

Lumbini

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Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK)

Buddha was born more than 2600 years ago at Lumbini in Nepal. His teachings of existence of suffering and the way out of the suffering are applicable today as they were applicable then. The middle way he preached is more appropriate now than ever before.

For centuries Buddhism remained the religion of the East. Recently, more and more Westerners are learning about it and practising Dharma for the spiritual and physical well-being and happiness. As a result of this interest many monasteries and Buddhist organisations have been established in the West, including in the UK. Most have Asian connections but others are unique to the West e.g. Friends of Western Buddhist Order.

Nepalese, residing in the UK, wishing to practice the Dharma for their spiritual development, turned to them as there were no such Nepalese organisations. Therefore, a group of Nepalese met in February 1997 and founded Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) to fill this gap. The society is non-political, non-racial, non-profit making voluntary organisation and open to all, both Nepalese and non-Nepalese, whatever their faith and tradition.

Objectives

1. To make Buddhism known to the wider public and to help them understand the benefits of the Buddha's profound teachings,
2. To have a forum for the meeting of Nepalese residents in the UK and others with an interest in Buddha Dharma as a spiritual practice for discussion, exchange of ideas, constructive dialogue and to build Nepalese Buddhist community in the UK etc.,
3. To establish links with similar organisations in the UK, Nepal and other countries,
4. To organise voluntary work to help reduce human suffering in Nepal and other countries, and
5. To promote and publish religious and cultural heritage of Nepal.

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Journal of The Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK)

Lumbini is the journal of LNBDS (UK) and published annually depending upon funds and written material; and distributed free of charge as Dharma Dana. It is our hope that the journal will serve as a medium for:

1. Communication between the society, the members and other interested groups.
2. Publication of news and activities about Buddhism in the United Kingdom, Nepal and other countries.
3. Explaining various aspects of Dharma in simple and easily understood language for all age groups.
4. Discussion on Dharma through a readers column.

Lumbini is run purely on donation. Therefore, any donations are welcome and greatly appreciated. Cheques/Postal orders should be made payable to Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) or LNBDS (UK) and forwarded to the society.

Lumbini for you...

For the forthcoming issues of Lumbini, we welcome your articles, anecdotes, short stories or news features, which are linked to Nepal and/or Buddhism. Send your contributions and comments to the Editor, LNBDS.

Please include your full name, address and telephone number. We regret we cannot acknowledge or return items we do not publish.

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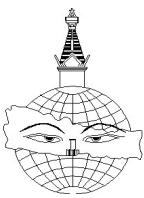
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Editorial

LNBDS UK would like to wish a very Happy Buddha Day, Buddha Jayanti, Swanyapunhi to all our readers. It is 2562nd Buddha Jayanti, the era which marks the passing away (Mahaparinirvan) of the Buddha, in 543 BCE. The Buddha was born in 623 BCE in Lumbini, Nepal. So, this year we will also be celebrating the Buddha's 2642nd birth day, Lumbini Day.

We are blessed that prince Siddhartha, Buddha to be, was born in present day Nepal. Some people make big noises on this fact but do not try to discover the value of his teachings. In the Buddha's own word, it is said '*Yo Dhammam passati, so mam passati*' (one who sees Dharma, sees me). From this it is clear that learning and practising his teaching is necessary to know the Buddha. We are proud to be born in the country where the Buddha was born, let's also be proud to learn and to implement his teachings in our daily life for betterment and happiness.

With a great compassion, empathy and kind heartedness, The Buddha taught Dharma that leads to Nirvana which is eradication of defilements (greed, hatred and delusion). By fulfilling all great qualities Siddhartha Gautama attained the Buddhahood. By having faith on The Buddha, we accept his *Dhamma* (teaching) and follow *Sangha* (disciples). As Buddhists we go to refuse to Triple Gem. As a great teacher (Dhamma guru), The Buddha is embodiment of great qualities. As a Buddhist we recite and contemplate nine qualities (*Nava Guna*) of The Buddha. By doing so we develop *Saddha* (faith) on The Buddha. We are thankful to Dr. Doreen Perera for her article 'Investigating the Nine Noble Qualities of the Buddha' which help us to get some understanding of those qualities.

Out of compassion, the Buddha dwelled from village to village teaching dhamma for 45 years. His advice to his disciples was '*Charatha bhikkhave charikam bahujana hitaya bahujana sukhaya lokanukampaya*' (monks, dwell from city to city for the benefit and happiness of many). After passing away of the Buddha, his teachings were compiled into three baskets (*Tipitaka*). Dhammapada is one of the well known text which is complied with various teachings into one book, also known as hand book of Buddhist. To highlight the benefit of this book, we made Dhammapada as one of topics at our annual Buddha day. Last year Mrs Sweekhya Dahal Tuladhar presented enlightening presentation which we published here

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'*Dhammapada verses 182 & 183 with explanation*' for the benefit of many.

Appreciative Joy (*Mudita*) is one of the four sublime states of mind. One should develop *Mudita* along with loving kindness, Compassion and equanimity. *Mudita* is to be happy in others' happiness which is opposite to jealousy. We are grateful to Mr. Rajah Kuruppu/Dr Arjun Dev Mehta for the in-depth article on Mudita. To our Nepali readers we have 'सुशासनका लागि बुद्ध धर्म' by Ganga Gosai, one of the winning articles from our essay competition in 2016 in Nepal. Our society in collaboration with Buddhist Youth Group (*Yava Baudha Samuha*), Kathmandu has been organising Buddhist essay competitions on various topics since 2007. Topic for last year was 'Buddhist perspective on good governance'.

We are thankful to Acharya Mahayogi Sridhar Rana Rinpoche for his article on 'Some facts about Vajrayana Buddhism'. Equally our thanks to Bhante Sujan for his reflection on Loving Kindness, Mr. Hem Bahadur Shakya on 'Anatma – No Soul' and Mrs. Nitima Priya on 'My encounter with Buddha Dharma'.

May the blessings of the Triple Gem be with us!

Cover story

Shanti Deep (Eternal Peace Flame)

Prince Siddhartha was born in Lumbini Garden while his mother Mayadevi was on her way from Kapilavastu to her maternal home in Devadaha. He was born under a Sal tree on the full moon day (Baishakh Purnima) in 623 BC of Gregorian calendar. Immediately after the birth, The future Lord Buddha took seven steps to the north, looked around and announced '...this is my last birth; henceforth, there will be no rebirth for me' in the Lumbini garden. He was given the purification bath in the Pushkarini pond. Queen Mayadevi passed away after seven days of the birth of Prince Siddhartha and his stepmother Prajapati Gautami raised the prince. Siddhartha Gautama attained Nirvana (enlightenment) and become the Buddha (the awoken one). He taught people to respect each other and live peacefully.

Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha is now one of the most sacred pilgrimage site to all Buddhist, peace lovers and others. The government of Nepal with support of international community has prepared a master plan to develop and preserve the historic Lumbini as a major pilgrimage/tourist site. The site is being developed in different zones, namely the Sacred

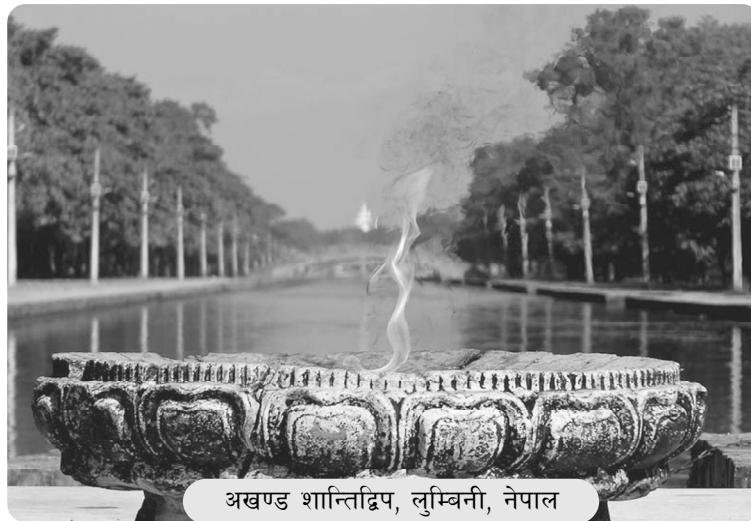
Garden, the West Zone, East Zone and New Lumbini Village. Monasteries from different countries are built in the West and East zone. A long canal is also built where people can take boats to visit different monasteries.

Symbolising the peace taught by the Buddha, an eternal peace flame (named as Shanti Deep) was lit on a marble

platform at the end of the canal in front of the entrance gate to the Sacred Garden, an area where one can visit the remains of ancient monasteries, the Maya Devi Temple, Ashoka Stambha (pillar) and contemplate on the peace propagated by the Buddha.

The Shanti Deep was lit by the then Chairman of the Lumbini

Development Trust, the then Prince Gyanendra on 1st of November 1986 and the flame has been lit continuously since then. This is now a symbol of peace in Lumbini garden. The Shanti Deep was taken to various Buddhist sites in Kathmandu and also to the Everest Base Camp in 2016 by Nepalese Olympian and athletes to help Nepali tourism after the impact of the earth quick in April 2015. May the 'Eternal Peace Flame' bring happiness, peace and prosperity to all!



अखण्ड शान्तिदीप, लुम्बिनी, नेपाल

Membership of the Society

Members whose valued memberships are due for renewal and new members who would like to support the society by becoming a member are requested to complete the section below and return it to the society's Treasurer at address **14 Toronto Avenue, Manor Park, London E12 5JE, UK** with your cheque made out to Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) or LNBDS (UK). We very much hope you will support the society by renewing your membership or by becoming a member.

Membership for 1 year: **Individual - £ 10.00, Family - £ 25.00, Life Membership - £ 150.00**

I/We would like to support the LNBDS's work and would like to renew my membership/join the society.

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I/We enclose the membership fee for the year of £ to renew my membership/join the society.

In addition, I/We wish to donate £ Total amount enclosed £

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Anatma – Non-Soul

✉ Hem Bahadur Shakya, Patan, Nepal

The Mahasi Technique of Vipassana Meditation is devised by Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw of Myanmar on the basis of the Teachings of The Buddha. According to this technique, one needs to sit in a posture in sitting position such that he or she can sit for one hour or longer comfortably and without difficulty. The left leg should be kept inside and the right leg outside in the sitting posture. The left hand is kept below the right hand. The body should be in an upright position. Eyes should be closed. After doing all these, one should keep mind (concentrate) in the abdomen. When one inhales there is rising of the abdomen. When one exhales there is falling of the abdomen. One should note only rising of the abdomen and falling of the abdomen. It is not necessary to say that there is rising because there is inhalation. Simply it is to note that there is rising of the abdomen. Similarly, there is falling of the abdomen. It is not necessary to say there is falling because of the exhalation. Simply one has to note that there is falling. Thus, the technique says only that there is rising of the abdomen and falling of the abdomen. In this technique, the main object of observation is to see the rising of the abdomen and the falling of the abdomen slowly and steadily. The object of observation is called "Aaraman". So, in this context, aaraman is the object of observation i.e. rising of the abdomen and falling of the abdomen. After observing aaraman for a considerable amount of time, one will slowly begin to understand meanings of *Anicca*, *Dukkha* and *Anatma*. Today's subject matter is to understand "*Anatma*".

One has to sit in a natural way easily and in a comfortable way. There should be normal breathing no less or no excess speed. There should be breathing in its natural and real way. It is to observe the rising and falling of the abdomen as and when they occur. When there is actual rising of the abdomen there should be noting that there is rising. Similarly, when there is falling of the abdomen there should be noting that there is falling. So, when the rising of the abdomen is occurring it is to note there is rising. If there is rising of the abdomen and if one says it is falling, then it is wrong noting. It is wrong. Similarly, if there is falling of the abdomen and if one says it is rising then it is wrong noting. It happens quite often in this type of wrong observation and labeling in wrong way when there is distraction in the mind. It is natural. Our mind is in the beginning stage. It is very wild. We cannot concentrate in the object of observation at once. With passage of time and our constant practice we will be able to concentrate in the object of observation. One's mind runs here and there in a quick manner. One has to tame it. If one practices the Vipassana meditation continuously and persistently he will be able to tame the mind soon. He will be able to stick into observing rising and falling of the abdomen in quick

succession. He can see the object of observation for longer and longer period and thus his concentration will be developed. Slowly he will be able to understand Anicca, Dukkha and Anatma.

At the beginning one may not be able to feel the movement of abdomen. One may not feel rising of the abdomen and falling of the abdomen. With constant observation and practice the movement of the abdomen will become clear. One can see the rising of the abdomen from beginning of the rising to the end of the rising. Similarly one can feel the falling of the abdomen from beginning to the end of the falling. One will be able to feel the rising of the abdomen actually when it is occurring. Let us say there is rising of the abdomen. At the same moment of actual rising we note that it is rising. At this moment it happened that there is actual rising moment of the abdomen. At the same moment the mind is noting that it is rising. We are in real condition. It is really happening and really perceiving simultaneously. At such moment our mind is neutral. It is neither in delight nor in anger. Mind is in pure condition.

