

# Sambodh

IBC Newsletter

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INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST CONFEDERATION

Collective Wisdom United Voice

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An IBC delegation, led by the Secretary General, Ven. Lama Lobzang called on the President of Sri Lanka, H.E. Mr. Maithripala Sirisena at his residence in Colombo on June 13, 2015, and gifted him a *tangka*. Other members of the delegation were Deputy Secretary General, Dr Harsha Kumara Navaratne, and President of the IBC, Sri Lanka chapter, Mr. Jagath Sumathipala.

*More on Sri Lanka visit on Pages 8 & 9*

## Freedom from war only if we follow the path of Buddha: PM Modi



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the 'International Buddha Purnima Diwas Celebrations 2015' in New Delhi. Also seen are IBC Secretary General Ven. Lama Lobzang, Minister of State for Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju and Minister of State for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Dr. Mahesh Sharma.

The world is debating whether the 21st century would be Asia's century ... (though) there may be differences over which Asian country would the 21st century belong to ... but an aspect possibly overlooked by those having this vision is that without Buddha, 21st century can never become Asia's century," Prime Minister Narendra Modi told delegates at the International Buddha Purnima Diwas Celebrations 2015 in New Delhi on May 4, 2015.

Purnima Diwas was organised by the International Buddhist Confederation with the support of Union Ministries of Home Affairs and Culture.

Modi said that the Buddha's message of love and compassion would help Asia inspire the world as it deals with all-round strife and bloody conflicts. "Buddha is the one who will make Asia a source of inspiration for the world that is dealing with various problems. People are killing each other ... a large part of the globe is witnessing bloody strife ... in such a scenario, it is Buddha's message of compassion and non-violence

that will show the way to the world," said Modi.

At the colourful event attended by over 2,000 people, it was announced that the Buddha Purnima or Vesak would now on be an annual event to be celebrated officially by the Government of India. A national committee will be set up under the chairmanship of the Minister of State for Culture, with IBC as the coordinating and implementing organization, and its Secretary General as ex officio convener.

The Culture Minister has also recently announced that the Government is committed to building a grand Holy Relic Vihara in Delhi to consecrate the Kapilvastu relic currently housed in Delhi's National Museum.

In addition, a 130-hectare Buddha Charita Path park in the middle of Delhi will be jointly developed by IBC and a national committee of experts and eminent personalities to showcase the Buddhist heritage of India and also as a walkthrough of Buddha's life and teachings.



(Left) The choir of the Mahabodhi Higher Education School, Chandigarh, singing during the cultural programme at Talkatora Stadium, at the International Buddha Pournima Diwas Celebrations 2015 in New Delhi. (Right) Prime Minister Modi addressing the gathering. (Photos: Kshipra Simon)

The celebrations this year were historic indeed. Four eminent scholars who have contributed a lifetime of dedicated work to the preservation of Buddhist philosophic knowledge, art, culture and heritage were honoured by the Prime Minister. They are: **Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan**, art historian, eminent scholar and author; **Dr. Lokesh Chandra**, chairman of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and eminent scholar, historian and author; **Prof. Krishna Nath**, eminent Buddhist scholar; and, **Prof. Rama Shankar Tripathy**, eminent Buddhist scholar.

“Buddha’s three-word message—‘Be your own light’— said Prime Minister Modi, carried more weight than all management journals, lectures and books put together. “We should be inspired by his teachings on compassion, working with consensus, welfare of others and sacrifice,” he said. He underlined that Buddha had prescribed an eight-fold path to salvation—right view, right thought, right speech, right

conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right consciousness and right concentration

On the personal front, the Prime Minister recalled how during his visits abroad, most host countries took care to incorporate a visit to a Buddhist temple into his programme. Recalling Chinese traveller Hieun Tsang’s visit to his native village Vadnagar in Gujarat, he said archaeological excavation had found the remains of a monastery there. “At Devni Mori in Gujarat, archaeologists have discovered a casket containing Buddha’s relic. I hope a big Buddhist temple will someday come up at the site,” he said.

The Minister of State for Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation, Dr. Mahesh Sharma and the Minister of State for Home Affairs and the Chairman of the Celebration Committee, Shri Kiren Rijiju were also present.

Ambassadors of Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and representatives of US, Singapore, Thailand, Bhutan, Slovenia were among those present. Ministers

Rajyawardhan Singh Rathore, Prakash Jawadekar, MPs Anurag Thakur, Thubsten Chewang, Ramdas Athawale, Tarun Vijay, Sudhanshu Mittal, Hindu spiritual leader Swami Chidanand Saraswati of Parmarth Niketan, Jain saint Acharya Lokesh Muni too were present.

A large number of monks, nuns and followers of Buddha Dharma from all over India attended the event. Special enclosures with large screens were placed in the lawns of the Talkatora stadium for the latecomers who could not be accommodated in the stadium, though it is one of the largest in New Delhi.

The cultural programme began with the Mangalacharan- chanting of sutras in Pali and Sanskrit traditions, songs by the Himalayan School students, songs by the children of the Shakya community and songs by the Ladakhi children’s choir from the Mahabodhi Higher Education School, Chandigarh. ■

*Photos: Kshipra Simon*

## Special prayers for Nepal quake victims

On International Buddha Pournima Diwas celebrations in Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi offers prayers for the people affected by the earthquake in Nepal, the birthplace of Buddha.

Making a special reference to Nepal, the land of Buddha’s birth, the Prime Minister said the country was dealing with a huge challenge post the earthquake. “Buddha’s message of compassion should inspire us to share Nepal’s sorrow and grief,” he said while praying to Buddha to “give Nepal the strength to deal with the unprecedented crisis”. He hoped the “beloved brothers” in Nepal would bounce back to life but said he felt the road to recovery would be long and arduous. The earthquake of 7.9 magnitude shook Nepal on April 25. Subsequently too, there were several tremors reported. So far, more than 7,000 people have been killed and thousands injured. The most severe damage was seen in Nepal’s capital, where buildings collapsed, burying people.



The evening culminated at the Asoka Mission, where the guests released colourful Korean lanterns.

# Dialogue on Vinaya: A first in centuries

At a two-day Dialogue on Vinaya held on March 18-19, 2015, senior monks of the Nalanda tradition based in India, and high-ranking monks of the Theravada tradition from Sri Lanka discussed Vinaya, that includes guidelines, education and discipline within the various Buddhist traditions. Organized by IBC, this historic occasion also included a meeting of the visiting Sri Lankan delegation with His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Practitioners of the faith belonging to both the traditions noted that this dialogue was taking place after hundreds of years. The known ancient texts mention congregations of this kind during the Kushan period, where the teachings would come up for discussion. But further research is called for on this matter.

