

Vipassana Newsletter

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

Vol. 34, No. 08, 19 AUGUST, 2024.

A monthly publication of the Vipassana Research Institute

Website: www.vridhamma.org; International website: www.dhamma.org

For Online Patrika in various Languages, visit : <https://www.vridhamma.org/newsletters>

Words of Dhamma

Jātidhammo jarādhammo, byādhidhammo sahaṃ tadā;

Ajaraṃ amataṃ khemaṃ, pariyesissāmi nibbutiṃ.

—*Buddhavaṃsapāḷi, Sumedhapatthanākathā- 2/7*

– Being liable to birth, aging and disease I will seek the peace that is not aging, not dying, secure.

Renouncing Royal Comforts

(*Pukkusati*- Part 2 of 3)

King Bimbisāra sent his Dhamma letter to King Pukkusāti in a golden case adorned with gems, which he subsequently encased in ten expensive boxes, each one bigger than the other and sealed with the royal seal. Along with troops and a royal band dressed in white, he set this on an open seat adorned with royal white coverings atop an auspicious elephant and dispatched it to Takkasilā.

This priceless Dhamma jewel accompanied Bimbisāra to the edge of his dominion. He loaded containers with fresh water, sprayed water on the road, and spread sand over it. Additionally, he positioned auspicious arrangements of flowers and leaves on both sides of the pathway. Messengers were instructed to proceed to Takkasilā and deliver it to his friend, who was to open it in privacy.

Pukkusāti, while sending gifts to his friend Bimbisāra, included the instructions to open them in public so that the friendship between the two kings would leave a deep impression on people. But Bimbisāra had sent a message to open this gift in private. Bimbisāra knew that if his friend had merits from past births, then after reading this Dhamma message, he would consider renouncing his kingdom, and his family members and other influential people present might try to weaken his will. Therefore, he felt it was proper if he read it alone.

Upon its arrival at the border of the kingdom of Gandhāra after traversing hundreds of miles, Pukkusāti dutifully had the royal gift accepted with the utmost pomp and ceremony. King Pukkusāti personally went to receive it on the outskirts of the capital, Takkasilā, and he proceeded to walk in procession with it to the palace.

As per his friend's direction, he had this invaluable box taken to his private chambers in the palace, and putting a guard at the entrance, he opened the gift box. Breaking the royal insignia of Bimbisāra, he took out one box after the other till he reached the delicate and bejewelled golden box, from which he removed the long roll of the golden letter.

“My friend has sent this priceless gift of Dhamma, which sprouts only in the pure land of the Central Region. It is impossible to find it here.” Hence, with a melting heart

and a deep sense of reverence, he opened the golden letter and began to read it. “Let me see what my friend has to say!”

The first line was, *Idha tathāgato loke uppajjati*. Here in this world, a Tathāgata has been born. The king reflected, “Has a Buddha taken birth in this world? Have I really taken birth at the time of a Buddha?” This thought alone produced a great stream of joy. And further, *Itipi so bhagavā...* Reading the lines that depict the qualities of the Buddha caused such joy that every hair on his body stood up and his entire body tingled with excitement. He became lost in this joy for a moment and wasn't sure if he was seated or standing. For a while, he couldn't read any further.

When his emotional state subsided, he continued reading the next part, which contained a description of the characteristics of pure Dhamma: *Svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo...* While reading these lines, he again experienced a state of ecstasy. After some time, he became calm again. Continuing further, he read about the greatness of the Saṅgha: *Suppatipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho...* Again, he had the same experience.

The fourth part was a description of the practice of Anapana meditation. On reading it, he had the pleasant experience of a free flow of energy in his body. His mind became concentrated, and he reached a state of absorption (*jhāna*). He entered the first stage of concentration instantly because of the merits accumulated from previous lifetimes. He quickly advanced to the second and third stages, and finally to the fourth stage of absorption as well. At this deep level, there was no awareness of the outside world. He spent two weeks repeatedly experiencing the nectar of Dhamma in the fourth absorption state due to it being so special and fulfilling. Even though he hadn't yet attained the higher stages of Vipassana.

The guard remained alert at the door of the chamber. Apart from one personal attendant, no one else was permitted inside. For fifteen days, the king neither went to his queen's chambers nor attended public affairs; he did not go to the court nor to the armory. The community leaders started worrying as to what kind of gift had arrived that had

beguiled our king like this!

