



# Vipassana Newsletter

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

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## Words of Dhamma

Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā, tesam hetum tathāgato āha;  
Tesañca yo nirodho, evaṃ vādī mahāsamaṇo.

– Apanadānapali 1.1.286 Sāriputtattheraapadānaṃ

Of causally arisen things, the Buddha has declared their cause, As well as their ending. This is the teaching of the great recluse.

## Goenkaji's Address on Buddha Purnima

Global Vipassana Pagoda, Mumbai. 17th May, 2011

My dear Dhamma Sons, Daughters,  
and Dhamma loving People,

Let us consider the significance of this auspicious day, which marks the day Siddhartha Gotama attained Buddhahood, the significance of his Sambodhi, and also the significance of his teachings. Understand, he never founded a sect. He was opposed not only to the belief in castes based on birth but also to sectarianism. Both were enemies of Dhamma's purity, causing great harm to society by dividing it and causing mutual dislike and hostility. There were other reasons for people's unhappiness. Because they did not get what they wanted or because they wanted to get away from what they disliked, people were unhappy. There was suffering everywhere.

The King and his subjects, rich and poor, learned and illiterate were all subject to events over which they had no control, regardless of how strong and capable they were. Was there any way out of this? Siddhartha Gotama left his home in search of answers.

Having left home, he practised many different types of sadhana (spiritual practice), not the ritualistic ones but those that entailed meditation. Still, he was not satisfied. Finally, sitting under the Bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya, Siddhartha Gotama finally penetrated and attained that truth, which, having been attained, means there is no more misery, now or in the future. What did he achieve? Prior to his achievement, he had decided to continue his search for the truth of the law of nature. The truth that emerged in his experience at every moment, piercing that truth step by step, allowed him to see what the ultimate reality of that truth was.

In his search, what became clear to him was that when sadness arose in the mind, it did not confine itself to the mind but spread to every atom of the body. Every atom, every particle felt unpleasant, and the tendency was to multiply this misery. How strange is that? Why is it so? His first step was to understand that in the process of experiencing the truth, the base must always remain the truth, from start to finish, and then alone will the ultimate truth be reached.

Under the Bodhi tree, Siddhattha Gotama put this into

practice. Whatever is being experienced has to become the focus of awareness. The base should be that which is being experienced, not an imagination, blind faith, or sectarian belief. Just whatever the reality is that is arising from moment to moment. The first truth is that the breath is coming in and going out. There is no imagination here, no blind belief, as it is clearly felt as it comes in and goes out.

This is where you have to start. Besides this, do not take anything else as an area of attention. Otherwise, again you will go astray. If you are to walk the path of truth, then you have to observe the breath, whether it is long or short, and whether it is coming from the right nostril or the left. You have to do nothing else. Whatever is happening is happening, and you are just watching like spectators. That's all. And then, focus your attention below the nostrils and above the upper lip and feel the breath touching this area. You have to just observe the incoming and outgoing breath and do nothing else. You must make no effort to change it.

As you continue, some sensation begins on this part of the body: some heat or cold, heaviness or pressure, or pain—something is felt, that is all. Yet, do nothing; merely observe. As you do so, this mind which earlier gave importance only to the gross external realities, will now begin to give importance to the inner realities. The mind starts getting subtle and sharp. As you progress further, you will see that from head to toe, wherever your attention goes, something is being felt, some sensation is taking place. This is the law of nature: the contact between mind and body is a phenomenon that arises and passes away every moment. It is impermanent, constantly changing, and ephemeral (*anicca*).

Its nature is to arise and fall (*uppādavayadhammino*). It must be just observed, without any reaction. If you react, you go far from the truth: "Oh, this sensation is so good; oh, this sensation is so bad!" You give rise to craving if you like it, and you give rise to aversion if you do not like it. Do not react. Just feel from the top of the head to the tips of the toes, and experience whatever is happening with equanimity—a balanced mind.

In the language of ancient India, the term *passana*, "to see," was also used to denote experience. Even today, to see is used to mean to experience something, as when someone says, "This is so sweet, taste it and see." And then, as observation continued, another word arose: "*Visesena passatīti vipassako.*" [*Gantha-*

*saṅgaho Niruttidīpanī 7. Kitakaṇḍa—Ledi Sayadaw*], a Vipassana student “sees” or “experiences” in a special way. This is called Vipassana. And then this was added: “*paññati thapetvā*,” going beyond the apparent truth to reach the ultimate truth.

Understanding this well, the research went on for Siddhartha Gotama. As he moved on, this person, the highest scientist of the world of spirituality, gave importance to the truth in his search. He did not permit any belief or imagination to come near.

