

Vipassana Newsletter

In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin As taught by S.N. Goenka
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Words of Dhamma

*Sekho pathaviṃ vicessati, yamalokañca imaṃ sadevakaṃ;
Sekho dhammapadaṃ sudesitaṃ, kusalo pupphamiva pacesati:*
— *Dhammapadapāḷi-45, Pupphavaggo.*

A meditator in training will penetrate this earth, this realm of Yama, and this world, along with the world of the devas. As a skilful garland-maker selects the right flowers, such a meditator will select the well-taught Path of the Dhamma and go beyond the realms of death and of the devas.

DHAMMAGIRI: TENTH YEAR COMMEMORATIVE

From the International Vipassana Newsletter, Vol. 13, No. 4 (December 1986)

	(1974) DHAMMAGIRI AS IT LOOKED WHEN IT WAS PURCHASED		(1974) TWO OF THE FIRST MEDITATORS AT DHAMMAGIRI, MEDITATING OUTDOORS
(1976) DHAMMAGIRI AFTER ITS OFFICIAL OPENING. THE MAIN BUILDING CONTAINS THE DINING HALL AND THE MEDITATION HALL (RIGHT).		(1976) Inside the meditation hall during an early course at Dhammagiri	
	(1978) REV. GOENKAJI AND MATAJI LAY THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE PAGODA		(1979) MARCH 15, 1979 REV. GOENKAJI ADDRESSES VISITORS AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE PAGODA
(1979) BRIGHTLY LIT PAGODA ON THE INAUGURAL NIGHT COVERED WITH GOLDEN COLOR AND UMBRELLAS		(1983) REV. GOENKAJI AND MATAJI STAND IN FRONT OF THE PAGODA AND DHAMMA HALL	

This autumn marks the tenth year anniversary of the first official course at Dhammagiri. It was in October 1976 that the Vipassana International Academy opened its doors to the general public for its first ten-day course. The opening of Dhammagiri marked an important step in the spread of Dhamma in India. Since 1969, S.N. Goenka had conducted courses in that country using

temporary facilities: temples, churches, mosques, pilgrims' resthouses, monasteries, schools, hotels. These "gypsy camps" were invaluable in scattering wide the seeds of Dhamma, but obviously it would be still more valuable to have a place specifically for the practice of Vipassana meditation. The importance of establishing a center was stressed by Sayagyi U Ba Khin when, in the

early seventies, he was visited by the first of Goenkaji's students to come to Burma.

There were, however, formidable obstacles, not all of them financial. One was that while the Buddha is held in high respect in India, Buddhism is widely regarded with suspicion. If a center was founded to spread the teaching of the Buddha, it might be regarded as a sectarian institution, in which case its appeal would be limited only to the small minority of Buddhists in India. Aware of this danger, Goenkaji emphasized strongly the non-sectarian, universal nature of Vipassana meditation. He made clear that Dhammagiri was not to be the property of any group, but was for the benefit of all who sought a way out of suffering.

Another problem was that the system of pure *dāna* [donation] was unfamiliar in India. At the gypsy camps, students paid for their own room and board. Given the circumstances, there was nothing wrong with such a system, but a Dhamma center, Goenkaji felt, could not operate on this basis. He recalled his Teacher's own policy, as Sayagyi had written, "There is no admission or subscription fee or fixed donation payable by my disciples... We accept aid only from disciples who have purified themselves with Vipassana meditation.... If one can help the people to enjoy the fruits of meditation and if they know that the results obtained are for their well-being, tangible, here-and-now, and concrete, you cannot prevent them from doing their might to give better facilities for the promotion of the Dhamma."

The starting of a center was thus not just a matter of finding the right piece of land and the money to pay for it. There must be the proper foundation: the wish to experience and share with all others the benefits of Vipassana meditation. For the center to flourish, all who supported it and came there must understand this.

Goenkaji was confident, however, that the Dhamma would overcome these obstacles. He worked tirelessly to realize his Teacher's goal of establishing a center from which the Dhamma could spread not only in India but around the world.

As this great project has developed, many Vipassana meditators have become involved in it and in time thousands of them have come to Dhammagiri to meditate and give their help in establishing the center. Their own words and those of Goenkaji help to tell the story of the early years of Dhammagiri.

