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- His Holiness Late Sanghanayak Suddhananda Mahathera
President, Bangladesh Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha, Bangladesh

"Buddha Dhamma our Ancient Cultural Heritage," President Murmu on Asadha Purnima

"On Asadha Purnima we got acquainted with the Dhamma of Lord Buddha which is not only a part of our ancient cultural heritage but is also an important feature of our daily life," said the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, adding that to know about Buddha Dhamma we should learn and understand the first sermon given by Shakyamuni on the sacred land of Sarnath.

The President was addressing the celebrations of Asadha Purnima on 3 July 2023, organized by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) with the support of the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India. She explained that on Asadha Purnima Lord Buddha through his first sermon planted the seeds of the middle path of



Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu delivering a video message at the Asadha Purnima celebration

Dhamma. "It is important that on this auspicious day we absorb the teachings of Lord Buddha into our behaviour and thought," she added.

Asadha Purnima is observed as the Dhamma Chakra Pravartana Divas. The

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Ven Jetsunma on BBC's list of 100 most influential women

In the realm of inspirational women, named among the BBC's list of 100, is Most Ven Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo, one of the Presidents of the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC). "She stands as a beacon of spiritual dedication and unwavering commitment," reads the BBC statement.

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General Assembly Elects new Secretary General Shartse Khensur Jangchup Choeden Rinpoche



Ven Shartse Khensur Jangchup Choeden Rinpoche

The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) is happy to announce Shartse Khensur Jangchup Choeden Rinpoche as IBC's new Secretary General. At the 3rd General Assembly Meeting (GAM) in New Delhi, India, Rinpoche Jangchup Choeden was elected unanimously as the Secretary General.

Rinpoche is no stranger to IBC as he was earlier the Deputy Secretary General of the world body. Concurrently, other positions he holds are Vice President at the Indian Himalayan Council of Nalanda Buddhist Tradition

(IHCNBT) Delhi, Council Member at National Culture Fund (NCF), Ministry of Culture Govt. of India, Sangha Advisor at the Vajrayana Buddhist Council of Malaysia (VBCM), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Advisor at the Sri Lanka and Tibetan Buddhist Brotherhood Society (SLTBBS) Colombo, Sri Lanka and Trustee at Pipal Tree, a Bangalore based social, environmental and cultural organisation.

Rinpoche hails from Himachal and was formerly Executive Director of the Geluk International Foundation. He was also

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His Holiness The 12th Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa

event was held at The National Museum, New Delhi where the Holy Relic of the Buddha from Piprahwa is placed. It is the annual flagship event of IBC and the second most sacred day for Buddhists after the Buddha Purnima or the Vaisakh Purnima.

President Murmu had a message for the youth too. She called upon the youth to learn from the teachings of the Buddha, to enrich themselves and contribute significantly to building a peaceful society, a nation, and a world.

In a recorded video address, Smt. Murmu added "by following the three-teachings of Lord Buddha- Sheel, Sadhachar and Pragya- the younger generation can empower themselves and bring about a positive impact in society."

Minister of State for Culture and External Affairs, **Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi**, in her special address described a lay person's journey to attain the level of a Bodhisattva. "Though we are all connected with our values, yet we are responsible for our own actions. Right actions can change our destiny."

She went on to explain that if we adhere to the principles of consciousness and mindfulness in action, speech, conduct; pursuing the right livelihood, we are already on the path of Dhamma.

"It was Covid that showed us the worth of our life, building a sense of detachment to material and physical existence. In a sense, this was the path to attaining higher levels of consciousness," she added.

"As we have very little time on this planet," the Minister noted, "every individual should do the right thing according to his consciousness which will in turn make for a stronger community."

Members of the diplomatic community, dignitaries, patriarchs of Buddhist sanghas, eminent masters, scholars, monks, and nuns based in New Delhi participated in the event.

Asadha Purnima- Dhamma Chakra Pravartana Divas

His Holiness The 12th Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa in his Dhamma talk on the Significance of Asadha Purnima said "we celebrate the first and foremost teaching of the Buddha who laid the foundation of Dharma and taught us the universal truth of suffering and how we can overcome it by the practise of Dharma. Thereby pursuing the middle path and experiencing peace, happiness, harmony and compassion". □

Asadha Purnima celebrations around the world on page 17 ...

BBC's list of 100... from page 1

Named among the BBC's list of 100 inspiring and most influential women for 2023, Most Ven Jetsunma's journey from the bustling streets of London to the serene landscapes of Himachal Pradesh is nothing short of extraordinary.

The Ven became one of the first westerners to be ordained as a Tibetan Buddhist monastic in 1964. The turning point came in 1976 when Jetsunma sought deeper seclusion. High in the Himalayas, she found a cave at 13,200 feet above sea level, where she lived in solitary spiritual practice for 12 years,



Most Ven Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo

facing hardships and life-threatening experiences.

Most Ven Jetsunma is Founder-Abbess, Dongyu Gatsal Ling Nunnery, Himachal Pradesh- India and President, Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women.

(For the detailed article on Venerable's spiritual journey and enlightened thoughts on Buddha Dharma, read Samyak Sambodh newsletter dated February 2016, https://www.ibcworld.org/old_ibc_newsletter.php). □



Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi, Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture (Centre), from Left to Right, Ven Bounthavong Xaixana Bhikkhu incharge Watiao Bodhgaya International, His Holiness The 12th Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa, Ven Dr. Dhammapiya, SG IBC and Vice Chairman Ven Metteyya Sakyaputta, Lumbini Development Trust



Ven Llama Lobzang, Founder and Executive President IBC with the newly elected office bearers and committee members

the leading Abbot of the Gaden Shartse Monastery, Mundgod, a monastic Educational Institute.

It was after a hiatus of a few years following the Covid shutdown and other unforeseen developments that the GAM was convened on 27-28 November, 2023.

Patriarchs of Buddhist Sanghas, senior monks and Dhamma practitioners, all members of IBC, many amongst them have been IBC's founding members, participated in the meeting to elect office bearers for the world body. They will hold office for the next 3-years.

The meeting was a unique opportunity for senior monks from 27-countries to interact and share their views on some of the burning issues troubling the world today.

It served as a significant milestone, drawing together a distinguished assembly of members forming a truly global representation, including Russia, Brazil, Mexico, Norway, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Nepal, Mongolia, France and Germany, among others. The delegates were proud of their presence amidst the founding members of the IBC, lending a historical and foundational relevance to the event.

The inaugural day commenced with the introduction and adoption of IBC's new constitution, setting the stage for the next phase in the organization's journey. The proceedings progressed to the nomination and election of new office bearers, a pivotal moment that enrolled fresh leadership and perspectives into the IBC.

The second day of the as-

sembly featured presentations and discussions around international engagements that focused on Buddhist values for mitigating global challenges, including degradation of environment and rampant exploitation of wildlife for commercial considerations.

The highlight of the programme was an open discussion forum, providing a platform for delegates to suggest, comment and engage in profound conversations about the future trajectory of the IBC. This interactive exchange fostered a sense of responsibility and collaboration among nations committed to the principles of Buddha Dhamma.

