



NEWS LETTER

**DHARMASHOKA BUDDHIST
VIHARAYA, LEICESTER**



30th August 2023

Significance of Nikini Full Moon Poya

Nikini is the eighth Full Moon Poya of the year. In ancient India, even before the time of Buddha, all Poya Days had been kept holy. The Buddhist adopted all religious activities and observances that were there earlier and followed on Poya Days. The Nikini Full Moon Poya Day is important



as far as the Buddhist Order is concerned. Buddhist Monks and lay devotees perform an act, according to certain rules and regulations laid down by Gautama Buddha the 'Great Mahapurisha'. The close association and the link that binds the devotees and the Sangha, can be clearly seen on Poya Days.

After the Enlightened One preached his first sermon, Dhamma Chakka Pavattana Sutra (the Wheel of Dhamma), to the five disciples, Kondanna, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahanama and Assaji, in the Deer Park, Isipathana, in Banares, he advised his disciples to spread the Buddhist Doctrine and the Message of the Noble Dhamma to mankind. Nikini Poya is connected with Vas - the rainy season - which commences from Esala Poya. During the Vas season, Buddhist monks are assigned to be stationed in one place, under one roof.



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According to the principles and rules laid down by the Blessed One, Buddhist monks are not expected to live outdoors, under the trees, in cemeteries or open air, commencing from Esala Poya, for four months.

Vas can be divided into two segments. Pera-vas and Pasu-Vas, namely, Pre-Retreat and Post-Retreat. The period beginning with Vassana is a colourful and eventful period. The dawn of the Vas season in the month of Nikini records a religious awakening among the lay devotees and it has a tremendous impact on their moral thinking.

After delivering the Dhamma chaka pavattana sutta, Gautama Buddha observed the first recorded Vas (rainy retreat) at Migadaya Deer Park, Isipathana-ramaya.

According to the climatic and weather conditions globally, there are four recorded seasons. The first season of the year, Spring, when plants begin to grow, comes between Winter and Summer, and is from March to May in the Northern Hemisphere. Summer, the warmest season of the year, comes between Spring and Autumn, from June to August in the Northern Hemisphere. The third season of the year, Autumn, coming between Summer and Winter, falls between September and November in the Northern Hemisphere. The last and the coldest season of the year, Winter, comes between Autumn and Spring, and is from December to February in the Northern Hemisphere.

The month of Nikini comes with the South West Monsoon. The seasonal wind in South Asia, especially in the Indian Ocean, blowing from South West from April to October and from North East from October to April, brings rainfall.



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The Thathagatha, Gautama Buddha, always appreciated constructive criticism. As the Buddhist monks were earlier involved in religious and missionary activities during the rainy season, there was a public outcry against them in some quarters. The Thirthakas, followers of Jainism, also protested, stating that the Buddhist monks are assigned to be indoors during the rainy season and were violating an age-old rule. Buddha then advised the Buddhist monks to assign themselves to stay indoors. With this began the Vas season or period of Rainy Retreat.

Another important significant event that took place on Nikini Full Moon Day was the holding of the First Sanhga Council, led by Maha Kassapa, under the patronage of Ajasatta, at Rajagaha.

This important council was a landmark in the history of Buddhism. The Buddha, in his 80th year, on a Veask Full Moon Poya Day, attained Parinibbana. After the passing away of the Buddha there were a large number of Bhikkus in the Sasana. There were some undesirable monks, too, who had joined the Buddhist Order for worldly gains. With the exception of Arahats and those who achieved the state of Anagami, all others wept in grief. There was one Bhikku by the name of Subaddha, a monk who joined the order in his old age. Bhikku Subaddha requested the mourners not to weep, but to be happy and rejoice, because they are now free to do anything they want as the Master is not there. Further, this Bhikku Subhadda stated that the Buddha had been an obstacle for their freedom.

It was Maha Kassapa Thera who boldly took steps of conducting the First Sangha Council. Maha Theras such as Upali, Ananda, and Anurudda provided the fullest support to Venerable Maha Kassapa, the Dharmabhandagarika (Treasurer of the Dhamma).



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Ananda Maha Thera who possessed a powerful retentive memory played a leading part in the First Council. He attained Arahathship free from the postures of sitting, standing, walking or sleeping. Ananda Thera attained Arahathship at the night on the day before the First Dhamma Sangayanawa or Council. This council was held to arrest the deterioration of the Sasanaya and to discipline the Buddhist Order.

The lay devotees or Dayakas, invited the Maha Sangha to observe Vas, which can be considered as one of the most sacred events (it is known as Vas Aradhana Pinkama), which ends with Katina Puja Pinkama. The lay devotees see to the comfort of the Buddhist monks with great respect and care. The Maha Sangha in return, shower their blessings. The sight of the Dhamma, undoubtedly excels all other sights (Sabbha Dhanam Dhamma Dhanam Jinathi). They live indoors for nearly four months.

The advent of Buddhism to Sri Lanka took place during the reign of King Devanampiyatissa. With the establishment of the Buddhist Order in Sri Lanka, a Sri Lankan Buddhist monk with a retinue of monks, observed the first Vas (Rainy Retreat) in 68 rock caves at Mihintala Missaka Pabbhata. This took place during the Nikini season.

On the Nikini Full Moon Day, let us recall that the Buddha, who was spending the 14th rainy season since His Enlightenment at Devramvehera in Sravastipura, giving advice on meditation to Rahula Thera, his son in his lay life, preached Rahulovada Sutta to him and that the Reverend Thera, listening attentively, attained Arahantship at the end of the discourse.



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In Buddhist philosophy, transient are all conditioned things when this with wisdom one discerns, then is one disgusted with ill; this is the path to purity.

**Sabbe Sankhara Anicca ti-
Yada Pannaya Passati-
Atha Nibbidati Dukkhe-
Esa Masso Visuddiya- Massa Vagga**

(Dhammapada 277)

When with wisdom one discerns the transience of conditioned things, one wearily from Dukkha turns treading the path to purity.

Poya Day Inspirational Quotes from Dhammapada

*Manopubbangama dhamma
manosettha manomaya
manasa ce pasannena
bhasati va karoti va
tato nam sukha' manveti
chayava anapayini*

All mental phenomena have mind as their forerunner; they have mind as their chief; they are mind-made. If one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness (*sukha*) follows him like a shadow that never leaves him

Dhammapada Verse 01
The Story of Matthakundali



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Nikini Poya Program 03rd September 2023

9.00 am Administration Eight precepts

9.30 am Dhamma sermon (in Sinhala)
by **Bhante Arunasiri**

10.40 am Meditation session
by **Bhante Arunasiri**

11.00am Offering Buddha Puja

1.00 pm Pirith Chanting

1.30 pm Dhamma Sermon and Discussion
by **Bhante Arunasiri**

2.40 pm Tea Break

3.00 pm Evening Gilanpasa Buddha Puja
& Birthday Blessings

4.15 pm Conclusion

Important Notes

- ❖ Especial Dhamma sermon will be conducted by Ven. Kagama Siri Nanda Thero on 27th August
- ❖ Nikini Poya Sil Program will be held **03rd** September 2023
- ❖ Sutta Discussion series program conduct every Tuesday & Friday (English)
- ❖ Meditation Sessions conduct Every Tuesday to Friday at 9.00am to 10am
- ❖ Dhamma School New Semester will be commenced **10th** September 2023
- ❖ Vassana spiritual Pooja & Chanting conduct every Saturday at 6.00pm

Leicester Dharmashoka Buddhist Vihara



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