

Grand chariot festival Poi-Leng concludes



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The three-day grand Catafalque (Ceremonial chariot) festival known [as](#) Poi-Leng concluded on Saturday with burning of Ossuary (mortal remains) Ceremonial Chariot at Mahabodhi Lord Buddha College (MLBC) premises [Namsai](#) with great religious honour. Monks and devotees more than 3 lakhs from far and wide thronged the ground on day 1 to witness the installation of mortal remains and on day 3 pay their veneration during last rites performance and cremation of the two monks in the decorated ceremonial chariot.

The combined Poi-Leng celebration was held to pay obeisance to the departed monks, Late Venerable Gyanatisa Mahathero and Late Venerable U. Nanda Mahathera [as](#) per the Theravada Buddhist traditions who attained parinibbana on [8](#) and 29th November [2016](#) respectively at the MLBC Buddha Vihar.

The festival which begun with hoisting of World Buddhist flag, offering of foods to Bhikkhu Sangha, installation of mortal remains at Catafalque (ceremonial chariots) and chanting of mangala charan on January 5 ended today with cremation of mortal remains in ceremonial chariot with chanting of Buddham Sarannam Gacchammi, Dhammam Sarannam Gacchammi and Sangham Sarannam Gacchammi.

The Poi-Leng is the celebration of reflection of possession of a noble soul of Late Venerable U. Nanda Mahathera and Late Venerable Gyanatisa Mahathero who during their life span of 69 years and 87 years have spent 49 Vassa (monkhood) and 28 Vassa (monkhood) since their higher ordination to Bhikkhu in 1968 and 1989 respectively. With their death (nibbana) the entire Buddhist [community](#) has lost a respectable Buddhist Bhikkhus who were loved and respected by all people irrespective of caste, creed and religion.

The main attraction of the festival was the decorated ceremonial chariot

shaped like a boat with 12 wheels constructed and built in 22 days by Venerable Prajnashil Mahathera, Venerable Waradhamma Mahathera, Venerable Viriya Mahathera, Venerable Sobhita Thera and Venerable Dhammacitta Thera with the help of other novice monks from Pariyatti Sasana Buddha Vihara [Namsai](#), Pali Vidyapith Chongkham, Mahabodhi Monastery [Namsai](#) and [girls](#) from Mahabodhi Maitri [Girls Home](#), [Namsai](#) along with the upasaks (devotees).

The 12 wheels on the chariot signifies the quality of greatness of Dhamma and Vassa Vass (years spent [as](#) monkhood) of the late venerable ones. The chariot has three steps of roofs with an elevated platform where the coffins of the departed monks are placed after performing the religious rituals. The monks and devotees pulled the chariot alternatively from either side after the installation of bodies of departed monks at the ceremonial chariot from January 5 to January [7](#) till the period of cremation of mortal remains of venerable ones.

The mummified body of Late Venerable Gyanatisa Mahathero and Late Venerable U. Nanda Mahathera was preserve with great respect and honour by the Bhikkhu Sangha and devotees in makeshift stilt hut called the Chong Nibbana at MLBC [Namsai](#) Poi-Leng Ground. The bodies of the venerable ones were preserved in the coffin till the commencement of the festival by mummifying their bodies with cotton cloth dip in wax, covered with tobacco leaves and charcoal. The tobacco leaves were used to help preserve the bodies from decay and spread of foul play, cotton cloths dip in wax was used for mummifying the body and charcoal was used for assimilating the liquids dripping from the dead bodies.

The Poi-Leng Celebration Committee had ensured all effort to make the Poi-Leng celebration a successful event. Community feast was served for all during the three days celebration. A cultural night with presentation

of Poong (Traditional dramatic art form of Tai Khampti) was another attraction of the 3 day celebration.



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