

# BMVdigest

ISSUE • FEBRUARY 2019

For Non-Muslims only

*Tesaṃ ditthipahānatthaṃ - iddhiṃ dassahi gotami.*

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

**What was the  
Buddha Like?** .....pg. 3

**Can Women Become  
Leaders in the  
Buddhist Tradition**.....pg. 5

**Rare things in the  
World**.....pg. 7

**The Snake,  
The Mayor and  
The Monk** ..... pg. 13

**Why You are  
Addicted to your  
Phone** ..... pg. 14

## PHOTO NEWS

## BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA CHARITY CARNIVAL

**24 Febuary 2019 Sunday 9.30am-2.00pm**

Come and give us a helping hand to raise funds to support Friends of the Vihara (FOV) welfare activities for senior citizen homes, orphanage homes, the homeless and orang asli projects as well as buddhist education under the Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School (BISDS) and K Sri Dhammananda Institute (KSDI).

### **How can you support us?**

- 1) Operate a stall.
- 2) Donate items for sale. (No recycled or re-used items please)
- 3) Assist in sale of coupons.
- 4) Cash donation to support the expenses.

For more details, please contact

**BMV Admin Office at 03-2274 1141**

Jointly organised by

**Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School (BISDS)**

**Friends of the Vihara (FOV)**

**K. Sri Dhammananda Institute**



*Sabbadānam Dhammadānam Jināti ~ The Gift of Dhamma excels all other Gifts*



### HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR



#### Dhammapada Verse 24 Kumbhaghosakasetthi Vatthu

*Utthanavato satimato  
sucikammassa nisammakarino  
sannatassa dhammajivino  
appamattassa yaso bhivaddhati.*



Verse 24: If a person is energetic, mindful, pure in his thought, word and deed, and if he does everything with care and consideration, restrains his senses, earns his living according to the Law (Dhamma) and is not unheedful, then, the fame and fortune of that mindful person steadily increase.

*Venerable Chief Sangha Nayaka of Buddhist Maha Vihara, Venerable Datuk K Sri Dhammaratana Nayaka Maha Thera, President Sirisena Perera, the Committee of Management and Staff would like to wish all devotees and well-wishers a Happy Chinese New Year. May the Year of the Pig bring much peace, happiness, prosperity and good health to you and your loved ones for the coming Lunar New Year.*

## COVER STORY

### Open-Air Buddha Image at BMV

In view of the increasing number of devotees, particularly during Wesak celebrations, the Shrine Room became so crowded that most of the devotees were unable to enter the building to receive blessings, etc. To overcome this perennial problem, it was proposed to erect an open-air Buddha statue, with a canopy and plinth, within the grounds of the Brickfields Buddhist Temple.

The open-air Buddha Statue was erected through the kind generosity of Venerable K. Sri Dhammananda Nayaka Maha Thera, Mr and Mrs P. G. D. Hendry and Datin Gladys Loke Chua.

### Unveiling Ceremony of the Open-Air Buddha Image

The Open-Air Buddha Image was unveiled on 14<sup>th</sup> January, 1968 by Dato Eu Eng Hock. The image itself was donated to the Temple through arrangements made by the kind generosity of Ven. K Dhammananda Nayaka Maha Thera whilst the canopy and the plinth were donated by P. G. D. Hendry. The Open-Air Buddha Image had in fact been a long felt need as the Shrine Room was found inadequate to accommodate the growing number of devotees particularly on Wesak Full Moon Days. With the donation of the Image, open-air religious services could now be held on important religious occasions. Among those who spoke at the opening ceremony were Ven. K Dhammananda, Ven. H. Gunaratana Thera and Mr P. G. D. Hendry, President of the Society.



### Enshrinement of a Buddha relic from Sri Lanka

A Buddha relic brought from Sri Lanka by Ven. K. Deepananda Maha Thera (Principal of Vidyawardhana Pirivena, Dehiwala, Sri Lanka) was enshrined in the Open-Air Buddha Image. The enshrinement ceremony which took place on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1967 was conducted by Ven. K. Deepananda Maha Thera himself amidst a large gathering. On the following day, Sanghika Dana was offered by devotees in honour of Ven. Deepananda's visit.

Source:-

*Voice of Buddhism Vol 5, No 1, March 1968*



# WHAT WAS THE BUDDHA LIKE

by Bhante Dhammika

So extraordinary was the Buddha, so unerringly kind and wise and so positive was an encounter with him, that it would change people's lives. Even while he was alive, legends were told about him. In the centuries after his final Nirvana, it sometimes got to the stage that the legends and myths obscured the very real human being behind them and the Buddha came to be looked upon as a god. Actually the Buddha was a human being, not a "mere human being" as is sometimes said, but a special class of human being called a complete person (*mahapurisa*). Such complete persons are born no different from others and indeed physically they always remain quite ordinary. But through their own efforts they bring to completion every human potential and their mental purity and understanding develop to the stage where they far exceed those of ordinary human beings. A Buddha, a complete person, is even higher than a god because he or she is even free from the jealousy, anger and favouritism that we are told some gods are still capable of feeling.

So what was the Buddha like? What would it have been like to meet him? The Buddha was about six feet tall with coal black hair and a golden brown complexion. When he was still a layman he wore his hair and beard long but, on renouncing the world, shaved them both like every other monk (M.I,163). All sources agree that the Buddha was strikingly handsome. The Brahmin Sonadanda described him as "handsome, good-looking, and pleasing to the eye, with a most beautiful complexion. He has a godlike form and countenance, he is by no means unattractive" (D.I,115).



*Gautama Buddha was tall and pleasing to the eye.*

Vacchagotta said this of him: "It is wonderful, truly marvellous, how serene is the good Gotama's appearance, how clear and radiant his complexion, just as the golden jujube in autumn is clear and radiant, just as a palm-tree fruit just loosened from the stalk is clear and radiant, just as an adornment of red gold wrought in a crucible by a skilled goldsmith, deftly beaten and laid on a yellow-cloth shines, blazes and glitters, even so, the good Gotama's senses are calmed, his complexion is clear and radiant" (A.I,181).

But of course as he got older his body succumbed to impermanence as do all compounded things. Ananda described him in his old age like this: "It is strange, Lord, it is a wonder how the Exalted One's skin is no longer clear and radiant, how all his limbs are slack and wrinkled, how stooped his body is and how a change is to be seen in eye, ear, nose, tongue and body" (S.V,217).

