

The WBU Report (Nov 2021-May 2022)

For the 97th WFB EXCO Meeting

24 May 2022

Year 2021: A year still plagued by the COVID-19

Our time from 96th to 97th Exco Meeting we are still under the spell of the heinous Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, whatever happens life must go on. Same with the World Buddhist University. Aside discomfort created by the pandemic, work has never stopped. This is a part of the task the WBU has served the world in the name of WBU and the WFB.

The 96th WFB Exco meeting was held on 28 October 2021, I was not able to participate in person because I was busy putting up a national exhibition honouring the centennial celebration of the death of HRH Somdet Phra Mahasamanachao Krom Phraya Vajiranyanavarorasa, a royal prince-patriarch who was recognized by the UNESCO as the World Eminent Person of 2021. The inauguration of the exhibition was scheduled to be presided over by Their Majesties King and Queen of Thailand.

On 30 October 2021, the WBU Rector was solely responsible for the exhibition of HRH Prince-Patriarch Vajiranyanavarorasa, the UNESCO Eminent Personality of the World 2021. Their Majesties King and Queen presided over the inauguration of the exhibition at Wat Bovoranives Vihara, the royal adobe of the late prince-patriarch.

Through the honorary Rector of the WBU, their Majesties together with the Prime Minister and many other high-ranking dignitaries were happy and learned great contribution the late prince-patriarch had left his legacies in the field of development of Buddhism and modern education system in Thailand.

From the exhibition, the world has learned that the late HRH prince-patriarch, a century ago, played very significant role in reviving modern Buddhism into the world. Late HRH prince-patriarch was a close advisor to Anagarika Dharmapala in reviving Buddhism in India. He was assisting closely with the Pali Text Society in published world first English Pali Canon. He played a key role in distribution of the Buddha's relics which the British excavated at Piprahawa, India to the world through King Rama V of Thailand.

On 8 November 2021, Her Excellency Ms. Treenuch Thienthong, Minister of Education of Thailand visited the WBU Rector to get advise on Thailand policies about education as well as organizing a future World Sufficiency Summit at the UN headquarters in New York City, USA in 5 years' time.

On 20 November 2021, the Won Buddhism invited the WBU honorary rector to be a speaker for the Interfaith Coalition Conference for Global Citizens 2021 under the main theme of 'The Road to New Normal in Post COVID-19 Era: Collective Intelligence for Global Civil Society.' The WBU Rector was invited as a discussant at the Opening Session on Buddhist-Christian Dialogue on the topic of 'After COVID-19: What Should Be the Role of Religion for Global Civil Society?' The conference was in a virtual format organized by the Won Buddhism in Korea.

On 27 November 2021, the Buddhist Union of Singapore in conjunction with the WFB organized an International Buddhist Forum on the main theme of 'Wisdom of the Buddha: The Path to Happiness'. The WBU Rector was a guest speaker on the topic of 'Practising Buddhism in the 21st Century'. The forum was a virtual format.

On 14 December 2021, the Supreme Sangha Council of Thailand and the Royal Thai Government set up a working committee of Translating Pali Tipitaka into English Project. The WBU rector is one of the translating committees. The first committee meeting was held at Wat Prayuravangsavas.

From December 2021, the WBU rector was requested by the Ministry of Justice to operate one-year regular therapy course for nationwide inmates every fortnight via virtual medium.

Year 2022: A year of recovery from the COVID-19

Starting from 18 January 2022 to 9 February 2022, the WBU ran 13 episodes of Clubhouse discussions from the renown scholars of Thailand to brainstorm wisdom on Sustainable Agronomy, a Buddhist version of the SDGs. The Clubhouse runs in every night from 7:30 – 9.00 PM with different topics.

Episode 1: Between Human & Well-being which one is important to us?

Episode 2: Human and Nature: We all are part and partial of each other

Episode 3: Tomorrow's Environment: Will we survive or die?

Episode 4: Human and Quality of Life: A trembling dream

Episode 5: Economy or Enemy: Helper or Hamper of life

Episode 6: Right for Sale: Value of Right and Responsiveness

Episode 7: Why do we need Sustainable Development?

