

# Vipassana Newsletter

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

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## WORDS OF DHAMMA

*Susukham vata jīvāma  
āturesu anāturā  
āturesu manussesu  
vihārāma anāturā.*

Ah, happily do we live,  
In good health among the ailing;  
Among ailing people,  
We live in good health.

—Dhammapada 198

## SACRED SYMBOL OF GRATITUDE

The magnificent Global Pagoda being built near Mumbai is a sacred symbol of our boundless gratitude—towards Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha; towards Emperor Asoka and his teacher arahant Mogalliputta Tissa, who held the third and final Synod in India on 326 AD, 218 years after the *mahāparinibbāna* of the Buddha. Like the previous two Synods, the words of the Buddha were ratified and established again in the authentic form. Along with Vipassana meditation, they sent this authentic literature with Emperor Asoka's son arahant Mahinda and daughter Saṅghamittā to Sri Lanka. Similarly, they sent the arahants Soṇa and Uttara to Suvāṇṇabhūmi (Myanmar and Thailand).

What if they had not sent Vipassana and the words of the Buddha outside India? Within fifty years after Emperor Asoka, an unscrupulous commander usurped the throne at the capital of Magadha, Pataliputra, and together with some conspirators started to destroy the teaching of the Buddha and its teachers. They killed most of the teachers who had memorized the entire Tipitaka and almost all Vipassana teachers. Those who survived fled to the neighbouring countries to save their lives. Thus, the original words of the Buddha and Vipassana both became extinct in India.

If Emperor Asoka had not sent the words of the Buddha and Vipassana to the neighbouring countries, they would not have survived anywhere in the whole world. Fortunately, some wise bhikkhus of Sri Lanka and Myanmar as well as of Thailand, Cambodia and Laos preserved the Dhamma literature in its pristine purity through the teacher-student tradition for more than two thousand years. Similarly, meditation teachers preserved the technique of Vipassana in Myanmar until recent times. If they had not done so,

the theory and the practice would have been completely lost.

We are grateful to the eminent bhikkhu Ledi Sayadaw, who foresaw that within the next 100 years, the first Buddha Sāsana of 2500 years would come to an end, and at that time, the Saddhamma preserved in Myanmar would return to its country of origin, India, and from there, it would spread throughout the world. He also realized that this important mission could only be fulfilled by a householder.

Therefore, after centuries, the Venerable Ledi Sayadaw opened the door of Vipassana to householders. He taught Saya Thetgyi and established him as the first lay Vipassana teacher in modern times. Saya Thetgyi fulfilled this responsibility with great dignity, skilfulness and competence. He was accepted by many lay people as well as bhikkhus as a lay Vipassana teacher.

Saya Thetgyi taught Vipassana to Sayagi U Ba Khin, who was also recognized and accepted as an accomplished lay Vipassana teacher. Sayagi U Ba Khin had complete faith in the traditional belief that on completion of 2500 years of the first Buddha Sāsana, this technique would return to India and from there, it would spread throughout the world. He believed that Myanmar was indebted to India and had to repay this debt. The time had come to return this invaluable technique to the land of its origin.

Nineteen fifty-four was the last year of the first 2500-year Buddha Sāsana and 1955 was the first year of the second 2500-year Buddha Sāsana. Sayagi U Ba Khin became very happy when an unpolished stone came in contact with him in this year. For fourteen years, by diligent cutting and rubbing, this skilled sculptor transformed this ugly stone into a beautiful statue and adorned it so that it may prove to be a

worthy exhibit of this great master's skill. Sayagi U Ba Khin was like a philosopher's stone that had come in contact with a valueless piece of metal, which, by its constant touch was not only transformed into valuable gold but into a valuable philosopher's stone in the form of his representative.

Sayagi U Ba Khin needed a Myanmar citizen of Indian origin to repay the debt to India who would go to India and teach Dhamma in Indian languages. The time came for the fruition of his resolve. His Dhamma son devoted himself to fulfil his Dhamma father's noble wish. Initially, he had great doubts and hesitation about his worthiness and capacity. But he did not have to do anything. All the work was being done by Dhamma, by his Dhamma father. The Dhamma son was simply a medium for this great work. The firm resolve of this great saintly person was bound to be accomplished. Anyone could be the apparent cause for its accomplishment.

At the start of the second Buddha Sāsana, the radiance of Vipassana spread not only in India but throughout the world. What would have happened if Emperor Asoka had not sent Saddhamma outside India, and if the bhikkhu sangha of Myanmar had not preserved it, if the eminent bhikkhu Ledi Sayadaw had not opened the door of this Vipassana technique to lay people? How would it have spread outside of Myanmar? But Vipassana was bound to spread outside. The medium that was needed to accomplish this purpose was chosen.

