

Vipassana Newsletter

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

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WORDS OF DHAMMA

Jighacchāparamā rogā,

Saṅkhāra paramā dukhā;

Etaṃ ñatvā yathābhūtaṃ,

Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ.

Dhammapadapāḷi—203, Sukhavaggo.

Hunger is the greatest illness. Conditioned things are the worst misery. Knowing this, as it really is, the wise reach Nibbāna, the best happiness.

Visits to Churu and Other Places

The letters written by Respected Goenkaji reflect his deep sensitivity towards the social welfare of people. Suffused with the vibrant energy and blessings of his Dhamma father Sayagyi U Ba Khin, he answered the call of those who sought Dhamma, lighting the lamp of hope inspiring them to walk its path.

While touring he would write as time permitted, often late into the night, recording his impressions of what he had encountered. This brief trip to Churu, Rajasthan was planned with a desire to kindle at least a curiosity towards Dhamma in the people of his ancestral land of Churu. Additional stopovers in Delhi and Lucknow in UP were also undertaken as he made efforts towards the settlement of refugees who had come from Burma. – Editor –

Place: Tadepalli Gudam, 29th Oct 1969

Dear Babu Bhैया,

Pranam!

... I reached Churu late in the night (around 4 am). When I got off the train from Delhi there were a few people who had arrived to receive me. After greetings I was taken to our old family mansion. The railway station itself had seemed quite different to me – like stations in large cities such as Delhi. New buildings on either side of the road indicated that we were in modern times.

But our old mansion (haveli) remained the same; nestled in a narrow lane filled with dirt and debris and surrounded by many similar old properties that

were in need of serious repair. Those responsible for taking care of these repairs were now settled abroad. There was the usual courtyard at the back of the haveli. Though the old tube-well had fallen into disuse, a water tank above the shower area was kept filled with water from the municipal pipeline, which had made the 'water carrier' workers redundant. The only modernisation was a new toilet and shower area in one corner. The rest of the haveli remained untouched; now decrepit from 40 years of negligence.

So many memories of my life are linked to this haveli even though I never spent much time here. I remember how at the age of five, I had watched with curiosity when its foundation was being laid and the walls were coming up with huge stones. How the uneven stones were fixed together by expert hands into an even wall. The labourers would bring stones and drop them near the artisans. On one side a buffalo, eyes covered with a strip of cloth, would go round and round rotating a wheel where the lime concrete mixture was crushed and readied. This would be carried up by female labourers to the artisans. A water carrier would bring water from afar in a large leather bag, then pour it in a large cement water tank where the mixture was prepared. This picture is deeply embedded in my childhood memories, still remaining fresh to this day.

Years later in 1942 when we arrived from Burma in a disconsolate condition, after having wandered lost in jungles and struggled across mountains, this very haveli sheltered us in its healing, restful lap. How soothing its embrace had been then! I can never forget the sweet and not-so-sweet experiences of those days. This is where I started my married life and it was

here that the harsh realities and responsibilities of a householder had made me worried for the first time. It was here that the sharp knocks of a fledgling business had shaken me out of complacency. Just a few months of staying in this place had given me profound wisdom of life. And indeed it was here that I firmly resolved to stand on my own two feet financially. Now all these memories came flooding back as I entered into the house.

After freshening up I left to go around the town. I pondered the thought of abandoning my Burmese outfit for coat and pants. But then I thought this would be artificial and against my natural expression. To abandon the dear outfit of my motherland which settles on me so naturally merely because of certain attitudes that I may face did not agree with me. I left home in my normal dress even though I became an object of curiosity for others.

In the marketplace I met nearly all of my old friends and associates. One in particular, Laxmichand, met me with special warmth. Moving along the small and narrow marketplace I reached the office of Nagar Shree with a friend Subodh Agrawal. This was the place where in the past literary gatherings had taken place and where my mind had taken flight and had been inspired to bring forth rhymes and literary creations.

