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இலங்கை சனாதிபதி
President of Sri Lanka

Vesak Message

The Vesak festival, which commemorates the three pivotal milestones in the life of Lord Buddha: his birth, his attainment of enlightenment, and his passing (Nirvana), is the most sacred celebration for Buddhists across the world. The people of Sri Lanka, heirs to a proud culture enriched by Buddhist heritage, join Buddhists worldwide in devoutly observing this noble occasion.

Buddhism is the greatest philosophical teaching to have conveyed to the entire world a timeless and practical message of peace. The entirety of the Dhamma preached by the Gautama Buddha is founded upon the Four Sublime Virtues of loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy and equanimity.

Furthermore, peace, coexistence and reconciliation constitute the supreme teachings expounded not only by the Buddha but also by all enlightened teachers. Buddhism teaches that, in order to establish peace in the external world, inner spiritual peace within the individual must first be secured. We must recognise that this inward and peaceful approach, as advocated by Buddhism in guiding society towards collective noble objectives, is more relevant today than ever before. I believe that this was also the message brought to Sri Lanka recently by the Vietnamese monk Venerable Pannakara Thero, who undertook a pilgrimage on foot across the country.

Moreover, the celebration of Vesak is not merely a religious observance, but also a magnificent cultural festival that has, for thousands of years, reflected Sri Lankan identity, solidarity and artistic creativity. It is indisputable that the programmes organised alongside Vesak celebrations, giving prominence to acts of religious observance such as almsgiving, the observance of sil, meditation and Dhamma sermons, as well as the devotional offerings and festivities including dansals, Buddhist devotional songs, beautifully crafted lanterns and splendid pandals, greatly contribute towards fostering mutual understanding, reconciliation and coexistence among communities.

Inviting all people to further embrace in their lives the values of Buddhism founded upon non-violence, compassion and boundless loving-kindness towards all living beings, I extend my heartfelt wishes for a blessed Vesak festival in which all hearts may find peace, comfort and serenity through the soothing grace of the Dhamma.

Anura Kumara Dissanayake
President

Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

30.05.2026