



DHAMMADUTA

JOURNAL OF THE ASIAN BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE FOR PEACE

March 2024



12TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF ABCP

**THE 12TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
ASIAN BUDDHISTS
CONFERENCE FOR PEACE
(ABCPC)**





JOURNAL OF THE ASIAN BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE FOR PEACE

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The regular 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace - ABCP, was held in New Delhi, the capital of the Republic of India on 17-18 January 2025. This ABCP General Assembly was held in the Indian capital after 50 years when India hosted the 3rd ABCP General Conference on 1-3 November 1974.

ABCP Executive Council 15th Meeting



Minutes of the 15th meeting of the Executive Council of ABCP 17 January 2024

The 15th meeting of the Executive Council of ABCP was held on Wednesday, 17 January 2024 in New Delhi. Executive Council members from Bangladesh I & II, Sri Lanka I & II, Vietnam I & II, Lao PDR, Republic of Korea, Russia, India, CTA - Dharamsala, Nepal, Mongolia I & II, Japan and Russia I & II attended the meeting. *(Photo top - general view of the participants - heads of National Centers, at the 15th Executive Council Meeting of ABCP).*

Ven. Choijamts, President of ABCP, Ven. Khunkur Bymbajav, ABCP Secretary General, Mr. Khy Sovanaratna and Mr. Sonam Wangchuk, Deputy Secretary Generals of ABCP and Mr. Ch. Burenbayar, Senior Manager representing the ABCP Headquarters attended the meeting.

1. The meeting discussed and adopted the agenda of the 12th General Assembly of ABCP.
2. Executive Council members than discussed

the revised and edited version of the ABCP Charter. The revised and edited version of the Charter was circulated by the ABCP Headquarters with all the National Centers on 10 December 2023. By 10 January 2024, ABCP Headquarters received comments and suggestions from the Indian, Japan, Korea, Nepal and Dashchoiling, Mongolia National Centers. The Executive Council in its meeting, discussed and considered these comments and suggestions received from various National Centers. a presentation on which was made by the ABCP HQ Senior Manager Mr. Ch. Burenbayar.

During the discussion of the draft of the ABCP Charter, Executive Council members (from Bangladesh, Vietnam, Nepal, Sri Lanka) took up the matter

Continued on page 9

ABCP Executive Council



Members of the Bangladesh ABCP National Center (photo top) and heads of delegations from the Russian (Ivolginsky Datsan), Korea Tego Order and Sri Lanka Sumanatissa Chapter National Centers (photo below) Photos by Phuntsog Toldan





Members of the Sri Lanka National Center - Wipulasara Chapter, Vietnam National Centers - Vietnam Buddhist University and Vietnam Buddhist Research Institution (photo top) and from the National Centers of Lao People's Democratic Republic, Japan and Indias (photo below)





Delegations from Vietnam National Center - Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute and the Central Tibetan Administration in Dharamsala, India (photo top) and from the Sri Lanka and the Mongolian National center - Dashichoilin Monastery (photo below)





Members of delegations from Bangladesh National Center and the Kingdom of Cambodia. Photos of the ABCP Executive Council meeting by Phuntsog Toldan

related to membership fee size, the new article in the draft Charter on ABCP and Partnership, as well as the nomination of ABCP President by the three regions of ABCP on a rotational basis. The Executive Council members noted the importance of membership fees, but some EC members (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka) referring to the 14th Executive Council Meeting held on 7-8 October 2023 in Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam said that the membership fee should be scaled and not fixed, as not all National Centers are in a financial position to pay the fee of 1,000 USD a year. No final decision was taken on the matter and it was left open for discussion in the next Executive Council meeting after the Revised and Edited version of the ABCP Charter is adopted. The Executive Council members supported the idea of promoting partnership with individuals, institutions and NGOs which had similar or identical goals and objectives as ABCP for developing partnership and collaboration in the interests of mutual benefit. The Executive Council members (Sri Lanka - Sumanatissa Chapter) noted that the founders of ABCP 54 years ago had made it a point that Mongolia should remain the President of ABCP given that it is headquartered in

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia since its establishment and that the National Centers would like to continue with this decision and tradition, while the three regions of ABCP could become the Vice Presidents on a rotational basis. This suggestion was supported by all the Executive Council members.

All the members supported the draft of the revised and edited version of the charter. The ABCP HQ was asked to share with all the National Centers the final Revised and Edited Version of the ABCP Charter after its consideration and approval by the 12th General Assembly. The 15th Executive Council by a majority of votes, endorsed the draft Revised and Edited version of the Charter and decided to recommend the General Assembly for its consideration and approval.

3. The executive Council discussed the request from Bhutan for ABCP membership Bhutan is known for its ancient Buddhist Culture and for its standing as a Buddhist nation. The Executive Council unanimously approved the request from Bhutan and recommended to the General Assembly for its approval and acceptance of Bhutan as a member of ABCP.



The presidium of the ABCP EXecutive Council meeting. Photo: left to riight - Mr. Sonam Wangchuk Sakspo, ABCP Deputy Secretary General, Lama B. Munkhbaatar, assistant to ABCP President, Most Ven. Gabju D.emberel Chojjamts, President of ABCP, Most Ven. Da Lama Khunkhur Byambajav, Secretary General, ABCP and Mr. Chanrav Burenbayar, ABCP Senior Manager. Photo by Phuntsog Toldan

4. The Myanmar delegation, which had come for the 12th General Assembly of ABCP, had also expressed their willingness and desire to join ABCP. However, a formal request from Myanmar is still awaited and it was decided the request will be considered when received from Myanmar.

5. The Executive Council Meeting decided to set up an Editorial Committee of the General Assembly to draft the final documents of the General Assembly. The Editorial committee included representatives from the National Centers of India, Russia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

6. Mr. Sonam Wangchuk, representing the In-

dian National Center, informed that Ven. Jangchub Choeden, who was holding the position of the Vice President of ABCP, had expressed his desire to resign from this position in view of his election as the Secretary General of the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC). Considering the resignation request of Ven. Jangchub Choeden, Mr. Sonam Wangchuk proposed that Ven. Konchok Wangdu from India may be accepted as the Vice President of ABCP for the remainder of the tenure of Geshe Jangchub Choeden. Members of the Executive Council approved the request.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks. ■

NOTE: A meeting was held between the Executive Council of ABCP and Dharma Alliance, a tax-exempt, non-profit organization based in Geneva, Switzerland. It was held on Thursday, 18 January 2024 in New Delhi during which the sides discussed the draft Framework of Cooperation Agreement between ABCP and Dharma Alliance. Dr. Prashant Sharma, President of Dharma Alliance made a presentation detailing the objectives and mission on Dharma Alliance. The Executive Council members of ABCP decided to sign the Framework of Cooperation Agreement between ABCP and Dharma Alliance. For more on the partnership between ABCP and Dharma Alliance go to page 62 of this magazine.





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



सत्यमेव जयते

प्रधान मंत्री
Prime Minister

MESSAGE

Namo Buddhaya! My best wishes and heartfelt greetings to the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP). It is a great honour to welcome you all to New Delhi, especially since an Assembly of ABCP is happening here after five decades. As the world is going through a historic and significant phase, the importance of this gathering becomes even more profound.

The motto of the 12th General Assembly, 'ABCP - Buddhist Voice of the Global South', is laudable. While it reflects the shared history and heritage of many countries of Asia, it also takes current realities and a shared future into account. As a nation that has always been guided by the principles of Bhagwan Buddha and as a strong votary of the interests of the Global South, the motto of this gathering resonates with India.

India is the land of Bhagwan Buddha. As I have said earlier, we are proud to belong to a nation that has given the world 'Buddha' and not 'Yuddha' (war).

Whether it is the development of the Buddhist circuit, boosting connectivity for international travellers to access sites of Buddhist heritage, efforts such as the India International Centre for Buddhist Culture, or the popularisation of Bhagwan Buddha's message, India is committed to ensuring that the younger generations across the world learn more about Bhagwan Buddha and get inspired by His ideals.

The challenges faced by the world are shared challenges - be it climate change, conflict, terrorism or poverty. These are problems that know no boundaries. Such problems can only be solved by a common, collaborative and collective approach. The principles of Bhagwan Buddha not only help bring us together on a common platform but also contain the solutions to many of these challenges that we face.

In this context, platforms such as the ABCP are important in shaping a common future.

The diverse activities of the ABCP are a testament to the proactive engagement of its members. It is heartening to witness your commitment to promoting mutual understanding and cooperation between nations and societies.

The ABCP's proactive collaboration with international bodies reflects its inclusive and forward-looking approach to addressing the challenges faced by the world.

I hope that with the spirit of 'भवतु सच्च मंगलम्' (May all be well), this assembly emerges as a source of enlightenment, inspiration, courage, and strength for the whole world.

(Narendra Modi)

New Delhi
पौष 26, शक संवत् 1945
16th January 2024



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



PRESIDENT
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
BANGABHABAN, DHAKA

03 Magh 1430
17 January 2024

Message

I welcome the initiative of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) to organize its 12th 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.

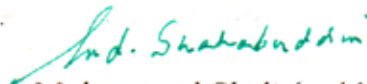
ABCP as a prestigious international organization is working for durable peace and improving the quality of life of the people. ABCP Promotes the dissemination and realization of Lord Buddha's teaching on the lofty ideals of peace, equality and human dignity. It is admirable that ABCP is also working 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 12th General Assembly of ABCP.

Joi Bangla.

Khoda Hafez, May Bangladesh Live Forever.


Mohammed 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 'Nirbana' spiritual perfection of mind and body. Gautam Buddha was born as a human being, lived as a man, achieved 'Nirbana' 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 glories 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



МОНГОЛ УЛСЫН
ИХ ХУРАЛ



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Мэндчилгээ

Даян дэлхийн энх амгалан, эв нэгдэл, шударга ёс, хүн төрөлхтний үнэт зүйлсийг бэхжүүлэх, байгаль дэлхийгээ хайрлан хамгаалахын төлөөх нэгдмэл зорилго бүхий олон улсын Бурханы шашинтнуудын сайн дураараа эвлэлдэн нэгдэж 1969 онд Улаанбаатар хотноо байгуулсан Азийн Буддистуудын энх тайвны бага хурлын 12 дугаар Ерөнхий чуулган Бүгд Найрамдах Энэтхэг Улсын нийслэл Шинэ Дели хотноо 2024 оны 1 дүгээр сарын 17-18-ны өдрүүдэд болж байгаад баяртай байна.

Монголчууд тэртээ 13 дугаар зуунаас хүний итгэл үнэмшлийг хүндэтгэн олон шашин эв найртайгаар зэрэгцэн орших нөхцөлийг бүрдүүлж байсан бахархам түүх, баялаг уламжлалтай билээ. Өнөө цагт ч Монгол Улс оюун санааны эрх чөлөөг эрхэмлэн дээдэлдэг үнэт зүйл, найрсаг соёл, уламжлалаа үргэлжлүүлэн дэлгэрүүлж энхийг эрхэмлэсэн, нээлттэй, бие даасан, олон тулгуурт гадаад бодлого явуулж байна. Монгол Улс Үндсэн хууль болон бусад хууль тогтоомж, Монгол Улсын нэгдэн орсон олон улсын гэрээ, конвенцоор хүлээсэн үүрэг, хариуцлага, НҮБ-ын Хүний эрхийн түгээмэл тунхаглалыг баримтлан хүний эрх, эрх чөлөө, шашин шүтэх, эс шүтэх эрхийг тууштай сахин хамгаалж, олон шашны урсгал, үзэл санаа, ялгаатай байдлыг хүндэтгэх замаар даян дэлхийн амар амгалан, эх дэлхийн төлөөх нийтийн хүчин чармайлтад бодитой хувь нэмрээ оруулж байгааг онцлон тэмдэглэхийг хүсэж байна.

Бурханы шашны байгууллага болох Улаанбаатарт төвтэй Азийн Буддистуудын энх тайвны бага хурал нь Монгол Улсын гадаад бодлогод зохих хувь нэмэр оруулж байгааг тэмдэглэхэд таатай байна.

Олон улсын хурцадмал байдал дэлхийн олон улс орны ард түмэн, түүний дотор Монголын ард түмний сэтгэлийг ихэд түгшээж байгаа энэ үед Азийн Буддистуудын энх тайвны бага хурлын 12 дугаар Ерөнхий чуулган "АБЭТБХ нь Дэлхийн өмнөдийн Буддист дуу хоолой" гэсэн уриан дор болж байгаа нь цаг үеэ олсон алхам гэж үзэж байна. Энэ зорилтын хүрээнд Азийн Буддистуудын байгууллага дэлхий дахинд энх амгалан тогтоох, Бурхан багшийн энэрэнгүй, нигүүлсэх үзлийг түгээн дэлгэрүүлэх үйлсийн төлөө шинэ зорилт дэвшүүлж идэвх чармайлттай ажиллана гэж итгэж байна.

2024000006

Энэрэнгүй, нигүүлсэнгүй сэтгэлтэй баймааж улс түмнүүд харилцан ойлголцож, тэр хэмжээгээр нэг нэгнийхээ язгуур эрх ашиг, улс орнуудын халдашгүй бие даасан байдлыг хүндэтгэж чадна. Ингэснээр Бурхан багшийн номлосноор хамаг зүйлийн зургаан амьтан эв түнжинтэй, амар амгалан амьдарна.

Энэхүү эрхэм зорилгод хүрэхийн төлөө Азийн Буддистуудын энх тайвны бага хурал улам олон буянтай үйл бүтээхийг өрөөхийн хамт танай энх тайванч Буддистуудын хөдөлгөөний 12 дугаар Ерөнхий чуулганд амжилт хүсэе.

МОНГОЛ УЛСЫН ИХ ХУРЛЫН ДАРГА



ГОМБОЖАВЫН ЗАНДАНШАТАР

English translation of the message of greetings

12 January 2024

MESSAGE OF GREETINGS - SPEAKER OF THE STATE GREAT KHURAL OF MONGOLIA

I am pleased to learn that the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace, a voluntary movement of international Buddhists united by a common goal of fostering world peace, unity, justice, strengthening human values, and safeguarding the natural world, will convene in New Delhi, the capital of the Republic of India, on 17-18 January, 2024.

The Mongols have a proud history and a rich tradition, dating as far back as the 13th century, of creating the preconditions for a peaceful coexistence of different religions, thus respecting the faith and convictions of a person. Even today, Mongolia is conducting a peace-loving, open, independent and multi-polar foreign policy by continuing and promoting the values, friendly culture and traditions that uphold spiritual freedom. Mongolia, upholding the Constitution and other laws and legislation, the commitments undertaken under international treaties and conventions acceded to by the country, and guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, unwaveringly safeguards human rights and freedom, the right to belief and non-belief, and I would like to emphasize that by way of respecting different streams, ideologies and differences of many religions, Mongolia is making a tangible contribution to global tranquility and the universal efforts for the good of the Mother Earth.

It is a pleasure to note that the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, a Buddhist organization, which has its headquarters in Ulaanbaatar, is making relevant contribution to the foreign policy of Mongolia.

Today, when international tension is causing grave concern of the peoples of world countries, including that of the Mongolian people, it is very timely that the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace is being held under the motto "ABCP - Buddhist voice of the Global South." I am confident that this organization of Asian Buddhists, guided by this objective, will work diligently by setting forth new goals and tasks towards establishing peace and tranquility throughout the world, and spreading Lord Buddha's teachings on compassion and kindness.

Through compassion and kindness can nations foster mutual understanding, and respect each other's fundamental interests and the inviolability of the independence of countries. Then only can all the sentient beings, as taught by Lord Buddha, live in harmony and peace.

In pursuit of this noble mission, I wish that the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace will accomplish greater noble deeds and taking this opportunity, I would like to wish success to the 12th General Assembly of the peace movement of the Buddhists. ■



ශ්‍රී ලංකා ජනාධිපති
இலங்கை சனாதிபதி
President of Sri Lanka

MESSAGE

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

09th January 2024

ශ්‍රී ලංකා ප්‍රජාතාන්ත්‍රික සමාජවාදී ජනරජය
இலங்கைச் சனநாயக சோசலிசக் குடியரசு
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

편백운 전 태고종 총무원장 축사

인도 뉴델리에서 개최되는 아시아불교평화회의 제12차 총회가 성공적으로 결실 있는 대회가 되기를 진심으로 축하드립니다. 이 대회를 유치하여 물심양면의 지원을 아끼지 않는 인도본부에 감사의 뜻을 전합니다.

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제가 아는 한 아시아불교평화회의는 이제 아시아 뿐 만 아니라 전 세계를 망라한 불교지도자들이 참석하여 세계평화와 인류의 정신문명향상을 위하여 사회와 대중에게 지혜와 비전을 제시하는 세계불교 기구가 되었다고 생각합니다.

여러 가지 상황변화로 인하여 세계불교는 많은 도전을 받고 있습니다. 불교신자 수가 감소하고 출가하여 수행하고자 하는 젊은이들이 불교라는 종교를 기피하는 현상까지 일어나고 있는 것이 작금의 추세입니다.

이번 제12차 총회에서는 논의할 여러 가지 주제가 있겠지만, 이런 부분에 대안이 될 수 있는 세계불교지도자들의 고견이 피력되었으면 합니다.

아무쪼록 제12차 아시아불교평화회의 총회가 원만히 개최되고 결실 있는 대회가 되기를 희망합니다.

불기 2568(2024)년 1월 17일

한국불교 태고종 제26대 총무원장 편 백 운



Congratulatory Remarks

I sincerely congratulate you on making the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace held in New Delhi, India, a successful and fruitful event. We would like to express our gratitude to the Indian headquarters for hosting this General assembly and providing both material and spiritual support.

Fortunately I attended the 11th General Assembly held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in 2019 as the then President of the Taego Order and received a warm welcome. I regret that due to various circumstances, I will not be able to attend the 12th General Assembly held in India. I promise to attend the next 13th General Assembly as much as possible.

As far as I know, the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace has now become a world Buddhist organization attended by Buddhist leaders not only from Asia but also from all over the world, presenting wisdom and vision to society and the public for world peace and the improvement of human spiritual civilization.

World Buddhism is facing many challenges due to various changing circumstances. The current trend is that the number of Buddhists is decreasing and young people who want to become monks and practice asceticism are avoiding the religion called Buddhism.

There will be many topics to discuss at this 12th General Assembly, but I hope that the opinions of world Buddhist leaders who can provide alternatives in these areas will be expressed.

I hope that the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhist Conference for peace will be held successfully and be a fruitful event.

January 17, 2568 (2024)

Pyeon Baek-un,
the 26th President of the Taego Order of Korean Buddhism





**NATIONAL VIETNAM BUDDHIST SANGHA
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Ho Chi Minh City, Jan 15, 2024

His Eminence Gabji Choijamts Demberel,
President of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FOR THE 12TH ABCP GENERAL ASSEMBLY

On behalf of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, I extend my warmest congratulations to all participants of this significant event, to be held at the Asoka Hotel in Delhi on 17th and 18th January 2024. This gathering marks a momentous milestone in the journey towards peace and harmony.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deep appreciation for the commendable contributions made by ABCP since its establishment in 1970 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Throughout the years, this esteemed organization has been at the forefront of the world peace movement, tirelessly working toward conflict resolution and fostering understanding among nations and cultures. Your unwavering dedication and tireless efforts have not gone unnoticed, and the world is indebted to you for your valuable contributions.

The Buddhist message of wisdom, compassion, loving-kindness, and world peace remains as relevant today as it was centuries ago. As we witness ongoing conflicts in various parts of the world, such as Europe, the Middle East, and Yemen, we must draw upon the teachings of Buddhism to guide us toward a more peaceful and harmonious existence. The principles of non-violence, empathy, and understanding that Buddhism espouses are essential in addressing the root causes of conflicts and promoting lasting peace.

In this era of unprecedented global challenges, unity, and collective wisdom are more important than ever. The Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace provides a platform for individuals and organizations to come together, exchange ideas, and develop action plans aimed at fostering peace and harmony. Your united efforts and shared wisdom will undoubtedly pave the way for a brighter future, where conflicts are resolved through dialogue and compassion.

As we embark on this esteemed gathering, I urge all participants to engage in fruitful discussions, share experiences, and explore innovative solutions to the challenges we face. Let us embrace the power of collaboration and forge strong partnerships that transcend borders and ideologies. Together, we can create a world where peace and understanding prevail.

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Sonam Wangchuk Shakspo, Deputy Secretary General ABCP, the organizers, volunteers, and all those involved in making this event possible. Your dedication and hard work are instrumental in ensuring the success of this assembly.

May this 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace be a resounding success, and may it catalyze positive change in our world. May the noble teachings of Buddhism continue to guide us on the path towards a more peaceful and harmonious existence.

Yours sincerely,



His Eminence Thich Thien Nonh
Deputy Sangharaja - President
of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha



The 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace - ABCP



The 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace - ABCP, which was held in New Delhi, the capital of the Republic of India on 17-18 January 2025, was graced by the Hon'ble Shri Jagdeep Dankhar, Vice President of the Republic of India and Hon'ble Shri Kiren Rijiju, Cabinet Minister of Earth Sciences and Food Processing Industries in the Government of India, Special guests of the ABCP GA. Seated right to the Hon'ble Vice President of India are the Most Ven. Gabju D. Chojamts, President of ABCP and Most Ven. Da Lama Kh. Byambajav, Secretary General of ABCP. The General Assembly was attended by all the ABCP National Centers from Bangladesh (Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha and Bangladesh ABCP National Center), Cambodia, Department of Religion and Culture, Central Tibetan Administration, India, Japan, Republic of Korea (Taego Order), Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia (2 National Centers at Gandan Tegchenling and Sashichoiling monasteries), Nepal, Russia (IvolginskyDatsan and AginskyDatsan), Sri Lanka (Ven. Dr. Sumatissa and Ven. Dr. Wipulasara Chapters), Thailand, and Vietnam (Vietnam Buddhist University and Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute). Representatives of Myanmar and Burma also attended the General Assemblu for the first time. (Photo by Phuntsog Toldan)

"Together, as a family united by Buddha, we can illuminate the world with his message of peace"



The Hon'ble Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice President of India addressing the inaugural session of the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace.

Best wishes and greetings to the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP).

It is a great honour to welcome you all to New Delhi, especially since an Assembly of Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace is happening here after five decades. Welcome to Bharat home to 1/6 hu-

manity. The importance of this gathering assumes significance as the world is passing through a historic and transformational phase.

We gather at the 12th ABCP General Assembly under the timely theme: "ABC - The Buddhist Voice of Global South."

This coincides with India's growing leadership



Most Ven. Gabju Demberel Choijamts, President of ABCP and Most Ven. Da Lama Kh. Byambajav, Secretary General of ABCP (first on left) and Shri Kiren Rijiju (second on right in photo) welcoming the Hon'ble Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice President of the Republic of India, who was the Chief Guest of the 12th ABCP GA. Photo below shows the chief guesets and also Dr. Khy Sovanratana, Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Kingdom of Cambodia, and President of ABCP Cambodia National Center (at the extreme right in the photo below)



Inauguration - Vice President of India



The Hon'ble Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice President of India with Shri Kiren Rijju, Hon'ble Minister of Earth Sciences of India, Most Ven. Pramaha Surasak Paccantaseno, Assistant Professor from the Office of Vice Rector for Foreign Affairs of the Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in Bangkok, Thailand and ABCP President Most Ven. Gabju D. Chojamts

role, amplifying the voices of the Global South. As evidenced by its G20 presidency and the "Voice of Global South Summit," India is committed to representing the concerns of nations with three-quarters of the world's population.

The tone for me was set when the momento was given to me and what was indicated there I read for the benefit of those who are here and those outside in the entire world, it carried a message which cannot be more impact full and contemporaneously relevant and a beacon for everyone. The messages I quote "May those who fight with arms in hands meet with flowers".

The motto is soothing as Bharat as a nation has been guided by the principles of Bhagwan Buddha. This event is significant as we are gathered in the capital of a country where Buddhism was born and spread to diverse corners of the world, including all the countries that are members of this prestigious international organization for the noble cause of peace.

India is the land of Bhagwan Buddha. As appropriately reflected by Prime Minister Modi "we are proud to belong to a nation that has given the world 'Buddha' and not 'Yuddha' (war)."

India is committed to ensuring that the younger

generations across the world learn more about Bhagwan Buddha and get inspired by His ideals.

India is proactive, be it the development of the Buddhist circuit, boosting connectivity for international travellers to access sites of Buddhist heritage, or the efforts such as the India International Centre for Buddhist Culture, or the popularisation of Bhagwan Buddha's message.

World today faces challenges that are universal and call for concerted efforts be it the climate change, conflict, terrorism or poverty.

These challenges to humanity are existential and can be addressed by common resolve and collaborative and collective approach. The principles of Bhagwan Buddha are no less than a beacon of hope and light to catalyse convergence of all stakeholders on a common platform.

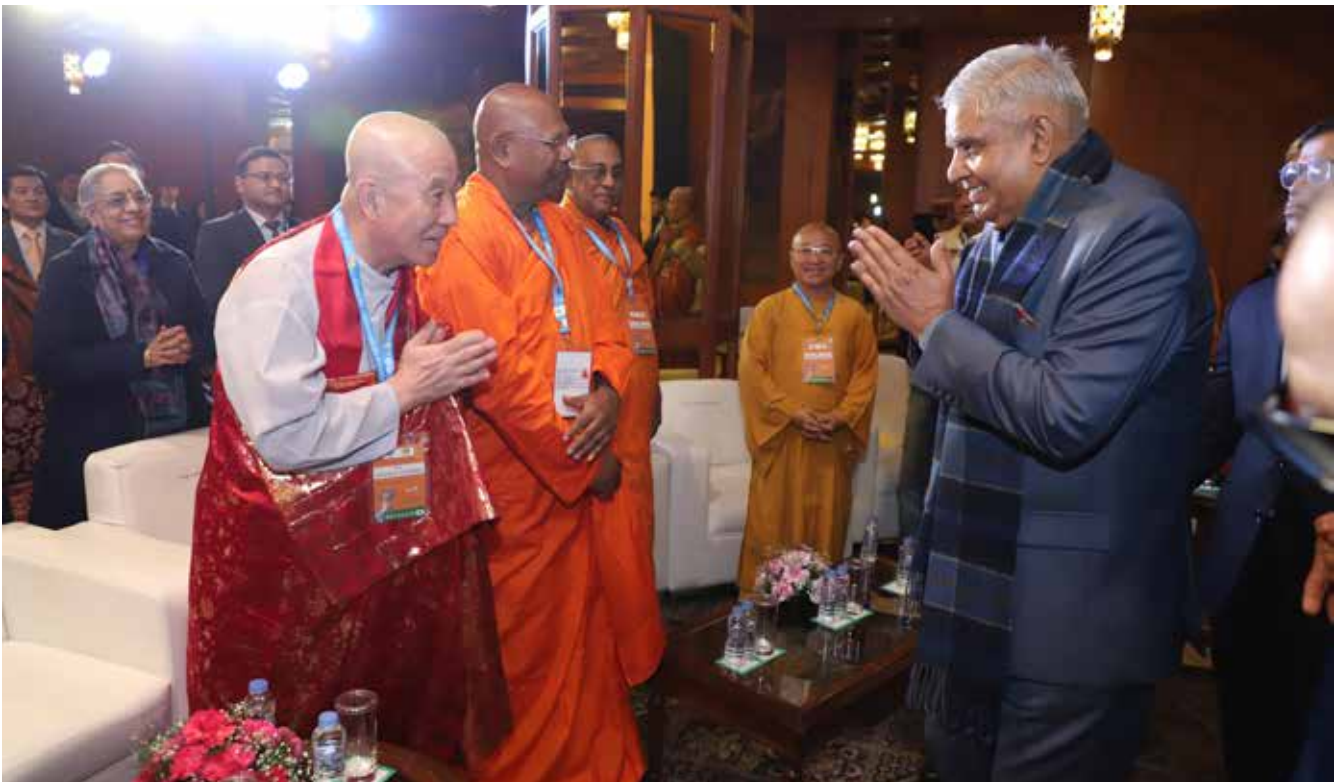
Platforms such as the ABCP are important in shaping a common future and directing a positive discourse

The diverse activities of the ABCP are a testament of the proactive engagement of its members.

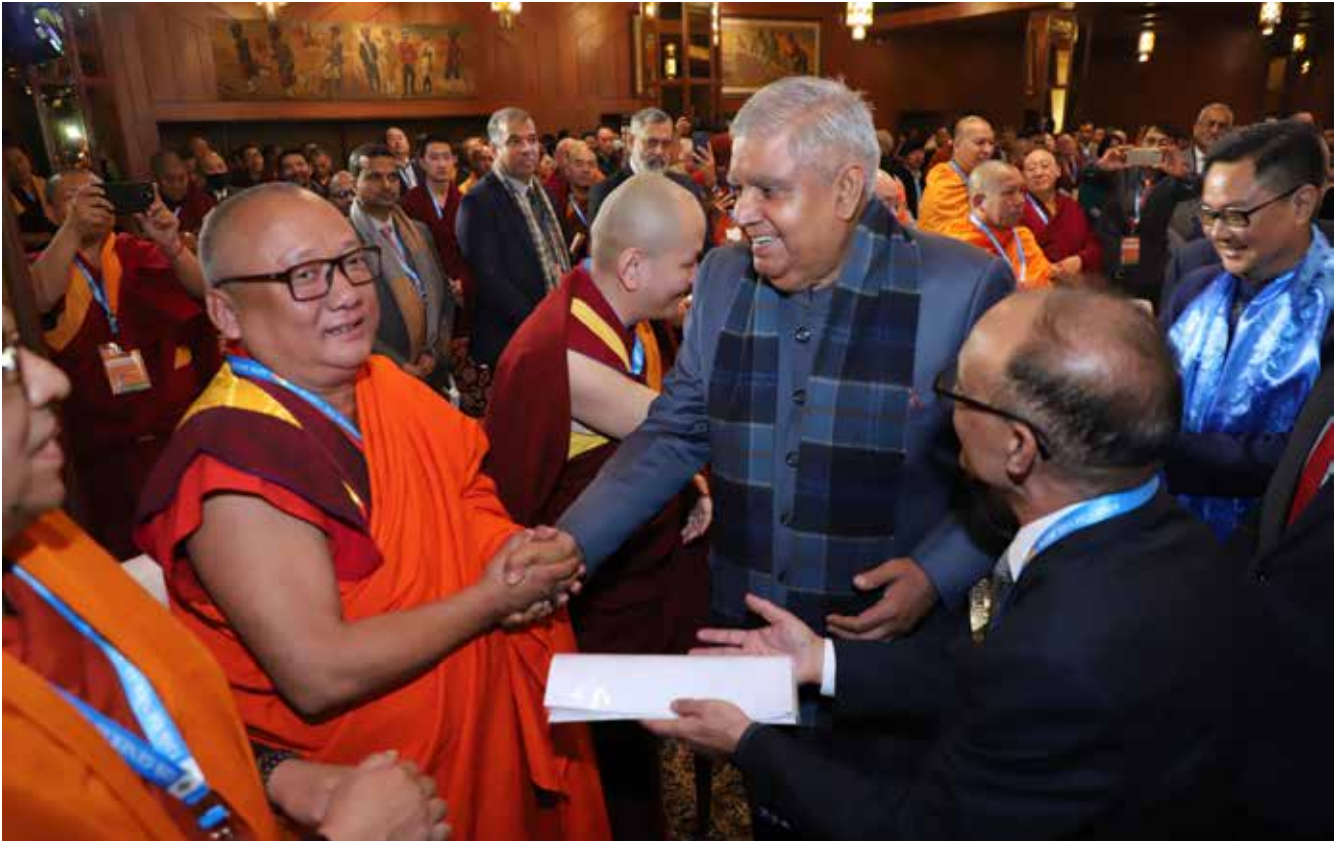
Continued on page 28



The Hon'ble Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice President of India with Shri Kiren Rijiju, Hon'ble Minister of Earth Sciences of India, Most Ven. Gabju D. Choijamts, ABCP President and Dr. Khy Sovanratana, Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Kingdom of Cambodia, and President of ABCP Cambodia National Centre on the dias of the 12th General Assembly of ABCP (photo top) and greetings heads of delegations from the Korea, Sri Lanka and Vietnam National Centers (photo below)



Inauguration - Vice President of India



The Hon'ble Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice President of India meeting with Ven. Ugen Namgyel, Khenpo, Central Monastic Body of Bhutan, a Buddhist Asian country, which joined ABCP as a new member at the 12th General Assembly

It is heartening to witness your commitment to promoting mutual understanding and cooperation between nations and societies. The ABCP's proactive collaboration with international bodies reflects its inclusive and forward-looking approach of addressing the challenges faced by the world.

