



Vipassana Newsletter

In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin, as taught by S. N. Goenka

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Words of Dhamma

Sabbattha ve sappurisā cajanti, na kāmakāmā lapayanti santo.
Sukhena phutṭhā atha vā dukhena, na uccāvacaṃ paṇḍitā dassayanti.

– *Dhammapadapāli- 83, Paṇḍitavaggo.*

Good people surely everywhere renounce (attachment), the virtuous do not talk of desiring sense-pleasures; The wise show neither elation or depression, when touched by pleasure or pain.

Gurujii's Public Talk on Birth Centenary of Shri Kedarnathji

By S.N. Goenka

Place: Manav Samaj Hall, Sion, Mumbai

Dated: 25 Dec 1983

*May pure Dhamma arise purifying the mind;
Filling it with virtue and removing all defilements.*

Admirers and followers of Saint Kedarnath ji.

He was a great saint among saints. But how should we mark the anniversary of a saint's birth?

As we gather here to commemorate his birth centennial, let us remember that a saint has no desire for praise or glorification. If we only sing paeans of praise for the one who has passed, it will be a useless and vacuous tribute to someone who lived his entire life away from fame and praise and adoration. If we want to truly celebrate the anniversary of a saint who has passed on, then let us make an effort to imbibe the ideals he held dear in life. If we cannot imbibe his virtues, then mere talk of those virtues is not going to benefit us. If our minds are not purified, then merely praising the purification is not going to benefit us. The greatest homage, the greatest respect, to such an evolved being can only be that his ideals become our ideals.

It was to my good fortune that a year after my return from Burma (Myanmar), I came in contact with this jewel amongst the saints. During a series of public talks in Bikaner (Rajasthan), one person who had been attending all my talks came over during my departure at the station and said, "You speak the language of Nathji". I asked, "Who is this Nathji?" And he said, "You don't know Nathji?" I said, "I am new to this country; I don't know him." He said again, "Have you not read his book, Sadhana and Vivek?" "No, brother, I have not." "What a strange coincidence! You say the same things that Nathji speaks of, although you haven't met him, and you haven't read his book." "It's true, brother; I have not met him and have not read his book." "Then you will be very happy to meet him," he declared.

We had a course in Bodhgaya almost immediately after the above-mentioned incident. Shri Dwarko Sundrani, a well-

known social worker, attended the course. He also mentioned that I taught in the same manner as Nathji. I explained to him that I had only recently become aware of him. Dwarko Bhai told me that Nathji lived in Mumbai and that we should meet when I returned.

When I returned to Mumbai, Dwarako Bhai who happened to accompany me, again suggested that I visit Nathji. However, because of his sickness, Nathji's physicians had advised him not to speak with anyone for longer than five to seven minutes. Soon as I met him, I was assured that I was indeed in the gracious company of a saint. Bharat is the land of spirituality, and whenever pure Dhamma arises, saints too take birth here. Certainly, the earth can never be devoid of saints.

Although only a few minutes had been allotted for me to speak, Nathji didn't seem to mind his host Kantibhai's concerns, and the two of us spoke happily for the next two and a half hours. Subsequently, after finishing a course, I would frequently see him when I returned to Mumbai. Associating with any saint, even for a few moments, is very beneficent. He had such a fresh and clean, wholesome mind. He would get very happy upon hearing how people come to the camps and, turning inward, sit for sadhana, to rid themselves of the impurities.

Sadhana is Not an Escape

Meditation is not an escape; it is not a way to avoid life. One does not come for ten-days because he is tired of vicissitudes of life and wants a brief respite from troubles. Nathji was very happy to know that the meditation that is taught is not to get immersed in some medium of focus, but rather to be undertaken with great care and discerning wisdom. During sadhana, one makes an effort every moment, and then from moment to moment, one sees how to make the mind free of negativities, to purify it by filling it with virtues. A meditator who turns inwards reaches the inner recesses where negativities take birth, their source. The effort is to stop these impurities at the very source, and if they do sprout, to see that they do not develop further and multiply; when this happens, the effort is to remove them from the very roots.

