Global Buddhist Summit 2023

Why in news?

The recently concluded global Buddhist summit could leverage India's soft power to connect the Buddhist population around the world.

What are the significance of the summit?

- **Shakyamuni Buddha** - The prime vision of the Summit is to look into the teachings of the Shakyamuni Buddha.
- **Buddhist diplomacy efforts** - The summit could be a good push to the foreign soft power diplomacy.
- **Buddhist culture and heritage** - The Indian government hopes to demonstrate its commitment to preserving and promoting Buddhist culture and heritage by conducting such event.
- **Four themes** - The discussion during the summit revolves around
    - Buddha Dhamma and Peace,
    - Buddha Dhamma: Environmental Crisis, Health and Sustainability,
    - Preservation of Nalanda Buddhist Tradition,
    - Buddha Dhamma Pilgrimage, Living heritage and Buddha Relics.
- **173 international participants** - Comprising 84 Sangha member and 151 Indian delegates comprising 46 Sangha members, 40 nuns and 65 laity from outside Delhi.
- **Resolve Buddhist issues** - India is well-positioned to play a leading role in shaping the discourse around Buddhist issues on the global stage.
- **Foreign policy** - The Panchamrit principles includes Sanskriti Evam Sabhyata which means cultural and civilizational links, which were heighted in the summit.

What are the recent efforts taken?

- **Buddhist tourist circuit** - Promotes Buddhism via tourism.
- The circuit includes places such as Kapilvastu, Kaushambi, Sarnath, Sankisa, Sravasti, and Kushinagar.
- **Buddhist culture and heritage** - Global Buddhist summit promotes the Buddhist culture and heritage in India.
- **Shared Buddhist Heritage** - An international conference of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) with focus on India's civilizational connect with the SCO nations.
- **Press Information Bureau** - Released a digital compilation of 20 speeches made by Modi that were important in understanding the rich connection between Prime Minister and Lord Buddha.

The Buddhist summit's theme is Responses to Contemporary Challenges:

Philosophy to Praxis.

What is the way forward?

- The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) could play a significant role in promoting such summit.
- Like china, India must use Buddhist diplomacy to engage with its neighboring countries effectively.
- India must use the Bollywood to promote the Buddhist heritage.
- India's G-20 presidency this year could be used to promote Buddhist diplomacy on a bigger scale.

Quick facts

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)
• ICCR was founded in ***1950*** by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, independent India's first Education Minister. • ICCR objectives is to actively participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes pertaining to India's external cultural relations. • ICCR foster and ***strengthen cultural relations*** and mutual understanding between India and other countries. • ICCR promotes cultural exchanges with other countries and people, and to develop relations with nations.

References

1. The Hindu | Global Buddhist Summit
2. PIB | Significance of the Global Buddhist Summit

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