

Vipassana Newsletter

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

Vol. 16, No. 12: 4 December 2006

WORDS OF DHAMMA

*Jayaṃ veraṃ pasavati,
dukkhaṃ seti parājito;
upasanto sukhaṃ seti,
hitvā jayaparājayaṃ.*

Victory begets hatred,
The defeated live in misery;
Happily the peaceful live,
Giving up victory and defeat.

–Dhammapada 201

The Purpose of Dhamma Service

(The following is excerpted and adapted from a talk given by Goenkaji to Dhamma servers at Dhamma Giri in June 1986 and published by VRI in 'For the Benefit of Many'.)

What is the best way to serve? Without knowing this, servers cannot help others or themselves; instead they may even do harm. However noble the Dhamma mission, there can be no true benefit in helping to fulfil it if the volition of the Dhamma server is not sound. The service will not be beneficial if it is given to inflate the server's ego, or to obtain something in return—even if only words of praise or appreciation.

When you give service see that you meditate at least three times a day for one hour each, to keep yourself fit to give service. If you find your mind is agitated or full of negativity and it cannot work properly, then you had better stop serving and join the course. First help yourself! Understand, unless you have helped and strengthened yourself in Dhamma, you can't help others. A lame person cannot support another lame person; a blind person cannot guide another blind person. Strengthen yourself so that you can give wholesome service.

Every action of yours is important because the students examine the actions of the teacher, the management and the Dhamma servers, and if they find these people are short-tempered, they will be discouraged. But if they find the teacher, management and the servers are peaceful, smiling, helpful, and full of love, without a trace of ill will, they will certainly be encouraged to walk diligently on the path.

Therefore, understand that you have a great responsibility. Every action of yours on this Dhamma land should be such that you generate devotion and confidence towards Dhamma in the mind of the newcomers, and you help to strengthen devotion and confidence in the minds of the old students.

Just as you expect a new student to observe the precepts and the discipline of the course, in the same way see that you yourself observe the discipline and silence as much as possible. Say only what is essential. Speak

politely, lovingly, truthfully, helpfully. You have to observe all the Five Precepts while you are giving Dhamma service. If you break any precept you will harm the atmosphere of the centre and harm others.

A Dhamma server is not a jailer but a servant, a Dhamma servant. The students are not prisoners. Of course the rules and discipline must be observed, but if a student is found breaking them, it does not mean the Dhamma server should take action against this person with the mentality of a jailer towards a convict. No, there must be sympathy.

If somebody has broken a rule, it shows that this person is either ignorant or highly agitated. A good Dhamma server will generate a feeling of sympathy and think, "This person is suffering; how can I help him come out of suffering?" This cannot be done by punishment or using hard words full of anger and hatred—that would be like throwing fire on somebody already burning. This person requires soothing words of sympathy, love and compassion.

At times, you might have to use strong words but see that they are not hurtful, filled with ill will. If by mistake you have spoken wrongly, see how quickly you realize this and develop love and compassion towards the same student. Seek an opportunity to meet this person and smilingly speak a few words of love and compassion. If this person was hurt by your wrong action, the bad effect will be washed away and the student will start working once again with enthusiasm.

Understand that even though you are a server, you are always a student.

Therefore never try to play the role of the teacher. If a student approaches you with any difficulty pertaining to the meditation, don't be enthusiastic to give advice on the technique to the student. In a humble way take the person to the teacher and let the teacher answer questions pertaining to the technique.

While serving you can give suggestions, but don't expect that these suggestions will be accepted by the manager or by the teacher. Don't inflate your ego or you will start to harm

yourself. If you feel agitated because your suggestions have not been accepted, you are not learning Dhamma. You are here to serve, not to dominate others.

Do not expect anything in return for your service. When you insist that your suggestions should be accepted, you are expecting something. Keep understanding: "I am here to serve, that is all. I am learning how to serve without expecting anything in return; I am serving with only one volition: to see that more and more people benefit. May I be a good example to them; this will help them and will help me also."

