

# Vipassana Newsletter

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

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#### WORDS OF DHAMMA

Yo ca buddhañca dhammañca, saṅghañca saraṇaṃ gato; cattāri ariyasaccāni, sammappaññāya passati. Dukkhaṃ dukkhasamuppādaṃ, dukkhassa ca atikkamaṃ; ariyaṃ caṭṭhaṅgikaṃ maggaṃ, dukkhūpasamagāminaṃ. Etaṃ kho saraṇaṃ khemaṃ, etaṃ saraṇamuttamaṃ; etaṃ saraṇamāgamma, sabbadukkhā pamuccati.

Dhammapada 190, 191, 192 Buddhavaggo

He who seeks refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, and who sees with true insight the four Noble Truths: Suffering, the Arising of Suffering, the Cessation of Suffering and the Noble Eight-fold Path which leads to the Cessation of Suffering.

This, indeed, is the secure refuge. This, indeed, is the supreme refuge. Seeking such refuge one is released from all sorrow.

# Fifty Years on the Path of Dhamma

(The following is a translation of an article by S. N. Goenka published in the October 2005 issue of the Vipasyana Patrika. It has been adapted for the Vipassana Newsletter.)

1 September 1955! An extremely important day of my life! The incurable and unbearable migraine headaches, which had been a terrible curse, now became a boon for me. I joined the Vipassana meditation course of my revered teacher, Sayagyi U Ba Khin, for ten days. I had serious doubts about the course. Still I went for the course and gained astonishing benefits from the course. This is well known.

My main reservation about Vipassana was that it was a Buddhist meditation technique. What if it made me leave my Hindu religion? What if I became a Buddhist? Surely I would go astray and become debased if I left my religion! Though I had devotion towards the Buddha, I had nothing but disdain for his teaching! Even then I joined the course because Sayagyi convinced me that in the Vipassana course, nothing else would be taught other than sīla (morality), samādhi (concentration of mind) and paññā (wisdom). How could a Hindu like me or any person of any religion object to morality, concentration of mind and wisdom?

Living a life of morality, developing mastery over the mind and purifying the mind by developing wisdom—how can any reasonable person object to these three teachings? I wanted to get rid of my mental defilements such as anger and egotism that resulted in a life full of tension and was the root cause of the migraine headaches. In addition, the family in which I was born and the atmosphere in which I grew up gave great importance to the ideal of abstaining from unwholesome conduct, practice of moral conduct and keeping the mind free from negativity. Therefore, I was reassured to some extent when Sayagyi stated that this is what the Buddha taught and only this will be taught in the Vipassana course, nothing else. Still, some doubt lingered. I decided that I would practice only sīla, samādhi and paññā in the course and would not accept anything else.

I thought that it was indeed true that there were good things in the Buddha Dhamma and that was why it had been accepted and honoured in so many countries and by so many people. But all the good elements had been taken from our Vedic texts. I decided to stay away from the rest.

At the end of the ten days, I saw that in accordance with Sayagyi's statement, nothing other than sīla, samādhi and paññā



During the long motor home pilgrimage for 111 days in Amerika-Canada in 2002, respected Guruji and Mātaji answering questions after discourse in a program.

was taught in the course. The claim that this technique gave results here and now proved to be true. The practice of only ten days had started to eradicate my mental defilements. My tension started to decrease and, as a result, the migraine was cured. I was also relieved forever from the misery caused by the morphine injections and the need to take sleeping tablets. Daily practice of Vipassana weakened my mental defilements. My misery started decreasing. I did not find any fault in the technique. It was totally flawless. I could not see any harm in the technique. It was truly benevolent.

In the first course itself, my spiritual search was fully satisfied. I found Vipassana so pure that I did not feel the necessity to go anywhere else in search of another meditation technique. To develop in Vipassana, every day I meditated one hour in the morning and evening and joined at least one ten-day course every year. Sometimes, I joined a long course of one month, which gave me a deeper understanding at the experiential level. I found Vipassana very rational and logical, practical and scientific. There was no place for blind belief in it. There was no insistence on a belief just because my teacher had said it or the Buddha had said it or it was given in the Tipitaka. One understood the teaching at the intellectual level, then at the level of experience, and only then accepted it. One did not accept without knowing, without understanding and without experiencing.