In the last year before his final Nirvana the Buddha said this of himself: "I am now old, worn out, venerable, one who has walked life's path, and I have reached the end of my life, being now eighty. Just as an old cart can only be kept going by being held together with straps, so too the Tathagata's body can only be kept going by being held together with bandages" (D.II,100). However, in his prime people were attracted by the Buddha's physical good looks as much as they were by his pleasant

personality and his Dharma. Just to be in his presence could have a noticeable effect upon people. Once Sariputta met Nakulapita and noticing his peaceful demeanour said to him: "Householder, your senses are calmed, your complexion is clear and radiant, I suppose today you have had a talk face to face with the Exalted One?" Nakulapita replied: "How could it be otherwise, master? I have just now been sprinkled with the nectar of the Lords Dhamma" (S.III,2)

The Buddha was a masterful public speaker. With a pleasant voice, good looks and poise combined with the appeal of what he said, he was able to enthrall his audience. Uttara described what he saw at a gathering where the Buddha was speaking like this: "When he is teaching Dharma to an assembly in a park he does not exalt them or disparage them but rather he delights, uplifts, inspires and gladdens them with talk on Dharma. The sound that comes from the good Gotama's mouth has eight characteristics: It is distinct and intelligible, sweet and audible, fluent and clear, deep and resonant. Therefore, when the good Gotama instructs an assembly, his voice does not go beyond that assembly. After being delighted, uplifted, inspired and gladdened, that assembly, rising from their seats, depart reluctantly, keeping their eyes upon him." (M.II,140)



*The Buddha partaking in a mid day meal.*

King Pasenadi once expressed his amazement at how silent and attentive people were when listening to the Buddha's talk. "I am a noble anointed king, able to execute those deserving execution, fine those deserving a fine or exile those deserving exile. But when I am deciding a case sometimes people interrupt even me. Sometimes I don't even get a chance to say 'While I am speaking, sir, don't interrupt me.' But when the Lord is teaching the Dharma to various assemblies, at that time not even the sound of coughing is to be heard from the Lord's disciples. Once, when the Lord was teaching the Dharma a monk did cough; one of his fellows in the holy life tapped him on the knee and said 'Quiet, make no noise, the Lord, our teacher, is teaching Dharma.' When I saw this I thought 'It is wonderful, truly marvellous, how well-trained, without stick or sword this assembly is'" (M.II,122).

Although the Buddha never gave cause for people to dislike him, there were people who did, sometimes out of jealousy, sometimes because they disagreed with his Dharma and sometimes because he held up their beliefs to the cold light of reason. Once, when he was staying at Kapilavatthu, Dandapani the Sakyan asked him what he taught and when the Buddha told him, Dandapani was not impressed, and "shaking his head, wagging his tongue he departed leaning on his stick, his brow



furrowed into three wrinkles” (MI,108). The Buddha did not chase after Dandapani trying to convince him of the truth of his message.

The Buddha responded to all criticism by calmly and clearly explaining why he did what he did and where necessary correcting misunderstanding that gave rise to the criticism. He was always unflustered, polite and smiling in the face of criticism and he urged his disciples to be the same. “If anyone should criticise me, the Dharma or the Sangha, you should not on that account be angry, resentful or upset. For if you were, that would hinder you, and you would be unable to know whether they said right or wrong, would you?” “No, Lord.” “So, if others criticise me, the Dharma or the Sangha, then simply explain what is incorrect, saying ‘That is incorrect, that is not right, that is not our way, and we do not do that’ ” (D.I,3). Sometimes the Buddha was not criticised but rather abused “with rude, harsh words”. At such times, he usually maintained a dignified silence.

The Buddha is often seen as a gentle and loving person and indeed he was, but that didn’t mean that he would not himself be critical when he thought it was necessary. He was very critical of some of the other ascetic groups of the time, believing that their false doctrines misled people. About the Jains he said: “The Jains are unbelievers, immoral, shameless and reckless. They are not companions of good men and they exalt themselves and disparage others. They cling to material things and refuse to let go of them. They are rogues, of evil desires and perverse views” (A.V,150). When, through misunderstanding, Buddhist monks taught distorted versions of the Dharma, the Buddha would reprimand them, saying, as he did on one occasion: “You foolish man, how could you think that I would teach Dharma like that!” (M.I,132). But his reprimands and rebukes were never to hurt but to spur people to make more efforts or to re-examine their actions or beliefs.

The Buddha’s daily routine was a very full one. He would sleep at night for only one hour, wake up and spend the early morning in meditation, often doing loving-kindness meditation. At dawn he would often walk up and down for exercise and later talk to people who came to visit him. Just before noon, he would take his robe and bowl and go into the nearest city, town or village to beg for alms. He would stand silently at each door and gratefully receive in his bowl whatever food people cared to offer. When he got enough, he would return to the place he was staying at or perhaps go to a nearby woodland area to eat.

He used to eat only once a day. After he had become famous, he would often be invited to people’s homes for a meal and, being an honoured guest, he would be given sumptuous food, something other ascetics criticised him for. On such occasions he would eat, wash his own hands and bowl after the meal and then give a short Dharma talk. Straight after his meal he would usually lie down to rest or sometimes to have a short sleep. As at night, it was the Buddha’s habit to lie in the lion posture (sihasana) on his right side, with one hand under his head and the feet placed on each other. In the afternoon he would talk to people who had come to see him, give instruction to monks or, where appropriate, go to visit people in order to talk to them about the Dharma. Late at night when everyone was asleep, the Buddha would sit in silence and sometimes devas would appear and ask him questions.

Like other monks, the Buddha would usually wander from place to place for nine months of the year, which gave him many opportunities to meet people, and then settle down for the three months of the rainy season (*vassa*). During the rains he would usually stay in one of the huts (*kuti*) that had been built for him at various locations like the Vultures Peak, the Jetavana or the Bamboo Grove. Ananda would tell visitors approaching the Buddha’s abode to cough or knock and that the Buddha would open the door. Sometimes the Buddha would instruct

Ananda not to let people disturb him. We read of one man who, on being told that the Buddha did not wish to see anyone, sat down in front of the Buddha’s residence saying: “I am not going until I see him.”

When he was wandering the Buddha would sleep anywhere – under a tree, in a roadside rest house, in a potter’s shed. Once, Hatthaka saw the Buddha sleeping out in the open and asked him: “Are you happy?” The Buddha answered that he was. Then Hatthaka said: “But sir, the winter nights are cold, the dark half of the moon is the time of frost. The ground has been trampled hard by the hooves of the cattle, the carpet of fallen leaves is thin, there are few leaves on the trees, your yellow robes are thin and the wind is cold.” The Buddha reaffirmed that despite his simple and austere lifestyle he was still happy (A.I,136).



*The Buddha had many guests and he made himself available to anyone who needed him.*

Because he had such a busy teaching schedule and because he was so often approached for advice on different matters, sometimes he felt the need to be completely alone. On several occasions, he told Ananda he was going into solitude and that only those who were bringing him his food were to come and see him (S.V,11). The Buddha’s critics claimed that he only went into solitude because he found it difficult to answer people’s questions and because he wanted to avoid public debates. The ascetic Nigrodha said of him: “The ascetic Gotama’s wisdom is destroyed by the solitary life, he is not used to assemblies, he is not good at debates, and he has got out of touch” (D.III,38). But usually, the Buddha made himself available for anyone who needed him – for comfort, for inspiration, for guidance in walking the Path. Indeed, the most attractive and noticeable thing about the Buddha’s personality was the love and compassion that he showered towards everybody, it seemed that these qualities were the motive of everything he did. The Buddha himself said: “When the Tathagata or the Tathagata’s disciples live in the world, it is done for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world” (A.II,146).

