



The 3<sup>rd</sup> ATBU International Conference on  
**“Buddhist Education, Life Education”**

Organized by **Mahamakut Buddhist University**

In cooperation with  
**Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities**

At Mahamakut Buddhist University,  
Salaya, Nakhon Pathom

16-18 May BE 2556/CE 2013



## 1. Conference Details

### 1.1 Background

The 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2013 is the celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Anniversary of His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara, the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand and the former President and a founding member of Mahamakut Buddhist University. The whole Thai nation celebrates the occasion with various activities jubilantly throughout the year. As a part of ‘The Celebrations on the Auspicious Occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Anniversary of His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara, the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand, the Mahamakut Buddhist University (MBU), the first state-sponsored Buddhist university of Thailand, in cooperation with the Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities (ATBU), is honoring the occasion with organizing the two-day Buddhist international conference on **‘Buddhist Education, Life Education’** at Mahamakut Buddhist University Main Campus, Salaya, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand during 16-18 May BE 2556/CE 2013.

Ideally, education is the principal tool of human growth, essential for transforming the unlettered child into a mature and responsible adult. Yet everywhere today, both in the developed world and the developing world, we can see that formal education has become so routinized rather than an adventure in learning. The word “education” literally means “to bring forth,” which indicates that the true task of this process is to draw forth from the mind its innate potential for understanding. The urge to learn, to know and comprehend is a basic human trait, as intrinsic to our minds as hunger and thirst are to our bodies.

The industrial growth model of society demands that the educational system prepare students to become productive citizens in an economic order governed by the drive to maximize profits. Such a conception of the aim of education is quite different from that consistent with Buddhist principles. Practical efficiency certainly has its place in Buddhist education, for Buddhism propounds a middle path which recognizes that our loftiest spiritual aspirations depend on a healthy body and a materially secure society. But for Buddhism the practical side of education must be integrated; with other requirements designed to bring the potentialities of human nature to maturity in the way envisioned by the Buddha. Above all, an educational policy guided by Buddhist principles must aim to instil values as much as to impart

information. It must be directed, not merely toward developing social and commercial skills, but toward nurturing in the students the seeds of spiritual nobility.

In the world of education, it has recognised that to cope with the 21<sup>st</sup> century problems we need to have 21<sup>st</sup> century skills which comprise of core subjects (3Rs and 21<sup>st</sup> century themes); learning and innovation skills (4Cs: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity; information, media and technology skills; life and career skills.

Surprisingly, the heart of Buddhist teaching is the education which can be summarized under Buddhist 3Rs or threefold education viz. *Sīla* (Regulating/Relationship), *Samādhi* (Reflecting), and *Paññā* (Reasoning). This Buddhist education teaches us how to manoeuvre our lives to be peaceful, prosper and happy in addition to the highly competitive knowledge for today's economic driven society with constructive creativity and social relationship. In other words, it fully answers what the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills looking for.

The *paññā* or wisdom is the crown and pinnacle of the entire system of Buddhist education, and all the preliminary steps in a Buddhist educational system should be geared toward the flowering of this supreme virtue. It is with this step that education reaches completion, that it becomes illumination in the truest and deepest sense, as exclaimed by the Buddha on the night of his Awakening: "There arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and light."

For the Celebrations on the Auspicious Occasion of the Celebration of the 100th Birthday Anniversary of His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara, the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 and the 3rd ATBU International Conference, MBU deemed that an international conference on 'Buddhist Education, Life Education' should be organized in order to discuss the problems that Theravāda Buddhist colleges and universities have been facing in providing Buddhist education and the solutions to its successful life education.

Under the main theme of the '**Buddhist Education, Life Education**' there are four workshops for new scholars and researchers to work together to materialize the purpose of the conference:

- (1) Buddhism and Life Education,
- (2) Making Standard Buddhist Curriculum
- (3) ASEAN Community and Buddhism and
- (4) Pali-Tipitaka Studies (Pali medium)

By 2015, all ten nations within the ASEAN are integrating to be one community in various fields under the blueprint of three pillars, namely the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). One of the ASEAN identities is Theravada Buddhism. Accordingly, the ATBU is directly deals with ASEAN issue on educating Theravada Buddhism in post-graduate levels together with other four nations, namely Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is hoped that this conference is the first step to create ASEAN+4 Buddhist Curriculum Sourcebook. This will not only answer the ASEAN policy but take another step of practicality to bring ASEAN+4 working in collaboration for Buddhist education to go with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

## 2. Objectives

1. As a tribute to the Celebrations of the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Anniversary of His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara, the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand 3 October 2013.
2. To be venue for the 3rd ATBU International Conference 2013.

3. To create Open Buddhist Syllabi to impart in ATBU member institutions.
4. To promote research in the fields of Buddhist Education by fellows and associate fellows of MBU and the ATBU.
5. To implement the policies of MBU and the ATBU regarding to the exchange of knowledge and information with learned institutions.
6. To broaden academic network of MBU and the ATBU to many different countries so as to gain worldwide recognition.
7. To exchange ideas and experiences among fellows of both within and outside members of ATBU.

### **3. Responsible Organisation**

Mahamakut Buddhist University in co-operation with the Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities (ATBU)

### **4. Participants**

Lecturers, academics, members of ATBU, special guests, students both from Thailand and abroad numbering 300 people in total.

### **5. Expected Result**

The conference should lead to creation of open curricula on Buddhism to share and impart among ATBU member institutions. This also prepares ASEAN community to reach the same goal of ASEAN as 'One Vision, One Identity, One Community.' This will develop Buddhist academic network in the field of teaching Buddhism among ASEAN and neighbouring countries.

### **3. Venue**

The conference will be held in the Sujib Punnyanubhap Conference Hall located in the middle of the Mahamakut Buddhist University Main Campus, Salaya, Nakhon Pathom. It is located 30 minutes' drive from downtown Bangkok. The Mahamakut Buddhist University Main Campus map, which can be downloaded from [www.atbu.mbu.ac.th](http://www.atbu.mbu.ac.th)