

## "Eి ఏిజిజితె" The Buddhist



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## Cover Photo

(The Dagaba at Thanthirimale Raja Maha Viharaya)
Thanthirimale Raja Maha Viharaya built in 3rd c B.C., covered in near by rock area is situated in the Anuradhapura District. One of the eight saplings of Sri Maha Bodhi was planted at Thanthirimale, age-old caves, cave paintings and sedentary Buddha statue and a recumbent Buddha statue carvings out of the rock.

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# The Buddhist 

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#### Abstract

                   


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## Editorial $\sim$

## Let's appreciate the service of Colonel Henry Steel Olcott

From the time of the Portuguese started to govern the Maritime Provinces of Ceylon in 1505, the English who later invaded the country gave us independence in 1948. During the above period the Sinhalese as a Nation and Buddhism as a Religion had to suffer a pathetic fate. The westerners observed and admitted the fact that if they were to invade and start governing Ceylon they had to eliminate Buddhism from this land.

So, they started to rob and arson the Buddhist temples and kill the Buddhist monks. To avoid being killed, the monks had to flee to the mountains and hide. Some became "Ganinnansela". Later, some of them had supported the English rulers by providing information about the Sinhala conspiring leaders through 'Katupulles'.

Because of this, the courageous Buddhist leaders and the brave erudite monks had to engage in a severe struggle to protect the Buddhists and the upcoming Buddhist leaders.

In an era where the nation and the religion were in a state of serious disturbance, the "Panadurawaadaya" was started by the Ven. Megettuwatte Gunananda thero and a group of Buddhists scholars. This was a severe blow to the Christian religion and idealisms, and it was a remarkable landmark in history.

Colonel Henry Steel Olcott who was born on the 2nd of August 1832 came to India voluntarily to serve the downtrodden and after serving in India came to Ceylon along with the positive results of 'Panadurawaadaya'.

Colonel Henry Steel Olcott who had arranged free educational programs for South Indian low- caste children, had a good understanding of their positive results and he had a good knowledge of Hinduism and Islam too.

He came to Ceylon with Lady Blavatsky in 1890 and observed that in Ceylon which is a Buddhist country there were only 2 Buddhist schools, and the total number of school children was 246 .

By this time, 805 Catholic schools had been established in this country and 78086 children were being educated in them.

The period of two decades from $1870-1890$ was a note worthy period in the history of this country.

It was during this period that the erudite monks such as Ven. Megettuwatte Gunananda, Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala, the incumbent of Maligawatte Pirivena, and persons of unflinching courage such as Colonel Henry Steel Olcott and Anagarika Dharmapala contributed a massive effort for the revival of Buddhism and reestablishment of Buddhist culture.

The gradual improvement of the Buddhist revival that grew up with 'Parama Vignartha Samagama' (Buddhist Theosophical Society (BTS) ) reached a level that became a headache to the Christian Church. Those who were shy to admit that they were Buddhists started to come forward.

On the 13th of February 1886 the first 'Daham Pasala' was started and in May 1886 it was transformed into a Buddhist school of English and later
renamed as Colombo Ananda Vidyala. This school was started with 37 students and C.W. Lead Beater was the principal and became an outstanding school for Buddhist religious revival.
"Sarasavi Sandarasa" the magazine started under the guidance of Colonel Henry Steel Olcott who came to Ceylon was warmly embraced by the Buddhist readership and in 1918 the magazine was handed over to the Colombo Young Men’s Buddhist Association, and the magazine is printed up to this day under the title 'The Buddhist'.

The service contributed by Colonel Henry Steel Olcott to declare the Vesak day, the day of birth of Lord Buddha as a national holiday, and to create a Buddhist flag of six colour and hoist it on behalf of the Buddhists of the world is immense.

Colonel Henry Steel Olcott rendered an unmatched service to the revival of Buddhism and education in this country along with the monks who were the Buddhist leaders, in addition to the leaders such as Anagarika Dharmapala, Sir D.B. Jayathilake and the other strong leaders of that time.

Colonel Henry Steel Olcott breathed his last in India, on the 17th of February 1907 engraving the mark of 32 years of service in history.

The unmatched service rendered to Buddhism by Colonel Henry Steel Olcott is unforgettable.

Sunil S. Sirisena
Editor-in-Chief


Freedom and peace are Universally treasured by most beings and specially the humans. For a sovereign to gain and sustain leadership in such a scenario should be blessed with numerous excellent qualities. Some of the fundamental prerequisites for good governance are that, of those who administrate must act honorably, honestly and justly.

The political scenario during the time of omniscient Sammasambuddha could be portrayed as predominantly autocratic feudal kingdoms. In this setting, generally the subordinate people were by and large harshly
and despotically governed. Torture, oppression, persecution, agonizing punishment and excessive taxes were some of the hallmarks.

The Blessed one was always touched, concerned and cared about the cruel treatment of beings. According to the learned Scholar the Venerable Dr. Walpola Rahula has declared in his acclaimed literary composition "What the Buddha taught" .... "The enlightened one directed his attention to the problem of just government". Venerable Dr. Rahula adds "How this form of just government could be realized is explained by the Buddha in his teaching of the ten Duties of the King" (dasa raja dhamma).

Please note that henceforth in this presentation dasa raja dhamma will be referred to as "D.R.D."

