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தினேஷ் குணவர்த்தன - (பா.உ.) வெளிநாட்டு அமைச்சர்
Dinesh Gunawardena - (M.P.) Foreign Minister

Vesak Message by Hon. Dinesh Gunawardena Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka

Today is a day for the whole of humanity to observe, as Buddhism is considered with the most precious aspects of spiritual, philosophical, ethical, intellectual, cultural, artistic and social heritage of the entire humankind.

The full moon day of Vesak marks the birth, enlightenment, and passing away of the Buddha, as the thrice blessed events occurred on the full moon day in the month of May.

Today is also celebrated by One-fifth of the world population as the 2610th anniversary of the Birth of Buddhism.

Buddhism is a philosophy that espouses living a noble life, a life that follows the 'middle path' and is devoid of excessive pleasure and excessive sorrow.

It is in following the middle path, 'Madyama Prathipadava' - that will help us realize the true nature of things and shed the ignorance that fuels our anger, ego and jealousy.

The Buddha's teachings are not confined to caste, gender or nationality-they are universal principles and teachings available to all, just as enlightenment and truth is a blessing for all.

An ethos that is reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The principles and wisdom of Buddhism are ingrained in the very culture and values of Sri Lanka.

From the Sacred Bodhi Tree in Anuradhapura, to the Temple of the Sacred Tooth in Kandy and to the temple cave in Dambulla, to the offerings during harvest seasons or Buddhism's influence on the formation of olden kingdoms - we can see the impact and value Buddhism has had on Sri Lankan culture and belief since its introduction to the island 2600 years ago.

Even after 2600 and more years, Teachings of the Buddha continues to be sought after in today's modern world, for the great wisdom and deep values it instills. Even more as Buddhism shows path to ease stress, assures tranquility, and brings serenity in the minds of today's troubled world.

As we look to emerge from the COVID- 19 pandemic and focus on rebuilding our nations and our global community, I believe teachings of the Buddha will surely guide us.

We are facing unprecedented times that are stressful for us all - a time that challenges our relationships and we have witnessed globally, situations of anger and hostility. We must reject hate and ensure that there is no room for it in our responses.

This is why the Buddha taught us that the goal and the very purpose of one's existence is to serve for the benefit of others - Parattham Patipajjatha –

Let me conclude with the noble words of the Buddha;

Sabbitiyo vivajjantu
Sabbarogo vinassatu
Ma te bhavatvantarayo
Sukhi digayukho baha

May all misfortunes be avoided!
May all sickness be healed!
May no dangers befall you!
May you live long and happily!

May blessings of the Noble Triple Gem be with you all!

[End]