Infinite gratitude to Ledi Sayadaw as well as to Sayagi U Ba Khin because their boundless compassion enabled India to regain its invaluable technique and paved the way for the people of the whole world to learn Vipassana. Therefore, all the people who have spread the technique of Vipassana outside India in the past nearly four decades are filled with feelings of infinite gratitude for Sayagi U Ba Khin.

The Global Pagoda that is being built is a sacred symbol of the gratitude of all of us.

It will also be a sacred symbol of gratitude of all those who have received Vipassana and will receive it in the future during the present Buddha Sāsana. This huge Pagoda will endure as a sacred symbol for more than a thousand years. That is why instead of cement or concrete, the Global Pagoda is being built with stones based on the ancient architectural style of India. The first part of the Pagoda encloses a hall with 20-foot thick walls, with 280-foot diameter and 90 feet height unsupported by any pillars. This is itself a wonder in the entire world. It is a shining example of Indian architecture. When the construction of this 320-foot high glorious Pagoda is completed, it will be evoke much more wonder and admiration.

However, the Global Pagoda is not merely an

architectural wonder. It will contain a wonderful exhibition about Vipassana, the ancient meditation technique of India. Understanding their responsibility, all present and future Vipassana meditators will complete this vast inspirational work for the benefit of the people of the world. For centuries to come, they will gain the merits of the spread of Vipassana in the entire world. This will shed light on the infinite benevolence of Emperor Asoka and arahant Moggaliputta Tissa to Bhadant Ledi Sayadaw, lay teacher Saya Thetgyi and my revered teacher Sayagi U Ba Khin not only in India but the entire world.

The construction of the first one-third of the Global Pagoda was far from easy. Beyond measure are the merits of those enthusiastic servers who worked untiringly day and night to complete it. Similarly, inspired by the memory of the infinite benevolence of Sayagi U Ba Khin, the merits of those people throughout the world who donated the huge amount of money required for its construction, according to their capacity ranging from the price of one stone to hundreds, thousands, lakhs or crores of rupees is immeasurable, incalculable, invaluable.

There is an ancient belief that whenever the construction of a pagoda is started, it should be completed, particularly a Pagoda in which the sacred relics of the Buddha will be enshrined. This Pagoda will proclaim our boundless gratitude towards our great benefactor Sayagi U Ba Khin. For hundreds and thousand of years to come, the people of India and the entire world will remember the great saint from Myanmar whose sole strong Dhamma desire was that the technique of Vipassana, which had been preserved in Myanmar for thousands of years, should return to India and benefit India and the entire world. This Pagoda dedicated to him will inspire innumerable people towards Dhamma. The merits acquired by any assistance given for its construction will be truly priceless, invaluable.

*Bhavatu sabba maṅgalaṃ*—May all beings be happy!

S. N. Goenka,

Wayfarer on the path of Dhamma

## THE ETYMOLOGY OF PAGODA

The popular term 'pagoda' is neither from Pali or Sanskrit nor from Hindi or any other Indian language. It is not from the Sri Lankan, Myanmar, Thai, Cambodian, Laotian, Chinese or Japanese languages. Let us see how it originated.

The *thūpa* in which the relics of the Buddha or any arahant is enshrined was called *dhātu-gabbha* (*dhātu*=relics, *gabbha*=interior, cavity, cavern, womb). With the passage of time, all *thūpas* began to be called *dhātugabbha*. Later this became corrupted to *dhagabbha* or *dhagobā* or *dagobā*. A few centuries ago, when Portuguese sailors first came to the east, they did

not see any *thūpas* in India but they saw *thūpas* in many places in Sri Lanka. They asked the local people and were told that these were *dagobā*. They found it difficult to pronounce this new word and started to call *dagobā* as *pagodā*. Later when they went to other Buddhist nations, they saw many *thūpas* there which they called *pagodā*. As time passed, the *thūpas* that were earlier called *ceṭiya*, *cedigo* or *thūpa* were all called *pagodā*. Later on, the term *pagodā* became popular not just among foreigners but also among the local inhabitants.

#### INAUGURATION OF GLOBAL PAGODA DOME AND ENSHRINEMENT OF BUDDHA-RELICS

The inauguration of the dome of the Global Pagoda and the enshrinement of the sacred relics of the Buddha will be held on 29 October 2006.

At 6 am, the venerable bhikkhus will be served food followed by Saṅghadāna. At 9 am, the inauguration program will start in the hall within the newly completed dome of the Global Pagoda in the presence of leading bhikkhus from Myanmar, India and other countries as well as dignitaries from all over the world. After blessings by the venerable bhikkhus and enshrining of the Buddha-relics in the Global Pagoda, Goenkaji will give a short discourse about the purpose and importance of the Global Pagoda. The program will conclude with lunch for all the guests at about 1 pm.

