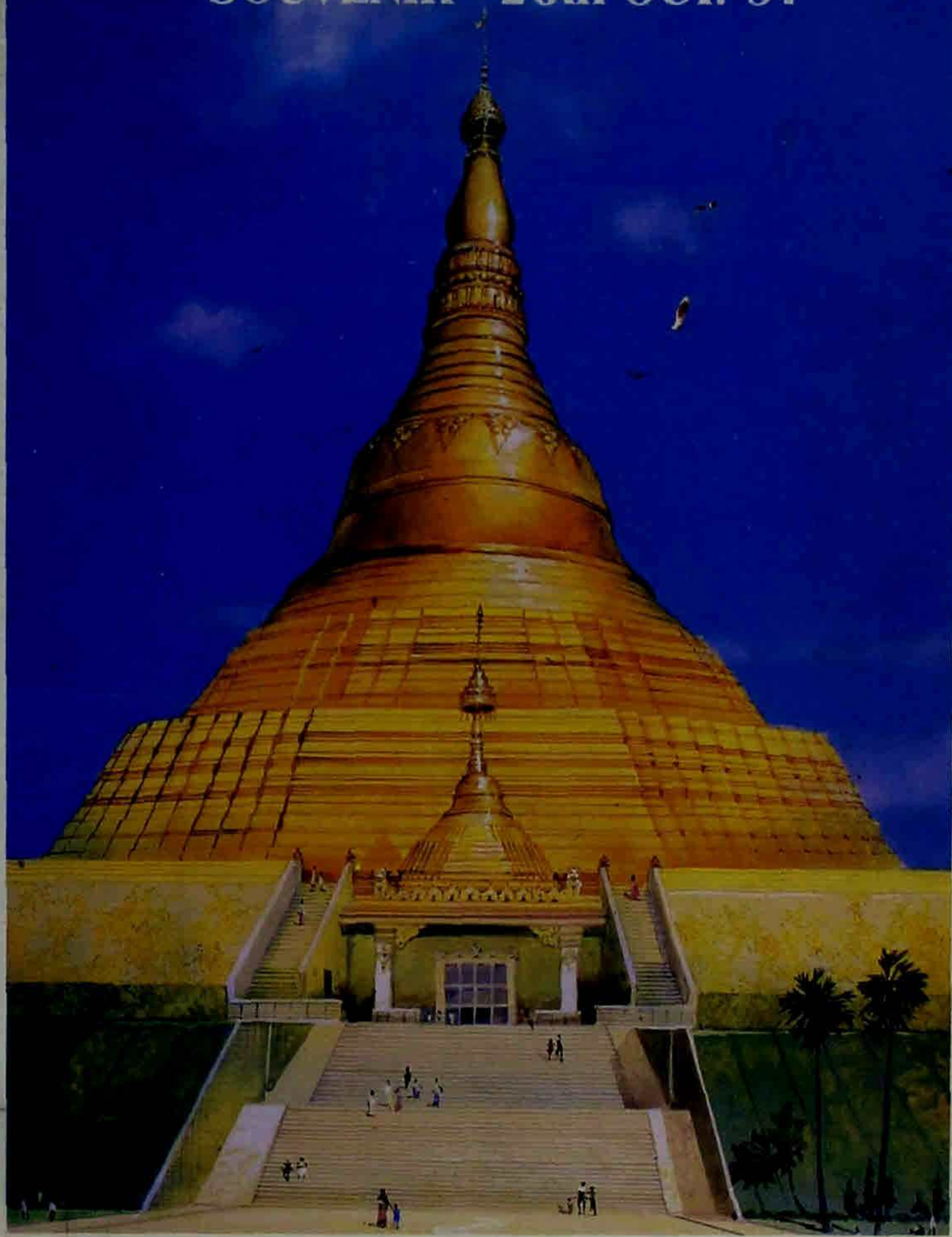


VIPASSANA PAGODA

SOUVENIR 26th OCT. 97



Global Vipassana Foundation
MUMBAI, INDIA

VIPASSANA PAGODA

SOUVENIR 26TH OCT. 97

Global Vipassana Foundation

Mumbai

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Dhamma Messages of Emperor Asoka

Amongst the thousands of emperors and kings in the firmament of human history, wrote H.G.Wells, the name of Asoka will shine brightest amongst them all.

For, in the oceans of blood shed spilled by conquerors down centuries, who else, but Asoka, had vowed to give up warfare soon after a famous victory?

From being called Asoka the Cruel, he was transformed to Dhamma Asoka.

By practicing Dhamma and encouraging his people to practice Dhamma, Emperor Asoka's rule became one of the most benevolent of all times. His many rock edicts are testimony to his conviction that the actual practice of Dhamma is needed for the happiness and welfare of all.

Below are a few of Dhamma Asoka's timeless messages on rocks:

“ Even in the past the kings desired that the people should grow in Dhamma. But this did not happen.

It, then, occurred to me: I should cause Dhamma proclamations to be made and Dhamma instructions to be issued. Then the people will follow these strictly, elevate themselves, and grow in Dhamma.

It is for this purpose that Dhamma proclamations were made by me and manifold Dhamma instructions issued.

The growth of men in Dhamma has been achieved through these two means: Dhamma regulations and insight meditation.

Out of these two, of little avail have been the Dhamma regulations, while much more has been accomplished through insight meditation ”.

**— Pillar Edict VII
Delhi - Topra**

“ Happiness in this world and the next is difficult to secure without love of Dhamma, utmost self-examination, utmost dread of sin, and utmost enthusiasm. By my instructions, this regard for Dhamma, as well as love for Dhamma, have grown day by day and will multiply still further.

My officers too- of high and low and middle rank – act according to my instructions, and enforce their proper practice. My instructions are: to protect according to Dhamma, to dispose according to Dhamma, to make others happy according to Dhamma, and to guard others according to Dhamma ”.

**—Pillar Edict I
Delhi – Topra**

“ King Priyadassi honours all sects; by gifts and offerings of kinds does he honour them. But he does not value such gifts or honours so much as that the worthiness of all sects may increase.

The increase of worthiness may be of several kinds, but its root lies in guarding one's speech, that is to say, the praising of one's own sect or the blaming of the other sects may not take place.

In fact, other sects ought to be honoured in various ways. By doing so, one promotes one's own sect and also benefits other sects; and by doing otherwise, one hurts one's own sect and also harms other sects”.

—Rock Edict XII

“ The practice of Dhamma is not possible for one who is devoid of good conduct ”.

—Rock Edict IV

“There is no such gift as the gift of Dhamma, or acquaintance through Dhamma, or the distribution of Dhamma, or kinship through Dhamma”.

—Rock Edict XI

“There is, indeed, no better work than the welfare of all the people.”

—Rock Edict V

“In spite of possessing rich gifts, those who have no self-control, or purity of mind, or gratitude and firm devotion, are poor indeed.”

—Rock edict VII

“The beloved of Gods wishes all beings non-injury, restraint and impartiality, even in case of offensive conduct.”

—Rock Edict XIII

“On account of these, one does not act properly – envy, anger, cruelty, hurry, indifference, indolence (and) fatigue. So you should strive that these (things) may not arise in you. And the root of all this is absence of anger and absence of hurry”.

—Kalinga Rock Edict I

“These are the ways to sin, viz. fierceness, cruelty, anger, pride, envy. Let me be not ruined by these”.

—Delhi-Topra Pillar Edict III

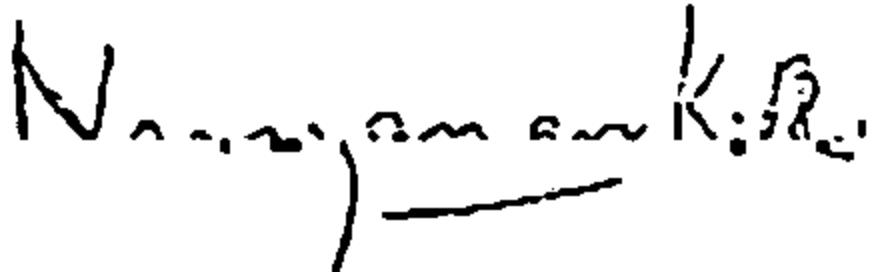


राष्ट्रपति
भारत गणतन्त्र
PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF INDIA

MESSAGE

Lord Buddha's timeless message of 'Karuna', equality and a life of harmony, balance and moderation is of profound contemporary relevance to human society.

I am glad to learn that the foundation stone laying ceremony for a magnificent Vipassana Stupa is being organized in Mumbai in October. I extend my greetings to all associated with this noble project and wish them success in their endeavours.


(K.R. NARAYANAN)

New Delhi
October 20, 1997.



सत्यमेव जयते

प्रधान मंत्री
PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE

I am happy to note that the Global Vipassana Foundation will be building a Vipassana meditation centre at Mumbai to spread the message of Lord Buddha. His universal message of compassion and middle path have stood the test of time and brought solace to millions of his followers across the globe.

I wish the Foundation all success in carrying forward this noble mission.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'I.K. Gujral', written in a cursive style.

[I. K. Gujral]

New Delhi

October 18, 1997

Telephone No. (228187
228796
228911



Ref. No.:-

Royal Palace
Nepal.

Date:-

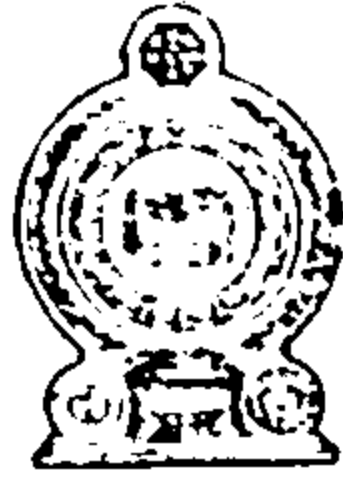
Subject:-

**MESSAGE FROM HIS MAJESTY BIRENDRA BIR BIKRAM SHAH DEV,
KING OF NEPAL, TO THE COMMEMORATIVE SOUVENIR
TO BE PUBLISHED ON THE OCCASION OF THE
FOUNDATION - LAYING CEREMONY OF THE
VIPASSANA STUPA IN MUMBAI, INDIA**

We are happy to learn that a Vipassana Stupa is being constructed in Mumbai, India under the auspices of the Global Vipassana Foundation. It is gratifying for the people of Nepal, the birthplace of Lord Buddha, that the Stupa will enshrine the sacred relics of Buddha, the essence of whose teachings, it is said, was based on Vipassana.

The gradual revival of Vipassana has enabled people in different parts of the world to benefit from this ancient technique of meditation. We hope that it will contribute to foster peace and harmony in the modern world plagued by various kinds of ills.

I wish the Global Vipassana Foundation every success in its endeavours.



Prime Minister of Sri Lanka

21st October 1996

To whom it may concern

A pure gold replica of a Chaityaya containing the relics of the Gautama Buddha was handed over by me to Messrs M.D.S.Perera and party who would be leaving for Bombay by air on the 26th October 1996, to be presented to Shri S.N.Goenkajii of Igatpuri.

Shri Goenkajii is planning to build a Stupa in Bombay very soon and these relics in the gold replica will be enshrined in that Stupa to commemorate this great event.

It is a matter of great pride to Sri Lanka and myself to be personally associated with this memorable occasion.

Sirimavo R.D. Bandaranaike
Prime Minister

H.E. Surya Bahadur Thapa.
Prime Minister of Nepal

काठमाडौं.

मन्त्री


Message

२०१४/६/३०

शुभकामना

विपश्यना ध्यानाचार्य श्री सत्यनारायण गोयन्काज्यूको सक्रियतामा भगवान बुद्धको जीवनी र शिक्षा अङ्कित वृहत् स्तूपको निर्माण हुन लागेको र सोही उपलक्ष्यमा स्मारिका समेत प्रकाशित हुन लागेको जानकारी पाउँदा मलाई खुशी लागेको छ ।

काम, क्रोध र अहङ्कार जस्ता विकृतिबाट ग्रसित आजको यस भौतिकवादी समाजमा भगवान बुद्धबाट प्रतिपादित विपश्यना ध्यानको माध्यमबाट मानव समाजलाई राग, द्वेष र ईर्ष्याबाट मुक्ति दिलाई समाजमा नैतिक मूल्य र मान्यता स्थापित गर्नमा नेपाल विपश्यना केन्द्रले गरेको योगदान प्रशंसनीय छ । यस दिशामा त्यस केन्द्रलाई अझ बढी सफलता मिलोस् यही मरा शुभकामना छ ।


(सूर्य बहादुर थापा)



P.C.ALEXANDER

**RAJ BHAVAN
BOMBAY 400 035**

17 August 1997

M E S S A G E

I am happy to know that a grand Vipassana Stupa, 350 feet tall, having a Dhamma Hall for meditation, and a gallery depicting the life and teachings of Lord Buddha is being built in Mumbai by the Global Vipassana Foundation.

Gautam Buddha who gave to the world the message of non-violence, tolerance, peace and love, revived Vipassana, a scientific method of purifying mind through the realisation of Truth. It is gratifying to note that Vipassana is becoming increasingly popular and has spread to over 90 countries.

I extend my good wishes to the Global Vipassana Foundation for successful and speedy completion of the Stupa.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P.C. Alexander".

**(P.C.ALEXANDER)
Governor of Maharashtra**

CHIEF MINISTER



MAHARASHTRA

Mantralaya, Mumbai 400 032

Date : 17/7/97

MESSAGE

I am glad to know that the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Vipassana Stupa in Mumbai will be laid on October 26, 1997.

I compliment the Globle Vipassana Foundation for undertaking this venture so as to create an awareness among the people about Lord Buddha's universal teachings. I hope, the project will help to revive Vipassana - the scientific technique of mental purification which is our precious heritage. I hope, the huge 350-feet tall monument will go a long way to strengthen our efforts to promote peace, harmony and happiness in the world community.

I wish the Foundation laying ceremony of the unique venture all success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'मनोहर जोशी' (Manohar Joshi).

MANOHAR JOSHI

DIGVIJAY SINGH.
Chief Minister

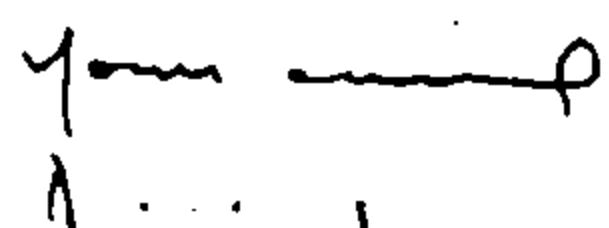


Government of Madhya Pradesh
BHOPAL—462004

To

Mr. Subhash Chandra
Chairman,
Global Vipassana Foundation,
MUMBAI.

I congratulate Global Vipassana Foundation for its efforts to revive the teachings of Lord Buddha. The 350-feet tall pagoda being built by the Foundation at Mumbai will surely come up as an international landmark. The statue will further strengthen the Vipassana movement and generate awareness about the pure scientific technique of mental purification by realisation of truth, as taught by Lord Buddha.

Yours sincerely

(DIGVIJAY SINGH)



Sri. Bhairo Sing Shekhawat
Chief Minister of Rajasthan

मुख्य मंत्री
राजस्थान

Message

जयपुर
0 JUN 1997


सन्देश

मुझे यह जानकर प्रसन्नता है कि ग्लोबल विपशना फाउण्डेशन, मुम्बई द्वारा "विपशना स्तूप, मुम्बई" के शिलान्यास समारोह का आयोजन 26 अक्टूबर, 1997 को किया जा रहा है तथा इस अवसर पर स्मारिका का प्रकाशन किया जा रहा है ।

भारतीय उप महाद्वीप अध्यात्म और दर्शन का केन्द्र बिन्दु रहा है तथा यहां की षट् दर्शन की परम्परा विश्व बन्धुत्व एवं विश्व शान्ति की अवधारणाएं अगेजे हुए है । आज देश और विदेश में जिस प्रकार की स्थितियां हैं, व्यङ्गित एवं समझित की शान्ति के लिए इस प्रकार के आध्यात्मिक उपक्रम सामयिक हैं ।

मुझे विश्वास है कि आयोज्य स्तूप-आधार शिला समारोह हमारी बौद्ध-दर्शन धारा को व्यापक बनाने की दृष्टि से उपयोगी होगा ।

मैं भगवान बुद्ध को श्रद्धापूर्वक नमन करते हुए इस आध्यात्मिक अनुष्ठान की सफलता के लिए शुभकामनाएं प्रेषित करता हूं ।


भैरों सिंह शेखावत



CHIEF MINISTER

Jammu and Kashmir

D.O.NO:CMJK/PS/OS/97

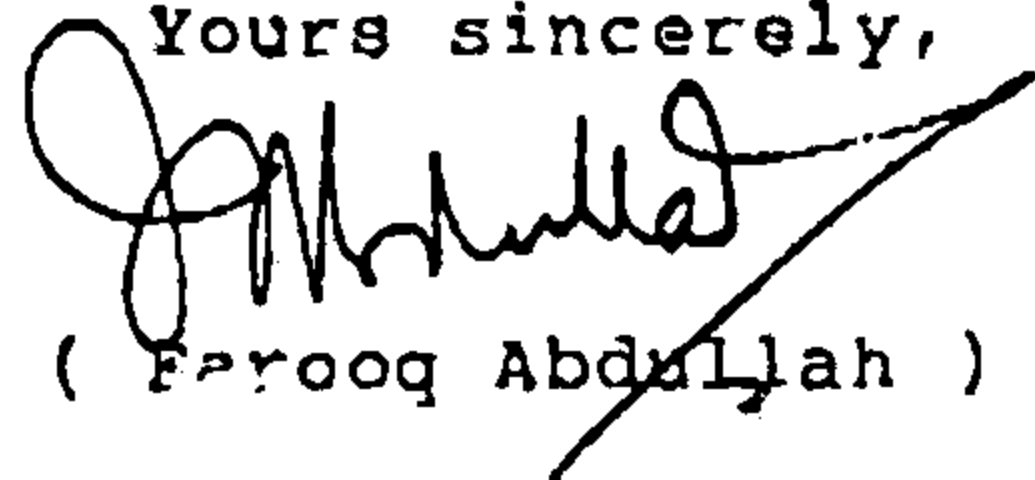
Srinagar, the
June 10, 1997

Dear Shri Subash Chandra Ji,

I appreciate your Vipassana Stupa Project which aims at introducing people to non-sectarian meditation.

I wish you all success.

Yours sincerely,



(Farooq Abdullah)

Shri Subash Chandra,
President,
Global Vipassana Foundation,
Green House, Second Floor,
Green Street, Fort,
Mumbai.

Fax No: 91-22-266 4607

DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

Mantralaya, Mumbai 400 032



MAHARASHTRA

Date: 11th Aug. 1997

I am happy to know that a great monument to attract more people to vipassana is being built in Mumbai.

I am sure that this great stupa of 350 ft. height will draw many more thousands of people to vipassana and to the true life and teachings of Gautam, the Buddha, which have been lost to India for centuries.

My Government, and personal good wishes are with the global vipassana foundation in this worthy project.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gopinath Munde'.

(GOPINATH MUNDE)



KATHMANDU
NEPAL

The Prime Minister

June 16, 1997

Message

I thank you for your letter informing me about the construction of a Vipassana Stupa being built near Mumbai, India. You may be pleased to know that I have myself attended a 10-day Vipassana Meditation Course and benefitted from it.

On behalf of the people of Nepal where Lord Buddha was born, I take pleasure in extending my best wishes for the success of your noble project. May your efforts to propagate the Teachings of Buddha be successful and may Dhamma spread far and wide to the cause of the human society of the world.

Lokendra Bahadur Chand
(Lokendra Bahadur Chand)



MINISTER FOR
Social Welfare, Women and Child Welfare,
Ex-Servicemen's Welfare and Prohibition Propaganda

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA
Mantralaya, Bombay 400 032

Dated 29th July, 1997.

I am glad to know that a grand Vipassana Stupa is being built in Mumbai to draw people to Vipassana - the pure, universal, non-sectarian teaching of the Buddha.

In these past decades, since Shri S.N.Goenkaji brought back the Vipassana technique to India from Myanmar (Burma), one sees every section of society reaping benefits through the practice of Vipassana.

It is particularly noteworthy that even the world of business and industry is incorporating the very ancient technique of Vipassana into their work culture. Many well-known corporate companies are regularly sending their employees to get trained in Vipassana. A better mind makes a better employee, who in turn makes a happier family and society.

Shri Goenkaji, who was himself a successful, well-known businessman in Myanmar, knows fully well the stress and enormous strain involved in the pursuit of wealth. With a expanding economy and a growing, competitive global market, Vipassana is a much-needed balancing factor and a proven coping mechanism to give one the happiness that money alone cannot give. I have personally undergone number Vipassana courses and have been immensely benefitted by it.

I earnestly wish that this new Vipassana Stupa will help bring Vipassana to many more suffering sections of society.

(BABANRAO GHOLAP)

Global Vipassana Foundation,
Green House, Green Street, Fort, Mumbai - 23.



ပြည်ထောင်စု မြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော် အစိုးရ
သာသနာရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန
(ဝန်ကြီးရုံး)

Government of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Religious Affairs
(Office of the Minister)

Date. 30.7.97

MESSAGE OF GOODWILL

We are glad to take the opportunity of observing very keenly with all the respect, appreciation and pride, the various Dhamma Dūta works of Mahā Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja Sayagyi U S N Goenka in India and in the world. He learned the quintessence of Buddha Dhamma in Vipassanā from late Thray Sithu Sayagyi U Ba Khin in Myanmar and carried it to India and to many other countries spreading Paṭipatti for the good and benefit of the suffering humanity all around the world, we have noted with great interest his success in spreading the Paṭipatti Dhamma and then the Pariyatti Dhamma as well. He took up the responsibility of publishing the Buddha's words in Tipiṭaka and the commentaries in book form and now the same is being produced in CD Rom which is very inspiring

The project of building the grand, magnificent pagoda, in the size and shape of the world famous Shwedagon pagoda of Yangon, in Mumbai the most populated as well as the financial capital city of India is very significant in the sense that the holy relics of the enlightened one will be enshrined there and large number of meditators will be able to meditate Vipassanā, sitting around the relics with great satisfaction and happiness, we also note that the pagoda will have a gallery for the exhibition of the life and the teachings of the enlightened one. This will certainly be very informative, educative and inspiring to the people of the country where Buddha Dhamma originated. It will also inspire people of the world who will visit this pagoda.

The monumental pagoda will be a memorial to the eventual return through the devoted efforts of Gururji U Goenka to its original home of Paṭipatti and Pariyatti Dhamma of Gotama Buddha.

It will also serve as a significant symbol of friendship and cultural ties between Myanmar and India. These ancient connections go back to the days when the Buddha first appeared in Majjhimadesa and when the first men to meet him, the two businessmen from Okkalapa of Myanmar, were granted the eight hair relics for their worship, now enshrined in the great Shwedagon pagoda.

(Lt Gen Myo Nyunt)
Minister
Ministry of Religious Affairs

මගේ අංකය
எனது இல.
My No. } S/02/241



ඔබේ අංකය
உமது இல.
Your No. }

බුද්ධ ශාසන අමාත්‍යාංශය
புத்த சாசன அமைச்சு — MINISTRY OF BUDDHA SASANA

සුභාසි ඩයරිස් චතුර ධර්මසිරි

July 25th, 1997

Sri Radhe Shyam Goenka,
Trustee,
Global Vipassana Foundation,

**MESSAGE FROM THE HON. MINISTER OF BUDDHA SASANA,
CULTURAL & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, SRI LANKA**

I am glad to be associated with the laying of the foundation stone of the Vipassana Stupa at Mumbai, India. The service to the Buddha Sasana that is being performed by the Global Vipassana Foundation in propagating vipassana meditation world-wide is immense. Sri Lanka too has taken an active part in the revival of vipassana meditation with the establishment of a permanent centre devoted solely to the teaching and practice of the vipassana technique as taught by Sri Goenka. Buddha relics too were donated with the blessings of the Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka for enshrinement in the main stupa now being constructed at Mumbai.

The construction of the new stupa and Dhamma hall will surely prompt another leap forward in the propagation of vipassana meditation. I wish the Global Vipassana Foundation every success in this very worthy endeavour.

Lakshman Jayakody

MINISTER OF BUDDHA SASANA,
CULTURAL & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

सिद्धराज ठड्डा
चौड़ा रास्ता, जयपुर-302003
फोन नं. : 312419

Sri Siddhraj Dhaddha,
Ex. Minister of Rajasthan

SIDDHARAJ DHADDA
Chaura Rasta, Jaipur-302003
Phone No. : 312419

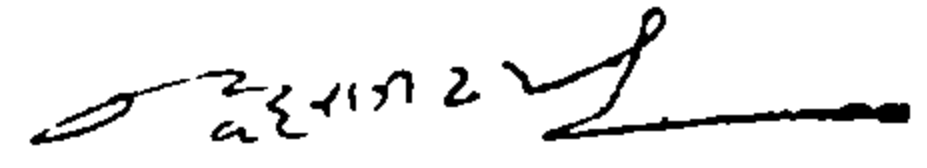
दिनांक- 20.6.97

Message

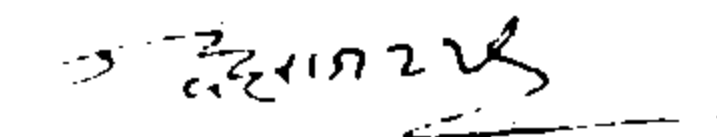
आदरणीय अध्यक्षी,

विश्वना साधना के कार्य को गति देने के
लिये मुंबई में विश्वना स्तूप का निर्माण किया जा रहा
है यह जानकर प्रसन्नता हुई ।

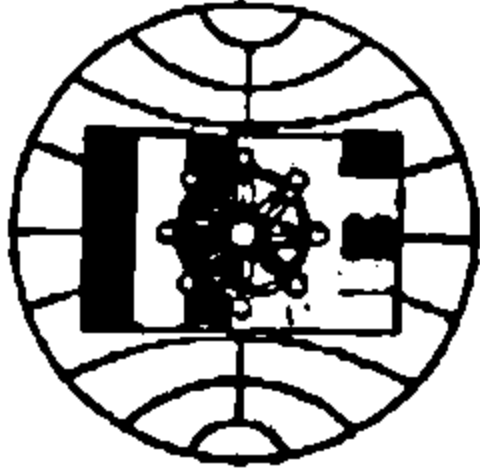
मेरा यह सौभाग्य रहा है कि भारत में जब
विश्वना को आदरणीय श्री लत्यनारायणजी गोयनका द्वारा
पुनर्जीवन प्राप्त हुआ तभी से मेरा इस प्रवृत्ति से संपर्क हुआ ।
विश्वना साधना का आध्यात्मिक व नैतिक चरित्र के निर्माण
में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान है । विश्वना के प्रचार-प्रसार में मानव
का कल्याण, खासकर भारतीय परिवेश में, निहित है । ऐसी
शुभ प्रवृत्तियों को जगन्मयता का आशीर्वाद सदा प्राप्त है ।


-- सिद्धराज ठड्डा

आपका,


} सिद्धराज ठड्डा }

श्री तुभाजन्द्र,
अध्यक्ष, स्तूप विश्वना फाउंडेशन,
ग्रीन हाउस, लेक फोर,
ग्रीन वूड, मोर्ट मुंबई- 400023



世界佛教僧伽會

中華民國台北市紹興北街六號 • 電話：3219425 • 3962602

WORLD BUDDHIST SANGHA COUNCIL

6. Shaoxing N. Street Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C. Tel. 3219425 • 3962602 Cable "TBAROC" Taipei

Sept. 15, 1997

Dear Mr. Goenka,

The project of building a Grand Pagoda in the land of the Buddha is a very meritorious act. The Torch of Wisdom, Taiwan R.O.C. and Global Vipassana Foundation, India are thus proclaiming the beginning of the Second Dispensation of the Buddha's teaching, in India and around the world. This towering, magnificent monument in such a big city is a proper place for the relics of the Sakyamuni Buddha.

The coming together of the Dhammika people from around the world for this lofty task is need of the time. I have no doubt that it will aid the peace process in the entire world.

India is the centre of the cultural map of the world. I am sure that this monument will attract and inspire millions on the Path of Pure Dhamma for coming centuries.

My blessings and best wishes are with you on the auspicious occasion of the Foundation Laying ceremony and will always be with you for successful completion of the project.

May all beings be happy, be peaceful, be liberated.

Yours in Dharma,

Wu Ming
Ven. Wu Ming
President



ဘဒ္ဒန္တသောဘိတ

(အဘိဓဇမဟာရဋ္ဌဂုရု)

(အဘိဓဇအဂ္ဂမဟာသဒ္ဓမ္မဇောတိက)

ဥက္ကဋ္ဌဆရာတော်

နိုင်ငံတော် သံဃမဟာနာယကအဖွဲ့၊

ဓမ္မဒီပကျောင်းဆောင်၊ ကမ္ဘာအေးကုန်းမြေ၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့၊
မဟာဝိသုတာရာဇိက ပဓာနကျောင်းသစ်၊ ကိုးဆောင်တိုက်၊ မြင်းခြံမြို့။

ဖုန်း - ၆၆၁၇၄၆ ဓမ္မဒီပ

၂၂၄၆၂၂ သစ်တော်ကျောင်း

ရက်စွဲ ------

ပြည်ထောင်စု မြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်၊ နိုင်ငံတော် သံဃမဟာနာယကအဖွဲ့၊ ဥက္ကဋ္ဌဆရာတော်
ဘဒ္ဒန္တသောဘိတ အဘိဓဇမဟာရဋ္ဌဂုရု၊ အဘိဓဇအဂ္ဂမဟာသဒ္ဓမ္မဇောတိက ၏
သာရဏီရကထာ

ဂေါတမဗုဒ္ဓ ရှင်တော်မြတ်ဘုရား ပွင့်တော်မူရာ အိန္ဒိယနိုင်ငံ၌ ဗုဒ္ဓသာသနာတော်သည် နှစ်ပေါင်းများစွာ
ကွယ်ပျောက်နေခဲ့ရာမှ ယခုတစ်ဖန် ဝိပဿနာတရားပြဆရာကြီး မဟာသဒ္ဓမ္မဇောတိကဓဇ ဦးဂိုအင်ကာ၏ ထက်သန်
ကြိုးမားသော လုံ့လဖြင့် လွန်စွာကြိုးကုတ် အားထုတ်ဆောင်ရွက်ခြင်းကြောင့် ပြန်လည်ထွန်းတောက်လာခဲ့လေသည်။

ယင်းသို့ အိန္ဒိယနိုင်ငံ၌ ဗုဒ္ဓသာသနာတော် ပြန်လည် ထွန်းတောက်ခြင်း၏ အထိမ်းအမှတ် အဖြစ်ဖြင့်
ဘုံဘေးမြို့အနီးတွင် စေတီတော်ကြီး တည်ဆောက်ကိုးကွယ်ရန် စီမံဆောင်ရွက်မှုသည် ဗုဒ္ဓသာသနာတော်အတွက်
တန်ဖိုးမပြတ်နိုင်သည့် အလွန်မွန်မြတ်သော သာသနာပြုလုပ်ငန်းကြီး တစ်ရပ်ဖြစ်ပေသည်။

ပူဇော်ကြသူ နတ်လူအပေါင်းတို့မှာလည်း -

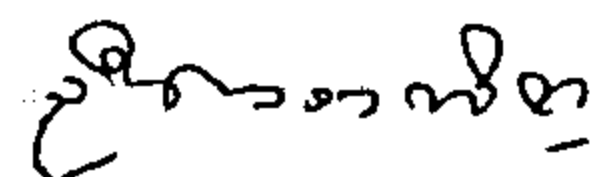
ပူဇာရဟော ပူဇယတော၊ ဗုဒ္ဓေ ယဒိဝ သာဝကေ။

ပပဇ္ဇသမတိက္ကန္တေ၊ တိက္ကသောကပရိဒ္ဒဝေ။

တေ တာဒိသေ ပူဇယတော၊ နိဗ္ဗုတေ အကုတော ဘယေ။

န သက္ကာ ပုည သင်္ခါတုံ၊ ဣမေတ္တမပိကေနစိ။

ဟူသော ဓမ္မပဒ (၄၂) လာ ဒေသနာတော်နှင့်အညီ ဤရွှေ၊ ဤမျှဟု မရေတွက်နိုင်သော ကောင်းမှု၏အကျိုးကို
ရရှိခံစားကြရမည်ဖြစ်၍ ထိုစေတီတော်ကြီး လျင်မြန်စွာပြီးစီးအောင် ဆောင်ရွက်နိုင်ကြပါစေဟု ဆုတောင်း
ပတ္တနာပြုလိုက်ပါသည်။



ဘဒ္ဒန္တသောဘိတ

ဥက္ကဋ္ဌဆရာတော်

နိုင်ငံတော် သံဃမဟာနာယကအဖွဲ့၊

ဓမ္မဒီပကျောင်းဆောင်၊ ကမ္ဘာအေးကုန်းမြေ၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။

Sāraṇīya Kathā

Memorable Message of Felicitations from the Venerable Bhaddanta Sobhita, Abhidhaja Mahāratthaguru, Abhidhaja Aggamahā Saddhammajotika, Chairman of State Sangha Mahā Nāyaka Committee, Union of Myanmar.

The Light of Buddha Sāsana which has disappeared for many centuries from India where Gotama Buddha had gained Enlightenment has again shone forth over the Indian Continent as a direct result of intense devotion and ardent endeavours on the part of the great Vipassanā teacher Mahā Saddhamma Jotikadhaja U Goenka.

As a magnificent Memorial to the reappearance of the Light of Dhamma in all its glory in the land of its origin a great Stupa is being constructed in the neighbourhood of Mumbai. This is indeed a performance of great beneficence which will contribute to the Prosperous growth and development of Buddha Sāsana.

In accordance with the Dhammapada verse:

**Pūjārahe pūjayato, Buddhhe yadiva sāvake,
Papañcasamatikkante, tinnasokapariddave.**

**Te tādise pūjayato Nibbute akutobhaye.
Na sakkā puññaṃ saṅkhātum imettamapikenaci.**

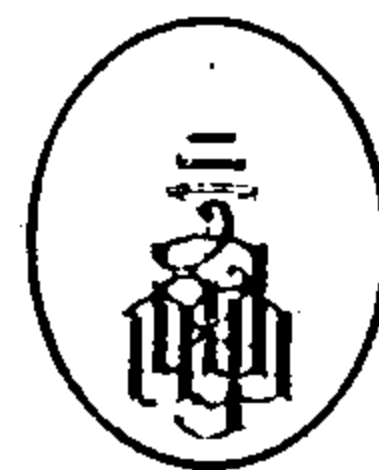
This great Stupa will indeed bring forth much merit which cannot be measured as this much or that much to untold number of men and devas. We fervently pray for a speedy and successful completion of the construction of this Auspicious Pagoda.

**Venerable Bhaddanta Sobhita,
Chairman,
State Sangha Mahā Nāyaka Committee,
Kaba Aye, Yangon.**



WAT BOVORANIVES VIHARA

248 Phra Sumera Road, Bangkok 10200, Thailand Tel: 281 2831 A, Fax: 280 0141



The fact that Mr. Satya Narayan Goenka, a Burmese Buddhist, has seriously joined various countries all over the world, including Thailand, to seriously propagate Buddhism, should be considered a good news for the world, in view of the fact that the whole world has been in trouble brought about by human *kilesa* as well as natural phenomenon. The whole trouble is brought about by those lacking correct understanding of Buddhism, and positive in the truth that Buddhism brings about happiness to the world.

The power of Buddhism will become true only whenever the practise is truly done. This is the sacred of Buddhism which brings about happiness in reality.

May I congratulate Mr. Satya Narayan Goenka who managed for the construction of a grand stupa, with a view to reminding the importance of Buddhism. The Buddha attained Nirvana about 2500 years ago, but his Buddhism is still the greatness. Buddhism teaches people to abstain from all wrong-doings and being a well-doer, keep one's mind clean and clear. That will bring about happiness to the world in general.

Sd. Phra Nyanasamvara
(Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara)

The Supreme Patriarch of Thailand

中國佛教會

The Buddhist Association of Republic of China

No.6, Shao-shing North Street

Taipei, Taiwan

Tel:(886-2)321-9425 • Fax:(886-2)321-4516

Sept. 15, 1997

Dear. Mr. Goenka,

It gives me great Dhamma-joy to know that Torch of Wisdom, Taiwan R.O.C. and Global Vipassana Foundation, India have undertaken the historical project of building the Grand Pagoda in Mumbai, India.

History is repeating itself in this sublime collaboration between the Chinese and the Indians. For centuries there has been exchange of Dhamma practices, scriptures and relics between the two people. This is also an occasion for my country to pay back the debt of the Dhamma that we received from Gotama the Buddha--that great son of India, nay, the entire world.

This magnificent monument will not only be a fitting resting place for the relics of the Buddha but will also attract millions in the coming centuries to the pure, universal teachings of the Buddha.

I give my blessings and best wishes on the pious occasion of the Foundation Laying ceremony.

Yours in Dharma,

Ching Hsin
Ven. Ching Hsin
President

Ven. Rambukwelle Sri Dharmarakshita Vipassi
Mahanayaka Maha Thera
Siyam Maha Nikaya

Tel: Nila Arama (Official Residence) 08-22500
24157



Malwatu Maha Vihara
Kandy
Sri Lanka

15. July 1997

Mahanayaka Maha Thera

*THE MASSEGE

I am very happy to hear anew 'Vipassana Stupa' is being built in Mumbai - India.

The primary aim of this 'Vipassana Stupa' is to introduce people to the non - sectarian Vipassana meditation and generate awareness about this pure scientific technique of mental purification by realization of truth as taught by the Lord Buddha.

wisdom and ultimate reality is gained only through Bhavana (Meditation). Knowledge and intelligence only helps in wandering about in the world of sansara. Spritual knowledge comes only through Bhavana and 'Panna' or ultimate wisdom 'Reality' comes through 'Vipassana' Bhavana.

I wish you all Peace and Happiness

'Sabbe Satta Bhavantu Sukhitatta.

By Metta,

Ven Rambukwelle Sri Dharmarakshita Vipassi
Mahanayake Maha Thera
Malwatu Maha Vihara
Kandy - Sri Lanka.

"Sukhā Sanghassa Sāmaggi"
Happy is the Unity of the Saṅgha

Madihe Pannaseeba Mahathera
Head of the Dharmarakshita Sect
of the Amarapura Nikaya.
Tele: 550207 Maharagama
588830 Vajiraramaya

Siri Vajiranana Dharmayatanaya
Siri Vajiranana Mawatha
Maharagama
Sri Lanka.

20th JULY... 1997.... $\frac{253}{199}$

TO : MR. RADHE SHYAM GOENKA
Trustee,
Global Vipassana Foundation.

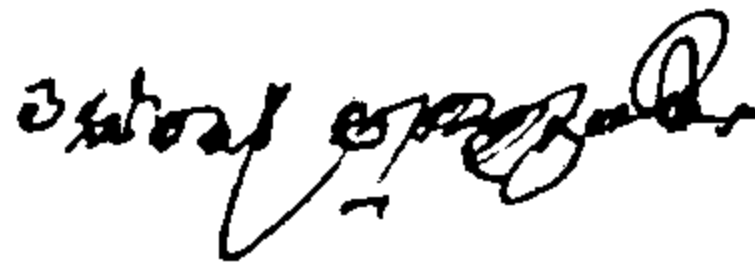
INDIA

DEAR MR.,

IT IS INDEED A GREAT PLEASURE TO LEARN THAT THE GLOBAL VIPASSANA FOUNDATION HEADED BY THE PRINCIPAL VIPASSANA TEACHER MR. S.N. GOENKA IS PLANNING TO BUILD A NEW VIPASSANA STUPA IN MUMBAI, INDIA. SINCE IT IS GOING TO BE A VERY LARGE PLACE OF BUDDHIST PRACTICE (THE PLANNED DHAMMA HALL ALONE WILL ACCOMMODATE AT LEAST TEN THOUSAND MEDITATORS.). I AM SURE THAT THIS WILL BE BENEFITING ENORMOUSLY TO THE VIPASSANA PRACTITIONERS, NOT ONLY IN INDIA BUT ALSO FROM MANY COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD .

I CONGRATULATE VERY SINCERELY ON THIS GREAT OCCASION AND MAY THE TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA BE WELL SPREAD IN THE WORLD AND LIGHT THE LIGHT OF PEACE AND WISDOM . MAY THIS NOBLE VENTURE OF SPREADING PEACE THROUGH THE DHAMMA LIVE LONG .

WITH METTA .



MADIHE PANNA SIHA MAHA THERA .

MADIHE PANNASIHA MAHANAYAKA THERA
SIRI VAJIRAGNANA DHARMAYATANAYA
(Buddha Training Centre)
SIRI VAJIRAGNANA MAWATHA
MAHARAGAMA

Ven. Balangoda Ananda Maitreya Mahanayake Thera

Sri Nandaramaya
Udumulla
Anandamaitreya Road,
Balangoda
Sri Lanka

23 July 1997

GLOBAL VIPASSANA FOUNDATION
Green House, Second Floor,
Green Street, Fort
Mumbai-400 023
INDIA

Thank you for inviting me for the Ceremony of setting foundation stone for the shrine in the Vipassana Centre in Mumbai. As I am too old to leave my residence, I am sorry that I am not in a position to be present at the ceremony. I bless and hope the ceremony may be successful and the Shrine may come to existence before long.

बि. वि. प्र. का. का. स. द. नं. १८३/०४७

कोन नं. २-२४६०७



“सुखी सङ्घस्त सामागी”

अखिल नेपाल भिक्षु महासंघ

(स्थापित : सम्बत् २००७)

प्रधान कार्यालय :
विश्व शान्ति विहार
बीन जवन, नयाँ बानेश्वर
काठमाडौं, नेपाल

मिति २०-८-१९९६

मंगलमय कामना

शाक्यमुनि बुद्धको पवित्र अस्थिपातु निधान गरीकन दश हजार विपस्सनाका साधकहरू बसेर विपस्सना ध्यान गर्नसकिने धम्महल सहितको ३५० फीट अग्ला विपस्सना स्तूप वसुत्पन्न हुने कुरा सुनेर धेरै धम्मपीति भएकोछ ।

विश्व विपस्सना संस्थानको यस पुण्य-प्रयासमा सबै देशका सबै विपस्सना साधकहरू र ब्रह्मातुहरूको ब्रह्मा-सुमन अर्पित हुने नै छ र प्रायोजनानुसार विपस्सना स्तूप निर्माण सम्पन्न होस् भन्ने हार्दिक मंगलमय कामना गर्दछु ।

(भिक्षु कुमार काश्यप महास्थविर)


अध्यक्ष

अखिल नेपाल भिक्षु महासंघ //

ဇေယျာဓိရာဇ်နန္ဒီတော်
 နန္ဒီတော်သံဃမဟာဘုရား
 အကျိုးတော်ဆောင်ရွက်တော်
 သန့်စင်အပ် (အဂ္ဂမဟာပဏ္ဍိတ)
 (အဘိဓမ္မောက္ခမဟာသန့်စင်ရှင်) ကို
 သာဓကပြုပါသည်။

[illegible]

ထို့ကြောင့် ဆရာတော်က ဟိုဗုဒ္ဓသာသနာ့ ဖြစ်တော်မူကြောင်း၊
တော်တော်တော် နာမည်ကျော်ကြားကြောင်း၊ နာမည်ကျော်ကြားကြောင်း၊ နာမည်ကျော်ကြားကြောင်း၊
ပစ္စုပ္ပန်လုပ်ကံပါသည်။

10/10/10

Sāraṇīya Kathā

Memorable Message of Felicitations sfrom the Venerable Bhaddanta Kumāra, Agga Mahā Paṇḍita, Abhidhaja Agga Mahā Saddhammajotika, General Secretary of State Sangha Mahā Nāyaka Committee, Union of Myanmar.

Through ceaseless endeavours of the Vipassanā Teacher Mahā Saddhammajotikadhaja U Goenka, a great disciple of Sayagyi U Ba Khin, Founder of the International Meditation Center of Inya Myaing Street, Yangon, the extinguished Lamp of Buddha Dhamma has been relighted in its original home of India.

As a deserving Memorial to this performance of great merit, a Stupa is to be erected in the vicinity of Mumbai, India

This construction of a great Stupa near Mumbai in India in honour of the Supremely Enlightened Buddha may be likened to the erection of the Thuparama Stupa in Sri Lanka by King Devanampiya Tissa at the instance of the Arahant Venerable Mahā Mahinda, the first Buddhist missionary to Sri Lanka or to the erections of Shwezigon Pagoda and Lokananda Pagoda of Bagan in Myanmar by king Anawratha or Anuruddha Deva, at the instance of the Venerable Arahant Dhammadassi.

The great Stupa is bound to serve as a beacon illuminating in all directions the Path of Dhamma for all wayfarers, ensuring long endurance and prosperity of Buddha's Teaching. We fervently wish a speedy completion of the construction of this great Memorial in honour of the Self-awakened Buddha.

Bhaddanta Kumāra
General Secretary
State Sangha Mahā Nāyaka Committee
Union of Myanmar.

Ven. Dr. Mapalagama Wipulasara Thero
Director & Chief High Priest
PARAMA DHAMMA CHETHIYA PIRIVENA
Fax: 94 (1) 593901 / 734679

70, Pirivena Road,
Mount Lavinia
SRI LANKA.
Phone: 730149

29th May, 1997

Mr. S.N. Goenka
Green House

MESSAGE FROM VEN. DR. MAPALAGAMA WIPULASARA THERO
PRESIDENT, THE MAHA BODHI SOCIETY OF INDIA

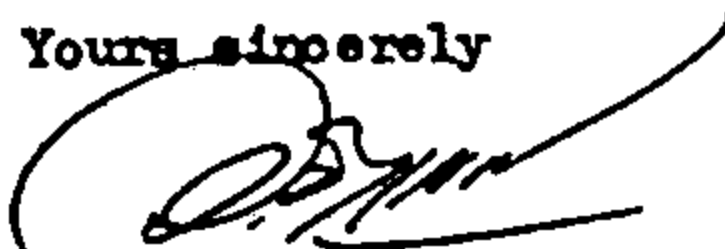
As President of the Maha Bodhi Society of India it gives me great pleasure to contribute to the souvenir to be published on the occasion of the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Vipassana Stupa in Mumbai.

Your idea is very appropriate at a moment when most Westerners are looking towards clear understanding on the nature and destiny of humanity. Most intellectuals agree that Buddhism accord with some of the modern advanced scientific and philosophical insights.

I feel quite confident that this venture will usher a new era of illumination and establish a global atmosphere to obtain solace and relief to all practitioners of Vipassana - the methodical investigation of reality in the Universe, through mind training that leads to the highest liberation.

May the Noble Path guide you in all your undertakings to propagate the profound Dhamma.

Yours sincerely



Dr. Mapalagama Wipulasara Thero
Director & Chief High Priest



NAMO BUDDHAYA

Maha Bodhi Society of India

(Founded by Anagarika Dharmapala in 1891)

[Registered under W.B.S.R. Act 1961. Regn. No. S/2666/61 of 1916-16]

Post Box No. 12365 * Grams : "BUDDHIST" Calcutta * Phone : 2415214

Fax : 91-33-241-5214 / 91-33-241-2100 ATN : MIF-34

Headquarters :

4A, BANKIM CHATTERJEE STREET, CALCUTTA-700 073, INDIA.

Ref. No.....

Date 9th, 7, 25

To,

Kalyana Mitra Sri S.N. Goenka,
Global Vipassana Foundation,
Green House, 2nd Floor,
Green Street, Fort,
Bombay-400 023.

Dear Kalyan Mitra Sri S.N. Goenkaji,

I am extremely pleased to receive your cordial invitation to me to join the auspicious foundation laying ceremony of the grand Vipassana Dhamma Stupa at Buddha Dweep in Mumbai, the largest cosmopolitan commercial city of India on 26th October 1997. With a height of over 300 feet, it will be one of the highest monument of its type in the world. This monument with its gallery of exhibits showing the life and teachings of the Buddha will certainly help in educating the people of India and of the whole world, the true significance of Buddha's teachings which was readily adapted in the past by people around the world as it gave wonderful results.

Those who are Vipassana meditators will be able to get the benefit of sitting around the relics of the Enlightened One and meditate.

I shall be happy to donate a portion of the genuine Buddha's relics from the Mahabodhi Society for enshrining in the new Pagoda. Enshrining the Buddha's relics in such Pagoda will be a real honour to the relics, and will be as per Buddha's last instructions. The relics so enshrined will be a source of immense enthusiasm among the faithful, and also help the Vipassana meditators to take advantage of its strong vibrations by meditating in its close proximity in the Pagoda.

I send you my best wishes for the successful completion of this noble project. May this monument bring peace and harmony to all.

Yours in the Dhamma,

Ven'ble Dr. D. Rewatha Thera)
General Secretary,
Maha Bodhi Society of India
Headquarters, Calcutta.

ဘဒ္ဒန္တပညိန္ဒာဘိဝံသ

(ဓာရမဟာပဏ္ဍိတ)

ဒုတိယ ဥက္ကဋ္ဌ

နိုင်ငံတော် သံသမဟာနာယက

မဟာအောင်မြေဘုံစံကျောင်းတိုက်

ဦးထောင်မိုလ်လမ်း၊ ဗဟန်းမြို့နယ်

ရန်ကုန်တိုင်း

ဖုန်း(၀၆၅၃၂)

စာမျက်နှာ ၁၀၀

မြတ်စွာဘုရားသည် နိဗ္ဗာန်ရောက်ရှိပြီး ပွင့်တော်မူခဲ့ပြီး
နောက် သာသနာတော် သုံးရပ်ကို တည်ထောင်တော်မူခဲ့ပါ
သည်။ ထိုသာသနာတော် သုံးရပ်သည် ပရိနိဗ္ဗာန်စံပြီးနောက်
စာတန်ကြာရောင် တည်တံ့နေတော်မူလည်းနောက် ပိုင်းတွင် နိဗ္ဗာန်
ယူနိုင်ငံမှ ကွယ်ပျောက်ခဲ့ပါသည်။ မြတ်စွာဘုရားသည် နောင်
လာ နောက်သားများ၏ သုံးတန်ချမ်းသာ အလို့ငှါ ပရိနိဗ္ဗာန်
စံပြီးနောက် ထွက်တော်မူတော်မူများ ကျန်ရစ်ရောင် အဓိ
ဋ္ဌာန်တော်မူခဲ့ပါသည်။ ယခုအခါ ဝိပဿနာတရားပြ ဆ
ရာပြီး မဟာသဒ္ဓမ္မဇရာတိကဇေ ဦးဂိုဏ်က က
ထိုတော်တော်မူတော်များကို ဌာပနာ၍ ဘုံအာဇာနည်
ကွင်း စေတီတော်တည်မည်ဟု သိရှိရ၍ ဝမ်းမြောက်နှု
မော်သာစုစုပါပြီ။ သာရဏီယ စကား
မိန့်ကြားသိစေပါသည်။



Sāraṇīya Kathā

Memorable Message of Felicitations from the Venerable Bhaddanta Paññindābhivaṃsa, Agga Mahā Paṇḍita, Vice-Chairman, State Sangha Mahā Nāyaka Committee, Union of Myanmar.

The Supremely-Enlightened Buddha had appeared in India and established the three-fold Teaching of Pariyatti, Paṭipatti and Paṭiveda which lasted till after the Parinibbāna of the Gotama Buddha , but later disappeared altogether from India.

The Homage-Worthy One had, however, made a resolution to leave behind his relics so that they may be enshrined in Stupas for people to feel reverence and devotion to the virtues of the Buddha in their minds.

We come to know that the great Teacher of Vipassanā, Mahā Saddhamma-jotikadhaja U Goenka is having such a stupa erected near the city of Mumbai enshrining some of the very relics left behind by our Gotama Buddha. We send this memorable message of felicitations in appreciation of the great deed of merit performed for the welfare and prosperity of mankind

Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu

**Bhaddanta Paññindābhivaṃsa
Vice - Chairman
State Sangha Mahā Nāyaka Committee
Union of Myanmar.**

ဘဒ္ဒန္တပဏ္ဍိတဘိဝံသ
ဓမ္မမဟာ ဂန္ထဝါကေ ပဏ္ဍိတ
သာသနာလင်္ကာရ သာမဏေကျော်
အစိုးရဂုဏ်ထူးဆောင် ဓမ္မာဓိဃ
ဝေဟိယာဏ ဓမ္မာဓိဃ

ဖုန်း-၆၂၉၉၇

၆၆၂၉၉၇ -

နာယကချုပ်ဆောင်

အခန်း(၃)

နိုင်ငံတော် ပရိယတ္တိ သာသနာ့တက္ကသိုလ်

ကမ္ဘာ့ဆေးကုန်မြေ၊ မရမ်းကုန်းမြို့နယ်၊
ရန်ကုန်မြို့။

ဓာတုသင်္ကေတ-၁၁၀၆၁

ရက်စွဲ ၂.၁.၆.၉၉

သာရဏီယကထာ

ဆရာကြီး ဦး ဂျီကန်ကတ် သာသနာ့ဥပုသ်များမှာ ကျွန်ုပ်တို့
တို့ သိရ၍ နာမည် ဝမ်းမြောက်ပါသည်။ ဤကြီး စာအုပ်ဟောသော
နာမ် " ဝမ်းမြောက်ဆရာတော်၊ ဆရာကြီး ဦးကန်၊ ဆရာကြီး
ဦးဂျီကန်တို့၊ ဟောပြောကြားပြော ကမ္ဘာမှာ ဝိပဿနာတရား
တို့ကို အားပံ့ပိုး " စသည်တို့ကို ဟောပြောပါသည်။

မူရင်းစာကို ဖုဒ္ဓမြတ်စွာ၏ ဥဒ္ဓိသစေတီတော်
စဉ်ဆား ပျံ့နှံ့အောင် နှစ်စဉ် တပ်ဆင် ဝမ်းမြောက်ပါသည်။
စေတီတော်အတွင်း၌ တပ်ဆင်အောင် အစစ်အမှန် ဌာပနာအဖြစ်
ပျံ့နှံ့အောင် အားပံ့ပိုးတရား ကျင့်တမ်းမှုများအဖြစ်ကြောင့်
ဤ ဝမ်းမြောက်စွာ ဟောပြောပါသည်။

စာအုပ်အတွက်


၂.၁.၆.၉၉

ဘဒ္ဒန္တပဏ္ဍိတဘိဝံသ
(ဓမ္မမဟာ ပဏ္ဍိတ)
နာယကချုပ်

Sāraṇīya Kathā

Memorable Message of Felicitations from the Venerable Bhaddanta Paṇḍitābhivamsa, Agga Mahā Paṇḍita, Rector of the State Pariyatti Sāsana University, Kaba Aye, Yangon.

