

Lumbini

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Main Buddha Statue in Rajakiya Buddha Vihara, Lumbini, Nepal

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.

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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.



L u m b i n i

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:-

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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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Editorial

'*Sukho Buddhanam Uppado*' Blessed is the birth of the Buddhas (*Dhp* 194). Full moon of May is a happy day to all truth seekers. The Buddha to be was born in Lumbini, in present day Nepal. At the age of 35, he became an Enlightened One in *Buddhagaya* and passed away at the age of 80 in *Kusinagar*. The great Master is no more with us but the path he showed is with us to be followed. To be near the Buddha is to follow the path he had shown to us. The greatest way to pay our admiration and honour to the great master is to practise the Noble teaching.

We are fortunate that in Buddhism we have choices to practice different traditions such as Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism which focus on the same goal despite some differences in the approaches. The Buddha showed the path that leads us to ever lasting happiness, *Nirvana* for which one may take different paths and means of transports to arrive at the same destination. We are thankful to Mike Murray and Acharya Narayan Prasad Rijal for writing short but very informative articles explaining Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism in their respective articles '*Mahayana Buddhist Practice*' and '*Vajrayana Buddhism*' respectively.

We have included a brief article by Dr. Bhadra Ratna Bajracharya on Lotus Research Centre, Nepal describing its various activities. The centre can be a valuable information resource for future researchers in Buddhism and Nepal.

Friends are very much valued in the teachings of the Buddha. A friend can be one's pal, parent, sibling, spouse, teacher or colleague. One can consider being fortunate if the friend is a noble one who protects one from corruption and guide us to wholesome deeds. Such a good friend is known as *Kalyana mitra*. Dr. Sunil Kariyakarawana was kind enough to provide us with an article '*Aspects of Noble Friendship in Buddhism*' that explains Noble Friendship in Buddhism. I am sure this will help us to find our own *Kalyana Mitra*.

'Every action bears consequence' is some thing we believe in. If the act is performed with an intention, it becomes a complete act which is known as 'Karma' in Buddhism. Karma can be what we did in our previous lives or in this very existence. In an article '*Talking to dead*' Deborah Smith, uses her professional experience, to clarify how *Karma* influences our lives. We are positive that this article will shed light in understating how *Karma* works.

In *who is who in Buddhism in Nepal*, we have a brief biography of Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche, the spiritual

Contents

LNBDS Executive Committee and Objectives	2
Editorial	3
Rajakiya Buddha Vihara (front cover)	4
Mahayana Buddhist Practice - Mike Murray	5
Aspects of Noble Friendship (<i>kalyana Mitra-ta</i>) in Buddhism - Dr. Sunil Kariyakarawana	7
Lost (Poem) - Anu Sthapit	9
WHO IS WHO IN BUDDHISM IN NEPAL (Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche)	10
Lotus Research Centre, Lalitpur, Nepal ~ Dr. Bhadra Ratna Bajracharya	11
Vajrayana Buddhism - Narayan Prasad Rijal	12
Talking to the dead - Deborah Smith	14
सार्थक मानव जीवनका लागि सप्त रत्न आर्य धन - सुचिता तुलाधर	16
Twenty five years as monk	18
LNBDS Activities and News	20

director of The Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition. Similarly, for those Nepalese who would like to read in their own language, we have included an article on '*Seven Noble Treasures*' by Suchita Tuladhar which illustrates the real treasure we should uphold. Ms. Anu Sthapit contributed fitting poem on '*Lost*' which we hope will be an inspiration to our readers to reflect on our life.

Meditation has become popular in the West. Thanks to kind hearted and charismatic teachers. Research studies on physical and psychological benefits of meditation have been carried out by many scientists in different institutions using the most sophisticated research tools. We are able to publish a brief summary of recent news item entitled "*Brains of Buddhist monks scanned in meditation study.*" The hope is that with further research it may be able to reveal mysteries of common illness like depression, Autism and Alzheimer's disease. We live in hope.

We hope all our readers will enjoy reading this journal, as much as we have enjoyed presenting it to you. May peace and contentment be with you.

'Bhavatu Sabba Mangalam'

Rajakiya Buddha Vihara, Lumbini, Nepal (Front Cover)



The first Vihar of the present century in Lumbini is Abhinawa Buddha Vihar established in 1952 (Bikram Sambat 2009). It had a face lift in the auspicious occasion of the fourth World Buddhist conference in the year 1956 (BS 2013) as Nepal hosted the conference. The Vihar was then called Nepal Buddha Vihar. The first monk who resided there was Venerable Dharmalok Bhante. Venerable Bhante Anirudra had stationed there for 46 years. Another prominent Bhante who had resided there was Venerable Bimalanda Bhante.

The Vihar has been renamed as Rajakiya Buddha Vihar recently. Venerables Sagar Dhamma Bhante and Sunanda Bhante are residing there presently.

According to Lumbini master plan, various countries were given permission to build Buddhist monasteries according to their traditions. At present, in Lumbini, there are Viharas from Thailand, Myanmar, Germany, Vietnam, China, Sri Lanka, etc.

Courtesy of Bhikkhu Maitri & Vinaya Dhakhwa

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 address **11 Mulberry Drive, Slough, Berkshire, SL3 7JU** 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 Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society's work and would like to renew my membership/join the society.

Name:.....Address:.....

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Email:.....

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 £

Signature:

Date:

Mahayana Buddhist Practice

✍ Mike Murray

Spiritual Programme Coordinator, Jamyang FPMT Buddhist Centre London

Mahayana Buddhist practice is for bodhisattvas and aspiring bodhisattvas. It is for those people who want to help all beings out of suffering and see that only the state of a fully enlightened Buddha brings that ability. So they aspire to become bodhisattvas and then finally to become fully enlightened Buddhas. Mahayana Buddhism says that every living being with a mind has the potential to eventually become a fully awakened Buddha. It is the birth right of every being with a mind, something innate and inseparable from the very core of their being, not something given from outside that could be taken away. It is our Buddha potential, our Buddha nature.

To make these aspirations and wishes come true Mahayana Buddhists make extensive prayers to the Buddhas and bodhisattvas and offer praises, pujas and service to the Three Jewels and to other beings. They work at improving their stock of merit (Sanskrit: punya) through doing good actions and dedicate the good karma they accumulate to one day becoming a fully enlightened being. They also try to break the bad habits they have accumulated over the years, of getting angry and resentful, of becoming obsessed and stuck on beings and situations, and of ignoring the reality of their situation. They do this by purifying and cleaning out the seeds of future suffering results and the traces left by previous bad actions in their minds, subtle energetic bodies, and gross physical bodies of bones, flesh and blood.

They do both of these things by practising the six perfections (of generosity, ethics, tolerance, endeavour, concentration and wisdom) on a base of the mind of Bodhicitta. But what does that mean for ordinary lay people in their daily lives?

The importance of Bodhicitta

For us beginners the beautiful perfect mind of Bodhicitta - that extraordinary heartfelt determination to work for as long as it takes to become a fully enlightened Buddha because we clearly see that only that can empower us to help others find true lasting peace and happiness – is about wishing to have that mind. We appreciate its qualities, its beauty, its elegance, the doors that it opens, the benefits it brings. We rejoice in the fact that some people, most notably the Buddha and Arya Bodhisattvas have achieved it, have turned that wish into a living vibrant experienced reality. We listen to teachings, read books, recite prayers that praise its qualities that tell us how to develop it, how to understand its value, how to never give up, and how to revive and restore our determination to develop bodhicitta.

Whether or not we seek out or have the glorious mind of Bodhicitta is what marks us out as either an aspiring bodhisattva or a bodhisattva. It orients the whole of our being towards developing the merit and understanding necessary to break free of samsara and to devote our lives to removing suffering.

The six perfections in daily life

So how do we bring that extraordinary mind of Bodhicitta into the core of our being and bring ourselves closer to full complete enlightenment? By practising the six perfections in our daily life.

Generosity towards religious objects, such as the Three Jewels (Sanskrit: Tri Ratna) brings very great merit. But if we focus our generosity only on giving to the Three Jewels we miss an important point. Practising generosity with other beings brings much merit too. Not necessarily giving money or things, but offering time, kindness, companionship, sympathy, practical help with daily life things, helping them to study and practice the dharma, especially giving protection from fear and pain. Our daily lives, busy though they are, are full of opportunities to practice generosity - we just have to open our minds to the possibilities.

Ethics is not only about restraining ourselves from bad or unhelpful behaviour, of bringing some discipline into our lives it is also about encouraging others to do the same. Encouraging, not by being self righteous or judgemental about others' behaviour but by showing how leading an ethical lifestyle brings less problems more space into our daily lives, calms the mind down and gives us space to strengthen it. How do lay people live an ethical life? First by taking on the lay vows, if unable to take all five at first, then at least taking the three of no killing, no stealing, no lying for this life and making a conscious effort to reduce the number of times they do the other two. The reason why the taking of intoxicants is considered unhelpful for Buddhists is because intoxicants cloud the mind and dull our wisdom leading us to do foolish wasteful things when under their influence. If we meditate the after effects of using intoxicants can be clearly seen to linger for days and weeks, setting back our progress considerably.

Tolerance is something we can practice every day. Rather than react with anger or irritation we consciously hold back and bear it, put up with it. Rather than enter another pattern of attachment and obsession we consciously hold back from getting involved. We put up with difficulties along the way because we know the goal of full complete

enlightenment is worth it. But it is important not to misunderstand the bodhisattva practice of patience. The practice of patience is not about letting people persistently behave badly or treat you or others badly and not challenging them. It is not about letting people walk all over you. It is not about letting bad manners go unchecked. But it is about not acting with anger in situations like that, it is about clearly and calmly saying or showing to others what behaviour is and is not acceptable in a given circumstance- kindly, firmly.

