

**Speech of His Excellency, Shri Ram Nath Kovind
on Inaugural Session of the 2nd International Dhamma Conference
on 19/11/2015 At Bodhgaya**

His Holiness Phraa Thikan Kukrit Savasdiphol, Chief Abbot, Watpa Napapong, Bangkok, Venerable Sudhamma Lankara Thero, General Secretary, MBSI Venerable Sandalankara Bhikkhu, President, IBC, Venerable K. Medhankara Thero, Joint Secretary, Maha Bodhi Society of India, Venerable Lobsang Norbu Shastri, Vice Chancellor Central University of Tibetan Studies, Vice Chancellor, Magadh University, Commissioner Magadh Division, Director, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Secretary, Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee, Media Representatives, Ladies & Gentlemen.

It gives me immense pleasure in joining the inaugural session of '2nd International Dhamma Conference', which has been organized with the theme -- "The Words of the Buddha: Awakening Global Consciousness". The main theme of the conference is very relevant and effectual which touches deeply the hearts and minds of mankind.

As we know the Buddha was a unique Being. He was the profoundest of thinkers, the most persuasive of speakers, the most energetic of workers, the most successful of reformers, the most compassionate and tolerant of teachers, the most efficient of administrators. The most notable characteristic of the Buddha was His absolute purity and perfect holiness. He was so pure and so holy that He should be called "the Holiest of Holies." He was the perfect model of all the virtues He preached everybody who came in

contact with Him, acknowledged His indisputable greatness and was deeply influenced by His magnetic personality.

His will, wisdom, compassion, service, renunciation, exemplary personal life, the blameless methods that were employed to propagate the Dhamma, and His final success -- all these factors have contributed to hail the Buddha as the greatest religious Teacher.

The Buddha was the first most active missionary in the world. He travelled from place to place for forty-five years preaching His doctrine to the masses and the intelligentsia. Till His last moment, he served humanity both by example and by precept. His distinguished disciples followed suit. Penniless, they even travelled to distant lands to propagate the Dhamma, expecting nothing in return.

The Buddha as we know is a supreme human being, who through His own effort, attained to Final Deliverance and Perfect Wisdom, and became 'the peerless teacher of gods and men.' He is a 'Saviour' only in the sense that He shows men how to save themselves, by actually following to the end the Path trodden and shown by Him. In the consummate harmony of Wisdom and Compassion attained by the Buddha, he embodies the universal and timeless ideal of Man Perfected.

The Dhamma, the truth by the Buddha, is uncovered gradually through sustained practice. The Buddha made clear many times that Awakening does not occur like a bolt out of the blue to the untrained and unprepared mind. Rather, it culminates a long journey of many stages. The Dhamma is the Teaching of Deliverance in its entirety, as discovered, realized and proclaimed by the Buddha. The Dhamma is not

a doctrine of revelation, but the teaching of Enlightenment based on the clear comprehension of actuality. It is the teaching of the Fourfold Truth dealing with the fundamental facts of life and with liberation attainable through man's own effort towards purification and insight. The Dhamma offers a lofty, but realistic system of ethics, a penetrative analysis of life, a profound philosophy, a practical method of mind training-in brief, an all-comprehensive and perfect guidance on the Path to Deliverance.

The Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, are called 'The Three Jewels' (ti-ratana) on account of their matchless purity, and as being to the Buddhist the most precious objects in the world. These 'Three Jewels' form also the 'Threefold Refuge' (ti-sara.na) of the Buddhist, in the words by which he professes, or re-affirms, his acceptance of them as the guides of his life and thought.

Buddha discovered three great truths. He explained these truth in a simple way so that everyone could understand them.

The first truth is that nothing is lost in the universe. Matter turns into energy, energy turns into matter. A dead leaf turns into soil. A seed sprouts and becomes a new plant. Old solar systems disintegrate and turn into cosmic rays. We are born of our parents, our children are born of us. We are the same as plants, as trees, as other people, as the rain that falls. We consist of that which is around us, we are the same as everything. If we destroy something around us, we destroy ourselves. If we cheat another, we cheat ourselves. Understanding this truth, the Buddha and his disciples never killed any animal.

The second universal truth of the Buddha is that everything is continuously changing. Life is like a river flowing on and on, ever-changing. Sometimes it flows slowly and sometimes swiftly. It is smooth and gentle in some places, but later on snags and rocks crop up out of nowhere. As soon as we think we are safe, something unexpected happens.

The third universal truth explained by the Buddha is that there is continuous changes due to the laws of cause and effect. This is the same law of cause and effect found in every modern science textbook. In this way, science and Buddhism are alike.

The law of cause and effect is known as **Karma**. Nothing ever happens to us unless we deserves it. We receive exactly what we earn, whether it is good or bad. We are now due to the things that we have done in the past. Our thoughts and actions determine the kind of life we can have. If we do good things, in future good things will happen to us. If we do bad things, in future bad things will happen to us. Every moment we create new karma by what we say, do, and think. If we understand this, we do not need to fear karma. It becomes our friend. It teaches us to create a bright future.

The Buddha said :-

"The kind of seed sown
will produce that kind of fruit.

Those who do good will reap good results.

Those who do evil will reap evil results.

If you carefully plant a good seed,

You will joyfully gather good fruit."

I wish to congratulate the organizers of this Conference –specially the Maha Bodhi Society of India, the International Buddhist Council of Buddhagaya and BE BUDDHAWAJANA WORLD INTERNATIONAL, Bangkok, Thailand for their untiring efforts in organizing such a valuable Conference for the benefit of one and all living in this world and also very much appreciate the participation of learned Speakers attending this Conference from different countries of the world, speaking on the theme “Words of the Buddha: Awakening Global Consciousness”.

Once again I thank you all for inviting me in this holy conference.

Jai Hind!

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