"Ekena bhoge bhunjeyya, dvīhi kammaṃ payojaye, catutthmca nidhāpeyya, āpadasu bhavissati"  

Let him divide the income into four portions. Out of the four, one portion should be used for his daily expenses. Two portions should be used for the progression of his business. One portion should be deposited carefully for the use in future in the case of emergency.

Singalovāda Sutta

Many people believe that embracing ethics would limit their options, their opportunities, and their ability to succeed in business. It is the old suspicion that good man finish last. How would you describe the state of ethics in business today? Is it wonderful? Is it rock solid? No, I think most people are disgusted with it. They are sick of dishonesty and unethical dealings. What is your reaction to the following names: Dumpo, Jessop, Saradha Group (West Bengal), Enron, AIG (American International


2 Jessop Company Limited is a privately owned engineering company based at Kolkata, India. It is part of Rula group of conglomerate, which also owns Dunlop India and Falcon Tyres as well textile business. The huge building and company head quarter since 1788 in heart of city near B.B.D.Bagh at 63, Netaji Subha Road was, however, taken over by Government of West Bengal as the company did not have funds to pay its dues to the state.

3 The Saradha Group financial scandal is a financial scam that was caused by the collapse of a Ponzi scheme run by Saradha Group, a consortium of Indian companies that was believed to be running a wide of collective investment schemes (popularly but incorrectly referred to as chit fund) in Eastern India. The group collapsed in April 2013, causing an estimated loss of INR 200-300 billion (US $ 4-6 billion) to over 1.7 million depositors.

4 The Enron scandal, revealed in October 2001, eventually led to the bankruptcy of the Enron Corporation, an American energy company based in Houston, Texas. In addition to being the largest bankruptcy reorganization in American history at that time, Enron was attributed as the biggest audit failure.
Group,\textsuperscript{5} Layman Brothers\textsuperscript{6} (USA), Mayflower Bank and Asia Wealth Bank\textsuperscript{7} (Myanmar)? At least, it’s probably a feeling of unsettledness. If you owned stock affected by the ethical scandals associated with these names, you are probably outraged. Economic growth today seems to be at its climax across the globe. The trend of globalization has expedited the process of economic development. It has turned the whole world into a small village. Economic growth in the present era has posed certain challenges which can be tackled globally and here comes the need of the ethics of economic growth. We should focus our attention whether this economic growth has been doing justice to the common people in society.

What is the proper way for earning money and wealth and how to make proper utilize of it – have been the central issue with philosophers who deal with practical ethics. In fact a new branch of ethics emerged nowadays, which is generally termed as business ethics or economic ethics. But in the Buddhist literature I also find concern with such problems. In the Buddha’s teaching, the layman was encouraged to contribute to his economic stability. He was asked to think on the production of wealth through skill and earnest endeavor and protect wealth through savings and living within one’s means. He had right to property and wealth for living a decent family life, but not to develop greed and avarice for wealth. To help

\textsuperscript{5} AIG (American International Group) faced the most difficult financial crisis in its history when a series of events unfolded in late 2008. The insurer had sold credit protection through its London unit in the form of credit default swaps on collateralized debt obligations but they had declined in value.

\textsuperscript{6} Lehman Brothers was a global financial services firm. Before declaring bankruptcy in 2008, Lehman was the fourth-largest investment bank in the US. Financial services firm Lehman Brothers filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on September 15, 2008. The filing remains the largest bankruptcy filing in U.S. history, with Lehman holding over $600 billion in assets.

\textsuperscript{7} The Myanmar Mayflower Bank is a bank of Burma. Founded in 1994 by U Kyaw Myint, it is the third largest bank in the country with ten branches. Asia Wealth Bank was also a Myanmar bank that was found to be of primary money foundering concern by the US Secretary of Treasury. The bank license was subsequently revoked by the Government of Myanmar in the banking crisis in 2003. The Ministry of Finance and Revenue said the licenses of the Asia Wealth Bank and the Myanmar Mayflower Bank had been revoked. Authority state announcement that it was fond that these two banks have not strictly followed the banking regulations, thus their licenses were revoked effective March 13.
the needy and to give wealth to the have-nots were the advice not only for the layman but also for the kings.

**Economics and Morals**

Economics is a positive science, while ethics is a normative science. The former deals with facts, while the latter deals with values. Economists studies facts relating to production, distribution and consumption of wealth and generalize them from the economic laws, with a view to increasing the material prosperity of the people. Ethics investigates the moral ideal which should regulate production, distribution and consumption of wealth. Economics is concerned with wealth and material prosperity. But ethics is concerned with moral well-being. Economics should be guided by ethics. Material prosperity should be subordinated to moral welfare. Physical enjoyment should be subordinated to virtuous life. The rights to property depend on the moral rights to personality. Property is indispensably necessary for the development of personality. Property and personality go together. The rights of exchange and distribution of property also are derived from the moral rights of personality. Thus economics should be subordinated to ethics.

Some of the most serious moral problems of our time are connected with business and industry. Business ethics is the study of what is ethically permissible and of what is positively virtuous, in regard to business activity. It is an attempt not only to reach conclusions but to understand what lies behind them. It is a branch of applied ethics. As such it draws on ethical theories and concepts and brings these to bear on problems and issues that arise in and for business. Many of the issues that are central in business ethics involve us in reflection political theory as well as ethics. The essence of business may be deemed to be commercial enterprise that engages in the selling of goods or services simply in order to make profits. If that is basically what we take business to be about, then we can debate what activities or policies are ethically defensible in the light of its characteristics.
or proper aim. If you are in business you should be aiming to make a profit while conforming to the same legal and ethical constraints that everyone is bound by at work or play. In other words, you should obey the law and treat people honestly, fairly and non-coercively.

Economic ethics covers a wide range of issues: types of work or business practices, the approach to work in general and entrepreneurship in particular, the use to which income is put, attitudes to wealth, the distribution of wealth. In a Buddhist context, it also entails a consideration of such issues in relation to lay citizens, governments. According to Buddhism, there is nothing wrong in becoming rich, but in Buddhism, the means by which one becomes rich and the way by which one should use one’s riches are taken into consideration.

The Economic Life of the Buddhist

We need to examine the Buddha’s conception of the economic life of human beings in the background. The most comprehensive discussion of it is found in the Cakkavattisihāna Sutta. It refers to Universal Monarch, coming after a long line of such monarchs whose authority rested on their being righteous, who decided to rule the people according to his own wishes. The result was a breakdown in law and order. In consultation with ministers and counsellors, the king instituted righteous means of security, protection and guard for the people but did not take any measures to improve their economic conditions. In other words, he did not create opportunities for the people to acquire wealth. When there were no such opportunities, poverty became rampant. Normally it is assumed that “power corrupts.” In this case, it was poverty that corrupted the people. Those who did not have the basic necessities of life resorted to stealing. To avoid punishment they were compelled to commit other evils such as lying. One may assume that since Buddhism contributed to the doctrine of kamma it is compelled to attribute poverty to lack of initiative or

---

entrepreneurship on the part of the person; it is the kamma of that person. But this initial passage in the discourse places the blame not on the individual, but on the society that prevented the individual from having an opportunity. Merely providing opportunities for making a comfortable living is not sufficient in itself. According to the Buddha, not two human beings are born equal. In addition to the differences in the physical constitution, there are also differences regarding temperaments, dispositions, and so on.

Thus, when a person resorted to stealing because of the lack of the basic amenities of life, the king decided to provide him with the opportunity to acquire some wealth. Others in similar position who beard about it resorted to stealing in the hope of gaining the king’s favour. Finally, when the situation was out control, the king had to mete out severe punishment for stealing and other crimes. This is another point made in Buddhist economics: equal distribution of wealth alone does not solve economic and social problems. It has to go hand in hand with moral progress. The Buddha carefully distinguished between human need and human greed. Similarly, material wealth or comfort is not in itself an evil. Abject poverty and deprivation are not the solutions to the problems caused by material wealth. Rather, it is the attachment to material wealth that is the source of the problem. Hence, the Buddha’s statement, “Richs destroy the imprudent, but not verily those who seek the further shore,” is immediately qualified by another: “Through craving for riches, the imprudent person destroys himself as though destroying others—hananti bhogā dummehaṃ, bhogataṇhāya dummeho.” In fact, the fate of those who have not acquired some wealth during their prime is beautifully described in the following passage:

Without having live the noble life and without having acquired wealth in their prime, languish like decrepit cranes in a lake depleted of fish.

\[9 \text{Dhammapada, Verse, 355.}\]
Without having lived the noble life and without having acquired wealth in their prime, some like overspent arrows, lamenting over things of the past.\(^{10}\)

How the moral life and the acquisition of wealth can go together is best explained by the Buddha when he addressed Anāthapiṇḍikā. What is significant is the nature of wealth, which is said to be something earned through industry (\(\text{utthānaviriya}\)), strength of the arms (\(\text{bāhābalaparicitā}\)), and sweat of the brow (\(\text{sedāvakkhitta}\)) and through righteous means (\(\text{dhammiyaladdha}\)).\(^{11}\) The introduction of the term righteous to define the means of acquiring wealth indicates that at every stage of that process a person needs to be morally concerned. The ultimate criterion of morality is the happiness of both oneself and others. When we speak of oneself and others, it could be a reference to oneself and others humans or oneself and other living beings, not necessarily humans, but animals as well. Righteous acquisition of wealth would therefore be twofold, depending upon which definition we adopt. If we take the first definition, then the acquisition of wealth, the economic activities such as the production of goods, should be for the welfare and happiness of humans. The welfare of humans would not be achieved by creating situations promoting greed and possessiveness. When the goods are produced without much concern for the human consumer, it is done purely for the sake of profit. This would increase greed on the part of the producer. It also would mean the production of goods that would generate lust, desire, and longing instead of satisfying the needs. This is what the Buddha called the “wealth generative of the strands of desire (\(\text{kāmabhoga}\)).”\(^{12}\)

If we adopt the second definition of oneself and others, then the so-called righteous wealth or economic progress needs to take into account the welfare of humans as well as animals. This is where the larger issue of a

\(^{10}\) Ibid. Verse, 155. Acarītvā brahmaścarīyāṁ, aladdhā yobbane dhanam, jñānakocāva jhāyanti, khīṇa maccheva pallale. 156 —Acarītvā brahmaścarīyāṁ, aladdhā yobbane dhanam Senti cāpāti kīnīvāva, purāṇāni anutthunam.


A healthy environment comes up. A healthy environment includes the social as well as physical. The social environment has already been discussed. Safeguarding the physical environment was also of great concern to the Buddha. The place where he met with his disciples for discussion of the doctrine is generally called ārāma, a term for garden. The universal Monarch is therefore one who is concerned not only with the material welfare of his subjects, but also their moral well-being. Hence, he is called upon to instruct the subjects on both economic welfare and moral development.

**Ethics of Wealth and Poverty**

To read Buddhism in totally old context may not very inspiring and encouraging of the thinkers of post-modern-world, hence, different aspect of Buddhism need re-evaluation in light of present day challenges. As the present era of globalization has economic development at its core, the review of economic system provided by Buddhism is more relevant in this context. It should also be mentioned here that as Buddhism is often treated as ‘an ethical system’, nature of this evaluation is rather ethical. At first I shall mention here the attitude of Buddhism towards wealth and poverty.

For Buddhism, wealth is not evil: the important thing is how it is made and used. Yet even if wealth is made in a moral way, and used to benefit oneself and others, one should not have a greedy attitude to it. Wealth is something to be amassed or sought after in traditional Buddhism as well as the global world of modern times. On the contrary poverty is in no place praised. In Buddhism it is never encouraged even for monks. *Aṅguttara Nikāya* says ‘For householders in this world, poverty is suffering’ –*dāliddiyaṃ dukkhaṃ lokasmīṃ kāmabhoginoti* and ‘Woeful in the world is poverty and debt’ –*dāliddiyaṃ dukkhaṃ loke, iñādōnaṅca vuccati, dalido inamādāya, bhuṅjamāno vihaññiati.*

---

In traditional Brahmin ethics of India wealth is placed among four Purusartha\(^{14}\) (things to be gained by a gentleman or a person who keeps ethics and religion in his heart) as one cannot perform his duties and will not be able to lead a successful and noble life in this world as well as in the transcendental world without being wealthy.

In Buddhism or in entire Indian ethics, it is not wealth that is praised or blamed but the way one acquire or uses it. The things that are blamed are greed, stinginess, clinging, attachment, to gain and hoarding the wealth. Acquisition of wealth, either by monks or by lay-people, is acceptable only when it is acquired through proper means and spent for proper reasons with a proper intention.

