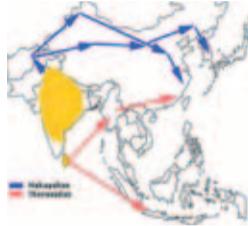


For Non-Muslims only

Tesam ditthipahānattham - iddhim dassehi gotami.

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

Inside:



How
Sri Lankan
Bhikkhunis
took
Bhikkhuni
Sasana to the
World

Sri Lanka was the only country outside India where the Bhikkhuni Sasana was established. The Bhikkhuni as well as Bhikkhu Order once established, thrived in Sri Lanka, whereas both Orders disappeared in India, the country where they were founded. 4-6



How Australia's First Theravada Bhikkhuni Ordination Happened 22nd October 2009: remember that date. That's when it all changed. That's when the Sangha of Bodhinyana Monastery and Dhammasara Nun's monastery, with the support of an international group of bhikkhunis, performed the first Theravada bhikkhuni ordination in Australia, and the first bhikkhuni ordination in the Thai Forest Tradition anywhere in the world. 7-8



Meet Burma's Feminist Buddhist Nun

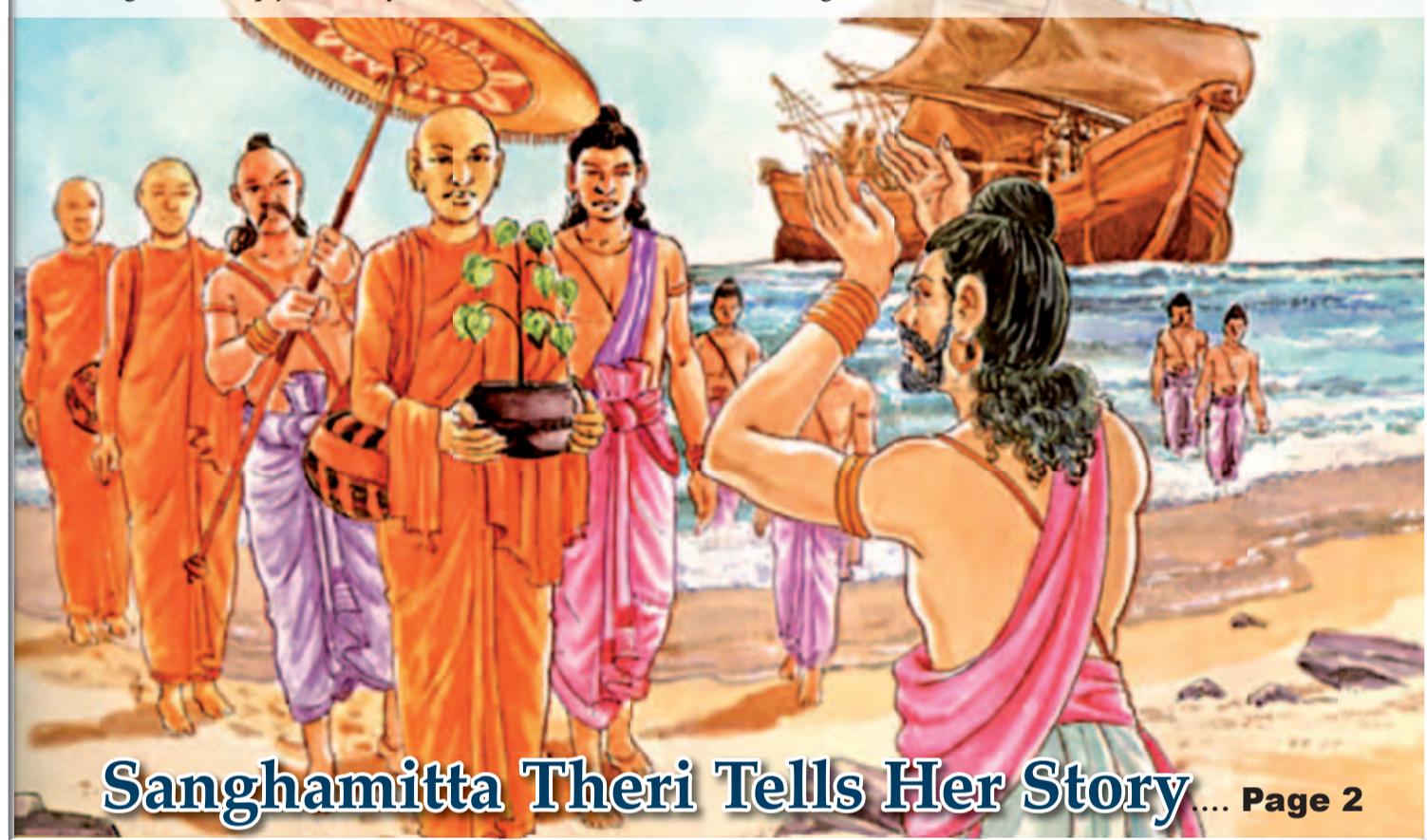
Burma is home to around 60,000 Buddhist nuns. They have taken monastic vows, shaved their heads, and donned robes. Yet these thilashin are not equal to their Theravadan Buddhist male counterparts. 12



The Sakyaditha Movement

Judith Hertog profiles the Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women, which has been leading the way for gender equality in Buddhism for more than thirty years. 13-14

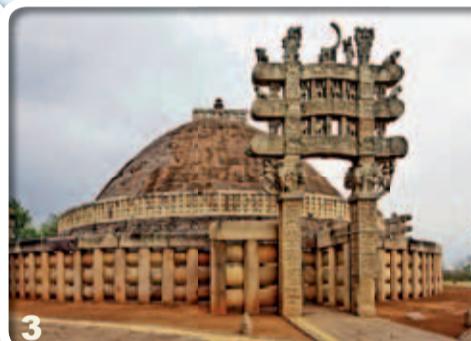
1 King Devanampiya Tissa of Sri Lanka welcoming Bhikkhuni Sanghamitta.



Sanghamitta Theri Tells Her Story Page 2



2 Ven Sanghamitta Theri ordaining Queen Anula of Sri Lanka.



3 The Gates of the Sanchi Stupa, India shows the planting of the bodhi sapling in Anuradhapura.



4 The original sapling at the Sri Maha Bodhi temple, Anuradhapura.

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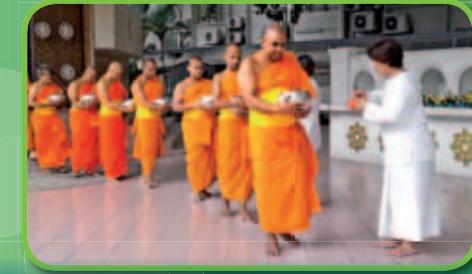
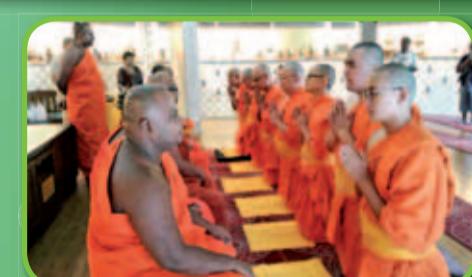
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SANGHAMITTA THERI TELLS HER STORY

by Susan Pembroke

My name is Sanghamitta Theri, meaning “friend of the Sangha.” I don’t think a more fitting name could have been selected for me. Every time someone addressed me, I was reminded of my life’s mission. I was born to bring the Bhikkhuni Sangha, as well as a sapling from the bodhi tree and the Dhamma it symbolized, to Lanka, a teardrop-shaped island just off the coast of the subcontinent. In journeying there in the third century B.C.E., I preserved the Bhikkhuni Sangha.

I also imported the Buddhist values of my father, Emperor Asoka, who moved from wars of conquest to self-conquest, from aggression to peaceful coexistence with neighbouring city-states. He envisioned an ideal and compassionate society, one that cared for the needs of its people and fostered learning, commerce, agriculture, health, and harmony. He forbade capital punishment. He urged religious tolerance and non-harming, and he even banned the hunting of animals for sport.

As my first Dhamma teacher, my Buddhist mother also played a crucial role in what I became. But my story, as you will see, is inextricably tied to my father’s actions—the Emperor of Emperors—and their repercussions. He sent nine delegations to far-flung regions to spread the Dhamma. My brother, Mahinda, and I headed one such delegation as his emissaries in Lanka. I may have been the first woman ambassador in the world.

My father’s trust in me reveals how much respect and confidence he had in women, something revolutionary for the time. All of the foreign missions were charged with actualizing the highest principles of the Dhamma.

“But you say I am ignoring the anguish of the hundreds of thousands killed or injured during his drive to expand his empire. Just think of all of those who died at the battle of Kalinga, you say. How many families were devastated by the deaths of fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons in that battle? How can I praise this cruel monster? Wasn’t he the most feared and detested of rulers? Wasn’t he called Candasoka, Asoka the Fierce? Didn’t your grandfather, King Bindusara, want your father’s brother Sushim to succeed him, but your father ignored his own father’s wishes and instead conspire with high-ranking officials to take over your grandfather’s empire? Your father eliminated the legitimate heir to the throne by tricking him into entering a pit of burning coals. Your father went on to have all of your uncles killed, their heirs, and anyone else who might stop him”.

“Still singing his praises, Sanghamitta, you ask me? How convenient for him to convert to the Buddha’s teachings and take on the title of Dhammasoka, Asoka of the Dhamma, and pile up good deeds to undo his horrifying kamma? He was no fool. He knew what awaited him. How many monasteries and stupas did he construct? Eighty-four thousand? Who wouldn’t try to buy better kamma after all he did? Still not convinced, Sanghamitta, that your father was a frightened, cowardly hypocrite who was capable of immense brutality? After all, didn’t he commission the creation of one of the worst torture devices imagined? We called it hell on earth for a reason. Didn’t he kill his entire harem when he learned these young women had cut

“

This article makes creative use of the known history as well as legends about Sanghamitta Theri, her father, and other key figures. The intent is to explore the moral lessons which still apply and continue to inspire.

