

BMVdigest

ISSUE • APRIL 2019

For Non-Muslims only

Tesaṃ ditthipahānattham - iddhiṃ dassēhi gotami.

Perform a supernatural feat, Gotami in order to dispel doubts about women's full realization of Dhamma.

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PHOTO NEWS

SRI LANKAN PILGRIMAGE TOUR

A PILGRIMAGE WITH A DIFFERENCE

OFF THE BEATEN TREK

BUDDHIST SITES TO BE VISITED

Athagala Samadhi Buddha Statue (90ft), Kurunegala
Samadhi Buddha Statue (67ft), Rambodagalla
Avukana Buddha Statue (46ft), Kekirawa 5th CENTURY AD
Pidurangala Vihara Rock Buddha Image 5th CENTURY AD
Alu Vihara Rock Temple, Matale 3rd CENTURY AD
Dhowa Raja Maha Vihara, Badulla 1st CENTURY AD
Bogoda Raja Maha Vihara, Badulla 1st CENTURY AD
Maligawila Buddha Statue (36ft), Buttala 7th CENTURY AD
Wewrukannala Buddha Statue* (160ft) 18th CENTURY AD

*Biggest Statue in Sri Lanka

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HAPPY SINHALA AND TAMIL NEW YEAR

– 14th April 2019

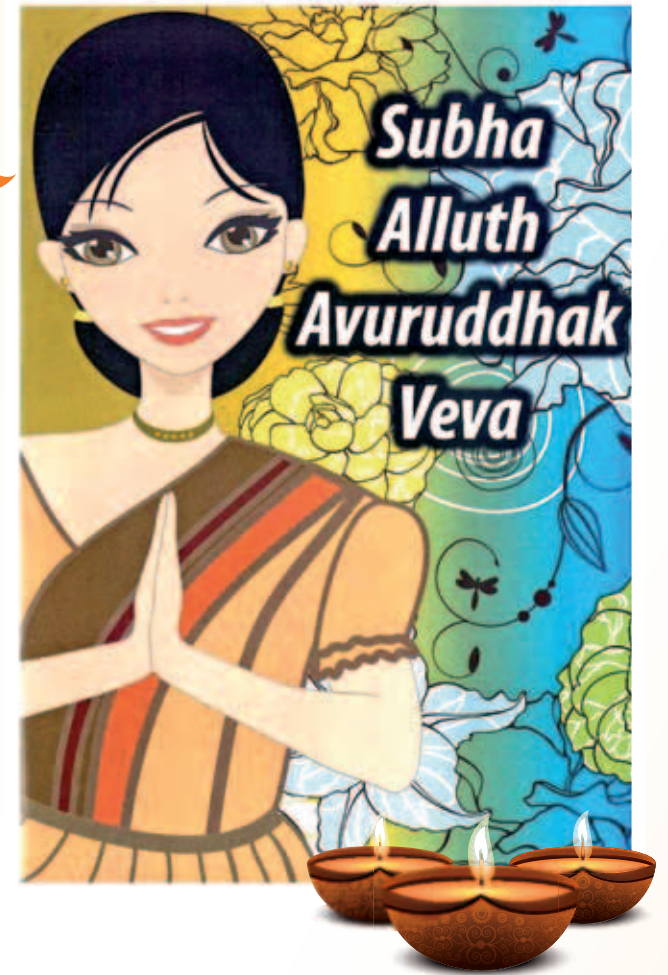
Dhammapada Verse 204
Pasenadikosala Vatthu

*Arogyaparama labha
santutthiparamam dhanam
vissasaparama1 nati
nibbanam paramam sukham.*



Verse 204: Health is the greatest gift, contentment is the greatest wealth, a trusted friend is the best relative, Nibbana is the greatest bliss.

Venerable Chief Sangha Nayaka of Buddhist Maha Vihara, Venerable Datuk K Sri Dhammaratana Nayaka Maha Thera, President Sirisena Perera, The Committee of Managemet and Staff would like to wish all our Sinhala and Tamil devotees and well-wishers a Happy New Year. May the New Year bring much peace, happiness, prosperity and good health to you and your loved ones. 'Subha Aluth Awruddak Wewa Oba Sameta'.



COVER STORY

BMV'S 125 YEAR OLD SHRINE ROOM BUILDING



Foundation stone laying Ceremony

The laying of the foundation stone of the Brickfields Buddhist Temple was a grand ceremony. It was held in the evening at 5pm on 25th August 1894. The ceremony was performed by Mrs C. E. Spooner, wife of the State Engineer in the presence of the Selangor British Resident Mr W. H. Treacher and his wife, a large number of Europeans and Sinhalese members. Mr T. A. Gunasekera, the President of the Sasanabhi Wurdhi Wardhana Society (officially changed to Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society in 1918) gave a speech thanking the Government. He

spoke of the growth of the Society which numbered 400 members and the great effort which had to be made before sufficient funds could be collected to start the building operations. Mr Gunasekera then handed a Trowel to Mrs Spooner and asked her to lay the foundation stone of the first Sinhalese temple built out of Ceylon. Mrs Spooner gracefully performed the ceremony and in Sinhalese and English, declared the stone block to be well and truly laid. The block which was prepared in Singapore was faced with marble and bears gold letters. The estimate cost of the temple was \$4,000.



Plaque commemorating the laying of the foundation stone by Mrs C. E. Spooner dating back to 1894.



The picture of the trowel which was a token of appreciation presented to Mrs C. E. Spooner.

Original Shrine Room

In accordance with the usual tradition, the proposed temple building was sited in such manner so that its main entrance would be positioned facing the rising sun, the most auspicious direction.

Sometime after the foundation stone laying ceremony had taken place, the Society organised a fund raising campaign to collect contributions from devotees. Quite a number of the contributors were prominent leaders of Kuala Lumpur in the early days. By March 1897, construction of the building had been progressing at a very slow pace. Only the four walls of the building was erected. By 1898, with a little bit more money, the tiling of the roof of the building was completed. By 1899, the plastering of the walls were completed. It is believed that the shrine room building was eventually completed sometime during the first decade of the 20th century. The Kuala Lumpur Sanitary Board upgraded the road leading to the temple on 29th January 1919 and named it Temple Road. This could be taken as indicative of the existence of the temple at the time.

The original shrine room building was a modest rectangular shape building measuring 36 feet by 25 feet, with a height of 16 feet with verandas. The building had no windows but there were six large oval sun shaped ornamental air vents to allow sunlight into the interior of the shrine room. The air vents were later sealed up in the course of renovations when side doors were provided to the shrine room around 1963. The only object of veneration at the Shrine Room in the early days was a one-foot high sculptured marble Buddha image. This Buddha image is now placed on display at the International Buddhist Pagoda in memory of the founders of the Society and its Temple.



The first Buddha image to be venerated at the Shrine Room when it first opened.

In 1924, due to the growing number of devotees, the shrine room building was extensively renovated and enlarged with spacious verandas all round the building in an exquisite manner as originally envisaged by the founding members of the Society in 1894. This plan was drawn up by Mr A. George de Alwis.

In 1926, the original one-foot marble Buddha image which served as a main image since the inception of the building was replaced with a five-foot high brass Buddha image of Burmese origin, donated by Mr A A G de Alwis.



5 foot tall brass Buddha image of Burmese origin which replaced the original 1 foot high image in 1926.

