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## 2nd Anniversary for President

By Nisthar Cassim

(Ft.lk) - Marking the milestone of two years in office, President Maithripala Sirisena along with Prime Ranil Wickremesinghe on Sunday 8th January urged people to unite for prosperity as the coalition Government was more resolute than weak.

Noting that several significant achievements had been made in the fields of democracy, human rights, coexistence and media freedom among others during the past two years, the two leaders emphasised that the arduous forward journey from a dictatorship to good governance required more work, hence their rallying call for unity.

"All must commit themselves to work towards sustainable development and the alleviation of poverty. There are good and bad things in a market and social economy.

Let us take the best of both to lead Sri Lanka to prosperity. We have intelligent people and professionals. We have good policies and plans and we can be victorious as a country," the President said at an official ceremony at the BMICH to mark the second anniversary of his inauguration yesterday.

The theme of the event was 'Dawn of third year in the era of sustainability' with the Chief Minister of the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, Chandrababu Naidu as the special guest.

The President said the event marked the celebration of two years of success and the commissioning of a host of new initiatives, including the poverty alleviation drive of the rural-based 'Grama-Shakthi' encompassing 15,000 villages and ... **SEE P10**



President Maithripala Sirisena along with Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe arrive at BMICH to officiate at the ceremony to mark the former's second anniversary in office  
Pic by Sudath Silva.



## Protesters clash with police in Mirijjawila

(SundayObserver.lk) - At least 21 people, including three security personnel were injured when a group of people including the Joint Opposition parliamentarians protesting the launch of Sri Lanka - China Industrial Development Zone under the Southern Development Project clashed with the Police who tried to block the protestors reaching the Mirijjawila Board of Investment premises.

Police used tear gas and water canons to disperse the crowds who tried to reach the Mirijjawila BOI premises where the Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe was due to launch Southern Development Project with the participation of Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Yi Xianliang.

Crowds including the Maha Sangha and Opposition parliamentarians launched a protest campaign against the giving away of lands to Chinese investors, despite the restraining order issued by the Hambantota Magistrate's Court on Friday against 27 parties from organising protests, demonstrations and meetings for the next 14 days in the area near the Magampura port in Hambantota, on a request made by the police.

According to eye witnesses, Police initially failed to block protestors reaching the premises where the ceremony was held, to lay the foundation for the construction of the Sri Lanka-China Industrial Development Zone ... **SEE P10**

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## TNA to support constitution-making despite internal dissent

(adaderana.lk) - The Tamil National alliance (TNA), which is the official Opposition in the Sri Lankan parliament and the ruling party in the Northern Provincial Council, will continue to support the ongoing process to draft a new



constitution for Sri Lanka despite internal dissensions. The TNA, which met twice last week, decided to accept leader R.Sampanthan's advice that despite doubts about a getting a favorable outcome from the constitution-making process, the process should be supported because there is no alternative to it. The TNA leader thinks that the present Sirisena-Wickremesinghe dispensation is the only one which can deliver goods for the Tamils because the Sinhala opposition parties led by a resurgent and former

president, Mahinda Rajapaksa, are resolutely and uncompromisingly averse to any more devolution of power than what was given under the 13th Constitutional Amendment enacted in 1987. The Jamatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) is fighting for equal rights but is wary about federalism and the expansion of ethnic enclaves.

The Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU), a strong voice within the government, is against any more devolution. However, Sampanthan's plea for cooperation rested on the hope that the personal and explicit commitment of President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe to promoting ethnic reconciliation through appropriate constitutional provisions would stay through the process and influence the final outcome. The TNA leadership believes that unlike the Rajapaksa regime, the current regime is pledged to implementing the September 2015 resolution of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) which includes devolution of power. Given the part played by the international community in the political marginalisation of the Mahinda Rajapaksa regime and its defeat in January 2015,.... **SEE P10**

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## Foreign Minister on official UK visit

Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera will undertake an official visit to the United Kingdom on 9-14 January 2017. This is the first high-level visit from Sri Lanka to the UK, since the appointment of the new Government of Prime Minister Theresa May following the Brexit vote in July 2016.

The visit reflects the continuing dialogue between Sri Lanka and the UK since resetting bilateral ties in January 2015. Minister Samaraweera is scheduled to meet with the Rt. Boris Johnson, UK's Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, and other key interlocutors. The



being achieved by the Sri Lankan Government in institutional building to strengthen democracy, reconciliation and inclusive development.

During the visit, the Minister will also meet with the Rt. Patricia Scotland, Commonwealth Secretary General to discuss Sri Lanka's shared interests and cooperation as an active member of the organization. The bilateral segment of the programme includes a

speaking engagement by Minister Samaraweera at the Chatham House on the efforts of the Unity Government to move forward peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

## 69th Independence Day Celebrations

The High Commission of Sri Lanka Cordially invites All Sri Lankans living in the UK to the 69th Independence Day Celebrations on Saturday 4th February 2017 at 10.00am. to be held at the Sri Lanka High Commission, No 13, Hyde Park Gardens, London W2 2LU [Nearest Tube Station - Paddington (Lancaster Gate Station will be closed on that day)]  
RSVP (on or before Thursday, 02 Feb 2017)  
mail@slhc-london.co.uk or 0207 262 1841(ext:0234)

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