”

off the flowers and limbs of a beautiful Asoka tree, their actions revealing how they felt about him. He flew into a rage and had these young women burned, deaf to their pleas for mercy. Admit that his pride and need for total subjugation were everything, Sanghamitta. All had to bow down to him or risk their very existence”.

All I can say to you and to those who denounce my father is that I did not know that monster. My father was loving and tender with my brother and me. He wanted us close to him and took us with him to the capital Pāṭaliputra when he fought for control of the Mauryan Empire. He grew up in a world of assassins, revolts, and invasions. His harsh reprisals in the early years of his reign may have been intended to send a message: cross me at your own peril. It was what kings did at the time, or needed to do, or so he thought when he first took power, before he understood the Dhamma. Over time, he formulated another way of leading.

Many times he spoke of the war at Kalinga, the thousands of images of death forever etched in his mind, images that haunted him throughout his life. Kalinga was also a lesson to my father about the futility of aggression. Though the entire Kalinga state was annexed to the Mauryan Empire, in truth, my father only controlled a narrow strip along the coast, with strife in the rest of the country a frequent reminder to him of what hostility breeds. Kalinga was the worst and bloodiest battle for the great Mauryan Empire. It was also my father’s last war. As he stepped over corpses, as he passed the weeping widows and orphans, he asked himself, is this what victory looks like? So many dying, so many maimed, or starving. He learned and he changed. I say: from this awful tragedy, much good came.

I know first-hand that he was transformed by what he witnessed at Kalinga and became determined to leave a legacy of peace and prosperity as well as model a different way of ruling. If my father had not felt tremendous guilt, if Kalinga had never happened, it is very possible I would not have been sent to establish a Bhikkhuni Sangha in the isle of Lanka. If I and my fifteen bhikkhuni sisters had not gone to the island nation, the Bhikkhuni Sangha would have died out following the repeated wars and invasions from the north much later.

We brought the Bhikkhuni Sangha to the Sinhalese, we brought a cutting of the sacred bodhi tree, we brought the Dhamma to the women. Because of us, in 429 C.E. it was possible for Sri Lankan bhikkhunis to travel to China to establish a Bhikkhuni Sangha there. These Sri Lankan bhikkhunis gave higher ordination to more than 300 Chinese nuns at a monastery in Nanjing in 433 C.E. Thousands of years after my death, bhikkhunis will trace their



Sanghamitta's brother, Arahant Mahinda preaching the Dhamma to King Devanampiyatissa of Sri Lanka.



Sanghamitta's father, King Asoka.

lineage from me, to Lanka, and then to China, and then south from there again. In history's interesting twists, the revival of the Sinhalese Bhikkhuni Sangha thousands of years after I stepped onto its shores is a result of brave Lankan bhikkhunis making the dangerous trip north to China.

What people may not know is that long ago, the people of Kalinga and Lanka shared a very similar language and script. Many were kin, their ties stretching far back in time. About eighty years before my father invaded Kalinga, these seafaring, proud, and industrious people had won back their freedom from the Magadha

Empire, only to suffer a much worst fate under my father. Many Kalingans fled to the island nation. If my father had not felt so much guilt about what he put the Kalingans through, he may not have felt the need to bring the Dhamma to the Lankan people, many of whom suffered under his hand at Kalinga or had family and friends who had lost their lives or all they had owned, so sacked and devastated was Kalinga.

One of the best ways to guarantee the Lankans remained a peace-loving people was to plant the Dhamma in their country. Going to Lanka was a large-scale, well-thought-out diplomatic effort. Being visionary as well as highly practical, my father had insisted that a wide range of craftsmen and artisans accompanied us in our journey. My father was sensible enough to know that people of Lanka needed more than spiritual ideals. They needed prosperity. Unless the people of Lanka flourished economically—the reason for the many tradesmen we brought—amity between our people would not last. Ensuring that Lanka became a peaceful extension of the Mauryan Empire accomplished multiple goals for my father: stability, harmony, trade to benefit all, as well as a way for my father to atone for his violence.

My brother and I were well aware of all of this. Raised in an imperial world, we were trained in diplomacy. We were also well trained in the Dhamma. Having memorized the suttas, my learned brother, Mahinda, was chosen to go to Lanka, as well as my son, Sumana. The people of Lanka so loved the Dhamma that Mahinda taught that hundreds converted. Many men went forth into the homeless life and the Bhikkhu Order established there.

But King Devanampiyatissa's sister-in-law, the Queen Anula, and her retinue of 500 women also loved the Dhamma and wished to establish a bhikkhuni order. The Vinaya requires bhikkhunis to ordain bhikkhunis, so I was asked to come months later. My father, the Emperor of Emperors, King Asoka, wept, knowing he would never see any of us again. Yet he allowed me to travel with 200 people to Lanka. Does this sound like some last-minute capitulation by a father who could not say no to a daughter he loved?

Future historians would also note that of the hundreds who accompanied me, most of the high-ranking members of the delegation were my mother's relatives. Some scholars would later speculate that another reason my father sent an envoy to the island nation was to create a haven for my mother's clan from the confrontations between them and my father's clan. Before my brother left, he spent the better part of a year visiting my mother at Vedisa as well as meditating at a monastery she had constructed nearby at Sanchi. Do people think I was not a part of the many plans and conversations that took place, that my going to Lanka was not anticipated from the very beginning?

I am overdue in telling you about my Buddhist mother, who was the daughter of a Vedisa merchant. My father had stopped at my maternal grandfather's house on his way to Ujjayinī, where he was going to assume



The great Kalinga war which was the last war of King Asoka.

the position as the Prince Viceroy. My parents met and fell in love. They had my brother, and then two years later I was born. My mother was my first Dhamma teacher and had enormous influence on me as well as on my brother and father. From the same clan as the Buddha, my mother's Sākyan family had escaped the destruction of Kapilavatthu by Viḍūḍabha, who had invaded and massacred the Sākyas and annexed their territory to Kosala.

Children, of course, are not privy to adult conversations or what transpires between their parents. I do know my father was determined to seize power and become the next Mauryan Emperor. I cannot imagine my mother would have encouraged my father to engage in wars of succession, especially considering how her family had been deeply scarred by violence and destruction perpetrated by Viḍūḍabha, really traumatized by the massive loss of life and annihilation of their city-state. If anything, she would have begged my father to do no harm. She may well have known what a murderous rampage my father was about to embark on and wanted nothing to do with it, which is why she did not accompany him to the capitol.

It was a time of upheaval and danger. Four years later, at my father's coronation, after he had eliminated all who stood in his way of becoming the next Mauryan ruler, the queen at his side was not my mother, but Asandhimitta. Knowing my mother as I do, I cannot conceive of her taking any joy in ascending to a throne won through so much sorrow and loss of life.

After my father became emperor, I married Aggribrahma in my early teens and we had our son, Sumana, who later became a monk and envoy for my father as well. My husband felt a call to ordain after a couple of years into our marriage. I, too, had stirrings to commit myself to the Dhamma. I have Sākyan blood in my veins and felt a strong tie throughout my life to the Triple Gem and to the Buddha, who lived only 200 years before my father ascended to power. Soon, I too, ordained. My preceptor was the well-known nun Dhammadālā and my teacher Āyupālā.

The eighth year after my father's coronation, he waged war on the country of Kalinga, his last war. I was a young woman by then. The war, as I said earlier, marked a turning point for every person in our family and for every person in the empire.

Centuries later, scholars would wonder how and when my father became a Buddhist. The Pali scriptures name a couple of monks who featured prominently in my father's life. I, though, believe my mother, Devi-Vedisa, planted the seeds of the Dhamma and taught all of us the value of compassion and non-harming. I think it helps explain why the slaughter at Kalinga impacted my father so tremendously. He had absorbed more of the Dhamma than he realized. Afterwards, my father was very open about his commitment to the Dhamma in his many edicts but never mentioned my mother's impact on him.

It may be my father choice not to disclose my mother's influence as a way to protect her and her relatives. He was, after all, very sensitive about the impact on the local populace of what he wrote and thus wrote slightly different variations of his edicts to best suit an area. He also had a new chief queen who may not have appreciated his lavish praise of my mother, who remained one of his queens and someone he continued to hold in high regard. Some

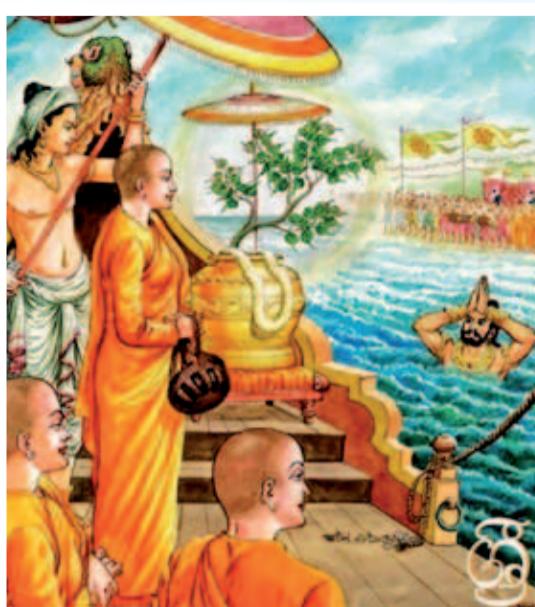


King Asoka hands the Bodhi sapling to Sanghamitta Theri.

assumed that my mother was forgotten and abandoned by my father. Nothing could be further from the truth. Her family figured prominently in the Dhamma missions to Lanka. My father also built a magnificent stupa just outside of Vedisa, later known as the Great Stupa of Sanchi, where he helped my mother construct a lovely monastery. These and other actions reveal the depth of his devotion and respect for her.

