



43rd Novitiate Programme

7th Dec to 16th Dec 2018

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PHOTO NEWS - Sanghamitta Day 21st December



THE HISTORY BEHIND BMV'S NOVITIATE TRAINING PROGRAMME

Asian Theravada Buddhist countries have been promoting Temporary Ordinations as a social and cultural tradition. In many countries like Myanmar and Thailand, it has become customary for every Buddhist male to temporarily renounce worldly pleasures for a brief period and spend his time in a monastery, in meditation and learning as a novice monk. In these countries where Buddhism is so much a part of the everyday lives of the citizens, the ordination is regarded as a routine matter, although it forms a significant aspect of one's growing into manhood.

Many Malaysian Buddhists attracted to this custom had approached Venerable Dr K Sri Dhammananda Nayaka Maha Thera to similarly ordain them. The Venerable however saw that the ordination of men in Malaysia would have to have different aims and rationalization. He realised that many aspects of this practice which were taken for granted in Thailand and Myanmar would have to be clearly defined, or modified to make it relevant to the Malaysian situation.

The Buddhist Monks' Training Centre and its Novitiate Training Programme

Due to continued restrictions imposed by the Immigration Department on the entry of Sri Lanka Buddhist monks into Malaysia, it had become increasingly difficult to get down monks for *dhammaduta* work at the Brickfields Buddhist Temple as had been done hitherto, and that action had to be expedited to seek ways and means of establishing a Buddhist Monks' Training Centre locally.

By early 1976, the situation had reached critical stage and this necessitated the convening of an emergency meeting of the Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society on 25th January 1976 to discuss ways and means of resolving the problem.

Venerable K Sri Dhammananda commented on the urgent need to train local youths to take up monkhood. He said that there were potential young men willing to be ordained. He suggested that a Training Centre be set up immediately in the Temple to begin with, limited to 4 or 5 youths irrespective of nationality.

A sub committee was formed consisting of members of the Sasana Society and from the Buddhist Missionary Society to co-ordinate on all matters relating to the setting up of the Training Centre.

Establishment of the Buddhist Monks' Training Centre

The Buddhist Monks' Training Centre at the Buddhist Temple, Brickfields was officially opened on Sunday, 14th March 1976 by the Honourable Tan Sri Lee Siok Yew, Minister of Health, Malaysia. The ceremony was witnessed by a large number of monks – Sinhala, Thai,



Opening Ceremony of the Monks Training Centre on 14th March 1976 by Tan Sri Lee Siok Yew

Chinese and Korean – including a large gathering of members and devotees.

Speeches were delivered by the Ven K Sri Dhammananda Nayaka Maha Thera who was the Chairman and Director of the Buddhist Monks' Training Centre, the Honourable Tan Sri Lee Siok Yew and a few other distinguished guests present. The Director and sponsors of this Training Centre fervently hoped that more educated youths would come forward to dedicate their lives to be trained as Buddhist monks to do a proper religious service in this country and also to lead a religious way of life.

The first Buddhist Novitiate Training Programme

It was agreed to hold a Buddhist Novitiate Programme to ordain some twenty-five novice monks to mark Ven K Sri Dhammananda's Silver Jubilee Celebration of his service in Malaysia.

The Buddhists Novitiate Programme – the first of its kind to be conducted in English – was held at the Temple from 5th to 19th December 1976 and was sponsored by the Buddhist Missionary Society and Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society. The two week programme included early morning and evening religious services and meditation sessions. Lectures and religious discussions were conducted thrice daily – in the morning, afternoon and evening.



Group photo of novice monks of the 1st Novitiate Programme

Provision made for lady devotees to participate as Upasikas

Ven Dhammananda suggested that lady devotees should also be invited to take part in the Buddhist Novitiate Programme. They would be wearing only white and their hair will not be shaved. They would only observe the *Dasa Sil* (10 precepts) and they would be accommodated at a residence near the Temple.

Objective of the Buddhist Novitiate Training Programme

The objective of the Novitiate Programme has been to familiarise the public in general, and the youths in particular, with some aspects of monastic discipline and to encourage dedicated Buddhists to take up a monk's life for advancement in personal spiritual development and service to the Buddhist community in Malaysia.

One of the aims of the Programme was to remove a lot of misgivings and misinformation regarding the monastic discipline of a monk. It was aimed at showing that such a discipline was not so severe or austere as to cause undue hardship to anyone. On the contrary, the novices learnt the noble Buddhist way of life, they practised self-discipline and they had a wonderful opportunity to follow an intensive course on Buddhism, where they could clarify for themselves many doubts they had regarding the Teachings of the Buddha.



Young novice monks from left Alex De Silva, the late Glen Laxman Jayawardena and a very young Ven K Vijitha Thera

Another major aim was to overcome the problem of finding suitable young Malaysians who would be prepared to take the robes permanently, to serve the Buddhists of this country.

The symbolic alms round by the novice monks

A regular feature on the last day of the Novitiate Programme is the participation by the novices of the symbolic alms round or pindapata, visiting several houses around the Temple.

Source:-

100 years of the Buddhist Maha Vihara Book authored by the late Mr H M A De Silva. Mr De Silva held a few positions in the Committee of Management of the Buddhist Maha Vihara for several decades.

Review from a mother and her son who participated in the 42nd Novitiate Programme in 2017.

Joanna Teoh Seok Bin

Age: 59 years (mother)

Buddhist Name: Upasika Yasodhara

I was overwhelmed with happiness when my son Vincent Low Hon Choon decided to join me for the 42nd Buddhist Novitiate Programme last year. My last Buddhist Novitiate Programme at Buddhist Maha Vihara was in 2012. I was looking forward again to learn and experience the monastic life of a upasika solely for my self cultivation & development, well being, and to accumulate more merits.

Programme highlights includes meditation, sutta studies, chanting, daily dhamma discussions and the most important is the understanding of the Buddha's teachings about Noble 8-Fold Path. It's a challenging mission - got to be mindful all the time and learning to radiate the spirit of love to all beings by practicing metta - loving kindness.

I always rejoice with this wholesome experience and sincerely wished that all my 5 children will attend the Buddhist Novitiate Programme once in their lifetime.

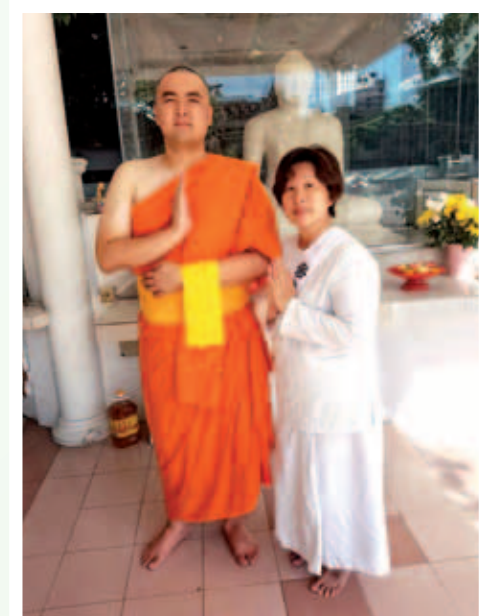
Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu !

Vincent Low Hon Choon

Age: 30 years (son)

Buddhist Name: Samanera Medhavi

This programme allowed me to understand deeper about the Buddhist way that I can never learn from books or myself. Getting a first-hand experience of living a life of a monk was a very inspiring moment for me. I was given a Buddhist name and taught about Dharma, chanting, and meditation from the great teacher of the Sangha which I am currently applying to my daily work and social life. The Ordination ceremony, Pindapata event, and even having meal from alms bowl was truly an eye opener for me.



MY FIRST PINDAPATA AS AN EIGHT PRECEPTOR

A personal account by Sis Annie Yin

For those unfamiliar with Pindapata, it is a common Theravadan practice where monks would go barefoot with their alms bowl to a nearby town, standing at a few spots to receive alms or requisites from devotees or well-wishers, until sufficient food has been collected to sustain the monks, especially the older and less mobile monks in the monastery, for the day. Whilst some may associate it with begging, pindapata, is certainly not begging because the monks do not demand or ask for anything from the passers-by. It is believed to be very meritorious for people to make such offerings as the merit comes from:

- supporting the sangha who have renounced samsara to focus on Dharma; and
- considering that the sangha's full commitment to uphold vows and practice is integral to the continuance of the Dharma.



