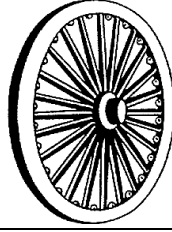


Vipassana



Newsletter

In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin, as

taught by S. N. Goenka

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WORDS OF DHAMMA

*Upanīyati jīvitamappamāyu,
jarūpanītassa na santi tānā;
etaṃ bhayaṃ maraṇe pekkhamāno,
lokāmiṣaṃ pajāhe santi pekkho.*

—*Saṃyutta Nikāya 1.100*

Life is swept along, next-to-nothing its span,
for one swept to old age no shelters exist;
perceiving this danger in death,
one should drop the world's bait and look for peace.

The Purity of Dhamma

S. N. Goenka

(The following has been translated and adapted from Goenkaji's article in the March 2010 issue of the Hindi Vipassana Patrika.)

To understand why the pure teaching of the Enlightened One was lost in India, we must look at the last two thousand years of Indian history. Until then there were people who had practised the teaching and experienced its goal; they were fully liberated or had reached one of the stages on the way to full liberation. Later, however, forces opposed to the Dhamma gained strength and sought to undermine its purity. Many bhikkhus were killed. Many others left India. Almost all the monasteries were destroyed, and the few remaining ones could not maintain the purity of the teaching. The contamination spread eastward to Myanmar, reaching the capital of Pagan.

*Suttantesu asantesu,
pamuṭṭhe vinayaṃhi ca,
tamo bhavissati loke,
suriye atthaṅgate yatā.*

(A.N. Aṭṭhakathā 1.1.130, Dutiyapamādādivaggavaṇṇanā)

When the words of Dhamma go unheard and
its practice is forsaken,
The world becomes dark
just as when the sun sets.

In southern Myanmar, news reached the arahant bhikkhu Dhammadassi of what had happened in the north of the country. He decided to go himself to Pagan. There he met King Anawrahta and explained to him the pure teaching of the Buddha. Seeing with new eyes, the king put an end to the degraded practices and re-established the purity of the Tipitaka and Vipassana. This was approximately a thousand years ago.

At an earlier time, in the reign of India's Emperor Asoka, Dhamma envoys had carried the pure words of the Buddha as well as the technique of Vipassana to different countries. One of these was Suvaṇṇabhūmi, now southern

Myanmar. There the custom started of memorising the entire Tipitaka or a section of it to maintain the actual words of the Buddha. At the same time people continued to practise what the Buddha had taught by maintaining the Vipassana technique in its pristine purity.

Envoys went as well to Sri Lanka, in this case the son and daughter of the Emperor Asoka himself. In that country the entire Tipitaka was first written down to ensure its preservation, and for many generations the pure Vipassana technique was also maintained.

The benefit of these actions could be seen in more recent times when scholars from different countries attended the councils convened in Myanmar, to once again verify the text of the Tipitaka. In the 19th century, they caused the text to be inscribed on stone tablets; in the 20th century, they published the text in book form.

*Suttantesu rakkhite sante,
paṭipatti hoti rakkhitā,
paṭipattiyaṃ thito dhīrā,
yogakkhemā na dhaṃsati.*

(A.N. Aṭṭhakathā 1.1.130, Dutiyapamādādivaggavaṇṇanā)

When the words of the Teaching remain secure,
the practice remains secure.

The courageous person who practises persistently
does not fail to be liberated.

From Dhammadassi onward to the time of Ledi Sayadaw, the pure technique of Vipassana was preserved in northern Myanmar, although among only a few. This is indeed very fortunate for us. Ledi Sayadaw had a strong belief that 2,500 years after the Buddha, the Teaching would again arise and Vipassana would spread far beyond the monasteries where small numbers practised it. This why Ledi Sayadaw decided to train not only bhikkhus and bhikkhunis but also lay followers in Vipassana. He appointed Saya Thetgyi, a farmer, as a teacher of Vipassana. In turn, Saya Thetgyi appointed Sayagyi U Ba Khin, because of whom Vipassana and the words of the

Buddha have become available in India and around the world.