Endeavour is sometimes called enthusiastic perseverance and is about delighting in, having great interest in and enjoying doing good. If we thoroughly enjoy doing good then we won't be put off by setbacks. We will just return to the task with the same, or even greater levels of enthusiasm as before. If we are delighted by doing good then we will find every available opportunity to do it and rejoice in it, because it just brings us such joy and because it helps others. If we have a real uncontrived joy in helping others then nothing is too much for us to do for them. We don't spend enough time encouraging ourselves to develop this attitude to life and to our progress on the path. If we really develop this then the three perfections looked at earlier become a delight to do and a joy to carry out and we can so easily rejoice in the fact that others behave in such a way.

The perfection of concentration is really about strengthening the mind, which will take us to enlightenment. At present we are easily distracted, leaping from one sense impression to another, one thought to another like a monkey travelling through trees. And when not distracted we are unenergetic, unclear. So we start with where we are and we train the mind little by little to stay with a chosen object of concentration with brightness, clarity, lack of interruption. When we first start, say in a twenty minute session at the same time each day, it seems like the mind has got worse. But actually our mind is

really as out of control as that, it is just we never paid proper attention before. But if we quieten our lifestyle down with ethics, open up our mind with generosity, have energy for and delight in our practice of concentration (no matter how weak) and put up with the initial difficulties soon we will notice that it is possible to stay with a chosen focal object for longer and longer and for the object to be experienced very clearly and crisply without wandering off or losing energy. Then understanding will grow, and gradually the benefits of our meditation will spill over into our daily life.

The perfection of wisdom is very deep and difficult to fathom but we can start by noticing that all our experiences, everything in our daily life, is constantly changing. Since it is constantly changing there is little point in getting locked into anger or attachment about something that is now actually in the past and the only thing that is left is simply an impression on the mind. We can recognise these things for what they are – the unpleasant or pleasant results of past actions done by actions, coming out of seeds and impressions we laid on the mind while doing those actions. If we don't react by yet again repeating the pattern, we set ourselves free from laying down yet more seeds and traces. If we look more deeply we see that the underlying reality of our experience is dynamic, spacious, vibrant, open not cluttered with unyielding self natures as we imagine.

The Bodhisattva's path is sometimes summed up as being made up of two things, the mind of Bodhicitta concerned with the temporary and ultimate welfare of all, and the wisdom and understanding that enables us to set ourselves free from repetitive patterns of unenlightened behaviour by striking at their root, the wilful ignoring of the underlying reality of our lives. So that is our job in Mahayana Buddhism to develop our social and intellectual skills beyond their furthest point, to become a fully enlightened Samyak Sambuddha.

Lumbini Dana Fund

The LNBDS has launched the Lumbini Dana Fund in May 1998 on the auspicious day of Buddha jayanti. The purpose of the fund is to put the Buddha's teachings to practice. Karuna (compassion) is to extend our kindness to others in need. The fund intends to help poor and orphans in Nepal. Up to now the society has sponsored six orphans from Ramechhap village regularly since 1998, five destitute Cancer patients from Nepal in 2003 and regular donation to Dallu orphanage in Patan from January 2009. LNBDS hopes to expand such noble work. The LNBDS's aim is to concentrate on education, health and religion. The LNBDS depends on your generosity to make this task a success.

Please make cheque payable to the Lumbini Dana Fund

Aspects of Noble Friendship (*Kalyâna Mitra-tâ*) in Buddhism*

✍ Sunil Kariyakarawana

Buddhist Chaplain to Her Majesty's Forces

1. Introduction

Whilst the Sanskrit word *Mitra* (Pali: *mitta*), like its English counterpart: 'friend', denotes several different meanings ranging from general 'friendliness' to different levels of intimacy, affection and love, the term '*kalyâna mitra*' in Buddhism, by contrast, conveys a specific meaning: 'spiritual' (noble) friendship which runs through the canonical literature as one of the core concepts of the Buddha's teaching.

What, however, has not been clear in the traditional understanding of this concept is its 'full scope', the nature and the role of '*kalyâna mitra*' as to how and what extent a person who embodies it should and be able to influence another person. Where does '*kalyâna mitra-tâ*' begin and end? More specifically, what sort of an act does fall under the purview of '*kalyâna mitra-tâ*' and what does not?

The aim of this short article, thus, is to revisit this important Buddhist concept based on the canonical evidence and consider whether or not the '*kalyâna mitra*' concept in fact encompasses a 'larger scope' than we traditionally ascribe to it. What are the different dimensions of '*kalyâna mitra-tâ*? Who qualifies to be a '*kalyâna mitra*' and who doesn't? When does one need a '*kalyâna mitra*' and when does one not?

By way of finding answers to these questions in what follows we will argue that while '*kalyâna mitra-tâ*' always has to involve a 'spiritual' element to it as its main focus, the role of a '*kalyâna mitra*' however does not have to be limited to that of a meditation teacher (*kammatthânâcariya*) who gives meditation instruction to someone or a senior monk or nun of an order who acts as a Mentor to a given person.

For the purpose of exposition here, we will identify three main contexts in which *kalyâna mitra-tâ* applies, namely *worldly*, *samsaric* and *nibbanic*. On par with the rest of the Buddha's teachings, '*kalyâna mitra-tâ*' too must be applicable in all three contexts making it the 'whole of the Holy Life' as the Buddha has characterised it (SN. V2), rather than limiting it in any way. The Buddha himself being the greatest of all *kalyana mitras* and having guided people in all three spheres exemplified this position.

1. Canonical position vs. Traditional understanding

The Buddhist dictionary defines the term '*Kalyâna mitra*' as follows:

KALYANA MITRA, 'Noble (or good) friend' is called a senior monk who is the mentor and friend of his pupil, "wishing for his welfare and concerned with his progress",

guiding his meditation; in particular, the meditation teacher (*kammatthânâcariya*) is so called. The Buddha said that "Noble Friendship is the 'entire 'Holy Life' (S III, 18: XLV, 2) and he himself is the Good Friend par excellence: "Ananda, it is owing to my being a good friend to then that living beings subject to birth are freed from birth" (S III, 18). (Bhikku Nyanatiloka 1946 (ed. By Nyanaponika 1970) p.73)).

Though this definition points to both general and specific roles and responsibilities of a '*kalyâna mitra*' it seems to conform to our traditional understanding of the concept, namely, the *kalyana mitra* is a meditation teacher (*kammatthânâcariya*).

While it is essentially correct that one of the main and specific roles of a *Kalyana mitra* is to be able to guide one in one's meditation and spiritual progress and mentoring one in that direction, the overall general role of a *Kalyana mitra*, in guiding one to bring one to that position, however, need not be forgotten.

A closer examination of the contexts in which this concept occur in the Pali canon should give us a better knowledge and understanding of this:

1.1 Summary of main canonical representations:

- (1) "*Kalyâna mitra-tâ* is the whole of the holy life" (SN.45:2)
- (2) *Kalyâna mitra-tâ* (*sappurisa – sevana*) is one of the **four** '*sotâpatti – angas*' (SN.15.2) (limbs of '*sotâpatti*', or the factors that brings one to the state of *sotâpatti*).
- (3) It is the first of the five qualities needed for the development of the one whose Awareness-release is still immature (UD 4.1)
- (4) Dhamma is (fully beneficial) only for those who have 'good friends' who have good companions and are fully inclined towards virtue. It is not beneficial for those who have wicked friends who have wicked companions who are inclined towards wickedness" (SN.3:18)
- (5) One of the four factors (qualities) of security and happiness: *uttâna sampadâ* (being consummate in initiative), *âraakkha sampadâ* (being consummate in vigilance), *Kalyâna mitra-tâ* (admirable friendship), *samajivikatâ* maintaining one's livelihood in tune (AN.8:54 translation by Thanissaro bhikkhu).

- (6) Seven qualities of a spiritual friend: “He gives what is beautiful, hard to give; does what is hard to do, endures painful, ill-spoken words; his secrets he tells you; your secrets he keeps; When misfortunes strike, he doesn’t abandon you; when you’re down & out, doesn’t look down on you. A person in whom these traits are found, is a friend to be cultivated by anyone wanting a friend. (Bhikkhu Thanissaro translation, AN. 7:35).

The five contexts shown above seem to have a single focus: **Kalyāna mitra-tā** is there for worldly beings (*assutava puthujjana*) as an essential support to use for one’s final goal, that is *nibbanic* freedom.

However, one cannot escape the fact that one is still in the world and therefore one has to start from where one already is. For that to be meaningful one has to be prepared to apply the qualities of **Kalyāna mitra-tā** at least in three distinct domains:

2. Three domains:

- (1) Worldly,
- (2) Samsaric and
- (3) Nibbanic

This could be illustrated in the following diagram:

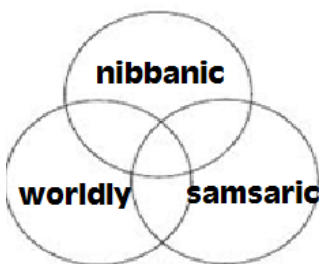


Figure 1

As every circle intersects with the other two the acts of **Kalyāna mitra-tā** do have their bearing on every domain. Though all three are properly integrated to a single focus, it is important to recognise the function of **Kalyāna mitra-tā** in all three circles which of course is the case with all/ any other virtue in Buddhism*.

Let’s consider the (4) in 1.1. The context of this teaching is for the *Dighajanu* (*Vyagghapajja sutta*) AN. 8.54 who was simply interested in finding out the crucial factors to make this very worldly living a success. Buddha offers ‘spiritual friendship’ as an important factor alongside three other factors: being consummate in initiative, being consummate in vigilance, and maintaining one’s livelihood in tune, implying that ‘spiritual friendship’ is relevant in all three spheres:

[The Blessed One said:] “There are these four qualities,

TigerPaw, that lead to a lay person’s happiness and well-being in this life. Which four? Being consummate in initiative, being consummate in vigilance, admirable friendship, and maintaining one’s livelihood in tune.

“And what does it mean to be consummate in initiative? There is the case where a lay person, by whatever occupation he makes his living — whether by farming or trading or cattle tending or archery or as a king’s man or by any other craft — is clever and untiring at it, endowed with discrimination in its techniques, enough to arrange and carry it out. This is called being consummate in initiative.

