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Buddha's teachings propel India's actions



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing lakhs of national and international devotees and others on the day of Buddha Pournima through the virtual Vesak Global Celebrations in New Delhi, India

Lord Buddha's message and resolve to remove the difficulty of every life has always shown direction to India's civilization and culture, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing lakhs of devotees and others on the day of Buddha Purnima (7th May 2020). The Sakhyamuni enriched the culture of India. In his life after enlightenment, he also

enriched the lives of many others around the world, as well. His message is not limited to any one circumstance, or to any one subject, the Prime Minister said.

Each and every word, each and every discourse of Lord Buddha underpins India's commitment to serve humanity. The Buddha symbolizes both the

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BLESSINGS FOREVER

IBC mourns passing away of HH Sanghanayaka of Bangladesh

The IBC deeply mourns the passing away of His Holiness Sanghanayaka Suddhananda Mahathero (15 Jan 1933 – 3 Mar 2020) President of Bangladesh Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha.

His Holiness was an esteem Patron of IBC, whose blessings and wisdom have guided the IBC in its endeavours to give shape to the dreams and aspirations of millions of our brothers and sisters of the Buddha Dharma all over the world.

page 8...

Covid -19 compelled IBC to hold Virtual Visak Celebrations

The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) in association with Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee (BTMC), IBC chapters and several partner organizations had put together a unique and blessed opportunity to witness and participate in the ceremonies and prayers from the most sacred sites of Buddha Dharma- Lumbini in Nepal, Bodhgaya,

Sarnath and Kushinagar. The Secretary General of IBC, Ven. Dr. Dhammapiya, the Convenor of the National Buddha Pournima Celebrations explained "We were compelled to organise a Virtual Visak day because of Covid-19 obligations.

He welcomed the Supreme heads of the Sanghas from Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar,

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Buddha's teachings propel India's actions

Enlightenment of India and the Self-Realization of India. With this self-realization, India is and will continue to work for the benefit of the entire humanity, the whole world. India's progress will always be of help to the progress of the world.

Prime Minister Modi was presenting a virtual keynote address to national and international audience for the Vesak Global Celebrations organised by the International Buddhist Confederation in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, in association with Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee (BTMC), partner chapters and with the participation of all the supreme heads of the Buddhist Sanghas from around the world.

Greeting all a Very Happy Buddha Purnima, many happy Vesak celebrations "to everyone and the followers of Lord Buddha spread all over the world," he recalled that it was his good fortune, that on "this sacred day, I meet you and seek blessings from all of you. I got many

"The International Buddhist organization deserve praise for organizing a virtual Vesak Buddha Purnima Day in these difficult circumstances of lockdown. Due to your innovative efforts, millions of followers from all over the world are joining each other in this event"



Theravada monks and school children praying during the prayer week at the Dhamma Dipa Vihara, Agartala, Tripura

such opportunities on earlier occasions. I was a part of the celebrations with you in 2015 and 2018 in Delhi, and in 2017 in Colombo.

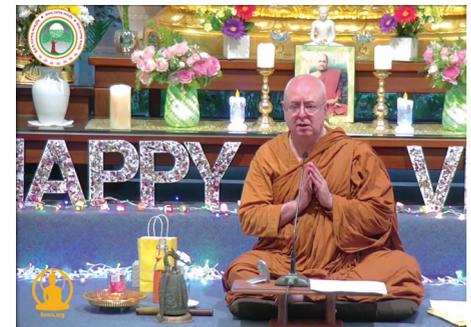
The International Buddhist organization deserve praise for organizing a virtual Vesak Buddha Purnima Day in these difficult circumstances of lockdown. Due to your innovative efforts, millions of followers from all over the world are joining each other in this event. Besides Lumbini, Bodh Gaya, Sarnath and Kushinagar, the integration of ceremonies taking place at Sri Anuradhapura Stupa and Vaskaduwa Temple in Sri Lanka, are really very beautiful," he said.

However, the circumstances this time are quite different, he noted, adding "So we are unable to meet face to face. Though remotely located, with the help of technology, we are getting an opportunity to interact with each other, and I should say that this is satisfying enough."

Lord Buddha said –

**मनो पुब्बं-गमा धम्मा,
मनोसंढा मनोमया,**

It means, Dhamma – the religion exists in the mind, Mind is supreme. It leads all actions. It is the mind that connects me with you. That is why, the lack of physical



He reminded everyone of the Three Refuges and Five Precepts in Buddhism to face these difficult times

Most Ven Ajahan Brahmavamsa Mahathera
Abbot, Bodhinyana Monastery,
Buddhist Society of Western Australia

presence is not so felt. "It would be a great pleasure to be among you, but now the circumstances are not favourable," the Prime Minister said.

Online streaming of worship programs being held everywhere is in itself an amazing experience. You have pledged to celebrate this event as a prayer week



Mahayana Chanting by Young Monks of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Centre of Mongolian Buddhist, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

for the frontline warriors from all over the world who are fighting the Corona global epidemic. I commend you for this compassionate initiative.

For many centuries, before and after Siddhartha's birth, after the turning of Siddhartha into Gautama, the cycle of time continues to rotate taking us through many situations and circumstances.

Time changed, the situation changed, the functioning of society changed, but the message of Lord Buddha has been continuously flowing in our lives. It was possible only because Buddha is not just a name, but also a sacred thought, a thought that beats in every human heart, guides humanity. Buddha is the limit to renunciation and penance.

Buddha is synonymous with service and dedication. Buddha, with a strong will power, is the climax of social change. Buddha is the one who is devoted to perseverance, self-sacrificing, and spreading joy all over the world.

And look at the good fortune of all of us, at this time we are seeing many people around us, who serve others, treat a patient, feed a poor person, clean a hospital, maintain law and order on a road, they are all working round the clock. In India, outside India, every such person

deserves a salute, a tribute.

सुप्प बुद्धं पबुज्झन्ति, सदा गोतम सावका, that is, those who are engaged in the service of humanity at all times, day and night, are the true followers of Buddha. This spirit keeps illuminating our lives, keeps it moving.

The Prime Minister continuing his virtual keynote address and recalling the Noble teachings of Sakyamuni Buddha, mentioned the – Four truths told by Lord Buddha –

Mercy,

Compassion,

Nonchalance or Detachment either in happiness or in sorrow, and

Accepting someone with its all virtues and faults- These truths continue to inspire the land of India.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized that "India as a responsible country is fulfilling its "duty" to selflessly serve the entire world amid the Covid-19 pandemic by making tireless efforts to supply medicines.

"You are also seeing today that India is standing firmly in selflessness, without any distinction, with the person in distress, both in the country and throughout the world.

"India as a responsible country is fulfilling its "duty" to selflessly serve the entire world amid the Covid-19 pandemic by making tireless efforts to supply medicines. "You are also seeing today that India is standing firmly in selflessness, without any distinction, with the person in distress, both in the country and throughout the world"

Beyond the profit and loss, able and unable, for us this hour of crisis is to help others, as much as possible to forward the hand of help.

This is the reason why many countries of the world have remembered India in this difficult time and India has left no stone unturned to reach every needy.

"Today, India is making every effort to save the life of every Indian, and is following its global obligations with equal seriousness," he said in reference to India supplying paracetamol and hydroxychloroquine to over 120 countries in the past few months.

Both our scales and goals of success will change over time. However, the thing we always have to keep in mind is that our work should be done with continuous service. When there is compassion for others, compassion and a sense of service, these feelings make us so strong that you can overcome the biggest challenge.

'World is in Danger, Helping Each-Other is Everyone's Religion.'



...Contd. from page 1

Live streaming of messages on Vesak Day

Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, Mongolia, Uganda, Kenya, Russia, South Africa, The US, The Tibetan Sangha and India, and expressed IBC's gratitude for their messages and prayers.

The Virtual Vesak-Buddha Poonnima and Global Prayer Week received phenomenal response of more than 2.5 lakh and 20 lakh viewers joining respectively from 27 countries.

Ven Dr Dhammapiya emphasized the need for prayers and refuge in the blessing of Triple Gem, adding that its need is greater than ever before especially while the humanity is going through probably the worst crisis in recent times.

A major highlight of the event was the exposition of the Holy Buddha Relics amidst prayers from Rajaguru Sri Subhuthi Maha Vihara, Waskaduwa, in Sri Lanka. Later in the day, the programme included Live Streaming of other ceremonies and prayers from

- The Sacred Garden Lumbini, Nepal,
- Mahabodhi Temple, Bodhgaya, India,
- Mulgandha Kuti Vihara, Sarnath, India and
- Parinirvana Stupa, Kushinagar, India
- Special Pirith Chanting from Ruwanweli Maha Seya in the sacred and historic Anuradhapura stupa premises, Sri Lanka
- Prayer and Lighting of lamp from



Secretary General IBC, Ven. Dr. Dhammapiya, the Convenor of the National Buddha Poonnima Celebration Organizing Committee

Boudhanath, Swayambhu, Namu Stupa, Nepal

Vesak – Buddha Poonnima, is the Triple Blessed Day of Tathagata Gautam – Buddha's birth, enlightened awakening and Maha Parinirvana – all were observed this year on 7 May, 2020.

