

Monday, August 1, 2022. Dr Rabin Man Shakya Advanced Teaching on 'Ekajati' Charya Nritya

Without Singing and Dancing, There is No Liberation, Says Vajracharya

Portland, July 12 (Nepal Oregon News): "Charya singing and dancing is an integral part of Newar Vajrayana Buddhism. Without singing and dancing, there is no liberation."



Prajwal Vajracharya, a senior Charya Guru and co-founder of Nritya Mandala Mahavihara (NMM) said this while conducting a Charya talk for the members of Hong Kong Dance Mandal.

Charya talk for Hong Kong group was organized in the zoom on July 11, 2022 and was participated by 25 members of the Hong Kong Sagha.

Prior to starting of the talk, Guru Prajwal also offered chanting rituals to Lord Padmanateshvara. Sixteen offering prayers and nritya was also performed by the Guruji on the occasion.

Underscoring the importance of Charya dance, Rev Vajracharya, who is also a scholar on Newar Vajrayana Buddhism, said that the Charya dance tradition is one of the religious arts of the Newar Tantric Buddhist priests of the Kathmandu valley, who perform it as part of their esoteric meditation and rituals since before the time of the Buddha.

Singing is the mantra, dancing is the meditation. It is written in the HeVajra Tantra text that sing and dancing is where where liberation comes through. When you combine the two - dance and song - through it you grow spiritually, Vajracharya went on saying.

The veteran Charya Guru made it clear that Charya is not just a dance, it is a teaching, it is preaching as well a philosophy which teaches you a lot of things to move forward in life. Newah Buddhism and civilization are very ancient and they were not known outside the world, he said."The 12th century was



a dark century for Buddhism in Nepal, India and other countries. During the time of setbacks in this period, Buddhism was taken over by other religious regimes and Buddhism was made a minority religion," he said.

Attributing to the causes of hidden culture and hidden nature of Charya dance, he said: "Non-Buddhist regimes in the past centuries have been apathetical to the cause of development of Buddhism in Nepal." Despite hidden nature, this tradition survived and it is alive. That's the beauty about Nepal, Vajracharya stated.



When the Fourth World Buddhist Conference was held in Kathmandu, one Buddhist Charya dance was shown at that time, Prajwal said.

Touching on Charya giti, he said: "Charya lyrics tells us about the iconography of deities and yoginis, about what they are holding in their hands and what they are wearing." Charya giti focuses on compassion, liberation, enlightenment and transformation, he added.

Prajwal Guruji's lecture on sacred Charya dances of Nepal presented comprehensive details on Pancha Buddha, Manjushree, Vajrayogini, Nairatma and other deities.

Similarly, the talk zeroed in on the visits to Nepal Mandala by various ancient Buddhas like Vipashwi, Shikhi, Vishwovu, Krakuchanda, Kashyap and Kanakmuni Buddhas. His talk also shed light on ancient Mahasiddhas like Shantikaracharya - the first Bajracharya Guru of the Nepal Mandala, Surat Bajra, Manju Bajra, Shaswot Bajra and Lila Bajra Bajracharya and so on

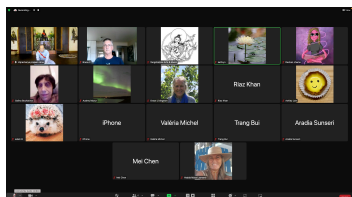
"In Portland, we dance more than 50 Charya dances, many of which we have created. But there are thousands of Charya dances," Vajracharya stated. "My father, Ratna Kaji Vajracharya, collected 556 charya in his book 'Charya Muna' volumes 1 and 2. Likewise, my brother, who is also collecting ancient Charya giti, has about 1,500 of them he would like to publish", the Guruji said.

On a different note, Prajwal Guruji said: "Musical instruments used in Charya nritya and Charya singing are Taa (two little cymbals) and Damaru (Kanta Dub

Dub). Similarly, there are 18 different rhythms and 42 different melodies for Charya singing, he added.

During the talk, Vajracharya also lauded the role and contribution of Hong Kong Dance Mandal in disseminating and enhancing Charya nritya. Similarly, the Guruji replied to various queries raised by the participants.

