

Bearer of the Tipitaka and Custodian of Theravada). Amongst those Day followers and bhikkhus with wide learning the Sayadaw earned great respect his erudition witnessed by competence in editing and approving the texts prepared by the editorial board for recitation at the Synod, as well as for his authorship of the learned treatises such as the two-volume set of "A manual of Vipassana Practice", the 4-volume set of translation of Visuddhimagga, the 4-volume set of translation of the Great Commentary on Visuddhimagga.

His method of practice of mindfulness has proved to be a boon to the seekers-after-truth who find it practical and simple and quite in conformity with the Buddha's teaching contained in the Pitaka. It has in effect popularised the practice of Dhamma both at home and abroad so much so that it has ushered in a new era of vipassana tradition.

The simplicity and effectiveness of his method of practice of mindfulness has drawn vast followership among practitioners locally as well as in various foreign lands. He is recognized as a great-teacher of vipassana practice of mindfulness by Buddhist countries that follow the Theravada School as well as the mahayana School, and by the great multitude of practitioners everywhere.

**A Short Biography of the late Mahasi Sayadaw,  
Aggamahapandita,  
the Questioning Officer at the Proceedings of the Sixth  
Buddhist Synod,  
a celebrated leader in World Buddhist Mission**

**Preface**

There have appeared in the history of Theravada School of the Buddhas Teaching in Myanmar Country eminent bhikkhu elders well versed in the Pitaka learning and adept in the practice of Dhamma.

To name a few of those doubly competent bhikkhus, we have the Theelon Sayadaw, the Ledi Sayadaw, and in the contemporary period the Mahasi Sayadaw.

The depth of Pitaka learning of the Mahasi Sayadaw is recognized by the members of the Sanagha who have themselves acquired Pitaka and general knowledge, ever more than the laity. The lay folks were deeply impressed by the dexterity of the Mahasi Sayadaw as the Questioning Officer at the Sixth Great Synod who put important and memorable questions to the Responding Officer (the late Venerable VicittasaraVivamsa Sayadaw,

The life and story of a bhikkhu elder of such standing should be familiar to the Buddhist Community of all ages in our country. Besides, Buddhist people and non-Buddhist people in other countries should have the opportunity to learn about a personality of this stature. It would certainly be worthwhile for everyone to know fully the life story of the great there.

There are a number of biographies of the Mahasi Sayadaw in the Myanmar Language. But only a limited number of books on the subject are found in English, and they are mere life sketches.

A biography of the Sayadaw written in Myanmar by the Venerable Silanandabhivamsa (Aggamahapandita, Aggamahasa-ddhammajotikadhaja, Ph.D.) is an outstanding work. It is a brief account of the life story, and is called Part One. Nevertheless, it is quite informative and reliable. The style is highly readable. The committee for celebrating the centenary of Mahasi Sayadaw has, at its meeting held on 24.12.2004, chosen this book as a basic to be translated into English. Thanks to the immense past merit of the great Sayadaw, competent translators are found in the persons of Daw Mya Tin, holder of the Mahasaddhammajotikadhaja, and U Tin U (Myaung), holder of the same religious title. With the willing co-operation of these two persons, this book has seen the light of day.

This is to put on record the sincere thanks by the Buddha-tharthana-nuggaha Aphwe and the committee for the celebration of the Centenary of the Mahasi Sayadaw that are due to the above mentioned translators.

**(U Win Htein)**

**for the Committee for the  
celebration of the Centenary of  
the Mahasi Sayadaw, Buddha  
Sasana Nuggaha Aphwe,  
Mahasi Tharthana Yeiktha,  
Dated the 15 June 2004**