

HUMBLE TRIBUTES to
The NOBLE DHAMMA DUTA



Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa Nayaka Maha Thera
TO FELICITATE HIS 75th BIRTHDAY ON 23rd OCT., 1989
By RAHUL SUMAN CHHAWARA

HONOUR THE WORTHY ONE

In the first stanza of the Mangala Sutta, the Buddha said "To honour those-worthy of honour, is the highest blessings." Who is the worthy of honour. The worthy of honour is one, who lives the life of DHAMMA full of dedication for the welfare of the many and good of the many.

When I came to know that the Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa Nayaka Maha Thera Chief Sangha Nayaka of Northern India and Vice President of the Maha Bodhi Society of India and The World Buddhist Sangha Council, Taiwan R. O. China is going to complete his 75th year of age on 23rd October, 1989. I felt it necessary to honour him and his selfless life and works by bringing out a small publication to record his great Dhamma services, which he rendered through out his life, to enable the readers to gain the Dhamma inspirations there from and live a worthy life.

I went to the Ven'ble Maha Thera and expressed my heartfelt desire and wanted his message for the mankind at this occasion.

Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa Nayaka Maha Thera at once uttered the very first sentences of the Buddha, which he spoke after gaining the Super Enlightenment Buddhahood.

Sabbe sankara annichate
Sabbe sankara anattate
Sabbe sankara Dukkate

Every thing is changing every fraction of a moment, every thing is egoless and every thing is suffering.

He further added that in fact he would be going 75 years closer to death on his 75th birthday. This reminds him about the message of impermanance given by the flowers which are placed before the Buddha.

The flowers plucked in the morning keep fresh for few moments only. They go on decaying every fraction of a moment and by the evening they are decayed and are thrown away. But they keep on giving fragrance & happiness till they are fully decayed. So like wise the birthdays come to remind every one of us about the ultimate TRUTH of Impermanance and inspire us to devote the life for the good and welfare of the many by rendering the services of the Dhamma to the people. The service of the Dhamma is the greatest service to mankind-One can also help & assist the Noble ones who serve the Dhamma financially and otherwise and earn the merits there from. It is the Dhamma, which kindles the light of Wisdom and expell the darkness of Ignorance, which is the root cause of sufferings.

The Ven'ble Nayaka Maha Thera also reminded me about the instance of Lord Buddha when he was about to

breath his last for attaining the Maha Parinibbana. One devotee was pressing Ven'ble Ananda to allow him to seek the path of deathlessness from the Master. But he was being refused by Ven'ble Ananda as there was no enough time and many people were yet in the que to have the last sight of the Master. The Buddha hearing there arguments, told Ven'ble Ananda to allow him to come and seek the path. He was then allowed and in those last moments also, the Buddha served him with the Dhamma and lastly gave the sight to others too and finally passed away in the Maha Parinibbana. In this way we can see that the Buddha devoted his every minute for serving the people with the Dhamma.

This reminds us all that the older we grow, nearer we reach the death. So we must devote every possible effort to practice the Dhamma and convey its noble message to as many people as possible, If we can not do that ourselves, we must help and assist those who are doing so and earn the same merits there from. This will enable us to have the self satisfaction that we have really done our best, which we should have done.

He further said that he wishes to continue his Dhamma services to the people till his last breadth and inspire as many people as he can towards the path of light as taught by the Buddha.

With these words, he said that if the noble Sangha

strives hard to develop a good ideal society full of purity of thoughts, speech and actions, than such an ideal good society would in turn produce noble Sangha [Bhikkhus] and this way the society and the noble Sangha, both will enable the people to have peace and prosperity in life right here and now.

I was deeply impressed by the Dhamma inspiration of the Nayaka Maha Thera and decided to present a small publication to the public which could inspire one and all with the self-less life and great works of the Nayaka Maha Thera and enable me to earn some MERITS there from.

May he live a healthy long life to serve the people with the Dhamma and have all the peace and happiness in the rest of his old days to come.

Rahul Suman Chhawara
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The World Fellowship of Buddhists, Bangkok, Thailand
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FOREWORD

It gives me a great pleasure to know that Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji Nayaka Maha Thera, Vice President of Maha Bodhi Society of India is completing his 75th Birthday on 23rd October, 1989. Shri Rahul Suman Chhawara who has dedicated his life for the cause of revival of Buddha Dhamma in Rajasthan since 1950 when he was just 20 years old and by now he has been able to complete the International Buddhist Monastery of Rajasthan-the Maha Bodhi Ashoka Vihara, in Ajmer and made Ajmer once again the great seat of the Buddhist studies and practice like that of ancient times, is bringing out a publication to honour the great Dhamma services rendered by Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji through out his life. This deserves the SADHUWAD of one and all.

I know Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji as a great Buddhist leader and scholar monk of India who is enjoying an International reputation due to his dedicated Dhamma works which he is still continuing with great enthusiasum and devotion in his old days also. When ever I met him in the International Buddhist conferences and seminars and even at the Buddha Vihara New Delhi, he always smiled and gave me the blessings of the Holy Tripple Gem. His Dhamma and other social activities in the capital of India are very well recorded at the National & International level by the public

and the Govt. Practically all the high dignitaries of India like H. E. President, Vice President, Prime Minister, Home Minister and defence Minister and the Prime Ministers of the neighbouring countries have been visiting the Buddha Vihara. H. H. The Dalai Lama and the head Lamas of U. S. S. R., Mangolia and Laddkah etc. have also paid their holy visits to the Vihara at his request. This shows about his good relations & approach with all of them due to his social and scholarly activities for the cause of the suffering humanity.

I wish a happy long life to Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa Nayaka Maha Thera at this occasion and hope that he would continue his Dhamma services for many more years and guide us all towards peace and happiness.

KISHAN MOTWANI
DEPUTY SPEAKAR
Rajasthan Vidhan Sabha
JAIPUR (Rajasthan)

LET YOUR BLESSINGS BE WITH US !

