

# Vipassana Newsletter

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

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

## WORDS OF DHAMMA

*Yogā ve jāyatī bhūri  
ayogā bhūrisaṅkhayo  
etaṃ dvedhāpathaṃ nātvā  
bhavāya vibhavāya ca  
tathāttānam niveseyya  
yathā bhūri pavaddhati.*

Indeed, from meditation, wisdom arises;  
Without meditation, wisdom wanes.  
Knowing this twofold path  
Of gain and loss,  
One should conduct oneself  
So that wisdom may increase.

—Dhammapada 282

## BE SELF-DEPENDENT!

S. N. Goenka

*(The following is adapted from the translation of a Hindi talk to old students by Goenkaji on 26 October 2003 at Jamunabai Narsi School, Mumbai on the occasion of the Hindu New Year. It was published in the December 2003 issue of Vipassana Patrika).*

You have all gathered here to take part in the New Year group sitting. Understand that it is the group sitting that is important and not the New Year. Every day, every moment is equally important. We have to give importance to every moment; we have to give importance to meditation. It is good that you have gathered in a group today. The Buddha has said, “*Samaggānam tapo sukho.*” There is great happiness in meditating together. After all, what is happiness? When suffering is removed, there is happiness. So we meditate to remove suffering.

What is the cause of suffering? Suffering is caused by your mental defilements. You spend the whole life seeking the cause of suffering outside and trying to get rid of this outside cause. By the practice of Vipassana, you realize that whatever the external cause, suffering arises within yourself. Why has suffering arisen? Because you have generated a mental defilement within. As soon as you generate a mental defilement, suffering arises and you strengthen the habit of generating defilements. Such situations keep arising repeatedly and you keep generating defilements and multiplying your misery. How can you free yourself from this misery?

It is not wrong to try to get rid of the apparent external cause of your suffering. But it is more important to get rid of the internal cause. The habit of generating defilements within because of one reason or another results in the habit of remaining miserable. You wish to

be free from suffering, and instead, you have developed the habit of reacting with craving and clinging to pleasant sensations and with aversion to unpleasant sensations. This habit pattern continues day and night. Even when you are in deep sleep and a sensation arises in the body—if it is unpleasant, you react with aversion; if it is pleasant, you react with craving. This continues all the time for 24 hours.

You learn to observe these sensations with awareness—whether pleasant, unpleasant or neutral—without generating any defilements. Enough is enough! You have been a slave to defilements for so many lives! And this slavery is continuing even now, in this life. You are very fortunate to have received Vipassana, the path of liberation, the way to free yourself from the habit of generating defilements. It would be foolish if you do not make proper use of it. Come out of this foolishness. If you understand Vipassana in its pristine purity, you won't make this mistake.

You yourselves have to fight the battle against these defilements; you have to defeat and eradicate them. You have to realize this without generating ego. Why should you generate ego? If your hands or your bodies become dirty, you immediately wash them. You do not generate ego that you have cleaned your hands and bodies. If they become dirty, it is your responsibility to clean them. Who else will clean them? Similarly, if the mind becomes defiled, it is your responsibility to clean it. There is no question of developing ego.

Every meditator should understand that he or she is wholly responsible for defiling the mind. No other external power or invisible entity has defiled your minds. Why would any invisible being defile the minds of people

and make them miserable? We keep generating impurities in our minds out of ignorance. Understanding this, do not allow new impurities to arise and eradicate the old ones so that you come out of suffering, out of bondage and progress on the path of liberation. This is the law of nature.

In ancient India, this law was called *ṛta*, the essence of Dhamma. If you defile your mind, you are bound to become miserable. If you remove these defilements, you are bound to become happy. This law of nature is immutable; no one can change it. If you plant a seed of suffering, the fruit will also be of suffering. If you plant a seed of happiness, the fruit will be of happiness. So simple, and yet we forget it. Vipassana was lost in India because this simple law was forgotten.

There were many reasons why it got lost. One reason was the belief that someone would bless us and liberate us. You may spend your whole life deceiving yourself. Why would someone bless only you and not others? Such a being is called all-powerful and all-compassionate. Either the one who liberates does not have the power to liberate everyone or he does not have compassion for all. You delude yourselves and forget Dhamma when you believe that someone else will liberate you because you have sung his praises, flattered him, glorified him, and worshipped him. What kind of liberator is this who takes delight in listening to praise and flattery!