When we are not in meditation and in other activities we may not feel movement of the abdomen. Even if we do not see the movement, the rising of the abdomen is still there. The falling of the abdomen also takes place even though we do not attend (notice) it. The process of rising and falling of the abdomen keeps going whether we care about it or we do not care about it. It goes on forever until our death. It happens to everybody. The more we practice the more clearly, we will be able to perceive the rising and falling movements to its true nature. One will be feeling the rising of the abdomen very slowly step by step to the end of the rising movement. After the end of the rising moment there will be the start of the falling movement. It goes on falling until the end of the falling. There will be another rising again. It goes on so and so forth continuously for ever. In each rising movement simultaneous noting of the rising moment should coincide. In the same way there should be coincident perception of the falling movement simultaneously. Such phenomena will happen to each and every living being. It depends upon how much time you devote on such phenomena. The more you devote the more you will reap. The more you dedicate the clearer will be your mind. One will be able to see its real nature. One will be able to perceive actually at the same moment when it is happening. In such moments we are perceiving the reality. We are seeing the real form. We are seeing in real form what actually it is. In such coincident moment our mind is free of *klesh* (defilement). If we can keep more and more such moment our mind becomes more and more free from *klesh*. Our mind becomes more and more clear and pure. At this

point it is to be noted that our mind becomes pure only when there is coincidence of perception and the actual happening of the *aaraman*. *Klesh* does not enter in our mind in such coincident moments. So, our practice should be continued in such a way that there are such coincident moments more and more. *Klesh* will be diminished in each observation of such coincidence. It takes one second for one observation. If there is one such observation in one second our mind becomes pure one time. In one minute i.e. 60 seconds our mind will be 60 times pure. In one hour i.e. 60×60 seconds our mind will be 3600 times pure. In this way if we go on observing *aaraman* actually when it occurs coincidentally then our mind goes on becoming purer moment by moment. If we go on observing the abdomen in such careful way we will begin to see the nature of the *aaraman*. We will begin to understand that the rising movement is there due to the natural condition of the abdomen. The rising of the abdomen is there because the air goes inside when there is inhalation. In the same way there is falling of the abdomen because the air goes outside when we exhale. The phenomena of rising and falling of the abdomen is not done by a soul. It is natural condition of the abdomen that the rising or falling phenomena is produced. There is no entity which is doing these phenomena. The phenomena of rising and falling of the abdomen is there from the moment a baby is born. And it goes on until one breathes one's last. When one is not in meditation and is doing some other job then he will not notice rising and falling. But the phenomena of rising and falling go on happening. It is still there. Our attention is diverted when we are not observing that. It is still there and it is still happening. There is no one there to stop or continue the phenomena from happening. The rising and falling of the abdomen continues. Naturally it continues. The phenomena happen according to its nature. There is no soul. There is no any other entity which forces to produce rising and falling of the abdomen. It depends upon the condition of the abdomen. Sometimes the rising of the abdomen takes place for long duration at a stretch and the falling also becomes long. Sometimes the rising becomes short and the falling also short. The phenomena is not always of the same type. The form of the phenomena also varies. Some time it becomes very tight and uneasy. Sometimes it becomes loose and easy. Sometimes it becomes heavy and painful. Sometimes it becomes light and pleasant. The more seriously you practice the more you will have better understanding of the nature of the phenomena. This will indicate that there is no soul. If there is soul, you do not need to do yourself. You do not need to labour hard. The soul should have done easily for you. Because there is no soul your performance is measured according to what you do. You will need to do things of your own. Things happen according to the condition. The condition of the abdomen ascertains the length of the rising

and falling. The heaviness and painful movement of the abdomen are also due to the condition of the abdomen. In this way the phenomena is due to its natural cause of dhamma. It is all due to non-self-i.e. Anatma. Beginners may feel it difficult to understand this phenomenon. As time passes by after continuous practice one will begin to understand slowly. It depends upon the interest you show in the practice. If you are doing with much interest and diligence you will begin to learn. There are phenomena of rising of the abdomen and there is noting by the mind at the same time. The rising is felt, and the rising process is finished. The rising is impermanent. The process of the falling phenomena begins immediately after the end of the rising process. The falling continues for a while and comes to end at a certain time. The falling is also impermanent. Again, the rising process begins. It continues in this way. It is Anicca. The process of one rising is different than that of the process of another next rising. In the same way the process of one falling is not the same as the next falling process. The process of previous rising is totally different than the following process of rising. It has changed. It is Anicca.

In this way, we will begin to understand Anicca. When one understands one of Anicca, Dukkha or Anatma then he will understand all three simultaneously. It is said that it is one and the same among those three. After much contemplation of the object of observation i.e. *aaraman* we will begin to know of Nama and Rupa. When we go on observing rising and falling of the abdomen seriously we sometime feel the rising very heavily and relaxed when there is falling time. There is note made by the mind that there is heaviness at the time of rising. The mind knows this. In the same way there is tightness at rising time and loose feeling at the time of falling time. The mind knows that there is tightness at the rising time. The mind knows this. The heaviness and tightness are the natural dhamma of the rising movement of the abdomen. The relaxation and loose feelings are the natural dhamma of the falling movement of the abdomen. These heaviness and tightness during the rising movement are Rupa. The knowing of heaviness and tightness by the mind is Nama. Thus, there is Nama and Rupa in the observation of rising movement of the abdomen. There is another next Nama and Rupa in the observation of the following falling movement of the abdomen. Similarly, there will be another Nama and Rupa in the next rising movement and another Nama and Rupa in the next falling movement of the abdomen. In this way, the Nama and Rupa is a continuous flow. It is said that this world is made up of the Nama and Rupa only. This world is full of sorrow because of the Nama and Rupa. There is Dukkha due to Nama and Rupa. The Nama and Rupa are automatically moving. They go of their own. We cannot do what we like. This way our life is governed by the Nama and Rupa. It depends upon Nama and Rupa. So, it is soulless. There is no soul. It is Anatma.

Mudita-Appreciative joy

(Revised and edited by Dr Arjun Dev Mehta from the original article in the booklet *The Brahma Vihara – The Art of Noble Living* written by Mr Rajah Kuruppu)

Of the four sublime states, perhaps the most neglected is mudita which is defined as sympathetic or appreciative joy or rejoicing the joys of others or altruistic joy at the happiness, fortune and success of others.

One should not extend mudita to those who may be successful and happy but lead an unwholesome and an evil life. For a true Buddhist is aware of suffering that is in store for them under the natural law of kamma, the law of cause and effect, action and reaction. What should be extended to such people by a person practising the art of noble living is compassion for their future suffering and the wish that they would change their ways soon for their own welfare.

Mudita should be extended to those who are successful and happy without resorting to evil ways. It may also be directed towards those who may not deserve success on grounds of competence and application but who are successful by fortuitous circumstances.

One could be happy of another leading a noble and honourable life, for even if such a person may not realise success and fortune at present, under the law of kamma happiness would be his in the future. His wholesome kamma would follow him like a shadow, as in the case of unwholesome action, and would yield happy results at a future time.

It is possible to be even happier about those who are living a life in accordance with the Dhamma and following the noble eight-fold path. For they are on the road to Nibbana, the liberation from birth and suffering for all time. The happiness gained by men of virtue is of a transient nature because whatever heavenly planes one may be born and for whatever length of time, one would eventually have to return to other spheres of life that may not be that satisfactory.

Many modern writers on Buddhism agreed that Mudita is a neglected virtue.

Mudita and Karuna

Mudita is much more difficult to practise than Karuna, which flows naturally towards all those who are in distress, including one's enemies. Compassion arises even towards our worst enemies when they undergo unbearable hardship and suffering. On the other hand, jealousy increases with the prosperity of others and it applies not only to one's enemies but also to friends and neutral persons.

There are more opportunities for the cultivation and

development of karuna than for mudita. The media records the sufferings of people in various parts of the world at considerable length, whereas the happiness of people is not given the same publicity as it does not appear to be news worthy. Thus, it is necessary to make the best use of the comparatively few opportunities that come in one's way to practise and develop the noble quality of mudita.

Mudita could also help the cultivation of karuna. It would ennoble charitable and social work undertaken with compassion and prevent such activity from degenerating into a patronizing and condescending exercise that would repel and hurt the recipient. Moreover, it would prevent charitable work from becoming dead routine performed with indifference. In this connection, it should be noted that indifference is a distant enemy of mudita. Mudita would also enable the acquisition of greater merit by one undertaking charitable work moved by compassion. In such circumstances, one would not be merely taking action to relieve the distress of others but would also be happy at their joy arising from relief provided.

As mentioned earlier, the practice of metta and karuna is easier than the practice of mudita which requires great personal effort and strong will power. The usual tendency is for one religion to be jealous of another religion, one institution to be jealous of another institution, one business undertaking to be jealous of another business undertaking, one family to be jealous of another family, unsuccessful students to be jealous of successful students and even brothers and sisters to be jealous of another brother and sister.

Achievable goal

The long-term objective in the cultivation of mudita is to be happy at the success of others as if it is one's own success. The realization of this goal is not impossibility. The Buddha declared that if it were impossible to cultivate the good, he would not have advised to do so. It has been pointed out by Ven. Nyanaponika Maha Thera that the capacity for mudita has psychological roots in the nature of man perhaps even deeper than his compassionate responses. People like to feel happy, with or without good reason, and would prefer it to shared sadness or compassion. Man's sociability gives him some familiarity with shared emotions and shared pleasures. There are in man not only aggressive impulses but also the natural bent towards mutual aid and co-operative actions. More-over happiness is infectious and mudita can easily grow out of this tendency. Children

also respond to smiling faces and happiness around them. Though jealous and envious at times they enjoy making play mate happy. The Ven. Thera adds that parents and educationists should provide wise encouragement to develop this potential.¹

One could develop mudita by thinking of evils of its opposite emotions of jealousy and envy. The begrimed success of others, hatred for gains of others, the odious comparisons of the fortunes of others with one's humble circumstances would lead to one's own undoing and sorrow.

On the contrary, rejoicing at the success of others would add to one's sum total of happiness. Happiness among living being is limited. Even the affluent and opulent have their fair share of disappointments, sorrow and ill health so that the joy in the happiness of others would enable one to increase one's own fund of happiness.

Buddhagosa, the outstanding Buddhist commentator, has remarked that if mudita could not be extended to a given person, as the person at present is not in a happy position, one could think of his past happiness and rejoice in that fact.

Benefits

Actually, mudita towards the success and fortune of others would be helpful to oneself. It would act as an antidote to envy and jealousy, the evil emotions that along with craving and greed are responsible for much of the suffering by disturbing the mental and physical equilibrium of man.

One often observes people in extreme agitation. However, on examination one finds that no serious calamity had befallen them or those who are close and dear to them. All that has happened is that someone known to them, perhaps even a relative or a friend, had achieved some success or gain which is the cause of agitation. This is unnecessary torment and worry. How much better it is to be happy at the success of others and be happy ourselves. Our life will gain in happiness by sharing in the happiness of others. In fact, in the moments of happiness people's features change for the better. Actually, happiness inspires men to noble aspirations and deeds exceeding their usual capabilities. One could increase one's own happiness by the cultivation of the mind to be happy with other's success.

When mudita is developed there is chain reaction that

would encourage the growth of other noble virtues such as magnanimity, tolerance, generosity, friendliness and compassion while evil emotions such as jealousy, ill-will, selfishness and hardheartedness would sharply decline.

An important benefit of mudita is that it would assist the eradication of craving that is the main cause of all suffering and which tie the living beings to samsara, the cycle of births and deaths, with its transient, unsatisfactory and insubstantial nature. On account of ignorance there is the craving for sense pleasures, which are never fully satisfied as new kinds of desires continue to arise. The Buddhist prescription to overcome craving is renunciation of such pleasures by wisdom. For this reason, it is said in the Dhammapada that "who so ever in¹ the world controls this stupid unruly craving, from him sorrows fall away like water drops from a lotus leaf". With the cultivation of mudita there is a shift of emphasis from one's own happiness to rejoicing in the joys of others which would considerably help to progressively overcome craving for the eventual realization of nibbana, the liberation from all suffering.

One should also extend mudita to oneself and be happy and appreciative of one's own success and fortune, provided such gains have been realized without resorting to unethical practices. If not, one would always be discontented with life, and there would be no mental tranquillity and contentment. One should not only think of one's failures but also of one's successes. It is important to be satisfied with one's gains and cultivate joy, which is one of the seven factors of enlightenment.

However, the greatest happiness for one is the satisfaction of leading a life of virtue without causing harm to any living being, human, animal or invisible, and even more, the life that is lived in accordance with Dhamma. For the latter is the surest and most effective way for ensuring a lasting escape from the suffering of life.

Thus, the chief characteristic of mudita is the happy acceptance of others prosperity and success. Mudita embraces all prosperous beings and is a congratulatory attitude toward such beings. It tends to eradicate any dislike towards successful persons.

Reference:

¹ Ven Nyanaponika Thera "Is Unselfish Joy Practicable?" in 'Mudita'. Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 1971. p. 1

**"Health is the most precious gain and contentment the greatest wealth.
A trustworthy person is the best kinsman, Nibbana the highest bliss."**

~ 204 Sukhavagga, Dhammapada

My encounter with Buddha Dharma

↗ Nitima Priya, Holistic Counsellor, UK

Growing up in Nepal, we are known both Hindus and Buddhists. We were taught the life story of the Buddha in Primary school, that Siddhartha Gautama was a prince locked up in the four doors of his palace, where he had everything one could possibly ask for. One day he went out of the palace, saw the four signs and upon returning, he left his wife and newborn baby.

I remember spending much time with my grandparents in Kohiti in Kathmandu. They were my favourite times. My mum's maternal home, it was made of mud, and for those of you that remember the old style mud homes with wooden ladders that had holes in-between, you will remember they were pretty scary. It had Newari style tiles, a big balcony (*kausi*) and a tinned roof. I loved every corner of that house, the smell, the colour and my grandparent's love. In the early mornings I would join my grandparents in harmonium and devotional songs, I really enjoyed it. Grandma (Ma) would tell me tons of stories about Ram, Krishna, Naradmuni and Buddha. She was a unique character and my hero; she was funny and a great storyteller.

Ma was not afraid of anybody yet she was very compassionate and her best friends ranged from common people to beggars in Pashupatinath temple (mandir). During VIP parties, people would often ask for her, as she was such a pleasure to be around. I will also never forget about one of her close friends, she was blind and begged behind Vasuki nag's mandir in Pashupati, every time they met, she would hold her hand and sit and chat for ages. The joy they exuded was out of this world; Ma would tell me that these friends were very precious to her and she thought very highly of them. Perceiving things from the outside world, it was strange to me and I had a slight inner conflict. The society we lived in didn't touch the beggars because they were dirty and slept on the streets, but there she was hugging them, and sitting on the floor, chatting about life. Of course I was young and I loved her, so I just followed everything she did. Ma never told me the value of being non-judgemental, but she lived with it. She is an amazing person and I will forever be in her debt, I don't think she knows how much I have learned from her.