As per the directions of our founder Sri Rahul Suman Chhawara, I am availing the proud privilege of bringing out this small publication to express our humble gratitude and honour to Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji Nayaka Maha Thera for his sincere and devoted Dhamma services, which he has been rendering through out his life. We in Rajasthan do not have any Buddhist monk. Though we are rendering our humble Dhamma services as much as possible, but whenever a Bhikkhu is needed here, we always invite him to guide and bless the newly wedded couples and grace the religious functions as the Chief guest. Whenever we visit Delhi, we stay with him & enjoy his Dhamma guidance. At the occasion of his 75th birthday, we wish him a happy long life full of peace and prosperity. By brining out this small publication to felicitate and honour him at this occasion, we are honouring the DHAMMA and SANGHA to which he represents very ably and wisely.

Our special thanks are always due to him for his learned articles which he so kindly sends for our monthly journal "Samyak Dristi" (Right View) by which our readers gain the true sense of the Dhamma and feel inspired to practice the same. We receive large number of appriciations from our readers who are benefitted by his articles. I therefore thank and felicitate him on behalf of them and myself.

Mrs. QUIN MOI RAHUL
Genl. Secy., Maha Bodhi Ashok Mission
Maha Bodhi Marg, Gautam Nagar, AJMER.

Hearty Felicitations to Ven'ble L. Ariyawansaji Nayaka Maha Thera

While seeking your blessings at the occasion of your 75th birthday, we sincerely congratulate and felicitate you for your excellent Dhamma Duta work which you have been doing in New Delhi—the capital of India, May you live long for many more years and continue your Dhamma-duta work.

SADHU ! SADHU !! SADHU !!!

We are your most humble devotees

**BHANWAR SINGH
SAHAWAL**
Chief Executive Officer
Jila Parishad. Jhalawad.

GUNWANT RAHUL
President,
Ashoka Mission youth League
& Editor, Samyak Dristi,
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**MRS. USHA RAHUL
KUMPAWAT**
Secretary
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President (Carriage Shop)

Buddha Purnima Celebration Committee, Ajmer.

The Laws & Principles of Nature

On the full moon day of Vaisakh, when Siddarth yogi was in his deep meditations for gaining the Buddhahood, he could visualise the mundane and supermundane worlds, their beings and their nature as well. He could also see beings dying and taking rebirth in the other planes depending upon the nature that they had developed in that life and the last thought at the moment of death. He himself also saw that before taking birth as Siddarth, he had to take about 500 births and his last birth was in the TUSHITA DEVELOKA.

The Buddha explained that there are 31 planes of existence. The human world is in between the Six Devalokas and the Four Apayalokas. Beings born in the Devloka are supposed to live for a definite period to enjoy the fruits of their meritorious deeds. After the completion of that period they have to leave that world and take birth elsewhere. Below the human world there is Apaya loka in which there are four divisions, The Realms of Inferno (Hells), World of Demons (Titans), The world of unhappy spirits and the animals world of air, water and earthly ones. Above the six Devlokas there are 16 Brahma lokas and above these 16 planes are 4 arupa Brahama lokas.

Normally the beings from the lower nether planes of the apaya loka, human planes and the Devaloka take

birth in each other planes. Those who strive for Nibbana and live their lives accordingly are reborn in the Devaloka and after completing the specified age there, they attain Nibbana and if they gain the stage of Arrahatship in this very life, than they attain Nibbana with the last breadth they take in their human life.

In view of the above. if one tries to study the nature of each individual, than he would certainly conclude by his or her nature as to what type of Conciousness he is having and he is bound to live according to his past nature which he has developped. It is only the Buddhas and the Arrahats who, by the power of their unlimited merits and Dhamma which they practice, they can fertilise some of their good thoughts lying under the heap of bad ones. The Buddha had explained that each being has 8 kinds of seed-thoughts which includes the Buddha seed as well, but the number of seed thoughts which are more in number, determine the nature of a man and lead him in that particular directon. We can therefore readily accept that each being has the number of seed thoughts as mentioned above and the large number of a particular type of thoughts rule the life of each individual.

By the practice of Vipassna meditation as taught by the Buddha, one can surely root out the seed thoughts which are likely to bring forth woefull states in future. Like wise he can also develope the good meritorious thoughts

for the good and welfare of the many and live a happy peaceful life now and in future also.

The human beings who take birth in this world have their own views of life and they live and act accordingly. Those who are born for the good and welfare of the many, they do that, those who are born for looting and bringing sorrow and sufferings for the people, they do that. Those who are born as stupid like beasts, they live in that way and so on.

What ever sorrow and sufferings and dissatisfaction which we experience is the result of the majority of such human beings who are having such thoughts and tendencies. Whatever soothing, pleasant and happiness, that we experience and see is the result of a small number of such good people having such good thoughts, speech and actions.

MAHA BODHI ASHOKA VIHAR

Maha Bodhi Marg, Gautamnagar, Ajmer (Raj.) Phone 24235

(The Premier International Buddhist Monastery of Rajasthan Founded by Sri Rahul Suman Chhawara & Mrs. Quin Moi Rahul in commemoration of the 2600th birth anniversary of Lord Buddha in March 1976.)

Note : Mini Bus Ply from Rly. station to Ajainagar every hour. Maha Bodhi chauraha is the second last stop at GAUTAMNAGAR.

The Blessed day of 23rd Oct., 1915

The blessed is the day when the great beings are born on this earth. Vaishak purnima day was the blessed day when Lord Buddha was born on this earth. Like wise the Asvin purnima, Friday the 23rd October 1915 was also a blessed day for the human society and the parents Dr. Sri Kali Kumar Barua and Smt. Shashi Kumari Barua of village Lakhera of the Chittagong District of present Bangladesh when a pious child was born in the mid night. Beings who are reborn from the Devlokas have to determine the good parents before taking birth. Their parents must be pious having good thoughts by which they could serve the mankind for their good and welfare. The beings of Devalokas when born as human beings, they certainly live a very pious life and serve the cause of the suffering humanity.