Understand that it is your responsibility to remove your own defilements. Someone may do you the favour of compassionately showing the way. When people start realizing that they have to liberate themselves by moulding their lives according to the laws of nature—or the laws of God Almighty—they start to walk on the path of Dhamma, the path of liberation. But when people start realizing this, the priests feel threatened that their influence will decline. If people feel that they can liberate themselves, there will be no need for priests. So the priests spread this propaganda: “You are too weak, too impure to liberate yourself. Come to us, we will perform this rite or ritual or recite the sacred texts, which will wash away all your sins.”

It seems to be a very easy way compared to the strenuous effort of practising Vipassana and gaining mastery over the mind. “This effort is too much for us. These priests will do everything for us and we will be liberated. Someone will bless us.” You should be careful not to fall into this deceitful trap. Why is the whole world suffering? So many people pray, yet why is their suffering not removed? You have stopped understanding, and as a result, you have stopped improving yourselves.

You may believe that the world has been created by God Almighty and that he has made all these laws. If so, and if you want to please him, you must follow these laws and he will be pleased. Instead, you break his laws but sing his praises! Just like you break the laws of the state and send a bribe to the government officer to get your work done. You have brought your God to the same level as that of the corrupt government officer.

Why was this technique lost in India? It was lost because it went into the hands of the priests. This happened in all sects and not just in any one sect. The tradition of the Buddha was no exception and the priests of this tradition also started doing the same thing: “Come, we will perform this ritual, we will give *mettā* to you, we will liberate you from all your sins.”

Further, some of them said, “We don’t ask you to do any ritual. We don’t ask you for any offering. We will give you *mettā* for one hour and pull out your negativity.” Why will anyone work if it is possible to get rid of all sins by sitting in front of a teacher and receiving *mettā* for one hour? Such teachers are enemies of Dhamma.

Dhamma is Dhamma only if it makes us self-reliant. So it is the duty of every Vipassana teacher to teach people to become self-reliant. “*Attā hi attano nātho*” You are your own master and no one else. “*Attā hi attano gati*” You make your own future, both wholesome and unwholesome and also the state of full liberation beyond all conditioned states. If you understand this properly, no teacher will be able to harm you in any way. Then if any teacher says, “Sit in front of me for one hour, I will give *mettā* and suck out all your sins,” you will get up and walk away because you don’t want this kind of *mettā*.

A student may sit in front of the teacher with folded hands and plead, “O teacher! Please wash away my sins.” Today, such teachers may do it for the sake of the prestige and respect that they get from the students because they are sitting on the Dhamma seat. After one or two generations, such teachers will start asking for offerings. “We have removed all your defilements and you have not given us anything. Whatever you give will be of much merit, which will take you to heaven or to higher celestial planes.” This practice will start.

So I am giving all of you this warning now. Whether I am here or not, do not allow Dhamma to get corrupted. Every meditator should learn to stand on his own feet. The duty of every teacher is to teach people to become self-dependent and to inspire them to become liberated. “You have defiled your mind, you will have to remove these defilements yourself. We are showing you the path that we have received. If you walk on this path, you will get rid of your defilements.”

If this is followed, Dhamma will remain pure for centuries and lead to great benefit for all. But if there is priesthood—“I will liberate you or I will ask an invisible power to liberate you”—Dhamma will get corrupted just as it was corrupted in the past.

Therefore, those Vipassana teachers and students who are wise, must be alert. They must get rid of their ego and, with humility, they must preserve the Dhamma in its pristine purity for the benefit of more and more people. If everyone understands this and Dhamma spreads, it will lead to real happiness, real benefit. The path of liberation will be opened to all suffering humanity. Anyone who walks on the path will be benefited and the path will be preserved.

Otherwise, this path will gradually be lost if people develop the feeling: “Why should we exert ourselves if

someone else is going to liberate us? Why should we go to a ten-day meditation course where we have to maintain silence and we don't get any dinner? We won't go. This person will give us *mettā*, so we are certain to get liberated." A few foolish people will do this in the future.

But those Vipassana meditators who are wise will not encourage such foolishness and instead will feel: "We have received such a priceless jewel! It has benefited us so much! May more and more people get the same benefit! There are so many suffering people in the world. May they get the right path! May they also find the way to come out of their suffering by their own efforts!" This feeling is very beneficial.

If Dhamma is to be re-established, it has to be established in its pristine purity. May this sentiment arise that Dhamma should be established in its pure form for a long time!

Let us help to establish pure Dhamma to the best of our ability. May it result in great happiness and harmony. May all beings be peaceful, be happy, be liberated!

