Reed College Students Visit Newar Buddhist Monastery

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Nritya Mandala Mahavihara preserves and shares the tradition of Buddhist practice, arts and culture held by the indigenous Newar people of the Nepal Mandala. Established in Portland, USA in 2009, our center is the first Newar Vajrayana Buddhist temple in the West with performance and art making spaces and a library of old and new Buddhist texts.



Prajwal Vajracharya, co-founder of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara said this while welcoming the students of Portland's Reed College at the Vihara. A big team consisting of two professors - Kristin Scheible and Kritish Rajbhandari and 22 students of the college visited the Newar Buddhist monastery on Friday, Oct 9, 2026 to get acquainted with the kind of Buddhism that is being practiced in Nepal for centuries.

Prajwal Guruji started his presentation by showing and explaining about the exterior of the Vihara: the stupa, the Tiki Jhya, Toranas, Pancha Buddha etc on the premises of the Vihara.

The Guruji informed the students that the Vihara was built with stuffs and materials brought all the way from Nepal.

The Guruji showed students the Tiki Jhyas at the Vihara and explained that a Tiki Jhya also known as Ankhi Jhyal is a centuries old, hand carved wooden lattice window that serves as the definitive pinnacle of traditional Newar architecture in the Kathmandu valley.



Tiki Jhyas were made and built at the Newar Buddhist monasteries during Malla and Shah-Rana repressive Hindu rule in Nepal, he



added.

Throwing light on Torana, the Guruji said that a Torana is a free-standing ornamental or arched gateway for ceremonial purposes seen in the Buddhist and Hindu arts and architecture of Nepal and India. He said that Sixteen Offering Goddesses are depicted on the free-standing Toranas at the Vihara.

The Guruji discussed the significance of a stupa in Newar Buddhism and gave detailed accounts of various parts of the stupa at the Vihara.



Showing students the Pancha Buddha outside of the temple, Prajjwal Guruji said that Pancha Buddhas - Vairochana, Akshovya, Ratnasamvabha, Amitabha and Amoghasiddhi - are central symbolic figures in Vajrayana Buddhism.

During the presentation inside the Vihara, Prajwal Guruji, shed light on various Buddhas like Vipashwi Buddha, Shikhi Buddha, Vishwobhu Buddha, Krakuchanda Buddha, Kashyap Buddha and Kanakmuni Buddha.

During the talk, the Guruji said that, according to Swayambhu Purana, the Kathmandu valley was a huge lake centuries ago and mentioned about Lord Manjushree who cut a gorge at Chobhar in the Kathmandu valley with his flaming sword to allow the lake to drain.

Newar Buddhism is a unique and richly layered tradition of Vajrayana Buddhism practiced by the Newar people of the Kathmandu valley, Prajwal Guruji said and added:"It blends ancient Buddhist rituals with local customs, Sanskrit texts and a vibrant artistic heritage."



During the presentation, the Guruji also underscored the importance of Bahals and Bahis in Newar Buddhism, saying that these monastic courtyards serve as spiritual hubs for rituals and community.



Also, during the meeting with the Reed College students, the Guruji viewed that six paramitas Dana, Sila, Ksanti, Virya, Dhyana and Prajna are six transcendental perfections of Buddhism.



During the gathering with the Reed students, the Guruji emphasized the importance of the five elements in Newar Buddhism - earth, water, fire, air and space.

The Guruji went on saying: In Newar Buddhism, enlightenment and full understanding of the Buddhist teachings of transformation of mind, entails singing and dancing. Specifically, it means meditation which which is equal to dancing, and mantra, which is equal to singing."

Describing about Charya Nritya, the Guruji said that Charya dance is a meditational dance that tells stories of the inner qualities and awakening of the Buddhist deities." Charya is a Buddhist ritual dance with a history going back to more than 1000 years. It is performed by Vajracharyas as part of their esoteric meditation practices and rituals."



The Guruji underscored role of his father late Ratna Kaji Vajracharya in reviving Charya, once on the verge of extinction." My father had written and published 20 books on various aspects of Newar Buddhism and had published collection of 560 charya gitis vol 1 and 2," he said.

At the end of the program, the Reed College team visited library, art section, mask section and costume section of the Vihara.