I am always delighted to hear the good news of Dhammadūta works by the great Vipassanā Teacher U Goenka. In my public lectures, I never fail to mention the spread of Vipassanā practice through out the world, thanks to the great endeavour of Mahasi Sayadaw, Saya Gyi U Ba Khin and Saya Gyi U Goenka

It gives me intense happiness therefore to hear that Saya Gyi U Goenka is crowning his success in Dhammadūta by erecting a Stupa enshrining therein the true relics of Gotama Buddha. This will indeed be a great work of merit bestowing great benefits to those who come to honour the Buddha at the Shrine.

**Bhaddanta Paṇḍitābhivamsa
Agga Mahā Paṇḍita,
Rector of the State Pariyatti Sāsana University,
Kaba Aye, Yangon.**

MAHACHULALONGKORNRAJVIDYALAYA UNIVERSITY

(Under Royal Patronage)

Office of the Rector
Tel. 2214859
Fax 2214859



Wat Mahadhatu, Maharaj Rd,
Bangkok 10200, Thailand.
Tel. 2234386

Message

As it is well known that Buddhasasana is a scientific religion, which requires a belief associated with reason or wisdom in absolute reality, realization of truth is an individual experience, which has nothing to do with logic and speculation, but the highest and transcendental wisdom.

To study Buddhadhamma is unlike learning any other subject in the worldly affairs. A Buddhist monk takes a course in Buddhasasana not simply for the sake of knowledge, but for applying it in self-training process aimed at the highest peaceful state of mind i.e. Nibbana, then the liberated monk would share his inner peace of mind with all laity who have supported him with the four requisites.

In the present world, however, the lay Buddhists and others have not enough time to study Buddha's teachings formally, and devote themselves in practice. But many of them would not miss the benefit deriving from the study and the practice of Dhamma. Because, there are some great meditation masters like Sayagyi Goenka who have been tirelessly working towards the spreading of Buddhasasana and subsequently the Buddhist insight meditation culture has spread rapidly to over 90 countries and there are 50 centres located in India and other countries.

Therefore, on behalf of Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University and Thai Buddhists, we would like to express our gratitude and joy learning that the great Vipassana Stupa is being built in Mumbai. We earnestly pray for the success and progress of Dhamma-activities in order to constantly enrich Vipassana culture and the peaceful state of mind for all intricate, conflict-ridden, weary and perplexed human beings in the world.

Yours in the Dhamma,

(Phra Rajvaramuni)

Rector

Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University

Mahamakut Buddhist University
Under Royal Patronage
Wat Bovornivesvihara Bangkok, 10200
Tel. 281-6427, 282-8302-3, 282-8109
Fax. 281-0294



มหาจุฬาราชวิทยาลัย ในพระบรมราชูปถัมภ์
วัดบวรนิเวศวิหาร ถนนพระสุเมรุ กทม. ๑๐๒๐๐
โทร. ๒๘๑-๖๔๒๗, ๒๘๒-๘๓๐๒-๓, ๒๘๒-๘๑๐๙,
๒๘๒-๘๑๐๙, ๒๘๒-๑๗๑๙ โทรสาร ๒๘๑-๐๒๙๔

Message

I am glad to know that Mr. Satya Narayan Goenka, a Burmese-born businessman of Indian origin, one of the best Upasakas of 20th century, and a worthy pupil of great Vipassana teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin, has proved name of his teacher by establishing more than hundred Vipassana Centers in India and abroad. Mr. Goenka known for his valuable deeds and selfless service of Dhamma has now earned the gratitude of Dharmmic World by the effort he has made for the construction of about 350 feet tall Stupa, a grand historical monument for awareness of Vipassana. Mr. Satya Narayan Goenka has been eminently successful in projecting Vipassana, a scientific way of purifying the mind through truth realization. Vipassana means wisdom, seeing things the way really they are. In Vipassana, the meditator experiences ultimate truth directly. It trains the meditator to catch his own thoughts right away; to make the right decision at the right moment, to see things as they really are. Whenever we see something with liking or disliking, we should know right away that we on the wrong path, because we are seeing the thing through the screen of our preferences and emotions, not as it is in itself. Through his untiring and dedicated efforts Mr. Goenka has spread the Buddha's teaching, Vipassana, far and wide.

I appreciate Mr. Satya Narayan Goenka's work and I wish his progress in the Dhamma. He may get complete success in his goal. May all his kindness and all his good deeds he has done lead him to the happiness and Niravana.

Yours in the Dhamma,

Phra Dhammapanyajarn
(Phra Dhammapanyajarn)

Rector

Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya, Buddhist University



ဘဒ္ဒန္တဇောတိပါလ
(အဂ္ဂမဟာပဏ္ဍိတ)
ကြွေတ်ဝိုင်း ဆရာတော်
ကြွေတ်ဝိုင်းကျောင်းတိုက် ပဲခူးမြို့

ဖုန်း (၀၅၂) ၂၁၀၈၂

ရက်စွဲ.....၂၇-၁-၉၇.....

ပဲခူး - ကြွေတ်ဝိုင်းဆရာတော်၏
သမ္မောဒနိယ ဓမ္မကထာ

ဝိပဿနာတရားပြဆရာကြီးဦးဂို အင်ကာ(မဟာသဒ္ဓမ္မဇောတိကဝေ)ကဦးဆောင်၍ဆရာကြီး၏အပြည်ပြည်ဆိုင်ရာဝိပဿနာပေါင်းဒေးရှင်းမှအလှူရှင်များကစုပေါင်းစုဆောင်းပြီးအိန္ဒိယနိုင်ငံဘုံဘောမြို့အနီး၌မြန်မာနိုင်ငံရန်ကုန်မြို့မှလေးဆူခါတ်ပုံရွှေတိဂုံစေတီတော်ကြီးနှင့်ပုံစံတူစေတီတော်ကြီးတစ်ဆူကိုတည်ထားကိုးကွယ်ကြတော့မည်ဖြစ်ကြောင်းကြားသိရသောအခါစိတ်ထဲတွင် "လူအရသာသာသနာ"၊ "ဆရာဒါယကာ ရေနှင့်ကြာ"၊ "ကုသိုလ်ကောင်းမှု များများပြု"၊ "ကုသိုလ်ရိက္ခာ ကိုယ်နောက်ပါ" ဟူသောစကားများကိုသတိရမိပါသည်။

ဤစေတီတော်ကြီးသည်မြတ်စွာဘုရားရှင်၏သာသနာတော်ကြီးသည်အိန္ဒိယနိုင်ငံတွင်စတင်ပေါ်ပေါက်ခဲ့သော်လည်းအိန္ဒိယနိုင်ငံမှပျောက်ကွယ်သွားခဲ့ပြီးနောက်ဆရာကြီးဦးဂိုအင်ကာ၏ကြိုးပမ်းဆောင်ရွက်မှုကြောင့်ယခုအခါတွင်အိန္ဒိယနိုင်ငံသို့ပြန်လည်ရောက်ရှိခြင်းအထိမ်းအမှတ်အဖြစ်ရပ်တည်နေတော့မည်ဖြစ်သည်။

ဤစေတီတော်ကြီးသည်ရှေးနှစ်ပေါင်းများစွာကတည်းကရှိခဲ့သောအိန္ဒိယနှင့်မြန်မာနိုင်ငံတို့၏ယဉ်ကျေးမှုဆက်နွှယ်မှုကုန်သွယ်ရေးဆက်သွယ်မှုတို့ကိုဖော်ထုတ်ပြသရာအထိမ်းအမှတ်စေတီတော်ကြီးအဖြစ်လည်းတည်ရှိနေမည်ဖြစ်သည်။ဂေါတမမြတ်စွာဘုရားရှင်ပွင့်တော်မူသောအချိန်တွင်မြန်မာနိုင်ငံမှတပုဿနှင့်ဘလ္လိကကုန်သည်ညီနောင်တို့သည်အိန္ဒိယနိုင်ငံသို့ရောက်ရှိကြ၍မြတ်စွာဘုရားရှင်ထံမှဆံတော်များရရှိကာရွှေတိဂုံစေတီတော်အတွင်းတွင်ဌာပနာခြင်းပြုခဲ့ကြသည်။

ဤအထိမ်းအမှတ်စေတီတော်ကြီးသည်မြန်မာနိုင်ငံနှင့်အိန္ဒိယနိုင်ငံတို့၏ချစ်ကြည်ရင်းနှီးဆက်နွှယ်မှုအစဉ်အလာကိုခိုင်မြဲသည်ထက်ခိုင်မြဲစေမည်သာမကဂေါတမမြတ်စွာဘုရားရှင်ကိုကြည်ညို၍ရောက်ရှိလာကြမည့်သူအပေါင်းအားချမ်းသာသုခတိုးပွားစေလိမ့်မည်မှာအမှန်ပင်ဖြစ်ကြောင်းသမ္မောဒနိယဓမ္မကထာရေးသားချီးမြှင့်လိုက်ရပါသည်။

နေ့စွဲ- ၂၇-၁-၉၇
ဖုန်း - (၀၅၂) ၂၁၀၈၂

၂/ ဘဒ္ဒန္တဇောတိပါလ
ဘဒ္ဒန္တဇောတိပါလ
ကြွေတ်ဝိုင်း ဆရာတော်
ကြွေတ်ဝိုင်း ကျောင်း တိုက်
ပဲခူး မြို့

Sammodaniya Dhammakathā

Congratulatory message with thoughts of Dhamma from the Venerable Bhaddanta Jotipāla, Agga Mahā Paṇḍita, Kyakhat Waing Monastery , Bhago.

On hearing the news that Global Vipassanā Foundation headed by the great Vipassanā Teacher, Mahā Saddhamma Jotikadhaja U Goenka are erecting near the city of Mumbai, a great Stupa exactly like our great Shwedagon Pogoda, these suddenly appeared in my mind:

"The essence of human existence is Sāsana, as the lotus is to water, so is the disciple to the Teacher .

Strive to perform much meritorious deeds, they indeed will sustain you in the long journey of Samsāra."

The Stupa which is going to be erected on auspicious grounds near Mumbai will be a great memorial to be the reappearance of the Buddha's Teaching in the land of its origin as a result of the tireless Dhammadūta endeavours of Saya Gyi U Goenka.

It will also serve as a symbol of close cultural and mercantile links between India and Myanmar going back to the ancient time when Myanma merchants Tapussa and Bhallika brought back to Myanmar the hair relics of the Buddha which are now enshrined in the great Shwedagon Pagoda

I feel intensely happy that this great Memorial Stupa will not only strengthen existing close relationship between Myanmar and India but also bring welfare and happiness to all who visit there in reverence to Gotoma Buddha

**Bhaddanta Jotipāla
Kyakhat Waing Monastery
Bhago**

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INTERNATIONAL BUDDHIST ACADEMY
SAGAING HILLS
SAGAING CITY
MYANMAR
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Sep. 12, 1997

Highest Congratulations and Blessings

I received a message that S. N. Goenka the well-known meditation master of the present world, is going to build a replica of the Shwedagon Pagoda, one of the great wonders of the world, in India near Bombay. The Shwedagon Pagoda is the earliest stupa in the world. Seven weeks after the Buddha's Enlightenment two merchants from Myanmar (Burma) started to build this pagoda in which they enshrined eight hair-relics of the Buddha which had been given to them by the Buddha himself.

At the time of Emperor Asoka there were, in the whole of India, 84000 stupas and countless number of statues. Nowadays we can only see the Sanchi stupa in its original form, and no other stupa exists in the Asokan style. The land of India is the mother of great cultures, peerless gems, and priceless Buddhist works of art.

Today I received the most wonderful and delightful piece of news that S. N. Goenka and his students are going to build in India the exact replica of the Shwedagon Pagoda in its original dimensions. This news fills me with great joy and I rejoice wholeheartedly in this most wonderful and sacred project.

May all people who know their duty maintain their priceless culture, sacred literature, and ancient teachings. He who knows duty does his duty.

May the Dhamma last long, and prevail in its pristine purity in his motherland.


12.9.97
Ashin Nyāṇissara

Aggamahāpaṇḍita, Aggamahāsaddhammajotikadhaja
Mahādhammakathikabahujaṇahitadhara
Sāsanadhajadhammācariya
Sitagū International Buddhist Academy
Sagaing Hills
Sagaing, Myanmar

May all beings be happy

**IIE**

สำนักงานใหญ่
องค์การพุทธศาสนิกสัมพันธ์แห่งโลก
616 ในอุทยานเบญจสิริ
ซอยสุขุมวิท 24 แขวงคลองเตยเหนือ
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**A Message
from
President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists**

On the auspicious occasion of the Foundation Stone Laying ceremony of Vipassana Stupa at Mumbai, India on October 26, B.E. 2540 (1997) with the purpose to promote scientific technique of mental purification by means of Vipassana practice, we are glad to extend our congratulations and best wishes to the President Trustee and all those who cooperate and participate in the praiseworthy activities.

Vipassana or spiritual insight means seeing things as they really are. To promote Vipassana is to promote peace and happiness based on morality, tranquillity and wisdom.

May this admirable movement be sincerely supported and cooperated wide and far.

Prof.

(Sanya Dharmasakti)
President of the WFB.

September 15, B.E. 2540 (1997)
Bangkok, Thailand.

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SO SAID SAYAGYI U BA KHIN

- *The fruits of meditation are innumerable.*
- *A balanced mind is necessary to balance the unbalanced minds of others.*
- *For those who want to meditate continually for longer periods, a place is necessary.*
- *The Dhamma can stand the test of those who are anxious to do so. They can know for themselves what the benefits are.*
- *Love which alone is a means for the unity of mankind must be supreme, and it cannot be so unless the mind is transcendently pure.*
- *Just as the light of a candle has the power to dispel darkness in a room, so also the light developed in one man can help dispel darkness in several others.*
- *The world is facing serious problems. It is just the right time for everyone to take to Vipassana meditation and learn how to find a deep pool of quiet in the midst of all that is happening today.*
- *Instead of using intelligence for the conquest of atomic energy in matter without, why not use it also for the conquest of atomic energy within. This will give us the "Peace Within" and will enable us to share it with all others.*
- *Dhamma eradicates suffering and gives happiness. Who gives this happiness? It is not the Buddha but the Dhamma, the knowledge of anicca within the body, which gives this happiness. That is why you must meditate and be aware of anicca continually.*
- *It is our experience that under a proper Guide this Inner peace and purity of mind with Light can be secured by one and all, irrespective of their religion and creed, provided they have the sincerity of purpose or are prepared to submit to the Guide for the period of trial.*
- *Only those who take to meditation with good intentions can be assured of success. With the development of the purity and the power of the Mind backed by the Insight into the Ultimate Truth of Nature, one might be able to do a lot of things in the right direction for the benefit of mankind.*
- *This is not the age for showing miracles, such as rising into the air, and walking on the surface of water, which would be of no direct benefit to the people in general. But if the physical and mental ills of men could be removed through meditation, it should be something for one to ponder over.*
- *Anicca is inside of everybody. It is within reach of everybody. Just a look into oneself and there it is - anicca to be experienced ... anicca is, for householders, the gem of life which they will treasure to create a reservoir of calm and balanced energy for their own well-being and for the welfare of society.*
- *What is happiness? For all that science has achieved in the field of materialism, are the peoples of the world happy? They may find sensual pleasures off and on, but in their heart of hearts, they are not happy when they realize what has happened, what is happening and what may happen next. Why? This is because, while man has mastery over matter, he is still lacking in mastery over his mind.*
- *The time clock of Vipassana has now struck...*
- *I have given you Anicca as the Dhamma for refuge. For so long as you are with anicca, you are with me. Anicca when properly developed will solve almost all your problems. It might not even be necessary for you to ask questions for answers. As the*

appreciation of anicca grows, so will the veil of ignorance fade away. When the way becomes clear for the Right Understanding, doubts and fears will disappear automatically. You will then see things in the true perspective.

□ *For progress in Vipassana meditation, a student must keep knowing anicca as continuously as possible. The Buddha's advice to monks is that they should try to maintain the awareness of anicca,*

dukkha or anatta in all postures... Continuous awareness of anicca, and so of dukkha and anatta, is the secret of success. The last words of the Buddha just before he breathed his last and passed away into Mahāparinibbāna were: 'Decay (or anicca) is inherent in all component things. Work out your own salvation with diligence.' This is, in fact, the essence of all his teachings during the forty-five years of his ministry. If you will keep up the awareness of the anicca that is inherent in all component things, you are sure to reach the goal in the course of time.

*Alaṅkato ce'pi samaṃ careyya
Santo danto niyato brahmacārī
Sabbesu bhūtesu nidhāya daṇḍaṃ
So brāhmaṇo so samaṇo sa bhikkhu*

A householder wearing costly garments, yet living in mental calm and quiescent, with tamed, tranquilised senses, does not hurt or harm or blame any being, and is living a pure Dhamma life leading to assured liberation, he is indeed a Brahmin, a Samana, a Bhikkhu.

—Dhammapada (142)

Our gratitude to all the teachers of Dhamma from Sakyamuni Gotama the Buddha to Sayagyi U Ba Khin is boundless. Without the dissemination of the Dhamma by them and without their safeguarding it in its pristine purity for so many centuries, how could we have got this invaluable gem of Dhamma in our present life.

We bow down to their memory to express our feelings of deep devotion and infinite gratitude.

—Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

WHY THE GRAND PAGODA ?

S.N. Goenka

Every enlightened person (*sammāsambuddha*) teaches Dhamma (Dharma) which is universal, can be practised by everyone and is beneficial to all humanity - good both for oneself and others. An enlightened person is neither interested in establishing a religion or sect, nor in creating a horde of blind followers who remain involved in performing different lifeless rites and rituals, trapped in cults and dogmas, ostentatious sectarian ceremonies and celebrations - without actually getting the immense benefits from applying the Dhamma in their lives.

An enlightened person is only interested in such a practical, beneficial aspect of Dhamma. He lives a moral life (*sīla*) and teaches others to live a similar moral life abstaining from all such unwholesome physical, vocal actions that hurt, harm and affect the peace and harmony of others.

To live a life of morality, one has to learn how to control and discipline one's wild, fickle mind, i.e. through the practice of *samādhi*. An enlightened person lives such a life with a controlled mind and teaches others how to control the mind.

To live a moral life, it is also essential to keep the mind pure, eradicating all the unwholesome mental defilements like craving, clinging, aversion, hatred, ill-will, animosity, delusions, illusions etc. This eradication can only be completely done by developing insight i.e. *paññā* (*prajñā*). One can then fill the purified mind with wholesome vibrations of compassionate love and goodwill for all beings, i.e. *mettā*. An enlightened person himself lives a life of pure mind, full of infinite love and compassion and teaches others Vipassana to develop these mental qualities.

An enlightened person will be concerned only with observing the above three practical aspects of Dhamma and will totally avoid argumentative quarrels and debates based on this or that philosophical blind belief.

Sākyamuni Gotama was such an enlightened person, a *sammāsambuddha*. Like any other enlightened person, he taught *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā* - by prac-

tising which he himself became enlightened.

There are no sectarian boundaries involved in the practice of *sīla* (morality) which can and should be practised by everyone. It cannot be a monopoly of any particular sect. It is universal.

To become perfect in *sīla*, *samādhi* is taught in a non-sectarian way: by observing the flow of one's own natural breath, something which is totally universal. This is no monopoly of any particular sect.

The Buddha taught the technique of Vipassana - to purify the mind totally, by breaking its unwholesome habit-pattern at the deepest level. Again the object of meditation is entirely natural and universal. One learns to observe within oneself the ever-changing sensations on the body, the reality of mind-matter interactions, with equanimity. Through regular practice of Vipassana one understands, by direct experience, how defilements arise at the root level of the mind and multiply, how that process can be stopped and how the foundations for the arising of future defilements can be demolished.

So Vipassana involves making an analytical study of the mind-matter phenomenon and purifying the mind by breaking its unwholesome habit-pattern. Anyone practising Vipassana can acquire the same beneficial results and develop feelings of pure love and compassion. It is definitely not the monopoly of any particular sect, because the subject of this practice, i.e. the interrelation of mind and body, is based on pure science. Hence it is universal.

The quintessence of Buddha's teaching is nothing except developing *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā* through practising Vipassana. The teaching is totally non-sectarian. To practise Vipassana it is not necessary to get oneself converted from one organized religion to another organized religion. The Buddha's original teaching is not a religion as the word is conventionally understood.

The Buddha taught Dhamma - a moral, wholesome way of life - which is universal, and can be practised by anyone in any particular sect. He did not teach

'Buddhism', and was not interested in making anyone a 'Buddhist'. He taught Dhamma and made people *dhammiko* (dhārmika), *dhammattho* (dharmistha). Going through the entire original teachings of the Buddha along with its commentaries - in 146 volumes, 52,602 pages and 7,448,248 words - the words 'Buddhism' or 'Buddhist' (Bauddha) are not found anywhere. Even during the early Asokan period, i.e., three centuries after Buddha, such words have never been used. Emperor Asoka had himself practised Dhamma and inspired others to practise only Dhamma. This fact is established in his rock edicts and pillars.

People started using these words like 'Bauddha', 'Bauddha Dharma', or 'Bauddha Darśan' many centuries after Buddha when his original, universal teaching in the form of Vipassana and the entire related literature was lost. These terms have unfortunately created a misunderstanding that the universal Dhamma as taught by the Buddha is also like one of the many sectarian organized religions.

Although it was lost in the country of its origin, fortunately, some in the neighbouring country of Myanmar both preserved and maintained the Buddha's teaching of Vipassana in its original, pristine purity. This pure teaching was brought back to India in 1969. After a gap of nearly two millennia, Vipassana, the priceless jewel of Dhamma was returned to the land of its birth.

Since its reappearance in the country of its origin, Vipassana has spread far and wide. It has abundantly proved its efficacy as a result-oriented, non-sectarian teaching acceptable to all religious communities. Large numbers of people in over 90 countries are taking advantage of this scientific practice of mental purification.

Just as the exercise of Yoga i.e. *prāṇayāma* and *āsanas* is universally practised for sound physical health without converting oneself to any particular religion, similarly Vipassana is also practised by all for sound mental health at the deepest level, without converting oneself to any particular religion.

Large numbers of high government officials and corporate executives are taking advantage of Vipassana to get progressively relieved from stress and to increase their efficiency and productivity.

Thousands of prisoners are practising Vipassana, transforming their mental attitudes completely and benefiting from the resultant peace and harmony in their lives. Large numbers of school and college students are taking full advantage of this technique to increase their faculties of memory and understanding whilst developing self-esteem, self-confidence and humane qualities like tolerance, good-will etc. at an early age. Many undertake Vipassana to easily come out of addictions like smoking tobacco, consuming alcohol and also drugs. Some rehabilitation centres for drug addicts in countries of the developed world like Australia and Switzerland have adopted Vipassana in their programmes with encouraging results.

With this background in mind, the purpose of building a Vipassana Pagoda is as follows:

1. This huge monument will attract large numbers of people who will get the true message of Vipassana and be encouraged to practise it.
2. Following the instructions in the last will of the Enlightened One, the genuine Buddha relics will be enshrined at the centre of a large central hall where about 10,000 Vipassana students can sit and meditate jointly, getting advantage of the powerful vibrations emanating from the relics.
3. During the past nearly one-and-half to two millennia, the actual historical truth about the life and teachings of the Enlightened One has not only disappeared from the country but a gross misinformation has spread making him a mythological divine figure, completely forgetting his historical human reality. Besides, his rational, scientific teachings were totally misunderstood and became wrongly considered as just another of the many sectarian dogmas and religious tenets. The Pagoda will have an informative gallery exhibiting the actual historical life of the Buddha, and the benefit of the practice of Vipassana derived during his lifetime.
4. The Pagoda will be a vehicle for the spread of the Buddha's true teaching that emphatically opposes any sectarian, casteist, religious dogmas. The teaching is already proving to be an ideal bridge for peace, tolerance and harmony across all the communal and regional divides splintering India today. The strongly secular nature of Vipassana is

further proved by its acceptance amongst people of all religions, nations, sects and socio-cultural backgrounds. Vipassana courses are taking root in even some of the staunchly sectarian countries.

5. With the genuine relics enshrined, the Pagoda will become a centre of tremendous attraction for the devotees of the Buddha around the world to come and pay their respects to the relics and get the message of Vipassana - the quintessence of the teaching of the Enlightened One that is lost in their countries also. Hence, this magnificent structure will also be a great symbol for creating goodwill amongst countries that have traditionally revered the Buddha.
6. Centuries ago, India served humanity at large by distributing the invaluable gift of Vipassana. This proved so very effective and beneficial that people accepted and adopted it wholeheartedly. History now is repeating itself, with the rapid spread of Vipassana to many countries across the six continents. The Vipassana Pagoda will be a central symbol of this spiritual tradition.
7. This monument will be an added focus of attraction to visitors and tourists worldwide, who come to this ancient country looking for its rich cultural traditions or something magnificent in the spiritual field. The sheer size, grandeur and architectural style of the Pagoda itself will be sufficient to gain its entry into tourist maps. Even the tourists who visit the Pagoda as merely another

monument to sight-see, will get the great opportunity to receive the true teachings of the Enlightened One, understand their benefits and may be inspired to follow the practical path of Vipassana.

9. The main purpose for the construction of the Pagoda, however, is to give greater impact to the teachings of the Buddha by injecting fresh life and vitality with the introduction of Vipassana. This will also make clear the true perspective of the historical Buddha as a great therapist (*cikicchako*), a physician (*bhisako*), a surgeon (*sallakatto*), a research scientist (*ariya sacca gavesi pariyavesi*). This is how he used to describe himself during his lifetime, as found in the original words preserved in his mother tongue - Pāli. The aim is also to expose his teaching as the greatest practical science of self-psychotherapy that the world has ever acquired.

May this clear and correct understanding of the rationale behind the construction of the Vipassana Pagoda be well understood by one and all.

May the Truth triumph and may more and more suffering people come out of the mental agony by the practice of Vipassana, the invaluable ancient cultural heritage of India for the good of many, for the benefit of many.

Bahujana hitāya, Bahujana sukhāya.

*Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ
kusalassa upasampadā
sacitta pariyodapanam
etaṃ buddhāna sāsanaṃ.*

—Dhammpada -183

Not to do evil, to cultivate merit, to purify one's mind totally - this is the teaching of the Buddhas.

*Uttiṭṭhe nappamajjeya
dhammaṃ sucaritaṃ care
Dhammacāri sukkam seti
Asmiṃ loke paramhi ca.*

—Dhammapada-168

Arise. Be not heedless. Practice Dhamma scrupulously. One who practices Dhamma lives happily here and hereafter.

VIPASSANA IN GOVERNMENT

an effective instrument for change and reform

Ram Singh

Vipassana, an ancient meditation technique of India, is the quintessence of Buddha's teaching. It is a method of objective observation of mind-body phenomena, leading to purification of mind.

The technique is non-sectarian and can be practised by all irrespective of caste, creed, religion or nationality.

The technique has been found to be an effective means for attitudinal change, management of stress and strain and for instilling such qualities as compassion, equanimity, integrity and efficiency in the discharge of one's duties and responsibilities.

In the remote past, as far back as the third century B.C., Asoka, the Great Emperor of India, used Vipassana as an instrument of reform in the governance of his vast empire. His actions in the administration and management of State reflect piety, love, magnanimity, high moral discipline and ethical conduct in his personal as well as public life. He organized a system of government, efficient, humane and responsive to public weal, unparalleled in human history!

The record of his administration chiselled on rocks and stones in the different parts of his empire, on the highways and hills, caves and public places enshrines the noblest sentiments of a man who loved his people like his own children, offered respect to all sects and religious faiths and instilled confidence in the neighbouring countries for peace and concord.

In one of his most renowned Edicts, inscribed on the Delhi Topra Pillar, Asoka gives a comprehensive review of the measures he took during his reign. Through the words of the inscription, we gain a valuable insight into the character of the man. He says that, whereas kings and rulers prior to him cherished the same wish as his for advancement of people, failed, yet he succeeded. He explains in the Edict : he used *nijhatiyā* – variously interpreted as inner meditation, reflection, contemplation—Vipassana. He further says that let this fact be engraved on stones and pillars so that his message endures till Sun and

Moon shine on Earth!

This is, indeed, an eloquent record of an effective use of Vipassana to achieve the aims of a government committed to the welfare of the people.

In the post-Asokan period, the impact of Vipassana continued for several centuries as the graphic accounts of the Chinese pilgrims indicate, where they speak highly of the culture and civilization of the people and how they lived in peace prosperity and harmony. As the time passed and centuries after centuries rolled by, distortions and admixture was caused in the technique by unscrupulous elements. Vipassana lost its efficacy, and finally the pure practice disappeared altogether in India, the home of its origin.

However, Myanmar (then Burma), our neighbouring country, has preserved this technique in its pristine purity through a chain of teachers from generation to generation since its inception. During the period of Asoka, *dhamma messengers* were sent to many countries far and wide, including Myanmar, to spread the message of The Enlightened One, the message of Vipassana.

Sayagyi U Ba Khin in the recent past (1898-1971) was an outstanding lay teacher of Vipassana. As the Accountant-General of Myanmar, he introduced far-reaching reforms in the departments under his charge. He succeeded in eradicating corruption, instilling efficiency and accelerating the pace of decision-making and fostering harmony and better relationships. He says: "The fruits of meditation are innumerable—those who take to meditation with good intention can be assured of success. With the development of purity and the power of the mind backed by insight into the Ultimate Truth of Nature, one might be able to do a lot of things in the right direction for the benefit of mankind..... many advantages accrue to a person who undergoes a successful course of training whether he be a religious man, an administrator, a politician, a businessman or a student". Sayagyi U Ba Khin maintained that medita-

tion can help in "creating a reservoir of calm and balanced energy to be used for the building of a welfare state and as a bulwark against corruption in public life." This was amply illustrated by his own noble example!

Sayagyi U Ba Khin deeply desired that Vipassana should return to India, the home of its origin. He entrusted this mission to Shri S. N. Goenka, his illustrious student, who arrived in India in 1969 and with his first course in the month of July, the same year, set in motion the Wheel of Dhamma once again.

Some years later, it so happened that the Home Secretary to the Government of Rajasthan attended one of Goenkaji's courses. By his own experience, he immediately found the technique to be effective, with immense potential to bring about positive change in individuals and organizations.

Thus it was that the Government of Rajasthan took a pioneering decision to introduce Vipassana as an instrument of reform in its own organizations. As a first step, Goenkaji was invited to conduct a Vipassana course in the Central Jail, Jaipur in the year 1975 for jail inmates convicted of heinous crimes and some members of jail staff. The course yielded wonderful results. The convicts felt remorseful and greatly relieved of tensions, with perceptible change in their behaviour. The jail staff who participated in the course developed greater awareness towards their duties and responsibilities.

The success of the course led to the organization of a course in the Rajasthan Police Academy in early 1976 in which police officers of all ranks participated. The course had a profound impact on the behavioural pattern of the participants. They gained a clearer perception of their functions and roles and developed greater awareness of their duty towards the society. Then followed a second course in the Central Jail, Jaipur conducted by Goenkaji with similar results.

During the same period, some senior officers in the Home Department in the Government of Rajasthan who attended Vipassana courses were instrumental in initiating internal reforms leading to the reduction of paper work, quicker decision-making, clearance of pending work accumulated over years

and better staff-officer relationships. Departments coming within the jurisdiction of the Home Department were re-organized and their training system streamlined resulting in greater efficiency, economy in functioning and the inculcation of trust and harmony.

Subsequent to the successful experiments in Rajasthan, Vipassana courses were organized in the Central Jail, Sabarmati, Ahmedabad and the Central Jail, Vadodra in Gujarat State with positive results. In 1993, the first Vipassana course was held in the Central Jail, Tihar, New Delhi, one of the biggest prisons in Asia, followed by four more courses and then a mega-course of over one thousand jail-inmates in 1994. This course was conducted by Shri S.N. Goenka himself which made a significant impact on the prisoners, an event unique in the annals of prison reform. Central Jail, Tihar now has a full-fledged Vipassana centre exclusively for the prison inmates where regular courses are being held, leading to a change in the prison environment and enabling a continuous process of human development.

The Government of India has recommended to the State governments to consider introducing Vipassana in prisons as a measure of reform.

The Government of Maharashtra has taken a major step towards the introduction of Vipassana in all the jails of the State. A regular centre has been established in the Nashik Central Jail, as in Tihar. Similarly, Vipassana courses are being organized in the Central Jails in the States of Haryana, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

The Government of Maharashtra has also taken a decision to provide an opportunity to senior officers to avail themselves of the benefits of Vipassana courses, for which they can receive commuted leave and actual travel expenses according to their entitlement.

The Government of Madhya Pradesh has taken a decision that officers joining Vipassana courses held in the State Academy of Administration will be considered to be on duty.

The Government of Rajasthan has recently decided that police personnel of all ranks belonging to State and Subordinate Services be exposed to Vipassana meditation courses, including personnel of

various police stations in the city of Jaipur. In a major policy decision the Government has enabled all cadres of officials to have the benefit of special leave to attend Vipassana courses. The Government has also decided to have regular courses for trainees in the State Institute of Public Administration and Rajasthan Police Academy and other training institutes.

This is a brief account of the contribution of Vipassana to government in India at the present time.

Today government plays an all-pervasive role in the society. The character and quality of government is shaped by the people who run the administration and who exercise control over it. They have

to be trained to be humane, responsive and of high integrity. This cannot come about by imparting skills in management only. Attitudes have to be changed – an eternal challenge to mankind. Vipassana can change attitudes.

Vipassana is now available to all through the benevolent effort of Shri S.N. Goenka, the founding father of the Vipassana movement in India and the world. Its efficacy is well tested in the past, as well as now.

By making Vipassana an integral part of training systems, we can be assured of a good government, the noblest aspiration of every citizen. Vipassana is the most effective resource of human development, an invaluable heritage of India.

*Devo vassatu kālena sassa sampatti hetu ca
Phīto bhavatu loko ca rājā bhavatu dhammiko*

May the clouds rain in time for generating agricultural wealth.
May the people be prosperous. May the ruler be imbued in Dhamma.

*Shāsana meṇ jāge Dharama
Ukhade bhrashtāchāra
Dhaniyoṇ meṇ jāge Dharama
Swaccha hoyā vyāpāra*

May Dhamma arise in governments,
May corruption be eradicated.
May Dhamma arise in the corporate world,
May commerce be pure and honest.

—Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

MEDITATIVE EXPERIENCES

Justice Surendra Nath Bhargava

Chairperson, Assam Human Rights Commission, Guwahati
Former Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court,
Former Justice of Rajasthan, High Court.

When I was a judge of the Rajasthan High Court at Jaipur I had an occasion to hear the discourse of Respected Shri Satya Narayan Goenka (Guruji). I was very much impressed by his simplicity, humility, devotion, dedication and depth and clarity of thoughts.

I decided that I must go for a course of Vipassana for ten days at the earliest. I was lucky to get the opportunity of doing the course at Jaipur in the presence of Guruji Shri Satya Narayan Goenka.

I was very much impressed by the discipline which was to be maintained in the course at Jaipur. One has to maintain silence for ten days continuously without having any access to T.V.,radio,newspaper,telephone-call or even talking amongst the participants of the camp. We were given very healthy and nourishing food and I thoroughly enjoyed my camp. The daily routine in the camp was also very strict and everything punctual.

Initially I thought that I will not be able to complete the course and follow the strict discipline. But I am glad, I could complete the course and also observe the discipline strictly. It was unique experience and cannot be described in words. One will not believe unless he himself takes the course.

After completing the course I found myself very healthy not only physically but also mentally. It gave me occasion to know myself. The whole method is very simple and one is introvert throughout the period without any disturbance from outside.

The boarding and lodging are all free during the camp and one can donate whatever he likes after completing the course. It gives peace of mind, new thinking, new approach and develops a new way to life and feeling towards others. If everyone goes through this training the whole society can be changed and the present ills in the society regarding hatred towards each other, fear, disrespect, distrust will all

vanish. The cancerous growth of corruption everywhere will also be controlled automatically.

I wish Vipassana spreads all over the world for the benefit of the individual society, and humanity.

Justice D.R. Dhanuka

Former Judge of Bombay High Court.

In May 1991, I was lucky to participate in the ten-day Vipassana course in Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri, with the help of my friend Shri Madhusudan Mor. I was much impressed by Vipassana and the principles underlying the same. Accordingly, I found silence effective and more powerful than speech. Meditation and concentration should become a way of life. I was benefited. I believe that it is highly useful and worthwhile to learn the Vipassana technique. We have to march ahead towards experiencing a good life under the guidance of Shri Goenkaji and his colleagues.

I am happy to record my view and impressions in brief. I shall be very willing to join the Vipassana course in future, whenever I get the chance.

Justice K.G. Shah

Former Judge of Bombay High Court

On the recommendation of my yoga Guru Dr. Dhananjay Gunde of Kolhapur, my wife and I attended the Vipassana meditation course at Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri, Maharashtra between January 17, 1997 and January 28, 1997.

Without any hesitation, I would say that the experience we both had during the course was invigorating and exhilarating. At the end of the course, we came out of the serene atmosphere of Dhamma Giri with almost everlasting sense of well being. We really felt that we were changed persons, certainly not the same persons we were when we entered the course. There was perceptible change in us throughout in body, mind and spirit.

The management of the course under the able guidance and supervision of the moving spirit of Shri, Satyanarayan Goenkaji (Guruji) was flawless. The

volunteers meticulously took care of the smallest needs of the participants of the course.

I am looking forward to attending such a course once again on an opportune occasion. I am sure Vipassana which so far has helped thousands of people in mind, body and spirit will progress in this country and ameliorate the sufferings of many, many more people.

I would take this opportunity of thanking Shri. Satyanarayan Goenkaji for having started this movement in this country, as also the volunteers of the course, who untiring and ungrudgingly catered to the needs of the participants.

Of course, Guruji's lectures in person as also on the video cassettes and the guidance given by the assistant teachers during the course was of immense help to one and all who participated in the course in understanding what is Vipassana and putting it into practice.

Madhukarrao Chaudhari

Former Speaker of Assembly, Maharashtra

Vipassana is of immense importance for the development of a human being. Lord Buddha attained enlightenment by following the path of Vipassana.

Acharya Goenka, who is a living master of Vipassana, is endeavouring very hard to spread the message of this great art of life.

I am a humble practitioner of Vipassana and I have been immensely benefited in my life.

D.R. Karthikeyan, I.P.S.

Special Director, Central Bureau of Investigation, New Delhi.

I have undergone the ten days meditation course at Hyderabad Centre only recently. I should confess that I have not been strictly following the prescribed schedule of meditation every day, as I am constantly on the move, being in charge of three different full-time jobs with headquarters at Delhi, Hyderabad and Chennai.

Yet, one can say with certainty that the results are perceptible. One realizes the truism, life is not a problem but a reality to be experienced. We are prisoners of our behaviour patterns. The mind is the cause of misery and the individual is the key to transform the society.

Vipassana is a practical method for emotional and spiritual education on a non-sectarian basis. It reduces hostility and helplessness; enhances hope and a sense of well-being. While reducing stress, it fosters positive attitude. While instilling the right values, it purifies the mind, physical well-being becoming a valuable by-product.

The unique technique results in self-transformation by self-observation. It is healing by observation and in accordance with the universal law of nature.

When one realizes by experience, the concept of impermanence, the entire attitude towards life, day-to-day situations and relationships with others become more positive.

The Vipassana technique of meditation brings out all unnecessary and accumulated mental load that one carries all the time. One develops detachment and equanimity. We do become observers of ourselves. One is amazed to realize how our body and mind have become the storehouse of innumerable and unwanted impressions.

Even in the very short time that I have been exposed to Vipassana I am able to increasingly accept people as they are instead of trying to change them all the time, to fit them in my own standard 'frame'. To that extent life has become calmer, healthier, peaceful and positive.

My wife Kala who underwent the 10 days course at Hyderabad centre later than me also shares the same experience.

R.B. Budhiraja

Principal Secretary (services)

Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai.

I attended a ten-day programme of Vipassana Meditation at the Vipassana International Academy, Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri, District Nasik. I found this programme to be extremely useful and the meditation technique goes a long way in helping the participants get a better knowledge of the way their own mind functions. It is an art of living and can help one to eliminate tensions in every day life and develop positive creative energy. The beauty is that it can be availed of by all irrespective of their caste, creed or

religion. It is totally and absolutely non-sectarian.

Realising the importance of Vipassana for its officers, the Government of Maharashtra issued a Resolution No. 2496 / 3 / SER-9 dated 15th May 1996, allowing officers of the rank of Deputy Secretary and above with a minimum age of 45 years to avail of 14 days commuted leave (with medical certificate) as also, to and fro passage. The facility can be availed of once in three years and for a maximum of six times during total service.

Besides, Vipassana has demonstrated positive results even in prisons. Recognising this, Government of Maharashtra has encouraged its jail administration to conduct regular programmes for inmates at Pune, Nagpur, Nasik, Kolhapur, etc. with very encouraging results.

V.K.Hansuka

Additional Director General of Police, Rajasthan

I am personally convinced by the potential of Vipassana which greatly helps its practitioners to develop a positive attitude to overcome the conflicts, misery and tensions prevalent in abundance in our day to day life. While fully realizing the usefulness of Vipassana for happy living and positive thinking, I thought it my humble duty as Director, Rajasthan Police Academy, Jaipur (my previous assignment) to expose all my trainees (22 Dy.S.Ps and 315 sub inspectors) to Vipassana courses at Dhamma Thali, Jaipur.

The feedback from the trainees who underwent the Vipassana course is greatly satisfying and a joy to me forever.

Ratnakar Gaikwad

Additional Municipal Commissioner, Mumbai.

Present day life is full of stress and tensions. Our efficiency goes down substantially due to these tensions. It is often said that it is not the workload but load on the mind which affects one's performance and efficiency. After I was introduced to Vipassana technique, I discovered that this unique secular technique enables one to gain concentration of mind, right attitude, clear thinking which goes a long way in improving one's out-put and efficiency. This technique does not make you believe in preconceived notions

but properly guides you to see the reality of things as they really are and not as they appear to be. This scientific technique of purification of mind eventually leads to happiness for yourself and for others. I have indeed, immensely benefitted during last four years due to practice of Vipassana.

S.M. Gavai

Director of Social Welfare, Maharashtra

My first brush with the philosophy of Vipassana was when an old acquaintance met me and urged me to undertake a 10-day Vipassana course at the Vipassana Centre at Igatpuri. At that time, I did not express more than a passing interest in the method. But I do believe that the seeds of my ultimate initiation into the technique were sown then.

More than half a decade later, I finally had the opportunity to undertake the course along with my brother. Even this time, in a manner of speaking, I went along with him to keep him company. Each individual life, however insignificant, has its milestones with birth and death as the most significant ones. Having completed the course last year, I have realized that there is an even more significant one—that of an individual's initiation into and final attainment of Vipassana.

Although I am but a novice, I am convinced that this is indeed the surest path to peace and salvation. The path that was untrodden for millennia has been rediscovered in the land of its birth.

It is fitting indeed that the Pagoda of Peace will be located in this nation. The Pagoda will go a long way in establishing more solidly, the philosophy and traditions of this secular practice.

I, on my part, am profoundly grateful to Vipassana International Academy for affording me in this lifetime an opportunity to make a small beginning towards absolute liberty.

Ramesh M. Ubale

Senior I.A.S. Officer

Due to over work and stress I started getting chest pain in the year 1984-85. I consulted various doctors, Dr. Dhananjay Gunde from Kolhapur introduced me to the Art of Vipassana and I attended my first course at Igatpuri in 1985, under the guidance

of Shri Satyanarayan Goenka. That was the turning point in my life. Initially I joined this course out of curiosity. After the completion of the course I realized that this is the only way of scientific meditation which will keep each and every one of us free from all complications of life and will bring harmony in our relations.

I am totally convinced that before going to any doctor for minor illness as well as psychosomatic disorders one should try this course which will definitely help to recover from such problems.

After 1985, I tried to convey this message to various groups of people. I was also practising Vipassana in my daily life, but due to my preoccupied engagements I could not repeat the course till November '96. I attended this course at Igatpuri in November '97. I can assure any individual that this way of life does not propagate and challenge or any false promises. It is based on purely natural science, which helps a human being to "know thyself". It also helps to keep away diseases like diabetes, hypertension and heart problems. The persons who are engaged in all the sedentary work are advised to do this course atleast once to find out the truth of the life. I can also assure that one can practice Vipassana and at the same time be Hindu, Muslim or Christian or for that matter of any religion.

Human life today is full of competition, stress and fatigue. Specially to cope up with this kind of life and to attend noble peace of mind one must attend this course and it does not interfere in the various religious life of the practising student.

S.N. Tandon

Teacher of Vipassana

Former Dy. Home Secretary, Rajasthan.

From earliest childhood, I was always a very timid person. On my way to school I would purposely avoid any route that would bring me into contact with dogs or unruly fellow pupils. In my studies at school, I always came near the top of the class and in Sanskrit, my favourite subject, I gained full marks. Still, when my teachers and family, wanted to give proper recognition to these achievements, I always found some pretext or another to avoid the glare of publicity. For, deep inside, I felt as if some huge error was

being made by others when estimating my talents and that sooner or later this would be exposed.

This inferiority complex continued into my college and working life. Despite ample, and repeated, evidence of exceptional abilities, again and again I denied their existence, shrinking from the publicity I feared they would attract and thus failing to capitalize on them for my own and others' benefit. I have always been a natural student, who loves nothing better than to be surrounded by books. And so it was, during my married life in Delhi, when I was a junior civil servant. Any free time was always taken up in reading and further study. During this period I had the opportunity on several occasions to apply for a post in the Indian Administrative Service, the country's elite cadre. Despite the recommendations of those who knew me and my capacities well, I staunchly refused to apply, thinking that I was intellectually and personally inadequate to a task, which so many others could perform with ease. In this way, a golden career chance passed me by. Sometime later, I almost repeated the same pattern when posts in the State Administrative Service of Rajasthan were advertized.

Had it not been for the personal intervention of my wife and close friends, who knew my problem and coaxed and cajoled me, I would never have applied for a post, nor would I have taken the entrance examination, nor appeared for the personal interviews. With their understanding and support, I was successful. I was appointed to the State Service, where I worked for 23 years, undertaking a range of challenging assignments in different departments. However, even in my work, I found that this tendency to low self-esteem made me reluctant to accept major responsibilities involving contact with the public, which my colleagues and superiors felt I was competent to tackle.

As a newcomer to the Administrative Service in Rajasthan, I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Shri Ram Singh. This marked the beginning of a close professional and personal relationship, which has brought untold benefits to me. Naturally, when Shri Ram Singh, who was State Home Secretary at the time, with myself as his immediate subordinate, took a Vipassana course with Goenkaji

in 1974 and immediately felt much benefited, I also became curious. I took my first course in that same year and continued to practice Vipassana as best I could. However, pressure of work often meant that I was unable to sit daily as regularly as I would like and finding time to take further ten-day courses was also difficult. For some years, I felt that my progress in Dhamma was inadequate.

After a few years I had the rare opportunity to sit a long course for serious old students at Dhamma Giri. After just a few days of meditation in this deep atmosphere the truth of my inferiority complex, and how it had continuously dogged my life thus far, became clear in my mind. By the end of the course, through the practice of Vipassana, substantial layers of this profound *sāṅkhāra* had evaporated and I felt real progress had been made. And so it has proved, when applied in everyday life: not that this deep-rooted tendency has been completely eradicated, but certainly there is a major improvement which is good both for me and for others. This is evident from the fact that I have since then been able to address more than 30 audiences in India, USA, and U.K. with confidence. I have also conducted workshops for training assistant teachers in conducting Vipassana courses under instructions from Goenkaji, and have led one workshop to encourage study of the Pāli language among Vipassana students.

When a student takes a Vipassana course, there should never be any expectation of particular experiences or outcomes. Rightly, we are told, to practise correctly and to leave the result to Dhamma. However, it is my personal experience, that if someone really wants to go to the depths of the mind to take out the most stubborn complexes, then one or more long courses, when the proper opportunity arises, is a real priority.

R.S. Gupta

Deputy Commissioner, Indore.

The program on reducing tensions and for self improvement was very good. It is my good fortune that I got an opportunity to take part in the program, for this I am grateful to my department. This program will help me a lot in the future in improving myself. It will definitely help me progress

on the path to good. It will also help me to be a better official.

The tensions which arise during executing our daily official duties will get reduced by this program and we can perform those duties in a better way. Initially for the first 3 days I was a bit upset and tense but as the course progressed, I found some inner strength. Now after doing the course I feel grateful for being sent here against my wishes. I hope I will get a chance to do a refresher course at least once a year. I am very grateful to my department for the apparent benefits I have got from this course.

I am sure I will derive many more benefits in future from this course.

A S Dighe,

Chief Engineer (D) NVDA.

The training programme organized by the Academy of Administration from 15/2/97 to 26/2/97 on Vipassana appears to me very much useful for future working in the department. The course develops concentration of mind, self confidence and to take decision in the right direction. It will also increase the efficiency and discipline in day to day working.

Shri Kishan Singh Rathor

Company Commandant, Armed Forces, Bhopal

By attending this Vipassana Course I got to learn this valuable Dharma knowledge of Vipassana. Through Vipassana I got to know myself and have found a new way to live my life. I have found the path of self improvement and in future I can realize my mistakes and work towards rectifying them.

Uttam Singh Thakur.

Deputy Commandant, 16th Special Armed brigade, Sagar.

I was quite surprised when on reaching the Academy I was told that I would have to remain silent for 10 days and live within a limited area. I followed the instructions of the academy having decided to undergo the course and observe all the rules. I liked the Vipassana course very much, I feel it will change a person's nature. However it should

not be restricted to a few persons but should be conducted on a large scale. It should especially be conducted for those in high posts and important officials so that those below them will be inspired to join the course and improve their thoughts.

R.L. Vora,

Jail Superintendent, Probander

Many Vipassana Meditation courses were conducted in Baroda Central Jail. As a result, relationship between the prisoners and the jail staff improved. The attitude of the prisoners to take revenge has changed. This technique has ignited creativity among the prisoners. They were able to realize the mistakes / crime they have done in the past. Many newspapers have reported the favourable impact of Vipassana meditation. May more and more courses be conducted for the benefit of inmates in particular.

Srilata Swaminadhan

Rajasthan State Party Spokesperson of C.P.I. (M-L) and National President of the All India Progressive Women's Association (AIPWA)

I did my first ten-day course of Vipassana in 1995. Since then I have done two more ten-day courses and one Satipaṭṭhāna course. I realize that that makes me a beginner with a very long way to go but even then the benefits and potential of Vipassana are apparent.

What I find most appealing about this technique is its simple, pure scientific rationality - no religiosity of any kind, no gods, no mumbo-jumbo, no false promises of a great here-after, no form of escapism into some blissful never-never-land ! Buddha's emphasis on practice and an ethical life and not just theorizing or intellectualizing make the whole method intensely practical and keeps one's feet solidly on the ground. In fact, Buddha's definition of Dharma, or religion, is the understanding of the laws of nature, understanding the world of mind and matter and then living according to those laws. Vipassana helps you to do just that.

Vipassana is a form of meditation which, more than anything else I have ever known or tried, helps you to understand yourself. As you go deeper and deeper into the practice, the more you understand and see how your mind and matter function, how they

interact and influence each other, you are gradually able to observe the patterns of your own behaviour, your own reactions, your aversions and cravings - in other words you can see how you tick. It is a very good way of learning self-awareness and gaining self-knowledge, even of the deepest levels of one's subconscious mind.

You also learn how to re-programme yourself with total awareness and understanding. There is neither suppression or rejection of one's deepest and, often, ugliest drives. I had come across the word "sākṣī" in the Gita and in many Upanishads as the way to come out of suffering but it is only Vipassana which teaches you, step by step, how you can actually achieve that, how to achieve the equanimity to become a "sākṣhī".

The other things which appeal to me are that you are constantly aware and in the present, in possession of all your faculties and not asked to surrender yourself or your mind to some great guru or teacher who will do your thinking for you. Instead, the technique constantly emphasizes how one is responsible for one's own life, one's own actions and their consequences. As one's present actions and behaviour will determine what one becomes in the future, I find it tremendously attractive that I can be in control and responsible for my own future. What more can one ask for !

The whole concept of Karma is shorn of all the superstition and rubbish that some religious sect has smothered it with and one is able to experience it and understand it as mere cause and effect, action and reaction. The universality of the method, its total lack of any kind of sectarianism makes it truly scientific and acceptable to any human being irrespective of caste, colour, creed or sex.