*Bhavatu sabba maṅgalaṃ!* ■

### GOENKAJI'S VISIT TO PHALTAN

For the last thirty-five years, Goenkaji has been travelling around India and the world to spread the Dhamma. Three years back, he undertook an extensive tour of South India and two years back he travelled for more than four months in the West.

He is eighty now. It is becoming more and more difficult for him to travel. Last year, when Vipassana meditators from Phaltan in Satara district of Maharashtra invited Goenkaji to give a talk in their town, it seemed almost impossible that he would accept.

However, their enthusiasm for Dhamma and efforts on the path of Dhamma made Goenkaji accept the invitation this year.

Phaltan is a small town in the heart of the "sugar belt" of Western Maharashtra. Many meditators from Phaltan have sat courses at the Vipassana centres in Pune. Non-centre courses are also being organized in Phaltan since three years.

Goenkaji's visit was scheduled on 29 February. A large contingent of Dhamma workers had come a day earlier from Pune to help in the preparation of the visit of Goenkaji.

More than six thousand people filled the open hall and lawns on the grounds of the Anant Mangal Karyalaya on the morning of 29<sup>th</sup> February to listen to Goenkaji's discourse. Sanjeev Raje Nimbalkar—a Vipassana meditator, educationalist, banker and businessman—requested Goenkaji to give a Dhamma talk. The audience listened in rapt attention as Goenkaji explained the essence of pure Dhamma.

Goenkaji explained that Dhamma is the universal remedy for the universal malady of suffering. He also clarified the meaning of Sanatana Dharma. Sanatana means eternal or ancient. A law that is applicable to all at all times. It was operative in the ancient past and it is operative today. It does not make any difference whether one is Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Muslim or Christian—if one generates defilements in the mind, one becomes miserable.

Goenkaji cautioned the audience that mere intellectual understanding of Dhamma is not enough: one must put it into practice. He then went on to explain what is taught in a Vipassana course. The talk was followed by a lively question and answer session.

In the afternoon, Goenkaji went to Govind Milk, a milk industry that sends its employees for Vipassana courses on job. More than 160 employees of Govind Milk have taken Vipassana courses. About a thousand meditators had gathered in three different halls for the group meditation. Many meditators had travelled from distant places to take advantage of the opportunity to listen to their teacher. After the group meditation, Goenkaji answered questions from the meditators and then returned to Mumbai.

### ONE-DAY CHILDREN'S COURSES IN MUMBAI

Date	Venue	Eligibility	Registration
25-4	Mulund	13-16 yrs	23 & 24-4
9-5	Ulhasnagar	13-16 yrs	6 & 7-5
9-5	Andheri	10-12 yrs	6 & 7-5
23-5	Mulund	10-12 yrs	20 & 21-5

**Course Timing:** 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. **Registration Timings:** 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. **Course Venues:** **Andheri:** Dada Saheb Gaikwad Sansthan, Babasaheb Ambedkar Marg, RTO Corner, Four Bungalows, Andheri (W), Phone: 2683-4820. **Mulund:** Mulund College of Commerce, Sarojini Naidu Road, Near Ration Office and Court, Mulund (W) Phone: 5598-3338. **Ulhasnagar:** Guru Nanak High School, Kurla Camp, Ulhasnagar-4. Phone: 252-2693. [NB \*Please bring cushion. \*Please register on the specified phone numbers. If you are unable to attend after registration, please inform in advance. \*Please arrive on time for the course.]

### DHAMMA CAKKA—SARNATH VIPASSANA CENTRE

It is a matter of great joy for all Vipassana meditators that construction work is progressing well at *Dhamma Cakka*, the Vipassana centre at Sarnath. After enlightenment, the Buddha gave his first discourse here, thereby setting in motion, the Wheel of Dhamma.

Construction of the Dhamma Hall and residences for male and female students has already started. It is expected that all facilities for the first residential course will be ready within six months. Vipassana meditators wishing to share in the merits of this noble project may contact: Satya Prakash, The Raymond Shop, Kambal Ghar Enterprises, C-27/277, B-1, Maldahiya, Varanasi-221002. Tel: 0542-2205418, 3112314. Fax: 2202285. Email: kambalghar@sancharnet.in Mobile: 94152-26862

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I, Ram Pratap Yadav, declare that the above-mentioned information is true to the best of my knowledge.