Episode 8: Planet Redefine: Adapt before Disruption

Episode 9: Possessing Redefine: Live to possess or Possess to live

Episode 10: Living Redefine: Good life in community to Society with good life

Episode 11: Circulation Redefine: Water flows no black out

Episode 12: Growing Redefine: Growing Options

Episode 13: Harmony Redefine: Victory of Reconciliation

On 27 January 2022, the WBU together with 9 ministries and several educational institutions organized a virtual one-day conference on Sustainable Agronomy. The conference was inaugurated with the opening remark from Her Excellency Ms. Gita Sabharwal, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Thailand. The conference was designed with several keynotes and five seminar workshops. The goal of the conference was to find localized version of the SDGs in order to meet the global goals with the foundation of Buddhist understanding and practice. The conference was a huge success as many civil servants from 9 ministries and institutions were actively engaged during the conference. This is a unique WBU model of working in synergy with government agencies and institutions as a main task of the WBU.

On 12 February 2022, the WBU honorary rector was invited by the Criminal Court of Thailand to coach their officials on 'Dhamma at Work.' This is an example of the WBU serving the wider society not limited within the religious groups.

On 13 February 2022, Her Excellency Ms. Gita Sabharwal, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Thailand paid a courtesy visit to the WBU honorary rector to discuss on further cooperation between the WBU and the UN organization.

On 9 March 2022, Indian movie superstar Gagan Malik entered the monkhood in Thailand. Gagan Malik played the role of Prince Siddhartha in the movie Sri Siddhartha Gautama in 2013, which depicted the life of the Lord Buddha. During his time as a monk, Ven. Asoko (Gagan Malik) took one day intensive course on Buddhism with the WBU honorary rector.

On 16 March 2022, His Excellency Adj. Prof. Dr. Anek Laothamatas, Minister of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI) invited the WBU honorary rector to stage with His Excellency in lecturing university professors of Thailand on the Ministerial conference on 'Noble Dhamma Noble Wisdom: Building Capacity for Future Higher Education'. The WBU honorary rector was invited to lecture on the topic of the 'Wisdom of thinking and means of living in the world of future.' Another example of rendering academic service to policy making of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI).

On 8 April 2022, International Buddhist Confederation in India invited the WBU honorary rector to deliver a Dhamma talk for their worldwide members on 'Dhamma, Peace and Sustainable Development.' This is another example of the WBU working in synergy with other international Buddhist organizations worldwide.

On 12 April 2022, Srithanya Hospital, the largest psychiatric hospital of Thailand requested the WBU honorary rector to deliver a counselling therapeutic talk to the staff a deceitnd patients. Another academic service of the WBU in a special place and to special people.

On 17 April 2022, the WBU honorary rector rendered 2 days academic course service by lecturing to 150 Thai army cadets who were ordained as a monk for period of 3 weeks.

On 28 April 2022, the WBU honorary rector was selected to be one of the scholars to play a key role in initiating a dialogue with the advisor group to the President Putin to find a way out from the Russia-Ukraine War. The topic of discussion was "Future world configuration: new continental and national structures."

On 13 May 2022, C asean organization invited the WBU honorary rector to deliver a speech at the C asean Forum Talk. The main theme was 'Reopen, Recovery, Resilience.' The WBU honorary rector delivered a superb talk on 'Resilience: Building a resilience mental city'

On 16 May 2022, the International Buddhist Confederation together with the government of India organized Vaisakha Buddha Purnima Diwas. The WBU honorary rector delivered organizational speech for the event.

On 17 May 2022, The WBU honorary rector together with Mr Phallop Thaiaree had a meeting with the governor of Chiangrai province to discuss about the possibility in organizing the WFB 30th Conference in Chiangrai province of Thailand.

On 19 May 2022, The WBU honorary rector was invited to be a guest speaker for the International Vesak Day celebration organized by Indian Cultural Council Relations, Embassy of India in Bangkok. The topic was Dharmic Development: Sustainable Development. The event was inaugurated by the Indian ambassador to Thailand.

On 19 May 2022, the Ministry of Justice requested as a lecturer for their course on Judicial Ethics for 91 judges nationwide.