Impressed by the peaceful experience of the fourth absorption samādhi, King Pukkusāti, recalling King Bimbisāra's final remarks, thought, “A Buddha having arisen at this time is so fortunate for me. I should go learn Vipassana from him so that I might become free from suffering and make the most of my human birth. Perhaps I don't have much time left. I owe my friend a great deal for sending me such a beneficial message. I really ought to renounce my kingdom.”

Thus, he firmly resolved to renounce his kingdom and his home in order to be liberated by walking on the path enunciated by the Buddha and becoming an Arahant. With a knife in hand, he cut his hair and beard and asked his assistant to bring two rough pieces of cloth. One he wore on the lower part, and the other he wrapped around the upper part of his body. He also called for a begging bowl of clay and a wooden stick. Holding these in hand, he came down from the palace.

The couriers and the family members did not recognize him thinking that a hermit must be returning after having met the king. However, when his personal assistant apprised the situation, pandemonium broke out in the queens' quarters and the regal court. The news spread throughout the kingdom like wildfire. Hearing that their beloved king who cared for them like his own children had now renounced the kingdom made them sad, as if lightning had struck them. Weeping and wailing the couriers, ministers and the royal family followed Pukkusāti, now a recluse. They wept saying, “We are orphaned without you, sir.” Pukkusāti assuaged their anxieties by saying, “Here there are many suitable and capable persons who, in my absence will be able to fulfill the responsibility of running the kingdom most ably.”

The ministers tried to dissuade him, saying, “Sir, the kings of the central region are very crafty. Their wily political cunning is full of traitorous ways. Who knows whether the Buddha has truly arisen in the world or not? Perhaps these are all lies. Perhaps these are manoeuvres to dethrone you, thereby weakening the Gandhāra kingdom so as to grab it at an opportune time.”

“Oh no, my ministers! Do not doubt my dear friend. The kingdom of Magadha is very far from the kingdom of Gandhāra. In between there lie Kosala, Vamsa, Chetiya, Pañcāla, and Kuru, all powerful kingdoms. To cross these and capture Gandhāra is impossible. This unseen friend is my well-wisher. He knows that the Lord Buddha resides in the Magadha region. Hence, while remaining a householder, he can avail himself of associating with the Tathāgata whenever he likes. But the Buddha will not be able to come this far, and I will be deprived of his association. This is the reason he has urged me to leave home in order to be near him. So my ministers, do not be a party to unwholesome kamma by falsely doubting him. This friend is my well-wisher.”

“Oh royal couriers, rare indeed is the arising of the Buddha in the world. *Buddha uppado dullabho lokasmin*. With good pāramīs, this rarity has become possible for those like me and many others. Let me go to his refuge. I have wandered fruitlessly in many lifetimes in search of

liberation. Now is the opportunity. Do not make a useless effort to deprive me of it.”

Despite his entreaties, people were not convinced. They continued to follow him, weeping and wailing. Pukkusāti then took a firm step. He drew a line with his stick on the ground, declaring, “I have renounced the life of a householder. But if you still consider me your king, then hear me: this is the king's command. No one should cross this line.”

Despondent people, seeing the firm resolve of their king, bowed down to his command and turned back, weeping. The renunciate Pukkusāti now moved forward on the way from Gandhāra to Magadha on foot.

The way from Takkasilā to Rājagaha was truly very long. But the former king, now an ordinary recluse, traversed the path with firm and strong steps. “The Buddha had renounced the world, chopping off his hair with his own hands and wearing renunciate clothes; he had left alone in search of truth. I will walk in his footsteps; I shall dwell in solitude. He wore nothing on his feet. I, too, shall walk barefoot. He did not use any vehicles, and I too shall not. He did not shield himself, even with an umbrella of leaves. I, too, shall journey without a shield. He journeyed on whatever he received without asking for anything. I, too, shall stay away from that which has not been offered to me. I will not break a branch of a tree even to brush my teeth, nor will I take water from a body of water myself. If not offered food, I will not eat.”