**Ram Pratap Yadav**  
Printer, Publisher and Editor

3 April 2004

VIPASSANA FOR TRAINEE OFFICERS

The Board of Governors of the Yeshwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration (YASHADA), Pune under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra has approved the proposal to include a ten-day Vipassana course as a compulsory part of the induction/foundation courses of senior officers such as IAS officers, Deputy Collectors and Tehsildars (D. O. No. DG/V-Courses/2004 dated 24<sup>th</sup> February 2004). These directly recruited officers undergo a month-long training course in management, which has been extended by ten days to enable them to participate in a ten-day Vipassana course.

About 20 Deputy Collectors participated in the ten-day course at *Dhamma Giri* from 10 to 21 March 2004 accompanied by an Associate Professor of YASHADA.

#### ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

##### Ācāryas:

Mrs. Usha Modak, *Pune*

*To serve Dhamma Sarovara (in addition to Goa, Konkan and Western Maharashtra including Dhammānanda, Dhamma Puṇṇa and Dhammālaya).*

#### NEW APPOINTMENTS

##### Assistant Teachers

1. Mr. K. Madhusudan Rao, *Khammam, A.P.*
2. Mr. N. Suryanarayana Murty, *West Godavari, A.P.*
3. Mr. Premanand Ootukuru, *Hyderabad*
4. Mr. Jagdish Prasad Dodia, *Pondicherry*
5. Mrs. B. Saraswathamma, *Bellary, Karnataka*
6. Mr. B. Raveendran, *Kochi, Kerala*
7. Mr. Chhaganbhai Parmar, *Surat*
8. Dr. (Mrs.) Geetha Kumari, *Mysore*
9. Mrs. Rupa Ratnayake, *Sri Lanka*
10. Ms. Marie-Christine Fromont, *France*
11. & 12. Mr. Gerald & Mrs. Mary Samide, *Canada*
13. & 14. Mr. Brett & Mrs. Maria Morris, *USA*
15. Ms. Bridget Riley, *USA*

##### Children's Course Teachers

1. Mr. Mallikarjunappa, *Bellary*
2. Mr. Padmanabha Acharya, *Udipi*
3. Mrs. Santosh Kohli, *Delhi*
4. Mrs. Sangeeta Kohli, *New Delhi*
5. Dr. M. R. Ravi, *New Delhi*
6. Ms. Helen Blum, *USA*
7. Ms. Elyena (Ellen) Louise Lundh, *Canada*
8. Mr. Stephane Barbier, *France*

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE

##### *Opportunity for Pali and Sanskrit scholars to work at VRI*

The Vipassana Research Institute was established at *Dhamma Giri* in 1985 for research in *pariyatti*. Its notable achievements include production of the *Chattha Saṅgāyana* CD-ROM and printing of the entire Pali Tipitaka in Devanagari script. VRI is also actively engaged in comparative research of various Indian scriptures and translation of the Pali scriptures into Hindi and other Indian languages.

VRI is looking for Pali scholars (having knowledge of Hindi) and for Sanskrit scholars (having knowledge of both Vedic and Panini Sanskrit). Suitable accommodation and remuneration is offered. For more details, write or email VRI.

#### NEW VIPASSANA CENTRE AT BANGALORE

Ten acres of land has been acquired for a new Vipassana centre in Alur Village, 25 kms from Bangalore city. City buses from Bangalore go right up to the gate of the centre every hour, making it very easy to reach the centre. The centre is located in a very tranquil area, with farmland on two sides and forestland on one side, the ideal setting for a meditation centre.

A temporary Dhamma hall for about one hundred meditators and a high compound wall has been built. The land already has more than a hundred trees, including mango and coconut trees. Electricity and abundant water are available at the site. Goenkaji has named the centre *Dhamma Paphulla* (Cheerfulness of Dhamma).

The first one-day course was organized on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2004 and the foundation stone was laid on this occasion. The next one-day course will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> May (Buddha Purnima). The local Vipassana trust plans to build all facilities for 100 meditators by March 2005, including Dhamma hall, single and double self-contained student accommodation units, office block, dining halls and kitchen, rooms for assistant teachers and Dhamma servers, etc.

For more details, please contact:  
Vipassana Centre city office, 185, 1st floor, 4th Cross, Lalbagh Road, Bangalore 560027. Tel: (080) 2222-4330, Fax: (080) 2227-5776. Email: silksb@vsnl.com

#### GOENKAJI'S VISIT TO NASHIK CENTRE

Goenkaji will be visiting *Dhamma Nāsikā*, Nashik Vipassana Centre on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2004. There will be group meditation from 5.30 to 6.30 p.m. followed by question-answer session. **Contact:** Tel: (0253) 2347908, 2312284, 98225-13244, 98225-48822.

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