He would send many people to camps, and when they returned, he would ask them how they had benefited. What

changes have come about? How much have the impurities diminished? How purified and virtuous has the mind become? And it would greatly please him to hear of the benefits, even if they are minor; whether one gains direct benefit or not, whether dharma is becoming a part of life. If the mind gets purified, then it will begin to reflect in one's behaviour. He was pleased to hear that the dharma that was taught was not a mere intellectual exercise. A true saint would always insist on imbibing Dharma. Knowing how to remain equanimous in the face of adversity is an art. To live in a way so as not to hurt another person's peace and harmony, since whenever a person loses his equanimity and behaves in a negative way, he first harms himself. This is the immutable law of nature. When the mind is purified, on the other hand, it is naturally filled with immeasurable lovingkindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and balance of mind.

Fundamentally, sadhana is to purify the mind. People forgot this, and focusing the mind became the primary goal. They feel: "My mind is very voluble; it should turn silent, get focused, and become steady." But even if it did become steady, if defilements still pervade your mind, keeping you unhappy what have you gained? One needs to dive deep within to become free of mental impurities, for focusing the mind is not the final goal of meditation. It is necessary to cleanse the mind of all impurities.

Celebrating the birth anniversary of such a wise person started with an hour-long meditation. It was a good start. Sitting with closed eyes, what does one do? Witnesses the reality within, where cravings and aversions arise. As soon as they arise, one starts to watch with equanimity, and as he continues to watch, the power of these impurities gets weakened, dissolving them. If one remains unaware, and is not watchful, then the impurities multiply. One must watch, confront what has arisen, and not try to escape. Sadhana's sole purpose is this.

And this path is universal, free of any sectarian concerns. That this sadhana does not belong to any one particular sect was a matter of great joy for Nathji, who used to feel very happy that this path, which is universal and true for all times and benefits everyone without exception, is not limited to any sect.

The truth is to be realized; otherwise, it is a mere intellectual exercise. It used to make Nathji very happy that there was a way to bring the truth down to the experiential level rather than just as a verbal, intellectual exercise or even as a devotional immersion. That which has not been experienced but merely believed has only brought pride in its wake—look at my knowledge! I know all about dharma. But what, indeed, do you know? Your experience is nothing more than a belief. There is a big difference between knowing and believing.

Being born into a very strict Sanatana (Hindu) household, I was accustomed to reciting the Gita scripture like many others in my community. For years I continued, but I did not understand what I was reciting. I finally began to understand when I turned inward and started 'to see' the truth. Oh! What is the point of mere verbosity? They cannot be understood unless they appear in one's experience. I used to recite a couplet, a shloka from the Gita.

Utkrāmantam sthitam vāpi, bhuñjānam vā guṇānvitam;

Vimūḍhā nānupaśyanti, paśyanti jñānacakṣuṣaḥ.

Śrīmadbhāgavadgītā Chap. 15, Puruṣottamayoga—15.10

Vimūḍhā nānupaśyanti – Ignorant ones are unable to 'see', unable to practice Vipassana;

Paśyanti jñānacakṣuṣaḥ – Those whose eyes of (*gyāna / paññā*)—knowledge and wisdom—have opened will be able to practise Vipassana. Going inwards, when they start to 'see' the truth, on the one hand, the inner eyes of knowledge open, while on the other hand, the capacity to watch the truth within rises. Both support each other. As one marches onward, the entire mystery of nature reveals itself.

