# Nalanda Buddhist Society

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For Non-Muslims Only

# Dhammaduta tour of India

Nalanda founder Bro. Tan was recently invited to go on a 'Dhammaduta' (Dhamma-teaching) tour of India from 3 to 13 February 2017. He was the guest-of-honour and keynote speaker at the 'Mahakarunā Diwas' held in Delhi, Bombay and Nagpur, which were a series of lectures on Buddhist teachings organised by the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre.

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# Visit by Dr. Charika and Dr. Upali

Nalanda Centre was recently honoured by a visit by well-known Sri Lankan social activist Dr. Charika Marasinghe and her husband Dr. Upali, M.D. Dr. Charika is the daughter of Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, the founder of *Sarvodaya Shramadana*, the largest socialdevelopment organisation in Sri Lanka.

Dr. Charika and Dr. Upali were mesmerised by the serenity of Nalanda Centre after a building tour led by its Director, Sis. Nandinī. The visitors later met with Nalanda founder Bro. Tan for fruitful discussions on the social application of Buddhist teachings in helping people affected by trauma.

Bro. Tan said that he was impressed by the work done by *Sarvodaya*, and wished to learn more about its plans to improve rural communities. He agreed to visit Sri Lanka soon to witness the implementation of *Sarvodaya's* family-based programmes there.





# New Year Pūja and Dāna

On Sunday 8 January, Nalanda Centre was honoured to host Venerable Ayya Sumangalā for a Dhamma talk on *'welcoming happiness*'. Ayya began her talk by commenting on festive greetings where we usually wish others happiness. While we are wishing ourselves and others happiness, are we really working towards it?

Ayya Sumangalā told the well-known story of Venerables Sariputta and Moggallana, who being disenchanted with worldly life, found true happiness in the Dhamma and awakened to it. Using this example, Ayya mentioned that we usually indulge in entertainment because we cannot face the sufferings of life. Instead, we should seek to discover the world within and around us, which is enough for us to realise the nature of life which is impermanent and unsatisfactory.

Ayya Sumangalā reminded devotees about

the preciousness of human existence and urged everyone to make full use of it through diligent spiritual cultivation. It is important to always reflect on our direction and goal in life, and include a strong spiritual element in it.

Nalandians were also blessed to receive a 'New Year message' from Nalanda founder Bro. Tan. He advised devotees on the right way to make aspirations. As practitioners, we should ask ourselves, 'what makes me unhappy?' and think about how to overcome this in clear and specific ways – that is the direction for our personal growth. Bro. Tan then wished everyone a 'Happy Whole Year!' – instead of the customary 'Happy New Year'.

After the inspiring teachings, devotees offered lunch dāna to Ayya Sumangalā. The abundant merits accumulated from the wholesome and joyful day were then shared with all beings. Sadhu anumodana!



14 January

# Convocation and Gratitude Day joy

On Saturday 14 January, Nalanda Institute held a *Convocation Ceremony and Gratitude Day* for graduates of BPS304 Certificate in Buddhist Studies who successfully completed their course in December 2016.

The day marked the culmination of months of lectures, assignments, presentations and written evaluation throughout the whole course, and naturally the graduates received their certificates and transcripts with much joy and satisfaction.

The event started with inspiring messages by three Nalanda-achariyas – Achariya Vijaya, Achariya Tan Siang Chye and Achariya Tan Ho Soon. The teachers emphasised what a privilege it is for one to be able to learn and comprehend *Dhamma* in this lifetime. Thus we shall not waste such a great fortune and furthermore, develop a sense of responsibility to share the *Dhamma*  with people around us. Hence, the end of the course should mark a new beginning of deeper learning and living in accordance to *Dhamma* for the graduates.

After presenting tokens of appreciation (Pāli: Guru-dakkhinā) to their respected teachers, the graduates amused everyone with various performances cleverly acted by each course group.