Vinaya or the rules or guidelines that the Buddha passed on to his disciples, evolved in different forms, in different schools of Buddhism, as it spread through the disciples to different parts of the world. "Dialogues are imperative to iron out differences between different schools. Only when you talk to others, you understand them better and are able to work with them to create a



His Holiness the Dalai Lama greets the Most Ven. Napana Pemasiri Maha Nayake Thero, Chief Priest of the Sri Lanka Ramangna Maha Nikaya.

better world... which is why we're here to engage and learn from one another," said Buddhist monks from both the Theravada and Mahayana traditions who met in New Delhi.

At the dialogue, scholars explained their respective Vinaya sutras. It may be recalled that the first ever Buddhist council was held

soon after Buddha's parinirvana, under the patronage of King Ajatasatru. It was meant to preserve Buddha's teachings and monastic rules for monks. Most historians agree that the last great Buddhist Council in ancient times was held in 644 CE, during the reign of King Harshavardhana.

Vinaya literally means education or



Ven. Prof. Kotapitiye Rahula Mahathero, Anunayaka of the Kotte chapter of the Siam Maha Nikaya speaks during the dialogue.

## WORD GUIDE

**Samvad:** As opposed to vivad or argumentative debate, samvad allows for dialogue and sharing of multiple perspectives on the same subject by different people and institutions.

**Nalanda tradition:** The Buddhist tradition historically followed in the Indian Himalayas, Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet, China, Japan, Vietnam, Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, Russia and Mongolia. The source of this tradition which includes the Mahayana and Vajrayana schools is the ancient university of Nalanda in the present-day state of Bihar in India.

**Theravada tradition:** Based mainly on teachings of elders, this stream of Buddhism is practised mostly in Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos, Burma and Thailand.

**Vinaya:** This includes all the guidelines, teachings, disciplinary aspects, education and teachings of the Buddha including the many versions being adopted by the many different schools of Buddhism extant today.

**Parinirvana:** In Buddhism, the term *parinirvana* is commonly used to refer to nirvana-after-death, which occurs upon the death of the body of someone who has attained nirvana during their lifetime.

**Dhamma:** Buddhist teachings and natural laws.



Sri Lankan delegation prays before the Holy Buddha Relic at the National Museum in New Delhi.

discipline. It is a framework of rules within which Buddhist monks live their lives and practisedharma. Eventually, these rules were written in different languages in canonical texts and were followed by Buddhists in different parts of the world, often in dissimilar ways. Sri Lankan Buddhists follow the Theravada vinaya preserved in Pali canon, while those following Nalanda tradition, also known as Sanskrit tradition and more popularly Tibetan Buddhism, follow the Mūlasarvāstivādivinaya canon conserved in Kangyur—words of the Buddha translated in Tibetan/Bhoti language.

“Buddhists have one common goal and that is to serve humanity. If followers of Buddha come together they will be able to serve humanity in a much better way,” says Ven. Khen Rinpoche Jangchup Choeden of the prestigious and ancient Gaden Shartse College in Karnataka, India. He refers to similarities between the two Buddhist traditions in the way they follow vinaya. “Most vinaya rules are similar. For instance, in *sanghadisesa* or classification of the type of offences committed by monks there is mention that a monk cannot wrongly accuse another monk. Another similarity is that in *aniyatās*, (third level of offences) monks

should abstain from sex. These are some of the common things,” says Khen Rinpoche.

This dialogue between the two oldest Buddhist traditions have helped Theravadin Buddhists to understand their Nalanda brethren in a better way. “There was a



Ven. Khen Rinpoche Jangchup Choeden makes a point during the discourse as other members of the Nalanda tradition look on.

misconception that the Nalanda tradition practised in Tibet and Mongolia does not have a proper vinaya. Theravadins felt distant from Mulasarvasvadins. However, after the dialogue, both sides understood that there are no major differences. Both have the same vinaya tradition taught by the Buddha himself,” says Buddhist scholar Ven. Samdhong Rinpoche who also participated in this dialogue. Such was the impact of the dialogue that after talking to each other over two days, many wondered on the need of having separate traditions in Buddhism.

Anunayaka and General Secretary of the Kotte chapter of the Siyam Nikaya in Sri Lanka, Ven. Kotapittiyē Rahula, strongly feels that there is no need for different traditions as they are all alike and follow the same Vinaya. “We are all followers of the historical Buddha, but after a few centuries, we went separate ways because of etiquette. Today, we have to see why we were separated. There are not many differences between schools. Now we are discussing why we were not able to work together all this while,” he says.

However, there are minor differences between the two traditions, which are mostly related to the climate in which each of these traditions blossomed. “Tibetan Buddhists wear thicker robes, which we cannot wear in tropical weather in Sri Lanka. We use a robe



Ven. Banagala Upathissa Thero, Vice-President of IBC and President of the Mahabodhi Society of Sri Lanka, exchanges greetings with His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

that is prescribed by the Buddha. Buddhists in the north have to wear shoes and socks because of cold weather that we don't need to," explains Ven. Rahula Thero. Besides dress code, there are other minor differences that Sri Lankan monk Ven. Indrasara Thera highlights — "We have one vinaya code, *upsampada* or higher ordination. After higher ordination, a practitioner becomes a full-fledged monk. In Mulasarvastivada, the monk has a *khammavagacharya*, or external advisor for high ordination.

We don't have such teachers in our traditions," he adds.

Both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhists agree that differences can be sorted out for better coordination between the two Buddhist traditions and the dialogue should be extended to include Buddhists in different countries. ■

*Excerpts included from the Special coverage by Speaking Tree of May 3, 2015, published by the Times of India.*

*Photos: Kshipra Simon*



Senior monks of the Theravada tradition (facing) presenting their views on Vinaya to their counterparts from the Nalanda tradition.

