

In the Sixth Century B.C., born in the Kingdom of Shakya of Bharath Deshaya, Prince Siddhartha attained enlightenment at the shades of Bodhi at Buddha Gaya and passed away at the sacred Sal Uyana of Kusinara and this day of Vesak, which is triply blessed by those sacred events of the Buddha, is celebrated with much devotion and faith.

Strolling on the banks of rivers, researching the Dhamma sermons of great teachers, displaying tremendous discipline, strength, determination, and commitment, Siddhartha attained the supreme bliss of Nirvana based on his intellect.

On this momentous day of Vesak, we must resolve to be guided by the teachings of the Buddha to build a peaceful and contented society.

For any society to exist without fear, danger and mistrust, it needs to remember the eternally relevant words of the Buddha: "Hatred will not heal hatred, but kindness will heal hatred". We in Sri Lanka need to bear this truism in mind today more than ever.

We, with an understanding of the history of Buddha Dhamma that dates back 2500 years, in which not a drop of blood was shed to convert non-Buddhists to Buddhism or in the name of the Great Teacher, need to remember that power, wealth and social status are but temporary phenomena, they are all subject to decay, impermanence is all.

It behoves us, Buddhists to spread the virtues of loving kindness, forgiveness, and compassion to counter the forces of evil in this world. Such efforts will surely contribute towards safeguarding the peace and harmony enjoyed by all who live in this country.

I wish the Buddhists of Sri Lanka and those outside our shores a blessed Vesak.

## **President's Vesak Day Message**

Saturday, 18 May 2019 10:27

---

Maithripala Sirisena

President

May 18, 2019