

MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF MONASTIC LIFE REPRESENTED IN THE PALI CANON.

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Introduction

Management is very important to do anything in a better way. Where there is no proper management social, economic and political problems are unavoidable. Therefore, organizations must have a management system. When imposing rules and regulations, putting them into operation and making the public aware of programs of the government and civil organizations, why do many institutions whether government or private sector degenerate day by day? This paper, examines the management procedure utilized by the Buddha to create an ideal monastic life.

The objectives of this study are to introduce the way of management in the monastic life, to apply Buddhist teachings of management to the current society, and to empower people with a better understanding of areas of management.

Methodology

This research is a literary survey. In this research I propose to discuss the management system of monastic life based on the Pali Canon and its Commentaries. Although this is not a comparative study, I wish to study and refer to sources related to modern management studies.

Results and Discussion

In early texts, the term used for monastery is ārāma. This word has been interpreted in different ways. According to Sinhala Vishvakoshaya "ārāma means the place which interests the mind, the place where monks dwell, the garden that has trees and creepers with fruits and flowers, and play ground." The Encyclopedia of Buddhism defines the word in the following way. "Arāma is a park, given to the Buddha or the Sangha for the benefit of the bhikkhus, where they meet and hold discussions about sacred and secular matters, a place of recreation and meditation, a meeting place for religious gatherings." The popularly known meaning of ārāma is the place where monks dwell. The ārāmas in that sense were well organized religious organizations. To be well organized there should be a good system of management. When we go through the Vinaya

Pitaka, we can see the following areas in relation to the monastic management.

Management of life style based on basic requirements

The Buddha approves four basic needs for sustaining monks' lives. They are clothing (Cīvara), Food (Pinḍapāta), Housing (Senāsana), Medicine (Gilānapaccaya bhesajja).¹ The monks who renounced from all the worldly possessions had to sustain their lives with minimum requirements. And this practice was not a burden to lay people. They followed the "Bee theory". This way of life style really helps to develop good mental states such as simplicity, easily manageable, and satisfied with minimum. Finally, it is bound to the Nibbāna, the final goal of Buddhism.

Management of material resources

It is well known from the discussion between king Udena and Venerable Ananda that the Buddha arranged to get the maximum use of material resources. It was helpful to the easy of community and protection of resources. It will be clear from the following factors.

- Departure after having monastic goods kept with protection.
- Departure after having the residence place cleaned.
- Departure after having the doors and windows closed.
- If he is unable to do those things, he should inform to another monk, attendant or devotee.²

Management of surrounding environment

We should not forget that monks are a spiritual community. Therefore, building up a pleasant environment is very essential for mental development. The Vattakkhandhaka of Vinaya Pitaka directs the person to manage the environment in detail. In whatever monastery monk is staying, if that monastery is dirty, he should clean it, should clean monastic materials, should clean surrounding area of monastery, should clean the alms halls and lavatories, and should clean Cetiya, Bo-tree and Vihāra.

¹ Mahavagga Pali 1, *Buddha Jayanti Tripitaka series*, (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2006) 238

² Cullavagga Pali 2, *Buddha Jayanti Tripitaka series*, (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2006) 344-346.

Management of interpersonal relationships

As a community, management of interpersonal relationships is very important. Especially, the relationship between teacher and pupil is a main concern in this regard to show the right path to the other members. Teacher should look after pupils with parental concern. Similarly, pupils must look upon their teachers with filial concern. In the Sārānīyasutta of Anguttaranikāya, the Buddha declares six pieces of ethical advice for harmony and well-being of monks. Namely:

- Living with physical loving kindness (mettenakāyakamma).
- Living with verbal loving kindness (mettenavacīkamma)..
- Living with mental loving kindness (mettenamanokamma).
- By sharing even a small thing with each other.
- Working virtuously in every moment while associating with one another.
- Seeing righteous in every moment while associating with one another.³

These facts help to attain peace and harmony in life and spiritual development of the disciples who depend on each other.

Management of monastic members

Duties of a monastery are allocated and assigned to some members within the community as follows:

- Cīvarapaṭiggāhaka (Receiver of robes from donors)
- Cīvarabhājaka (Distributor of robes among monks)
- Yāgubhājaka (Distributor of rice gruel)
- Phalabhājaka (Distributor of fruits)
- Khajjabhājaka (Distributor of Sweets)
- Bhandāgārika (Overseer of the store)

The following members are appointed to manage monastic affairs for the convenience of resident and visiting monks.

Senāsana paññāpaka (Officer for allocating rooms)

³ Anguttara Nikaya vol. 6, *Buddha Jayanti Tripitaka series*, (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2006) 18.

Senāsana gahāpaka (Officer for directing visitor monks)

Navakammaka (Officer in charge of maintenance work)

Arāmika pesaka (Supervisor of attendants in the monastery)

Sāmanera pesaka (Supervisor of the novices in the monastery)

Mundāsayanāsana varika (Officer in charge of lodgings)⁴

Conclusion

It is evident from above mentioned factors that Buddhist Vinaya texts show a well-organized management system of monastic life. Although this system of management is used within the monastic life, it is also applicable to the household life. This system of management is based on an ethical foundation and it is not law-bound, but duty-bound.

References

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⁴ Cullavagga Pali 2, *Buddha Jayanti Tripitaka series*, (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2006) 225-236.