CHAPTER VI
Bhikshus in U.P. during 20th century.

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(I) ADMISSION INTO THE SANGHA AND ITS GOVERNMENT:

The ceremony of initiation into the Sangha is simple and plain. Whenever a new person, desires to join the order, he has to shave his head, put on a yellow robe and before the chairman of the local Sangha or institutions take the following oaths of fidelity to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

- I take refuse in the Buddha.
- I take refuse in the Dharma.
- I take refuse in the Sangha.

Next he has to repeat the ten commandments of Buddha. They are abstinence from (i) Killing; (ii) Stealing; (iii) Adultery; (iv) Speaking falsehood; (v) Drinking intoxicating liquor; (vi) Afternoon meals; (vii) Witnessing dances, music, etc; (viii) The use of garlands, scents, unguents, etc; (ix) The use of high beds, and (x) The acceptance of gold and silver. Then he has to attach himself to a monk who would give him certain preliminary training after which he has to present him to an assembly of monks and make a formal proposal for admitting him to the Sangha. When the permission is given, he has to be ordained as a monk. Henceforth, he is required to observe the internal discipline of the Sangha and abide by its rules for leading in a life of poverty, chastity, devotion, austerity, simplicity and celibacy.

(II) CONSTITUTION OF THE SANGHA IN 20TH CENTURY:

Buddha did not nominate a disciple as his successor after his death. He enjoined that the monks, living within a boundary, were to elect their chief who would be the Sanghatthera or Sanghapurinayaka. In every Sangha, office bearers were elected to carry on various functions of the Sangha, such as distribution of food and dress, provision of beds, additions and alterations to a monastery or building a new monastery. The Sangha was governed on absolutely democratic lines and was empowered to enforce discipline among its members. It had also the power to punish the erring members. Whenever a meeting of the Sangha was held, the members or monks took their seats according to their seniority.
No assembly was valid unless at least ten monks were present, though in border countries the quorum could in exceptional cases be reduced to five. Novices and women were not entitled to vote or to constitute the quorum. Every question was decided by those present, and the questions to be decided in the meeting of Sangha had to be formally presented. There were the systems of formal moving of resolutions (Jnapti), ballot voting by means of wooden sticks (salaka) and in case of a divided opinion, the question was referred to the arbitration by a small sub-committee.¹

During 20th century, the chief of the Sangha is not elected in Uttar Pradesh generally. Office bearers are appointed by the chief. The Sangha today is not governed by on absolutely democratic lines and is not powerful enough to enforce its will upon its members. It can oust the members in practice but cannot disrobe a monk. Whenever a meeting is organised, monks take their seats according to their seniority.

No assembly is held regularly to maintain discipline except morning and evening prayers. No quorum is required, although the chairperson of the meeting who is normally the head of the centre also tries to incorporate the advices of its members. Every question is decided by the chairperson of the meeting. There is an agenda of the meeting but the members often try to draw attention towards their personal views. No ballot voting or arbitration by sub committee is in practice.

The chief can send his message or command regarding a meeting if he is personally absent. The ultimate authority is vested in the hands of the chairperson of the Sangha, it does not matter whether he is present or absent in a meeting. Before and after the transaction of usual business in a meeting, some religious discourses are arranged for the benefit of the mankind.

(III) LIFE OF THE MONKS:

The monks live in a Buddha vihar generally but they also reside in the institutes having concern with Buddhism. Buddha vihara is the hub of religious life and discipline of the monks. Most of the Buddha Viharas house only one or two monks.

¹ Life and Culture in Ancient India, Page 180, B.N. Lunia
Buddha Viharas of Lucknow, Sarnath, Sravasti and Kusinagar provide dwelling rooms, service-hall or assembly-hall, store houses, bathrooms, etc. The Sangha is the owner of the Buddha Vihara.

The monks are allowed three garments (Chivara) viz; an upper robe (the Uttarasana) which is wrapped round the legs from the loins to the ankles with its ends drawn, at the body, from the right hip, over the left shoulder and allowed to fall down on the back; the undergarment (the Antarvasana) wrapped round the loins, fastened by an end of the cloth being tucked in thighs or by a girdle. It trenches below the knees; the Sanghati is the waist-cloth wrapped round the waist and the back and tied with a girdle. These garments are yellow for food begging is no more in existence but the monks are allowed to accept invitations to meals. Monks take dinner also.

Offerings are sent to monastery by the faithful and ardent Buddhists. During the rains the monks do not take up a fixed abode in a Buddha Vihara. They work throughout the year. No nun is seen in U.P. of Indian origin. Ceylonese nuns seem in Ceylonese monasteries.

The property donated to the Sangha is held in common and the possession of private property, though forbidden is in practice. The monks are forbidden of the use of garlands, scents and other articles of personal decoration. They are not to indulge in liquor, flesh-food, dancing, singing or music; but a few monks take flesh food. The monks, Indian and foreigner practice morality strictly.

(IV) ABSENCE OF CO-ORDINATING AUTHORITY:

The grave defect in the Sangha is the absence of the Central co-ordinating authority. There is no central representative body of all scattered Sanghas. Though Mahabodhi Society of India has done extra ordinary efforts in this regard.

(V) THE USE OF PALI LANGUAGE:

The use of Hindi has increased but the use of Pali language is a hindrance to the spread of Buddhism, as it is unintelligible to the people at large.¹

¹. Interview with Bhadant G.Pragnanand on 06.05.95 at Risaldar Park, Lucknow.
(VI) MONKS:

Sangha is one of the three pillars on which Buddhism stands. When the revival movement began in the last decade of the 19th century, there was neither any monk nor any Vihara in India.

