



**INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST CONFEDERATION**

Collective Wisdom United Voice



# ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16**

**April 2015 to March 2016**

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Phone : 011-64619584 Web: [www.ibcworld.org](http://www.ibcworld.org)

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## About IBC



**T**he International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) is a Buddhist umbrella body that serves as a common platform for Buddhists worldwide. It currently has a membership comprising more than 300 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.

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

### 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.

## Meeting of the Working Group set up by the Governing Council

19th and 20th April, 2015

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

The other areas for discussion were planning new activities, use of IBC logo, creating awareness about IBC, Buddhism as a part of the secular curriculum in education, membership and chapter formation, setting up a directory and the UN Day of Vesak celebrations.



Meeting of the Working Group set up by the IBC Governing Council in progress.

**The meeting was attended by:**

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



## Buddha Poornima Diwas Celebration

May 4, 2015

**P**oornima Diwas was organised by the International Buddhist Confederation with the support of Union Ministries of Home Affairs and Culture. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the Chief Guest and addressed the gathering at the International Buddha Poornima Diwas Celebrations 2015 in New Delhi on May 4, 2015.

At the colourful event attended by over 2,000 people, the Minister of State for Culture, Tourism and

Civil Aviation, Dr. Mahesh Sharma, announced that Buddha Poornima or Vesak would now be an annual event to be celebrated officially by the Government of India. A national committee was to be set up under the chairmanship of the Minister of State for Culture, with IBC as the coordinating and implementing organization, and its Secretary General as ex officio convener.

The Culture Minister also announced that



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





**Prime Minister Narendra Modi presenting a scroll to Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan**

the Government was committed to building a grand Holy Relic *Vihara* in Delhi to consecrate the Kapilavasthu relic currently housed in National Museum, New Delhi.

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

Prof. Krishna Nath, eminent Buddhist scholar; and Prof. Rama Shankar Tripathy, also an eminent Buddhist scholar.

The Minister of State for Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation, Dr. Mahesh Sharma and the Minister of State for Home Affairs and the Chairman of the Celebration Committee, Shri Kiren Rijju were present. Ambassadors of Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and representatives of US, Singapore, Thailand, Bhutan, and Slovenia were among those attending. Ministers Rajyawardhan Singh Rathore, Prakash Javadekar, MPs Anurag Thakur, Thubstan Chhewang, Ramdas Athawale, Dr. Udit Raj, Tarun



**The choir of the Mahabodhi Higher Education School, Chandigarh, singing during the cultural programme at Talkatora Stadium, at the International Buddha Purnima Diwas Celebrations 2015 in New Delhi.**

Vijay, Sudhanshu Mittal, Hindu spiritual leader Swami Chidanand Saraswati of Parmarth Niketan, Jain saint Acharya Lokesh Muni also participated.

A large number of monks, nuns and followers of Buddha *Dharma* from all over India attended the event. Special enclosures with large screens were placed in the lawns of the Talkatora stadium for attendees who could not be accommodated

in the stadium.

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

## Buddhist Prayers at Gwanghwamun Square Conference for World Peace and Reunification of Korea

May 15-18, 2015

**A**n IBC delegation from India took part in the Buddhist Prayers at Gwanghwamun Square Conference for World Peace and Reunification of Korea, Commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Korean Independence. The event was organized by the Jogye Order of Korean

Buddhism on 15-18 May 2015. Members of the Indian delegation were Dr. Bhalchandra Mungekar, IBC Deputy Secretary General, Mr. Thupstan Chhewang, both Parliamentarians, and Mr. Shatrughna Singh and Mr. Sachidanand Singh, members of the Sakya community.



IBC delegation from India took part in the 'Conference on World Peace and Reunification of Korea' organized by the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism.

## Nepal Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Committee set up by IBC

June 8, 2015

**A**n IBC Nepal Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Committee was set up to co-ordinate efforts by the IBC members worldwide for providing all kinds of assistance for the people of Nepal. The IBC Nepal chapter was the implementing agency. The committee consisted of three key members of IBC: His Eminence Phakchok Rinpoche, Vice President; Ven. Khenpo Chimed, Executive Member of the Governing Council and

its Working Group; and Ms. Ang Dawa Sherpa, Honorary Secretary and member, Working Group of the Governing Council. IBC Nepal was represented on the Committee by three members—Ven. Phupu Chhembe Sherpa (aka Ven. Thubten Jikdol), President, Nepal Buddhist Federation; Ven. Dharma Murti, Vice President, All Nepal Bhikkhu Federation; and Prof. Dr. Nareshaman Vajracharya, President, Nepal Traditional Buddhist Association. There were



(From left to right) Ven. Khenpo Chimed, Executive Member of the IBC Governing Council, Ven. Thubten Jikdol, Ven. Lama Lobzang, Secretary General IBC, Mr Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli, President of the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninists) and Mr Kripasur Sherpa, Minister for Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation, Nepal.





**Participants at the conference organised by IBC Nepal Chapter and Buddhist organisations of Nepal on Post-Earthquake Reconstruction, Rehabilitation Initiatives and Buddhist Heritage Conservation.**

also representatives from the three traditions– Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana–making it a 10-member group.