The writer Annie Yin on the left with Ven Luangpor.

Despite obviously not being a monk, I was extremely blessed to be able to participate in Pindapata recently as part of my 2018 vassa (rainy season) retreat experience at Vihara Buddha Gotama, Temoh, Perak (VBG). During the evening Dhamma talk on the second day of my retreat, Venerable Dhammavuddho Maha Thera, the abbot of VBG, (Luangpor) kindly invited me to join him for pindapata.

I then learned that at VBG, Pindapata activity is scheduled every day at different locations in Perak, from Mondays through Saturdays. Each location would entail different departure time given the distance to be covered on foot and the targeted time to be at the designated locations is at 8 am each morning. Generally, the further the distance, the earlier the departure time. To illustrate, the departure time from VBG to Teluk Intan which is the farthest from VBG would be at 7:05 am while the departure time to Temoh and Mambang Di Awan which are the nearest to VBG would be at 7:50 am.

My first pindapata as an Eight Preceptor took place on Monday (20.08.2018) and I joined the small group heading to Temoh and Mambang Di Awan. My small group consisted of Luangpor himself, one of the resident monk, Venerable Ciropunyo (Tan Ciro), one fellow male Eight Preceptor, Brother Yap and myself. I was clueless as to what to do but thankfully Brother Yap took the time to brief me on where I should wait for the van that would be chauffeuring us to the pindapata venue as well as the meeting time. I belatedly remembered that pindapata was supposed to be done barefooted and was admittedly a bit taken aback when Brother Yap indicated that the usual practice is to leave our footwear behind before boarding the van. Nonetheless, I quickly took off my new "Flipper" slippers and left them neatly at VBG. We were at the meeting point a bit early and with the short spare time, I introduced myself to our van driver for the day, Ah Fatt (in Cantonese) and rejoiced upon learning that this middle-aged Chinese gentleman is constantly involved in such meritorious activities. I had also asked Brother Yap about the protocol when it comes to getting into the van with the monks. He patiently explained that it is proper to let the monks board first, as a mark of respect to the representation of the Sangha, one part of the Triple Gem. With that in mind, I took the back seat of the van after Luangpor and Tan Ciro had boarded the van. Brother Yap sat at the passenger seat in front, next to Ah Fatt.

Even at the start of the journey, I was hit with the first lesson of the day – a lesson on compassion and mindfulness. In short, as the van started to move out of VBG, Luangpor suddenly turned to me and asked whether I brought my sandals. I happily replied "No." Next thing I know, Luangpor instructed Ah Fatt to stop the van and told me to bring my sandals. Not really knowing the proper protocol, I quickly scurried down the van to retrieve my slippers and jumped back into the van to avoid delay. Upon my return to the van, Luangpor explained that there was a portion of the walk which might be difficult for a rather advanced in age newbie like me. Hence, it is better for me to have my sandals with me. I am at awe at how

spontaneous Luangpor is with his compassion for others. He even factored in small details like this and was so understanding and accommodating although it wasn't wrong for me to walk barefoot all the way. However, I did become slightly intimidated as I then wondered how "difficult" the walk would be. Oh, well, only one way to find out!

First stop, Temoh. The van pulled over and we alighted. Brother Yap handed me a yellow rectangular tray to carry along and although I was a bit puzzled to receive it, there wasn't time to ask as Luangpor and Tan Ciro had started the barefoot walk. With the tray in hand, I trailed behind Luangpor, Tan Ciro and Brother Yap. Even at the start, I could feel the pain and I felt every one of the small sharp pebbles that dug into my soles. I kid you not, each step was really a painstaking effort and I was gradually trailing behind the small entourage. To make things worse, we haven't even reached the part where Luangpor referred to earlier as difficult for me.

To get my mind off the pain, I tried to distract myself by chanting, "Buddho, Buddho, Buddho" but to no avail. It also didn't help when after a while, Brother Yap noticed I was lagging and astutely uttered "Em Kuan" (cantonese in reference to me not used to walking barefoot). I began to have doubts that maybe I had overestimated myself when I took up Luangpor's invitation to join pindapata and would end up delaying as well as burdening the entire group. I also then realised it was useless to wallow in negativity and drew upon my past experience of circumambulating a stupa 108 times, in a monastery at Johor Bahru. I was flooded with doubts too but I managed to complete it by persevering and also focusing on the abbot's feet and pace. Hence, I psyched myself up that I could complete this too and started to eye Luangpor's feet and pace. Before I knew it, we arrived at our pit stop. WHAT A HU-GE RE-LIEF!

Our first pit stop was at a corner near a small market, at the front of a village house where residents nearby did their morning shopping. We stood in silence, waiting patiently for devotees or well-wishers to make their offerings. After a while, one by one, started to come forward, intermittently, to offer food to the monks. Luangpor would lift the cover of his alms bowl and turn it inside out, for devotees or well-wishers to place their offerings, which are usually cooked food packed into tiffin carriers, or plastics or paper wrapped, but we also received bread, cakes, cookies, biscuits, fruits, mineral water, canned drinks and packets of rice grains. I noticed that people would make offering based on the number of monks present as most would come with 2 portions, namely, one portion for Luangpor and another for Tan Ciro. I also figured out what I was supposed to do with the tray handed to me earlier. Upon observing Brother Yap lifting the offerings from Luangpor's alms bowl and placing it onto the tray he was carrying, while acknowledging and chanting "Sadhu, sadhu, sadhu" in gratitude. I did the same in relation to the offerings for Tan Ciro. It was also a form of lesson in mindfulness and gratitude for me as I had to be alert as to when to take the offering out without being offensive and to be mindful that my demeanour was respectful at all times, including making sure I was standing behind the monks as a form of respect. In addition, we received each offering with much gratitude.

Then, it was time to move to another location. We continued our barefoot walk and had to cross a wet road. Oh my goodness! The wet pebbles seemed to stick to my soles like glue. As I lifted my feet to step forward, basically the pain doubled for me! Again, I was lagging behind them even though I was trying to hasten each painful step.

The van driver, Ah Fatt, who was very familiar with Luangpor's pindapata route would pull the van up, in a timely manner and at certain parts of the route for us to transfer the offerings into the van. It was definitely a good strategy given the quick rate in which both trays held by Brother Yap and myself filled up due to the generosity of



BIDOR A devotee and her grand daughter offered alms food near their home.

the people making such offerings. In addition, a lighter load made a difference when walking such distance barefooted.

After we boarded the van to head to another pits stop, Luangpor turned around and advised me to wear my sandals. I didn't have to be told twice and slipped my sore feet into the slippers. I definitely developed a deeper appreciation for the protection offered by my slippers which I have taken for granted. After the adventurous barefoot experience, the slippers felt extremely comfortable and it was like walking on air. At the risk of sounding dramatic, after putting on the slippers at that time, I really wanted to hug my slippers for giving me so much comfort and protection from the harsh road. Now I know exactly what the homeless or poor had to endure while walking with naked feet.

My relief was short-lived as I had to go barefoot again, the roads at Mambang Di Awan, our next destination was smoother and hence more acceptable to my inexperienced feet. I was spared from more painful foot reflexology experience. Whilst we also received generous offerings at Mambang Di Awan, I was particularly very moved and inspired by the 3 Thai nationals who came up to Luangpor to make their offerings while earnestly kneeling down and making their aspirations. With Mambang Di Awan being our final stop, we headed back to VBG and my first pindapata as an 8 preceptor came to an end around 9:15 am.



TELUK INTAN A devotee waited on his knees in front of his house to offer alms food to the monks.

