

# Vipassana Newsletter

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

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## Words of Dhamma

*Asāhasena dhammena samena nayatī pare;  
Dhammassa gutto medhāvī, dhammaṭṭho'ti pavuccati.  
—Dhammapadapāḷi - 257, Dhammaṭṭhavaggo.*

The intelligent person who leads others not falsely but lawfully and impartially, who is a guardian of the law, is called one who abides by the law.

### Autobiography Part – 1

## Dhamma is Great

A few years back, a famous journal abroad published an interview of mine, wherein, in response to a query, I said that while following the Lord Buddha's Teachings with utmost devotion, I do not call myself a Bauddha (Buddhist). Similarly, during an interview given on the Thai government television channel in Bangkok, I responded to a question by saying that I do not convert anyone to Buddhism, because I teach Dhamma, not Bauddha Dhamma.

When the first groups of people from Burma (Myanmar) came to Igatpuri, Maharashtra, to join Vipassana courses, the first question many asked was, How many people had I converted to Buddhism? My answer was, "Not even one." I do not teach Vipassana in order to convert anyone. Rather, my effort is to help people become more Dhammic. Due to this misunderstanding, misconceptions arose about me, resulting in opposition in places like Burma (Myanmar), Sri Lanka, Thailand, etc., as a result of many interviews that I gave to the press, radio, television, or in public discourses.

In my motherland, Burma, this misconception and opposition reached an unpleasant level. There, a close friend and colleague of mine was translating Bill Hart's well-known English book on Vipassana meditation, which I teach, into Burmese and publishing it in installments in a popular local monthly magazine. He became angry and stopped the work midway. The situation, in fact, became a topic of gossip. An editor from a renowned publishing house in Sri Lanka criticized me in his monthly journal. This also became a significant topic of discussion in Myanmar, yet I stood firmly by my beliefs. As long as I do not perceive any faults in these beliefs, which seem to have no room for doubt, I remain steadfast. Fortunately, I was given an opportunity to clarify my point of view, with a very positive result.

The Burmese government's Ministry of Religious Affairs invited me to Burma to deliver a Dhamma talk. On the one hand, there was an atmosphere of misconception and opposition about me, while on the other, groups of people from Burma were coming to Igatpuri to practice. They all spoke of the work here only with praise. In any case, it was a moment of immense joy for me. First, I was happy to return to my homeland after such a long absence, and

second, I was also happy that the place where the teachings were being held was a renowned university for Burmese monks. There, I would be speaking among Burma's eminent and learned monks. Therefore, it seemed like an excellent opportunity to resolve any misunderstandings that had spread.

And that's what happened. Questions with misconceptions and misleading opinions that had persisted were raised. Burma has two monastic universities—one in Rangoon and the other in Mandalay. I gave public discourses at both. During these talks, the questions and answers that followed, along with three additional discussions with Burma's leading Pali scholars, clarified the situation. The confusion that had clouded their minds dissipated, and everyone felt extremely pleased.

Later on, the Sri Lankan government invited me to hold a Vipassana course in Colombo. I gave public discourses there, and I also had the opportunity to have private conversations with leading scholars among the local monks and laypeople. They too were satisfied with the views put forward. I also received an invitation to hold a course from Thailand. Public discourses were also held there. A detailed discussion with learned monks and laypeople took place, and all their doubts and concerns resolved themselves there as well.

Wherever I went, I consistently expressed one sentiment: I was drawn to Lord Buddha because he transformed individuals into followers of Dhamma without establishing sects. I was already part of a sect. I was born and brought up in a very strict Sanatani (Hindu) community. Notwithstanding its many shortcomings, I never felt a need to change it. Whatever it was, I was satisfied with it. I would have missed out on the invaluable practice of Vipassana had it required changing my sect. But it was my good fortune that I met a Guru who initiated me in Dhamma, not in a sect. Had not Lord Buddha done the same thing? He did not establish any sect. He did not initiate people in sects but in pure Dhamma. And whoever sits on the teacher's seat in this tradition, that son of the Buddha indeed represents the Buddha. My most respected Guru, as a representative of the Buddha, understood this teaching of the Buddha very well.

