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**NATIONAL SEMINAR
ON**

VIOLENCE, NON VIOLENCE AND PEACE : BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE

(21th to 22st July, 2014)

We are glad to inform you that the Buddhist Studies Centre and the Department of History & Indian Culture is going to organize a two-day National Seminar on the theme " *Violence, Non Violence and Peace : Buddhist Perspective*" on 21th to 22st July, 2014.

We cordially invite you to participate in the seminar and look forward to your learned contributions and observations.

VIOLENCE, NON VIOLENCE AND PEACE: BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE :

Appropriateness of the theme lies in the fact that we are living in an insane world full of confusion, conflict and turmoil. The present world is in chaos politically, socially and environmentally, Violence and Wars have become the rule of the day. In this perspective all the

religions also meet the Challenges and pressures of contemporary surrounding world and with special reference to "Buddhism" it is necessary to understand and analyze the dynamics of violence, non violence and peace. It is very strange question, why the first nuclear explosion of India was named "Smiling Buddha". All the concerns moved to revisit Buddhist perspective.

In the *Sakkapanha Sutta* of the *Digha Nikaya*, Sakka, The chief of the gods, questions the Buddha as to why men in this world who aspire for peace act contrary to peace and produce mutual conflicts detrimental to their own good. The answer given by the Buddha is significant. Diagnosing the problem he traced the final root cause to be *Tanha* (craving). According to the Buddha craving prevents men from pursuing their own good even when they see clearly the path leading to their welfare. The rise of Buddhism witnessed increasing imperialist tendencies. The Buddhist texts explicitly deal with violence and non-violence. Dhammapada expressly states: " All tremble at punishment and all fear death. Therefore having compared unto oneself one should not kill nor should cause to kill" There are many ways in which the Buddhist literature deliberate upon this theme. The Buddhist position on violence, its forms, ways to deal with it , practical considerations, upholding the ideal of compassion and non-violence can only be authenticated by extracting and analysing the scriptures.

It is commonly believed that non-violence is at the heart of Buddhist thinking and behaviour. The first of the five precepts that all Buddhists should follow is "Avoid killing, or harming any living thing." One of Buddha's sermons puts this very clearly with a powerful example that stresses the need to love your enemy no matter how cruelly he treats you:"Even if thieves carve you limb from limb with a double-handed saw, if you make your mind hostile you are not following my teaching".(*Kamcupamasutta, Majjhima-Nikkaya*)*The ideal of a non-violent ruler is promulgated in the ancient Buddhist texts. The Cakkavatti sihanada sutta talks about such a ruler, who wields dhamma, and earns voluntary subordination of others. One of the duties of the rulers is to curb crime. Is that possible without force? Do we find some clever deception within the texts? Even the critics say that Buddhism might show an understanding towards the use of violence but will never approve of it.* (Peter Harvey)

Despite this perception, there are numerous examples of Buddhists engaging in violence and even war. In the 14th century Buddhist fighters led the uprising that evicted the Mongols from China. In Japan, Buddhist monks trained Samurai warriors in meditation that made them better fighters. In Sri Lanka the 20th century civil war between the mostly Buddhist Sinhalese majority and the Hindu Tamil minority has cost 50,000 lives. In 2007, Buddhist monks led a foiled democratic uprising in Burma: images of columns of clerics bearing upturned alms bowls, marching peacefully in protest against the junta, earned sympathy around the world, if not from the soldiers who slaughtered them. But where does social activism end and political militancy begin? Every religion can be twisted into a destructive force poisoned by ideas that are antithetical to its foundations. Is it now the turn of Buddhism?

To address the contemporary concerns, it is required to tap into the ancient wisdom and revisit the Buddhist perspective on violence and non-violence. Some of the questions that the papers are expected to seek answers should be regarding the different forms of violence known to the Buddhist texts ; on what grounds do the texts condemn violence; how do they perceive origin of violence; Do they give a coping mechanism; is there an unequivocal stand; are there exigent exceptions within the scriptural traditions; what is the nature of Buddhist political activism? These sub-themes are indicative and can be expanded to include significant contributions to the

main theme of the Seminar. The attempt is to clear the haziness of a tradition through the clarity of primary sources in the light of contemporary concerns.

Subthemes: -

1. Revisiting Sources in reference to Violence and non violence.
2. Concept of Māra
3. Concept of Chakkavati.
4. Changing perspective in Medieval Buddhism.
5. Buddhist Political activism.
6. Dynamics of war in Buddhism.
7. Peace Conversations in Buddhism.
8. Meditation and Peace in Buddhism.
9. Administration and non-violence and peace in Buddhist literature.
10. Dialogue for Peace : A Buddhist perspective.
11. Peace and non violence for Humanity in Buddhist perspective.
12. Why violence ? Buddhist perspective.
13. No other way than non violence and peace : Buddhist view.

You are requested to submit your paper (in full or abstract) in hard and/or soft copy, by 10th July, 2014 to the Director, Buddhist Studies Centre or the Head of Department of History and Indian Culture, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur-302 055. Papers can also be e-mailed at the e-mail address of the Centre: buddhacentreraj@gmail.com and Department of History and Indian Culture : hodhistoryuor@gmail.com.

Registration fee is Rs. 500/- per delegate.

It will be very kind of you if you would confirm your participation in advance.

Looking forward to your participation in the seminar.

Yours sincerely,

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