Now Govind, the younger brother of Subodh, had opened an art gallery here in which portraits of former and current citizens of Churu hung, smiling down at us. I also saw my own picture with the erstwhile Prime Minister of Burma, U Nu, in Rangoon during a sacred fire ritual. Some archaeological findings, including a translation of a Jain scripture in Tamil, was also displayed here.

Southern India has always been a vital centre for Jain followers as well as Buddhists and Rajasthan, of course, remains an influential centre of Jains. Therefore, there was likely religious interaction between the two places and hence the presence of a southern Tamil scripture in this northern state of Rajasthan.

I was aware that Govind was immersed in researching and writing a book on Churu's history. The manuscript was almost ready and he was now looking for financial sponsors to publish it. I glanced at the manuscript and noticed that as it normally happens, the upper classes of princes and nobility inhabited the book, as if the ordinary folks did not matter. Upon drawing his attention to this Govind said enthusiastically that he was in the process of writing another chapter on this very subject – the folk life in olden Churu. He showed me a few pictures on this and I welcomed his efforts and chatted for hours lost in fond

memories of literary gatherings and of student days. I then noticed a large picture of guru Ram Narayan Joshi hanging on one side. Our heads bowed down to this simple, straightforward but profound thinker; how he sacrificed his life at its peak for a weeping mother whose child was caught in blazing fire. Even a stranger would have bowed down to such a one, we however had learnt so much sitting at his feet. I still remember his child-like nature completely free from cunning. His school taught children without charge.

Once during Diwali I thought that though this noble teacher would not accept anything in return for the teachings, why not take his blessings and offer him a Diwali gift? I was given Rs. 5/- for an offering which I thought was meagre. I had paid Rs. 25/- or 30/- to a teacher who had taught me English for a month during exams; and this man had been teaching me free of charge for the last 4 to 5 months. Gifting a mere Rs. 5/- troubled me immensely but there was no choice. I hesitantly went to his house during Diwali to pay my respects, thinking that he would be offended with this miserly offering. But to my surprise his response turned out to be just the opposite. He told all and sundry that this Burmese student of his had given him five silver coins. That no one had given him this kind of respect. This offering of silver during a festive occasion was so meaningful to him, etc. Decades later I evinced this kind of child-like simplicity in my teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin. To have learnt Hindi literature under such a saintly person was my singular good fortune. I could not praise his warmth and simplicity enough to my friends. Subodh called a photographer and we all had our photographs taken in the office of Nagar Shree.

In his eyes gleamed a hope, an expectation from me. From Goenka, the businessman, there was hope amongst the local folk of financial support as is the norm in rural towns and villages. I encountered this unspoken hope in people's eyes wherever I went. When those who have made it big in cities return to their native land, there is a customary expectation that the person will assist in the upliftment of the community.

When so confronted I would get uncomfortable, unused as I was to refusing. I had always shared my material abundance with those in need. It would take time to get used to this new Goenka.

This was Goenka, the Dhamma teacher on a visit to spread Dhamma and he had left the businessman far behind. How to explain this to these people that I was no longer the successful businessman but a man of literary pursuits and more importantly, a Dhamma teacher. I could give the gift of life-altering Dhamma if they so wished

Back in the haveli I sat with my four sisters for four hours of Dhamma conversation. I had been anxious that they should not feel indifferent towards this meditation technique of Lord Buddha, the knowledge of which was new to them. As I had moved away from speaking in such a way as to please the person sitting with me, I spoke just as I felt. Often people initially withdraw from the bitter truth being spoken to them, but in this case this very medicine compelled them to ponder over it and soon they felt drawn to Dhamma. After hearing of my reservation to such deep, deep rooted practices of rites and rituals and belief in god incarnate – after hearing so many beliefs being questioned, my sisters spoke in one voice – Dhamma kindled in their hearts and they requested that a 10-day camp be held in Churu. I assured them that though it would be impossible to hold a camp in Churu, I would hold one in Delhi. When the Delhi camp was held, Ginni and Savitri bai joined though it became difficult for Jayadevi and Rawati to disentangle themselves from familial responsibilities. Ilayachi bai also joined from Sadulpur after a letter was written to her.

