

Vipassana Newsletter

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

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Words of Dhamma

*“Dhamme ca ye ariyapavedite ratā,
Anuttarā te vacasā manasā kammunā ca;
Te santisoraccasamādhisaṅghitā,
Sutassa paññāya ca sāramajjhagū”ti.*

— Suttanipāta- 332

“Those who are devoted to the Dhamma taught by the Noble Ones, In word, thought and deed are unsurpassed. Developed in peace, humility, and meditation, They have obtained the essence of wisdom and learning.”

The Blessed Three-Fold Full Moon Day of Vesak: Birth Anniversary of Buddha

Goenkaji wrote this article on the Full Moon Day (Purnima) of the month of Vesak (May) in 1968, before returning to India. It originally appeared in Burma's monthly magazine “Brahma Bharti” and was then printed and distributed as an essay by the 'All Burma Hindu Central Board'. Today, the occasion of Vesak Purnima (Buddha Jayanti), the article is being reprinted for the benefit of Vipassana students.

It is Vesak, the day of the full moon. Today, 2592 years ago, Prince Siddhartha Gautama was born in the verdant Lumbini region of present-day Nepal. Thirty-five years later, under the Bodhi Tree in Bodh Gaya, northeastern India, the recluse prince attained full enlightenment on this very same full moon day of Vesak.

What was the sacred enlightenment like that Prince Siddhartha attained? What was the wisdom of Buddhahood that elevated human spiritual understanding to new heights?

With this wisdom and insight, the Buddha observed that it was ignorance, the illusionary false ego of ‘I’ and ‘mine’, that results in the creation of mental conditioning (saṅkhāras), and where there are saṅkhāras, there is consciousness. Indeed, it is this consciousness that becomes the cause of the mind and body coming together, resulting in the continuum of the flow of life.

Where the mind and body come together, there are the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind and their respective objects: vision, sound, smell, taste, sense of touch, and mental objects. As soon as a particular sense comes into contact with its respective object, there is a contact, a sensation within that results in craving, or its opposite, aversion towards the object. It is this craving that grows into deep, deep clinging and attachment, and then, in order to fulfil these cravings, one indulges in multifarious mental as well as verbal or bodily actions. These actions (kamma-bhava) propel us into the future and give rise to new births. And where there is birth, then old age, illness, and death are inevitable. A mountain of misery arises as a result of this ignorance and craving.

The Buddha witnessed this misery and the cause of its arising. But there is no need to despair. There is also a solution to this suffering. There is a way to stop it. The way is known as the Noble Eight-Fold Path. What is this path?

This eight-part path consists of three sections. The first is moral conduct (sila), right speech, right action, and right livelihood—a life of wholesomeness. Not to indulge in any kind of misdeeds by body or speech. The second section is mastery of the mind (samādhi), right effort, right awareness, and right concentration. Through continuous practice, the restless mind can be calmed by concentrating on one point. The third section is wisdom (paññā), right intention, and right view. With wholesome intention, one undertakes the practice of Vipassana meditation, awakening the inner eye of wisdom. A meditator, remaining aware, delves within and experiences the subtler reality of the body and mind, and the truth of nature.

With Vipassana, one clearly sees that the reality of the entire sensory world is ever-changing and ephemeral, and while it may appear to be pleasing, its nature in reality is that of pain and misery. The senses are without substance. There's nothing there that can be called ‘me’ or ‘mine’. They are essenceless, not-self (anattā). Thus, while experiencing the realities of the sensorial world within this body, the mind grows detached, and the bonds of ignorance are broken, resulting in attaining a state beyond the senses. This is Nibbāna, the ever-present, eternal, and ultimate bliss. Its realisation is the end of misery, the ultimate fruition of the path of Vipassana meditation.

Clearly, a mind filled with craving is a fount of suffering, and a mind free of craving brings one to the end of suffering. Hence, if one has to come out of misery, one's mind will have to be purified, making it free of craving. The mind plays the most important role when it comes to the generation of misery, as well as putting an end to misery. When the sickness, that is, the misery, needs to be

cured, then it is pointless to treat it externally. One will have to strike at the very roots of the sickness—one will have to observe the mind and make the changes there and purify it. This work can never be done by outer rites and rituals; it cannot be done by the blessing or favour of some Deva or Brahma.

