

Lumbini

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The vajra is used symbolically in Buddhism often to represent firmness of spiritual power.

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

Happy 2557th Buddha Day (*Buddha Jayanti, Vesak Day, Swanyapunhi*) and warm wishes from LNBDS! This year is 2557 Buddha Era since the Buddha passed away. 'One who sees the teaching sees me', said The Buddha. The greatest way to pay our respect and homage to the great master is to follow his Noble teaching.

Year 2012 was announced as "Visit Lumbini Year (VLY) 2012" by Government of Nepal. Purpose of this VLY 2012 was to attract more visitors particularly Buddhist from around the world. This was also an opportunity to present that Prince Siddhartha, the Buddha to be, was born in Lumbini, Nepal. Majestically standing historical Asokan pillar and archaeological evidences are confirming that there should be no doubt on the Buddha's birth place. VLY 2012 was good time for Government of Nepal to develop and highlight rest of Buddhist sites in Nepal relating to the Buddha. Kapilavastu (King Suddhodana's palace, Buddha's childhood place), Devdaha (Queen Mahamayadevi's maternal home), Ramgram (Pagoda made at the Buddha's time). According to Mr. Madhav Acharya of Lumbini Development Trust, none of these sites were given attentions. On this auspicious occasion of Buddha Day, we appeal to the government of Nepal to focus on these heritage sites to preserve and maintain.

It is 16 years ago that LNBDS (UK) was established. This small society grew from strength to strength with your support, encouragement and guidance. To continue and expand the society's activities in the future for the benefit of many, your continued support is essential and will be greatly appreciated.

We can't talk about Buddhism in Nepal without mentioning Newar Buddhism. Although Newar Buddhism is offshoot of Vajrayana Buddhism, it is unique in its practice and rituals. In this issue we briefly tried to touch on significance of Vajra in Buddhism (front cover) with brief explanation inside.

The society organises many activities to propagate the noble teaching. Two monthly one day meditation is one of them for which we invite prominent teachers, whenever possible, to give guidance. Here we are please to include one of the talks '*The Important Role of Joyous Feeling in Meditation*' given by Venerable Dhammasami in one of our meditation sessions. We hope that you will equally benefit by reading this transcribed article.

Living life without 'Mindfulness' is like wondering blindfolded, not knowing where one is heading. Clear vision will help one to reach destination by being able to follow right path while avoiding wrong path. '*Cultivating*

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Mindful Awareness in Daily Life by Martin Gordon is an enlightening article which is a must read. The writer with many years of practice in meditation and in teaching Buddhism explains this profound teaching of the Buddha in simple terms.

Executive team of the society plays vital role in the smooth running of our activities. The team gets together quarterly to discuss business matters along with offering Dana to monk/s, meditation practice, discussion on Dhamma topics and practising the teachings. '*Bhava Cakra - The wheel of life*' was a talk given by Acchaya Bajracharya in our October 2012 meeting. We hope that you will enjoy reading this article. We are also grateful to Kishor B. Bajracharya for his article on '*Positive thinking in Buddhism*.' Kishor explains how positive thinking helped his organisation's work.

In *who is who in Buddhism in Nepal*, Vinaya Dhakhwa writes a brief biography of Venerable Maitri Mahasthava of Nepal. We have included Shubha Ratna Shakya's winning article from essay competition 2012 conducted by the Society in collaboration with Buddhist Youth Group, Kathmandu, on topic '*Buddha's teaching for healthy life*'. The society organises alternatively Essay competition one year and Art Competition another year in Nepal to promote the Buddha's teaching.

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'

Significance of Vajra in Buddhism (Front Cover)



(Vajra at the front of the Swayambhu Maha Chaitya, Kathmandu)

Vajra in Sanskrit (Dorje in Tibetan) is used by Vajrayana practitioners of both Nepal and Tibet during their rituals. Vajrayana is one of the three major branches of Buddhism. Other two are Theravada and Mahayana.

The vajra is used symbolically in Buddhism often to represent firmness of spirit and spiritual power. The use of the vajra as a symbolic and ritual tool spread from India along with Indian religion and culture to other parts of East and Southeast Asia.

In Tantric Buddhism (Vajrayana) the vajra and ghanta (bell) are used in many rites by a lama or any Vajrayana practitioner of sadhanas. The dorje is a male symbol that represents many things for the tantrika. The vajra is representative of *upaya* whereas its companion tool, the bell which is a female symbol, denotes *prajna*. Some deities, for example Vajrasattva, are seen holding

the vajra in one hand and the bell in other hand - symbolizing the union of the forces of compassion and wisdom, respectively. The vajra is made up of several parts. In the centre is a sphere which represents *Sunyata* (emptiness) the primordial nature of the universe, the underlying unity of all things. The five pronged vajra (with four makaras, plus a central prong) is the most commonly seen vajra.

One important correspondence is between the five “poisons” with the five wisdoms. The five poisons are the mental states that obscure the original purity of a being’s mind which are – desire, anger and hatred; delusion, greed and pride and envy, while the five wisdoms are the five most important aspects of the enlightened mind. Each of the five wisdoms is associated with virtues of Dhyanī Buddha- Amitabha, Akshobhya, Vairocana, Ratnasambhava and Amoghasiddhi.

”Not by birth is one an outcaste; not by birth is one a high caste (Brahmin). By deed one becomes an outcaste, by deed one becomes a high caste.”

- Vasala Sutta, 1.7: Sutta Nipata

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**.

Cultivating Mindful Awareness in Daily Life

✍ Martin Goodson

"This is the sole way, monks, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the destroying of pain and grief for reaching the right path, for the realization of Nibbana namely the four Foundations of Mindfulness." (DighaNikaya – The Heart of Buddhist Meditation by Nyanaponika Thera; pub; Weiser 1988)

The sutta dedicated to the formula known as the Four Foundations of Mindfulness is, like most suttas, quite short. Within a few pages which can be read in less than an hour lies the whole of the Buddha's teaching when it comes to practice. This fact is made quite clear at the end of the sutta with a bold statement from the Buddha that practice of these Four Foundations will deliver the sincere practitioner either in this life or at the very least in the next!

"Suffering I teach, and the way out of suffering." With this statement the Buddha summed up his teaching, the reason why Buddhas appear on this earth and why they teach humanity. So before we can start looking at this practice formulation perhaps we had better be clear what the link is between the cultivation of what is called in English 'mindfulness' and the end of suffering.

There is a Japanese poem that describes an incident in the public gardens in the city of Nara. These gardens are frequented by tourists because they are very beautiful. Visitors can see the blooms or watch the wild birds; look into the pools where the koi carp swim or rest and take refreshment in the tea-houses. Suddenly, there is the sound of clapping hands; at this signal the koi carp rise up to the surface of the pond, the heron fly away and the waitress brings out a tea tray.

In Japan, koi carp are often kept in pools to adorn and beautify the gardens and they are looked after and fed regularly. There is a custom of clapping and then sprinkling fish food onto the ponds so the carp associate the sound of clapping hands with feeding time. Heron are wild birds, on the other hand, and the sound of clapping hands is likely to signal alarm – the possibility of danger and so fear drives them away. In the tea house the waitress is notified of a new guest by the clapping of hands so she knows to bring out the tray with the tea things on it. In this poem we do not know why someone is just now clapping his or her hands – it is not important. What is to be realised is that the heart and mind of the carp, heron and waitress creates how that sound is to be experienced. It is the realisation that it is the heart/mind which, far from being a passive organ taking in sense data to create a picture of the world, actually manufactures our experience.

We can become familiar with this process when it goes wrong. In our relationships with each other there are times when we misunderstand. We say "I got the wrong end of the stick" or "but I thought you said/meant..." We might not think anymore of it but in fact such situations arise because instead of actually hearing what was said I half-heard and then one of my expectations crept in and I 'assumed' the rest. So in this case an expectation can actually alter what we hear. Another example of how the heart/mind can create what we experience as 'reality' is when the passions are aroused. A charismatic speaker knows this and uses his words to affect the emotions of the audience to make them susceptible to whatever message he wants them to hear and believe. This suggestibility is a quality of the passions which encourage us to see things in a certain way. To give an example which might sound rather silly – say that I have a real terror of spiders. Even though we live in the U.K. and have no poisonous spiders here I cannot bear to have one near me! One day I go into the bathroom and shout in horror because there in the bath is a tiny house spider. Another member of the household comes rushing in to see what the commotion is about and wide-eyed and white-faced I point a shaking finger at the culprit. Now, I live in Finchley in North London and about six miles away is Regents Park Zoo. The other householder does not think very highly of me being so frightened of such a tiny thing and so decides to play a trick on me. He tells me "H'mm you know it might be a black widow spider escaped from Regents Park Zoo!" Suddenly, gripped by a new wave of terror I turn to him and say "Do you think so?"

Now the possibility of a spider escaping from Regents Park Zoo and making its way across six miles of London traffic and in a cold climate and just finding its way into my bath in Finchley. What is the likelihood? Of course with fear there is always a tiny possibility but the fear amplifies it and makes the impossible, possible. This is precisely what the passions do – they blow things out of proportion. It may not be fear, it can be anger or it can be love or enthusiasm. Any passion can do this if it carries me away. In such a deluded state all sorts of things can happen from small misdemeanours which I later regret and have to apologise for to heinous crimes. *"It is this suffering which is caused by heedlessness, by moments of being deluded that the Buddha talked about as being the cause of suffering."*

"His medicine for this condition is what is called in the sutta – 'sati' which is often translated into English as 'mindfulness'." Now, personally I'm not keen on that

translation because it has a connotation which is not reflected in the original Pali word. The mind, in English, has an association with thought. In English we think with our minds and feel with our hearts. The Pali word 'citta' is also often translated as 'Mind' but in the texts clearly it has a wider meaning than that. 'Sati' has the sense of attention or awareness – which is much more immanent; something which happens in and through the body and has little or no connotation of thinking about something. To use an example - just now stop reading this article and just pinch yourself in the arm...

Now, do I have to think about it in order to feel it? No! The pinch jumps up into awareness. Please do this exercise and actually experience it – Do not skip it thinking I can imagine it happening!

So there is a difference between awareness of an actual pinch and thinking "Oh, I'm pinching my arm." This may seem a small point but it is a very important point.

Awareness (sati), of the body is the First of the Four Foundations and is perhaps the simplest to work with for a clear understanding of the nature of awareness.

Again, as you are reading this article just stop for a moment and become aware of your own body – is it sitting, standing or lying down? Is the skin sensing warm, hot or cold? Now open up to the sounds – actually lean into them. Imagine if you were at a party and the room is quite noisy. Someone is talking to you and at one point you hear someone nearby mention your name. You want to hear what they are saying about you but you cannot turn away that would be impolite! So you just turn your attention to the other conversation and strain to hear the words! Now just lean into listening around you like that for a few moments!

All this awareness of sights and sound and tactile feelings are in and through the body. A useful exercise is to take a short walk about half-an-hour and just really open up to the sights and sounds around. Walk a bit more slowly than usual, be in no rush and give yourself into seeing and hearing and feeling.