Further renovations to the interior of the shrine room took place on a massive scale and were completed on 17th May 1935. Under the renovation project by Mr P H Hendry, a central colossal image of the Buddha, seated in the lotus position was installed, replacing the former five-foot high brass Buddha image. Flanked on either side of the colossal image of the Buddha are statues of his chief disciples Sariputta and Maha

Moggallana. Paintings on the walls and ceiling depicted various scenes from Buddhist Jataka stories. Alongside the wall at right appears the figure of the Buddha in a reclining position. On the opposite side are shown Maitreya Bodhisattva (future Buddha – successor of Gotama Buddha) at left and the Buddha on the right, both in a standing position with the right palms outward denoting blessings.



The interior of the Shrine Room with mural-painted walls after 1935.

Throughout the period of World War II, no development works to the shrine room building took place, apart from maintenance and minor repairs. The period during the mid-1950s however saw extensive development works being carried out to the shrine room building. The renovations were carried out particularly to commemorate the 2500th Anniversary of the Parinibbana of the Buddha. Mr P H Hendry, apart from his substantial donation towards cost of the renovation, also contributed towards the painting of the statues, etc in the Shrine Room. Other renovation works carried out at the Shrine Room included the laying of marble slabs for the floor through the kind generosity of Mr Law Joo Jin, the construction of two side doors to the Shrine Room, cost of which was met by Mr V L S de Silva in memory of his late parents, the redesigning and repainting of the halo around the head of the main Buddha image by Ven. M. Vipulasara Maha Thera of Sri Lanka and the construction of the Makara Thorana above the main entrance to the Shrine Room which was financed by Mr Ng Ban Onn.



The Shrine Room before the major renovations of 1979.

The year 1979 saw extensive renovations to the Temple premises, especially the Shrine Room, where the roof tiles were changed, interior walls were magnificently tiled and the veranda was raised, extended and finished off with mosaic tiles. The renovation work of the Shrine Room, undertaken with donations raised by the devotees was completed on Wesak Day of 10th May 1979.



The Shrine Room after the flooring was extended out to accommodate the big puja crowd.

Since then, the exterior of the Shrine Room has been painted several times, the roof tiles replaced and Shrine Room became disabled friendly with a ramp and bars installed for wheel chair users and the elderly. A couple of months ago, heritage repair works were carried out on the exterior walls and the roof and painted a beautiful white in time for the Chinese New Year festivities.

Resourced and compiled by Pamela Jayawardena

Source:-

100 years of the Buddhist Maha Vihara (1895-1995) book by Mr H. M. A de Silva



BUDDHISM AND SEXISM: CAN THERE BE BUDDHIST GENDER EQUALITY?

by Barbara O'Brien

Buddhist women, including nuns, have faced harsh discrimination by Buddhist institutions in Asia for centuries. There is gender inequality in most of the world's religions, of course, but that's no excuse. Is sexism intrinsic to Buddhism, or did Buddhist institutions absorb sexism from Asian culture? Can Buddhism treat women as equals, and remain Buddhism?

The Historical Buddha and the First Nuns

Let's begin at the beginning, with the historical Buddha. According to the Pali Vinaya and other early scriptures, the Buddha originally refused to ordain women as nuns. He said that allowing women into the sangha would cause his teachings to survive only half as long – 500 years instead of a 1,000.

The Buddha's cousin Ananda asked if there was any reason women could not realize enlightenment and enter Nirvana as well as men. The Buddha admitted there was no reason a woman could not be enlightened. "Women, Ananda, having gone forth are able to realize the fruit of stream-attainment or the fruit of once-returning or the fruit of non-returning or arahantship," he said.

That's the story, anyway. Some historians argue that this story was an invention written into scriptures later, by an unknown editor. Ananda was still a child when the first nuns were ordained, for example, so he couldn't very well have been on hand to advise the Buddha.

Early scriptures also say that some of the women who were the first Buddhist nuns were praised by the Buddha for their wisdom, and several realized enlightenment.

Unequal Rules for Nuns

The Vinaya-pitaka records the original rules of discipline for monks and nuns. A bhikkuni (nun) has rules in addition to those given to a bhikkhu (monk). The most significant of these rules are called the Eight Garudhammas ("heavy rules"). These include total subordination to monks; the most senior nuns are to be considered "junior" to a monk of one day.

Some scholars point to discrepancies between the Pali Bhikkuni Vinaya (the section of the Pali Canon dealing with the rules for nuns) and other versions of the texts and suggest the more odious rules were added after the Buddha's death. Wherever they came from, over the centuries the rules were used in many parts of Asia to discourage women from being ordained.

When most orders of nuns died out centuries ago, conservatives used rules that called for ordained monks and nuns to be present at nuns' ordination to stop women from being ordained. If there are no living ordained nuns, according to the rules, there can be no nun ordinations. This effectively ended full nun ordination in the Theravada orders of south-east Asia; women there can be novices only. And no nun's order was ever established in Tibetan Buddhism, although there are some women Tibetan lamas.

There is, however, an order of Mahayana nuns in China and Taiwan that can trace its lineage back to the first ordination of nuns. Some women have been ordained as Theravada nuns in the presence of these Mahayana nuns, although this is hugely controversial in some patriarchal Theravada monastic orders.

Women have had an impact on Buddhism nonetheless. I've been told the nuns of Taiwan enjoy higher status in their country than the monks do. The Zen tradition also has some formidable women Zen masters in its history.



Can Women Enter Nirvana?

Buddhist doctrines on the enlightenment of women are contradictory. There is no one institutional authority that speaks for all Buddhism. The myriad schools and sects do not follow the same scriptures; texts that are central to some schools are not recognized as authentic by others. And the scriptures disagree.

For example, the Larger Sukhavati-vyuha Sutra, also called the Aparimitayur Sutra, is one of three sutras that provide the doctrinal basis of the Pure Land school. This sutra contains a passage usually interpreted to mean that women must be reborn as men before they can enter Nirvana. This opinion pops up in time to time in other Mahayana scriptures, although I'm not aware of it being in the Pali Canon.

On the other hand, the Vimalakirti Sutra teaches that maleness and femaleness, like other phenomenal distinctions, are essentially unreal. "With this in mind, the Buddha said, 'In all things, there is neither male nor female.'" The Vimalakirti is an essential text in several Mahayana schools, including Tibetan and Zen Buddhism.

"All Acquire the Dharma Equally"

In spite of the barriers against them, throughout Buddhist history, many individual women have earned respect for their understanding of dharma.

I've already mentioned women Zen masters. During Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism's golden age (China, ca. 7th-9th centuries) women studied with male teachers, and a few were recognized as dharma heirs and Ch'an masters. These include Liu Tiemo, called the "Iron Grindstone"; Moshan; and Miaoxin. Moshan was a teacher to both monks and nuns.

Eihei Dogen (1200-1253) brought Soto Zen from China to Japan and is one of the most revered masters in the history of Zen. In a commentary called the Raihai Tokuzui, Dogen said, "In acquiring the dharma, all acquire the dharma equally. All should pay homage to and hold in esteem one who has acquired the dharma. Do not make an issue of whether it is a man or a woman. This is the most wondrous law of the buddha-dharma."

Buddhism Today

Today, Buddhist women in the West generally consider institutional sexism to be vestiges of Asian culture that can be surgically excised from dharma. Some western monastic orders are co-ed, with men and women following the same rules.



