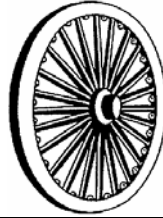


# Vipassana



# Newsletter

In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin, as

taught by S. N. Goenka

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## WORDS OF DHAMMA

*Ācariyaṃ, so ahaṃ,  
niccaṃ namāmi;  
“hotu sabbāṃ, maṅgalaṃ,  
mamaṃ sabbadhi”.*

*I always bow to the Teacher.  
May there be good/well-being for me  
And for all in all respects.*

– Naradakkhadīpanī

## Most Venerable Teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin

I was born and brought up in an orthodox Hindu family. Since childhood, the ideology expressed/represented by the Gita Press, Gorakhpur left deep impression on my psyche. Devotion to God was the very basis of my life.

My Babaji (grandfather Shri Basesarlalji) used to visit the majestic Sānju Pagoda in Mandalay almost daily. My brother Babulal and I were very small at that time. On Sundays, the school being closed we also used to accompany him. There is a very big and attractive statue of Lord Buddha in the Pagoda. Some people used to sit silently before that. Our Babaji would also sit with them. We had two reasons to accompany him there – one, children were allowed to travel free in electric trams those days and secondly, it afforded us a good opportunity to spend our Sunday holiday. We would spend an hour or half there in playing and at times I would sit quietly beside Babaji for 5 to 7 minutes. I was very fond of sitting there in silence. I do not know what my grandfather did there for such a long time. There were big temples of Shiva and Vishnu in the city. But I never ever saw him visiting there, while he was a regular visitor to the Pagoda.

Since childhood, I had a deep reverence for Lord Buddha. This was because of the traditional belief that he was an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. But as I grew up, I only heard criticisms of his teachings such as his denial of the existence of soul and God. I feared that, under the influence of his teachings, I too might become an atheist and be condemned to hell. His teachings exaggerated misery so much that there seemed to be no place for happiness. I had also heard that his teachings strongly advocated non-violence which was responsible for debilitating our nation. Under the influence of Lord Buddha's teachings, Emperor Asoka laid down his arms after the Kalinga victory and disbanded his huge/big army. As a result, our nation became weak and attacks/raids from

foreigners increased. I used to hear many such hostile remarks against his teachings. Hence, despite a deep personal faith in him I considered it proper to keep myself away from his teachings.

Later in life, when I had severe attacks of migraine every fortnight, I was given a sedative injection of morphine as its cure. This unpleasant situation kept on worsening day by day. Then, family doctors cautioned me that I could become an addict to morphine. They said, 'if this happens, then you will have to take a morphine injection daily.' They advised me to consult the leading doctors of the foreign countries I visited on my business. They also said that even if they were not able to cure this special type of migraine they might prescribe an alternative painkiller. I agreed to their good advice and the next time when I went abroad, I consulted the leading doctors in Switzerland, Germany, England, America and Japan. But I failed to get any relief from either migraine or morphine. When I returned home extremely disappointed, a very close friend of mine named U Chan Htoon, the Attorney General of Burma advised me to sit a 10-day Vipassana course. He was confident that practicing Vipassana would definitely free me from migraine. He maintained that the illness is psychosomatic i.e. related to the body and the impurities of the mind and that the Buddha's teaching of Vipassana would purify the mind of the impurities and I would for ever get rid of migraine and its antidote-- the sedative morphine.

U Chan Htoon always wished me well and thought of my welfare. But it was unacceptable for me to practice the teaching of the Buddha, which would lead me to hell. So I hesitated to sit even if it meant enduring the migraine. When I did not heed his advice, he insisted on my meeting the Vipassana teacher at least once. I accepted his advice, as there seemed to be no harm in meeting him.

I had the impression that the Vipassana teacher would be some renowned Bhikkhu but I was surprised to know that he was U Ba Khin, the Accountant General of the Burmese Government. I was more surprised to know that the teacher of Vipassana meditation was a householder and a Government officer. Owing to my dear friend's persistent entreaties, I went to him and found him to be a calm and saintly person. He spoke to me very affectionately. In those days, I was the President of the All Burmese Hindu Central Board. Hence, he was well aware that besides being a prominent businessman, I was the leader of the Hindus residing in Burma. As soon as I sat down the first thing he said to me was that Vipassana is practiced not for curing any physical illness and said further, 'If you wish to come to me to cure your migraine then please don't come. If you wish to purify the mind of its impurities, you are welcome.' Noticing my hesitation to join a course on account of my being an orthodox Hindu he affectionately asked me, "Is there any objection to morality in your Hindu religion?" I replied, "What to talk of the Hindu religion, there can be no objection to it in any religion." He then said, "In Vipassana, we teach to observe moral precepts i.e. we teach Sila. But, how can any one practice morality, when his mind is not under his control. So to have mastery over mind, we teach how to achieve concentration of mind (samādhi). Is there any objection to practicing samādhi in Hindu religion?"