The IBC's newly elected office bearers to the posts of Presidents, Vice Presidents and Deputy Secretary Generals are as follows:

Executive President:

Most Ven. Lama Lobzang	India
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Presidents:

His Holiness Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang	India
Most Ven Dr. Waskaduwe Mahindawansa Mahanayake Thero	Sri Lanka
Ven Khenpo Chimed	Nepal
Deputy Sangharaja of Thailand	Thailand
Most Ven Xin Bao Heshang	Taiwan
His Eminence Candimabhivamsa	Myanmar
Most Ven Dr. Thich Thanh Nhieu	Vietnam
Most Ven Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo	UK
Deputy Sangharaja of Laos	Laos

His Eminence Samdech Preah Pothisong Am Lim Heng	Cambodia
Most Ven. Seo Euihyun	South Korea
Most Ven. Bootawatte Sri Saranankara Nayake Thero	Malaysia
Ven Dr. Dhammapiya	India

Vice Presidents:

Most Ven Khenpo Ugen Namgyel	Bhutan
Ven 20th Bakula Rinpoche Stanzin Ngawang Jigmet Wangchuk	India
Ven Ajahn Amaro	England
Ven Karma Tashi Choedron	Malaysia
Ven Phra Dr. Anil Sakya	Thailand
Ven Ananda Bhikkhu	India
Most Ven Dr. Thich Nhat Tu	Vietnam
Ven Pomnyun Sunim	South Korea

Ven Dhammapala Bhikkhu	Malaysia
Most Ven Bounsouane Phanhavong	Laos
Did Khambo Lama Tsyren Dondukbaev	Russia
His Eminence Khamba Lama Dambajav Chojiljav	Mongolia
His Excellency Dr. Khy Sovanratana	Cambodia
Capt Kaji Sherpa	UK

Deputy Secretary Generals:

Most Ven. Geshe Chosphe Zotpa	India
Ven Khemachara Bhikkhu	India
Dr. Damenda Porage	Sri Lanka

Apart from the above, other elected positions are Dhamma Secretaries-10; Assistant Dhamma Secretaries-2; Treasurer-1; Assistant Treasurer-1 and Executive Committee Members-15. □



Buddha Dhamma in Education: Ram Nath Kovind



Former President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind (Centre), (Left to Right) Director General, IBC, Mr. Abhijit Halder, Vice Chancellor, GBU, Prof. Ravindra Kumar Sinha, General Secretary and Anunayaka (Deputy Prelate) Supreme Sangha Council of the Kotte Chapter, Sri Lanka, Most Ven Kotapitiya Rahula Anunayaka Thero, Secretary General, IBC, Ven Dr. Dhammapiya, Director, Central Institute of Himalayan Culture Studies, Dr. Gurmet Dorji and Registrar of GBU, Dr. Vishwas Tripathi

In support of value-based education, the former President, **Shri Ram Nath Kovind**, called for the inclusion of the principles of Dhamma in the education curriculum as an applied practise of Vipassana. "Dhamma education will assist young minds in shaping a new India," Shri Kovind stated.

The former President was the Chief Guest at the International Abhidhamma Divas from 28-30 October 2023 at Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida. The day was also celebrated as the birth Centenary year of Vipassana Acharya, Dr Satya Narayan Goenka.

The Abhidhamma Divas marks the descent of the Buddha from the celestial domain of the heaven to Sankassiya, presently known as Sankisa Basantapur in Farrukhabad district of Uttar Pradesh, India. It is stated in the

Buddhist texts that after teaching Abhidhamma to the Devas and his mother as witness, The Buddha descended here. It falls on the full moon day of Sharada Purnima.

The event was organised by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) with the support of the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India, and collaboration of Gautam Buddha University.

To mark the contribution of Acharya Goenka an International Conference on 'The Tenets of the Buddha Dhamma and Global Well-Being: Nature, Significance and Applicability' was held on the final day.

Speaking on the subject, the former President further explained that it was based on his own experience and the benefit he derived from the practice of Vipassana that he had suggested

the introduction of Vipassana amongst the trainees at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie.

"I am fortunate that I was introduced to the Dhamma by none other than Revered Goenka ji. Through the practice of Vipassana Meditation, Goenka ji enabled me to experience the teaching of the Shakyamuni Buddha. The Dhamma if applied in our daily life, it can be the panacea for all the present-day problems" he said, adding that "for these modern times, the contribution of Guru ji in the systematic presentation and practice of the Dhamma has been significant. As a result, we see that the number of practitioners of Vipassana are increasing day- by- day, not only in India but throughout the World."

Special Guest from Sri Lanka,

Most Venerable Senior Professor **Kottepittie Rahula Anunayaka Thero**, (Deputy Prelate) Supreme Sangha Council of the Kotte Chapter Sri Lanka said, "India has made tremendous contribution to human knowledge with Buddha Dhamma and we all in the Buddhist world revere this holy land of the Buddha."

Prof. R. K. Sinha, Vice Chancellor, Gautam Buddha University in his



International Abhidhamma Divas celebrations at the Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida

welcome address focused on the significance of Uttar Pradesh as a cradle of Buddhism, a place where "the teachings of the Buddha" were evolved and nurtured.

He said that "UP is a land that resonates with the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha. Today, we stand in a state that holds profound significance in the history of Buddhism". He added that "I would also like to draw



Most Venerable Kottepittige Rahula Anunayaka Thero

your attention that out of the Eight Great Sacred Places in Buddhism, it is truly remarkable that four are situated right here in Uttar Pradesh. These sacred sites namely: Sarnath, Kushinagar, Sankissa and Sravasti are not just geographic locations; they are repositories of spiritual enlightenment and historical significance."

Ven Dr. Dhammapiya, Secretary General International Buddhist Confederation said that "at a time when the world is facing violence in the name of religion and the human mind is full of hatred, anger and causing pain leading to mutual destruction; it is only Buddha's teaching that will bring peace and stability in the society." He further said that "In the spirit of this heritage, it is indeed a pious occasion that we have gathered here, where the legacy of Gautam Buddha thrives."

The Chief Guest, **Prof Santishri Dhulipudi Pandit**, Vice Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), for the valedictory address recalled her deep association with Buddhism and commended the organizers for organising the event.

Prof Pandit underscored that Buddhism and Advaita do not have western equivalents which means, they are unique and universal. She men-

tioned that India's tradition of valuing dissent was rooted in Gautam Buddha's teachings. This left a great impact on her during her student days at Presidency College in Madras.

International Abhidhamma Divas and Workshop on Vipassana

Drawing attention of the gathering, she said that the Madras Museum holds Amravati relics which should be visited by all Ven monks. She further mentioned that Tamil Nadu was a place that produced one of the greatest thinkers and philosophers of all times- Acharya Nagarjuna.

Prof Pandit's academic work includes Nagarjuna's teachings; "the 'Middle Path', similar to non-alignment- a component of India's foreign policy, and 'Shunyata'- the doctrine of emptiness which comes from Buddha Dhamma," she said.



Prof. R. K. Sinha

In conclusion she pointed out that JNU had introduced a Pali certificate course last year and this year, they are planning to add MA in Hindu and Buddhist studies, demonstrating their commitment to India's spiritual heritage.

In his valedictory speech, **DG IBC Abhijit Halder** drew attention to the critical global events marked by enmity, conflicts and wars, driven by human greed for power and revenge. He advocated introducing Vipassana in educational institutions, inspired by the concerns of former President Shri Ram Nath Kovind. Excellent papers

were presented and spirited discussions took place with the practitioners, both monks and nuns, and the scholars which was a spiritually energising experience for all, he said in conclusion.

Esteemed International institutions, including **Dongguk University, Dhammaduta Chekinda University,** and the **Dhammachai International Research Institute** contributed to the event's academic richness.

The well attended conference brought together scholars, practitioners, student monks and nuns, and renowned Buddhists from around the world, including India-based Ambassadors and other diplomats. Guests included a delegation from the Russian Foundation for the Promotion of Buddhist Education and Research, emphasizing the importance of unity for world peace.

The event featured research papers, an open dialogue on Goenka ji's contribution to Buddha Dhamma and Vipassana, and a discussions on the significance of Vipassana practice. It showcased 187 research papers in 24 academic sessions, spanning diverse aspects of Buddhism, including Vipassana practice. A number of Vipassana experts shared their experiences too.