"In Asia, nuns' orders are working for better conditions and education, but in many countries, they have a long way to go. Centuries of discrimination will not be undone overnight. Equality will be more of a struggle in some schools and cultures than in others. But there is momentum toward equality, and I see no reason why that momentum will not continue.

Source:-

<https://www.thoughtco.com/buddhism-and-sexism>

About the Writer:-

About the writer: Barbara O'Brien is a journalist and student of Zen Buddhism who writes about religion in America and how it impacts politics and culture. She is the author of *Rethinking Religion: Finding a place for Religion in a Modern, Tolerant, Progressive, Peaceful and Science-affirming World*.

KHEMA: THE FIRST FEMALE CHIEF DISCIPLE OF THE BUDDHA

Just as the Buddha had appointed two chief disciples, Venerable Sariputta and Venerable Moggallana, for the Order of Monks, He had appointed two chief disciples for the Order of Nuns. They were Venerable Khema and Venerable Uppalavanna.

Venerable Khema was one of the two women responsible for running the first community of nuns. She was considered to possess the greatest insight, and in several places in the Pali Canon, she is called the most exemplary nun.



King Bimbisara and the beautiful Queen Khema.

Khema came from a ruling family in Sagala. As a grown woman, she became the Chief Consort of King Bimbisara. “Chief Consort” seems to mean that she was his favourite mistress. In this capacity, she apparently filled a different niche from Mallika, Bimbisara’s chief wife, his other wives, Ubirri, Soma, Sakula, Vasabhakhattiya, or his other mistresses, female servants or slaves.

Khema, had been enthralled with her own beauty. Khema was beautiful like a full moon reflected on a still lake at mid night. Her skin was said to be the colour of pure gold. Her cheeks were smooth as lotus petals and her eyes sparkled like gems. Prior to meeting the Buddha, she had heard that He did not speak well of physical beauty so she had no wish to see him. But Khema had made a vow before during the earlier Buddhas’ Dispensation, to become great in wisdom under the Buddha Gautama.

During their Dispensations, she had parks and monasteries made which she donated to each Buddha and his Sangha.

But in her final lifetime, Khema strongly resisted going to see the Buddha. Perhaps her “Mara forces” were making a last effort to keep her in samsara. Somehow as this was her final existence in the samsara, the merits she had acquired in her earlier lives forced her to see the Buddha. King Bimbisara tricked her into going to the Buddha because Queen Khema was afraid that this would provoke the Buddha’s disapproval. One cool, breezy morning, Khema decided to visit the monastery which King Bimbisara had built for the Buddha in the Bamboo Grove.

The conversion of Khema was one of the rare cases where Buddha used his psychic powers to make a change in the heart of another. Buddha knew how to tame Khema’s vanity and conceit. He created a vivid image of a woman even more attractive than she was. Like a bee being attracted to a flower, Khema moved to the hall where



The conversion of Queen Khema.

Buddha was preaching in a deep clear voice. It was unlike anything she had heard before. It sounded beautiful than the singing of birds at the break of dawn. The voice was warm, relaxed and full of love and concern. Its words were words of wisdom. When she came into his presence, Khema saw this other lady fanning the Buddha. Then before the Queen’s very eyes, the Buddha made the beautiful image grow older and older until she was just a decaying bag of bones. Seeing this she then realised that just like the lovely image, one day she too would grow old and die. All vanity of external beauty fell from her, this broke her pride and she instantly understood the impermanence of the physical body and life.

The Buddha next spoke a verse and Khema became a stream-enterer. Then in rapid succession she went through all the stages of enlightenment to attain Arahantship on the spot. Thereupon, the Buddha told King Bimbisara that

she would either have to ordain or to pass away, and the King, unable to bear the thought of losing her soon, gave her permission to ordain. This was one of very rare cases of a human being who had achieved Arahantship before entering the Sangha.

A further story about Khema tells of a visit paid to her by the other great King of this period, King Pasenadi. More religiously earnest than Bimbisara, Pasenadi came to the nun Khema with his own unanswered questions – did a Buddha exist after death or not? Though the content of the exchange is not preserved, we know that Khema explained the matter to him fully. In the Khema Sutta (Samyutta Nikaya 44), Khema told him the Buddha had not declared whether he would exist or not exist.

The King clearly was frustrated by this answer. So Khema said, *Let me ask you a question, great King. Can your accountants count grains of sand in the Ganges?*

No, lady, they cannot, the King said.

Khema continued, *Can your accountants determine the number of buckets of water in the ocean?*

No, lady, the King said. The ocean is deep and boundless. It is hard to fathom.

Even so, Khema said, when the Buddha is freed from physical form, he is deep and boundless and hard to fathom, like the ocean. “The Tathagata exists after death” doesn’t apply. “The Tathagata doesn’t exist after death” doesn’t apply. “The Tathagata both exists and doesn’t exist after death” doesn’t apply. “The Tathagata neither exists nor doesn’t exist after death” doesn’t apply.

The King bowed to Khema and departed. Some time later, he met the Buddha himself and asked the same questions, and he received exactly the same answers.

That a King should sit at the feet of a woman, in a Society where nuns were not permitted to teach monks, sows the high esteem in which Khema was held.

A poem attributed to Khema appear in the Therigatha, or Verses of the Elder Nuns, in the Khuddaka Nikaya of the Pali Sutta-pitaka. The poem is in the form of a conversation with Mara, the demon trickster.

Khema wrote that Mara came to her in the form of a handsome man, and said, “You are young and beautiful, Khema, and so am I. Let us enjoy each other.” Khema responded,

*“Through this vile body, a host for disease and corruption,
I feel loathing. Lust is uprooted.
Lusts of the body and mind are cut away.
Don’t talk to me about sensuous pleasure!
Such things cannot delight me any more.”*

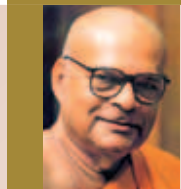
Khema had clearly built up truly unique paramis by giving great gifts to earlier Buddhas and by learning their teachings thoroughly. Here we see that the importance of creating strong good Karma in the present life based on wisdom, even if we do not attain any of the paths or fruits in this lifetime. The more good deeds accompanied by wisdom that we do now, the easier will it be when the time actually comes for us to reach the goal. We should develop wholesome thoughts and deeds that generate Generosity, Loving Kindness and Wisdom. Meditation is, of course, the most valuable of such deeds. Arahant Theri Khema ranked first in insight amongst the other nuns and later she was appointed by the Buddha as one of the two Chief Disciples of the Buddha for the Order of Nuns in his dispensation.

Source:- Dhamma-stream website

<http://dhamma-stream.blogspot.com/2016/09/the-first-female-chief-disciple-of.html>



Venerable Khema.



IS DEATH REALLY FRIGHTENING? - PART 2

by Venerable Dr K. S. Dhammananda

LIFE IS UNCERTAIN, DEATH IS CERTAIN

– A 3 part article which will be carried in 3 issues of the BMV Digest (March, April and May)

THE FIVE AGGREGATES

Death is the dissolution of Khandhas. The Khandhas are the five aggregates of perception, sensation, mental formations, consciousness and corporeality or matter. The first four are mental aggregates or nama, forming the unit of consciousness. The fifth, rupa is the material or physical aggregate. This psycho-physical combination is conventionally named an individual, person or ego. Therefore what entities that exist are not individuals as such, but the two primary constituents of mind and matter, which are rare phenomenon. We do not see the five aggregates as phenomena but as an entity because of our deluded minds, and our innate desire to treat these as a self in order to pander to our self-importance.

