Dear Dhamma Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings and mettā to you all on the occasion of the Birth Centenary of our Revered Guruji Shri Satyanarayan Goenka (1924-2024).

Guruji taught us the pristine, pure technique of Vipassana with boundless compassion and loving kindness. He devoted 60 years of his life to Vipassana, and after his arrival in India in 1969, he worked tirelessly to teach Vipassana to a large number of meditators in India and around the world. While Vipassana helped us purify our minds; it also allowed us to serve many with dhamma-volition. In doing so, Guruji gave us a golden opportunity to contribute to the advancement of the Second Buddha Sāsana.

This occasion allows us to not only express our gratitude to Guruji, but also to renew our commitment to our own practice and dhamma-service. A special gathering has been arranged at the Global Vipassana Pagoda, Mumbai, which will also be streamed live on YouTube.

The program is scheduled for Sunday, February 4, 2024, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Indian Standard Time. We sincerely look forward to meditating together under the relics of Lord Buddha at the Global Vipassana Pagoda.

Guruji often highlighted the words of the Buddha, Samaggānaṃ Tapo Sukho.

Meditating together brings happiness.
Fifty Years on the Path of Dhamma
by S. N. Goenka

The following is a translation of an article by S. N. Goenka published in the October 2005 issue of the Vipasyana Patrika and in 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 it. 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 were 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 morality, developing mastery over the mind, 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 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 freed from the misery caused by the morphine injections and the need to take sleeping tablets. The daily practice of Vipassana weakened my mental defilements, and 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 for 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 Tipiṭaka. 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, in itself, was a great benefit. Vipassana went further. It liberated me from dry intellectual and 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 it did teach me to develop mettā (loving-kindness) for them. The sentiment of "Apni mukti, apna hatha, apna parisartha—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 sense of self-reliance. I was filled with rapture upon recalling these words of a poet: "Svavalanbana ki eka jhalaka para nyauchavara Kubera ka kosa—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-sāsana 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 organisation committee for providing vegetarian food during the Chaṭṭha Sahāgāyana. 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-sāsana 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,

– Kalyanamitta, S. N. Goenka

Dhammic Death

Shri M.A. Subramanian of Madurai passed peacefully on October 23rd while travelling by rail. His final moments were with full awareness. He has served as AT since 1998 and has made significant contributions to the spread of Dhamma in Tamil Nadu and Malaysia, having served many courses in jails, non-centres, Tamil Nadu centres, and Tamil courses in Malaysia. He was responsible for translating and recording Dhamma literature in Tamil from the one-day course to the 60-day course, as well as publishing Tamil Dhamma books. He also served as the CT for Dhamma Setu and Dhamma Arunachala. May all of his immense merits contribute to his attainment of Nibbāṇa.
One-Day Mega Courses at Global Vipassana Pagoda, Gorai, Mumbai

1. 4th Feb 2024, Sunday MEGA EVENT: Documentary Film on Pujya Guruji & other events

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 (Please bring a bottle so you can fill it with drinking water at GVP.)

2. Facility for students at Pagoda site

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, Tel :- 022-50427500 / +91 8291894644
Email: guruji.centenary@globalpagoda.org

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.

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

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

DHAMMA DOHAS

Hindu hūṃ nā Bauddha hūṃ, nā Muslimā nā Jainā; Dharamapantha kā pathika hūṃ, sukhī rahūṃ dina raina.
I am neither a Hindu, nor a Buddhist, I am not a Muslim or a Jain; I am but a traveller on the path of Dhamma, remaining in bliss day and night.
Dharma sadā maṅgala kare, dharma kare kalyāṇa; Dharma sadā rakṣā kare, dharma baḍā balavāna.
Let us pay respects to Dhamma! Dhamma confers welfare; Dhamma always protects us. Great is the power of Dhamma!

Dharma hamārā bandhu hai, sakhā sahāyaka mīta; Caleṅ dharmā kī rīta hī, rahe dharmā se prīta.
Dhamma is our brother, companion, helpmate, friend; Let us walk to the measure of Dhamma, giving our love to Dhamma.
Dharma sadr̥śa rakṣaka naḥīṃ, dharma sadr̥śa na ḍhāla; Dharma pālakoṃ kā sadā, dharma rahe rakhavāla.
There is not a protector like Dhamma, nor a shield like Dhamma; Dhamma is ever the protector of those who nurture and practise Dhamma.