SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF
SRI MALLIKARJUN M.KHARGE

Sri Mallikarjun.M.Kharge as a representative of people of Karnataka and Ex-Minister of Government of Karnataka and Government of India, has many achievements and accomplishments to his credit. They are discussed in previous chapters. He is not only political leader but also spiritual leader. He is a stanch follower of Dr. Ambedkar and Lord Buddha. Some of his followers believed that Sri. Mallikarjun.M.Kharge is nothing but a modern Ambedkar of Karnataka State. He believes that the philosophies of Buddha and Dr. Ambedkar can take the world in a new direction and help to create a society where explanation does not exist.

Buddhism flourished not only in India but also in many Asian countries because of the efforts of Indian rulers like Ashok and Harshavardhan. However, the influence of Buddhism in India witnessed a steady decline over centuries. The revival and redefinition of Buddhism in modern India can be credited to Babasaheb Ambedkar. He contributed greatly to the revival of Buddhism by Embracing the teachings of Budha along with 5 lack supporters on 14th October 1956.

Dr. Ambedkar’s embracing Buddhism was a culmination of decades of research and learning about the Dhamma. He made clear arguments about his reasons to believe that Buddhism can emancipate the human race from its
sorrow and establish a society where all are equal and help eradicate the exploitation of depressed classes.

Sri.Mallikarjun.M.Kharge deeply studied The Buddhist Legacy and Buddhism in Karnataka

In Karnataka and the Hinduism assimilated most of the teachings of Buddha but later Buddhism lost its distinct identity. However, today, there are still numerous places of Buddhist interest spread across the State.

“Our destination, Aihole, is today an insignificant village in Bijapur district of north Karnataka and reaching it involves an obstacle course: an excruciatingly slow passenger train to Badami, an hour wait for a bus and jostling to get on. The vehicle rattles across the interminable hot plains and flat scrub of north Karnataka. To do just 46 kilometers from Badami to Aihole, the bus needs four tedious hours. But alight at Aihole and the travails are forgotten. For Aihole is one of the most remarkable temple sites in the country with one hundred and twenty temples, big nad small, in different styles, all in a small village.”

Art historians say Aihole was a workshop for temple architects and sculptors patronized by early Chalukyan monarchs. Here are some of the earliest structural temples in stone in the country, dating from 450 AD and, among them, is one of the four Buddhist shrines in Karnataka. So we make our way to Aihole’s hillock, Meguti, to the rock cut Buddhist shrine. It is of special interest to us because it is the most important surviving Buddhist temple in Karnataka.
The Chaitya, a double stories structure, is half structural and half excavated in rock. “The sanctum sanctorum is in the upper storey. It has a rectangular verandah of 8.78 m x 2.15 m. In the centre of the Verandah’s ceiling is a relief of Buddha in preaching posture. Of the three Buddha sculptures at Aihole, this is the best preserved and is 61cm in Height. He is seated on the padmapitha in the satvaparyankasana, that is, his right hand is placed against his chest in the vyakhyan mudra while the left is placed on the right foot with the palm facing upwards. His right shoulder and right breast are uncovered. There is a triple umbrella above him and his attendants are nearby”.

Buddhism was founded in north India in about 500 BC when Siddharth Gautama, born a prince, achieved enlightenment. It is widely held that the religion first emerged during Mauryan times when there was a missionary zeal. Parts of Karnataka were subject to the rule of the Mauryas. Chandragupta Maurya’s son Bindusara (298-273 BC) and Bindusara’s son Asoka (269-232 BC) caused some of his edicts to be put up here. Asoka’s grandson Samprati Chandragupta is believed to have come to Sravanbelagola where he spent his last years. Eleven Asokan edicts, four in Bellary district, three in Raichur district and three others in Chitradurga district bear witness to the Mauryan presence in Karnataka.

Some hold the view, however, that such rock edicts merely prove that Karnataka was within the jurisdiction of Mauryan kings, but not necessarily the advent of Buddhism here. The Sinhalese chronicles, Mahavamsa
and Dipavamsa, mention Mangaliputtatissa, a contemporary of Asoka and reputed to be the emperor’s teacher and mentor. He had sent missionaries to Mahshaka (southern region of Karnataka) under Mahadeva, and to Banavasi (the heart of Karnataka) under Rakkhita, to preach the gospel. That would firmly indicate Buddhist prevalence in Karnataka.