Understand that while serving, you are learning how to apply Dhamma in day-to-day life. After all, Dhamma is not an escape from daily responsibilities. By learning to act according to the Dhamma in dealing with the students and situations here in the little world of a meditation course or centre, you train yourself to act in the same way in the world outside.

Despite the unwanted behaviour of another person, you practise trying to keep the balance of your mind, and to generate love and compassion in response. This is the lesson you are trying to master here. You are a student as much as those who are sitting the course.

May all of you who give Dhamma service become strengthened in Dhamma. May you learn to develop your goodwill, love and compassion for others. May all of you progress in Dhamma to enjoy real peace, real harmony, real happiness.

Bhavatu sabba maṅgalaṃ—May all beings be happy!

NEW LONG COURSE CENTER FOR EUROPE

An important new project is now under way in Europe: construction of the first long course center in the West. "Dhamma is like an ocean," says Goenkaji. "As you move further it becomes deeper and deeper." Every Vipassana course is an opportunity to go deeply, no matter how many days it lasts.

But for meditators well established in the practice, a long course enables them to work more seriously and understand Vipassana at greater depth. This is why a long course was organized within months of the opening of Goenkaji's first center, *Dhamma Giri*, in 1976. While that was a valuable experience, it was soon realized that students need to be carefully selected to ensure that they can benefit from a long course; and they also need accommodation and meditation facilities allowing them to live and work in seclusion.

Over the years, successive building projects created large numbers of private rooms and meditation cells at *Dhamma Giri*, and many courses of 30 days and longer were held.

Still, in 2000, Goenkaji decided that a separate center should be established next to *Dhamma Giri*, to be used exclusively for long courses. This is how *Dhamma Tapovana* came into being. Since then, this center has hosted many long courses for people from around the world. Those who come to *Dhamma Tapovana*

have learned how valuable it is to meditate in such a calm and tranquil atmosphere, with such superb facilities.

Hundreds of people come to *Dhamma Tapovana* every year. However, for many meditators, such a journey is impossible for medical, financial or other reasons. To serve them, long courses have been organized at centers in Western countries for many years, including in the U.K., France, Spain, and the United States. These are wonderful opportunities for local meditators.

However, they create certain strains: they may cut into the scheduling of ten-day courses and they require a considerable investment in facilities. So Goenkaji has encouraged meditators in Europe to develop a single site for long courses. This would allow the different centers to fulfill their role of offering ten-day courses without interruption and it would be a more economical way of providing the facilities and environment for long courses. It could also be used for special events such as executive courses.

In 2004, all European centers were asked to investigate the feasibility of turning their site into a long course center or building such a facility next to the existing one. At a meeting in April 2006, European assistant teachers reached a consensus in favor of developing a facility in Germany beside the existing center of *Dhamma Dvāra*. This is an excellent choice of location for a long course center because of its quiet environment, central location, cheaper building costs and strong support from the local trust and center.

The center will be a project with European-wide involvement. The initial planning is now quite well advanced and outline plans have been drawn up and approved by Goenkaji.

The aim is to provide facilities initially for 50 students, expanding later to 100. The layout of the site meets the needs economically and efficiently by sharing certain facilities with *Dhamma Dvāra*, for example, the kitchen. Initially the center will be supported by donations from students and loans, and also contributions from established centers in Europe. Ultimately, the facility will be self supported through donations from long-course students.

The European Long-Course Center Forum has been set up to facilitate the development of this center. Old students interested in participating in this project may contact: elcc-info@eu.region.dhamma.org Website: www.eu.region.dhamma.org/os (username: oldstudent; password: behappy)

NEW VIPASSANA CENTRE IN IRAN

The course site in Iran, which had been rented for courses for the past two years, was purchased by the Iranian Trust in July 2006. Goenkaji has named the new center, *Dhamma Iran*.