How Dhammagiri Was Purchased

In December 1973 I attended my first Vipassana course at Deolali, near Nashik, about 40 km away from my home at Igatpuri. I found the course hard but rewarding. On the last day I learned by chance that Goenkaji had been looking for a site for a meditation center in the area of Bombay. At once the thought came to me that there could be no more suitable location for such a center than Igatpuri. I was eager for the inexhaustible spring of Dhamma to well forth from the town where I lived. I went to Goenkaji and invited him to stop for tea at my house on his way back to Bombay after the course. I assured him that he would not be delayed more than five minutes, since my home stood by the side of the road that he must travel from Deolali to Bombay. My plan was, once he was in my home, to broach the subject of a site for a center.

Goenkaji's reply was not at first encouraging. "If I stop at every house where I am invited along the way, how will I ever reach my home?" he asked. But in response to my urgent requests he kindly accepted my invitation, only warning me, "See that the five minutes do not turn into five hours!"

I was filled with joy that my plan had worked so far, but also with trepidation that it might yet miscarry. In my anxiety I wanted to set out at once for my home, lest Goenkaji pass me on the way. He would be traveling by car, while I would have to take the bus or train, which naturally were much slower. It was now lunchtime. I went to the dining room to say goodbye to Shri Rangil Mehta, a fellow meditator who had given me a lift to the course. Hearing of my plan, he offered his assistance. "Let us have our lunch," he said. "Then we shall all go together in my car, and reach Igatpuri in no time."

All went as I had hoped. We were in plenty of time to welcome Goenkaji when his car arrived at Igatpuri. As we were drinking tea in my home, I requested that if he could spare the time now, I might show him a few possible sites for a meditation center in the area of my town. He gave his consent, and with Mr. Mehta we set off to look at properties.

The first one or two that I showed Goenkaji obviously did not meet with his approval. I asked for clearer guidelines about the kind of place that he had in mind. He told me, "I would like a site that is not in the midst of the town but not too remote either, where connections could easily be arranged for water, electricity, and telephone, and where access would not be too difficult." I immediately thought of showing him the land where Dhammagiri now stands.

At that time there was no proper road into the property, but Mr. Mehta did not hesitate to risk his car on the rough,



View of the original buildings, taken from the area where the pagoda now stands (1975)

uneven track We went as far as the car could take us, and then got out. Goenkaji looked closely all about him, and within just a few minutes he decided that this was what he had been looking for. At that moment someone pointed out a cremation taking place at the foot of the hill on which we stood. I was worried that the proximity of a cremation ground would make Goenkaji change his mind about the site. But he said with a smile, "Good! This will continually implant the awareness of anicca [impermanence] in the minds of meditators."

There and then Mr. Mehta offered to purchase the property and donate it to the Trust. Before we left, he had noted all the details so as to conclude the transaction speedily.

All of this took five hours—a long time for a cup of tea! Goenkaji was well justified in his suspicion that stopping at my house would take much more than five minutes.

That day—December 16, 1973—was the happiest of my life. Since then I have practiced Vipassana faithfully and given whatever free time I have to serve the Dhamma so that many may experience the happiness of liberation.

—Bhojraj Sancheti, Igatpuri, India

- *Goenkaji named the new center "Dhammagiri," meaning the Hill of Dhamma.*
- *Very soon it began to attract Vipassana meditators.*

The First Meditators at the New Center

I first came to Dhammagiri in early 1974. After a course near Bombay, I had asked Goenkaji for permission to visit the newly purchased land. He told me to go ahead, and to contact Mr. Bhojraj in Igatpuri. I went there along with a friend, and Mr. Bhojraj took us up the hill. At that time the site consisted of three or four old bungalows and the surrounding land. There was a family of farmers still living in the little bungalow nearest the mountain. Mr. Bhojraj opened up the easternmost building for us, which is where the farmers used to keep their goats. The floor was covered with dung and the walls were black from years of cooking-fires.

I stayed about a week and then left. When I came back a few weeks later, Graham Gambie had arrived. Together we set up housekeeping and started meditating on the site. We wrote to Goenkaji and asked him what work we should do to start improving the place—cleaning, planting gardens, or whatever. He wrote back, "Dear Graham and Geo: Be happy! Meditate, meditate, meditate. Clean yourselves and clean the meditation center. Don't do anything else, just meditate." And that is what we did.

First there was some basic cleaning that was necessary for us to use the place. We carried buckets of water up from the well, threw them on the floor, and scrubbed away on our hands and knees. And then we started meditating, perhaps six to eight hours a day. It was hard enough with the farmers in the next building, arguing and yelling and screaming. But after a while the farmers moved out.

