



**INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST CONFEDERATION**

Collective Wisdom United Voice

## **International Symposium on Scholarship for Studying Buddhism in India held on 20-21 July, 2019 in Delhi**

As part of the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) outreach to connect the Buddhist world with India's vast treasure-trove of Buddhist knowledge, legacy, and heritage, IBC has decided to launch a scholarship programme for studying Buddhism in India for interested students from Asian Buddhist countries in the first phase of the programme. In this connection, IBC organized a two-day symposium on 20<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> July, 2019 at IBIS Hotel, Aero city, Delhi. The symposium was convened to discuss and firm up the modalities and procedures with regard to eligibility criteria, selection procedures, courses to be offered and quantum of scholarship etc. for studying Buddhism in Indian universities and monasteries. In the second phase of the programme, similar scholarships would be offered to interested Indian students to study Buddhist courses in foreign countries.

A total of 32 prominent Buddhist scholars/academicians, 18 from India and 14 from outside, participated in the symposium representing various universities/ Buddhists institutions and monastic orders. The international delegates were drawn from **Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Mongolia.**

The inaugural session began with a welcome address by **Ven. Dr. Dhammapiya, Secretary General, IBC**, who explained the agenda and purpose of the symposium and sought co-operation of participants in sharing their professional knowledge/expertise in the field of Buddhism to formalize the scheme. He expressed the hope that this scholarship scheme can begin from the next academic session in 2020-2021.

The Chief Guest on the occasion, **Mr. Akhilesh Mishra, Director General, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)**, expressed his appreciation to the IBC for launching the noble scholarship programme for studying Buddhism in India, and assured ICCR's full support in this regard. He remarked that his organization, which is an important cultural arm of the Government of India to promote cultural relations and exchanges between India and other countries, is providing 4000 annual scholarships to foreign students to study various courses in Indian universities and institutions.

**Ven. Sri Saranankara Nayaka Maha Thera, Chief Adhikarana Sangha Nayaka of Malaysia and President of the IBC**, addressed the gathering on behalf of the Sanghas and Governing Body of the IBC. The inaugural session was attended by around 70 prominent Buddhist Scholars/ academicians including Ven. Lama Lobzang, former Secretary General and currently Working President of the IBC and members of the Foreign Diplomatic Corps based in Delhi.

Besides giving presentations on academic facilities available in their respective universities / institutions/monasteries, the delegates also discussed at length about the current scenario for learning Buddhism in India and abroad and challenges being faced by them. The delegates had exhaustive interactive discussions on all the issues related to study of Buddhism during the two days long symposium.

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