Utkrāmantam – A part of our consciousness, of our mind, raises its head – *Utkrāmantam* – when any sense is stimulated. All sense doors, viz., the eyes, nose, ears, tongue, and body (sense of touch), are all by themselves lifeless; they cannot work by themselves unless that part of the mind whose task it is to 'know' does not engage with the particular sense door. For instance, a sound strikes the ears, or a form strikes the eyes, or some aroma strikes the nose, etc., and the first part of the mind raises its head and knows. As soon as an object strikes its respective sense door, the 'knowing' segment of the mind raises its head – oh, something happened. And then the next segment raises its head – *sthitam* – it sees what has happened. A sound has struck the ears. Then it recognizes, recalling all of its previous experiences and memories—some sound came: "Oh, these are words of abuse or praise." And it does not merely stop there, it evaluates – word of abuse – very bad. Or word of praise – very good. And as soon as the evaluation has happened, as per nature's law, the entire body starts vibrating with sensations. If the evaluation states "very good," then the entire body will pulsate with pleasant vibrations, and conversely, if the evaluation states "very bad," then unpleasant sensations will pulsate throughout. And the person starts to indulge in the pleasant or unpleasant sensations, as the case may be. There is just indulgence and more indulgence. This was called – *bhuñjānam* – he starts to indulge and to tie knots, multiplying them manifold.

Guṇānvitam – One thus ties knots again and again. One needs to go inwards and 'see' this entire play; of course, nothing will be gained by closing one's eyes and merely imagining. Unless the truth that was realised by that Great One, is experienced by our own selves, it is not the truth for us. We will know nothing by merely imagining it. But the moment a truth reveals itself and we see this truth as it is, with neutrality and without reacting, then the entire phenomenon becomes clear to us, and we see how we give rise to craving and how we tie the knots. As soon as craving (or aversion) occurs, *bhuñjānam* has begun. But then one reminds oneself, "Ah, I am not to react to it." The sensation that has arisen, if it is unpleasant, it is impermanent; if it is pleasant, it is impermanent. The entire field of mind and matter is impermanent, ephemeral. A sadhak does not accept it merely because some guru or Buddha has said so. He knows it from his own experience, and so he accepts it. However painful or pleasant a sensation, it will eventually end; it is ephemeral and constantly changing. This is its nature. Why get attached to it or run away from it? As a result, mediators practise establishing their minds in equanimity, equipoise.

That a meditator will be established in equipoise of mind as soon as he starts to observe the pleasant and unpleasant sensations and not permit any reaction is not going to happen. A tiny step is taken to purify oneself, and the road is indeed

long. The road to becoming totally free of impurities is indeed very long, but every journey must begin with the first step. If a person has taken one step, then it can be hoped that he will take the next step and then the next step forward, thus ultimately reaching the final goal. The journey demands immense hard work.

The day a person realises that he or she must improve themselves, that they must go inward and remove their own sufferings, that person has begun his or her journey to well-being. I am suffering, and I am attempting to alleviate the suffering of others; I am blind, and I am attempting to show others the way; I am a cripple, and I am attempting to assist another cripple! How is it possible? First, I have to change and improve myself.

Arduous Journey Begins with One Step

Once, when I went to meet Nathji, my good friend Shri Rishabh Das Ranka, who had learned and valued Vipassana and who was also Nathji’s follower, was sitting there. Nathji said, “Goenkaji, this work of spreading Vipassana is a very gigantic task you have undertaken. The society, the political sphere, the business and professional spheres—everywhere there is corruption. How will it change, and how long will it take?”

I replied that what he said was true and I understand that it will take a long time. But what can be done? There is no other way out. The entire forest has wilted, and we want it to turn green and vibrant. However, wishing will not help. Every single tree will have to be watered and nourished. Then, as it turns green, the entire forest will become more vibrant. The entire society will be altered.

But this is not going to happen by listening to mere discourses or in a burst of emotionalism; this may help a person improve for a while, but the impact will not be lasting since the changes do not happen from the very depths where the defilements nestle. Lasting work is time-consuming. Rankaji said, “I see that sadhana certainly helps each individual to improve, but Goenkaji, these numbers are too small. Hardly 100 people must be coming to you out of which barely 10 - 20 may be starting regular sadhana, make an effort to imbibe dharma in life, the rest possibly forget it all.”