"Buddhist Deities Embody Hand Mudras for Purity, Power and Wisdom" July 9th -30th 2022



Portland, July 31 (Nepal Oregon News): A four week course on Mudra Yoga which was conducted by Prajwal Vajracharya of Portland and hosted by Yangchenma Arts and Music, Los Angeles, was organized in the zoom from July 9 to 30, 2022. The Mudra Yoga classes were held once a week on July 9, 16, 23 and 30.

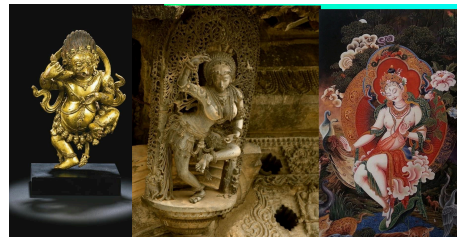
40 people from 15 different countries had participated at the Mudra Yoga webinar.

This Mudra Yoga webinar provided the participants with ample opportunities to learn about various Mudras, such as, Tibetan Ayurvedic Mudra and Dhyan Mudra. Throwing light on the iconography of deities, Prajwal who is one of the senior-most Charya Nritya gurus in the world, also talked about Lalitasana, Santikaramudra, Abhayamudra, Adhaparyanka, Bhumisparshamudra, Dharmachakramudra, Tarpanamudra, Varadamudra, Vitarkamudra, Namaskarmudra etc.



The four-week virtual conference also dealt with the galaxy's role in the Mudra. He also touched on the wheel of life and life cycle rituals. The talk also focused on the functions of the veins during the Mudra Yoga and highlighted about Foot Reflexology chart.

Laying emphasis on the importance of Mudra Yoga, Vajracharya, who is a priest from one of the Vajrayana Buddhist lineages of Nepal, said that the Buddhist deities embody hand mudras for purity, power and wisdom. Also, during each webinar, Prajwal Guruji began the practice of Mudra Yoga with the meaning and significance of each finger.



Prajwal Guruji stressed that applying the appropriate gesture can heal the organs, tissues, bones and nerves of the body.

The international webinar emphasized spiritual yoga through subtle fluidity of movement, breath and skillness.



According to Prajwal, a 35th generation Vajrayana priest, Mudra Yoga is an ancient technology that has been used for thousands of years by people wishing to deepen their spiritual understanding and grow on the spiritual path.

The veteran Charya nritya Guru Vajracharya said: "The practice of deity yoga supports an appreciation of the inner beauty of the body and cultivates understanding of our personal mudras as unique expression."

During the four-week virtual talk, Rev Prajwal Guruji guided participants with simple movement gestures and positions from his lineage of deity yoga. The Guruji also answered questions of the participants in each session.

Guru Purnima (Dilla Punhi) Observed in Portland, USA amid Chanting of Naamsangiti

आद्वयपरमार्थ
आर्यमञ्जुश्रीनामसंगीतिः
Advaya paramārthā
ārya mañjuśrī nāmasaṅgītiḥ
MAÑJUSHRI-NAMA-SAMGITI

Portland, July 14 (Nepal Oregon News):
Guru Purnima, which is a day to pay respect and honor a teacher or Guru, was observed on July 13, 2022 at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara (NMM) by reciting Manjushree

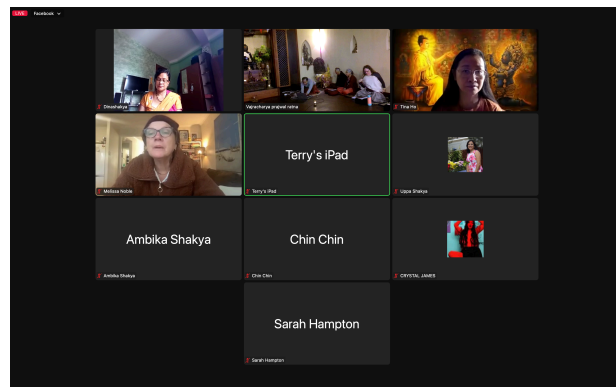
Naamsangiti.

Manjushree Naamsangiti was recited at the Portland Buddhist temple by Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya, Joshua Proto, Anna Shustrova, Gretchen, Mario Mastrangelo and Allie. Similarly, there were 20 participants reciting Naamsangiti in the zoom from USA, Hong Kong, Canada and so on.