Dhamma Iran is located in Mehrshahr, 40 km. outside Tehran, easily accessible by bus and subway. It has nine rooms and can accommodate approximately 36 students in each course. The number of applicants is usually quite high and *Dhamma Iran* is normally filled to capacity for both men's and women's courses. The purchase was made possible mainly by donations and loans from Iranian students in

Iran. The total amount borrowed is US \$150,000 of which \$40,000 carries a 20% interest rate.

The first introductory talk in Iran on Vipassana meditation was given in 1994. In the following three years, a number of Iranian students came to *Dhamma Giri* in India to take courses in Vipassana. In 1998, a group of Iranian meditators, including an assistant teacher appointed by Goenkaji, met in Tehran to begin the planning for local courses in Iran.

In August 1999, the first non-center Vipassana course was held in Iran. Another five courses were organized, in and around Tehran, in the same year. These single-gender courses alternated between male and female participants. Prior to 2004, 35 non-center courses were organized before moving to what would become the permanent Vipassana Meditation Center in Iran. Since then, 42 ten-day courses have been held at this site. Additionally, there have been three Satipaṭṭhāna courses, and many one-day, three-day, and children's courses. Mostly, courses have been single-gender.

Children's courses have received warm appreciation from both parents and children; more than 40 one-day courses have been organized for children at the site so far. The spiritual inclination of the Iranian people has prepared them to welcome the Dhamma warmly, in large numbers. The positive effect of Vipassana meditation on individual meditators and their relationships with family and society, as well as the joy and happiness they get from applying it in their daily lives, have attracted an increasing number of Iranians to the courses. So the number of applicants increases after each course.

Vipassana began in Iran in 1999, with 14 participants in the first course. Now, in 2006, continuous courses of 36 students are filled to capacity. Regular group sittings are held in Tehran as well as other cities such as Shiraz and Kerman. Six books published by the Vipassana Research Institute have been translated into Farsi and made available in Iran. These include: *The Art of Living, Discourse Summaries, The Gracious Flow of Dhamma, Vipassana Health and Addiction, Healing the Healer, and Come People of the World*. Additionally, articles about Vipassana have been published in some leading Farsi newspapers.

In Iran, Vipassana has expanded primarily through word of mouth, but there is still much work to do to inform people about Vipassana, which will help them to live happier lives and will complement and enhance their traditional moral values. For more information on the new center in Iran, contact: trust@ir.dhamma.org or info@ir.dhamma.org. In North America, contact: mersedeh.sabbagh@gmail.com.

PALI-ENGLISH COURSES AT VRI

VRI will be conducting an eight-month residential course in basic Pali-English from March 2007 to 31 October 2007.

Vipassana meditators who have completed five 10-day courses and one *Satipatthana* course, are observing five precepts and maintaining 2 hours of daily practice for the last two years and are fully committed to this tradition are eligible for admission. Local area Teacher's

recommendation is essential. The last date for application is 31 December 2006.

VRI also plans to conduct an advanced nine-month Pali course from February to 31 October 2008. Eligibility: Basic Pali course or equivalent.

Application forms are available at VRI, *Dhamma Giri*, Igatpuri. Website: www.vri.dhamma.org Contact: Dr. (Mrs.) Sharda Sanghvi, Email: s_sanghvi@hotmail.com

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: *Urja*,** 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
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
7 Jan	South Mumbai	13-16 years	4 & 5 Jan
14 Jan	Ulhasnagar	10-12 years	11 & 12 Jan
21 Jan	Ghatkopar	13-16 years	18 & 21 Jan
21 Jan	JNPT	10-12 years	18 & 21 Jan
28 Jan	Matunga	10-12 years	26 & 27 Jan

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

Course Venues: **Andheri (W):** Dada Saheb Gaikwad Sansthan, Babasaheb Ambedkar Marg, RTO Corner, Four Bungalows. Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505. **Ghatkopar (W):** SNTD School, New Building, Cama Lane, Opp Vidyut Society. Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505. **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. **South Mumbai:** Times of India Bldg., Opp CST station. Tel: 2308-1622. **Ulhasnagar:** Guru Nanak High School, Kurla Camp, Ulhasnagar-4. Tel: (0251) 252-2693.

