EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF BHUDDHISM IN THE PRESENT CONTEXT

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Abstract

The goal of Bhuddhist education is to attain wisdom. Bhuddhist philosophy is known as the perfect ultimate wisdom. The Bhuddha taught us the main objective of our practice or cultivation was to achieve this ultimate wisdom. He further taught us that everyone has the potential to realize this state of ultimate wisdom, as it is an intrinsic part of our nature, not something one obtains externally. However, most of us have become confused, through general misconceptions and therefore, are not able to realize this potential. Therefore, if we break before this confusion, we will realize this intrinsic part of our nature. Thus Bhuddhism is an educational system aimed at regarding our own intrinsic nature. It also teaches absolute equality which stemmed from Bhuddha’s recognition that all sentient begins possess this innate wisdom and nature. Therefore, there is no inherent difference among beings. Everyone is different now because we have lost our true nature and have become confused. The degree of delusion and has nothing to do with the true nature of the individual. The Bhuddha’s teachings help us to realize that innate, perfect, ultimate wisdom. With wisdom, we can then solve all our problems and turn suffering into happiness.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Educational Implications OfBhuddhism in the present context

Objectives

The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To highlight the importance given to education by Mahatma Bhuddha
2. To study the general philosophy of Mahatma Bhuddha
3. To study the educational philosophy of MahatamaBhuddha
4. To study the educational and social scene.
5. To find out the changes occur in educational and social scenario of India with the efforts of MahatamaBhuddha
6. To study the impact of educational ideas of Mahatma Bhuddha
7. To study the impact of educational ideas of Mahatma Bhuddha on different aspects of modern education
8. To find out the relevance of educational ideas of Mahatma Bhuddhain present context

METHOD OF PROCEDURE
This study is philosophical and historical in nature. So the descriptive method will be used. The investigator used the primary as well as secondary sources concerning the educational ideas of Mahatama Buddha. This study is completely based upon library work.

Introduction
Buddhism is one of the earliest philosophy, and its teachings are applied even today. There are many followers of Buddhism all around the world. The role of teaching in Buddhist education is very important. Because the education implications have a strong role to play in the lives of the Buddhist people, it is imperative that you should understand the features of Buddhist education and the role of teachers in Buddhist education. Buddhists have many methods to impart their education. Buddhism is based on the teachings of Gautama Buddha. He was born as a royal in the Kapilvastu family in the 6th Century. Buddhist education system (200B.C to 200 A.D) was founded by Lord Gautam Buddha. Gautam Buddha was primarily an ethical teacher and reformer and a philosopher. He was concerned mainly with the problems of life. He avoided the discussion of metaphysical question because they are ethically useless and intellectually uncertain. He always discussed the most important questions of suffering, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation. Buddha’s philosophy is described as ‘Tripitakas’. Vinayapitaka – Rules of conduct, Suttapitaka – Buddha’s Sermon, and Abhidhammapitaka – Exposition of philosophical theories. Buddhist Education offered to impart education to all. Many people shifted to Buddhist system of education. It was for the first time in India that education was institutionalised on a large scale during Buddhist movement. It is also a historical fact that with the arrival of Buddhist era great international centres of education like Nalanda, Takshashila, Vikramshila, Ballabhi, Odantapuri, Nadia, Amravati, Nagahalla and Saranath were in prominence. Educational centres in Buddha period developed in Viharas and Sanghas.

Features of Buddhist Education
1. The main aim of Buddhist education is to spread the teachings and the knowledge of Gautama Buddha. Along, with this, Buddhism aims for the attainment of Nirvana. Nirvana is a state of in which there is neither suffering, desires, nor sense of self, as the person is released from the effects of karma and the cycle of death and rebirth. Nirvana is the final goal of Buddhism.
2. Education is imparted equally to all. Caste, religion, gender, etc. are ignored, and all the students are treated equally. The Buddhist education is open to all, and everyone gets an equal opportunity for growth and self-development.

3. One of the important features of Buddhist education is the role of teachers in Buddhist education. There exists a very harmonious relationship between the teachers and the students. Teachers are treated with great respect and share mutual love and affection for the students. All of them lead a much-disciplined life.