This requires continual practice with a technique that works directly with the mind. This is precisely what Vipassana meditation does. It is the practical aspect of the principles of Dhamma rediscovered and taught by the Buddha. It is this practical aspect that enables one to ‘see’ Dhamma for oneself. It is this that gives results here and now (*akāliko*). A meditator experiences the taste of freedom right here, in this life, within this body, with his own efforts, not with favours bestowed by some external power.

We are the cause of our rise or fall; we are the cause of our own bondage or freedom. Whatever we are at this moment is the result of our own actions (*kammas*). Whatever we become in the future will be the result of our own actions. We have power over our present actions. The knots created by us will have to be unravelled by us; again, they cannot be left to some external power.

Having attained full enlightenment at the age of 35, the Lord, for the next 45 years, remained engaged in teaching this very same Dhamma of ‘seeing for oneself’ and ‘tasting the results here and now’. He was instrumental in removing confusion and wrong views from the minds of millions upon millions of people. He uncovered the falsity of vacuous, jaded beliefs, rituals, and dead traditions. He broke the meaningless beliefs, awakening the unlimited capacities of man, so that he could rise on his own two feet, unchain himself, and throw away the crutches he held on to in his ignorance.

The outward-oriented human being was taught to turn inward. The Lord gave a simple and straightforward method of disciplining and liberating oneself by purifying the mind of dirt and dust while remaining on the straight and true path. This instead of relying on belief in pilgrimages, bathing in sacred rivers, fasting, changing attire, praises and appeals to unseen powers, and performing many other external rites and rituals as the ultimate to liberation.

By not depending on any external force, he gave us humans the strength to march forward using our own enormous, untapped potential, gaining confidence in ourselves, and finding refuge in Dhamma as the way forward.

Having completed 80 years of his life and having imparted this invaluable heritage to the human world, Lord Buddha attained Mahāparinibbāna on this very day, 2540 years ago. This sacred Purnima (full moon day) of the month of Vesak was thus thrice blessed.

Kalyāṇa-mitta,
S. N. Goenka

(With permission from: Hindi Patrika Vol. 25, Vesak May-3, 1996, Issue Number 11.)

Housing Schemes

AT KIT 2012

Assistant Teacher Meeting 2000

Questions and Answers:

Revised to reflect the latest guidelines by Goenkaji:-

Session 3

3-1. Can all the trusts plan to have a Dhamma village near their centres? Many meditators are ready to purchase land.

This is overenthusiasm, nobody should take such a step at this stage. Let the village here develop, and let me see how the Dhamma can be maintained. There must be someone to look after a Dhamma village. If you create a village where there is no *sīla* everything will degenerate. At least one village should be properly controlled and when I am satisfied that it is an ideal village, then of course, villages can come up at other places following the pattern established here. But don’t think of it yet. If anybody is overenthusiastic about developing a Sayagyi Village now, deflate this enthusiasm, it is wrong.

APPENDIX AT KIT 2012

September 21, 2004

To All teachers

Dear Teachers,

Some time back Guruji gave guidance on the issue of housing schemes, such as Sayagyi U Ba Khin Village (SUBKV), under the aegis of a Vipassana centre in this tradition. Guruji has given instructions that no such schemes should be taken up in future by Vipassana centres or trusts in this tradition.

Guruji has clarified that SUBKV has been an experiment that he would not like to see duplicated elsewhere as this scheme has put a big demand on the time of the teachers and the trust of Dhamma Giri. Guruji has given a clear instruction that Vipassana centres should not launch such schemes, so that they can maintain a clear and exclusive focus on meditation courses. This will also prevent precious time of teachers and Dhamma workers from being used up for non-course activity.

Often meditators buy land and build houses near Vipassana centres. This is okay and even advisable as long as they do it on their own, independent of the trust.

A trust may sell part of any additional land it may own to meditators if the teachers and trust feel that such a sale will help the finances of the centre and also afford protection. However, once the sale is completed, the trust should have no further involvement in the development and construction on the land.

With metta,

(Secretary to S.N. Goenka)



Modern Multi-Media Museum at the Global Vipassana Pagoda

A modern multi-media museum has been built within the Global Pagoda campus to commemorate the birth centenary of the respected Vipassana Acharya Shri S. N. Goenka. It was soft-launched on this occasion on February 4, 2024. The museum covers an area of 1800 square feet and acquaints visitors with the journey of pure Dhamma over the last 2600 years. It is divided into sections such as the birth of the Buddha, his renunciation and enlightenment, the great emperor Ashoka’s contribution to spreading Dhamma in Asia, the critical effort of the ‘Chain of Teachers’ in Myanmar to preserve Dhamma in its pristine purity over the centuries, and the inspirational life of Acharya Goenka ji and his tireless and compassionate efforts to spread Dhamma throughout the world.