The first Hindu to become a Buddhist monk in modern times was Mahavira. He became a Bhikshu in 1890, returned to India via Burma and started living at Kusinagar. The first monk to be ordained in India was Bodhananda. As at that time there was no consecrated Sima in India for the ordination of monks, Ven. Bodhananda was ordained in the Ganges near Calcutta. According to the Vinaya, a Bhikshu can be ordained on water in the absence of a consecrated land Sima. It is a matter of pride that now Sarnath and Kusinagar are among the consecrated Simas in U.P.¹

At present there are so many monks in the state. The introduction of some of the prominent figures among the monks is given below.

1. ABHAYASHEEL BHANTE:
   Abhayasheel Bhante is associated with Buddha Vihar Pareecha, Jhansi.²

2. ALOK DEEP BHANTE:
   He is associated with Gautam Buddha School, Agra Road, Mainpuri.³

3. AMITANAND BHANTE:
   Bhante Amitananda’s original name was Ayodhya Prasad. He is spreading the message of Buddhism sincerely. He is associated with Sitapur.⁴

4. ANAND DEV BHANTE:
   He is associated with Buddha Vihara Orai, Jalaun.⁵

5. ANAND METYA VEN. B:
   He is associated with Sarnath.⁶

¹. Buddhism in Modern India, Page 66 by D.C. Ahir, 1972.
². Interview with Bhante Abhayasheel on 05.02.94 at Jhansi.
³. Interview with Alok Deep Bhante on 10.03.95 at Mainpuri.
⁴. Interview with Amitananda Bhante on 04.04.95.
⁵. Interview with Bhante Anand at Jalaun on 06.06.97.
⁶. Interview with Bhante Anand Metya 06.03.90 at Sarnath Varansi.

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Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan

*With Gratitude from A. Lal.*
6. ANAND KAUSALYAYAN:

He was born at village Sohana near Chandigarh in a Punjabi family in 1905 on 5th January. His father’s name was Shri Ram Saran Das. He was named as Harnam Das.\(^1\) He met Rahul Sankritiyayan in 1926. He visited Buddhist places on the advice of Rahulji. He visited Shri Lanka and learnt Pali language. On 10th February he was ordained by Ven L. Dhamanand the Principal of Vidyalankar Parivena Mahavidyalaya and he was named as "Ananda Kausalyayan". He came to Allahabad in 1936 after two years stay at Sri Lanka.

He edited the Dharmaduta Journal being published by Mahabodhi Society of India. While staying at Sarnath he translated Jatak stories (1st Part) in Hindi in 1941.\(^2\)

He was the Patron of Akhil Bhartiya Bhikshu Sangh. He participated in the two days conference of Akhil Bhartiya Bhikshu Sangh in 1980. He attained Nirvana in 1988, on 22nd June at the age of 83.\(^3\) He has written pioneer and revolutionary works in modern Buddhist literature. His works include:-

(i) Buddha Vachan
(ii) Bhikshu ke Pattar
(iii) Sanyojana
(iv) Mahavansa (Translation)
(v) Moggallana Pali Veyakarana
(vi) Baudh Dharma (Ek Budhivadi Addhyayan)
(vii) Kranti Ke Agradut - Bhagvan Buddha
(viii) Anatmavada
(ix) Shri Lanka.

7. ARYA DEV D. BHIKKHU:

Bhikkhu D. Arya Dev was one of the five monks (D. Arya Dev, Sheel Bhadra, Gyan Prabhakar, Mahanam, Vimal) who earlier belonged to Kabir Panth. All these five monks hailed from Western Uttar Pradesh. He was born at Tilsadiya village, Kayamganj, district Farrukhabad. He was ordained in 1961. His upsampada took place on 5\(^{th}\) August 1964. He founded a Buddha Vihar near Tilsadia village, Farrukhabad. He remained associated with Prabuddha Ambedkar cultural institute.

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2. Ibid Page 54.
3. Ibid Page 53.
Swami Bodhanand

* With gratitude from Dr. A. Lal.
8. ASHOK RATNA:
He is associated with the spread of Buddhism in Bareilly district. He sings Buddhist and Ambedkarite songs in a melodious voice.¹

9. BHANTE ASHWA GHOSH:
He was born on 17th June in 1941 at Nagla Bhoot P.O. Sarsai Helu, Etawah. His original name was Ramesh Chandra. In 1972, he was ordained by D.R. Dev Deekshacharya. As a Buddhist he inspired people to construct a Buddha Vihar at village Rajmau of Etawah in 1983.²

10. ASHWAKIRTI BHANTE:
He lives in Kanpur City at Buddha Vihar, Simra.³

11. ASSAJI THERA VEN. M:
He is associated with Nowgadh.⁴

12. ATTADASSI VEN. BHANTE:
He is associated with Sarnath.

13. BODHANANDA MAHA THERA, LUCKNOW:
Mahasthavir Bodhanand was born at Chunar⁵ in a Bengali Brahmin Family. When he was a minor, his parents had died. After years of study, meditation and yoga practices in quest of an independent field to work in, Swami Bodhananda went to Lucknow which was to become the place of his permanent residence until death removed him from this world. Making Lucknow his headquarters, Swami Bodhanand spread his activities to the neighbouring villages where he mixed with the common people freely propagating against the evils caste system had brought upon the Society. As the time passed on he was inclined more and more towards the Buddha and his benign teachings.

Therefore it was natural for him to rally them round and goad these classes to action for regaining their lost rights by education and proper organisation.

