

## PATRONS

- His Holiness Thich Tri Quang**  
*Deputy Patriarch, Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, Vietnam*
- His Holiness Samdech Preah Agga Maha Sangharajadhipati Tep Vong**  
*Supreme Patriarch, Mahanikaya Order, Cambodia*
- His Holiness Dr. Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa**  
*Sangharaja and Chairman, State Sangha Mahanayaka Committee, Myanmar*
- His Holiness Jinje-Beopwon**  
*13th Supreme Patriarch, Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, South Korea*
- His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso**  
*India (Tibet in Exile)*
- His Eminence Rev. Khamba Lama Gabju Chojiamts**  
*Supreme Head of Mongolian Buddhists, Mongolia*
- His Eminence 24th Pandito Khamba Lama Damba Ayusheev**  
*Supreme Head of Russian Buddhists, Russia*
- His Holiness Late Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara Suvaddhana Mahathera**  
*Supreme Patriarch, Thailand*
- His Holiness Late Phra Achan Maha Phong Samaleuk**  
*Sangharaja, Laos*
- His Holiness Late Aggamaha Pandita Davuldena Gnanissara Maha Nikaya Thero**  
*Mahanayaka, Amarapura Nikaya, Sri Lanka*
- Zen Master Most Ven. Late Thich Nhat Hanah**  
*France*
- His Holiness Late Sanghanayaka Suddhananda Mahathero**  
*President, Bangladesh Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha, Bangladesh*

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## World needs healing touch of compassion, kindness



President of India Ram Nath Kovind

On the auspicious day of Ashadha Purnima - Dharma Chakra Pravartana Divas, President of India Ram Nath Kovind recalling the sufferings caused by COVID-19, said the world needs

the power of the Buddha now, more than ever before. This, in the form of love, compassion, kindness and non-violence to heal and conquer the forces of disease, conflict and poverty. These universal

*Contd. on page 2...*

## The Power of Buddha's teachings help in times of crisis!



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing National and International devotees and participants at a virtual Ashadha Purnima-Dharma Chakra Pravartana Divas Global Celebrations on 24th July 2021.

The Prime Minister, Mr Narendra Modi said that the holistic and righteous teachings of the Buddha are not only inspiring India but many nations are coming together to strengthen each other in times of crisis.

Today, when mankind is confronting the Pandemic, the

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## World needs healing touch of compassion, kindness



The President offering flowers at the altar of Lord Buddha.

values propagated by the Buddha need to be adopted by all in their thoughts and actions.

enlightenment at Bodhgaya. Ashadha Purnima is also considered as the second most sacred day for Buddhists all over the world, after Buddha Purnima.

The formal ceremony commenced physically at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi, where President of India Ram Nath Kovind, Minister of Culture Gangapuram Kishan Reddy, Minister of State Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of State Meenakshi

logical, rational and simple answers to the fundamental problems faced by human beings across time and place," noted President Kovind.

Addressing Buddhists and lay persons around the world, the President said, "I feel proud in performing my duties to preserve, protect and defend a Constitution which is substantially based upon Buddhist values. I am proud to share with this virtual gathering that behind the seat of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the popularly elected House of the Indian Parliament are displayed the words- "Dharma Chakra Pravartanaya". This is a

*Dr B R Ambedkar ensured that the Buddhist principles of equality, justice, fraternity, peace and harmony found expression in the governance of India*

The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) under the aegis of Ministry of Culture, Government of India organised one of its annual flagship events at the Rashtrapati Bhawan (the President's House). The programme was held in the hybrid format on 24th July 2021. The event was held in association with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and the Mahabodhi Society of India.

The Ashadha Purnima-Dharma Chakra Pravartana Divas commemorates the first sermon of the Buddha to his five-disciples that was delivered at the Deer Park, Sarnath, after attaining

Lekhi and Ven. Dr. Dhammapiya, Secretary General, IBC were present.

The appeal of Buddhism, stated the President, went much beyond the nearly 550 million formally ordained followers of the faith. "People belonging to different faiths, and even sceptics and atheists feel attracted to the teachings of the Buddha. This universal and eternal appeal of Buddhism is due to its



Early in the morning, the President planted a sapling of the Bodhi tree in the gardens of the Rashtrapati Bhawan on the Presidential Estate. (L to R) Minister of State for Culture Meenakshi Lekhi, Minister of Culture Gangapuram Kishan Reddy, Minister of State for Culture Arjun Ram Meghwal and Ven. Dr. Dhammapiya, Secretary General, IBC were present. During the plantation of the sacred sapling, the venerable monks led by Secretary General chanted the Mangala Gatha.



visible reminder of the ideals of the Dharma Chakra Pravartana Sutra which inspires our members of parliament to follow the spirit of the first sermon of the Buddha.

India's national emblem is also taken from the Sarnath Lion Capital of the Ashoka Pillar. It can be said that the national symbols of the Republic of India always remind everyone of the Buddha's Dharma Chakra Pravartana Sutra at Sarnath.

The chief architect of the Constitution of India, Dr B R Ambedkar ensured that the Buddhist principles of equality, justice, fraternity, peace and harmony found

expression in the governance of India.

I had planted a sapling from the Holy Bodhi Tree at Rashtrapati Bhawan a few years ago, now it stands 6 ft tall. The sapling I planted today will also grow to become a tree. The trees will remain in Rashtrapati Bhawan as a lasting symbol of Buddha's expansive, compassionate world-view, the President said.