We will be able to see things as they truly are if we only have patience and the will to do so. If we turn inwards to the recesses of our own minds and note with just that bare attention, note objectively without projecting an ego in the process, and then cultivate this practice for a sufficient length of time, as laid down by the Buddha in the Sati Patthana Sutta, then we will see these five aggregates, not as an entity, but as a series of physical and mental processes. Then we will not mistake the superficial for the real. We will then see that these aggregates arise and disappear in rapid succession, never being the same for two consecutive moments, never static but always in a state of flux, never being but always becoming.



REBIRTH

The four mental aggregates, viz, consciousness and the three other groups of mental factors forming Nama or the unit of consciousness, go on uninterruptedly, arising and disappearing as before, but not in the same setting, because that setting is no more. They have to find immediately a fresh physical base as it were, with which to function - a fresh material layer appropriate and suitable for all the aggregates to function in harmony. Kamma acts as a law and this law operates to re-set the aggregates after death. The result is "re-birth".

A BUNDLE OF ELEMENTS AND ENERGIES

In brief, the combination of the five aggregates is called birth. Existence of these aggregates as a bundle is called life. dissolution of these things is called death. And recombination of these aggregates is called rebirth. However, it is not easy for an ordinary man to understand how these so called aggregates could recombine. A proper understanding of the nature of elements, mental energies and the law of Kamma and co-operation of cosmic energies is important in this respect. To some, this is a simple and natural occurrence. To them death means the separation of the five elements and thereafter nothing remains. To some, it means transmigration of the soul from one body to another; and to others, it means indefinite suspension of the soul; in other words, waiting for

the Day of Judgment. To Buddhists, however, death is nothing but a temporary end of a temporary phenomenon. It is not the complete annihilation of this so-called being.

CAUSES OF DEATH

According to Buddhism, Death can occur in any one of these four ways.

- I. It can be due to the exhaustion of the life span assigned to beings of that particular species. This type of death is called Ayukkhaya;
- II. It can be due to the exhaustion of the Kammic energy that caused the birth of the deceased. This is called Kammakkhaya;
- III. It can be due to the simultaneous exhaustion of the above mentioned two causes - Ubhayakkhaya; and
- IV. Lastly, it can be due to external circumstances, viz, accidents, untimely happenings - working of natural phenomena or due to a Kamma of a previous existence not referred to in (ii). This is called Upacchedake.

There is an excellent analogy to explain these four types of death. It is the analogy of the oil lamp. The light in the oil lamp can be extinguished due to any one of four causes:-

- I. The wick in the lamp burns up. This is likened to death through the exhaustion of the life span;
- II. The consummation of the oil in the lamp is likened to death through exhaustion of the Kammic energy;
- III. the consummation of the oil in the lamp and the burning off of the wick at the same time - is likened to death occurring through the combination of causes described in (I) and (II) occurring simultaneously; and
- IV. The effect of external factors such as the wind blowing out the light - is likened to death caused through external factors.

Therefore, Kamma alone is not the cause of death. There are external contributory causes also. The Buddha's teaching categorically states that Kamma does not explain all happenings in our lives.

FACE FACTS

How should one best face this unavoidable occurrence? By being forewarned -- that is, by reflecting that death will, and must come sooner or later. This does not mean that Buddhists should view life with gloom. Death is real, and has to be faced -- and Buddhism is a religion

of reason that trains its followers to face facts, however unpleasant they may be. The Founder of the Sikh religion Guru Nanak said "The world is



afraid of death, to me it brings bliss." I clearly shows that great and noble people are not afraid of death but are prepared to accept it. Many great people have sacrificed their lives for the welfare of others. Their names are recorded in the history of the world in golden letters for posterity.



DEATH IS INEVITABLE

It is rather paradoxical that although we so often see death taking its toll of lives, we seldom pause to reflect that we too can similarly sooner or later be victims of death. With our strong attachment to life, we are disinclined to carry with us the morbid thought, although a reality, that death is an absolute certainty. We prefer to put off this awful thought behind us as far away as possible - deluding ourselves that death is a far-away phenomenon, something not to be worried about. We should be courageous enough to face facts. We must be prepared to face stark reality. Death is a factual happening. If we appreciate such eventualities and equip ourselves with the realization that death is inevitable; even that has to be accepted as a normal occurrence and not as a dreaded event which we should be able to face when it eventually comes, with calmness, courage and confidence.

OUR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

With the certain knowledge that death will ultimately overtake us one day, we should decide, with the same calmness, courage and confidence, to discharge our duties and responsibilities towards our immediate dependents. We should not procrastinate our responsible duties. We should not leave things for tomorrow when they can be done today. We should make good use of time and spend our lives usefully. Our duties to our wives, husbands and children deserves priority and should be performed in due time. We should execute our last will and testament, without waiting for the last moment, so that we may not cause undue distress, difficulties and problems to our families due to our neglect. Death may call at any time - it is no respect of person or time. We should be able to face this ultimate event bravely with hope and confidence if we prepare for the next existence.

CRAVING AND IGNORANCE

Can death be overcome? The answer is - Yes! Death exists because of birth. This repetition of countless births is called samsara. If this cycle of existence is to be stopped, it can be cut off only at the stage of Avijja (Ignorance) and Tanha (Craving) - These are the roots in this cycle of births and have to be exterminated. Therefore, if we cut off Craving and Ignorance - birth is overcome, death conquered, Samsara is transcended and Nibbana attained.

We should try to understand that everything in this universe is uncertain. Existence is only a vision. When we analyse everything either scientifically or philosophically, in the end we find nothing but void.

"To be afraid of dying is like being afraid of discarding an old worn-out garment". (Gandhi)

It is hard to bear the loss of people whom we live because of our attachment to them. This happened to Visakha a well-known lady devotee during the time of the Buddha. When she lost her beloved grand-daughter she visited the Buddha to seek advice in her sorrow.

- Visakha, would you like to have as many sons and grandsons as there are children in this town?' asked the Buddha.
- 'Yes, Sir, I would indeed!'
- 'Then, Visakha, in such a case would you cry for all of them when they die? Visakha, those who have a hundred things beloved, they have a hundred sorrows. He who has nothing beloved, has no sorrow. Such persons are free from sorrow.'

When we develop attachment, we also must be prepared to pay the price of sorrow when separation takes place.

The love of life can sometimes develop into a morbid fear of death. We will not take any risks even for a rightful cause. We live in fear that an illness or accident will put an end to our seemingly precious life. Realizing that death is a certainty, we hope and pray for the survival of the soul in heaven for our own security and preservation. Such beliefs are based on strong craving for continued existence.



Each and every individual should be aware of the role of death in his or her destiny. Whether royalty or commoner, rich or poor, strong or weak, a man's final resting place for his body is either in a coffin lying buried six feet underground or in an urn or in the water.

All human beings face and share the same fate. Due to ignorance of the true nature of life, we often weep and wail. When once we realize the true nature of life, we can face the impermanence of all component things and seek liberation. Until and unless we achieve our liberation from worldly conditions, we will have to face death over and over again. And in this respect, too, the role of death is very clear. If a person finds death to be unbearable, then he should make every endeavour to overcome this cycle of birth and death.

Note:-

Look out for the final part (Part 3) of this article in the May issue of the BMV Digest. Don't forget to get your copy.