The duties included by the term 'DRD' consists of virtuous and noble qualities and characteristics of a ruler. The make up of "DRD" according to Buddhist canon consists of :-

| Dana | $=$ liberality/charity |
| ---: | :--- |
| Sila | $=$ morality |
| Pariccaga | $=$ Altruism, giving up |
| Ajjava | $=$ Honesty, Integrity |
| Majjava | $=$ gentleness,, kind |
| Tapa | $=$ Spartan, Simple |
| Akkodha | $=$Free from enmity, <br>  <br>  <br> anger |
| Avihimsa | $=$Harmlessness, <br>  <br> non-violence |
| Khanti | $=$Tolerance, patience <br> Avirodha |
|  | Goodwill, non- <br>  |

A sincere virtuous master governing a country should be able to orchestrate the administration in accordance with the guidelines set out in 'DRD'.

## ి ఇఙిఙొరె / The Buddhist <br> November - 2020

The standard norm of morality as communicated by the Enlightened one is, if designed or executed to damage oneself or others or both it is immoral. It is note worthy that the key components are to embrace and widespread love, pity and empathy for all beings. Country heads and leaders must be exemplary. Integrity is paramount. It is widely accepted that Mahathma Gandhi of India, Nelson Mandela of Africa and Abraham Lincoln of USA were national icons worthy of emulation. Such heroic leaders were capable of inspiring people to achieve great heights such as freedom. To succeed Rajas must continuously, intelligently self search within to improve and refine themselves in keeping with D.R.D. guidelines.

PARRICCAGA is selflessness/ altruism. Selfishness must be avoided. Matters of public interest should always be considered as sensitive issues. Simplicity and austerity are hallmarks to be benchmarked. Giving up and sacrifice for the benevolence and benefit of society should be achieved by deliberate focus. Never embrace an exploitive lifestyle at the cost to the people. Deny for self fame, gain, name and comfort for the sake of the good of the citizens. Briefly a few glorious gestures of altruism are when very early after the discovery of the truth the enlightened Buddha had a full-fledged team of sixty messengers of the Dhamma. These Arahats ventured out alone in different directions to propagate and promote the doctrine to all. The life's work of king Datusena of Sri Lanka who invested all his wealth and resources to construct the Kalawewa for the welfare of the country exemplifies selflessness.

A Vietnam war veteran Karl Malantes who won the navy cross medal for extra- ordinary heroism observed "Acts of heroism are different from acts of bravery.

People who are heroes go beyond what is expected of them risking life and limb to benefit others. There is an altruistic aspect to heroism ". This communication coming from a battle-hardened stalwart is worthy of reflection and respect.

AJJAVA- Honesty/IntegrityImplies being honest and sincere to others and self. Will never engage in acts and deeds which are corrupt, dishonourable, unscrupulous or distrustful. It is cardinal and important that fair play and justice should prevail. No room must be provided for the evil path stated in the Buddhist moral ethic (agati)" of greed (chanda), of hate (dosa) of delusion (moha) of cowardice (bhaya)" to surface or surge.

The Samma Sambuddha is a personification of moral excellence. As the mahabosatano when fulfilling his perfections (paramis) over an enormous period he continuously developed this virtue. The well-known Seruwanija jataka was selected out of a magnitude of magnificent episodes to show case this forte.

MADDAVA- kind and gentleWhen we reach the fifth D.R.D. it is kindness and being gentle, which is the kernel, crux and essence of a raja. No doubt among the vital features of a ruler are commitment and uprightness. However as and when the issue necessitates he would be flexible to compromise and even make concessions. He should share in the joy of success and be stunned and shocked when disaster and distress arise in his country. Such a personality should refrain from being autocratic, inhuman, unrefined and discourteous. Like a huge shady tree which provides cool and shelter to travellers he should foster and facilitate the well-being of people.

The Thathagathas endless compassion is beyond description. It is a glowing example of loving kindness. He was up before dawn

daily, taking advantage of his "divine eye" one of his priorities was to look at the world to identify who has to be helped. Uninvited often he walked alone many a mile, facing many hazards to provide the boon and benefit to them.

TAPA- means simple austere life-style. Such persons must steer clear of satisfying physical sensual body delights. Since they officially enjoy the highest ranking positions they are more liable to be targeted and tempted. Leaders should eternally safeguard themselves from this dangerous and perilous situation. Specially today the human behavioural patterns and scenario are such that their vulnerability has increased. Globally a sophisticatedly equipped media is hunting and hovering around for sensational news. Many leaders downfall has been caused by sex scandals etc. Perhaps a cue can be captured from the pragmatic practice of our ancient kings to visit his subjects in disguise. The objective was to learn at grass
root level the degree of satisfaction. Further during that epoch even the common people had the opportunity to see and seek redress from the crown.

The pinnacle of wisdom, the Sakya-muni proclaimed "Happy is non-attachment. so is the transcending of all sensual pleasures". He exemplified what he stated in the aforesaid citation by his unparalleled historic great renunciation in the full bloom of his youth.

AKKODHA- which in English could be explained as non-hatred or non-anger is the next virtue. A head of state should always steeraway from harbouring grievances and bitterness. Never resorting to what is currently called "political victimization" which is a distinctive demerit. The repercussions of such acts are likely to be adverse and ugly. It is distressing to note that although D.R.D. was advocated by the Enlightened Buddha long ago, some of the national and even international issues and confrontations can be still traced directly or indirectly to such unfair
conduct. If a person is not angry he is probably more stable and composed, which is a desirable quality.