One anxiety that I did have for quite some time was would Vipassana make me want to leave the problems, tensions and frustrations of daily life and work and make me want to escape to a more peaceful and secluded world, would it make me go more and more inwards at the expense of my work? But what I am discovering is that the inward journey complements the outward life and, in fact, is helping my work.

Nothing has given me the hope and confidence that this technique has given me. To know that I can

understand myself and then be able to change myself and that i do not have to rely on anything or anyone else except myself to achieve this, is at once the greatest gift and the greatest responsibility that i have been given. I am the scientist, i am the laboratory and i am the specimen ! A whole new universe, that i was totally oblivious of, has opened up to me and i am on a new and meaningful journey.

Khursheed Merchant

Universal Vision of Learning

Though affected greatly by the ten-day course I did in 1984, sad to say, I did not pursue the practice.

Fortunately in 95' Madhusudan Mor revived my enthusiasm. I attended a four-day course with Dr Asha Kapadia followed by another ten-day course. Needless to say I am benefitting immensely. I am a much quieter, wiser, and more fulfilled person.

In my coaching in the Empowerment Programmes, I lead here and abroad, I am far more effective as I am able to bring sharper distinctions of the mind in focus from the insights I've had in my Vipassana practice. I recommend it as a most fruitful practice in all my courses.

D.P.Garg

Principal, Agri.Coop. Staff Training Institute, Bhopal

In these modern times, the true wealth of a nation is gauged by the mental health of its people. Without improvement at the individual level, it is not possible to think of human development and individual development is possible only by purification of mind and its intelligence. This can be done only with concentration, discipline, devotion, dedication and faith as practised by the Vipassana institute in its courses.

D.D. Tripathi

Section officer (Police), Saver, Indore.

1. The programme was very self improving and peaceful. However if the number of participants could be increased then many more could be benefited.
2. An advantage of participating in the programme was that a lot of my unanswered questions were clarified. If we can use this mental clarity in

our area of responsibility successfully, then it will definitely go a long way in resolving a lot of our problems.

3. After undergoing this course there will be more diligence, honesty and dedication towards our work.
4. I have learnt the art of living, its truth and advantages.
5. I have become free from various superstitions, religious beliefs and illusions.

I.K. Bhalavi

Asst. Director, Food & Supply Dept.

In this entire programme one learns about oneself and develops dedication towards one's work.

One learns to develop his inner strengths and gets confidence to live in today's tension filled world. One is cured of various internal illnesses automatically. Your inner energy and capacity for work increases. The entire programme is beneficial for administrators, govt. and public servants. In my opinion we should have more of such programs. By this not only will government officials be benefited but as a result the entire department will be benefited.

N.P. Barkede

Section Police Officer, Damoli.

Vipassana is an important tool for self development. It is not any particular religion, it is humanism which is the basis of every religion. It helps in self development and awakens in you a feeling of good towards everyone. It increases one's capacity and efficiency at work. Every person should attend a Vipassana course. Let people from all religions take part in this camp together and be benefited. Let more such camps be organized in the future so that other officials may get the benefit.

Dr Dinesh Kumar Gupta,

Ayurveda Treatment officer, Sahaya Bhopal.

This course has been very good for reducing tension and self improvement and the mind becomes very peaceful as a result. It is a very complete and practical technique which no science had discovered till date. It inspires one to lead a pure life and one feels that it will increase one's dakshata. We

are grateful those officials who arranged this programme so that we could end our mental tension. We hope there will be more such programs in the future.

Dr. N.K. Prasad,

P. Kushiram Ayurvedic Institution, Bhopal.

In 1984, I was introduced to this ambrosial and highly beneficial technique. Since then I have been associated with it. In this camp I have had a few spiritual experiences. With the help of Anapana meditation my concentration has increased, the period of concentration also has increased.

By observing my bodily sensations with greater awareness, equanimity and continuity, I managed to remove my negativities to a deeper extent.

Apparent benefits

1. Concentration was increased.
2. Proper awareness was established.

K.M. Dube,

District Chief, Homeguards, Gwalior

I am at a loss for words to describe the benefits I have received from the Vipassana course held at the Academy of Administration, Bhopal from 15/2/97 to 26/2/97. From this course I learnt the true meaning of humanity. Apart from my personal improvement it will benefit my official duties by increasing tolerance, capacity for work, efficiency and equanimity.

The high officials of the department should participate in this course and get benefited. My diabetes has been controlled to a large extent by this course. If more such courses are organized then others will also get benefited. A refresher course should be organized at least once in a year.

Dr A.N. Rao

Deputy Collector, Betul, M.P.

Vipassana Meditation puts an end to negativities and lets you experience equanimity. I recommend that every government official and politician should make it a point to attend at least one course in his life. I experienced an inner joy by attending this course.

Shri Vivek Nema

It is a technique to identify truth and falsehood, a technique which prevents one from going astray so that he may proceed on the path to experience the Ultimate truth. It keeps one away from selfishness and towards humanity. Every person should undergo this technique in order to be a better human being.

Shri N.P. Panthi

Dept of social welfare and panchayat. M.P.

In this 11 day Vipassana course, I have

- Understood True Dharma and the difference between Dharma and religion.
- Learnt the way to lead a peaceful life as a householder.
- Practised an easy and beautiful method by which one can be free from this cycle of birth and death.
- Freed myself from the long time enslavement of tobacco.

Dr. Ramesh S.Shah,

Cardiologist, Ahmedabad.

There is no technique at present, other than Vipassana, to take one to the path of full enlightenment.

Though I am a medical practitioner for quite some time, I have no hesitation to say that through this highly scientific technique, I have been able to realize the truth to a certain extent pertaining to mind and matter by observing sensations with equanimity. I have been able to overcome certain impurities. I am highly grateful for the technique which helps to overcome the maladies.

Principal Dr. P.G. Patel,

Ahmedabad

After doing a number of Vipassana meditation courses, a highly scientific and beneficial process, I am convinced and have recommended to my family members, friends, and students and they have undergone the courses and enjoyed them. I am benefitted in a number of ways, like more peace and tranquility in facing life, better relationship with people and im-

proved efficiency in my profession namely – teaching.

I am sure, by practicing Vipassana daily and regularly I will be able to eradicate all impurities and march towards the goal.

Principal H.S. Shah,

Ahmedabad

After doing about four Vipassana courses with my family, relative and few friends, we have all found the technique very useful.

I got mental peace. Strictness has been changed to *Karuna*. It has improved the balance of my mind to a great extent. It has improved my health too. Vipassana is a mighty weapon which certainly helps

to march towards '*mukti*'. It's an art of living.

Professor Dr. Savitriben Vyas,

Ahmedabad

I have undergone different types of meditation camps and I have found that Vipassana meditation course is the most useful in all respects, as they are organized in a disciplined way with suitable environment. This technique has helped me in conquering injustice, ego, hatred, fear, sexual exploitation etc. This has given me added self-confidence and courage to live as a good citizen in society with piece of mind. My entire family has done Vipassana courses and have benefited from them.

Vipassana is truly priceless.

The word “Buddha” means a person who is fully enlightened. “Dhamma” means nature. Hence, “Buddha-Dhamma” means the nature of an enlightened person. All persons, whoever they may be, if they are really and fully enlightened, must have the same nature: that is, total freedom from craving, aversion, delusion.

When we practise Buddha-Dhamma, we are not getting involved in a particular sect. Rather, we are actually working to develop in ourselves the nature of a Buddha - to attain freedom from craving, aversion, delusion. And the means by which we develop this nature is the practise of *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*, which is universally acceptable to all.

— Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

VIPASSANA: A TOOL FOR LIVING IN A STRESSFUL WORLD

Thomas Crisman

BACKGROUND

Having practised professionally as a lawyer for over 25 years, I have encountered many people who were very unpleasant to deal with, both as opponents with which I was in direct conflict, and even as clients whom I had a professional obligation to help. At many points in my career I have considered giving up this profession simply because of the highly confrontational and stressful environment which surrounds it.

When I began the practice of Vipassana 17 years ago, I found both an understanding of the nature of reality and a technique which enabled me to relate to other people and to my profession in an entirely different way. Instead of seeing each interaction with an opposing party as a conflict in which I must be victorious, I came to see that the opposing party almost always had some points in their favour and that there was bound to be some way that both sides of a controversy could be brought to an acceptable resolution of their conflict. This change in my approach did a great deal towards lowering the level of stress with which I lived my daily life.

One of the things that has become abundantly clear to me over the years is that Vipassana is especially helpful to people who work in highly stressful occupations as well as people who live in highly stressful environments. Stress itself is extremely harmful to one's physical health, without even considering the mental misery it produces. Two categories of professionals who live particularly stressful lives are government officials and business executives. An environment in which there is an enormous amount of stress virtually all the time is that of jails and prisons. The highly stressful environment of a prison not only increases the misery of the inmates but also drives them into mental attitudes and future plans which continue the cycle of recidivism. That is, each time they are released from prison they are unable to successfully relate to the outside world in a peaceful and harmonious fashion and end up back in

prison within a relatively short period of time.

VIPASSANA IN INDIA

Since Vipassana was first reintroduced to India, the country of its origin, in 1969, it has spread rapidly into all strata of Indian society. As early as the mid-1970s courses were organized for the police officers and prison inmates of Central Jail, Jaipur, in the Western State of Rajasthan. While these courses were highly successful, for various reasons no additional prison courses were held in India for almost 15 years. In 1990 a course was again held in the prison at Jaipur and this was later followed by courses in many other States such as Gujarat, Maharashtra and Haryana.

In 1993 a new Inspector General of Prisons was appointed for Tihar Jail in Delhi, the capital city. Ms. Kiran Bedi understood the social implications of the punitive and stressful environment in the Indian prison system and with great compassion for the inmates was searching for a programme to help them. From one of her officers she came to know about Vipassana and the previously successful courses in the jail at Jaipur. Thereafter, several ten-day courses were quickly organized and conducted in several wards of Tihar jail, which is one of the biggest prisons in Asia. Based upon the success of these early Tihar courses, a ten-day Vipassana course was conducted there by Goenkaji and a number of his assistant teachers in April 1994 for over 1,000 inmates. At the conclusion of this, the largest Vipassana course held in modern times, a permanent meditation centre was inaugurated within the walls of Tihar jail which today offers at least two courses each month to the inmates.

Vipassana has been a wonderful blessing to the inmates of the Indian prison system. A recently released documentary film entitled *Doing Time, Doing Vipassana* traces the history of Vipassana courses in the Indian prisons and includes interviews with numerous officials and inmates. Each one of these people speaks of how the journey inside themselves taken

via Vipassana meditation has changed not only their relationship to the stressful environment within which they are living but also their relationship to the outside world. Vipassana can provide them with the necessary tools to successfully return to the outside world when they are released from jail. As a result of the successful experience at Tihar, there is now also a meditation center in the Nashik jail and the Indian government has recommended Vipassana be adopted in prisons in all States.

The Central and State governments of India have also recently determined that Vipassana meditation can be a vehicle through which their administrative officials can live a longer, healthier and more productive life. After the government of the State of Maharashtra, which includes Mumbai, was plagued with a high incidence of heart attacks among its officials as a result of the stress of their responsibilities, they began sending these officials to Vipassana courses. Today, Maharashtra provides its officials with periodic paid leave so that they can travel to a nearby meditation centre and attend a 10-day Vipassana course. This government has found that the time and money allotted for this program has been greatly repaid in the form of increased productivity and increased longevity of the officials who participate.

As Vipassana has spread into all levels of Indian society, many business executives there have started to come to courses. They have learned how helpful the experience and skills they acquire at the courses can be to someone in the business environment. As a consequence, many centres in India have begun to offer special courses for business executives. A number of Indian companies are now offering paid leave to their employees to attend Vipassana courses and find their investment is richly repaid by the benefits received by the employees.

VIPASSANA IN THE WESTERN COUNTRIES

Goenkaji's first visit to the West to teach courses was in 1979. Since that time, the technique has established a firm foundation and numerous centres have been set up in the West and are operating successfully. However, there are a number of cultural differences between India and the East, on the one

hand, and the Western countries, on the other, which make the adoption and growth of Vipassana meditation proceed at a significantly slower rate there than in India.

First, meditation is not a natural part of the religious and cultural heritage of the West. In India spiritual practices which include meditation have existed for millennia. Virtually all of the sectarian religions of India and the East have some type of contemplative meditative practice associated with them. In the West, such practices are mostly unknown in a religious context and only recently arising counter-cultural movements have been involved with meditation. More importantly, the concept of meditation has been associated in the West principally with groups which many people consider to be "cults". Such organizations have received lots of negative publicity which has stigmatized the idea of meditation in the process. Still other groups in the West have economically exploited people in the name of meditation. They have made meditation into such a business that many people, including many who have come in direct contact with these groups, view meditation courses with great suspicion. Finally, the practice of meditation is associated by many people in the West with "other religions". That is, many of the various denominations of Christianity, which has been the traditional sectarian religion in the West for most of its existence as a distinct society, consider meditation and those who practice it to be a threat to their belief system.

Vipassana in U.S. Prisons

In the United States there are two separate categories of prison systems: a Federal prison system within which people are incarcerated for the commission of crimes in violation of Federal laws; and 50 separate State prison systems, one in each of the 50 U.S. States. Prisoners are sentenced to a State prison within their region for the commission of crimes in violation of State laws. In general, most State prison facilities are considerably more crowded and less well funded than the prisons of the Federal System. One recent change in penology in the U.S. is the advent of private firms which contract with various prison systems, both State and Federal, to provide facilities and management of the inmate

population.

Penal systems in the West are associated with some very startling statistics. For example, in the United States, there are currently over 1,600,000 inmates incarcerated in either State or Federal prison facilities. This means one out of every 150 members of society is in prison, the highest per capita prison population of any country in the world. The prison population is increasing at a rate of over 6% each year and American prisons are, on average, 20% over their established capacity. While there are numerous reasons given for these statistics, one consequence of the burdens this has placed on governments has been a hardening of the overall attitude of penal system administrators in the U.S. Not surprisingly, many officials manifest an attitude of austerity, severity and punishment rather than rehabilitation. Because of this a prisoner becomes quickly caught in the cycle of recidivism, which exacerbates rather than alleviates the problem of a growing prison population.

Some attempts were made during the mid-1980s to arrange a Vipassana course in one of the Federal Prison facilities. The chief psychologist had attended a number of Vipassana courses and was interested in helping to organize a course within his facility. However, before the course could be conducted, the warden of the prison was replaced by an official who was against such liberal and innovative programmes in his prison. Since that time the psychologist has also left the Federal Prison System. With great compassion, his personal mission for many years at that institution had been to conduct a special programme for all inmates who would agree to give up smoking, follow a healthy diet, practise meditation and other self-improvement programmes, and generally try to prepare themselves for a successful return to society. He tells the story of making his decision to leave the prison system by recalling that shortly after a new warden was posted to his facility, he was brought to the warden's office. The warden said, "You are doing too much for these people. The only thing that you can do for me here is to shoot a prisoner when he tries to crawl over the wall of the prison and escape." The psychologist said he knew then that it was time for him to leave.

Despite a harsh attitude within most prisons,

there are many compassionate and forward-thinking individuals working to help inmates rehabilitate themselves and return to happy and useful lives in society. It is simply a matter of finding the right combination of personnel and facilities within a particular prison to give a fair trial to Vipassana in this environment in the West. Once the benefits and advantages are seen, the job of expanding courses to other facilities will become easier. Currently a number of efforts are being made in parallel to conduct pilot Vipassana courses in the different North American prison systems. Discussions are ongoing with the Federal Bureau of Prisons to locate a Federal penal institution which has suitable physical facilities for conducting a course. While there are many cultural barriers to jail courses in the West, it appears that the first course in a U. S. prison may be conducted in late 1997 at a State facility in the State of Washington.

Vipassana and the Business Environment

For some time, business executives in the West have been attending training courses in skills which are outside of their ordinary business responsibilities — so-called "experience-broadening seminars." It is a well-accepted management principle that the broader a business executive's background and experience the better they will be able to deal with unexpected business problems. The approach being taken in the West is to introduce first three-day Anapana courses and then ten-day courses into the context of these experience-broadening seminars. Of course, a major impediment to a Vipassana course for many business executives, most of whom live a very crowded personal and professional schedule, is their inability to even imagine taking ten continuous days away from their work and families. The traditional vacation period given by most businesses in the U.S. is only a few weeks. Thus, taking most of that vacation time to attend a Vipassana meditation course in complete silence is virtually inconceivable to most business executives. While many business and professional people, such as doctors, lawyers, engineers, and business leaders, are coming to Vipassana courses at the various centres in the West, they come on their own rather than through sponsorship by their company. As more come, the atmos-

phere within their companies will eventually change for the better. The current plan is to introduce Anapana and Vipassana courses slowly and gradually into this segment of society.

Vipassana and Government Officials

A major impediment to participation by government officials in Vipassana courses is similar to that of business executives, i.e. the perceived lack of time. However, there is one additional problem that has been raised by some people in the United States. Because Vipassana is based upon the teachings of the Buddha and viewed by many people as a "religious" undertaking, it is argued that it is improper for the government to sponsor such programmes for their employees. One of the fundamental precepts of the American Constitution is separation of Church and State. For the government to give an employee time off with compensation to attend a course which is argued to be "religious" could amount to a legally improper practice. It could also be subject to political criticism by dogmatic religious groups. In fact, as

Goenkaji has repeatedly emphasized, Vipassana is not a religion and is entirely non-sectarian; it is a secular, scientific way of observing the mind-matter interaction within oneself. However, because of such obstacles, the introduction of Vipassana courses for government officials in the West will likely continue to be primarily because of their attraction to courses on an individual basis. Perhaps successful use of Vipassana in the prison systems will lead their governmental operators to view meditation as a tool helpful also to administrators.

CONCLUSION

Vipassana is making essentially the same inroads into the fabric of society in the West as it has in India except much more slowly. The differences in the cultural and religious heritage of East and West require us to proceed slowly and deliberately, with much patience. Dhamma works. In time, it will become available to all the people of the world who need it.

What is Dhamma?

- Dhamma is not a religion.
- Dhamma is a code of conduct.
- Dhamma is an ethical, moral way of life.
- Dhamma is an art of living.
- Dhamma is to live a happy, healthy, wholesome life.
- Dhamma is to live peacefully and harmoniously within oneself and generate a peaceful and harmonious atmosphere around oneself.

— Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

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- Dhamma is not sectarian.
 - Dhamma is universal.
 - Dhamma means truth.
 - Dhamma means law.
 - Dhamma means nature.
 - Dhamma means truth about the universal law of nature.

— Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

VIPASSANA - AN ART OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

Roop Jyoti

Vipassana is an art of many things. First, it is an art of living. How to live happily and harmoniously. How to live with equanimity. In life, wanted things don't always happen. Unwanted things frequently happen. It is impossible for all our desires to be fulfilled in spite of the abundance and the extent of resources at our command. We may think we possess this wisdom but when the time comes, we give in to our emotions and lose the balance of our mind. We surrender ourselves to our cravings and aversions, we become the slave of our mind and we suffer. Whereas, we should be the master of our mind, we should conquer our emotions, we should remain equanimous. Vipassana makes this possible. It enables us to live a happy, harmonious and peaceful life.

Every life must come to an end, that is the universal law of nature and it applies to everyone without any exception. And so when it ends, a happy life must end with peace and calm, not in misery and suffering. Vipassana makes us capable of attaining a dignified and peaceful death. Having been aware of impermanence while living, having been alert to aversions and cravings while living, having kept away from attachments while living, one becomes capable of practising all that while dying too. After all, our greatest attachment is towards ourselves, and towards our own life. So when we learn to distance ourselves from such attachment, we can die calmly and peacefully without misery and suffering. So Vipassana is also an art of dying.

My father, Maniharsha Jyoti, found out that he had lung cancer in July '92 and passed away in January '93. During the last days of his life, I was able to observe him very closely. He was a serious Vipassana meditator and every time he had a setback in the treatment, which happened many times, Vipassana brought back his balance of mind and enabled him to remain calm and peaceful. Finally, during his last trip to Bangkok, where we were taking him for chemotherapy, he learnt that he had very little time left and

with the help of Vipassana he was able to give up his attachment to life, and so his last days were very peaceful. It was like water evaporating from a saucer, he passed away without a ripple. He remained calm and peaceful till the end without suffering. Watching him die peacefully, all of us around him could also remain calm and peaceful, although it was such a calamity for us. It occurred to us, "Oh, this is how Dhamma protects! Dhamma does not prevent old age or illness or death but whenever these things happen, and they are bound to happen sooner or later, it gives us inner strength to face the situation with equanimity, a calm and balanced mind, not overwhelmed by misery!"

Vipassana is more, much more, and it is relevant to all people of all sorts, all sections of our society and all types of human activities. Vipassana is also relevant to the business world, to the world of trade and commerce, to the world of manufacturing, to the world of economic activities.

Vipassana teaches how to tackle ups and downs in life calmly. One engages in trade and the price sometimes goes up and sometimes goes down. One engages in manufacturing and one is faced with problems and uncertainties all around - production problems, labour problems, raw material problems, marketing problems, finance problems and it goes on. One may engage in any type of business activity and there are always problems, there are always uncertainties, there are always ups and downs. We were expecting sales to go up but they go down. We were hoping the profits to rise but they decline. We are expecting the interest rates to go down but they go up. We are expecting the cost of goods sold to decrease but they increase. Are we able to deal with such situations calmly? Most certainly, if we are practising Vipassana and applying it in our daily lives.

Vipassana teaches how not to get upset in life. Business management involves dealing with people, good people, bad people, all kinds of people. Some

behave decently, some don't. Some are satisfied customers, some aren't. Some are obedient workers, some aren't. Among this maze of uncertainty, there is one certainty - we don't have a choice of people we get to deal with. Whether we like our superiors or not. Whether we like our subordinates or not. Whether we like our working conditions or not. Whether we like the task assigned to us or not. We may not have any immediate options. Does it help to get upset? No, it only makes things worse, not only for ourselves but also for those around us. But we do just that unless, of course, we have learnt Vipassana meditation and are practising it regularly.

Vipassana teaches how not to react in the face of provocations. Friendly meetings turn into shouting matches. Nice customers suddenly get angry. Employees don't do what they are told to do. Workers make impractical, unrealistic demands. Bosses give unreasonable, impossible tasks. Do we get provoked and react with a fit of temper? That's what we do and make the situation worse for ourselves and for others. Unless, of course, we are trained in Vipassana meditation and have learnt to observe our sensations, the natural vibrations within ourselves.

Vipassana provides us with a skill to deal with all types of situations in life with serenity, tranquillity, and equanimity. There could not be another sphere of life where such a skill is of more utility, of more relevance, of more importance, than the corporate world.

I am a businessman and I use cost-benefit analysis, consideration of trade-offs etc. for making decisions. When we have a limited amount of money and we have to decide where to spend it, we figure out where it will give us the most benefit and even save us money in the future. Similarly, when we have a limited amount of time, we should figure out where the time spent will give us the maximum benefit and even save time for us in the future. I have received many practical benefits from Vipassana. I do not easily get upset, irritated or angry; if at all, only rarely and only for a short while, so I do not waste time on these things. If I am wavering on some decision, "sīla" and "dhamma" show me the way. I am more aware of my responsibilities. I am more effective as

a manager. People take us more seriously when we tell them with a cool and calm mind rather than when we shout at them in temper about what they have done wrong and what they should do to redress it - whether they are our employees or our children. Experiencing such benefits, I find time for Vipassana, even though my time is always in short supply.

How does Vipassana help? Vipassana helps by enabling us to gain control over our mind. After all, an uncontrolled mind is the cause of our miseries. We want this and we want that. We don't want this and we don't want that. We desire this to happen, we desire that not to happen. All this never ends; it just goes on and on, and we suffer, we get upset, we get irritated, we become miserable. If we can become the master of our mind rather than a slave to it, all this can change and we can remain happy, composed and calm in spite of any event that may take place. Vipassana helps us by removing impurities of our mind.

Our ego keeps on growing and growing. All our lives, we go on accumulating fear, anger, animosity, hatred, greed but we never learn how to get rid of them, how to eradicate them. We know how to clean our body but don't know how to clean our mind. Vipassana teaches us how to clean our mind and how to keep it clean and pure.

The experience of a number of business enterprises has shown that the introduction of Vipassana meditation to the people in the organization has improved the working atmosphere, the co-operative attitudes, the discipline, and the harmony within. Managers have become more patient in dealing with business uncertainties and more tolerant in dealing with troublesome employees. Workers have become more disciplined and better capable of carrying out their tasks, even if they entailed repetitious and monotonous routines. Observing the benefits of Vipassana many business and non-business organizations have begun providing paid leave to their employees to attend Vipassana meditation courses. Some have treated Vipassana as a training programme, some have included it in their Human Resource Development activity and yet others have simply considered

it as an aspect of employee welfare. Vipassana has reduced instances of confrontation and situations where conflicts arise unnecessarily. After all, Vipassana makes a person live happily and happy individuals make a happy organization. Employees become grateful towards their employers for giving them the opportunity to learn. Vipassana and employers reap the rewards in the form of higher productivity and better morale.

Vipassana teaches us how to be responsible without developing attachment. Vipassana does not make us indifferent, it makes us more aware of our responsibilities. Vipassana trains us how not to react involuntarily but how to be properly pro-active. Vipassana does not make us unambitious, it makes us more resourceful. Vipassana develops our will power to persist with the right actions, it makes us more patient, more persevering.

Vipassana teaches us how to tolerate short-term

pains for the long-term gains. We may be doing our best for the good of the organization but the desired outcome may not take place. Do we get upset, irritated, annoyed, disappointed, frustrated? If yes, we have developed an attachment. If no, and we keep on trying untiringly, without giving up, searching for more suitable alternatives, continually seeking more appropriate methods, then we have learnt to fulfil our responsibilities ever more successfully. Vipassana makes us capable of doing all this by making us become aware of our inner self. With Vipassana we get rid of our negativities and purify our mind and a pure mind guided by pure Dhamma always makes the right decision, always takes the right actions.

Vipassana is an art of stress management. Vipassana is an art of people management. Vipassana is an art of conflict management. There may be more to the science of management but Vipassana can become very nearly the art of total corporate management.

You better protect Dhamma within yourself and Dhamma will certainly protect you.

—Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

PRODUCTIVITY AND HARMONY THROUGH VIPASSANA

Jayantilal Shah & Bhadresh Patel

Mr S.N.Gupta, Deputy Director (Engineering) of Air-India recently presented a paper to the School of Management Studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi.* The paper was a Research Project to fulfil the requirement for an MBA Degree. It took as its subject M/s. Anand Engineers Pvt. Ltd., a small-scale industrial enterprise, located at Andheri, Mumbai (Bombay) -400 093, with an Annual Turnover of over Rs.10.00 crores (\$U.S. 3 million) and having approximately 100 employees. Its activities include the design and manufacture of medium and large size heat exchangers and reaction vessels for the chemical industry.

The paper starts with the concept of Vipassana meditation, an ancient Indian technique, which has been applied to the field of Business Management to develop effective leaders. This theme is elaborated over 7 chapters.

In Chapter 2, "The Theory of Vipassana", the following aspects are discussed:

- the interrelation and interaction between the body, mind and environment;
- why we act, on occasions, in such a way which we know is harmful to ourselves and others;
- effects of Vipassana meditation in modifying our behaviour and attitudes;
- applications of the Vipassana technique to industrial management.

Gupta mentions that the main focus of the technique of Vipassana meditation is on the cleaning of the sub-conscious mind, which is responsible for negative reactions to outside situations. This progressive cleaning process undertaken during a ten-day course brings about a transformation in the individual, where the negative reaction changes to a positive response – love, compassion, cheerfulness and equanimity. The details of this transformation are

listed as:

- a) hatred or strong dislike to love
- b) revenge to forgiveness
- c) jealousy to rejoicing
- d) deceit to straight-forwardness
- e) arrogance to humility
- f) expectation to acceptance
- g) greed to charity.

Gupta has also drawn on our own paper presented at the Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi, during the International Seminar held in April 1994, which since then has been published in "Vipassana – Its Relevance to the Present World", a publication of Vipassana Research Institute, Igatpuri. This earlier paper suggests that this unique meditation technique contributes to the basis of management by cleaning its roots – the hearts and minds of the managers – so that business is continually nourished by pure food. This also prevents starvation of subtle inputs to the business. It is excessive craving or greed which poisons management and this is brought under control by meditation. The effects of Vipassana in different areas of business management can be categorised in the following way.

Right Livelihood

Briefly this concept means that income, whether of a business corporation or an individual, should be not only ethical but that the consciousness of the group or individual producing this income should be reasonably clean, i.e. free from negativities. Wealth produced by such a group consciousness not only produces profit, but along with it health and mental happiness - a stress-free mind.

Human Resource Development

Human beings working in a business or industry need to be developed. One of the parameters of the development process is to have respect for each other, refining the quality of inter-personal relations. This exactly is the aim of this meditation technique, viz. to come out of hostility towards fellow human I.

beings, colleagues, subordinates, superiors, government officers and others; hostility which can be expressed as anger, arrogance, jealousy, revenge, selfishness, dislike, prejudice, hatred and greed. Although lectures, seminars, books, discussion, examples do give some insight into how helpful and practical meditation can be, without actual practice more than 95% of the negative material in the human mind remains intact, despite apparently understanding the usefulness of not becoming negative, hostile and selfish.

At Anand Engineers, Gupta found an organisational structure comprising:

1. Directors	-	4
2. Executives	-	7
3. Staff	-	39
4. Workers	-	50
Total	-	100

Jayantilal Shah and Bhadrash Patel - two directors of the Company - have jointly encouraged the introduction of Vipassana within the organization, with a number of guiding principles in mind: respect for the workforce; solve labour problems; improve communication; stimulate individual growth, support workforce welfare schemes.

For the purposes of his research, Gupta sampled both managers and workers. Only those who had taken at least one Vipassana course were interviewed. A high proportion of managers was included since it is the attitude of the managers that is such a key factor in determining the internal environment of the organization and ultimately its productivity and harmony. It was not feasible to construct a mathematical or statistical model for the direct measurement of productivity and harmony - therefore some secondary characteristics, which have a direct correlation with the primary ones were identified, namely:

- motivation
- commitment
- tolerance
- trust
- job satisfaction.

Gupta's investigation at Anand Engineers yielded the following results.

- I. Turnover has steadily increased from Rs.86.52 lakhs (\$U.S.250,000) in 1986-1987 to Rs.906.00 lakhs (\$U.S. 3 million) in 1995-1996, i.e. an average rate of growth of 26% , except in 1988-1989 and 1993-1994.
- II. The number of employees in the Company has not varied significantly. Based on the available data, it is estimated that the average increase in the number of employees during 1986-96 was 5% per annum.
- III. The average profit for the period 1986-96 works out to be 3.6% of the total turnover. This is a very reasonable figure and corroborates the firm's claim that its objective is the maximization of service, to customers and employees alike. Profits are only a by-product of the process of service. It also confirms that the faith in right livelihood has taken deep roots at Anand Engineers.
- IV. In the all-important area of industrial relations, a number of interesting facts emerged:
 1. There has been no industrial unrest etc. in the period 1986-96.
 2. No disciplinary action against any employee was taken by management during this period. Disciplinary issues, if they arose, were resolved by a committee made up of workers and a supervisor.
 3. There are no wage agreements signed between the workers and management. The decisions of the Chairman/MD are gladly accepted.

The above facts very clearly establish the existence of harmonious relations between the management and the workers. There exists trust, understanding and complete co-operation.

The members of the sample group were interviewed individually and suitable questions were asked to elicit their views about Vipassana and its impact on employee motivation, commitment, tolerance, trust and job satisfaction as existed in Anand Engineers.

The responses highlighted - the lowering of ego level, more job satisfaction, reduction in anger, tension and harmful habits like the drinking of alcohol; strengthening of team spirit and sense of belonging; greater understanding of workers' problems; greater interest in the welfare of workers; better communi

cation; increased productivity due to less absenteeism; consistent quality of products and honouring of commitments; satisfied customers, suppliers, employees and owners.

CONCLUSION

- Every one of the four directors and six executives has taken at least one ten-day Vipassana course. Out of thirty-nine staff members, ten have done one or more ten-day courses and out of fifty workers, 21 have joined one or more ten-day retreats.
- The average increase in the output per employee was 21%.
- There have been no strikes or any other form of labour unrest in the Company.

- Individual employees have reported a reduction in anger together with greater tolerance and calmness of mind as a result of Vipassana meditation. These factors have contributed to higher productivity and harmony in the Company's operations.

FOOTNOTE

At the time this article was written (October 1997), the proportion of the workforce at ANAND ENGINEERS who had taken at least one ten-day Vipassana course had risen to 80%.

** Limited copies of the full paper are available with M/s Anand Engineers for those who are interested in serious study of this subject further.*

Vipassana helps to eliminate the unhealthy atmosphere of conflicts and confrontations of ill-will and animosity. It generates the healthy atmosphere of consideration and co-operation, goodwill and friendliness between individual and individual, between one group and the other having diverse interests and diverse religions, holding diverse beliefs and dogma.

—Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

EHİ PASSİKO

Shriram Taparia

Guruji S.N. Goenka came to India from Burma in June 1969. His relatives and friends from Burma were the first 122 students of Vipassana in eight courses conducted between June / early December 1969. My wife and I joined the 9th Vipassana course at Bombay on 27th December 1969.

My learning Vipassana is an interesting story. Motilalji Chôwdhary of Burma, a Vipassana student of the great guruji Sayagyi U Ba Khin, happened to be my business friend since 1950. He used to come to India at an interval of 3 to 4 years. Motilalji was an old man and had all the signs of aging. He left Burma for good in early 1969 and met me in Bombay. He was looking bright and younger than his age and had a glow on his face. I asked him how it could happen and he said that he has been practicing Vipassana meditation in Burma for some time and that is why this change has come about. He said that Vipassana meditation is very beneficial and is coming to India very soon. "When it comes I will make you practice Vipassana meditation", he said.

I had a hearty laugh over these words because I am a man of strong determination and senior-most in my family and no one dared to command me to do things ! Moreover, I was a non-believer and understood meditation to be a religious ritual, which never appealed to me any time in my life. The matter ended at that. Or so I thought.

In a community gathering after Diwali Festival some time in October 1969, I met Motilalji and casually asked what happened to Vipassana meditation coming to India. He said it has come and he will contact me when the next course is scheduled. Duly, he rang me up in early December of 1969 to say that there is a course in the last week of December. Now this put me in a fix. While I had no desire to attend such a course, I was not able to say no to my valuable friend Motilalji and therefore reluctantly I decided to join the course to oblige him.

I started preparation for attending the course. When my uncle came to know I was attending a medi-

tation course, his curiosity was aroused. He wanted to know more details. But I knew nothing and therefore requested Motilalji to get me details and he fixed a personal meeting with Guruji along with my uncle. Guruji's answers to my uncle's queries satisfied me too. I did not find anything objectionable in the theory and details of Vipassana as explained by Guruji.

This is how I came in contact with Vipassana. After joining the course I found it to be extremely good for anyone and everyone. *Ehi passiko* started. I wanted that my relatives and friends should join Vipassana meditation and get enjoy the same benefits I experienced. "Come and See (*ehi passiko*)", I kept telling them.

I organized a discourse by Guruji for the social workers of my community in Bombay. Then a few public lectures of Guruji in Bombay were organized and thus information about Vipassana meditation started flowing to general people. One Dayanandji Adukia joined one of the courses organised by me at a school. He then took over as organizer of courses and together we organized a number of courses in Bombay in 1970 to 1974. Courses were also arranged in Nasik and Devlali.

There were only 19 students in the December 1969 course I attended and therefore there was a lot of time available for one to one discussions with Guruji. I took full advantage of clarifying some more points of practice and theory.

In July 1970, I planned to visit USA and Japan and I therefore decided to visit Burma on my way back to India. I got only one-week visa for Burma from Bangkok. I reached Rangoon by the evening flight and thus one day was lost. At the airport another business friend, Shri. Chouthmalji Goenka advised me that I should spend five days at the meditation centre and take Vipassana lessons under Sayagyi U Ba Khin. I could not say no to this and learned Vipassana from Sayagyi U Ba Khin. In the course of my stay I saw the meditation centre. Though I felt nothing in those five days, but on my return to India, I

started seeing a change in me and a feeling of Vipassana getting deep into me. I consider myself lucky that I could take lessons from Sayagyi U Ba Khin as he passed away in January 1971. Sayagyi exhorted me to help Gurujı to establish a centre in India to teach Vipassana. After making a long search for a suitable site, ultimately Gurujı selected the present site at Dhamma Giri.

After purchase of Dhamma Giri land at Igatpuri, a trust was established. I was grateful for being given the responsibility of being the first President Trustee. Along with other friends, we made plans and then

started construction of the first phase, which was completed in 1976. First courses in Dhamma Giri started in October 1976. From the strength of 14 students – mostly relatives of Gurujı in July 1969, to almost 500 students presently at a course in Igatpuri, two times a month and with land mark courses like the course for 1000 inmates in Tihar Jail, Vipassana has spread rapidly. At present, scores of centres in India and outside India throughout the length and breadth of the world are providing Vipassana meditation teaching in its purest form to one and all without distinction of caste and creed, religion and nationality.

What is the fees of teaching Vipassana Dhamma?

Can any valuer evaluate Dhamma? Dhamma is invaluable. If a price tag is attached to Dhamma, it is no more Dhamma. Then it becomes degraded to a commercial commodity.

How about boarding and lodging during a Vipassana course?

If there are charges for boarding and lodging, then it is no more a Dhamma training centre. It is a hotel.

–Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

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DHAMMA GIRI: THE EARLY DAYS

Dr Geo Poland

I remember the first time I heard about Dhamma Giri.

It was at the end of the course in Khandala, when Goenkaji announced that they had been looking for a centre near Bombay; they had found a piece of land and purchased this land in a town named Igatpuri, about three hours north of Bombay. As it happened, our train to Bombay stopped at Igatpuri for about twenty minutes to change engines. And so a friend and I got off the train and looked around at the beautiful landscape; we were so inspired and excited about the possibility of a centre coming up, that then and there we decided to go and see Goenkaji at his office in Bombay the next day and ask his permission to return to the land to sit and meditate for a few days. In those days I was a hippy with long hair and long beard, as was my friend. But it also so happened that at the end of that course I decided to leave those hippy days behind. So I went to the local barber's shop and had my haircut and beard shaved off. Then we went on down to Bombay.

The next day we went to Goenkaji's office and requested the secretary if we could have a few words with him and we were told to wait in the waiting room. I must admit I was a bit nervous as I'd never had any contact with Goenkaji, other than as a student sitting at his feet. After a short period of waiting, I was told I could go in and see him and so I walked into his office. As soon as he saw me, he burst out laughing. I couldn't understand what was going on and I reached nervously for my beard, which was my habit whenever I got nervous. Then I realized that my beard had been shaved off and that he didn't recognize me. I asked if we could go and meditate at the land. He was happy to let us do so and he was also happy that we had cut our hair short and shaved off our beards, because he felt that it was very important that the first few people that went to Dhamma Giri would be viewed by the townspeople as representing Goenkaji and the technique of Vipassana meditation. So the next day we took the train up to Dhamma Giri and

contacted Mr Bhojraj who showed us up to the land.

At that time there were only three buildings on the property. There was an old farmhouse where some resident farmers were staying and a large warehouse. And then there was a three-room bungalow, which is still in existence at Dhamma Giri today. So Mr Bhojraj showed us up to the bungalow and opened the door and told us this was where we could stay. That night he came back with a few other meditators from the town and we had a small group sitting outside, under the stars. We stayed to meditate for a few days and then we had to leave, due to previous commitments.

When I returned to Dhamma Giri about two weeks later, Graham Gambie from Australia, who had been living up in Darjeeling, had heard about the land being purchased and had immediately come down.

We were both very excited about the new centre and we wrote a letter to Goenkaji, requesting his advice as to what we should do: should we start digging gardens and planting flowers; what should we do to improve the site and begin the work on the centre? We very soon received his inspiring reply: "Dear Geo and Graham, Be happy! Meditate! Meditate! Meditate! Clean yourselves and clean the atmosphere of the centre." So this became our goal.

However, there were some physical problems we had to overcome before we could start doing self-courses. The bungalow which we decided to use for meditation had three rooms. There was a large central room which seemed best for the meditation room, however it had been used for many years for keeping goats and hence the floor had a very thick layer of goat dung ground into it. In addition, after many years of people cooking in these rooms with fires, the walls were black with soot. The only water available was at the bottom of a steep hill where there was a well. So for a few days we walked up and down the hill carrying water, throwing it on the floor and scraping and scrubbing the floor clean.

Shortly thereafter, Graham was called to Bom-

bay to manage some of Goenkaji's courses, so I was left alone at the centre. In consultation with the other local meditators, we decided that we should whitewash the soot-covered walls. And so the first worker was hired for Dhamma Giri. His name was Sonu and to this day he is still working at the centre. Sonu is a man who has been deaf and dumb since birth. He cannot speak, he cannot hear, yet he can communicate very well in simple sign language. He is a very hard-working and honest working man. Sonu was coming every day to whitewash the walls and again in my enthusiasm, I explained to him in sign language that I would like to help him with the whitewashing. But he made it very clear to me in his own sign language, that my job was to meditate and his job was to whitewash.

There were three rooms in the bungalow and I would sit in one room meditating and he would be in one of the other rooms whitewashing. When he had finished one room, he would come into the room where I was and indicate to me that I had to go into the next room to meditate. Then he would whitewash those walls and again come in and move me on to the next room. So for a few days, we went on moving from room to room. And gradually, from day to day, layer after layer of whitewash went on the walls and they changed from black to grey to white. This bungalow is all that remains of the original buildings; and due to its high ceilings and thick stone walls, it's one of the coolest, most comfortable buildings, even today in Dhamma Giri.

When Graham returned from Bombay, we started doing self-courses in which one of us would meditate and the other would cook and take care of the centre. After some time, we hired a local village lady to come and cook for us, so we would both have time to meditate.

At one time, Narayan and I went to do a short self-course in a cave near the village of Tingelwari, behind the mountain at Dhamma Giri. At the time, we were thinking of what type of accommodation we should have at the centre. The Trustees from Bombay had already begun to build the dormitories and dining halls but we wanted some smaller huts. On our way back from the cave, we were inspired by the simple mud huts with grass roofs which we had seen

in the village. So we asked the Trustees if we could construct two circles of 10 huts, one for males, one for females. They agreed and so we set about getting them built by local villagers. The workers came with their families and camped out on the Shanti Pathar and the work began. One problem we encountered was that we could not easily get the necessary materials close at hand. The huts were made of clay and cow-dung mixed with water to a thick consistency and then packed by hand onto the walls which had already been woven together from small branches. Because we were building so many huts at once, we could not get all the necessary mud we needed, so we had to get mule-trains carrying sacks of clay from some distance away. Also it was not possible to get enough cow-dung from the local village and so it was ordered from a dairy in Bombay. I remember very clearly the night we awoke about 2 a.m. to the sound of the truck's horn blasting and next thing we knew the workers were up to their waists in cow-dung, unloading the truck.

By this time, a number of Westerners had come to Dhamma Giri to help with the construction of the centre. Although we were all very enthusiastic to help, as often happens, personality differences led to disagreements and eventually quarrelling developed between different factions as to what we should do. When Goenkaji heard of this, he gave us such wonderful advice, which I remember to this day and I am happy to pass on to other centres, when they find themselves in the same situation. He said: "This is how māra (which is nothing but the manifestation of your own impurities) gets into the centre; you start fighting with each other and generating bad vibrations of anger and hatred and this spoils the entire atmosphere of the centre. You have come to help develop good vibrations of love and compassion and peace, and in the name of Dhamma you have started harming the centre and also harming yourselves. Be careful to see that you do not fight with each other; you must live together in peace and harmony." This is such a valuable lesson to learn for all of us who wish to help the spread of Dhamma.

Before the centre actually opened for courses, Goenkaji held a short course to develop the Dhamma vibrations on the Dhamma land. This was organized

at the last minute and so we did not have much time to prepare. At that time, no facilities were ready, so a temporary Dhamma hall had to be improvised. This was quickly constructed with the easiest materials available - in this case, corrugated iron walls and roofing. However, this became known as the "oven", because in the heat of the midday sun, that is exactly how it felt and we all had to cook in there for the rest of the day! During this course, out of fear, a snake was killed by some workers. When Goenkaji came to know, he held a special sitting, where he chanted, giving special mettā. He declared that from that time onwards, no animal or reptile or other being should be harmed on this land, which was a refuge for all beings, a place where all beings should feel safe and happy.

Later on, as courses began, we often encountered snakes and scorpions as the land at that time was very raw and not too many people had been there, so snakes were coming from the lowlands in the monsoon up onto the hill to take refuge from the water. Nowadays, because of the heavy traffic of people coming for courses, they tend to stay away and we see very few. At that time, I remember we were having a group sitting in the old bungalow one afternoon and one of the Western students, Bill Crecelius, was sitting in the kneeling position with his legs facing backwards. During the sitting he felt a funny sensation on the back of his legs, but as it was adhiṭṭhāna, a sitting of strong determination, he did not move.

After the sitting, we looked behind us and there in the corner was a cobra all curled up and peaceful - he had come for the group sitting and crawled over Bill's legs! We quietly put a large tin pail over the snake and then slipped something under the tin to trap him and then took him far away into the jungle to release him unharmed. Even today, if a snake is found on the land, we have a special contraption for catching them and releasing them unharmed in the wild, away from the centre.

Finally the courses began in 1976. The Dhamma hall in those days was the where part of the now-male dining Hall (formerly 'X' dorm) and 'Y', 'Z', dormitories are now. I remember that on the tenth day, after giving mettā, Goenkaji would walk slowly up the main walkway towards the Shanti Pathar; and he would stop at each little tree which had been planted and holding his hand over each tree, he would give mettā to each one. As one walks up this road today, these same trees are high above, giving delightful shade to the meditators.

These have been some of my fond memories of the early days at Dhamma Giri. I am sure they will stir other ones in the minds of those who were so fortunate to be there at the beginning of this wonderful centre. I hope too that they may inspire the newer generation of Dhamma servers, who are equally fortunate to be involved in the establishment and running of all the various centres which are coming up now or will arise in the future.

*Dharama Giri se shuddha Dharama kī
gaṅga pravāhita hoyā re!
Sakala vishva ke sare prāṇī
mangala lābhī hoyā re !!*

May the Ganges of Dharma flow
from Dhamma Giri !
May all beings of the world
be benefited by it !!

—Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

THE GROWTH OF DHAMMA GIRI

P.G. Savla and M.M.Khandhar

"Just as, monks, whatsoever great rivers there be, all of them flow, slide and tend towards the ocean; Even so, monks, a monk who cultivates the Eightfold Noble Path, flows, slides and tends towards Nibbāna."

- Saṃyutta Nikāya, 3.5.114

Sayagyi U Ba Khin, meditation master, teacher and layman, was one of the most extraordinary figures of our time. It was his deep wish that Dhamma be re-established in India, the land of the Buddha, and from there spread far and wide throughout the world. A base was needed for this, and thus land was donated in 1974. Goenkaji named the centre Dhamma Giri (Hill of Dhamma), and in 1976 Dhamma Giri opened to the public for its first ten-day Vipassana meditation course.

That was the beginning, a moment in time. More than 20 years later, Dhamma Giri has the richness of atmosphere which is as timeless as the Dhamma itself, inviting those who enter to flow, slide and tend gradually from the apparent to the ultimate reality, through the process of deep introspection.

Sīla, the moral code of conduct practised by students and all those who serve at Dhamma Giri, provides the essential foundation for the strength and purity of the Dhamma vibration. A stable foundation of *sīla* creates the calm, peaceful atmosphere from which the next steps of *samādhi* [concentration] and *paññā* [wisdom] can be taken.

What was a simple, humble beginning of an arid, unproductive hilltop of 17 acres, scattered with a handful of scrubby trees and various small buildings and huts, has spread and grown to its present proportions of around 65 acres providing facilities for large numbers of people from every continent of the globe, aiding them in their quest for happy, peaceful and enlightened living. Yet despite this exponential expansion in material form, shape and numbers, due entirely to the sincere, wholesome volition of Dhamma servers and their selfless service, the hu-

mility and the simplicity remains, gently and quietly revealing the tender, brushstrokes of the hand of Dhamma.

Dhamma Giri has grown, evolved, blossomed in many ways. Building construction, gardening and landscaping provide the framework within which year by year increasing numbers of courses are held for increasing number of students.

In parallel with building construction (designed to be simple yet attractive, using mostly local materials), gardening and landscaping has been undertaken with care. So much so that the prolific flourishing gardens of Dhamma Giri with a multitude of varied flowering trees, shrubs, climbers, plants and flower beds enchant and delight meditators with vivid colour and scent throughout the seasons. Many beautiful birds also make their home in the ecosystem of Dhamma Giri.

Dhamma Giri now has five meditation halls catering to ten-day students, long course students and Dhamma servers. The towering pagoda, a landmark of tourist attraction, was built in the Myanmar traditional style and houses more than 400 cells suitable for solitary meditation. There is a Teachers' residence, accommodation for about 350 male and 250 female students, a separate residence for *bhikkhus*, *sanyasis* and recluses, accommodation for male and female assistant teachers and three dining rooms. A large kitchen complex which was originally run by a couple of cooks with a few rickety old pots and pans now has a staff of about 35 people, uses modern kitchen appliances and caters to 700 people daily.

There are also male and female office blocks, a bookstore, carpentry and maintenance areas and the "White House", comprising accounts office, computer room, tape room, newsletter office plus the Vipassana Research Institute offices. There are also separate residential quarters for long-term workers and a guest house for visitors.

Dhamma Giri offers a year-round programme of meditation courses including ten-day, *Satipaṭṭhāna*,

ten-day special, twenty-day, thirty-day, forty-five-day, short, Anapana, Executive Anapana and children's courses. In 1996 approximately 7,500 students attended 21 courses; this number has increased rapidly over the years. During the last twenty years there has been more than an eightfold increase in the number of participants attending Vipassana courses at Dhamma Giri. Many prestigious organizations and government departments have begun to actively encourage their employees to undergo Vipassana courses. Students from every continent of the world have attended courses. Goenkaji's discourses and instructions are now available in twenty-six different languages in addition to Hindi and English. Dhamma Giri has served people from over 90 countries; they come from different walks of life and religious backgrounds, including Jain, Christian and Buddhist monks and nuns, high-ranking government officials, jail and police officers, corporate executives, students, housewives, medical and scientific professionals.

Currently an average of 500 students participate in each ten-day course necessitating the use of three meditation halls, (one each for males and females and one for foreign language discourses) and between 4 and 8 assistant teachers. Parallel ten-day and old student courses are frequently run at Dhamma Giri, although future plans hope to ensure that the 20, 30 and 45-day courses for serious old students are held separately in order to maintain the peace, silence and discipline required for this deep introspective work.

In addition to meditation courses, Dhamma Giri also hosts an Annual Conference, seminars and occasional public talks given by Goenkaji, and is the location for the Vipassana Research Institute (VRI) which was established in 1985. The Institute's research work concentrates on two fields, one being publication and translation of Pāli texts, and the other,

research into the effects of and application of Vipassana meditation in daily life.

The Pāli literature includes the *Tipiṭaka* (the preserved words of the Buddha), commentarial works, such as the *Aṭṭhakathās*, *Ṭīkā*s and *Anu-ṭīkā*s and other non-canonical works. Although this literature is available in the scripts of other countries such as Myanmar and Sri Lanka, in India the word of the Buddha had been lost. Realizing the importance of this great literature as an invaluable part of the Indian heritage, VRI is making history by undertaking to publish the entire *Tipiṭaka* with commentaries and sub-commentaries in Devanāgarī Pāli. Translation into Hindi will follow. The literature will also be available in Myanmar, Devanāgarī, and Roman scripts on CD-ROM, providing scholars with an invaluable research tool.

The Institute has also conducted research on the application of Vipassana in the areas of health, education and social development, and provides a Pāli studies programme which allows students to integrate the *pariyatti* (theory) with the *paṭipatti* (practice).

Through Goenkaji's presence and guidance, Dhamma Giri has now become a model Vipassana centre. It caters to the needs of other Vipassana centres by coordinating course and conducting-assistant-teacher schedules and providing teaching material and training. As well as being an ideal setting for the study and practice of Vipassana meditation, Dhamma Giri is growing as an information and research base for Dhamma to once again spread throughout India and the rest of the world.

May Dhamma Giri continue to flourish so that many more thousands of suffering people can quench their thirst at the Ganges of Dhamma and find the path to liberation, for the good of themselves and others.

May all beings be happy, peaceful, liberated.

May Dhamma arise again in the land of its origin and from here spread around the world to eliminate the misery of suffering humanity.

—Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

THE RISE AND SPREAD OF DHAMMA IN INDIA

Vipassana Research Institute

"My confidence in Dhamma is unshakable. I am only a medium – it is Dhamma that is working.

Dhamma has to choose some medium to get the work done".

-Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

16th December, 1974. Igatpuri, India.

A few hundred yards from the sleepy railway station, a small group of seven men, all Vipassana meditators, slowly made their way up a deserted hill. One of them had his foot in plaster. He hobbled along painfully with a crutch. The others addressed him as 'Guruji'.

Sayagyi S.N. Goenka and the group reached the top of the hill, a desolate land with ancient ruins and a few scattered trees. Nearby, the group could see bodies burning in a cemetery.

"Guruji, this place could hardly be ideal for a meditation centre", one amongst the group said nervously.

The Sayagyi smiled. "On the contrary, this is the ideal place. You can see the ultimate fate of this physical body for which we have so much attachment".

He experienced the vibrations on the lonely hill. "We were not looking for this land", he said quietly. "This land was looking for us".