Guru Purnima is also known as Dilla Punhi among the Newah people of Nepal.

"Guru Purnima is not just a regular purnima for the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara, it is a special Purnima because it is related to a Guru. And our Mahavihara at Portland, USA is not just a regular temple, it is also a temple of learning Charya dance," said its co-founder Prajwal Vajracharya.

In Buddha Dharma, there is a great place of honor and respect for teachers or Gurus. Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter were inundated with Guru Purnima greetings and best wishes.



Notable among them was the one posted on July 13 in the Facebook by Sangha member Joshua Proto to his Gurus Prajwal Vajracharya and Michael Stirling.

Joshua's post said: "Happy Guru Purnima to my dear Gurus on the path Prajwal R. Vajracharya and Michael Stirling. I would not be where I am today without you both, and for that, I'm deeply grateful. I wish my teachers Michael Stirling and Prajwal R Vajracharya simply the best on this Guru Purnima. Thank you both for your endless generosity and connection to lineage."

Kids of Sangha Members Take Part at Dharma Camp, Mandala on Mountain

Portland, July 30 (Nepal Oregon News): Arya Tara Shakya and Veena Shakya, daughters of Uppa and Suva Shakya, Amrita Nakamura Rybak, daughter of Corinne and John Rybak and Shreya Maharjan, daughter of Rajesh and Bijaya Maharjan participated at Dharma Camp, Mandala on the Mountain.



Mandala on the Mountain, also known as Dharma Camp, was a week-long summer camp for kids organized at Molalla Retreat by Dharma Rain Zen Center (DRZC) from July 24-29, 2022 for kids aged nine through eighteen who are interested in Buddhism.

According to DRZC, the camp experience combines traditional camp activities, such as, swimming, crafts, sports, and a campfire, with Buddhist practices like meditation, a chanted morning service, silent breakfast, and mindful work practice.

"Campers come from a variety of traditions and have different levels of familiarity with Buddhism, but are willing to participate in our forms for the week of camp," DRZC added.

Participation of the kids of the Sangha members of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara, a temple of Newar Vajrayana Buddhism in Portland, at the Dharma Camp, Mandala on the Mountain at Molalla Retreat is a testimony of growing interest of our kids to Buddhism and other camp activities, said Mahavihara's co-founder Prajwal Vajracharya.



Advanced Teaching on 'Ekajati' Charya Nritya

Portland, July 25 (Nepal Oregon News): An impromptu advanced class of Charya dance 'Ekajati' was organized for members of the Hong Kong Dance Mandal on Sunday, July 24, 2022.



The zoom teaching on 'Ekajati' charya dance was conducted by senior Charya Guru Prajwal Vajracharya.

Speaking on the occasion, Prajwal Gururji said: "This dance is named after the deity 'Ekajati'. This is one of the ancient classical Charya dances. This dance is performed as a devotion to the deity Ekajati."

Addressing the zoom gathering, Prajwal Gururji expressed the view that Dance Mandal USA and Hong Kong Dance Mandal should join forces to promote and preserve classical Charya dances like Ekajati.



The virtual teaching presented a detailed and comprehensive description of Ekajati classical Charya dance.

Ekajati is also known as one of the most powerful and fierce protectors of Vajrayana Buddhist tradition, he said.

Ekajati is also known as Blue Tara, Vajra Tara or Ugra Tara, said Vajracharya who is also a priest and ritual master of the Vajrayana Buddhist tradition of Nepal.

Prajwal Gururji went on saying: "Ekajati is a wrathful protector deity, blue in color and awesome to behold. She is beautiful and splendorous with her short and stout body, huge belly and angry face."

Ekajati wears a tiger skin, bone ornaments and snakes and is destroyer of all fears. Ekajati dances upon negative forces that fuel the path to enlightenment, said the Gururji.

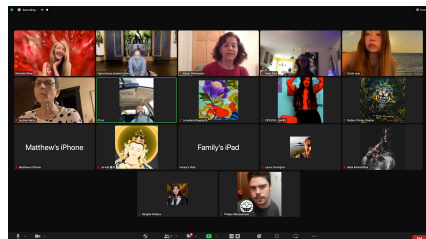


Prajwal Guruji added: "In this dance, symbolic movements of hands and fingers are skillfully timed with general body movements and facial expressions."