Ma reminded me this event, early one morning, when I was about five years old, Ma and I were returning through the field after buying some fresh vegetables. In my small hand I held malpa and swari (a Nepali breakfast) wrapped in newspaper, I couldn't wait to get home and eat it with hot sweet milk. We came across Buddha's mandir right in the middle of the field where the monk was giving discourses in Newari. Ma said to me: "we should always

make an effort to listen to Buddha's deshana (teachings), shall we sit and continue with our journey after the teaching?" I always appreciated that Ma never told me what to do but rather always presented me with choices from which I could make my own decisions. I said sure, but in my mind I just couldn't wait to get home to eat my malpa, and swari. The discourse finished and the monks and nuns were asking for alms. We hadn't planned on going there, and had spent the money we had, the unprepared fresh vegetables would be no good for the nuns and monks, so all that remained was my malpa and swari. She kneeled down, held my hand and said "Dear, you can eat malpa and swari whenever you want, and you will only be satisfied for a while. You can also ask Ba (grandfather) or your uncles to buy you more, however it is said that giving is the biggest dharma." I continued listening: "If we practice giving, karma has its own way to eliminate all the dukkha (dissatisfaction). These monks and nuns cannot eat anything after noon, and we have opportunity to feed them and earn punya (merits). What would you like to do?" I found myself in a very awkward position. Although only 5 years old, I had already formed a sense of ego, the nuns were waiting, while they smiled at me. Part of me didn't want to give them my malpa and swari but a part of me did. I also had a reputation to uphold, so I nodded and handed it over. Ma gave me big "well done" and we continued on our journey. It didn't mean much to me back then, it was just another small incident that took place.

I was always curious and full of questions, when I asked them, people would often ignore me, but Ma would be curious with me. I would often wonder: "why do some get less attention than others?"; "why some people were more privileged than others?"; "for what reasons monks and nun live the way they do?"; and other strange questions like: "why is it disgusting to swallow saliva once outside the body, but ok to do so when it is still in one's mouth?" I was fascinated with our bodily function and the vastness of the sky, its beginning and ending. "There must surely be other beings like humans beyond this planet?" I questioned.

Ma would often show me that dissatisfaction exists for all. She would say, "regardless of who you are, whether you are rich or poor, old or young, we all need a guru to show us the path. I have my guru and you must find yours". I often wondered who my guru would be? Where would I find them and how would I know that I had? Little did I know that I would connect with my guru almost two decades later, across the seven seas whilst he

was in retreat back in Nepal. When I did, that was when things started to make sense.

I only began following the Buddha Dharma in 2007. Learning about the Buddha and his intentions is boundless like the space. I have yet to learn the depth of karuna (compassion), but it cannot be compared to the incident when he left his wife and newborn son. The important detail that Buddha returned after his enlightenment and guided his family to attain sottapatti (the first entrance of enlightenment) is completely missing from the full story. No wonder families are afraid that their children will become Buddhist and leave home like it's said he did. Ignorant people like me don't understand and perhaps don't want to understand the truth of dukkha (dissatisfaction), let alone understand Buddha's deeper teachings like pratidipa-samudpada (dependent-co-arising). We are so stuck in mundane daily living (making ends meet), which is limited to self, family and friends, excluding neighbours, strangers and all beings. As the Buddha said: "we run after happiness, not realising that this in itself becomes the very cause of our dissatisfaction". I wonder if we even want to understand his teachings, perhaps we believe it's easier to be entertained in our mundane world, and go round and round in the vicious cycle of birth after birth.

I became a disciple of Vidyadhara Acharya Mahayogi Sidhar Rana Rinpoche in 2007. My parents initially felt insecure about me following this path and like many others, they thought I would leave them and go live in the mountains. It's tempting, but Rinpoche has told us time and time again, that we are household practitioners and we can attain enlightenment doing what we do. This takes me back to my experience with my Ma. Now when I look back I see the Buddha in my Ma and I see Buddha in her blind beggar friend. They all planted seeds that have led me to become the person I am today. Had these incidents not taken place, had I not come across Ma, perhaps I would not question life and instead would continue finding distractions and become a victim of the consumer society. They allowed me to witness the teachings of the Buddha, the teaching of equanimity. We are often drawn away from pain and towards pleasure. We do not like ugly, unorganised, dirty things and instead want pretty, organised, clean things. For Ma, her blind beggar friends were as precious as the VIPs at the party. She never differentiated between beings, be it an ant, an earthworm or any human being, she ensured that she offered them compassion, warmth and food. For me at this point in time, understanding and practicing this is the biggest form of the Buddha dharma, and with this, accepting that nobody is perfect and also accepting my own imperfections.

The reason I share this story is because it was a normal day

like any other, but when we look closely, life has a lot to teach us. Buddha Dharma is already within each one of us, it is just a matter of changing our perceptions. It is said that we all have the Buddha nature, we all have the seed, it's just matter of recognising and working on it. Nobody is perfect but each of us can find perfection within our imperfection.

Reflecting back at what Ma taught me is what I'm relearning in the Dharma – the components of the paramitas (the perfections). She taught me generosity no matter what little I have, never to shy away from giving and instead doing so whole-heartedly, with no regrets and with a lot of joy – not only materially but also in terms of time, effort and compassion, regardless of who the other person is. She taught me to have a non-judgemental attitude, not to differentiate between poor and rich, aggression and compassion. She taught me to be present with myself and I'm working on being there for others. Over the years I have learned to accept that I am not perfect and that's okay, I just continue polishing without any expectation, as this is a journey that carries across many lifetimes.

... Cont. from page 15

upon these two very meaningful verses from Dhammapada. Cherish our life and start a journey to purging our thoughts and beliefs for greater goods. Let us all free our mind from delusions and seek guidance through Buddha's teachings. Be grateful. Respect and enjoy life. Make sure that the things we do are meaningful and can actually contribute to the welfare of others. Let us have a story- create experiences and memories that we want people to discuss about. Doing good can only make us feel good- In fact, selfless people who give and volunteer a lot are typically the happiest people. Let's make this world a better place!

Dhammapada is filled with such illuminating guidance to life. One should not take this book as a superficial novel and shelve aside. It should be read and re-read to get a constant companion for inspiration, solace and edification in times of need.

Any truth-seeker, irrespective of their religious beliefs, can read this book of Wisdom with interest and profit. By constantly reflecting on these golden sayings and by translating them into action in the course of one's daily life, anyone can gain spiritual bliss that transcends worldly happiness and can attain to a higher spiritual plane whereby they can purify themselves and try to purify and enlighten others both by example and by precept.

"Thank you all for taking time to patiently reading to what I had to say about Buddha's teachings, and I wish you all a happy-blessed day"

Some Facts about Vajrayana Buddhism

¤ Acharya Mahayogi Sridhar Rana Rinpoche
Kathmandu, Nepal

It is a well-known fact that the form of Buddhism that has flourished in Nepal since the ancient times has all been Vajrayana. The Newars of Kathmandu Valley follow the Vajrayana school of Buddhism as well as the entire Northern Sector of Nepal and its ethnic groups (like the Sherpas, Manangis, Tamangs, Lopas, Bhutias, Depchas etc.). Given this fact, it would not be an exaggeration to say that Vajrayana Buddhism has had the strongest effect in the culture of Nepal Valley i.e. Kathmandu specifically.

To deny Vajrayana is to deny the very roots of Nepalese culture, especially if you understand that even the forms of Tantric Hinduism flourishing in Nepal since the ancient times has been strongly influenced by Vajrayana.

Recent renaissance of Theravada Buddhism in Kathmandu Valley has produced an upsurge of some writers who are eager to prove that Vajrayana is a decrepit form of Buddhism and that Theravada is the only true and original form. As part of their weak reasoning, they are always excited to show that the Newari Vajrayana has caste systems etc., alien to Buddhist ethics and the Tibetan Buddhism (also wrongly given the misnomer Lamaism) is influenced by Bon and thus not a pure form of Buddhism.

Needless to say, none of these amateur writers have given any solid proof as to why they feel Tibetan Vajrayana is influenced by Bon. In my own studies I have found that it is actually the other way around in that Bon has through the centuries been influenced by Vajrayana to the extent that their dress, rituals etc., have become quite similar (though still different).

Of course, I am not saying that Vajrayana was never even touched by Tibetan culture which pre-existed even before Buddhism went to Tibet but then the same can be said of the Theravada of Sri Lanka, Thailand, Laos and Burma too. It has been the nature of compassionate Buddhism to accept the cultures of the areas it spreads to without destroying either the culture or itself. So, this characteristic is not found solely in Vajrayana but in all forms of Buddhism, be it Zen of Japan, Tien Tai of China or the Theravada of the Laotian mountains.

As far as the basics of Buddhism go, all forms of Buddhism – Zen, Tien Tai, Jodo, Vajrayana and Theravada have the same principles. All forms of Buddhism agree in the concept of Anattma, impermanence, and that conditioned existence is sorrow. The only difference is the depth or subtlety in interpreting these concepts and in the methods of integrating. Since the Sunyata of Nagarjuna is basically talking about the Anattma of the Theravada in a more refined and subtle way and since the basic view of

Vajrayana is the basic view of Nagarjuna, Vajrayana does not contradict the basic philosophy of the Buddha in any way whatsoever. It is only in the depth of interpretation and mode of implementation of the Buddha's teachings that they vary, but not in the teachings themselves. So, it is not fair to say that Vajrayana has changed or distorted the teachings of the Buddha.

Also, all forms of Buddhism still practice Vipassana (Pali: Vipassana) and Samatha. It is not true, as some Theravadian teachers have wrongly proclaimed that only the Theravadian form of Buddhism has Vipassana. All of the various form of meditations found in Vajrayana are Vipassana. The forms of practices called Mahasandhi, Mahamudra, The Six Yogas of Naropa, The Six Yogas of Niguma, Marga Phalam (Called Lam Dre in Tibetan) etc. are all forms of Vipassana. The very word Lhag Thang in Tibetan is a technical word for the Sanskrit term Vipassana. In Japanese Buddhism, it is called Kan, in Chinese Buddhism Kuan. Out of the four mindfulness practices that the Buddha taught, Chittanusmriti (mindfulness of mind) is the form of Vipassana mostly used in the Vajrayana tradition, whereas the Theravada tradition seems to concentrate mostly on Vedanannusmriti (mindfulness of sensation). Of course, you can find all the four forms of Mindfulnesses in all traditions of Buddhism; I am merely explicating the general tendency within the tradition. So, to proclaim that Vajrayana is not pure Buddhism, because it does not have forms of Vipassana meditation is to prove one's own ignorance and narrow mindedness (to use a classical Buddhist word, Moha).

To claim that since the Newar Buddhists have castes, Vajrayana has caste system and therefore is not a pure form of Buddhism is also not fair because no text or form of Vajrayana Buddhism vouches for the caste system. That the Newars have a weird caste system of their own even though they claim to be true Buddhists is a result of Newari culture and not Vajrayana Buddhism. Anybody with even an inkling of Nepalese history knows that the Newari culture was forced to accept the caste system.

Proclaiming that Vajrayana has all sorts of deities and therefore cannot be a pure form of Buddhism is another mistake of the unthinking critics. Firstly, deities like Indra, Braham etc. are found all over the Pali texts which claim that they too became Arhats after receiving teachings from the Buddha. Secondly, all the Theravada countries have one or the other form of deities as their protector of Buddhism, for example Sri Lanka has a festival of Lord Indra where he is considered as the protector of Buddhism.

Thirdly, the Abhidharmakosha has Devannuati as one of the meditations. So if Vajrayana is an impure form of Buddhism for the above reasons, then the Buddhism of the Pali texts are also impure, the Buddhism of Sri Lanka etc. are also impure. And fourthly, only amateur writers who have absolutely no idea how these deity practices are used as skillful means for Vipassayana itself write that Vajrayana uses Gods and Goddesses like Hinduism. It is surprising to see how even some so called Vajracharyas think that Vajrayana has made all sorts of Pancha Buddhas and given them wives and children. I would like to advise them to study the significance of Utpanna Krama (Development Stage) and Sampanna Krama (Completion Stage) in deity practices before they give naive interpretations which show their own ignorance. I challenge any scholar to prove how the Utpanna Krama and the Sampanna Krama of deity practice are not the Vipassayana and Samatha of Chittanusmriti of the Buddha.

To make the deity practices of Vajrayana like the Gods and Goddesses of Hinduism is to show one's own ignorance about these practices.

Some have even gone so far as to claim that the Vajrayana and Mahayana have substituted the Buddha for God the Creator as in other religions. It must be made clear that neither form of Buddhism has made the Buddha an Ishwar.

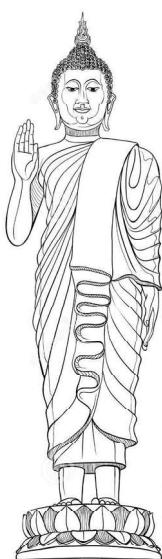
The claim of some Theravadian writers that in Vajrayana

Buddhism, the Buddha has been made into some kind of Super Human whom they worship like God is totally non-valid. First of all, to claim in Theravada Buddhism that the Buddha was born with the thirty-two characteristics and then to say he was just an ordinary human being is a flagrant contradiction. I would like to ask how many ordinary people are born with the thirty-two characteristics. Secondly, the Buddha is not worshipped as a God in Mahayana but as a Revered Teacher – Guru.

Some writers have tried to point out that the Pali texts talk about a man being reborn immediately after he dies whereas the Tibetan Buddhism talks about a Bardo (Intermediate State in English and Antarabhava in Sanskrit). They say this is the influence of Bön. But again, they seem to lack enough studies of Buddhist history as many of the eighteen schools of Early Buddhism believed in the concept of Antarabhava.

The Theravada is a true form of Buddhism as taught by the Buddha and there is no doubt about it, but so are Zen and Vajrayana. It is interesting to note that Vajrayana, which is our Nepalese culture, has the openness (Amoha) to say, he who criticizes Hinayana criticizes Vajrayana. The Hinayana is the foundation on which Vajrayana is built.

(First published in Sunday Dispatch of The Rising Nepal on June 14, 1992. Republished in Lumbini with permission of Sridhar Rana Rinpoche.)



*“Treat yourself, your mind sympathetically, with loving kindness.
If you are gentle with yourself, You will become gentle with others.”*

~ Lama Yeshe on Bodhicitta

**We wish Happy Buddha Day to all on the
auspicious occasion of BE 2562**

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Letter to the editor

Dear Sir,

I have been a regular reader of Lumbini, the journal you have been publishing every year from your society for almost two decades. I, being an old reader from its first issue, am taking this opportunity to thank you for the great job you have been doing through your journal itself.

