

## Press Release

### Vesak Celebrations held at Nuga Gama, Cinnamon Grand



Vesak was celebrated on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of May at Nuga Gama, ‘the village in the city’ with the Nuga Gama staff creating a peaceful setting to ensure as guests observed the traditions and fellowship of this religious festival in a typical village setting.

Nearly 2000 guests gathered at Nuga Gama over the two day period to experience the Vesak celebrations. Nuga Gama was decorated with many Buddhist flags, pandols and even a torana, which depicted one of the 550 Jataka Katha or the 550 Past Life Stories of the Buddha with a translation for foreign guests. There was also a dansala in keeping to Vesak’s traditions, distributing flavoured “Saruvath” throughout the weekend.

In the evenings, beautiful Vesak lanterns and flickering lamps adorned the Nuga tree, creating a peaceful serenity around this majestic 200 year old banyan tree and setting the scene for the traditional experience to follow. They participated in Vesak activities such as bhakti gee, visited the Cinnamon Grand dansala and even partook in a special vegetarian menu.

As part of the Cinnamon Grand’s early Vesak celebrations a group of 50 Samanera monks were invited to visit Nuga Gama, ‘the village in the city’ to perform a dhane on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May.

In keeping with the traditions of Vesak, Nuga Gama served strictly vegetarian fare throughout the Vesak time period for both lunch and dinner. Bhakti gee was also conducted by the Maduwanthie Cultural Troupe as they sang religious songs to obtain blessings from Lord Buddha and to spread the philosophy and teachings of Buddhism.

“Vesak is an important time of the year in Sri Lanka,” said General Manager Rohan Karr. “We wanted to honour tradition, religion and Vesak customs at our very own village in the city and we were very pleased with the celebrations,” he said.