#### **About the Writer:-**

*Bhante Shravasti Dhammika was born in Australia in 1951 and converted to Buddhism at the age of eighteen. He ordained as a monk under Ven Mativella Sangharatna of India in 1976. The same year he went to Sri Lanka where he studied Pali at Sri Lanka Vidyalaya, and later became a co-founder and teacher of Nilambe Meditation Centre in Kandy. Currently, Bhante Dhammika is the spiritual advisor to The Buddha Dhamma Mandala Society in Singapore. Bhante Dhammika has written over 25 books and scores of articles on Buddhism and related subjects and his most popular book Good Question Good Answer has been translated into 36 languages.*



# CAN WOMEN BECOME LEADERS IN THE BUDDHIST TRADITION ?

by Amy Holmes-Tagchungdarpa

The relationship between gender and authority in Buddhist traditions is a contested one, and is made all the more complex by the diversity of Buddhist communities. According to some Buddhist narratives, female leadership is impossible due to a woman's inability to reach enlightenment, believed to be a limitation of her gender. These narratives state that enlightenment is only possible for women if they gain good karma and are reborn as men beforehand. Others point out that as women edge closer to enlightenment, they will spontaneously transform into a male form as a prerequisite for attaining final awakening.

Other historical narratives can be interpreted as similarly disparaging toward women. According to tradition, the Buddha refused his stepmother Mahaprajapati's request for women to be able to become ordained and participate in the Sangha, the Buddhist community, three times before he finally acquiesced, but only after she promised that ordained women would follow extra rules. Today several major monastic lineages in Sri Lanka, parts of Southeast Asia, and Tibetan cultural areas deny female renunciants full ordination, stating that the lineage of nuns was broken long ago and without the Buddha's authority cannot be restarted.



*Maha Prajapati Gotami seeking ordination from the Buddha.*

However, while these narratives may seem discouraging, branding them sexist or as examples of the lack of urgency for women in the Buddhist tradition is only one potential interpretation of this Buddhist doctrine and history. Alternative narratives do exist that argue women can also reach awakening, and that historical stories of the Buddha's life and past traditions need to be read with care and awareness of the broader socio-historical context.

For example, key concepts in Buddhism, including the inherent emptiness of the self, may be read as radical rejections of static ideas of gender and the championing of stereotypically feminine characteristics. Compassion in Buddhist traditions demonstrate the potential for women as well as men to attain the highest goals of the tradition. The vastness of Buddhist literary traditions, as well as its sheer diversity across time and space, leaves it open to multiple interpretations, and similarly, the role of women in the tradition and their potential as leaders also remains open to discussion and debate.



*Bhikkhuni Khema was the first chief female disciple of the Buddha.*

One such debate over the possibility for women in certain monastic traditions to gain ordination has been raging for over a century. In both Asian and contemporary global contexts, some groups of nuns and their supporters argue for the importance of ordination as a platform of authority and representation for women in Buddhist communities. These groups have been disappointed by the lack of willingness to change among Buddhist leaders in the Theravada and Tibetan Buddhist traditions, where some sangha (monastic community) leaders have argued based on historical precedent that they do not have the authority to change the Buddha's directives about ordination. Others argue that these nuns should focus instead on their practice and service and leave aside matters of worldly rank. Additional groups argue that ordination is often secondary to the immediate challenges faced by female renunciants in these Buddhist cultures, who are often housed in economically-marginalized institutions and require institutional and educational support, rather than debates over Buddhist monastic jurisprudence.

While the ordination debate remains an important one, it also tends to obscure alternative narratives and opportunities open to both lay and renunciant Buddhist women for leadership in their communities. Throughout the Buddhist world, women play important roles that are often overlooked in popular discourse. Historically, laywomen were crucial patrons of the Buddhist sangha, funding the building of monastic institutions, the composition and publication of Buddhist texts, and the performance of rituals for the upkeep of the cosmos. Buddhist women also acted as authors of texts and hold their own ritual responsibilities. In the Himalayas, communities devoted to the fasting practice of the Bodhisattva of Compassion known as Nyungne are often dominated by women, who fundraise to build their own temples, organize their own retreats, and choose mentors from their own peers. Politically powerful women such as the Chinese Empress Wu Zetian (624-705) used Buddhism to legitimate their authority just as their male counterparts did. After founding her own short-lived dynasty during the Tang, Empress Wu built Buddhist institutions and



sponsored sacred sites and the publication of books. In Asia and other global contexts, Buddhist women act as teachers. In fact, in South Korea today, more nuns than monks hold Ph.D.s in Buddhist studies. These examples demonstrate the potentialities for leadership in the Buddhist community in diverse contexts.



*Bhikkhuni Kusuma, the first to ordain as a Bhikkhuni in Sri Lanka after a 1,000 years.*

Whether these women articulate their activities as having relationship to goals of gender equality or women's leadership is a different issue. As Chandra Mohanty has pointed out in her seminal work *Feminism Without Borders*, feminism is not a homogenous construct and can at times act as a form of imperialism and oppression for women in non-Western societies. Buddhist communities are also affected by global debates over the relevance and appropriateness of feminist theory and goals, and the ordination debate has at times been particularly polarized by critique of "Western feminists" who are perceived by some Sangha leaders as pushing their own agenda. While Buddhists have been reluctant to engage with the complexities around these issues though, feminists have long seen Buddhism as a resource that supports movements for women's leadership in non-religious environments. In Japan, one of the pioneers of the feminist movement, Raicho Hiratsuka (1886-1971), saw her practice of Zen Buddhism and its ideas of deconstruction as a cornerstone to her feminist philosophy and social activism. The influential Korean new woman and leading author of modern Korean literature Kim Iryŏp (1896-1971) eventually joined a convent and became an influential and respected Buddhist teacher. Today, feminists around the world continue to use ideas of non-self and interdependence to argue that Buddhist philosophy is a bastion for women's liberation in multiple social and spiritual spheres.

Such discussions bring us full circle, and demonstrate the dangers of reifying Buddhist attitudes toward gender and women's potentialities. Historically, as Buddhism has travelled, local cultural attitudes toward women have influenced the opportunities provided for women in complex ways, as in denying full ordination to women in Sri Lanka and Tibetan societies. On the other hand, Buddhism has also opened up new opportunities, particularly in Confucian societies of East Asia, where it allows women to attain literacy and spiritual agency. Some Buddhist philosophers have both denied the opportunity for women to attain enlightenment, while other traditions have argued that women are inherent manifestations of enlightened energy. This array of attitudes illustrates the diversity of Buddhism, or perhaps more accurately, Buddhism, and the importance of considering the agency of human communities, not just textual authorities, in providing women opportunities.