“And what does it mean to be consummate in vigilance? There is the case when a lay person has righteous wealth — righteously gained, coming from his initiative, his striving, his making an effort, gathered by the strength of his arm, earned by his sweat — he manages to protect it through vigilance [with the thought], ‘How shall neither kings nor thieves make off with this property of mine, nor fire burn it, nor water sweep it away, nor hateful heirs make off with it?’ This is called being consummate in vigilance.

“And what is meant by admirable friendship? There is the case where a lay person, in whatever town or village he may dwell, spends time with householders or householders’ sons, young or old, who are advanced in virtue. He talks with them, engages them in discussions. He emulates consummate conviction in those who are consummate in conviction, consummate virtue in those who are consummate in virtue, consummate generosity in those who are consummate in generosity, and consummate discernment in those who are consummate in discernment. This is called admirable friendship. (Venerable Thanissaro Bhikkhu translation p1.)

As the last paragraph shows, the **Kalyāna mitra-tā** described here does seem to involve wider range of roles some of which clearly have a slant on the worldly existence which seems to have escaped from traditional understanding of the term. Same point could be made in the case of qualities of a friend enumerated in the 1.1. (5) as well. All seven qualities of a friend does have a slant on all three dimensions as well.

By contrast, the teaching given to Meghiya (UD 4.1) as presented in 1.1 (3) above involves a variety of ‘spiritual’ roles as shown by the descriptions given below:

“Meghiya, in one whose awareness-release is still immature, five qualities bring it to maturity. Which five?

“There is the case where a monk has admirable friends, admirable companions, admirable comrades. In one whose

awareness-release is still immature, this is the first quality that brings it to maturity.

“Meghiya, when a monk has admirable friends, admirable companions, admirable comrades, it is to be expected that he will be virtuous, will dwell restrained in accordance with the Patimokkha, consummate in his behavior and sphere of activity, and will train himself, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults.

“When a monk has admirable friends, admirable companions, admirable comrades, it is to be expected that he will get to hear at will, easily and without difficulty, talk that is truly sobering and conducive to the opening of awareness, i.e., talk on modesty, on contentment, on seclusion, on non-entanglement, on arousing persistence, on virtue, on concentration, on discernment, on release, and on the knowledge and vision of release.

“When a monk has admirable friends, admirable companions, admirable comrades, it is to be expected that he will keep his persistence aroused for abandoning unskillful qualities, and for taking on skillful qualities — steadfast, solid in his effort, not shirking his duties with regard to skillful qualities.

“When a monk has admirable friends, admirable companions, admirable comrades, it is to be expected that he will be discerning, endowed with discernment of arising and passing away — noble, penetrating, leading to the right ending of stress.

“And furthermore, when the monk is established in these five qualities, there are four additional qualities he should develop: He should develop [contemplation of] the unattractive so as to abandon lust. He should develop good will so as to abandon ill will. He should develop mindfulness of in-and-out breathing so as to cut off distractive thinking. He should develop the perception of inconstancy so as to uproot the conceit, ‘I am.’ For a monk perceiving inconstancy, the perception of not-self is made firm. One perceiving not-self attains the uprooting of the conceit, ‘I am’ — Unbinding in the here and now.”

3. Conclusions

The main focus of this short article was to reflect on the width and depth of *Kalyāna mitra-tā* in Buddhism. Contrary to how it was traditionally understood to mean as ‘a meditation teacher’ or mentor who has a specific spiritual role, the Pali Canon seems to imply spiritual roles relevant to all three domains we posited as: *worldly*, *Samsaric* and *nibbanic*. When Venerable *Ananda* suggested to the Buddha “*Kalyāna mitra-tā* involves half of the holy life, Buddha immediately corrected Venerable *Ananda* and said:

“Don’t say that *Ananda*, don’t say that. Admirable friendship, admirable companionship, admirable camaraderie is actually **the whole of the holy life**. When a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & comrades, he can be expected to develop & pursue the noble eightfold path”. The helping and supporting one in developing Noble Eightfold Path surely does involve a multitude of roles.

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End notes:

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Lost

 Anu Sthapit

If wealth is lost nothing is lost
If health is lost something is lost
If character is lost everything is lost.

Life is short and death is sure
The time of death remains obscure
A soul you have had only one
If that is lost all hope is gone.

That is why,
Be ready for these three
Death, Downfall, Sorrow

Control these three
Desire, Temper, Speech

Do not waste these three
Energy, Money, Time

Preserve these three
Good books, Good friends, Good deeds

Have a heart for these three
Children, Hunger, Handicap

Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche

Lama Zopa Rinpoche, the spiritual director of The Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, is the reincarnation of the Sherpa Nyingma yogi Kunsang Yeshe, the Lawudo Lama. Rinpoche was born in 1946 in Thami, not far from the cave Lawudo, in the Mount Everest region of Nepal, where his predecessor meditated for the last twenty years of his life. While his predecessor had belonged to the Sakya tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, the Lawudo Lama himself had been a great master of the complete tantric teachings of the Nyingma tradition.

Rinpoche left Thami when he was about 4 years old and was put in a Monastery that was very close to the border of Nepal and Tibet. Rinpoche stayed at this Monastery for several years until he went to Tibet and took getsul ordination in 1958, and continued his studies in Domo Geshe's monastery in Phagri, Tibet.

In 1959 Rinpoche escaped from Tibet and continued his studies in Sera Jhe monastery in Buxa Duar, in the north of India. This is where the Indian Government housed the monks from Sera, Ganden and Drepung Monasteries who wanted to continue their studies, along with monks from the other sects. It was at Buxa Duar that Rinpoche became the disciple of Geshe Rabten Rinpoche and then of Lama Thubten Yeshe. Frida Bedi then invited him to join her school for incarnate lamas in Dalhousie where they were given the chance to learn English for 6 months. Upon the completion he returned to Buxa Duar and continued his studies.

Lama Yeshe and Zopa Rinpoche's contact with Westerners began in 1965 in Darjeeling, when they met Princess Zina Rachevsky from Russia. She became the Lamas' first Western student. In 1969 they founded the Nepal Mahayana Gumpa Center at Kopan, above Boudhnath Stupa in Kathmandu, Nepal. At the insistence of Zina Rachevsky the Lamas started to teach courses on Buddhism for Westerners at Kopan.

In 1971 Rinpoche took gelong ordination from His Holiness Ling Rinpoche in Bodh Gaya. By 1975, twelve centers had started. In 1976, the growing worldwide organization was named by Lama Yeshe 'the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition' (FPMT). The FPMT is an organization devoted to the transmission of the Mahayana Buddhist tradition and values worldwide through teaching, meditation and community service.

There are 147 FPMT centers and projects worldwide as of March 2007.

FPMT currently has 8 standard Buddhist education programs that are taught in many of the centers. Two of these, the Masters Program and the Basic Program are committed courses of 6 and 5 years of study respectively. Based on the great

philosophical texts studied in the monasteries of Tibet, FPMT holds to rigid standards of translation and has a passion for authentic texts to ensure that complete accuracy of the meaning found within these profound texts is not forfeited in the transmission from East to West.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche has many other projects around the world; one of the most important is the 500ft Maitreya Statue that Rinpoche is building in Bodh Gaya that will include schools, hospitals and other social projects such as Leprosy clinics (these social projects are already in existence and have been functioning for the last 15 years). Some of the other projects that Rinpoche has founded are Sera Jhe food fund – which offers breakfast, lunch and dinner everyday to 2700 monks. The Lama Tsong Khapa teacher fund offers an allowance to the main 100 teachers in the Gelukpa tradition from various monasteries. Rinpoche also has a number of other funds that are for building holy objects, such as Stupas, prayer wheels etc. Rinpoche has a very strong interest in collecting texts from all the different traditions.

For more information please visit www.fpmt.org





Lotus Research Centre, Lalitpur, Nepal

Dr. Bhadra Ratna Bajracharya, Chairman

Introduction

Lotus research Centre (LRC) was established with encouragement and support from Late Rev. Shozo Iijima, then president of Shishin-kai, Japan in 1988 to promote and preserve Buddhist Cultural Heritage of Nepal. Lotus Research Centre continued to get support from present head and members of Shishin-kai as well as Buddhist intellectuals and well wishers from Nepal.

Lotus Research Centre has executive board and advisors for the smooth running of its activities. Executive board members and advisors are elected every five years. Current chairman of the executive board is Dr. Bhadra Ratna Bajracharya. Every year the centre's programme and budget are passed by General Assembly.

Aims and objectives:

- To carry out studies in the areas of religion, culture, art and allied subjects in Nepal.
- To translate and to publish Buddhist Sanskrit scriptures in vernacular language
- To help the weaker section of Nepalese society in their effort to acquire knowledge and skills.
- To promote cultural exchange programmes with other national and international organisations with similar objectives.

Activities:

A. Research and study: Since its establishment it has published more than 40 research works on cultural heritage and Buddhism in Nepal.

B. Establishment of Lotus Academic college: This was established in 2007 in affiliation with the Tribhuvan University of Nepal to offer Post graduate diploma Courses in Buddhism. It plans to start Master's degree course on Buddhist Studies in near future.

C. Translation and publications:

a) Translation: It has translated 10 Buddhist scriptures from Sanskrit into Vernacular language such as *Sadhanamala*, *Siksa-samuccaya*, and *Nispannayogavali*.

b) Publications:

- i) It has translated seven Sanskrit Mahayana Scriptures into Nepal Bhasa and published them for general public use.
- ii) Research works on cultural and Buddhist heritage of Nepal
- iii) Conference and Seminar Reports on various subjects

- iv) Educational material for children like 'Life of Lord Buddha' and 'The Lion and the Wolf.'
- v) Its journal '*Paleswan*'

D. Conference and Seminars: It has conducted many conferences and seminars both at national and international levels. The Fifth International Conference on Buddhist Heritage of Nepal Mandala is scheduled to be organised during April 23-25, 2011.

E. Information Centre: LRC has initiated to build digital archive to be used as information resource. The archive now contains several hundreds of thousands of digital pictures, scans of thousands of manuscripts, hundreds of hours of audio-visual resources and a significant number of electronic books. The archive is now open to public.

