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T: 020 7978 9030

E: info@newslanka.net

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Lord Naseby sends detailed evidence to United Nations including Gash despatches

Lord Naseby wishes to state the following with regard to the response attributed to the British High Commission in Colombo following a query raised by the Sri Lankan newspaper 'The Island', published on 6 December 2017 under the headline 'Naseby's call doesn't reflect UK's stand- HC'. The resolution 30/1 entitled 'Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka' emphasized the need for truth-seeking, among others, as an important element in the overall quest to promote reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka. The UK government was one of the initiators and a co-sponsor of the resolution. The despatches by Col Anton Gash, the former defence attaché of the British High Commission, constitutes an important element in the process of truth-seeking and should be of interest to all those who genuinely seek a clear picture of what happened during the final stages of the conflict in Sri Lanka. It is therefore disappointing that the British High Commission fails to acknowledge the importance of the despatches of its own former defence attaché and the insight that is provided by his communications with the British

Government. While not expressly stated so in the resolution, those who have closely followed events in Sri Lanka after the end of the conflict would agree that the basis for the successive resolutions on Sri Lanka at the UN Human Rights Council stemmed from the allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity (and in some quarters 'genocide') said to have been committed by the Sri Lankan armed forces and the LTTE. Especially, the Report of the UN Secretary General's Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka, commonly known as the 'Darusman Report', alleged that 'a number of credible sources have estimated that there could have been as many as 40,000 civilian deaths' (para 137), mostly as a result of indiscriminate shelling by the Sri Lankan military. Therefore, the number of civilians killed forms a very important element in truth-seeking especially when the difference is over 30,000. While Lord Naseby does not take issue with those advocating reconciliation and accountability in Sri Lanka including the need to investigate any allegations of human rights violations,... SEE P8



99year lease of Hambantota Port to Chinese

by Saman Indrajith (Island.lk) - Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe received a cheque of US\$ 300 million as an advance payment from the China Merchant Group Limited which will now manage and operate the Hambantota Port. The ceremony to hand of the cheque was held at parliamentary complex yesterday under the patronage of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe. Several ministers, Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka Yi Xianling and the officials of the China Merchant Group attended the ceremony. The US\$ 300 million is considered to be the largest foreign payment received after a lapse of four decades and the money will be deposited in a special fixed deposit account and will add to the country's foreign

reserves, he said., The Prime Minister said next would be the establishment of the Ruhuna Industrial Development Corporation through which the Ruhuna area would be developed into an industrial zone and hundreds of factories would be set up. Among these will be an oil refinery, an LNG facility, a dockyard and cement factory, he said. "Negotiations for these have already started. The land for these projects will be identified by the Ruhuna Development Authority," he said. The Prime Minister said that the country is on its way to being the hub of the Indian Ocean. "Sri Lanka is part of the modern maritime silk route. We have three ports, one in Colombo, one in the south at

Hambantota and one in the east in Trincomalee". The Prime Minister added that thousands of dollars will be received in the future. This will release the people's debt burden without leaving any for the present and future generations to pay off. The intention of the Government is to create a better country for the future generation which would enable them to move forward without any fear.



Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe accepting the cheque for US\$ 300 million as an advance payment from Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Yi Xianling, on behalf China Merchant Group Limited which will now manage and operate the Hambantota Port. Looking on is Minister Malik Samarawickrama. The presentation of the cheque was held at the parliamentary complex.

Sri Lanka win 1st ODI

Rex Clementine reporting from Dharamsala (Island.lk) - Fast bowler Suranga Lakmal overcame sickness and a stunning M. S. Dhoni to end Sri Lanka's frustrating losing streak in ODI cricket this year at the picturesque Dharamsala yesterday. Sri Lanka's seven-wicket win is their first ODI victory since July this year ending a 12-match losing streak. Having required a supply of oxygen and injection due to Delhi's poisonous smog, Lakmal skipped training on

Saturday as he was repeatedly vomiting and was a doubtful starter for the first game. But he put the disappointments behind and bowled one of the most probing spells by a Sri Lankan fast bowler in the history. In helpful conditions, Lakmal barely touched 135kmph, but more importantly, swung the ball to good effect to reduce India to 29 for seven. Such was his stamina, that he bowled his ten overs on the trot;... SEE P27

Congratulations to Vernon Uduogampola OBE



Vernon recently received his award for services to Humanitarian Aid, particularly in Sri Lanka and the UK. Please see page 8.

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