¹ Interview with Bhante Ashwaghosh on 06.04.97 at Etawah.
² Interview with Bhante Ashwakirti on 05.04.97 at Kanpur.
³ Interview with Bhante Pragyananda on 05.04.97 at Kanpur.
⁴ Ibid.
⁵ Bhadnat Bodhannada, Page 22. Prof A. Lal.
The work he had taken upon his shoulders was so vast that it was not to be achieved during his lifetime. While he was still in the midst of this struggle, worn out by age, he had to yield to the natural forces that rendered him week and inactive. Old age and failing health came in as his enemies and at the ripe old age of 78 he fell a prey to the deadly disease of cancer and died at Calcutta on 11th May 1952. Venerable Bodhananda appointed Bhante Prayyanand as his successor.¹

He also impressed Rahul Sankrityayan and Dr. Ambedakar. In the fulfillment of his desire he had therefore, to go all the way from Lucknow to Calcutta where Kripasaran Mahasthavir, and the founder of the Dharmankur Vihar and Bengal Buddhist Association was then residing. It was from him that Swami Bodhananda received his ordination in 1914. Having got his desire fulfilled, Ven’ble Bodhananda returned to Lucknow to start his ambitious programme. The rest of his life was spent in the pursuit of the programme of work which included social as well as religious activities. His path was not a very smooth one always. There was opposition from some quarters, but undaunted he applied all his time and energy to the cause which he so dearly upheld. He almost lost himself when he thought of the injustice done to the so called backward and depressed classes who were denied human rights.²

**BUDDHAMITRA BHANTE (KUSHINAGAR):**
He is associated with Japanese Temple Kushinagar, District Kusinagar.³

**BUDDHA MITRA BHANTE:**
He is associated with Ratan Punj Buddha Vihar, Mirja Nagla, Firozabad.⁴

**BUDDHA RATAN BHANTE:**
He is associated with Buddha Vihar Harsha Nagar, Hardoi.⁵

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1. Ibid, Page 40.
2. Ibid, Page 41.
3. Interview with Buddhamitra Bhante at Kusinagar on 08.04.95.
4. Interview with Buddha Mitra Bhante on 05.04.95 at Firozabad.
5. Interview with Buddha Ratan Bhante on 03.04.95 at Hardoi.
Ven. Chandramani with Dr. Ambedkar & his wife.

*With gratitude from Smarika Sandesh by Mohar Singh, MBD.*
BUDDHA SHARAN STHAVIR, BHANTE:
He inspired people to erect Buddha Vihar at Pipal Mandi in Firozabad and Dr. Ambedkar Baudhia Vihar at Bhimnagar, Firozabad. He was also instrumental in the establishment of Panch Sheel Montessori School at Mohalla Tapa Kalan, Firozabad. He also inspired people to install Dr. Ambedkar statues at Humarpur, Bhim Nagar and Purushottam Nagar in Firozabad.¹

CHANDRAMANI MAHATHERA VEN. BHANTE U:
He presided over the programme of the conversion of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar into Buddhism. He took over the Dharmashala work at Kusinagara after the death of Bhante Mahavira.²

CHANDRARATANA NAYAKATHERA, SRAVASTI:
He is the President of Navajetavana Mahavihara and Sri Lanka Rameya. He is a publisher and social worker.³

CHANDRARATANA BHANTE:
He is associated with the Buddha Viharas of Patti Bahadur and Puwayan Road Cantt, Shahjahanpur.⁴

CHETAN PRAKASII BAUDDHA, REV. BHANTE:
He has founded International Buddha Education Institute at Hapur, Distt. Ghaziabad in 1978. He is also one of the founders of International Buddha Child Welfare Centre, Dehradun.

DEEPAKAR BHANTE:
He has founded Buddha Vihara at Juhi, Kanpur.⁵

BHANTE DEEPAKAR:
He is associated with Dela Pir Buddha Vihara, Bareilly.⁶

DEVANANDA BHANTE:
He has founded the Buddha Vihara of Marak Pura village in District Jalaun.⁷

¹ Interview with Buddha Sharan Sthayir on 01.04.95 at Firozabad.
² Interview with Chandraratana Nayakathera on 07.03.95 at Srawasti, Bahraich.
³ Interview with Chandra Ratana Bhante on 12.03.95 at Shahjahanpur.
⁴ Interview with Bhante Deepankar (Kanpur) on 06.04.95 at Kanpur.
⁵ Interview with Bhante Deepankar on 06.04.95 at Kanpur.
⁶ Interview with Bhante Devananda at Lalaun on 16.03.95.
Ven. Dr. Uruwela Dhammaratana Thero

*With gratitude from Maha Bodhi Journal.*
DEVANAND THERA VEN. K:
He is associated with Sarnath.¹

DHARMADARSHAN BHANTE:
He has established Buddha Viharas at Chajhau, Seramau and Paparoya. He established the statues of Lord Buddha and Dr. Ambedkar at Village Kuapur of Puwayan sub division. He has also established a school at Mahaba Phatak, Shahjahanpur.²

DHAMA DHARO BHANTE:
He is associated with Karuna Buddha Vihara, Aligarh.³

DHAMMA DEEP BHANTE:
He is associated with Buddha Vihara, Laxminagar, Mathura.⁴

DHAMMA KIRTI BHANTE:
He is associated with Buddha Vihara City Station Khurja Bulandshahr.⁵