It was a joyous and heart-warming session where family members of graduates, lecturers, and volunteers congregated to witness the result of diligent effort and determination put forth by course participants over the past 6 months to learn the Buddha's teachings. Nalanda Institute congratulates our graduates for their success, and thanks all our lecturers, supporters and volunteers who have contributed to the students' learning and spiritual progress.

Convocation day joy with Achariya Tan Ho Soon, Achariya Vijaya Samarawickrama, Achariya Tan Siang Chye, and graduates of BPS 304 – Certificate in Buddhist Studies.





Graduates receiving certificates from Achariya Vijaya.







## Tzu Chi members visit NEO Centre

On Saturday 14 January, a group of 10 members from Buddhist Tzu Chi Merits Society Malaysia paid an official visit to NEO Centre Sungai Petani. They were warmly welcomed by Nalanda branch leaders and members. The visit was an initiative by Tzu Chi Merits Society to forge closer friendship with other Buddhist societies locally.

During the visit, Tzu Chi representative Bro.



Chuan Yeong Ming presented two specially crafted gifts to Nalanda – comprising a ceremonial bell and a drum. Bro. Chuan explained that both are common instruments used to accompany chanting in Mahayana temples. The symbolism of the bell is to wake us up from ignorance; and the drum is to spur us into exerting effort.

Nalanda Sungai Petani Branch Chairman Bro. Khaw and Deputy Chairman Dr. Song gratefully received the gifts on behalf of the Society, and in return presented two Dhamma books and Nalanda Bulletins to the visitors.

Our friends from Tzu Chi were later hosted on a building tour and lunch. It was indeed a joyful meeting for everyone which further enhanced the spirit of Buddhist comradeship in Kedah. We thank our respected Tzu Chi friends for their kind visit and acknowledgment. Sadhu!



# New Year 'open house' in Kedah

On Saturday 4 February, Nalanda members and devotees from the neighbourhood gathered at NEO Centre Sungai Petani for our annual Lunar New Year 'open house'. It was a happy occasion to meet good friends and make new ones.

First-time visitors were brought on a tour of NEO Centre to get to know the facilities and activities in Sungai Petani. Many people were delighted to see the beautiful and serene education facility, which includes a Dhamma Teaching & Meditation Hall, a reference library, meeting rooms, and lounges.

At the 'open house' programme, a pre-recorded Dhamma talk by Nalanda founder Bro. Tan was played. He spoke about the 'recipe' for a happy New Year celebration, which in fact helped us to reflect much broader on the way we should live our lives. We thank all visitors who attended our 'open house' at NEO Centre Sungai Petani, as well as generous donors who prepared food for all. We look forward to seeing everyone at NEO Centre again, soon.







2 February

The festive gathering coincided with the 'soft reopening' of Nalanda Book Café.

# Festive gathering at Nalanda Café

Nalandians who returned from Lunar New Year celebrations in their respective hometowns had a wonderful 'reunion' at Nalanda Book Café in Sri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur, on 2 February. The festive gathering saw Nalanda members and devotees from the Klang Valley, Johor Bahru and Sungai Petani congregating for the 'soft reopening' of the Book Café, which resumed operations after several months of renovation.

Nalanda founder Bro. Tan and benefactors Mr. and Mrs Y. W. Lai graced the occasion and expressed their joy and delight in seeing the milestones achieved by the café. Nalanda Book Café was established in 2009 to promote healthy diet and eating habits, while emphasizing a balanced and wholesome lifestyle. Good physical health is one of our *Six Well-beings*; thus the consumption of nutritious food is an essential element towards greater fitness.

The café currently serves healthy vegetarian food and provides a comfortable and conducive environment for casual dining and small-group meetings. The Book Café also aims to provide training opportunities for Buddhist youths to become sociallyresponsible entrepreneurs in line with Nalanda's "*Right Livelihood Programme*".

Nalanda Book Café is located at 35-1, Jalan Radin Anum 1, Sri Petaling, 57000 Kuala Lumpur.