In point of fact, Buddhist doctrine held sway in Karnataka even before Asoka’s time. Mahisasana, a form of Hinayana Buddhism, spread after the first “Convention of Buddhism in Rajgraha (477 BC) to Avanti, and to areas south of it to what are today’s Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Thus, while Asoka accepted Buddhism only in 268 BC, Buddhism was prevalent in Karnataka two centuries prior to the Mauryan monarch”.

Early on, Buddhism separated into Sthavarvad (Hinayana) and Mahasanghikvad (Mahayana) which developed into Mahisasana. This branch stretched up to Banavasi from 5th century BC to 3rd century BC, that is, after the very first Buddhist convention in 477 BC and certainly long before Asoka.

Why then, are there are no Buddhist relics found from those centuries before Asoka? The answer is quite simple. There was no idol worship in Buddhism. There had been no sculptures, carvings nor erection of stupas and inscriptions before the Asokan stupas at Sanchi and Sarnath. Prior to them, there were only earthen stupas which could not survive the ravages of time. There is one exception, however, excavations near Banavasi in 1971 revealed stupas and bricks that have been dated to the 2nd and 3rd century BC. A Buddhist deepasthambha (lamp post) of those times was found at the village
Togarsi near Banavasi. By and large, in Karnataka, the Hnayana Buddhism that prevailed did not deify Buddha but looked upon him at human level, as perfect man. Paucity of actual remnants before Asoka’s time is thus explained.

The Mauryan inscriptions do not merely indicate the empire’s boundary. They also assert that Buddhism flourished there because the very purpose of Asoka’s edicts was to spread universal message to the masses. Buddhism duly spread and flourished. In sum, the Mauryan was undoubtedly the golden age of Buddhism.

The Satavahanas were successors to the Mauryas and ruled in Banavasi, as is evident from the Nasik inscription of Gautamiputra Satakarni and the copper plates from Hirehadagali. There is a Prakrit inscription belonging to the second century on the stone Naga effigy fund at the Madhukesvara temple, which refers to the fact that Siva-skandanagar-sri, daughter of Satakarni of Chutukula, the king of Vaijayantipura (i.e. Banavasi) was responsible for the installation of that Naga effigy, and the Vihara. A copper plate inscription of 338 AD likens a Banavasi king to a bodhisattva (reincarnation) in his great compassion towards all living beings (*praninam parama karnikataya bodhisattvo pamanasya*).

From 30 BC to the second century AD, the Satavahanas ruled from Pratisthana (modern day Paithan) on the bank of Godavari river at Aurangabad. Their support to “Buddhism is evident from Pliny (1st century AD) whose account mentions Prakrit inscription of Gvinaya Pitaka, referring to
Setakannika, which shows that Buddhism was flourishing in Karnataka. Mahavagga, a composer after Asoka’s time endorses this.”

“The Satvahanas may have been a Karnataka dynasty, as Dharwad and Bellary districts are called Shantavahani Hara (or Shantavahana region). Some of their kings were called rulers of Kunthala, the old name for Karnataka. At Sannati (Gulbarga district), as well as Vadgoan Madhavpur (near Belgaum) and Brahmagiri (Chitradurga district), there are remains of monuments of their period. The Uttara Kannada area of Banavasi has their inscription at Vasan in Dharwad district, and there are remains of a brick temple. The Chandravalli inscriptions that were unearthed in 1888, strongly suggest that worshipers of Buddha were here during the early centuries of the Christian era. The leader coins of the Satvahana kings bear the figure of a humped bull and on the other side of the coins are the unmistakable emblems of the bodhi tree and the chaitya (cairn). Small sculptures of Gandharva, a Buddhist yaksha, are also found.

“The earliest epigraphic evidence in this regard (latter half of second century AD) is the stone memorial inscribed in Prakrit. It is that of Vasistapura Sivasiri Pulumari Rajana Mahadevi Sirijantamula, wife of a king of Banavasi who constructed a stambha and a Vihara for the Mahisasanas at Nagarjunakonda”.