Please allow me to express my impression of your journal and the society also. FYI, I am not very good in documentation, so I do not have the copies of journals handy, nor do I remember details of the article printed in the journal. What I am going to present here is the broad impression I have of the journal and the society. Also, in real life, as often reminded by Gurus, what will be remembered in the end of one's life is what you have been doing mostly in your whole life span. If you have been a butcher throughout your life, you will visualize the dreadful seen of killing of the animals and echo of the loud sound of moaning of the animals at the time of your death. If you have been helping people and making your neighbors happy most of the time in your life, you will have flash backs of the peaceful atmosphere with those joyful people who you have helped. In a way we are conditioned by our life style and our profession together with our attitudes and behavior. I think the term conditioning is but, a very narrow translation of the broad term "Kamma" as defined in the Buddhist literature.

Does it mean that we wait till the last days of our life to get paid off for our actions of our life; face the consequences of our actions of the entire life? No, you do not wait that long. We bear the consequence of our Karma all the time, right after the action is taken. We eat excessive amount of tasty food, it will have its consequence the next day. We talk about the scenario of the time at death only because that is the denominator common to all of us, as death comes to all, sooner or later. The Buddha's teachings on Kusala Kamma (good Dhamma) and Akusala Kamma and their consequences apply to all equally. No living being wants suffering and so the way to reduce it for all living beings is to do Kusala Kamma.

No matter, what language the article is written, Nepali or English, you have always given the message of Dhamma, the need to do Kusala Dhamma. That is the main message I got from your journal. To go with it, I have seen the effort made by your society to attain it. Some of the meetings which I could luckily attend of your society, small and big, the same message has been transmitted. The peaceful atmosphere, helpful tendencies and kindness amongst members are so vividly visible. That is what I admire of your society. Long live LNBDS!

With Metta,

Vinaya Dhakhwa, Well-wisher from Nepal

Metta Bhavana (Loving Kindness)

The Buddha's advice to Rahula for Peace and Happiness

"Just as I love happiness and detest suffering and I wish to live and not to die, so it is with other living beings.

It is a great blessing to live without considering any living being as an enemy.

Hence, the Buddha explained to his son Rahula, the importance of metta (loving kindness) in the following words, "*Cultivate Rahula the meditation on loving kindness; for by cultivating loving kindness hatred is banished.*"

Aham Avero Homi = May I be free from enmity and dangers !

Aham Abyapajjo homi = May I be free from mental sufferings !

Aham Anigho homi = May I be free from physical sufferings !

Sukhi Attanam pariharami = May I take care of myself happily peacefully !

Aham Viya mayam Acariyuppajjhaya = May my teachers,

mayam mata = May my mother

mayam pitaro = May my father

hitasatta majjattika satta veri satta = May my relatives, friends, those unfriendly and all living beings

Avera hontu = May they be free from enmity and dangers.

Abyapajjo homi = May they be free from mental sufferings

Anigho Homi = May they be free from physical sufferings

Sukhi Attanam pariharami = May they be able to take care of themselves happily and peacefully!

dukkha muccantu = May all sufferings be cured

*yatthaladdha sampattito maviggaccantu,
kammassaka* = May they also have patience, courage, understanding, and inevitable difficulties, problems and failures in life.

Sadhu = Be happy; *Sadhu* = Be well; *Sadhu* = Be in peace!!!

~ Ven. Sujano

Dhammapada verses 182 and 183 with explanation

(This was presented during 2561st Buddha Jayanti Celebration held on Sunday, 28th May 2017 at Harrow Borough Football Club, London, UK)

✉ Mrs Sweekhya Dahal Tuladhar, UK

Dhammapada; a book which has long been recognised as one of the masterpieces of early Buddhist literature, is a volume of 423 short sayings of the Buddha. The book consists of 26 chapters with verses and short stories uttered by Buddha on about 300 occasions. The premise of the book has been selected from various situations and insights given by the enlightened one. It is one of the best known and recognisable books of the Sutta Pitaka. In addition to being a soul awakening collection of the teachings of Buddha, it is also clearly expressed in simple and pithy verses. The verses can often be found to be terse, witty and extremely convincing.

Through these verses, Buddha encourages one to achieve the greatest of all conquests, the conquest of self; to escape from the evil's hatred and ignorance; and to strive hard to attain freedom from craving and freedom from the round of rebirths. Each verse contains a truth, a motto and a piece of advice. In its core, it is simply a map of a journey towards truth, harmony, righteousness, virtue and spirituality. It is a central law which implies all life is one, which further leads to contentment and greater good.

We are today going to focus on two of the verses (Verse 182 and 183) from this book. These verses were uttered by the Buddha in the course of his forty-five years of teachings. I am sure this would be very insightful, enlightening awakening and benefitting experience for the readers.

Verse 182

"Kiccho Manussapati labho, Kiccham Maccana Jivitam
Kiccham Saddhammasavanam, Kiccho Buddhanam
Uppado"

It is difficult to be born a human, hard is the life of mortals; It is difficult to hear the sublime truth, hard is the arising of Buddhas.

A summary of the Verse (182) of this book is in reference to King Erakapatta, also known as the king of nagas (snakes). King Erakapatta was a monk in his previous life who was born as naga in the current life.

Throughout his naga life, the king strived to meet the divine Buddha. He finally came across an opportunity to fulfil his life's aim through his daughter. The king explained to Buddha how he had burdened himself with worry in his past life over a little offense he had committed. The offense being unable to fulfil the responsibility he was handed. The king then went on to pour his sorrow over how being a naga (an animal), he was no longer able to attain Sotapatti fruition then and there. Buddha, in response, uttered the above insightful

verse to the king, which had a wider meaning befitting not only the king, but the entire human race.

Verse Explanation: It is rare to be born as a human being in this cycle of rebirth. It is even more difficult and rare to get the opportunity to hear the good teaching. To be born as a human is a blessing. The human body is the highest and most elevated of all bodies. It is only achieved when there is a perfect balancing of karmas, and is, in fact, the best form of incarnation. It is a blessing because a human life is fraught with so many obstacles, tests, trials, and sufferings, that one can spiritually progress and evolve rapidly in such an incarnation. Yet despite this fact, most waste this extremely rare and precious opportunity. The reality is that there are countless souls in the spirit plane awaiting the opportunity for a human birth. Yet there exist only a limited number of bodies on the earth plane at a given time, so rare that may not come again for a very long time.

Being born as a human, the most intelligent creatures who are capable of using their potential for the best is a privilege. But in this current age and era, humans seem to have lost the true value and meaning of this blissful life, which has put us all through suffering, stress, confusion and misery. We are currently living in one of the most uncertain times in human history, where we are faced and engulfed with fear, hatred, war, violence, discriminations; moreover, killings and suicides. If we listen to the media, we are aware that the whole world is traumatised with uncertainty. The mere and a bitter cause for this: Not realising how difficult it is to get a human life. It is a shame that having received such a precious gift of life, people are engrossed in seeing only differences and cynicism taking life for granted.

Our deeds and thoughts define us and it shapes our soul. The world on the other hand, appears to have become blurry, unreliable, unpredictable, making it difficult to achieve peace of mind or the clear direction to the path of liberation. Ironically, we, ourselves are ultimately responsible for our own wellbeing and/or misery. We are the architects of our own fate. Thus, from a Buddhist point of view, our present mental, moral intellectual and temperamental differences are, for the most part, culminating from both our past and present actions/tendencies.

It is thought that humans of ordinary intellect cannot comprehend the actual reason or reasons. The definite invisible cause or causes of the visible effect is not necessarily confined to the present life, they may be traced to a remote past birth. It's not easy to comprehend this for a normal human being. Buddha, the awakened- anybody who has

arrived at complete knowledge or possessed of unlimited knowledge can find the answers. However, being a Buddha and awakening of ‘the Buddha’ is not so straightforward at all. It takes years and years of constant dedicated practice for inner-transformation.

Verse 183

*"Sabba Papassa akaranam, kusalassa upasampada
Sacittapariyodapanam, Etam buddhana sasanam"*

While residing at the Jetavana monastery, Buddha uttered these Verses (183) from the Dhammapada. It is with reference to the question raised by Thera Ananda, one of the Buddha’s disciples regarding the fundamental instructions to bhikkhus by the preceding Buddhas. On one occasion, Thera Ananda asked Buddha whether the fundamental instructions to bhikkhus given by the preceding Buddhas were the same as those of the Buddha himself. To answer to his query, Buddha recited the above verse.

Verse Explanation: Abandoning all evil, not to commit any sin, to do good and purifying one’s own mind by oneself - this is the teaching of Buddhas. One has the ability to do greater good/attain to a higher spiritual plane, whereby he can purify himself and try to purify and enlighten others both by example and by instruction.

Have we ever pondered upon the facts about the cause of the inequality that exists among mankind? Why do some people get to be brought up in the lap of luxury, endowed with fine mental, moral and physical qualities, and others in absolute poverty, steeped in misery and in destitute? Why is it that one person is brilliant, and another an utter idiot? Why should one person be born with saintly characteristics and another with criminal tendencies?

This inequality of mankind has a reason. As per Buddhism, this variance is due to Karma. In other words, it is the result of our own past actions and our own present doings. The seed that is sown, bears the fruit you reap. Anyone who does good will gather good, and anyone who does evil, gathers evil.

So, the question is how do we become good so that good things happen to us?

Simply attempting to be a good human being is not as easy as it sounds. The process does not complete in a day. This requires thorough dedicated cultivation of thoughts of choosing to be good, setting ideas of being good, and actually making it the grand mission of one’s life. It also requires several sessions of vigorous training to train our mind to self-control. We should then be able to replace evil, hatred, delusion, greed anger arrogance and jealousy with love, joy, peace, patience kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, generosity, compassion and wisdom.

We all are aware of this fact, but why do we not come across more good deeds then? Why aren’t more people

taking part in events for the overall good of society? The answer is **excuses**: “I didn’t know what to do for others!”, “The timing was never right.”, and “I didn’t know how to do good deeds”.

Doing Good is a simple and universal choice; a choice to which each and every one of us can connect and contribute to its realisation/fruition. A choice based on the positive thinking and affirmative choice of words, feelings and actions, we can enhance goodness in the world, inspire people to contribute towards the welfare of the society. If we want to see positive change in the world, it is important to purify the mind and cultivate merit with positive thoughts. It holds the power to transform us on the inside, and then ripple out in ever-expanding circles that positively impact the world at large. There is a sort of gratification in doing good which makes us rejoice in ourselves. Since all defiled or corrupt states of consciousness are born from ignorance, the ultimate purification of mind is to be through the instrumentality of wisdom, the knowledge and vision of things as they really are. Wisdom, however, does not arise through chance or random good intentions, but only in a purified mind. Thus in order for wisdom to come forth and accomplish the ultimate purification, we first have to create a space for it by developing a provisional purification of mind—a purification which is a foundation for the emergence of all liberated insights.

Buddha and his teachings only show the path to follow, but it is **YOU** and **US** who must make the effort. The achievement of this preparatory purification of mind begins with the challenge of self-understanding. To eliminate this pollution on our minds, we must first learn to know them, to detect them dominating our everyday thoughts. Self-purification cannot be executed hastily, there is unfortunately no quick results. It requires patience, care, and persistence - and to follow Buddha’s crystal clear instructions. Buddha has given us the antidote, the method to emerge and conquer from all worldly defilement. By learning these principles and applying them properly, we can gradually wear away the most stubborn inner stains and reach the end of suffering, thereby liberating the mind.

There is also a very carefully devised method of mental development and most popular Buddhist training which can assist us in getting the best out of ourselves - **Meditation**. It is theoretically precise and practically efficient which helps to attain inner purity and spiritual freedom. The principal tools are mental factors of energy, mindfulness, concentration, and understanding. This is the teaching of all the preceding Buddhas.

So, as a human, we can pause and reflect on what our situation is and then use our intelligence to choose a path of action. It is all about **‘Taming our wild mind to shape our beliefs to further guide our souls’**. Let us all therefore take a deep breath, take a little time to ponder

... Cont. to page 10

Investigating the Nine Noble Qualities of the Buddha

✉ Dr Doreen Perera, UK

Every Buddhist is familiar with the chant “*Iti pi so Bhagavā Arahām Sammasambuddho...*” Although we may chant it regularly, it has to be said that not many of us actually know the meanings of these words. This familiar Pali chant is found in the *Dhajagga Sutta* and the *Devedaha sutta* among others and describes the nine Noble Qualities of a Sammasambuddha.

It must also be said that although we chant only nine Noble Qualities, a Sammasambuddha has an innumerable amount of Noble Qualities.

In fact, only another Supreme Sammasambuddha, a self-enlightened Buddha, can actually know all of the Noble Qualities of another Sammasambuddha, and even then, it will take him longer than an aeon to recite them all.

So why do we only chant these nine? It is because these nine Noble Qualities can be understood and appreciated by most of us. As we grow in our understanding, our confidence in the Buddha's wisdom, our Saddha, will also rise. Saddha is the key to Nibbana. So understanding these nine Noble Qualities is like opening the door to the Path of liberation.

Iti pi so Bhagavā - Thus indeed, is the Blessed One,

1) *Arahām* -One who has eradicated all defilements, the Worthy One

2) *Sammā-sambuddho*- Self-Enlightened Buddha, Fully Awakened without external help

3) *Vijjā-carana sampanno* - Endowed with Knowledge and of virtuous conduct

4) *Sugato* - Walked on the Sublime Path to reach Nibbana, Speaker of Excellent words

5) *Lokavidū* - Knower of all the worlds

6) *Anuttaro Purisa-damma-sārati* - Incomparable leader of men to be tamed

7) *Satthā deva-manussānam* - Teacher of gods and men

8) *Buddho* - Teacher of the sublime Dhamma which leads to Nibbana

9) *Bhagavā* - the Blessed One

Although the Supreme Buddha is our Incomparable Teacher, he himself encouraged us to investigate the truth of his own statements.

Did Gautama the Sammasambuddha indeed have these Noble Qualities within him? We shall explore the Noble Qualities embodied in the epithet ‘Araham’.

Araham'

The Buddha was first and foremost an Arahant. An

Arahant is One who has eradicated all mental impurities or defilements; namely, Greed, Hatred and Delusion.