The event is also being dedicated as Global Prayer Week to pray for the victims of Corona virus contagion and honouring the medical professionals and first responders in the frontline of humanity's fightback against the pandemic.

The week saw live streaming of chanting, prayers, religious ceremonies, messages, speeches, Dhamma talks, performances and presentations through FaceBook, IBC Apps, Instagram, You Tube, Mandala App, and many other online channels. Apart from Monks and Nuns many lay persons also participated in the 7-day virtual programme. Hundreds and thousands of Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike witnessed and benefitted from this virtual holy event.

Time to reflect on individual and collective conduct

In his opening address the Union Minister of State for Minority Affairs Mr Kiren



Mr Kiren Rijiju, Union Minister of State for Minority Affairs who is also the Co-chairman of the National Buddha Poonnima Celebration Organizing Committee



Mr Prahlad Singh Patel, Minister of Culture (Independent Charge) and Chairman of the Buddha Poonnima Diwas National Organising Committee said that the Buddha stood for "higher levels of thinking- *Gyan ka Prakash* (spreading the light of knowledge and wisdom), the language of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) and *Prem ka Bhaav* (the language of love). A person is not God! It is this outlook and perspective which makes him so. This is applicable to Lord Buddha."

In his address as guest of honour, interspersed with anecdotes from the life of the Buddha, the Minister explained the essence of Buddhism, the wisdom in the teachings of the Sakhyamuni and its simple approach that made it easy for a lay person to understand. As such his following was ever expanding.

The Buddha dharma crossed the borders of India to reach several countries, spreading its main ideology, the language of dharma. "It is this dharma, borne out of this soil that is now attracting many all over the world," the Minister said.



THE DALAI LAMA

MESSAGE



His Holiness the Dalai Lama paying his respects before the statue of the Buddha inside the stupa at the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhgaya, Bihar, India on January 17, 2020. Photo by Tenzin Choejor

It gives me great pleasure to offer greetings to Buddhist brothers and sisters across the world, who are joining together on this occasion in a virtual celebration of Vesak, organized by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC).

Shakyamuni Buddha was born in Lumbini, attained enlightenment in Bodhgaya and passed away in Kushinagar 2600 years ago, yet I believe his teaching is universal and continues to be relevant today. Moved by a deep sense of concern to help others, following his enlightenment the Buddha spent the rest of his life as a monk, sharing his experience with everyone who wished to listen. Both his view of dependent arising and his advice not to harm anyone, but to help whoever you can, emphasize the practice of non-violence. This remains one of the most potent forces for good in the world today, for non-violence, motivated by compassion, is to be of service to our fellow beings.

In an increasingly interdependent world, our own welfare and happiness depend on many other people. Today, the challenges we face require us to accept the oneness of humanity. Despite superficial differences between us, people are equal in their basic wish for peace and happiness. Part of Buddhist practice involves training our minds through meditation. For our training in calming our minds, developing qualities such as love, compassion, generosity and patience, to be effective, we must put them into practice in day-to-day life.

Until relatively recently, the world's diverse Buddhist communities had only a distant understanding of each other's existence and no opportunity to appreciate how much we share in common. Today, almost the entire array of Buddhist traditions that evolved in different lands is accessible to anyone who is interested. What's more, those of us who practise and teach these various Buddhist traditions are now able to meet and learn from one another.

As a Tibetan Buddhist monk, I consider myself an heir to the Nalanda tradition. The way Buddhism was taught and studied at Nalanda University, rooted in reason and logic, represents the zenith of its development in India. If we are to be 21st century Buddhists, it is important that we engage in the study and analysis of Buddha's teachings, as so many did there, instead of simply relying on faith.

The world has changed substantially since the time of the Buddha. Modern science has developed a sophisticated understanding of the physical realm. Buddhist science on the other hand, has achieved a detailed, first-person understanding of the workings of the mind and emotions, areas still relatively new to modern science. Each therefore has

crucial knowledge with which to complement the other. I believe that combining these two approaches has great potential to lead to discoveries that will enrich our physical, emotional and social well-being.

While as Buddhists we are the one's upholding the Buddha's teaching, but his message is relevant in our broader interaction with the rest of humanity. We need to promote inter-religious understanding by underlying the fact that all religions promote happiness of all people. Also, in this time of serious crisis confronting the world, when we face threats to our health and we feel saddened for the family and friends we have lost, we must focus on what unites us as members of one human family. Accordingly, we need to reach out to each other with compassion, for it is only by coming together in a coordinated, global effort that we will meet the unprecedented challenges we face.

6 May 2020

Rijiju, who is also the Co-chairman of the National Buddha Pournima Celebration Organizing Committee associated the coming together of Buddhists and others to be part of the Global celebrations of the Virtual Vesak Day with a universal and unifying principle, central to the Indian thought.

"We are gathered here today from all corners of the world as one large family - 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam - the ancient belief in India - to witness virtual-live prayer ceremonies from under the Bodhi Tree in Bodhgaya, the place of Lord Buddha's enlightenment, Lumbini, where He was born, Sarnath, the place of His first teachings after enlightenment and Kushinagar, the place of Mahaparinirvana.

We are observing the Buddha Pournima Day under very trying circumstances when the world is grappling with the pandemic. This unprecedented crisis also provides us with an opportunity to reflect on individual and collective conduct, and consciousness especially in the context of an interdependent nature, welfare of all sentinel beings, compassion and respect of nature and mother earth.



Messages

A wakeup call for Planet Earth

“In this unprecedented pandemic challenge – what wisdom can we draw from Lord Buddha? First, Prince Siddhartha was inspired to leave the comfort of his palace to seek enlightenment when he saw old age, sickness and death.

These encounters with reality of the Samsara acted as the wakeup call. We are always exceedingly grateful to Lord Buddha who attained the ‘awakening’ and shared the Dharma with us and also to all those who have studied, practiced and preserved this precious Dharma through the ages to the present day.

So, what does the Dharma have to say to us in our present challenging situation. The Corona virus did not just happen from nowhere!

It is we humans who have created this pandemic, perhaps especially through karmic debt to animals. Throughout this time we have killed animals for food or for sport, and moreover also we have tortured them in the name of medical research – we have a heavy karmic liability towards other living beings with whom we share this planet.



Most Ven Jetsunma Tenzing Palmo, Joint President IBC, Founder-Abbess, Dongyu Gatsal Ling Nunnery, Himachal Pradesh- India and President, Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women

However, many people were forced into prolonged isolation, perhaps for the first time in their lives. Some are turning to various ways to cope with this isolation, and many are also sometimes turning to meditation to seek answers.

This is where the Dharma can be of great help with its millennia of experience and many teachers are reaching out through the internet to hold courses on meditation, proactive skilful ways to deal with people’s anxiety and panic, and also to encourage practical social outreach with generosity and

kindness, and fearless compassion.

The Buddha taught us what is Dukkha and how to overcome Dukkha. This Dukkha of the virus spreading shows us how we are all interconnected people all over the world, are united in suffering and struggles against the virus.

The virus does not respect high or low, rich or poor, nor is based on gender or nationality – we are all connected in our vulnerability. However, despite the terrible toll this disease has taken especially for the poor and disenfranchised, when we visualized the future we might imagine the life to be the same as it was before, but it cannot be so.

We are seeking security but there is none – this is samsara.

We can only hope that in the future we will become more mindful and caring towards each other, towards the earth too, our mother earth that is suffering so much. Humans are slow to learn this lesson but perhaps the pandemic will be a wakeup call towards holding a more responsible presence on this planet before it is too late.

The Dharma in its wise sanity and open hearted compassion can be a great example for the world but only if its practitioners themselves show the way – action speaks louder than words.”



...The fast degenerating trends in the values of humanity and exploitative nature of the human mind which does not care for the law of nature has vastly contributed to these challenges....

There is an unprecedented growing interest in Buddhism among the nations in both the Western and Eastern countries. In various nations people have learnt much about Buddhism in practice and through experience. This is only indicative of how they regard Buddhism as a great and noble religion carrying the timeless wisdom, very relevant in today’s context.

Most Ven. Waskaduwe Mahindawansa Mahanayake Thero of Sri Amarapura Maha Nikaya



“Every country is affected by this virus, it has inserted a sense of fear and instability in the minds of all mankind. This gives us the chance to make a conscious decision in shaping our destiny and future.

...It is time to redesign our life style. A special focus must be to conserve natural resources. We have to understand that Mother Earth will only provide for mankind’s needs and not wants. The Buddha’s teachings shows us the path to purify our minds, to come to the understanding of what is right and what is wrong...

