

**Ministry of Education**  
**Department of Higher Education**  
**University of Pyay**

**Pyay University**  
**Research Journal**

Vol. 9, No. 1

December, 2017.

**Ministry of Education**  
**Department of Higher Education**  
**University of Pyay**

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# Pyay University Research Journal 2017

## Vol. 9, No. 1

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## The Sources of Some Mottos in *Pāli* Language of Universities in Myanmar

Nyo Me Aung<sup>1</sup>, Nyein Nyein Aye<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

The universities of Myanmar have their own mottos that reflect their aims and objectives. Some universities use *Pāli* phrases as their mottos. A study on some mottos in *Pāli* language currently used at universities and educational institutions in Myanmar will be carried out and each of the mottos will be analysed in terms of its *Pāli* sources, its literary meaning, and its interpretations. The purposes of this research paper are to describe a vivid knowledge of their meaning and their *Pāli* origin and to appreciate, to follow and to practise them.

Key words: *Pāli* language mottos; universities in Myanmar; literary meaning; *Pāli* sources; interpretations

### Introduction

Learning and teaching of *Pāli* language and literature have existed in Myanmar since the earliest period of Myanmar history. In fact, Myanmar people were continuously interested in *Pāli* literature since Theravāda Buddhism in which *Pāli* played the vital role arrived at Myanmar. Myanmar people enhanced the standard of Myanmar literature and that of Myanmar culture on the basis of *Pāli* language that they constantly strove hard to study and scrutinize. Consequently some appropriate themes from *Pāli* literature which match well with Myanmar ways of life and Myanmar society were taken out to be used as adages, proverbs and mottos.

The word motto is derived from the Latin “*muttum*”, which means “words” or “sentence”. The Latin word “*muttum*” is changed into “*mutter*” and then by way of Italian it becomes “*Motto*”. It is called “မော့ဝံ့ဝံ့” in Myanmar language<sup>3</sup> and *Saraṇīyapajja* in *Pāli* language.<sup>4</sup> Motto is a short sentence or phrase composed of some words of wisdom, which is regarded as the set goal or the guiding principles for an individual, a family, or an organization etc. Every cultural community has mottos relating to every sector of the society such as socio-economic sector, religious sectors, political sector, business companies, government departments, educational institutions, sports, etc. In fact, mottos are widely used from an individual basis to a society basis.

### Materials and Methods

In this research paper, all of the data about mottos in *Pāli* language was collected from some of the universities of Myanmar, together with descriptive and analytic methods were used. An interpretation method is applied as well, when describing the sources and origins of the *Pāli* language mottos in terms of its literary meaning. The materials used for the purpose of the research are *Pāli*, *Aṭṭhakatha*, *Ṭīkā* and some articles (including articles on the internet) and some of the *Pāli* language mottos of universities in Myanmar.

### Findings

#### Some Mottos in *Pāli* Language of Universities in Myanmar

International universities have mottos of their own to indicate their intentions or purpose. Likewise, Universities and Educational Institutions in Myanmar also have their respective mottos. Some universities in Myanmar use *Pāli* phrases as their representative mottos. For example, the motto of Yangon University is “*Natthi Vijjā Samam Mittam*”, the motto of Dawei University is “*Paññā Narānam Ratanam*”, the motto of Myeik University is

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<sup>3</sup> English-Myanmar Dictionary, 139.

<sup>4</sup> HokeSein, U. *Pāli Myanmar Abhidhan*,288.

“*Vijjā Sippam Paramam Paññam*”, the motto of Sittwe University is “*Paññā Samā Ābhā Natthi*”, the motto of Kyaington University is “*Paññā Dhanam Sippam Mittam*”, the motto of Bhamaw University is “*Paññājīvim Jivitamāhu Settham*”, the motto of Universities of Medicine is “*Upaṭṭhānam Anukampā Dayā*”, the motto of Universities of Dental Medicine is “*Ārogyam Paramam Lābham*”, the motto of University of Pharmacy, Mandalay is “*Abhaya Vipāka Guṇā*”, the motto of Institutes of Economic is “*Vīriya, Saccā, Ñāṇa, Samādhi*”, the motto of “National University of Art and Culture, Yangon is “*Cittam Dantam Sukhā Vaham*”, the motto of National Management Collage is *Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā, Cetanā* and the motto of State Pariyatti Sāsana Universities is “*Sabbadānam Dhammānam Jināti*” etc.