While some communities may argue that gender egalitarianism is an offshoot of forms of Buddhist modernity moulded in interaction with other forms of globalization, the historical heterogeneity of Buddhist women and their activities demonstrate the importance of context in the interpretation of Buddhist narrative tradition and the possibility of individual agency in its practice. In the public and academic sphere, Buddhist women are often incorrectly seen as marginalized, which can contribute to actual marginalization for their activities inside and out of institutions; however, they are present and remain crucial in Buddhist communities. It is up to practitioners and observers to look more closely and widely for opportunities to acknowledge Buddhist women's leadership in varied forms, thereby avoiding the pitfalls of simplistic understandings of women in Buddhist societies and texts and returning agency to these individuals.

Source: <https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/forum>. Berkley Centre for Religion, Peace and World Affairs. The Berkley Forum offers an online space for rigorous debate on critical issues of the day at the intersection of religion, law, ethics, and world affairs.



*Dhammanda Bhikkhuni is the Abbess of the only temple in Thailand where there are Bhikkhunis.*

**Source:-**

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**About the Writer:-**

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# RARE THINGS IN THE WORLD

by Bhante Henepola Gunaratana Nayaka Maha Thera

## There Are Eight Rare Things In The World. They Are:

- (1) Dullabhañca manussattaṃ
  - (2) Buddhho ca dullabho loke
  - (3) Dullabhā khaṇa sampatti,
  - (4) saddhammo paramadullabho
  - (5) saddhammasavaṇampi ca
  - (6) Saṃgho ca dullabho loke,
  - (7) sappurisā atidullabhā
  - (8) kataññūkatavedi puggalo dullabho lokasmim
1. To be born as a human being is rare. There are many obstacles that prevent someone to be born as a human being. Even though there are billions of human beings, all the odds are against their birth compared to other living beings in this planet. It is even more difficult to live in good health that helps focus the mind on learning Dhamma.
  2. Birth of a Buddha also is very rare. According to Buddhist tradition only seven Buddhas are listed by name in the Buddhist text such as Samyuttanikāya, Dīghanikāya. They are Vipassi, Sikhī, Vessabhu, Kakusand, Konāgama, Kassapa, and Gotama. Each of them has taken prepared very long time to attain Buddhahood.
  3. Right moment to practice is very difficult. The right moment is obstructed by eight situations.
    - a. hell realm,
    - b. animal realm,
    - c. ghostly realm,
    - d. birth in a realm without perception,
    - e. birth in a region where nobody can understand four noble truths,
    - f. birth with mental handicap that prevents from comprehending anything,
    - g. birth with total confused state of mind and
    - h. birth during the period when the Buddha's dispensation is not existing.
  4. Saddhammo paramadullabho  
Saddhamma is even more rare. Dhamma—anicca, dukkha and anatta—exist all the time. Recourses for learning Noble Truth are very rare. They are mixed with fake truth. The Buddha has given two very meaningful similes. One is a simile of summoning drum (Āni Sutta) in the discourse called Āni Sutta. The other is counterfeited gold. When imitation gold comes to the market you don't know the difference between real gold and counterfeited gold. So, the value of real gold goes down.
  5. Saddhammasavaṇampi ca  
When noble dhamma is rare, listening to noble dhamma also is rare.
  6. Saṃgho ca dullabho loke  
When the above factors are rare noble Sangha Ariya sangha also is rare. Those who have attained Stream entry, Once returner, Never returner and Arahant are known as noble Sangha (Ariya Sangha).
  7. Sappurisā atidullabhā;
  8. Kataññūkatavedi puggalo dullabho lokasmim

## Listening To Dhamma Is Very Difficult:

Listening to Dhamma is difficult not only because of the appearance of the Buddhas in the world is difficult but also those who listen do not have proper attitude to listening. It is very difficult to focus the mind on the Dhamma teaching. One needs to be highly motivated to listen to Dhamma with undivided mind.



*Not everyone was paying attention to the Buddha during a dhamma sermon.*

## Story:

One day five people went to listen to Dhamma sermon delivered by the Buddha. One of them was sleeping while sitting, one was scratching the ground with his fingers, one was looking up in the sky, one was shaking a tree nearby, the last one was the only one that listened to Dhamma attentively.

While the Buddha was delivering the Dhamma sermon Ven. Ānanda was fanning the Buddha standing behind him. He saw what these people were doing. At the end of the sermon he told the Buddha how these five people behaved while the Buddha was delivering the Dhamma sermon and asked the Buddha why they behaved that way.

Then the Buddha said that it is due to their own Saṃsāric habit. One who slept during the sermon was a snake in 500 previous lives and he coiled up like a snake. One who was scratching the ground with his fingers was an earth worm in his previous life. One who kept on looking in the sky was an astrologer in his previous life. One who was shaking a tree was a monkey in the past life. The one who listened to Dhamma attentively was a learned Brahmin who had studied three Vedas.

Ven. Ānanda asked the Buddha while he was delivering the wonderful Dhamma sermon with remarkable skill of delivery conveying a most beneficial message, why these four people did not listen to it?

The Buddha asked Ānanda, “Do you think this Dhamma is sweet to everybody?”

When Ānanda was silent, the Buddha himself answered his own question and said, “Ānanda, people are engaged more deeply in useless talks (*tiracchānakathā*). They are deeply entrenched in these habits. It is most difficult for them to pay attention to Dhamma that leads them to liberation from suffering. For many people Dhamma is not very sweet.



Attachment, hatred, confusion and craving have conditioned their mind. Even in many Kappas [an immensely long period of time] these people have not heard the word Buddha, Dhamma Sangha. So in this life it is very difficult for them to hear Dhamma. In this beginningless saṃsāra these people have been engaged in animal talks. Turning their mind to Dhamma all of a sudden is very difficult.

## What Do You Do When You Have Listened To Dhamma?

Fifteen steps to follow to discover the truth. They are:

1. First you investigate the teacher.
2. Then you place faith in him (*Atha tamhi saddhaṃniveseti*);
3. Filled with faith you visit him (*saddhājāto upasaṃkamati*)
4. Then you pay respects to him (*upasaṃkamanto payirupāsati*);
5. Having paid respects to him, you give ear (*payirupāsanto sotaṃmodahati*);
6. When you give ear, you hear the Dhamma (*ohitasoto Dhammaṃsuṇāti*);
7. Having heard the Dhamma, you memorize it (*sutvā Dhammaṃdhāreti*)
8. Then examine the meaning of the teachings you have memorized (*dhāritānaṃ dhammānaṃattahṃ upaparikkhati*);
9. When you examine their meaning, you gain a reflective acceptance of those teachings (*atthaṃupaparikkhato dhammā nijjhānaṃkhamati*);
10. When you have gained a reflective acceptance of those teachings, zeal springs up (*Dhammanijjhānakhantiyā sati chando jāyati*);
11. When zeal has sprung up (*chandajāto ussahati*),
12. You apply your will (*ussahitvā tuletī*);
13. Having applied your will, you scrutinize (*tulayitvā padahati*);
14. Having scrutinized, you strive, resolutely striving, you realize with the body the ultimate truth (*pahitatto samāno kāyena c'eva paramasaccasacchikaroti*)
15. and see it by penetrating it with wisdom (*paññāya ca tamativijjha passati*). In this way there is the discovery of truth. (Adopted from Canki Sutta)



An attentive dhamma audience but who is really listening with a clear mind.