Dr. Sri Kali Kumar Barua and Smt. Shashi Kumari Barua enjoyed a great love and respect from one and all in the village and near by other areas, as they used to serve the people with the feelings of boundless loving kindness to enable them to live a happy and peaceful life. Their main aim was not money, but to serve and rescue the sufferings of humanity. Naturally their out come child would also be brought up in that atmosphere and he would develop his good thoughts which he has already brought from his previ-

ous birth. There were Buddha Viharas in the village where newly born child was taken for blessings on the Full and half moon days every month for the blessings of the Bhikkhu Sangha. The parents used to observe the 8 precepts on the full and half moon days and practice deep meditations. They had two daughters and three sons more before this child was born.

This child was none else but the present Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa Nayaka Maha Thera who is completing his 75th Birthday on 23rd October 1989. We can therefore easily conclude that this child was previously having Deva Virtues in view of the laws and principles of Nature as explained in the previous pages.

The family and surrounding atmosphere and conditions were all good, pious and full of love and boundless loving kindness. The child was therefore fortunate due to his own previous meritorious deeds, that he could have every thing favourable as required by him. He was named as Apurva Ranjan Barua by the family. He was educated in the Vihara by the high priest and he picked up every thing that was taught to him. He was later admitted in the primary school in the village at the age of 5 years. By his full devotion for studies he always topped the class and showed his extraordinary ability and superamacy. He completed his studies up to 6th class in this school of the village.

The brother-in-law of Apurva Ranjan Barua was living in Rangoon, Burma having a big industry of steel trunks. So he went to Rangoon along with his father for a month. There he was deeply impressed by the life of the Buddhist monks. He had the opportunity of visiting the famous pagodas like Swedagon, Sule and other viharas etc. His seed thoughts of the pious religious life received good nourishments there and he could develop the feelings to live such a life.

They all came back after a month and the elder brother of Apurva, Sri Rohini Ranjan Barua was married with great festivities. But Apurva who was nourished with the thoughts of living a life of the Bhikku remained busy reading the Dhamma books and gaining the guidance from his religious teacher Vinayacharya Sri Praggya Allankar Maha Nayaka Thera and developed his will to become a Bhikkhu.

THE ORDINATION AND STUDIES IN SRI LANKA

The seed thought of becoming a Bhikku Apurva became ripe and led him to seek permission from his parents and other members of the family to leave the house and live a Dhamma life as a monk. In the year 1928 when he was just 14 years of age he was ordained as a sramnera by their family priest Ven'ble Praggyalankar Maha Nayaka Thera and given the name "ARIYAWANSA". The entire village-young and old respected Sramnera Ariyawansa. He devotedly learnt

the various suttas by chanting them daily. His Ven'ble guruji and others went for the Buddhist pilgrimage to India, he was also taken by them. He saw Sarnath, Buddha Gaya, Lumbini Kushinagar and Srawasti etc. Every good or bad karma has its vipak at its fixed time. So perhaps it was the ripe and fixed time for Sramnera Ariyawansa, that Ven'ble Moligoda Ariyawansa Maha Nayaka Thera of Sri Lanka during his pilgrimage to the Buddhist places of India was in Sarnath, when he went there. He paid his humble respects in the feet of the Mahanayaka Thera of Sri Lanka and expressed his desire to study the Dhamma under him in Sri Lanka. His request was immediately accepted but he could not take him with him and assured him to invite him to Sri Lanka. He returned back home and completed his education along with Pali Language and was now ready for further higher studies.

In the meanwhile Anagarika Dharamapalaji invited 10 sramneras from Chitgong and Sri Lanka each for their higher training and education as the Dhamma duta workers. Sri Devpriya Vali Singh General Secretary of the Maha Bodhi Society of India wrote to Ven'ble Ariyawansa ji in Sri Lanka about ten sramneras which included sramnera Ariyawansa also whom he knew well. Ven'ble D. Sasan Sri Maha Thera taught Pali and Sinhali to sramnera Ariyawansa and others under the patronage of Ven'ble Anagarakia Dharamapal ji the founder of the Maha Bodhi Society of India. Lastly in July 1932. Sramnera Ariyawansa received a letter from

Sri Lanka and they left Chitgong for Sri Lanka via Rangoon at the age of 17 years.

Sramnera Ariyawansa was put for his further studies in the Pravachanodaya Oriental college, Molligoda, Sri Lanka. He devoted his full time in the studies and completed the Tripitika and Sinhali language etc within 9 years under the guidance of Ven'ble Molligoda Ariyawansa Maha Nayaka Thera who was the highest Buddhist scholar of his time in Sri Lanka and the Principal of the Oriental College. He was also the Maha Sangha Nayaka of Kotte Jayawardhanpura, Kalyani Dharam Samagri Maha Sabha. Sramnera Ariyawansa led a very virtuous disciplined life fully devoted to his studies and practice and obtained the highest degree of TRIPITIKA VISHARAD from the Previnia after the constant study of 8-10 years. Later on he also attained the efficiency in Pali Vaykaran Alankara Shashtra, Bhasa Viggyan, and Sanskrit literature. During his studies Sramnera Ariyawansa received his higher ordination as a Bhikkhu from his Acharya Ven'ble Molligoda Ariyawansa Maha Nayaka Thera in June 1938. Bhikkhu Ariyawansa lost his father while he was studying in Sri Lanka. He came to India and Chitagong with his guruji to pay short visit to the Buddhist places of India and the Buddhist Vihara of Chitagong. They were warmly received by the people of the village and accorded a hearty welcome. The actual name of this place was Chetiyagama which means the gram of the Chettyas. Later on the British people named it

as Chitagong. Chettya gama or Chettya gram is a meaning ful name. We wish the people and the Government of Bangladesh could rename it as Chettya grama or gama since there are lot of Viharas and Chettyas there.