During the advanced class of Charya dance 'Ekajati', Prajwal Guruji provided the zoom participants with the Charya giti 'Ekajati'. He also demonstrated movements of Ekajati charya dance for the participants.

Online Course on Kurukulla Concludes

Portland, July 2 (Nepal Oregon News): A five-week live online course on Kurukulla Singing and Dancing organized by the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara from June 3 concluded on July 1, 2022.

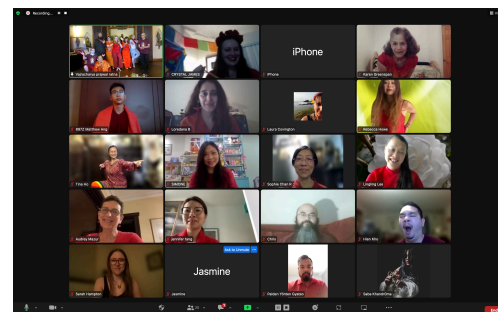


The Kurukulla Singing and Dancing course was conducted by Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya, co-founder of the Mahavihara.

Empowerment chanting of deity Kurukulla was bestowed - to the

virtual participants from various countries as well as to the Sangha members who were present at the temple - by Prajwal Guruji who is a 35th generation Vajrayana priest.

On the occasion, Gurumandala Puja was also performed by Prajwal Guruji and other Sangha members.



Month-long Gunla Dharma Kicks off in Portland



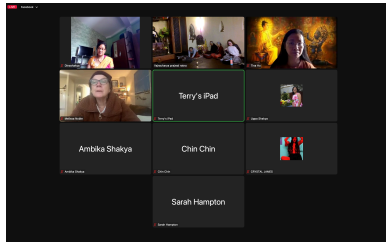
Portland, July30 (Nepal Oregon News): Gunla Dharma kicked off from Friday, July 29, 2022 onwards for a whole month. Nritya Mandala Mahavihara in Portland, USA has been observing Gunla Dharma for last four years.

The Mahavihara celebrates the Gunla Dharma month by chanting Naamsangiti everyday for the whole Gunla month. From Friday, July 29, the reciting of Naamsangiti in the zoom has started at the Mahavihara in Portland.

The first day of reciting of Naamsangiti was taken part by 15 participants on July 29, 2022 from Oregon, California, Hong Kong and Canada.

Throwing light on the importance of reciting Naamsangiti during the Gunla month, Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya said that there are a lot of important Newah festivals during this month.

Meanwhile, the regular Dharani recitation is being held virtually every Tuesday, while Charya singing practice continues to be organized in the zoom every Friday. Sadhana practice and Buddha Bhajan take place each Wednesday remotely at the Mahavihara.



Dharani recitation was launched at the end of 2019 by Prajwal Gurujū with the objective of promoting the meaning and importance of Dharani literature. In the beginning, Dharani was recited at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara by Prajwal Gurujū and other Sangha members. But after the start of Covid-19 pandemic in Oregon in March 2020, the Dharani started to be recited in the zoom. Recently, on the request of the Dharani participants, Prajwal Gurujū launched the translation project of Dharani literature from Sanskrit to English starting from the first week of July 2022. On each Tuesday, during Dharani recitation, Prajwal Gurujū is also translating the stanzas of Dharani line by line.

During the Gunla Namasangiti Chanting

Everyday at 8am, Nepal 8:45pm, NY 11am

Meeting ID: 837 0692 3412

Passcode: 167

Gunla (गुंला) is the tenth month in the lunar calendar according to the Nepal Sambat. It is one of the most important events in Newar Buddhism and many observe this month as sacred. Gunla is a holy month for Newar Buddhists, as they recite the scriptures, observe fasts and visit places of worship while playing devotional music at this time. During this month, one can transform their body, mind, and speech. Meanwhile, traditional musical instruments are played at different places in Kathmandu to mark the month of Gunla Dharma. It is to be noted that there is a Buddhist Mahavihara at each Newar Buddhist locality in Kathmandu and each Mahavihara has its own Gunla Bhajan team.

During the whole month of Gunla, the Buddhist communities of different localities of Kathmandu make daily pilgrimage to [Swayambhu](#) while chanting Namasangiti.

