

Buddha Jayanti Observed at Vihara with Various Programs by Dr. Rabin Man Shakya, May 1st



Buddha Jayanti also known as Buddha Purnima and Swan Ya Punhi is the most important and sacred festival in Buddhist tradition, celebrating the birth, enlightenment (Nirvana), and passing (Mahaparinirvana) of Lord Gautama Buddha. It falls on the full moon day of the month of Baisakh.

A vibrant Buddhist procession with a number of Sangha members and Nepali community activists was taken out from local landmark Laurelhurst Park to the

Nritya Mandala Mahavihara.

Immediately after the procession, the participants started to give a baby Buddha bath before entering the temple. This beautiful act of pouring water over the little baby Buddha statue symbolizes the purification of one's own heart and mind from greed, anger and ignorance.



108 butter lamps were illuminated to symbolize the dispelling of darkness, accompanied by a meditative Refuge dance (a performance of Buddha Bandana Dance through Charya Nritya) performed 108 times continuously by the American and Nepali devotees.

Also, to mark the occasion, Mahamanjushree Naamsangiti was chanted by Prajwal Vajracharya along with other participants of the celebration.



Speaking on the occasion, president of Nepa Chhen - a Nepali nonprofit in Portland - Daya Shakya threw light on the history and activities of the Nritya

Mandala Mahavihara.

Likewise, a brilliant presentation on "Lumbini - Birth Place of Buddha" was made by Shreya Shrestha, an architect. She analyzed various historical facts to prove that Buddha was born in Lumbini, Nepal.

An interesting part of the program was the question - answer episode between Daya Shakya and Prajwal Vajracharya in which the Guruji shed light on various aspects and importance of morning and night rituals at the Vihara.

The Guruji also elaborated on distinctive ritual practices of Newar Buddhism.



In his conversation with Daya, Prajwal Guruji underscored about the power and impact of Newar Vajrayana rituals and chantings in the Dharma practice.

Answering to Daya's question, priest also detailed the meaning and significance of Das Paramita chanting.

Similarly, a number of Buddha Bhajan songs in Nepal Bhasa (the language of Newar people) namely Jaya Nammo Shree, Najato, Tri Ratna Mhasika and Anitya Lumankegu were presented by Joshua Proto, Casey Redman, Ashley Low, Teya Vajracharya and Matt Costagno.

Sangha member Dechen Lhamo enthralled the audience with flute playing.

Sangha member Naveena Shakya recited a poem in Nepali language "Buddha Aau Timi Pheri" (Buddha, Please Come Again).



On the occasion, Pancha Buddha Charya Dance was performed by Prajwal Vajracharya, Corinne Nakamura, Anastasia Roderick and Joshua Proto.

The Buddha Jayanti celebration was followed by a vegetarian potluck dinner.

Six-week Foundational Course on Charya Dance Wraps up



A six-week long - Foundational Charya Nritya Teaching Series - which was organized every Sunday at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara in Portland from April 5, 2026 was wrapped up on May 10, 2026.

Wrapping up the six-week foundational course, Prajwal Guruji said this is the foundation and pre-requisite for learning other deity dances.

The foundational course laid the groundwork for all to-be-continued studies in the tradition of sacred Buddhist Charya dances of Nepal, Prajwal Guruji told the participants in his concluding remarks.

The Guruji extended congratulations to the Charya Nritya course participants for successfully completing the foundational class.

The Guruji went on saying: "You learnt the history of this ancient practice. You also studied how to train your bodies in the movements, exercises, hand and foot mudras, and techniques that are the foundations of Charya dance and practice the Refuge and the Sixteen Offering Goddess dances."



Prajwal Guruji further reminded the course participants: "You don't practice charya as a form of entertainment. But you do it as a form of spiritual movement, as meditation, as prayer, as Sadhana."

Matt Costagno, Dira Osland, Hank Loos, Clay Stenhilbur, Hawk Grubb, Ashley Low, Jennifer Pepper Koscis, Susan Morningstar, Lisa Ovelar and Naveena Shakya were the participants of the Six-week Foundational Charya Dance.



Two of the participants shared their views about the course:

Ashley Low: "The Foundations of Charya Nritya class was a wonderful introduction to the sacred dance of Newar Buddhism. Prajwal's lectures connected us to this sacred dance traditions and its history in Nepal, its significance within Newar Buddhism, and the deeper meaning of every element in the dances we practiced. His dance teaching was wisdom through movement. It was a gift to learn from such a master, thank you,

Prajwal."