Among these mottos, the mottos of Yangon University, Dawei University, Sittwe University, Bhamaw University, Universities of Medicine and Universities of Dental Medicine with their respective meanings and their original sources in the *Pāḷi* texts are presented in this research paper.

### (i) The Motto of Yangon University

“*Natthi Vijjā Samam Mittam*” is the motto of Yangon University, which was first established in Myanmar about a century ago. The phrase “*Natthi Vijjā Samam Mittam*” means “no friend is as valuable as knowledge”. In other words, this motto indicates that there is no friend who is as useful and valuable as knowledge.

The phrase is taken from a verse included in *Paṇḍitakaṇḍa* of *Lokanīti*. The original wording is “*Natthivijjāsamaṃmittam, nacabyādhisamoripu; Nacaattasamaṃpemam, naca-kammasamaṃbalaṃ*”.<sup>1</sup> It means “There is no friend like knowledge; There is no foe like disease; There is no love like self-love; There is no power like one’s own deed.”

The *Pāḷi* word *Vijjā* means 18 kinds of arts and skills.<sup>2</sup> They are general knowledge, the science of Law, calculation, mechanical art, the knowledge of the ‘*Nīti*’, the *Byakarein*, music, manual dexterity, archery, antiquities, science of medicine, wit and humour, astrology, strategy, versification; diplomacy, magic, and grammar.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, there are also crafts and art to be used to earn a living. Some branches of studies are technical skills, industrial art and the art of speech and elocution etc. Nowadays, these branches of studies can be classified into two streams: arts and science subjects.

At present, science and technologies have rapidly advanced and so there are new academic subjects in a large number in the modern world education. It is impossible to join all studies but the learners can try to access any learning opportunity that can match their interest. The learners can easily earn their living if they know and master any kind of knowledge.

The word *Mitta* in this motto means friend. Friend means the people who do well to others and who are willing to help others and who wants other’s benefits only.<sup>4</sup> In *Pāḷi* literature, it was mentioned that there were two types of friends: the true friend and the seemingly true friend. The four types of true friend are: (1) a person who is helpful, (2) who is the same in prosperity and adversity, (3) who gives good guidance, and (4) who understands and is full of kindness. The four types of foes in friendly guise are (1) a person only taking and not giving in return, (2) a person rendering just lip-service (3) a person who flatters and (4) a person who leads to the evil activities.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lokanīti*, Verse No. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Buddhaghosa, Venerable, *Jatakatthakathā*, Vol.II, 204-5.

<sup>3</sup> *Suti, Samiti, Saṅkhyā, Yogā, Nīti, Visesa, Gandhabba, Gaṇika, Dhanubbedā, Pūraṇa, Tikicchā, Itihāsa, Jotisa, māyā, chandati, Ketu, Mantā, Saddā*, Lokaniti, Verse-10-11.

<sup>4</sup> Buddhaghosa, Venerable, *Suttanipata Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol.I, 64.

<sup>5</sup> *Pāthikavagga Pāḷi*, 151-152.

Everybody needs good friends and true friends to achieve their success in affairs. In the *Upaḍḍhasutta*, the Buddha said to Venerable *Ānanda* that associations with good companions would be complete fulfillment of the Noble Life of Purity.<sup>1</sup>

But sometimes, human beings tend to change their attitude towards others depending on changing circumstances. So human beings are not steady in their temperament: they tend to change their likes and dislikes frequently. As a consequence, sometimes a friend unexpectedly becomes an enemy in some cases. So, friends will not help with everything in every time and everywhere.

Parents, on the other hand, are always true friends for their children because they always want to see their children prosper and succeed. But they can do well to their children only during their lives. After death, they can neither protect nor do well for their children any longer. Unlike friends and parents, the wisdom has no erratic nature to leave behind or to change into enemy. The wisdom will follow throughout lives by providing benefits to the learned persons. So wisdom is the best friend as well as true friend.

To highlight this importance Yangon University seems to have used this *Pāḷi* phrase “*Natthi Vijjā Samam Mittam*” as its motto because a variety of academic subjects from both arts and science streams are being offered at this prestigious university.

## (ii) The Motto of Dawei University

The motto of Dawei University is “*Paññā Narānam Ratanam*”, which means “Wisdom is the treasure for people”. This motto is taken from *JarāSutta* and *AjarasāSutta* of *Jarāvagga*, *Sagāthāvagga Pāḷi*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya*. The exact wording of original *Pāḷi* phrase is “*Sīlamyāvajarāsādhu, saddhāsādhupatiṭṭhitā. Paññānarānamratanam, Puññamcorehidūharanti*”.<sup>2</sup> This phrase means “Moral conduct serves one well till old age. Religious conviction, if well established, serves one well. Knowledge is a precious treasure for man. The merit of good actions is difficult to be taken away by thieves.”