The venerated "Dhammapada" declares "...one should not be angry..."

AVIHIMSA is the eighth asset. It implies harmless or non-anger. Restrain in hurting or killing living beings and other wicked acts. It is unlimited compassion and goodness. The reality of life is that predominantly beings are instinctively inclined on selfpreservation. It is imperative that one should understand this truth and extend this same consideration for other fellow beings. When citizens are helplessly in trouble and distressed the master must respond promptly and positively. Fostering a society where amicability and peace prevails is the ideal concept to work towards. It may be a positive remedy for the violent terrorist trends of today.

Avihimsa is one of the key features of Buddhism. Its excellence was eloquently focused upon by the Thathagata in preaching the doctrine. The omniscient was a vigorous activist of harmlessness. For the sake of brevity it is not proposed to detail them. Moving on to a later historical stage another illustrious icon to be show-cased is Mahatma Ghandi. An architect in achieving freedom for India, his approach was also based on this concept.

KHANTI is the practice of the virtues of patience, toleration and understanding. It includes the ability to endure hardship, provocation, pain and suffering inherent in mundane worldly life well elucidate by the enlightened Buddha. This merit is clearly indispensable to a dedicated and committed overlord to do justice in the hallowed high office in which he functions. In most countries governors have to face up to and deal with difficult challenges, unpleasant

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era were peace, prosperity and protection for people and animals, rock and pillar edicts spanning most of the sub-continent, Afghanistan and Nepal functioned to buttress and fulfill the overall strategy to establish and extend predominantly the D.R.D. related concepts and views in the empire.

Another authentic D.R.D. related system can be traced to the Lichchavi Vajjian administration model. Remarkably, the affairs of state were conducted by a senate of seniors. The pride of place was for meetings, discussions, rapport, harmony, unity and agreement. It is remarkable to note, that the
patricide king Ajasatta covetously hatched a wicked plan to invade the flourishing Lichchavian territory. To learn the Thatagathas opinion, Vassa Kara the Prime Minister was sent. The Sama Samabuddhas pragmatic pronouncement, praising the Vajjians foiled the evil invasion plot.

The D.R.D. ground breaking concepts revealed nearly 2600 years ago are words of wisdom. The practice of the profound Buddha words gives immediate excellent results (sanditthiko, akaliko). Clearly the consequences were favourable whenever elements of D.R.D were adopted. It is noteworthy that, at our important state functions, such as freedom day commemoration celebrations the stanza "Raja.... Dhammiko" (May the governors rule according to the dhamma) is recited. It reflects the traditional aspirations of the people. The Buddha has shown this path. It is up to the heads of state to embrace it, and reach excellence.

## SABBE SATTA BHAVANTU SUKHISATHA

May all beings be well and happy. will contribute to attain and achieve the ultimate outcome of ruling in harmony with the people.

In concluding this presentation, it is proposed to examine the workability and practical effectiveness of D R D.

Looking back to the feats of one of the greatest political figures of all time the magnificent emperor Asoka are outstanding. He was probably the first sovereign of the consolidated sub-continent of India. The era was the third century B.C.,. For nearly four decades he dominated the scenario. H.G. Wells the renowned historian in his celebrated composition. "The outline of History" praises him thus ".... shines alone, a star". Some other scholars and narrators portray his reign as a show-case for D.R.D.

The hallmarks of this epic

# The GloriousFlourish of BuddhisminIndiaand itsIgnominious Disappearance 



Deshamanya K.H.J. Wijayadasa, Former Secretary to the President


## The Early History of Buddhism in India

Buddhism is the oldest of the great world religions. Its founder Siddhartha Gautama, a prince born in Lumbini in present day Nepal; achieved enlightenment a little over 2500 years ago; so he was, known as the Buddha, meaning the Enlightened one. Buddhism, which flourished in India in all its glory for several centuries; was forced out of its country of birth and enrichment unsung, unwept and by and large unaccounted for. Before the advent of Buddhism; the two religions which were widely practiced in the Ganges valley were Brahmanism and Jainism. Brahmanism was based on the divinity of the "Vedas" or ancient Hindu scriptures. Jainism was more akin to Buddhism in scope and content; hence there was greater room for peaceful coexistence.

According to traditional accounts; the Buddha in his lifetime pioneered the movement for the propagation of Buddhism far and wide; by dispatching the first sixty monks ordained by him with the following words of
advice. "Go monks and travel for the welfare and happiness of the people, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare and happiness of gods and men. No two of you go the same way. Teach the Doctrine monks, which is fine in its beginning, middle and end, with its meaning and letter, sheer and whole, and proclaim the pure holy life. There are beings, naturally of little passion, who are languishing for lack of hearing the Doctrine. They will understand it. "With these words, the Buddha had dispatched the first sixty monks he had ordained, in different directions to propagate the Dhamma. In fact the Buddha had lauded the 'gift of Dhamma as the greatest of all the gifts; "Sabba danam dhammadanam jinathi". At the time of the passing away of the Buddha; the Sangha or the order of the monks had firmly taken root.

