

# Buddhist Voice

Year 2, Issue 6

World's First International Buddhist E- Magazine from the Land of Buddha

## BUDDHISM

...the Philosophy, Practice and Challenges

### Buddhist Psychotherapy

Endangered Freedom

Death of a Missionary : **Mr. K Jamanadas**

“Freedom from war only,  
if we follow the path of Buddha”

- Mr. Narendra Modi,  
(Prime Minister of India)



## Buddha Jayanti (Purnima) and Its Political Significance

**World's First International  
Buddhist E-Magazine From  
The Land of Buddha**

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**HAPPINESS DOES NOT DEPEND  
ON WHAT YOU HAVE OR  
WHO YOU ARE.  
IT SOLELY RELIES ON  
WHAT YOU THINK.**

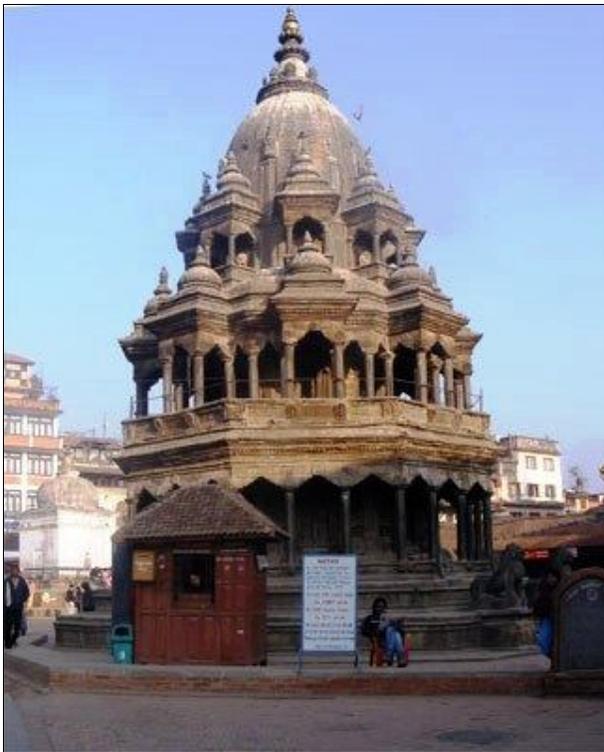
*~ Buddha*

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### Greetings on Buddha Purnima!

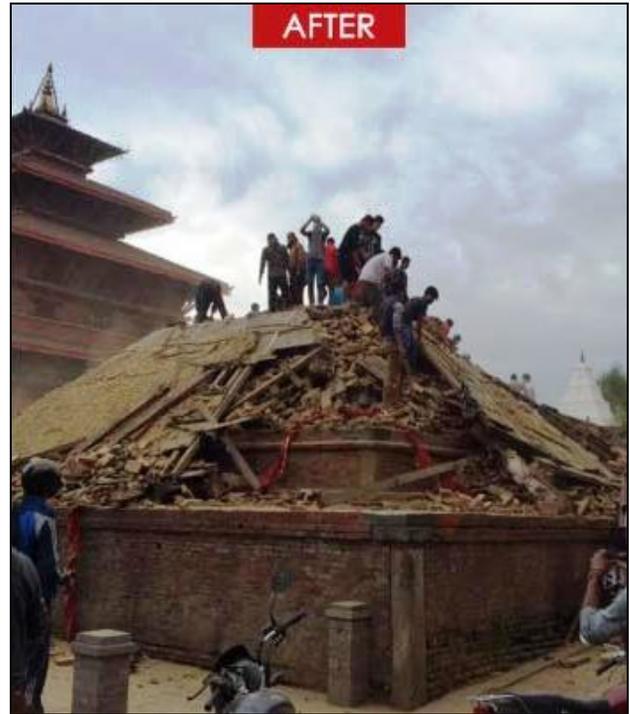
Buddha Purnima (Jayanti) is a Buddhist Festival that marks Gautam Buddha's Birth, Enlightenment and Death. It is also known as Vesak Day and celebrated all over the world by Buddhist. This year's celebrations all over the world had a shadow of recent earthquake took place on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2015 at Nepal. It was the most powerful disaster to strike Nepal since 1934. A strong earthquake of 7.80 to 8.30 on the Richter magnitude scale was followed by many powerful aftershocks. The earthquake hit Nepal in the area near Barpak, a mountain village between Capital Kathmandu and tourist town Pokhara. Nearly 8000 people died and many thousands are injured. Many historic buildings, temples and roads have been destroyed, resulting in loss of part of the history of Nepal. We are with Nepal in this sad moment and pay our tribute to all those who lost their lives during the earthquake and wish speedy recovery to those who are injured.



**Patan Durbar Square Before Earthquake**

India was very quick in reacting to the call from Nepal and could extend the help in shortest possible time. During the Buddha Purnima Diwas (day) celebration, Indian Prime Minister, Hon. Mr. Narendra Modi, while greeting everyone on the auspicious

occasion of Buddha Purnima, expressed that he feels sad because the country where Lord Buddha was born is going through a tough phase.



Main celebration of Buddha Purnima in India was at Bodh Gaya. Thousands of Buddhists from across the world, including the monks, celebrated Buddha Purnima at Bodh Gaya where Gautam Buddha attained Enlightenment. As per the reports received at the time of releasing this issue people lined up outside the Mahabodhi Temple for hours to offer their prayers. Mahabodhi temple is considered as a lifetime destination for millions of Buddhist across the world. According to the UNESCO, which gave it World Heritage Site status, *"The Mahabodhi Temple Complex is one of the four holy sites related to the life of the Lord Buddha, and particularly to the attainment of Enlightenment. The first temple was built by Emperor Asoka in the 3rd Century B.C., and the present temple dates from the 5th or 6th centuries. It is one of the earliest Buddhist temples built entirely in brick, still standing in India, from the late Gupta period"*.

Since 1590, Shaiva monks had taken care of the temple, which had been abandoned by Buddhists after the massacre of the Buddhist monks around A.D. 1192. In 1874, it was agreed, to the Burmese kings' proposal, to re-establish the building as a Buddhist Place of

Worship. But the Anglo-Burmese War and several foreign interventions did not allow completion of the project. In year 1890-92, Edwin Arnold, author of the Buddha Romance :*The Light of Asia*, appealed to the British-Indian Government to hand over the temple to the Buddhists, and even went to Japan to plead for diplomatic support to this demand. However, the court case was ultimately lost. Subsequently, the negotiations dragged on, involving Swami Vivekananda (1901) and Hindu Mahasabha leader Bhai Parmanand (1935) among others.

In 1922, the Indian National Congress had appointed a committee headed by Dr Rajendra Prasad to examine the issue related to the management of the Bodh Gaya Temple, who had recommended a joint management of the Temple by both the Hindus and the Buddhists as a compromise proposal which gives both Hindus and Buddhists the right to worship and an equal representation in the management committee.



After independence, in order to take care of management of Bodh Gaya Temple and its properties, the Legislature of the State of Bihar enacted the Bodh Gaya Temple Act (BGT Act), 1949, which came into force on July 6, 1949. It was just after the independence of India and Buddhism was not having significant presence in India due historical reasons. The BGT Act was amended by the Adaptation of Law Order, 1950, dated February 8, 1955. Since then, this Act has been governing the cultural, spiritual and financial affairs of one of the most sacred shrines of world without passing the Constitutional scrutiny of secularism, non-discrimination and the fundamental right of freedom of religion.

The most important governing section under BGT Act is Section 3, which empowers the State Government to constitute a nine-member temple management committee, consisting of a Chairman, and four Buddhists and four Hindus, including the Mahanth of Bodh Gaya. It imposes the condition that the Mahanth must be a Hindu. In the event that the Mahanth is unable to fulfill his duties, only another Hindu member can replace him. The act gives hereditary membership to Saivite Mahant and his successors in Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee. It is very painful to note that the Mahabodhi Temple has been under virtual control of Hindus for centuries now.

In July 2013, the Bihar Government has amended the Bodh Gaya Temple Act of 1949, allowing for a non-Hindu to head the temple committee. As per Section 3 (3) of the Act, the District Magistrate (DM) is the ex-officio chairman of the temple committee and has to be a Hindu. If the DM is a non-Hindu, the Act requires the government to nominate a Hindu as Chairman of the committee for the period during which the DM is a non-Hindu. As per the Bodh Gaya Temple (Amendment) Bill, 2013, it is provided now that a Non-Hindu can be a chairman of the committee on pretext that the DM is a representative of the government's secular credentials. Practically, it is very rare to have Buddhist DM in Bihar State and therefore Bodh Gaya Temple (Amendment) Bill, 2013, becomes just a political gimmick and does not make any change in the management of the temple. The Buddhist, over six decades, has been demanding to amend the Bodh Gaya Temple Act of 1949, allowing Buddhist to be majority on the committee so that the management of the temple can be with the Buddhist in similar lines with other shrines in the country which are managed and controlled by the members of the respective religion. A petition seeking transfer of exclusive rights to the Buddhist from the State Government has been admitted by Supreme Court in 2012, which is still pending. State Government of Bihar has always taken a stand that there is no need to alter it as long as the temple management is properly handled by the committee comprising four members each of Hindu and Buddhist communities.

Of Course the Buddhist from all over the world knows that the temple is not managed as it should have been and it is of utmost importance to have complete control with the Buddhist so that it can be managed in

Buddhist way and Hindu dominance is removed.

On July 7, 2013, Mahabodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya witnessed a series of low-intensity blasts and security of the temple became a matter of great concern to Buddhist all over the world. In case the management of the Temple is with Buddhist, more care can be taken to protect the Mahabodhi Temple by the Buddhist who has genuine concern for the temple.

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## Buddha Poornima Diwas Celebrations in Delhi



**The Chief Guest on the eve of the Buddha Poornima Diwas, celebrations was Mr. Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.**

## THE PROLOGUE

Buddhism originated in India and has been in existence for almost 2500 years, which later spread to various parts of the world. Today it is the 3rd largest religion in the world (post China's official declaration as Buddhist Country). In India, during the last six decades much of the talks on Buddhism, its philosophy and practice resurfaced after the conversion of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar to Buddhism on October 14, 1956. It is believed that he, along with 5,00,000 followers, converted to Buddhism on that day at Nagpur. The basic premises of the mass conversion was to avoid the caste system – which remains as the edifice of Hindu religious order – and also to have a new identity from that of the earlier one as untouchables. This was the first of a mass conversion in the history of religious conversions, particularly in the context of Buddhism.

The time and location of this mass event had much larger sense. The rains were over and the weather was neither hot nor cold. Nagpur is one of the central places in India. October 14, 1956 was the day of the great Hindu festival Dussara. According to Hindu mythology it is known as Vijaya Dashimi<sup>1</sup>, the triumph of Rama over Ravana, the ten-headed king of Lanka. Sangharakshita (1986:7) one of the contemporaries of Ambedkar, says that, 'so far the date and location was concerned, Ambedkar and his followers were concerned it was a different understanding with the day. It commemorated the Ashoka Vijay Dasami. Thus for Ambedkar and his followers, even more than for the Hindus, the festival of Dussara symbolised the victory of Buddhism over Brahmanism'.

Certainly, this particular episode has brought back the basic discussion on Buddhism as a theory and practice to the centre stage. While much of these theories and its pragmatic features almost evades from the Indian surface, one could say that Dr. Ambedkar's efforts were also aimed at the revival of this religion. Hence, it became pertinent for many sociologists, political thinkers and theologians to go back and search the real meaning and sense of Buddha and his ism.

<sup>1</sup> Vijaya Dashami means the victory tenth.

## THE HISTORICAL & PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEXT OF BUDDHA'S PERIOD

The present geography of northern India never formed a single sovereign state in the sixth century BCE. The land was divided into many states among which some were monarchical and some were non-monarchical<sup>2</sup>. The monarchical states were known as Janapada while the non-monarchical state had come to know as sangha or gana. Sakya is one of the non-monarchical states of which it is not much known about the political nature, whether it was a republic or an oligarchy. One thing could be clearly stated that there were many ruling families in the Sakya republic and they used to rule in turns. The head of the ruling family was known as Raja (Ambedkar 1992: 1).

While Kosambi (2008: 165) refers the Sakya state to be an oligarchic one, Ambedkar (1992: 1) has provided some indications that the Sakya state could be a republic. Not much is known beyond these two different positions.

There were many other faith order and religious formations that took place during the pre-Buddha period. It is vital to understand these contexts in order to understand the historical relevance of the Buddha's efforts. Ilaiah (2001: 26) notes that the non-availability of well-documented history of that time is a major problem. Vedic literature presents a social picture of the pre-sixth century BCE. However, since Vedic literature basically dealt with sacrificial hymns and superstitious symbols, it is very difficult to reconstruct the social and economic conditions of that society from that literature.

Kosambi (2008: 163) says that there were several very similar movements that arose in Magadh at about the same time. Of these, Jainism survived in India for the same reason that prevented its spread outside the country.

<sup>2</sup> Ambedkar (1992) gives a full list of monarchical states and non-monarchical states. The monarchical states were sixteen such as Anga, Magadha, Kasi, Kosala, Vriji, Malla, Chedi, Vatsa, Kuru, Panchala, Matsya, Saurasena, Asmaka. Avanti, Gandhara and Kambhoja. The non-monarchical states were the Sakyas of Kapilvatsu, the Mallas of Pava and Kushinara, the Lichhavis of Vaishali, the Videhas of Mithila, the Koliyas of Ramagam, the Bulis of Allakapa, the Kalingas of Resaputta, the Mauriyas of Pippalvana and the Bhaggas with their capital on Sumsumara Hill.

**Jainism espoused caste and rituals, however, Buddhism did not.** The Buddhist emperor Ashoka and his grandson Dasaratha bestowed cave retreats upon the Ajivikas. This sect was relatively unimportant beyond Magadha, though some of its followers had spread as far south as Kolar in the Kanarese-Telegu country by thirteenth century AD. The Ajivikas have long been extinct, even in name. There were others whose doctrines are likewise, known only through refutations in Buddhist and Jain documents, or in the equally hostile Brahminical Sarva-darsana-samgraha.

Kosambi (2008: 163) quotes A. Shakespeare to mention,

‘The opening sutta reports sixty-two such inhostile summary. The next sutta narrates how the parricide Ajatasatru reviewed eight major doctrines, finally to lend favourable ear to the Buddha. That kings of the day were deeply interested in religious matter and protected these sects is provided by the reported friendship of Bimbisara for both Jainism and the Buddha. Ajatasatru of Kasi was comparable to Janaka as patron of Upanishadic Brahmins’ (ibid. 163-4).

Pasenadi made friends with the Buddha, but also performed yajna sacrifices. It follows that the new beliefs were the expression of some urgent need, some change in the productive basis (Kosambi 2008: 164). He (ibid, 164) goes on to mention,

‘Alara Kalama was a Kosalan Kshatriya who taught seven steps of Samadhi (intense concentration and thought control), while Uddaka Ramaputta taught the eighth step. The Kasyapa purana preached that no action had any consequence of sin or merit’.

‘Makkhali Gosala founded the Ajavika sect on the belief that effect led to no fruit, that every being has to pass independently of his volition through 8400000 cycles of existence after which his sorrows would terminate automatically. Just as a ball of thread cast away unrolls till the end, so existence had to pass through these cycles. The sects of Purana and Gosala approximated to each other, and perhaps merged. The Ajivikas were popular with the southern Jains, while others had similarities with Samakhya philosophy’.

‘Even closer to the Jains was the agnosticism of Sanjaya Belatthiputta, a Brahmin who neither affirmed nor denied that good and evil deeds had good and evil fruit, or that there was (or was not) a world beyond. Sanjaya’s principal disciples, the Brahmins, Sariputta and Moggallan accepted the Buddha’s doctrine to become its leading apostles. The proto-materialist Ajita Kesakambala believed that there was nothing in charity, yajna, ritual,

good, good or evil deeds. The elements of which man is made of dissolves into the original components earth, water, radiance, air, when he dies. Nothing is left of his virtues soul or personality. Pakudha Kaccavana’s doctrine which resembles that of the later Vaisisikas, maintained the permanence of these four components plus three more: happiness, sorrow and life; none could kill, know, describe or influence these fundamentals in any way whatever; the sharp weapons which cut off a head merely passed through the interstices between these components. The far older Jain traditions went back to Parva Thrthamkara, a couple of centuries earlier, who had preached non-killing (ahimsa), truth, non-stealing, renunciation; to these Mahavira added sexual continence. Absolution could be obtained from sins committed in former births by these observances and by asceticism’ (Kosambi 2008: 164-5).

While Kosambi deals at length with the political context and the varied philosophical positions emerging out of it, it is essential to look at the socio-economic aspects too. Ilaiah (2001) mentions the methodological aspects of studying the pre-Buddhist society encompassing of understanding the construct of socio-economic conditions leading to the construct of power. Kosambi (2008: 163) while challenges the authenticity of the Jatakas to understand the pre-Buddhist history, Ilaiah (2001: 26) strongly banks of the Jatakas for the same.

Kosambi (2008: 163) says, ‘nevertheless though the tradition maybe old, the Jatakas cannot be utilised directly for a picture of social relations at the time of the Buddha. The reason is that the Jatakas were written down much later, in a trade’s environment – perhaps during the Satavahana period. They have, in addition, been influenced by the lost Ceylonese version of Buddhist stories from which the present text was again reduced to Pali’. Contrary to this, Ilaiah (2001: 26-7) considers the Jatakas as a more reliable source of information and could be applied to understand the socio-political situation of pre-Buddhist society. He considers Jatakas as, ‘the collection of Buddhist stories of the previous births of Buddha... these stories undoubtedly depict society of a period of time prior to that of Gautama Buddha’. Kosambi’s assumptions of the Jataka stories emerge from his understand of archaeological evidences. However many social scientists have opted to omit or ignore his position, although not completely, on multiple counts.

Ilaiah too has opted to omit this argument of validating or not validating the Jatakas as

per Kosambi, since he was more focussed on generating the argument based on the socio-economic and cultural contexts. However in his detailed analysis, he is in fact legitimising the Jatakas in multiple ways. In his study (2001: 26-48) carefully looks into the social conditions based on the Varnashrama and caste system (ibid: 27-33), the economic conditions based on the advancement of culture and civilisation (ibid: 33-37) and investigates the political conditions that led to the transfer of political power in ancient India which was also one of the pre-condition that led to the emergence of Buddhism (ibid: 37-40).

Ilaiah (2001: 28) categorically mentions the context of the emergence of Brahminism under varna system and also indicates the emergence of class distinction within it. He quotes Digha Nikaya,

‘within the Brahmin class some were “proper” that is, who corresponded closely to the ideal, sketched in the older scripture and others “worldly” that is those who did not conform to the strict rule of their class, and followed all sorts of occupations’. Slowly the ‘proper’ or puritan Brahmins pushed the improper or non-puritan worldly sections, which were engaged in other professions either into the Vaisya or the Sudra classes. This indicates that during that phase of history, Brahminism was becoming an ideology than a religious sect. The formation of a class is accompanied by the creation of its own ideological superstructure, though no doubt that of the Brahmins could not go far beyond a ritualistic framework (ibid: 28).

On the other hand Shudra were already turned into a slave mass, mostly providing ‘free labour’ and service to the three upper segments. This class was also disintegrating into different artisanal and professional groups. Jataka stories indicate the emergence of professional such as dancers, musicians, potters, smiths, ivory carvers, smiths and weavers, who moved from village to village and were slowly settling. There were also snake charmers and mongoose tamers making a living out of these professions. There were fishermen and basket makers engaged in these professions for their living (Ilaiah 2001: 32). The division of labour in agrarian economy was crystal clear which was at par with a sub-human slavery system. Further these lower castes had no right to have family life of their own.

The economic development during the period was also a key factor for the development of the caste and slavery system. Agriculture

began to slowly develop into tribal plot system where individual families marked out patches of land for cultivation. However the major land was under the supervision of the Kshatriya families. The rulers employed slaves to do actual work. The masters were supposed to give them a bare minimum of food and also shelter in the form of sheds. Sometimes they lived in groups at the master’s house (Ilaiah 2001: 32).

Untouchability was slowly introduced during this period by the Brahminical masters into the society. By establishing this specific practice the Brahminical school codified the laws of the various social groups and perfected its control over the Indian system. The Brahmins found it convenient to link the stigma of impurity to the profession of a given group. Of course, all Shudras were untouchables for Brahmins and Kshatriyas. This culture of untouchability reached its acme when it became applicable even among Shudra caste/ class groups (Ilaiah 2001: 32). Altogether the entire Indian subcontinent was faced with multiple complications.

#### **CONTROVERSY AROUND BUDDHA’S BIRTH**

There is not much unknown about the life of Buddha. The dates concerning the birth and death the Buddha are still contested and there looms a definite uncertainty with regards to this. In the early twentieth century, most of the historians date his lifetime between circa 563 BCE to 483 BCE (Cousins 1996). Some of the recent historians opine that he died between 486 and 483 BCE, while some others also refer it to be between 411 and 400 BCE (Narain 2003).

In an excavation in November 2013, a Buddhist shrine assumed around 550 BCE was discovered at Mayadevi temple, Lumbini. This would possibly push back the birth date of the Buddha. Nepalese authorities favour Buddha’s birth around 623 BCE (Vergano 2013). According to Hilaire (Undated: 12), he was born in the year 622 and died in 543 BCE at eighty years of age. The majority of historians till date has not accepted all these dates and chronologies now.

#### **THE MAKING OF THE BUDDHA**

Towards the end of the seventh century BCE, in the city of Kapilavastu, the capital of the same kingdom of the same name, situated in India, at the foot of the mountains in Nepal, the Buddha was born. His father Suddhodana was from Sakya tribe, a descendant of the great solar race of the Gauamides ruled over the country (Hilaire [Undated]: 31). Suddhodana was married to

Mahamaya. He was a wealthy person and a man of great military prowess. When he had shown his martial powers he was allowed to take a second wife and he chose Mahaprajapati, the elder sister of Mahamaya. Siddharth Gautama was born to Suddhodana and Mahamaya (Ambedkar 1992: 1-3). Whatever be the debate with the birth of the Buddha, there is no doubt that he was born in a grove of trees sacred to (the mother goddess) in Lumbini (Kosambi 2008: 153).

Siddharth was only seven days old when his mother died. He had a younger brother named Nanda, born to Suddhodana and Mahaprajapati. He had several cousins, Mahanama and Anuruddha, sons of his uncle Suklodan, Ananda, son of his uncle Amitodan, and Devadatta, son of his aunt Amita. Mahanama was older than Siddharth and Ananda was younger. Gautama grew up in their company (Ambedkar 1992: 8-9).

He began his studies at the age of eight under the same eight Brahmins who interpreted Mahamaya's dream. They had long ago predicted that her son would leave the kingdom and become a holy man and wander in beggared and in want. Siddharth quickly justified the high repute in which he was held. When he was sent to writing school, he displayed more talent than his masters and one of them Visvamitra under whose care he was more especially placed, soon declared that he had nothing more to teach him. In the midst of companions of his own age, the child took no part in their games; he seemed even then absorbed in higher thoughts. Often he remained aloof to meditate and one day when he had gone with his comrades to visit the agricultural village, he wandered away alone in the great wood, where he remained for many hours while no one knew what happened with him. (Hilaire [Undated]: 32-3).

Suddhodana sent for Sabbamitta of distinguished descent and of high lineage in the land of Uddikka, a philologist and grammarian, well read in the Vedas, Vedangas and Upanishads. Having poured out water of dedication from a golden vase, Suddhodana handed over the boy to his charge to be taught. He was his second teacher. Under him Gautama mastered all the philosophies prevalent till date (Ambedkar 1992: 9).

Suddhodana was aware of the prophesy about his son and tried to bind him to the throne by an early marriage. He was conscious of the early humanitarian traits in

the mind of Siddharth. They hoped to bind the young Siddharth to the throne by an early marriage. Siddharth was married to Yashodhara and she gave birth to a son who was named Rahula (Ambedkar 1992: 14).

