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The Island

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Expediting resettlement process

Pascoe assures UN assistance

by Harischandra Gunaratna

The visiting UN Under Secretary General for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe yesterday assured UN assistance to expedite the resettlement process of the IDPs, accommodated in welfare centres.



Pascoe

Addressing a press conference last night at the Foreign Ministry, he emphasised that resettlement and rehabilitation had to be done as soon as possible. He expressed satisfaction at the pace of the ongoing demining process.

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Joint Trade Unions demand Thonda's resignation

Financial Review

Mangala against death sentence

by Dasun Edirisinghe

Sri Lanka Freedom Party (Mahajana Wing) leader Mangala Samaraweera, MP, yesterday said his party was strongly opposed to the re-implementation of the death sentence. Most countries in the world had done away with the death sentence since they refused to be convinced that it could appropriately deal with underworld crimes, he said.



Mangala

"If it is reintroduced, the Government would use it to hang those who raise their voice against it," Samaraweera said.

Addressing a Press Conference at the SLFP(M) head office in Rajagiriya, he said that today the Police and Attorney General's Departments were politicised and handled by the government. The police and AG's departments were not implementing the rule of law against ruling party politicians or their relatives, he said. The law applied only to innocent civilians who represented 80 per cent of the population. In this situation, implementation of death sentence would be very dangerous, Samaraweera said.

"The Police are handled by the Rajapaksa brothers. They couldn't find the culprits of recent brutal killings, including senior journalist Lasantha Wickremethunge, MP Raviraja Nadaraj and MP T. Maheswaran. The investigations on these incidents are very slow. Drug dealers have strong connections with powerful

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Relieved of labour pain



Plantation sector President of the Employers Federation, Lalith Obeyesekere hands over a copy of the collective agreement signed with three main estate sector trade unions on wage increase to Labour Relations and Manpower Minister Athauda Seneviratne at the Labour Ministry, Narahenpita yesterday. Looking on are Mahinda Madihahewa, Secretary to the Labour Ministry and Upali Wijeweera, Commissioner General of Labour.

UN Spl Envoy: Probes into C-4 video prompt but not impartial

Philip Alston, the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, has said that he could attest, based on the information made available by the Government, that the four separate investigations undertaken into the Channel 4 video were "prompt" since they took place within two weeks of the airing of the video in late August. He said that the investigation was not impartial.



Alston

Alston said he could not conclude that they were "thorough" or "impartial," as two of the experts were from the Sri Lankan Army.

Another expert has previously acted on behalf of the Government, and the basis on which the fourth was chosen as an expert remains unclear.

"The final question that remains is whether the information provided by the Government raises significant doubts as to the authenticity of the video," said Alston in a

statement. "On this question, my conclusion is that the views expressed do indeed raise several issues which warrant further investigation before it could reasonably be concluded that the video is authentic.

"The only way to do this is for an independent and impartial investigation to take place," stated Alston, who serves in an independent and unpaid capacity and reports to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Meanwhile, the Human Rights Ministry yesterday welcomed Philip Alston's statement saying he now acknowledged that a report which was shared with him by the Government on the controversial Channel 4 video led him to the conclusion that "the views expressed do indeed raise several issues which warrant further investigation before it could reasonably be concluded that the video is authentic."

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HR probe: Lanka informed of US move

by Shamindra Ferdinando

Robert O. Blake, Assistant Secretary, South and Central Asian Affairs has informed Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Washington Jaliya Wickremasuriya that a report on the conduct of government forces during the war against the LTTE would be submitted to the US Congress on Monday (September 21).

Ministerial and Defence sources told *The Island* that this was expected as part of their strategy to pressure Sri Lanka on the human rights front. Sources pointed out that the US move preceded UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs B. Lynn Pascoe's visit to Colombo to discuss what the UN Office in Colombo called critical issues related to the aftermath of the conflict.

According to the UN, talks would cover resettlement of internally displaced persons, political reconciliation and the establishment of a mechanism of accountability for alleged human rights violations.

Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa yesterday said that Sri Lanka was targeted by a section of the international community for being successful in her war against the LTTE, a group proscribed by India, US, UK and EU.



Gotabhaya

In a brief interview with *The Island*, the veteran soldier said that a section of the international community and their local agents had conveniently forgotten the death and destruction caused by the LTTE.