I hope today's world gets inspired by the Buddha's infinite compassion and resolves to overcome all sources of human



The Minister of Culture, Mr Gangapuram Kishan Reddy presenting a memento to the President of India.

sufferings. I pray that human society follows the ideals of the Buddha and works to make our planet a more hospitable habitat, the President concluded.

*"..... Universal and eternal appeal of Buddhism is due to its logical, rational and simple answers to the fundamental problems faced by human beings across time and place"*

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## The Power of Buddha's teachings help in times of crisis!

teachings of the Buddha have become even more relevant. India, following in the footsteps of the Sakhyamuni Buddha has shown that it can face even the most difficult challenge with compassion.

In his message on Ashadha Purnima Divas, the Prime Minister said that in India, we say, "where there is knowledge, there is completeness," which is also Purnima (full moon); and when the sermon giver is himself the awakened one, it is evident that this knowledge is for the welfare of the entire world.

The Buddha, the epitome of renunciation and tolerance, had the power whereby every word he spoke became

Dharma. At that time, the Buddha taught only five disciples but today he has followers all over the world, stated the PM.

He taught the first Noble Truth of suffering, the second Noble Truth of the cause of suffering, and affirmed that we can overcome suffering. He also taught the path to the cessation of suffering by teaching the Noble eightfold path.

If our actions and efforts are followed by a balanced mind, speech and intention then we can alleviate suffering and attain happiness. This balance inspires us to serve humanity and give us strength in challenging times.

He also praised the IBC's effort in

providing a common platform for all Buddhist traditions and organisations to serve humanity. "In this regard, the 'Care with Prayer' initiative of the International Buddhist Confederation is laudable."

Quoting the 'Dhammapada', he said hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world; by non-hatred alone is hatred appeased. This is a law eternal.

In times of tragedy, the world has also seen love and experienced the power of friendship. As the humanity progresses along the path taught by Shakyamuni Buddha, the world will touch new heights of success and prosperity, the Prime Minister concluded on a note of hope.



## Tree- plantation at Buddha Jayanti Park

A special session of 'tree-plantation' was held at the Buddha Jayanti Park to commemorate the virtual Ashadha Purnima-Dharma Chakra Pravartana Divas. It was organised by IBC.

The Buddha Jayanti Park is situated at the heart of the central ridge of Delhi, spread in about 81-acres. It was inaugurated by India's former Prime Minister, the Late Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri by planting a sapling from the "Holy Bodhi tree" of Bodhgaya on 25th October 1964. This park is incredibly beautiful with a sparkling statue of the Buddha. It is home to almost 100 types of trees and 40 shrubs species that generate a vibrant ecosystem.



Ashoka Tree plantation by Minister of State for Culture Mrs Meenakshi Lekhi at the Buddha Jayanti Park with the Director General of IBC, Mr Shakti Sinha (2nd from L)



Venerable monks from the Theravada and the Nalanda tradition chanting the Mangala Gatha at the Buddha Jayanti Park.

During the plantation of the sacred sapling Venerable monks from both the Theravada and the Nalanda tradition led by IBC Secretary General, Ven Dr Dhammapiya chanted Mangala Gatha. The IBC Sangha members and lay devotees from around the world were also chanting at the same time. The Vietnam Buddhist Sangha hosted the Chanting of the Dharma Chakra Pravartana Sutra at Chuan Su Pagoda in Hanoi. Prayers from Sacred Mayadevi Temple, Lumbini, Nepal and Sri Abhayagiri in Sri Lanka were also streamed live.

Minister of State for Culture, Mrs Meenakshi Lekhi, addressing the gathering highlighted Buddha's teachings, emphasizing that these were most relevant today in times of mental stress, violence and sufferings. The path of truth, compassion, respect for all sentient beings and peaceful coexistence with the environment are the Buddha's messages that will lead to global peace and harmony.



75<sup>th</sup> year of India's Independence:

## Buddhist heritage to be part of celebrations



Union Minister of Culture, Mr. G Kishan Reddy

In a video address, the Union Minister of Culture, Mr. G Kishan Reddy, highlighted that as India will be observing its 75<sup>th</sup> year of Independence & we will be celebrating Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, the contribution of the Buddha and Buddhist heritage will form an important part of these celebrations.

He also reiterated that India is home to Buddhism and many ancient sites and stupas are being redeveloped, and preserved all over the country so that pilgrims from around the world can visit these sacred historic places. "We support the Buddhist community to preserve its heritage and share the ageless wisdom of Buddha with all. Ashadha Purnima is a sacred day for both the Buddhists and the Hindus. It is also known as Guru Purnima when we express gratitude to our gurus," he added.

*Excerpts from virtual Messages from the Heads of Government*

## Contributing to world peace...



Prime Minister of Vietnam Pham Minh Chinh

A message by the Prime Minister of Vietnam was read by the Minister of Internal Affairs and Head of the Department for Religious Affairs Mr Vu Chien Thang.

"The IBC is instrumental in lending a united voice for all the Buddhist organisations towards aiding and engaging in issues of common global concerns, conserving Buddhist practise, traditions and heritage worldwide, and preserving Buddhist cultural assets.

The government of Vietnam has always supported Vietnam Buddhist Sangha as a member of IBC to fulfil its responsibilities and actively contribute to the development of the IBC, world peace and propagation of Lord Buddha's teachings."

## Strike a balance between spiritual well-being and material growth



Prime Minister of Bhutan Dr Lotay Tshering

The life and teachings of Lord Buddha have been a great source of inspiration, but to be observing the First Sermon during the Pandemic, gives us a huge sense of spiritual reinforcement. I join the spiritual groups of leaders here in offering our heartfelt condolences to everyone who lost their loved ones and those whose livelihoods are affected.