## How To Listen To Dhamma

The way how one should listen to Dhamma has also been stated by the Buddha. *Attikātvā manasikātvā sabbacetaso samannāharitvā ohitasoto Dhammaṃ suṇāti*.

1. Listens to Dhamma (*Dhammaṃ suṇāti*).
2. This Dhamma is beneficial to me (*Atthikātvā*).
3. Paying mindful attention (*manasikātvā*).
4. Listen wholeheartedly paying total attention to Dhamma (*sabbacetaso samannāharitvā*).
5. Bending the ears, paying entire attention to the Dhamma one should listen to Dhamma (*ohitasoto*).
  - a. What is heard (*Sutā*)
  - b. Remember (*dhatā*)
  - c. verbal recitation (*vacasā paricitā*)
  - d. reflect mindfully (*manasānupekkhatā*)
  - e. penetrate with right view or wisdom (*ditṭhiya suppaṭivijjhatā*).

## Three Kind Of Listeners:

There are three kinds of individuals listening to Dhamma:

- i. One who has turned his wisdom upside down (*avakujjapaṇṇo*)
- ii. One who keeps his wisdom in his bosom (*ucchanga paṇṇo*)
- iii. One with wide wisdom (*puthupaṇṇo*).

Suppose somebody goes to a monastery and listens to Dhamma delivered by bhikkhus. They preach the Dhamma excellent at the beginning, excellent in the middle and excellent in the end. Morality, concentration and wisdom are all excellent. This person who goes to the monastery to listen Dhamma does not pay attention to the beginning of Dhamma, does not pay attention to the middle nor does he pay attention to the end of the Dhamma. He is compared to a pot turned upside down. When the pot is turned upside down it does not hold water no matter how much water you pour into it. His mind is just like this pot. So his wisdom is turned upside down.

Suppose somebody listen to the beginning, middle and the end of the Dhamma while he is sitting. But as he stands up, he forgets everything he heard. He is like a man who sits in a place keeping some fruit or nuts on his lap and eating them. Suddenly he stands up forgetting the fruits or nuts in his lap. Then all the fruits or nuts on his lap falls on the ground and scatters here and there.

The third person listens to Dhamma while he is sitting. He pays attention to the beginning of the Dhamma, middle of the Dhamma and end of the Dhamma. When he gets up to leave he remembers everything he heard. He is compared to a pot kept turning upside up so that when you pour water into it water stays in it.

Source:-

<https://bhavanasociety.org/article>

About the Writer:-

Venerable Dr H Gunaratana Nayaka Maha Thera popularly known as Bhante G is the founding Abbot of the Bhavana Society, Virginia, USA and an internationally recognized author and meditation teacher. Prior to coming to the United States, he spent five years doing missionary work with the Harijanas (Untouchables) of India and ten years as a resident monk at the Buddhist Maha Vihara, Malaysia. Bhante G has a strong scholarly background and lifelong commitment to dhamma.



# 1. Upcoming Events in February and March 2019

## a) Chinese New Year Eve Blessing Service - 4<sup>th</sup> February at 11.00pm

There will be blessings conducted by the Maha Sangha at 11pm. Oil lamps can be sponsored for peace and prosperity. Lotus candles, flower bouquets and Chinese lanterns are also available for sponsorship. Refreshments will be served after the puja.



CNY Eve Blessing Service.



Oil Lamps will be available for sponsorship.

## b) Chinese New Year New Moon Puja and Blessings - 5<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm

There will be blessings by the Maha Sangha throughout the day. Free vegetarian lunch will be served after the Dana at 12 noon. New Moon evening puja will commence at 7.30pm with offerings followed by Sutta chanting and a dhamma talk.



CNY New Moon Puja.



Lotus candles and flower bouquet will be available for sponsorship.

## c. Sunday Dhamma Dana Series - 'What Buddhists Believe' - a 3-month Beginners Course



Sunday Dhamma Dana Series Speaker Ananda Fong.



Sunday Dhamma Dana Series Speaker Tan Siang Chye.

### i) Is Buddhism still relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by Bro Ananda Fong - Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> February from 10am to 11.30am

**Buddhism & Science** / Origin of the World; 12 links of Dependent Origination

Chapter 14 Pg 344; Chapter 16 Pg 380; Chapter 5 Pg 141

### ii) The Re-discovered Path by Bro Tan Siang Chye - Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March from 10am to 11.30am

**The Noble Eightfold Path**

Chapter 5 Page 102

### iii) I Have Been Here Before by Bro Ananda Fong - Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> March from 10am to 11.30am

**Rebirth**

Chapter 5 Page 129

### iv) The Three Refuges and Buddhists Texts by Bro Tan Siang Chye - Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> March from 10am to 11.30am

**The Tipitaka**; 3 Refuges, Vinaya and Sangha

Chapter 5 Pg 82; Chapter 9 Pg 232; Chapter 8 Pg 192

### v) Misconceptions About Buddhism by Bro Ananda Fong - Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> March from 10am to 11.30am

**Is Buddha a God** Pg 16; First Cause Pg 150; God Idea Pg 331; Buddhist Funeral Pg 229; Idol Worship Pg 274; Vegetarianism Pg 281; Abortion and Suicide Pg 308; Way to Paradise/End of the World Pg 340; Mercy Killing Pg 372



## 2. Past Events in December 2018 and January 2019

### a) 43<sup>rd</sup> Novitiate Programme - 7<sup>th</sup> Dec to 16<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018

The Novitiate Programme was successfully organised for 10 days by the Buddhist Monks Training Centre of BMV and was conducted by Ven. Dr. R. Padmasiri Thera and Ven. M. Dhammika Thera. 18 Novice monks and 9 Upasikas participated in the Programme. Dhamma Talks that were open to the public were delivered by Ven Padmasiri, Ven Dhammika as well as Ven K Wajira Thera and Bro James Ong.



Upasikas taking their precepts.



Ordination Ceremony on 8<sup>th</sup> December.



Group Photo of the 18 Novice monks and 9 Upasikas with the Maha Sangha.



Dhamma Study with Ven Dhammika, one of two Chief Preceptors.

### b) Sanghamitta Full Moon Day - 21<sup>st</sup> December

BMV's 8 precept programme was a great success with a very good turnout of 62 upasikas and upasakas attending. Venerable Sumangala Bhikkhuni from Ariya Vihara Buddhist Society conducted the programme from 7am to 7 pm. Ven Sumangala Bhikkhuni then delivered a dhamma sermon after the puja. A 28 Buddhas puja was held to signify the full moon day of December called Unduvap in Sinhala.



Listening to a Dhamma Talk by Ven Sumangala Bhikkhuni.