The Buddha brought forth the purity of Dhamma, exposing the superficial show and empty rituals that were prevalent and the sectarian and imaginary philosophical beliefs that people were entangled in. In the very name of Dhamma, the unjust social system of caste, class, and clan was crippling a significant portion

of society, forcing them to remain poor, exploited, and oppressed for generations. The sacred altars of temples presented horrific scenes of a slaughterhouse. This disturbing reality, in the name of Dhamma, was profoundly damaging. This Great One's aim was to transform it and re-establish the benevolent, pure form of Dhamma, and this is what he did throughout his life.

He brought out the essence of Dhamma—universal, eternal, and true for all times and all places—where divisions resulting from casteism, high and low, and sectarianism could not endure. Regardless of which caste, clan, class, status, or sect one belonged to, this pure Dhamma could be adopted by one and all without distinction, equally beneficial to each and every one who practiced it. And that is

□ Sīla, living a life of virtuous conduct. Refraining from all unwholesome acts of body and speech, such as violence, theft, adultery, and the use of intoxicants, and staying away from livelihoods that harm the happiness, peace, and health of others.

□ Samādhi, to control the mind, and that too on the basis of one's own breath, the natural breath, which is universal. Thus, one develops a wholesome skill.

□ Paññā—meaning, to be established in wisdom, which is not based on hearsay but on one's own direct experience of observing one's own body and mind as it really is. This results in the total purification of craving, aversion, and other impurities from deep within one's self.

Anyone who becomes a Buddha teaches the Dhamma in these three aspects. This is his dispensation; this is his discipline. Not only Gautama Buddha, but all Buddhas share this teaching, this dispensation, and this discipline. Becoming a Buddha does not depend on the munificence of some imaginary unseen power. By accumulating and perfecting virtues (paramis) over many lifetimes and through austerity and self-control, anyone can attain enlightenment (bodhi) and become a Buddha.

In this eternal world, there have been countless Buddhas before Gautama, and who knows how many more will come after him in this endless cycle of births. This liberation is attainable through the individual's own hard work and perseverance over countless lifetimes.

A Buddha establishes pure Dhamma after eliminating all nonsense that goes on in the name of Dhamma. He does not hold anyone in sectarian confines. Similarly, one who sits on the Dhamma seat also performs to the best of his ability. Buddha gave sermons on 'Dhamma,' not 'Bauddha-Dhamma.' He did not convert anyone. In fact, the entirety of the Buddha's teachings do not contain the word "Bauddha." Buddha used only these words for his followers—Dhammi, Dhammiko, Dhammattho, Dhammachari, and Dhammavihari. It seems that for more than five hundred years after the Buddha, no one addressed himself as a 'Bauddha.'

The Dhamma of sīla, samādhi, and paññā is universal. It is not the inheritance of any one caste, creed, or sect. It belongs to everyone. It is equally beneficial to all. A person of any caste, creed, or sect, from any time or place, can become Dhammi, Dhammiko, Dhammattho, Dhammachari, or Dharmavihari. They may call themselves Hindu, Buddhist, or any other. They will all be followers of Dhamma. A Hindu will become a Dhammic Hindu, a Bauddha will become a Dhammic Bauddha, a Jain will become a Dhammic Jain, a Christian will be a Dhammic Christian, and so on. If one becomes Dhammic, one will become a noble human being and be the pride of human society. A person who leads a peaceful and harmonious life will never engage in any behaviour that even remotely resembles communalism or caste discrimination, nor will they take part in riots, bloodletting,

or violence that occurs in the name of Dhamma.

A Buddha establishes Dhamma, leading people to Dhamma, not Bauddha-Dhamma. Kashyap, Bhardwaj, Katyayana, and Maudgalyayana all belonged to Brahmin Gotras (subcastes), and they retained their names after learning Dhamma from the Buddha. The Buddha didn't alter their names. Katyayana was known as such during his life, as were Maudgalyayana, Kashyap, and Bhardwaj. The names don't matter. The Dhamma people cultivate inside themselves is what matters.

Buddha said – Dhammo hi setṭho janetasmiṃ

Dhamma is the best thing for people; that is, Dhamma is great, Dhamma is the leader, and Dhamma is the only thing worth following, not any sect.

