

Mahamaheem's Speech for Buddha Purnima Festival at Varanasi on 17th May, 2011

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends from Media,

It is a matter of immense pleasure for me to have been invited to participate on the occasion of 2600th year of Enlightenment and Dhammachakka Pavattana commemoration of Lord Buddha at Mulagandha Kutya Vihara organized by Maha Bodhi Society of India, Varanasi. Today, It is Buddha Purnima and I extend my hearty greetings to all the followers.

Sarnath is a historical site of great importance. It is the cradle of Buddha-dharma as the world knows it today. Inspired by one man's journey to end suffering for all living beings, Buddhism today occupies a unique place in our civilization.

I welcome all the guests and foreign delegates to the sacred city of temples and ghats. Varanasi is known worldwide for its exquisite culture. It is also one of the most important pilgrimage destination and known for being great city of learning. Great and notable personalities who happened to be residents of Varanasi like Munshi Prem

Chand, Mahamana Madan Mohan Malviya, Lal Bahadur Shastriji, Bismillah Khan Saheb, Girija Devi and many more have added feathers to this city.

On the full-moon night of Vaishaka, in 623 B.C., Lord Buddha was born in Lumbini in a royal family. It was a rare coincidence that Lord Buddha attained enlightenment and passed into Mahaparinirvan on Purnima day. For this rare triple coincidence associated with Lord Buddha's life, this day is rightly known as a thrice-blessed day.

As you are aware, Lord Buddha had discovered that pain and suffering were the fundamental facts of life.

Though a Prince, having at his disposal all comforts of life, he renounced the world at an early age to discover the cause of pain and the means to seek deliverance from it. After attaining enlightenment, he showed the path of overcoming suffering to his followers through right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindedness and right concentration. He was concerned with removal of suffering and he laid emphasis on ethics, humanism, wisdom, loving compassion and fraternity. His teachings which were

confined to the East has now spread to every nook and corner of the world.

The time-tested teachings of Lord Buddha are more relevant during the present times that they were ever before. The world today is on the brink of a total disaster and adherence to Lord Buddha's teachings of peace, tranquility and fraternity alone can avert such an imminent disaster. Therefore, on this blessed day the best homage we could pay to Lord Buddha would be to re-dedicate ourselves to his teachings of peace, love, compassion and fraternity, by appealing to people at national and

international levels to strive for a national and international order where peace, love and fraternal relations prevail.

I thank Maha Bodhi Society of India for inviting me to this function and giving this opportunity to associate myself in this function.

Thankyou. Namaskar