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.

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VIPASSANA WEBSITES

Vipassana introduction: 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 - Contains information about Vipassana Research Institute, Vipassana Newsletter and Patrika, Indian Vipassana centres, schedule of courses, etc.

Pali Tipiṭaka website: www.tipitaka.org - Contains the *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka* in Roman script with commentaries.

Global Pagoda website: www.globalpagoda.org - Contains updated information including facility for online donation.

Prison course website: www.prison.dhamma.org

Executive course website: www.executive.dhamma.org

IN MEMORIAM

Mr. Mohanlal Kela, Senior Assistant Teacher of Vipassana from Indore, passed away peacefully in Mumbai on 18 October 2006. He played a major role in the spread of Dhamma in Indore and also conducted many Vipassana courses elsewhere.

May he be happy, peaceful and liberated.

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NEW APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Teachers:

1. Dr. Birendra Bisht, *Uttaranchal*
2. Mr. Himatlal Joshi, *Gandhidham, Kutch*
3. Mrs. Pushalata Kolte, *Nagpur*
4. Mrs. Kanchan Leal, *Igatpuri*
5. Mrs. Uma Mundhada, *Amravati*
6. & 7. Mr. Gregory & Mrs. Patricia Calhoun, *USA*
8. Ms. Anita Comelo, *USA*
9. Mr. Alan Xia, *USA*
10. Mr. Alan Nicholson, *Canada*

Children's Course Teachers:

1. & 2. Mr. Parminder Singh & Mrs. Nirmal Kaur Gill, *Punjab*
3. Mrs. A. M. B. Chandrawatthie Menike, *Sri Lanka*
4. Mrs. Tikiri Bandage Sunethra Kumari Tilakratna, *Sri Lanka*
5. [Mrs. Pan, Lingna, Taiwan](#)
6. [Ms. Hu, Yiwen, Taiwan](#)
7. Ms. Veerle Offerhaus, *Belgium*
8. Mr. Grant Harper, *Australia*
9. Mr. Bjarni Wark, *Australia*
10. Mrs. Paula Cauduro, *Australia*

WEB VERSIONS OF THE VIPASSANA NEWSLETTER

Vipassana Newsletter and Patrika can be downloaded from:

<http://www.vri.dhamma.org/NewslettersHindi/index.html>

<http://www.vri.dhamma.org/newsletters/index.html>

DHAMMA DOHAS

*Dukhiyāre dukhamukta hoñ, bhaya tyāgen
bhayabhīta;
Baira choḍa kara loga saba, karen paraspara pīta.*

May the wretched be freed of suffering,
May the fearful be rid of fear;
May all people forsake enmity; may they love each other.

*Dveṣa aura durabhāva kā, rahe na nāma nisāna;
Sneha aura sadabhāva se, bhara leñ tana mana
prāṇa.*

Of hatred and ill will, may not a trace remain;
May love and good will fill body, mind and life.

*With much metta,
A Vipassana meditator*

*Dūra rahe durabhāvanā, dveṣa hoñya saba dūra;
Niramala niramala citta meñ, pyāra bhare bharapūra.*

May ill will be far away, may all aversion be dispelled;
May the pure and stainless heart brim over with love.

*Jyoñ ikalaute pūta para, umaḍe māñ kā pyāra;
Tyoñ pyārā lagaṭā rahe, hameñ sakala sañsāra.*

As a mother overflows with love for her only son;
May we keep feeling love for all the universe.

With best compliments from

MOTILAL BANARSIDASS

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Pune, Tel: 24486190; Bangalore, Tel: 26542591;
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