

Vipassana Newsletter

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

Vol. 15, No. 8: 19 August 2005
Published every month

Vipassana Research Institute
Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri-422 403, Maharashtra

WORDS OF DHAMMA

*Tapo ca brahmacariyañca,
ariyasaccāna-dassanam;
nibbānasacchikiriyā ca,
etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ.*

Ardent practice, a life of purity,
Witnessing the Noble Truths,
Experiencing *nibbāna*—
This is the highest blessing.

—*Khuddaka pāṭha 5.11, Maṅgala Sutta*

The Global Pagoda : Lighting a Beacon to the World

William Hart

To mark the centenary of the birth of Sayagyi U Ba Khin, an extraordinary project is taking shape in Mumbai. There, in the suburbs of India's most modern city, a crossroads of East and West, the foundations have been laid for a unique monument: the Global Vipassana Pagoda.

For ages, graceful pagodas have dotted the landscape of Myanmar. Their soaring spires have represented humanity's aspirations to the highest spiritual goals. By their very form they have served as visible reminders of the path of liberation, the teaching of the Buddha. The most famous and revered of Myanmar's pagodas is the world-renowned Shwedagon in the capital city of Yangon. It dominates the city skyline, beckoning to people from afar; and it has been the model for countless other pagodas, including those built atop the meditation cell complexes at Vipassana meditation centers.

Each pagoda honors the past: the matchless Teacher who showed the world the way to enlightenment. At the same time a pagoda is a beacon guiding us toward the future of freedom from misery through the practice of Vipassana meditation.

The world needs such a beacon today. Although tens of thousands of people have learned Vipassana in the last three decades, many more remain unaware of the message of the Buddha. And in India, that message is still misunderstood: there people are taught to honor the Buddha as a god but to reject his teaching as a heresy.

The Global Vipassana Pagoda is designed to break through this shell of ignorance. Towering over 100 meters into the sky, it will attract visitors from India and abroad; and in a gallery with compelling displays,

it will present the truth about India's greatest son—and the world's greatest benefactor. Indians in large numbers will have the opportunity to learn about the life and universal teaching of the Buddha; they will rediscover the most precious part of their national heritage. As for the millions of people from other countries who pass through Mumbai each year, many will be drawn to the Global Pagoda; and when they return to their homelands they will carry an interest in Vipassana and perhaps the wish to join a course. The Pagoda thus will inform and inspire multitudes.

But a Vipassana Pagoda must do more than that; it must provide an opportunity to take steps on the path to Enlightenment. And so the structure will contain a hall in which up to 8000 people can sit together and practice Vipassana meditation. This is in fact its main purpose. Old students will gather in the hall on Sundays and holidays for group sittings or one-day courses; and by their meditation together, they will create a powerful Dhamma atmosphere.

2500 years ago, Myanmar received the Teaching of the Buddha from India, and through the centuries it preserved Vipassana, the gem of Dhamma, in its pristine purity. But according to an ancient prophecy, after 2,500 years the Dhamma would return from Myanmar to India and would spread from there around the world.

Earlier, this century, Sayagyi saw that the time had come for the prophecy to be fulfilled, for Myanmar to repay its debt of gratitude to India. Although he himself could not go to India during his lifetime to teach Dhamma, he trained our teacher, Goenkaji, to do this as his representative. Because of him, the land of India again has the jewel of Vipassana; and we,



Construction of the dome of the Global Pagoda, as of June 2005

Goenkaji's students, have learned the technique of liberation.

As Goenkaji often says, "Without Myanmar there would have been no U Ba Khin, without U Ba Khin there would have been no Goenka, and there would have been no gift of Dhamma to students around the world." In the very first words of every course he declares his gratitude to his teacher; and before teaching Anapana and Vipassana, he chants:

*Guruvara terī aurase,
deūn Dharama kā dāna;
Guruvara terā pratinidhi,
devūn Dharama kā dāna.*

Revered Teacher, on your behalf,
May I give the gift of Dhamma;
Revered Teacher, as your representative,
May I give the gift of Dhamma.

Goenkaji attributes all the enormous successes of the last 35 years to U Ba Khin. Each student of Vipassana will naturally feel gratitude to Sayagyi U Ba Khin and Myanmar for the gift of Dhamma, and gratitude for the opportunity to develop our *pāramīs* by helping in U Ba Khin's great mission.