In spite of great ethical utility too much importance should not be given to wealth. It is treated as only a means of personnel perfection as well as that of social welfare. *Āṅguttara Nikāya* mentioned the pros and cons of wealth. It is said, “Wealth is nothing uncommon to fire, to water, to the king, to robbers and to unwanted inheritors. These five are the dangers for wealth. On the other hand, wealth is benefit. On account of wealth one pleases the self and maintains the self pleasantly. On account of wealth one pleases his mother and father and maintains them pleasantly. On account of wealth one pleases his wife and children and maintains them pleasantly. On account of wealth one pleases his friends and co-associates and maintains them pleasantly. On account of wealth one offers the highest gifts to recluses and Brahmins which conduces to heavenly bliss and heavenly birth. These five are the benefits for wealth.”\(^{15}\)

Though on mundane level poverty is something to be avoided, a poor person is not deprived of all means to act for the good of him or herself and

\(^{14}\) The ancient Hindus recognized four supreme ends: 1) artha —wealthy, 2) karma —happiness, 3) dharma —virtue, and 4) mokkha —liberation. Wealth satisfies his material, biological and economic needs. Happiness satisfies his mental and emotional needs. Virtue satisfies his rational, social and moral needs. Liberation is the transcendental good.

for the good of society. The ten ways of doing good\textsuperscript{16} or making merit begin with giving but they also include moral conduct, the development of mental qualities and wisdom, the rendering of service, and the teaching of the \textit{dhamma}. Because of the poverty people may be too preoccupied with the mere struggle for survival and thus cannot do anything for their own perfection or for society. They also may create trouble for society in course of earning their own livelihood. But when basic living needs are satisfied one can make sincere efforts and may devote one’s time for one’s personal perfection and social well-being. Wealth as a resource of achieving social good can help to create a cheerful and healthy atmosphere. But it is mental maturity and wisdom, not solely wealth that brings about the realization of this perfection. Misuse of wealth may not create only social destruction but it may obstruct individual development also.

Basic orientation of Buddhism towards wealth and poverty is best seen in terms of ‘middle path’ which emphasizes the cultivation of attitude of non-attachment. Buddhism sanctions provisional attachment of material property together with an awareness of its corrupt influence. In Buddhism the law of kamma (action) ensures the religious piety, moral behavior and material property are mutually supportive. Buddhist ethics which calls for sober economic activity, controls irresponsible expenditure and emphasizes virtue of charity. The social ethics of Buddhism resonant with growth of a middle class merchant ethos is the need of hours.

The \textit{Kuṭadanta Sutta} of the \textit{Dīgha Nikāya} suggests that the economic prosperity of the people should be a special concern of the state and the king. A certain king, desirous to offer a sacrifice for the good fortune he had enjoyed thus far and for further continuance of propriety in his domain, is advised by his counselor that instead of such a sacrifice it would be more advisable for him to take preventive measures to check the occurrence of

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Dāna} – generosity,
  \item \textit{siīla} – morality,
  \item \textit{bhāvanā} – meditation,
  \item \textit{opacāyana} – paying due respect to who are worthy it,
  \item \textit{veyyāvacca} – helping others,
  \item \textit{pattidāna} – sharing of merit after doing good deed,
  \item \textit{pattānumodana} – rejoicing at others merit,
  \item \textit{dhammasavana} – listening well to the doctrine,
  \item \textit{dhammadesanā} – teaching doctrine,
  \item \textit{ditthijukkamma} – right one’s views.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{16} 1) \textit{Dāna} – generosity, 2) \textit{siīla} – morality, 3) \textit{bhāvanā} – meditation, 4) \textit{opacāyana} – paying due respect to who are worthy it, 5) \textit{veyyāvacca} – helping others, 6) \textit{pattidāna} – sharing of merit after doing good deed, 7) \textit{pattānumodana} – rejoicing at others merit, 8) \textit{dhammasavana} – listening well to the doctrine, 9) \textit{dhammadesanā} – teaching doctrine, 10) \textit{ditthijukkamma} – right one’s views.
crime. He says that it could be achieved by the removal of the causes of economic discontent among the people, for which he lays down some positive guidelines: he (the king) should give to farmers subsidy of food and seed; sources of capital for investment should be made available to merchants and trades; those in government jobs should get proper wages and food. If this is done there would be no danger for the state; on the contrary, the king’s revenue will go up; the country will be quiet and at peace, and the populace, pleased one with another and happy, dandling their children in their arms, will dwell with open doors. The sutta runs as follows:

Long ago, there was a king by name Mahā Vijita with great wealth and large property; with stores of silver and gold, of aids to enjoyment, of goods and corn; with his treasure-houses and his garners full. Now when King was once sitting alone in meditation he became anxious at the thought: I have in abundance all the good things a mortal can enjoy. The whole wide circle of the earth is mine by conquest to possess. If I were to offer a great sacrifice that should ensure me weal and welfare for many days, what should I do? And he had the Brahman, his adviser, called; and telling him all that he had thought, he said: So I would offer a great sacrifice let the venerable one instruct me how for my weal and my welfare for many days.

Thereupon the Brahman who was adviser said to the king: The king’s country is harassed and harried. There are dacoits abroad who pillage the villages and townships, and who make the roads unsafe. So long as that is so, if the king were to tax a fresh tax, verily his majesty would be acting wrongly. Suppose your majesty might think: ‘I will get rid of this plague of robbers by executions and imprisonment or by confiscation, threats and banishment, the plague would not be properly ended. Those who survived would later harm your realm. However, with this plan, you can completely eliminate the plague. Whosoever there be in the king’s realm who devote themselves to keeping cattle and the farm, to them let Your Majesty give
food and seed-corn. Whosoever there be in the king's realm that devote themselves to trade, to them let Your Majesty give capital. Whosoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to government service, to them let Your Majesty give wages and food. Then those men, following each his own business, will no longer harass the realm, the king's revenue will go up; the country will be quiet and at peace; and the populace, pleased one with another and happy, dancing their children in their arms, will dwell with open doors.

Then King accepted the word of his adviser, and did as he had said. And those men, following each his business, harassed the realm no more. And the king's revenue went up. And the country became quiet and at peace. And the populace, pleased one with another and happy, dancing their children in their arms, dwelt with open doors.\(^{17}\)

The account says that the king, convinced about the soundness of this advice, acted accordingly and thing took place as the councilor had predicted. On the other hand, 'Cakkavattisihanāda sutta' tells how a king caused and confusion and various other evils in his kingdom by not giving due attention to the economic well-being of the poor.

To discuss the proper means for acquiring and spending one's wealth I shall discuss the special features of Buddhist economic system and using wealth properly which reveals more about the topics.

**Special Features of Buddhist Economic System**

The central character of this system consists in its simple structure. In Buddha's days societies were more localized than globalised, hence, the socio-economic structure of the society was simpler. It had a local character. There are fundamental differences between the societies which are part of industrialized global economy and those that are dependent on

more localized factors. The structure of industrialized global society is more dependent upon complex technology and large scale social institutions. It is more bound with techno-sphere rather than the bio-sphere. This global society is based on an assumption that man is the master of not only his fate but also the nature; hence he is separate from and is able to control it. A person of this ‘fast track’ era is bound to be indulged in a mad race, which makes him self-centered. He does not have time or care either for society or for his family. He is living in an artificial world without having any human value and social-sense.

On the other hand, societies having localized structure are more closed to nature. It is more dependent upon biosphere than techno-sphere. The relation between nature and creature is more close and interdependent. A common man of this society has human values at his heart, hence he is more devoted to the society and to his family.

These factors, the characteristic of a localized society, are deeply rooted in the Buddhist vision towards wealth and poverty. However, in Buddha’s days the Indian economy, or economy of the entire world, was so simple. The concept of industrialization or technology based industries and complex economy was not developed by that time. Particularly Indian economy was mainly agriculture based. The trade structure of then –Indian was concentrated, mainly, within the area of Indian sub-continent. Structure of social and other organizations were not so vast.

The Buddha, though, neither suggested any change in economic system nor did he advocate any particular economic structure, preached some rules for financial dealings and economic behaviour. Indeed, the Buddha thought that proper behaviour and strong moral character may bring a positive social change including politics and economy. Thus His teachings were concentrated on simple human behaviour rather than vast theories.

Being dependent on local factors this system keeps family and social values. In Śīṅgālovāda Sutta the Buddha teaches that moral acts and social
relations may bring economic upliftment. Describing relevance of the religious practice of paying devotion to the various quarters of the earth and the sky, the Buddha says that the six quarters—east, south, west, north, the nadir and the zenith should be taken as representing parents, teacher, wife and children, friends and companions, servants and workpeople and religious teacher and Brahmins respectively (I had already discussed them in chapter 3). As a preface of this explanation the Buddha speaks of the necessity of abandoning the evil actions arising from four motives and the six practices leading to loss of property and wealth. The four impurities of conduct consist in the violation of the precept: not to take life, not to take that which is not given, not to commit sensual offence and not to indulge in falsehood. The four motives on which one should not act are: uncontrolled impulses or partiality (chanda) hatred (dosa) fear (bhaya) and delusion (moha).\(^{18}\)

In *Sīṇgālovāda sutta* six causes are mentioned which are conducive to loss of wealth and poverty. They are:

I. indulgence in intoxicants,
II. sauntering in the streets at unseemly hours,
III. frequenting entertainment,
IV. gambling,
V. associating with evil companions; and,
VI. idleness.\(^{19}\)

The first of these causes not only the loss of wealth but also fosters quarrels, increases chances of disease, make a bad social reputation, indecent exposure, and impaired intelligence. The second one leaves one’s family alone and his property unprotected. The third one—the excessive entertainment leads a person towards wastage of time and unnecessary impulses in some cases including directing his thought constantly to locate such entertainment. Gambling makes a person aggrieved for his lost wealth


and hatred towards the winner, in addition to the loss of wealth. It decreases his reliability in the court of law and also affects his credibility in the society. Association with evil companion may involve him in bad practices like cheating, violence etc. Idleness may make him lazy. Laziness, in Buddhism, is considered in more extensive form than is done in Siṅgālovaṁda sutta, under the synonyms of Torpor and languor (thina-middha). It represents one of the five hindrances to mental development and vision, hence it seems like ignorance. It is also considered as a constituent of an immoral factor of consciousness.

This system provides an ethics of employment which is very relevant even in present millennium. This system never decries against master-workman work culture. Rather it has an ethical code of conduct for this relationship. According to Siṅgālovaṁda sutta an employer should conduct himself towards his employees in following manner.

a) He must arrange his work according to his strength and capability.
b) He must provide his employees proper salary.
c) He must take care of his employees when he is sick.
d) He must share his happiness with his employee.
e) He must grant leaves to his employee time to time.20

In return an employee should perform following duties towards his master:

I. The employee should rise before his master rises. (Modern verse; the employee must come to office before the arrival of his seniors or superiors. 

II. He must go to rest after his master (modern verse; the employee must leave the office only after his master leaves it.)

III. He must take only those things what is given to him (modern verses; he must not steal or snatch anything from his workplace or from his office. He must not indulge in financial and other irregularities .he must avoid any call of strike which is

motivated by mal intentions or given only for better pay and perks avoiding well beings of the institution or the employer.

IV. He must work well.

V. He must try to establish a good reputation for his master.\(^{21}\)

We see how these duties of employer and employees comply with modern ‘ethics of employment’.

Though this system favours private property, it given stress on proper distribution of income. Having acquired wealth one should distribute it properly. Buddhism has no place for misers and selfish persons. The \textit{jātaka} tell that a wise man having acquired wealth helps his relatives and gains their respect; after death he rejoices in a heavenly region.\(^{22}\)

This system provides to some extent farmers. “The field should be well-ploughed and well-prepared, that sowing and watering should take place at the proper time, and that the farmer should be quick at his work.”\(^{23}\) On the other hand, the Buddha said, a farmer should cultivate seeds in suitable fields. \textit{Aṅguttara Nikāya} said, in improper fields “Here, bhikkhus, the field, is raised and bent, not even, it has stones and pebbles, the soil is saline, has no depth, is not of an increasing nature, without good drainage, without a water course, without defined limitations. Bhikkhus, seeds sown in a field endowed with these eight things are not of much benefit, not for great enjoyment and profit—Idha bhikkhaye khettaṁ unnāmaninnāmi ca hoti. Pāsānasakkharikañca hoti. Úsarañca hoti. Na ca gambhīrasitaṁ hoti. Na āyasampannam hoti. Na apāyasampannam hoti. Na mātikāsampannam hoti. Na marīyādasampannam hoti. Evaṁ aṭṭhaṅgasampannāgato khette vījaṁ vattam na mahapphalam hoti na mahassādam na phātiseyaṁ.”\(^{24}\)

This system also provides some guidelines for proper livelihood which are very relevant in the present scenario. In this connection it prohibits some trades as the means of proper livelihood as these are not in accord with precepts. These are:

a) *Sattha vanijjā* – Trade in weapons,

b) *Satta vanijjā* – Trade in living beings,

c) *Mamsa vanijjā* – Trade in flesh,

d) *Majja vanijjā* – Trade in intoxicants, and

e) *Visa vanijjā* – Trade in poison.²⁵

These restrictions, imposed on various types of trades, are very important in present scenario. We know how much terror has been created by arm-traders and also how it throws the threat of next world –war. In the same manner 'trade in living beings’ specially the trade of human beings, is destroying dignity of human being as well as happiness of the earth. Trade in flash, and also the flesh trade’, is not only destroying our social and family structure but also destroying ecological balance. However, the trades of growing market of meet may argue in favour of ‘trade in flash (but not in favour of ‘flesh trade’ at all, but after all, it makes a man cruel at least which goes, definitely, against human value. Same case goes with ‘Trade in intoxication’ and with ‘trade in poison’. It does not need to say that all the five trades are destroying moral values, human dignity, social structure and lovely world of ours in to.