Below are my further thoughts about my first pindapata:

1. Humility

- To walk barefoot and enduring the staring from passers-by and motorists.
- a. It was more humiliating for me, as I was lagging behind the spiritual ones, more like hobbling along instead of walking barefoot with dignity.
- b. To accept each and everything that was being offered to us. You cannot pick and choose. "Eh, excuse me, I don't eat white bread. Only whole meal. Please take it back." I imagine myself in a caricature, being given a hard knock on the head by a monk with his alms bowl! You certainly cannot, ever mouth that!
- c. We have to show our sincere gratitude and acknowledged each devotee and well-wisher's magnanimous offering, by saying "Sadhu, sadhu, sadhu!" You cannot grit your teeth and seethed, "You please remember, ah, its whole meal not white."

2. Patience

- a. Patience while waiting for devotees to come make their offerings. When will they arrive? Will anyone, ever going to come by?
- b. It would not have been easy for Luangpor when he first started his pindapata rounds. Some may be wondering what is this monk doing, standing here with that round thing at his side? It must have taken Luangpor quite some time to educate the people in the vicinity on pindapata, for him to gain such great support with the locals at all his pindapata venues.

According to Languor, initially he was offered money. He had to explain that as a Buddhist monk, he was not allowed to receive money and would appreciate offerings of food and produce instead. The news spread by word of mouth and that was how his devotees and supporters grew.

3. Sense of worth

- a. According to Bhikkhu Gavesako, in his dhamma on "The Value of Pindapata": Monks rely on pindapata, on what is spontaneously and freely offered, to sustain their lives, so that they can study and practise the Dhamma-Vinaya. He further explained that when monks go for alms in the local town provides an opportunity for the people to reflect on the in depth meaning of life when they see a monk.
- b. Going on pindapata is something one choose to do and it involves some physical exertion. The action of giving, if done regularly creates a healthy sense of worthiness. "I can do this, because I have decided to do this." This also applies to a devotee, like me, who practises pindapata together with the monks.

4. Barefoot revolution

- a. Barefoot revolution or grounding, also called "earthing", is the process of absorbing the earth's free flowing natural electrons into your body, by walking barefoot or touching the earth with your bare hands. When you walk barefoot, electrons absorbed from the earth neutralise free radicals that build throughout the day. When we wear shoes, plastic or rubber, we become disconnected with the earth's benefits and do not give our body a chance to get in touch with Mother Nature.
- b. Scientific research and studies indicate that grounding:
 - i. relieves inflammation, muscle tension and headache;
 - ii. reduces stress;
 - iii. boost immunity;
 - iv. helps ameliorate the constant assault of electromagnetic fields and other types of radiation from hand phones, computers and Wi-Fi;
 - v. increases bodily energy through improved blood flow and blood pressure;
 - vi. improves menstrual and female hormone symptoms by accelerating the healing of wounds; and
 - vii. shortens recovery time from athletic injuries.
- c. Reflexologists recommend walking barefoot on bare soil or round stones to:
 - i. help stimulate pressure points on the feet, which can reduce cancer risk;
 - ii. improve cardiovascular health;
 - iii. lower weight and prevent diabetes;
 - iv. improve blood oxygenation and its circulation and immune response;
 - v. remove toxins; and
 - vi. relieve stress.



BIDOR Home cooked food in tiffin carrier was offered.

In other words; walking barefoot for pindapata promotes good health!

In closing; I would strongly urge people to experience pindapata for themselves as it will positively impact your spiritual journey. It definitely has, for mine and I remain grateful to Luangpor for inviting me and giving me the opportunity to participate in this unforgettable experience of pindapata. I am also very thankful to VBG for organising such pindapata activities so that many are able to partake in such meritorious activities and also to Brother Yap for his patience in explaining things to this rather advanced in age newbie. Last but not least; a quick shout out to my beloved and learned kalyana mitta, Ms Cindy Hew, for the constructive feedback and exceptional edits; and my beloved and learned close friend, Ms Ong Lee Fong, for her inspirational comments. It is hoped that this humble sharing which is an avenue of me to repay such kindness, would provide some helpful insights about pindapata for lay practitioners.

Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu!

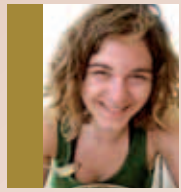
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About the Writer:

After retiring in 2015, Sis Annie Yin left Kuala Lumpur and returned to her hometown, Tangkak, Johor to look after her aged mother as well as her own well-being, adapting to the non-hectic life of a small town. She tries to make time for meditation, meditation retreats and of late, studying the suttas.



THE FIRST IN 1,000 YEARS: An Interview with Venerable Kusuma

by Caitlin Dwyer

In 1996, Venerable Dr. Bhikkhuni Kusuma became the first Buddhist nun in 10 centuries to ordain in Sri Lanka. She later established a meditation center, wrote several books, and has given Dharma talks all over the world. An advocate of women's ordination, Ven. Dr. Kusuma is credited with helping to revive the Theravada monastic tradition for Sri Lankan women.

For much of her early life, Kusuma Devendra was an academic. She studied molecular biology in the United States and taught science and English at university. Feeling that science could not answer all her questions, she turned to Buddhism. She obtained two PhDs, one on Sri Lankan nuns and one on the Vinaya, or monastic regulatory framework. Her studies taught her that women had been ordained as bhikkhunis since the days of Mahapajapati, the Buddha's mother; and that though that lineage had died out in Sri Lanka, it was alive and well elsewhere. She traveled to South Korea and Taiwan to study those living lineages, and in a controversial ceremony, she formally took her vows in India with nine other women, overseen by Korean sisters. She and her cohort became the first Theravada nuns in 1,000 years.

Now 88 years old and the founder and abbot of the Ayya Khema Meditation Center, Ven. Dr. Kusuma spoke to us about her ordination ceremony and her hopes for the future of Buddhist nuns.



Bhikkhuni Dr Kusuma

Buddhistdoor Global: Were you worried about re-establishing the Bhikkhuni Sangha in Sri Lanka?

Venerable Dr. Bhikkhuni Kusuma: I worked toward the establishment of the bhikkhuni order for maybe 20 years. There was a flourishing bhikkhuni order in Sri Lanka for nearly 10 centuries and then the lineage died out. I had no idea of ordaining, but I was keen to get it re-established.

The bhikkhu [male monastic] order was well established and people are used to looking up to bhikkhus. For centuries, Sri Lanka had a very powerful tradition of bhikkhu ordination. But that also died out due to invasions, a lot of wars, being under the British, the Dutch, the Portuguese; Sri Lanka lost the bhikkhu order as well. But about 200 years ago, it was resurrected. They took Dutch ships, went to Burma and Thailand, and brought the bhikkhu lineage back. But they did not bring back the bhikkhuni order! So that's what we were trying to do. Because

the bhikkhu order is well established, recognized by the government, and there is education and support from the entire Buddhist community, it has been functioning successfully up to today. However, the bhikkhuni order was unheard of. It was quite controversial.

I didn't want to confront the hierarchy because that would mean that I would get into trouble personally. For 20 years I had conducted many ordinations, but privately, without any publicity. There was a silent understanding. [Before my ordination] I got books printed with my name written as Bhikkhuni Kusuma, but nobody confronted me. There wasn't a big opposition; we were in the minority, and the monks didn't feel that we were a challenge. I thought: it is tradition, and it takes time. As time passed, when the numbers [of interested women] grew, the time would be right for us to openly ask for recognition. I was waiting.

My ordination came as a surprise even to me. Dr. Vipulasara Thero [at that time, the secretary of the World Buddhist Council, the president of the India Maha Bodhi Society, and an advocate for bhikkhuni ordination] insisted that I join the order and take up leadership because he thought that the other nine nuns were not able to face such an important international ordination by themselves.

We now have about 3,000 bhikkhunis and it was after my first ordination that the word bhikkhuni was once again known and heard in Sri Lanka!



BDG: Did you encounter resistance or opposition?

VK: It was risky to start the order because the senior monks were and still are not in favor of bhikkhunis, so we did not know what kind of opposition we would be facing.