The Global Vipassana Foundation cordially invites all Vipassana meditators with family and friends on this joyous and historic occasion. This function is open to all.

Arrangements has been made at a guest-house for some of the guests coming from afar. Unfortunately, accommodation is very limited here. Therefore, all meditators are requested to help to make this important function a grand success by making their own arrangements for meals, accommodation and transport so that they reach the Global Pagoda on time.

For information about reaching the Global Pagoda and any other details, please contact:

Mr. Derek Pegado, Tel: (022) 2845 2261, 2845 2111; Tel/Fax: 2845 2112. Email: globalpagoda@hotmail.com

Website: www.globalpagoda.org

#### Ways to reach the Global Pagoda:

**Malad Station (W):** From Malad railway station, exit from west gate of the station, take Bus No. 272 to Marve beach (Rs. 5) or auto-rickshaw (Rs. 32). Then take the ferry from Marve Beach to Essel World (Rs. 25). The Global Pagoda is a short walk from Essel World.

**Borivali Station (W):** From Borivali Station, exit from the west gate of the station, take Bus No. 294 or 247 from Chandavarkar lane to Gorai Creek (Rs. 5) or auto-rickshaw (about Rs. 22). Then take the Essel World ferry from Gorai Jetty to Essel World (Rs. 25). The Global Pagoda is a short walk from Essel World.

**Bhayandar Station:** From Bhayandar station, take Bus No. 4 or auto-rickshaw to Essel World car park area. The Global Pagoda is a 15-minute walk from here.

**Mumbai Airport:** One may take a taxi to Global Pagoda by the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Highway via Bhayandar (Rs. 500 to 700).

#### Full Address:

Global Pagoda, Global Vipassana Foundation, Near Essel World, Gorai Creek, Borivali (W), Mumbai 400 091.

Tel: [91] (22) 2845 2111, 2845 2261; Fax: 2845 2112;

Email: globalpagoda@hotmail.com

**Important note:** Those who wish to donate for the Saṅghadāna may contact Mrs. Madhuben Savla, VIA, Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri 422 403. Tel: [91] (02553) 244076, 244086; Fax: 244176; Email: info@giri.dhamma.org

#### AT WORKSHOP AT GLOBAL PAGODA

A workshop for assistant teachers will be organized at the Global Pagoda from 29 October afternoon to 2 November 2006 afternoon. Goenkaji will be present during the workshop and will address the ATs and answer their questions. For registration, contact: Mr. Dilip Deshpande, Mobile: 094222-65919; Email: info@giri.dhamma.org. A list of questions for Goenkaji to answer is being compiled. Those who wish to submit questions should send them to Dr. H. V. Ganla (7/1-2, Jail Road, Yerwada Pune-411 001, Email: hganla@yahoo.com).

#### BENEFICIAL GRATITUDE

A Vipassana meditator was filled with profound gratitude after learning about the infinite benevolence of Emperor Asoka, and he has decided to sponsor the construction of a grand Asoka Pillar which will be similar in shape and size to the original Pillar at Sarnath and will be erected near the Global Pagoda. The *Dhammacakkappavattana* wheel will also be erected near the Asoka Pillar. This great Dhamma volition of gratitude will be accomplished at a cost of Rs. 7-8 lakhs.

#### PALI DEPARTMENT AT PUNE UNIVERSITY

The University of Pune has established an independent Department of Pali this year, which will offer certificate, diploma, degree, M.Phil and PhD courses. So far, Pali being taught under the umbrella of the Department of Sanskrit and Prakrit Languages. For more information admission to Pali courses, contact: Dr. Mahesh Deokar, Professor and Head, Department of Pali, University of Pune.

**NOTE:** Vipassana Newsletter subscribers whose mailing address has changed should send both their old and new addresses to the Patrika Section, VRI, Dhamma Giri 422 403. Please mention the computer code number printed above the subscriber name in the address label in all correspondence about non-receipt of Newsletters, change in address, receipt of extra copies, change in language etc.

#### GOENKAJI'S DISCOURSES ON TELEVISION

**Aastha TV channel:** Daily from 9:40 to 10 am (Goenkaji's Sri Lanka tour). **Hungama TV channel:** Hindi discourses telecast daily from 4.30 to 6.00 am (IST). **Zee TV:** Daily, 4:30 am (IST). **USA: Aastha TV** will be telecasting Goenkaji's discourses at 6 pm EST (Monday to Friday) on the WORLDDIRECT platform of DIRECTV on channel no. 2005.

## CHILDREN'S COURSES IN MUMBAI

To serve children's courses in Mumbai, call 98200-22990.