Buddha taught that a person should go for proper livelihood and must avoid improper or immoral one. A person, who acquires wealth by lawful and honourable means, by his own energy and efforts, enjoys prosperity, independence and mental peace in the sense that he does not run into debts. His parents, wife and children, work people and other members of society honour him and also the recluses and priests to whom he is accustomed to give alms and make charitable gifts. All of them wish

long life and give him protection, and by the reason of his virtue it may be expected that he will not go into decline.

Buddhism states about following four factors responsible for decline of acquired wealth:

a) Failing to seek what has been lost.
b) Failing to repair what is decaying.
c) Excessiveness of eating and drinking.
d) Putting unreliable workers on responsible position.²⁶

We know that this modern tendency is destroying the mental set-up of workers as well as his commitments to employer institution. It is also creating a huge amount of industrial waste. In the same manner, ‘eat, drink and be merry’ policy of modern man’s destroying our social character as well as the meaning of ‘human life.’

This system is important that you need to work hard in your life to be successful person. There are six apertures in the world wherein the mind does not stand firm: laziness, negligence, lacking in effort, lack of self-control, drowsiness and heaviness after a meal. Avoid these if you want to be successful in life. These are the apertures.²⁷

Using Wealth Properly

Buddhism does not judge people’s goodness or badness from the size of their wealth because wealth is considered merely a stairway to other goals, not a goal in itself. Whether the possession of wealth is encouraged or not lies in the goals for which it is used. As a result, there are two points of interest concerning wealth for Buddhism: the ways wealth is obtained

and conduct in regard to the wealth secured. In other words, Buddhism does not emphasize wealth itself, but its seeking and its use.

Since Buddhism gives such importance to the ways of seeking and using wealth, apart from competing with oneself to attain more wealth, fair competition with others for better efficiency and for increased benefit to oneself and others should not be against Buddhist principles. Buddhism has mentioned many different types of wealth seekers. Here I would like to mention three, as follows:

i. People who seek wealth improperly and selfishly, then do not spend that wealth on their comfort, do not give alms, and do not make merit.

ii. People who seek wealth improperly and selfishly, then spend that wealth on their comfort, but do not give alms and do not make merit.

iii. People who seek wealth improperly and selfishly, then spend that wealth on their comfort, give alms, and make merit.

Among these three types of people, those who seek wealth improperly and do not use it for their own comfort are harmful both to themselves and to society. They harm themselves by not obtaining happiness from the wealth they have acquired. Also, they may be punished for their misconduct, which negatively affects people at large in that it is a way of destroying the economic cycle because wealth is not properly circulated.

The second group harms themselves partially, in that they seek wealth improperly. However, they use their wealth only for their own comfort, so they are not advantageous to society. The third group harms themselves and society partially, but is also partially advantageous to society because they use their wealth for themselves, for alms giving, and for merit making. Apart from this, having or acquiring wealth and then just hoarding it is also considered wrong, like seeking wealth improperly and using it wrongfully.

The Buddha criticized a very wealthy millionaire who had accumulated a great amount of wealth and possessions, but who lived on
bad food of broken rice and vinegar, wore only three pieces of coarse-grained fabric, used an old vehicle and a sunshade made of leaves. He died without descendants to inherit his wealth. King Pasenadi of Kosala had to cart the uninherited wealth off into the palace. The Buddha criticized the millionaire who possessed wealth without making use of it thus:

This is how it is, Your Majesty. The unworthy man, acquiring great wealth, does not spend it for his own happiness and comfort, does not spend it for the happiness and comfort of his parents... his children and wife... his servants and workers... his friends and colleagues, does not place offerings in recluses and holy men (samaṇa brahmaṇa) that are for spiritual happiness and lead to heaven. That wealth of his, not rightfully used, is inevitably taken by state authorities, stolen by thieves, destroyed in fire or lost in water, or taken by some unbeloved relatives. That wealth, not rightfully used, disappears to no use, unconsumed. It is like a pond in a land of demons, full of clean, cool, fresh, transparent water with good approaches, a shady place. No one can use the water for drinking or bathing.

As for the worthy man, having gained great wealth, he spends it for his own happiness and comfort, spends it for the happiness and comfort of his parents... wife and children... his servants and workers... his friends and colleagues, and places offerings in recluses and holy men that are for spiritual happiness and lead to heaven. That wealth of his, rightfully used, cannot be taken away by state authorities, thieves cannot steal it, fire cannot burn it, water cannot sweep it away, and unbeloved relatives cannot take it away. That wealth, rightfully used, is consumed, not wasted, just like a pond near a villages or market town full of clean, cool, fresh, and limpid water, with good approaches and shady setting. People can come and take the water, drink, bathe, or use it as desired.28

Then the Buddha continued with verses, “A bad person, having gained wealth, does not use it for himself nor give it (to anyone else). Just like a pond in a land of demons, people cannot drink or use its water. A wise

person, having gained wealth, uses it for himself and for his tasks (personal activities and charities). He is excellent. Having taken care of his kinsfolk, he is blameless. He attains to heaven.”

The above Buddha-vacana teaches us that one should utilize wealth or possessions, not just hoard them uselessly. The presence of wealth is for the purpose of benefit. As for the ways in which wealth is to be used, we should take the guideline. Now, what is more convincing in this respect is the Buddha’s explanation of how to put one’s earnings into use. In this connection, the Buddha explains the issue on four heads:

1. With the wealth one has lawfully earned, he makes the mother, father, wife and children, servants and workmen, friends and comrades happy.
2. He makes himself secure against all misfortunes such as may happen by way of fire, water, the king, robber and ill disposed person.
3. He performs fivefold offering (bali): to relatives (hāti), to guests (atīthi), to departed ones (pubbapeta), to kings such as taxes and duties (rāja) and to deities for the things worshipped according to beliefs or social traditions (devatā).
4. He gives away in charity to recluses and Brahmins who practise abstinence from sloth and negligence, who are bent on kindness and forbearance, who strive to tame, calm and cool themselves from defilement.

The wealth of anyone spent without these four deeds of merits is called wealth that has failed to seize its opportunity, failed to win merits and unfittingly used. In many a dialogue of the Buddha, ways of abusing money are detailed. In sociological perspective dissipating earnings amounts to a crime without victims. Nevertheless, abuse of wealth ruins oneself at the beginning and then leaves its impact on society at the end. People abuse their wealth not only by hoarding, but also using it extravagantly in pursuits of cheap sensual satisfaction, which are discussed in the Śīṅgālovāda Sutta under Six Doors to Woe (cha apāyamukha). On the personal level as well as

---

social level, adultery, addiction to drugs and alcoholic drinks, gambling, bad company and numerous other vices detrimental to one’s own and society’s welfare are considered abuses of wealth. A person proud and snobbish (dhanattthaddha) due to his riches also abuses his wealth by neglecting what is to be done thereby causing his own downfall.\(^{31}\) The vanity of such thoughts is shown with emphatic phraseology. For it is stated: “A fool may worry thinking that he has sons and wealth but actually speaking, when he himself is not his own, how can there be sons and wealth?"\(^{32}\)

**Business Management in Buddhism**

People very often speak of economic crisis that dominates every quarter of the world. What they mean to say is business enterprises and economic management are experiencing tremendous setbacks creating financial difficulties for everyone in both commercial and private sectors in society. What is to be noted in this regard is the Buddhist paradigm in economic management, which is totally applicable to everyone and every business undertaking beginning from small-scale personal ventures to large-scale multimillion dollar enterprises.

Buddhism is sometimes misrepresented as a religion of pessimistic outlook having a world-negating attitude. Buddhism is not a religion solely for a monastic community; it embraces lay (both male and female) community as well. Therefore this is one of the glaring instances where the Buddha has shown how economic managing is inevitable for economic security of any individual in society. Since economic managing is so indispensable to leading a happy and successful lay life, the Buddha pointed out to the millionaire *Anāthapindika*, economic stability (*atthi sukha*) which results from proper management and just and righteous enterprises (*anavajja sukha*) are contributory to one’s happiness. Enjoying the bliss of

\(^{31}\) Sutta Nipāta. verse 104.
\(^{32}\) Dhammapada, verse, 62.
not being indebted (ānanya sukha) one must be able to enjoy one’s wealth with friends and relatives (bhoga sukha).33

In Sīṅgālovāda sutta of Dīgha Nikāya, we see the Buddha’s advice to youth Sīṅgāla with reference to managing one’s income in the following stanza:

“Ekena bhoge bhuñjeyya, dvihi kammaṁ payojaye, Catutthṁca nidhāpeyya, āpadasu bhavissati.”34

“Let him divide the income into four portions. Out of the four, one portion should be used for his daily expenses. Two portions should be used for the progression of his business. One portion should be deposited carefully for the use in future in the case of any emergency.”

The investment of two portions of one’s earnings is recommended in anticipation of a better income to meet the demands in time to come. A portion of the income is to be deposited for use during unexpected calamities, which would help one to be at ease in future being free from thoughts of foreboding. It may be like purchasing insurance policies or depositing in banks. As the commentary explains, one fourth of one’s income is to be taken not only for one’s own subsistence but also for other petty expenses and to help the needy and to give away in charity. In fact, a person who while being economically sound does not maintain his aged parents is termed as a man of mean character.

Now let us see what the Buddha has said concerning the accumulation of wealth. In the Sīṅgālovāda Sutta, the layman is specifically asked to earn wealth even as bees collecting honey and termites building an anthill and spend it wisely. It runs thus:

“To him amassing wealth, like roving bee, its honey gathering and hurting naught, Riches mount up as ant-heap growing high. When the good

layman wealth has so amassed, able is he to benefit his clan."\textsuperscript{35} Sharing of one's wealth with the needy and the Saṅgha are highly commended virtues in Buddhist ethics. The Buddha outlines the ways of utilizing one's wealth profitably, not only for one's own benefit, but for others' benefit as well. One day the Buddha addressed Anāthapiṇḍika, one of his lay devotees, and said: "Householder, there are five merits of earning wealth. What are the five?

A wealthy person can live healthy, happy and long life supplying all his needs. This is the first merit of the wealthy.

A wealthy person can look after his parents when they are sick or old or in need of his support. This is the second merit of the wealth.

A wealthy person can support his wife and children supplying all their needs, this is the third merit of the wealth.

A wealthy person can help his relatives, friends, servants and others. This is the fourth merit of the wealth.

There are recluses and priests who have given up household life and devoted their time for higher religious practices. As they depend on the support of the laity, a wealthy person could support them and become a sharer of their virtues which would conduce him to be born into a happy state after death. This is the fifth merit of the wealth."\textsuperscript{36}

In the \textit{Mañgala Sutta} the Buddha has expounded thirty eight beatitudes out of which, to look after parents, is an important one which has been mentioned in his own words as \textit{Mātāpitu upaṭṭhānaṁ}. The next one is "\textit{Puttadārassa Saṅghahō}" which means "To look after wife and children is a beatitude". "\textit{Ñātakānañca Saṅghahō}" To treat relatives and friends is beatitude."\textsuperscript{37} In many a place the Buddha has advised his followers of "\textit{Ubhayaattha patipadā}" to work for the well being both of oneself and of others.

According to some religions it is hard for a rich man to enter heaven. But according to Buddhism it is easier for a rich man to enter heaven, if he properly spends his wealth, fulfilling his duties. It is not wealth but miserliness and other wrong ways that obstruct the way to heaven. The Buddha praising the wealthy who are generous has said: “Datvā ca bhutvā ca yathānubāvā Anindito saggāṁ upeti thanan. This means The generous rich man gives or helps others and enjoys himself, too, and is praised here and will go to heaven after death.”

There is an important discourse addressed to a headman called Rāsiya where the accumulation of wealth is discussed with reference to the Middle Path. Rāsiya, in front of the Buddha, poses the question whether the Buddha censures and abuses downright all kinds of asceticism and ascetics who lead austere ascetic mode of life. Herein the Buddha asserts, those who represent him as one who censures and abuses downright all kinds of ascetic practices, who lead austere ascetic mode of life, are wrong and do not speak in accordance with his view but misrepresent him.

Then explaining the extreme practice of self-indulgence as low, vulgar, practice of the manyfolk, ignoble and not bound up with welfare, explains the self-mortification, as painful, ignoble and not bound up with welfare. The explanation is just the same as the one we find in the first discourse—Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta. Then proceeds on to outline the Noble Eightfold Path and describes the means by which people earn and make use of wealth.

The discourse is important for two reasons. Firstly, it points out the commendable mode of conduct in relation to the Middle Path avoiding two extremes. Secondly, it delineates the relevance of the Middle Path to every aspect of a layman’s life. Now, in accordance with the means that common-folk employ to earn wealth, they fall into three categories:

1. A person who employ unlawful and violent means.

2. A person who employ both unlawful and lawful means.

3. A person who employ only lawful means.

In regard to the first and second categories of people, wealth earned by unlawful and violent means is illegitimate and illegal, and considered as black, dirty and easy money, which is blameworthy; whereas the second and third categories, what is lawfully earned is legal, legitimate, righteous and praiseworthy. In the long analysis of the issue found in the discourse, Buddha criticises the illegal means of acquisition in spite of the fact that it is spent generously for others' welfare.