Ven. Sumangala Bhikkhuni giving a Dhamma talk after the Buddha puja.



Group Photo to commemorate the Observance of 8 Precepts.



A tray of offerings to the 28 Buddhas.

### c) New Year Blessing Service - 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2018 and 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2019

Special puja and chanting of the suttas were conducted by the Maha Sangha to invoke the Blessings of the Noble Triple Gem for the peace, happiness and harmony of those who attended on the eve, morning and evening of New Year's day.



### d) Dhamma Talks

#### i) Ven K. Wajira Thera from Sri Lanka

Thurs, 13<sup>th</sup> December at 8pm - Anicca, Dukkha, Anatta

Fri, 14<sup>th</sup> December at 8pm - Humility and Respect

Sun, 23<sup>rd</sup> December at 10am - Consciousness according to Abhidhamma



#### ii) Ven. G. Chandima Thera from Canada

Wed, 26<sup>th</sup> December at 8pm - How to Cultivate 10 Paramitas in Daily Life

Thurs, 27<sup>th</sup> December at 8pm - Is Everything Karma?



#### iii) Daozhang Dr Yam Kah Kean from Penang

Fri, 28<sup>th</sup> December at 8pm - Similarities between Taoism & Buddhism





## iv) Laughter Yoga for Health, Happiness and Harmony with Bro Billy Tan

Sun, 30<sup>th</sup> December at 10am



## iv) Bro Garbis Chandana from USA

Fri, 4<sup>th</sup> Jan 2019 at 8pm - Finding Security and Safety in the Practice of the Dhamma



## | PEN PORTRAITS

### – Portraits of 93 Eminent Disciples of the Buddha

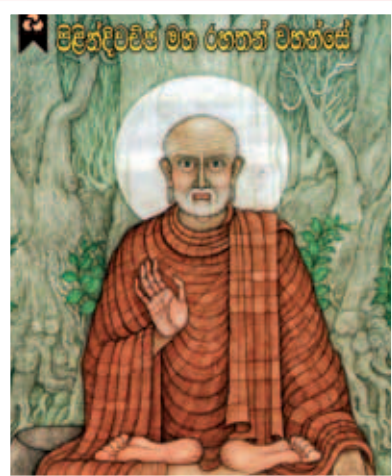
#### No 26. Pilindavaccha Maha Thera – *The Gods love him most*

In his lifetimes prior to the arrival of Gautama Buddha in this world, Pilindavaccha had been successful in reforming the lives of others in the cultivation of virtue. As a result, some were born in the heavens and were grateful to their teacher and guide.

In the Dispensation of Gautama Buddha, Pilindavaccha was born a Brahmin at Sravasti. Having listened to a sermon of Gautama Buddha, he was instantly converted and sought ordination.

While residing at the Veluvana monastery, the Buddha uttered Verse (408) of the Dhammapada with reference to Pilindavaccha Thera, due to his offensive ways.

Pilindavaccha Thera had a very offensive way of addressing people, it didn't matter if they were in the Order or lay people: he would often say, "Come here, you wretch", or "Go there, you wretch" and such other terms as 'Vasala'. Other bhikkhus reported about him to the Buddha. The Buddha sent for him, and spoke to him on the matter. Then, on reflection the Buddha found that for the past five hundred existences, Pilindavaccha Thera had been born only in the families of the brahmins, who regarded themselves as being superior to other people. So the Buddha said to the bhikkhus, "*Bhikkhus! Pilindavaccha Thera addresses others as 'wretch' only by force of habit acquired in the course of his five hundred existences as a brahmin, and not out of malice. He has no intention of hurting others, for an Arahant does not harm others.*" He proceeded to say that the Maha Arahant was free from all defilements and recited the 408th verse of the Dhammapada –



Venerable Pilindavaccha  
Maha Thera

#### Pilindavacchatthera Vatthu

*Akakksam vinnapanim  
giram sacca' mudiraye  
yaya nahhisaje kanci  
tamaham brumi brahmanam.*

Verse 408: Him I call a brahmana, who speaks gentle, instructive and true words, and who does not offend anyone by speech.

One day, a seller of 'tippili' or long pepper ran into serious trouble. Knowing not who Venerable Pilindavaccha was, he was taking a wagon load of 'tippili' for sale, having a sample of specimen 'tippili' in a basket.



Buddha and his Disciples

When he met Ven Pilindavaccha one morning at the gate of Jetavanarama, the Maha Arahant addressed him as 'Vasala' and inquired what the basket contained. The seller was dumbfounded. He retorted by saying 'meebeti' i.e. excreta of mice. "Be it so", said the Maha Arahant and went on his way. There was a striking similarity between long pepper and excreta of mice and to his horror, the seller discovered that the specimen and then the wagonload in turn consisted no longer of long pepper but excreta of mice.

The deities saw to it that the goods were turned into excreta of mice to the great distress of the trader. The poor man's grief knew no bounds.

In desperation, he sought the Maha Thera to give vent to his anger for he felt convinced that he was the cause. He met a well meaning person who questioned him. On hearing the story, he explained to the trader that Venerable Pilindavaccha was a Maha Arahant and the remedy lay in his own hands.

He was asked to meet the Maha Arahant again in the same way, to be careful to reply simply that they were 'tippili'. Then the Venerable Pilindavaccha would say "Be it so". Then you would discover the true nature of your goods. The trader did so and was glad to retrieve his fortune, for instantly the goods of the trader were in the original state by the same process.



Buddha speaking to Ven Pilindavacca  
regarding his offensive language.

Afterwards, the Buddha addressing the Noble Order and the laity, declared that among his Maha Arahants, Pilindavaccha was most pleasing to the Gods.

*Though devoid of triple stain,  
From habit he could not refrain,  
His made of Brahminic address,  
Though Ariyan was past redress.*



## BMV Carnival 2019

- A time for fun and fellowship with numerous kinds of activities

**C**ome 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2019 Buddhist Maha Vihara will be organizing a Charity Carnival and Fun Fair for the devotees and all friends' of Vihara. This carnival is jointly organized by Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School (BISDS), Friends Of the Vihara (FOV) and K. Sri Dhammananda Institute (KSDI), the 3 departments under Buddhist Maha Vihara.

The objective of the Charity Carnival is to raise funds for adult and children's Buddhist Education expenses under BISDS and KSDI and also our current welfare and charitable activities which supports the old folks, orphanages, the orang asli and the homeless under FOV.

We would like to encourage all devotees and friends to come forward to give us a helping hand by supporting us in :-

- 1) Setting up stalls
- 2) Assisting in sale of coupons
- 3) Donation in-kind
- 4) Cash donation to support the expenses of the Charity Carnival

Bring along all your family members and friends to have a time of fellowship and fun time on this charitable and fun fill day. There will be lots of delicious food and beverage, games, entertainment & songs, photo booths and many more.

Please feel free to contact the Buddhist Maha Vihara or the Carnival Committees for any assistance. We will be very happy to assist you.

