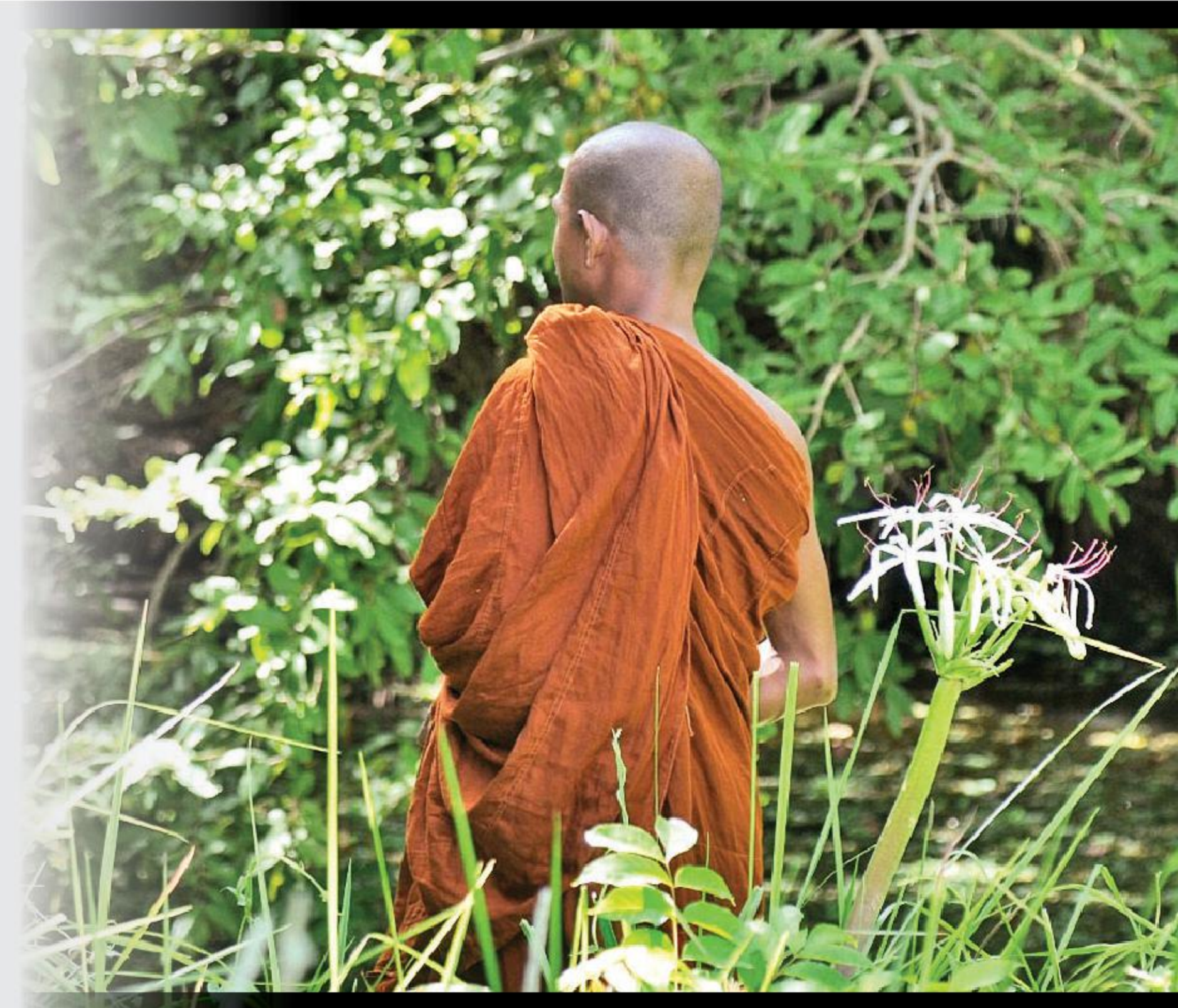




The International Institute of Theravada (IIT), a fully-fledged training institute based on Theravada teachings is dedicated to the spiritual and academic development of Buddhist monks irrespective of sects (Nikaya) and other differences. IIT, being a monk-training centre, has a monastery. In it, students can lead their lives well according to the disciplinary code advocated under the Theravada Vinaya.