Thus money, for that matter, wealth or property is not an end in itself. Until one thinks that it is only a means to an end, one is ever in disappointment. Hoarding consciousness or extravagant lifestyle leads one nowhere. The most deplorable thing in our society is that man is subjected to the demands of modern living over and above social norms and values. As long as he is alienated from his moral character, he is bound to experience difficulties in economic management for a contented living.

The Way to Successful Business

Now the question is “How should one earn wealth? What has the Buddha said about it?” In many a discourse like Ujjaya Sutta, Vyaghapajja Sutta, Singhalovada Sutta, instructions for being successful in earning wealth, as expounded by the Buddha, have been mentioned in detail.

One day Vyaghapajja the Koliyan asked the Buddha for some instruction concerning success in life here and hereafter. The Buddha instructed him on how to be successful and happy in both the lives. To be successful in business and other affairs in this life, the Buddha said, ‘a
person should be endowed with four things’ namely *Uṭṭhāna sampadā*, ārakkha sampadā, kalyāṇa mittā and Samajīvitā.\(^{41}\)

Here the first one is *Uṭṭhāna sampadā* which means ‘achievement of indefatigable effort. A businessman should be energetic and active. He should to live closer to the nature, not fearing slight cold, slight heat, slight rain and the like. Sometimes he may fail in his effort, due to obstacle, but by that much he should not lose his courage. He should try over and over again. At last he will be successful. At every step, he should be mindful, far-seeing and cautious.

Whatever the nature of one’s occupation, one must be diligent. *Vīrya* – effort is essential for successful business man. Laziness and lacking in effort is a hindrance to wealth – *ālasayam anuṭṭhānanaṃ bhogānaṃ paripanto*.\(^{42}\) You can break through poverty by effort – *vīryena dukkhamacceti*.\(^{43}\) The man who never denies any work to do can get wealth through effort – *uṭṭhānā vindate dhanam*.\(^{44}\)

The second thing a businessman should be possessed of has been expounded by the word “ārakkha sampadā” which means “the achievement of awareness.” This implies to be careful in not wasting what one earns. The Buddha said that there were many ways which would bring decay to one’s wealth and therefore one should be careful and vigilant in keeping one’s wealth. Sometimes fire or flood and the like might consume his wealth. Sometimes one’s ill-disposed heirs would try to take away one’s wealth. If one falls into bad habits of gambling, debauchery in sex and drunkenness, before long one would be dragged down to poverty. One should be loyal to the government; otherwise one’s wealth would possibly be confiscated. As there are so many ways to a person’s degradation, he must be vigilant and very careful in not wasting his wealth.

\(^{43}\) Khuddaka Nikāya. Sutaniṇīta. Āḷavaka Sutta. Verse, 186.
\(^{44}\) Ibid. verse, 189.
The third thing an earner should be possessed of is ‘kalyāṇa mittatā’ which means, to have good companions, who instruct, help and encourage him in carrying out his business. Suppose he could not find out good companions, then he should be careful not to fall into association with persons of evil ways. It is better to keep oneself to oneself and carry out one’s business alone.

“No ce labhetha nipakaṁ sahāyaṁ saddhiṁ caraṁ sādhuvihāri dhīraṁ rājava raṭṭham vijitaṁ pahāya eko care, mātanraṅñeva nāgo, addhā pasamsāma sahāyasampdam setṭhā saha sevitabbā sahāya ete laddhā anavajjabhoji eko care khaggavisāṇakappo” is the Buddha’s advice, which means “if you could not find a good companion, go on alone like a unicorn, and never have contact with a bad companion.”

A person’s kind parents and relatives or teachers, monks, recluse or priests, whoever is wise and compassionate, who hope his success are his good friends or companions.

The fourth point is “Samajīvitā” which means ‘even or simple way of living’. A person who continues his business should spend his money very carefully. His expenditure should not exceed his income. A salesman who carries his scale, when he holds up the balance is watchful and sees that by so much it has dipped down or by so much it has tilted up. In the same way a person who follows any kind of business must be watchful so that his expenditure should not exceed his income, otherwise he would be unsuccessful in his effort. If a person with small income imitates the ways of rich men of high income and tries to live on a grand scale, he will not be able to continue long the same way and fall into insolvency and his business will be a failure. Therefore the Buddha advised every earner to live his life as simple as possible. This does not mean that he should live meanly. If his income is great and if he lives meanly as a stingy person his effort in earning wealth is useless. In his expending he should be neither too high nor two. This is what the Buddha has meant by ‘even way of living.

Thus the Buddha’s advice to householder was to try to earn wealth and to spend it in proper way and thus to live a useful life. Speaking about the merchant who would be successful in his business the Buddha said:

“A salesman should know the quality of goods he buys; he should know their price and the amount of profit he gains on the sale of those goods. He should be skilled in the art of buying and selling. He should be honest and trustworthy so that highly rich persons would deposit their money under his care.”

On another occasion the Buddha said that a trader should be active in his business throughout all the three parts of the daytime: morning, noon and afternoon and that if he is inactive and lazy he would not be successful.

There are some persons, simple-living and contented with a little amount of income. They do not want to become rich as they like to live a simple life. But if a person expects to do a great service, to help the people who are in need of his help, he should try to earn much wealth by right means; he should be virtuous and energetic. A real follower of the Buddha, that expects to earn wealth, will certainly be a rich man before long, if he vigilantly follows the Buddha’s instructions.

Vigilant and energetic man thereby would be successful in his business and earn a great mass of wealth. At this point one might question: “Is poverty not a result of an unwholesome karma of a previous life?” According to Buddhism, poverty may be a result either of a past karma or of present karma or of the both. But most of such karmas can be suppressed and overcome by wise and far-seeing steps one takes at present life. There are certain unwholesome karmas which can be suppressed and overcome by means of wise and strong steps taken in this life. Most often it depends on the present situation that a past karma good or bad rises up and finds opportunity to give its result. Therefore the effort that is made at present is

the pre-eminent cause of a person’s progress or failure in the case of the majority of people. “Uṭṭhahatha ma pamadattha (get up, loiter not) is the Buddha’s frequent advice to the world.

One of Jātakas said about successful life. They are: seek health, the greatest blessing; following virtue. Listen to people; read good books and learn. Be truthful; break the chain of sad attachment – Ārojyamicche paramañca lābham silañca vuddhānumatiñ sutañca, dhammānudhamma vattiṣa atthassa dvārā pamukhā chaletē.48

First, take care of your health; from health comes the strength to walk the other five paths. Next, follow virtue – not perfection, not consensus morality, not indulgence, but virtue. Learn, learn from people, books, the internet, wherever. Tell the truth; this is simple. Finally, break the bounds that tie you to your preconceptions, possessions, gripes, even your love ones.

One who desires progress and success in life, be it in the field of education, occupation or livelihood, is advised to abide by the following principles:

1. Patirūpadesavāsa: choosing a suitable environment; to choose a suitable location in which to live, study or work, where there are people and an environment conducive to learning and betterment in life, to the pursuit of the truth, virtue and knowledge, and the generation of goodness and prosperity.
2. Sappūrisūpanissaya: associating with good people; to seek association or alliance with people who are learned and virtuous and who will support one's pursuit of the truth, virtue and knowledge, and one's advancement and growth in a rightful way.

3. **Attasammapanidhi**: establishing oneself rightly; to establish oneself firmly in virtue and a right way of life; to establish a clear and virtuous goal for one's life and work, and set oneself resolutely and firmly on the right path to that goal, not wavering or being negligent.

4. **Pubbekatapuññatā**: having a good "capital foundation"; one portion of this capital foundation comprises innate qualities such as intelligence, aptitude and a healthy body; the other is, on the basis of that foundation, knowing how to rectify or improve oneself, to seek further knowledge, to strengthen good qualities and to train oneself in preparation for when these qualities are needed, to be ready to welcome success, to bring about welfare and happiness and to advance to even greater heights.49

Practicing according to the four conditions that lead to the success of any undertaking, known as the *iddhipāda* (pathways to success):

i. **Chanda**: having a heart of zeal; to be keen to do something, and to do it for the love of it; to wish to bring an activity or task to its optimum fruition, not simply doing it to get it out of the way or merely for reward or material gain.

ii. **Viriya**: doing with effort; to be diligent and apply oneself to a task with effort, fortitude, patience and perseverance, not abandoning it or becoming discouraged, but striving ever onward until success is attained.

iii. **Citta**: committing oneself to the task; to establish one's attention on the task in hand and do it thoughtfully, not allowing the mind to wander; to apply one's thought to the matter regularly and consistently and do the task or action devotedly.

---

iv. *Vimāṇsa*: using wise investigation; to diligently apply wise reflection to examine cause and effect within what one is doing and to reflect on, for example, its pros and cons, gains and shortcomings or obstructions. This can be achieved by experimenting, planning and evaluating results, and devising solutions and improvements in order to manage and carry out the activity in hand so as to achieve better results.\(^{50}\)

Let us see further what the Buddha has said concerning wealth and other necessities of life.

_Dasayime bhikkhave dharmā kantā manāpā dullabhā lokasmiṁ._

Katame daha? Bhogā iṭṭhā kantā manāpā dullabhā lokasmiṁ, vanṇo iṭṭho kanto manāpo dullabhā lokasmiṁ, ārogyaṁ iṭṭham kantam manāpaṁ dullabhām lokasmiṁ, sīlaṁ iṭṭham kantani manapani dullabhāni lokasmiṁ brahmacariyam iṭṭham kantam manapam dullabhām lokasmiṁ, mittā iṭṭhā kantā manāpā dullabhā lokasmiṁ, bahusaccam iṭṭham kantam manapam dullabhām lokasmiṁ, paññā iṭṭhā kantā manāpā dullabhā lokasmiṁ, dhammā iṭṭhā kantā manāpā dullabhā lokasmiṁ, Saggā iṭṭhā kantā manāpā dullabhā lokasmiṁ.\(^{51}\)

This means: “These ten things desirable, pleasing and charming, are hard to achieve in the world. What are the ten? Wealth is desirable, pleasing and charming, but hard to achieve in the world. Beauty..., health..., virtues..., holy religious life..., true friends..., erudition...wisdom...genuine Dhamma... to be born in heavens......—each of these things is desirable, pleasing and charming, but hard to achieve.

_Imesam bhikkhave dasamam dhammaṁ iṭṭhāṁ kantānāṁ manāpānāṁ dullabhānāṁ lokasmiṁ dasa dhamma paripanthā. Katame daha? Alassam anuṭṭhānam bhogānam paripanthen, amañḍanā avibhūsanam vanṇassa paripanthen, asappāyakiriyā ārogyassa paripanthen._


pāpamittatabhā silānaṁ paripantho, indriya-asamvaro brahmacarīyaṁ paripantho, visarṇvādanā mittānaṁ paripantho, asajjhāya kariyā bāhusaccassā paripantho, asussusa aparipuccha paññāya paripantho, ananuyogo apaccavekkhanā dhammānaṁ paripantho, micchāpatipatti saggānaṁ paripantho.52

This means: “Bhikkhu to these ten things desirable, pleasing and charming and hard to achieve in the world, ten things are obstacles. What tens? Laziness and lack of activity is the obstacle to wealth. Lack of finery and lack of adornment are the obstacles to beauty. Following unhygienic ways is the obstacle to health. Association with persons of foul character is the obstacle to virtues. Unrestraint of senses is the obstacle to life of holy celibacy. Deceiving is the obstacle to friends. Lack of recitation and re-reading is the obstacle to erudition. Not to listen and not to ask questions is the obstacle to wisdom. Lack of practice and contemplation is the obstacle to achievement of true Dhamma. Getting on to evil way is the obstacle to birth in heavens.”

A person who expects to achieve success either in the worldly or in the religious life should get out of and avoid these obstacles and follow the way of growth and success as follows: The Buddha said:

Dasahi bhikkhave vaṭṭhīhi vaṭṭhamano ariyasāvako ariyāya vaṭṭhiya vaṭṭhati sāradāyi ca hoti varādāyi kāyassa. Katamehi dasahi? Khettavatthāhi vaṭṭhati, dhana dhaññena vaṭṭhati, puttadārehi vaṭṭhati, dāsakammakāraporisehi vaṭṭhati, catuppadehi vaṭṭhati, saddhāya vaṭṭhati sīlена vaṭṭhati, sutena vaṭṭhati, cāgema vaṭṭhati paññāya vaṭṭhati.53

This means: “By increasing in ten growths the Ariyan disciple—a noble lay follower of a Buddha grows in the Ariyan growth, takes hold of the essential, takes hold of the best for his person. What tens? He grows in

landed property, in wealth and granny, children and wife in servants and workmen, in four-footed beasts (i.e. cattle and sheep): he grows in faith, and virtue, in erudition and in generosity and wisdom.”