Opening hours are from 12pm to 9pm; Wednesdays to Sundays.

All are welcome!



# Dhamma School facilitator training





On Thursday 9 February, Nalanda Dhamma School had its first training session in 2017 for facilitators from Sri Serdang and Kuala Lumpur. The training was conducted by School Director, Sis. Sunanda.

Facilitators were reminded to perform more than just facilitating learning and coaching students during School sessions. They should also act as counsellors and *Dhamma-mittā* to their students, sharing with them the necessary knowledge, skills, values and culture as practising Buddhists.

Throughout the day, facilitators had discussions to explore ways to improve the effectiveness of School programmes. Besides that, they also enjoyed lighthearted moments with creative games. We thank Sis. Sunanda for her time and effort to conduct this fruitful training session for facilitators. Sadhu anumodana.

A huge audience attending the 'Mahakarunā Diwas' in Nagpur on 11 February, which also happened to be Magha-pūja Day.

# A remarkable Dhamma teaching tour of India

## 3 – 13 February

Bro. Tan was specially invited by the President of Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre, Venerable Bhikkhu Sanghasena Mahathera, as the keynote speaker at a series of gatherings named '*Mahakarunā Diwas*' to promote Buddhist teachings. Bro Tan also took the opportunity to visit local Buddhist communities in Maharashtra, and granted interviews to the local press and Buddhist TV channel.

Throughout his Dhammaduta tour, Bro. Tan spoke about various subjects covering essential qualities of *Buddha-Dhamma* – its compassionate activism, vigorous practice to purify the mind, and guidance by wisdom and realisation. He emphasised that the Buddha taught one 'to understand suffering and to transcend it' by cultivating morality, tranquillity and wisdom.







Being the chief-guest at Bombay 'Mahakarunā Diwas'.

















## Visit to Kelzar

On Sunday 12 February, Bro. Tan received a very warm welcome when he visited *Dhammabhumi* monastery located in Kelzar, 52km south of Nagpur. The village of Kelzar has a population of 1500 people, with a significant proportion of Buddhists.

Around 300 people including a large turnout of Sangha members had gathered that afternoon to listen to Bro. Tan's talk, which was translated into *Marathi*, the local language.

In his talk, Bro. Tan touched on the glorious history of Buddhism which spread peacefully in all directions from its land of origin — India. He urged Indian Buddhists to again revitalise the Buddha's teachings throughout our spiritual homeland, and lead more people to the Path of Wisdom and Liberation.











# SMK Gajah Berang Malacca & SMK USJ 13 students visit Nalanda Centre

On Saturday 4 February, Nalandians were delighted to host a study tour by 80 students from SMK Gajah Berang, Malacca, and 40 students from SMK USJ 13, Selangor.

The young visitors and their teachers were warmly received in the morning, and they proceeded on a tour of Nalanda Centre. The students then listened to a Dhamma sharing by Bro. Aggaphala Yap on 'Happiness'. The sharing was very simple and useful, allowing the students to have a better understanding of the Buddhist way to a happy life. After receiving food for the mind, the students had the opportunity to experience a traditional, Nalandian communal lunch.

We would like to thank both schools for organising this visit to Nalanda Centre. Our appreciation also to the teachers for having great concern for the spiritual well-being of their students. Sadhu!





Spirited performance to welcome the young visitors.





Everyone enjoying a Nalandian communal meal.



## Visit by Sri Lankan scholar monks

On Tuesday 7 February, a group of 10 scholarly Sangha members visited Nalanda Centre to learn about the Buddhist educational work done in Malaysia. The young monks were among the best scholars throughout Sri Lanka in Pāli, Sanskrit and Sinhalese languages, having excelled in national Buddhist examinations there.

They were invited to Malaysia on a study tour courtesy of Venerable Sri Saranankara Nayaka Thero of Sentul Temple.