Another chronicler, Mahavamso, cites an important event. In the first century, Dattagamini, King of Ceylon, built a vihara and 80000 bhikus of Vanavasi had attended! Bhutpala, a merchant of Banavasi, was responsible for
carving the famed Buddhist cave at Karla where an inscription says it was the best in the whole country.

It is at Sannati, (Chitapur, taluk, Gulbarga district), on both banks of the river Bhima, that many Buddhist stupas of the Satvahana times have been found. It resembles Amravati and was the Buddhist centre of the Satvahana period of pre-Christian era and is spread over a three kilometer area. Fine sculptures can be seen all along and the Buddhist ruins found there are in large numbers. They include remnants of stupas, stone pottery for holy bones and ayaka stambha which has symbolic representation of birth, parinishnishkramana, enlightenment, preaching and nirvana (salvation) of Buddha. Inscriptions in the Brahmi script contain names of those who gave grants to sangharama, stupas and viharas. The words – visiriputa sirisata mahasataraha – show the beginning of the Christian era and reference to Banavasi is found. There are stupas carved in stone, and another stupa (1st to 3rd century AD) has Buddha’s feet.

The Sannatis (feudatories) of Satvahanas, known as Mahabhojas, had then ruled the Banavasi area. An inscriptions of that period says: “Nagamulida, wife of Maharathi, daughter of the Mahabhoja, King of Banavasi, mother of Khanda Nagashtak, constructed a cave residence at Kanheri (near today’s Bombay) of Buddhist bhikus.”

After the Satavahanas, Karnataka fell into the hands of the Pallavas of Kanchi and the Chuttu Shatkarnis (who were feudatories of the Satavahanas) ruling from Banavasi after the fall of the Satavahanas. Pallava domination
ended when two dynasties, the Kadambas of Banavasi and the Gangas of Kolar (345 AD) held sway.

The Gangas, ruling from Talakadu, followed the vedic religion but were tolerant towards Buddhism. A Sanskrit copperplate (400 AD) issued by Padangala Madhava (440-470 AD), a Ganga ruler, indicated land grants to a Buddhist vihara (gangarajya madhava-sarmanah sasana Buddha-sattvaya dattam). There were Buddhist viharas alive and active and Buddhism was still powerful in the Ganga territory.

Like the Gangas, the Kadambas were also tolerant towards Buddhism as epigraphic evidence shows. The Kadamba capital was also Banavasi, (known as Vaijayanti,) and their century was a prominent one for Buddhism in Karnataka. Chinese traveller, Hieun Tsang, visited Banavasi in the 7th century AD and saw 1000 sangharas and three stupas. He says: “By the side of the royal palace is a great sangharama with 300 priests, all men of distinction. This convent has a great vihara 100 in height.”

Recent excavations of the site of Banavasi have given the remains of a Buddhist stupa. The large apsidal structure is what remains and it was planned like a dharma-chakra.

“The Buddhist Chaitya in front of which we stood at Aihole, is pre western Chalukyan and indicates the influence of Mahayana. It was built around the 5th century and is 25 feet high. We now make our way to Badami in another rickety bus headed toward the erstwhile capital city of the western Chalukyas in the 6th century. These rulers were also associated with Buddhism
and relics here have survived in the shape of a Buddhist cave datable to the 6th century. There is also a figure, identifiable as Padmapani, the Bodhisattva of the same period. Hieun Tsang has stated that during the time of Pulakesin II (642 AD) in Banavasi (or Konkanpura), there were 400 Sangharamas and 10000 followers of Buddhism.

In Gadag Taluk, Dharwad district, at Dambal, there was a Buddhist centre as late as 12th century. According to an inscription of 1095 AD, a temple of the Buddhist deity Tara and a Buddhist vihara were built by 16 merchants during the reign of Lakshmidevi, queen of Vikramaditya VI. Another temple of Tara, built at Dambal was by Sethi Sangarmaya of Lokkigundi. Karnataka was indeed the place where the worship of Tara gained ground. Tara became celebrated in Mahayana Buddhism (especially Mantrayana) and acquired popularity as the mother of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, as the power of enlightenment and as the consort of the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, the patron divinity of the Mantrayana sect in Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia and China.