According to *Jarā Sutta*, once a *deva* enquired the Blessed One “What serves one well till old age? What, if well-established, serves one well? What is a precious treasure for man? What is it that difficult to be taken away by thieves? The Buddha said, “Moral conduct serves one well till old age. Religious conviction, if well established, serves one well. Knowledge is a precious treasure for man. The merit of good actions is difficult to be taken away by thieves.”<sup>3</sup>

The word *Paññā* is variously defined as “insight by which one can think critically, analyses in detail, and evaluate the value of things; intellect, cleverness, wisdom,<sup>4</sup> knowing everything, omniscience, *vipassanā*, *magga* insight etc.”<sup>5</sup> *Paññā* is a general term, which has a wide range of meaning from the trivial knowledge of lay people in their daily activities to the Four Noble Truths of *Ariya*. Six kinds of wisdom are mentioned in *UparipaṇṇāsaPāḷi*. They are (1) *Mahāpaññā* – great wisdom, (2) *Puthupaññā*– broadwisdom, (3) *Hāsapaññā* – witted wisdom, (4) *Javanapaññā*–quick wisdom, (5) *Tikkhapaññā*–sharp wisdom and (6) *Nibbetikapaññā* – penetrative wisdom.<sup>6</sup> In brief, *Paññā* is divided into two types: *Lokīpaññā* and *Lokuttarāpaññā*.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Mahāvagga SaṃyuttaPāḷi*, 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Sagāthāvagga Saṃyutta Pāḷi*, 33.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>4</sup> *TipitakaPāḷi Myanmar Abhidhan*, Vol.13. 535.

<sup>5</sup> *Pāḷi Myanmar Abhidhan*, HokeSein. U, 572.

<sup>6</sup> *Uparipaṇṇāsa Pāḷi*, 75. 107. Buddhaghosa, Venerable, *UparipaṇṇāsaAṭṭhakathā*, 56.

<sup>7</sup> *Tipitaka Pāḷi Myanmar Abhidhan*, Vol.13. 535-536.

*Vipassanāpaññā* which enables one to realize the fact that all things are impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*) is known as *Lokuttarāpaññā*. Such *Lokuttarāpaññā* can indicate the ways to eradicate all unwholesome such as greed, anger and delusion. In fact, it is *Lokuttarāpaññā*, which is the noblest in the world and which can lead all living beings to complete liberation from cycle of rebirths and lead to *Nibbāna*.<sup>1</sup> The word *Paññā* can also be defined in terms of worldly affairs. Different field of study such as economic, agriculture, trade, commerce and farming etc. are also branches of *Lokīpaññā*. Science, technology and arts, humanity and crafts can also be categorized as *Lokīpaññā*. These studies can be supportive for lay persons to earn a living and to become highly-qualified human resources.<sup>2</sup>

The word “*Ratana*” means something that can make one pleased and delighted. *Samyuttaṭīka* defines it as “*Ratim Janeti*” which means “a thing can make people pleased and delighted”.<sup>3</sup> The five characteristics of *Ratana* are mentioned in *Sīlakkhandhavagga Aṭṭhakathā* as (1) deserved to be respected (2) precious (3) unique (4) very rare to find and (5) used only by those of high social ranks or the noble ones.<sup>4</sup>

Although the gems and treasures can give some kinds of pleasure to the respective owners in their own ways, they cannot heal the woes of human society. On the other hand, *Paññā* can be identified as “*Ratana*” because it is highly respected, its benefits can be enjoyed, it can give intellectual pleasure, it can be acquired only through hard work and concentration, so it is acquired at a high cost, and it can be accessed to by those with noble aims to use it for their blameless and honest livelihood and career.<sup>5</sup>

In *Milindapañha*, king *Milinda* and Venerable *Nāgasena* discussed about the precious jewel of wisdom. Venerable *Nāgasena* explained that knowledge by which the disciple of the noble ones know thoroughly what is virtue, and what is not; what is blameworthy, and what is not; what should be made a habit of, and what should not; what is mean, and what is exalted; what is dark, and what is light, and what is both dark and light; the knowledge by which one truly knows the Four Noble Truths. So this is called “The Blessed One’s jewel of knowledge.”<sup>6</sup> knowledge.”<sup>6</sup>

It is assumed that the motto of “*Paññā Narānaṃ Ratanam*”, the authentic words of admonition given by the Buddha himself, is used as the motto of Dawei University to highlight the great value knowledge or studies of respective fields. In fact, these academic studies are valuable treasure that can provide the students with ways and means for successful life. So, the students should pursue their respective studies energetically so that they can possess these treasures. By doing so, they will be able not only to serve the society but also to improve their own lives.