Then Sonu, the deaf laborer, was hired to work at the site. He started whitewashing the walls of the bungalow where we were living, which went from black to dark gray to light gray to white after about eight coats of whitewash. We would meditate in one room and Sonu would whitewash in another. When he had finished the room where he was working, he would move to the next and start whitewashing there. One day I must have been getting a little bored with meditating, so I motioned to Sonu that I would help him whitewash. In gestures he told me emphatically, "You meditate, I'll whitewash!"

During the monsoon season we would put our foam cushions above the stone floor on little two-inch-high

wooden platforms, because it was so damp the cushions would soak up the water. One time while I was meditating, I felt a really strong pain in my big toe. I thought it was just a strange sañkhāra [reaction], so I just sat and observed. And then I felt another one, and another one. So I looked down and there was this little mouse—he'd take a bite of my toe and slip underneath the platform after each bite. And the ants! I used to wrap myself up in this elaborate way so that it would take at least 45 minutes for the ants to find my neck or my eyelids or my face.

From time to time Goenkaji would come to lay out the building plans and inspect progress. I remember when he decided where the Pagoda would be. At that time the Plateau of Peace [where the Pagoda stands] was just a field without any trees, but we had a group sitting there: Goenkaji, Graham, Narayan Dasarwar [now manager of Dhammagiri], and myself. I was there when the four Bodhi trees were planted on the Plateau of Peace. Graham had brought the trees from Sarnath, Bodhgaya, Sravasti, and Burma.

Building started in 1975. The Trust hired a contractor to construct facilities for about 80 people. At the same time Goenkaji gave the westerners living at Dhammagiri permission to build thatched mud huts for meditators, in traditional Indian village style. Once construction started, there was a whole encampment of laborers and their families and animals living on the site.

—Assistant teacher Geo Poland, Canada

In the early days before there was any building going on, everyone who was there would meditate six to eight hours a day. There was more to do in terms of keeping yourself alive then; there was no water, electricity, or plumbing, just an empty building to stay in.

Dhammagiri wasn't a retreat environment. It was like living in a hut out in the desert. We were living on an isolated hilltop with four or five mango trees and the wind howling around, and the rain. There were snakes and jackals and vultures, and many kinds of insects. The insects really owned and ran the building; the people were the intruders.

Working with the Indians was great. Sonu was there from the beginning. He has a great personality. Because he's deaf and mute, his instructions are always in sign language. He had a novel way of identifying each of the foreigners, according to some physical characteristic. Geo Poland, because he is a doctor, was signed as the needle pusher with no hair. And Graham, who wore round glasses, was signed like binoculars held in front of the eyes. One day Sonu was replacing some tiles on a roof and another worker came and took the ladder away. Since he couldn't talk, he was just left there gesturing wildly. And if he wanted to get your attention without going up to you, he would throw rocks at you. So you would see these rocks and know Sonu wanted you. [*Sonu is still working at Dhammagiri today as one of the head laborers, and has been shown the first steps of meditation by Goenkaji.—Editor*]

We were always so busy, every day. I don't think we sat around and thought about what it was going to be like in ten years. It was more, "What have we got to do tomorrow?" Goenkaji did encourage us with news about what was going on, and how this would be a center for future generations, and so on. But the day-to-day jobs have a way of shouldering their way to the front. When we planted all the trees we knew one day it would be a wonderful forest, but as you're considering the forest, you know that you have to water this one and that one and prune those....

—Luke Matthews, Canada



Original bungalows with mango trees that were standing on the site when it was purchased (1980)

A course for old students was held at the new center in May 1975. The following is from the International Vipassana Newsletter, July-August 1975.

Academy's First Course

A total of seventy-six students attended the historic first course of four days at the Vipassana International Academy to make every particle of the land vibrate in Dhamma.

In a very short time the Igatpuri Academy was extensively repaired and all necessary facilities such as lighting, temporary meditation hall, dining tent and bathroom were installed.

Naturally there were numerous initial difficulties, which were quickly overcome. A tube well was drilled, but at the last moment it was found to be dry. Water for the course was brought by tanker.



One of the original thatched mud huts

The course, in severe heat, proved a grueling but wonderful experience. Goenkaji meditated almost the whole time in the meditation hall with the meditators.

