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*Launch likely this week **No deadline imposed*

Govt to go ahead with PSC

Rasika SOMARATHNA

(Dailynews.lk - 08/08/11) - The government will go ahead with the formation of the Parliamentary Select Committee that would serve as the platform to arrive at a solution to the longstanding national question. A senior government minister yesterday said that the PSC was most likely to be formed within this week. Meanwhile, the TNA has denied certain media reports that they were against the PSC. Our sister newspaper the 'Thinakaran'

quoted MP, M A Sumanthiran of TNA as denying that his party gave an 'ultimatum' to the government to come up with a response within 10 days on its three point request made during the discussions that were held between the two parties. The three issues on which the TNA sought information were, the structure of governance, the allocation of subjects and functions to the central government and the provincial councils, and issues relating to fiscal and financial devolution. The MP had said that the TNA had not

imposed any deadlines, but, its opinion was that if such a response is given forthwith it would help in commencing the next round of talks. Sumanthiran had also denied media reports that the TNA was trying to drag on with the issue and avoid discussions in the future. The government delegation earlier had categorically stated that they were not in a position to give an immediate response to the TNA's three point request as they needed time to discuss issues with

relevant stakeholders in order to arrive at a consensus. They had said that a discussion with other parties was necessary to arrive at a decision. The 'Thinakaran' in their report also said that Sumanthiran while addressing the TNA London branch members a couple of weeks ago, had requested the Tamil diaspora to take a positive attitude towards the talks between the government and the TNA.

UNP group meeting stormy

Ranil says only WC can remove him as UNP leader

by Zacki Jabbar and Norman Paliyawadana (Island.lk - 10/08/11) - A noisy meeting of the UNP parliamentary group yesterday ended with Ranil Wickremesinghe telling those who wanted him to step down as leader that they can stake their claim at the Working Committee Meeting scheduled for August 17. Informed sources told The Island that Wickremesinghe, after listening to Sajith Premadasa's proposal for him to hand over the reigns to Karu Jayasuriya, while retaining the post of Opposition Leader had tried to walk out of the proceedings conducted in the parliamentary complex but was heckled into staying back. Some of the members had made some very nasty remarks, while certain others appealed to the leader to remain and listen to their views, it is learnt. Wickremesinghe had responded by saying that the proper forum to appoint or remove office bearers was the Working Committee and those wanting a change, should submit their proposal on August 17. Thirty seven of the 42 UNP parliamentary group members were present at the near three-



hour meeting, with the exception of National Organiser Ravi Karunanyake, Ranjith Madduma Bandara, Ranjith Aluvihare, Chandrani Bandara and Ranjan Ramanayake. Premadasa, while thanking Wickremesinghe for supporting his father, the late President Ranasinghe Premadasa, said that he has no personal issues except the need to unite the party and install a UNP government. Events took a surprise turn when Kabir Hashim and Harin Fernando, considered to be from the leader's camp, also spoke in favour of Jayasuriya being put in charge of the party. They spoke of Wickremesinghe's virtues such as his experience and knowledge, but said the time has come for change, because that was what the rank and file wanted. Fernando said that he cared for Wickremesinghe and was certain that Jayasuriya would do him no harm. At the outset Ajith Perera said that the urgent need was for party unity and it was echoed even when he had visited Nuwara Eliya recently. The meeting ended with the leader announcing that he was to meet party seniors yesterday evening.

No USAF intrusion: Minister

(DailyMirror.lk - 10/08/11) - No unauthorised foreign aircraft entered Sri Lankan air space as claimed by certain sections, Minister of Civil Aviation stated in Parliament. Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority H.M.C. Nimalsiri maintained that there was no intrusion of U.S fighter jets into sovereign Sri Lankan airspace. Speaking exclusively to Daily Mirror online subsequent to the

statement made by the Minister of Civil Aviation Priyankara Jayaratne denying any intrusion, Mr Nimalsiri said that "the minister has stated the facts. Upon investigation we found that there was no intrusion whatsoever by the US upon sovereign Sri Lankan airspace". Earlier the Sri Lanka air force maintained that

there was infact infringement by the fighter jets, after the US embassy denied the claim. (Fazal Mohamed)

COLOMBO COLUMN

By Reggie Fernando TV Director Niroshan Kahawatte See p22



Randoli Perehera

(DailyMirror.lk) - The First Randoli Perehera of the Kandy Esala Festival, paraded the streets of Kandy last night. The annual Kandy Esala Perehera is the

largest Buddhist festival and the most colourful cultural pageant in Sri Lanka. The Perehera is held in honour of the Sacred Tooth Relic of the Buddha enshrined in

the temple of the tooth relic. The picture shows a tusker carrying the casket of tooth relic, chaperoned by two other tuskers. Pix by Pradeep Dilrukshana



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