Greed?: Did the Buddha not have any greed?

Prince Siddhartha was the first-born son of a great King and Queen and as such destined to be a King himself. When he was growing up the royal father also made sure that the young prince wanted for nothing. We can also surmise that even by our mere knowledge of what happens around Royal births, young prince Siddhartha must have had an extremely privileged upbringing. Instead of enjoying all that his regal status has to offer, Prince Siddhartha left the palace and took to following an ascetic life in order to search for a way out of Suffering.

If we extrapolate this back to our own situation, how likely are we to leave everything behind and take up an austere lifestyle? Not very likely. So even before the Buddha became enlightened, worldly comforts must have meant very little to him. After becoming the Supreme Buddha, his loyal devotee, King Bimbisara offered him his kingdom, which was of course politely turned down.

So we can safely say that the Buddha did not have any Greed for family life, worldly possessions or status. The term Greed covers a far wider range than this, but it is enough to know this much for now.

Hatred?

How would we have reacted if our own brother-in-law plotted against us and tried to kill us? We would make it our business to wage war against him and ask every high-ranking person that we know for help. King Pasenadi Kosala was Lord Buddha's close devotee, as was King Ajsatta. One word from them would have been enough to obliterate all opposing factions. Gautama the Sammasambuddha only had compassion for *Devadatta*, *Sundaree*, *Cinca Manavika*, *Magandhi* and the like; same as he had for his only son, prince Rahula.

Delusion?

The Buddha understood the three characteristics of existence and went beyond them to reach Nibbana.

The three characteristics of existence are,

1) Impermanent (*anicca*)

2) Unsatisfactory (*dukkha*)

3) Non-Self (*anatta*)

We, on the other hand, are deluded and hold a distorted view of life (*sañña vipallsa*).

We think that existence can be,

1) Permanent (*nicca*)

2) Satisfactory (*sukha*)

3) Self (*atma*)

Do we actually think the above?

Is existence permanent?

If you believe that the house that you left in the morning will still be standing when you return later, this is your subtle view of permanence. In a relatively stable country like the UK, you are more likely to be proven right but if one looks around the world, you can see that there can be a number of factors that can change such scenarios very quickly.

Is life satisfactory?

Most people do not even have the sensitivity to know that they are suffering. If their sense pleasures are gratified momentarily, hopes fulfilled, health restored that is their worldly definition of “non-suffering” or “I am happy”.

They do not see the roaring fires within, the chattering mind, “I am worried about the next health check, but I will push that thought away until then... I am worried about my job but I will push that thought away...., I am worried about my wife/husband/ partner/children, parents etc etc etc... but let me not think about these things for now....” Future worries and anxieties are eating away in the present moment, but the capacity to observe this oppressed state, is missing.

Presence of My Self?

We see, hear, smell, taste, feel and cognise and believe that the story being conjured up is Mine, Me and My Self.

To understand Non-Self, one must first see Impermanence and Unsatisfactoriness.

Is the body attractive?

The Buddha encouraged us to contemplate on the reality of this body. The repulsive nature of its components, starting with the hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth and skin. We are deluded into thinking that these are attractive features, but only while they are attached to the body.

Understanding the three characteristic of existence for ourselves

People may understand impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-self at various levels.

Impermanence

Understanding Impermanence at Basic Level

Although we wish our good experiences to last forever, we all know that people and possessions age, decay and perish. This is quite a rudimentary level of our understanding of impermanence.

Intermediate Level

At a slightly higher level, we may become sensitive to our feelings and notice that they arise, linger for a while and eventually disappear. This is the awareness of impermanence of our sense faculties.

In this scenario, the faculty of the mind and the mind object (feeling happy, sad, bored etc) came together and gave rise to mind-consciousness (cognising/ knowledge of that feeling). Immediately afterwards, we may hear a sound with the arising of the ear-consciousness and we realise that the previously arisen mind-consciousness has fallen away and the ear-consciousness has arisen. On and on this goes, rapidly and perpetually changing, one type of sense consciousness being replaced by another. A little like a string of blinking light bulbs at Christmas.

If we are very mindful, we become aware of the rising (*udaya*) and falling (*vaya*) of our sense consciousnesses. The impermanence of our sense faculties, the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind.

So we are in agreement with the Buddha’s teaching on Impermanence, albeit at these fairly superficial levels. This is still the ordinary, worldly, mundane (*lokiya*) level of understanding.

Why are these still mundane views of impermanence? It is because these two levels are associated with personality-view.

The ‘self’ having a relationship with what he saw, heard, smelt, tasted, felt or cognised, became aware of the changing nature from one of ‘his’ sense faculties to another. He thinks there is a ‘self’, and ‘his sense faculty’ ‘cognised’ an ‘object’. Having believed all of the above, it inevitably follows a downward spiral, ending with ‘suffering related to the self’, the five aggregates of clinging. This is a mundane view.

Supra-mundane (*lokuttara*) level

The Buddha comprehended impermanence beyond this mundane level of understanding.

That is, understanding impermanence according to dependent origination or *Paticcasamuppada* or the Law of Cause and Effect. This is understanding impermanence at the supra-mundane level.

Here impermanence refers to the fact that causes result in effects.

Since the effects depend on the causes being present, the entire process becomes inherently impermanent. Put in another way, seeing impermanence through the rise and fall of conditioned phenomena.

Therefore, a wise person sees the impermanence of the process that resulted him in;

seeing,
hearing,
smelling,
tasting,
feeling and

cognising, and not the impermanence of the sense faculty or what 'he' 'saw' or 'heard' etc.

He understands that going in the forward direction of the *Paticcasamuppada* process (*anuloma*) means that it is a *micca-patipad-* starting with false view, ignorance or *Avijja*. He then investigates this process in the reverse order (*patiloma*) which leads him to see that Not-knowing the Conditioned nature of the Process was in fact, the Source of Ignorance. This is Knowledge (*Vijja*).

So instead of reacting with greed, hatred and delusion to what the wise person has seen, heard, smelt, tasted, felt or cognised, an investigation into the process by which the seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling or cognising took place is undertaken.

Unsatisfactoriness or Suffering

In his very first sermon, the *Dhammacakkappavattana sutta* the Buddha taught us that the five aggregates of clinging is synonymous with suffering or *dukkha*. *Dukkha* is always the end result of *Paticcasamuppada*.

The Buddha referred to three types of *Dukkha* (*Dukkhata sutta*).

1) *Dukkha-Dukkhata* - This is the physical and mental pain, sadness, sorrow, losses etc that we are all too familiar with, in one's own life. This could be mundane unsatisfactoriness associated with the view of a Self and the attachment to 'Mine' 'Me' and 'Myself'. The Buddha and the arahants also felt physical pain but having fully comprehended *Dukkha*, they did not have the suffering that we add to our pain.

2) *Sankhara Dukkhata* - Conditioned by Ignorance, we make volitional actions (*sankhara*) with the body, words and the mind (*Cula Vedalla Sutta*). *Sankhara* are constructed (*sankata*) and the Buddha said there are three characteristics to such constructs. We can observe them arising (*uppado*), passing away (*vayo*) and continually changing from that state which we believed to be permanent, to another (*titthassa annatatta*). So even when we are happy, we have the niggling feeling that it will not last. We make plans to prolong the happy state. More *Sankhara* are formed. This is suffering. This is *Paticcasamuppada* in action.

3) *Viparinma Dukkhata* - Realising that *sankhara* are continually changing, this is the ignorant person's suffering associated with seeing that absolutely no stability can be

found anywhere in this chain of events.

The wise person, investigating *Paticcasamuppada* in reverse order, beginning with mundane feelings of sadness and loss, realises that ultimately, they arose out of Ignorance. He investigates this process in both directions (*samudaya-vaya dhammanupassiva*) until he becomes very proficient at it.

This is the 'Middle Way' that Siddhartha Gautama the Sammasambuddha discovered for himself and explained to others so that they can also attain the ultimate bliss of Nibbana.

Non-Self

Having investigated *paticcasamuppada* in both directions, the wise person sees that he has little control over his form, feelings, perceptions, thoughts and consciousness, or the five aggregates of clinging. He realises that the process is merely the process, no personality or a self-driving it (*Anattalakkhana sutta*).

Therefore, before the wise person acts upon what he has seen, heard, smelt, tasted, felt and cognised, he has understood the impermanent, unsatisfactory and non-self-nature of the entire chain of events, and he will do all that he can do to reduce suffering for everyone concerned.

His actions will not be stemming from a place where there is a lot of greed, hatred or delusion. As such, a wise person's actions will flow from a place of Knowledge (*Vijja*).

So we can now see that the Buddha had no delusion. He was fully awakened and had indeed eradicated all defilements. This is just one of the meanings of the qualities embodied in the word 'Araham'.

When we next chant the Nine Noble Qualities of the Buddha, it would be good to reflect on those qualities with a deeper understanding. Even if we know one of the Noble Qualities of the Buddha like this, it will be of immense benefit to us.

May we grow in Saddha.

*On the auspicious occasion of the
Buddha Purnima, We wish our
readers and well wisher well,
happiness and peace.*

May all be well and happy.

- LNBDS family

सुशासनका लागि बुद्ध धर्म

(This is one of the prize winning articles (second from Essay Competition 2016 held in Nepal organised by Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) in collaboration with Buddhist Youth Group, Kathmandu. Such essay Competition has been held since 2007 as a small step taken by us to encourage and support to propagate the teachings of the Buddha in Nepal. LNBDS would like to express our gratitude to all our well wishers in making such noble task successful. ~editor)

गंगा गोसाइ, मैत्रेय युवा संघ, भक्तपुर

सरल भाषामा, सुशासन भन्नाले राम्रो शासन यानकि राम्रो नियमले शासन गर्नु भन्ने बुझिन्छ । सुशासन भनेको राज्य निर्माण भएपछि सम्पुर्ण जनतालाई आवश्यक सुख, सुविधा र समस्याहरुको निष्करण हेतु गरिने कार्य हो । सुशासनलाई अर्को शब्दमा भन्नुपर्दा सम्पुर्ण जनताको हित र अधिकारका लागि गरिने कार्यहरु जस्तै कर न्युनीकरण, भौतिक पुर्वाधारहरुको विस्तार, अर्थिक उन्नति आदि हुन् । राम्रा नीतिहरु निर्माण र कार्यान्वयन गरी सही निर्णय लिने प्रक्रियालाई सुशासन भनिन्छ । सुशासन एक राज्यका लागि हरेक पक्ष जस्तै : अर्थिक, भौतिक, भौगोलिक, ऐतिहासिक विकासका लागि आवश्यक छ । सुशासनले हरेक क्षेत्रमा सुधार र सुदृढीकरणहरु ल्याई सम्पुर्ण वर्ग, जाति, धर्म, सबैको उत्थान हुन्छ ।

शान्तिका अग्रदूत तथा ऐसियाको ज्योतिका रूपमा चिनिने महामानव गौतम बुद्धदारा प्राप्त ज्ञान नै बुद्ध धर्म हो । बुद्धधर्म भन्नाले भगवान् बुद्धले आफुले प्राप्त गर्नुभएको ज्ञानलाई शिक्षाको रूपमा प्रचारप्रसार गरेको ज्ञान हो । सुशासन शब्द बुद्धधर्मसँग सम्बन्धित छ । भगवान् बुद्धको पालादेखि नै सुशासनको प्रयोग हुँदै आइरहेको छ । भगवान् बुद्धले सुशासन कुराहरु थुप्रै उपदेश, जातकहरु तथा शुत्रहरुमा ल्याउनुभएको छ । जस्तै : महापरिनिर्माण सुत्रको सात अपरिहानीय धर्म, दशराज धर्म, राजोवाद जातक, आर्य अष्टादिग मार्ग, चतुब्रह्म विहार, धम्मपद, पञ्चशील, आदि ।

भगवान् बुद्धले धम्मपदको बुद्धवर्गमा निम्न गाथाद्वारा शासन पढ्नित बारे बताउनुभएको छ ।

सब्ब पापस्स अकरण, कुसलस्स उपसम्पदा ।

सचित परियोदपन, एतं बुद्धानुशासन ॥

अर्थात् : कुनै पनि पाप कर्म नगर्नु, कुशल कर्महरु गर्नु र चित्तलाई सधैँ शुद्ध पार्नु, यही नै बुद्धको शासन हो । यस गाथामा शासन शब्दको अर्थ “अनुशासन” भनेर उल्लेख गरिएको छ । शासन गर्दा यदि यी अनुशासनका तीन नियमहरु पालन गरे शासक अवश्य सफल हुन्छ । यसैगरी अर्को गाथामा भगवान् बुद्धले विनय यानविनियम बारे बताउनुभएको छ ।

विनयो नामो शासनस्स आयु ।

अर्थात् : विनय भन्नु नै शासनको आयु हो ।

हेरेकलाई नियमको आवश्यकता परेभै सुशासनलाई पनि वियमको आवश्यकता छ । सुशासन भनेको राम्रो नियमले शासन गर्नु भन्ने बुझिन्छ । राज्यद्वारा राम्री शासन कसरी चलाउने भन्ने बारे भगवान् बुद्धले यसो भन्नुभएको छ । पाली शब्द “धम्मपस्सना” भन्नाले सुशासनका भन्ने बुझिन्छ । “धम्म” भन्नाले नियम वा सद्गुण वा सत्यता र “पस्सना” भन्नाले शासन भनेर बुझिन्छ । एक सामाजिक सुधारकर्ता र राजनीतिक सोचकर्ताका रूपमा भगवान् बुद्धले शासनबारे पुर्वाधार निम्न कुरा भन्नुभएको छ ।

धम्म + विनय - निर्वाण

१) धम्म = सत्य

२) विनय = आदर्श, नियम र व्यवहार

३) निर्वाण = राग, द्वेष र मोह आदि क्लेशबाट मुक्त हुनु

भगवान् बुद्ध बुद्धहुनुभन्दा अगाडिको काल वा बोधिसत्वको समयमा सुशासनसँग सम्बन्धित धेरै प्रसंगहरु थाहा पाउन सकिन्छ । राजावाद जातक अनुसार राजाहरु देशका आफुले गरेको शासन व्यवस्थाबाट जनताहरु कर्ति सन्तुष्टि छन् भनेर भेष बदलेर परम्परा पनि थियो । यसैकम्मा दुई छुट्टाछुट्टै कोशल र