Centuries after my death, my chroniclers will write the most fantastic things about me. They will claim I

had miraculous power, such as having the ability to assume the form of a garuda, part human, part bird, to drive away nagas. For me, the real miracle is the profound impact the Dhamma had on my father, me, my family, the Mauryan Empire, as well as the isle of Lanka. When the Dhamma infuses a culture, when non-harming is the foundation of a nation, it does become heaven on earth. The fact that the Dhamma can produce the most sweeping and profound changes in anyone strikes me as utterly amazing. Let's all become miracle workers, for our good and the good of all.



Sanghamitta Theri brought the Bo Sapling at the invitation of the Sri Lankan ruler Devanampiyatissa and to establish the Bhikkhuni Sangha.

Material for this article was drawn from the following sources:

1. Guruge, Ananda W. P. "Emperor Asoka and Buddhism: Unresolved Discrepancies between Buddhist" in *King Asoka and Buddhism: Historical and Literary Studies*, ed. Anuradha Seneviratna (Buddhist Publication Society, 1994), 37–91.
2. Rohanadeera, M. "Mauryan Society Introduced Bodhi Worship to Sri Lanka." *Sunday Observer*, June 15, 2003.
3. Seneviratna, Anuradha. "Asoka and the Emergence of a Sinhala Buddhist State in Sri Lanka" in *King Asoka and Buddhism: Historical and Literary Studies*, ed. Anuradha Seneviratna (Buddhist Publication Society, 1994), 111–140.
4. Strong, John S. "Asoka's Wives and the Ambiguities of Buddhist Kingship." *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie*, 13 (2002), 35–54.

Source:-

http://www.bhikkhuni.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Sanghamitta_Tells_Her_Story.pdf

About the Writer:-

Susan Pembroke is the founder of the Alliance for Bhikkhunis. As a lay organization, their mission is to raise funds and support fully ordained Theravada Buddhist nuns (bhikkunis), who because of the Vinaya (code of monastic disciplinary rules), cannot directly ask lay practitioners to address even their most basic needs. She was born and raised a Catholic. While living in Los Angeles in the mid 1980s, Susan was introduced to Buddhism. She learnt and practised meditation under several teachers since then. She also educated herself about bhikkunis and their history and current achievements as well as challenges.

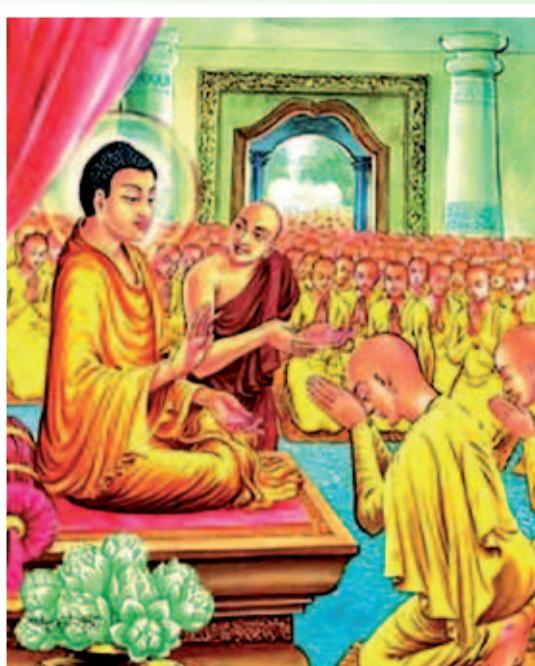
| FEATURE

HOW SRI LANKAN BHIKKHUNIS TOOK BHIKKHUNI SASANA TO THE WORLD

Buddhism introduced into Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka was the only country outside India where the Bhikkhuni Sasana was established when on a Unduwap Full Moon Poya Day in 236 B.C.E., Sanghamitta Theri arrived in Sri Lanka and ordained Queen Anula Devi and five hundred women. The Bhikkhuni as well as Bhikkhu Order once established, thrived in Sri Lanka, whereas both Orders disappeared in India, the country where they were founded.

The Bhikkhuni Order founded by Gautama Buddha with much hesitancy six years after the founding of the Bhikkhu Order, lasted barely 500 years in India. However, if



Maha Prajapati Theri taking ordination from the Buddha.

not for the determination and the persistence of the pioneers, especially that of Queen Maha Prajapathi Gothami, there would not be a Bhikkhuni Order.

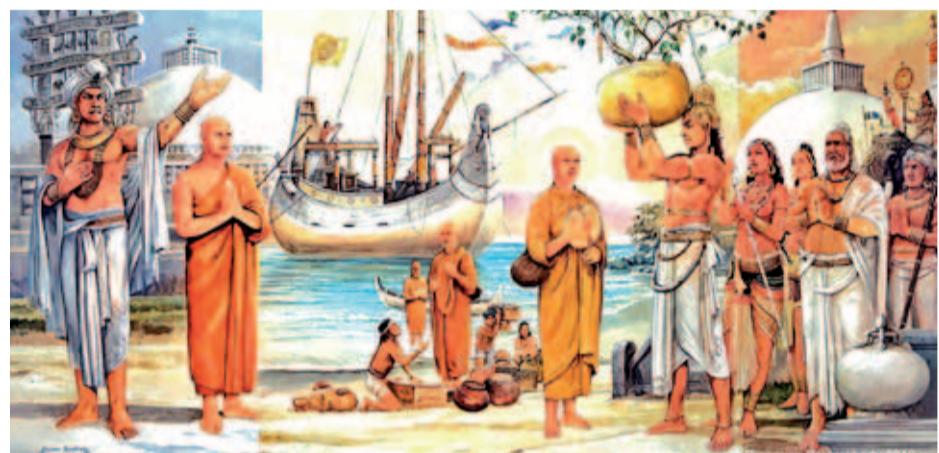
In an essay titled, "The Unbroken Lineage of the Sri Lankan Bhikkhuni Sangha from the third BCE to the Present," its author Dr. Hema Goonetilake, who holds a Ph.D in Buddhist Studies from the University of London and who had served in the United Nations in New York and Cambodia states that the Theravada Bhikkhuni Sasana which existed only in India and Sri Lanka, was spread to South East Asia by Sri Lankan Bhikkhunis.

With the Parinibbana of the Gautama Buddha, the Bhikkhuni Sasana appears to have declined in India as there are no records which mention of any Bhikkhuni activity. They were even excluded from participating in the first Buddhist Council convened by Maha Kassapa Thera, three months following the Parinibbana (passing away) of the Buddha. The Council was attended by 500 Arahants when Ananda Thera recited the Discourses which were delivered by the Gautama Buddha and answered queries on the Teachings. Upali Thera explained and answered queries on the Vinaya – the rules which governed Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis although there was no representation of Bhikkhunis at this very crucial Council.

Sanghamitta introduced Bhikkhuni Order

With the great revival of Buddhism during the reign of Emperor Asoka, 235 years after the Parinibbana, there was a wave of ordination of women from royal families as well as from all social levels. Sanghamitta, Emperor Asoka's only daughter was 16 when she married Prince Aggribrahama and had her son Sumana. Sumana later arrived in Sri Lanka with his uncle Mahinda Thera as a samanera (those who aspire to be a Bhikkhu.)

Both Sanghamitta and her husband entered the Sangha Order. Sanghamitta was ordained following Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, a lineage of Theravada which goes back to Mahaprajapati Gothami Theri (the Buddha's Aunt and step mother). At the age of 32, Sanghamitta Theri had the courage to commence the Order in a distant land far away from her homeland.



A photo story showing the sequence of Sanghamitta's departure from India and arrival in Sri Lanka.

Dr. Goonatilleke who had made an analytical study of the Dipavamsa states as to what led Sanghamitta Theri to arrive in Sri Lanka. "When Queen Anula Devi (wife of the sub King Mahanaga) and 500 attendants had heard the most excellent Doctrine (Discourses) by Venerable Mahinda Thera, Queen Anula Devi, in whose mind faith had arisen, attained the stage of Sotapatti (the first step of the Path or Attainment) which occurred for the first time in Sri Lanka even before any male devotee. A few days later, when the Queen attained the second stage "Sakadagami," she expressed the desire to receive Ordination. When King Devanampiyatissa conveyed this to Mahinda Thera, the latter pointed out that according to the Vinaya rules, it was not permissible for him to grant ordination to women and that the King should request his father Asoka to send his sister Sanghamitta Theri and also to bring with her a branch of the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya under which the Buddha attained enlightenment. Anula and her companions observed dasa-sila (ten precepts) and lived in a nunnery, especially constructed for them, waiting for Bhikkhuni Sanghamitta to arrive.

Six months following Mahinda Thera's arrival, Bhikkhuni Sanghamitta Theri, with 16 Bhikkhunis arrived in Sri Lanka. Sanghamitta Theri and her companion Bhikkhunis taught the Dhamma and Vinaya to the Sri Lankan Bhikkhunis. The mass Ordination was conducted by Sanghamitta Theri's instructress, Bhikkhuni Dhammapala and Sanghamitta Theri's Teacher, Bhikkhuni Ayupala. Their ecclesiastical roles are highlighted in the Dipavamsa. The Bhikkhuni Order thus founded in Sri Lanka, completed the establishment of Buddha's fourfold Sangha – Bhikkhu, Bhikkhuni, Upasaka and Upasika.

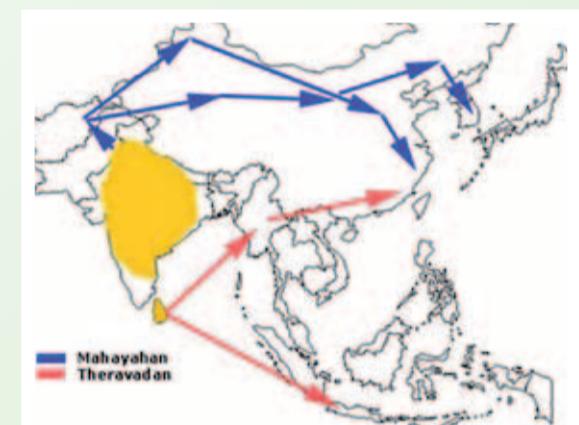
Bhikkhuni Sanghamitta Theri initially lived in the Hatthalhaka nunnery along with the newly ordained nuns. As the numbers grew, she founded twelve other nunneries. In three of these buildings, the mast, rudder and the helm of the ship by which Sanghamitta arrived, were kept as mementoes of her visit to Sri Lanka. These nunneries where these

historical artifacts were preserved in the 3rd century B.C.E can be described as the earliest museums in the world.

