

Day 3
Radio Thailand Special Report
Promotion of Buddhism Week on Magha Puja Day
11 February 2017

To all Buddhists, today is the first auspicious Buddhist holiday of the calendar year known as Magha Puja Day. The Magha Puja Day was first introduced in Thailand by His Majesty King Mongkut and it was first celebrated in 1851. The celebration is performed to emphasize the significance of the teachings of the Buddha. It was the day when the Buddha constituted the Main Code of his instructions which is universally regarded as the heart of Buddhism. In another word, it was the day the Buddha laid out his teaching into a revolutionary format of vision, mission and action.

Last two days, I have explained a gist of Buddhist vision and mission. Today, let me clarify on the part of action. The Buddha laid out his action for us by saying: *“No malice, no injury, disciplined in behaving, moderate in consumption, high-thinking and simple living, this is the Buddhas’ teaching.”*

Mankind has always been professed in the mysterious power of gods and spirits including some kinds of external power as the controller of human life and society. This makes people not independent at all and they are endlessly engaged themselves in pleasing and sacrificing those invisible beings and powers. Although no one knows whether human’s acts of pleasing really please the invisible beings or not we still continue to please those powers regardless of its efficiency and exception. With such perception, human are living under the shadow of fear of invisible and unknowing power and not feel independent at all. Responding to such popular idea, the Buddha totally revolutionized the human’s perception by instructing us to abandon it totally. He described that it is our own action or the karma which operates human life and society. Karma is our own action without any influence of mystical or external power. In other words, it is our consciousness what Buddha actually called karma. Therefore, we should understand our true ‘self’ and as a result we can be in charge of our own action and behavior that will lead to happiness of each individual and the whole world. This is the first revolution on human perception introduced to the world by the Buddha on the Magha Puja Day.

Secondly, mankind has always been believed in many things without proper investigation and scrutiny. To this respond, the Buddha pointed out that any belief based upon mere traditions or hearsay, the authority of religious texts, or even based upon the consideration: ‘This is our Teacher’ might be right or wrong. We should, therefore, fully scrutinize everything with the wisdom before we believe in it. There is no reason for us to jump to conclusion without proper investigation and rationalization. Therefore, the Buddha prompted us to develop wisdom efficiency and be confident in power of wisdom and rationality rather

than flimsy logic. Mankind has always been believed in something based upon their emotion rather than basing their judgement on wisdom and rationality. To a certain extent, the Buddha even told us to be cautious with mere rationality as it also needs to be scrutinized with wisdom. This is the second revolution on human belief system introduced to the world by the Buddha on the Magha Puja Day.

Finally, the Buddha condemned people's behavior for treating others unequally based on castes, ethnicity, and gender. He pointed out that one does not become a high or low by birth but by living well with virtue and behavior. It is like saying in our society a true gentleman is not born into a particular family but someone who behaves properly. The Buddha also condemned the idea and belief that one gets merits and happiness by harming other's life either of human or animal in the name of sacrifice and ritual. He pointed out that such behavior is not true and irrational. He questioned how things instigated by suffering of others will bring happiness? How things instigated with destruction can bring the result of peace and calming? The Buddha, therefore, advised us to behave properly towards others, not to harm both others and self and to generate loving-kindness by understanding life as it truly is. This is another revolution on human behavior the Buddha revolutionized drastically both of the individual and society on the Magha Puja Day.

Let all of us revolutionize our perception according to the Magha Puja message as a celebration of Magha Puja for our own happiness and peace.