



# DHAMMADUTA

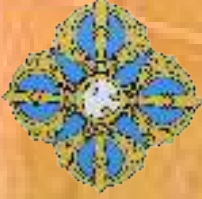
JOURNAL OF THE ASIAN BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE FOR PEACE



SPECIAL ISSUE 17.01.2024

**COMMEMORATING THE  
12<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
ASIAN BUDDHISTS  
CONFERENCE FOR PEACE  
(ABCP)**





JOURNAL OF THE ASIAN BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE FOR PEACE

# DHAMMADUTA

SPECIAL ISSUE

17 January 2024

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## **May peace prevail with the blessing of the Triple Gem**



It is a great pleasure and an honour to present this special edition of "Dhammaduta" magazine commemorating the 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of ABCP.

It has been a little more than 4 years since the last General Assembly of ABCP was held under the motto "Revival and Rejuvenation," during which we worked to revive and rejuvenate our organization, which is today celebrating its 54<sup>th</sup> Foundation anniversary. During the last General Assembly we made changes and amendments to our Constitution, renaming it the Charter of ABCP, charting new objectives and goals before

our organization.

Today, we have converged on New Delhi, the capital of India, the place where Buddhism originated, for our 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly to catapult ABCP as a Buddhist voice of the Global South.

When the world is today becoming multi-polar, peoples in the Global South are coming forward, raising their voices for their legitimate interest for peace, harmony, and equality. The Buddhists in our region, and in this sense, ABCP, representing Buddhists in 13 countries of Asia and the Pacific, has a special role to play and we shall strive to be the voice of the Global South.

For this ABCP needs to work hand-in-hand with Buddhist and non-Buddhist organizations - both public and non-governmental, UN and its specialised agencies, other international organizations, individuals and institutions, the private sector to bring to the nations of the world Lord Buddha's teachings of peace, harmony and compassion.

May peace prevail with the blessing of the Triple Gem.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name of the Secretary General.

Da Lama Khunkhur Byambajav  
Secretary General, ABCP





THE DALAI LAMA

## MESSAGE

I would like to offer warm greetings to my spiritual brothers and sisters taking part in the 12th General Conference of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) in New Delhi. Having been aware of ABCP's activities since its inception in the 1970s, I also wish to express my appreciation of the initiatives it has taken over the years to create greater awareness of the need to promote peace in Asia and the wider world, as well as the efforts it has made to strengthen Buddhist culture and values.

It is important that we seek a genuine determination to achieve global demilitarisation. In this respect, some kind of inner disarmament is necessary to have the confidence to eliminate physical weapons.

In the world today, it is very clear that our tendency to see other people in terms of 'us' and 'them' sadly leads to divisions that give rise to conflicts. This occurs because we fail to appreciate the oneness of humanity. However, when we recognise that we are all the same as human beings, we can learn to live in harmony and friendship and help one another.

If we develop compassion (*karuna*) within and avoid doing harm to others on the basis of non-violence (*ahimsa*), we will create happiness and reduce suffering for everyone. By cultivating a warm-hearted attitude towards others we will be on good terms with those around us.

By working to reduce the threat that violence, poverty and damage to the environment pose to us all, you will help not only those of us who are alive today, but even generations yet to come. All of us must work to promote a sense of universal brotherhood and sisterhood.

I wish you success in the deliberations of the Conference.

With my prayers and good wishes,

6 January 2024



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



PRESIDENT  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH  
DANGASHABAN, DHAKA

03 Magh 1430

17 January 2024

## Message

I welcome the initiative of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) to organize its 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in New Delhi. On this auspicious occasion, I convey my heartfelt felicitation to the organizers, delegates, guests and Buddhist community all over the world.

Every religion of the world advocates for peace, just and human rights. Similarly, I believe that it is our noble responsibilities to establish world peace and serenity crossing all the barriers of religion, caste and creed. Buddhism bears the significance of peace, love and compassion. It is praise-worthy that peace-loving Buddhist community are immensely contributing towards upholding peace and harmony around the world through their non-violence, and humanitarian activities. Moreover, the Buddhist are carrying the thousand years old glorious history and heritage and maintaining rites of passage, tradition and culture with due religious fervor.


ABCP as a prestigious international organization is working for durable peace and improving the quality of life of the people. ABCP Promotes the dissemination and realization of Lord Buddha's teaching on the lofty ideals of peace, equality and human dignity. It is admirable that ABCP is also working to strive for general and complete disarmament and for banning the production and use of nuclear and other weapon of mass destruction. The United Nations recognized its activities and granted ABCP the status of an Accredited Non-Governmental Organization with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

I hope this General Assembly would help ABCP tighten the bond of friendship among the members and inspire them to continue their efforts towards humanity.

I wish all success of the 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of ABCP.

Joi Bangla.

Khoda Hafez. May Bangladesh Live Forever.

  
Md. Shahabuddin



**PRIME MINISTER**  
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF  
BANGLADESH

03 Magh 1430  
17 January 2024

## Message

I am happy to learn that 12th General Assembly of Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) is being held in New Delhi, India on 17- 18 January 2024. I have pleasure to know that a 4-member delegation of ABCP Bangladesh National Center headed by Ven. Buddhapriya Mahathero, President of Bangladesh Buddha Kristi Prachar Sangha (BBKPS) and President of ABCP Bangladesh National Center are going to participate in this ceremony.

Bangladesh is a country of religious harmony. People of different religious communities living in peace in this country. People of all religions irrespective of cast & creed are performing their religious activities in Bangladesh. Our constitution guarantees equal rights to citizen of all religions. Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman adopted secularism as one of the basic principles in the constitution to ensure the religious freedom of people of the country.

Gautam Buddha's teaching and practices inspire human race to achieve 'Nirvana' spiritual perfection of mind and body. Gautam Buddha was born as a human being, lived as a man, achieved 'Nirvana' as a man and also died as a man and thus he exalted the dignity of human race. His teachings urge his followers to halt hatred, stop killing and love humanity.

Bangladesh's soil and people are mingled with ancient Buddhist monasteries including many old Buddhist Viharas. The contribution of the people of Buddhist Community to religious harmony and nation-building is undeniable like the people of all other religions. I believe, the people of Bangladesh irrespective of cast and religion will uphold the glorious tradition of religious harmony, and actively participate in the ongoing development activities of the Awami League government.

I wish the 12th General Assembly of ABCP a grand success.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu  
May Bangladesh Live Forever.

**Sheikh Hasina**



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இலங்கை சனாதிபதி  
President of Sri Lanka

## MESSAGE

It is with great pleasure I extend warm congratulations to all the participants of the 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Asia Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP), scheduled to take place in New Delhi, India, from January 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

The ABCP is a momentous occasion that brings together the collective wisdom, spirituality and compassion of Buddhist leaders, scholars, practitioners and advocates from diverse corners of Asia. This assembly stands as a testament to the shared commitment to fostering harmony, understanding and cooperation among the varied Buddhist communities across the continent.

The overarching goal of the ABCP to promote the principles of peace, compassion and social welfare resonates deeply with the timeless teachings of Buddhism. As all of you gather in New Delhi, may the collective efforts serve to strengthen the bonds that unite everyone and reaffirm the dedication to the values that lie at the heart of Buddhism. I am confident that the discussions and interactions during this assembly will contribute significantly to the promotion of peace and understanding, not only within our Buddhist communities but also in the world.

May the 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Asia Buddhist Conference for Peace be a source of inspiration and a catalyst for positive change. I wish all participants fruitful deliberations and a harmonious gathering that advances the noble principles of Buddhism.

**Ranil Wickremesinghe**  
President  
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

09<sup>th</sup> January 2024

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இலங்கைச் சனநாயக சோசலிசக் குடியரசு  
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka



# ABCP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

The Fourteenth Meeting of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace (ABCP) was held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam on October 7-8, 2023.

The Executive Council regular meeting was organized and hosted by the Vietnam ABCP National Center under the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha.

It was attended by Most Ven. Kh. Byambajav, Secretary General of ABCP, members of Executive Council from Bangladesh (two National Centers - Boudha Kriti Prachar Sangha and Center II), Cambodia, India, Korea (Taego Order), Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia (two centers of Dashichoiling and Gandan Tegchenling monasteries), Nepal, Russian Federation (two national centers - Ivo Iginsky and Aginsky Datsan), Sri Lanka (two centers - Wipulasara and Sumanatissa Chapters) and Vietnam (National Vietnam Buddha Sangha and Vietnam Buddhist University).