Dr Warakagoda Dhammasiddhi Sri Pagnananda Gnanarathanabidhana, Maha Nayaka Thero of the Siyamopali Maha Nikaya-Asgiriya Chapter Asgiriya Maha Vihara, Kandy





Virtual Vesak 2564th Buddha Poornima Celebration & Global Prayer Week

Thursday, 7 May 2020 | 06:30 AM IST (GMT +5.5) Onwards



Program

Opening Address,
Shri Kiren Rijiju,
Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Minority
Affairs & Co-Chairman of the Buddha Poornima
Diwas National Organizing Committee

Keynote Address,
Shri. Narendra Modi,
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

Guest of Honour,
Shri Prahlad Singh Patel,
Hon'ble Minister of Culture
(Independent charge) & Chairman
of the Buddha Poornima
Diwas National Organizing Committee

Vesak Address

His Holiness the Dalai Lama
Patron, IBC and ABCP

His Eminence Sitagu Sayadaw Dr. Ashin Nyanissara
Myanmar

Most Venerable Warakagoda Gnanarathana Mahanayake Thero,
Mahanayake of Asgiriya Chapter, Siyam Maha Nikaya, Sri Lanka

His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin Ratna Vajra Rinpoche
The Supreme Head of Sakya tradition, India

His Eminence Pandito Khamba Lama Damba Ayushev
Supreme head of Russian Buddhists, Buryat Republic, Russia, Vice President, Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) and Patron, IBC

Most Venerable Ajahan Brahavamso
Buddhist Society of Western Australia

His Eminence the 4th Chogtrul Gyangkhang Rinpoche
Chief Abbot, Palyul Namdroling Monastery, Karnataka, India

Most Venerable Bhikkuni Dhammananda
Abbess, Songdhammakalyani Monastery, Thailand

Most Venerable Buddhapriya Mahathera
President of Bangladesh Buddha Kristi Prachar Sangha, Dhaka.

Most Venerable Pelwatte Seewali Thero
General Secretary, Mahabodhi Society of India

Most Venerable Sanghasena Mahathera
Founder Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre, UT of Ladakh, India

Ven. Acarya Lobsang Chogni
Associacao Buda Dharma, Brazil

Prof. (Dr.) Kuldip Chand Agnihotri
Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, India

Venerable Dr. Dhammapiya
Secretary General IBC

Most Venerable Kotugoda Dhammawasa Mahanayake Thero
Supreme Patriarch of Sri Amarapura Maha Nikaya, Sri Lanka and Patron, IBC

His Holiness Thich Tri Quang
The Supreme Patriarch of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, Vietnam and Patron, IBC

His Holiness the 37th Drikung Chetsan Rinpoche
supreme head of Drikung Kagyu Order, India

His Eminence Khambo Lama Gabju Demberel Choijamts
Supreme head, Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists, Mongolia, President, Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) and Patron, IBC

His Eminence 7th Shechen Rabjam Rinpoche
Throne holder of Shechen Lineage of Nyingma Tradition & head, Shechen monastery, Nepal

His Eminence 7th Kyabje Yongzin Ling Rinpoche, India

Most Venerable Jetsunma Tenzing Palmo
Abbess, Dongyu Gatsal Ling Nunnery, Himachal Pradesh, India, President, Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women and Joint President, IBC

His Eminence 20th Bakula Rinpoche
Stanzin Ngawang Jigmet Wangchuk, India

Most Venerable Arayaw angso
Abbot, Buddhapojhariphunchal Forest Monastery, Thailand

Most Venerable Bhante B. Sri Saranankara Nayaka Maha Thero
Chief Monk (Judiciary) of Malaysia, Sentul Temple, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Joint - President, IBC

Bhante Dr. Dhammapala
Malaysia, and former Deputy Secretary General IBC

Venerable Jangchup Choeden Khensur Rinpoche
Deputy Secretary General IBC

Specially Dedicated Songs

Siddhartha and Tri - Ratna by **Ani Choying Drolma,**
Founder Abbess, Nuns Welfare Foundation of Nepal, UNICEF Global Ambassador & Global Envoy IBC

Meta in Distance by **Ms. Imee Ooi,** Eminent Dharma Singer & Composer, Malaysia

LIVE Streaming of Ceremony & Prayers from

Lumbini Sacred Garden, Lumbini, Nepal

Mulgandha Kuti Vihar, Sarnath, India

Ruwanweli Maha Seya in the sacred Anuradhapura stupa premises, Sri Lanka

Mahabodhi temple and Holy Bodhi Tree, Bodhgaya, India

Maha Parnirvana Stupa, Kushinagar, India

Rajaguru Sri Subhuthi Maha Vihara, Waskaduwa, Sri Lanka
(exposition of Holy Buddha Relics)

Sacred sites of Swayambhu Stupa, Baudhanath Stupa & Namu Buddha Stupa, Nepal
(Butter lamp offering)

Supported by  Ministry of Culture.
Govt. of India

WATCH LIVE STREAM ON  facebook.com/ibcworld.org  youtube.com/c/IBCWorld/live



Most Ven. Dr. Bhikkhuni Dhammananda

Former Deputy Secretary General, IBC- Abbess, Songdhammakalyani Bhikkhuni Arama, Monastery, Thailand

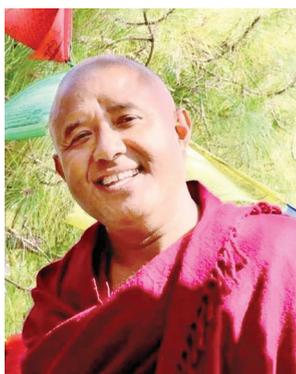
This year we are observing the Vesak Day in a very special way because of the lockdown. We are taking care of the poor who are suffering around the temple. We have been feeding 100 families for the past five-weeks and will continue doing the same until the lockdown is over. This is our way of offering respect to The Buddha.”

Ven Jikdol to head important Committee in Nepal

It is an honour for IBC to extend felicitations to our Executive Member Ven. Thubten Jikdol, of Nepal for his appointment as the Chairman of Buddhist Philosophy and Gonpa Development Committee of the Civil Aviation, Tourism and Culture Ministry of the Government of Nepal.

Secretary General (IBC) Ven. Dr Dhammapiya in his message stated “I am sure, under your able leadership the Buddhist Philosophy and Gonpa Development Committee will be able to contribute for the preservation, promotion and propagation of Buddha Dhamma not just in Nepal but all over the world.

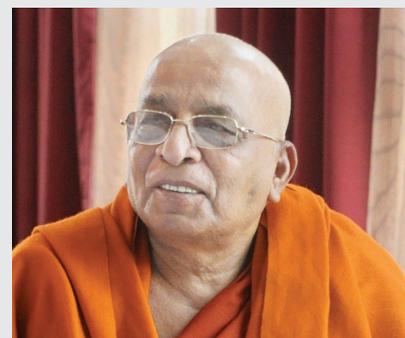
Best wishes for your good health and progress on the path of Dhamma. Your dynamic personality and commitment for Dhamma will continue to benefit all living beings for years to come.”



Ven. Thubten Jikdol

BLESSINGS FOREVER

We seek the blessings of our spiritual leaders who have passed on during the Coronavirus lockdown months.



His Holiness Sanghanayaka Suddhananda Mahathero

President of Bangladesh Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha

The International Buddhist Confederation deeply mourns the passing away of His Holiness Sanghanayaka Suddhananda Mahathero (15 January 1933 – 3 March 2020) President of Bangladesh Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha.

His Holiness was an esteem Patron of IBC, whose blessings and wisdom have guided the IBC in its endeavours to give shape to the dreams and aspirations of millions of our brothers and sisters of the Buddha Dharma all over the world.

He left us on 3rd March, 2020 in Dhaka at the age of 87 years. He was suffering from old age related complications. In December last year he was admitted to



the Institute of Liver and Biliary Science (ILBS) in Delhi for medical treatment.

Born in 1933, H H Suddhananda Mahathero, served as the supreme patriarch of the Bangladesh Bauddha Bhikkhu Mahasabha (the Supreme Sangha Council of Bangladesh). In 2012, he was awarded the prestigious Ekushey Padak for his contribution to social service.

The Ekushey Padak award introduced in 1952 and administered by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, is the second-highest civilian award in Bangladesh, presented in recognition of significant contributions in any one of ten fields listed under it with social service being one of them.

Among His holiness's many socially engaged initiatives, were several charities

for underprivileged people, and worked actively to engender peace and fellowship between Bangladesh's Theravada Buddhist and Muslim communities, which have a long history of inter-communal unrest.

Each year, His Holiness opened his monastery in Dhaka for hundreds of underprivileged Muslim families to provide them their 'iftar'- evening meal, throughout the holy month of Ramadan. All through the Muslim fasting month, hundreds of men, women, and children could be seen queuing to receive free food boxes at Dharmarajika Buddhist Mahabihar, which is also home to more than 700 orphans who study at the free school it operates.

May His Holiness's blessings remain with us forever and may he continue to inspire the Sangha for all times to come.



Most Ven. Late Gyanapurnika Sangha Mahanayeka Thera

7th Sanghanayaka of Theravada Buddhism Bhikkhu Federation (TBBF)

President, All Nepal Buddhist Sangha (Theravada), Nepal

The All Nepal Bhikkhu Association had elected Bhikkhu Gyanapurnik Mahasthabir the seventh Sanghanayaka of Theravada Buddhism Bhikkhu Federation (TBBF) on 17 April, 2019.

Born in Palpa, Mahasthabir had received his higher education on Buddha philosophy and literature from Burma. He had contributed around six decades of time to promoting Buddha philosophy and literature, apart from translating books on Buddha philosophy into Nepali.