After millennia, the priceless jewel of Dhamma had found a casket in the land of its origin.

The Early Years (1969-1979)

The coming of Shri. Satya Narayan Goenka and his wife Smt. Ilaichi Goenka to India in 1969 marked the return of Vipassana to the country after nearly 2,000 years.

On June 20, 1969, Sayagyi U Ba Khin formally bestowed on Goenkaji the responsibility of *Vipassanā-ācariya* (teacher of Vipassana).

On June 22, 1969, Sayagyi Goenka left for India. He carried with him the gem of Dhamma. "Truly it was a great responsibility", he wrote in 1991. "Although India today respects and takes pride in the

Buddha, there is widespread opposition to his teaching, purely because of misconceptions about what he actually taught... I myself was once involved in them, until I came in contact with Vipassana... The real nature of Dhamma is coming to light, beneficial to all and accessible to all, no matter what's one background".

That light of Dhamma began to glow brighter in the land of the Buddha.

From 1969 to December 1975, Vipassana courses had already been held in 11 Indian states and 37 towns and cities. There were no Vipassana centres then. Courses were organized in *wādis*, schools, colleges, hostels, hotels, *dharamsalās*, ashrams, temples, *vihāras*, bungalows, offices, a stadium, a jail, a church, a mosque.

Lack of basic facilities in the many residential Vipassana camps did not seem to deter people. In Pratapgarh, for instance, a course was organized by pitching tents in open space on a river bank. Bigger tents were provided for group sittings and smaller tents were put up for students' accommodation. The response from the Indian people was still overwhelming.

The need and the time had come to fulfil Sayagyi U Ba Khin's wish to see a Vipassana centre established in India. Soon, the decision was taken to have a Dhamma centre. It was a long search for a suitable land that brought the group of people on Igatpuri Hill on that December day in 1974.

One amongst the group, returned to Bombay, went directly to the owner of the deserted site, made the payment and only then went home. He had decided to donate the entire cost of the land the moment Sayagyi Goenka had approved of it. The land for the first Vipassana centre in India after millennia was ready. That meditator who offered that invaluable *Dhamma dāna* lives in Mumbai to this day.

The first ten-day course in Dhamma Giri was held on 27th October 1976. This was the 126th 10-day Vipassana course Sayagyi Goenka had conducted in

India. *Dhamma Khetta* in Hyderabad had already hosted two courses, becoming the first Vipassana centre in millennia to offer pure Dhamma to India.

The early courses were given by Sayagyi Goenka himself. Assistant teachers were yet to be appointed. Besides, in the absence of many centres, the Sayagyi and his wife had to travel tirelessly to different parts of the country, carrying the torch of Dhamma.

During courses, 'Guruji' as he was called by his Indian students and 'Goenkaji' as he was called by the Western students, would be in the Dhamma Hall for the early morning chanting, group sittings and would personally check each student. At 7.00 p.m, he would give the Dhamma discourse personally. No tape-recorders were used. There were barely 100 students in each course.

Demand for courses exceeded available capacity even in those early days. Courses were not conducted as often as now, but many students would come for regular self-courses. Whenever students asked in what way they could best offer their services in emerging Dhamma centres, Sayagyi Goenka's answer invariably was three words : "Meditate, mediate, meditate !"

Dhamma Giri in the West, *Dhamma Khetta* in the South, *Dhamma Thali* in Jaipur in the North-West became the pillars for the edifice of Vipassana to quickly grow in India.

By 1979, Sayagyi Goenka had conducted 170 ten-day courses all over the country. These courses had already paved the ways in which Dhamma would reach out to different sections of society. Slowly but surely the understanding spread that Vipassana is not another religion, but the practical quintessence of the goodness and purity in all the religions in this vast and diverse land.

These early years were also a most difficult and a most inspiring period. Most serious meditators, Dhamma workers and the Sayagyi himself had to overcome resistance from their deeply suspicious families who initially wrongly believed that Vipassana has something to do with conversion from one religion to another.

Difficulties were overcome with strong meditation, hard work, perseverance and great faith in

Sayagyi U Ba Khin's prophecy that " the time clock of Vipassana had struck". Dhamma workers toiled day and night selflessly. Thousands upon thousands of students today are reaping the fruits of their inspired and inspiring labours. In one post-*mettā* meeting of Dhamma workers in *Dhamma Giri*, Sayagyi Goenka saw a young worker with his legs swollen from all the running around to take proper care of the students.

Sayagyi Goenka wrote in an article to commemorate that memorable decade: "When I recall the faces of these many dedicated servants of Dhamma, I feel a thrill of rapture throughout my body. I ask myself whether the great work accomplished in only ten years would ever have been possible without their selfless service".

That selfless service was the fertilizer feeding the sapling of Dhamma sprouting again in the land of its origin.

The Years 1980- 1989

This was a period of consolidation on the strong foundation laid the past decade for Vipassana to spread again in India.

A significant development in June 1982 provided the thrust for Vipassana to spread with greater rapidity across the country -ie. the first assistant teachers were appointed. Using audio and video recordings of the Teacher's instructions and discourses, these assistants enabled far more ten-day courses to be organized.

By mid 1985, over 50 assistant teachers were appointed. Most of the courses were in the three regional Vipassana centres.

One more major Dhamma centre arose. *Dhamma Gaṅgā* (1988) on the banks of the River Ganges, in Calcutta, was established to serve Eastern India.

Perhaps the most significant development of the decade for the spread of Dhamma in India was the establishment of the Vipassana Research Institute (VRI) in *Dhamma Giri*, Igatpuri in 1985. VRI has a primary three-fold aim : compilation and publication of the Buddha's true teachings, publication of literature for the spread of Dhamma, and research into the application of Vipassana in daily life.

VRI's work enabled Dhamma to spread in the way Buddha wished - meditators to grow strong both in *pariyatti* (theory) and *paṭipatti* (practice). Sayagyi Goenka once said of both the Vipassana International Academy (VIA) and the VRI being in Dhamma Giri as "the gem set in gold" - students could benefit from the invaluable combination of the theory and practice of Vipassana.

VRI also began a monumental and momentous project - the compilation and publication of the entire *Tiṭṭaka* and related Pāli literature in Devanagiri script. The project, that will have far-reaching implications for millennia to come, meant that for the first time ever, 41 volumes of 82,000 discourses by the Buddha, 2000 discourses by his leading students and related Pāli literature would be accessible in the original words, not just to learned scholars but to millions of people. With plans for publication of the *Tiṭṭaka* in other major Indian scripts, even more millions of people in India are set to benefit from the "gem set in gold".

VRI also began using modern technology to conduct research and publish the teachings of the Buddha. Use of computers and specially engineered software made the task of search and reference through the voluminous Pāli texts easier and more effective.

VRI's CD-ROM project made the *Tiṭṭaka* and its related literature even more accessible. The entire Pāli literature is being released in a single Compact Disc. The CD-ROM released in different scripts, is being distributed free of cost as *Dhamma dana* to scholars, institutions and other deserving recipients.

With more students wishing to share the benefits they experienced from Vipassana, the seeds for the growth of Dhamma were carried from the main centres to far-flung regions of the country. By the end of the decade over 300 courses were held.

The sapling of Dhamma had grown into a strong tree.

The 1990's

From the turn of the decade, an annual conference is held in *Dhamma Giri* for Dhamma workers from all over the world. Its purpose is to discuss, rectify, receive guidance and instructions from the Teacher,

review and plan for the future of what is now a flourishing world-wide Dhamma organization.

In a concluding address of one such annual conference, Sayagyi Goenka said, "The time for take-off has come". Even before this decade is over, those words are turning true, particularly in India.

A Vipassana wave is now quietly but rapidly sweeping across the length and breadth of this ancient civilization. The 90's have already seen the establishing of 14 new Vipassana centres in India : *Dhamma Sindhu* (Kutch, Gujarat), *Dhamma Salila* (Dehradun, Uttar Pradesh), *Dhamma Tihar* (Tihar Jail, New Delhi), *Dhamma Sikhara* (Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh), *Dhamma Ananda* (Pune, Maharashtra), *Dhammālaya* (Kolhapur, Maharashtra), *Dhamma Sarovara* (Dhule, Maharashtra), *Dhamma Nāga* (Nagpur, Maharashtra), *Dhamma Koṭa* (Rajkot, Gujarat), *Dhamma Piṭha* (Ahmedabad, Gujarat), *Dhamma Bodhi* (Bodhgaya, Bihar), *Dhamma Licchavi* (Vaishali), *Dhamma Vimutti* (Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh), *Dhamma Kānana* (Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh), *Dhamma Ketu* (Durg, Madhya Pradesh).

New Dhamma centres are being developed by Vipassana meditators in Chennai (*Dhamma Setu*), New Delhi (*Dhamma Sota*), Bangalore (*Dhamma Sumana*), Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh (*Dhamma Cakka*), Shravasti (*Dhamma Suvatthi*), Baracakia, Bihar (*Dhamma Upavana*), Bhopal (*Dhamma Pāla*) (*Dhamma Dhaja*) Hoshiyarpur, Panjab.

Besides courses in Vipassana centres, non-centre Vipassana courses continue to be held in many small towns and cities across India. In South India, for instance, the state of Kerala, had its first two 10-day Vipassana courses recently. Tamil Nadu had courses in Coimbatore, Madurai.

One heartening development in South India is that instructions and discourses are now available in regional languages. This has meant more Tamil, Telugu and Kannada-speaking peoples participating in courses.

In South Gujarat, a population of over 80 lakh people, nearly half of whom are tribals, have begun to benefit from Dhamma. To date, 23 ten-day courses have been held in non-centre camps. A dedicated team of six senior Dhamma servers are working in earnest

to conduct courses even in the more remote interior regions.

Three courses have also been held at the Kakrapur Atomic Power Project at Anumala Township. Its management is so pleased with the results that small batches of employees are being sent to various Dhamma centres to attend courses.

Dhamma Nāga, the Vipassana centre in Nagpur city has completed its first phase of construction. Vipassana has spread rapidly in the region with ten-day courses having been conducted in almost all the major towns and cities.

To enable Vipassana to reach far-flung interior regions, a group of *Bhikkhu ācarayas* have been authorized to introduce Vipassana through part-time courses, based on Goenkaji's discourses.

In Madhya Pradesh, the state government has in principle agreed to hand over 35 acres of land in Chhavni Village for a Vipassana centre. A master plan for the centre is ready. The newly formed Madhya Pradesh Vipassana Samiti has organized 7 ten-day courses and a two-day children's courses.

The first two Vipassana courses in Gwalior city are being held this September – October. In Balaghat, the new *Dhamma Kānan* Vipassana Centre is serving the southern part of the state.

Barely a month ago, *Dhamma Dhaja* (Banner of Dhamma) has been named as a centre in the Punjab. It has 40 acres of land and is situated in Hoshiapur district of that State.

Vipassana has firmly entered the prison system in India with two Dhamma centres established inside the very walls of two notorious prisons – *Dhamma Tihar* in Delhi and a centre in Nashik Jail (yet to be given a Dhamma name), both of which conduct fortnightly ten-day courses.

Courses are being held regularly for focus groups all over the country— children, teenagers, juvenile delinquents, college students, the visually handicapped, the leprosy-afflicted, management trainees, police officers. For society to change, the individual must change. Vipassana is providing that powerful tool for change.

With now over 30 established and emerging Dhamma centres, over 400 assistant teachers, still the supply of Vipassana courses is unable to keep pace

with the demand. The national media too is awakening to the beneficial implications of Vipassana spreading across India. Print media articles in all the leading newspapers and magazines, TV documentaries telecast over the DoorDarshan National Network, radio interviews given by the Teacher and assistant teachers, discourses of Sayagyi Goenka telecast in 44 episodes of the Zee Satellite TV channel have all contributed to drawing people to Vipassana. Yet, even now, the single biggest factor responsible for the growth of Dhamma is the quality of '*ehi passiko*' or 'come and see' - students who have done courses and benefited cannot resist persuading their family, friends and acquaintances too to do a Vipassana course soon.

People are coming from all sections of society—millionaire industrialists, farmers, technocrats, scientists, labourers, fashion designers, housewives, professionals, judges, addicts... In a country infamous for its 'caste system', the sight of over 500 students in *Dhamma Giri* meditating together, side by side, in a Dhamma Hall is a portent of a future social barrier-free India. "It is a sign of a India-to-be where only the factor of quality will be recognized in a person", says Sayagyi Goenka, "and not any other discriminating factors like social strata or caste etc."

Another crucial development in the spread of Dhamma in India is the growing acceptance of Vipassana by the national governmental bodies and state governments. The most telling development is the Government of Maharashtra Resolution (GR No. 2496/3/SER-9, dated 15/5/97) that offers paid leave for senior government officials to undertake Vipassana courses. This is perhaps the first tangible acceptance of Vipassana by a government to enhance its own working.

The fact that this acceptance comes from one of India's most advanced and industrialized states, holds great significance. The Maharashtra Government has also been the first to declare that Vipassana courses be conducted in every prison in the state. The state, with five Vipassana centres, has also the largest number of Vipassana students in India.

The edicts of Emperor Asoka indicate that he himself and vast sections of his people practiced Dhamma. His empire, one of the largest in the world then, flourished. The country is again beginning to

benefit from the invaluable heritage of the Buddha.

The tree of Dhamma has again begun spreading its branches in the land of its roots.

“ A long journey lies ahead ,” says Sayagyi

Goenka. “ From a firm base in India, the light of Vipassana must spread everywhere around the world”. For that purpose, the new Vipassana Pagoda on the coast of Mumbai will be like a light house of Dhamma to humanity floundering in the stormy seas of misery.

How can one be ‘high’ or ‘low’ by being born in this so-called caste or that so-called caste, this community or that community, being born from the womb of this mother or that mother?

One can only be high or low according to the moral quality of life one is living. One who is living a Dhamma life of wholesome mental, vocal, physical actions is definitely a ‘high’ person. A person living a life of unwholesome mental, vocal, physical actions, harming oneself and harming others is definitely a ‘low’ person. Such a person is wasting the invaluable opportunity of being able to live a human life.

One who is ‘high’ in the applying of Dhamma in day- to- day life has to be very vigilant, very watchful every moment to see that he or she does not slip down and become ‘low’.

One who is ‘low’ in Dhamma has the invaluable opportunity to work diligently, ardently, consistently to develop in Dhamma by practicing Vipassana. Such a person is bound to become ‘high’. Such is the law of nature.

No one else can make us ‘high’ or ‘low’. We are our own masters, the creators or destroyers of our own happiness. Therefore, let us acquire mastery of ourselves. Let us acquire mastery of the present moment to acquire mastery of the future, for our own good, and for the good of all other beings.

— Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

THE SPREAD OF VIPASSANA OUTSIDE INDIA

From Scattered Seeds to Fruit

Bill Hart

In June 1969, when Shri S.N. Goenka boarded the aeroplane from Yangon to Calcutta, he thought that he was embarking on a brief trip to help his mother in India, and he expected soon to return to Myanmar. However, his teacher, Sayagyi U Ba Khin, knew the real significance of the journey. "The time clock of Vipassana has struck," he had said; and he told Goenkaji, "You are not going; I am going." Events had thwarted his own hopes of re-establishing the practice of Vipassana in India and spreading it from there around the world; now he saw Goenkaji as doing this work on his behalf.

The signs were not especially encouraging. In India the Buddha was hailed as a spiritual hero but his teachings were regarded with suspicion. What's more, Dhamma — the universal law of nature — had come to be equated with a religious sect, and instead of uniting people it divided them. As for Goenkaji, he knew only a handful out of the millions who lived in India. There was no particular reason to suppose that he would have much influence there. Still less could success be foreseen in Western countries, where the teaching of the Buddha was viewed as a foreign religion and the technique of Vipassana was virtually unknown.

On the other hand, Goenkaji had been trained systematically by Sayagyi. By personal experience he knew that the Dhamma transcends all barriers and divisions. And by his own experience he knew that Vipassana offers a genuine cure for the ills that everyone encounters in life.

That assurance sustained him as he left behind his teacher and the land of the Dhamma. It sustained him again in India as enthusiastic meditators insisted on course after course, delaying his return to Myanmar indefinitely.

From Bombay (Mumbai) to Madras (Chennai) to Varanasi to Calcutta and back again, from temple to *dharamsala* to school to church or mosque, Goenkaji criss-crossed the Indian subcontinent repeatedly. His family had provided a secretary to accom-

pany him; but otherwise there was no organization to support him, no guidelines on setting up or managing courses, no rich endowment to smooth the way. He worked entirely alone but, as he has said, "The Dhamma has a thousand hands." Men and women who had learned Vipassana under his guidance came forward to assist in the work in many different ways. And so the wheel of Dhamma began turning once again in its homeland, India.

It was perhaps inevitable that Westerners would become attracted to Goenkaji's teaching. In those years many had come to India in search of a spiritual approach to life, something they felt their own cultures had cast aside. These seekers had flocked to different teachers, but with Goenkaji they faced a language problem: in his first years he taught only in Hindi. Of course he spoke English freely, but it was the English of a businessman and he felt it might not be suitable for the teaching of the Dhamma.

After resisting for a year, at last in October 1970 he acceded to the many pressing requests and travelled to Dalhousie, a hill station in the Himalayas. There for the first time he conducted a course, giving instructions and evening talks in English.

By this simple step, Goenkaji widened the scope of his Dhamma service to include people around the world who spoke English as a first or second language. For people of differing faiths and cultural backgrounds, his non-sectarian emphasis was uniquely appealing. For people from lands where science was the new religion, his presentation of the Dhamma as a practical, scientific teaching struck home. Goenkaji had developed this approach with Indians in mind; it turned out to work equally well for citizens of other countries East and West.

But the impact was not seen at once, except in the steady presence of large numbers of Westerners at Goenkaji's courses in India. Not being tied by family or jobs, they followed him from one 'gypsy camp' to the next, to meditate or else to help in the running of courses. Later, when land was bought in 1974 for

the first Vipassana centre at Igatpuri, a handful of Western students immediately came there to begin the work of meditating on the site and building the future Dhamma Giri. They played a key role in establishing the centre.

In those years Goenkaji used to say, "My job is simply to scatter the seeds." He did this through the length and breadth of India, but the wind carried some of the seeds much further afield, even across the oceans. Westerners who had sat with Goenkaji eventually returned to their own countries. There some of them organized regular weekly sittings of Vipassana meditators and even self courses. They also started publishing the *Vipassana Newsletter*, which provided continuing information on the Dhamma work of Goenkaji.

But the first Western students performed another very important task: they kept urging Goenkaji to travel to their countries and bring the Dhamma to the many people unable to go to India.

At first Goenkaji declined their invitations. Before anything else he felt that his job was to establish a firm base for the Dhamma in India; only having done so would he consider teaching in other countries. Instead, he encouraged other students of Sayagyi to conduct courses in the West.

But Goenkaji refused also for a more practical reason. He still held a Myanmar passport, valid for travel only to India. He was unable to receive permission to travel to other countries; and while he could easily become an Indian citizen and thus receive a valid passport, he was reluctant to break still another tie with his homeland.

By 1979 ten years had passed since Goenkaji began teaching in India. There were now three centres in that country, and the nucleus of the meditation pagoda had been built at Dhamma Giri. He decided that the time had come to carry the teaching to other lands. Receiving his Indian passport hours before his scheduled departure, he flew to France to conduct two courses, and then continued to Canada and England.

Those first courses galvanized meditators in the West. They saw that the Dhamma could be transmitted as broadly and successfully in their own countries as in India. They discovered that they had the

skills and energy to undertake the work of organizing and managing large meditation courses. Most of all, they learned how great was the need, the demand for Vipassana meditation. People travelled hundreds, even thousands of miles for the chance of receiving the teaching from Goenkaji. Others who had sat with him in India travelled just as far to work on the courses. And naturally, at the conclusion of each course, Goenkaji received more requests to teach Vipassana.

In each of the following years he again travelled outside India to teach in Europe, North America, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Nepal and Sri Lanka. But visits, even once a year, were clearly not enough. Each country needed its own continuing programme of meditation courses and the proper facilities for conducting them.

To meet the burgeoning demands was far beyond the power of any individual. But several developments combined to allow the teaching of Vipassana to spread more widely than ever before.

First, in 1980 Goenkaji decided that courses he conducted in the West should be run on the same *dāna* basis as in India. Up to then, course participants had been asked to pay a fixed amount to cover costs of room and board. Now there would be no more charges; all expenses were to be met by the donations of grateful students of past courses.

To some it was a move that seemed risky. The concept of *dāna* was unfamiliar to most people in the West, and the expenses involved were far higher than in India. But old students spontaneously came forward with donations, and a course fund was soon created. Organizers could draw on this for initial expenses, replenishing the fund with donations received at a course's end. In this way the work was given a firm financial basis in accordance with the highest Dhamma principles.

A second development was a systematic effort to record the entire teaching of Goenkaji in a ten-day course. This was not the first time he had been recorded: there were audio tapes of his discourses, chanting and some of his meditation instructions going back to the early 1970s, and in 1979 the first videotapes had been made. These were all of great value, especially to students of Goenkaji outside In-

dia; but no one had tried to record the full teaching day by day, from beginning to end of a course. Now one meditator undertook to do precisely that.

It turned out to be an exacting and time-consuming task: so many variables were involved, and so many things could go wrong. In the following years the video camera and audio recording equipment seemed to follow Goenkaji to almost every course. As early as 1982, however, the recording project yielded results: the first complete set of high-quality recordings presenting the teaching of Goenkaji in its entirety. Work then began on preparing translations into most of the major European and Asian languages.

The third development came in late 1981, when Goenkaji appointed the first assistant teachers — meditators who were given the responsibility of conducting courses as his representatives, using the recordings of his teaching.

With these developments, outside India it became possible to offer Vipassana courses as taught by Goenkaji throughout the year, not only during the brief times when he himself could visit.

In March 1982 the first ten-day course conducted by an assistant teacher took place in Bodh Gaya, India. Within months other assistants began teaching in Europe, North America, Australia and Japan. Very soon each of those parts of the world had a regular programme of Vipassana meditation courses.

Almost at the same time came another milestone: the establishment of the first permanent facilities outside India specifically for the practice of

Vipassana meditation as taught by S.N. Goenka. Within weeks of each other, properties were purchased in the northeastern United States and near Sydney, Australia. And so the centres of Dhamma Dharā and Dhamma Bhūmī came into being, soon to be followed by many others.

Today many of the seeds Goenkaji scattered have sprouted into plants that have come to fruition. In the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Thailand, Cambodia and Myanmar itself, centres operate under Goenkaji's guidance. There and in many other locations, Vipassana courses are offered throughout the year — not only the regular ten-day courses but also courses for children and for old students who wish to deepen their practice.

Naturally many old students make it a priority to visit India for the purpose of meditating in the presence of Goenkaji at the superb facilities in the older centres there. But for the many more who cannot undertake the journey, the Dhamma has come to them.

In 1969 or even 1979, no one could have imagined that the teaching of Vipassana would spread so widely — no one except Sayagyi U Ba Khin. He knew that the clock had struck and could not be turned back. He knew that Goenkaji, though seemingly alone, would be helped by the thousand hands of the Dhamma, and that ways would be found through all difficulties to bring the teaching of liberation to people around the world.

*Caratha, Bhikkhave, cārikaṃ bahujaṇahitāya
bahujaṇasukhāya lokānukampāya ... (Cūḷa Vagga)*

Move on, O Bhikkhus. Move with compassion towards the world,
for the welfare of many for the happiness of many...

DHAMMA DHARĀ

Barry and Kate Lapping

In the 60s and 70s thousands of Westerners travelled to India on a spiritual search. Many of them were fortunate enough to come in contact with Goenkaji and learn Dhamma from him. After practising in India for a number of years, these Westerners returned to their countries and continued to practise. But at that time there were no Teachers there to guide them and to spread the Dhamma further, so Goenkaji was invited to North America to conduct courses. In 1979, the first course in North America was held in Canada.

For a number of years Goenkaji returned to North America to conduct courses at rented sites all across the United States and Canada. The enthusiasm and thirst for Dhamma was strong, and right from the beginning old students started seeking a permanent centre where Vipassana could be taught and practised on an ongoing basis. In 1981, after conducting a course in western Massachusetts, Goenkaji appointed the first Trust in North America with the purpose of establishing a permanent centre.

The search began immediately but did not bear fruit until the next summer when Goenkaji again came to America. During that visit he looked at a number of places throughout the north-eastern United States. One of the last he saw was a renovated farmhouse and barn on 8 and 3/4 acres amid the rolling hills and apple orchards of western Massachusetts. The property was near enough to the small city of Greenfield to provide easy access for students and yet rural enough to provide a quiet environment for meditation. Many years ago it had served as a temperance tavern, a gathering place where alcohol was not allowed, so already the site had a foundation of good sīla. Goenkaji found this place to be quite suitable. Dāna accumulated quickly and in August 1982, the property was purchased. Goenkaji named the new centre Dhamma Dharā, land of Dhamma. This was the first centre established outside India, and the old students in the West welcomed it with great enthusiasm. Now there was a place for them to meditate se-

riously without having to travel halfway across the world !

A small core of students dedicated their lives to establishing the centre and slowly more and more meditators moved to the area to help carry on the work. At first there were difficulties, especially because the Dhamma was so new in the West and there was no precedent for such a place here. There was some initial resistance from the local townspeople but gradually their fears were allayed as the meditators worked with the local realtors, contractors and businesspeople from the town. They began to see that the centre was, in fact, a real asset to the community at large and soon some of the prominent local citizens began to come to the centre to take courses.

The centre has grown steadily in the last fifteen years. When it opened in 1982 only eight students could be accommodated indoors; now the number has grown and there is room for 64 inside and 200 with tenting in the summer. There has been a slow but sure increase in the size of courses and a dramatic change in the atmosphere with the construction of the pagoda. Much of the construction work at the centre has been done by meditators and Goenkaji has remarked that this has contributed greatly to the good Dhamma vibrations here. Although only the first floor of the Pagoda is complete, with 64 cells, there are plans to finish the second and third floors topped with a large Myanmar-style bell. The Pagoda, already a source of strong Dhamma vibrations, will be an even greater inspiration when the golden bell can be seen by all who drive by Dhamma Dharā.

Currently, the site planning committee is preparing a long-term master plan for developing Dhamma Dharā into an ideal Vipassana centre. There are plans for the completion of the Pagoda, a Teachers' residence, new accommodation for 200 students providing single and double rooms with attached bathrooms, expanded kitchen facilities and accommodation for Dhamma servers. Recently, the summer meditation pavilion was winterized as the permanent

meditation hall, which can seat up to 250 students. Covered walkways provide the students with shelter from the rain and snow as they walk to the meditation hall from the house.

As Dhamma Dharā has developed, the community of meditators living around the centre has also grown. Many students have moved near the centre, built homes nearby and devoted their lives to their own practice and to helping others by serving Dhamma. The Dhamma atmosphere of the centre

has spread from its physical boundaries to the surrounding area and has become a source of happiness for many.

A good seed has been planted at Dhamma Dharā and a small plant has sprouted out. If this seed continues to be nourished, it surely will grow into a large tree, able to serve more and more suffering humanity. May Dhamma continue to flourish throughout the world at all the centres.

Dhamma i.e. *sīla, samādhi, paññā* is complete in itself - *kevala paripunṇam*. Nothing need be added to it - no blind belief, no dogma, no mysticism, no lifeless rite or ritual. Adding any such element will dilute and pollute Dhamma. It will lose its strength, it will lose its efficacy. Therefore, apply the totality of Dhamma in life without mixing anything with it and enjoy all the immense benefits of pure Dhamma.

- Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

Dhamma of *sīla, samādhi, paññā* is ultra pure - *kevala parisuddham*. Nothing should be taken away from it calling it impure. There is no impurity in *sīla, samādhi, paññā*.

These three aspects of Dhamma is what makes Dhamma ultra pure. Maintain the pristine purity of Dhamma and practise the three aspects of it diligently. Enjoy the best fruits of pure Dhamma.

- Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

SPREAD OF DHAMMA IN NORTH AMERICA

Thomas Crisman

Goenkaji's first course in North America was conducted in Canada in the summer of 1979. The following year, 1980, he conducted courses in Eastern Massachusetts, Chicago, and Northern California at which many old students, who had previously attended courses in India, participated along with hundreds of new students.

The first centre in North America was established with the purchase of a farm house and a few acres located in the rolling hills of Western Massachusetts. Dhamma Dharā had its first course in August 1982 and has continued to grow and add facilities, including a new pagoda with 64 cells and a new Dhamma hall with a capacity of about 250 students. Every year, at least twenty ten-day courses, one 20-day course, and one 30-day course are held at the centre.

A few years later, the second centre in North America, Dhamma Mahāvana, was established in California, initially in a rural area north of San Francisco. After operating for a few years at that location, the California centre was moved to a much larger piece of property located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains in central California about equal distances from San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Dhamma Mahāvana has continued to increase the number of courses it gives each year as well as offering numerous children's courses and longer courses. A new Dhamma Hall accommodating approximately 150 students was completed in 1997 and a teacher's residence is now under construction.

In the summer of 1990, two additional centres were established in the United States. Dhamma Siri is located in the southwest part of the United States near Dallas, Texas, Dhamma Kuñja is located about equal distances between Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon in the Pacific Northwest portion of the United States. Both of these centres have contin-

ued to grow and expand their physical facilities as well as the number of courses that they offer each year. They each serve numerous old and new students from both their own respective geographic areas as well as from throughout the United States.

Very recently, two new centres have been established in North America and both are in Canada, the home of many old students in this tradition of Vipassana. In August 1997, land was purchased in the Western Canadian Province of British Columbia and construction of buildings is currently being planned. The other new Canadian centre is located in the Central Canadian Province of Ontario, although very near the Province of Quebec, the principal city of which is Montreal. This site is a former convent which already has a number of buildings and should be ready for the conducting of courses very shortly.

In addition to the four well-established centres in the United States and the two new centres in Canada, there are numerous non-centre courses conducted at various locations throughout North America each year. For example, in 1997 approximately 33 ten-day courses were conducted at non-centre sites, serving hundreds of students.

In addition to the conducting of regular ten-day courses, a programme is currently underway to introduce Vipassana courses into the prisons of North America. It is presently expected that the first prison course will be conducted in a jail facility near Seattle, Washington, towards the end of 1997.

While Dhamma has not spread as widely or as quickly in North America as in India, great progress has been made since the earliest courses less than 20 years ago. In countries and in a culture to which meditation is generally a foreign concept, the rapid growth of Dhamma in North America has been quite remarkable.

VIPASSANA IN EUROPE

Drs B. and K. Gandhi

In 1979, after teaching Vipassana for ten years in India, Goenkaji made his first trip abroad to spread Dhamma around the world. The very first courses were given in France and England and these two countries continued to benefit from regular visits from Goenkaji over the next decade and more. These visits, during which he conducted courses and gave numerous public talks, were of immeasurable value in attracting hundreds of new students, seekers of truth from different countries and traditions, to Dhamma. They also provided old students with valuable service experience, inspiring them to help him in his mission and deepen their own meditation practice. The following is a brief account of Vipassana activity in the various countries of Europe.

France: Dhamma Mahī

In response to the growing demand for courses, a 30-acre rural property, south of Paris, which had previously been a children's holiday camp, was purchased in 1988. Thus, Dhamma Mahī, the first European centre was established. Regular ten-day, old student and children's courses are held, using teaching materials in two, three or more languages, depending on the nationalities represented. Gradually, the neighbouring countries also became active and started holding increasing numbers of their own courses; in 1995, therefore, Goenkaji redesignated Dhamma Mahī as a 'French Vipassana Meditation Centre'. Presently it has acquired about 100 acres of land, and 18 meditation cells have been built. A studio has been established to record course material in various languages and the Trust has plans to build a pagoda. In addition, the Cambodian community purchased a property east of Paris in 1996, where they are holding regular group-sittings.

UK Centre: Dhamma Dīpa

The need for a permanent site at which to hold Vipassana courses was likewise soon felt in the United Kingdom. A family house in suburban Birmingham, Dhamma Geha, was bought as a temporary facility

in 1987. Almost immediately, however, old students began looking for a larger, more suitable site. In 1991 a 22-acre former riding school in the border country between England and Wales was purchased. Goenkaji inaugurated the centre, naming it Dhamma Dīpa - Island of Dhamma. Since its inception the centre has been functioning very efficiently and steadily gaining in Dhamma strength. In 1996 Goenkaji gave permission to hold a 30-day course at the centre, a landmark in its life, as if it came of age. Continuous courses are being held at the centre as well as outside it. Non-centre courses are also being held in Scotland, Sussex and London. Sixteen meditation cells have been constructed at the centre and a new long-term development plan for the site is underway. An old barn has been converted into a second Dhamma hall, which has a makeshift arrangement to convert it into cells for long courses. Yearly open days are held to establish rapport with the neighbouring community and let them know the nature of the work being carried out at the centre. These are very successful and productive. In addition, 11 regular weekly group sittings are held countrywide and One-day sittings twice a month. All activities are run by the Vipassana Trust, which is recognized as a charitable organization.

Germany: Dhamma Geha

The first course in Germany was held in 1983 in a youth hostel. However, because of lack of proper facilities, German students continued to hold courses in Belgium and at Dhamma Mahī until 1993, when a good and convenient site at Bad Herrenalb was offered to the Trust on a rental basis. This former hotel continues to serve as the focus for Vipassana activities in the country. Meanwhile the Trust is actively in search of a permanent site for a centre. In addition to a very full programme of ten-day and other courses, the German Vipassana Association have organized a number of Pñli workshops in recent years. The Vipassana Newsletter is published in German and is reaching 2,400 students. The Discourse Summaries

and "Art of Living" by Bill Hart have been translated into the German language. Open houses have been successfully conducted every year at Bad Herrenalb. Anapana meditation is being taught in some schools on a regular basis. The Trust maintains close contact with "Start Again", the drug rehabilitation centre in Zurich, Switzerland and former drug addicts often come to attend courses. Six weekly group-sittings are taking place around the country.

Italy

The first course in Italy was held in 1986 and students have been holding ten-day courses regularly every year since then. In addition they have organized one three-day and six one-day courses. They have also organized public talks and a two-day seminar. They have translated and published a number of books about the practice of Vipassana into the Italian language. Four regular group sittings are held every week and several 1-day courses are now organized every month.

Spain

The first course in Spain was held in 1984, at a rented site. Since then at least one course was held every year and recently this has risen to 4 or 5. Regular weekly group sittings are held in four places. All the activities are carried out by the Spanish Vipassana Association, which was formed in 1992 and is actively looking for the site for a Dhamma house or a centre.

Portugal

The first meditation course was held in Portugal in 1990. Since then one course is held every year with an average of 30 students participating. Several 1-day and 3-day courses are being held and regular weekly group sittings have taken place since 1992. The courses were initially conducted in English/ Spanish languages but recently ten-day instructions and discourses have been translated into Portuguese. A public talk was recently organized with good response and discussions are afoot with the Government with a view to introduce Vipassana in prisons. Meditators are looking for a site for a Dhamma house.

Switzerland

The first course in Switzerland was conducted by Goenkaji and Mataji in 1980, with 120 students attending. There was little Dhamma activity in the

country until 1985, since when 2 or 3 courses are held every year, with an average of 40 students participating. In 1990, Swiss Vipassana Association was established and is functioning effectively. In 1992, a "Start Again" project, a rehabilitation centre for drug addicts was established. They are using Anapana and Vipassana Meditation as part of the curing process, alongside socio-medical therapies. A good number of students from this centre have sat 10-day courses with beneficial effects.

Belgium

The first course in Belgium was held in 1985 at a rented site. After a better site was found, old students started holding courses in collaboration with the German Association until Germany found their own site in 1994. Regular weekly group-sitting and 1-day sittings are held since 1982. Goenkaji's introductory video talks are regularly organized with an enthusiastic response. An active search is going on for a Dhamma house. The legal Vipassana Trust will be formed this year.

Netherlands

The first course in Netherlands was organized in 1988. Thereafter for 4 years yearly courses were held in Belgium in collaboration with the Belgian Association. 4 regular weekly group sittings and 2 monthly 1-day sittings are taking place. The legal Netherlands Vipassana Trust was inaugurated last year. Together with the Belgian Association, they are looking for a suitable site for a Dhamma house.

Scandinavia

The first course in Sweden was held in 1992 and now one course is regularly held every year. In addition, three -day self courses for old students are held every Spring and Autumn. A regular weekly group sitting is taking place. Pamphlets of "Art of Living" and "Code of Discipline" and some discourse summaries have been translated in the Swedish and Danish languages. Denmark is planning to hold a course in Spring 1998.

Romania

The first course in Romania was held in 1993. Regular weekly group sittings and self courses are taking place and some public talks are being organized. The Newsletter is being translated into the local language.

Serbia

Due to keen demand for a course and unavailability of sites and paucity of experienced Dhamma servers, the first course for Serbian students was held at Dhamma Mahī in 1995. Since then regular courses are being held once or even twice a year, in Serbia itself. A weekly group sitting is taking place in Belgrade. Public talks are being organized. Students are actively looking for a site for a Dhamma house or even a centre.

Russia

The first course in Russia was held in 1993. To date, 7 courses have been held with about 300 students having sat a course, either in Moscow or St. Petersburg. One group sitting has been established in Moscow and a Vipassana World Contact for the territories of the former Soviet Union has been appointed. Ten-day course instructions and discourses are being translated and recorded in the Russian language.

Israel

Vipassana courses have been held at different sites over recent years. Courses are usually heavily over-subscribed. Ten-day course materials are available in Hebrew. The local Trust is hoping to establish a Dhamma house to cater for the demand in the country.

Ireland

The first course in Ireland took place in 1996, swiftly followed by a further two courses within 12 months. The prison authorities have shown an interest in Vipassana.

Summary

To date, at least 704 courses of various types have been held, with more than 27,000 students having sat. The course instructions and summaries and other relevant literature have been translated into most of the European languages. Group sittings are active, public talks organized and newsletters published. The main Newsletter is published in English from Dhamma Dīpa and inserts added from other countries in their respective languages. Some Trusts pub-

lish their own short Newsletter. With the exception of four, most countries have Trusts or Associations and they work in harmonious co-operation with 30 Assistant Teachers and devoted Dhamma servers to organize and execute a range of activities for the benefit of students and the general public. A European Vipassana Conference was organized in 1995 at Dhamma Mahī and about 150 delegates attended. More of such events are planned in future. Assistant Teachers Meetings are taking place twice a year. The motivation and enthusiasm of those involved in Dhamma activities in Europe is commendable. Interest has also been expressed in holding courses in Austria, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania and Greece.

Figures can be inaccurate and dull and statistics misleading. However, one fact is crystal clear that the demand for Vipassana is steadily and progressively increasing. Presently about 120 courses are held every year and more and more are planned. There is a great hunger and thirst for Vipassana throughout Europe. It may be Communism or Capitalism, Democracy or Dictatorship, people may be living under any system of government but they are miserable and suffering. We may delude ourselves about happiness but it remains an illusion. We may call ourselves civilized but civilization has its roots in spiritual values which many do not recognize. We may call ourselves free, but freedom without morality and ethics is just a licence to commit any crime one likes. Vipassana has brought this awareness to people of various denominations in Europe, they are adopting it and are trying to help their colleagues and countrymen.

In Europe one can perhaps begin to see evidence of a genuine desire to unify and overcome some of the old divisions of politics, economics, religion, language and culture. Vipassana can make a powerful contribution to this process of personal and social integration.

May Dhamma spread far and wide. May more and more people of all walks of life take to this benevolent Path for the benefit of themselves in particular and humanity in general.

THE SPREAD OF DHAMMA IN AUSTRALIA

Patrick Given-Wilson

Dhamma has rained beneficently, and the practice of Vipassana has taken strong roots in the land of Australia. From 1969, when Goenkaji first started giving Vipassana courses in India, most of his early students naturally were Indians. Goenkaji was not fluent enough in English to conduct courses in that language. When Westerners approached him for the Dhamma, he learnt English with the strong encouragement of his own Teacher. Among his Western students in those early years were a number of Australians, and in 1979, when he decided to start teaching outside India, an early invitation came from his Australian students.

His first course in Australia was held at Boys Scouts camp at Heathcote, outside Sydney in 1980, for 119 students, new and old, immediately followed by another in Perth for 76 students. In 1981 he came again, and gave another course, again in Sydney for 164 and Perth for 80. In 1982, a third Sydney course was held for 208 students.

A realization quickly grew, especially among the older students, of the importance of having places dedicated to the practice of Vipassana where a strong meditation vibration could be established and maintained for the benefit of all who came there. After Goenkaji's first course in 1980, a major donation by an old student resulted in the acquisition of a Sydney Dhamma House. In 1981, land was donated for the establishment of a full Vipassana Centre at Blackheath, in the Blue Mountains. In 1982, during his visit, Goenkaji visited the land, and by the next year a centre had been built there which he called Dhamma Bhūmi, meaning Dhamma land.

There are now Vipassana centres in four of the six states of Australia, Dhamma Bhūmi in New South Wales, Dhamma Rasmi in Queensland, Dhamma Pabhā in Tasmania, and Dhamma Āloka in Victoria. Even in the states where there are no centres, there is a regular programme of courses and group sittings. Overall in Australia, over 50 ten-day courses are given each year, attended by over 2,000 students. In addi-

tion, about seven Satipaṭṭhāna courses and long courses and many shorter courses are given each year. This is all the more remarkable in a country with a population of only 18 million.

Each centre has essentially been built by the hard work, self-reliance and often physical labour of groups of old students. Three of the four centres are entirely built, while the fourth, which was built in just three months, is greatly expanded from the existing house. Another notable feature of all four centres is that each is built on attractive land with scenic outlooks onto or near a mountain.

Dhamma Bhūmi, Blackheath, was built to its initial stage in 1983 largely by a small group of students, in seven months over a bitter mountain winter, on rocky soil, often in wind and freezing temperatures. It is sited near the highest point of the Blue Mountains, with good road and rail connections, taking about two hours to the city. Set in natural bushland with dramatic views, it has been landscaped with ponds, paths and gardens. Its strong Dhamma vibration was augmented by further visits from Goenkaji in most years during the eighties. Goenkaji first gave the inaugural ten-day course there in 1983. The first Twenty-day course in Australia was held there in 1986. Pagoda cells were opened in 1990, on the occasion of Goenkaji's Satipaṭṭhāna course there. A number of Goenkaji's discourses and instructions have been recorded at Dhamma Bhūmi over the years, and the Satipaṭṭhāna discourses recorded in 1990 are now used as a standard for the English language courses. At present a new Teacher's residence is under construction and there are plans for a new large Dhamma Hall. Presently the centre serves about 1350 students every year.

In 1988, a small group of old students in Queensland donated land for a centre. After a short search, a suitable place was found at Pomona, about two hours north of the state capital, Brisbane, with good road and rail connections. The first course was held in 1989. Goenkaji called the centre Dhamma

Rasmi: Rasmi means a ray of light or sunshine. He visited Dhamma Rasmi and gave a three-day course there in 1990. It is built on gently sloping land and enjoys the warm, sunny Queensland climate. It is notable for its beautiful fertile gardens and fruit trees, and its fine views of a nearby steep mountain, a local landmark. In 1993, a large, beautiful octagonal Dhamma Hall was built, now a major feature of the centre. The first twenty-day course was held at Dhamma Rasmi in 1996, and currently Dhamma Rasmi serves about 600 students every year.

Inspired by the success of these first two centres, and most importantly by their own meditation, in 1992, a group in the state of Tasmania, an island south of the mainland, donated for a centre there. Eventually 268 acres of bushland was found and purchased near Mt. Dromedary, about 45 minutes north of Hobart. Goenkaji named this centre Dhamma Pabhā. Pabhā means glow or radiance. The centre is still in its early stage of development, which has been limited by selling some of the unused blocks of land, mostly to meditators who wish to live near the centre. The first course, in the summer of 1994-95, was held in campsite conditions, without electricity or on-site cooking facilities, using marquees or tents for a hall and student and worker accommodation. A small facility has been constructed and regular courses have been held at the centre since. Presently about 75 students a year are served on 10-day courses at Dhamma Pabhā.

Melbourne has long been the home of a strong group of old Vipassana students, and its turn came with the purchase of land in 1993. Goenkaji named this centre Dhamma Āloka, again meaning Dhamma light or radiance. Its purchase was partly financed by the sale of a previously owned Dhamma house in Melbourne, and by donations from old students. It is situated on a small hill, whose banks rise steeply above the Yarra river on three sides, in a rural valley looking out onto mountain ranges to the north and south. It is about one and a half hours drive east of Melbourne, and the centre buildings are clearly visible

from the approaching highway. Although Dhamma Āloka was the most recent of these centres to arise, it has also seen the fastest development, with regular courses starting after only three months. A year later the first Satipaṭṭhāna course followed, and Dhamma Āloka now serves about 250 students a year with regular ten-day courses.

Western Australia, which Goenkaji visited twice, in 1983 and 1984, has been holding regular courses and these have been held at a semi-permanent campsite near Perth since 1991. The site is owned by Cyrenean House, a drug rehabilitation organization, funded both by the government and charity, and founded by a Vipassana meditator, who is now an Assistant Teacher. It incorporates the use of Anapana and, where possible, Vipassana into its rehabilitation programmes and has had remarkable success rates with the treatment and cure of drug addicts, over 50%. Later, it is hoped to establish an independent Vipassana centre, quite possibly on adjoining land granted by the state government.

After twenty years of Vipassana courses in Australia, over 10,000 people have taken a course and experienced for themselves the practice and the fruits of Vipassana. This is approaching one person in a thousand. This is a tiny proportion in absolute terms, and a reminder of the major work to come. Nevertheless, it is an indication that the words Vipassana and meditation are increasingly known and accepted. From time to time, positive, unsolicited articles about Vipassana appear in the press. Vipassana is truly beginning to take its place, at least in parts of the country, as a part of Australian society. To serve the Australian and other centres, Goenkaji has to date appointed five Teachers resident in Australia, as well as many Assistant Teachers. The sheer number of new students taking courses, the firm establishment of regular long courses, annual Assistant Teacher and Spread of Dhamma meetings, the emergence of strong Trusts and Dhamma servers, all indicate the depth and strength of the roots of Dhamma, that is the practice of Vipassana, in this land.

VIPASSANA IN NEW ZEALAND

John Luxford

When people hear that Vipassana meditation has become well established in New Zealand, they often express surprise: "How did such a wonderful centre come about? How was it financed?" New Zealand is a small country with a population of about three million. It is far away from the rest of the world in the south seas, yet this year, 1997, there will be seventeen ten-day courses held at Dhamma Medinī. It is a testament to the spread of Dhamma that this tranquil centre has arisen in this far off corner of the globe.

This story is not so different from the development of other centres except that here there was not a large group of students to get things underway. When Goenkaji started teaching in India in the early 1970's a few New Zealanders participated in the courses. Most of these were young people travelling through India. Some of these first students were fortunate, and after experiencing the benefits of Vipassana, were able to stay for extended periods in India, attending courses and getting quite well established in the practice. As these students returned to their homeland they continued their twice daily sittings. Other New Zealanders became attracted on hearing about the Dhamma, and soon there were requests for courses to be arranged. Soon courses conducted by Assistant Teachers were held in rented sites at least twice a year. These courses had between 20 and 50 students attending. Goenkaji himself taught much larger courses in New Zealand in the early 1980's.

Students attending these early courses in New Zealand generally had little to give as donation, and for quite a number of years the course organizers operated with just the minimum of funds. Students often expressed the desire to have a centre in New Zealand, but it seemed unrealistic to even contemplate purchasing land. We were a very small group with basically no funds, wanting to make a vast financial outlay. However the local meditators felt that when the time was right the Dhamma would certainly grow firm roots in the fertile soil of New Zealand.

In 1986 a local meditator suddenly offered a substantial loan for the purchase of a permanent centre. A few enthusiastic students searched for land and found a large secluded site with great potential about one hour north of Auckland. When word spread that a possible centre had been found, other students offered *dāna* and loans. Normally local councils do not allow farms to be divided but this land was an exception and it was possible to subdivide four plots. These sections could be sold to meditators and the money raised would repay the loans. This was how, in early 1987 the New Zealand centre was purchased. Goenkaji named it Dhamma Medinī, Land of Dhamma.

The facilities at Dhamma Medinī were rudimentary for the first few years. The meditation hall was an old barn, the dining room was an old army tent and students stayed in tents. Although the Trust now owned a beautiful centre there were no funds to build appropriate facilities. Nevertheless the students were undaunted in their enthusiasm and met to plan the next stage. After much discussion, plans for a large building were drawn up. It would include a meditation hall, kitchen, dining room and accommodation for about twenty, being the first stage of the long-term development plan. The finances of the Trust were not sufficient to undertake such a large project, but it was decided to start the foundations, as an inspirational step.

The cornerstone of the spread of Vipassana as taught by Goenkaji is that all donations must come from those who have completed a Vipassana course. At this point the Dhamma Medinī Trust learnt a good Dhamma lesson concerning the importance of working only on a donation basis. Seeing the shortage of funds the Trust was advised that a community bank was giving large grants to non-profit charitable organisations that were providing services to the community. The Trust fitted their narrow criteria and after discussion it was decided to apply for a grant. The first lesson we learnt was that when students heard of

the possible grant from the bank, those who were planning to give *dāna* held back. We then heard that the bank had certain conditions: a plaque should be put up informing of their generosity, and they wanted us to let other groups use the centre when we are not conducting courses. Of course the Trust could not accept these requirements, so in due course the bank turned down our application. Yet the feeling amongst all the meditators involved was one of joy on hearing this news, because we had realised how sacred the principal of pure *dāna* is.

As it turned out, funds were soon loaned and donated by meditators and the building was completed with this pure basis. It opened in 1995, and now stands as a manifestation of meditators' confidence and gratitude to Dhamma.

Now the centre is developing well. A new block of twelve single rooms is nearing completion. There

are more accommodation blocks planned, then a new meditation hall. Dhamma Medinī is a centre with which all who visit cannot help being impressed. Students have put enormous effort into the development of Dhamma Medinī but when one reflects on the centre's growth, clearly the major contributing factor has been the powerful influence of Dhamma that wanted this centre to arise here. There were so many difficulties and hindrances, sometimes seeming to be insurmountable, yet all the difficulties were overcome by keeping to the Dhamma principles that Goenkaji has elucidated.

May Dhamma Medinī and the spread of Vipassana in New Zealand continue with the same loving service that has been the foundation in these early years.

May all beings be happy.

May the words of Buddha reverberate far and wide.

May all the inhabitants of this planet get the universal path of liberation.

—Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

THE SPREAD OF VIPASSANA IN NEPAL

Kuldharma Ratna Tuladhar

The eagerness of the people of Nepal to learn Vipassana and Goenkaji's willingness to initiate such courses in Nepal date back to the 1970s. But initially, there was some difficulty. Goenkaji held a Myanmar passport which had no endorsement for travel to Nepal. In view of this, his only option was to conduct a Vipassana course at some place in India, close to the border with Nepal. This course was held at Raxaul (in Bihar) in November 1975. Thereafter many students from Nepal attended courses at Bodh Gaya, Varanasi, Rajgriha, Kushinagar, Ahmedabad and Igatpuri. Some of these are now serving as Senior Assistant Teachers of Goenkaji.

It was not until 1978 that a concerted effort was made to organize Vipassana courses in Nepal itself. Yadukumār Siddhi and Sahu Mañiharsa Jyoti met with each other at Igatpuri in one of the courses held there. Both were very eager to start Vipassana courses in Nepal. Fortunately, Goenkaji was also able by that time to secure an Indian passport, which allowed him to travel to Nepal. Both men urged Goenkaji to conduct his first course in Kathmandu in 1981. This particular course was held at Ānandakuṭī Vihāra. Later courses were sometimes held at other sites.

The Nepal Vipassana Centre, Dharmasringa (the summit of Dhamma) was founded in April 1981. It is located in the village Budhañilakaṇṭha, in the foothills of the Himalayas, at the north end of the Kathmandu Valley. It is bordered on the north side by the Sivapuri Wildlife Reserve. The centre has a very strong meditative atmosphere. Here ten-day courses are conducted on a regular schedule twice every month, together with periodic *Satipaṭṭhāna* courses. Courses of longer duration, twenty and thirty days, are also being offered now as a direct result of new purpose-built infrastructure at the centre.

The first Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the centre was Sahu Maniharsha Jyoti, whilst Yadukumār Siddhi was a Trustee. The latter donated 3.5 ropanies (0.6 hectares) of land, including a hall for thirty persons and two small cottages for residen-

tial purposes. With donations flowing from grateful students, the centre has been able to construct a Dhamma hall to accommodate 150 students and living quarters for 60 male and 60 female students. A kitchen, storeroom, dining hall, bathrooms and toilets have also been built. As a result of recent activity, the construction of a second facility at the the highest spot of the centre's compound for long courses has been taken up. According to this plan, a long course Dhamma hall with a capacity to seat 100 students has already been constructed, combined residential and meditation rooms (including cells for each student) - 18 for female and 11 for male students - have been completed. The construction work is, however, still in progress.

The first course at this centre was conducted in 1985, using tents for students who could not be accommodated in cottages. Since then more than 300 regular courses have been offered, providing benefit to nearly 20,000 students. Goenkaji has also been visiting the centre from time to time. A total number of about 2,800 students (new and old) have benefited from courses conducted by Goenkaji himself in Nepal.

The main driving force behind the establishment of Dharmasringa was Sahu Mañiharsa Jyoti. He was an ideal Vipassana meditator. He passed away in January 1993 while receiving *mettā* over the telephone from Goenkaji, who was thousands of miles away from him. Sahuji's mission of spreading Vipassana in Nepal has since been taken over by his son, who is now serving as one of Goenkaji's Senior Assistant Teachers.

