



International Buddhist Conclave 2018

The President of India will inaugurate the “International Buddhist Conclave (IBC), 2018” in New Delhi on 23rd August, 2018.

- The Conclave is being organized by the **Ministry of Tourism** in collaboration with the State Governments of **Maharashtra, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh** from 23rd – 26th August, 2018 at New Delhi and Ajanta (Maharashtra), followed by site visits to Rajgir, Nalanda and Bodhgaya (Bihar) and Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh).
- Apart from the Ministerial level delegation from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, delegates from other 29 countries will also participate in the International Buddhist Conclave.
- IBC-2018 will have a **religious / spiritual dimension**, an **academic theme** and a **diplomatic and business** component.
- The Ministry will also organize an **"Investors' Summit"** during the Conclave to attract investments in developing world class infrastructure at Buddhist sites.
- The aim of the Conclave is to showcase and project the Buddhist Heritage in India and boost tourism to the Buddhist sites in the country and cultivate friendly ties with countries and communities interested in Buddhism.

Background

- The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has been organizing the International Buddhist Conclave biennially since 2004.
- The earlier International Buddhist Conclaves were organized in New Delhi and Bodhgaya (February 2004), Nalanda and Bodhgaya (February 2010), Varanasi and Bodhgaya (2012 and 2014) and in Sarnath/Varanasi and Bodhgaya (October 2016).
- The “ASEAN” was the Guest of Honor during IBC, 2016 and **Japan would be the ‘Partner Country for IBC-2018.**

Buddhism

- **Gautama Buddha (born in 563 BC at Lumbini, Nepal)** founded the Buddhist School of Philosophy.
- He attained Nirvana while meditating under a pipal tree in Bodhgaya on the banks of the river Niranjana.
- Buddhist philosophy questioned the authority of the Vedic rituals in helping the attainment of salvation. Instead, the Buddhist philosophy maintains that in order to attain salvation four noble truths must be followed.
- The **four noble truths** are:
 - The Truth of **Suffering (Kutai)**- Human life is full of **suffering** in the form of pain, sickness and death.
 - The Truth of the **Cause of Suffering (Jutai)**- The root cause of human suffering is **desire**.
 - The Truth of the **Cessation of Suffering (Mettai)**- In order to attain a state of peace and nirvana a person **must let go of all his desires and passions**.
 - The Truth of the **Path to the Cessation of Suffering (Dotai)**- To ease human suffering it is important to move towards the attainment of nirvana using the **Eight-Fold Path**.
- The Eight-fold Path, in Pali language, **Aṭṭhangiko Maggo** are:
 - i. Right Views - to keep ourselves free from prejudice, superstition and delusion and to see

aright the true nature of life.

- ii. Right Thoughts - to turn away from the evils of this world and to direct our minds towards righteousness.
 - iii. Right Speech - to refrain from pointless and harmful talk to speak kindly and courteously to all.
 - iv. Right Conduct - to see that our deeds are peaceful, benevolent, compassionate and pure; to live the Teaching of the Buddha daily.
 - v. Right Livelihood - to earn our living in such a way as to entail no evil consequences.
 - vi. Right Effort - to direct our efforts incessantly to the overcoming of ignorance and selfish desires.
 - vii. Right Mindfulness - to cherish good and pure thoughts for all that we say and do arise from our thoughts.
 - viii. Right Meditation - to concentrate our will on the Buddha, His Life and His Teaching.
- On the other hand, the 'Buddha Path' also refers to the Eight Great Places of Buddhist Heritage, (**referred in Pali as Aṭṭhamahāṭhānāni**). They are:
 - i. Lumbini (Nepal)- Buddha was born.
 - ii. Bodh Gaya (Bihar)- Attained enlightenment.
 - iii. Sarnath (Varanasi, U.P.)- First sermon.
 - iv. Kushinagar (Gorakhpur, U.P.)- Buddha died.
 - v. Rajgir (Bihar)- Where the Lord tamed a mad elephant.
 - vi. Vaishali (Bihar)- Where a monkey offered honey to him.
 - vii. Sravasti (U.P)- The Lord took his seat on a thousand petaled lotus and created multiple representations of himself.
 - viii. Sankasya (Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh)- He descended from heaven.

Significance

- Presently, it is estimated that there are nearly 500 million Buddhists all over the World and majority of them live in East Asia, South East Asia and Far East countries.
- However, a very small percentage of them visit the Buddhist sites in India each year.
- Therefore, the potential of encouraging more tourists to visit the Buddhist destinations where Lord Buddha lived and preached is immense.
- Earlier in 2014-15, the Ministry of Tourism has also launched the **Swadesh Darshan scheme** with a vision to develop theme-based tourist circuits on the principles of high tourist value. The Ministry has identified **Buddhist Circuit as one of the thirteen thematic circuits** for development under the Swadesh Darshan scheme.
- Moreover, this Buddha Path is **the Living Heritage** that still continues to inspire millions of people to walk and find out Peace, Happiness, Harmony and Solace.
- To work for the promotion of both the **intangible and the tangible Buddhist Heritage**, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has decided to organize 6th International Buddhist Conclave on the theme, "**Buddha Path - The Living Heritage**".