddhist Association of ROC Taiwan were also streamed.

The highlight of the inaugural event was the unveiling and presentation of the digitized publication of Mongolian Kangyur by Hon'ble Minister of Culture to Hon'ble President of India. Kangyur as it's called in Mongolian and Tibetan languages is translated Tripitika or the entire collection of texts regarded as Buddhavacana or "Buddha-word". Each set of Kangyur has 108 volumes and this invaluable publication was compiled by Dr. Lokesh Chandra from the archives of late Dr. Raghu Veera. It is published by National Manuscripts Commission and courtesy of Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts under the aegis of Ministry of Culture. It is an offering from India to the people of Mongolia on whose behalf the Ambassador of Mongolia received one copy.

Later in the day video messages by Supreme heads of the Buddhist Sanghas of various countries and Eminent Masters including His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Scholars from around the world were also streamed. Live streaming of prayers and ceremonies from Mahabodhi Temple, Bodhgaya and Sacred Tooth Relic Temple, Kandy Sri Lanka was done along with the streaming of chanting of Dhamma Cakka Pavattana Sutta at Golden Dome, Wat Dhammakaya, Thailand, as well as by nuns sangha of Jamyang Choling Institute, Dharamsala, India were also streamed. The story of First Sermon by Attodeepa group of Kolkata and Guru Padmasambhava by students of Indian classical dance Guru Alpana Nayak were other highlights of the day.

The successful hosting of Asadha Poornima- Dharma Chakra Day under such trying times of Covid 29 pandemic is testimony to IBCs goodwill in the Buddhist world.

The virtual celebration was viewed by 1, 43,375 viewers from 24 countries.