DHAMMMA LOKO BHANTE:
He is associated with Buddha Vihara Sankissa, Farrukhabad.⁶

DHAMANKUR BHANTE:
He is associated with Aligarh.⁷

DHAMMARATNA THERO DR. URUWELA 1983-1984:
He became a novice (samanera) in Foster Buddhist Seminary at Kandy in 1928. After the passing away of Ven. Dharmapala special classes were organised by him for some time. For ten years, he edited Sarnath. After the passing away of Shri Devpriya Valisinghe, Ven. U. Dhammaratana became the editor of the Maha Bodhi Journal.⁸

¹ Interview with Devananda Ven. K. at Sarnath on 04.01.94.
² Interview with Dharmadarshana Bhante at Shajahanpur on 06.01.94.
³ Interview with Bhante Dhammadharo on 08.01.94 at Aligarh.
⁴ Interview with Bhante Dhammadeep Bhante on 10.01.94 at Mathura.
⁵ Interview with Bhante Dharma Kirti on 12.01.94 at Bulandshar.
⁶ Interview with Bhante Dharma Loko on 14.01.94 at Farrukhabad.
⁷ Interview with Bhante Dhammankur on 08.01.94 at Aligarh.
DHAMMA RATAN BHANTE:

He is one of the founders of Dr. Ambedkar School at Laxminagar and Buddha Vihara, Jaitpur, Mathura. He wrote a book viz; Manav Manav Sab Ek Saman.¹

DHAMMA SAGAR:

He is associated with Bhartiya Baudhika Mahavihara, Balrampur Road, Sravasti Bahraich.²

DHAMMA SHEEL BHANTE:

He is associated with Dr. Ambedkar Buddha Vihara, Opp. Railway Station, Ganj Dundwara, Etah.³

DHAMMA SHEEL BHANTE (JALAUN):

He has founded the Buddha Viharas of Kukar Gaon, Konch and Sainjapura in District Jalaun at Bahraich.

DHAMMA VIVECHAN:

He is working at Sravasti Bahraich.⁵

DHARMANAND, REV., BHANTE:

He founded Dr. Ambedkar Park, Anand Nagar, Maharajganj.⁶

DHARMAPAL VENERABLE ANGARIKA:

With the arrival of Anagarika Dharmapala, the systematic revival of Buddhism in India began in 1891. He was a Sinhala Buddhist. He was shocked to see the condition of most sacred shrines in India. The completion of the Mulgandha Kuti Vihara was the crowning and most glorious achievement of Anagarika Dharmapala. He decided to make Sarnath a living centre of Buddhist learning and culture. For this purpose, he established a library also to which Sheo Narain, a pioneer Buddhist of Punjab, transferred all books from his personal library. Anagarika Dharmapala, who had assumed the name of Sri Devamitta Dharmapala on entering the Sangha in 1931, passed away in 1933.⁷

¹. Interview with Dhamma Ratan Bhante on 10.01.94 at Mathura.
². Interview with Dhamma Sagar on 07.03.95 at Sravasti, Bahraich.
³. Interview with Dhamma Sheel Bhante on 15.01.94 at Etah.
⁴. Interview with Dhamma Sheel Bhante on 20.01.94 at Jalaun.
⁵. Interview with Dhamma Vivechan on 07.03.95 at Sravasti Bahraich.
⁶. Interview with Dharmanada Bhante on 25.01.94 at Maharajganj.
DHARMA KIRTI VEN BHANTE:
He is associated with Siddharthanagar.¹

DHARMARAKSHITA, BHIKKU DR.:
He wrote many books on Buddhism in Hindi viz;
1. Visuddhimagga (Translation) Parts I & II
2. Acharya Buddhaghosh
3. Sarnath Ka Itihas
4. Baudh Yogi ke Pattar
5. Baudhchhariya Viddhi
6. Chariya Pittak
7. Baudh Bibhutiyan
8. Tathagat Hirdya
9. Baudh Dharma ke Mul Siddhant
10. Pali Veyakarna
11. Jati Bhed aur Buddha
12. Baudh Sanskar Padhiti
13. Pali Path Malô
14. Kushinagar Ka Itihas
15. Tathagat Ka Pratham Updesh
16. Telkatah Gatha
17. Mahavansa
18. Buddha Kalin Bharat Ka Bhaugolok Parichay
19. Sarnath Digdarshan
20. Pali Sahitya Ka Itihas
21. Baudh Dharma Darshan tatha Sahitya
22. Sarnath – Varanasi
23. Bhikshu Pratimoksha
24. Sramner Vinaya
25. Baudh Dharma ke updesh
26. Kalama Gantastra Ka Kesaputra²
27. Dharma Sagar, Rev. Bhante

DHARMA SAGAR REV. BHIKSHU:
He has founded many institutions of Buddhism including Chandramani Buddha Vihara Kausaravan and Dr. Ambedkar Buddha Vihara, Sadva, Maharajganj.³

¹. Interview with Dharmakirti on 10.01.90 at Siddharthanagar.
³. Interview with Bhante Dharma Sagar on 07.03.95 at Maharajganj.
GUNANAND BHANTE:

He is associated with the Buddha Vihara of Sankissa Farukhabad.¹

GUNARATNA NAYAKA THERO, DR. POTUWILA:

Venerable Potuwila Gunaratna Nayaka Thero came to India in 1954 as a student of linguistic studies in Benaras Hindu University. He did research in linguistics and obtained a Ph.D. Degree which gave him the opportunity as a lecturer in Sinhalese. Concurrently he was appointed the Joint Secretary of the Maha Bodhi Society of India and was assigned to the Sarnath and its affiliated institution for nearly ten years.

