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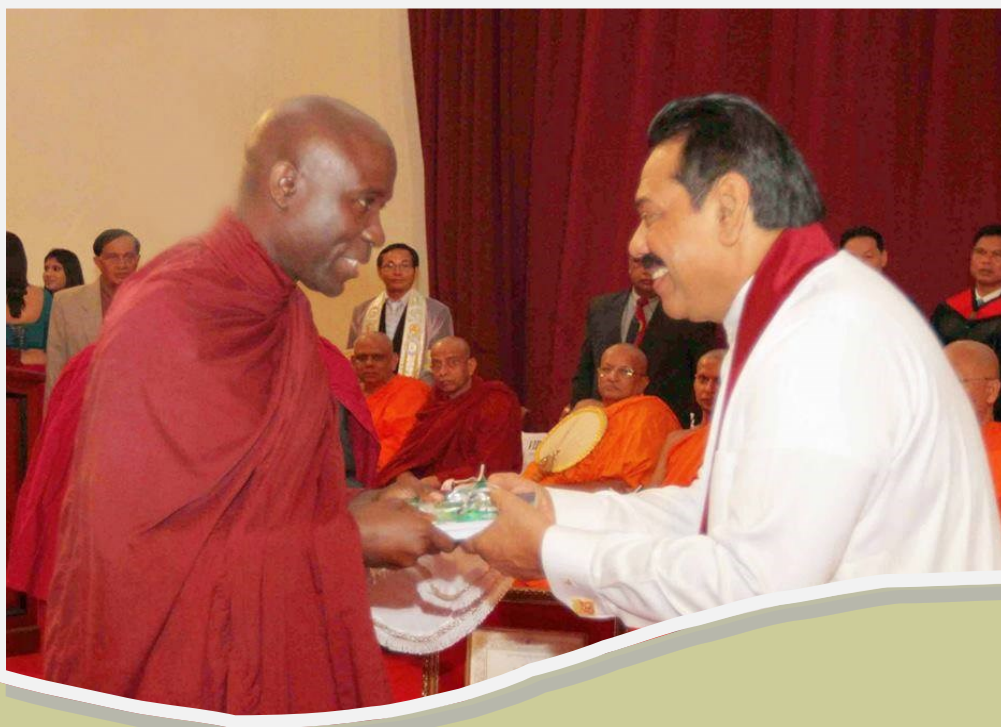


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**Bhante Buddharakkhita offers H.E Mahinda a book
*'Caring for our Planet'***



Bhante Buddharakkhita giving a book to H.E Mahinda Rajapaksa the President of Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

We were graced, Bhante Buddharakkhita to be part of the 2nd convocation of Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy where he has been undertaking his studies in Buddhism. On this auspicious occasion, His Excellency Hon. Mahinda Ra-

japaksa, the president of Sri Lanka presided over as the patron.

At the ceremony (August 9, 2014), Venerable Buddharakkhita offered a copy of his newly compiled book titled: "Caring for our planet; Buddhism and the Environment" to

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His Excellency the president Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Bhante Buddharakkhita has also written several other inspirational Dhamma books. These include:

1. *Drop by Drop: The Buddha's Path to True Happiness*, 2012
2. *Attempted Murder: Tales, Trial and Tribulation of Planting Dhamma Seeds in Africa*, 2010

3. *Planting Dhamma Seeds: The Emergence of Buddhism in Africa*, 2006

We wish to congratulate our beloved Venerable Buddharakkhita upon His Graduation and for making us proud.

We are delighted to have you, and surely, you are our source of inspiration.

May you be blessed in the Triple Gem.



Pg. 3: Vesak Day Celebrations

Dhamma Greetings! We convey our heartfelt thanks to you all for the valuable effort and support extended to UBC in the past. Without your active support, it would not have been possible at all. Reciprocating your support is not possible. Thank you again

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H.E Bobi Wine Plants a Dhamma tree at UBC

On October 14, 2014, the Uganda Buddhist Centre hosted H.E Bobi Wine (a.k.a Robert Ssentamu Kyagulanyi) a famous and top music artiste and movie actor in Uganda. Along with him, was a member from his band, Kankande Desire. H.E Bobi Wine planted a Dhamma tree at the Temple which was organized by the Centre Coordinated, Mr. Tom Kaboggoza.

Bobi wine stands out alone among other artistes due to his strongest conviction and concern for humanity through his meaningful and educative music. He is dedicated to support the growth of Buddhism in Uganda in whichever way possible. While planting the tree, Bobi Wine said that all human beings share the same planet earth and that our spiritual traditions share the same values of compassion, respect, love and joy. In addition, he appreciated the importance and power of Uganda Buddhist Centre which appeals to the hearts and minds of people for spiritual connections and enlightenment.