Two new centres have recently come up in Nepal. These are situated in Birganj and Lumbini, with the names 'Dhamma Tarāi' and 'Dhamma Jananī', respectively. Birganj is located on the border with India (near Raxaul, Bihar), while Lumbini draws its importance from being the birthplace of the Buddha. The centre at Birganj has become operational, two courses having already been held there this year.

The main centre at Kathmandu draws students from many other countries. Recently a special ten-day course was conducted there for a group of 18 monks and nuns from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Taiwan, in the Chinese language at their re-

quest, as they were eager to learn Vipassana in the land of the Buddha's birth.

This is how Dhamma is spreading in Nepal, at a rapid pace.

Bhavatu sabba maṅgalaṃ.

*Te mayaṃ vicarissāma, gāmaṃ gāmaṃ nagānagaṃ
Namassamānā Sambuddhaṃ, Dhammassa ca Sudhammataṃ
—Hemavata Suttaṃ*

We shall keep on moving from one village to the other from one hill to the other paying respect to the Enlightened One and the Dhamma expounded by him so well.

*So aham vicarissāmi, gāmaṃ gāmaṃ purāpuraṃ
namassamāno Sambuddhaṃ, Dhammassa Sudhammataṃ
—Ālavaka Suttaṃ*

Now I shall keep moving from one village to the other,
from one town to the other paying respect to the Enlightened One and his
well-expounded Dhamma.

VIPASSANA IN SRI LANKA

Brindley Ratwatte

In tracing the growth of Vipassana meditation in the last two centuries, one has to take into reckoning the decline of the Dhamma due to the on-going rule of the British. In the past as we see it, the growth of Samatha meditation where concentration is mainly stressed, and *Jhānic* attainments were popular, and Vipassana or Insight meditation was not understood and practised as today. This was mainly due to the divisive effects of foreign rule and the influence of alien religions.

The history of Insight meditation cannot be traced without recalling the contribution of the Venerable Sumapithipala, senior monk of the Kanduboda Vipassana centre and the Venerable Nanarama Thera of Mithirigala. The latter venerable *thera* undertook a course of training in the Myanmar system of Vipassana Insight meditation under the guidance of Venerable Jayana, a senior pupil of Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw. On Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw's visit here in 1958 he was recognized as a *Kammaṭṭhāna Ācāṃrya* and he taught this method to many pupil *theras* and *upāsakas*. This, however, was of a restrictive nature.

At the invitation of a committed old student who had taken his first course with Shri Goenkaji at Bodh Gaya in 1974 and subsequently followed a number of ten-day courses; from 1980 - 1990, approximately every two years, Goenkaji held several courses when he visited Sri Lanka. Several hundreds of students participated in these courses, learning the technique of Vipassana meditation as taught by Goenkaji in the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin of Myanmar.

In 1991 - Dhamma Kūṭa (Summit of Dhamma) - a Vipassana meditation centre where instruction is given in this same tradition, was inaugurated. In 1994 on the completion of the construction of the meditation hall, Goenkaji held an inaugural course in which several hundreds of students participated. Vipassana meditation is now available to all with no barriers of race, creed, gender or belief. Dhamma Kūṭa has now

developed and is spreading the Dhamma. One or two courses are held every month. These courses are of a duration of three or ten days. Courses which go in-depth, linking the technique to the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* and special courses varying in duration from ten to twenty days, which involve more serious and solitary practice are conducted. Courses in Sinhala (local language) have now commenced. All courses are residential for the entire period and free of charge.

In Sri Lanka school children who are Buddhists, learn the Dhamma in school and in Dhamma schools in temples. Buddhism has been introduced into the school curriculum, and it is a subject for the basic qualifying General Certificate of Education, ordinary level examination. At University level there are degree courses in Pāli, Sanskrit and Buddhist philosophy. As a corollary to this understanding of the theoretical aspects of the Dhamma, recently there has been a growing interest in the practice of meditation and its teaching.

Today we find a large number of meditation centres in this country. In many of them students are allowed to practise on their own, without comprehensive and appropriate guidance. Often the practice leads to the concentration methods of Samatha.

At Dhamma Kūṭa, in totally residential courses, students practise seriously with a strict discipline in the tradition of Vipassana meditation as taught by Sayagyi U Ba Khin and Goenkaji.

This systematic and structured course of practice has helped thousands of students in understanding the Dhamma, and its true purpose — that of eradicating the defilements in the mind. The results are rewarding in the peace and harmony this process of self-purification generates. We find a large number of students who have benefited, keep repeating the courses and training, thus getting a better understanding. The impact of following and repeating this practice with deeper understanding is profound. Many students addicted to drugs, alcohol, compulsive smoking or leading very stressful lives, come out of these

harmful tendencies. Often there is a positive change in their lives, bringing in a new dimension of peace, a lessening of stress and mental strain.

It is indeed rewarding to see the change in the quality of their living, the peace and happiness this Dhamma practice generates. Some students have begun to understand the urgency of working towards their own liberation, and they work more meaningfully to this end. Some have changed their jobs and vocations or given them up to find more space and time for a more contemplative and peaceful way of life. Some have progressed much on the Path of Dhamma. Such people are, indeed, a source of inspiration to all.

Vipassana meditation teaches one to observe the constant flow of energy vibration throughout the body. This is a reality which takes place every minute of the twenty-four hours of the day; the important factor is to train the mind to observe this reality - the arising and breaking up of this flow. We have to observe this factor, this reality within the framework of this mind-body phenomenon, and cultivate equanimity. This process takes place automatically - there is no "I" involved. One's equanimity - non reaction - can be taken as a measurement of one's progress in the practice. Hundreds of students come gradually to an understanding of this, and happiness can be seen in them. It is a long process of self-purification, but a substantial beginning has been made.

There are instances where some, having practised methods of concentration - Samatha - achieve *Jhāna* experience - a level of deep concentration, with progressive development to a higher level of absorption - the second *Jhāna*. This is an experience of great calmness and peace. If to this *Jhānic* experience there is added the awareness of change, flux, of Vipassana insight, progress is rapid thereafter. This is the culmination of practice not for the many, but a

few. But at all levels there is the peace and harmony which the smallest quantum of mental purification brings.

After taking a number of basic ten-day courses of Vipassana, the progressive training in 30 or 45-day courses, brings the mind to states of great stillness, calm and purity. One is then able to advance step by step, weakening the bondage of perception - *Saññā*, and growing equanimity will enable one to experience the highest reality - if one has the will and strength to persist in the practice.

With the Dhamma practice at Dhamma Kūṭa we have been receiving innumerable letters from students from all walks of life, nationalities, ages and creeds, expressing a deep sense of gratitude for the guidance given to them. It is satisfying to know their lives are happier and they have benefited and wish to practise more deeply.

More and more people are beginning to understand that it is not just theoretical knowledge or faith in the Dhamma, but actual practice - of seeing the truth of Dhamma - change, sorrow and insubstantiality - through Vipassana, which is the way to end all suffering. This technique teaches them to understand and identify this changing process of the mind-body phenomenon, and to experience how it works. It is a very gradual understanding and process of mental purification. But once clearly comprehended, then one begins the process of detaching oneself from that which is conducive to unhappiness.

And so one begins - to walk the path to one's own liberation. In this country the average Buddhist has a tremendous store of *saddhā* (faith) in the Dhamma of the Enlightened One, the Buddha. So our foundation is quite strong. It is the discipline and the practice that has to be inculcated, without which one cannot proceed further in meditation.

May all beings be happy.

Dhamma is the Eightfold Noble Path divided into three divisions of *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*.

The path is noble (*ariya*) in the sense that any ignoble, ignorant (*anariya*) person walking on it will certainly become an *ariya* - a noble and saintly person.

— Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

THE SPREAD OF VIPASSANA IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

John Beary

Sayagyi U Ba Khin was born nearly 100 years ago. In the closing years of his remarkable life he watched with great joy as one of his closest students met with great success. S.N.Goenka was then working to restore Vipassana in India and in a very short time his Vipassana courses were attracting a large number of students. Sayagyi was not surprised by this. Before Goenkaji departed Yangon for his first course in 1969 Sayagyi told him, "India is very ripe to receive this gem of the practice of Vipassana. You will have no difficulty at all".

Sayagyi would remind Goenkaji in those early years that he was under Sayagyi's protection always; that his success was Sayagyi's success. In fact he is reported to have referred to Goenkaji as his Dhamma guided missile. To this day Goenkaji humbly says that he is still merely serving his teacher and that this is really Sayagyi U Ba Khin's Dhamma mission which is spreading so rapidly now around the world.

Over the years Goenkaji has launched his own Dhamma guided missiles. Spawning first old students and then assistant teachers as his Dhamma emissaries. A devoted student of Sayagyi calls them "Sayagyi's grandchildren". They are spread far and wide now and are actively serving many people around the world in the practice of Vipassana.

Japan

One such group of old students found themselves relocating in Japan in the late 1970s. Initially seeking an employment base within easy reach of India and Myanmar, this small group of old students began quite naturally to draw others to the practice of Vipassana. People everywhere notice something attractive about Vipassana meditators and their curiosity is aroused, "What is this thing you spend all your free time doing called Vipassana? It seems to be good for you. Can you show me how to do it?" It wasn't long before Goenkaji was invited to conduct his first ten-day Vipassana course in Kyoto in 1981. Japanese translations of his discourses were rushed to completion and served the many Japanese students on this course, as well as his subsequent courses in

1982 and 1983. By 1982 assistant teacher courses had begun in Japan, serving the many Japanese students who now had more opportunities to learn Vipassana. These assistant teacher courses grew each year to meet a growing demand for courses. Initially Japanese speakers accounted for about 30% of the students, with the remainder being English-speaking foreigners. Over the years Japanese participation has increased dramatically, with the average now at about 80% and it is not uncommon to find courses where all the participants, students, Dhamma servers and assistant teachers are Japanese.

Reflecting the need to develop a strong base for the practice of Vipassana a centre was founded in 1989. Appropriately Goenkaji named it Dhamma Bhānu - the rising sun of Dhamma. Currently the centre runs about 14 bilingual Vipassana courses each year and is preparing now for the first bilingual long course in Japan in 1998.

Thailand

Goenkaji has often mentioned that Sayagyi U Ba Khin had a strong international perspective in his presentation of Vipassana. It came as no surprise to Goenkaji to see foreigners succeed in helping him to introduce Vipassana in India and different parts of the world. The face of Dhamma has no colour, no nationality. It really is a universally applicable remedy, open to everyone. In 1987 when a foreign resident of Thailand offered to organize the first assistant teacher course there, Goenkaji gave his enthusiastic approval. On a remote island in the south of the country the first course in Thailand attracted mostly English-speaking foreigners with only two or three Thai nationals. Good news spreads quickly though. The following year the second course there attracted about a dozen Thai nationals among the 45 students and by the third course you couldn't see the foreigners for the Thai students - it was nearly 100% Thai. In early 1990 Goenkaji conducted his first Vipassana course in Thailand. Among the 100 students were prominent members of Thai society. A Thai Trust was formed immediately at the close of the course and

when they invited Goenkaji to return to Thailand for another course he agreed, but only on the condition that they establish a Vipassana centre first. Taking this challenge to heart, land for the centre was obtained within a year and construction begun. Located 130 km northeast of Bangkok, Goenkaji named this first Thai centre, Dhamma Kamala - lotus of the Dhamma - and the first course was held there in November 1993. Soon after the centre obtained the endorsement of the highest ranking bhikkhu in the country, the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand. He had come to know of this technique and his official patronage came as a great boon for the centre. Dhamma Kamala is the only lay meditation centre in the country to be so honoured and this has afforded the organization in Thailand instant credibility. When Goenkaji met the Supreme Patriarch for the first time in 1994, he was very up to date with Goenkaji's endeavours and gave his enthusiastic blessing for his efforts to restore the practice of the Buddha's teaching in India and in spreading it worldwide.

Recently two additional centre sites have been donated in Thailand. Both are currently under development. One is in North Central Thailand near Visnulok and the other in Chumporn in the south. Reflecting the growth of the Thai old students, Dhamma Kamala will host its first long course in 1997 and groundbreaking has already begun for a pagoda/cell complex for 160 persons. It is expected to be completed in the third quarter of 1998.

Myanmar

In 1988 Goenkaji was invited to visit Myanmar by the Government. It was his first return to the land of his birth since leaving in 1969. Initial public talks in Yangon were heavily attended, for Goenkaji's Dhamma work has been closely watched there for a long time. People in Myanmar from all walks of life have great respect for the practice of Vipassana. It is not uncommon to encounter people with very little knowledge of the outside world yet who are aware of Goenkaji's efforts to spread Vipassana in India and around the world.

In 1993 a group of distinguished Myanmar monks, scholars and community leaders attended a Pāli conference at Dhamma Giri focussing on the role of sampajañña in the practice of Vipassana. Goenkaji

designed the conference so that the participants would first take a ten-day course before entertaining theoretical considerations. The visitors from Myanmar readily agreed to take the course and afterwards there was much enthusiasm for Goenkaji's presentation of the technique. During the conference, when they further saw how much Goenkaji had penetrated and understood the words of the Buddha regarding practice in the Pāli canon, they began to see the reasons behind the success of the spread of this technique - literally it is the Buddha's teaching in its essence.

Upon returning to Yangon, an association was formed to foster the spread of this technique within Myanmar. It was found that Sayagyi U Ba Khin's original centre at Inya Myaing, though very hospitable, was simply too small and crowded to accommodate the numbers of local people demanding Vipassana courses. Therefore the association set out to acquire and build a centre which could accommodate these larger numbers. Unbelievably a large tract of land was donated in central Yangon and construction of Dhamma Joti began in 1992. Goenkaji inaugurated the first course there in 1993. Assistant teacher courses were scheduled heavily from inception, running two courses each month and averaging 80-90 students. Within a short time the centre became one of the most prominent meditation centres in the land of meditation centres ! In 1996, for the first time, ten-day Vipassana courses in this tradition were conducted for members of the saṅgha by an authorized bhikkhu from India. These were extremely successful and more courses for the bhikkhu saṅgha are planned. Another centre has since sprung up in Mogok, Dhamma Ratana - Jewel of Dhamma. Certainly the future is very bright for the continued and enhanced practice of Vipassana among the Dhamma people of Myanmar.

Taiwan

In the spring of 1995 in a very surprising move Goenkaji accepted on very short notice an invitation from a few old students in Taiwan to give a series of public talks on Vipassana. Assistant teacher courses began soon after, with the first course attracting 200 students in August 1995. Right from the start the demand has been extraordinary. People began flocking to Vipassana courses in unprecedented numbers. Within the first year, and starting with no more than

8 old students in the country, the organizers arranged for 21 ten-day courses, the first prison course outside of India and the first two Satipaṭṭhāna sutta courses. When they finally stopped for breath and counted the numbers of old students receiving their Chinese newsletter they found 3,600 names on their mailing list at the end of their first year of operation. 1996 was not much different and in 1997 the pace continues, with children's courses and the search for suitable land for a permanent centre occupying the organization there in addition to the heavy schedule of courses.

Cambodia

Expatriate Cambodians were attracted to Vipassana via courses in Europe and the USA in the early 1980s. Knowing that this technique would do much to restore balance to their war-torn country, they joined hands in helping to establish a centre. Founded in 1993 Dhamma Kamboja comprises a compound within easy reach of Phnom Penh which can accommodate 150. Due to extensive flooding in the area, November - March are the peak periods of use. In the period from November '96 to March '97, 7 ten-day courses were held, each filled to capacity. Additionally children's courses have been very heavily subscribed, with many children as young as ten making the trip and taking the two-day course on their own. Recent reports from Phnom Penh indicate a major surge in interest in Vipassana. Additional courses are planned in Battambang and land for a second centre has become available.

Other Areas

Recent efforts to arrange courses in China have taken a backseat to Mongolia where two ten-day courses will be held for the first time in 1997. Mongolian old students studying in India have prepared Mongolian translations of all of the teaching materials and the teaching tapes are now being rushed to completion. To begin in a new country with bilingual teaching tapes in hand is an unusual development. It will surely spur courses there.

During 1997 two courses in Indonesia are planned. Four courses have been held there over the past few years but with only limited Indonesian language support. However, the translation of the teaching materials, instructions and discourses has just been completed into Indonesian and these upcoming courses will be fully bilingual.

Around the world now it is this bottleneck of translation and recording of the teaching materials into new languages which is the principal limiting factor to a much faster and wider spread of Vipassana. If we can organize the technology available and minimize the time it takes to prepare new languages, we are certain to see an enormous explosion of interest in Vipassana throughout the region. Old students, foreign and native, in China, Korea, Viet Nam, Laos, Philippines, and Malaysia are ready and eager to introduce their countrymen to the benefits of the practice of Vipassana. It remains to be seen how we can help them realize their Dhamma aspirations sooner rather than later.

*Dhammaṃ care sucaritaṃ
na naṃ duccaritaṃ care
Dhammacārī sukhaṃ seti
Asmiṃ loke paramhi ca.*

—Dhammapada (No. 169)

Practice wholesome Dhamma. Abstain from the unwholesome.
One who practices Dhamma lives happily here and hereafter.

HOW I HAVE BENEFITED FROM VIPASSANA MEDITATION

Venerable Sanghabodhi

Before I came in contact with Goenkaji (i.e. the pure Dhamma), I encountered immeasurable *dukkha* (misery). I was swimming hopelessly and helplessly in the ocean of *samsāra* (round of suffering). I felt very depressed and sad because I lost my wife and four youngest children who were killed by the Communists in Cambodia. Over one million of my countrymen were killed, including many of my relatives and friends.

I tried many ways to get rid of this suffering: serving others, volunteer social activities, reading the *Tipiṭaka*, etc. All these helped me but only at the superficial level. In 1980, due to the help of an American *sāmaṇera* (novice monk) named P. Santa, I attended my first ten-day Vipassana Course in California, USA with Goenkaji. I will never forget this monk for the rest of my life. I always share my merits with him for showing me the wonderful right path that is the best way to come out of my miseries.

In general, a big change in my life came when I finally felt relieved from suffering. Now I feel peaceful and harmonious. I feel I am becoming gradually liberated. I experience less anger, hatred, craving, aversion, delusion, less judgement of others. My mind has become more calm, more loving, more compassionate. I feel more sympathetic joy and more equanimous. I am also increasing the ability to accept myself and unwanted situations in my life. I am very fortunate and happy to have found this pure Dhamma which has helped me so much. I have gained much more mental and physical health than I could ever have expected. My capacity to work has increased considerably. My mind is more balanced so that I can easily face the vicissitudes of life. I enjoy helping others without expecting anything in return. I am happier than if I had become the ruler of the world.

In 1981, I came to Dhamma Giri and stayed there for two months. I went on a pilgrimage with Goenkaji and one hundred and four students of Vipassana for fifteen days. At the end of the pilgrimage, I stayed at Bodhi Gaya for one month. In May

1982, on the full moon day of *Vesākha* I was ordained as a *sāmaṇera* under the Bodhi tree and later became a *bhikkhu* (monk).

Many of the Cambodian people had lost their families, friends and relatives to the Communist killing and had escaped from Cambodia to Asia, Australia, Europe, Canada, and USA and other countries. Inspired by the results I had experienced from this great technique, I believed that they too would benefit from Vipassana. In 1983 with the permission of Goenkaji, I translated the Vipassana instructions and discourses from English into Cambodian.

In 1986, in France I served as an interpreter for 25 Cambodians who attended a ten-day bilingual (French and Cambodian) course and the results were positive. Later, similar courses were held in Canada, USA, Thailand, England and Australia. Vipassana has, indeed, been enthusiastically welcomed by the Cambodian community abroad.

In 1990 Goenkaji appointed me as an assistant teacher. Feeling a very deep gratitude to Goenkaji who helped me to gradually get rid of *dukkha*, I declared that if Cambodia becomes independent and peaceful, I will take this seed of Vipassana and plant it anew in my country. This is my best way to pay back my debt of gratitude to Goenkaji.

In 1992 Cambodia became independent. My dream was coming true. I got to plant the pure seed of Dhamma in Cambodia. For the first two years, I taught Vipassana in a Buddhist Temple in Phnom Penh, the capital city. Then in just one year in 1995, with the generous help of benefactors, we built a Vipassana meditation centre 47 km. south of Phnom Penh. With this facility, we can accommodate 130 meditators. Since the beginning of 1995, until 1997, we taught ten-day courses, *Satipaṭṭhāna*, three-day Anapana and Children's courses. We taught Vipassana also in the second biggest city, Battambang. To date, 45 adult courses have been given, serving a total of 4,000 students. During 1997 almost 700 children have attended Anapana courses.

At the beginning of this year, a second centre opened in Pursat province, about 200 km. west of Phnom Penh. A piece of land near the seaside, in the city of Kep, has been offered for the third centre. Kep is in Kampot province about 145 km. southwest of Phnom Penh. Furthermore, a down -payment for a

fourth centre has been made on a 9-hectare (approximately 22 acre) property in the suburbs of Phnom Penh, about 18 km. from the city centre. Thus we continue to spread this pure Dhamma all over Cambodia, as well as for Cambodians around the world who have left their homeland.

*Dhammapīti sukhaṃ seti
Vippasannena cetasā
Ariyappavedite dhamme
Sadā ramati paṇḍito.
—Dhammapada (No.79)*

One who experiences the bliss of Dhamma lives a happy life with a peaceful mind. The wise always delight in the Dhamma exposed by the Enlightened One.

*Dhammārāmo dhammarato
Dhammaṃ anuvicintayaṃ
Dhammaṃ anussaraṃ bhikkhu
Saddhammā na parihāyati.
—Dhammapada(364)*

The bhikkhu who dwells in Dhamma, who delights in Dhamma, who contemplates Dhamma, who remembers the Dhamma well, does not fall away from the true Dhamma.

THE SPREAD OF DHAMMA IN LATIN AMERICA

Arthur Nichols

"May Vipassana spread to every land around the world. May all come out of suffering and enjoy real happiness, real peace, real harmony". These words of deepest mettā come from Goenkaji when he hears about courses in so many new places where Dhamma has never been before. The life-long wish of his teacher, Sayagyi U Ba Khin, was that Dhamma spread throughout the world and Goenkaji feels great joy in seeing this wish being fulfilled.

Until recently, Vipassana courses were being held only in the United States and Canada but nowhere else on the rest of the American continent. While quite a few students from Latin America had taken courses with Goenkaji in India and even more with Goenkaji and assistant teachers in countries in the West, no course had been organized in any Latin American country. When asked about this, Goenkaji's response was always, "Let the time ripen".

The first course organized in Latin America was in September 1991 in Panama. However, because of a mix-up by the local authorities, the police came and took the assistant teacher and the students to the local jail for questioning and the course ended on Day 7. Afterwards, the authorities apologized to the Vipassana organization and today ten-day courses are being held regularly in Panama. Even though the course ended prematurely, it was important, as a number of students from the course later completed full ten-day courses and are now helping with organizing courses in Panama. Also, after seeing the announcement of this course in the Vipassana Newsletter, students from other countries in Latin America became interested in organizing courses in their own countries.

Finally, in March 1994, the first full ten-day Vipassana course was held in Venezuela. In addition to the students from Venezuela, Vipassana students from a number of other Latin American countries came to sit and serve. With the successful completion of this course, it became obvious that the time had ripened for Dhamma to start spreading throughout Latin America. In October and November of this same year, courses were given in Brazil and Argentina and again in Venezuela. The next year courses were given in Panama, Chile, and Mexico, as well as Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela. In 1996, the first Vipassana course was held in Cuba and in 1997 first courses will be given in Bolivia and Colombia. Like this, Dhamma is indeed spreading throughout Latin America.

Most of these countries are currently hosting at least two courses a year. By the end of 1997, a total of 40 ten-day courses will have been held in Latin American countries. Courses for children as well as short three-day courses for old students are also being organized. Portuguese instructions and discourses were recently completed for courses in Brazil where, until now, Spanish tapes have been used. There are ongoing projects to translate more and more Vipassana material into Spanish and Portuguese.

In Venezuela, a trust has been formed which is searching for a place to purchase for a centre. Surely, one day, there will be permanent Vipassana centres throughout Latin America, again bringing forth Goenkaji's words of mettā, "May Dhamma continue to spread for the good of all. May all beings everywhere be peaceful. May all beings be happy. May all beings be liberated."

May the light of Dhamma spread to every corner of the world to dispell the darkness of ignorance and resultant misery.

—Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

TIPITAKA PROJECT - AN OVERVIEW

Dr Dhananjay Chavan

*Dveme, Bhikkhave, dhammā saddhammassa
ṭhitiyā asāmosāya*

*anantaradhānāya saṁvattanti. Katame dve?
Sunikkhitañca padabyañjanaṃ*

*attho ca sunīto. Sunikkhittassa, Bhikkhave,
padabyañjanassa atthopi sunayo hoti.*

There are two things, O monks, which make the Truth-based Dhamma endure for a long time, without any distortion and without (fear of) eclipse. Which two? Proper placement of words and their natural interpretation. Words properly placed help also in their natural interpretation.

The Pāli literature is a direct result of the enlightenment of the Buddha. It contains only the teachings of the Buddha and related literature. The Buddha, after his enlightenment, spent all his life distributing the Dhamma - the truth, the law, the path - to all those who came to him. He worked with tireless zeal and boundless compassion for forty-five continuous years. He gave his discourses in Pāli - the language of the people of north India at that time. Since then the Pāli language has had the honour of carrying the message of the highest endeavour that any human being can undertake: liberation from all suffering. For several centuries after the Buddha, his teaching spread and served the people in many countries of the world. However, after a few centuries, his teaching was lost in its country of origin. At the beginning of the 20th century, India and the West knew little about the Buddha and his teachings.

When Shri S.N. Goenka brought back Vipassana from Myanmar (Burma), it spread to many countries. People from all over the world, from all castes and sects, were attracted to the teaching which is scientific and rational, universal and non-sectarian, free from blind beliefs and dogmas, beneficial to one and all. The spread of Vipassana led to a revival of interest in the Pāli literature. Enthusiastic Vipassana meditators established the Vipassana Research Institute (VRI) at Dhammagiri, Igatpuri, which is a non-profit making, charitable organization. VRI has two objectives: 1. to carry out research in the practical applications of Vipassana and 2. to search the Pāli literature for sources of Vipassana and to help in preserving

the *pariyatti* (theoretical) aspect of the Dhamma.

It is the actual practice of the Dhamma that gives results, but the theory is important in maintaining the purity of the practice. It inspires a meditator on the path of Dhamma. Goenkaji in his Foreword to the Devanāgarī edition of the *Tipitaka* writes, "India has entirely lost the *Dhamma-vacana* (words of Dhamma). Perhaps that is why the practice of Dhamma also disappeared from this land." Diligent and painstaking efforts over many centuries have been made in our neighbouring countries to preserve the original words of the Buddha, making the Pāli literature some of the oldest authentic literature in the world. Since the historical Dhamma Councils (*Saṅgāyanas*), from the first one held within three months of the Buddha's *mahāparinibbāna*, up to the latest one held in Yangon in 1954, have played a major role both in preserving and confirming the authenticity of the words of the Buddha, it was only natural that VRI should use as its source the Pāli literature recited, approved and published by the *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana*. Erudite scholars from Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Kampuchea, Nepal and India participating in the *Chaṭṭha-Saṅgāyana* made a thorough review of the *Tipitaka*, its *aṭṭhakathās*, *ṭīkā*s, *anu-ṭīkā*s and other commentarial literature. A remarkable uniformity and consistency was found in all versions. The Council performed an impressive task, finishing its work on the full moon day of May 1956 (the 2,500th anniversary of the birth of Buddha) with the completion of an authentic version of the Master's teaching.

The *Tipitaka* (literally, "three baskets") is arranged in three divisions: *Vinaya Piṭaka*, *Sutta Piṭaka* and *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. *Vinaya Piṭaka* contains the rules of conduct for the Sangha. *Sutta Piṭaka* is a collection of discourses. *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* is a compendium of profound teachings elucidating the functioning and interrelationships of mind, mental factors, matter and the phenomena transcending all of these. The *Tipitaka* contains in modern scripts more than 24 million characters in over forty printed volumes. The commentarial literature (*Aṭṭhakathās*, *ṭīkā*s, *Anu-ṭīkā*s, *Abhinava-ṭīkā*s, etc.) is very extensive, ex-

ceeding the *Tipiṭaka* in length.

The publication of the *Tipiṭaka* and its commentarial literature was the first step in VRI's effort. The work started with the publication of the *Tipiṭaka* along with its *aṭṭhakathās* and *ṭīkā*s in Devanāgarī script: *Dhammagiri Pāli Ganthamālā* (Devanāgarī). The entire literature was typed in twice over in Devanāgarī script and then compared, using a computer program to find errors in typing. The text was then proof-read, both in India and Myanmar. After that, scholars from both countries edited the text carefully. Various computer programs developed by VRI ensured that the text was made as free of errors as possible. Then it was type-set to make it ready for publication. Fifty-six volumes have already been published in Devanāgarī script; fifty-seven more are in the press and the work on the remaining twenty-seven is almost complete. Extreme care has been taken to preserve the purity of this literature and VRI is committed to continual efforts to keep it error-free.

The Devanāgarī version of the *Tipiṭaka* and allied literature contains

- a comprehensive index of relevant words and terms as well as complete verse index for each volume
- page references of the Roman edition of the Pāli Text Society, London and the *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana* (Myanmar script) edition
- references to *vipassanā*, *paññā* in the *Sutta Piṭaka* in bold characters
- summary of contents in Hindi of each volume of the *Sutta Piṭaka*
- in each set, the Canonical texts and the allied commentarial literature published together, making it possible to study the Enlightened One's words along with the learned commentaries
- convenient references and paragraph numbers linking each *Tipiṭaka* text, its *aṭṭhakathā* and *ṭīkā*
- high quality paper and binding, ensuring a long shelf-life.

Goenkaji had planned, originally, to write a brief introduction to the *Tipiṭaka* in Hindi. When he started collecting references from the texts, he found so many of them - all sublime and inspiring - that he decided to publish a detailed introduction in Hindi in the form of three separate books. The first book, *Tipiṭaka meṃ Samyaka Sambuddha*, is already published in two parts. It will be translated into English in the near future. These books will not only act as a window to the *Tipiṭaka* but, being studded with the choicest of

Pāli quotes, will also introduce readers to the Pāli language.

VRI has also been successful in making the entire literature available in three scripts—Devanāgarī, Roman and Myanmar on a CD. The efforts will continue to create a CD that provides most of the Pāli literature in more and more scripts. The entire literature in this CD is being checked again against the original *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana* texts to make the next version even more error-free.

Goenkaji says: "The influence of the Buddha's teachings is not confined to Indian thought; the deep impact of his teaching is also visible in the spiritual thought and literature of the rest of the world." VRI will undertake analytical and comparative research to study this impact. Relevant literature in Sanskrit, Myanmar, Sinhalese, Tibetan, Chinese, Japanese, Ardhamāgadhī and many more languages will be studied to understand how humanity has benefited in the past from the Enlightened One's teaching and how the same can be ensured in future. VRI has already started typing Sanskrit literature into its computer.

There is a lot more to do and a lot of help is being offered, from Vipassana meditators as well as charitable organizations such as the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, Taipei, Taiwan R.O.C. After VRI had published the first fifty-six volumes, the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation kindly came forward with the offer to print and distribute the remaining volumes free of cost. This has made available the literature to many deserving scholars and institutes who could not afford to buy it. We are sure that in future also the joint efforts of the Vipassana Research Institute and the Buddha Educational Foundation will continue to serve people all over the world. The publication of the *Tipiṭaka* in Devanāgarī script and the *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana* CD represent just a beginning in the efforts of VRI towards bringing the true teaching of the Buddha to light. VRI aims to make the words of the Buddha available in many more scripts and to bring out translations in as many languages as possible. With the *Tipiṭaka* project, VRI has laid the foundation for all the future work. May awareness about the true teachings of the Buddha spread all over the world.

Ciraṃ Tiṭṭhatu Saddhammo!

May the Truth-based Dhamma endure for a long time!

PUBLISHING ANCIENT PALI LITERATURE

Dr R. Panth

Language is like an eternally flowing river which serves the purpose of the communication of ideas, according to the current needs of the time. This is why the literature from any particular language contains the historical, geographical, socio-political, cultural, ethical, and spiritual elements of its time. From this point of view, in today's context, the publishing of ancient Pāli literature can be very useful in accurately portraying the rich ancient Indian culture from which it came, as it was Pāli, which was widely used in the north of India in the 6th century B.C., although it is no longer in use as a spoken language today.

More than twenty-five centuries ago, Pāli was the colloquial language of the part of Northern India from where Gotama the Buddha came. From the time Gotama became the Buddha, until the time of his great demise (*mahāparinibbāna*), he gave thousands of sublime discourses for the benefit and happiness of many (*bahujana hitāya, bahujana sukhāya*). Within three months of the Buddha's *mahāparinibbāna*, the First Council was convened with the purpose of collecting, reciting and classifying the words of the Buddha, in order to preserve them in their pristine purity. These words are presently known as the *Tipiṭaka*. The Pāli word "*piṭaka*" means "basket". "*Ti*" as a prefix in "*Tipiṭaka*" means three. Hence, *Tipiṭaka* actually means "three baskets". These are:

1. *Vinaya Piṭaka* which contains the rules of conduct pertaining to monks and nuns,
2. *Sutta Piṭaka* which contains the popular discourses given by the Buddha with apt illustrations, similes and metaphors, and
3. *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* which contains the profound teachings of the Buddha related to the ultimate reality which elucidate the functioning and inter-relationships between mind, mental factors, matter, and the phenomena transcending these. It is an amalgamation of psychology and ethics in the true sense.

In addition to the *Tipiṭaka*, which contains the words of the Buddha, there are an enormous number

of commentaries (*Aṭṭhakathās*), sub-commentaries (*Ṭīkā*s), and further sub-commentaries (*Anu-ṭīkā*s, *Madhu-ṭīkā*s, etc.) which have been written by great commentators since ancient times, and are a valuable contribution to ancient Pāli literature. The tradition of compiling commentaries still continues today in countries like Myanmar and Sri Lanka.

Not only does Pāli literature contain the invaluable treasure of Indian civilization, including culture, religion, and philosophy, but it also contains the great contribution of the unique message of the Buddha, which emphasizes the importance of human values found in the practice of *sīla, samādhi* and *paññā*, (morality, concentration and wisdom) that lead to the liberation of each individual, as well as to harmony within the society, which is currently the most basic need in today's chaotic world.

The basic teaching of the Buddha revolves around the single goal of the attainment of liberation, as rightly uttered by him—

Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, mahāsamuddo eko raso loṇaraso, evameva kho, bhikkhave, ayaṃ amhākaṃ dhamma-vinayo ekaraso vimutti raso.

— Cullavagga, para 385

Monks, as the taste of the ocean is salty throughout, similarly my teaching (*dhamma* and *vinaya*) has only one taste and that taste is emancipation/liberation.

The Buddha's concern for suffering humanity becomes clear in his words—

What is the use of my crossing over alone, being a man aware of my strength? Having reached omniscience, I will cause the world together with the devas to cross over.

—Buddhavamsa 2.56

For this, the Buddha discussed and revealed in detail, the most practical and scientific way to achieve mental purification, thus taking one from the state of suffering to the state of cessation of suffering, that is, *nibbāna*, which can be regarded as the ultimate aim

in the spiritual pursuit. The technical term given for this spiritual practice in Pāli literature is *Vipassanā*.

The *Tipiṭaka* is an unparalleled lexicon of wisdom for the practitioner of Vipassana meditation. Although stray references pertaining to Vipassana are available right from R̥g-Veda down to the teachings of Mahāvīra, Kabīr, Nānak, and other Indian saints, the authentic, detailed and subtle description of Vipassana is available only in the *Tipiṭaka* and its commentaries.

Not only is the ancient spiritual and philosophical landscape of India of twenty-five centuries back, brought to life in the ancient Pāli literature, but a colourful spectrum of the historical, geographical, socio-political, and cultural conditions of the time is also provided. The literature opens a window onto the administrative, educational, commercial, and industrial customs of the Buddha's time. It sheds light on social conditions, in the urban as well as rural life of ancient India. The India of 2,500 years ago comes alive in this literature. It is a vast ocean overflowing with the peerless, wholesome benedictions of the Enlightened One.

Readers of this literature, scholars, and seekers, who wish to know the truly rich heritage of ancient India, might think that the wisdom expounded by the Buddha has disappeared from India. Apparently, this seems to be so but in reality, it flows on through subsequent Indian literature. The Sanskrit literature which followed it, as well as writings in Hindi and other regional languages, are full of the benevolent teachings of the Buddha. The literature of medieval saints of India, as mentioned earlier, is suffused with the wisdom of the Buddha. When the words of the Buddha become available in their authentic form, an analytical and comparative study of them will show that India is greatly indebted to the Buddha for his innovative thought as well as for the practice of Vipassana meditation.

The influence of the Buddha's contribution is not limited to Indian thought; the deep impact of his teaching is also visible in the spiritual thought and literature of the rest of the world. Thus, the Buddha's words carry a special significance for the human race, even today. The stately grandeur of the Buddha's teaching will be verdant forever. It is the perennial

forerunner of the resurrection of fallen human values. What could be more relevant to the current state of moral degradation, with its inevitable result of down-trodden people afflicted with misery?

The publication and study of Pāli literature will also correct some of the prevalent misconceptions about the Buddha, held by uninformed people. To note a few—since the Buddha was a recluse, his followers were also recluses and therefore, his teaching was meant for recluses, not for householders. An objective examination of the literature will completely dispel such misconceptions. Another major misconception about the Buddha, is that he gives undue emphasis to suffering and the eradication of suffering, and ignores the everyday problems of the individual, the family, and society at large. Study of this literature reveals that he was quite cognizant of and sensitive to worldly problems. While it is true that he gave the majority of his discourses to the recluses, addressing the topic of the ultimate truth, nevertheless, he delivered numerous discourses to his lay followers addressing worldly concerns, which are relevant and beneficial even today.

The instructions given to the Licchavis, for example, for the maintenance of adequate protection of their republic, are acceptable as a model for any republican government of modern times. Inspired by the teachings of the Buddha, Emperor Asoka established a righteous administration which was unique and unparalleled in human history. His reign shines like a luminous pillar of light in the administrative history of India, indeed of the entire world.

The teaching of the Buddha, as mentioned in the Pāli literature, completely uproots distinction based on caste or race, and the pollution of discrimination. Relief from these poisons is the most pressing need of India, as well as the greatest need in the rest of the world today. Their removal will help to bring much longed for peace and happiness to the world. The teaching of the Buddha is free from blind faith and is completely empirical, impartial, and dedicated to intellectual rigour. Hence, it is universally acceptable.

In this way, we find that in addition to its spiritual aspect, which is no doubt the core of ancient Pāli literature, it also depicts different aspects of a

society's development— paleographical, linguistic, literary, religious, philosophical, ethical, socio-political, and artistic, each of which deserves patient study, special investigation, careful consideration and prudent judgement, in terms of its contribution to society.

For this, the publishing and study of ancient Pāli literature is important and beneficial, not only for Indians, but for the entire human race. To fulfil this need, the Vipassana Research Institute has undertaken the monumental task of publishing the entire Pāli canon and allied commentarial literature. VRI has taken the *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana* version (the recitation

in Pāli of the words of the Buddha, that took place in the Sixth Council in Myanmar in 1954-6) as the authentic, authoritative version, since it is the most recent review of this literature, as the base manuscript. With the help of Pāli scholars from India and other countries, including many learned *bhikkhus* and research scholars in Myanmar, who are assisting VRI with publishing this ancient Pāli literature—*Tipiṭaka* (canonical texts), its *Aṭṭhakathās* (commentaries), *Tikās* (sub-commentaries), the work is nearing completion. This will be followed by its translation into different languages, which will be of great value to people everywhere interested in the original words of the Enlightened One.

Sayagyi U Ba Khin used to say '*pariyatti*' (theory) and '*paṭipatti*' (practise) must go together.

Together, they are like two wheels of a cart and both must be equal in size and strength if the cart is to move smoothly. With these two wheels of *pariyatti* and *paṭipatti* work diligently and travel swiftly on the path of Dhamma.

If one knows only the theory and does not practise, one can never acquire the real fruits of Dhamma, of liberation. Moreover, there is always a danger of one becoming egocentric, arrogant, full of false vanity and pride and always trying to glorify one's views and condemning the views of others.

Similarly, if one tries to practise Vipassana without understanding the theory, without understanding why one has to practise only this way and not in any other way, one will remain confused, hesitant, skeptical, always a Doubting Thomas. One cannot work diligently. There is another danger for such meditators who do not understand the theoretical aspect of Vipassana - there is every likelihood of their mixing Vipassana with some other technique. And so out of ignorance, instead of getting the wholesome fruits of Vipassana, they might harm themselves.

— Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

TECHNOLOGY AND THE SPREAD OF THE DHAMMA

Upāya-kusala in the Second Sāsana

Richard Crutcher

At the end of the first rainy season retreat after his enlightenment, the Buddha instructed his sixty disciples to disperse, each going in a different direction, in order to spread the Dhamma, out of compassion for humanity. During the time of Gotama the Buddha this was the medium of broadcasting the teaching of liberation. The Buddha was a master of teaching in ways that were understandable and attractive to the listener. A review of his *suttas* to various kinds of people shows that he taught using *upāya-kusala* (skilful means) in order to make the Dhamma as widely available as possible.

As time passed the most current technology has always been employed as a means of both preserving and disseminating the Buddha's teaching. From the beginning the Saṅgha has used verbal recitation and memorization but they have also availed themselves of writing, on whatever material was available. Fragile bark strips, palm leaves, engraved marble slabs, and more recently, paper pages of books printed with moveable type—all these media have represented advances in technology used at various times down through the centuries.

We live today in the twenty-sixth century since the *Mahāparinibbāna* of the Buddha, at the beginning of the Second *Sāsana*. Sayagyi U Ba Khin understood the importance of the dawning of this second dispensation of the Buddha's teachings, as evidenced by his encouragement to Goenkaji to return the jewel of the Dhamma to India. Sayagyi himself set the example for the use of modern forms of communication by making early use of audio tape to record his now famous address in English to his foreign students who were not able to come to Myanmar to practise under his guidance. This discourse was later published under the title "Essentials of Buddha-Dhamma in Meditative Practice."

There were several trials in the 1970s using audio- and video-tape to record Goenkaji's chanting and his discourses. However it was not until the 1980s, when he began to appoint assistants to help him in

the *dharmadūta* (Dhamma messenger) work, that the effort began in earnest to record the entire set of Vipassana teaching materials. The number of Vipassana students and centres worldwide has grown exponentially since that time. This is due in large measure to the fact that the teaching tapes have provided a consistent and effective presentation of the Dhamma wherever a course was held. The use of these tapes as a teaching medium is so universally accepted today that the pivotal role of the use of this technology is seldom noticed.

The taping programme has continued unabated from the early 1980s to the present, due to the tireless work of a handful of dedicated students. In addition to the taping and archiving of this now voluminous library of Goenkaji's lifework, other willing students in many countries have toiled assiduously in another critical area—keeping up with the constant demand for translations into the world's numerous languages. Translation work and the production of dual-language teaching tapes is an ongoing programme that greatly facilitates the entrance of the Dhamma into ever new areas of the world.

With the advent of newer, longer-lasting forms of audio media the archival material is slowly being transferred from magnetic tape to Digital Audio Tape (DAT) and Compact Disk (CD) in order to preserve it for as long as possible. As new standards are established for compression of data onto CDs, we can expect the video material also to be preserved on CD in the near future.

Television and the video medium have, to date, been used most importantly as tools for imparting the direct teaching of Vipassana. During the last fifteen years a new student on his or her first course will most likely have heard the explanation of the Dhamma primarily by watching and listening to the video discourses of Goenkaji. However, until recently, information about the availability of the living practice was still mainly passed via word of mouth, from person to person, much as it was in the Buddha's time.

This has begun to change since Goenkaji's inspiring Dhamma discourses in Hindi have been broadcast over the Zee Television network throughout India and beyond, starting in 1993. A similar nationwide broadcast is planned for Taiwan in the near future. Perhaps by skilful use of this technology general knowledge of Vipassana will begin to spread more rapidly now.

The Worldwide Vipassana Video Project, started by Karuna Films in Israel several years ago, has contributed greatly to this effort. "Hill of Dhamma", an inspiring short documentary film in English about the main centre of Vipassana, Dhamma Giri, has been shown on national television in Myanmar and India. Karuna Films' second noteworthy effort, "Doing Time, Doing Vipassana," movingly depicts the historic phenomenon of the Vipassana meditation programmes going on in prisons in India. This remarkable one-hour film has been broadcast nationally in Israel and is being used to try to further interest in such prison courses in several other countries.

Skilful use of Computers: The Pāli Publication Project

After the Vipassana Research Institute was established in 1985, one of the early IBM personal computers was hand-carried from the United States to Igatpuri and installed in a monsoon-proof room built especially for that purpose. This was the humble beginning of the VRI Pāli Publication Project. Soon several other computers were added, both at Igatpuri and in Bombay, and the text entry work rapidly expanded.

These early computers, and the installation of the first successful electronic collection of the Buddha's teachings, known as BUDSIR (Buddhist Search and Information Retrieval), from Mahidol University in Thailand, enabled VRI to begin serious research into the meaning of certain key Pāli terms, such as *vedanā* and *sampajaññaṃ*. This invaluable research threw much light on the Buddha's use of these terms as they relate to the practice of Vipassana. Beginning in 1990, VRI organized international seminars on various subjects arising from this early textual research. These seminars were instrumental in bringing the pioneering work of Goenkaji and VRI to the attention of monks and scholars from the traditional

Buddhist countries, especially the Myanmar Saṅgha whose cooperation has been a critical element in VRI's *Tipiṭaka* Publication Project.

The historical Dhamma Councils (*Saṅgāyanas*)—the first held three months after the passing away of the Buddha—have played a major role both in preserving the words of the Buddha and in confirming their authenticity. Therefore it was only natural that, for the benefit of India, VRI should choose to publish the Pāli literature recited, approved and published by the *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana*, the sixth and most recent held in Yangon in 1954.

The *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana* text was typed into computers in Devanāgarī-script directly from the Myanmar-script books printed in Yangon. Once the text files were entered and corrected in Devanāgarī, the conversion of those files into other scripts was a simple matter for the computers. With this capacity for conversion of scripts, and with the development of software to allow a user to search through the entire literature—both the *Tipiṭaka* itself and all the commentaries and sub-commentaries—VRI was prepared to offer the world a CD-ROM edition of the entire Pāli canon in three scripts: the original Myanmar, Devanāgarī and Roman. The use of computers has transformed the vast Pāli literature from an expensive and bulky library of books, available only to those with access to such libraries, into a single twelve-centimetre Compact Disk available to all free of charge.

Skilful use of the Internet: The Dhamma Online

As we have seen, down through time the goal of adopting the latest technology has always been to achieve preservation and dissemination of the Dhamma: to make known the beneficent teaching of the Buddha; to inform people worldwide about the living practice of Vipassana. The most recent advance in technology to further this goal is the Internet.

The Internet is a worldwide communications network that allows nearly instantaneous access to text, pictures and, increasingly, sound and video anywhere that telephone lines are available. So something prepared in India (or Taiwan, Sri Lanka or America) can be transmitted instantly around the world. The simplest use of this technology is Elec-

tronic mail (E-mail). Writing and editing projects that may have previously taken months to circulate by post for review and editing by people in remote locations now fly back and forth effortlessly and are completed in days. Several articles published in this souvenir are prime examples.

An Internet domain, which is like a location on the network, was set up in 1994, residing on a computer in Massachusetts, USA. Known as "dhamma.org", this domain has expanded internal communication within the worldwide Vipassana organization. Through automatic E-mail lists resident at the dhamma.org domain, people interested in various specific subjects may send E-mail to all other listed subscribers by sending the message to a single address. For example, people concerned with the maintenance of databases at the centres, whether they are in Europe or America or Australia, can communicate with each other through an E-mail list at dhamma.org.

Similar lists allow those concerned with computers and technology issues or those interested in prison courses to circulate news to each other virtually instantaneously. Announcement lists specific to the trusts of individual centres are also available and greatly ease the work of Trusts and committees in several places. This medium of communication is more reliable, vastly less expensive and more rapid than other forms of communication. Moreover it was only used by a handful of people prior to a few years ago.

The dhamma.org domain also provides a File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site that contains computer files of use to course organizers and centres worldwide. There are complete collections of course signs and forms, registration materials, centre administration files, etc. These can be very helpful for people new to organizing Vipassana courses or centres. There are also Pāli fonts and graphics files of the Dhamma-wheel logo for the use of Vipassana editors and translators.

These examples of the way the Internet has been used, for E-mail or transferring useful computer files, are limited to internal communication within the Vipassana organization. A second and perhaps even more promising aspect of the Internet is illustrated

by the two websites that have been established on the World Wide Web. Websites are electronic information "books" with multiple "pages" that are available twenty-four hours a day from anywhere in the world by means of the Internet.

The Vipassana website is accessed by its address, "http://www.dhamma.org". Here there is basic information about the Vipassana technique and all of the basic course information materials. There is contact information for all the centres, including coloured pictures of many, and an extensive worldwide list of scheduled courses. An application form is available here as well, so, in effect, the Vipassana website serves as a complete introductory package for a new student. A prospective student can fill out the application form right on his computer screen and, with the click of a button, E-mail the application directly to the centre of his choice. Increasingly the centres in the USA are finding that students are first discovering Vipassana by finding this website on the World Wide Web.

For the benefit and inspiration of old students of Vipassana there is additional information posted on the Old Student pages. These pages are part of the Vipassana website but are available only to old students using a password that is published in both the Indian and the international editions of the Vipassana Newsletters. In addition to inspiring articles by Sayagyi U Ba Khin and Goenkaji posted there, information about service opportunities, announcements of international projects like the Grand Pagoda Project, as well as current listings of long-course dates worldwide and application information for these courses, help old students find ways to grow in their practice and understanding of Dhamma. The international Vipassana Newsletter is also posted there as soon as it is complete. Increasingly students are choosing to receive their Newsletter in this fashion, rather than waiting for it to come by mail.

So far the technology of the Internet allows text and pictures to be displayed easily. But this area is becoming ever more sophisticated and multi-faceted. As the technology advances websites become less like books and more like television programmes. We anticipate that before long the Vipassana website will also contain video clips of Goenkaji with full sound

of chanting or Dhamma talks.

The other website of note is “<http://www.vrpa.com>”. This site, the domain of Vipassana Research Publications of America (VRPA), is the online home for VRI, presenting background information about the Institute and its work. There are photos and descriptions of the *Tipiṭaka* publication project and announcements of current developments of the *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana* CD-ROM. In the first six months since announcing the forthcoming CD, VRPA has received E-mail requests for information about the CD from more than 300 interested people in twenty-eight different countries.

This website also provides direct booksales of VRI books, and other books of interest to students of the Buddha’s teaching, through its Pariyatti Book Service online bookstore.

VRPA looks forward to providing a home at its website for an online edition of the *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana* at the earliest possible date. Unfortunately, the current limitations of the Internet technology are such that the text cannot be displayed in special fonts. Therefore, direct access on the World Wide Web to

the multiple scripts pioneered by VRI on its CD are not yet accessible. However, as soon as standards are established for displaying non-Roman scripts, VRPA and VRI will seek to offer free access to the words of the Buddha through this most universal of media. In the meantime, the International Buddhist Research and Information Center (IBRIC), in Sri Lanka, has posted *Tipiṭaka* files in two locations on the Internet. These files can be found at either “<http://www.psu.edu/jbe/ibric.html>” or at “<http://www.gold.ac.uk/history/ibric.htm>”.

Each new technology extends the reach of the Dhamma but does not supersede any of the older ones. The printed word remains valuable today in the age of video. So does memorization and recitation. But most valuable is the earliest technology—of internalizing the teaching so as to be able to present it by all one’s physical and vocal deeds. With the aid of modern technology the stage is truly set for the worldwide spread of the Dhamma, which is beneficial at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end—both the spirit and the letter of it—for the benefit and happiness of many.

May all suffering people of the world understand what is Dhamma, may they practise Dhamma, may they apply Dhamma in their day-to-day life and come out of all the agonies of a defiled mind full of negativities.

May all enjoy the peace and harmony of a pure mind, a mind full of compassionate love and goodwill towards other beings.

— Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

THE MAKING OF THE *CHAṬṬHA SAṄGĀYANA* CD-ROM

R.S. Goenka

Ever since the earliest times, efforts have been made to preserve the words of the Buddha in their pristine purity. When Gotama the Buddha gave his discourses, those of the learned monks who were with him memorized his discourses. Special mention must be made of Venerable Ānanda, who was with him as his private secretary for the last twenty-five years of the Buddha's life. Ānanda had an understanding with the Buddha, that whenever the Buddha gave a discourse in the absence of Ānanda, the discourse will be repeated to him. Ānanda, with his computer-like memory, was able to recite these discourses at the time of the *Paṭhama Saṅgāyana* (First Council) for the benefit of the members of the Saṅgha. Bhikkhu Upāli recited the Vinaya. In those times memorizing was the only way of preserving the teachings for posterity. Thus, the *Saṅgāyana* served an important function to recite and verify the accuracy of the teachings committed to memory by a congregation of learned monks.

The first *Saṅgāyana*, sponsored by king Ajātasattu and presided over by Elder monk Venerable Mahākassapa, was called three months after the *mahāparinibbāna* of the Buddha. This Council recorded and systematically classified the teachings, which later came to be called the *Tipiṭaka*. None other than the gathering of five hundred eyewitness *arahant* monks certified the authenticity. Down the ages five more such Councils were called to verify the authenticity of the words of the Buddha. The latest of these Councils was sixth in the series, and was conducted in Yangon under the sponsorship of U Nu, the then Prime Minister of Myanmar. Heading this Sixth Council of 2,500 learned monks from various countries in the years 1954-1956, was Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw.