काशी राज्यका राजाहरु त्यस्तै भेष बदलेर राज्यका जनताहरुको धारणा थाहा पाउने उद्देश्यले यस्तो गरेका थिए । यसबाट पहिला राजाहरु यानकि शासकहरु आफ्नो शासन प्रणालीलाई लिएर कर्ति संवेदनशील थिए भन्ने कुरा थाहा पाउन सकिन्छ ।

शासन गर्ने इकाईहरु विभिन्न तहमा देखिन्छ । जस्तै : नगरपालिका, वडा आदि यो सँगै घरपरिवारमा पनि शासन गरिन्छ । शासनविना कुनै पनि नगरपालिका, वडा वा घरपरिवार कुनै पनि राम्री संचालन हुँदैन । तर शासन राम्री गरी सबैलाई नियममा बाँध्ने काम तब हुन्छ, जब एक सक्षम अनुशासित शासकले शासन गर्दछ । नेतृत्व गर्ने वा शासन गर्ने शासकसँग निम्न ६ वटा नेतृत्व गुणहरु हुनु जरूरी छ ।

१. क्षमा : जुनसुकै परिस्थितिमा पनि समताभाव राखी त्यसप्रति प्रतिक्रिया नगर्ने हुनुपछ ।

२. जागरिय गुण : यथास्थितिबारे जानकारी यानकि देशमा कुन ठाउँमा के भईराखेको छ, भनी सही जानकारी हुनुपर्दछ ।

३. वीर्य : देशको विकास कार्यमा सधैँ उत्साहपुर्वक भाग लिने र साथसाथै समूह तथा संगठनलाई सही नेतृत्व गरेर उनीहरूलाई सही बाटोमा लाने उत्साह सधैँ कायम राख्नुपर्दछ ।

४. संविभाग : विभिन्न माध्यमबाट विभिन्न कुराहरु आउन सक्छन् । ती कुराहरुको बारे विचार नगरी हचुवातालमा निर्णय नलिई त्यसको वास्तविकता के हो छुट्टयाउन सक्ने शक्तिको विकास हुनुपर्दछ ।

५. दयागुण : कुनै एक वर्ग वा सम्प्रदायप्रति मात्र नभई समस्त देशका जनताप्रति मैत्री र सद्भावना उत्पन्न गरि सधैँ हित गर्न तत्पर भई राख्नु पर्दछ ।

६. इवरवना : विभिन्न विषयम वा प्रतिकूल परिस्थिति उत्पन्न भएतापनि त्यस कारणप्रति सजग हुनु र त्यसलाई राम्री विश्लेषण गर्न सक्नुपर्दछ ।

माथि उल्लेखित गुणहरु एक शासकमा हुनु अत्यन्त जरूरी छ, किनकि राज्यलाई कतातिर दोहो-याउने भन्ने हात शासकमा भर पर्दछ । शासक नै नराम्रो भझादिएको खण्डमा देशमा खण्डीकरण, अशान्ति, गरिवी, मुत्यवृद्धि इत्यादि कार्यहरु देखापर्दन् । बुद्ध शिक्षा अन्तर्गत सुशासन गर्न राजाहरुमा दशवटा गुणहरु हुन जरूरी छ, भन्ने कुरा उल्लेख गरिएको छ । जसलाई दशराज धर्म भनिन्छ । दशराज धर्म भन्नाले सुशासनका लागि राजाहरु यानकि शासकहरुले पालन गर्नुपर्ने दशवटा नियमहरु वा गुणहरु भन्ने बुझिन्छ । ती निम्न प्रकारका छन् ।

७. दान : आफ्नो सम्पति मात्र होइन, आफ्नो अधिकार पनि बाँड्ने हुनु पर्दछ ।

८. शील : राम्रो आचरण भएको हुनुपर्दछ र एउटा राम्रो उदाहरणका रूपमा अरुको अगाडि प्रस्तुत हुन सक्नुपर्दछ ।

९. परिच्चाग : कुनै व्यक्तिको क्षमताको पहिचान गरी उसलाई सो अनुसार काम दिनसक्ने हुनुपर्दछ ।

१०. पारदर्शिता : पाखण्डपन नहुनु, आफुले जे भनेको छ, त्यही गर्ने हुनु, यथावादी, तथाकारी

११. न्यायमा समानता : न्यायधीशको रूपमा भूमिका निर्वाह गरी न्यायमा समानता दिने, धर्मी-गरिब, उच्च-निच्च आदि केही नहेरी न्याय दिनु ।

१२. काममा जागरूकता : आफुले गर्ने जुनसुकै काममा जागरूक भएर पुरा उत्साह र उमंगसाथ गर्नु ।

१३. घृणा नगर्ने : कसैलाई पनि घृणा नगर्ने, सबैले मनपराउँदा हुनु ।

८. हिंसा नगर्ने : आफुभन्दा कमजोर माथि हिंसा नगर्ने । नेतृत्व वा शासन गर्नेसँग एक प्रकारको शक्ति हुन्छ । तर शक्ति भयो भन्दैमा जथाभावी त्यसको दुरुपयोग गर्नुहुँदैन । शक्तिशाली व्यक्तिहरुले बढी अकुशल कर्महरु गर्दैन् भनेर भगवान् बुद्धले भन्नुभएको छ ।

९. धैर्यता : धैर्य गर्ने क्षमता हुनु, दया र क्षमाको भावमा हुनु ।

१०. बदला लिने भावना रहित : कसैले आफुलाई नराम्रो गरेतापनि त्यसप्रति बदलाको भावना नहुनु ।

यी नियमहरु आज पनि देशमा सुख, शान्तिका लागि आवश्यक छन् । एक राम्रो शासकमा एक सम्प्रदाय वा समुह विरुद्ध भेदभावको भावना नराखी सबैलाई समान व्यहार गर्ने हुनुपर्छ कसैप्रति घृणाको भावना राख्नुहुन्न र हरेक नियमलाई पालन गर्न सक्ने हुनुपर्छ । यसैगरी बुद्ध शिक्षामा सुशासनको प्रयोग दीघनिकायको महपरिनिर्माण सुत्रको सप्त अपरिहानिय धर्ममा उल्लेख गरेका पाइन्छ । सत्त अपरिहानिय धर्म भन्नाले हानि हुनवाट बचाउने धर्म भनेर बुझिन्छ जसले व्यक्ति, समाज र देशलाई नै बचाउँछ । अर्को शब्दमा भन्नुपर्दा सप्त अपरिहानिय धर्म भन्ने कोही पनि वाहिरका मानिसले वा तत्वले हानी गर्न नसक्ने र सबै मेलमिलाप गराइराख्ने धर्म हो । यी सात अपरिहानिय धर्म हुन् ।

१. राष्ट्रिय विकाससम्बन्धी सहमतिको लागि बराबर बैठक बोलाउने ।

२. एक आपसमा मेलमिलापको भावना राखी बैठक गर्नु र बैठकको निर्णयलाई सबै मिलि कार्यान्वयन पनि गर्नु ।

३. अवैद्यानिक कार्य नगर्नु अर्थात् संविधान (नियम कानुन) को उल्लंघन नगर्नु ।

४. अनुभवी वयोवृद्ध व्यक्तिहरुको शिक्षापद र रचनात्मक कुराहरुलाई सुनी सम्मान गर्नु ।

५. कुलकुमारीहरु महिलाहरु, बालबच्चाहरु, उपोगहरु र विरामीहरुप्रति कुर्कमहरु नगरी उनीहरुप्रति उचित व्यवहार गर्नु ।

६. राष्ट्रको पुजनीय स्थानहरुको सम्मान गर्नु र पुजा सत्कारको संस्कारलाई लोप हुन नदिनु ।

७. पुण्य पाहुनाहरुको सम्मान र रक्षा गर्नु ।

यी सप्त अपरिहानिय धर्मको पालना गर्नाले देशमा सुख, शान्ति र समृद्धि छाउँछ । तर यसको पालना नगर्नाले ठूलो हानी वा क्षति व्यवहोर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ । यस धर्मलाई पालना नगर्नाले एक राज्य पतन भएको कुरा यहाँ उदाहरणको रूपमा प्रस्तुत गर्न चाहन्छ ।

भगवान् बुद्धको पालामा गड्गा नदीको वारि र पारिपटि दुई राज्यहरु मगध र वैशाली थिए । वैशालीका लिच्छिविहरुको गणतन्त्रले सप्त अपरिहानिय धर्म पालन गरेका थिए । जसकारण भगवान् बुद्धले प्रशंसा गर्नुभएको थियो । त्यसकारण यस राज्यमा सुख, शान्ति र समृद्धिले छाएको थियो । तर यसमा मगधका राजा अजातशत्रुको नराम्रो दृष्टिका कारण उनीहरुवीच मतभेदको अवस्था वर्षकार ब्राह्मणद्वारा गराइयो । यस मतभेदका कारण उनीहरुको सप्त अपरिहानिय धर्म पालना गर्न छोडे र उनीहरुवीच फुट भयो । यसरी उनीहरुवीच फुट भएपछि राजा अजातशत्रुले वैशालीमाथि आक्रमण गरे र विजय प्राप्त गयो । यसरी सप्त अपरिहानियक धर्म पालन नगर्नाले उनीहरुवीच प्रेम र सद्भावको सद्गुणा, ईर्ष्या आदि उत्पन्न भयो र एकअर्काको सहयोग गर्ने भावना पनि भएन । यसै कारणले गर्दा यस वैशाली राज्यको नै पतन भएको थियो ।

सुशासनका लागि शासकमा शीलतको महत्व पनि रहेको छ । बुद्धको शिक्षामा मानव जीवनको जग वा मुलआधारको रूपमा व्यञ्चशीललाई लिईएको छ । आफ्नो दैनिक जीवनमा अरुलाई अहित हुने कार्य, नहोस भनी थप शर्तक हुन यस शीलको आचरण गरिन्छ । यस शीलको आचरणले आफु लगायत आफ्नो वरिपक्ति सबैलाई फाइदा गर्दैछ । अप्रमादलाई अमृतपद भन्ने बुद्ध वचनलाई गौर गरेपनि यो शील पालन भन् महत्वपूर्ण भएको हामी पाउँछौ । शील पालनमा पुर्णताको महत्व दर्शाउँदै भगवान् बुद्धले निम्न गाथा भन्नुभएको छ ।

यो पाणमतिपातेति मुसावादञ्च भासति

लोके अदिन्नं आदियति परदारञ्च गच्छति ।

सुरामेरयपानञ्च यो नरो अनुयुञ्जति

इधेवमेसो लोकरिमं मुलं खण्टि अतनो ।

अर्थात् : - हिंसा, असत्यवादी, चोरीकाम, व्यभिचारी र मद्यपान गर्ने व्यक्तिले यसै लोकमा आफ्नो उन्नतिको जड उखेल्दछ । यसरी स्पष्ट रूपले भगवान् बुद्धले पंचशील पालनमा समग्रताको आवश्यकतालाई औल्याउनु भएको छ । आध्यात्मिक विकास गर्नको लागि आवश्यक समाधि अभिवृद्धि गर्न पञ्चशीललाई आधारको रूपमा वा जगको रूपमा लिईएको र भौतिक विकासको लागि पनि नभई नहुने भएकोले पंचशीलको महत्व धेरै छ ।

यसैगरी सुशासनका लागी चतुब्रह्म विहार पनि महत्व छ । चतुब्रह्म विहार भन्नाले चार उत्तम मनुष्य गुण धर्म भनी बुझिन्छ । मैत्री, करुणा, मुदिता र उपेक्षा यी चार ब्रह्मविहार हनु । यहाँ ब्रह्म शब्दको अर्थ उत्तम श्रेष्ठ वा दोष रहित हो 'विहार' शब्दको अर्थ वास गर्नु, बस्नु हो ।

यसैले ब्रह्मविहार भनेको उत्तम श्रेष्ठ दोषरहित भएर बस्नु हो । ब्रह्महरुमा पनि यी गुणहरु हुन्न छन् । यी गुणहरुले सम्पन्न भएर वास गर्ने हुनाले पनि चतुब्रह्म विहार भनिएको हो । मैत्री भनेको द्वेषभाव र शत्रु भन्ने भावना त्यागेर सबैलाई मित्र सम्भन्नु हो । करुणा भनेको दुखित सत्त्वप्राणीहरुप्रति दया राख्नु, दुख मुक्तिको कामना गर्नु हो । मुदिता भनेको प्राणीहरुको सुख समृद्धिमा प्रशन्न र सुखी हुनु हो । उपेक्षा भनेको सबै प्राणीहरुको आ-आफ्नो कर्म तै सम्पति हन् भनी प्राणीहरुप्रति मध्यस्थभाव (समभाव) राख्नु हो । यी चार गुणधर्महरु एक शासकमा हुनु अति जरुरी छ । अनि मात्र सुशासन सफल हुन्छ । जसका कारणले सबैतर स्वच्छ, सुन्दर वातावरणको सृजना भई देशका जनताहरु आनन्दसित रहन सक्छन् ।

बुद्ध शिक्षा अन्तर्गतको आर्य अष्टाङ्गिक मार्ग यानकि मध्यम मार्गलाई पनि सुशासन गर्ने एक मार्गदर्शनका रूपमा लिन सकिन्छ । कुनै कुरा बढी गर्ने र घटी गर्ने जस्ता अतिसत्त्वलाई सन्तुलनमा राखी आवश्यकता अनुसारको मात्रालाई अपनाउनु 'मध्यम मार्ग' हो । सुख, समृद्धि वा निर्वाण प्राप्तिका लागि भनेर दृष्टकर तपस्या गरी शरीरलाई कष्ट दिनु र आमोद-प्रमोदमा लिप्त रही जीवन त्यसैमा धुलमिलाउनु दुवै 'अति' हुन् । अत : भगवान् बुद्धले यस 'अति' लाई छोडेर मध्यम मार्ग अपनाउनुभयो । यो व्यवहारिक सिद्धान्त जीवनको हरेक पक्षमा लागु हुन्छ । यस अन्तर्गत सम्यक्दृष्टि, सम्यक, संकल्प, सम्यक वचन, सम्यक् कर्मान्त, सम्यक् आजीविका, सम्यक् व्यायाम, सम्यक् स्मृति र सम्यक् समाधि पर्छन् । यसलाई सुशासनको लागि चाहिने सन्तुलिन विचारहरुका रूपमा लिन सकिन्छ ।