Most Ven. Thich Thien Nhon, President of the National Vietnam Buddha Sangha, made welcome remarks followed by remarks by ABCP Secretary General Most Ven. Da Lama Kh. Byambajav. The Executive Council meeting declared His Eminence, Most Ven. Thich Thien Nhon as the Permanent Patron of ABCP, who is one of the six patrons of ABCP.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Executive Council Meeting heard and discussed the activity report of the ABCP Headquarters, presented by the ABCP Secretary General, who spelled out the work done as a follow up to the decisions of the



Opening of the 14<sup>th</sup> ABCP Executive Council Meeting: left to right: Ven. Thich Thanh Nhieu, Ven. Thich Thien Phap, Ven. Kh. Byambajav, ABCP Secretary General and Ven. Thich Thien Nhon, President of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha. Photo below: Ven. Kh. Byambajav, ABCP Secretary General with the Chief Monk of the Quoc An Khai Tuong Temple





*Chief monks and lamas during the opening of the 14th ABCP Executive Council Meeting (photo top) and ABCP members offering prayers at National Vietnam Temple (photo below)*



Choeden, Vice President of ABCP and the Indian National Center of ABCP, in reaction to the report of the Secretary General, expressed concern over the global situation, which is posing a threat to peace and security the world over, and called on the Executive Council members to voice their concern over the existing global challenges and urged ABCP to work harder for peace. In this connection, the Vietnam and Japan National Centers of ABCP shared draft resolutions on promoting peace and ending armed conflicts in different parts of the world through peace talks and negotiations with due consideration of Lord Buddha's teachings of compassion, non-violence and respect for human values.

The ABCP financial report for the Fiscal years 2020 to the first half of 2023 was also presented at the Executive Council meeting. The Headquarters of ABCP appealed to the member National Centers to make their membership fees on time, upon which the activity and growth of the organization depended. From the floor, there were several proposals and suggestions concerning membership fees as well as contribution to the organization's Corpus Fund. (Before this issue was being prepared, National Centers of Nepal and Central Tibetan Administration in Dharamsala, and India contributed their membership fees, for which the ABCP Headquarters expresses its appreciation).

Mr. Sonam Wangchuk, Secretary of the Indian National Center and Deputy Secretary General of ABCP briefed the participants in the meeting on the preparations for the next 12<sup>th</sup> general Assembly of ABCP, which, he said, would be hosted by the Indian National Center.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Executive Council of ABCP con-

12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Executive Council meetings. He expressed gratitude to the Indian National Center of ABCP for its initiative to take the responsibility for financing the Director of the ABCP Regional Coordination Center, which ABCP is planning to set up in the holy city of Bodh Gaya in Bihar, India. The Secretary General reported on the status of upgrading the roster status of ABCP with ECOSOC (UN Economic and Social Council) and called on the National Centers to engage actively with their re-

spective governments to support ABCP in this respect through their Permanent Representatives in the United Nations.

The Secretary General dwelt at length on the various activities carried out by the ABCP Headquarters in Ulaanbaatar in collaboration with the Mongolia National Center of ABCP - Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, and he also appreciated the work done in this regard by the National Centers of India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

Most Ven. Geshe Jangchub

cluded with the discussion and adoption of a Resolution and a Communique.

During the two-days of the Executive Council Meeting, the Vietnam National Center - Vietnam Buddhist University, introduced the meeting participants with more than 1,000 residential monastic students of the University, organized meetings with and courtesy calls on His Eminence Thich Tri Quang, Sangharaja of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, His Eminence Thich Minh Chau, former Deputy Sangharaja of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and Chairman of Vietnam ABCP National Center, Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee and also organized visits to the National Vietnam Temple and the Quoc An Khai Tuong Temple in Dong Nai province. ■



*Members of ABCP offering prayer at the memorial of Thich Quang Duc, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, who died by self-immolation at a busy Saigon road intersection on 11 June 1963, protesting against persecution of Buddhists by the US-backed South Vietnamese government of Ngo Dinh Diem (photo top) and ABCP members outside the National Vietnam Temple (photo below)*



# EYES ON ABCP'S FUTURE

There is seemingly a growing tendency among the younger generation to ignore the values of national culture and traditions, as a consequence of which, there is an apparent risk of less social spiritual coherence, fragility of credo and belief, moral and ethical crisis, and further division of the society, owing to many factors related to globalization. Alien cultural influences are impacting traditional customs and rites, such as giving name to a newborn baby, clip-

ping the hair of a growing child, celebrating an important birth anniversary, customary funeral rites etc., posing a threat to customary rites and rituals.

Taking into consideration some of these negative trends, the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists considers it imperative to better protect and preserve the values of traditional religion and culture, enlighten the society, strengthen moral and ethical values. Guided by the

strong belief that there is a need in the society today to preserve and hand over to the future generation the traditional values and practices, the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery has taken the initiative to build a center of religious and cultural tradition of the Mongols.

Globally, religious tourism is increasing. According to statistics (World Tourism Organization, a specialized UN agency), revenues generated from religious tourism in 2019, prior to

*Photo below: Bird's eye-view of the upcoming culture and religion center. Architecture's concept*



the COVID 19 pandemic, was 300 million US dollars, which today has grown to 18 billion US dollars.

The Gandan Tegchenling Monastery believes that the growth of the national economy can be supported by way of attracting the flow of international tourists to Mongolia especially through religious tourism.

Proceeding from this premise, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists has launched the project.

Apart from the above, some of the key goals of the project is to concentrate the activities of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace at the project center, energize the activities of this international religious organization and on this basis, increase the contribution of Mongolia to the cause of establishing peace in the region and in the world, as a whole.

The other objective of the project is to bolster the independence of Buddhist religion in the country, and for this purpose, set up a palace of Bogd Jebzundamba, the head of the Mongolian Buddhists.

The project area covers 15 hectares of land and is located at a place called Yarmag in the south western part of the capital city in the vicinity of the Bogd Uul mountain, a more than 360-year-old national protected park.

As of today, a 19-meter-tall statue of standing Buddha has been erected and consecrated. A meditation center is going to become functional soon and plans are afoot to build several construction projects, important elements of the center, such as a temple of Goddess Tara.

The project initiators and implementers have the slightest doubt that the center of religious and cultural tradition of the Mongols in Ulaanbaatar will become one of the must-visit-places for tourists and believers in the near future. ■



*A 19 meter tall statue of Lord Buddha (photo top) has been already erected at the site of the project, which after completion will have a monastery in its background (photo below, artist's concept)*



*A part of a cluster "meditation" center (Artist's concept, below)*





*When ABCP history was made - June 11-13, 1970. Buddhists from Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), India, Mongolia, Malaysia, Nepal, former USSR met in Ulaanbaatar to found the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, which was then called the Asian Buddhist Committee for Promoting Peace. (Photos from ABCP Archives)*

# 54 YEARS OF HISTORY





*The Most Ven. S. Gombojav (Mongolia), Ven. Gunananda Thero (India on behalf of Ven. B. Jinaratana Nayaka Thero), Ven. M. Sumanatissa (Sri Lanka), Ven. Amritnanda Thero (Nepal) and Dr. S. Dylykov (USSR on behalf of the Most Ven. Bandido Khambo Lama Gomboyev) signing the text of Memorandum to initiate the movement of Asian Buddhists for promoting peace (photo top) and (photo below) Representatives of Ceylon, India, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Singapore, USSR and Vietnam in Ulaanbaatar in June 1970. (Photos from ABCP Archives)*