Shortly after the Parinibbana or the passing away of the Buddha 500 senior monks well versed in the Dhamma held a council to codify his teachings. At the conclusion of this Buddhist council , these monks who were living in monasteries in Bihar spread out throughout northern India and engaged in missionary activities.
The Expansion of
Buddhism in India

Buddhism was at the height of its influence in India from around 250 BC to the middle of the first millennium AD . The great expansion of Buddhism came under its benevolent patron Emperor Asoka (268-239BC) Historians are of the unanimous opinion that Emperor Asoka was the greatest figure in the history of Indian Buddhism after the Buddha himself. From his capital in Pataliputra (Modern Patna) Asoka ruled over the whole of northern and central India; more than two thirds of the sub continent and probably the largest empire that India was to see for two millennia. Being enthroned as the king of Pataliputra was evidently not good enough to become the Emperor of the vast Maurya empire. He fought a series of battles to annex all neighboring principalities and kingdoms; most of the adversaries happened to be his half brothers. Asoka's father king Bindusara belonged to the Brahmanicai faith. He had provided alms daily to about 60,000 Brahmins. King Asoka continued

## ૬ి ఇజిజేరె / The Buddhist <br> November - 2020

Buddhism in different countries of Asia in particular brought in its wake Buddhist thought which embodies not mere faith of creed but an entire culture with a world view, a scale of human values and its perception of the meaning and significance of life.

The fact that Buddhism flourished in India from the pre Christian era up to the medieval period is corroborated by ample literary, archaeological and epigraphical evidence. There were hundreds of Buddhist temples and monasteries in the kingdom of Mathura between 300 BC and 600 AD. The Saka and Kusana monarchs patronized Buddhism, the and launched Dhammavijaya or conquest by Righteousness. Dhammavijaya which commenced ten years after his consecration continued unabated until his demise 27 years later. He collected the relics of the Buddha from the original relic mounds in which they were enshrined and dispatched them to different parts of his vast empire with instructions that they should be enshrined in stupas for veneration by the Buddhists. Asoka also played a major role in the reforming and purging of the Sangha by convening a Dhamma Sangayana or a Recital of the Scriptures, presided over by Moggaliputtatissa Maha Thero. He undertook pilgrimages to the holy sites connected with the life of the Buddha such as Lumbini, Bodh Gaya, Saranath, Kusinagar etc. and erected massive granite pillars indicative of their true identity and significance. Emperor Asoka's greatest achievement in life as well as his everlasting legacy to the world was the dissemination of the Buddha's ethical message not only to the frontier and neighboring countries such as Sri Lanka, but also as far beyond as Greece, Egypt, Libiya and Syria; up to a distance of six hundred "yojanas". The introduction and spread of


Asoka continued this practice for about four years until he embraced Buddhism.
monks and their monasteries with great devotion while promoting Buddhist art especially in Mathura, Sravasti, and Saranath. Hsuan-tsang who resided in India from 630 AD to 644 AD speaks of the existence of some 115,000 Hinayana and 120,000 Mahayana monks in India at that time. Also he has stated that there were around 2000 Hinayana and 2,500 Mahayana Monasteries in India which provided shelter, alms and education to monks. Fahsian (399-411 AD) reported the existence of 20 monasteries which sheltered 2000 monks in Mathura. Buddhism flourished in the NorthWestern region of India in present
day Pakistan from around 100 BC to 400 AD as amply evidenced by literary, archaeological and epigraphical evidence as well as unique Buddhist art, architecture and sculpture especially of the Gandhara period. The ruins of Buddhist Monasteries of North Western India provide ample proof that they were foremost among the architectural wonders of Asia. Hsuan-tsang has recorded that around 18,000 monks lived in 1,400 monasteries in Uddiyana in the Swat valley.

Nalanda, the seat of the famous Buddhist University was the greatest centre of Buddhist learning in ancient India. One of the largest monastic settlements in India was Saranath in close proximity to Varanasi. Sanchi was a major centre of Buddhist monasticism, art, architecture, sculpture and culture
from around 200 BC to 600 AD .
A large number of monasteries and shrines were in existence in several districts of Andhra Pradesh including those of Amarawathi and Nagarjuna Konda which had acquired great fame and acclaim throughout the then Buddhist world. A unique school of Buddhist art and culture flourished in Andra Pradesh from about 2nd century BC to medieval times. Large scale excavation of rock monasteries for the use of monks and nuns commenced around 200 BC in the mid-south west of India and continued up to the 9th century AD. There are over 1000 such rock monasteries in Maharashtra, Madya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan. According to oral tradition after the third Buddhist Council Emperor Asoka dispatched Buddhist missionaries to different parts of the then civilized world. Arahat Mahinda set out for the introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka, Mahadeva to Mahismandala, Rakkhita to Vanavasa, Dhamma Rakkhita to Amarankata and Mahadhammarakkhita to

Maharattha. There is epigraphical evidence which confirms that Asoka established medical treatment centres for men and animals in the neighboring states such as Cholas, Pandyas Satyaputa, Keralaputa and Thambapanni. Emperor Asoka would have in all probability attempted to introduce Buddhism to the South Indian states but without much success.