The discussions covered topics from Buddhist philosophy to sustainable development, history, archaeol-



Prof Santishri Dhulipudi Pandit

ogy, art, and the nature of Vipassana; Buddhism's emphasis on interconnectedness offering a path to a happier, compassionate, and progressive world-transcending borders, religions, and cultures. Participants left with shared experiences, spiritual enrichment, and academic lessons to foster a peaceful future. □



Prayer for World Peace



Participants at the conference gather at the statue of Shakyamuni Buddha, GBU for the candlelight peace march

As the world goes through turbulent times and conflict is visible all around, the Buddhist Scholars and academicians from different countries who had gathered at the GBU were in deep discussion and thought on how would this peace march contribute towards spreading the message of world peace based on the teachings of Dhamma.

This exercise led to the spontaneous gesture by the international monks from Russia, South Korea, UK, Canada, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Taiwan, Brazil, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar together on the Abhidhamma Divas, the full moon evening at Gautam Buddha University to carry out a Candlelight march. This march was not just a ritualistic event but a powerful expression of a shared commitment to the cause of world peace. Participants walked together, transcending national, cultural, and linguistic boundaries, and it was a visual representation of unity and solidarity for a more peaceful world.

It was silent, yet holding a resolute message that the teachings of Buddha Dhamma offer a path towards reconciliation and compassion in a world too often torn apart by division and discord. The sight of participants holding candles in the fading light served as a poignant reminder of the essence of Buddhism—illumination in the dark. The candlelight cutting through the darkness envisioned the hope and wisdom that Buddhism imparts to its followers.

The Candlelight march was a significant highlight of the Abhidhamma Day and the International Buddhist Conference of 2023, serving as a testament to the power of collective consciousness, shared aspirations, and a shared commitment to the betterment of humanity.

It was a symbol of hope, peace, and a brighter future, leaving a lasting impression on the hearts and minds of all who participated and witnessed it. □



Silently marching for hope, peace, and a brighter future for the world

Our Responsibility to Carry forward Buddha's Teachings: Meenakashi Lekhi



Prayers at The Holy Buddha Relic on 5 May, 2023

The Buddha's message of peace, non-violence and to follow the path of truth is as relevant today as it was 2550 years ago, said **Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi**, Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture, Govt of India, adding that "we not only need to recall them, but also carry them forward to the next generation; as it has been handed down to us through all these past centuries."

Speaking on the auspicious day of Vaisakh Buddha Purnima, on 5 May 2023, at the National Museum where the Holy Buddha Relics are enshrined, Smt. Lekhi called upon the congregation to move from ideas to action. Quoting from the ancient text, the words of Buddha, she said all our thoughts and ideas are like fragrance, it should reach all, we need to transfer them into action, merely keeping them as ideas is of no use.

The celebration to commemorate the Triple Blessed Day of Shakyamuni Buddha's birth, enlightenment and Mahaparinirvana was organised by the **International Buddhist Confederation and the Himalayan Buddhist Cultural Association**. The event was marked by reverence and piety. Prayers for National Unity, Harmony and World Peace were held at the Holy Buddha Relic, at the Museum. Many monks, nuns and lay worshipers gathered to pray and recall Buddha's teachings.

The Minister added that during the reign of Samrat Ashok, several monks spread out in many countries

The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) marked the Vaisakh-Buddha Purnima Divas celebrations in New Delhi, Leh-Ladakh, Washington and Colombo in pursuance of its mission of making Buddhist values a part of global engagement.

taking the Buddha's teaching. "In this respect we are all connected through blood, thought and culture. The message remains common: be kind in thought and deed, follow the right action and apply in everyone's life.

The event started by lighting of Lamp and offering of the Maglacharan prayers by Ven Monks. The Dhamma Talk was presented by the Guest of Honour, His Eminence the Kundeling Taksak Choktrul Rinpoche, Drepung Gomang Monastery and the Special Guest was Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, President, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

His Eminence the Kundeling Taksak Choktrul Rinpoche, said that the essence of Buddha's teachings remains as fresh and vital as the fresh-water from the Himalayan glaciers. It is important to preserve, study and practice his teachings as they are necessary to heal the contemporary world, he added. In conclusion, he called upon all Buddhists around the world to work towards peace and wellbeing of the entire world, this would be the best way to venerate the Buddha on this day of Buddha Purnima, he said.

Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe said that Buddha is central to India's conceptualisation and Bharat and Buddha are inextricably connected. Buddha's teachings and thoughts remain unique amongst all the Indian spiritual and philosophical traditions because of its interplay between individualism and collectivism, he added.

Referring to the Buddha as a great spiritual leader and a philosopher, he said that the Buddha also showed the path for a relationship between the



(Left to Right) H E the Kundeling Taksak Choktrul Rinpoche, Drepung Gomang Monastery, Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture, Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi, Chairman, Indian Council For Cultural Relations (ICCR) Shri. Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, Director General, IBC, Mr. Abhijit Halder and Chairman, Himalayan Buddhist Cultural Association, Lama Chospel Zotpa



individual and the society. Though the individual pursued his spiritual path, he still held obligations towards the 'Sangha.' His path of compassion led to serving the most deprived which in most

cases were also the most deserving. This was the philosophy of both Mahatma Gandhi and Deendayal Upadhyaya. It led to the setting up of the programme 'Antyodaya'; signifying that up to the last

man in society, the poorest of the poor, services of subsidised food and other help was carried out, Dr Sahasrabuddhe added. □

Buddha Purnima Day Celebrations at Leh-Ladakh, Washington and Colombo



Over 8,000 participate at the colorful Buddha Purnima Celebrations, Polo Ground, Leh-Ladakh

At the colourful celebration of Buddha Purnima on 5 May, 2023, with the participation of over 8,000, representing leading public personalities, monks, lay citizens and members of all faiths, IBC in collaboration with the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) and All Ladakh Gonpa Association (ALGA) marked the Holy day with great pomp and show.

The event started with a grand procession through the Leh city culminating at the sprawling Leh Polo Ground. It was led by **Shri Thupstan Chhewang**, President, LBA and **Ven Acharaya Stanzin Wangtak**, President, ALGA. Students from various schools and devotees marched holding Buddhist scriptures and Statues behind the tableaux depicting scenes from Buddha's life. The event concluded with a cultural programme by the Tamang Community and others performing mask dances, skits by school children depicting the life of the Buddha with the three main significant events in the Shakyamuni's life on this Holy Vaisakh day.

The Chief Guest was Brig. (Retd.) **B.D Mishra**, Lt. Governor of UT

of Ladakh and the Guest of Honour was **H.E Drukpa Thuksey Rinpoche**.

Ven Dr. Dhammapiya, Secretary General, (IBC) presented a special address on the holy occasion. Other prominent personalities present during the event were **Ven Bikkhu Sanghasena** Founder-Mahabodhi International Centre, Leh, **Mr. Tashi Gyalson**, CEC-LAH-DC Leh, **Ms. Rinchen Lhamo**, Member Minority Commission, Government of India, **Prof. Rajesh Ranjan**, Vice Chancellor, CIBS and other leaders from different religious communities of Ladakh.

Leh-Ladakh

At the Polo ground the event commenced with the lighting of lamp followed by chanting of prayers in both Pali and Nalanda tradition. **Shri Thupstan Chhewang**, President, LBA in his welcoming speech informed about the life of the Buddha and the significance of the day.

Brig.(Retd.) **B.D Mishra**, Lt. Governor of UT of Ladakh appreciated the

grand event arranged by the organisers. Dwelling on the significance of the Day he disclosed that the philosophy of the Buddha had always inspired him. He also informed about the world-renowned Nalanda Library and how it was destroyed by Bakhtiyar Khilji in the 12th century.

In conclusion, while appreciating the spread of Buddhism in many East Asian and Asian countries he said the Preservation, Protection and Propagation of the Buddha's teachings were equally important.

