Goenka ji Addresses Students on Buddha Purnima

The Threefold Blessing of Vaiśākha Pūrṇimā

Dear meditators,

Let us fulfil our true welfare and may this occasion of Vaiśākha Pūrṇimā (Pali: Vesākha, full moon night of May) inspire us to develop further on the path of pure Dhamma.

For countless lifetimes, Bodhisatta Siddhattha Gotama fulfilled the ten pāramitās (perfections) of dāna (generosity), sīla (morality), nekkhamma (renunciation), paññā (wisdom), viriya (effort), khanti (tolerance), sacca (truthfulness), adhiṭṭhāna (strong determination), mettā (loving-kindness), and upekkhā (equanimity). He took birth on this holy day and this was his last birth. Let us follow him and fulfil our pāramīs and eventually take a final birth as well.

On this very night of Vaiśākha Pūrṇimā, Bodhisatta Siddhattha Gotama, purifying his mind of all the deep-seated, dormant impurities lying deep within, achieved full enlightenment. May we too continue to practise sīla, samādhi, and paññā (morality, concentration, and wisdom) and, by dissolving all our impurities, realise the ultimate truth of Nibbāna.

After achieving full enlightenment, that great compassionate one continued to tirelessly serve others for 45 years, and at the ripe old age of 80 years, on Vaiśākha Pūrṇimā, he attained Mahāparinibbāna. This was his last death. May we too, remaining immersed in our own welfare and the welfare of others, achieve such a death that proves to be our last one.

May the three-fold merit-filled blessing of this sacred Vaiśākha Pūrṇimā inspire us to practise Dhamma sincerely. In this practice lies our true welfare.

Meditators, come, work towards your true welfare!

Realising the Truth

The sacred night of Vaiśākha Pūrṇimā became truly blessed when the young yogi Siddhattha Gotama achieved the incomparable victory over the self. The darkness of ignorance was fully dispelled. The subtlest impurities were washed away from the innermost depths of the mind and a totally purified dhamma-vision was attained. Many saṅkhāras that had lingered for innumerable lifetimes were dissolved. All kammic bonds were broken and his mind became completely free of any kind of bondage. No desire for the future remained, and the fog of illusory mental distortions was washed away. The ultimate truth was realised. The pure effort of countless lifetimes was successful, and the Bodhisatta Siddhattha Gotama became a Sammā Sambuddha.

Totally joyous in tasting the incomparable elixir of liberation, the Sammā Sambuddha uttered these inspired, very meaningful words.

Anekajāti saṃsāraṃ, sandhāvissaṃ anibbisaṃ;
Gahakārakaṃ gavesanto, dukkhā jāti punappunaṃ.
Gahakāraka diṭṭhosi, puna gehaṃ na kāhasi;
Sabbā te phāsukā bhaggā, gahakūṭaṃ visaṅkhataṃ;
Visaṅkhāra gataṃ cittaṃ, taṇhānaṃ khayamajjhagā.

Through countless births in the cycle of existence I have run, not finding although seeking the builder of this house; and again and again I faced the suffering of new birth.

Oh housebuilder! Now you are seen. You shall not build a house again for me. All your beams are broken, the ridgepole is shattered. The mind has become freed from conditioning; the end of craving has been reached.

(Dhammapada 153-154, Jarāvaggo)
On the strength of having achieved many siddhis (Pali: iddhi, spiritual powers) due to the meditative heights he had reached prior to attaining full enlightenment, Siddhattha Gotama viewed innumerable past lives and saw that he had taken birth incalculable times in this ever changing cycle of lives. He considered that having taken birth had only been to run towards death. Who is this who gives me birth again and again? Who is it who creates a new life for me at every death? Who will build a new house for me? Searching for this one who created a house for me, I have spent so much time in so many lives, and in this search I had to take birth in lives filled with suffering. This time I have attained full enlightenment and the entire truth has been revealed in front of my eyes. I have seen that house builder and I have destroyed the materials required for making the house. My house will not be able to be made again.

