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Supreme Court rules President can run for third term

By Ashwin Hemmathagama

(FT.lk) - President Mahinda Rajapakse has received what a Senior Minister described as the "much-wanted favourable interpretation" from Supreme Court.

Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources Management and the Leader of the House of Parliament Nimal Siripala de Silva yesterday informed the Parliament the Supreme Court has given the greenlight, allowing the President to stand for another round of elections.

"It is with great pleasure I inform this House of the Supreme Court interpretation, which held that it lawful and not against the Constitution for President Mahinda Rajapaksa to stand for a third term. According to the Supreme Court, the necessary provisions are already found in the Constitution," he told the House.

On Monday night, the Supreme Court delivered its determination on incumbent President Mahinda Rajapaksa's eligibility to contest for a third term to the President at Temple Trees.

The opinion was endorsed by the nine Supreme Court judges who met at the Chief Justice's room at the Supreme Court yesterday. They discussed for about one-and-a-half hours before endorsing their opinion on the President's requests.

The Supreme Court Bench comprised Chief Justice Mohan Peiris, Justice K. Sripavan, Justice Chandra Ekanayake, Justice Priyasath Dep, Justice Eva Wanasundera, Justice Rohini Marasinghe, Justice B.P. Aluvihara, Justice Sisira de Abrew, Justice Sarath de Abrew and Justice Priyantha Jayawardena.

Earlier, the President submitted a series of questions to the Supreme Court for its consideration asking the apex Court to submit its opinion on to him before 10 November.

President Rajapaksa, who was elected in January 2010 for a second term in office, asked the Supreme Court whether the Constitution, as amended by the 18th Amendment, will allow him to declare his intention to contest for presidency after the expiration of four years from the date of commencement of his second term of office as President on 19 November 2010.

The President made the request in terms of Provision 129 (l) of the Constitution. The Apex Court informed the Bar Association of Sri Lanka of the President's request and asked them to submit any points they have in writing to the Registry of the Supreme Court by

Friday, 7 November.

Interested parties submitted 38 petitions to the Court both in favour and against the President's inquiry. The Bar weighed in on behalf of the President and the majority of submissions were in his favour.

The decision by President last week to seek Supreme Court opinion came under fire by Opposition parties as well as legal experts whilst Bar Association sought extended time to submit written submissions apart from wanting to make oral submissions. UNP Leader Ranil Wickremesinghe noted Supreme Court opinion on the constitutionality of the President seeking a third term has no validity since there is no legal binding in such an opinion. The JVP filed a motion to appeal to the Supreme Court to hear the opinion sought by the President in open court.

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Press Release

SriLankan Airlines launches new A330-300 with a Non-Stop service to London

Colombo, November 10, 2014: National carrier, SriLankan Airlines began commercial operations on its newly acquired Airbus 330-300 with a direct non-stop service to London on Sunday November 09th.

SriLankan Airlines flight UL505 departed from Katunayake at 0225 am local time

on Sunday en-route to London Heathrow airport, returning to Colombo at 0440 am on Monday 10th November.

The brand new A330-300, the first of seven such aircraft on order from Airbus was inducted to SriLankan's fleet last month, launching its wide body fleet renewal and replacement programme with

the aim of reducing costs, improving operational efficiencies and providing an enhanced product offering to customers.

Chief Operations Officer, SriLankan Airlines Captain Druvi Perera said, "We have begun commercial flights with our new Airbus 330-300 aircraft, with a view to deploying it on a number of medium and long-haul routes as part of a performance evaluation process that is implemented by the airline for induction of new aircraft to its fleet. The first of such flights

was operated by the new A330-300 with a non-stop service to London on Sunday, one of our oldest traditional markets. The performance evaluation programme will continue for a period of three months during which the deployment of the aircraft on a particular route will be decided after an evaluation of passenger volumes, route yields, demand for Business

Class, frequency and consistency of the product and the number of aircraft required to support the frequencies to a particular destination.

"We will deploy the new A330-300s primarily on Far-Eastern routes including Bangkok, Tokyo and Chinese cities of Canton and Beijing."

Capt.Druvi Perera further stated: "We will see a ramp up in our delivery programme

with the arrival of our second A330-300 this December and the balance new A330-300s to be inducted in 2015, with these aircraft to be assigned for mainstream long-haul operations, replacing the older A340s in the interim. The new generation A350-900s due to join our fleet from mid- 2016 will eventually take over our long haul routes and the A330-300s will consequently be deployed on the medium

haul operations. "Our new fleet of versatile A330-300s with its superior Inflight features and comfort and enhanced fuel efficiency will serve to meet our capacity requirements in the medium and long haul routes prior to the delivery of the new generation wide body A350-900s on order. These new Airbus aircraft share an operational commonality with our existing fleet and therefore provide us with a strong platform for our continued growth." **CONT P4**



Captain Druvi Perera
Chief Operations Officer
SriLankan Airlines



The New A330-300
soon after take-off from London Heathrow

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