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

In the same spirit of extending all physical and material support, IBC Vice President, Ven. Thich Quang Ba, Founding Abbott, Van Hanh Monastery, and Sakyamuni Buddhist Centre of Australia led a nine-member delegation of Vietnamese monks and nuns from New Zealand and Australia to Nepal from June 9 to 15. The Quake Relief Mission brought gifts and funds from lay Buddhist community which was

distributed among around 3,000 severely affected families in the 10 most destroyed districts of Nepal.

IBC Secretary General Ven. Lama Lobzang joined the group in Kathmandu to co-ordinate the works and for supervising the setting up of committees.

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

The Nepal chapter of IBC organised a conference in association with Buddhist Organisations of Nepal on August 10-15, 2015 to discuss the post-earthquake scenario regarding resources, reconstruction, rehabilitation initiatives and the conservation of Buddhist heritage.

## Meeting with the President of Sri Lanka

June 13, 2015

IBC delegation led by Secretary General, Ven. Lama Lobzang called on the President of Sri Lanka, H.E. Mr. Maithripala Sirisena at his residence in Colombo. Other members of the delegation were Deputy Secretary General, Dr Harsha Kumara Navaratne, and President of Sri Lanka IBC Chapter, Mr. Jagath Sumathipala.

During his visit to Sri Lanka, IBC Secretary General Ven. Lama Lobzang also held a meeting with the newly appointed Maha Nayake Thero of Asgiriya Chapter, Most Ven. Galagama Aththadassi Maha Nayake Thero, in Kandy, Sri Lanka, on June 14, 2015.



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



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

## Celebration of the 80th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

July 5, 2015



**Chief Secretary Sharma planting a tree as Ven. Lama Lobzang looks on.**

To celebrate the 80th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on July 5, 2015, the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) organised a 'Tree Plantation' drive along the banks of the river Yamuna in Delhi. The effort saw the cleaning of the river banks and greening of the neighbourhood by planting trees.

The Chief Guest, the Chief Secretary of the Government of NCT, Delhi, Mr K K Sharma launched the 'Tree Plantation' drive. The main function was held at the Tibetan School at Majnu Ka Tila, in North Delhi. More than 2,000 Buddhist monks from different states of the country as well as from other countries participated in the programme and planted trees along the river banks and by the side of the nearby settlements.

Also, around 1,000 members of the Maurya and Shakya communities planted saplings to mark the occasion.



## 4th International Festival of Buddhist Heritage, Ladakh

August 23-30, 2015.

**T**he 4th International Festival of Buddhist Heritage of Ladakh (IFBHL) held from August 23-30, 2015, focused on showcasing, conserving and preserving the rich cultural and spiritual heritage of Ladakh.

It was hosted by the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre, the International Festival of Buddhist Heritage of Ladakh (IFBHL), and in association with the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC).

Eminent scholars, politicians, social and religious heads from different countries participated in the events. In addition, a cultural troupe from Thailand also participated in the festival.



## Working Group Meeting

September 1-2, 2015

The two-day Working Group Meeting was held on September 1-2, 2015, to discuss the proposed amendments to the IBC Constitution. Members were informed that IBC is organising an “International Seminar on India’s North Eastern Region and Buddhist Heritage – Bridge between South and South East Asia” in December 2015.



Members discussing at the Working Group meeting at New Delhi

### The meeting was attended by:

1. **Ven. Lama Lobzang** (*Secretary General*),  
Chairman
2. **Mr Jamie Cresswell** (*Vice President*)  
Member
3. **Prof B Munekar** (*Deputy Secretary General*),  
Member
4. **Dr Harsha Kumara Navaratne** (*Deputy  
Secretary General*), Member
5. **Mrs Ang Dawa Sherpa** (*Honorary Secretary*),  
Member
6. **Dr Gregory Kruglak**  
(*Honorary Secretary*), Member
7. **Ven. Bhikku Sanghasena Mahathera**  
(*Treasurer*), Member

8. **Ven. Thich Nhat Tu**  
(*Executive Member of the Governing Council*),  
Member
9. **Ven. Khenpo Chimed**  
(*Executive Member of the Governing Council*),  
Member
10. **Mr Seshadri Chari**  
(*Advisor*)
11. **Most Ven. Prof Thich Thien Tam**  
(*Member of the Supreme Dhamma Council*),  
Special invitee
12. **Ven. Banagala Upatissa**  
(*Vice President*), Special invitee
13. **Mr Lai Seow Khee** Special invitee
14. **Mr Maling Gombu** Special invitee