Since childhood, I had been listening to stories of this hermit and that sage going to the forest for practicing samādhi. For a householder like me, I thought whether it was possible to practice samādhi. Then I replied, "We are not opposed to practicing samādhi."

He then explained that most of the techniques of samādhi help in concentrating the mind at the surface level only thereby making it peaceful and pure to some extent. But these do no help in removing the impurities lying deep in the unconscious mind. As a result, off and on, any one of them raises its head, defiles the purity and disturbs the peace of mind. Such samādhi techniques hardly benefit the meditator.

Hearing that, I recalled how sage Viśvāmitra fell a prey to the charms of beautiful Menaka and forgot his solemn vow of chastity, despite practicing severe penances. This also reminded me of the hermit/ascetic Parashar, who was overpowered by lust upon seeing the gorgeously beautiful Matsyagandha who was rowing a boat. I was also reminded of how sage Durvasa would frequently get furious upon encountering a little unpleasant situation.

So thinking I wanted to hear more attentively what U Ba Khin had to say next. Then he said, "Vipassana is not limited to samādhi only. We go further and teach how to attain prajñā (wisdom) which will uproot the latent impurities accumulated in the depths of the unconscious mind. Is there any objection to prajñā in the Hindu religion?"

I was thrilled to hear the word 'prajñā'. I used to recite the Bhagvad Gītā not merely out of devotion but also I was greatly fascinated by the greatness of 'sthītaprajñatā' extolled herein. The Gītā declares that he is a 'sthītaprajñā' (established in wisdom) who is free from greed, fear and anger (vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhah). Whatever is explained through 'sthīta-prajñāsya kā bhāṣā' has not only always fascinated me alone but also every reader of the Gītā. Influenced by this ideal of being established in wisdom I praised it highly and held it in high esteem. Whenever on one or other festive occasions I was invited by one or other of the Hindu religious institutions in Rangoon to speak I would always give a discourse on 'sthītaprajñatā' as defined in the Gītā. But returning home after every such discourse, I would be sad to know that I did not even have a trace of such 'sthītaprajñatā' / I did not have the qualities of a person established in wisdom. Why should a person like me who has passion, anger and ego give a discourse on 'sthītaprajñatā'? So when U Ba Khin said that he would teach me how to become established in wisdom, my heart leapt up with joy and I instantaneously agreed to sit a course at least once, not to get rid of migraine but to seek deliverance from the impurities of the mind through prajñā (wisdom)

My teacher was delighted to hear this and I went to his centre to join a Vipassana course. As I reached there, I found a small booklet entitled, 'Do not believe'. When I went through it I came to know that the Buddha has said it. He very clearly said that one should not believe in any thing, what is hearsay or written, what is traditionally accepted or what is written in a scripture or even something which appears logical. It was further said that one should not be carried away by the speech of a handsome and impressive orator. Lord Buddha himself was very handsome and was a very good orator. This applied even to him. What he actually meant was that one should not believe even what he says.

I was astonished to read that even a great Dhamma teacher like Lord Buddha says not to believe in what he says. What actually does it mean? And when I read further I soon realized that he gave importance to one's own experiential knowledge not to his blind belief. He said that only when you experience the truth as it is at the experiential level and see for yourself that it is beneficial for you and others then only you should accept it. And then not merely accept it but apply it in your life. This alone would be truly beneficial. Reading this, I was fully convinced that there is nothing superstitious here nothing that is born out of blind belief.

Thus convinced I sat a ten-day course. As days rolled by one after another I realized that the technique relied solely on the experience one has from moment to moment, on direct experience of truth and truth only. How could I ever object to this technique based on the truth?

Upon completion of the course, not only did I get rid of morphine injections but also from the migraine forever. I was wonderstruck as to how this could happen? Was it a magic or a miracle? But as I continued practicing meditation regularly, it dawned upon me that I had attacks of migrain only when some gross impurity arose in my mind. Now that I was free from defilements how could migrain recur?

Deliverance from migraine was not the only reason for me to practice Vipassana for ever in the future, but when my dreadful enemies like anger, passion and ego started receding /melting, then I accepted this technique for ever because of my great progress and achievement.