Buddha's timeless wisdom, woven into the fabric of our world, offers a powerful path to peace. His Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path guide us towards inner peace, compassion, and non-violence – a transformative roadmap for individuals and nations facing today's conflicts.

In a world yearning for harmony, Buddha's light shines brightest. Let us embrace his teachings and build a future where peace prevails. Beyond mere coexistence, Buddha's teachings weave a tapestry of understanding, em-

pathy, and shared well-being. In a world rife with division, his wisdom shines brighter than ever. Let us follow the light of tolerance, justice, and a shared commitment to peace, paving the way for a future where all flourish and Virtuosity blossoms, sublimity shines.

Our shared heritage, woven with faith, culture, and love, forms an unbreakable thread. Together, as a family united by Buddha, we can illuminate the world with his message of peace. Violence has never generated humanity and peace has never laid to divisions.

Across the continent, Buddhist stupas stand as silent testaments to Buddha's enduring wisdom. Whispers of chants and vibrant festivals echo his teachings, reminding us of India's role as his birthplace and a beacon of non-violence, peace, and compassion for millennia.

This ethos, reflected in our Constitution and national emblem, compels us to share his message with the world, just as India has always shared its knowledge and wisdom. The Indian Constitution's artwork reflects 5,000 years of history, particularly in Part V, where Lord Buddha graces the section on Union governance.

This placement symbolizes the ideals of enlightenment - a parliamentary system, independent judiciary, and balance of power - guiding the nation's highest institutions.

Buddha's teachings inspire India's service-driven governance, prioritizing citizen welfare and inclusivity, from farmers and the vulnerable to the *देवियांगजन*. This commitment extends to environmental sustainability, where the interconnectedness of all life



The Hon'ble Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice President of India greeting the delegates and participants of the 12th General Assembly of ABCP (Photos top to bottom in this page)



Inauguration - Vice President of India



The Hon'ble Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice President of India greeting the participants in the 12th General Assembly

guides India's advocacy for a greener future.

Initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance, launched by India, and Mission LiFE, reflect our commitment to harnessing sustainable and clean energy for the well-being of our planet.

Gautama Buddha's message of peace, harmony, and coexistence stands stark against forces of hate and terror that threaten our world. But hope lives in those who believe in humanity. Let us converge, guided by Buddha's wisdom, not just as a relic of the past, but as a compass for the future.

In an age of ethical uncertainty, his teachings offer a path of sustainability: simplicity, moderation, and reverence for all life. By embracing this interconnectedness, we can build a harmonious future with our planet.

On the occasion of this 12th General Assembly, let us ignite the embers of Buddha's wisdom. For within its light, we discover not only personal peace, but the power to forge a world united in harmony.

Our Prime Minister, Modi ji, rightly called Buddhism the "biggest strength of earth." Let this truth be our banner, as we, the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace, march ever forward in its spirit.

Remember, Buddha's teachings are not relics of the past, but a compass for our future. As technology races ahead, his Middle Path – a tapestry of friendship, moderation, and reverence for all life – offers a sustainable path for us and our planet. His thought process principles and essence all model dated when the world is faced with disruptive technologies.

Therefore, let us not merely gather here, but proactively champion the Buddha's message. Let our deliberations birth a vigorous program of action, echoing his call to befriend one another and work for the betterment of all humanity.

May this Assembly become a beacon, illuminating a path where borders fade and shared understanding reigns. May the light of Buddha guide us, transforming not just ourselves, but the very fabric of our world.

Together, let us build a future where peace is not a dream, but a shared endeavor. For in the spirit of Buddha, we know: there is no other way.

As Lord Buddha taught us, 'भवतु सब्ब मंगलम': which means blessings, compassion and welfare of all.

Thank you. ■

ABCP is a time-tested organization



Shri Kiren Rijiju, Hon'ble Minister of Earth Sciences addressing the inaugural session of the 12th General Asseble of ABCP

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

Namo Buddhāya!

1. Shri Jagdeep Dhankar, Hon'ble Vice President of India
2. Dr. (Smt.) Sudesh Dhankar, Hon'ble first lady of India
3. Most Venerable Chojamts Demberel, President, ABCP
4. Dr. Khy Sovanratana, Secretary of State Royal Government of Cambodia
5. 6. Lama Lobzang, Executive President of IBC
7. Rev. Ashin Nyanissara, Myanmar
8. Ven. Dalama Khunkhur Byambajav, Secretary General of ABCP
9. Ven. Kundeling Rinpoche, Ambassadors,

members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Delegates from 15 Asian countries.

Most Venerable Members of the Mahā Sangha present here in this Dharma gathering; Members of the diplomatic community;

Dignitaries from different countries, Erudite Buddhist Scholars, Dharma practitioners, Media-persons;

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Greetings and Namāmi

At this moment I feel honored and joyful to be present here at this sacred occasion of the 12th General Assembly of Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace. I am thankful to the Organizers and congratulate all the Members of the ABCP, who have assembled here from various countries to participate in this General Conference. I feel assured that such



Shri Kiren Rijiju, Hon'ble Minister of Earth Sciences of India with Most Ven. Gabju D. Choijamts, former Khambo Lama of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists at the Ulaanbaatar airport soon after the Holy Relics of Buddha were brought to Mongolia in 2023



Shri Kiren Rijiju with Most Ven. Gabju D. Choijamts, former Khambo Lama of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery and other lamas at the Ulaanbaatar airport with the Holy Relics of Buddha

a rare and unique Dharma gathering involving Sangha leaders, eminent Buddhist scholars and Dharma practitioners from all over the world would be able to contribute meaningfully towards spreading the Universal message of Lord Buddha very much needed in the chaotic modern world. The overwhelming response to this event from Sangha and Buddhist leaders from across the world indicates the enthusiasm and keenness that persists globally towards seeking

Universal wellbeing, Peace and Compassion through the teachings of the Buddha.

I have been associated with this organization from the past and was always keen to see the ABCP grow in strength and stride over the years. However, due to numerous factors the organization, while remaining active in its functional format, has been consistently striving to attain the global stature as deserving of its capabilities and potential. Dur-

ing a meeting I held with representatives of the ABCP at my residence recently, I realized that there was a renewed vigor with which the office bearers wanted the organization to play a lead role in achieving its aims and objectives. I understand that a lot of ground work has been done towards this end and a serious reorganization has been perceived for the organization. I extend all my support to the members and the leadership of the ABCP and am always available for any advice or guidance.

When we speak of Buddhism and Asia, we are talking of a large span of area and population which is multi-cultural, multi ethnic, encompassing the collective and diverse customs and traditions of art, architecture, music, literature, lifestyle, philosophy, food, politics and religion that have been practiced and maintained by the numerous ethnic groups of the continent since pre-history. Buddhism has undoubtedly been a critical factor in binding several of the nations in Asia together and also with India. It has given us all a way of life which has its rich values. In a way, Buddhism has been a strong, trusted and reliable philosophy or way of life or religion – whatever we may call it, to bring about a high degree of belief in non-violence and peace and a life practiced based on wisdom and compassion.

The message of world peace that it conveys is seen as the basic strand of human civilization; even prosperity and peace are inter-dependent. Although human civilization is still coloured with war and violence, but peace has subsequently been restored with the realisation that without peace human civilisation will be extinct. The Buddhist philosophy urges for mutual trust,



The Hon'ble Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Vice President of India and Shri Kiren Rijiju, Hon'ble Minister of Earth Sciences at the inaugural session of the 12th General Assemble of ABCP

cooperation, self-sacrifices and inner satisfactions which negate the possibilities of conflict and violence. Infact, it leads to the essence of peace which is vital component of our modern society and civilization.

In this context, Buddhist teaching of evolving practice of peace and non-violence from inner sense which ultimately leads to harmony between different socio-cultural groups, religious beliefs and nation-states has always been a promising philosophy. In my opinion, Buddhism is the strength of Asia and will always remain a strong foundation for a stable, confident and dynamic Asia. Whether it is politics or economy or defence relations or the booming technological strength which form the basis of a country's existential matrix, with the underlying

belief in Buddhism a nation can overcome any challenges that it faces.

Having said this, I must emphasise that the ABCP is a time tested organization created as early as in 1970 and has seen the world change through wars and conflicts, poverty and social degradation, terrorism and insurgencies, political and economic changes of different nature – some good and some bad. At the same time the ABCP has also seen the growth of Asia, which is the largest and most populous of the continents, as Asia became richer faster than any other region of the world. Of course not to mention the turnaround brought about by the technological and scientific advancement that Asia has seen.

This deep rooted experience

and durable existence of the organization undoubtedly gives it the strength and confidence to not only strive for universal peace, harmony and cooperation among nations but also to further their economic and social advancement and promoting respect for justice and human dignity. We need to remember that the Buddhist culture, tradition and heritage binds us all together and acts as the umbilical chord. Therefore, we need to ensure that this chord is made further strong, robust and firm under any circumstances.

I wish the ABCP every success and am confident that the 12th General assembly will come out with some positive and strong messaging - not only for the ABCP per se, but also for the overall interest of Buddhism across the globe. ■

Honouring peace champions of Asian Buddhists



Recipients of the "Medal of Honour" of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace. Left to right: The late Lama Lobzang (India), Gabju D. Chojamts, Shri Kiren Rijiju and the Hon'ble Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar

From the Charter of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace (Article 18)

18.1. The highest award of ABCP is the "Medal of Honour." The "Medal of Honour" shall be awarded to an individual who has played a distinctive role in fortifying global peace, fostering interfaith harmony, enlightening communities, championing human rights and freedom, and disseminating the teachings of Lord Buddha Shakyamuni.

18.2. The "Medal of Honour" of ABCP shall be granted to individuals who have made substantial contribution to implementing the goals and objectives of ABCP.



Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India (photo top) and the Late Lama Lobzang (photo below) receiving the "Medal of Honour" of ABCP from ABCP's President, Most Ven. Gabju D. Choijamts

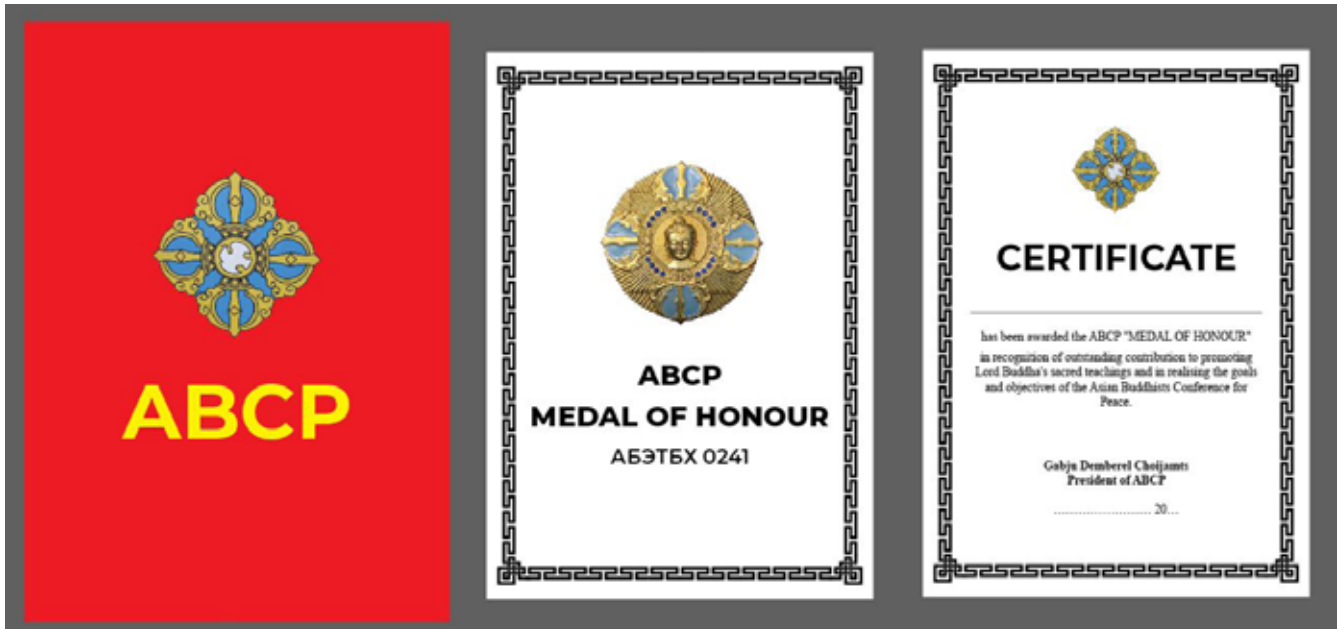


NOTE: It is with sadness that Most Ven. Lama Lobzang, recipient of the ABCP *Medal of Honour* passed away on 15 March 2024. At the time of printing of this issue of the magazine, ABCP President had expressed his deep condolences at the passing away of a peace stalwart and a propagator, promoter and protector of Buddha's teachings.

ABCP Medal of Honour



The "Medal of Honour" of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace and the accompanying certificate (below - sample copy)



Prominent peace champions and promoters of Buddha's teachings were honoured with the *Medal of Honour* of the Asian Buddhists Conference for peace.

The two recipients of the ABCP *Medal of Honour* were Hon'ble Minister of Earth Sciences of India Mr. Kiren Rijiju and the late Most. Ven Lama Lobzang. Earlier recipients of the med-

al have been His Holiness The Dalai Lama, the late Most Venerable Khushok Bakula Rimpoce, one of the founders of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, among others. ■

Challenges numerous but ABCP must persist



ABCP President Most Ven. Gabju Demberel Choijamts delivering his key note speech at the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace

Members of the ABCP, National Center's Head Monks,

Shangas, Dharma friends, and distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I extend a warm welcome to all the representatives of the National Center of the ABCP member countries and our guests who have joined us in New Delhi, the vibrant capital of the Republic of India—a land that holds the cradle of Buddhism and stands as a representative of the "South of the World" with its

rich ancient culture. Heartfelt thanks go to each one of you for accepting our invitation to participate in the 12th General Assembly of the ABCP. On behalf of myself and the ABCP, I express deep gratitude.

Special appreciation is directed to the Buddhist representatives from Bhutan and Myanmar, which have expressed their interest in joining ABCP as its new members. Additionally, we extend our gratitude to the representative of Thailand's Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, an honored member since the organization's inception, who have come for the 12th General Assembly of ABCP.

challenges & future perspectives

This gathering marks an auspicious occasion for ambassadors and advocates of world peace and security to come together, unify their ideals, amplify their voices for the betterment of humanity, articulate their manifestos, and foster meaningful connections. May peace accompany you throughout this day.

Over 2,500 years ago, the compassionate leader and teacher, Buddha Shakyamuni, was born on this very continent, imparting teachings that guide humanity towards eternal peace and liberation from suffering. His wisdom resonated across the Asian continent, evolving into a global religion that unified millions.

In reflecting on history, the disciples who remained steadfast to the teachings of Lord Buddha gathered to offer prayers for global peace and the well-being of all sentient beings. They dedicated themselves to their respective tasks, reflecting on the historical context that led to the inception of this peace movement 54 years ago, in the 1960s, when the nations of Southeast Asia were ensnared in the grip of a relentless war. During this tumultuous period, countless lives were tragically lost, leaving behind a trail of orphans and a landscape scarred by the destruction of historical and cultural treasures, as well as the desecration of religious sanctuaries.

In this intricate scenario, serving as representatives for the Centre of Mongolian Buddhists - Abbot of Gandantegchenling Monastery, Nomch Mergen, Gabju Gombojav; the Venerable Gunaratana Thero, acting on behalf of the "Mahabodhi" Society of India and representing the Venerable Kushok Bakula Rinpoche; Vice-President of the World Buddhist Federation, Professor S. Dylykov, representing the Abbot of Buriat, Jambaldorj Gomboev of the Soviet Union; President of the Sri Lanka Buddhist Congress in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), Venerable Sumanatissa Thero; and President of the Young Buddhist Council of Nepal, Venerable Amritanand Thero, the initiating group convened for the first time in Ulaanbaatar on 5 December 1969 to foster peace in Asia.

During that gathering, a declaration was issued, affirming the convening of an assembly of Asian Buddhists in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia. Consequently, this assembly transpired in Ulaanbaatar on 11-13 June 1970, marking the genesis of an international voluntary coalition of Buddhists united by a shared mission to fortify global peace, unity, justice, human values, and the cherishing and safeguarding of the natural world. This collective effort gave rise to the Asian Buddhists Committee for Promoting Peace, a non-governmental organization.

This marks the inception of a voluntary movement of international Buddhists who have embraced the invaluable teachings of peace, unity, and tolerance imparted by Lord Buddha as the foundational

tenets of their endeavours.

The inaugural meeting of the ABCP encapsulated its peaceful ideals and mission with the motto "May those who fight with arms in hands, meet with flowers."

The teachings of Lord Buddha consistently advocate for the avoidance of wars, conflicts, and crises.

Throughout our history, countless wars have erupted, causing the loss of countless innocent lives, disability, orphanhood, and affliction by hunger, poverty, and diseases. Furthermore, the progress of nations has been hindered for decades.

In the aftermath of war, cultural artifacts and intellectual heritage painstakingly crafted over centuries by societies and individuals are obliterated.

Throughout human history, aggressive acts such as establishing dominance, seizing territory, expanding possessions, looting wealth, imposing one's views, and imposing one's language and culture have inexorably led to war and conflict.

The preparation for war and the pursuit of armaments constitute a significant economic burden on normal human life, exacerbating mistrust, enmity, and suspicion between nations in the political arena, while instilling ideological distrust, fear, and pessimism about the future.

War and armed conflict have been enduring sources of danger, loss, and harm in human history, and these painful lessons must be perpetually etched in our collective memory.

The ABCP stands as a reputable international organization with a storied history and wealth of experience, consistently vocalizing its principles and contributing to the peace and security of the Asian continent for decades, recognizing that world peace is humanity's most cherished asset.

The organization has also garnered noteworthy achievements in fostering unity among Buddhists, nurturing friendships, fostering mutual respect, cultivating cultural relations, and promoting cooperation.

Let us, in the same breath, honour and remember the legacy of peace activists across generations, who have consistently led by example, laboured with unwavering dedication, and kindled hope for humanity in the pursuit of establishing, sustaining, and fortifying global peace.

As followers of Buddhism, the pursuit of peace is an intrinsic part of our ethos, affording us ample opportunities for the exchange of knowledge and experiences.

As adherents of a religious faith, our focus must increasingly centre on our unique responsibility in disseminating peace and compassion.

The tranquility of the world hinges on the peace of nations, and the peace of nations hinges on the in-



Most Ven. Da Lama Kh. Byambajav, Secretary General of ABCP addressing the 12th General Conferences of ABCP

ner serenity of their people.

A renowned spiritual leader once proclaimed, "He who contends with his anger and hatred, mastering their suppression, emerges as a true hero. However, those who extinguish lives cannot be deemed heroes. They are, in fact, slayers of the deceased."

Peace stands as one of humanity's paramount values, encompassing a profound significance. The yearning for peace is inherent in our desires, extending not only to ourselves but also to our families, societies, and the world at large. Global peace entails a state devoid of warfare and strife, while personal peace delves into inner serenity, the cornerstone for harmonious coexistence with oneself and others. Consequently, religious individuals bear the responsibility to ardently convey the virtues of peace, tranquility, and spiritual enlightenment to society.

Presently, adverse repercussions are observable in the collaborative efforts among nations, human behavior and psychology, and the potential for swift, drastic transformations within human society. The world grapples with myriad challenges and predicaments.

The ravages of the Covid-19 pandemic have

left an indelible mark on global trade, economies, and societies, exacerbating worldwide disparities. Geopolitical conflicts have surged in recent years, with military resolutions resurfacing as a political practice. Hotspots proliferate, and regions continue to contend with the scourge of extremism and terrorism.

Currently, a quarter of the global population resides in conflict-ridden nations. The refugee population burgeons annually, humanity edges closer to the precipice of nuclear conflict, and the ranks of those grappling with poverty and hunger swell.

The depreciation of moral and spiritual values has given rise to the veneration of material development and societal success, fostering a pervasive consumerist mindset toward people and nature.

While technological advancements present positive prospects, they concurrently pose a substantial risk to traditional values.

Addressing these critical issues requires a judicious and coherent approach.

I am convinced that tangible progress can be achieved through bolstering mutual understanding and cooperation. By consolidating the efforts of international and national community organizations,

challenges & future perspectives

as well as well-wishers, and fostering unity, dialogue, and comprehension, we can confront a plethora of challenges. Political, social, and economic crises, poverty, inequality, environmental catastrophes, discrimination, epidemics, extremism, and terrorism all demand our collective attention.

Establishing peace and harmony as unwavering principles of human existence necessitates fostering understanding, unity, and dialogue among religions and cultures. The amalgamation of peace movements into a robust, new global system for peace and security is of paramount importance.

We bear an escalating responsibility to safeguard spiritual and moral values. In shaping the spiritual culture of the new generation, it is imperative to pass on the enduring spiritual legacy cultivated over millennia.

As global conflicts and wars intensify, colossal sums are diverted from supporting human lives to military expenditures. The scale has reached a point where no single country or organization can unilaterally halt this perilous activity against human security. The fate of the world hangs in the balance.

The 14th Dalai Lama, in his teachings in Bodhi Gaya at the end of December last year, emphasized the universal aspiration for "world peace" shared by people worldwide, irrespective of their religious beliefs.

However, this noble desire faces persistent challenges, as mentioned by His Holiness. Unfortunately, a few individuals with firm convictions contribute to the suffering of the global population, numbering over 7 billion. Humanity, despite its aversion to suffering, has initiated World War I, World War II, and seems to be on the brink of World War III. The production and proliferation of various weapons continue to escalate for this purpose.

A poignant recent example lies in the conflicts in Europe and the Middle East, where the suffering of ordinary people intensifies despite global calls to halt the violence. Pope Francis, noting the gravity of the situation - "The situation in the Middle East has gone beyond the war on terror", urged both Israelis and Palestinians to cease hostilities immediately.

In response to the Hamas group's attack last October, Israel's retaliatory actions resulted in the tragic loss of over 23,000 Palestinian lives, including more than 11,000 children and over 9,000 women or civilians. Additionally, more than 200 Israeli soldiers lost their lives.

The teachings of Lord Buddha expressed in the Metta Sutra, "Just as a mother protects her only child without fearing her own life, we should develop a sacred heart to love all beings".

In light of this, the ABCP is urged to redouble its commitment to peaceful ideals, carry forward the

work of past peace advocates, and take a leadership role in this noble struggle.

Within the Buddhist faith, there is a call for collaboration with other denominations and religions to achieve meaningful results.

Dear Dharma friends,

Another pressing concern that commands our attention is global climate change and environmental degradation.

Lord Buddha's profound insights into the interconnectedness of all things, based on inner nature and dependent arising, highlight the consequences of neglecting this understanding. The imbalance in the current world system, driven by a lack of awareness of dependent arising, has led to escalating problems such as air and environmental pollution and the depletion of natural resources.

The primary root of these challenges lies in the insatiable greed for external comforts and material consumption.

Our highest principle is to express love and kindness towards all living beings, recognizing life as the most precious gift. It is only natural for us to cherish and protect our shared home, the world, as it forms the foundation of our existence. A harmonious and happy life in this world depends on our love and protection of our "home" nature.

Today, we find ourselves amidst an alarming acceleration of global warming and climate change. Global temperatures have surged by over 1 degree Celsius, a fact that climate warming will cause great disasters, especially in developing countries - UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres underscored during the high level climate change summit convened in Dubai, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, in November 2023.

The meeting saw the approval of a citizen empowerment program. Under this initiative, the overarching objective is to provide comprehensive training on climate change for all members of society, fostering greater participation, enhancing information dissemination, and fostering increased international cooperation.

Leading scientists assert that human activities are significantly contributing to the current state of climate change and global warming.

Industries such as manufacturing, electricity, transportation, waste management, agriculture, fuel extraction, and deforestation are identified as major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. Notably, the combustion of fossil fuels and the depletion of forest cover exponentially escalate the concentration of greenhouse gases, exacerbating global warming.

The repercussions of climate change manifest in



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

droughts, floods, forest fires, rising sea levels, permafrost melting, the extinction of species, soil degradation, and desertification.

International climate scientists and research organizations emphasize that human actions are reshaping the world's climate at an unprecedented pace. The urgency for immediate measures is highlighted in succinct reports, with a resounding reminder that there is no deadline and no rationale for delay.

The international community united in 2015 under the Paris Agreement, with the primary aim of capping global warming at 2 degrees Celsius within this century, striving further to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The commitment made by nations worldwide to formulate and execute national plans for reducing greenhouse gases is pivotal. However, there is a noticeable lack of vigorous implementation, with countries falling short of the agreed-upon targets.

Additionally, a substantial number of nations have pledged allegiance to the Kyoto Protocol, a collective effort to curtail greenhouse gas emissions.

As discussions and activities unfold on the global stage to combat climate change, it is imperative to concurrently heighten awareness and understanding.

Building resilience against climate-related hazards and natural disasters is crucial. Simple everyday actions, such as energy conservation, waste sorting, and refraining from purchasing nonrecyclable items, play a pivotal role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. These individual efforts, when multiplied, can contribute significantly to the broader global initiative.

Turning our attention to Mongolia, a nation grappling with the adverse impacts of climate change, where 76.8 percent of the land is affected by desertification. Over the past 80 years, the average air temperature has surged by 2.25 degrees Celsius, 2.5 times the global average. Precipitation is dwindling, forest fires have doubled in the last two decades, and issues like overcrowded livestock grazing and soil degradation are on the rise. Disturbingly, carbon dioxide content has escalated by 16.5 percent, and methane content by 8.8 percent. In essence, the alterations in the natural world and the threats to the living world are unequivocally linked to human actions.

One of ABCP's primary operational objectives is the preservation of the environment. The implementation of this goal has been deeply influenced by the Buddhist doctrines of karma, dependent arising, and compassion. These principles have played a piv-

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(Photos on this page) Heads of delegations and members of ABCP National Centers at the 12th General Assembly inauguration session. (Photos by Phuntsog Toldan)





(Photos on this page) Heads of delegations and members of ABCP National Centers at the 12th General Assembly inauguration session. (Photos by Phuntsog Toldan)



challenges & future perspectives



Lamas from the Indian ABCP National Center (photo top) and heads of delegations of National Centers offering prayers during the inauguration of the 12th ABCP (photo below)



otal role and will continue to hold significant value. It is crucial to dedicate special attention to disseminating and nurturing the profound teachings of Lord Buddha, particularly through our National Centers in respective countries. Collaborating with government bodies, religious institutions, and other public organizations is essential for successfully executing projects and engaging devotees on a broader scale. I wish to highlight that organizations like the National Center of Vietnam are setting a

commendable example in this regard.

Dear friends in the Dharma,

The ABCP experienced a prolonged period of stagnation, attributed to various honorable reasons such as the collapse of two world systems, the conclusion of the global cold war, and societal transitions. However, in 2019, the 11th General Assembly convened in Ulaanbaatar, the capital city of Mongolia, with the theme "Reviv-

al and Revitalize." During this assembly, discussions were held, and the organization's Charter was revised to align with the demands of the new era, outlining clear goals and objectives. I am delighted to acknowledge the significant role your participation and contributions played during this pivotal moment.

Four years have elapsed since the 11th General Assembly. Amid the global challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the ABCP remained proactive. The National Center of Vietnam hosted the 12th Executive Council meeting in December 2019, followed by the 13th Executive Council meeting conducted online by the National Center of Sri Lanka in January 2021. In October 2023, the National Center of Vietnam successfully organized the 14th Executive Council meeting.

These successive Executive Council meetings were instrumental in addressing crucial issues pertaining to the activation and enhancement of the ABCP. Noteworthy documents, including slogans and declarations on world peace and security, were issued. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the National Centers for their unwavering efforts and for creating conducive conditions for these Executive Council meetings. I wish you continued success in all your future endeavors.

Dear friends in the Dharma,

To expand the ABCP's membership, establish new partnerships, and enhance its operations, the revised Charter was circulated among all members of the Executive Council for feedback. I express my sincere appreciation to the National Center of India, the National Center of South Korea, the National Center of Mongolia - Daishchoilin Monastery, the National Center of Nepal, and the National Center of Japan for pro-

viding their valuable suggestions during the charter revision process.

In light of this, the representatives of the 2024 General Assembly cordially invite you to actively engage and meticulously deliberate upon the draft of the Charter revised during Executive Council meeting, offering your insights and recommendations. To provide context, let us briefly examine the historical trajectory of our organization's Charter. The inaugural draft of the Charter, titled "Brief Constitution of the Asian Buddhist Committee for Promoting Peace," was formulated on 15 December 1970. It underwent discussions and received approval at the 3rd meeting of the ABCP Executive Council held in Ulaanbaatar on 10-12 March 1974. Subsequently, in 1982, the 6th General Assembly of the ABCP reviewed and sanctioned a revised draft comprising 10 articles. Furthermore, at the 11th General Assembly in June 2019, the Charter was subject to revision and subsequent approval as part of the organization's revival efforts.

In order to surmount the aforementioned obstacles to global peace, unity, and environmental preservation collectively, it is imperative to expand both the membership and activities of our organization.

Hence, considering the expressed interest of individuals and organizations eager to collaborate, a new provision, namely the "partnership" clause, has been incorporated into the Charter. Through the activation of this provision, we aim to undertake collaborative initiatives with entities that endorse the goals and objectives of our organization, even if they have not yet become formal member as the National Center. This will allow them to articulate their perspectives on pressing contemporary issues by fostering mutually beneficial partnerships.

Presently, organizations such



ABCP President Gabju D. Chojamts with Most Ven. Thich Nhat Tu and Prof. Le Manh That of the Vietnam National Centers (photo top) and a general view of a session of the 12th General Assembly (photo below)



as Dipananda Bhikku from Bangladesh, the Center for Indian Studies from Mongolia, and the Dharma Alliance based in Geneva, Switzerland, have conveyed their interest in collaborating with the ABCP. The proposal is slated for discussion at the General Assembly. Notably, the Dharma Alliance has submitted a detailed cooperation proposal, prompting our representatives to engage in multiple meetings with its founder, Dr. Prashant Sharma.

Dr. Prashant Sharma has been

invited to participate in our General Assembly, and ABCP and Dharma Alliance are in the process of finalizing a document termed the "Framework of Cooperation Agreement." This strategic collaboration will enable us to expand and diversify the scope of our organizational partnership.

