

Buddhist chiefs call Sri Lankan President to withdraw impeachment against Chief Justice

(A rare combined statement issued by the leaders (Mahanayaka theras) of Sri Lanka's four Buddhist chapters)

28 November 2012

His Excellency the President
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Temple Trees
Colombo 3

Your Excellency,

Importance of avoiding apprehension in the minds of the people in dispensing law and justice in a Democratic Society

Sri Lanka is an island which won the eulogy "Daham Divayina" from time immemorial and was praised here and abroad. But society at present is full of grave crimes such as murders, rape, robberies, arson, abductions, bribery, drug trafficking and child abuse; committed with craving and hatred. Almost every day these are reported in the media. These pernicious acts imply the lack of security and value of human life. There is more room for deterioration of human values, in the absence of equilibrium between materialistic, spiritual and ethical development and apprehension with regard to the equity in law. If there is a collapse in law and order it is rather difficult to rise up as a righteous nation. If we are to rekindle the fast vanishing human values in our country, we must make the man a humanist, who respects human values. Teaching of Lord Buddha elucidates that selfish craving, ignorance, hatred, lead to the destruction of human society. We can establish peace and happiness in our country by following Buddha's teaching and propagating and practicing patience and loving kindness. Many lessons can be learnt by the ruler and the subject if they follow the "Chakkavathi Sihanada" Sutra, the discourse by Lord Buddha, and take refuge in the teachings of Buddha. The time has come for all social institutions including the government to work together to bring this society out of this mire, taking into consideration the saying of Buddha, "To be born as a human is arduous and rare".

The Legislature, Executive and the Judiciary can perform an immense service to maintain morals, law and peace in any civilized democratic society. It should be based on law, justice, patience and fairness. In order to achieve this end, it is not proper to resort to actions which will generate an apprehension with regard to the judiciary and the judges. It will be harmful rather than beneficial. It is certain to affect the honour and the trust that the judiciary of Sri Lanka had up to now in the world.

Majority of the people think that the impeachment motion against the Chief Justice will lead to a disenchantment about all branches of the judiciary. Therefore the government should think patiently about the ill effect of the prevailing attempt of the Legislature, Executive and the Judiciary to go above the other and take steps to safeguard the independence of the judiciary and solidify the feelings of justice in the minds of the people. By the display of just behaviour of the government it will

definitely generate a feeling of satisfaction in the minds of the people.

It is possible to get humans to respect law and traditions by acting according to human ethics without scorn. Therefore to avoid the breakdown in law and deterioration of society as a result of the impeachment motion we kindly request that the impeachment motion be withdrawn, taking into consideration the recent recommendation of the Supreme Court. This will be beneficial to the country.

May you have the refuge of the Triple Gem!

1. Thibbotuwawe Sri Sumangalabhidana Maha Nayake Sthavira of Mahaviharawanshika Shyamopali Mahanikaya (Malawathu Chapter)
2. Udugama Sadharma Keerthi Sri Rathanapala Buddharakkhithabidana Maha Nayake Sthavira of Mahaviharawanshika Shyamopali Mahanikaya (Asgiri Chapter)
3. Napana Pemasiri of Sri Lanka Rammanya Mahanikaye Maha Nayaka Stavira
4. Davuldena Sri Gnanissarabhidhana Maha Nayake Sthavira of Amarapura Maha Nikhaya