Since Vipassana is universal and non-sectarian, people from all sects are drawn to it. No-one has objected to the technique. The Buddha's Vipassana teaching has been respectfully accepted everywhere. In the past 40 years, people of more than 80 countries have offered support for the benefit of many. There are more than a thousand assistant teachers and over 150 permanent centres, aside from courses held at rented sites. Nearly 1,200 junior assistant teachers hold children's courses at various places. The discourses and instructions have been translated into close to 60 languages for use in Vipassana courses.

So far as the words of the Buddha are concerned, modern technology has made it easy to preserve their purity. But there remains the possibility that inappropriate changes would be made to the technique of Vipassana. My teacher, Sayagyi U Ba Khin, was very insistent that the Buddha's pure tradition should be maintained. Therefore, it is now our responsibility to keep alive this technique in its pure form, as imparted by Sayagyi. The same discourses and instructions have been used at Vipassana courses in India and all over the world for 40 years. Everywhere they have been wholeheartedly accepted. Therefore it would be unwise to change what has been accepted so universally. But if anyone sees a problem with some part of the teaching, the proper thing is to bring the matter to the attention of the Principal Teacher, so that he may consider it and do whatever is required.

Sayagyi U Ba Khin said that wherever Vipassana is taught, no other practice should be added however good it appears to be, since it might gain importance at the expense of the pure Dhamma. We have carefully followed this instruction for the past 40 years.

Nevertheless, well-intentioned people have sometimes tried to add something to the teaching of Vipassana. In some cases it was a specially healthful diet at courses. Sometimes it was the actual provision of medical guidance by renowned physicians who were meditators. Sometimes it was the introduction of forms of religious observance. Sometimes it was the addition of physical exercises. Sometimes it was extra discourses to the students, beyond what has been recorded for use in the course. In one case it was an offer to teach yoga to students after a course. In another case it was an offer to provide acupuncture treatment at a centre.

The people who wanted to make these changes were all sincere and well intentioned. And they had good ideas. But what each was suggesting had no place in a Vipassana course.

Vipassana is a technique of self-observation for the purpose of liberating the mind from suffering. That is all. That is everything.

Therefore it is the responsibility of all sincere Vipassana meditators to keep the technique secure and not allow anything to be mixed with it, however good the addition might seem to be. This is how the Wheel of Dhamma will keep turning for generations, for the benefit of one and all.

May all be happy! May all be liberated! ☸

Vipassana News Around the World

First ten-day course at Dhamma Maṇḍa

The first ten-day course at the Northern California Vipassana Center, *Dhamma Maṇḍa*, was held from October 28 to November 8, 2009. Purchased in April 2008, *Dhamma Maṇḍa* is located in the Cobb Mountain area of Lake County, California. Covering 17 acres of mature pine, fir and oak forest, the property is easily accessible from San Francisco, Santa Rosa and Sacramento. The center will first offer courses for 50 students in winter and 60 students in summer.

The facilities include a newly built Dhamma hall and commercial kitchen, with a remodeled dining hall. Several cabins have also been remodeled to offer more privacy and comfort for students and servers. Further plans call for an office and more upgrades to the accommodations, plus expansion of the overall capacity at a later stage. For more details, visit www.manda.dhamma.org or e-mail info@manda.dhamma.org.

First one-day course at Dhamma Modana

On September 12, 2009, the first one-day course was held at *Dhamma Modana* on Vancouver Island on Canada's Pacific coast. In preparation for the event, a temporary Dhamma hall was constructed on a limited budget of \$5,000. Volunteer meditators provided the design and labour for the project.

The property covers 137 acres of land, purchased in July 2006. A zoning change allows the 12 acres in the northeast corner to be used for public assembly for 75 people. A new bridge to access the land was installed in September 2009.

The building committee is working on the long-range plan for future development, with the aim of accommodating 75 people. Buildings will be constructed as funds become available. For more details, visit: www.modana.dhamma.org

Vipassana in North American prisons

Since 1997, the North American Vipassana Prison Project has brought over thirty 10-day residential courses to more than 250 participants at five correctional facilities in North America. These include more than six courses at the Donaldson facility, a maximum-security prison in Alabama and the location for the film *The Dhamma Brothers*.