This day becomes even more meaningful as the Buddha turned the 'Wheel of Dharma' and taught us the Four Noble Truths. They give us strength as we emerge from grief and

suffering.

A question lingers, where could have humanity gone wrong over the years. Did we live the right way? Were our priorities in the right direction? Were we being compassionate enough? "Material wealth, as we know has taken the Centre stage in most of the Globalisation efforts."

The Prime Minister questioned, "is it in line with Lord Buddha's teachings of contentment and loving kindness?

Fortunately for Bhutan our wise Monarch has introduced the philosophy of Gross National Happiness- infused with Buddhist values. It tells us to strike a balance between spiritual well-being and material growth. It focusses on collective happiness. It has served the purpose of keeping us on our track so far, he stated. "May the wheel of Dharma turn till eternity," he said in conclusion.



***Video Messages were received from Supreme Heads and Patriarchs of Buddhist Sangha from Thailand, Cambodia, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and many others. All the celebrations & proceedings were watched live by a large number of Buddhists from around the world.***

***A text message from H H Somdet Phra Ariyavaṃsāgatañāṇa, The Supreme Patriarch of Thailand***



Saṅgharājasāna

for the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) in concurrence  
with Asaḷha Puja ceremonies, B.E.2564 (2021)

Over two thousand years ago, the turning of the wheel of Dhamma (the Dhammacakka) was observed on the fifteenth day of the waxing moon of the eighth lunar month, when Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon before his five disciples and completed the sacred Three Jewels of Buddhism. The sermon, known as the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta, describes the Four Noble Truths—a concept that identifies suffering as the underlying reality of nature and the cessation of suffering as the ultimate goal of life. These truths consist of dukkha, physical and mental suffering; samudaya, the origin of suffering; nirodha, the cessation of suffering; and magga, the path to ending suffering. This path rejects both extremes of sensual indulgence and self-mortification. Instead, the Buddha proposed that the ideal path is the Middle Way (majjhimāpaṭipadā), which encompasses the Eightfold Path (ariya-aṭṭhaṅgikamagga) that would soon lead us all to the noble truths. Starting from setting the right understanding, Buddhists are graciously guided to follow his path, liberated from all sufferings to achieve the Nibbāna, perceived as the ultimate goal of Buddhism.

As long as the world is extant, the sufferings shall prolong, and we all may not overcome the continuation of sufferings whilst sailing aboard the unceasing spiritual cyclicity of Samsāra. Notwithstanding, Buddhists who comprehend the depths of sufferings and attain such insights should embrace the practice of introspection, and contemplate the reality of sufferings that all lives face unavoidably, in order to one day achieve the ultimate goal void of all sufferings and unyieldingly repeated rebirth. I wish that all Buddhists mark the quintessence of the Asaḷha Puja, and persevere to adhere to the Buddhist teachings. Therefore, by the virtues of the wheel of Dhamma and the Noble Eightfold Path that Lord Buddha first demonstrated, ones may extinguish the unsatisfactory and painful sufferings affecting mundane lives through such practices and self-development.

On behalf of the Saṅgha of Thailand, I extend our best wishes with warmest sincerity to the International Buddhist Confederation for your every success during Asaḷha Puja celebrations and beyond. May all your wishes be accomplished with prosperity in accordance with the Dhamma of Lord Buddha.

(Somdet Phra Ariyavaṃsāgatañāṇa)

The Supreme Patriarch of Thailand

Wat Rajabopit  
24 July B.E.2564 (2021)



**A Message of His Holiness Samdech Preah Agga Maha Sangharajadhipati Tep Vong was read by Most Venerable Samdech Preah Maha Ariyavamsa Prof Dr Khy Sovanratana. His Holiness Tep Vong is a Patron of IBC and Supreme Patriarch, Mahanikaya Order of Cambodia**



វត្តភ្នំព្រះបាទ  
លេខ: 579/... រ.ស.វ  
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ជាតិ សាសនា ព្រះមហាក្សត្រ

Phnom Penh, July 15, 2021

**His Holiness Samdech Preah Agga Maha Sangharajadhipati  
Tep Vong The Great Supreme Patriarch of Kingdom of Cambodia  
On Asadha Puja on (B.E.) 2565**

- First of all, I would like to pay my homage to the Triple Gem
- I would like to pay respect to all His Holiness
- I would like to pay my respect to all His Eminent monks and venerable monks,
- And I would like to greet to all Buddhist all over the world.

It is my great honor and pleasure to share my appreciation on the Asadha Puja to be celebrated on the Full Moon of Asadha, 2565/ on July 24, 2021

Asadha Puja or Dhamma Day is one of the most important Buddhist Events in Buddhist Calendar. And Asadha Puja is to be commemorated for five main events as followings:

- 1- To commemorate the day that Santusitadevaputa Bodhisatva descended from the heaven to the earth to take the birth in His Mother Sirimahamayadevi's womb;
- 2- To commemorate the day that Siddhatha Kumar to renounce the world to become a monk (hermit);
- 3- To commemorate the day that Lord Buddha expounded His first sermon: Dhammacakkappavattana sutta in the Deer Park at Isipatana (now called Sarnath);
- 4- To commemorate the day that Sangha was founded by Lord Buddha;
- 5- To commemorate the day that Lord Buddha performed His miracle power (Yamakappadhara) to subdue the Niganthanathaputta in Sravasti city.