4. Bhikshus or Monks are the teachers of Buddhist education. The role of a teacher is highly important because they are responsible for teaching their students the path to righteousness and nobleness. The monks should have the purity of character, and thoughts.

5. The chief aim of education was the spread of Buddhist religion and attainment of Nirvana through it.

6. Education was imparted in Mathas, Viharas and Monasteries and monks were responsible for its organisation and management. Monastic life of the Shramanas and monks had always been exemplary for the Indians so much so that the educational institutions attracted students from distant parts of the world, such as China, Japan, Korea, Java, Burma, Ceylon, Tibet and other countries.

7. Educational facilities were provided to all on an equal footing. All differences of caste and social status which had taken deep-roots under the Brahmanical education had been removed. The attitude of society towards education was broad and positive. Not only the sacred portals of the institutions were opened to all but also all the students were provided equal opportunities for the development of their character according to their capacity and aptitude.

8. Along with religious and philosophical aspects of education secular education formed an essential part of it. Besides, rituals were in vogue while imparting education.

9. There existed harmonious relationship between teacher and the taught. Students had great respect for the teachers and the teachers had tremendous love and affection for the students. They led very disciplined life.

10. Though educational system was dominated by Dhamma yet there was provision for imparting practical knowledge in Spinning, Weaving, Drawing, and Medicine etc. The medium of instruction was folk language—Pali.

11. The system of education was purely Indian having been evolved by the Indian educationists. So education was closely wedded to the various problems of life and it aimed at finding out concrete solutions thereof.
Education Implications Of Buddhism

The many teachings of Buddha have impacted the lives of the followers. If they want to travel down the path of righteousness, then they have to be noble. Buddhism guides them and helps them in their journey. The implications of Buddhism include directions for developing a good code of conduct. Also, the focus on Karma helps people to keep a check on their conduct in life. Buddhism gave way to a new form of education that involved living a noble life, and it created the foundations of the modern education system.

(1) Four Truths:

‘This world is full of miseries’ is the first truth as viewed by Lord Buddha. He has regarded the various miseries of the world as a nature of man. If one realizes this truth from the very beginning he will do nothing which may cause any trouble to him. Then he will so conduct his life as to ensure his physical, mental, moral and spiritual development. Thus he will become a good citizen. If the parents and teachers are motivated by this truth of Lord Buddha, children will be developed in a desirable manner and our educational system will be transformed.

In the second Arya Satya (truth) Lord Buddha says that one’s ignorance is the cause of misery. Due to ignorance one gets involved into various intricacies of the world. In the third truth he says that if the drives generated due to ignorance are destroyed, then a person will raise above all attachments (Rag), rivalry, lust and anger. In fact, to obtain this victory is to achieve salvation.

Through the fourth truth Lord Buddha has indicated the path towards destruction of worldly miseries. In this indication he has spoken of eight devices (Ashtangik Marg) which may help one in getting himself free from worldly miseries.

Lord Buddha has prescribed a middle course to be followed. He has opposed to torture the body through hard penance. The middle course consists of eight devices. By following these eight devices the ultimate aim of education may be achieved. To obtain salvation (Nirvan) is the ultimate end of life. Salvation is the freedom from the cycle of birth and death. In fact, this may also be accepted as the ultimate purpose of education.

(2) Eight Fold Path:

The first step of the Ashtangik Marg is Samyak Drishti, i.e., the appropriate insight this insight will help one to be away from worldly complexities. For being away, SamyakSankalp or appropriate willpower is necessary. This will-power will help one to proceed towards the path of salvation. After having thus proceeded, SamyakVach or appropriate speech is necessary. This may be possible through control over oneself. This control will assist one towards proper behavior with others. After achieving this control, one should exercise due restriction over his physical and mental aspirations. This type of restriction has been termed...
as Samyak Karmant which means to shun all types of violence through thought, word and deed (Manasa, Vacha and Karmana). After Samyak Karmant comes Samyak Ajeev, which means to earn his bare living through Justice Samyak Ajeev is to be followed by Samyak Vyayam which purports that one should entertain only auspicious thoughts in his mind and should shun evil ones. The seventh ‘Marg’ (device) as enjoined by Lord Buddha is Samyak Smrîti which means that one should always remember the basic elements of the acquired knowledge the eighth manner (device) is Samyak-Samadhî which amounts to perfect concentration of attention after purifying one’s inner self. Antahkaran Kishuddhi. For salvation this concentration is very necessary. Needless to add that the above Ashtangik Marg (eight devices) is full of very powerful education meanings