However, there is sufficient literary, epigraphical and architectural evidence to establish the existence of Buddhism even though sporadically in several states in South India from about the 4th century AD. Hsuan-Tsang (630-644) has observed that in the Pallava country there were around 100 monasteries with over 10,000 monks. His records indicate that he had visited the Pandya Kingdom called Malakuta and noted the existence of old monasteries which were continuously inhabited by monks. As for archaeological evidence there are numerous images of the Buddha found all over South India. Likewise, there are many Buddha images in Sivam Temples in Travancore, Pondichery and Tanjore districts. For several centuries Nagapatam continued to be a centre of Buddhism and a busy port in the Chola Kingdom. Fa-hien the Chinese Buddhist monk who travelled extensively in India and Sri Lanka has left valuable and authentic records of his travels in the first decade of the 5th century AD ; to posterity. Buddhism flourished in South India in two phases; firstly, under Pallava rule from the 3rd century AD to the $7^{\text {th }}$ century AD and secondly, during the Chola period from the 9th to the 14th century AD. The Chola Kingdom with the capital in Kaveripattinam was one of the most powerful, one of the largest and flourishing kingdoms in South India. From the very inception the city had been a centre of Buddhist learning of great repute. Two great

Tamil epics based on Buddhist themes; the Silappadikaram and the Manimekhalai; provide insights into Buddhist activities of an ancient Buddhist temple at Kaveripattanam called Indra Vihara. Likewise there is ample literary and archaeological evidence to establish the existence of several Buddhist monasteries in Nagapattanam and Kanchipuram. An eminent poet of Java writing in the 14th century AD has stated that Buddhism was on the decline in South India; being battered by hostile opposition from Jainism and Hinduism. He has added that Buddhism and VaishaVism had got so mixed up that it was difficult to distinguish one from the other. Further, he has placed on record that Buddhist Viharas were being converted to Hindu Kovils while Buddha statues were being paraded in the guise of Hindu gods. The closing years of the 14th century AD saw much damage and irreparable destruction of Buddhist shrines and monasteries in South India; the last haven of Buddhism in India.

## The Ignominious Disappearance of Buddhism from India

The complete disappearance of Buddhism from the land of its birth after its glorious flourish is one of the greatest puzzles of history. In present day India Buddhism survives only in the Himalayan fringes, along the Tibetan frontier and in small pockets in Nothern and Western India among recent Ambedkarite Dalit converts. Buddhism reached many countries of Asia at an early date. However, it did not survive for long in the countries to the north west and north of India due to foreign invasions and the advent of Islam; but remained firmly established in Tibet, China Mongolia, Korea, Japan as well as in the whole of south east Asia and Sri Lanka. The ignominious disappearance of Buddhism from India has triggered
much debate among historians, social scientists and theologians. The following analysis attempts to figure out the possible reasons for this incongruous phenomenon.

During the time of the Buddha, Hinduism or Brahaminism; a polytheistic religion of Hindus or the Aryans of North India was the sole preserve of the Brahmins or the elevated Hindu priestly caste. The bedrock of Brahminism was the Vedas. The Buddha held that all men are equal and that the caste system or varanadharma to which the Vedas and other Brahmanical books had given religious sanction was completely false. The Buddha is said to have exhorted the Bhikkus saying "Just as the great rivers, when they have emptied themselves to the great ocean lose their different names; so do the four varnas or castes; Kshatriya, Brahmin, Vaishya and Sudra; when they begin to follow the doctrine propounded by the Buddha renounce the different names of caste and rank and become the members of one and the same society." The simplicity of the Buddha's message, its stress on equality and its crusade against the bloody and costly sacrifices, and ritualism of Brahmanism had attracted the hitherto oppressed and despised masses to Buddhism in large numbers.

Buddhism by nature is a nonaggressive, non-violent and noninvasive religion. Even though Buddhism was promulgated more than 2500 years ago; its propagation and expansion throughout northern and Central India took place around 300 years later during the reign of Emperor Asoka (268-239 BC). Thus, firmly rooted; Buddhism flourished in India under royal patronage for about 800 years from 2nd century BC, without serious competition or ruthless aggression from other faiths and invading armies. From the 6th century AD up to the 14th century AD; a period of

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dynasties which fostered, nurtured and provided royal patronage to Buddhism.

Another plausible argument advanced by scholars to substantiate the gradual decline and eventually the disappearance of Buddhism from India is the corruption as well as the disunity in the Sangha or priesthood. While it is true that with time Buddhist priests became increasingly lax in the observance of the Vinaya or religious rules, corruption alone cannot explain the death of Buddhism. After all it should be borne in mind that Buddhism was replaced in India by an even more corrupt Brahmanism. Buddhism was not a regimented or an institutionalized religion; hence the emergence of Tantra Buddhism weakened Buddhism by making it look like a form of Hinduism. Another important factor that has been overlooked by historians is the gradual disappearance of Buddhist dynastic rule in some regions of India and the emergence of Brahmanical dynastic rule which adversely impacted on the Buddhists. Thus, in places such as Bengal and Sind which were ruled by Brahmanical dynasties but had Buddhist majorities; Buddhists are said to have welcomed the Muslims as saviours who had freed them from the tyranny of "upper caste" rule. This explains why most of the "lower caste" people in eastern Bengal and Sind embraced Islam. In actual fact, few among the "upper castes" of these regions as well did the same.