There were many who expressed their views both in favor and against bhikkhuni ordination, and the mass media made it headline news. So I was in India for two years, because it was not very safe for the 10 of us to be in Sri Lanka due to the open opposition. After two years, people had said so many things in favor and against our ordination that the questions sort of died down or were forgotten. That's the time we decided to return to Sri Lanka.

Up to today I have not been confronted. For one thing, they [the monks] know that I know the Vinaya and the rules. When I went for my PhD, I spoke to the panel on defense of theses. They questioned me and they were quite satisfied with my grasp of the facts. I had a degree in Pali, so I was able to read in Pali, in English, and in Sinhala, so I was quite thorough with my facts. That, I believe, was the reason nobody confronted me: because I knew my facts.

BDG: You spent time in Korea to prepare for the ordination. Can you talk a little bit about what you learned from the Korean order that you took back with you to Sri Lanka?

VK: I learned so much. Their drumming and their chanting took long hours, and the place was spic and span. I was old even then, and two or three of them used to come to hold me by hand and take me to a huge spacious room that was already prepared. There would be a bowl of food and flowers all ready for me; they gave me such wonderful comfort. Dharma discussion was in Korean, but I was still listening. I knew that they kept a pure lineage. I find that the nuns' community is extremely pious and committed.

BDG: Your original training was in science. You have said that science did not have the answers you were looking for, so you turned to Pali tradition. What is missing in science that you can find in Buddhist practice?

VK: Science only answers questions about the physical nature, not the mental nature. Buddhism gives priority to the mind. There is no scientific evidence there. There is no physical evidence there. You cannot experiment on mental phenomenon, like feelings, recognitions, perceptions, volitions, memory. That kind of thing has not been experimented or understood at all by the scientific world. Why are we born? Why are we dying? Why are we suffering? All these questions came to me and science had no answer for those. That's why I sought answers in Buddhist philosophy. Today I feel very happy I changed because I have the best of the scientific background, and as for the physical world, it's okay. The body? Okay. But the mind! I had to seek meditation to understand the working of the mind.



During a meditation session

BDG: You are highly educated, and many nuns at the Ayya Khema Meditation Center also have advanced degrees. Why is education so important for nuns? What does academic training provide for bhikkhunis that is so valuable?

VK: With all this high technology and ability to transmit knowledge, the Dharma should know no language, no border. Without technology, you cannot perform at any level. Maybe on a personal level, but you can't speak to the world. You have to speak to people in the language that is understood. Without technology, without knowledge, you can't disseminate, you can't spread the Dharma. You may be able to stay as a

hermit in a jungle and practice meditation, but that is not the Buddhist way.

The Buddhist way is to teach and also to study. In the Dharma, we not only have to learn the theory, but also practice it, so it becomes firsthand knowledge. Until then, it is secondhand knowledge; we have read it somewhere, we have heard it somewhere. It is not convincing enough unless you put it to practice, you reap the benefits, and realize the value of it because it has sprung from your mind, your thinking, your speech, and your action. You become so pure that you understand the efficacy of the Dharma, through practical application, for you, for your neighborhood, and all those who come into contact with you. Then you can transmit this Dharma. So knowledge is very important, language, technology, so important, not only for your own edification, but also for the spread of the Dharma.

BDG: What has changed for the Theravada bhikkhuni order since your ordination?

VK: The order is still there, but it is unrecognized by the monks and the state, even today. The government does not recognize the Theravada bhikkhuni order. We are practicing according to the Theravada tradition. We don't know Korean, we don't know Chinese. We don't practice according to the Mahayana rituals, but according to Theravada practices. Though we have done that for so long, the government and the advisory board to the government has not sanctioned us, so we remain unidentified. There is ongoing protest asking for the recognition of the bhikkhuni identity.

BDG: What would you like to see happen next for bhikkhuni in Sri Lanka?

VK: I wish that bhikkhunis—not only in Sri Lanka, but all over the world—will be educated, will be practicing, will be talking about the Dharma and giving that knowledge to the world. Then, it will be a different world altogether.

Source: Buddhist Door Global Special Issue 2018 @ <https://www.buddhistdoor.net/features/the-first-in-1000-years-an-interview-with-venerable-kusuma>

About the Writer:

Caitlin Dwyer is a freelance writer and monthly columnist for Buddhistdoor Global for the last two years. She writes on women in Buddhism. She is learning to maintain a Zen practice while raising a family.

Venerable Dr Bhikkhuni Kusuma's book "A Step in the Right Direction" is available at the Buddhist Maha Vihara.

Please check with the BMV office.

A Step in the Right Direction

The Teachings of Bhikkhuni Kusuma



SANGHAMITTA THERI - a liberated woman

by Dr. Lorna Dewaraja

The fullmoon day of Unduvap or the month of December, the Buddhists of Sri Lanka honour the memory of Sanghamitta Theri who together with her brother Mahinda Thera was responsible for the establishing of Buddhism in this country 2300 years ago in the reign of King Devanampiya Tissa. A significant feature is that when Mahinda Thera preached the Dhamma in Anuradhapura the most enthusiastic listeners were women; those of royal rank as well as the commoners. This remains so to this day for in any Buddhist event the women far outnumber the men.



King Devanampiya Tissa welcoming Bhikkhuni Sanghamitta and her a retinue of nuns. She is carrying the sapling from the original Bodhi Tree.

Having listened to Mahinda Thera's sermon, Queen Anula, wife of the sub King Mahanaga, convinced of the truth of the Buddha word, informed the king of her desire to become a bhikkhuni. When this was conveyed to Mahinda Thera, he pointed out that according to the rules of the Vinaya it was not permissible for him to bestow the pabbajja on women. Further, he said that this could be accomplished if the King sent a message to King Asoka Maurya who ruled from Pataliputra (modern Patna) requesting him to send his daughter Sanghamitta Theri and also to bring with her a branch of the Bodhi Tree at Gaya under which the Buddha attained enlightenment.

It should be mentioned that diplomatic relations had already been established between the Court of Anuradhapura and that of Pataliputra. Hence Devanampiya Tissa did not hesitate to send his minister Ariththa to the Mauryan king with these two earnest requests.

The King was reluctant to send his daughter on an overseas mission but because of the insistence of Sanghamitta Theri he finally agreed. Several nuns accompanied the Theri who sailed to Sri Lanka carrying the Bo sapling, together with the Minister Ariththa. This was a very courageous action on the part of Sanghamitta. In an age when rigid Brahmanic ideas regarding women were prevailing in society, it was indeed an act of great courage for a woman of royal birth to embark on a hazardous voyage unaccompanied by any male member of her family. She was indeed a liberated woman to defy the challenges of a male-dominated society.



What is left of the original sapling at the Sri Maha Bodhi temple, Anuradhapura is a branch which can still be seen today.

At Jambukolapattana (modern Point Pedro in Jaffna Peninsula), a multitude of devotees headed by the King and Mahinda Thera received the Theri and the Bodhi Tree. It was brought in procession to Anuradhapura, a journey which took 14 days on foot, and planted it in the Mahamegha Park on a specially prepared terrace.

The King and the people of Sri Lanka throughout 23 centuries have cherished this tree like a priceless treasure, the oldest historical tree in the world.

Historical evidence

Some scholars have expressed doubts on the Mahavamsa account of Sanghamitta and the historicity of the tree on the ground that there is no external evidence to corroborate the Sri Lanka tradition. Wilhelm Geiger, the German Orientalist who translated the Mahavamsa into German, firmly upholds the Mahavamsa tradition.

The narrative of the transplanting of the Bodhi Tree finds interesting confirmation from archaeological evidence. He says that another scholar Grundewel has shown in a very convincing way that the sculptures of the gate of the Sanchi Stupa are representations of that event.

Sanchi, it should be remembered is the childhood home of Sanghamitta and Mahinda and it is reasonable to assume that Sanghamitta's memory was revered in the place of her birth. Since the Sanchi sculptures belong to the 2nd Century BC the representation is only about 100-150 years after the coming of Sanghamitta. Hence we have near contemporary evidence on stone to corroborate the Mahavamsa story of the coming

of Sanghamitta. Further there is a village called Kantarodai in the Jaffna Peninsula originally known as Kadurugoda Vihara.