While in Churu I also met old friends pandit Murlidhar Sharma, pandit Dwarka Prasad Mishra and Mohanlal Mishra. Pandit Ramlal Vaidya was not available but when he returned home at 9 pm he met Dwarka Prasad and together they came to the station to meet me. Pandit Murlidhar arrived before and all stayed with me till 11 pm. There followed a long Dhamma related conversation with them.

Hearing such revolutionary ideas from me against their deep rooted and firmly held beliefs stunned them into silence. Though this proved to be a very bitter pill for them, after much pondering pandit Murlidhar grudgingly accepted that my argument certainly was not without logic and it could by no means be called atheism. Murlidhar pressed upon me to extend my stay by a day in Churu so that a gathering of a few educated people could be held so I could give a Dhamma talk. He argued that certainly around 20-25 of them would be inspired to join the upcoming camp. But I was pressed for time and had to reach Delhi. After spending nearly 18 hours in my ancestral land I took a night train to Delhi where I had a very busy schedule meeting government officers and ministers.

On the following day in the evening the 'Burmese-Indian Friendship organisation' and the 'Hindi Literary organisation' held a joint programme in my honour, chaired by Shri Dinkarji (a well known name in Hindi literature). Delhi has a peculiar custom whereby a host of an organisation garlands the one being honoured. During this function I was felicitated by about 15 to 20 garlands and a certificate. Many gave speeches praising me. But I felt burdened by

these words. There was false hype and exaggeration and while my virtues were being extolled, no mention was made of my shortcomings, of course, though that is what would keep one balanced. In those moments I thought of my weaknesses and reminded myself not to become swollen with pride with all the praises being heaped on me.

My mind wandered to an ancient Buddhist poet's words that when someone praises you, you must remember that there are others who censure you because certainly there are faults in you. And conversely, when someone censures you, you must remember that there are those who praise you because there are virtues in you too. Thus in praise and in censure, I try to maintain my mental balance. After praises were heaped on me it was time for me to say a few words. I rose and spoke of my anguish at the moral degeneration in our nation's social fabric. Shri Dinkarji who gave the following speech also said a few words seconding my feelings. His words also spoke of his silent pain.

I also spoke of the situation faced by the Indian diaspora in Burma and our responsibilities towards our adopted nation. I reminded the ones who were displaced by the Burmese government not to hold grudges against them. A glimpse of Dhamma and rational thought was inevitable in my talk and it seemed that people accepted my words graciously and warmly. The floodgates of love that opened towards their old friend was difficult to contain but there was a regret in the hearts of the refugees that this function was held by local groups and that there was not much emphasis laid upon the issues that mattered to the returnees from Burma. They therefore put pressure on me to hold another programme. I agreed on the condition that not a penny would be spent on food and drinks and that the focus would remain exclusively on the current problems and solutions of the refugees. After two days the programme was organised and an intensive discussion took place for two hours where their concerns were voiced and understood. I was able to place these concerns in front of government officials I subsequently met.

Their difficult conditions moved me. There had been a time when they lived a prosperous life in that generous land, and now they were lost in penury. This too was kammic, changing all the time. Understanding this softens the blow of destiny and prevents us from holding grudges against apparent perpetrators of our sufferings. Our future is always guided by our present actions. And we can change the direction of our future if we want to. If this is well understood then a new vitality, a new hope and a new faith will emerge in our hearts. Having spoken such words of gentle trust

to those searching for answers, I departed.

I met the central finance minister Shri Jagannath Pahadia for almost three hours at his residence. On the matter of those displaced he expressed anguish and said he would do his best to assist them from his department. He agreed readily to two or three problems which directly related to his department and advised me to send an application letter against which the necessary orders could be given.

When I met the leaders of the displaced peoples organisation a month later, having concluded the Sarnath and Delhi camps, I enquired about the application letter that was to be sent to the minister. I was informed that the letter never got sent, as they remained locked in their personal problems. And now through newspaper reports it was learned that due to an internal struggle in the current ministry of the Congress, the said minister had lost his chair. A major opportunity unfortunately had been lost.