In his address **H.E Drukpa Thuksey** recalled the kindness and contribution of the past High Lamas and Kings of Ladakh. He stressed upon religious harmony among different communities in Ladakh and appealed for a balance between the spiritual and materialistic development. The Rinpoche strongly called for imparting moral values and providing education to Ladakhi children to keep them away from negative actions. This was followed by felicitation to various individuals and organisations for their contribution in the society. □



Indian ambassador to the United States, Taranjit Singh Sandhu inaugurates the Buddha Purnima celebrations in Washington, USA

In continuation of the Vaisakh Day programmes, The Embassy of India in Washington D.C. on 5 May 2023 celebrated Buddha Purnima in association with the International Buddhist Association of America (IBAA) and the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC). The event was attended by venerable monks, scholars, and members of the Indian diaspora.

IBC facilitated in bringing together Buddhist organizations in the US with the Indian Embassy in Washington to celebrate Buddha Purnima at the Indian Embassy. The US based Buddhist organisations associated with IBC participated in the event.

IBC facilitated an exhibition from India on 3 May 2023, on the auspicious day of Buddha Rashmi National Vaisakh Festival at Seemamalakaya, Gangaramaya Temple in Colombo. The special exhibition relating to the Digital Restoration of Ajanta Cave Paintings was hosted by the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka.

Colombo

The Exhibition curated by Prasad Pawar and presented by the President of the Prasad Pawar Foundation **Mr Ankur Naik** displayed digital recreations of the fresco paintings from the world-famous UNESCO Heritage Site Ajanta caves of India, depicting significant episodes from Lord Buddha's life

The Ambassador of India, **Mr Taranjit Singh Sandhu** in his remarks praised Buddhism as one of the "greatest gifts" from India to the world.

Listing out several initiatives of the Indian government towards strengthening Buddhism and people-to-people con-

ing and renovating Buddhist monasteries are all efforts to centre stage Buddhist philosophy.

Other speakers at the event included scholars and office bearers from

the IBAA, who also shared their insights on the significance of Buddha Purnima

Washington

tacts, he said the development of the Buddha circuit in India and Nepal, the rejuvenation of pilgrimage centres like Sarnath and Kushinagar and assistance to neighbouring countries in construct-

and the relevance of Buddhism in today's world. **Ms. Erika Moritsugu**, Deputy Assistant to President Biden and the Senior Liaison Office of the Chief of Staff United States of America



Monks at the Indian Embassy in Washington, US

also participated at the event. In his message the **DG IBC Abhijit Halder**, thanked the participants from the US, representing members of the Sangha, Academicians from various Universities and Institutions. "We also want to thank the Indian Embassy for giving us the opportunity to participate in this sacred Day of Vaisakh. We would

like to reiterate that the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) is committed to providing a unified platform for all Buddhist traditions and organizations worldwide and to ensure that the path of Dhamma remains relevant in society's changing landscape," he said in conclusion. □



Exhibition on Ajanta Caves in Colombo Sri Lanka

and Jataka tales. Ajanta Caves are Buddhist cave monuments in Maharashtra, India, dating back to 2nd and 1st centuries B.C.

President **Ranil Wickremesinghe**, accompanied by High Commissioner **Gopal Baglay**, senior Ministers and other dignitaries visited the exhibition that was part of the grand Vaisakh Festival in Colombo. □



Mr Ankur Naik, President, Prasad Pawar Foundation (Right) presenting a restored replica of Ajanta paintings to the President of Sri Lanka, Mr Ranil Wickremesinghe as Mr Prasad Pawar, the artist looks on (Left) in the presence of Indian High Commissioner Gopal Baglay (Right)



Bhutanese Delegation Visits IBC



A high-level delegation led by His Eminence Khenchen Sangay Khandu Tshogi Lopen Rinpoche, representing the Central Monastic Body of Bhutan and accompanied by esteemed senior monks, visited the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) on 15 October 2023. The delegation was warmly received by the Secretary General of IBC, Venerable Dr. Dhammapiya, and the Deputy Secretary General, Ven Jangchup Choeden Rinpoche.

In his opening remarks, Secretary General IBC underscored the significance of Bhutan as a Buddhist country, highlighting the pivotal role played by the Central Monastic Body in the nation's development through the propagation of Buddha Dharma teachings.

His Eminence Lopen Sangay, in his address, conveyed his deep appreciation to IBC for their tireless efforts in organizing, coordinating, and facilitating the delegation's journey to sacred places in Ladakh. He lauded IBC for successfully orchestrating a spiritually enriching experience for the delegation. As a token of appreciation, His Eminence Lopen Sangay presented a Thangka to Secretary General IBC.

Moreover, His Eminence illuminated the spiritual bond between Bhutan and India. Beyond the realm of diplomatic relations, he emphasized the profound spiritual connection shared by the two nations. He described Bhutan as a land steeped in spirituality, with India being the wellspring of this

spiritual wisdom, often referred to as the Arya land. He acknowledged that spiritual teachings had reached Bhutan in the 7th century from two distinct sources - India and Tibet. His Eminence Lopen Sangay commended IBC for its instrumental role in disseminating the teachings of Lord Buddha globally and uniting the Buddhist Sangha under one harmonious umbrella. He earnestly urged IBC to persist in their commendable work, a request made on behalf of the Central Monastic Body.

In a closing gesture of appreciation, the Deputy Secretary General of IBC presented a memorable token to the delegation, expressing heartfelt gratitude for their visit to IBC. □

20th Parinirvana Divas Anniversary of the 19th Kushok Bakula Rinpoche

A large delegation of Monks from different traditions, including representatives of the Japanese Monastery from Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh, India) on 4 November 2023 marked the 20th Parinirvana Divas anniversary of the 19th Kushok Bakula Rinpoche at the World Buddhist Centre, New Delhi.

On the occasion, Mr. Sonam Wangchuk, Deputy Secretary General of Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP), briefed the gathering on the life, achievements and contributions of the 19th Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, who was also India's Ambassador to Mongolia from 1990-2000.



It was Rinpoche's contribution to the revival of Buddha Dharma in Mongolia as an Indian diplomat following the collapse of the Soviet Union that brought him into global limelight. In 1993 Rinpoche managed to bring the holy Buddha Relics to Mongolia.

Rinpoche's tenure hosted in his residence not just diplomats but a long line of

devotees from the Mongolian countryside seeking his teachings and blessings on a near daily-basis.

He is referred to as Ambassador Teacher 'Elchin Bagsh' by the people of Mongolia and has left a great legacy in Mongolia.

He highlighted Ven Kushok Bakula Rinpoche's contribution to the security of Ladakh in the past and also his tremendous gift to the people of Mongolia by preaching to them the valued teaching of the Buddha.

Ven Acharya Lobsang Shastri, former Speaker of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), mentioned there was a need for

IBC's 11th Anniversary...

Celebrations with Ven Lama Lobzang



As a mark of respect and acknowledgement of Ven Lama Lobzang's contribution to the crea-

tion and sustenance of IBC by involving eminent Buddhist patriarchs, renowned Buddhist practitioners and distinguished scholars representing the Buddhist world, IBC felicitated the Venerable on the 11th anniversary.

Thus, as a mark of gratitude, team IBC on the 11th Anniversary of the World Body, visited the Asoka Mission nestled in the forests surrounding New Delhi which is a Buddhist prayer area and the residence of Ven Lama Lobzang.

The Asoka Mission is doing exceptional work by facilitating large numbers of critical patients from Ladakh, including cancer patients to undergo treatment at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Del-



Team IBC with Ven Lama Lobzang

hi. It also, under the leadership of Venerable Lobzang is organising regular medical camps and other treatments in remote regions of the Ladakh (UT) with doctors and specialists from AIIMS. □

English Edition of 'Gaya Buddhism- Unlatching The Gate'

The Embassy of India, Seoul hosted a special event on 22 September 2023 to launch the English edition of the book titled 'Gaya Buddhism, Unlatching the Gate' by Ven Domyeong, Chief Monk of Yeo Yeo Jung Temple. Ven Domyeong, is a well-known Korean scholar of Buddhism. He is also the Chairman of the Gaya Cultural Promotion Foundation in Gimhae city.