The Arya Samaj made me a rational thinker and kept me away from blind beliefs. This, itself, was a great benefit. Vipassana went further. It liberated me from dry intellectual philosophical arguments and the frenzy of sentimental devotion and taught me to experience true spirituality. Accepting whatever truths I actually experienced, I progressed further and experienced subtler truths. I continued to examine whether my mental defilements were becoming weaker or not. The emphasis of the teaching on actual improvement in the present appealed to me. I understood that if the present improved, the future would improve automatically. If this life improves, the next life will improve automatically. It also became clear to me that I was fully responsible for defiling my mind. Why should any external invisible force defile my mind? Similarly, I alone had the responsibility of purifying my mind. The teacher would, with great compassion, show us the path. But I would have to walk on the path step by step. I became free from the delusion that someone else would liberate me.

This technique did not teach me to develop contempt or aversion towards invisible gods and goddesses but taught me to develop mettā for them. The sentiment of "Apnī mukti, apne hātha, apnā pariśrama, apnā puruṣārtha—our liberation is in our own hands; it depends on our own diligence and efforts," did not result in egotism but generated humble awareness of my own responsibility. I liked this self-reliance. I was filled with rapture on recalling these words of a poet: "Svāvalanbana kī eka jhalaka para nyauchāvara Kubera kā koṣa—renounced is the treasury of Kubera (the god of wealth) for one glimpse of self-dependence." My life was transformed. I felt as if I had been born anew.

1954 was the last year of the first Buddha sasana of 2500 years. In this year, I came in contact with the Buddha sāsana for the first time when I was appointed as a member of the food organization committee for providing vegetarian food during the Chattha Sangāyana. 1955 was the first year of the second Buddha sāsana. In this year, I learned Vipassana meditation. It seems that this first year of the second Buddha sasana was the sunrise of my good fortune. The final year of the first Buddha sāsana was the dawn signaling this auspicious sunrise. The fifty years of this Dhamma journey have made my life meaningful, made it successful. I feel blessed.

May the rest of my life be dedicated to Dhamma. Wayfarer on the path of Dhamma,

Kalyanmitta, S. N. Goenka.

Goenkaji in Dubai, U.A.E.

Goenkaji has been travelling around the world for the spread of Dhamma for many years. Most of these travels have been during the Indian monsoon season. Earlier, he used to visit the West more often but of late, responding to the enthusiasm for Dhamma in certain Asian regions, he has been travelling more in Asia. Old age and age-related health issues play an important role in his itinerary. These allow him less and less time for the various Dhamma projects he has taken up. Usually, Goenkaji gets more free time for his writing during his stay at the Nepal Vipassana Centre, Kathmandu and in Dubai.

The main focus of Goenkaji's work has always been the practical aspect of the Buddha's teaching. The centuries-old misconceptions about the Buddha's teaching in India need to be removed in order to put his teaching in the right context and to facilitate the spread of Vipassana. As long as these misconceptions have currency in society, people hesitate to learn and practise Vipassana. To counter the misunderstandings Goenkaji has written many essays and books such as "Was the Buddha a Pessimist?"

A false allegation against the Buddha that has been making

the rounds for centuries is that he is a nastik— a term with a strong derogatory connotation that has meant different things at different times in the history in India. Nastik may be loosely translated as nonbeliever in English. It implies that if someone is a nastik, those who follow him will be led astray. In the past few months, Goenkaji has undertaken an in-depth study to analyse the evolution of the term and its impact on the teaching of the Buddha and other teachers. Goenkaji also studied the usage of nastik and its implications in the times before the Buddha and after the Buddha, which involved the comparative study of various spiritual traditions in India. This study has culminated in the writing of the book "Kya Buddha Nastik The?" (Was the Buddha an unorthodox?). This book, in Hindi, will be available to meditators by the end of 2005. When Goenkaji and Mataji arrived in Dubai on August 11, completion of this book was the primary object. During his stay in Dubai, he was able to review related literature and has almost completed writing this detailed work.