### Delegates from Nalanda tradition

- 1) His Eminence the Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang Rinpoche (Drikung Kagyu delegate)
- 2) Most Ven. Drepung Khentri Rinpoche Lobsang Tempa [(Representative of H.E. Gaden Tri Rinpoche) Gelug delegate]
- 3) Most Ven. Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche (Gelug delegate)
- 4) Ven. Khenchen Lodro Donyo Rinpoche (Karma Kagyu delegate)
- 5) Ven. Khenpo Ogyen Tenzin (Nyinma delegate)
- 6) Ven. Khenpo Gyaltzen (Karma Kagyu delegate)
- 7) Ven. Khenpo Nima Gyaltzen (Drikung Kagyu delegate)
- 8) Ven. Khenpo Tenzin Kunga (Taklung Kagyu delegate)
- 9) Ven. Khenpo Jamyang Lekshe (Sakya delegate)
- 10) Ven. Shartse Khen Rinpoche Geshe Jangchup Choeden, (Gelug delegate)
- 11) Ven. Khangser Rinpoche (Gelug delegate)
- 12) Ven. Ponlob Thinley Nyima (Bon delegate)
- 13) Geshe Tenpa Phakchok (Assistant to Most Ven. Drepung Khentri Rinpoche)
- 14) Lama Oser Jungnay (Assistant to Ven. Khenchen Lodro Donyo Rinpoche)
- 15) Ngodup Tsering Bukhar (Translator of Ven. Khenchen Lodro Donyo Rinpoche)
- 16) Yundrung Kalsang (Assistant to Ven. Ponlob Thinley Nyima)

### Delegates from Theravada tradition

1. Most Venerable Napana Pemasiri Mahanayake Thero, Mahanayake Ramanya Nikaya
2. Venerable Dr. Itthapana Dhammalankara Mahanayake Thero, Siyam Nikaya, Sri Jayawardenapura Kotte Sri Kalyani Samagri Dhamma Maha Sangha Sabawa
3. Venerable Thirikunamala Ananda Mahanayake Thero, Amarapura Sri Dharmarakshita Nikaya
4. Venerable Prof. Kotapitiye Rahula Thero, Anunayaka of the Kotte Chapter of the Siyam Maha Nikaya and Director, Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies
5. Venerable Anamaduwa Sri Dhammadassi Nayake Thero, General Secretary, Asgiriya Chapter
6. Venerable Dr. Godagama Mangala Thero, Principal Sri Chandananda Buddhist School, Kandy and Executive Member of Asgiriya Chapter
7. Venerable Banagala Upathissa Thero, President of the Mahabodhi Society of Sri Lanka
8. Venerable Prof. Gallele Sumanasiri Thero, Vice Chancellor, Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka
9. Venerable Prof. Ittademiye Indasara Thero, Professor, Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka

#### Assistants

10. Ven. Dakunu Doraliyadde Jinasiri Thero
11. Ven. Minipe Chandima Thero
12. Ven. Thiniyawala Dhammaratana Thero

#### Accompanied by

13. Mr. Jagath Sumathipala – President, IBC Sri Lanka Chapter
14. Dr. Daminda Porage – Coordinator, IBC Sri Lanka Chapter



## IBC joins relief efforts in Nepal

The Sri Lankan government has approved a proposal to support the re-construction of a Buddhist Monastery and a Hindu Temple damaged in the recent earthquake in Nepal. This request was placed by the Foreign Minister of Nepal. IBC Secretary General Ven. Lama Lobzang recently visited Kathmandu.

An IBC Nepal Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Committee has been set up to co-ordinate efforts by the IBC members worldwide for providing all kinds of assistance for the people of Nepal. The IBC Nepal chapter will be the implementing agency. The committee will consist of three key members of IBC: His Eminence Phakchok Rinpoche, Vice President; Ven. Khenpo Chimed, member of the Governing Council and its Working Group; and Ms. Ang Dawa Sherpa, Honorary Secretary and member, Working Group of the Governing Council. IBC Nepal is represented on the Committee by three members—Ven. Phupu Chhembe Sherpa (aka Ven. Thubten Jikdol), President, Nepal Buddhist Federation; Ven. Dharma Murti, Vice President, All Nepal Bhikkhu Federation; and Prof. Dr. Nareshaman Vajracharya, President, Nepal



Photo: Kishore Thukral

IBC Secretary General Ven. Lama Lobzang calling on the Ambassador of Nepal in India, His Excellency Mr. Deep Kumar Upadhyay on June 8, 2015. They discussed relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in Nepal by IBC and its member organisations from around the world.

Traditional Buddhist Association. There are also other representatives from the three traditions— Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana—making it a 10-member group.

Among the first group of IBC members to send relief material were our members from Malaysia who sent a container with 1,000 tents immediately to Ms. Shakun Sherchan, Buddhist Peoples' Rights Forum, Nepal. More containers are expected soon.

In the same spirit of extending all physical and material support, IBC Vice President, Ven. Thich Quang Ba, Founding Abbott, Van Hanh Monastery, and Sakyamuni Buddhist Centre of Australia led a nine-member delegation of Vietnamese monks and nuns from New Zealand and Australia to Nepal from June 9 to 15. The Quake Relief Mission brought gifts and funds from lay Buddhist community, which were distributed among around 3,000 severely affected families in the 10 most destroyed districts of Nepal.

IBC Secretary General Ven. Lama Lobzang joined the group in Kathmandu to co-ordinate the works and for supervising the setting up of committees. Describing the scenes of devastation, he said, "I was shocked to see frightened people all around. Destruction apart, there was a total breakdown of the human spirit when confronted by such phenomena of nature.



Some pictures of the devastation caused by the earthquake to temples and monasteries



## KNOW YOUR PATRON



### **His Holiness Late Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara Sangharaja - Supreme Patriarch Thailand**

Late His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara Suvaddhana Mahathera was the 19th Supreme Patriarch of Thailand. He held the position from 1989

to 2013, until his sad demise due to blood infection following surgery for an intestinal infection. During his more than 70 years as a monk and novice, Somdet Nyanasamvara held a variety of posts in the Thai ecclesiastic hierarchy. In these roles, he has always been concerned with 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 communities. As abbot of Wat Bovoranives, he oversaw the renovation and expansion of this famed century-old monastery.



### **His Holiness Phra Achan Maha Phong Samaleuk - Sangharaja & Acting President, Lao Buddhist Fellowship Organisation, Laos**

Though the buildings were standing, but the structures had become very weak, and the people were extremely frightened to go inside their homes. With one slight tremor the entire building would fall apart. Everyone was sleeping outdoors or inside tents at night. These structures have to be brought down and built anew," he said.

"I was told that at one place around 500-600 people had died. There was not a single person to perform the last rites. There were machines digging up and around 40-50 people were being moved by machines and buried in these huge pits. There was no manpower to physically bury them. This left me stunned and speechless. I have never heard of this kind of destruction and human loss," he added.

On the relief front, he said massive amounts of relief were pouring into the country but mostly in Kathmandu. However, the far flung remote areas, especially those that are inaccessible had been left out. IBC is targeting remote areas for support and relief work through its local members. The relief material was based on reports sent by IBC members in Nepal after studying the requirement. Local logistics support is being provided by Ven. Khenpo Chimed and monks from the Shanti Vihara.