In order to prevent the prophesy of Asita, Suddhodana thought to engross Siddharth in the pleasures and carnal joys of life. Therefore, Suddhodana built three beautifully furnished luxurious palaces for his son to live during the three seasons; summer, rains and winter. Each palace was surrounded by an extensive garden beautifully laid out with all kinds of trees and flowers. Based on the advise of the family priest Udayin, Suddhodana arranged for harem inmates – women to cajole, win and divert the mind of the young prince. Udayin was in-charge of diverting the mind of Siddharth. However all such efforts turned out utter failure. Udayin made many other efforts and each of those failed one after another (Ambedkar 1992: 15-22).

According to the rules in place of the Sakya Sangh, any male who has reached the age of twenty could be a member of the same. Siddharth was now twenty, which meant that it was time for him to be initiated into the Sangh. A meeting to enrol Siddharth as a full member of the Sangh was convened and as per the norms he was inducted into the Sangh. Rights and duties of the Sangh members were read out to Siddharth. Eight years down the lane as a member of the Sangh, there was a dispute between the servants of Sakyas and the Koliyas (one of the bordering states) on the first right over water from the river Rohini. There was a bloodbath in which both the sides suffered casualties. Both the sides wanted to have a war. Siddharth opposed this move strongly. In the later voting, his resolution not to have a war and to negotiate with the Koliyas could not find its feet. Even after that Siddharth consistently opposed the proposition of war. He was firm not to join it. The Senapati grew angry and instantly warned of punishing him along with his entire family. Siddharth appealed to the Sangh not to punish the family for none of their mistake. He took the responsibility of being guilty against the Sangh and asked them for a suitable punishment like death or exile and expressed willingness to stick to it without appealing before the king of Kosalas (Ambedkar, 1992: 22-8).

Siddharth assured the Sangh of turning a Parivrajaka (going into exile). He parted with

his parents and wife. While his parents were unhappy with his decision, his wife was rock solid and supported him in his future sojourn. The family remained in mourning and was under the impression that someone could persuade Siddharth to return home. Siddharth makes sure that everyone who wanted to accompany him to see him off went back to home including Kanthaka and Channa. Kanthaka returned home with a heavy heart. After having heard both Channa and Kanthaka, Suddhodana felt struck down by sorrow (Ambedkar 1992: 28-42).

Leaving Kapilavatsu, Siddharth decided to go to Rajagraha. On the way he accepted the hospitality of several Brahmins in succession, the young Siddharth reached Vaisali. He had now to prepare himself for the long conflict he had to undertake with the Brahminical doctrines. He was too modest to believe himself sufficiently prepared for the contest and wished to put himself on test. He sought out the Brahmin Alara Kalama, who was renowned as the most learned of professors. Kalama admired the learning of Siddharth and besought him to share with his work of teacher. Young Siddharth after going through this doctrine had a thought, 'this doctrine of Alara is not truly a deliverance. The practice of it will not completely free him from misery. In rendering perfect this doctrine, which consists in poverty and the subduing of the sense, I shall attain true freedom, but I must still make further researches' (Hilaire [Undated]: 45-6).

Rajagraha was the capital of the kingdom of Magadha. Siddharth selected a spot at the foot of the Pandava hill and put up a small hut made of leaves of trees for his sojourn. Rajagraha was a place of great philosophers and leaders of thoughts. King Bimbisara comes to meet with Siddharth at the Pandava hill. Both of them have a long discussion. Bimbisara offers him a part of his kingdom. Gautama remained like a firm mountain. His reply to all could be concluded in these words, 'I have been wounded by the strife of the world and I have come out longing to obtain peace; I would not accept any empire in this third heaven, for saving me from all the ills of the earth and how much less amongst men?' (Ambedkar 1992: 45-55).

Soon Siddharth learns from five Parivrajias that the war between the Koliyas and Sakyas had ended up in a peace pact after he left Kapilavatsu. This was a great victory for Gautama in his pursuit for peace making between the two sides. While the conflict

between the Koliya and Sakya clan came to an end, Buddha's mind still wandered to understand the fundamentals of conflicts that broke human relationship. He thought that how far the old established philosophies of Vedic Brahminism could provide a solution to the problem of conflict within human mind. The decision to examine and find solution from within was the biggest strength of the philosophy that he evolved for the permanent solution of the problems and crisis that the world faces. His search for this new light led him to the study of sankhya philosophy under Arada Kalam, getting himself trained in meditation according to the methods of Samadhi marga.

The turning of Gautama to Buddha came up with the realisation that the desire to have more and more accumulation of wealth and power is the basic reason for all pains and sorrows. This realisation came through his personal exposure in Kapilavatsu and later in other places wherever he sojourned. The Buddha was already in the making; right from the ten stages of Bodhisatta to Buddha.

#### **THE PHILOSOPHY OF BUDDHISM**

The Buddha was the most radical social revolutionary in ancient Indian history. Any study of Indian rational political philosophy should begin with him. Regretfully, political thinkers, academicians, parties have not included Buddha's philosophy in their thought process. The political philosophy of a given thinker, in a given period of time, must address the institutions that structure power relations at that point in time. In India for example, before the state became visible as a strong framework for society, the institution of caste originated, developed and began this structuring. The notions of justice, authority, rights and duties were understood and addressed within the domain of caste. Therefore, from ancient times, thinkers conceptualising and philosophising caste were also in their own lives divided and ruled by caste (Ilaiyah 2001: 11-2).

In ancient India thinkers had to engage with caste, either for or against it. Those who supported it like Kautilya and Manu constructed a notion of justice (dharma) to suit their political agenda. The state was assigned the dharmic duty to protect caste and varnashram dharma. Thus, the central theme of their speculation was meant to establish power relations in such a way that the lower caste Shudras and Dalits as well as women were completely subordinated to the hegemonic power of Brahminical forces

(Ilaiah 2001: 11).

While Kautilya and Manu were systemisers of post-Upanishadic speculation, Buddha, a forerunner of both, challenged the Upanishadic dhrama philosophy. He opposed the caste system and constructed a diametrically opposite notion of justice (dhamma) to speculate and assign a whole range of new tasks to the state and to society. He differentiated politics from religion, science from myth, reason from belief, class from caste, right from wrong. In this process he threw up a whole range of political philosophy that became the foundation of progressive philosophies that have emerged at different stages of Indian history (Ilaiah 2001: 12).

Kosambi notes (2008: 147) that the philosophy inscribed in Buddhism through the canon was mostly formed about the time of Ashoka, some part even later. Only the fact that society and its means of production changed slowly, that there was no special reason to invent the particular details cited, allows part of the canon to be used as evidence for conditions at the time of the death of Buddha.

Buddhism chose the middle path between full satisfaction of the senses and the ascetic's extreme self-mortification; the primitive fertility orgy and the medicine man's self torture for witchcraft were both unsuitable for the new society. The nucleus of Buddhism is the noble eightfold path; proper activity of the body (avoidance of taking life, of stealing, of fornication); proper speech (truthfulness, not carrying tales, no cursing or vituperation, avoidance of idle chatter); proper vision and proper thought (not hankering after the wealth of others, absence of hatred, belief in rebirth as fruit of good and evil deeds). To these must be added four more: rightful mode of gaining a livelihood, proper exertion of self-control and active cultivation of proper thoughts. This was the most active as well as the most social of creeds, without belief in a personal all-powerful God or ritual of any sort (Kosambi 2008: 165).

The Buddha never claimed to promulgate a new religion as such, but rather expounded what seemed to him as an underlying and fundamental order in all nature (i.e. society), which he had observed, and which seemed to him to transcend every particular set of group observance, which also enjoyed the same name dhamma. This was a scientific advance as it analysed in a rather elementary way the causes of social suffering and

showed the way to its negation. Understanding of the necessity led to freed from the necessity, to the extent that the analysis was accurate (Kosambi 2008: 165)

In the whole of Buddhism, from beginning to end, there is not a trace of the idea of God. He reached his completed doctrine after years of painful asceticism, while squatting on his heels in the blazing sun in a Licchavi field. The thirty-five year old Buddha abandoned parents, wife and child, along with the life of a Sakyan oligarch, and possibilities of a military or ministerial carrier at some upstart court, for years of mediation, study, penance, before developing his own system (Kosambi 2008: 165).

During meditation, Buddha attained enlightenment. This was a turning point where he found the reasons and measure to solve the problems related with pains and sorrows of human beings. He came up with certain principles, which emerged as the pillars of Buddhism. He went on to practice and preach these principles, which turned to be universal guidelines to all those followed Buddha and Buddhism. These principles could be broadly explained under the following categories.

### **1. The Four Noble Truths**

The Buddha's core teachings could be summarised under this category, which are mentioned below:-

- a. Suffering is common – Birth, sickness, old age, death, etc.
- b. Cause of suffering – ignorance and greed
- c. End of suffering – to cut off greed and ignorance
- d. Path to end sufferings – the Noble Eightfold Path

Hilaire (Undated: 96-7) gives a detailed narration on the four noble truths. First, the state of suffering, which assails man under some form or another, whatever maybe the condition of his birth. This unfortunately an undeniable fact, although it does not entail all the consequences that Buddhism ascribes to it but it is given an impregnable basis, sad but true, on which the whole building of the system reposes. Secondly the cause of sufferings attributes to the passion, to sinful lusts. The third truth is that the sorrow would cease only by attaining Nirvana, the supreme goal and reward of all human engagements. Finally the last truth leads to the mitigation of sorrow – the way that leads to Nirvana (Hilaire

Undated: 97).

## 2. The Noble Eightfold Path

The method by which one could end suffering is by adopting and following the Eightfold Noble Path, which is key to the philosophy of Buddhism. It is a set of conditions that every human being should fulfil in order to ensure his eternal deliverance. The practical proposition of the Buddha's teaching is never ending. It always leads to the central point of the wheel of change. The eight spokes on the wheels represent the eight different aspects of the Noble Eightfold path. They are :-

- a. **Right View**
- b. **Right Thought**
- c. **Right Speech**
- d. **Right Conduct**
- e. **Right Livelihood**
- f. **Right Effort**
- g. **Right Mindfulness**
- h. **Right Concentration**

Hilaire (Undated: 97) says, according to the Buddhist phraseology, the first one is right view, which means a balance between faith and orthodoxy. The second one indicates right judgement, which dispels all doubts and uncertainty. The third is right speech that is perfect truthfulness – meaning the strict avoidance of falsehood and such speech under whatever form. The fourth path is aimed towards right aims to pursue a pure and honest line of conduct. The fifth right mode of livelihood seeking for maintenance in an upright and sinless occupation – in other words by a religious profession. The sixth is the right application of the mind to all precepts of the law. The seventh indicates a right memory, which retains a clear and exact recollection of past actions. The eighth and the last is meditation which leads the intellect, that bring one very close to Nirvana.

## 3. The Panchashila

Following these Four Noble Truths require a certain number of precepts. There are five key precepts as per Buddhist doctrines. These are commonly known as the Panchashila. The Panchashila is based on the fundamental principles of good conduct and prohibits their followers to indulge in the misconduct and misbehaviour that could harm the society at large. Therefore, it is complete control

of body, brain and mind along with one's emotions, feelings and sensations. The following are the five precepts of Buddha:-

- a) **No killing** – meaning that one would have fully respect towards human life.
- b) **No stealing** – meaning that one would evolve respect for other's property.
- c) **No sexual misconduct** – meaning respect for one's pure nature and allowing the natural flow of human emotions.
- d) **No lying** – meaning no false speeches or falsehood under any given circumstances. Following the path of truth seeking and honesty.
- e) **No intoxication** – referring to keeping the body without any external influence that would spoil the functioning and also impact the mind. This also refers to the need for keeping a clear mind.

Truth, justice, non-stealing, non-encroaching upon the possession of others shows that a totally new concept of private as well as individual property has arisen. In the older traditions, the most valuable property within the tribe was cattle, which was held in common, assigned to clans or households by mutual consent, property of strangers was not recognised. The injunction against adultery denotes a rigid concept of family and the passing of group marriage. Without such a morality, taken for granted today, trade would have been impossible. The staunchest of the Buddha's lay followers were traders (Kosambi 2008: 167).

The ahimsa doctrine first expressed the basic fact that agriculture can support at least ten times the number of people per square mile than a pastoral economy in the same territory. It affected the caste, which lived by ritual killings, to the extent of being written prominently in the epic remains devoted entirely to the glory of yajnas, universal conquest, and a murderous civil war fought to mutually annihilate as per the vedic traditions of sacrifices (Kosambi 2008: 167).

On the other hand, this new ideology was equally against tribal exclusiveness. Because of good or evil karma, a living creature would be reborn; not into a special totem but into any species particularly suited to and measured by the action, from the vilest insect to a god. Karma was therefore a religious extension of an elementary concept of abstract value, independent of the individual, caste or tribe (Kosambi 2008: 167).

Finally, the new religions were at the beginning to challenge vedic Brahminism. The sramana monks and ascetics took no part in production, as their creeds forbade them to labour but neither they exercise the least control over production. They were forbidden ownership of houses, fields, cattle, the touch of gold or silver and trade. The monk lived on alms, which amounted to one doubtful meal a day of soiled food from any hands, or going hungry. Incidentally, the monk thereby broke the communal taboo retained by tribe and caste. (Kosambi 2008: 167-8).

### **THE PRACTICE OF BUDDHISM AND ITS CHALLENGES**

Since the beginning of the practice of Buddhism, the monks and other clergies constitute the key aspects of its institutional existence. Though in the discourse there were multitudes of schools and doctrinal differences that emerged, the fundamental life style remained the same to a certain extent. It is without any doubt that the schools of Mahayana and Hinayana differed in its fundamental attitudes and this impacts the tradition in a big manner. This also impacted the philosophical understanding, core values and life style of not only the monks and other clergies, but also the layman who had been a core part of Buddhist practices. The earlier presumptions on the theological, practical and optimal aspects amidst these schools seemed to have completed missed in the later stage due to the arisen differences.

After the first three councils, it was during the reign of Kaniska, the fourth Buddhist council was held. This council led to the major split in the doctrinal adoption of two lines. These two schools of Buddhist thought of which the northerners claimed the Great Vehicle (Mahayana), corresponding precisely to the activities and tastes, which might have been expected by nobles and satraps that continued to pile gifts upon ancient monastic foundations. This Mahayana school changed its language to Sanskrit, though not always the carefully developed Parunian type; Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit forms an idiom by itself. They drifted further away from the common people in their refinement of doctrine, research into science and higher abstract philosophy (Kosambi 2008: 261).

The conservative Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle; contemptuously so labelled by the versatile northerners) retained a primitive, austere Buddhism, with its simpler Pali language –

which was nearly as distant as Sanskrit from the common people's idioms in the south where these monks continue to preach the Law. The division was not sharp for several Hinayana monasteries that persisted in the north, while the Mahayana had, by the second century AD come as far south as the lower Krishna river in the person of the great scientist and theologian Nagarjuna (Kosambi 2008: 261-2).

However, in either case the monks constituted the key of either school. These monks differed from the Brahmin mode of vanaprastha, a retreat to the forest. The Brahmin need not be a hermit, as one or more wives, and a group of disciples would accompany him. Moreover, he lived in the forest by pasturing cattle, and food gathering. Not only the family but caste and tribe were also renounced by the monk upon ordination, which meant adoption into a quasi-tribal sangha. A monk's maximum possessions were three cloth garments (preferably stitched from rags), the alms bowl, needle and thread, a razor, perhaps a bottle of oil and if he were delicately made, a pair of sandals. He was enjoined to dwell in a rude shelter during the four months of the rainy season, but had to wander on foot the rest of the year to preach the doctrine to new ears. The Buddha himself followed the rule till his death at the age of eighty. His disciples went along new trade routes, even into the tribal wilderness, bearing the message of peace (Kosambi 2008: 168).

In the political field, the new religion was the exact parallel for the same economic reasons, of the move towards 'universal monarchy' the absolute despotism of one as against the endlessly varied tyranny of the many. Social friction was certainly reduced below that caused by the 'natural rights' of the four-caste class division, partly because of the new, highly respected class above and beyond all caste, partly because the monks successfully contested Brahmin pretensions to innate superiority (Kosambi 2008: 169).

### **REFLECTION & CONCLUDING NOTES**

In the current phase, these equations have drastically changed to unpredictable magnitude. While the Buddhist practice in Zen Buddhism is entirely different from those of Mahayana and Hinayana, Ambedkar's Navayana proposes a different model altogether. While converting to Buddhism, Ambedkar came up with a charter of 22-vows – which is perhaps the most carnal part of the methodology followed by him. The 22-

vows are more rational than the other schools of Buddhism under practice. However, it has not been much validated by the majority of Buddhist schools. While taking a close study of some of the practices, one could find that the rational component of Buddhism is neither practised by other schools nor even followed by the present day Navayana Buddhists.

The resurgence of the Navayana Buddhism was certainly a big success in India, particularly for the Dalits and other lower castes under the leadership of Ambedkar. I have a few observations in this regard. Incidentally, today anyone who is a Buddhist is automatically understood to be an untouchable. Further, the Dalits who have converted have also been indulged, like normal fellow citizens in India in habits of corruption, wrong methods of earning money, application of short-cuts and so on. The trendsetters amidst the ones who follow the Navayana Buddhism are the ones who are well educated, have reached a position in the society and attained certain economic upward mobility. The ideas placed by these people are to attain, achieve and accumulate as much as possible in all possible ways. In other words, it is a method to defeat others by applying all possible means and methods.

Governed by this idealism, the poor Dalits in the urban slums and rural areas also follow a similar path or are willing to follow the same path. Therefore, there is a two-way question. How is it that following of the Noble Eightfold Path, acceptance of the Four Noble Truths and holding oneself close to the Panchasheela possible within the framework of Buddhism and how does it easily adhere and fall into the trap of wrong, violent and corrupt practices? How is that all the neo-Buddhist live with the idea of accumulating more and more wealth to turn themselves into petit-bourgeoisie and if possible every single person among the neo-Buddhist want to become a capitalist, where Buddhism gives the premises of scientific method and standards of sharing, caring and cooperation through the precepts of Buddha (wisdom), Dhamma (insights) and Sangha (collective).

Today human society and cosmos as a whole has been faced with multiple types and levels of problems, which needs critical intervention. As a human being, the primary responsibility is to prevent the wounds on human society and nature as well as to enter

into a healing process of the already incurred wounds. Ideally, this would evolve a harmonious relationship between the human and nature. It is a method to get back to nature and human. It hardly has the notions of competition, rivalry, antagonism, uncaring and accumulation. It needs an altogether different attitude and vision, which can be found within the ambit of Buddhism. However, it is a difficult task much beyond the general perceptions of any school of Buddhism.

The philosophy of Buddhism is more visible when one reduces their needs, takes the minimum from the nature and cause no hurt to human beings as well as nature. Further, it also engages in a process of healing the wounds of human beings and nature. With the overwhelming loam of individual centric culture at present, where everything is evaluated through the prism of market and commodity, the premise of Buddhism is either drifting or shifting or getting completely lost. Maybe it is not Buddhism; or something else in the name of Buddhism. Today due to the multiple level forces and practices, seven Ambedkarite model is not left out of this individualistic approach.

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One of the most difficult skill of an individual is to live in the present moment. Every moment the human mind/brain/heart, call it whatever, lives either in past or in future. We are always involved in our good, bad, old memories and past incidents, or planning something for the future. The mind / heart / brain fails to live in this very moment of life.

Once I read a short story of a wealthy person who wandered a lot in search of Gautama The Buddha to seek the path of enlightenment. He finally met Buddha, when Buddha was on his way to seek alms along with his sangha. The moment he came across Gautama, he wanted the answer to his question, the path to enlightenment, Buddha requested the person to meet him in the evening and have a fruitful discussion in proper approach, and all his queries will be answered.

The person was adamant. He wanted the answers right there at that very moment. He said to the Buddha that it could be that the very next moment he might die, it could also happen that Buddha might die, it could also happen that his thirst to seek enlightenment might die, or it could also happen that the world shall be finished and he might die without being enlightened.

Buddha understood his thirst and answered him; when you walk you should do nothing else but walking, when you eat you should do nothing else but eating, when you sleep you should do nothing else but sleeping, when you listen you should do nothing else but listening, when you talk you should do nothing else but talking, in short in every action you do you should be 100% with the action and that action should not be diluted with something else added to it.

The person understood and thanked the Buddha. This was one of the paths given by Buddha towards enlightenment.

Today, in social context, we see people mixing a lot of things and putting up a mask. A mask to disguise people and do something hidden within. The actual intention and action do not synchronise.

A follower of Buddha should refrain from such behaviour to the best of his ability. What pains me is that today this has become a norm in many of the recent new followers of Buddhism. They have recently, a few years

ago, embraced Buddhism and have not yet been able to understand the core of it. Their will to promote Buddhism is very very strong. But the cost they pay is a huge cost, a cost that is indirectly paid by their own siblinghood, a siblinghood that has been poor, depressed and downtrodden.

They wish to promote the idea and thoughts of Buddha, hence they find new means and methods to do so, their intentions at this very moment are very noble and I appreciate them. However, their means are not rightmost.

Recently, I came across one individual who sells Buddhist greeting cards, he mentioned to me that he has taken a lot of pain and trouble to get Buddhist ideology in such cards, they have a message of the Buddha, a photo or a painting, and they are specially designed keeping in mind the Buddhist calendar. Well done! But what next? There is no audience. Greeting cards in total have lost their market and been replaced by the digital era's new methods. Also, greeting cards are just greeting cards, they are not religious cards. He was doing business on pretext of promoting Buddhism, which should not be the case. Either one does business or one promotes Buddhism. How can these two be clubbed together?

Another friend wanted to initiate a print magazine. He mentioned to me that it was because most mainstream magazines don't give ample space to "Our issues / needs / ideology" I agreed. I was very excited. He wanted it to be highly focused to "Our People" not only in terms of content but also in terms of readership, from where he was supposed to make the most money. Well why "His Own" people should pay him to make him rich and famous, when his core reason to start the magazine is not to make money but to help issues/content to reach people.

I have a group of friends who sing songs of Buddha and Ambedkar and also promote their ideology in their songs. The reason why I am happy with them is they don't do this for a living. They have their jobs and other sources of income and this is done just for a cause. They have done shows wherein they are not paid any amount. They Just sing without any commercial considerations.

Today there are numerous such people who have made their own people their market and

are earning money. A closed economy is not in interest of masses.

Making a business out of social cause (pay back to society) is wrong. When you do a business, just do business and not fake it as a social cause. When you do something for a social cause, just do it for a social cause and not try to earn money out of it. Money needed to sustain that social cause should be raised, from the cause itself, but not to the extent that it becomes living, a source of status, celebrity, political power etc.

These results may follow but they should not be the intentions. Starting to work on a social cause with these intentions has never led to fruits, neither in the intentions projected nor

in the intentions intended. A few exceptions may be there who have succeeded in the intended intended but failed in the intended projected.

Please try to look within, when you work on a social cause, what are your actual intentions and what intentions you portray to the people. Unmask yourself in your own interest.

A focused approach shall always be successful. Do only one thing at a moment. Live in present.

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### **Note to Contributors**

We welcome your research articles / essays / intimation for the events / news / book reviews / photos / cartoons / paintings relevant to our subject matter related to Buddhism and Buddhist people in the world. Contributors are requested to send their articles / essays in word format latest by 15 days before the full moon day of the month so that it can be published in the same month if space is available. The publishers reserve the right to publish the article within six months from the receipt of your articles / essays etc. Writers are requested to provide full details for correspondence, postal address, day-time phone numbers and email address. Our email address for correspondence is [indian.buddhistvoice@gmail.com](mailto:indian.buddhistvoice@gmail.com). All the material published in this e-magazine will be posted on <http://www.buddhistvoice.com> and will form the part of archives for future reference. We encourage you to send original research material with list of references used for preparation of the material for publication. We prefer the articles / essays / news within 1000 words.

#### **Discussions and Letters**

We encourage you to comment on the articles published in Buddhist Voice. Your comments / letters should be restricted to 300 words. If found suitable, we will publish your comments / letters in our e-magazine.



