

# SEVERAL STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY MINISTRY OF CULTURE TO PROMOTE RESEARCH ON BUDDHIST STUDIES AND CULTURE IN INDIA – CULTURE MINISTER

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Ministry of Culture

## Several steps have been taken by Ministry of Culture to promote research on Buddhist Studies and Culture in India – Culture Minister

Posted On: 04 FEB 2020 6:02PM by PIB Delhi

To promote research on Buddhist Studies and Buddhist Culture in India, the Ministry of Culture currently operates four Autonomous Buddhist educational Institutions namely

- (i) Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, Bihar
- (ii) Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies (CIHTS), Sarnath, Varanasi
- (iii) Central Institute of Buddhist Studies (CIBS), Leh, Ladakh and
- (iv) Central Institute of Himalayan Culture Studies (CIHCS), Dahung, Arunachal Pradesh.

The mandate of these educational Institutions is to provide education in Buddhist philosophies, Culture & Art and to promote research in different aspects of Buddhism, preserve ancient Buddhist manuscripts, digitize ancient Buddhist text preserved in the languages of Pali, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese, Japanese and other Asian languages through the system of a modern university.

In addition to the aforesaid four Autonomous Buddhist educational Institutes, Ministry of Culture also provides annual grants-in-aid for the upkeep and maintenance to the following six Grantee Bodies for promoting Buddhist Culture and Art:

1. Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamshala
2. Tibet House, New Delhi
3. Centre for Buddhist Cultural Studies, Tawang Monastery, Arunachal Pradesh
4. Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Sikkim
5. International Buddhist Confederation
6. GRL Monastic School, Bomdila, Arunachal Pradesh

Further, the following two Financial Grant Schemes are also being implemented by the Ministry for propagation and scientific development of Buddhist Culture and tradition as also for preservation of cultural heritage of Himalayas.

1. Scheme of Financial Assistance for the Development of Buddhist/Tibetan Culture and Art
2. Scheme of Financial Assistance for the Preservation & Development of Cultural Heritage of the Himalayas

Ministry of Culture has signed Cultural Exchange Programmes (CEPs) with a number of countries which include countries having Buddhist population viz. China, Japan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Thailand etc. Besides, with a view to build international cultural relations with other Buddhist nations, the Buddhist institutes under the Ministry have various alumni exchange programmes, faculty exchange programmes, collaborative research projects and Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with various international Institutes located in USA, Australia, Russia, Korea, Mongolia etc. Further, international level seminars, symposia and conferences are organised regularly by these Institutes with participation of scholars from various countries. Besides, the Ministry of Tourism undertakes various promotional activities on an ongoing basis in the international markets including those with a Buddhist population. These promotions are undertaken with the objective of showcasing the various tourist destinations and products of the country including the Buddhist sites. Further, the Ministry of Tourism organizes an International Buddhist Conclave biennially. Participants in the conclave include eminent Buddhist scholars, opinion makers, tour operators and media personalities from overseas. Various projects for Buddhist sites are being undertaken by Ministry of Tourism under the scheme of Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD and Assistance to Central Agencies, provides Central Financial Assistance to State Governments/Union Territories/ Central Agencies etc. for development of infrastructure and facilities at thematic tourist circuits in the country.

**The following activities were under taken to promote India's Buddhist Tradition Internationally:**

1. Three days International Buddhist Conference was organized by the Ministry from 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2017 at Nava NalandaMahavihara Campus, Nalanda on the theme "Nalanda Tradition: Buddhist response to world crisis".
2. An international Seminar was organized by International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 at Agartala on the theme "India's North Eastern Region and Buddhist Heritage-Bridge between SAARC and ASEAN".
3. In observance of the triple Blessed Day of Lord Buddha's Birth, enlightened awakening and Mahaparinirvana, Vesak Buddha Purnima Diwas is being celebrated by the Ministry in 2015,2016,2017 and 2018.
4. Buddhist Mahotasava and an exhibition titled "DhammaDarshan" were organized from 6-10

February, 2017 in Combodia .

5. A photographic exhibition on Buddha was organized in Russia.
6. Buddhist Carika, exhibition in China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Combodia, Laos, Indonesia etc. was organized by Nava NalandaMahaviahra to disseminate the Buddhist Culture, tradition and strengthen cultural relationship between these Buddhist Nations and India.
7. Nava NalandaMahavihara organizes 'Nalanda Dialogue' every year in which versed scholars from abroad including India participate and exchange their views on the various issues in Buddhist prospective.
8. Nava NalandaMahavihara hosted 'Asian Philosophical Congress' in which delegates from various countries participated.
9. Under Academic Exchange Programme with USA 40 students along with their faculty members visits the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies (CIHTS), Sarnath, Varanasi every year and receive one month integrated course on Buddhist Philosophy.
10. Interaction and Workshop organized by Central Institute of Buddhist Studies (CIBS), Leh, Ladakh with Nihon University, Japan.
11. Road shows organized by Ministry of Tourism in Yangon (Myanmar), Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam), Phnom Penh(Combodia) and Bangkok(Thailand) for promoting of India's Buddhist Heritage.
12. A short film on Buddhist sites in the country has been produced by the Ministry of Tourism.
13. A dedicated website has been launched by Ministry of Tourism on important Buddhist sites in India i.e. ***indiathelandofbuddha.in***. The website aims to promote and showcase the rich Buddhist heritage in India.
14. Under the Regional Connectivity Scheme Udan, 346 tourism routes have been incorporated by the Ministry of Civil Aviation wherein important Buddhist destinations such as Kushinagar, Varanasi and Gaya have been included.

This information was given by the Minister of State (I/c) of Culture and Tourism, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha today.

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(Release ID: 1601911) Visitor Counter : 210

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