From these words of the Buddha, it is very clear that he has valued the laymen’s growth in wealth and every aspect of family life as an Aryan growth. The Buddha saw the world as a school of many forms and gave his instructions suitable to the mental levels of his hearers. One day a poor Brahmin came to the Buddha and said “Master Gautama, I am a poor person and am going to a distant city seeking a job with a view to earn some wealth. Will you kindly give me some instruction in order to be successful in my job.” The Buddha agreed and instructed him on the way to success in his works. Some time passed and the Brahmin returned as a man of riches.54

On another occasion the Buddha on his tour of service to the world arrived at a village called Vejudvāra gāma. The villagers came to him and said “Buddha, we are householders following varied jobs for maintenance of our families, and thereby we are full of responsibilities. We have no time to devote to higher religious practices. We expect from you some instructions for two things, to live our present life in peace and to be born into a happy state after death.” The Buddha saw their mental tendency and gave an instruction suiting their need.55

**Buddhism and Global Economy**

After discussing various aspects of Buddhist viewpoint regarding wealth and poverty, and, some special features of economic system provided by Buddhism we shall arrive on emerging socio-economic structure of this ‘global- village’ to examine the relevance of economic structure provided by Buddhism in present millennium.

---

The present millennium is termed as the 'Post-modern era'. Basically the term 'modern' means to be 'up to date', so it has a time related meaning which mainly consists in a thrust for change' and 'non-tradition'. This thrust for change should not be confused with that of Buddhism as in Buddhism the concept of change and impermanence has a philosophical base which gives birth to value oriented thinking while the concept of change in modernity is originated by the power of science and technology and a strong defying attitude towards all existing ideologies.

Philosophically the seeds of post-modernity can be traced out basically in the heart of modern western philosophy, beginning in the period of renaissance with the writings of thinkers like Francis Bacon. It further developed in two parallel but rival streams of thinking having radically opposed objectives: Rationalism, which emphasizes solely upon the internal and rational world of man, and, Empiricism, that is concerned only with the outer world of experience. Though in later times Immanuel Kant made great attempt to reconcile these rival plans, he could not overcome the dichotomy which eventually has tremendous impact, particularly after the development of the two rival philosophies of Hegelian idealism and Marxian Dialectic Materialism. This dichotomy resulted in the clumsy picture of post modernity which has radically opposed colours. Due to inclusion of such contradictions, the post-modernity is running, at present, under the risk of being understood as 'anarchical'. The present millennium is challenged by the waves of 'Deconstructionism' which is constantly overtaking the well established system of human understanding. Hence, the present millennium may be characterized philosophically, as 'Endism'.

Globalization is the latest programme of this post modern world. It has some features in prominence. At its core it is an economic programme based upon science and technology bringing rapid growth in trade, investment and capital market which are tying countries together. Globalization can be translated into deregulation and privatization. It claims
that low cost communication and information technology is webbing a
global community which is the member of a global village.

The present picture of this economic programme does not give much
assurance for an insured and beautiful future. This globalization, definitely,
opens a door for economic growth and enhances the prosperity of
particular class but at the same time it frustrates the deprived class. The
entire world society has continued to run under an uneven social, economic
and political structure throughout the history. “The globalization cannot
provide equal opportunity to all; hence it goes against the demand of
economic and social equality primarily, and derivatively against the value-
based demands of Indian ideologies like ‘vasudhaiva kutumbakam’, which
means that the entire world is like a family and each and every person of
this ‘family’ should share his weal and woes together.”

The present millennium is an era of science and technology. During
this period economy is based upon science and technology. As technology
demands a strong unified effort towards a definite goal, it compels a person
to eliminate each and every thing which is not useful in own interest. This
kind of ‘pragmatism’ presents a dark view of technology which converts
each and every thing, including human relations, into a consumer good and
starts destroying the human values, individual relationship, and further the
emotional life of a man. As we know, man is a rational animal, but this
rationality can never be explained only in terms of ‘reason’ or ‘intelligence’
because the world ‘rational’ denote s a balanced attitude between reason
and emotion. These are value-oriented emotions which differentiate a man
from a beast or a computer like machine. Furthermore, the world of human
being is a colourful spectrum of human relationship expressed in the fine
network of social structures. Family is the basic unit of society. The
destruction of emotional life and harsh pragmatic values are creating a
chaos-like situation in society as well as in the family life of a person. This
destruction of emotional and family life is destroying the unified personality

of a man as the human personality is the sum total of three factors knowledge, action and imbalanced also.

These are the vast challenges thrown by the era of post modernity. These are also some questions. The 19th century has often been discussed as a ‘century of nationalism’ and the 20th century of ‘national conflict’; will 21st century be called as an era of internationalism’ due to its more attempts for Global Governance’? Or, shall we see a reassertion of ethnic and religious conflicts? One can be reasonably sure that the institutions of international economic cooperation already set up will continue to be active, but, would they be based upon principles like ‘aid’ and charity’ or in Buddhist terminology, principles like ‘cāga’ and dāna’ and not on principle of ‘give and take’? then what will be the fate of so-called ‘third world countries’ who have spent much of their energies on seeking and managing aid from organizations like world bank etc.? Experience shows that cooperative institutions, like the World Bank, the world trade organization, world health organization will survive and so called third world countries will also continue to be the members of these organizations having much pressure from the side of rich or powerful countries without having any option of step-out. Experience also shows that not only the economic but political, social, cultural and all other policies of these ‘poor countries’ will be influenced by the policies of these ‘master countries’ to a considerable extent.

Now, how can these poor countries may acquire or may maintain their political, economic, cultural and other sovereignty? In these circumstances it seems that the days of aid or ‘concessional credit’ are numbered and self reliance or doing without aid and concessional assistance is no longer a matter of choose but that of necessity. If these countries do not do so of their own accord they will have to be ready for worst consequence like super imposition of ‘master mind’.

When we come outside economic to the arena of international peace and security the picture emerges gloomier. It is not clear that the UN, as
structured as present, can be an honest broker in ethnic conflicts or in ensuring adherence to human rights; and, yet with the UN we have at least some forum for mobilizing world public opinion (even if it does not always succeed in safeguarding the interests of humanity), we cannot think about the existence of UN in future without being unduly optimistic.

The present global world may be defined as a ‘world of homogeneous consumptionin’—a world in which the people consume same type of food, every society employs the same technology, depends on the same centrally managed economy, offers the same western education to their children and so on. Indeed, this system is based on very narrow view of human needs and motivation. It is concerned almost exhaustively with monetary transactions and largely ignores such non-material aspects of life and spiritual values. Indeed, the globalization is destroying gradually the cultural diversities and philosophies of so-called ‘third world countries’ which are dependents on more local factors of culture, society and economics and are bringing monoculture.

In these difficult circumstances the philosophical foundations of Buddhism provide intellectual as well as spiritual tools against this artificially constructed techno-sphere and its corrupt economic system. The concept of four brahmavihāra state in Buddhism, which more ethical than metaphysical or religious, may illuminate the path of humanity. Samajīvikata, as mentioned and discussed above, also provides a golden rule for economic independence as well as others three (ārakkasampadā etc.) provide some rules for proper and dignified life. The wind of globalization must blow over Asia and the world as well because it has some programmes of prosperity, but, it must have a value oriented face and soul.

In fact, economic policies are not impervious to space and time. On the contrary there are certain constants in human nature and human societies which give meaning to the search of appropriate policies. During the last two decades a certain consensus on economic policies is emerging
around the world and it may be useful to set down some of the philosophical and theoretical insight on which much of current economic thinking is based. The major insight and conclusions one can draw from them may be summed up as follows:

a) Though most human beings are driven by their own perception of their economic self interest, the noble instincts of service and cooperation are there and need to be encouraged.

b) The factor of self interest argues in favour of private property, at the same time the factor of noble instinct of service argues in favour of social well-being and charity. The economic structure provided by Buddhism is very relevant from both of the sides as it sanctions private property on one hand and it goes for charity on the other.

c) It is instinct of survival as an expression of self-interest that encourages competition which makes for efficiency at the individual and the social level. That’s why the globalization thinks that competition should be encouraged by policy and attempts at collision or restrictive behaviour must thwarted by law. Further, free and unfettered competition also requires a general condition of law and order, and, a peace and a framework of legal control. The role of state is important in this sphere. Buddhism, though it favours private property, sanctions direct control of state in trading.

d) Some inequality is also inherent in economic growth which is counterproductive on the one hand and raises poverty in society on the other. However, higher rate of growth raises living standard at all levels is the most potent factor in reducing poverty.

But how can the growth rate be enhanced in a manner that it may give rise to the economic status of a country, or the entire world in even structure and every man may be benefited equally by this growth rate as a new explanation. The answer is simple: when value is added to skill, it gives tremendous result to society and then the social growth takes place in rapid manner. Obviously, the economy grows rapidly because social growth is some total of various developments including economical growth. Here it
must also be remembered that the total growth of a society cannot be measured only on the scale of economy, rather, it is measured on the scale of general living conditions of the common mass. The societies that place great emphasis on education, health, nutrition, irrigation, power and transport, hard work and national pride have greater social growth.

In this context the economic structure advocated by Buddhism, somehow presents a balanced substitute, but in changing circumstances it needs a little modification as well. However, in the context of the rising demand of ethical foundation for the present economic structure of global world which may support its practical as well as theoretical demands.

Ethics and Politics

Mahatma Gandhi said, "Politics without principles is danger to human virtues." Politics is the science of government; it describes the structure and functions of government. It is a normative science. It seeks to prescribe laws and organize institutions and regulate the conduct of individuals with a view to realizing public good or utility. Government is an institution devised by men for their welfare. Politics aiming at public good is intimately connected with ethics, which determines the supreme good the individual. A government based on ethical principles can be the only successful one in bringing about welfare of the masses.

"Man is political animal", Aristotle said. Man is always a member of some kind of community or political organization. Moral life is not lived apart from the State. It is always lived in some sort of political organization. Moral life, though not identical with political life, is a part of it. Moral conduct is intimately connected with political life. Right and duties are maintained by the State. Virtues are relative to the State. So Ethics is related to Politics. The word 'State' in English is similar to and practically identical with the term 'Rattha' in the Pâli language, which means a reign,
kingdom, empire, country, or realm. According to Buddhist Scriptures, the state is not an independent thing, such as the ruler, government, or land, but the combination of the four important elements: the territory, people, government, and sovereignty or independence. The concept of the state in the Buddha's time consisted of four elements just as we find in the modern concept of the state. Mahāvagga of Vinaya Piṭaka says about the Magadha state held his sovereignty over eighty thousand townships. Mahavagga of Vinaya Piṭaka says about the Magadha state held his sovereignty over eighty thousand townships. Dhammapada Commentary says; “The total area of the state was 300 leagues and the area of the capital city Rājagaha was three miles (tīgāvutām).” It is to be noticed that the concept of the states might be well known in the sense of country or kingdom even before the Buddha's appearance.

The Buddha did not speak of the ideal government or ideal state because he recognized the legitimacy of every political system. He did not regard the political system as a prime factor. The spirit of the politician who exercised power was most important. The ruler of the state should run the state for the common good, the benefit and happiness of the people. The state, according to the Buddha, is nothing more than a place to seek the truth and wellbeing of the people. The ruler or the group of rulers, thus, is an agency consisting of the people who have ability to help the subjects to attain the highest aim of life. State in Buddhism, thus, is different from the definitions mentioned above. It lays special emphasis on the ethical and moral aspects. The Buddha's ideas on the state involve the following distinct aspects: the origin of the state, the rulers of the state and their virtue.

Construction of an Ideal Socio-Political System

This is a well established fact that human society is nothing but a network of human relations, expressed in fine network of different social organizations. During the course of evolution a change in human

relationship, and in this way in society, take place. In this sense society is perennial state of flux. Since human society is primarily a system of human relationship, social changes are primarily conceived in these relations and then are presented in the social organizations, which constitute the units of human society.

The Buddha’s words collected in the Buddhist Scriptures reflect the division of society into four vanṇa. Cūḷavagga in Vinaya Piṭaka mentions thus:

Just, O monks, as the great rivers, that is to say, the Gaṅgā, the Yamunā, the Aciravatī, the Sarabhū, and the Mahī, when they have fallen into the great ocean, renounce their names and lineages and are then forth reckoned as the great ocean. Just so, O monks, do these four vanṇa, the Kattiya, (kshatriya) the brahmaṇa (Brahman), the Vessa (vasiya) and the Sudda (Sudra), when they have gone forth from the world under the doctrine and discipline proclaimed by the Tathāgata, renounce their name and lineage and enter into the member of Samanas (monks) the son of Sakya.  

The statement mentioned above indicated that in the Buddha’s time the Indian society was constituted by mainly these four classes—warrior class (Khattiya), priestly class (brahmaṇa), business class (Vassa) and worker class (Sudda) but the Saṅgha organization became a new classless society with a new mode of life based on rules of equality. These classes were bound in a social hierarchy. Social distinctions between these classes were also rigid. Though society had much material comfort, all prosperity, luxury, status and comforts were enjoyed either by upper class or by strong people of the society.

