**Press Release**

**Ambassador Amit Kumar Participates in Buddha’s Birthday Lantern Lighting Ceremony at Dongguk University**

 Ambassador Amit Kumar and his spouse were honored to join Venerable Donkwan, Chairperson of Dongguk University, and President Yun Jae-woong at the Lantern Lighting Ceremony held at Dongguk University on April 09 to celebrate Lord Buddha’s Birthday.

 Organized by Dongguk University with the participation of the Embassy of India, the solemn event was attended by over 500 individuals and featured the lighting of 16,000 lanterns, symbolizing Buddhist compassion and wisdom, reaffirming the shared spiritual bonds between India and Korea.

 In his remarks, Ambassador Kumar highlighted the enduring relevance of Lord Buddha’s teachings in the contemporary world, and the historical ties and rich Buddhist exchanges between India and Korea. He emphasized India’s efforts to preserve and promote Buddhist heritage and studies globally, including through the restoration of key pilgrimage sites and the recognition of Pali as a classical language.

Prior to the ceremony, Ambassador Kumar met with Venerable Donkwan. They agreed to explore proposals for strengthening university linkages, promoting research in Buddhist scriptures, and facilitating academic exchanges.

The event also underscored the deep-rooted Buddhist connections between India and Korea. In 2023, a delegation of 108 senior monks from the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism undertook a 1,200 km walking pilgrimage across sacred Buddhist sites in India, commemorating the 50th anniversary of India-Korea diplomatic relations. Further, during his visit to South Korea in 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted Bodhi tree sapling to the Mayor of Gimhae — a city deeply linked to India through the journey of Princess Heo Hwang-ok of Ayodhya. The sapling, a living symbol of our shared spiritual heritage, continues to thrive in Gimhae, further strengthening the cultural and religious bonds between the two nations.

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