The essence of Dhammacakkappavattana sutta has become an important Buddhist philosophy that has been studied all over the world: the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path, and also as Dhamma brings enlightenment by avoiding the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification.

All Buddhist all over the world should have time to celebrate Asadha Puja together in one place or every Buddhist temple but we can't because of Covid-19. However, we can do it on line. Since Covid-19 pandemic has broken off, it costs many lives, health destruction, and economic hurt for the whole planet. Lord Buddha expounded "Everything is arising and passing ways, nothing permanent." However, we should not have any negligence about it. Lord Buddha added that " Mindfulness is the way to the deathless; unmindfulness is the way to death. Those who are mindful do not die; those who are not mindful as if already dead. So, may all Buddhist and all people in the world carry mindful with them every moment. When all people have mindfulness and follow all the regulations required by health care institutions and governments, later or sooner Covid-19 would vanish from this earth.

Finally, I wish the Teachings of Lord Buddha to be spread to over the whole world.  
And May all beings be happy and free from all suffering!

Yours in the Dhamma



His Holiness Tep Vong



***His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's message was read by Khensur Rinpoche Jangchup Choeden, Deputy Secretary General IBC. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is a Patron of IBC***



THE DALAI LAMA

22 July 2021

## MESSAGE

On the auspicious occasion of Dharma Chakra Day, which followers of the Pali Tradition celebrate on Ashadha Purnima, I offer my greetings to everyone commemorating the Lord Buddha's Turning of the Wheel of Dharma about 3000 years ago.

As is well known, several weeks after he had attained enlightenment at Bodhgaya, the Buddha encountered the five ascetics who had previously been his companions. They asked what accounted for the extraordinary change they observed in his speech and demeanour. In his reply he revealed to them the Four Noble Truths, which he disclosed in terms of nature, function and result.

Explaining the nature of the Four Truths he stated this is the Truth of Suffering, the Truth of its Origin, the Truth of its Cessation and the Truth of the Path to that cessation. In terms of their function, in other words what a practitioner needs to do, he stated that suffering must be known; its origin must be overcome; its cessation must be achieved and the path to cessation must be cultivated.

Essentially the Buddha taught how to transform the mind. By seeing through our distorted views, we can penetrate our mental afflictions. Just as we preserve our health by following a code of physical hygiene, we need to adopt a sense of mental hygiene to achieve and preserve our peace of mind, here and now.

I am grateful to have this opportunity to send a message to members of the International Buddhist Confederation, which seeks to bring together representatives of all the world's Buddhist communities. Not long ago our various communities had only a distant notion of each other's existence and little appreciation of how much we share in common. Today, almost the entire array of Buddhist traditions that evolved in different lands are accessible to anyone who is interested, and followers of those traditions are able to celebrate occasions such as this Dharma Chakra Day together—and that is a further cause for rejoicing.

With my prayers and good wishes,



***Video Messages from Patriarchs of the Buddhist Sangha  
from Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Dhamma Masters***



***His Holiness Thich Tri Quang, Patron IBC,  
Deputy Patriarch, Vietnam Buddhist Sangha,  
Vietnam***

*"The one who practices the middle way can attain a spiritual insight and realisation of the Four Noble Truths, leading to full Enlightenment. Not only is it the first teaching of the Buddha but also the most foundational sermon given to his disciples during his time of preaching the dharma."*



***Ven Thich Duc Thien, Secretary  
General, National Vietnam Buddhist  
Sangha, Vietnam***

***Dharma Master- Hsin Tao, Member  
of the Supreme Dhamma Council,  
IBC and the Founder of Ling Jiou  
Mountain Buddhist Society and  
Museum of World Religions***



***Most Ven Makulewe Wimala  
Mahanayake Thero,  
Sri Ramanna Maha Nikaya,  
Sri Lanka***



## Today marks a revolutionary step in the spiritual evolution of humanity

The Ashadha Purnima day marks the anniversary of the day the Buddha expounded the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, the discourse with which he “set in motion the Wheel of the Dhamma.” For us, as Buddhists, this day marks a revolutionary step in the spiritual evolution of humanity.

All living beings face the problem of suffering. Since human beings emerged on planet earth, people everywhere have been seeking a solution to the problem of suffering. This is a universal quest that unites all humanity. The various religions and philosophies developed by advanced thinkers have been motivated by the need to find an answer, a solution, to the problem of suffering.

It was the search for liberation from suffering that motivated the Bodhisatta to leave his palaces in the Sakyan republic and take up the life of a samana, an ascetic. For six years, he learned and mastered different systems of meditation and adopted the most austere practices of self-mortification, all with the aim of finding the door to liberation. Finally, after six years of fruitless striving, he discovered the middle way, the Noble Eightfold Path, and thereby attained the supreme Enlightenment.

After his Enlightenment, the Buddha pondered over the question whether he should share the Dhamma with others. At first he hesitated, concerned that others would not be able to understand the truth he

had realized. But finally he made the momentous decision to go forth and teach, choosing the five ascetics as his first disciples. In stages he walked the distance from Bodhgaya to the Deer Park at Sarnath, outside the city of Varanasi, arriving on the eve of the full moon day in the month of Ashadha, corresponding to the month of July.

After overcoming the hesitations of the five ascetics, he won their trust, and began expounding the sutta. For the first time, the world heard about the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path, and the Wheel of Dhamma began to turn. Over the following years the wheel rolled over much of northeast India. From there it rolled over most of India and onward across Asia, stretching perhaps from Persia in the West to Japan in the East. Today it has rolled over every continent in the world.