Ven. Lama Lobzang called on the Ambassador of Nepal in India, His Excellency Mr. Deep Kumar Upadhyay, in New Delhi on June 8, 2015. They discussed relief, rehabilitation and

reconstruction efforts in Nepal by IBC and its member organizations.

The Ambassador suggested that IBC members should henceforth contribute money instead of material since the cost of transporting the material can be enormous and, therefore, a waste under the present circumstance. He said that the Government of Nepal is shortly going to announce what kind of contribution is required for reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Further, the Nepalese government will soon be holding an expo in Kathmandu where various agencies and companies will display construction materials, including prefab material. He suggested that IBC



Nepal should depute a team to visit the expo and see for itself the availability of materials and the cost involved per unit. This could then be communicated to all member organizations with the request that they contribute money towards specific reconstruction projects. ■

**Text: Vichitra Sharma**  
**Photos: Ven. Khenpo Chimed**





## KNOW YOUR PATRON



### His Holiness Thich Pho Tue - Supreme Patriarch of All Vietnam Buddhist Sangha

General Thich Pho Tue as third legal owner of the Buddhist Church of Vietnam. Born in Khanh Tien Yen Khanh district, Ninh Binh province. He has made major contribution in many research projects, compilation, translation, creation of dictionary on Buddhism for the University Tripitaka, Vietnam.



### His Holiness Samdech Preah Agga Maha Sangharajadhipati Tep Vong - the Great Supreme Patriarch of Cambodia

His Holiness Samdech Preah Agga Maha Sangharadhipati, the Great Supreme Patriarch of Cambodia. In 2006, H.H. Tep Vong was elevated to the title of Samdech Preah Agga Mahā Sangharājādhipati or Great Supreme Patriarch. He is the first monk in over 150 years to receive this title. He has been actively involved in re-establishing Buddhist educational institutions, reconstructing the Buddhist Sangha Administrative Structure from the national level to the temple level throughout the country, establishing a new institute of monks called Sangha Governing Board for all the provinces of Cambodia, and constructing many Buddhist schools—the monastic schools; roads, bridges, stupas, temples and hospitals. He has participated in many international conferences, General Assembly of Religions with world religious leaders and State leaders.

## IBC delegation meets President of Sri Lanka

An IBC delegation, led by the Secretary General, Ven. Lama Lobzang called on the President of Sri Lanka, His Excellency Mr. Maithripala Sirisena at his residence in Colombo on 13 June 2015. Other members of the delegation were Deputy Secretary General, Dr Harsha Kumara Navaratne, and President of the IBC, Sri Lanka chapter, Mr. Jagath Sumathipala.

The delegation requested the President to be Chief Guest at the proposed 150<sup>th</sup> year celebrations in India to mark the birth of the Sri Lankan reformer and revivalist, Anagarika Dharmapala, who founded the Maha Bodhi Society of India in 1891, and is credited with having revived Buddhism and Buddhist heritage in the country. The President accepted the request and promised a date in early October 2015.



President of Sri Lanka, His Excellency Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, receiving a memento from IBC Secretary General Ven. Lama Lobzang.

The exact dates will be communicated by his office shortly.

The IBC delegation also discussed the proposed setting up of the twin Anagarika Dharmapala Centres for Buddhist Studies and Comparative Philosophies in India and Sri Lanka. The President assured them that the preliminary proposal would be forwarded to the Ministry of Buddhasasana and Religious Affairs, and suggested that in the meantime IBC should prepare a detailed proposal. ■

*With inputs from Jagath Sumathipala*

## ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA CENTRE FOR STUDIES

Anagarika Dharmapala (17 September 1864 – 29 April 1933) was a Buddhist revivalist and writer from Sri Lanka who is credited with having pioneered the revival of Buddhism in India, where Buddhism had been almost extinct for centuries. He is also known to be the first Buddhist in modern times who preached Buddhism in three continents, namely Asia, Europe and North America. As reformer and revivalist, Anagarika Dharmapala's work is symbolic of the symbiotic relationship that has existed between India and Sri Lanka for centuries.

About 2,600 years ago while sitting beneath the Bodhi Tree, after six years of strenuous practice to discover the path that leads to the end of suffering caused by greed, anger and hatred, and ignorance, Prince Siddhartha became the Buddha, attaining Full Enlightenment. In 1891 Dharmapala visited the Bodh Gaya Temple and the Sri Maha Bodhi tree and seeing the neglected condition of the temple vowed to rescue the holy place. He founded the Maha Bodhi Society of India, of which academicians Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee and Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee were later Presidents. Dr. Mookerjee was later one of the founders of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. The society aimed at the revival of Buddhism in India and restoration of the ancient Buddhist shrines in Bodhgaya, Sarnath and Kushinagar. Anagarika spent the rest of his life to preserve the historical sites in India where the Buddha taught and lived; to protect the Buddhasasana in Sri Lanka; and to disseminate the Dhamma throughout the world.

In 1893 Anagarika attended the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago representing the Maha Bodhi Society and the Buddhist world giving a speech, The World's Debt to Buddha thoroughly impressing the participants. His well received lectures opened the eyes of Western intelligentsia to the greatness of Buddha Dhamma. It is here that he met another philosopher saint Swami Vivekananda from India. The bonding



## KNOW YOUR PATRON



**His Holiness Dr. Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa - Sangharaja, and Chairman State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, Myanmar**

### **Aggamaha Pandita Davuldena Gnanissara Maha Nayaka Thero - Mahanayaka Thero, The Supreme Prelate of the Amarapura Maha Nikaya, Sri Lanka**



The Most Ven. was born on December 31, 1915 in Dauldena, Uwa Paranagama, Sri Lanka. The Thero received his early education from Medawela Sri Gunarathana Madya Maha Vidyalaya and after graduating as Rajakeeya Panditha from Vidyodaya Pirivena Monastery, he wrote many great pieces of literature—prose, verse and Prashasthi that are still read by Buddhist students. He has held many positions and titles, both nationally and internationally including the Chancellorship of Pali and Buddhist University, Sri Lanka. The Thero, throughout his serene life, has held almost all the titles a Buddhist monk can hold such as Chief Incumbent, Anu Nayake, Maha Nayake and Supreme Patriarch. His Eminence has done immense service to propagate Buddha Dharma in the world and is the recipient of many awards.

## IN BUDDHISM AND COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHIES



**At the Parliament of World Religions. From left to right: Virchand Gandhi, Anagarika Dharmapala, Swami Vivekananda, and G. Bonet Maury.**

between the two laid the foundation for a lasting relationship between Hinduism and Buddhism, between Dharma and Dhamma and above all between India and Sri Lanka.