Ven Domyeong's book is an invaluable source that stands testimony to the deep civilizational links between

ancient India and Korea. The Gaya Culture Promotion Foundation and the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) supported in bringing out the English edition.

The event featured a lecture by Ven Domyeong about his book and



research. The book provides a fascinating scholarly account of the travel of Buddhism from India to Korea through the maritime route along with Princess Suriratna of Ayodhya, who arrived in Korea in 48 A.D.

Princess Suriratna married King Kim-Suro of the Gaya Kingdom and became Queen Heo Hwang-ok. The Indian princess and her brother Monk Jangyu brought a Buddhist pagoda along with them, which is currently placed adjacent to the tomb of Queen Heo in Gimhae.

The event was attended by Hon'ble Member of ROK National Assembly Min Hong-chul, Ambassador of India Amit Kumar, senior Buddhist monks and scholars from Korea and India. Ambassador Kumar noted that the English edition of the book will immensely benefit many more historians and students, and help advance our understanding of that important period.

Director General IBC Abhijit Halder in his video message said that IBC has remained at the forefront and will continue to support the centuries-old cultural and historical connection with Buddha Dhamma. □

more proactive awareness building among people on the life and contribution of Ven Kushok Bakula Rinpoche. He suggested that a library should be set up in Ladakh where the life and work of Ven Kushok Bakula Rinpoche should be collated for public reading.

In his keynote address DG IBC Abhijit Halder, remembered his personal meeting with Ven Kushok Bakula Rinpoche in Ulaanbataar in 1990 when he had travelled there from Moscow. He also briefed the gathering about the exposition of the Holy Relic of the Buddha in Mongolia, which was carried by the 20th Kushok Bakula Rinpoche in June 2022.

The event ended with prayers by monks of the Mahayana and Theravada traditions besides the Japanese monks. □

The 20th Kushok Bakula Rinpoche at IBC Office.



The IBC hosted the 20th Kushok Bakula Rinpoche at its headquarters on 20th September 2023. He was

received by SG, Ven Dr. Dhammapiya and DG IBC Abhijit Halder. This visit not only marked a harmonious convergence of wisdom and devotion but also underscored IBC's enduring commitment to promoting Buddha Dhamma worldwide. □



Venerables from around the globe join His Holiness The Dalai Lama at International Sangha Forum



His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Chief Minister Arunachal Pradesh Shri Pema Khandu, Ven Ru-Jing, Abbot of Bliss and Wisdom Monastic Community, Taiwan, Phra Dhambodhi-vong, Chief Abbot of the Royal Thai Monastery, Bodhgaya, Bihar, Preah Iddhimuni Moeng Sang, President of the Cambodian Buddhist Monk Society - USA, Shadjin Lama, Geshe Lobsang Chodak, Head Lama of Buddhism of Kalmyk, Republic of Kalmykia, Russia, Most Ven Dr. Warakagoda Gnanarathana Mahanayake Thero, The Mahanayake Thero of Asgiriya Chapter of Siyam Maha Nikaya, Sri Lanka, Mr. Abhijit Halder, Director General, International Buddhist Confederation, (IBC) New Delhi, Ven Khensur Jangchup Choeden, Secretary General, International Buddhist Confederation, (IBC), New Delhi, amongst others, at the International Sangha Forum, Bodh Gaya, India.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama in his address as the Chief Guest at the **First International Sangha Forum (ISF)** in Bodhgaya, Bihar spoke about instilling compassion in everyone, regardless of their beliefs and practices for which he indicated that "we must follow the practices of Bodhisattva for world peace and ourselves."

Inaugurating the first ISF that was organized by IBC, in collaboration with the **Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Buddhist Centre**, along with 23 co-organizers from 20-22 December 2023, His Holiness shared his practices of Bodhisattva

that had deeply benefitted him. Keeping the competitive and harsh world in mind, His Holiness emphasised practicing the concept of "Bodhichitta — the mind of enlightenment" — a precious practice that works on inner strength, which would subside feelings of anger, hatred, and jealousy.

During the inauguration session, the event witnessed the presence of practitioners of the Pali tradition of Southeast and South Asian countries, including India, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Indonesia, as well as those of the Sanskrit tradition.



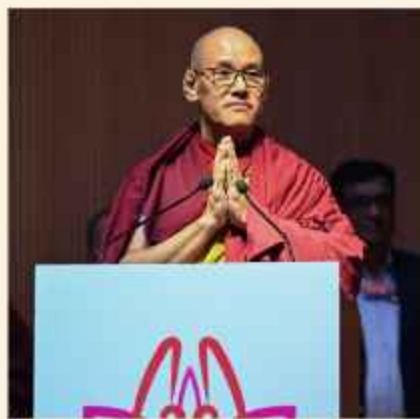
**International
Sangha Forum**

*"Bridging Traditions,
Embracing Modernity"*



His Holiness the Dalai Lama addressing the congregation gathered at the Mahabodhi Temple to join in prayers for world peace in Bodhgaya

The session began with a group of Theravada Tradition monks reciting the 'Karaniya Metta Sutta'—'The Buddha's words on loving-kindness'—in Pali, which was followed by a group of monks from the Sanskrit University in Varanasi who chanted the Mangala Sutra—the Sutra of Auspiciousness—in Sanskrit.



Secretary General, IBC, Ven Khensur Jangchup Choeden Rinpoche

Subsequently, **Secretary General IBC, Ven Khensur Jangchup Choeden**, offered the Vote of Thanks. He paid homage to the Holy Sangha led by the great 14th Dalai Lama and expressed his gratitude to all the speakers, dignitaries, and devotees.

He wished the event every success and said that he would himself be participating in the discussions on Vinaya and will be interacting with a cross section of Dhamma practitioners from across the globe who are participating in the Conference.

He also interacted with the media explaining to them the essence & value of Dhamma.

The **Director General IBC Mr. Abhijit Halder** delivered the Keynote address, where he expressed his faith on the meaningful impact of this conference. At a time when conflict has broken out in several parts of the world, he said "the primary focus of the Dhamma is to develop compassion and wisdom. The Buddha Dhamma is part of the world's culture, which teaches us how-to live-in peace with prosper-

ity and compassion." He highlighted the need to shift our attention to what will make human beings more compassionate and peaceful.

Mr. Halder also drew the attention of the gathering to the specific mention by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on the need for us humans to pay more attention to the health of the environment at the recently held World Climate Action Summit in Dubai.

He Quoted, what His Holiness The Dalai Lama had said at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992:

"I believe that to meet the challenge of our times, human beings will have to develop a greater sense of universal responsibility. Each of us must learn to work not just for his or herself, family or nation, but for the benefit of all mankind. Universal responsibility is the real key to human survival. It is the best foundation for world peace, the equitable use of natural resources and,



Director General, IBC, Abhijit Halder

through concern for the future generations, the proper care of the environment."

Venerable Heads of Sanghas from different parts of the world also spoke about the core values of Dhamma and its applicability in today's world. Representatives from Russia, Mongolia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Thailand, Singapore, Laos, Myanmar, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Nepal, Japan, Korea, and Mexico were among those who addressed the gathering. □

Picturespeak

Visitors to the IBC



Most Venerable Aryawangso
Buddhapojharipunchal Forest Monastery,
Thailand



Director IBC, Dr Ravindra Parth greeting the leader
of the South Korean delegation, Prof Chongdok C H
Park, Director, Buddhist Culture Research Institute



H.E. Mr. Nambaryn Enkhbayar
Former President of Mongolia



Significance of Buddhist Pilgrimage for Young Scholars



Mr S.K. Mishra, (Centre) Chairman of the Indian Trust for Rural Heritage and Development (ITRHD) inaugurating the conference, Mr. G.K.G Sarath Godakanda, (Extreme Left) Minister Counsellor from the Sri Lankan High Commission

The International Conference of Young Buddhist Scholars on 'Significance of Buddhist Pilgrimage' brought together young academicians and researchers who discussed diverse dimensions of Buddhist Pilgrimage as seen by the youth today.