---

The political condition in the Buddha’s time was not complex. It was divided into two, the monarchies and the republics. Of the sixteen great states, some were dependent and some were independent. The sixteen sovereign powers are enumerated in *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. These are considered as the fundamental base of political divisions. The list of states in *Aṅguttara Nikāya* runs as follows: “Aṅga, Magadha, Kāsi, Kosala, Vaijī, Malla, Ceti, Vaṅga, Kuru, Pañcāla, Maccha, Sūrasena, Assaka, Avanti, Gandhāra, Kamboja.” It is called *solas mahājanapada* at the time of Buddha. Politically, India had two types of states: Republic and Monarchy. Vaijī, a republic was formed by the union of several classes. Vaijī were famous for their seven conditions (*satta aparihāṇiya dhamma*) that lead to prosperity of country. Its capital was Vasali. A popular assembly and some elders carried-on the business of the state. Malla was the next republic which has almost the same political structure. There are also some other little republic like sakya of Kapilvathtu, which was the birthplace of Siddhāttha Gotama. Besides theses, there were four great kingdoms: Avanti, Vaṅga, Kosala and Magadha. There was a sharp difference between the life style of the ruler and that of the common class. Ruler class lived in cities while common-men lived in village. Nagara-town had major civil amenities as compared with village like parks, dancing halls, gambling house etc.

In a nutshell society was, then, not in an ideal condition as it had many social evils, but the Buddha neither pointed out directly socio-political evils nor suggested anything regarding the restructure of this socio-political system. What was the reason? It seems that the Buddha thought that a social change, as well as political one comes by peaceful means of morals of the people. Probably he believed in the phrase that a community develops a system according to its own understanding of life, and further that, not other system can forcibly be imposed on a society from outside. This is the reason why the Buddha emphasized on moral habits and practice rather than suggesting a different socio-political structure.

---

Buddhism emphasizes an interdependence of individual perfection and society. On the one hand society is made up of people who depend on the social structure for their well being, while on the other, the moral or physical structure of society depends on the quality and quantity of the people by which it is constituted. Each person should take social responsibilities for the well being of the society and its development. Responsibilities vary according to mental, physical and social status of a person. But however, every person is responsible to society for his own deeds and for his own well-being. One must extend his helping hands to the fellow community members. One should always be in a friendly position for his companions. The Buddha says:

“How guarding oneself, does one guard others? By practice, by development, by continuous exercise; in this way, one guarding oneself, also guards others. And how guarding others, does one guarding oneself? By tolerance, by non-violence, by having a mind full of loving-kindness, by care; in this way, one guarding other also guards oneself. Kathañca bhikkhave attānarām rakkhanto paraṁ rakkhati? Āsevana, bhāvanāya, bahulikammena. Kathañca bhikkhave paraṁ rakkhanto attānarām rakkhat? Khantiya, avihimsāya, mettacittatāya, anudāyatāya.62

Not only layman but also monks have to bear social responsibilities. In Buddhism both the classes –laity as well as Monastery – are the constituent units of the society. Monastic society depends on laity for his spiritual perfection and for the other physical needs like food etc. In the same manner the laity depends upon monastery for their spiritual well-being. Hence, the monastery has to teach the Dhamma to the laity. By this manner every stage of personal perfection of a monk is beneficial for society.

The general well-being of society depends on its social and political structure. The ruler and common men both are expected to do their duties for each other. They are also expected to put the virtues and duties in actual practice for making of a good society.

Political Ethics in Buddhism

In Buddhism there is mention of principles of government. For instance, one of the duties of an emperor is to share wealth to the needy. Buddhism recognizes the importance of wealth in worldly society. Poverty and need are important causes of crimes and social evils, and it is considered the responsibility of the state or government to look after and apportion wealth to poor citizens and to remove poverty from the land. To do this, many methods are required, in keeping with each situation, especially creating opportunities for the people to pursue honest livelihoods, giving career support, allocating funds and equipment, as well as preventing and controlling unfair and wrongful methods, exploitation, etc. We can see from the Buddhist viewpoint that the state has a major role in the economy, unlike the economics of liberalism in which the state has only a minor economic role.

Seven conditions leads to prosperity of a country. The Buddha admired some of the tribal republics of his day. At one time, he said that the Vajjian republic would flourish if the people continued to:

i) Hold regular and frequent assemblies’.

ii) Meet in harmony, break up in harmony, and carry out business in harmony’.

iii) Not authorise what has not been authorised, but proceed according to what has been authorised by their ancient tradition’.

iv) Honour, respect, revere and salute the elders among them, and consider them worth listening to’.

v) Not forcibly abduct others’ wives and daughters and compel them to live with them’.

vi) Honour, respect, revere and salute the Vajjian shrines at home and abroad, not withdrawing the proper support made and given before’.
vii) Make proper provision for the safety of Arahats, so that such Arahats may come in future to live there, and those already there may dwell in comfort.

It may be observed that the seven conditions of national welfare contain many ideas such as freedom, fraternity, human right, culture and ancient custom. In the beginning the frequent public assemblies supported the ideas of freedom to discuss, express and criticize the state affairs every day. It was very easy to find what should be corrected or what should be started or finished. Everything was approved by the majority of the members.

The second condition of the national welfare promoted the ideas of integrity and mutual undertaking. To consider any matter, a meeting should be held. The members should have concurrence, co-operation and mutual help in carrying out state affairs.

The third conditions emphasized the maintenance of good custom and culture. It is not appropriate to abrogate the ancient regulations which contributed to the well-being of the modern society.

The fourth emphasis was to honour elders. It is true that elder scholars have much expertise and experience of life. To esteem and honour them enables the modern generation to understand that the present phenomena are something resulting from former phenomena.

The fifth condition gives the idea of women’s rights which is valid up to now. The Buddha can be said to be the first man of the East who raised the issue of women’s rights and tried to protect them. By nature, the women are weak but they carry a lot of burdens in their lives. They are not mere slaves of men to serve them and give them pleasure; they have actually given birth to men. It would not be wrong to say that women have not been the slaves of men, but the owners of men’s lives. To injure women by force or abduction is condemned. On the contrary to love and be kind towards them is praised.

The two last conditions give the idea of dealing with the faith of the former generation. The holy men coming from distant places to the state

---

should be welcomed and given hospitality, and provided with the four conditions of life viz., food, clothes, residence and medicine. It also suggests freedom of preaching. The state should give them this opportunity because they are all preaching a righteous way of life to the people.

One can see these as the principles of respecting collective decision making, concord, tradition, elders, women, religion, and holy men and women. The importance of these social principles was such that he saw them, or adapted versions of them, as ensuring the flourishing of the monastic Saṅgha. Nevertheless, the Buddha could see that the days of the tribal republics were numbered, as they were gradually being swallowed up by new, expanding kingdoms. Indeed, he saw the falling away from the above principles as the thing that would allow them to be overwhelmed by these kingdoms.

**King’s Duties and an Ideal Quality of King**

According to *Aggañña Sutta*, the first ruler was entitled ‘Mahā Sammata’ because he was chosen by the whole people. He also was called Khattiya or lord of the fields. His last name was Rājā because he charms the others by the Norm or Dhamma. It is noticed that the first duty of the ruler would be to resolve conflict among the people, to divide the fields and to distribute the fields to the people with justice. Everybody respected and obeyed him. They saw him as the lord of the fields who was helpful to them.64 Lord of fields is rendered by “Khattiya” in the Pāli language.

He preserved the peace and settled the conflicts among the people by way of Dhamma. So the word Khattiya or lord of the fields was the next expression to denote the ruler. He worked for the people through practicing virtue, morality and justice. He was not removed by the people but on the contrary because of his charm, the norm or virtue mentioned above, and his functions made people satisfied. He was entitled Rājā. It

---

means one who gives pleasure. So this was the third standing phrase of the world for calling the ruler in Buddhist Scriptures. Of these words Khatiya and Rāja were employed generally in the Buddhist Scriptures. Khatiya is mostly used for explanation of the king's status. But the position of the ruler is mostly expressed through the word Rāja. In Buddhist Scriptures and their Commentary, the word Rāja was used to denote the ruler both in a republic and a monarchy.

The Pāli-English Dictionary explains the etymology of the word Rāja as “Dhammena pare Rañjeti’ti Rāja meaning he gladdens other with his righteousness.”65 We find it is used as a designation of king in the sense of an elected or hereditary monarch but also to imply a distinguished nobleman, or a local chieftain, or a prince with various attributes characterizing his position according to special functions. From the meaning of the word “Rājā” we are informed about the origin and the functions of the ruler along with the origin of the state. These all originated from the public consent. They, it is said, were based on social contract theory.

Some personal qualities such as high personality and ability have also been prescribed. Aggañña Sutta mentioned the quality of king. The qualities of the ruler were enumerated as follows:

Then, Vāsetṭha, those beings went to the being among them who was the handsomest, the best looking, the most pleasant and capable and: asked to him: Come now, good being, criticize those who should rightly criticize, censure those who should rightly deserve it, and banish him who deserved banishment.66

According to the Sutta the ruler possessed special qualities revered by the members of the society. Those elected as rulers would be good looking, favoured, and capable to decide justly the socio-economic problems. He, after having been elected, had to perform his duties on the basis of constitution issued by the agreement of the whole people. He should be powerful, in command of an army, loyal and disciplined, burning

up, methinks his enemies by his every glory. He should be learned in all kinds of knowledge. Its main basis was right action of the ruler.

In the days of the Buddha, as today, there were rulers who governed their countries unjustly. People were oppressed and exploited, tortured and persecuted, excessive taxes were imposed and cruel punishments were inflicted. The Buddha was deeply moved by these inhumanities. The Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā Records that he, therefore, directed his attention to the problem of good government. His views should be appreciated against the social, economic and political background of his time. He had shown how a whole country could become corrupt, degenerate and unhappy when the heads of its government, that is the king, the ministers and administrative officers become corrupt and unjust. For a country to be happy it must have a just government. How this form of just government could be realized is explained by the Buddha in his teaching of the 'Ten Duties of the King' (Dasa Rājadhamma), as given in the Jātaka text.

The Ten Duties of the King, therefore, apply today to all those who constitute the government, such as the head of the state, ministers, political leaders, legislative and administrative officers, etc. The duties of king are:

1. The first of the 'Ten Duties of the King' is liberality, generosity, charity (dāna). The ruler should not have craving and attachment to wealth and property, but should give it away for the welfare of the people.

2. The second is that a high moral character (sīla). He should never destroy life, cheat, steal and exploit others, commit adultery, utter falsehood, and take intoxicating drinks. That is, he must at least observe the Five Precepts of the layman.

3. The third duty is that sacrificing everything for the good of the people (pariccāga), he must be prepared to give up all personal comfort, name and fame, and even his life, in the interest of the people.
4. The fourth king's duty is that honesty and integrity (ajjava). He must be free from fear or favour in the discharge of his duties, must be sincere in his intentions, and must not deceive the public.

5. The fifth is that kindness and gentleness (maddava). He must possess a genial temperament.

6. The sixth is that austerity in habits (tapa). He must lead a simple life, and should not indulge in a life of luxury. He must have self-control.

7. The seventh duty is that freedom from hatred, ill-will, enmity (akkodha). He should bear no grudge against anybody.

8. The eighth duty is that non-violence (avihimsa), which means not only that he should harm nobody, but also that he should try to promote peace by avoiding and preventing war and everything which involves violence and destruction of life.

9. The ninth duty is that patience, forbearance, tolerance, understanding (khanti). He must be able to bear hardships, difficulties and insults without losing his temper.

10. The final tenth is that non-opposition, non-obstruction (avirodha), that is to say that he should not oppose the will of the people, should not obstruct any measures that are conducive to the welfare of the people. In other words he should rule in harmony with his people.  

The king must perform the five duties of a supreme ruler, called the Cakkavatti Vattu:

(i) **Dhammādhipateyya**: holding the Dhamma supreme; he adheres to truth, righteousness, goodness, reason, principle and rightful rules and regulations as standards; he respects, upholds, favors and establishes himself in righteousness and practices accordingly.

---

(ii) *Dhammikārakkha*: providing righteous protection; he provides fair protection to all groups of people in the land, i.e., the royal household, the military, administrative officials, civil servants, academics and people of various occupations such as merchants and farmers, country people and inhabitants of the border provinces, monks and priests who uphold moral conduct, and even beasts and birds requiring conservation.

(iii) *Mā adhammakāra*: prohibiting unrighteous actions; he arranges preventive and remedial measures, not allowing unrighteous actions, exploitation, oppression, corruption, or unrest to arise in the country; he encourages the people to establish themselves firmly in honesty and virtue and also establishes a system that excludes bad people and promotes good ones.

(iv) *Dhanamanuppadeyya*: distributing resources to the poor; he ensures that there are no poverty-stricken people in the land by, for example, arranging that all people have a chance to make an honest living.