The two governments have since released stamps on Swami Vivekananda and Anagarika Dharmapala and observed the 150th birth anniversaries of the two noble figures of history. We will be failing in our duty if we do not do enough to commemorate the memory of these two and also carry forward the cause they have laid down for our two societies.

With this in view, the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) proposes to set up the Anagarika Dharmapala Centre for Studies in Buddhism and Comparative Philosophies in India. A similar centre may be set up in Sri Lanka as a follow up. It will permanently house an exhibition on Anagarika Dharmapala, and display his works. The Centre will also organize an annual Anagarika Dharmapala lecture on topical subjects from a Buddhist perspective. ■

## Meeting with new Maha Nayake of Asgiriya

**I**BC Secretary General Ven. Lama Lobzang visited the newly appointed Maha Nayake Thero of Asgiriya Chapter, Most Ven. Galagama Aththadassi Maha Nayake Thero, in Kandy, Sri Lanka, on June 14, 2015. In this meeting Ven. Lobzang explained IBC's role to the Maha Nayake Thero and its current activities.

Further Ven. Lobzang invited the Maha Nayake Thero to serve in the Supreme Dharma council as the successor of the late Maha Nayake Most Ven. Udugama Sri Buddharakkhitha Thero.

The newly appointed Maha Nayake Thero expressed his extreme satisfaction on what the IBC is doing and accepted the invitation of Ven. Lama Lobzang. The Maha Nayake Thero promised to extend his fullest support to the IBC and blessed Ven. Lama Lobzang, the IBC and its membership in the name of Lord Buddha's Holy Relics deposited at the ancient Mahiyangana Sthupa premises that the Buddha visited himself after nine months of his enlightenment. The Maha Nayake Thero is the Chief Incumbent Thero and the Custodian of the ancient Mahiyangana Sthupa. ■

**Text & Photos: Dr. Damenda Porage**



**IBC Secretary General Ven. Lama Lobzang (left) visiting the Maha Nayake Thero of Asgiriya Chapter, Most Ven. Galagama Aththadassi Maha Nayake Thero.**



## KNOW YOUR PATRON

### His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama Tenzing Gyatso

The 14th Dalai Lama (religious name: Tenzin Gyatso, shortened from Jetsun Jamphel Ngawang Lobsang Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso, born Lhamo Dondrub, 6 July 1935) is the 14th and current Dalai Lama, as well as the longest lived incumbent. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, and is well known for his advocacy for Tibetans. His Holiness has travelled to more than 67 countries spanning 6 continents. He has received over 150 awards in recognition of his message of peace, non-violence, inter-religious understanding, universal responsibility and compassion. He has also authored or co-authored more than 110 books. His Holiness has held dialogues with heads of different religions and participated in many events promoting inter-religious harmony and understanding. Since the mid-1980s, His Holiness has begun a dialogue with modern scientists, mainly in the fields of psychology, neurobiology, quantum physics and cosmology. This has led to a historic collaboration between Buddhist monks and world-renowned scientists in trying to help individuals achieve peace of mind. This has also led to the introduction of modern science in the traditional curriculum of Tibetan monastic institutions re-established in exile.



awareness about IBC, Buddhism as a part of the secular curriculum in education, membership and chapter formation, setting up a directory, communication with members in Chinese and the UN Day of Vesak celebrations.

It was proposed that having a detailed operational plan for 3 to 5 years was important as on its basis IBC would be able to approach prospective partners and funders. The group suggested that “We should prepare an Operational Plan under separate heads, and categorize each activity according to the Aims and Objects as mentioned in the IBC constitution.”

While allowing the use of the IBC logo by another organization for a joint programme, publication or otherwise, the relationship of the organization with IBC must be ascertained, i.e. whether the said organization is a partner/member/chapter of IBC. Chapters of IBC in different countries will use the IBC logo. However if another organization has been appointed as the IBC chapter in a particular country, it may use its own logo along with the IBC logo. For instance, since the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism is now an IBC chapter, it may use its own logo as well as the IBC logo for programmes, publications, and other

## Governing Council’s Working Group Meets

The Working Group set up by the Governing Council of IBC held a two-day meeting on 19 and 20 April 2015 to discuss several pending issues including operational issues, forging partnerships, Amendments to the IBC Constitution, Member-

ship and Chapter Formation, Fundraising and functioning of the working group.

The other areas for discussion were planning new activities and looking at the proposed activities, use of IBC logo, foreign contributions, creating



Meeting of the Working Group set up by the IBC Governing Council in progress. (Photos: Amos Simon)

such materials organized and brought out by it as IBC's South Korea chapter.

There is need for a directory listing out the seniority and hierarchy of monks. It was pointed out that during the Dialogue on Vinaya between senior monks of the Theravada tradition from Sri Lanka and senior monks of the Nalanda tradition, organized by IBC in March 2015, there was confusion regarding the seniority and hierarchy of monks. It was, therefore, suggested that a directory be prepared that would list the names and designations of senior monks and heads of traditions or lineage holders in order of their seniority. This would help the Secretariat as well as member organizations in following the proper protocol. For this, it was agreed that the various chapters and big member organizations in different countries will be requested to start working on the directory

Awareness about the relevance of



## KNOW YOUR PATRON

### His Holiness Jinje -beopwon- 13th Supreme Patriarch of Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, South Korea

The Great Seon Master His Holiness Jinje-Beopwon is the spiritual leader of Korean Buddhism, which is composed of 20,000 monks and twenty million lay people. He was appointed unanimously to be the 13th Supreme Patriarch at the Council of Elders election on December 14, 2011. Master Jinje's five year-term began on March, 2012. Supreme Patriarch Jinje stated in his acceptance speech, "I am very grateful that great masters from the Council of Elders have chosen me as the leader to represent the Jogye Order" and added, "I will follow suggestions from the Council of Elders to create peaceful future for Korean Buddhism. I will try my best to spread Ganhwa Seon, the essence of oriental spiritual culture, and to contribute to World Peace." His long-term goal is to share Korean Buddhism and Ganhwa Seon with the whole world and to contribute to the realization of world peace.