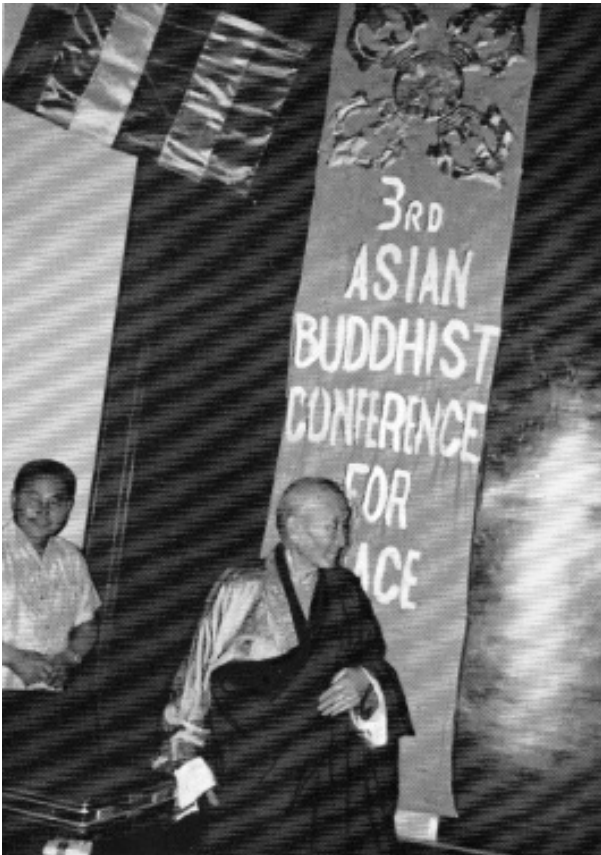




*Second and Fifth General Conferences of ABCP - 1972 and 1979. The Second General Conference of ABCP was held in Kandy, Sri Lanka. In the photo, top, are some of the founders of ABCP, such as Khambo Lama S. Gombojav of Mongolia, Khambo Lama Gomboev of USSR and Kushok Bakula Rinpoche of India. Photo below: HH The Dalai Lama was the Chief Guest at the Fifth General Conference of ABCP held in Ulaanbaatar on June 16-19, 1979.*







*Images from the Third General Conference of ABCP. In the photo, top, left is Most Ven. S. Gombojav, Khambo Lama of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery and President off ABCP. Photo top right shows Kushok Bakula Rinpoche of India and the photo below, delegation of ABCP in New Delhi when they were received by the Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi at her residence in 1974. (All photos from ABCP archives)*





*ABCP Disarmament Committee meeting in Tokyo, Japan. International Peace March by Japanese Buddhists and members of ABCP in Tokyo, Japan. (Photos from ABCP archives)*





*ABCP Nepal delegation at the 5<sup>th</sup> General Conference of ABCP, 1979. (Photo by V. Matviyevski, TASS Photo correspondent, from ABCP archives). Inter-faith meeting at ABCP Headquarters in Ulaanbaatar. In the photo below, left to right, are a representative of Orthodox Church, Dr. Romesh Chandra, President of the World Peace Council and Khambo Lama Kh. Gaadan, ABCP President. (ABCP Archives)*





*His Holiness The Dalai Lama attending a round table conference organized by the International Center of ABCP in New Delhi, India in 1984 (photo top), International Year of Peace event in Ulaanbaatar organized by ABCP (photo left), and Buddhist monks praying for peace in Ulaanbaatar (photo below). (ABCP Archives)*



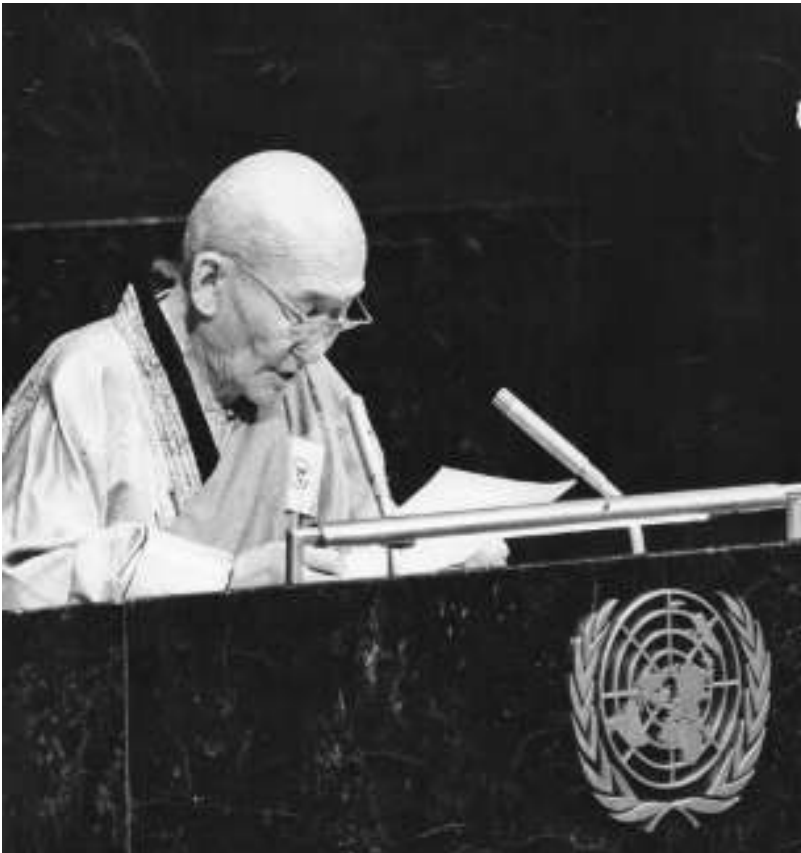
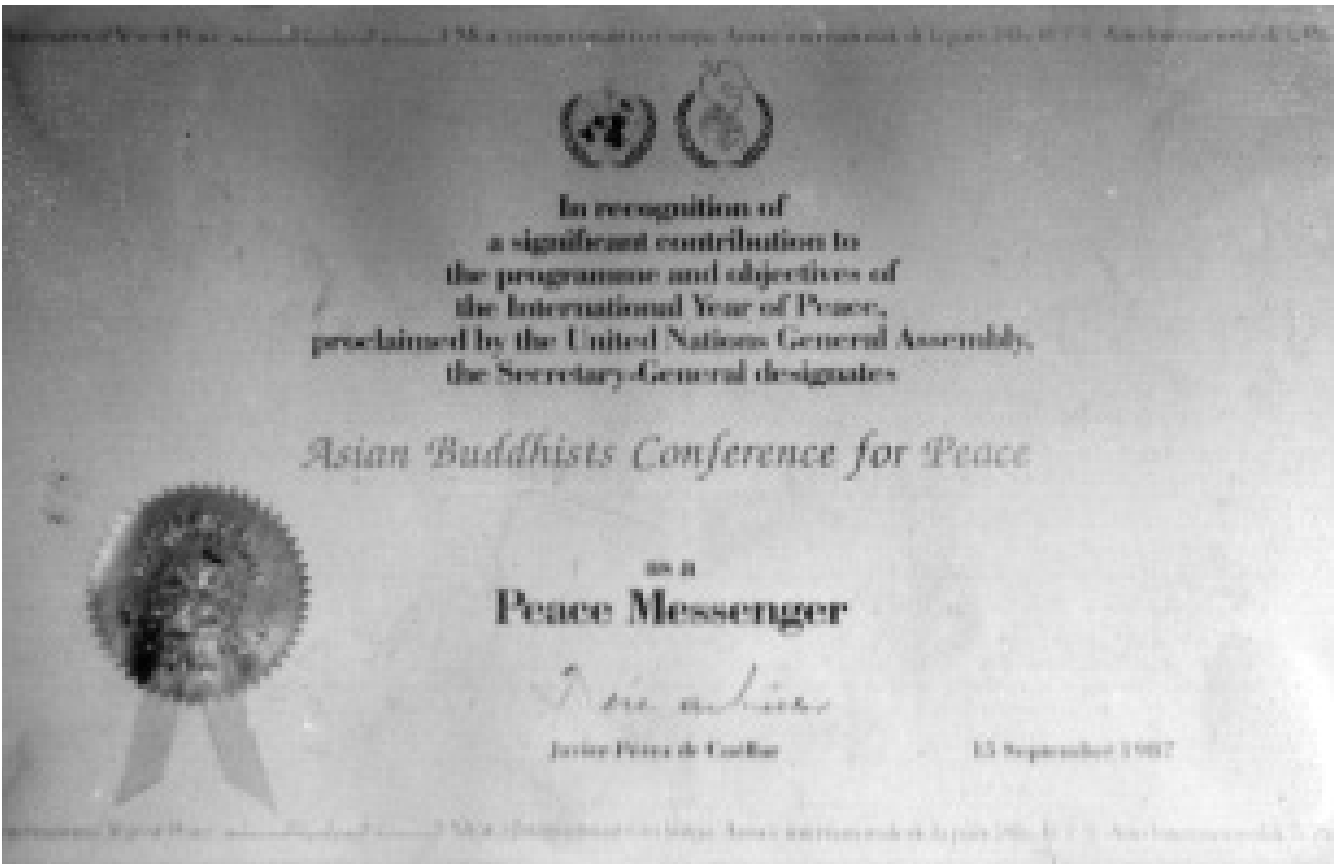


Photo Left: ABCP President S. Gombojav addressing the UN General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament at UN in New York in 1982; Photo top, Opening of International Peace March of Buddhists under the Motto "Buddhists Against Nuclear Weapons" in Korea, and photo below, copy of the award "Peace Messenger" given to ABCP in recognition of its significant contribution to International Year of Peace proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly and signed by UN Secretary General Javier Peres de Cuellar on 15 September 1987 (Archive photos.)