Naveena Shakya: "From this foundational Charya class, I got an opportunity to acquire more information about Newar Buddhism and Charya Nritya. Thank you so much Prajwal Gurujū for teaching those ancient and medieval Charya steps. I learnt that mindfulness practices are very important to be happy and peaceful in your life. I am grateful to Joshua and Stacie and to all the fellow participants as well."

Hong Kong Buddhist Studies Association Celebrates International Dance Day

International Dance Day was celebrated by Hong Kong Buddhist Studies Association (HKBSA) on the zoom as well as live at the Portland Baha on Friday, May 2nd, 2026.

The world famous day in the field of dance and culture was observed by HKBSA in collaboration with the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara with the presentation of several Newar Buddhist Charya dances online as well as live at the Vihara in Portland.

The International Dance Day was created and proclaimed by the Dance Committee



of the International Theater Institute (ITI), the main partner for the performing arts of UNESCO.

Dr Tina Ho, who was the master of ceremony at the event, said: "The Hong Kong Buddhist Studies Association has been working hand in hand with the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara to enhance and promote the Newar Buddhist Charya dances in the world."

The International Dance Day event kicked off with Avalokiteshvara Sloka charya dance which was performed by Joanna Lai, Pamela Chan, Fiona Yiu and Suen Tan Mei. Avalokiteshvara also known as Guan Yin or Chenrezig, is widely beloved throughout the Buddhist world. The deity embodies the beauty of universal compassion in its most accessible and recognizable forms: softness, kindness and gentleness.

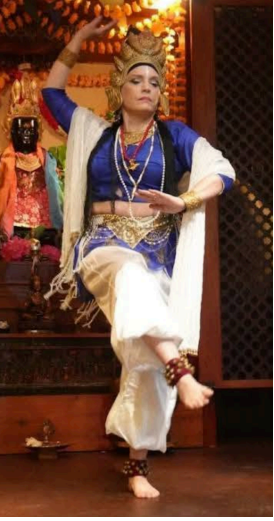
After that, Vasundhara Charya Nritya was presented by Shira Chan. Vasundhara is the Goddess of Harvest, the Earth Mother and nurtures all her children. Golden-yellow, like the element Earth, she is adorned with jewels and ornaments, symbolizing her association with wealth and abundance.

Likewise, Kurukulla Charya dance was demonstrated by Sin Yin Leung. Kurukulla is a female Tantric deity in Vajrayana Buddhism associated with magnetizing enchantment and spiritual power. She is often depicted in red, symbolizing passion and transformation, and holds a flower, bow and arrow, representing attraction and influence.

Similarly, Arya Tara charya dance was offered on the zoom by Patty Chan. Arya Tara is green and embodies compassionate activity. The deity sits in a joyful ease pose with her right leg extended, always ready to come to the aid of beings. She gives generously with her right hand and holds a lotus of parity with her left hand at her heart.

Furthermore, Vajrasattva Charya Dance was put on the stage by Dickon Kong. Vajrasattva is considered the essence of all the peaceful Buddha families.





Vajrasattva is peaceful in appearance, white in color, with one face and two hands, seated in Vajra posture.

Meanwhile, Vajrayogini charya dance was a beautifully choreographed performance by Dr Tina Ho. Vajrayogini is a primary female Buddha. She is semi-wrathful, bright and dances joyfully, without shame or fear, glorifying in her femaleness. She drinks the nectar that fuels her in the intensity and clarity of an uncompromising motivation to cut through ignorance while embracing all accessible energy.

Moreover, Padmanateshvara charya nritya was beautifully displayed by Anastasia Roderick, a Sangha member of the Vihara. Padmanateshvara is the deity who represents performance arts. Padmanateshvara possesses ten hands. The deity's initial gesture is to indicate the wisdom of the heart, with the second one, the Bodhisattva touches heaven, with the third the Earth. All the other symbols the deity holds in different hands refer to the Buddha Dharma, and about one making decisions to follow this path.

Besides, Singhamukhi charya dance was performed by Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya. The lion-faced Dakini symbolizes an enlightened female like a lion-king. There is also the skull rosary/mala which represents the undertaking of the various feelings and moods of sentient beings and the snake represents the treasure.



Further, Mahakala Charya dance was rendered by Joshua Proto. Mahakala is a wrathful protector deity, dark blue in color and awesome to behold. He is beautiful and splendid with his short and stout body, huge belly and angry look. He wears a tiger skin, bone ornaments, and snakes and is a destroyer of all fears. Like Vajrapani, he dances upon the negative forces that fuel the path to enlightenment.

Also, Simhanado Lokeshvara and Sadaksari Lokeshvara Charya dances were displayed by Ada Ip and Ayumi Cheng.