AS A DHARAMDUTA AND SOCIAL WORKER OF THE MAHA BODHI SOCIETY

Ven'ble Bhikkhu L. Ariywansa ji came to his motherland and started his Dhammaduta and social work. In the year 1943 there was a dreadful flood in Chittagong. Ven'ble L. Ariywansa ji came to Calcutta and raised some funds and gave relief to his people in the village. Due to his selfless services of every poor and needy people, he was considered as a saintly person.

Maha Bodhi Society of India was in need of the Dhamma duta workers The General Secretary Sri Devpriyavalisinha ji wrote a letter to the Ven'ble Bhikkhu in Oct. 1949 and called him to Calcutta to render his services in the society head Qtrs. office. With in a months time he got his third book published in Bangali under the title of Buddha Niti Siksha of 35 pages. Looking to his hard and sincere work he was sent to Sarnath in November 1950. He started his services in the most important centre of the society where thousands of people visit the Vihara daily. He however fell ill in August 1951 so he was called back to Calcutta. He was advised a change of climate so he was

sent to Shilong for a change for 3 months. On his return from Shilong in good health. He was sent to New Delhi on 7th November 1951. At that time Ven'ble Dr. H. Saddatissa Maha Thera was the secretary of the New Delhi Centre of the Society. Ven'ble Dr. Saddatissa handed over the charge to Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji and went to Sarnath and from there he had to go to London to look after the London Buddhist Vihara.

Before handing the charge of the Vihara Ven'ble Dr. H. Saddatissa examined the ability and capability of Ven'ble L. Ariywanasaji since he may have very many problems to face being in the capital of India. He was found all the way seasoned, able and wise enough to shoulder the responsibilities of the centre.

New Delhi centre of the Maha Bodhi Society is the most important centre and a very capable man is needed here, as he has to face the Politicians, Govt. officials, Ambassadors, Ministers, Buddhists of different states, countries, and different languages and the Hindoos who hold high respects for the Buddha. Each group of people are required to be dealt with as per their requirements. The Govt. calls the Buddhist monk of the Maha Bodhi Society on different occasions at Raj Ghat where he is required to recite Holy refuges and some blessings suttas etc. Some times when the very important Buddhist dignitaries of other countries visit Delhi, then they are required to be received very

warmly and taken to the Prime Minister and the President for courtesy visits etc etc.

In view of all these requirements the monk of New Delhi Centre is required to be very intelligent, active able and wise to face the problems and situations. Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji has proved his worth here by his ability and tactfulness.

There are large number of Bengali Buddhists in New Delhi apart from the Buddhists of nearly all the states of India. All of them visit the Buddha Vihara of New Delhi headed by Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji. He had to work single handed and shoulder the responsibilities of the Vihara, library, booksale counter, visitors, etc. etc. The place is very limited one, therefore no work can be extended. He feels very sorry when he cannot accomodate the devotees coming from far off places and other countries etc. He has to get them accomodated in different lodges and Dharamshala here and there. This is really very pity, but nothing can be done as there is no space.

Apart from the Dhamma duta work, he has to bless the social ceremonies of the Buddhist devotees like marriage, naming the child last day rites etc. etc. Some times he is also required to go for the Dana to the residence of the devotees also. Than the day to day problems of the family are also brought to the Ven'ble Bhante to guide and solve

their problems. In this way he has to use his very high intellect to satisfy all without hurting any one.

After the independance of India Pt. Jawahar Lal ji Nehru became the Prime Minister of India. He was deeply impressed by the life and teachings of the Buddha and rule of Ashoka the great who was influenced by the Buddha Dhamma and its culture.

The Dhamma Chakka-the-symbol of the first sermon of Lord Buddha was adopted in the National flag of India and the Lions facing four ways was taken as the National emblum. "Dharamchakkra pravartanaya" was written on the Chair of the President. All these signs of Buddhist culture being patronised by the Govt. were pinching the hearts of some people having narrow thinking not knowing that these things represent Nature, but since Lord Buddha was their source, so they are taken as the part of the Buddhist culture.

The President. the Prime Minister and other Ministers of the Govt. started comming to this Buddhist temple. Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji had to talk to them all and satisfy all their querries. Due to all this some people started becomming jealous and they started making all sorts of false propaganda against the Buddha and Buddha Dhamma.

One Jain Muni in the year 1951 published one article in the daily news paper where in, he showed that Lord Buddha

was the disciple of Lord Maha Veera. This was a great controversy. Hence the learned Buddhist scholar Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji in reply published many articles in the same newspapers and expelled the wrong conceptions of the Jain Muni and in the last the Jain Muni had to drop his pen and came to the Buddhist temple and had a cordial talk with the Buddhist monk Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji and then became his friend. This publication of articles in the newspaper gave a great publicity to Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji.

In may, 1952 when the Buddha Purnima was celebrated and a grand publicity of the same was made in the newspapers and through the handbills etc. there was a large gathering of Buddhists and non Buddhists as well. It was presided by Dr. Katju the then Home Minister of India. Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji visited him at his residence and explained the international importance of the Buddha Purnima and its impact on the neighbouring Buddhist countries like Tibbet, Japan, China, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Thailand etc. etc. and made him to understand that the declaration of this day as a public holiday would be very useful in the foreign policy of the Govt. The Home Minister came and in his presidential speech he declared the Buddha Purnima day as a public holiday. This was a very great achievement of Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji, for which the Buddhists shall ever remain grateful to him.

Dr. B. R. AMBEDKAR'S INTEREST FOR BUDDHISM

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. Law Minister of Govt. of India and the great leader of the down trodden people became interested in Buddhism. Buddha Vihara was only place where he could discuss about the Dhamma. He started coming to the Buddha Vihara for discussions with the Ven'ble Maha Thera. It was Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji Nayaka Maha Thera who had to reply all his questions about the Dhamma. Dr. Ambedkar was a great personality and well read leader. His questions were also great and he expected the right reply. Hence the Ven'ble Maha Thera had to keep himself well prepared to satisfy him to the best of his ability.

