



TI-SARANA BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION

Ti-Sarana

NEWS

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Message from Bhante:

THE SECRET OF PROGRESS: UNITY IN DIVERSITY

In common usage, progress means the onward march towards a better and advanced condition. There are many facets to progress. Nevertheless, here we will confine our concerns to the progress of individuals or institutions. Society is constituted of individuals; every individual is hence a part and parcel of society. From the time of our birth into this world until the last moment of our mortal existence, we will be continuing our relationship with society under varying situations and circumstances. Just as one cannot imagine a running vehicle without its component parts, one cannot speak of a society without individuals. While living in society, the way individuals respond or react with one another is called social interaction. To make that relationship of social interaction more congenial, systematic and beneficial to society and individuals, human civilization has handed down some guidelines or conventions called social norms. An individual is obliged to follow those social norms for the betterment of both individual and society.

Unity in Diversity

The Buddha says in the **Anguttaranikaya** that just as the bodies of individuals are different, so are their perspectives. Also in another instance replying to a question put to him by Sakka, the Buddha in the **Sakkapañha Sutta** expressed the same observation saying that the world is composed of people of diverse attitudes and perceptions. Diversities of perception may depend on numerous causal factors such as understanding, sense faculties, emotionality, introversion, extroversion, self-control or such other mental factors. Certainly, Buddhism advocates unity of purpose of individuals, over and above their own personal inclinations. Once the Buddha visited the Gosinga Sala Tree Park where the venerables Anuruddha, Nandiya and Kimbila were living peacefully, developing loving kindness towards one another by deed, word and mind openly and privately. All of them hailed from Sakyan aristocracy, famous for pride and complacency. As to be expected from these worthy ones, the crux of their relationship lies in the fact that not one of them was authoritarian or domineering in their interpersonal relations with one another. It is noteworthy that those factors that disrupt concord, unity and friendly social relations are totally absent in them.

First, the Buddha said to venerable Anuruddha that he hoped that all of them are living in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, blending like milk and water and viewing each other with kindly eyes. When the venerable answered in the affirmative, the Buddha asked him further how they were able to live in that way.

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Then the venerable unfolding the secret of their inter personal relationship said it was because of their unity towards the common goal and said that it was a great gain to him to live together with worthy companions such as those with whom he lived together and revealed further:

“I consider - why should I not set aside what I wish to do and do what these venerable ones wish to do. We are different in body Venerable Sir, but one in mind.”

When the Buddha asked the same from the other two venerables, Nandiya and Kimbila, they also answered in the same vein. The discourse depicts a beautiful picture of harmonious living leading to progress in their endeavour.

Conditions for Non-Retrogression

On another occasion, the Buddha preached to the Vajjians The Seven Conditions of Non-Retrogression or otherwise called Seven Conditions of Welfare for the progress and welfare of their kingdom. The second condition of the seven is to meet together in the assembly in concord, disperse in concord after deliberations, and carry out their undertakings in concord. As long as they adhered to this and other conditions, they would progress from strength to strength. But later, when the unity among them was disrupted they retrogressed and fell prey to the adjoining kingdom of Magadha. These episodes show that the secret of progress of individuals and institutions are dependent on the unity of purpose despite the diversity of individuals and their perceptions. Evidently, the English proverb **“United we stand; divided we fall”** also expresses the same sentiment of vitality of concord for progress.

Ven. Dr. P. Gnanarama Mahā Thera

33rd Annual General Meeting

The 33rd Annual General Meeting of Ti-Sarana Buddhist Association will be held on 21st Mar 2010 (Sun) at 12.30 pm. A notice of the meeting will be sent to members in due course.

Qing Ming Memorial Service – 30th Mar to 5th Apr 2010

Qing Ming Jie is the time for us to remember all our departed loved ones. Showing gratitude when the person is living as well as when he/she is deceased is a virtue praised by the Buddha. We can perform meritorious deeds in memory of the departed ones and dedicate the merits to them for their well being.

Qing Ming Memorial Service at Ti-Sarana will be held after the Evening Puja Service from **30th March to 5th April**. After the Evening Pūjā Service (7.30 pm on weekdays and 6.30 pm on weekends) names of the donors and their departed loved ones will be read out before the commencement of the memorial service. Gifts of essential requisites will be offered to the Venerables in memory of the departed ones, followed by the recitation of the Tirokudda Sutta and dedication of merits to the departed ones. All members and devotees are encouraged to participate in the Memorial Service.

We can perform meritorious deeds in memory of our departed ones by making a donation to Ti-Sarana Buddhist Association in their memory. Donations collected are used for Dhamma propagation, Sunday Dhamma Classes' activities, upkeep and maintenance of the premises and the welfare of the Venerables. Enclosed in this newsletter is the registration form for Qing Ming Memorial Service. Please complete the form and send it to the Honorary Treasurer by 26th March 2010.

Activities of the Sunday Dhamma Classes

A gift for me!

Getting to know each other

We still want to play

Our YMBA certificates!

Exuberant Sunday School Kids

The Pagoda Lamps of Blessing



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