All the materials of the house lie scattered, and no longer is there any foundation for building a new house. The mind, having been totally purified, is empty of sankhāras. All the layers of the past attachment have been removed. Now there is no possibility of a new layer as no desire remains towards the future. All the craving has been pulled out from the roots and thrown off – the craving of sensuous desires, the craving of becoming, and the craving of non-becoming also.

Who was this house builder who the Sammā Sambuddha, the Fully Enlightened One, saw? During this fierce battle for freedom that night, was it not Māra that was seen? Māra, the house builder. But who is this Māra? Māra is the personification of all our impurity, our sankhāras lying deep within our unconscious self. Truly, it is Māra who keeps on building new houses for us again and again; continues to make new bodies for us, new births for us. But now this Māra has become totally helpless; his ammunition is gone; he has become weak. He can no longer make the house as all the materials required to build it, that is, all the stored sankhāras lie truly broken and scattered. All cravings that would create new sankhāras have been rooted out.

When the material fueling a fire has been consumed, then the fire will automatically die down. “Khīṇaṃ purāṇaṃ navaṃ natthi sambhavan”, the old is destroyed and no new is being made – this indeed is the state of freedom. This was the full enlightenment of the Bodhisatta. This was the victory of light over darkness. This was the victory of immortality over death. This was the victory of truth over untruth.

However, if we are overcome with joy upon hearing about Siddhattha Gotama’s incomparable achievement and exclaim, “Blessed be this achievement,” then this alone will not be of particular benefit to us. Our true welfare is found in self-realisation, in achieving total freedom through self-realisation of the ultimate truth. Let us be truly and fully inspired by this monumental victory of Siddhattha Gotama and, walking on the path delineated by him, let us achieve mental purification in this very life, whether less or more. This alone will give us true joy. Therefore, let us understand what Siddhattha Gotama’s full enlightenment was and how he achieved it.

This was not some supernatural, miraculous happening that occurred due to the benediction of an unseen force. This was the crowning achievement of a human being’s ceaseless effort. This was not some vacuous and empty intellectual understanding based on imagination, nor was it a futile emotionalism resulting from blind devotion. This was full enlightenment; the very real, actual realisation of the ultimate truth; not supported by false imagination nor spurious emotionalism. Total mental purity can be achieved only by keeping both these contaminants at bay.

The mind gained infinitely pure knowledge and the heart, free of false sentimentalism, gained infinite and unsullied pure mettā and compassion, and this was achieved on the strength of self-reliance. How can one indeed become free and independent by being dependent on another? How can he be liberated? A human being has to fight his own inner battles. He must battle his own defilements and false beliefs. The dark clouds of ignorance scatter with this very battle, and from that darkness, the light of truth begins to emerge.

A seeker in search of truth begins to know what is happening within and to understand that whatever is happening, such and such is the cause of that. He knows that whatever is happening due to a cause, invariably has a way out of it. He knows that in such and such a manner the way out of those causes can be found, and by knowing and understanding those causes, he himself finds the solution and becomes free from bondage; and then, like the sun shining in cloudless skies, he understands this is true liberation.

Wandering through innumerable lifetimes and in this life too, getting lost in the practice of different methods, finally this giant of a man found the way out which was so simple and straightforward, and he left it for us as a legacy. We can, by using it properly, achieve the same results that he achieved.

What was that way? To continue observing the truth as it is – and by beginning to see the truth in its gross form till one reaches its subllest reality. By observing the gross truth and breaking it down and analysing it till one sees it in its finest, highest form. The search for truth becomes successful when all the coloured glasses of our old established beliefs and prejudices come off and all those truths that arise before us experientially are accepted as they are. This is the wisdom (paññā) of ‘seeing’ reality as it is, which leads us to the ultimate truth. There is no room here for either imagination or sentimentality. Keeping both these aside, the Bodhisatta sought this ultimate truth like a scientist or researcher and became successful.

Siddhattha Gotama took birth in open nature, he reached the ultimate self-realisation under open skies, and under open skies he attained Mahaparinibbāna; the three important milestones of his life occurred under open skies. Thus lifelong he studied nature deeply, closely. He saw that in this world, everything is ever in motion, nothing is still, inert. Every moment, something is taking place. Every moment, something is becoming, something is changing. This is the nature of this world – ever changing, ever becoming. This is why it is the world of becoming (bhava samsāra). What we call inert matter is also in motion. At an extremely subtle level, something is changing every moment. That which we call alive is also changing every moment. Whatever is occurring outside is also occurring inside every being at every moment. Something is changing.