Come, let's learn to accept pure Dhamma without being constrained by any sectarian obstacles so that we can actually accomplish our own true welfare and escape the extremely damaging bonds of casteism, rituals, communal entanglements, and false philosophical views!

(From Vipashyana Patrika Hindi, 08.03.1993. Vol:9.)

## Manifestation of Dhamma in Daily Life

**(29th September was Respected Goenkaji's thirteenth death anniversary. The entire Vipassana Family expresses its profound gratitude to him. On this occasion, come and let us offer our deepest homage as we once again read his profoundly inspirational words that will help us in our endeavour of walking on the path of Dhamma. Deepening our practice as guided by him will be our true offering to our Teacher.)**

January 4, 2004, Delhi

Dear students!

Two things are very important for you to truly bring meditation practice (sadhana) into your lives. One point is to have learnt this practice in a Vipassana course, or to have ripened in practice over a number of Vipassana courses, along with not missing your morning and evening daily sittings once you return home. If you miss them, you will not get the desired benefit from these courses. Otherwise, these ten-days here will turn into just a mere ritual.

In the same way as you give food to the body two or three times a day to sustain it and keep it healthy, so also the mind needs its sustenance. These morning and evening sittings are the food which keeps the mind healthy and strong. Without this, the mind will grow weak and unhealthy and you will be deprived of the benefit that accrues from the practice.

The second important point to remember is that even though you may sit for Vipassana meditation daily in the morning and evening, you must also check whether it is manifesting in your daily life. Keep checking repeatedly. For instance, a meditator (sadhak) sees that previously he used to get angry in a certain situation; but now in a similar situation, when he becomes aware that anger has arisen, he sees that it is not as strong, not as intense. In addition, it does not remain for as long as it did previously. This is an improvement.

You must keep observing yourself repeatedly whether there is any improvement or not. In addition to anger observe the other defilements. For example, previously you may have become agitated in certain situations, and now agitation has indeed arisen again in a similar situation. But has it come with the same intensity, or is it less? Is there any improvement? In this way, keep checking yourself.

Perhaps ill will has arisen towards someone. It used to arise in the past, and now once again it has arisen. But does it remain in your mind for as long as it did previously, or does it dissolve more rapidly? Keep checking. How soon did you become aware of it? First of all, how soon did you become aware that you did something wrong; you became angry and generated ill will and hatred? Secondly, and of equal importance, how soon did you start generating a feeling of loving-kindness (metta) and goodwill towards the person to whom the ill will, anger and animosity had arisen? Having wounded someone with your harshness, anger, ill feeling and hatred, now it is important that you apply a healing balm. How soon did you start giving that same person metta from your heart; 'may you be happy, may you be peaceful'. You will now come to know how strong this metta within has become.

If you are boiling in anger and you utter the words, 'May you be happy', it will not generate any goodwill. Calm the mind, quieten it, then metta can arise. Once the anger has gone and the mind is calm, then you can remember this person towards whom you expressed anger, spoke harsh words, generated ill will and as you remember him, you can generate goodwill and a loving feeling: 'May you be happy, may you be at peace'. If this happens, then you are indeed developing Dhamma in your life.

On the one hand, if you sit for a 10-day course but do not practice Vipassana daily in the morning and in the evening when you return home, then it will not give the proper benefit that it should. On the other hand, certainly it is good if you are practicing daily in the morning and evening, but if you are not checking whether Dhamma is manifesting in your life or not, then still your practice is incomplete.

Dhamma must develop in our lives, it must become alive, it must become an indivisible part of our lives; only then it truly starts giving benefit. Each individual must know if this change is taking place in himself or herself. No other person can make an apt evaluation and judgment.

You may have an associate with whom your relations are not very harmonious. That person may expect that because you have just returned from a meditation camp then you will likely behave according to his desires – as if the practice was undertaken just to make this person happy. Now, if you do not behave as that person wishes then perhaps he will ask you, 'What is the use of your practice? It is useless and you are useless as well'. If this does happen then just smile and tolerate this poor fellow as he has not understood Dhamma properly.

However, if this person has pointed out a shortcoming that truly exists, then thank him. Thank him for reminding you of a fault that needs to be rectified and say, 'Now I shall work to remove it'. However, if the criticism is baseless, if someone ridicules and falsely accuses you of something you have not done, then generate metta towards him.