### (iii) The Motto of Bhamaw University

The motto of Bhamaw University is “*Paññā Jīviṃ Jivitimāhu Setṭham*”, which means “a livelihood that is made by using one’s intellect and knowledge is a noble and blameless livelihood”. This motto indicates people should earn their living by means of using knowledge and skill they have acquired.

<sup>1</sup> *Itivuttaka Pāli*, 219. *Netti Pāli*, 143, Dhammapāla, Venerable, *ItivuttaAṭṭhakathā*, 149.

<sup>2</sup> *Vibhaṅga Pāli*, 337.

<sup>3</sup> *Sagāthavagga Samyutta Tikā*, 14.

<sup>4</sup> Buddhaghosa, Venerable, *Sīlakkhandhavagga Aṭṭhakathā*, 35.

<sup>5</sup> Mahānāma, Venerable, *Paṭisambhidāmagga Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol.I, 344.

<sup>6</sup> *Milindapañha*, 320.

This phrase was taken from *Ālāvaka Sutta* of *Yakkhasamyutta*, *Sagathāvagga Samyutta* and *Uragavagga* of *Suttanipāta*. The extract wording of original *Pāli* is “*Saddhīdhavittampurisassaseṭṭham, Dhammosuciṇṇosukhamāvahāti; Saccam have sadhu - taramrasānam, Paññājīviṃ jīvitamāhu seṭṭham*”.<sup>1</sup>

The meaning of this verse is “Faith is the wealth here best for man; Dhamma well-practiced shall bring happiness; Truth indeed excels all other tastes; Life wisely lived, they say, is best.”

While the Buddha was residing at the abode of *Ālāvaka* at *Ālavī*, the *Yakkha Ālāvaka* was greatly incensed by the Buddha’s visit and he tried to dislodge the Buddha from his seat, but without success although he used his special weapon. Then, approaching the Buddha, *Ālāvaka* asked him to leave his house, which the Buddha did. He then summoned the Buddha to come back and the Buddha came. Three times this happened and three times the Buddha obeyed, judging compliance to be the best way of softening his wrath, but the fourth time the Buddha refused to return. Thereupon *Ālāvaka* expressed his desire to ask questions of the Buddha, hoping thereby to fatigue him. The Buddha agreed, and when he had answered all the questions to *Ālāvaka*’s satisfaction, the latter became a *Sotāpanna*.<sup>2</sup>

*Paññā* means *Paññindriya* which is *amoha* in nature.<sup>3</sup> It is called *Paññā* because *Paññā* results in gaining insight into the Four Noble Truths and the Three Characteristics.<sup>4</sup> It can distinguish between the good and the bad. Just as a well-qualified physician can distinguish between suitable and unsuitable things for his patients, a wise person can distinguish between the good deeds and evil deeds.<sup>5</sup>

People should avoid corruption and malpractice at work, but do their jobs honestly and earn a good reputation. The Buddha also had pointed out the splendid life that a corrupted person is not as noble as the death of a person whose good image and integrity is remarkable. So, the profession of an intellect is a noble livelihood.

Universities in Myanmar offer various courses on two streams as Arts and Science. Again Arts and Science subjects can be divided into many fields of study. Such branches of study are either based on knowledge or on technical skills. They can give many benefits for the society. So everyone should try to access them as much as possible so that they can earn their living by employing blameless occupations. Those who earn their living by means of knowledge and education can consider occasional problem thoroughly and can make a proper decision. They can offer their service to the community welfare work as they can control their greed, anger and delusion by using wisdom.

Thus the university students should earn their living by right livelihood or noble profession. To do so, they should pursue their studies well and diligently. Bhamaw University seems to have a desire to make such suggestions to their students and they choose this *Pāli* phrase “*Paññājīviṃ jīvitamāhu seṭṭham*” as their motto.