## abcp history in photos



*ABCP Executive Council meetings, held in New Delhi in May 2017 (photo top), and in Dhaka, Bangladesh in May 2018, (photo below) were key in the preparation for the 11<sup>th</sup> GA held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in the revival and rejuvenation of ABCP*





*Former Mongolian President Kh. Battulga at the 11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of ABCP (photo top), and President of ABCP, Gabju D. Chojamts at the inauguration of the GA in Ulaanbaatar (photo below)*



# Leadership Transition at Gandan Tegchenling Monastery



*The former Khambo Lama of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery - the Center of Mongolian Buddhists, Gabju D. Chojiamts (left) and the newly installed Nomun Khan, Khambo Lama of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists Geshe Lharampa Javzandorj Dulamragchaa (right)*

In a momentous event, Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists, recently underwent a historical leadership transition. The Most Venerable Gabju Chojiamts Demberel, the 29<sup>th</sup> Abbot Khambo Nomun Khan of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, and the President of the ABCP, resigned after an impressive 32 years of unwavering service. Fol-

lowing this remarkable tenure, a new era begins with the appointment of the 30<sup>th</sup> Abbot Khambo Nomun Khan, Geshe Lharampa Javzandorj Dulamragchaa.

Born on April 25, 1980, in Baruun Urt city, Sukhbaatar province, to father Dulamragchaa and mother Nanzad, Javzandorj Dulamragchaa emerged as the second child in the family. His spiritual journey

began at Erdenemandal Monastery in 1991, laying the foundation for a life dedicated to profound learning and unwavering commitment.

Javzandorj Dulamragchaa's spiritual journey is marked by significant milestones. From receiving the "Basic Precepts" from Damdinsuren Tumur, the 28<sup>th</sup> Abbot of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, to the "Shramanera



Precepts" from Lama Luvsandamba of Drepung Gomang Monastery, and culminating in the "Bhikshu" ordination bestowed by His Holiness XIV Dalai Lama—an epochal moment in his spiritual evolution.

His journey of learning extended to Drepung Gomang Monastery in India, where between 2000 and 2012, he earned titles in Pramanavartika, Paramita, Madhyamaka, Abhidharma, and Vinaya. Notably, in 2017, he achieved the prestigious title of Lharampa, the highest academic degree in Buddhist philosophy, setting a standard of excellence. In 2018, he completed a one-year training at Gyuto Tantric Monastery, securing the first place in the secret tantra exam and the third place in the 2019 agrampa exam. Demonstrating unwavering commitment, he successfully completed the three-year secret tantric program at Drepung Gomang Monastery in 2023, earning top honors in debate, essay writing, and overall results, marking the initiation of his mission to disseminate the teachings of secret tantra.

Geshe Lharampa Javzandorj's impact extends beyond the academic realm. Since 2002, he has been teaching dharma to students from Mongolia and abroad, earning the title of "Mongol Bagshi or Teacher" among devotees and disciples in India, Tibet, and Mongolia. Notable among his disciples are prominent lamas like Yeguzur Khutugtu - Danzanluvsanvanjil Rinpoche, Sraidorj Nomun Khan - Luvsandanbijantsan Rinpoche, and Erdene Bishrelt Mergen Pandita - Danzanjamianlodon Rinpoche.

Returning to Mongolia, he played a pivotal role in community-oriented Buddhist teachings, meditation, training, cognition, and humani-



*The new Khambo Lama Nomun Khan of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists Geshe Lharampa Javzandorj Dulamragchaa*

tarianism. His influence led to the establishment of the Sumadi Girdi NGO in 2013, dedicated to enlightening sentient beings.

His commitment to spreading the Dharma was further evident

in his role as an interpreter during His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama's teachings, including the "Initiation of the Wheel of Time" in 2012 and the "Great Lamrim Chenmo" in 2013 and 2014, as well as during the His

Holiness the Dalai Lama's official visit to Mongolia in 2016.

Since 2011, Geshe Lharampa has held the office of the chief abbot of Erdenemandal Monastery, the Center of Sukhbaatar Province Buddhists, overseeing religious affairs, training personnel, and providing teachings to the public across the provinces, monasteries, and dharma societies. His influence extends globally, as he persistently contributes to spreading the Dharma in regions where Buddhism was less prevalent or had experienced decline, reaching overseas countries such as Japan, Austria, Belgium, and Germany.

A prolific author and translator, Geshe Lharampa has undertaken the translation and publication of significant works, including "A Necklace for the Fortunate" and Lama Jonondagwashudev's commentary on the "Three Main Points of the Path". His publications also include booklets in Mongolian and Tibetan, such as "Compendium of Lamrim," "Guide to Refuge," "Understanding Karma," "The Benefits of Dharma," "Ashisthana Supplication of Bodhicitta's Training," "The Purification of Altan Ovoo," "The Ritual of Local People 'Ongon Soum,'" "An Introduction to the Meaning of Emptiness," "An Introduction to the Nirvana Path of the Abhidharma Commentary," and "Prayers for the Exalted Ones."

Since 2020, at Zanabazar's Buddhist University of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists, he has been teaching day and evening class students in interpretation programs for the "Lamrim", having taught over 600 students, he persists in disseminating the illuminating teachings of the Dharma in all directions.

In a momentous decree by the 29<sup>th</sup> Abbot Choijamts Dem-



The final Tantra certificate (top) from the Gyuto Tantric Monastery in India received in 2019



The Lharampa certificate of the new Khambo Lama Nomun Khan of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists, Geshe Lharampa Javzandorj Dulamragchaa, from the Gelugpa University in India

berel, on 22 September 2023, Geshe Lharampa Javzandorj Dulamragchaa was entrusted with the vital responsibility of teaching Buddhist philosophy to His Holiness the Supreme Ochirdara, the 10th Bogd Jebzundamba Khutugtu Danzambalchoijinwanchug.

As Geshe Lharampa Javzan-

dorj Dulamragchaa assumes his role as the 30<sup>th</sup> Abbot Khambo Nomun Khan of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, may his endeavors be met with spreading peace and happiness to all sentient beings.

Article by P. Tuya, Manager, ABCP HQ

# PEACE EFFORTS OF THE LATE KHAMBO KHARKHUUGIIN GAADAN

G abju S. Gombojav, the Khambo Lama of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists, invited Buddhist monks from Sri Lanka, Nepal, India and Russia (former USSR) and met them in Ulaanbaatar on December 5, 1960. United under a common desire to promote cooperation among Asian Buddhists to establish peace in Asia, basing on the teachings of Lord Buddha on compassion, unity and harmony, the first meeting of the Asian Buddhists was organized on 11-13 June 1970 in Ulaanbaatar founding the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace under the appeal “May those who fight with arms in hands, meet with flowers.”

The Second President of ABCP, and Khambo of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists Kh. Gaadan in his memoirs had written that Asian Buddhists in commemoration of the 2,500<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Lord Buddha, which was observed in the 1960s, were engaged in promoting the Lord Buddha’s teachings on compassion, which became the fountain source of establishing the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace (ABCP).

ABCP’s first President S. Gombojav was an outstanding peace champion who made every effort to expand and strengthen the ranks of the organization, stop wars and aggressions in Asia, step up the involvement of the regional Buddhists in this struggle, ban weap-



*Kharkhuugiin Gaadan, the Second President of ABCP and Khambo of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists*

ons of mass destruction and promote universal disarmament.