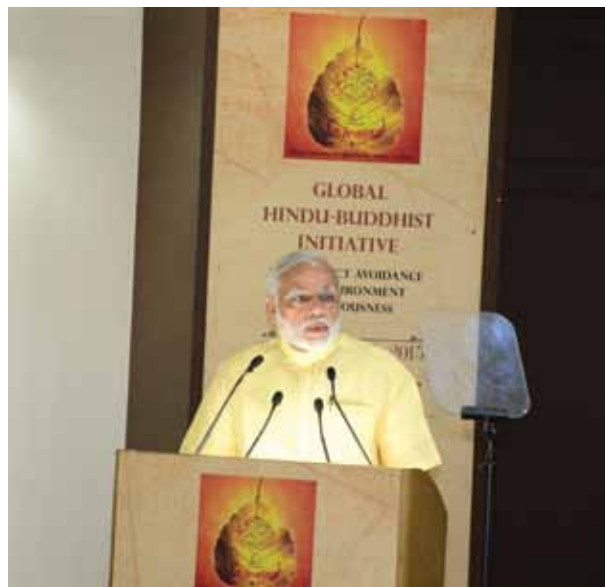
## Samvad- Global Hindu-Buddhist Initiative on Conflict Avoidance and Environment Consciousness, New Delhi and Bodhgaya

September 3-5, 2015

Over 21 countries represented by leading scholars, teachers of spirituality and religion, venerable *bhikkus*, political leaders and former heads of state, converged for the 'Samvad – Global Hindu-Buddhist Initiative on Conflict Avoidance and Environmental Consciousness' in New Delhi on September 3-5. The conference was inaugurated by Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi.

The two-day conference, jointly organised by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) and the Tokyo Foundation, was held in New Delhi on September 3-4, 2015. A pre-recorded message from Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, was played at the inaugural session.

Delegates from over 20 countries including Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bhutan, Mongolia, Thailand, Vietnam, Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, Russia and the United Kingdom attended the conference. The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Kiren Rijiju, and Union Minister of State for Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation, Mahesh Sharma, were among the distinguished invitees to the conference, which was also attended by the former President of Sri Lanka,



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the inauguration of the two-day conclave - 'Global Hindu-Buddhist Initiative on Conflict Avoidance and Environment Consciousness'

Mrs Chandrika Kumaratunga, senior ministers from Japan, Mongolia, Bhutan and Nepal, His Eminence Khamba Lama Rev. Chojamts Gabju Demberel, Supreme Head of Mongolian Buddhists, Most Ven. Sayadaw Dr Ashin Nyanissara, Founder Chancellor



**Speakers on the dais (from left to right): State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr Minoru Kiuchi, His Eminence Sayadaw Dr Ashin Nyanissara, Director of VIF, Gen. NC Vij, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, former Sri Lankan President, Mrs Chandrika Kumaratunga, Founder of the Art of Living, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, and Union Minister of State for Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation, Dr Mahesh Sharma, listening to the pre-recorded message by Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe.**

of the Sitagu International Buddhist Academy in Myanmar, Most Ven. Prof Bellanwila Wimalarathna Thero, Anu Nayaka of the Kotte Chapter and Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayawardenapura, Sri Lanka, Ven. Thich Thien Tam, Vice President of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, and Most Ven. Ming Kwang Shi, Vice President of the Buddhist Association of ROC, Taiwan, besides other high-ranking Buddhist monks and Hindu religious leaders from around the world.

At the conference, renowned Buddhist and Hindu scholars, religious leaders and opinion makers deliberated upon, and attempted to come up with, a new framework that will move away from the usual solutions to two key issues confronting humankind today, i.e. rising conflict and rampant environment degradation.

Speakers on the first day included Most Ven. Sayadaw Dr Ashin Nyanissara, Mrs Chandrika Kumaratunga, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs



(From left to right) **Most Ven. Prof. Bellanwila Wimalaratana Thero, Sri Lanka; His Eminence Telo Tulku Rinpoche, Shadjin Lama, Kalmyk Republic, Russian Federation; Most Ven. Dr Thich Thien Tam, Vice President of National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha; and His Eminence Rev. Khama Lama Gabju Chojjams Demberel, Supreme Head of Mongolian Buddhists.**

of Japan, Mr Minoru Kiuchi, Founder of the Art of Living, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Ven. Thich Nhat Tu of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, Mr S Gurumurthy, leading political thinker and co-convenor of the Swadeshi Jagran Manch, Dr Lokesh Chandra, President of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Dr M Bataa, Advisor on Religious Affairs to the President of Mongolia, Dr Karsten Schmidt, Board Member of the Council of Religions in

Germany, Prof S N Balagangadhara of the Ghent University, Belgium, and Mr Jean Pierre-Lehmann, Emeritus Professor, International Political Economy, IMD, Switzerland.

The second day of the conference witnessed a spirited and composite dialogue on environment consciousness as the prime paradigm of socio-cultural cooperation and creative global action. This session was chaired by Param Pujya



Swami Paramatmananda, Secretary General and Coordinator of the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, and co-chaired by Most Ven. Telo Tulku Rinpoche, Shadjin Lama of the Kalmyk Republic, Russian Federation.