The museum brings to life the various sections by blending video projection, beautiful props, and informative panels. In keeping with the vision that Acharya Goenka ji conveyed in an interview, the inspiring narration conveys what Dhamma is in interesting and simple words. The journey enables the visitor to absorb the difference between sectarian paths and pure Dhamma. The museum will soon be open on weekends and holidays to the public, and it is hoped that a large number of people will be inspired to take their first step on the Dhamma path by attending the mini Anapana session available within the Pagoda campus.

PAGODA CORPUS FUND

For the Operations of Global Vipassana Pagoda

Pujya Guruji Shri S.N. Goenka ji had the vision to develop this historical monument as a symbol of gratitude to his teacher, and the chain of teachers back to the Buddha, and to help preserve and promote the technique of Vipassana, the ancient cultural heritage of India, as well as to provide a place for people from all over the world to come and meditate together, in the huge meditation hall, under the Buddha relics that are being preserved here. It has been decided to set up a Centuries Corpus Fund to fulfil the above vision and meet the daily expenses for the period of the second Sasana of the Buddha. It has been calculated that if 1,39,000 persons were to donate Rs 9000/- (Rs. Nine Thousand) per person then the total would amount to Rs. 125 crores. The interest earned from this amount could then meet the daily expenses of operations and maintenance of the Global Pagoda. Donations are eligible for tax benefits under Section 80G of the Indian Income Tax Act, 1961.

You may Contact/ Refer-Bank Details:-

Global Vipassana Foundation,

Axis Bank Ltd, Malad (W) Branch, Mumbai - 400064.
Account No.: 911010032397802; IFSC No.: UTIB0000062.
Please contact: 1. Sh. Derik Pegado- 022-50427512/ 28451204
2. Sh. Bipinbhai Mehta - 022-50427510/ 9920052156

- 3. Email - audits@globalpagoda.org
- 4. Online Donation-
<https://www.globalpagoda.org/donate-online>

Vipassana Research Institute (VRI) Project Pāla

On the occasion of Guru Purnima, Vipassana Research Institute is very happy to announce Project Pāla – Treasures of Dhamma.

As you are all aware, this precious Dhamma, which was taught to us by S.N. Goenkaji, in its pristine purity, which is being maintained through the pure tradition of Teachers, must be preserved, protected, and passed on for the benefit of many. This includes a vast collection of materials comprising manuscripts, rare books, pictures, palm leaves from Myanmar, artefacts, audio and video tapes, and Goenkaji's personal documents.

Treasures of Dhamma summary:

- Photos, over 2000 images & 8000 negatives.
- Letters, Documents & Transcript – over 210,000.
- Newsletters, Newspapers, Magazines – over 10000.
- Diaries & Notebooks – around 500.
- Printed books – over 12000.
- Palm leaf & Manuscripts – Approx 28.
- Audio & Video collection – over 3000 tapes.
- Paintings - over 130 large paintings on the Life of the Buddha.
- Course application forms – over 12 lakhs.

The word pāla means to preserve or secure Dhamma teachings. In order to protect these materials from the risk of damage due to environmental conditions, a 5000 sq ft state-of-the-art conservation and preservation facility is planned. The storage facility will have a temperature-controlled environment that is fire and water proof.

The project is estimated to cost around Rs 300 lakhs; hence, any contributions towards this noble cause for future generations would be of great merit to the donor.

Please click the YouTube link below to see a short video on Pāla - The Treasures of Dhamma: <https://youtu.be/eK-dJPWnOhs> Anyone can donate online through our website, mobile app, scan UPI QR Code, net banking or by sending a cheque to our address.