In one of the courses I run on this subject we do this and the students all report how when they begin to look they see much more and when they give themselves into listening they hear so much more. Of course it seems obvious when we read it like this but this is cultivating awareness of the body and the senses that operate through it.

As we continue with this particular foundation another thing is realised. Awareness is a matter of noticing what just now is arising in consciousness. Just notice again if you are sitting or standing, if your feet touch the floor

notice the pressure of the feet on the floor or your bottom on the chair. If you really open up then you can also notice the feel of clothes on your body; in some areas they are loose in others tight. Now that information is coming in all the time but awareness only notices it when directed or when strong enough to force its way to attention. Now the act of noticing is not something that 'I' do; it happens to awareness. Going out of the gate for the first time awareness sees the spring blooms on the tree in the garden across the road. The sounds of the chattering starling on the rooftops are just now noticed. All these things happen quite outside of my intention. I do not decide what I will see or hear rather it just 'comes in'. So awareness has to be continually attentive, open reaching out to the objects of awareness and those objects appear. This noticing has a quality of surprise about it! Until it happens I do not know then suddenly it happens, it is fresh and vital. This noticing in fact produces a sense of being really alive - this aliveness is a quality of practicing awareness.

Now we have been focussing on the physical body and the physical senses and practicing awareness through them. What about the mental processes? After all, the other three foundations relate to them. What we find is that as we continue to cultivate awareness through the body we discover an intimate link between all four foundations. Our bodies flash what is going on in the mental realm through our faces and body postures. These days psychologists call it 'body language' and it is an art and science all of its own but in truth we all read body language and use it every day. In going about our business begin to open up to the body language of others, the tone of a voice as well as what they say. If we practice this awareness then a lot more information comes in and that information relates to the mental processes of others.

One of the major obstacles to practicing awareness either to oneself or towards others is the mental faculty of judgement; in particular 'my judgements'. We know the Buddha said that this 'I' and this 'me' and this 'mine' is a deluded way of seeing ourselves. But again if we really look at what this 'I' is, what we quickly see is an almost endless stream of 'my' judgments – what suits me, what I don't like, how that will affect me etc. When these thoughts come up then awareness recedes into the distance. So in order to continue practicing awareness we have to also become aware of when 'I' get carried away in this type of thinking.

So starting with the body, awareness gradually widens out to cover all areas inner and outer. Not being caught in the judgements of 'I' there is not only vitality to it but also a clarity which brings us closer to seeing things as they really are – this is the Wisdom spoken of by the Buddha through which the causes of suffering can be left behind.

The Important Role of Joyous Feeling in Meditation

(This talk was given at the one-day meditation retreat at the SSIBC, Kingsbury, London, organised by LNBDS, on Sunday, 2-9-2012 by Venerable Dhammasami of the Oxford Buddha Vihara, Oxford, UK)

✍ Venerable Dhammasami

We have one more hour before conclusion of today's meditation. I would like to briefly discuss about the role of joyous feeling in meditation practice.

Especially in meditation practices dominated and led by monastics, monks and nuns, if you look at the faces of meditation teachers they are very stiff and very *serious*; that is because the monastics have to restrain their senses. In 1999 during the retreat I was leading in Sri Lankaramaya in Singapore, one Chinese lady asked me 'How come you teach meditation and you smile a lot.' It was a very unusual question. It seems as if one of the requirements of meditation teachers is to have stiff and serious face. If you smile too much you are considered as not being serious.

In addition, in the teaching very often we talk about *detachment*, we have to let go of everything, both pleasant and unpleasant feelings, you have to be equanimous. That is the usual explanation. You have to develop strong concentration so that you can stand unpleasant sensation, disappointment and so on. And, you also have to develop strong concentration so that you do not get carried away by pleasant sensation, joyous feeling, wonderful memory etc.

Some Vipassana meditation practitioners become mechanical and get caught up in a meditation technique, so they do not learn to develop positive feeling. You are supposed to see that whatever arises passes away. Before you see that, you have to label every thing, if you use a labelling technique. For example if you have joyous feeling just label it as joyous feeling, register it and let it go and then return to breathing. You are not allowed to actually enjoy it. If you have too much pain, just observe it; it is just pain and then let it go and return to breathing. Do not complain. So, if the meditator does not employ skillfulness and flexibility, sometimes one may become mechanical with this technique. One may take meditation as a mechanism and tries to approach meditation in a fixed way.

It is almost a taboo to feel joyous during meditation, for instance, to enjoy walking during the walking meditation, to enjoy sitting during the sitting, during the exercise of breathing awareness to enjoy breathing. To use the word 'enjoy' is itself almost a forbidden in some meditation practice. One day in Sri Lanka when I mentioned the word enjoyment with regard to meditation, I was at once told that I should not even use the word enjoyment, let alone feel it; , I was told, "you have to let go of it and you know

what Buddha taught: detachment!"

Because of this misunderstanding, my purpose here is therefore to convince you that joyous feeling is very important for meditation. Without the joyous feeling it is very hard to develop concentration; even if developed, it will be very hard to sustain it.

We can say without joyous feeling there is no enlightenment. Enlightenment, Bodhi in Pali, means being fully awakened; you are fully awakened to the experience so that nothing can fool your mind. Awakening to the way things really are means you know jack fruit is jack fruit, mango is mango, and mango is not jack fruit; jack fruit is not mango. Something is not yours, you should not see it as yours. Usually anger is not ours; indeed, anger does not belong to any one. It comes and goes. When the conditions are right for anger to arise it arises, when the conditions are right for it to go, it goes away. Anger is not Burmese, Nepalese, Sri Lankan, English, Thai or Chinese. It is neither masculine nor feminine. No such thing. Anger is just anger, just an emotion; nothing else. We think it is ours. If I think it is mine, then anger is masculine and monastic. When I claim like that, when I see like that it is very difficult for the anger to go away. The mind is deluding itself and the mind is fooled.

However, usually for an unenlightened mind, when pain arises, we identify with it and personalise it. When we do that it is difficult to let go of it and keep distance from it. When the mind can not distant from pain, the mind will shake and be shaken by pain. The mind becomes restless and agitated. When we have headache see how easy it is to become restless. Look at the people who are not well. How moody they can be, this is because the mind is shaken by the pain. Meditation teaches us to distant mind from the pain. To do that first we need to develop concentration and so that mind is strong enough to pull back a little bit and to look at pain as the third person not as me, not as mine, not as you or not as yours, some thing impersonal. This is pain; not this is *my* pain. This is the way we approach pain in order not to get fooled by the discomfort it brings.

In dealing with pain, another thing we need to take care of is attitude toward pain. If there is right attitude towards pain, accepting it as something natural, as part of life, as being conditioned by four physical elements, then there is less problem. It is the elements of earth when you sit and when you feel tight. Your muscles are very tight and hard.

The earth element is working in the body. That tight muscle produces pain. This is the nature here. When you personalise it as *my* pain, this pain is killing *me*, *I* can not meditate then it becomes a problem. That problem is largely attitude problem which makes the pain worse.

We are talking about joy here, the importance of feeling joyous. Instead of going into detailed meditation practice of joy, I would like to spend the rest of the time this evening talking about joy in our daily life. You have good health, you can get up in the morning, you can cook, you can enjoy your meal, you can go to work, you can go for a walk, you can do some reading, you can sit and relax and watch television, do some exercise, you can meet friends and families, you have all the conditions to make you feel joyous and to make you feel happy. Yet, despite all these people can not access the resources of joy, the resources of enormous conditions to make them feel happy. As a result they need some thing exciting, something expensive in their lives to make them feel happy. The heart simply has very little ability to feel joyous and happy. The feeling joyous should not be taken for granted. This is some thing we need to develop.

I have mentioned this everywhere I go. I will mention it here as well. There is group theory called “Eighty-twenty theory.” What is going on well in your life is eighty percents; something wrong or something problematic is twenty percents. However, your mind spends only 20% on the 80% positive things that is going well, the source of joyous feeling in your life, and instead you spend eighty percents of your time, 4 out of 5 hours, worrying about the 20% percent negative things in life. As a result of this imbalance in time-investment, the mind comes to perceive the 80% percents as going wrong in your life and that only 20% percents are there to celebrate.

That is why when you have solved one problem at work, instead of enjoying it, you start looking for another problem to solve. In your house you feel you need to change the painting. Once you have painted the house, instead of enjoying it you start to think of the carpet needing a change. As soon as you have changed the carpet you start thinking of some thing else, for example, a plant in the corner is not quite right, forgetting about the nice painting and brand new carpets.

In your wardrobe you may have many beautiful clothes but you hardly think about them. You are more attracted by beautiful clothes displayed in the high street. The mind is always obsessed by things you do not have. The mind forgets what you have already got. This is the habit of the trouble-making mind.

Before you have A/Level you think once you have A/Level the world will be perfect. That is the only thing you want

when you are 17/18 years. But once you have got them you start worrying about getting a place in university. When you get a place in a university, instead of being feeling joyous about it, you will worry about getting a degree with a good grade, otherwise you cannot get a good job, you can not become somebody. Once you have a degree you worry about finding a suitable job. That also you managed to get it. Now you have achieved many things, A/Level, a university degree and a good job, conditions are all there for you to be happy but you still can not feel happy.

Sometimes you go to work and a small insignificant thing irritates you at work, you come home feeling irritated and unhappy, remain unhappy throughout the evening and the night; and go back to work next day with a hangover of bad feeling and agitated mind. You forget to access the resources that are available there to make you happy. Why the mind behaves like this is because it is obsessed with negative aspects of life. That is why newspapers, television reports always concentrate on negative things; they are what ordinary people want to read or see. That is why the Buddha said joy is important.

Unless your heart is able to feel joyous you can forget about enlightenment! There are seven factors of enlightenment mentioned in the text. One of them is *piti* in Pali which means feeling joyous. Another word is called *passaddhi* in Pali which means feeling calm and pleasant. These are the ultimate components of an enlightened mind. Along the way in the process of development the Buddha used the word *pamujja* in Pali, that is joyous feeling; without that it is not possible to maintain concentration; concentration simply does not become natural. It is very hard to maintain concentration. You sit down and the mind is just running all the time why, because you do not have access to your own heart where you can feel joyous.

So for the next 15 minutes I will introduce you to positive thinking meditation in other to help you with your vipassana mindfulness meditation. In Pali it is called *anussati* to reflect again and again, here to reflect on some positive actions, for example, generous act which makes you feel joyous. Or you can think about your ethical action, *sila* (*silanussati*) to make you feel joyous. Any action that makes you feel truly joyous will do. I do not want to quote too many things and burden you with text. I only want you to access your own heart.

