



# MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD INSTITUTE OF ASIAN STUDIES

(An Autonomous Body under The Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India)

*Cordially invites you to the*  
**LECTURE ON**

## **"The impact of Buddhist ethics on Asian consciousness"**

*Speaker*

**Dr. Prajnalankar Bhikkhu**

Joint Registrar, Visva Bharati University

*on*

**26 May, 2021 at 11:30 A.M.**

*At*

<https://makaias.webex.com/makaias/j.php?MTID=m36897fbf21a49ef87e81935a35c596a2>



**BRIEF PROFILE: Dr. Prajnalankar Bhikkhu** has done his M.A. and Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies and UGC-NET with Junior Research Fellowship from the University of Delhi. He worked as Guest Faculty in the Department of Philosophy and Comparative Religion, Department of Indo-Tibetan Studies and Center for Buddhist Studies of Visva-Bharati University. Presently he is working as a Joint Registrar in the same University. He is a recipient of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Award for Social Justice and Peace of the Dalit Open University of India (2014-15). He has several research publications to his credit. He has co-edited two books namely, *Relevance of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar for Inclusive Development in India -- Inclusive Development, Women Empowerment and Social Justice (Vol. I)* and *Human Rights and Social Justice: Theoretical Concepts and Practical Challenges*.

### **Abstract :**

**BUDDHA: INDIA'S MESSENE FOR GLOBAL HUMAN UNITY, HARMONY AND WELL-BEING**

**Dr. Prajnalankar Bhikkhu**

Buddha's (563-483 BCE) self-introduction is that he is neither a god, nor a celestial being, nor a divine being, nor a human being; he is an enlightened, compassionate and transcendental being called "Tathagata" (*Anguttaranikaya*). He does not preach any religion or sectarian doctrine; he teaches the "Dhamma", the true law of nature or universal secular principle. It doesn't belong to any particular individual or community, nor does it belong to Buddha himself. It represents two truths:

1. Empirical truth (samsara or bondage). It explains the cyclic existence of birth and death of sentient beings and their illusive happiness and suffering associated with it depending upon their consciousness and karma; and
2. Transcendental truth (Nibbana or liberation). It explains one's exit from the samsara and entry into the Nibbana.

Buddha teaches a way to men and women for their understanding and realization of the Dhamma in his "Noble Eightfold Path" or "Middle Way". Its objective is to convert men and women into humans who are endowed with right knowledge and universal compassion. It promotes a greed-hatred-and-delusion-free and an enlightened and compassionate human culture i.e. a knowledge-and-value-based

society which is necessary for inclusive development, well-being, happiness and liberation of all men and women irrespective of their race, religion, color, gender and status.

Buddha established two organizations -- one for men and one for women which are respectively called "Bhikkhu Sangha" (Order of Monks) and "Bhikkhuni Sangha" (Order of Nuns) and instructed them to promote the Dhamma in the world for universal human development, well-being, happiness and liberation.

Buddha and his noble disciples and followers taught and promoted the Dhamma in the Jambudvipa (now Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Myanmar) and left there a glorious human heritage (language, literature, teaching, art, architecture, monasteries, monuments, universities etc). Later Emperor Asoka (3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE) spread it across Asia. Thus, Buddha became the "Light of Asia", as Edwin Arnold writes (1879), and Asia became an enlightened and compassionate human culture and civilization. Gurudeva Rabindranath Tagore remembers Buddha thus: "Rising up from the seat of his meditation Bhagavan Buddha manifested himself. India's light of truth got lighted with the light of his manifestation. His eternal appearance in the history of mankind crossed the geographical boundaries of India and spread in home and abroad. India became a pilgrim center i.e. India was recognized by all countries, because she recognized and respected all as humans with the message of Buddha" (10 Jaistha, 1363). Unfortunately, the "Light of Asia" disappeared and his heritage was forgotten in many parts of the Jambudvipa from the 13th century CE onwards, and gradually his heritage withered away from there due to sectarian greed, hatred and delusion.

Modern India has the potential and the obligation to lead the global campaign for promotion of Buddha's consciousness, wisdom and compassion and his heritage in the world in general and in Asia in particular for global human unity, harmony and well-being.

This paper will try to re-look the potential of Buddha and his heritage in the world, especially in Asia, and India's leadership in promoting the same for global understanding, friendship and well-being.