(3) Theory of Karma:
According to Lord Buddha ‘sin’ and piety (righteousness) are the outcomes of one’s own deeds. The sinner reaps miseries both in this world and in the other beyond, and the pious (Punyatma) man harvests happiness. Due to one’s own efforts someone is rich and the idle one is poor. It is the outcome of one’s own deed that one is ill and the other is healthy. One is learned and the other is ignorant. Thus the various peculiarities in the world are not God’s creations, but the outcomes of some deeds. Thus Lord Buddha has given the message to the mankind that one gets miseries due to his own deeds. Therefore he is quite capable of removing them. Thus the theory of Karma has been propounded very strongly. Lord Buddha firmly believes that God is not the giver of the result of any deed. In fact, the deed, itself, gives its outcome to the doer. Needless to remark that Lord Budha’s theory of Karma is pregnant with noble educational meanings. If our educational centers become imbued with the ideals of Karmavâd and the parents, teachers and students begin to behave accordingly, all will be “up and doing” and every one will be the maker of his own destiny. Then no one will curse his fate and sit idle, doing nothing. In some other contexts, we have already referred to this ideal.

(4) Concept of morality:
For practical purposes the eight steps of the path have been divided into three ways of practice, or three divisions of training. These three divisions are good conduct or morality (Shîla), mental development or meditation (Samadhî) and finally wisdom or insight (Prajña). Although conceptually and structurally, the first step depends upon the last and the last depends upon the first; although they are dependent on one another, still in practical terms when one climbs a mountain one has to climb the lowest slope first. One may be attracted to the summit, but in order to get there one has to cover the lower slope first. It is for this very
practical reason that we find the eight steps of the Eightfold Path grouped into these three ways of practice.

The first of these three ways is good conduct. Good conduct forms a foundation for further progress on the path, for further personal development. It is said that just as the earth is the base of all animate and inanimate things, so is morality the foundation of all qualities. When we look around us we can see that everything rests upon the earth, whether it be the building, whether it be the tree and bush, or whether it be the animal. The earth is the foundation, and in the same manner morality is the foundation of all qualities, all virtues, all attainments ranging from the mundane to the supra-mundane, ranging from success, good fortune all the way up to skill in meditation, wisdom and enlightenment. Through this metaphor, we can understand the importance of good conduct as a foundation for following the path, as a basis for achieving results on the path.

(5) Concept of Reality:

Mahatma Bhuddha has taken the world as full of misery. But he also suggested the remedies of these miseries (thus optimist also). He criticised blind faith in the Vedas. He was of the views that the all worldly objects are momentary. Due to faith in the doctrine of karma he has not admitted the existence of God. Buddha’s teachings are most pragmatic; it is due to their pragmatic importance the Buddha has discussed the four great truths.

He explained it by giving a practical example, once he was sitting under a Sinsupa tree, Buddha took some of the leaves in his hand and asked his disciples, whether they are all leaves of the tree or there are more leaves? When they answered that there are more leaves. Buddha said, “similarly it is definite that there is much more than whatever. I have told you.”

Buddha does not recognize the perpetuity of the soul. Soul is combination of five elements. Man is also the combination of mental and material states.

(6) Ideology of Buddhist educational system:

Buddhist education was free from communal narrowness, there was no favouritism on the basis of caste, creed in the centres. Buddhist education laid much emphasis on the physical, mental and spiritual development of the novice, even today the aim of education is integration of personality that can develop the various aspects of the individual which are interlinked. corporal punishments were absolutely forbidden which is also very true in the present scenario of education. Buddhist philosophy is positivistic and has a careful logical systematisation of ideas. It is ethical, the eightfold path to Nirvana makes a universal appeal. It is democratic as it believed in freedom of enquiry. Democratic and republican
procedures were followed while running the educational institutions. The entire techniques of Buddhism provide directions to develop good conduct and which is also the essence of a sound system of education.