बुद्ध शिक्षामा चारवटा अगतिद्वारा प्रेरित भई शासन गरेमा राम्रो हुँदैन भनी उल्लेख गरेको पाइन्छ । यसको वंशमा नपरी शासन गरेमा राम्रो हुन्छ । भनिन्छ चार अगति (कुभावनाबाट बच्नुपर्छ । मतलब-

१. छन्दागति : - लोभ, इच्छाको वंशमा परी काम गर्नुहुन्न, पक्षपाती बन्नुहुन्न ।

२. द्वेषागति : द्वेष र क्रोधको वंशमा परी व्यवहार गर्नुहुन्न ।

३. भयागति : दण्ड पाइएला भन्ने र धम्कीको वंशमा परी भयको कारणले पापकर्म गर्नुहुन्न ।

४. मोहागति : अज्ञानता र आशक्तिको वंशमा परी नराम्रो काम गर्नुहुन्न । यस्ता चार अगतिबाट दुर रहेर शासन गरेमा एक राज्य अवश्य समृद्ध हुन्छ । यसैगरी बुद्ध शिक्षा अन्तर्गत सुशासनका लागि खुद्धकनिकाय अन्तर्गत परपेतवत्यु र विमानवत्युलाई पनि समावेश गरेको छ । यसमा ५१ सुत्रहरु छन् । जसमा नराम्रो कर्मका कारण राक्षसीहरुबाट गर्ने नर्कमा जन्मनुपर्ने कुराहरु उल्लेख गरेको पाइन्छ । यसरी गर्दा शासकहरुमा नराम्रो काम गर्न पछाडि पर्छन् । त्यसैगरी विमानवत्यु भन्नाले विमान कथाहरु भनेर बुझिन्छ । विमानवत्यु एक पद्यसंग्रह, हो जुनमा ८५वटा कथाहरु पाइन्छन् । कथाहरु जीवनमा गरेका र

रामा कर्महरुका कारण मानिस स्वर्ग नामक विमानमा जन्म लिने कुरा उल्लेख गरेको छ । यसले शासकमा रामा कर्महरु गर्ने भावना जागृत गर्दछ ।

त्यसैगरी भगवान् बुद्धले कोशलका राजा प्रसेनजिलाई सुशासनका लागि उपदेश दिएको कुरा पनि उल्लेख गर्न चाहन्छ । कोशल राजाका मलिकका नामक रानी भगवान् बुद्धकोउपदेश सुन्ने गर्थिन् । प्रसेनजित राजा पनि उपदेशका लागि गाइरहन्त्ये । एकदिन रानी मलिलकाले पुत्री पाएको खबर राजा प्रसेनजिलाई दिन आए तर राजा पुत्री भएको कारणले दुखी भए किनकि उनलाई राज्य चलाउन एक पुत्रको चाहना थियो । यसबखत भगवान् बुद्धले महिलाहरुको पक्ष लिएर उपदेश दिनुभयो कि सबै पुत्र वा पुत्रीहरु बराबर छन् र हामीले जसलाई धेरै माया गाउँ, त्यसबाट नै दुख र पीडा पनि पाइन्छ । यस्तो कुरा बुझेर प्रसेनजित राजा प्रवाभित भई राम्री शासन गरे ।

भगवान् बुद्धद्वारा प्रतिपादित बुद्धधर्मको प्रभावले सुशासन गर्न सफल चक्रवर्ती अशोक सम्प्राटलाई एक उदाहरणका रूपमा लिन सकिन्छ । बौद्ध ईतिहासमा कोही पनि राजा अशोक सम्प्राटको महानता र पाँडित्यमा जित्त सकेका छैनन् । अशोक सम्प्राट युद्धमा भाग लिइ रहने प्रवृत्तिका थिए । कलिङ्ग राज्यसँगको युद्ध उनको अन्तिम युद्ध थियो । जसमा १,००,००० भन्दा बढी मारिए र यसबाट विरक्त भएर दरवारमा बसिरहंदा बाटोमा हाँडिका शान्त भिक्षुलाई देखेर उहाङ्को मन शान्त भयो । त्यस पछि ज्ञान प्रप्त भिक्षुहरुको शिक्षा उपदेश सुनेपछि उनले बुद्ध शिक्षालाई सुशासनको क्रममा प्रयोग गरे । ती हुन् : सत्त्ववहार, अभ्यास, परोपकारी, भावनाको उजागर, कैदीहरुप्रति दयाभाव प्रदान गर्नु, सृष्टिको रक्षा, धार्मिक सहिष्णुताको प्रोत्साहन र विरामीहरुको सेवा जस्ता कार्यहरु गरे । यस्ता कार्यहरुका कारण उनले थुपै नाम कमाए । उनी अत : “अशोक एक महान्” का रूपमा चिनिन थाले ।

बुद्ध शिक्षा अन्तर्गतको सात आर्यथनलाई पनि सुशासनको साधनका रूपमा लिन सकिन्छ । यसमा श्रद्धा, शील, लज्जा, भय, क्रृत, त्याग र प्रजा पर्दछन् ।

१. श्रद्धा- विश्वास गर्नु, अविश्वास होइन

२. शील - राम्रो बानी बनाइराख्नु,

३. लज्जा - पापकर्म, अयोरय कर्म गर्नमा लाज मान्नु

४. भय - असत्य र अयोरय काम गर्नमा अरुले भन्ना, केही गर्ला भन्ने डर हुने स्वभाव

५. श्रुत - सुनी- पढी जानेबुझेको हुनु, ज्ञानि हुनु ।

६. त्याग - कञ्जुसी स्वभाव नहुनु

७. प्रजा - विवेकवृद्धि । हो, होइन, राम्रो नराम्रो जान्न सक्ने विशेष बुद्धि ।

यसैगरी हाम्रो दैनिक जीवनयापन गर्न चाहिने गृहिविनय यानकि गृहस्थीहरुले पालन गर्नुपर्ने नियमहरु पनि सुशासनका लागि आवश्यक छ । यसरी बुद्ध शिक्षाका थुपै कुराहरु सुशासनसँग सम्बन्धित छ ।

अहिले आधुनिक युगमा सुशासन भन्नाले एक सुसंगठित वा सरकारी प्रशासन हो जुन भष्टाचारविहिन, सब्बल प्रविधियुक्त न्याय कानुनी प्रणाली, त्यसको उचित कार्यान्वयन र जनताको हित र कानुनी अधिकारमा आधारित हुन्छ । यहाँ जनतालाई प्रमुख प्राथमिकता दिइ उनीहरुको प्रमुख आवश्यकताहर सर्वसुलभ मुल्यमा प्रदान गर्दछ । आधुनिक सुशासनको सिद्धान्त अनुसार यसका आठवटा विशेषता छन् । ती हुन् :

१. सहभागिता : राज्य व्यवस्थामा देशका सम्पुर्ण जनतालाई निर्णय प्रक्रियामा सहभागी गराउनु ।

२. कानुनी राज्य : कानुनी शासनमा सबैलाई समान नियम लागु गर्नु सानालाई ऐन ठूलालाई चैन नहुनु ।

३. पारदर्शिता : सरकारको आयत्यवमा जनतालाई पारदर्शिता ।

४. उत्तरदायी : जनताका चाहना र आवश्यकताहरप्रति उत्तरदायी भई कार्य गर्नु ।

५. सर्वसम्मति : सबैलाई मान्य हुने तबरले निर्णय गर्नु, आफुले चाहे जस्तो

नभई जनसाधारणको भावनालाई पनि कदर गर्ने, जनताको भावनाको जानकारी लिन आफै जनतामाझ जाने ।

६. समानता र समावेशीकरण : सबै वर्ग, धर्म जातिलाई समान रूपमा सबैलाई निर्णय वा कानुनको कार्यान्वयन क्षेत्रमा समावेश गर्ने ।

७. प्रभावकारिता : दक्ष र प्रभावकारी शासकहरुमा परित्यागको भावना, सहनशीलता र आवश्यक परेमा तप गर्न पछि नपर्ने ।

८. जवाफदेहिता : गल्ती गरिएमा जिम्मा लिने गर्ने, गल्ती स्वीकार गरेपछि आफ्नो तबरबाट हुन नदिन र काम विग्रेमा वास्तविक दोषीलाई जिम्मेदार ठहर याउने ।

माथि उल्लेखित विशेषताहरु बुद्ध शिक्षासँग सम्बन्धित रहेको छ । बुद्ध शिक्षामा सम्पुर्ण विशेषताहरु पाइन्छ । बुद्ध शिक्षा पढ्नु नै सुशासन पद्धतिको लागि हो भनेर तलका कुराहरुबाट थाहा पाउन सकिन्छ ।

१. सहभागिता : सात अपरिहानिय धर्ममा सबैलाई एककृत गरी बैठक राख्ने र कार्यान्वयन गर्ने कुरा उल्लेख गरेको छा ।

२. कानुनीराज्य : कानुनी शासनमा शील, सदाचारको जीवनलाई प्रोत्साहन गरी सबैलाई समान कानुन बनाइएको छ ।

३. पारदर्शिता : यथाकादी तथाकारी भई काय् वाक र चित्तबाट सुचिरित गर्ने कुरालाई प्रोत्साहन गरेको छ ।

४. उत्तरदायी : मैत्री, करुणा, मुदिता र उपेक्षाको आधारमा जीवनयापन गरी अरुप्रतिथ उत्तरदायी हुने कुराको उल्लेख गरेको छ ।

५. सर्वसम्मति : जनताको राय बुझ्न दुई राज्य कोशल र काशीका राजाहरु भेष बदलेर जनतामाझ पुगेका थिए ।

६. समानता र समावेशीकरण : सारिपुत्र र मोदगत्यायन जस्ता ब्राह्मणदेवि लिएर उपालि जस्ता नाउ पनि समावेश गरिएको थियो । महिलाहरुलाई पनि समावेश गरिएको छ । खेमा भिक्षुणीलाई “एत्तदग” भन्ने अग्रपद दिइएको, अपांग दासीहरु, सुनीति भन्ने कुचीकारलाई पनि समावेश गर्नुभएको थियो । सबै जाति, धर्म, गोत्र, उच्च-नीच्च, सम्पुर्णलाई समान रूपमा समावेश गरिएको छ । भगवान् बुद्धको निम्न गाथाले समानताको कुरा बताउँछ ।

न जच्चा बसलो होति, न जच्चा होति ब्राह्मणो ।

कम्मना बसलो होति, कम्मना होति ब्राह्मणो ।

अर्थात् : जन्मले कोही नीच हुँदैन, जन्मले कोही ब्राह्मण हुँदैन । कामले नै नीच र उच्च (ब्राह्मण) हुन्छ ।

७. प्रभावकारिता : धर्मलाई प्रभावकारी रूपमा अगाडि बढाउन उपेदश गर्नुभएको छ । विमानवत्थुमा राम्रो कर्म गर्ने कुरालाई जोड दिइएको छ ।

८. जवाफदेहिता : विनयमा त्रुटि गरे त्यसै अनुसारको कारवाही गर्ने कानुन र हेको छ ।

यसरी माथिका पक्षहरुबाट हेर्दा आधुनिक सुशासनमा बुद्ध शिक्षाको महत्व अत्यावश्यक रहेको छ । बुद्ध शिक्षाले सैद्धान्तिक, नैतिक तथा व्यवहारिक सम्पुर्ण ज्ञान प्रदान गर्ने भएकोले यसको महत्व आजको युगमा निकै रहेको छ ।

अतः बुद्ध शासन नै सुशासन हो अर्थात् बुद्धको शिक्षालाई व्यवहारमा प्रयोगर्नु नै सुशासन हो । बुद्ध शिक्षामा एक शासकमा हुनुपर्ने गुणहरु र सुशासनलाई चाहिने नियमहरु आदि इत्यादिबारे सम्पुर्ण उल्लेख गरिएको छ । सुशासनका लागि समाज विकास हुनु आवश्यक पर्दछ, र यसका लागि बुद्ध शिक्षाले राज्यका पक्षहरुमा ठूलो योगदान पुऱ्याएको छ । जस्तै : सामाजिक, राजनीति, अर्थ, व्यवसाय, विज्ञान, मनोविज्ञान, शिक्षा आदि । यसैगरी सुशासनका लागि चाहिने व्यवस्थापकीय क्षमता पनि बुद्ध शिक्षाले बढाएको देखिन्छ । जस्तै : योजना बनाउने, संगठन गर्ने, उचित व्यक्तिको नियुक्ति, निर्देशन दिने, समन्वय गर्ने, निर्णय दिने, नियन्त्रण गर्ने आदि । साथसाथै बुद्ध शिक्षाले श्रम व्यवस्थापन, गरि वी न्युनीकरण, खाद्यान्त संकट, आर्थिक विकास, पुर्वाधार विकास, जस्ता कार्यहरुमा

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LNBDS (UK) Activities and News 2015/2016

2561st Buddha Jayanti News (Sunday, 28-5-2017) at Harrow Borough Club, London.

This year our society celebrated Buddha Jayanti (2561st) at the usual venue of Harrow Borough Football Club on Sunday, 28th May 2017. This year also we had children's programme by including a presentation by our society's president Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana on the theme of '*Kalyana Mitra* (Noble Friend)' and asked the children to do painting based on this presentation on 'Good Friend and 'Bad Friend'. Just like last year this year also children produced some interesting and wonderful paintings for which they received prizes.



One of our executive committee members reminded us last year, "*In Nepal, children and animals are very much neglected. But we have realised this problem on the right time and managed to organise something for them. That was very good.*" Hence, we are planning to include children's programme in next year's celebration as well may be with different activities.

Menika, Rinu and Swechya presented two verses from Dhammapada in Pali with English translation. Swechya's English translation of the meaning and background leading to these verses were awesome. Everyone were impressed by her calm and clear presentation. We are hoping to publish this in our next issue of LUMBINI journal for everyone's benefit.

This year we were graced by Venerable Bhikkhu Tissa besides our Venerables Sumana, Sujano and Indrasak. Venerable Tissa gave an excellent talk in Nepali which we hope to publish in our next issue of Lumbini.