Goenkaji sent special mettā to all the creatures living on the land the night the first group mettā session was held. He announced that no creature from now on need fear for its life in the Dhamma atmosphere. No one would kill them or give orders for them to be killed.

During the course Goenkaji carefully checked all sections of the land and selected the site for the first new buildings, which will be a kitchen and a large hall.

To make clear that the Dhamma is a priceless gift, Goenkaji also has announced a new arrangement for

covering the cost of food and accommodation at the Academy. In future students will not pay for their food and other expenses, but will donate according to their means and the feeling of their hearts for the benefit of students who will follow them at the Academy. In this way their happiness at receiving the Dhamma will be shared with others, and the wheel of Dhamma will keep rolling for the benefit of all. The intention of this move is to eliminate any trace of commercialism from the Dhamma institute.

Dhammagiri in the First Year After its Opening

I arrived at Dhammagiri in October 1976, a few days after its official opening. The first ten-day course was in progress, attended by 130 people, about the limit that the Academy could then accommodate. I was asked to help out until the next course began. My first jobs were scraping whitewash off the tiles in the new bathroom and clearing a walking path around the Plateau of Peace. I was surprised by the place. I had thought I was coming to a center that was fully, if newly, built. Instead it seemed to me a raw, unfinished building site. Some structures were incomplete; all were surrounded by rubble and debris. Only a few trees and gardens had yet been planted.

Still, the center had a stark beauty. In the evening, while Goenkaji was giving the Hindi discourse in the meditation hall (then located beside the dining room), I would sit outside and watch the shadows deepen on the surrounding hills. This was the first course at Dhammagiri, and many people from the town wanted to come at least to hear the discourses. There was no room for them in the hall, so a loudspeaker was set up outside and carpets were put down near the mango tree in front of the gate. Each evening fifty to a hundred people would come and sit there. They were simple people of all ages, in traditional Indian dress. They listened intently to Goenkaji's words as their ancestors had listened to the Buddha speak. Then they gathered up their sleeping children and in the darkness they hurried home.

From November I started to sit, and continued in consecutive courses into early 1977. My plan was to keep going until March, when I would head on my way to carry on with my life elsewhere. It didn't work out that way. By January I very much needed a break and was contemplating going away for a vacation. I am always grateful to Graham Gambie who encouraged me instead to stay and serve at Dhammagiri, an experience that taught me at least as much as sitting had.

Serving at V.I.A. was a little different then from today. There were no Indians and no hired workers involved in the day-to-day management. There were also very few organized

office procedures. At one time I was responsible for manning the office, answering the telephone, dealing with students, supervising workers and watchmen, handling the petty cash, replying to letters, keeping accounts—all simultaneously. To do all that, and do it smilingly with equanimity was quite a test, and my failures taught me as much as my rare successes. I quickly realized that I had much to learn about Dhamma, and decided to extend my stay at V.I.A. indefinitely.

As the hot season came on, Dhammagiri’s perennial water problem became severe. The line connecting us to the municipal system seemed to be obstructed, and there were endless delays in having it cleaned out. Goenkaji asked me to write a letter on the subject to the Igatpuri Municipality. I wrote that if the problem was not solved soon, we might be forced to close the meditation center. Before sending the letter I showed it to Goenkaji for his approval. He told me to change it. “Our job is to open meditation centers,” he said. “It is the job of Mara [the forces opposed to Dhamma] to close them.”

June brought the onset of monsoon. Courses stopped and only a handful of people remained at Dhammagiri. Within a few days the land was carpeted in fresh green, and on every side the Hill of Dhamma was surrounded by flowing streams. At that time it seemed to me a true island of peace, wrapped in mist and cut off from the world. Those of us who stayed took turns serving and doing self-courses. With Goenkaji’s encouragement, Shanti Shah began teaching us Pali. It was inspiring at last to understand the meaning of the chants that we had heard so often during courses. Every weekend Goenkaji would come to visit Dhammagiri and attend our class. He seemed as delighted with our progress as we were. For hours he would explain Dhamma to us or tell us stories of his experiences in Burma.



Entrance to meditation compound; beyond, new construction (1975-1976)

Those early days at Dhammagiri remain unforgettable to me. In them so many seeds were planted that were to come to fruition in later years.

