

The Title of the *Aggamahāpaṇḍita*

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Abstract

Since the time of Buddha age, in the Buddha's Sāsana, monks who were acted very sharply at the well-fare of the doctrine of the Buddha were offered "*Etadagga* Title". Every age the kings usually offered the religious titles to the monks who were served sharply at the well-fare of Sāsana. In this paper, the beginning of *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title and the qualification of it were described.

Introduction

The religious titles were offered to the Venerable Sayadaws who acted very sharply for the well-fare of the doctrine of the Buddha. Among these titles, the beginning of *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title will be described dividing sub-titles as follows:

- I History of *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title
- II *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title of post-independence period
- III List of monks and men who won *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title
- IV Conclusion

I History of *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* Title

In 1273, king monarch George V succeeded to the throne of his father king Edward VII and held the coronation ceremony at Delhi, India in October, 1273. In that ceremony, an announced speech was asking for advice and information to Sayadaw that getting the applications which was wanting to provide and donate titles and money to the monks and people who were proficient in *Tipiṭaka* literature in Myanmar according to their education quality, which title is suitable for which level and wanting to obey to plan of Sayadaw. Sayadaw nominated that *Tipiṭakavidū Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title was suitable and if monk, "*Tipiṭaka Aggamahāpaṇḍita*" title, if man, "*Tipiṭaka Vidu Aggamahāpaṇḍitadaza*" title. Moreover, Sayadaw differentiated three titles in people who were proficient in three *Piṭaka* that was *Pāli* Language.

If Lower class, *Tipiṭaka Vidū Paṇḍita*

If Middle class, *Tipiṭaka Vidū Mahāpaṇḍita*

If Higher class, *Tipiṭaka Vidū Aggamahāpaṇḍita*

In that differentiation, Sayadaw set that

- ❖ If one can just translate three-*Piṭakas Pāli* Language to Myanmar that was classified as primary class
- ❖ If one can translate literary works of classical standard which were written Myanmar Language, which was classified as medium class.

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- ❖ If one can write new thesis which was praise worthy by scholars like ancient literacy works, that was classified as superlative class and gave the suggestion that those titles were be selected and offered by the government as wishes.

1277, at that time, Sayadawphayagyi, head of religious order in Buddhism of Myanmar was Taungkhwin Sayadawphayagyi. The qualities which were worth for offering *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title and recognized by Sayadawphayagyi after having discussion with *Sudhammāvaṃṃ* Sayadaw were-

- ❖ Knowing and being proficient *paramaprā vinicchaya* decision which should keep it continuously after being fully with endowed with the characteristics which was “*Tiṭṭhakadarānantara Kovida Pariyattivīsārada Patipattimāma*”.
- ❖ He who was endowed with *Issariyanāyakagūṇa*-able to admonish and manage to the disciples.
- ❖ He who was endowed with *Ācariyaladdhodesanā*-able to teach reliable Pāli texts to the disciples.
- ❖ Having learned Pāli texts: Prosody, Rhetoric, Dictionary, Grammar and able to write new Pāli texts.
- ❖ He who enables to teach the doctrines for the sake of monks and men.
- ❖ He who enables to write Pāli texts which were endowed with possessed of virtue and accomplishment of concentration.
- ❖ Consulting with *Sudhammāvaṃṃ* Sayadaws, Taungkhwin Sayadawphayagyi regulated to offer *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title to the monks who were endowed with these qualities.

For the *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title, if monk, rice which equal to 100 kyats, if man, ration allowance which equal to 100 kyats were offered yearly.

II *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title of post-independence period

Thus English government offered *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* titles from the time 1276 to 1302, at that time, because of the Second World War, offering titles ceased. After regaining our independence, Myanmar government offered *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* titles. 1953, at that time, Myanmar government organized title management committee.

- ❖ *Abhidhajamahāraṭṭhaguru* Phayagyi Sayadaw - Hinsada.
- ❖ *Abhidhajamahāraṭṭhaguru* Nyaung Yan Sayadaw - Mandalay.
- ❖ *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* Le Thar Sayadaw - Yangon.
- ❖ *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* Visutārāma Sayadaw - Pokakku.

