

Hoang Phap Monastery - Report of the Organizing Board

Dear Masters, Monks and Nuns,
Dear Mr and Mrs Ian Green,
Dear lay Buddhists,

With the approval of Mr and Mrs. Ian Green –the owners of the Jade Buddha, with the permission of the local authority and the support of the HCM City Buddhist Association’s Cultural Board and with the spiritual and financial support of the Sangha members and the lay Buddhists, Hoang Phap Monastery has its chance to organize the Jade Buddha display– one of the most precious jades in the world from April seven to April twenty-four, two thousand and nine (*March 13 to March 30, according to Lunar calendar*).

In order to prepare for the Jade Buddha display, our Sangha members and lay Buddhists spent our days and nights within one month to set up the front gate, the Jade Buddha-worshipping hall and all of the decoration works of paper lamps and paper flags hung around the monastery campus

According to our schedule, the Jade Buddha display would have been shown on April eight, two thousand and nine at our Hoang Phap Monastery, but as the statue arrived early, we had to organize its display two days earlier. The opening ceremony was held solemnly and splendidly with the participation of Sangha monk and nun members from the National Vietnam Buddhist Association, representatives from the city and district local authorities and with the presence of Mr and Mrs Ian Green and thousands of lay Buddhists as well.

Within the past seventeen days, as thanks to good conditions, our Hoang Phap Monastery has welcomed Buddhist monks and nuns, Buddhist lay people and people from different social classes, from different religious backgrounds like farmers, workers and business people who came and worshipped the Jade Buddha.

Besides HCM City local people, people from provincial areas throughout the country also arrived at the display. Our Hoang Phap campus is usually large but during the period of the Buddha statue’s display, it became smaller, full of people. From 4 o’ clock in the morning till 10 at night big crowds of visitors arrived to watch the statue. In average, each day the display received from twenty-thousand people to thirty-thousand people’s arrivals to watch the Jade Buddha; On Saturdays and Sundays the number of visitors reached up to thirty-thousand to fifty-thousand.

During the Jade Buddha exhibition period, also the period of holding our fifty-sixth Buddha Recitation Retreat, though we were busy with meal preparations for three thousand retreat participants we still had to prepare breakfast and lunch foods for those who arrived to visit the Buddha display. Averagely, each day for the six o’clock breakfast, we had to prepare from one-thousand to three-thousand loaves of bread for the display visitors, and five-thousand or six-thousand take-away rice boxes for visitors’ 11 o’clock lunch. Besides Buddhist monks and nuns arriving at the display would also receive one free gift including Dharma books or VCDs or DVDs. Lay Buddhists arriving to the display were also offered one VCD entitled “*Oh, Buffalo*” or “*the Ceremony of Ullambana Great Festival*” and one photograph of the Jade Buddha taken and donated by Chieu Tuong and HCMCity Fahasa Publisher. And due to our lacking of service members, we could only carry out our free present delivery from 6 AM to 6 PM.

To safeguard the Jade Buddha display, each day our monastery had to hire ten security guards; these professional security men would work with our own security guards in arranging visitors in two line standings before taking turns for their statue visits. Thanks to these security guards, there happened no push or trouble making at the display.

Before and during the time of the Jade Buddha display, some monks suggested us to transfer the Jade Buddha display to other Buddhist temples so that we could have our benefits shared to other temples. But as time for the statue display had been informed to the public and lay Buddhists from distant provinces as planned had hired buses to arrive at our temple for the Buddha statue’s visits, we didn’t want to disappointed them and we didn’t want to destroy our prestige. Therefore, our temple wasn’t able to change our display schedule. We hope Buddhist monks and nuns and Buddhist lay people sympathize for us.

Thanks to the Buddha’s support, and thanks to the chanting support of the Sangha members, and thanks to the support given to us from different people from different social classes, our display of the Jade Buddha statue right here at Hoang Phap Monastery has been greatly successful.

Tomorrow the Jade Buddha will be transferred to another place for its continuous displays before arriving home in Australia. But the image of the Jade Buddha will still linger on our Vietnamese lay Buddhists’ minds. And perhaps Vietnamese lay Buddhists will forever remember the efforts made by Mr and Mrs Ian Green who created the Jade Buddha statue so that people in the world have their opportunity to watch the statue and the statue in turn helps provoke their Buddha minds.

To show our gratitude to the Triple Jewels, our thanks to Mr and Mrs Green as well as all of the lay Buddhist people who have contributed to the success of the Buddha display, our Hoang Phap Temple is holding light candle and its Thank-You To The Triple Jewel Ceremony tonight April twenty-four, two thousand and nine

We wish Masters, monks and nuns and our noble guests good health and great successes in everything you expect.

* * *