The speakers included Mr Lyonpo Namgay Dorji, Honourable Minister of Finance, Kingdom of Bhutan, Shri Kripasur Sherpa, Honourable Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation of Nepal, Dr Sudha Murthy, Chairperson of the Infosys Foundation, Ven. Thich Thien Tam, Vice President of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, Ven. Geshe Jangchup Choeden, Abbot of the Gaden Shartse Monastery in Karnataka, India, Sri Sri Nirmalanandanatha Swamiji, Sri Ksetra Adichuchanagiri Ash-

ram, Mandya, Karnataka, India, Dr Barbara Maas, Head, International Species Conservation, NABU International and Secretary IBC Standing Committee on Environment and Conservation, Prof Naresh Man Bajracharya, Vice Chancellor of the Lumbini Buddhist University in Nepal, Prof Hsiang-C Hou Yo, eminent scholar from Taiwan and Dr M D Srinivas, Chairman of the Centre for Policy Studies, India.

The keynote speaker at the valedictory session was Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister for External Affairs, Government of India

### **Visit to Mahabodhi Temple**

On September 5, the last day of the International Conference, all the national and International



PM Narendra Modi joins the Sangha in offering prayers under the Holy Bo Tree in Bodhi Gaya.

delegates visited Mahabodhi Temple, Bodh Gaya. Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address said that Bodhgaya should be developed as Spiritual Capital of the World.

The delegates to the conference also adopted the Bodh Gaya Declaration and endorsed the same.

### **Bodh Gaya Declaration of Buddhist Leaders**

This Bodh Gaya Declaration of Buddhist spiritual and temporal leaders, scholars, philosophers and thinkers is made in Bodh Gaya at the conclusion of day-long devotional and spiritual accomplishments. It is hereby declared that:

- 1 Bodh Gaya, where Siddhartha became Buddha, is the seat of enlightenment for the world of Buddhism and Buddhist civilisation that have inspired all religions of the world.
- 2 In this age of increasing conflicts, where in the last 15 years religious conflicts have trebled and killings in the name of religion have gone up by two-thirds, the spiritual gift of Buddha is the only hope for the world to overcome the intra-religious and inter-religious strife and massacre.
- 3 The Hindu-Buddhist civilisations have a special responsibility to work for conflict avoidance and environment consciousness by expounding the philosophical principles common to Hinduism and Buddhism to save the world from fratricidal conflicts.
- 4 The Hindu-Buddhist civilisations, that celebrate diversity and are non-conflicting #with other

religions, will have to work together for a paradigm shift from the present conflict resolution model powered by geopolitics to conflict avoidance model inspired by civilisation.

- 5 This will call for in-depth spiritual orientation to present an alternative world-view as a new paradigm for understanding, appreciating and celebrating diversity based on the ancient idea of Dhamma as in Pali and Dharma as in Sanskrit.
- 6 There is no place more appropriate and elevating than Bodh Gaya for inspiring and institutionalising such noble work.
- 7 Bodh Gaya has the credentials to emerge, and must emerge, as the global symbol and vehicle for enlightenment, peace and hope for civilisational, spiritual and cultural harmony.
- 8 A Buddhist spiritual and civilisational institution, that will bring together and make the entire Buddhist world participate in this momentous task, will be built in Bodh Gaya in the coming three years.
- 9 Hindu civilisational and spiritual institutions will be invited to work with this new Buddhist institution to share the responsibility for global peace and harmony.
- 10 Buddhist spiritual leaders will approach governments of all Buddhist nations to support this monumental and noble task of developing Bodh Gaya as an International Centre of Buddhism for the enlightenment of all humankind.
- 11 We call for support from the Government of India for the development of infrastructure and



other public utilities in the area.

12 A team of experts will be constituted to begin the noble work and the responsibility for this purpose shall be given to a committee.

### **Exhibition on Xuanzang's pilgrimage**

An exhibition, 'Chetiya Carika-the Dhamma Pilgrimage', was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of 'Global Hindu-Buddhism Initiative', held at Bodh Gaya on

September 5. The focus of the exhibition was to showcase the pilgrimage legacy of Xuanzang and to highlight this part of the Buddhist circuit that remains untapped.

The highlight of the exhibition was a detailed map showing the entire pilgrimage route of Xuanzang. The map was prepared on the basis of the '*Biography*' and the '*Journey to the West*', the two works of Xuanzang. Exhibits included digital photographs, books, art and handicrafts.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being shown the map at the exhibition depicting Xuanzang's pilgrimage. Also seen are Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju and Director of the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Dr Ravindra Panth.

## Photo exhibition on 'India-Japan: Echoes of Cultural Friendship'

September 3-5, 2015

A photo exhibition on 'India-Japan: Echoes of Cultural Friendship', held at Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF), displayed the history of cultural friendship between India and Japan on

September 3-5, 2015. It reflected the sharing of ideals of wisdom and compassion, faith and sacrifice, purity and enlightenment. The exhibition in collaboration with IBC was curated by Prof. Shashibala.



Union Minister of State for Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation, Dr Mahesh Sharma, inaugurating the exhibition. Also seen are Director of VIF, Gen. NC Vij, and exhibition curator, Prof Shashibala (left); Former Sri Lankan President, Mrs Chandrika Kumaratunga looking at the display. Also seen is Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Mr Kiren Rijiju, and Director of VIF, Gen. NC Vij (centre). The State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr Minoru Kiuchi, addressing the gathering.