Buddhist education helped India to gain international importance. It also developed cultural exchange between India and other countries of the world. International exchange of scholars attracted students and scholars from far off lands. To be moral being one must follow noble path, the eightfold path as preached in Buddhism provides guidance for moral education and peace. The entire techniques of Buddhism provides directions to develop good conduct which is also the essence of sound system of education. Curriculum included secular as well as religious subjects. Universities established during this period are still serving as a guiding force. The organization of Nalanda and Ballabhiuniversity was advanced that it continues to influence the organization and structure of university till present day. The system of determining a minimum age for higher education, providing a set of rule and taking a test for admission are even today guiding the educational structure. Education as a social institution got its existence as a result of Buddhist system of education. An important contribution of this period is the imparting of education in various practical subjects, a tradition which has come down to the present day also. It was in this period that the method of collective teaching and the presence of numerous teachers in single institution was evolved.

(7) Concept of wisdom:

Wisdom is the key thing in Buddhism. In other religions, we find that faith is paramount. In still other religions, we find that meditation is supreme as for instance in Yoga. In Buddhism, faith is preliminary, meditation is instrumental. The real heart of Buddhism is wisdom. Wisdom arises by systematically working the ideas and principles learned through study into the fabric of the mind, which requires deep reflection, intelligent discussion, and keen investigation.

It is wisdom that the Buddha held up as the direct instrument of final liberation, as the key for opening the doors to the Deathless, and also as the infallible guide to success in meeting life's mundane challenges. Thus wisdom is the crown and pinnacle of the entire system of Buddhist education, and all the preliminary steps in a Buddhist educational system should be geared toward the flowering of this supreme virtue. It is with this step that education reaches completion, that it becomes illumination in the truest and deepest sense, as exclaimed by the Buddha on the night of his Awakening: "There arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and light."
(8) **concept of making friends:**

Interestingly, Buddha also gave advice for different types of people that we meet in life. **He was especially interested in the friendships we make, because those form our environment and influence us.** He described 4 different types of friends we meet and should seek: the helper, the friend who endures in good times and bad, the mentor, and the compassionate friend.

1) **The Helper**

This person can be identified by four things: protecting you when you are vulnerable, a refuge when you’re afraid, and in various tasks providing double what is requested. One who is always there to give aid when needed, one who asks for little to nothing in return. They will always protect you and show you the way when you are lost or need guidance.

2) **The enduring friend**

He can be identified by four things: by telling you their secrets, guarding your own secrets closely, not abandoning you in misfortune, and even dying for you. The friend who stands by you through every event in your life, and will always there for you. The enduring one does not pass judgment but is simply there through it all for you.

3) **The mentor**

Can be identified by four things: by restraining you from wrongdoing, guiding you towards good actions, telling you what you ought to know, and showing you the path to the heavens. This type is a teacher or parent/caregiver, someone who teaches through love, kindness, their own actions, and compassion. This person has the most patience with you and truly wants to set an example.

4) **The compassionate friend**

Can be identified by four things: by not rejoicing in your misfortune, delighting in your good fortune, preventing others from speaking ill of you, and encouraging others who praise your good qualities. This person showers you with love, praise and happiness regardless of times. They are there to hold your hand and support you through everything. They express their love for you through words, actions, and physical touch.

(9) **Concept of freedom:**

In the Buddhist sense, "free" means to be free from all suffering, to reach inner freedom where suffering ceases to be. This is, of course, an ideal state of mind - but how do we reach it? To reach inner freedom we must search for freedom with a "free mind." It is like the saying, "to catch a thief one must think like a thief."
The only appropriate way is to view everything with equanimity, be it gurus, doctrines, ideals, and even one's own practice and progress. Only then can one view everything with objectivity. Freedom is not just an end result. It is not something that awaits us at the end of our endeavour. Freedom is instantaneous, right now, from the very beginning. We can be "free" in the very process of the search, in experiencing, in every step along the way. **To achieve freedom requires only two things: a silent mind and an open heart.**

(10) **Buddhism and ecology:**

In recent years some Buddhists have been among the leading voices trumpeting the need for ecological awareness and action. For example, the Council of All Beings, a ritual in which one places oneself as in a trance in the position of another species in order to appreciate the impact of ecological decline on it, was designed by Buddhists and has become popular among environmentalists of all persuasions. Also, there are several examples of Buddhist movements establishing environmentally sustainable rural communities in America, and the group known as "engaged Buddhists," many of whom are associated with the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, have consistently led protests against the misuse of nuclear power and a host of other issues. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that there has always been another side of Buddhism, which after all is largely a monastic tradition for home-leavers -- a side that is hermetic, withdrawing, and socially and environmentally disengaged and, at times in history, corrupt, at least as a by-product of benign neglect.