The entire area was preserved as an archaeological site and there is a strong tradition prevailing up to that day saying that Sanghamitta rested on that spot on her way to Anuradhapura. It is clear that Kadurugoda Vihara developed into a hallowed spot and because of the Sanghamitta connection. Paul E Pieris writing in 1919 to the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society said that Kantarodai is a miniature Anuradhapura.

Besides all this evidence there is the far famed tree itself still firmly rooted in Sri Lankan soil while literary works like the Bodhivamsa, Maha Bodhivamsa, Sulu Bodhivamsa bear witness to its antiquity and sacrosanctity.



The sculptures on the Gates of the Sanchi Stupa, India was the representation of the great event of planting the bodhi sapling in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka.

The Bhikkhuni Sasana

Sanghamitta Theri then accomplished her most important mission by ordaining Anuladevi and her retinue and established the Bhikkhuni Sasana in Sri Lanka. The charisma and impact of the founder was such that the Sri Lanka Bhikkunis were illustrious and erudite women who were internationally renowned and emulated their founder by travelling overseas to spread the Dhamma.

According to Chinese sources, they sailed to China and began a Chinese Order of Nuns which lasts to this day. They specialised in different sections of the Pali Canon and taught their specialties all over the island.

Liberation of Sri Lankan women

The arrival of Sanghamitta had a significant impact on Sri Lankan womanhood. Many visitors to Sri Lanka long before the impact of the West was ever felt have commented on the social freedom that Sri Lankan women enjoyed that there was no segregation of the sexes and that they participated in the social, religious and economic life of the community. This was Sanghamitta's legacy and the example of the bold and adventurous band of nuns she nurtured.

She was the first woman ambassador mentioned in recorded history, sent from one Head of State at the express invitation of another Head of State. Belonging to the ecclesiastical tradition of Maha Prajapati Gotami, the first Buddhist nun, she displayed the same qualities as the latter - courage and determination and not taking no for an answer.

She remained in Sri Lanka for the rest of the life working for the upliftment of Sri Lankan women, far away from home, kith and kin. To Sanghamitta Theri, a woman liberated in every sense of the word, the women of Sri Lanka owe a deep debt of gratitude.

Source: BuddhaSasana.org. @<http://www.budsas.org>
a Buddhist page by Binh Anson

About the Writer:

The late Dr. Lorna Dewaraja, was an eminent academic and historian well known for her objectivity and insight in presenting and interpreting historical facts. She obtained her Master Degree in History from the University of Ceylon. In 1978, Dr Lorna was awarded a doctorate by the University of London and for three years commencing 1976, she was at St. Anne's College, Oxford, as Rhodes Research Fellow pursuing her post – Doctorial studies. Her last post was as an Associate Professor in History, University of Colombo.

“In conjunction with Sanghamitta Full Moon Day or Unduvap Uposatha, an 8 Precepts Programme will be conducted by Venerable Sumangala Bhikkhuni from 7am to 7pm at Buddhist Maha Vihara. Please join us especially the ladies.”

1. Upcoming Events in Dec 2018 and Jan 2019

A. 43rd Novitiate Programme - 7th Dec to 16th December

Buddhist Monks Training Centre of Buddhist Maha Vihara is pleased to announce the Novitiate Programme on the dates mentioned above. The Programme gives one the experience of renunciation from the world of work and family life to experience the world of chanting, puja, meditation, self-reflection and Dhamma study. Men and women above the age of 18 are encouraged to join as Samaneras and Upasikas. Please register early at the BMV Reception or call 03-22741141 for enquiries.

Shaving Ceremony – Friday 7th December at 3.00pm

Ordination Ceremony – Saturday 8th December at 9.00am

Pindapata – Sunday 16th December at 9.30am

Closing Ceremony – Sunday 16th December at 2.00pm

Chief Preceptor and Coordinator – Venerable R. Padmasiri Thera from Sri Lanka

Medium of Instruction – English

Food served for the duration – Vegetarian

**** Dana** – daily at 7.30am and 11.30am



Pindapata.



Shaving Ceremony.

C. New Year Eve Blessing Service - 31st December at 11.30pm

A special puja to usher in the New Year 2019 will be held at 11.30pm. The Maha Sangha will conduct blessings and chant Suttas till past midnight.



D. New Year Day Blessing Service - 1st January 2019 at 7.30am

Begin the New Year by invoking the Blessings of the Noble Triple Gem for the peace, happiness and good health of yourself and your family members by attending the special puja followed by chanting of the Suttas by the Maha Sangha.



B. Sanghamitta Full Moon Day - 21st December

A Special Observance of 8 Precepts programme conducted by **Venerable Sumangala Bhikkhuni** will be organised from 7.00am to 7.00pm in honour of Venerable Sanghamitta Theri who is credited with the establishment of the Bhikkhuni order in Sri Lanka as well as bringing with her, a sapling of the original Bodhi Tree from Buddha Gaya, India to Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka. A programme of meditation and dhamma talks will be organised to commemorate the glorious Buddhist nuns and women of the past and present and all women are encouraged to participate.



E. Dhamma Talk by Bro Garbis B Chandana (USA) - 4th January 2019 at 8.00pm



Bro Chandana was ordained as a lay Buddhist Minister at the College of Buddhist Studies, LA under the auspices of the Sangha council of Southern California and served as a member as well. He

studied the dhamma and has practised meditation under notable teachers such as Ven Dr Walpola Piyananda Maha Thera (USA), Ven Vimalaramsi Maha Thera and the late Ven Punjabi Maha Thera for several years. His meditative practice spans over two decades of in depth experience, culminating in the practice of the Brahmaviharas and Vipassana. He is also a qualified mental health clinician. Bro Chandana will share the dhamma of his teachers and speak on the topic "Finding Security and Safety in the Practice of the Dhamma" on 4th January at 8.00pm at BMV.

2. Past Events in October and November 2018

A. Sasana Ladies Section Community Service - 13th October 2018

Some of the ladies from the committee led by their Chairman, Sis Gladys Jayawardena visited some members of the Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society at their homes. Mrs Indra Abeyasekera, Ms Nancy Jayawardena and Mr Lionel Abeyasekera; Mrs P. G. D. Hendry; Mr Robert Lee Alwis and the Society's Patron Mr Vijaya Samarawickrama were happy to receive some cheer and goodwill from the Ladies Section.



B. Visit by Maha Sangha from Sri Lanka - 26th October 2018

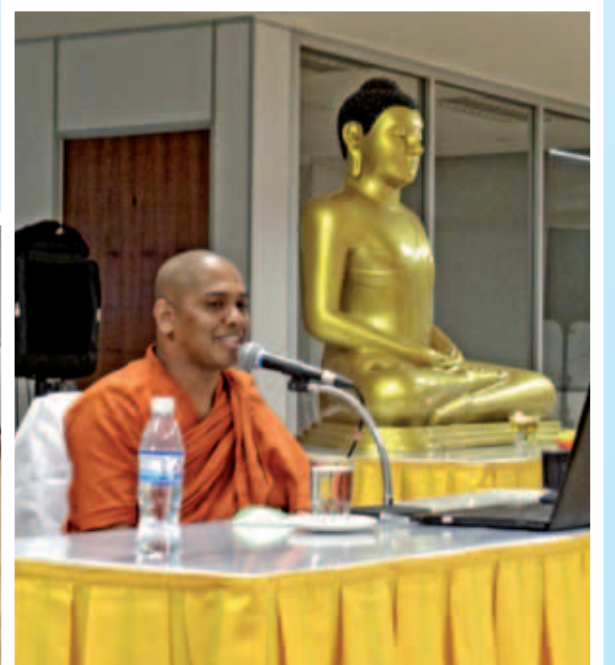
On their journey to Penang for Mahindrama Temple's 100th Anniversary, a big group of 45 monks and 8 bhikkhunis stopped by BMV for lunch Dana. It was a joyous event for the large number of devotees who turned up to help in the serving of the dishes and to receive their blessings from the Maha Sangha on this rare occasion.