Though Goenkaji spent most of his time on this book, he also worked on several other topics during this period. He edited the booklet on the royal physician Jivaka who was also the Buddha's physician. This booklet titled Agrapala Rajvaidya Jivaka will be published shortly. Goenkaji also wrote an essay on his natural mother. (Goenkaji was adopted by his paternal uncle and aunt during his childhood. His article on the death of his adoptive mother has been published in the Vipassana Newsletter.) He also edited a book on the King of Magadha, Bimbisara which is mostly a compilation of his earlier articles on the king and his family. Bimbisara was the first king to become a disciple of the Buddha and attained the stage of stream-enterer (sotāpanna).

Vipassana meditators in the rapidly growing city of Dubai were delighted to have Goenkaji among them. They were able to meditate with him at the weekly group sitting at the end of which he would answer a few selected questions. One meditator, who has been meditating for many years, had only recently come from the USA to work as a professor in a local university. She came to the group sitting not realising that it would be conducted by Goenkaji. Needless to say, she then joined all the subsequent group sittings.

A ten-day course was held in August at a temporary campsite in a neighbouring Emirate. 28 August was the metta day of this course. In spite of cautionary words from his assistants about his ill-health, Goenkaji insisted on making the journey to give the metta session live to the students on this course. After the metta session, he met the students and Dhamma servers for almost an hour. One meditator from Kerala, who had joined a ten-day course for the first time, asked Goenkaji, "I joined the course because one of my friends in Mumbai told me about it. Now I have experienced firsthand what a wonderful teaching this is! Why is it not widely known in Kerala? This must spread in Kerala!" Goenkaji laughed and told him that it is the meditators who spread awareness about Vipassana, organize courses and establish centres. This student's enthusiasm was not empty. Within a few days, he approached Goenkaji requesting a brief interview for an English programme on the Malayalam channel, Asianet. On 5 September, he recorded Goenkaji's

On 11 September, Goenkaji gave a public talk in Hindi at the Sindhi Ceremonial Centre. The topic was "Vipassana—Sukhi Jivan ka Vigyan". After the talk he answered questions for more than half an hour. On 15 September, he recorded an interview for "Dubai Eye", a local radio station. On 29 September, he gave a public talk in English at the Sindhi Ceremonial Centre on "Vipassana—the Science of Happiness" and then answered questions from the audience.

Awareness of Vipassana is spreading in the Middle East and there are regular group sittings in Bahrain and Muscat. Meditators from the neighbouring countries of Oman and

Bahrain came for a group sitting to Dubai. The meditators who were instrumental in organizing a ten-day course in Bahrain recently came to meet Goenkaji and sought guidance from him. Goenkaji and Mataji returned to Bombay on 8 October after a very fruitful stay.

May all beings be happy!

## Celebrating 50 Years of the Journey of Dhamma A program at the Global Pagoda in Dec. 2019

As you all know that the 50th Year has come to pass, to celebrate this Golden Milestone, a mega event is being planned at the closing of this year on Dec 15-16, 2019 at the Global Vipassana Pagoda.

One objective of the program is to bring Vipassana meditators from all over the world, together at one place for a mega group sitting and metta to strengthen the practice of Dhamma. The other is to collectively reflect on the past 50 years and outline the vision for the coming 50 years. In this two-day event, we shall also hold discussions around Vipassana and Buddha's discourses, as well as sharing memories of old meditators who worked closely with Guruji for Dhamma Work. We request you all to kindly attend the event

Please register before coming. You can use following method: 94644; SMS - 82918 - 82918 Website: (The link for the same will be provided next month.)

### Basic Diploma & Advanced Diploma Courses on the teachings of the Buddha: Vipassana practice and its theoretical aspects.