#### (iv) The Motto of Sittwe University

The motto of Sittwe University is “*Paññā Samā Ābhā Natthi*”. It means that “no other light can compete the brightness of the light of wisdom”. This *Pāli* phrase may be extracted from the third paragraph of the second verse of *Natthiputtasama Sutta* included in *Devatā*

<sup>1</sup> *SagāthāvaggaSamyutta Pāli*, 216.

<sup>2</sup> *Suttanipāta Pāli*, 305.

<sup>3</sup> Buddhaghosa, Venerable, *Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakatha*, Vol.II, 66.

<sup>4</sup> Buddhaghosa, Venerable, *Aṭṭhasālinī Aṭṭhakathā*, 165.

<sup>5</sup> Vicittasarabhivamsa, Venerable, *The Great Chronicle of the Buddhas*, Vol.I, Part.I, vi

*Samyutta* of *Sagāthāvagga Samyutta Pāḷi*. The original *Pāḷi* phrase is “*Natthi Paññā Samā Ābhā*” but the motto is “*Paññā Samā Ābhā Natthi*”.

The complete original wording is “*Natthiattasamampemaṃ, natthidhaññasamaṃ dhanam; Natthi Paññāsamā ābhā, vuṭṭhiveparamāsarā.*”<sup>1</sup> The translation of this verse is “There is no love like love for oneself. There is no wealth as valuable as grain. There is no light as great as that of Wisdom. There is no lake greater than the rain.”

The *Bhagavā* was staying at *Sāvatti*, *adeva* spoke thus in verse in the presence of the *Bhagavā*, “there is no love like love for one's child. There is no wealth as valuable as the cow. There is no light as great as the sun's. There is no lake greater than the ocean.” In reply the Buddha uttered the above verse.<sup>2</sup>

This motto indicates the bright and powerful status of wisdom, which is compared with very powerful light. In *Samyutta Pāḷi*, the Buddha mentioned that there are four kinds of light; sunlight, moonlight, the light of fire and the light of wisdom.<sup>3</sup> Among them, sunlight, moonlight and the light of fire are useful for all creatures but their usefulness has limits relating to time. But they can illuminate the exterior darkness only. On the contrary, the light of wisdom can illuminate the interior darkness within continuum of consciousness. The light of wisdom can eradicate ignorance of the four *Ariya* Truths and enable one to illuminate the interior darkness in his mind by the light of insight. The light of wisdom can give benefits to all people regardless of time, locality, and social status. The light of wisdom is the best and the noblest of all light.<sup>4</sup> So the Buddha pointed out that there was no light as bright as the light of wisdom.

In the *Milindapañha*, the characteristics mark of wisdom are mentioned as “when the wisdom springs up in the heart, it dispels the darkness of ignorance, it causes the radiance of knowledge to arise, it makes the light of intelligence to shine forth, and it makes the Noble Truths plain.”<sup>5</sup>

Today is the knowledge age and many more branches of study have rapidly developed all over the world especially information and communication technology. With the advent of the internet and media everyone can access to more learning opportunities.

Moreover, there are a large number of courses offered by private education centers. So those who are thirsty for knowledge can get many opportunities to learn everywhere and every time regardless of age or gender. Since the acquired knowledge from various modes of learning are very effective to study modern branch of studies and to innovate ways in business etc. the mature students can be proud of their enthusiasm to learn. So, everyone who has gained knowledge of various kinds can share with to general public and can make them aware the importance of buildings more peaceful and better world. For these reasons, “*Paññā Samā Ābhā Natthi*” is the motto that best suits the nature of the present day's learning opportunities.

In summary, Sittwe University seems to be very likely to highlight the power of knowledge. The motto “*Paññā Samā Ābhā Natthi*” motivates the students to learn their studies with interest. So, they can possess the power of wisdom in their future. According to this motto, both the teachers and students of Sittwe University are obliged to pursue studies continuously to ensure a brighter future. Based on the *lokīyapaññā*, they are supposed to have

<sup>1</sup> *Sagāthāvagga Samyutta Pāḷi*, 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Sagāthāvagga Samyutta Pāḷi*, 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 14.

<sup>4</sup> *Anguttara Nipāta*, Vol.I, 456-457.

<sup>5</sup> *Milindapañha*, 38.

acquired a certain degree of foundation for pursuing *lokuttarāpaññā*, which will enable them to attain *Maggapaññā* as their ultimate aim as Buddhists.

