

The Nwe Kwe Nunneries



Despite the challenging and difficult situation in Burma, we have managed to distribute the MIA donations. This has been made possible by the generous support of Better Burma, a US-based non-profit organization that is dedicated to supporting Myanmar's journey towards peace, justice, and democracy by providing, among other things, essential humanitarian aid.

They helped us to transfer part of the donations into the country and then distribute them to various nunneries and monastic schools. Zaw Win Htet is the person responsible for donations to monastics within the Better Burma organisation.

I had the privilege of meeting him and together we visited the monastic schools. He is fully dedicated to supporting the Saṅgha and has great faith in the teachings of the Buddha. His knowledge of the Dhamma is profound and vast.

He has written three reports about visiting these monastic schools. By reading his reports, you can feel his enthusiasm and the joy he derives from doing this voluntary service.

Zaw Win Htet's reports are attached, or can be found here:

<https://vipassana-metta.com/en/social-projects/social-projects-burma>,
or <https://mettainaction.org>

Each year we received many words of thanks and heartfelt gratitude from the nuns when we offered them the dāna (donations). This year their gratitude and thankfulness were even more pronounced because the living conditions are going from very bad to worse (and worsen, if this word existed). It is not only the laity who are suffering from the current situation in Burma. The economy is in ruins, prices are soaring, and electricity is rarely available. The nuns (and monks) are receiving less support and fewer donations despite having to feed and care for the same or even increasing number of nuns. Families in contested areas are sending their girls to nunneries in Yangon where they are not only safe but can also continue their education.



Below is a letter written by the abbess of Shwechanda Nunnery, Daw Thusandar. Her words reflect what other nuns have also expressed.

On the picture are four of the seven abbesses of the Nwe Kwe Nunneries (from left to right):

Daw Khema
Daw Aye Suvati
Daw Thusandar
Daw Somatheri

To **Mettashin Apwe** [Members of the Metta Group, MIA]

Dear Daw Virañani, Daw Ariya, and Dhamma Friends

I hope you all are well. My name is Daw Thusandar, and I am the head of Shwechanda Nunnery in Nwe Kwe, Mingaladon, Yangon, Myanmar.

We are immensely grateful for your annual donation. This year, we received 20,000,000 Kyats [4500 Euros] and we deeply appreciate it as your generous support has made a significant impact on our nunnery.

Your contributions [over the years] have helped us in expanding, improving meals, and enhancing the education of our young nuns. We truly cannot thank you enough for your generosity and compassion.

Now, the young nuns are so happy and participate in school activities. They are also very excited to take the final exam. You all make their world better and brighter. Thanks for giving them a good future and always supporting us. Without your help, I cannot take care of them.

Your kindness is a blessing to us, and we are so excited to continue this journey with you.

Thank you very much!

We all send a lot of loving kindness and our best wishes to you and your family.

May you and your family be happy and healthy.

May you and your family be free from all suffering, danger, and disaster.

May you and your family have success in everything you do.

May you and your family attain Nibbana.

Warm regards,

Daw Thusandar

Shwechanda Nunnery

(11 February 2025)

Nwe Kwe Nunneries

There are seven nunneries in the neighbourhood called Nwe Kwe situated at the outskirts of Yangon. The nuns in these nunneries take care of each other and make sure that the others are also okay when conditions get worse. I always find it so heartening to see how they live harmoniously and friendly with each other.

Ayemyayaungkyi Nunnery

Daw Aye Suvati lives with her 12 nuns in a small two-story building that is not yet finished. One of the urgent needs are tiles for the upper floor as well as a proper kitchen. Her young nuns go to the Zaloon Monastic School (also supported by MIA).



Daw Aye Suvati with two of her nuns, the shrine room downstairs, the makeshift kitchen

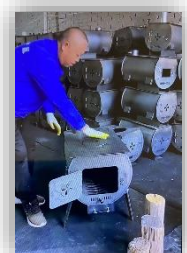
Kyesinaye Nunnery



The nunnery from the street, young nuns waving good-bye, Daw Somatheri and some of the nuns



There are 43 nuns living at the Kyesinaye Nunnery, run by Daw Somatheri. The young orphan they adopted last year is now two-and-a-half-year old and doing well. They use wood for cooking which is also getting more expensive. In their search for an alternative (to gas or electricity), they came across a stove that is very energy efficient. With the donation, they will buy one of these wood stoves instead of cooking over an open fire.



Maukasuvanna Nunnery I



This nunnery is headed by Daw Yuvati, there are 8 nuns living there in total. They go on alms round twice a week and take the bus to Yankin, a suburb near downtown Yangon. The bus fare is 400 Kyats one way per nun. This amounts to 6400 Kyats each day they go for alms round, which is quite a substantial amount of money for them. They need a new roof for the kitchen – the donation will go towards this repair.



In the shrine room downstairs, we noticed a plaque with donations from MIA from 2015 till 2021, the amounts are in Kyats.

နိုင်ငံခြားအလှူရှင်	
ဒေါ်ဝီရ-ဒေါ်အိရိလာ အဖွဲ့မှ	
(13. 1 .2015)	100000
(11. 1 .2016)	100000
(13. 1 .2017)	600000
(9 . 1 .2018)	1100000
(10. 1 .2019)	1400000
(21. 4 .2021)	500000
(26.12.2021)	500000

Maukasuvanna Nunnery II



Daw Nyanedi and her friend, Daw Medhasingi, lead a quiet and meditative life in their small and very tidy place. They want to lay tiles on the floor upstairs – they will gratefully use the donation for this.



A fancy plaque for a previous dāna by MIA

Paññayaungkyi Nunnery I



In all the nunneries we visited, the shrine is the center heart of the building and is always maintained with great care. The nuns offer water, fresh flowers, or lights.

With last year's donation, they have tiled the floor in the shower/toilet area and on the veranda on the second floor. To improve living conditions on the ground floor, they want to lay a parquet wood floor in the left part of the room near the shrine and tiles near the entrance instead of a concrete floor.



Daw Khema with three of her nuns



The shower/toilet area



Upstairs - sleeping quarters



MIA Donations from 2009 till 2021

Paññayaungkyi Nunnery II



Daw Dhammananda and her daughter Daw Ñanasinghi



Their little shrine room



Their building

Daw Dhammananda is 88 years old and her health is not so good anymore. She also suffers from knee pain. Her daughter, Daw Ñanasinghi (59), is taking care of her as best as she can despite having some infirmities. She goes for alms round in the neighbourhood for about two

hours to collect some money. They have a donor who makes a monthly offering of rice. The roof of the building needs urgent repairs before the monsoon starts in June, as do the stairs leading up to the shrine room and living quarters. Fortunately, they have people to help with these repairs.

Shwechanda Nunnery

When I visited the nunnery, the abbess, Daw Thusandar, was away on a journey, and many of the younger nuns were not there because they went to school. There are 40 nuns living in this spacious three-story building that they recently could build. Living quarters, kitchen, a storage room, bath rooms and toilets are all clean and tidy, obviously taken care of each day. The donation is used for the monthly expenses for food, clothes, education, gas and electricity, and medical needs.



Some of the nuns (above), Daw Thusandar receiving the dāna a week later (right)



Shwechanda Nunnery



Storage room (with many rice bags!) and kitchen

With a heartfelt **THANK YOU** for your generous and life-sustaining support.
 May you rejoice in your goodness and that of others.
 Sadhu, sadhu, sadhu !!!

(Ariya Baumann, February 2025)