Khambo of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists and President of ABCP S. Gombojav passed away in 1980 and on 10 June 1981 Kh. Gaadan was appointed the Khambo of the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery. One year later on 16-18 August 1981, the 6<sup>th</sup> General Conference of ABCP was held successfully in Ulaanbaatar thanks to the unflinching effort of Khambo Kh. Gaadan, who then spearheaded the Organizing Committee of the 6<sup>th</sup> ABCP General Conference, where he was unanimously elected as the President of ABCP.

Kh. Gaadan, ABCP President and Khambo of the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists,

supported and contributed in every way the activities of ABCP. After the 6<sup>th</sup> ABCP General Conference, Khambo Kh. Gaadan established close contact with all the important Buddhists leaders in Asia, and took an active part in the peace efforts in the continent. In his capacity as ABCP President, Kh. Gaadan went on several peace tours to Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, India, former Soviet Union, Sri Lanka, and Japan, where he met with the leaders of the ABCP National Centers and held business-like consultations with them.

ABCP President Kh. Gaadan in his speeches and remarks, made at ABCP leader’s and Executive Council meetings and round-table conferences since the 6<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, fo-

cused on guidelines and orientation for future work of ABCP. Moreover, he issued a number of statements on the most important issues of international peace and gave interviews to the media on this topical issue.

He also took an active part in peace promotion activities and events organized by both religious and non-religious organizations and movements, where the President clearly outlined the missions and objectives of ABCP. He also took an active part in the global conference of religious leaders held in Moscow, a meeting of the Presidium of the World Peace Council, the 6<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization held in Algeria and many other international fora.

Khambo Gaadan accomplished many noble deeds by directing the efforts and financial sources of the Mongolian Buddhists to the cause of peace and against war. He also published many research papers on issues of peace in the "Buddhists For Peace" magazine of ABCP.

Basing on the contribution and the effort of Khambo Kh. Gaadan to the noble cause of international peace, against war, unity and harmony, he was re-elected as the President of ABCP at the 7<sup>th</sup> General Conference of ABCP held in Vientiane, Laos in 1986.

Noteworthy would be to recall ABCP President's speech at the 6<sup>th</sup> General Conference. He then had appealed to the Asian Buddhists "to make every effort to establish peace and justice, and promote compassion and harmony for the good of intensifying the peace movement of the Asian Buddhists, and forging closer collaboration among Buddhists organizations and also organizations and individuals of other religions and faiths." Proceeding from this premise,



*Kh. Gaadan, President of ABCP and Khambo of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhist, second from left, and the Most Ven. Kushok Bakula Rinpoche of India with bhikkus and monks*

the ABCP President Kh. Gaadan redefined the goals and objectives of ABCP, which led to the growth of the efforts and initiative of the Asian Buddhists, and the contacts and relationship of temples, monasteries and the religion as a whole with the general public.

Within the framework of the 20<sup>th</sup> foundation anniversary of ABCP, the 8<sup>th</sup> General Conference was held in Ulaanbaatar in September 1990. This coincided with a period when democratic changes and transformations began in Mongolia and heralded the period of the end of the Cold War. At the General Conference, the ABCP President summed

up the historic lesson of the organization and at the same time, called on the member National Centers to continue with their comprehensive activities and defined the reform plans of the organization.

It must be noted that the late ABCP President and Khambo Kh. Gaadan was a prominent peace promoter, who made his personal contribution to turning ABCP a prestigious international organization, brought closer together collaboration among the member National Centers and directed the attention of the international Buddhists to the issue of global and regional peace and security. ■

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*Summary of a paper entitled "The peace efforts of President of ABCP, Khambo Kh. Gaadan" presented by ABCP Secretary General Da Lama Kh. Byambajav at a scholarly conference organized jointly by Gandan Tegchenling Monastery-Center of Mongolian Buddhists, Department of Philosophy and Theology of the Mongolian National University, Institute of Language and Literature of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences and the local council of Uvs Aimag's Sagil and Turgen Soums in commemoration of the birth centenary of Kharkhuugiin Gaadan at the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery in Ulaanbaatar on 23 June 2023.*

# PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION



*Most Ven. Shugaku Mori, Secretary General of the Japan National Center, at the front on the right.*

**A**BCP Japan National Center is collaborating with the "Japan Religious Persons Council for Peace" and carrying out joint activities.

The Japan Religious Persons Council for Peace, the so-called "Nihon Shuuheikyou," conducted a "Prayer for Choosing Life through Fasting" on August 5, 2023, amid the escalating danger of nuclear weapon use. The event took place in front of the Atomic Bomb Memorial Tower in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, in collaboration with the Hiroshima YMCA. Representatives from various religions, including Jodo-shinshu Buddhism, Nichiren Buddhism and Christianity offered prayers in their own tradition.

This fasting prayer marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the

establishment of the "Religious NGO" in August 1983, when the NGO began offering prayers for the victims of atomic bombings, advocating for the abolition of nuclear weapons, and the enactment of laws to support survivors. Additionally, a panel exhibition on atomic bomb and humanity was held at the park, aiming to convey the message to the public about the absolute evil of war and nuclear weapons.

Mrs. Nobue Ogasawara, who was a victim of the atomic bombing when she was a first-year student in an elementary school at the age of six, shared her experiences as an A-bomb survivor. She introduced her father's memoir, published in "Burnt Like a Leaf", which de-

tailed his experience as a professional military man. She stated, "Publicly advocating and justifying 'nuclear deterrence' argument at the G7 Summit blatantly insults the Hibakushas, survivors, the affected areas, and the people of the Hiroshima prefecture. I have hopes in the enactment and dissemination of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons," and called for a swift and immediate abolition of nuclear weapons.

More than 20 individuals from all parts of Japan, who had come to the gathering, raised banners with slogans "Pray for a nuclear-free 21<sup>st</sup> century!", "Prayers for Peace into a Wave of Actions" and "No Need for Military Force."

# Indian National Center of ABCP and Its Activities

By Sonam Wangchuk Shakspo, Secretary, Indian National Center and Deputy Secretary General of ABCP

Indian National Center of ABCP was formed in New Delhi in 1974. It is one of the oldest national centers of ABCP and has substantially contributed to the development of ABCP. It also hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> GA of ABCP in 1974 in New Delhi. A national organizing committee was set-up for the purpose under the chairmanship of Most Venerable Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, M.P. The 3<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly adopted the historic New Delhi Declaration, which many consider the Magna-Carta of ABCP.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> GA of ABCP was inaugurated by Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, President of India, alongside a galaxy of venerated figures and luminaries from the Buddhist world like HH the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, Venerable Nichidatsu Fujii of Japan, Khambo Lama of Mongolia Venerable Samagiin Gombojav, Khambo Lama of Soviet Union Venerable Jambaldorj Gomboev, Ven. Jinnarathana Mahathero and Bhadant Anand Kausalyan both from India and Buddhist leaders from several other countries. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, hosted a reception in honour of the delegates at her residence.

Besides holding the GA of ABCP in 1974, the Indian National Center was also entrusted with the activities of "Com-



*Pandito Khambo Lama Jambaldorj Gomboev of USSR, Khambo Lama Samagiin Gombojav of Mongolia and Bakula Rinpoche of India and Mr. Baatardorj, Ulan Ude, USSR (1968)*

mission on Panchsheel" by the ABCP headquarters. It organized several symposiums and related activities in different parts of India. But unfortunately, after the 10<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of ABCP held in Vientiane, Laos in 2002 due to financial constraints and some other factors, the ABCP was unable to carry on its activities with the same zeal and intensity, and for nearly 15 years it maintained a very low profile.

Then in 2017 India celebrated the birth centenary year of Most Venerable Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, one of the most celebrated Buddhist leaders of India.

The occasion began with a mega event in Leh, Ladakh, India which also proved to be a god-sent opportunity for the ABCP as it was during this period that the idea of rejuvenating ABCP found a strong voice. Birth centenary of Bakula Rinpoche was also celebrated in Mongolia too where he was popularly known as Elchin-Bagshi or the 'Ambassador Teacher' and which was his last Karma-Bhoomi (land of action). A grand celebration was held in Ulaanbaatar on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018 to mark his Birth centenary. Mr. Damdin Tsogtbaatar, Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Mongolia, Mrs. Sushma Swaraj,



*(L to R) Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, Ven. S. Gombojav, President of ABCP, Shri Fakruddin Ali Ahmed, President of India, Ven. Nichidatsu Fujii of Japan, Prof. Ch. Jugder, General Secretary and Ven. Jinaratana at the Third General Assembly of ABCP. (1974)*

Minister for External Affairs of India, Mr. Gombojav Zandanshatar, Chief Cabinet Secretary of Mongolia and Most Venerable Khambo Lama D. Choijamts paid glowing tributes to Bakula Rinpoche on his birth centenary which was marked with deep devotion and solemnity. The year-long celebration culminated with a mega celebration in Leh, India on 19 May, 2018, which was attended among others by Honorable Shri Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India.

