

# Vipassana Newsletter

In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin, as

taught by S. N. Goenka

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## WORDS OF DHAMMA

Yesam sambodhiyaṅgesu, sammā cittaṃ subhāvitam,  
Ādānapaṭinissagge, anupādāya ye ratā,  
Khīṇāsavā jutimanto, te loka parinibbutā.

Whose minds are perfectly developed in the factors of enlightenment, who have no clinging, who take delight in the abandoning of grasping, who are free from taints, such shining persons have attained *Nibbāna* even in this world.

— Dhammapada: 89, Panditavaggo.

## Ānandabodhi

In Sāvatti-- the capital city of Kosala, Anāthapiṇḍika had spent millions to have the Jetavana Vihāra built. The Buddha lived there during most of the rainy retreats and taught Dhamma to the people. After the rainy retreats he would go to other parts of India to teach Dhamma.

Anāthapiṇḍika thought it would be beneficial to have a place symbolizing the Buddha where people would gather and practice meditation even when the Buddha was not there himself. He expressed his desire to Bhikkhu Ānanda. Ānanda, in his turn, very tactfully conveyed his wish to the Buddha.

In his reply the Buddha emphasized the importance of the Bodhi tree under which he had attained enlightenment as the atmosphere around the **Bodhi tree** would be very supportive for meditators to experience peace of mind.

Thrilled with joy Ānanda requested Mahāmoggallāna to bring a seed of the Bodhi tree from Bodh Gaya and got it sown by Anāthapiṇḍika in the presence of King Pasenadi, Mātā Visākhā, and other disciples near the main gate of Jetavana Monastery. The tree was named **Ānandabodhi** because it was planted there with the efforts of Ānanda.

The Buddha was then requested by Ānanda, to meditate under the tree just as he had done under the Bodhi tree. So the Buddha, for the benefit of many, spent a whole night under the Ānandabodhi abiding in *Nirodha Samāpatti* (attainment of annihilation: extinction of feeling and perception) suffusing every atom of that place and the tree with the vibrations of Nibbānadhātu and Dhammadhātu.

Many meditators continually practiced meditation under the Ānandabodhi tree during and even after the life time of the Buddha. At the same place, there is still a tree, which is believed to be the original Bodhi tree and perhaps it is the oldest in the world.

The supportive atmosphere in the vicinity of this Bodhi tree helps meditators to experience *anicca* the impermanence of all compound things when they meditate there Vipassana meditation even today, when the second *sāsana* has started.

—from the book “*Anāthapiṇḍika*” Hindi published by VRI



## Planting of the Saddhamma Siri Mahā Bodhi

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March, 2014, a sapling of the **Jayasri Mahābodhi** brought from Sri Lanka was respectfully planted in the campus of the **Global Vipassana Pagoda**.

Two hundred and fifty years after the Buddha, an emperor named Asoka ruthlessly ruled the country and as he was mercilessly expanding his empire he became known as **Caṇḍa Asoka** (Asoka --the cruel).

After coming in contact with Vipassana meditation the practise completely transformed him. **Caṇḍa Asoka** changed into **Dhamma Asoka** (Asoka --the righteous).

He had monasteries built all over India and a Stupa (Pagoda) in every monastery. Thus he built 84,000 Pagodas, in which he enshrined the mortal remains of the Enlightened One. He did this with the wish to enable all his subjects to experience the close vibrations of the Buddha and attain their own welfare by practicing his teachings.

He decided to send Dhamma ambassadors to several neighbouring countries. King Devānāṃ Piyatissa from Sri Lanka learned Dhamma from Asoka's son Mahinda whom he had sent there and he developed deep faith in the Buddha. Thus Bhikkhu Mahinda made a proposal to King Piyatissa that a sapling of the Bodhi tree of Bodh Gaya be planted in Sri Lanka. King Piyatissa filled with joy, requested this to Emperor Asoka, who immediately appreciated his zeal and sent a sapling of the southern branch of the Bodhi tree through his daughter Saṅghamitrā who had become Bhikkhunī. The tree was planted in Anurādhapurā and it was called **Jayasri Mahābodhi**. Its branches or saplings have been planted in some other countries also. Still flourishing even today, people assemble under them to meditate.