His Eminence Late Kamby Lama Jampel Loduo

The 8th Kamby Lama of Tuva Republic



H.E. Jampel Lodoy was born on 21 August 1975 in the village of Hondergey, Dzun-Khemchiksky District, in the autonomous republic, to a family of livestock farmers. In 1992, he began his Buddhist education at Gandan Puntsogling, a monastery in Kyzyl. From the years 1993–96 he studied at Gunzechoinei Datsan in St. Petersburg, then subsequently, he continued his training at Drepung Gomang Monastery in the southwestern Indian state of Karnataka. While in India,

Jampel Lodoy completed a nine-year course of study and received the title candidate of philosophical sciences. He then returned to Tuva and served as *kamby lama* from 2005 for the next five-years.

During this period, the Tuvan lama began actively working to establish ties with the spiritual leaders of the sanghas in the republics of Kalmykia and Buryatia, and also initiated the construction of a grand new monastic complex with the cooperation of the local republican and federal authorities. Jampel Lodoy later became the abbot of Ustuu-Khuree, a temple in the town of Chadan. Ustuu-Khuree was built in 1905 in the Tibetan architectural style.

The Eighth Kamby Lama, was the most senior Buddhist monastic in the Tuva Republic, Jampel Lodoy, abbot of the legendary temple Ustuu-Khuree, was elected as the supreme lama of the Russian republic on 29 November, 2019 at Tsechenling Buddhist temple, taking this high position for the second time for a period of five years. The institution of the *kamby lama* was revived as the highest religious authority in Tuva in 1997. The supreme lama of the Buddhist republic is elected on a democratic basis for a term of five years.



The Holy Relics within the Casket displayed only on special holy occasions

Exposition of Holy Relics from Sri Lanka

A special part of the Vesak day's celebration was the historic virtual exposition of the Holy Buddha Relics from Rajaguru Sri Subuthi Temple Waskaduwa, Sri Lanka.

The displayed Buddha relic belonged to the Chief Incumbent of Sri Subhuti Maha Viharaya. It was discovered in Kapilavastu, India, by Sir Alexander Cunningham in 1898. The findings became significant due to the efforts of Venerable Rajaguru Waskaduwe Sri Subhuti Thero, the Chief of Sri Subhuti Maha Viharaya Temple during that period.

As a great expert of ancient languages, he helped Sir Cunningham to translate the inscription on the relic container so that they were able to identify the relics. These were discovered as that of the Shakyamuni Buddha's. Consequently, Sir Cunningham presented some of the found relics to the Venerable as a token of appreciation and it has been kept at the temple until the present date.



Most Ven. Waskaduwe Mahindawansa Mahanayake Thero of Sri Amarapura Maha Nikaya praying with Dr. Damenda Porage, Deputy Secretary General IBC, Chairman, Foundation for Buddhist Brotherhood, Sri Lanka

Evening Prayers from the Holy sites

The Vesak day ended with colourful and joyous celebrations with the virtual witnessing and participation in the Lighting Ceremonies and Prayers from Mahabodhi temple, Bodhgaya, India; Maya Devi Temple Sacred Garden, Lumbini, Nepal and Maha Parinirvana Stupa, Kushinagar, India

"This is the time to pray to the Triple Gem and to follow Buddha's teachings. We now need to change our behavior and living style; respect everyone and always be kind to all sentient beings. Today, nothing is better than to find solace in the Buddha's teachings." said Ven. Chimed.



Prayers at Mahabodhi temple, Bodhgaya



Prayers at Namu Buddha Stupa, Nepal



Ven. Khenpo Chimed, Secretary IBC, Founder and Director, Siddhartha Foundation, Nepal - speaking from Swayambhunath Stupa



Live streaming of prayers and butter lamp offering from historic sacred temples of Swayambhunath Stupa and Baudhanath Stupa



Monks offering prayer at Mulagandha Kuti Vihara, Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh

Special songs on Siddhartha

A dedicated music and songs segment was also part of the live streaming event at the Virtual Vesak - 2020



Ani Choying Drolma, IBC Global Envoy, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and Founder of Nun's Welfare Foundation, Nepal. Presenting Buddha Dharma through Tibetan and Nepali Chants and songs.



'Metta from a Distance' by eminent Dharma Singer and Composer Ms. Imee Ooi, Malaysia, founder IMM Music works and Jing Shi Jin Gang (JSJG) Dharma Man's Vocal Group



A tribute to a legend

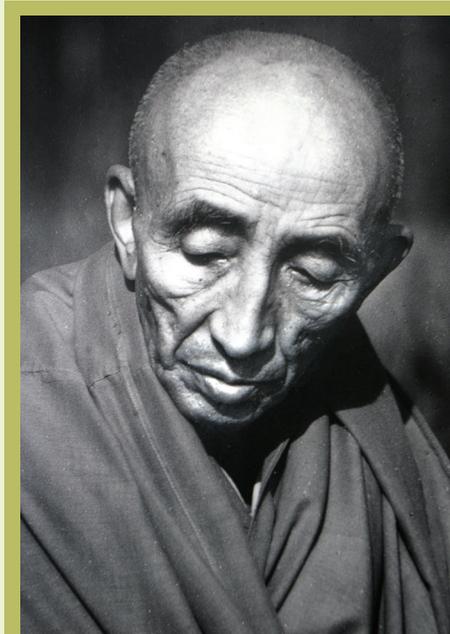
Ven'ble Kushok Bakula Rinpoche

Sonam Wangchuk Shakspo

The first test of a truly great man is his humility and Bakula Rinpoche was an epitome of this. For years I persuaded him to write his autobiography. He would not agree as he felt it would be blowing his own trumpet as he had not done something remarkable. When he finally relented there was no mention about his achievements — it was just a bland representation of some factual information about his early life and education in Tibet. It was then that I decided to write a detailed book on his inspiring life and works. I felt that his story needed to be told to the next generation and that he deserved better recognition than he had actually got. I was jubilant when His Holiness Dalai Lama released my book *“Kushok Bakula Rinpoche: The architect of modern Ladakh”*. He was an extraordinary combination of a monk-scholar, a philosopher, a social reformer, a consummate statesman, an effective diplomat and a popular mass leader who served the Indian state and the people of his native Ladakh, and the nation for many decades on the strength of his moral integrity, simplicity and humility.

EARLY YEARS

The 19th Bakula Rinpoche Lobzang Thupstan Chognor was born as a prince in the royal family of Ladakh on the auspicious *Vaisak Purnima day* in 1917. His mother passed away after giving him birth. When he was barely four, he was recognised as the 19th reincarnation of Arhat Bakula by the 13th Dalai Lama Thubten Gyatso. He was taken to Pethub Monastery in Leh which became his home for the rest of his life. At the age of 10, he went to Lhasa (Tibet) where he studied at the renowned Drepung Monastery for over 14 years and obtained *‘Geshe Lharampa’* with distinction, the highest degree in Buddhist philosophy and metaphysics.



**This is the fifth
in a series on the
Great Masters**

Tibet was then an independent nation.

In 1940 after completing his studies in Lhasa, Tibet, Rinpoche returned to Ladakh and set about turning his home turf, then a poor and exploited society, into a modern educated democratic order free from social evils and administrative apathy. He was compassionate to the core. Once on a visit to Dha-Hanu, two distance villages in Leh district, he learnt that a sheep had been sacrificed for his meal. He vowed never to eat meat again and strictly adhered to the *Vinaya* code of conduct for Buddhist monks. He would never deviate from his monastic duties even under the most difficult circumstances. Such was his adherence to the practice of *Dharma*.

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

People often talk about his friendship with Jawaharlal Nehru. This is true that he was very close to the country's most formidable leader of his era. Field Marshal Kodandera “Kipper” Cariappa, first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Army was, however, the first person in Delhi to host Rinpoche to profusely thank him for the logistic and other assistance during the Pakistan invasion in 1948. It was under his leadership that the local people had rallied behind the army to repulse the Pakistani raiders in 1948 and helped the army engineers to convert an open plot of land in Leh near his Pethub monastery into a makeshift landing strip. A Dakota plane piloted by IAF Commodore Mehar Singh had landed in Leh on May 24, 1948 and chased the invaders out of the territory. Rinpoche had called upon the people of Ladakh to come forward and offer their services to the Army and was instrumental in the raising of Ladakh Scouts. In retrospect, the Pakistani invasion of Ladakh was a truly historic episode. It secured India's border with Pakistan and it saved Ladakh and its ancient Buddhist culture. Had things gone otherwise, India's political map would have been drawn differently and Ladakh would have been a part of Pakistan and its Buddhist civilisation would have been subsumed by a hostile ideology, suffering a fate similar to that of Tibet under Chinese occupation.

Later it was at Rinpoche's persuasion that Nehru along with Sheikh Abdullah and other leaders landed in Leh on July 4, 1949 for an on-the-spot study of the local conditions. As the VVIP guests landed at Leh, they were escorted to Guest House on horses as there was no car or road in Leh that time. It turned out to be yet another turning point in his spectacular life. Nehru advised him to join politics as an instrument of social service. He was



initially reluctant but eventually agreed. Sheikh Abdullah also rendered similar suggestion to him and made him president of his National Conference in Leh. It is a matter of record that his association with the Sheikh did not go very far; they often clashed on issues till the Sheikh's arrest in 1953. His 1952 speech in the J&K Assembly denouncing his own National Conference Party was another classic and memorable legacy which made him well known across India.