Tara’s consort Avalokitaesvara-bodhisattva is the Siva of the Saiva cult and there is the correspondence of Tara with Durga. The association between Tara and Avalokita (Lokesvara) is emphasized in Karnataka. In Balligame, on the banks of the river Varada, a Buddhist Vihara known as Jayanti Prabuddha Vihara was built in 1065 by Rupa Byhattaya, the minister of the Chalukyan king Ahavamalla, and the deities that were worshipped there were Tara Bhagavati, Kesava, Lokesvara and Buddha. A Dambala inscription of 1095 AD
begins with the customary invocation *namo buddhyana* and goes on to describe at length the greatness of Tara-bhagavati.

In Kolivada, Hubballi taluk, Dharwad district, an icon of Tara has been discovered belonging to about the thirteenth century and inscribed on the pedestal of this icon are the words *siddham om namo bhagavatayai Aryatarayai*, followed by the usual statement of the Buddha’s teaching in brief.

The Vihara on Kadari Hill in Mangalore (Dakshina Kannada) was an important site for Mahayana Buddhism. There are three exquisite bronze statues, now in the Manjunatha temple, one of which is of the Mahayana deity Avalokitesvara bodhisattva (consort of Tara) called Lokesvara. The other two bronzes are those of seated Buddha in contemplation. Buddhism, which never became prevalent in Tulu-nadu, continued to survive till the thirteenth century. It gradually got fused with Saivite ideology.

Thereafter, it became difficult for Buddhism to survive, especially as it lost its specific identity and got merged with Saivism. The Buddhist legacy in Karnataka survives in the teachings of Basaveswar or Basava, a religious teacher who flourished in the 12th century.

“There are estimated to be 75000 Buddhists in Karnataka of which Tibetans form a substantial portion. Since the year 1900, the South India Buddhist Association of Madras saw Buddhism taking roots and in Kolar Gold Fields near Bangalore there is a Buddhist Vihara at Champion Reef. The Mahabodhi Society of India founded a Buddhist Vihara in Bangalore in 1940 and since 1956, Buddhism has got a fillip under Acharya Buddha Rakkkhita
who has published over 50 books and founded an institute, a vidyapeeth and a hospital. Very much in evidence are the four Tibetan settlements of Karnataka, at Bailkuppe (near Mysore), Mundgod (in north Kanara district), Cauvery Valley, and at Kollegal. The most important Tibetan Buddhist monasteries are Thegchay Ling and Namgoling, both at Bailkuppe”.8

Budha Vihar at Gulbarga

Sri. Mallikarjun.M.Kharge dreamed a construction of Budha Vihar in Gulbarga. To achieve the same he established Siddharth Vihar Trust in 1994. the construction of the Budha Vihar originally was a small one which began in 2002. But the Trust changed the blue print to make it a huge complex making it one of the best Vihars in the South India. The Vihar believes to spread the message of peace, compassion and non-violence which are the teachings of Budha. The soul aim is to create a peaceful, egalitarian society where there is tolerance and understanding.

There are other two famous holy shrines in Gulbarga city. The temple of Saint Sharana Basaveshwara and the Dargha of the Sufi Saint Khwaja Bande Nawaz. The establishment of the Budha Vihar in the city connects the ancient spiritual tradition to the modern world. The vihar is the centre of attraction to a large number of devotees and the Budhist Scholars not only from India but also from the abroad.

“Buddha Vihar is located in Gulbarga on a sprawling 70 acre land. It is the nations largest and one of its kind. It is adjoining the Gulbarga University in the city outskirts. It is built by the Siddartha Vihar Trust at a cost of more
than Rs 8 crore, is considered to be one of the biggest vihars in the entire South India.

Nearly 1,500 tonnes of cement, 250 tonnes of steel, 5 lakh bricks and 200 cubic metres of sand have been converted by artisans and craftsmen into this beautiful structure that is built. The main structure stands on 32,450 sq ft of land on 170 pillars with 284 blocks. Each one of these reflects the Ajanta and Ellora sculptures and art.”

