

A MESSAGE FROM PRIME MINISTER IN CELEBRATION OF VESAK



THE PRIME MINISTER



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

I would like to extend my best wishes on Vesak to those celebrating the birth, enlightenment and passing into Nirvana of Gautama Buddha, the enlightened one.

The Government join with all Buddhists here in the UK and throughout the world in your celebrations on this happy day. May your day be filled with giving, virtue and cultivation, and the doing of good and meritorious deeds.

Buddhism in the UK has a long and rich history. The principles of Buddhism teach us to be wiser and more compassionate; both are qualities which are particularly needed in today's world. The UK is indeed stronger for its Buddhist communities.

May 2019

MESSAGE FOR THE FEAST OF VESAKH 2019

Buddhists and Christians: Promoting the Dignity and Equal Rights of Women and Girls

Dear Buddhist Friends,

1. On behalf of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, I extend warm greetings and prayerful good wishes for your celebration of *Vesakh*. May it bring joy and peace to all of you, and to your families and your communities.
2. This year our message is inspired by the *Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*, signed in Abu Dhabi on 4 February 2019 by Pope Francis and Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar. That document includes an important call for people everywhere to promote the dignity of women and children.
3. The teachings of Jesus and the Buddha promote the dignity of women. Both Buddhism and Christianity have taught that women and men are equal in dignity, and both have played an important role in the advancement of women. Buddhist and Christian women have made significant contributions to our religious traditions and to society as a whole. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that all too often women have also experienced discrimination and maltreatment. At times, religious narratives were used to present women as somehow inferior to men.
4. In our day, violence against women and young girls is a global problem, affecting as much as a third of the world's female population. Situations of conflict, post-conflict and displacement favour such violence. Women and young girls are especially vulnerable to human trafficking and modern slavery, and these forms of brutality negatively and often irreversibly affect their health. To counter these injustices, it is vital to provide young women and girls access to education, to guarantee them equal pay for equal work, to ensure the recognition of their inheritance and property rights, to overcome their under-representation in politics, government and decision-making, to address the issue of dowries, and so forth. The promotion of women's equal dignity and rights should also be reflected in interreligious dialogue: more women need to have a place at the table, where they are still outnumbered by men.
5. Dear friends, urgent action is needed to protect women and to defend their fundamental rights and freedom. As the *Document on Human Fraternity* states: "It is an essential requirement to recognize the right of women to education and employment, and to recognize their freedom to exercise their own political rights. Moreover, efforts must be made to free women from historical and social conditioning that runs contrary to the principles of their faith and dignity. It is also necessary to protect women from sexual exploitation and from being treated as merchandise or objects of pleasure or financial gain. Accordingly, an end must be brought to all those inhuman and vulgar practices that denigrate the dignity of women. Efforts must be made to modify those laws that prevent women from fully enjoying their rights".
6. Those in authority and positions of leadership have a special responsibility to encourage their followers to uphold the dignity of women and young girls, and to defend their fundamental human rights. We are likewise called to alert our brothers and sisters to the dangers inherent within gender ideology, which denies the differences and the reciprocity of men and women. In promoting the dignity and equality of women and young girls, may we also promote and protect the institution of marriage, motherhood and family life.
7. Dear Buddhist friends, let us make every effort to foster within our families, communities and institutions a renewed appreciation of the central place of women in our world and work for the definitive rejection of every form of unjust discrimination against the human person. In this spirit, I wish you once again a peaceful and joyful feast of *Vesakh*!

Bishop Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot, M.C.C.J.
Secretary

Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Dhammatalaka Peace Pagoda

Repair and renovation projects.

Presented on 19th May 2019- Buddha Day

Project 1: - Re-roofing flat roof of the Dhammatalaka Peace Pagoda

Free survey conducted by **Sika Liquid Plastics** on 31st July 2018 and they produced a 41 page document on 14th August (available on request).

Commented on:

Ponding - a fall put in with firings but no insulation.

Condensation - surface and interstitial - wood rot. Wood used probably not tanalised and nor marine ply boards.

Upstands & flashings - bitumen felt layers with short term repairs done. Possible route of water ingress as well.

Pagoda brickwork - A few areas of defects in the dome where water ingress could have taken place. (To be addressed when gold painting the Pagoda!)

GRP over concrete still in good condition but no vapour layer.

Recommendation- good roofing practice to strip the roofing build up and to re-roof.