(11) **Buddhism and economics:**

**Buddhist economics** is a spiritual and philosophical approach to the study of economics. It examines the psychology of the human mind and the emotions that direct economic activity, in particular concepts such as anxiety, aspirations and self-actualization principles. In the view of its proponents, Buddhist economics aims to clear the confusion about what is harmful and what is beneficial in the range of human activities involving the production and consumption of goods and services, ultimately trying to make human beings ethically mature. The ideology's stated purpose is to "find a middle way between a purely mundane society and an immobile, conventional society."

Buddhist economics holds that truly rational decisions can only be made when we understand what creates irrationality. When people understand what constitutes desire, they realize that all the wealth in the world cannot satisfy it. When people understand the universality of fear, they become more compassionate to all beings. Thus, this spiritual approach to economics doesn't rely on theories and models, but on the essential forces of acumen, empathy, and restraint. From the perspective of a Buddhist, economics and other
streams of knowledge cannot be separated. Economics is a single component of a combined effort to fix the problems of humanity and Buddhist economics works with it to reach a common goal of societal, individual, and environmental sufficiency.

Unlike traditional economics, Buddhist economics considers stages after the consumption of a product, investigating how trends affect the three intertwined aspects of human existence: the individual, society, and the environment. For example, if there were an increase in the consumption of cigarettes, Buddhist economists try to decipher how this increase affects the pollution levels in the environment, its impact on passive smokers and active smokers, and the various health hazards that come along with smoking, thus taking into consideration the ethical side of economics. The ethical aspect of it is partly judged by the outcomes it brings and partly by the qualities that lead to it.

The Buddhist point of view ascribes to work three functions: to give man a chance to utilize and develop his aptitude; to enable him to overcome his self-aggrandizement by engaging with other people in common tasks; and to bring forward the goods and services needed for a better existence.

(12) Buddhism and psychology:

Buddhism includes an analysis of human psychology, emotion, cognition, behavior and motivation along with therapeutic practices. A unique feature of Buddhist psychology is that it is embedded within the greater Buddhist ethical and philosophical system, and its psychological terminology is colored by ethical overtones. Buddhist psychology has two therapeutic goals: the healthy and virtuous life of a householder (samacariya, "harmonious living") and the ultimate goal of nirvana, the total cessation of dissatisfaction and suffering (dukkha).

Buddhism and the modern discipline of Psychology have multiple parallels and points of overlap. This includes a descriptive phenomenology of mental states, emotions and behaviors, as well as theories of perception and unconscious mental factors. Psychotherapists such as Erich Fromm have found in Buddhist enlightenment experiences (e.g. kensho) the potential for transformation, healing and finding existential meaning. Some contemporary mental-health practitioners such as Jon Kabat-Zinn increasingly find ancient Buddhist practices (such as the development of mindfulness) of empirically proven therapeutic value.

Aims of Education:

The word "education" literally means "to bring forth," which indicates that the true task of this process is to draw forth from the mind its innate potential for understanding. The urge to learn, to know and comprehend is a basic human trait, as intrinsic to our minds as hunger and
thirst are to our bodies. In today's turbulent world, however, this hunger to learn is often deformed by the same moral twists that afflict the wider society. Indeed, just as our appetite for wholesome food is exploited by the fast-food industry with tasty snacks devoid of nutritional value, so in our schools the minds of the young are deprived of the nutriment they need for healthy growth.