Caste Scourge

The erstwhile minister was the leader of the lower caste section of Rajasthan and a sense of deep inferiority permeated his psyche, as is almost always the case. Truly the unspeakable injustices perpetrated by the upper classes of Hindus on this segment of society result in poisonous reactions, even among the educated ones from the so called lower classes. The only way out is the total abolition of caste divisions. But in the current social scenario this is as possible as separating the skin from the body. Casteism has become so deeply entrenched in our social fabric that not only our social but our political platform too has been blighted by it, making it nearly impossible to rid ourselves of it. The centuries old customs are so very deeply rooted that even an educated person from this section of society finds himself unable to rise above it. Even when he becomes an engineer or a doctor, he carries the reality of his being a low born, a social outcaste, deep in his heart. It has been said that if we proclaim a lie as truth often enough, then even the lie will become the truth. This is the terrible effect of a lie which is heard right from birth. Hearing it repeated again and again it leaves an indestructible impact on the mind and we begin to believe this lie as the truth. This is most unfortunate.

A so called low born hears from infancy that he is a low born. No one ever tells him that he is a human being first and foremost. He only hears that he belongs to a low class till it becomes a bitter truth for him. The opposite becomes true for one born in a so-called upper class. Hearing this lie repeated constantly he becomes firm in his belief that he is blessed by being one of the upper class. How deep rooted these constant

repetitions of false beliefs over the centuries have become. A person does not even want to consider how the profession of someone who cooks food for him as a chef, for instance, or who delivers milk to him, makes him an upper class or lower class person! Or how someone who has never read the four Vedas (original scriptures of Hindus) can be called a Chaturvedi (one who has read the four vedas). Strange are the ways of these lies which have planted such deep, deep roots in our country! While conversing with the minister belonging to the scheduled (lower) caste, this became apparent to me once again.

In a large Bauddha gathering in Nagpur a few days before this matter gained major momentum. The solution to eradicate the poison of casteism from the country that they were looking at, that all those belonging to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribal groups (Adivasi) turn to Buddhism, was not the solution. If those converts to Buddhism turn to sila, samādhi and paññā, (morality, concentration, and wisdom) in reality bringing a new turn in their lives, and refuse to be addressed as untouchables, then there is hope but only partially. The so-called upper segment of Hindu society too must refuse to accept this centuries old lie and cease to segregate themselves as those belonging to the brahmin, the warrior and the merchant classes (social community divisions made in ancient times which still persist) and view themselves as human beings first. Only then will this country be rid of this scourge. When that will happen and how, is the big problem.

Lover of Hindi Literature

Another long conversation ensued at the residence of a politician from Rajasthan, Shri Ramnivas Mirdha. He seemed rational, clear headed, socially adept and humane. I met many others while in Delhi. I put in a major effort to get the government to approve of giving Hindi educational books to Burma free of cost. It was a good time for me to understand the thought processes of the government officials. There were those in power who took it as their victory if they were able to deflect the problem posed and then there were those, albeit few and far between, who were eager to find solutions.

Luckily, I was able to meet people like the senior officer of the Hindi Department, Shri Bacchu Prasad Singh, the minister Shri Dinesh Singh and his P.A. Shri Purushottam who was related to the newly appointed Consul General of Burma, Shri Baleshwar Prasad. I also met the branch secretary of 'Southern India Hindi Organisation' Shri Anjani Sharma, a generous hearted person who eagerly promised me his sincere cooperation. On the evening of the day I was felicitated by the 'Hindi Literary Organisation'

in Delhi, some literary lovers and socially active people gathered at the home of Shri Yashpal Jain (a well known Hindi litterateur) as it was his birthday. I greeted him warmly and met many old friends there including Shri Kaka Kalelkar, Shri Jainendra Jain and many other notables. One day during a dinner party at Vishnu Bhai's house I had a lengthy conversation with Shri Brahmanandji. I also met Shri Yashpal Jain at his house a couple of times for a convivial get together.