Provided:

Four detailed drawings of layers of roofing material to be put down.

Details of work schedule and product schedule.

Datasheet on all products to be used.

Work contracted out to RIO Asphalt & Paving Co. Ltd.,50 Devon St.,Nechells Birmingham B7 4SL.
www.riogroup.co.uk

Company was a Sika Liquid Plastics approved contractor. A 20 year assurance of guarantee on products as well as workmanship was given.

Work started beginning of October 2018 and finished end of November 2019.

Additional work was to install a metal drip over the concrete base of the Pagoda as there was

concern that water could still get in between the concrete base and the top of the upstands. A metal drip would provide a complete seal all around.

Cost of roof repairs:- £27,661.50

More work needed to be done -

Hopper heads found to be too low from drain. (Completed in May 2019)

Downpipes not anchored properly. (Completed in May 2019)

Three spotlights not working. (Needs completion)

Project 2:- Installing new kitchen in the Vihara

Kitchen old and dated. The sink area and window sill were beyond repair. Work was done by Mr.Mark Durant of Quality Design & Build, Shenstone, Staffs.

Work started on 12/12/19. Completed 19/12/19

**Cost of Howdens units and installation:-
£9250.00**

Project 3:- Water leakage/damage in the Vihara

Leakage from downstairs hot water tank - valve needed repairs. 28/11/2018

(Approx **£66.00**)

A new radiator pump needed to be installed in March 2019. (Approx **£350**)

Water damage to wall (plasterboard) in the Shrine room. Slow water leak from one of the drain pipes from upstairs. Cost included in all the repairs done in the Pagoda hall.

Project 4:- Solar Panel Installation

In August 2018 **Dr.Win Myint Aung & Dr.Khine Thin Han** had a meeting with the trustees to discuss the solar panel project. They kindly offered to pay for the installation of the solar panels. Their main and honorable intention was to not only make savings on the utility bills but also to have the Dhammatalaka Pagoda illuminated at night.

The project was contracted out to Ace Solar Energy, Unit18, The Hollies Industrial Estate, Graiseley Row, Wolverhampton, WV2 4HE.

20 Solar panels were installed on the Dhamma Academy roof. Work was done in February 2019.

Cost of installation:- £9826.45

Dr. Win Myint Aung and Dr.Khine Thin Han kindly donated **£6875.00**

Our sincere gratitude to you both Saya and Sayama.

Project 5:- Renovating & Rejuvenating the Hall

Work started on internal repairs on 1st April 2019. (4 months after roof repair).

(Mr. Mark Duran of Quality Design & Build, Shenstone, Staffs).

Water damaged wall was stripped back to bare brick work. Damaged plasterwork removed.

Plaster boarded and re-skimmed.

Four window frames replaced. All failed double-glazed window panels replaced.

Ventilation grills over all windows showed no connection to outside so were removed.

Repainted all of the lower section of the hall.

Dome was checked for damp/water damage.

Affected areas repaired, retreated and painted.

The chandelier was cleaned and all bulbs replaced.

Mr. Durant sanded the floor and stained it and will varnish it. Will only charge for hiring the sander. This was his donation to Birmingham Buddhist Vihara.

Observations:-

Bare brickwork showed there is no insulation!

Donations

Six rolls of carpet were delivered on 17 May 2019 in time for the Buddha Day ceremony. Donations were made by:

Ko Sunny Zan	£800
Daw Khin Myo Thant	£200
Dr So Pye, Dr Kathy Saw	£200
Dr Aye Aye Pyone , Dr Maung Maung Latt	£150
Dr Moe Thant, Ma Theingi	£100
Dr Sai Hyne, Dr Mya Mya Aye	£474
Total	£1924

Plus the fact that there was no insulation on the roof made the big hall very cold in winter. Now with the roof insulated and no failed double-glazing it should be less cold.

As a future project there might be a need to insulate the brickwork.

To date the cost of the renovation work:-

£12,150.00

This is inclusive of work done in the shrine room, downpipes, hopper heads etc,.

Future work to be done

To inspect and repair the wall behind the mural/Buddha statues as there is evidence of water damage.

Project 6:- Electric Gate Installation

Work contracted out to Kitaure Limited, 90 Moseley St. Birmingham B12 0RT

Cost of installation:- £4424.00

Donation from Patron of BBV **Dr.Win Maung & Daw Nyo Nyo : £4500.00; Dr. Peter Soe Win: £500.00**

(Additional remedial work will be done to the mains box adding separate trip switches to the three buildings in BBV. The door frame is to be mended as well.)