**Office :** 03-22741141, **Mobile Phone :** 017-2161287 (Sis Foong),  
**E-mail :** bmvcc2019@gmail.com

May all the merits accrue by all your good deeds be shared by all beings

**Bro Ronald Ong**

*Project Head*

*BMV Charity Carnival 2019*



## 2019 Training Plan for BISDS staff

**J**ust as teaching is no longer seen as simply transferring factual information, so teachers also require a more sophisticated approach, responding to the needs & training to build skills and advance teaching methods through technology demands and expectations of teaching. Generation z will present an opportunity for the teachers to learn the best practices in teaching methods.

BISDS has designed a comprehensive teacher training program to put into practise and enhance the quality and skills for teachers to provide improved educational practices to model the competencies and attributes they wish their students to adopt.

The approved BISDS training calendar for 2019 is as follows:

**January 12** - Service in Buddhism

**January 20** - Intelligent White Board refresher class and IT knowledge

**March 30** - Meditation for Staff & Teachers

**April 06** - Professional Presentation (part 1)

**April 13** - Professional Presentation (part 2)

**June to October** - Dhamma Teaching External Program  
(10 weeks, total of 40 hours program)

BISDS will carry out a briefing session to welcome all newly registered staff and teacher volunteers as well as to talk on the Annual New Recruit Teachers Training program.

*By BISDS Training Dept.*

## FOV

### Free meals to Myanmar Refugee School

**B**eginning from January 2019, every Sunday, FOV will provide meals to 45 Myanmar children at the Refugee School on Jalan Landak.



### Visit to Sincere Care Home

- 29<sup>th</sup> December 2018

**F**OV members visited the Sincere Care Home for senior citizens in Kajang on 29 December to deliver some groceries. FOV hoped to raise awareness of the hardship faced by this Home as they owed the rent for one of the 3 premises occupied and has been asked by the owner to vacate the house soon.



### Cooking and Feeding the Needy

- 18<sup>th</sup> November 2018

**B**ukit Beruntung Buddhist group lead by Bro Ian cooked and packed 280 pack meals and distributed 250 packed meal, bread, water, biscuits, oranges, coffee sachets at the Bursa open car park from 2.00pm to 6.30pm. Thanks to all the volunteers from Bukit Beruntung Buddhist group, Bro Jasper, Bro Richards and sponsors of other items.







## “THE SNAKE, THE MAYOR AND THE MONK

by Ajahn Brahm

I spent more than eight years as a monk in Thailand. Most of that time I was in forest monasteries, living among snakes. When I arrived in 1974, I was told that in Thailand there are hundred species of snake: ninety-nine are venomous – their bite will kill you – and the other one will strangle you to death!

During this time I saw snakes almost every day. Once I stepped on a six-foot snake in my hut. We both jumped, fortunately in opposite directions. I even peed on a snake early one morning, thinking it was a stick. I apologised, of course. (Perhaps the snake thought it was being blessed with holy water.) And once while I was chanting at a ceremony, a snake crawled up the back of one of the other monks. Only when it reached his shoulder, did the monk turn around to look; and the snake turned to look at him. I stopped chanting and for a few ridiculous seconds, the monk and the snake were eyeballing each other. The monk carefully flicked off his robe, the snake slithered away, and we carried on with the chanting.

We were trained as forest monks to develop loving-kindness for all creatures, especially snakes. We cared for their welfare. That is why, in those days, no monk would ever be bitten.

I saw two huge snakes while I was in Thailand. The first was a python at least seven metres long with a body as thick as my thigh. When you see something that size, you stop in disbelief; but it was real. I saw it again a few years later and many other monks in that monastery also saw it. I have been told it is now dead. The other huge snake was a king cobra. It was on one of the three occasions, living in the Thai rainforests, when I felt the atmosphere become electric, the hairs stand up on my neck and my senses suddenly become inexplicably acute. I turned a corner of the jungle path to see a thick black snake blocking the 1.5-metre-wide path. I could not see its head or its tail: both were in the bushes. And it was moving. By following its movement, I counted the length of that snake in path widths. It took seven path widths until I saw the tail. That snake was over 10 metres long! I saw it. I told the local villagers. They told me it was a king cobra – a big one.

A Thai monk disciple of Ajahn Chah, now a famous teacher in his own right, was meditating in the Thai jungle with a number of monks. The sounds of an approaching creature caused them all to open their eyes. They saw a king cobra coming towards them. In some parts of Thailand, the king cobra also bears the name ‘one step snake’, because after it strikes you all you have left is one step, and then death! The king cobra came up to the senior monk, raised its head level with the monk’s head, opened its hood and began spitting, ‘Hsss! Hsss!’



What would you do? It would be a waste of time running. Those big snakes can go much faster than you can.

What the Thai monk did was to smile, gently raise his right hand, and softly pat the king cobra on the top of its head, saying in Thai, ‘Thank you for coming to visit me.’ All the monks saw that.

This was a special monk with exceptional kindness. The king cobra stopped hissing, closed its hood, lowered its head to the ground, and went to see one of the other monks, ‘Hsss! Hsss!’

That monk said later that no way was he going to try patting a king cobra on the head! He froze. He was terrified. He was silently wishing the king cobra would quickly go off and visit one of the other monks.

That cobra patting Thai monk once stayed several months at our monastery in Australia. We were building our main hall and had several other building projects waiting for approval at our local council’s offices. The mayor of the local council came for a visit to see what we were doing.

The mayor was certainly the most influential man in the district. He had grown up in the area and was a successful farmer. He was also a neighbour. He came in a nice suit, befitting his position as a mayor. The jacket was unbuttoned, revealing a very large, Australian-size stomach, which strained at the shirt buttons and bulged over the top of his best trousers. The Thai monk, who could speak no English, saw the mayor’s stomach. Before I could stop him, he went over to the mayor and started patting it. ‘Oh no!’ I thought. ‘You can’t go patting a Lord Mayor on the stomach like that. Our building plans will never be approved now. We’re done! Our monastery is finished!’



The more that Thai monk, with a gentle grin, patted and rubbed the mayor’s big stomach, the more the mayor began to smile and giggle. In a few seconds, the dignified mayor was gurgling like a baby. He obviously loved every minute of having his stomach rubbed and patted by this extraordinary Thai monk.

All our building plans were approved. And the mayor became one of our best friends and helpers.

The most essential part of caring is where we’re coming from. That Thai monk was coming from such a pure heart that he could pat king cobras on the head, and mayors on the stomach, and they both loved it. I would not recommend that you try this. At least until you can care like a saint.