Dr. Ambedkar was very well impressed by the reply of Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji and during the course of his talks, he used to tell him that it would be a red letter day in the Buddhist history of the world, when he would be in his full power to get a big Buddha Vihara made near India gate which would become the main attraction for all those who are interested in Buddha Dhamma and its culture.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar did accept the Buddha Dhamma on 14th October 1956 with about 20 Lakhs of his followers, but unfortunately he could not survive to fulfill his wishes in respect of the Buddha Dhamma. Amongst his followers

there is now Mr. Buddha Priya Maurya who is in the politics in the capital and is likely to gain power. We can therefore have some hopes from him, if he could do any thing by which the wishes of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar could be fulfilled.

If Dr. B. R. Ambedkar would have survived for at least 10 years and he would have realised the TRUTH of the Dhamma through Vipassna meditations, then he would have proved himself to be the second Ashoka of this time. Ashoka practiced the Vipassna meditation and gained the stages of purity, then and then only he could devote his full interest for the propagation of the Dhamma not only in India but in the near by countries as well.

Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji published many booklets on the Buddha and his Dhamma for free distribution among the common men and the intellectuals, which created great interest for the Buddha Dhamma among the readers.

Every full moon day is celebrated in the Buddha Vihara by Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji. A large number of Bengali and other Buddhists attend the same. People observe the 8 precepts, do meditation, and give DANA to the Sangha. Since there are many Buddhists in the various embassies. they also come to the Buddha Vihara on Sundays and the Full moon days. In this way Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji has to satisfy the the Dhamma needs of all these people with his deep knowledge of Dhamma.

INDIAN BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION AND VEN'BLE L. ARIYAWANSA JI

The Buddhist community of Former esat Pakistan and now Bengladesh came to Delhi and settled here. They formed the Indian Buddhist Association and were functioning well. When Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji arrived in New Delhi Buddha Vihara, they all were very happy as he hailed from Chittagong, Bengladesh. As such they found a right person to guide them in the Dhamma and he had the right type of devotees to serve the cause of the Dhamma. In this way the Maha Bodhi Society and the Indian Buddhist Association both, combindly started their Buddhist activities in the Buddha Vihara. This gave a good publicity of the Vihara and the Ven'ble Maha Thera L. Ariyawansa ji as well.

Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji was not only giving them the Dhamma guidance, but also serving their social and cultural needs as well. i. e. Naming the child, Blessing and guiding the newly wedded couple, performing the last rites, sacramental and conceptional ceremonies and that of ordination as nauvices for short periods and reciting the Paritta Path—the verces for the protection and blessings etc. These Bengali Buddhists of the Barua community are devoted Buddhists. They feel very happy to give Data to the Monks and food to the poor and needy people on the half and full moon days.

They celebrate the Birthday anniversary of Ven'ble Anagarika Dhatampal ji also with great devotion as he revived Buddha Dhamma in India.

The most Ven'ble teacher of Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji Ven'ble Indrajyoti Ariyawansa Maha Sangha Nayaka, Kotte Raja Mahavihara and the Principal of the Pravachanodaya Oriental College, Molligoda, Sri Lanka came to New Delhi in 1952. All these Bengali Buddhists, the devotees of Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji came in large number and accorded him a very warm welcome and offered him DANA and impressed him very much with their devotion and service.

EFFORTS FOR BUDDHA PURNIMA HOLIDAY

Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji was very keen to get the Buddha Purnima day declared as a public holiday. He had personal relations with the then Home Minister Sri Kailash-nath ji Katju. He explained him all the importance of the Buddha Purnima and its political impact on the neighbouring Buddhist countries. Due to his constant efforts, while presiding over the Buddha Purnima celebrations of 1952 in the Delhi Buddha Vihara, he declared it is a Govt. gazetted holiday. Hence the credit for this goes mainly to Ven'ble L. Ariyawansaji Maha Nayaka Thera.

2500TH BUDDHA PURNIMA

The preparations for celebrating the 2500th Buddha Purnima were being made right from 1953 all over the

world including India. The Govt. of India was moved by the Maha Bodhi Society of India and Prime Minister Sri Jawahar Lal ji Nehru who had great love and respect for the Buddha, readily accepted the proposal. It was decided to celebrate this great event on the National level. Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji being in the capital-New Delhi had great responsibility to meet the Ministers on behalf of the Maha Bodhi Society and reply the letters of the Buddhist leaders all over the world, He contacted the Buddhist leaders all over the world on behalf of the Govt. of India as well to apprise them about the preparations of the Govt, for celebrating the Buddha Purnima celebrations. Govt. of India was in need of the list of the great Buddhist leaders and scholars all over the World, Ven'ble Ariyawansa ji consulted the head quarters and sent the list to the Govt. He also informed them all, that they are being invited in the International Buddhist seminar being held in New Delhi. In this way he became familiar with all the Buddhist leaders and scholars all over India. The writer of these lines also attended this International Buddhist seminar.

Govt. of India made special arrangements to receive and accomodate these foreign Buddhist leaders comfortably, by constructing the Ashoka Hotel in the area of Chanakkya puri. In the Ramleela Maidan a special stage, giving the show of the Buddhist artitecture was specially constructed and the celebrations were held on 24-5-56 under the

Chairmanship of Late Dr. Rajendra Prashad ji the President of India. Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji Maha Thera was the associate member of the National Buddha Purnima celebration Committee, organised by the Govt. of India. He played a very important role in making these celebrations a great success.

Shri Jawahar lal ji Nehru wanted to have a huge Buddha image in the capital of India which could be seen from a far distance. He therefore chose a forest area near by the Buddha Vihara and named it as Buddha Jayanti Park. He laid the foundation stone of this memorial park on 23rd May 1957. The writer of these lines attended nearly all the programmes of these Jayanti celebrations including the public meeting, seminar, Foundation stone laying ceremony, etc. etc. The Govt. of India repaired and reconstructed all the main Buddhist places all over India for the convenience of the Buddhist pilgrims and tourists. Tourist dak banglows and pilgrims rest houses were made by the Govt. Tourist literature giving a wide publicity to the Buddhist holy places were made and they were also connected suitably by rail, road and air as well.