Despite the passage of 25-centuries, the message conveyed by the Wheel of Dhamma retains its validity and value. The Four Noble Truths remain the simplest, deepest and clearest diagnosis of the human condition. The Noble

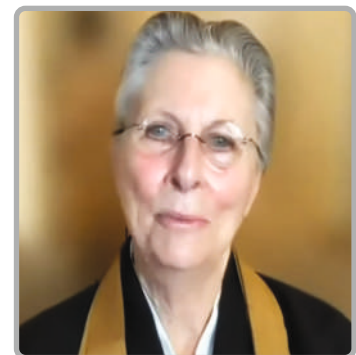
Eightfold Path remains the most sublime, uplifting, and purifying way of life. May the Wheel of Dhamma roll on long into the future, awakening countless beings to the liberating truth and lead-

ing them to the path of enlightenment and liberation.



Ven Bhikkhu Bodhi from Chuang Yen Monastery, USA

## Short Reflections on sufferings, the turning of the first wheel.



Ven Roshi Joan Halifax, Abbot,  
Upaya Zen Centre,  
Former Secretary, IBC

“In a way, we can say awakening is not a magical experience. It is something that reveals reality, truth- exactly as it is.

Although, the later scriptures, including the Pali cannon's description of his awakening is glorious; but in reality things are just as they are!

In these times of catastrophe, and when there is so much connectivity, we are able to bear witness to sufferings from across the world.

I believe that the teachings of the Buddha are a great vehicle for bringing an end to the perpetuity of sufferings.”



***Ashadha Dharma Talks were presented by eminent  
Buddhist Masters and Scholars from various countries***



***Most Ven Arayawangso, Abbot,  
Buddhapojhariphunchai  
Forest Monastery,  
Thailand***



***Ven Bhikkhu Kaboggoza  
Buddharakkhita,  
Vice President,  
IBC & Abbot and President,  
Uganda Buddhist Centre***



***Ven Bhikkhuni Tathaloka Mahatheri,  
Founding Abbess and preceptor,  
Dhammadharini Monastery,  
USA***



***Ven Geshe Lhakdor,  
Director,  
Library of Tibetan Works & Archives,  
India***



***Prof. Asanga Thilakaratne,  
Nalanda University  
from Sri Lanka***

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## GREAT BUDDHIST MASTER: Shantarakshita

### ‘Protected by the One who is at Peace’

**S**hantarakshita (725-788) (Khenpo Bodhisattva, 'Bodhisattva Abbot') whose name translates into English as "protected by the One who is at peace" is an important and influential Indian Buddhist philosopher, particularly for the Tibetan Buddhist. *(Source: wikipedia)*

He was born a prince in Bengal (East India). As a youth, he saw the faults in the life of a householder, so he left his kingdom and became a monk, taking both the novice and full ordination vows from Abbot Jnana Garbha.

This great Indian Pandita of the Mahayana school studied and was also an abbot at the Nalanda University. He worked extensively to uphold and maintain the Buddhist teachings, and so began to establish the Buddha Dharma in Tibet.

Shantarakshita defended a synthetic philosophy which combined Madhyamaka, Yogachara (Yogācāra) and the logico-epistemology of Dharmakirti into a branch of Madhyamaka philosophy known as the Yogācāra-Svatantrika-Mādhyamika system.

#### Ordained the first seven Tibetan monks

He was invited to Tibet by King Trisong Detsen where he founded the Samyé monastery and ordained the first seven Tibetan monks, thus establishing the Tibetan Sangha, according to Nagarjuna's Sarvastivadin tradition.

In these times, the King of Tibet, who was a manifestation of Manjusri, passed away. His son, Trisong Detsen succeeded to the throne, but some evil ministers were able to take advantage of the old



This 19th century painting depicts biographical episodes from the life of the Buddhist monk, Shantarakshita, particularly highlighting his journey to Tibet where he was instrumental in establishing Buddhism. The vignettes are arranged chronologically beginning on the top-right of the painting and proceeding clockwise.





king's death to gain power and influence. They impeded the spread of the Doctrine in Tibet.

The young king, Detsen was inclined towards the Dharma. He sent one of his ministers Basalnang, with others on the mission to China to bring back the teachings of Buddha to Tibet. But the evil Tibetan ministers would not allow them to open the texts. The King then decided that Basalnang should go to India to get the texts and to find a

## THIS IS THE SEVENTH IN A SERIES ON THE GREAT MASTERS

teacher who could explain the Buddhist teachings in Tibet.

Basalnang went to India, where he visited the holy places of Bodhi Gaya and Nalanda and made offerings.

### Spiritual guide of the king of Nepal

Then he went to Nepal, where he met Shantarakshita who was at that time the spiritual guide of the king of Nepal. Shantarakshita accepted his invitation to go to Tibet and accompanied him to Mangyul Kyidrong (the province where Basalnang was the Governor), where two temples were built for Shantarakshita. Basalnang requested for teachings on Bodhicitta from Shantarakshita.

Meanwhile, by skilful means, the King exerted his influence over the minds and hearts of the wicked ministers so that they would not interfere with his task of bringing the Buddhist teachings to Tibet.

The Acharya Shantarakshita taught the ten virtuous Actions, the Eighteen Elements and The Twelve links of Dependent Origination at the Lungtsub palace.