When I return each year to V.I.A., it is the trees that convey most vividly the change in the place. I remember one morning during the monsoon of 1977, when a hundred silver oak seedlings lay in a little pile under the mango tree outside the office. Today those seedlings are each twenty feet tall and form the border of the Plateau of Peace. I remember when the trees along the drive from the gate to the old bungalows barely reached my shoulder. I remember when I first came that the banyan tree in the central garden between the men’s dormitories was so weak that it drooped from a stake. Now its trunk is thick and straight, its roots deep, its branches thick, giving pleasant shade—a visible symbol of the growth of *Dhammagiri*.

—Assistant teacher Bill Hart, Canada

Once the newly opened Academy was functioning smoothly, it was possible to think of further expansion. The first priority was to improve the meditation facilities by providing cells where students could work in seclusion. Accordingly, construction of a meditation pagoda began on the Plateau of Peace in 1978. Dozens of meditators from the west came to Dhammagiri specially to participate in this project. Alongside Indians they worked as carpenters, masons, electricians, and general laborers, often under conditions of great difficulty. With their help it was possible to inaugurate the first stage of the Pagoda in March 1979.

Dhammagiri in 1978-79

The train rumbled to a halt. Maureen and I scrambled for our backpacks and wearily pushed and shoved our way onto the platform of Igatpuri Station. We were greeted by a bunch of small kids, mouths crammed with sugarcane, yelling “What is your name?” and “Give me a stamp!” Above, flocks of black crows squawked noisily. The air was thick with smoke from charcoal burners, which had been brought out into the street in preparation for the midday meal. Screeching train whistles competed with the high-pitched horns of brightly decorated trucks. Added to the traffic din was the incessant wailing of popular Indian vocal music piped through antiquated loudspeaker systems. The sweet aroma of freshly ground spices permeated the air.

It was a walk of about twenty minutes to Dhammagiri, through the sprawling back streets and alleys, crowded with people, children, cows and ox-carts. A dry, dusty track linked the town with the Academy.

Physically, Dhammagiri was no luxury hotel, but its facilities were basic and practical. The buildings were primarily of stone and concrete. About twenty-five mud and stick huts helped accommodate the ever-increasing numbers of people who came to practice there. The grounds were landscaped, with young trees and a lush garden obviously well-tended. It was particularly pretty at sunrise and sunset, when soft light highlighted the surrounding dry mountains.

Maureen and I eagerly joined the first ten-day course of the winter season (1978-79). The large hall was jammed with an interesting mixture of westerners and Indians of all classes. During the course I began to piece together a deepening understanding of the practice and its implications in my daily life. I began to understand more clearly how it all fit together, and could directly correlate theory to my own experience. There seemed a cleanliness in what I was learning. The powerful atmosphere at Dhammagiri was most conducive to making strong efforts. The presence of a number of eager students who had been practicing for years gave further inspiration.

At the end of the first ten days, Maureen and I decided we would continue another ten days in a self-course. After twenty days we felt sure that our long journey to the East had been well worth it. We decided we would stay on at Dhammagiri.

Staying means work, whether you sit and work at the practice or help around the Center. Maureen found a niche in the office. I was fortunate to work on the construction of the Pagoda. This is a large, circular, concrete construction with a roof in the shape of a traditional Burmese pagoda and rows of cave-like cells for individual meditation in seclusion.

Living at Dhammagiri provided us with the ideal environment to do intensive meditation and become more established in the technique, and also to give service. It was an excellent balance, alternating periods of meditation and periods of work.

Six months passed before we made our final descent down the dusty track, through the bustling town of Igatpuri to the train station. We both felt a quiet and deep respect for Goenkaji, who stood as such a fine example of both theory and practice.

—Bruce Stewart, New Zealand/U.S.A.

Initially meditators often had to share cells, since in its first stage the Pagoda contained only thirty-two. Sometimes as many as six or seven people sat together in one cell.

Each year more cells have been added, and the number now exceeds 200. In 1980 a large meditation hall was added next to the Pagoda. At the same time the residential facilities have been expanded and improved. Recently a second meditation hall was added. Extensive tree-planting has also been undertaken to create a green zone around the perimeter of Dhammagiri. A large water-tower was completed this year, and as an experiment a dam has been built to create a reservoir. A printing press has been established, and under the auspices of the Vipassana Research Institute, a one-year Pali studies program is being offered annually.

But the most important development has not been in bricks and mortar. Year by year, the meditation atmosphere has strengthened at Dhammagiri. As soon as it was possible to provide students with the facilities to live and meditate in seclusion, Goenkaji began to conduct thirty-day courses at the Academy. A still longer course is planned for early 1987. Those who come to V.I.A. have the opportunity to practice seriously and intensively in a highly supportive environment, and so to take further steps along the path to liberation.