#### The meeting was attended by:

1. Ven. Lama Lobzang (Secretary General)	Chairman
2. His Eminence T.K. Lochen Tulku Rinpoche (Vice President)	Member
3. Mr Jamie Cresswell (Vice President)	Member
4. Prof. B. Mungekar (Deputy Secretary General)	Member
5. Dr Harsha Kumara Navaratne (Deputy Secretary General)	Member
6. Mrs Ang Dawa Sherpa (Honorary Secretary)	Member
7. Dr Gregory Kruglak (Honorary Secretary)	Member
8. Ven. Bhikku Sanghasena Mahathera (Treasurer)	Member
9. Ven. Khenpo Chimed (Executive Member of the Governing Council)	Member
10. Dr Damenda Porage (Executive Member of the Governing Council)	Member
11. Mr Seshadri Chari	Invitee
12. Mr Ashok K. Wangdi	Invitee
13. Mr Kishore Thukral (Executive Director, Communications)	Ex-officio
14. Ms Vichitra Sharma (Coordinator, PR and Media)	Ex-officio

Buddha's teachings to issues of present-day human concern is extremely important. IBC needs to organize programmes in association with the countries keeping in mind local conditions and needs. However, in regions and countries where Buddhism is already being discussed, it would be difficult for IBC to become a part of the dialogue, it was pointed out. For instance in the United Kingdom, IBC can create awareness about itself by organizing events such as talks, concerts, cultural performances, and so on to garner donations and funds.

Members were informed that IBC is completing three years since its registration and is, therefore, expecting its FCRA clearance in November 2015.

An Advisor to the Working Group was

appointed. Ven. Lama Lobzang requested Mr Seshadri Chari to accept the honorary position of Advisor to the Working Group of the Governing Council of IBC. Mr Chari has vast experience in the NGO sector, both within India and internationally, and is well versed with the laws governing registered societies. He is also well respected within government circles, and will, therefore, be a great asset to the organization. He has also been advising the Secretary General as well as the Secretariat of late in various matters. The appointment of Mr Seshadri Chari as Advisor to the Working Group of the Governing Council was unanimously welcomed and approved by members of the Working Group. ■

**With inputs from Kishore Thukral**



## KNOW YOUR PATRON



### His Eminence Khamba Lama Damba Ayushev - Supreme Head of Russian Buddhists, Buryat Republic, Russian Federation

His Eminence Khamba Lama (Dam Badmaevich Ayushev) was born on September 1, 1962 in village Shergoldzh in Krasnochikoisky district, Chita region.

In 1980 he graduated from Petrovsk Zabaikalskoe pedagogical school. He worked as Emchi Lama in Ivolginsky Datsan. In 1991 he was appointed Shireete Baldan Lama Datsans, Breybun village, Murochi Kyahntinsky District, Republic of Buryatia, the first Datsans based in Russia and ethnic Buryatia. On April 28, 1995, he was elected XXIV Khambo Lama, chairman of the Central Spiritual Directorate of Russian Buddhists, whose legal successor is the Buddhist Traditional Sangha of Russia. In August 1995 he was elected as member of the Council for Cooperation with Religious Organizations under the President of the Russian Federation. In 1998 he was included in the Presidium of the Interreligious Council of Russia.

### His Holiness Sanghanayaka Sudhananda Mahathero - President, Bangladesh Buddha Kristi Prachar Sangha and Lord Abbot, Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery

He became His Holiness 28th Sanghanayaka and Supreme Patriarch of Bangladesh in 2012.

His preceptor is Late H. H. Mahasanghanayaka Visuddhananda Mahathero, a renowned world-fame Buddhist Sangha Leader of Bangladesh. He is currently serving as a member of many national and international Buddhist organisations and is one of the founding members of the IBC. He has also been honoured with many awards and titles including Mahatma Gandhi Peace Award in 2007, a Letter of Appreciation for Humanistic Service-UNICEF, Letter of Appreciation for Social Welfare Service- Sri Lanka, Peace Gold Medal- India and Messenger of Peace title- Bangladesh.



## OBITUARY / L.S. Cousins



With the death of Lance Cousins, we have lost a man whose life was devoted to both the study and the practice of Buddhist meditation and theory. He will be deeply missed, and the effects of his life's work long-lasting.

Lance Selwyn Cousins was born in 1942 in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. He attended Letchworth Grammar and Hales Grammar. In 1961 he won a scholarship to read History at St John's College, Cambridge. He changed to Oriental Studies, though a historical perspective never left his academic work. Whilst at Cambridge, he had met the man whom he regarded as his lifelong teacher. Boonman Poonyathiro (1932–) had trained at Wat Pailom in various forms of *samatha* practice at that time popular throughout Thailand. In Britain Boonman taught a variation on a traditional Thai practice based on *samatha* breathing mindfulness, the meditation said by the commentaries to have been undertaken by the Buddha on the night of the awakening. Lance instinctively felt that he had found a practice true to the Buddha's original teachings on meditation. During this time Lance was involved with setting up the Samatha Trust and became its founding chairman (1973–1999). His success perhaps lay most in the one-to-one discussion that lies at the heart of the way this form of meditation is taught.

Whilst often busy with academic and personal teaching, Lance wrote some seminal articles, on oral literature, meditation and *jhāna*, during this time. He always felt, however, that he would like to pursue more academic research. Lance took early retirement and in 2000 moved to Oxford. He became a member of common room (2001–2007, 2009–2015) and a supernu-

merary fellow (2007–2009) at Wolfson College. He was made a member of the Faculty of Theology at Oxford University, where he taught and lectured on Pāli and Buddhist Studies.

At Oxford he undertook a considerable amount of academic work. He wrote extensively on *Abhidhamma*, Buddhist meditation, Pāli, Middle Indian and Buddhist Sanskrit textual studies, and the history of early Buddhist schools, particularly in the Southern Buddhist Tradition. Always primarily interested in the common sources of the modern meditative traditions, he had a special interest in Sanskrit Buddhist sources. He was working on a number of projects at the time of his death. He did not complete his translation of the *Abhidhammāvatāra*. A long-term planner, however, he left complete drafts of two books: a translation of the *Yamaka* and its commentary with Charles Shaw, and a history of aspects of Buddhist meditation. He knew that after two major heart attacks, he might not see these published. All through, he sustained his strong connections with the living traditions in South and Southeast Asia. He spent periods of practice, teaching and research in Sri Lanka and Thailand and encouraged the Samatha group learning chanting with Ajahn Maha Laow to make tours in Thailand. In all, his death, the day after completing teaching of a five-term Pāli course, finally studying the commentary of *Jarasutta* (the 'Discourse on Old Age'), came at a time of contented study, discussion and teaching.

His body remained at the Oxford Buddha Vihāra, where full funerary *Abhidhamma* chanting was performed. Ajahn Dhammasāmi presided over his funeral, which included chanting, recital of the *Mettā Sutta* in English, and recollections from his daughter. At the reception at Wolfson afterwards, Professor Richard Gombrich discussed his career as an academic, Dr Paul Dennison his association with the Samatha Trust, Professor Rupert Gethin his role as a teacher, and Dr Rajith Dissanayake his strong Sri Lankan connections. The family recounted memories from childhood. ■ **Contributed by Keith Munnings**

# Korean Ambassador visits Bodh Gaya

The IBC, as part of its mandate of serving as a platform for preserving, developing and promoting the shared spiritual and cultural heritage, facilitated the visit of the Korean Ambassador and his delegation to the holy city of Bodh Gaya and the adjoining Buddhist pilgrimage destinations- Nalanda, Rajgir and Dhungeshwari.