All the spirits and devils were disturbed by this and caused floods, destructive thunderstorms and sickness. Because of these disasters, the common people revolted against the Acharya. So, the king had to ask Shantarakshita to return to Nepal for a while because of the lack of good karma of the people and the actions of the evil spirits. Acharya suggested that the King invite Guru Padmasambhava (the Great Tantric Master) who was a specialist in subduing evil spirits.

### Invited Padmasambhava

Accordingly, the King sent Basalnang to invite Padmasambhava. They met the Guru at Gungthang and brought him back to Tibet. Along the way, he subdued all the evil spirits he met.

Then, the Acharya Shantarakshita returned to Tibet and together with Guru Padmasambhava performed the ritual of purifying the land.

Before, Shantarakshita passed away, he told the King that conflict over the doctrine will arise in Tibet, and at that time the King should invite his disciple Kamalasila from India.

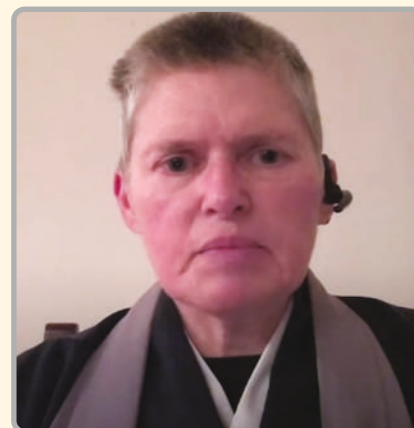


Shantarakshita - "Khenchen Bodhisattva"  
at Guru Lhakhang Monastery, Bouddhanath

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**Prof. Dr Robert A F Thurman-**  
**world renowned Buddhist scholar,**  
**US**



**Most Ven Amala Wrightson Sensei,**  
**member Supreme Dhamma Council,**  
**IBC, Director, Auckland Zen Centre,**  
**New Zealand.**



## India's Buddhist Heritage: The Way Forward

*By Shakti Sinha  
Director General  
International Buddhist Confederation (IBC)*

After reading his own obituary in a newspaper, the author Mark Twain said that 'the news of my death is grossly exaggerated.' Similarly, having grown being told about the disappearance of Buddhism in the land of its birth, I now realise that this understanding, rather misunderstanding, too is guilt of gross exaggeration. Recent archaeological evidence from Krimila in Bihar show that new Buddhist monasteries, including one led by Vijayashri Bhadra, a nun, were being established as late as the end of the 11th century CE, centuries after the alleged demise of Buddhism in India.

Critically, Buddhist communities continued to exist in some villages of Patachitra painters from Odisha, to the Shakya of UP, the Baruah Buddhists of Bengal and the Himalayan communities stretching from Ladakh to eastern Arunachal. Buddhist communities in Tripura link up with those in Bangladesh and onto Myanmar, forming a large Theravada branch that continue into the larger Southeast Asia.

### India's Buddhist heritage is deeply entrenched in Indian traditions

India's Buddhist heritage, human-made art and architecture to ethics and values have been deeply entrenched in Indian traditions, so much so that it is well-nigh impossible to separate out diverse strands based theological origin. Therefore, any talk about the revival of Buddhism in India is to misread history. What is definitely required, and is happening with government support, is to bring focussed attention on this heritage and the presentation of its multifaceted manifestations. But we have not been able to project the Buddhist component on India's heritage

in adequate measure, affecting a double loss to both Buddhism and to India.

One, that Buddhist sites – and there are thousands across the length and breadth of India – are not as well-developed in terms of access, facilities and information. Fortunately, the development of the Devni Mori complex in Gujarat, Aastha Kunj in Delhi and Kushinagar in UP, for example, show that things are changing.

Second, most of the non-Buddhist world do not automatically link



*The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) was set up in 2011, with a view to bringing Buddhist communities across the world on one platform*

Buddhism with India, and do not see the latter as the land that gave birth to, and sustained Buddhism into becoming the world religion that it is. It is the efforts in trying to correct the picture that is very important, and potentially can be misunderstood.

### Kalmykia, the only Buddhist majority region in Europe

The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) was set up in 2011 to bring Buddhist communities across the world on to one platform. Many predominantly Buddhist countries have national Mahasanghas, while many are less structured. The IBC has members in 39 countries, spread across the globe. In Russia itself, there are members in three of its republics including the republic of Kalmykia, the only Buddhist majority region in Europe. Though funded by the government of India, the IBC is not a government body and, in the years, to come, would have to raise resources from diverse sources. So that it could potentially act as a successful platform for bringing Buddhists across the world together. It is also necessary to dispel some feeling that the government of India is playing the Buddhist card as a strategic instrument. In Asia, to counter efforts elsewhere to appropriate Buddhist legacy.

Grand celebrations are organised twice a year. One, during Vesak – Buddha Purnima, which marks Buddha's birth, enlightenment and Maha Parinirvana. The other is and Ashadha Purnima, also known as Guru Purnima, which marks the first turning of the wheel of Dhamma, the day that Buddha delivered his first sermon at Sarnath. In addition, IBC and its members organise many local functions, including Dhamma talks for the benefit of believers and non-believers alike.

### IBC works with national government

The IBC also attempts to work with national governments to highlight that country's Buddhist heritage.



India is not just the land of Buddhism historically, but also the centre of Buddhist Studies. Indian universities and academies even today get thousands of foreign students who come here to study Buddhism. To strengthen academic partnership, the IBC with the Ministries of Culture, Tourism and External Affairs (Indian Council of Cultural Affairs), and the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara are together organising a Global Buddhist Conclave centred on the theme of Buddhism in Literature in Nalanda from November 19, 20, 2021.