Meditators helping in construction of Pagoda (1978)



Masons working on Pagoda roof (early 1979)

Today this unique center is a wonderful example of what can be done with hard work and with Dhamma. To meditators around the world it gives support and inspiration for the practice of Vipassana meditation.



Students completing installation of metal umbrella, in preparation for the inauguration of the Pagoda (March 15, 1979).

The following extract is from an article written by Goenkaji in 1979 to mark his completion of ten years as a Teacher of Vipassana meditation.

I do not devalue what has been done for the spread of Vipassana in the last ten years, since to do so would be to devalue the selfless service given by so many people. But the fact remains that up to now only a first step has been taken in the work, and a small step. From a firm base in India, the light of Vipassana must spread everywhere around the world.

It is a lifetime job. It is a steep ascent of the mountain. Upon the way are many obstacles and hindrances, those within and those without. To overcome these difficulties requires great strength of Dhamma, perseverance, forbearance, zeal, and egolessness.

At times when faced with great difficulties, I find that I have stooped beneath their weight. Very soon, however, I have stood up, brushed the dust from my knees, and started walking with increased Dhamma strength. Whatever portion of the journey has been completed gives the inspiration and strength to walk on. And the greatest help upon the path is gratitude. This is the support for the journey ahead.

Therefore gratitude keeps overflowing in my mind, firstly to the Enlightened One who rediscovered this lost technique and used it for his benefit, and who with free hand and compassionate heart distributed it for the benefit of one and all. I am grateful to the entire chain of teachers from the Buddha to Sayagyi U Ba Khin who maintained this wonderful technique in its original form, thereby permitting me to learn it in its purity. I am grateful to all the members of my family, whose cooperation has been so helpful in the Dhamma work. I am grateful to all my comrades and friends in the Dhamma, all who have given me their cooperation and assistance, whose companionship has given me sustenance on the path.

If during the last ten years by my deeds of body, speech, or mind I have committed any wrong action knowingly or unknowingly, intentionally or unintentionally toward anyone, I ask pardon.

- May all beings be happy!
- May all beings be peaceful!
- May all beings be liberated!

—Traveler on the Dhamma Path,
S.N. Goenka



New Responsibility

- 1. Shri Prem Narayan Sharma, SAT, will serve as Centre Teacher for Dhammanaga, Nagpur.

- 7. Shri Mukund Rangnath Shekatkar, Ahmednagar, (MS)
- 8. Mr. Wilson Chen, Taiwan.

- 9. Miss Nittaya Namsatean, Thailand

Children Course Teachers

- 1. Mrs. Jayashree Nishant Bhoyaar Bhandara
- 2. Mrs. Bhagyashree Dongare Bhandaraa
- 3. Mr. Avinash Saakhare Bhandara
- 4. Miss. Sangita Meshram Bhandaraa
- 5. Mr. Prashant Meshram Nagpur
- 6. Mr. Harshal Doshi Mumbai
- 7. Mr. Pritam Nagarale Mumba
- 8. Dr Kata Kerenyi, Hungary, Europe

New Appointments Assistant Teachers

- 1. Mr. Prahlad Tarigoppula, Hyderabad.
- 2. Shri Lingaiah Cherupally, Nalgonda (Telangana)
- 3. Shri Narayan Bharade, Aurangabad (MS)
- 4. Mrs. Surekha Shilewant, Dombivali
- 5. Shri Brij Mohan Verma and
- 6. Smt. Sarita Verma, Karnal



Dhammic Demise

1. Mrs. Kamalaben Thakkar, resident of Bhuj-Kutch, Gujarat passed away on May 5, 2022. She served Dhamma selflessly along with her husband Mr. Jaytilal Thakkar who was with her at her death and said she passed away very peacefully. She served alongside her husband as CT for Dhammaambika Vipassana center (South Gujarat) and also as the CAT of this area. May she be happy and peaceful, and liberated

2. Dhamma Teacher, Narayandas Saparia, passed away peacefully on May 16th at the age of 92 due to cardiac arrest. In earlier years of his Dhamma service, he helped establish a Vipassana center in London, UK. He had a strong volition to serve Dhamma till the end and lived a truly inspirational Dhamma life. May he be happy, peaceful, and liberated.