Adopting these firm resolves, recluse Pukkusāti walked on. The journey between Takkasilā and Rājagaha was not only long but also treacherous. Pukkusāti, born and brought up in the comforts and abundance of royal palaces, was now walking barefoot on rough and hard ground. His feet had blisters and cuts, from which pus flowed. The difficulty of the journey was compounded by the piercing pain.

Pukkusāti was walking with determined steps behind a caravan of merchants. There were hundreds of bullock carts loaded with goods for sale. Along with them, there were some magnificently decorated bullock carts with comfortable mattresses and large cushions for the merchants to sit and sleep on. Every cart had two robust oxen pulling it. Their bellies were so big they almost touched the ground, and their enormous, beautiful horns were coloured in lovely hues. Each of their backs was draped with a thick, multicoloured cloth with little bells strung along the edges. A bell hung around each of their necks. Furthermore, a bell-shaped ornament was attached to the wheels. The jingling of the bells was exceedingly lovely to hear as the two oxen yoked to the cart drew it, swaying and bobbing their heads, but the recluse following behind paid no notice. With downcast eyes, he continued his strenuous journey.

At sunset, the caravan would stop for the night. Tents were erected, but the recluse did not go near them. A bit removed, he sits cross-legged under a tree. There is no water to wash the wounds on his feet. There is no backrest for his painful back. Practicing Anapana meditation, he moves from upacara and progresses towards appana samādhi, and advancing further, he reaches the fourth

absorption meditation. By meditating throughout the night, he rids himself of the weakness in his body. By morning, he is fresh and ready to travel.

Early in the morning, those from the caravan finish their breakfast and drop some leftovers in his bowl. The food is at times half-cooked and at times overcooked. Sometimes it is too dry or too wet; at times there is less salt, and at other times it is too salty. The royal renunciate gladly accepts whatever comes in his bowl as nectar and covers his day’s journey with that one meal.

If the merchants of the caravan were to realise that this beggar in tattered clothes who follows behind them was none other than the Gandhāran king Pukkusāti, with whose munificent they have obtained relief from custom duty, multiplying their profits manifold, then they, filled with respect and gratitude, would have made his journey as comfortable as that which they enjoyed themselves. Pukkusāti had a different wish. He liked the simple and hard life of a mendicant, which, despite its challenges, provided him with a great deal of mental comfort and happiness. With this joy, he successfully completed all 192 yojanas.

On the way, the caravan passed through the city of Sāvathī. When it came out of the city, it passed by the Jetavana monastery. Pukkusāti had heard that this was the monastery of Buddha. But he thought that many people claim to be Buddhas, and he would have nothing to do with them. The Buddha, whom his dear friend Bimbisāra had told him about, would only be the Buddha for him, and he would meet him in Rājagaha, the capital of Magadha. With this mindset, he travelled from Sāvathī to Rājagaha.

When he reached Rājagaha, it was sunset, and the gates of the city were closed for the night. So he decided to spend it outside the city. There he learned that the Sammā Sambuddha whom he wanted to meet was now in fact at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvathī. So he resolved that the following morning he would return to Sāvathī to meet with the Lord.

(To be continued)

VNL Hindi, May 1991, No. 12

oooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

Future Course Schedule and Applications

Information on future Courses is available on the internet. All types of bookings are currently available online only as per the Government’s new rules due to Covid-19. Applications will not be accepted on paper. Therefore, you are requested to check the following link and apply online directly for your appropriate course or for dhamma service at Dhammagiri:

<https://www.dhamma.org/en/schedules/schgiri>

Please apply similarly as per the schedule of other centres. Here is the link for all Indian centres:

<https://www.dhamma.org/en-US/locations/directory#IN>

New VRI website for applying for courses:

<https://schedule.vridhamma.org/>

and for worldwide courses: www.dhamma.org

oooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

Dhammic Deaths

✧ Ms. Vishakha Sanghdeep, a senior assistant teacher in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, departed peacefully on June 19, 2024. She was appointed

by Respected Goenkaji in 1995 as an assistant teacher, and in 2013, she was appointed senior assistant teacher. Since then, she and her spouse, Mr. Jaipal, have been actively engaged in extensive Dhamma service. Her life’s higher purpose was accomplished. The wish of her Dhamma family is that she should keep evolving on her Dhamma journey until she achieves her final goal.