Therefore, Dharma friends, I implore you to actively engage in the discussions during this 12th General Assembly. Your participation is crucial, and I thank you for your attention. ■

Bhutan joins ABCP as a new twentieth member



Most Ven. Gabju D. Choijamts, President of ABCP congratulating Most Ven. Ugen Namgyel, Khenpo, Central Monastic Body, Royal Bhutan Monastery, Kingdom of Bhutan after Bhutan was accepted as the latest new members of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace at the 12th ABCP General Assembly

The Kingdom of Bhutan is a landlocked country in South Asia situated in the Eastern Himalaya between China in the north and India in the south. It is a Buddhist country where Buddhism is the state religion. More than 1,000 lamas belonged to the Central Monastic Body or the *Dratshang Lhentshog*, as the body is called in Bhutanese, which is the Commission for the Monastic Affairs of Bhutan in Thimpu.

A predominantly Buddhist Asian country Bhutan through its Central Monastic Body or the *Dratshang Lhentshog* was accepted as a new twentieth full-fledged member of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, an international NGO on roster with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and which was officially founded in 1970 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

The Bhutanese delegation was led by Most Ven. Ugen Namgyel, Khenpo - Chief Monk, Central Monastic Body.

The joining of Bhutan and its Central Monastic Body was a landmark event in the history of ABCP, as the edited and revised Charter of which was unanimously approved at the 12th General Assembly in New Delhi. The new edited version of the Charter is designed at adding impetus to the peace efforts of one of the oldest Buddhist peace organizations in Asia, which is also working to promote partnership with Dharma organizations - both Buddhist and non-Buddhist.

Another important event marking the 12th General Assembly was the participation of one of the oldest members of ABCP - the Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in Bangkok, Thailand. It was attended by Most Ven. Pramaha Surasak Paccantaseno, Assistant Professor of the University. The Thai National Center of ABCP was established in 1982 (See the opposite page - from the ABCP Archives). The document indicates when the Thai ABCP National Center was established. ■

Archive material about Thai National Center

ABCP's new and old members



Most Ven. Gabju D. Chojamts, President of ABCP and Most Ven. Ugen Namgyel, Khenpo, Central Monastic Body (photo top) and Most Ven. Pramaha Surasak Paccantaseno, Assistant Professor from the Office of Vice Rector for Foreign Affairs of the Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in Bangkok, Thailand, representing the Thai National Center of ABCP, for taking part in the ABCP General Assembly after a long break (photo below)



ABCP Bangladesh National Center - "We are contributing to the cause of Buddhism in our country round the year"

Respectable President of ABCP Most Venerable
Gabju D. Chojamts,
Respectable Secretary General of ABCP Ven. Da
Lama Kh. Byambajav,
Respectable Supreme Head of Sangha of different
countries,
Respectable heads of delegation of various countries,
Respectable delegates, observers,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of Buddhists of Bangladesh and in particular on behalf of four member delegation of ABCP Bangladesh National Center headed by Ven. Buddhapriya Mahathero, President of Bangladesh Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha (BBKPS), I extend my heartiest greetings to you all. Other members of our delegation are Mr. Deva Priya Barua, Senior Vice-President and Mr. Ranjit Kumar Barua. Vice-President of BBKPS. We feel very happy to attend the 12th General Assembly of ABCP which is being held at Ashok Hotel, New Delhi, India. For this purpose, I express my sincere thanks and gratitude to ABCP Indian National Center.

I would like to mention here that a renowned Buddhist Monk of our country His Holiness Mahasanghanayaka Visuddhananda Mahathero established Bangladesh Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha in 1949 for the socio-cultural & religious activities for the Buddhists of our country. Then he established Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery in 1960 at Sabujbagh, Dhaka, Bangladesh for performing religious and social activities for the Buddhists of Dhaka City. He was the founder member of The World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB) and also the founder member of Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace(ABCP).

Since then he attended all the meetings, conferences held at different countries. Due to old age Mahasanghanayaka Visuddhananda Mahathero passed away in 1994 and after that H.H. Sanghanayaka Suddhananda Mahathero became President of BBKPS and Chief Abbot of Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery, Dhaka. In that capacity he has also attended in several meetings and conferences of ABCP in various countries. During his tenure we have arranged one EC Meeting of ABCP in our Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery, Dhaka in the year 2018. Delegates from Mongolia, India, South Korea, Cambodia and Bangladesh participated in the meeting. Due to old age Sanghanayaka Suddhananda Mahathero expired in 2020. After that Venerable Buddhapriya Mahathero became the President of BBKPS and Chief Abbot of Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery, Dhaka.

Now I have honour to inform you about the activities of ABCP Bangladesh National Center headed by Ven. Buddhapriya Mahathero. It may be mentioned here that after attending ABCP General Assembly Meeting at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in 2019 we have arranged a briefing meeting with our Executive Members of BBKPS in Dhaka. Members became very happy to know about our activities in the conference. Then we have arranged one Seminar at our Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery under the sponsorship of High Commission of India to Bangladesh on December 4, 2021. The theme of the Seminar was "Buddhism and Buddhist Heritage of Bangladesh and India." Two speakers from India, 4 speakers from Bangladesh participated in the seminar. Again we arranged another seminar under the sponsorship of High Commission of India to Bangladesh on August 2, 2023 at our Dharmarajika Buddhist Mon-



Ven. Buddha Priya Barua, President, ABCP Bangladesh National Center 1 - Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha (left) and Mr. Deva Priya Barua, Senior Vice President of the Bangladesh National Center 1 (right) presenting activity report of their center at the 12th General Assembly

astery, Dhaka. The subject of the Seminar was “Buddhism and Buddhist Circuit Development between Bangladesh and India.”

A good number of people of our community attended the seminar. We published one souvenir named ‘Kristi’ special issue on this occasion. The meeting was presided by Ven. Buddhapriya Mahathero, President of BBKPS and Foreign Minister of our country H.E. Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen M.P attended the ceremony as Chief Guest. Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Member of Parliament of our local constituency has inaugurated the ceremony. Apart from these we distributed clothing materials to the poor and needy people of our society during last winter season. We also supply drinking water from our deep tube-well to the people of our locality throughout the year free of cost.

In the meantime we have attended an Executive Committee Meeting of ABCP in Vietnam in October, 2023 and one General Assembly Meeting of International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) at New Delhi, India.

I like to mention that we distributed Iftari (food

items) to the poor Muslim people of our locality during Ramadan month which have been appreciated by the people of our community. In this way we have been doing social and humanitarian activities throughout the year. Apart from arranging all religious activities such as Buddha Purnima, Ashari Purnima, Modhu Purnima, Prabarana Purnima, Sanghadana and Yellow Robe Offering Ceremony. In this way we are contributing ourselves for the cause of Buddhism in our country round the year.

Deva Priya Barua,
Senior Vice-President,
Bangladesh Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha and
ABCP Bangladesh National Center,
Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery,
Sanghanayaka Suddhananda Sarak, Sabujbagh,
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"We have earnestly worked towards achieving a world of peace without military build-up"



Ven. Ono Yasutaka, International Executive Director, ABCP Japan Center, Bunkyo-ku addressing the 12th General Assembly

Ladies and gentlemen, Chairman, and esteemed participants.

I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to speak here as a representative of the Japan National Center. As followers of Buddhism in Japan, we, living with love and compassion, deeply repent and reflect on the past history of aggression and colonial domination towards Asian countries. As a testament to

our faith, we have earnestly worked towards achieving a world of peace without military build-up.

In the "World Conference of Religious Leaders for Peace" held in July 1961, with representatives from 16 countries and 47 foreign delegates, we discussed three crucial themes: "Total Disarmament, Ban on Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, and Nuclear Non-Armanent." We confirmed our purpose of connecting inner peace with the outer world's peace, adopting



Rev. Shugaku Mori of the ABCP Japan Center at the 12th ABCP General Assembly

the "Kyoto Declaration" which states, "Without the happiness of all people, inner peace is impossible."

Furthermore, during the "Second World Conference of Religious Leaders for Peace" in July 1964, recalling the United Nations' first resolution calling for the removal of atomic bombs and all other weapons of mass destruction, we declared, "There is no faith that stands outside the extinction of humanity" (the "Tokyo Declaration").

"Hyou Ga Muyuu," the teachings of Lord Buddha, advocating a world without soldiers and weapons, inspire us to desire a world where "war is unnecessary." Nuclear weapons are inhumane instruments of mass destruction, and the only path to safety is their abolition.

I express my gratitude to the participants of the 11th General Assembly in Ulaanbaatar, for your cooperation in signing the petition by survivors of the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, highlighting the illegality and inhumanity of nuclear weapon use.

The "Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons" was adopted at the United Nations in July 2017 and came into effect as international law on January 21, 2021, with 50 ratifying countries. As of January 2024, 69 countries have ratified it, and we will continue to expand public awareness and movements to increase the number of ratifying nations.

As you probably know, unfortunately, the Japanese government has neither signed nor ratified this treaty. To encourage the Japanese government to sign and ratify, we are expanding our advocacy efforts.

The Japan National Center, in collaboration with

the Japan Religious Persons Council for Peace, actively participates in events like the Bikini Day Memorial Service on March 1, the Non-Nuclear Fire Monument Service on March 11, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial on August 6, the World Conference Against A & H Bombs in Nagasaki on August 9, and the Fasting Prayer for Life in Hiroshima on August 5. These activities aim to pray and act towards the abolition of nuclear weapons.

We deeply empathize with the ongoing conflicts such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Israel's attacks on Gaza, calling for an immediate ceasefire and the initiation of peace negotiations. Let us strive to realize a world without soldiers and weapons, in alignment with the teachings of Lord Buddha, where "war is unnecessary."

I have brought with me the "Non-Nuclear Fire" and pamphlets detailing the realities of being exposed to nuclear weapons. Please feel free to make use of them.

Finally, may the 12th ABCP General Assembly be a success, and I extend my prayers for the development of the ABCP India Center and all the other National Centers in various countries, and for the well-being of all esteemed participants.

May the blessings of the Triple Gem be upon us. Thank you for your listening.

Rev. Shugaku Mori
Vice-Representative of Japan National Center,
Priest of the Shinshu Ohtani-ha,
Secretary-General of the Japan Religious Persons
Council for Peace. ■

" We are paying attention to changing and improving the social morality in our country"



Ven. Altankhuu Tserenjav, ABCP National Centre (II), Dashichoiling Monastery, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia presenting his National Center report at the 12th General Assembly

Dear H.E. the 29th Khamba Nomun Khan Chojamts, President of ABCP,
Most Ven. Byambajav Secretary General of ABCP,
Executive Council members,
Dharma Friends,
Distinguished Guests,

First of all, on behalf of H.E. Dr. Dambajav Kham-

ba Lama, a former Vice President of ABCP and President of Dashichoiling National Center of ABCP in Mongolia, and sanghas of ABCP National center Dashichoiling monastery and myself, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Sanhgas and distinguished guests who are gathering here at this meaningful occasion. It is a significant opportunity of which experienced scholars and Buddhist leaders

Progress report - Mongolia - Dashichoiling Monastery



Most Ven. Dr. Dambajav Khamba Lama, President of Dashichoiling National Center of ABCP in Mongolia, on the extreme right, with the President and Secretary General of ABCP and the Vietnam National Center delegates at the 12th General Assembly

from many Asian countries are able to meet and exchanging their opinion which is beneficial to peace and harmony. Moreover, I would like to express my deep appreciation for Indian National center of ABCP and Mr. Sonam Wangchuk hosting and organizing the 12th General Assembly of ABCP in own country. It is very honored and privileged to be here in New Delhi seeing our old friends since last General Assembly.

Second, H.E. Dr. Dambajav Khamba Lama, President of Dashichoiling National center of ABCP in Mongolia would like to extend his warm greetings and wish a big success for the 12th General Assembly. He also said that he would be very happy ABCP is activating more and more and he would like to fully support ABCP activities every time in the future.

In the past several years, Dashichoiling National center of ABCP was able to accomplished educational, humanitarian, and social activities even though we had some difficulties after harsh influence of pandemic and economic difficulties. We have celebrated Buddha Shakyamuni's main special days which are Vesak day, Dharma Chakra Day, and Return from the realm of Devas Day and Tsongkhapa's Parinirvana day.

On those days, we had organized various different events such as educating the public and youth on Buddha's teachings, explaining about loving kindness and compassion, lightening candles, giving donations to elders, assisting disabled and poor people in the outskirts of town. Beside this, during the Vesak celebration, our sanghas and members of National center had cleaned Selbe River which is in the middle of the town and planted over 200 trees at the agro-park in Ulaanbaatar cooperated with public, NGOs and private people.

Also, we had celebrated the World Religious Day and World Peace Day respectively with the UN Resident Representative in Mongolia and Hindu, Christian, Muslim and other religious representatives. On those days, we pray for the world peace, lightening candles, ring the peace bell and gives some speeches.

In short, we are truly paying attention to changing and improving the social morality in our country. As may you know that the social morality is disappearing in everywhere because of impact of harsh life competition, influence of rapid development, stress of social media, insatiable needs and wants, and endless sufferings. Therefore, Dashichoiling National center of ABCP is running day and evening

Dhamma classes with intention to provide lay people and youth whoever are interested in Buddha's teachings and wants to develop their mind.

The main purpose of our training is to strengthen their inner-values based on the principles of Buddha's teachings such as mutual respect, tolerance, compassion and forgiveness. In other words, sharing loving kindness and a Bodhisattva way of thinking, we would be able to create harmony and peace and to improve ethics in our society.

In addition, I would like to introduce Khuree Maitrya project which is trying to restore Maitrya Buddha statue and his temple in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia since beginning of 2000. The statue and temple were fully destroyed during the communist repression in the 1930s. The project consists of two tasks which are restoring 23-meter high Maitrya Buddha statue and rebuilding 5 floors temple. The statue was completed in 2018 and the temple would be accomplished in May, 2024. As a result of implementing this project, Maitrya temple will be one of new favourite destinations for youths, researchers, devotees, local and foreign tourists while adding new colour to appearance of Ulaanbaatar city. Besides that, it will be an important venue for religious, cultural and educational activities.

Finally, we are sincerely pleased to participate in the 12th General Assembly and wish peace, happiness and great success for the Dharma work to all of you.

Thank you for your kind attention.

May all beings be happy and peaceful forever.

Ven. Altankhuu Tserenjav
Secretary of Dashichoiling
National Center of ABCP
in Mongolia

Khuree Maidar (Maitreya) temple re- construction project

Briefly About Zuun Khuree Dashichoiling Monastery

Current Zuun Khuree Dashichoiling Monastery is the renovation of Erkhem Toin and Vangai temples survived out of Zuun Khuree's 30 temples, which were the main part of the Nüislel Khüree ("Capital camp") and reopened its day-to-day religious activities by the initiation and effort of H.E. Dr. Dambajav Choijiljav Khamba Lama and other senior monks on July 26, 1990 which was the 4th auspicious day of lunar calendar in the Year of White Horse. Former Indian Ambassador H.E. Kushok Bakula Rinpoche named the renovated Monastery "Dashichoiling" (the literal meaning is "Auspicious Dharma Land").

When Undur Gegeen Zanabazar was 5 years old, he was enthroned as an incarnation of Bogdo Javzandamba Khutugtu, the spiritual leader of Mongolian Buddhism, at Shireet Tsagaan Nuur, where the palace of Undur Gegeen Bogdo Javzandamba Khutugtu was founded, later became the first capital of Mongolian Buddhism, with congregation of all delegates from seven provinces of Khalkhas, the main ethnic group in Mongolia.

The first Bogdo Javzandamba Khutugtu had changed coordination styles of his palace by first establishing 7 temples which were Anduu, Jasa, San-

gai, Zoogoo, Khuukhen Noyon, Darkhan emch and Uurlud identical to Tibetan Drepung Monastery founded by Jamiyantsorje in 1651. Then two years later, he founded the Ikh Khuree at front side of Khentii Mountain in 1654.

Although this Monastic complex was built by using bricks and woods, it was reconstructed in 1706 due to the destruction during Khalkha-Oirat conflict which took place in 1680. Gradually, temples in Ikh Khuree were established one after another increasing the number to 13 as of 1772. There were 27 temples by the year of 1795 after Ikh Khuree changed its location to Khui Mandal (current location of Ulaanbaatar). Later, by the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, it consisted of 30 temples by constructing 3 more.

Currently, Zuun Khuree Dashichoiling Monastery continues to expand into a large religious institute with a total of 100 monks, a religious institute facility, day-to-day ceremonial, training and humanitarian facilities as well as nature preservation activities.

The Khuree Maidar (Maitreya)

According to earlier foreign tourists and explorers' accounts, the great statue of the future Buddha Maitreya, which is predicted to arrive in Ikh Khuree or current capital city of Mongolia, Ulaan-



Maidar statue with his temple as a part of renovation of Zuun Khuree Dashichoiling Monastery to preserve the religious and traditional cultural heritages since 1990. In order to handle this project successfully, researches on Khuree Maidar statue and his temple were conducted based on planning activities of Khutugtu's Ikh Khuree. In 2005, Khuree Maidar reconstruction project is announced publicly for extensive introduction and have completed another research to preserve traditional styles and characters on the masterpiece. In 2007, the prototype of Khuree Maidar statue was created by Orgil Namkhaitseren, a sculptor of Art Council of Mongolia, 1.6 meters of height using reproduction and enlargement method applied on Maitreya statue and crafted according to school of the first Bogdo Javzandamba Khutugtu-Zanabazar, the original of which is currently preserved in Chojin Lama Temple Museum. Peculiarity of this statue is that it has distinct feature of traditional Mongolian characteristics based on Undur Gegeen Zanabazar's school in terms of appearance and delicacy, which differs from Maitreya statues created in Tibet, China and other Asian Buddhist countries.

Prototype design of Khuree Maidar statue

Yong He Gong Lamasery in Beijing, People's Republic of China commenced to support Zuun Khuree Dashichoiling Monastery in creating the Khuree Maidar statue free of charge as an irrevocable donation to Mongolian Buddhists in 2010. The statue of Khuree Maidar's statue was made of copper by Tibetan and Nepalese sculptors based on sculptor Orgil Namkhaitseren's prototype at Sichuan Karma Bisno-Tibetan Art and Culture Development Co., Ltd. based in Chengdu city, Sichuan, China in 2013. We had sent our team to make site vis-

The statue of Khuree Maidar at Dashichoiling Monastery, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia (top) and artist's concept of the Khuree Maidar temple (photos on opposite page, top and middle) and lams of the monastery carrying the copper "foot" of the statue (opposite page, bottom photo)

baatar, was built by Dharma King Luvsankhaidav known as Jadar Abbot Agvaankhaidav by the initiation of Luvsanchültimjigmed, 5th Jebtsundamba Khutugtu in the year of 1834. Unfortunately, all religious activities were banned, monasteries and temples were forced to close and demolished during the political and religious persecution in 1930s. New buildings started to be built in their place. Maidar

temple was demolished in 1943 for construction of such new buildings.

Reconstruction of Khuree Maidar (Maitreya) statue

H.E. Dr. Dambajav Chojiljav Khamba Lama and other senior monks of Zuun Khuree Dashichoiling Monastery initiated and have commenced meritorious activities of reconstructing Khuree

its, checkup on the work progress of the statue creation and ensure compliance with the prototype. Khuree Maidar statue was assembled by craftsmen and sculptors of Sichuan Karma Bisno-Tibetan Artand Culture Development Ltd. China in Ulaanbaatar in 2017. Therefore, we have successfully recreated Khuree Maidar statue, the Mongolian Buddhist historical and culture heritage, with the help and support of devotees, ordinary people, sponsors, domestic and international organizations and our monks in our capital city.

Design of Khuree Maidar temple

Baldan D., an architect of “Baldan’s” LLC and Nyamtsogt G, chief architect of Suld Project LLC worked on the design of Khuree Maidar temple and it was approved by the Chief architect of Ulaanbaatar city and Urban Development and Planning Department on March 15, 2012.

The temple will be a five-story high glass structure to meet demand and expectation of current devotees and each floor will be designed to accommodate cultural, ceremonial, meeting halls, various training and meditation rooms. Reconstruction of Khuree Maidar statue along with its cultural and historical heritage temple will be one of favourite destinations for both local and foreign tourists.

The foundation of Khuree Maidar temple was laid in a traditional way in the presence of monks, devotees and distinguished local and international guests. The ceremonial event took place on July 28, 2012.

Reconstruction of Khuree Maidar temple will be one of new favourite destinations for students, researchers, devotees, local and foreign tourists while adding a new color to appearance of Ulaanbaatar city. Besides that, it will be an important venue for religious, arts, cultural and educational activities. ■



Multifaceted activities of the Wipulasara Chapter



Festival, and all monthly Poya programs, as well as Sinhala and Tamil New Year celebrations and the Annual Blood Donation program, are among the events held almost every year. Additionally, on the occasion of the Chief Incumbent's birthday, the distribution of dry rations and essential items among needy pregnant mothers, Katina Pooja, and other national and international programs are carried out at this religious center. Even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic period from 2020 to 2023, all these activities were conducted as usual.

Founders' Day

The Most Venerable Founder's and Late Chief Incumbents' Memorial Day of the PDCP at Ratmalana, the ABCP-National Center of Wipulasara Chapter Headquarters in Sri Lanka, celebrates the Memorial Day on the 7th of January every year as an annual occasion. (*First photo left*)

Sri Lankan Independence Day

National Day, also known as Independence Day (*Second photo left*), is a Sri Lankan national holiday celebrated annually on the 4th of February to commemorate the country's political independence from British rule in 1948. It is celebrated across the country with flag-raising ceremonies, dances, parades, and concerts. The main celebration usually takes place in Colombo, where the President raises



Parama Dhamma Chethiya Pirivena, Ratmalana, Sri Lanka, a prestigious religious center maintaining international relations in Sri

Lanka, conducts a number of religious and social activities annually. The Sri Lankan Independence Day, Indian Independence Day, Vesak

the national flag and addresses the nation.

Indian Independence and Republic Day Celebrations

With the collaboration of the Indian High Commission and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), PDCP, along with around 15 Indian Buddhist monks currently studying at the Pirivena, annually celebrates the Independence Day of India, which falls on the 15th of August (*photo right*).

Republic Day of India

Republic Day is the day when the Republic of India marks and celebrates the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect on 26th January 1950. Parama Dhamma Chethiya Pirivena, as a Buddhist center for international relations, celebrated the Republic Day of India on 26th January 2022 with the arrival of the Former Indian High Commissioner, His Excellency Shri Gopal Baglay, as the Chief Guest of the event.

Inter-religious Activities

Parama Dhamma Chethiya Pirivena as a temple more connected with members of other faiths, have the opportunity to establish and participate in inter-religious activities (*photo in the middle right, and the photo on the bottom right shows participants in the "Sanskrit Day" organized by the Center*).

The Annual Prefect Day

The ceremony for Fr. Marceline Jayakodi School in 2020, held at Dankotuwa Godella Village, included the awarding of the "Kalasuri Mapalagama Vipulasara Memorial Scholarship" to students who excelled in the Ordinary Level examination in 2019. The Chief Guest for the event was Ven. Maitipe Wimalasara Thera, and the scholarship



Progress report - Wipulasara Chapter - Sri Lanka



was presented by the Fr. Marceline Jayakodi Memorial Foundation and the National Arts Front Secretary.

Blood Donation and Medical Campaign Programme

Among the social activities established under PDCP, Blood Donation campaign continues annually through collaboration with the Blood Bank of Sri Lanka (*photo top left*).

Provision of Essential items for Pregnant Mothers

In the years 2022 and 2023, due to the impact of the Covid pandemic and the economic crisis, PDCP established a social service initiative focused on distributing dry rations and essential items among pregnant mothers from economically disadvantaged backgrounds (*photo middle left*).



Police Advisory Council, Mount Lavinia

During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2021), the PDCP has been at the forefront of social service to the community. Throughout the pandemic, it has actively participated in assisting the needy by distributing food parcels and other essentials. Additionally, it has been involved in preventing drug addiction and addressing other social issues, particularly among the youth. The PDCP has also conducted Inter-Religious Community Dialogue in collaboration with the Police Advisory Council, Mount Lavinia.



Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace

As the President of the National Committee of the Asia Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) and the Secretary of the Organizing Committee of the 13th Executive Committee Meeting of the ABCP,

Ven. Dr. Maitipe Wimalasara Maha Thera guided the Volunteer Group in organizing the Executive Committee Meeting. The event saw the participation of Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa as the Chief Guest and Dr. Rewant Singh, the Director of the ICCR, as a Guest. Representatives from 25 other countries also participated via Zoom technology.

24 Hour Metta Around The World

"One World. One Time. One Metta" is an annual international program led in Sri Lanka by Ven. Dr. Maitipe Wimalasara Maha Thera of Parama Dhamma Chethiya Pirivena, Ratmalana, in the years 2020, 2021, and 2022. This initiative aims to radiate Loving Kindness to the entire world, transforming negativity into Light, Love, and Harmony.

The "24 Hr Metta Around The World" is organized by the Buddhist Missionary Society of Malaysia and Aloka Foundation Malaysia.

Besides the many activities mentioned above, the Wipulasara Chapter of the Sri Lanka National Center of Abcp also conducted the following activities-

Christmas celebration at St. Joseph's Church, Ratmalana,

Celebration of Sanskrit Language Day,

New Year Celebration (*First photo top on this page*),

Annual Prefects' Day (*Third photo on the opposite page*),

Hosting of Hong Kong delegations arrived at the Parama Dhamma Chetiya Maha Piriven Temple (*Scnd photo in the middle on this page*),

Tripitaka Dharma Day Special program held at Ratmalana Parama Dhamma Chetiya Maha Pirivana (*First right on this page*).

**ABCP Sri Lanka National Center
(Wipulasara Chapter)**



Universal Day of Compassion



Sonam Wangchuk Shakspo, Secretary of the Indian National Center of ABCP submitted a proposal to declare 6 June, the birthday of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama as a "Universal Day of Compassion," which was welcomed and endorsed by the delegates of the ABCP General Assembly.

Below is the complete text of Mr. Sonam Wangchuk Shakpo's statement

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama is the most famous and prominent global Buddhist figure who embodies the ideals of peace, compassion, universal responsibility, religious and social harmony;

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's selfless and genuine efforts to build peace and harmony has been fully recognized by the conferring of the Noble Peace Prize, the United States of America's Congressional Gold Medal, the Templeton Award, the ABCP Medal of Honour and countless other prestigious accolades.

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama has voluntarily relinquished all his political authority, therefore living the pure life of a Buddhist Spiritual leader, respected, cherished and admired by millions of Buddhists and others throughout the world.

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama has successfully represented profound and vast Buddhist Wisdom the basis of which are Karuna and Ahimsa, through his continued interactions with scientists, leaders, environmentalists and others:

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama has worked in his entire life in a tireless manner to bring closer not only Buddhist traditions, communities and strengthen a sense of oneness of brotherhood and sisterhood among all followers of Lord Buddha but also others.

The 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace unanimously resolves to recognize the great contributions of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama towards a global mission for peace and har-

mony among humankind and particularly among followers of the Great Lord Buddha. In recognition to his immense contribution, the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace unanimously declare His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama to be a Universal Supreme Leader of the Buddhist World.

That with regard to the reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness' repeated statements since 1969, the official pronouncement of September 24, 2011, or any guidance in future is inherently discretionary. No government nor any individual has the right to interfere in this matter. This religious activity has to be conducted as per the responsibilities that His Holiness the Dalai Lama enshrines and entrusts.

The 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace recognizes the significance of the continuation of Gaden Phodrang institution.

We further declare 6 July, His Holiness's birthday to be the "UNIVERSAL DAY OF COMPASSION". We request all lovers of peace, compassion and non-violence throughout the world to join us in celebrating the Universal Day of Compassion every year on 6 July.

By celebrating compassion and non-violence we celebrate the essence of the messages of Lord Buddha and the teachings of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. We commit to building a truly harmonious and peaceful world.

*Sonam Wangchuk Shakspo,
Secretary Indian National Center*

ABCP Partners with Dharma Alliance



Most Ven. Da Lama Kh. Byambajav, Secretary General of ABCP (left) and Dr. Prashant Sharma, President of the Dharma Alliance signing the Framework of Cooperation Agreement between ABCP and Dharma Alliance during the 12th General Assembly of ABCP in New Delhi

A meeting was held between the Executive Council of ABCP and Dharma Alliance, a tax-exempt, non-profit organization based in Geneva, Switzerland was held on Thursday, 18 January 2024 in New Delhi.

The meeting was attended by Dr. Prashant Sharma, President, Dharma Alliance and Prof. Amarjiva Lochan, Member, Board of Advisors, Dharma Alliance, Vice President of International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) and Joint Dean, International Relations, University of Delhi, and from ABCP by its Secretary General Ven. Da lama Kh. Byambajav, ABCP Deputy Secretary Generals Mr. Khy Suvanarata and Mr. Sonam Wangchuk Shaksपो, and Executive

Council members from Nepal, Vietnam and Mongolia.

ABCP and Dharma Alliance have a profound overlap in their missions and objectives, in which Buddhist teachings, traditions and culture play a fundamental and unequivocal role.

ABCP and Dharma Alliance have agreed to sign a Framework of Cooperation Agreement between the two organizations in order to provide guidelines to jointly raise awareness and carry out advocacy work to protect, preserve and promote Dharma principles and perspectives across institutions, dialogues and policies, as well as develop collaborative programs at local, nation-

al, regional and global levels that support this effort.

ABCP and Dharma Alliance view the Framework of Cooperation Agreement as an important instrument for building a strong voice that can effectively channel ancient wisdom in addressing modern challenges.

Dr. Prashant Sharma, President of Dharma Alliance made a presentation detailing the objectives and mission on Dharma Alliance, which was established in 2021 in Geneva, Switzerland as a tax-exempt, non-profit organization that seeks to protect, preserve and promote Dharma-based perspectives and practices across the world.

The draft of the Framework of Cooperation Agreement between ABCP and Dharma Alliance was shared between the two organizations and it was also sent to all the National Centers of ABCP for their review, comments and suggestions.

The Executive Council Members considered the draft for the proposed Framework of Cooperation Agreement between ABCP and Dharma Alliance and approved the draft with some minor changes and decided to submit the draft Framework of Cooperation Agreement to the 12th General Assembly for its review and approval, with which the meeting between the Executive Council of ABCP and Dharma Alliance ended.

At the Plenary Session of the 12th General Assembly of ABCP Dr. Prashant Sharma made a presentation

on what Dharma Alliance is and stands for. He noted that "Dharma Alliance has a vision that the world recognizes the value of and acts upon the principles of Dharma which emphasize peace, harmony, mutual respect, and the inter-connectedness of all life. ABCP and Dharma Alliance have a profound overlap in their missions and objectives, in which Buddhist teachings, traditions and culture play a fundamental and unequivocal role. The purpose of this Framework of Cooperation Agreement between ABCP and Dharma Alliance is to provide guidelines to jointly raise awareness and carry out advocacy work to protect, preserve and promote Dharma principles and perspectives across institutions, dialogues and policies, as well as develop collaborative programs at local, national, regional and global levels that support this effort."

See page ... of this issue of Dhammaduta for the signed "Framework of Cooperation Agreement between the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace and Dharma Alliance."

At the General Assembly, and the Charter of ABCP it was noted that ABCP is prepared to partner with all religious organizations, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist organizations that have similar or identical goals and mission of promoting, protecting and preserving universal peace and security, vitally important for the promotion of heritages of all religions. ■



Dr. Prashant Sharma, President of the Dharma Alliance addressing the 12th General Assembly of ABCP in New Delhi (photo top) and copy of the Framework of Cooperation Agreement signed between ABCP and Dharma Alliance, on pages 65-68.



