

Spiritual and Intellectual Upliftment at Siriwardhanaramaya

Posted on



The Siriwardhanaramaya Temple focuses on enhancing wellbeing in a spiritual and mindful way

Siriwardhanaramaya is more than a temple. Located on Temple Lane in Colpetty, it houses the Buddha Dhamma College and the Manodaya Meditation Centre. Following the mission “to impart meaningful education and social service to the needy”, Siriwardhanaramaya facilitates teaching and counselling services at the premises.

Words Roomini Wijayarathne

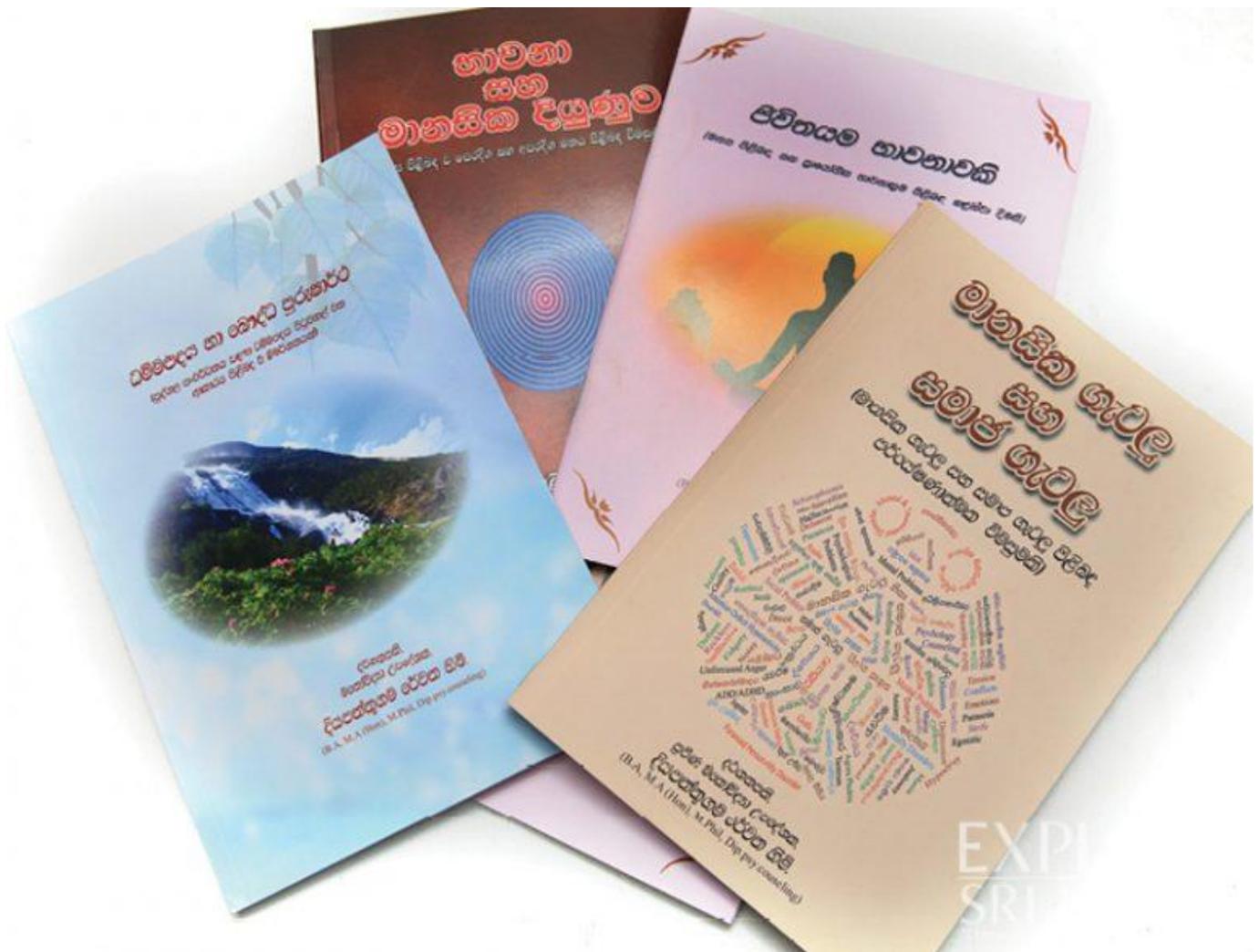
Photographs Menaka Aravinda and Geeth Viduranga

The temple dates back to the 19th century. Siriwardhana Mahatha, a nobleman from Agalawatte Walawwa, is said to have donated a villa, and it has been converted into a temple named “Siriwardhanaramaya” in honour of the great act of generosity.