In Sri Lanka, as in India, members of the royalty were the first to enter the Order. Women of all social levels and from various parts of the country followed. With the Sacred Bo Sapling being ceremonially planted just prior to the establishment of the Bhikkhuni Order, the responsibility of the water ritual of the Sri Maha Bodhiya (tree) was given to the Bhikkhunis. This may have continued as a pillar inscription bears a record that seven leading Bhikkhunis from Nalarama monastery during Kassyapa 1V (898-914CE) were assigned with the daily duties of taking care of the Sacred Bodhi tree. Lands from a village had been donated to the monastery to meet its cost.

Pioneer Historiographers in the World

Dr. Goonetileke says that Dipavamsa of the fourth century BCE authored by bhikkhunis, was the first Chronicle to have been documented in Sri Lanka and was a record of "her story" not only of Sri Lanka but perhaps of the world. It gives in detail the establishment of the Bhikkhuni Order, its history, development, expansion and the spiritual and intellectual successes of the Bhikkhunis. This is in contrast to the documentation in the Mahavamsa written in the sixth century CE based on the Dipavamsa where Bhikkhu scribes had ignored the services of Bhikkhunis except for the initial events and brief references. Dr. Goonetileke's contention is that Mahavamsa which gives the "male history" of the Theravada fraternity, appears to be a deliberate effort to delegitimize the services of the Bhikkhunis.



How Bhikkhuni lineage spread to other countries.

First Missionary Nuns in Foreign Lands

Bhikkhunis in the meantime, had not confined their services to the island. The most significant foreign travel undertaken by Sri Lankan Bhikkhunis was in the 5th century. This travel to China is perhaps the longest recorded travel by women anywhere in the world up to that time. In the 11th century C.E., the Sri Lankan Bhikkhuni Chandramali went to Tibet and translated six Tantra texts from Sanskrit to Tibetan which have been included in the Tibetan Tripitaka, the Kanjur.

Sri Lankan Lineage passed on to the Chinese Nuns

We have observed that the Bhikkhuni lineage continued without a break and flourished until 1017 C.E. It was this lineage that was passed on by the Sri Lankan Bhikkhunis to the Chinese nuns. This event of great significance is not mentioned in any of the Sri Lankan records. The *Pi-chiu-ni-chuang* ('Biography of the Nuns) compiled by Pao-Chang in 520 C.E., and biographies of Sinhala Bhikkhus Gunavarman and Sanghavarman who were in China, give detailed accounts of how the Chinese Bhikkhuni order was established.

In 429 C.E., eight nuns went on board a ship captained by Nandi – a Lankan, arrived in China, and lived in the Ching-fu nunnery in the ancient Sung capital, Nanjing (Nanking). On hearing that the Chinese nuns had received ordination only from Bhikkhus, the Sinhalese Bhikkhunis sent back the ship captain Nandi to Sri Lanka to bring more Bhikkhunis as eight was insufficient to perform an ideal dual ordination. By the time the second group of ten Bhikkhunis led by Bhikkhuni Devasara Tie-so-

ra arrived in China in 433 C.E., the first group of Bhikkhunis had learnt the Chinese language. With the two groups and the Sinhala Bhikkhu, Sanghavarman a mass dual ordination was conferred to 300 Chinese bhikkhunis at the Nanjing temple in 433 C.E. – which speaks of detailed attention given on Ordination.

Dr. Goonetilleke points out that the sea voyage of Bhikkhuni Devasara took place about ten years after the Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hsien left Sri Lanka. While in Sri Lanka, he stayed two years at the Abhayagiri Vihara and bhikkhunis who went to China had been affiliated to the Abhayagiri Nunnery. Therefore, there is the possibility that Fa-Hsien who took residence in Nanjing (Nanking) took the initiative in getting down the mission to China. In Nanjing, he had undertaken translations of Sanskrit manuscripts – especially literature on Vinaya, into Chinese. Records also say that a Chinese merchant made an offering to the Abhayagiri Monastery. Bhikkhunis left for China in a merchant ship.

The division that took place 500 years after the Passing Away of the Gautama Buddha with Mahayana branching off from Theravada had its impact on the Bhikkhuni Sasana. According to scholars, even Dipavamsa was written by Mahayana Bhikkhunis and it has been claimed that Mahayana entertained a more positive attitude towards the role of women.

Unbroken Lineage through an Unbroken Succession of Vinaya Teachers

The Bhikkhuni lineage founded by Sanghamitta Theri however, continued through an unbroken succession of Vinaya Teachers. But with the division, Bhikkhunis did exercise their own version of the Vinaya together with the distinct tradition of interpretation.

The Bhikkhuni Sasana lasted till the end of the Anuradhapura Era. The final mention of a Nunnery in the Chronicles was during the reign of Mihindu the fourth (956-972) who built Mahawallaka Nunnery for Theravada Bhikkhunis. The Chola invasion saw the end of the Anuradhapura Era and with it disappeared the Sangha Order with Vijayabahu the First (1055-1110 C.E.) reviving the Bhikkhu Order in less than 50 years of the disappearance. He got down Bhikkhus from Burma for ordination of Bhikkhus in Sri Lanka. Professor Ranaweera Gunawardene mentions of a Burmese inscription which speaks of the existence of Theravada Bhikkhunis in Burma in 1196 C.E. Even in 1279 C.E. according to inscriptions, Nunneries had existed in Burma.

Sri Lankan Lineage given back to Sri Lanka

Dr. Goonetilleke brings up the argument which is made today by many among the Sangha in Theravada countries that there is no possibility of resuscitating the Bhikkhuni Order as the traditional requirement of an appropriate lineage does not exist. However, Dr Goonetilleke points out that it is not possible to strictly adhere to the rules and regulations as set out earlier for the re-establishment of the Theravada Bhikkhuni Order.

Several efforts had been made by Sri Lankan Bhikkhus over the decades to confer Bhikkhuni ordination on Sri Lankan Samaneris (who aspire to be Bhikkhunis). The most significant was the one made in 1996 by Ven Mapalagama Vipulasara Thera where Bhikkhuni Kusuma Devendre

became the first Bhikkhuni to receive *Upasampada* in Sarnath, India from a team of Korean Bhikkhunis nearly thousand years since the disappearance of the Bhikkhuni Order. Bhikkhuni Kusuma and nine other Bhikkhunis who received *upasampada* there remained in India for missionary activities.

In February 1998, the Buddha's Light International Association of Fo Guan Shan, Taiwan organised an international dual ordination ceremony in Bodh Gaya, India. By this time, twenty Samaneris were being trained by the Bhikkhuni Educational Academy in Sri Lanka under the guidance of Ven Sumangala Thera of Rangiri Dambulu Vihara. These Samaneris got the opportunity to receive higher ordination in Bodh Gaya along with other international Samaneris from Theravada countries. Six months later, Ven Sumangala Thera got these twenty Bhikkhunis to confer higher ordination to another twenty-two Samaneris who had been trained in Sri Lanka. The *upasampada* ceremony held on Sri Lankan soil after nearly one thousand years, was conducted at the ordination hall of the 2,200 year old Rangiri Dambulu temple, which was up to then used exclusively for Bhikkhus ecclesiastical activities. Thus the Bhikkhuni ordination was re-established in Sri Lanka after nearly one thousand years. It was history unfolding.

"In gratitude for having received the Bhikkhuni lineage from Indian and Sri Lankan missionaries, the Chinese feel that it is their duty to return the lost Bhikkhuni lineage to the ancestral lands...."

Thus the higher ordination conferred to the nuns from Theravada countries in Bodh Gaya was in accordance with the original tradition of receiving ordination from a Bhikkhuni of Dharmagupta Vinaya – the earliest branch of the Theravada which continued with an unbroken lineage in



Ordination Ceremony of Theravada Bhikkhunis.

China after *upasampada* was conferred on Chinese nuns by Sri Lankan Bhikkunis headed by Bhikkhuni Devasara in 433 C.E.

Conclusion

The Bhikkhuni lineage that began with Prajapati Gotami's ordination by the Buddha himself continued up to the time of the Emperor Asoka, and that his son Mahinda Thera took the initiative to introduce the Bhikkhuni ordination through his own sister Sanghamitta in the 3rd century B.C.E. The same lineage continued through the centuries up to the 1017 C.E. when it totally disappeared along with the monk's order.

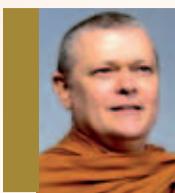
The Bhikkhuni ordination introduced by Sri Lankan Bhikkunis to China in the 5th century, spread from China to Korea and to Japan. After one thousand years, the Sri Lanka nuns received higher ordination back from the Chinese Bhikkhunis living in Go Guan Shan monastery, and thus the same unbroken lineage continues at present in Sri Lanka.

Source:-

<http://www.sundaytimes.lk/171203/plus/lankan-bhikkhunis-took-bhikkhuni-sasana-to-the-world-271068.html>

Ed Note:-

The above article was edited, rearranged and compiled from an article titled Lankan Bhikkhunis took Bhikkhuni Sasana to the World by Mr Rajitha Weerakoon in the Sri Lankan "The Sun Times" and from an essay titled Unbroken Lineage of the Sri Lankan Bhikkhuni Sangha from the 3rd BCE to the present by Dr Hema Goonatilleka.