Framework of Cooperation Agreement
between
Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace, Ulaanbaatar
and
Dharma Alliance, Geneva

1. Introduction

Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) was established in 1969 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia as a voluntary movement of Buddhists with both monastic (monks) and lay members. Most Venerable Gabji Samaagiin Gombojav, Khambo Lama of Mongolia, Venerable J. Gomboyev from Buriat, the Khambo Lama of the former Soviet Union, Venerable Kushok Bakula Rinpoche from India, and Buddhist leaders from Sri Lanka and Nepal came together and officially founded the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) in 1970 with its permanent headquarters in Ulaanbaatar. ABCP currently has national center members in several countries across Asia including Bhutan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Japan, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, Republic of Korea, Russia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

ABCP aims to bring together efforts of Buddhists in support of consolidating universal peace, harmony and cooperation among peoples of Asia; furthering their economic and social advancement and promoting respect for justice and human dignity; and disseminating Buddhist teachings, traditions and culture.

Dharma Alliance was established in 2021 in Geneva, Switzerland as a tax-exempt, non-profit organization that seeks to protect, preserve and promote Dharma-based perspectives and practices across the world.

Dharma Alliance has a vision that the world recognizes the value of and acts upon the principles of Dharma which emphasize peace, harmony, mutual respect, and the inter-connectedness of all life. With its permanent headquarters in Geneva, a center of global governance and an operational hub of multilateral diplomacy, its aim is to introduce, strengthen and mainstream Dharma principles and perspectives in global norms, standards and policies through consistent and effective advocacy in multilateral institutions, dialogues and processes.

2. Purpose of the Framework of Cooperation Agreement

ABCP and Dharma Alliance have a profound overlap in their missions and objectives, in which Buddhist teachings, traditions and culture play a fundamental and unequivocal role. The purpose of this Framework of Cooperation Agreement between ABCP and Dharma Alliance is to provide guidelines to jointly raise awareness and carry out advocacy work to protect, preserve and promote Dharma principles and perspectives across institutions, dialogues and policies, as well as develop collaborative programs at local, national, regional and global levels that support this effort. ABCP and Dharma Alliance view this Framework of Cooperation Agreement as an important instrument for building a strong voice that can effectively channel ancient wisdom in addressing modern challenges.

Within this collaboration, ABCP and Dharma Alliance aim to:

- 2.1 Build awareness about the ways in which Buddhist teachings, traditions and practices can contribute substantially to the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- 2.2 Support advocacy efforts to strengthen and embed Buddhist principles in public policies at various levels; and
- 2.3 Support and strengthen the development of a collective Dharmic voice premised on common principles such as peace, harmony, mutual respect, and the inter-connectedness of all life, for greater effectiveness in influencing international institutions, dialogues and policies.

The possible areas of cooperation that could serve as a joint work plan, to be regularly reviewed by ABCP and Dharma Alliance as per mutual convenience, are detailed below.

3. Areas of Cooperation

Recognizing their common objective to protect, preserve, and promote Dharma-based perspectives and practices across the world, in which Buddhist teachings, traditions and culture play a fundamental and unequivocal role, ABCP and Dharma Alliance will collaborate in areas of mutual interest and engagement, where possible and appropriate, through:

- 3.1 Developing common positions on issues of mutual interest, particularly with respect to the SDGs;
- 3.2 Facilitating engagement and sharing relevant information with individuals and institutions that are a part of their respective networks;
- 3.3 Providing support in developing and strengthening institutional relationships in bilateral, regional and multilateral contexts (such as UN Alliance of Civilizations, UN University for Peace, and UN-ECOSOC);
- 3.4 Using various platforms available within multilateral institutions such as the United Nations (for example, the International Day of Vesak), to raise awareness of Dharma principles and practices in the context of international peace and development;
- 3.5 Supporting the development of appropriate knowledge products and related tools for advocacy purposes;
- 3.6 Sharing information and news on their activities on a regular basis;
- 3.7 Participation, joint or otherwise, in relevant activities and programs in various parts of the world;
- 3.8 Collaborating to raise funds for joint events and activities; and
- 3.9 Sharing of calendars of relevant activities, initiatives or strategies pertinent to the areas of cooperation identified above.

4. Terms and Modalities of Collaborative Activities

To support the implementation of this Framework of Cooperation Agreement, all activities will be subject to the availability of sufficient financial and human resources for that purpose and in compliance with legal obligations, program of work, priority activities, principles, internal rules, regulations, policies, administrative procedures and practices of ABCP and Dharma Alliance.

ABCP and Dharma Alliance commit to promoting and communicating their collaborative activities to relevant audiences in a spirit of collaboration and joint ownership.

This Framework of Cooperation Agreement will remain in place until either of the entities chooses to withdraw.

Signed on 18 January 2024 in New Delhi at the 12th General Assembly of ABCP



Da Lama Khunkhur BYAMBAJAV
Secretary General
Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace
Gandan Tegchenling Monastery
Ulaanbaatar-38, Mongolia 16040



Dr. Prashant SHARMA
President
Dharma Alliance
Chemin de la Fleuriste 18
1216 Geneva, Switzerland

"We must research to determine what is real. With no research, you can't find reality."

The Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso



Dr. Khy Sovanratana, Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Kingdom of Cambodia and President of Cambodia ABCP National Center opening the "Academic Conference" held as a part of the 12th General Assembly of ABCP

An academic conference was held during the 12th General Assembly of ABCP.

Research scholars, both lay persons and Buddhists monks from

the ABCP national Centers made presentations on their research into various aspects of Buddhism and presented findings of their research.

From India Dr. Shashibala,

Dean, Center for Indology, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and Dr. Anirban Das, Director, National Mission for Manuscript, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Minis-

try of Culture, Government of India (*First and second photos on this page*) presented findings of their research. Dr. Anirban Das, an expert of ancient Indian scripts., gave an exhaustive explanation on the link between Mongolia and an invaluable find made from Mongoli with inscriptions in Brahmi Script. While Mr. Mukunda Bista, Executive member, Nepal National Center of ABCP presented a paper called "Swayambhu Maha Chaitya: An Appraisal of Its Religious and Cultural Importance as The Axis Mundi of Nepal Mandala".

There were three scholars from Mongolia, who took part in the academic conference. One of them was Professor M. Otgonbayar, Head of Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, National University of Mongolia. The title of her paper was "A Historical Overview and Current State of Buddhist Teachings and Research in Mongolia," while Ven. Dr. Myagmarsuren Gombodorj, Director of Zuun Khuree College and Research Institute for Buddhism and Culture, Dashi-choiling Monastery - Mongolia National Center of ABCP presented his study entitiled "Preserving Buddhist Cultural Heritage: Writings in Tibetan by Mongolians." And Venerable Lama Lkhagvasuren Dorj, Research fellow, Theology College, Gandan Tegchenling Monastery – Mongolia National Center made a presentaton entitiled "Buddhism among the Mongols."

Papers on research and findings were also presented by Most Ven. Phra Anil Sakya, Assistant Abbot, Wat Bovoranives Vihara, Bangkok, Thailand; Lama Luvsandorj, Director, Theology College, Theology College, Gandan Tegchenling Monastery – Mongolia National Center (*third photo on this page*); Ven. Sodnomdorzhiev Dashi-Nima of Ivolginsky Datsan, Ulan Ude, Russian National National Center; Sok Buntthoeun, Director, Division of Buddhist Higher Education, General Inspectorate for National Buddhist





Education, ABCP Cambodia National Center, Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Mr. Sunil Galagama, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health, Government of Sri Lanka (*first photo top on this page*); Ani Genden Lhamu, and Mr. Jigmet Olden, Ph.D. both from Delhi University, India (*second and third photos on this page*).

At the time of the printing of this issue of *Dhammaduta*, we had received copies of papers presented at the ABCP Academic Conference from Mr. Mukunda Bista, Professor M. Otgonbayar, Ven. Dr. Myagmarsuren Gombodorj and Venerable Lama Lkhagvasuren Dorj, which we print in full in this special edition of *Dhammaduta*.

If the editorial office of the magazine receives the copies of the other presentations made at the General Assembly, we would be happy to reprint them at the next issue of the magazine *Dhammaduta*. ■



Swayambhu Maha chaitya - The Axis Mundi of Nepal Mandala



By Mukunda Bista, ABCP Nepal

Introduction

Nepal is renowned for the numerous Buddhist pilgrimage sites amongst Buddhist devotees

from around the world. Some of these famous sites include Lumbini, the birthplace of Sakyamuni Buddha, the 4th among the 1000 Buddhas of this fortunate

Aeon; Boudha, which according to legend was constructed by Jhya-je ma (Shamvara), the poultry farming lady's three virtuous sons, who vowed in front



Mukunda Bista, Executive Committee Member, ABCP Nepal National Center

of the stupa in their previous life to disseminate and preserve the Dharma in Tibet, the land of snow, Namobuddha (Tib: sTag-mo-lus-sbyin), where in one of his previous lives as a Bodhisattva, he had offered his body to a staving tigress and her cubs. However, the single most important sacred monument on this earth for

Buddhists, the Swayambhu Maha chaitya, whose blessings sustain the power of the Buddha dharma on the planet, is located at the heart of the country as the Axis Mundi of the entire Buddhist cosmos on this planet. In this paper, I will try to demonstrate through scriptural and historical references how and why Swayambhu was and has been the center of inspiration and devotion not only for ordinary practitioners of the valley but also for the enlightened masters and adepts (siddhas) both from India and Tibet and therefore could be deemed the source of inception of Buddhism in Nepal Mandala and the source of light and renewal of Dharma, a major

juncture of microcosm and macrocosm, which has served as the axis mundi of Buddhist Cosmos for Buddhist diaspora in general and Nepalese Buddhist in particular.

The Maha chaitya essentially is a Vajrayana Stupa which is treated as Dharmadhatuvagiswara chaitya with the Manjushree as the central deity of the mandala. The oldest inscription with the full name for the shrine on Swayambhu dates back to 1372 A.D, where it is referred to as "SriSriSri-Sahmegu-Dharmadhatuvagiswara-Bhattaraka" (in Newari: Sah=cow, megu= tail which is equivalent to the Gopucchha in Sanskrit, the name of the hillock over which the Chaitya is located). The detailed origin myth of the Nepal Mandala (i.e. Kathmandu valley) and its self-arisen divine light (Swayambhu Jyoti Rupa) Maha chaitya is narrated in the most important Buddhist texts of Newar Buddhism – The Swayambhu Purana (hereafter SP). According to SP, the valley is said to have been a sacred place

for practicing Buddhism from the very beginning, long before the appearance of the historical Buddha Shakyamuni. After the light of Swayambhu appeared, it became the center of Newar Buddhist devotions. The earliest version of the Swayambhu myth focuses only on the importance of this divine light, but later versions give prominence to Dharmadhatu Vagisvara (Manjushree).

The multiple versions of Swayambhu Purana

German Indologist Horst Brinkhaus in his 'Textual History of the SP mentions that there are 5 different recension and hundreds of versions of SP in Kathmandu Valley. Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project alone has filmed more than a hundred manuscripts of the SP and there are more still in the Valley. The importance of the SP and consequentially the importance of its main character, the Maha chaitya, is also highlighted by the fact that the shorter prosed version of the SP, i.e., the "Goshringa-Parvat Swayambhu Chaitya-Bhattaraka Uddesha" or "Short treatise on the true sovereign among Stupas, the Self-originated Chaitya on Mount Oxhorn". It was translated three times; two complete Tibetan translations survive, plus a tiny quotation from an earlier third one. Scholars of the Snowlands, moreover, also composed two extensive commentaries, in the first place directed against Tibetan pilgrimage guides to Nepal that, according to them, abounded in errors.

The origin of the Stupa - the legend is interwoven with history

According to SP and Nepal Mahatmya, ninety-one eons ago during the time of Kathmandu Valley was a big lake, named the Nagahrada or Taodhanahrada. Once Lord Vipaswi Buddha came and was said to have planted a lotus seed into the lake from Jatamatrochcha (presently known as Jamacho Hill or Nagarjuna Hill). When his disciples asked why he did so, Lord Vipaswi Buddha explained that there would appear a self-originated divine light, a manifestation of Primordial Buddha from Akanistha Bhuvan and people would call it Swayambhu. He also predicted that in the future Bodhisattva Manjushree will drain the water off from the valley and make it a habitable land. At that time Satyadharm (Dharmasatya)

Bodhisattva, who was to become Shakyamuni Buddha after ninety-one eons, was accompanying Vipaswi Buddha.

The lotus seed planted by Vipaswi Tathagata bloomed during the time Sikhi Buddha. When the Sikhi Tathagata heard that a self-originated divine light has appeared on the beautiful blooming thousand petalled lotus, he came to pay homage to Swayambhu with his disciples, among them was Bodhisattva Kshemaraj Grahapati (Kshantiraja), who was to become Shakyamuni Buddha later. Sikhi Buddha composed a hymn and merged himself with Lord Swayambhu. He also preached about Nairatmya at the southern mountain called Dhyanocha.

Later Lord Visvabhu Buddha came to pay homage to Lord Swayambhu with his disciple and offered 125000 flowers from eastern mountain called Fullo-

chha. At that time Bodhisattva Parvatakshya (Kutakiritiraja) who was to become Shakyamuni later, was with Visvabhu Buddha.

It was around the time of Visvabhu Tathagata that Bodhisattva Manjushree, fascinated to see the glorious light of Adi Buddha came from Wutai-Shan, Five-Peaked Mountain and drained the water from lake and made the valley inhabitable. According to SP it was Manjushree himself, who later manifested in human form as Manjuvajra Acarya to perform his bodhisattva deeds in the sacred land of Swayambhu.

Later, Lord Krakuchanda Buddha came with his chief disciples Jyotipala (Abhayadatta) and Gunadhvaja to pay homage to Swayambhu in Tretayuga. Jyotipala was the future Shakyamuni Buddha. He climbed up Siddhifullochcha parvat, i.e. Northern hill of Kathmandu valley, presently known as Shivapuri Hill and preached extensively the doctrines of 37 factors. At that time there were no traces of water. Then Krakuchanda Tathagata through his miraculous utterance issued forth a stream of water and hence the name Bagmati, the one of the main rivers in the valley. During that time, he also ordained 700 disciples at the place of origin of the river Bagdwara, the place of origin Bagmati river.

Similarly, Kanakmuni and Kasyapa Buddhas also came to pay homage to Lord Swayambhu and preached the doctrines extensively. The Future Sakyamuni Buddha, followed the two Tathagatas as Sudharmaraja Bodhisattva and Jyoti Raj (Prabharaja) Bodhisattva respectively.

In the Nepalese Chronicles that during the reign of King

Jitedasti in the Valley, Shakyamuni Buddha after meeting his father Suddhodhana in Kapilvastu, visited Kathmandu, to teach the dharma and pay homage to the holy shrine at Swayambhu Stupa in Kathmandu valley. He saluted Stupa thrice, offered hymns and declared that he came to pay homage to lord Swayambhu seven times in seven different births; 6 times in the emanation of a bodhisattva disciples of previous Buddhas. Then he moved to western part of Swayambhu called Goshringa Hill and there he gave the discourses on the origin of Swayambhu Stupa at the request of Maitreya Bodhisattva. Shakyamuni Buddha, after paying homage to Lord Swayambhu, and then he visited Gujesvari (Guhyesvari temple) and then went to called Namobuddha, which is located at the eastern direction of Kathmandu valley.

In the SP, all the seven Tathagata highlights the amount of virtuous one accumulates just by merely seeing or paying homage to the Mahachaitya. Particularly, on chapter 5 of SP, Shakyamuni Buddha instructs how one can get liberated from the all the 8 worldly concerns and obtain the fruit of peace, if one would duly venerate and meditate on the stupa, after establishing oneself in discipline.

According to some chronicles and folk lore, Arya Nagarjuna came to visit Swayambhu Stupa around 200 A.D. He also became priest of the shrine for some time and went to retreat at Shantipura cave. According to him, there are three narrow paths leading to the Divine light of Swayambhu. Afterwards, he went to the western hill for meditation, which is aptly known as

Nagarjuna hill these days.

There is one early inscription at Swayambhu, which provides literary evidence that the Stupa was worshipped by countless devotees from all over the Buddhist world. Among them some of the most famous names in Buddhist history Nagarjuna, Santi Deva, Naropa, Vagisvarakirti, Savaripa, Jalandharipa, Padmasambhava et al.

Two hundred years after Parinirvana of Lord Shakyamuni Buddha, Emperor Ashoka having heard the fame of Nepal as a sacred place, and having obtained the permission of his spiritual guide, Upagupta (Bhikshu), visited every holy place in the country and bathed in every sacred water, and went to Swayambhu, Gujesvari and eight Bauddha Vitaragas or Chaityas. and established numerous stupas, send missionaries to different countries to propagate the Buddha shasana. He visited Kathmandu valley with his teacher, Upagupta, his consort Tisarakshita, daughter Charumati and many other persons. He built four Stupas at Patan city at four cardinal directions of the city. It is also believed that he had built fifth stupa in Patan. Ashoka's daughter married a Nepali prince Devapala and founded the city of Devapattana and established a monastery called the Charumati Vihara which is in the place presently known as Chabahil.

Later, King Prachanda Deva paid homage to Lord Swayambhu and Bhikshu Gunakara ordained him by giving name Shantashree. Vikshu Shantashree, thinking that in later period people with evil mind might destroy this self-originated divine light, with permission from the disciple of Bodhisattva Manjushree, Vikshu Gunakara, covered it by erecting a Stupa. After completing the Stupa, he went to retreat in Shantipur.

The axis mundi of Newar Buddhist tradition

Yagmanpati Bajracharya, a Newar Buddhist scholar and a Buddhist priest, based on the legend of SP, alludes that the worshipping of the Chaitya started from the time of Vipaswi Buddha. He further claims that, the Newar Buddhist culture follows the Lokottaravada or Caityavada sect of Mahasanghika school. Thus, he alludes that the entire Newar Buddhist culture is weaved around the culture of worshipping stupa, particularly the Swayambhu Mahachaitya. He tries to substantiate his points by explaining that in Newar Buddhist culture, while performing any religious ceremo-

ny, rites, rituals, offerings etc., one must verbally commit to the Stupa repeating the line in Sanskrit "Shree Swayambhu Caitya Bhattaraka Saanidhaane..." which means, "I take the vow being in front of the lord Swayambhu Stupa..." Preferably, A monastery or vihara should be built in a place from where the Swayambhu Stupa is visible. If not, then in the shrine a representation of Swayambhu Stupa is placed. Furthermore, while going through the Cudakarma (rite of passage to mark Puberty or the coming of age) one holds the stick with the Caitya at the top, while going for the alms round to represent that one is a worshipper of the Swayambhu Stupa. He further points out that in every ritual, starting from birth till death, the chaitya occupies a central niche—the axis mundi—in Newar Buddhist cosmos.

The construction and multiple restorations of the Mahachaitya

According to Gopalraj Bamsavali (genealogy compiled between 1387 and 1390 A.D.), historically, Singu Vihara Chaitya (Swayambhu Mahachaitya) was built during the reign of Licchavi King Vrisha Deva, who ruled around 450 A.D according to historian Sylvian Levi. After its construction Mahachaitya has been devotedly restored every century for more than a millennium. Due to these efforts, the continuity of power of generation of worship remains active till our time. Here the Manjushree Namasangeeti and the Pragyaparamita are still chanted with heartfelt faith in the teachings of the tathagatas. Till the date the Mahachaitya has been restored and renovated more than fifteen times. , These restorations and

renovations were not only initiated/sponsored by the local kings and public but by the adepts, masters and lamas of different sects of Buddhism from different part of the world. This alludes at the fact that the stupa must have been for centuries not only the center of civilization, spiritual inspiration and integrity of the Nepal Mandala but a precious religious heritage for the Buddhist around the world.

Conclusion

If we pay heed to the spectrum of intellectual, cultural and material wealth that has been invested for centuries(if not eons) in the conception, inception, preservation of the Mahachaitya and in the

propagation of the cult around it, we can easily appraise that the Mahachaitya is not only a religious site seminally important for the Buddhists of the Nepal Mandala, but it is one of the most important sacred site for the Buddhist around the world as an ancient heritage site, the axis mundi, that rep-

resents the integrity of Buddhist diaspora around the world. And thus, it is not just the physical and structural aspect of Swayambhu which is worth preserving but the idea of Swayambhu as a site of soteriological and cultural importance as well which is worth propagating. ■

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A Historical Overview and Current State of Buddhist Teachings and Research in Mongolia

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Statistics based on historical circumstances

The study of Buddhism in contemporary Mongolia is inextricably linked to the social and historical external conditions of the spread of Buddhism in Mongolia on the one hand, and secularism on the other hand.

According to the results of the first population census conducted in 1918 with the help of Russia, at the beginning of the 20th century, Mongolians were almost all Buddhists. At that time, the population of Mongolia was 542,540, with 21.3% of the total population – equivalent to 105,577 individuals identifying as monks, about 20% of the entire population, or one out of every 5 people were Buddhist monks.

"In 1924, shortly after the passing of Bogd Khan Javzandamba,

the head of the sovereign state, the First Constitution of the People's Republic was adopted. It contained the following article: 'In order to safeguard and grant full freedom of conscience to every citizen of the country, it is deemed necessary to separate religious affairs from political matters, allowing individuals to freely determine and practice their religious beliefs according to their own will.'"

In Mongolia, where almost everyone was Buddhist, the People's Democratic Party, which took power after the People's Revolution in 1921, took many measures to destroy religion under the influence and leadership of the Comintern and the Soviet Union. In the 1930s, about 30,000 monks were persecuted and about 1,000 Buddhist temples were demolished.

The intense repression that reached its peak during 1937-

39, and the events that brought societal upheavals as a result of it forced Mongolians to renounce their religion and beliefs without their consent and to hide their devotion. Until the 90s of the 20th century, Mongolia was a member of the communist system and implemented the theory and ideology of communism, so it forced the public to become atheist/secular.

The restrictions related to religion and beliefs in our history in the 20th century were characterized by the direct leadership and influence of the ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party within the country and the Comintern and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from abroad.

In the 2010 population census, Mongolia conducted its first survey on the religiosity of the population. According to the census, 61.4% of the



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total population identifies as religious, with 53% being Buddhists. Furthermore, 86.2% of all individuals who follow a religious belief adhere to Buddhism.

Thus, Mongolians were publicly Buddhists at the beginning of the 20th century, and after 70 years they became atheists. In the mid-1980s, the percentage of religious people increased from 19.6% to 72.8% by 1994. However, in 2010, it decreased to 61, 4 %.

According to the new Constitution adopted in 1992, the citizens of Mongolia have the freedom of conscience, it allows free practice of religion.

Academic research

On November 19, 1921, "The Institute of Manuscripts" (Sudar Bichgiin Khureelen) was established as the first scientific academic institution in Mongolia. One of the main areas of research of the institute was the study of Buddhism, and in the late 1920s, the catalog of Mongolian Danjuur (Bstan-'gyur) was cross-referenced with the source texts and subsequently released as the "Complete Catalogue of Danjuur" or "bsDan bcos 'gyur ro cog gi dgar chag." This publication, presented in the form of scripture, contributes to

the development of Buddhist religious literature and spans 227 pages in Tibetan and Mongolian characters.

From this point of view, our Academy of Sciences has been working on registering recording, cataloging, and exploring the contents of Buddhist sources since its inception. Buddhist grammar or Buddhist linguistics and its branches have made a special contribution to the development of Mongolian literature. Mongolians who studied the traditional science of healing have developed medical sciences.

In 1970, the Department of Buddhist Studies was established in the Institute of History of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, later it was named "Buddhist Studies Sector" and transferred to the Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law in 1973. Since that time, the treatises of main schools of Buddhist philosophy, its prominent Buddhist thinkers, and sources have been studied in the sector. The Sector of Buddhist Studies has studied the history of Mongolian philosophical thought in connection with Buddhist teachings and published joint works such as "Some Issues in the History of Mongolian Philosophy" (UB, 1990) and "Overview of the History of Buddhist Philosophy" (UB, 1991)

Analyzing the works published by researchers in the field of Buddhist studies, the research has been conducted on various aspects, including the social and political views of Mongolians, the history of Mongolian Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist logic, Yogachara (Vijnanavada) philosophy, Madhyamaka philosophy, Prajnaparamita (the perfection of wisdom), astrology, and the writings of some prominent Buddhist masters.

One of the significant characteristics of Mongolian Buddhist masters is their proficiency in the Tibetan language, leading to the creation of textbooks in Tibetan language and Tibetan-Mongolian dictionaries.

During the period when communist ideology dominated our society and teaching Buddhist doctrine in civil schools and institutions was prohibited, the history of Buddhist philosophy was imparted under the title 'History of Mongolian Philosophy' in the curriculum of the Philosophy Department at the National University of Mongolia. At this time in history, it is interesting that ABCP was established by the initiative of our Buddhist researcher and Gandantechinlen Monastery.

In 1998, the Buddhist philosophy program was first introduced in our department. Today, we are conducting research on Buddhist studies and, offer undergraduate and graduate courses in religious studies, and advanced Buddhist philosophy courses in the department.

Our teachers and faculty members have been engaging in research, translation, and publication of com-

mentaries on Buddhist philosophy written by Mongolian Buddhist masters. They have also delved into the history of Mongolian Buddhism, biographies of Khutagt and Khuvilgaan, Buddhist logic, Yogachara (Vijnanavada) philosophy, Madhyamaka philosophy, Prajnaparamita (the perfection of wisdom), Abhidharma, and Buddhist ethics, among other topics.

In conclusion, I believe it is important to undertake the following initiatives for the further development of Buddhist research in Mongolia.

Firstly, implement a translation project for the works of Mongolian Buddhist masters.

Secondly, establishing exchange programs for faculty members, researchers, and students from Buddhist Universities, along with organizing summer school programs on Buddhist studies.

Thirdly, fostering the sharing and exchange of data, texts, and resource materials related to Buddhist studies. Encouraging young scholars to collaborate on joint articles for publication in professional journals and inviting scholars to join the editorial boards of Buddhist journals.

Lastly, the comparative study of Buddhist and Western philosophies is becoming increasingly significant. This area holds the potential to develop into one of the key areas of Buddhist research in Mongolia. New research topics, such as the religious issues faced by Mongolians during historical transitions from secularism, questions of religious freedom, and the formation of religious institutions in this process, are emerging. ■



A hasnd drawn oainting showing the lay out of Ikh Khuree, the old name of Ulaanbaatar. Photo courtesy of Dashi-choilin Monastery

Preserving Buddhist Cultural Heritage: Writings in Tibetan by Mongolians

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neighboring countries since ancient times. In particular, there have been extensive relations with India and Tibet in terms of religion and culture.

From the time when Buddhism began to spread from India and Tibet in Great Mongolia, a large number of well learned scholars and monks were appeared who studied the major and minor sciences of the East, and wrote the numerous works on the major and minor sciences in Mongolian. They have inherited us an invaluable history and cultural heritage by translating, interpreting the deep meaning of the teachings of the Buddha and creating new writing works that reflect the features and characteristics of the native land, place, and tradition.

In terms of translation works, 108 volumes of “Ganjuur” or “Translation of teachings of Buddha” consisting of 1,161 texts, and 226 volumes of works consisting

An important part of the intellectual cultural heritage inherited by the Mongolian people over the centuries is the literary works cre-

ated by Mongolians in the Tibetan language. Mongolians have had extensive political, economic, religious and cultural relations with

of 3,458 texts called "Danjuur" or "Translation of Explanations", a compilation of the works of Indian sages, have been translated into Mongolian. In addition, some works of Indian scholars who were not included in the Tibetan Danjuur were translated directly from Sanskrit into their native Mongolian language. Also, many works of philosophy, medicine, poetry, literature, teachings, and biographies written by Tibetan scholars were translated into Mongolian and published.

Many Mongolians spent a long time studying in monasteries in their homeland and in Tibet, mastered the Tibetan language as if it were their mother tongue, learned and perfected the traditional Buddhist knowledge of ancient India, commented on the writings of Indian and Tibetan scholars, and created their own magnificent works in Tibetan.

According to the researches of Nomch Mergen Gavj Gombojav, Borjigin Geshe Ishtavkhai, doctor, professor L. Khurelbaatar, astrologer, doctor L. Terbish, and R. Byambaa, there are over 500 individuals who composed their written works in Tibetan language.

Choji-Odser (XIV century), Ayush Gyush (XVII century), Altangerel Uvsh (XVII century), Undurgeegen Zanabazar (1635-1723), Zayabandid Luvsanperenlei (1642-1715), Oirad Zayabandid Namkhajamts (1599-1662), Lamiingegen Luvsandanjanjantsan (1639-1704), Darbabandida Luvsansodovjamts (1637-1702), Shiva shireet Luvsanshiva (1682-1745), Chin sujigt Luvsannorovsharav (1701-1768), Erdene Zuu shireet Luvsandagvadarjaa (1734-1803), Erdene Zuu Gonchigjantsan (1858-1937), Tsakhar Geshe Luvsantsuldem (1740-1810), Sumbekhambo Ishbaljir (1704-1788), Noyonkhotugt Danzanravjaa (1803-1856), Alshaa Agvaandandarlharamba (1758-1840), Bragri Damzigidorj (1781-1856),

(1797-1864), Agvaanhaidav of Jedor (1779-1838), Vangairavjamba Agvaantuvden (XIX century), Bichechtsorj Agvaandorj (1785-1849), Dai Guush Agvaandanpel (1700-1780), Arya Janlunbandid Agvaanluvsandambijantsan (1770-1845), Dandaragramba (1835-1915), Shejei Gavj Agvaandondov (XIX century), Beiliin Agvaandamba (1814-1855), Ikh Khuree Tsorj Luvsanchoinzin (XX century), gabji Luvsandash (XX century), Zava Lama Luvsandamdin (1867-1937), Sungiin Angi Lama Chagdarjav (1869-1933), Lunrigdandar (XIX century), Yondon Maaramba (XIX century), Ugalz Lama Luvsansodovjamts (1878-1961), Nuurnii lama Tserendorj (20th century), Erenkhambo Luvsantseren (1873-1934), Tserenjav Agramba (19th century), Luvsanbaldan of Orgiochi (19th century), Agvaanishsambuu (1847-1896), Toinkhambo Toysamjamts (19th century), Nomgon's Tara lama Agvaantsuldemzhamts (1880-1930), Borjigin GesheIshtavhai (1901-1972) and so on.

The great heritage of writings created in many genres, such as explanations, manuals, readings, meditations, examples, stories, notes on teachings, interpretations of difficult words, sample names, interpretations of difficult meanings, legends, stories, speeches, and letters so on, written or published in Tibetan from one volume to dozens of volumes, has been passed down to our time.

The works written by Mongolians in the Tibetan language, it is very broad in terms of subject matter, it covers all three traditional tripitakas, major and minor ten eastern wisdoms, it is very rich in terms of genres but unique, it uses many possible options in terms of descriptive methods, and it has common aspects but has unique differences in terms of content.