Joy is a positive emotion, some thing that we should develop. People think perhaps wrongly you should not have emotions. As a human being, as a living being how can you not have emotions? Positive emotions are part of enlightenment – loving kindness (*metta*), compassion

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WHO IS WHO IN BUDDHISM IN NEPAL

Venerable Bhikkhu Maitri Mahathera

✍ Vinaya Ratna Dhakhwa

Venerable Bhikkhu Maitri Mahathera is one of the senior and prominent teachers of Buddhism in Nepal. He comes from Shakya clan and his householder name is Kiran Chandra Kumar Shakya. He was born on the full moon day of 28th December 1954 in Nuwakot district of Nepal. He is the only son of Mr. Ravi Ratna Shakya and Mrs. Shanti Shakya. He passed school leaving certificate examination from Tribhuban Trishuli High School, Nuwakot. After high school graduation he was awarded a "Diploma in Buddhist Studies" from Sri Lanka Vidyalaya and University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.

He has been ordained both as novice Buddhist monk in November 1968 and fully ordained monk in June 1976 in Sri Lanka. The Most Venerable Baddegama Wimalawansa Anunayaka Mahathera of Sri Lanka and the Most Venerable Amritananda Mahanayaka Mahathera of Nepal were two of his main teachers.

He is currently a Council Member of International Lumbini Buddhist University; Spiritual Advisor of Lumbini Development Trust; President of Anandakuti Vihara Trust and the Chief Abbot of Ananda Kuti Vihara, Swayambhu, Kathmandu, Nepal.



He was the Founder Chairman of International Buddhist Society established with the goal of providing free health care and literacy program to serve the populace of 12 adjoining village development committees of Lumbini and

Kapilvastu of Nepal. He is also the Managing Director of International Buddhist Bhikkhu Training Centre which ordains Nepalese youth every year. They are given basic training on Buddhism in Nepal and later sent to Sri Lanka for advanced studies. He is the editor of Lumbini, a biannual journal published from Nepal. His valuable contribution also includes production of a documentary in 1990 on the life and deeds of the Most Ven. Bhikkhu Amritananda Mahanayaka Mahathera.

He has travelled extensively and has participated in various conferences, seminars and workshop in countries around the world. He has been made an "Ambassador for Peace" by International Religious Foundation based in USA. Also Lumbini Development Trust has honoured him in a special function for his contribution in promoting peace through Buddha's teachings. He is loved and liked by the Buddhist communities in Nepal and abroad alike for his generosity, hard work and above all compassion to all living beings.

"He who has cut off the thong (of hatred), the band (of craving), and the rope (of false views), together with the appendages (latent unwholesome tendencies), he who has removed the crossbar (of ignorance) and is enlightened — him do I call a holy man."

~ No 398, Dhammapada

"As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, even so the wise are not ruffled by praise or blame."

~ No 81, Dhammapada

We wish all our supporters a happy and a prosperous Buddha Jayanti 2557
May knowledge of Wisdom prevail the world. ~ LNBDS

Continue from Page 8 ...

(*karuna*), sympathetic joy (*mudita*) and equanimity (*upekkha*) are positive emotions. Without these four there is no enlightenment. The Buddha is well renowned for his great compassion. Compassion is a positive emotion. It is very important to remember some thing in your life that makes you feel joyous; that will help you access your own heart. You can call this exercise by different names but I call it positive meditation.

Once I told one 11 year old girl about this positive thinking and asked her to practice it with myself and others. She said she was thinking about her mother who was ill and she massaged her mother's legs. That was the only thing she has ever done for any one in her young life. When she thought about that she felt very happy and proud of herself.

Another time a young man told me that, on the day he got A/Level results he got a lot of pocket money from his parents, uncles and aunts. Instead of going out and celebrating with his friends drinking and having fun, he gave all his pocket money to an old people's home. Not only that, he also persuaded his friends to do the same. Now he is a young professional; whenever he looks back in his life that is something he has done and always is proud of it; he feels joyous about his own action and himself.

I would like to spend about ten minute's time allowing you to develop this joyous feeling within you. This is very important. It is going to help you to stay positive whatever happens in your life as long as you can access the resources of joy in your life.

*"Whatever living beings there
may be — feeble or strong (or
the seekers and the attained)
long, stout, or of medium size,
short, small, large, those seen
or those unseen, those dwelling
far or near, those who are born
as well as those yet to be born
— may all beings have happy
minds.*

*~ Karaniya Metta Sutta,
Khuddaka Nikaya*

Tribute to late Mr. Min Bahadur Shakya, a prominent Buddhist scholar of Nepal. (*Sabbe Sankhara Anicca*)



Mr. Min Bahadur Shakya, one of the prominent Buddhist scholars of contemporary Nepal who had contributed considerably to Buddhism passed away on September 18, 2012 around 3:00 AM in the morning at his own residence in Chakupat, Lalitpur, Nepal. He was sixty one.

He was the director of Nagarjun Institute of Exact Methods and visiting lecturer in the department of Buddhist studies, Tribhuvan University, Nepal. He was also members of many prestigious Buddhist institutions like Lumbini Development Council and Lumbini University.

As a prominent Buddhist scholar he had participated in many national and international conferences and meetings and had presented papers on Buddhism particularly on Buddhism in Nepal like Lumbini and its environment, Namobuddha, Boudhanath, and Swayambhu Maha Chaitya etc.

He had authored many books and had also written numerous articles on Buddhism for its propagation. He had also helped and guided several young Buddhist scholars in their research works. In recognition of his substantive contribution to Buddhism he had been awarded with: -

1. Research Associate Award by Fokuangshan Chinese Buddhist Research Academy, Kaohsiung, Taiwan 1989;
2. SAARC Buddhist Fellowship by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bhutan 1990;
3. Dhanavajra Talent Awards by Ministry of Culture, HMG 2001 and
4. Dharmabahadur Dhakhwa Award, Patan -2010.

In his death Nepal has lost a unique scholar and one of the champions of Buddhism. His absence will be felt considerably in the Buddhist literary world. May he attain Nirvana.

Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK)

Bhava Cakra (The Wheel of life)

✍ Acchaya Bajracharya

Introduction

Bhavachakra in Sanskrit and 'The Wheel of Life' in English held up by Yama –the god of death to depict impermanence and to show to the ordinary people the endless cycle of birth and death (*Samsara*). It represents the conditions of samsara as well as the moral and mental factors that cause an individual to remain within samsara. Bhava cakra are usually painted in the doorways of Tibetan temples known as Thaka. The earliest surviving example is a 6th-century wall painting at Ajanta. In the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, it is believed that the drawing was designed by the Buddha himself in order to help ordinary people understand the Buddhist teaching especially the dependent origination.

In Theravada Buddhism Dependent Arising is explained in many different ways but the simile of the wheel is found only in the Visuddhimagga ("The Path of Purification") and in the other commentarial literature

The three poisons:

In the centre of the wheel are three animals: a pig, a snake, and a bird (cockerel) representing three poisons of ignorance, attachment and aversion. The pig stands for ignorance; being the most stupid of the animals, since it sleeps in the dirtiest of places and eats whatever comes to its mouth. The snake represents anger; this is because it will be aroused and strike at the slightest incitement. The cockerel represents attachment i.e. desire or clinging.

In many drawings of the wheel, the snake and the bird are revealed as coming out of the mouth of the pig, indicating that hatred and attachment evolve from ignorance. The snake and the bird are also shown grasping the tail of the pig, indicating that they in turn support greater ignorance. Beneath the impact of the three poisons, beings generate karma, as shown in the next level of the circle.

Second level: karma

Karma represents the universal law of cause and effect—good action resulting positive results and bad action resulting negative results. The second level of the wheel shows two-half circles relating to karma.

The light half-circle, indicates people experiencing the results of positive actions, shows contented people moving upwards to higher states, possibly to the higher realms.

The dark half-circle, indicates people experiencing the results of negative actions, shows people in a miserable state being led downwards to lower states, possibly to the lower realms.

Driven by their karma, beings take rebirth in the six realms of samsara, as shown in the next level of the circle.

Samsara

Samsara, or cyclic existence, refers to the process of cycling through one rebirth after another. The third level of the wheel is divided into six sections that represent the six realms of samsara that beings can take rebirth. These six realms are divided into three higher realms and three lower realms.

The three higher realms

are shown in the top half of the circle consisting of the god (Dev) realm, the demi-god (Asura) realm and the human (Manusya) realm. The god realm is shown in the top middle and the human realm and demi-god realms are on either side of the god realm.

The three lower realms are shown in the bottom half of the circle consisting of the hell (Naraka) realm, the animal (Tiryagoni) realm and the hungry ghost (Preta) realm. The hell realm is shown in the bottom middle of the circle, with the animal realm and hungry ghost realm on either side of the hell realm.



A brief description of the six realms

Six realms of existence, as identified in the Buddhist teachings, can be understood on a psychological level, or as aspects of Buddhist cosmology. They are:

God realm: God realm is populated by godlike beings. The gods lead long and enjoyable lives full of pleasure and abundance, but they spend their lives pursuing meaningless distractions and never think to practice the dharma. When death comes to them, they are completely unprepared; without realizing it, they have completely exhausted their good karma (which was the cause for being reborn in the god realm) and they suffer through being reborn in the lower realms.

Demi-god realm: Demi-gods are strong and powerful beings who are sometimes depicted as enemies of the Gods. Demi-gods are marked by their fierce envy. The karma of hate and jealousy causes rebirth in the Demi-god Realm. The Demi-gods have pleasure and abundance almost as much as the gods, but they spend their time fighting among themselves or making war on the gods which they always lose.

Human realm: The Human Realm is the only realm from which beings may escape samsara through enlightenment, yet only a few open their eyes and see it. Rebirth into the Human Realm is conditioned by passion, doubt and desire. Humans suffer from hunger, thirst, heat, cold, separation from friends, being attacked by enemies, not getting what they want, and getting what they don't want. They also suffer from the general sufferings of birth, old age, sickness and death. Yet the human realm is considered to be the most suitable realm for practicing the dharma, because humans are not completely distracted by pleasure (like the gods or demi-gods) or by pain and suffering (like the beings in the lower realms).

Animal realm: Wild animals suffer from being attacked and eaten by other animals; they generally lead lives of constant fear. Domestic animals suffer from being exploited by humans; for example, they are slaughtered for food, overworked, and so on. Rebirth in the Animal Realm is conditioned by ignorance.

Hungry ghost realm: They suffer from extreme hunger and thirst. They have huge bellies and long thin necks making it difficult to swallow food. They are characterized by insatiable hunger and craving and associated with addiction, obsession and compulsion.

Hell realm: As the name suggests, the Hell Realm is the most terrible of the Six Realms. Hell beings have a short fuse; everything makes them angry. Hell beings endure unimaginable suffering for eons of time. There are believed

to be eighteen different types of hells, some are hot and others are cold realms suffering accordingly.

These are six realms of Samsara into which beings are reborn into according to their past karma.

In some representations of the wheel, there is a Buddha or bodhisattva depicted within each realm, trying to help sentient beings find their way to nirvana.

Twelve Nidanas

The outer level of the wheel is divided into twelve sections that represent the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination. As previously stated, the three inner levels of the wheel show that the three poisons lead to karma, which leads to the suffering of the six realms. The twelve links of the outer level show how this happens—by presenting the process of cause and effect in detail.

These twelve links can be understood to operate on an outer or inner level.

