

# LAUNCHING OF UNITED THERAVADA BHIKKHUNI SANGHA INTERNATIONAL DHAMMA PROGRAM JANUARY 16TH 2022



*Offered by*  
Ven. Bhikkhunī Tathālokā Mahātherī

## LAUNCHING OF UNITED THERAVĀDA BHIKKHUNĪ SANGHA INTERNATIONAL DHAMMA PROGRAM

United Theravāda Bhikkhunī Sangha International  
Co-ordinators:

1. Ven. Bhikkhunī Tathālokā Therī,  
Founder of Dharmadharinī Monastery,  
Theravāda Bhikkhunī Association of North America
2. Ven. Bhikkhunī Santinī Therī,  
Vihāra Kusalyani, Sangha Bhikkhunī Theravāda Indonesia
3. Ven. Bhikkhunī Vidithadhammā Therī (Lieu Phap),  
Suññatā Bhikkhunī Ārāma, Vietnam
4. Ven. Bhikkhunī Dhammananda Therī,  
Songdhammakalyani Bhikkhunī Ārāma, Thailand
5. Ven. Bhikkhunī Bodhicitta Therī,  
Nisala Arāna Meditation Center Sri Lanka  
& Melbourne, Australia

Keynote Speaker and Launching of UTBSI  
Dhamma Program:

Most Ven. Bhikkhu P. Seewalee Thero  
Chief Sanghanayaka, General Secretary,  
Maha Bodhi Society of India

Moderator:  
Ven. Bhikkhunī Sumangala  
Ariya Vihāra Buddhist Society,  
Malaysia

Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
6.30 - 8.30 am (IST)

Meeting ID: 810 5936 5463 | Passcode: DHAMMA

Link Zoom: <https://bit.ly/UTBSIDhammaProgram>

Link Youtube: <https://youtu.be/JIV-Vs26T1M>



# NAMO BUDDHĀYA! NAMO RATANATTĀYA!

Greetings to all venerable members of the Mahā Saṅgha, to our esteemed keynote speaker Venerable P Seewalee Sanghanāyaka Thero, to my renowned venerable Bhikkhunī Co-ordinator colleagues with the United Theravāda Bhikkhunī Sangha International (UTBSI), and to all our Fourfold Sangha and Manifold Sangha around the world.

First, I would like to offer my congratulations to our organizer, Venerable Bhikkhunī Ayyā Santinī Mahātherī and to the entire UTBSI on the occasion of the launching and introduction of the UTBSI Dhamma Program.



*Speaker* | Ven. Bhikkhunī Tathālokā Mahātherī



# Pioneering Dhamma Journeys

Acknowledging the Significant Contribution  
of the Bhikkhunī Revival  
to the Renewal of the Early Buddhist Three Trainings  
of *Sīla*, *Samāḍhi* and *Paññā*



## RESILIENCE & FORTITUDE IN THE FACE OF DECIMATION

Following strong spread and development during its first thousand years, the millennia leading up to the 2500 Buddha Jāyanti (in May of 1956), saw Buddhism severely impacted by political vicissitudes in almost all areas in which it had traditionally spread and been established: from Gāndhāra and the Indian heartland to Sri Lanka in South Asia; to Indonesia and Malaysia; then China, Korea, and Japan in East Asia; and in Southeast Asia in Burma (up to 1948), Laos (until 1953), Vietnam (until 1975) and Cambodia (until 1979) — in many places the Sangha and Buddhism was completely or nearly decimated.



## RESILIENCE & FORTITUDE

However, the Early Buddhist teachings and practices bear tremendous qualities of resilience and fortitude.



# RESILENCE & FORTITUDE REVIVAL

In the 19th through 21st centuries, we have been blessed to witness and be a part of a great revival, with the rise of the Vipassana movements and global spread of Buddhist practices of Insight and Mindfulness meditation (*Samāḍhi* and *Sati-sampajañña*). Likewise, the 19th through 21st centuries have witnessed a progressive revival in both interest and accessibility, and both teaching and study, of the Early Buddhist Suttas — *Paññā* developing through study-based learning (*sutamayāpaññā*), contemplation-based understanding (*cintāmayāpaññā*), and through meditation-based wisdom (*bhāvanāmayāpaññā*).