In this way, see how Dhamma can become an indivisible part of you, how it manifests in your life, how it becomes your second nature. Then Vipassana gives us its full benefit. It becomes a tool of growth.

You have to be very aware. You have to examine yourself. Others too may observe you and say, 'Yes, certainly you are improving'. That is good. Nevertheless, remember that another person's evaluation of you may or may not be accurate. You have to evaluate yourself very dispassionately, very objectively. Check to see if the defilement within is just as strong as it was before, or if it has decreased. And if it has decreased then by how much? If you are continuing your practice, and there is no improvement in your behaviour and your nature, then it means that the practice is not being followed properly. It is not possible that you are

practicing Vipassana meditation properly without there being some improvement in your behaviour and nature. There must be a shortcoming somewhere. If so, then meet with your teacher and take guidance once again. Make corrections in your practice. Remain aware and keep yourself mentally healthy. As soon as you see yourself becoming unhealthy, double your efforts and see how you can come out of it. We must live a Dhammically healthy life. If this commitment, this perseverance remains unbroken then certainly you will make progress.

You are walking on the path of Dhamma. It will lead to your highest welfare in this life as well as in future lives. Progress must take place here and now, in this life. If there is no improvement in this life, then we cannot hope that there will be improvement in future lives. If life in this realm is improving then certainly life beyond this realm will improve also. We do not have to worry about what will happen when we get there. The future is the child of the present. If the present changes for the better, then the future will also be better.

So, taking one-step at a time understand the laws of Dhamma well. Step by step become free from your defilements, become free from your miseries. May you be happy and peaceful, may all who walk on the path of Dhamma achieve their highest welfare.

May you all be happy!

(Source: VRI News L., 16 October, 2016. Original article is titled as "Words of Dhamma Inspiration For Old Students by Principal Teacher S.N. Goenka".)

### Additional Responsibility

1. Mr. P. Venkatesh, To Serve as Centre Teacher of Dhamma Nagari, Davangere, Karnataka
2. Mrs. Rama Agnihotri, To Serve as Centre Teacher of Dhamma Sukhālaya, Bengaluru, Karnataka
3. Mrs. Rekha Bhasker, To Serve as Centre Teacher of Dhamma Andaman, Andaman Nikobar
- 4-5. Mr. Kantharao & Mrs. Rajani Uppala, To Serve as Centre Teacher of Dhamma Vana, Chunchunkatte Hubli, Karnataka
6. Mrs. Sarojini Chauhan, To Serve as Centre Teacher of Dhamma Lakkhana, Lucknow, U.P.
7. Mrs. Kanaka Prabha Lakkam, To assist the Centre Teacher of Dhamma Sukhālaya, Bengaluru, Karnataka

### New Responsibility Teacher

1. Mr. R. Kannan, Chennai, Tamilnadu
- 2-3. Mr. Somchai & Mrs. Boondee Arkkasirisathavorn, Thailand

### SAT

- 1-2. Mr. Shankar & Mrs. Leeta Hajarika Guwahati, Assam
- 3-4. Mr. Krishnakumar & Mrs. Nila Thaker, Amreli, Gujarat
5. Dr. Kishor Kumar Lakhani, Jetpur, Gujarat
- 6-7. Mr. Shamarao Madhav & Smt. Arpana Ramakrishna, Bengaluru, Karnataka
8. Mr. H Ramappa, Shimoga, Karnataka
9. Ms. Asha Laungani, Jaipur

### New Appointments Assistant Teachers

1. Mr. Jagdish Gajbiye, Nagpur, MS

2. Mr. Shankarappa Doddamani, Dharwad, Karnataka
3. Mr. Ramkrishna Sahu, Sambalpur, Odisha
4. Mr. Hui Liang, China
5. Mr. Hoang Minh Cao, Viet Nam
6. Mr. Remy Fruteau, Reunion Island
7. Mr. Mark Lazarus, Australia
8. Mr. Andrew Parry, Australia

