

India's free consignment of AstraZeneca vaccine here tomorrow



ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA

Sri Lanka will receive 500,000 doses of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine from India this week.

Co-Cabinet Spokesman Mass Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa had informed the Cabinet that the Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Gopal Baglay had informed him that the consignment of vaccines will arrive in Sri Lanka tomorrow (28).

In view of the longstanding relationship between Sri Lanka and India and the cooperation between two countries in the face of the COVID-19 epidemic over the past year, India has decided to grant over 500,000 vaccines manufactured in India to Sri Lanka. The Cabinet of Ministers decided to express appreciation and gratitude of the Indian government in this regard.

Primary Health Care, Epidemics and COVID Disease Control State Minister Dr. Sudharshani Fernando stated that the country will receive the vaccine against COVID-19 imported from India this week and the Health Ministry is preparing to launch the vaccination drive.

She made this observation at a special media briefing on COVID-19 vaccination and planning. The Minister said that with the direct intervention of the President, the Government of India has taken steps to provide nearly 600,000 doses. **▶ PAGE 02**

GOVT SOLE AUTHORITY TO DECIDE ON BACHELET REPORT - MINISTER

PRIORITY FOR PEOPLE'S SOVEREIGNTY, CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA

The government has the sole authority to decide whether to accept the report or not of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, Co-Cabinet Spokesman Mass Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said.

The Minister made this observation responding to a question by a journalist at the weekly Cabinet media briefing held yesterday at the Government Information Department.

Sri Lanka received the Human Rights High Commissioner's report on Sri Lanka for the 46th session of the Human Rights Council and the response of the Sri Lankan government to the report was scheduled to be delivered by yesterday (26) evening.

"When Tilak Marapana was the Foreign Minister, **▶ PAGE 02**



President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa visited the Dharmapalaramaya in Mount Lavinia yesterday to extend their best wishes to Most Ven. Aggamaha Panditha Kotugoda Dhammawasa Maha Nayaka Thera of the Amarapura Chapter who marked his 88th birthday yesterday. A felicitation stamp was issued to mark the event and an alms giving was also held for 50 monks in which the President participated. **Pictures by Dushmantha Mayadunne.**

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Coal tenders above board - Gammanpila

ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA

Co-Cabinet Spokesman Energy Minister Udaya Gammanpila yesterday (26) said the statement made by an Opposition MP claiming that several spot tenders were cancelled in a manner that raises serious doubts about the procurement of coal was false.

The Minister emphasised that the Ceylon Coal Company totally denies allegations made by the Opposition and that the allegation that several spot tenders were cancelled and over-purchased was baseless and false.

They also said that the present government had bought at a very competitive price higher than what the Yahapalana had bought and had not cancelled any tender and had arranged to award



the tender to the lowest bidder and approval was sought to change the coal loading port.

"Changing the port means that the price changes and that the supplier withdraws from the tender due to the rejection of the request as it would be to the disadvantage of the other suppliers, as the price of the second supplier will be 7 US dollars per metric tonne higher than that of the first supplier. **▶ PAGE 02**

No final decision on ECT di

ISHARA MUDUGAMUWA

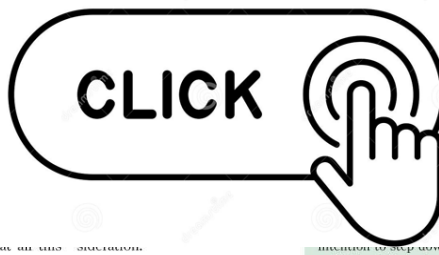
Co-Cabinet Spokesman Mass Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella yesterday (26) said no final decision had been taken yet on divesting Colombo Port's Eastern Container Terminal (ECT).

The minister told journalists at the weekly Cabinet media briefing at the Government Information Department that debates and discussions are ongoing and

the Cabinet had not taken a decision in this regard.

The President's Terminal will be with 51 per cent of Sri Lanka's government the remaining 49 an investment by In Group and other including Japan.

But this proposal been submitted to President. However, he said



Steps down as UNP National Organiser



member. He called on the UNP to appoint a suitable member as the party's new National Organiser.

The party's Working Committee had unanimously taken the decision to appoint Dissanayake to the post on the grounds that he had held the position previously. Dissanayake had asked for two days to decide on whether he would accept the position or not. **▶ PAGE 02**

Ranjan sent to Angunakolapelessa

CAMELIA NATHANIEL

Samagi Jana Balawegaya MP Ranjan Ramanayake who was sentenced to a four year prison term was transferred to the High Security Prison in Angunakolapelessa yesterday (26).

The Prisons Department Spokesman Commissioner Chandana Ekanayake told the *Daily News* that the MP was transferred to the prison after his quarantine process ended. Ramanayake, underwent the quarantine process at the Correctional Center for Youthful Offenders in Pallansena, Negombo. MP Ranjan Ramanayake was sentenced to four years Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) by the Supreme Court on January 12.

Ramanayake was found to be in Contempt of Court in connection with statements made to the media regarding the judiciary.

Avail Rs.14 bn FEB funds to repatriate workers - COPE



The COPE meeting under the chairmanship of Dr.Charitha Herath.

The Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) has instructed the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) to look into the possibility of repatriating migrant workers affected by COVID-19 using Bureau funds.

This was revealed at the meeting held on January 22 under the chairmanship of Prof. Charitha Herath to look into the special audit

report on the current situation in the field of foreign employment.

The Committee inquired whether there were any legal impediments to the repatriation of Sri Lankan workers from various countries affected by the COVID -19 situation using Foreign Employment Bureau's current assets of Rs.14 billion.

The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) Chairman said **▶ PAGE 02**

PCOI report, a licence for corrupt to go scot free - JVP

AMALI MALLAWARAACHCHI

The report submitted by the Presidential Commission of Inquiry (PCOI) investigating incidents of political revenge during the Yahapalana regime is a licence given to thieves and corrupt politicians to walk free of all their misdeeds, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna alleged yesterday (26).

This observation was made during a press briefing held by the JVP at the headquarters in Battaramulla. JVP General Secretary Tilvin Silva speaking to the media observed that, "A Cabinet memoran-

andum has been submitted to take action on the 2,000 page report of the Commission appointed by the President to investigate political revenge."

"The purpose of the Cabinet Memorandum is to obtain Parliament approval for the implementation of the recommendations of the report. There are three attachments in the Cabinet Memorandum. Annexure One covers the misuse of public property by the Anti-Corruption Committee and the Secretariat and 22 accused have been named in this regard. Annexure Two

and Annexure Three contains recommendations for the removal of a large number of cases."

"The second annexure recommends the removal of 61 cases pending in the High Court. The Third annexure recommends that 79 cases be withdrawn and that the accused in these cases be given relief and those who sued them be punished. Here lies the problem."

Silva furthered, "Every government committed massive

frauds and corruption. This report is an attempt to remove court cases in the name of correcting political revenge. This was done by appointing a commission while cases are being heard in the High Court."

"We have already told the people that this commission was appointed to acquit the Rajapaksa family and their relatives from their cases. It is in accordance with these recommendations that 79 cases have been removed and those who filed cases are to be held responsible. This is a very serious situation. **▶ PAGE 02**