Venerable Sumana gave very inspiring talk on the teaching, "*I teach only two things- Suffering and the way out of the Suffering said the Buddha.*"

Ajahn Sujano conducted meditation session excellently. Everyone practised meditation for about 20 minutes with

pin drop silence including children.

Our founder president Mr Amrit Ratna Sthapit conducted the programme professionally as a Master of ceremony with translations of the talks either in Nepali or in English as required for the benefit of those who have difficulties in understanding talks in either in Nepali or English

The celebration ended with Paritran chanting, distribution of paritran threads and light refreshment kindly provided by generosity of members, well-wishers and friends.

Picnic at Milton Keynes in the vicinity of Peace Pagoda (Sunday, 13 August 2017):

The Society's picnic for members, families and well-wishers was organised on Sunday, 13th August 2017 at the Milton Keynes in the vicinity of Peace Pagoda, Willen Road, Willen Lake, Milton Keynes MK15 0BG. After the pleasantness of the Picnic in the lovely surrounding and in a beautiful sunshine the whole group visited nearby Nipponzan Myohoji Buddhist Temple.

Milton Keynes Peace Pagoda was built by monks and nuns of the Nippon Myohoji and enshrines sacred relics of Lord Buddha presented from Nepal, Sri Lanka and Berlin. It was the first to be built in the Western hemisphere. The Inauguration Ceremony on 21st September 1980 was presided over by the late Most Venerable Nichidatsu Fujii, founder and preceptor of the Order of Nipponzan



Myohoji. It is built to further humanity's quest and prayer that the world may be saved from nuclear annihilation. "May eternal peace prevail on Earth."

Nicheren (a Japanese Mahayana) tradition believes that by venerating Amitabha with deep reverence by chanting mantra **Na Mu Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo** (I devote my life to the law itself') leads to birth in *Sukhavati Bhumi* and to enlightenment.

A member of the Sangha from the temple gave explanation about the tradition and temple. He told us that Fuzi

Guruji was greatly inspired by meeting Mahatma Gandhi. After his explanation, he conducted a short meditation which was very inspiring. Everyone felt the experience was wonderful, more than expected.

Panca Dana (Sunday, 23-9-2017): Panca Dana was organised at the Kingsbury Vihara on 23 September 2017. It was well participated by both Nepali and Sri Lankan communities.

Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana, President of the Society gave talk on different types of Dana and their significance and Venerable Bhikkhu Tissa on Buddha Dharma. This was followed by meditation, discussion and blessing.

In Hinduism, Budhism, Jainism and Sikhism, dana is the practice of cultivating generosity. It can take the form of giving to an individual in distress or need. It can also take the form of philanthropic public projects that empower and help many. *Wikipedia*

The practice of giving is universally recognized as one of the most basic human virtues, a quality that testifies to the depth of one's humanity and one's capacity for self-transcendence. In the teaching of the Buddha, too, the



practice of giving claims a place of special eminence, one which singles it out as being in a sense the foundation and seed of spiritual development. In the Pali suttas we read time and again that "talk on giving" (*danakatha*) was invariably the first topic to be discussed by the Buddha in his "graduated exposition" of the Dhamma. Whenever the Buddha delivered a discourse to an audience of people who had not yet come to regard him as their teacher, he would start by emphasizing the value of giving. Only after his audience had come to appreciate this virtue would he introduce other aspects of his teaching, such as morality, the law of kamma, and the benefits in renunciation, and only after all these principles had made their impact on the minds of his listeners would he expound to them that unique discovery of the Awakened Ones, the Four Noble Truths. [Bhikkhu Bodhi; Access to Insight]

Meeting and Presentation YMBA Nepal (August and September 2017): Dharma Shakya met with



president Ms Arni Bajracharya, General Secretary Mr Sanam Shakya, past president Mr Surendra Shakya and other members of Young Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA) of Nepal a few times to discuss mutual cooperation between our society and YMBA for the promotion of Buddha Dharma. He also did a presentation on 'Physical and Psychological Benefits of Meditation' at the YMBA, Patan, Nepal on Friday, September 15, 2017 evening.

Meeting with Mahayogi Acharya Sridhar Rana Rinpoche (January 2018):

Members attended talk programme by visiting Buddhist monk from Nepal, Mahayogi Acharya Sridhar Rana Rinpoche at the Monty's, 1 The Mall, Ealing Broadway, UK on Sunday, 14-1-2018 and members also met him at



the UK office of Byoma Kusuma Buddha Dharma Sangha UK South Ruislip on Tuesday, 30-1-2018. We felt privileged to listen to Rinpoche's talk and have a private interview to discuss different aspects of Dharma. We wish him long life, peace and happiness.

Meeting with Yuba Baudha Samuha, Kathmandu, Nepal (13 February 2018) : Founder president of the society Mr Amrit Ratna Sthapit and his wife Mrs. Anu



Sthapit met with members of Yuba Baudha Samuha at their office on 13th February 2018 to discuss forth coming Essay competition 2018. Sponsorship money was handed over to Yuva Baudha Samuha treasurer Mr. Raju Shakya in the presence of President Mr. Tej Narayan Manandhar and Secretary Ms. Rajani Tamrakar for the said competition. Different topics were discussed, and finally the topic chosen was "*Buddha's Teachings for a Happy Family Life*" (बुद्ध शिक्षा र सुखी पारिवारिक जीवन). This competition is open to all to participate. Please contact Yuba Baudha Samuha Kathmandu for further information.

Society's Meetings and Dharma Discussions:

We continued to have daylong meetings and discussions on some aspects of Dharma regularly every three months



in the residences of one of our executive committee members during 2017 and 2018 which will be continued.

Magar Buddhist Society's Buddha Jayanti (Sunday, 29-4-2018): Many of our society's members including Venerable Sumana and Venerable Tissa attended 2642nd Buddha Jayanti (Year from Birth) organised by Magar

Buddhist Society UK at Samuel Cody College in Farnborough, UK on Sunday, 29th April 2018. Most of the Theravada Buddhist Monasteries in the UK are celebrating Vesak a month later as 2562nd Buddha Jayanti (Year from Parinirvana). It was a joyous occasion and participated by a large number of people not only from Magar Community but also from other Nepalese communities.

Venerable Pragya Siri, who was invited especially for this event gave an excellent dhamma talk in Nepali on '*Prajñā* (Wisdom)' and explained the Buddhist doctrine of cause and effect as explained in *Paticca-samuppada* (Dependent Origination). He quoted what Venerable Assaji told Sariputra on their first meeting. Sariputra asked Venerable



Assaji what did his teacher taught? He replied, "I cannot expound the doctrine fully, but I can tell you the meaning briefly." Sariputra said, "Well friend, tell little or much; what I want is just the meaning." Assaji quoted following verse which embraces the Buddha's entire doctrine of causality:

'Whatever from a cause proceeds, thereof
The Tathagata has explained the cause,
Its cessation too he has explained.
This is the teaching of the Supreme Sage.'

Venerable Pragya Siri also explained the purpose of Vipassana meditation which is realisation of impermanence. He conducted guided meditation for 10 minutes in Nepali. The whole audience practised meditation in complete silence. It was very encouraging and inspiring to experience the atmosphere in the hall both during the talk and meditation.

Our society's president Venerable Sumana also gave excellent talk in English. The programme started with taking five precepts and Paritran chanting. It is heartening to see that Magar Buddhist Society UK has made great spiritual progress in very short time. Thanks to the effort of Mr Krishna Darlami, Mr Tika Darlami, Mrs Sarla Rana Magar and others. They deserve special congratulation for their success.

News about Buddhism

14th UN Vesak Day Celebration, New York, USA (May 11-14, 2017):

Sri Lanka hosted the 14th UN Vesak Day which took place from 11 to 14 May. The celebrations were attended by over 1,000 people from about 80 countries.

The attendees included among others the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Damodardas Modi and the first woman President of Nepal Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari

The theme of the event was: "Buddhist Teachings for Social Justice and Sustainable World Peace."

On the occasion the Indian Prime Minister said, "*The biggest challenge to sustainable world peace today is not necessarily from conflict between the nation states. It is from the mindsets, thought streams, entities and instruments rooted in the idea of hate and violence. The menace of terrorism in our region is a clear manifestation of this destructive emotion,*"

President Bhandari said: "*Buddha is the light of the world. We should practice his teachings to create a better world*". She also outlined plans for the continued development of Lumbini.

Sri Lankan President, Pallewatte Gamaralalage Maithripala Yapa Sirisena said in his speech: "Today, the Western philosophers promote the Buddhist Philosophy to heal all the agitated minds with a clear understanding of this philosophy."

Several joint inter-country projects to further Buddhism were also launched on the occasion. It is worth remembering that the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution, moved by Sri Lanka, to hold an international Vesak Day in 1999 and since then Vesak Day has been celebrated at United Nations every year.

This message has been sent to us with Metta via the NBO email group. <http://www.nbo.org.uk>

The Seventh Buddhist Summit in Sri Lanka (November 2-7, 2017):

The Seventh Buddhist Summit was held from 2-7th November in Sri Lanka as a national event in the presence of H E President of Sri Lanka Maithripala Sirisena, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe, members of Royal families, national leaders from overseas and Sangha members from all three traditions – Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana from 47 countries across 5 continents. The theme of the summit was, "Buddhism for World Peace."

At the end of the summit, a joint communique was

adopted. Some of the points adopted were:

1. The Eight Buddhist Summit and inauguration of newly built Nalanda University will be held together in November 2018 in Japan. Newly re-established Nalanda Mahavihara was built by Nenbutsushu Sampozen Muryojuji Temple of Japan.
2. 8th April is to be designated International Buddhist Day for common celebration by all Buddhist traditions.
3. To hold Buddhist Council in 21st century.

Venerable Bhikshu Bodhijnana on behalf of Most Ven. Bhikshu Jnanpurnika Mahasthavir attended the summit to represent Nepal. A souvenir Buddhist Summit News was also published to mark the occasion with some of the Good Will wishes from eminent leaders both lay and Sangha members out of 1200 messages received. (Source: 7th Buddhist Summit News)

EBU Conference 2018: Spreading Wisdom and Compassion in European Societies in Malaga, Spain (April 13-15, 2018):

The European Buddhist Union organized a conference Spreading Wisdom and Compassion in European Societies in Benalmádena, near Malaga, Spain, from April 13-15th, 2018 to bring Buddhists from different European countries and from different Buddhist traditions and schools together.

Benalmadena Stupa of Enlightenment was established by



Lopon Tsechu Rinpoche also known a Guru Kushyo Tsechu Lama of Buddha Dharma Centre Kathmandu Nepal (See Lumbini Nov. 1999 issue for brief biography) (Source: personal e-mail invitation)

International Conference on Mindfulness in Amsterdam (July 10 – 13, 2018):

An International Conference on Mindfulness (ICM) is being held in Amsterdam from 10-13th July 2018. Mindfulness has become a hot topic in recent years with many publications in scientific journals and degree courses

offered in the UK and overseas universities.

This ICM will bring together progress in mindfulness research in the domains of medicine, education, organizations, and developmental, clinical and neuropsychology. The theme of this ICM is “science from within”,

Prominent Buddhist teachers and practitioners like Ajahn Amaro, Abbot of Amaravati Buddhist Monastery, Prof Mark Williams from Oxford, Stephen Bachelor, Zon Kabat-Zinn well known for his Stress clinic in USA (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Programme) and others will be contributing in the conference. (Source: Personal e-mail invitation)

Ashoka pillar finally gets protective shed (Kathmandu, March 20, 2018)



Nepalese Government has finally taken a step to preserve the remains of the ancient Ashoka pillar in Niglighawa, Kapilavastu, by building a shelter around it to protect it from elements. This pillar was believed to be built by Indian emperor Ashoka in 249 BC, the fragmented relics had been left in neglected state until recently.

Now, with an investment of nearly 3 million Nepalese Rupees by the Lumbini Development Trust, a small pavilion has been built to protect the two pieces of broken pillar. Lumbini Development Trust has also deployed three security guards to protect the pillar. ~ Kathmandu post 20-03-18

... Cont. from page: 21

पनि सहयोग गर्दछ । यी पक्षहरु पनि सुशासनका लागि आवश्यक छन् ।

देशको सम्प्रग विकास र उन्नति तथा त्यहाँका जनताहरूले सुख, शान्ति र सद्भावका साथ जिउनका लागि सुशासन अत्यन्त आवश्यक छ । अनि सुशासनका लागि बुद्ध शिक्षा, बुद्ध शिक्षाभित्र सुशासनका कुराहरु आउँछन् । अतः सुशासन भन्नु नै बुद्ध शासन हो यानकि बुद्ध धर्मको आयामहरु भित्र सुशासन पर्दछ ।

सन्दर्भ सामाग्रीहरु

- 1 शाक्य सुवर्ण, बुद्धधर्म र व्यवहार
- 2 मानन्दर त्रिरत्न, आर्थिक सरोकार र बुद्धको शिक्षा
- 3 भिक्षु अश्वघोष महास्थाविर, धर्म जीवन जिउने कला
- 4 भिक्षु अश्वघोष, अमुल्य धन
- 5 भिक्षु अमृतानन्द, धम्मपद

Wishing you Happy and Prosperous 2562

Buddha Jayanti.

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"There are times when the thing to do is to speak up, and there are times when the thing to do is to be quiet."

"If you are mindful while giving teachings to others, You will be teaching yourself at the same time. Do not think that you are only teaching others."

~ Amaravati Sangha

We wish all readers Happy 2562nd Buddha Jayanti!

Madan Thapa
Sangeeta Thapa
& Family
Hanwel, London

*"Don't recall - let go of the past
Don't imagine - let go of the future
Don't think - be in present
Don't examine - don't try to figure things out,
Don't control - don't try to cultivate things Rest."*

~ Advice by Tilopa to Marpa (Milopa's teacher)

We wish all readers Happy 2562nd Buddha Jayanti!

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A fashion advertisement featuring a woman with long dark hair, wearing a white knee-length dress with a vibrant, colorful floral and butterfly print. She is standing outdoors in a lush garden setting with a rustic brick wall in the background. The lighting is soft, creating a romantic atmosphere.

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