With support from the ABCP Headquarters, a meeting of the ABCP Executive Council was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017 in New Delhi after nearly 16 years which finally broke the ice. It was attended by Most Ven. Khambo Lama D. Choijamts, President, Dr. T. Bulgan, Secretary General and members from several National Centers. It was an important step and a landmark beginning in the rejuvenation of

ABCP.

Participating in the meeting Mr. Sonam Wangchuk Shakspo, Secretary, ABCP Indian National Center lamented that the ABCP which was once a shining example of the Buddhist peace movement, has lost its sheen and called for urgent measures to rejuvenate it. He also called upon the members to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the organization in 2019 marking the 50 years of great achievements. All the delegates to the Executive Council meeting endorsed the idea and expressed full solidarity with the ABCP headquarters. They assured all possible assistance towards rejuvenation of ABCP. The ABCP Executive Council meeting was an important step and a landmark beginning in the revival of ABCP after a long silence which besides other important measures, also announced the holding of the 11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of ABCP

which coincided with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ABCP.

Thus the 11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of ABCP was held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in 2019 which was a grand success. Most of the ABCP National Center's participated in it. His Excellency Mr. Kh. Battulga, President of Mongolia, was the Chief Guest on the occasion which was also attended by Her Excellency Ms. Inga Rhonda King, President of United Nation's ECOSOC, New York.

### **Our Activities:**

In subsequent years, Indian National Center has fully participated in the activities of ABCP and organized various events. In association with the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, Indian National Center participated in the exposition of holy Buddha Relics in Mongolia in 2021 and subsequently in



*H.E. Ling Rinpoche with the bronze statue of 19<sup>th</sup> Bakula Rinpoche in Moscow, Russia. (2022) and photo below, at the 7<sup>th</sup> General Conference of ABCP Vientiane, Laos (1986), left to right: Most Ven. Kh. Gaadan, ABCP President, a Lao Government official, Most Ven. Kushok Bakula Rinpoche (India), a Lao Government official and Most Ven. Thich Minh Chau (Vietnam)*



the printing and free distribution of 10 Kanjur or Kangyur texts in 108 volumes in Mongolian language which consists of works in 108 volumes of the words spoken by the Buddha himself.

M. Sonam Wangchuk, Secretary, ABCP Indian National Center was also a part of an official delegation representing the Ministry of Culture, which visited the Russian republics with substantial Buddhist population. On 15 September 2021, a function was held at the DP Dhar Hall, Embassy of India, to launch a book on the 19<sup>th</sup> Kushok Bakula Rinpoche. The book had been published by the Embassy of India in Russian. Ambassador Varma released the book and he was joined by Shri Suresh Soni, Shri Shakti Sinha, Dr. Sachidanand Joshi, Dr. Aashish Bhawe, Prof. Alikberov and Dr. Tatiana Shauyman (senior members of Russian Academy of Science), Indologists and other dignitaries. During the course of their visit, the delegation visited Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kalmykia, Tuva and Ulan Ude and Aginsky regions of the Buriat Republic and discussed issues of mutual concern. The visit has paved way for future cooperation with the Buddhists of Russia and I hope that our efforts in this direction would continue.

There are hundreds of Mongolian and Russian monks undergoing monastic education in monasteries across India. ABCP Indian National Center has embarked upon a scholarship scheme of “Bakula Rinpoche scholarship” Rs. 1000- per month for all such monks irrespective of age and other considerations. The scholarship amount is directly credited to their bank accounts which has been highly appreciated by the beneficiaries. ■



# MULTITUDE OF ACTIVITIES

## Fact File

ABCP Bangladesh National Center is associated with ABCP from the very inception of its journey. It was established in 1975 under the dynamic leadership of late Mr. D.P. Barua, Professionally a renowned journalist, Chief editor and Managing Director of state owned only news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS). The highest National honour “Swadhinata Padak” recipient and President of Bangladesh Supreme Sangha Council, the 10<sup>th</sup> Sangharaj Most Ven. Jyotipal Mahathero was the First President and Mr. D. P. Barua was the Secretary General of Bangladesh National Center. After the death of Most Ven. Jyotipal Mahathero Most Ven. Shilalankar Mahastavir, the 8<sup>th</sup> Sangharaj became the President of the Center. The then Secretary General of Bangladesh Supreme Sangha Most Ven. Santa Pada Mahathero became the President of the National Center after the death of Most Ven. Shilalankar mahastavir. Legandary personality of Bangladesh intellectual Society and the Buddhist Community Mr. D P. Barua was elected as the President of Bangladesh National Center after the death of Most Ven. Santa Pada Mahathero. Since 1975 Bangladesh National Center has been functioning for peace with the pace of ABCP Headquarter's activities under their dynamic leadership.

## Social Activities

ABCP Bangladesh National Center is widely involved in social activities in the Buddhist Community of Bangladesh. The leaders of the Center took part in social activities on different occasions. The center from its own platform and other platforms actively engaged in social activities. The leaders are engaged in cloth distribution program among the poor during the winter season. The leaders are always engaged in helping the seriously ill poor patient of the society.

## Donation to establish new Buddhist monastery

ABCP Bangladesh National Center executive members are committed to take care of the Buddhist values and uphold the images of the Buddhist community of Bangladesh. Buddhist monasteries play a vital role in this respect. Building new monasteries is a prime goal of our center members. They are also providing financial and non financial support to the monasteries. Mr. Dibbendu Bikash Chowdhury Barua, Vice President of our National Center, is the sitting President of Bangladesh Buddhist Federation. The elected body which runs the International Buddhist monastery Merul Badda, Dhaka are the members of Bangladesh Buddhist Federation and ABCP Bangladesh National Center. International Buddhist monastery is one of the biggest monasteries of Bangladesh. The other

Vice President of our center Mr. Shakya Pryo Barua is also Vice president of Bangladesh Buddhist Federation. Our President Mr. Jibanananda Barua and Secretary General Mr. Goutam Arindam Barua are also patron and important members of the Management Committee. Mrs. Jharna Barua, social welfare secretary and Mrs. Sangeeta Barua, women's welfare secretary hold important portfolios of other Buddhist organizations.

## Organizing Cultural Program

Mr. Goutam Arindam Barua, a celebrated singer and composer, organizes cultural event in the International Buddhist Monastery. He organized a colorful musical program called 'Probarana Purnima' last year. Thousands of Buddhist people of Dhaka City enjoyed the cultural program. He also organized a seminar on the topic of the challenges of 4<sup>th</sup> revolution.

## Helping the Poor during Corona Pandemic period

ABCP Bangladesh National Center launched a special financial assistance program by helping the less privileged people of the society during COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the village area who lost their job or had to close their business during that period. Although that was not enough to meet their needs but they got little relief with the financial assistance. ■



## ASIAN BUDDHIST CONFERENCE FOR PEACE NEPAL

शान्तिको लागि एसियाली बौद्ध संघ नेपाल  
Kathmandu, NEPAL.

Govt Regd : 863-2074/75

Warmest greetings,

It is with immense pleasure that I extend my heartfelt prayers to all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for the resounding success of the 12th General Assembly of ABCP, slated to take place in the vibrant city of New Delhi, India on the 17th of January 2024. As we reflect on the genesis of ABCP, established 54 years ago in 1970 in Ulaanbataar under the auspicious guidance of H.E. Nomch Mergen Khamba Lama Gabju S. Gomboja, we are reminded of the profound journey embarked upon.

ABCP, over its distinguished history, has orchestrated numerous impactful programs, fostering collaboration among the 12 member nations of Asia. Under the adept leadership of its current President, H.E. Gabji Demberel Chojamts, the organization has achieved commendable milestones in the pursuit of universal peace, harmony, and cooperation in the Asian community along with endeavors directed toward economic and social advancement, the promotion of justice and human dignity, and the widespread dissemination of Buddhist culture, tradition, and heritage.