GYAN DEEP, BHIKSHU:

He has founded Buddha Vihara, Compareganj, Maharajganj.²

GYANESHWAR BHANTE:

He was born at Jee Benjai Mivya, Anpad Akyab, Arakanta province of Myanmar. He came to India 1963. He is the Secretary of Kusinagar Bhikku Sangha, and Sangha Mahanayaka of Akhil Bhartiya Bhikshu Mahasangha. He has established Chantaji Jedi Chaitya in Myanmar Temple complex. He is a monk of world fame working in U.P.³

GYAN JAGAT:

In Modi Puram conference he participated. He appealed for unity of Hindu and Buddhist religion.⁴

GYAN JYOTI BHANTE:

He is associated with Buddha Vihara Rajghat, near Railway Station Bulandshahr.⁵

GYAN PRABHAKAR, BHANTE:

He became a shramner in 1961 and his upsampada was held in 1964. Mahasthavira D Sasanisiri was his Deeksha guru and his upaddhyaya was Bhikkhu M. Sangharatan. Dr. Dharmrakshita was his Acharya. He was associated with Purvodaya Buddha Vihar, Chakki Pat Agra.⁶

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¹ Interview with Gunanand Bhante on 29.01.94 at Farukhabad.
² Interview with Bhante Gyan Deep on 07.03.95 at Maharajganj.
³ Interview with Gyaneshwar Bhante on 04.02.94 at Kusinagar.
⁴ Dainik Jagaran 22nd Nov. 97 Meerut edition.
⁵ Interview with Bhante Gyan Jyoti on 12.01.94 at Bulandshahr.
⁶ Interview with Shri. K.S. Bharti at Buddha Vihar Chakki Pat Agra on 08.03.94.
GYAN RATAN BHANTE (SANKISSA):
He is associated with Buddha Vihara Sankissa, Farrukhabad.¹

GYAN RATAN, BHANTE:

GYAN SAGAR REV. BHIKSHU:
He is associated with Buddha Vihar, Brijamanganj, Maharajganj.³

GYAN SATAK, BHANTE:
He is associated with Baudhda Samajotthan Mahasabha U.P. He is associated with Etawah also.⁴

JAGDISH KASHYAP BHADANT:
He was Born at Ranchi in 1908. His childhood name was Jagdish Narain. He visited Sri Lanka in 1934 and studied Pali. He was ordained in 1934. On the advice of Rahulji and Anand Kausalalayan. Now he was named as Jagdish Kashyap. He taught at Sarnath in high School in Kashi Vishwavidyalaya. He wrote Pali Grammer. He also wrote “Buddhism for Everybody” and “Paschayya Tarkashastra”. He translated Digha Nikaya, Samyutta Nikaya, Udana Sutta and “Milinda Prashna”. He edited eleven Books of Khuddak Nikaya in association with Rahulji and Bhadant Anand Kausalayafana.⁵

KANCHAN BODHI BHADANT:
Bhadant Kanchan Bodhi is associated with Buddha Vihar Shahpur Qutab, p.o. Aligarh. He became monk in 1972. He established Bodhisattva mission of India (Head Quarter Aligarh). He also founded Shantrakshak Buddha Vihar of Shahpur Qutub.⁶

¹. Interview with Bhante Gyan Ratan at Sankissa on 29.01.94.
². Interview with Bhante Gyan Ratan (Agra) at Buddha Vihara Chakki Pat Agra on 08.03.94.
³. Interview with Bhikshu Gyan Sagara on 07.03.95 at Maharajganj.
⁴. Interview with Bhante Gyan Satak on 06.04.97 at Etawah.
⁶. Interview with Bhadant Kanchan Bodhi at Agra.
KAUDINYA VEN BHANTE:
He was associated with Chakki pat Buddha Vihar, Agra.¹

KARUNA VEN. BHANTE:
He is associated with Kanpur.²

KARUNAKAR BHANTE:
He is very bold and dynamic person. He is always pleased with his controversial image. He seems to have got some political ambitions. He has been working for Buddhism in District Aligarh.³

KARUNA NIDHI:
He is associated with Dr. Ambedkar Buddha Vihar, Bhim Nagar, Firozabad.⁴

KHEMPO MIGMAR TSERING:
He is the Principal of Sakya College, Mussorie Road, Dehradun.⁵

KUMBALWELLA SIRINIWASA NAYAKA MAHA THERA:
He was first appointed as the Bhikshu in charge of the Sarnath centre of the Maha Bodhi Society and there he devoted his time and energy to develop it. He constructed a Dharmashala at Nowgarh and it was named ‘Siri Niwasa Ashrama’.

LINGOPAL BHANTE:
He is associated with Buddha Vihar, Laxmi Nagar, Mathura.⁶

MADHUKAR BAUDDHA:
He is associated with Buddha Vihar, Mohalla Sotipura, Sambhal, Moradabad.⁷

¹ Interview with Bhante Gyan Ratna at Agra on 08.03.94.
² Interview with Bhante Karuna on 06.04.95 at Kanpur.
³ Interview with Bhante Karunakar at Sikandra Rau on 05.04.97.
⁴ Interview with Bhante Karuna Nidhi on 01.04.95 at Firozabad.
⁵ Interview with Khempo migmar Tsering on 10.05.94 at Lucknow.
⁶ Interview with Bhante Lingopal on 10.01.94 at Mathura.
⁷ Interview with Bhante Madhukar Bauddha at Sambal on 18.05.94.
MAHANAM MAHATHERO BHADHIANT:

He has been working for the spread of Buddhism. He hails from Ghazipur Village, Atrauli, Aligarh.1 He died in 1997 on 9th November.