# RESILENCE & FORTITUDE REVIVAL

## The Buddha's Threefold Training\* of *Sīla*, *Samādhi* and *Paññā*

\* Pāli: *Tīsikkhā*, Skt: त्रिशिक्षा *Trīśikṣā*, Tibetan: ལྷན་པའི་བསྐབ་པ་གསུམ།, Chinese: 三學



## REVIVAL OF THE BUDDHA'S THREE TRAININGS

While the revival of Meditation and Sutta teachings is now greatly widespread among all spheres of the Sangha both lay and monastic; of the traditional “Threefold Training” divisions of the Noble Eightfold Path, foundational and enlightening *Sīlā* teachings and training in Buddhist Ethics and Moral Virtue have lagged behind, but are also now beginning an important and much needed revival.



# REVIVAL OF THE BUDDHA'S THREE TRAININGS

We can see this revival in three ways:

1. in the emphasis on Sīla being spread to serious lay practitioners through Vipassana retreats,
2. in Pātimokkha Sīlā spreading with the globalization of the Forest and Insight traditions' Bhikkhus' communities, and
3. in the revival of the Theravāda Bhikkhunī Sangha.

It is on this last that i would like to pause, reflect, and give due credit here now.



# REVIVAL OF PĀTIMOKKHA SĪLA

Traditionally in Early Buddhism, the Pātimokkha Sīlā of the Bhikkhu and Bhikkhunī Sanghas is greatly revered, both in its support for personal liberation as a strong foundation for trainings Meditation & Wisdom.

As well as —and perhaps even more so —for its benefits for the strength, integrity and endurance of the healthy whole Buddhist Community.



# REVIVAL OF PĀTIMOKKHA SĪLA IN CONTEXT OF THE THREEFOLD TRAINING

*Tathāgate parinibbute bhikkhū bhikkhuniyo upāsakā upāsikāyo satthari...  
dhamme...saṅghe...**sikkhāya** sagāravā viharanti sappatissā, aññaamaññaṃ  
sagāravā viharanti sappatissā —*

“When Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunīs, Upāsakas, and Upāsikās maintain respect and reverence for the Teacher, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha; for the training; and for each other, after the final Nibbāna of the Tathāgatha —”



# REVIVAL OF PĀTIMOKKHA SĪLA IN CONTEXT OF THE THREEFOLD TRAINING

*Ayam kho...hetu ayam paccayo, yena tathāgate parinibbute  
saddhammo ciratthitiko hotī”ti.*

This is the cause, this is the reason, whereby the True Dhamma lasts long after the final Nibbāna of the Tathāgatha.”

—the Buddha in the Kimbila Sutta, *Numerical Discourses* AN 5.201  
(frequently stated likewise, i.e., at AN 6.4, AN 7.56 and SN 16.13)



# REVIVAL OF BHIKKHUNĪ PĀTIMOKKHA SĪLA

I would like to commend those outstanding members of the Buddhist Fourfold Community who have — during this period of revival — worked so hard for the strengthening of Buddhism through the revival of full Pātimokkha Sīla for women, a very large percentage of the Buddhist population worldwide...



# REVIVAL OF BHIKKHUNĪ PĀTIMOKKHA SĪLA

...whether it be the great master Mingun Jetvan Sayadawgyi, the teacher of Mahasi Sayadaw, one of the most notable of the founding teachers of the aforementioned worldwide Vipassana traditions; or Anāgārika Dharmapāla, and the leaders of the Mahā Bodhi Society of India, past and present, who have worked tirelessly for the revival of our Buddhist heritage in India; or the international patriarchs of the Sri Lankan and Cambodian Sanghas such as Most Venerable Havanpola Ratansāra Sanghanāyaka Thero and Somdech Preah Maha Ghosananda...