In order to generate momentum and draw the participation of scholars from across the world. This Conclave would be preceded by 8 regional conferences including 4 in India. These would be at Dharamshala, Gangtok, Hyderabad and Sarnath (in India) and at Bangkok, Tokyo, Phnom Penn and Seoul. An academic exchange program between scholars is also being

launched, whereby the IBC would send India scholars to foreign universities and academic institutions abroad, and invite foreign scholars to spend time in Indian universities and institutions.

As mentioned earlier, the IBC is also working closely with state governments to develop Buddhist sites, and create appropriate environment in such places for Buddhist organisations globally to set up their presence in these locations. The effort is clear and it is not political, far from being geo-strategic.

### **India home to the holiest places of Buddhism**

India does need to project its rich Buddhist heritage, and re-establish itself as the primary centre for Buddhist Studies. At the same time, being the home for almost all the holiest places of Buddhism, India must strengthen its partnership with

Buddhist organisations across the world. The IBC and its partners do take the help of their respective national governments for facilitation of their work, but these do not go beyond the stated purposes of our institutions.

The last thing strategic thinkers should advocate is for India to play the Buddhist card, for any such approach would necessarily be transactional, and would fail to generate larger goodwill. India, should, instead, strengthen its efforts towards making a large part of the world feel that India is their spiritual home, to which they would travel to renew their beliefs and help make the world a better place.

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## **With floral offering and the recitation of the Manglacharan by the Sangha members a very special ceremony was held at the Holy Buddha Relics in the National Museum, New Delhi on Ashadha Purnima-Dharma Chakra Pravartana Divas**



*Manglacharan was  
venerated by the Sangha members*

*Ven Dr Dhammapiya, Secretary General,  
IBC and Shartse Khensur Rinpoche Jangchup Choeden,  
Deputy Secretary General,  
IBC praying at the Holy Buddha Relics*





## Chanting and Prayers by the Sangha Members from Kandy (Sri Lanka) were

*The day began with the chanting of Dharma Chakra Pravartana Sutra by*



*Direct relay through  
webcast from the  
Mulagandhakuti Vihara temple,  
Sarnath,*

*Chantings from  
Lumbini, Nepal*





# Sarnath (India), Lumbini (Nepal), Vietnam and directly relayed through webcast

*the monks from Theravada traditions of Mulagandhakuti Vihara, Sarnath*



*Chanting by the Sangha Members of National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, Vietnam*

*Streaming of Prayers and Ceremonies from the Sacred Tooth Relic Temple, Kandy, Sri Lanka by the Venerable monks of Nelligala International Buddhist Centre*



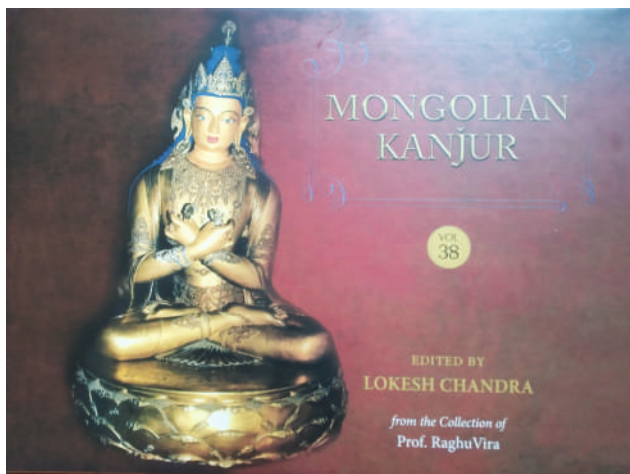


## Gift for Mongolia: Buddhist Canons

Two rare Mongolian religious texts that were reprinted and published were virtually displayed at the Ashadha Purnima celebrations. In a special message Dr Sachidanand Joshi, Member Secretary Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) said that these rare texts of the Mongolian Kanjur and the accompanying catalogue of the Tanjur will be gifted to all Monasteries in Mongolia.

This is a special gesture by the Government of India for the people of Mongolia, cherishing the age old religious and cultural ties. The Ministry of Culture had taken up the project under the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM) for reprinting the 108 volumes of Mongolian Kanjur. It is expected that these volumes will be completed by March 2022.

The Mongolian Kanjur has been translated from Tibetan (Kanjur). In fact, the Mongolian Kanjur which is written in classical Mongolian is not merely a holy book but is also the foundation for a cultural identity of the Mongolia people.



In the Mongolian language 'Kanjur' means 'Concise Orders'- the words of Lord Buddha, in particular. It is a Buddhist

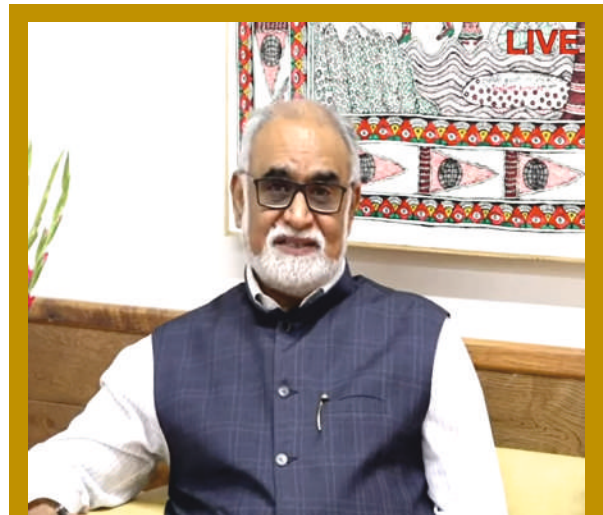
canonical text in 108 volumes and is considered to be the most important religious text in Mongolia. It is held in high esteem by the Buddhists and they worship the Kanjur at temples, recite the lines from it as part of their daily sacred ritual. Almost in every Monastery in Mongolia, the Kanjurs are placed with great reverence prominently.

