



International Buddhist Confederation

Annual Activity Report
2016- 2017

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Revised minutes of Ayutthaya meet approved



The IBC Executive Committee held in July 2016 was opened by Secretary General, Ven. Lama Lobzang. The meeting discussed major programmes held in 2015-16. It also discussed the revised minutes of the Governing Council held in Ayutthaya, Thailand (March 1-3, 2016), which were approved by the members present.

A copy of the receipts and payment account for the financial year 2015-16 was placed before the Executive Committee. Events and programmes to be held in 2016-17 were also discussed.

The meeting was attended by: Ven. Lama Lobzang (Secretary General), Chairman; Mr. Jamie Cresswell (Vice President), Member; Prof. B. Mungekar (Deputy

Secretary General), Member; Dr. Harsha Kumara Navaratne (Deputy Secretary General), Member; Mrs. Ang Dawa Sherpa (Honorary Secretary), Member; Dr. Gregory Kruglak (Honorary Secretary), Member; Ven. Bhikku Sanghasena Mahathera (Treasurer), Member; Dr. Damenda Porage (Executive Member, Governing Council), Member; Mr. Seshadri Chari, Advisor; Mr. Lalit Mansingh (Chairperson, Global Outreach Committee, Invitee and Chairperson, Election Committee); Ven. Dr. Dhammapala Bhikkhu (Deputy Secretary General), Invitee; Ven. Thubten Jikdol (President, IBC Nepal), Invitee; and Mr. Maling Gombu, Invitee.

IBC discusses future events, activities



The Executive Committee of the IBC held a one-day meeting at the Asoka Mission, Mehrauli on 21st October 2016, which was chaired by Ven. Lama Lobzang, Secretary General and attended by Ven. Khenpo Chimed, Ven. Bhikkhu Sanghasena, Treasurer, Dr. Bhalchandra Mungekar, Dy. Secy General, Mrs. Ang Dawa Sherpa, Hon. Secretary, and Dr. Damenda Porage, Executive Member.

Ven. Lama Lobzang, Secretary General, introduced a new colleague, Dr. Ravindra Panth, a former Director of Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, Bihar. The IBC Secretary General stated that Dr Panth brings with him over 30-years' experience

of academic and research work on Buddhism. This expertise will enrich IBC as Dr Panth will oversee the implementation of the research and academic programme of the confederation. At the Executive Meeting of IBC, held in October 2016, the Secretary General reported on his recent tour to four countries – Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and Mongolia – adding that these exchanges were very good and fruitful. The meeting discussed the future programmes of IBC, events and activities to be taken up during the remaining period of 2016-17 and 2017-18.

IBC reaches out to East Asia

To inform, acquaint and continue networking with the distinguished Governing Council members of the International Buddhist Confederations in East Asia and Far East on IBC's various activities during the past one year and to discuss matters related to the next General Assembly Meeting, Secretary-General Ven. Lama Lobzang, accompanied by Deputy Secretary General Ven. Dr. Dhammapala called upon the Buddhist Patriarchs and leading Buddhist luminaries in Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea and Mongolia. The IBC representatives held discussions and conferred on various future activities of IBC.

HONG KONG

- Meeting with renowned Buddhist scholar, Venerable Professor KL Dhammajoti, the Founder and President of the Buddha-dharma Centre of Hong Kong

- Paying respect to the Most Venerable Siu Kun, who is President of the Hong Kong Buddhist Sangha Association. He is also one of the Presidents of IBC
- Visiting the Tsz Shan Monastery and meeting with Most Venerable Thong Hong, the Abbot of Tsz Shan Monastery
- Meeting with Most Venerable Shi Kuan-Yun, the Abbot of Western Monastery, Hong Kong. Ven. Lobzang offers prayers at the monastery.