Authenticity of *Tipiṭaka*

The words of the Buddha were originally taken to various neighbouring countries at the time of Emperor Asoka. Myanmar and Sri Lanka received the *Tipiṭaka* along with the practice of the Dhamma dur-

ing this period. Later the *Tipiṭaka* travelled to Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and other countries along with the spread of the Dhamma to these countries. For over two millennia, these countries preserved the *Tipiṭaka* as a precious treasure, and it was considered a great unwholesome deed to make any changes in the text.

The first written text was produced at the time of the *Fourth Saṅgāyana* held in Sri Lanka in the year 29 B.C., during the reign of King Vattagāmaṇinī, when the text was recorded on palm leaves, the only available writing medium. Before this time, and until the *Third Saṅgāyana*, the only way of recording and preserving the teachings was to commit them to memory. Later, after the *Fifth Saṅgāyana* held in Mandalay (Myanmar) in 1871 A.D., during the reign of King Mindon, the entire *Tipiṭaka* was recorded on marble slabs.

During the last over two millennia, with the efforts of the devoted monks, the *Tipiṭaka* was preserved very carefully wherever it went. During all this period, the countries were separated by long distances, without adequate means of transportation and communication. Still, when the *Tipiṭaka* was recited in the presence of 2,500 learned monks from various Theravāda countries, there was no difference in the text as preserved in the different countries with different scripts, and different pronunciation. The only differences recorded were of a minor nature, in the form of certain spellings etc. The text preserved in regions far from each other was found to be the same after a period of over two millennia; this shows that there were no changes in the original words.

The CD-ROM

Over the ages the words of the Buddha have been preserved in whatever medium was available at the time. With the dawn of electronic preservation of documents, a need was felt to preserve them in this modern form so as to make them easily available. Moreover, with the spread of *paṭipatti* in the form of Vipassana, the meditation technique taught by the

Buddha to purify one's mind of the defilements, *pariyatti* had to follow. Vipassana students wanted to read the original words of the Buddha and the accompanying commentaries. Students from all over the world who started taking Vipassana courses began to express deep interest in studying the theoretical aspect of this scientific technique — which is available only in the Pāli literature. To this end the Vipassana Research Institute was established in 1985 at Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri, for research and publication of Pāli and other Dhamma literature.

Vipassana Research Institute started entering the Pāli text into computers with a highly motivated team of dedicated workers, including computer specialists, programmers and Pāli scholars in the year 1991. It was decided to use the Pāli text as finalized and authenticated by the most recent congregation of *Bhikkhus* from all over the world gathered in Myanmar in the *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana* (the Sixth Council). The initial purpose was to publish the whole Pāli literature into Devanāgarī and other scripts. Many volumes have already been printed. But, for research purposes, the CD-ROM was found to be a very efficient modern tool, where one could quickly refer to any passage in the voluminous texts, and search any word to which one wanted to refer. Hence, when all the Pāli text was entered into computers, work on the development of special software needed for a CD-ROM was started in the year 1996.

The *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana* CD-ROM is now ready for the use of scholars world wide, with its wide-ranging facilities that make it extremely user-friendly. This CD-ROM is designed to preserve the words of the Buddha in modern electronic media; it offers an easy search-and-navigation facility through the voluminous text and serves as a valuable tool of research. Some of the features of this CD-ROM are as follows:

1. Besides the main *Tipiṭaka* volumes, it contains the

most comprehensive collection of the *Aṭṭhakathās*, *Ṭīkā*s and *Anuṭṭhā*s. It has a total of 146 volumes, extending to 52,602 pages. At the click of a button one can open any volume, view any chapter, paragraph or page.

2. An easy-linking facility has been provided to see the corresponding passages in the main Pāli text, *Aṭṭhakathās*, and *Ṭīkā*s
3. The text can be viewed in the following three scripts: Devanāgarī, Roman and Myanmar.
4. The page numbers of the printed texts in Devanāgarī, Roman and Myanmar are simultaneously displayed on the screen.
5. For readers in Devanāgarī, a Pāli-Hindi dictionary that gives the meaning of Pāli words with a click on the word.
6. Search for words and phrases is extremely easy, giving a powerful tool to research scholars.

For the next version of the CD-ROM, work is progressing in the following fields:

- i. To provide viewing facilities in Sinhalese, Thai and other scripts.
- ii. To provide dictionaries in English and other languages.
- iii. To include some more rare Pāli texts.

Dhamma is too precious to be given at a price. It is a precious gift that should be given free of cost. The cost is met with donations from grateful Vipassana students. This tradition has been maintained in teaching the Vipassana practice. The same tradition is maintained in giving away the CSCD free of cost, as *Dhammadāna* to all those who can use it.

Ciraṃ Tiṭṭhatu Saddhammo!

May the Truth-based Dhamma endure for a long time!

*Choṭi sī yaha tashtari bharā Buddha kā gyāna
Phaile sāre vishwa meṇ hoyā parama kalyāṇa*

This tiny little disk filled with all the wisdom of the Buddha
May it spread around the world by bringing beatitude to all.

—Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

A GLOBAL MEDIUM FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF VIPASSANA

Ruth Senturia

INTRODUCTION

As technology makes its way into far reaches of the planet, the world has become increasingly globalized. And as the simple technology of audio and video tape recordings has made a presence in even distant villages, this medium has had a significant impact in a worldwide cause: the spread of Dhamma.

HISTORY

In 1969, Sayagyi S.N. Goenka came to India, at the behest and with the blessings of his teacher, to serve the single purpose of offering a course of Vipassana to his ailing mother. The success of the first course unleashed continuous requests for more. Summoned from one side of India to the other, Mr Goenka and his wife served tirelessly to meet the demand from enthusiastic students. Invitations beckoned them to traverse the Indian subcontinent, and eventually the world.

As Vipassana spread from place to place, and country to country, it became evident that the needs could not be met single-handed. Thus Mr Goenka began appointing some of his more experienced students as assistant teachers to conduct courses on his behalf. Meanwhile the entire course material was committed to audio and video tapes. These tapes were then entrusted to appointed teachers for the purpose of making Vipassana widely and readily available wherever courses would be organized.

This simple medium made it possible to organize courses anywhere. It ensured that the teaching would be carefully conveyed and preserved, and that courses everywhere would be conducted in the same format, and with the same degree of clarity and depth. Any student—anywhere—would be provided with the full exposition of the technique, without any deviation, addition, subtraction, or confusion.

The teaching material was offered bilingually in Hindi and English—two languages which are spoken by large numbers of people in India and around

the world. However, people who did not speak either of these still didn't have access to the teaching. So students began translating the course material into other languages—each language opening the door to whole populations of people—and Vipassana spread more enthusiastically than ever before. The obstacles of integrating the translation material with the original teaching material on the audio and video recordings could be overcome, with the result that all the course material could still be disseminated in a pure and consistent form.

Today the projects encompassing audio and video tapes have evolved. There are simple archive facilities, libraries, language recording studios, tape distributors, and even a film production team. The primary purpose is to supply teaching materials to Vipassana centres around the world; but collecting and preserving recordings, and extracting inspiring useful material, are also important functions.

ARCHIVES

The archives at Dhamma Giri are a central facility where the recorded material is housed. This was first started in 1985, when a haphazard bundle of tapes was sorted and subsequently placed in a library for access and preservation. Each tape was identified, documented, given a number, entered into a catalogue, and then shelved and indexed.

A few years later a suitable facility was built, and the collection began to take shape as an extensive archive. Audio and video tapes were stored separately, masters were kept securely from the copies, catalogues were filled with information about the recordings, old tapes were repaired and supplemented with workable copies, climate was carefully controlled against excessive heat, dust, or moisture, and labels were improved with accurate documentation. The work of upgrading this collection is ongoing.

Meanwhile, efforts unfolded to try and collect any and all existing recordings that had been made over the years, but which were not available in the

collection. One old student provided originals of the first recordings ever made since Goenkaji started teaching—Rajasthani discourses from the ninth course in December 1969, on an old reel-to-reel format for which equipment was found only recently after extensive efforts. Other students also generously offered recordings from their personal collections—various public talks, chantings, and discourses that they had from previous years when Goenkaji had travelled to their areas.

Some recordings were from the 1970's, when few recordings were done, and those too, almost exclusively on audio tapes. These were often recorded informally, without much equipment, but they managed to capture the content. Others were recorded in the 1980's, when video was often used, and more events outside of courses were organized—public talks, annual conferences, seminars, interviews. These recordings have all contributed to the collection, and still more material is anticipated.

The collection is also growing as current events are recorded, particularly as Vipassana has been introduced to different social sectors. Public talks have been organized for business executives, yoga academies, jails, Christian seminaries, school teachers, and health professionals. Seminars have been offered for scholars, researchers, professionals, administrators, and foreign delegates. Each of these events, when recorded and utilized, can serve to inspire others in similar fields.

The two main archive facilities—in U.S.A. (Dhamma Dharā) and in India (Dhamma Giri)—have undertaken a long-term project to transfer all the recordings onto a digital medium, and exchange copies so that they and other centres can have a comprehensive collection.

INTERNATIONAL TAPE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

The purpose of the archives has been not simply to collect tapes, but also to process them and make them available to centres around the world. The archive centres are in the process of supplying the primary centres of five major regions—Europe, North/South America, Australia/New Zealand, East Asia, and South Asia—with master tapes. The five centres

in turn will supply tapes to serve the course needs in each region, as well as the general interests of old students and the public.

In addition, there are four facilities set up to record languages—in France (Dhamma Mahī), U.S.A. (Dhamma Dharā), Japan (Dhamma Bhānu), and India (Dhamma Giri). They have the challenging task of combining the translated language with the original instructions for course use around the world.

In addition, students based in Israel have been producing documentary films to be broadcast on TV networks in different countries and to be available to the general public. Their work on Vipassana in prisons has brought attention to the impact the technique is having on reforming both prisoners and the prisons themselves.

TRANSLATION MATERIAL

Translation material continues to be the area of greatest demand. Goenkaji's first courses were given using Hindi only, with the exception of a single course conducted in Rajasthani, his native language. The first Western students were already pressing him to give a course in English at Dalhousie, North Western India, something he was initially reluctant to do because of doubts about the adequacy of his knowledge of the language for teaching Dhamma. However his teacher, Sayagyi U Ba Khin, instructed Goenkaji to go ahead with the English course, and sure enough it was a great success and all his earlier misgivings proved unfounded. During the first courses held outside India, in Japan and France, simultaneous translations were provided - but the limitations of this method were soon apparent, one could never be sure that the technique of meditation was being transmitted accurately. Thus the need for prepared translation of course materials in other languages, which could be carefully checked and periodically reviewed, became a priority. To date, course material has been translated and recorded into twenty-six languages. This includes various languages in India (Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, Kannada, Telugu, Punjabi); South Asia (Nepali, Newari, Sinhalese); Southeast Asia (Myanmar, Thai, Indonesian, Cambodian); East and Northeast Asia (Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Mongolian); the Near and Middle East (Farsi, Hebrew);

Western Europe (French, Spanish, German, Italian); Eastern Europe (Serbo-Croat, Russian, Romanian); and in Latin America (Spanish, Portuguese). Additional translation work is currently underway in the Indian languages of Tamil and Malayalam as well as Dutch/Flemish, Swedish, and Finnish.

Each of these language recordings may be used not only for courses in their respective countries, but for students native to those languages who may be residing or travelling anywhere else in the world. For communities of people residing in different countries, such as the Indian, Chinese, and Cambodian communities living in the West, entire courses may be scheduled in their language.

When significant numbers of students from a single language attend a course, those translated teaching tapes which have been restructured as a supplementary teaching set may be used concurrent with the primary course material. For example, in European courses a secondary language may be used along with the English/French or English/German teaching sets.

For individuals travelling or residing in other countries, translated language tapes may be used

alongside, or separate from, the standard course material. At times courses at the centres where travellers frequently visit—such as in Kathmandu, Jaipur, Igatpuri, and Dharamsala—may require four or five additional languages to be employed in a single course.

Foreign students who are able to learn Vipassana in their own language may feel inspired to go back to their homeland and lend their assistance and enthusiasm to make Vipassana courses available. They serve an important function as *Dhamma-dūta*, ambassadors of Dhamma, in bringing Vipassana to their own country or community.

CONCLUSION

As the world evolves towards a more globalized existence, the obstacles of distance and language that separate people become less. In line with this trend, Vipassana has become accessible to people of different locations and backgrounds. Harnessing a simple technology which is common and practical, and bridging linguistic divisions, the teaching of pure Dhamma continues to reach out to people wherever they are: in villages and institutions, across countries and continents.

*Pāli, Sanskrit, Hībrū, Chīnī, Arabī, Hoya.
Bharā Satya Sandesh Ho, Bhāshā Koyi Hoya.*

It may be Pāli or Sanskrit or Hebrew or Chinese or Arabic or any other language
but the content should be the message of the Truth.

—Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

VIPASSANA, HEALTH, HEALERS

Dr R.M.Chokhani

The word 'health' is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word 'hal', meaning the whole, and thus implies the integral existence of a person. It is usually depicted by the bio-psycho-social model, where the biological, psychological and social factors operate together in a dynamic, interactive system. Of these, the psyche or mind matters the most as it is the central directing force of one's entire life and activity. Accordingly, psycho-somatics, which studies the relationship between mind and body, is considered to be the kingpin of Health Sciences; it has numerous variants like psycho-neuro-immunology, psycho-endocrinology, psycho-cardiology, psycho-dermatology etc. Positive health, a concept developed to encompass the total quality of life, is the utopia that mankind is ever striving to realize.

Vipassana meditation is a scientific technique of self-observation, within the framework of one's own mind and body; a healing by observation of and participation in the universal laws of Nature (Dhamma), that operate upon one's thoughts, feelings, judgements and sensations. It aims at the total eradication of mental negativities and conditionings to achieve real peace of mind and lead a happy and healthy life. Vipassana courses are open to students of any faith, nationality, colour or background; even those afflicted with sickness can participate, provided the person is able to comply with the code of discipline, follow the meditation instructions and practise accordingly and that the appropriate facilities and support are available at the centre to cater for the individual's needs.

A wealth of data exists about the beneficial effects of Vipassana in a variety of health disorders, both physical and mental. Such health benefits are considered to be just its by-products and it is advised that one should not pursue them as the main objective lest such efforts turn counter-productive. Healing - not disease cure, but the essential healing of human suffering (*dukkha*) - is the purpose of

Vipassana. With joy and equanimity; one's approach to life is totally transformed, enabling one to face all the vicissitudes including disease, and even death, with serenity and fortitude.

The practice of medicine is a confluence of the twin streams of science and art. A healer needs not only the learned skills of diagnosis and treatment but human understanding too, with love and compassion for the suffering. Besides, the constant exposure to human suffering may lead to professional burn-out unless the healer consistently endeavours to develop one's own autonomy and self-knowledge, augmenting one's ability to be a professional anchor to others in the tumult of their lives. As the saying goes, "Physician, heal thyself!" Vipassana shows a way.

Vipassana is acceptable and relevant to healers of diverse disciplines as it touches the common ground of healing. With its practice, healers grow in their personal as well as professional lives; empathetic sensitivity and diagnostic accuracy are enhanced and therapeutic effectiveness is facilitated. Many meditator-healers teach their patients 'Anapana' - a preparatory step in the training of Vipassana, in addition to administering the regular medical treatment. The patients are thus encouraged to take personal responsibility for their own health and well-being. Vipassana is truly the path of all-healing, including self-healing and other healing.

The existential position of Vipassana, namely, the inevitability of suffering (*dukkha*), and its exhortation to work ardently so as to eventually reach the ultimate goal of full liberation (*nibbāna*), makes it a perfect tool for self-actualization, a positive mental health measure indeed. Accordingly, the primary focus of research in the health area, is on studying and evaluating the psychological benefits of Vipassana, in terms of transformation in one's personality and attitude; one's coping patterns in the face of life-stressors; one's performance and adjustment at home, study and work; in short, the quality of life.

NATURE CURE, VIPASSANA AND MENTAL CONDITION

Dr Vithaldas Modi

Nature cure believes that all diseases are one and their cure is also one. Having a disease itself implies the deterioration of the natural state of the body. This happens because we live in the wrong way, because we go against nature. Man is the child of nature. He should live like other animals, like other beings. Nature wants him to work as he has been doing since time immemorial. He should eat the food that nature has made for him. He should not pollute it by adding something to it or removing something out of it. He should inhale pure air, drink pure water and have enough sleep. But where does man do so? The result is that his body becomes polluted, in other words it becomes filled with pollutants. It is true that nature has created a system in the body to drain out the pollutants that are produced normally. But although they are removed, additional pollutants caused by the wrong way of living, if not drained out, manifest in the form of disease. Then we lose our appetite, feel the desire to take rest and the desire to drink water persists. These are signals of nature. If a man recognizes them and lives accordingly, his body becomes free from pollutants and if he does not pollute it any more, it is clean (pollutant-free) and healthy.

The mind works within the confines of this body. Our body is also polluted by a defiled mind, that is, by impure thoughts that arise in it. The pollution so caused is deadlier than poison. There is only difference in the degree. Man survives if the amount of pollution is small. So in order to maintain good health, one should live a natural life, as prompted by nature, and take certain measures to keep one's mind pure. Innumerable and varied are the ways for attaining purity of the mind but the best in my view is Vipassana—a unique technique of meditation taught by the Buddha, both simple and unfailing. He himself attained enlightenment by practising it and taught it to others out of compassion.

A sound mind can live only in a sound body. Therefore the first requirement for the practice of Vipassana is to keep one's body pure and healthy. To achieve this, one has to undertake the observance of five precepts:

1. I shall not kill
2. I shall not steal
3. I shall not commit sexual misconduct
4. I shall not tell lies
5. I shall not take intoxicants.

On the basis of these moral precepts, coupled with proper concentration of mind, one is ready to begin the practice of Vipassana.

Whatever right or wrong, good or evil, a person does, is stored in his/her mind. So mind is most important and all the results of evil deeds that are accumulated here are the cause of our next birth. If one's mind becomes ultra-pure, one is said to have attained enlightenment. But this happens in a span of several existences. A beginning, however, has to be made which is possible by the mind in the life of a human being only. The Buddha could attain the path of enlightenment by virtue of good deeds done in innumerable past lives. We are fortunate that this technique of Vipassana is made available to us in its pure form. It had disappeared from India but had been preserved in neighbouring Myanmar with great care. In its pristine purity this same technique was brought to India in 1969 by Goenkaji. So far several hundred thousand people from India and the world over have gained from this technique of meditation taught by him.

One who practises Vipassana without regarding it as a ritual, achieves purity of mind. In other words, sensuality, anger, craving and aversion which agitate Man's mind become feebler as a result of the meditation practice. As the negativities become feebler, a person experiences profound peace.

Vipassana is undoubtedly a technique of freeing oneself from the cycle of birth and death. Besides, it is also a technique to purify one's mind and achieve mental peace. And this is desirable for everybody. Walking on the path of Vipassana is a unique method of living this life happily.

One who walks on this path derives benefit immediately. In addition, he suffuses and permeates the environment around him with the fragrance of his good-will and, in return, he gains the good-will of all.

DRUG ADDICTION AND THERAPY: A VIPASSANA PERSPECTIVE

Dr R.M. Chokhani

Introduction

Drug addiction or chemical dependency has become a worldwide problem respecting no barriers whatsoever, whether social, economic or religious, with serious ramifications for mankind since it undermines individual health, warps human relationships, torments families, cripples the economy, fosters crime and destroys peace – a veritable scourge of society, indeed. Various therapeutic approaches have been resorted to in treating and rehabilitating the addict, the major ones being pharmacotherapy – detoxification, maintenance; counselling and psychotherapy – individual, family, group; self-help groups – alcoholic anonymous, narcotics anonymous. The outcome has been generally unsatisfactory, with the majority of addicts still trapped in the “revolving door phenomenon” characterized by initiation, continuation, abuse, cessation and relapse.

Trail of Addiction

The realization has now dawned upon the addiction therapists and research workers that craving (*taṇhā*) is the root cause of all addictive behaviour; also, that people get addicted not only to drugs but to many other things as well. The word “addiction” is actually derived from the Roman legal terminology; to “addict” meant “to give over to a master or enslave”. The word was subsequently anglicized and used to describe an individual’s behaviour when he/she habitually and obsessively surrendered control of his / her life to a particular experience, sensation or activity. It is thus “craving” that needs to be tackled directly and adequately if there is to be a real redemption; Vipassana does just that. “*Vedanā samosaraṇā sabbe dhammā*”, said the Buddha, which means: everything that arises in the mind is accompanied by body sensations. This interrelationship of mind and matter is the key to the practice of Vipassana, which by working with sensations reaches progressively deeper levels of mind to remove the roots of addiction.

Chemical dependency is actually an addiction to the pleasant body sensations (*sukha vedanā*), that arises because of the biochemical flow (*āsava*) in the body specific to the pharmacodynamics of the drug taken. This biochemical flow (*āsava*) influences the mind with more craving (*taṇhā*) which, in turn, precipitates subsequent drug intake and *vice versa*; a vicious circle thus sets in and a clinging (*upādāna*) develops, which leads to a compulsive and repetitive drug usage. Besides, physical dependence on the drug and drug tolerance also set in, the rider being that the more powerful the drug, the faster the deeper trouble occurs. It is, therefore, advised that the addict stops using drugs and negotiates the drug withdrawal phase, much before the due date of his/her Vipassana course, so that he/she is able to derive optimum benefits from the practice of Vipassana.

Progressively, the addict goes beyond the craving for drug-induced sensations and clinging to just craving, that is, desire simply for desire, develops. At this stage, the external stimulation of the drug becomes secondary, manifested by the phenomena of multiple drug abuse and switching of drugs when the drug of choice is not available. This cycle of addiction to craving continues in everyday life, even when the addict is not under the influence of drugs: the memory of the pleasant effects of the drug generates craving, which is accompanied by sensations and the process of multiplication of craving continues unabated, leading to formation of strong conditionings (*sankhāras*) of addiction. This explains the occurrence of chronic relapses even after fairly long periods, say years, of drug abstinence. As the saying goes, albeit modified, “Once an addict, one is still at risk of relapse”.

Dawn of Wisdom

The meditator realizes that the addiction is not merely to the chemicals being abused but also to the negativities in the mind like passion, anger, egotism, etc. As with chemicals, the addiction is really to the

particular sensations (*vedanā*), that arise because of the biochemical flow (*āsava*) specific to the mental content. The *āsava* of ignorance (*avijjā*) is the strongest *āsava*. It is out of ignorance that one reacts with passion, anger or fear, but drug abuse and intoxication queers the pitch since it multiplies one's ignorance. Therefore, an addict takes more time to feel sensations; some may need to take more Vipassana courses. But if one keeps working patiently and continuously, sooner or later, one manages to break the barrier of ignorance between the '*paritta citta*', the conscious mind, and the *bhavaṅga*, the unconscious mind, and one starts feeling sensations throughout the body.

Along with this awareness (*sati*) of sensations, an understanding of their impermanent nature (*anicca*) is also developed, which enables one to observe them objectively, equanimously (*upekkhā*). By *sampajañña* - the constant thorough understanding of impermanence with Vipassana, the process of "*vedanā paccayā taṇhā*" is reversed and "*vedanā paccayā paññā*" results, that is, with every sensation, be it pleasant, unpleasant or neutral, instead of craving and aversion, now the wisdom of impermanence arises and one remains equanimous; thereby, no new *sankāras* (conditionings) are produced and layers after layers of the old accumulated *sankhāras* get eliminated. In this way, Vipassana strikes at the root cause of addiction and gradually eradicates it.

Practical Applications

Vipassana meditation is not some magic or miracle. Progress requires a strong will to come out of addiction, as also, to work towards this goal, by observing oneself at the level of sensations. Therefore, prior preparation and motivation of the addict for passing through the Vipassana course, by counselling and by teaching "*ānāpāna-sati*" (awareness of the breath) is crucial. That enables one to work properly and get the desired results, as has been observed at 'Cyrenian House' in Perth, Australia and at 'Start Again' in Zurich, Switzerland, the addiction therapy centres for drug dependants, founded and run by Vipassana meditators since 1981 and 1992, respectively. The addict is supported and counselled after the Vipassana course as well, to ensure that he/she

keeps working with the technique regularly.

These two centres have also made the time available to their patients as well as their staff, to practise *ānāpāna sati* (and Vipassana, where applicable) on a daily, in-house basis, as also, to attend Vipassana courses that are held externally. Nearly all the staff members are meditators and many are ex-addicts too, who with their Vipassana experience and its applied practice in their daily life, show empathic sensitivity and effectiveness in helping their clients, as well as serving as excellent role models. Attracted by this novel and effective approach, many drug rehabilitation organizations have evinced keen interest in incorporating the deeper dimensions of *ānāpāna-sati* and Vipassana in their therapeutic programme and have been deputing their staff members and patients to Vipassana courses.

With the practice of Vipassana, one learns how to lead one's daily life, to gain increasingly more freedom from suffering (*dukkha*). One tries to observe how one is dealing with various life-situations, whether one is reacting or remaining equanimous. It is only when one reacts that one generates negativity and becomes miserable. A few moments of observing body sensations make the mind equanimous and one remains balanced; then instead of reacting blindly, one can choose the best course of action. Accordingly, the drug addict is advised: "Do not succumb the moment an urge or craving arises. Instead wait for awhile, for 10 to 15 minutes. Accept the fact that an urge to abuse drugs has arisen in the mind and start observing whatever sensations that you feel at that time, since the two are interrelated. And by experiencing the impermanent nature of the sensations, you will find that this urge weakens and passes away". Thus, the practice of Vipassana helps in times of stress, which could have led to a relapse in the past, and the addict-meditator becomes increasingly more resistant to threats to his/her sobriety.

Conclusion

The Buddha is truly called '*Mahā Bhisaka*' - the great physician, for having given to the world this wonderful technique of Vipassana, by the practice of which, one is liberated from all the ills of life and one's entire being gets suffused with infinite love

(*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*). Life becomes full, harmonious and fruitful. All this is not achieved though, just by attending a Vipassana course of ten days. There is no short cut. One has to make sustained efforts. A ten-day course followed by regular practice sets in motion a process of improvement, which is worth attempting, sublime and elevating. Those who really want to come out of their addiction should take to Vipassana for their own emancipation, as also, for the benefit of others.

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It seems that one is addicted to tobacco, alcohol, drugs or any abused other substance. But this is only an apparent truth. The real truth, as discovered by the super psychologist Buddha, is that one's addiction is actually to the feelings of body sensations related to these external objects. One likes these sensations and begins craving for them. That develops into an addiction. If one learns to observe these sensations equanimously then one understands their true nature of impermanence. These sensations arise only to pass away. One comes out of the craving, the apparently irresistible urges and resultant addiction. This is what Vipassana teaches.

—Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

ANAPANA COURSES FOR CHILDREN

Shanti Shah

"The next generation must learn Vipassana at a young age, so that they can live a very healthy life, a harmonious life. When children are taught Vipassana in schools, colleges, there are very good results."

- S.N.Goenka

Scientific meditation is a powerful tool in helping children to mature and discover the deeper values of life, thereby leading to better overall personal development and happiness.

Anapana meditation as taught by Gotama the Buddha is the first preparatory step for learning Vipassana. It is a simple technique where one observes the natural breath - as it is. In the Pāli language, *āna* means breathing in, *apāna* means breathing out. By developing awareness of this natural function of breath children increase their ability to concentrate. This eliminates nervousness, sharpens memory, and develops a more balanced personality. In Anapana courses, children find a technique that is simple, easy to learn, always available, objective and scientific. Children can easily understand the scientific and universal nature of the technique.

ANAPANA COURSES IN SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

There has to be a way, in which mental training can become an integral part of school education. By nature, children are active and enthusiastic. At this age, it is appropriate to offer them an opportunity to explore the mind with all its hidden faculties, latent abilities, and subtle complexities.

This wholesome seed sown now will sooner or later grow and open up a new dimension of life for them.

The first children's course began on April 17, 1986. Under the auspices of Vipassana International Academy, Igatpuri, in co-operation with the management of Jamnabai Narsee School, Mumbai, a residential four-day course was organized. Eighty-eight

children participated. Goenkaji conducted the course. The results were remarkable and encouraging. Since then, the Wheel of Dhamma continues to rotate. The educational value of such courses became quickly apparent.

Guidelines were prepared to facilitate the organization of such courses. In the same year, during the Diwali Vacation, three-day courses were very successfully held at Vipassana centres in Igatpuri and in Hyderabad.

In 1987 and 1988, invitations to hold courses came from schools from various parts of India. The initial two courses which were held in Jodhpur, Rajasthan - (a) in Balniketan, an experimental school, and (b) in a residential school for blind children, provided the experience and insight necessary for organizing and conducting the courses amidst ongoing school routines. In addition, invaluable experience in a specialized field resulted from the blind school course. In these first few steps seeds were sown, which have grown into full trees with fruit and blossoms, so much so, that now courses are held not just in regular schools but also at remand-homes, leprosy homes, and even for street children.

Demand continues to increase. Already thousands of children have benefited. Records from 1996 show that the number of students who participated in courses throughout India was in excess of 10,000.

Usually courses are held in schools by invitation. The courses held are either residential or non-residential, for three days, two days, one and a half days or even for a day. At Vipassana centres all over India three-day residential courses are held during school holidays. The age-group ranges from 8 to 15 years old.

INNER EDUCATION

It is quite clear that the modern educational system sidesteps the emotional and spiritual aspects of the human personality. Parents and schools realize that something is lacking in our educational system,

but most of them do not know how to help children grow at the inner level.

Anapana meditation is a solution to this. It is a simple technique that consists of awareness of respiration, hence children from any part of the world, from any background, can successfully learn and benefit from it.

In actual practice, the children are taught to watch the incoming breath and outgoing breath by focussing their attention at the entrance of their nostrils. They simply observe their natural breath without trying to change or correct the flow of breath. In this way, they experience the first few steps of self-awareness.

Once the technique is learnt, the process of self-awareness naturally arises and continues to flow on. As they observe, they learn to be in the present moment. This ability to live in the present, with a balanced mind, fosters the development of a positive attitude and outlook.

They learn through their own direct experience, a simple, straight-forward, and logical message that by not harming others through their mental, vocal or bodily actions, they actually help themselves and those around them.

GIVE AND TAKE

GIVE: Children who come to Anapana courses follow a schedule of meditation interspersed with other activities. The aim is to make the meditation an appealing activity which will predispose the children to "graduate" to Vipassana when they are older.

Communication is a means to satisfy their natural inquisitiveness. Small groups of ten to twelve children are guided by a counsellor who is a Vipassana meditator. Constant interaction with the children ensures that they grasp the essence of the technique. Various visual aids, flash-cards, display charts and questionnaires have been designed for this purpose.

Meditation periods last for half an hour, punctuated by group discussions, games, creative activities, all of which aim at encouraging the expression of originality. Hence, along with the actual practice of meditation, the children experience its practical value while participating in various activities.

TAKE: The child learns an art of developing

mastery over the mind, understands clearly that the breath is a bridge between the body and mind, and that the rhythm of the breath is closely related to the state of mind. Over time, the awareness of natural, normal breath helps the child to come out of unbalanced mental states such as nervousness, fear, anger etc. The change in mental attitude is reflected in day-to-day behaviour. Any educationist can tangibly see that preaching does not work, practice works. For continued progress, regular daily practice is the first and foremost requirement.

SO FAR

- * There are some schools where Anapana meditation has been introduced as part of the curriculum providing one practice period of half an hour daily.

- * In some places, the entire school practises daily for five to ten minutes. Each year refresher courses are held there.

- * The Principals and teachers who were sceptical, are surprised to discover the tremendous improvement in children's behaviour.

From the response to questionnaires, it can be concluded that 70% of the children first improve in their social behaviour. Negative qualities like quarrelsomeness, use of harsh words, disruptiveness in class and various other complexes, decrease. Simultaneously, positive qualities such as helpfulness, and self-confidence, increase. Memory and concentration improve to a remarkable degree, which reflects on their studies and results.

A REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE FROM GITANJALI SCHOOL

Within a span of fifteen days everyone at the senior school in Gitanjali including all the students, the Principal, the teaching and non-teaching staff, attended the course.

Principal Ms. Gita Karan's Impressions:

In this age of jet-set pressure and tension, where morals are declining, where children are confused because of too much exposure, when one begins to think that something is wrong with our social system, it is imperative to develop some inner discipline and strength of character. When we were approached to introduce this Anapana meditation to children in our school, I agreed with a little reluctance, not know-

ing how our children would benefit; it also meant, taking time out of our regular routine. Now that we are doing it (our children meditate for 7 to 10 minutes everyday at the assembly), I am very grateful to the team who conducted this programme so devotedly. Many of our children have benefited. We know this from the feedback we have received. For some, concentration has improved, thus improving their academic performance, some don't get upset easily and are more tolerant, and one or two have even gotten over their headaches.

TEACHERS' VIEWS:

The meditation course was definitely a very positive step towards self-betterment. As adults we have also learnt a lot and I already feel the change in me to tackle life with a more positive approach and this can only improve with regular meditation. It also has brought peace of mind and I earnestly feel that it should be a part of the school curriculum.

-Ms Manju Rajan

The course is very enlightening. Meditation has taught us how to control our mind which under normal conditions is not possible. Now I feel that I will be able to overcome any difficult situation with meditation.

-Ms Vanita Rao

CHILDREN'S VIEWS IMMEDIATELY AFTER CONDUCTING THE COURSE

I like to meditate because it helps me a lot in two days only. I am going to practise it and not give up. I was very happy hearing that every morning we will meditate in school.

-Mohd.Qadeer std-IX

With meditation it becomes easy to concentrate. Meditation purifies our mind and we learn to control our anger, selfishness and greed. Thus by meditating, we have peace of mind but an important thing is that we should meditate every day.

-Prasanna std-VIII

AFTER ONE MONTH OF THE ANAPANA EXPERIENCE

Experiencing is believing. With faith, born of experience, I can honestly say that not only have I felt calmer, but people around me also felt the same. A month is a long time and I have been through the

usual ups and downs, but daily practice of Anapana has helped me to quickly regain my balance.

-Ms Lakshmi Naik, Headmistress

AFTER FOUR MONTHS OF ANAPANA

Meditation is a type of medicine, after practising which we receive a dose of tonic. It helped me a lot in studies. It also helped me in the examination hall. It not only makes us remember what we learn but also keeps us attentive in the class.

-Tasleem Banu std-VI

I feel that I have improved my concentration. I practise it at home in the mornings and at night. If we can do it everyday, I think we will all grow up to be good citizens of our country.

-Devangana Pande std-VI

I felt as though I could never be successful in my life. This meditation has benefited me. In what way? I will tell you. I have been controlling my anger and have stopped telling lies and I am peaceful at night.

-Manisha std-VI

Many people have different views about meditation. They think it is a waste of time. But if you do it sincerely you will always be good-natured, honest and trustworthy and you will become a favourite with everyone.

-Akshay std-VI

SOME MORE EXPERIENCES

"I have gained by controlling my anger, which was an enemy of me and my entire family."

"It is challenging and tough at first but enjoyable later on. It is good to look at oneself."

AND FURTHER....

It is the wish of our Teacher, Goenkaji, to organize more and more courses so that this beneficial technique spreads throughout the world to the younger generation.

Goenkaji has appointed more than a hundred 'children's course teachers' around India, who conduct such courses.

There is felt to be a need to have a centre basically for children. A plan is under discussion to establish it somewhere in Maharashtra.

May more and more young people walk on this Path and enjoy real happiness!

CHILDREN'S COURSES IN THE WEST

Kirk and Reinette Brown

'I don't know about you, but I feel much better after that!' Such was one boy's comment as he fastened his shoes after his first experience of meditation on a children's course.

We have seen in recent years how large numbers of children have taken to meditation in India, and heard about the benefits they have gained. But also in the West, the programme of courses is beginning to expand and, although in its infancy, we see very encouraging results beginning to emerge. Children's courses are now a regular feature at the centres in Australia, New Zealand, North America, U.K., France and Germany. Usually there are three courses per year, and to date the numbers of children attending range from 20 to 55. Periods of Anapana meditation and counselling are alternated with physical activities and creative activities on Dhamma themes. Courses are held for different age groups.

Initial contacts have been made with schools in Australia, North America and the U.K., as a result of which a number of children have started practising Anapana. Following an article published in an educational magazine in North America, there has been a large response from schools eager to find out more about Anapana courses for their children. In Germany one school sent a whole class to the centre for a residential three-day course. Because meditation is not a mainstream activity in the West, it is not as easy as in India to set up links with schools. However, with the increase in the number of behavioural problems and attention deficiency disorders amongst children, it is very much in the forefront of the minds of educationalists to find ways of dealing with these problems. Clearly *sīla* and *samādhi* have enormous potential and as the benefits for children become more widely known, interest is bound to spread.

On a superficial level the children benefit purely by coming to the centres. They can see where it is that their parents periodically disappear to and feel that it is also somewhere for them. 'At first I was frightened but it's not like school because everything

here is calm and everyone is kind.'

Feedback about the benefits of Anapana has been collected from parents and the responses have shown positive results, especially in coping with problems, better behaviour, less aggression and less T.V. watching. Children themselves report that they use Anapana at school before examinations and in stressful situations. One parent reported that her teenage son's attitude to her had completely changed after he had attended a course. Alienation that had existed before was replaced by a respect and closeness, brought about by an understanding of what his mother was doing at the centre. But, more than that, the boy himself experienced 'huge' changes for the better in his own character as a result of his own practice, changes which he himself found difficult to describe. It is these profound benefits that make courses for young people so important.

Children come with many of the same aims and hopes as their parents. One boy hoped 'to be nicer to be around.' Another wished to be able 'to deal with stressful situations.' A girl looked forward to 'gaining in self-confidence and being able to centre myself.'

They experience the same difficulties as adults. One seven year old boy, becoming aware of the wandering mind, found it 'funny having a head that moves and not knowing where it's going.' A girl said: 'Meditation was difficult at the beginning because you had to stay still and only think of one thing and I wanted to think of other things, but I made the efforts to come back to the respiration.' A counsellor, congratulating a young meditator for working hard was told, 'Yes, but if you only knew how much I was sweating.....!' The children certainly go through mini-courses of their own, encountering difficulties and coming through them successfully. One young boy described his experiences by drawing a 'demon' and telling the counsellor that the demon had gone out of him because of meditation. A girl said, 'I realize I've got a lot of work to do. I should come here more often be-

cause it makes things easier for me.'

Children readily see the need to meditate and they work with great enthusiasm. When so much that is offered to them in society is based on materialism and the quest for instant gratification it provides a much-needed method of getting in touch with their inner selves and a way to deal with the very real fears and anxieties of childhood and adolescence. They rise to the challenge very naturally. We should not underestimate the depth of their understanding. A 13 year old boy reflecting on his experience wrote: 'Meditation is a privileged moment that a person passes in calm far away from noise, far from everything! Particularly this tranquillity, which one finds so rarely in life. Life is a river which one purifies so little except in the course of meditation. It is sometimes peaceful, sometimes agitated, sometimes cloudy, sometimes dark. The mind is always overloaded with all sorts of thoughts. Meditation is an excellent way of taming the wandering mind. It is also a remedy for anger and melancholy.'

Another great benefit for children in the West is to have morality presented to them. And that too, not in any doctrinaire way, but as part and parcel of a way of life that leads to their own happiness and the happiness of others. A way of life that gives them a vision to set their course by. A simple path that, as they progress almost effortlessly from Children's Day to three-day course, to full ten-day course, gives them the possibility of avoiding some of the pitfalls of early adulthood. It is found that Western children react unfavourably to simply being told 'you must not do this or that'. However they do respond to an invitation to look inside and discover for themselves the reality of how, by generating defilements of the mind, they make themselves and others unhappy.

'I am looking forward to coming back to another course and maybe when I'm older a ten-day

course, but I'm no way ready for that yet,' was how one 13 year old assessed the situation. Another girl whose parents were not meditators thought that she should 'practise this technique at home with my mother and sister and then when I feel ready I would like to come.....for a ten-day course.'

Another encouraging feature is seen when children return for a second course. Courses are held with such regularity that some children have now attended 10 or 12 courses. They or their parents report positive improvements. One boy showed a girl at school who was unhappy how to observe her respiration. Others have used it before a test to overcome nerves. Another felt angry but went upstairs to meditate instead. One teacher received a surprise when she sent one 6 year old over to the corner to 'meditate,' using the term loosely to mean 'calm down'. He went and sat cross-legged on the floor. The baffled teacher asked what he was doing. He replied, 'I'm observing my respiration.' After school she enquired and found out about Anapana from the boy's parents.

At the end of a course for children it is striking how keen and positive they are about meditation. A whole new world opens up for them as it does for adults. On one course a teenager told the counsellor, 'I just can't tell you how wonderful it is here. I wish my older sister could have come.' Other typical comments include: 'I learnt how to control my mind.' - 'I would have liked it if it had been longer.' - 'Challenging at first, nevertheless enjoyable and good to think about ourselves.' - 'I got lots of calmness out of the weekend.' - 'I feel I have gained a lot.' - 'Brilliant!'

May more and more people of all ages find this technique of pure Dhamma and use their lives to walk towards full liberation.

May the coming generation bloom with high human values and be a harbinger of hope for the future.

—Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

VIPASSANA AMONGST THE YOUTH OF INDIA

Dr Raman Khosla

"One doesn't have to wait till a certain age, to become a good human being."

Prashant, 19 years old.

In 1987, the average age of Indian participants attending a meditation retreat at the Vipassana International Academy, Igatpuri, India (the principal Vipassana centre in India) was 50. Today, only a decade later, it is less than 30. During their vacation periods, college students form an overwhelming majority of the over 500 meditators on each course. Amidst our superficially advancing, yet increasingly stressful world, these figures bear testimony to the ever-growing demand for Vipassana amongst the youth of India today.

How did such a rapid transformation take place, particularly in India, where 'mass conditioning' dictates that meditation is to be practised in the last quarter of one's life, when all else has been achieved?

Why did the administrative authorities of an engineering - medical college at Aurangabad build a meditation centre for their students within its premises? What inspired a highly reputed management school in Pune to incorporate meditation as an integral component of the daily curricular activity, for prospective managers?

A Christian seminary in Goa organized, in its chapel, a ten-day residential meditation retreat, apparently outside its faith, for the benefit of its young priests in training. Why? Why did the officials of Tihar Central Prison, New Delhi, India's largest and most famous prison, dedicate a ward of their already overcrowded youth-jail to the practice of meditation for the inmates?

In answer to these questions, let us look at the comments of youngsters and their teachers who have participated in Vipassana courses.

Today's youngsters universally accept the technique of Vipassana as scientific. As Pushkar put it: "It's very difficult for a student of science to accept things which are religious in nature, but in Vipassana,

there's no trace of dogma. It's totally scientific, and the biggest proof of it is that you are told to first experience the truth and then believe it."

Prashant gave a sci-fi explanation: "It's a process of taking the spaceship of the mind into your own universe of the body, to snatch out the roots of the evils."

According to John: "The whole thing makes sense right from the beginning. We couldn't find even a minor flaw in the technique, let alone a major one. It is a complete reworking of all the things that we need to be actually doing in real life."

Youngsters use a wide spectrum of vivid phrases to describe their ten-day Vipassana experience,

viz. 'breath-taking and sensational', 'inner realization', 'sense of achievement', 'opening up', 'revolutionary churning process', 'wonderful, novel and stimulating experience', 'intellectually satisfying and experientially rewarding' and 'journey through the storm and the calm thereafter'.

Today's result-orientated youngster is fascinated by the 'amazing-here-and-now benefits' of Vipassana. Handicapped by little or no educational training to deal with it, the fight for survival in our fiercely competitive and shrinking world, devoid of work ethic, leaves today's young adult invariably facing stress.

In Raghav's words: "The stress of the corporate world had gotten to me, making me peevish and blaming all wrong on others. Vipassana came as a panacea to make me realize that the cause of the stress is within and how to remove it."

Anjali felt: "I'd read a lot about stress and mind-matter relationships, but in Vipassana I actually saw the mind-body interactions happening, thereby creating stress."

Most youngsters felt that the Vipassana experience had made them more calm, balanced, self-aware, confident and optimistic. As Nikhil put it: "In the course a lot of agonizing and aggressive thoughts came down. Now I have forgiveness instead of anger for certain actions of others and regrets for cer-

tain arrogant follies of mine."

Arvind had the following to share: "I have found a lot of improvements in myself - improved concentration, changed attitude towards life, better decision-making ability and goal implementation, improved interpersonal relationships and creativity. Vipassana is a must for people. I see no other permanent solution to tensions."

Others report major attitudinal changes. Amit stated: "The first couple of days of the course were torture, but later on I realized that these ten days were among the most important days of my life."

Prashant commented: "If I'd got Vipassana two or three years earlier, I would've become a genius engineer. It gives one a new vision, full of confidence."

Manish said: "I've learnt the most important fact that I'm responsible for everything that happens to me and that I'm the only one who can bring about a change. This gives you a kind of inner strength, a belief in yourself."

Vipassana helped Priyadarshini "to realize the preciousness of each moment, so utilize it to the best of my capabilities."

Vineet, belonging to the batch of chemical engineering students who sat the first ever all-student course at the Aurangabad College Vipassana Centre, reported how his class benefited during examinations. "Despite one of our papers being unusually difficult, this time we observed that, unlike earlier, nobody got nervous, all sat calmly and fared well." This batch, said to be probably the most notorious class of the engineering college, was the experimental group, which posed a challenge to reform through Vipassana. Their post-course feedback and changes later, inspired this entire revolution there. Barely a year later this batch had the best academic results of all the outgoing groups. Interpersonal relationships, not just with peers, but also with parents and teachers improved, thereby bridging the 'generation gap' - one of the big problems in India today.

Some young people came to Vipassana to give up their addictions - mainly cigarettes and alcohol, but occasionally other drugs too. Amit and Mangesh, both 25-per-day-smokers, are among the many young people who have succeeded in abstaining from addictions. Kshitij also had the following to admit: "I'm

glad I took Vipassana as my high-on-life habits of alcohol, cigarettes and drugs have gone. I'm definitely healthier, more considerate and equanimous."

For the spiritually-orientated youngster, confused at the turbulence and hypocrisy at home and in society in the name of religion, Vipassana comes as a 'paradise'. As Srinivas said :

"Through Vipassana I've learned two important points about spiritual knowledge - firstly, such knowledge without experience is a waste, and secondly, how ego, a big barrier on the spiritual path, can be reduced."

Besides Hindus, numerous Muslim, Christian, Jain, Sikh and Buddhist young people have benefited from Vipassana, most of them agreeing with Rahul's statement: "After Vipassana I've learned what I should do to improve the wisdom and faith in my religious sect. Having now understood what true religion is, I hope to become a better practitioner of my faith."

Responsibility, both at the individual level and as citizens of our community and larger world, is one area in which young people, having undergone a Vipassana course, revealed startling insights. In Ganesh's words: "Indian youth is conscious of various things that need to be done at this time for each person to be a complete human being and yet we are not able to do these things in practical life. This course will provide at least a beginner's direction into putting what we idealize into practice. It will go a long way towards putting a person on the correct path and hence it is very much applicable to students, who are on the threshold of taking up responsibilities and who are the destiny of the nation."

This, of course, is not only applicable to students but to anyone who is at a crossroads in life. Generally it has been observed that the more misery a person has gone through, the more benefit one feels from Vipassana.

Dr Ajay Singla, superintendent of the youth jail in Tihar Central Prison, New Delhi, himself a Vipassana meditator, had the following to say about his inmates: "Their states of mind and behaviour are much more intense and anxious, so Vipassana is like nectar for them. They learn a totally new method to control their minds. How can one who has mastered his mind commit a crime ? This technique will have

more beneficial effects in youngsters because of a lesser accumulation of mental impurities and their benefits will have a longer lasting impact on society. We don't really need any administration in our Vipassana ward, as the inmates are managing themselves. The atmosphere is so different from the rest of the prison - no shouting, abusing, fighting, beating, injury - this is really true society, society living by itself. The biggest benefit of this Vipassana experiment on a mass scale is a new way of life, attitude and behaviour in these inmates. I've never seen such a tremendous change, and that too in such a short time; one inmate who kept terrorizing others in the jail has now become a harbinger of peace."

Many young inmates had positive experiences to share of major changes in their lives. Ashok said: "Since I've been in jail I've always contemplated either suicide or crime. Now these thoughts have disappeared, I feel totally at peace."

Naval's comments were: "I now realize that it's totally a weakness of my mind that has brought me into jail. I didn't know that one moment of anger could ruin my life. Vipassana has helped me to significantly reduce my anger, revenge and ego."

Kamal, the youth inmate meditator coordinator, summed up the situation: "There is a tremendous demand for Vipassana in our inmates. Entering jail itself is a big misery in all ways. Education, sports, vocational and religious activities in the jail only provide temporary relief...I am confident that if Vipassana is regularly practised, then it won't take long for our jail to become a haven of peace."

Comments thus far are mostly from young people who have completed one or two ten-day Vipassana retreats. Much more profound changes have been experienced by students who have not only maintained their daily practice, but have gone on to do further, or more advanced, courses.

Abhimanyu had the following to share: "I wanted to change people and kept observing faults in others. Now I feel I need to focus on my own wholesome development first. The more hope I see in my development, the more optimistic I am about a positive change in society."

Rahul commented about the change in him: "The first results were in terms of stress relief. Ear-

lier an uneasy stress permeated my mind very deeply. After Vipassana I felt relaxed to such an extent, as if I woke up after a long sleep. Secondly, it has resulted in a quantum increase in my level of awareness. As a result, I see my existence redefined and perhaps more meaningful. I think that my world-view has become more holistic, moreover I am able to understand and feel 'happiness' as never before."

Devasheesh said: "Now it is easier to control emotions like anger, lust and hatred. Relations with my family members too have improved. I have enjoyed the friendship of new Dhamma friends. Overall I've finally found a purpose to live and more importantly have been guided on the path to do so."

Finally Harsh opined; "Vipassana changed my life. I actually experienced myself as I really was, like never before. The truth about what I called 'I' began becoming clearer. My outlook to everything profoundly changed. The powerful realization dawned that it was 'me' and not any outside influence that finally decided my happiness or unhappiness. Vipassana has made me a stronger person and has brought many positive changes in my personality. I now understand that I can never be happy myself as long as I hurt others' feelings. Vipassana has given my life a firm direction of truth."

It is no wonder then, that the Mahatma Gandhi Mission Trust started a two-acre Vipassana centre within their 100-acre conglomerate of professional colleges at Aurangabad in 1996. The Principal of its Engineering College (JNEC) Mr Pratap Borade, himself a meditator, explained: "I felt that if Vipassana is taught among the young people of today's India, then we will have a wonderful force of value-based youth. On taking the course, I realized that this is probably the only technique for purification of the mind which is totally secular, experiential and scientific. It is very beneficial for the students of today who are confused and disturbed. We started the experiment with an entire batch of chemical engineering students and the result was a new personality development, beneficial in their career and to society. Vipassana will go a long way towards achieving a 'value-based education', a concept which Indian educationists have been trying to implement for many decades now with little success."

In Pune, the Symbiosis Centre for Management and Human Resource Development (SCMHRD) over the last four years has blossomed into one of the most sought-after training institutes in India for the post-graduate diploma in management. The secret of success is summed up in the words of Prof. M.S. Pillai, the Director of the Institute and himself a Vipassana practitioner: "We started a management institute focussing on changing the human being first and then educating them and grooming them as managers. We have a deep conviction that unless a person is able to manage oneself, be happy, he can never manage others. Today management is less technology and more dealing with people. If one is not a good human being at heart, how can one be a good manager? So we focussed on the spiritual dimension also and introduced Vipassana as part of the daily curriculum to process them through experience-based learning."

Mr Arvind Gangolli, a consultant on the board of the institute, added: "In times to come every human being will have to be equipped to deal with change. The very concept of our lives and living is changing very rapidly...while imparting training in

management, it would be 'suicidal' not to incorporate this particular facet. Today's successful leader needs not only a well-maintained body, but a well-maintained mind."

Vipassana is spreading rapidly through India and around the world. People from all walks of life are finding that this is an answer to the seemingly insoluble problems not only of our individual lives, but our present-day world environment. Vipassana can transform the human mind and character. As more and more young people start practising the technique, the ideal of a profoundly positive transformation in Indian society may become a reality.

As responsible adults, it is our duty to safeguard the future not only for the next generation but if possible for all those to come. To quote Mr Baburao Kadam's (Chairman of the Mahatma Gandhi Mission Trust) succinct and eloquent appraisal: "In today's social environment, full of violence, we see the youth meditating and feel very optimistic about the future of our nation. After all, as guardians, there is no better education we can give our students than to teach them the 'art of living.'"

Youth is the future of humankind. May they imbibe the universal Dhamma, keeping themselves away from the sectarian bondages of narrow mindedness, fanaticism, communal frenzies and blind beliefs.

—Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

VIPASSANA AND THE CULTURING OF EMOTIONS

Prof. P.L Dhar

The quality of life that a man leads is primarily governed by the quality of his emotions. One who is full of negative emotions like anger, hatred, fear, lust, avarice etc. always leads a miserable life, and one who is full of positive emotions like friendliness, compassion, love, cheerfulness etc. leads a happy life; and this holds good irrespective of one's wealth, intelligence and social position. The ever-growing conflict and violence in society today, which makes reading of the morning newspaper such a depressing experience, is a consequence of negative emotions running amok. At the root of each despicable act, whether carried out by an isolated individual or collectively by a mob, lies emotional ineptitude - the inability to manage one's feelings. Culturing of the emotions is thus an urgent priority and concerted efforts are therefore being made both to understand the origin of these emotions and the methods to culture them. And this search for methods for the refinement of emotions has naturally led to increasing interest in various ancient oriental practices which are better known by the generic term 'meditation'. In this paper an attempt has been made to present one such meditation practice - Vipassana or Insight meditation - in the perspective of modern scientific studies on emotion.

Scientific Studies on Emotion

Plutchik and Kellerman³ classify the studies on emotion in three domains, viz. the evolutionary, the psycho-physiological and the dynamic or psychoanalytic. Fundamental to the evolutionary view, originally propounded by Charles Darwin, is the postulate that "emotions serve an adaptive role in helping organisms deal with key survival issues posed by the environment"⁴. Thus occurrence of any event, such as a threat by an enemy or loss of a parent, is interpreted based on past memories. This cognition is followed by introspective feelings such as fear or sadness that

we usually think of as emotions.
(See Fig. 1)

The sequence of events related to the development of an emotion⁴

Stimulus/ event	Cognition	Feeling	Behaviour	Effect
Threat by enemy	Danger	Fear	Run	Protection
Loss of parent	Isolation	Sadness	Cry for help	Assistance

Figure 1

As shown in Fig.1, this feeling usually results in an appropriate behaviour which is conducive to "survival". The word emotion refers to this complex chain of reactions which has adaptive value for the individual in dealing with various types of crisis.

The psycho-physiological view of emotions is based on the extensive studies done, especially in the last few decades, on the relationship between emotion and various physiological changes occurring within the organism, the most dramatic of these being the glimpse into the role of complex neural circuitry made possible by modern brain-imaging technologies. Though attempts to identify the precise biological signatures of each emotion have not been fully successful, it is evident that there is a strong relationship between the subjective experience of emotion and changes in the autonomic, neuroendocrine and neurological processes. Further, the physiological changes triggered by these play a key role in providing feedback for amplification and response to emotions⁶.

The third major approach towards the study of emotions is based on the Freudian theory of mental functioning and its later derivatives. It posits that the emotions, which are a part of our biological heritage, are essentially combinations of certain ideas

(thoughts, memories and wishes) intimately associated with the sensations of pleasure and displeasure⁷. The ideas and/or the sensations may be wholly or partly unconscious. These undergo transformation depending on the extent of gratification or its opposite in the life of an individual and the level of psychic maturity and functioning (in psychoanalytic terms: ego development and ego functioning).

These scientific studies have naturally led to a number of approaches at culturing emotions and treating emotional disorders: counselling, chemical (and even surgical) interventions in neural systems and psychotherapy. In contrast, the oriental tradition has preserved a number of techniques to bring about a refinement of emotions by directly controlling and purifying the mind - Vipassana meditation being probably the most powerful of these. It is interesting to understand the 'mechanics' of Vipassana in the light of such scientific studies; but first a brief description of the practice of Vipassana.

Vipassana Meditation

Vipassana, as the very name suggests (the Pāli word *passanā* means to see, to observe), involves a careful observation of all that is happening in the body-mind complex, so that we become aware of the misconceptions about it that are the root cause of all suffering. Careful observation demands alertness and therefore the Buddha, who propounded this technique over 2,500 years ago, called it *Satipaṭṭhāna* - the establishing of mindfulness. The *Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, the discourse expounding the complete details of the practice, describes four foundations of mindfulness, viz. carefully observing the body, the sensations, the mind and the mental contents. It is claimed to be "...the only way...for the purification of beings, for going beyond sorrow and lamentation, for the extinguishing of suffering..."⁸ The technique of Vipassana meditation being taught by Mr S.N. Goenka through the medium of 10-day residential courses is based on this discourse. A very brief description of this training follows.

At the outset, one must undertake to observe certain fundamental moral principles during the course. The first part of the training itself involves focussing attention around the nostrils and observ-

ing by direct experience the natural inflow and outflow of the breath. Step by step, the area of observation is narrowed down so that the concentration is progressively increased and one is able to observe subtler realities which manifest within that area, e.g. the touch of the breath, any sensations felt. This paves the way for the second, and the most important part of the training, viz. *Vedanānupassanā* - non-reactive observation of the sensations occurring throughout the body. Since, as discovered by the Buddha, "whatever arises in the mind is accompanied by sensations"⁹, this observation of sensations provides a means for understanding the true nature of the entire body-mind complex.

With systematic practice one learns through experience that the root cause of emotional ineptitude (and consequent suffering) is our inability to come to terms with the all too obvious fact of its impermanence - *anicca*. And, with the proper practice of Vipassana, i.e. repeated observation of the evanescent somatic sensations and the accompanying thoughts and emotional upsurges - ranging from rage to ecstasy - with a non-reactive impersonal attitude, the instinctive resistance slowly crumbles. One gradually becomes established in this great transforming insight of *anicca*. The entire body-mind phenomenon, which is innately impermanent, can surely not be a source of permanent satisfaction; nor can one have any mastery over it - for it would change at its own sweet will, without my control, without me! A steady practice of Vipassana thus slowly leads to other insights into the true nature of our existence - unsatisfactoriness or *dukkha*, and insubstantiality or *anatta*. Quite naturally, these three insights bring about a deep inner transformation. When everything is 'seen' as transient, sharing, and not greed and avarice, makes sense: for 'things' would slip away anyway. Suffering becomes a common bond which ties us to all in friendliness and compassion. And with no false images to defend, anger, hatred and ill-will just lose their relevance.

Vipassana and the Science of Emotions

Let us now understand, in the light of modern scientific studies, how this practice of Vipassana enables one to achieve the emotional refinement referred

to above. It is interesting to note that a modern variant of the psychoanalytic view explicitly recognizes that emotions are "...complex mental phenomena that include (a) sensations of pleasure and displeasure, or a mixture of the two, and (b) thoughts, memories, and wishes.... either the idea(s) or the pleasant/unpleasant sensation(s), or both may be wholly or partly unconscious."¹⁰ This is in consonance with the central role assigned to sensations in Vipassana meditation. The fundamental insight of the Buddha: "Whatever arises in the mind is accompanied by sensations", in fact, holds the key to integration of all the three modern views on emotion. Thus, Vipassana accepts the role of cognition (evaluation) in the development of emotions as depicted in Fig 1, but with this important additional link between behaviour and cognition, viz. sensations. If a person reacts to the sensations blindly (i.e. instinctively - with craving if these are pleasant, and with aversion, if these are unpleasant), his desires intensify, the emotions run wild and overwhelm reason. Unwholesome acts follow. He suffers himself and inflicts suffering on others. The Buddha calls it ignorance about the true nature of the body-mind complex (Fig. 2). On the other hand, a good meditator, knowing the impermanent nature of sensations, remains equanimous and does not react, thus entrenching this insight into the deeper recesses of the mind. His emotions remain under control and he can now act wisely, maintaining his own happiness and bringing happiness to others.

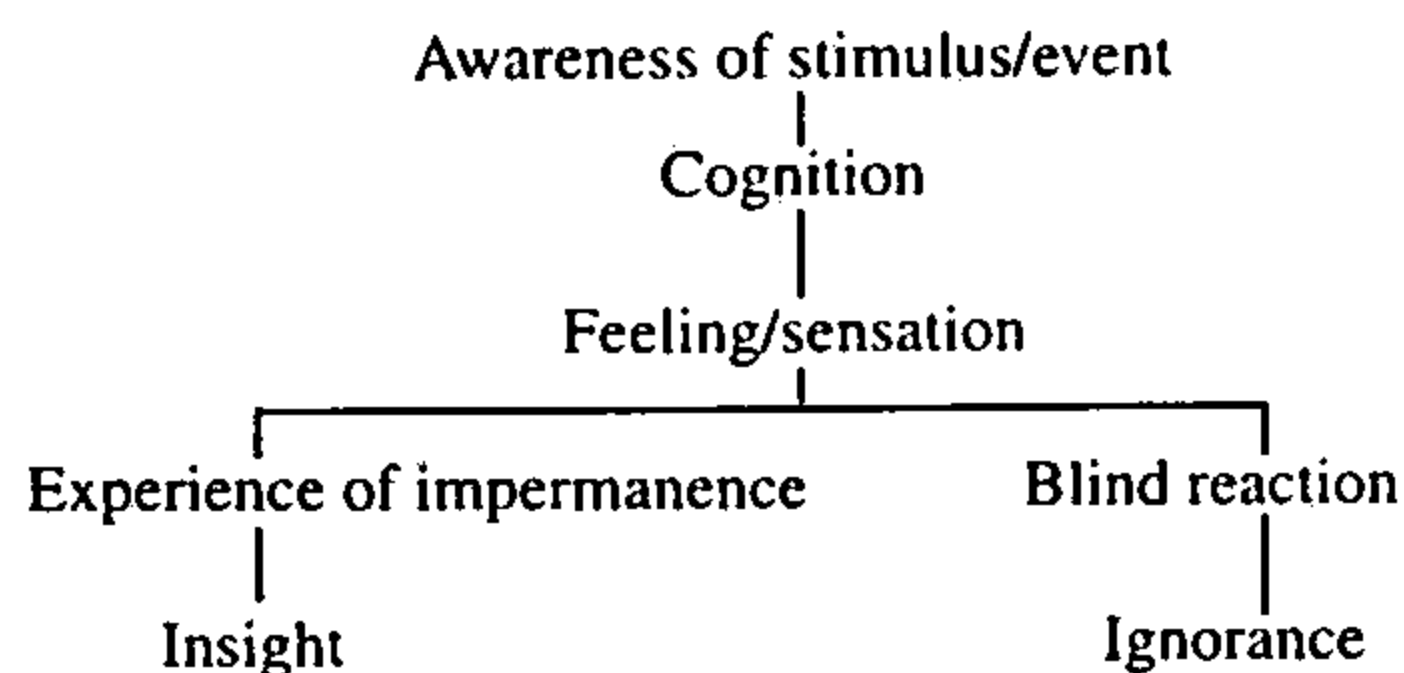


Figure 2

Interaction of beings with surroundings as explained by the Buddha

The importance of sensations in the development of emotions is also recognised by the psycho-

physiological school. Thus, for example, consider the physiological events which are now known to occur in human beings in response to a strong emotion like fear or rage. As described by Gray¹¹, the emergency reaction is due to the sympathetic nervous system acting in conjunction with hormones - adrenaline and - secreted by the endocrine glands (adrenal medulla). Its function is to mobilize the body's resources for a swift action that may be needed. There is an increase in the rate and strength of the heart beat, allowing oxygen to be pumped round more rapidly; contraction of the spleen, releasing stored red blood cells to carry this oxygen; release of stored sugar from the liver for the use of muscles; redistribution of the blood supply from the skin and viscera to the muscles and brain; deepening of respiration and dilation of the bronchi, to take in more oxygen; dilation of the pupils, perhaps to increase visual efficiency; an increase in the blood's ability to seal wounds by coagulating; and a rise in the supply of special blood cells known as 'lymphocytes', whose function is to help repair damage to the tissues.

All these changes, which take place in a matter of seconds or minutes, clearly cause changes in the sensations experienced all over the body. Now, depending on how one responds to these, the emotions would get further amplified or calmed down; for example, a sudden increase of heart beat or deepening of respiration can further induce a variety of emotions like fear, anxiety or anger unless one remains unperturbed knowing these as transitory, in which case the original emotion itself would be soothed (Fig.2). It is interesting to note that the Buddha uses the term "*āsavakkhayā*" (which literally means extinction of flow of 'moral intoxicants')¹² to denote the state of perfection, indicating clearly that as long as impure emotions arise these *āsavas* continue to increase. In view of this psycho-physiological connection, the hormones and other biochemicals secreted when emotions flare up could be equated with the *āsavas* referred to by the Buddha.

Concluding Remarks

As the importance of culturing emotions is being realized by society, numerous approaches have been evolved to institute this process as early in the

life of an individual as possible. Psychologists now emphasize the need for the emotional education of children. Goleman 13 gives details of some attempts done in various schools in the USA in this direction: and the key element in all these attempts is to raise self-awareness about the emotions through various innovative techniques. As Goleman also points out, the mere process of self-awareness has a salutary effect on the emotions, something like the impact of an observer at the quantum level in physics, altering what is being observed¹⁴. Vipassana, which is basically a technique of cultivating mindfulness at a very deep level, could clearly be of great help. It has the additional advantage, over the usual intellectual approaches, that the emotions which are simmering beneath the level of awareness, can be handled effectively through non-reactive observation of the accompanying sensations, even before these gain enough momentum to explode into awareness. Reacting to these sensations blindly the unconscious mind would have continued to intensify the negative emotions, in spite of all intellectual persuasion. By the equanimous observation of these sensations, the unconscious mind gets illuminated with the understanding of impermanence, thus pacifying the emotions at their very root.

¹Plutchik, R and H.Kellerman (Eds) "Emotion-Theory, Research and Experience", Vol.1, Academic Press, 1980.

²Plutchik, R and H.Kellerman(Eds), op cit, p8.

³ibid, p11

⁴Tomkins S.S "Affect as amplification: Some modifications in theory" in Plutchik, R and H.Kellerman (Eds), op cit, Chapter 6.

⁵Brenner, C "A Psychoanalytic theory of affects" in Plutchik, R and H.Kellerman(Eds.), op cit. Chapter 13.

⁶Mahasatipattana Sutta ; Vipassana Research Institute, Igatpuri (Maharashtra), 1994, p3.

⁷Anguttara Nikaya, VIII.ix.3(83), Malaka Sutta

⁸Brenner, C "A Psychoanalytic Theory of Affects", in Plutchik, R and H.Kellerman, op cit, p343.

⁹Gray, J.A. "The Psychology of Fear and Stress", (Second Edition), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987, p55.

¹⁰The Dhammapada, Verse 253, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, Varanasi, 1990.

¹¹Goleman, D op cit., Chapter 16.

¹²Goleman, D, op cit, p xiii.

*Sukha āye nāce nahim
Dukha āye nahim roya
Donom mem samatā rahe
Dharamavanta hai soya.*

Not dancing when pleasure comes,
not wailing when in pain.
Keeping equilibrium with both-
this is living the Dhamma.

—Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

VIPASSANA FOR THE UNDERPRIVILEGED

Amyt Bhatia

A significant development of Dhamma happened in the mid-1990s. More Vipassana courses were regularly organized for disadvantaged groups like street children, the physically impaired, leprosy-afflicted, tribals and juvenile delinquents. Courses in Indian prisons had already taken firm root with Vipassana being introduced to around 15 prisons in the country.

One of the most socially ostracized sections of people have begun to benefit from Dhamma – those afflicted with Hansen's Disease commonly referred to as leprosy. The Acworth Leprosy Home invited Shri S N Goenkaji to teach Vipassana to its patients. In mid-1997, a ten-day residential course was conducted at the Leprosy Home located in a lush green section of Wadala in downtown Mumbai.

Improvisations were made to suit the handicap of students. Some were very enthusiastic about participating in the course but were unable to be out of their beds for long periods. Instructions were relayed to their wards through the public address system.

In following months, two more 10-day courses were arranged at the same place in which many old and new student participated with same seriousness. It has been decided to arrange more 10-day courses with a gap of two or three months as requested by the hospital management.

Inspired after seeing the beneficial results of the course at Acworth Leprosy Home, the Chief Medical Officer of the Home attended the 10-day course at Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri.

That successful course inspired social workers to organize Vipassana courses for more such disadvantaged people. For instance, the management of Kamlaben School for the Blind was very keen that their visually handicapped students benefit from Vipassana. The students were equally supportive and their enthusiasm was backed by a scientific curiosity. This motivated them to attend the course at the cost of missing their vacation and their annual trip to their homes. Soon, a 10-day course was held in Kamlaben

Mehta School for the Blind. 44 students of the institute, all female (aged 5-20), along with 5 of their academic tutors participated in that course. Some of them had totally lost their vision.

Their physical disability neither hampered their spirits nor was a barrier in working hard during the course. Normally, no physical contact is permitted in a Vipassana course. However, the only way the visually handicapped students could find their way around in the newly created environment for the Vipassana course was with the help of fellow students. So the 'no physical contact' rule was relaxed to enable students to form a human chain that would help them occupy their respective seats in Dhamma Hall.

Utmost care was also taken to respect their sensitive feelings regarding their physical handicap. Any such part from the discourses that may have offended their sensibilities or reminded them of their deficiency was carefully deleted.

On the concluding day of the course, a majority of the students honestly confessed that they had not totally observed the rule of noble silence, even if it was just for asking the way to the bathroom. They promised that next time they will retain maximum silence, even though their primary medium of communication is verbal.

Narrating the benefits they got from the Vipassana course, many students said they had broken the habit-pattern of a restless, wandering mind and improved the self-confidence which will be useful in their life. Many said they were convinced they have learnt the technique of developing mental peace while others felt their anger has reduced.

After the technique of *mettā* was given, one student said, "Until now my understanding of word 'friendship' was limited to persons with I can talk or can meet in-person. Now I have learnt this new and unique way of friendship, can share joy, happiness and good wishes with the whole world, beyond all the boundaries! Never thought of it!"

In the session of *mettā*, Goenkaji advised them

not to lose heart for any deficiency in life but to fill their hearts with joy for invaluable jewel of Dhamma which they have received.

Street Children

The one's who have been considered as most receptive towards the teaching of Dhamma are the children who live on the streets. The street children have a strong instinct for survival. This is obvious from their maturity levels and an existence that forces these children to live adult lives.

With the introduction of Anapānā (the preparatory technique for Vipassana) into their lives, these vulnerable children in urban jungles at last have a powerful tool with which they can cope with their extraordinarily difficult lives of daily survival.

Voluntary organizations working with street children like SUPPORT, *Snehasadan* in Mumbai regularly have Anapana courses conducted for their children. Children's course teachers and Dhamma workers regularly go to these institutions to mediate with the children.

There is initial resistance from the children to participate in the Anapana courses. But their suspicions are resolved as Mukta Shrivastava, a Vipassana mediator and coordinator of SUPPORT tells them, "Don't think we adults are different from you. We too get depressed, have bad thoughts, are addicted to various things. This technique will teach you to be happy

wherever you are." An article in the Times of India, Mumbai (October 5, 1995), on Anapana courses for street children quoted Shrivastava saying that a new approach was needed to grapple with the "tempestuous, self-destructive mind of the street child". Anapana provides that new approach.

Once the hardened minds of the street child begins experiencing the benefits of Dhamma, they turn very enthusiastic. Some like Santosh have even successfully completed 10-day Vipassana courses in Dhamma Giri! Santosh, formerly a drug addict and prone to violence once said, "Some people wrongly say that children like us only need food and not meditation. But can food help us come out of anger and our bad habits? Meditation does."

Observers have noted that these children, after regular practice of Anapana, "become less violent gradually. Their play time is less tense and their games are more amicable."

This feeling of friendliness towards builds up after a course even as hatred dissipates and gives way to loving kindness. But the benefits can only be accrued when there is continued practice along with high degree of follow-up action on part of their institutions with help from Vipassana meditators around them. If this doesn't happen, there is a very high chance of the children turning back to their old, harmful and dangerous habits of street life again.

*Jyom ikalote pūta para
umade maṃ kā pyāra
Tyom pyārā lagatā rahe
hamem sakala sansāra.*

As a mother overflows with love
for her only son,
may we keep generating compassionate love
for all beings in the Universe.

—Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

VIPASSANA COURSES IN PRISONS

Raja. M

*'In this world
Animosity has never dispelled animosity.
It is only dispelled by compassionate love.
This is the law,
Ancient and inexhaustible.'*

- The Dhammapada

1975. Central Jail, Jaipur, Rajasthan

"..Mr. Goenka was allowed to stay in the jail in a makeshift room in the jail dispensary. At that time, ankle locks and handcuffs were used for hardened criminals. Four such hardened prisoners were brought into the meditation hall bound in these iron handcuffs and ankle locks. When he saw this, Mr Goenka was amazed. I told him these were hardened criminals. He exclaimed, 'How can people in chains be put before me? This cannot happen. Remove the chains !'"

Mr Ram Singh, Vipassana teacher, then the Home Secretary of the State of Rajasthan, narrated this as witness to an historic moment in the annals of prison reform. After millennia, the mind-purification technique of Vipassana had, at last, reached one of the most miserable sections of society. Convicts, undertrials, hardened criminals who participated in that Vipassana course received the key to liberation from chains even more shackling than those around their limbs - the chain of the habit-pattern of the mind to generate negativities like anger, hatred and ill-will.

"Jails are actually meant to bring people out of their misery, out of their mistakes", explains Principal Vipassana Teacher, Mr S.N. Goenka. "I am glad that Vipassana has started working in prisons. This will certainly be a great example for the entire world - how prisons should be maintained, and how the prison inmates get rehabilitated, so that when they come out, they will become an asset to society and not a liability. And Vipassana works here because Vipassana works and purifies at the root level of the mind, where the habit-pattern for criminal, anti-social behaviour is formed".

1994. Tihar Jail, New Delhi

Two Vipassana students from Israel - well-known film-makers Ayelet Menahemi and Eilona Ariel - became the first media personnel to be given access to maximum-security zones in one of the world's largest prisons. Their documentary film, 'Doing Time, Doing Vipassana' is an eloquent story of how deeply Vipassana had made beneficial in-roads into even the most condemned of human beings - murderers, terrorists, rapists, ruthless gangsters.

By now Tihar Jail has established a Vipassana centre within its very imposing walls. Thanks to the great efforts by the then Inspector-General of Prisons, Ms. Kiran Bedi, her colleagues and successors, the centre called 'Dhamma Tihar', now regularly conducts two Vipassana courses a month for jail inmates. Voluntary workers (Dhamma servers) for the courses are inmates who have done a Vipassana course and now serve to enable fellow-prisoners to get the same opportunity they received.

In the nine years since the historic first course in Jaipur, Vipassana had spread like a quiet wildfire to prisons across the country - the States of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka,

Bihar and Haryana followed Rajasthan and Delhi. In a New Delhi meeting of Inspector-Generals of Prisons in India, it was recommended that Vipassana be introduced as a prison reform measure in jails throughout the land. This decision was influenced by hearing innumerable personal accounts of the transformation in mental attitudes, not only amongst prisoners but also jail officials, after undertaking a Vipassana course.

There were many like Arvind Sanghavi, a criminal of 30 years notoriety, who did a Vipassana course and after his release astonished prison officials by going straightaway to 'Dhamma Thali' - the Jaipur Vipassana centre, to offer serve voluntarily in Vipassana courses.

There are even more touching instances like that of Babu Bhaya, a hardened criminal convicted for

killing three people in five minutes. After his Vipassana course in Baroda Jail, Babu Bhaya was so filled with remorse that he pleaded for forgiveness from his victims' families. In 1992, on the day of 'Raksha Bandhan' (an Indian festival to strengthen bonds between a brother and sister), the wife and sister of a man he killed came to the Jail and tied the sacred 'Rākhi' string around Bhaya's wrist. They had accepted him as their brother.

Says Babu Bhaya: "I only had hatred for people and had always had feelings of anger, of revenge. But after the Vipassana course, I have changed. Now all I feel is feelings of compassion, of sympathy for people."

Such a dramatic change in mental attitudes amongst prisoners inspired extraordinary courses like the retreat for more than 1,000 inmates in Tihar Jail. This course in 1994, conducted by Mr Goenka himself, is the largest single Vipassana course to be held in modern times.

A study conducted under the aegis of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, on Vipassana students inside Tihar Jail, reports, "the statistical analysis has revealed significant improvement in the functioning of inmates on most psychological parameters studied. There has been considerable reduction in the neurotic predisposition, hostility and feelings of helplessness reported by the prisoners; while the sense of hope and well-being were enhanced following Vipassana courses."

These beneficial results were obviously not the product of some miracle or the effect of some supernatural power. Inmates who worked hard in practising Vipassana correctly and ardently benefited like any other Vipassana student outside the prison walls. As Mustafa, an African student inside Tihar Jail puts it, "Change does not come the easy way. Change takes time... I'm not telling you I did a Vipassana course and Bam! - anger, my quick temper completely went out at one time. It's still subsiding, subsiding, subsiding..."

1996. Central Jail, Nashik, Maharashtra

In the eleven years since the first prison course, Vipassana has taken a firm root in Indian prisons. After a visit to Nashik prison, the Deputy Chief Minister of

Maharashtra, Mr Gopinath Munde, declared that every prison in the State conduct Vipassana courses.

Soon afterwards, Nashik Central Jail was officially declared a Dhamma centre like Tihar Jail. Two courses are held there every month.

The notorious Yerwada Prison in the city of Pune too, shortly followed suit. A special course was organized for foreign inmates of the prison. The course was conducted by foreign Vipassana assistant teachers and served by foreign Dhamma servers. After the course,

Josef, a Czech inmate convicted for 20 years on drug charges, said: "I had been practising many forms of meditation techniques. But none of them took me to the depths of my mind like Vipassana does. With Vipassana, prisons need no longer be called the 'University of Crime'."

Great care is taken to see that both prison and Vipassana rules are strictly followed during courses in prisons. A set of careful guidelines for Vipassana courses in prisons has been established. The prison authorities set aside a self-contained area of the prison for the Vipassana course, and this area is insulated from the rest of the prison for the entire duration of the course. While the local Vipassana Trust provides the teachers, teaching material and Dhamma servers, the prison authorities provide the necessities for the prisoners. As with Vipassana courses outside prisons, absolutely no fee is charged for undertaking a Vipassana course.

On the tenth day of the course, the *mettā day*, when the vow of noble silence is broken, a special function is sometimes arranged in the afternoon within the jail premises. Other prisoners, prison officials, local dignitaries and the media gather to hear the experiences of inmates who have just finished the Vipassana course. This is usually a very emotional and moving experience.

"It actually changed people", says Ms. Kiran Bedi. "It made the prisoners weep. It made them cry. They had realized what life actually could be. They had looked within. And within themselves they had seen the feeling of revenge, anger, the disrespect and hurt they had caused to parents and society; and they wept. And they wanted to be different".

On this day when the silence is broken, one of

the most fervent requests from inmates who had just finished the course, is that the jail authorities provide them with the facility to enable them to continue practising Vipassana daily. This daily, regular practice and segregation from other still-hardened fellow prisoners has been found to be essential for the mental rehabilitation of inmates.

The Vipassana seeds of profound change within the prisons of the world have been sown. Those from within the same walls are the first to recognize the deep significance of Vipassana courses in jails. David, a Canadian inmate of Tihar Jail and a Vipassana student, is quoted in the film, 'Doing Time, Doing Vipassana': "This is history in the making, you

know....this is the first chance where Vipassana is being used in a prison system to possibly reform people.... this could reform the whole prison system in the entire planet..."

At present, over 50 Vipassana courses are being conducted annually within Indian prisons. A special Vipassana course was recently held for drug addicts within Tihar Jail. Requests for Vipassana courses from prison authorities across the country are increasing. Work is in progress to conduct Vipassana courses in jails in other countries also.

May all beings be liberated!

Not only within these four walls but even outside this jail, everyone is a prisoner – a prisoner of his or her own unwholesome habit pattern of the mind. Verily, this imprisonment is more torturous than this walled prison.

—Sayagyi S.N.Goenka

BREAKING THE SHACKLES OF BONDAGE

Tarsem Kumar

Criminologists, psychologists, sociologists and law-makers all over the world have long been storming their brains to find out ways and means to transform the criminals and to transform the prisons from being houses of punishment into temples of rehabilitation. Imprisonment, whether of short or long duration is always associated with social stigma. To the offender, imprisonment is a reminder of his crime and of his past and implies punishment in terms of separation from his family and society.

The Vipassana meditation practice has an important role to play in making the person able to keep mental equilibrium.

I have seen many a prisoner coming to jail and going out, and I can very well establish that those who had done four or more ten-day Vipassana Meditation Courses are a changed lot. Their family members have also testified their permanent reformation.

The main objective of modern penology is to rehabilitate and reintegrate prisoners as responsible members of the society and Vipassana has come out to be a powerful tool in reforming them.

Most crimes originate from a diseased and disturbed mind. The criminals seldom find an opportunity in the prison to get relief from these tensions and, throughout their incarceration, they continue to be under constant stress and strain. Vipassana meditation Course was first organised at Central Jail No. 2, Tihar in 1993 with the keen initiative of Ms Kiran Bedi, the then I.G. (Prisons), to give the inmates an opportunity to find a way to free themselves from the tension and to involve them in constructive activities, to make them useful citizens of their motherland.

Encouraged by the positive results of the first meditation course and rising demand from the pris-

oners to organise more such meditation courses; five courses were organised in 1994 in all the four jails. The remarkable change in prison inmates and their enthusiasm for more courses led to establishment of permanent Vipassana centre in Tihar jail in Ashram no. 4. Goenkaji named it "Dhamma Tihar". Two Vipassana courses a month are being held in Dhamma Tihar. Many 10-day courses for the women prisoners have also been organised.

Not only prisoners but staff members have also benefited from the Vipassana meditation course and Tihar jail sends its security staff and officers to attend course in Delhi and Jaipur regularly.

The feeling among Prison inmates for taking revenge and violence has lessened, their frequency and intensity of anger has reduced, their urge for smoking and chewing tobacco has considerably reduced. Many of them have even quit smoking completely. The staff members who have undergone the course have also been more cordial in dealing with the prisoners and are having more compassion for inmates.

I have also undergone 10-day mediation course in Jaipur along with my wife Alpana and have experienced inner peace and equanimity.

The present I.G. (Prisons) Shri R. S. Gupta has also shown a keen interest in continuation of Vipassana Meditation. The first ever 10-days Vipassana mediation course for detoxified prisoners in Jail No 3 in November 1996 and a course for women prisoners in Jail No. 1 in the month of August 1997 showed his concern for using Vipassana meditation as a tool in reforming the prisoners.

I hope Dhamma Tihar continues to benefit the prison inmates for a long, long time.

VIPASSANA IS NON-SECTARIAN

Usha Modak

Vipassana is a non-sectarian and scientific technique of meditation. It can be practised by one and all belonging to any country, caste or creed and coming from all walks of life.

It is a technique of purifying the mind, deconditioning the mind of its defilements by self-observation and introspection. It is an effort to change the habit-pattern of the mind, which very often reacts blindly either with craving or aversion. The effort is experiential and this is the unique feature of this technique. We must make the effort ourselves, walk the path ourselves. Someone else cannot do it for us; nor can we achieve it through intellectualization or through mere blessings of a guru.

The so-called organized religions merely preach moral ideas, rites, rituals and blind beliefs. To protect their religion we see so much conflict and violence, where people of one sect kill people of another sect, burning temples, destroying churches, dargahs, mosques and all this in the name of religion. The repeated communal riots in our country are a typical example of lack of basic moral values and lack of harmony in religions. The essence of true Dharma is lost. "Dhamma" is a Pāli word for Dharma. Dhamma is universal. It can never be sectarian. Sects divide, Dhamma unites. Dhamma is the Law of Nature which governs the entire universe, both animate and inanimate objects.

It is through the regular practice of Vipassana meditation that one really begins to get established in true Dhamma.

Dhamma wants us not to kill, not to steal, not to tell lies, not to engage in sexual misconduct and not to get intoxicated - the five basic precepts, "*sīla*", that a Vipassana meditator is required to observe meticulously. One cannot work to liberate oneself from defilements if at the same time one continues to harm others or perform deeds of body and speech which will only multiply these defilements. Hence the code of morality - *sīla* - forms the basic foundation of this technique of Vipassana Dhamma.

As Goenkaji explains, at the surface level, these laws are actually laws of society because they contribute to the peace and harmony of the entire community. But when you start practising Vipassana, deep inside, you understand that every time you break any of these precepts, even before you harm others you have started harming yourself. You cannot kill without generating a lot of anger or hatred in your mind and you become miserable, agitated and lose your peace of mind. Similarly, every precept broken creates agitation in the mind and makes one miserable. This is the Law of Nature. Hence morality is to be practised, not for society but for its own sake, to prevent oneself from becoming miserable. This is Dhamma, which is universal.

The next step is *samādhi* in the practice of Vipassana Dhamma. Its purpose is to achieve some mastery over our unruly mind by focussing attention on our natural and normal breath (not controlled or regulated breath as in *prāṇāyāma*). This is called "*Ānāpāna-sati*". There is no verbalization, no recitation of a name or mantra, no visualization of a God or Goddess; just observation of natural and normal breath as it comes in and goes out. This can be practised by anyone be they Hindu, Muslim or Christian or Jain. Breath is again universal, present in every being.

This takes us to the next step of *Paññā* (wisdom) purifying the mind of defilements by developing insight into one's own nature. We observe how mind and matter work, how they interact and manifest in the form of sensations. We observe these ever-changing sensations within ourselves in a systematic and dispassionate way. This is the process of self-purification through self-observation and introspection. This again can be practised by a person belonging to any sect.

So, in all these three aspects in the practice of Vipassana Dhamma - *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā* - Dhamma is universal.

Vipassana is taught in ten-day residential

courses. It is a very demanding course requiring the student to observe noble silence and follow strict rules. There are ten hours of meditation daily, with instructions given periodically and with Goenkaji's discourse in the evening, explaining and clarifying the technique.

Vipassana does not teach any dogma or creed which creates barriers and divisions between communities. In the name of religion, we have shackled ourselves in golden chains of meaningless rites and rituals. The essence of true Dhamma is performing acts of body, speech and mind with a pure heart, full of compassion. Then it doesn't matter what clothes we wear, what rites and rituals we perform, what beliefs we hold or do not hold. Today our minds are so full of anger, hatred, greed and delusion that we have lost the essence of true religion and cling to empty husks of religious practices. To make matters worse, we quarrel and argue over them. Religion has degenerated into sectarianism. This prevents us from self-examination, introspection into the impurities of our minds and from making efforts to eradicate these impurities.

As Goenkaji rightly points out, the problem is not sectarian, therefore the remedy cannot be sectarian. It must be universal. Everyone faces the problem of mental impurities. It is not Hindu anger or greed, or Muslim anger or greed, or Buddhist anger or greed. The malady is universal. The remedy must also be universal.

Vipassana is such a remedy. No one will object to practising morality, getting some mastery over the mind and developing insight into one's own reality by which it is possible to free the mind of its negativities. No one is asked to convert from one sect to another. In Goenkaji's words, "If at all there is any conversion it is from misery to happiness, from defilement to purity, from bondage to liberation, from ignorance to enlightenment". It is a conversion to becoming a better person.

The spread of Vipassana, and the practice of Vipassana Dhamma at all levels of society, will liberate each one of us to the best of our abilities and ca-

pacities and to that extent it will promote the good and happiness of humanity.

India is a secular State. Here public institutions such as schools, universities are not allowed to advocate any particular religion. However, this policy of the State has contributed to a decline in moral values and standards. Students are no longer given any training in these values by their teachers and their parents are unsure as to what to give them in this regard.

Under the garb of secularism, the State is trying to promote national integration and maintain peace and harmony among people of different religions. But repeatedly we see their differences erupting like volcanic lava, at times taking monstrous shapes and forms, causing a great deal of suffering in a world already brimming with tensions and anxieties of all kinds.

"*Ānāpāna-sati*" and the basic precepts offered in schools can play an important role in imparting basic moral values and harmony among different religious groups. There have been very positive experiences in schools where Vipassana meditation is offered on a regular basis. It helps to broaden young people's outlook in life and lay the foundations for national integration when they become grown-up citizens. It will also strengthen secularism. In addition, the problem of drugs and intoxication in schools and colleges will be eradicated if Vipassana meditation becomes part and parcel of their curriculum.

A young boy writes in his comments on meditation experience that he was happy to see children of different religions coming to this course. He says, "I performed *sādhana* (practice) with full interest and wrong thoughts and wrong things vanished from my mind like thin air. Here, Goenkaji treats every religion equally. According to me, this is the best way of national unity."

So Vipassana, with its universal approach, rises above all sectarian religions of the world and promotes national and emotional integration. This takes place not by some cosmetic surgery on the surface but deep at the roots of the problem, in the mind and heart of each individual.

MY WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE OF VIPASSANA

Yuvācārya Dr Shiv Muni

The fundamental teachings of Bhagawān Mahāvīra can be defined very briefly in two words—equanimity and awareness (*samatā and jāgarūkatā*). The essence of code and conduct of a Jaina monk lies in five-fold consciousness (*samiti*), i.e. watchfulness in walking, watchfulness in speaking, watchfulness in eating, watchfulness in taking up and setting down, watchfulness in excreting, and three forms of self-control (*gupti*), i.e. control of mind, control of body and control of speech. One can follow all these vows by doing Vipassana meditation. It becomes very easy to follow all rules of conduct with the practice of Vipassana.

Bhagwān Mahāvīra's *mettā bhāvanā* is very practical in Vipassana meditation (*Mitti me sabba bhūtesu veram majjham na ke ñai*). All beings in this world are my friends. All are equals. There is no enmity towards anybody. In the words of Mahāvīra, “*Appā so paramappa*”, you are your own God. As Lord Buddha says, “*Attā hi attano nātho*”, you are your own master. One can understand the feelings of godhood while practising Vipassana.

I am fortunate that I received Vipassana *sādhana* in May 1984 at Jaipur under the kind guidance of Dr Savla, Shri Ram Singh and Pūjya Gurudev Acarya Shri Satya Narayan Goenkaji. I took *śramanic dīkṣā* and became Jaina Muni in May 1972. I have read many holy scriptures, did Ph.D. but was not able to know how to do meditation practically. I had keen desire to do meditation courses. Thanks to Shri Harish Bader and Shri Kushal Bader from whom I came to know about Vipassana meditation and did four courses at Jaipur.

In these four Vipassana courses, I realized and felt so wonderfully what is *mettā bhāvanā* (*Maitrī bhāvanā*), sense of awareness and equanimity that it is beyond my words to describe. How noble silence

works for deepening meditation is remarkable. I realized and felt the truth within myself through Vipassana. I too realized to follow the teachings and practices of monkhood (*municaryā*) without any outside restrictions or bondage that comes from the heart inside as water comes from the well inside.

I become introvert from extrovert. My life changed as attachment and aversion (*rāga-dveṣa*) go out naturally through observing sensation and remaining calm and aware, knowing the condition of subtle and subtler sensations. It is really meditation of awareness and equanimity (*samatā and jāgarūkatā*).

Vipassana is the most ancient, delicate and powerful meditation of India. It was practised and propounded by Gotama the Buddha. It aims at the highest goal of full liberation and enlightenment. Vipassana means to see things as they really are.

Vipassana teaches how one can remain equanimous and aware at every moment in life. It is an art of living. It is really the meditation of *satya dharma* (True Dhamma). In other words, to be free from all the sufferings of the world, and to realize truth within oneself. One can attain bliss only searching, analysing inside all subtle sensations and remaining with equanimity.

As Dr Emerson says: “What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters as compared to what lies within us”.

Vipassana unfolds the hidden reality of truth by observing continuous sensations of mind and body. The ultimate peace can be attained by conquering attachment and aversion. This Vipassana meditation is powerful for self-purification and self-realization. Many many regards to Acarya Shri Goenkaji for contributing real *dharma* to whole humanity. In this scientific age Vipassana is very powerful to give peace, bliss and power to mankind.

THE PATH IS ONE

Muni Bhuvanachandra

The goal of the spiritual aspirant can be summed up in a few words like these: be free from all the bondages, miseries and impurities, to be established in freedom, bliss and purity. There are so many paths aiming at this sublime state. In India there is a multiplicity of such theories and practices which give results to more or less extent.

Vipassana is one ancient way of spiritual practice – a forgotten discipline of ancient India. It has arisen again in the spiritual sky of the modern world at such a time when mankind has reached a state of degradation in almost all walks of life. Our planet seems to be on the verge of devastation ecologically, politically, ethically and most of all, spiritually. The resurgence of Vipassana at such a disturbed time is a wonderful natural phenomenon like a lightning, shining amidst dark clouds.

Vipassana meditation is not some occult practice or a religious ritual. It is a noble path leading to liberation. It is a holistic way of life. The path consists of three divisions: *Sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*. *Sīla* [morality] takes care of the ethical. *Samādhi* [concentration of the mind] is an internal discipline and exercise which strengthens one's mind so that one can venture into the reality pertaining to one's own self. The third part – *Paññā* [wisdom] enables the seeker to realize the truth. Vipassana is a technique to develop wisdom. Without the former two, realization is out of the question.

India was and still is rich in spiritual thinking and practices; some working on *sīla*, others on *samādhi*, a few on *paññā*. We can say that Vipassana is an advanced course of spiritual practice. A seeker may start from anywhere, but he has to come to the last step of self-realization. The highest state of realization is defined as 'just to be'. It is described as 'going nowhere, doing nothing.' This truth is reverberated in the exhortations of the great seers and thinkers from every tradition and of every century. This is the reason why a student of Vipassana finds the proc-

ess consistent with the essence of one's own tradition. In fact every spiritual system worth the name of it speaks of the ultimate state in terms like 'Just to be.' How closely Vipassana resembles the teachings of great saints is presented well by Goenkaji in his discourses.

One such ancient Indian tradition is Jainism. Its last proponent, Bhagawān Mahāvīra was a contemporary of Bhagawān Buddha. These two *s'hraman* traditions are amazingly similar in their outer as well as inner aspects. These similarities lead the pioneers of oriental studies to an erroneous conclusion that these both were one and the same. The language, the style, the code of conduct, the monastic order of both have much in common; the theoretical side of both the traditions also agree on most points.

When it comes to the practical side of Dhamma, we find a striking similarity within these two traditions. In Jainism we find four gradually deep going steps of Dhamma, namely *Dāna*, *sīla*, *tapa* and *bhāva*. Here the first two are just the same as *Aṭṭhaṅgika maggo*. *Tapa* includes various exercises that help establish mastery over one's body and mind. *Bhāva* is purification of mind. One can easily detect the compatibility of these with the Noble Path taught by the Buddha.

There are ten *s'hraman* – *dhammas* one must develop for one's liberation, which are called ten *pāramitās* in the Buddhist tradition. *Pañca sīla* here are five *Anuvratas* [precepts] with a slight difference. There prevails among Jains a practice named *sāmāyika*. Although now it is reduced to a mere ritual, this practice originally was meant for developing equanimity. And there is meditation called '*kaussagga*', which literally means 'abandoning one's body.' In *kaussagga*, a student vows to remain still, bodily as well as mentally, unflinching towards bodily sensations. He also observes his own respiration, with his attention fixed on the fore part of the nose.

There are four types of *Jhānas*, two to be discarded, two to be cultivated. *Dhammajhāna* is an analysis of the universe, the structure of the universe, the fruition of karmas, the misery; all within one's body and on the experiential level. The fourth *Jhāna-shuklajhāna* is an analysis of thought. The laymen and *bhikkhus* are expected to have *mettā* for all living beings. They are also told to remain aware day and night.

The pinnacle of spiritual progress is a state where only knowledge remains. A student is advised to be a witness, to be a knower, not a doer. To observe the reality manifesting itself from moment to moment and remaining equanimous is the essence of Vipassana. And this is the gist also of the teaching of Bhagawān Mahāvīra –

Nāṭitamaṭṭhaṃ ṇaya āgamissaṃ,

*Aṭṭhaṃ ṇiyachchhanti tathāgayā tu;
Vidhūta kappe' e'yāṇupassī,
Nijhosaitta khavage' maheṣī.*

Ācārāṅga 3/3/117

'The followers of ...do not think of the objects in the past, nor do they contemplate the objects in the future, shaking off the imagination or convention and constantly observing 'this', these great meditators exhaust all the karmas.'

We find such similarity in every serious spiritual system because the truth is one, the intrinsic nature of Dhamma is one, the path of liberation is one, '*Ekāyano maggo*.'

Let us walk on the path! May all the people of the world awake and appreciate the path! May all avail themselves of Dhamma!

May all be happy!

*Hindu ho yā Baudha ho, Muslim ho yā Jain
Jisane mana maila kiya wahi huā bechain*

One may be a Hindu or a Buddhist, a Muslim or a Jain,
if one defiles the mind one is bound to become miserable.

—Sayagi S.N.Goenka

*Hindu ho yā Baudha ho, Muslim ho yā Jain
Jisane mana nirmala kiya waha bhoge sukh chain*

One may be a Hindu or a Buddhist, a Muslim or a Jain,
if one purifies one's mind, one is bound to enjoy peace and harmony.

—Sayagi S.N.Goenka

GROWING IN GOODWILL AND EQUANIMITY

Father Lawrence

Recently I attended a Vipassana course in Dalhousie, India, given by Mr. Goenka, or Goenkaji as we lovingly called him. Goenka is a Burmese Buddhist of Indian Marwari stock, whose family is engaged in business in Bombay. The man himself is the most persuasive evidence of the efficacy of the course he gives, as not so long ago his own teacher turned him from an arrogant, irascible, migraine-plagued man into what he is today: gentle, patient, compassionate and educated. True it is that he is a very wealthy man, but he no longer is attached to riches. His brothers care for the business in Bombay. Goenka himself takes not a paisa in fees, and pays his own travel and course expenses. More important still, he gives all his time and himself to pass on the treasures he has discovered.

The aim of the course

This is certainly not to make the whole world Buddhist but to make everyone who submits to the discipline of the course a better human being with the assistance of whatever religious beliefs he may already hold, or even without them. Drug addicts, alcoholics, depressives and others troubled in various ways, in growing numbers gratefully attest to the efficacy of the course. And if, happily, one goes to it in peace, one emerges with that peace deepened and strengthened. And this, mind you, not by exhortation, but through the technique.

The course is based on the enlightenment of the Buddha, which is:

- a. the universality of suffering
- b. craving as the root of suffering
- c. detachment as the remedy for craving and suffering and
- d. technique to acquire detachment.

This made me want to run away in the beginning.

Technique

This is divided into three parts:

1. *Sīla* or morality, corresponding to our Ten Com-

mandments.

2. *Samādhi* or concentration, a mental discipline which has much in common with yoga; the student learns to develop the faculty of attention.

3. *Paññā* or wisdom which is acquired through "Vipassana," that is, seeing things, good or bad, in their true light, as all transient. Vipassana is Buddhist Meditation properly so called.

The intention to be moral is taken for granted, and the course starts at once with *samādhi*, training the mind to be attentive to one event only at a time; concentration of the mind is the aim, and not going into trance. So the *first day* is devoted to sitting and keeping the attention as far as possible without distraction on the breath as it enters and leaves the nostrils. On the *second day*, the attention is directed to the "feel" of the breath inside the nose. On the *third day* one seeks and concentrates on whatever sensation, pulse, throb, cold, heat etc. may be felt in the area just below the nostrils. On the *fourth and all subsequent days*, one gradually passes over the whole body, first in parts, then in larger parts, and finally the body as a whole. In this survey of the body, an attempt is made to note whatever sensations there may be, gross or subtle, pleasant or unpleasant, and look at them with equanimity in the knowledge that they are all transient, as is the very "self" that is observing them. Because this psychology is so basic - mind affects body, and body affects mind - the technique works, and at last the beginnings of a new peace appear. Thus for instance, any sensation of excessive joy at the possession of fame or wealth, or depression at their absence, returns to normal as we reflect on the impermanence of these things. So if we were to lose them, we would not be plunged into despair; and if we should acquire them, we would not lose our heads.

One can conceive of the technique as a hoop of goodwill and equanimity which one passes over the body, up and down many times, noting the sensations

en route, nodding at them as it were, and then passing on. Scientists tell us that if one has a rod of silver with impurities in it, and one passes over it again and again with a ring of pure silver, the rod itself becomes purified - they cannot tell us why this happens, nor do we know why the ring of goodwill cleanses our spirit - but both practices do work.

Deeper and continued meditation will eventually result in our noting not only those sensations that

are connected with our conscious mind, but eventually those connected with the subconscious and even unconscious mind; and so we are never overtaken by any surprise; our wisdom grows, and with it, our love and compassion for all mankind. This technique is not meant for nuns and monks only - all suffer, all need it, all can acquire it, and live it in any walk of life.

October 1972.

Dhamma is munificent in the beginning, Dhamma is munificent in the middle, Dhamma is munificent in the end.

Dhamma, i.e., *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*, is munificent and beneficial in its entire path for anyone walking on it by practising it. Every step taken on the path of Dhamma gives healthy, wholesome results here and now; no step, no effort taken on the path is wasted.

— Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

MENTAL YOGA

Mother Mary

For some time I had known that a ten-day intensive Vipassana course would be given in Dalhousie by a Buddhist Guru (master). After receiving the necessary permission,* Mother Declan and myself and a Capuchin Father attended this course. Mr Goenka, the teacher, is a former wealthy industrialist from Bombay who has a wife and six children. He has prepared himself for this teaching during 14 years of study and practice, and a few years ago began to teach this technique full-time.

This technique is very difficult to explain; one must live it to really understand it. For a successful ten-day intensive Vipassana meditation course, it is absolutely essential to observe the Five Precepts to provide a moral basis. The Five Precepts are: 1. not to kill [not even an insect]; 2. not to steal; 3. not to indulge in sexual misconduct; 4. not to tell lies; 5. not to take intoxicants. For us, that was not too difficult to observe. Six of us were Indians, out of a group of 110; all the others were Americans, Australians, Canadians, Japanese, Italians, French, etc., the majority of them youngsters between 20 and 35 years of age.

The first four days of meditation we concentrated solely on our breathing. For twelve and a half hours a day, it is the rhythm of our respiration which is the sole object of our concentration and, believe me, it is hard. Often we had the temptation to run away. After four days, or even before, a very particular sensation is felt below the nose and on the upper lip.

When this sensation arises, one is ready for the second - and by far the most important - phase of the meditation course: it is called "Vipassana meditation". This time the concentration is not on the respiration, but on all the parts of the body from head to foot. Very intensive concentration is essential; slowly you become aware of different sensations, feelings in the whole of the body - some very acute, some painful, some lighter - until it becomes like a flow of heat, like a continuous movement of atoms, which produces

vibrations in the whole body. People who have taken this course two or three or five or eight times may be able to detect vibrations in others. A kind of radiation takes place from person to person, which is a scientific fact today.

But what is the significance of Vipassana in our ordinary life, and why are there so many, youngsters especially, from all the corners of the world, so keen to follow this course ?

In this age of economic development in the world, the responsibilities of people are increasing. The changes in social and economic patterns are rapidly increasing the tensions in the minds of people associated with these changes. This mental tension takes a heavy toll on the physical health of the people. To escape this state of mental tension many youngsters have become alcoholics or drug addicts. If only they could find peace - mental equilibrium, self-discipline. Vipassana helps one to regain mental peace. As a consequence of this intensive concentration, the mind becomes clearer, purer, the attention becomes so sharp that it reaches the subconscious, makes us discover the cause of our dissatisfaction, our frustration; the cause of our sentiments of anger, hatred, bitterness, envy; the cause of all that is in us that is a source of evil. It helps us to look at all these things in a detached way, as if they are happening outside us; and having analysed them, they slowly lose their acuteness and disappear. Having our minds on the alert, Vipassana helps us to control our thoughts or our sentiments of envy, hatred, bitterness, lust and to replace them by sentiments of love and compassion. Vipassana helps us to keep peace, and equanimity and to radiate them around us. It helps us to be detached, to be free in a kind of holy indifference which leads us to perfect liberation.

This course is not based on any creed, as Mr Goenka told us; it is a technique which, well-understood, and continued in daily life for about two hours a day, helps to develop in us all our potentialities, helps us to become a better Christian, a better Hindu,

a better Muslim or a better Buddhist. It helps us to radiate Love and Compassion, to wish for the happiness of the whole world. All the students who followed the course parted with a smile, saying: "Good bye, be happy."

(Mother Mary is Mother Superior of a convent school in Dalhousie)
October 1972.

* When the higher authorities of their Roman Catholic Order were convinced that the teaching of Vipassana is non-sectarian and is good for one and all, permission to attend the course was granted. Mother Mary, Mother Declan and Father Lawrence were the first Christian leaders and teachers to undertake Vipassana practice. This opened the gate for hundreds of Christian priests and nuns to join Vipassana courses.

A Hindu who learns Vipassana may continue to call himself a Hindu; a Muslim a Muslim, and so too a Jain, a Christian, a Buddhist.... The important thing is to become a good person, living a happy and harmonious life. Dhamma helps everyone to become a good human being.

— *Sayagyi S.N.Goenka*

‘KNOW THYSELF’: MY EXPERIENCE OF VIPASSANA

Sr. Vinaya - Christian Sister and Assistant Teacher of Vipassana

I did my first course in 1978, after being inspired by some lectures in Bangalore by Fr. Anthony de Mello - one of the first Christian priests in India to take a Vipassana course. The ten days in Dhamma Giri changed my life and gave it a new dimension.

While doing the work of integrating Indian culture with Christianity, certain conflicts arose within me. I found myself doing certain actions which I believed to be good for the community at large, but deep inside left me feeling unconvinced. The penetrating insight of Vipassana helped me to get to the root of such conflicts and resolve them. The result was I could do my work with greater harmony within. There was a sense of peace that was not there before. Vipassana had helped me break the walls, the barriers that separated me from knowing my inner self.

‘Know thyself’, is a saying familiar to Christians. My experience with Vipassana is that this is the actual technique, the scientific, practical path using which one can get to know oneself better and live a happier, more beneficial life.

Vipassana helps us develop morality, mastery of the mind, purity of the mind. It helps one develop great compassion and love for one’s fellow beings. Vipassana, I find, is the Christian scriptures in practice - how to live a life, good for oneself and for others.

I find that the universality of Vipassana has a strong appeal. After all, Vipassana is directly experiencing the laws of nature and this is applicable to all humanity, regardless of the particular faith one chooses to follow.

