

From Holy Relics to Republic Day: Global Buddhist Summit Delegates Experience India's Spiritual Soul and National Resolve

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A highpoint of the Global Buddhist Summit was the visit of around 250 foreign monks and Global Buddhist Summit (GBS) delegates to Qila Rai Pithora Cultural Complex to pay their respects and offer prayers to the Holy relics of the Buddha at the exposition which was inaugurated by the Prime Minister on January 3, 2026. The delegates from overseas and India spent over 2 hours passionately viewing the exhibition and mesmerised by the historical background of the Piprawah relics and the background about how India made efforts to bring back the reliquaries of the Buddha which were taken away from India in 1898 and how they were brought back and united with the other part of the same reliquaries. They appreciated India's efforts to not only preserve its ancient heritage but also ensure that they are repatriated home.



Most of the delegates were overawed by the visit to the relic museum and received blessings while some of them even chanted before the holy relics in a peaceful and serene mood. "We are extremely fortunate to be given this rare opportunity to be blessed by the relics of the Shakyamuni, and see the rich collection", one senior sangha member said. Another mentioned that "This was a spiritual part of the GBS which we never expected but it came our way". The organisers of the GBS kept this program as a surprise for the participants so that the academic and philosophical aspects are combined with a spiritual experience.



Another aspect of the side line activities of the Global Buddhist Summit was the visit of around 60 monks from different countries to watch the Republic Day parade on January 26. The presence of the monks amidst displays of an array of defence equipment and troops created a sombre moment for all those watching the event.



While India exhibited its military might before the world, the presence of the venerable monks and nuns embodied peace and compassion, conveying a profound message that the resolution of global challenges lies in the path of Dhamma, as often mentioned by our honourable Prime Minister.



“It was a thrilling experience,” said a Senior monk. As the parade got over and the group was leaving the stand, three nuns from Vietnam requested if they may stay on since Prime Minister Narendra Modi was walking past the sitting area and they wanted to greet him. Though the rest of the group left, they were obliged by International Buddhist Confederation staff. Later they expressed their delight at seeing the Prime Minister from close quarters. Several photographs were clicked to cherish the special moment so that they could share the experience with others on their return. “It was a once in a lifetime experience for me,” remarked the Nun, later.



Together, these two events highlighted the dual essence of India’s identity: a nation rooted in spiritual wisdom and cultural heritage, while simultaneously asserting its democratic strength and sovereignty.

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