In my personal perspective, it is incumbent upon us, the collective of member states, to redouble our efforts in reaching every stratum of society, instilling awareness, and inspiring individuals to embrace the profound teachings of Tathagata. May we foster mutual compassion and loving-kindness, thus contributing to the noble goal of making our shared planet Earth a more harmonious and nurturing abode.

Special commendation is due to the President of the ABCP India chapter and the entire organizing team for their meticulous efforts in orchestrating the 12th General Assembly in India. My fervent prayers and best wishes accompany you, anticipating the triumphant success of this distinguished event.

Bhawatu Sabba Mangalam!

Bhikkhu Maitri  
President,  
ABCP Nepal National Center

# ACTIVE AND DYNAMIC

1. The president Most Ven. Maitri Bhikkhu with one monk Koliya Wisuddhi Himi, attended the 14th ABCP Executive Council Meeting which was held at Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam on Oct. 7 - 8, 2023. This Executive Council Meeting was concluded to work together with International NGOs like Dharma Alliance based in Geneva, Switzerland.



2. The AGM of ABCP, Nepal was held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2023 under the chairmanship of President Ven. Maitri Bhikkhu and concluded with the unanimous decision of continuation of the Buddhist programs in Nepal.



3. On behalf of President Mukunda Bista, an executive committee member participated in the International Buddhist Forum organized by the Russian Buryat from 17 to 19<sup>th</sup> August 2023 at Ulan Ude and presented a paper on 'Traditional Buddhism and Modern Challenges'.



# ACTIVE AND DYNAMIC

4. Vice President Norbu Sherpa and Secretary Naresh P. Manandhar joined the team to explore the Pashupati temple area for conservation and protection of the Buddhist heritages such as statues. And participated in the interaction with Government authorities to safeguard the statues of Buddha located in various sites that are being tampered already by Hindu devotees.



5. A 13 km peace march was organized under the leadership of Secretary Naresh P. Manadhar with other 16 participants with peace lamps on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2022 starting from the Golden Temple at Patan to Anandakuti Vihara at Swayambhu. Monks at Anandakuti chanted the Paritrana and were offered food and Daana on the occasion.



6. On behalf of our President Most Ven. Maitri Bhikkhu, Bhikkhu Kondanya is going to attend the ' Buddhist Summit at Cambodia Laos Vietnam on dated December 26 and 27, 2023.

# BUDDHA'S IMAGE ON ANCIENT CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

An international scholarly conference "Buddhism and Archaeology" was held at the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists on 6 November 2023. This was the second scholarly conference jointly co-organized by the Institute of Archaeology of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences and the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery.

More than 30 papers were presented at the conference by some 40 scholars and researchers from Mongolia, Russian Federation, People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

An archaeological exhibition was also displayed for the public in the Battsagaan Temple of the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery.

Dr. N. Erdene-Ochir, Secre-

tary of the Institute of Archaeology, speaking about an ancient Buddhist temple discovered anew in Mongolia said "We carried out archaeological excavation at a historical site called 'Khar Tune Ord,' the ruins of Turgen or the original palace of Khereid Wang, along the banks of Tuul river in the area of Songino near Ulaanbaatar and carried out extended initial research. There we discovered the remains of an ancient Buddhist temple which was built around the sixteenth century. Every year in fall, we review the outcome of our joint research and organize a conference under the theme 'Buddhism and Archaeology.' Thanks to our archaeological excavation, we have been able to find ruins of Buddhist temples and monasteries, and related artefacts."

The conference gave the opportunity to learn about the registration, preservation, protection of Buddhist relics related to the history of ancient empires and states of the Mongols. The conference also made it possible to learn about the outcome of scientific research conducted by Mongolian and foreign scholars covering a broad research areas, such as archaeological and historical source materials, ancient writings, cultural heritage, their preservation and restoration, architectural structure, design, construction decorations and ornaments, and the last conference was not an exception either.

Historians and scientists believe that Buddhism spread and flourished in Mongolia during three different historical periods. Research papers presented

Photo below: Participants in the scholarly conference "Buddhism and Archaeology"





*Photos top to bottom: Opening of the exhibition "Buddhism and Archaeology" at Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, finds made during archaeological excavations (photos 2 and 3 page, bottom)*



at the conference revealed that the first period of the spread of Buddhism was during the rule of the Huns or the Xiōngnú Empire that existed on the territory of present-day Mongolia BCE 209 to CE 93. At present, there are no hard evidences to prove the above, however, it can be corroborated with the help of archaeological studies.

In recent years, Mongolian archaeologists have discovered ruins or Buddhist temples and monasteries in many different parts of the country. Excavation and research have been carried out at some of them, leading to massive new finds, shedding new light on the spread of Buddhism, its scale and scope, and ever new evidences, which had not been recorded in any written sources, according to Dr. G. Eregzen, the Director of the Institute of Archaeology.

A joint project "Core of Heritage and Culture," which is being jointly implemented by the Institute of Archaeology of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences and the Erdem Institute of Culture of the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, with financial support of Golomt Bank of Mongolia, aims to subject monuments related to Buddhism, that are being found from the territory of Mongolia, to archaeological study, and draw conclusions after their thorough study.

Artefacts and objects that are found within the framework of the archaeological research and excavations, are kept at the Institute of Archaeology, which are transferred and handed over to the relevant museums, and as of today, the Institute has more than 200 thousand such archaeological finds, cultural and other objects.

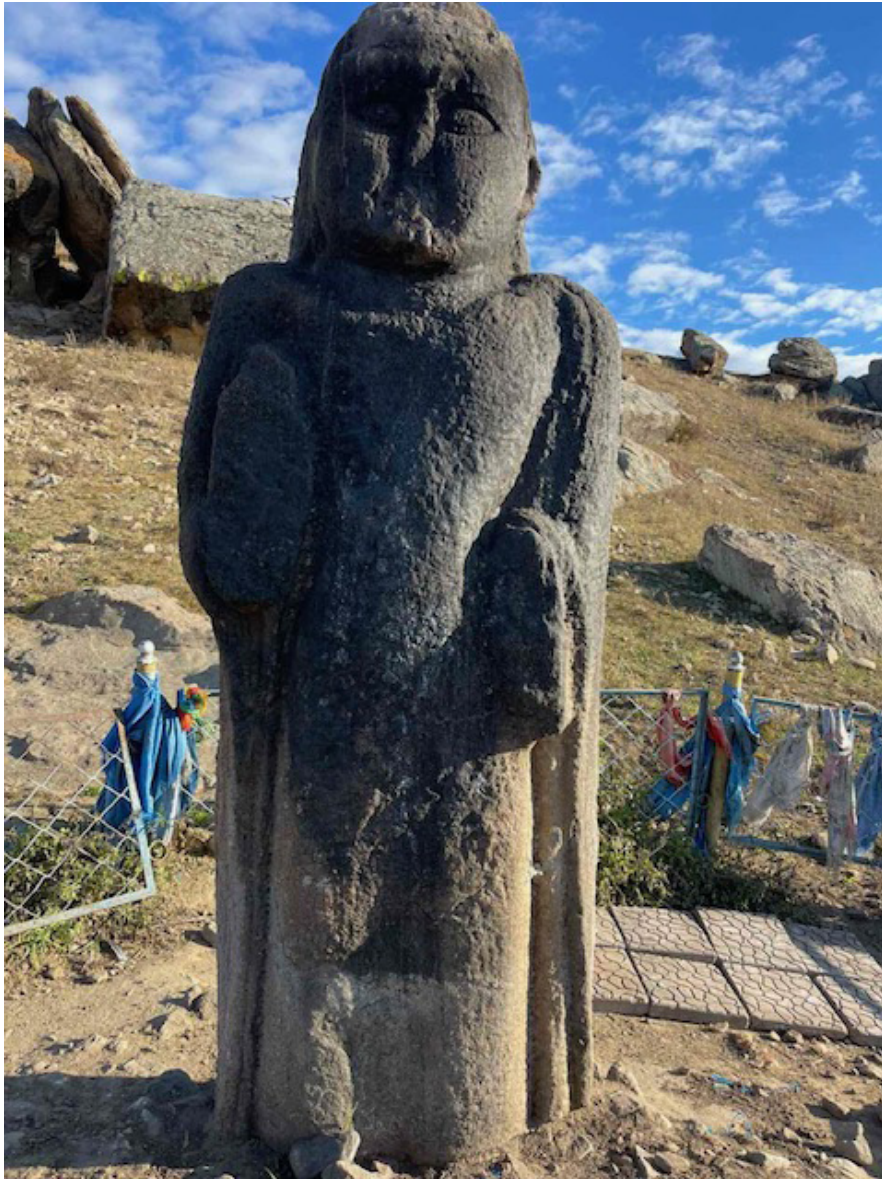
An exhibition of artefacts and objects found as a result of archaeological excavations in recent years were on public display at a

special exhibition. From among the rare excavated objects and artefacts on display, of particular interest are the objects excavated from the ruins of the main monastery built by Kharkhul Khan on the banks of Khanui River in Erdenemandal soum of Arkhangai province, which most likely could be a very ancient Buddhist monastery appertaining to a very early period in the history of Mongolia.