An AT who conducted courses at Donaldson in the early days returned there recently and was amazed at the changes in many of the inmates. Even a corrections officer spoke of radical changes evident in some of the most challenging inmates. The course program at Donaldson continues to be a source of inspiration to the outside world and an example to other prisons. The warden of the prison is very enthusiastic about continuing and possibly expanding the program in Donaldson.

Supervising the courses is the North American Vipassana Prison Trust. The Trust holds annual retreats to plan its activities and provide training. It is developing a website linked to the international prison website. Donations may be made online for prison activities in either the USA or Canada; income tax receipts can be issued for either country. Both meditators and non-meditators may donate. The website will eventually feature articles, research papers and other prison-related materials. Visit: www.prison.dhamma.org/en/na.

Vipassana in Ecuador: The first Vipassana course in the Cuenca area was held from 5 to 15 August 2009. 29 new students and 10 old students completed the course, which was a great success.

Online Vipassana Newsletters and Archives

For archives of the VRI Newsletter in English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Gujarati and Malayalam, visit: www.vridhamma.org/Newsletter_Home.aspx

European Long Course Center to open in March 2010

Construction work at *Dhamma Padhāna*, the first European long-course center, is progressing well, and the first course, a Satipatthana Sutta course, has been scheduled for late March 2010. This will mark the completion of Phase 1 of this inspiring project, which will provide facilities for serious meditation for 50 old students. Working diligently and harmoniously alongside professional contractors, Vipassana volunteers have played an important part in transforming the site.

Phase 1 involves construction of three accommodation blocks, interim dining rooms and a meditation hall. Volunteer meditators have done much of the work, coming from many of the countries of Europe. They show clearly that this is a project for all of Europe.

For detailed construction updates and a full course schedule, visit: www.padhana.dhamma.org. If you wish to help with the construction, email: construction@padhana.dhamma.org. If you are interested to serve in any other way, email: dhamma-service@padhana.dhamma.org. For updates on *Dhamma Padhāna* funding and details of how to give financial support, contact: finances@padhana.dhamma.org.

With the opening of *Dhamma Padhāna* beside *Dhamma Dīpa* in 2010, a unique meditation campus will be created in the West with a combined student/server capacity of about 220 meditators. Many service functions in the two centres overlap and will be delivered jointly; others will remain separate. To serve the enlarged campus, new roles, structures and procedures are being devised. A new combined *Dhamma Dīpa-Dhamma Padhāna* management team is likely to revolve around five key posts: three center managers, a kitchen manager and a site maintenance manager. In addition, other long-term servers will be encouraged to stay on campus. Job descriptions and further information will be made available later via the *Dhamma Padhāna* exchange list and other email lists. If you are interested in any of these roles, email: dhamma-service@padhana.dhamma.org.

To subscribe to the *Dhamma Padhāna* exchange list, email trust-exchange-subscribe@padhana.dhamma.org. Monthly updates and meeting minutes are also posted on this list.

Vipassana in Thailand

First course at Dhamma Simanta

Dhamma Simanta, Thailand, located close to Chiangmai in northern Thailand, held its first ten-day Vipassana course from December 23, 2009, to January 3, 2010. Monthly courses are planned in 2010. The centre will initially be open to local students until its facilities expand.

Dhamma Porano

Six acres of land have been donated for a center near Nakorn Sri-Dhammaraj. This is an ancient city highly developed in religion, arts and culture. Goenkaji therefore named it *Dhamma Porano* (ancient Dhamma). The first project is to build a temporary hall for one-day courses.

Dhamma Puneti

Forty acres of land have been donated for a center close to Nongkai, in north-eastern Thailand, near the frontier with Laos. The hilly land is surrounded by shady plantations and is only 21 kilometers from the city. Goenkaji has named it *Dhamma Puneti* (Experiencing the Dhamma anew). Local old students have now built a temporary small building for group meditation.

Dhamma Ujjala

Dhamma Ujjala in South Australia held its first one-day course in September 2009, using a temporary tent. Eighteen students attended, which was close to full capacity. Further one-day courses are planned for the near future. A site development plan is now in preparation for submission to the local authorities.