Repeating the same history one sapling of the **Jayasri Mahābodhi** has been officially brought to India from Sri Lanka by the most Venerable Dr Pallegama Siriniwasa Nayaka Thero, Atamasthanadhipati, Anurādhapurā accompanied by his secretary, assistants and other Bhikkhus and laymen. They brought the sapling and in a ceremony organized on the campus of the Global Vipassana Pagoda, Principal Vipassana Teacher Srimatī Ilayachi Devi Goenka planted it and gave the name **Saddhamma Siri Mahābodhi**. All the trustees of Global Vipassana Foundation, Vipassana Research Institute, and Dhammapattana Vipassana Centre together with many

meditators offered earth and water while it was being planted.



After planting the sapling of the Bodhi tree Mātāji offered earth and water. Venerable Pallegama Siriniwasa Nayaka Thero, Atamasthanadhipati gave his blessings.

This auspicious event was also joined by Consulate General Kumari Upekkha Samaratunga and Deputy Consulate General Sri Senaratha Dissanayake of Sri Lanka together with three thousand meditators from various parts of the world. It was honoured by the presence of a large number of Bikkhus from Sri Lanka and different parts of India.

Subsequently, saṅghadāna was arranged for Bhikkhus and lunch was served to all.

Finally the most Venerable Dr Pallegama Siriniwasa Nayaka Thero, Atamasthanadhipati, Anuradhapura explained how to protect the Bodhi tree and requested people not to pour milk and oil on its root. A big square cage provided with



Saddhamma Siri Mahābodhi, The Great Spiritual Mahābodhi Tree that was brought from Sri-Lanka with great devotion

netting made of stainless steel was put to protect the sapling.

May it keep growing!

May many meditators benefit under the shade of this tree while practicing Vipassana!

May all beings be happy!

-- Vipassana Research Institute.

## Reminiscences of Sayagyi U Ba Khin

by S.N. Goenka

(The following appeared in the first *Vipassana Journal*, published in 1983. It has been lightly edited.)

One of the things that kept attracting me closer and closer to my teacher was his non-sectarian interpretation of Dhamma. The teaching of the Buddha is so universal that people from different sects and communities can follow it and experience its benefits. I never found Sayagyi interested in converting people to the formal, organized Buddhist religion.

Of course, he himself was Buddhist by birth and proud to be so. But for him the essence of Buddhism was Dhamma, and a true Buddhist was someone who practiced Dhamma. He was interested in helping people to establish themselves in Dhamma—that is, in *sīla* (morality), *samādhi* (concentration) and *paññā* (wisdom); to show people how to convert themselves from misery to happiness. If someone who had undergone this conversion from impurity to purity and then wished to call himself a Buddhist, Sayagyi was pleased; but the important point was the change in the person's life, not merely the change in the name he called himself.

Sayagyi would even admonish enthusiasts who were eager to convert others to Buddhism, saying to them, "The only way to convert people is to become established oneself in Dhamma—in *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*—and to help others similarly to get established. When you yourselves are not established in *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*, what is the sense in your trying to convert others? You may call yourselves Buddhist but unless you practice *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*, to me you are not Buddhists. But if someone practices *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*, then even though he may not call himself a Buddhist, nevertheless he is a true follower of the teachings of the Buddha, whatever he may label himself."

One incident, illustrating this non-sectarian attitude, occurred when a staunch Christian came to take a course under Sayagyi. While the opening formalities were being explained, this man became frightened that he was being asked to convert from Christianity to Buddhism; and out of this groundless fear, he refused to take refuge in the Buddha. "I can take refuge in Jesus Christ, but not in Buddha," he said. "Very well," replied Sayagyi smilingly, "take refuge in Jesus Christ—but with the understanding that you are actually taking refuge in the qualities of Christ, in order to develop these very qualities in yourself." In this way the person began to work; and by the end of the course he realized that his initial objections had been unnecessary, that his fears of conversion had been without cause.