### Children Course Teachers

1. Miss Rakhi Landge, Parbhani, MS
2. Miss Sarita Rathod, Nanded, MS
3. Mrs. Savita Jondhale, Nanded, MS
4. Mr. Vishal Haral, Hingoli, MS
5. Mr. Manav Pagare, Sambhajinagar, MS
6. Mr. Sameer Shaikh, Baramati, MS
7. Mr. Vijaykumar Supekar, Baramati, MS
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14. Mrs. Nikita Sharma, Jaipur, Raj
15. Ms. Chhavi Gupta, Sri Ganganagar, Raj
16. Mrs. Baby J., Chennai,
17. Mr. Jinsu Kim, Chennai,
18. Mrs. Kavitha S, Chennai,

### RCCC

1. Mr. Vishwas Khade, Regional coordinator children courses Kolhapur, MS
2. Mrs. Mahalaxmi Mahadevan, Regional coordinator children courses Satara, MS
3. Mrs. Laxmi Kamble, Regional coordinator children courses Sangli, MS
4. Mrs. Irene Delaney, Regional coordinator children courses Goa

## Dhammic Death

On August 28, John Beary peacefully passed away after a long illness. He was 78.

John and his wife Gail sat their first course in India in April 1973. Over the years, the two had many opportunities to sit and serve with Goenkaji. In 1982, when Goenkaji appointed the first eight assistant teachers, one of these was John.

After living in Japan for many years and helping to establish Japan's first Vipassana center, Dhamma Bhānu, John and Gail decided to retire and return to the United States. Goenkaji asked them to assume the responsibility of center teachers for the California Vipassana Center, Dhamma Mahāvāna, in 2001. Many people got benefitted with this opportunity.

The Dhamma family wishes him continued growth in Dhamma



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

### (1) One-day Mega course on Sunday:

1. **Sunday, 4th October 2026**, Sharada-Pūrṇimā plus Pujya Goenkaji's Death Anniversary.
2. **Sunday, 17th January, 2027** Sayagi U Ba Khin's and Mataji's Demise-day
3. **Sunday, 23 May 27**, Buddha Pūrṇimā
4. **Sunday, 18th July 2027** Ashadha-Pūrṇimā (Dhammacakkappavattana day)
5. **Sunday, 3rd October 2027** Sharada-Pūrṇimā plus Pujya Goenkaji's Death Anniversary.

(2) 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 for all one-day:** 022 50427500 (Board Lines), & Mob. +91 8291894644 (from 11 am to 5 pm). **Online registration:** <http://oneday.globalpagoda.org>; **Email:** [oneday@globalpagoda.org](mailto:oneday@globalpagoda.org)

(3) **Dhammalaya Accommodation 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](mailto:info.dhammalaya@globalpagoda.org) or [info@globalpagoda.org](mailto:info@globalpagoda.org)

## DHAMMA DOHAS

*Jo hindū na bauddha hai, jo muslima nā Jaina;  
Śuddha dharama mangalakaraṇa, deya sānti sukha chaina.*

It is neither by being a Hindu nor Buddhist, Muslim nor Jain; It is true Dhamma practice that gives peace, happiness and serenity.

*Mana ke maila utāra le, jo cāhe sukha chaina;  
Maile mana dukhiyā rahe, bauddha hoyā yā jaina.*

Dissolve the impurities of mind, if you desire peace and happiness; Whether a person is a Jain or a Buddhist, they remain unhappy if they have an impure mind.

*Yahī dharma kī parakha hai, yahī dharma kā māpa;  
Jīvana men dhāraṇa karen, dūra hoyā santāpa.*

This is the measure of Dhamma, this is the yardstick of Dhamma; When assimilated in life, the miseries dissolve

*Bina auṣadha sevana kiye, kahān roga kā anta;  
Jīvana men dhāraṇa kare, dharma hoyā phalavanta.*

Without taking the medicine, how can the ailment disappear; Dhamma bears fruit if practiced in life.

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**Vipassana Research Institute**

Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri 422 403

Dist. Nashik, Maharashtra, India

Tel: (02553) 244998, 244076, 244086,

244144, 244440, Mob. 9405618869

Email: [vri\\_admin@vridhamma.org](mailto:vri_admin@vridhamma.org)

course booking: [info.giri@vridhamma.org](mailto:info.giri@vridhamma.org)

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