Buddha Vihar will be one of its kind spiritual centre in the country. The building will be a symbol of ancient history and social movements in the region. It serves as a great tribute to Buddha, Basava and Ambedker, who fought and dedicated their lives for the needy in the society.

The Vihar is not only a great tourist centre but also a centre of creativity and research. This centre is doing a lot of research on Buddhism.

“The intricately carved doors in rosewood and teakwood are designed by artisan Kaiser Ali, connected with the royal family of Mysore. The complex consists of a museum, where another idol of Lord Buddha is installed, an auditorium, guesthouses, and a dining hall”.

Gulbarga is all set to emerge as a major Buddhist pilgrim centre in South India. The Buddha Vihar of Siddarth Vihar Trust was formally inaugurated by the President of India and the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibet.

The vihar is spread across 18 acres, it can be divided into the main building which has a meditation hall at the cellar and a Lord Buddha chaitya
(temple in Pali) on the ground floor. The dome is 70 ft in height and 59 ft in diameter.

Besides, it has 48-ft tall four Ashoka pillars in the corners of the main building. It has an attractive Sankalpa stupa, 26 ft in length and 30 ft in diameter.

The other attractions are 100×100 ft open-air theatre with a 2,500-seating capacity, four large Mahadwaras (arches) known as Sanchi gates and a group of 11 cement statues led by a bronze statue of Dr B R Ambedkar indicating the Dhamma Kranti Yatra of 1956. Another feature is the U-shaped Dhamma complex housing a dormitory, a library, study centre, kitchen, dining hall, conference hall, exhibition hall and guest rooms. The Dhyana Mandir (meditation hall) in the main complex draws attention. It has a 6.5 ft tall black granite Buddha statue made in Bidadi by famous sculptor Ashok Gudigar. It is bliss to see the smiling face of Buddha while listening to the chanting of the mantra “Buddham Sharanam Gacchami”

“The prayer hall is 15,625 sq ft with 170 pillars and 284 blocks. Each block has a carving representing the architecture of Buddha temples of Ajanta, Ellora, Nagpur, Bodh Gaya, Saranath, Rajgir, Lumbini, Kusinara, Thailand, Singapur, Sri Lanka, Tibet, Japan and Rome. The marbled floor of the hall has a seating capacity of 1500. There are 28 huge ventilators named after Buddhas various eras”.
“The main attraction in the complex is a gold coated 8.5 ft tall panchaloha statue of the seated Buddha. This is supposed to be the tallest Buddha statue in the South India, imported from Thailand. It was consecrated in September last year. Statues of Buddha’s disciples Ananda and Kashyapara are also part of the complex. The hall has a seating capacity of 500. The walls have cement carvings depicting the Jataka tales, Tipitaka and Buddha charite”13.

“There are three huge arch-shaped entrances to the basement and the ground floors. In the corridors of the ground floor there are cement statues of Buddha. The entrance door is made of rosewood. The dome is 75 ft from the ground and has a 10-ft-tall panchaloha kalasha”14.

The white arch is in the shape of a peepal leaf (Bodhi tree) which symbolizes enlightenment. A beautiful landscaped garden stretches from the Mahadwara to the temple.

The Ashoka pillars in the four corners are symbols of four noble truths or Arya Satya – suffering; attachment, which are the cause of suffering; cessation of suffering and path to the cessation of suffering.

**Make Buddha Vihara A Centre of Learning: Dalai Lama**

“Gulbarga, Karnataka, India, 20 December 2009 (Deccan Herald) - Buddhist spiritual leader and Nobel peace laureate the Dalai Lama has underlined the need for developing the Buddha Vihara constructed here in to a centre of higher learning in Buddhism instead of remaining a religious centre on the creation of inaugural of meditation hall centre.
Delivering a religious discourse on 'The Four Noble Truths of Buddhism' at the Buddha Vihara organized by the Buddha Vihara Trust here on Saturday, the Dalai Lama had full praise for the construction of a marvelous Vihara and lauded the senior leader and Union Labour and Employment Minister Mallikarjun Kharge for initiating a lead for the construction of the rare structure. Addressing the gathering as 'spiritual brothers and sisters' he said that he was very happy to be at the Buddha Vihara for the second time saying he was very much impressed over the structure. "It should not remain a mere Buddhist temple but should transform into a learning centre," the Dalai Lama said.