For example, one sees that this is my head; my face; my hands; my arms; and my feet—this is the obvious, apparent truth. Aside from that, notice what is going on in your body. Experience that nature, that truth, which is anicca, impermanent, without any reaction. If you are experiencing and reacting, you are not practising Vipassana.

The truth, the law of nature, the law of existence, the universal law, says that whatever takes place, observe it with detachment, with equanimity, and experience it without reaction. Sooner or later, a stage comes in every Vipassana meditator's life when the mind becomes so very sharp, so very subtle, and it begins to penetrate this apparent reality, piercing it, unravelling it to its very depths, and what is happening within is seen. And whatever is observed, it is not being created, it is happening by itself, and with the support of this technique, it is being experienced.

Expressing this phenomena of self-observation, a saint of India had this to say: “*Adi sachu, jugadi sachu, hai bhi sachu, Nanak hosi bhi sachu.*” Beginning with the truth and moving forward in the present with this base of truth, we shall ultimately reach the final truth. These words are a reflection of the Buddha's words. The saint says further: “*Thapiya na jaye kita na hoye, ape api niranjanu soye.*” Nothing is to be imposed, nothing is to be done. Whatever is happening by itself but is not seen by the eyes is niranjan, it has no shape or colour, but it is there, it exists (the truth). “*Anjan manhi niranjan rahiye.*” To realise the unseen within that which is seen.

The mind continues to get purified as one reaches the stage where, through insight, one breaks down the apparent reality into pieces and reaches the very depths of the mind. By continuing to observe with equanimity, the mind is purified of craving and aversion as they raise their heads, and also from the impurities that have been gathered over innumerable lifetimes and which keep us miserable. As they surface and are expelled, their roots are shaken. When these impurities are totally rooted out, a stage called “*khīṇaṃ purāṇaṃ*” occurs where the impurities that have lingered due to old karmas are now dissolved and eradicated. Then “*navam natthi sambhavam*,” it is no longer possible to generate new impurities or create new *saṅkhārās* that could cause a new birth.

One starts to understand why one is born. There is no one sitting up there giving birth to us. We are responsible for our own birth. Taking birth again and again makes us miserable. “*Punarapi janānaṃ, punarapi maraṇaṃ, punarapi janani jathare sayanaṃ.*” Dying and taking birth again and again in the womb of a mother, how does one get free of this cycle? It does not happen by prayer or by someone's blessing. We have to work for ourselves. Every person is his own master. “*Attā hi attano nātho, ko hi nātho paro siyā.*” You are your own master; there is no one sitting up there who is your master. “*Attā hi attano gati.*” You create your own destiny. In your ignorance you may create

either a happy or an unhappy destiny.

This life continuum goes on. Who is responsible? Each one himself or herself. We begin to understand that every time we are born, we become unhappy for various reasons, yet there is only one reason for the person's unhappiness—the stored impurities within. What I desire must happen, and the undesirable must not happen. This is *taṇhā*, the desire that multiplies impurities and *saṅkhārās*. The cycle of birth and death goes on unabated, and every new birth brings its own set of miseries.

Having reached the final stage the Buddha said: “*Ayam me antimā jāti.*” This is my last birth. “*Natthi dāni punabbhavo.*” There is no more birth. The seeds of *kamma-saṅkhārās* which cause future births have been eradicated. I have discovered this knowledge and through this, I have uprooted and removed all old *kamma-saṅkhārās*. The mind is fully purified. In body and mind, there is only the experience of anicca; all is ephemeral. And that which is *anicca*, is *dukkha*, misery. For a brief while, one may be deluded into thinking it is filled with happiness, but as it is *anicca*, it is full of pain. Isn't the end of happiness so very painful? What is impermanent is painful. If it is *anicca*, it is not me, not mine, not my soul. Thinking it to be *nitya*, or permanent, is only an illusion.

If an experience is the result of the mind-body connection and one is misled into believing it is the final destination, that this experience is the soul, that this is God, that this is the ultimate liberation, then one is deluded, and must come out of it.

When someone reaches final liberation, he is lost for words. How can one define that state since it cannot be put into words? Continuing to observe oneself, the mind is purified, free from desires, and one gets liberated. This road to liberation is the same for all.

If a thorn pricks you, it will hurt; it does not discriminate or see who it has pained. The thorn does not see which sect the person belongs to. Whoever it injures, that person suffers. If one wants to save oneself, then the thorn must be removed.

Fire will burn if touched. This is the dhamma, the law of fire, its nature. If you don't want to get burned, then stay away. This is nature's law. It is so simple. But one has forgotten the basics: the root cause and its solution.