Pancha Buddha Serve as a Transformational Framework for Humankind, Says Prajwal Vajracharya



A zoom presentation "Pancha Buddha Teaching and Praise of Five Buddhas" was organized by Hong Kong Buddhist Studies Association (HKBSA) on Friday, Oct 30, 2026. The remotely held teaching was conducted by Prajwal Vajracharya, The priest kicked off the virtual teaching by reciting Pancha Buddha sloka: "Jino Vairochana Khyato Ratna Sambhava Me Baca, Amitabha, Amoghasiddhi, Achyobhyeca Prakritita".The Guruji then explained word by word the meaning of the Pancha Buddha sloka dance.

Throwing light on elements, the Guruji informed the zoom participants that Vairochana represents Space, Achovya - Water, while Ratnasambhava, Amitabha and Amoghasiddhi symbolize Earth, Fire and Air.

Likewise, shedding light on Mudra, the Guruji said:"Vairochana has Dharmachara Mudra, Achovya has Bhumisparsha Mudra, while Ratnasambhava, Amitabha and Amoghasiddhi have Varada Mudra, Dhyana Mudra and Abhaya Mudra respectively."

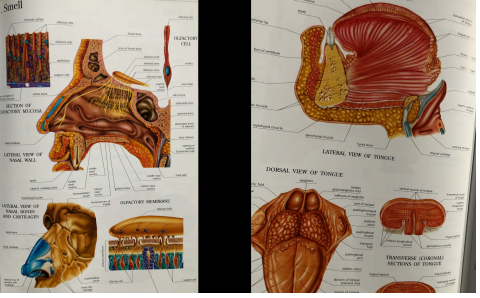
Vairochana is white in color, Achovya is blue while Ratnasambhava, Amitabha and Amoghasiddhi are yellow, red and green respectively, said Prajwal Guruji and added:"As far as family is concerned, Vairochana is Buddha family, Achovya is Vajra family, whereas Ratnasambha, Amitabha and Amoghasiddhi are Jewel, Lotus and Karma family.

The Pancha Buddha are not just historical deities to be worshipped, in practical Buddhist reality, they serve as a transformational framework for the humankind, the Guruji said and went on:"In Newar Buddhism, Pancha Buddha represents the transmutation of our deepest negative emotions (the five poisons) into the enlightened wisdom.

Likewise, the teaching presented a detailed and comprehensive description of the Directions, Wisdoms, Symbols, Vehicles, Chakras, Kleshas



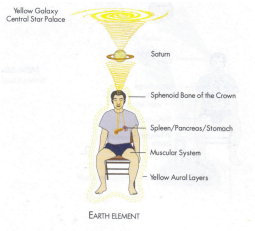


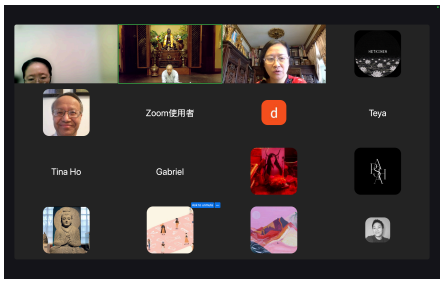


and Mandalas of the Pancha Buddha.

In discussing the history of Newar Buddhism in Nepal, Prajwal Guruji mentioned the visits of Vipaswi Buddha, Sikhi Buddha, Vishwobhu Buddha, Krakuchanda Buddha, Kashyapa Buddha and Kanakmuni Buddha to the Nepal Mandala.

Based on Swayambhu Purana, once upon a time, the Kathmandu valley was a huge lake, the Guruji told the zoom participants mentioning about Vipashwi Buddha's visit to Swayambhu and about Maha Manjushree striking the hill with his sword and releasing all the waters from the lake.





At the end of the teaching, Prajwal Guruji offered the Refuge dance as well as the Pancha Buddha sloka dance.

Noted Tantric Guruji Visits Sammamish, WA for Tara Puja

A comprehensive Green Tara Puja vidhi was conducted and completed by Guruji at the residence of Purna Hira Tuladhar, Sachin Shakya and Nirala Shakya in Sammamish, WA on Saturday, Oct 24, 2026.