TAIWAN

- Attending the AGM of the Taipei Buddhist Association
- Meeting with masters at the Taipei Buddhist Association
- Meeting with Ms Christie Yu-Ling Chang, President of Sakyadhita Taiwan
- Meeting with Bro. Hung Chi-Sung, the Earth Zen Person of Enlightening Earth and Prof. Yo Hsiang-Chou.
- Visiting the World-wide Buddhist Development Association and meeting The Most Venerable Shih Lien Hai, President of the Association, and Ven. Shi Jian-ying.
- Meeting with The Most Venerable Shi Jing-Yao, the Director in-charge of International Affairs of Buddhist Association of Republic of China (BAROC)
- Meeting with The Most Venerable Ming Kuang, Vice President of Buddhist Association of Republic of China (BAROC), and President of Buddhist Association of Taiwan. He is also one of the Vice Presidents of IBC
- Meeting with The Most Venerable Liao Chung Mahathera, the President of World Buddhist Sangha Council
- Meeting with Bro. Her Rey-sheng, Spokesman of Tzu Chi Foundation and other foundation members
- Visit to Linju Mountain Monastery and meeting with The Most Venerable Dharma Master Hsin Tao, the Founder of Museum of World Religions and Abbot of Linju Mountain Monastery.

- Meeting with The Most Venerable Guodong, the Abbot and President of Dharma Drum Mountain
- Meeting with Dr. iur. Chu, Wu-Hsien, President of the Taiwan Interfaith Foundation
- Meeting with The Most Venerable Yuan Tsung, the President of Buddhist Association of Republic of China (BAROC)

SOUTH KOREA

- Visiting the offices of the Buddhist True Network
- Meeting with The Most Venerable Sung-Woo Suk, the Chairman of Buddhist True Network and other members
- Meeting with The Most Venerable Bang Joo Suk (Bhikkhuni Sangwon) the Chief Abbess of Bo Myung Sa Temple, and other senior Bhikkunis
- Meeting with The Most Venerable Jung-Moon, the Director of Social & International Affairs Department, The Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism.
- Meeting with Junghee Min, Coordinator, Inter-religious Climate and Ecology Network (ICE)
- Meeting with The Most Venerable Eui Hyun Seo Mahathera, the Vice President of World Buddhist Sangha Council

MONGOLIA



- Visit to Dashicholing Monastery and meeting with His Eminence Khamba Lama Dambajav Choijiljav, the Abbot of Dashicholing Monastery, Rector of Zuun Khuree College and IBC Vice-President
- Visit to Ganden Thegchenling Monastery and meeting with His Eminence Rev. Khamba Lama Gabju Choijamts Demberel, The Supreme Head of Mongolian Buddhists and IBC Patron

- Meeting with the Great Masters and Rinpoche at Ganden Thegchenling Monastery
- Visit to Tarvaling Monastery and meeting with The Most Venerable Abbot Lama Ariunbold.T., Abbot of the Tarvaling Monastery

Remembering Sariputta's legacy



Venerable Sariputta is one of the most prominent disciples of the Buddha, who was considered the right hand of the Buddha. For centuries, the followers of the teachings of the Buddha inspired by the contributions of Sariputta to the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the *Sangha* paid tribute to the stupas built in his native village.

To mark his legacy, the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) with the support of the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara (Deemed University), Nalanda and Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee (BTMC) successfully organized the 7th Sariputta World Peace Walk at the base of Giriyaak Hill, Rajgir on 14th November, 2016. Venerable *Bhikkhu Sangha*, important dignitaries, community of Nalanda and staff and students of NNM assembled at the start point of the Walk at 2.30 pm. Following the walk to the base of

the hill, Venerable *Bhikkhu Sangha* chanted *SammaditthiSutta*. The chanting was followed by the speeches by the distinguished guests who spoke about contributions of *Arhat Sariputta*. Objective of the event was to pay rich tributes and to generate awareness towards the legacy of Sariputta on occasion of his *parinirvana* anniversary on *Kartika Purnima* (full moon day of Oct-Nov).

Tradition maintains that Sariputta attained *parinirvana* six months before the *Mahaparinirvana* of the Buddha. Sariputta was born and he attained *parinirvana* in a village near Rajgir and Nalanda. Pali literature mentions the village Nalaka (also Nala, Nalaka, Upatissagama and Nalagamaka), where Sariputta attained *parinirvana*. 5th CE Chinese monk-scholar Faxian (Fahein) corroborates this by mentioning the name

of the village Nala, while 7th CE Chinese monk Xuanzang (Hsüan-tsang) mentions the name, Kalapinaka. Identification of Sariputta's village based on Xuanzang and Faxian's descriptions has led to village Nanand, both in the proximity of Giriya Hill. Our effort is to promote the whole area consisting of Chandimau, Nanand and Giriya as Sariputta *Parinirvana* Zone.