F. Formation of the 'LRC Support Group': This group was formed in 2009 to provide support to the centre. It is presently headed by Mr. Kiran Narsing Shakya.

G. Preaching and Training programmes: To attract youths to education and cultural heritage, LRC also offers training on Research Methodology, Basic Buddhist courses of varying lengths and courses on Sanskrit language both for beginners and advanced level students

H. Essay Competition: It has been conducting essay competitions since 1989 in various Buddhist topics like 10 perfections (*paramita*), Maitri (*loving kindness*), Karuna (*compassion*), etc.

I. Cultural Exchange and Networking: This has taken place at national as well as international level e.g. it has established network with Buddhist Library of Nagoya, Japan. It has also pursued academic exchanges at national and international level. As a result of this exchange some of LRC members have obtained higher degrees from foreign countries and LRC via its college has offered post graduate degree courses on Buddhism to international students.

Contact address: You are welcome to contact the centre for further information either by post, telephone or e-mail at:

Lotus Research Centre

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Website: <http://www.LRCnepal.org>

Office hours: 10:00 to 17:00 pm

Vajrayana Buddhism

✍ Narayan Prasad Rijal

Assistant Holder of Dharma (Sahayak Dharmadhara), Byoma Kusuma Buddhadharma Sangha

Many people in the world today know at least something about the Buddha. One of the main reasons behind the popularity of the Buddha is because he had spent more than half of his later part of his life teaching people without any discrimination. The Buddha taught ways to be completely free from the suffering of simple level to profound depths, suffering like anxieties, stress and grievances arising out of disease and death. Among all the teachings he gave to humans and non-humans, which are supposed to be more than eighty four thousand according to Pali and Sanskrit sources, only a few are now available in languages like Pali, Sanskrit and others, and most of them have been lost.

For scholars of culture, religion, history and anthropology, objective study of the teachings that are available in different languages will reveal the history of Buddhism not yet known. It will also tell us about development of different belief systems within Buddhism and reveal chronological order of events that had occurred when Buddhism spread throughout the world.

The study may also disclose why Buddhism is so zealously safeguarded by communities where it has flourished for centuries and how it is now rapidly spreading all over the world. These events have occurred due to the link the Buddha's teaching have with suffering and happiness of everyday life, and because of their effectiveness in pacifying and eradicating human fears, and their infallibility in maintaining peace and harmony in the society. So whatever forms of Buddhism are available now, they are all capable of bringing results and are still being practiced with great enthusiasm in Buddhist societies. We should also not forget that those Buddhist traditions that have failed to produce change in the experience of their followers have gradually disappeared from the world.

Thus, if we analyze Buddhism from practical and empiric viewpoint, three major forms are found today. They are known by popular names: Shravakayana, or the system of Buddhist practice where the mode of practice is chiefly based on the methods of renunciation; Paramitayana, or the system of practice where major emphasis is on the methods of antidote and compassion; and Mantrayana, where methods of transformation are most important part of the practice.

The main goal of Shravakayana is to achieve the liberated state of mind which is free from all afflictions (Sanskrit: Kleshas) like desire, anger, etc.. This state is called 'Nirvana'. The one who has fully realized this state is called an 'Arhant'.

The main goal of the other two systems is basically the same and is slightly different from that of the first one. This goal is what is called perfect enlightenment (Sanskrit: Samyak Sambodhi), which is a mental state of spontaneity where wisdom and compassion are inseparable and the mind is constantly experiencing the non-dual state of indivisibility of non-abiding Nirvana (Sanskrit: Aprathisthita Nirvana). This difference creates some distinction in the path of Mantrayana and Paramitayana from Shravakayana.

Vajrayana is the name given to the Buddhist system where both Paramitayana and Mantrayana are practiced in a combined way. The word Vajra means something that is indestructible, hard and rigid. The absolute nature of all our experiences is 'emptiness' which pervades everywhere and is infallible and hence is indestructible. So 'emptiness' is metaphorically known by the word 'Vajra', and the system where practice is geared towards realization of 'emptiness' as the reality of experience is Vajrayana. The concept of emptiness is described in texts of Shravakayana also, like in Pali Suttas. But the practice-instructions are missing in their system. You can for example read in Anagatabhaya Sutta of Anuttaranikaya, 5th Nipata, where the Buddha has mentioned: "Those Sutra teachings taught by Tathagata which have deep profound meaningsare beyond the world....endowed with the concept of emptiness...if these are taught, they would not like to listen to them..." The practice of 'emptiness' is thus not important in Shravakayana. But it is one of the major practices in Vajrayana.

In Vajrayana, the theoretical goal is the same as that in Paramitayana, but in practice through the use of skillful methods in Vajrayana, the path towards Buddha-hood is much quicker, effective and faster. This is why Vajrayana is also known as Upayayana (skillful way).

Most of the skillful methods are related with the subtle levels of experiences that are produced from different kinds of yogic visualization techniques. These techniques reach deep subconscious level of practitioners and change will manifest very quickly. Before performing these profound techniques, everyone has to study a lot to understand the process and they will still need plenty of skillful guidance during practice to progress correctly in the exercise. Because of this, the methods must be taught by an authentic master who has himself practiced these techniques, gained deep and profound experience from them, and can guide students properly. If you practice by yourself these methods might help you produce mental clarity, but correct

realization cannot be achieved without the help of a qualified master. So these methods are kept secret and are expressed in code-language (Sandhya Bhasha), whose meaning should be understood only from lineage master. This is why Vajrayana is also known as Guhyayana (or secret way).

In order to enter into the practice of Vajrayana, one should understand Buddhism correctly and have certain qualities. They are in general like:

1. One has to take refuge in the triple gem (Buddha, Dharma and Sangha) and must adhere to basic moral precepts as far as is practically possible.
2. Has to understand that there is real suffering in the world and develop a deep feeling for preciousness of human life.
3. Know basic principles of the Buddha's teaching on suffering and how cessation from suffering can be accomplished, like understand the concept of the rule of interdependent origination (Sanskrit: Pratityasamutpada), four noble truth and qualities conducive to enlightenment, etc.
4. Have good knowledge of those Buddhist practices that shed light on the truth like impermanence, suffering, no-soul or emptiness.
5. Develop compassion for the sake of eradicating the suffering of others.
6. Take practices like 'generation of Bodhicitta (enlightenment mind)' and 'Bodhisattva vow' according to Paramitayana and safeguard and practice them daily.
7. Understand the principles of emptiness and also clearly know its relationship with the path and Buddha-hood.

If you have understood these things, then you will have the right to practice according to Vajrayana. But it is up to an experienced master to tell if someone is capable of practicing according to Vajrayana.

The main practice of Vajrayana is Vipassayana meditation. Through Vipassayana you will understand the true nature of all your mental afflictions. There are five main mental afflictions, which are explained through an empowerment ceremony. This is why in Vajrayana you will practice Vipassayana only after receiving empowerment. During the empowerment, you will be taught to understand the five mental afflictions metaphorically as the figure of five Buddhas. The effect of this out reaches deep in the sub-conscious mind, and not just superficially on an external conscious level.

After the empowerment, you will base your daily practice on the 'Dev Yoga' you have received and continuously explore the deep recesses of your mind and try to understand the true nature of it. Your daily practice is divided into two parts – generation and dissolving stage. The generation stage takes a lot of time and involves less Vipassayana, whilst the dissolving stage takes less time and involves more Vipassayana practice.

Your experience of Vipassayana meditation will deepen if you practice daily and correctly. With dedication of more time to practice and great enthusiasm, you will start to understand the real nature of your mind and how mental afflictions have blocked you from realizing it. As your practice deepens and when you come to a stage where you will realize the true nature of mind effortlessly and completely non-conceptually, you will reach the stage known as 'first Bhumi (stage)'. According to Shravakayana, this stage is known as 'Shrotapanna'.

After that, as you practice more you will cross more stages and you will then experience the stage of Buddha-hood, for which you have to cross the tenth stage.

In Vajrayana, there are 4 types of Tantra practices according to which you can practice Vipassayana. These are: 1. Kriya (action) 2. Charya (conduct) 3. Yoga 4. Anuttara Yoga (the highest yoga).

The practice of Anuttara Tantra is the most popular of the four.

In Vipassana, many skillful methods are used to deepen the experience. These must be learned directly from an authentic master. You will not be able to learn from a book or by listening to discourses. If you do not learn from a master you will either fail to progress in your spiritual practice or gain negative (or damaging) experiences. As Vajrayana practices produce deep psychological changes, practicing on your own can have detrimental mental effect. That is why these practices are kept secret and taught secretly.

There are many skillful practices within the four Tantras. It is impossible to describe all of them here, but to name a few – Vajra-deha, Chandali, MayaKap, Sleeping Yoga, Ukranti Yoga, Yoga of entering the stage between death and another life (Sanskrit: Antarabawa, Tibetan: Bardo), etc. These are all Vipassayana practices, and are practiced at different stages of the path, depending on the level of experience you have gained. For example, during sleeping yoga, you will try to acquire full awareness during the sleep and try to know your nature of mind.

During the practice of Ukranti Yoga, the mind will gain very different experience and leave the body and you will learn to practice the nature of mind.

Continued on ...19

Talking to the dead

✍ Deborah Smith (*Bsc. Hons*)

I'm developing my ability to talk to the dead and the surprising thing is it's not scary or spooky, it's wonderful! The official term for someone who can talk to spirits is a medium because they mediate between someone in the human realm and someone in the spirit realm.

There are mediums all over the world, some of whom are amazingly good, Gordon Smith for example. They give such accurate details of the person they are connecting with that it's difficult to find an explanation to how they know the information they are giving, other than that they are in connection with your loved one of whom they have no previous knowledge.

I have always been sensitive, sensitive to other people's feelings, sensitive to atmospheres and sensitive to spirits. Recently I was told that this is the reason for my having a natural gift of mediumship. Mediums are also known as sensitives because they are sensitive to things that most other people are not. It is certainly true that before I had any knowledge of mediums or psychics I did sense spirits. It was years later that I found out about this world of "sensitives" and that my great grandmother had also had the gift of mediumship!