There are many magnificent written works such as the chanting rituals of Undurgeegen, Shiva

Shireet, Arya Janlunbandida's, books on Hayagriwa by Bragri Damtsigidorj, Lhundevbandida's method of meditation works such as "Creation and Completion Stage of Yamandaka", Luvsanperenlei's "Notes of Teachings", "Horchoinjün", history of Buddhism in Mongolia by Ishbaljir, Sumbekhambo, Tsembelguush of Tumedy, Dharamdala of BaarinKhoshun, and ZavaDamdinGavj of Khalkh, "The biography of Tsongkhapa" by TsaharGesheLuvsantsuldem, other biographies composed by Vangai Ravjamba, "Commentary of Phonetics" by Bizya Lama Damdinsuren, "Commentary on the Theory of Poets" by Jamyangarav, Agvaanbaldan, lyrical explanations and commentaries, teachings on Path "Lamrim" by Lamiingegen, "Critical Explanation on the Path to Enlightenment" by Luvsandorj Gavji, commentaries on Indian and Tibetan saint's composition, philosophical works by Agvaanbaldan, Bragri Damtsigidorji, Dandar Agramba, Agvaandorj Gavji, Baldansambuudooromba, Choinzad Lama, Nanzad Agramba, Luvsandash Gavji, philosophical debate works by Agvaankhaidav of Jedor, Paramita commentaries" by Gavji Tserendorj, phonetic works by Damdinsuren, Yanjingaivilodoi, astrological works of Sumbekhambo, Tsakhar Gebsh, medical works by Lamiingegen Luvsandanjanjantsan, Lunregdandarmaaramba, Luvsanchoimboltoyin and so on.

These examples of literary works in the Tibetan language of the Mongols are that they learned foreign languages extensively, mastered them even to the level of bilingual literature, created works that can be called scientific, contributed to the field of traditional Eastern science, and put forward their own theories, in turn, it is a proof that it had an impact on the intellectual culture of India and Tibet, where it was derived from.

The rich collection of works of

the Mongols not only greatly contributed to the development of the intellectual fund of the people of their country, but also had an appropriate effect on the development of the history, religion and culture of the Tibetan people.

The tradition of Mongolian writing in the Tibetan language dates back to the 14th century. It is reasonable to consider that the period of intense writing in Tibetan language by Mongolians from the XYII century. The tradition of Mongolian writing in Tibetan continues even to these days.

Unfortunately, during the anti-religious movement of the 1930s, more than 700 temples, more than a hundred thousand monks, religious, cultural, historical objects and books were destroyed and burnt, and many scholars and scholars were killed, some of our rich intellectual cultural heritage was destroyed. There is a sad story of the destruction of many rare and precious literary works in the Tibetan language of the Mongols belonging to the ten major and minor wisdoms.

Although valuable historical, cultural monuments and books were destroyed, Tibetan works written by Mongolians in Tibetan and classical translations beautifully translated into Mongolian, like the saying of "the bottom of the big pot is not empty", were left and inherited.

From the time the Academy of Sciences was established in Mongolia, as a result of collecting rare books and scriptures written by Mongolians in Tibetan, translated from Tibetan, and rare books by Indian and Tibetan scholars, the State Library of Mongolia, the library of Institute of Linguistics, and other libraries have a rare and important treasure of collection of books and scriptures.

After the re-opening of the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, thanks to the collection of books and scriptures from rural areas, many rare

and precious books and scriptures of Tibetan and Mongolian monks were collected, which are now kept in the library of the monastery.

S.Gombojav (1903-1980), the abbot of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery laid the groundwork for researching and recording the works of people who wrote works in Tibetan language in the first International conference of scholars for Mongolian studies with a speech entitled "The Written works by Mongolians in Tibetan language" and in this speech, he mentioned approximately 208 famous monks of Mongolia who wrote works in Tibetan language, and briefly explained which region, province, which period they belonged to, and which field of study they wrote.

Since then, a number of foreign and domestic scholars have done numerous works to study the titles and original texts of the works written in Tibetan by Mongolians and put them into the research framework. Ishtavhai, a monk of GandanTegchenling monastery, (1902-1972), wrote in Tibetan, in which he wrote the name of 100 monks, which region, which generation they belonged to, and how many volumes they had.

The book "Titles of Sumbum" which published in China contains brief biographies and titles of works of 35 Mongolian monks, such as Bichechtsorj Agvaantseren, Zaya Luvsanperenlei, tsorj Agvaanlvsandondov, Bragriyonzin Damtsigdorj, Agvaankhaidav of Jidor, and so on.

Indian scholars Raghu Vera and Lokesh Chandra have published biographies and titles of more than thirty Mongolian monks, as well as some writings and complete sumbums of many Mongolian monks. Mongolian monk Gurudeva Rinpoche published the works of famous Mongolian monks who wrote works in Tibetan, such as sumbums of "Zava Lama Luvсандаян, Tserenjavagramba of Murung monastery, Arya Janlunbandida Agvaanlvsandanbizhalt-

san (1770-1845), Agvaanbaldant-sorj, Bragriyonzin Damtsigdorj, Awgardo ram pa DpalIdanbzangpo (XIX century), etc.

In modern times, many researchers and scientists have done a lot of research and analysis on the Tibetan literary works of Mongolians who created literature in Tibetan from the perspective of linguistics, literature, philosophy, poetry, history, medicine, astrology, etc.

We all know that Academician Ts. Damdinsuren, Sh. Bira, D. Tserensodnom, doctor Ch. Altengerel, D. Yondon, L. Khurelbaatar, L. Terbish, Sh. Soninbayar have written dozens of research and analysis works on old Mongolian, Tibetan literature, Mongolian scholars and monks, and their rare and precious works.

In this way, many foreign and Mongolian scholars have published many researches on the Tibetan language writings and Mongolian writers and monks.

While we are proud of our Mongolian scholars, it is our duty that we should highlight their contributions to Mongolian religion, culture, and science, translate and publish their writings into Mongolian, bring them into the circulation of modern analysis and research, study their works more closely, and make them available to the entire world.

Although few scholars have translated some of Tibetan written works into Mongolian, it has not yet been published in Mongolia.

In the winter of 2017, we organized the Research Institute for Buddhism & Culture at the "Zuun Khuree" Dashichoiling Monastery in order to spread traditional religion, culture, Buddhist teachings, and scientific knowledge to the masses, to enlighten the people, to explain the teachings of Buddha, and to analyze the Buddhist religion and cultural heritage.

One of the projects implemented by the institute is the complete

translation of Sumbum, written in Tibetan by Mongolian monks, into Mongolian language. As a starting point for this work, the work of translating the sumbum texts of the Undurgegen Zanabazar, the main representative of the spread of Mongolian Buddhism, into Mongolian language, and laying the foundation for this sumbum, the work of translating the complete collection of the writings of Mongolian monks into Mongolian language has been started. In the future, we are planning to translate other sumbum works of Mongolian monks written in Tibetan and publish them as a series, and we hope that this work, which we are planning and implementing, will be useful for scholars and ordinary readers and devotees.

When we translated and published a series of works written by Mongolians in Tibetan language, we called it Mangalapitaka. "Mangala" means auspicious. The name of Dashichoiling Monastery means

"Auspicious Dharma Monastery", so it indicates that it is carried out in Dashichoiling Monastery. "Pitaka" means the main three collections of the teachings of Buddha.

We have already translated and published the volume of the sumbum of Undurgegen Zanabazar, I, IV, V, VII, VIII Javzandamba Khutagt, Arya Janlunbandid and Tsedenharamba.

The compilation of works of the Undurgegen Zanabazar called "sun torvu" consists of about one hundred and thirty works focusing on worship, prayer, meditation, recitation, blessing, and methods of meditation. It includes the prayers for Taranatha, Panchen Luvsanchojijantsan, Undurgegen himself, long life prayers for Nomun khan Luvsandanzanjantsan, Zayabandid Luvsanperenlei, prayers requested by Shiva shireet, Zayabandid, publication prayers for Ganjuur, Danjuur, Jadamba, Lamrimetc, the meditation method of deities such as Dorjpagam and Janraisig, and the recitations of chanting of dhar-

ma protectors Gombo, Chojjoo, Jamsran, and Tsanba.

A seven-volume collection of 157 works by Agvanluvsandambijantsan, Aryya Janlunbandid was published in Beijing in Tibetan. His writings consist of meditation on guru, yidam deities, dharma protectors, initiations, rituals, chanting, offerings, and prayers.

Tsedenharamba or Luvsantse-
sedenharamba lived in the 18th-19th centuries. He studied at the Sera Monastery in Tibet, and received the rank of lharamba. Tse-
den Lharamba wrote a total of seven books, and most of them are written in one volume, but in 2011, the Tibet Autonomous Region Publishing Committee published his sumbum in two volumes in Tibetan.

We are confident that our work of translating and publishing the works written by Mongolians will be expanded, will attract the attention of the world scholars, and the analysis and research matter will expand even more. ■

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Spread of Buddhism Among the Mongols

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Buddhism originated in India 2,500 years ago. It spread to ancient Mongolia around two thousand years ago and it evolved deeply into our culture and inherently became the link to traditional politics and religion. The history of Mongolian Buddhism is divided into three periods: ancient, middle and modern. We can say that the first introduction of Buddhism was spread among many ancient tribes living in the Mongolian lands where they established their empires. This period continued until the 10th century. A special characteristics of spread during this period is that it did not come through China or Tibet but it arrived from the Middle East Asian people nations such as the Parfy, Samarkhand, Tokhar, Kuchi, and Turkestan along the Silk Road and was introduced to Central Asia directly from India. Famous Mongolian Buddhist scholar Зава Дамдин mentioned in his Алтан дэвтэр that great panditas in Sogd and Uighur translated Mahāyāna sūtra.

At that time, the Sogdian people of Sogdia, which was an ancient Iranian civilization in Asia that existed from the 6th century BC to the 11th century AD, came from Li land to the place of the Uighurs, and became instructors for the Uighurs

and the Mongols and was taught the Dharma derived from ancient India. This is a story of how the holy Dharma was introduced there. The people not only believed in the Dharma but they were reciting Taking Refuge verses in Ancient Indian language using Hindi, Sogdian, and Uighur languages in teaching and learning. They had a tradition of using Sogdian script for wrote oral traditions. There are many such examples of Buddhism's spread before Činggis Khan's Great Empire. Buddhism was formed its own unique characteristics when it penetrated into the lifestyle, and spiritual faith among nomadic empires, especially for the Mongol and Turkic Empires. Therefore, we can refer to Mongolian Buddhism because it was performing a special role in the life of the people living in the 'Northern Land' or the Mongolian steppe.

Considering the Xiongnu Empire (3rd century BC to 1st century CE), stretched to the west to Khotan in East Turkmenistan. This was out of the boundaries of the spreading Buddhism in the steppe which was the main symbol of civilization and religion at the time. This though is uncertain.

After the fall of the Xiongnu

Empire, the Xianbeis (147-234) built their empire and moved (apparently from the east) into the region vacated by the Xiongnu. Although there is some evidence that their political policy was based on Buddhist myths or tales, Buddhism was not their main religion, but Shamanism.

The current tradition of Mahāyāna Buddhism found its form around the time of the empire of the Northern Wei (386-534). After the Xiongnu Empire, Buddhism prevailed in the Toba people in the nomadic tribes and at the base was a combination of religion and authority system set its first form in the Northern Wei Empire of Toba people.

Aristocrats in the Toba Wei Empire also known as Northern Wei, built historical Buddhist construction as a symbol of the success of their empire and state. The influence of monarchs of Toba Wei performed a significant impression on the aristocrats of the Juan-juan Empire in the land of the Mongols and it did notably affect to spread Buddhism there.

The Juan-juan Khaganate among the ancient nomadic empires glorified Buddhism at national level. They had direct contact with In-

dia and actualized Indian Buddhist culture in the land of the Mongols. Shamanism was their main religion at first but they were converted into Buddhism eventually and it became the state religion. The monarchs of the Juan-juan khaganate issued orders to create Buddhist thangkas and statues by gold and other precious gems. Around 438–489, they invited Pandita Darmapariya, who understood the meaning of many sutras, such as the Abhidharma sūtra, Sangha sūtra, and gained the special power of mantra. They enthroned him as the guru of the nation and they gave him 3000 households as his servicemen. It is becoming clear in historical materials that Buddhism in Central Asia

building temples and stūpas in Khar Balgas (Mo. qar-a balyasun, Khal. xar balgas), Baibalyk city and translating many Buddhist sūtras for the further development of Buddhism. Even though this growth reached its top level from 744-840, after the tantric tradition for the national religion, Buddhism started to weaken. They used Sogdian script at the beginning. It is known nowadays as Uighur script. Some words such as nirwaan (Khal. gaslangaas nöxcösön, Skr. nirvāna, Tib. mya ngan las 'das pa), shashin (Skr. śāšana, Mo. šasin), sansar (Skr. śansāra, Mo. sansar), sudar (Skr. sūtra, Mo. sudur), shastir (Skr. śāstara, Mo. šastar), adis (Skr. adhishthāna, Mo. adis), we still use

political power. At the beginning of the 10th century, Buddhism became the main religion for people. Not only Buddhist ideology was important for them but also the philosophy of Konfucius, Taoist philosophy, and shamanism existed harmoniously. Even though the sangha of the Khitans mostly received their Buddhist culture from the Tang dynasty, they did not keep many new achievements from the Song dynasty.

The trails that show Buddhism gained at a high level during the Khitan Empire are the construction of Buddhist temples and stūpas. Many Khitan temples and stūpas from the Steppe of Eastern Mongolia through the land of Manchuria, Inner Mongolia to Shanxi currently (Shanxi Province in China), and Beijing are the evidence to show they were highly skilled builders. These constructions were mostly Chinese style. Two of the biggest examples of it are the stūpa of Kherlen Bars city near the Kherlen River in Tsagaan Owoo district in Dornod Province in Eastern Mongolia and Jinchin White stūpa in Western Baarin Province in Inner Mongolia.

Buddhism gained its success many times in ancient nations which rose and fell in the land of the Mongols. They were receiving the religious culture of ancient India through the Middle East and enriched it with their nomadic culture. This was the beginning of Buddhism thriving in the land of Mongolia.

The 13th century is a special period that saw a major revolution for national consciousness, social ethics, mind, ideology for the Mongols. Although the nomadic clans had continuous war with one another, eventually they built the greatest empire of all time which conquered almost half of the world. After the Mongol Empire was established in 1206, they had active political, economic, and cultural relations with their neighborhood and other na-



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was introduced from the period of the Turkic Empire (555-745), and the Toba emperor (573-581) issued an order to build Buddhist temples and stūpas (Mo. suburyan). Afterwards, Buddhism spread during the period of Ishpara emperor (581-587) and Bilge emperor (710-730) in the central part of Mongolia.

After the Turkic era, Buddhism continued its development in the period of the Uighur Empire. Many activities were completed such as

today derived from Uighur which they used at that time before the first wave of Buddhism came from Tibet. Therefore, contributions of the Uighurs in religion and culture of Mongolia are immeasurable.

The Khitan people of the Great Liao dynasty (907-1125) who spoke a Mongolian language supported Buddhism when their empire was strong and powerful. They were announced Buddhism for their national religion and tried to use their

tions of the world. It became the prosperity of spreading Buddhism which already had a great religious tradition in nomadic people and other religions.

Even though Činggis Khan (1162-1227) and his successors respected all the religions, eventually Buddhism had stronger influence than others. The Khans of the empires had a special tie with Tibetan high ranking monks and they had the policy to support Buddhism. Thinking that Buddhism came to Mongolia only from Tibet is incorrect. While there is the form of Tibetan Buddhism, there were other forms of Buddhism such as from the Uighurs, Tanguds (Mo. qašin irgen, Tib. mi nyag), and Chinese. It is obvious that the spreading Buddhism from Uighur was Tata tonga (Mo. tatatungya), the keeper of the seal of the Naiman Tayan Khan, who fell into the hands of the Mongols, and had strong influence to Činggis Khan. Tatatonga was not Naiman, but an Uighur and eventually he became an advisor to Činggis Khan. The Uighurs used primarily a script that had been derived from the Sogdian script and which is referred to as Uighur script. The Uighur Tatatonga assumed office with Činggis Khan and apparently taught the Uighur script to the Mongols. This script began to be used also for representing the Mongolian language. To the present day, the Uighur script is widely used by the Mongols.

After conquering against the Xixia Empire, the Empire of the Tanguds. Činggis Khan had an opportunity to make contact directly with Tibet in 1227, and he was received a lot of information from Tibetan ranking high monks. At that time, 7 monks came from Tibet to teach but they returned not long after because of the oppositions from shamans. Mentioned by name are Tsalwadungarba, a disciple of Zhang tshal pa brTson 'grus grags pa (1123-1193), the founder of the Tsalwagarjudba (Tib. tshal pa bka'

brgyud pa), and Zina Geshe (Tib. dge bshes), a learned Sakya monk. Činggis Khan is reported to have been so favorably struck by Tsalwadungarba that he granted the Buddhists exemption from taxes. Also, he was giving an order to reconstruct monasteries in the Tangud area.

In historical material, "When Činggis Khan went to Tibet he was 45 years old, in the year of the Fire Rabbit of the 14th sexagenary cycle (1206), Desrid Togma and Tsalba Gungaadorj sent their 300 people to greet him and organized a special ceremony. This messenger brought a message about their surrender and offering of three provinces of Ngari (Tib. mnga' ris skor gsum), four provinces in Ü-tsang (Tib. dbus gtsang) and three places in Southern Kham (Tib. khams) under his rule as the present of capitulating. This area of Tibet became under his control. According to another source, he sent his letter and presents to Gungaanyambo (Tib. kun dga' snying po), high ranking monk of the Sakya stream of Tibetan Buddhism out of his respect to the monk. He said "I have a special reason to invite your holiness. However, it is not the right time now because of political reasons but I have an admiration for you. Therefore, could you include me in your prayers? Someday, when I finish the matters, you should come to visit here with your disciples to spread Buddhism in the Mongol lands." Even though he never met the monk in face to face, because he had faith in the monk from a distance and sent his presents to monastics and the Ü-tsang precious three deities, he is a King of Dharma." Additionally, Činggis Khan had contact with Chinese Buddhist monks.

During the campaign against the Jin Dynasty (Mo. altan ulus) that lasted from 1211 to 1216, Činggis Khan encountered representatives of Chinese Buddhism. In 1214, the thirteen-year old monk Haiyun

(1202-1257) paid his respects to him. Haiyun belonged to the Chan or meditation school (Chin. chan-zong) that had a big influence in Northern China at the beginning of the 13th century. It is obvious that the Great Khan asked many things about Buddhism and had the answers from the monk. Činggis Khan issued an order to exempt Chinese Buddhist monks from tax. His successors followed this order. The Chan master (Chin. chanshi) Haiyun also enjoyed the highest esteem from Činggis Khan's successors Ögödei (r. 1229-1241), Güyüg (r. 1242-1246), and Möngke (r. 1251-1259).

Based on the facts mentioned above, Činggis Khan was a ruler who helped Buddhist Dharma and who used the dual system, the combination of religion and political system. We can say that he gave this tradition to the next generations.

Ögödei Khan (1186-1241) invited the high ranking monk of Taglungpa monastery (Tib. stag lung pa) in Tibet to the Mongol lands and appointed him as guru of Sorkhagtani, queen of Tului (?-1252) and his son in Karakorum, capital of the Mongol Empire. As mentioned in some books of the Great Yuan Dynasty, the period of Ögödei Khan, Namu, Otochi monks from Kashmiri or Kachi of Northern monks came to the Khan's palace. Güyüg Khan (?-1248), the third khan of the Great Mongol Empire, declared Namu as his dharma teacher. Also, Möngke Khan (1208-1259) proclaimed him as a national religious leader and issued him a special seal. Namu played an important role together with Phagpa Drogön Chogyal (Tib. 'phags pa 'gro mgon chos rgyal, 1235-1280) making Tibetan Buddhism to become the dominant religion of the Yuan dynasty during the period on Qubilai Khan (1215-1295). One evidence of Buddhism that was important at the beginning of the Great Mongol Empire is the inscription on a stone monument

found near the base of Erdene Zuu monastery. The meaning of the script was about Ögödei Khan who ordered to build a large temple in 1246 and Möngke Khan completed the construction in 1256. Other Khans were also paying attention to the temple and they spent some wealth for reconstruction in 1311, 1342-1346, thus it became more elegant. There were five stores and 90 meters tall tower (ger) on the top of the temple, 7 jan (Mo. jang) size, every room at four sides, shrines with many sūtras and statues, a gold-covered stūpa, solid castle around the temple and three 3 double-door entrances.

W. B. Rubruck mentioned 12 Buddhist temples in Karakorum. They were decorated beautifully around the temple entrances and had resting or sitting places near the biggest entrance. There were very tall trees, taller than anything in the city, near the big entrance. This tree was the kind of direction point to the Buddhist temple. When I entered the temple, I saw many monks sitting outside, near the entrance. As it was mentioned in Rubruck's book, there were 12 temples for different nations. In 1227, after Činggis Khan passed away, the relationship between the Great Mongol Empire and Tibet was not good for a while. The Mongols' first intention was not to conquer Tibet but they were controlling them through supporting their high ranking monks and the strongest tradition of Tibetan Buddhism at that time. This policy continued throughout history.

In 1240, Göden son of Ögödei Khan, was ruling the area around Kukunor (Mo. köke nayur, Khal. xöx nuur). In 1240 he sent an army to Central Tibet. This brought the whole territory from Kong-po in the southeast of Tibet to the border with Nepal under Mongolian rule. The Mongolian troops were under the supreme command of general Doorda (Tib. dor ta/rdo rta).

Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyeltsen (Tib. sa skya pandi ta kun dga' rg-

yal mtshan, 1182-1251), was a high ranking monk of the Sakya stream of Tibetan Buddhism. His two nephews, Phagpa Drogön Chogyal was ten years old at that time, and his brother was only six years old when left their palace in 1247 for the invitation of Göden. After a long trip, they finally reached the palace of Göden in Lanzhou in the 8th month of the year of the Fire Horse (1246). They reached Göden's encampment in Sira Tala the "Yellow Plain", in the neighbourhood of Lanzhou, in the central part of present-day Gansu Province. He was 65 years old at that time. Göden was in Mongolia but he came back to his palace and greeted them with great respect on the first day of the Sheep month. Göden was suffering from leprosy at that time and Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyeltsen cured his pain with special rituals and herbs. Therefore, the noyon had a deep faith in the monk and he became a benefactor of Buddhism. He received many important teachings including initiation of Hevajra (Tib. kye'i rdo rje) for accumulating merits. This meeting was important to Tibetans and they stayed peaceful under his protection. On the contrary, it was important to spread Buddhism amongst the Mongolian people.

This was the event that Göden had a dharma connection with Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyeltsen as "object of offering (=Lama) and almsgiver, religious guide and worldly patron" (Mo. takil-un oron, öglige-yin ejen, Tib. mchod gnas, yon bdag). Göden enthroned this high ranking monk of the Sakya stream to be the head of Tibetan Buddhism and became the benefactor of Buddhism. Qubilai Khan invited Phagpa to Shangdu (Mo. šangdu, Khal. šandu), which was the capital of the Yuan Empire (1259-1378) to appoint him as monk in 1253. He gave a honorary title "Guru of the Empire" (Chin. guo shi) to the high ranking monk of Tibetan Buddhism and en-

throned him to be the head of Buddhism of the entire empire. Moreover, Buddhism was announced as the main religion and Buddhist monks, who kept their vows purely, were exempted from any kinds of tax. Also, they prohibited their messengers staying overnight in temples, using their land, water, and properties which belong to a temple. In other words, this was a kind of protection of Buddhism from dissolving into many religions especially the Chinese culture. The dual system, initiated by Phagpa and implemented by Qubilai Khan, was improved more by the next successors. Qubilai Khan's policy, which was the combination of the worldly policy and the teaching of the Buddha, had been preserved until the beginning of the last century.

The next Khans of the Great Yuan Empire such as Ölziit Khan (1265-1307), Khaisankhüleg Khan (1281-1311), Buyant Khan (1285-1320), Yesöntömör Khan (1276-1328), Zayat Khan (1304-1322), Rinchenbal Khan (1326-1332), and Togoontömör Khan (1320-1370) had their own chosen guru and they were controlled the empire with the dual system. Even though the Nyingma (Tib. rnying ma) stream and the Sakya stream of Tibetan Buddhism were introduced during the period of the Yuan Empire, it just gained its success among the royals of the Empire but did not expand its popularity among the ordinary people.

After the fall of the Yuan Empire, Buddhism temporarily lost its popularity and shamanism found its success more than ever in the Mongol land. Many historians consider that as the "Dark Period". It seems that many people were preferring shamanism over Buddhism and they were doing many wrongdoings. Nevertheless, the influence of Buddhism was still strong in the area of Western Mongolia and the Southern area which had boundaries with the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). Togoön and Esen

Khan of Oirat gave a honorary title "Guru of the State" to high ranking monks of Tibet and they were trying acceptance by Ming dynasty. When the Oirats tried to establish a relationship with the Ming Dynasty, they sent messengers to high ranking monk from Oirat and Tibet and demanding them to give honorary titles and the charity of Buddhist statues and thangkas.

The third wave of Buddhism with many failures and success came to the present from the beginning of 16th century and it still continues into the 21st century. Even though the third wave of Buddhism is generally the same as the previous, its nature differs in some ways. We could say that this wave was used in a more political purpose.

After the fall of the Yuan Empire of the Mongols, they lost their policy of being unified, and aristocrats were tried to be independent everywhere. Having contact with the high ranking monks of a tradition in Tibetan Buddhism was a way of showing power. Mongols wanted their power and unity back in their politics throughout a century. This method started from Qubilai Khan as a guru-benefactor relationship gave mutual benefit in both politics and religion. Therefore, the competition of making contacts to high ranking monks of Tibetan Buddhism was the main characteristics of the aristocrats to the middle of the 16th to 17th centuries. Gradually, Buddhism was spreading in all parts of Mongolia including Tümed, the main ethnic group of Inner Mongolia, Khalkha, subdivided into four province or Aimag Oirat, and Inner Mongolia. According to Johan Elverskog "Tibetan Buddhism and 263 monasteries of its derived version of Buddhism in a Mongolia was giving an opportunity to many groups of Mongols to keep their separation.....Aristocrats of many small groups or provinces were understanding that it is impossible to keep their independence based on

Dayan Khan's policy of the nation. In other words, they were trying to unite their nation under the influence of one religion and culture. From the middle of the 16th-17th century, Red and Yellow Stream of Tibetan Buddhism spread in the Mongol lands. Society was disappointed because of meaningless competition among the aristocrats of that time and they thought the unity under one religion and one policy as the only solution to overcome these issues. It was clear that they saw Buddhism meeting these requirements when they choose this religion because of the demands of that time.

It was a political necessity at that time but it was not pressured by someone. Most of the influential royal people of the Mongols contacted high ranking monks of the Gelukpa stream (Tib. dge lugs pa) of Tibetan Buddhism, also known as Yellow hat stream. It was the newest and the most powerful stream at that time. Instead of shamanism which was not enough to the political demands, they were welcomed this tradition because it was enriched by the dual system and they tried to modify it according to the culture of the Mongols. These are the reasons of why this religion spread in the land of the Mongols and one of the special features of Buddhism in the middle of 16th and early 17th centuries.

In the middle of the 16th century, Altan Khan (1502-1582) of the Tümed Mongols lived in the rich plain situated in the northeast corner of the loop of the Yellow River. He had a significant role in spreading Tibetan Buddhism, especially the Gelukpa stream in the Mongol lands from the royals of the Mongols. Altan Khan and Khutugtai Tsetsen (Mo. čečen, Khal. cecen) of Ordos (Mo. ordus) invited more than 20 monks from Tibet and some of them travelled through the land of the Ming dynasty. They taught the Buddhist doctrine and tried to educate and enlighten peo-

ple with the Buddhist teachings.

Altan Khan had a very active policy of spreading Buddhism such as inviting Sönam Gyatso (Tib. bsod nam rgya mtsho, 1543-1588), high ranking monk of the Gelukpa stream of Tibetan Buddhism, in Tsawchaal Temple, having a personal meeting with the monk, having faith in the Gelukpa stream with his followers. He started spreading Buddhism among the ordinary people in his area. In the meeting, he created a rule of the approval of Buddhism in the Mongol lands which corresponds to Арван буянт номын цагаан түүх [White History of the Dharma with Ten Virtues], a rule of Qubilai Khan to combine the policy of politics and religion. This legislation was the first law officially approving and supporting the spread of Buddhism.

This law prohibited the old traditions in shamanic rituals such as killing animals to sacrifice to the spirit of the shaman, burying people and animals with their deceased ones. Instead, it allowed people to make offerings such as milk and butter for such deities as Mahākāla (Tib. nag po chen po). This law harshly punished Shamanism and supported widely the Gelukpa stream of Tibetan Buddhism. Altan Khan gave the honorary title of Dalai Lama for the first time to Sönam Gyatso in a meeting, and permitted him to be such as Phagpa, the guru of Qubilai Khan. Also, Sönam Gyatso, and Maitreya khutugtu gave a honorary title "Dharma Čakravartinking, The Powerful One" and a silver stamp to Altan Khan and gave an honorary title "Ärya Tārā", an emanation of Tārā, to the queen of Altan Khan. This Dalai Lama title became official and later, this title was given to the Gedun Drub (Tib. dge 'dun grub pa, 1391-1474), a disciple of Tsongkhapa (Tib. tsong kha pa, 1357-1419), as the First Dalai Lama and his emanation Gedun Gyatso (Tib. dge 'dun rgya mtsho, 1475-1542) as the Second Dalai Lama. Altan Khan

hoped to unify again the Mongolian polities in a confederation based on this universal and organized religion, which had attracted the settled Tümed nobility by its sophisticated rituals, doctrine, and literature. For his part, the Dalai Lama hoped to find in these new allies strong military support that could allow the Gelukpa stream to consolidate their influence and to conquer whole Tibet.

By building a good relationship with the Third Dalai Lama Sönam Gyatso, Altan Khan, one of the most influential royals of the Mongols, became the most influential person spreading Buddhism in the Mongol lands, specially the Gelukpa stream. Next, Tümen Zasagt Khan (1539-1592), Abtai Sain Khan (1554-1588), Altan Khan Sholoi (1567-1627) and Oirat Baibagas had strong faith in Buddhism and they started to spread Buddhism in their areas. For instance, Tümen Zasagt Khan (1558-1593) tried to create a political and religious union with Tibet to restore their nation's unity and improve the power of the nation.

In order to support the expansion of Buddhism, he passed "Great Tsaz" (Mo. čayaja, Khal. caaj) or "Prohibition Law" in 1576, and invited Wangchuk Dorje (Tib. dbang phyug rdo rje, 1556-1603), the abbot of the Nyingma stream, well known as sword knitter (Mo. ildün janggıduyči) of the Nyingma stream of Tibetan Buddhism, became his disciple, and actively worked on spreading this stream among the Tsakhar (Mo. čaqar, Khal. caxar), a Mongol ethnic group. Also, Tümen Zasagt Khan invited the Third Dalai Lama Sönam Gyatso (1543-1588) from Kökeqota to Tsakhar and tried to support the Gelukpa stream. This was their policy to get support of the Red and Yellow Streams. The third Dalai Lama, Sönam Gyatso passed away on the area of the Khorchin (Mo. qorčın, Khal. xorčın) Mongols in the southern area of

the Mongols in 1588 while he was making efforts for spreading Buddhism.

A boy was born in the family of Sumberu Daichin, the oldest son of Senge Düüren, son of Altan Khan, and his wife Dare, also known Baakhanzul in the year of Ox of the 10th sexagenary cycle (1589) and he was enthroned as the reincarnation of the Third Dalai Lama Sönam Gyatso. This was an unusual event in the history of the Mongols in the 16th century.

Enthroning the Fourth Dalai Lama Yonten Gyatso (Tib. yon tan rgya mtsho, 1589-1616) from the area of the Mongols was important in the relationship of Tibet and the Mongol lands to accelerate the advancement of Buddhism in the area of the Mongols.