✧ On July 26, 2024, Mr. Bharat Prasad Mishra of Muzaffarpur, Uttar Pradesh, quietly departed from this life. In 2012, he was appointed assistant teacher, and in 2018, he was appointed senior assistant teacher. He was actively interested in serving Muzaffarpur and the neighboring areas. His Dhamma family hopes that he will keep progressing along the Dhamma path until he arrives at his ultimate goal.

✧ Dr. Seema Pradhan of Bengaluru was appointed as an assistant teacher in 2011. On Saturday night, August 3rd, she passed away peacefully at her home after suffering a heart attack. She was particularly interested in serving courses for children and teenagers. She served on the Vipassana Research Institute’s research council, conducted her own Vipassana research, and supervised the work of many research scholars. The Dhamma family wishes for her to continue evolving on her Dhamma journey till she accomplishes her final goal.

---0---

New Feature added to Vipassana Meditation Mobile App:

You may now register for various types of courses such as:

- 10-day course, - Executive course, - Children’s course,
- 3-day course, - etc.

In centers across India, South Africa, Kenya, Indonesia, UAE, etc.

Once an application is filed, you can also view the application status on the app. Enable daily logging of meditation for your own personal record.

Currently these new features are available only for Android phones and will be soon available for iOS (iPhones).

Download App Link: <http://vridhamma.org/applink.html>

N.B.:-

[You may read all Vipassana Newsletters in many languages on this App.](#)

One-Day Mega Courses at Global Vipassana Pagoda, Gorai, Mumbai

1). One-day Mega courses on Sundays:

1. 29-9 Goenkaji’s Demise-day and Sharad Purnima,
2. 19-1-2025 Sayagyi U Ba Khin’s and Mataji’s Demise-day.

2). In addition there are **Daily One-Day Courses** being held in the Pagoda for Vipassana Students. Please follow the link to join and take advantage of the immense benefit of meditating in a large group. **Contact:** 022 50427500 (Board Lines) Mob. +91 8291894644 (from 11 am to 5 pm).

Online registration: <http://oneday.globalpagoda.org/register>

Dhammalaya Stay during Mega Courses:--Meditators can stay at Dhammalaya during mega courses and avail maximum benefit. Please **contact:** 022 50427599 or **Email-** info.dhammalaya@globalpagoda.org

For any other information for One day or Mega courses you may **contact:** info@globalpagoda.org or pr@globalpagoda.org,

Tel :- 022-50427500 / +91 82918 94644.

Additional Responsibility

Mrs. M. R Rajeswary, To
assist Centre Teacher of
Dhamma Utkal Orissa

**New appointments
Assistant Teachers**

1. Mr Subhash Dwivedi, Thane
2. Mrs Michelle Miciel, Igatpuri
3. Mr. Vikas Maske, Beed
4. Mrs. Ambika Markikar, Amrawati
5. Mrs. Jyoti Wankhede, Akola
6. Mrs. Jyoti Pamwani, Ahmedabad
7. Mr. Brahmapal Chaure, Bhandara
8. Mrs Smita Tempe, Nagpur
9. Mr Gangaram Prajapati, Raypur
10. Mr. Dilip Kumar Yonzon, Darjeeling, W. B,
11. Mrs. Thitirat Wangratanaparkdee, Thailand

Children Course Teachers

1. Mrs. Dayaben Virabhai Hadiya, Mahuva
2. Ms Anamika Rameshbhai Sagar, Vadodara
3. Mrs Heena Yogesh Patel, Baroda
4. Mrs Jeet Singh, Ghaziabad
5. Ms Depanri Rita Jasmatbhai, Gujarat
6. Mr. Nilesh Maruti Powar, Kolhapur.
7. Mr. Santosh Dattatray Totre, New Panvel, Raigad
8. Mrs. Sarla devi Kushwaha, Vadodara
9. Mr Satyendra Singh Kushwaha, Vadodara
10. Mr Vijaybhai Pratapbhai Dodiya, Mahuva
11. Mrs. Tripti Jaiswal, Indore
12. Mr Niko Meinhold, Germany
13. Mrs Herta Kraemer, Germany