MAHAVIRA VEN. BHANTE:

He became a Buddhist for the first time in modern age. According to Valisinha, he was a close relative of Kunwar Singh one of the Bihari leaders in the revolt of 1857. After the defeat, Mahavir fled to Ceylon. There he studied Pali Buddhist Dhamma and inspired by Indrasabha Nayaka Thera, he became a Bhikkhu in 1890, came to Kushinara and established Vihara in 1902, A devout Burmese layman Khee Zarhee, gave him funds to build the Dharmashala in Kushinagar.2

BHANTE NAGARJUN:

He is associated with Buddha Vihar, BHEL Khelar, Jhansi.3

PARSAN BHANTE:

He took part in the establishment of the Buddhist Parks at Atarra, Banda, Bacheli and Tarawa etc.4

PATSEN, BHIANTE:

He is associated with Buddha Vihara Nagla Mohan, Agra.5

PRAGYANANDA VEN. G. THERA:

Bhante G. Pragyananda Thera was born on 18th December, 1927. He was appointed successor by Bhadant Bodhananda and since then he has been fulfilling the desire of his teacher. He is one of the founders and Ex-President of Bharat Ratna Baba Sahab Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Maha Sabha, Dr. Ambedkar Marg, Lucknow U.P. Presently, he is Patron of the Maha Sabha. He has worked as the President of Buddha Dhammankar Sabha, Lucknow (Established in 1915); the President Bhartiya Baudh Dharm Samiti; Lucknow (Established in 1916), Vice President, Mahabodhi Society of India, General Secretary,

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1. Interview with Bhadant Mahanam on 05.04.97 at Aligarh.
2. Valisinha, Devapriya, Buddhist Shrines in India. Maha Bodhi Society of Ceylon, Candy 1948 Page 118.
3. Interview with Bhante Nagarjuna on 22.03.94 at Jhansi.
4. Interview with Bhante Parsan at Banda on 25.05.94.
5. Interview with Bhante Patson on 08.03.94 at Agra.
Bhartiya Baudh Shiksha Parishad, Lucknow since 1964; Vice President Bhadant Vijayasoma Inter College, Sankisa, District Farrukhabad U.P., Manager – cum -Secretary, Jetavana Higher Secondary School, Sravasti, District Bahraich, Since 1964, President Sarva Dharma Milan, Lucknow since 1978. He has published translation of more than 50 Buddhist texts in Pali and Sanskrit including more than 50 Buddhist texts in Pali and Sanskrit including major texts like Deeghanikaya, Majjhima Nikaya, Buddhacharya, Theragatha, Bodhicharya vatara, and Sutradwayam. He is the editor of four Hindi journals viz. ‘Manava Utthan’, ‘Shravasti’ (Monthlies) and “Madhyam Marg” (Weekly) and presently “Jetavana Shravasti” monthly in Hindi. He has organised national Seminar on Buddhist culture at Lucknow in Feb. 1975 on the occasion of birth centenary of late venerable Bhadant Bodhananda Mahasthavira. He has organised National Seminar on world Buddhist culture at Sravasti in February 1988. Since 1956, he has been arranging Deeksha ceremonies throughout U.P.  

**BHANTE PRAGYA PRABHAKAR:**

Bhanteji embraced Buddhism under the guidance of Sri. Revati Ram, the then Project Director of Budaun. Bhanteji hails from Lilwan Villages P.O. District Budaun. 

These days he is going to found a Buddha Vihar at Awas Vikas Colony, Budaun City. He has also founded Gautam Buddha Shakya Junior High School at Haidalpur Budaun. He is the chief Editor of Devanam Priya Priyadarsi Ashok magazine. His teacher was Reverend Bhante Gyan Prabakar. He is the President of Rashtriya Bhante Samaj Kalyan Samiti, Avas Vikas colony, Budaun.

**PRAGYA RASHMI BHANTE:**

He has been very popular monk. He has founded Buddha Vihar at Shiwali, Bulandshahr.  

**PRAGYASHEEL BHANTE:**

He is associated with Buddha Vihar Nagla Man Singh, Aligarh.

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1. Interview with Bhante Pragyananda on 25.05.94 at Lucknow.
2. Interview with Bhante Pragya Rashmi on 29.05.93 at Bulandshahr.
3. Interview with Bhante Pragya Sheel on 08.01.94 at Aligarh.
PRAJNA SHEEL:

He has founded the Buddhist Vihar of Chiravali and Ait Buddha Vihar of Jalaun.¹

PRIYADARSHI BHANTE:

He is associated with Laxmi Nagar Buddha Vihar, Mathura.²

RAHUL BODHI BHANTE:

In 1970, he was ordained. He has a good knowledge of Buddhism. He is associated with Adarsh Buddha Vihar, Nagla Man Singh, Aligarh.³

RAHUL SANKRITYAYAN:

Maha Pandit Rahul Sankrityayan was born in 1893 on 9th April at village Pandaha village in district Azamgarh, U.P. His original name was Kedarnath. He was by nature a very adventurous person. He invited ups and downs, played with upheavals, travelled far and wide to attain light in all its forms. He was every inch an extra ordinary person whose intellect was exemplary.