#### (v) The Motto of Universities of Medicine

The motto of University of Medicine (1) Yangon, University of Medicine (2) Yangon, University of Medicine (Mandalay) and University of Medicine (Magway) and University of Medicine (Taunggyi) is “*Upaṭṭhānaṃ Anukampā Dayā*” which means “Service, Sympathy, Humanity”.

The word *Upaṭṭhāna* means “look after” or “attend to.”<sup>1</sup> This term is similar in meaning to the usage of “*Upaṭṭhānaṃ*” included in “*Mātāpituupaṭṭhānaṃ*” described in *Maṅgala Sutta*.

“*Anukampā*” means “to protect someone out of pity”, or “to honour someone”.<sup>2</sup> Besides, “*anukampā*” also suggests “*Karuṇā*” or “compassion”. “*Dayā*” can be interpreted as “loving kindness, the cause of setting the animals free from being killed, no discrimination between the poor and the rich, giving attention to everyone equally like water, kindness, and compassion etc.”<sup>3</sup>

Medical Science is a branch of study, which aims to prevent diseases and epidemics, to give treatments to patients and to relieve their ailments. Medication plays a key role in the survival of living creatures especially human beings. Medical science can help people live longer, keep themselves fit and healthy, get physical strength and lead a happy life. The physicians cure diseases and give necessary treatment to the patients so that they can get better. In doing so, they are required to treat the patient kindly and tenderly without discriminating between the poor and the rich.

The Buddha preached the guidelines on the importance of nursing and looking after the patients about 2600 years ago. The Buddha told the monks that nursing monks, who were to watch over the sick monks must have five qualities based on loving kindness (*mettā*) and compassion. They are – (1) He must be one who can manage to get medicine; (2) He should know moderation in what is proper for the sick person; and he must put away what is not proper and bring what is proper; (3) He should attend the sick person through loving-kindness, but not through covet to the sick person’s belonging; (4) He should be one who does not detest feces, urine, spittle or vomit; (5) He must be able, from time to time, to show the sick person know the real condition, to advise, to arouse, to gladden him by means of religious discourses. Being endowed with these five qualities, one who is ill will become easy to tend.<sup>4</sup> So, these facts should be followed by those who are assigned to nurse the sick people.

The Buddha not only admonished the monks to nurse and look after one another if one monk feels ill but also condemned those who neglected the sick monk. The Buddha himself also paid special attention to unhealthy monks in the holy order. Here, how the Buddha had set an example of looking after a sick monk will be presented by taking out some information from some sources written and recorded in *Pāli* scriptures.

<sup>1</sup> Buddhaghosa, Venerable, *Khuddakapāṭha Aṭṭhakathā*, 115.

<sup>2</sup> *Tiṭṭhaka Pāli Myanmar Abhidhan*, Vol.2.6.

<sup>3</sup> *Tiṭṭhaka Pāli Myanmar Abhidhan*, Vol.10, 155.

<sup>4</sup> *Vinaya Mahāvagga Pāli*, 416-417.

One evening, the Buddha came out from a certain place where he did meditation alone and proceeded to the monastery where sick bhikkhu was placed to preach them about the way of contemplating on loathsomeness of the body.<sup>1</sup>

While the Buddha was residing in *Jetavana* monastery at *Sāvatti*, the Venerable *Mahākassapa* was stayed in *Pippali* Cave. One evening, the Buddha went to Venerable *Mahākassapa* and preached the sermon about the seven factors of enlightenment. Having listened to the Buddha's sermon delightfully, Venerable *Mahākassapa* became well again.<sup>2</sup>

Once *Bhikkhu Tissa* got skin disease, which was so severe that *Tissa* could not move his hand and legs. Since his body was full of blood and pus, companions and even disciples stayed away from him. The Buddha himself held him to have a bath. Then the Buddha comforted the patient by preaching sermon. On hearing the sermon, venerable *Tissa* attained the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* Arahantship.<sup>3</sup>

Once, a monk got dirty with faeces and urine all over the body as he suffered from severe diarrhea. As no one was willing to take care of him, the Buddha himself washed the patient while Venerable *Ānanda* scrubbed dirt from his body. After that, the patient was lifted up with his head held by the Buddha and his legs by Venerable *Ānanda* and placed on the bed.<sup>4</sup>

These incidents suggested that the Buddha visited the sick monks to comfort them and preach them. In addition, the Buddha himself offered his service to look after them. Moreover, the Buddha gave his disciples words of admonition that if they want to take care of the Buddha, they should take care of the sick monk. Thus, the Buddha set an example for his disciples by offering his service to take care of the patients.