Children are often sensitive and open to picking up spirits around. When I was living in a 16th Century farmhouse there was one particular spirit who was very friendly and playful. My son was about 4 years old at the time and so as not to frighten him I didn't tell him about the spirit. However, one morning he said he was very tired and when I asked why he said "because that woman keeps waking me up and wanting to play and I don't want to play in the night, I want to sleep." I casually said I would ask her not to do that anymore which is indeed what I did and he never mentioned her again! She continued to be around and made her presence felt in a playful way to me and, on more than one occasion to my guests!

One lunch guest was determined not to believe in my stories of the spirits in the house and, when I was trying to explain the frequent events, a bottle top flew across the table. He took the bottle and tried to make the top pop off the bottle as it had just done. While struggling to do that an object, from the shelf some distance, behind him, landed squarely on his empty plate. He stopped arguing and never visited again!!

There are many other such stories but actually physical evidence like this is very rare, what is more common is sensing a spirit and what they wish to communicate. This is much more subtle and, as someone who is a developing medium, that subtlety can be very disarming as it is much

like learning a new language, which, like translating, you don't always get right! Mediums pick things up in various different ways, via clairvoyance (seeing things), clairaudience (hearing things) or clairsentience (sensing/feeling things). Personally my strongest sense is clairsentience which means that I have to learn the language of sensing, sensing what the spirit wants to say, sensing what they feel, sensing them, their being. What is interesting is, as you develop you feel that you know a spirit better than you know a person, this is because you have blended with the spirit so you have felt what they feel, what they think etc. It's not often you know people to that depth.

As a psychotherapist I help people to help themselves by drawing on a variety of methods from conventional psychotherapeutic techniques, to Buddhist meditation, hypnotherapy, regression to earlier times in their lives and even earlier lives if the resolution is not to be found in this life. Even with all these different ways of helping there has always been a certain life issue where I have struggled to help people – bereavement. The only thing I could do was listen, which does have some value of course but I always felt this was inadequate especially, faced with someone in deep pain.

This is where mediumship comes in – it can give such comfort and even joy to be able to communicate with a departed loved one via a medium. It can also help those people who have been stuck in grief for an overly long time, to let go of the pain of grief. Naturally it is an emotional experience to make this contact but usually the tears of grief are mixed with tears of happiness. Often the loved one gives a message which can have a profound effect on the recipient in a variety of ways.

There are people who are not only affected by the death of a loved one or close friend in terms of mourning but are stuck in negative emotions which have arisen as a result of the death. For example, death as a result of an accident for which they see themselves as being partially responsible or a suicide. They may be unable or unwilling to let go of the negative emotions for various reasons. In this kind of situation there is only so much a therapist, a friend or family member, can say to help. Often the only person who can help them to let go is the spirit of the departed one.

This type of situation can also go the other way in that it can be the spirit who wants to say sorry to the living person for either actual wrong doings or perceived wrong doings. Thus enabling the living person to let go of any negativity they have been holding onto, like anger or resentment.

The medium will usually start by giving some evidence to the recipient about the spirit they are communicating with. For example, personality, a description of the person as they would be remembered, what their job had been, their connection to the recipient i.e. mother, father, wife, son etc. Once the recipient is sure who the medium is connecting with then the reading will continue, giving a message from the spirit.

Not only is it wonderful to have that connection with someone who has died who you loved, the emotional and psychological release but it can also help people let go of their fear of their own death. Helping them to recognise the continuity of existence.

As a Buddhist I believe in rebirth and, having experienced past life regression both for myself and regressing others therefore I feel I know it to be true from my own experience. My understanding of mediumship is that the spirits we communicate with have been reborn as spirits in the spirit realms. This is why we can't always contact the deceased, as sometimes they have been reborn in other realms.

None of this is straightforward and I am grateful that I have 20 years experience as a therapist and 25 years background in Buddhism to help the recipient, the spirits and myself cope with it! What I can say is that each reading I have witnessed has been profoundly moving, rewarding and deeply healing.

If you would like to contact Ms. Deborah Smith please call 01225.448988 or visit www.psychologist.ms

BUDDHA VIHARA FUND APPEAL

With aim of having our own Vihara for the benefits of all we have established a Vihara Fund.

Vihara in Pali, the language used by the Buddha himself, means a dwelling place where Buddhist monks and nuns dwell. In the Buddhist text it is written that to build or participate in any form in building a Vihara is considered highly meritorious act. This is the spiritual place where the nobleness is practised by many for the harmonious life and salvation of all.

We would like to appeal to all our well-wishers to help the society to fulfil its aim by donating whatever you can. Please forward your donations to LNBDS (UK), 11 Mulberry Drive, Slough, Berkshire SL3 7JU. Cheque should be made payable to **Lumbini Buddha Vihara Fund**.



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'Hatred is never conquered by hatred in
this world; it is conquered by love.

This is an eternal Law.'

~ Dhammapada 5

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सार्थक मानव जीवनका लागी सप्त रत्न आर्य धन

लेखक : सुचिता तुलाधर

संसारमा धन दुई किसिमका छन् । पहिलो सांसारिक धन हो भने दास्रो गुण धन हो जस्लाई आर्य धन भनिन्छ । सांसारिक धन भनेको सुन, चाँदी, हिरा, मोती, रुपैयाँ, पैसा हुन् । गुण धन भनेको मानिसलाई साँचो अर्थमा मानिस बनाउनको लागि उसको व्यवहारमा हुने गुण हो । यो धन स्थीर तथा दीर्घ कालीन हुन्छ । तर सांसारिक धन नाशवान हुन्छ । बढी संचित गरेको खण्डमा चिन्ता र कलहको बीउ समेत बन्न जान्छ । त्यसैले भगवान बुद्धले व्यक्ति सफल र साँच्चैको धनी हुनको लागी आध्यात्मिक गुण सम्पत्ति नभई हुँदैन भन्नु भएको छ । यस्तो गुण सम्पत्तिलाई वहाँले ‘सप्त रत्न आर्य धन’ भनि उपदेश दिनु भएको छ । जो संग सप्त रत्न आर्य धन हुन्छ, ऊ संसार कै धनी हुन्छ । यस लोकमा राम्रो तथा सभ्य बनाउने अमूल्य रत्न धनलाई श्लोकमा यसरी भनिएको छ ।

सद्धान्नं सीलधनं, हिरी ओत्ताप्पिय धनं ।

सुतधनं च चागो च, पञ्चवे सप्तमं धनं ॥

अर्थात् सप्त रत्न आर्य धन भनेको

१. श्रद्धा (विश्वास) २. शील (परिशुद्ध आचरण) ३. हिरी (अकुशल कर्म गर्न लज्जित हुनु) ४. ओत्ताप्पिय (नराम्रो कर्म गर्न भयभीत हुनु) ५. श्रुत (बहु श्रुत हुनु) ६. त्याग (श्रद्धावान भई दान दिनु) ७. प्रज्ञा (बुद्धि विवेक हुनु)

१. श्रद्धा धन –

कुनै पनि व्यक्ति, सिद्धान्त वा संघ संस्था प्रति पुर्ण रुपले विश्वास गर्नु नै श्रद्धा हुनु हो । बाटो विराएको व्यक्तिको लागि पथ प्रदर्शक माथि पुर्ण विश्वास गर्नु जति आवश्यक हुन्छ त्यति नै कुनै पनि क्षेत्रमा अगाडि बढ्न त्यस माथि श्रद्धा हुनु उति नै आवश्यक हुन्छ । तर यस्तो श्रद्धा मध्यम हुनु पर्दछ । अति भयो भने अन्ध भक्ति, अन्ध श्रद्धामा परिणत हुन जान्छ । श्रद्धा भनेको यस्तो प्रकाश हो, जुन बढी भयो भने आँखा तिरमिराएर सहि बाटो ठम्याउन गाह्रो हुन्छ । श्रद्धा धन हुनलाई यी चार विषय बस्तुमा श्रद्धा हुनु आवश्यक हुन्छ ।

क. चतुआर्य सत्य ख. त्रिरत्न ग. कर्म घ. कर्म फल

२. शील धन –

नराम्रो पाप कर्मबाट अलग रहि परिशुद्ध आचरण हुनु नै शील धन हुनु हो । अरु सबै गुण भएर पनि व्यक्तिको बोली, बचन र व्यवहार क्षुद्र भयो भने त्यो मानिस कहिल्यै सफल हुन सक्दैन । बुद्ध शिक्षा अनुसार मानिसको आधारभुत शील भनेको पञ्चशील हो । पञ्चशील भनेको हिंसा नगर्नु, चोरी नगर्नु, पर स्त्री/पर पुरुष गमन नगर्नु, झुठो नबोल्नु र सुरापान नगर्नु हो । पञ्चशीलमा अहिंसक र सत्य वादी हुनु पर्ने भनिँएता पनि “अहिंसा परमो धर्म” र “सत्यमेव जयते” भन्ने दुवै बुद्ध बचन होइनन् । चेतना युक्त काम अर्थात् कर्म गर्दा कसैको ज्यानै गए पनि त्यस बखत उसको मनस्थिति हेरेर शील भंग भए नभएको फरक हुन्छ । जस्तै – डाक्टरले विरामीको उपचार गर्न चिरफार गर्दा विरामीको ज्यान जानु र डाँकाले धन लुट्न जाँदा कसैको ज्यान जानु । यहाँ डाँका र डाक्टर दुबैको हातबाट अरुको हत्या भए पनि डाँकाको मात्र शील भंग भएको

हुन्छ, डाक्टरको हुँदैन । त्यस्तै किसानले खेतमा कीट नाशक औषधी छर्नु पनि हिंसा मानिँदैन । सधैं सत्य बोल्नु पर्छ भनेर शिकारीलाई उसको शिकार भागेर गएको ठाउँ देखाइ त्यसको हत्याको कारण बन्नु भन्दा भागेको शिकार देखेको छैन भनि झुठ बोलेर त्यसको जीवन बचाउनु उत्तम हुन्छ ।