The International Buddhist exhibition was also held on 23rd Nov., 1957 in New Delhi. Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji extended his co-operation and assistance to the Govt. in all these affairs and also in bringing the following-publications

1. The 2500 years of Buddhism.

2. The albums of Buddhist Archeological and historical monuments and places.

3. The pillars of Emperor Ashoka the great.

4. The publication of the holy Tripitika in devnagri script.

Film - The life of Lord Buddha in sculpture and historical paintings and pictures.

Postal stamps - Occasional historical stamps related to the life of Buddha Buddhist places and Buddhism were released.

RECEPTION OF THE RELICS OF MOGGLIPUTTA TISSA THERA

The British Govt. had taken away the bone relics of the great Arhats the Holy ones and kept in the Albert Museum of London. The Maha Bodhi Society of India requested Sri Nehru ji to take back those relics. Hence Smt. Vijya Laxmi Pandit the then High Commissioner of India in London brought back these Relics to India. Sri Jawaharlal Nehru went to receive the same at the Palm air Port. Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji also paid his respects to these relics at the Air port.

The most important event that took place in 2500th Buddha Jayanti year was that of the Embracing of Buddhism By Dr. B. R. Ambedkar along with lakhs and lakhs of his followers on 14-10-1956. The press published this great news in the head lines on the front page. The General Secretary of the

Maha Bodhi Society of India Sri Devpriyavali Sinha ji and the writer of these lines also went to Nagpur to congratulate and felicitate Dr. Ambedkar for this historical wise step in his own interest and that of his followers all over India. The contribution of Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji Maha Thera was nothing less in promoting the utility and importance of Buddha Dhamma in the mind of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar who had already made up his mind to give up Hinduism and adopt the path of the Buddha which gave complete mental freedom to its followers and showed the path of equality and morality.

Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji was wise enough to choose a right person at the right time to preside the Buddha Jayanti celebrations of the Vihara. He invited Dr. Kalulal Shrimali Minister of Education. Govt. of India to preside the Buddha Jayanti. Before the large gathering, the Ven'ble stressed the importance of the study of Buddha Dhamma in the Delhi University, since it was the best cultures of India which is being accepted by every intellegent person having the scientific mental outlook. The Hon'ble Minister was well impressed by his arguments and was pleased to open the Department of Buddhist studies in the University of Delhi.

The all India Radio invited the Ven'ble Maha Thera to recite the Dhamma gathas for their record. These records of 10 and 12 minutes were relayed daily during the Jayanti year. Now also they are relayed at the important occasions.

After the great historical conversion of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and many lakhs of his followers, there came a wave of conversion all over India. Many thousand followers of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar came to the Buddha Vihara and accepted Buddha Dhamma from Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji Maha Nayaka Thera.

6th December, 1956 was the most unfortunate day for the Buddhists. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar completed his historical book the Buddha and his Dhamma which he started many years ago. After completing this book in the night of 5th Dec., 1956 signed it and slept and never woke up on the 6th Dec. morning. Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji received a telephone call from his residence and he rushed to his residence at Alipur Road where Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru was already there to bid him farewell. Ven'ble Ariyawansa ji recited the gathas of the TRUTH of Impermanance and expressed the boundless loving kindness for his eternal peace. His body was than flown to Bombay for the last rites. We can now see the Dr. Ambedkar Memorial there on the sea coast and lakhs of his followers come there and pay their homage to his remains which are enshrined there. It has become a centre of pilgrimage to them.

People from every nook and corner of India and foreign countries who come to Delhi, they also visit this Buddha Vihara and meet Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji they seek his Dhamma advice and many of them also stay over night with him. He has to face great difficulty and however accomodate them. In this way he has many friends all over.

The V.I.P.S. who were received at Buddha Vihara by Ven'ble L. Ariyawansaji Nayaka Maha Thera

1. Sarvasri J. R. Jayawardane, President of Sri Lanka.
2. Prem Das, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka (Present President)
3. Mrs. Srimavo Bhandarnayake, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.
4. Dr. Rajendra Prashad, President of India
5. Morar ji Desai, Union Minister,
6. Lal Bahadur Shastri, Home Minister of India,
7. Dr. Karan Singh. Minister for Tourism, of India,
8. S. R. Dass, Chief Justice of India
9. C. C. Biswas, Law Minister of India
10. Dr. B. R. Ambedker, Law Minister of India
11. Pt. Govind Ballabh Panth, Home Minister of India
12. A. S. Ayyangar, Speaker Lok Sabha
13. Dharamweer, Chief Commissioner of Delhi
14. Seth Jugal Kishore ji Birla
15. Prof. V. K. R. V. Rao, Minister for Education
16. Indra Kumar Gujral, Minister for Information
17. Jagjeewan Ram, Defence Minister of India
18. Dev Kant Barua, Minister for Petroleum
19. Lalit Narayan Mishra, Rly. Minister
20. Kamla Pati Tripathi, Rly. Minister
21. Dr. Pratap Chandra Chundra, Minister for Education

22. V. D. Jatti, Vice President of India
23. Smt. Indira Gandhi, Minister for Information
24. B. P. Maurya, State Minister Industries
25. High Commissioners of Sri Lanka in India—Sarwasri Justice Sri Wardane, Panabokke, B. P. Tilakratne, G. Wijaysiri, F. C. Kalpage,
Dr. Suchati Chuthasmit, Ambassador of Thailand & Mr. Daniel Levy Ambassador of France.
Lama K. G. Bakula Member Minorities Commission, Lama Lobazang Member S.C., S.T. Commission, Prof. N. C. Parashar M. P., Chairman Govt. Assurance Committee of Lok Sabha, Mr. Dudley Senanyake of Sri Lanka.