**Madhukar Arkade**

**15 April 1952 – 15 March 2015**

**Writer, Poet, Actor, Music Director, Film Producer, Painter.  
An Versatile Artist to his core.**

Renowned Psychologists like William James, Carl Jung, and Eric Fromm saw much of value in Buddhist philosophy and its positive impact on mental health. The modern mental health clinicians have found incomparable therapeutic efficacy in Buddhist psychotherapy. Buddhist psychotherapy has become a major complementary therapeutic strategy in mental health. Recent research has highlighted the importance of Buddhist psychotherapy in the treatment of depression, anxiety disorders, factitious disorders, addiction disorders, medically unexplained symptoms and various other psychological ailments. Buddhist psychology is increasingly informing psychotherapeutic practice in the western world (Kelly, 2008).

Psychotherapy is generally defined as a means a treatment of emotional, behavioral, personality disorders based primarily upon verbal or nonverbal communication. Buddhism is a method of mind training (Bullen, 1994). In the Buddhistic approach, situational, and psychological states are viewed more holistically (Hall & Lindzey, 1978). As Sherwood (2012) underlines Buddhist psychotherapy is based on the Buddhist model of the cause of mental suffering (the noble fourfold truths) and the notions of attachment, permanence and clinging to notions of self as the perpetrating forces of mental suffering.

Buddhist psychotherapy mainly deals with self-knowledge, thoughts, feelings and actions to minimize the psychological distress. Neale (2012) views Buddhist psychotherapy as a novel approach to the clinical practice of mental health and it combines aspects of conventional psychotherapy with traditional Buddhist psychological theory and practice. According to Neale (2012) the objective of Buddhist psychotherapy as just being mindful of one's momentary experience without judgment have failed to understand the crucial role that wisdom and action play in the process of healing and change.

Buddhism and Western Psychology often overlap in theory and in practice. Over the last century, experts have written on many commonalities between Buddhism and various branches of modern western psychology like phenomenological psychology, psychoanalytical psychotherapy,

humanistic psychology, cognitive psychology and existential psychology (Aich, 2013).

### **Mind and Mental Factors in Buddhism**

Buddhism is a religion that deeply discusses human mental process. Human mind has a special place on Buddhist philosophy and it has gone in depth to analyze the human mind. The Buddhist philosophy talks about the human mind and its pathological and non-pathological segments. In Abhidhamma – which is the higher teaching of the Buddha profoundly analyses human mental process. In Abhidhamma man is described as a psycho-physical being consisting of both mind and matter, and it gives a microscopic analysis of the human thinking process (Narada, 1956). In Abhidhamma the Buddha describes consciousness as a flowing stream intensely interconnected. These words were echoed by William James and in his Theory of Mind (1890) described that conscious mental life flows continuously like a stream. William James further illustrates the consciousness and writes thus - *“the transition between the thought of one object and the thought of another is no more a break in the thought than a joint in a bamboo is a break in the wood”* (James, 1988).

### **DSM and Buddhist Jathaka Stories**

The Buddhist Jathaka story book deeply touches the DSM (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*) based mental illnesses (Jayatunge, 2013). The Jathaka stories are a voluminous body of narratives that were compiled in the period, the 3rd Century B.C. to the 5th Century A.D. According to Professor Rhys Davids who conceptualized canonical Buddhist writings in terms of psychology in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Jathaka stories are one of the oldest fables. Most of the DSM based mental ailments are vividly described in the Jathaka stories. These Jathaka stories discuss profound psychological themes. For centuries these stories helped the people to view individuals with mental illnesses with a compassionate eye.

### **Empathy in Buddhist Psychotherapy**

Some contemporary psychologists identify empathy as an automated, involuntary, biologically-inbuilt reaction. Nonetheless empathy is a part of social and emotional development. Goleman (2000) characterizes empathy as one of the key components of

emotional intelligence. Rogers (1961) indicates that empathy and unconditional positive regard for the client create a growth promoting climate. Rogers thought that accurate empathy was one of the three core conditions of effective psychotherapy (Dowd & McCleery, 2007). Empathy strengthens the therapeutic alliance. Vyskocilova and Colleagues (2011) highlight that empathy helps to understand both emotional reactions and the meanings of experience for the client.

Buddhism is a practical philosophy that advocates providing empathic responses to humans as well as other living beings. In Buddhist psychotherapeutic approach empathy has a special status. Buddhist empathy is a state of mind that is filled with wisdom, tolerance and loving-kindness. According to Buddhism, compassion is an aspiration, a state of mind, wanting others to be free from suffering. It's not passive -- it's not empathy alone -- but rather an empathetic altruism that actively strives to free others from suffering (Dalai Lama, 2005).

### **Psychoanalytic Technique and Buddhist Psychotherapy**

In his famous lecture series at the Clark University in 1909 Sigmund Freud highlighted that psychoanalysis is a method of treating nervous patients medically. In classical psychoanalysis, unconscious defense mechanisms such as denial, splitting, and projection are identified as preventing psychic equilibrium and the genuine expression of self. In this method, defenses are made conscious, rendering them superfluous and health is achieved when one develops new, more appropriate ways of accessing validation, love, and connection (Neale, 2012). Safran (2012) describes psychoanalysis as a new way of looking at inner life.

The psychoanalytical components in Buddhism have been emphasized by many scholars like Martin Wicramasinghe D.Lit, Laurence W. Christensen etc. (Jayatunge, 2011). Some contemporary psychologists see parallels between the Zen Buddhism and psychoanalysis. The primacy of experiencing for both disciplines, particularly concerning the experiencing subject's momentary state of consciousness, forms a central theme for both Zen and psychoanalysis (Cooper 2001).

Eric Fromm suggests that Zen Buddhism has a prolific influence on theory and technique of psychoanalysis.

*"...[W]hat can be said with more certainty is that the knowledge of Zen, and a concern with it, can have a most fertile and clarifying influence on the theory and technique of psychoanalysis. Zen, different as it is in its method from psychoanalysis, can sharpen the focus, throw new light on the nature of insight, and heighten the sense of what it is to see, what it is to be creative, what it is to overcome the affective contaminations and false intellectualizations which are the necessary results of experience based on the subject-object split"* (Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis Eric Fromm p. 140).

The psychoanalytical module in Buddhism is very much evident. Buddhism provides psychological methods of analyzing human experience and inquiring into the potential and hidden capacities of the human mind. According to Buddhism mind precedes its objects. They are mind-governed and mind-made. The verse 37 of the Dhammapada explains the dynamics of human mind thus

*The mind is capable of travelling vast distances – up or down, north or south, east or west – in any direction. It can travel to the past or the future.*

### **Existential - Therapy and Buddhist Psychotherapy**

Buddhism and Existential-humanistic psychology share common grounds with realm of representation, realm of action and reality of self. Both psychotherapies are based on mindful awareness and directed towards growth potential. Both consider the human condition as a whole.

Existential Psychotherapy is aimed to enhance self knowledge and search for meaning. Frankl (1946) believed that man's main concern is not to seek pleasure or to avoid pain, but rather to search meaning in his life. Search for meaning help individuals to construct connections, find wisdom and experience healthy transformation when dealing with trauma. Individuals surviving a traumatic event often demonstrate a need to create meaning around events to make sense and regain coherence to their lives, thereby reestablishing the biographical continuity which had been lost (Abernathy, 2008). Search for meaning is parallel to Buddhist philosophy. Buddhist psychotherapy encourages clients to search for meaning hence allowing posttraumatic positive growth. Tedeschi & Calhoun (1996) define Posttraumatic growth (PTG) as positive

psychological change experienced as the result of the struggle with highly challenging life circumstances. Buddha's Eight Fold Path encourages to search for meaning of life, death, and suffering.

### **CBT and Buddhist Approach**

In general terms Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a psychotherapeutic approach that addresses dysfunctional emotions, maladaptive behaviors and cognitive processes and contents through a number of goal-oriented, explicit systematic procedures. According to the Buddhist point of view, suffering is not caused by external, traumatic events, but by qualities of mind which shape our perceptions and responses to events. These same words were repeated by the Psychologist Albert Ellis in 1953 when he introduced his action oriented therapeutic approach – Rational Emotive Therapy. According to Ellis not the event that causes psychological distress but the belief held by the client. He further argues that one's emotional distress is actually caused by one's catastrophic thinking in appraising stressful events. Rational-emotive behavior therapy (REBT) argues that irrational beliefs result in maladaptive emotions leading to reduced well-being (Spörrle et al, 2010).

The Buddha often used Insight-oriented dialog and Socratic Method to give awareness to his disciples. Insight-oriented dialog is similar to the methodology of cognitive therapies. In Buddhist Psychotherapy therapist and patient work together to identify dysfunctional mental patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving that stem from a patient's identification with their traumatic narrative. Once these specific issues are recognized, patients are prepared to use the healing relationship as an emotional corrective and employ meditation techniques to counter their particular cognitive-affective-behavioral habits (Neale, 2012).

### **Buddhist Meditation**

Meditation is a synchronized mind body technique and conscious effort that helps transforming the mind. In Buddhism meditation is regarded as the second category of the Eight-Fold Path. Buddhist meditation interventions have been integrated in to contemporary psychotherapy. Research based evidence supports the therapeutic use of meditation in a range of psychological ailments.

Oshita and colleagues (2013) indicate positive outcome following Buddhistic meditation and the subjects benefited from meditation and showed significant increases in their sense of coherence, self-esteem and purpose in life. A number of studies have shown that meditation activates and deactivates certain brain regions. Brewer and colleagues (2011) report that deactivation of posterior cingulate cortex (which has a prominent role in pain and episodic memory retrieval) during a number of different types of meditation. Tsai and Edds (2013) found increased alpha and theta activities in electroencephalography (EEG) during various forms of meditation.

The concept of mindfulness is based on Vipassana, a Buddhist meditation technique (Delgado-Pastor et al., 2013). Mindfulness has been described as a practice of learning to focus attention on moment-by moment experience with an attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance (Marchand, 2012). As Tusaie & Edds (2009) indicate the practice of mindfulness is increasingly being integrated into Western clinical practice within the context of psychotherapy and stress management.

Numerous research concur the therapeutic effects of mindfulness meditation. Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy is strongly recommended as an adjunctive treatment for unipolar depression and anxiety (Marchand, 2012). de Zoysa (2013) reports successful use of Buddhist mindfulness practice in the treatment of a case of obsessive compulsive disorder. Smith and colleagues (2008) reveal mindfulness-based stress reduction helps in reducing somatic pain. Winbush, Gross and Kreitzer (2007) highlight that increased practice of mindfulness techniques is associated with improved sleep in mindfulness-based stress reduction research participants. According to the research finding by Cahn and Colleagues (2013) suggest that Vipassana meditation evokes a brain state of enhanced perceptual clarity and decreased automated reactivity.

Methha Meditation or Loving-kindness Meditation is widely used in Buddhist Psychotherapy. Loving - kindness meditation is a practice designed to enhance feelings of kindness and compassion for self and others. Loving-kindness meditation appeared safe and acceptable and was associated with reduced symptoms of PTSD and Depression (Kearney et al 2013). According to Hofmann, Grossman and Hinton

(2011) neuro-imaging studies suggest that loving-kindness meditation (LKM) and Compassion Meditation (CM) may enhance activation of brain areas that are involved in emotional processing and empathy. They hypothesize that loving kindness meditation and compassion meditation may provide potentially useful strategies for targeting a variety of different psychological problems that involve interpersonal processes, such as depression, social anxiety, marital conflict, anger, and coping with the strains of long-term care giving.

Anapanasati meditation or 'mindfulness of breathing' is the first subject of meditation expounded by the Buddha in the Maha-Satipatthana Sutta, the Great Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness (Ariyadhamma, 1994). Mindful breathing increases oxygen intake and has stress-reducing impact. Feldman, Greeson and Seniville (2010) point out that mindful breathing may help to reduce reactivity to repetitive thoughts.

### Conclusion

Buddhist concepts have profound influence on Western Psychotherapy. Buddhist Psychotherapy is based on the Buddhist model of the cause of mental suffering and deals with self-knowledge, thoughts, feelings and actions to minimize the psychological distress. Buddhist Psychotherapy has a positive impact on mental health and it can be used to treat a wide range of mental illnesses.

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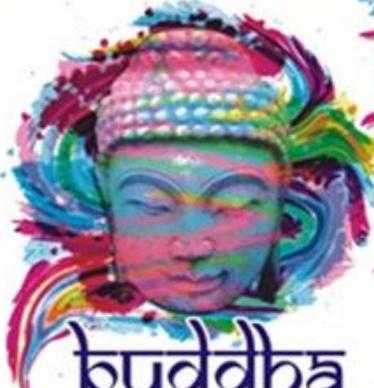
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**Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia** -- While in Thailand the majority of its population are adherents of the Theravada Buddhist 'tradition', in Indonesia, Buddhism is a minority religion with the Theravada Buddhist 'tradition' embraced by the majority of Buddhists. However, the development of the Theravada tradition in Indonesia is much influenced by its counterparts in Thailand.

Consisting only of men, the Theravada Buddhist ecclesiastical authorities in both Thailand and Indonesia do not recognize bhikkhunis (a fully ordained female monastic). In this context, the aspiration and determination of Buddhist women to be female monastics in the Theravada Buddhist tradition in the 21st century reflect their role as agents of change to bring renewal to their faith.

Their convictions and actions affirm women's spirituality and gender inclusiveness as envisioned by the Buddha in establishing the female monastic order. They are able to survive and even grow due to their ability to attract their own supporters and followers. Furthermore, those who aspired to be female monastic are able to travel outside of their countries to be ordained due to the transnational dimension of Buddhism. These Buddhist women thus reclaim their identities and roles from only being supporters of Buddhism to that of spiritual leaders, religious innovators and ritual specialists. The Theravada Buddhist 'tradition' is a changing one as the female adherents stake their claim to their rightful heritage as female

monastic. Similarly, the identity and roles of Buddhist women are fluid.

### **Changing Identity of Buddhist Women**

In Thailand, Ven. Dhammananda, and in Indonesia, Ven. Santini both reference the Buddhist scripture for a usable past 1 to posit that where bhikkhunis are not in existence, it is possible for them to be ordained by bhikkhus (fully ordained male monastic) only (Lai 2014, 3, 6). They thus became religious innovators by leading the way in becoming ordained and legitimized, deeds based upon the 'original', 'pure' message of the Buddha. Detractors of bhikkhuni ordination claim that the proper procedure and requirement for bhikkhuni ordination is to require both bhikkhus and bhikkhunis (dual ordination) as the 'original', 'pure' message of the Buddha (Lai 2011, 147-48). Ven. Dhammananda received her full ordination as a bhikkhuni in 2003 in Sri Lanka and Ven. Santini with three other Indonesian Buddhist women did so in 2000 in Taiwan. Their ordination subsequently paved the way for other Thai and Indonesian Buddhist women to be ordained and to defend their ordination as being based on the Buddha's 'tradition'. However, none of them are recognized by the religious authorities of the Theravada 'tradition' in their home countries. Despite this, Ven. Dhammananda and Ven. Santini introduced samaneri (novice female monastic) temporary ordination which is based upon the samanera (novice male monastic) temporary ordinations in their respective countries.

Nevertheless, both Ven. Dhammananda, and Ven. Santini are able to attract their own followers and are invited for ritual blessings of new homes and donated lands for schools. When they go for pindapata (almsround), a ritual symbolic of being a monastic in the Theravada tradition, laypeople give them dana (offerings of food, drink and flowers) indicating their support. Significantly, monastic — in this case, bhikkhunis — who practice well and purify their minds as they observe 311 precepts are sources of merits. Conventionally, women are perceived as only receivers of merits or as supporters of Buddhism (Terwiel 1994, 243). However, as female monastic they become “conveyor of blessings” (Harvey 1990, 241) in their role as ritual specialists whether it is going for pindapata (almsround) or in ceremonies conveying blessings for healing, protection or to ward off evil spirits. In ordaining and practicing well, women become synonymous with sources of merit and conveyers of blessings and symbolically represent sacred and positive power (Lai 2011, 203-17), a role conventionally identified with male monastic.

Both bhikkhunis are regarded as a spiritual leaders in their respective countries with their own followers and are well known for being socially engaged Buddhists. The female monastic at Songdhammakalyani Temple where Ven Dhammananda is abbess have worked with female prison inmates since 2011 (Dhammananda 2013, 16-20) and run an environmentally friendly project. Ven. Dhammananda has contributed to training and strengthening the Indian Bhikkhuni Sangha (Yasodhara 2013, 8-11) as well as facilitating the ordination of male monastic from Sankissa, India in Thailand (Thakur 2013, 5-7) and became involved in interfaith dialogue with Muslims in southern Thailand.

Furthermore, Ven. Santini and her followers are known for their work with the disadvantaged that transcends religious lines whether it is donating basic necessities such as rice, oil and sugar or monetary contribution in the aftermath of a fire to rebuild homes of the villagers nearby Wisma Kusalayani, Lembang where she is abbess or coming to the aid of the victims of the recent Mt Kelud eruption who are predominantly Muslims (Lai 2014, 5-6). The Wisma Kusalayani is run in an environmentally sustainable manner with a policy of reduce, reuse and recycle whether it is with regards

to water or other household products and a separation of organic and non-organic waste.

### **Buddhist Women As Agents of Change**

The research conducted indicates that these Buddhist women are agents of change as they bring renewal to their faith by ordaining as female monastic in spite of the obstacles encountered. They refer to the Buddhist scripture to reclaim their heritage as female monastic. As educated persons knowledgeable about Buddhist history and teachings of their tradition, they are able to withstand the opposition encountered and defend their ordination. As female monastic, they become more visible publicly, be it as a spiritual leader, a ritual specialist or a religious innovator. Both Ven. Santini and Ven. Dhammananda are religious innovators as they tap local culture and sentiments by



introducing the samaneri temporary ordination in their respective countries, an innovation based on the existing samanera temporary ordination.

### **... And Growing Support**

Support for the female monastic is growing as they find a niche in attending to the needs of female Buddhists due to the prohibition of close contact between a monastic and the opposite sex and in meeting the needs of the more disadvantaged sections of society. The socially engaged Buddhist practice that transcends religious lines bodes well for the future and can serve as a stepping stone towards religious harmony. In both the Thai

and Indonesian case, networking at the international dimension enables them to be ordained. Furthermore, international networking offers a pathway for female monastic to share their experiences and ideas on a broader stage as well as learning from each other.

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## Notes:

1. See Gross (2009, 20) for the importance of an accurate and usable past to empower women in the present and see Tambiah (1976, 528) and Muecke (2004, 232-34) for the deployment of an usable past in the context of religion in Thailand. ←
2. I would like to acknowledge the support of the API Fellow grant for the data collected in Indonesia and for some of the materials and information gathered in Thailand.

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## Foundation Stone Laying of Dr Ambedkar International Centre



There is no need to tell that Indians love festivals. They spend half of the year in festivity and religious rites. They also give great importance to celebration of birth and death anniversaries of great people. The celebration of Krishnajanmastami, Ramanavami and Hanuman Jayanti are testimony to these mental attitudes of the Hindus. It will surprise for the non-Indians that Indians do not celebrate the Buddha Jayanti in the same spirit though the Indians are fond of such celebrations. Of all the great people born in India, the status of the Buddha is the highest. The followers of the Buddha regard Him as the great Sun who illuminated this world. Christians, though envious they are of the Buddha, compare Buddha with the Light of Asia. Hindus also regard the Buddha as the tenth incarnation of Vishnu. This famous person was buried in the memories and Indians do not remember him at all. There are many people who will know the name of Bajirao's harlot, Mastani. But I guess that the numbers of people who are familiar with the name of the Buddha are far less than this. This famous person has been forgotten to this extent is a matter of great shame and surprise. In this situation, it is a matter of joy that in Bengal and other provinces the celebration of the Buddha Jayanti has been started. This is very praiseworthy. But we think that this event has a great political significance. Therefore in order to make people aware of this significance we have planned to introduce people the importance of the life and mission of the Buddha.

Before 2500 years, King Suddhodhan of Sakya clan was ruling Kapilvastu. The name of the family was Gautama. Kapilvastu was located in what is now called United Province. It was located between Shravasti and Ayodhya and 50 miles east of Faizabad. Suddhodhan had two wives. One of them was Mayadevi and another was Prajapati. After marriage of Suddhodhan and Mayadevi, Mayadevi conceived after some days. According to social tradition, the first delivery was to be carried out in her maternal home and therefore her father Subuddha sent a message to his son in law for sending Mayadevi. Therefore Mayadevi and her sister Prajapati left for her maternal house with retinue. On the way they halted in Lumbini forest. On that place Mayadevi underwent labour of birth of a child and she gave birth

to a boy in that forest. After giving birth to the boy, Mayadevi died in a very short time. The boy was nurtured by Mayadevi's sister Prajapati. The boy was named as Siddhartha. Later on he became famous as the Gautama Buddha.

As he was born in warrior class and ruling family, he was provided education according to the situation of the time. He was not only trained in warfare but also was he well versed in the Vedas. But Siddhartha was more inclined to the life of solitude. He was not specially interested in enjoying the royal life. Due to fear that Siddhartha might become a Sanyasin, Suddhodhan decided to marry Siddhartha to confine him to family life. And therefore he married Siddhartha to daughter of Dandapani whose name in the father's house was Gopi and in law's home was Yashodhara. Yashodhara gave a birth to a boy whose name was Rahula. In order to provide luxuries to his son, Suddhodhan built three palaces. He made all the arrangements so that Siddhartha could live in comfort.

One day Gautama decided to wander in the village and to see the social situation and therefore he left palace in his chariot. Entering the city, he saw four events. First of all he saw an old man, suffering, hopeless, toothless, wrinkled faced, white haired, back bent like an arrow, with a stick in hand moving with ant's speed whispering something inaudible and with all the body shaking uncontrollably. When he moved forward, he was another scene. A man suffering from heavy fever, enervated and fainted, homeless he was lying on the road. On the further journey, he saw a dead body carried in procession by his friends and relatives. The fourth scene he saw was that of a Sanyasin with a pleasant and peaceful mind carrying a begging bowl. These four scenes had a terrific impact on the Gautama's mind. By seeing this, Gautama understood that there is a suffering in the world. Human life is uncertain and mortal. If it were otherwise, man would have not suffered diseases, never became old and would have never died!!!. And the fourth sight of a Sanyasin is the aim of the life-Gautama thought. And as this world is full of suffering, full of diseases, full of deaths therefore there is no meaning to this worldly life, Gautama further thought. Caught in this thought web he returned home. Returning home he came

to know that Yashodhara delivered a boy. This is another binding chain-Gautama thought. But his resolve of renunciation was firm in his mind. And therefore he conveyed this resolve to his father. Not to say that Siddhodhan tried to refrain Siddhartha from not taking this course of action by a lot of persuasion and providing various entertaining things. But Gautama was firm on his resolution. But he thought that he should not go without informing his father. In order to express his mind, he went to the palace to and told his father, "Please do not stop me. Let your kingdom and your property be with you, O, Father! I do not want anything." Next day Siddhodhan called upon his ministers and conveyed the situation. Hearing this, the ministers replied, "We will keep an eye on him and we will not let him go." It was not easy to renounce home in this situation. Therefore, he deferred his renunciation that day. The next mid night he got up, told his charioteer Chhanna, and said, "I have to go, please go and bring my horse." Chhanna refused to take this order and requested Gautama not to go. But seeing Gautama's strong will, he brought Kanthaka, the horse. After a last glance at his wife and son, Siddhartha left Kapilvastu on Kanthaka's back.

After renunciation, Gautama became disciple of two teachers to understand why there is suffering in the world. First of all he became disciple of Alara Kalam and after that that of Uddaka Ramaputta. In this way, he spent seven years in their company. But their teaching could not satisfy Gautama. Therefore he left them and went to Uruvela in the Magadha Kingdom (Uruvela is now known as Bodhgaya). Like him there were five persons who renounced family and now were taking refuge in the forest. With them the Buddha started austerity to the severe extent. After leading hard ascetic life for six years, his body became thin and he had no energy to walk. One day when he was returning from the Falgu river after bath, he fainted on the way. There was a cowman residing nearby. His elder daughter Sujata saw Siddhartha fainted and offered him rice milk from her house. After coming to conscious, Gautama realized that ascetic life will not lead to the solution to the problem of suffering in the world. As Gautama took food, his five companions thought that the he is a fallen man now from the path and therefore they deserted him and in that Buddhagaya, Buddha remained solitary.