३. हिरी धन ४. ओत्ताप्पिय धन –

कुनै पनि अकुशल कर्म गर्दा भित्रै देखि लज्जा आउनु हिरी धन हुनु हो भने नराम्रो काम गर्न भयभीत हुनु ओत्ताप्पिय धन हुनु हो । लज्जा र डरले अकुशल कर्म गर्न रोकि शील बचाइ दिन्छ । रिस उठेको बेला अति नराम्रो विचार आए पनि लाज र डरले गर्दा प्रकट गर्दैन, जस्तै गर्दा भगडाले ठूलोरुप लिन पाउँदैन । साँचो अर्थमा भन्ने हो भने यी दुई गुणले संसार कै रक्षा गरी रहेको हुन्छ ।

हिरी र ओत्ताप्पिय धनको उदाहरण –

कुनै समयमा एक राजाले आफ्नो दरबारको प्रांगणमा एक भिक्षुलाई आफ्नो संरक्षणमा राखेका थिए । दरबारबाट उक्त भिक्षुलाई सधैं शाही भोजन पठाउने गर्दथे । पछि हुँदा हुँदा उसलाई त्यो स्वादिलो भोजनको बानी पर्न गएछ । त्यसताका राजाको दरबारमा पनि विशेष दिनहरुमा मासु पकाउँदैनथे । तर त्यो भिक्षु भने मासु बिना खान नसक्ने भैसकेका थिए । त्यसैले भोजनमा मासु नआउने दिनमा उनी दरबार कै एउटा पोखरीमा बल्छि हालेर माछा मार्न बसीरहे । त्यसैबेला दरवारियाहरु भोजन दान गर्न आउँदा भन्तेले माछा मार्न बसेको देखे । भन्तेले तिनीहरुलाई देखे बित्तिकै हत पत बिहार तिर भागे । यस्तो दृष्य देखे पछि तिनीहरुमा भन्ते प्रति श्रद्धा घटे । अनि भोजन दान नगरिकनै फर्के । उनीहरु दरबारमा फर्के पछि सधैं भै राजाले भोजन दान दिएर आयौं भनेर सोधे । उत्तरमा उनीहरुले भन्तेको कृत्याकलाप देखेर भोजन दान नगरिकन फर्केको बताए । राजाले फेरी सोधे “तिमीहरुलाई देखेपछि उसले के गरे त?” दर बारियाहरुले भने “हामीहरुलाई देखेपछि त त्यो भन्ते लाजले मुख छोपेर बिहार तिर भागे ।” यसरी सबै वृत्तान्त सुनी सकेपछि राजाले भने “नराम्रो काम गरि रहेको तिमीहरुले देखे पछि यदि ऊ लाजले भागदछ भने उसमा भिक्षुत्व अझ पनि बाकी छ । ल फेरि गएर दान दिएर आऊ ।” यसरी हिरी र ओत्ताप्पिय धनको ठूलो महत्व हुन्छ । तर जब सत्य नै प्रश्न चिन्हमा परेको हुन्छ त्यसबेला बोल्न डराएर वा लाज मानेर बस्नु हुँदैन ।

५. श्रुत धन –

पढेर, सुनेर, देखेर बुझेको ज्ञानलाई श्रुत धन भनिन्छ । ज्ञान हुनु भनेको ठूलो मंगल हो । ज्ञान भएन भने दुःख, चिन्ता र दुर्भाग्यको कारण बन्छ । विभिन्न ज्ञान अर्थात् बहुश्रुत भएन भने जीवनमा आइ पर्ने विभिन्न समस्याहरु हल गर्न सकिँदैन र जीवनमा सफल हुँदैन । हरेक कुरामा थोरै मात्र ज्ञान भए पनि सधैं काम लाग्ने हुन्छ । जस्तै कतै ठूलै दुर्घटना हुँदा पनि प्राथमिक उपचार जस्तो साधारण ज्ञान भयो भने बाँच्ने र बचाउने सम्भावना बढी हुन्छ । बहुश्रुत भयो भने हरेक क्षेत्रमा सफल हुन मद्दत पुग्दछ । समाजमा मान, प्रतिस्था बढ्नुका साथै सम्पत्ति पनि बढ्छ ।

६. त्याग धन

आफ्नो मेहनतले कमाएको, आफ्नो स्वामित्वमा रहेको आफुलाई चाहिने वा नचाहिने कुनै पनि वस्तु अरुको हितको लागि खुशी साथ दान दिन सक्नु नै त्याग धन हुनु हो। त्याग भावना नभइकन समाजमा नाम र इज्जतको लागि दिएको दान सच्चा हुँदैन। दानको पुण्यफल दान दिँदाको चित्तको अवस्था अर्थात स्तर अनुसार नै हुन्छ। दुःखको प्रमुख कारण मानिसमा रहेको लोभ हो। लोभ भनेको कहिल्यै नपुग्ने मृगतृष्णा हो। त्यागले लोभलाई बशमा राखी दुःखबाट मुक्त गरीदिन्छ। संसारका सबै वस्तु नाशवान छन्। हिलो चाँडो सबै नाश भएरै जान्छ। त्यसैले जसले विग्रोको भाँचेको, टुटे फुटेको वस्तु प्रति छिटो त्याग गर्छ र लामो समय सम्म शोक गरेर बस्दैन, ऊ नै सुखी हुन्छ। भनिन्छ – संकलन गरेर प्रयोगविहीन राखेको धन हराएको सरह हुन्छ। प्रयोगमा ल्याएको धन केवल भएको सरह हुन्छ भने त्याग गरेर अरुलाई दिएको धन मात्र साँचो अर्थमा पछि सम्म रहने आफ्नो धन हुन्छ।

७. प्रज्ञा धन –

कुशल – अकुशल, राम्रो – नराम्रो, गर्न हुने –नहुने आदि कर्मलाई राम्ररी चिनेर अकुशल र नराम्रो कर्मबाट अलग रहि परिस्थिति अनुसार बुद्धि विवेक पुर्‍याएर काम गर्न सक्नु नै प्रज्ञा धन हुनु हो। अर्को शब्दमा भन्ने हो भने अनित्य संसारलाई यथाभुत हेर्न सक्नु नै प्रज्ञावान हुनु हो। प्रज्ञा भएको ठाउँमा अन्धविश्वास, कुरीति तथा भै भगडा हुँदैन। शरीरको आँखाले देख्न नसकिने वस्तु

प्रज्ञाको आँखाले देख्न सकिन्छ। त्यसैले प्रज्ञा भनेको विश्वको नै सर्वश्रेष्ठ चक्षु हो।

यसरी यो सप्त रत्न आर्य धन भनेको धन मध्ये सर्वश्रेष्ठ धन हो। यो धन न कसैले चोरेर लान सक्छ न डाँकाले नै लुटेर लान सक्छ, न कसैको अंश लाग्न सक्छ, न कसैले सर्वश्व हरण नै गरेर लान सक्छ। यसलाई आगो पानीले समेत नष्ट पार्न सक्दैन। यस्तो अमूल्य धनको सुरक्षाको लागि न त बैंकको लकरको आवश्यक पर्छ न कुनै चौकिदारको नै आवश्यक पर्छ। यो धनले जीवन भर त साथ दिन्छ नै, मृत्यु पछि पनि कुशल कर्मको रूपमा साथ दिन्छ।

अन्तमा सप्त रत्न आर्य धन भएको व्यक्ति लोक कै सर्वश्रेष्ठ धनी ठहरिन्छ। आजको संसारमा बाँच्नको लागि साँसारिक धनको पनि निकै आवश्यक हुन्छ। तर सत्पुरुषको लागि पहिलो सप्त रत्न आर्य धन नै श्रेष्ठ र उत्तम हुन्छ। त्यस पछि मात्र साँसारिक धनको स्थान हुन्छ। साँच्चै भन्ने हो भने मानिसाई मानिस बनाउने नै यी आर्य धन हुन्। यदि मानिसमा यो आर्य धन भएन भने र मानिस र पशुमा केहि फरक हुँदैन। मानिसले यो आर्य रत्न धन कमाएर प्रयोग गर्न जानेमा उसको जीवन नै उच्च स्तरमा सफल र सार्थक हुन्छ।

श्रोतः

१. सप्त रत्न आर्य धन – प्रकाश बज्राचार्य
२. सिद्धिमाः गु जीवनय बुद्ध्या अमृतोपदेश – भिक्षु संघरक्षित ‘सद्धम्म कोविद’
३. बुद्ध धर्मका आधारभूत शिक्षा को Class notes

**We Wish All Our Suppoters
A Happy and A Prosperous Buddha Jayanti 2555**
May Knowledge of Wisdom prevail the world.

~ LNBDS

One should not prey into the faults of others, into things done and left undone by others. One should rather consider what by oneself is done and left undone.

(Dhammapada 50)

We wish all readers Happy 2555th Buddha Jayanti!



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Twenty five Years of Service in Buddhism



Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana, the president of our society has completed 25 years in the service of Buddhism as an ordained Buddhist. In January 1986, at the age of 11, he was ordained as Samanera by Ven. Sakyananda Mahathera (then Deputy Sanghanaya Mahasthvir) under the tutelage of his preceptors Venerable Bhikkhu Pragyalok Mahathera and Ven. Pollamure Sorata Mahathera. In March 1986, he went to Sri Lanka to receive his monastic education and training. He received his higher ordination in June 1995 in Sri Lanka.

In 1994, he topped all candidates and came first in the 'Buddha Dharmacarya' (Buddhist Teacher) Examinations in Sri Lanka. Embarking on his tertiary education in the UK, he completed his BA in 'Religious Studies' at Middlesex University, London in 2001; MA in 'Anthropology and Sociology of Religion' at Kings College

London, University of London (2004) and PGCE in Religious Education at the Institute of Education, University of London (2005). Ven. Sumana is currently the Head of Religious Education Department at the Whitmore High School, Harrow, London where he has been teaching religious education for 6 years.

In recognition of Venerable Sumana's long service and dedication to Buddha Dharma the members of the society presented to him a gift of small Buddha statue brought from Nepal to show our grateful appreciation at the society's meeting held on Sunday, 20 March 2011 in Slough, Berkshire, UK.