In the national capital he became close to leaders of all major political parties. He was respected as a true voice of the Buddhist community of India especially of the trans-Himalayan regions. The result was that even while he was committed to the Congress party ideology he enjoyed the trust of other parties no less. Actually he did not agree with the Congress party's stand on Article 370 guaranteeing special status to Jammu and Kashmir. He opposed the Article and supported total integration of Jammu and Kashmir with the Indian Union.

PRIMACY TO LADAKH

Rinpoche planted the seeds of the demand for a Union Territory status for Ladakh. He successfully led the agitation for Scheduled Tribe status for Ladakh and was chairman of Ladakh Action Committee. The establishment of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), the present elected body for local governance, is a direct legacy of the initial demands he made for Central administration or NEFA-type status in the 1960s (*NEFA is abbreviation for North-East Frontier Agency which was one of the political divisions in British India and later the Republic of India until 1972, when it became the state of Arunachal Pradesh*).

Under Rinpoche's leadership, a remote Himalayan region known as the land of *tattu* (mule), *sattu* (woolen) and *pattu* (barley wheat) was transformed into a vibrant forward-looking society while retaining its own ancient culture. The most compelling part of Rinpoche's leadership was that he led the people from the front, with honesty and impartiality. Communal harmony and unity among

the people of different regions was the hallmark of his stewardship and modern education for the youth was his *mantra*. A true patriot, Bakula Rinpoche infused a sense of nationalism and patriotism among the people of Ladakh. He genuinely felt that due to historical and close cultural ties, Buddhism and Ladakhi culture could survive and thrive only in India. Over the years he laid emphasis on opening of schools across Ladakh and founded among others the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies, Leh, Ladakh. Bakula Rinpoche had a hand in the building of Ladakh's two most important Buddhist institutions: The All-Ladakh Gonpa (monasteries) Association for monasteries to effectively protect their collective interests, and the Chokhang temple in Leh on the line of Jokhang temple in Lhasa, Tibet which is a major site of pilgrimage for Buddhists of all sects.

DIPLOMAT YEARS

Rinpoche's journey as a diplomat appears to have begun in 1955 long before his formal appointment as ambassador in Mongolia. In 1955 he led a delegation deputed by the Nehru Government to Lhasa to coordinate with the then Government of Tibet for the participation of the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama in the 2500th Buddha Jayanti celebrations which were scheduled to take place the following year in India. He spent over six months in Tibet and on his return to New Delhi, informed Nehru about the grim situation facing Tibet. His warning was ignored with consequences which are only too well known. He worked tirelessly for the resettlement of Tibetan refugees following their influx especially in Ladakh. In the book *"India after Gandhi: History of the World's Largest Democracy"* the noted historian Ramachandra Guha refers to how Rinpoche had warned the Government of India in 1955 of the severe danger facing Tibet and its potential fallout on India as reports came in of growing Chinese presence in the region.

From 1949-1967 in J&K State first as Member of State Constituent Assembly and subsequently as a minister and following that as a Member of Parliament

About the Author

Sonam Wangchuk was born in the Himalayan region of Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, India in 1956. After completing his elementary education in Ladakh, he joined the Vishesh Kendriya Vidyalaya in New Delhi. A graduate from St. Stephen's College, Delhi, he obtained diploma in Tibetan language at the Delhi University. He later studied Russian at the University of Tashkent, USSR and Mongolian language in Ulaanbaatar.

From 1979-89, he worked for the National Commission for Minorities, Government of India, New Delhi. From 1990-2000 served as a diplomat at the Embassy of India in Ulaanbaatar,

Mongolia. Working with Ven. Kushok Bakula Rinpoche as his Private Secretary, Mr. Wangchuk travelled extensively. He has authored several books and articles. His most recent book "Kushok Bakula Rinpoche – The Architect of Modern Ladakh" was launched by H.H. The Dalai Lama on 31 March 2018 at Dharamsala, India.

He is associated with several international organizations, including the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) in Mongolia, Buddhist Summit (BS) in Japan, Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) in the United Kingdom and the International Association of Mongol Studies (IAMS), Mongolia.

He is presently working as Director General of Pethub Buddhist Center in Mongolia and is the Deputy Secretary General of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace.





for 10 years, Bakula Rinpoche contributed immensely in the nation building activity. He served in various Parliamentary committees including Defence, Estimates and took up issues concerning Scheduled Castes and Tribes and in general for the poor and under privilege class of our society. He travelled extensively all over the country.

He also served as Member of the National Commission on Minorities for 10 years from 1989-2000 representing the Buddhist minority. This position and earlier as Member of Parliament helped him understand the hardship and difficulties faced by Buddhists as well as other minorities in the country. It also helped him build up close relation with Buddhists from outside India and represented India in many international fora including at the United Nations in New York.

Rinpoche visited Tibet again in 1992 and 1993 and became the first high-ranking Indian official to do so after the 1962 war. He apprised the Union Government of the situation in Tibet under Chinese occupation constantly pleading for measures to find a peaceful and mutually acceptable settlement of the Tibet issue. His first tour to a foreign country was to Myanmar (then Burma) in 1953 for a conference which transformed his understanding of Buddhist traditions and sectarian divide and how it was impacting Buddhism. At the conference when lunch was served, Rinpoche joined a group of monks but was refused entry because of the colour of his robes and physical appearance. He wore a moustache at the time unknown to the Theravada tradition but not uncommon in Tibet, Mongolia and Ladakh. Even the 13th Dalai Lama had it. Following this incident, he was determined to correct these differences and made it a mission of his life. On his return to Ladakh, he sent several young monks to Sri Lanka to study Theravada tradition and Pali. He promoted great contacts between the two major Buddhist traditions— Mahayana and Theravada to break all barriers dividing the two. Rinpoche always carried a set of Theravada monk's dress which he would wear whenever he travelled in a country with Theravada tradition.



BUDDHISM IN MONGOLIA

It was his contribution to the revival of Buddhism in Mongolia as an Indian diplomat following the collapse of the Soviet Union that brought him into global limelight. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 had brought an end to religious freedom in the Soviet Union and the Mongolian Revolution of 1921 that followed with the help of the Soviet Red Army leading to the emergence of the Mongolian People's Republic in 1924 resulted in a similar situation in Mongolia.

In fact, the scenario in Mongolia in the 1920s was in tune with a prophecy that Buddhism at its pristine glory would be destroyed by external forces. The other part of the prophecy was that the religion would witness a major revival following Arhat Bakula's visit. *Thangkas* (Tibetan Buddhist paintings) prominently depicting Arhat Bakula were made and displayed and special prayers in praise of Arhat Bakula were composed and read out in monasteries across the country celebrating the arrival of freedom. It turned out to be true in 1990 when just a few months after Rinpoche's appointment as Indian ambassador to Ulaanbaatar the Communist regime collapsed and for the first time democracy was restored in the landlocked country.

In 1993 Rinpoche managed to bring the holy Buddha Relics to Mongolia. He laid a solid foundation for the Indo-Mongolian relations. Rinpoche made himself available to all those in grave need, especially those

who suffered under the brutal Communist regimes. This was a significant hallmark of his great legacy. Unlike other embassies, the Indian Embassy in Ulaanbaatar during Rinpoche's tenure hosted not just diplomats and locals seeking Indian visas but a long line of devotees from the Mongolian countryside seeking his teachings and blessings on a near-daily basis. He is fondly remembered as '*Elchin Bagsh*' (Ambassador-Teacher) by the people of Mongolia. In 2001, he was conferred with the Polar Star award, Mongolia's second-highest civilian award.

The Pethub Monastery that Rinpoche built in the heart of Ulaanbaatar is an enduring symbol of our links. Speaking in the Mongolian Parliament in 2015 Prime Minister Narendra Modi said "*Our relation lives through the work of Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, India's Ambassador to Mongolia from 1990-2000.*"

GLOBAL OUTREACH

Rinpoche tirelessly worked and actively participated in the peace movement, inter-faith dialogues and environmental conservation activities. He founded several international organisations including the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) in Mongolia, Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) in the United Kingdom, the Buddhist Summit in Japan. His last visit to the UK was at the invitation of Queen Elizabeth-II whom he met at the Buckingham Palace in 2002. He worked closely with Mikhail Gorbachev, Prince Philip, King Norodom Sihanouk and other world leaders.

When Rinpoche passed away on November 4, 2003, at the age of 86 Dalai Lama paid a moving tribute: "*Bakula Rinpoche worked for the preservation, dissemination and restoration of precious teachings of the Buddha Shakyamuni. The assistance rendered to us the Tibetans by him during the difficult times is to be remembered with gratitude.*" Many other national and global leaders expressed identical sentiments.

Bakula Rinpoche led an active life spanning five decades. He was a religious preacher and a reformist, a politician and a statesman — all roles he performed with ease and perfection.



Buddha's statue vandalised in Pakistan

Monks from Bihar's Bodhi Gaya district condemned the vandalism of an ancient Buddha statue in Pakistan and expressed their resentment over the incident. The statue was discovered during construction work in Pakistan's Mardan district while digging the foundation of the house.

The ancient statue is believed to be from the Gandhara civilization and is dated to be around 1,700 years old.