'Spring Blossoming Dance Offering' Held at Vihara

A program "Spring Blossoming Dance Offering" showing amazing and incredible



Newar Vajrayana Buddhist Charya dances was organized at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara in Portland, USA on Friday, May 15, 2026.

Students of the Foundational Charya Dance Course performed Mandala Dance - Refuge and Sixteen Offering Goddess dances. The dance performers were: Dira Osland, Ashley Low, Jennifer

Pepper Koscis, Susan Morningstar, Clay Stenhilber, Hank Loos, Hawk Grubb, Lia Ovelar and Naveena Shakya.

Later, Vajrasattva charya dance was presented by Rev Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya. Vajrasattva embodies the state of being to which all Mahayana Tantric practitioners aspire, namely the adamant state of full enlightenment.

Likewise, Green Tara charya dance was performed by Jennifer Pepper Koscis. Through graceful mudras, precise steps and meditative gestures, the charya dancer embodies the enlightened energy of Arya Tara, blessing devotees with protection, wisdom and swift liberation from obstacles and sufferings.

Similarly, Vajrayogini charya dance, on the occasion, was offered by Anna Shustrova. This is an embodied spiritual discipline where the Charya dancer visually and energetically transforms into Vajrayogini and the embodiment of supreme, enlightened wisdom.





Finally, Vajrapani charya dance was rendered by Rev Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya. Vajrapani is a wrathful Bodhisattva dark blue in color, with bloodshot eyes, and an angry glare. He holds a bell in his left hand and a Vajra in his right and wears a tiger-skin garment, snakes wrapping around his body and ornaments made of bones and skulls. All the Charya giti songs on the occasion were vocalized by Charya giti singer Joshua Proto. The program 'Spring Blossoming Dance Offering' was conducted by Anastasia Roderick. The program was attended in person by more than 40 people at the Vihara.



Octogenarian Community Member Padma Laxmi Karanjit Passes Away

Portland's Nepalese community was shocked and deeply moved by the sad news of demise on Friday, May 13, 2025 of octogenarian community member Maa Padma Laxmi Karanjit who has been battling the age related disease for last couple of years.



Late Karanjit who was born on Oct 31, 1938 in Kathmandu, was married to late Bishnu Bahadur Karanjit. She is survived by three sons and two

daughters and many grand children.

Late Padma Laxmi's son Pramod Karanjit and daughter Bijaya Maharjan are entrepreneurs in Portland.



A funeral service was held on Friday, May 15, 2026 at Holman's Funeral & Cremation Service on South East Hawthorne Boulevard in Portland, followed by a cremation service in Vancouver, Washington.

Extending the condolences on the occasion, president of Nepa Chhen Daya Shakya threw light on the life and contributions of late Padma Laxmi who came to the US in 2006.

Late Padma Laxmi's grand son Dennis Karanjit, community member Keshari Maharjan and Sangha member of Nritya Mandala Mahavihara Rabin Man Shakya expressed the feelings that her legacy lives on through our treasured memories.

Likewise, Rev Gurujī Prajwal Vajracharya took the podium to eulogize late Padma Laxmi's contributions to her family and community. Prajwal Gurujī also said that late Padma Laxmi's Buri Janko was ritualized at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara in Portland several years ago.

A number of Nepalese people living in Portland and its periphery came to the funeral service to pay last tributes to late Padma Laxmi by offering flowers.

Present at the funeral service were the Sangha members of Nritya Mandala Mahavihara, officials and ex-officials of Nepali Association of Oregon (NAO), office bearers of NRNA-USA-Oregon chapter and Nepa Chhen.

During the funeral service, Gurujī Prajwal Vajracharya, chief priest of Nritya Mandala Mahavihara conducted the Antyasthi Kriya Puja (funeral rituals). The Gurumandala puja was chanted during the funeral service.

Also, Prajwal Gurujī gave away Chilakha to Pramod Karanjit, the deceased's son, for daag batti. Durgati Parishodhana Dharani was chanted by Gurujī Pradip Bajracharya along with other funeral service participants.



On the tenth day of her demise - on May 23 - Pramod went to a river in Portland and after that was given a head-shaving at the Newar Buddhist temple. Prajwal Guruji purified the White Barkhi Dress and then handed it over to Pramod. Further, Prajwal Guruji gave 'Panchagavya' to Pramod.

Panchagavya is a Sanskrit word in which Pancha stands for five and Gavya refers to mostly cow derivatives: ghee, milk, cow dung, honey and water.

On the 12th day of passing, Gurumandala Puja, Homa Puja and Mamaki Puja were ritualized by Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya at Pramod's residence in Portland. Homa Puja is a sacred ritual in which wood, ghee, grains and herbs are burned in a consecrated fire to invoke divine forces.