Project 7:- Sheds & Garden

All the old sheds have been dismantled and disposed of.

Plan is to renovate the shipping container and to use it for storage.

Donation for Dhamma Hall carpet runner

Dr Kyaw Tun Aye and Dr Htet Nwe Win £359.00

Projector donated by Dr. Khin Maung Tun £275.00

Pagoda donation list for (Dec.18 to June 19)

Drs Kyaw Zeyya and Yin Yin Win	£300.00
Drs Jayaclave Shakher and Rema Swarna	£250.00
Drs K Z Cho and Htet Htet Win	£ 30.00
Drs Soe Pyae and Kathi Saw family	£100.00
Dr Anupa,a Barua	£1000.00

Thank you all for all your donations over the years! Making all these projects happen. We could not have done it without your donations!

VIHARA NEWS

Educational Visits

The number of educational visits to the Pagoda, and the number of students present in each group, has once again continued to rise significantly. Over one hundreds schools and three thousand students visit our Pagoda yearly. In addition to the increasing numbers wishing to visit, it is very reassuring that the student knowledge and understanding of Buddhism prior to their visits is also significantly improving.

Dr Nagasena and Ellen Parker help with school visits.

For a school visit please contact:

Dr Nagasana: uk.suriya@gmail.com

Yanda Lovelock : yanda_lovelock@yahoo.co.uk

In addition, Jenny has taken over direction of the Buddhist segment of the Ladywood Interfaith Education Programme (LIEP).

Volunteers

Vihara welcomes everyone who have different skills set and can spare some time to volunteer at vihara and share good deeds. Thanks to all our volunteers.

- U Rattapala is taking care of the Pagoda and vihara.
- Alena and her husband Alan always looking after our garden and all visitors are very happy in our Pagoda. Andrew also offered helping hand in the garden.
- Ko Thiha and his friends always lend a helping hand in every ceremony in our vihara.
- Dr Mar Mar handles the kitchen.
- Ko Wunna manages the Vihara website. Laszlo Bencze looks after all computer systems and hardware at Vihara.

Four Days Easter Retreat

The Easter Retreat took place from 19th to 22nd April in the Buddhist Academy (Rewata Dhamma hall). Meditators joined together and studied the Metta Sutta as a guide for universal loving kindness meditation. Thank you to all donors for offering meals to sangha and meditators.

Buddha Day (Vesak) Celebrations

2563 years of Lord Buddha's Mahaparinibbana was celebrated in our Peace Pagoda on the Sunday 19th May. Hundreds of supporters joined the day. Special thanks to Buddha Day sponsors. The day concluded with paying respects to senior community members. A total amount of approximately £6000 was donated to the Pagoda by the generous supporters. Thank you.

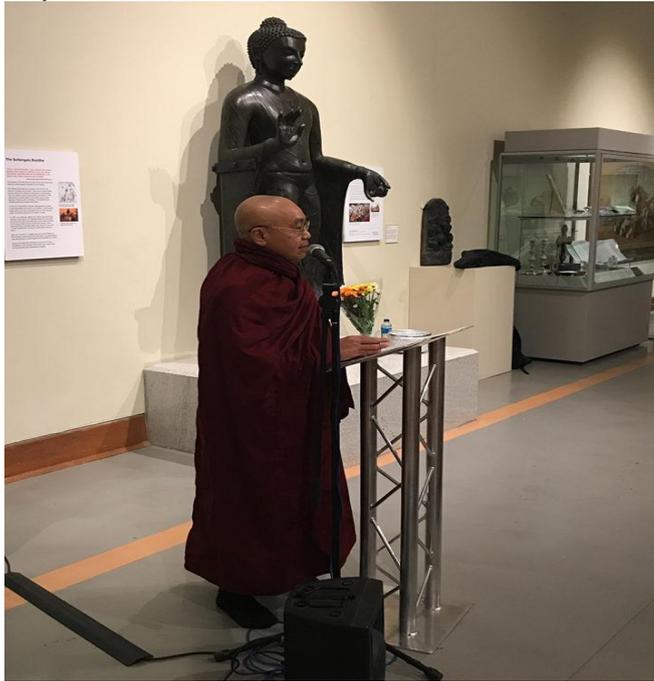


Photo Galley of Repair and Renovation Projects



Dr Ottara Nyana's activities

Bhante attended the Civic Buddha Day celebrated in Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery on Saturday 18th May 2019.