Sure, it’s true! But tell me, because they become negligent and don’t practise it in life, do we stop the work? These words pleased Nathji, and addressing Rankaji, he said that the job of a cloud is only to fall as rain. It has no idea how much, who benefits, or where its water falls. It is possible that a large amount of water falls on hard rocks where nothing will grow. Some rain may fall on the ground where trees would grow. However, not all growing trees will thrive; some will wilt, and not all trees that grow will flower, and not all flowering trees will bear fruits. Few trees will eventually bear fruits that ripen. But will the clouds cease to fall as rain? Let the rain fall as abundantly as it can. Even if only a few people benefit, it is for the better.

I well understand and know from experience that spread of dharma is an arduous task. Nathji would often repeat these words of Kabir... the battle of a saint is to struggle day and night, lasting till the body remains.

Ah! This is a lifetime job. This is what we must do as long as we are alive and life exists: observe the sensations within

and to remain equanimous. If we lose this vital link between the sensations that arise on the body, we will only be able to work on removing cravings and aversions on the surface of our minds without getting to the root of the problem. We should not merely remember these words but work to truly develop them in our lives. This type of practise benefited a saint like Kedarnathji. By merely listening to discourses, bowing our heads in respect, how will this lead to our welfare? What will we gain from it? But unless we begin to work on removing defilements and purifying our minds, our true welfare is miles away. The sooner we realise this, the better, as then we can embark on this journey for our welfare. Even if it is a small step that we take, let us at least begin. Otherwise, this invaluable life as a human being is lost. This work cannot be done by an animal or bird, nor by insects, other life forms from lower worlds, or other disembodied beings. Nature has blessed the human being with this limitless treasure, and if we waste it away like an animal, then we have truly lost a valuable life.

We are celebrating the anniversary of a saint filled with a sense of discernment and discrimination, wisdom, and knowledge. Are we living the ideals he stood for? The true homage to him will be when we begin to go inward and purify our minds, filling them with virtues. This is the way to our welfare and the welfare of others.

In self-welfare lies the universal welfare, and in our inner awakening is the universal awakening. If we cannot serve ourselves, how can we serve others? Allow dharma to arise in us; may we dive inward, purifying the self of defilements, and work toward our true welfare, our liberation, while also becoming a vehicle for the welfare, awakening, and liberation of others.

May everyone be happy and progress toward their true well-being.

—Kalyanamitta,
S. N. Goenka



Future Course Schedule and Applications

Information on future Courses is available on the internet. All types of bookings are currently available online only as per the Government’s new rules due to Covid-19. Applications will not be accepted on paper. Therefore, you are requested to check the following link and apply online directly for your appropriate course or for dhamma service at Dhammagiri: <https://www.dhamma.org/en/schedules/schgiri>

Please apply similarly as per the schedule of other centres. Here is the link for all Indian centres: <https://www.dhamma.org/en-US/locations/directory#IN>

New VRI website for applying for courses: <https://schedule.vridhamma.org/> and for worldwide courses: www.dhamma.org



Very Important Notices

1. Central IVR (Interactive Voice Response) number-022-50505051. Applicants can call this number from their registered mobile number (the number mentioned in the form), to check their status, cancel, transfer or re-confirm their application. They can also contact the centre through this system. This is a central number for all Vipassana centers in India.

2. If you are sending non-centre Dhamma programs to be published in Newsletters, please send through the CAT (Coordinator Area Teacher) and if it’s for a centre, it should come through the Centre Teacher.