Now, we have an opportunity to show our gratitude to U Ba Khin. We do so first of all by practicing what he taught, establishing ourselves in Vipassana. And having done so, we can work to fulfill his mission by helping the teaching to spread still more widely, to millions of suffering people around the world.

In every part of the globe, dedicated meditators are patiently working to help others learn Vipassana. However humble the efforts of these Dhamma servers, the fruit yielded will be wonderful because of the purity of volition behind the efforts. And crowning all of these Dhamma efforts will be the Global Pagoda. It will be visible proof of the re-awakening of the Buddha's teachings in India, and the acceptance of the teachings around the world. The Global Pagoda will be an expression of gratitude to Myanmar, the country that preserved Vipassana, the practical essence of the Buddha's Teaching. It will embody as well our gratitude to U Ba Khin, who enabled each of us today to find the path to liberation.

All Vipassana meditators are welcome to contribute to the Global Pagoda Project, even in a small way; and by thus expressing their gratitude to Sayagyi U Ba Khin, to Myanmar and to the Teaching, they will share in the great merits of the project.

The Global Pagoda will be a beacon to the world, drawing large numbers of people everywhere to the incomparable teaching of Vipassana. This is the message carved in the stones of the Global Pagoda, message that speaks to people of any nationality, of any religion or no religion. It is a message of hope, of liberation, of peace.

The Global Pagoda brings this message to the people of the world. For all of us, it is a summons in stone. Start climbing! 🙏



The Global Pagoda



*Construction of Global Pagoda, as of June, 2005.
The completed small Pagoda (the size of Dhamma Giri Pagoda) is on top*

Progress in Pagoda

- ⇒ After completing the work for laying the massive foundation and the first phase of construction, all efforts are being made to complete the dome of the Global Pagoda by May or June 2006. Until this period, approximately Rs 75 lakhs to Rs 100 lakhs (US \$ 220,000) are required each month for construction.
- ⇒ Out of 94 layers to be completed in building the dome, 44 layers have been completed so far. As the height of the dome increases, fewer stones are required in each layer. The total height of the Pagoda will reach 315 feet.
- ⇒ Besides work on the Global Pagoda, necessary RCC work for completing the exhibition gallery is in progress. Simultaneously, ventilation and acoustic consultants are working on details to complete this work, along with construction of dome of the main Pagoda.

A Stone from each Vipassana Meditator, for the Global Pagoda

The Global Pagoda presents a rare opportunity for each Vipassana meditator to earn merits by participating in a historic project that will serve as a beacon of Dhamma for centuries to come. It is Acharya Goenkaji's wish that every meditator participates in this Dhamma project. The amount donated is not important - the volition to contribute is. The Global Pagoda is being built in stone. You can now choose to make a donation for any number of stones, even one stone. Every meditator in the family can feel joyful that he or she has donated for this most beneficial Dhamma project.

Cost of one Serration stone is Rs 5,000; cost of one Dome stone is Rs 3,500; cost of one Column stone is Rs 1,000; cost of one Support stone is Rs 100.

Cheques/drafts drawn in favour of "Global Vipassana Foundation" payable at Mumbai, may be mailed to The Treasurer, Global Vipassana Foundation, C/o Khimji Kunverji & Co., 52, Bombay Mutual Building, Sir P. M. Road, Mumbai 400 001. Phone: 91-22-22662550 ; Email: kamlesh@khimjikunverji.com. All donations qualify under Section 80 G of the Income Tax Act in India. Foreign donors should contact the Treasurer for clarification on tax concessions in their respective countries.

Online donations accepted at www.globalpagoda.org

One-day courses (for old students only) every Sunday at the Global Pagoda (Dhamma Pattana) Goraigoan, Mumbai. 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For gate pass to visit Pagoda, please call: Tel: (022) 2845111, 2845-2261 Tel/Fax: 2845-2112. Email: globalpagoda@hotmail.com; web: www.globalpagoda.org

SIDDHARTH HOSPITAL VIPASSANA FACILITY

A seminar was organized on 22 July 2005 to mark the third anniversary of the Vipassana Counselling & Research Centre of the Department of Psychological Medicine at Siddharth Municipal General Hospital (SMGH) in Mumbai. This hospital is part of the Brihan-Mumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).

BMC staff members (many with their family members) and citizens from Goregaon and nearby suburban areas, have been making use of the facilities. The BMC recognizes Vipassana as a non-sectarian and scientific technique that enables one to live a happy and harmonious life. Accordingly, leave facility has been provided to its employees to take ten-day Vipassana courses, through an official circular [AMC (WS) Circular No. MPM / 9090 of 9th January 1998]. Hundreds of BMC personnel and many from Siddharth Hospital, have since benefited from this staff-welfare measure.

