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DHAMMA GETS DEEPLY ROOTED INTO HEARTS OF CHILDREN FROM VARIOUS NATIONALITIES IN THE “TRUE LITTLE MONK : A WISDOM TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR NOVICES”LEARNING THE MOST PRECIOUS LESSONS LEARNED OF “COMPASSION & KINDNESS : LEARN – LIVE – LOVE – LET GO”

Closing its curtain impressively, True Little Monk : A Wisdom Training Programme for Novices, the world’s first reality documentary programme in English, was originally initiated by Mr. Suphachai Chearavanont, Chief Executive Officer, Charoen Pokphand Group / Chairman of the Executive Committee, True Corporation Plc. Through the four weeks of learning and practicing Dhamma up to a ceremony day that marked the end of 12 novices’ monkhood at Wat Pah Sai Ngam in Det-Udom district, Ubon Ratchathani province, it was evident that these novices managed to obtain profound Buddhist wisdom. They could understand Dhamma amazingly and go beyond that. The precious life lessons learned by the 12 youngsters from practicing Dhamma had been handed over to all programme viewers – not only Thais, yet the audience from over 110 countries across the world who stayed tuned for this online reality documentary programme.

Mr. Suphachai Chearavanont said, “The True Little Monk : A Wisdom Training Programme for Novices is an extension of the Thai language True Little Monk Programme which is aimed at cultivating virtues and ethics among youngsters as well as expanding Buddhism to an international scale. The programme broadcasted real lives of novice monks from various nationalities such as British, French, Australian, New Zealander, Kenyan, Chinese and Nepalese so that viewers both in Thailand and abroad are able to learn and practice Dhamma principles along with the novices.
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On the monkhood leaving ceremony, Phrakhru Nikrotthammaphon (Luang Ta Anek Yasadinno), the Abbot of Wat Pah Sai Ngam, Ubon Ratchathani province said, “This year’s program is so special that the young novices opened their hearts to Dhamma teachings during the days that they were ordained. This is regarded as a propitious good deed that everyone should be proud of. All the novices have gained Dhamma wisdom and enlightenment as a heritage from the Lord Buddha. All reverend monk teachers kindly shared their knowledge in a way similar to great craftsmen helping refine the minds of all novices to be decent ones in the future. Everything has been accomplished today because of the power of faith and support from all related parties. Everyone should apply Buddhist principles, which are like a guiding compass, into their daily lives.”

Mrs. Varnnee Chearavanont Ross, Chairwoman of the Ceremony, and a member of the Programme’s Advisory Committee, as well as the founder and Director of Concordian International School said, “the 12 novices with ages between 8-12 years old, speaking various languages and from diverse cultural background encountered real life tests through Dhamma coaching for the past month. This is not easy at all for youngsters, who may not be familiar with the culture and traditions of Buddhism, to adapt themselves to a new environment as well as learn and practice Dhamma for the

entire four weeks. All novice monks have indeed done what is considered as making the greatest merit in their life by paying respect and gratitude towards their parents. Moreover, the parents of these 12 novices can certainly be proud of their children who had chosen to be ordained and study the Dhamma. Most importantly, these young boys are great role models, captivating attention of viewers worldwide regardless of gender or age to follow their progress in the study and practice of Dhamma. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation to all Thai and foreign monks who have taught the 12 international novices throughout the past month. In addition, I would like to thank the parents and family members of the 12 novice monks who have kindly allowed their children to join this programme, of which the key objective is to spread out Buddhism wisdom and bring peace to the society."

Mr. Vichaow Rakphongphairoj, President (Co) of True Corporation Plc said, "True Little Monk : A Wisdom Training Programme comes from the power of faith. On this programme which is conducted in English, 12 novices from various nationalities have learned Dhamma under the concept of "Compassion & Kindness : Learn – Live – Love – Let go" to attain the goal of becoming a "Giver" with compassion. This is indeed an important foundation on which they can grow and develop into good citizens who are able to provide positive contributions to their families, communities and society in the future. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the sponsors of True Little Monk: A Wisdom Training Programme for Novices. The collective support we have received from all has led to the great success. The working team is committed to continuously improving the programme."

On the monkhood leaving ceremony, all 12 monk novices held Dhamma talks on the topic "Compassion & Kindness : Learn – Live – Love – Let go", reflecting the result's effectiveness of their learning and practicing of Dhamma throughout the month.

Jaydet Maxum Bainbridge, a 9-year-old Australian/Thai novice who studies in Australia and decided to join this programme gave a Dhamma talk about "Patience" and how to endure desires. He said, "If we want to have patience, we must train ourselves intensively. If there is no such patience, the world will be chaotic. Even parents, they must have patience in taking care of and teaching their children. Being a novice monk, I have learned many things, and when I go home, I will keep practicing tolerance such as playing less games and finding more useful activities to do. Bainbridge also talked about determination, which is a key factor to successful life and also encouraged the audience to raise Dhamma-concerned questions and meditate regularly.

Pratik Prokae, a 9-year-old Nepalese novice, explained the Dhamma principle of "Diligence & Perseverance as a way to achieve success". He shared, "If you want to succeed in life, you need to have perseverance. If you have only intention but no perseverance, it will be very hard to achieve anything. Also, you should have persistence in a right way. During my monkhood, I must have determination to get up early in order to receive food from people. Living under the long-handed umbrella, I must indeed encounter fears and try not to be discouraged by constant distractions. After leaving the monkhood and returning to the normal life, I will recommend my friends to learn more about Buddhism. I will teach them how to meditate so they can take control of their minds and emotions. If I have an opportunity in the future, I would like to be ordained and learn Dhamma with my reverend monk teachers again.

The well received True Little Monk : A Wisdom Training Programme for Novice is regarded as a new dimension in expanding Buddhism on the international scale. In addition, virtues and ethics are cultivated among the youths who are compared to precious gemstones which have passed grindings. They now can return to their families and grow up to be good citizens of the society.

The public are invited to watch impressive moments and reruns of the True Little Monk : A Wisdom

Training Programme for Novice, the world’s first reality international documentary programme, at www.truelittlemonk.com,www.facebook.com/TrueLittleMonk and www.youtube.com/TrueLittleMonk. In addition, the programme’s reruns with Thai subtitle will be available soon in September 2018 onwards on TrueVisions Reality TV channel 60, 99 and TrueVisions Reality TV HD channel 119 or 333. Interested persons can also follow the programme’s activities at www.facebook.com/truelittlemonk.