The relic was destroyed because it was considered to be un-Islamic. According to reports a local cleric asked the workers to destroy it as otherwise they would lose their faith. Using sledge hammers the ancient statue was broken into pieces.

Expressing resentment, the Monks said ancient heritages are based on values, this is a destructive mind-set. Their instinct is to destroy, this is dangerous for the society and entire world.

According to UNESCO, the Buddhist Ruins of Takht-i-Bahi (Throne of Origins) are a monastic complex, founded in the early 1st century A.D., it is spectacularly positioned on various hilltops ranging from 36.6 metres to 152.4 metres in height, typical for Buddhist sites. The complexes cover an area of around 33ha.





Indian Buddhist Masters in China

Controlling Epidemics and Curing the Incurables

Prof. Dr. Shashibala

Coronavirus has terrorized the world with everyone struggling hard to find its remedy. It emerged suddenly, infected lakhs and killed thousands and still has a grip on life the world over. The media brings shocking news, everyday. Thousands in critical condition are to be treated; medical facilities are crumbling; the world is up in arms to stop the contagious disease.

The world accepts that following the western philosophy of accepting man as master of nature, we have damaged the fabric of nature and have even intruded into the animal world. Destruction of ecological

balance, violation of ozonosphere, shortage of fresh water, and extinction of biological species are all endangering human existence. Let us pause and think, if there was or can there be any possibility of any solution in the Eastern mode of thought and practice. The question is— are there any leads to researches to find remedies in such situations?

When I received a message from a friend in Singapore that people in Chinese monasteries are performing *homam* to contain the disease, I felt duty-bound to write this article as an answer to the question— do we need to have faith in Indian medical science, its scientific culture, practices, and connect between science and spirituality. Where

science stops, spirituality begins to work. Many scientists are doing research on ancient Indian practices, mapping them scientifically, and showing positive results, acknowledging ancient Indian ways and means to protect the environment to save humanity from infections and viruses through *havan/homa*, planting specific trees and plants, boosting immunity to fight diseases through *pranayama* and yoga, etc.

The list is long but here I am focusing on the Chinese historical chronicles that acknowledge Indian sciences and scientists for controlling contagious diseases and epidemics.



DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS

There has been a dialogue among civilizations over the past centuries. Chinese historical chronicles refer to curing diseases, stopping storms and epidemics, protection from fatal strikes of lightning, etc., by Indian Buddhist masters. The entry of Buddhism into China helped mitigate suffering and make the people happy. Apart from sowing the seeds of love and compassion, meditation and enlightenment, democracy and equality, social reforms and imperial virtue, cheering up the downtrodden, introducing temple culture and monastic structure, Buddhist medical science penetrated deep into the Chinese system.

INDIAN BUDDHIST ACHARYA CONTROLLING EPIDEMICS IN CHINA

An Indian acharya presented a perfume to the Chinese Han Emperor Wu during the 2nd-1st century BC. At first the Emperor was not much attracted to the egg-like presents. Just then a severe epidemic broke out in Ch'ang-an taking away many lives. The Indian asked the Emperor to burn the substance. Its fumigation stopped the epidemic and even resurrected the dead. Its perfume spread to an area of 50 kilometres and its effect lasted for three months. The Emperor was grateful and conferred great honors on the Indian guest, presented a special dinner, and bid farewell to him. This account is given in the "Collection of Information on Things of Universe" written by Zhang Hua (232-300 AD). This story also appears in a Chinese historical record "General Records of Buddhist Patriarchs" compiled in 1296. It gives details of the activities of Indians in China. According to it, a monk from India, Hala Haraka/Hari Vikrama helped the Chinese stop a terrible epidemic with medicine and charms/mantras in Loyang, an Imperial city of Northern China in 287. It stopped a devastating epidemic in the Imperial capital Chang-an and saved thousands of lives. Such events indicate the great reputation of Indian medicine and fumigating with them in ancient China.

INDIANS CURING INCURABLES IN CHINA

Another Indian acharya Jivaka went via the sea route and arrived in Loyang. He



became famous as a doctor who could cure incurable diseases around 306 AD. He treated the Governor of Hengyang province, Teng Yongen. The Governor was not able to walk because of his foot being paralyzed for many years. This is detailed in the historical work "Biographies of Eminent Monks", an important work on Indo-Chinese relations. It contains information about 257 monks, both Indian and Chinese, who played a key role in dissemination of Indian culture to China. Apart from curing incurable diseases, there are references to Indian magicians

performing rejoining of severed tongue, spitting fire, swallowing a knife and rejoining broken cloth.

CURING CHINESE SUFFERING FROM CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

Another Indian acharya Buddhachinga was a great doctor, an astronomer and an astrologer. Given his acumen and capacities, he was referred to as a magician. He had studied in Kashmir under famous Buddhist masters. He could recite scriptures running into millions of words.

He had reached the then capital of China, Loyang, in 310 AD. At that time the ruler Shi Le was helped by Buddhachinga to win in battles and get his army cured from a contagious disease. When he cured Shi Le's army from the infectious disease, people were so impressed that they embraced Buddhism en masse. Shi Le appointed Buddhachinga as Rajya Guru.

Shi Le's successor bestowed even greater honors and patronage on him. He used to attend court sessions; the crown prince and top courtiers used to escort him, was given a standing ovation when entering the court, and he was offered a seat by the side of the Emperor. Courtiers used to address him as Great Monk. There was so much enthusiasm that Buddhachinga could build 893 temples in North China. Chinese historiography remembers him as "Shengsheng" meaning 'divine monk'. His disciples actively worked in China following in the footsteps of their guru.



FUMIGATION BY INDIAN ACHARYA IN CHINA SAVED MANY LIVES DURING AN EPIDEMIC

Indian perfumes began to enter China in 98 BC when the Kushana Empire presented a magic incense to the Imperial court of Han Dynasty. A guest from India to China presented three pieces of incense that resurrected many dead to life in the capital of Ch'ang-an during an epidemic. The Chinese began to use Chandan calling it *zhantan*; turmeric and coriander became a part of Chinese cuisine. Turmeric was called *yujinxiang* meaning 'fragrance that gathers gold'.

In Chinese Buddhist literature, Buddha's country is called 'fragrant land'. Buddhism introduced the ritual of incense burning and filled Chinese life with the concept of fumigation. Buddhist temples were designated as 'houses of fragrant fire' (=havan) and Buddhist organization as 'society of fragrant fire' (*hotri sangha*). Money donated by people was called 'money of fragrant fire' (=havan *nidhi*). Chinese began to burn incense for a good cause. The expression 'fragrant for burning fiercely' indicated 'thriving religious activities' and 'fragrant fire extinguishes' meant religious activities were coming to a halt. Pilgrims, donors and lay disciples engaging in religious activities were called 'having a date with fragrant fire'. People addressed each other as 'brothers in fragrant fire'. There is a clear indication of *havans*, indicative of their acceptance and popularity in China.

INTRODUCTION OF AYURVEDA IN CHINA

Medicine in India was a well-developed science and it reached China. Great Indian acharyas translated medical texts and prescriptions from Sanskrit into Chinese. Acharya Dharmarksha edited and translated 'Classic on Four Hundred and Four Diseases of Human Body' and 'Classic on the Path to Cultivation'. He also recorded the pathogenesis theory of Buddhist medicine. It was followed by a number of other works including those compiled by Chinese Emperor Wu. The Indian masters were welcomed because of their curing skills. Even though China had developed its own medical system, it could be benefitted from



the Indian prescriptions extensively. Wang Tao (670-755 AD) compiled 'Important Secret Prescriptions'. During the Sui and T'ang Dynasties, many Indian medical theories reached China. The Chinese were impressed by the Indian treatment of cataract extraction with needles often performed by Brahmana monks, meaning non-Buddhist. Poet Liu Yuxi even wrote a poem in praise of a doctor when he was treated for his eyes.

AYUVEDIC TEXTS ON MEDICAL SCIENCE

Discovery of Sanskrit manuscripts called Bower Manuscripts from Kucha, now in the Chinese Xinjiang region opened up a new path of researches in Central Asia. The first is a fifth century medical manuscript written on birch bark in Brahmi script. The second

is on predicting the future by dicing- Pashak Kevali and the third is on remedy from snake bite- Mahamayuri-vidya-ragy. Like Jivaka Pustaka and Siddhasara, the Bower Manuscripts also play an important role in researches on Chinese medicine.

Astro-medicine was practised in India and travelled abroad. It is still practised by Tibetan doctors. In the period of the Northern Dynasty, the Chinese Dharma Branch translated 20 volumes of Brahmana Astronomy. A volume in Book of the Sui Dynasty describes ten medical texts of India, including four volumes of Prescriptions by Nagarjuna, 23 volumes of 'Medicinal Prescriptions of Fairies in the Western Regions', One volume of Catalogue, 10 volumes of 'Medicinal Prescriptions of Nine Fairies of Fragrant Mountain'. Clearly, China



has preserved a long history of acceptance of Indian prescriptions.