Vipassana Activities in Greater Mumbai Area

There are several Vipassana Centres & Meditation Facilities in Greater Mumbai area- Please View the link: <https://mumbai.vridhamma.org/>

1-day Courses and Group Sitting Information in India:

Please view the link below:

<https://www.vridhamma.org/1-day-Courses-Information-in-India>

Additional Responsibility

CATs

- 1-2. Dr. Hamir Ganla & Dr. Nirmala Ganla are appointed CAT (Co-ordinating Area Teacher) for Tamil Nadu and Kerala

Additional Responsibility

- 1-2. Shri Sachin & Smt. Girija Natu (CT Dhammanand Pune), to assist the CAT for Pune area
3. Shri Vilas Shinde, as SAT & To assist CAT for Pune region

CTs

1. Shri. A. Z. Patil, SAT Dhule, to serve as CT for Dhamma house- Dhamma Pabhas, Nandurbar (M.S.)
2. Mr. Jayesh C. Soni, Modasa, to serve as CT for Dhamma Aravalli, Modasa, Gujarat

New Appointments Assistant Teachers

1. Shri Madhusudhan Velayudhan, Bengaluru
2. Dr (Smt) Nisha Roy, Bhagalpur
3. Ms. Rajshree Kshirsagar, Mumbai
4. Anagarika Punyawati, Nepal
5. Mr. Gunaraj Bhandari, Nepal
6. Ms. Alien Bertien Hospers, Nepal
7. Ms. Marie Pradier, France/Nepal
8. Ms. Wenlin Huang, Taiwan
9. Mrs. Shu Li Chen, Taiwan
10. Mr. Alex Hsiang Fu Hung, Taiwan

Children course Teachers

1. Harshita G., Bangluru
2. Abhijeet Chavan, Kolhapur
3. Ashok Popalwad, Mahad
4. Shashikant Sarkate, Mahad
5. Mrs. Rohini Chandra, Bangluru

One-Day Mega Courses at Global Vipassana Pagoda, Gorai, Mumbai

(1). One day Mega Courses at the Pagoda:

Please find SCHEDULE OF MEGA COURSES: During Centenary Celebrations of Birth Year of Pujya Goenkaji (on the separate sheet- Page no. 5).

2. Daily one-day courses at the Pagoda:

In addition there are Daily One-Day Courses being held in the Pagoda for Vipassana Students. Please follow the link to join and take advantage of the immense benefit of meditating in a large group. **Contact:** 022 50427500 (Board Lines) Mob. +91 8291894644 (from 11 am to 5 pm).

Online registration: <http://oneday.globalpagoda.org/register> Email: oneday@globalpagoda.org (Pl. bring a bottle so you can fill it with drinking water at GVP.)

Dhammalaya Stay during Mega Courses:- Meditators can stay at Dhammalaya during mega courses and avail maximum benefit. Please **contact:** 022 50427599 or email-info.dhammalaya@globalpagoda.org

For any other information for One day or Mega courses you may **contact:** info@globalpagoda.org or pr@globalpagoda.org

DHAMMA DOHA

*Sukhadā saṅgata santa kī, satata māṅgalika hoyā.
Suddha dharma ke pantha para, sadā sahāyaka hoyā.*

Joyous is the company of a saint, it is so beneficent;
It always becomes a support on the path of pure Dharma.

*Sampradāya se santa kī, hove nā pahacāna;
Jisake mana mairī jage, vaha hī santa sujāna.*

A saint does not recognize sectarianism; He in whose heart compassionate metta arises, he alone is a pure hearted saint.

*Nirmala nirmala dharma kā, jo bhī pālaka hoyā;
Namana kareṅ usa santa kā, kiṣī jāti kā hoyā.*

He who is a nurturer of pristine Dharma; We bow down to that one, whichever creed he may belong to.

*Ahobhāgya hove manuja, hoyā santa saṃyoga;
Auśadhi pāe dharama kī, dūra kare bhava roga.*

He who gets associated with a saint is indeed a blessed one; He overcomes the ailment of becoming by receiving Dhamma medicine.

