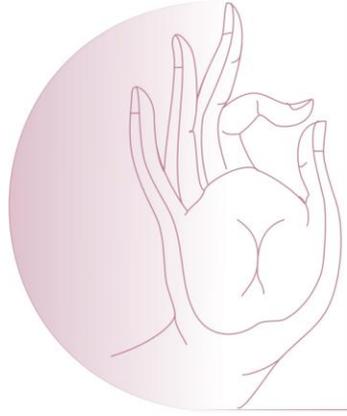


**The International  
Festival of Buddhist  
Heritage of Ladakh  
2012**



**INTERNATIONAL  
FESTIVAL OF  
BUDDHIST  
HERITAGE OF  
LADAKH**

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**3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2012**

**At MIMC, Devachan, Leh-Ladakh, INDIA**



**About Ladakh:**

Ladakh, popular known as the broken moon, and the lost Shangri-la, little Tibet etc is a small paradise in between the high peaks of the Himalayas set in the most northern part of India. Politically a part of the world known region of Jammu-Kashmir, the mountain range forms a kind of wall between the absolute peaceful Ladakh and its neighbors. Its culture is slightly similar to the Tibetan tradition and the way of living is in its manner very unique. Isolated for centuries it developed a rich culture and a deep believe in the Buddhist religion. The first population to be here were the Mons from Tibet and Kullu and the Drads came later and started to live in lower Ladakh.

For first timers Ladakh leaves them spell bound. There is such a vast cultural difference between Ladakh and other regions people are taken in by that. Ladakh has an amazing history too. The land of lost Shangri la is mysterious enough and its several monasteries and local stories intrigue the visitor even more. There are villages which are decorated with Monasteries that have hermits, monks residing since such a long time.



### **A brief on Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre (MIMC):**

Amidst mountains and beautiful landscapes, is the Devachan campus located at Choklamsar on a 200 acre land close to Leh. Over the last 20 years, the institution has developed into an integrated community thriving with a numerous set of humanitarian welfare activities with more than 500 permanent residents. A dedicated team of social workers, teachers, doctors, monks, nuns, community leaders and care-providers have created an integrated community at Devachan in Ladakh which provides comprehensive care to all segments of society: children, elderly, special needs individuals, monks & nuns, the sick, as well as those seeking spiritual development that includes school children, elderly people, young novice Monks and Nuns, the physically challenged destitute and the visually impaired children. The uniqueness of the organization is the integrated approach for inner spiritual development encompassing all human welfare activities to become potential amalgam unit as a model in this region. MIMC is a great example of one man's vision turning into reality. Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena established the Mahabodhi International Meditation Center in 1986 to offer both spiritual instructions as well as desperately needed humanitarian services to impoverished people in the remote land of Ladakh.

At Mahabodhi, the practice and teaching of meditation is one of the key programs. Meditation is introduced to all students and staff of Mahabodhi Devachan. Each year, during the summer months, the MIMC is engaged in conducting several mediation activities for visitors. Meditation classes are conducted both at the main campus and at other places in Ladakh. Throughout the summer months, short residential courses are led by Ven. Bhikkhu Sanghasena and other senior monks. The retreats provide an excellent introduction to Buddhist meditation and complementary yoga practices for beginners, as well as suitable conditions for the more experienced who can both deepen and extend their practice.

### **Ladakh Festival- 1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2012:**

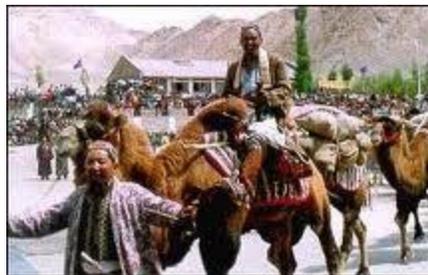
The 2-week long colorful celebration of Ladakh festival is held from September 1-15 every year in Leh and villages. It is a major event organized every year by the J&K Tourism Department, in collaboration with the local communities and the district administrations of Leh. Its main objective is to revive and



promote the richness, depth and pageantry of Ladakh's centuries-old culture, traditions, its cultural heritage, performing arts and folk heritage for world-wide appreciation and enjoyment.

On the first day, there is a grand scale celebration at Leh with a spectacular procession in which various cultural troupes and village contingents participate in full ceremonial costumes, singing songs and performing various types of dances to the tune of the traditional orchestra. For the visitors to Ladakh, the festival provides an opportunity to witness and experience the lifestyle and cultural ethos of a people who have lived for centuries on the crossroads of Asia, receiving and harmonising socio-cultural and religious influences from their neighbouring societies.

At the Polo ground, where the procession terminates, the participants break into a variety of folk and popular dances, presenting the best samples of the region's performing arts. Among the regular programmes, the most colourful and interesting are the village archery festivals held in selected suburban villages of Leh. Every villager is required to formally participate in these events in accordance with the established social code. Besides the music and folk dances, there are polo contests, archery contests, wedding celebrations and masked dances that add to the festivities of the festival. The final carnival parade which is a kaleidoscope of the Ladakhi culture showcasing the blending of Central Asian, Tibetan and North Indian cultures and the art and handicrafts of the region passes through Leh town.





## Organizers:



Asoka Mission,  
New Delhi



Mahabodhi Int'l Meditation Centre,  
Leh Ladakh



Nav Nalanda Mahavihara,  
Nalanda