He went within and saw this truth, and the entire truth of nature revealed itself. This body and this conscious mind which one has such a close connection with and which one addresses as ‘me’ and ‘mine’, one gets increasingly caught up in, and like a tightly wound thick jute cord, becomes rigid. Nature revealed itself to the Bodhisatta in its total reality. Indeed, the world showed its most subtle truth, the sensory field’s disintegrating nature, and then, beyond the sensory field, beyond existence, the truth of the everlasting nibbanic state disclosed itself as well.

In this manner, the truth of suffering (dukkha) was realised at an experiential level, the cause of suffering revealed itself too, and by dissolving these causes, the state of total freedom from dukkha was realised as the ultimate truth.

Come, let us also see for ourselves and understand what this material body is at an experiential level. What is this mind and consciousness? And what is this combined flow of life constantly streaming onwards? How do changes keep on happening? How do knots continue to multiply within due to ignorance? How do knots continue to multiply within due to ignorance? How does irritation and vexation continue to grow? How can one prevent the arising of these knots and how can old knots be undone? How can all this confusion be sorted out? And how can one, by realising the ultimate truth, taste absolute freedom? This is Vāsākha Pūrñimā’s sacred inspiration; let us benefit from it.

Let us too, by ‘seeing’ the Māra within us who keeps on creating this ‘house’, defeat him, weaken him by disarming him. Let us too observe our weaknesses, our impurities, and weaken them.
This is where liberation lies. This is the way to our true welfare.

Kalyāṇa-mitta
S.N. Goenka

― This article first appeared in the Hindi VNL Issue 11, May 17, 1973.

Cost-Effective Holistic Dhamma Center Development Workshop

The spiraling cost of essential commodities and construction materials, the scarcity of resources, unpredictable weather conditions, and a shortage of manpower have resulted in multifarious challenges for the efficient operation of Dhamma Centers. To formulate strategies and solutions for these, VRI organized four online sessions during which the successful implementation of various sustainable solutions at Dhamma Arunachala Vipassana center, Tamil Nadu, was shared.

The sessions covered the following topics: earthen architecture; utilisation of four elements of nature (earth, water, air, and sun); solutions for waste to wealth; flexible and adaptable structures; passive cooling strategies; automation and soundproofing solutions; cost-benefit analysis of sustainability; and integrating solutions and new technologies.

Illustrations were given to demonstrate how harnessing biological and physical forces in nature, as well as traditional Indian methods created over thousands of years, can help overcome present-day difficulties.

Following the positive feedback from many Indian centers following the online workshops, a comprehensive workshop with live demonstrations and hands-on sessions is being planned for June 21st to 23rd, 2022.

Place and dates:
Dhamma Arunachala, Tiruvannamalai, Tamilnadu, from evening 21st June to evening 23 June 2022.

(Please note that ATs and trustees involved in Center Development must obtain permission from their Center teacher/ Coordinating Area Teacher to attend the program.) For registration and details:
Contact: Santhanagopalan V., Email: info@arunachala.dhamma.org

Dhamma Nadi Vipassana Centre near Udupi/Mangalore( Karnataka)

Dhamma is slowly but surely spreading in the coastal belt of Western India. We are now in the process of implementing the “Master Plan” for about 100 students, 15 sevaks/sevikas and 4 Asst. Teachers in phases.

In the first Phase of this project, we plan to implement the following
• Leveling and Pitching work. (see photos - https://nadi.vridhamma.org/photo-gallery)
• Dhamma Hall with a capacity of 125 students/servers.
• Few Male and Female residences.

All kinds of donations are appreciated, anyone considering to earn immense paramis is welcome to support this project with any amount they wish. Nothing is too large, nor too small. You are also welcome to give dana by meditating on this Dhamma Land and strengthening the dhamma atmosphere. Also during the construction period sadhaks/sadhikas can give Dhamma service-by supervising the construction work (as and when required). We hold 1-day courses every Sunday at our site.