The second text is the Tanjur, a catalogue of the commentaries on the teachings of the Buddha. These too were translated from Tibetan and compiled by the Mongolian Scholar Byambin Rinchen (1905-77). They are being further edited by Prof. Dr Shashibala, Dean, K M Munshi Centre of Indology, Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan.

Dr Joshi said, "the translation of these texts is indicative of the age-old 'spiritual' ties between Indian and Mongolian scholars. Historical interaction between

India and Mongolia goes back centuries. Buddhism was carried to Mongolia by religious ambassadors during the early part of the 1st millennium CE. Traditionally, Tibetan Buddhism was the predominant religion. Today, Buddhists form the single largest religious denomination in Mongolia."

During 1946-1990, he added, it was suppressed under the communist regime with only one showcase monastery allowed to



Dr Sachidanand Joshi, Member Secretary  
Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)

remain. Several manuscripts were consigned to flames and monasteries were bereft of their sacred scriptures. As liberalisation began, from 1990 onwards, Buddhism saw a resurgence. According to the 2010 national census, 53 per cent of the Mongolians identify themselves as Buddhists.

### The Indian connection

Prof Joshi recalled that it was Professor Raghu Vira during his visit to Mongolia from 1956-58 obtained a microfilm copy of the rare Kanjur manuscripts and brought them to India. In the 1970s, Mongolian Kanjur in 108 volumes was published by Professor Lokesh Chandra, former Rajya Sabha MP. Now the present edition is being published by the NMM. In this, every volume will have a list of contents mentioning the original title of the sutra in Mongolian. This work is being carried out under the supervision of eminent scholar Prof. Lokesh Chandra.

In 1955, India established formal



diplomatic relations with Mongolia. Since then both the countries had a warm and cordial relationship that has now been taken to a new height. Therefore, the publication of the Mongolian Kanjur by the Government of India for the Government of Mongolia will act as a symbol of cultural symphony between India and Mongolia, and in the coming years will contribute to further strengthening of bilateral relations, he added.

### Tanjur

This has had a huge effect on the development of Mongolian literature and other branches of science. The proposed inscription concerns a large collection of over 3427 works on ten disciplines created by ancient Indian and Tibetan scientists and panditas. It has served as a theoretical guide for translators and has immensely contributed to the translation of Mongolian of the Middle Ages.



## Indian Embassy hosts IBC's Ashadha Purnima celebrations in Bhutan



Her Royal Highness Ashi Kesang Wangmo Wangchuck was the Chief Guest and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Tandi Dorji attended the programme as a special guest

The Embassy of India in Thimphu hosted an 'In Conversation Dialogue' on the "Relevance of the teachings of Lord Buddha in the Age of Technology," with the prominent Bhutanese scholars who represented the Bhutan Chapter of IBC.

Her Royal Highness Ashi Kesang Wangmo Wangchuck graced the occasion as the chief guest while Minister of

Indian Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj highlighted the common spiritual heritage that joins Bhutan and India, as well as the salience of the teachings of Lord Buddha in present times. Members of the audience included senior government officials, Buddhist scholars and representatives of the local media.

The celebration of Ashadha Purnima is in keeping with the exceptionally close and friendly relations between Bhutan and



Ambassador of India Ruchira Kamboj

Foreign Affairs, Dr Tandi Dorji attended the programme as a special guest.

The dialogue witnessed a discussion and exchange of views between Dasha Karma Ura, President, Centre for Bhutan Studies and GNH Studies and Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye, Former Chief Justice of Bhutan. The discussion was moderated by Dr Tashi Zangmo, Executive Director of the Bhutan Nuns Foundation.



Dasha Karma Ura, President, Centre for Bhutan Studies and GNH (Centre), Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye, former Chief Justice of Bhutan (Right) and moderator Dr Tashi Zangmo, Executive Director of the Bhutan Nuns Foundation (Left)

India, reflective of the common thread of Buddhism that binds both countries.

*By Yangchen Lhamo  
From Bhutan Times*



Maha Bodhi Temple, Bodh Gaya

**T**he International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) is a Buddhist umbrella body that serves as a common platform for Buddhists worldwide. It is headquartered in New Delhi, India.

Established under the patronage of the supreme Buddhist religious hierarchy, it currently has a global membership of over 320 organizations, both monastic and lay, that include world bodies, national and regional federations, monasteries, international organizations and institutions.

United by the motto, "Collective Wisdom, United Voice", IBC aims to make Buddhist values and principles a part of the global discourse by presenting a united Buddhist voice on issues that concern all humankind.

The IBC stands for transparency, inclusiveness and a balanced representation of various traditions, gender and emerging Buddhist communities in Africa, the Caribbean and South America. Praised by followers of Buddha Dhamma from around the world for including both Sangha and laity in its governing structure, IBC has been hailed by the international media as a forward looking, credible and action-oriented World Buddhist Umbrella Body.

The IBC also stands for the preservation, development and promotion of Buddhist heritage, both tangible and intangible worldwide, especially the holy sites like Bodh Gaya in India, where Buddha attained Enlightenment, as well as many others.

## Mission

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



**INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST CONFEDERATION**

Collective Wisdom United Voice

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