We wish him long and happy life. May he continue his Dharma work for the benefit of mankind for many years to come. With gratitude.

- Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK)



Like rain leaking through a poorly-thatched roof,
the unruly passions seep into an untamed mind.

(Dhammapada 13)

*On the auspicious occasion of 2555th Buddha Jayanti
May the power of the Triple Gem bring light of wisdom to all.*

Montys

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Proprietor: Mahanta Shrestha

Continued from page ...13

During the practice of Luminosity Yoga (Sanskrit: Prabhaswor), using the words of the Buddha – “Oh Monks! This mind is in Prabhaswor” – you will be directly pointed to your nature of mind and you will then apply Vipassayana practice based on that experience. This practice is about remaining in the luminous state of mind of a deep sleep.

The skillful methods available in Vajrayana are not limited to this. If for instance during the practice there are signs of death approaching soon, within Vajrayana practice you can practice methods to gain precious human birth in your next life in a family where Buddhism is practiced, or gain a good birth in one of the upper realms rather than in lower realms. There are also methods through which you can gain birth in Amitabha Buddha's Sukhavati realm and then learn directly from the Buddhas.

Vajrayana is also a path of transformation. Instead of renouncing the mental afflictions (Sanskrit: Kleshas) or using antidote to destroy them, in Vajrayana you will learn to know the true nature of them and try to transform them. This is why Vajrayana practitioners are encouraged to use everyday activities to practice Vipassayana, rather than renounce these activities. Thus, instead of experiencing the nature of suffering and gaining Nirvana, in Vajrayana you are taught to see the nature of happiness and suffering as they are, and use it to gain the experience of emptiness. That is why this path, instead becoming bland and uninteresting, is full of energy and excitement.

But because of this very reason, many intellectuals, who learn Vajrayana from books instead from learning from an authentic Vajrayana masters, and many Shrivakayana practitioners who are used to the methods of renunciation, have expressed doubts if Vajrayana is a correct Buddhist path. The Vajrayana practices were taught by the Buddha himself and there are still many authentic masters who have practiced them for many years and have realized profound emptiness. They are living Buddhas themselves and a living proof that the system of Vajrayana really works and is an authentic Buddhist path.

The final aim of Vajrayana is Buddha-hood, and for that it is intimately related to the Trikaya (three bodies). In Trikaya – there are Dharmakaya (truth/reality body), Sambhogakaya (bliss body), and Nirmanakaya (activity body). To become a Samyak Sambuddha (fully enlightened Buddha), all the three Kayas have to be fully developed. In other words, a fully enlightened state is where the three Kayas are fully developed. Vajrayana develops Sambhogakaya very fast and makes the path towards 'Buddha-hood' very short.

It is impossible to include everything about Vajrayana in this short article very clearly. Because of this, the information I have written might not have been fruitful to the readers. I apologize if this is the case.

For further information please contact -
bk-uk@byomakusuma.org

*I offer Thee, The Buddha, these flowers, May this virtue aid in my emancipation.
Our bodies undergo decay, even as these flowers must fade.*



As rust, arisen out of iron, eats itself away,
even so his own deeds lead the transgressor to the states of woe.
(Dhammapada 240)



*We extend our heartiest wishes for your prosperity & longevity on
the auspicious occasion of 2555th Buddha Jayanti.*

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Website: <http://www.greenwichlondoncollege.co.uk>

2554th Buddha Jayanti Celebration in London, UK (Sunday, 6th June 2010)

Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) celebrated 2554th Buddha Jayanti (Buddha Day) on Sunday, 6th June 2010 at the usual venue of Priory Community Centre, Acton, London. The celebration started with offering of flowers, candles, incenses etc to Buddha (Buddha Puja) by devotees followed by administration of Panca Sila by Venerable Bhikkhu Seelawimala and chanting according to Tibetan tradition by a visiting Lama. The ambassador of Nepal, Dr. Suresh Chandra Chalise gave a brief speech and told the audience with inspiration from Buddha's message of peace, hopefully Nepal will attain peace in 10 years time. He also informed the audience that when then prime minister visited Sri Lanka a few years ago then president of Sri Lanka told the Nepalese prime minister that Lumbini could be developed as a cultural centre for peace and Sri Lanka is more than happy to help in this project.

During the occasion Venerable Bhikkhu Bogoda Seelawimala, Head of London Buddhist Vihara and Chief Sangha Nayaka of Great Britain presented slides of Buddhist pilgrimages in India and Nepal – Lumbini, Bodhagaya, Sarnath and Kusinagar with explanation of importance of each site. Our society's senior advisor Venerable Bhikkhu Sugandha who is visiting UK from Thailand at the invitation of Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies, Oxford university gave an excellent talk on Buddha's advice to lay people (in Nepali) - for personal and social well being. Our society's president Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana gave talk on 'Why Meditation?' and this was followed by a brief meditation practice.

To mark the occasion, the society's journal LUMBINI 2010 with Karunamaya temple from Bungamati, Patan, Nepal in the front cover was released and distributed as a Dharma Dana for the benefit of readers.

As a fitting end to this auspicious day Venerable Sugandha, Venerable Sumana and Venerable Sujana did Paritrana chanting and blessed the audience and offered sacred Paritrana thread to those who wished to have them.

The hall was decorated appropriately with Buddhist flags and tankas for the occasion. An additional feature of this year's celebration was display of Buddhist artefacts at the reception area which was very much appreciated. About 200 people of various nationalities attended the ceremony. The editor of Sagarmatha Times attended the ceremony and Nepal Television took video recording of the session for their respective media. Sujana and Ujwal Shakya provided an excellent sound system. After the formal programme every one enjoyed the traditional Nepali refreshment generously provided by members and well-wishers of the society.

17th July 2010: One day meditation and Dana offering to venerable monks at Sri Saddhatissa International Buddhist Centre, Kingsbury, London.

1. Meditation and Dana offering: We had a successful meditation day and Dana offerings to venerable monks at Kingsbury Vihara on Saturday, 17th July 2010. Altogether 25 people (3 members of the Sangha and 22 laity) attended the meditation and 9 venerable monks blessed us for Dana offering. Dr. Swayambhu Tuladhar came all the way from Longfield, Kent despite being on call and left Dakshina for the venerable monks which I had pleasure of handing it over to them. Every one was pleased with the day. Sumana Bhante and Sujana Bhante suggested we should make it a regular event and Sumana Bhante was happy to arrange it to be held at Kingsbury Vihara.

2. LNBDS Meeting: After the day long meditation a brief meeting of the society was held to discuss society's affairs including informing the members regarding contact made with Nepalese Buddhist group from USA and also request received by the society for donation for proposed and under construction Ratna Kirti Bauddha Bihara in Harisiddhi, Lalitpur, Nepal

31st October 2010 PM: Meeting of Organisations and Individuals with interest in Buddhism at Sri Saddhatissa International Buddhist Centre, Kingsbury, London

Present: Members of following organisations LNBDS (UK), Buddhist Community Centre (UK) (BCC). Byoma Kusuma Buddha Dharma Sangha (BK), Tamu Dhee (UK), Buddhist Society, Dr. Sunil M Kariyakarawana (Director Buddhist Chaplaincy MOD), Prof David Gellener and Dr Lola Martinez (Oxford University). **Apology:** Venerable Lodro Thaye and Hasta Lama (Sakya Ling)

- Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana welcomed the participants and explained the purpose of the meeting which were to share ideas and experiences, to improve cooperation and coordination among us.

- This was followed by introduction and a brief explanation by respective organisations and individuals of their involvements in Buddha Dharma

- Future Meetings:** Participants felt the meeting was very useful and agreed to hold another meeting at the same venue on Sunday, 16th January 2011 PM after one day meditation and Dana for the venerable monks which has already been planned.

- Blessings:** Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana thanked every one for attending the meeting. He lit the candle in memory of late KB Lama as requested by Subasing Gurung (Chairman of Tamu Dhee UK) and chanted a Gatha to bless every one. Meeting ended with light refreshment and further exchanges of ideas.

16th January 2011: One day meditation and Dana offering to venerable monks and meetings at Sri Saddhatissa International Buddhist Centre, Kingsbury, London.

1. Meditation from (9.30 – 3.00 PM):

We had a successful one day meditation led by Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana and Venerable Bhikkhu Sujan and Bhojan Dana for venerable monks from Kingsbury Vihara on 16-1-2011. Participants included a bhikkhu from Sri Lanka, lay devotees from Nepal, Sri Lanka and one English lady. Meditation ended with sharing merit (*Punn anumodana*).

2. LNBDS Meeting (3 - 3.30 PM): After the day long meditation a brief meeting of the society was held to discuss society's affairs like organising 2555th Buddha Jayanti on 22nd May 2011, publication of society's journal Lumbini, edition of proposed book by Sujan Bhante on 'Revival of Theravada Buddhism in Nepal' etc.

Sumana Bhante also informed the meeting that devotees and teachers of Saturday Dhamma class are giving Bhojan Dana to Venerable monks at Kingsbury Vihara to mark 25 years of Sumana Bhante's ordination on Saturday, 22nd January 2011. They have invited our members to join them.

3. Meeting of Organisations and Individuals with interest in Buddhism (3.30 – 4.30PM):

Present: - Members of LNBDS (UK), Byoma Kusuma Buddha Dharma Sangha and Mr. Ram Kumar Shrestha, global coordinator, Kapilvastu Day Movement.

Meeting discussed ways of helping and cooperating with each other to promote Buddha dharma. It also discussed hosting joint Dharma events like meditation, Dhamma talks. One of the suggestions was to hold joint Nepali Buddha Day Celebration like International Buddha Day celebration which used to be held every year in the past by UK Buddhist organisations in collaboration of all Nepalese Buddha Dharma associations besides celebrating Buddha Jayanti by individual organisations.

Mr. Ram Kumar Shrestha explained the aims and objectives of Kapilvastu Day Movement. It is celebrated to coincide with the discovery of Lumbini Ashoka pillar by a German archaeologist A. Fuehrer on 1-12-1895. It has branches not only in Nepal but in various other countries and has provision to open more branches in other countries like Canada etc.