## Talk on ethics in leadership by H.H. Dalai Lama in London

September 20, 2015

In keeping with the mandate of the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) of reaching out and raising awareness, an event was organised in London by IBC's Global Envoy, Mohini Kent (Lady Noon) in collaboration with the

Hinduja Foundation.

A luncheon meeting was organised during H.H. Dalai Lama's visit to the city to introduce him to a gathering of Indian and British political and business leaders.



Lady Mohini Kent Noon, IBC Global Envoy, introducing His Holiness the Dalai Lama.



His Holiness the Dalai Lama speaking to Indian business and political leaders at the talk organised by the Hinduja Foundation on September 20, 2015.

## Participation in Conference on Gross National Happiness at Paro, Bhutan

November 4-6, 2015

**T**he Centre for Bhutan Studies and Gross National Happiness (GNH) Research hosted a large international conference from November 4-6, 2015 in Paro, Bhutan. A delegation of IBC took part in the discussions. It is the largest in a series of conferences on Gross National Happiness organised by the Centre for Bhutan

Studies in cooperation with international partners since 2002.

The conference opened with addresses from Tsuglag Lopen Rinpoche, one of the highest ranking lamas of Bhutan's Central Monastic Body, and by Thailand's Most Ven. Professor Phra Brahmaphandit, Chief Abbot, as well as the Chief Abbot of India's



**His Majesty Fifth Druk Gyalpo interacting with Ven. Lama Lobzang, Secretary General, IBC, Most Ven. Sanghasena Mahathera, Hon. Treasurer of IBC and other participants**





**Secretary General of IBC, Ven. Lama Lobzang, offering the traditional khadag to His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the Fifth Druk Gyalpo (Bhutan)**

Ngagyur Nyingma University in Namdroling, and the Ven. Lama Lobzang, who is the Secretary General of the International Buddhist Confederation.

During the conference, 116 experts from academia, politics, business and civil society,

coming from 48 different countries across the world shared their insights and experiences with a total of around 500 international and hundreds of Bhutanese participants, and engaged in discussions with the audience.

## Participation in Meet on ‘Buddhism in Mekong Region: History and Development’

November 13-14, 2015

**M**ore than 100 Vietnamese and 40 international scientists, scholars and Buddhism researchers from the US, China, India, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia and other countries took part in the two-day ‘Buddhism in Mekong Region: History and Development’ conference held in Ho Chi Minh City on November 13-14, 2016. The conference was organized by HCM City University of Social Sciences and Humanities and Vietnam Buddhist



institute supported by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), India, among others.

IBC Secretary General Ven. Lama Lobzang was among the eminent speakers at the conference. Over 140 presentations were delivered at the conference.

They discussed Buddhism’s development and integration in Vietnam, its heritages and culture, and environmental protection in the context of globalisation and sustainable development.



**Secretary General IBC, Ven. Lama Lobzang (centre), at the Minh Dang Quang School along with Dr Barbara Mass, Secretary IBC Standing Committee on Environment and Conservation (standing with folded hands). Ven. Thich Nhat Tu, Vice Director – Secretary General of Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute and Executive Member of IBC’s Governing Council, addresses the gathering**



Inauguration of the Conference at HCM University of Humanities and Social Science. The Chief Guest, His Holiness Thich Thien Nhon, President of National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha's Executive Council (4th from left), Most Ven. Thich Thien Tam, Vice President of National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and member of IBC's Supreme Dhamma Council (3rd from left), Most Ven. Prof. Thich Tri Quang, Vice President, National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (5th from left), Ven. Lama Lobzang, Secretary General IBC (6th from left) and other eminent Buddhist leaders and scholars

Most Ven. Thich Thien Tam, Vice President of National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and member of IBC's Supreme Dhamma Council, presents an idol of Sakyamuni Buddha to Ven. Lama Lobzang, Secretary General IBC, at the Pho Minh Temple. Ven. Thich Nhat Tu, Vice Director – Secretary General of Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute and Executive Member of IBC's Governing Council, is on the microphone





## Three-day seminar on ‘India’s North Eastern Region and Buddhist Heritage-bridge between South Asia and South-East Asia’

December 18-20, 2015

A three-day seminar, ‘India’s North Eastern Region and Buddhist Heritage- Bridge between South Asia and South East Asia’, was organised by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), in collaboration with the Asian Confluence, Shillong and the Dhamma Dipa

Foundation, Tripura. It dwelt extensively on closer engagement between the South East Asian nations and felt that wholesome prosperity, especially the economic prosperity could be achieved through cultural and philosophical unity grounded in Buddha’s teachings.



At the inauguration of the three-day seminar on “India’s North Eastern Region and Buddhist Heritage- Bridge between South Asia and South-East Asia” (from L to R) Ven. Athuraliye Rathana Thero, Hon’ble MP from Sri Lanka, Mr Manik Sarkar, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tripura, and Mr Ananda Prasad Pokharel, Hon’ble Minister of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Nepal



**Tripura Governor H. E. Tathagata Roy at the Valedictory function receiving a memento from Secretary General of IBC Ven. Lama Lobzang as Ven. Dr. Dhammapiya, the Founder and Chairman of the Bahujana Hitaya Education Trust and Dhamma Dipa Foundation assists**

Hon'ble Tripura Chief Minister, Mr Manik Sarkar, thanked the organisers for choosing Agartala as the venue for the international conference.