Buddhism teaches environmental ethics and recognizes the shared values of stewardship for the earth that we are all subject to. And it is our responsibility to enlist such people to support and address the issue of environmental ethics.



H.E Bobi Wine planting a tree

Our Dhamma School gets a temporary classroom

With support from our dear friend and well-wisher Ven. Rinpoche, UBC received a temporary tent for our Dhamma School. The facility is being used as a classroom for the school as one of the sustainability strategies for UBC to continue offering services and teaching the Buddha's principles to the children. More efforts in sustainability programming are underway and support is continually sought to achieve this goal.



Dhamma School

Celebration of Vesak Day

The celebrations were graced by our Most Venerable Budharakhitha.

The theme of the day was love and wisdom. A theme that delivered a number of shared messages among the participants with a very memorable a mindful meditation session that ushered us into a relaxing and peaceful celebration mood.

The meditation session was followed by speeches from some of the distinguished guests including Tony an Australian Buddhist, Eng. Ntwasi a longtime friend of Ven. Buddhārakkhita and a practicing Buddhist resident in Entebbe and Dr. Juuko a traditional healer practitioner

from Kigo.

Tony's speech was centered around attachment which he says according to the Noble truth is and has been the biggest cause of suffering to us, The other guests were from Sri Lanka and Nepal (Sherpa and Sumathirathne) working with the UN in Uganda added their voice on the topic in an interactive manner. He illustrated the cause of suffering with several examples that left members appreciating the message in such a simplistic manner. controlled as craving compounds the problem of material attachment.

In conclusion with an illustration of a book in the palm of the monk, Ven. Buddhārakkhita illustrated the the kind of resistance that causes human beings suffering when they lose or when someone takes away an article in their life. He also added that craving levels ought to be controlled as craving compounds the problem of material attachment.

In the Q&A session, a number of questions were rised by members in the congregation and the Venerable answered all of them skillfully to the satisfaction of everybody. The question that took a most of time to explain was the question of re-birth asked by Eng. Ntwasi which after a long explanation Venerable Buddhārakkhita promised to provide more literature from American book store with scientific evidence. He further said a shared fire from the candle does not make the candle deem or faint.

*"Knowing this body
is like a clay jar,
securing this mind
like a fort,
attack Mara
with the spear of
discernment,
then guard what's won
without settling there,
without laying claim."*

Dhammapada 40



Lighting of the candle

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In his address to our guests of the day, Robert Ziribasanga the Operations Manager and personal Secretary to Ven. Buddharakkhita, encouraged all members present to continue visiting the center even when the Monk is away.

He further said a shared fire from the candle does not make the candle deem or faint.

In his address to our guests of the day, Robert Ziribasanga the Operations Manager and personal Secretary to Ven. Buddharakkhita thanked everybody for the time they spared to come and celebrate Vesak day at UBC. He further

encouraged all members present to continue visiting the center even when the Monk is away.

He also reported to the members the various donations that have been recorded at the center this year. He reported generous donation of a tent by Venerable P. Rinpoche of Chokygru Foundation, full sponsorship of 2 monks training; tuition fees volumes of books donated by the President of the Australian Buddhist Council through his friends of Singapore. He appealed to the older Buddhist communities to continue supporting UBC. He also thanked Venerable Buddharakkhita for giving him the opportunity to attend the last

IBC conference at New Delhi in India last August where he met very many great friends to UBC including Venerable P. Rinpoche.

The Coordinator Mr. Tom Kaboggoza Mukomazi welcomed everybody and thanked members for turning up on such a short notice in quality numbers. He wished everybody peace and love.



In a concluding session Venerable Buddharakkhita met some of the attendees of the day in the temple where he unveiled a proposal by a one Mss. Moemoe Zaw

She proposed a sustainability strategy of enabling material and financial support by members who turn up for retreats and visits in order to sustain the center activities. She said in her proposal that all monasteries across the world thrive on donations and good-will of the people who patronize the establishment.

Unanimously members present adopted the idea and spontaneously Ugshs. 250,000 an equivalent of

(\$100) was raised in a circle form!

Bravo sister MoeMoe!!!! It instantly worked!

It was also emphasized that people can willingly contribute whatever they have to support the Center activities in future as this will reduce the dependency burden/pressure on the Monk's personal sources and probably increase his presence at the temple.

Eng. Ntwasi was appointed by the Monk as the acting treasurer for such funds raised, and was instructed to keep the money on the center account in Africa

The Monk concluded the impromptu meeting by tanking all the participants for being mindful and prescribing sustainability strategies which has been bothering him since inception. This in my opinion is what I take to be the power of being together in all situations of real life; the Liverpool team says "you can never walk alone" Big up to all our dear guests.

Note:

As a young family we appeal to the older communities around the world to come and support us in preservation and growth of Uganda Buddhist Center.

