



MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY

Wisdom of the Land

Message from the President of Mahidol University

The theme of this year's Day of Vesak Conference, '*Buddhist Virtues in Socio-Economic Development*' is indeed an intriguing and timely theme.

Within this theme, an essential question is not how can we create a Buddhist socio-economic system, but rather, how can Buddhists be virtuous within any given socio-economic system. It is clear that in the Tipitaka virtuous people help create a virtuous society, and a virtuous society can become a prosperous society.

The Buddha was not so much concerned with the type of socio-economic system in place, as he was with the virtue of those taking part in that system; for even the best system will fail if the people are immoral. Thus, in the present world, where some form of global capitalism operates in most countries, we still see rich and poor countries.

While many factors contribute to the difference in the wealth of nations, the Buddha would not be surprised to see that the most prosperous nations, those that bring the most benefit to all citizens, are the nations with the least political and economic corruption.

It's therefore a challenge for each individual Buddhist to be an example of Buddhist virtue and to influence others. Under the influence of these virtuous people, socio-economic conditions will begin to develop for the better

This is the true power of Buddhist Virtue in Socio-Economic Development, and it is my sincere hope that this Day of Vesak will contribute to the development of Buddhist virtue, and the socio-economic betterment of Buddhists and others around the world.

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President