

108 Buddhists from Republic of Korea to walk for over 1100 kms on a 43-day pilgrimage

Sangwol Society to organize walking pilgrimage to Buddhist sites in India and Nepal

Motto of India's G20 Presidency similar to Buddhist teachings: Mr Chang Jae-bok, Ambassador of South Korea to India

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Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Shri Apurva Chandra today announced that 108 Buddhist pilgrims from Republic of Korea will walk over 1,100 kms over 43 days as part of walking pilgrimage being organized by Sangwol Society of South Korea. Shri Chandra added that the occasion gains importance as India and South Korea celebrate 50 years of establishment of diplomatic ties. The pilgrimage aims to increase friendship and collaboration between the two countries. The tourists will visit Buddhist pilgrimage sites in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in India and subsequently move to Nepal.

Shri Chandra further stated that it was the vision of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi that the Buddhist tourism circuit in India be taken to the world. The circuit seeks to help tourists experience first hand the teachings of Lord Buddha and traces the footsteps of Buddha during his lifetime. The sites to be covered during the pilgrimage span the life of Buddha from his birth to his Parinirvana.

The Secretary welcomed the pilgrims and assured all assistance from Government of India and hoped that the pilgrims would gain a deeper understanding of Buddhist philosophy from this visit.

The tourists will be on a 43-day tour to Buddhist holy sites in India and Nepal from 9th February to 23rd March, 2023. With the slogan 'Oh, We! Oh Love! Oh, Life!', the pilgrimage, organized by Sangwol Society, aims to spread Buddhist culture of devotional activities through a through a pilgrimage to India where the life and footsteps of the Buddha are preserved.



Ambassador of Republic of Korea to India Mr Chang Jae-bok said that the year 2023 is special for the bilateral relation between the countries as the two celebrate this historic milestone of 50 years of diplomatic relations. This occasion coincides with India's G20 Presidency and South Korea is committed to India's success at G20, he added. The Ambassador further remarked that Buddhist teachings are similar to the motto of India's G20 presidency 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.

Speaking on the religious ties between India and South Korea, the Ambassador said that the it evokes strong emotion and generates immense goodwill among the two peoples that fuels the bilateral relation. He further said that every year thousands of tourists visit India from Korea and this walking pilgrimage is being hosted by Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism. The walking pilgrimage will begin from Sarnath in Varanasi and will culminate at Shravasti after traversing through Nepal.

Informing media about the significance of this event, the Ambassador said that the mega Buddhist pilgrimage is a befitting tribute to our shared Buddhist heritage. This will go a long way in further deepening the people to people contact. He added that the pilgrims which include monks will

1. pay homage to eight major Buddhist holy sites,
2. experience Indian Buddhism and culture, and have a bilateral meeting of religious leaders and
3. hold a prayer assembly for world peace and a blessing ceremony for the dignity of life

The Main Programs of the India Pilgrimage

| Date | Content |
|---------------|--|
| 02.09.2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing-the-Buddha Ceremony for the Sangwol Society India Pilgrimage (6 a.m., Jogyesa Temple) • Departure (Incheon)→Delhi→Varanasi |
| 02.11.2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Ceremony for the Sangwol Society India Pilgrimage -Venue: Deer Park (in front of Dhamekh Stupa) |
| 02.21–22.2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodh Gaya (Mahabohi Temple): pay respects & perform daily closing ceremony -Time: 11 a.m. on Feb. 21, 2023 • Dharma Assembly for World Peace -Time: 8 a.m. on Feb. 22, 2023 -Venue: in front of the bodhi tree at Mahabodhi Temple |
| 02.24.2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Conference at Nalanda University (to highlight our pilgrimage routes) -Venue: Nalanda University (10 a.m./ 4 p.m. for the pilgrimage group) |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulture Peak (Rajgir): pay respects & hold prayer assembly |

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| | 02.25.2023 | -Venue: Gandhakuti on Vulture Peak (11 a.m.) |
| | 03.01.2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddha's Relic Stupa Site (Vaishali) & daily closing ceremony -Venue: Buddha's Relic Stupa Site (11 a.m.) |
| | 03.03.2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kesariya Stupa & daily closing ceremony -Venue: Kesariya Stupa (11 a.m.) |
| | 03.08-09.2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay respects to Mahaparinirvana Temple & Ramabhar Stupa in Kushinagar & daily closing ceremony -Time: 11 a.m. Mar. 08, 2023 |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayer Assembly at Kushinagar where the Buddha entered parinirvana -Time: 8 a.m. Mar. 9, 2023 -Venue: Plaza next to Mahaparinirvana Temple |
| 03.14.2023 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayer assembly at Lumbini (Nepal) where the Buddha was born -Venue: Plaza in front of Ashoka Pillar (11 a.m.) -Offering robes to the Buddha |
| 03.20.2023 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing Ceremony for the Sangwol Society India Pilgrimage (Jetavana Monastery, Shravasti) -Venue: Plaza next to Gandhakuti at Jetavana Monastery |
| 03.23.2023 | | Arrival (Incheon) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing of the Sangwol Society India Pilgrimage (1 p.m. at Jogyesa Temple) |
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