International Institute of Theravada

Enhancing Spirituality and Knowledge

ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA

The success of a life of a Buddhist monk mainly depends on the way he spends his life during the first few years after ordination. A monk who wishes to live alone practicing liberation would have certain qualities such as the knowledge of certain meditation techniques till the arhathood, perfectly knowing 'Vinaya' rules and formal act of Vinaya Kammass and also the ability to preach Dhamma and express Buddha's teachings correctly.

Only the monks with all these qualities can live alone. In addition he has to have lived at least five years under the guidance of a well trained teacher. Thereafter if the monk wants to ordain others and to become a teacher or a mentor in the Buddha Sasana, he is supposed to have certain other qualities such as the development of spiritual faculties and vast knowledge on Buddhism.

In order to get higher erudition in the Buddhist scriptures and also in meditation, one has to thoroughly study the doctrine and also undergo certain meditation techniques.

Unfortunately though the qualifications have been clearly mentioned within the doctrine there aren't sufficient numbers of institutions established to groom or to capacitate Buddhist monks to have such qualities. Seeing this vacuum, the International Institute of Theravada (IIT) was established to train monks systematically to be endowed with such qualities, Vice-President of the IIT Ven. Watagoda Maggavihari Thera said.

The IIT located in Karuwalagaswewa, near Anamadua in Sri Lanka, a country where Theravada Buddhism is preserved and practiced extensively is a monk training institute dedicated to capacitate monks who are capable in attaining their own liberation (*atthahita bhikkhu*), guiding others towards liberation (*parahita bhikkhu*) and sustaining the *sasana* by accurately following the code of discipline (*vinayadhara bhikkhu*).

In addition to that, the IIT also conducts training courses and programmes that would help lay devotees follow the Dhamma path correctly and precisely.

The IIT is a comprehensive training institute aimed at facilitating spiritual and academic development of Buddhist monks, based on Theravada teachings. It is inclusive and accommodative, irrespective of sects (Nikaya) and other differences within the Theravada Buddhist monks. The IIT would disseminate the teachings of the Buddha as per the ancient Theravada texts, to Buddhist practitioners across the globe.

The Sangha community, especially the Sri Lankan Sangha community has witnessed great setbacks during the past few decades in spirituality, knowledge and practice. One of the main reasons for this phenomenon is the absence of a proper monk-training programme during the initial stages of the monkhood. This vacuum was clearly visible at least for the

past seven decades. Though there had been a few attempts to rectify this situation, no coherent, well-focused and well-structured mechanism had been established so far, mainly in the contemporary tradition of Theravada monks.

Due to the lack of learned and disciplined monks within the Sri Lankan society, pure philosophy of Theravada Buddhism is at the brink of being distorted, misinterpreted and misguided. Also, the real purpose of monkhood is being diverted towards arenas which are entirely against the real Dhamma and Vinaya.

Observing this timely need a group of young competent monks from the Sri Kalyani Yogashrama Samstha, Sri Lanka who have completed their studies in Myanmar and exposed to forest traditions in Thailand and elsewhere took the initiatives to establish the International Institute of Theravada, a monk training centre focused on capacitating monks who can lead their own spiritual lives and render correct spiritual advices to others. With the erudition garnered from the courses conducted in the institute, student monks of IIT are expected to sustain the lineage of the Theravada monks in its purest form.

Founding monks of the IIT are students of the Most Venerable late Na-Uyane Ariyadhamma Maha Nayaka Thera, the Head of the Sri Kalyani Yogashrama Samstha and the Vice President of the Sri Ramanna Maha Nikaya. They visited Myanmar for higher studies in Theravada doctrine with the blessings of the Maha Thera and returned to Sri Lanka, having successfully completed their studies.

The auspicious establishment of IIT took place on November 15, 2019 with the offering of six residential chambers (*kutis*) for the Maha Sangha. The land of approximately 87 acres known as Heenatikalma Watta, where IIT is located, was offered to the Maha Sangha, on the April 25, 2019, by pious devotee Chandrakeerthi Bandara and his family under the guidance of Most Venerable Agulgamuwe Ariyananda Maha Thera, the abbot of the well-renowned Na-Uyana Forest Meditation Centre, Melsiripura.