One night beneath one tree while seated Gautama realized the cause of suffering in the world and also way to end the suffering in the world. He saw that human beings are treading two paths. One is that of sensual pleasures and other is that of self mortification. Buddha saw that these two paths are wrongs and they will not end suffering in this world. Due to this vision, Gautama became enlightened and was therefore called the "enlightened one". After that he became famous as the Buddha and that tree became famous as a Bodhi tree all over the world.

Due to result of this new vision, Buddha left the path of self-mortification. He did not enter in the family life again. But he returned back to the society and for the welfare of the society started preaching the Dhamma. He himself went across the length and breadth of India and taught his Dhamma to all without distinction. He taught the Dhamma for 40 years. At the end, when he was propagating his Dhamma he arrived at Pava. In that village lived an ironsmith known as Chuda. Chuda invited Buddha for a lunch and Buddha could not digest the food and fell sick. In that sickness, the Buddha went to Kusinara village and died.

The Buddha was born in 563 BC as a prince and died in 483 BC as a founder of religion.

### **Mission of the Buddha**

What are the fundamental teachings of the Buddha Dhamma? What did he accomplish? Without understanding these questions, importance of the Buddha cannot be understood. However the detailed explanation is not possible due to constraint of space; but it is not true that the Buddha's mission can not be explained in the brief. During the time of the Buddha, the Brahmanism has three pillars. The first pillar was infallibility of the Vedas, sacrifice was the second and the third pillar was Chaturvarna dharma. Whatever is written in the Vedas is infallible whether it is intellectually valid or not. Buddha was against accepting that the Vedas are infallible and he considered it as the first fetter. Instead of believing in the infallibility of the Vedas, Buddha's position was that the truth has to be accepted on intellectual basis. In the Brahmanism, the stress was on attaining the God. Without making sacrifices the God cannot be attained and therefore sacrifice was the considered as the religion. Even before the Brahmans used to sacrifice human beings and the flesh of the human being was to be consumed by the organizers. This norm

did not exist at the time of the Buddha however the system of animal sacrifice existed. **Whoever has read the literature of that period will know that the ancestors of the Brahmans killed innumerable cows in sacrifices.** One is forced to think after reading this literature that the number of cows killed by the Brahmans far outnumber the cows killed by the Muslims. The Buddha attacked the belief of infallibility of the Vedas and in the same force attacked the custom of sacrifices. One can say that Buddha's position in this regard was revolutionary. Buddha advocated that there is no connection between the religion and attainment of God. The purpose of the religion was related to human's behaviour with another human. This was the Buddha's position. Buddha thought that attainment of the god is not concern of the religion. On one hand, strive for attainment of god and on another treat the neighbors with the contempt is the antithesis of the religion. Buddha attacked the third pillar of Brahmanism that is Chaturvarna Dharma vehemently. The essence of Brahmanism lies in the Dharma of Chaturvarna. The concept of caste based on superiority or inferiority of the birth is responsible for this belief in Chaturvarna Dharma. In Brahmanism the lowered caste and the women do not have a respectable position, they do not have means of livelihood and they do not own anything and therefore these two classes are not free. This is their condition when they are alive. This same condition will follow them after their death. In Brahmanism there is no freedom even after death for these two classes. According to tenets of Brahmanism only those who can become Sanyasin can be free and these two classes (lowered castes and women) were denied right to become a Sanyasin. Buddha did not accept this unjust position. Buddha was opposed to the concept that even if the Brahman is fallen he is worthy of worship by the three worlds. Buddha wanted to remove this wrong propaganda. Buddha was the greatest proponent of the social equality and like of him cannot be found elsewhere. There was no freedom for the women in Brahmanism, Buddha opened the gates of freedom for them. Even for the lowered caste, the Buddha accepted them as monks in his Sangha. Buddha not only advocated the principle of social equality, but also made efforts to make it possible. He not only made the women and lowered caste the members of his order, but also made other lowered castes the members of his order.

The above explanation is not sufficient; however, it is useful for readers to understand what the Buddha did for this country. The principles of Buddhism were beneficial and very bright and it led to huge spread of Buddha Dhamma all over the world. In south, it spread to Sri Lanka and many islands in the Pacific Ocean. In the east, it went to Burma, Assam, Thailand, China and Japan. In the north, it went to Tibet, Nepal and Turkstan. Buddha Dhamma also went to Afghanistan. No religion spread to this extent. There is another specialty of the Buddha Dhamma. Not every religion spread due to its values and ideas. Islam grew on the basis of wars. Christianity grew on the basis of law. Only Buddhism spread with its values and ideas. It did not need the support of sword or force of law. Buddha never forced people to follow his teaching. People forced themselves to follow his teachings.

Despite of this, the question arises as to why Indians forgot the Buddha Dhamma. Buddhism is still living outside India. There are many Buddhists in the world. However in India Buddhism was killed. Due to space constraint, the detailed reasons cannot be enumerated. However, it is important to discuss in brief. The time cannot forget the Buddha. Buddha is eternal, deathless and timeless. How will his name vanish from this world? China did not forget the Buddha. Japan did not. Burma did not. Only India forgot the Buddha. It is clear that time is not responsible for this, but the enemies of the Buddha are responsible for this situation. Brahmans were the enemies of the Buddha. It is not true that Brahmans were only opposed to the Buddha. They also opposed Mahavir, the founder of Jainism. But the way the Buddha attacked Brahmanism, Mahavir did not. The reason is that the Buddha was the greatest opponent of Chaturvarna Dharma, Mahavir was not. Brahmans were not very concerned about the Buddha's attack on the Vedas or sacrifices. But they had a different view on Chaturvarna Dharma. If Chaturvarna is eradicated, Brahmanism will be eradicated. Brahmans knew this. In fact, they considered Chaturvarna dharma as their breath. The attack on the Chaturvarna dharma was therefore attack on the Brahmans. One can say that the Buddha's movement was the anti-Brahman movement of that time and the Buddha was the leader of that movement. The Brahmans conspired to destroy the Buddha and His Dhamma by all means. They left their vedic gods and

made warrior gods as their own gods. Brahmans started worship Rama, the way the Brahmans worship Jedhe (Jedhe was a leader of non Brahman movement) these days. With one god they could not satisfy, they started supporting another warrior class god, Krishna. **Now that Brahmans started worshipping our gods, thinking thus, the non Brahmans thought that there is no point in continuing fight against them. Thus the Buddha's movement against Brahmans was weakened.** The Brahmans started advocating that though the Buddha is yours, we accept him as the reincarnation of Vishnu. People became happy. Now that the Brahmans accept the Buddha as the tenth reincarnation of Vishnu the matter is over. Now what is the point of fighting? On one hand the Brahmans tried to pacify the non Brahmans and on the other hand they started imitating the Buddha Dhamma and started misguiding people that Brahmanism and Buddhism are the same. The Buddhists built the Vihars. Vihars are the signs of burning fire of Buddhism for the Buddhists. The Brahmans started constructing their temples next to the Buddhist Vihars. With this outer change people forgot making differentiation between Buddhism and Brahmanism. And at the end when the Muslims invaded India and destroyed the Vihars, the monks fled to other countries in their absence the Brahmans started destroying Buddhism and started addressing the Buddhist caves as Pandav leni and broke the images of the Buddha and converted them into phallus of Shiva.

It is understandable that the Brahmans opposed Buddhism as it was their main opponent. How would they entertain a thought of celebrating Buddha Jayanti? However the non Brahmans should not have forgotten the great man who tried to liberate them from the clutches of blind faith, who tried to liberate them from the slavery of magical spells, who tried to bring them on humanistic way, who tried to make them humans, who gave up his royal life for their welfare, who fought for their self respect, who made this country glorious by his deeds. It is great pity that the non Brahmans forgot such a great man. They should have kept the Buddha's memory alive.

We do not want to tell that this is the only reason the Indians should celebrate the Buddha Jayanti. Our reason is different than the above stated reasons and it is a very solid

reason. The educated class amongst the Hindus desire to establish democracy in politics based on Hindu culture and for the Hindus. They are striving for this. We pity on the intellect of such people. The people who want to establish democracy in this country might be stupid or cunning. But this stupidity and cunningness can not last long. Faced with experiences, it will be clear that **Brahmanism and democracy are two opposite things. For the establishment of democracy there is a need to eradicate Chaturvarna Dharma. In order to kill the germs of Chaturvarna there is no medicine powerful than the Buddha Dhamma.** Therefore, we think that in order to purify lifeblood of politics all Hindus should celebrate Buddha Jayanti. It is important and in their benefit.

Politically India is like a sick man. When we remember India, we imagine a picture of a man whose belly is big, his hands and feet reduced to mere bones, face paled, eyes deeply buried in the socket and a skeleton. He has no power to run the democracy but he has a great desire to run it. In order to satisfy this desire, power is important. This power cannot be achieved without medicine. But what use is the medicine! Everyone knows that in order to take medicine, it is necessary to clear the stomach. All the impure elements should be removed. Without this, the medicine will have no effect. The stomach of Hindus is not clean. The filth of Brahmanism is stored in their stomach for a long time. The doctor who can wash this filth will help in establishing democracy in India. That doctor undoubtedly is the Buddha. The lifeblood of Hindus cannot be purified by celebrating Rama Jayanti, or Krishna Jayanti or Gandhi Jayanti. Rama, Krishna and Gandhi are the worshippers of the Brahmanism. They are useless in the establishment of democracy. The Buddha can only help in establishing democracy. Therefore, it is important to remember the Buddha and take his medicine for cleansing the political and social lifeblood of the Hindus. Therefore, we think that people should chant this greatest mantra for establishment of democracy:

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**When Words Are  
Both True And  
Kind, They Can  
Change  
The World!**

Triumphant and victorious in the 16<sup>th</sup> general elections for the Lok Sabha, the Hindu nationalists are attributing their victory as rejection of secularism by the Indian electorate. The election results have unwittingly started sort of questioning on the desirability of using the term secularism. It is true that secularism has become a much abused term in India. Regional parties like the Samajwadi Party in UP and the RJD in Bihar and Indian National Congress misused the slogan of secularism to cover up their mis-governance and corruption. The slogan of secularism was used opportunistically to garner votes of the minority communities. They would not have any policies or programmes to ensure equal opportunities or ensuring fair stake of the minorities in the development. To them, secularism meant ensuring security of minorities, and they failed miserably in this too. There were more than hundred riots in UP during the Samajwadi Party regime and likewise under the Congress in other states. Security and intelligence forces victimized and even staged murders and incarcerated scores of innocent Muslim youth in the name of counter-terrorism operations in what has come to be called the cow belt of India and Hyderabad. They failed to check the growth of communal forces and did not counter the stigmatization of the minorities.

Opportunistic secularism of the so-called secular parties meant joining hands with fundamentalist forces within the minority community in the hope that they would be able to deliver at the polling booths. The fundamentalist tendencies within the minority communities are as marginal as the cultural nationalists are within the majority community. As well organized and vocal as in the majority. They deftly use media coverage to create their larger than life image on issues like preventing Salman Rushdie from visiting India or problematizing Taslima Nasreen's visa extension or getting various books, films, websites and artistic expressions banned just like the Hindu nationalists do so (i.e. use media coverage) demolishing Babri Masjid and opposing freedom of expression on the ground that it offends their faith.

The Hindu Nationalist Organizations (HNOs) used this opportunistic secularism to their advantage and sought to blame and stigmatize the minorities as a whole as if they were responsible. The HNOs, well organized as they are, mobilized and instilled dislike not

only against the political parties subscribing to opportunist secularism, but also against the members of the minority communities. The HNOs laid the primary blame for opportunistic secularism not on the "secular" political parties but on the very existence of the minorities within the nation, particularly those having their holylands outside. They primarily problematize Islam and Christianity and their presumed separatist mindset rather than opportunistic secularism. HNOs propound that so long as Muslims and Christians exist, there will be parties to benefit politically from opportunistic secularism. The solution desired by the HNO ideologues therefore is either expel the minorities if possible from the nation, or subdue them to second class citizenship without any rights. It is the opportunistic secularism that needs to be problematized rather than locating the problem within any community as all communities are diverse and have diverse traditions, customs and cultures. Cultures are being made and unmade through social, economic and political changes and each individual responds dynamically to the changes occurring.

### Religious ethos in India

The HNOs have problematized secularism itself as a western notion to be discarded. However, one must accept that there is no universally accepted understanding of secularism. While in France, USSR and Turkey, secularism has meant uneasy tension between church and the state. In India the dominant discourse of secularism was more inclusive in its formulation of "*sarva dharma sambhav*", where state indulges all religions equally and citizens are at liberty to practice, profess and propagate their religion. State is often called upon to impartially mediate during conflicts between different religious communities.

HNOs are also Hindu supremacists though they pay lip service to the Hindu ethos of tolerance. They want privileged status for Hinduism (or rather re-invented and selective traditions of upper caste elite). Golwalkar, the revered ideologue of HNOs, wanted that minorities should dream of nothing but the glory of *Hindu rashtra* and Hindu traditions and symbols. Even in the Manifesto of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for the 2014 elections, it calls for return to "civilizational consciousness" that was lost during the

colonial rule. The democratic notion of liberty, equality, human dignity and citizenship sound western ideas, alien to Hindu culture.

Usage of the term 'Hinduism' in the sense of religion was popularized during the colonial rule. Hindu community signified people living on the southern and eastern banks of river Sindhu and was inclusive of followers of diverse religious practices. Religious consciousness at popular level evolved from the resistance to the dominant upper castes, particularly the Brahmins, and their monopoly over notions of purity and pollution and structuring society into rigid hierarchies. The popular resistance was led by many bhakti saints, including Tulsidas, Kabir, Ravidas, Mirabai, Gyaneshwar, Namdeo, Tukaram, Chokha Mela, the Warkari Sampradaya, Bahinabai, Guru Nanak, Basवेशwara, Narayan Guru, the Bauls in the Bengal, Shankar Deva in Assam etc.

The popular religious consciousness of the subalterns developed due to popular compositions of the bhakti saints who opposed the notions of purity and pollution and believed in equality of all before one God. God was not a power who punished the deviants with lower status during cycles of re-births or to be feared. God was benign compassionate power to whom one should devote to and derive ecstasy from devotion. Devotion to God meant loving all God's creation – all humans practicing diverse traditions of worship, from any ethnic community, belonging to any culture. Loving and being non-violent towards even animals and nature. Muslim bhakti poet Salbeg, credited with numerous compositions in praise of Lord Jagannath and as tradition has it, Lord Jagannath's rath could not be moved on its annual *yatra* till Salbeg could join the *yatra*. Raskhan similarly composed on Lord Krishna. Sufi Islam was as inclusive and contributed to the religious consciousness of Muslims as well as Hindu devotees who were attracted to their shrines. Sufi Islam, like the bhakti saints, emphasizes on love of compassionate and merciful God believing in inclusive traditions of worship. Sufis like Mazhar Jan-e-Janaan believed that Vedas too were revealed book of Allah and Nizamuddin Auliya would have recitation of *bhajans* in praise of Ram and Krishna every morning.

The priestly class of Brahmins and Ulemas aligned with the state seeking state patronage, blessed coronation ceremonies of

the rulers advised them on "right path" of *shari'at* (Muslim Law) and rules of worship, purity and pollution. The popular religious consciousness of the subalterns on the other hand was inclusive, for them all paths reached God and respected all religions as true. Religion was more of a path that taught them to be humble, human, and to live harmoniously in society with others and with nature. The priestly class catered to the elite and were supremacist in their notions of religion. Subalterns constituted roughly about 90% of the people. Therefore, the dominant ethos in India were not defining religious boundaries, recruiting followers exclusively and then governing on the basis of religion of majority or minority. Subalterns had ambivalent attitude towards religion. To be Hindu did not exclude them from being a Muslim or a Christian. Drawing from this ambivalent attitude, the formulation of *sarva dharma sambhava* aptly described the nature of secularism desirable to Indian people. Indian experience of secularism did not come from struggle between the church and the state where one or the other had to be a victor and other vanquished.

The HNOs mislead the people of India when they claim that secularism is a Nehruvian concept borrowed from the west and in the same breath claim Hinduism to be a tolerant religion. The religion of subaltern Hindus is more than tolerant – it respects all faiths and for them truth is multi-dimensional. However, HNOs stoke intolerance. Diverse as it is, the HNOs realize that Hindus can be united only if they can be made to disapprove of something in other religious communities and therefore are involved in the project of stigmatizing the minorities.

### **Reclaiming Secularism**

Opportunistic secularism vies for Muslim votes and in the process gives in to the demands of fundamentalists and communalists within the minority community. That strengthens and empowers the tiny but well organized fundamentalists and enables them to impose their hegemony over the community and redefine the community on their terms. The fundamentalist sections appear to be much larger than their actual strength and often the only voice within the minority community. It enables them to victimize weaker and marginalized sections, particularly women within the community, and weed out dissenting/alternative opinions. Strengthening of hegemony of the

fundamentalists within the minority community strengthens HNOs. The neutral political and cultural space is greatly reduced.

The HNOs also reduce the liberal space within the society; pose a threat to the religio-cultural diversity and pluralism and polarize attitudes and behaviour of people on issues of identities, forcing people to behave in conformity with their identity. Without constructing a totalitarian state, the HNOs cannot eliminate the liberal space where citizens are not reduced to their religio-cultural identities but are dynamic beings, agents of change, re-ordering their cultural spaces and their lives. The HNOs desire to construct cultural-totalitarian state to defend non-negotiable symbols of patriarchal upper-caste hierarchical social order.

### **Secularism and State:**

We must then reject opportunistic secularism as well as “India First” as not being secular in any sense. Secularism is outcome of process of secularisation wherein institutions are liberated from the hold of the Church and institutionalized clergy. For example, knowledge and education was liberated from the Brahmins, Madrasas and Church. For secularism, we have to have a secular state and a secular society. A secular state is one which is not based on religious scriptures, theological dogmas or doctrines nor sponsored by church or any religious institution. Though the state does not profess any religion, it gives freedom to its citizen to profess practice and propagate any religion of their choice or even atheism. HNOs want the state to privilege Hindu religion and religious symbols.

A secular state is not concerned with the religion which its citizens profess and practice. In framing public policies and laws, in executive actions, public employment, education, and in dispensing justice, religion of the citizen is irrelevant. Public policies are based only on welfare of the citizens. Secular state treats all its citizens even handedly irrespective of the religion they profess. The HNOs and the fundamentalist/communalists within minorities on the other hand seek to negotiate with the state space for their community. The fundamentalists derive their power from state recognizing them as representatives of their respective communities, which they are not. A secular state is not even supposed to recognize any community. Any such recognition triggers off competitive communalism/fundamentalism

and competition for more communal rights and greater share in power and state resources. Citizens are then pushed into tighter hold of the community as their rights and entitlements are essentially based on membership of community. Communal membership is more or less birth based. The state is reduced to protecting and promoting the hegemony of the fundamentalist / communal elite.

A secular state should rather protect the rights and liberties of the dissenters, however weak or minority within the group they may be. However, a secular state may frame policies for a group to address any adversity arising merely from group membership. Right to dissent, disagreement and dialogue is sine qua non of progress in knowledge and our understanding of truth. Similarly, dialogue of cultures, faith and religion is essential for cultural advancement.

### **Secularism and Society**

Secular state does not emerge from the vacuum. Though Indian Constitution is secular, state in India strengthens cultural entrepreneurs. As the majority in the scenario are more influential and powerful, they corner larger share in social space and national resources. For example, Supreme Court Judgment stating Hindutva is way of life, or anti-cow slaughter and anti-conversion legislations euphemistically named as Freedom of Religion Acts or non-protection of minorities by security forces during riots and targeting minorities in police encounters.

State action should not be based on group identity. The cultural entrepreneurs of the minority community demand more protected and secure space for themselves and tighter hold over the community resistance to any change in their Personal Laws, tighter control over women from the community.

Nothing is so sacred that it should be put beyond the rational scrutiny. But that does not mean disrespecting the sentiments of the believers. One has to be not only rational, but also reasonable person when we share political space with members belonging to different communities. Religion is often conceived as a threat to secularisation. It is not religion but cultural entrepreneurs misusing religion and religious institutions that oppose secularisation and liberties. Religion and egalitarian values associated with religion can be a resource in secularisation of the society as the Bhakti and Sufi understanding of religion are.

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## Dr. Ambedkar's Ideology: Religion, Nationalism and Indian Constitution

Ram Puniyani

In order to gain larger legitimacy, RSS has been making claims of sorts. One of that which was made few months back was that Gandhi was impressed by functioning of RSS. Now on the heels of that comes another distortion that Ambedkar believed in Sangh ideology (Feb 15, 2015). This was stated by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Sarsanghchalak, Mohan Bhagwat. Recently on the occasion of Ambedkar's 124<sup>th</sup> anniversary many programs were held by RSS combine giving a pro-Hindutva tilt to presentation of Ambedkar.

There cannot be bigger contrasts between the ideology of Ambedkar and RSS. Ambedkar was for Indian Nationalism, Secularism and social justice while the RSS ideology is based on two major pillars. One is the Brahmanic interpretation of Hinduism and second is the concept of Hindu nationalism, Hindu Rashtra.

Where does Ambedkar stand as for as ideology of Hinduism is concerned? He called Hinduism as Brahminic theology. We also understand that Brahmanism has been the dominant tendency within Hinduism. He realized that this prevalent version of Hinduism is essentially a caste system, which is the biggest tormentor of untouchables-dalits. Initially he tried to break the shackles of caste system from within the fold of Hinduism. He led the Chavadar Talab movement (right to access to public drinking water for dalits), Kalaram Mandir agitation (movement for access to temples). He also went on to burn Manu Smriti, the holy Brahmanic- Hindu text saying that it is a symbol of caste and gender hierarchy. His critique of Hinduism, Brahminism was scathing and in due course he came to the conclusion that he will give up Hinduism. In his book 'Riddles of Hinduism' published by Govt. of Maharashtra, India (1987) he elaborates his understanding about Hinduism i.e. its Brahmanical version. Introducing his book he writes, "The book is an exposition of the beliefs propounded by what might be called Brahminic theology...I want to make people aware that Hindu

religion is not Sanatan (eternal)...the second purpose of the book is to draw the attention of Hindu masses to the devices of Brahmins and make them think for themselves how they have been deceived and misguided by Brahmins" (from Introduction of the book).

Ambedkar had started moving away from Hinduism in 1935 itself when he had publicly declared that he was not going to die as a Hindu. In 1936, he had attended the Sikh Missionary Conference as he had toyed for some time with the idea of embracing Sikhism. In 1936, Ambedkar also wrote and published *Annihilation of Caste*, his undelivered presidential address to the *Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal* Conference at Lahore. At the end of his written address, Ambedkar reiterated his resolve to give up Hinduism. (<http://bihar.humanists.net/B.R.Ambedkar.htm>)

He said "I have decided for myself. My conversion is sure as anything. My conversion is not for any material gain. There is nothing which I cannot achieve by remaining an Untouchable. My conversion is purely out of my spiritual attitude. The Hindu religion does not appeal to my conscience. It does not appeal to my self-respect. However, your conversion will be both for material as well as for spiritual gains. Some persons mock and laugh at the idea of conversion for material gain. I do not feel hesitant in calling such persons stupid."

([http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/txt\\_ambedkar\\_salvation.html](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/txt_ambedkar_salvation.html))

Lord Ram is the major symbol of Cultural Nationalism propounded by RSS. Let's see what Ambedkar has to say about Lord Ram, "The life of Sita simply did not count. What counted was his own personal name and fame. He, of course, does not take the manly course of stopping this gossip, which as a king he could do and which as husband who was convinced of his wife's innocence he was bound to it." And further, "For 12 years the boys lived in forest in Ashram of Valmiki not far from Ayodhya where Rama continued to rule. Never once in those 12 years this model

Husband and living father cared to inquire what has happened to Sita whether she was alive or dead, ...Sita preferred to die rather than return to Ram who had behaved no better than a brute." The signals to the Dalits in Hindutva cultural Nationalism are more than glaringly obvious as the Lord demonstrates in his own life, "...he was a Shudra named Shambuk who was practicing Tapasya with a view to going to heaven in his own earthly person and without so much as a warning, expostulation or the like addressed to him, cut off his head..."(From Riddles of Rama and Krishna).