On the outer level, the twelve links can be seen to operate over several lifetimes; in this case, these links show how our past lives influence our present life, and how our actions in this lifetime influence our future life.

On the inner level, the twelve links can be understood to operate in every moment of existence in an interdependent manner. On this level, the twelve links can be applied to show the effects of one particular action.

By contemplating on the twelve links, one gains greater insight into the workings of karma; this insight enables us to begin to unravel our habitual way of thinking and reacting.

The outer level represents the 12 links of dependent origination. These twelve causal links, paired with their corresponding symbols, moving clockwise, are:

Avidyā: *lack of knowledge* - a blind person, often walking, or a person peering out. Ignorance (Avidya) - not knowing the four noble truths as taught by the Buddha.

Samskāra: *constructive volitional activity* – (a potter shaping a vessel or vessels). A potter moulding a pot symbolizes that we shape our own destiny with our actions through the workings of karma.

Vijñāna: *consciousness* – (a man or a monkey grasping a fruit). The monkey climbing a tree represents consciousness or the mind, which wanders aimlessly and out of control.

Nāmarūpa: *name and form* – (two men afloat in a boat). Consciousness gives rise to name and form which are essential elements of mental and physical existence. It is

symbolized by people travelling in a boat on the river of life.

Sadāyatana: *six senses – (a dwelling with six windows).* The next link is an empty house, the doors and windows of which symbolize the developing sense organs. Buddha noted six senses: sight, smell, taste, hearing, touch and thought (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind)

Sparsa: *contact – (lovers consorting, kissing, or entwined).* The six senses allow us to have contact with the world, which is symbolized by lovers embracing.

Vedanā: *pain – (an arrow to the eye).* From contact arise feelings - pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. Feelings are represented on the wheel as an arrow piercing the eye.

Tanhā: *thirst – (a drinker receiving drink).* From feelings arise desires or attachment to pleasant feelings and experiences, symbolized by a couple falling in love or a man drinking alcohol.

Upādāna: *grasping – (a man or a monkey picking fruit).* Desire or attachment leads to grasping for an object of desire, symbolized by a monkey picking fruit.

Bhava: *coming to be – (a couple engaged in intercourse, a standing, leaping, or reflective person).* From grasping arises existence, represented by a man and a woman making love.

Jāti: *being born – (woman giving birth).* Existence culminates in birth (entry into the human realm), which is symbolized by a woman in childbirth.

Jarāmarana: *(old age and death - corpse being carried).* Birth naturally leads to aging and death, which is symbolized by an old man carrying a burden.

Yāma:

Yama is the figure holding the Wheel of Life. Yama is a furious deity who is the lord of death. It symbolises impermanence and the inevitability of death – ‘nothing lasts forever’.

This figure is most commonly depicted as Yama, the lord of death. Regardless of the figure depicted, the inner meaning remains the same—that the entire process of cyclic existence (samsara) is momentary; everything within this wheel is constantly changing.

The Buddha pointing to the moon: the path to liberation

The upper part of the drawing also shows an image of the Buddha pointing toward the moon; this represents the path to liberation.

Thubten Chodron states:

So the Buddha's gesture is like the path to enlightenment. It's not that the Buddha is the cause of nirvana. The Buddha is a cooperative condition of our nirvana. He points out to us what to practice and what to abandon in order to be liberated. When we follow the path, we get the result, which is nirvana.

Chögyam Trungpa states:

The nature of the path is more like an exploration or an expedition than following a path that has already been built. When people hear that they should follow the path, they might think that a ready-made system exists, and that individual expressions are not required. They may think that one does not have to surrender or give or open. But when you actually begin to tread on the path, you realize that you have to clear out the jungle and all the trees, underbrush, and obstacles growing in front of you. You have to bypass tigers and elephants and poisonous snakes.

Summary and Conclusion

Symbolically, the three inner circles (levels), moving from the centre outward, show that the three poisons of ignorance, attachment, and aversion give rise to positive and negative actions; these actions and their results are called karma. Karma in turn gives rise to the six realms, which represent the different types of suffering within samsara.

The fourth and outer level of the wheel symbolizes the twelve links of dependent origination; these links indicate the sources of suffering. The three poisons and karma produce lives within cyclic existence.

The demon being holding the wheel represents impermanence; this symbolizes that the entire process of samsara or cyclic existence is impermanent, momentary, constantly changing. The moon above the wheel indicates liberation. The Buddha is pointing to the moon, indicating that liberation from samsara is possible.

The entire *Bhavachakra*, Wheel of Life, is a depiction of the possibility of transforming suffering by changing the way we relate to it. Liberation from the Wheel of Life does not mean escape. It means clear perception of oneself, of the entire range of the human experience.

According to the Buddhist tradition, the Buddha told his followers: I have shown you the path that leads to liberation but you should know that liberation depends upon yourself. As the Buddha taught in his final saying, it is only through becoming a “lamp unto yourself” that liberation can be won. *‘Atta Dīpa Bhāva.’ Tathagata can only show the path, you yourself have to tread the path for your own liberation.*

Positive thinking in Buddhism

✍ Kishor B. Bajracharya, Patan, Nepal

Buddhism states that if one speaks or acts with pure mind happiness and success will follow and if one speaks or acts with impure mind suffering and sorrow will follow. Hence success in his or her work depends on whether it is carried out with good intention and positive attitude or not. Positive thinking is the main cause for good result. When we think of a successful person and a successful organization, there are always positive thinking and hard work of a person and good leaders of the organizations behind it.

Shakyamuni Buddha preached his teaching- the Dhamma for about 45 years travelling from door to door, village to village, city to city and so on. All his Dhamma talk is based on compassion and loving kindness for the well being of all sentient beings. Compassion and cherishing for others' happiness is at the very heart of the Buddhism.

If you remove compassion from teachings of Buddha you remove the heart of the Buddhism

Buddha's central teaching is four noble truths – suffering, cause of suffering, cessation of suffering and path leading to cessation of suffering which is noble eight fold path. They are: -

1. Right understanding
2. Right thought
3. Right speech
4. Right action
5. Right livelihood
6. Right effort
7. Right Mindfulness
8. Right concentration

Right thought is the outcome of Right Understanding. Thoughts are all important as man's words and acts have thought as their source. Hence Right thought is necessary to develop human positive thinking and positive attitude for a successful endeavour.

Personally I am very grateful to Buddha's teaching on four sublime states -Brahmavihara in Pali language. They are i. Loving kindness, ii. Compassion, iii. Sympathetic or Appreciative joy and iv. equanimity. (Pali is believed to be the language used by Buddha in his teachings). **If one can cultivate these four sublime states in his or her daily life he or she can live in peace and happiness. That type of person is a virtue to himself or herself as well as to others.** It is very practical teaching for human

beings to do better for his own family, for the society he or she lives in and as well as for an organization.

An organization will be successful if it follows this into practice. We need to develop compassion to the juniors, loving kindness to the friends and sympathetic joy to the one who gets success in his or her work, and equanimity to those who don't listen to us though it is true. In this manner one has to develop equanimity rather than anger.

I would like to share my experience of working in an organisation called Right Livelihood Learning Center and SCOPE Cooperative Ltd established on the principle of Samma Ajiva (Right Livelihood) based in Patan, Nepal. I am the founder chairman of this organisation and the most of our members come from Patan. We have been applying these four sublimates states in our youth organizations and we found it works. These four sublime states have always supported us to develop positive thinking in every aspects of our work.

We have been undertaking different activities to share the principle of art of living based on path of right livelihood. In addition we have also been sharing this teaching among the youths along with conducting some of the training programs to help youths to follow the path of right livelihood. At one time we decided to conduct training programs for sharing our experiences of working together and how to build up a group work for both social and economic activities which benefit all. We chose several nearby villages around Patan for this training program. The villages were Khokana, Bungamati, Sunakothi and Thecho.

Initially some of our friends were doubtful and they thought that these ideas of training program might not work as most of the villagers in Nepal were dominated by political parties and their leaders. Some of our friends thought negatively that our group would be considered as a political group belonging to one of the political parties. Our friends were hesitant and doubtful for the success of our training program.

But majority of our young friends thought that the training would bring a very good positive result. The force of positive spirit was strong. They felt that training would motivate groups and would lead them to carry out various beneficial activities which would benefit the villagers financially and will help them to carry out social services. Everybody was convinced with it. The programs were conducted applying four sublime states - Loving kindness, Compassion, Sympathetic joy and Equanimity. The

training was for one week. After the training program, as it was predicted earlier, the farmers of all the villages expressed happiness. They heartily honoured all our friends with great respects, offering delicious food and token of love. The villagers promised to apply the learning from the trainings into practice. As a result of these training programmes they have been actively running their group's businesses benefiting more poor villagers offering them both financial and social services.

One village formally registered a cooperative society later on. The cooperative is successfully running its activities to date. The other villages also are doing group activities in their areas successfully. This really changed the negative thinking of some of our young friends and they were convinced the benefits of the positive thinking and positive attitude.

With this success the young people started several successful training programs on forming cooperative societies to semi urban areas applying Buddha's teaching to develop positive attitude based mainly on the four sublime states. We relate to friendly people with loving kindness, to those in distress with compassion, to the successful with appreciative joy and to unpleasant with equanimity.

At one time two of our friends had misunderstanding while carrying out some social activities but because they practised four sublime states in their daily lives they did not get into fight rather they practice loving kindness and compassion for each other and overcame their misunderstanding. At present their friendship are stronger than before. Such is the virtue of practising four sublime states in our daily lives.

As present most of the youths think of easy money which leads them to negative actions. Initially they felt they were doing the right thing as they earned some easy money and were able to enjoy life for short while but later they realised the mistakes of following the wrong path as they got into big troubles. There were many examples where young people got into trouble and had suffered because of the different type of negative activities.

In this context I personally like to share a very important teaching of the Buddha given to a businessman called Dighjaanu. I believe this teaching emphasises the value of practising ethics and good manner so that one can enjoy life positively. Dighjaanu met the Buddha one morning when the Buddha was on his alms round (Vicchatan in Pali language).

As Dighjaanu was busy he did not have time to go to the monastery so he prayed to the Buddha to teach him

dhamma on the way. Lord Buddha accepted and preached him with four things. In Pali language they are called:

1. Uthāna Sampadā: It means to say that one should be honest and hard working, enthusiastic to carry out ones day to day business operation.

2. Aarakhha Sampadā: It means to save some money for future from one's earning and to spend on necessary things only.

3. Kalyāna Mittatā: It means to say that one has to meet spiritual teachers, intellectuals, superiors and seniors who are positive and who can guide us to go on the right path.

4. Samajivatā: It means to say that one has to follow right livelihood. To follow such occupation which makes one to earn happily and which is not harmful to anyone. Moreover one has to spend money honestly in the needy areas only.

These teachings are still valuable even in the present world. It all supports one to develop positive thinking.