The Vision of the IIT

To groom and capacitate the Buddhist monk who is capable in:

- Attaining the ultimate liberation, the Nirvana
- Guiding others (both monks and laity) in attaining the ultimate liberation, the Nirvana
- Prolongation of the *sasana* by performing formal acts in the code of discipline (Vinaya Kammass) according to the exact teaching of the Buddha

The Mission of the IIT

The International Institute of Theravada (IIT), a fully-fledged training institute based on Theravada teachings is dedicated to the spiritual and academic development of Bud-

dhist monks irrespective of sects (Nikaya) and other differences.

A group of competent monk-disciples (who have completed Theravada Buddhist education in Myanmar and exposed different traditions in Thailand and elsewhere) of the late Most Venerable Na-Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahathera, the Vice President of the Sri Ramanna Mahanikaya and the Supreme Head of the Sri Kalyani Yogashrama Samstha, and also affiliated to the well-known Na-Uyana Forest Monastery, Malsiripura, has already commenced initial work in establishing IIT at Karuwalagaswewa, Sri Lanka with the blessings and guidance of senior Mahatheras of both Ramanna Mahanikaya and Amarapura Mahanikaya.

Academy

In our Academy, we impart Theravada teachings in their purest form in Buddhist monks and train them in authentic Theravada meditation techniques. Foremost objective of our Academy is to capacitate our students who have profound apprehension on fundamentals of the doctrine and meditation practice as preserved by the tradition of Theravada.

Academic Staff

● **Ven. Werapitiye Dewananda Thera** - President of the IIT - BA & MA in Buddha Dhamma at the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon. BA (Hon) in Sanskrit at the University of Peradeniya, Vidyanidhi Panditha Vidyodaya Parivana, extensive experiences in propagating Buddhist teachings in both Australia and Hawaii.

● **Ven. Watagoda Maggavihari Thera** - Vice-President of the IIT - BA in Buddha Dhamma at the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon. Also underwent monastic training under the Thai Forest Tradition.

● **Ven. Matugama Dhammanisanti Thera** - Head in Monastic Duties
An experienced Abhidhamma teacher currently conducting basic and advanced Abhidhamma courses for lay devotees in Colombo for over five years.

● **Ven. Ududigana Siddhatthalankara Thera** - Secretary of the IIT and Head of the Vinaya Department - BA in Buddha Dhamma at the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon. The first Sri Lankan to pass all the three stages in both Sasnalankara (Samanejo) and Vinayavidu Traditional Buddhist Examinations in Myanmar.

● **Ven. Labunoruwe Dhammavihari Thera** - Passed the Vinayacariya and Abhidhammacariya examinations held under the Sri Kalyani Yogashrama Samstha, Ramanna Maha Nikaya, Sri Lanka. He is currently a Vinaya teacher at the Na-Uyana Forest Monastery.

● **Ven. Walawe Sumedhaloka Thera** - Head of the Language Department - Diploma in Buddha Dhamma at the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon. He has also gained knowledge and experience under the monastic education system in Myanmar for four years and has gained training under the Thai Forest Tradition as well. He is a competent Abhidhamma- and Pali-teacher capable teaching in both Sinhalese and English.

● **Ven. Deniyaye Upasama Thera** - Head of the Abhidhamma Department - He has studied the Abhidhamma with specialization in the Patthanappakarana, the seventh and most profound book in the basket of Abhidhamma and had taught Abhidhamma in Burmese language in Myanmar and also in Sinhala at sev-

eral Sri Lankan monastic education institutes. He is arguably the best academic in the field of Patthana studies currently in Sri Lanka.

● **Ven. Kuliyaipitiye Sangharatana Thera** - Head in Monastic Well-Being - Diploma in Buddha Dhamma, International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon.