The Dalai Lama said that during his first visit in January, he could not deliver discourses and had expressed his desire to come over again to deliver discourses. He thanked Mr. Kharge and the Buddha Vihara Trust for providing him an opportunity to share his thoughts with the people of Gulbarga. He pointed out that over 100 volumes of Gautam Buddha's preaching and over 200 volumes of Buddha's texts by masters such as Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, and over 300 volumes of other Buddhist literatures in Pali, Sanskrit and Nepali languages have already been published. There was a dire need to study all of them carefully and dwell into research.

The Dalai Lama said that utilization of human intelligence and wisdom for attaining the purity of mind and for one's advancement was very important in Buddhism. He made it clear that his discourses are not mere ritualistic nor religious but the occasion should be treated as an educational seminar. The
Dalai Lama at the end of the discourse gave opportunity to the audience to ask questions. He replied to all the questions and invited even arguments on important issues.

The Dalai Lama said that the distinction of Buddhism from other religious cults was that it does not believe in atma. This similarity could also be found in Jainsim. He said that there are certain cases of rebirth which he himself had come across and it was for the science to investigate these cases. He also asserted that the big bang theory of scientists goes very well with Buddhist philosophy as it doesn't believe in the theory of creation of something by someone.

Good number of devotees had turned up for the discourses which were heard attentively. All the devotees except a very few were seated on the floor. The Dalai Lama's discourse in English was translated for some time into Kannada and half way through it was done away with. However, for many in the audience it was difficult to follow what His Holiness was saying.

The Dalai Lama felicitated Mallikarjun Kharge, his wife Radhabai Kharge, and two sons Rahul and Priyank.¹⁵

**Inaguration of Budha Vihar by her Excellency then the President of Smt. Pratibhadevi Singh on January 7ᵗʰ 2010 and Delivered the speech in this occasion that**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

“I am happy to be in Gulbarga, a region with a rich historical past and a strong association with Buddhism. Sannathi located on the banks of the river**
Bheema in Gulbarga district was one of the well known Buddhist centres of pilgrimage and learning. Archeologists have found Buddha statues, Buddhist sculpture and other relics dating back to the period of Asoka and Satavahanas. Today, I am glad to be inaugurating the beautifully designed and constructed Buddha Vihar with a magnificent stupa at the front. I complement Shri Kharge ji and his colleagues for this commendable work.

Buddhism arose out of Buddha's search for a way to overcome human pain and suffering. Born as Prince Siddhartha, Gautama was deeply disturbed by the sight of a sick man, an old man and their sufferings.

He became an ascetic, wandering in search of truth about human sufferings. When he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree in Gaya, he realized that the root cause of unhappiness was the outcome of the attachment to desires. This attachment can be ceased by following the noble Eight Fold Path of right view, intention, speech, action, livelihood, effort, thought and concentration.

Buddha's message found resonance and it spread far and wide, attracting great amount of interest. Many scholars came to India to learn about Buddhism and many from India went overseas. There is a belief that Mahindra and Sanghamitra, the son and daughter of Emperor Asoka went from the Gulbarga region to Sri Lanka, carrying the message of Buddha. There are a large number of followers of Buddhism across the world. During my visit to Vietnam, I went to one of the old pagodas built in the 6th century called "Tran Quoc". In the garden there is a Pipal Tree known as the Bodhi tree grown from a cutting of
the original Bodhi tree in India and planted in 1958 by President Rajendra Prasad. Buddhism provides, in many ways, a strong bond of friendship between India and other countries where Buddhism has an influence.

Buddhism's appeal lay in the adherence to the Middle Path which advocates the avoidance of extremes. In his life, Buddha had enjoyed excessive luxury as a prince and had also practiced severe austerities as an ascetic. It was only when he forsake both that he became enlightened. In other words, he found a path, or way of living, that gave him peace and calm. The Middle Path calls for approaching issues in a moderate and balanced manner. It requires human activities to be conducted on the basis of high moral values, harmony and kindness to others. The Middle Path is a noble path not only for the personal lives of individuals but could be good basis for activities of nations from economics to politics.