From the inception itself, Siriwardhanaramaya has been a centre for education. Records state that Dr Paul Dahlke from Germany has studied Pali at the premises in 1900. Monks following higher education at the Vidyodaya Pirivena and Vidyalankara Pirivena have resided at the temple for educational assistance. Even private education institutes have been hosted at Siriwardhanaramaya in the recent past reflecting the temple’s attempts to uplift education.

The Chief Incumbent of the temple, Ven Diypattugama Revatha Thero is a certified counsellor, having completed a diploma in Psychology and Masters in Buddhist Philosophy. It has been one of his initiatives to establish the International Non-Formal Educational Organisation in 2002, along with the Buddha Dhamma College and the Manodaya Meditation Centre.

Buddha Dhamma College, headed by Revatha Thero, imparts knowledge of Dhamma with a psychological insight, and Manodaya Meditation Centre conducts meditation classes and counselling sessions. Both institutes welcome anyone of any faith to engage in meditation and counselling for spiritual upliftment.



Many find relief and guidance through the books authored by Revatha Thero

When asked if the external noise interrupts the meditation processes, as the temple is located near a main road, Revatha Thero states simply that, “Sound is only an interruption of we let it become one. Here at Manodaya we teach how to be sensitive to the environment and incorporate all your senses into the meditation process. That is the truest form of meditation.”

Commenting on the link between mental health and meditation he says, “Many psychiatrists in Sri Lanka advise against meditation for mental illnesses. But that is not wise. Meditation is a powerful form of strengthening the mind and relieving mental illnesses.” In addition to mentoring individuals at the Buddha Dhamma

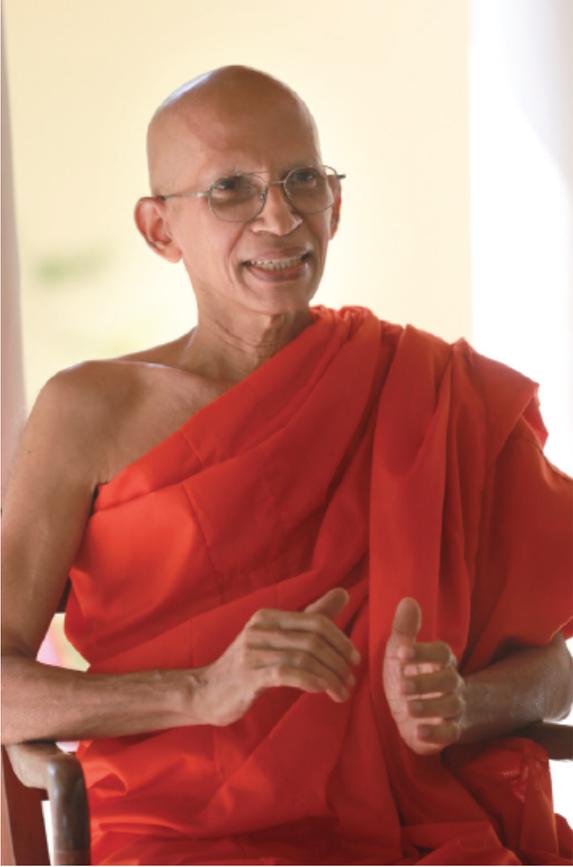
College and Meditation Centre, Revatha Thero has also authored six books that help meditation, mental conditions and social living.

At Siriwardhanaramaya, Revatha Thero engages in a number of social services, without expecting any kind of a contribution in return. Mentoring and teaching are done at the allocated space in the temple premises: a respite for all participants from the fast-paced ways of the daily life.

The Bo tree exudes a serene aura, ideal for mindful relaxation and concentration. The pearly white dagoba and the bell tower beside it adds to the spiritual atmosphere; a visitor can leave the hustle and the bustle beyond the gates of the temple premises to experience the stress-free tranquillity.

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Chief Incumbent, Ven Diyapattugama Revatha Thero mentors everyone who seek help.

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The avasaya has been home to many knowledge seeking bhikkus.

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The dagoba and the Bo tree create a peaceful aura.