C. Venerable Punjabi's 3-month Memorial - A 3 day event

Dhamma Sermon - 26th October 2018 at 8.00pm

Venerable Indarathana Thera gave a dhamma talk on Āghāta Vinaya Sutta (AN5:611) "Ancient Wisdom of Managing Difficult Emotions".



Maha Sangha Lunch Dana - 27th October 2018 at 12 noon

The Maha Sangha led by Venerable K Siridhamma Thera transferred merits followed by a sharing of Bhante Punjabi's teachings by Bro Vong Choon Choy. A set of 5 books, the latest by Bhante Punjabi published by Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society, was given to each member of the Maha Sangha. The books are available for free distribution at the Vihara.



A Sharing of Bhante Punjabi's Legacy

- 28th October at 10am

A group of devotees gathered to share his teachings followed by a video presentation about Bhante Punjabi.



D. Kathina Ceremony

- 4th November

Buddhist Maha Vihara commemorated the end of Vassa season with its annual Kathina celebrations on 4th November. Ms Nancy Jayawardena carried the Kathina Robe and offered to the Maha Sangha on behalf of all the devotees present.



E. Dhamma Talk

by Bro Vong Choon Choy

9th November

- How to Manage our Emotions the Buddhist Way (The 5 Hindrances).

16th November

- How to cultivate Universal Goodwill and Compassion by developing the Brahma Vihara.



F. Dhamma Sermon in Sinhala

- 10th November

To commemorate the 100th birth centenary of the late Ven Dr K Sri Dhammananda Nayake Maha Thera, Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society invited Venerable Weragoda Sarada Nayake Maha Thera (Chief Incumbent of Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre) to give a dhamma talk in Sinhala titled 'The Four Protective Meditation'. After the sermon, a book in Sinhala titled "A Fragrant Offering" written by Mrs Dayani Hemadasa was launched by Venerable Sarada. Buffet dinner was served, courtesy of Serendib Restaurant.



Note - Correction**In the November Newsletter under the section of BMV News and Activities, the Inter Religious Forum was organised by Buddhist Maha Vihara and not MCCBCHST as implied - Editor

PEN PORTRAITS

– Portraits of 93 Eminent Disciples of the Buddha

“

The theme is to pay tribute to the 80 Maha Arahants and the 13 Maha Theri Arahants who had by their efforts won emancipation of a rare distinction. They belonged to the innermost circles in the life of the Gautama Buddha. The Buddha and the Maha Arahants were together at all times. Their lives portray heroic endeavor. - Editor

”

No 24. Upasena Vanganta Putta Maha Thera

This Mahā Arahant's name was Upasena. Vanagata Putta was he called as he was a forest dweller. He was pleasing to all. In the art of pleasing, none could excel him. He was born in the Brahmin village called Nālaka as the son of Rūpasārī, the brahminee, his father being Vanganta. He was the younger brother of Sāriputta, the Chief Disciple. He was an eloquent preacher in his day.

When Upasena came of age, he learnt the three Vedas, and, having heard the Gautama Buddha preach, entered the Order. When his ordination as a Bhikkhu was but two years old, he ordained another Bhikkhu, to increase the number of holy ones.

Venerable Upasena and his brother bhikkhu who was but one year since his ordination, went to meet the Buddha at Jetavana. Upasena was too presumptuous. He erroneously thought that the Buddha would be too pleased to meet them. It was the custom of the Buddha to greet the Bhikkhus and inquire about them. After the felicitations, the Buddha found out how forward Upasena was, when he should be a pupil, he was acting the role of a teacher. The Buddha's strongest term of reprimand was “mogha purusha” or “empty man” which He used on this occasion (Vin.i.59; Sp.i.194; J.ii.449). Gautama Buddha proclaimed a rule that only a Bhikkhu who has completed the tenth year of ordination could be called a senior Bhikkhu (*upasampada Bhikkhu*).

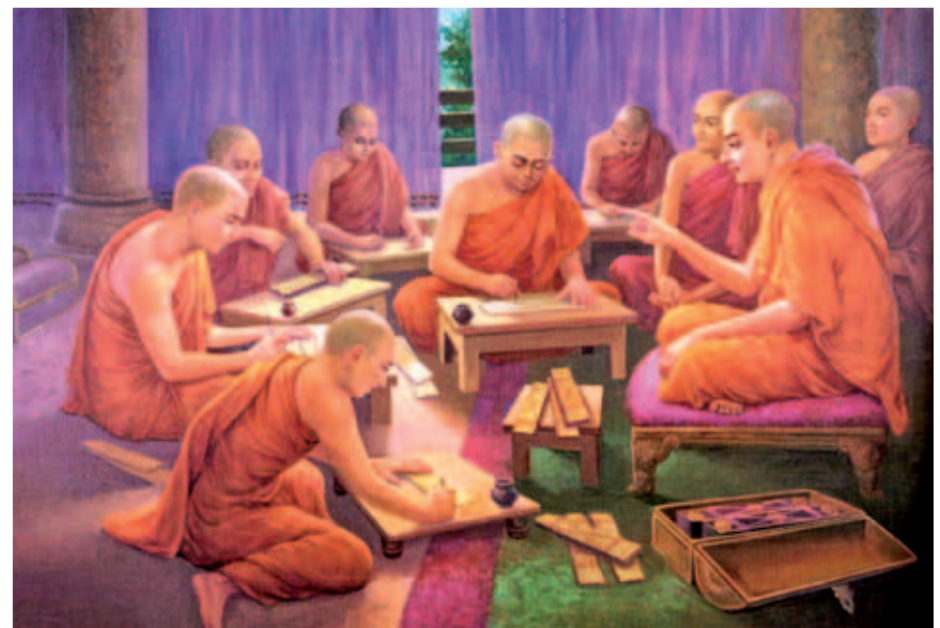
This rebuke was a spur to his Arahantship. He applied himself relentlessly to the pursuit of higher morality, by intense meditation. He realised Nibbāna, and became an Arahant.

In due course, Venerable Upasena had a large following. Various persons of good families were attached to him as he was a gifted speaker. They expressed a desire to be ordained under him. Venerable Upasena said he was a forest dweller and they, out of regard followed him. He set an example in the practice of austerities (*Dhutangas*) which were thirteen in number. Each Bhikkhu took upon himself to practise at least one, if not more. At the end of ten months, Venerable Upasena had a following of five hundred Bhikkhus.

It was at this time that the Gautama Buddha was contemplating going for a retreat for half a month when Venerable Upasena arrived with his followers to meet the Buddha. The Blessed One saw one of his followers wearing a *pansakula* robe. That was the robe made up of pieces of cloth picked up from the cemetery. In those days, the dead were as a rule

neither buried nor burnt. They were simply left in the cemetery with the shroud.

On Buddha asking the Bhikkhu whether he took delight in wearing the robe, he replied that he did so out of regard for his teacher. Then the Buddha praised Venerable Upasena by acclaiming “*Sadhu*”. Things have come a full circle. Venerable Upasena won praise with much effort. Not long afterwards, the Buddha declared that Upasena was foremost in pleasing other.



Ven Upasena and his student bhikkhus.

One day, while Upasena was sitting after his meal in the shadow of the Sappasondika-pabbhāra, fanned by the gentle breeze, mending his outer robe, two young snakes were sporting in the tendrils overhanging the cave. One fell on his shoulder and bit him, and the venom spread rapidly throughout his body; he called to Sāriputta and other monks who were near, and requested that he might be taken outside on a couch, there to die. This was done, and his body “was scattered there and then like a handful of chaff.” (S.iv.40f; SA.iii.10).