The Conference held in New Delhi, on 1 August, 2023 was organised by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), with support of the Ministry of Culture.

The primary objective of the conference was to create a vibrant platform for young researchers to share their insights, engage in scholarly pursuit, further engage with the eight-Buddhist sites in India, and carry out research on other sites here and overseas. The conference witnessed an impressive attendance of more than 70 young scholars of different nationalities representing various Buddhist institutions.

Academicians and researchers from around the world explored the profound dimensions of Buddhist Pilgrimage and shared their valuable insights. Said a scholar, "taking pilgrimage to holy sites has two aspects. The first one is physical and the other is mental. According to the Buddha the mental aspect is an act of devotion and faith. By visiting these holy places and looking upon them with feelings of reverence and showing veneration, one is able to purify one's thought, speech and action."

Mr Jigmet Olden, researcher and scholar from Delhi University,

speaking on 'historical Buddhist pilgrimage sites of Guru Padmasambhava in Ladakh said, "Pilgrimage is an essential part of Buddhism because it provides an opportunity for Buddhists to deepen their spiritual practise, connect with their faith, and cultivate mindfulness and compassion. It is also seen as a way to purify negative karma and gain merit or positive spiritual energy towards their path to eventual enlightenment."

He further said that "Since time immemorial, Buddhists have traditionally performed an annual pilgrimage to the most significant Buddhist holy sites. These holy sites are revered as places of power and the physical manifestation of the Buddha's teachings. By visiting these places, they believe they can absorb this spiritual energy and connect more deeply with the teachings of the Buddha."

Among the many Buddhist pilgrimage sites, those associated with Guru Rinpoche (Padmasambhava) carry a unique significance."

The Chief Guest was Mr S.K. Mishra, Chairman of the Indian Trust for Rural Heritage and Development

(ITRHD). A keynote speech was delivered by Prof. Kuldeep Chand Agnihotri, Vice Chairman of Sahitya and Sanskriti Akademi, Haryana, who provided thoughtful insights into the importance of Buddhist pilgrimage and its impact on cultural heritage.

Mr. G.K.G Sarath Godakanda, Minister Counsellor from the Sri Lankan High Commission, New Delhi, as the Guest of Honour spoke on the significance of the conference and its relevance to the global Buddhist community.

In a special presentation Dr. Ajmal Shah, Sr. Assistant Professor of Archaeology, University of Kashmir spoke about the many excavations he had participated in, such as Farmana, Rakhigarhi in Haryana and Junnar in Maharashtra. He had been the director of the excavations at Ahan, a Kushan site on the sub-section of the ancient Silk Route in Kashmir Valley. He had also co-directed two international projects entitled "Archaeological Studies of migration routes from Central Asia to Kashmir".

Other distinguished dignitaries present at the event included Mrs. Tin Tin Htwe Win, Minister Counsellor (DCM) of the Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Mr. Keo Sengdavong, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy of Laos.

The event generated an overwhelming response from young Buddhist scholars who seldom have a chance to be centre stage, that the DG IBC Abhijit Halder seeing the motivation and enthusiasm, said the IBC will be continuing with these conferences on many similar topics, engaging with the young scholars, in the coming months. □



"Buddhist Pilgrimage and Cultural Linkages"- the fourth technical session

7th Kyabje Ling Rinpoche in Russia



On his visit to Russia His Eminence 7th Kyabje Ling Rinpoche presented memento from IBC to Khambo Lama Damba Ayushdeev, Head of the Buddhist Traditional Sangha of Russia

Rinpoche's visit to Russia in July 2023 was significant in deepening the spiritual bond between Indian and Russian Buddhist, as well as its importance for the global Buddhist communities.

The visit, at the invitation of **Khambo Lama Damba Ayushdeev**, included blessings, discussions, and a consecration ceremony at the Aginsky Datsan.

An exhibition on ancient Buddhist thangkas from Buryatia was held at the Indian Embassy. □

Blessings for the Future of IBC



Upon the election, the Secretary General, IBC **Shartse Khensur Jangchup Choeden Rinpoche** accompanied by the Deputy Secretary General **Ven Geshe Chosphe Zotpa** and the Director General IBC **Abhijit Halder** had an audience with **His Holiness the Dalai Lama** to seek blessings for a successful beginning of their term and a prosperous future of the International Buddhist Confederation. □

Buddha Dhamma in the Land of Origin

International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), in collaboration with Light Of Buddhaddharma Foundation International (LBDFI) Executive Director **Ms. Wangmo Dixey**, organized a symposium on the "Revival of Buddha Dhamma in the Land of Origin" at National Museum, New Delhi on 16 November, 2023. This symposium marked the beginning of a major chanting event at Bodh Gaya from 2-12 December 2023, which witnessed the participation of over 5,000 monks and nuns from many countries, including participants from India. The 18th International Tipitaka Chanting Programme in Bodhgaya brought together monks from a number of Buddhist nations who converged in Bodh Gaya for this special event. □



Prayers at the opening of the event in New Delhi

IBC Welcome Delegates for Buddha Bhoomi Vandan Yatra



The IBC hosted a distinguished delegation from 11 countries on 31st October, 2023 at the office. The delegates were in India for the Buddha Bhoomi Vandan Yatra from 25 October to 03 November, 2023 supported by

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

They were received by Deputy Secretary-General, IBC **Jangchup Choeden Rinpoche** and the Director-General, IBC **Abhijit Halder**. Special in-

vitees, **Mr. Koji Sato**, Director General, The Japan Foundation and **Ven Y. Seelawansa Thero**, Bhikku-in-Charge, Mahabodhi Temple, New Delhi also graced the occasion. □



International Buddhist Forum (IBF) in Russia

The first of its kind, the International Buddhist Forum (IBF) was held in Ulan-Ude, Buryatia, Russia from 17- 19, August 2023.

The objective of the Forum was to draw attention to the understanding of Buddhist culture, philosophy, and practice under conditions of modernity; to strengthen international ties among Buddhists; and to give new impetus to scholarly, academic, and cultural cooperation among Buddhist organisations from different countries.

Organised by the Buddhist Traditional Sangha of Russia, the Gov-

ernment of Buryatia, and the Fund for the Promotion of Buddhist Education and Research, this event welcomed approximately 400 delegates, including 80 from 14 countries. Greeting messages sent from President **Vladimir Putin**, Prime Minister **Mikhail Mishustin**, Minister of Foreign Affairs **Sergei Lavrov**, and Chairman of the Federation Council **Valentina Matvienko** were read during the opening ceremony, underscoring the significance of this international gathering.

The delegation from the **International Buddhist Confederation** to IBF was led by senior monk and recipient of the prestigious Padma Shri

award, **Ven Guru Tulku Rinpoche**. While addressing the august gathering at the opening session on the second day he said "The Buddha's message of compassion, non-violence, and inner peace remains as vital today as it was



Ven Guru Tulku Rinpoche (center) with Buda Balzheivich Badmayev (right), Head Priest of Datsan Gunzechoinei Buddhist Temple in St. Petersburg

when he first imparted it over two millennia ago. In a world marred by turmoil, conflict, and the clamour of modernity, the resonance of the Buddha's peace message grows stronger. In this spirit of universal harmony, we gather to engage in insightful discourse, foster connections, and envision a world where the essence of the Buddhist principles guides our individual and collective paths".