The Bank details: (Building Fund) are:
Account Name: KARAVALI VIPASSANA RESEARCH CENTRE.
Bank name & address: Canara Bank, Main Road, Hebri-576 112
Account No: 11001863760, IFSC Code: CNRB0002502

Online donation can also be made on our website link: https://nadi.vridhamma.org/donation
Kindly inform us by email accounts.nadi@vridhamma.org to get a donation receipt. One may claim tax exemption on all donations under 80-G of Income Tax Act.

With metta Trustees: B.V. Pai - 99007 36473; Shankar Hegde - 94487 24087; Prithvi Hegde - 98205 02354

Dhammic Demise

Mr. Babu Ram Yadav from Jaipur expired peacefully on April 3rd, 2022. He joined with Vipassana at Dhamma Thali, and he remained with Vipassana for the rest of his life. He was appointed assistant teacher in 1998 and full teacher in 2008, when he was given the responsibility of serving jail courses. He was able to serve successfully until the very end. May he be peaceful and progress on the path of Dhamma until the nibbanaic stage.

Additional Responsibility
1-2. Gauri Shanker and Hemlata Sharma, To serve as CTS of Dhamma Madhuvana, Sri Ganganagar (Rajasthan)
3-4. Dr. Narendra Hengade and Dr. Vaishali Hengade to assist centre teacher Dhammapurana, Pune
5. Mrs. Neeru Jain, To assist the CT, Dhamma Pushkar (Rajasthan)

New Responsibility

Senior Assistant Teachers (SATs)
1. Mrs. N. Vijayalakshmi, Chennai
2. Smt. Kamlesh Kumari, Haryana
3. Shri Ajay VJ, Chennai
4. Ms. Paolien Lee, Taiwan, R.O.C.

Mega Courses at Global Vipassana Pagoda, Gorai, Mumbai

One-Day Mega Course schedule:
(1) Sunday— 17th July, Ashadha-Pūrṇimā (Dhammacakkappavattana day)
(2) Sunday— 9th October Sharada-Pūrṇimā plus Pujya Goenkaji’s Death Anniversary.

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: 022-62427544, 022-2845170- Extn: 9, Mob. 8291894644 (Tel. booking: 11 am to 5 pm daily). Online registration: http://oneday.globalvipassana.org/register

Very Important Notices

1. Central VR (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.
Important information regarding the Vipassana Newsletter

The Vipassana Patrika will begin its 52nd year of publishing next month, July 2022. For the past two years, the Patrika has only been available online, but now a print edition will be available again starting next month. However, because the cost of paper and other materials has increased, the following changes are required:

1. Instead of eight pages, the Patrika will be printed on four pages, containing the main story and all relevant information. The programs, together with the main article, will be printed on 8 pages every third month (quarterly).

2. In this way, future course programs will be published twice a year, and in the remaining two quarterly issues, group sittings, one-day courses, and other information related to VRI publications will be published.

3. Please keep the Patrika handy so you can use it throughout the year without having to ask anyone else. You may also visit the links below listed under ‘Future Course Schedule and Applications’.

4. The Patrika’s annual subscription rate has been raised from Rs. 30 to Rs. 100/- . A life member subscription will no longer be offered but those who are already life members will continue to receive the Patrika as usual.

5. All issues of the Patrika will be available online as before.

6. Online course registration will continue. Every issue of the Patrika will have current registration information. Please read the instructions carefully before applying.

Special notice

At present, people who are affected/frightened by Covid-19 may find relief to some extent by practising Mini Anapan (observing incoming and outgoing breath), as taught by Pujya Goenka. For the benefit of all, we are sharing links below using which anyone, anywhere, anytime can experience peace by practising Anapana regularly for 10-minutes. It can be used by everyone for their well-being.

You Tube Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oh5ii6R6LTM

25 Minutes Anapan for all: https://www.youtube.be/AyJmFdeBFVQ

2022 Schedule of Vipassana Courses as under:

For courses in India and abroad (including one-day courses and group sittings), see https://schedule.vridhamma.org and www.dhamma.org

All courses are conducted by assistant teachers appointed by S. N. Goenka. Please send the application form to the course organisers only after reading the Code of Discipline so that a place may be reserved for you.