Ligden khutugtu (1598-1634) descendant of the elder son of Činggis Khan, hence the legitimate emperor of all Mongols, built a centre for Buddhism in Awga Khar Mountain by building Tsagaan Balgas (White City) and Tsagaan Stüpa (Mo. čayan suburyan, Khal. čagaan suwarga) and invited Maitreya khutugtu Donkhor Yonten Gyatso (Tib. stong 'khor yon tan rgya mtsho, 1557-1587) and Sharawdanzan khutugtu, who both were representatives of the Fourth Dalai Lama, to the centre. He became a disciple to them and received many empowerments. He ordered the translation of the Kanjur, total of 108 volumes, from Tibetan to the Mongolian Language to high ranking monk Pandita Gungaa-Odser (Tib. kun dga'od zer) and his 33 translators even though this work was started in the period of Altan Khan and printed the collection using gold. Ligden Khan strictly following the policy for religion in the Yuan Empire of Qubilai Khan invited many eminent monks from the Nyingma and Sakya streams supporting mostly by the tantric stream of Tibetan Buddhism.

Abtai sain Khan of the Khalkha

(1554-1588) sent his messengers with their leader Alag Darkhan of Khernuud tribe to Tümed to invite monk Gümen Nanso in 1581 and monk Samla Nanso in 1583. He received Dharma teachings and initiated vows. He became as an example of how a good disciple should be and it was the start of spreading Buddhism in Khalkha.

Abtai Khan had contacts with high ranking monks of Tibet who were residing in Inner Mongolia at the time. With the help of Altan Khan and Sengedüüren Khan (1538-1585), he met the Third Dalai Lama Sönam Gyatso in 1585 on the 15th day or full moon day of the last month of summer, and gave him precious gifts such as sable fur, glittering tent, silver and livestock. In return, Sönam Gyatso gave him a non-combustible thangka of Pagmadupe Vajra King, this time to him an honorary title "Vajra King", a stamp with yellow letters and he gave title because of many Khans were supporters of the Vajra tradition.

Abtai Sain Khan chose an old Vajrapāni statue from the many Buddhist statues. He selected it intentionally because he might have thought about Činggis Khan when he made his decision. There is an evidence that the red hat stream was strong at the beginning in Khalkha. After his return to his land, Abtai Sain Khan started to build the Zuu temple, a Zuu or Śākyamuni Buddha thangka in enormous size and the translation of sūtras as a symbol of the Triple Gem. Erdene Zuu Khiid monastery was built from 1585-1587 and he enthroned Lodoinyanbo sent from Tibet to the monastery. This monk officially opened the monastery with special Buddhist rituals and gave its name "Bat Erdene Zuu". From this moment, Erdene Zuu monastery became a centre of politics, religion, culture and economy and it was thought of as the sacred land for many devotees of the Mongol lands. Buddhism

spread at a fast phase until the beginning of the 17th century. Buddhism reached its highest peak of the extent and its teachings: rituals and organizations were well organized and penetrated deep into people's mind. For example, many monks and khutugtus such as Zaya Pandita Namkhajamts (Tib. nam mkha'i rgya mtsho, 1599-1662) in Oirat, Jidshod khutugtu Agwaan-danzanperenlei (1627-1672) in Oirat, the great translator Agwaan-Looroi, Luwsanpuntsag (Tib. blo bzang phun tshogs), abbot of Gomang Datsan (Tib. sgo mang grwa tshang) of Drepung Monastery (Tib. 'bras spungs dgon pa) in Tibet, Öndör Gegeen Zanabazar (1635-1723), also known as Jebtsundamba (Tib. rje btsun dam pa), Jalkhanz Khutugtu Lobsang Tenzin Gyaltsen, Lamiin Gegeen Lobsang Tenzin Gyaltsen (1639-1703), Zaya Pandita Lobsang Trinley (1642-1715), Darba Pandita Sonam Gyatso (1637-1702) had important roles in this development. In Inner Mongolian Torguud Neyiji toyin (1557-1788), Oirat Sumpa Khamba Ishbaljir (1704-1788), Buryat Damba Darjaa Zayayev (1711-1776) had great contributions too. Most of the high ranking monks and khutugtus of the Mongol land were sent to Tibet, when they were young to study Buddhism under the guidance of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. They resided in Lhasa, Ganden (Tib. dga' ldan rnam par rgyal ba'i gling), Sera (Tib. se ra), Drepung, Tashilhunpo (Tib. bkra shis lhun po) monasteries and after they studied the biggest five doctrines of Buddhist philosophy, they returned to their homeland to contribute to spreading Buddhism, to build monastic schools, to teach the Dharma, and to translate and print sūtras.

Like many other oriental people, the Mongols entered deeply into the boundary of Buddhist religion and culture and Buddhism became the dominant religion. The number of highly educated monks increased

and many khutugtus who were educated in Mongols and Tibet tirelessly performed their religious activities. Many royal people became benefactors, spent their prosperities on building temples, giving goods and livestock, finding pupils etc. Royals welcomed Buddhism and created the title of Dalai Lama. When they gave this title to Sönam Gyatso for the first time, he was the abbot or abbot of Drepung monastery in Tibet. The next Dalai Lama reincarnated and enthroned in the Mongol lands, and the relationship between the Mongols and Tibet reached a very high level. This was an important condition to spread Buddhism during the Ming Dynasty and Manchu Empire. The contribution of the Mongols to the development of Buddhism was immense.

After the Fourth Dalai Lama Yondonjamts (1589-1617) was enthroned from Mongol land, Zanabazar (1635-1723), a son of Tüsheets Khan Gombodorj (1594-1655), direct descendant of Činggis Khan, and Khandjamts the wife of Gombodorj and the daughter of Dörwöd Dalai, who was leader of the Dörwöd, was declared spiritual leader of the Mongols in the year of the blue, Wooden Pig year in the 11th sexagenary cycle (1635) and it was an important event in the life of khutugtu's and high ranking monks. This was an effort to have one spiritual leader and an attempt to soften the conflict between the Khalkhas and the Oirats on the other hand. Also, it was a great effort to unite the nation in spiritual and political ways. Red Hat Donkhor Khutugtu ordained a 5-year old boy, son of Tüsheets Khan Gombodorj and grandson of Abtai Sain Khan of Khalkha, with rawjung (Tib. rab 'byung) vow and gave him the ordained name "Zanabazar".

A special palace was built at Shiree Tsagaan Nuur (Mo. siregetü čayan nayur, Khal. šireet cagaan nuur) in the year of the yellow Rabbit in the 11th sexagenary cycle (1639), many people like

khans, royals, monastics, and laymen gathered at the place from all around in Khalkha including the four Khalkha provinces, and they enthroned Zanabazar as a spiritual leader in the Northern Mongolian land and the protector of sentient beings. Khans, royals from 7 banners collected charity to found Ikh Shaw' or treasure fund and gave him service people for his religious activities. This was the first establishment of Ikh Khüree (Mo. yeke küriy-e, Khal. ix xüree). Zanabazar established many monasteries and temples such as Baruun Khüree (Western buddhist complex) or Ribogejai Gandanshaddüwlin (Tib. ri bo dge rgyas dga' ldan bshad sgrub gling) [Monastery with Full Beauty and Joy in Theory and Practice] monastery near Erdene Zuu monastery which was built by Abtai Sain Khan in Karakorum, where many Great Mongolian khans resided before, in 1654 and Sardagiin Khiid (Mo. šardag-un keyid, Khal. sardagiin xiid) in the south of Khan Khentii Mountain (Mo. qan kentei ayula, Khal. xan xentii uul) in 1688. After many times of movements, Ikh Khüree moved to near Bogd Khan Mountain (Mo. boyda qan ayula, Khal. bogd xan uul) on the bank of the Tuul River (Mo. tuul yool, Khal. tuul gol). This was the base of today's Ulaanbaatar, the capital city of Mongolia. In Mongolian history Zanabazar established a brand-new religious and cultural school, founded monastic camps, monasteries and temples, and laid the basis of the intensive spreading of Buddhism throughout Mongolia. He did not aim at adopting and spreading Tibetan Buddhism in its original form, but made efforts to innovate it completing with nomadic lifestyle, nomadic culture and psychology. He used his own talents as well as the vocation of his disciples. As fruits and results, several highly educated monks worked on the spreading of Gelukpa teachings, founded various assemblies, temples and monasteries which fit

to the nomadic, moving lifestyle, and also introduced monastic regulations, ceremonial rules, different rites and practices combining them

with the traditional way of life and mindset of the Mongols.

Starting from Öndör Gegeen Zanabazar, ten incarnations of the

Jebtsundamba Khutugtus have been recognized in Mongolia, who secured and spread Buddhism ever since. ■

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Buddhist Peace Initiative – A Contribution to the Sustained Holistic Development for the Global South

**By Venerable Buddhadatta Thera,
Director, Mahabodhi Research Center,
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Namo Buddhaya!
Homage to the Triple Gem Blessed
one perfect one and supremely
Enlightened One!

Most Ven, Gabju D. Chojamts
,President, ABCP,
Ven. Da Lama Byambajav, Secretary
General, ABCP,
Most Ven. Thic Nhat Tu, Vietnam
Most Ven. Sitagu Sayadawji, from
Myanmar,
Mr. Sonam Wongchuk ji, Hon'ble
Deputy Secretary General, ABCP,
Dr. Khy Suvanaratana, State Secre-
tary, Government of Cambodia,
Venerable Members of the
Mahasangha, National heads,
ABCP members,
Estmeed delegates and dignitaries
from different countries,
Ladies and gentlemen.

Dear Friends in the Dhamma,

I bring very warm greetings to
all of you from the Maha Bodhi
Society, Bengaluru in South India.
Maha Bodhi Society Bengaluru was
established in the year 1956 by the



*Venerable Buddhadatta Thera, Director, Mahabodhi Research Center,
Maha Bodhi Society, Bengaluru*

Most Venerable Acharya Buddhara-
kkhita, a monk of deep commit-
ment and compassion, who worked
tirelessly for 57 years. He was very
close Dharma brother of Most Ven-
erable Kushok Bakula Rinpoche,
one of the founders of the ABCP.

Together they worked hard in their
won areas with the mission of edu-
cating the youths and several Bud-
dhist developmental projects. To-
day many people are beneficiaries
of their selfless services.

It is a great privilege to be

Mahabodhi Society of Bengaluru

amongst you all in the ABCP assembly. We all sincerely wish the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace to emerge as Buddhists Voice of Global South. The founders of the ABCP had a great vision and worked hard. It is our bounded duty to take this forward. Buddha means peace and peace means Buddha. Nobody contradicts this aspect. The only challenge now is to reach out to more and more people in a practical way.

Buddha said in Dhammapada
Na hi verenaverāṇi,
sammantīdhakudācanam;
Averena ca sammanti,
esadhammosanantano.

Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world. By non-hatred alone is hatred appeased. That is universal love (metta). Victory begets enmity; the defeated dwell in pain. Happily, the peaceful live, discarding both victory and defeat.

Sisters and brothers, today every word of our Supreme Buddha are becoming more and more relevant. But how to convey this to the world! All of us here know that the Buddha's teachings are pragmatic and relevant and also we know that if we adopt even a little bit of this teaching, our earth will change drastically. There are so many efforts in different forms. Still, we need to evolve more methods to reach out for the good and welfare of the world. Universal message of Buddha's teaching is more relevant and essential medicine for the ailing world today than ever.

Peace is an imperative and a prime need of the hour today in challenging times and ever diverse world. Beyond conflict, defeats and victories each Individuals, Family, society and Globe as one family yearning to live in peace and harmony. To achieve this, we need the noble teaching of Buddha in our hearts, establish ourselves as peace ambassadors and share it with the whole world. By practising, Virues, meditation, calmness for mental culture and insight for realising



Puja and meditation organized by the Maha Bodhi Society, Bengaluru



wisdom. EkayanoMaggo, this is the only way - Path of noble Eightfold path, path of sila- samadhi- panya. Practice of Mindfulness, taught by the Buddha the more we practise we awaken to the Buddha nature. Buddha's noble truths and noble paths is the way to purification harmony bringing about freedom, cessation of all conflicts and suffering, be it Individual family societal or Internationally.

Today, Global South is emerging in every field. This is also true with some Buddhist activities thriving in some places. But it has also brought certain dangers of distracting peo-

ple from the preference they gave to Buddhism earlier. There is a need for harmonizing Buddhist religion and practices with the modern change. In the hype of material changes or enticements or with modern lifestyle the practice of religion is slowly taking sideline. Sometimes it is negligence and sometimes it is time pressure.

The very notion of 'development' has to be redefined so that while material prosperity is gained, spiritual and cultural wealth are not lost. There is a big challenge for the countries in the Global South to go

Maha Bodhi Society Bengaluru

Dedicated to peace, meditation, harmony, sustained development, holistic education, health for all, social equality and freedom

Mahabodhi Monastic Institute (MMI) is an important pioneering venture of MBS and the main focus has been on training monks. It is one of the main Theravada monastic centers in India, where theory and practice are equally given emphasis. The MMI was started in the year 2001 by Most Respected BadaBhan-teji, Venerable Dr. Acharya Buddharakkhita with the aim of providing all holistic facilities for self-realization through a monastic living and for reviving the Dhamma in its birth place, India.

Every day puja, meditation and weekly Dhamma talks in English and Kannada language are held regularly. Society serves the sick and poor through three hospitals and medical centers and regular visits and prayers at various hospitals in Bengaluru.

Mahabodhi Research Centre, (MBRC) a pioneering center for Buddhist studies, was established in the year 2017 to promote Buddhist courses, from Diploma certificate to Ph. D and in Buddhist studies in the field of higher Buddhist studies and research. MBRC is affiliated with the Karnataka Sanskrit University and JAIN university in Bangalore.

through this phase. We are followers of the Enlightened One who have great responsibility to bring the teachings of the Buddha practically in the hearts of Buddhists and also non Buddhists equally. We are fortunate to have Lord Buddha's teachings which are so universal that anybody can adopt Buddhist principles fully or partly. This benefit has to be utilized fully.

Maha Bodhi Society, Bengaluru, being one of the biggest Buddhist organizations under the vision of Most Venerable Acharya Buddharakkhita Mahathera, the holistic approach is adopted to convey the message of peace. We work mainly to train young monks from all over India, who are truth seekers and peace lovers and want to spread the same message. Education is another field which is very essential as the young minds need to be properly nourished with positive attitudes of peace, compassion, wisdom and togetherness in the world. Thirdly we try to serve the sick and the suffering through medical services. Another area of our work is publication of books and translation of Pali scriptures. Meditation is another effective way of conveying the teachings of the Buddha, where every individual experiences at deeper level the truths of life and peace of mind.



Serving the sick and the poor thousand hospitals and medical centers by the Maha Bodhi Society, Bengaluru

The Global South needs this kind of work and similar approaches we feel. Our mission is to achieve one family, one earth, one future through practice and development of Brahmaviharas – Metta – universal love, Karuna – compassion, Mudita – altruistic joy and Upekkha – Equanimity.

Thanks to ABCP for inviting to this august gathering of the 12th General Assembly of the ABCP at New Delhi. We wish a great future for this movement started by stalwarts of Buddhism in the last century. We are with you in this peace

initiative from Buddhist contribution. Thank you Mr Sonam Wangchukji, the Deputy Secretary General of ABCP.

May all people live in peace! May all wars end! May all share love and compassion with each other Harmonizing both Global south and north supporting hand in hand both spiritually and materially. May the voice of Buddha Dhamma awaken the humanity. May there be peace in the world.

May All sentient being be safe well and happy!

Recipient of ABCP "Medal of Honour" Honours the General Assembly delegates and guests

Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India, who was awarded the "Medal of Honour" of ABCP in recognition of his outstanding contribution to promoting Lord Buddha's teachings and in realizing the goals and objectives of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, hosted a high-tea for all the delegates, guests and participants of the 12th General Assembly of ABCP at his residence in New Delhi. Here are some of the photos captured during the high tea. *(The "Dhammaduta" editorial team would like to apologize that all the photos could not be accommodated in this edition of the magazine. These and all photos related to the General Assembly will be shared by mail with all the National Centers)*



Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India, (in the center) flanked on his right by Most Ven. Gabju D. Chojamts, President of ABCP and to his left by Mr. Ky Suvanaratna, Dputy Secretary General of ABCP and other delegates and participants of ABCP 12th General Assembly at his New Delhi residence. All photos by Phuntsog Toldan



Most Ven. Gabju D. Chojamts, President of ABCP arriving at the residenct of Shri Kiren Rijju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India, (photo top) and being welcomed by the Honble Minister Kiren Rijju (photo below)





Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India, (photo top) welcoming the delegates and participants of the ABCP GA for high tea at his New Delhi residence (photos top and below)





Shri Kiren Rijju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India, and his spouse with the delegates of the Vietnam ABCP National Center (photo top) and with Mr. Shelu Barua, Bangladesh National Center and Mr. Mohit Chauhan, a famous Indian bollywood singer and Cultural Ambassador of Mongolia , to his left, and Mr. Sonam Wangchuk Shakspo, Secretay, Indian National Center for ABCP during the high tea (photo below)





Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India, with Ani Genden Lhamu (on the left in the top photo) Ven. Khenpo Ugen Namgyel of Bhutan (on the right in photo top) and photo below shows the spouse of Shri Kiren Rijiju with Ven. Sodnomdorzhiev Dashi-Nima (to her right) and Ven. Andrey Dondukbayev (Tsyren Lama) from Buryatia, Russia





Shri Kiren Rijju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India, with Most Ven. Dr. Pallekande Rathanasara Thero, General Secretary, ABCP Sri Lanka National Center (II) - Sumanatissa Chapter (photo top) and with Ven. Lee Chi Ran, President, ABCP Korean National Center -Taego Order (photo below)





Shri Kiren Rijju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India, with Most Ven. Bhikki Buddhapala, President, Mula Sangha, and Jogyeo Order, Korea (photo top) and with some of the delegates, including Mr. Abhijit Halder, Director General of International Buddhist Confederation, third from left (photo below)





General view of the high tea hosted by Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India (photo top) and Shri Kiren Rijiju seeing of the Most Ven. Gabju D. Chojjamts, President of ABCP after the conclusion of the high tea (photo below)



ABCP Regional Coordination Center



The Mongolian Buddhist temple, the site of the ABCP Regional Coordination Center, in Bodhgaya, Bihar, India

An ABCP Regional Coordination Center was opened in Bodhgaya, Bihar, a most important and sacred place for the Buddhists, the site of Buddha's enlightenment.

The Regional Coordination Center is located at the Mongolian temple in Bihar.

The goal of the establishment of the Regional Coordination Center in Bodhgaya is to expand the scope of ABCP's activities through the Coordination Center to reach the missions and goals of ABCP and to coordinate management relations, and build partnership with monasteries, temples and datsang schools of other countries in Bodhgaya, India. ABCP Headquarters will provide the Coordination Center with approach, professional guidance and methodology. The will have 2

staff - a Director and an assistant and the chief of the Mongolian Monastery shall act as the Director of the Regional Coordination Center. Its address is Mongolian Temple, Bodhgaya, Bihar 824231, India.

A special event was organized to inaugurate the Regional Coordination Center, and its Chief Guest was Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, the Hon'ble Governor of Bihar. The occasion was also graced by His Holiness the 43rd Sakya Trizin Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, who also addressed the gathering (See page 111 for the speech of HH the 43rd Sakya Trizin Gyana Vajra Rinpoche.)

The inauguration of the Regional Coordination Center was attended also by the Heads of the ABCP National Center, who took part in the 12th ABCP GA. ■

राजेंद्र विश्वनाथ आर्लेकर
Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar



राज्यपाल, बिहार
GOVERNOR OF BIHAR

राज भवन
पटना-800022
RAJ BHAVAN
PATNA-800022

**Speech of the Shri Rajenda Vishwanath Arlker, Hon'ble Governor, Bihar
delivered on 19th January, 2024 at Mongolian Temple, Bodhgaya
on the occasion of inauguration of ABCP Regional Coordination Centre.**

It is indeed a moment of joy to be present here at the occasion of the inauguration of the Regional Coordination Centre of Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP). I congratulate all the Members of the ABCP, who have come from various countries today, to participate in this General Conference. I understand that three prominent Buddhist monks namely, Ven. S. Gombojav, Khambolama of Mongolia, Ven. J. Gomboev, Pandita Khambolama of USSR (Russia) and Ven. Kushok Bakula Rinpoche from India were among the pioneers of this movement which began in 1969 in Mongolia. I am told that recognizing the pioneering work of ABCP, the United Nations granted it a status of an accredited Non- Governmental Organizations with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which is the UN's central platform for reflection, debate and innovative thinking on sustainable development. Over the years ABCP became a well-known and a prestigious international Buddhist organisation working for durable peace and improving the common man's quality of life.

I am confident that such a rare and unique platform involving Sangha leaders, eminent Buddhist scholars and Dharma practitioners from all over the world would be able to contribute significantly towards spreading the Universal message of Lord Buddha in the modern world. The overwhelming response to this event from Sangha and Buddhist leaders from across the world indicates the keenness and zeal that persists globally towards seeking universal wellbeing, peace, harmony and sustainability through the teachings of the Buddha.

राजेंद्र विश्वनाथ आर्लेकर
Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar



राज्यपाल, बिहार
GOVERNOR OF BIHAR

राज भवन
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PATNA-800022

The present century is undoubtedly an age of scientific and technological advancement that has resulted into the so-called material development and growth. However, this scientific and technological advancement has failed to alleviate the basic suffering of human-beings, like poverty, inequality, communalism etc. that very much provides the fertile ground for the growth of fundamentalism, hatred and violence, greed and conflict throughout the world. There is no empirical evidence to support the assumption that social and economic progress based on a materialistic conception of life can ensure happiness and well-being of humanity. Moreover, the present crisis of Wars and pandemic has created an environment of fear and uncertainty of life.

In such a conflicting scenario, to bring peace, happiness and harmony within us and in the environment around us, attention must shift to issues that help in making humans humane. It is this that makes the Teachings of the Buddha and more so the practice of Dharma relevant today, as it encompasses the philosophy of life completely missing in this post-modern era of development.

Buddha Dharma in ancient India made significant contributions to the development of human civilization. Its spread to the world led to a great churning of knowledge and cultures and flowering of diverse spiritual and philosophical traditions.

All the religious traditions of the world believe in peace and harmony and teach principles and human values that can play a pivotal role in mitigating the suffering of human beings, ironically, many of the current conflicts around the world are being fought along religious, sectarian, selfish and ideological divides. The followers of Buddha Dharma must take a proactive responsibility in contributing to the mitigation of the causes of the conflict, promoting greater understanding and dialogue and finding solutions

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for a way forward. The need of the hour is to proactively push forward efforts to promote the valued teachings of the Buddha and highlight the relevance of the Middle Path of the Buddha that shows we can be better human beings and contribute to making the world a better place to live in. I am glad that the participants from ABCP from across the world, while seeking to find responses to Contemporary Challenges, will deliberate upon finding ways forward on these matters of global concern during this Conference and bring out a vigorous program of action for the future.

I am happy to learn that since its very inception in Mongolia, ABCP has been striving for peace, goodwill and compassion among all people in accordance with the lofty ideals of Lord Buddha for peace and harmony. Apart from the General Conferences, Executive Council Sessions, Leadership Consultative meetings and Secretariat meetings, the ABCP holds International Forums, Conferences, Seminars, Symposia, Peace marches, pilgrimages, International Prayers services etc., which is the need of the day.

I feel honored that India, that is Bharat, the Land of origin of Buddha Dharma, its development and dissemination takes pride that ABCP with the support of other like-minded organizations world over and the International Sangha is working for the promotion and practice of the Universal and Non-sectarian Teachings of the Buddha.

All my good wishes for the success of this Event.

Jai Hind!

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ABCP Regional Coordination Center



General view of the high tea hosted by Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India (photo top) and Shri Kiren Rijiju seeing of the Most Ven. Gabju D. Chojjamts, President of ABCP after the conclusion of the high tea (photo below)



"The Dharma has acted as the sacred thread, inseparably connecting the spirits of Tibetans and Mongolians with India"



The opening of the ABCP Regional Coordination Center was attended by (from left to right), Ven. Das Lama Kh. Byambajav, Secretary General of ABCP, His Holiness the 20th Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, Most Ven. Ganbju D. Choijamts, ABCP President, Hon'ble Governor of Bihar Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar and His Holiness the 43rd Sakya Trizin Rinpoche . (Photos by Phuntsog Toldan)

Speech of HH the 43rd Sakya Trizin Gyana Vajra Rinpoche at the opening of the ABCP regional Coordination Center in Bodhgaya, Bihar, India

Today as we gather here in the holy vicinity of Bodhgaya, which holds an unparalleled significance for Buddhists worldwide as the most blessed ground where Siddhartha Gautama, attained enlightenment under

the Bodhi Tree more than 2,500 years ago. This sacred site serves as the spiritual epicenter of Buddhism, embodying the essence of the Buddha's profound teachings. For us Buddhists, Bodhgaya is not just a physi-

ABCP Regional Coordination Center



Hon'ble Governor of Bihar Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar opening of the ABCP Regional Coordination Center by cutting the ribbon. Standing to his left is the His Holiness the 43rd Sakya Trizin Rinpoche and to his right is Most Ven. Ganbju D. Choijamts, ABCP President (Photo top), and the President of ABCP, Most Ven. Ganbju D. Choijamts addressing the event marking the inauguration of the ABCP Regional Coordination Center (Photo below)





Hon'ble Governor of Bihar Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar in a photo-op with the heads of some ABCP National Centes who attended the opening of the ABCP Regional Coordination Center in Bodhgaya, Bihar, India, including H.H. the 20th Bakula Rinpoche and H.H. the 43rd Sakya Trizin Gyan Vajra Rinpoche on the extreme left in the photo

cal location; it is a pilgrimage to the very source of our faith, a place where the air resonates with the echoes of the Buddha's realizations and the earth beneath our feet carries the imprints of his enlightenment. Beyond its historical and religious importance, Bodhgaya fosters a universal sense of peace, unity, and understanding, drawing people from all walks of life in a shared quest for spiritual awakening and inner tranquility. It stands as a timeless beacon of wisdom, compassion, and mindfulness, inspiring devotees worldwide to tread the path of enlightenment.

Ever since the Buddha set in motion the first wheel of Dharma, his profound teachings, encompassing principles such as Maitri, Karuna, Ahimsa, Bodhichitta, and Shun-

yata, have traversed vast distances, leaving an indelible mark across the globe. Buddhism's inception in Asian countries from India marked a profound and transformative journey, with the teachings resonating and taking root in diverse cultures and landscapes.

In one of the Buddha's prophecies, he foretold that "my teachings would spread from north to north." This prophecy has been widely interpreted as the journey of Dharma from India to Tibet and from Tibet to Mongolia. To this day, Tibetans and Mongolians hold India in high esteem, considering it the land of Arya Bhumi or the land of the exalted beings. The Dharma has acted as the sacred thread, inseparably connecting the spirits of Tibetans and Mongolians with India.

In the 13th century, my ancestors

of the Sakya Khon lineage forged what modern political historians term as a "priest-patron relationship" with the Mongol Khans during the peak of Mongol hegemony on the Eurasian continent. Historical records suggest that the Mongol Khans were drawn to Buddhism and the vast knowledge and sciences associated with it. Seeking a knowledgeable and accomplished teacher, they dispatched emissaries to Tibet. This led to the almost forceful escort of Sakya Pandita, one of Tibet's greatest masters, to the Mongol court. His nephew, Chogyal Phagpa, who later became the Imperial Preceptor during Kubilai Khan's reign, succeeded him. This era not only witnessed the importation of Buddhism to the Mongol empire but also the infusion of diverse aspects of Indo-Tibetan cul-



Heads of some ABCP National Centres who attended the opening of the ABCP Regional Coordination Center in Bodhgaya, Bihar, India. Fourth from left is Ven. Erdenebulgan, the head of the Mongolian Temple in Bodhgaya, who will concurrently serve as the Director of the ABCP Regional Coordination Center

ture, including philosophy, the political theories of righteous kingship (Dharma Raj), the union of religion and the state, medicine, astrology, art and architecture, linguistics, and legal services. Chogyal Phagpa, for instance, invented the Phagpa square script based on the Sanskrit alphabet during this period.

Throughout its history, Buddhism in Mongolia faced numerous challenges. Traditionally, Mongolians believe that Buddhism was introduced three times to the country: first during the 6th century, second in the 13th century, and the third in the 16th century. However, I posit that there was a fourth reintroduction of Buddhism to Mongolia in the 20th century, spearheaded by His Eminence Bakula Rinpoche. Under the Communist regime, monks were executed, and

many were coerced into disrobing. Monasteries, libraries, art reserves, and other treasures of religious and cultural significance were ruthlessly destroyed. After the overthrow of communism in 1990, with the advent of democracy in Mongolia, Bakula Rinpoche played a pivotal role in the resurgence of Buddhism in the country. The Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) founded in 1970 stands as another visionary legacy of Bakula Rinpoche, which evolved into a voluntary mass peace movement that advocates for peace, social and economic progress, justice, and human dignity.

Today, in the context of the contemporary world, the role of India in the promotion and preservation of Buddhism in Asia cannot be overstated. As the birthplace of

Buddhism, India holds a unique and central position in the ongoing narrative of the Buddhist heritage. The Indian National Centre-ABCP, through its tireless efforts and the grand success of the 12th General Assembly of ABCP held in New Delhi, has demonstrated India's commitment to fostering the teachings of the Buddha in the modern era. Furthermore, the inauguration of a Regional Coordinating Centre in Bodhgaya, at the heart of the Buddhist Universe, serves as a testament to India's pivotal role in the revitalization and sustenance of Buddhism in the contemporary world. It is through such initiatives that India continues to be a beacon for the global Buddhist community, promoting the timeless values of compassion, wisdom, and peace across borders and cultures. ■



ASIAN BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE FOR PEACE

12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace,
New Delhi, India,
January 17-18, 2024

DELHI DECLARATION

We, Buddhist monks and laymen, representatives of peaceloving Buddhists from Asia, gathered for the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace (ABCP), which was successfully held in New Delhi, the capital of the Republic of India, on January 17-18, 2024. Being conscious of the pressing issues confronting humanity, such as global peace, security and environment degradation, generating a sense of hope and understanding for a better way of life that would benefit global peace, compassion and harmony among nations of the world, reaffirm our commitment to strive for peace and for preservation of the sacredness of nature.

The happiness of mankind is closely linked with and dependent on healthy and peaceful environment of our planet. As Buddhists, we feel committed to bring about a qualitative change in the life of the people through sustained spiritual development and moral values in conformity with the noble teachings of Lord Buddha who taught us to wipe out hatred, jealousy, violence, cruelty and revengefulness by building an attitude of unconditional love and universal brotherhood.

Guided by the noble teachings of Lord Buddha, we Buddhists, members of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace,

1. Believe that world peace is the most valuable asset of the entire humanity. Many valuable human lives are being lost, and peoples around the world continue to bear the sufferings of separation and poverty. ABCP demands an immediate end to wars and armed conflicts that bring along mortal threat, suffering, and destruction.
2. Distrust, suspicion, and antagonism between countries and nations are deepening, and armed conflicts and race for armaments have increased drastically. And so ABCP urges and calls on all countries and nations to resolve in a peaceful manner all disputes, leading to controversies, by means of talks and negotiations, and by promoting mutual understanding.
3. Some countries are whipping up the race and competition for weapons of massdestruction, including nuclear weapons. There can neither be a winner nor a loser in a nuclear conflagration. ABCP calls on all peace-loving countries and peoples to draw the attention of the humankind to putting an end to such kind of crime against humanity, and to consistently fight for peace.

4. Huge amounts of financial resources are being allocated for military and war purposes, which otherwise could support the development and progress of countries and nations around the world. We, Buddhists of Asia, demand the discontinuation of such a sinful act with sinister consequences, and call on all peaceloving nations around the world to unite for building global peace, and bringing about peace and tranquility for the entire humanity.