**Source:-**

*‘Opening The Door Of Your Heart’ a book by Ajahn Brahm*

**About the Writer:-**

*:- Ajahn Brahm was born in London in 1951. He was ordained in Bangkok at the age of 23 by the Abbot of Wat Saket. He spent 9 years studying and training in the forest meditation under Venerable Ajahn Chah. Ajahn Brahm is now the Abbot of Bodhinyana Monastery and the Spiritual Director of the Buddhist Society of Western Australia.*





## WHY YOU'RE ADDICTED TO YOUR PHONE

by Kurt Spellmeyer

About two years ago, I lost my phone. Waiting at Newark International Airport, I heard the cancellation of my Chicago flight, closed down by a blizzard. I took out my phone to call home, but then I learned about another plane, soon departing from a different terminal. Stampeding down the concourse with the crowd, I must have dropped my aging Samsung.

In the weeks that followed, I added “Buy a phone” to my list of undone tasks, but as each list replaced the former one, something held me back. Gradually, I understood: losing the phone felt liberating.



Living as I do in central New Jersey, I wouldn't have the same sense of relief if my Toyota disappeared. And I'd surely miss my Kenmore washing machine, still running after 20 years. But cell phones differ from technologies like these—and in ways we might not appreciate.

Pinging, ringing, and vibrating all the time, phones can be annoying, but that's not what sets them apart. Lying in my bed at the end of a day, I don't feel so overwhelmed by anxiety that I can't relax unless I run downstairs to do another load of dirty clothes. But anxiety, guilt, loss, loneliness—these emotions can arise when I'm unconnected to my phone, and I'm not the only one this happens to. The mystery is why.

Most of our machines have been designed to replicate or enhance our bodies' functioning. A hammer is a prosthetic hand; bicycles are prosthetic legs. But cell phones, iPads, and PCs are prostheses for our minds.

People often talk about the mind as though it's a computer when the relationship is just the reverse: computers imitate our mental processing. Our grandparents didn't need Steve Jobs to watch the screens behind their eyes. They'd admire mental snapshots of their patios or replay movies in their heads, adding sound to the images.



Computers and their spinoffs are machines designed to simulate these capacities, and like all tools, they soon become extensions of ourselves. The mind is no computer, but our consciousness still merges with our phones and tablets as seamlessly as a painter's hand fuses with her brush or musicians vocalize through their instruments. This fusion can happen, Buddhist teaching holds, because consciousness is formless and adopts the qualities of everything it “touches.” Once we've immersed ourselves in our screens, they become our whole reality—and that's why texting drivers look up with surprise when they rear-end the car in front of them.

We'd like to believe there's a clear boundary between the real and the virtual, but if screens have become extensions of our minds, that

assumption could prove fatally naïve, especially now that IT visionaries claim an implant linking our brains to the Web is less than a decade away.

Long before the Internet, early Buddhists coined a term—*papanca* in Sanskrit—to describe the tendency of our thoughts to proliferate like “entangling vines,” as Zen teachers say. Mahayana Buddhists expanded the term to include not only words and ideas but also images, memories, and other mental fabrications. Now, the time has come for us to add everything streaming into our heads from our new prostheses: YouTube videos, online news, music, selfies sent from far away.



The trouble with *papanca*, the Buddha taught in the *Madhupindika Sutta*, is that the nonstop novelty prevents us from uncovering the sources of our suffering. We shuttle from one screen to the next, trying to allay our nagging sense that something's missing or not right. But nothing we find satisfies for long, and so we start Googling again.

Instead, we need to turn our devices off. When the screens in front of us go blank, we have a better chance to become aware of another screen “behind our eyes,” the screen of the mind. Then, if we sit quietly, watching the breath or reciting the Buddha's name, that inner screen will empty out until it appears formless and radiant. And once we make contact with this bright, empty mind, our craving for fresh screens comes to a stop. No matter what displays we encounter when we switch our devices on again, all of them will convey the same “one taste.”

The *Samdhinirmocana* Sutra describes this “one taste” as a timeless “now” that is “unproduced, unceasing, quiescent from the start, and naturally in a state of nirvana” (trans. John Powers). In that state, where you have nothing to achieve and nowhere left to go, it won't hurt to make an occasional call or look up a restaurant on an app because the mind behind your eyes hasn't changed.

Still, I'm not planning to buy a new phone. Phones come in handy if your car breaks down or you get lost in Brooklyn. But when I've found myself in those predicaments, I've had to reacquaint myself with two often overlooked dharma practices. The first is giving a person on the street the chance to offer me assistance. The other practice goes to the very heart of our real, not virtual, connectedness. That practice is asking for help.

Source:-

<https://tricycle.org/trikedaily/buddhism-cell-phones>

About the Writer:-

About the Writer:- Kurt Spellmeyer a Tricycle contributing editor, is a Zen priest and directs the Cold Mountain Sangha in New Jersey. He teaches English at Rutgers University and is the author of *Buddha at the Apocalypse: Awakening from a Culture of Destruction*.



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 : RM116,700 (from initial amount of RM150,000)
- Shrine Hall Lights
  - Outside - Est amount to spend is RM40,000
  - Inside - Balance amount of : RM6,950 (from initial amount of RM8,000)



- Replacing the 56 Buddha Statues’ Huts with stainless steel panels/tampered glass
  - Balance amount of : RM23,450 (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
  - 50 statues left to be sponsored
- Standing Buddha Frieze
  - RM38,000 each
  - 3 statues left to be sponsored

PARTIAL SPONSORSHIP

- Shrine Hall External Painting (Heritage Refurbishment)
  - IMO Lim Sin Mook – Amount : RM500
  - IMO Kam Sin Yan – Amount : RM800
  - Lim Yang Meng – Amount : RM800

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 25<sup>th</sup> August 1894 and the simple rectangular shaped building completed sometime during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

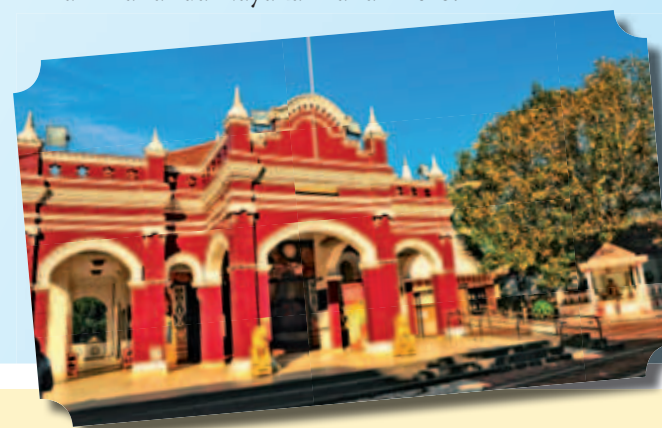
Many students or devotees who have studied and benefited from the BISDS, the Vihara's Free Publications, Dhamma programmes, classes, talks, etc have gone on to set up new Buddhist societies and centers which help to spread Buddhism in the country far and wide.

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

### 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

*(1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto: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

123 Jalan Berhala, Brickfields 50470 Kuala Lumpur.

Tel: 03-2274 1141 Fax: 03-2273 2570

Email: [info@buddhistmahavihara.org](mailto:info@buddhistmahavihara.org)

Website: [www.buddhistmahavihara.org](http://www.buddhistmahavihara.org)