

Temples get ready for Wesak

ALL SET: Buddhist temples get artisans from Myanmar and Sri Lanka to design floats for the procession

DAWN CHAN
PETALING JAYA

street@malaymail.com.my

FOR the past few weeks and months, artisans from Myanmar and Sri Lanka spent hours moulding Wesak Day floats which will take centre stage during processions on Friday and Saturday.

Wesak Day, which falls on Friday, commemorates the birth, enlightenment and death of Buddha.

At Chempaka Buddhist Lodge (CBL), visitors and devotees will be greeted by rows of Buddhist flags as they drive towards its premises in Taman SEA.

The majestic statue of a Sleeping Buddha at the entrance of the lodge



The Sleeping Buddha at the entrance of the Chempaka Buddhist Lodge was built by an artisan from Myanmar. Pic by Dato Ismail

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Sri Lankan artisan Leelasena Garandana (right) checking the float he made for the Buddhist Maha Vihara in Brickfields. Pic by Mior Azfar Mior Kamarulbaid

Keep celebration simple, urges high priest

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will leave one in awe. Also known as the Reclining Buddha, the statue in gold is one of the two floats built by an artisan from Myanmar.

The artisan has been working on the float since he arrived here shortly after Chinese New Year.

The statue, which measures 9.7 metres in length and 2.4 metres in height, is made of foam and sits on a 12-metre long trailer.

Apart from injecting Burmese style art on the float, the artisan also made 108 mini statues of enlightened disciples with their hands clasped lined in three rows in front of the Sleeping Buddha.

CBL Wesak Day organising chairman Tan Kok Ing said the Sleeping Buddha signifies the final passage to Nirvana.

"This Sleeping Buddha statue is not only for the Wesak Day float procession.

"After the procession, it will be mounted at the entrance of CBL to replace a similar one which was made last year," he said, adding that the statue was made to withstand heat and its water-proof.

Some 25 floats made by other Buddhist organisations are expected to join in CBL's Wesak Day float procession which will pass areas like SS23/17, SS24-B and SS2 on Saturday. The procession starts at 7pm.

Over at the Buddhist Maha Vihara (BMV) in Jalan Berhala, Brickfields, Sri Lankan artisans Leelasena Garandana and Rajapaksa Werhanage have been working around the clock to put together a 9.1-metre float where the centerpiece is a 4.2-metre high swan on a lake decorated with lights, flowers and hand-carved ornaments.

The swan is used as it is believed to be the only

bird that can separate milk from water. BMV administrator Hema Jayasinghe said: "People with dharma knowledge, with the swan as a representation, are able to filter good from evil."

BMV will also use a brass Buddha statue which was donated by a family in the 1950s. Behind the statue will be a lit up dharma chakra.

Chief High Priest of Malaysia Venerable Donak K. Sri Dhammaratana called on the Buddhist community to devote themselves to learning the basic teachings of Buddhism and putting them into practice.

"If we can follow the teachings of the great master, we can find peace and harmony within ourselves. We can also cultivate inner peace and happiness within us," he said.

He also urged Buddhist organisations to make Wesak Day celebrations as simple as possible instead of spending unnecessary money.

"Take part in dharma talks, chantings and blessing ceremonies, give alms to the monks and meditate," said Dhammaratana.

The Wesak Day celebrations at BMV started on Sunday with a blood and corona donation drives.

A contribution of RM45,000 was also made to the Pingtung-NKF Haemodialysis Centre, the National Kidney Foundation, orphanages and old folk-homes.

On Thursday, the first of lamp will be lit followed by a puja and traditional shows.

On Wesak Day, there will be hosting of the Buddhist flag, Buddha puja (mid-day offering), Sanghika dawa (lunch for the monks), free vegetarian lunch and meditation sessions. The procession at 7pm on Friday will feature 40 floats.

BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA'S FLOAT PROCESSION ROUTE



CHEMPAKA BUDDHIST LODGE'S FLOAT PROCESSION ROUTE



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