DEVOTEES at the Sri Lankaramaya Buddhist Temple are celebrating Vesak Day today - although the public holiday falls on June 2 - and this 7.6m-tall revolving lantern will be a highlight.

Those marking it this month are mainly followers of the Theravada form of Buddhism, from countries such as Sri Lanka, Thailand and Myanmar.

Most adherents of Mahayana Buddhism, practised in countries such as China, Korea, and Japan, will remember the birth, enlightenment and final nirvana of the Buddha next month.

This year's different dates arose from the different calendars used: Theravada Buddhists use the 12-month solar calendar, whereas Mahayana Buddhists use the lunar calendar.

So, in Sri Lanka, for example, Vesak Day falls on the full moon day of the fifth month - May.

But in, say, China, it falls on the full moon day of the fourth month of the Chinese calendar.

Normally, both dates coincide.

But on 'extremely rare occasions', said Mr Pua Yeow Khoong, director of public relations at the Singapore Buddhist Federation, the dates will differ as they did this year.