Workshop on Edicts of Emperor Ashoka

A seven-day workshop on *Samrat Ashok ke Abhilekh* (Edicts of Emperor Ashok) has been arranged at Jaipur from 8 to 16 August, 2010 (11 am), including a visit to Bairath.

Venue: Kothari Farms (Marugandha), 2 kms off Jaipur-Ajmer Express Highway, On Bhankrota-Jaisinghpura Road, Bhankrota, Jaipur. The workshop is for Hindi-speaking Vipassana meditators from India and Nepal and is open to men and women.
Registration: Mr. Anil Mehta, Mobile: 96104-01401, Email: paliworkshop@yahoo.co.in.

Pali Workshop at Bhuj

A ten-day Pali workshop has been arranged from 19 to 30 November 2010, only for English-speaking non-Indian Vipassana meditators.

Venue: Dhanvantari School, Pramukh Swami Char Rasta, Mundra Relocation Site, Bhuj 370 001, Kutch.
Contact: Dr. (Ms.) Shantuben Patel, Mobile: [91] 98256-62156, Tel: (02832) 291-366. Email: shantubenpatel@gmail.com

Pali Workshop in Madhya Pradesh

A seven-day Pali workshop has been arranged from 27 May to 4 June 2010 for Hindi-speaking Vipassana meditators.

Venue: Shri Rawatpura Sarkar Institutions (SRI), Kalapuram, NH-75, Jhansi Road, Datia 475 661, Madhya Pradesh.
Contact: Mr. Naresh Kumar Agarwal, Shanti Niketan Hostel, Near Bharat Petroleum Pump, Shivaji Nagar, Kanpur Road, Jhansi, U.P. Mobile: 99355-99453, 90057-74504. Email: shanti.globaldhamma@gmail.com

AT Training Workshops in 2010

Schedule of AT workshops in 2010 is as follows:
North: *Dhamma Sikbara*, Dharamshala: 27-5 to 31-5
East: *Dhamma Ganga*, Kolkata: 26-7 to 30-7
Gujarat: *Dhamma Divakara*, Mehsana: 29-9 to 3-10
West: *Dhamma Pala*, Bhopal: 12-10 – 16-10
South: *Dhamma Setu*, Chennai: 27-10 to 31-10
Nepal: *Dhamma Janani*, Lumbini: 27-10 to 31-10
Assistant teachers are requested to contact the above centres for registration and more details.

Workshops for Children's Course Teachers

The following CCT workshops are scheduled in 2010:
Dhamma Punna, Pune: 21st to 24th January
Dhamma Paphulla, Bangalore: 25th to 28th March
Dhamma Khetta, Hyderabad: 26th to 29th April
Dhamma Kota, Rajkot: 29th to 31st May
Logicstat, Delhi: 27th to 31st May
Dhamma Thali, Jaipur: 11th to 14th June
Dhamma Ganga, Kolkata: 31st July to 3rd August
Children's course teachers are requested to contact the above centres for registration and more details.

Goenkaji's Discourses on Television: Goenkaji's discourses are telecast daily on Bindass TV from 4.45 am to 6 am. (Please confirm exact telecast timings.)

IN MEMORIAM

Mr. John Leach, Senior Assistant Teacher from Australia, passed away peacefully in hospital on 16 February, 2010. He was suffering from cancer but faced the illness with courage and equanimity. John gave valuable Dhamma service in various areas, including information technology, for many years. He is survived by his wife Carolyn who is also a senior assistant teacher.

May he be happy, peaceful & liberated.