Ambedkar envisioned 'annihilation of caste', which remains unfulfilled despite India getting Independence. Multiple factors have operated in the society due to which caste still remains a major factor in India. In contrast to Ambedkar's 'Annihilation of Caste' the politics of RSS combine says that there should be 'harmony amongst different castes' and so they have formed an organization called 'Samajik Samrasta Manch' (Social Harmony Forum). Contrasting approach to social issues, Ambedkar and RSS!

Core of RSS political ideology is *Hindutva* or Hindu nationalism. Ambedkar engaged with this issue in much depth, particularly in his classic book 'Thoughts on Pakistan'. In this book he deals with the question of Hindu nationalism as represented by Savakar; the progenitor of RSS ideology of Hindu nation; and Jinnah, leading the ideology of Muslim nationalism, Pakistan. "Strange as it may appear Mr. Savarkar and Mr. Jinnah instead of being opposed to each other on the one nation versus two nations issue are in complete agreement about it. Both agree, not only agree but insist that there are two nations in India- one the Muslim nation and the other the Hindu nation." he continues, "They differ only as regards the terms and conditions on which the two nations should be. Jinnah says India should be cut up into two, Pakistan and Hindustan, the Muslim nation to occupy Pakistan and the Hindu nation to occupy Hindustan. Mr. Savarkar on the other hand insists that, although there are two nations in India, India shall not be divided into two parts, one for the Muslims and the other for Hindus; that the two

nations shall dwell in one country and shall live under the mantle of one single constitution: that the constitution shall be such that the Hindu nation will be enabled to occupy a predominant position that is due to it and the Muslim nation to made to live in the position of subordinate co-operation with the Hindu nation." (Thoughts on Pakistan, Third section, chapter VII)

Dr Ambedkar was for composite Indian Nationalism, "Is it not a fact that under the Montague Chelmsford reforms in most provinces, if not in all, the Muslims, the non-Brahmins and Depressed Classes united together and worked for the reforms as members of one team from 1920 to 1937? Here in lay the most fruitful method of achieving communal harmony among Hindus and Muslims and of destroying the danger of Hindu Raj. Mr. Jinnah could have easily pursued this line. Nor was it difficult for Mr. Jinnah to succeed in it." (Thoughts on Pakistan, P. 359)

Dr Ambedkar was totally opposed to the concept of Hindu Raj as well. In the section "Must There Be Pakistan" he says, "If Hindu Raj does become a fact, it will, no doubt, be the greatest calamity for this country. No matter what the Hindus say, Hinduism is a menace to the liberty, equality and fraternity. On that account it is incompatible with democracy. Hindu Raj must be prevented at any cost."

(<http://ecumene.org/IIS/csss101.htm>)

On all associated matters related to affirmative action for weaker sections of society, rights and status of religious minorities their positions are totally contrasting. Even in the matters of the very Constitution of India, Ambedkar was the chairman of its drafting committee while many a sections from RSS stable have called it as anti Hindu and need to bring in Hindu Constitution based on Indian Holy books. This attempt by Mr. Bhagwat is like putting wool in the eyes of people to achieve their political goals and to get legitimacy from amongst the sections of people who are deeply wedded to ideological values of Ambedkar.



There have been lot of discussion on Arundhati Roy's 'introduction' to 'Annihilation of Caste', a historical document produced by Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar which should have been introduced in our school text books as well as made part of syllabus in Universities in India. I am of the firm opinion that let this book be introduced to our students without any introduction or edition or deletion by any one. Let the students develop their critical thinking to understand the dynamics of caste and how it has sought to be defended in the name of traditions and religion by high and mighty who we 'worship'.

The issue is not whether she can write on Ambedkar or not. No one can stop anyone to write on a public figure and his or her work. A few of them said that none had brought this great work to international people and hence if Navayana is doing so we should complement him. It is wrong to say that the work has not been published. Of course, the debate of annihilation of caste actually remains within the confines of 'converted'. Fact is that Dalits do not need this debate as it has to go to the so called dwijas whose arrogance will destroy India as a civilized nation. In an award giving ceremony just a few days back when I referred the name of Dr. Ambedkar to push my idea of 'constitutional morality' and there were loud cries against me for being 'casteist'. Such is the aversion as if Dr. Ambedkar discovered caste. Gandhi remains biggest patronizer here with the arrogant simplicity of the Gandhians.

Like any other community and intelligentsia, Ambedkarite or those claiming to be, are also of different varieties and hence reaction to her book and article cannot be said to be the only Ambedkarite position, as it is a huge world and opinions differ here too. Definitely those who feel hurt at her patronizing attitude too are young Ambedkarites and have their issues which have some very valid points and definitely need discussion. The reaction of the Ambedkarites is very much democratic as they have a right to boycott any ceremony or book which definitely the Maoists would not have allowed in Chhattishgarh if uncomfortable questions were raised about their ideology and perception.

It is not that some upper castes have written about Dr Ambedkar or on caste for the first time. There were many who participated in his movements in Mahad too but yes really never claimed their brahmanical lineage. Yes, there

are serious questions but we must also understand the fact that the movement has grown much from the rhetoric of our own voice and identity to ideology now. Hundreds of those who claim Dr. Ambedkar by virtue of their birth are in Hindutva while equal numbers of those who do not have the 'caste' as a factor to embrace Ambedkar and came to him just with the idea of liberation are with the movement. Definitely Dr Ambedkar is not just an ideologue but an emancipator and liberator of the community and central to Dalit identity.

There were leaders like Jagjivan Ram who remained with power structure and had more in relations with upper castes than the Dalits. There are great soldiers of Ambedkarite movement such as Bhadant Anand Kautshlyayan who came to Ambedkar and Buddhism because they knew brahmanism is a disease and hence they left it. It was he who had translated huge work of Baba Saheb Ambedkar into Hindi for common masses. Though their number is very low, yet they remain as an important part of Ambedkar's movement in spreading Buddhism to common masses.

Ambedkarites are now making solidarity with other like-minded revolutionaries. They know all those revolutionaries are part of their movement which Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar was the central figure. Hence, March 23rd is celebrated by a huge number of Dalits all over the country in their own way to remember Bhagat Singh and his ideas about a casteless secular India. For years Ambedkarite organizations have been organizing the birthday celebrations of Rahul Sankrityayan whose contribution to Buddhism in India is extraordinarily underrated by 'experts'. And these legends have been part of Ambedkarite discourse for long. There are numerous others who have been working silently in the movement and have left their identities which they have inherited by birth. Actually, such variety of Ambedkar's movement is much more visible at the ground with common masses than those who claim to be educated. Young scholars are now challenging the status quo and brilliantly articulating their views. Definitely they do not want to be 'favored' or patronized. It is the self-respect and dignity aspect that appeals to them. They want to create a niche for them independently. Hundreds of them are now published, becoming international and are

servicing in different capacities. They are coming back to community also through different means. Frankly speaking, the criticism to Arundhati came more from the young budding Ambedkarites and not from those who are already established.

Their concern may be an overreaction but they have a right to speak their mind. Some where they felt that the attempts are being made to project Arundhati as the new 'messiah' of the Ambedkarite Dalit movement. Definitely, it was not needed and Arundhati does not require that. She has her own fan following and all those who follow are not upper caste Hindus but Dalits, tribal, minorities and vastly those market forces too who she always target in her essays. Therefore we have to understand that neither is Arundhati the first non-Dalit writing on Ambedkar, nor is she going to be the last. Secondly, as we move ahead, more research come, more political interest creep in, there will be people who will also redefine Ambedkar according to their own convenience. Since Ambedkar has become a big brand in the post 1990s, every ideological formulation wants to use him for their own purpose. Despite critique like Arun Shourie and Sanjay Paswan.

There are those who initially were Ambedkarites but now 'critiquing' him too for their own selfish motives. The reason I am writing it is that an attempt is being made to look at the entire Ambedkarite movement in a 'Talibanised' way which has no level of tolerance to a dissenting view point. In fact, a huge number of people have not heard about the book written by Arundhati Roy because the entire discourse is running around English speaking groups.

It is therefore important to understand that Arundhati Roy's writings are an extension and not everything. Ambedkarites know Dr. Ambedkar much better than Roy but we cannot snatch her right to write on an issue which she deemed fit. For millions of oppressed masses in India, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar is not just another political leader, thinker or writer, he remains their father figure, philosopher and guide and therefore there will definitely be a difference between those who analyze Ambedkar as a political philosopher like any other contemporary and those for whom he was an emancipator.

Now I come to the point raised in the essays written by Arundhati Roy who pleads her case passionately. Those who know Ambedkar and his writing well do understand that he does

not need someone to 'introduce' him to the world but at the same point of time he is also an international icon now and will be evaluated, presented and analyzed in different ways. We have right to counter the allegations or criticism in a democratic way. We have seen those days when a brahmanical 'intellectual' called Arun Shourie tried to misrepresent the facts on Ambedkar in his so-called 'research'. It was a lawyer's argument denigrating Ambedkar because he felt Ambedkar criticized Gandhi and questioning Gandhi, for Arun Shourie, was like challenging the very idea of India and its authority. Shourie selectively quoted, or I would say misquoted Ambedkar. Years later, a brahmanical Maoist ideologue Rangnayakamma too came out with a book criticizing Ambedkar as a part of the power structure and did not address the basic issues of Dalits.

Ms. Arundhati Roy has been fascinated by the Maoists struggle in the forest of Bastar. She has written extensively and definitely spoken on other issues where Indian government has definitely not done a great service like issue of Armed Forces Special Power Act in North-East and Kashmir. Prior to that Roy was also in the Narmada Valley but realized that their struggle could not attain anything for the masses as it is fighting with in the same 'power structure'.

The issues of Dalits and Adivasis are different yet also similar in many aspects. Both are oppressed communities. One remained isolated in the forests and became victim of the 'developmental' agenda of the Indian state while others were victim of brahmanical hierarchical social system and faced not just ostracisation but cultural violence. Adivasi movement, though strong in certain pockets, got romanticized by upper caste 'intellectuals' who enjoyed 'patronizing' it in the name of 'preserving' cultural identity of the community while Ambedkar became a difficult person for them as he not only questioned the very thesis of 'golden 'past' but also sought participation in power structure. Dignified participation in all walks of life is the biggest problem for the upper elite to accept. So Ambedkar's perception differed highly against those romantics of past who harp that India has become 'worst' because of British Raj in this country. It is not that he was not critical of British Raj and its implications on India but he feared the Hindu Raj to be worse than the so-called whites as the caste prejudices among the caste Hindus were deep rooted and could have been

detrimental to the growth of the rights of the Dalits if they were not ensured in the constitution.

I have not read the book definitely went through Arundhati's essays published in Caravan as well as her interview given to outlook. They are definitely based on many other 'left critique' of Dr Ambedkar particularly the issue of 'village'. Yes, Dr Ambedkar said villages in India are den of feudalism, nepotism and casteism. They live in ignorance and are truly a replica of Manu's law. The biggest state in India is actually brahmanical mindset. It is more powerful than any other things. Arundhati has written on numerous occasions about Bastar and how the tribals are denied right to even protest. Contrary to this, Hazare and his upper caste followers like Kejriwal have been given larger than life role by media and protection by police and administration. Why? They fixed in the upper caste nationalism which only is the guarantee of right and wrong in India according to power elite. Hence, when we discuss 'State' in India, we cannot talk state in a utopian Marxist sense to hide the follies and crookedness of the brahmanical masters of the state.

I am sure, Arundhati must have heard about the water movement in Mahad led by Dr Ambedkar. That apart, he fought many battles for workers' rights with trade unionist in Nagpur, Mumbai as well as for the land rights of the people. He talked about 'Nationalisation' of land and stood for it even when he could not do anything for it in the Constitution of India because of all the obscurantists' hell bent to stop his reforms. He was a thorough democrat and hence did not approve the 'communist' form of government but he was fascinated with the land reforms that had taken place in Soviet Union and China. Often critique of Dr Ambedkar brings the issue of his call for people to migrate to cities and his appreciation for freedom and liberation in the United and Europe without understanding the meaning and feeling behind these words.

Dr Ambedkar called people to migrate to cities, to adopt new education, shun superstition and develop rationalist attitude. We must appreciate that this was his concern for the community and he was speaking as an elder who had faced untouchability in his life time. When he went to United States, he felt different as none asked him questions about his caste and identity and every one shook hands with him. And once he returned to

India with a bigger degree and experience, yet the caste minds discriminated against him and State of Baroda could do nothing. So, we have to realize that, in India, state is nothing but Brahmanism and unless you target the brahmanical values, its system, the merely shouting Indian state and leaving the 'builders' of these state out of your criticism will only amount to your trying to avoid caste discrimination.

So when Ambedkar appreciated the freedom and liberty that he breathed in United States of America and Europe, it does not mean that he supported all their action. How is it possible? When Dr. Ambedkar was speaking for the rights of Dalits who were his main concern, how is amounted to 'not being able to speak' for 'aadivasis'. He defended their right of cultural autonomy and Schedule Areas to be demarcated for the Aadivasis. Yes, he was not in a luxurious position like Gandhi to speak for everyone. Even speaking on behalf of Dalit was challenged by Gandhi who claimed that he had more 'followers' among the 'Harijans' than Dr. Ambedkar. Yes, Gandhi's followers will always remain Harijans but Ambedkar's followers will remain those who believe in dignity and self-respect. A call to migrate to cities was meant for his people in the very similar way 'educate, agitate and organise' where he advised people to migrate to cities to save themselves from the violence of untouchability and caste discrimination. It does not mean that he wanted to demolish the villages. He wanted to demolish the caste structure in the villages and not villages. One should appreciate a man who embraced Buddhism cannot be a hater of nature. Ambedkar modernism does not mean building of 'concrete' structure. He talks of 'Prabuddha' Bharat which from his own understanding was where caste identities are demolished and he felt it was only possible once India embraced the path of Buddha. Many people may not like it as they have their own prejudices towards Buddhism, but Dr Ambedkar had realized that in Buddha's path lies our salvation. So when he talks of modernity, it means end of Khap Panchayats and concealed hatred.

In his book, 'Pakistan or partition of India', Dr Ambedkar clearly mentions that Hindu Rashtra would be a calamity for India. He says unambiguously that Hindu Rashtra would be as dangerous as Muslim Rashtra and then he went on to say that only a political formation of the workers, Dalits, aadivasis, OBCs and other secular progressive

people can counter the communal forces in the country.

It is not without reason that Ambedkar talked about cooperative farming and support to farmers. His main emphasis was people's participation and how Dalits were to be made part of this power structure. If those who are now becoming part of power structure do not remain committed to their ideology, it is not the problem of Ambedkar but dishonesty of those who use him. We all know that Dr Ambedkar wanted people to work for society.

In the Constituent Assembly debates, he tirelessly advocated for the Directive Principles of State and claimed that they were instructions to the state to work on. Can anyone show that Dr Ambedkar has 'love' for capitalist order or has he ever supported western invasions or imperialism? Yes, in India, he felt Hindu imperialism would be more dangerous than the British imperialism and he was negotiating with British government for ensuring the space for the untouchables as he used to say. **Don't we know that Congress Party was formed not to ask for 'freedom' of India but ensuring the space for caste Hindus in power structure and hence it called for reservation for Hindus in the British regime?**

It is important to understand that Dr Ambedkar was a thorough democrat and his vision for India was basically a society which has equality of people irrespective of their sex, caste, religion and other identities. The day India becomes a society, the day we respect individuals, it is possible. I know many people who have fascination for 'collectives' will never like Dr Ambedkar's view. It is not that he was against Panchayati Raj Institution but his concern was how Dalit could be part of a majoritarian dominant culture without losing their autonomy and freedom. Will the draconian majoritarianism that exists in our villages allow the Dalit voices of dissent in our Panchayat democracy? Will this Panchayati Raj not turn into a Hindu Raj suppressing Dalit voices? If we see the results after 60 years what does it prove? Can we say that the fears expressed by Dr Ambedkar were wrong? Don't we know how our Panchayat model operates?

Dr. Ambedkar is an institution. He is a hope. He is a voice for millions who have been denied rights but definitely he might have his own issues and problems. He has been criticized in the past and in future too as they are part of life. And the criticism of Ambedkar

will not come from the so called upper castes but emerging from the Dalits too but none deny them that as everyone has a right to voice his/her opinion. However, it would be good to understand that Ambedkar was not a writer or philosopher, but a leader of a huge segment in India so many of his decisions are political in nature taken at that point of time. He is not here to answer those questions and if he were here, he would have responded. A leader has to be analyzed in entirety.

We must remember that Dr Ambedkar was an iconoclast. He never believed in icons and his hero was Voltaire whose famous quote he always used, 'I may disagree with you but I will defend your right to express'. He always mentioned that India needed a Voltaire, a dissenter who can speak without keeping things in heart. When he questioned Gandhi his opponent called him British stooge but he signed the Poona pact to save Gandhi's life. He was a fighting a lonely battle that time. Today, we have huge number of educated people, aspiring writers, journalists, academics yet the work with the people not gone. Those who want to make us believe that Ambedkar only had a constitution book in his hand actually leave aside his historical role in mass struggle for the rights of the people. One has to understand that he used all the opportunities that came in front of him for the sake of his community and hence, when we review him or speak of him, we need to take into account the circumstances.

Ambedkar stood for all those who were oppressed by religious dogmas. He challenged all the religious scriptures. He challenged the state and provided the state a new alternative. He himself said that good constitutions too can be failed by bad people. He further said that if this constitution fails to protect people, he would be the first to burn it. He always wanted that India need a Voltaire who could not be the voice of the state but stand with people. I am sure, despite differences, he would have appreciated Ms. Arundhati Roy speaking for people and becoming a prominent dissenter in this age when state and corporate are co-opting everyone. After all, how many of us are speaking against the Indian State? How many of us have stood up and said that the act of Indian State in Chhattishgarh amount to violation of rights of Adivasis? She already has a voice and does not need to write on Ambedkar to get 'famed'. She is already famous world over whether we like it or not. If she lent voice to any movement, it strengthens. It is not that she will come and become the leaders of Dalits.

So, let us give her the right to write and we have every right to democratically critique her and frankly speaking I felt the young Ambedkarites have followed that path only. Let us take these things positively without further hatred as these have lessons for us all. Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar's place in the heart of Dalits cannot be replaced by anyone but at the same point of time, Dr Ambedkar

as an international leader for all the oppressed masses will also be under study by political commentators and social scientists which is a great sign as it mean Ambedkar's idea is now being accepted by all as the future of the democratic world.

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**Tribute**

**Buddha Dhammachya Watevar che Pranete**  
(Advocacy – On the path of Buddha Dhamma)



## **Hanumant Upre**

President, Satyashodhak OBC Parishad

*He had a dream. He along with at least five Lakh people from Other Backward Caste (OBC) had decided to convert to Buddhism on Dhammachakra Pravartan Din in October 2016 at Nagpur, India. It would have been a real Ghar Wapsi for Indians. He left us on the way. It is our duty to fulfil his dream.*

## Death of a Missionary

- Vidya Bhushan Rawat



I have always been fascinated by the writings of Dr. K. Jamanadas and came in touch with him through our common writings in 'Dalit Voice'. The depth of his understanding of Ambedkarism as well as Indian history and

brutality of Brahmanical invasion on Buddhism would enlighten any one. It was such a pleasure to speak to him and listen attentively his thoughts. For me such people who are witness to some of the greatest events of our history and who documented a great deal of things, which would have gone unnoticed need special salute. They deserve our respect and tribute. There is no doubt in my mind that he remained one of the very few who truly served the Ambedkarite cause and dedicated his life for the same. He was a treasury of enormous information about Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar as well as Buddhism and his work reflects that but one thing is clear, if he had resources and good support, he would have contributed much more. After Bhagwan Das, I am witness to this man of enormous scholarship who actually did not get requisite support and help at the end.

**For last several years, he has not been keeping in great health and was confined to his bed and computer table for work at home in Chandrapur alone. Though he has been writing regularly, very few knew how he was coping with his ill health. It was the spirit of Ambedkarism that was moving him. It was difficult for him to move around without help and yet his spirit was so high that you can only appreciate and acknowledge that. He was a retired surgeon, a devoted Ambedkarite Buddhist and also associated for several years with Kanshiramji and contested on BSP ticket too. He was also a member of board of studies in History for two terms of three years each in Nagpur University. He wrote extensively and authored several books, the prominent being 'Tirupati Balaji was a Buddhist Shrine', 'Decline and fall of Buddhism', 'Maratha revolt against Brahmanism', 'Devadasis ancient to modern' etc. It was a great pleasure when he gave me his book of great research on Materialism in Indian traditions when I went**

**to specifically meet him at his residence in Chandrapur.**

He was a young man highly influenced with the mission and vision of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. Hailing from Chandrapur, he was witness to historic conversion of Dr. Babasaheb in 1956 at Nagpur. He was a young man preparing for his final year's MBBS examinations when he saw the massive conversion of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar to Buddhism at the Deeksha Bhumi, Nagpur. He was also a witness to his second day's ceremony in Chandrapur. These are moments of great historical importance for us. They were a group of youngsters who actually invited Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar to their convention. His eyes sparkled whenever the narrative of his live conversation with Dr Ambedkar was ever referred. He narrated in detailed the entire environment to me during our conversation when I met him at his residence in October 2012,

"The crowd was more than the present *"Diksha Bhoomi"* could accommodate. The area beyond the road, where today there are big buildings was a vacant plot of land. The Deputy Mayor being an Ambedkarite the whole labor gangs of Corporation along with volunteers of *"Samta Sainik Dal"* (SSD - Volunteer Force for Equality) were busy in uprooting small shrubs and clearing and cleaning the wasteland into a vast ground for the function. The stage was huge, and protected from all sides. By the side, there was a road built right from the main street to the stage for Babasaheb's car and protected by bamboo matting from both sides. Excellent arrangement was for sound projection. Stage of shape of Sanchi stupa was erected and covered with white cloth. All the stalls of eatables and free meals were arranged beyond the streets by various organizations.

It was ordained that those who wish to get converted, must come in white apparel, but in the markets white all cloth was exhausted, and then it had to be announced that, any clean clothes of any color would do. Similarly, it was declared that all those wishing to be converted should enroll themselves in Godbole's office. The rush was so much that in spite of hundreds of volunteers for record keeping, the arrangement broke down. That was the magnitude of the numbers. A

conservative estimate was half a million people, who poured down from all directions with whatever conveyances they could get. Many walked down with meals packed for three days, dried pieces of homemade *jaur* bread and an onion or two’.

He was the leader of a group of students that met Dr Ambedkar and was also invited at the tea party at Shyam Hotel in the evening. There are hundreds of aspects of Dr Ambedkar’s life, which are unknown or may be ignored by many but K. Jamnadasji brought all those facets through his anecdotes. It was interesting to hear from him how Babasaheb Ambedkar was trying to do. His narratives of the tea party in the evening of Dhammachakra Pravartan Diwas provide deep thought on which Babasaheb Ambedkar was focusing.

I had heard Babasaheb on many occasions before, but that was the first time, I was hearing him talk in fluent Hindi. The speech, though brief, had many new points, and very scanty reports of this speech are available. He said that we all cared more for politics than social and religious change. He had achieved everything in his life for himself. There was nothing more to be achieved for himself, “except perhaps the post of Prime Minister”, among cheers, he declared. But he was worried for all of us, as we keep on fighting amongst ourselves. He said, we were not used to work with people of other castes. Though the “Scheduled Castes Federation” (SCF) would be in existence for some more time and though Buddhists, we could still be members of it, as he had already made provisions in Constitution of SCF for “sympathizers”, it was time we change our ways and start learning to work together with other castes. He was already in touch with other leaders like R. M. Lohia, N. G. Gore, Madhu Limaye, P. K. Atre, S. M. Joshi and others and he had prepared the Constitution of new party, which would be launched soon. He gave a lot of stress on mixing with the people of democratic thoughts, belonging to other castes. It is rather unfortunate, that this aspect of his speech is totally neglected by the next generation of leaders, our predecessors. When next year in 1957, Republican Party of India was formed, there was not one single member of other castes’.