HOW AUSTRALIA'S FIRST THERAVADA BHIKKHUNI ORDINATION HAPPENED

by Bhante Sujato

22nd October 2009: remember that date. That's when it all changed. That's when the Sangha of Bodhinyana Monastery and Dhammasara Nun's monastery, with the support of an international group of bhikkhunis, performed the first Theravada bhikkhuni ordination in Australia, and the first bhikkhuni ordination in the Thai Forest Tradition anywhere in the world. Here's how it all came about.



The 4 nuns who made history at Bodhinyana Monastery, Western Australia.

Bhikkhuni ordination has been a live topic in international Buddhism since at least the 1970s, when Tenzin Palmo took full ordination. Actually, it was discussed long before that, as shown by the support for bhikkhuni ordination given by Jetavan Sayadaw in his paper of 1949, where he referred to contemporary discussions on the topic.

The Western, or more accurately, English-speaking bhikkhu community of Ajahn Chah started in the 1960s and gained momentum in the 1970s with the establishment of the first Western monastery in Thailand, Wat Pa Nanachat (International Forest Monastery), and in the 1980s with a number of overseas branches.

The question of how to support women's ordination aspirations became pressing in the new environment, and the English communities responded by developing an entirely new ordination platform called the *sīladharā*. This is superficially similar to the canonical *sāmañerī* platform for young girls, or the modern Sinhalese *dasasilamātā*, but in fact is based on a new system of rules, invented by Ajahn Sucitto in discussion with the English community in the 1980s. These new rules are structured around the canonical *pātimokkhas* for the bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, but introduce many changes of substance. This *sīladharā* platform has survived in Amaravati and Chithurst monasteries, and currently numbers around 15 nuns.

At the time, the English Ajahns new little about bhikkhuni ordination, and while it was sometimes said that the *sīladharā* ordination was intended to be a stepping stone to bhikkhuni ordination, there has been no signs of any actual effort to make this possible. Rather, the question of bhikkhuni ordination has been silenced every time it is raised.

Meanwhile, the community of Ajahn Jagaro and later Ajahn Brahm in Perth had the long term intention to establish a nuns' community. This became possible in the late 1990s, when Ajahn Vāyāmā was invited to establish a community at Dhammasara. Ajahn Vāyāmā, while having a respectful connection with the English community, was not ordained there, but in Sri Lanka. I was present at some of her initial discussions with Ajahn Brahm, and she made it clear that she did not wish to follow the English model. Ajahn Brahm responded by saying that Bodhinyana was not a branch of Amaravati.

The Dhammasara community was based on the 10 precept *sāmañerī* ordination, which they supplemented with their own monastery rules.

The international community had, meanwhile, been making great strides forward in bhikkhuni ordination. The first Theravadin bhikkhunis were ordained in the 1980s, with perhaps the first being Ayyā Khemā, who was

incidentally was one of Ajahn Vāyāmā's first teachers, and was an original trustee on the land that has now become Santi Forest Monastery. Many more followed, and during the 1990s a series of well-publicized and large scale bhikkhuni ordinations took place in India and Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan bhikkhuni order received a lot of opposition in the early days, but now there are several hundred bhikkhunis, and now that the hooha has blown over they just get on with their lives.

Chatsumarn Kabalsingh, a prominent Thai academic and media figure, took bhikkhuni ordination in Sri Lanka in 2003 under the name of Dhammanandā, becoming the first of a new generation of Thai bhikkhunis. Many have followed, and there are now perhaps 20-30 bhikkhunis in Thailand.

Cambodia, too, has a small bhikkhuni community, with a group of around 20 bhikkhunis supported by one of the Sangharajas there.

Burma has the most shameful record in their oppression of bhikkhunis. Bhikkhuni Saccavadī ordained in Sri Lanka and on her return to Burma was thrown in jail, abused and traumatized, and finally forced to disrobe. I should add, though, that most of the Burmese monks who I know overseas fully support bhikkhuni ordination and have gone out of their way to express this. In addition, 'Mahayana' bhikkhunis are at least allowed to stay and practice in the Burmese meditation monasteries, which they are still denied in the Thai forest tradition.

While all this was going on, and progress was being made internationally in almost all Theravadin lands, the Ajahn Chah tradition did nothing. There was no dialogue, no inquiry, no talk of change.

From around 2002 or so, I started to speak to the monks about this, in person and in letters raising it as an issue that needed addressing. With the exception of Ajahn Brahm and to some extent Ajahn Sucitto, I got no response from the leadership, although many of the junior monks, and also senior monks who did not have institutional roles, were receptive. I kept talking, writing, and researching. I focussed on three issues: the purported technical Vinaya objections to bhikkhuni ordination; the psychological problems informing the debate; and the practical business of setting up a nuns' community.

I think it was in 2006 that Ajahn Brahm told me that he was now fully convinced that bhikkhuni ordination was the way to go. He was supported by his monks, especially Ajahn Brahmali, and started to encourage Ajahn Vāyāmā to take bhikkhuni ordination. Meanwhile, Ajahn Vāyāmā and the nuns at Dhammasara had visits from several bhikkhunis, allowing them to have discussions, find commonalities, and see what a future as bhikkhunis could become.

By this time, Santi FM had become well known as a center for support of bhikkhunis internationally. We had many women candidates interested in bhikkhuni ordination, but for one reason or another none of them proceeded to full ordination. It's not an easy thing, and it's made so much harder by the bad vibes radiating from much of the bhikkhu Sangha. For a time we were discussing holding a joint bhikkhuni ordination with the Dhammasara nuns, perhaps in February 2010. But our potential candidate decided she was not ready for that step. In addition, the Dhammasara community wanted to do a quiet ceremony, which focussed on the real meaning of the ordination – acceptance within the Sangha – rather than making a media event out of it.



A part of the ordination ceremony.

During the vassa of 2009, Ajahns Brahm and Vāyāmā had a series of discussions, where they decided they wanted to go ahead with bhikkhuni ordination. They felt their communities were ready, and did not want to have to deal with the kinds of organized opposition that would inevitably follow an announcement of the date. They invited an international group of eight bhikkhunis to participate, who were: Venerables Tathālōkā (preceptor), Sucintā & Sobhanā (reciters of the formal Act), Ātāpī, Satimā, Santinī, Silavatī, and Dhammanandā (Vietnam). Ajahn Brahm and myself were the reciters of the Act on the bhikkhus' side. All four of the nuns from Dhammasara were to be ordained, that is, Venerables Vāyāmā, Nirodhā, Serī, and Hassapaññā.

The bhikkhunis had all received their ordination from the Theravadin tradition, and are well known as sincere practitioners. It was decided not to include any bhikkhunis from the Mahayana tradition, since some conservative Theravadins might object to this. For the same reason, the two Korean bhikkhus who were staying at Bodhinyana were respectfully asked to remain outside the sīmā boundary. This by no means implies that the presence of Mahayana Sangha would in any way affect the ordination. On the contrary, as qualified bhikkhus and bhikkhunis ordained according to the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, they are clearly saṁvāsa (in communion) according to the Vinaya, and none of the monastics who took part in the ordination had any problem with including them. Nevertheless, many Theravadin Sangha perceive Mahayanists as belonging to a fundamentally different order, if not indeed a different religion, and could use their inclusion as a way of criticizing the procedure.

In the days leading up to the ordination, the Sangha at Bodhinyana was repeatedly consulted as to whether they were supportive. This happened at the uposatha meeting on the previous Sunday; I spoke with them again on the Wednesday; and Ajahn Brahm consulted them again on his return from overseas shortly before the ordination itself on Thursday. All the relevant messages from the various Ajahns that were received were printed out and made available, and the monks were encouraged to read them so they could make an informed decision. All of the monks remained unified in their support of bhikkhuni ordination. However, one monk asked to be excused from the ceremony itself as he was ordained by Ajahn Sumedho, and would have preferred if the ordination had gone ahead following the planned WAM in December.

In this time Ajahn Brahm was away, visiting his sick Mum in England, as well as taking on several teaching engagements in England, Norway, and Singapore. On the Sunday before the ordination, he visited Amaravati, where he paid respects to Ajahn Sumedho and told him they were to do bhikkhuni ordination the following Thursday. Ajahn Sumedho advised against it. Following that meeting, it seems that emails were sent to the Western Ajahns around the world, and there was an instantaneous reaction against the ordination.

Most of the Ajahns responded in a reasonable manner, expressing their respects and stating their view that it was not wise to go ahead with the ordination without consulting the wider Sangha. The majority of the messages we received expressed support for bhikkhuni ordination in principle, but not the way it was done. Ajahn Brahm responded to this immediately by pointing out that he had in fact consulted widely with his broad community, including Wat Pa Pong. I also responded with a letter detailing how discussion on bhikkhuni ordination had been comprehensively silenced in the Western Ajahn Chah Sangha.

A few responses were much more aggressive, with implied and explicit threats from Ajahns expressed in email, fax, and phone calls. I called their bluff in emails on Tuesday and Wednesday, and the threatening, aggressive messages stopped cold.

I raised a number of important issues in those emails, and since then have received not a single substantive response. The Ajahns were lightning fast to point out a couple of factual mistakes in Ajahn Brahm's email, and to try to point out a mistake in mine (which was in fact just a misreading of my original letter). But they continue their total, blank silence in the face of the real questions: discrimination against women in the Sangha and the transformative potential of bhikkhuni ordination.

The communities in Perth were coping well with this pressure. We were all relieved to speak with Ajahn Brahm on the phone on Tuesday evening, when he said he felt happy and calm and that the opposition was pretty much what he expected. The nuns were coping well and remained firm and clear – they're used to this kind of pressure.

There was some discussion about the exact details of how the two Sanghas should be arranged in the limited space in the Bodhinyana hall. Eventually it was decided to have the bhikkhunis on one side of the shrine, and the bhikkhus on the other side. Each Sangha was arranged in two rows, so that the candidates could come inside the Sangha. The ceremony was conducted precisely in accordance with the Pali Vinaya, with the addition at the beginning of a few ceremonial flourishes as in the Thai tradition.

