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## A HISTORIC VISIT

President Mahinda Rajapaksa yesterday paid a landmark visit to Killinochchi - the first Southern leader to undertake such a visit since the visit of Prime Minister D. S. Senanayake nearly 60 years ago. The visit by President Rajapaksa to Killinochchi, until recently the de facto political capital of the LTTE's so-called Eelam, also marks a watershed in the three and half decade long ethnic conflict. It is a symbolic occasion heralding the dismantling of hitherto entrenched structures built by the LTTE and also sends a clear message that the writ of the Government is about to take firm root where once the Tiger terrorists held sway.

The historic visit by President Rajapaksa also comes amidst the death throes of the once mighty LTTE and as such may well mark the beginning of a shift in the nation's focus in the direction of the North and it's people who hitherto existed only on fringes of the minds of the southern polity. This will no doubt herald the development of the North as a whole to bring it on par with the rest of the country. The road may be long and the journey arduous. But a beginning has been made.

During yesterday's visit the President may also have been reminiscing on the goodwill of the people of Killinochchi and Jaffna in general in the past, who were more inclined to support SLFP Governments which purchased their chilly and onion harvests giving a shot in the arm to the Jaffna farmer and providing a boon to the Northern economy.

Hopefully the President with his constant emphasis on supporting the local producer will be able to revisit that not so distant past when the economies of the North and the South were interlinked to the greater benefit of the national economy.

But first the healing of the scars of the three decades long war should take precedence and this we are certain will be uppermost in the mind of the President who has already put in

93RD BIRTH ANNIVERSARY TODAY:

### Sirimavo led SLFP and country at crucial times

The 93rd birth anniversary of the late Premier and SLFP leader Sirimavo Bandaranaike falls today. She was born as a daughter of the Kandyan chieftain Barnes Ratwatte and was brought up in the best traditions of such families that were staunch Buddhists.

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### It's the global economy (stupid) - or is it?

"This is the day that the world came together, to fight back against the global recession. Not with words but a plan for global recovery and for reform and with a clear timetable," said U.K. Prime Minister Gordon Brown at the end of the G-20 Summit.

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Comments and Suggestions to : Web Editor

motion several projects and programs towards achieving this objective.

The President's visit to Kilinochchi thus sends a significant message to the Nation in the just-dawned Sinhala and Hindu New Year.

We must all be grateful to our heroic Security Forces for liberating Kilinochchi and the rest of the North, shattering the myth of Tigers' 'invincibility'. By going all the way to Kilinochchi to meet the troops and expressing gratitude, he has reminded us all that we are breathing free due to the valiant efforts of the Forces.

The Presidential visit also serves to highlight the Government's commitment to develop the newly-liberated areas. The Government, from the President downwards, has reiterated its steadfast commitment to uplift the Northern residents and their region. It is not only a military victory; it is also a people's triumph.

By visiting Kilinochchi, President Mahinda Rajapaksa has also proved the Government's enthusiasm to resolve the national issue expeditiously.

Kilinochchi, Jaffna, Elephant Pass and Mullaitivu have been regained for the peoples of Lanka. With the LTTE facing oblivion, the Nation has a golden opportunity for peace and reconciliation without a ruthless divisive factor.

Peace in our hearts and peace in our land is the New Year gift borne by the surprise visitor to Kilinochchi.

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