Source:- DhammaTalks.net

https://www.dhammatalks.net/Books2/Bhante_Dhammananda_Is_death_really_frightening.htm

About the Writer:-

The late Venerable Dr K Sri Dhammananda was a prolific and world renowned author and Dhamma teacher. He was a household name in the Buddhist world. In more than forty two years as incumbent of the Buddhist Maha Vihara, Malaysia, the Venerable brought the Buddha Word to countless numbers of devotees who otherwise would have had no access to the sublime message of the Enlightened One. Besides his talks the Venerable was able to reach an even wider audience through his numerous publications.



1. Upcoming Events in April 2019

A) New Moon Puja Honouring the Departed - 5th April at 7.30pm

A special puja to dedicate merits in memory of all departed relatives and loved ones. Sponsorship of Puja trays, flower bouquets and Oil lamps will be available.



B) Maha Sanghika Dana - 7th April at 11.30am

In memory of departed relatives and loved ones. Devotees are advised to bring only vegetarian dishes.

C) Merit Offering Ceremony - 7th April at 5.00pm

At the Sinhala Buddhist Cemetery, Jalan Loke Yew.

D) Sinhala and Tamil New Year Blessings - 14th April @ 7.30am

There will be a special Buddha puja and Blessing service as well as sutras chanted by the Maha Sangha to usher in the Aluth Avuruddha

1. Punnakalaya (dedication to undertake meritorious deeds) on 14th April from 10.15am to 11.03pm
2. Aharapissema (cooking time) on 14th April at 5.12pm.
3. Anubhawayakirima (Eating, Exchange of Gifts and Commencement of work time) on 14th April at 6.14pm. Colour of clothes – Red and yellow and facing east.



E) “Avurudu-da Ape Gama” – New Year at our Village

- 7th April from 7am to 6pm at the Asoka Hall, Buddhist Maha Vihara

A show-case of everything that is typically traditional during the Sinhala and Tamil New Year at a Sri Lankan village. Two village homes will be constructed, traditional food and herbal drinks will be served, traditional games will be played and traditional songs and dances will be performed for all to experience. A day of fun and merriment. Come and see.



F) Sinhala and Tamil New Year Show - 27th April @ 7.00pm

Sinhala and Tamil cultural dance performances and songs with dinner to celebrate the Sinhala New Year. The show is jointly organised by Buddhist Maha Vihara, Siri Jayanthi Association, Malaysian Sinhala Association and the Sri Lankan High Commission.



G) Meditation Retreat in Mandarin - 16th June @ 8.30am

Venerable Kai Zhao will conduct a Retreat in Mandarin on Sunday, June 16th from 8.30am to 5.00pm at BMV. To register, please call the BMV Admin Office at 03-22741141 / 011-26896123 or email us at info@buddhistmahavihara.org.



Ven. Kai Zhao

2. Past Events in February and March 2019

A) Jalan-Jalan Harmony at Brickfields

- 23rd February

Wikipedia describes Brickfields as “a neighborhood located in the western flank central Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It is known as Kuala Lumpur’s Little India due to the high percentage of Indian residents and businesses. Brickfields has been ranked third in Airbnb’s list of top trending destinations”. Many cities in the world have “Chinatowns” but perhaps only a few would have a “little India”, and Kuala Lumpur is among them. Though the early settlers here may have been predominantly from the Indian subcontinent, the demographics have changed over the years.

What is unknown to many is that in Brickfields, within a small radius of not more than three kilometers, there are many places of worship (close to fifteen I think) and each one unique to itself. Not just the architecture but also the people that worship in these places bring to this place a diversity that is hard to be matched. Each place of worship has a story to tell because these places that used to cater to the needs of the people living in the area, now because of development and expansion, continues to serve the people who have moved to other places but still come back here for religious services because of some affinity to the place and the experience.

On Saturday, 23 Feb 2019 can be yet another ‘feather in the cap’ for the residents and worshippers in Brickfields. Religious leaders and

worshippers, on their own initiative, came together as early as 6:45 am to begin the ‘Harmony Walk’ which I believe was the first of its kind in this part of Kuala Lumpur. Peoples of different religious faiths and traditions decided to visit, though only very briefly, the different places of worship and be welcomed warmly by each other.

The people of Brickfields decided to break way from prejudices, stereotyping and even barriers that could have existed, and showed that religion can be a force to unite fellow Malaysians in a way that politicians fail miserably. What was obvious and to me even noteworthy was that no politicians were invited and none to be seen on that day for a photo shoot opportunity.

Citizens initiatives in small localities are perhaps the way to rebuild Malaysia. No politicians, no guests of honour and no celebrities. All it needs is for ordinary Malaysians from all walks of life to come together to write a new narrative for this beloved Malaysia and as shown by the people of Brickfields, it doesn’t take much. As one journalist wrote, “I believe the good vibes that were here acted during the walk yesterday will bear fruits in yet unseen ways for a long time”. Kudos Brickfields!

Report written By Rev. Dr. Clarence Devadass



Mr Prematilaka Serisena from BMV and other Leaders leading the Walk.



Encik Ameer Anver Hussein at Church Lady of Fatima.



Ven Sumangala from BMV and other leaders at Madrasah.

B) Dhamma Talk

- by Venerable N. Jinananda Thero

March 1st – Nibbana in this very Life

March 8th – Qualities to be practised before Meditation



BMV Charity Carnival 2019

- 24th Feb 2019

Big Thank you to everyone who put in a lot of great effort and tireless hard work to make this carnival fun day a huge success. Maha sadhu to all for the tremendous effort. The organizing committee would like to say sorry for any short coming.

With your feedback, we hope to do much better the next time. I am sure everyone is happy to have been involved in this charity fun carnival knowing that we are not doing this for our own but for the glory of the Buddha Dhamma and the needy. Keep up the good work and thanks to all the sponsors.

May all the good deeds and merits accrued by your great effort be shared with all beings.

Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu

By Project Head- Bro Ronald Ong

BMV Charity Carnival Organising Committee



BISDS Refreshment Team

- 3rd March 2019

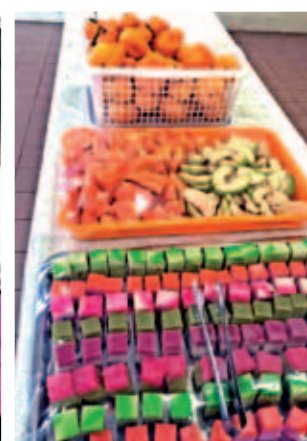
The refreshment team developed a new start for the year 2019, welcoming a team from Sariputta students encouraged by Bro KL Tan and appointing Bro Teo as our lead chef.

Our first attempt on 6th January, boosted everyone's spirit when all food was distributed to BISDS students and staffs without a drop of wastage. The spirit of working and giving filled up in the kitchen, with everyone busy as a bee to present fresh menus that touches all palates of the young and old that it was given thumbs up.

Our team is definitely very eager to promote healthy delicious menus every Sunday and we also encourage all students to bring their own containers and cups as a drive to go on green campaign.

Everyone that enters into the kitchen are of high spirits n honestly we are enjoying every minute of it.

