

President felicitates Weligama Gnanarathana Thera on his 101st birthday



President Mahinda Rajapaksa called on Chief Incumbent of the Mallikarama Viharaya in Ratmalana, Rajakeeya Pandith, Vinaya Visharadha Dhammakeerthi, Most Venerable Weligama Sri Gnanarathana Nayaka thero whose 101st birthday fell on 14 October. The President visited the Mallikarama Viharaya to look into the well being of the Maha Nayaka thero and wished him good health and long life. The President extended his greetings and birthday felicitations to the Nayaka thero. The President also had a brief discussion with the Thera.

President Rajapaksa also participated in a series of pinkamas organized at the temple in connection with the prelate's birthday and exchanged pleasantries with devotees present there. The President also unveiled a plaque of a silver plated statue of the Ven. Gnanarathana Thero erected at the Viharaya premises. This felicitations ceremony was organised by the Vihara Dayaka Sabhawa. Members of Mahasangha and a large number of people living in the area were also present. Nayaka thero is seen here blessing the President.

In the meantime President Rajapaksa also visited former Ayurvedha Commissioner Dr Upali Pilapitiya and inquired into his well being. The President visited the Veda Medura, residence of Dr. Pilapitiya in Piliyandala. After a cordial discussion with him, the President inspected the Veda Medura herbal garden at the location.



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Chinese Peace and Disarmament Association members commend Sri Lanka's progress



The Vice President of the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament (CPAPD), the Vice Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and the Chairperson of Central Committee of China Association for Promoting Democracy Mrs. Yan Junqi commended the victories, development and the progress Sri Lanka has achieved under the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Mrs Junqi made these remarks when she called on President Rajapaksa this morning (15 Oct) at the President's House.

Mrs Junqi also expressed interests of CPAPD in working to further strengthen bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and China. President Rajapaksa also recalled the continues support given by the Chinese government in the face of international conspiracies against Sri Lanka and the development of the island nation.

Chinese Ambassador in Sri Lanka Mr. Wu Jianghao, Executive Vice President of CPAPD and the Vice-Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress Mr. Ma Wenpu and several other officials from CPAPD accompanied Mrs. Yan. Minister of External Affairs Prof. G.L. Peiris, Secretary to the President Mr. Lalith Weeratunga and Mr. Milinda Moragoda also joined the discussion.

The CPAPD is the largest nationwide non-governmental peace association with a total of 24 influential member organizations in China. It was founded by various concerned mass organizations and prominent personages from all walks of life

in June 1985. The main objectives of the CPAPD are to promote mutual understanding, friendship and cooperation between the peoples of China and the rest of the world in joint efforts to maintain world peace, oppose arms race and war, achieve arms control and disarmament, strive for complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, protect ecological environment, and promote social harmony and sustainable development. The CPAPD also conducts cooperation and exchanges in various forms with more than 300 NGOs and research institutions in about 90 countries, and takes an active part in multilateral activities of the international NGO community.

By Janaka Alahapperuma

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