The teachings of the Buddha survived for 500 years in India in their pristine purity. Emperor Ashoka realised the immeasurable extent of misery he had heaped on people in expanding his empire in the Kalinga War. Coincidentally, he came into contact with Bhikkhu Moggaliputta and learnt the basic principles of the Buddha's teachings. He was told that understanding it in a theoretical way would not give the desired benefit, and the actual benefit could only come from experiencing it, for which he would have to practise Vipassana.

In those days, a highly evolved teacher of Vipassana lived in the remote town of Berath in Rajasthan, a long distance from his capital city of Pataliputra. When Ashoka heard this, he decided to go and learn under Acharya Upagupta at his centre in Berath. Handing over the responsibilities to his ministers, he stayed there for 300 days and learned Vipassana. From Chanda (ferocious) Ashoka, he now became Dhamma Ashoka. Ashoka, whose name means “one who is free from shoka, sadness,” was eager to impart what he had learned and started promoting the Dhamma by calling for people to “come and see.” He realised that, though his kingdom was large, as was this nation of Bharat, very few people knew this teaching of Vipassana. He started its

dissemination by carving the Buddha’s words on large stones; he encouraged teachers to go and teach; and he built 84000 centres of Vipassana. He kept Lord Buddha’s physical relics in a few major pagodas, including the Sanchi stupa and Sarnath. This was done to respect the Buddha’s physical remains after he left his body, as well as to allow meditators to deepen their sadhana by sitting by its sacred vibrations. Because it was impossible to obtain such a large quantity of physical relics for 84000 stupas, the ash from his cremation was collected and placed in small containers. He then had small stupas built to house these relics and ash in reverence. Only a few large stupas remain today; the rest have been destroyed. Why?

About 100 years after Ashoka’s time a major misfortune befell India when an outsider, along with a few selfish and cunning opponents, conspired to murder the contemporary Mauryan emperor and ascend to the throne. As a result, neither the Dhamma centres nor most of the Buddha’s relics survived. Only the relics kept in large stupas survived. Worse, another unwholesome kamma perpetrated by the new emperor was that, in order to turn the Buddha’s pure teaching into mere sectarianism, he started addressing Dhamma as “*Bauddha Dharma*.” In Buddha’s scriptures, the word Dhamma appears 4,119 times, but the word “*Bauddha*” never appears, not once. Neither was his teaching ever called “*Bauddha Dharma*,” nor were his followers ever called “*Bauddha*” or “*Buddhists*.” He destroyed the words of the Buddha too. As the Emperor is, so are his subjects, and people began believing this propaganda and as a result the expansion of Dhamma stopped. Not only did it stop, but it disappeared totally from India. The opposition to the Buddha’s teaching that began 2000 years ago persists even today. We must work to set the record straight.

The Lord Buddha taught Dhamma to all, and Ashoka sent it to neighbouring countries where it flourished as “*Dhamma*,” not “*Bauddha Dharma*.” About 2000 years after Ashoka’s time, when I came into contact with it, I was surprised to know that not a single page of the Buddha’s literature, which consisted of thousands of pages, existed in India. Vipassana had vanished from here to the extent that the very word Vipassana, was destroyed. I was non-plussed when my Gurudev said, “Come, I will teach you a profound teaching of India called Vipassana, an ancient technique of India.” I had never even heard this word.

Returning home, I scanned dictionaries of Hindi and Sanskrit. But I did not find the word “*Vipassana*.” What chance did the technique have when the very word was destroyed? My Gurudev then said that the country that had given us this priceless jewel is today bereft of Vipassana. We must repay this debt, and you shall do so. I was taken aback. How could I do so? But Dhamma worked. Today, people from all sects and communities are attending Vipassana courses. After I took Vipassana in Burma, many persons from my old, traditional Hindu community, as well as *Arya Samajis* and others, came to Guruji and learnt Vipassana.

When I came to Vipassana, I saw that there was no restriction on the caste, class, or sect of those who came. And then, when Vipassana went to other nations, people from every country and community were drawn to it, be they Christian, Hindu, or Muslim, who now all happily attend courses. By now, about 1.5 million people have taken a Vipassana course. Not one of them has said that they wasted their 10 days. All those who sit for Vipassana benefit, as it is based on nothing but the truth.

As Guru Nanak says:

*Kiv Sachiarā Hoiai Kiv Kurhai Tutai Paal ||*

*Hukam Rajai Chalna Nanak Likhia Naal ||*

“How can you become truthful? How can the veil of untruth be torn away? O Nanak, it is by taking steps with the truth within, until only the truth remains.”

Not only for 10 days, but now people join courses of 20, 30, 45, and 60 days. One who hesitated to sit for 10 days is now on the waiting list for a 60-day course. It is not a miracle. Understanding the reality, the truth, and the benefits that one gets is what draws them.

