

IBC hosts International Conference in Leh on Himalayan Buddhism's Contribution to India's Spiritual and Cultural Heritage

Leh, May 03, 2026: The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), in collaboration with the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre (MIMC), Leh, successfully organized an International Conference on the "Contribution of Himalayan Buddhism to the Spiritual and Cultural Heritage of India and Beyond" on the auspicious occasion of the 2569th Vaishakha Buddha Purnima.

The conference was held at the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre, Leh, and witnessed the participation of eminent scholars, spiritual leaders, policymakers, and practitioners from across India and abroad.

The event commenced with a traditional Mangalapath recitation by venerable monks, followed by the ceremonial lighting of the lamp and the official launch of an IBC documentary film on Ladakh, titled "Ladakh – The Land of High Passes."

The Chief Guest, Shri Pema Khandu, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, in his address, emphasized the cultural and spiritual significance of Himalayan Buddhism across regions such as Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, and Ladakh. He highlighted the importance of such conferences in strengthening cultural bonds across Himalayan communities and fostering global connections rooted in shared traditions. He noted that despite the challenges of living in harsh terrains, the people of the Himalayas remain deeply connected to their identity, culture, and spiritual heritage. He also underlined the enduring influence of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama in nurturing unity and compassion. Stressing the relevance of the Buddha's teachings in today's conflict-ridden world, he called for the promotion of peace, harmony, and unity beyond borders. He further elaborated on various initiatives undertaken by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh to preserve Buddhist heritage, including the restoration of ancient texts and monasteries, and reaffirmed his government's continued support to Ladakh.

The Guest of Honour, His Eminence Thuksey Rinpoche, spiritual master of the Drukpa lineage, spoke on the profound relevance of Buddhist teachings in the 21st century. He emphasized the importance of cultivating inner peace and addressing challenges such as anger, desire, and hatred through the practice of Dharma. He noted that Himalayan Buddhism continues to thrive as a living tradition deeply rooted in culture, history, and spiritual practice, and stressed the collective responsibility of preserving this heritage for future generations. He called for unity, collaboration, and guidance for the youth, who possess the knowledge and potential to carry forward these traditions.

Shri Dorjey Stanzin, President of the Ladakh Gonpa Association, highlighted the role of Buddhist institutions in promoting peace, compassion, and unity. He noted that such conferences serve as important platforms for enhancing understanding and knowledge of Himalayan Buddhism and showcasing its rich legacy to the world. Shri Tsering Lakruk, President of the Ladakh Buddhist Association, elaborated on the historical evolution of Buddhism in Ladakh, particularly along the Silk Route, where trade facilitated not only economic exchange but also the spread of religious ideas and cultural practices. He spoke about the role of monasteries as centers of learning, meditation, and conflict resolution, and highlighted the significance of traditional art forms such as thangka painting, Buddhist literature, and the holistic healing system of Sowa Rigpa.

On the occasion, a book titled "The Living Legacy of the Tathagata," compiled by Dr. Thupstan Norboo and Lhundup Gyalpo, was released by the Union Territory Administration of Ladakh.

In his inaugural remarks, Most Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena, President of MIMC, expressed gratitude to the Union Territory Administration of Ladakh, the International Buddhist Confederation, and all supporting agencies for organizing a series of events during the 15-day exposition of Buddha relics in Leh. He acknowledged the contributions of the Tourism Department and other stakeholders in making the event successful. He also emphasized that in today's technologically advanced world, the guidance of a spiritual teacher remains essential for cultivating wisdom and compassion.

The conference further featured a series of thematic sessions focusing on key dimensions of Buddhist studies, culture, and heritage. The first session, titled "Preservation of Ancient Heritage," was moderated by Prof. Rajesh Ranjan, Vice Chancellor of the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies, Leh, and included distinguished speakers from Bhutan, India, and Germany.

The second session, "Cultural and Artistic Innovation," was chaired by Lama Ugyen Wangdi Rinpoche and brought together scholars and practitioners from India, Nepal, and the United Kingdom. The third session, "Intellectual and Ethical System," was moderated by Lopen Lungtaen Gyatso and featured speakers from prominent academic and spiritual institutions.

A special address on spiritual tourism and its global significance was delivered by Shri Sanjeet Rodrigues, Secretary, Tourism and Culture, Union Territory of Ladakh, who emphasized the potential of Ladakh as a global hub for spiritual and cultural tourism.



