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President of Sri Lanka

**Message**

The Buddhists all over the world celebrate the Vesak Festival with much religious fervour and enthusiasm to commemorate the important events that took place in the life of Gautama Buddha on this day, namely the birth of Siddhartha Gautama, Siddhartha Gautama's supreme attainment of Buddhahood and the Mahaparinibbana. The Buddha's teachings which reflect a great vision of a superior religious sage and a humanitarian philosopher have an eternal appeal to the human civilization.


Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, was born in a complex era where the Indian society, embraced various beliefs and religions. The religious orthodoxy had a strong impact on that society, which also had various divisions within. Women were considered as weak beings and they enjoyed limited rights in a male dominated society.

The Buddha's teaching demystified that traditional narrow ideas and myths prevalent in that society, which was riddled in ignorance and blindness, and moved forward with scientific thoughts. The Buddha addressed the mindset of the people directly. The right of understanding the truth is our own mind after investigating the validity and truth was bestowed to ourselves by the Buddha.


Therefore, a spiritual human being emerged dispelling illusion and ignorance.


Buddha preached that human become a worthwhile person or a great person, not by his birth, but only through his actions. This noble concept became a strong healing force of the entire humanity.

Renewing minds on minds of equality with immense kindness and pure joy, Gautama Buddha avoided the shadows of hatred to show the abolition of violence and this blessed period of Vesak gives an ideal opportunity to recall the great teachings of the Noble One. I wish for a great Vesak Day Celebration for all the Buddhists around the world.

  
Manabendra Sirisena

April 29, 2018

  
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Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

  
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Prime Minister of Sri Lanka


**HON PRIME MINISTER'S VESAK MESSAGE**

Dharma or the teachings of Buddha is a purifying factor for the human mind propelled by lust, hate and violence. The pious festival of Vesak reminds us the virtues of practicing four factors of mindfulness in order to dwell with Dharma as its other refuge.

It is a time for reflection and appreciation of our humanity, and to lead a life full of equality, fraternity, respect and understanding. The unity Government is determined to make the prospects of a harmonious society a reality through the protection of democratic rights of people.

May the full moon of Vesak take away the darkness of ignorance, negativity and hatred towards others and it may herald an era of contentment, peace and euphoria for the whole world.

On this auspicious Vesak day you may be blessed with the sublime goodness of Lord Buddha!

  
Mahinda Rajapaksa  
Prime Minister

April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018