On the sidelines of the IBF, Ven Guru Tulku Rinpoche had the privilege of meeting with distinguished Buddhist leaders, further strengthening the bonds within the global Buddhist community. Among these luminaries

were the **XXIV Pandito Khabo Lama** of the Buddhist Traditional Sangha of Russia, **Damba Ayusheev** of the Ivolginsky Datsan, **Gelek Natsyk Dorju**, The Ninth Kamby Lama of Tuva, **Legtsok Lama**, Head Lama of the Aninsky Datsan, and

Buda Balzheivich Badmayev, Head Priest of Datsan Gunzechoinei Buddhist Temple in St. Petersburg. These interactions fostered unity and shared purpose among leaders who are custodians of Buddhist traditions in their respective regions.

Guru Tulku Rinpoche paid a visit to the Moscow Buddhist Society in Moscow and he

was invited to give a teaching on Buddhist philosophy by the president of the Society **Dolma Shakdarowa**. The teaching was attended by 20-25 people and it lasted for two hours.

He also visited the Myanmar Pagoda at Etnomir. The Forum was an attempt to bridge the gap between traditional Buddhist values and the complex challenges of the modern era, bringing together diverse representatives from around the world, fostering meaningful interactions, and generating tangible outcomes in the form of resolutions and collaborative initiatives. □



At the inauguration of the International Buddhist Forum, Ulan-Ude, Republic of Buryatia, Russia

ASADHA PURNIMA CELEBRATIONS AROUND THE WORLD

Japan



The Ambassador Sibi George spoke of the relevance & importance of Buddha's teachings.

The event marking Asadha Purnima was organized at the Indian Embassy premises on July 3, 2023. Nearly 120 people, including representatives from leading Buddhist orders and temples, participated enthusiastically. The event included speeches by two eminent scholars who spoke about relevance of Buddhism in modern day life.

In addition, videos on the 'Path of Compassion' and the 10th anniversary of IBC were also played, to acclaim by the audience.

Nepal



The event at the Indian Embassy was marked by Minister of Culture of Nepal Sushila Sirpali Thakuri who spoke on the shared Buddhist heritage between India and Nepal. The Ven Khenpo Chimed, Secretary of IBC in Nepal mentioned that Buddha's teachings aid in bringing harmony and world peace.

Vietnam

Celebrated together at Yen Phu pagoda in Hanoi with Vietnam Buddhist Sangha led by Standing Vice President of the Executive Council Most Venerable Thich Thanh Nieu prayers with by all. Standing Vice Chairman of the Executive Council, led by the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, and the Hanoi Vietnam - India Friendship Association (HAVIFA), chanted prayers at the event along with all gathered among the prominent people.



Russia



Indian embassy in Russia in the august presence of Ambassador Pavan Kapoor organised Asadha Purnima celebrations at the Embassy marking the first sermon of Lord Buddha. The ambassador highlighted the shared Buddhist heritage between India and Russia and the need to strengthen these bonds.

The gathering of monks amidst chanting created a somber atmosphere with a significant presence of Russians from different background in Russia. Several representatives of Buddhist communities attended the event.

Indonesia



JNICC, Embassy of India in Jakarta.

Cambodia

Indian Embassy in Cambodia, Phnom Penh, in presence of H.E. Ms. Devyani Khobragade, Ambassador of India to Cambodia, Ven Choun Savoeurn, Vice Reactor, Preah Sihanouk Raja Buddhist University and Dr. Ven Dith Virak, Assistant Secretary of State and Dean, Preah Sihanouk Raja Buddhist University, inaugurated the event by lighting the lamp and paying floral obeisance to Lord Buddha.



Bhutan



The Indian Embassy jointly with the Central Monastic Body of Bhutan on July 04, 2023. The event was presided over by the second highest spiritual leader of Bhutan, His Eminence Dorji Lopen. Apart from the Ambassador, India based officers/officials and local staff; prominent members of Indian community participated in the function.

Mongolia

Commemorating 1st ever sermon by Lord Buddha was celebrated in presence of Khamba Nomun Khan, Ambassador MP Singh & gathering of lamas in Gandan Monastery.



The planning and formating for the events was coordinated by the International Buddhist Confederation



Progress on the India International Centre for Buddhist Culture and Heritage (IICBCH), Lumbini, Nepal

Groundbreaking Ceremony of India International Centre for Buddhist Culture and Heritage (IICBCH) was held on August 6th, 2023. This auspicious event took place in the sacred land of Lumbini, Nepal. Despite encountering various challenges during the preparation, including unfavorable weather conditions, the ceremony emerged as a remarkable success.

The Bhoomi Pooja transpired flawlessly with participation of a distinguished gathering of 250 plus dignitaries from 10 countries. Among these esteemed guests, over 120 revered Monks from 32 monasteries/temples/centers were present from the Lumbini Monastic Zone.

Other esteemed figures present at the ceremony were, Former State Minister of Law and Justice, Former Member of Parliament, Mayor of Lumbini and Bhairawa, Deputy Mayor of Lumbini, SP Police, SP Police Armed Force, DSP Police, DSP Police Armed Force, Chief Custom officer, Bhairawa, Board Members and officials of LDT, among others.



Secretary General, IBC, Ven Dr. Dhammapiya (center) Executive Member of IBC, Ven Thuphen Jikdol (left), and Most Ven Maitri Bhikkhu Mahathera Chief Abbot of Anandakuti Vihara Trust Swoyambhu, Kathmandu, Nepal participate in the groundbreaking ceremony



Construction of India International Centre for Buddhist Culture and Heritage (IICBCH) in progress at Monastic site, Lumbini, Nepal

The construction of the IICBCH project has been proceeding smoothly after some hindrance due to the monsoons. The project was held up briefly because of heavy rains during the monsoon season which had flooded the dug-up portions of the land.

An onsite office has been setup for monitoring the daily progress.

As part of the construction, the first step involved excavation of the site up to a level of 3.8 meters which was followed by boulder soling (boulder/PCC sandwich soling). This was followed by raft casting which has been completed as per schedule.

At present, work is going on to fill the columns along with the excavated area with the earth. There is constant day-to-day interaction between the specialists on ground and Team Lumbini based at IBC headquarters in New Delhi. Complex issues are often sorted out through mutual negotiation and discussions among all the parties involved, including experts from the IBC.

Team IBC has planned and suggested to the contractor to ensure stock

piling of building materials such as cement, steel, aggregates etc., considering the fact that Nepal is prone to shortages of building materials and items which could be a result of some turbulence in the market.

All building items have gone through quality test from reputed laboratories in India and Nepal. Recently, a batching plant has also been installed at the site, which may increase the efficiency and output of construction at the site.

To monitor and supervise the construction activities at the site, the Project Management Consultant (PMC) has stationed a team of four experts at the site. The IBC intends sending a high-level team to visit the site and examine the situation on ground.

To ensure that all formalities as required by the Lumbini Development Trust and other officials of Nepal on ground; for smooth functioning IBC is regularly interacting with them. IBC is also coordinating with the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu for monitoring the project. □

10th Anniversary of The Buddha Valley Dhamma Walk

Several thousands, including monks, nuns and laity participated in the International – Buddha Valley Dhamma Walk that marked its 10th Anniversary this year.

The walk held in collaboration with the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), New Delhi and Light of Buddha Dhamma Foundation International (LBDFI), USA achieved a momentous milestone by hosting the 10th Anniversary of the Jethian-Veluvana Dhamma Walk on December 13, 2023.

The 15.5 km walk along the Jethian trail saw representatives of more than 15 countries take this spiritual pilgrimage.

The event witnessed the enthusiastic participation of 200 monks and 150 nuns, walking in unison to retrace the steps that hold profound significance in Buddhist teachings.

Beyond being a symbolic pilgrimage, the walk fostered a sense of community and shared purpose among participants. This endeavour not only honoured the rich Buddhist heritage but also highlighted the importance of collective efforts in preserving and promoting the spiritual essence of the Buddha Valley.