As all the people in the world are inter-related one another in some ways or others, it is important that those with better status such as power or health should take care of those who are inferior to them in social status, wealth or health etc. So, the healthy people should help and look after the unhealthy ones. They should treat kindly to those whose health has broken down because the unhealthy people often feel depressed in addition to their physical weakness.

The well-trained physicians cure various diseases by giving the most suitable treatment to patients. They should develop both loving kindness for the patient to become well again and compassion to sympathise with the patient for his ailments. Thus, they will be able to use gentle and polite words in relation to the patient. Moreover, they should inform the guardian of the patient the true account of the patient's condition. They also need to consult with them to improve the patients' health. Or if the disease is too severe for the patient to recover and it becomes a fatal one, the patient is bound to die. Even though the patient has to lose his life, he will be best supported to be calm enough to face the death if physicians and nurses alike take care of him with loving kindness and compassion. For this reason, the Universities of Medicine seem to exhort the medical students to take care of the patients with loving kindness and compassion by using the *Pāli* phrase “*Upaṭṭhānaṃ Anukampā Dayā.*”

#### (vi) The Motto of the Universities of Dental Medicine

“*Arogyam Paramam Lābham*” is the motto of the Yangon University of Dental Medicine while “*Arogya Paramā Lābhā*” is that of Mandalay University of Dental Medicine. The meaning of this motto is that “Health is the greatest blessing”. The verse, which includes the words of this motto can be found in *PasenadiKosalavatthu*, *Sukhavagga*, *Dhammapada*

<sup>1</sup> *Anguttara Pāli*, Vol.II, 126.

<sup>2</sup> *Sāmyutta Pāli*, Vol.III, 70-71.

<sup>3</sup> *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol.I, 202-203.

<sup>4</sup> *Vinaya Mahāvagga Pāli*, 416-417.

*Pāli* as “*Ārogyaparamālābhā, santuṭṭhīparamamāndhanam; vissāsaparamāñāti, nibbānam - paramamsukham.*”<sup>1</sup> It means “Health is the greatest gift; contentment is the greatest wealth, A trusted friend is the best relative, *Nibbāna* is the greatest bliss.”

While residing at the *Jetavana* monastery, the Buddha uttered this verse, with reference to King *Pasenadī* of *Kosala*. King *PasenadīKosala* was a great glutton. He was in the habit of eating too much so that he would often feel drowsy while listening to the *Dhamma* preached by the *Buddha*. The Buddha advised him to make the habit of just enough food to keep him in good health. So his nephew, waiting on him at mealtime, would remind him of the Buddha's words of advice, and the king would hold back his hand from the last morsel he would otherwise have eaten. Gradually he began to feel satisfied with less food than usual, and enjoyed better health. He told that to the Buddha, who said “*Arojaparamā Lābha*”.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, this phrase can be found in the *Māgaṇḍiya Sutta, Majjhimaṇṇāsa*. But it is the same as the *Dhammapada* only in the first stanza. The rest of the verses and stories are different. This verse is as “*Ārogyaparamalābhā, nibbānamparamamsukham; aṭṭhaṅgikocamaggānam, khemamamatagāmini*”<sup>3</sup>, meaning, “Freedom from disease: the foremost good fortune. Unbinding: the foremost ease. The eightfold: the foremost of paths, going to the Deathless, Secure.”

This discourse was given by the Buddha at the market town of *Kammāsadhamma* in *Kuru* country in connection with *Māgaṇḍiya*, the wandering ascetic, who recanted the Buddha's criticism of his wrong beliefs. The Buddha exhorted him to practice control of the senses and sensual thoughts. He told the wandering ascetic the story of his renunciation, how he had left his luxurious palaces and how, on discovering the Truth, he found happiness in *Arahanttaphala* which was far superior to any of the sensual pleasures. *Māgaṇḍiya* gave up his wrong views to become the disciple of the Buddha.<sup>4</sup>

Likewise, *Jātaka Pāli* also gives an account in a certain verse as “*Ārogyamiccheparamañcalābham, sīlañcavuddhānumataṃsutañca; Dhammānuvattīcaalīnatāca, atthassa-dvārāpamukhāchaḷete*”<sup>5</sup>. This verse means “Keep yourself healthy and fit; be wholesome in every way; listen to those with more experience; learn from more with knowledge; live according to truth; act with sincerity, not just energy; these are the six worthy ways.”