The Korean delegation was led by His Excellency Joongyu Lee, the Ambassador of Korea, and included Mr. Kimkum-pyoung, Director Counselor, and Mr. Sunil Rawat, External Manager of the Korean Culture Centre, Delhi.

The Korean visit to Bodh Gaya gained added significance as it was a 'research visit' to understand the significance of Buddhism and Bodh Gaya prior to the State visit of the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Korea. This was a familiarization and fact-finding exercise for the Korean delegation for briefing the Korean government prior to the high level visit.

The IBC hosted a dinner in honour of the delegation where they held a meeting with senior officers of the Bihar government. Those present were the Commissioner, Magadh Division, Gaya, Mr. R. K. Khandelwal and the District Magistrate & Collector, Gaya District Mr. Sanjay Kumar Agarwal. The IBC team was led by His Eminence Lochen Tulku Rinpoche, Vice President with Ms. Vichitra Sharma the PR and Media coordinator. Also present was eminent Korean Monk, Ven. Pomnyun, founder of the Korean NGO- Join Together Society (JTS) in Dhungeshwari with other members of the NGO.

Venerable Pomnyun, a Ramon Magsaysay award recipient, has an NGO since 1991 where he runs educational, medical and village development programmes for about 10,000 village people in Dhungeshwari who are among the most backward in Bihar.

Earlier in the day, Ambassador Joongyu Lee addressed the press and also fielded a few questions from the media. To the delight of

## KNOW YOUR PATRON

### His Eminence Rev. Khamba Lama Gabju Choijams Demberel - The Supreme Head of Mongolian Buddhist

His Eminence Rev. Khamba Lama is the title given to the senior lama of a Buddhist monastery in Mongolia and Russia. The current Khamba Lama since 1992 is the Supreme Leader of the Center of All Mongolian Buddhists and Abbot of Gandantegchinling Monastery. It currently has over 150 monks in residence. It features a 26.5-meter-high statue of Migjid Janraisig, a Buddhist bodhisattva also known as Avalokitesvara. During the communist rule in Mongolia, Gandantegchinlen Khiid monastery escaped the mass destruction which other monasteries faced but was closed in 1938, then reopened in 1944 and allowed to continue as the only functioning Buddhist monastery, as a gesture to traditional Mongolian culture and religion. With the end of Marxism in Mongolia in 1990, restrictions on worship were lifted. Khamba Lama is also the President of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace.



the Bihar media Mr. Lee mentioned that he too has some Indian ancestry. He narrated the story of how a Princess from Ayodhya who had arrived in a boat to Korea had married King Suro of Geumgwang Gaya. She, Heo Hwang-ok was the first queen of Geumgwang Gaya, and is considered an ancestor by several Korean lineages. He said almost 30 per cent of the Koreans have this Queen's ancestry. The King's family takes the name of Kim and as such the Heo and the Kims do not marry as they consider themselves as sisters and brothers. Both the Ambassador and the Director Counselor, he mentioned have some Indian DNA.

The Ambassador said for the Buddhists around the world Bodh Gaya was their spiritual home. The coming visit to Korea of the Indian Prime Minister will reinforce the traditional cultural and civilizational linkages between the two countries and also further develop economic and social ties. ■

**Text: Vichitra Sharma**



(Left) At the Maha Bodhi Temple His Excellency Joongyu Lee, the Ambassador of Korea and Mr. Kimkum-pyoung, Director Counsellor, (4th and 5th from left) with Mr. Nangzey Dorjee, the Secretary of Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee (BTMC), the BTMC Monk on duty, Venerable Pomnyun, founder of the Korean NGO- Join Together Society (JTS) in Dhungeshwari and His Eminence Lochen Tulku Rinpoche, IBC Vice President, and Ms Vichitra Sharma, IBC Coordinator, PR and Media. (Right) The Commissioner, Magadh Division, Gaya, Mr. R. K. Khandelwal presenting a memento- a replica of the Maha Bodhi Temple to H.E. Joongyu Lee, the Ambassador of Korea with Mr. Sanjay Kumar Agarwal, the District Magistrate and Collector, Gaya District.



## Buddhist Heritage in Tripura

Archaeological explorations and excavations have substantiated two Buddhist centres in the north-east Indian state of Tripura. One of them is located at Shyam Sundar Tila in South Tripura district and the other site is located at Boxanagar in West Tripura district.

The ancient mound, locally known as Shyam Sundar Tila, is located in south Jolaibari, Belonia sub-division of South Tripura district. The mound is situated on the west bank of the Pillak *nala* which flows a few metres away from the site and is surrounded by a cultivable plain landmass with alluvial soil cover.

The mound at present is spread over 1,260 sq.m., but due to gradual encroachment by the local people, it has already lost considerable area. The archaeological importance of the mound can be seen from the discovery of two stone images of Avalokitesvara and a number of terracotta plaques depicting figures of animal, birds, etc. Some of the plaques are now displayed in the State Museum at Agartala.

The site was first explored in a joint survey by ASI and the State Cultural and Tourism Department of Tripura in 1965-66 under the guidance of A. Ghosh of the Archaeological Survey of India and S. Banerjee, Director of Education, Government of Tripura. The ASI subsequently carried out limited excavation in 1984-85 and later a comprehensive excavation was undertaken from 1998-2001 and complete plan of the brick-built stupa was expressed along with discovery of large number of terracotta plaques. The stupa, cruciform on plan, is almost identical to the Paharpur stupa in Bangladesh.

The brick-built stupa is *pancharatha* on plan intervened by the four wide openings in four cardinal directions. There are two *pradaksbhinapathas*, one at the outer edge of the stupa while the other is the inner *pradaksbhinapatha* close round the *medhi*, the extant remains of which were found up to 1.70 m from its floor level.

The beauty of the stupa is enhanced by friezes of terracotta plaques comprising Dhyanī Buddha and various gods of Brahmanical pantheon like Ganesha, Narasimha and other divine figures. A



Brick-built stupa at Boxanagar, Tripura.

number of terracotta plaques also depict contemporary socio-cultural scenes such as musicians, drummers, dancers, *gandharvas*, *kinnaras*, archers, warriors and human figures besides a number of plaques depicting the faunal and floral motifs. Mention may be made of plaques depicting duck, parrot, peacock, eagle, snakes, fish, makara, elephant, tiger, lion, camel, fox, deer, bull, buffalo and monkey.

