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THURSDAY - 11 MAY 2017

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ISSUE 1327

14th International Vesak Day to be hosted by Sri Lanka



United Nations Day of **VESAK**
2560 B.E./2017 SRI LANKA

SundayTimes.lk) - This year, 2017, will be the 14th International Day of Vesak will be hosted by Sri Lanka. The commemorations will include an International Buddhist Conference, with the participation of over 400 delegates from over 100 countries.

Vesak is the name used for the 2nd month in the traditional Moon calendar(Lunar calendar) which corresponds with the month of may in the Gregorian calendar(Solar calendar). It was on the full moon day in the month of Vesak, Prince Siddhartha was born, became enlightened and attained Mahaparinibbana. Below we reproduce The Sunday Times, 'Sunday Punch', Trilogy of Buddhas' Life.

THE BIRTH OF SIDDHARTHA

Morning had broken. The dawn the world and the heavens had for epochs waited to break upon the land, had finally come to pass. And on that Vesak full moon day 2640 years ago, in the year 623BC, the rising sun sheds its tender early morn light to reveal the scene of a royal litter emerging from the gates of Kapilavasthu, the capital of the Shakyas, in northern India.

At the centre of this royal convoy, borne upon a golden palanquin, sits the queen of the domain. She is accompanied by her sister and a host of royal attendants. With the blessings of her husband the king, she is leaving the gates of

his kingdom, embarked upon a journey to her parents' palace in Devadaha. Heavy with child, Queen Mahamaya is going home for her confinement to bear a son to her husband King Suddhodana and provide an heir to his royal throne. Add New

As the royal litter progresses upon its chartered path at a sedate pace so as not to jolt the expectant mother and cause any untoward happening, the Queen reflects on the extraordinary events that had occurred in the months recently past. The failure to bear a child for many years had been the subject of vicious social comments and snide court gossip. Her barrenness was taken as an omen to the terrible fate that awaited the royal kingdom and, though none dared to express it in her presence, she knew they privately ostracized her for it. Perhaps even the king, though so kind, gentle and loving, bore some ill will, secretly and unconsciously deep in his heart; and it had caused her pain to think that she was the source of his unspoken grief over her inability to conceive. And then, just when she had resigned herself to a life of sorrow, there came the dream.

Ah, yes, how vividly she remembered that dream — the dream she had had nearly a year ago. She had dreamt that she had been carried forth by the four world deities to the tableland

of the Himalayas. There the wives of the four world guardians had welcomed her and taken her to the Lake Mansarovar. In its cool, clear and refreshing waters they had bathed her and then dressed her in a robe of exquisite beauty and decked her with gold ornaments and garlanded her with sweet smelling flowers of divine scent.

Then, through the distant hazy mist that engulfed the plateau, she saw approaching her, a white silvery elephant of magnificent appearance, which walked with measured steps and noble bearing. It circled her thrice; and then, with a salutation with its raised trunk, entered her soul. When she awoke, she had related the dream to the king who immediately summoned the royal astrologers to interpret its import. They prophesied that the queen was destined to give birth to a son who will do his father proud. "He will be," they proclaimed, "A ruler not only of this province but of the world. An emperor whose empire will be forever." Even as she recalled those words now, Mahamaya experiences a sudden surge of tears break out from her eyes and cascade down her cheeks, the same surge of joyous emotion she had felt that day ... SEE P21

Aravinda de Silva resigns

(SundayTimes.lk) - Sri Lanka Cricket has plunged into a fresh crisis with the resignation of Aravinda de Silva — the chief of its Cricket Committee and Thilanga Sumathipala's cricket mentor — over the Allan Donald spat. Last week Sri Lanka Cricket was in elation following the deal with former South Africa fast bowler Allan Donald for a two month stint — mainly during the Sri Lanka's Champion's Trophy excursion. On the instruction of SLC president Sumathipala, National Captain Angelo Mathews was quoted as saying "We are indeed grateful to SLC for providing us with all the support we need both in terms of technology and expertise. I have been given the best possible team — and the resource personnel who have

been supporting us are nothing short of fantastic. The addition of a legend like Allan Donald will be an invaluable step up for us, especially in English conditions. It is now up to us to give it our all in the middle and firmly raise the flag high". But, the move seems to have fired to the wrong bull's eye administratively. The moment this news reached Aravinda de Silva, he fired out a letter to SLC vice president Jayantha Dharmadasa, who is in charge of International Cricket, saying that he had decided to relieve himself with national cricket duties from June 30. However after a spate of disagreements with the SLC hierarchy, Dharmadasa himself is a hesitant starter in its line-up at present. Nevertheless he was at the Donald press briefing — taking a back seat at the head table. However the Sunday Times learns that de Silva was not happy with the state of affairs at SLC and this was not the first instance that de Silva was kept in the dark when very important cricketing decisions were taken in recent times. He has had more than one disagreement with Chief Cricket Selector Sanath Jayasuriya. The move to sign in Donald as the fast bowling consultant was pioneered by VP Dharmadasa and Sanath Jayasuriya with the blessings of SLC

President Sumathipala. However, with this new development, Sri Lanka will not have any Sri Lankans manning pivotal positions in the coaching department during the Champions Trophy tour. In contrast the Bangladesh National team has at least three Lankans in their camp — Chandika Hathurusinghe (Head coach), Thilana Samaraweera (Batting coach) and Mario Villavarayan (Strength and conditioning Coach). In Sri Lanka it will be — Graham Ford — Head Coach, Allan Donald — Consultant Fast Bowling Coach, Nic Pothus — Fielding Coach, Nick Lee — Trainer, Sriram Somayajula- Analyst. Only Ajantha Wattegama — Physiotherapist and Rohan Priyadarshana — Masseur are Sri Lankans. A name that will be conspicuous will be of fast bowling Coach Champaka Ramanayake who has been doing more than a decent job in the middle. Besides Ramanayake, Sri Lanka has Chaminda Vaas, Ravindra Pushpakumara and Nuwan Zoysa. According to our sister newspaper Lankadeepa, Aravinda de Silva, when asked about Donald's contract, had commented, "What can a person do in two months".

An obviously shaken Sumathipala making a statement with regard to de Silva's resignation said, "For someone like Aravinda cricket is a full time occupation..... SEE P30



Aravinda de Silva resigns as chief of SLC Cricket Committee

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