By BISDS refreshment team



– Portraits of 93 Eminent Disciples of the Buddha



Buddha and his Disciples

“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 28. KUMARA KASSAPA

– Brilliant imagery in sermons

Once, a young married woman having received permission from her husband, became a bhikkhuni. She joined the bhikkhunis who were the pupils of Devadatta, who had created a schism in the Dispensation at the time and was running a parallel organisation. This young woman was already pregnant when she became a bhikkhuni but she was not aware of that. But in due course, the pregnancy became obvious and the other bhikkhunis took her to their teacher, who told her to go back to the household life. She then said to the other bhikkhunis, 'I had not intended to become a bhikkhuni under your teacher Devadatta. I have come here by mistake. Please take me to the Jetavana monastery where the Buddha lives.' Thus she came to the Buddha. The Master knew that she was pregnant before she became a bhikkhuni and was therefore innocent, but he did not want to handle the case. Gautama Buddha sent for King Pasenadi of Kosala, Anatha Pindika and Visakha, the famous lay devotees of the Buddha. Then he told Venerable Upali (master of Vinaya - rules of conduct) to settle the case in public.

Lady Visakha examined the young bhikkhuni and reported to Upali that she had already been pregnant when she became a bhikkhuni. Upali then declared to the audience that the nun had not violated her morality (sila). In due course, she gave birth to a son. King Pasenadi adopted the boy who was named Kumara Kassapa. When the boy was seven years old, and on learning that his mother was a bhikkhuni, he also became a novice monk. The boy came to be called Kumāra, because he joined the Order so young and was of royal upbringing, and also because the Buddha, when sending him little delicacies such as fruit, referred to him as Kumāra Kassapa.



Kumara Kassapa.

in the time of Kassapa Buddha, appeared before him, and presented a riddle of 15 questions.

The Brahma's riddle was a text of 15 questions with regards to an ant-hill and a man of action armed with a spade. He began by saying the ant-hill (1) emitted smoke by night (2) and shone by day (3) the Brahmin (4) asked the man of action Sumedha (5) to take the spade and start digging the ant-hill. A weapon (6) was first unearthed. With persistent digging (7) a door (8) came into view. A swollen blue coloured frog (9) was next thrown up. Later, a signboard with two direction (10) followed by a strainer (11) a tortoise (12) then a log with a butcher's knife (13) come into view. Then a piece of raw flesh was revealed and (14) lastly there remained only the Naga Rajah or King Cobra (15) who should be left severely alone.

For the meaning of the riddle, the deity referred Kumara Kassapa to the Omniscient One. No exposition could excel that of the Teacher of Gods and men. With this story ringing in his ears, he could not sleep on that fateful night. Early morning, he went to the Blessed One. This led to the preaching of the Vammika Sutta (M.i.143ff), which is name after the ant-hill (Vammika).

To Kumara Kassapa, the sermon was a revelation. The wealth of meaning unfolded by the sermon gave realisation to Nbbana that so long eluded his grasp. After dwelling on its teachings Kassapa became an Arahant. However, he continued to live in the forest for twelve more years.

Thus, his mother had not seen him for twelve years and she longed to see her son very much. One day, on seeing him, the mother bhikkhuni ran after her son weeping and calling out his name. Seeing his mother, Kumara Kassapa realised that her great love was standing in the way of her attainments, thought that if he were to speak pleasantly to his mother she would still

be attached to him. So for the sake of her spiritual progress, he deliberately addressed her in an indifferent way: 'How is it that you, a member of the Order, cannot even cut off this affection for a son?' The mother thought that her son was very ungrateful to her, and she asked him what he meant. Kumara Kassapa repeated what he had said before. On hearing his answer, she reflected: 'O yes, for twelve years, I have shed tears for this son of mine. Yet, he has spoken harshly to me. What is the use of my affection for him?' Then, the futility of her emotional attachment to her son dawned upon her, and uprooting affection for her son, on that very day she attained Arahant hood.

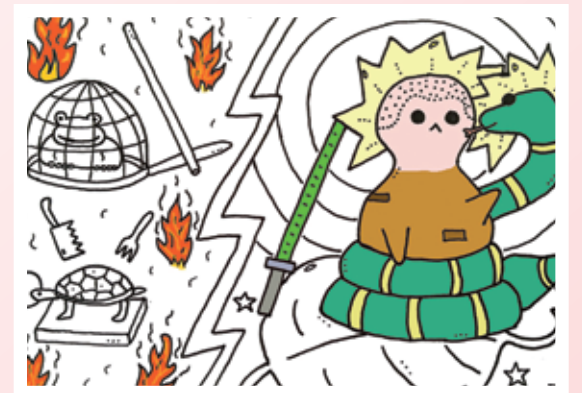
At the monastery, some bhikkhus told the Buddha, 'Venerable Sir! You are a refuge to them. If the mother of Kumara Kassapa had listened to Devadatta, she and her son would not have become Arahants. Surely Devadatta had judged her wrongly.' The Buddha answered, 'Bhikkhus! In trying to reach the deva world, or in trying to attain Arahant hood, you cannot depend on others, you must strive on your own.'

SELF IS ONE'S REFUGE

Atta hi attano natho ko hi natho paro siya

Attana' va sudantena natham labhati dullabham.

Oneself is one's own protector (refuge); what other protector (refuge) can there be? With oneself fully controlled, one obtains a protection (refuge) which is hard to gain.



An illustration of the Brahma's riddle of 15 questions.



FIRST THERAVADA ORDINATION OF BHIKKHUNIS IN INDONESIA AFTER A THOUSAND YEARS

by Sutar Soemitro of BuddhaZine.com

After being asleep for more than 1000 years in Indonesia, the lineage of Theravada bhikkhunis in Indonesia bounced back through Indonesia's first contemporary bhikkhuni ordination ceremony held on Vesak 2559 BE / 2015 CE, or Sunday 21st June 2015.



This ordination is a bright spot for the Indonesian Buddhist women who want to dedicate their lives by choosing to live the monastic way to realize the potential of spiritual attainment.

Aside from being a bright spot, the ordination aims to strengthen the four pillars of Theravada Buddhist sect in Indonesia, which consists of: male householders (upasaka), female householders (upasika), the Bhikkhu Sangha (male monastics), and the Bhikkhuni Sangha (female monastics).

The historic ordination was held at Wisma Kusलयani in Lembang, Bandung.

"This is a tremendous honor that Indonesia has hosted the international ordination of samaneris (prospective bhikkhunis) coming from abroad," said Bhikkhuni Santini, Chair of the Indonesian Theravada Bhikkhuni Association (Perbhiktin).

Ayya Santini, as she is more familiarly called, added that there were nine samaneris who underwent ordination, two of whom are from Indonesia and the other seven are from overseas. They were the bhikkhunis Vajiradevi Sadhika Bhikkhuni from Indonesia, Medha Bhikkhuni from Sri Lanka, Anula Bhikkhuni from Japan, Santasukha Santamana Bhikkhuni from Vietnam, Sukhi Bhikkhuni, **Sumangala Bhikkhuni from Malaysia**, and Jenti Bhikkhuni from Australia.

The ordination ceremony was led by the **Venerable Bootawatte Saranankara from Malaysia** as Bhikkhu Upajjaya and Bhikkhuni Santini as Bhikkhuni Upajjaya, as well as a number of bhikkhus and bhikkhunis from various countries who served as [Kammavacacariyas and] Kammavacarinis, and the invited witnessing quorum [of the Dual Sangha]. The ordination ceremony also received great attention in the presence of about 1,500 people to the extent beyond the seating capacity of the event.

The ordination ceremony began after lunch. The nine candidates for nuns performed circumambulation around the stupa three times in the back of the monastery complex located next to the guest house, while flowers were showered on the earth as the prospective bhikkhunis passed. The atmosphere was quiet and serene, with all attendees keeping solemn silence. The only sound audible was the repeated sounding of the bell.