Vipassana Research Institute (VRI) and University of Mumbai (Dept. of Philosophy) jointly conduct these courses on theoretical and practical aspects of the Buddha's teachings, and practical application of Vipassana in various fields. Duration of course: 22-June-2019 to March 2020. Classes: every Saturday 2:00 to 6:00 pm. Eligibility: Min. 12th pass / old SSC. {By the end of first term, students go to a 10day Vipassana course as a part of curriculum} Admissions from 12th to 15th June, 2019 between 11am to 2pm at Philosophy Department, Gnyaneshwar Bhavan, University of Mumbai, Kalina, Santacruz (E). Mumbai - 400098. Phone no. 022-26527337. Please carry: A photocopy of your Educational Certificate, A Name change gazette Certificate, passport size photos-3 & Admission fees Rs. 1800/-

For more information contact: 1) VRI office 022 50427560, 9619234126 (9:30am-5:30pm), 2) Mrs. Baljit Lamba – 9833518979, 3) Ms. Rajshree - 9004698648, 4) Mrs. Alka Vengurlekar - 9820583440; Visit Website - https://www.vridhamma.org/Pali-Study-Programs

## **Part time Non-Residential Short Course** "INTRODUCTION TO VIPASSANA MEDITATION"

University of Mumbai (UoM) and Vipassana Research Institute (VRI) jointly started 2nd Batch of the course 'Introduction to Vipassana Meditation' covering theoretical aspects and practical applicability of Vipassana Meditation in various fields, at Vipassana Research Institute, Global Pagoda Campus, Gorai village, Borivali-W, Mumbai; from 11th Sept to 4 Dec 2019 (3-Months)

Please find all the details and Application Form on: https://www.vridhamma.org/Pali-Study-Programs

Contact: VRI office- 022- 50427560 (9:30 AM to 5:30 PM), E-mail: mumbai@vridhamma.org

## Abhidhamma in Daily Life - Short course for 2019-20.

A short course on 'Abhidhamma in Daily Life' will be conducted at VRI under the affiliation of University of Mumbai.

Schedule: Every Saturday; 1 to 4 pm; Dates: Starting from 16-Educational Qualifications: HSC/Old SSC Nov- 2019 to 1-Feb-2020; -- (Passing certificate Photocopy & Name Change Gazette Certificate photocopy (if change in name) & 1 passport size photograph)

The last date of form submission is 8th Nov 2019.

To download the form, go to http://www.vridhamma.org/Theory-And-Practice-Courses

Fill the form, Scan and send it to mumbai@vridhamma.org VRI Office. Telephone: 022-50427560 or 28451204 Ext: 560 \*`\@\#@\

## Hearing and Speech Impaired Children - Workshop

Children courses for Hearing and Speech Impaired (HSI) children CCT and Dhamma Sevaks Workshop on 29th August to 1st of September 2019 (Starts- 29th August 5 pm & Ends 1st September Address: DhammaPunna - Vipassana Meditation Center, Near Anand Mangal karyalay, Opp. Nehru Stadium, Dadawadi, Swargate, Pune-411002.

For more details Please Contact: Sunanda Rathi: 9371177265, Sangeeta Shinde: 98237 19321 or Dhamma Punna: 020- 24468903,

Online Registration: http://punna.dhamma.org/cctworkshop.php

## New Vipassana Centre in Solapur

Dhamma Siddhapuri, Bhategaon, off Vijapur Road, Near Bhate Wadi, Soregam-Dodgam Raod, Solapur. Pin :- 413002

(Note: Auto Riksha from Bus stand and Solapur station to Soregaon are available for drop to Center.)

