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The Island

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China lends Zimbabwe £600m

World View



National security, national interest and 13th Amendment

Page 5



'Shan'ban-thota' or the harbour of Hamban-thota?

Page 6



Upon First Looking Into A Garland for Ashley

See Page 10

MR won't tolerate dissent, vows to implement political solution

Remembering his Royal father



A ceremony to commemorate old Royalists who sacrificed their lives in the war against the LTTE was held at Royal College, Colombo yesterday. In the picture, son of Lt Dhammika Tennekoon, an old Royalist who was killed in the battle against the LTTE in Mankulam in 1998, places flowers at the commemorative plaque in the school premises. The chief guest old Royalist and Presidential Advisor Lalith Weerasinghe along with the school principal Upali Gunasekera and several security forces personnel attended the ceremony. (Photo-Kamal Bogoda)

by Shamindra Ferdinando

President Mahinda Rajapaksa wouldn't tolerate any dissent within his government to proposed devolution of power to the provinces on the basis of 13th Amendment to the Constitution, Media Minister Lakshman Yapa Abeywardena said at a press conference at the Information Department. The President had emphasised that he wouldn't give in to pressure from any party, he said.

Minister Yapa said the President had received an assurance from coalition parties, at a special meeting held at Temple Trees, on Tuesday (June 30) that they wouldn't hinder his efforts.

Recently the UNP and JVP challenged the President to reveal his position on the 13th Amendment against the backdrop of JHU and National Freedom Front (NFF) declaring war on devolution of power. The JVP, too, has vowed to oppose the 13th Amendment.

The President has told his ministers that this could be tackled the way he had handled opposition to the country's war against LTTE terrorism. Responding to *The Island* query whether the President had told the JHU and National Freedom Front (NFF) led by Wimal Weerawansa, MP not to cause trouble, the minister said that none of coalition partners had challenged the President's position.

The President has assured that he wouldn't do anything detrimental to the country while seeking an opportunity to overcome what he had categorised as the second major problem confronted by his government.



Yapa
Continued on page 7

Petrol up by Rs. 10, Diesel by Rs. 3, Kerosene by 1, furnace oil by Rs. 1

by Norman Palihawadana and Shamindra Ferdinando

The government has increased fuel prices with effect from midnight Wednesday (July 01).

CPC Chairman Brigadier (ret'd) Asoka Thoradeniya, who yesterday morning told *The Island* that President Mahinda Rajapaksa had

turned down a request to increase fuel prices and wanted the Government to bear any loss, last night said that a litre of



Petrol 90 Octane had been increased by Rs. 10 and Octane 95 by Rs. 15, diesel by Rs. 3 and kerosene

by Rs. 1. Furnace oil has gone up by Rs. 1.

Continued on page 7

Triple murder in Horana

by Norman Palihawadana

A father, mother and their 25-year-old daughter were chopped to death on Tuesday night in Poruwandanda, Horana.

It is suspected that a per-

son involved in an incident of rape involving the murdered daughter over 10 years ago could have been behind this gruesome murder.

Continued on page 7

Tea Board to hold back taxes due from companies

by Ifham Nizam

The Tea Board will retain taxes payable to the Treasury by plantation companies since it has been found many companies have failed to pay taxes.

These taxes are payable by the companies since most of the plantation companies use State owned land. But currently they collect their sales proceeds from the Tea Board since sales are made through the Tea Board and thereafter evade taxes.

Plantation Industries Minister D. M. Jayaratne told *The Island* yesterday that despite strict instructions to plantation companies that they pay all

Continued on page 7



Jayaratne

UNP offshoot withering away

by Shamindra Ferdinando

The UNP (Democratic Group) in the Rajapaksa administration will shortly cease to exist. Of nearly 20 MPs in the group, all have now obtained SLFP membership and received appointments as electoral organisers except Tourism Minister Millinda Moragoda, Parliamentary Affairs Minister M. H. Mohammed and Supplementary Crops Development Minister Dharmadasa Banda.

Addressing the press at the Information Department yesterday July 1, Media Minister Lakshman Yapa Abeywardena, also of the UNP D Group said that they would contest the next parliamentary

Continued on page 7

Attacks on Media

Yapa regrets police inaction

Dismissing criticism on the failure on the part of the Media Ministry to prevent a continuing wave of attacks on the media, Media Minister Lakshman Yapa Abeywardena said that they had done everything possible to protect the media. He said that though the situation with regard to attacks on the media had been brought to the notice of the police

and army action hadn't been taken in this regard.

Commenting on Labour Minister Mervyn Silva's controversial decision to thwart *Sirasa* from covering a ceremony at the BMICH to honour journalists for their coverage of war against terrorism, Yapa said that Silva didn't throw away the *Sirasa* microphone but kept it

Continued on page 7

Welgama certain cement prices will drop

by Ifham Nizam

Industrial Development Minister Kumara Welgama is confident that with the reduction of cement prices in the world market, the price in Sri Lanka too would come down soon.

At a press conference held at his ministry in Colombo on Tuesday, in connection with the forthcoming Machinery Exhibition 2009, he said though

the price of cement had gone up earlier, it had come down to Rs. 730 per 50 kg bag recently.

He also expressed confidence that cement could be sold cheaper with the reconstruction of the cement factory in Kankasanturai which had been closed down because of terrorism. Plans were afoot to commence manufacturing in Kankasanturai with foreign collaboration if necessary, the Minister said.

The Sri Lankan Government will retain 51 per cent of the stake in the event of foreign collaboration Welgama stressed that the factory in Kankasanturai, built on a 772-acre land, would create many job opportunities.



Welgama

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