**N** Talandians warmly welcomed the **IN** honoured guests and brought them on a tour of the centre, while introducing them to the programmes and activities offered by the Society, Institute and Dhamma School.

The venerable monks were truly gladdened and happy throughout their visit. Leader of the group Ven. Rathanasara remarked that it was the 'happiest day of his life', having seen the work done by Nalanda for the Malaysian Buddhist community.

Before leaving, the monks offered blessings and words of encouragement to Nalandians to continue propagating the Dhamma. We thank the venerables for their kind visit, and wish them the best in all noble endeavours.



ugh the Pāli texts at Pustak<mark>a Nalanda.</mark>





# Youthful Lunar New Year gathering

On Saturday 11 February, Nalanda Youth Centre hosted a gathering to usher in the Lunar New Year. Decorated with auspicious blessings and ornaments, Nalanda Centre was made ready to receive our red-clad guests for the merry event. The evening kicked off with pot-luck dinner prepared by the youths, as familiar faces reconnected and rejoiced together.

After dinner, joyous laughter rang through the halls as the ice-breaker session started with a twist as the youths improvised Chinese New Year songs to introduce themselves.

The atmosphere warmed up even more with friendly competitions, challenging the youths on team-spirit and cooperation.

The gathering also shared Bro. Tan's message on "Good Friends". Bro. Tan taught that truly good friends bring out the goodness in us; they are 'good for' us, and not just 'good to' us. He also explained the four types of good friends: one who is helpful; one who endures together through happy and trying times; one who gives wise counsel; and one who sympathises with us.

We would like to thank the youths who contributed towards this joyous night by bringing food and much laughter. We also wish everyone a happy *whole year* ahead.

We look forward to meeting everyone soon at Nalanda Youth Centre; may our bonds of spiritual friendship long endure!





The youths enjoying the ice-breaking session with creative games (right). They also performed chanting, listened to a Dhamma teaching by Bro. Tan, and shared the food everyone brought.





# Honouring parents at Tea Ceremony

12 February

Parents symbolically tying blessing-strings on their children's hands, and wishing them well through the learning and practice of Dhamma.

On Sunday 12 February, Nalanda Dhamma School held its annual tea-offering ceremony in conjunction with the Lunar New Year. The purpose of the tea ceremony was for children to express their love and gratitude towards parents and teachers who have cared and supported them unconditionally.

It was heart-warming to see children bowing reverentially to their parents and elders. Parents and children also enhanced their communication and strengthened bonds through simple activities. Throughout the day, the importance of *Right Speech* in achieving family harmony was constantly emphasised.

We thank Nalanda Dhamma School for organising this meaningful programme to foster family well-being. Everyone who participated in the ceremony had a truly memorable and inspiring experience. Sadhu anumodana!







Mutual understanding and respect bring immense joy.









# First Nalanda Members' Day in 2017

Nalanda members held our first Members' Day in 2017 on Saturday, 18 February to review the Society's latest developments. Nalandians were briefed about major upcoming events including *Nalanda e-Run* on 16 April and the National Members' Convention from 29 April to 1 May.

At the meeting, Bro. Tan announced his retirement from the management team of Nalanda Buddhist Society. He explained that the time was ripe for him to withdraw from playing a management role as current leaders are capable of administering the Society very well.

Since last year, Bro. Tan had also progressively retired from the Theravada Buddhist Council of Malaysia and several other organisations. However, he will continue to spearhead the development of 'Wisdom Park' – an integrated Buddhist educational facility to be built in Hulu Selangor over the next few years. Nalandians offer our deepest gratitude to Bro. Tan for his inspiring leadership and wish him the very best in carrying out his noble *Dhammaduta* mission.







# 4th A.G.M. of Nalanda K.L. Branch

Saturday 18 February marked the 4th Annual General Meeting of Nalanda Buddhist Society Kuala Lumpur Branch. During the meeting held at NEO Centre Happy Garden, members were given updates on the Branch's development in 2016 as well as upcoming plans for this year. The meeting was also attended by Nalanda President Sis. Evelyn, Honorary Secretary Bro. Pee, and EXCO Member Bro. Lee Teck Beng.