After the circumambulation, the prospective bhikkhunis walked to the bhikkhus and bhikkhunis who then formed a procession together towards the Uposatha-gara building. Prior to be a becoming a certified place of ordination, the Uposatha-gara building was first officially opened by Ven. Bootawatte Saranankara and the ordination was officially opened by the Director General of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, Dasikin Buddha, which was followed by offerings of support to the prospective bhikkhunis by state officials and sponsors.



The ordination was done in two stages. The first stage was the ordination by Order of Bhikkhunis led Bhikkhuni Santini, while the second phase of the ordination by the Bhikkhu Sangha was led by Ven. Bootawatte Saranankara.



"Based on historical information, ordination of bhikkhunis in Indonesia was no longer been carried out since more than 1000 years ago," said Chairman of the Committee Handani Widjaja. "Ordination of bhikkhunis today will be a historic moment, the process of progress and accelerated the spread of Buddhist teachings in Indonesia's beloved soil."

"From today, there is no longer any doubt for the Buddhists of Indonesia, especially women, to leave their home life, and becoming a female Samana/ Bhikkhuni," continued Handani.

Meanwhile Dasikin did not deny the existence of several parties in the Buddhist religion who do not approve of the resurrection of the Bhikkhuni Sangha [in Theravada] after it became extinct since the 11th century.

"The Community of Theravada Bhikkhunis in Indonesia is the realization of gender equality in its role maintaining the Buddha Dhamma. Buddha himself has laid a solid foundation for the respect of women's rights, putting women as individuals who should be honored not only as a samana, but also revered as a mother figure," said Dasikin.

Theravada bhikkhuni Ayya Santini was the first in contemporary Indonesia, since becoming ordained as a bhikkhuni on April 15, 2000 until now, however, this has not been fully accepted by all Buddhists. Theravada bhikkhunis presence in Indonesia and a number of countries still raises pros and cons because some people think the lineage has been disconnected.



Ayya Santini's tireless fight for gender equality in the spiritual realm earned her the Outstanding Women in Buddhism Award by the United Nations in 2007 within the framework of International Women's Day.

Ayya Santini explained that ordination aims to provide positive inspiration to the Indonesian Buddhist women who have a desire to live life as a bhikkhuni. Moreover, it was a bright spot on a full recognition of the position of women in Buddhism in Indonesia.

"Basically Buddhism does not distinguish between men and women based on gender. Buddha himself emphasized that in a marriage, the husband and wife have the same responsibility," said Ayya Santini. Ayya hopes, through this ordination, that the Indonesian Buddhist women monastics will actively support the development of Buddhism in Indonesia.

Source:-

<http://buddhazine.com/upasampada-bhikkhuni-theravada-pertama-di-indonesia-setelah-seribu-tahun/>

About the Writer:-

Sutar Soemitro is the Founder and Chief Editor of BuddhaZine.Com a Buddhist news online in Indonesian language since December 2011. He writes and edits Buddhist news articles and reports on Buddhist activities in the greater Jakarta area.

THE BUDDHIST LAYMAN'S PRACTICE

What is the practice?

In the context of *dharmā*, what we usually call "practice" is not an exercise or a ritual that ought to be performed at some particular times, but simply a training into a life style, a mode of existence, during which our mind gets little by little used to lessen its impurities, until a right knowledge of reality will be developed.

When we speak about Buddha, we consequently speak about "Buddhist practice". The one who adopts a life style that befits the *dharmā* teachings will therefore be a "Buddhist". It is advisable indeed to define this word.

Who is a Buddhist?

In no way is a "Buddhist" the follower of a mystic ritual or some marginal movement that lives apart from the rest of the society, which requires a conversion. Even though, nowadays, many persons who claim to be Buddhists have life styles and embrace customs that drastically go astray from all that which originally defined this term, the "Buddhist" is only a person who lives in harmony with the teachings of *dharmā*. If our father is named Peter, if he gives us advices and if we put these advices into practice, at this moment we shall be "Peterist". Also, we shall be "Jenniferist" when we shall follow the advices of our mother Jennifer. In the same way, a "Buddhist" is no one else than the one who puts into practices a life style that is in harmony with Buddha's teaching.



It is not about a practice that we integrate from time to time into our daily lives, which we integrate when we have a bit of "spare time" to be spent for it. It is not even a kind of activity that would take part into our leisure activities, in the same way as ballet dance or archery might do. That is our whole life, indeed, up to the most insignificant details of our daily lives, which we take as stand points of our practice. So, "Buddhist" practice essentially lies in a way of life that one puts into practice or than one instead tries to put into practice, because this training is after all a permanent attempt. We try every day, every moment, according to the effort that we want indeed to put into it, to perfect this training in line with life, by striving to reduce and to avoid what is impure, unhealthy, useless and unfavourable, and by keeping on developing and maintaining what is pure, healthy, useful and beneficial.

Therefore it is equally absurd to assert: "I am a Buddhist but I am not a practising Buddhist" as to claim: "I am a vegetarian, but I eat meat".

The Layman

The layman and the others

From the point of view of *dharmā*, there are two categories of persons: Those who adhere to *dharmā*, that is to say those who rely on Buddha's teaching; and those who do not adhere to *dharmā*.

Among those that do not adhere to *dharmā*, whether we deal with followers of a religion or not, whether we deal with followers of a school of thought or not, one finds all the persons who adopt one or several beliefs among the group of those that exist apart from *dharmā*.

As an example, the simple fact to think that nothing does remain whatsoever after death, is a kind of belief in the same way as any other is.

In this group, we find monks and nuns, who totally dedicate themselves to the practice suggested by their respective doctrines so as to reach the goal that these one assert.

We find hermits, who isolate themselves in remote places to observe an ascetic mode of existence. They do it so as to reach the purpose that is supposed to get training proposed by their own faith. Those do not belong to any religious school.

We find "priests" and "priestesses", who are relatively involved into the suggested or imposed practice by the teachings in connection with their faith, and who organise or direct the practice of the laymen.

Finally, we find laymen, who, according to the individual cases, adhere to a religion, to a school of thought (philosophy, sect, etc.) or only to their own ideas. In the first two cases, they do it by devoting themselves to religious or ritual practices, ceremonies, recitations, prayers, considerations, philosophic debates, or by being self-contented with beliefs in ideas expounded by a monk, a guru, a philosopher, a book or any another support. In the last case (layman adhering to his own ideas), he shapes his own way to be followed, according to the



faiths, or he believes that what does occur after the death is the same thing for all, whatever are the actions being performed prior to it (Examples: Rebirths do occur in a totally unpredictable way; everybody is reborn in a realm of paradise or blissful celestial world (or demoniac); everybody reaches the stage of the divinity; before and after life, only nothingness does prevail, as soon as one dies, nothing whatsoever does remain; etc.).

This type of belief is one of the most wide-spread, it explains why so many persons live so selfishly by enjoying pleasant things, which they get access to, to the full, by radically running away from all that which seems to be unpleasant, devoid of pleasure or boring.

Among those who adhere to *dharmā*, there are *bhikkhus*, whom we often call the "Buddhist monks". They fully devote all their time to the practice, to the realisation, to the study and to the *dharmā* teachings.

There were *bhikkhunis*, "Buddhist nuns", who did exactly the same thing, but their community disappeared since the 10th century, at the same time as *sikkhamānas*, who were women of intermediate status between *sāmaṇerīs* and *bhikkhunis*, also did. They were in period of training, intending to become *bhikkhunis*. The Bhikkhuni order has been recently revived after an absence of one thousand years.

