

We (under the name [Deepa-Amrita](#)) take the opportunity to write an article on the NNBY convention.

OM MANI PADME HUM

YOUTH OF INDIA ROARS IN 2nd NATIONAL CONVENTION OF NNBY

(India's National Network of Buddhist Youth)

(pls. visit www.nnby.org)

Namo Buddhaya and Jai Bhim!

This is the first of its kind that we have ever witnessed at such a spiritual level, though these types of conventions (shibhirs) have been happening all over India frequently. Well we are talking about the 2nd National Buddhist Youth Convention organized by NNBY (National Network of Buddhist Youth) at Hsuen Tsang Retreat centre, Bordharan, Wardha, Maharashtra, India.



NNBY is an organization governed by youth. It is autonomous, independent and creative and goes beyond all caste identities. Its values are the Teachings of Lord Buddha and Babasaheb Dr. B.R Ambedkar. It is motivated by the vision of ideal society of Babasaheb. Dh. Kumarjeev as founder took the initiative to explore the vision and give shape to this organization with the help of senior order members and friends those who are genuinely concerned with the development of Buddhist youth and network. Consequently the hard work of the team now enriches the network of more than 2000 youth and spreading gradually throughout India.



Our main motivation to be part of this convention came from one particular programme (again one of its kind), the Cleanliness programme (Awakening Mumbai) held on Dec 7th 2008. Everybody knows there are millions of people who come to pay tribute to Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on Dec 6th to Chaithya Bhoom, Dadar, Mumbai. The Shivaji Park near to Chaithya Bhoomi is usually the temporary dwelling for these million people who come from various parts of India for nearly 5 days before the Mahaparinirvan Din.

Not surprisingly, one can hear a lot from the so called higher class society claiming that Dalits leave Mumbai City messy after the event. Interestingly, NNBY took up the responsibility to get together the Buddhist youth to volunteer in cleaning up Shivaji Park the following day and clean up the prejudice in Mumbaikars minds. It was a very successful event and inspired many including me.

The Journey begins



Bordharan is a lovely locale and a picnic spot for many...It has a Dam with nearly clear water surrounded by beautiful mountains. On one such hill lies this retreat centre that

harbours a huge Stupa and many cottages to accommodate participants. This place stands as an epitome of serenity and greenery. It is huge and very clean (thanks to all organizers and their team who worked day and night to make the place comfortable to stay). The cottages comfortably accommodated more than 50 people at a time and had all the facilities.



We were more than 45 from Mumbai who arrived there at night and were received with a warm welcome from the organizers and various other groups. The milieu was so friendly and spread all over.

The convention was to commence next day i.e. Dec 25th and continue till Dec 31st.



There were a total of 600 registrations from almost all parts of India ...Mostly from Maharashtra. It required a lot of ground work in getting all these people together. The organizers and their team literally went to various suburbs, slums etc. to study their condition and motivate them to participate and educate themselves and others. All the participants were educated and most of them were the first generation beneficiaries of reservations. One could have witnessed a lot of zeal in everyone, eagerly waiting to learn and to put it in practice. It was so much fun sharing work, be it cleaning or decorating the

Stupa and surroundings, or serving food, heating water etc. The whole group was divided into 12 small groups for the entire Convention.

Awakening Youth

The Mornings were beautifully serene and it would start with the most interesting part of the day i.e. Meditation followed by breakfast.



The Pravachans by Ven. Dh. Subhuti (combined with Dh. Amoghasiddhi's Hindi translation) were eye-openers, thought provoking, inspiring and incredibly interesting. He would deal with Babasaheb's message for the youth, the root cause of existing problems, Buddha Dhamma and Mind etc. Many started looking at things with a different perspective. Participants would curiously wait for next day's topic as that would become the topic for Discussion pre-lunch and Debate post-lunch.

Dr. Salunki dealt with the history of Indus Civilization and how the modern Hindu historians exploited it for their convenience.



Dh. Dharmashalin's Basic teachings of Buddha and Ann Dennehy's English classes were a regular part of the convention. Ann Dennehy, a Buddhist and a Wordsmith, is Creative Director of [Jai Bhim International](#). She lives in San Francisco, California, and will be returning to India for the third time in December to collaborate on Buddhist Youth projects. She is making tremendous efforts for the development of youth and organization.

Personality Development

NNBY believes that "a gift of human talent to others is a gift to oneself". That led to our witnessing some really interesting sessions by few participants.



In our opinion, NNBY is the perfect platform for self development and developing others simultaneously.



Our youth has a lot of potential and it just needs to be identified and tapped at the right time with the right attitude.



We were introduced to Wenlido, Human Rights, Bushindo's Karate classes, Innovative Games, NVC (Non-Violence Communication) and NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming).



There were some informal trainings as well on the course such as to make a portrait using sand and colours, decorating buffet table, vases etc. We had doctors (one of the organizers) on call day and night.

New Year Eve

This was the most memorable day, though being the last day; it had this pleasantness because of the beautiful and mesmerizing activities that were ahead.



It was the New Year eve and celebrations were in full swing, some decorating the Shrine and Stupa, some taking the auditions for New Year party, some handling the buffet and some making arrangements for the much awaited programme of the Convention, Dhammadheeksha. This was the most inspirational moment as this kindled the responsibility in many to educate oneself about Babasaheb and Buddha Dhamma at a deeper level and spread it around.



The Shrine was decorated with fresh flowers, Rangoli on four sides, and candles. There were nearly 50 participants who became Dhammamitras (Friends of Dhamma) under Ven. Dh. Subhuti's blessings.

While welcoming each other to New Year 2009 with warm hugs and a glow in our eyes that said a lot about our journey together into future, we knew that we are taking separate paths next day morning for the new beginning, to realize those horizons that would help create a bigger platform in uniting many more next time.

Thanks to NNBY and the team.

Bon Voyage...

With Metta,
Deepa-Amrita

NNBY is still fundraising for its 2009 expenses. Please consider visiting our on-line fundraising page at

www.justgiving.com/indianbuddhistyouth

Thank you!