Regn. Contact: Mr. Samrat Patil- Phone: +917620592920 & +919011908000; Email: solapurvipassana@gmail.com

Those who want to develop their parmies helping this centre, may do so. Account Details: Solapur Vipassana Meditation Centre; Bank:-State Bank of India; Account No.: 35749316844; IFSC no. SBIN0016894

#### Children's Meditation Courses in Mumbai

Date	Course sites	
First Sunday	Ulhasnagar, Churchgate, Thane, Khar, Wadala, Matunga	Age 10-16, Registration 2 days before
Second Sunday	Dombivili, Andheri	the Course, i.e.
Third Sunday	Thane, Ghatkopar, D. Vipula	Thursday & Friday.
Fourth Sunday	Airoli, Dhamma Vipula	

"Please call or send a text SMS message with the name & age of the child two days in advance for registration.

Course Timing: 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. Registration Timing: 11 am to 1 pm on the specified numbers and dates for each location. Course Venues:- 1) Ulhasnagar: A Block 703/1405, Gokul Nagar, Behind Netaji School, Near Mahesh Granite, Tel. 9970755130, 2) Wadala: "BMC School - Sewri Wadala Estate Road No: 7A Behind Lijjat Papad Building Contact: Mobile: 98922-18186, 98201-50336, 3) Khar: Mahabodhi Buddha Vihar, Baudha Smashan Bhumi, Carter Rd. Danda, Khar West, Mumbai-52, Mob. 9768123934, 7498027441, 4) Churchgate: Contact: Prashant Rao, Mob. 9820059287, 5) Thane: Contact: Deepali Kadam, 9833116107, 6) Matunga: Amulakh Amirchand High School, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, New SNDT College, King's Circle, Matunga (CR), Mob. 25101096, 25162505. 7) **Dombivili:** Tilak School, Tilak Nagar, Dombivli, Mob. 9819866615, 9029423540, 8) **Andheri:** Mayfair Meridian Meditation Hall, Ceaser Road, Off S.V. Road, Amboli, Near St. Blaise Mob. 9769926169, 9967813469. 9) Ghatkopar: SNDT School, New Building, Cama Lane, Ghatkopar (W), Opp Vidyut Society, Mumbai 400086. Tel: 25162505. 10) Belapur: D-Vipula Vipassana Centre – Contact: 77382000969, 9594464442, 11) Airoli: Dnyandeep School, sector 2, Airoli, Mobile: 9969267720, 9892565765. 12) Kalyan: Krishanrao Dhlup KDM school No. 4, Ram baug lane no 5, Near old Vani Vidyalay. Mob. 9987425633. Please call two days in advance for registration. NB: \*Please bring a cushion. \*Please register on \*Please register on the specified phone numbers. If unable to attend after registration.

\*please Inform in advance. \*Please arrive on time for the course. 

#### Additional Responsibilities

- Mrs Sabrina Katakam (T) oversee all Teenagers Courses in India, and guide the following team:--
- 2. Mrs Sunita Dharmadarshi (T)
- 3. Mr Anil Mehta (SAT)
- 4. Mrs Kakoli Bhattacharya (SAT)
- 5. Mrs Amita Parekh (SAT)
- 6. Mrs Medha Dalvi (AT)

#### **Newly Appointed Assistant Teachers**

- 1. Mrs. Snehal Maduskar, Mumbai
- 2. Mrs. Shakuntala D. Sheth. Mumbai

- 3. Mrs. Medha Dalvi, Mumbai
- 4. Mrs Kanta tai Tale, Solapur Mr
- Thannickal Gopalan
- Sukumaran, Singapore Mrs Jess Lai Shook Ching, Singapore

#### Children's course teachers

- 1. Mr. Radheshyam Pandit, Chapara
- 2. Mr. Ashukrit Kumar Sahu, Bilaspur 3. Miss Mamta Soni, Durg
- 4. Miss Linu Dahariya, Durg
- 5. Ms. Jittinan Khamjaroen, Thailand 6. Mr Naro Ty, France
- 7. Mrs Joana Lataste, France

# **Centuries Corpus Fund for the Operation** of Global Vipassana Pagoda (GVP)

As desired by Guruji, a Centuries Corpus Fund has been set up to meet the daily expenses of GVP. To fulfill this desire of Guruji, Global Vipassana Foundation (• GVF) calculated that if each of 8960 persons donates Rs 1,42,694/then the amount will be Rs 125 crores. The interest earned from this amount will meet its daily expenses. If one cannot deposit this amount at one time one can do it in installments in a year. (Some have deposited money, and it is hoped the full amount will be received soon.)