Children's Courses in Mumbai

Date	Venue	Age	Language	Registration
18-4	Ghatkopar	10-16 yrs	Hindi	15 & 16-4
18-4	Goregaon	9-16 yrs	Hindi	15 & 16-4
2-5	S. Mumbai	13-18 yrs	Hindi	29 & 30-4
9-5	Ulhasnagar	9-16 yrs	Hindi	6 & 7-5
16-5	Ghatkopar	10-16 yrs	Hindi	13 & 14-5
6-6	S. Mumbai	9-16 yrs	English	3 & 4-6
20-6	Ghatkopar	10-16 yrs	Hindi	17 & 18-6
20-6	Goregaon	9-16 yrs	Hindi	17 & 18-6
22-8	Goregaon	9-16 yrs	Hindi	19 & 20-8
24-10	Goregaon	9-16 yrs	Hindi	21 & 22-10
19-12	Goregaon	9-16 yrs	Hindi	16 & 17-12

Residential courses at Titwala. Contact: Tel: 2501-1096, 2516-2505

16 to 18-4	for girls	13-16 yrs	Hindi	4 to 10-4
23 to 25-4	for boys	13-16 yrs	Hindi	11 to 17-4

Course Timings: 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. **Registration:** 11 am to 1 pm
Course Venues: **Ghatkopar (W):** SNDT School, New Bldg., Cama Lane, Opp. Vidyut Soc. Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505. **Goregaon (W):** Siddharth Municipal Hospital, Opp. Motilal Nagar Post Office. Tel: 2308-1622. **South Mumbai:** Tel: 2308-1622. **Ulhasnagar:** Guru Nanak School, Kurla Camp, Ulhasnagar-4. Tel: (0251) 252-2693. NB Please: *bring cushion, *register on specified phone numbers, *inform in advance if unable to attend after registration, *arrive on time for the course.

New Responsibilities

Senior Assistant Teachers:

1. & 2. Mr. Scott Corley & Mrs. Kathleen O'Grady, USA
3. Mr. Samir Patel, *Dhamma Giri / UK*
4. Mrs. Ann Aston, UK
5. Mr. Patrick Elder, UK

New Appointments

Assistant Teachers:

1. Mr. V. Aravind, *Chennai*
2. & 3. Dr. Dilip & Mrs. Satyakala Jadhav, *Ambajogai*
4. Mr. Sudhakar Khaire, *Cbhattisgarh*
5. Mr. Muthuswamy, *Erode*
6. Mrs. V. Padmini, *Chennai*
7. Mr. Shrikant S. Patil, *Shegaon*
8. Mr. Ramesh Jain, *Aurangabad*
9. Mrs. Boondee Arkkasirisathavorn, *Thailand*
10. Ms. Veerle Offerhaus, *Belgium*
11. Mrs. Sheela Mahajan, *Australia*
12. & 13. Mr. Jose Silvestre Garcia-Zagal & Mrs. Claire Joysmith, *Mexico*

Children's Course Teachers:

1. Mr. Bherupa Singh Parmar, *Jalore*
2. Mrs. Nitu Bothra, *Jodhpur*
3. Mr. Ramanuj Tribhovandas, *Ahmedabad*
4. Mr. Balu Gopalan, *Australia*
5. Mrs. Shannon Ellis, *Australia*
6. Mrs. Joana Watni, *Australia*
7. Ms. Martha Kubisz, *France*
8. & 9. Mr. Phalgun & Mrs. Sangita Shah, *New Zealand*

DHAMMA DOHAS

*Samaya badā anamola hai, samaya na hāta bikāya;
Tina loka sampada diye, bitā kṣaṇa na pāya.*

Time is so precious, time is not for sale in the market,
Even for the wealth of three worlds,
you can't buy back the moment past.

*Bīte kṣaṇa ko yāda kara, mata birathā akulāya;
Bitā dhana to mila sake, bitā kṣaṇa nahin āya.*

Remembering past moments,
don't uselessly be obsessed;
Past wealth can be recovered
but past moments can never return.

*With much mettā,
A Vipassana meditator*

Bīte kṣaṇa to cala die, āne-vāle dūra;

Isa kṣaṇa meṅ jo bhī jīe, vo hī sādḥaka sūra.

Past moments are gone, those to come are far away;
Whoever lives in this moment is a meditator of courage.

*Bhūtakāla vyākula kare, yā bhaviṣya bharamāya;
Vartamāna meṅ jo jīe, to jīnā ā jāya.*

Living in the past is agitating, living in the future is delusory;
If you live in the present, you have learnt how to live.

*With best compliments from
MOTILAL BANARSIDASS*

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Patna, Tel: 2671442; Varanasi, Tel: 2412331

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