His deeds provided a lot of contribution to Buddhist literature and Buddhism. He has always tried to remain far from ethnocentrism. In 1917 he felt inclination towards Buddhism and he travelled Kusinagar, Lumbini and Bodhgaya. In 1926 he saw first time Bhadant Anand Kosalyayan. This year he also travelled Kashmir, Ladakh, Western Tibet and Kannaur.⁴ During the period between 1927 and 1928, he taught for 19 months in Sri Lanka and studied Buddhist literature. There he also was conferred the title of ‘Tripitakacharya’. He became a Buddhist monk in 1930. In 1929-30 he first time travelled Tibet. He sojourned for nine months in Lhasa. Kash Pandit Sabha conferred upon him the title of ‘Mahapandit’. During this period he adopted the new name “Rahul Sankrityayan”. He also wrote “Buddha Charya”. In 1934 he again travelled Tibet. In 1935 he travelled Japan, Korea, Manchuria Soviet Land and Iran. In 1936, he visited Nepal and also visited Tibet third time. In 1938 he visited Tibet fourth time. In 1939 he left monkhood. In 1949 he wrote “Baudha Sanskriti” In 1954, he edited “Dohakosh” of Sarhapad. In 1963 on 23rd March, he passed away.⁵

¹. Interview with Bhante Priyadarshi on 10.01.94 at Mathura.
². Interview with Bhante Prajna Sheel at Jalaun on 21.05.94.
³. Interview with Bhante Rahul Bodhi on 08.01.94 at Aligarh.
⁴. Swayambhu Mahapandit, Gunakar Mule, Page 266.
To enrich Buddhist literature he wrote “Buddhacharya” Dhammapada, Majjhim Nikaya (Translation), Vinaya Pitak (Translation) Digha Nikaya (Translation), Buddha Sanskriti Baudhi Darshan, Mahamanav Buddha, Tibet Mein Baudha Dharam.  

Rahulji did not believe in re-birth so he wanted to do more and more work during his life span. He liked these words of Buddha too much “Monks, I propound Dhamma like boat, This is to travel not to hold on”.  

Rahulji did not believe in god. He said that it is a synonym of ignorance. He did not believe in soul also.  

RATANA BODHI BHANTE:  
He is associated with Buddha Vihar, Auliya Road, Agra.  

RATANA JYOTI BHANTE:  
He hails from Aligarh but he stays at Delhi. He has popularity in U.P. also.  

R. SADDHALOKO THERA:  
He is associated with Sri Lanka, Buddhist Temple, Near Jetavana Sravasti, Bahraich.  

SANGHA GHOSHA:  
He founded Buddha Loka of Hapur, Ghaziabad.  

SANGH JYOTI, BHANTE:  
He is spreading the message of Lord Buddha in this area sincerely. He has founded Dr. Ambedkar Junior High School, Lalapuri, Meerut.  

SANGHAMITRA BHANTE ALIGARH:  
He was ordained in 1994. Bhante Satyamitra of Adarsh Buddha Vihar was his teacher. Bhante Sanghamitra also has a good knowledge of Ayurveda. He hailed from village Paikwara, Hathras, Gangcholi, Aligarh.  

1. Ibid, Page-272.  
2. Algaddupam Sutta, Majjhim Nikaya, 1.3.2.  
5. Interview with Ratna Bodhi on 08.03.94 at Agra.  
6. Interview with Bhante Ratan Jyoti on 08.01.94 at Aligarh.  
7. Interview with R. Saddhaloko Thera at Sravasti on 07.03.95.  
8. Interview with Bhante Sangh Jyoti on 02.06.94 at Meerut.  
9. Interview with Bhante Sanghanitra on 04.07.96 at Aligarh.
SHEEL RATA N BI ANTE (BAHRAICH):
He is associated with Anand Gyanodaya Tisy a Dhyan Bhawana Kendra, Bal rumpur Road, Bahraich.

SHEEL RATA N BI ANTE:
He has spread the message of Buddha in Pilibhit and Lakhimpur Khiri. He has guided many persons to follow Buddhism. He also has co-operated people to establish Buddha Viharas at Vechan Purwa, Badagaon (Lakhimpur), Khamaria, Nidhasan.¹

SHEEL SARAN, BI ANTE:
He is associated with Naripura Buddha Vihar, Agra.²

SHEEL SAROJ, BI ANTE:
He is associated with Bhim Nagar,³ Buddha Nagar, Firozabad.

SRINIVASA MAHATHERO VEN. K:
He is associated with Sarnath.⁴

SRINIVASA, NAYAK THERO VEN K.:
He is associated with Nowgarh.⁵

SOMANANDA VEN BHANTE N:
He is associated with Sarnath.⁶

SUGATANAND, BI ANTE:
He is associated with Paricha Buddha Vihar. He has inspired many people to instal Dr. Ambedkar statue at Simravari village. He has edited a book i.e. Dhamma Pad.⁷

SUGATANAND, VEN. BHANTE:
He is associated with Pratapgarh.⁸

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¹ Interview with Bhante Sheel Ratan on 05.06.95 at Lakhimpur Khiri.
² Interview with Bhante Sheel Ratan on 09.03.94 at Agra.
³ Interview with Bhante Sheel Saroj on 01.04.95 at Firozabad.
⁴ Maha Bodhi Journal Centenary Volume Page 196, Edited by Dr. Walpola.
⁵ Ibid.
⁶ Interview with Bhante G. Prajnananda on 25.05.94 at Lucknow.
⁷ Interview with Bhante Sugatananda on 22.4.94 at Jhansi.
⁸ Interview with Bhante Sugatananda on 27.4.96 at Pratapgarh.
Bhante Tejanker Deep, Bareilly.
SANGHANAND BHANTE:

He is associated with Bhartiya Baudha Mahavihara Evam Shramner Prashikshan Kendra Balrampur Road, Sravasti, Baharaich.¹

SANGHAPAL VEN. BHANTE:

He is associated with Farrukhabad and Sankisa.²

SANGHARATANA NAYAK THERA VEN. BHANTE M.:  

He is associated with Sravasti and Sarnath.³

SARANANDA:

He was deputed to organize a Mahabodhi branch at Kusinara.⁴

SASANASIRI, VEN D. MAHATHERO:

He is associated with Sarnath.⁵

SHANTRARAKSHAK BHADANT:

Bhadant Shantrakshak visited India, Thailand, Myanmar, England etc. He spread Buddhism in Uttar Pradesh. He had also a good knowledge of Ayurveda. He hails from Aligarh.⁶

SHEELBHADRA (ETAWAH):

He was born at Gandha Kasda in 1925 in Distt Etawah. Earlier he was associated with Kabir Panth. He became a Buddhist during the great conversion by Dr. Ambedkar along with Dr. Ambedkar he went to Sarnath. He lived a life of sramner for three years. In 1964, on 5th August, his upasampada ceremony was held at Sarnath. He achieved power and water supply during every kumbha fair for the Buddhist camp organised by Bhartiya Buddha Parishad. At the end of 20th century, he is 75 year old. He has founded Sapna Baudha Vidyalaya, Bamrahiya, Vinoba Nagar, Kanpur; Ambedkar Bhawan and Buddha Vihar, near collectorate, Distt Etawah; Gautam Buddha Vihar, Moti Ganj, Bharathna; Gopalpur Buddha Vihar, Gopalpur, Etawah, Oraiya Buddha Vihar, Oraiya; Ratnipur Buddha Vihar, Ratnipur, Oraiya.⁷

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¹. Interview with Sanghanand Bhante on 07.03.95 at Sravasti.
². Interview with Bhante Sanghapal on 29.01.94 at Farrukhabad.
³. Maha Bodhi Journal, Centenary Volume, Edited by Dr. Walpola Page. 196.
⁴. Ibid.
⁵. Ibid.
⁶. Interview with Bhadant Shantrakshak on 08.01.94 at Aligarh.
⁷. Interview with Bhante Sheelbhadra on 06.04.97 at Etawah.
BHANTE SUMANGAL DEV, SIDDHARTHANAGAR, LAKHIMPUR KHIRI:

Bhante Sumangal Dev is associated with Buddha Vihar Siddharth Nagar. He has been instrumental in the establishment of Buddha Vihar, Siddharatha Nagar, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Junior High School Sampurna Nagar, Prabuddha Ambedkar Sansthan. He wrote two books viz; 'Jai Bhim (1970); 'Buddha Upasana (1980').

SUMAN KIRTI, REV. SRAMAN:

He is associated with Dr. Ambedkar Buddha Vihar, Lalpur, Maharajganj.

SWAYAM KIRTI BHANTE:

He has been associated with Buddha Vihar of Van Baba Ka Purva. He has inspired many people of surrounding areas of Banda to embrace Buddhism.

TEJANKAR DEEP BHANTE:

He has founded Gautam Buddha Pali Vidyapeeth, Delapir, Bareilly. He is a good orator. His image is very controversial yet he is successful in his aims. His institutions are disputed on account of his ill temperament as his followers tell.

U.AMBA ATHA:

He is associated with Burmese Buddhist temple, Sravasti, Bahraich.

VIJAY GHOSH, REV. BHANTE:

He has born near sankissa District Farrukhabad. He became a Shramner in 1961 and he received higher ordination in 1964. He worked in and around Agra. Now at the end of 20th century he is no more.

VIMAL KIRTI BHANTE:

He is associated with Nagla Rati Buddha Vihar, Firozabad.

1. Interview with Bhante Sumangala Dev on 22.06.96 at Pratapgarh.
2. Interview with Bhante Suman Kirti on 07.03.95 at Maharajganj.
3. Interview with Bhante Swayam Kirti on 10.04.96 at Banda.
4. Interview with Bhante Tejankar Deep on 12.06.96 at Bareilly.
5. Interview with U.Ambartha at 08.03.95 at Sravasti.
6. Interview with Bhante Vijay Ghosh on 15.06.96 at Hardwar.
7. Interview with Bhante Vimal Kirti on 02.04.95 at Firozabad.
VIMAL MITRA, BHANTE:
He is associated with Adarsh Buddha Vihar, Nagala Man Singh, Aligarh.¹

VIMAL SAGAR BHANTE:
He is associated with Jagdishpura Buddha Vihar, Agra.²

VINAY KIRTI:
He is associated with Dr. Ambedkar Buddha Vihar Marauli, Azamgarh.³

VINAYSHEEL BHANTE:
He was born at Damodarpur village of district Azamgarh. He embraced Buddhism in 1965 and became a monk in 1979. At present he is staying at Dr. Ambedkar Bhawan, New Delhi. He struggled for the existence of Buddha Vihar situated at Muniraka village. He got reconstructed the Vihar. He spread Buddhism at Azamgarh and its surrounding areas.⁴

VISHUDDHANAND BHANTE:
He has founded a Buddha Vihar at Khalwa, Kanpur.⁵

VISHUDDHANAND VEN. BHANTE:
He is associated with Hardoi.

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¹ Interview with Bhante Vimal Mitra on 04.07.96 at Aligarh.
² Interview with Vimal Sagar Bhante on 09.03.94 at Agra.
³ Interview with Bhante Vinay Kirti on 18.07.96 at Azamgarh.
⁴ Interview with Bhante Vinayasheel on 18.07.96 at Azamgarh.
⁵ Interview with Bhante Vishuddhananda on 06.07.96 at Kanpur.