IBC Secretary-General Ven. Lama Lobzang said that through this seminar IBC seeks to re-explore and revive ancient cultural and spiritual linkages in nations that comprise South Asia and South East Asia.

The seminar discussed and resolved to support the IBC-led Buddhist initiative to steer the global discourse on climate change, environment and conservation towards a responsible and sustainable model based on the Buddhist principles and values of interdependence and respect for nature. This

was stated in the IBC-led Buddhist Declaration and Statement to World Leaders endorsed by the most eminent Buddhist religious leaders and leading Buddhist organisations, submitted at the Paris Climate Change Conference-COP 21.

Hon'ble Minister of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Nepal, Mr Ananda Prasad Pokharel was the Guest of Honour at the seminar in Agartala.

The seminar was inaugurated by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tripura, Mr Manik Sarkar, with Governor, H.E. Tathagata Roy being the Chief Guest at the valedictory.

Other eminent participants included Ven.



**Ven. Lama Lobzang welcomes the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tripura, Mr Manik Sarkar**

Athuraliye Rathana Thero, MP from the ruling coalition in Sri Lanka, H.E. Mr Sumith Nakandala, Secretary General of BIMSTEC, Dasho Karma Ura, President of the Centre for Bhutan Studies and Gross National Happiness Research, Bhutan, and senior diplomats from Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Laos. A total of 80 outstation delegates from 12 countries attended the seminar.

The two-day seminar discussed issues such as 'Growth and Sustainable Development: Relevance

of Buddha's Teachings and Philosophy', 'Buddhist Heritage and Traditions: A shared history', 'Cultural tourism and pilgrimage: scope and challenges' and 'Forging a sub-regional space of prosperity: Highlighting geographical contiguity'. It concluded with the unanimous adoption of the 'Agartala Declaration' which emphasises that greater engagement and economic prosperity can be achieved through cultural and philosophical unity based on Buddha's teachings.

## An Interfaith Dialogue for Peace and Sustainability

January 22-28, 2016

**A**n Interfaith Dialogue for Peace and Sustainability under the theme “Converging Streams: Engaging for Holistic Development” was held in Colombo and Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka by the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) of Thailand. INEB’s 2016 biennial

conference from January 22-28, 2016 was jointly organised with Sadahan Sevana, the Sevalanka Foundation and the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC).

The President of Sri Lanka, Maithripala Sirisena, shared the stage with eminent Buddhists in the fields



At the inauguration (L to R) **Dr Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari**, Conservancy for Trans-Himalayan Arts & Culture, USA and Global Envoy, IBC; **Dr Joanna Macy**, an environmental activist and Buddhist scholar, USA; **Ajarn Sulak Sivaraksa** (Founder Chair) Santi Prachin Dhamma Institute, Thailand, Member Global Advisory Committee IBC; **H.E. Maithripala Sirisena**, President Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka; **Ven. Athuraliye Rathana Thero**, MP and Founder Chair of Sadaham Sevana Monastery, Sri Lanka; **Dr A T Ariyaratne**, Founder Chair, Sarvodaya Movement Sri Lanka and **Ven. Lama Lobzang**, Secretary General IBC, India





**INEB Conference participants went on two separate study tours where they interacted with each other to learn about the issues**

of engaged Buddhism, climate change, and holistic and sustainable development. Ven. Lama Lobzang, Secretary General of IBC led the IBC delegation.

Around 200 persons from 22 countries interacted in various processes of interfaith dialogue focusing on peace and sustainability. The majority of persons came from Asian countries including Laos, Myanmar, China, S. Korea, Siam/Thailand,

Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, Taiwan, India, and Sri Lanka, with others coming from Canada, the USA, Hungary, Austria, and Australia.

Mr Shahid Siddiqui, an eminent journalist, Chief Editor of the Urdu weekly *Nai Duniya*, from India and also a former Member of Parliament of Rajya Sabha (the Upper House) was a member of the IBC delegation.

## Latiya Mahotasava

2 February, 2016

The 20th Latiya Mahotsava (Festival) was celebrated near Emperor Asoka's Pillar, Latiya, Zamania, Gazipur (Uttar Pradesh) on February 2, 2016. The festival was organised by the Samrat Ashok Club with the support of the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC). Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar was the Chief Guest at this year's celebrations. The Samrat Ashok Club comprises members of the Sakya and Maurya

communities in India. The former trace their lineage from the clan of Buddha Sakyamuni himself, while the latter trace their ancestry back to the Maurya clan to which Emperor Asoka belonged.

The history of the Latiya festival dates back to the 6th Century BCE, when Lord Buddha stayed here on his way to Shravasti from Rajgir. Thousands of devotees assemble in Latiya to celebrate the festival on February 2 every year.



**Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Secretary General IBC Ven. Lama Lobzang, Rajya Sabha MP RCP Singh, National Spokesperson, Samrat Ashok Club, Dr Sachidanand at the release of a book on Sakyamuni Buddha**

## Meeting of the Governing Council

March 01-04, 2016

**T**he Governing Council of the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) met from 01-04 March 2016 at the temple town of Ayutthaya, Thailand. The meeting was organised in partnership with the International Network of Engaged Buddhists and the Thammasat University, Thailand.

High ranking Buddhist monks from around the world, scholars, opinion-makers, special invitees (from 24 countries) and members of various Buddhist organisations converged at the temple town to take stock of the working of their Confederation, discuss constitutional issues, individual country matters and to share innovative experiences related to the sanghas, monasteries and temples.

The business sessions pertained to presentation of the minutes of the Governing Council meeting in Rajgir, Annual Report, the Audited Accounts, and a report on the major programmes in the year 2015-16. Some of these were “Samvad: A Global Hindu-Buddhist Initiative on Conflict Avoidance and Environment Consciousness” held both in New Delhi and Bodh Gaya, the Secretary General’s business visits to South East Asia and East Asia for sharing and keeping up on latest developments, the “International Seminar on India’s North Eastern Region and Buddhist Heritage: Bridge between South Asia and South East Asia” held at Agartala, Tripura and the Buddhist Climate Change Declaration

and Statement of World Leaders presented at COP-21, in Paris; to name a few.

Some of the other issues discussed at the meeting included:

1. IBC’s stand on conflict avoidance instead of conflict resolution.
2. Heritage preservation and development
3. Environment and conservation
4. Gender issues and women’s ordination
5. Inter-faith dialogue and understanding: a key challenge to religious intolerance
6. Young leadership
7. Art, culture and media

With the growing influence of the Buddhist way of life around the world delegates from Africa, Mexico, Brazil, Jamaica, Germany, France, Argentina, China, Japan, Mongolia, Australia to name a few, with very diverse and interesting perspectives offered varied experiences as related to Buddhist philosophy.

### IBC Nepal

President, Ven. Jikdol informed the house that IBC Nepal represents all the three Buddhist traditions, namely Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana. The chapter had been active in Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Coordination (RRRC) work after the devastating earthquakes in Nepal a year



ago. Through the IBC Nepal RRRC Committee, the chapter also worked with the delegation of the Australian Buddhist Federation led by Ven. Thich Quang Ba that distributed relief material among the earthquake victims.

### **IBC Sri Lanka**

President of IBC Sri Lanka, Mr. Jagath Sumathipala, informed the members that the chapter now has its own Constitution and it has been sent for registration. The main events for Sri Lanka during the year was a very successful Dialogue on Vinaya between senior monks of the Nalanda Tradition based in India and senior monks from the Theravada tradition of Sri Lanka, from 17-20 March, 2015. The Mahanayakas and other senior Sri Lankan monks who participated in the Dialogue also met His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

This dialogue was held after centuries. He also informed that a documentary film was planned on the ancient route taken by Buddhism to the ancient city of Anuradhapura, and how the Holi relics of Buddha came to Sri Lanka from Kalinga in India. The Sri Lanka chapter is working to preserve and promote Buddhist heritage, in keeping with the IBC mission.

### **South America**

Ven. Bhikkhu Nandisena of Mexico has been involved for more than 20 years in the promotion of Buddhism in the Spanish speaking countries from Mexico to Argentina as well as in Spain. He stated that he has high hopes and expectations that IBC will succeed where other organisations had failed. Ven. Bhikkhu Nandisena proposed the setting up of a Latin American chapter. He also proposed that



the website of IBC be translated to Spanish and Portuguese, and offered to help in this regard.

## **Africa**

Ven. Buddharakhita proposed the formation of an Africa chapter of IBC at his Uganda Buddhist Centre. He stated that there are 54 countries in Africa, but only 7 of them have a Buddhist presence. He invited members to come and see his monastery and to assist in introducing Buddhism in Africa through music.

## **The Caribbean**

Dr. Aye Hnin Thwin, originally from Myanmar, has been living in Jamaica for the last 25 years. She presented the history of Buddhism in Jamaica, advocated partnerships and networking to expand their work, and requested IBC to guide them as well as other member countries.

## **Buddhism in the West**

Mr. James Cresswell suggested that IBC should raise awareness about Buddhism in the west, namely Europe, Canada and the United States, and build friendships, trust and understanding among Buddhists from all different traditions. In his opinion it is important to make people aware of IBC as a great umbrella organization, and to assuage their fear of their organisations being taken over by IBC. He also suggested that one good way of presenting IBC in the west was to hold some event that could be related to a particular issue, such as the refugee



**President of IBC, HRH Ashi Kesang Wangmo Wangchuk of Bhutan presenting the welcome address at the inaugural function**

crisis, nuclear disarmament, environment and climate change.

## **Brazil**

Introducing his organisation, Associacao Tathagata Garbha (ATG) of Sao Paulo, Brazil, as a Special Invitee, Ven. Acharya Lobsang Chogni said that ATG registered in Brazil is run by four ordained Sangha that comprises, beside himself, 3 nuns. In the 11 years of its existence, ATG has grown as a centre of excellence, both nationally and internationally, building a quality framework for philosophical education, charity and social work. He expressed the hope that ATG would be able to collaborate with IBC in order to improve the knowledge of its students by participating in the



**H.E. Rev. Khamba Lama Gabju Chojamts Demberel, Supreme Head of Mongolian Buddhists and Patron of IBC**

activities, events and discussions, and be part of the international Sangha. He stated that at ATG, they consider IBC to be the most suitable organization in the world that would be able to provide such important and essential help for them.