The ordination ceremony began at 7.15pm, Perth time. Ayyā Tathālōkā, a respected bhikkhuni of 13 years standing, was formally appointed as the preceptor (pavattinī) by the bhikkhuni Sangha. Since no more than three should be ordained at one time, the candidates were ordained in two groups of two. The full procedure is carried out by the bhikkhuni Sangha, with the candidates requesting their preceptor, being instructed outside the Sangha and questioned inside the Sangha, before the final 'Motion and Three Announcements' (ñātticatutthakamma), which is the ordination proper.

When the two pairs had been ordained among the bhikkhuni Sangha, they were led in pairs to the bhikkhu Sangha. The ordination in front of the bhikkhus is much simpler, as there is no questioning of the candidates or appointment of a preceptor. The role of the bhikkhu Sangha, according to the Pali Vinaya, is simply to confirm the ordination, stamping it with their seal of approval, and acknowledging the acceptance of the candidates. Ajahn Brahm and I did the chanting, and I confess to more than one shower of rapture as the auspicious words finally came true: evam etam dhārayāmi – thus I will bear it in mind. The ceremony concluded around 9.00pm.



Ajahn Brahm.

Then the new bhikkhunis sat in the midst of the two Sanghas as we all recited the Metta Sutta in blessing. It is impossible to describe the feeling of joy and exultation that filled the hall – unforgettable. There was a light and a clarity which felt just so right under the crystal clear Perth sky that I remember so well from my childhood. Since the ordination, a flood of support and rejoicing has poured in from around the world. The future has never been brighter.

Source:-

Bhante Sujato's Blog Buddhism for a Small World

<https://sujato.wordpress.com/2009/10/31/how-australia%E2%80%99s-first-theravada-bhikkhuni-ordination-happened/>

About the Writer:-

Bhante Sujato, known as Ajahn Sujato or Bhikkhu Sujato (born Anthony Best, is an Australian Theravada Buddhist monk in the Thai forest lineage of Ajahn Chah. Sujato became a monk in 1994. He took higher ordination in Thailand and lived there for years before returning to Australia. He spent several years at Bodhinyana Monastery in Western Australia before going on to found Santi Forest Monastery in 2003. He now resides in Taiwan. Bhante Sujato along with his teacher Ajahn Brahm were involved with Re-establishing Bhikkhuni Ordination in the Forest sangha of Ajahn Chah.

1. Upcoming Events in Nov – Dec 2019 and Jan 2020

A) Dhamma Sharing – Dhamma Dana Series

i) Bhante Kovida – Canada

Dhamma Talks

3rd Nov Sun 10am – 3 Qualities of the Buddha and our Mental Defilements

8th Nov Fri 8pm – The Age Old Question – What happens to me when I die

10th Nov Sun 10am – 3 Characteristics of Existence and the Reason for Impermanence and Change

15th Nov Fri 8pm – Benefits of Mindfulness and the Freedom of Non-Duality

17th Nov Sun 10am – The Buddha's Cure for Birth, Sickness, Ageing and Death

22nd Nov Fri 8pm – Understanding the Nature of Fear and Insecurity

Meditation Retreats

(Please call BMV Office at 0322741141 to register)

9th Nov Sat – 9.00am to 6.00pm

Meditation Retreat for Beginners Level

16th Nov Sat – 9.00am to 6.00pm

Meditation Retreat for Intermediate Level

23rd Nov Sat – 9.00am to 6.00pm

Meditation Retreat for Advance Level

30th Nov Sat – 9.00am to 1.00pm

Half Day Meditation Retreat at an Outdoor Park



ii) Bhante Kotawaye Suseela

- Sunday, 8th December @ 10am

Topic – Mindfulness for Stress Relieve



B) Buddhist Forum

- Friday, 29th November @ 8pm

Panelists – Bhante Kovida from Canada

Bhikkhuni Dhammadina from Sri Lanka

Moderator – Mr Vijaya Samarawickrama

Topic – Why Meditation?

What is Buddhist Meditation?

Time – 8.00pm to 10.00pm



C) Dhamma Course in Mandarin by Ajahn Kaizhao

Dates – Monday 16th Dec to Thursday 19th Dec

Time – 7.30pm to 9.30pm

Note – Please call BMV office at 03-22741141 to enquire and register



D) Annual Buddhist Novitiate Programme

- 6th Dec to 15th Dec 2019

The Annual Novitiate

Programme has been held since 1976 to give opportunity for devotees to experience the life dedicated to the cause of studying, practising, realising and spreading the Dhamma as a novice monk. Limited to 25 participants only, registration is now open to all who are 18 years and above. The forms are available at the BMV office. The programme coordinator is Ven. Professor R. Padmasiri Thera.



E) Sanghamitta Full Moon Day

- 10th December

This full moon commemorates the arrival of the Buddhist nun Sanghamitta from India bringing with her a sapling of the Bodhi tree under which the Buddha attained Enlightenment. Ven Sanghamitta is also credited with the establishment of the Bhikkhuni Order to Sri Lanka from where it was brought to and established in other countries.



Observance of 8 Precepts

- 7am to 7 pm. Programme conducted by **Bhikkhuni Dhammadina** from Ayya Meditation Centre of Sri Lanka

Buddha Puja

- 7.30pm followed by Dhamma sermon by **Bhikkhuni Dhammadina**

F) Meditation Retreat

by Bhante Wimalaramsi

A 10-day Stay In Retreat

- from Friday 20th Dec to Sunday 29th Dec

Note – Please call BMV Office at 03-22741141 to enquire and register



G) New Year Blessings

New Year Eve Blessings Service

- 31st December @ 11.30pm

New Year 2020 Blessing Service

- 1st January 2020 @ 7.30am

2. Past Events in September and October 2019

A) Dhamma Sharing

i) Bhante Dr P. Yassasi

Dhamma Talks

Fri, 13th Sept - The World is in Turmoil. Is the End Near?

Sun, 15th Sept - Deva and Brahma Worlds

Sun, 2nd Sept - The Buddha's Mission

Sutta Class

Tues, 17th Sept - Araka Sutta

Wed, 18th Sept - Vaddi Sutta

Tues, 24th Sept - Phala Sutta

Wed, 25th Sept - Indriya Bhavana Sutta



ii) Chao Khun Keng

Dhamma Talk in English

Fri, 20th Sept - Seeing Death in a Buddhist Way

Meditation Retreat and Dhamma Talk in Mandarin

Sat, 21st Sept to Mon, 23rd Sept



iii) Dhamma Talk

by Sis Paruadi Ramasamy

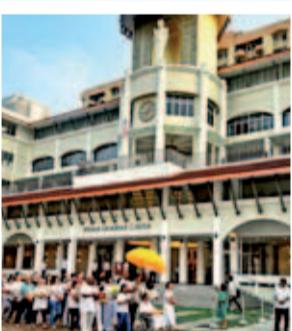
Fri, 27th Sept - Women's Role in Buddhism



B) Photo Story of Kathina Day Celebration - 20th October 2019



For the first time, the Kathina Cheevera was placed on a beautiful lotus designed placemat.



Kathina Circumambulation.



Devotees waiting patiently for the Maha Sangha to arrive.



Madam R. A. Janis with her 2 daughters Mallika and Nalynne and her son-in-law, Jestin Mendis.



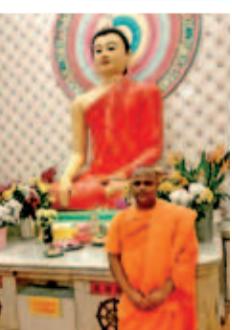
Madam R. A. Janis presenting the Kathina Cheevera on behalf of all the devotees present.



Kathina Cheevera Sewing Team.



The Sewing Team presented the sewn Kathina Cheevera to Chief Reverend.



Recipient of the sewn Kathina Cheevera - Venerable Sumangala Thera.



Venerable Chief Dhammaratana with members of the Maha Sangha after presenting the Kathina Cheevera.



FOV Volunteers for Kathina. A big thank you from BMV Management to this wonderful group of dedicated and hardworking volunteers.

BISDS Lantern Night

- 7th September 2019

The following are the feedback from participants, teachers and winners:

BISDS Lantern Night was a joyful event with pleasant memories for me mainly because teachers, brothers and sisters gathered together at this occasion with their parents and families. Teachers, Staffs, Students, parents and families, a unified community that gives the proudest joy of teaching, learning and enjoying as "A FAMILY" ... BISDS.

By Vincent Gwee, Moon Cake making



The Lantern Night Festival was definitely a successful event. It was a time for gathering and joyful sharing amongst all BISDS members; as well as keeping up with the cultural tradition of Lantern Night. We hope that all of you enjoyed yourselves on that day!

By Eunice Tan, emcee of the event



We have jelly moon cake to offer. We prepared Chinese cuisine and Western Pizza to meet young generation taste. Family gathering gave a home sweet home feeling in this mid-autumn festival.

By Sis Chia Ai Hiong, Sanghamitta class



It is fair to conclude that lantern Night was a great success. So many people have contributed in so many ways to turn this event into a smooth running merry making gathering with so much food activities and interesting games.

By Sis Ling , Nanda class



I'm glad and happy to have won the first prize of the Eco Lantern Contest. I look forward to a nice Hi Tea with my family members. It is a good time for bonding with family members during lantern making.

By Winner of Lantern making, Sis Ong from Sariputta Class



The lantern I made was inspired by the traditional lantern design which was the flower basket.

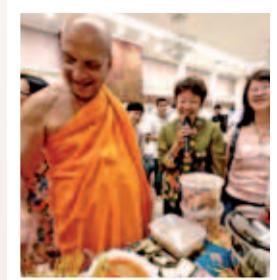
Since the theme was using recyclable items to make the lantern, the main material I used was plastic. This idea was actually inspired by my mom. I found it very interesting and it was an amazing art to be known by everyone.

By 2nd Winner of lanterns making, Foong Jin Yu



We celebrated firstly by cooking our favourite nyonya kueh and desserts like kueh paiti, kueh bingka, kueh talam, kueh angkoo, pengat pisang and red eggs to celebrate at night. A memorable and happy night of sharing for every member of the family.

