

Embassy of India
Tokyo

Remarks by Ambassador Sibi George on the Buddhist Symposium
(January 13, 2023)

Venerable Kokoei Kitakawara-Former head priest Indozan Nipponji Bodhgaya,
Prof Takashi Irisawa- dean Ryukoku University, Kyoto,
Members of the International Buddhist Brotherhood Association,
Distinguished scholars,
Ladies and gentlemen!

A very good afternoon to all!

2. Its a matter of great delight that we all have gathered here to celebrate the Civilizational ties between India and Japan. The deep cultural linkages between India and Japan erected over the great heritage of Buddhism. Even the former PM of Japan, Late Shinzo Abe had once said "The teachings of Gautama Buddha had spread from India to Japan and exist between both countries as a 'sutra'. { sutra means tie or a thread}

3. Gautama Siddhartha was one of humanity's wisest teachers, who lived in the middle of the 6th century BC in the northern plains of India. He taught a message of compassion and universal love. The vast spread of Buddhist philosophy across Asia in ancient times, over formidable geographical barriers and great distances, is one of the miracles in history. The warm acceptance of these ideas and vision of life , by the people of faraway lands, highlights the relevance of the teachings of Lord Buddha; across the globe and in all times to come.

4. I would like to quote here the words of our respected PM Sh Narendra Modi, who said "Buddha is beyond geographical boundaries. He is for everyone, he belongs to everyone." He further said "Buddhism is now more significant as we live in a world full of conflicting interests,

which then poses a nagging threat to world peace”

5. Friends, with great pride, I would like to state that India has made the teachings of Lord Buddha, a part of its developmental journey. We have never believed in restricting the knowledge, the great messages or the thoughts of great souls. Whatever was ours, we have shared with the entire humanity. That is why human values like non violence and compassion are still ingrained in the heart of India even today. Buddha is still the inspiration of the Constitution of India and Buddha’s Dhamma Chakra on the tricolor of India is giving us a momentum. Even today, if someone goes to the parliament of India, this mantra ‘Dharma Chakra Parivartana’ (the first sermon by Buddha), is clearly visible.

6. Friends, India and Japan has this shared heritage of Buddhism. At a time when India and Japan are celebrating 70 glorious years of their diplomatic relations and India is holding the G20 presidency; let us all – the people of India and Japan, come together and work together on the principles of Buddhist Philosophy for stronger India-Japan ties and synergized efforts for Global Peace and Prosperity.

7. With this, I congratulate the International Buddhist Brotherhood Association for collaborating with the Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Embassy of India Tokyo; for organising the lectures on “Indian Buddhism” to enlighten the people about the ancient Buddhist philosophy. I look forward to more such symposiums on Buddhism to increase the spiritual connect between the people of India and Japan. I also place on record my appreciation for the social causes carried out by IBBA in India through Indosan Nipponzhi in Bodh Gaya.

8. Once again, I thank you all for participating in this event.

Thank You.