This is a great occasion for all meditators and nonmeditators to increase their parami by contributing to this fund.

• For more information and making contribution please contact: • GVF office: 1. Mr. Derik Pegado, 9921227057. or 2. Mr. Bipin Mehta, Mo. 9920052156, A/c. Office: 022-62427512 / 62427510; Email-- audits@globalpagoda.org; Bank Details: 'Global Vipassana Foundation', Axis Bank Ltd., Sonimur Apartments, Timber Estate, Malad (W), Mumbai - 400064, Branch - Malad (W). Bank A/c No.-911010032397802; IFSC No.- UTIB0000062; Swift code: AXISINBB062.

#### The Construction of Dhammalaya 2

To give free accommodation to Dhamma Sevakas and meditators who come to the Global Pagoda for a one-day course from far-off places, Dhammalaya-2 will be constructed soon. Those who want to earn merit by contributing to the construction work should contact at above • GVF address.

## Importance of Lighting a Pagoda

Respected Goenkaji always said that it is of special importance that a Pagoda where relics are kept be well lit throughout the night. This helps maintain the Dhamma atmosphere. Anyone wishing to donate for the lighting of the Global Pagoda may do so. The cost per night is Rs. 5000/-. For further information Contact at • GVF address.

## Sanghadānas at Global Vipassana Pagoda

Sunday 29th September 2019, on the occasion of the death Anniversary of Respected Goenkaji and Sharad Purnima; Sunday 15th Dec. 2019, on the occasion of Celebrating 50 Years of Dhamma; & 12th January 2020, on the occasion of death Anniversary of Respected Mataji and Sayagyi U Ba Khin are being organized at 9 a.m. respectively. Those who wish to take part in the meritorious Sanghadana, they should Contact: 1. Mr Derik Pegado, 9921227057. or 2. Sri Bipin Mehta, Mo. 9920052156, Tel: 022- 62427512 (9:30 AM to 5:30 PM), Email: audits@globalpagoda.org.

## One-day Mega courses at Global Vipassana Pagoda for 2019

Sunday 14th July, Ashadha-Purnima (Dhammachakka Pravartan day); Sunday 29th September On the occasion of 5th death Anniversary of Rev. Goenkaji & Sharad Purnima. Oneday mega course at GVP onwards till 4 pm. Non-meditators may participate in the 3 pm discourse. Please come only with prior registration. Samaggānam tapo sukho: Avail of the immense benefit of meditating in large group. For registration Contact: 022-62427544, 022-28451170- Extn: 9, Mob. 8291894644 (Tel. booking: 11 am to 5 pm daily). Online registration: http:// oneday.globalpagoda.org/register

#### **DHAMMA DOHA**

Hindū hūn nā bauddha hūn, nā muslima nā jaina; Dharmapantha kā pathik hūn, sukhī rahūn dina rain.

I am neither a Hindu, nor a Bauddha, nor a Muslim, nor a Jain; By walking on the path of Dhamma I feel happy day in & day

Dharma sadā mangala kare, dharma kare kalyāna; Dharma sadā raksā kare, dharma bada balvāna.

Dhamma always does good, it always makes one happy; It always protects as it is very powerful.

Dharama hamārā bandhu hai, sakhā sahāyaka mīta; Calen dharama kī rīta hī, rahe dharam se prīta.

Dhamma is our brother, friend and companion; Walk on the path according to Dhamma and be friendly with it.

Dharma sadrsh rakşaka nahī, dharma sadrsh nā dhāla; Dharma pālakon kā sadā, dharma rahe rakhvāla

There is no protector like Dhamma nor there a shield like Dhamma; Dhamma always protects those who live a Dhammic life.

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Website: www.vridhamma.org