2. From the Desk of the Editor

- Language is important because it is through which human beings communicate, share ideas and build social bonds. It also shapes cultural identity. Speaking a common dialect, for example, Sinhala, Tamil, English, Hindi, or Mandarin, builds instant trust, belonging, and solidarity among members of a cultural group. Each language has unique qualities and preserves the thinking of its users for posterity.

  The language of the people of the Sinhala people is called Sinhala. It has a very long history dating back to the Buddha's time. It has its own script which has evolved over the centuries, as seen in the inscriptions and Ola manuscripts, and has withstood all environmental changes and adapted to the new surroundings. In a world population of over 8 billion, the numbers that speak and write Sinhala and use Sinhala as the language of communication are around 20 million, which is a miniscule percentage of .0025. No other country has such a long and written history.

  It should also be remembered that the Buddha's words were put into writing for the first time using the early *Brāhmi* Sinhala script, and that too was before the birth of Christ. Buddhism could have died a natural death if not for this timely action of Sinhala bhikkhus who assembled in Aluvihara in the Matale district.

  The lead article of the IL Poya issue is that of Professor Sandagomi Coperaewa, Senior Professor (Chair) of Sinhala of the Department of Sinhala, University of Colombo, with the title 'Beyond Spelling: Preserving Pali and Sinhala through Transliteration'. When quoting the Buddha or writing a Pali

stanza, let us learn to do it correctly. We may consider it as our duty and responsibility as faithful Buddhists.

Here's a somewhat hilarious example. King Dhatusena built the Kala Wewa, and when his son wanted his share of the wealth, he requested that he be taken there. After getting into the water, the king took some water with both his hands and said that this was the wealth he has. What stirring words from a head of state? We know how to pronounce this name of the irrigation tank correctly, as we are familiar. But it is not so to a person who sees the words Kala Wewa for the first time. That person could read it as කල වෙව, කාල වෙව, කලා වෙව, or කාලා වෙව. If the diacritical marks are used, there is the assurance that it will be pronounced correctly. Those who have gone to an elocution class will know how the English letter '**W**' is pronounced. The 'ව' in Sinhala has its equivalent in the '**V**' of the English alphabet and not the 'W'. Hence, to ensure correct pronunciation, 'ආ' and 'ෑ' have to be written in English as ***'Kalā' and 'Väva',*** using the appropriate diacritical marks as shown.

- There will be a new feature from this issue onwards. From the beginning of the revived new series of BOSAT, we had the 'Pali Alphabet in English with diacritical marks'. The title was changed subsequently to Transliterating into English the Pali texts written in Sinhala'. For the convenience of our readers and as a guide, important doctrinal terms will be transliterated into English from the Sinhala. It will develop into a useful list if copied and kept. We start with the four Noble Truths.
  අරියෝ අට්ඨංගිකෝ මග්ගෝ - ***ariyō aṭṭhaṃgikō maggō***

- We could say that half the battle is won if the correct attitude is developed by one. This month the title is Right Attitude to Work. Recent history has shown how certain nations have surged forward by developing the right attitude to work. If the workforce is sluggish and preoccupied with extraneous

matters, a country's economy too becomes sluggish. This valuable contribution to your BOSAT concludes by stating 'that the right attitude towards work is of paramount importance for the smooth operation of even the entire world'. In this regard, the greatest disability is in one's mind and not in external factors.

- However, building a nation is not only economic development. There are many other aspects that improve the quality of life. The contribution made by Professor Ediriweera Sarachchandra to the cultural life of our nation, who is featured in this issue, is colossal. He dedicated his life to restoring the country's identity and establishing a unique artistic landscape. *Maname* and *Sinhabahu*, which are two of his theatrical creations, continue to echo the pulse of our nation even today.

- Whatever our actions, whether vocal, physical or mental, we are morally responsible. When observing what's happening in the world around us, including our own country, this aspect of each one being morally responsible for one's actions or deeds seems to have been lost. The consequences that we see and hear are extremely pathetic. What is the money earned through unscrupulous means? The Buddhist point of view on this important aspect is discussed by one of our revered monks of the last century, who has gained international fame because of his missionary work and the books he has written, in his article on moral responsibility. The verses from the *Lovāḍa Sangarāva* presented herein emphasise this same aspect.

- It so happens, however, that people tend to lose their identity and have to be reminded as to who they are. The article by Most Venerable Madihe Paññāsīha Mahanayaka Thera on *Bauddhayā* in Sinhala is to fill that gap.

- We are a small nation but during its long journey have received many accolades. It has been described as the 'Pearl of the Indian Ocean', the Island of Gems *(Ratnadīpa), and* the Righteous Island

(Dhammadīpa). One reason for that is the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi in Anuradhapura, which is 'the oldest living, human-planted tree in the world with a documented planting date and being venerated daily by thousands of pilgrims'. The sense of gratitude of our people is amazing. If you have not heard of a *Daramiṭi Perahera* (Firewood Procession), read about it in the much-researched article on Sri Maha Bodhiya, the feature article under *'A Little Bit of Our Heritage.*

Näṇasiha



Art of Relaxing

Lie on your back on a flat surface, and try to avoid using a pillow or cushion under your head. *Keep your legs stretched and slightly apart and your arms loosely by your sides. Keep your eyes shut, do not go to deep thinking, but allow your mind to relax, and not wander. Relax each muscle, be completely relaxed for a few minutes.* At times you may slightly fall asleep for a couple of minutes; at the end of the relaxation get up feeling fit.

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