In a similar case, a Muslim friend of mine, a merchant in Yangon, had suffered for years from insomnia and suffered even more from the harmful after-effects of the drugs with which he tried to suppress his disease. He was living a very miserable life. When this man learned how I had been relieved of my miseries through a technique of meditation, he came to me very anxious to know about this Vipassana. I explained the technique to him in detail and he became eager to do a course, but first he wanted to meet my teacher at the International Meditation Center.

One evening I brought this man to the centre and introduced him to Sayagyi. The harmonious atmosphere of the place, the calm and kindly character of the teacher made a strong impression on him, and he declared that he wished to join the next course. After the interview with Sayagyi was over, I offered to show my friend around the centre before going back home—the various places of residence and meditation. In

the midst of this tour, suddenly the man lost all enthusiasm and interest. I couldn't understand his abrupt change of attitude so I asked him what was wrong.

With great concern he explained the problem to me. Within the centre's pagoda was a Buddha statue in one of the cells, which normally was visible only to the teacher in his room in the middle of this structure; or else it was visible from the teacher's entrance if the door was left open. By chance this door was left open as we were making our tour of the centre, and my friend had seen a Burmese Buddhist inside, bowing and paying respects to the statue.

"In my religion, all graven images are forbidden," said my friend, "and we must not bow to anyone but God. If I come to a course, I shall have to bow down to this statue and to your teacher. It is impossible for me to come."

I knew how my teacher would deal with this apparent problem, so I urged my friend to lay the difficulty before him. Accordingly we returned together to Sayagyi, and the Muslim explained the problem to him.

"But there is no problem," Sayagyi replied. "No need at all to bow down to me; and as for the statue, this being a Buddhist country, it is here simply to provide inspiration in their practice to traditional Buddhists who have devotion toward the Buddha. It has nothing to do with your meditation. If you are so particular, I shall put a curtain in front of the statue during your course. Don't allow such a thing to stop you from learning the technique."

The man accepted this good advice, although with trepidation. When the next course started, he joined it; and by the sixth or seventh day he began paying respects again and again to Sayagyi. Having tasted the Dhamma, he had realized its value. Filled with gratitude, he naturally wished to pay respects; but he had understood that actually one bows down not to a personality but to the Teaching, the Truth, for which the teacher is only a vehicle.

After completing his Vipassana course, this friend of mine did not begin to call himself a Buddhist. He remained a good Muslim, and at the same time he lived the life of sīla, samādhi, paññā. Nor did my teacher have any less mettā toward this man because of the name by which he called himself. It was enough that he had understood the Dhamma and lived the life of Dhamma.



### **Pali Study Programme at the V.R.I. Global Pagoda, Gorai, Mumbai. 2014**

Residential Pali Course at the Global Vipassana Pagoda, Theory (Pariyatti) and Vipassana (Paṭipatti), Pali Grammar, Sutta etc.

**90-day course-- Pali English**, From 1.6.2014- to 30. 8. 2014

For males only, Last date for submitting application, 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2014;

**60 day course-- Pali English**, From 10.10. 2014 to 10 12. 2014

Last date for submitting application 1<sup>st</sup> Sept, 2014;

For all courses application forms can be sent online – [www.vridhamma.org](http://www.vridhamma.org)

#### **The Eligibility criteria are:**

- (1) Applicants must have completed at least three 10-day Vipassana courses and one Satipaṭṭhāna course.
- (2) One year regular practice of two hours at home daily.
- (3) Strict observance of five precepts at least for the last one year.
- (4) Minimum 12th std passing certificate is required.

**Contact and Office, V.R.I. Global Vipassana Pagoda**, Near Essel World, Borivali (west) Mumbai 400091

#### **For further enquiry pl. contact:**

1. Dr (Mrs) Sharda Sanghvi, Phone (23095413); Mob. 9223462805

2. Mrs Balajeet Lamba Mob.09833518979

3. Alka Vengurlekar Mob. 09820583440

**e-mail: Mumbai@ vridhamma.org,**

**director@vridhamma.org**



### **'Pariyesanā Potthakālaya / Research Library'**

It was an earnest wish of late Principal teacher Shri S.N. Goenka to establish a well equipped library as facility for research. We are pleased to share the news that his wish has come true. The library was inaugurated by respected Mataji Mrs. Illaichidevi Goenka on 19th Jan, 2014 at the Global Vipassana Pagoda and is managed by Vipassana Research Institute.