Date	Venue	Age	Registration
15 Oct	Ghatkopar	10-12 years	12 & 13 Oct
22 Oct	JNPT	10-12 years	19 & 20 Oct
27 to 29 Oct (Residential)	JNPT	13-16 years	20 to 22 Oct
5 Nov	South Mumbai	13-16 years	4 & 5 Nov
12 Nov	Matunga	10-12 years	9 & 10 Nov
12 Nov	Ulhasnagar	10-12 years	9 & 10 Nov
12 Nov	JNPT	10-12 years	9 & 10 Nov
19 Nov	Ghatkopar	13-16 years	16 & 17 Aug
3 Dec	South Mumbai	10-12 years	30-11 & 1-12
10 Dec	Ulhasnagar	13-16 years	7 & 8 Dec
10 Dec	Andheri	10-12 years	7 & 8 Dec
17 Dec	Ghatkopar	10-12 years	14 & 15 Dec
24 Dec	JNPT	13-16 years	21 & 22 Dec

**Course Timing:** 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. **Registration:** 11 am to 1 pm.

**Course Venues:** **Ghatkopar:** SNTD School, New Building, Cama Lane, Ghatkopar West, opp Vidyut Society, Mumbai 400086, Tel: 25101096, 25162505. **JNPT:** Trainee Hostel Bldg, Sector 3, Sheva Taluka, Uran, Navi Mumbai. 98923-87145, 98218-08488, 2747-2554. **Matunga:** Amulakh Amirchand High School, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, New SNTD College, King's Circle, Matunga (CR), Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505. **Ulhasnagar:** Guru Nanak High School, Kurla Camp, Ulhasnagar-4. Tel: (0251) 252-2693. **South Mumbai:** Times of India Bldg., Opp CST station. Tel: 2308-1622 NB Please \*bring cushion, \*register on the specified phone numbers, \*inform in advance if unable to attend after registration, \*arrive on time for the course.

## NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

**Ācaryas:**

Dr. Daniel Mayer, USA

To serve Dhamma Santi, Brazil

**Senior Assistant Teachers:**

1. Mr. Tikiri Bandara Wijesinghe, Sri Lanka

2. Mr. Lama Hewage Chandrasena, Sri Lanka

## NEW APPOINTMENTS

**Assistant Teachers:**

1. Mr. Samir Patel, U.K.

2. Ms. Sieglinde Drabczynski, Germany

## VIPASSANA WEBSITES

**Vipassana introduction:** [www.dhamma.org](http://www.dhamma.org) - Contains information about Goenkaji, Vipassana centres worldwide, Code of Discipline, Application Form for ten-day courses, etc.

**Dhamma Giri:** [www.vri.dhamma.org](http://www.vri.dhamma.org) - Contains information about Indian Vipassana centres and schedule of courses, etc.

**Vipassana (old students only):** <[www.dhamma.org/os](http://www.dhamma.org/os)> - Contains information for old students of Vipassana including International Vipassana Newsletters and reference material. (username: oldstudent; password: behappy)

**Pali Tipiṭaka Website:** [www.tipitaka.org](http://www.tipitaka.org) - Contains the Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka in Roman script with commentaries, sub-commentaries and related Pali texts.

## IN MEMORIAM

Mr. Narayan Chandra Biswas, Senior Assistant Teacher from Thane, India passed away peacefully on 23 September, 2006. He served Dhamma selflessly for many years.

May he be happy, peaceful and liberated!

## DHAMMA DOHAS

*Mere sukha meṇ sānti meṇ, bhāga sabhī kā hoyā;  
Isa maṅgalamaya dharama kā, lābha sabhī ko hoyā.*

May my happiness and peace be shared by one and all;  
May this munificent Dhamma benefit one and all.

*Isa dukhiyāre jagata meṇ sukhiyā dikhe na koyā;  
Suddha dharama jaga meṇ jage, jana jana sukhiyā hoyā.*

In this wretched world I see no one who is happy.  
May pure Dhamma arise in the world,  
bringing happiness to all.

*With much metta,  
A Vipassana meditator*

*Suddha dharama isa jagata meṇ, puna pratiṣṭhita hoyā;  
Jana jana kā hove bhalā, jana jana maṅgala hoyā.*

May the pure Dhamma be established again in the world;  
Bringing welfare to many, bringing happiness to many.

*Jaga meṇ bahatī bhī rabe, Dharama Gaṅga kī dhāra;  
Jana jana kā hove bhalā, jana jana kā upakāra.*

May the Ganges of the Dhamma keep flowing in the world;  
For the happiness of all, for the benefit of all.

*With best compliments from*

**MOTILAL BANARSIDASS**

41 U.A. Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 110 007

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