The entire system of Buddhist education must be rooted in faith (saddha) — faith in the Triple Gem, and above all in the Buddha as the Fully Enlightened One, the peerless teacher and supreme guide to right living and right understanding. Based on this faith, the students must be inspired to become accomplished in virtue (sila) by following the moral guidelines spelled out by the Five Precepts. They must come to know the precepts well, to understand the reasons for observing them, and to know how to apply them in the difficult circumstances of human life today. Most importantly, they should come to appreciate the positive virtues these precepts represent: kindness, honesty, purity, truthfulness, and mental sobriety. They must also acquire the spirit of generosity and self-sacrifice (caga), so essential for overcoming selfishness, greed, and the narrow focus on self-advancement that dominates in present-day society. To strive to fulfill the ideal of generosity is to develop compassion and renunciation, qualities which sustained the Buddha throughout his entire career. It is to learn that cooperation is greater than competition, that self-sacrifice is more fulfilling than self-aggrandizement, and that our true welfare is to be achieved through harmony and good will rather than by exploiting and dominating others.

The fourth and fifth virtues work closely together. By learning (suta) is meant a wide knowledge of the Buddhist texts which is to be acquired by extensive reading and persistent study. But mere learning is not sufficient. Knowledge only fulfills its proper purpose when it serves as a springboard for wisdom (pañña), direct personal insight into the truth of the Dhamma. Of course, the higher wisdom that consummates the Noble Eightfold Path does not lie within the domain of the Dhammaschool. This wisdom must be generated by methodical mental training in calm and insight, the two wings of Buddhist meditation. But Buddhist education can go far in laying the foundation for this wisdom by clarifying the principles that are to be penetrated by insight. In this task learning and wisdom are closely interwoven, the former providing a basis for the latter.

Curriculum:
As Buddha stressed actions so curriculum of Buddhistic education includes practical activities. These practical activities include physical, intellectual, moral and social actions. For achieving salvation, moral education, meditation and intelligence have been considered
necessary. Although Buddha usually avoided long discussions, yet towards superstitions, orthodox views, useless rituals he had the approach of a modern scientist. Training of senses was emphasised in Buddhistic education which helps in detachment, destruction of passions, end of miseries, achievement of mental peace, knowledge, wisdom and Nirvana. Everything remains in this world for some time and then it meets its end in the same way as one wave goes and another takes its place and then another and this process is continued. By illusion we consider the continuity of sequence as permanent. In reality nothing is permanent; change is the law of nature, so the subject matter should be dynamic and according to the need of the time. Thus he suggested social sciences, moral education, ethics, sciences etc. and co-curricular activities includes social service, welfare of all, community services, moral deeds, adoption of true vocation, use of non-violence and behaviour of the student should be according to the vows emphasised by Buddhistic thoughts.

Methods of Teaching:
Buddha’s philosophy is pragmatic as he stressed one’s experiences or actions or deeds. A sinner suffers from miseries in the world as a result of his own actions. By adopting the eight ways i.e., the Ashtangik Marg, the ultimate aim of education may be achieved. By right insight one may keep oneself away from mundane affairs. Appropriate speech enables one to have self control. The sweetness of speech induces a person to behave properly with others to forsake violence in thought, word and deed, moral actions and moral behaviours and even invocations is necessary. Apart from these one should initiate basic elements of knowledge i.e., right memory. To purify one’s conscience is also necessary for salvation. Lord Buddha has suggested that there is one cause or the other for the origin of a thing. The student should try to find out the cause of their birth and miseries of life and should try to remove that cause. Lord Buddha has suggested a middle path i.e., the adoption of an attempt to co-ordinate atheism and theism.

The Buddhist education is dominated by equality. It is imparted in Pali Language. There are also provisions for practical knowledge in Buddhist education. In the ancient times, students were taught spinning, weaving, medicine, etc. The education is imparted through lectures, discussions and question and answers among the teachers and students. Some other methods of teachings in Buddhist education included:

1. Seminars
2. Oral Discussions
3. Preaching and Repetition
4. Debates
5. Meditation in Solitude

CONCLUSION

Buddhist education system is for everyone, regardless of gender, religion, age, occupation or nationality. Everyone can learn and practice Buddhism, for it is the teaching of ultimate, perfect wisdom. There is a need for Buddha’s teaching in all parts of the world. However, it is not easy to nurture Buddhist teachers. The difficulty lies with the fact that most people cannot renounce their worldly fame and wealth, which are the major obstacles in learning and practicing Buddhism. Without a pure mind, there is no way to truly understand Buddha’s teachings and to realize the causes to all the problems in this world. Meanwhile, without virtue of merits and good causes and conditions, practitioners cannot find good teachers. Therefore, I always encourage young practitioners to resolve to save our country and the world.

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