



Light of Buddhadharm Foundation International India

Information Sheet

The aim of LBDFI is to apply the principles of loving compassion to achieve peace and harmony for all humanity. Extending Venerable Tarthang Tulku's work for world peace and the Buddhist heritage, the Foundation's mission is to support preservation and restoration of the shrines and cultural artifacts of the land of the Buddha's enlightenment, the holy land of India, the Aryadesha; to support pilgrimages and religious ceremonies at sacred places for practitioners of all Buddhist schools and denominations; to support research into and understanding of the texts, practices, and symbols of Buddhism, especially by sponsoring educational events at the holy places; and to promote non-violence and mutual respect among all beings through the worldwide cooperation of men and women of good will.

In order to carry out its mission to revitalize the Buddha Sasana in the land of its origin, LBDFI has undertaken a four-phase strategy, as outlined below.

In its first phase, LBDFI has focused many of its efforts on promoting gatherings of monks and laypeople at major pilgrimage sites. In honour of the southern tradition of Buddhism, the Theravada, LBDFI acts as the primary sponsor of an international gathering of monastics who chant the Tipitaka (the words of the Buddha in Pali) at Bodhgaya for a ten-day ceremony from December 2-12th every year. Founded in 1996 and held annually thereafter. In 2022, the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind was the Chief Guest at the opening of the event. In 2023, the seventeenth annual ceremony attracted over 10,000 participants on its opening day with thousands of visitors from the eleven countries of Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal, Cambodia, Laos PDR, Vietnam, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Nepal and America to join their Indian counterparts in chanting the Buddha word under the Bodhi tree. LBDFI meets all the travel and accommodation expenses for attending Bhikkhus once they have arrived in India, and also provides dana, food and other essentials during the course of the ceremony. Copies of the Tipitaka are freely distributed at the event, along with many other books in Indian languages. Not only is this ceremony well supported by the international sangha of the

Theravadin tradition, but it is also a historical event, being the first time the Tipitika has been chanted on a regular basis in Bodhgaya in 700 years.

LBDFI has also sponsored regional chanting ceremonies in many locations in Bihar, Madya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, including Vaishali, Sravasti, Kusinagar, Rajgir, Sarnath, Ajanta and Ellora, Odisha, Lucknow, Kapilavastu, Kesaria, Sankasya, Delhi, Aurangabad and Nagpur, and also assists in the sponsorship of Mahayana gatherings in Bodhgaya, including the Nyingma Monlam Chenmo (World Peace Ceremony), and other regional ceremonies. Chanting of the Buddha word in the place of enlightenment brings great merit in its own right; however, these ceremonies have a further purpose, for they offer Indian monks and villagers who are often in isolated circumstances the opportunity to collaborate with monks from many nations, along with their devout lay supporters, and also brings substantial visitation and economic benefit to key tourist locations in Northern India.

A second element in the strategy is the development of the holy places, particularly those places mentioned by the Buddha himself in his final teachings recorded in the Mahaparinibbana Sutta. These places are Bodhgaya, the place of enlightenment, Sarnath, the place where the first teachings were given, Lumbini, where the Buddha was born and Kusinagar, the place of the parinirvana. These sites, along with Rajgir, Vaishali, Sravasti, Sankasya and Nalanda, where so many important teachings were given, form a great circuit of pilgrimage for Buddhists from all denominations and countries. LBDFI has been involved in the erection of a series of five tonne bronze World Peace Bells in all the holy sites of the Buddha in India. The Foundation has also sponsored the construction of a series of butterlamp houses in Bodhgaya, a paved walkway and garden around the Mucilinda lake in the Temple compound, the erection of over 1000 plaques with Buddhist sutras in Tibetan and Hindi, the donation of a major statue to the second-floor shrine, the donation of a second statue to the meditation park and the construction of two public toilet facilities near the main temple. Further proposals for beautification and development are in preparation.

A third element in the strategy of LBDFI concerns education, and the Foundation has initiated bhikku training programs in collaboration with well-established Indian organizations, along with providing large numbers of Buddhist publications without charge to Indian participants. It is collaborating with the Mahabodhi Society of Bangalore to grant training for a small group of Indian monks.

Finally, the Foundation has built on these achievements by promoting Buddhist teachings and outreach. The first all India Buddhist gathering was held in Bodhgaya in 2023, with plans to make this an annual event, and the prayer gatherings mentioned above involve live streamed Dharma talks and programs, which reach an international audience of over 100,000. The Foundation works closely with such esteemed institutions

as the International Buddhist Confederation in New Delhi, the Uttar Pradesh Ministry of Tourism and the Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee, Khyentse Foundation to name a few of its longstanding partnerships.

LBDFI was established in India in 2007 as a non-profit company (corporate ID # U93090DL2007NPL160698), and was granted FCRA approval in 2013 (# 231661537) which was renewed in 2019. The Foundation established a formal MOU with the International Buddhist Confederation in 2017, the Government of Uttar Pradesh in 2022 and is currently negotiating MOU with the Governments of Odisha and Bihar.