His Holiness Dalai Lama, H.H. Panchen Lama, Head Lama of Mongolia and Head Lama of U. S. S. R., Maha Guru Norbhu Lama, H. H. Riri Nakayama of Japan, H. M. The Maharajas of Sikkim, Bhutan, Laos. Ven'ble Koso Ohtani and Ven'ble Shodo Okano of Japan, Ven'ble Bhikkhu Jagdish ji Kashyap, Ven'ble Ananad Kausalyayan, & Ven'ble Dharamaratatna ji.

The Buddhist delegations of Sri Lanka, Japan, Thailand Mongolia, U. S. S. R., Burma, Combdia, Taiwan, R. O., China, Vietnam, Korea, Bangladesh, Malaysia etc. etc. were also warmly received by Ven'ble Ariyawansa ji.

2600TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF LORD BUDDHA

The Maha Bodhi Society of India with the help of the Ministry of Education Govt. of India organised a memorable Cultural conference in Viggyan Bhawan, New Delhi in March 1977. Ven'ble N. Jinratan Nayaka Maha Thera was the General Secretary and Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa was the scere-tary. Sri Dev Kant Barua M.P. and Sri Sashi Bhushan M.P. were the Chirmen of two diffrent committees and there were many more members. But Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji had the sole responsibility to see that every thing goes well. The writer of these lines also attended this Conferance and submitted a paper. There were about 250 delegates from India and abroad. This was inagurated by Mr. B. D. Jatti, Vice President of India and H. E. Sirwardane, High Commissioner of Shri Lanka in India concluded it.

The delegates comming from 32 countries and those of India all submitted very useful papers to the conference and a Souvenir was published thereafter. This was edited by Dr. Ananada Gurge of Sri Lanka and Sri D. C. Ahir. Shri Kamlapati Tripathi Minister for Railway was pleased to allow 50 % concession in Railway fare for the delegates participating in this conference. The Buddhists of Calcutta and Delhi also gave financial help for this noble cause at the appeal of the Society and Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji.

8th CONFERENCE OF BHIKKHU SANGHA

The 8th Conference of the All India Buddhist Bhikkhu Sangha was held in the Buddha Vihara New Delhi. In April 1970 under the auspicious of the Maha Bodhi Society of India. About 60-70 Buddhist monks participated in the conference.

Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji was elected as Upsanghanayaka of the All India Bhikkhu Sangha in this conference.

Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji has been ordaining samneras for short term in the Vihara nearly 6 times in the year. The writer of these lines was also ordained as Sramnera by him for a period of 20 days. He has sent many sramneras to Ssi Lanka for higher studies and higher ordination there under his Guru ji.

APPOINTED AS CHIEF SANGHANAYAKA OF NORTHERN INDIA

In view of the excellant Dhamma duta services for a very long time, he was appointed as the Chief Sangha Nayaka of Northern India on 29-5-1979. The Act of appointment was handed over to him personally by Hon'ble Premdass ji Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and H. E. Sri J, R. Jayawardane, President of Sri Lanka felecitated him at this occasion.

FOREIGN VISITS

Due to the Scholarly Dhamma works of Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa Nayaka Maha Thera, he was internationally

known all over the Buddhist World. He was invited to participate in the International Buddhist conferences and Peace seminars. He participated in many such conferences, seminars and goodwill visits and submitted useful papers. His scholarly contributions were printed in the reports and souvenirs published by them and the readers were greatly benefitted by the same. To sum up, the year and the name of the country in given below to show his foreign visits for the cause of the Dhamma.

1959 Nepal. At the invitation of Bhikkhu Amritanandaji.

1961 East Pakistan. For performing the last rites of his teacher Ven'ble Pragya Alankar Mahasthavir.

1964 Sikkim. Maharaja Chogyal, Shri Namgyal Thondup of Sikkim who was the president of Maha Bodhi Society of India invited him. While in Sikkim he met Ven'ble Karampa Lama the, teacher of H. H. the Dalai Lama there.

1964 Mongolia. At the invitation of the Asian Buddhist Conference for peace. First he went to Moscow (U.S.S.R.) and then to Ulan Ude, Buriyat and from there to Ulan Bator, Mongolia, He attended the Buddhist Conference there and gave lectures on Peace.

1970 Sri Lanka. Though he was trained in Sri Lanka in the beginning after that he went there to meet his respected Teacher after period of 18 years. His teacher Ven'ble M. Ariyawansa Maha Nayaka Thera blessed him for his useful Dhamma work which he was doing in India.

1971 Bangladesh. Ven'ble Dharamkirti Mahasthavir of Sri Lanka had his Vihara in Chitagong. He Passed away there. Hearing the news of his death, he went there to perform his last rites.

1972 Sri Lanka. In April, 1972 there was a meeting of the Asian Buddhist Conference for peace. There he delivered a lecture on the peace and boundless loving kindness.

1973 Bhutan. Due to the untimely death of the king of Bhutan. He was invited to attend the last rites ceremony.

1973 Japan. He was invited to attend the Peace conference held in Tokyo. He was the leader of the Indian delegation. In the (July) delegation there included 3 Members of Parliament namely B. P. Muarya, Sashi Bhushan and Kumbhare. This was inaugurated by Fuji Guru ji. The birthday of Ven'ble Fuji Guruji was also celebrated in the Asian hotel at this occasion. He also visited Nagasaki, Osaka, Hiroshima, Nagoya apart from Tokyo.

1976 (October) Thailand. There was a big congregation in Somdej, Thailand for installing the Relics of lord Buddha. He was specially invited to grace the occasion. He delivered a heart touching lecture at this occasion and paid his homage to the Buddha. The 8 Ambassadors of different countries including India and all other dignitaries of Thailand and other countries were well impressed by him

1977 U.S.S.R. There was a big International conference of all the religions in Moscow the capital of U. S. S. R. The

high priests of all the religions from each country were seen there in a most impressing manner. There were 600 delegates from all over the world. From India Dr. N. Jinrattana Maha Nayaka Thera, Dr. U. Dhammratan Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa Nayaka Maha Thera, Shri Shashi Bhushan, Prof. Ram Rahul had gone to attend this historical Conference. Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa read a paper on peace at this occasion.