MEDICINAL VALUE OF AROMATIC PLANTS – FROM INDIA TO CHINA

Chinese medical science solicited the supply of fragrant plants from India. Indian Buddhist monks carrying aromatic plants and plant products were known as men with skills of curing and healing people from incurable and contagious diseases. Knowledge about aromatic plants reached China when Indian medicinal texts were taken and translated over the centuries. They played an important role in development of Chinese medicine. It resulted in Indian acharyas being revered as gurus and even worshipped as gods.

In China saffron was used for medicines, flavouring and colouring during religious

ceremonies. It could expel all foul odour, and get rid of impure air, and diseases in body. Itsing, a Chinese pilgrim to India, describes that *haritaki* grew mostly in the west, saffron grew in the north and the west abounded in *asafoetida*. He has also recorded many fragrant medicines as also the use of cardamom. Kashmir was famous for dragon studhorses, saffron, fire balls and herbs.

AN INDIAN CHARM – LAW OF GARUDA

The Indian myth of Garuda was prevalent in China because of faith in its power of protecting from calamities and diseases. There is a chapter on the ‘Law of Garuda’ in the Buddhist text, *Arya-manjushri-mulakalpa*. It was popular in China for many centuries and was translated by the Chinese

pilgrim, Itsing. Dharmabhadra, an Indian acharya of the 10th century and several others also translated it. Garuda became a symbol in Chinese paintings. One can see it painted in the Yonghe Palace temple in Beijing. Many Ming dynasty temples have also preserved this theme. The ruling elite liked to subsume the power of Garuda to strengthen their political authority.

PRESENTATION OF BOOKS ON PRESCRIPTIONS

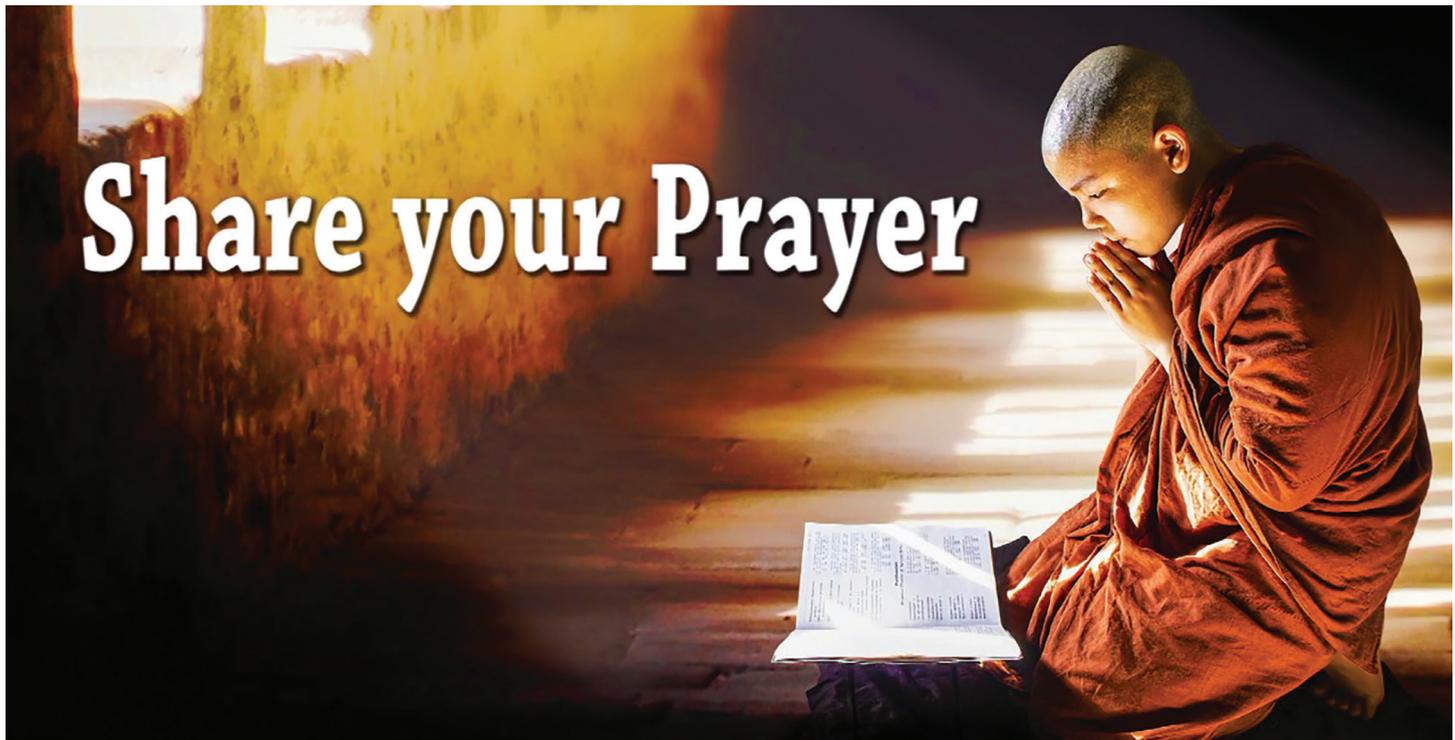
The Annals of Sui Dynasty mentions that a book entitled “Prescriptions of Bodhisattva Nagarjuna”, a text on astronomy and Indian medicine were presented to the T’ang Emperor Xuanzong I in 719 AD by an envoy from Kapisha. A famous classic on Chinese medicine also contains discourses on Indian medical theories and prescriptions. It states that prescriptions given by Brahmanas were quite attractive for the Chinese.

In 752 AD, Wang Tao collected all the available prescriptions that were used till then. They were meant for curing diseases of ears and eyes, and could turn grey hair into black. Annals of the Sung Dynasty are valuable to find evidence of India’s contribution to Chinese science and technology. It was the time when contacts between the Cholas and Sung China were at the peak. It has a chapter specifically on the Cholas.

There are other books, i.e. calendar by Gautama Siddhatha, a treatise written on pulse by Jivaka, sixty-four question answers by him, a treatise on eye diseases, important prescriptions, and treatise on the entrails. This was a time of much interaction. Even Indian games like throwing dice and others reached China. Itsing has mentioned prescriptions to cure diseases like deafness and blindness using lotus herbal ointment. In some prescriptions, basil leaf, green cinnamon, and sweet gum are mentioned with other herbs.

There is a lot of archival material to search and translate into Hindi and English to highlight India’s contribution to containing epidemics and contagious diseases. It may be helpful in the future.

The author is Dean, Centre of Indology, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, New Delhi



Share your Prayer

The Global Prayer Week

In continuation with the celebrations of the Vesak Day, a Global Prayer Week was observed, commencing from 7th May up to 16th May 2020. The virtual prayer week was dedicated to pray for the victims of Corona virus contagion and honouring the medical professionals and first responders in the frontline of humanity's fight back against the pandemic. Through live streaming we also had an opportunity to listen to invaluable messages, speeches and Dhamma talks from eminent personalities, great spiritual masters, Supreme Sangha members, Venerable monks, nuns and many other honourable lay practitioners, and also had an opportunity to witness presentations by many renowned artists from around the world on the theme of Dhamma and righteous life.

MESSAGE FROM VEN. DHAMMAPIYA
Secretary-General, IBC



Humans for humanity's sake,
Humans for the mother earth,
Karuna (compassion) for corona victims,
Prayers for safety of frontline corona warriors...

MESSAGE FROM LING RINPOCHE
Tibetan Buddhist Scholar



Think of others' happiness and suffering every day. It becomes a habit the more you think about it and at some point, it will become effortless. The you will be able to have an uncontrived intention to be of benefit to others.



MESSAGE FROM HIS HOLINESS THE 14TH DALAI LAMA TENZIN GYATSO

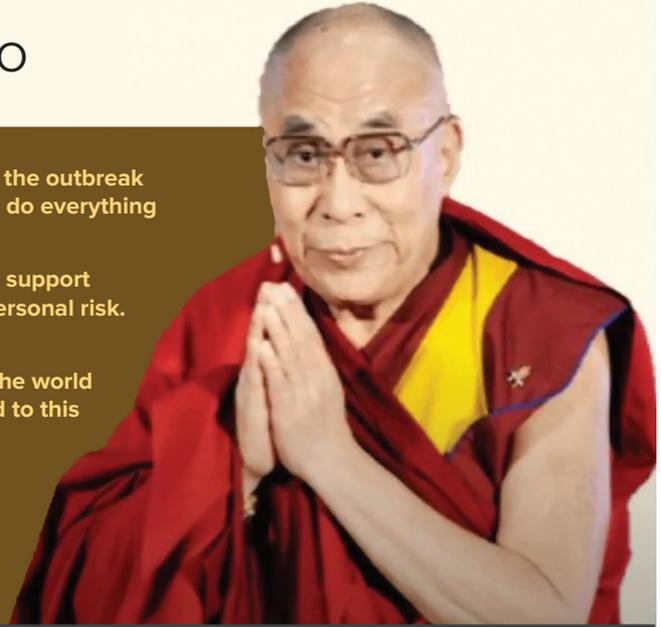
India (Tibet in Exile), Patron IBC

Today, we are passing through an exceptionally difficult time due to the outbreak of the coronavirus epidemic.... I earnestly appeal to all concerned to do everything possible to care for the vulnerable members of our communities.