14. Mr Nikita Pankov, Russia
15. Mr Maxim Sergeenkova, Russia
16. Mrs Guzel Sergeenkova, Russia
17. Mr Mikhail Gerasimovich, Russia
18. Mrs Esmira Jafarova, Russia
19. Ms Nadine Veldhuis, Netherlands
20. Mr Joost Walda, Netherlands
21. Mrs Lotte Stekelenberg, Netherlands
22. Mrs Timu Georgeta, Romania
23. Mr Andrea Fattoretti, Italy
24. Ms Innocenza Sorbi, Italy
25. Mrs Sara La Rosa, Italy
26. Ms Solimar Belandria, Italy
27. Mr Arthur Wolstenholme, UK
28. Mr Lisle Turner, UK
29. Mr Brendan Moher, Ireland
30. Ms Linda Meuwissen, Switzerland

31. Ms Susanti Chandra, Switzerland
32. Ms Katina Avramova, Bulgaria
33. Ms Yana Ovchelarova, Bulgaria
34. Ms Limor Ronen Cohen, Israel
35. Ms Linnea Osterberg, Sweden
36. Mrs Tiske Bosserez, Belgium
37. Mr Torben Rosgaard, Belgium
38. Mr Benoit Braidia, France
39. Ms. Savry Rath, Cambodia
40. Ms. Sokhuom Vun, Cambodia
41. Mr Chantheborras Chea, Cambodia

RCCC

Ms. Roli Bajpai - Regional
co-ordinator children courses -
Bihar.

DHAMMA DOHAS

*Keṣa śīṣa ke kāṭa kara, dāṛhī mūmcha muṛāya;
Lakuṭī bhikṣā-pātra le, pahane vastra kaṣāya.*

Cutting off his hair, beard and moustache, he took a beggar's bowl and a loincloth, and he dressed in the rough clothing of a bhikkhu.

*Calā choṛakara rājya-sukha, bhikṣuka banā nareśa;
Paga panahī sira chatra ko, tyāga calā daraveśa.*

The king, leaving the luxuries of his kingdom, has become a bhikkhu. Casting off the slippers on his feet and a canopy over his head, the wanderer moves on.

*Bina māṃge jo bhī mile, usase kara saṃtoṣa;
Rūkhī-sūkhī khāya kara, rahā deha ko posa.*

Without asking, he is content with whatever he receives. He nourishes his body with dry, stale food.

*Patha kaṃkara kaṃṭaka bharā, calatā naṃge pāṃva;
Phūṭa phaphole pāṃva meṃ, bhare pīpa se ghāva.*

He walks barefoot along a path covered with stones and thorns. His injured feet are covered in pus-filled boils.

*Kaṣṭa na bādḥaka bana sake, roka na sake thakāna;
Lagana eka mana meṃ lagī, mileṃ buddha bhagavāna.*

He is not hindered by challenges or fatigue. Meeting Lord Buddha is his only ambition.

*Mileṃ buddha bhagavāna to, mile dharama kā jñāna;
Nirmala mile vipaśyanā, mile mokṣa nirvāna.*

If I meet Lord Buddha, I shall acquire Dhamma knowledge. Receiving pure Vipassana I will attain full liberation.

SUBSCRIPTION TO ENGLISH/HINDI MONTHLY NEWSLETTER: ANNUAL: RS 100/- (Posting OUTSIDE INDIA- US \$ 50); (No Retail Sale)
No LIFE SUBSCRIPTION now onwords. Subscriptions BY BANK DRAFT, PAYABLE AT IGATPURI IN FAVOUR OF Vipassana Research Institute

Edited and published by R.P. Yadav for VRI, Igatpuri-422 403 and printed at Apollo Printing Press, 259, SICOF Ltd., 69 MIDC, Satpur, Nashik-422 007.
No.08, 19 August, 2024. Posted at Igatpuri, Dist. Nashik, Posting Day: Purnima of every month; Vip. NL Regd. No. 49916/90; P. Regn No. NSK/RNP-232/2021-2023

DATE OF PRINTING: 04 AUGUST, 2024, DATE OF PUBLICATION: 19 AUGUST, 2024

If undelivered, please return to:

Vipassana Research Institute

Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri 422 403

Dist. Nashik, Maharashtra, India

Tel: (02553) 244998, 243553, 244076,

244086, 244144, 244440

Email: vri_admin@vridhamma.org

course booking: info.giri@vridhamma.org

Website: <https://www.vridhamma.org>