By Sis Baby Cheah, Sivali class



The teachers and students of Revata, Upali and Yasa had joint effort to set up a food stall to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival. A big Sadhu to all the teachers, parents and students for their generosity as we had a delicious spread of vegetarian and non-vegetarian food for all BISDS family members and the public.

By Revata, Upali and Yasa Class – BISDS Lantern Night



BISDS Youth group was requested to help and coordinate the BISDS Mooncake festival celebration within the Buddhist Maha Vihara. A lantern procession was conducted where we guided the participant around the compounds of the temple. The BISDS Youth group, while kept busy and tired throughout the event, were happy that the event was a success and hope that similar events would soon follow in the future.

By Ng Zhao Xian



Here comes the opportunity for our team, together with our students to contribute DANA for this auspicious event. Dana connotes the virtue of generosity, charity or giving alms. We are satisfied when we see smiles and laughter fill up the hall during this event. We developed bonding time with friends and family from all walks of life.

By BISDS F&B team



Project Team

Lim King Sheng : “Nice and Good event, allowing all of us to get together, sadhu”

Sis Lim King Ting : “Nice events to allow us to get together, share foods, participants showed their creativity and talents in designing eco-lantern and food stall. Not forgetting the delicious food”

Sis Jess Leow : “Everyone praise our project team's 5 star presentation. Bravo good job. We donated the prize, later we won a prize. No choice, we work hard and put in a lot of effort.”



Bro Tan Lin Choong : “A meaningful night whereby all members under Dhamma School came together with food, games and activities to celebrate the tradition of Lantern Festival.”

Sis Carol Lim : “We get together, lighting lanterns, playing games and sharing our food and thoughts. We hold our value of togetherness in BISDS and share our merits with our fellow members.”



MEET BURMA'S FEMINIST BUDDHIST NUN

by Jennifer Rigby

“

How Ketu Mala is working to change opinions about gender in a highly traditional Buddhist country.

”

Burma is home to around 60,000 Buddhist nuns. They have taken monastic vows, shaved their heads, and donned robes. Yet these thilashin are not equal to their Theravadan Buddhist male counterparts.

In this deeply religious country, people give up their bus seats to monks, bow to them on the streets, and give them daily alms. Nuns, however, are forbidden from formally teaching the dharma and scarcely merit a backward glance. But Ketu Mala, a well-known Burmese nun, is breaking the mould. “Let’s face it,” the 36-year-old nun says in a soft voice, speaking partly in English and partly in Burmese. “Burma has a male-dominated, patriarchal society, which means religious life is also dominated by men. The patriarchy is deep-rooted here.”



Ketu Mala.

Founder of the Dhamma School Foundation, Ketu Mala has had remarkable success in bringing Buddhist teachings into mainstream education for Burmese boys and girls. Her organization has established a network of thousands of schools across the country, reaching more than half a million pupils. She has caught the attention of former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who met with her recently, and she gives popular religious talks worldwide.

Ketu Mala recalls first experiencing gender injustice when she was about 13 years old. Her uncle and cousin were being ordained as monks in Mawlamyine, her hometown, in southern Burma. But Ketu Mala and the women in her family were not allowed to enter the part of the temple where the ordination was taking place.

“For the first time I am feeling different from the males,” she said, recalling a sign that barred her entry. “And I am thinking, ‘Why can a man do that, and I cannot?’”

Ketu Mala said she didn’t experience gender equality until years later, when on retreat at Pa-Auk Forest Monastery. There, thanks to a progressive abbot, women could go anywhere they liked. Now, Pa-Auk is her home, and she wears the brown robes of a forest monastic. This type of acceptance, though, feels threatening to the leading monks in Burma.

“If I am talking to the monks, I have to move wisely and carefully,” said Ketu Mala, explaining that she must bow when she speaks to the bhikkhus and sit below them. “Some of them think that if I am talking about the gender issue, I am in competition with them. So I just have to explain to them: ‘This is not to compete with you. This is just for our confidence, for women.’”

She says the monks fear the return of the bhikkhuni sangha—the order of fully-ordained women that died out in Burma and other Theravadan Buddhist countries a thousand years ago. Since then, women have not been able to receive full ordination because the Buddhist monastic code requires a nun to be ordained by both the bhikkhu and bhikkhuni sangha.

In Mahayana Buddhist countries, the bhikkhuni tradition has been revived. And in Theravadan Sri Lanka, the bhikkhuni sangha has made a comeback. Still, Ketu Mala says that she can’t talk about the bhikkhuni sangha in Burma.

She is wise to be cautious: under Burma’s former military government, a woman ordained as a bhikkhuni abroad was imprisoned for her actions upon her return home.

“So in Burma it’s not easy to talk about gender,” Ketu Mala said. “[But] in Buddha’s time, when he was preaching, on one side there were the male monks and on the other side, the female monks. He gave them an equal role.”

For Ketu Mala, this kind of equality is a long way away—a feeling that hit home earlier this year when she clashed with a monk in the audience of one of her religious lectures. The monk had stated that he did not believe the Buddhist concept of metta, or lovingkindness, ought to be extended to everyone regardless of merit. Ketu Mala disagreed. “This is wrong,” she said fiercely. “As a Buddhist monk, he should not say this. Buddha would never talk like this—he says you must have compassion for all people.”

But the clash likely had causes that ran deeper than the simple disagreement. “I think he was not happy that for the first time, there is a nun on the stage and he is down in the audience. Burma is a male-dominated country, and the monks are always in a higher place.” The incident drew the attention of Burmese newspapers and social media.



In Burma, nuns are called thilashin, the owners or protectors of virtue or ethics. Ketu Mala’s passionate response in the face of the monk’s challenge suggests that it is a fitting title. But despite this honorific, nuns are still not taken seriously.

“Even though they are called thilashin, they do not have a good reputation in society. Many think girls become nuns because they have a problem—no money or no family,” Ketu Mala said.

Changing opinions like this will be an uphill battle, but it is one that Ketu Mala is committed to fighting.

“People in Burma are more interested in women’s rights now. But the nuns are also women: they are struggling, they are discriminated against in the religious sector. I think society has forgotten the nuns. So I would like our women to remember them,” she said.

“We have to show that we are standing up for ourselves,” Ketu Mala said. “If society accepts that we can [stand up for ourselves], we can do most things.”

Source:-

<https://tricycle.org/trikedaily/meet-burmans-feminist-nun/>

About the Writer:-

Jennifer Rigby is a freelance journalist based in Yangon. She recently received a grant from the International Women’s Media Foundation to write a book about inspirational women in Burma.



THE SAKYADHITA MOVEMENT – The International Association Of Buddhist Women

by Judith Hertog

“

Judith Hertog profiles the Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women, which has been leading the way for gender equality in Buddhism for more than thirty years.

”

At age thirty-eight, Venerable Karma Lekshe Tsomo felt ready to take full ordination as a Buddhist nun. Five years had passed since she had taken her novice vows in 1977, and it had been almost a decade since she had moved to Dharamsala to study Buddhism. Yet, as she prepared for the next step, she realized that the Tibetan Vajrayana tradition does not offer full ordination for women. Women monastics are limited to being novice nuns—until recently, occupied with chanting and manual work instead of having opportunities to pursue religious studies.



As a teenager growing up in California in the 1950s, Karma Lekshe (then named Patricia Zenn) was drawn to Buddhism. But she discovered that Buddhism as it was traditionally practiced in Asia did not always conform to the ideals that had attracted her to Buddhism in the first place. The books and scriptures she had read suggested there were no gender distinctions when it came to the dharma, and she knew that the Buddha himself had established an order of nuns (bhikshunis). In contemporary Buddhism, however, men dominate the sangha while women generally play secondary roles, with less financial and institutional support than monks, few women in leadership positions, and limited educational opportunities. Until the 1980s, many Tibetan nuns had never even learned how to write. When Karma Lekshe studied Buddhist logic and philosophy at the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics in Dharamsala, she was usually the only woman there.

The bhikshuni order that the Buddha himself established eventually died out in much of the Buddhist world, but it survived in East Asian Buddhist societies such as China, Korea, Vietnam, and Taiwan. So in the fall of 1982, Karma Lekshe traveled to Korea to receive bhikshuni ordination from nuns there. This experience was the next significant step in her effort to advocate for a stronger role for women in Buddhism.

Karma Lekshe reached out to others, such as German nun Ayya Khema and Thai professor Chatsumarn Kabil Singh, who were also frustrated by the limitations women faced in Buddhism, and together they decided to organize a conference. In February 1987, Buddhists from all over the world, including over one hundred nuns and monks, arrived in Bodhgaya for the First International Conference on Buddhist Nuns. More than 1,500 people attended the opening ceremony and the Dalai Lama's inaugural address, in which he spoke about the importance of women's contributions in Buddhism and said he would welcome a bhikshuni lineage in the Tibetan tradition. During the final session of the conference, the decision was made to establish an international Buddhist association dedicated to encouraging a more active role for women in

the dharma. The name chosen for this new association was Sakyadhita, meaning “daughters of the Buddha.” This was the beginning of a new Buddhist feminist movement. Every two years since 1987, each time in a different country, Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women has held a conference addressing the most pressing issues facing Buddhist women.

Over the past thirty-two years, Sakyadhita has grown into a well-respected organization with over two thousand members internationally. It has been instrumental in advocating for the welfare of women in Buddhism, supporting their education, and publishing research on the role of women in the dharma, both present-day and historical. It has also jump-started a movement to reintroduce full ordination for nuns in all Buddhist traditions.

The current president of Sakyadhita, Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo, is another trailblazer for women. In 1973 she traveled from India to Hong Kong to take ordination as a bhikshuni; in doing so, she became the second-ever fully ordained nun practicing Vajrayana Buddhism. The first woman was her friend Freda Bedi, who had ordained in Hong Kong one year earlier.