5. Today, technological progress and advances in materialistic life are creating ample positive opportunities, but on the other hand, such progress is fraught with the danger of nullifying ethical and spiritual values, and ultimately undermining and destroying them completely. Proceeding from this premise, ABCP realizes that we as an organization, representing millions of Buddhists in Asia, have greater responsibility of protecting ethical and spiritual values, and our valuable cultural heritages, and therefore, call on all nations around the world to ensure that each and every single individual make effort so as to contribute to protecting, preserving and saving these values.

6. A most pressing challenge, the solution of which cannot be delayed any longer, is the question of protecting and saving our universe, which is the most important guarantee of the peaceful and sustained life of all living beings. ABCP calls on all nations around the world to join efforts for the protection of our Earth and work to accomplish tangible results in the protection of our environment and nature.

7. Global warming, climate change and natural degradation are the consequences of the wrongful acts and deeds of man is a fact acknowledged by everyone. The Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace strongly believes that it is extremely important to raise awareness and build up the knowledge of peoples about the imperative need of reducing greenhouse effects, developing and introducing nature-friendly progressive and technology, and in this respect, training the psychology and building its resilience to overcoming nature-related challenges. Therefore, the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace strongly calls on nations and countries around the world to pool their efforts for common cause of preserving our earth and protecting our nature, and work hard so that our calls do not fall short of implementation.

Adopted by the delegates of the 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, which was attended by the 19 member National Centers from 14 countries in Asia.

New Delhi,
18 January 2024



ASIAN BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE FOR PEACE

RESOLUTION OF THE ASIAN BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE FOR PEACE

Date. January 18, 2024

New Delhi

Resolution GA12/24/02

The 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, which was held in New Delhi, India on January 17-18, 2024, considered the requests from the Central Monastic Body, Kingdom of Bhutan to join the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, and considering the motion of the Executive Council to expand and strengthen the organization, and having considered the recommendation of the 15th Meeting of the Executive Council of ABCP regarding new ABCP membership, decided to endorse the recommendations of the Executive Council and RESOLVES to:

1. Approve the decision of the General Assembly to accept Central Monastic Body of the Kingdom of Bhutan as a member of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace;
2. Instruct the new member to abide by the ABCP Charter, display initiative and strive to implement the aims and objectives outlined in the Charter;
3. Welcome Thailand's Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, one of the early members of the organization, as a full-fledged member of ABCP;
4. Instruct the ABCP Secretary General (Kh. Byambajav) to make continued and diligent effort to establish contact with the Jogyeo Order of Buddhists in South Korea, Buddhists in Myanmar, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia to re-establish contact with them for their membership with ABCP;
5. Instruct the ABCP Secretary General (Kh. Byambajav) to report to the National Centers of ABCP on the progress of point 4 in the Resolution GA12/24/02.

ABCP Secretary General

Kh. Byambajav



ASIAN BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE FOR PEACE

RESOLUTION OF THE ASIAN BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE FOR PEACE

Date. January 18, 2024

New Delhi

Resolution GA12/24/01

The 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, which was held in New Delhi, India on January 17-18, 2024, considered the recommendation by submitted the 15th Meeting of the Executive Council of ABCP, which discussed the Revised and Edited version of the Charter of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace. Delegates to the 12th General Assembly of ABCP having considered the recommendation of the 15th Meeting of the Executive Council of ABCP decided to endorse the recommendations of the Executive Council and RESOLVES to:

1. Approve the Revised and Edited version of the Charter of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace;
2. Make null and void the ABCP Charter adopted at the 11th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference held in 2019;
3. Instruct the ABCP Secretary General (Most Ven. Da Lama Kh. Byambajav) to share the newly adopted Revised and Edited Charter of ABCP with all the ABCP members;
4. Advise the National Centers/Members to abide by the ABCP Charter, display initiative and strive to implement the aims and objectives outlined in the Charter.

ABCP Secretary General

Kh. Byambajav

ABCP Charter

*Adopted at the Twelfth General Assembly of the
Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace*

**CHARTER
OF THE
ASIAN BUDDHISTS CONFERENCE FOR PEACE**
(Revised and Edited Version)

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PREAMBLE

One. The Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace is a voluntary international non-governmental organization of Buddhists with a common commitment to strengthening universal peace, unity, justice and human dignity, and protecting the environment and nature.

Two. The Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace was first initiated and established by the Initiative Group, which included

- Most Venerable Samaagiin Gombojav, Khambo Lama of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists,
- Most Venerable Gunaratana Thero, Representative of Mahabodhi Society of India (representing Most Ven. Kushok Bakula Rinpoche),
- Prof. S. Dylykov, Representative of the Buddhists of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (present day Russian Federation and representing Most Ven. Khamba Lama Jambaldorj Gomboev),
- Vice President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, Most Venerable Sumanatissa Thero, President of Sri Lanka Buddhist Congress of Ceylon, and,
- Most Venerable Amritananda Thero, President of the Young Buddhist Council of Nepal.

The Initiative Group, with the objective of promoting the cause of peace in Asia, met in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on December 5, 1969 and it agreed to call a meeting of Asian Buddhists in Ulaanbaatar and issued a communiqué. In accordance with the communiqué, the Initiative Group met in Ulaanbaatar on June 11-13, 1970 and founded the Asian Buddhists Committee for Promoting Peace.

The 3rd Meeting of the Executive Council of the Asian Buddhists Committee for Promoting Peace, which was held in Ulaanbaatar on January 16, 1975 renamed the Committee into the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace.

Three. The Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace (hereinafter referred to as ABCP) in pursuit of the aims and objectives spelled out in the Charter, shall be guided by the teachings on kindness, compassion, tranquility and harmony of Shakyamuni Buddha, and will carry out activities at the international level following the principles of openness, equality and independent of politics.

CHAPTER I

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF ABCP

Article 1. Aims and objectives

1.1. ABCP aims to pool the efforts of Buddhists to jointly address the challenges facing the international community by spreading the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha on universal compassion, protecting international peace, unity and harmony, reducing poverty, helping people afflicted by pain and disaster, and protecting the ever degrading nature and environment owing to climate change, and contribute to universal happiness, sustainable growth and development.

1.2. ABCP shall strive to accomplish the following objectives:

1.2.1. Protect such human values, such as basic human rights, morality and justice.

1.2.2. Stand steadfastly against all forms of discrimination based on the color of skin, language, religion and belief, and will fight against all forms and manifestations of violation of human rights and freedom in the name of religion and shall fight against violence.

1.2.3. It fully supports the policies and objectives of the United Nations and shall collaborate closely with the UN and its specialized agencies.

1.2.4. It will promote cooperation with other religious and non-religious organizations and movements pursuing similar aims and objectives.

1.2.5. It will protect both tangible and non-tangible heritage of Buddhist culture, and promote its research and study.

1.2.6. It will strive to disseminate and realize the teachings and the rich cultural heritage of Shakyamuni Buddha.

1.2.7. It will support efforts for peaceful co-existence of countries of the world without wars and conflicts,

it will advance disarmament and work towards the prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons.

1.3. ABCP shall have its own emblem and flag, official letter head and official seal.

CHAPER II ORGANS OF ABCP

Article 2. Organizational structure

2.1. The organizational structure of ABCP will consist of the General Assembly, National centers, Standing Commissions and Headquarters (Coordination Center).

Article 3. General Assembly

3.1. The General Assembly shall consist of all members of ABCP, which is the highest management and decision-making body of the organization.

3.2. General Assembly shall have the following functions and powers:

3.2.1. Approve the long-, medium- and short-term program of actions and guidelines of ABCP;

3.2.2. Elect the President of ABCP;

3.2.3. Appoint the members of the Executive Council and the Secretary General;

3.2.4. Consider and approve request for new membership;

3.2.5. Consider and evaluate the report on the activities of ABCP President, outline future directions, and if required, discuss the report of the Secretary General's work and performance;

3.2.6. Consider and approve changes and amendments to the ABCP Charter;

3.2.7. Approve the composition and organizational structure of ABCP;

3.2.8. Confirm and validate the ABCP Patron;

3.2.9. Others.

3.3. The General Assembly shall convene once in three years. If necessary, the President or the Executive Council can call a special General Assembly.

3.4. The quorum of the General Assembly shall be three fourth of the all delegates attending the ABCP General Assembly.

3.5. The working of the General Assembly shall be independent, open, transparent, free discussion of issue(s) from many different angles by respecting all opinion and the relevant decision shall be taken by a majority of votes.

3.6. The decision(s) (resolution, notes, recommendations, appeal, statements) of the General Assembly shall be deemed valid if it is (they are) approved by a simple majority of votes (50%+1) of the General Assembly delegates, and on important matters (Election of the President, accepting new members, relieving members, making changes and amendments to the Charter) by an overwhelming majority of votes(2/3) of the delegates to the General Assembly.

3.7. The decision(s) of the General Assembly shall be validated with the signature of the General Assembly meeting Chairperson and the seal of ABCP.

3.8. In the event if there is an equal number of votes, the final decisive voting right shall be reserved with the ABCP President.

3.9. The decision(s) of the General Assembly shall be binding on all members of the ABCP.

3.10. The number of official delegates from the National Centers to attend the General Assembly shall be maximum three (3).

3.11. The General Assembly shall be chaired by the ABCP President, or by a Vice President recommended by the President.

3.12. Representatives of the United Nations, state and government leaders of a country, non-governmental and partner organizations can attend the General Assembly at the invitation of ABCP.

Article 4. Executive Council

4.1. The Executive Council shall carry out the functions of the ABCP in between the General Assembly.

4.2. The Executive Council shall have the following rights and power:

- 4.2.1. Organize the implementation of the resolution(s) and decision(s) of the General Assembly;
 - 4.2.2. Take decisions and provide guidelines on urgent matters and on issues related to the activities and functions of the National Centers and Standing Commissions;
 - 4.2.3. Accept, review and discuss the material submitted by the Presidential nominee and submit the relevant conclusions and recommendations thereof to the General Assembly;
 - 4.2.4. Appoint and relieve the Vice Presidents, and the Deputy Secretary Generals;
 - 4.2.5. Review and discuss the application for ABCP membership, and submit the relevant suggestions and recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly;
 - 4.2.6. Submit for approval the draft changes and amendments to the ABCP Charter;
 - 4.2.7. Table motion for the calling of a special General Assembly;
 - 4.2.8. Approve the date, agenda and delegates to the General Assembly;
 - 4.2.9. Determine the size of the membership fee;
 - 4.2.10. Others
- 4.3. Members of the Executive Council shall be appointed by the General Assembly on the principle of “one representative from each National Center” and the National Centers shall submit in writing to the Secretary General the name of the candidate being nominated as a member of the Executive Council.
- 4.4. The regular meeting of the Executive Council shall be held every year. The meeting of the Executive Council shall be deemed valid with a quorum of three fourths of the Executive Council members attending. The Executive Council Meeting can be held both in person and on-line.
- 4.5. The decision(s) (resolution, note, recommendation, appeal, statement of the Executive Council shall be deemed adopted by a simple majority of votes (50%+1) of the Executive Council members attending the Executive Council Meeting.
- 4.6. The Executive Council meeting shall be chaired by the President or by a Vice President appointed by the ABCP President.
- 4.7. ABCP President, Vice Presidents, Secretary General and Deputy Secretary Generals shall attend the Executive Council meeting with a voting right.

Article 5. National Center (Membership)

- 5.1. Mongolia, India, Russia, Sri Lanka and Nepal, who attended the Initiative Group meeting held in Ulaanbaatar on June 11-13, 1970 and established the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, are the founding members of ABCP.
- 5.2. Every member of ABCP shall have its National Center. ABCP’s policy is to have not more than two (2) National Centers in one member country.
- 5.3. National Centers shall represent ABCP in their respective countries and communities, and the procedure of operation of the National Centers shall be approved by the General Assembly.
- 5.4. ABCP Members:
- 5.4.1. A National Center shall represent a Buddhist organization and Buddhist believers and shall have the right to vote, and carry out energetic activities;
 - 5.4.2. A Member National Center that has joined the organization as a new member shall represent a Buddhist organization and the believers.
- 5.5. A Buddhist organization and Buddhists who agree with the aims and objectives, duties and responsibilities of ABCP, can join the organization as its member and can set up a National Center in their respective countries.
- 5.6. Rules and procedures for becoming a member of ABCP:
- 5.6.1. Submit an application to the Secretary General of ABCP;
 - 5.6.2. The Secretary General shall submit the application with a proposal to the Executive council;
 - 5.6.3. The Executive Council shall review the proposal related to the application, and if a consensus is reached on the application it will be submitted for consideration to the General Assembly, which will take a decision on membership if two thirds of the General Assembly delegates support the proposal.

5.7. If an ABCP member wishes to withdraw its membership from the organization, it shall do so by submitting a written application to the Secretary General one month prior to the date of discontinuation of membership. The Secretary General shall submit the application to the Executive Council for consideration.

5.8. The decision on exclusion from membership or voluntary withdrawal from membership shall be decided by a majority of votes (two thirds) of the members of the General Assembly.

5.9. ABCP members shall have the following rights:

5.9.1. Take part in all the activities of ABCP within the framework of the organization's aims and objectives;

5.9.2. Submit proposals and take part in discussion of issue connected with the activities of ABCP;

5.9.3. Send representative delegate to the General Assembly and table motion regarding the General Assembly decision(s);

5.9.4. Submit proposals and suggestion regarding the action plan of ABCP;

5.9.5. Nominate candidates to the managerial and executive posts of ABCP, and elect and be elected;

5.10. ABCP members shall have the following responsibilities:

5.10.1. Shall strictly abide by the Charter of ABCP, make active efforts for the realization of the aims and objectives of ABCP, and implement the decision(s) passed by the General Assembly, the Executive Council and the ABCP Headquarters;

5.10.2. Shall expand the ranks of the organization with Buddhists, and make efforts for broadening the reach of activities of ABCP and strengthen its unity;

5.10.3. Shall promote the aims, objectives and activities of ABCP, propagate the teachings, heritage and culture of Shakyamuni Buddha, and promote the importance of the ideas of inter-country relations and cooperation;

5.10.4. Shall render financial and other support to ABCP, pay membership fees regularly;

5.10.5. Through the ABCP Headquarters, members shall submit to the Executive Council the annual performance report and new year's action plan of the National Council Center and the respective Standing Commission before every December 15;

5.10.6. Others

5.11. National Centers shall conduct their business and activities within the framework of the laws and legislation of their respective countries;

5.12. National Centers shall themselves elect their office bearers and inform the ABCP Headquarters of the same;

5.13. National Centers may, on its own, or in collaboration with other national centers hold peace marches, conduct workshops, meetings and conferences.

5.14. National Centers shall finance their activities and operational spending with donations and contributions from temples, monasteries and other organizations.

Article 6. Standing Commission

6.1. The Standing Commission within the framework of the respective mandate responsible for the Standing Commission, shall conduct research and analysis, and shall have the responsibility of submitting to the ABCP Headquarters in the form of recommendation the result of their work for reflection in the policy and actions of ABCP.

6.2. ABCP shall have the following Standing Commissions:

6.2.1. Standing Commission on Buddhist Traditions, Culture and Heritage;

6.2.2. Standing Commission on Promotion of Buddhist Ethics and Unity;

6.2.3. Standing Commission on Human Rights;

6.2.4. Standing Commission on Sustainable Development Goals;

6.2.5. Standing Commission on Peace, Disarmament and Conflict Avoidance;

6.2.6. Standing Commission on Inter-Faith Harmony;

6.2.7. Standing Commission on Women and Gender Equality;

6.2.8. Standing Commission on Children and Youth;

6.2.9. Standing Commission on Environment, Climate Change and Nature Conservation.

6.3. The Executive Council shall decide which National Center shall be responsible for one of the nine Standing Commission.

6.4. The National Center shall be responsible for the office bearers of their respective Standing Commission and this shall be informed to the ABCP Headquarters.

6.5. The Standing Commission shall, every year by December 15, submit to the ABCP Headquarters through their National Center the performance report for the given year and action plan for the next year.

6.6. A Standing Commission, on its own or in collaboration with the ABCP Headquarters, other National Centers and Standing Commissions, may organize activities at the national, regional and international levels.

6.7. Operational expenditures of the Standing Commissions shall be financed by the concerned National Center.

Article 7. ABCP Headquarters

7.1. The Headquarters of ABCP shall be seated at Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the center of Mongolian Buddhists, in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia.

7.2. The Headquarters shall have the responsibility of coordinating the activities of the ABCP system bodies, providing professional and methodological guidance, and providing support and assistance to the President in carrying out his/her duties and functions.

7.3. The ABCP Headquarters shall be managed by the ABCP Secretary General.

7.4. ABCP Headquarters, with the objective of promoting the activities of the organization and promoting closer working relationship with the members, shall have a Regional Coordinating Center at the most sacred site of the Buddhists – Bodhgaya in Bihar, India.

7.5. The rules of procedures of the ABCP Headquarters, and rules of procedure of the Regional Coordination Center shall be approved by the Executive Council.

Article 8. ABCP Partnership

8.1. ABCP shall strive to develop Partnership with an individual, association, union, national and international organizations and the private sector that wish to work with the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace in a sense of collaboration and cooperation in promoting, preserving, protecting and disseminating Lord Buddha's teachings on peace, unity, harmony and compassion.

8.2. ABCP shall jointly carry out projects and programs with partner organizations and individuals in order to address such issues as limited resources – whether financial, technological and human, engage in humanitarian assistance, jointly conduct research in a business-like and result-oriented spirit for the common benefit.

8.3. ABCP shall collaborate with partner organizations and individuals by way of defining mutual responsibilities and action guidelines through the signing of memorandum of understanding and agreement.

CHAPTER III OFFICE BEARERS OF ABCP

Article 9. President

9.1. The President is the senior-most post of ABCP.

9.2. The President shall have the following prerogative rights and duties:

9.2.1. Represent ABCP internationally;

9.2.2. Issue statements and appeals on pressing global issues and that of the organization;

9.2.3. Shall be active and display initiative in ensuring the continued realization of ABCP's aims and objectives, expanding the scale of activities and ranks of membership of the organization, and strengthening the international prestige and influence of ABCP;

9.2.4. Shall chair the General Assembly and the meetings of the Executive Council;

9.2.5. Call a special session of the General Assembly and a special meeting of the Executive Council;

9.2.6. May summon a meeting of ABCP Executive Council, Vice Presidents and other office bearers and experts to exchange information and deliberate upon pressing concerns before the organization;

9.3. ABCP President shall be a senior monk/nun of high order with international prestige, with high leadership qualities, with certain experience in diplomacy and international relations.

9.4. ABCP President shall be nominated from the Center of Mongolian Buddhists - Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, headquartered in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, and the nominee shall be approved at the General Assembly of ABCP.

9.4. There is no age limit to the post of ABCP President.

9.5. In the event the President is unable to carry out his/her duties, one of the Vice Presidents of ABCP shall be appointed as Acting President by a decision of the Executive Council.

Article 10. Vice Presidents

10.1. ABCP shall have three Vice Presidents representing the three regions of South Asia, South East Asia and North Asia and the Pacific.

10.2. The Vice President shall assist the President in the discharge his/her duties and also support and assist the Executive Council in carrying out its functions.

10.3. The term of office of the Vice Presidents shall be three (3) years, and the three ABCP regions shall nominate one Vice President each from their respective regions and submit the candidature for consideration and approval by the Executive Council.

10.4. On the advice of the President, the Vice Presidents may represent ABCP at international events, and together with the National Centers in their respective regions, show initiative in realizing the aims, objectives and decisions of ABCP.

Article 11. Secretary General

11.1. The Secretary General shall lead and manage the day-to-day work of the ABCP Head-quarters, regulate and coordinate the activities of the different organizations of ABCP, and oversee the implementation of the ABCP decisions and recommendations.

11.2. A person with administrative and management experience nominated by Gandan Teg-chenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists to the post of Secretary General of ABCP, and having reached a consensus with the ABCP President, shall be appointed for a term of 4 (four) years by the Executive Council of ABCP at its meeting.

11.3. The Secretary General shall have the following prerogative rights:

11.3.1. Shall draft the Development and Action Programs of ABCP (Short- and long-term), draft budget and finances, and submit the relevant proposals to the ABCP President and the Executive Council for submission for consideration and approval by the General Assembly of ABCP;

11.3.2. Plan and organize the realization of ABCP decisions and recommendations, and monitor their implementation;

11.3.3. Appoint and relieve the staff of the ABCP Headquarters and the Regional Coordination Center in India;

11.3.4. Maintain close working relationship with the Executive Council, National Centers, Standing Commissions and other organizations and movements;

11.3.5. As approved by the ABCP President represent the organization and take part in international events;

11.3.6. Manage the budget and finance in accordance with the relevant rules and procedures;

11.3.7. Publicize the activities of the organization, and develop cooperative partnership with governmental and non-governmental organizations, business entities and the media within the framework of the objectives outlined in this Charter;

11.3.8. Submit motion on calling into session special meeting of the Executive Council;

11.3.9. Manage and oversee fund-raising activities of the organizations;

11.3.10. Appoint and relieve chief editor of the "Dhammaduta" magazine;

11.4. The Secretary General shall present performance report to the Executive Council every year and to the General Assembly once in three years.

Article 12. Deputy Secretary General

12.1. ABCP shall have three Deputy Secretary Generals, one each from the three ABCP regions;

12.2. The Deputy Secretary Generals shall report to the Secretary General and shall be duty-bound to support the daily activities of the ABCP Headquarters;

12.3. The Deputy Secretary General shall temporarily perform the duties of the Secretary General in the absence of the latter.

Article 13. ABCP Patrons

13.1. ABCP shall have patrons from among supreme and well-known Buddhist monks/nuns to draw on their spiritual support, advice and guidance in the realization of the ABCP policy and activities.

13.2. The Patrons shall represent different traditions (Mahayana, Nalanda, Theravada) of Buddhism and different ABCP regions (South Asia, South East Asia, North East Asia and the Pacific).

13.3. The Patrons can take part in the ABCP General Assembly but without any voting rights.

CHAPTER IV FINANCING AND BUDGETING OF THE ABCP

Article 14. Budget and Finance

14.1 Funding for the ABCP is derived from the following sources:

14.1.1. Membership fees and donations from the National Centers of ABCP;

14.1.2. Donations and support from individuals and organizations;

14.1.3. Funds provided by enterprises, governmental, non-governmental, international and partner organizations for project implementation;

14.1.4. Other sources not prohibited by law.

14.2. The budget of ABCP shall be used only to realize the goals and objectives specified in this Charter.

14.3. The Secretary General shall have the authority to be the primary signatory of ABCP financial documents, and the financial officer of the organization shall have the right to secondary signature and the financial document shall be deemed valid after it is duly stamped.

14.4. The financial year begins on 1st of January and ends on the 31st of December of each calendar year.

14.5. The budget and financing of the ABCP shall be transparent, free of corruption and bribery.

14.6. The membership fee payable to the ABCP shall be determined by the Executive Council. The size of the membership fee can be changed to adjust according to the size and scale of operation and international financial situation.

14.7. Membership fee serves as a crucial leverage to ensure ABCP's normal operation, and ABCP members are obligated to pay their annual membership dues.

Article 15. Financial Officer

15.1. The Headquarters of the ABCP shall select and appoint an individual with financial and accounting background, known for honesty and high moral standards, as the Financial Officer of ABCP.

15.2. The Financial Officer shall report to the Secretary General and shall carry out accounting activities in conformity with accounting laws and standards.

CHAPTER V OTHERS

Article 16. Emblem and Flag of ABCP

16.1. The Emblem of the ABCP features a symbol of Vajra with a dove at its center. (see Appendix 1)

16.2. ABCP shall have a six-colored flag, with a ratio of 1:2 in breadth and length, consisting of a vertical yellow stripe, one fifth of the length of the flag, symbolizing the teachings of Lord Buddha, and five horizon-

tal stripes of blue, yellow, red, white, and orange, symbolizing the five wisdoms, reflecting the transcendence of attachment, aversion, ignorance, pride, and jealousy. (see Appendix 1)

16.3. The emblem of ABCP is positioned at the top of the flag's vertical stripe.

16.4. The emblem and flag of the ABCP shall be used during the General Assembly, Executive Council meeting, and events officially organized by ABCP. National Centers and Standing Commissions may use the emblem and flag of ABCP when organizing events to promote the goals and objectives of this Charter, subject to approval from the Headquarters.

Article 17. Official Language

17.1. The official language of ABCP shall be English.

17.2. All official documents shall be done in English.

17.3. National Centers are responsible for translating from the official language to their national language and vice versa. Only the English version is accepted for official use.

Article 18. ABCP Award

18.1. The highest award of ABCP is the "Medal of Honour." The "Medal of Honour" shall be awarded to an individual who has played a distinctive role in fortifying global peace, fostering interfaith harmony, enlightening communities, championing human rights and freedom, and disseminating the teachings of Lord Buddha Shakyamuni.

18.2. The "Medal of Honour" of ABCP shall be granted to individuals who have made substantial contribution to implementing the goals and objectives of ABCP.

18.3. The General Secretary shall identify and nominate eligible individuals for the award based on the aforementioned criteria and present the recommendations to the President.

18.4. National Centers reserve the right to nominate individuals for the reward, who have met the stipulations outlined in this Charter.

18.5. The presentation of the award shall be conducted during a ceremony held in the presence of the members at the General Assembly.

Article 19. Media and Public Relations

19.1. The ABCP shall have an English-language magazine called "Dhammaduta" and maintain an English language website accessible at www.abcp.mn, and a Facebook account [Facebook.com/Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace – ABCP](https://www.facebook.com/AsianBuddhistConferenceforPeace-ABCP) designed at internationally promoting its goals and objectives. National Centers shall be responsible for timely submission of news and information to the Headquarters for inclusion in the "Dhammaduta" magazine, website and Facebook account.

19.2. The media arm of the ABCP serves the following functions:

19.2.1. Promoting and publicizing the goals and activities of ABCP and National Centers to the general public.

19.2.2. Disseminating Buddha's teachings on peace, tolerance, and compassion to the wider public.

19.2.3. Publishing primary documents and resolutions of the ABCP for public awareness.

19.2.4. Conveying the stance of ABCP concerning Asia, and global peace and security.

19.2.5. Reporting on the collaborative efforts of religious and non-religious organizations working towards peace.

19.3. National Centers may have their own media outlets to publicize the activities and goals of ABCP.

Article 20. Responsibilities of Members

20.1. It is incumbent on the ABCP members to abide by and realize this Charter.

20.2. Should a National Center/Member fail to report its activities or fulfill its financial obligations for two consecutive years, it will forfeit its voting rights at the General Assembly.

20.3. In the event that a member engages in activities contrary to the goals and objectives set forth in the ABCP Charter or persistently violates its provisions, the Executive Council will bring the matter of membership removal to the attention of the General Assembly.

Article 21. Miscellaneous

21.1. This Charter shall take effect from the date of its adoption by the General Assembly.

21.2. Members are required to submit proposed amendments to this Charter to the Headquarters. The Executive Council shall deliberate on the proposals during its meetings and present its recommendations and findings to the General Assembly for final decision.

THE CHARTER OF THE ASIAN BUSSHISTS CONFERENCE FOR PEACE ADOPTED on this day the 18th of January 2024, by the delegates of the 12th ABCP General Assembly, which was held in New Delhi on 17-18 January 2024.

First adopted by the 6th General Conference of the ABCP, Ulaanbaatar, August 16, 1982.

Word changes were made at the 8th General Conference on the ABCP Ulaanbaatar, 23 September 1990.

The revised amended version of the ABCP Charter was discussed and adopted by the 11th General Assembly of ABCP held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on 21-23 June 2019.

The Revised and Edited version of the ABCP Charter was discussed and adopted by the 12th General Assembly of ABCP held in New Delhi, India on 17-18 January 2024.

APPENDIX OF THE CHARTER OF ABCP

Appendix 1

EMBLEM AND FLAG OF ABCP



Appendix 2

MEMBERS OF ABCP

1. Bangladesh National Center 1 (Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha)
2. Bangladesh National Center2 (Bangladesh ABCP National Center)
3. ABCP Bhutan National Center – Central Monastic Body of Bhutan (2024)
4. Cambodia ABCP National Center
5. Department of Religion and Culture, Central Tibetan Administration, Dharamsala, India

-
6. Indian ABCP National Center
 7. ABCP Japan National Center - Japan Religious Persons Council for Peace
 8. ABCP Korean National Center - DPRK
 9. ABCP Korean National Center – Taego Order, Republic of Korea
 10. Buddhist fellowship Organization of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic
 11. ABCP National Center Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, Mongolia
 12. ABCP National Center Dashichoiling Monastery, Mongolia
 13. Nepal ABCP National Center Anandkuti Vihar
 14. Buddhist Traditional Sangha of Russia, Ivolginsky Datsan Ulan Ude, Republic of Buryatia, Russian Federation
 15. Aginsky Datsan ABCP National Center, Russian Federation
 16. ABCP Sri Lanka National Center (Ven. Dr. Sumatissa Chapter)
 17. ABCP Sri Lanka National Center(Ven. Dr. Wipulasara Chapter)
 18. ABCP Thai National Center – Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
 19. ABCP Vietnam National Center 1 – Vietnam Buddhist University (Chairman Most. Ven. Prof. Thich Nhat Tu)
 20. ABCP Vietnam National Center 2 – Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute (Chairman Prof. Le Manh That)

Appendix 3

ABCP STANDING COMMISSIONS

ABCP shall have the following 9 (nine) Standing Commissions

1. Standing Commission on “Buddhist Traditions, Culture and Heritage,” with its center in Mongolia.
2. Standing Commission on “Promotion of Buddhist Ethics and Unity,” with its center in Dharamsala, India.
3. Standing Commission on “Human Rights,” based in Bangladesh. (National Center 2, Bangladesh)
4. Standing Commission on “Sustainable Development Goals,” with its Center in India.
5. Standing Commission on “Peace, Disarmament and Conflict Avoidance,” with its center in Japan.
6. Standing Commission on “Inter-Faith Harmony” with its center in Russia.
7. Standing Commission on “Women and Gender Equality” with its center in Sri Lanka.
8. Standing Commission on “Children and Youth” with its center in Sri Lanka and Vietnam.
9. Standing Commission on “Environment, Climate Change and Nature Conservation” with its center in Vietnam.