It is interesting to find some modern books written on positive thinking such as i. "Success through a Positive Mental Attitude" by Nepleon Hill, ii. "Awaken the Giant Within" by Antony Robins, iii. "Real Magic" by Dr. Wayne W. Dyer and iv. "Unconditional life discovering the power to fulfill your dreams" by Dr. Deepak Chopara

It is clearly written in these books that positive thinking makes one's life successful and it will lead one to make a right decision and develop self confidence.

In this way we can see how the Buddha's teaching is useful in this world to live life happily and successfully.

May all living beings be happy !

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"Just as a mother would protect her only child with her life even so let one cultivate a boundless love towards all beings.

~ Karaniya Metta Sutta

स्वस्थ जीवन र बुद्ध शिक्षा

शुभरत्न शाक्य, अमृत बौद्ध परियत्ति शिक्षा
Kathmandu, Nepal

विश्वव्यापी रूपमा जीवनस्तरको एक अत्यावश्यक अवस्था हो “स्वस्थ जीवन”, प्रत्येक मानिसहरू स्वस्थ जीवन रूचाउँछन् । मानिसहरू जतिसुकै धनाढ्य र शक्तिशाली किन नहोस् स्वस्थ अमृत निधि हो। विश्व स्वास्थ्य सङ्गठन (The World Health Organization, WHO) ले स्वास्थ्यलाई व्यापक रूपमा परिभाषित गर्दै भनेका छन् “A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”. यस परिभाषा अनुसार रोगबाट मुक्त हुनुका साथ साथै मानसिक र सामाजिक रूपमा पनि सहीसलामत हुनुपर्दछ भन्ने कुरा थपेका छन्। ६०० ई.पु. मा विश्वकै शान्ति नायकका रूपमा महामानव गौतम बुद्ध जन्मनु भयो । उहाँले प्रतिपादन गर्न भएको धर्मदर्शनलाई नै बुद्ध धर्म भनिन्छ । उहाँले दिनुभएको स्वस्थ जीवनको परिभाषा यस्तो छ - “To keep the body in good health is our duty otherwise we shall not be able to keep our mind strong and clear.” उहाँका अनुसार जबसम्म तपाईंको जीवन स्वस्थ र हन्छ, तपाईंको भौतिक शरीर आफ्नो मुल उद्देश्यलाई पुरा गर्नका लागि कार्यरत रहन्छ । आफ्नो शरीरको हेरविचारको सम्बन्धमा अरूलाई दोष दिन मिल्दैन, आफ्नो शरीरको हेरविचार आफैले गर्नुपर्छ । त्यसैले यो काम व्यक्ति स्वयम्ले गर्नुपर्ने व्यक्तिगत कार्य हो ।

सैनिकहरूलाई पैराशुटको तालिम दिने क्रममा क्रमशः पचास फिट, सय फिटको टावर फेरी हजारौं फिट माथि हवाई जहाजबाट हामफाल्न लगाइन्छ । त्यसवेला कारणवश पैराशुट खुलेन भने उनको ज्यानपनि जान सक्छ । तर त्यस पैराशुट नखुलेकोमा अरूलाई दोषदिन मिल्दैन ऊ स्वयम् त्यस दुर्घटनाको जिम्मेवार हुन्छ । यो उदाहरण अलि अचम्म लाग्न सक्छ तर स्वास्थ्य जीवनको सम्बन्धमा हाम्रो चित्त त्यस सैनिक जस्तो र शरीर पैराशुट जस्तो हो । यदी पैराशुट खुलेन भने दुर्घटना हुन सक्छ अनि अपाङ्ग र घायल भएर जीवनमा स्वास्थ्य गुमायौं भने चित्तलाई जीवनका अग्नि परिक्षाबाट गुज्रनु पर्ने हुन्छ । सानोभन्दा सानो काम देखी ठूलोला कुशल कार्य वा निर्वाण प्राप्ति सम्मका हरेक क्षेत्रमा स्वस्थ जीवनको आवश्यकता र महत्वपूर्ण भुमिका रहेको हुन्छ ।

बौद्ध दर्शन अनुसार चित्त, कर्म, ऋतु र आहार सम्बन्धी ४ वटा नियमहरूले मानव स्वस्थमा सँधै प्रभाव पारिराखेको हुन्छ । यी चार नियमको असन्तुलनले जसरी किल्ला घस्नाले टायर पन्छर हुन्छ त्यसरी नै शरीरलाई उचित आराम, पोषण , हेर विचार र मनमा तनाव मुक्त अवस्था नभएमा विरामी हुन्छ । बुद्धको प्रमुख दर्शन चतुराय सत्यमा रोगलाई व्याधिपि दुःखाको रूपमा व्यक्त गर्नु भएको छ । संक्षेपमा जन्मनु, बृद्धावस्था, रोग र मृत्यु नै दुःख हो र त्यसबाट मुक्त हुनु नै औषधी हो र निर्वाण प्राप्ती नै स्वस्थ जीवन प्राप्ती हो भनेर बुद्ध धर्मले सिकाउँछ ।

बुद्धकालिन समयमा महाकाश्यप स्थविर र महामौदगल्यायन स्थविर विरामी भएर रोगले पिडित हुनुभएको बेला भगवान् बुद्धले बोझ्झ

सुत्र को उपदेश दिनुभयो । त्यस उपदेशको श्रवणले तत्काल त्यस रोग निवारण भयो। साथै तथागत स्वयम् विरामी पर्नु भएको बेलामा महाचुन्द स्थविरले बोझ्झ सुत्र को स्मरण गराउनु भएको अवस्थामा रोग शान्त भएर गएको थियो । बोझ्झ सुत्रमा उल्लेख भए अनुसार सातप्रकारका बोझ्झहरू स्मृती सम्बोझ्झ, धर्मविचय सम्बोझ्झ, विर्य सम्बोझ्झ, प्रीति सम्बोझ्झ, प्रशब्धि सम्बोझ्झ, समाधि सम्बोझ्झ, उपेक्षा सम्बोझ्झ हुन् ।

त्यस्तै गरी आयुष्मान् गिरिमानन्द विरामी भएको बेलामा तथागतले आयुष्मान् आनन्द दश संज्ञा उपदेश सिकाउनु भई त्यसकुरा जहाँ आयुष्मान् गिरिमानन्द हुनुहुन्छ त्यहाँ गएर सुनाउनको लागी भन्नुभयो। आयुष्मान् आनन्दले पनि बुद्धको आज्ञा बमोजिम आयुष्मान् गिरिमानन्दलाई दश संज्ञाको उपदेश सुनाउनु हुदाँ तुरुन्तै रोगको पीडा शान्त भएर गएको थियो । ति दश वटा संज्ञाहरू क्रमशः १) अनित्य संज्ञा, २) अनात्म संज्ञा, ३) अशुभ संज्ञा, ४) आदिनवसंज्ञा, ५) प्रहाणसंज्ञा, ६) विरागसंज्ञा, ७) निरोधसंज्ञा, ८) अनभिरतसंज्ञा, ९) सर्वसंस्कार अनित्यसंज्ञा, १०) आनापान स्मृति संज्ञा हुन् । यी दश संज्ञा मध्यमा चौथो आदिनवसंज्ञामा रोगका विभिन्न प्रकारहरूलाई तथागतले यसरी प्रस्तुत गर्नु भयो :- आँखाको रोग, मुखको रोग, दाँतको रोग, खोकिलाने रोग, स्वाँ स्वाँ आउने रोग, पित्त, डाह, ज्वरो, पेट दुख्ने रोग, मुर्छा हुने रोग, रक्तनिसार, शुल, हैजा, कुष्ठ, गाँडो, दाग हुने रोग, छाला सुकेर जाने रोग, मृगी, दाग घोट्टी, स-साना धेरै खटिरा आउने रोग, नङ्गमा हुने रोग, सुनिएर आउने रोग, क्षय रोग, मधुमेह, जोर्नि, जोर्नि गाँठो आउने रोग, डण्डिफोर, भगण्डर रोग, पित्त रोग, कफ, पित्त, कफ वायु पित्त तिनैवटाबाट हुने रोग, मौसम फेरिँदा हुने रोग, अहार अजिर्ण भएर हुने रोग, अरूको कारणले हुने रोग, कर्म विपाकले हुने रोग, रूघा, गर्मिले हुने रोग, भोकप्यास, भाडापखाला, पिसाब नहुने रोग, आदि । यसरी हेर्दा बुद्धलाई सम्पूर्ण रोगहरूका ज्ञाता एक डक्टरका रूपमा चिन्न सक्छौं । मानसिक रोगको उपचारका तरिकाहरू, चित्त र स्वास्थ्य विचको सम्बन्ध नै स्वस्थ जीवन र बुद्ध धर्म को अध्ययन क्षेत्र हो। बुद्धले अंगुलीमाल, जस्तो डरलाग्दो र पटाचारा, कीशागौतमी जस्ता विषम मानसिक पिडा भएका मानिसहरूको मन स्वस्थ र शान्त पार्न भयो । त्यसैले बुद्ध एक मनोचिकित्सक पनि हो ।

स्वास्थ्य भनेको रोग नभएको अवस्था मात्रै होईन । स्वास्थ्य भनेको एक निरन्तर चुनौति हो । प्रत्येक क्षण सृजनशील स्मृति सप्रजन्यता बाट मनोविकारहरू हटाउने मैत्री करूणाको भाव बृद्धी गर्ने जस्ता अभ्यासबाट नै पुर्ण निरोगिता प्राप्त गर्न सकिन्छ । बुद्धका रोग निवारण विधिलाई अँगाल्दै जाँदा जापानमा रेकी उपचार पद्धतिको विकास भयो । यस पद्धतिमा मैत्री भावनाको माध्यमबाट हीलीङ्ग गरी विरामीको रोग शान्त पारिन्छ । कुनै व्यक्ती विरामी हुँदा आफ्नो घरमा भिक्षुहरू बोलाएर परित्राण पाठ गराउने चलन भगवान् बुद्धको पालादेखी रहिआएको छ । धेरै चर्को रोग लाग्दा उपचार कालागि विपस्सना ध्यानभावनाको अभ्यास गर्ने, आफ्नो मनलाई

स्वस्थ राख्न सकेमा शारीरिक रोगलाई पनि शान्त पार्न सक्ने बौद्ध विश्वास रहिआएको छ ।

