



UN VESAK Day 2012

On the auspicious occasion of UN Vesak Day, I convey my best wishes to all followers of Lord Buddha's teachings. I also compliment the Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University and the Royal Thai government, the principal hosts, for organizing the commemorative ceremonies. The University's efforts, coming in the wake of damage caused by last year's floods, are indeed commendable.

2. Vesak, which commemorates the three signal events in the life of Lord Buddha - Birth, Enlightenment and Passing Away – is also known as Buddha Purnima in India. The celebrations this year are of particular significance, as these mark 2600 years of His enlightenment.

3. The profound message of Lord Buddha has inspired generations of monks, scholars and pilgrims in our countries. It is undoubtedly one of the most valued strands of the shared heritage of India, Thailand and some other Asian countries. The Dhamma Chakra is a visible symbol in our lands of His teachings on righteousness. It is apt that it is also reflected in India's national emblem.

4. Vesak offers to all of us an opportunity to reflect on the life and teachings of Lord Buddha. It inspires us to attain the potential for inner peace and happiness that lies within us all. It provides us an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to living a moral and compassionate life.

5. The theme for the 2012 celebrations – "The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Well Being of Humanity" is of great relevance today. In our strife torn and conflict ridden world, one in which unsustainable exploitation of environment and natural resources has endangered our future generations, all of us need to reflect on His message of peace and compassion and strive to follow it in our thought and actions. May His teachings continue to enlighten our common path.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anil Wadhwa".
(Anil Wadhwa)