Appendix 4

ABCP OFFICE BEARERS

PRESIDENT:

His Eminence Gabju Demberel Choijamts (Mongolia)

VICE PRESIDENTS:

1. Ven. Konchok Wangdu (India, 2024)

2. Ven. Dr. Thich Duc Thien (Vietnam)
3. Ven. Damba Ayushev (Buryatia, Russia)

ABCP SECRETARY GENERAL:

Ven. Da Lama Khunkhur Byambajav (Mongolia)

ABCP DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL:

1. Mr. Sonam Wangchuk (India)
2. Ven. Khy Suvanaratana (Cambodia)

Appendix 5

ABCP PATRONS:

1. His Holiness The Dalai Lama (CTA, Dharamsala, India)
2. His Holiness Samdech Tep Vong (Cambodia – 26 February 2024)
3. His Holiness Suddhananda Mahathero (Bangladesh)
4. His Eminence Thich Thien Nhon (Vietnam)
5. Ven. Prof. Mahinda Sangharakhita Mahathero (Sri Lanka)
6. Most Ven. Pyun Baegun (Republic of Korea)



Delegates of and participants in the 12th General Assembly of ABCP after the adoption of the ABCP Charter and conclusion of the General Assembly on 18 January 2024 in New Delhi, India. (Photos by Phuntsog Toldan)

Summary of comments, observations and recommendations from the National Centers regarding the Charter of ABCP

Indian National Center for ABCP, 31 December 2023

- 3.5 replace "the opinion of the minority" with "all opinion"
- 5.3 National Centers shall represent ABCP in their respective countries/communities (had been added) and the procedure of operation of the National Centers shall be approved by the General Assembly.
- 5.5 A Buddhist organization and Buddhists who agree with the aims and objectives, duties and responsibilities of ABCP, can join the organization as its member and can set up a National Center in their respective countries / regions. (National centers are not regional based, but country-wise and so this suggestion may not be applicable)
- 5.9.6. While there may be two National centers in one country, there shall be only one vote for one country. ((This is a new clause suggested, but how can two national centers in one country agree to vote. So not applicable). At the Executive Council meeting in New Delhi on 17 January 2024, Executive Council members discussed and agreed that each national center shall have the right to one vote.)
- 5.10.5. Through the ABCP Headquarters, members shall submit to the Executive Council the annual performance report and new year's action plan of the National Centers Council and the respective Standing Commission before every December 15. (accept the suggestion MEMBERS, and replace the word "council" with centers, which was an error from the HQ).
- 7.4. ABCP Headquarters, with the objective of promoting the activities of the organization and promoting closer working relationship with the members, shall have a Regional Coordinating Center at the most sacred site of the Buddhists – Bodhgaya Bodh Gaya, Bihar, India. (Accept the inclusion of word "working" but the name of the town of Bodh Gaya is written in the same manner and not as one word).
- 9.2.5. To call a special session of the special General Assembly and meeting of the Executive Council; (Agree, not to call a special session of but a special General Assembly).
- 18.1. Change the "Order of Honour" with the "Medal Order of Honour."

Ven. Li Chen Ran, Korean ABCP National Center, South Korea, 2, 3 January 2024

- I have carefully read the charter amendment you sent. I think the charter amendment itself is very good. I think the problem depends on how well we practice it. However, I think it would be good if each center clearly decided how much the annual membership fee would be
- I agree with you

Nepal National Center of ABCP, 5 January 2024

- Revised edited versions are accepted.
- Suggestion: We kindly request you to revise the 'Annual Fee of ABCP' suggesting it to be lower.
- Progress Reports and Plan has already been submitted that will be presented by secretary, Naresh Prasad Manandhar.
- The name of the speaker and topic of the paper for at New Delhi General Assembly, is as follows,
* Name of the speaker: Mr. Mukunda Bista, Executive Member
* Topic of his paper: "Swoyambhu, the epitomic Buddhist Heritage of Nepal - an appraisal to the Stupa, the axis mundi of Kathmandu Valley"

Dashichoiling Monastery National Center of ABCP, Mongolia, 8 January 2024

- We don't have any comments on the Revised edited version of ABCP Charter and appreciate ABCP Headquarters for diligently working on the ABCP Charter.

Japan National Center, 8 January 2024

- Reasons for proposals are required for each item.
- Based on this, we think that thorough consideration is necessary at each National Center.
- In the 12th General Assembly, only the original proposal expressing the reasons for each item should be presented and we should continue the discussion in the subsequent Meeting of the Executive Council of ABCP.
- Therefore, amendments to the Charter should be discussed and resolved at the next 13th General Assembly.
- We will be sending the most important part of our suggestions at the next email.
- Source Revised Charter this time;
- 1.2.7. It will support efforts for peaceful co-existence of countries of the world without wars and conflicts.
- Source Original Charter at Ulaanbaatar, in 2019;
- 1.2.8 ABCP shall strive for complete disarmament and elimination of nuclear weapons.
- As you can see above, we regret the removal of the phrase "prohibition of nuclear weapons" from the original text. Therefore, we propose making the following revision to the wording:
• 1.2.7. To achieve a world without war or conflict, we will advance disarmament and work towards the prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons.
• The prohibition of nuclear weapons, marked by the enactment of Nuclear Weapons ban Treaty at the United Nations, and appreciatively, your country, Mongolia, has also signed, is a global trend that cannot be ignored.
- And this is an additional suggestion, but regarding the history of ABCP mentioned in the Preamble the Second, we request that it be moved to the appendix rather than being included in the main text.

Justification for revising and amending the Charter?



Photo: ABCP Charter discussion at the Executive Council meeting

The Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (Hereinafter referred to as ABCP) was first conceptualized by a so-called “Initiative Group”, which was formed by Buddhists from Mongolia, India, the Soviet Union (now Russia), Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and Nepal with an objective to promote and strengthen peace in Asia, when they met in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of the Mongolian People’s Republic on 5 December 1969 where they agreed to call a meeting of Asian Buddhists in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on 11-13 June 1970 to promote peaceful activities in Asia. A Preparatory Committee to organize the above-mentioned meeting was formed under the chairmanship of the Most Ven. Gabju Samaagiin Gombojav, the Khambo Lama of the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia with the representatives of Mongolia, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and Russia and a meeting of the “Initiative Group” was held in Ulaanbaatar on 11-13 June 1970 where the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, an international voluntary organization of Asian Buddhists was established.

The 3rd Meeting of the Executive Council of the Asian Buddhist Committee for Promoting Peace, which was held in Ulaanbaatar on 16 January 1975, renamed the Committee into the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace.

At that time when the Asian continent was faced with such challenges as Cold War, armed conflicts, hunger and poverty, all fall-out of the Second World War, the Asian Buddhists rallied and united in this manner, and have been since working together, united under the mission of ABCP, to promote peace, freedom, independence and the welfare of all sentient beings.

Owing to the global democratic changes and trans-

formations that occurred in the early 1990s, ABCP’s activities slowed down slightly, but in 2018 at the initiative and active involvement of its members, the ABCP once again, slowly but gradually, began to revive. Two Executive Council meetings were held, first on 22 May 2017 in New Delhi, India and the second one on 2 May 2018 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, where decisions were taken to revive and rejuvenate the organization and on this basis, ABCP held its 11th General Assembly in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on 21-23 June 2019.

The first Constitution (hereinafter referred to as the “Charter”) was called the “Concise Rules of the Committee of the Asian Buddhists to Promote the Struggle for Peace,” which was drafted on 15 December 1970, was agreed upon at the 3rd Meeting of the ABCP Executive Council, which was held in Ulaanbaatar on 10 March 1974. The 6th General Conference of ABCP, which was held in Ulaanbaatar in 1982, discussed and adopted a new revised Constitution of ABCP with a Preamble and 10 Articles, and the 11th ABCP General Assembly, which was held in 2019 to revive and rejuvenate the organization, adopted the new amended Charter of ABCP.

Today, member National Centers representing Buddhists in 13 Asian countries are actively carrying out activities to promote ABCP’s aims and objectives. ABCP is committed to uniting the voice and efforts to overcome the challenges posed to universal peace and unity by the global changes and addressing the environmental degradation caused by climate change, and thus contribute its share to the common good cause, and in this respect, it is incumbent on ABCP to expand the scale and scope of its activities and expand its ranks of membership.

Having assessed and evaluated the work done in the past four years, since the last 11th General Assembly,

and with consideration of the scale and scope of the future activities, the revised ABCP Charter, which was adopted in 2019, is being proposed to be changed and amended as follows in compliance with common international trends and legal standards, and with the following justifications:

1. Re-define the aims and objectives of the Charter in compliance with the new challenges facing the entire world (such as armed conflicts, violence), and UN goals and objectives (protecting the environment and nature, promoting sustainable development);

2. Bring closer the time for the calling of the regular meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Council in order to step up the activities of ABCP;

3. Make the activities of the ABCP open, transparent, democratic and accountable with the objective of increasing its members and expanding its activities;

4. Create a legal environment that clearly defines the functions and duties of ABCP's structure and management, ensures better internal coordination that prevents duplication of duties and functions;

5. Elect the ABCP President from among other members of the organization In order to promote internal democracy;

6. Clearly define the internal procedures of the General Assembly and the meetings of the Executive Council;

7. Enhance the responsibility and accountability of the ABCP members.

Basing on the above justifications, the following issues of principle have been included in the new amended Charter of ABCP:

One. Make the General Assembly more active and transparent, and to ensure better participation of all the members:

- The General Assembly shall be now held once every three years, instead of four years;

- The quorum of the General Assembly has been determined with the presence of three fourths of all delegates;

- A decision of ABCP shall be deemed valid by a simple majority of votes, that is, 50%+1 of all the members taking part in the meeting, and important decisions, such as election of ABCP President, changes and amendments to the ABCP Charter, admission of new ABCP member(s) and cancelling a membership shall be deemed valid by two thirds of votes concerned.

- The maximum number of delegates from one National Center to the General Assembly of ABCP shall be not more than 3 (three).

Two. Improve the work of the Executive Council:

- Organize the regular meeting of the Executive Council once every year;

- Besides the Executive Council Members, the ABCP President, Vice Presidents, the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary Generals shall exercise the right

to vote;

- Standardize the activities of the Executive Council, such as, the quorum, the principle of voting, and making the decisions official and binding;

- Clearly spell out the rights and duties of the Executive Council.

Three. Make the organization and its activities open, transparent and more accountable:

- Increase the number of official delegates to the General Assembly from the National centers up to 3 (three) delegates;

- Make more transparent and accountable the activities of the General Assembly, such as the quorum, voting principles and making its decisions official and binding;

- ABCP President shall be elected on a rotational basis from the three ABCP regions;

- The responsibility and accountability of the ABCP President will be made clearer;

- Elected President shall report to the General Assembly;

- Make the meetings of ABCP more open by ensuring participation of the UN, the state and governments of the member countries and representatives of NGOs and the public at large.

Four. Enhance the responsibility and accountability of ABCP members:

- The rights and duties of the members shall be defined clearly and precisely;

- The schedule for the submission of reports and plans by members shall become definite;

- A National Center/Member that has failed to present its performance report and make its membership fee two consecutive years loses its right to vote in the General Assembly;

- A new member shall strictly abide by the Charter of ABCP and take an active part in promoting and realizing the aims and objectives of ABCP;

- If an ABCP member carries out any activity that is inconsistent with the aims and objectives of ABCP, and if the Charter has been violated time and again, the Executive Council shall have the right to submit to the general Assembly a motion to cancel the membership of the National Center/Member in question.

The adoption of the revised and amended Charter will clearly define and delineate the rights and duties of the structural organization of ABCP, the National Centers/Members, and officials of the Management and the Executive organs of ABCP, which will ensure that the Executive Council meeting is held once every year, the General Assembly - once every three years, and it would help in promoting joint discussion and planning of activities in order to realize the aims and objectives of the Charter, and create an environment that would ensure mutual equality, transparency and active participation.

ABCP Headquarters

ABCP GA COMMUNIQUE

COMMUNIQUE 12TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF ABCP

The 12th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace (ABCP) was held in New Delhi, the capital of the Republic of India on January 17-18, 2024.

It was attended by over 200 delegates, guests and observers from 18 National Centers in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Central Tibetan Administration in Dharamsala, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Nepal, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

The 12th General Assembly was also attended by a delegation from the Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in Bangkok Thailand, headed by Ven. Pramaha Surasak Paccantaseno, Assistant Professor from the Office of Vice Rector for Foreign Affairs of the University. The Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University had become a member and a National Center of ABCP in December 1982. ABCP President Ven. Gabju D. Chojamts welcomed the delegation from the Thai National Center for rejoining ABCP after a long break. The ABCP President also welcomed a delegation from Myanmar led by Most Ven. Dr. Sitagu Sayadaw Asgin Nanissara, Chancellor, Sitagu Buddhist Academy, who had also expressed Myanmar's willingness and desire to join ABCP. A formal request from Myanmar is still awaited and it was decided that Myanmar's request would be considered when ABCP receives a formal request for membership.

Da Lama Kh. Byambajav, Secretary General of ABCP opening the 12th general Assembly of ABCP said: "The 12th general Assembly of ABCP is being held in New Delhi, capital of India on 17-18 January 2024. I would like to greet the ABCP delegates from the National Centers and the eminent guests that have accepted our invitation to our General Assembly. Our peace movement organization from its very inception has been raising its voice and spearheading its actions for world peace

and security. Wars, armed conflicts and natural disasters are occurring in the region and different countries around the world claiming many precious human lives and causing lot of suffering" and asked the General Assembly attendees to stand for a minute of silence in homage to those who have passed away.

Key note speech at the General Assembly was delivered by the Most Venerable Gabju D. Chojamts, President of ABCP focusing on major international issues of war and peace, environment and climate change, and the challenges, accomplishments and way forward of ABCP.

ABCP President, Gabju D. Chojamts began by saying, "The teachings of the Buddha consistently advocate for the avoidance of wars, conflicts, and crises. Throughout our history, countless wars have erupted, causing the loss of countless innocent lives, disability, orphanhood, and affliction by hunger, poverty, and diseases. Furthermore, the progress of nations has been hindered for decades. In the aftermath of war, cultural artifacts and intellectual heritage painstakingly crafted over centuries by societies and individuals are obliterated. The preparation for war and the pursuit of armaments constitute a significant economic burden on normal human life, exacerbating mistrust, enmity, and suspicion between nations in the political arena, while instilling ideological distrust, fear, and pessimism about the future. Wars and armed conflicts have been enduring sources of danger, loss, and harm in human history, and these painful lessons must be perpetually etched in our collective memory."

Focusing on present-day challenges, the ABCP President said "His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, in his teachings in Bodh Gaya at the end of December last year, emphasized the universal aspiration for "world peace" shared by people worldwide, irrespective of their religious beliefs. However, this noble desire faces persistent challenges, as mentioned by His Holiness. Unfortunately, a few individuals with firm convictions contribute to the

suffering of the global population, numbering over 7 billion. Humanity, despite its aversion to suffering, has initiated World War I, World War II, and seems to be on the brink of World War III. The production and proliferation of various weapons continue to escalate for this purpose. A poignant recent example lies in the conflicts in many parts of the world, including in Europe and the Middle East, as a consequence of which the pain and suffering of common people are multiplying. Although many countries, members of the international community, demand an immediate end to these conflicts and wars, we do not see much desire on the part of these involved in the conflict to stop the violence, which is extremely unfortunate.”

The ABCP President, concluded his key-note speech by saying “I am convinced that tangible progress can be achieved by way of bolstering mutual understanding and cooperation. By consolidating the efforts of international and national community organizations, as well as well-wishers, and by fostering unity, dialogue, and comprehension, we can overcome a plethora of challenges. Political, social, and economic crises, poverty, inequality, environmental catastrophes, discrimination, epidemics, extremism, and terrorism all demand our collective attention.”

The ABCP at its 12th General Assembly unanimously adopted the “Delhi Declaration.” The seven-point Delhi Declaration voices concern over fragile world peace and demands an immediate end to wars and armed conflicts by peaceful means, an end to the race for weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. It also voiced serious concern over global warming, climate change and natural degradation, which are the consequences of the wrongful acts and deeds of man, and called on nations and countries around the world to pool their efforts for the common cause of preserving our earth and protecting our nature.

The Delhi Declaration notes in part that “Being conscious of the pressing issues confronting humanity, such as global peace, security and environment degradation, generating a sense of hope and understanding for a better way of life that would benefit global peace, compassion and harmony among nations of the world, reaffirm our commitment to strive for peace and for preservation of the sacredness of nature. The happiness of mankind is closely linked with and dependent on healthy and peaceful environment of our planet. As Buddhists, we feel committed to bring about a qualitative change in the life of the people through sustained spiritual development and moral values in

conformity with the noble teachings of Lord Buddha who taught us to wipe out hatred, jealousy, violence, cruelty and revengefulness by building an attitude of unconditional love and universal brotherhood.”

The 12th General Assembly of ABCP had the honor of having H.E. Mr. Jagdeep Dankhar, Vice President of the Republic of India, and H. E. Mr. Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Earth Sciences, Government of India, as its Chief Guests.

The Hon’ble Vice President of India Mr. Jagdeep Dankhar addressing the inauguration of the 12th General Assembly of ABCP welcomed all the ABCP delegates and representatives to New Delhi, especially since an Assembly of Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace was happening in India after five decades. “Welcome to Bharat home to 1/6 humanity. The importance of this gathering assumes significance as the world is passing through a historic and transformational phase” he said and continued “We gather at the 12th ABCP General Assembly under the timely theme: ABCP - The Buddhist Voice of Global South. This coincides with India’s growing leadership role, amplifying the voices of the Global South. As evidenced by its G20 presidency and the “Voice of Global South Summit,” India is committed to representing the concerns of nations with three-quarters of the world’s population. The motto is soothing as Bharat as a nation has been guided by the principles of Bhagwan (Lord) Buddha. This event is significant as we are gathered in the capital of a country where Buddhism was born and spread to diverse corners of the world, including all the countries that are members of this prestigious international organization for the noble cause of peace. India is the land of Bhagwan Buddha. As appropriately reflected by Prime Minister Modi ‘we are proud to belong to a nation that has given the world ‘Buddha’ and not ‘Yuddha’ (war).’ India is committed to ensuring that the younger generations across the world learn more about Bhagwan Buddha and get inspired by His ideals,” he noted.

“Remember,” emphasized the Indian Vice President, “Buddha’s teachings are not relics of the past, but a compass for our future. As technology races ahead, his Middle Path – a tapestry of friendship, moderation, and reverence for all life – offers a sustainable path for us and our planet. His thought process principles and essence all model dated when the world is faced with disruptive technologies.”

H.E. Mr. Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Earth Sciences of the Government of India, in his address to the ABCP General Assembly delegates said, “I feel assured that such a rare and unique Dharma

gathering involving Sangha leaders, eminent Buddhist scholars and Dharma practitioners from all over the world would be able to contribute meaningfully towards spreading the Universal message of Lord Buddha very much needed in the chaotic modern world. The overwhelming response to this event from Sangha and Buddhist leaders from across the world indicates the enthusiasm and keenness that persists globally towards seeking Universal wellbeing, Peace and Compassion through the teachings of the Buddha.”

He continued “I must emphasize that the ABCP is a time tested organization created as early as in 1970 and has seen the world change through wars and conflicts, poverty and social degradation, terrorism and insurgencies, political and economic changes of different nature – some good and some bad. At the same time, the ABCP has also seen the growth of Asia, which is the largest and most populous of the continents, as Asia became richer faster than any other region of the world. Of course not to mention the turnaround brought about by the technological and scientific advancement that Asia has seen. This deep rooted experience and durable existence of the organization undoubtedly gives it the strength and confidence to not only strive for universal peace, harmony and cooperation among nations but also to further their economic and social advancement and promoting respect for justice and human dignity. We need to remember that the Buddhist culture, tradition and heritage binds us all together and acts as the umbilical cord. Therefore, we need to ensure that this cord is made further strong, robust and firm under any circumstances,” underlined Mr. Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Earth Sciences of India addressing the inauguration of the ABCP General Assembly.

A ceremony of presenting the "Medal of Honour" of ABCP was held during the inaugural session of the 12th General Assembly of ABCP. The Hon'ble Minister of Earth Sciences of India H.E. Kiren Rijiju and Most Venerable Lama Lobzang, from Ladakh, India were presented the Medal of Honor by Most Ven. Gabju D. Choijamts, President of ABCP, in recognition of their outstanding contribution to promoting Lord Buddha's sacred teachings and at realizing the goals and objectives of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace.

Messages of greetings from His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Prime Minister of the Republic of India Narendra Modi, President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Mohammed Shahabuddin, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, Speaker of the State Great Khural – Par-

liament of Mongolia Gombojavyn Zandanshatar, were read out during the inaugural session of the ABCP General Assembly. Ven. Pyeon Baek-un, the 26th President of the Taego Order of Korean Buddhism, and Ven. Bhikkhu Maitri, President of ABCP Nepal National Center also sent messages of greetings to the 12th General Assembly of ABCP.

His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, in his written message to the 12th ABCP General Assembly, noted that "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 demilitarization. In this respect, some kind of inner disarmament is necessary to have the confidence to eliminate physical weapons.”

“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,” underlined His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

National Centers of Japan, Mongolia – Dashi-choiling Monastery, Bangladesh made reports to the General Assembly on the activities and the progress of their respective centers.

Venerable Buddhadatta Thera, Director of the Mahabodhi Research Center, Maha Bodhi Society, Bengaluru, India, a special invitee to the General Assembly, made a presentation entitled “Stepping into the new horizons of change in the 21st century – Buddhist peace initiative – a contribution to the sustained holistic development for the Global South.

A meeting was held between the members of the ABCP Executive Council and Geneva-based "Dharma Alliance," and a Framework for Cooperation Agreement between ABCP and Dharma Alliance was signed during the General Assembly by ABCP Secretary General Da Lama Kh. Byambajav, and Dr. Prashant Sharma, President of Dharma Alliance. The draft of the Framework for Cooperation Agreement between ABCP and Dharma Alliance was first discussed at a meeting between the Executive Council of ABCP and Dharma Alliance, which was held on the sidelines of the General Assembly and attended by some members of the ABCP Executive Council and the Dharma Alliance.

The purpose of the Framework for Cooperation Agreement between ABCP and Dharma Alli-

ance is to build awareness about the ways in which Buddhist teachings, traditions and practices can contribute substantially to the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), support advocacy efforts to strengthen and embed Buddhist principles in public policies at various levels; and support and strengthen the development of a collective Dharmic voice premised on common principles such as peace, harmony, mutual respect, and the inter-connectedness of all life, for greater effectiveness in influencing international institutions, dialogues and policies.

ABCP and Dharma Alliance have a profound overlap in their missions and objectives, in which Buddhist teachings, traditions and culture play a fundamental and unequivocal role. The purpose of this Framework of Cooperation Agreement between ABCP and Dharma Alliance is to provide guidelines to jointly raise awareness and carry out advocacy work to protect, preserve and promote Dharma principles and perspectives across institutions, dialogues and policies, as well as develop collaborative programs at local, national, regional and global levels that support this effort. ABCP and Dharma Alliance view this Framework of Cooperation Agreement as an important instrument for building a strong voice that can effectively channel ancient wisdom in addressing modern challenges.

Another important feature of the Twelfth General Assembly was the Academic conference under the general theme "Buddhist Traditions, Culture and Heritage." The academic session was attended by monk and lay scholars from India, Mongolia, Nepal such as Dr. Shashibala, a renowned Indologist, who is currently Dean of Bhavan's K.M. Munshi Center for Indology, Prof. M. Otgonbayar of the Department of Philosophy and Theology, School of Sciences of the Mongolian National University in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Dr. Myagmarsuren Gombodorj of the Dashichoiling Buddhist Monastery in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Mr. Mukunda Bista, Secretary of the Nepal National Center ABCP, Ven. Lama S. Luvsandorj, Director of the Mongolian Buddhist University of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery and Ven. Lama D. Lkhagvasuren, a professor at the Mongolian Buddhist University at Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, Dr. Anirban Das, Director of the National Mission for Manuscript, Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts, Ministry of Culture of India, and Mr. Jigmet Olden, Ph.D. Delhi University, India.

The 12th GA considered the recommendations of the 15th Meeting of the Executive Council,

held in New Delhi on January 17, 2024 related to the Revised and Edited version of the Charter of ABCP, which after discussion by the delegates of the 12th General Assembly, was adopted unanimously.

It also confirmed the commitment of ABCP to stick to the three-point resolution on the future status of the Dalai Lama institution, adopted at the 13th meeting of the Executive Council of the Asian Buddhists Conference for Peace, which was held in Colombo Sri Lanka on 14 January 2021* (See the end of the Communiqué for the ABCP Colombo Resolution 2021), and the General Assembly welcomed the news about the reincarnation of the Tenth Bogd Khan Jebzundamba of Mongolia.

At the General Assembly, Mr. Sonam Wangchuk, in his capacity as Secretary of the Indian National Center of ABCP, read out a joint statement of the Himalayan Buddhist Culture Association, the Indian Himalayan Council for Nalanda Buddhist Tradition and the Trans Himalayan Arts and Culture Association of declaring His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama as a "Universal Supreme Leader of the Buddhist World," and declaring 6 July, His Holiness' birthday as a "Universal Day of Compassion." This joint statement was unanimously approved by the delegates of the 12th General Assembly of ABCP, noting that by "celebrating compassion and non-violence we celebrate the messages of Lord Buddha and the teachings of HH the 14th Dalai Lama," emphasizing that ABCP commits to building a truly harmonious and peaceful world.

The 12th General Assembly of ABCP passed two resolutions, one on the adoption of the Revised and Edited version of the ABCP Charter and the second one on approving the admission of Bhutan as a new member of ABCP, which was first considered by the 15th Executive Council Meeting of ABCP and whose recommendation the General Assembly unanimously adopted the Revised and Edited version of ABCP Charter.

At the 12th General Assembly, Vietnam National Center of ABCP announced its decision to host the 13th General Assembly of ABCP in Vietnam in 2026, and the head of the Cambodia National center announced that it is contemplating to host the 16th Executive Council Meeting of ABCP in Phnom-Penh, Cambodia. Both these decisions of the Vietnam and Cambodia National Centers were welcomed by the delegates to the 12th General Assembly of ABCP with a big round of applause.

Mr. Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Earth Sciences, Government of India, kindly hosted a high-tea at his residence in New Delhi, which was attended by

all the delegates and guests of the 12th General Assembly.

Another important event held during the 12th General Assembly was the inauguration of an ABCP Regional Coordination Center in the holy land of Bodhgaya, where Lord Buddha attained enlightenment. The ABCP Regional Coordination Center is based at the Mongolian temple in Bodhgaya and the decision to set up the center was taken at the previous 11th General Assembly of ABCP, held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in 2019 to facilitate better and easy cooperation between the National Centers of ABCP, most of which have their temples and monasteries in Bodhgaya, Bihar, India.

The inauguration of the ABCP Regional Coordination Center was graced by the Hon'ble. Governor of Bihar, Mr. Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar and also by His Holiness the 43rd Sakya Trizin Gyana Vajra Rinpoche.

The Hon'ble Governor of Bihar, Mr. Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, addressing the inauguration of the ABCP Regional Coordination Center said "Over the years ABCP became a well-known and a prestigious international Buddhist organization, working for durable peace and improving the common man's quality of life."

The Bihar Governor continued that "The present century is undoubtedly an age of scientific and technological advancement that has resulted in the so-called material development and growth," but noted that this advancement "has failed to alleviate the basic sufferings of human being, such as poverty, inequality, communalism etc., that very much provides the fertile ground for the growth of fundamentalism, hatred and violence greed and conflict throughout the world. There is no empirical evidence to support the assumption that social and economic progress based on materialistic conception of life can ensure happiness and well-being of humanity. Moreover, the present crisis of wars and pandemic has created an environment of fear and uncertainty of life." The Bihar Governor Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar underlined that "In such a conflicting scenario, to bring peace, happiness and harmony within us and in the environment around us, attention must shift to issues that help in making humans humane. It is this that makes the Teachings of the Buddha and more so the practice of Dharma relevant today, as it encompasses the philosophy of life, which is completely missing in this post-modern era of development."

His Holiness the 43rd Sakya Trizin Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, who also addressed the participants in the inauguration of the Coordination Center, said: "Today as we gather here in the holy vicin-

ity of Bodhgaya, which holds an unparalleled significance for Buddhists worldwide as the most blessed ground where Siddhartha Gautama, attained enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree more than 2,500 years ago. This sacred site serves as the spiritual epicenter of Buddhism, embodying the essence of the Buddha's profound teachings. For us Buddhists, Bodhgaya is not just a physical location; it is a pilgrimage to the very source of our faith, a place where the air resonates with the echoes of the Buddha's realizations and the earth beneath our feet carries the imprints of his enlightenment. Beyond its historical and religious importance, Bodhgaya fosters a universal sense of peace, unity, and understanding, drawing people from all walks of life in a shared quest for spiritual awakening and inner tranquility. It stands as a timeless beacon of wisdom, compassion, and mindfulness, inspiring devotees worldwide to tread the path of enlightenment," and further dwelt on what Lord Buddha prophesized about his teachings that they "would spread from north to north." He said, "This prophecy has been widely interpreted as the journey of Dharma from India to Tibet and from Tibet to Mongolia. To this day, Tibetans and Mongolians hold India in high esteem, considering it the land of Arya Bhumi or the land of the exalted beings. The Dharma has acted as the sacred thread, inseparably connecting the spirits of Tibetans and Mongolians with India."

Underlining the importance of the ABCP Regional Coordination Center, the 43rd Sakya Trizin Gyana Vajra Rinpoche said "the inauguration of a Regional Coordinating Centre in Bodhgaya, at the heart of the Buddhist Universe, serves as a testament to India's pivotal role in the revitalization and sustenance of Buddhism in the contemporary world. It is through such initiatives that India continues to be a beacon for the global Buddhist community, promoting the timeless values of compassion, wisdom, and peace across borders and the cultures."

The ABCP Regional Coordination center in Bodhgaya will be managed by Ven. Erdenebulgan, the head lama of the Mongolian Temple in this holy land, with support from the ABCP Indian National Center.

May the Triple Gem bless all and May peace, compassion and justice prevail in the world!

The 12th General Assembly, Asian Buddhists
Conference for Peace.

New Delhi, India

Special attachment to ABCP 12th GA Communique

The 13th meeting of the Executive Council (EC) of Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 14 January 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held via webinar. It provided an opportunity to the national centers to come together in one forum and to discuss a number of specific issues related to the organization and implement actions directed towards strengthening global peace, raising environment awareness, and promoting equality and unity among the Buddhists of the world.

The ABCP Executive Council meeting supported the statement made by Ven. Karma Gelek, President, National Center, Department of Religion and Culture, Central Tibetan Administration in Dharasala, Himachal Pradesh, India with regard to the following 3-point resolution on the future status of the Dalai Lama institution:

- (i) To continue the Institution and Reincarnation of the Dalai Lama in the future;
- (ii) The incumbent XIV Dalai Lama to be the sole authority of how the next reincarnation of the Dalai Lama should return, and the Tibetan people never to recognize any Dalai Lama reincarnation candidate chosen and installed by the Chinese government; and
- (iii) To employ the eight centuries old unique Tibetan traditional method in searching and recognizing the next Dalai Lama.



Left to right: Most Ven, His Holiness the 20th Bakula Rinpoche from India. Ven. Shugaku Mori from Japan, Ven. Dr. Sisaket Rattana from Laos, Ven. Ch. Dambajav, Mongolia and from,



Ven. Dr. Sisaket Rattana from Laos, Ven. Ch. Dambajav from Mongolia, Ven. from Bangladesh and Ven. Da Lama K. Byambajav, ABCP Secretary General (photo top) and Ven. from Nepal, Ven. Sodnomdorzhiev Dashi Nima and Ven. Andrey Dondukbayev (Tsyren Lama) from Russia, Ven. Lee Chi Ran, Korea, Ven. Ven. Maitipe Wimalasara and Ven. Pallakinde Rathanasara Thero from Sri Lanka (photo below)





Ven. Shugaku Mori from Japan and Ven. Dr. Sisaket Rattana from Laos (photo above) and Sri Lanka National Center, Wipulasara Chapter monks led by Ven. Maitipe Wimalasara offering prayer (photo below)





Ven. Buddhapriya Mahathero from Bangladesh - Boudha Krist Prachar Sangha, Ven. Khenpo Ugen Namgyel from Bhutan and Ven ... from ... (photos top) and monks and representative from Vietnam National Centers offering prayer led by Ven. Thich Nhat Thu and Prof. Le Manh That (in the foreground, photos below)





**Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace
- ABCP**

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The two-month instructions of the **Kanjur** (also known the **Kangyur**; collection of the Buddha's teachings) started on 9 April 2024 at the Battsagaan Temple of Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, the Center of Mongolian Buddhists, in Ulaanbaatar