Upasena had been, in Padumuttara Buddha's day, a householder of Hamsavati. One day he heard the Buddha declare one of His monks to be the best of those who were altogether charming, and Upasena wished for a similar declaration regarding himself by some future Buddha. Towards this end, he did many deeds of piety (ThagA.i.525). The Apadāna mentions that he gave a meal to Padumuttara Buddha and eight monks, and at the meal placed over the Buddha's head a parasol made of kanikdra-flowers. As a result, he was thirty times king of the devas and twenty-one times cakkavatti. (Ap.i.62).

*The forest claimed him as its own,
Good will none better to earn.
For others to follow a pattern;
Praise he got he has sown.*

Kathina for BISDS students - 4th Nov 2018 (Sunday)

Kathina. A day where all Buddhists gather and celebrate the festival following the end of Vassa. Vassa is a three month rainy retreat which the Sangha members have gone through and Kathina celebrates the end of it. Kathina serves as a purpose for Buddhists to come together and focus on the gift of giving such as offering robes or other requisite items to the Sangha members.

BISDS students & staff were given the opportunity to offer their items to the Sangha to experience the joy of cultivating generosity. Everyone came to class with something to offer. With just a glance in the Asoka Hall, you could spot a wide array of requisite items such as robes, towels, bed sheets etc in the hands of the givers who were waiting for their turn to offer to the Sangha members who were seated in front of the stage.

As the students and staff went forth to offer, smiles were plastered on their faces. The smiles on their faces were genuine. They were happy to give. It was truly a sight which I could not forget.

Report by Rachel Phang, Youth class



BISDS – Smartboard Enabled

School principle – K SiriDhamma Thera and BISDS moving back project team had decided to upgrade our new school building with the Interactive whiteboard or we called it Smartboard. The benefits of having this Smartboard will help the Dhamma learning process to be more fun for our Gen-Z students and also increase the level of engagement between teachers and students. We had installed 13 sets of Smartboards before the school started on the last week of September 2018. Training have been given to teachers and staff.

We have done an interview with one of the very first teacher that started using BISDS Smartboard for her Dhamma teaching - Sis Lisa from Revata class. The following is her interview report:

“I’m very impressed with the Smartboard’s features. I can draw and write important points on the videos, powerpoints and any documents. I can use different colours/types of presentation for my teaching to make it interesting, and I find it very convenient and user-friendly. I would like to encourage teachers to use this Smartboard because it is useful for both teachers and students. We just need to have more practice to get familiar with the features. This will definitely help to attract attention from students.”

*Report by Moving Back Project Team
14th of Oct 2018*



| FOV

Grocery Bags Distribution - 20th October 2018

FOV with 15 volunteers in five cars headed out to Kuala Kubu Baru to distribute grocery bags with provisions to 15 orang asli families. We then proceeded to Batang Kali, Kampung Orang Asli Songkok village to distribute another 25 grocery bags.

Distribution finished around 12.45pm where all volunteers went for lunch before heading back to Kuala Lumpur. With this distribution, FOV

completed Grocery Bags project for 2018. Till we meet again for more opportunity to serve the needy in 2019.

We would like to thank all our donors, sponsors and volunteers for your continuous support for a successful project.



Provisions.



At Kuala Kubu Baru.



Children eagerly waiting for treats at Kuala Kubu Baru.



At Batang Kali.



Team power !!

LEND A HAND

The Buddhist Maha Vihara “Lend A Hand” programme is to support the undertaking of a number of crucial projects that are needed for continuous maintenance and upgrading for the benefit of all devotees. We appeal to your kind generosity to help us realize the following:

- Shrine Hall External Painting (Heritage Refurbishment)
- Est : RM119,900 balance (from RM150,000)
- Shrine Hall Lights
- Outside - Est : RM 40,000
- Inside - Est : RM 7,000 balance (from RM8,000)



- Replacing the 56 Buddha Statues’ Huts with stainless steel panels/tampered glass
- Est : RM23,650 balance (from RM24,800)



- Vehicle for Transport
- Est : RM80,000



BUDDHA FRIEZE
FOR SPONSORSHIP AT MEDITATION PAVILION



- Seated Buddha Frieze
- RM18,000 each
- 50 statues left to be sponsored
- Standing Buddha Frieze
- RM38,000 each
- 3 statues left to be sponsored

SPONSORED

- Commercial Four Door Refrigerator sponsored in full by Mr Lim Kim Eng
• Total cost : RM5,000

With the merits accrued by your generous donations,
May you and your family be blessed and protected by
the Noble Triple Gem.

Sadhu..Sadhu..Sadhu.

THREE CLEVER FRIENDS

(The Kurunga Miga Jataka story)

This story the Master told at Veluvana, about Devadatta. News came to the Master that Devadatta was plotting his death. "Ah, Brethren," said he, "it was just the same long ago; Devadatta tried then to kill me, as he is trying now." And he told them this story.

Long time ago, when Brahmadata was King of Benares, the Bodhisatta became an Antelope, and lived within a beautiful forest near a lake. Not far from this lake, sat a Woodpecker perched at the top of a tree; and in the lake lived a Tortoise. The three became good friends.

Whenever the Antelope came to the pond for his sip of water, the Tortoise used to swim up there. Then the Woodpecker flew down from a branch of the tree. Thereafter, they had their long, long chats.

But there was one man who was observant of all this. And that was the Hunter. *"I must somehow or other, kill the young antelope"*, he said to himself. He then installed a trap by the pond, so that the Antelope would be caught. The young animal who did not know of the trap, came there the following day, and was caught in it. He shrieked in pain and tried to pull the legs out from the trap. But nothing came forth. Then he called to his friend.



When the Woodpecker and the Tortoise came there, they found that their friend was in great danger and in pain. Then the Woodpecker said to the Tortoise,

"You had better start biting away the leather string in the trap. By the time the Hunter arrives, you might be able to finish your task. In the meantime, I shall see that the Hunter will not arrive, before you finish your job."

The Hunter woke up in the morning, and was about to go out to collect his prey. Just then, the Woodpecker made a yelling, shrieking sound from a nearby tree.

The Hunter who was a superstitious man, thought that it was a bad omen, and went back into the house. Thereafter, the Woodpecker flew back to the pond and informed the Tortoise of what happened and asked him to finish his job as early as possible, for the Hunter might come there any moment. Then the Woodpecker flew back to the Hunter's house.



The Woodpecker perched high on a tree and was waiting there,

watchful of what was happening. This time, the Hunter came out through the back door, when the Woodpecker rushed there and made another terrible shriek.

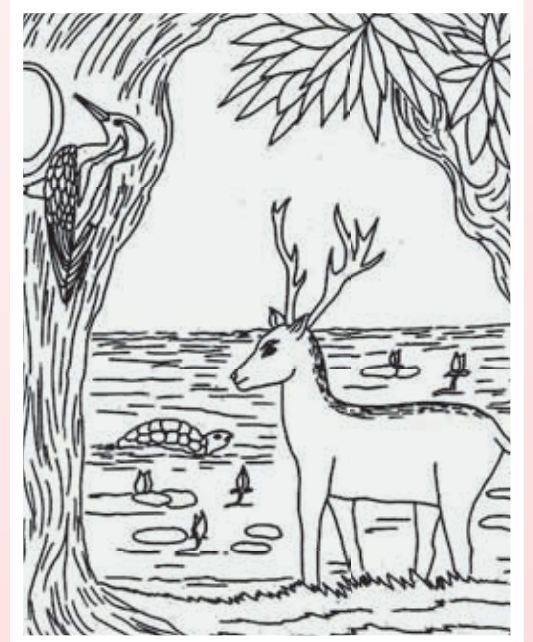
This time too, the superstitious Hunter decided that he should not go out. The same day, whenever he tried to go out from his house to collect his prey, the Woodpecker made his raucous cry. So the Hunter decided to go in the evening.

When at last the Hunter appeared on the scene, the Tortoise had almost finished biting the leather string. As he came near, the Antelope tugged at the leather string, and ran away from the Hunter.

When the Hunter saw what had happened, he was extremely disappointed. The only thing he could do, was to pick up the poor Tortoise who could not run away from him. The Hunter saw the Antelope limping away and he thought that he could still catch the animal.