A Green Tara Puja is a devotional Buddhist ceremony and prayer ritual dedicated to Green Tara, the female Buddha of active compassion, wisdom and swift protection. The Arya Tara is also known as "mother of liberation" and represents the virtues of success in work and achievements.

Arya Tara embodies compassionate activity. She sits in a joyful ease pose with her right leg extended always ready to come to the aid of beings. Om Tare Tuttare Ture Svaha is the main Tara mantra.





Astamangala Puja, a foundational ceremony ritualized to invoke good fortune, eliminate spiritual obstacles and cultivate mindfulness, was also performed by Prajwal Guruji.

Saptavidhanuttara Puja (Sat Puja) was performed on the occasion. The religious rituals during the traditional ceremony involved a number of objects including the comprehensive arrangement of 108 butter lamps, 108 water bowls, 108 Tormas (miniature stupas) and 108 Gulupas (begging bowls).



The elements of the offering were (1) Vandana (2) Pujana (3) Desana (4) Anumodana (5) Adhyesana (6) Yacana (7) Namana.

In Newar Buddhism, Saptavidhanuttara Puja integrates elements of Sutra and Tantric traditions.

Meanwhile, writing on his social media platform on Oct 31, 2026, Sachin Shakya said:"With immense devotion, faith and gratitude, we performed Tara Puja at our home, seeking the divine blessings of Goddess Tara for peace, prosperity, protection, good health, and happiness for our family and loved ones."



Sachin further added in his Facebook post:"Our heartfelt thanks to GuruBa Mr Prajwal R Vajracharya, who traveled all the way from Portland to graciously conduct the Puja and bless us with his presence and guidance."

Paritran Paath, Shira Daan Held in Memory of Late Amit Prabha Bajracharya

Second anniversary of passing away of Amit Prabha Bajracharya was celebrated at Rama and Shashindra Bajracharya's residence in Eugene, Oregon.



Late Amit Prabha was the daughter of late Amogha Bajra Bajracharya, one of the renowned Buddhist scholars in Newar Vajrayana Buddhism and a famous and prominent Bajracharya Guruju of Nepal.



Second anniversary of her passing was celebrated with Paritran Path and Shira Daan. Paritran Path was chanted by Subin, Monti and Brian Bhante from Wat Buddha Oregon.

Wat Buddha Oregon is a traditional Thai-Lao Buddhist temple located in Turner, Oregon (Marion County).

Paritran Path is a revered Buddhist practice of reciting sacred verses and suttas in the Pali language to invoke protection, peace, healing and spiritual well-being.

Likewise, a Shira Daan was offered to Prajwal Vajracharya, chief priest at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara in Portland, OR.

Sankalpa Puja was performed during the Shira Daan ritual. Fruits, raw rice, ginger, salt, turmeric, black lentils and beaten rice etc were offered to Prajwal Guruji by deceased's son Shashindra Bajracharya and daughter-in-law Rama Bajracharya.



In Newar Buddhism, Shira Daan is a deeply significant ritual offering performed primarily during the death anniversaries. In Sanskrit language, Shira means a pure mixture of staple raw foods and Daan means generosity. Shira Daan is performed to ensure a peaceful and comfortable heavenly journey for the deceased soul into afterlife.

At the end of the event, a Panjaran (Panchadaan) was offered to Prajwal Vajracharya, Daya Shakya, Pradeep Bajracharya and Rabin Man Shakya by Shashindra and Rama.

Panchadaan means giving away five different kinds of alms, such as grains and fruits like rice, paddy, salt, peas and money to people from Vajracharya and Shakya communities



Classical Hindustani Music Concert Held at Vihara

A powerful Bansuri and clarinet performance by world famous flute master Steve Gorn and Tabla and esraj playing by renowned multi-instrumentalist Benjy Wertheimer was organized at the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara in Portland on Thursday, Oct 15, 2026.



Steve Gorn and Benjy Wertheimer offered an evening of Indian classical music to a wonderful enthusiastic audience.

The audience seemed deeply attuned to the combination of the artiste duo's instruments - the esraj and bansuri - as they blended together melodically as their musical evening unfolded.

The virtuoso duo began the evening melody Raga Bageshori and, after introducing the main themes with the esraj, Benjy switched to Tabla for a more rhythmic continuation of the piece.