(v) *Paripucchayya*: not failing to seek counsel; he seeks advancement in wisdom and virtue by having advisors who are learned and virtuous, who are morally upright and not heedless or self-indulgent, and who can help him to cultivate his wisdom and wholesome qualities; he approaches monks and wise men and queries them to seek knowledge, goodness and truth; he discusses various problems with them at regular and appropriate times so that he may examine and improve himself and carry out his duties rightfully, properly and so as to bring about true welfare and happiness.\(^{68}\)

---

The ruler supports the people, allowing them to live in unity and harmony with the four *catusaṅgaha vatthu* (principles by which a king supports his people):

i. *Sassamedha*: shrewdness in promoting agriculture; he is skilled in agronomic policies and promotes agricultural activity which brings about bountiful crop yields.

ii. *Purisamedha*: shrewdness in promoting government officials; he is clever at making policies for supporting government officials by, for example, encouraging honest and capable officials and providing them with adequate social benefits.

iii. *Sammāpāsa*: bonding the people together; he assists the people with policies that support their livelihood by, for example, providing funds from which the poor may borrow to set themselves up in commerce or start business operations, thereby eliminating an economic disparity that is so wide as to cause rifts among the people.

iv. *Vācāpeyya*: impressive speech; he knows how to speak, clarify and advise; he takes an interest in greeting people of all levels and inquiring about their welfare; his speech is pleasant to the ear, worth listening to, reasoned, well-founded and useful; it leads the way to constructive action, to solution of problems, to increased harmony, and to mutual understanding, trust and respect.\(^69\)

**Fivefold khattiyabala (five strengths of a monarch):** These are the five strengths of a monarch:

(i) A monarch requires the strength of arms (*bāhu bala*)
(ii) A monarch requires the strength of wealth (*bhoga bala*)
(iii) A monarch requires the strength of ministers (*amassa bala*)
(iv) A monarch requires the strength of ancestry (*abhijacca bala*)

A monarch requires the strength of wisdom (*paññā bala*)

Among these five ‘the strength of wisdom’ is the most important. The ruler also wanted fulfillments —*sampatti*. They are essential to development for his country and people. *Udāna Aṭṭhakathā* mentioned seven fulfillments which were wished by all the kings. They are:

1. *Sāmi sampatti* — endowed with king’s virtues.
2. *Amassa sampatti* — endowed with ministers.
5. *Vibhava sampatti* — endowed with resources.
7. *Dugga sampatti* — endowed with fort.

The ruler is not only a manager of social welfare but he must observe the precepts and purify his mind daily. His virtues are the instruments of his legitimacy. According to the Buddha, *Dhamma* should be the main criterion of decision of what is right and what is wrong. The state is not an ideal state but rather a real state, because the state administration, which leads to prosperity and glory, can be realized and rationalized.

If a country is ruled by men endowed with such qualities, it is needless to say that that country must be happy. But this was not a Utopia for there were kings in the past like Asoka of India who had established kingdoms based on these ideas.

The world today lives in constant fear, suspicion, and tension. Science has produced weapons which are capable of unimaginable destruction. Brandishing these new instruments of death, great powers threaten and challenge one another, boasting shamelessly that one could cause more destruction and misery in the world than the other. They have gone along this path of madness to such a point that, now, if they take one
more step forward in that direction, the result will be nothing but mutual annihilation along with the total destruction of humanity. Human beings in fear of the situation they have themselves created, want to find a way out, and seek some kind of solution. But there is none except that held out by the Buddha—his message of non-violence and peace, of love and compassion, of tolerance and understanding, of truth and wisdom, of respect and regard for all life, of freedom from selfishness, hatred and violence. The Buddha says: 'Never by hatred is hatred appeased, but it is appeased by kindness. This is an eternal truth.'

One should win anger through kindness, wickedness through goodness, selfishness through charity, and falsehood through truthfulness.

There can be no peace or happiness for man as long as he desires and thirsts after conquering and subjugating his neighbour. As the Buddha says: 'The victor breeds hatred, and the defeated lies down in misery. He who renounces both victory and defeat is happy and peaceful.'

The only conquest that brings peace and happiness is self-conquest. 'One may conquer millions in battle, but he who conquers himself, only one, is the greatest of conquerors.'

### An Ideal Quality of Minister

After discussion of king's duties and qualities, now it is the time to mention ministers' qualities. Ministers also play an important role in the state. One important function of the ruler in ancient time was decision making in state affairs. In so doing it was impossible to work alone. It was necessary to seek the advice of those who were expert in any branch of state affairs. In Buddhist Scriptures the significance of the advisor is raised to the level of great power.

---

72 Dhammapa, verse, 5.
73 Ibid. verse, 223.
74 Ibid. verse, 201.
75 Ibid. verse, 103.
Mahāsudassana sutta mentioned seven precious gems (Satta Ratana). The last seventh treasure is Parināyaka Ratana. The word Parināyaka has been explained in the Pāli Dictionary as a leader, a guide, an adviser. In the Mahāsudassana sutta Rhys Davids translates Parināyaka as adviser. Tesakuna Jātaka also describes how to appoint the advisor and the result of doing so “Take as counselors men that are wise, thy interest clearly to see.” The wise men are well known as those who are experts and have insight into various kinds of state affairs. They are important sources of wisdom. In the same Jātaka, wisdom is supposed to be the way of happiness. The deeds of the wise man do not make both himself and the society suffer. In fact the ruler cannot know and analyse all the situations which come up in state affairs. If the wise are appointed in every position of state affairs, they can clearly analyse situations to know what should be done. When the ruler considers the significance of the wise in this way, the wise should not only be promoted but also beloved and cared for by the ruler. It is the duty of the ruler to provide facilities for earning livelihood and to encourage people to acquire greater ability and potentiality.

Buddhism points out the dangers caused by foolish men and women who lead the ruler and the kingdom to ruin. For the fool, Tandulanāli Jātaka said that a fool in high office can bring shame even to a king. Study virtue for every vice leads to a state full of suffering and woe. Such people will also shamelessly destroy the honour of the city. On the other hand, the uneducated men and the men of evil, greedy disposition are obstacles to the development of the state. If such men are appointed as state officials, they will become corrupt because of self-interest. They can even do things which bring suffering to the people. This is a truth that can be seen in the long history of political systems. Minister should be endowed with these:

1. He should be a listener (sotā).
2. He makes others listen (sāvetā).

3. He should be a learner (uggahetā)
4. He should be a bearer of the learnt (dhāretā).
5. He takes knowledge into heart (viññātā).
6. He could give knowledge to others (viññāpetā).
7. He is skilled in non-conformity from conformity (kusala sahitā ahitā).
8. He is non-quarreller (na kalahakārakā).

The man endowed with these eight things is suitable to be given authority to perform some duty.

The minister should be endowed with morality, must be knowledgeable and honesty. “The king like and praise minister who know his gratitude, have courage or brave, who is very clever and wisdom, who have ever mindfulness.” The need of ministers or leaders is truth or promise. “Truth is the highest taste —saccam have sādutaram rasānam.” “If you keep your word, your fame will spread far away —saccena kattim pappoti.” “The minister or leader need walk the walk talk the talk —yathävādi tathākārī, yathākārī tathāvādī.” The qualities of leader are: saccā —truth, Dhamma —law, dhāti —fear from hesitate, cāga —ready to sacrifice.

The leader also should speak in proper way and time. Even though he is eighty years old or ninety years old or hundred years old, he can be called as foolish man if he speaks improper way. In regarding this the Buddha said in Aṅguttara Nikāya, “There may be elders of eighty years, ninety years or even a hundred years from birth, talking, at the improper time, not the real and the not essential. Talk that is not the Teaching and the discipline, words without a limit and location and could not be treasured. They go to the category of foolish elders.”

Corruption: Social Evil and State Leaders

Nowadays corruption can be seen everywhere. It is like cancer in public life, which has not become so rampant and perpetuated overnight, but in course of time. Is it possible to contain corruption in our society? Corruption is a cancer, which everyone must strive to cure. Many new leaders when come into power declare their determination to eradicate corruption but soon they themselves become corrupt and start amassing huge wealth.

Many People become materialistic and money oriented, there is no important of ethics and morals in business dealings. Many people thinking that money which coming to their pocket is good, same way many thinking that money which going out from their pocket is bad, but they don’t consider the way money traveling. This is because these kinds of people have no moral accountability to anybody; and these kind have people have full trust on money, they strongly believing that money can hold big role in their life, they believing that money can solve their current and future problems, they believing that money can give them life without problems.

The causes of corruption are many and complex. Following are some of the causes of corruption.

1. *Lobha* – greedy, carving something, this could be wealth and materialism.
2. *Dosa* – anger, engaging in some form of hatred or a lack of compassion.
3. *Ahirika* – lack of moral shame
4. *Anotappa* – lack of moral dread
5. *Uddhicca* – restlessness and

All these are leading to suffering (*dukkha*) in the present life as well as the future life. Fundamentally, the corrupt official is also not in control of
his or her mind; the craving, desires, greed and ignorance dominate and torment the individual, poisoning his or her quality of life and the relationships with others.

India led a value-based is now facing the problem of corruption. Corruption is so popular in India. Now Anna Hazare is trying to root out corruption from country. It is not wonderful that corruption take place India because it had happened in ancient time. Now it is time to mention corruption from pāli literatures.

The Buddha narrated The *Bharu Jātaka* while residing at *jetavana* monastery in *sāvatthi*. This *Jātaka* refers to the corruption of the king and high-ranking officials at the time when the Buddha was honoured and revered. While he and his monks received rich presents – robes, food, shatter, medicine and provisions; but the pilgrims of heterodox schools were not honoured. The secretaries finding that their honour and gifts had diminished convened a secret meeting for deliberation. The meeting decided to give bribe the king and to get a good place for settlement in *sāvatthi*.

So by the intervention of his courtiers, they offered a hundred thousand pieces to the king with this message, “Great king, we want to make a rival settlement in Jetavana and they also pleaded not to answer the objections raised by the rival-Buddhists.” The king agreed, because he wanted the bribe. After thus conciliating with the king, the schismatic got an architect and put the work in hand. There was a good deal of noise about it.

“What is the noise and tumult, Ānanda?” the Buddha asked. The noise is some sectaries who are building a built near jetavana monastery. That is not a fit place because they are fond of noise. Buddha sent people to the king it stopped the building. As soon as he heard of their coming, the king, having already been bribed, pretended that he was not at palace. When the Buddha sent his tow chief disciples, the king did once again. Finally Buddha went to the king and impressed upon him how other kings
in old days after taking bribes had made virtuous people quarrel together, thus “leading to the ruin of the kingdom. He added: Great King, one should not be under the power of desire. The king, highly influenced by the sermon, sent some men to destroy the rival settlement. 86

_Tandulanāli Jātaka_ also told that how bribe damage the king and country. I would like to mention some paragraph from that Jātaka. The king asked appraise, “What is the value of this man’s five hundred horses?” “One measure of rice, Sire,” he replied. “Well, then, my friend,” asked the king, “If five hundred horses are worth one measure of rice, what is the value of that measure of rice?” of course, this fool had undervalued the horses to please the king, but having receiving the bribe, he now wanted to please the horse trader, so he declared, “Sire, it is worth all Baranasi and its suburbs.” 87

Buddhists consider that corruption is an unwholesome state of mind, which causes suffering, and contributes to an unhealthy society. It is important to challenge this behaviour with compassion and insight, guiding those individuals who can change their behaviour to do so. As this unwholesome condition arises in the mind, the transformation of the behaviour must also address knowing and guiding the mind. Such an effort may seem unattractive to a corrupt official, however, following a righteous and noble path is in itself rewarding, and brings real benefits, including inner happiness, self-respect, and the love of those around us. Where the individual is unable or unwilling to transform his or her behaviour, appropriate sanctions should be pursued to prevent such behaviour which erodes the moral integrity of the current society, and infects future generations and their chance for happiness. The path to freedom and happiness is built on strong ethical foundations, an accurate understanding of our own mental capacity, strengths and weaknesses, and the benefits of

rousing sufficient effort to improve our moral character, and the positive consequences that flow from this.

To eradicate corruption we require individuals who are incorruptible and undoubtedly, what produces such individuals is spirituality. There is saying that violence begins in the mind. This is true also of corruption: corruption begins in the mind. If we can alter our thinking, we can safely say that we shall have eradicated corruption by at least 50%. If a society is to be free of corruption, it has to be made up of evolved or at least evolving individuals who have fairly strong sense of what is right and what is wrong. This is the only solution to the problem of corruption.

Corruption is social evil; power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Better governance can at least help to check need-based corruption. Better governance can check greed based corruption also because punishment for the corrupt will be very effective and prompt in a better-governed country. The steps should be taken to correct the situation overall. Declarations of property and assets of the government employees are made compulsory and routine and surprise inspections and raids be conducted at certain intervals.

Though it seems very difficult to control corruption but it is not impossible. It is not only the responsibility of the government but ours too. We can eliminate corruption if there will be joint effort. We must have some high principles to follow so that we may be models for the coming generation. Let us take a view to create an atmosphere free from corruption. That will be our highest achievement as human beings.

Justice and Morals

According to Buddhism, the term for justice is dhamma, and its adjectival form, dhammika, is used to refer to whatever action that is "just." The Buddha's conception of justice had to emerge from his
understanding of the nature and status of both the individual and the society. After the advent of democracy, the meaning of justice has been expanded itself to cover almost all spheres of human life. Justice is the quality of being right and fair. Everyone has a right to justice. The concept of justice is a complex one. There are three important areas to the function of justice. It is used both of law and of social morality. On the one hand, justice is concerned with the order of society as a whole, and on the other, it is an expression of the rights of individuals in contrast to the claims of general social order. Finally, justice functions as conservative and reformative principle.