Activities in Myanmar - (19/11/18-21/01/19)

On the 9/12/18 Bhante attended the Thamangon - Gadoezate state High school (Secondary) anniversary in the home village of our great teacher Sayadaw Dr Rewata Dhamma. Sayadaw's 90th birthday occurred on the same day and was marked by awards being presented to the school's brightest students who had passed their examinations with flying colors ranging from primary to high school students.

Students award were donated by Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Trust :£1000 and Dr Mar Mar Lwin £1000. Thank you for these generous donations which make a significant difference on many children education.



Furthermore new multimedia hall with two solar panel and battery was also opened on the same day at the Thamangone state high school.

Innarr Journal donated 150 dozens of exercise book for the students.

Water tank and pump was also donated.

Hla Thida Jewelry donated K10000 each to 50 elders who are above 80 years old.

With all these generous donations and support students of Thamangon-Gadoezate state High school have achieved **FIRST RANK** among all high schools in Zalon Township, Myanmar. Teachers were able to provide special tuitions for the students which have made significant difference on the amazing RESULTS!

Dr Rewada High School Results 2019

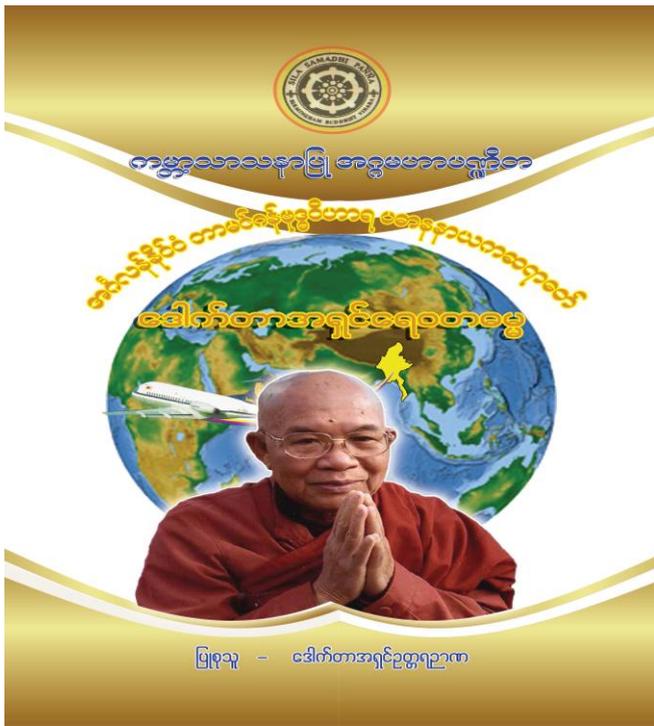
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24th Dec – 1st Jan - Bhante Ottarana's 9 days Vipassana retreat took place in his native village, Gyogone. Over 40 people meditated during this retreat.

Bhante also gave lectures to students at Mettananda Dhamma Collage (15/12./18), ITBMU (12/01/ 19) and Thadhu Buddhist University (14/1/19).

Bhante's spent a lot of time in preparation for the second edition of Dr Rewada biography which was published in remembrance of Sayadaw's 90th birthday.



Dr Ottara Nyana's Future activities

Bhante will be visiting to Brazil from 12th June to 10th July for meditation retreat taking place in different cities. Bhante will begin with public talk in each city centre town halls followed by a retreat in the meditation retreat centres.

Bhante will teach Metta Sutta in St Paulo ; Bojjhanga Sutta in Aracarju, Abhidhamma (four Paramattha) and Vipassana (four Satipatthana) in Nalandar Rama (Bello Horizonte).



Bhante is going to Dhammaramsi Belgium from 28th Jul to 3rd Aug to lead Metta retreat together with the Dhamma day celebration.

***Dhammapada Verse 387
Anandatthera Vatthu***

***Divā tapati adicco
ratti mabhati candima
sannaddho khattiyo tapati
jhayi tapati brahmano
atha sabbamahorattim
buddho tapati tejasa.***

By day shines the sun; by night shines the moon; in regalia shines the king; in meditation shines the arahat; but the Buddha in his glory shines at all times, by day and by night.