Knowing that there has been not enough rain in Portland, Steve played the quintessential rainy season melody Raga Megha, attempting to bring some rains to this dry land.

This was followed by a new composition that brought together three Indian classical Ragas - Raga Malkauns, Chandrakauns and Raga Joga - all three blended together in a new and mysterious way.



The concert closed with an esraj - clarinet duet, a version of their signature piece Priyagitah, followed by a wonderful discussion with the audiences, allowing the audience to reflect on the nature of the music.

Later, Steve Gorn said:"It is always a joy for me to play at the Nritya

Mandala Mahavihara in Portland. This wonderful Nepali temple setting is perfect for our meditative music."

Baby Shower for Teya Organized



A second baby shower event was organized at the Newar Buddhist temple in Portland on Saturday, Oct 10, 2026 for expressing excitement, extending blessings and wishing joy and happiness to Prajwal - Teya family.

The baby shower event was participated by members of the Nepali community in Portland and the Sangha members of the Nritya Mandala Mahavihara.

Teya is expected to give birth to a baby daughter this time. When Teya was pregnant with baby son Dewa, the first baby shower was organized at the Forest Refuge, Damascus, OR in 2024.

The parents have already chosen the name for their future daughter - Sunyata. Speaking on the occasion, Prajwal Guruji said that Dewa means blessing and Sunyata refers to emptiness.



Prajwal Guruji chanted Tara mantra 'Om Tare Tuttare' as well as Harati Mata Mantra for twenty one times.

There is a tradition in Newar culture to offer Khen-Sagun and to feed pregnant mother with Dhau Baji (beaten rice with yogurt). So these rituals were performed by Uppa Shakya and Kusumabati Bajracharya.

The baby shower was followed by a Newah style 'potluck' dinner and fun games.







Garbha Shanti Puja: A Newar Buddhist Ritual for an Expecting Mother

A Garbha Shanti Puja for Teya Vajracharya was performed at the Vihara on Monday, Oct 5, 2026 by Prajwal Guruji. Teya's second pregnancy is running onto 7th month.



Garbha Shanti Puja is a traditional Newar Buddhist spiritual and religious ritual performed for expecting mothers.Garbha Shanti Puja is described as a spiritual and religious ritual aimed at blessing the expectant mother and her unborn baby with health, purity and intelligence.In Newar Vajrayana Buddhism, lifecycle rituals surrounding birth, pregnancy and birthdays etc carry profound religious and cultural weight, marking important milestones in a human being's spiritual journey.



Vajra Kula's annual retreat, the Mara Roast.

From Oct 2-4, Nrityamandala Mahavihara was the host for Vajra Kula's annual retreat, the Mara Roast.



A regional gathering, over 30 dharma practitioners gathered from across the United State, including practitioners from local dharma communities in Portland, new to both the Vajra Kula and



Nrityamandala Mahavihara were in attendance.

Both senior leaders and Lamas of Vajra Kula, Lama Federico Andino and Lama Dorje Sherab led the majority of the teachings while Guru Prajwal Ratna Vajracharya opened the retreat with a detailed and thorough teaching of Mudra and Dasaparamitas as in accordance with Newah Buddhism.
Lama Sherab proceeded to teach and bestow a short Guru Yoga empowerment of Suchandra, King of Shambhala and a full afternoon abhishek with agama and upadesha on The Heart Essence of the Three Long Life Deities, otherwise known as Tse Lha Namsum Thugtik.



The following day Lama Fede gave an empowerment of the Guru Yoga of the Wicha Masters, an upadesha Guru Yoga concerning the sorcerous sages of Southeast Asia who have played major roles in the upaya of Buddhist amulet making. Following this, was an instruction on the making of these amulets, including their detailed physical components, and the meditative journeying required to charge them. Finally, the Mara Roast was wrapped up with a workshop on Journeying to the Sukhavati Purelands, based on the journeying upadesha of Dudel Dorje who attributed these teachings to the journeying practices done by yogis from Odiyanna.



Vajra Kula expresses their sincerest gratitude to Guru Prajwal and the Nrityamandala Mahavihara community for the use of the temple to practice the Rime Dharma.

Taking break Weekly programs till Newer 2027