Plato, the great Greek thinker praised justice as one of the four virtues: wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice, to support the perfect state. According to Buddhism justice is the soul of the ruler’s function. The ruler should be careful to be fair to the people. Justice should not be based on the four wrong causes of Behaviour, by love, by hatred, by delusion, by fear. The ruler who has political, military, and judicial power in his hands should use his power with the spirit of righteousness. Mahāpaduma Jātaka\(^8\) says that the king’s duties in the court, when he decides some case, are to be performed with care and deliberation. The Buddha said to the king of Kosala, “My lord king, to judge a cause with justice and impartiality is the right thing.”\(^9\) Mahāhaṁsa jātaka describes justice as a cause of well-being and happiness through the conversation between the king of the geese and the king of Kasi as follows:

“Is your realm in happy case, from oppression free? Held by no arbitrary sway, but ruled with equity?” “Kacci raṭṭham anuppilam, akutociupaddavaṁ, asāhasena dhammena, samena manusāsasi.”

“My kingdom is in happy case, from oppression free, Held by no arbitrary sway, but ruled with equity.” “Atho raṭṭham anuppilam, akutociupaddavaṁ, asāhasena dhammena, samena manusāsam.”\(^9\)

King *Pasenadi Kosala* always sought Buddha’s advice on personal or political problems. In political affairs the Buddha very often delivered sermons on the maintenance of strictly high morals by the kings and higher officials who must never accept bribes and who should be strictly impartial in administration. Once at the king’s request, he told a story of the olden time known as *Rajovâda Jâtaka*, which concerned the matter of justice and moral conduct of the ruler.

In this story, he referred to *Brâhmadatta*, a king of *Vârânâsî* who was very famous for his just rule, and his sense of uprightness in administering justice. When, because of his just rule, people stopped coming to courts he started finding out if something was wrong in his rule. With this end he moved from place to place adopting various ways, at times, moving in disguise. But he found no fault in his rule. Now it so happened that during this time *Mallika*, the king of *Kosala*, had done this very same thing. He too was a just king, and he had been searching for his fault, but amongst them there was none who had any fault to find in him and he heard nothing but praise. He had been making inquiry throughout the country, then the two kings arrived at the same spot.

These two met in a place where the carriage-road was deeply sunk between two banks. There was no room for one carriage to pass another. When the question arose as to which carriage should give way to the other, the exchange of ideas between the two drivers is very instructive. When in all aspects such as age, territory, power, glory, both were found equal, the virtues of the respective kings worked as the last criteria to resolve the issue. Since the king of *Bânâres* was more virtuous the king of *Kosala* gave way to him.91

Oppression and arbitrary behaviour was considered as the root of social evil. It was a real cause of social suffering. It was supposed to be a great fetter which made humans suffers. In every society justice is needed

---

for defeating oppression. The story also tells about justice which the ruler should give to bad men and good men. The conversation runs as follows:

"Do you drive bad man out from the land, good man to honour raise, or do you righteousness eschew, to follow evil ways?" Kacci santo apacitā, asanto parivajjitā, no ce dhammaṃ niramkavā, adhammamanaṃvattasi.

"I drive bad man out from the land, good men to honour raise. All wickedness I do eschew and follow the righteous ways." Santo ca me apacitā, asanto parivajjitā. Adhammamanaṃvattāmi, adhammo niraṅkato.¹²

It is very proper for the ruler to encourage and support the man of virtue. The bad man, if allowed to live with others, naturally disturbs the society. It is necessary to isolate him from the society. This leads to jails to control the bad men. If one is dangerous to society he may also be banished to another place. The theme of the above verse is the concept of punishment and reward.

A Good Government

Having talked so much about the ideals of kingship in Buddhism, we must ask ourselves whether Buddhism considers monarchy itself as the ideal form of government. During the Buddha’s time there were a number of great kingdoms, in India, such as Magadha and Kosala. There were also a number of democratic states at the time. The Buddha has definitely expressed himself in favour of the democratic form of government and also expressed the view that it was a form of government which was conducive to the stability of society.

The Buddha had gone beyond all worldly affairs, but still gave advice on good government. The Buddha discussed the importance and the prerequisites of a good government. He showed how the country could

become corrupt, degenerate and unhappy when the head of the government becomes corrupt and unjust. He spoke against corruption and how a government should act based on humanitarian principles. The Buddha says that whether a nation is just and good depends on the conduct of the rulers:

“When the ruler of a country is just and good, the ministers become just and good, when the ministers are just and good, the higher officials become just and good, when the higher officials are just and good, the rank and file become just and good, when the rank and file become just and good, the people become just and good.”

According to the Sutta, the adverse occurrences of phenomena are due to the moral degeneration of man. It describes a chain of moral crisis starting from the kings (rulers) down to the ordinary people. And this moral crisis of man has a great impact on the patterns of environment.

In the Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta, the Buddha said that immorality and crime, such as theft, falsehood, violence, hatred, cruelty, could arise from poverty. Kings and governments may try to suppress crime through punishment, but it is futile to eradicate crimes through force. In the Kuṭadāṇḍa Sutta, the Buddha suggested economic development instead of force to reduce crime. The government should use the country’s resources to improve the economic conditions of the country. It could embark on agricultural and rural development; provide financial support to those who undertake an enterprise and business provide adequate wages for workers to maintain a decent life with human dignity.

Here it is also important to note that the Aggaṇīṇa Sutta of Dīgha Nikāya shows how man and nature are interdependent and inter-influential. When man became greedy, the nature became deteriorated due to man’s over-exploitation of nature.

---


When an administrator is carrying out his functions, he should not allow the four biases, or deviations from righteousness, to interfere:

(i) Chandāgati: biased conduct on account of like
(ii) Dosagati: biased conduct on account of dislike
(iii) Mohagati: biased conduct on account of delusion or foolishness
(iv) Bhayāgati: biased conduct on account of timidity and fear.

King is leader of the human beings —raja mukham manussānam. His conduct must be role model in our human society. The story of Ummādantī in the Jātaka illustrates leader’s conduct very well. The Bodhisattva was once born into the Royal family of the Sīvīs and in due time became the king of the Sīvī. One day while touring the city with his retinue he saw Ummādantī, one of the most beautiful women among the Sīvīs and fell in love with her at first sight. But to the chagrin of the king he learned that Ummādantī was already married.

The king felt quite ashamed of his sudden passion for a woman who was married, and kept the knowledge of it to himself, and tried his best to extinguish the flame of love which arose in his heart. The king thus suffered in silence because of the love he had for Ummādantī. Abhiparaga, however, came to know about the king’s condition and the reason for it. One day he approached the king while he was alone and I bring Ummādantī for you. "No, no", said the king, “that may not be. I would lose my merit and would know myself to be immoral. Further my wicked deed would be known also to the public.” Abhiparaga argued again and again with the king with a view to convincing him that he was doing no wrong in accepting Ummādantī from his hands.

ibid. Sīṅgālovāda Sutta. P.T.S, vol –iii, p. 188.
The king finally said, "No doubt, it is your great affection for me that prompts you to the effort to promote my interest without considering what is right and wrong on your aide. The king continued, "The evil and good the people do depend on the behaviour of their rulers. For this reason, and taking into account the attachment of my subjects, I shall continue to love the path of the pious above all in conformity with my reputation. "If I should lack the power of ruling my own self, say, into what condition would I bring this people who long for protection from my side. "Thus considering and regardful of the good of my subjects, my own righteousness and my spotless fame, I do not allow myself to submit to my passion. I am the leader of my subjects, the bull of my herd.

The Buddha in this story showed how a king should conduct himself. Firstly, he must, put his private passions aside in the interest of the people. Secondly, he must always pay heed to public opinion. Thirdly, there must not be any divorce between his private life and his public life—both must be without blemish. Fourthly, he must always be regardful of the good of the subjects. Fifthly he must give the correct leadership in all matters to the people.

K. Sri Dhammananda talked about king's behavior to be a good government in his book –What Buddhist Believe. He said, "Milindapaññā also stated that if a man, who is unfit, incompetent, immoral, improper, unable and unworthy of kingship, has enthroned himself a king or a ruler with great authority, he is subject to a variety of punishment by the people, because, being unfit and unworthy, he has placed himself unrighteously in the seat of sovereignty. The ruler, like others who violate and transgress moral codes and basic rules of all social laws of mankind, is equally subject to punishment; and moreover, to be censured is the ruler who conducts himself as a robber of the public.' In a Jātaka story, it is mentioned that a ruler who punishes innocent people and does not punish the culprit is not suitable to rule a country. The king always improves himself and carefully examines his own conduct in deeds, words and thoughts, trying to discover
and listen to public opinion as to whether or not he had been guilty of any faults and mistakes in ruling the kingdom. If it is found that he rules unrighteously, the public will complain that they are ruined by the wicked ruler with unjust treatment, punishment, taxation, or other oppressions including corruption of any kind, and they will react against him in one way or another. On the contrary, if he rules righteously they will bless him: ‘Long live His Majesty.’

We can note in passing why the Buddha’s Teaching is called the Eternal Dharma or Truth. From the points mentioned above we can see that the Teachings are universal and can be applied to all human societies no matter how separated they are in time and space.

The Buddha’s emphasis on the moral duty of a ruler to use public power to improve the welfare of the people inspired Emperor Asoka in the Third Century B.C. to do likewise. Emperor Asoka, a sparkling example of this principle, resolved to live according to the Dharma and to serve his subjects and all humanity. He declared his non-aggressive intentions to his neighbours, assuring them of his goodwill and sending envoys to distant kings bearing his message of peace and non-aggression. He promoted the energetic practice of the socio-moral virtues of honesty, truthfulness, compassion, benevolence, non-violence, considerate behaviour towards all, non-extravagance, non-acquisitiveness, and non-injury to animals. He encouraged religious freedom and mutual respect for other people’s beliefs. He went on periodic tours preaching the Dhamma to the rural people. He undertook works of public utility, such as founding of hospitals for men and animals, supplying of medicine, planting of roadside trees and groves, digging of wells, and construction of watering sheds and rest houses. He expressly forbade cruelty to animals.

Good Government is one that is for people, and by the people, and of the people. Therefore, the people, themselves, have a key role in assuring there is Good Government. Citizens who contribute to bringing about good

---

administration, especially in a democracy, should know and abide by the following principles:

1. **Attadhipateyya**: supremacy of oneself; putting the prime importance on one's own self, position, reputation, or status; acting in view of one's self and what relates to oneself; on the wholesome side, it means abandoning evil actions and cultivating the good out of a sense of self-respect.

2. **Lokadhipateyya**: supremacy of the world; putting the prime importance on worldly values; wavering in face of criticism and praise; operating on the basis of what pleases the group, seeking popularity or fearing censure; on the wholesome side, it refers to avoiding evil actions and cultivating the good in deference to the opinions of the community.

3. **Dhammadhipateyya**: supremacy of Dhamma; putting the prime importance on principles, truth, righteousness, virtue and reason; operating on the basis of what has been learned and verified against the facts; acting on views that have been extensively and clearly investigated and considered to the best of one's wisdom and integrity to be righteous and for the sake of goodness; on a general level, it means acting out of respect for established principles, laws, rules and regulations.  

Bearing these three kinds of supremacy in mind, a responsible member of a democratic state should adhere to the last of the three, namely the supremacy of Dhamma.

Individuals, as the members of society, must try for their individual perfection as well as for the well-being of their society. For this they must maintain social harmony at first and secondly aforesaid goal. They must try to be economically, intellectually and morally dependable. To achieve these goals following four set of virtues should be observed:

1. Virtue leading to temporal welfare —

---

(i) To be endowed with energy, industry and skill in management,
(ii) To be endowed with attentiveness,
(iii) To be associated with good people,
(iv) To have a balanced livelihood.\(^{100}\)

2. Virtues for a good lay life:
   (i) Truth and honesty,
   (ii) Training and adjustment,
   (iii) Tolerance and forbearance,
   (iv) Liberty.

*Brahmacariya*ṣaṅga *sīlaṅga, ajjavo maddavo tapo, soraccavo avihimsaṅga khantiṅcapi avannayam.*\(^{101}\)

3. Virtues leading to prosperity:
   (i) To live in a good environment,
   (ii) To associate with good people,
   (iii) To aspire and direct oneself in right way,
   (iv) To have prepared oneself with good background.

*Patirūpa desavāso, sapūrisāvassayo, attasammāpaṇidhi, pubbe ca katapuṇṇatā –imāni kho bhikkhave cattāri cakkāni, yehi a samannāgatānaṃ devamanussānaṃ catucakkam vattati, yehi samannāgatā devamanussā nacirasseva mahanttām vepullattāṃ pāpuṇanti bhogesū’ti.*\(^{102}\)

4. The virtues leading to spiritual welfare:
   (i) To be endowed with confidence,
   (ii) To be endowed with morality,
   (iii) To be endowed with moral shame,

---

\(^{101}\) Sutta Nipāta. verse, 295.

(iv) To be endowed with moral fear,
(v) To be endowed with general knowledge,
(vi) To be endowed with generosity or charity,
(vii) To be endowed with wisdom.

If a woman or man has these wealth, he is not poor and his life is not useless. Therefore the wise develop faith, morality and right view recalling the dispensation of Enlightened One.

Saddhādhanam sīladhanam, hiri ottappiyam dhanaṃ, sutadhaṃca cāgo ca, paññā ve sattamaṃ dhanaṃ.

Yassa ete dhanā atthi, itthiyā purisassa vā, adaliddoti taṃ āhu, amodham tassa jīvitaṃ.103

---