

## Vesak Message of H.E the President Mahinda Rajapaksa

We are privileged to celebrate this year's Vesak with great respect and full state patronage in the simultaneous celebration of birth, enlightenment and the passing into nibbana of Lord Buddha.

The doctrine of Lord Buddha demonstrates the correct path to life. Accordingly we have given the teachings of Lord Buddha the utmost place in our governance system as it paves the way for a new Sri Lanka. It is my great belief that a society that avoids the four defilements will necessarily be endowed with freedom and fulfillment.

"The winner engenders in the loser hatred and the loser lives in hurt. Those who have resolved to treat the vicissitudes of life with equanimity go beyond victory and defeat and are composed, (Jayang Verang Paswanees–Dukkan sethi parajitho,Upasantho suwan seni–Nithwa jaya parajayan)

"Lord Buddha observed. It is this teaching that has persuaded us to take the humanitarian approach in all things and avoid our thinking to be marred by the discolorations that hatred engenders. The discipline of the doctrine has greatly influenced us to treat the enemies that hate us so much with loving-kindness when they are overpowered by us.

Terrorism has succeeded in pushing hundreds of thousands of our citizens into welfare centres as the internally displaced. The way to tread the path of the Thathagatha in this instance is to treat them with kindness, offering all help possible, to be generous and benevolent.

We should resolve to conduct our lives in accordance with the teaching of Lord Buddha. The dawning of Vesak paves the way for us to take this initiative. The true enemies that we need to overcome and defeat are greed, hatred and ignorance. Buddhists have no other enemies. The greatest victory that we can achieve is to practice kindness and compassion. When this is done there are no losers. Let us, on this

momentous occasion; resolve to tread that noble path taught to us by the greatest Teacher of all, Lord Buddha.