India is claiming that Lumbini and Kapilvastu are in India and not in Nepal. Hence to counteract this propaganda Kapilvastu Day Movement was established two years ago with following objectives:

- To promote the Buddha's message of peace
- To promote to the world that Lumbini and Kapilvastu are in Nepal not in India

Kapilvastu day movement has been promoting this via different media and other activities.

19th February 2011: Democracy Day Celebration and meeting with Mr. Bhusal (Attaché), Embassy of Nepal:

Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana and Dharma Shakya attended Democracy day celebration at Nepalese embassy in London. They also had meeting with Mr. Khimanand Bhusal, Attache, Embassy of Nepal to discuss about action to be taken to persuade the owner of the restaurant named 'Greedy Buddha' to change this inappropriate name.

He told us that members of Nepalese, Thai and Myanmar embassies and members of Sri Lankan High Commission met at Sri Lankan High Commission on 15th February 2011 to discuss this issue. We informed him what our society and others had done in the past to persuade the owner. Subsequently our society sent him a copy of letter we sent to the owner of this restaurant and copies of correspondences we had with other organisations like Buddhist Community Centre (UK) for his information..

20th March 2011: The society's meeting was held at Dharma and Pramila's residence in Slough. Various issues like sponsorship of destitute children from Bampti Bhandar, Ramechhap and Dallu orphanage, Art competition in collaboration of Young Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA) Nepal was held. Dharma did a short presentation on his recent visit to holy sites in India and Nepal using Mahaparinirvana Express (Buddhist Circuit Special Train).

The society presented a small Buddha statue to Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana's to express our gratitude for his long Dharma service. Please see separate news item for details.

8th May 2011 Meeting: The meeting of executive committee to finalise the programme for the 2555th Buddha Jayanti Celebration held on 22nd May 2011 and to allocate responsibilities for the day was held at Amrit and Anu's residence in Hayes.



News about Buddhism

Buddha Statue in Nepalese Embassy in Beijing (8-9-2010):

A Buddha statue measuring 2.7 metre and weighing 500 kg was erected in Nepalese Embassy in Beijing to mark 55 years of diplomatic relation between Nepal and China amidst the ceremony performed by Venerable Bhikkhu Nanapunnika (Jnanapurnik), head of Vishwa Shanti Vihara, Kathmandu, Vice president of Chinese Buddhist Association and others. Ambassadors of Sri Lanka, Cambodia and representatives of other embassies and officials of Chinese department of religious affairs attended the ceremony.



It was also revealed that a statue of the first Nepalese Buddhist monk to visit and promote Buddha Dharma in China Venerable Buddhahadra is planned to be erected in near future in the first town he visited in China. Bhikkhu Buddhahadra was born in Kapilvastu in 369 AD, came to China in 409 and passed away in 429. During his life time he was very successful in promoting Buddha Dharma in China. (e-kantipur.com)

UN-backed project to conserve Buddha's birth place in Nepal begins (11-1-2011): An international team of archaeologists has begun a three- year survey, coordinated by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), of the archaeological ruins of birth place of Buddha in Nepal. This three year project is part of larger project entitled "Strengthening the Conservation and Management of Lumbini, the birth place of Lord Buddha."

The project funded by Japanese Government and coordinated by UNESCO office in Kathmandu, Nepal aims to identify the presence or absence of archaeological deposits, invisible below the surface so that appropriate placing of pilgrim facilities can be made without damaging valuable archaeological resources.

Prof Robin Coningham, UNESCO Archaeological Expert and professor of Archaeology, Durham University UK will direct the team of archaeologists from Nepal's Department of Archaeology and the Lumbini Development Trust.

Proposed construction of Circular path around Maya Devi temple in Lumbini: Six hundred metre long and ten metre wide circular path for the devotees to circumambulate (to walk around) Maya Devi temple was to be constructed with

the help from Thailand. It will be completed by Full moon day in Baisakha (April/May 2011).

At the same time a three day free eye camp was held in Thai Temple in Lumbini to mark 84th birthday of His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.

(<http://www.newsfnepal.com>).

News from Nepal

YMBA AGM (7-8-2010): Young Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA), Nepal observed its 40th Annual General Meeting in its own premises with reverend Acharya Karma Syangpo, the vice president of Lumbini Development Fund as the chief guest. YMBA members, Buddhist scholars and dignitaries attended the meeting which was held according to Buddhist tradition. The chief guest reverend Acharya Karma Syangpo emphasised the need of unity of all Buddhists for the development of Lumbini.



A book on ways to combat challenges of life written by Mr. Dolendra Shakya, a Buddhist scholar was

released by the chief guest on the occasion.

A Buddhist philanthropist passed away (19-10-2010):

Dharma Bahadur Dhakhwa, a well known Buddhist philanthropist passed away peacefully at the age of 93 on 19 October 2010 at his own residence in Lalitpur. He was survived by his wife Jwala Devi Dhakhwa.

Dharma Bahadur Dhakhwa, a business man by profession had been instrumental in reviving Buddhism in Nepal with his generous donations to various Viharas like Anand Kuti Vihar, Viswo Santi Vihar, Sumangal Vihar, Buddha Vihar, Mani Mandap Vihar, Pranidhi Vihar, Sri Skakya Singha Vihar, Veluwanaram Vihar and International Buddhist Meditation centre in and around Kathmandu. He has also contributed generously to Hiranya Varna Maha Vihar of Lalitpur by establishing a reserve fund to offer Dana to Shakya Muni in regular basis. As a devoted Buddhist he has travelled many Buddhist countries and places around the world.

One of the greatest contributions he has made was establishing "***Dharma Bahadur Kalyan Kendra***", a trust in March 1999. The objective of the trust is to award Buddhist institutions, scholars, writers, social workers on a yearly basis by providing certificate of appreciation along

with sizeable cash prizes. Many renowned Buddhist institutions, distinguished Monks, scholars and writers have been awarded the prize. May he attain Nibana!

International Buddhist Conference in Patan, Nepal (25-30th October 2010): Young Men's Buddhist Association, Nepal (YMBA) hosted an international Buddhist Youth conference in Nepal with the participation of Buddhist youths from the South Asian countries for the period of six days from 25 - 30th October 2010. The program was inaugurated by the most Venerable Bhikkhu Ashwoghosha Mahasthabir, the Sangh Upanayak of Nepal as the chief guest. Three hundred participants from Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Thailand participated in the programme. After the inaugural session, participants from all the participating countries presented brief cultural programs highlighting the cultures of their respective countries. Mr. Denhone Suwannachaiya, Secretary General of WFBY handed over six computers to the school run by YMBA in that occasion in the closing ceremony

Buddha Puja at proposed and under construction Ratna Kirti Bauddha Bihar, Harisiddhi, Patan (5-2-2011):

A Buddha Puja was held at the above Bihar on 5th February 2011. Venerable monks including ex-president of Lumbini Nepalese Buddha dharma Society (UK) Venerable Bhikkhu Pannaloka, Anagarikas from different Viharas in Kathmandu valley, dignitaries and large numbers of Upasakas and Upasikas attended the puja.

Our society's secretary Dharma Bhakta Shakya also attended the function. Chairman of the proposed Bihar presented aims, estimated cost and plan of action for future construction. Treasurer of the proposed Bihar presented financial report.

Destruction of Swayambhu Pratapur (15-2-2011):

Pratapur was destroyed completely by lightening in the morning of 15th February 2011. Pratappur was constructed by then king Pratap Malla in 777 Nepal Sambat (Era). www.nepalmandal.com

Brains of Buddhist monks scanned in meditation study

Dr. Zoran Josipovic, a research neuroscientist and adjunct professor at New York University has been scanning Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns using Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) brain scanner to understand how their brain function and reorganise during meditation practice. Researchers have been scanning Buddhist monks since

2008. The scanner tracks blood flow within the brain as they meditate inside the scanner.

According to Dr. Zoran Josipovic, people who practice meditation regularly cultivates attentional skills which can help lead to a more tranquil and happier way of life. Meditation research, particularly in last 10 years or so, has shown to be very promising because it points to an ability of the brain to change and optimise in a way which was not known previously to be possible. Dr Josipovic has scanned the brains of more than 20 experienced meditators, both monks and nuns who primarily study the Tibetan Buddhist style of meditation, to better understand this mysterious network. He says his research will be published soon. Dr Josipovic's research is part of a larger effort to understand better what scientists have dubbed the default network in the brain.

According to Dr. Zoran Josipovic the brain appears to be organised into two networks: the extrinsic network and the intrinsic, or default, network. The extrinsic portion of the brain becomes active when individuals are focused on external tasks, like playing sports or pouring a cup of coffee.

The default network works when people reflect on matters that involve themselves and their emotions. But the networks are rarely fully active at the same time. And like a seesaw, when one rises, the other one dips down. This neural set-up allows individuals to concentrate more easily on one task at any given time, without being consumed by distractions like daydreaming. What the scientists are trying to do is track changes in the networks in the brain as the person shifts between these two modes of attention.

The default network came to light in 2001 when Dr Marcus Raichle, a neurologist at the Washington University School of Medicine in the US state of Missouri, began scanning the brains of individuals who were not given tasks to perform. They soon became bored and Dr. Raichle noticed a second network, that had gone previously unnoticed, danced with activity which is now labelled default or intrinsic network. He felt that studies of default network as that Dr. Zoran Josipovic is doing may help in uncovering the secrets surrounding some disorders like depression, Autism and Alzheimer's disease.

Dr Josipovic has found that some Buddhist monks and other experienced meditators have the ability to keep both neural networks active at the same time during meditation - that is to say, they have found a way to lift both sides of the seesaw simultaneously. This may lead the monks to experience a harmonious feeling of oneness with the environment.

The big question now is, could this unusual research shed light on some of the world's more mysterious diseases like Autism and Alzheimer's disease in addition to unravelling the secrets of leading a harmonious life as well? (BBC news, 24-4-2011)



Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Scanner



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