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The Island

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Page 10 Cambodia threatens to ban entry of Thai goods



Page 16 World Cup Schedule Announced



Ranil puts forth conditions for endorsing Fonseka's candidature

Appoint govt. with Ranil as PM, revoke Emergency
Give TNA, JVP Cabinet posts, end Exec. presidency
TNA should accept Fonseka's stand on Tamil issues

Close on the heels of the newly formed UNP-led United National Alliance's approval for Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Sarath Fonseka's nomination as its candidate at the next presidential election, UNP and Opposition Leader Ranil Wickremesinghe yesterday put forth conditions for endorsing his (Gen. Fonseka's) candidature.

Wickremesinghe said Gen. Fonseka

had to agree to appoint a caretaker government with him (Wickremesinghe) as the Prime Minister in the event of his election.

The UNP leader expressed these views in an interview with the Editor of *The Sudar Oli*, Nadesapillai Vidyadaran, published yesterday.

Wickremesinghe said the United National Front, the JVP and the Tamil National Alliance should be agreeable to

Gen. Fonseka's candidature. He said he expected Gen. Fonseka to clarify certain issues concerning the Tamil people and the Tamil National Alliance should endorse that General Fonseka's clarifications were acceptable to the Tamils. "I expect even the JVP and the TNA to come to some understanding over this issue," Wickremesinghe told the *Sudar Oli*.

The UNP leader said that he expected the common candidate to fulfil certain

other obligations and make some pledges in public regarding the abolition of the executive presidency and the resettlement of IDPs.

Wickremesinghe demanded that General Fonseka make a prior announcement that he would assign important portfolios to the JVP and TNA in the proposed caretaker government. Fonseka

Continued on page 2

LTTE's EP leader Ram recaptured

by Hemantha Randunu

The LTTE Eastern province leader Ram, who had escaped from custody, was arrested yesterday. The Army nabbed him following a massive search operation conducted in the Minneriya jungles.

Ram had been under interrogation in an army camp in the Giritale area in Polonnaruwa, when he fled last Saturday (7).

With the escape of the LTTE Eastern Province leader, the Army commenced a search operation with over 3,000 soldiers deployed to track him down.

Ram was captured while he was hiding in the jungle near the Minneriya tank.

Ram had been appointed to the leadership of the LTTE's Eastern Province following the defection of Karuna Amman. He had a thorough knowledge of the terrain in the East and led a number of attacks against the security forces.

Ram had fled to the North after his members were killed by the STF during confrontations.

SL pledges support for Aussie war on human trafficking

by Dasun Edirisinghe

President Mahinda Rajapaksa pledged Sri Lanka's fullest support to the Australian Government's efforts to wipe out human trafficking when he met Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith at *Temple Trees* yesterday, according to the Presidential Secretariat.

President Rajapaksa told the Australian Foreign Minister that Sri Lanka was

Continued on page 2

Presidential polls in mid January

by Ajith Alahakoon

The Government had decided on the date for the next Presidential election, a senior minister told *The Island* last night. He said the Presidential election would be held in the third week of January 2010.

Soon after the announcement of the results of the Presidential election, the President would dissolve Parliament for the next general election, he said. The next General election would be held before the Sinhala and Hindu New Year, he added.

UNP is on the come back trail - Rosie

Our future performance will surprise many

by Zacki Jabbar

The UNP was on a come back trail and its performance at future elections would surprise many, Opposition Leader of the Western Provincial Council Rosie Senanayake said yesterday.

Addressing a news conference in Colombo, she said that the sceptics would not be able to comprehend the chances of the UNP, but their vote bank was on the increase once again.

"The economy is in shambles and the cost of living has gone beyond the reach of the common man. Generations to come have been placed in debt, due to the imprudent economic policies followed by the Mahinda Rajapaksa government," Senanayake said.

"The UNP has the ability to develop the economy and the people are once again turning towards us. It would be a matter of time before we are back in the saddle."

Asked why the masses had not voted the UNP into power at recent elections, despite a proven track



Rosie

record on economic management, she said that the people had been deceived by false propaganda carried on by the State media.

"The votes cast in favour of the government, were actually an act of gratitude for the security forces defeating the LTTE," she said.

Told that the UNP, with its vast resources had failed to counter the State media's "false propaganda", Senanayake claimed there was not much they could do, while being in the Opposition and added that the media also has to take the blame.

"Contrary to claims by the Rajapaksa government, the UNP too can take credit for victories over the LTTE, with a much smaller army", she said. "It was the Ranil Wickremesinghe administration that began the process of modernizing the security forces."

Refuting allegations that the LTTE had acquired a submarine during UNP rule, she said that the purchase had been made in 2000 and the Ranil Wickremesinghe government, was installed only in 2001.

Court informed settlement possible in journalist case against police

by Chitra Weeraratne

The Supreme Court was yesterday informed by President's Counsel Romesh de Silva that there was a possibility of a settlement to the dispute between journalist A. W. Sornalingam and the Police

Department.

The Court allowed time till January 10, 2009, to effect the aforesaid settlement. Sornalingam had complained to the Court that he was illegally arrested by the Police.

The Police had filed a 'B report' in the Magistrate's Court of Mt.

Wholesale prices of essentials slashed

by Mike Andree

The Government yesterday slashed the prices of several essential items, with immediate effect, on a directive from President Mahinda Rajapaksa. This was announced by Minister of Trade, Marketing Development, Co-operatives and Consumer Services Bandula Gunawardana.

Last week retail prices of sugar, dhal and canned fish at Coop minishops, budget shops, CWE supermarkets and cooperative outlets were reduced, as a prelude to what the government called a consumer relief package aimed at the coming Christmas season.

Sathosa will also reduce the prices of essential goods.

The new maximum wholesale prices for essential items are:

Sugar - Rs. 80, Dhal - Rs.140, Bombay Onions - Rs. 65, Onions - Rs.75, Potato - Rs. 65, Chili - Rs. 95, Garlic -Rs. 200, Milk Powder 1Kg - Rs. 425

Continued on page 2

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