There are *sāmaṇeras*, whom we call "novices" or the "little monks". They learn monastic life, they dress in the monks' robe, but their discipline is sharply more flexible than those of the *bhikkhu*. To become *bhikkhu*, they have to wait to reach twenty years of age.

There are those whom we call the "nuns", who are women who opt for a monastic or semi-monastic existence. They do have a little particular status, halfway between the one of the *bhikkhu* and the one of the laity. Besides certain rules, they have to observe eight extra rules more than the Bhikkhu. Their life is dedicated to the *dharmā*.

Who is a lay person?

Finally, among the people who adhere to the *dharmā*, all those who are not *bhikkhus*, or *sāmaṇeras*, or nuns are laity. We can divide lay people into three categories:

- There are some laity who, although approving Buddha's word, only dedicate their life a little, or not at all, to the practice of the *dharmā*. They like to claim that they are Buddhists, but do little else than run after pleasures and engage in business activities; if they observe one or two precepts, it is only because it is easy for them; they don't want to dedicate any effort to the rest. Even though they claim to be inclined to meditation, they convince themselves that they never have any time to practice it.
- There are also lay people who try to dedicate more time and effort to follow a way suitable to the development of knowledge (of reality). They more or less observe the five precepts (sometimes the eight), they like everything that concerns the *dharmā* aesthetically (monuments, statues, ceremonies), they readily spend time reciting texts dealing with Buddha's teaching, watching the quality of their actions, regularly making donations, attending meditation sessions, and sometimes, taking ordination for a short period.
- Finally, there are laity who, within their possibilities, try their best to progress quickly and effectively on the path to the cessation of suffering. These ones very regularly train in being generous, in being vigilant and in applying full mindfulness. Their observance of the five precepts, if not eight, is scrupulous. Some of them even intend to lead a monastic life permanently.



Although they all point to a sole aim, the objectives of Buddha's teaching are very diverse. They consist, among others, in:

- Inducing the first category of laity to improve their way of life so as to become laity of the second category.
- Encouraging the laity of the second category to maintain the positive aspects of their way of life and inciting them to improve on this so as to become laity of the third category.
- Encouraging the laity of the third category to maintain the positive aspects of their way of life and suggesting them the experience of complete renunciation (monastic life).

Source:- Dhammadana.Org

<http://en.dhammadana.org/dhamma/practice/laity.htm>

THE BUDDHA'S ADVICE ON KILLING AND CONSUMPTION OF MEAT

Some are, some aren't. From the Theravada perspective, the choice of whether or not to eat meat is purely a matter of personal preference. Many Buddhists (and, of course, non-Buddhists) do eventually lose their appetite for meat out of compassion for the welfare of other living creatures.

Although the first of the five precepts, the basic code of ethical conduct for all practicing Buddhists, calls upon followers to refrain from intentional acts of killing, it does not address the consumption of flesh from animals that are already dead. Theravada monks, however, are clearly forbidden to eat meat from a few specific kinds of animals, (flesh of humans, elephants, horses, dogs, snakes, lions, tigers, leopards, bears, hyenas, and panthers) but for reasons not directly related to the ethics of killing.

Monks are to pursue vegetarianism by leaving uneaten any meat that may have been placed in the alms bowl, but because they depend on the open-handed generosity of lay supporters (who may or may not themselves be vegetarian) it is considered unseemly for them to make special food requests. In those parts of the world (including wide areas of south



Asia) where vegetarianism is uncommon and many dishes are prepared in a meat or fish broth, vegetarian monks would soon face a simple choice: eat meat or starve. Taking part in killing for food is definitely incompatible with the first precept, and should be avoided. This includes hunting, fishing, trapping, butchering, steaming live clams, eating live raw oysters, etc.

But what if I eat or just purchase meat: aren't I simply encouraging someone else to do the killing for me? How can letting someone else do the "dirty work" possibly be consistent with the Buddhist principles of compassion and non-harming, a cornerstone of right resolve?

The Dhammapada expresses this sentiment succinctly:

All tremble at the rod. All hold their life dear. Drawing the parallel to yourself, Neither kill nor get others to kill. – Dhammapada V 130

Clearly we should not intentionally ask someone to kill for us as when, for example, we order fresh boiled lobster from the restaurant menu. But purchasing a piece of meat from an animal that was previously killed is another matter. Although my purchase may indeed help keep the butcher or restaurateur in business, I am not asking him to kill on my behalf. Whether he kills another cow tomorrow is his choice, not mine. This is a difficult but important point, one that reveals the fundamental distinction between personal choices (choices aimed at altering my own behaviour) and economic political ones (those aimed at altering others' behaviour). Each of us must discover for ourselves where lies the boundary between the two. It is crucial to remember that the Buddha's teachings are, first and foremost, tools to help us learn to make good personal choices (kamma); they are not prescriptions for commanding action.



We are all guilty of complicity, in one way or another and to varying degrees, in the harming and death of other creatures. Whether we are carnivore, vegan or something in between, no matter how carefully we choose our food, somewhere back along the chain of food production and preparation, killing took place. No matter how carefully we trod, with every step countless insects, mites, and other creatures inadvertently perish under our feet. This is just the nature of our world. It is only when we escape altogether from the round of birth and death, when we enter into the final liberation of Nibbana the Deathless, can we wash our hearts clean, once and for all, of killing and death. To steer us towards that lofty goal, the Buddha gave us very realistic advice: he didn't ask us to become vegetarian; he asked us to observe the precepts. For many of us, this is challenge enough. This is where we begin.

Courtesy of Noble Living, a collection of Dhamma Essays from Vesak Lipi

Source:- <http://www.maithri.com/links/articles/the-buddhas-advice-on-killing-and-consumption-of-meat/>

FRIENDS OF THE VIHARA (FOV)

BMV Charity Carnival - Sunday, 24th February

On behalf of FOV, we like to say a Big THANK YOU to all sponsors, donors and volunteers for your support towards the success of BMV Charity Carnival event on Sunday, Feb 24, 2019.

With the effort and teamwork from BISDS, FOV & KSDI (K. Sri Dhammananda Institute), we have raised around RM170,000 with 120 stalls.

We hope everyone had a great time and rejoice in doing charity for a good cause.

By Dinah Lau



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)
- Balance amount of : RM115,450
(from initial amount of RM150,000)
- Shrine Hall Lights
- Outside - Est amount to spend is RM40,000
- Inside - Balance amount of : RM5,900
(from initial amount of RM8,000)



- Replacing the 56 Buddha Statues' Huts
with stainless steel panels/tampered glass
- Balance amount of : RM22,980
(from initial amount of RM24,800)



- Vehicle for Transport
- Est : RM80,000



BUDDHA FRIEZE FOR SPONSORSHIP AT MEDITATION PAVILION



- Seated Buddha Frieze
- RM18,000 each
- 45 statues left to be sponsored
- Standing Buddha Frieze
- RM38,000 each
- 5 statues left to be sponsored

PARTIAL SPONSORSHIP

Shrine Hall External Painting (Heritage Refurbishment)
and Shrine Hall Lights

- IMO Ng Chin Chai and Choo Meng Kean
- Amount : RM2,000

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.

A brief history of the 125 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 in 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

effecting 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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Website: www.buddhistmahavihara.org