In this *Jātaka*, when king *Brahmadatta* was ruling in Benares, the *Bodhisatta* was a rich man. He had a son who was intelligent, curious, and eager to learn. Even though he was seven years old, he was determined to find out what is really valuable. One day, the little boy said to his father, “what are the ways to gain the most valuable things in life?” His father said the above verse. The boy tried hard to practise these ways from then on.<sup>6</sup>

By studying above these stories, in the *Pasenadīkosala Vatthu* and *Assaṭṭhadvāra Jātaka*, health means only physical health or absence of physical illness. In the *Māgaṇḍiya Vatthu*, it means mental health or absence of moral defilements or craving for sensual pleasures. In fact “*Ārogya*” in this phrase means both mental and physical health.

It was said that people would be able to improve their lives when they were healthy both in mind and body. Unhealthy people, on the other hand, were unable to observe moral

<sup>1</sup> *Dhammapada Pāli*, verse- 204.

<sup>2</sup> *Dhammapad Atthakathā*. Vol.II, 173.

<sup>3</sup> *Majjhimaṇṇāsa Pāli*, 177

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Jātaka Pāli*, 84.

<sup>6</sup> *Buddhaghosa, Venerable, Jātakaṭṭhakathā*, Vol.I, 388.

precepts, seek knowledge, strive hard to achieve their aim, and do things diligently not because of their laziness but because of their bad health. Thus they could not be eligible for prosperity and success. Accordingly being free from diseases and illness is said to be the basis for prosperity. Undoubtedly, healthy people have enough physical strength and high intelligence to implement their plans successfully.

Thus, the Buddha had stated that “Being free from all kinds of diseases and ailments is the best blessings”. So, the Universities of Dental Medicines might have this *Pāli* phrase as their mottos to raise the public awareness on the importance of health.

### **Discussion**

As mentioned earlier, some information about the mottos of some universities in Myanmar have been presented in terms of their origin, meaning and the guidelines that they indicate etc. as far as the information is available. This information will be now reviewed and some of them will be elaborated to some extent.

The mottos in *Pāli* language are used by the above mentioned universities. Among them, those of Dawei University, Sittwe University, Bhamaw University, Institutes of Dental Medicine are directly taken from original *Pāli* verses while that of Yangon University is taken from *Lokanīti* treatise. On the other hand, the mottos of Universities of Medicine are the phrases composed of some suitable *Pāli* words so that they can convey the effective meaning to their functions. So, the mottos in *Pāli* language can be classified into two types: the directly borrowed type and the modified and derived type.

There are two indispensable sectors for every human being. These are health and education. Health is the most valuable and important thing in life. Only when people are healthy both physically and mentally, they will be able to do for progress in life. Such benefits and importance of good health are suggested in the motto “*Arogyam Paramam Lābham*” of the Universities of Dental Medicine.

Besides, all human beings have to live in a community or society, and so they need to be kind to one another. They also need to have sympathy for others. They should not only be helpful but also be considerate. Just as loving-kindness, compassion also plays a key role in peaceful living. To make a better world, the seniors need to treat the juniors kindly. Likewise, there should be kindness and understanding in the relations between the stronger ones and the weaker ones, between the rich and the poor, between the lucky ones and unlucky ones, between the healthy ones and the unhealthy ones etc. All people especially medical scientists and physicians should have compassion to patients. This important fact is mentioned in the motto “*Upaṭṭhānam Anukampā Dayā*” of the Universities of Medicine.

Not only good health but also wisdom is the most useful and powerful device in our daily life. It can change our lives good or bad. Through wisdom, we can overcome the vicissitudes of human life. It plays a crucial role in the sectors of education, economics, health, social-science and religious affairs. They all are based on wisdom. Wisdom is the resource of human development. If there are highly qualified human resources in a nation, it will develop rapidly. Therefore, the mottos of Yangon University, Dawei University, Bhamaw University and Sittwe University highlighted their important facts.

### **Conclusion**

Therefore, the mottos of universities are found that they can not only give guidelines for education, social relation, economic and health sector but also for supramundane world. They are, in fact, moral conducts, responsibilities and obligations for everyone in every world

of life. By following such guidelines instructed in these mottos, it is believed that people can benefit at present and in future life after death.

#### Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to Rectors Dr. Daw Khin Thidar and Dr. Aung Aung Min and Pro-Rector Dr. Daw Thwe Linn Ko for giving permission to carry out this paper. Then special thanks go to my colleagues, Department of Oriental Studies, Pyay University for their supports.

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