In order to send necessary books and other literary materials to Rangoon, the Burma Hindi Literary Organisation was founded, as well as the Burma India Literary Samiti, which was established for mutual cooperation. Shri Yashpal Jain was chosen to head these, while Radheshyam Lhila was chosen as secretary and Shri Dharmavirji as treasurer. Their primary task was to collect Hindi Books from the government and other local bodies for Burma.

On 5th Sept, having spent a few days in Delhi, I took a night train to Lucknow, arriving around 7.30 am. I was to travel to Naimisharanya, about 150 miles away, with a Consul General of a neighbouring country in his air conditioned car. We managed to leave by 8.30 am. Throughout the journey I had an interesting conversation with him. He seemed a scholarly person interested in literary pursuits and the three hour journey passed smoothly. The car was comfortable and the road smooth with views of green farms on either side and the weather was pleasant.

A message of our arrival had preceded us at Naimisharanya and I was taken to an ashram there. I saw a grey haired, bearded sadhu sitting on a raised platform. To his right about 100 to 200 renunciates were sitting quietly and to his left there were about 200 to 300 householders. The sadhu wore orange robes. All wore religious marks (tilak) on the forehead, like their master's. The householders all had a shawl wrapped around their shoulders with the name of Rama and some couplets (shlokas), printed on them. The sacred, tranquil place and the quiet, gracious gathering enraptured me. But the shawls with Rama and chants printed on them and the tilak marks on the renunciates foreheads did not impress me. I had never been attracted to this type of external show of religion, and even more so now.

The programme began as soon as we reached there. A few words of welcome were spoken in honour of the guests – the Consul General and me. Briefly introducing the ashram we were told that a branch had been opened here to disseminate our exalted ancient culture. Thereafter, we were introduced by Vyasji who while introducing the ashram and the incumbent guru said that it would not be appropriate to say that the branch of an ancient culture had been opened

here. In fact, the ancient civilisation organisation had begun from here. I liked his interpretation. This was followed by a brief speech of the Consul General followed by a briefer speech by me. As I spoke about the utter moral and spiritual degeneration of the nation that hypocritically spoke of the cultural and spiritual heights, I saw that these words penetrated the hearts of the listeners. Many eyes turned moist and a woman was weeping openly.

I saw that the person who rose after me to give thanks also had tears in his eyes. This was a strange paradox. I had openly challenged those who spoke glowingly of the Indian culture and spirituality while doing nothing for the nation's character building. This was a gentle rap to the inmates of the ashram and I was holding my breath for someone to rise and say something in justification. It was due to the power of Dhamma that just the opposite happened. Finally the guru rose and read his pre-written message for the entire world. He then said a few words in response to my speech. I saw that this renunciate, seemingly unaffected by the world's happenings, was also touched and reassured us that his sacred ashram would make sincere effort towards raising general awareness and a spiritual awakening among the masses.

The crowd dispersed and we went around the place, reveling in its silent spaces. Truly it was a beautiful, sacred land. The mahatma (the exalted one) showed us his meditation hut and then we were taken to a dense cool grove where seats had been arranged for us to sit in silence ...

Your Brother,

Satya Narayan Goenka

(Excerpts from correspondence with Babu Bhaiya)

To be continued ...



Autobiography continues

The previous vignettes from the life of the world renowned Vipassana teacher Mr. Satyanarayan Goenka, were from the days prior to, and just after his coming into contact with pure Dhamma. Now we move ahead to the period of his teaching courses in India. We offer this series from his autobiography so that it may inspire others. **NL Part – 19.**

The Debt of India

When I met Sayagyi U Ba Khin for the first time he said, “I shall teach you the finest that India had to offer in the spiritual sphere. It is called Vipassana.” I came home and scoured the Hindi and Sanskrit dictionaries but could not find this word. In losing its jewel of pure Dhamma, Bharat had become truly impoverished.

Sayagyi wanted to return this jewel to India, saying that he would undertake this work himself, but unfortunately, the Burmese government would not grant him a passport. In those days, a passport was granted only under two conditions: to someone who wanted to leave the country for good or to someone who had obtained employment in another country. My teacher did not meet either of these conditions and so he was never able to visit India.