The SMGH is the first Public Health Institution in India that has taken such a pioneering step to combine both contemporary psychological treatment methods with classical and proven mental health promoting measures like Vipassana meditation.

CHILDREN'S COURSES IN MUMBAI

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

Course Venues: **Andheri:** Dada Saheb Gaikwad Sansthan, Babasaheb Ambedkar Marg, RTO Corner, Four Bungalows, Andheri (W), Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505. **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 23081622.

Ghatkopar: SNTD School, New Building, Cama Lane, Ghatkopar West, Opp. Vidyut Society, Mumbai 400086, Tel: 25101096, 25162505. (To serve children's courses in Mumbai, call 98200-22990.)

Date	Venue	Age	Registration
4 Sept	South Mumbai	13-16 years	1 & 2 Sept
4 Sept	Matunga	13-16 years	1st & 2nd Sept
11 Sept	Andheri	13-16 years	8 & 9 Sept
11 Sept	Ulhasnagar	10-12 years	8 & 9 Sept
18 Sept	Ghatkopar	10-12 years	15 & 16 Sept
18 Sept	Mulund	13-16 years	15 & 16 Sept

NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

Bhikkhuni Ācharyā:

Bhikkhuni Yin Kit Sik (Sister Jessie), *Canada*

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Teachers:

1. & 2. Mr. Gulabrao & Mrs. Mangala Mali, *Beed*

3. Ms. Joelle Caschera, *France*

Children Course Teachers:

1. Mrs. Sonal Adhia, *New Mumbai* 2. Dr. (Ms.) Preeti Bakre, *Goa*

3. Mr. Sudhakar Bawiskar, *Bhopal* 4. Ms. Parul Gada, *Mumbai*

5. Mr. Lalendra Hoomane, *Bhopal* 6. Ms. Jayabala Sanghvi, *Mumbai*

IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Parvati Ranchod, Assistant Teacher of Vipassana, passed away peacefully on 16 July 2005. She served the Dhamma selflessly and lived an exemplary life full of Dhamma. May she be happy, peaceful and liberated!

DHAMMA DOHAS

*Mana bandhana kā mūla hai, mana hī mukti upāya;
Vikṛta mana jakadā rahe, niravikāra khula jāya.*

Mind is the root of our bondage,
Mind is the means of our liberation;
A polluted mind remains shackled,
An unpolluted mind becomes freed.

*Mana cañcala mana capala hai, bhāga rahā saba ora;
Sānsa ḍora se bāndha kara, roka rākha ika ṭhora.*

The mind is volatile and flighty,
Wandering in every direction;
Bind it with a chain of breaths;
Confine it to one point.

*With much metta,
A Vipassana meditator*

*Jitanā burā na kara sake, duṣamana dveṣi doya;
Adhika burā nija mana kare, jaba yaha mailā hoyā.*

Neither enemy nor antagonist can harm you as much;
As can your own mind when it is defiled.

*Jitanā bhalā na kara sake, mān bāpu saba koya;
Adhika bhalā nija mana kare, jaba mana ujalā hoyā.*

Neither mother, father nor anyone can do you as much good;
As can your own mind when it is bright and clear.

With best compliments from

MOTILAL BANARSIDASS

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Kolkata, Tel: 22824872, Patna, Tel: 2671442; Varanasi, Tel: 2412331.

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LIFE SUBSCRIPTION: RS 500 (U.S. \$100 OUTSIDE INDIA) BY BANK DRAFT, PAYABLE AT IGATPURI IN FAVOUR OF VRI.

Edited and published by R. P. Yadav for VRI, Igatpuri 422 403 and printed at Akshar Chitra Press, 69B-Road, Satpur, Nashik 422 007.

19 August 2005

Posted at Igatpuri, Dist. Nashik

Posting Day: *Purnima* of every month

POSTAL CLAUSE NO. 232 REG. NO. 49916/90
LICENSED TO POST WITHOUT PREPAYMENT OF POSTAGE - LICENCE NUMBER - AR/NSK/WP-13
POSTAL REG. NO. AR/NSK 39/2003-2005

PRINTED MATTER

If undelivered, please return to:

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Dist. Nashik, Maharashtra, India.

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