It is one of the important events of the Buddhist Calendar in India, the Cetiya Carika (a walking pilgrimage). As mentioned in the Buddhist literature, the Buddha on his maiden visit to Rajagriha after his Enlightenment was received by Bimbisara, the King of Magadha at Supatitha Cetiya.

Both of them along with hundreds citizens of Magadha then walked this path through the beautiful valley of Rajagriha where King Bimbisara offered the Venuvana (Bamboo Grove) to the Buddha and the Sangha, around 2,500 years ago.

The 'Buddha- Path' has been traced out based on the travelogues of Chinese Monk – Scholar Xuanzang in the seventh century AD.

The description of Jethia- Rajgir valley and its association with Buddha has also been supported by British archaeologist Alexander Cunningham who identified the site in the year 1871.

Jethian in ancient times was called Latthivana (Yasthivana), meaning Bamboo Forest. Jethian village is surrounded by Dhamma Walk- 'the spiritual pilgrimage hills' from three sides and this serene valley have a very deep connect with the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha.

In the 6th century BCE, Siddhartha the prince of Kapilavastu, set

tava Siddhartha promised King Bimbisara to share his experience once he attained enlightenment.

Later, after his enlightenment, keeping his promise the Buddha, along with the Sangha, left Gayasisa (Brahmayoni) for Rajagriha. Walking 25 miles north-east along the hills they reached a beautiful bamboo forest, Latthivana (Latthivanuyyana, Yasthivana, Jethian), surrounded by hills on three sides.

Chinese monk-scholar Xuanzang (Hieun Tsang) mentioned an interesting legend where a lay person made a failed attempt to measure the height of the Buddha with a bamboo stick (latthi), he then threw the bamboo on the ground. His bamboo took roots, and the place became Yasthivana (Bamboo Forest). In the heart of Bamboo Forest was

Supatitha Cetiya (Supratishtha Chatiya), and this is where the Buddha stayed during his maiden journey to Rajagriha after his enlightenment.

King Bimbisara was very happy to see Siddhartha again, who now was the Buddha. He approached the Buddha and paid his respects. The Buddha found the assembly eager to absorb his

words of wisdom and offered insights, such as, saying that ego or self is nothing but a deception. The life that exists is nothing but transitory and dwelling in desires of the senses is the cause for all suffering. He explained that once a human being let go of the self and realized the transitoriness of all that exists, that person would be on the path that ensures happiness.

The following day, Buddha and the Sangha, escorted by King Bimbisara and myriads of people from Rajagriha then took this route through Jethian-Rajgir Valley to reach Rajagriha, where the King Bimbisara offered the Buddha and the Sangha his favourite pleasure garden, the Veluvana (Bamboo Grove). □



out to find the truth related to the phenomenon of life. In search of the truth, Siddhartha passed through Vaisali to Rajagriha (Rajgir). By word of mouth the news of his presence in the area reached King Bimbisara. The King was very impressed with Siddhartha's stately presence and his calm and composed manner.

Bimbisara did everything in his power to keep Siddhartha in his state, even offered half his kingdom, but Siddhartha eloquently declined each offer explaining that these were the very things that he wanted to break free from in his search for a cure from the miseries of life. Before leaving Rajagriha in search of the truth, Bodhisat-

In the Footsteps of the Buddha

The Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, Bihar, in Collaboration with International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), New Delhi and Light of Buddha Dhamma Foundation International (LBDFI), USA achieved a momentous milestone by hosting the 10th Anniversary of the Jethian- Veluvana Dhamma Walk on December 13, 2023.

This collaborative effort aimed

at revitalizing the Buddha Valley through a 15 km spiritual journey along the sacred Buddha trail in Jethian Village.

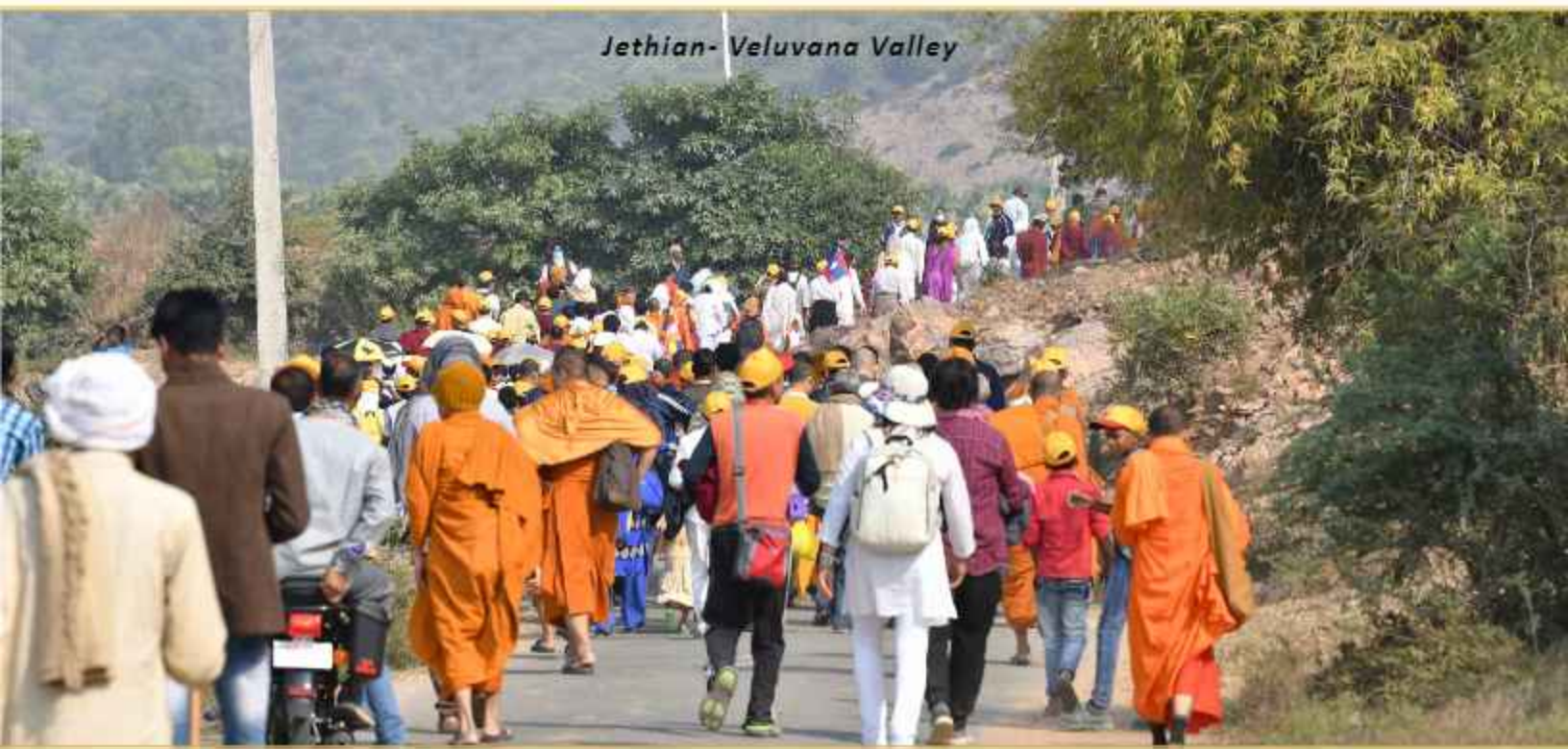
The event witnessed the enthusiastic participation of approximately 200 monks and 150 nuns, donned in traditional robes, walking in unison to retrace the steps that hold profound significance in Bud-

dhist teachings.

Beyond being a symbolic pilgrimage, the walk fostered a sense of community and shared purpose among participants.

This endeavour not only honoured the rich Buddhist heritage but also highlighted the importance of collective efforts in preserving and promoting the spiritual essence of the Buddha Valley. □

Jethian- Veluvana Valley



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.



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