3. Shri Thakorbbhai Parekh, senior assistant teacher of Navsari and a master of architecture, died peacefully on 15 May 2022. Along with running many camps, he helped a lot in the design and construction of many centers. May he be peaceful, happy and liberated.

4. Teacher (Ajarn) Nirand Chayodom (84), passed away peacefully at a Bangkok hospital on Sunday, June 5, 2022. Ajarn Nirand along with his wife Sutthi played a major role in helping Goenkaji with his Dhamma mission in Thailand for over 30 years. He coordinated the design and construction work of a number of Centers. He was a kind and energetic person who always cared for the welfare of the Dhamma servers. In his later years, frail health forced him to retire from teaching activities. May he be happy, peaceful and liberated.

As a result of their virtuous deeds, may they all keep on progressing on the path of Dhamma, this is the good wish of the Dhamma family.



A New Meditation Campus in Mumbai

Dhamma Pattana Vipassana Centre has opened a new meditation campus within the city of Mumbai at Goregaon East. It has been operating since September 2021 and is situated in a 5 storey building of 11,000 sq ft. It’s called ‘Goregaon Vipassana Centre’ (under Dhamma Pattana Vipassana Trust).

Facilities include an air conditioned Dhamma Hall on the top floor, common halls for accommodation on 3rd and 4th floor with privacy curtains, common but sufficient number of toilets & bathroom facilities on each floor.

This campus will be of great use to old students in Western Mumbai suburbs who can come for daily group sittings, weekly 1-Day courses and monthly 3-Day courses. The first 10-Day course was held successfully from 28th April 2022 and the schedule for the rest of the year has been announced.

More construction is planned to improve the facilities. These include an independent kitchen on ground floor, individual rooms with toilets, course office, a Meditation Hall for outside Vipassana Meditators (open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.) on the ground floor, additional lift and staircase to enable dual gender courses.

Donations for the same may be sent to the following account and email sent to info.gvc@vridhamma.org giving details.

Dhamma Pattana Vipassana Trust,

A/C. Goregaon V. Center,
Axis Bank Ltd., Malad west branch,
A/C No. 921010040391149, IFSC UTIB0000062

For more information about 'Goregaon Vipassana Centre' (under Dhamma Pattana Vipassana Trust), and schedule of courses, please visit: gvc.vridhamma.org or whatsapp +91 84549 27150.

Future courses at Goregaon V. Centre

3-Day Courses: Male- 30-6 to 3-7, 4 to 7-8 , 17 to 20-11, 2022. **Female -** 19 to 22-5, 8 to 11-9, 13 to 16-10. 2022.

10-Day Courses: Male- 13 to 24-7, 21-9 to 2-10, 30-11 to 11-12, 2022. **Female -** 17 to 28-8, 26-10 to 6-11, 21-12, 2022 to 1-1-2023.

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Successful 1-day Mega Courses at Global V Pagoda and other Places

1. After long restrictions at Global Vipassana Pagoda, the first Mega course was successfully organized on 15th May, 2022 in which about 3000 students participated and about 300 people also came to hear the public discourse at the end of the camp.

2. Similarly, about 150 people participated in the one-day camp at Patna's Vipassana Center – Dhammapataliputta. On this occasion, the Chief Minister of Bihar state, Shri Nitish Kumar, along with some of his ministers came and attended the Anapana meditation session in the Dhamma Hall. He said that more and more people should make use of the facilities and join Vipassana camps. Government employees and officers have already been given the facility of paid leave. His kind arrival was very pleasant to the people.

3. News of one-day courses have been received from many other such places and online camps and group sittings were organized at many places. May the Dhamma Spread without hindrance !

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Special notice

At present, people who are affected/frightened by Covid-19 may find relief to some extent by practising Mini Anapana (observing incoming and outgoing breath), as taught by Pujya Goenkaji. 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 Anapana for all: <https://youtu.be/aYJmFdeBfVQ>

https://www.vridhamma.org/sites/default/files/node-uploads/Intro-Practice_English_Mini-Anapana.mp3

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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.

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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

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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.

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

- (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 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



Photos, Clockwise from the Top:

Plateau of Peace with the Meditation Hall in the center and the Teacher's residence on the left and the Pagoda on the right. In the foreground is the construction of the second Dhamma Hall, surrounded by holes for tree planting (1984).

Dhamma Giri shines like a jewel in the mountainous landscape (1985).

New accommodation block (1986).