Time had moved on when I received word that my mother, who had left Burma some years back and settled with other family members in India, was ill. Having heard that the Burmese government had made the situation in Burma difficult for Indians, she grew very concerned and this affected her health. I knew that she would improve if she practised meditation, and so I decided to go to India to teach her Vipassana. I applied for a passport the next day. My friend, U Tin Han, was a minister in the External Affairs Department and so, being well known to him, I was granted a passport easily.

When Sayagyi heard the news he was thrilled and said, "The massive debt owed by Burma to India for giving us the priceless gift of Vipassana, that I had wanted to repay, shall now be repaid by you." He formally named me a Vipassana Teacher before I departed.

I had come to India to teach Vipassana to my mother and father, and that anyone else should attend the course would be well and good. Besides my family, I knew few persons in India, and that too not very well. I mused with serious misgivings how I could possibly teach Vipassana in such a huge country. Even if I attempted to organise a Vipassana camp, would anyone come? I had doubts about where camps would be held, who would manage them and where the necessary funds would come from. I was quite concerned about all this, but then I remembered my teacher's reassuring words, "You are not going to be conducting the courses, I am. So put your mind at rest."

The First Camp in India

How true his words proved to be! I had barely landed in Bombay with misgivings churning in my mind when a few old friends from Burma came to meet me. When this matter came up, one of them, Shri Dayanand Adukia said, "You make your plans for the camp; I will make all the arrangements." A few others then decided to sit for the course. Panchayati Wadi Dharamshala (pilgrim guest house) in Bombay was the venue where the first camp began on 3rd July 1969. Thirteen people, including my parents, a few other family members and some friends sat for

the course. Immediately following this course the word spread and there were requests to conduct another course. The second course was held at Madras, and then a third one was held again in Bombay. The demand to learn Vipassana kept increasing and the courses rolled on.

A literary friend from Delhi, Mr Yashpal Jain, then invited me to hold a camp in Delhi, organising it at the Birla Temple. After that bhikkhu Dharmarakshitji organised one at the Birla Dharmashala in Sarnath which was attended by one Mr Jeetlal from Pratapgarh, U.P. who came with his family. Subsequently, he organised a camp in his village, Madhoganj, in Pratapgarh district and then another in the city of Pratapgarh. It was a good start.

Strangers started to look familiar. Those who attended the courses took to Vipassana meditation very well indeed. Demand grew and I travelled all over northern India conducting courses. Travel expenses were borne by my family members. They would purchase Yadav's and my travel tickets placing 200 to 400 rupees at our disposal, out of which I would offer 100 rupees as dāna wherever a course was held. Most courses were held in North India at this time. It was but the power of Dhamma and Sayagyi's blessings that we barely encountered any difficulties. The demand for courses kept on increasing.

Nearly all of my family members attended the courses and made good progress, including those who were followers of Ananda Marg (a religious sect of India). My eldest brother Shri Balkrishna also progressed well. Later, after becoming a Vipassana teacher, he conducted courses in South India. Eventually, he took on the responsibility of overseeing Vipassana centres in the South, contributing to the spread of Dhamma. Only my youngest brother, Shyam Sunder, has still not tasted the nectar of Vipassana, being deeply engrossed as he is in Ananda Marg.

There was a linguistic mishap in the first course that was held in Calcutta. A young man who was mentally disturbed attended the camp. He made good progress and on the last day his grateful mother, delighted with the outcome, came to meet me. She said, please bless my son so that he stays well and ever progresses on the path of Dhamma. I responded saying, "May he reach nibbāna soon". Instantly the mother became agitated. I did not know at the time that in India, to obtain nibbāna meant to die. I tried to explain to her that by this meditation, one can experience nibbāna even while alive and continue to be involved in one's daily activities, but she was not convinced.