Since Buddhism was replaced by triumphant Brahmanism; the eclipse of Buddhism in India was primarily a result of the Brahmanical revival. The Buddha's fight against Brahmanism won him many enemies from among the Brahmins. When Buddhism was on the ascendancy under royal patronage and universal acceptance in India; the Brahmins kept a low profile and marked time until such
time "the iron was hot enough to strike". The Brahmins were not as greatly opposed to the Buddha's philosophical teachings as they were to his message of universal brotherhood and equality; for it directly challenged their hegemony and the scriptures they had invented to legitimize them. After Buddhism lost ground in northern and central India, following on successive Muslim invasions, the sacking of temples and monasteries and the prohibition of Buddhist worship; it sought refuge in the Chola, Chera and Pandya Kingdoms of South India up to medieval times. Buddhist missionaries who went to South India initially had to encounter stiff resistance from Jain and Hindu opponents. However, these missionary monks quite often had the good fortune of receiving the encouragement and support of kings, noblemen and wealthy merchants. As a result these monks were able to move freely in many parts of South India, build monasteries and establish centres of Buddhist learning. These missionary monks undertook various social services in addition to the propagation of the Dhamma. Caste differences were immaterial to these monks and this provided great relief to the depressed communities. Undoubtedly, the depressed classes found their emancipation in Buddhism. However, between the 13th and 15th centuries AD Buddhism was wiped out of South India as well; with Hinduism making great strides under state patronage.

Today, Brahmanism or Hinduism is the most widely accepted religion in India; practiced by nearly one billion people. To combat Buddhism and revive the tottering Brahmanical hegemony; Brahmanical revivalists resorted to a three-pronged strategy. Firstly, they launched a campaign of hatred and persecution against the Buddhists Secondly, they
appropriated many of the finer aspects of Buddhism into their own system so as to win over the "lower caste" Buddhist masses, but made sure that this selective appropriation did not in any way undermine Brahmanical hegemony. The final stage in this campaign to wipe out Buddhism was to propound and propagate the myth that the Buddha was merely another incarnation or Avatar of the Hindu god Vishnu. Thus, the Buddha was turned into just another of the countless deities of the Brahmanical pantheon.

The Brahmanical campaign of hatred and persecution against Buddhists was multi-pronged, continuous and relentless. To lend legitimacy to their campaign against Buddhism, Brahmanical texts included fierce strictures against Buddhists. Manu, in his Manusmriti laid down that "If a person touches a Buddhist he shall purify himself by having a bath. Aparaka ordained the same in his Smriti_ Vardha Harit declared that entry into a Buddhist temple is a sin, which could only be expiated by taking a ritual bath. Even dramas and other books for lay people written by Brahmins contained venomous propaganda against the Buddhists. Fines were imposed on those
who associated or entertained Buddhists. Shankracharya the leader of the Brahmanical revival, struck terror into the hearts of the Buddhists with all sorts of diatribes against Buddhism.

In order to win over the Buddhist masses. The Brahmanical revivalists appropriated many of the finer aspects of Buddhism into their own system. The Vedic Brahmins taught that animal sacrifice was highly meritorious. The Buddha categorically denounced animal sacrifice. However on account of Buddhist influence, some Hindus renounced the slaughter of animals and adopted the first precept of Buddhism. The Boddhi tree is sacred to Buddhists, because the Buddha attained enlightenment seated at the foot of the Bodhi tree. The Buddhist practice of worshipping the Bodhi tree has been emulated by the Hindus of South India. Consequent to the gradual fading out of Buddhism from South India many Buddhist temples were converted to Hindu Kovils, Buddha statues were paraded in the guise of Hindu Gods and the Buddhist history of many of their shrines was transferred to that of Hindu geneology.

In order to make Hinduism more attractive to the Buddhists; many Buddhist concepts were incorporated,into Hinduism. Further, the Hindus made an attempt to absorb the Islamic faith. During the reign of King Asoka a new
 Allah Upanishad was proclaimed. Even after Buddhism was wiped out, Hindus continued to worship the Buddha as the 9th Avatar or incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu. The Shaivites; one of the main branches of Hinduism made the Buddha one of their gods, calling him Sasta Aiyanar and Dharmarajan. They called him Buddha Vinayaka and equated him to Hindu god Ganesh. The Dharmaraja Vihara and the Vinayaka Vihara were converted to Dharmaraja Kovil and Vinayaka Kovil. Finally, the Buddhists were absorbed into the caste system as Shudras and Untouchables and with that the Buddhist presence was completely obliterated from the land of its birth. The process of the assimilation of Buddhism by Brahmanism was minutely planned and expertly executed. The Brahmins who were once voracious beef eaters, turned vegetarian imitating Buddhists in this regard. Popular devotion to the Buddha was replaced by devotion to Hindu gods such as Rama and Krishna.

## Events of the YMBA









The Colombo YMBA for the first time organized a Blood Donation Programme on 22.09.2020 at the YMBA Main Hall at Borella in collaboration with "Apeksha Hospital" Maharagama. The pictures show Ven. Maha Sanghas and Donors donating blood in this programme.












Mr. Kusumabandu Samarawickrama, Vice President of the Colombo YMBA is seen awarding cash prizes to the students who achieved best results at the GCE (O/L) 2019 examination, at a ceremony held on 24-09-2020 at Sampathnuwara National School. Major General Janmika Liyanage, member of the School Development Project of the Association, Squadron Leader Sanjeewa Karunarathna, Assistant General Manager (Administration) and Principal of the school are also in the pictures.