Branch Chairman Bro. Ng Eek Chon expressed deep gratitude and appreciation towards all members and devotees for their active participation and support towards the Branch's activities. He encouraged all members to join hands and continue to put in effort to organise educational programmes for the benefit of the community. He also thanked the Board of Management and Nalandian officers for their guidance and unrelenting support.

Nalanda President Sis. Evelyn congratulated the Branch Management Committee and members

for their successful out-reach programmes such as *Pindacāra* and meditation class. Besides, she reminded Nalandians to uphold our *Eight Core Values*, strive to achieve the *Six Well-beings*, and maintain concord in working together.

We wish Nalanda K.L. Branch members much blessings in providing quality educational programmes for the community. May the branch continue to grow from strength to strength! Sadhu anumodana.



# Dhamma School outing to Putrajaya

On Sunday 19 February, Nalanda Dhamma School organised an outing for facilitators and students to Taman Putra Perdana in Putrajaya. 104 teenagers and children from Sri Serdang and Kuala Lumpur branches spent a healthy and fun day out with their Dhamma friends, while learning the important values of good friendship and loving-kindness.

The students were grouped into ten teams and competed in multiple relay-races which tested their courage, teamwork, and adaptability.

Dhamma School Director, Sis. Sunanda Ong, reminded students to become *good friends* by being helpful, loyal, and sympathetic towards one another. The trip ended with group reflection and discussions, where students recollected key learning points for the day.

It was truly a joyful and well-spent Sunday for the students who participated in the outing. We thank the Dhamma School facilitators for planning this meaningful and enjoyable outof-class activity to enhance everyone's learning experience.









# RUN FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION



# 16 APRIL 2017, SUNDAY, 7AM

## Register now at www.nalanda.org.my/e-Run

Registration closes on 3 April 2017, Monday

Nalanda is organising **e-Run 2017** to raise funds for our education and development expenses. The event also aims to promote physical fitness and family well-being within the community. We invite everyone to kindly promote this programme and actively participate in it.

Let us all "run for community education" on 16 April.

## Nalanda e-Run 2017 — Run for Community Education

## Family & team participation

Nalanda **e-Run 2017** aims to promote family well-being and social harmony within the community and therefore we strongly encourage family and team participation in this fun-filled activity.

## Why should you support?

Since 2003, Nalanda has been organising and offering free courses, training programmes, tuition classes and other services to benefit the entire Malaysian community. Contributions and public donations are vital to sustain our operations and to improve our service quality. Therefore, we invite you, your family, your company and friends to be involved in this fundraising *e-Run* to help raise RM300,000 towards *Nalanda Education Fund* for the above purposes.

## How can you support?

- Register as a Sponsorship Pledge Card fund-raiser to raise funds from your friends, colleagues and relatives.
- Register as an *e-Run* participant and encourage others to participate as well.
- Sponsor in cash or in kind to the event.
- Sponsor someone / a group to participate in the *e-Run*.
- Join us as a volunteer, and make new friends.

## Thank you for supporting this noble cause of holistic education.



# wacana 2017

Conference Theme The Buddha Word : Discovering the Essential

1 July Saturday, 8am – 5pm

The Saujana Hotel Jalan L.T. Subang, Selangor

**WACANA** is the premier Malaysian Buddhist Conference where the Sangha and laity gather to discuss pertinent issues that affect the Buddhist movement. The purpose of this Conference is to address the challenge many people face today in learning about Buddhism – what exactly did the Buddha teach? What teachings, doctrines, and practices constitute the 'Buddha Word'?

WACANA 2017 will host an illustrious panel of Sangha members and prominent community leaders to discuss this critical issue. We invite all concerned Buddhists to attend the Conference so that we can pool our ideas and resources to propagate the true teachings of the Buddha for generations to come.

