



To celebrate

The 6th Auspicious Birth Cycle of

Most Venerable Bhikkhuni Dhammananda

Abbess of Songdhammakalyani Monastery, Kingdom of Thailand

Rajbhat University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand

in collaboration with

Network of Asian Theravada Bhikkhunis

Buddhasavika Foundation

Announces the

1st ASEAN Buddhist Conference (ABC-1)

Rajbhat University Campus

Nakhonpathom, Thailand

September 22-23, 2016

Buddhism emanating from the Holy Land of *Jambudvipa* that is India extended its boundaries to several lands and seas in Asia. Its dense population is however in East Asia wherein the region falling under Southeast Asia has nurtured Buddha-Dharma since the First Millennium AD. This very location now primarily known as ASEAN is the most important area where Buddhism is the pervading culture unit. With several countries claiming their land to be *Suvarnabhumi/Suvarnadvipa* of ancient Sanskrit-Pali classical texts, it is but beyond doubt that this *Bhumi of Golden Land* encompassed exactly the today's ASEAN region!

Buddhism being the fourth largest religion with the Mahayana representing 500 million, the Theravada 130 million and Vajrayana about 20 million, the 10 countries of the ASEAN holds about 150 million or 30% of the world's Buddhist population. However, this peace loving group of Buddhists in ASEAN has many challenges in front of them.

The First ABC (ASEAN Buddhist Conference) aims at addressing these issues which are very central to Buddhism, its relativity and relevance in the contemporary world scenario while at the same time, safeguarding its Basics.

Paper proposals are being invited with serious scholarship from the researchers, teachers and independent thinkers on a significant topic related to ASEAN region and Buddhism. Paper's acceptance would depend on the evaluation by expert team. Though, we would have a section of papers highlighting the parallel situation of Buddhism in non-ASEAN region as well, the main focus however would be on papers related to and meaningful to ASEAN Buddhism.

Following sub-themes are planned as a guide to your proposed paper presentation:

Buddhism and Women: Current Scenario

The future of Buddhism depends a lot on the women. Being mother, it is her primary role to nurture the young toddlers with the first awareness of Buddha, and thus bringing children up to be rightful Buddhists. Similarly, in Theravadin part of ASEAN, the plight of Bhikkhuni is different. Their socio-religious mobility, acceptance and accommodation in the psyche of the Sangha leaders is a big issue yet to be sorted out. The sub-theme would expect papers on such relevant topics.

Educating ourselves: Challenges in ASEAN Buddhism

ASEAN Buddhism is suffering from the absence of proper education. The goal of education is not only imparting human values but also to give the understanding of coexistence with malice towards none. The panel explores the measures required to set education in right order not only for the laity but also for the monastic order.

Mental Re-organisation through Buddhism

Siddhartha's journey from a prince to "Buddha" was accompanied by a lot of obstacles. One of the biggest challenges was to overcome one's instincts and have a stable and sound mind. This challenge in today's chaotic contemporary world stands with wuthering heights. Buddhism seemed to have a foresight and therefore one of its key aspects addresses the very core of suffering-the distorted mind. Buddhism hence involves reorganisation of the psyche, movement from the distorted to the sorted mind. Papers highlighting Buddhism and its effects on human mind are most welcome.

ASEAN Society through the Buddhist Lens

Every philosophy or doctrine has its unique ways to look at the inter-links of the social cobweb. The Buddhism paradigm highlights a compassionate, instinct-free order of the world. Under this sub-theme Buddhist views of social construction can be discussed. Also how it projects a role model for a society which may be applicable to all geographical locations, countries, etc.

Addressing Nature and Environment the Buddhist Way

Individual though literally suggests separateness but one cannot truly exist without its environ. Buddhism understands the importance of this harmonious, holistic existence and thus holds a compassionate world view of the fellow beings, plants and animals. It highlights the inter-dependence of nature and people as synchronous to the relationship of a mother to her child. Papers helping in re-imagining our environ, creating awareness finding solution are most welcome.

Buddhist Heritage as reflected in Art Forms in ASEAN Region

Across world, Buddhism has encouraged creative forces as manifested in variety of art forms that we see today. Each creation like *stupa*, *caitya* or the anthropomorphic forms of Buddha narrating rich stories and heritage. Participants are invited to dig out insights hidden in such art forms in the ASEAN as they require care, scientific treatment and understanding of the essence of religiosity behind them. The safeguarding of such tangible heritage would further solidify the position of Buddhism not only in ASEAN region but also for the globe.

Papers on related topics falling outside the ASEAN region are also welcome.

Dates to remember:

| | |
|---|--|
| Abstract | May 15, 2016 |
| Full Paper | June 30, 2016 |
| Early Registration Fee for Local scholars | Baht 2000(late fee May 15, 2016): Baht 2500 |
| Early Registration Fee for Developing Countries | US\$ 150 (late fee May 15, 2016): US\$ 200 |
| Early Registration Fee for Developed Countries | US\$ 250 (late fee May 15, 2016): US\$ 300 |

ABC-2016 Secretariat

Wat Songdhammakalyani , Mueang Nakhon Pathom District, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand

Email: abc.2016conf@gmail.com

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| President | Patron | Organising Secretary |
| Asstt Prof. Dr. Somdej Ninlapan Rector, Rajphat University | Most Venerable Bhikkhuni Dhammananda Social Thinker and Theravadin Nun | Dr Amarjiva Lochan Delhi University |