He put the Tortoise into a bag and tied it onto a tree. Having done that, he ran after the Antelope. But the Antelope managed to run away from him, this time too. The Antelope then came to where the Tortoise was, and was able to tear away the bag with the help of the Woodpecker. In a moment, the Tortoise was free.

Then the Antelope (who was the Bodhisatta) thus addressed them both: *"My life has been saved by you, and you have done a friend's part to me. Now the hunter will come and take you; so do you, friend Woodpecker, migrate elsewhere with your brood, and you, friend Tortoise, dive into the water."* They did so.



The Master, becoming perfectly enlightened, uttered this stanza:

*"The Tortoise went into the pond, the Deer into the wood,
And from the tree the Woodpecker carried away his brood."*

The hunter returned, and saw none of them. He found his bag torn; picked it up, and went home sorrowful. And the three friends lived their lives in long unbroken friendship, and then passed away to fare according to their deeds.

When the Master had ended this discourse, he identified the Birth: — "Devadatta was the hunter, Sāriputta the Woodpecker, Moggallāna the Tortoise, and I was the Antelope."

Sources/references/citations:

1. *Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*
Volume II Book 2: *Dukanipāta*
Translated from the Pāli text by W.H.D Rouse
2. *Vesak Lipi 2003 Report* by W. A. Abesinghe

A brief history of the 124 year old Buddhist Maha Vihara, Brickfields

The Buddhist Maha Vihara was founded in 1894 by the Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society (SAWS), the oldest registered Buddhist Society in the Klang Valley.

From its very inception, the Vihara has been managed by the Sinhala Buddhist community but was financially supported by the Chinese and Indian communities as well. The first structure of the Vihara was the Main Shrine Room, with its ceremonial laying of the foundation-stone taking place on 25th August 1894 and the simple rectangular shaped building completed sometime during the first decade of the 20th century. The donors for the Shrine room, as recorded in the Selangor Government Gazette 1896, pg 408 were clearly Chinese and Indian communities and among the main donors were:

Kapitan Yeap Quang Seng, Towkay Loke Yew, K. Tambusamy Pillay, R. Doraisamy Pillay, Loke Chow Kit, San Peng and Son, Lim Tua Taw, etc...

The Vihara was always the focal point to mobilise the Buddhist community. The large gathering to protest and stop the screening of the then controversial film "Light of Asia" in 1927 in Malaysia was also held at the Vihara, and so was the mass gathering and signature campaign in the 1950s to lobby the government to declare Wesak as a national holiday.

During the Emergency period of 1948-1960, monks from the Vihara made a massive impact reaching out to calm and educate the psychologically disoriented

Chinese New Villagers who were evicted from their traditional lands and placed in new settlements by the Governments which was fighting a communist insurgency.

Since the 1940s, the Vihara commenced a free Dhamma publications programme as a Dhammadutta outreach to the masses which by the year 2012 was made available in 28 languages, with millions of copies of books and CDs produced. The Vihara's Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School (BISDS), founded in 1929, is the oldest Sunday School in the country with an enrolment of more than 1200 students and continues to produce systematic books on Buddhist studies for children.

The Wesak procession organised by the Vihara since the 1890s is the oldest and largest religious procession in the country. The 3-day Wesak celebrations at the Vihara attracts about 100,000 people.

Many students or devotees who have studied and benefited from the BISDS, the Vihara's Free Publications, Dhamma programmes, classes, talks, etc have gone on to set up new Buddhist societies and centers which help to spread Buddhism in the country far and wide.

The SAWS is also one of the founding members of the Malaysian Consultative Council for Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCCBCHST) formed in 1983, a Council which constructively engages the Government on matters

affecting non-muslims in the country. The MCCBCHST Administrative office is based at the Vihara.

In 2004, the Vihara was a major focal point in the country to collect relief aid to assist the South Asian Tsunami that killed almost 280,000 people. Several forty foot containers equivalent of relief aid were dispatched by the Vihara to Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India, Myanmar and Thailand by air, sea and land.

Buddhists remain the country's largest organ donors, thanks to Cornea and Organ Donation Campaigns carried out by the Vihara. The Vihara continues to operate to deliver its obligation to the Buddhist community till this day and is governed and directed by its Vision, 4 Missions, 6 Strategic Objectives and 4 Ennoblers in tribute and gratitude to all our past and current Sangha, volunteers, donors, friends, etc. We would be failing in our duty if we fail to mention the name of the foremost amongst them, our late Venerable Chief, that is Venerable. Dr. Kirinde Sri Dhammananda Nayaka Maha Thero.



DAILY ACTIVITIES

Mon - Sun

- 6.30am - 7.30am
- 11.30am - 12noon
- 7.30pm - 8.30pm

Daily Morning Buddha Puja
Daily Noon Buddha Puja
Daily Evening Buddha Puja

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Mon, Wed, Thurs

- 8.00pm - 10.00pm

Tues

- 10.30am - 12.00noon
- 8.30pm - 10.00pm

Thurs

- 7.30pm - 9.00pm

Fri

- 1.00pm - 2.00pm
- 8.00pm - 9.30pm

Sat

- 8.30am - 10.30am
- 9.30am - 11.30am
- 10.30am - 11.30am

Sun

- 7.30pm - 8.30pm
- 8.30am - 9.30am
- 9.30am - 11.00am
- 9.30am - 12noon
- 10.00am - 11.30am
- 10.00am - 2.00pm

- 11.00am - 12.30pm
- 1.30pm - 5.00pm

- 2.00pm - 3.00pm
- 2.00pm - 7.00pm
- 5.00pm

Meditation Class

Senior Club Yoga for Beginners

BMV Choir Practise

Senior Club Yoga for Intermediate

Afternoon Puja & Talk

Dhamma Talk

Qigong Practise

Sanskrit Class

Tai Chi Practise

Bojjhanga Puja

Morning Puja

Abhidamma Class

Sunday Dhamma School Session

Dhamma Talk

Traditional Chinese Medicine

(1st and 3rd Sun of the month. Please note there will be no clinic if a Public Holiday falls on the allocated Sunday)

Pali and Sutta Class

Sinhala Language Classes

Sinhala Cultural Dance Classes

Dhamma for the Deaf (fortnightly)

Diploma & Degree in Buddhism Classes

Feeding the Needy and Homeless

You can donate towards our many projects :

- Dhammadutta
- Free Buddhist Publications
- Welfare Activities
- Monks Dana
- Sunday Dhamma School
- Maintenance of Shrine Hall
- K Sri Dhammananda Library
- Temple Lighting
- BISDS Building Fund

Payments can be made via :

BMV Office Counter : Cash, cheques & credit cards

Postage : Make cheques payable to "Buddhist Maha Vihara" & write your name & contact telephone at back of the cheque.

Direct Debit : Hong Leong Bank Brickfields
Acct : 292-00-01161-8

BMV Statement of Accounts :

Buddhist Maha Vihara's Monthly Statement of Accounts is displayed on the Notice Board at the Reception area for public viewing. Please address all queries to the Hon. Secretary in writing.

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE BY :

- Cash (at the BMV Counter)
- Cheque (made payable to "BISDS Building Fund")
- ATM Transfer / Direct Bank-in (Bank Acct : BISDS Building Fund, A/C No : CIMB 86-0011008-6. Please send the bank-in slip to info@buddhistmahavihara.org)

We accept VISA and MASTERCARD for donations. Thank You.

Donations to Buddhist Maha Vihara operations are tax exempt.

Any donor who wants a tax exemption for computation of personal or corporate tax can request for a tax exempt receipt.

PLEASE BEWARE OF UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS SOLICITING DONATIONS.

KINDLY ENSURE THAT ALL DONATIONS ARE ISSUED WITH A NUMBERED BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA OFFICIAL RECEIPT.

BMV OFFICE HOURS

MON – SAT : 9.00 am - 9.00 pm

SUN & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS : 9.00 am - 5.00 pm



BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA

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Email: info@buddhistmahavihara.org

Website: www.buddhistmahavihara.org