Most of the us world over know about the Nagpur conversion ceremony but I was amazed to hear from Dr K. Jamanadas that the Chandrapur mass conversion on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 1956, was equally big and had huge

crowded waiting for Babasaheb. It is great that he has recorded all these events which give us ideas of how people have so much faith in Dr Ambedkar due to his idealism, conviction and commitment for the cause of the society. The impact of conversion was wider though it remained confined to Mahars in Maharashtra yet they discarded Hindu festivities and symbols. Hundreds of women threw away their ‘Mangalsutras’ once they were informed that it is the symbol of slavery of a woman and against the principles of Buddhism.

Dr K Jamanadas was a devoted Ambedkarite who lived every day according to principles of Ambedkarism and Buddhism. The women question was very important to him and he felt that Ambedkarites were not doing enough in that direction. He felt that joint family system was destructive and governed by Mitakshara Law, which is in force in practically whole of India. According to him, Dr. Ambedkar wanted that the *Dayabhag* Law should replace it. This is not achieved yet. Unfortunately, the Ambedkarites are not fighting for the demand of introduction of Dayabhag Law all over the country. They have not yet realized that this one single measure would give a strong blow to the caste system.

He explained the differences between Mitakshara and Dayabhag laws so that Ambedkarite could fight for the latter.

‘While stating that the main difference after Hindu Code would be ‘the abolition of the right by birth and the principle of survivorship and the substitution of the *Dayabhag* for *Mitakshara* in the Mitakshara Provinces, Dr. Ambedkar, in his speech on Hindu code, explained the fundamental differences between two systems of inheritance in *Mitakshara* and *Dayabhag* Law. According to *Mitakshara*, the property of a Hindu is not his individual property. It is property, which belongs to what is called a coparcenary, which consists of father, son, grandson and great grandson (the ‘*sapinda-s*’). All these people have a birthright in that property and the property on the death of any member of this coparcenary passes by survivorship to the members who remain behind, and does not pass to the heirs of the deceased.

‘The Bill, while it does away with coparcenary’, Dr. Ambedkar said, ‘maintains the joint family’. He further clarified that, ‘The only distinction will be that the members of the joints family instead of holding their rights as joint tenant will hold them as tenants in common’.

We had several conversations on phone and on email. He would ask me to come to his place and stay over. He used to send me a lot of stuff written by him and complimented many time on my writings. He always admired the way I was involved in with people and writing those experiences from the grassroots. In my zeal to record things, I went to meet him at his residence in Chandrapur on October 28, 2012. Actually, I had long wanted to have a conversation with him and record it but unfortunately my camera ditched me that day and all the videos and photographs that day got deleted inadvertently. It is one of the biggest regret of my life. Anyway, the interaction with him was thought provoking and cleared many ambiguities in my mind. He was thought provoking and you would just hear him attentively to understand the depth of his knowledge. I had sent him a questionnaire but due to ill health, he could not respond to all the questions and send his thoughts, materials and submissions, etc to me. In fact, a majority of quotes have been taken from his email conversations and material that he made available to me.

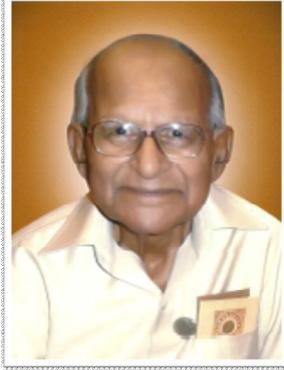
He was very clear that Naxal movement was not helping the Dalits and Adivasis but definitely expressed his unhappiness on the issue of continuous erosion of natural resources. He maintained that, 'Land of Adivasis should be treated as special category. If they are sitting over metal ore or forest produce, the ore and produce must belong to them. They should get the benefit of that product. But our business community is not willing even to give them 26 percent share in the profit. It must be realized that it is the property of Adivasis and they are entitled for hundred percent profit, why only 26%? If they cannot utilize the ore themselves, government should form their co-operative societies and fund them in initial stages or arrange finance for tapping these resources and bring it to the market and export by financing by state agencies or by long-term bonds at government guarantee.'

Unlike many other Ambedkarites, Dr Jamnadas considered land issue as very important for Dalits, Adivasis and minorities and essential for their identity and dignity. He was against loot of natural resources and building of SEZs. He said, 'This is urgent need. Enforce land ceiling and tenancy laws, with due consideration of SC, ST and religious minority rights. Distribute the surplus lands to these people. Stop all

grabbing land by mafias, with or without consents of bureaucrats and/or ministers and politicians. Punish the guilty, recover back the land from mafia, demolish all illegal constructions and cancel all SEZs and prevent all land grabbing by vested interests. Bring in new proper laws for acquiring land from farmers, and pay them according to market rates. Define unambiguously what constitutes 'public interests' and keep a strict vigil on implementation'.

He was equally vocal on the issue of electoral reform when I discussed some of these issues with him. He felt that entry of criminal should be banned and felt the best way to do it is to the basis of the filing of a charge sheet against the person. 'If a charge sheet is filed one year before and case is still pending, he should not be allowed to contest. A minor offence, or a politically motivated charge, one year should be considered enough time for him to clear it out. He was very apprehensive of forces trying to convert Indian electoral system on American presidential pattern which he mentioned was a brahmanical conspiracy. 'It is a venomous idea of Hindutva forces to destroy the Constitution and bring in a dictator and fix his term for five years. What they could not do while in power, they want to do it through the means of so-called 'Civil Society', which is neither civil nor society, he suggested.

He passed away living a fruitful life of about 88 years yet at a time when India is at crucial stage and Dalits, Adivasis and minorities live in uncertain time as a right wing Hindutva government is preparing to take charge of the country. The politics of parties like BSP and RPI has faced serious rout in the elections and parties have compromised on their basic principles. He was upset with the things happening in Maharashtra and that is why kept away from political parties after making his attempt to contest as BSP candidate. He was doing things singlehandedly when actually he required support. Despite that, he remained a very warm-hearted Ambedkarite whose main consideration was to spread the message of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and to write history from an Ambedkarite perspective. His contribution to the growth of Ambedkar movement will always be remembered for extraordinary work that he produced through his powerful writings, which will be guiding principles for new generation of people. A man who was witness to history and who documented each aspect of it so well despite all disabilities that he had to face at his ripe age, yet he has become immortal and milestone in the Ambedkar movement for all the work that he has done and deserves to be acknowledged and appreciated.



**Prof D. Prempati**  
**21<sup>st</sup> June 1931 to 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014**

*Prof D. Prempati started his journey by participating in fight against Britishers at the age of 13. He studied in Kharagpur and Shanti Niketan in West Bengal. He was a committed Marxist. Later, he moved to Delhi to teach English in Delhi University. His courage and commitment in releasing friends from Jail during emergency is still remembered. He believed that the working class and the marginalized will finally overthrow Brahmanism. He was part of many political formations. He believed in mass education through newsletters and pamphlets. He still has collection of over 7000 books. An ardent reader who had a great understanding of Marx and Dr. Ambedkar. Truly his demise is the end of an era.*

Life and death are part of our life but some deaths leave you in a sense of deep loss where you do feel the loss of inheritance of a movement which we all contribute to build to see India a Secular Progressive Nation where each human being live in dignity and honor. Prof D Prempati's death is a deep loss for all of us who joined the social justice movement in the Mandal era. Prempati, a Marxist actually realized the real nature of his university teachers are who were not just joining the anti Mandal agitation but actively instigating the students to thwart every efforts to get it implemented. He felt it deeply that those who speak of Marxism as their idea suffer from caste-based identities and in

their heart remain highly Anti-Dalits and Anti-Shudras.

Those were the days when we all witnessed a national hate campaign against the Dalits and OBCs and many masks fell on the ground revealing their true identity. The brahmanical secularism was getting exposed with the hardened reality of post-Mandal India where each community was asking for its share in political structure.

Normally, university teachers suffer from various tantrums and one big is in terms of 'space', 'honor' and 'talk time' at any programme. However, there are many exceptions whose life became an open secret in social movements and my respect for them is tremendous who come in the movements leaving their tags of 'Dr', 'Prof' and many other things. Prempati, that way was extraordinarily humble and would never like to be called as 'Prof' or 'Dr' D Prempati. In fact, so simple was his style that many in the social movements never realized that he was a professor of English language who taught Shakespearean drama at the Delhi College of Art. It was his conviction that made him absolutely common with other people in the North particularly Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. He had deep faith in the Dalit backward Muslim communities of Uttar Pradesh and every time whenever elections would be announced, we had gone together to do our bit.

In December 1992, Babari Masjid was demolished and Prempati was deeply anguished. That was a time when so many of us came together and felt we must do something to defeat the communal fascist agenda unleashed by various offshoots of Sangh Parivar. He was clear that it is not the question of 'secularism' of brahmanical variety but participation of Dalits and backward communities in power structure too. He knew well that shudras need to be politicized and along with Dalits and Muslims they can change the power structure and defeat the brahmanical forces permanently. It was his firm view that only Mandal forces can demolish the artificial structure created by brahmanical superiority but there were deep disenchantment with the politics of both Mulayam Singh Yadav and Mayawati.

His two booklets on Mandal Commission Report and Hindutva politics in the aftermath of Babari demolition became very popular. The booklet 'Hindutva Hai Kya' published by *Teesari Duniya Publication* initiated by Mr. Anand Swroop Verma sold like hot cake. It was the first such book in the Hindi heartland immediately after the demolition which actually broke the myth of Hindutva and its brahmanical politics. Normally, RSS and Sangh Parivar politics would always be discussed in the 'secular' 'echelons' in terms of Hindu Muslim relations but Prempati linked to RSS politics against the Dalits and shudras and Babari demolition with undoing of the Mandal revolution. I still remember the bold cover page of ***Samkaleen Teesari Duniya*** after Babari demolition was '***sharme kaho ham Hindu Hain***' was a rage in which Prempati too contributed. He strengthened it as an alternative media and wrote extensively in the magazine which was actually capable of challenging the so-called 'mainstream' magazines in the market in layout, contents and professionalism.

In the 1990s, we started tabloid '**Bahujan Bharat**', a fortnightly with great thought that something would emerge out of it. He knew that a journal for backward communities is going to suffer in the absence of finances and human resources. We put all our efforts in bringing it out but it did not succeed and finally we had to close it, yet our efforts in uniting Dalit Bahujan Muslim communities continued with public meeting, pamphleteers and conventions whenever and wherever required. He campaigned tirelessly against the Hindutva and wrote extensively in Hindi as he believed that our message must reach the larger audiences in the villages. He had a mastery over language which never ever reflected his background from a non-Hindi speaking state. He felt that we must bring out more pamphlets, tabloids and small booklets to educate the Dalit backward communities about the dangers of Hindutva. Despite the failure of 'Bahujan Bharat', both of us came together again with '**Buniyadi Times**' during election season and exposed communal agenda of Sangh Parivar. Of course, this time too, the magazine failed in the absence of a basic requirement of resources.

I still remember being with him at a village level meeting where we had gone together. We would sit hours and hours and discuss political issues. His capacity to learn and unlearn was great. He was never bored from these discussions and would be happier with

the people in the ground. The one thing that I learnt from him was leaving those tags of knowing 'English' or an urban person who pretend not knowing Hindi. He was remarkable with language. Never ever in his public meetings, would he bring even a single word of English language which are often part of our discourse, as he understood many in the crowd may even not know those words. He warned me not to bring these heavy words in the popular discourse and speak the language of the people.

He enjoyed speaking to people and listening to them. He would help the youngsters who would come to work along. Once in Bundelkhand, a district level reporter came to know that he is with me, so he inquired about him. When his editor came to know about him, he asked the reporter to have an interview with Prempati on Nuclear explosion done by Vajpayee government but did not really know how to interview him. I laughed when Prempati asked him to come to our hotel next day for the same. This correspondent came but was just clueless about the interview that his editor wanted from Prempati so he said, 'Sir, aap he kuchh bataaiye', please tell me yourself sir. Prempati after some time dictated him the entire interview in the question answer format. I was amused to see him painstakingly putting the question and then answering himself and the reporter dutifully writing the dictation.

We traveled a large part of India together and enjoyed the company of each other. Though at age, he was a father figure but he always mentioned me as a colleague, a friend. It was a privilege with loads of anecdotes which he would share with us and would joke too. While people like me used to get depressed many time with prevailing situation in the country, Prempati was an optimist and firm believer in political battle. So much so that he was always eager for a political front where Left political forces along with Dalits, Backward Communities, Adivasis and Muslims form a block and fight for their right. '**Bahujan Vam Shakti**' was one such initiative but could not move much due to various other issues involved in it including resources.

As I said, he was always eager to contribute his time and energy, ready to live in all the circumstances. He traveled in sleeper class on many occasions just to fulfill his commitment even when age of catching up. He would come to coffee house to meet

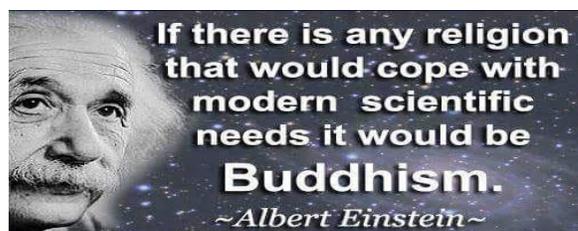
likeminded friends and after the meeting whenever I would go and put him in the particular bus for his home. Such breed is rare today. He was unfit in today's politics which is actually 'management'. For people like him it was conviction which mattered more and that is why all his initiative failed to move because of absence of 'management' which became an ugly reality of the current world. He would discuss issues, politics, planning and actions and yet at the end of the day at the absence of resources, it became difficult but despite that he continued to live in optimism and encouraged people to form political formation that could take on the brahmanical capitalist forces of Hindutva. He knew that the shudras are being influenced by the Hindutva forces and hence working hard through his writings and direct relations with the people to wean them away to secular social justice platform. I was amazed to see his eagerness to start any political formulations, organisations and parties. He was never tired off them and believed that we have to do. He never bothered about failures and always believed that we must be in political action.

In the past few years, his mobility was influenced due to age and eye sight yet he would ensure that he is present in major programme that were organized for the rights of the people. For his friends, he was always available. He would never ever bother to go back home if we was in the company of political activists. Age was never a deterrent for him. While in his writings he promoted Hindi to reach to the larger masses and spoke eloquently in English as well whenever an opportunity came to him though he despised seminar culture meant for 'academic brown Sahibs'. At all his forums, he spoke extempore and with great courage of conviction and did not really appreciate those who 'read' texts in these seminars. A fierce critique of Narsimha Rao's politics which he termed as anti-Dalit and anti shudra-minorities, Prempati was the voice of those who are not even represented in these marginalized sections. He felt that Rao's politics was meant to undo what VP Singh had brought in public life through his Mandal agenda. Prempati was a strong votary of Mandal forces and felt it is they only who can defeat the Sangha Parivar and the liberal Brahmins of Congress and Left Parties. He was among very few such as Bhagwan Das who was never ever impressed with Bahujan politics and was a fierce critique of both Mulayam Singh Yadav and Mayawati who he

claimed to have known much through friends and relatives. He was upset that these two politicians, who could have changed the political history of India, were hobnobbing with brahmanical forces of Congress and BJP. That time, when Prempati was writing against them, all condemned him but today he has been proved correct as political forces have been exposed and have connived with their brahmanical masters. He felt that only a Ambedkar-Marx-Phule-Periyar's combine thought could demolish the brahmanical hegemony in India and place a truly republican democratic government at the helm of affairs of the country.

Prempati was a public intellectual though I wish he had written more and extensively. During our conversations, I expressed this desire to him to start writing his memoirs as well as critique the entire movement so that people can learn from their failures. I feel he did not do justice to his intellectual level as most of the time he was preoccupied with political groups, which could rarely make their presence felt in the current environment.

The passing away of D Prempati is a great blow to the movement for social justice as he was a friend, philosopher and guide who was always ready to help and go to any extent to support the cause of Dalits, OBCs and minorities. Most of the time, people would come to him to write a 'parcha' or theme for their programme, philosophy of their 'political party' or social movements and he obliged them without any ifs and buts. At the time, when the brahmanical forces are on the rise, the demise of Prempati is a great blow to the forces of social justice. Yet, he has left a large number of friends who are contributing in public life and I hope that with their combined strength our battle against brahmanical capitalist hegemony will continue. The best tribute to Prempati would be to keep our egos aside and join hands for a greater cause of Secular India where each citizen of the country can live in peace and with his head high. The country is passing through a crisis and hence his presence will be severely missed.



**News**  
**Conference of World Fellowship of Buddhists 2014**



The **World Fellowship of Buddhists** (WFB) is an international Buddhist organization. WFB was founded by representatives from 27 nations in 1950 in Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Although Theravada Buddhists are most influential in the organization, (its headquarters is in Thailand and all of its presidents, so far, have been from Sri Lanka or Southeast Asia), members of all Buddhist schools are active in the WFB. Presently, WFB has regional centres in 35 countries, including India, USA, Australia, and several nations of Africa and Europe, in addition to traditional Buddhist countries. WFB is established with a purpose to promote various exchanges and friendship among Buddhists in the world to spread the noble teachings of Buddha and contribute to the World peace. The headquarters is located at Bangkok, Thailand, and its affiliate members are 170 regional centers from various countries throughout the world.

Since the establishment of WFB, the General Conference, the highest decision-making function, has been held every two to three years, and it reviews its organizations and activities and decides the agendas and schedules of activities for the future.

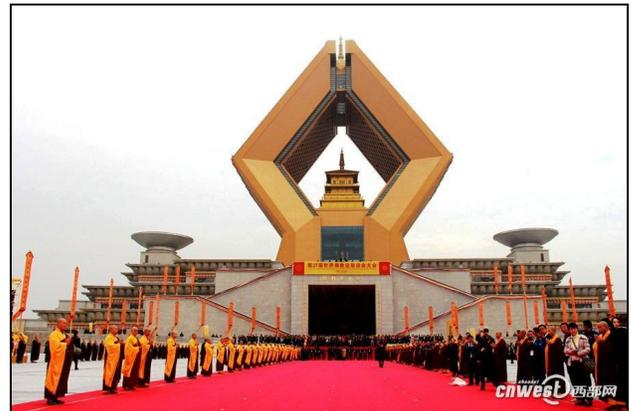
**The aims and objectives of the World Fellowship of Buddhists:**

1. To promote among the members strict observance and practice of the teachings of the Buddha.
2. To secure unity, solidarity, and brotherhood amongst Buddhists.
3. To propagate the sublime doctrine of the Buddha.

4. To organize and carry on activities in the field of social, educational, cultural and other humanitarian services.
5. To work for happiness, harmony and peace on earth and to collaborate with other organizations working for the same ends.

In order to achieve its Aims and Objectives, the World Fellowship of Buddhists shall :-

- a. Establish Regional Centres in countries, territories, or areas where there are appreciable numbers of Buddhists, whose belief in and practice of Buddhism are free and unrestricted, or give recognition to any existing organizations as Regional Centres;
- b. Establish and maintain Dhamma-duta Centres throughout the world for the purpose of disseminating the teachings of the Buddha, promoting and encouraging practice and observance of the teachings of the Buddha;



- c. Establish and maintain, or assist in the establishment and maintenance of, such institutions as may be necessary for the study and propagation of Buddhism;
- d. Stimulate and promote active practice and observance of the principles of Buddhism;
- e. Organize and maintain, or assist in the organization and maintenance of, institutions for social, educational, cultural, and other humanitarian services;
- f. Act as a directing and coordinating authority amongst international Dhamma-duta Centres;



g. Organize and promote exchange of missions, scholars and students between Buddhist countries; and

h. Take such other steps as will be conducive to the promotion of its Aims and Objectives.



Currently, Mr. Phan Wannamethee, the Thai Red Cross Society Secretary-General, is President of the WFB. He was elected at the 20<sup>th</sup> WFB General Conference held in Australia, B.E. 2541 (1998).

### WFB Conference in 2014

Hundreds of the world's Buddhists gathered at an ancient temple in Fufeng County, Baoji City in Shaanxi Province, Northwest China's on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014 to mark the opening of the World Fellowship of Buddhists 27<sup>th</sup> general conference. Congregating around a relic containing Gautama Buddha's finger bones from the physical body at Famen Temple in Baoji City, Buddhist from all over the world attended the conference. More than 4000 people, including senior Buddhists Monks, domestic and foreign distinguished guests, and all sorts of Buddhist practitioners from about 30 countries — including the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Nepal and India, as well as the Chinese mainland

and Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan — took part in the grand event to promote Buddhism around the world. More than 30 themed meetings and 14 activities took place during the five-day conference on the development and dissemination of Buddhist culture. The Conference ended on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

Buddhist leaders at the opening ceremony included Hon. Bainqen Erdini Qoigyijabu, the 11<sup>th</sup> Panchen Lama, and Hon. Nichiyu Mochida, Chief Abbot of Japan's Sogen-ji Temple.

This is the first time Bangkok-headquartered WFB has held its general conference in the Chinese mainland. The event was organized by the WFB jointly with Buddhist Association of China and Shaanxi Province.

The opening ceremony focused on goodwill and charity. Master Chuanyin, president of the Buddhist Association of China (BAC), said that “The event is a milestone for friendship between the BAC and the WFB. It will help Chinese Buddhists play a bigger role internationally”. He hoped that the event will boost Buddhists' cooperation and exchange on promoting Buddhism so as to make greater contributions to the benefit of mankind and world peace. The last conference of WFB was held in Yeosu City in the Republic of Korea on June, 2012.



Following resolutions were passed unanimously at 27<sup>th</sup> WFB General Conference:-

1. To appeal to the world community to strengthen their ongoing engagements in humanitarian and social welfare development, in order to reduce social inequality and poverty.
2. To pursue and establish peaceful and harmonious society through applying the teachings of the Buddha.
3. To promote inter-religious and inter-cultural understanding through dialogues to reduce mistrust and

- misunderstanding among the communities.
- To urge all Buddhists to contribute to environmental sustainability through the mindful reduction of greed and through practicing green-consumption in their daily life.
  - To urge world communities to maintain respect of human values in order to uphold equality of human beings.
  - To encourage promotion of spiritual and religious practice irrespective of cultural or social backgrounds.
  - To work for the preservation of intangible and tangible Buddhist cultural heritages which are in danger in different parts of the world.
  - To promote moral and ethical education among Buddhist youth to support them to be humane and responsible global citizens.

- To appeal to the international community to sustain their ongoing effort to provide educational and professional opportunities to underprivileged women to improve their quality of life.
- To provide education and skill development to impoverished communities to help improve their economic and social circumstances.

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#### 'Navankur' Essay Competition

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर यांच्या १२५ व्या जयंतीनिमित्त  
१२५ बक्षिसांची भव्य स्पर्धा  
बौद्ध युवक परिषद, आयोजित

नवांकुर  
प्रज्ञावान | विचारशील | ध्येयवादी  
तरुण पिढी घडविण्यासाठी

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रजिस्ट्रेशन  
१४ एप्रिल  
पासून

कॉल  
9766912340

तुम्ही विद्यार्थी असाल किंवा सुशिक्षित बेरोजगार किंवा नोकरदार,  
तुमची लेखणी मिलवून देऊ शकते तुम्हाला आकर्षक बक्षिस !

सर्वोत्कृष्ट निबंध : एक लाखची बक्षिसे

	मह - १ (१५-२० वर्षे)	मह - २ (२१-२६ वर्षे)	मह - ३ (२७-३५ वर्षे)
बक्षिस	50,000/-	30,000/-	20,000/-

उत्कृष्ट निबंध बक्षिसे

	मह - १ (१५-२० वर्षे)	मह - २ (२१-२६ वर्षे)	मह - ३ (२७-३५ वर्षे)
प्रथम	20,000/-	15,000/-	10,000/-
द्वितीय	12,500/-	10,000/-	7,500/-
तृतीय	10,000/-	7,500/-	5,000/-

नोंद : प्रत्येक विद्यार्थ्याची प्रत्येक वर्गासाठी एक भन्क वीजे  
विभागीय पातळीवर सुर्वीसाठी विशेष बक्षिसे

समाजात आधुनिक विज्ञानवादी व वियेकवादी विचार पेरण्यासाठी ।  
स्वतःला अधिक चिकित्सक व बुद्धिप्रामाण्यवादी बनविण्यासाठी ।  
तत्त्व-तत्त्वज्ञानाच्या हातात लेखणी आणि स्वातंत्र्य ।

सम्राट स्टडी सेंटर  
मौल अकादमी, बजाज शील्डम जलक, पुणे-मुंबई रोड, बाकडेवाडी, पुणे ४.  
फोन : ०२० - ६५०००८५८, ९०९६४६२२२८

'Baudh Yuvak Parishad', has come up with a novel idea of tapping talent by organizing an essay competition, by the name 'Navankur Rajyavyapi Nibandh Lekhan Spardha' (Essay Competition) open to all. This competition is categorized as per age group (i.e. 15- 20 years, 21 - 26 Years and 27 - 35 years) and covers various topics that relate to issues faced in the various spheres of life like, social political and educational.