1978 Japan. The International conference of the world fellowship of Buddhists was held in October 78. He was invited to attend this conference and submitted a paper of 11 pages. Being the special geust, he was honoured in all the sessions of the conference.

1979 Sri Lanka. The most respected teacher Ven'ble M. Ariyawansa Maha Nayaka Thera, Principal of Pravachanodaya Oriental College Wadduwa, Molligoda Sri Lanka the Guru ji of Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji expired on 10th April 1979 He was accorded a state caremation by the Govt. of Sri Lanka on 16th April, 1979. After the sad demise of the great teacher the Bhikkhu Maha Sangha decided and agreed to appoint Ven'ble Ariyawansa ji as the Chief of Sangha Nayaka of North India on behalf of the Kotte Mangala Uposathagara Kalyani Samagri Dharma Maha Sangha Sabha. This was also the wish of his late Guru ji as well. The Govt. of Sri Lanka invited Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji as a state geust and he was warmly received at the air port on behalf of the Govt. of Sri Lanka by the Senior Ministers, officials and monks etc.

On 19th may, 1979 he was appointed the Chief Sangha Nayaka of North India and the title of “Dhammakiritishri” was also conferred upon him in the presence of senior 100 Bhikkhus.

On 29th May, 1979. The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka Sri Premdass presented the Act of Appointment to Ven’ble L. Ariyawansa in a big congregation The Indian Ambassador in Sri Lanka and the Cultural Minister of Sri Lanka spoke at this occasion and congratulated Ven’ble L. Ariyawansa ji Nayaka Maha Thera.

The radio of Sri Lanka relayed a Special programme of this event and the Daily prers gave large coverage. After staying for 15th day days as the state geust, Ven’ble returned back on 31st May, 1979.

1979 Mongolia. He was invited to Mongolia to attend the Asian Buddhist peace conference. He left on 6th June, 79 for Mocow and from there he went to Ulan Bator-Mongolia and attended the Buddhist conference. In his paper he stressed that by the practice of Love, boundless loving kindness, tolerance, follow feeling patience and feeling for Justice and and fair dealing with all, we can bring pęace and happiness to one and all.

HISTORICAL VISIT TO CHINA

Between 1980 and 89 Ven’ble L. Ariyawansa ji had to visit Korea, Thailand, Combodia, Singapore, Taiwan, Sri Lanka and few other countries to participate in various Buddhist conferences and seminars of the World Buddhist Sangha Council, A. B. C. P. and W. F. B. etc etc.

The most important was his visit to China when the Indian Council for cultural relations Govt. of India deputed him as the head of the delegation to visit Peoples Republic of China. The other members included in the delegation were Dr. S. R. Bhat of Delhi university, Aloke Chatterji of Calcutta University, Dr. Sundra Ramiah of Andhra University. This delegation spent three weeks in China as the state guests. This delegation attended a Buddhist seminar in the Institute of social Sciences of Beijing University on 15th Oct. 1985. Thereafter they visited many other places, Buddhist temples, Universities and gave a series of lectures to strengthen the ages old relations of India and China. They found Buddhism flourishing once again in that red land. The Buddhist temples are being repaired by the Govt. The Tipitka and other religious books are being printed. The Buddhist functions and ceremonies are being held. Govt, of China has Started giving huge sums of money as grants to the Buddhist temples and societies.

PATRONAGE FOR THE KOLIYAS & SAKKAYS AND MAHA BODHI ASHOKA MISSION

The Maha Bodhi Ashoka Mission is the independant Buddhist organisation founded by Rahul Suman Chhawara and Mrs. Quin Moi Rahul for serving the Dhamma needs of all in general and the ancient traditional Buddhists the Koliyas and Sakkays and the Chinese Buddhists of the Kumaun hills in particular. The Koliyas and Sakkays are from the clan of the Lord Buddha himself and these Chinese Buddhists were imported from the Sochau District of China for Tea plantation purpose about 150 years ago and they have now settled in the hills of Kumaun region.

All these Buddhists are living a neglected and exploited life having no voice to represent them or to solve their problems.

Gradually they are coming in the contact of Sri S. N. Goenka of Burma and his assistant teachers of Vipassna meditation, By practicing the Vipassna meditation they are re-gaining the truth of the Dhamma in their own experience and they are practicing the path of the Dhamma-Morality, concentration and Wisdom.

The Maha Bodhi Ashoka Mission is the Regional centre of the World Fellowship of Buddhists and affiliated with the Maha Bodhi Society of India, and the Maha Bodhi Ashoka Vihara-the Premier International Buddhist Monastery of Rajasthan are serving their Dhamma, educational, social and other needs of these Buddhists.

Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji Nayaka Maha Thera has been extending his patronage to the Maha Bodhi Ashoka Mission since its very inception. He feels that the 12 Crore Koliyas and Shakkays should have their voice and representation in the Govt. at every level to enable them to regain their past glory like that of 2500 years ago when they had their own Republican Govts. Now after suffering the exploitation at the hands of the anti Buddhist forces, they have become totally neglected and exploited. He has therefore been writing to the Prime Minister and inviting his attention towards them. Though his constant efforts so far could not be crowned with success, but it is hoped that the Prime Minister would one day surely give deep thought towards them and give them appropriate representation in the Govt.

On behalf the Koliyas, Sakkays and the Maha Bodhi Ashoka Mission and its Buddhist Monastery – The Maha Bodhi Ashoka Vihara, I sincerely congratulate and felicitate Ven'ble L. Ariyawansa ji Nayaka Maha Thera at the occasion of his 75th birth day on 23-10-89 and wish him healthy, happy, peaceful long life.

23-10-89

Rahul Suman Chhawara