Please register on-line for this inspiring Conference at : www.nalanda.org.my/wacana

Jointly organised by Nalanda Institute Malaysia and Theravada Buddhist Council of Malaysia

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## **Upcoming Events**

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ers NEO Centre KL / Taman O.U.G. market & Happy Garden
NEO Centre SP
NEO Centre JB
Nalanda Centre
Dāna Nalanda Centre
Nalanda Centre
Nalanda Centre
Nalanda Centre
ers Nalanda Centre / Seri Kembangan market
or Youths Nalanda Centre
Dāna Nalanda Centre
Nalanda Centre
Nalanda Centre
NEO Centre KL
ers NEO Centre KL / Taman O.U.G. market & Happy Garden
ers Nalanda Centre / Seri Kembangan market
Sri Serdang, Selangor

March – April 2017

\* Registration is required for these programmes / activities.

#### Special programme :

## 5th Nalanda members' National Convention\* - 29 April – 1 May

Weekly activities at Nalanda Centre include "Sunday Service" (Sundays, 9am–12pm) and "Meditation & Dhamma Sharing" (Wednesdays, 8pm–10pm). For full details or updates on Nalanda's many programmes, kindly visit our website at www.nalanda.org.my or facebook www.facebook.com/nalanda.org.my

## Four Principles of Living

Buddhism implores its followers to lead wholesome lives guided by wisdom and compassion. Thus, Nalandians choose to live spiritually and gratefully by following these *Four Principles of Living*, namely :

- 1. Leading a life of simplicity, modesty, and moderation.
- 2. Maintaining a serene, calm and contented mind.
- 3. Living gracefully and harmoniously with the community.
- 4. Living in accordance to Dhamma.

**'Like'** our Facebook fanpage at **www.facebook.com/nalanda.org.my** to connect with Nalanda for more *Dhamma-rich* news, views and articles!

## Nalanda Contacts Please visit our website for directions to Nalanda.

## Nalanda Buddhist Society Malaysia

#### Nalanda Centre, 3357, Jalan 18/31, Taman Sri Serdang, 43300 Seri Kembangan, Selangor.

 Tel. No.
 +603-8938 1500 / 1501

 E-mail
 info@nalanda.org.my

Website www.nalanda.org.my Facebook www.facebook.com/nalanda.org.my

Nalanda Centre is open daily from 10.00 am to 10.00 pm. For visits, kindly call to make appointments.

### Nalanda Education & Outreach (NEO) Centre, Kuala Lumpur

#### 524 A, 1st Floor, Jalan Riang 12, Taman Gembira, 58200 Kuala Lumpur.

Tel. No.+603-7971 7151E-mailneo-kl@nalanda.org.myFacebookwww.facebook.com/NeoCentre.KL

NEO Centre KL is open every first Saturday of the month from 7.30 am to 5.00 pm; Mondays to Thursdays : 8.00 pm to 10.00 pm; and every Sunday from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm.

### Nalanda Education & Outreach (NEO) Centre, Johor Bahru

30, Jalan Dedap 26, Taman Johor Jaya, 81100 Johor Bahru, Johor.

Tel. No. +607-350 3870 E-m Facebook www.facebook.com/NeoCentre.JB

E-mail neo-jb@nalanda.org.my

NEO Centre JB is open on Sundays : 8.30 am to 11.30 am; Mondays to Wednesdays : 8.00 pm to 10.00 pm; and on New-moon / Full-moon weekdays : 8.00 pm to 10.00 pm.

### Nalanda Education & Outreach (NEO) Centre, Sungai Petani

210, Jalan Bandar Mutiara 2/2, Bandar Mutiara, 08000 Sungai Petani, Kedah.

E-mail neo-sp@nalanda.org.my Facebook www.facebook.com/NeoCentre.SP

NEO Centre SP is open on Fridays : 7.30pm to 9.30pm; and on Saturdays : 9.30am to 12.00pm.