Historically, Buddhism has had a tremendous impact on those who embraced it or followed its principles. Emperor Asoka, one of the greatest kings of India, on becoming a Buddhist completely gave up violence and followed Ahimsa as the policy of his Kingdom. For him the welfare of his people became the guiding principle of governance. Later, Gandhiji won India's independence by adopting Ahimsa as the instrument for India's freedom struggle. It was a unique example in the history of mankind.

Buddha highlighted the importance of community and, indeed, Sangha - the community - is one of the Triple Gems of Buddhism, other two being Dharma and Buddha. Sangha in the broader sense can mean those around us
and their welfare. Today, the need is to look at all of humanity as one and the world as a common home that we live in. We thus have responsibilities towards our fellow human beings and towards the conservation of the planet Earth. These responsibilities must be fulfilled by all while working for their own development and peace. A Buddhist proverb says and I quote "if a seed of a plant does not grow, do not blame the plant, instead the fault lies with us for not having nourished it properly". All individuals must strive to follow Dharma, live a life of good deeds so that they can become compassionate and caring human beings. Sanghas were also run on democratic principles and in the debate in the Constituent Assembly, Baba Saheb Ambedkar made reference to the old republics of India and to Sanghas as Parliaments which in their functions used procedures like resolutions, divisions and whips. The ethos of democracy, respect for diverse views and tolerance form part of the Indian civilization since ancient times.

I am informed that the Siddhartha Vihar Trust was established in 1994 by Shri Mallikarjuna Kharge ji with the aim to spread the message of Buddha and to undertake charitable, cultural and educational activities in this region.

I am confident that the Buddha Vihar with its educational institutions, open air theatre, convention centre and library will contribute to the peaceful growth of the region.

I am also told that this Trust seeks to carry forward the work of Dr. Baba Sahib Ambedkar, one of the greatest sons of India, who was an extra-ordinary man, with great human qualities. Baba Saheb shall always be remembered as
the principal architect of the Indian Constitution. The enlightened vision of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity that is contained in the Preamble of the Constitution has been guiding the Indian nation, the world's largest democracy.

Throughout his life, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar championed the cause of the oppressed and the downtrodden. As India progresses, we must ensure that we adhere to a strategy of inclusive growth in all areas of national life, so that the benefits of our economic growth can improve the lives of all our citizens, particularly the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes and the disadvantaged sections of the society. We must work relentlessly for the upliftment of the vulnerable sections of society. A life of dignity must be assured to all. The fight against poverty, illiteracy and disease must be fought and won. Delivering social welfare and social justice to our people will be a just tribute to Babasaheb Ambedkar who followed the teachings of Lord Buddha. I am informed that the Siddhartha Vihar Trust is undertaking a number of welfare and awareness activities and I would like to encourage them to continue their good work, including in the field of education.

In conclusion, I would like to say that India has a proud tradition of having the pervasive thought of brotherhood and humanism in its philosophy. Buddhism that arose in India is a part of our rich heritage.

I convey my good wishes to Siddhartha Vihar Trust and its Chairman Shri Mallikarjuna Kharge ji to continue to work for the welfare of society in the
spirit of the message and teachings of Lord Buddha. My best wishes to all of you on the occasion of New Year.”

Thank you.
Jai Hind

Now the Union Government sanction of Rs. 10 crore for the establishment of a Pali language research centre at the city-based Siddharth Vihar Trust in the Union Budget 2012-13 has brought cheer to lovers of Pali here.

“The research centre in the Pali language would help in taking up the study of the over 100 volumes of Gautam Buddha's preachings and over 300 volumes of other Buddhist literature in Pali language. Mr. Kharge was instrumental in constructing the Buddha Vihar which is rapidly becoming a major Buddhist study centre. The trust has planed to establish an international study centre of Buddhist literature and has established a library with a rich collection of books in different languages, including Pali”.

Now the Sidharth Budha Vihar Trust in the leadership of Sri.Mallikarjun.M.Kharge conducting various seminars, symposium, prayer, every month of purnima and special lecturers are conducting in Budha Purnima, Vijayadashami, Dr.Ambedkar Birth Celebration and in many occasion, the trust is serious to spread the Budhism and Humanism in this area.
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