# REVIVAL OF BHIKKHUNĪ PĀTIMOKKHA SĪLA

...or more recently, the Venerable Bhikkhu Brahmavamso Mahāthero (*popularly known as Ajahn Brahm*) and the Venerable Bhikkhu Bodhi Mahāthero, who have also emerged as world-class luminaries for both their Sutta and Meditation Teachings, together with their support for the Revival of the Bhikkhunī Sangha (supporting revival of *Sīla, Samāḍhi* and *Paññā*).



# REVIVAL OF BHIKKHUNĪ PĀTIMOKKHA SĪLA

I would also like to commend my courageous and enormously dedicated Bhikkhunī-Therī peers, some of the foremost of them here with us today with the UTBSI, who have together “birthed” this revival with their own bodies: from an other-worldly dream-concept, into a lived reality manifest in our own world now — opening up the real-life possibilities for increasing numbers of sincere, faithful Buddhist women whose hearts incline to the full living of the monastic path set forth by the Buddha, to be able to do so. The third great revival.



# DEDICATION TO MORAL EXCELLENCE

May the moral excellence of the Bhikkhunīs,  
together with our growth in Meditation and  
**Dhamma Study & Wisdom** through this  
**Dhamma Program** offer a worthy contribution  
to the Buddha's intention when he said:



# MORAL EXCELENCE & WISDOM

*Yo hoti viyatto ca visārado ca,  
Bahussuto dhammadhāro ca hoti,  
Dhammassa hoti anudhammacārī,  
Sa tādiso vuccati saṅghasobhano.*

They who are knowledgeable and confident,  
Very learned and expert in the Dhamma,  
Who live according to the Dhamma:  
Such ones are the beautifiers of the Sangha.



# MORAL EXCELENCE & WISDOM

*Bhikkhu ca sīlasampanno,  
Bhikkhunī ca bahussutā;  
Upāsako ca yo saddho,  
yā ca saddhā Upāsikā;*

The Bhikkhu consummate in moral virtue,  
The Bhikkhunī who is widely learned,  
The male lay disciple who has faith,  
And the confident female lay disciple:



# MORAL EXCELENCE & WISDOM

*Ete kho saṅgham̐ sobhenti,  
ete hi saṅghasobhanā” ti*

These illuminate the Sangha,  
These are the beautifiers of the Sangha.

—the Buddha, *Saṅgha Sobhana Gāthā* “Verses on the Illumination of the Sangha”  
(Sobhana Sutta, *Numerical Discourses* AN 4.7)



# DEDICATION

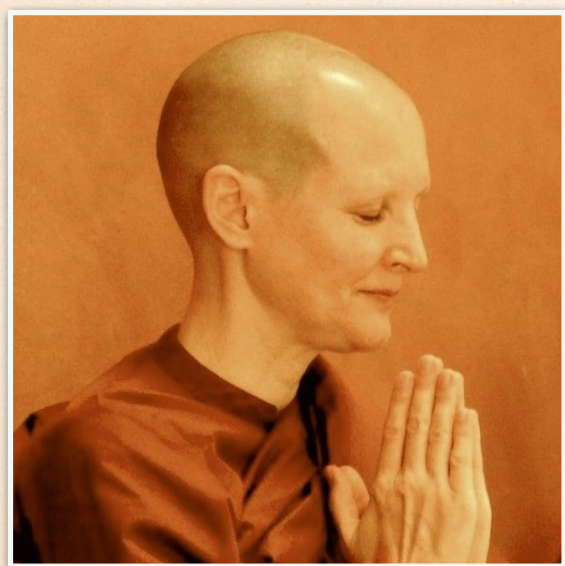
May our coming together now, under the umbrella of the newly-inaugurated United Theravada Bhikkhuni Sangha International — a movement of virtuous unity and harmony in the Sangha in a world so riven by conflicts — be for all our growth in the Way of the Buddha and for our together Walking of the Path of the Buddha unto its full fulfillment: *ambākaṃ dīgha-rattam hitāya sukhāya* — for all of our long-term benefit and the happiness it gives us.

*Sāḍhu... Sāḍhu... Sāḍhu!*



# THE END

*of Pioneering Dhamma Journeys*  
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*Offered by Ven. Bhikkhunī Tathālokā Mahātherī*  
for Launching of United Theravāda Bhikkhunī  
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