विपश्यना ध्यानको लाभ सम्बन्धमा बौद्ध राष्ट्र म्यानमारमा ध्यान बस्ने योगीहरूको घटनाहरू निकै चाख लाग्दा छन् । यसपालीको बुद्ध जयन्ती स्मारिकामा “घाँटीको द्युमरसँग संघर्ष गर्ने एक वर्मीयोगी को सत्य घटना” भन्ने शीर्षकमा भिक्षु विशुद्धाचारको लेख छापिएको थियो । जसमा उल्लेख भएअनुसार ३७ वर्षिया नर्स ल्हा मिन्टलाई घाँटीको द्युमर हुन्छ । डाक्टरहरूले उक्त द्युमरलाई क्यान्सरको शंका गरी बायोप्सी गर्ने निर्णय गर्यो । त्यसबाट रोग निको हुनुभन्दा पनि साईडएफेक्ट र भन् रोग चर्किने सम्भावना देखेपछि ल्हा मिन्ट ले विपश्यना ध्यान भावना गर्ने निर्णय गर्छिन् । उनकै शब्दमा “यसका लागि मैले सजिलो उपाय रोजेको छु । यदि म उपचारमा लागेकी भए , म निको हुन पनि सक्थेँ नहुन पनि सक्थेँ । तर मैले गम्भीर साईड एफेक्टहरूलाई भेल्लै पर्थो । यदि मैले ध्यान गरेको खण्डमा पनि मेरो रोग निको हुन पनि सक्थ्यो नहुन पनि सक्थ्यो, तर सम्पूर्ण दुःखबाट छुटकारा दिलाउने निर्वाणरूपी साईड एफेक्ट पाउन सक्थेँ लौ , निर्वाण नै प्राप्त गर्न नसकेतापनि म त्यस्को नजिक त अवश्य पुग्नेछु । किनकी विपश्यना ध्यानमा मेरो अगाढ श्रद्धा थियो ।” यस्तो अगाढ श्रद्धाले ध्यान बस्ने ल्हा मिन्टले ३ वर्षको अथक विपश्यना को अभ्यासले डक्टरि उपचार बाट निको नहुने रोग निको भयो । अहिले उनी स्वस्थ छिन् । त्यतै ध्यान केन्द्रमा स्वस्थ उपचारिका भई अन्य योगीहरूको सेवा गर्छिन् ।

भगवान् बुद्ध प्रायः भिक्षुहरूलाई “फसु विहाराय ” अर्थात् सुखपूर्वक बस्नुपर्छ भनेर स्वस्थ जीवन ज्युनको लागी प्रेरणा दिनुहुन्थ्यो । उहाँ भन्नुहुन्थ्यो- “चतारो पञ्च आलोपे अभुत्वा उदकं पिवे अलं फासु विहाराय” अर्थात् पेट भर्नको लागी चार पाँच गाँस बाँकि हुँदा पानी पिउनुपर्दछ त्यसले गर्दा स्वास्थ्य लाभ हुन्छ । एक समय कोशल राजा धेरै खाना खाने गर्थे । यसरी धेरै खाना खाने हुँदा उहाँलाई बुद्ध दर्शन गर्नका लागी पनि दुईजना मानिसहरूले हात समाएर ल्याउनु पर्थ्यो । त्यसबेलामा भगवान् बुद्धले भोजनमा संयम् गर्नुपर्ने कुरालाई गाथा बनाई बताउनु भयो । त्यस गाथा आफ्नो भान्जालाई कण्ठ पार्न लगाई भोजन गर्ने समयमा वाचन गर्न लगायो । त्यसरी दिन प्रतिदिन एक एक गाँस कम गर्दै ल्याई आफुलाई पुग्ने गरीमात्रै खाने गर्न थाले । यसरी नै हामीहरूले पनि खानामा संयमता अपनाउनु पर्छ । त्यस्तो संयमता अपनाउनाले डायबिटिज, प्रेसर, कोलेस्टेरोल, भाडापखाला जस्ता रोगहरूबाट बच्न सकिन्छ । स्वास्थ्य सम्बन्धी सजग हुनलाई नै बुद्धले विकाल भोजन गर्न हुँदैन भनेर उपदेश दिनुभएको छ ।

विनयपिटक महावग्गभिन्नको भैषज्य खण्डमा बुद्धले भिक्षुहरूलाई स्वस्थ जीवन लाभका लागि र रोग प्रतिकारका लागि औषधी सम्बन्धी विधान बनाउनु भयो । उहाँले विरामी भएको बेलामा घिउ, मखन, तेल, मह मिलाएर बनाइने चतुमधु खान हुन अनुमति दिनुभयो । यस्तै तरीकाले चर्बी, मुल, नीम को बोक्राको औषधी, पात को औषधी, फल, हींग, नुन लवण को औषधी एवम् प्रकारले १३ प्रकारका औषधी बनाउने तरीकाहरूका तालीकाबद्ध रूपलाई विनय पिटकमा संगालिएको छ भने घाउचोट लाग्दा गर्नु पर्ने

उपचार विधीहरू पनि उल्लेख गर्नभएको छ । उहाँले पसिना निकाल्ने चिकित्सा, रगत निकाल्ने चिकित्सा, खुट्टामा मालिस गर्ने चिकित्सा, चिरफार गर्ने पर्ने चिकित्सा, मलमपट्टी गर्ने, सर्प चिकित्सा, विष चिकित्सा, भुत चिकित्सा, पाण्डु रोग अदि ११ प्रकारका चिकित्साका बारेमा भिक्षुहरूलाई अनुमति दिनुहुन्छ । वास्तवमा भिक्षुहरू बुद्धको नजिक रहने हुँदा धेरै जसो उपदेशहरू भिक्षुहरूलाई दिनुभएको जस्तो लागे पनि यी उपायहरू स्वास्थ्य लाभ गर्न चाहनेहरू सबैकालागि पठन योग्य विषयहरू हुन् ।

धम्मपदमा “जिघच्छा परमारोगा” अर्थात् भोक नै सबै भन्दा ठूलो रोग भएको कुरा बताईएको छ । “आरोगा परमालाभा” भन्नु भएर धम्मपदकै अर्को गाथामा निरोगी हुनु नै सबैभन्दा ठूलो लाभ भएको कुरा बताउनु भएको छ । यस गाथामा “स्वस्थ जीवन कसरी जिउने” भन्ने विषयलाई प्रष्ट्याउन खोजेको छ । जीवनमा जिउनका लागि सोच्नेबेलामा स्वास्थ्यको बारेमा पनि सोच्नुपर्ने हुन्छ । मानिस एक आध्यात्मिक प्राणी भएकोले उनको मष्तिष्कमा आध्यात्मिक प्रभाव पनि रहिने रहन्छ । प्रत्येक व्यक्तीलाई नकारात्मक आध्यात्मिक प्रभाव जस्तै- धेरै दिनसम्म नखाई बस्नु, दुष्कर चर्चालाई मुक्ती मार्ग ठान्नु यस्ता नकारात्मक आध्यात्मिक प्रभावलाई बाहिर निकालि एक मुख्य विषय सत्य र समथ विपश्यना ध्यानको अभ्यास गर्न नै स्वस्थ जीवन लाभको प्रभावकारी तरीका हो । यदी तपाईंको मन तपाईंको वसमा छैन भने अन्य नकारात्मक कुराहरूले नकारात्मक प्रभाव पारी तपाईं को जीवन गलत दिशामा लगिदिन सक्छ । त्यसले तपाईंको स्वास्थ्य स्थिति नै खतरामा पार्न सक्छ । त्यसैले रूढिवादी परम्परा, अन्धविश्वास लाई वेवास्ता गर्दै आफ्नो शरीरका साथै मनलाई सफा राख्नुपर्ने कुरामा बुद्ध धर्मले जोड दिएको देखिन्छ । जो मानिस स्वास्थ्य हुन्छ त्यसले जीवनमा जित हासील गर्न एक कदम अघि सारेको हुन्छ । त्यसैले भनिन्छ पैसा गुमायौं भनै खासै केहि गुमेको हुँदैन किनकि पैसा भनेको फेरी कमाउन सकिन्छ, स्वास्थ्य गुम्यो भने केही बढी गुमेको हुन्छ तर आचरण नै बिग्रयो भने सम्पूर्ण कुराहरू गुम्न पुग्छ । त्यसैले भगवान् बुद्धले स्वस्थ जीवनकालागि स्वस्थ बानी व्यवहार अपनाउनु पर्छ भन्नुभएको छ ।

बुद्धकालीन समय सारिपुत्र भन्तेलाई पेट दुख्यो । मौदगल्यायन भन्तेले सारिपुत्र भन्तेको उपचारका लागी भिक्षाटन जानुभई मह र आँपरस लिएर आउनु भयो । तर सारिपुत्र भन्तेले आफ्नो प्रज्ञा ज्ञानले विचार गरी हेर्दा शक्रले छल गरेर भिक्षादान गरेको कुरा थाहा हुनआएपछि उहाँले त्यस पात्रमा भएको आँपका रस पिउन अयोग्य भएकोले फाल्नलगाएका थिए । त्यसरी फाल्ने बित्तीकै उहाँको रोग शान्त भएर गएको थियो । त्यसैले स्वस्थको सवालमा राम्ररी पालना गरिएको शील गुण धर्मले लाखौं पर्ने औषधी भन्दा बढी लाभ दायक हुन्छ ।

बुद्धधर्म एक किसिमको सरल आध्यात्मिक दर्शन वा सिद्धान्त मात्र होइन । बौद्धहरूले सदियौंदेखि शारीरिक र मानसिक रोगका बारेमा चिन्तन गरेर रोगबाट मुक्त गर्ने उपायहरूको खोजी गरेका छन् । जस्तैगर्दा बौद्ध र औषधी उपचार एकै साथ अध्ययन गर्ने गरिन्छ । बौद्ध धर्ममा मन वा चित्तको भुमिकासँग नजिकैको सम्बन्ध राख्दा भविष्यमा जति धेरै मानसिक तनावसँग सम्बन्धीत विरामीहरू हुन्छन् त्यतितै मन र स्वास्थ्यको सम्बन्ध अझ बढी रहने निश्चित छ ।

किनकी रोगबाट अनुपस्थिति मात्र स्वस्थ होइन । स्वास्थ्यको अर्थ हो निरन्तर परिवर्तन, निरन्तर सृजना हुँदै जानु, एक सजक जीवन सधैं अगाडि बढीरहन्छ, जीवनका नयाँ आयामहरुतर्फ आगाडि बढ्नु वास्तविक स्वास्थ्य जीवन हो । संघर्षरत स्वभावले सधैं अगाडि बढ्न प्रेरणा वा शान्ति दिई राख्छ ।

बौद्धधर्म कारणाकारण तर्कमा आधारित भएर औषधी उपचार गर्न स्वभाविक हो । त्यसैले विरामी कहिल्यै हुँदैन भन्ने धारणा गलत छ किनभने त्यस्ता विचार गर्न नै हाम्रो घमण्डपना हो । जब हामीलाई कुनै प्रकारको दुःखको संकेत देखापर्छ, त्यतिबेला डाक्टरको समीपमा जानु केवल सहीमात्र नभई स्वाभाविक कुरा पनि हो । वास्तवमा हामीहरु आस्था वा विस्वासको पनि अभ्यास गर्दछौं, निचेरिन लेख्छन्- “यदि तिमी एक दिन लामो बाँच्न सफल भए तिमीले पुण्यसंचय गर्न सक्छौ, जुन जीवनको सौभाग्य र महत्वपूर्ण पक्ष हो ।” यस भनाईबाट हामीले हाम्रो मनलाई स्वास्थ्य जीवन पाउनका लागि तयार पार्नु पर्ने देखिन्छ ।