Currently the library holds around 10,000 books including Encyclopaedias, Dictionaries, Journals, Books on Vipassana, V.R.I. publications, Books on other religions and philosophies etc. This library has a capacity of 40,000 books and offers a special 'Research Room / Gavesanalaya' that is accessible to research students. The rest of the area of the library is accessible to meditators and college students who can make use of the facilities during the following timings:

**12:00 noon to 4:00 pm - Monday to Friday,**

**12:00 noon 5:00 pm - Saturday & Sunday.**

*(Wednesday - Closed)*



### **Inaugural Ceremony of 'Dhammalaya' Guest House**

The newly constructed 'Dhammalaya Guest House' which has been built for the convenience of travellers on the campus of the Global Pagoda will be inaugurated on 27th April, 2014 in the presence of Venerable Sayadaw Ashin Nyanissara from Myanmar.



#### **NEW APPOINTMENTS**

##### **Assistant Teachers**

1. Mrs. Kala Wasnik, Chandrapur
2. Mrs. Vani Kovelamudi, Hyderabad
3. Mrs. Urvi Savjani, Rajkot
4. Mr. John Mendonca, Surendranagar
5. Dr. Suresh Kotangale, Bhandara
6. Mr. Anil Sapkale, Ulhasnagar
7. Mr. Mahavir Shete, Kolhapur
8. Mr. Michel Brissot, France

##### **Children's Course Teachers**

1. Mrs Bindiaben Joshi, Rajkot
2. Mrs Divyaben Shukla, Rajkot
3. Mrs. Gargiben Thakkar, Rajkot
4. Mrs Geetaben Raichuria, Rajkot
5. Mrs Kinjalben Shah, Rajkot
6. Mrs Kirtiben Vegda, Rajkot
7. Mrs Kirtiben Sapariya, Rajkot

8. Mrs Manishaben Patel, Rajkot
9. Mrs Manjulaben Pambhar, Rajkot
10. Ms Mayuriben Bosamiya, Rajkot
11. Mrs. Nilamben Lathigara, Rajkot
12. Mrs. Samjuben Tantee, Rajkot
13. Mrs Umaben Patel, Rajkot
14. Mrs. Vinaben Zalavadia, Rajkot
15. Mr. Anil Borkar, Goa.
16. Mr Rajeev Dongare, Raigad
17. Dr. Mrs. Bharati Ankush, New Mumbai
18. Mr Narendra Gade, Navi Mumbai
19. Mr. Allen Hsiao, Taiwan
20. Mr. Bo Rui Chen, Taiwan
21. Mr.Hsiang-Lai T, Taiwan
22. Ms. Li-Yung Yu, Taiwan
23. Ms.Mei-Hua Liu, Taiwan
24. Mrs. Yu Chang, Taiwan
25. Ms. Yu Jung Chiu, Taiwan

**Children's Meditation Courses in Mumbai**

Date	Course site	Age (years)	Registration
First Sunday	Dombivili	10-16	2 days befor Course
First Sunday	Ulhasnagar	10-16	2 days befor Course
First Sunday	Matunga	10-16	2 days befor Course
Second Sunday	Sanpada	10-16	2 days befor Course
Second Sunday	Andheri	10-16	2 days befor Course
Third Sunday	Ghatkopar	10-16	2 days befor Course
Fourth Sunday	Airoli	10-16	2 days befor Course
23-3	Goregaon	10-16	20 & 21-3-2014
20-4	Goregaon	10-16	17 & 18-4-2014
25-5	Goregaon	10-16	22 & 23-5-2014
15-6	Goregaon	10-16	12 & 13-6-2014

**Course Timing:** 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. **Registration Timings:** 11 am to 1 pm on the specified numbers and dates for each location.