Large stupas were built at the native village of Sariputta by King Ashoka and

the place was part of the Buddhist pilgrimage as mentioned by Faxian and Xuanzang. Illustrations from life and contributions of Sariputta were discovered in numerous frescos from the Tang Period (7th-9th CE) at Dunhuang Caves in China. Sariputta is also depicted in ancient Thangka paintings from Tibet. Sariputta is often seen flanking the right of the Buddha in many Buddhist temples around the world.

Dignitaries present on the occasion

- Venerable Lama Lobzang, Secretary General, International Buddhist Confederation.
- Shri Chandrasen Kumar, Hon'ble MLA, Islampur.
- Shri Nanzgey Dorjee, IAS (Retd.), Member Secretary, BTMC.
- Shri S P Sinha, Registrar, NNM.
- Ms. Wangmo Dixey, Executive Director, LBDFI.
- Shri Subodh Kumar, DCLR, Nalanda.
- Shri Rajiv Ranjan, Dy Collector, Rajgir.

JETHIAN TO RAJGIR - 3rd International Dhamma Walk

One of the important initiatives of IBC is to organize Dhamma Walks along the Buddha trails to revive the ancient tradition of *Cetiya Carika* (a walking pilgrimage). The path through the valley connecting Rajgir with Jethian (Latthivana, Yasthivana) was once an important pilgrimage path connecting sacred Buddhist places like Indrasailaguha (Parwati), Rajagriha, Jethian, Tapovana and *Sambodhi* (Bodhgaya). The IBC in collaboration with the Light of the Buddha Dhamma Foundation International and other like-minded institutions organized the 3rd International Dhamma Walk from Jethian to Rajgir on 13th December, 2016. More than 1,500 venerable monks, nuns and laity from 15 countries participated in the Dhamma Walk.



Significance of the Jethian Valley

Jethian in ancient times was called Latthivana or Yasthivana, meaning Bamboo forest. Jethian village is surrounded by hills from three sides and this serene valley has

a very deep connection with the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the *Sangha*.

After his enlightenment the Buddha, along with the *Sangha*, left Gayasisa (Brahmayoni) for Rajagriha. Walking 25 miles north-east along the hills they reached a beautiful bamboo forest, Latthivana (Latthivanuyyana, Yasthivana, Jethian), surrounded by hills on three sides. In the heart of Bamboo Forest was Supatittha Cetiya (Supratishtha Chatiya), and this is where the Buddha stayed during his maiden journey to Rajagriha after his enlightenment.

The Buddha's pious steps in Supatittha Cetiya caused a rush of people anxious to hear him speak and receive his blessings. King Bimbisara gathered news of the Buddha's presence; at this point in time, king Bimbisara most likely was unaware of the connection between the recluse prince Siddhartha whom he had met at Rajagriha six years ago and the Buddha. King Bimbisara along with his retinue of ministers and a myriad of followers from the town of Rajagriha came to greet this Enlightened One at Supatittha Cetiya, about 7 miles west, along the Rajagriha hills.

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

In 13th CE, when Buddhism came to its ebb in Indian subcontinent, Yasthivana monastery and other vestiges of Buddhism in this valley fell into ruins. The name Yasthivana got corrupted and became Jethian. In 17th CE, the new population from neighboring places came and settled over the ancient Buddhist remains in this valley. In 20th CE, it was revealed that Jethian was the ancient Yasthivana monastery mentioned by Xuanzang. Since then the community of this valley have been making efforts to preserve the place and create awareness locally and internationally about the significance of the place. They have even formed a committee named 'Bhagwan Buddha Gram Vikas Samiti' (BBGVS). The objective of the committee is to protect and preserve this sacred heritage and also facilitate safe and successful pilgrimage for the pilgrims coming from different countries.

Revitalisation of the tradition of Sanghadana

An important highlight of the Dhamma Walk event was *Sanghadana*. More than 200 Venerable monks and nuns from Thailand, Srilanka, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Nepal, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan and Taiwan with their alms bowl in their hands walked in the streets of the village Jethian and collected food.