In another episode, a famous ayurvedic practitioner from U.P. who was a friend of my cousin Shri Chouthmal, participated in a course. He was working

well. On the third day of Vipassana he experienced sensations throughout the body. However, when I asked him, are you experiencing any vedana in the stomach area, he thought I was talking nonsense. (Footnote: The word vedana in Dhamma is used to mean sensations of every kind. However, in India, the word vedana had come to mean only painful sensations.) Where there was no pain, how could he experience vedana there, he argued. He up and left the camp on the same day. This was a lesson for me, and since then I have used the word samvedana instead of vedana for sensations. I was learning the colloquial language of India the hard way. But these difficulties notwithstanding, the camps were successful and people went home in a happy state of mind.

In North India, especially in Bodh Gaya, many young westerner travellers started to attend the courses. My knowledge of English was limited, just enough to fulfil my professional obligations when I was involved in business. Hence, I took to calling the English-speaking students aside and briefly explaining the essential points to them. If I had difficulty finding the correct words I would take their help.

Confusion in language once led to a very unfortunate episode. It was metta day and the discourse was on compassion when I said, “Today is the day to make love.” The result of this linguistic confusion became apparent soon enough when I chanced upon three young couples under a tree, embracing. When I chided them they said, "But you told us that today is the lovemaking day."

At this time an International Conference was underway in Delhi; the subject was ‘Sādhanā’. A participant who happened to be a Vipassana meditator mentioned that if anyone wanted to learn the true meaning of sādhanā, then they should go to Goenkaji, as he taught the Buddha’s essential teaching of Vipassana most scientifically.

When the head of the organisation, Baba Ram Dass (Richard Alpert) from the USA, heard this he came to Bodh Gaya and participated in a camp that was organised there. Pleased with the outcome, he participated in a number of courses before returning to the USA. Thereafter, many of his students started attending Vipassana camps.

My First Camp Taught in English

Pressure was increasing from foreign students for me to organise a course for them in English in Dalhousie, the tranquil hill station in the Himalayas. I was hesitant of course, as my English was basic and I could not speak fluently at length. It did not seem practical to hold a camp for them exclusively.

Then some of them took matters into their own

hands and wrote a letter to Sayagi U Ba Khin. They said that this profound knowledge had come to India from Burma to benefit the masses, but due to Mr Goenka feeling that his English was limited, they were being deprived of Dhamma. Very soon there was a phone call from Sayagi and while admonishing me he asked, “Why are you refusing? Remember, you are not holding these courses, I am. Take heed of what they request and go to Dalhousie. Dhamma will help you. Do not worry, all will go well.”

The decision was made; a camp was organised in Dalhousie. Previously a camp had been held in a hotel in Dalhousie in Hindi language, but this was to be in English. On the first day I could barely speak for 15 minutes, then on the second I spoke for half an hour, and from the third day onwards I was speaking in a flow, giving discourses for at least an hour. If any word vexed me, the meditators were able to help. The camp was a success. The meditators were surprised by my fluency in English, but I was much more surprised than them. Certainly, this Dhamma camp was my Guru’s camp, not mine. My hesitation was groundless and the camp proved to be a turning point for all.

(from the Autobiography of Mr. S.N. Goenka) –

To be continued...



Additional Responsibility

- 1-2. Shri A Subramanian and Mrs S Janaki, to serve as Centre Teachers for Dhamma Setu

New Responsibility- SATs

1. Dr. Bhishma Prasad Subedi, Nepal, to serve as center teacher for Dhamma Suriyo, Nepal
2. Mr. Onkar Wakode, To serve as Centre Teacher for Dhamma Saket, Ulhas nagar

3. Ms. Panorea Pervival, South Africa

Assistant Teachers

1. Shri Uttam ji Chaudhary, Muzaffarpur, Bihar
2. Mrs. Eshrat Alinia, Iran
3. Mr. Youssef Terzikhan, Morocco
4. Mr. Silvano Pedroni, Morocco
5. Ms. Farahnaz Khazanehdary, Iran
6. Mr. Mohsen Bazroodi, Iran
7. Mr. Stasick Seyoum Kebede, Iran



Future Course Schedule and Applications

Information on all future Courses is available on the internet. All types of bookings are being made available online only as per the Government’s new rules due to Covid-19. Applications will not be accepted on paper. Therefore, you are requested to check the following link and apply online directly for your appropriate course or for dhamma service.