एक महत्वपूर्ण अध्ययन जुन सोका गोकाइका (soka Gakkai) अनुसार दोश्रो अध्ययनमा जोशी तादाले एक पटक भन्नु भएको छ, कि आजको मान्छेहरुमा दुई मौलिक समस्याहरु विद्यमान छन्, एउटा हो प्रज्ञा र ज्ञानमा भ्रम हुनु र अर्को हो अस्वस्थता र मृत्युमा भ्रम पर्नु । ज्ञान र प्रज्ञा एउटै चिज होइन । ती दुईको बिचमा भएको सम्बन्धबारे धेरै भन्न सकिन्छ । बौद्धधर्म र औषधी विज्ञानको सम्बन्धमा भन्न सकिन्छ । औषधी विज्ञानले रोगसित वैज्ञानिक ज्ञानबाट सामना गर्दछ भने, बौद्ध धर्मले अर्कोतर्फ मानविय प्रज्ञाको विकास गर्दछ जसले गर्दा हामीले आफ्नै गति पत्ता लगाउन सक्दछौं र हाम्रो जीवन शक्तीलाई मजबुत बनाउँछौं । यसले गर्दा हाम्रो औषधी उपचारको क्षमता बढाउँछ र हाम्रो आफ्नै प्राकृतिक उपचार पद्धतिबाट पनि रोग निको पार्न सहयोग पुग्छ । तर यदी आवश्यकै पर्दा पनि औषधी उपचार गरेनौं भने त्यो मुख्यतापूर्ण र अन्धविस्वासयुक्त काम हुन्छ । भगवान् बुद्धलाई पनि एक समय देवदत्तले ढुङ्गाले हिकारिएर घाउ पारिदिँदा औषधी उपचारको आवश्यकता परेको हुँदा जीवक वैद्यले औषधी उपचार गरिदिएका थिए । त्यसैले औषधी र साधनहरु बुद्धिमत्तापूर्वक प्रयोग गरेर रोगसँग जीतुपर्छ ।

रोगसँगको संघर्षले मानव जीवनलाई पुर्णरूपमा बुझ्न मद्दत पुऱ्याउँछ । प्रज्ञा, स्वास्थ्य, दीर्घजीवन र सुखको निम्ति आधारभुत गुण हुन् । विरामीपनले मृत्युतिर नै लान्छ भन्ने छैन । निचेरिन (Nichiren) लेख्नुहुन्छ- “विरामीपनले हामीलाई स्व-परीक्षण गर्न पनि बल पुऱ्याउँछ र आफ्नो अस्तित्व र आफ्नो जीवनको बारेपनि यो एउटा अत्यन्त महत्वपूर्ण र अमूल्य मनोभावना हो ।” कसैले यस्तो पनि भनेका छन्- “कहिल्यै विरामी नभएको मान्छेले मानव जीवनलाई आधामात्रै बुझ्दछ ।” एक बर्मी योगीले आफ्नो ध्यान भावना अभ्यास सकिएको बेला एक साप्ताहिक पत्रिकासँग अन्तर्वार्तामा स्वस्थ जीवन र बुद्ध शिक्षा सम्बन्धमा यस्तो भनेका छन् “म सानै छँदा कडा रोगको शिकार थिएँ । म क्षयरोगको रोगी थिएँ, त्यसकारण मैले केवल तीस वर्ष बाँच्ने आशा गरेको थिएँ । तर मेरो विरामीको अनुभवले गर्दा अरु विरामीहरु बारे जानकारी पाउन धेरै मद्दत पाएँ । त्यसकारण मलाई हरेक पलपलको महत्व मलाई थाहा छ । मैले के कस्ता सफलताहरु हासिल गर्नपरेछ, जबसम्म म जीवित रहन्छु, म एक क्षण पनि खेर फाल्दिन र मैले विपस्सना ध्यान अभ्यासमा धेरै समय बिताएर यी वर्षहरुमा म पुर्ण जीवन जिउन लागेको छु ।” यसरी स्वस्थ जीवन ज्युनकालागि बुद्ध शिक्षामा बढो महत्वपूर्ण, अचुक दार्शनिक पुर्णतया व्यवहारिक ज्ञानलाई उजागर गर्न भएका बुद्ध आफै पनि एक कुशल डाक्टर र मनाचिकित्सक हो भन्ने निष्कर्षमा पुग्यौं । उहाँको धर्म नै जीवन जिने कला हो । त्यसैले जस्तो बुद्ध भन्नुहुन्छ त्यस्तै हामी पनि कुनै पापकर्म नगरौं, कुशल कर्म गरौं र चित्त शुद्ध पारि स्वस्थ जीवन जीऔं ।

This is one of the prize winning articles from Essay Competition held in Nepal organized by Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) in collaboration with Buddhist Youth Group, Kathmandu, in 2012. Such Essay competition has been held since 2007 as a small step taken by us to encourage among the youth and to promote The Buddha's teaching in Nepal. LNBDS would like to express our gratitude to all our well wishers in making such noble task successful.

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

2556th Buddha Jayanti Celebration in UK (13th May 2012): Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) celebrated 2556th Buddha Jayanti in the afternoon of Sunday, 13th May 2012 at Harrow Borough Football Club. Buddhist monks from both Theravada and Mahayana traditions graced the occasion. The programme started with Buddha Puja, administration of five precepts (Panca Sila) and chanting according to Mahayana tradition.



Nepalese ambassador **His Excellency Dr. Suresh Chandra Chalise** emphasised the need for peace not only in Nepal but also in the world and said who is better than the Buddha himself for promotion of this. He hoped that peace will prevail in the world.

Visiting Buddhist monk of Mahayana tradition **Venerable Khempo Bagindasil** of Triyana Dharma Shangha, Kathmandu informed the audience that Nepalese are very proud that Buddha was born in Nepal but most Nepalese pay little attention to his teachings. His organisation is trying to rectify this situation by providing opportunity to learn Buddhism.

Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana, President of our society gave a talk on Panca Sila and founder president Mr. Amrit Ratna Sthapit spoke on 'How to be happy'. Venerable Bhikkhu Sujan led the audience to a brief guided meditation to calm the mind which every one appreciated.

Talks were followed by lively question and answer session. Unfortunately venerable monks were unable to answer all the questions raised because of the lack of time.

2012 is 'Visit Lumbini Year.' To emphasise this short film on Lumbini was shown. This was followed by blessing from both traditions, distribution of Paritrana thread and light refreshments.

To mark the occasion, the society's journal *LUMBINI* 2012 with one of the art work from art competition held last year in collaboration with Young Men's Buddhist

Association of Nepal was released and distributed as a Dharma Dana for the benefit of all.

Art work from the above competition on Mahasattva Raja also was displayed.

Mrs. Suchita Tuladhar conducted the celebration professionally.

Private view of Ancient treasurers of Tibetan Buddhism and contemporary art (May 2012): Dharma attended this exhibition at the invitation of Diamond Way Buddhism at 'The Spring', Vauxhall Walk, London on 29-5-2012. Venerable Lama Thaye welcomed the guests and explained the purpose of the exhibition.

LNBDS (UK) meeting (July 2012): Society's executive committee meeting was held at the residence of Dharma and Pramila on Sunday, 22-7-2012. As a part of Dharma discussion the importance of 'The Wheel of Life' was discussed.

Family Picnic (August 2012): The family picnic was organised to promote team building on 19 August 2012 at Ruislip Lido.

One day meditation and Dana offering for venerable monks at Kingsbury Vihara, London (September 2012): Our society has been organising this events since January 2012 regularly once every 2-3 months. We invited Venerable Bhikkhu Dhammasami, abbot of Oxford Buddha Vihara, Oxford, UK to lead the meditation on Sunday, **2-9-2012**. Every one appreciated his practical approach to Dhamma practice.



Afternoon session with relaxing meditation, talk and meditation on Joyous Feeling in Life was really good. His question and answer session was excellent. His answers to questions raised during the day with illustration from daily lives were not only excellent but some thing we can all use in our daily

life. So also his advice to reflect on at least one 'Joyous feeling' from time to time was very helpful. He reminded us most of us most of the time dwell on negative aspects of our life and become miserable. So if you can spend at least some time contemplating on at least one event in your life that make you feel happy it will act as an antidote to our usual habitual pattern of feeling sorry for yourself.

It was encouraging to learn that every one who attended meditation showed keen interest in continuing this type of Dhamma practice. Every one felt that we should invite



Dhammasami Bhante and other well known meditation teachers from time to time to lead the meditation.

We have been continuing this practice of one day meditation and Dana offering and will be continuing in 2013 as well. Please check our website: www.lumbini.org.uk for further information.

LNBDS meeting (October 2012): Society's executive committee meeting was held at Dinesh and Rasana Bajracharya's residence in Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Acchaya Bajracharya made an excellent power point presentation on 'The wheel of Life' as a follow on to earlier discussion in July 2012.

Essay Competition Prize giving ceremony, Nepal (November 2012): Prize giving ceremony of The Essay Competition of 2012 took place on 24 Nov 2012 at Jagat Sundar Bwonekuthi, Kathmandu, Nepal. Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) in collaboration with Yuba Baudha Samuha (Young Men's Buddhist Association) of Kathmandu has been holding Essay Competitions every other year on Buddhism since 2007. Accord-



ingly an essay competition on "Buddha's Teaching for Healthy Life" was held on 2012. People of different age groups from Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur took part in the competition. Prizes were given to Ms Sunita Manandhar, Mr. Juju Man Maharjan and Mr. Shubha Ratna Shakya who came first, second and third respectively. A consolation prize was given to Ms. Rasana Bajracharya. We hope to continue the essay competitions in future as well for the promotion of Buddha Dharma among the youth of Nepal.

One day meditation, Dana offering and LNBDS meeting (January 2013): Another one day meditation and Dana offering followed by a brief meeting of executive committee took place at Kingsbury Vihara on 27-1-2013.

Invitation to Advisory Meeting and Dinner by Kalyana Mitra BCSG (February 2013): Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana and Dharma attended this meeting at CHAK 89, 105 Bond Road, Mitcham Surrey CR4 3HG on 22nd February 2013 at the invitation of The Buddhist Chaplaincy Support Group - Kalyana Mitra.

The spirit of Kalyana Mitra is to offer friendship, kindness and compassion to those struggling with their lives or work, in one way or another

Triologue on Ethics, Belonging and Understanding (March, 2013): Dharma attended this unique triologue among Hindu, Buddhist and Christian scholars held at The Buddhist Society, London on 27th March 2013 at the invitation of Inter Religious Affairs to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lambeth Palace, London, SE1 7JU.

A similar meeting-a dialogue between Buddhists and Christians was held last year on 5th March 2012 at the same venue which was attended among others by Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Rowan Williams, Venerable Bhikkhu Seelawimala, the head of the London Buddhist Vihara, Ajahn Amaro, Abbot of the Amaravati Buddhist Monastery, Ven. Cheuh Ru Shih of London Fo Guang Temple and Prof Kemmyo Taro Sato of Three Wheels Temple, London.