● **Ven. Palmadulle Vjitanandabhivamsa Thera** - Vice Secretary of the IIT and Head of the Pali, Sanskrit and Prakrit Department - one of the most academically celebrated Sri Lankan Buddhist monks studied in Myanmar. Successfully completed the first stage of the well-celebrated Sakyasaha Dhammacariya Examination (known as the Mandalay Abhivamsa Examination) becoming the second Sri Lankan to make this achievement. Only about six hundred monks have passed the first level of the Abhivamsa Examination, in Myanmar, throughout its history of more than a century. He has also passed one of the three subjects of the second stage of the Sakyasiha Dhammacariya (Abhivamsa) Examination. Venerable Vjitananda has also successfully passed the Sasanadhaja Dhammacariya Examination in Myanmar. He is currently a Dhamma teacher at the well-celebrated Yuwa Ma Pariyatti Centre, Ein Sein, Yangon.

Monastery

IIT, being a monk-training centre, has a monastery. In it, students can lead their lives well according to the disciplinary code advocated under the Theravada Vinaya. Monks in IIT fully abstain from using or handling money as admonished by the Buddha and strive to achieve their aspired sublime goals as per doctrine they have studied in the Academy.

Administrational structure

IIT is an independent academic institution that would retain autonomy with regard to all aspects of decision-making.

IIT is governed by its General Assembly of which powers are exercised by three independent bodies, namely Executive Board, Senat and Vinaya Council.

Education

Comprehensive studies of Buddhist scriptures pave the foundation for the prolongation of the Buddha Sasana (dispensation). IIT capacitate monks capable in attaining their own liberation, guiding others towards it and prolonging the dispensation with highest erudition.

Available courses

Nissayamuttaka Course (NmC)

Nissayamuttaka course is a series of theoretical and practical lessons that will impart knowledge and develop skills required by a monk who wishes to live by himself independent of a teacher.

- Duration of the course - Six years
- Subjects - Vinaya, Suttanta, Abhidhamma, Pali, Samatha, Vipassana, History of the Sasana, English and few more
- Practice - Students undergo daily meditation practices throughout the six-year course (in addition to theoretically studying *samatha* and *vipassana* subjects), and observation of *dhutanga* practices during an entire semester

● Skills - Abilities to execute formal disciplinary acts (*vinayakammass*), skillfulness in crafts such as robe-making and bowl-colouring and capability in preaching Dhamma

Parisupatthaka Course (PuC)

Parisupatthaka course is a series of theoretical and practical lessons aimed at facilitating the monk to become a qualified mentor with adequate knowledge and spiritual qualities mentioned in the Vinaya Pitaka as required to become a teacher (preceptor).

- Duration of the course - Two years
- Subjects - Extensive studies on Parajikapali, Pacitiiyapali, Vinayakammass and Khandhakavatta in Vinaya, comprehensive studies on Mahavagga of Digha Nikaya, Mulapannasaka of Majjhima Nikaya, Mahavagga of Samyutta Nikaya, first half of the Anguttara Nikaya, Jatakapali together with its commentary and Dhammapadapali together with its commentary in Suttanta and extensive lessons in meditation especially on giving meditative instructions
- Practice - Regular meditation during the course
- Skills - Regular meditation during the course

Bahussuta Course (BstC)

Bahussuta courses are the advanced theoretical training courses that focus upon extensive and comprehensive studies on scriptures, especially following ancient methods of interpretation preserved in Myanmar. There are few such courses based on the subjects studied.

Duration of the course depends on the subject

Courses

- The whole Vinaya Pitaka and related literature
- The Digha Nikaya and related literature
- The Majjhima Nikaya related literature
- The Anguttara Nikaya related literature
- The Samyutta Nikaya related literature
- The whole Abhidhamma Pitaka related literature
- Visuddhimagga, Patisambhidamagga and literature related to meditation
- Advanced Pali Studies; Kaccayana, Moggallana, Saddaniti traditions and modern philological studies

Meditation

Are you looking for guidance for your meditation? IIT is willing to render a helping hand in your noble quest.

Samatha Meditation -(SUB HEAD)
There are forty meditation subjects called *samatha bhavana* (meditation) to tranquilize our mind. Monks in IIT are given proper instructions to practice *samatha* and calm down their thoughts.

Vipassana Meditation

One apprehends the reality of life and world with wisdom through insight meditation (*vipassana bhavana*). Theravada tradition has preserved a doctrine which contains gem-like information of this special training that has proven to yield fruition for two millennia.