On this auspicious day, we must reiterate our commitment to Vipassana, ensuring that we add nothing to it. It must be preserved in its pristine purity.

This is today’s message: that all Vipassana meditators must observe this commitment most sincerely. And those who have not taken the 10-day course, may they take inspiration from this atmosphere and go to any centre for 10 days to learn this technique. They will not lose anything except their suffering and pain. And they will gain happiness. This pure form of Dhamma is for the welfare of all. It must never be damaged. Let us pledge to safeguard it and observe it sincerely.

Kalyānamitta

Satya Narayan Goenka

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My dear Dhamma Sons and Daughters,

I have already spoken so much in the local Hindi language. In short, the message is that Siddhartha Gotama was not the founder of a religion. It is incorrect to think that he founded a religion. It is incorrect to say that he founded Buddhism, taught Buddhism, or made people Buddhist. He was a great scientist, a super scientist of this spiritual world who went on discovering and analyzing the truth about reality. The reality of this mind-and-matter interaction. What is happening? How does one become miserable? How does one come out of misery? And this was the discovery of Vipassana—how to come out of misery? So long as the mind is impure, there is bound to be misery. The moment the mind becomes totally pure, one is free from misery. This is not just a sermon. This is actual practice.

—Kalyanamitta,

S. N. Goenka

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**Additional Responsibility**

- 1-2. Mr. Deepak & Mrs. Satyakala Jadhav, To assist the CT of Dhamma Avasa, Latur

**New appointments Assistant Teachers**

- 1. Mrs. Usha Gupta, Alwar (Rajasthan)
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- 3. Ms. Bina Shah, Mumbai
- 4. Mr. Mangesh Rajput, Nashik
- 5. Shri Bechoo Ram, Azamgarh,

Uttar Pradesh  
6. Mrs. Vandana Athawale, Akola  
**Children’s course teachers**

- 1. Mrs. Sushma Bhandare, Solapur

**RCCC**

- 1. Mr. Pravin Shardul, Serve as RCCC, Region: *New Mumbai. Airoli to Panvel and from Kurla to CST*
- 2. Mr. Sachin Gangurde, Serve as RCCC, Region: *Western Rly zone- Churchgate to Palghar*
- 3. Mr. Ram Meghrajani, Serve as RCCC, Region: *Ghatkopar to Karjat and Kasara*

**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
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	<b>Documentary Film on Pujya Guruji and other events</b>



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**True Homage**

Let us all pledge to make every effort to meditate and to incorporate the Dhamma that he has given us into our lives as much as possible. In this centenary year, this will be our true homage to respected Goenkaji.

**DHAMMA DOHA**

*Yā hi buddha rī bandanā, yo hi buddha sammāna;  
Pragyā karuṇā pyāra syūñ, bharalyāñ tana mana prāṇa.*

This is true homage to the Buddha, this is respect of the Buddha; Filling up the body, and mind, ones very being with wisdom, compassion and love

*Jāgai dharama vipassanā, anityatā ro gyāna;  
Roma roma cetana huvai, pragaṭai pada nirvāṇa.*

May Vipassana dhamma arise, the wisdom of anicca; May every pore awakens to this consciousness, giving rise to the state of Nibbāna.

*Khojata khojata nā milyo, jaga ro sirajanahāra.  
Dekhaṇa lāgyo svayaṃ nai, khulyā mukti rā dvāra.*

I searched and searched but did not find the creator of the world; When I began observing the self, the gates of Liberation opened.

*Buddha dharama ro, saṅgha ro, yo sāco sanamāna;  
Jīvana maṅha jāgai dharama, huvai jagata kalyāṇa.*

This is true homage of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha; That Dhamma kindles in life, leading to the welfare of the world.

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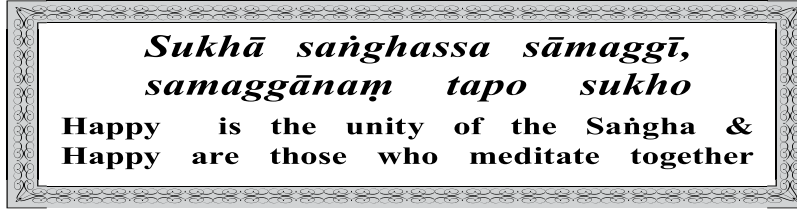
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## पूज्य गुरुजी श्री सत्यनारायण गोयन्का के जन्म शताब्दी समारोह के दौरान विश्व विपश्यना पगोडा के महा शिविर कार्यक्रमों की सूची

माह	प्रस्तावित महा शिविर तिथियां	अवसर
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

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