I was in a monastery in Europe for a while after coming in contact with Vipassana. The comparatively superior living conditions and the facilities there should have been very appealing. But I found a strange kind of emptiness within me. I returned to India, took more Vipassana courses and got established in this technique. This helped me develop a quiet, inner strength that removed that emptiness within, the emptiness most of us feel from time to time.

A Brazilian nun and a Vipassana meditator I am acquainted with, wrote to me recently saying that when she visits India soon, one of the first things she would like to do is to take another Vipassana course. Other priests and nuns who have done Vipassana also say that it has enriched their lives. Such is the universal appeal of Vipassana, cutting across religions, nations, cultures. Vipassana, after all, is the art of living, of becoming a better human being, beneficial for oneself and for others.

All the Enlightened Ones teach only these three:

1. *Sīla* : abstaining from unwholesome evil actions.
 2. *Samādhi* : performing beneficial actions with a wholesome, concentrated mind.
 3. *Paññā* : Purification of the entire mind, from its very roots, by practise of insight.
- These are the greatest common factors of all the religions of the world. No religion worth the name can object to any of these three. These three combined are called Dhamma. They are universal. They are not confined to any one organized religion. Any one can practise these three without any misgivings, difficulty and hesitation, and can acquire the same results of peace and harmony.

— Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

A CATHOLIC PRIEST ON VIPASSANA

Fr. Peter Lourdes

In February 1986, I attended a ten-day course in Vipassana offered by S. N. Goenka at the Vipassana International Academy (VIA) at Igatpuri. Igatpuri is about three hours by train from Bombay.

With me was a group of 4 Catholic priests, 2 brothers and 28 sisters. A priest and two sisters from my staff also joined me. I programme and direct a six-month course for Formators (church personnel in charge of the training of future brothers, sisters and priests). The Unit on spirituality calls for an experience of other forms of spirituality respected in this part of the world. All of us were part of this experience.

I am a religious priest with a degree in psychology from Rome and Ph. D from Loyola University of Chicago. My doctoral thesis was "The Implications of the Transcendental Meditation (TM) Programme for Counselling Psychology). In a course in Comparative Mysticism at Loyola, I was asked to present TM to the class. My background in psychotherapy, comparative mysticism, TM and my personal life in a religious order was a tremendous asset during my Vipassana days in VIA. I seem to have touched something I was looking for over the years. I returned to Pune and continued Vipassana together with a religious group whom I am Spiritual Director.

At Igatpuri I met Laurie Ross whose involvement in Vipassana impressed me. In the meditation hall one thing that struck me was the stillness with which she sat in an unchanged posture for hours. I could not do that much. She told me later that this was her thirteenth course in Vipassana.

People who know I am a priest sometimes wonder what a Catholic priest is doing in a Buddhist Centre! Roger Corless of Duke University reports that Thomas Merton remarked he felt more in tune with D. T. Suzuki (Zen Buddhist) than with the average Catholic mass-goer. I am no Merton, but I felt the same in Igatpuri and often feel so in my ministry. Spirituality has been a life-long quest for me. I have dared to search for it in waters outside the Bark of Peter.

How does that square with my Catholic affiliation? I think Vipassana is one way of reaching the goals of the mystical spirituality of my Catholic tradition.

My Catholic tradition also has a theological side to it. That is the side, which is usually transmitted to us from conventional catechisms, church-going, family upbringing, preaching and so on. The theory (or theology if you will) of the Vipassana technique does not generally fit my Catholic theological world view. But I do not think that is very important.

The reason why I do not think it important is this: I consider my Christian theology just one way of interpreting and talking about transcendent experience. I think the experience is more important than the way of talking about it. In the experience, I feel closer to the mystics of our Christian tradition, to those of our Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist tradition, than to our theologians and mass-goers.

In my Christian tradition, I think, the "theological spirituality" was more dominant than the mystical one. I seem to find that in Goenka's variety of spirituality, the mystical is all. It reaches out so heart-warmingly to the really Real and will not settle for anything less.

Does not the Christian tradition have the same heart-warming thrust? I believe it does, but it does not seem to have a simple and clear-cut method like Vipassana. Whatever methods it had may have died with the monasteries.

Where I am at present in my spiritual journey, I feel hungry for the ineffable God of our humanity rather than the talked-about God of our theology and Sunday School.

Although I do not wish to be Messianic, I often feel sad I cannot make all my fellow Christians interested in the mystical dimensions of our common human thirst for the Beyond.

I invite all of you to join all human beings and me in an attempt to hear and march to a different drum right within the rank and file of our own religious groups or outside.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR NATIONAL VOCATION SERVICE CENTRE, PUNE

Fr. M.A. James

I came across Vipassana from the late Fr. Tony De Mello and subsequently I experienced it in the year 1976. It was a great blessing. Peace and tranquillity descended upon my life; I became a more centred person; my concentration and sharpness improved. Though I cannot claim to be a regular practitioner of Vipassana, I have often spent time practising Vipassana. Now I spend at least some time every day.

This experience helped me to organize the Vipassana retreat for the participants of the course 'Transformation Towards Wholesomeness'. Year after year, they have experienced the liberative and transformative effect of Vipassana. It is indeed an effective transformative therapy. After six months of training here, they feel that Vipassana is one of the most effective tools in their armoury. Most of them go with the determination to continue the practice.

I admire and appreciate our Guruji Goenka who has spread in this world the message of Buddha to alienate misery. May this message spread and flourish, bringing peace and harmony to an embattled and broken world. May peace reign.

As our participants returned after the experience in a Vipassana course, we had group discussions with a view to help the participants gather the fruits of Vipassana. The attached are the results of these discussions.

N.V.S.C. VIPASSANA REPORT

A. Experience:

Everyone expressed that this course was a peaceful experience in their life. It helped each one of us to know and understand the reality within and to realize that the kingdom of God is within us. It helps us to live here and now and to be equanimous. This was something new of Vipassana.

Fear and anxieties:

At the beginning, we all experienced a lot of anxiety and fear about what is going to happen, sit-

ting long hours, silence and food. Slowly as days passed, we entered into the rhythm of Vipassana all the fears vanished, we experienced inner peace and tranquillity.

Benefits:

1. Concentration was sharpened.
2. Concentration on breath helped me to live in the present and not in the past; makes us aware how the breath goes on changing when different types of sensations arise.
3. Through this Vipassana experience, we could experience liberation within from past impurities which surfaced now and then through the different sensation and result of this was God experience within.
4. Through maintaining of certain posture and noble silence we develop self-discipline which is very essential for religious life.
5. The noble silence that was stressed throughout the course was found very helpful to generate inner enlightenment.
6. The principle of anicca—everything will pass away—was also experienced in the observance of the sensations in the body and it helped us to develop the equanimity of mind towards the changing realities.
7. Vipassana experience was useful to lead us to the wholeness of life to know ourselves better, and have a balanced life that prevents us from stumbling.
8. It helped us to be more compassionate, loving and generate goodwill towards all beings.
9. It was expressed by all that the method of Vipassana was more experiential than intellectual.
10. Dhamma discourses were found to be very enlightening and practical.

B. Yes, Vipassana is definitely a great help to this T.T.W course. As it helps in achieving the main aim of this course that is wholesomeness. Vipassana has

been a purifying means of freeing and liberating ourselves from all miseries. Since we are all formators who have our own ideas, beliefs, behaviour pattern and attitudes - it helps us to remain composed, not to be pulled this way or that. Not to have distorted opinion about the formees. Thus it helps us remain

equipoised, we can make good and sound judgment. C. Yes, as a beginning a small step, we introduce the formees the technique of Vipassana, namely, concentration of the breath and mind, sitting posture, silence, and showing the usefulness of Vipassana in their daily life.

Anyone belonging to any country, creed, caste, colour, gender, status, profession in society can practise Vipassana and get the same wholesome results. The tree gives sweet or bitter fruit depending on the seed that is planted, and not whether a Muslim planted it, a Hindu planted it, or whether a Christian planted it... as the seed is, so the fruit will be. This is the law of nature, universal and applicable to all, anywhere, at all times. So too is Vipassana a universal technique, a practical tool enabling one to live according to the law of nature or Dhamma, and enjoy the sweet fruits of Dhamma.

— *Sayagyi S.N. Goenka*

FEEDBACK ON VIPASSANA

National Vocational Service Centre, Pune

The following detailed report was compiled in May 1997 from group discussions held by priests in training who had taken Vipassana courses. It was distributed to Christian training institutions throughout India.

1. What did you experience in Vipassana?

- The experience of Vipassana was very enriching.
- During the first sessions there was a lot of struggle, to get into the technique, to be convinced of its power and usefulness and to overcome pain. These things were experienced by different persons in different ways like boredom, turmoil, anxiety, confusion, distractions, loss of energy, impelling force within to run away etc. But all these things gave way to the 'free flow' of peace, and freedom of strong positive feelings, enfold-ing one with deep peace, inner freedom, equanimity, serenity, solitude, joy etc.
- Experience of "anicca" - the law of impermanence leads us to an experience of inner harmony and detachment.
- There was an experience of wholeness and integration powerfully enwrapping us especially at the end of the Vipassana experience.
- Experience of lightness of the body and mind leading to inner quietness and deep peace.
- An experience of remaining calm and equanimous in spite of adverse situations.
- A sense of security and self-acceptance was felt.
- A new strength to begin life anew was obtained.
- The world of awareness of oneself broadened.
- An experience of noble silence.
- Understood the importance of living in the present.
- Gained a realization that there lies a strength within me to create my own happiness.
- Experience of being in touch with reality.
- Experience of a challenge to undergo pain to liberate oneself.
- Experience of the energy released in the harmony of body and mind.

- Experienced unity in diversity as there was no sectarian feeling.
- Was touched by the way in which people from different walks of life got themselves fully immersed in Vipassana.
- Through the practice of *mettā bhāvanā*, experienced a kind of universal forgiveness, peace and love.
- Realized the root cause of misery in the world is either because of craving, clinging or aversion.

2. Would you say that the Vipassana experience is useful for a course like yours? If no, why not? If yes, how?

The unanimous answer is "yes".

- It was a culmination of all that went before the intensive journal, therapy, retreat etc. Vipassana gave us a real experience of deep healing and liberation from distorted thoughts.
- Vipassana leads us to be balanced personalities - due requirement of a formator.
- It was effective means and a wonderful opportunity to be aware of ourselves and experience equanimity and wholeness and to live our lives happily instead of just existing.
- It was an opportunity to personalize and interiorize all the inputs we were given earlier. It gives practical skills to live the Gospel.
- What has been a theory has become a practice to live in the present with an integration of our whole being. A formator who is able to be in touch with them, the present will be able to understand the formees better.
- This course widens our view of truth, that the truth is universal and not sectarian.
- The technique taught helps us to experience the stillness of mind and body which, in turn, helps us to deepen our spirituality.

3. Do you plan to do anything with Vipassana in your formation programme?

The answer is "yes" and "no".

As a whole the thrust is towards implementing Vipassana in formation programme, but some hesitation too is expressed with practical reasons.

What implementation can be done in formation?

- Introducing Vipassana form of meditation in formation.
- Encouraging other members of the congregation to attend Vipassana meditation as part of ongoing formation.

Why hesitations?

- During initial formation, Vipassana may not be much of help. (During second year novitiate or as a preparation for final commitment it may be very appropriate).
- Various things are there to be emphasized during initial formation.
- Certain amount of maturity is needed for full benefit of Vipassana and also for the right understanding of it especially to transcend oneself beyond religions, rituals, cults etc.

(This question was further debated upon during the general session)

GENERAL DISCUSSION

1. The experience of Vipassana in the light of Christian experience :-

- The Christian experience of spirituality and Vipassana experience have many things in common.
- A distinction is that in Vipassana there is a concentration on self and in Christian spirituality this stress on self is in going beyond. The communitarian aspect in worship, in fellowship, its very existence is missing in Vipassana experience.
- The response to this observation from the group is two-fold, one agreeing with what is said about and the other disagreeing reasons shared are the following:
- Concentration on self is towards liberation of oneself and once that is achieved, one is lead to sharing of oneself. Vipassana always promotes and proclaims the well-being of all. Buddhism stresses

enlightenment and liberation first and then service. Christian spirituality - means towards the end - though sharing and working with others towards the goal.

- Both aim at freedom and love and one flows from another. Vipassana : freedom - love, Christian exp. love—freedom. . .

2. In the reports given on the questions whether Vipassana can be introduced in formation, there seems to be a tinge of caution. Why?

Reasons for hesitation to introduce Vipassana in formation, given the context of their background and knowledge.

- The main reasons may be our own prejudices about the technique.
- We ourselves are not sure of the technique of Vipassana and the spirituality involved in it and the Christian spirituality.
- All types of meditations are not suitable for everyone.
- In case we ourselves introduce the technique will we be able to give personal attention to the formees, as the teachers give at the centre.
- The effectiveness of teachers comes from their being with meditation always.
- We had to do a lot of preparation to do this course. What about the formees, their background, maturity etc.
- The aspect of silence is a must. Will that atmosphere be produced in the strict sense as at the centre?

3. Points supporting the introduction of Vipassana in formation

- Vipassana is mainly (i) concentration on breathing and (ii) awareness of sensation. Can it not be done by all?
- There is Vipassana for children. So what about the formees? Will it not help them to live an enriching life, early in life?
- Formees will find it very easy to enter the technique with their enthusiastic spirit and simple personality.
- At the centre, there were many teen-agers doing the course.

- Those who have sent the formees found much benefit.

4. *Christian meditations and Vipassana*

- (a) Goal of Christian meditation is union with God.
- Is it a clinging to God and is it good?
 - When no clinging, will not the days be dark?
 - All of us are growing in knowledge and love of God. Any concept and thought we have of God may not be a correct one. We need to clear our understanding and what and who God is. We have to be careful about longing or clinging - the example of Jesus makes it clear. He did not have a clinging to his experiences at Mount of Olives as well as Mount of Tabor.
- (b) Vipassana meditation aims at freedom, peace and happiness.
- is free from any clinging to any experiences.
 - transcends all the experiences with equanimity according to law of impermanence.
- (c) Mystics always referred to a transcendence of this sort.

5. *Church and Sectarianism*

- Is not church sectarian?
- To understand this we need to consider the interpretation of teaching of Jesus Sectarian? Not at all! Is not the understanding of it and the teaching of it by us, in a different way, making Christianity sectarian?
- There is a lot of openness on the part of the Church today.
- Still the question is when we conduct a prayer service, how many Hindus and Muslims can pray comfortably with us.
- What are some of our attitudes even today. Is it not one of superiority?
- How much of our time, energy and effort is put in the inter-religious projects?

6. *Effectiveness of Christian spirituality*

- Principles are very good - but living of it is not done, hence the ineffectiveness.
- The difficulty in living the Christian spirituality to the fullest is not only outside of us but also within.

- In the discourses during Vipassana there was the reference to rebirth and in Christianity there is stress given for experiencing God in this very life.
- In Christian spirituality there is a risk and challenge to live in the present.
- In Vipassana too, the constant call to live in the present was emphasized.

7(a) How do the contents of the talks, confront, challenge, conflict or confirm your ideas, beliefs, values, attitudes and assumptions with regard to religious life?

7(b) How do these affect you as a person?

- There are many things outside the Catholic Church, so an openness towards that is essential.
- We are content with the limited truth. What I understand, I make it as whole truth as a Christian. I need to challenge myself.
- I thought Christ is not the monopoly of Christians.
- The selfless service offered by thousands of people for a great cause of sharing goodness with others, making lives happy, by helping them remove their misery in a deep level touched me - and this was a challenge to me as a religious person.
- Even a householder is ready to spend two hours of his day for meditation, for the sake of realization of himself.
- There was a confrontation of the idea of re-birth.
- We are busy with our organization and the generosity of the people is much more at the Vipassana centre, in terms of their generous service and donation. Our Catholics are more at the receiving end.
- It is to be noted there is generous service and selfless donation given for the needy, in Christianity too.
- What I was challenged by was the universal love experienced at the Centre. Jesus too was a person of that type, attracting and liberating people because of his universal love. Seeing the great assistance given at the Centre, to overcome misery, I was challenged and I question myself: "What am I doing?"
- Does not all these observations we are making reveal to us the need to go back to the sources of Christian existence and experiences?

- Was challenged to go beyond the religious devotionism.
- When we advance in spiritual life it is easy.
- For those less advanced, it may not be easy. Our very set-up is challenged.
- Many a time we are stuck up in the means and fail to move towards the end!
- The extra importance given to the devotions kills the real spirit. Are we not giving importance to the accidentals of religion at the sacrifice of what is essential!
- We stick on to the "ism" and not the "charism" and enwrap formees into that "ism" when we fail to go beyond our own congregations, dioceses, rites etc!
- There is need to question what is the quality of the spirit of Christ in me?
- A serious question to be asked - "Is holiness confined to one sect?"
- Goenkaji is not in favour of organized religions. He is a person going beyond religions. In the history of humanity certain persons have some great peak experiences and they communicate that experience to some followers. While communicating this, often it is transmitted in less pure form. Therefore what is happening in organized religion is many trying to speak about a big experience that they did not have. And I see in Goenka a person who had a peak experience.
- I am forced to examine the way I experience and express my faith - especially some of the rituals.
- Do we not need the lower levels of experiences and expressions of the faith in order to go further? But we do not need to cling to them but it must facilitate us in the process of climbing the next step.
- There will be a diminished spirit, once when the founder is no more, specially when the disciples did not have the real experience.
- In our own Christian tradition, there are many mystics unrecognized. Very recently only the Church started appreciating the writing of the great mystic, e.g. Eckhart.
- Our inability to get into the real experience not only pollute and dilute the real teaching but also blind us in seeing the reality.
- The law of equanimity is very much Christian and it was a challenge to me.
- Among the Jews, Hasidism too - what is practical is Vipassana. It seems to be a common heritage of humanity.
- Is not Vipassana just one of the movements to liberate persons? Many are the examples and experiences of Christian Charismatic movement too liberating persons, as Vipassana does!
- Is not our tendency to go for newness? We spoke highly of Yoga, we speak now much of Vipassana, can we not delve deep in the depth of our own spirituality and appreciate the richness there?
- In fact, the new insights I received in Vipassana compliment what I have.
- A serious question to be asked is, how do we continue practising and living what we received, and how much do we imbibe the richness of these experiences.
- Are we just looking for newness? Are we not engaged in continuous search? The truth is one and there are different ways, leading to the same truth. One path may suit me and I am in search of that path. Examining different paths may help me to find the right path for me. Willingness to go through that process of testing different paths itself works towards transformation.
- But we need to be aware of the danger of the blind pursuit of paths one after another, never really walking a long distance in any of them. It will be like digging well - going on digging at different places, never going deeper and one will never reach the springs of water!
- We can experience harmony outside Vipassana too.
- I was confronted. More than the praying prayer of the church, the practice of Vipassana helped me in establishing right relationship with others.
- How to integrate Vipassana in daily life?
- Integrating Vipassana in our lives is practising it in the entire spectrum of our life.
- For example, living a life free from cravings and clings and living equanimously.
- I have integrated Vipassana in therapy and found it very useful - being filled with positive feelings to others bring about great positive results of tremendous change in the persons.

- While going to bed, when there are negative feelings, I become aware of that. Earlier I clung fast to them, though resented them at the same time. But when filled with compassion and love I practised '*mettā bhāvanā*' I fell asleep easily.
- I understood the importance of keeping the mind with me and also being in the present moment.
- By Vipassana a deeper awareness of God enveloped me. When I sin, I do not run away from God, but I am in God, even at that moment.
- Vipassana brings liberation, freedom, peace. What is the need of sacrament? Specially confession? Even after confession, we find it difficult to be reconciled?
- To understand this I need to understand the psychological and spiritual healing taking place through confession.
- In therapy we are told to create positive feelings in us and remain in that. Is it a clinging?
- Now the aim of the therapy is to make the ego strong.
- Clinging is always to something past. The experience of not clinging gave me a lot of freedom. What I heard sometime earlier - fresh response to fresh situations - became very clear to me during Vipassana. I received better light to be present to the present moment and this gives me a lot of freedom.
- When I understood the principle of equanimity I understood Jesus better, especially his forgiving love.
- The message of forgiveness became very meaningful to me. Inner freedom experienced last day when vibrations were sent, was the result of the preparations that went before the earlier day. A new awareness of the goodness of people has come to me.
- I realized that we are in touch with everything and experienced "Eco-spirituality" - a feeling of relatedness to everything, feeling one with the entire Universe.
- *Mettā bhāvanā* includes an experiment of goodness of not only persons but also of all that is animate and inanimate.
- There was a time of centripetality in spirituality. Jesus - a personal God leads us to the father,

through him.

- I have a doubt whether practising Vipassana meditation is inadequate in my spirituality, in the absence of other meditation.
- The doubt can be cleared when we understand the concept of God.
- For me, Vipassana and Christian meditations are one and the same.
- One way of looking at it is within the frame of our spirituality.
- Practice of *mettā bhāvanā* leads me to God and others.
- God is truth, peace, love, freedom. Experience of these is experience of God.
- Knowing oneself is knowing God.
- I understood the importance of understanding the whole truth and not holding on to partial truth.

8. *How are the experiences and ideas you received in Vipassana going to help you as a formator?*

- Vipassana emphasizes freedom from misery. As a formator, if I am miserable, I will communicate that misery to the formees. So I will try to be liberated from my own misery.
- How would you respond to the formees with equanimity? For example, there are three categories of formees in a group—some brilliant, some average and some dull. The usual tendency is one of attachment, acceptance, and aversion respectively. Awareness of my sensations and feelings and the truth that persons are basically good can help me.
- What will be your reactions when they disobey? Being in touch with the reality of impermanence and being equanimous will be helpful not only in this situation but all situations.

The Technique of Vipassana

- Misery is universal. I found the technique of Vipassana very useful in dealing with misery in me and outside me.
- Vipassana is one of the powerful techniques in transforming oneself. By focussing our attention on sensations many things in the unconscious are purified.

- I have been initiated to meditation of various types and I find that Vipassana is a meditation that is very helpful and I practise it.
- Vipassana is a deepest system of psychology.
- During the technique, lot of sexual thoughts arose and allowing them to spring and remaining equanimous, they started vanishing.
- Vipassana helps us to live our celibate commitment.
- As a technique it looks very simple that I doubted its power to transform one. But something happened in me positively that I believe in the transformation of persons by this technique.
- I find that this is a very good technique to get over one's aversion.
- It is a good technique to control the wandering mind.
- From my experience with Vipassana what I would say of this technique is this other technique—I am not eager to recommend to you, but Vipassana, I do recommend.
- Vipassana is a technique that taught me that there is a lot of wealth in others.
- There is a lot of energy within me, positive and

- negative. Vipassana helps me to the resources of positive energy and remove the negative energy.
- Vipassana helped me to change the negative image I had of others because of the realization that the cause of misery is not others but myself.
- Lot of my time and energy was wasted thinking of the past and future but this technique helped me to make use of the rich present.
- This is a technique that gave me a lot of peace and inner freedom.
- The realization that the root cause of misery is either clinging or aversion helps me to find a deep sense of freedom.
- A new discovery it was for me, the realization that awareness of sensations and being equanimous can help me to come out of the misery.
- One of the words that struck me was "*anicca*". I was always thinking of my past and in Vipassana it worked out my problems of the past.
- Through the technique I understood the power of the mind when we have a determination.
- I found this technique helpful for being tolerant and loving towards those who offended me.

Dhamma is so simple, so clear, and so easy to understand. It is the truth experienced by oneself within oneself. That is why the student of Dhamma is so confident of the Path. The truth has been experienced by oneself. What doubt can there be? The beneficial results are there to be experienced. It does not require any arguments to convince oneself and to convince others.

— Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

VIPASSANA: MY SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE

Mohammed Arif Joiya

In 1976 I went to Arogya Mandir, a nature cure institute at Gorakhpur, and benefited greatly from my stay there. In those days I also read many spiritual books and entered into religious discussions with various colleagues. All this awakened me but did not quench my thirst. On the contrary, it made me more agitated and spurred me on to a further search. I was looking for a teacher who would really make me experience the truth. I wanted to realize within myself the esoteric expressions in the form of living peace and energy. Not being satisfied with entertaining discourses, I wanted to realize and experience the truth for myself.

Temples, mosques, pagodas, and *gurudwārās* [Sikh temples] along with all the scriptures could not hold my mind. I was still overwhelmed by an empty, unsatisfied life. In such a wounded state, I opened myself and expressed my spiritual aspirations before Dr. Vithaldas Modi, founder of Arogya Mandir, and demanded a way out. He advised me to attend a Vipassana meditation course and sent me a small pamphlet and application form for Vipassana. I read and understood it, but was frightened: "Oh ! This is the religion of Buddhists, atheists. These Buddhists don't believe in Soul and God. What can they teach ? I am a Muslim. I cannot commit this crime." But my heart within again said that the advice of Dr Modi should be obeyed. "Why should he wish ill of me ? Whatever he advises is certainly for my benefit and welfare. Let me try and see." So I went to the Vipassana International Meditation Centre near Hyderabad in February 1978 to attend a Vipassana course.

I arrived late but was pleased to find the place very quiet and peaceful. Mr Bachubhai Shah, who was an organizer, received me with great love and hospitality. He said, "Arifbhai, you have missed a day but I am sure that Goenkaji will accept you on the course. Don't worry. You may take a bath and have breakfast while I go and speak to him about you." I was pleased with this pure, affectionate reception

and reassurance from Mr Bachubhai.

While I was waiting I started looking around at the students observing Noble Silence. And I was experiencing a slight fever which I had been feeling from the moment I had stepped onto this holy land. This was the fever of some unknown fear. I felt that my ego was going to be sacrificed, and I was ready for it.

Goenkaji sent for me. I went, bowed down and smiled. He and his wife were seated on chairs. He appeared to be a scientist, a doctor, or a literary person.

"Come and sit down."

I sat on the border of the carpet and smiled.

"What is the nature of your work ?"

"I am a physical training teacher in Udasar, Sir."

"Hmmm... What is the problem ?"

"Stammering speech, Sir. A little difficulty."

"Okay. It will be alright. There will be instructions in the evening. Until then observe your breath and remain aware of it."

"Very good, Sir."

"Then go," he said smilingly.

I bowed down, paid respects, and smilingly came out of the hall.

I started thinking, "What sort of Guru have I got ? He is a worldly person. Could there be a Guru like this ? Married ! Householder ! No beard, no moustache, clean shaven ? No marks on the forehead ? No long hair ? No ochre robes ? He had on a terylene half-sleeved shirt, and colourful checked *lungi*. At least he should have been wearing *khādi* (home-spun) cloth. Absolutely modern, very ordinary. How can he teach meditation ? Never mind, I have come, so let me try and see."

After a short while when I, along with hundreds of meditators, started following the instructions of Goenkaji of observing and remaining aware of the breath and feeling its touch, a silent voice within me arose and whispered, "Oh ! This is exactly what I was looking for. I've got it. I must work hard. I'm

already one day late so I should not waste a single moment." I started meditating with great enthusiasm.

In the evening the instructions were given. Goenkaji said: "Repeat what I say in Pāli." I repeated that for the duration of the meditation course I would abstain from killing, theft, sexual misconduct, speaking lies and taking intoxicants. I liked the five precepts. But along with them I had to repeat, "I take refuge in Buddha. I take refuge in Dhamma. I take refuge in Saṅgha." At that moment I refrained, but later there was a little discontentment in the mind. "Look, Modiji trapped me. He put me in a whole new position as if a snake has swallowed a rat. Oh ! Khan Saheb, these people have sunk your ship. Now go in your society as a Buddhist."

At any rate, I recovered and started to observe the breath. Again the same train of thought came. But when the awareness of breath steadied a little, this problem automatically and gradually resolved itself. Now I didn't want to think of these problems. I started progressing. During the rest period, even after finishing lunch, etc., I continued meditation. The fact that I was a day late and other meditators must be farther advanced inspired me more. I continued meditation without any other thought.

A television screen started shining before my closed eyes. I very clearly perceived the shaping of dormant impurities of the mind starting to arise and pass away. It was like the dirtiest, wildest film I had ever seen. Such obnoxious prejudices appeared which made me feel like vomiting. But I understood at the same time that it was doing me good. Impurities were coming out. It was a good thing.

On the fourth day Vipassana was given. A new voice arose within my heart. "I have practised this technique some time in the past. It is very simple and familiar !" I continued to progress from the gross to the subtle.

By Day Seven I realized that this technique of meditation is so simple that any child or even an illiterate person can learn and effectively practise it. Just to observe the natural breath with closed eyes and continued awareness that it is coming in, going out, and it is touching somewhere. Continuing to observe the breath, the witnessing faculty of the mind

establishes automatically. And then one has to observe objectively the sensations throughout the body from head to toe in a particular order. Sensations may be pleasant or painful. Both have to be observed with equanimity. By repeating the same process over and over again, quiet concentration of the mind and equanimity gradually increase.

As I slept that night, a terrible thing happened. It was almost midnight. I saw that a very ferocious demon had seized my neck with both hands and had started shaking my head around and around and said, "Oh evil soul ! You have brought me here in this *ashram* ! Just wait, I will show you." And with enormous force he threw my body on the ground. Along with it the very sweet voice of Goenkaji came to my ears, "Son, do not worry. Come near me. Come, do not be frightened." I awoke fearful and frightened, looked around with open eyes and saw the foreign meditators who were my room-mates fast asleep. Immediately I understood that it was a nightmare. It was a play of my mind. It was a trick to force me to leave the course by any means. Impurities were being eradicated. All the torture was due to that. I came out of the room; saw the lights on and the trees standing with their branches and leaves swinging and singing, as if some quiet festival was being celebrated. I started listening and then realized, "Oh ! This is a conspiracy of the unconscious mind. I now understand. I am not leaving without completing the course." I relaxed, smilingly returned to bed, and meditating while lying down, eventually went to sleep.

Dawn broke. There was meditation in the hall. After lunch I was overwhelmed with another experience. I felt that my head and hands were swinging as though they belonged to someone else. I was in a very tranquil, detached, equanimous witnessing state. "Oh Gotama Buddha ! How did you discover this unique meditation technique ? You kept on teaching people this sacred art. And once again this art has become available for people's welfare. Salutations to you, my Lord. Again and again I prostrate before your compassionate feet. Endless prostrations." I now understood the meaning of "I take refuge in Buddha" as refuge in one's own *bodhi* or enlightenment, not the personality of Siddhārtha Gotama. The

meaning of "I take refuge in Dhamma" is that one has to be established in one's own true nature, not in any sectarian religion. The meaning of "I take refuge in Saṅgha" is to take refuge in those noble ones who have become well-established in Dhamma, whatever their race, colour or nationality. From this sacred moment onwards, the word death, full of theories and tears, just melted from the book of my life and flowed away like melted snow. Oh, no ! No being dies. Death is impossible. Everyone keeps on moving on the journey according to one's own actions. And the final destination of the journey is *nirvāṇa*. Now I understood what one's own religion is and what the religion of others is. Without purifying the mind of impurities by Vipassana and realizing our own nature, life is lived in the religion of others. Living in one's own nature is *Svadharmā*, the true Dhamma.

On the ninth day a new meditation technique was taught — the technique of *mettā bhāvanā* whereby one shares one's own merits with beings all around. This meditation filled me with love and compassion and made me cry.

When I came out of the course I felt that I had no enemies. All were my relatives. My mind was filled with love, compassion and sympathetic joy towards everyone. I thought that I must have performed some good action in a past life, and as a consequence of that I was born in the lap of the affectionate and compassionate Mother-India: salutations to you, Mother-India. Now I really understood why

India is designated as the "world teacher." A sort of pride arose in me to be an Indian. I felt one with all created beings of the earth.

Now the only religion for me is to help miserable people to be free of their miseries: may all beings walk on the path of pure Dhamma; may all be religious in the true sense of the term. By adopting the practice of Vipassana I have found the right direction in life and this has made life worthwhile. The path is long but it becomes straight and easy.

Vipassana has naturally helped me to come out of bad habits. It has given me the strength to smile in desperate situations. It has also given me the strength to discharge my responsibilities. I feel less nervous. Day by day I am gaining strength to address bigger and bigger audiences. My life was incomplete without Vipassana.

I would like to tell my young educated Muslims that they should really try Vipassana and see the results. It is a necessity today that people of all different walks of life unite. By escaping from harmful sectarianism they can help establish a really strong national unity. Vipassana is the only solution to all the problems of mankind, because it is universal and it gives such positive fruits.

I bow my head down to my teacher Shri Satya Narayan Goenka and assistant teacher Dr Vithaldas Modi.

*Salutations to Buddha !
Salutations to Dhamma !
Salutations to Saṅgha !*

Even if someone does not call himself or herself a 'Buddhist', I am happy to see such a person walking diligently on the Noble Eightfold Path, the universal, non-sectarian Path that is divided into three parts each complementing the other: *sīla* (morality), *samādhi* (mastery of the mind) and *paññā* (experiential wisdom). On the other hand, I do not feel happy but feel sorry for someone calling himself a 'Buddhist' but is far away from the Noble Eightfold Path of *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*.

— Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

VIPASSANA AMONG MUSLIMS: FEEDBACK FROM IRAN

Dr Shelina Meghani

*Yo sahaṣṣaṃ sahaṣṣena saṅgāme mānuse jine;
Ekañ ca jeyyamattānaṃ, sa ve saṅgāma juttamo.*

Though one could conquer a million men on the battlefield, Yet the noblest victor, indeed, is one who has conquered himself.

-Dhammapada

Can Muslims Practise Vipassana Meditation?

Many Muslims are reticent to take up meditation because they fear it might be in conflict with their religious principles. Adil Salahi, religion editor of the Arab News and one of the most respected religious scholars in the Middle East, recently commented on meditation by saying that it is perfectly permissible for Muslims to take up a meditation technique as long as that technique is not identified with any religious activity. Sheikh Adil commented: "Meditation needs no particular ritual. Therefore, what is desirable and encouraged by Islam may be achieved without having to go through the rituals of some other religion".

Dhamma, the Truth, the Teaching, the Way, all things, is a river. The river flows. It notices not whether you are a Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh, Jew or from any other religion. It notices not whether you are male or female, black or white, yellow or brown. It notices not whether you are learned or illiterate, rich or poor. It flows for all. The Truth is the Truth for all. Come and see. Sit at the bank of the river for a while, ten days perhaps, and see for yourself.

People from many different religious backgrounds have practised Vipassana and seen for themselves, that this is a pragmatic method which can eradicate the root cause of human suffering, a technique which can be applied, leading to happy, healthy, productive lives.

Many Muslims have experienced the positive benefits from taking Vipassana courses including a significant number from Iran, some of whose feedback is presented below.

The following are some brief comments from Iranian Moslems after a Vipassana Course in Dhamma Giri:

- Vipassana does not have anything to do with any organized religion. It is a technique for everyone to purify the mind and matter and reach highest stage.
- From an orthodox Moslem, University Teacher. Vipassana helped me to understand everything much better. I would like to come again. I continue.
- I thought, I knew, what is calmness of insight, but now, during 10-Days, I realized something beyond that, what I could imagine.
- People here, at Dhamma Giri, reach with Vipassana some higher stage.
- Mr. Goenka taught me Vipassana, that will help me throughout my life and beyond that.
- With Vipassana I found the way of my life.
- After the Vipassana course, I feel much energetic, and lighter, mind is clear, why should not be one all the time in such a situation? I have to practise Vipassana.
- After a long time, looking for something, that can help me throughout my life, I found Vipassana. Now I am satisfied.
- Vipassana is good for every society and more than that.
- Vipassana is helping me to come out of every addiction and have a good relationship with my family members.
- Suddenly I had lost my mind, I did not know what I was doing, I quit my job, my family members were unhappy with me, I started to do something here and there and finding the others fault. I came in contact with Vipassana, only then, I started to understand what I am doing and start to improve my life.
- With Vipassana I could witness inside hell and also paradise.
- University Teacher for Psychology: We know that

every cell has information, but we did not know, how it is working. Vipassana helps us to have access to that.

- A Professor: I had for long time pain in my back. During my second Vipassana course, one day suddenly there was a light throughout my body and the pain disappeared. I cannot with ordinary science describe it, but I feel me very well and lighter.
- Realizing anicca here and understanding it, is a great thing for the day to day life.

The following two letters from Iranian students speak for themselves:

Dr. Abbas Rouhbakhsh

Tehran

Vipassana created a turbulence within me. After 15 years that I studied, experienced, and taught different methods of meditation, I came across the technique taught Mr. Goenka and found it very effective. I used to be a yoga teacher for many years and have trained many students. I have also written a book on the subject of yoga and meditation. But I reached Vipassana - the way as Mr. Goenka teaches - on the last part of my experiments.

I was acquainted with the mindful-breathing and had experienced it as a technique for meditation and I was also familiar with different meditational objects such as mantra, yantra, manlala, music, Dervish Dancing etc... and for this reason I took Vipassana very ordinary at first. But when after three days in my first course, I was shaken by a turbulence within, I took Vipassana very seriously. When the storm passed I experienced a wonderful calmness. It was then and there that I understood the effectiveness of Mr. Goenka's technique. Evening discourses were very interesting for me. I, as an Iranian familiar with the profound eastern mysticism, have spent my life in the desire of flying beyond the materialistic world and I have seen this impermanent world as a shadow to the ultimate truth. I found in Mr. Goenka's words a deep mutual understanding and I believed the great school of thought of the Buddha and the effectiveness of this method of meditation.

Now on my third voyage to Dhamma Giri, a group of more than 60 peoples are with me as compared with my second trip when 30 people, mostly

my yoga students, followed me to the Vipassana course. The people who had experienced different methods of meditation are going now to experience the last but the best technique. With all the best wishes for Mr. Goenka and all meditators.

Dr. Mohammad Eyvazi

Tehran

I am very pleased that I have had the opportunity to pass through the Vipassana course. Last year when I reached Dhamma Giri, the first thing I can say is that I felt very relaxed there. When the course begun in the second day, during which we were observing our breath, suddenly I felt something through all of my body which was very disturbing, something like an explosive sensation. I had it for a while and then after I got to go out of the hall where I cried unwillingly for about 15 minutes and I was free, vacant and light at the end. This happened for me many times during the course.

I was very grateful because I felt very well, the best in my life. I felt as I was a spiritual person and I was satisfied with myself. Also I thought that what a great opportunity it would be if we could have such a course in our country where so many people need it. Of course, I know, and I feel that it's not too far.

Some other experiences:

Preeti Bubna Ali

Art Director

It was a wonderful experience doing a ten-day course for the first time.

When I started working on my mind, on the first day, there were layers of doubts. But now on the 10th day I am experiencing happiness. All the clouds of doubts have vanished.

In the future also I would like to establish more and more into Dhamma. I would like all my near and dear one and for that matter even my enemies to take Dhamma, so that all the miseries of the world end. At the end of the 10th day I have everything to Dhamma and it will guide you to the right direction.

This is Dhamma Practice it, and you will be one step near to you goal everytime.

Dhamma—It has set me into a direction. It has

shown me the Art of Living happily.

Mohd Reza Gharib

I am very glad that I'll share with you my experience, maybe some other human beings will get out of the addiction misery.

I had addicted to use opium more than 20 years. I had given up at least ten times but it didn't last more than two or three months. Finally I think that according to my good karma I found out about Vipassana in 1995 and I participated in a ten-day course in November 1995 and it was my privilege that my teacher was the kind and dear Mr Goenkaji. Now after two years there is nothing about craving to use opium and more than that I've got too many more benefits out of this technique. I do my meditation every day morning and evening and I've sent my wife and my daughter to do this course for their benefits.

I want to thank again Gurujī, Management, Assistants and the kind workers in the Igatpuri Vipassana centre.

May all beings be happy

Vipassana meditation offers Muslims of every school and community the opportunity to practise a meditation technique completely free of rites and rituals. The meditation itself is designed to make every person, no matter what their religion might be, a better member of their community. Many Muslims have already taken advantage of Vipassana meditation and have discovered a technique of living which enhances their lives as Muslims while in no way requiring them to identify themselves with the practices of some other religion.

Pure Dhamma can never be sectarian. It teaches only three things, which are acceptable and applicable to everyone: morality, mastery over the mind, mental purification. There is no room for dogmatic sectarian prejudices. The teaching is complete and perfect in itself, needing neither addition nor subtraction.

All over the world, people are suffering due to greed, hatred and delusion. Here is a way out of that suffering. May more and more people from every caste, creed and sect come to know the river, the flow of Dhamma, through their own experience and enjoy real happiness.

You won't have to get converted to any sectarian religion when you learn and practise any physical exercises of Yoga, i.e. *asanas* and *pranayama*, to keep your body strong and healthy. Similarly you won't have to get converted to any sectarian religion when you learn and practise the mental exercises of Anapana and Vipassana to keep your mind strong and healthy.

—Sayagyi S.N. Goenka

THE ART OF LIVING

Usha Modak

□ *A nurse in the Crisis Department of a hospital had a dilemma. The sight of mauled bodies of accident cases paralysed her. She had the option of asking for a transfer. But she chose to do a Vipassana meditation course instead. Now doctors and colleagues are amazed at her equanimity.*

□ *A young man had run away from home in anger after a quarrel with his parents. He had sworn never to see them again. For ten years he had vanished, resisting all their attempts to contact him. After a Vipassana course, his ego and anger began to dissolve. He could see his problem from perspectives other than his own. He decided to return home.*

Across 90 countries in the world, individuals such as these are experiencing the benefits of Vipassana meditation. Ordinary people from all walks of life and people from all religions are practising this most ancient meditation technique.

"To reform society, each member of the society has to be reformed," says Mr S.N. Goenka, the principal teacher of Vipassana, who teaches through audio-video tapes and over 400 authorized assistant teachers. "If the individual cannot come out of misery, how can society come out of misery?"

Vipassana is a scientific, practical way out of misery. Meaning 'observing oneself in a special way', Vipassana is a completely non-sectarian technique that purifies the mind, deconditioning it of negativities like anger, hatred, greed, selfishness, etc. Once they are removed, life becomes peaceful and harmonious. Vipassana is popularly called the 'Art of Living'.

Nowadays the technique is even being used as a stress-coping mechanism in the corporate world. Companies like Mahindra and Mahindra (Indian volume car and agricultural vehicle manufacturers) send their employees to Dhamma Giri, the main Vipassana centre at Igatpuri, near Mumbai. In many schools in India and at centres in the West, children are given

three-day short courses that teach them a technique that will equip them to handle the pressures and expectations of modern day society.

Vipassana is taught in a basic ten-day residential course. The teaching is completely free of cost. No fee is charged even for board and lodging. This follows an old tradition in India. One goes to a spiritual teacher to receive only - nothing at all is expected in return. Money or commercialization should never enter the teacher/student relationship. The teaching of Dhamma demands no fee, unlike many schools and colleges today. Even the assistant teachers give their services freely. Initially, when this principle was established for all Vipassana courses in India and worldwide, many people thought it was unworkable. Either this generosity would be abused by the poor to fill their stomachs or it would raise suspicions that some government or intelligence group was operating behind the scenes. However, pure Dhamma has proved its strength. Expenses are met only through voluntary services and donations of previous students who would like to share their benefits through Vipassana with others. Everywhere courses run as a result of the good volition and genuine altruism of grateful students.

The quintessence of the technique is objectively observing our natural body sensations without blind reactions of craving or aversion. Gradually, we learn that in everyday life we are actually reacting not to the external world, but to the body sensations that arise through our sense doors coming in contact with the outside stimuli.

The deepest region of the mind is constantly in touch with our body sensations. By equanimously observing the body sensations, the barrier is broken between the conscious and the unconscious mind. The deep-rooted conditioning of negative reactions is broken at the root level. The process of mental purification begins.

Vipassana is, therefore, a process of self-purifi-

cation through self-observation and introspection. It is a technique of non-verbal, self-administered psychoanalysis. There is no 'gurudom' or blind belief in this technique. The student has to work hard with individual effort. The teacher is there only as a guide.

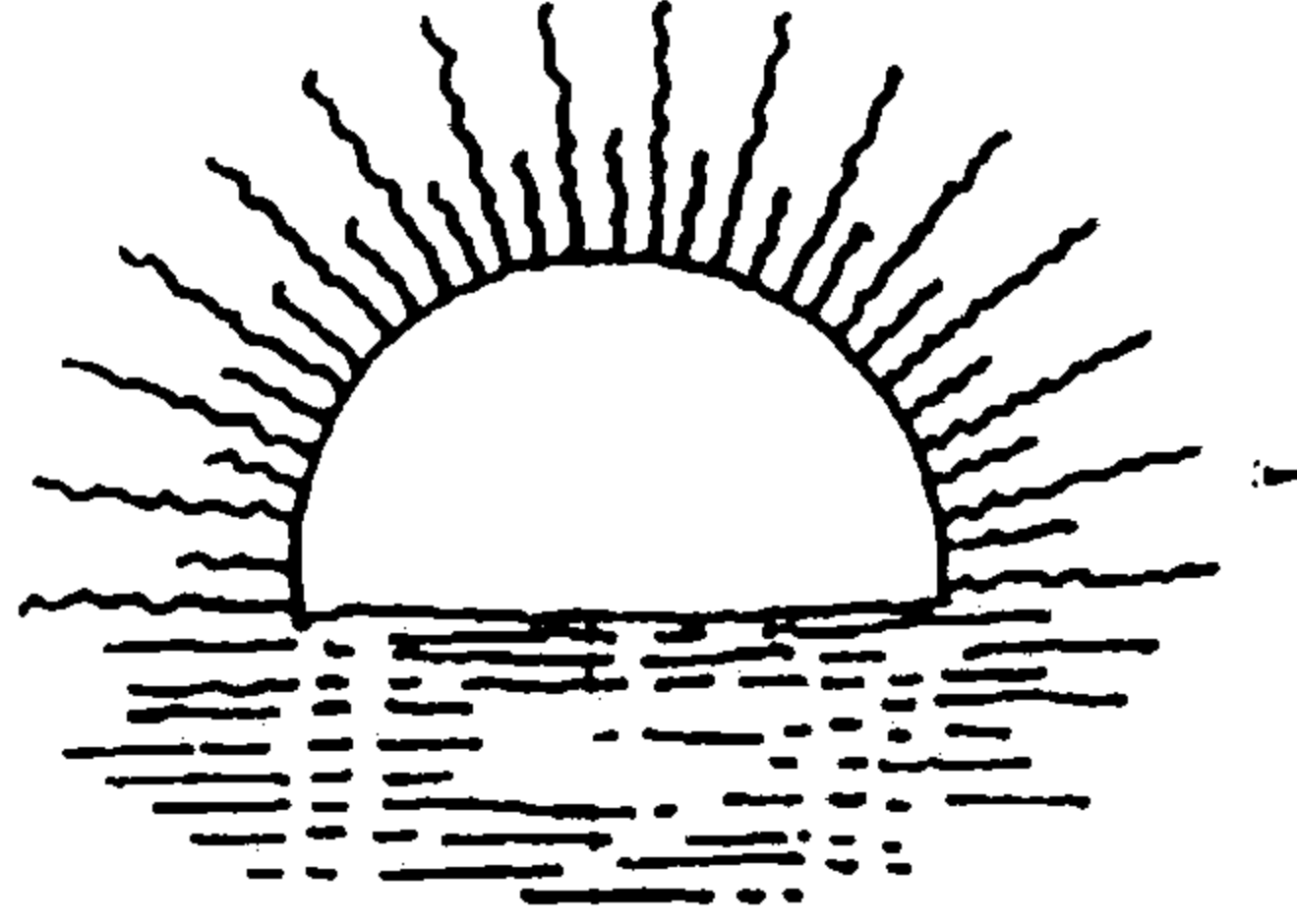
Mere advice and counselling do not help. We are able to observe a situation in its totality only as

the layers of mental impurities begin to peel off through the practice of Vipassana. There is greater clarity of thinking. We begin to judge situations better and this helps to improve our relationships with other people - family, children, neighbours, colleagues, superiors, subordinates, etc.

Through the practice of Vipassana, one learns the art of constructive social living which greatly benefits oneself and society.

Vipassana does not bind anybody within the boundaries of any sectarian belief. The only boundary there is in Vipassana is the boundary of *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā* within which one has to live the daily life.

— Sayagyi S.N.Goenka



मग्गाड्ढिको सेट्ठो, सच्चानं चतुरो पदा।
विरागो सेट्ठो धम्मानं, द्विपदानञ्चचक्खुमा॥

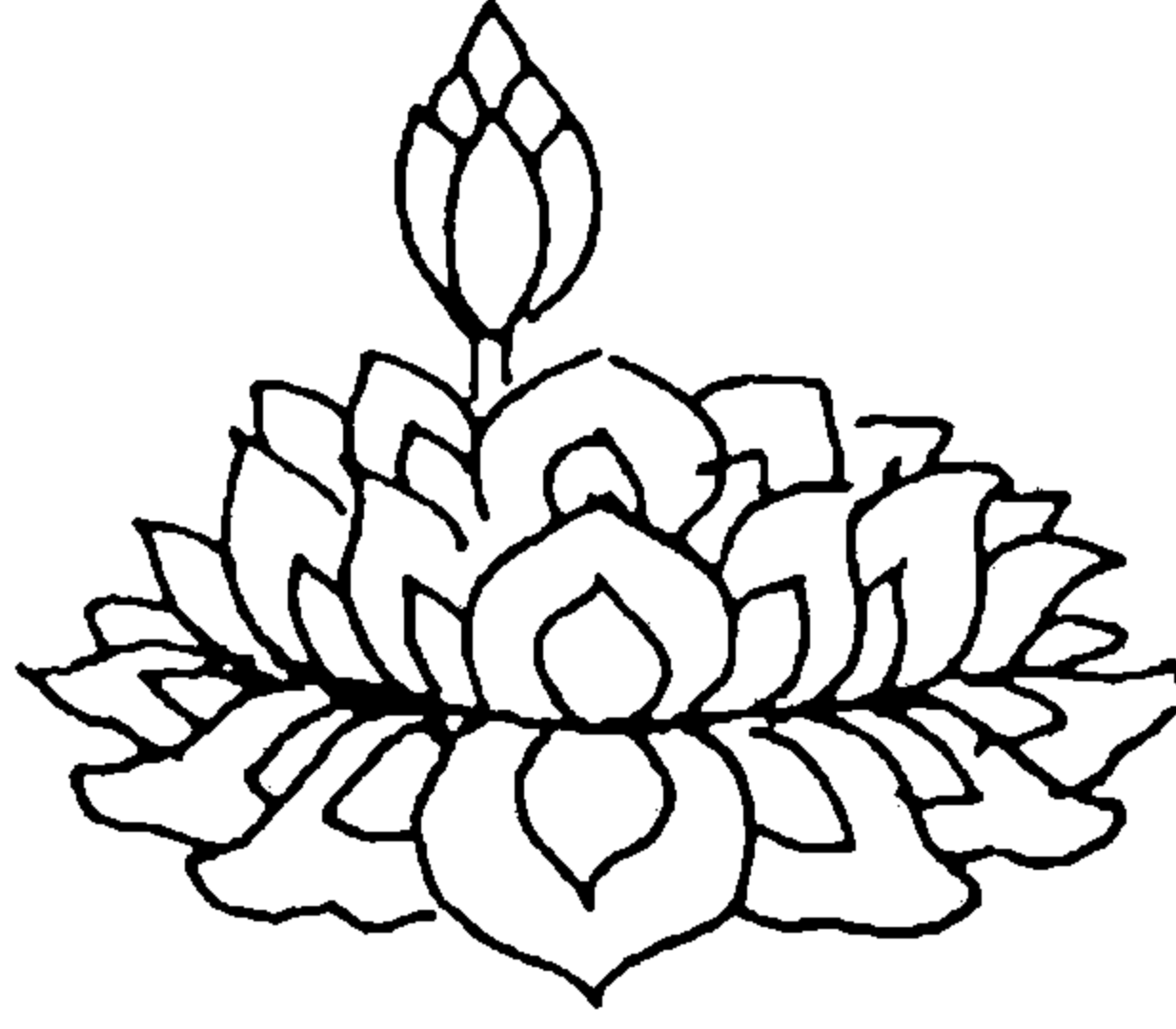
मार्गों में अष्टांगिक मार्ग श्रेष्ठ है, सत्त्यों में चार पद (चार आर्यसत्य) श्रेष्ठ हैं, धर्मों में वैराग्य श्रेष्ठ है, द्विपदों (मनुष्यों) में चक्षुष्मान (ज्ञाननेत्रधारी, बुद्ध) श्रेष्ठ हैं।

The best of paths is the Eightfold Path.
The best of truths are the four sayings.
Non attachment is the best of states.
The best of bipeds is the Seeing One.

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सब्बे सद्गारा अनिच्चा'ति, यदा पज्जाय पस्सति।
अथ निब्बिन्दति दुक्खे, एस मग्गो विसुद्धिया॥

सभी संस्कृत चीजें अनित्य हैं; यह जब प्रज्ञा से देखता है, तब सभी
दुःखों से निर्वेद को प्राप्त होता है, यही मार्ग (चित्त विशुद्धि का) है।

Transient are all conditioned things:
When this with wisdom, one discerns,
Then is one disgusted with ill;
This is the path to purity.

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अनुपुब्बेन मेधावी, थोकथोकं खणे खणे।
कम्मारो रजतस्सेव, निद्धमे मलमत्तनो॥

बुद्धिमान (व्यक्ति) क्षण क्षण क्रमशः थोड़ा थोड़ा अपने मल को (वैसे ही हटावे), जैसे कि सुनार चांदी के (मलको) जलाता है।

By degrees, little by little,
From time to time,
A wise person should remove his own impurities,
As a smith removes (the dross) of silver.

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-Sayagyi S. n. Goenka

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