



Embassy of India
Seoul, Republic of Korea
सन्तानें जगते



주한인도문화원
Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre
Embassy of India, Seoul

PRESS RELEASE

Gift of Buddha Statue by ICCR to Tongdosa

A series of events are being organised in connection with the handing over and unveiling of a statue of Lord Buddha being gifted by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations to the holy Tongdosa and to the people of the Republic of Korea.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), New Delhi, is an institution that was established in 1950 with the objective of fostering cultural relations and understanding between India and the world and promote cultural exchanges with other countries and people. The ICCR works closely with the Ministry of External Affairs of India to build on India's cultural heritage and reach to successfully deepen India's cultural diplomacy around the world.

The gift of this statue is testimony to the age-old relationship between the people of India and the people of the ROK. The statue was handed over ceremonially by the Ambassador of India to ROK to the Head Monk of Tongdosa on April 30, 2021 at a ceremony at the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Embassy of India, Seoul. The ceremony was graced by Ven. Hyun Moon, Head Monk of Tongdosa Temple, Mr. Yeo Han-gu, Secretary to the President for New Southern and Northern Policy, Rep. Park Seong-jun, Rep. Jeong Pil-mo, Rep. Choi Jong-youn, Members of the National Assembly of Republic of Korea, along with other noted dignitaries from the field of arts, culture and academia.

Subsequently, the Tongdosa authorities will hold a ceremony for installation of the statue at the temple premises on May 16. Another ceremony will be held on May 19 at Tongdosa on the occasion of Vesak celebrations, to unveil and dedicate the statue to the people of the Republic of Korea.

A virtual exhibition 'Bodhicitta: Interweaving Buddhist Art Traditions from India across Asia' digitally curated by the National Museum of India will also be launched on May 16 at Tongdosa. Movies on Buddhism will also be screened as part of the celebrations.

Tongdosa enjoys a very special connection with India, having been built by monks who had travelled to India and become part of the Buddha's close circle of disciples. It is believed that the very location of the Tongdosa temple was influenced by the connection with India – its location in the vicinity of the Yeongchuksan mountain range was chosen as the shape of this range resembles that of the Rajagriha mountain ranges where the Buddha imparted the Buddha Dhamma to his disciples.

The installation of Lord Buddha's statue at Tongdosa reinforces the strong cultural connect wrought by Buddhism between India, the birthplace of Buddhism, and the ROK, a country where it remains a major religion.