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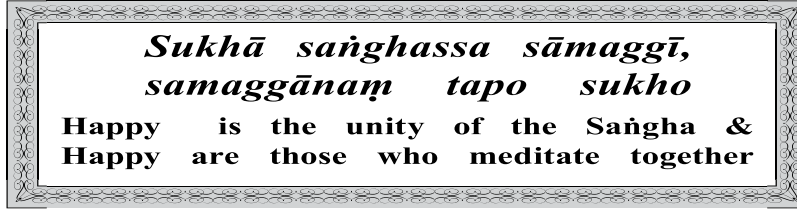
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Centenary Celebrations of Birth Year of Pujya Guruji S.N. Goenka
Schedule of Mega Courses at GLOBAL VIPASSANA PAGODA, Gorai, Mumbai

Month	Proposed Mega Course, Date & Day	Occasion
January 2023	29th Jan 2023, Sunday	To launch the Centenary Birth Year celebrations and Guruji's Birth Anniversary
February 2023	19th Feb 2023, Sunday	Centenary year Mega course
March 2023	19th Mar 2023, Sunday	Centenary year Mega course
May 2023	7th May 2023, Sunday	Buddha Purnima
June 2023	11th Jun 2023, Sunday	Centenary year Mega course
July 2023	2nd Jul 2023, Sunday	Guru Purnima
August 2023	27th Aug 2023, Sunday	Centenary year Mega course
September 2023	10th Sept 2023, Sunday	Centenary year Mega course
October 2023	1st Oct 2023, Sunday	Sharad Purnima (Pujya Guruji)
November 2023	19th Nov 2023 Sunday	Centenary year Mega course
December 2023	10th Dec 2023, Sunday	Centenary year Mega course
January 2024	14th Jan 2024, Sunday	Sangha dana and Mega Course
February 2024	MEGA EVENT: 4th Feb 2024, Sunday	Documentary Film on Pujya Guruji & other events

पूज्य गुरुजी श्री सत्यनारायण गोयन्का के जन्म शताब्दी समारोह के दौरान
विश्व विपश्यना पगोडा के महा शिविर कार्यक्रमों की सूची

माह	प्रस्तावित महा शिविर तिथियां	अवसर
जनवरी 2023	29 जनवरी 2023, रविवार	शताब्दी जन्म वर्ष समारोह का शुभारंभ और गुरुजी की जयंती के उपलक्ष्य में
फरवरी 2023	19 फरवरी 2023, रविवार	शताब्दी वर्ष महा शिविर
मार्च 2023	19 मार्च 2023, रविवार	शताब्दी वर्ष महा शिविर
मई 2023	7 मई 2023, रविवार	बुद्ध पूर्णिमा के उपलक्ष्य में
जून 2023	11 जून 2023, रविवार	शताब्दी वर्ष महा शिविर
जुलाई 2023	2 जुलाई 2023, रविवार	गुरु पूर्णिमा के उपलक्ष्य में
अगस्त 2023	27 अगस्त 2023, रविवार	शताब्दी वर्ष महा शिविर
सितम्बर 2023	10 सितम्बर 2023, रविवार	शताब्दी वर्ष महा शिविर
अक्टूबर 2023	1 अक्टूबर 2023, रविवार	शरद पूर्णिमा एवं पूज्य गुरुजी की पुण्यतिथि के उपलक्ष्य में
नवंबर 2023	19 नवंबर 2023 रविवार	शताब्दी वर्ष महा शिविर
दिसम्बर 2023	10 दिसम्बर 2023, रविवार	शताब्दी वर्ष महा शिविर
जनवरी 2024	14 जनवरी 2024, रविवार	संघ दान और महा शिविर
फरवरी 2024	समापन समारोह : 4 फरवरी 2024, रविवार	'डॉक्यूमेंट्री फिल्म' का विमोचन और अन्य कार्यक्रम

Registration link:- oneday.globalpagoda.org

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N.B. The QR code on top right corner contains informations regarding Centenary Program.