

14th April, 2020.

Donation of Dry Rations to Needy People in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has been suffering from Covid-19 virus from the beginning of March, 2020. Some people, who have infected this virus, caused to spread this virus through the country by travelling many places and associated with many people, including their relatives and friends. As a result, more than 40000, people have been corontined and some selected areas were completely shut down. The Government imposed the curfew all over the country, and some districts: Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara and Jaffna were named as the red areas. All the religious observances have been stopped, even at Poyadays, Buddhist devotees were requested to do the religious activates while staying at homes.

Sri Lanka Government, Army, Police, doctors and other relevant stake holders are working day and night to protect the people from this dangerous virus, disregarding their life in danger.

All the shops, supermarkets, and the Government offices were kept closed for a certain period and at present, a system has been introduced to order the food items from the selected several super markets via internet or the telephone but unfortunately to get that chance has to wait for a long time perhaps, few days. Educated and rich people who have such facilities are capable to do that but not for the others. Some vegetable sellers are time to time selling food items alone the roads but choices are not much and also need money to buy.

More than 1500 families are living in shanty houses, alone the coastal area between Mount Lavinia and Dehiwala. Most of them have no proper income sources to cover their day-to-day life expenses, and they are doing odd jobs in the Colombo city. This is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious area hence, Buddhists, Muslims, Catholics, and Hindus are living together.

The Curfew has been imposed for the last few weeks and still it is continuing. Under this chaotic situation these people have faced for big economical problem even to buy food for surviving. Since these economically needy people have no way to live, most probably they will engage in thievery around. Because of this situation, other people are living in fear of them.

Considering all these miserable conditions, the most Ven. Senior Prof. Medawachchiye Dhammajothi Thero, distributed dry rations for these people, living around his temple in Mount Lavinia. He selected 900, the poorest people from the 1500 people. 100 milk powder packets were giving to the families who have children. The difficulty which he faced was there is no place to buy such a huge number of dry rations in

Colombo city. So, it happened him to buy these things from Medawachchiya area and deliver to his temple in Mount Lavinia, Colombo. Other activities related to this meritorious deed, such as going to these shanty houses and select poor families, counting families with children, packing those items into bags etc., were also not easy tasks. The other problem is no body is allowed to go out of their houses and to gather one place because of the curfew.

The Buddha Said. **“Jagadupakrutireva mama Buddhapuja” (helping to people (in need) is the offering to me)**. In respecting to the Buddha’s word, **Ven. Dhammajothi**, as a Buddhist monk, decided to help these people, with the help of some of his foreign students.

Pointing out the above word uttered by the Buddha, he motivated these foreign students to help him to fulfil this meritorious deed, saying them that it is their duty to look after these miserable people living around. It is the correct way to offer the Buddha rather than offering him many other ways. It is the best way for them to follow the Buddha as young educated and wise Buddhists. At this difficult time, they have way to live without much prejudices, because they have accumulated enough merits in the previous lives, doing meritorious deeds, such as donating food, money, knowledge etc., to others. So, they have good education, good jobs, and sound income. Strong and wealthy human should protect economically unhealthy human beings, irrespecting their caste, creed and religion.

May the noble triple gem bless you always.

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