Mahāvisuddhāyum Taik – Myaung Mya Sayadaw and U Thein Maung – Chief Justice, Sir U Thwin, an archaeologist, a chief officer for religion were included in this committee. This committee indicated exactly for the offering title. The qualities which were worth for offering *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title were:

- (1) Proficiency in the text of the Pāli canon, commentary of the text and subcommentary:
- (2) Teaching constantly the text of Pāli canon, commentary of the text and subcommentary.
- (3) One who gained at least Twenty years of teaching,

(4) Famousness to be skillful in the text of the *Pāḷi* canon, commentary of text etc.

(5) One who was endowed with the ornament of virtue.

Myanmar government offered *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* titles to the native monks and foreign monks from the time 1951 to 12 years. These were *Abhidhajamahāraṭṭhaguru* titles (11) persons, *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* titles (108) persons. *Abhidhajamahāpaṇḍita* titles were offered to 11- monks and *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* titles to the 108 monks who were from *Theravāda* five countries and native country. From the time 1215 to 1321, offering titles ceremonies were held at the house of the president. In 1322 it was held at Sāsanabiman of Pariyattisāsanahita association, Mandalay. Revolutionary Council held offering the ceremonies at mission compound Ko Kaing, Yangon. The monk who own *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title is worthy to receive allowance 750 kyats for rice and can travel by train and ship in upper class carrying one who makes a thing allowed yearly.

III List of monks and men who won *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* title

Year	Sayadaw	Person	Total	Remark
1276	11	1	12	Pāḷi Saya U Phay
1277	4	-	4	
1278	5	-	5	
1279	1	1	2	Thayankar Sayagyi U Ohn Nyunt
1280	2	-	2	
1281	1	-	1	
1282	1	-	1	
1283	2	-	2	
1284	4	-	4	
1285	4	-	4	
1286	1	-	1	
1287	1	1	2	Sayagyi U Lin (Dr.Lin)
1288	4	-	4	
1289	4	-	4	
1290	4	-	4	
1291	8	-	8	
1292	3	1	4	Ledi Saya Myo
1293	4	-	4	
1297	6	-	6	
1298	2	-	2	

1299	1	-	1	
1300	5	-	5	
1301	5	-	5	
1302	4	-	4	As Second world war was occurring in 1302, the English.
1312	3	-	3	Government stopped the offering of the title of <i>Aggamahāpaṇḍita</i> .
1313	7	-	7	Since the independence had been got, the government reoffered it.
1314	5	-	5	
1315	7	-	7	
1316	6	-	6	
1317	4	-	4	
1318	23	-	23	
1319	6	-	6	
1320	3	-	3	
1321	4	-	4	
1322	12	-	12	
1323	28	-	28	
1340	10	-	10	

VI Conclusion

The doctrine of the Buddha endowed with the initial good, the middle good and the end good. If one follows and practices the teaching of the Buddha, one can obtain worldly enjoyment and supreme end. The teaching of the Buddha enables to increase the doctrine of *Lokaṇāla*. If the doctrine develops, we can establish the peaceful new world. The teaching of the Buddha plays a very important role for the establishment of our peaceful new world. To shine the light of doctrine, the responsibility falls down onto the shoulder of present monks. The present monks should perform to develop the teaching of the Buddha. To serve this duty should the monks be endowed with purity of virtue and accomplishment of concentration. And then they need to be skillful in scripture. The learned monks should teach the community of disciples and should write the new scripture. Thus there will be extraordinary monks who are able to serve the welfare of the doctrine of the Buddha. As it is the duty for monks who serve to develop the doctrine of the Buddha we laymen should provide with four properties such as kyaung, robes, food and medicine for serving their duties without anxiety. And we laymen should offer titles to monks according to their qualities. Nowadays, Myanmar Government offered titles to monks according to their

qualities yearly. It is a suitable transaction because it is an ablation to those who are worthy of offerings.

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