<https://www.dhamma.org/en/schedules/schgiri>

Please apply similarly as per the schedule of other centres. Here is link for all Indian centres:-

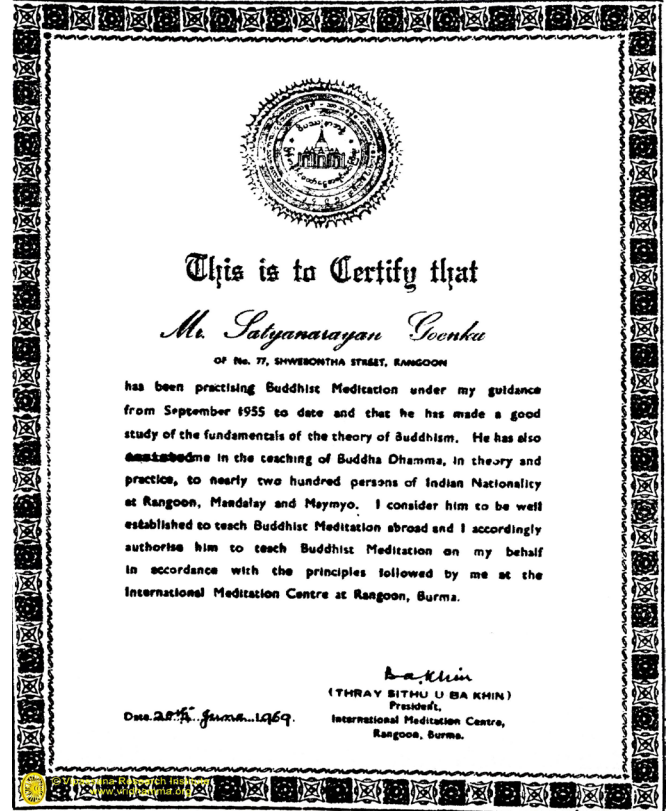
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One-day Mega courses at Global Vipassana Pagoda for 2020 / 2021

Sundays— on the occasions of **10th January, 2021 Mataji's Death Anniversary and Sayagi U Ba Khin's Death Anniversary; 23rd May, Buddha Purnima; 25th July, Ashadhi Purnima; 26th September, Sharad Purnima and Goenkaji's Death Anniversary; All One-day Mega courses** at GVP start at 11am – till 4 pm. Non-meditators may participate in the 3 pm discourse. (Daily one-day courses are still being held at the Pagoda for those who are staying in the campus.) Please come only with prior registration. ***Samaggānaṃ tapo sukho:*** Take advantage of the immense benefit of meditating in a 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>

(All courses will be arranged as per the Government's rules pertaining to Covid-19)



He formally named me a Vipassana Teacher before I departed.

DHAMMA DOHA

*Jāta-pāṃta nahiṃ dharama hai, dharama na bane divāra;
Dharama sikhāye ekatā, manuja-manuja meṃ pyāra..*

Caste and sect is not Dhamma, Dhamma does not create walls; Dhamma teaches unity, love amongst all human beings

*Jāti-varṇa ke nāma para, phailā atyācāra;
Sadācāra garhita huā, pūjita mithyācāra.*

Oppressive hatred has spread in name of class and colour; Wholesomeness has been destroyed while the false get praised.

Jaba-jaba yaśa carcā sune, taba-taba hoyā vinīta;

Parakha svayaṃ ko ahaṃ taja, rakha mana sāṃta punīta.

Whenever one hears praise, bow humbly; Check oneself leaving arrogance aside, keeping the heart quiet and pure.

Carcā hī carcā kare, dhāraṇa kare na koya;

Dharma bicārā kyā kare? dhāre hī sukha hoyā.

One merely talks about Dhamma, no one lives by it; What then can poor dhamma do? Happiness will come only when imbibed.

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