As known to all of us as
Buddhists, "Sankhara", generally translated as formations, form the second link of the formula of Dependant Arising "paticca samuppada", the doctrine of the conditionality of all physical and mental phenomena in the world, which facilitates the perfect understanding of the Buddha Dhamma. The three types of "sankhara" are, the " kaya sankhara" ie, those in respect of the body, "vaci sankhara" those linked with the verbal functions and "citta sankhara" those linked with the mind respectively. In the Sutta texts, Kaya Sankhara have been described as "assasa passasa", Vaci Sankhara as "vitakka, vicara", ie, thought conceptions and discursive thoughts, and "citta sankara" as "vedana" and "Sanna" ie, feelings and perceptions.

With regard to Kaya Sankhara, most of the Buddhist devotees identify them as the inward and outward breath, being the literary sense of the two Pali words "assasa passasa". Apparently, such a concept is based on the Cula Vedalla Sutta in the Majjhima Nikaya in which the Theri Dhammadinna responds to a question by the lay devotee Visakha explaining Kaya Sankhara as "assasa passasa". However, when Visakha requests for the reasons for such an identification, Theri Dhammadinna explains that "assasa passasa" is Kaya Sankhara because it is about the body and is also a phenomenon connected with the body " assasa passasa........kayika, etc dhamma kayapatibaddha". However, the popular concept of Kaya Sankhara remains to be based entirely on the literal translation of the words assasa passasa" as "inward and outward breath".

However, when one commences deep meditation on the Paticca Samuppada, ie, "Avijja paccaya , Sankhara, Sankara paccaya Vinnana" etc, along with a clear perception of the meanings of the

## KAYA SANKHARA IN BUDDHA DHAMMA

on such a possibility, and this presentation is an attempt to briefly explain its outcome so far, expecting any constructive responses from like minded devotees interested in comprehending the essence of pure Buddha Dhamma. I have included only a few of the main facts avoiding much details to maintain the brevity of this presentation.

Firstly, as clearly evident in a number of Suttas, the words "assasa passasa" do not appear to refer to an inward and outward breath. For example, in the Mahavedalla Sutta in Majjhima Nikaya and the Dutiya Kamabhu Sutta in Samyutta Nikaya, Buddha explains that Kaya Sankhara get extinct and fade away in a dead person, as well as in a person who has achieved Sanna vedayita Nirodha. "swatam avuso, mato kalakato tassa kayasankhara niruddha patipassaddha, ....so vayam, sanna vedayita nirodham samapanno tampi Kayasankhara niruddha patipassaddha". Additionally, in the Rahogata Sutta in the Samyutta Nikaya, Buddha explains that "assasa passasa" get extinct in a person who has attained the fourth Dhyana. "catuttham jhanam samapannassa assasa passasa niruddha honti". Hence it is clear that in explaining Kaya Sankhara, the Buddha has used the words " assasa passasa "not in their literary sense but to convey some other concept, possibly however, associated with the inward and outward breath".

In this regard, we find in the Kesaputtiya Kalama Sutta in the Anguttara Nikaya, Buddha has used the word "assasa" to mean a " false sense of relief " prevalent among the believers in mythical Athma etc. While addressing a group of his devotees who had earlier been indoctrinated by various Brahmin priests, Buddha explains to them that, as a result of their clear understanding of the Buddha Dhamma, they may

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now be able to overcome their previous four types of false senses of relief "cattaro assasa adhigata honti". As explained therein by the Buddha, the four false senses of relief are, firstly, the belief in a life after the disintegration of the body after the death, and the birth in a heaven due to good Kamma, "kayassa bheda parammarana sugatim saggam lokam upapajjissami". The second false sense of relief is that, even if there is no birth after death, and no effect of Kamma, the possibility of enjoying a happy Athma "aneegham sukham attanam pariharami". The third false sense of relief is that any person who does not commit, or cause to commit, or intend to commit any sins, will not be afflicted with sorrow, "kuto dukkham phusissanti". And the fourth "assasa" being any person who neither commits nor causes to commit any sins, will be enjoying an Athma purified both ways "idaham ubhayeneva visuddham attanam samanupassami" Accordingly it is quite clear that the word "assasa" has been used by the Buddha to convey four types of false senses of relief in respect of one's body, ie, Kaya Sankhara, arising in the minds of ignorant "avijja" persons due to their misguided beliefs either in a continuous "sassata" Athma or an annihilative "uccheda" Athma, effectiveness or non effectiveness of Kamma etc. Incidentally, it is appropriate to note that the Sinhala word "asweseema" which means "a sense of relief" has a close similarity with the Pali word "assasa".

Along with such a clear understanding of the concept of false sense of relief Buddha has intended to express through the word "assasa", it is also appropriate to consider the reasons for the Buddha, to have used the words "assasa passasa "which means inward and outward breath" in a number of Suttas to explain Kaya Sankhara.