Among the stone sculptures, mention may be made of Buddhist deities and Avalokitesvara Padmapani made on fragile sandstone standing in *samapada* posture over a carved lotus. The left hand of the figure is shown holding a *padma* while the right hand is in *varada mudra*. The divine figure is flanked by two devotees, one of them is a male figure shown in clubbed hands in *anjali mudra* while the other is a female figure standing in *samapada* posture over the basement. Stylistic features of the image show a resemblance with the Pala School of art and can be assigned to c. 9<sup>th</sup> century CE.

The structural mound at Boxanagar is located on the northern bank of a rivulet named *Harimangal* and is about 40 km west of state capital Agartala, in the West Tripura district near the Indo-Bangladesh border. The adjoining areas along the border are full of archaeological remains

especially in the adjacent Comilla districts, Bangladesh, formerly known as Tipperah.

The structural activity at the mound is spread over an area of about three acres. The excavation work was undertaken in the south-western corner of the mound which revealed a massive brick-built stupa of *trivatha* plan. The stupa consists of a large basement and is made of eight mouldings with gradual decreasing order in upward direction, over which the gradually tapering *medhi* is beautifully set with burnt bricks with the help of mud mortar. Evidence of the collapsed portion of the *harmika* is noticed on the western side of the stupa. The cause of the damage may be attributed to natural factors. The chamber of the *harmika* is also square in plan.

In the second season, a *chaityagriha* came to light on the eastern side of the stupa. The plan of the exposed *chaityagriha* is rectangular and aligned in east-west direction. The superstructure is damaged except for the side wall which has survived approximately 1.65 m from the foundation level. The construction pattern of the *chaityagriha* appears very simple. It shows that the larger rectangular plan encloses a proportionately smaller rectangular structure, leaving a gap of 1.40m on three sides. The walls of the *chaityagriha* are joined with the walls of the stupa on one

side. The walls are thick, measuring up to 1.25m which might have supported the superstructure. The central vacant space might have been used for congregation of the devotees for prayers. The walls are robbed at many places. Only 28 extant courses of burnt bricks have been found. Mud mortar has been used for joining the burnt bricks in the structure. A small staircase was provided on the eastern side of the structure to enter the *chaityagriha*.

Excavation of the central chamber of the stupa yielded about 150 clay sealings of Buddhist creed. A number of clay votive stupas were also found. A notable discovery was a clay figurine of a headless Buddhist deity with four hands seated in *padmasana*.

Antiquities found from the *chaityagriha* are mainly of terracotta comprising mostly bricks with *kumuda* motifs, fragments of two vases, one terracotta spindle whorl, hopscotch, one iron pin, etc.

A small quantity of redware sherds of coarse to fine fabric, mostly wheel-turned were found from the site. Majority of the shapes are represented by vases and *handis* of different variety made of the fine levigated clay and well burnt. Most of the sherds are plain, devoid of external decorations but some of the sherds found had external impressions like the back of a tortoise, etc.

Since the structural remains of the *chaityagriha* are interlocked with the stupa,



Views of the excavated remains at Shyam Sundar Tila, South Tripura District.

it suggests that both belong to the same phase. The date of the stupa is tentatively ascertained from the stylistic pattern of the writings of the Buddhist creeds found in the clay sealings. Considering the paleography of the writing and the ceramic assemblages found in the vicinity of the *chaityagriha*, it can be presumed that the *chaityagriha* is contiguous to the stupa and stylistically can be assigned to circa 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century CE.

It will not be out of place to mention here that the copper plate inscription which was found during the course of excavation at Mainamati in Bangladesh provided important information about the two new dynasties of 'Devas' and 'Khadgas'. They ruled from the middle of 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century CE and seem to be contemporary to the early Palas. Excavated materials at Mainamati further revealed that the rulers of both the dynasties followed Buddhism as the state religion.

Scholars have identified the seat of the government of the Khadgas as "JayakarmantaVasaka" identified with Badakamta, a locality 12 miles west of Comilla in Bangladesh. On the other hand, the Devas set their capital at Mainamati, now located in Bangladesh. Considering all the available evidences, it appears that the Buddhist centre of Boxanagar may have belonged to the Khadgas who ruled mid-7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century CE from their capital located near Comilla. The locality of Boxanagar is hardly 4-5 km away from Comilla.

Another notable feature is the non-availability of icons, which was common with rulers of the Palas. This is despite the availability of sandstone at several places for making the icons. This suggests that the Buddhist centre was not in the domain of the Palas although on the basis of architectural details and cultural assemblage of the site, it can be hypothesized that the religious establishment at Boxanagar was perhaps much influenced by the theology of *Hinayana Buddhism* during the 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century CE. Further excavation may provide more light in this direction. However, one thing is certain—the discovery of the Buddhist centre in Boxanagar has opened a new chapter in the cultural history of Tripura. ■

**Text & Photos: Haji Dr. Syed Jamal Hasan, Director (Archaeology), ASI**

## Picturespeak



All Ladakh Gompa Association honoured Ven. Lama Lobzang with a 'Lifetime Achievement Award' on May 12, 2015, in recognition for his outstanding humanitarian service to the poor and suffering of the entire Himalayan region. As President of the Asoka Mission, the Venerable started the Medicare Initiative. Ladakhis come to Delhi with varied problems and the Venerable has helped each one of them. Noteworthy are those relating to higher referrals in medical emergencies and serious or chronic illnesses, whom the Venerable has personally accompanied to the hospitals for medical treatment. He has also over the years taken doctors from Delhi to organize health camps in Ladakh and its remote reaches.



An IBC delegation from India took part in the 'Conference on World Peace and Reunification of Korea' organized by the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism. Members of the Indian delegation were Dr. Bhalchandra Mungekar, IBC Deputy Secretary General, Mr. Thupstan Chhewang, both Parliamentarians, and Mr. Shatrughna Singh and Mr. Sachidanand Singh, members of the Sakya community. The Sakya community traces its origins to the Sakya clan to which Buddha Sakyamuni himself belonged.



Maha Bodhi Temple, Bodh Gaya.

Photo by Himanshu Joshi

**T**he 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.



**INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST CONFEDERATION**

Collective Wisdom United Voice

## Mission

To gather the collective wisdom of Buddhists around the world to speak with a united Buddhist voice; to make Buddhist values part of global engagement while working to preserve and promote Buddhist heritage, traditions and practices.

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