On display at the exhibition were some very ancient artefacts and objects found from the ruins of Shagjaa Buddhist Monastery built during the reign of Monk Khan, the fourth Khan of the Great Mongol Empire (June 1,1251 to August 11,1259), Buddhist artefacts appertaining to the seventeenth century, as well as rare objects belonging to Mother Queen Dondogdulam, who was the wife of the Eighth Bogd Khan of Mongolia (She was born in the Year of Blue Dog or 1874 in the Khuvchiin Jonon Beis Banner of Setsen Khan aimag).

Archaeological artefacts and objects that were displayed at Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Mongolian National Center of ABCP, were the results of a joint project with the Archaeological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Mongolia and they represented different periods of Buddhism in the country. ■

*Photos: an ancient statue of Lord Buddha (top right) and an eve edge plate tile (right)*



*Story adapted from news.mn and montsame.mn sites and photos courtesy of the Institute of Archaeology, Mongolian Academy of Sciences*

# ABCP's Collaboration with Gandan TV: Reviving Buddhist Heritage



Photo top: Screenshot from a TV documentary about ABCP Khambo Lama of the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery and President of ABCP, Most Ven. S. Gombojav meeting with His Holiness The Dalai Lama after presenting His Holiness with the ABCP Medal in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia (1979)

*In an interview conducted by ABCP Manager Tuya Purevgonchig, Gandan TV Director Venerable Odgarid Jugder sheds light on the fruitful collaboration between the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace (ABCP) and Gandan TV in bringing historical documentaries to the forefront of domestic and international audiences.*

Venerable Odgarid begins by emphasizing ABCP's significant role as an influential organization on roster of the UN ECO-SOC. He reflects on the 11<sup>th</sup>

General Assembly held in Mongolia in June 2019, where media organizations and the public expressed gratitude for ABCP's revival and its continuous humanitarian and peaceful activities around the world.

He highlights the collaborative efforts between Gandan TV and ABCP, emphasizing the importance of delivering these documentaries to the public. One noteworthy example he shares is the coverage of the 7<sup>th</sup> General Assembly and the 1979 activities attended by His Holiness the Da-

lai Lama. These historical events, brought to life through the meticulous curation of old archives, have garnered widespread popularity.

Gandan TV's dedicated team supports ABCP's mission by ensuring that monthly news content will cover activities from both the Head office and National Centers. He stresses the importance of informing the youth about international relations, the scope of Buddhism's activities globally, and publicizing ABCP's efforts. The documentaries serve



as a cultural and educational event, showcasing how Asian Buddhist countries navigated the challenges of the Cold War, resisted threats, and brought their voices to the United Nations and other international organizations.

Through the lens of historical documentaries, viewers witness the leadership, organization, and cooperation among Asian Buddhist countries during the Cold War. The films illuminate the efforts of Asian Buddhist religious leaders to create the foundations of today's humane and compassionate society. Venerable Odgarid believes that understanding these events is crucial for young people, inspiring them to learn from the past, prevent future threats and conflicts, and value peace through cooperation.



*Venerable Odgarid Jugder, Director of Gandan TV*

tion.

In a final note, Venerable Odgarid encourages ABCP Nation-

al Centers to actively contribute by sending news, content, and works that promote religion and culture, providing education for children and youth. This collective effort aims to spread Buddhism globally, publicize future activities, and gain public support.

In essence, the collaboration between ABCP and Gandan TV stands as a testament to the power of media in preserving and propagating the rich heritage of Buddhism, fostering peace, and inspiring future generations. The historical documentaries serve as a bridge between the past and the present, creating a legacy that will endure for years to come.

# Buddhist Wildlife Trade Demand Reduction Initiative in Southeast Asia: Mongolia Project Progress



*The Project by Association of Mongolian Buddhist Devotees, Supported by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ GmbH)*

**U**laanbaatar, Mongolia: In the vast and serene landscapes of Mongolia, a profound initiative is quietly making waves against the illegal wildlife trade.

The "Buddhist Wildlife Trade Demand Reduction Initiative in Southeast Asia" is a groundbreaking collaboration led by the Association of Mongolian Buddhist Devotees, with the invaluable support of Deutsche

Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ GmbH). This transformative endeavor is not only reshaping the narrative but also fostering a harmonious connection between Buddhist teachings and conservation efforts.

The initiative was realized from 1 February 2022 to 4 December 2023. Under the able management of NABU International's collaboratin with the

## buddhism and nature

Association of Mongolian Buddhist Devotees as the project implementer, this initiative is not merely a project, it's a spiritual journey led by eminent monks. Da lama of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery and ABCP Secretary General Kh. Byambajav, and the 30<sup>th</sup> Abbot Khambo Nomun Khan of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, Geshe Lharampa D. Javzandorj are providing pivotal leadership.

Commencing with a survey that touched the lives of 4,000 citizens, the project unveiled a poignant truth—67% were unfamiliar with Buddha's teachings. The need for environmental education, rooted in Buddhist principles, became evident. 76% recognized the insignificance of wild animal products in human life, and a resounding 63% called for legal reinforcement.

Responding to the survey, the project organized training sessions on Karma, Interdependence, Compassion, Superstitions about the use of marmot organs, Reducing the hunting of Khuvsgul Lake white fish, Worshipping of Mountains and its importance in nature conservation and the Ecological importance of wildlife, reaching over 20,000 people across various platforms. These sessions were held at the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, Buddhist University of Mongolia, and high schools, correctional facilities, care homes, and local communities in six provinces - Khuvsgul, Bulgan, Dornod, Khentii, Khovd, and Omno-Gobi.

The dissemination of video content through Ulaanbaatar-based channels and social media has been instrumental. Noteworthy is the exhibition "Let's refuse-II," attended by 3,000 individuals, and a "Travelling library" spreading Buddha's teachings and distributing



*Photo top and bottom: Training sessions on karma, interdependence, compassion, superstitions that were organized under the project*





*Photo top, participants in the painting contest, and one of the winners of the photo contest, photo below*



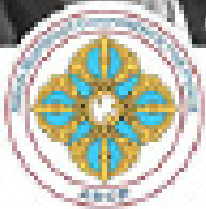
wildlife conservation literature in six provinces.

Engaging the younger generation, the initiative organized a "Let's save wildlife" drawing contest involving 210 children. The winners, recognized during a public event, received certificates, cash prizes, and gifts. Further, a magazine, in collaboration with the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, delves into karma, nature, and wildlife conservation.

The initiative achieved success by disseminating free information and leveraging Ulaanbaatar city billboards, thanks to the backing of government support. The intellectual property "Lord Buddha" 55 series of films has been featured on local television stations and government websites. Lectures at the Horse Trainers' Association, featuring the participation of the 29<sup>th</sup> Abbot Khambo Nomun Khan and ABCP President Choijamts Demberel, and an appeal at their meeting emphasize wildlife conservation.

As this project progressed, it carried the promise of inspiring positive change. It helped nurture a profound understanding of the interdependence between Buddhist teachings and wildlife conservation, fostering a collective consciousness that will echo through the vast landscapes. In the heartland of Mongolia, a beacon of change is lit—one that guides us towards a harmonious coexistence with nature, in the spirit of Buddha's teachings. ■

*Prepared and translated by ABCP  
Manager – Tuya Purevgonchig.  
Photos courtesy of the Association  
of Mongolian Buddhist Devotees*



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MAY THOSE WHO FIGHT  
WITH ARMS IN HANDS  
MEET WITH FLOWERS