PAGODA CORPUS FUND

for the Operations of Global Vipassana Pagoda

Pujya Guruji Shri S.N. Goenka ji had the vision to develop this historical monument as a symbol of gratitude to his teacher, and the chain of teachers back to the Buddha, and to help preserve and promote the technique of Vipassana, the ancient cultural heritage of India, as well as to provide a place for people from all over the world to come and meditate together, in the huge meditation hall, under the Buddha relics that are being preserved here.

It has been decided to set up a Centuries Corpus Fund to fulfil the above vision and meet the daily expenses for the period of the second Sasana of the Buddha. **It has been calculated that if 1,39,000 persons were to donate Rs 9000/- (Rs. Nine Thousand) per person then the total would amount to Rs. 125 crores.** The interest earned from this amount could then meet the daily expenses of operations and maintenance of the Global Pagoda.

Donations are eligible for tax benefits under Section 80G of the Indian Income Tax Act, 1961.

You may Contact/ Refer-Bank Details:

Global Vipassana Foundation,

Axis Bank Ltd, Malad (W) Branch, Mumbai - 400064.

Account No.: 911010032397802; IFSC No.: UTIB0000062.

Please contact:

1. Sh. Derik Pegado - 022-50427512/ 28451204
2. Sh. Bipinbhai Mehta - 022-50427510/ 9920052156
3. Email - audits@globalpagoda.org
4. Online Donation- <https://www.globalpagoda.org/donate-online>

Vipassana Research Institute (VRI)

Vipassana Research Institute (VRI) provides Dhamma-related publications at cost price. VRI provides this literature at a minimum cost so that everyone can learn more about the practical benefits of the teachings. There are a number of Burmese texts related to Vipassana meditation that still need further research and then translation into English/Hindi and other languages. For this work scholars/translators may come forward to contribute. The research work takes place at - **Vipassana Research Institute**, Pariyatti Bhavan, Global Vipassana Pagoda Campus, Near Essel World, Gorai Village, Borivali-W, Mumbai-400 091, Maharashtra, India. Office No: +91-22-50427560, Mob. (Whats App)- +91 9619234126.

In addition to this, VRI publishes a monthly newsletter that contains articles, interviews, couplets, meditation-related questions and answers by Guruji and other materials published to inspire and encourage meditators to keep progressing correctly on the path of Dhamma. The newsletter is published in three languages - Hindi, English and Marathi.

To continue these tasks undertaken by VRI, the support of meditators is very important. Meditators are welcome to make use of this opportunity to contribute to the meritorious work of funding research and publication of the Dhamma material so that meditators may continue to benefit in the future. You may refer below to contact VRI/ banking details.

For this institution, 100% income tax is exempted from the government as per the rules of section 35- (1) (iii) of the Income Tax Act 1961. Meditators may take advantage of this. The bank details for the donation are as follows:

Vipassana Research Institute, Axis Bank Ltd., Malad (W.)

Account number: 911010004132846; IFSC Code: UTIB0000062;

Please Contact:

1. Shri Derik Pegado - 022-50427512/ 28451204
2. Shri Bipinbhai Mehta - 022-50427510/ 9920052156
3. Email - audits@globalpagoda.org
4. Online Donation- <https://www.vridhamma.org/donate-online>

DHAMMA DOHAS

Dhammagiri se Dharma kī, gaṅga pravāhita hoyā,

Roga śoka sabake miṭeṅ, muktī dukhoṅ se hoyā.

May the Ganges of Dhamma flow from Dhammagiri;
May everyone's pain and ailments come to an end and
may all be free from suffering.

Tapobhūmi se Dharama kī, gaṅga pravāhita hoyā;

Jana jana kā hove bhalā, jana jana maṅgala hoyā.

May the Ganges of Dhamma flow from the land of ardent practice;
May everyone be filled with well - being,
may all be happy.

Sukha chāye saṃsāra meṅ, dukhiyā rahe na koyā;

Saba ke mana jāge Dharama, saba kā maṅgala hoyā.

May happiness spread through the world, may no
one remain miserable; May Dhamma awaken in every
heart, may all be happy.

Sukha chāe isa jagata meṅ, dukhiyā rahe na koyā;

Jana jana mana mairī jage, jana jana maṅgala hoyā.

May happiness spread through the world, may no one
remain miserable; May metta awaken in every heart,
may all be happy.

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244144, 244440

Email: vri_admin@vridhamma.org

course booking: info.giri@vridhamma.org

Website: <https://www.vridhamma.org>