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The objective of this exercise is to model the youth towards modern scientific thoughts and wisdom. To enable the youth to have investigative and intellectual approach.

Information and application for the essay competition is available on the website

www.bypune.com, contact details cell no. +91-9766912340, navankur2015@gmail.com

## 33rd Kalachakra Initiation by His Holiness Dalai Lama in Leh, Ladakh in July, 2014



The word Kalachakra means cycles of time. This term is used in the context of the highest tantric practice in Tibetan, Mongolian and Nepali Buddhism. The meaning of Kalachakra Tantra is included within the three Kalachakras, or Wheels of Time: The Outer Wheel of Time, the Inner Wheel of Time, and the Other Wheel of Time. The Outer Wheel of Time is the external world of

the environment and it is also called "The procession of the external solar and lunar days." The Inner Wheel of Time is the human body that is an inner Jambudvīpa, or earth-surface. Likewise, the inner channels, elements, and movements of the winds are set forth as the Inner Wheels of Time. The Other Wheel of Time is the initiations and paths of Kalachakra.

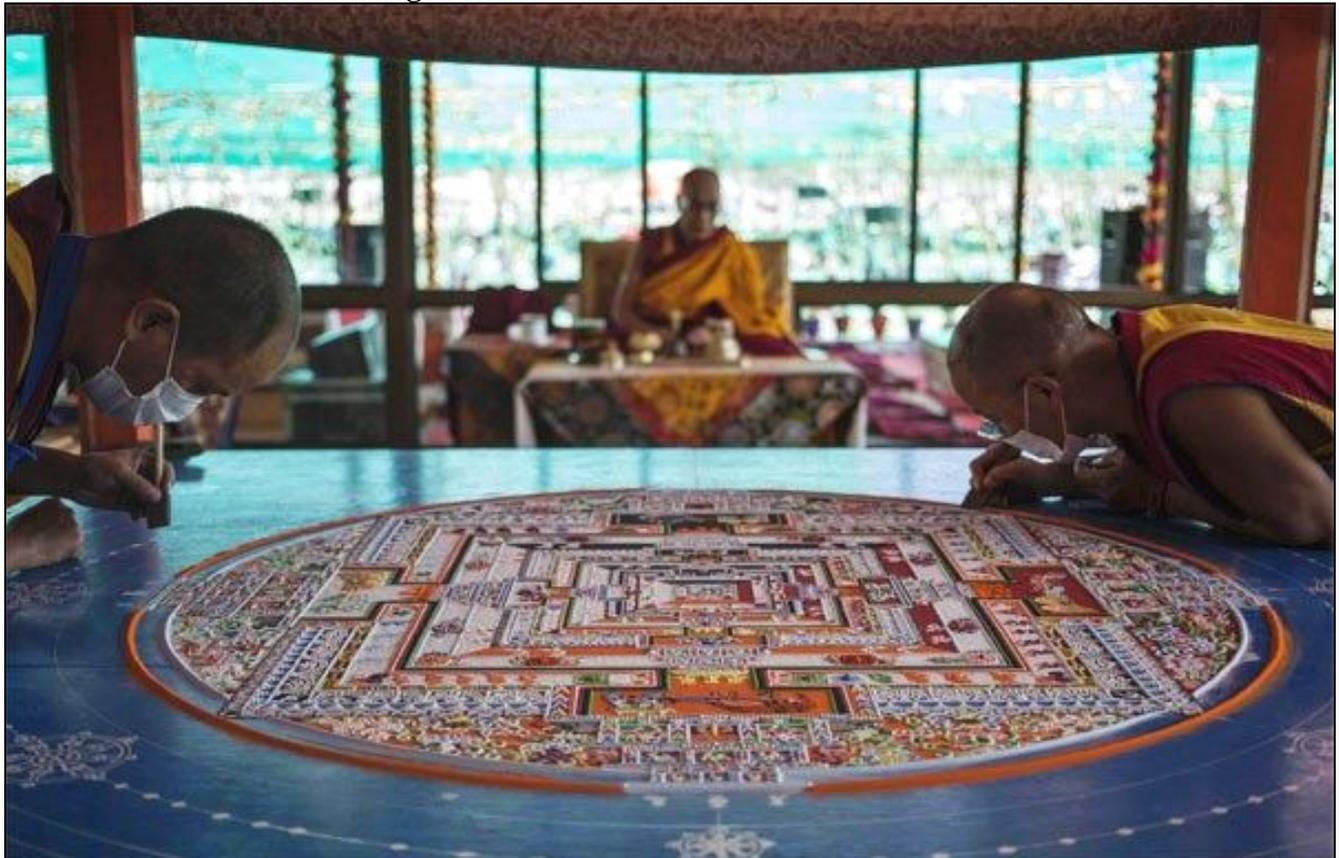
S No	Month	Place	People attended
1	May 1954	Norbulingka, Lhasa, Tibet	1,00,000
2	April 1956	Norbulingka, Lhasa, Tibet	1,00,000
3	March 1970	Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh, India	30,000
4	January 1971	Bylakuppe, Karnataka, India	10,000
5	December 1974	Bodhgaya, Bihar, India	1,00,000
6	September 1976	Leh, Ladakh, India	40,000
7	July 1981	Madison, Wisconsin, USA	1,500
8	April 1983	Dirang, Arunachal Pradesh, India	5,000
9	August 1983	Tabo, Himachal Pradesh, India	10,000
10	July 1985	Rikon, Switzerland	6,000
11	December 1985	Bodhgaya, Bihar, India	2,00,000
12	July 1988	Zanskar, Jammu & Kashmir, India	10,000
13	July 1989	Los Angeles, California, USA	3300
14	December 1990	Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh, India	1,30,000
15	October 1991	New York, New York, USA	3000
16	August 1992	Kalpa, Himachal Pradesh, India	20,000
17	April 1993	Gangtok, Sikkim, India	1,00,000
18	July 1994	Jispa, Himachal Pradesh, India	30,000
19	December 1994	Barcelona, Spain	3,000
20	January 1995	Mundgod, Karnataka, India	50,000
21	August 1995	Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia	30,000
22	June 1996	Tabo, Himachal Pradesh, India	20,000
23	September 1996	Sydney, Australia	3,000
24	December 1996	Salugara, West Bengal, India	2,00,000
25	August 1999	Bloomington, Indiana, USA	4,000
26	August 2000	Kyi, Himachal Pradesh, India	25,000
27	October 2002	Graz, Austria	10,000
28	January 2003	Bodhgaya, Bihar, India	2,00,000
29	April 2004	Toronto, Ontario, Canada	8,000
30	January 2006	Amarvati, Andhra Pradesh, India	1,00,000
31	July 2011	Washington, DC, USA	8000
32	January 2012	Bodhgaya, Bihar, India	2,00,000
33	July 2014	Leh (Ladakh), Jammu & Kashmir, India	1,50,000

The Buddha's teaching of the Kalachakra is described in the Paramadibuddha, the Kalachakra, Basic Tantra:

Time, in Buddhism, is defined as a measurement of change. For example, a month is the measurement of change involved either

externally in the moon circling the earth. Such changes are cyclical in that

the pattern repeats, although the events of each cycle are not completely identical. Externally, the universe passes through cosmic, astronomical, astrological and historical cycles.



### **Kalachakra Initiation:**

The initiation process spans several days, with the first day being a preparation ceremony, followed by usually two or three days of actual empowerment. The 33<sup>rd</sup> Kalachakra initiated by His Holiness Dalai Lama in Leh Ladakh on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2014. The accounts of previous Kalachakra Initiations are as follows:-

The most important part of the initial procedures is taking refuge to Buddha. It is believed that without refuge we cannot actually receive empowerment, although we may witness it and derive great benefit.

The empowerment itself involves a complex procedure of imagining ourselves transforming into a series of special forms, entering the mandala of the Buddha, and experiencing in it a sequence of purifications and the awakening and enhancing of potentials for future success in the practice.

The mandala is an enormous multistoried palace, in and around which are 722 figures, including a principal couple in the center. The master conferring the empowerment simultaneously appears as all these figures, not just as the central one. Thus, throughout the process we visualize ourselves, our teacher and our surroundings in a very special way.

The steps of the initiation are extremely intricate and, without familiarity, the visualizations involved can be quite perplexing.

### **References**

<http://www.dalailama.com/teachings/kalachakra-initiations>

<http://ladakhkalachakra2014.com/>

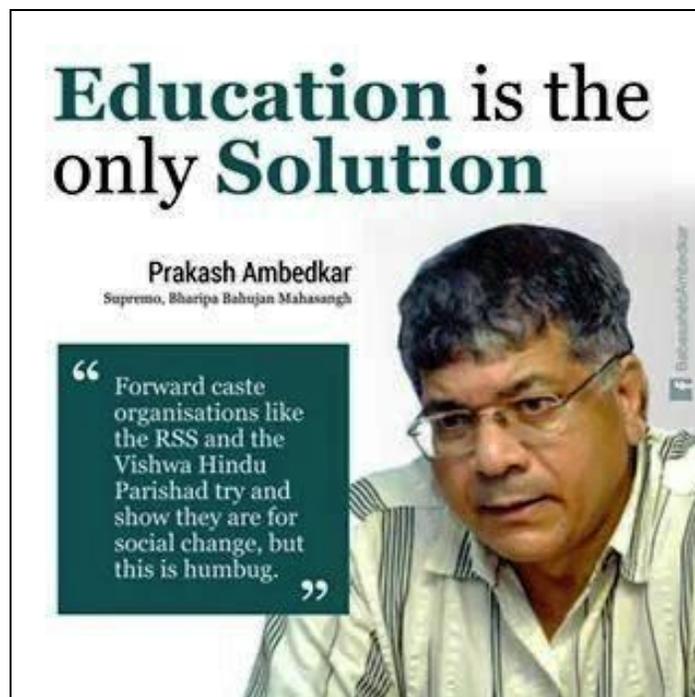
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## Dr. Ambedkar International Convention - Paris

Dr. Ambedkar International Mission (AIM) in collaboration with Shri Guru Ravidass Sabha, Paris, France, had organized the 3rd Dr. Ambedkar International Convention between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> July 2014 in Paris, France, at one of the world's prestigious center. The main objective of the convention was to spread message about Dr. Ambedkar's philosophy, his struggle and life mission. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> International conventions were held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> October 1998 and 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> December 2011, respectively. 3<sup>rd</sup> Dr. Ambedkar International Mission Convention held at Paris was indeed a grand success. More than 600 delegates from over 12 countries viz. U.S.A., Canada, U.K., Japan, Malaysia, India, Italy, Portugal, Holland, Belgium, Germany, France; attended the convention. The Buraku Liberation League (BLL), Japan volunteered to host the next convention in Japan. As an offshoot of the Paris convention, there is every likely that there will be international conventions in different countries of Europe every year; of course such conventions will be scaled down to mostly for Ambedkarites spread over Europe, UK, Canada, USA and other countries. The main objective of the convention is to develop a stronger network of Ambedkarites worldwide and be motivated to work for the freedom of their millions of

brothers and sisters from the clutches of the Hindu Caste system.

With an initiative from AIM Japan a convention was organised between 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015 to 17<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at Japan. The Government of Wakayama Prefecture, Japan and Government of Maharashtra, India in association with Embassy of India, Tokyo and Ambedkar International Mission, Japan had organised the Dr Ambedkar's Statue unveiling ceremony at Koyasan University, Wakayama, Japan. Maharashtra Chief Minister Mr. Devendra Fadnavis had consented to be Chief Guest from India. However, while going to press we have received a message from the organiser that the function has been postponed since the organisers have received an official email from Maharashtra Government stating that the unveiling ceremony along with the Maharashtra tourism promotion event scheduled from 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2015 in Japan has been postponed and the new dates will be announced in near future. As it was an international event, planned well in advance, the organizer should have gone ahead with the scheduled convention even in the absence of Mr. Devendra Fadnavis who postponed the visit to Japan since Mr. Fadnavis was invited at the last minute by PM to accompany him on the tour to China.



## Buddhist Youth Training Centre in Odisha



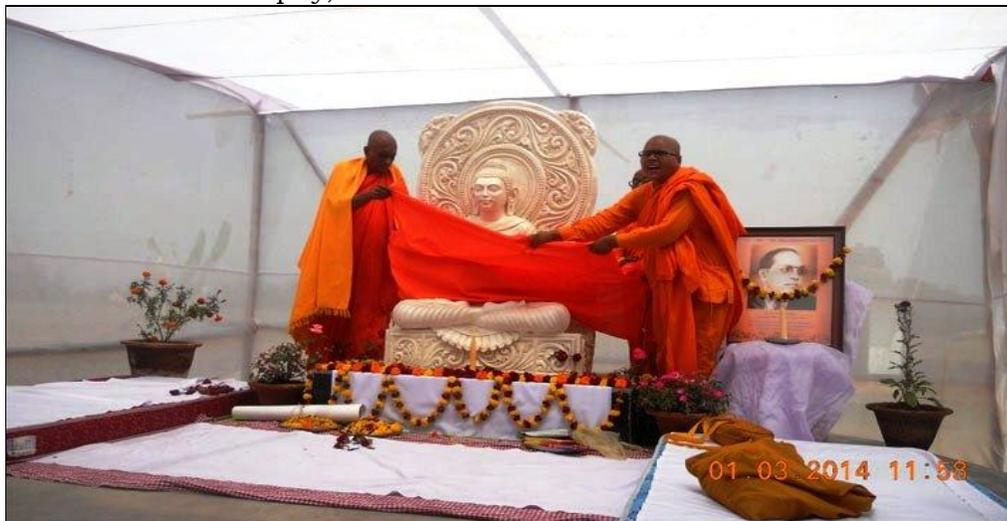
A Buddhist Youth Training Centre (BYTC) was inaugurated on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2015 in Jajpur District, Odisha. A statue of meditating Buddha has been installed at BYTC. Odisha Dalit Adhikar Manch (ODAM) has been working on the proposal of setting up of the Youth Training Centre for Buddhist over past two years. The inaugural function was presided over by Mr. Manas Jena, Human Rights Activist, Writer and Initiator of the process.

Bhante Sadattisha (Thero), Sri Lanka; Bhikuni Suniti, Nagpur and Bhikuni Sumedha, Nagpur unveiled the statue and conducted prayer. Many people from nearby area also converted to Buddhism on this occasion.

Later, a public meeting was organized on the eve of the occasion. Prof. Dr. Dhaneswar Sahu, Professor of Philosophy; Prof. Dr.

Basanth Mallick, Department of History, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar; Prof. Sanatan Jena, Retired Professor of Political Science; Mr. Narayan Das, Mr. Nityananda Jena, Retired Bureaucrat of Odisha State Secretariat, members of Odisha Dalit Adhikar Manch and Mr. Harish Mahapatra, Social Justice Movement leader and Film Personality, spoke on the relevance of Buddha and Ambedkar in today's context.

People, including activists, movement leaders from the different parts of the state and local youth, women and members of the district committee participated in the function and contributed to its success. This has created a new hope amongst the people looking for a democratic society based on principles of liberty, equality and fraternity in a caste and class divided society of India.





डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर यांनी संपादन केलेल्या  
एम.ए. पदवीच्या शताब्दी आणि 'थॉट्स ऑन पाकिस्तान' या ग्रंथाच्या  
पंच्याहत्तरीनिमित्त

रमाई फाउंडेशन, रमाई मासिक, रमाई प्रकाशन आणि सूर्यपुत्र भय्यासाहेब आंबेडकर प्रतिष्ठान,  
औरंगाबाद यांच्या वतीने आयोजित

# चौथे 'रमाई' चळवळीचे साहित्य संमेलन, रमाई स्मारक, वनंद (रमाईचे माहेर)

दि. २६ मे २०१५

आंबेडकरी महिला  
चळवळीचे मुख्यपत्र  
मासिक



अध्यक्ष



प्रा. आशालता कांबळे  
(सुप्रसिद्ध कवयित्री, लेखिका-मुंबई)

उद्घाटक



महाउपासिका मीराताई आंबेडकर  
(राष्ट्रीय अध्यक्षा-  
भारतीय बौद्ध महासभा, मुंबई)



विशेष उपस्थिती



भीमराव आंबेडकर  
(राष्ट्रीय कार्यध्यक्षा-  
भारतीय बौद्ध महासभा, मुंबई)

स्वागताध्यक्ष



प्रियाताई खरे  
(मुंबई)

स्थळ :

सूर्यपुत्र भय्यासाहेब आंबेडकर  
साहित्यनगरी,  
'रमाई स्मारक' वनंद  
ता. दापोली जि. रत्नागिरी

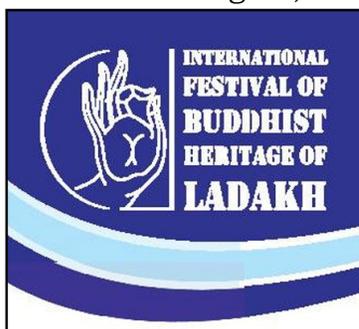
Contact :

+91-9403123375 / +91-9623726520 / +91-9420691245 / +91-9405695384

## International Festival of Buddhist Heritage of Ladakh 2015

(22<sup>nd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2015)

Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre (MIMC) in collaboration with Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Bihar, International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) New Delhi, J&K Tourism and Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Leh, have decided to organize the 4<sup>th</sup> International Festival of Buddhist Heritage of Ladakh from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2015. The festival will be one of its kind which will promote Ladakh's rich ethnic and diverse heritage. Being the land of tranquility, an oasis of peace, harmony and cradle of Buddhism with nature's blessings, the event has the potential to become a prestigious feature of international stature in the cultural calendar of the region as well as to promote Ladakh as a distinct tourist, cultural and spiritual destination of the globe.



Ladakh, as a land of Dhamma and custodian of Buddhist heritage, has been promoting cultural exchange with other nations that shared Buddhist heritage in both economic as well as cultural prospective since time immemorial by promoting spiritual tourism through the message of peace, harmony and compassion.

This unique Festival is expected to attract a huge number of participants from foreign countries, renowned scholars, masters and artists from within the country and abroad. Apart from these dignitaries many eminent Buddhist scholars and other religious masters are also participating in this important event.

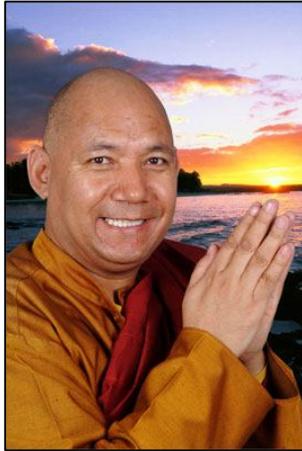
The Tentative Schedule for the festival is as follows:-

<b>Date</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Particulars</b>
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> August, 2015 (Saturday)</b>	06:00 Onwards 04:00 PM	Arrival of Guests & rest for acclimatization Registration
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2015 (Sunday)</b>	09:30 A.M-12:00 PM	Inauguration of the International Festival of Buddhist Heritage of Ladakh 2015
	12:00 PM- 01:30 PM	Colorful Traditional Cultural Program
	10:00 A.M Onwards	Live Exhibition on Tribal Culture of Ladakh
	10:00 A.M Onwards	Photo Exhibition
	07:00 PM	Traditional Cultural Performance
<b>24<sup>th</sup> August, 2015 (Monday)</b>	09:30 AM	Holy Ritual Mask Performance
	10:00 A.M	Live Exhibition on Tribal Culture of Ladakh
	10:00 A.M Onwards	Photo exhibition
	10:00 AM	International Buddhist Film Festival
<b>25<sup>th</sup> August, 2015 (Tuesday )</b>	10:00 A.M Onwards	Live Exhibition on Tribal Culture of Ladakh
	10:00 AM	Seminar on "Buddhist heritage of Ladakh" by many eminence scholars of Ladakh& abroad
	06:00 PM	Valedictory Ceremony of the IFBHL 2015 Followed by colourful traditional culture program
<b>26<sup>th</sup> August, 2015 (Tuesday) – 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2015</b>	Optional Heritage tour to famous monasteries like Hemis, Thiksay, Likir, Alchi, Lamayuru etc. and Places like Pangong Lake, Nubra Valley, etc.	
<b>Contact Details</b>	Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre (MIMC) Devachan, Saboo Dho, P. O. Box # 22, Leh-Ladakh – 194101 (India)	
<b>Telephone</b>	+91-9906982024                      +91-1982-264372	
<b>Email</b>	ifbhl.mimc@gmail.com              infomimc@gmail.com	
<b>Website</b>	www.ifbhl.org                              www.mahabodhi-ladakh.org	

## **Mahabodhi International Medication Centre (MIMC)**

The Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre (MIMC) is a great example of one man's vision turning into reality. Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena established the Mahabodhi International Meditation Center in 1986 to offer both spiritual instructions as well as desperately needed humanitarian services to impoverished people in the remote land of Ladakh.

Mahabodhi Devachan is built on the values and practices of the Buddha Dhamma. The Sanga provides the core leadership and vision for its development and working. The community of monks and nuns, students, elderly and disabled, staff and guests all have equal access to the timeless and life changing teaching of the Buddha.



A dedicated team of social workers, teachers, doctors, monks, nuns, community leaders and care-providers have created an integrated community at Devachan in Ladakh which provides comprehensive care to all segments of society: children, elderly, special needs individuals, monks & nuns, the sick, as well as those seeking spiritual development. The community has become a model for the region through sustainable, ecological development.

### **Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena**

Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena was born in the remote Himalayan region of Ladakh - an ancient state located in the far north west of India, high on the Tibetan plateau. He was brought up within a deeply religious family, amongst people who followed the ancient Buddhist traditions and believed in peacefulness, humility and innocence as the natural way of life. At the age of seventeen he joined the Indian Army, where he developed a strong sense of personal discipline and responsibility.

1977 was a particularly significant year in his life, for this is when he felt the inner spiritual call and decided to leave the army. He left the mountains of Ladakh far behind him and became a committed disciple of the renowned

Buddhist scholar and celebrated monk, Venerable Acharya Buddharakkhita Mahathera, the abbot of the Mahabodhi Society Vihara, Bangalore, South India.

In 1986 Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena founded the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre (MIMC) in Ladakh. For the past 25 years Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena has tirelessly and selflessly worked to provide high quality education and safe shelter for underprivileged children, first-class healthcare for the sick and needy, empowerment and literacy programmes for women and other socially disadvantaged groups, a caring home for the aged and destitute, and many other humanitarian services. The site for much of Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena's humanitarian and spiritual service work has been the 200 acres of moon-like desert that now form the impressive backdrop to the main Mahabodhi Devachan campus in Choglamsar, Ladakh.