Mamaki Puja is an esoteric Tantric ritual dedicated to Mamaki, The Puja is uniquely associated with the worship of specific ritual items like Ayla (wine), Thwon (white fermented beer) and curd.

On the 13th day, Shraddh rituals were performed by Guruji Prajwal in honor of late Padma Laxmi at Pramod's house. Shraddh is a reverential death ritual performed to nourish and honor deceased person.

During the Shraddh ritual, Prajwal Guruji offered Pinda to the deceased soul. Pinda refers to the symbolic food offerings (balls of rice, barley and sesame seeds) made during the Shraddh ceremony to sustain the departed soul in the afterlife.

The Shraddh rituals are conducted so that the heavenly journey of the deceased souls after death is comfortable and stress-free. On the day of Shraddh rituals, a Shraddh-bhoj was offered by Pramod at his residence for community members.



Sangha Member Joshua's Birthday Observed at Vihara

Sangha member of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara Joshua Proto turned 32 on Sunday, May 31, 2026.

According to Newar Buddhism, birthday is also a part of lifecycle ritual. Joshua's birthday was celebrated at the Vihara amidst a religious ceremony called Navagraha Rituals which was performed by Prajwal Vajracharya, the chief

Pujari.

A Puja Bha Sankalpa - consisting of Hyangu and Bhasugu Sinha, Goja, Jajanka, Dhau, Jaki, Baji, Dhup, flowers and coins etc - is prepared for the Navagraha Puja.

Usually, Khen Sagan (hard-boiled egg, anchovy fish and Khola of Ayla three times) is handed over to the birthday guy.

The Navagraha Puja engages the nine planets in a square Mandala with the Sun in the center, and in the process of acknowledging and honoring each of the planet, clears the cause of obstacles and sufferings.

The Navagraha Puja is ritualized to clean the life of any undue negative possibilities and problems.



Bara Tayegu Rituals for a Newar Girl Organized in Gresham, Oregon

Bara Tayegu rituals for Mriyana Sen Tamrakar were performed by Prajwal Guruji in Gresham, Oregon on Sunday, May 10, 2026.

Mriyana is the daughter of Mrinal and Rajani Sen Tamrakar.



Gurumandala Puja and Bali Puja were performed by Prajwal Guruji on the occasion.

Bara Tayegu - which is one of the important lifecycle rituals of Newar women - is one of the traditional rituals which has been performed in Nepal for centuries.

Bara Tayegu is a ritual carried out for young girls before the start of menstruation and usually followed by another important lifecycle ritual called 'Ihi' (Bel Bibah).



Home Purification Ritual Held in King City, OR



A house purification ritual was performed by Guruji Prajwal Vajracharya at the new residence of Ramila and Prasanna Shakya in King City, Oregon on Sunday, May 10, 2026.

In the Buddhist tradition, a purification ritual is conducted before people move into a new house. The purpose of the ritual is to purify the house from the evil spirits.

On the occasion, Gurumandala Puja and Pancha Bali Puja were performed by Prajwal Guruji.

According to Prajwal Guruji, Gurumandala Puja is the foundational Newar Buddhist ritual used to remove obstacles and invoke blessings for the households whereas Pancha Bali Puja is a primary house blessing and purification rite used when moving into a new home or clearing unpleasant energies.

Indian Classical Music Concert Held at Vihara

An Indian classical music concert was organized at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara on Thursday, May 28, 2026.



A powerful Bansuri and clarinet performance by world famous flute master Steve Gorn and Tabla playing by renowned multi-instrumentalist Benjy Wertheimer was held at the temple to the full house.

The concert was one of the rare opportunities for a limited number of audience at the Newar Buddhist temple in Portland to dive into the ocean of raga with bamboo flute by flute master Steve and multi-instrumentalist Benjy.

Steve Gorn has performed Indian classical music on Bansuri Bamboo flute in concerts and festivals across the world. A disciple of Shri Gour Goswami of Kolkata, India and Pandit Raghunath Seth of Mumbai, Steve is well known to audiences in India and the West.

A Grammy winner and five times Grammy nominee, Steve is creating a new idiom, a music that combines the essence from a virtuoso mastery, generating a vibrant fusion, alive and accessible to Western ears.

Benjy Wertheimer is award winning musician, composer, vocalist, producer and multi-instrumentalist equally accomplished in Tabla, congas, percussion, esraj, guitar and keyboards.



Regular Activities Continue

All the usual events including Monthly Full Moon Namasangiti chanting, weekly Dharani chanting, Sadhana Practice, Buddha Bhajan practice and Charya giti singing practice were conducted on a regular basis at the Vihara in person and on the zoom.