The rationality for the Buddha to have done so, however, has to
be understood within the context of the evolution of ancient Indian philosophies including those reflected in some pre Buddhist Upanishads and the Buddha's responses to some such religious concepts. As evident in the Brahmajala Sutta and Tevijja Sutta in Digha Nikaya, etc Buddha had often responded to some concepts contained in many pre Buddhist Upanishads such as Bruhadaranyaka, Chandogya, Taittiriya, Eitereya, Kautishaki Upanishads etc. The major Brahmanic concept the Buddha has consistently rejected has been the mythical belief in the existence of an omnipresent Athma which is believed to function within each and every person as well, as frequently reflected in a number of pre- Buddhist Upanishads. For example, Bruhadaranyaka Upanishad (Chapter 3-iV-I ) explains in the form of a dialogue between a Brahmin named Chakrayana and a Brahmin priest by the name of Yajnavalkya, the powers of an omnipresent Athma, "athma sarvantarah", functioning within each and every person. Furthermore, when Chakrayana requests Yajnavalkya to clearly explain to him the exact way to identify the Athma functioning within every person, Yajnavalkya explains that "the person who breathes -in along with your inbreath is the Athma within you," "pranena pranithi, sa te athma sarvantarah", and furthermore, that "the person who breathes out with your out breath is the Athma within you" "yo panenapaniti sa ta athma sarvantarah". Hence it is quite clear that such a concept induces their devotees to believe that along with their each in breath and each out-breath, they are feeling the presence of Athma functioning within him /her. Accordingly, Buddha being well aware of such a mythical belief, has quite appropriately used the words "assasa passasa", inward and outward breath, to express his concept of "false senses of relief"
within every person who is afflicted with ignorance "avijja". In other words Buddha has in explaining Kaya Sankhara, used the words "assasa passasa" to be synonymous with the continuous feeling of the presence of mythical Athma functioning within each and every person. As mentioned above, in the Kesaputtiya Kalama Sutta, Buddha was just reminding his devotees who had formerly been adherents of Brahmanism that they have now become capable of overcoming "adhigata" their former four types of false senses of relief "assasa".

Hence, it is quite reasonable to realize that the Buddhist concept of Kaya Sankhara refers to the four types of false senses of relief, continuously felt by ignorant persons "avijja" along with their each and every in and out breath "assasa passasa". Such a concept is consistent with the Buddha's words "avijja paccaya sankhara "as explained in the Paticca Samuppada Dhamma. It is also relevant to realize that, Kaya Sankhara ie, the four types of false senses of relief are closely associated with, and complementary to "sakkaya ditthi" ie, the first fetter Samyojana, which means the false belief that the five bases of clinging "panca upadankkhanda " are the Athma, since, Kaya Sankhara refers to the four types of false senses of relief constantly felt by an ignorant "avijja" person due to his/her "sakkaya ditthi" thus obstructing the path to Nibbana.

Finally, it may be useful realize that such a comprehensive understanding of the precise nature of Kaya Sankhara as explained by the Buddha, is an essential pre requisite to enter an effective process of meditation on the Paticca Samuppada Dhamma, facilitating a substantial progress in our progressive journey towards the termination of Sansara.
"Sabbe Satta Bhavantu Skhitatta" May all beings be blessed with happiness.

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## YMBA News

## AWARD OF CASH PRIZES TO THE BEST RESULT ACHIEVERS AT THE GCE (O/L) EXAMINATION IN 2019

Sampathnuwara National School facilitated under the School Development Project of the Colombo YMBA, mainly focused the uplifting of the educational standard of the students preparing for the GCE O/L and A/L examinations.

The students who successfully completed the GCE (O/L) examination in 2019 with 'A' passes to the difficult subjects such as Maths, Science and English were awarded cash prizes by the Colombo YMBA at a small ceremony held on 24.09.2020, attended by Mr. Kusumabandu Samarawickrama, Vice President of the Association, Major General Janmika Liyanage, a member of the School Development Project of the Association, Squadron Leader Sanjeewa Karunarathana, Assistant General Manager (Administration) and staff members of the Association.

## BLOOD DONATION PROGRAMME OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Colombo YMBA for the first time organized a Blood Donation Programme on 22.09.2020 at the YMBA Main Hall at Borella in collaboration with "Apeksha Hospital" Maharagama.<br>Venerable Maha Sunghas, members of the Sri Lanka Air Force and Police, Personnel of the Institutions of Government, Banks and Private sector along with some school children participated in this Blood Donation Programme.<br>The organizers of the Association appreciated the services of the staff of "Apeksha Hospital" and the staff of the Colombo YMBA who gave their fullest cooperation to make this event a success.<br>Expenses in this programme were born by the officers of the Board of Management and the Colombo YMBA.

## SHORT BUDDHIST DRAMA COMPETITION

The Preliminary rounds of the Annual Short Buddhist Drama Competition of the Association scheduled to hold in March 2020 had been postponed due to "Covid - 19" pandemic. However the Association took steps to stage a few Drama Teams by early March among the 45 schools and Dhamma Schools Drama Teams applied for the contest.

After a few months, on the satisfactory condition of the country the rest of the competition was held
in September and selected the Drama Teams of Janadhipathi Vidyalaya of Weyangoda, Panirendawa/ Medagama Model Maha Vidyalaya, Don Pedrick Maha Vidyalaya of Horana and Sri Indrajothi Dhamma School of Eppawala as the best four teams to be staged for the final contest in October. But the YMBA had to postponed it indefinitely considering the present plight of the "Covid - 19". They will be staged in a future date.


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