### **List of Activities of Of MIMC**

1. Mahabodhi Sambodhi Retreat Centre: Dedicated to physical and mental well-being, social harmony, world peace and the realization of enlightenment.
2. Mahabodhi Milarepa Meditation and Trekking Camps: Dedicated to spiritual life in harmony with nature.
3. Mahabodhi Jetavana Monastery: Dedicated to the training of young monastic students.
4. Mahabodhi Nunnery: Dedicated to the upliftment of Nuns and women.
5. Mahabodhi Educational Programs: A holistic educational movement - dedicated to the eradication of illiteracy and poverty.
6. Mahabodhi Residential School: Dedicated to holistic education to the children from far flung areas of Ladakh.
7. Mahabodhi Boys Hostel: Dedicated to providing a safe home and inviting deprived children.
8. Mahabodhi Girls Hostels: Dedicated to holistic education and providing a safe home and for inviting deprived children.
9. Mahabodhi School and Hostel Project for visually impaired Children : Dedicated to the disabled children of Ladakh
10. Mahabodhi Home for the Aged and Destitute: Devoted to the care and respect of the elderly and destitute.
11. Mahabodhi Karuna Charitable Hospital: Dedicated to the welfare of sick people.
12. Mahabodhi Mobile Health Clinic: Dedicated to health-care of the

- communities of remote and inaccessible areas.
13. Mahabodhi Maitri Charity program: Dedicated to emergency relief for the very poorest members of society.
  14. Mahabodhi Environmental Projects: Dedicated to afforestation and nature conservation.
  15. Mahabodhi Zita and Horst Norberg Studio: Dedicated to promote and preserve Ladakh culture.
  16. Mahabodhi Interfaith Program: Dedicated to inter-religious harmony and peaceful co-existence.
  17. Mahabodhi Youth Wing: Dedicated to building character and confidence in local youths.
  18. Mahabodhi Adult Women Literacy Project: Dedicated to the empowerment of women.
  19. Mahabodhi Tingmosgang Branch School: Dedicated to education of rural children.
  20. Mahabodhi Bodhkharbu Branch School: Dedicated to education of deprived and neglected rural children.
  21. Mahabodhi Nubra Branch : Dedicated to education of rural children
  22. Mahabodhi Jammu Deepa Centre, Jammu: Dedicated to spiritual life in the city.
  23. Mahabodhi Meditation Centre, Chandigarh : Dedicated to spiritual life in the city
  24. Mahabodhi Padmaloka Girls Hostel, Chandigarh : Dedicated to the higher education of girl students

### **Monasteries in Ladakh Ladakh**

Ladakh, the Land of High Passes (la dwags), is one of the highest inhabited regions in the world. Located in the north Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, this high-altitude cold desert is flanked by two formidable mountain ranges – the Karakoram to the northwest and the Great Himalayan range to the southwest. Between these two mountain ranges, there are smaller massifs such as the Ladakh and Zaskar mountain ranges, the altitude varies between 9,000 feet and 25,170 feet resulting in extreme temperatures – in winter, temperatures can drop down to a staggering minus 40 degrees Celsius while in summer they tend to soar up to 35 degrees.

The region is denied access to the monsoon-laden winds that sweep across much of North India by the Great Himalayas, so the main source of water remains the glaciers and heavy winter snowfall that feed the network of springs and streams. Many of these

streams eventually join the major rivers that traverse the region. Foremost among them is the River Indus, which begins its journey near Mount Kailash in Tibet and enters Ladakh at Demchok, about 250km southeast of Leh. The Indus continues flowing through the central Ladakh heartland, before entering Pakistan. It was along this mighty river and its tributaries – the Zaskar, Shayok and Nubra rivers – that human settlements first arose in this austere environment.

### **Leh**

Leh is the main headquarter of Leh district. It is said that the first settlement was started around Chubi during the reign of King Tashi Namgyal who built the castle and Gonkhang on top of the Tsemo hill. During the reign of King Singe Namgyal, the nine storied palace was built above the present old town. Leh means a garden with springs and plantation. In ancient times, Leh used to be an important trade centre on a feeder branch of the fabled Silk Route. Traders from Kashmir, Punjab and Central Asia halted here with their caravans en route to the mercantile cities of Chinese Central Asia such as Yarkand, Kashgar and Khotan. Today, Leh is an important tourist destination in India and has an airport located at the outskirts of the city.

Some of the well-known Monasteries located in Ladakh and Leh are listed here

1. Namgyal Tsemo Monastery (Fortress of Tashi Namgyal)
2. Lhechen Palkar (Leh Palace)
3. Shey
4. Stok Palace
5. Thiksey Monastery
6. Stakna Monastery
7. Takthok Monastery
8. Hemis Monastery
9. Matho Monastery
10. Spituk Monastery
11. Phyang Monastery
12. Likir Monastery
13. Basgo Monastery
14. Alchi Monastery
15. Rizong Monastery
16. Tingmogang Monastery
17. Samstanling Monastery
18. Diskit Monastery
19. Karsha Monastery
20. Zongkul Monastery

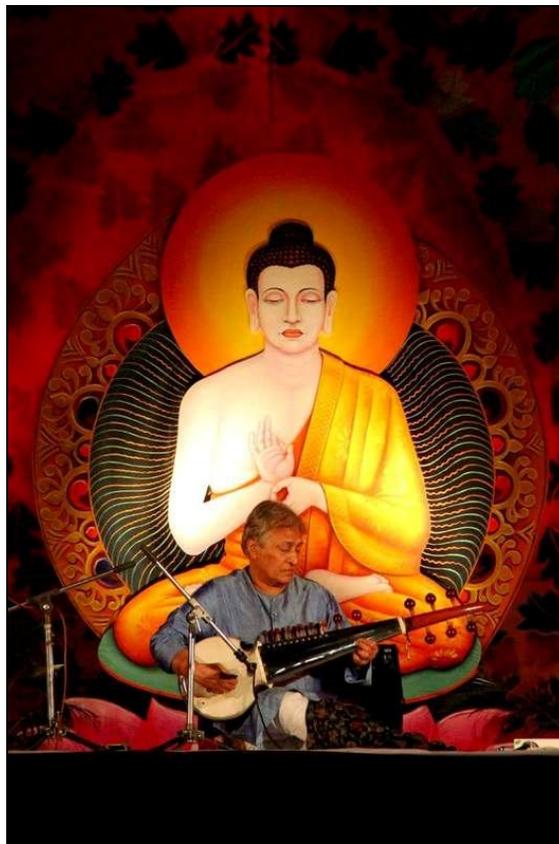
### **References and source**

<http://www.mahabodhi-ladakh.org>  
<http://ladakhkalachakra2014.com/monasteries-in-ladakh/>

## Nagpur Buddhist Festival 2015



**Sarod recital by Ustad Amjad Ali Khan. The event was attended by noted artists from the field of Cinema and Music!**



## Mountaineer Anand Bansode



Mountaineer Anand Bansode successfully climbed the Europe's tallest Mount Elbrus, the highest mountain in Europe on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014 at 10.32 AM. Mount Elbrus isn't technically a mountain — it is an inactive volcano located in the western Caucasus mountain range, near the Georgian border in Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachay-Cherkessia, Russia. The height of the mountain is 18,510 feet (5,642 meters). Mountaineer Anand Bansode, a member of Mission Everest 2012, has entered the Limca Book of Records 2013, for being the first

person to play the national anthem on the guitar at the height of 6300 m (26669 ft) above sea level at Camp 2 of Mount Everest on May 6, 2013. Mr. Anand Bansode, a true Ambedkarite, holds the Guinness Book of World Record for conducting a music concert at the highest peak for more than 15 minutes during the same expedition on May 6, 2013 fulfilling the guidelines of Guinness Book regulations. With this performance, he broke the record of Germany's Musikkapelle Roggenzell who held a ten-minute long concert with ten musicians.



Mr. Anand Bansode, aged 27, hails from a middle class Buddhist family from Solapur, Maharashtra, never let the lack of financial resources get in the way of his dreams. He received complete support of his family, both, financially and morally. His father mortgaged their house and his mother sold all her jewelry to arrange the Rs 20 Lakhs (about US \$ 31250) needed for his trip to Mount Everest. He prepared continuously for six years for his trip to Mount Everest. Five days a week he used to do a one hour workout in the morning and ran for two hours in the evening. On the weekends he used trek up Sinhadgad Fort, near Pune. Mr Anand

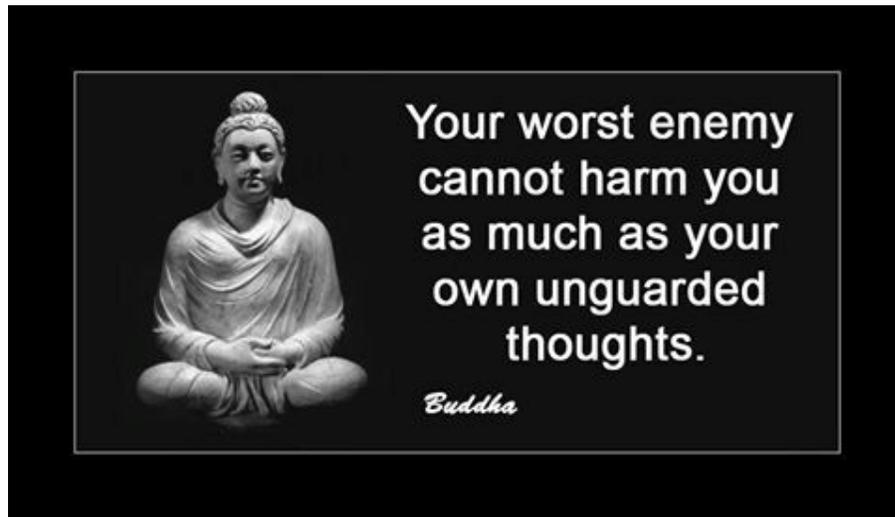
Bansode says that singing national anthem on the mountain and creating a world record was a very emotional moment for him. His future dream is to scale the highest peaks on all seven continents. Mr. Anand Bansode is M.Sc. in Physics and presently he is undertaking a research project at National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), Pune. His next target is to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. Mount Kilimanjaro, with its three volcanic cones, Kibo, Mawenzi and Shira, is a dormant volcanic mountain in Tanzania. The height of Mountain Kilimanjaro is 5895 Meters (19,341 ft). The Mountain Kilimanjaro is a large stratovolcano. Of its three peaks,

Mawenzi and Shira are extinct, while Kibo, the highest, is dormant and could erupt again. The last major eruption has been dated to between 150,000 and 200,000 years ago. Although dormant, Kibo has gas-emitting fumaroles in its crater. Several collapses and landslides have occurred on Kibo before, one creating the area known as the Western Breach.

Recently a University from UK has awarded Honorary Ph. D. to Anand for his research

Thesis playing music on Mountain at the function held on Delhi. His research work will be referred as Record References all over the world. Anand has got several Awards for his outstanding achievements. He dedicated his several awards for some social causes

Mr. Anand Bansode can be reached at +91-9730277759 / [www.anandbansode.com](http://www.anandbansode.com)



**OUR FUTURE IN HANDS OF SUPERSTITION?**

MINISTRY OF SUPERSTITION?

OUR FATE IN HANDS OF SUPERSTITION?

**DEAR HRD MINISTER,  
EDUCATION CREATES FUTURE  
NOT SUPERSTITION**

**International Conference on Teachings of Ven. Bodhi-dharma at Chennai, India  
(13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of August 2015)**

The proposed international conference is on Ven. Bodhi-dharma's teaching, a Buddhist Monk from Tamil Nadu who went to China and established the Chan School of Buddhism and exerted deep impact on the life style of the people of Asia.

It is remarkable that the Medieval Traders and Buddhist Monks of India served as true cultural ambassadors since they carried with them the rich cultural traditions of India to various parts of Asia along with their mercantile commodities and the message of love and compassion of the Buddha. This great message of the Buddha radiated its rays over the benighted world and brought the people of Asia closer than ever and developed spiritual kinship and symbiotic relationship among them.

One such spiritual and cultural ambassador was Ven. Bodhi-Dharma, a prince of Kanchipuram, the capital city of the Pallava dynasty, who went to China in the Fifth Century AD and founded the Chan/Zen school of Buddhism. The teachings of this great monk from the Tamil soil has transformed the life and culture of the people in China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and many other countries and he is venerated as the first Zu (patriarch) of Zen Buddhism. The Chinese manuscripts show the birthplace of Ven. Bodhi-Dharma as "Kang-zhi", which researchers believe to be Kanchipuram of Tamil Nadu, a great spot of learning and cultural diffusion during the times of Bodhi-Dharma.

Mahayana or Zen Buddhism has given birth to a vast literary corpus. The Japanese worship Ven. Bodhi-Dharma as Dharmazan. If Lord Gautama Buddha is the Light of Asia, Ven. Bodhi-Dharma is a great Asian beacon of philosophy. It is a matter of great pride for Tamil Nadu that this great Buddhist teacher hailed from Kanchipuram, one of the spiritual city of ancient India. Ven. Bodhi-Dharma taught Kalari art, the unique martial art form of Southern part of India to the Chinese, and this later evolved into various forms of martial arts in Asia.

The Zen Buddhism brought about revolutionary changes and enlightenment in

the culture and lives of not only practitioners but also ordinary people in East Asia, including China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and other countries. In our contemporary world, the influence of Zen Buddhism is not waning, but rather it is vigorously expanding worldwide, and its importance is increasing even more.

To help advance the study of Indian philosophy and Mahayana Buddhism, a Buddhist Study Centre named after Ven. Bodhi-dharma is being established in Kanchipuram, his birth place. It would serve as a centre of study and meditation for Buddhists and scholars from all over the world.

Even though Ven. Bodhi-dharma and his Zen Buddhism are popular worldwide, they are not well known in the birth place of Ven. Bodhi-dharma. A thorough study of Ven. Bodhi-dharma and his teaching in relation to his native country is highly indispensable to have an objective understanding about this great teacher and philosopher. To get a holistic understanding of Bodhi-dharma whose roots are in the spiritual soil of India a two day International Conference on Ven. Bodhi-dharma has been organized at Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of August 2015.

#### **Areas of Deliberation**

Scholars from various countries will participate and present papers on various aspects of Ven. Bodhi-dharma and his teachings. The organizers have invited scholars from all over the world to present research papers on various impact of Ven. Bodhi-dharma on Buddhism in China and his teachings.

#### **Organizers:**

The seminar is being organized by the Institute of Asian Studies, Chennai, India in association with Institute of Seon (Zen), South Korea and a few other centers of international reputation with the support of the ICCR, Govt. of India.



## Global Protest Against Caste Discrimination



21<sup>st</sup> June, 2014 will be remembered as a historic day in the Dalit history when, for the first time, NRIs settled in various countries came on streets simultaneously to protest against the caste based discrimination and ill treatment being given to them on the basis of their birth. In solidarity with Dalit organisations across the World, on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2014, a demonstration against caste discrimination took place in front of the 10, Downing Street, London, UK, the official residence of the British Prime Minister. This was a second demonstration by Dalits held in the month of June, 2014. It was organised by the Anti Caste discrimination Alliance UK and supported by a number of organisations including Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist Organisations UK, Ambedkar Mission Society, Southall Black Sisters, Indian Workers Association, Sri Guru Ravidass and Bhagwan Valmik Sabhas UK and several other organisations. The purpose of the protest was to raise awareness with UK Government, policy-makers, Parliamentarians and the Press about the key issues that impact on socially excluded groups like Dalits, atrocities against them including the rape and violence against women and girls in India. It also intended to promote the draft 'UN Principles and

Guidelines for the Effective Elimination of Discrimination based on Work and Descent' established by the UN Human Rights Council.

A petition, including a joint statement signed by numerous Dalit and Non-Dalit organisations, demanding the government to implement without further delay the law agreed by Parliament to outlaw Caste-based discrimination in the UK, was handed over to the Prime Minister. The protesters also asked the British Government to use their clout to stop atrocities against Dalits especially caste based rapes and violence against women in India.



The call for Global action against caste based discrimination was given by the US based organisation, International Commission for Dalit Rights (ICDR) and joined by many cross faith Dalit and non-Dalit organisations (including those representing Ambedkarites, Buddhists, Christians, Muslims, Ravidassia and Valmikis).

At the same time, the protest events also took place in New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles in USA and Toronto in Canada and raised the voice against human rights abuses in India and abroad.

▲▲▲

## Mrs. Vasundhara Kamble Elected as Councillor in Northern Ireland



Mrs. Vasundhara Kamble is the first woman Ambedkarite elected as Councillor in Castlereagh Borough's Council in Northern Ireland in Westminster UK. We, the team at Buddhist Voice, congratulate her for this distinguished achievement. Ms. Vasundhara Kamble was born and brought up in Mumbai, India. She has three grown-up children and was a teacher for seventeen years in India before she and her husband migrated to Belfast, UK in 1995.

She taught history in senior college and Ancient Indian History was her speciality. Mrs. Vasundhara's main pastime is reading, but she also does embroidery and patchwork and is a member of Patchwork and Embroidery Guild of Northern Ireland. Mrs. Kamble also does voluntary work, mainly with Women's Aid. It is her first time standing for election in Westminster. The Alliance Party has selected Mrs. Vasundhara Kamble to stand in Fermanagh and South Tyrone in the Westminster election

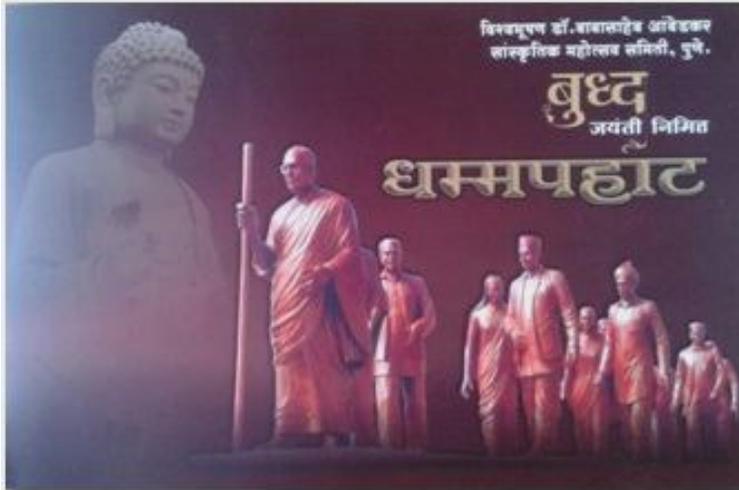
## 2000 Kg Book on Buddha



Buddha and His Dhamma, a book written by Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar on Buddha's Life and Teaching has been translated in Hindi and etched into a stainless steel tome weighing a whopping 2000 kg at Agra, India. The 24 page book has the whole text of the 400 odd pages book "Buddha and His Dhamma. The producers of the book have applied for entry into Guinness World record for the tag of World's heaviest Book. The books pages are 9.20 in height and 5.50 feet in width. The thickness of a page is 2 inches. Besides Taj Mahal, the producers are confident that Agra will also be now known for this book world-over. The Book will travel all over the India for public viewing before it will be kept at Gyanodaya Buddh Vihar, Dhanoli, Agra.



## Bauddha Dhamma Pahat



'Bauddha Dhamma Pahat' is an annual musical event being organized for the past few years. Pahat means morning. It is a Marathi world. The festival is being organized every year by Dr. Ambedkar Sanskrutik

Mahotsav Samiti, Pune, India in the early morning of Bauddha Purnima day. The event is generally attended by many noted personalities from social, political and educational field.

As early as 5 AM in the morning the venue was stormed by the Buddhists in and around Pune, Maharashtra and from the States of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. By 5:45 am the venue was almost full to capacity but later with no space left people occupied whatever positions they could and remained in those positions up to the end of the program around 11:00 am.



Apart from the melodious music and the songs sung by noted singers, the orchestration was led by an All Women's Band, that had been a part of a famous television show on one of the TV channels in India a few years ago.

The artists sung messages from the Dhamma Pada and inspiration songs forwarding the Ambedkarite movement. The songs were very aptly interspersed by anecdotes from the Dhamma Pada and thoughts and quotations of Dr. Ambedkar.

At the end of the program a clip on proposed statue of Mahamata Ramai Ambedkar was screened and donations were collected for the statue and for the Nepal earthquake victims.



**Google Doodle on 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2015  
(Bheem Jayanti)**

## Dr B R Ambedkar National Award 2014

### Mr. Thangkham Lupheng.



Dalit Sahitya Academy, New Delhi announced Dr B R Ambedkar National Award 2015 to Mr. Thangkham Lupheng. Mr. Thangkham Lupheng is a noted social worker from Manipur State, particularly among the tribal communities. Mr. Thangkham Lupheng belongs to Nungkha village, Sadar Hill in Senapati District, Manipur. He is the president of Kuki Inpi Saikul Gamkhai as well as the General Secretary of Committee on Protection of Tribal Areas Manipur (CoPTAM).

### Dr B R Ambedkar National Fellowship 2015

Well-known writer, Mr. Kaithakkal Somakrup, has been selected for Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Fellowship 2015 in recognition of his contribution to literature for Dr B R Ambedkar National Fellowship, 2015. The Award instituted by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Jayanti celebration committee presented the award to Mr. Kaithakkal Somakrup on Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Jayanti ( Birth Anniversary) i.e. on 14th April 2015 held at Thiruventhapuram, Tamilnadu, India.

## All India Buddhist Literature Summit

The Buddhist Voice in association with Global Buddha Foundation and Prabuddha Yuva Group has organized a three day All India Buddhist Literature Meet / Summit on 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at New Mumbai-400708, India. The Literature Summit is having full three day program which includes Panel Discussions, Debit, Kavi's Sammelan, cultural program and festival of Drama.

Venue:- Bhadant Dr. Rahul Sankrityan Sachitya Naghi.  
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Ground,  
Sector-15, Airoli,  
Navi Mumbai-400708, India.

Date and Time : From 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> May 2015.  
Time 9 am To 10 pm.

Contact Details:- Phone No. 900405109/ 7738871717/  
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### Inclusion of Pali in Indian Official Language



World know India as a Land of Buddha. Buddha used Pali as his language of communications since it was the language widely spoken and understood by all citizens during Buddha's Period. Today Indian Constitution recognizes 22 languages which do not include Pali. In order to include Pali in the list of recognized languages of the country a private bill has been moved by Mr. Bhalchandra Mungekar, Rajyasabha MP. To include Pali in the list of official Indian languages as officially approved language so that it can be offered as a optional language for Examinations conducted by Union Public Services Commission (UPSC) India.

### Launch of Bhartiya Buddhist Sangha (BBS)

With initiative from few active Buddhist an all India Organization viz. Bhartiya Buddhist Sangha (BBS) has been Launched on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2015 at Aurangabad, Chief Guest for the function was Prof. Sushma Andhare. Main objective of BBS is to be instrumental in Economical and Cultural Development of Buddhist People in India.

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## Sant Kabir Residential Hostel for Boys



Prabuddha Foundation (PF) has set-up a hostel for orphan, single parent children and homeless students at Saloba Vasti, At Post Khutgaon, Taluka Daund, District Pune, Maharashtra. Saloba Vasti, a Village surrounded by farms and trees, is located at about 60 km from Pune City and about 12 km off Pune Solapur Highway near Daund. The Prabuddha Foundation, a Government Recognized and registered NGO, has been promoted by Mr. Ravindra Bansode and Mr. Vijay Nag in 2008. PF is operating a Boys hostel since 2009. The infrastructure at the Boys Hostel includes three rooms to accommodate the student and basic facilities such as Kitchen, Bore-well, toilets and

bathrooms. The entire infrastructure has been funded by the members of the Prabuddha Foundation under the leadership of Mr. Ravindra Bansode. Mr, Ravindra Bansode, aged 35 years, is in social movement for last 12 years. He was managing editor of *Buddha Bharat* for 7 years. Buddha Bharat is a magazine focusing on socio-political issues of Buddhists in India. Recognizing the efforts by Prabuddha Foundation, the Government of Maharashtra is funding the food and other basic expenses for Boys Hostel since the academic year 2012-13 for 24 students. The present students are from all religions, castes and most of them are either orphan or their parents cannot afford expenses for their education. Presently, the hostel accommodation is for students studying in 5<sup>th</sup> Standard to 10<sup>th</sup> Standard. They attend the ZP School in nearby village.

The Prabuddha Foundation has purchased 3500 sq. feet land and planning to acquire additional land for further expansion and for building a study rooms and library facilities for the students. From next year academic year Foundation is also planning to start in-house coaching for the students so that they can excel in academic field and achieve remarkable heights. The Foundation members' viz. Sachin Ahire, Chandrakant Sonkamble, Adv. Ambadas Bansode, Ms. Deepali Chavan, Ms. Pallavi Harshe etc. are spending their personal time and money for this Nobel cause.

Our readers are requested to extend their help to this hostel so that better facilities can be provided to needy students.

### Contact Details:

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