May you all and I be well, happy and peaceful.

With Love

For UBC Team

Robert Ziribasanga
Operations Manager

A ten days experience

The whole experience of staying in such a big forest monastery was an experience itself, especially getting used to the sounds of crawling snakes and geckos, throughout the night, and then complete silence. The site of the monastery was very impressive, kept spotless.

I and my teacher Ven. Buddharakkhita hailed down a bus from the outskirts of Kandy city. As the city was warming up, we said goodbye to the bustle. I knew where I was going would be totally different. That evening, we were warmly welcomed by one of the monks at the monastery. Our destination was Nauyana forest monastery which rests on about 5000 acres of land. It was my first time to stay in such a big monastery.

The following morning, dressed all in white like a ghost (the required attire for lay people in a monastery), I joined the other laypersons in a line which seemed like soldiers at a frontline going for breakfast.

The next part of the morning schedule after breakfast involved



Laymen in procession for breakfast

cleaning of the place where the Buddha statue is rested (pagoda) which I did with much ease. This was a beautiful experience as us laypeople lined up at the pagoda to offer flowers accompanied by chanting in Pali language which I attempted to follow though I didn't understand the meaning of the words. The chanting was followed by lighting the incense which I did after another short crash course from an Iranian layman. As I had tried this before, it was great trying it in this incredible setting, even though I was not used to it. This was the same in the evening. As I was moving back to my kuti, a medium sized black snake was also leading in my way. Only to see it about 20cm on my feet. Hahah, what a big jump and horrible night I had!

The next morning while I was sweeping near the pagoda, here still emerges another snake of about 1.5metres, only to see it 50cm away from my feet. Surely, snakes are not my buddies. This raised so many worries and that night I didn't concentrate and have a good sleep too.

I was very lucky to be taken under the wings by one of the monks during my stay in the monastery. Ven. Ananda, a Sri Lankan monk who nicely spoke good English, offered me some lessons on Buddhism and especially on meditation most days. It was strange going from the noisy life to sitting down for hours, but it was exactly what I wanted from my stay, and was invaluable in learning about the backbones of monasticism and meditation.

During my time at the monastery I learnt and practiced two forms of meditation; Vipassana, meditation which examines in depth the true reality of nature through the process of our thoughts and actions. The second meditation is Samanatha which involves focusing attention on a single-point especially on breath.

My experience with Ven. Ananda was truly inspirational as he had such a genuinely kind and approachable nature, as did all of the other Monks at the monastery. Another thing I learnt was that most of the Monks looked considerably younger than they were, which led me to lose many age-guessing games. I am not sure if it is down to their lack of hair and eyebrows, or stress-free lifestyle.

The process of learning and practicing meditation is a personal one, but I found out that it is a central part of a monk's life and a routine. A good understanding and patience are both crucial, and it is something I am keen to keep practicing.

It was also an unforgettable experience to ask monks about their lifestyle, and I felt truly lucky that I was able to ask open questions about meditation and Buddhism to 'my' monk as I called him, as he spoke the best English than most of the local Monks and laymen.

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The Uganda Buddhist Centre
Your source of Buddhism, in Africa

Off - Entebbe Road, Garuga, Bulega,
Entebbe
P.O. Box 898, Entebbe, Uganda

Phone: +256(0)7750-19180, +256(0)776-159985
E-mail: ugandabuddhistcentre@gmail.com
buddhistcenteruganda898@gmail.com

Visit us at:

www.ugandabuddhistcenter.org

Would you like to give in an article for the UBC Newsletter? Anything that would be of interest to the general Buddhist community is welcome. Personal experiences, questions that you would like to ask the UBC team, poetry, short stories, letters to the editor. Send your article by email as a Word or WordPerfect document, or as a text document to:

ugandabuddhistcentre@gmail.com / buddhistcenteruganda898@gmail.com

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I was also very lucky in that I met many people including laypersons whom I interacted with sometimes especially Martins from Sweden and one gentleman from Iran who was waiting for his ordination.

The transition from the backpacker lifestyle to living at such a big monastery was a very powerful one; eating one meal a day, rising and sleeping at unusual hours and doing cleaning mainly at the Pagoda. These didn't seem difficult while at

the monastery. Fortunately while at the monastery, I didn't find the eating of only one meal a day too difficult, as I think my mind accepted that it would only get breakfast and I would have to meditate any hunger away. But surprisingly, I failed to totally adjust to that style of eating out here because of some health problems.

I achieved exactly what I wanted from my stay, to learn more about the monastic order, meditation

and Buddhism as well as have a completely different change in routine and lifestyle, all surrounded by beautiful and stunning settings. I also took away some practical changes, especially concerning living more simply, which the Monks do in their tiny kuti's with only essential items.

Author: Andrew Bakaki