### **China**

Ven. Miao Haiyn was invited as an observer to the meeting and he shared his experience in putting Climate Change messages into action.

### **Indonesia**

Prof. Philip K. Widjaja was a special invitee said that out of a total population of 235 million in Indonesia, less than 5 million are Buddhists. He

shared the Buddhist traditions of Indonesia.

In the discussions that followed the presentations, Mr. Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari, Ven. Bhikkhuni Jampa Tsedroen and Ambassador Lalit Mansingh took part.

The Governing Council meeting was inaugurated on the grounds of the historic Wat Maha That, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Ayutthaya, Thailand on March 1, 2016.

The function began with a rendering of the auspicious *Mangalacharan*. This was followed by a minute's silence observed in the memory of HH Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara Sangharaja, Supreme Patriarch of Thailand, HH Maha Phong Samaleuk,



**Group photograph of delegates and invitees at the Governing Council meeting in Ayutthaya, Thailand. Seated in the middle (front row) is HRH Ashi Kesang Wangmo Wangchuk of Bhutan, flanked by H.E. Rev. Khamba Lama Gabju Chojamts Demberel of Mongolia (left) and Ven. Lama Lobzang (right)**

Sangharaja of Laos, Most Ven. Uddugama Sri Buddharakhita Maha Nayaka Thero, Maha Nayaka of the Asgiriya Nikaya, Sri Lanka, HH Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche, Head of the Nyingma Order and H.E. Chatral Rinpoche, Dzogchen master.

The formal welcome address was delivered by the President of the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), Her Royal Highness Ashi Kesang Wangmo Wangchuk of Bhutan. Ven. Arayawangso, Abbot of the Buddhapojharipunchai Forest Monastery and Advisor to the India Studies Centre of the Thammasat University welcomed the participants and invitees on behalf of the Thammasat University. This was followed by words of welcome by Ajarn Sulak Sivaraksha, Co-founder and Chair of the Advisory Committee, International Network of Engaged Buddhists.

The Chief Guest was H.E. Mr Pongchak Semson,

Advisor to the Minister of Culture, Thailand. The Guest of Honour was H.E. Mr Prayoon Rattanasenee, Governor of Ayutthaya. The keynote address was delivered by H.E. Mr Rae Kwon Chung, former Principal Advisor on Climate Change at the Executive Office of the UN Secretary General, and Climate Change Ambassador of the Republic of Korea.

Ven. Lama Lobzang, Secretary General of IBC, delivered the formal vote of thanks, and on behalf of all members of the organization, prayed for the good health and long life of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.

The cultural programme began with the rendition of dhamma songs by the renowned singing nun from Nepal, Ani Choying Drolma, who is also a Global Envoy of IBC and the UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador to Nepal.

## Rinpoche on meditation in daily life

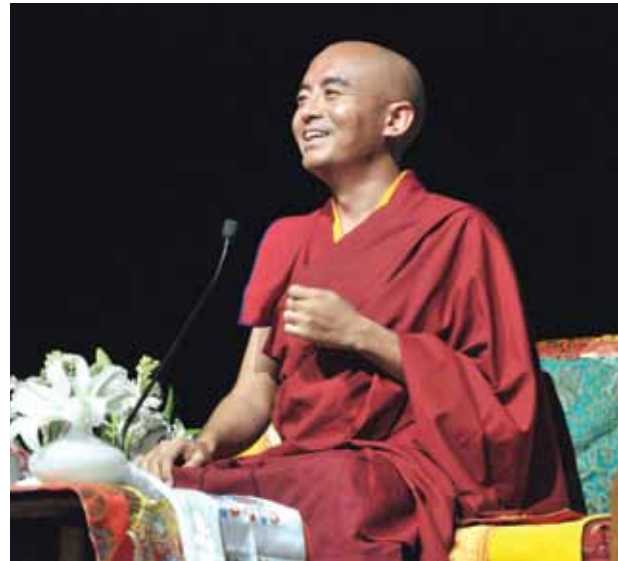
10 March, 2016



Followers queue up to take blessings from Yongen Mingyur Rinpoche (above); the crowded auditorium (below)



In March 2016, IBC organised a lecture by Yongen Mingyur Rinpoche in association with Asoka Mission, Deer Park Institute and The Attic in New Delhi. The theme of the lecture was 'Meditation in Daily Life'. His lecture was well appreciated by the packed auditorium.



Yongen Mingyur Rinpoche addressing the gathering





**Address:** PO Box No.10831, Mehrauli, New Delhi- 110030 (India) **Phone:** 011 64619584 **Email:** [secretariat@ibcworld.org](mailto:secretariat@ibcworld.org) **Website:** [www.ibcworld.org](http://www.ibcworld.org)