The ordinations of Tenzin Palmo and Freda Bedi showed that with the help of Buddhist communities that had maintained a bhikshuni lineage, it was possible to revive nuns' orders in places where they did not exist. After all, this is how Buddhism spread in the first place: in the fifth century CE, the Chinese bhikshuni lineage was established by nuns from Sri Lanka.



Even though conservative Buddhist institutions have tended to disapprove of ordinations carried out by clergy from different traditions, these ordinations have inspired a bhikshuni revival all over Asia. In 1996, with support from Sakyadhita, eleven Sri Lankan women took bhikshuni ordination with Mahayana nuns in Sarnath, India, reviving the nun's order that had disappeared from Sri Lanka more than one thousand years ago. The initiative was so successful that now there are more than two thousand fully ordained Sri Lankan nuns, who, in turn, have started ordaining bhikshunis from other Theravada countries.

Even in the Tibetan tradition, which never had a bhikshuni lineage as far as we know, a revolutionary shift has taken place. In 2017, the Seventeenth Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje, initiated the process of establishing a bhikshuni order in the Tibetan Kagyu tradition. In an unprecedented move, he invited Taiwanese bhikshunis to Bodhgaya to confer novice vows to nineteen Tibetan women. In a few years, when these women have completed their training as novices, the Taiwanese nuns will presumably ordain them as bhikshunis.

Tenzin Palmo believes Sakyadhita has played an important role in showing Buddhist women what's possible. "When they see hundreds of fully ordained nuns who are highly educated and disciplined," says Tenzin Palmo, "they are quite in shock because they didn't know such women existed." By connecting Buddhist women from different traditions from all over the world, Sakyadhita helps them to broaden their vision, overcome obstacles, and realize new goals.

It is difficult to change attitudes that for centuries have been rooted in practices and structures that favor male authority, especially if this sexism is enshrined in scripture. In this, of course, Buddhists are not alone. "In no religious tradition that I know of did women have equal status to men," says Karma Lekshe, who is in close contact with feminists from other religious traditions, including Catholic nuns, orthodox Jewish women, Muslim women, Hindus, and others.

"In a way, Buddhists are in the best position," she says. "At least, we already had fully ordained nuns from the very beginning, and we have a very clear statement from the Buddha himself confirming that women have equal potential for liberation."

Scholars confirm that the position of women in early Buddhism started off strong. "If you look at inscriptions from the early period of Buddhism in India, you can see a thriving nun's order," says Reiko Ohnuma, a professor of Buddhism at Dartmouth College, who has been studying the role of women in early Buddhism. Nuns were significant donors to stupas and monastic complexes and may have had resources and status nearly equal to those of monks. According to Ohnuma, textual criticism has shown that the story of the founding of the nun's order is clearly not historical. Early Buddhist scriptures were written down only centuries after the Buddha's death, and it's likely that the rules that subordinate nuns to monks were only later cobbled together by monks who felt threatened by competition from nuns. "It's amazing," says Ohnuma, "that women initially got so powerful at all."

Karma Lekshe thinks it's timely that women gain the equal status in the sangha that the Buddha intended for them. "If women were inferior and not worthy of ordination, the Buddha would not have ordained women," she says.

Since its establishment more than three decades ago, Sakyadhita has made so much progress that it has had to revise its objectives; almost all its early goals have been accomplished. "Of all the goals that we set ourselves, I think the only one we haven't achieved yet is to attain world peace through the teachings of the Buddha," jokes Karma Lekshe. She lists the many improvements in the status of Buddhist women today: greater educational opportunities, more women teachers, improved opportunities for ordination, representation in public forums, increased women's leadership, higher education for women in traditional Buddhist studies, and, finally, a new willingness to expose sexual abuse in the sangha and in Buddhist societies overall. Thanks to a surge of



Ven Karma Lekshe Tsomo,
President of Sakyadhita.

research on the role of women in Buddhism, much of it sponsored by Sakyadhita, we are also getting to know many strong Buddhist women from the past.

Many things that seemed impossible for women in Buddhism three decades ago have now become a reality, and this progress emboldens Sakyadhita's sense of purpose. "When women achieve equal representation in Buddhism," says Karma Lekshe, "Sakyadhita will continue to work for social justice. We will continue to nurture kind and wise women leaders to help eradicate sexism, racism, homophobia, and other social ills." Today, women in robes are creating currents of social transformation in Buddhist societies, with ripples expanding across the globe.

In brief:-

Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women is a global alliance founded at the conclusion of the first International Conference on Buddhist Women, held in Bodhgaya, India, in 1987, under the patronage of the Dalai Lama. The initiative for the conference came from the German nun Ayya Khema; the American nun Karma Lekshe Tsomo; and the Thai professor Chatsumarn Kabilsingh (now Bhikkhuni Dhammananda). The organization aims to unite Buddhist women of various countries and traditions, to promote their welfare, and to facilitate their work for the benefit of humanity. Sakyadhita now has nearly 2,000 members in 45 countries around the world. Biennial international conferences bring laywomen and nuns from various countries and traditions together to share their research and experience and to encourage projects to improve conditions for Buddhist women, especially in developing countries. Sakyadhita has been registered as a 501(c)3 non-profit in the State of California since 1988.

The name Sakyadhita means "Daughter of the Buddha." Based on Pali and Sanskrit, two ancient Buddhist languages, the term was coined at the first international gathering of Buddhist women held in Bodhgaya, India, in 1987. The aim was to work together to benefit Buddhist women, to reduce gender injustice, and awaken women to their potential for awakening the world.

Since 1987, through a series of biennial international conferences, Sakyadhita has worked for gender equity in Buddhist communities, focusing especially on improving opportunities for women in education, health, spiritual practice, and ordination. Encouraged by Sakyadhita, members have established retreat centers, education projects, women's shelters, and initiated translation, research, and publication projects.

Sakyadhita links Buddhist women with similar initiatives in other countries around the world to encourage cooperation and cultural and educational exchange. Firmly grounded at the grassroots, Sakyadhita seeks to empower women who have previously been neglected in international development. As a result of these initiatives, Buddhist women are gaining confidence and recognition as scholars, teachers, artists, writers, counselors, and mentors, tackling the problems of poverty, malnutrition, sex trafficking, and the other social ills that beset their communities.

In addition to becoming a world leader in Buddhist social activism and gender development, Sakyadhita provides training in conflict resolution, environmental ethics, healthcare, and human rights to girls and women of all ages in vulnerable communities. We are the core of a global movement to end gender injustice and work for better health and education services for the world's 300 to 600 million Buddhist women.

Source:-

<https://www.lionsroar.com/the-sakyadhita-movement/>

About the Writer:-

Judith Hertog is a teacher and writer whose work has appeared in such publications as the New York Times, the Sun, and Tablet Magazine.



Participants at the 16th Annual Conference in Australia.

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 : RM113,750
(from initial amount of RM150,000)
- Shrine Hall Lights
- Outside - Est amount to spend is RM40,000
- Inside - Balance amount of : RM3,600
(from initial amount of RM8,000)



- Vehicle for Transport
- Est : RM80,000

- Replacing the 56 Buddha Statues' Huts with stainless steel panels/tampered glass.
- Balance amount of : RM22,080
(from initial amount of RM24,800)



BUDDHA FRIEZE FOR SPONSORSHIP AT MEDITATION PAVILION



- Seated Buddha Frieze
- RM18,000 each
- 39 statues left to be sponsored

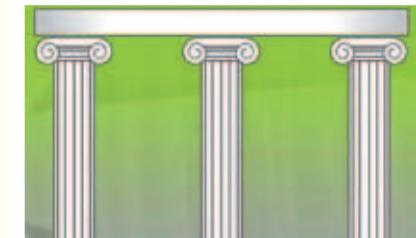


- Standing Buddha Frieze
- RM38,000 each
- 5 statues left to be sponsored



● 25 Lotus Pillars

A total of 25 Lotus Pillars named after the Buddha's core teachings are available for sponsorship at the Wisma Dharma Cakra building at RM25,000 each. Names of the Sponsors will be placed on the pillar.



*Ground Floor – 2 pillars

*Mezzanine Floor – 18 pillars

*First Floor – 5 pillars



- Supply and Install Visual System at 1st Floor, Puja Hall
Estimate Cost:- RM 25,850.00

● Meditation Cushion with Cushion

Big 2ft x 2ft @ RM65 x 66 nos = RM4290
Small 10 x 14 x 46mm @ RM55 x 106 nos = RM5830
Total Estimate Cost :- RM10,120

- Wireless Head Set Microphone
Estimate Cost :- RM 3,300

- Tabletop Gooseneck Microphone system
Estimate Cost :- RM4,800.00

- Mobile Stage with Skirting and staircase
Estimate Cost :- RM7,700

- 10-seater Round Tables
Quantity – 50
Estimate Cost :- RM9,000

- Skirting for Banquet table
Quantity – 100 tables (6ft x 2ft)
Estimate Cost :- RM9,500

● Dharmacakra Wheel at Wisma Dharma Cakra Building

The exclusively designed Dharmacakra Wheel has been completed and installed at the tower of the Wisma Dharma Cakra. Made in concrete, the total cost came up to RM300,000. A single donor has generously given RM100,000 and now BMV would be most appreciative if more Donors can come forward to off-set the remaining RM200,000. The Dharmacakra Wheel symbolises the name of the building, Wisma Dharma Cakra.



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

- 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
- Bojjhangga Puja
- Morning Puja
- Abhidamma Class
- Sunday Dhamma School Session
- Dhamma Talk
- Traditional Chinese Medicine
(Every Sunday except Public Holiday)
- 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

Fri

- 7.30pm - 9.00pm
- 1.00pm - 2.00pm
- 8.00pm - 9.30pm

Sat

- 8.30am - 10.30am
- 9.30am - 11.30am
- 10.30am - 11.30am
- 7.30pm - 8.30pm

Sun

- 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

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

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)

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.

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



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