Please click link for various Donation Options:
<https://www.vridhamma.org/Donation-to-VRI>

Donations to VRI are eligible for 100% tax deduction benefits to Indian citizens. The bank details for the donation are as follows:

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2. Shri Bipinbhai Mehta - 022-50427510/ 9920052156
3. Email - audits@globalpagoda.org
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Dhammic Death

Shri Pundlik Ahire, Vipassana Teacher, 78 years old, from Kalyan, Maharashtra, passed away on 22 April 2024 after a short illness. Just before this, he had conducted a 45-day course at Dhamma Tapovan. Pundlik Ji was serving as the Centre Teacher of Dhamma Sarita, Khadavli, Thane. He was instrumental in the spread of Dhamma in the Thane area and inspired many to follow the Eightfold Noble Path as taught by Pujya Guruji. The Dhamma family's sincere wish is for such a dedicated Dhamma server to continue to advance towards liberation

Indian Air Force Officers benefit from Ānāpāna

Many senior officers, like Army Colonel, Lt. Colonel, Major, Captain and other senior officers from the Army-Air Defence (AAD 332) Regiment of the Kargil region visited the Vipassana centre: Dhamma Laddha in the Leh-Ladakh region (northwest India) on 25th April 2024.

There, they were very pleased to be informed about the 10-day courses being held in Dhamma Laddha, and expressed interest in participating in the future. They then felt they benefited from a mini-Ānāpāna session that they attended.

Siachen Glacier base camp, where they are stationed, is at a height of of 12,000 feet, where even breathing is difficult for the soldiers. They agreed that this training could prove very beneficial for them. Finally, expressing gratitude, they also

expressed a desire to visit the Dhammagiri Vipassana Centre (Igatpuri) sometime in the future.

May All Be Happy!

Additional Responsibility

1. Shri. Anil Mali, (T), To assist CAT of respective areas- Jalgaon, Dhule and Nandurbar of North Maharashtra.
2. Shri. Ashok Babhale, (SAT), To assist CAT of respective areas- Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg of Konkan area.
4. Mrs Swarna Lakshmi Konkimalla, Madinaguda, Hyderabad
- 5-6. Mr. Pasek Saejew & Ms Malee Daochalermwong, Thailand

Children Course Teachers

1. Mr. Aditya M. Sorathia, Anjar
2. Mrs. Mausami Umesh Dholkia, Bhuj

New Responsibility

Senior Assistant Teachers

1. Mr. John Mendonca, Surendrnagar (Rajkot), Guj.
2. Shri Ramlal Patil, Indore, MP
3. Mrs. Medha Dalvi, Mumbai, MS
4. Mrs. Nanda Pal, Thane, MS
5. Mrs. Preeti Pai (Bakre), Igatpuri, MS
3. Ms. Pooja Jindal, Dehradun
4. Ms. Preeti Jolapra, Bhuj
5. Mrs. Kirti Sahu, Lucknow
6. Ms. Shipra Ganguly, Lucknow
7. Mrs. Mridula Srivastava, Lucknow,
8. Mr. Arun B Balkrishna, Kollam
9. Mr. Ashok Kumar N.A., Ernakulam
10. Dr. Pramitha Ratheesh, Trivandrum
11. Mr. Raveendran K.P., Kannur
12. Mr. Sreekumar Chandran M., Waynad
13. Mrs. Sunitha Sreekumar, Waynad
14. Mr. Prabhakaran K.K., Kasaragod
15. Mr. Liu Zhiqiang, China,
16. Mr. Gan Mingjia, China

New Appointments

Assistant Teachers

1. Dr. Jashavantbhai Patel, Vadodara, Gujarat
2. Mr. Ramkumar Venkatanarayana, Tiruchirappalli, Tamilnadu
3. Mrs Krishna Sudha Madabhushi,

DHAMMA DOHAS

*Dharama jage to manuja kā, hoya parama kalyāṇa;
Dharama chuṭe to manuja ke, hoveṃ vyākula prāṇa.*

When Dhamma arises in a person, it results in his highest welfare; When Dhamma disappears in him, his heart turns restless.

*Bhāgya jage to dharama ko, dhāraṇa kare subodha;
Hoya abhāgā, dharama se hove vimukha abodha.*

When an inclination awakens for Dhamma, a wise person adopts it; While a foolish and unfortunate person turns away from the Dhamma.

*Dharama na samajhe, dharama kā ho mithyā ābhāsa;
Rahe dharama se dūra hī, chuṭe nā bhava-trāsa.*

Not understanding the essence of Dhamma, one merely imitates it; Avoiding Dhamma, the suffering of the world never ends.

*Kisī dārśanika mānyatā, se ho jaba āsakta;
Satya dharama ko choṛa kara, rahe usī meṃ ratta.*

When someone is infatuated with their own philosophical belief; They remain immersed in that leaving Dhamma aside.

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