I offer special gratitude to the medical staff—doctors, nurses & other support personnel—who are working on the frontline to save lives at great personal risk. Their service is indeed compassion in action.

With heartfelt feelings of concern for my brothers & sisters around the world who are passing through these difficult times, I pray for an early end to this pandemic so that your peace & happiness may soon be restored.

Excerpts from A Special Message from His Holiness the Dalai Lama



Video messages were received for the Global prayer week from:

Name	Country
1. Ven. Wogum Woneung (Dr. Lee Chi Ran)	S. Korea
2. Ven. Okonogi, chief priest of Nipponzan Myohoji Temple,	India
3. Ven. Sangha from Kadam Choeling	Indonesia
4. Most Venerable Ajahn Brahm	Australia
5. Ven Dr. Kalyan Priya Bhikkhu	India
6. Mr Mohit Chauhan	India
7. Venerable Khensur Jangchup Choeden Rinpoche	India
8. Bro. Plinio Marcos Tsai and Venerable Lobsang Chogni	Brazil
9. Venerable Sangha of Gyudmed Monastery	India
10. Ven Kithalagama Hemasara Nayake Thero	Sri Lanka
11. Sri Vivekaramaya Buddhist Temple	Sri Lanka
12. Most Ven Ceintitar Linkara	Myanmar
13. Madhusree Chowdhury	India
14. Ven. Geshe Lobsang Samten	India

Name	Country
15. Most Venerable Prof. Pallekande Rathanasara Anunayake Thero	Sri Lanka
16. HH 12th Chamgon Kenting Tai Situ Rinpoche	India
17. Venerable Monks of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery	Mongolia
18. Jamyang Choling Institute	India
19. Choskorling monastery	India
20. Ven. Okonogi	India
21. Buddhist Community Centre	UK
22. Mr Kaji Sherpa	UK
23. Most Ven Eaindanyana	Myanmar
24. Most Ven Dr Dhammapiya, Secretary General IBC	India
25. Jamyang Choling Institute	India
26. Nechung Monastery	India
27. Venerable Dr. Ashin Nandaka	Myanmar
28. Most Venerable Ve Pon La	Myanmar
29. Drikung Kagyu Institute	Dehradun



MESSAGE FROM HH THICH TRI QUANG

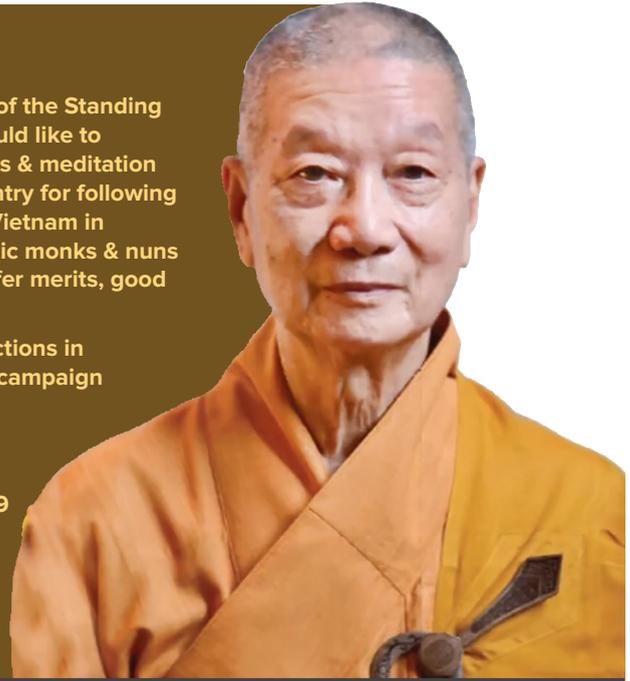
Deputy Patriarch, Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, Vietnam, Patron IBC

On this special occasion of Vesak during Covid-19 pandemic, on behalf of the Standing Committee of the Supreme Patriarch of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, I would like to express my praise to venerable monks & nuns from all Buddhist pagodas & meditation centers national wide, lay Buddhists from inside and outside of the country for following instructions from the Prime Minister & the National Liberation Front of Vietnam in combating Covid-19 pandemic in delightful harmony. Especially, monastic monks & nuns have organized daily online chanting sessions to pray for peace & transfer merits, good deeds & a strong belief to stop Covid-19 pandemic.

Simultaneously, Vietnam Buddhist Sangha has carried out immediate actions in providing essential items to the community & actively participating in a campaign on the spirit of giving helping hands to others...

As a means to express our great gratitude to the Buddha, I would like to urge all monastic monks, nuns, lay Buddhists to demonstrate your robust actions to help the community overcome this dangerous Covid-19 pandemic & continue to strengthen the country's development.

Excerpt from the Virtual Vesak Address by H.H Thich Tri Quang, the Deputy Supreme Patriarch of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, Vietnam



Name	Country
30. Ven Bhadant Bodhiratna	India
31. Dunhor temple	Republic of Buryatia, Russia
32. Hemis Monastery	India
33. Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh	Vietnam
34. HH Dalai Lama	India
35. Phyang Monastery	India
36. HE Ling Rinpoche's Monastery	India
37. Gyudmed Monastery	India
38. Gyabung Tulku, Rinpoche	India
39. Ven. Dr. Kalyan Priya Bhikkhu	India
40. Ven. Khenpo Ragdol	India
41. Drepung Gomang Monastery	India
42. Sakyamuni Dharma Center	Malaysia
43. H.H. Drikung Kyabgon Thinley Lhundup	India
44. Mr Devnaka Porage	Sri Lanka
45. H.E. Ling Rinpoche	India



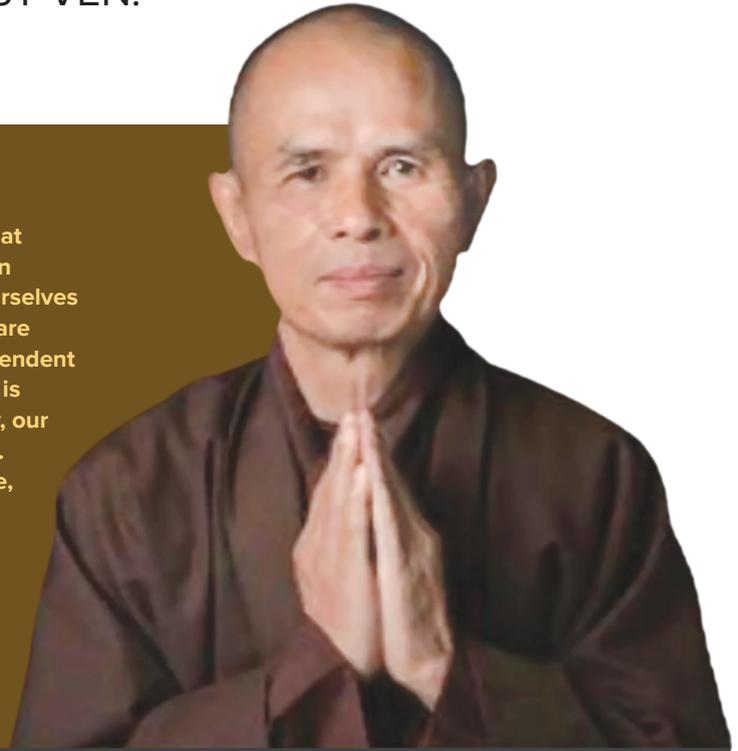
Prayers at Dhamma Dipa Vihara, Bishnupur, Tripura



MESSAGE FROM ZEN MASTER MOST VEN. THICH NHAT HANH

France, Patron IBC

The one who prays and the one prayed to are two realities that cannot be separated from each other... The first element of an effective method of prayer is the communication between ourselves and the one we are praying to. Because we and the one we are praying to are interconnected, our communication is not dependent on time or space. When we meditate on this, communication is realized straight away and we are linked... To pray effectively, our body and mind must dwell peacefully in the present moment. If you are not present, who is praying? In prayer we need love, mindfulness and right concentration. Mindfulness is the real presence of our body and our mind. Our body and our mind are directed toward one point, the present moment. If this is lacking, we are not able to pray, no matter what our faith.



MESSAGE FROM MOST VEN. DHARMA MASTER HSIN TAO

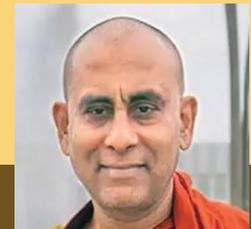
Founding Abbot of Ling Jiou Mountain (L J M) Buddhist Society, Founder of the Museum of World Religions (MWR)



“We will recite the Heart of Shurangama Mantra 100 million times. As during the SARs epidemic the LJM Mountain Community recited the Mantra for 21-days and our sincere efforts paid off”. He explained the scientific impact of Mantras and how they work to keep the heart and mind at peace, and have a calming effect.

MESSAGE FROM MOST VEN. PROF. PALLEKANDE RATHANASARA ANUNAYAKE THERO

Joint-President IBC, Secretary General of Sri Amarapura Maha Nikaya, Sri Lanka



“These critical times are a wake-up call for everyone in the world to change their attitude and life patterns”



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 organisations, 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.

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.



INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST CONFEDERATION

Collective Wisdom United Voice

*pix Govind S. Khampa
Maha Bodhi Temple, Bodh Gaya*

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