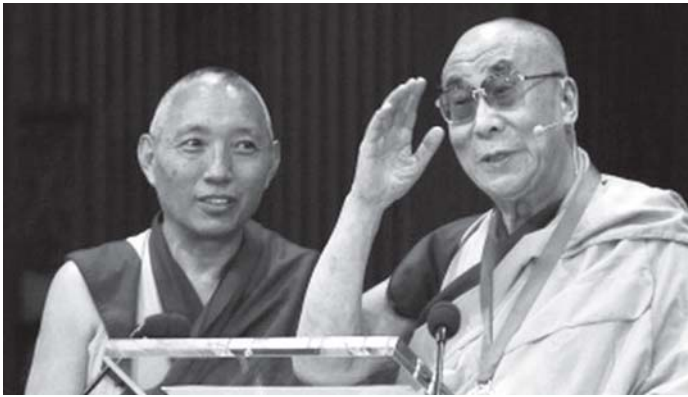
The purpose of these meetings is to encourage dialogue and understanding among various faith groups. Hence the future meetings will be organised by Inter Religious Affairs to the Archbishop of Canterbury in collaboration with the Buddhist Society.

One day meditation and Dana offering (March 2013): Another one day meditation and Dana offering was held on 17th March 2013 at Kingsbury Vihara, London.

LNBDS Meeting (April 2013): Society's executive committee meeting was held at Dinesh and Menika Sthapit's residence in Manor Park, London on 28th April 2013 to finalise the 2557th Buddha Jayanti programme.

News about Buddhism

Dalai Lama gives £1.1m Templeton Prize money to charity, UK (May 14, 2012):



A special service was held for the Dalai Lama at St Paul's Cathedral in London

The Dalai Lama has said he is giving away to charity £1.1m in prize money that has been awarded to him.

The Tibetan spiritual leader received the annual Templeton Prize in London for exceptional contributions to "affirming life's spiritual dimension".

About £900,000 is going to Save the Children in India, with £125,000 set aside for The Minds and Life Institute.

Money is also going towards a fund to educate Tibetan monks about science.

The 76-year-old was awarded the prize for encouraging "serious scientific investigative reviews of the power of compassion", and its potential to address world problems.

The John Templeton Foundation said he was chosen for exploring these issues - which are key themes of his teachings - with people beyond his own religious traditions.

A service was held at St Paul's Cathedral in London to mark the occasion.

Other people to have received the Templeton Prize include fellow Nobel laureate Mother Teresa, the first recipient of the prize in 1973.

Speaking at St Paul's Cathedral ahead of Monday's service, the Dalai Lama warned British people against feeling "hopeless" and "helpless" in the face of economic troubles. (BBC News 14 May 2012)

India: Rare Buddhist manuscript Lotus Sutra to be released (May 2012):

A rare Buddhist manuscript, discovered by cattle grazers in 1931, is set to be released in a book form in India on Thursday. The Lotus Sutra was found in Gilgit, now in Pakistan-administered Kashmir. The document, which dates back to 5th century, is perhaps the only Buddhist manuscript discovered in India. Believed to be one of the most revered Buddhist scriptures, it represents the

discourse delivered by Buddha towards the end of his life. The Gilgit Lotus Sutra is kept at the National Archives of India in the capital, Delhi in the section '**Important find**'

The book - a facsimile edition which is the exact replica of the manuscripts - will be launched by the National Archives jointly with the Institute of Oriental Philosophy and Soka Gakkai, Japan-based UN-recognised non-governmental organisation.

"This will help greatly to preserve the rare documents for posterity and make them available for future research," Prof Mushir-ul Hasan, Director General of National Archives of India, said.

The manuscripts were discovered in a wooden box in a circular chamber inside a Buddhist stupa by cattle grazers who brought the box to the Wazir of Gilgit.

The Wazir of Gilgit sent it to the Maharaja of Kashmir in Srinagar.

The document was studied by Hungarian-British archaeologist Sir Aurel Stein who announced the important find to the world.

Officials at the National Archives say the ancient manuscripts managed to survive for centuries because they were written on the bark of bhoj (birch) tree which does not decay and the freezing sub-zero temperatures of the Gilgit region. The Lotus Sutra is one of the most sacred scriptures of Mahayana Buddhism which is strongest in Tibet, China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, and Mongolia.

(BBC 3, May 2012 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-17935041>)

The First Constitutional Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies has approved the Agreement/Treaty signed by the Government with the Italian Buddhist Union, Italy (December 11, 2012):

This act ends the long process for the institutional recognition of Buddhism in Italy.

On this occasion the Executive Council of the UBI wants to single out the pivotal role played by Vincenzo Piga in promoting the Italian Buddhist Union, for his vision and his work, and all those who have worked to achieve this outstanding result

There are an estimated 160,000 Buddhists in Italy out of a population approaching 60M.

The first effect of the signing of the Treaty that comes to mind is the following:

"The law in which Italian taxpayers allocate 0.8% ('eight per thousand') of their income taxes to selected religions or the State."

For further details visit: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_of_religion_in_Italy

(Network of Buddhism, UK, <http://www.nbo.org.uk>)

Lumbini Year fails to connect Buddhist circuit, Nepal (December, 2012):

BUTWAL, Nepal — The Visit Lumbini Year (VLY-2012) has failed to connect well known Buddhist Circuits around Lumbini though the government had announced 2012 as a national campaign with an aim to attracting a million tourists and collecting the funds for the development of Lumbini.

Around a dozen of Buddhist circuits in Kapilvastu, Rupandehi, and Nawalparasi districts related to Buddha's life have fallen under shadow when the Lumbini Development Trust could not bring any program for the dissemination and development of these places. The VLY could not even touch the Tilaurakot of Kapilvastu, where Siddhartha Gautam was born and spent his childhood and early adult life until he was 29 years. Besides these, Devdaha, Ramgram, Ashok Pillar among others have been ignored.

Budget was not allocated for the implementation of VLY-2012 from the centre and district level programmes were not set up for the promotion of the Buddhists centres, said Madhav Acharya, Chief of Branch Office of the Lumbini Development Trust.

However, an entry to border of Nepal-India, Chakarchauraha, has been built at the initiative of District Development Committee, he added. (My Republica, Dec 11, 2012 courtesy: <http://www.buddhistchannel.tv/index.php?nepal>)

Death of Three Dharmadutta Monks remembered, UK (December 2012):

Samye Ling Buddhist Monastery, Amaravati Buddhist Monastery and other Buddhist Centres in the UK remembered in their prayers the untimely deaths of the Three Dharmadutta Buddhist monks from Thailand in the early hours of Christmas Eve 2012 in Scotland in a car crash.

Phramaha Pranam Thongphaiboon aged 44, abbot of Wat Buddharam in Aberdeen, Phramaha Chai Utamedhi, aged

34 and Pramaha Kringkai aged 34 who has been to the UK only for four days were being driven from Wat Buddhapadipa, London to Wat Buddharam in Aberdeen and were about ten miles from Edinburgh when the crash happened. The three monks were sitting in the back seat and were killed instantly. The front passenger suffered neck injuries but the driver managed to get out herself. May they attain Nirvana.

16th Annual General Meeting of Women's Buddhist Association of Nepal (January 2013):

Bhrikutimandapa, Kathmandu: 16th annual general meeting of Women's Buddhist Association of Nepal was held on 26th January 2013 under the chairmanship of Bhikkhu Dharmamurti Mahasthavira, general secretary of All Nepal Bhikkhu Mahasangha in Kathmandu. Sangha Nayaka Venerable Bhikkhu Ashwogosh Mahasthavira was the guest of honour.

Senior vice president of Dharmodaya Sabha and others attended the meeting. Successful Pariyati students from Paropkar High school were given prizes.

Mahaparitratan Chanting at Hanuman Dhokha, Kathmandu, Nepal (March 2, 2013):

Historic Mahaparitratan Chanting was inaugurated by then minister of Science and Technology Dr. Keshab Man Shakya on Saturday, 2 March, 2013 at Hanuman Dhokha, Kathmandu amidst the colourful surrounding. This was the first time in the history of Nepal that such a chanting had taken place.

This event was organised by All Nepal Buddhist Mahasangha and sponsored by Mahadev Makhani Club, Sri Sweta Bhairab Bhajan Khala and Women's Buddhist Association.

Sangha Nayak Venerable Bhikkhu Ashwogosh Mahasthabir administered the five precepts (*panca sila*) and Bhikkhu Ananda explained the purpose of the Paritratan chanting.

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, 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.

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

..... Tel:.....

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:

Paritta” in Pali, “*paritrana*” in Sanskrit and “*pirit*” (pronounced *pirith*) in Sinhala mean principally protection. Paritta suttas describe certain suttas or discourses delivered by the Buddha and regarded as affording protection in order to avert illness or danger, to ward off the influence of malignant beings, to obtain protection and deliverance from evil, and to promote health, prosperity, welfare, and well-being . This protection is to be obtained by reciting or listening to the *paritta suttas*. The practice of reciting or listening to the *paritta suttas* began very early in the history of Buddhism. (Source: *The Book of Protection Paritta translated from the original Pali, with introductory essay and explanatory notes by Piyadassi Thera*)

Ambassadors of Sri Lanka and Thailand along with large numbers of Buddhist monks, nuns and general public took part in the ceremony.

Government of Myanmar’s awards to Bhikkhu Jnanapurnik and Bhikkhuni Dr. Dhamma Bijaya (March 2013):

The government of Myanmar, ministry of religion has been awarding prominent Buddhist teachers for many years in recognition of their service to the mankind. This year **Bhikkhu Jnanapurnik Mahasthavira** president of All Nepal Bhikkhu Maha Sangha and abbot of Vishwa Shanti Vihara, Kathmandu and **Bhikkhuni Dr. Dhamma Bijaya**, abbess of **Kindol Vihara** were awarded with prestigious awards of *Aggamahapandita* and *Ganthakvachak Pandit* respectively on 26th March 2013.

Pariyatti Examination results published, Kathmandu, Nepal (March 2013):

Examination results of Pariyatti classes conducted by All Nepal Bhikkhu Maha Sangha were published in March

2013. All together 3474 students took part in this year’s examination. A resident of Sinchahiti, Patan, Miss Puspanjali Shakya from Shakya Singha Boudha Pariyatti and Adult Education came first. Presently she is working in Dhulikhel Hospital, Nepal as nurse educator.

Pariyatti Baoudha Dhamma cup Question and answer competition held, Nepal (April 2013):



With the aim of promoting Buddha’s teaching among the youth of Nepal a nation wide Pariyatti Dhamma cup question and answer competition was organised jointly by Amrit Dhamma Boudha Pariyatti School and Matatirtha Boudha Pariyatti Education from 6 – 10 April 2013. Previously similar competitions were organised by Sukhihotu Nepal for three years from the year 2005. All students of Pariyatti classes were eligible to take part in this competition.

Lumbini Pariyatti Kendra, Lumbini was declared the winner of the Pariyatti dhamma cup 2556 on 10th April 2013.

*Good are friends when need arises; good is contentment with just what one has;
good is merit when life is at an end, and good is the abandoning of all
suffering (through Arambantship).*

~ 331 Dhammapada

We wish all readers Happy 2557th Buddha Jayanti!



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