**Course Venues:** **Goregaon:** Vipassana Counselling & Research Centre, Siddharth Municipal General Hospital, Goregaon (W), Tel: 2624-2025 & 98690-23884. **Dombivili:** K B Vira High School, Near Municipal Office, Dombivili (E) Mob. 9930301594. **Ulhasnagar:** 703-A Block /1405, Gokul Nagar, Behind Netaji School, Near Mahesh Granite, Tel. 9970755130. **Matunga:** Amulakh Amirchand High School, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, New SNTD College, King's Circle, Matunga (CR), Mob. 98201-50336. **Sanpada:** Navi Mumbai Mahanagar Palika School, Sector 5, Sanpada. Tel: 7738649821, 9699862322, 9223300575. **Andheri:** Mayfair Meridian Meditation Hall, Ceaser Road, Off S.V. Road, Amboli, Near St. Blaise Church Andheri, Mob. 9820459449. 9664782244, 9699668642. **Ghatkopar:** SNTD School, New Building, Cama Lane, Ghatkopar (W), Opp Vidyut Society, Mumbai 400086. Tel:

25011096, 25162505. **Airoli:** Saraswati School, Sector 5, Airoli, Mob. 9892565765.

Please call two days in advance for registration.

NB \*Please bring cushion. \*Please register on the specified phone numbers. If unable to attend after registration, please inform in advance. \*Please arrive on time for the course.



**One-Day Mega courses in 2014 in the presence of  
Mataji Mrs. Illaichidevi Goenka on the auspicious  
occasions of:**

**Buddha-purnima: May 18, 2014, Sunday, Asadha-purnima: July 13, 2014, Sunday,** and also on account of **Sharada-Purnima & the death anniversary of late S. N. Goenka: on September 28, 2014, Sunday;** in the main Dome of the **Global Vipassana Pagoda, from 11 am to 4 pm.**

Recorded Discourses of Goenkaji will be played at 3 pm. These are also open for in non-meditators. Meditators are requested to come only after registration. They may contact for registration on phone between 11am and 5pm: on (022)28451170 / (022)33747501 - ext: 9; (022)33747543; (022)33747544. Online Registration: [www.oneday@globalpagoda.org](http://www.oneday@globalpagoda.org).



**Honoured as a scholar of Pali**

Professor Angraj Chaudhary working in VRI, Dharmagiri was honoured as a scholar of Pali on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2014 by the honourable Chief Minister of Madhyapradesh Sri Shivaraj Singh Chauhan in the international Conference on Dharma-Dhamma organized by the Centre for study of Religion and Society of India Foundation, auspices of the Buddhist and Indic University, Sanchi.



**DHAMMA DOHAS**

*Isa dharatī ke vṛkṣa kā, aisā teja pratāpa,  
saba kī manśā pūrṇa ho. Dūra honya bhava tāpa.*

-- Such is the vigour and energy of this tree: It fulfils the desire of all and keeps the heat of the world away.

*Bodhivṛkṣa kī chanha men, jagā bodhi kā jñāna,  
Bodhisattva Gautama jahān, bane Buddha bhagavāna.*

-- Under the shade of the Bodhi tree, the Buddha attained Enlightenment. It is here that Bodhisattva Gautama became the Buddha—the Supremely Enlightened One.

*Bodhimaṇḍa ke devagaṇa, hoven pulakita prāṇa,  
Āo phira sumaraṇa karen, śuddha bodhi kā jñāna.*

-- The higher beings (Devas) living at the Bodhi maṇḍa were full with joy. Let us again recall the knowledge of pure enlightenment.

*Sabhī kāmānā pūrṇa ho, Bodhikalpa kī chānha,  
Jana jana men jāge dharama, yahī eka basa cāha.*

-- This is my only wish that under the shade of this Bodhi Dhamma may arise in everybody and people be successful in their task to reach highest stages.

*Jyon Gautama Siddhārtha men, jāgī bodhi ananta,  
Tyon hama saba men bhī jage, hoya duhkhoṇ kā anta.*

-- As infinite enlightenment arose in Gautama Siddhārtha so may it arise in all of us and all our sufferings may get eradicated.

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