Referring to a spate of recent statements attributed to Opposition politicians, INGO/NGO activists and UN officials, he said that all this was part of a major propaganda campaign directed at the Sri Lankan government. Responding to our queries, he said that this threat was as serious as the one posed by the LTTE a year ago. A section of the media, too, had contributed to this strategy, he said, urging the international community not to adopt double standards in dealing with the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan, where US-led allied forces were fighting terrorists and Sri Lanka's war: "Our successful war should be considered as part of the global campaign against terror," he said.

He emphasised the importance of investigating the LTTE international arms procurement network now that it had been militarily defeated.

Government sources told *The Island* that in the run up to the last presidential election, an attempt had been to move a resolution in the US Senate to

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CBK given 71 security personnel, 12 vehicles - Govt.

Fears for her life unfounded

by Zacki Jabbar

Former President Chandrika Kumaratunga had been provided with a security contingent far in excess of what a Minister was given and there was no reason for her to fear for her life, Media Minister Anura Priyadarshana Yapa said yesterday.

He told the Cabinet press briefing in Colombo that remarks by Kumaratunga to the Indian media this week, that she feared for her life despite her party the SLFP, being in power, were unfounded.

The Minister said: "Mrs. Kumaratunga has been given 71 security personnel



Chandrika

which includes one Superintendent of Police, three Sub Inspectors, 27 Police Constables, 18 Sergeants, eight Police drivers, one Woman Police Constable, one army captain and 12 soldiers. She has also been provided with 12 vehicles. In contrast, a Minister gets only one Chief Inspector and five Police Constables.

The vehicles are hardly used, because Mrs. Kumaratunga is eternally abroad and her security personnel were idling in Colombo, Yapa said.

He alleged that Kumaratunga, who had not

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Bus fare hike from 22

by Harischandra Gunaratna

Lanka Private Bus Operators Association (LPBPA) Chairman Gemunu Wijeratne yesterday said that both private operators and the SLTB would increase bus fares from September 22, but the fares of the first and second sectors which was Rs. 6 and Rs. 9 would not be increased.

Addressing a news conference, Wijeratne expressed dissatisfaction at the manner in which the National



Gemunu

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Two IPOs oversubscribed

by Devan Daniel

Two Initial Public Offerings closed last evening and both issues were oversubscribed.

NAMAL Acuity Value Fund, the country's first closed ended unit trust, raised about Rs. 600 million while the Hemas Power issue was about two times oversubscribed, sources close to both IPOs said, based on applications received.

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DG SEC: Driven by local investor sentiments

CSE records highest market cap of Rs. 942 bn

by Devan Daniel

The Colombo Stock Exchange recorded the highest ever market capitalisation, which is the total value of all the stocks, of Rs. 942.6 billion yesterday, the exchange announced last evening.

The Director General of the Securities and Exchange Commission, the regulator of the Colombo Stock Exchange, Channa De Silva said it would give foreign investors an understanding about local optimism and capacity.

"The Colombo Stock Exchange

is now valued higher and it was driven mostly by local investor sentiments and foreign investors will now be able to see the level of confidence local investors hold in the country's stock exchange," De Silva told *The Island*.

"It will be interesting to see how the exchange handles this new change. The increase in the market capitalisation means that the exchange is now structured differently. It has



a higher value and reduced risk. It is an indication of the exchanges' ability to grow further," he said.

The Colombo Stock Exchange has seen exceptional gains in both indices during the year.

The All Share Price Index has gained 95.9 percent year to date and the Milanka Price Index, and index of the most liquid stock on the exchange, has gained 101.7 percent year to date.

GK suspects refused bail

by Jayantha de Silva

Mt. Lavinia Chief Magistrate Harsha Setunge yesterday refused bail to 14 suspects arrested in connection with the Rs. 26 billion Golden Key Credit Card scam. He ordered three others to appear in Court when



Lalith

The case will be taken up on October 1. State Counsel Damith Totawatte objecting to the bail applications said that the Ceylinco - Cisco establishment, under the Ceylinco Group, also employs former Police and Service personnel in its ranks.

If the suspects were

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DATE	SUN RISE	SUN SET	SUBAH	MAGRIB	ISHA
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