One and 3-day Courses and Group Sittings are for old students who have completed a 10-day course with Goenki or his authorised assistants.

Satipāṭṭhāna Courses marked #ST end on the evening of the last day and are for students who have completed at least three 10-day courses and are practising regularly for the last one year.

Long Courses: (Please get special application forms from centres)

20-day and Special 10-day course: requires five 10-day courses, one Satipatthana course, full-time Dhamma service for at least one ten-day course, daily practice of 2 hours for the past two years, and full commitment to Vipassana.

30-day: 20-day course and full-time Dhamma service in at least one ten-day course. (Itapāna for 10 days in a 30-day course and for 15 days in a 45 day course is prescribed.)

45-day: two 30-day courses and deeply involved in Dhamma service.

60-day: only for ATIs who have sat two 45-day courses.

Gratitude Course

Previously the Teachers’ Self Course—TSC. With the passing away of respected Guruji and Mataji, this course will enable us to pay respects to them and to the long tradition of esteemed Vipassana Teachers. The same format as before will be followed. It is a happy coincidence that the birth anniversaries of both Guruji and Mataji fall between these dates (in February) according to the Hindi calendar.

Eligibility: Minimum one Satipatthāna course, serving in the spread of Dhamma and local teacher’s recommendation. — Dates: From 2nd Feb to 17th Feb, every year. — All centres where single accommodations are available can include this course in their future programmes, with due consideration of the local demand.

Please use NEW LONG COURSE APPLICATION FORM, available at Dhamma Giri, Dhamma Khett, Dhamma Thali, Dhamma Sindhru, and Dhamma Patthana.

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/scheviri

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 ** *

Vipassana International Academy, Vridhamma

Website: www.dhamma.org

Online application: www.dhamma.org,

Email: info@vridhamma.org,

Website: www.vridhamma.org

Gratitude Course

For all other inquiries, Contact Manager,

Email: info@vridhamma.org

Dhamma Dhamma Newsletter Vol. 32, No. 05, 16 May, 2022.

Regd. No. 49916/90; P. Regn No. NSK/RNP-232/2021-2023
Mini anāpāna for Visitors

Teenagers’ Course: (Girls) 30-day (9 to 18 yrs Every Month first and Third Sunday (8 am to 2:30 pm) (Only 25-5 to 5-6, 8 to 19-6, 22-6 to 3-7, 6 to 17-7, 20 to 31-7, 3 to 14-8, 2-day: Gut No. 198-2/A, Behind Alyali Cricket Ground, Alyali Village, Pal±µik±. (Male only) 21-5 to 1-6, 22-6 to 3-7, 6 to 17-7, 20 to 31-7, 6 to 17-8, 20 to 31-8, 7 to 15-9, 20 to 28-9, 5 pm. Meditators can benefit from meditating in presence of the Buddha’s relics.

NB: Management to accommodate them.

One-day: inside main dome of the Global Vipassana Pagoda Every Day from 11 am to 5 pm. Meditators can benefit from meditating in presence of the Buddha’s relics. Contact: Tel: 022-28452235, Email: info@globalvipassana.org; (Pl. bring bottle so you can fill it with drinking water at GVP.)
Dhamma Dohas

Māyā sāri dūra ho, ho marīcikā dūra;
Satya sūdha jāge dharmā, ho maṅgala bharāpāra.

May all illusions and mirages be far removed; May the pure and true Dhamma arise, abounding with welfare.

Dharma na mithyā mānyatā, dharma na mithyācāra;
Dharma na mīhāyā rūḍhiyāṃ, dharmā satyā kā sāra.

Dhamma is not false belief, Dhamma is not blind action; Dhamma is the essence of truth.

SUBSCRIPTION TO ENGLISH/HINDI MONTHLY NEWSLETTER: ANNUAL: Rs. 100/- (US $ 5 0 OUTSIDE INDIA); (No Retail Sale)
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