Later when I had done a few courses, I was fortunate enough to sit at the feet of my teacher for 14 years and delved deep into the ocean of Vipassana. I also followed his instructions and studied the original words of the Buddha at the same time

Prior to this, I was greatly opposed to the teachings of the Buddha. Whenever my friend Venerable Bhikkhu Ananda Kaushalayana used to visit Burma, he would stay at our residence. He was a great Hindi scholar. He was also so humorous that I used to relish his company. But whenever he would begin to speak about the teachings of the Buddha, I would avoid him without being discourteous to him I never heard attentively what he said about the teachings of the Buddha. Once he presented to me a copy of the Dhammapada and said that I must read it. The book lay unread on my table for three years. How could I read this? It contained the words, which were against my Dhamma?

But after practicing Vipassana, my teacher asked me to go through the teachings of Lord Buddha. Then, for the first time, I went through the Dhammapada. As I read it for the first time, I became ecstatic. Each verse of the Dhammapada was like nectar to me.

How can I forget the benefit I derived from my teacher? He gave me a new life. The jewel of Dhamma he gave me did not only do me good but also it did good to all my Indian friends in Burma who practiced Vipassana at my advice. Now, following my teachers' instructions, I have become his Dhamma son and I teach Vipassana to many miserable people of the world. They are also deriving benefit from the true dhamma. Seeing this achievement I become ecstatic with infinite veneration and gratitude towards my most revered Teacher.

Whosoever has benefited from this invaluable technique sent to India and abroad by my teacher, it is quite natural that they feel extremely grateful to Sayagyi U.Ba Khin. In this lies their happiness! In this lies their well-being!

Kalyānmitta S.N. Goenka

### **Dhamma Ambikā**

With the blessings of Dhamma and Guruji, the progress of Dhamma- Ambika is going on well. We are going to organize a seminar for old students on 12th February, 2012 between 9am to 5pm at Dhamma Ambikā

### **One Day Mega Course with Pujya Guruji at the Global Vipassana Pagoda on the occasion of the death anniversary of Sayagyi U Ba Khin**

Date Sunday 22 Jan. 2012 from 11 A.M. to 4 P.M. in the Dhamma Hall of the Global Vipassana Pagoda. In order to avoid any inconvenience you must first register yourself. Please **Contact Mob. 09892855692, 09892855945 & Phone Nos. 02228451170, 33747543, 33747544 (Booking from 11 A.M. to 5 P.M every day)**  
**Email Registration: oneday@globalpagoda.org**  
**Online Registration: www.vridhamma.org**

### **VRI Photo Archives**

Vipassana Research Institute has decided to archive Goenkaji's photographs so that they can be well preserved for years. VRI is collecting all old and new photographs of Goenkaji's visits to various places as well as during talks and other occasions. All meditators, servers, assistant teachers, and centres are requested to send all such photographs to the following address as soon as possible:

Vipassana Research Institute, Green House, 2nd floor, Green Street, Fort, Mumbai-400 023. Tel: (022) 2266-4039, 2266-5926; Email: archives@vridhamma.org

### **NEW RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Senior Assistant Teachers:**

Mr. A. Srinivasa Murthy, Bangalore  
Ms. Joelle Caschera, France

### **NEW APPOINTMENTS**

#### **Assistant Teachers:**

Mr. Raghunath Kurup, Kerala  
Monique Somaya, Madikeri  
Mr. Pathagawage Rangith Dharmasena, Sri Lanka  
Mrs. Ira Perera, Sri Lanka  
Mr. Christian Tietz, Australia  
Mr. Dan Rosenberg, USA  
Mr. Scott Perchall  
& Mrs. Karen Karagheusian, Canada

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

Mr. Kanjibhai Mayani, Kutch  
Brother Joy Joseph, Jabalpur  
Mr. Alok Kumar Tripathi, UP  
Mr. Manoj Kumar Varma, UP  
Mr. Bhumidhar, UP  
Ms. Sudha Joshi, Nepal  
Mrs. Roshna Shakya, Nepal  
Ms. Maiya Pandey, Nepal  
Mr. Bholu Prasad Gupta, Nepal  
Ms. Tara Acharya, Nepal  
Mrs. Sabitri Raut, Nepal  
Mr. Motilal Yadav, Nepal  
Mr. Jitendra Yadav, Nepal  
Mrs. Anjali Gurung, Nepal  
Mrs. Vineetha Kalupahana, Sri Lanka  
Ms. I. A. Damayanthi, Sri Lanka  
Mr. Fan Shi Ran, China  
Mrs Yang Jin Hua, China  
Mrs. Wu Chao Li, China  
Mrs. Chen Shan, China  
Ms. Lotte de Monte, Netherlands  
Ms. Susana Castro, Mexico  
Mr. Karim Chalakani, Mexico  
Mrs. Erika Cubillos, Mexico  
Ms. Eugene Garcia, Mexico  
Ms. Janice Dean, USA  
Mrs. Nirmala Pailla, USA  
Mr. Nikhil Jain, USA

**Children's Meditation Courses in Mumbai**

Date	Course site	Age (years)	Registration
22-1	Goregaon*	10-16*	19 & 20-1*
22-1	Airoli *	10-16*	19 & 20-1*
5-2	Matunga	10-16*	2 & 3-2*
5-2	Dombivili	10-16*	2 & 3-2*
12-2	Sanpada	10-16*	9 & 10-2*
19-2	Ghatkopar	10-16*	16 & 17-2
26-2	Airoli *	9-16*	23 & 24-2*
26-2	Goregaon*	9-16*	23 & 24-2*
4-3	Matunga	10-16*	1 & 2-3
4-3	Dombivili	10-16*	1 & 2-3
11-3	Sanpada	10-16*	8 & 9-3
18-3	Ghatkopar	10-16*	15 & 16-3
18-3	Goregaon*	9-16*	15 & 16-3*
22-4	Goregaon*	9-16*	18 & 19-4*
20-5	Goregaon*	9-16*	17 & 18-5*
17-6	Goregaon*	9-16*	14 & 15-6*

(\*Registration of Goregaon course is handled by the Siddhartha hospital team and the contact numbers are 2624-2025 & 98690-23884, between 10 am & 11 am only.)

**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:** **Ghatkopar:** SNTD School, New Building, Cama Lane, Ghatkopar (W), Opp Vidyut Society, Mumbai 400086. Tel: 25011096, 25162505. **Matunga:** Amulakh Amirchand High School, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, New SNTD College, King's Circle, Matunga (CR), Tel: 25101096, 25162505. **Goregaon:** Siddharth Hospital, Shastri Nagar, Goregaon(W). **Airoli:** Saraswati School, Sector 5, Airoli, Mob. 09892329410. **Sanpada:** Navi Mumbai Mahanagar Palika School, Sector 5, Sanpada. Tel: 7738649821. **Dombivili:** K G Vira Gujarati School, Near Municipal School, Dombivili (E) 9930301594.

For registration, contact 2516-2505 from 3 November onwards. Courses are also held regularly at:

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.

**Resignation**

It has been a joy and privilege serving with you all for more than two decades. Now my parents are ageing and I have to give more time to be with them. Therefore, I have resigned from all my responsibilities including teaching. Principal Teacher Goenkaji has accepted my resignation. I thank you all for all the help through all these years.

Metta,  
Dhananjay

**NEW RESPONSIBILITIES**

On account of resignation of Dr. Dhanajaya Chavan from all the teaching and related responsibilities, all responsibilities being handled by him would henceforth be looked after by the following Teachers:-

**Shri Mahasukh Khandhar**

"Gopal Bhuvan", Bapubhai Vashi Road, Vile Parle (W), Mumbai 400 056  
e-mail: khandhar@mayfairhousing.com

**Shri Arun Toshniwal**

16/4 Ishwar Bhavan, A Road, Churchgate, Mumbai 400 020  
Fax: 2493 6166; e-mail: arun@toshniwal.com

**DHAMMA DOHAS**

*Āo logoñ jagata ke, caleñ Dharama ke pantha.  
Isa patha calate satpuruṣa, isa patha calate santa.*

Come, people of the world! Let us walk the path of Dhamma.  
On this path walk holy ones, on this path walk saints.

*Dharma pantha hī shānti patha, Dharma pantha sukha pantha.  
Jisane pāyā Dharma patha, maṅgala milā ananta.*

The path of Dhamma is the path of peace,  
the path of Dhamma is the path of happiness.  
Whoever attains the path of Dhamma gains endless happiness.

*With much mettā,  
A Vipassana meditator*

*Āo mānava-mānavī, caleñ Dharama ke pantha.  
Kadama-kadama calate hue, kareñ dukhoñ kā anta.*

Come, men and women! Let us walk the path of Dhamma.  
Walking step by step, let us make an end of suffering.

*Sāñsa dekhate dekhate, citta avicala ho jāya.  
Avicala citta nirmala bane, sahaja mukta ho jāya.*

Observing breath after breath, the mind becomes still.  
The unwavering, mind becomes pure and naturally finds liberation.

*With best compliments from  
MOTILAL BANARSIDASS*

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