

The use of CFLS - statement of Deputy General Manager CEB (D.S.M.)

This is with reference to the statement of Deputy General Manager (D.S.M.) CEB that 50 MW of power could be saved for 2 hours daily if 20% of consumers switch on to CFLS. This appeared in "The Island" on Feb. 14, 2002. The energy savings which is more critical than power, for 2 hours is 90,000 units. Why cannot the CEB consider giving 2 CFLS free to all consumers then it will save 250 MW of power for the 2 hours and 450,000 units of energy per day and charge the consumers Rs. 20 per month.

The cost to CEB would be about Rs. 2 billion but it will recover this amount within 6 years from the consumers with interest together with the replacement cost of CFLS. If this proposal is to be a success, CEB should go on replacing them at its own expense whenever CFLS go defective.

The average life span of CFLS is about 8000 hours. As such the average CFLS will last over 6 to 7 years. However there should be power factor control and local manufacturers should also be encouraged and given a share of the market.

The CEB in consultation with the environmental authorities should also evolve an environment friendly method of disposal of the used CFLS. The cost benefit is such and also that it could be implemented within 4 months this should have been the first proposal that should have come up for the 180 day program.

If it is compared with the capital required for the Kukulegama Hydro scheme which is 30 MW and may be able to give in an average rainfall year of only 900,000 units per day. In addition to these initial huge capital there should also be a further additional capital cost of having 14 MW of Thermal standby because of pattern of rainfall which every 4 years there is a probability of having a 30% drop in rainfall.

With only 2 billion investment half the units generated by such a huge and very expensive capital costing combine Hydro-Thermal scheme is achieved. It should be noted that whenever Hydro scheme are planned it should be cost as a combine Hydro - Thermal scheme because of the pattern of rain fall that every 4 years or so, there is about a 30% drop in rain fall. As such, as to keep the pledge of no power cuts Hydro scheme will have to be considered as a combine Hydro Thermal scheme.

The board should not consider giving free to consumers is disbursing government funds. Because from the time of the CEB establishment it is the consumers that have generated all the funds for thirty years or so for CEB and built up its assets to 161 billion and not a single cent has been subsidised by the government. The CEB also has been having surpluses up to the year 1999 which year private power producers were thrust on CEB may be illegally because the CEB act does not provide for any other organization or even the government to interfere in its activities.

The latest revised edition available of the CEB act has clause 65 stating as the short description "The act to prevail over other written laws". In addition to the benefits given above due to CFLS there is also the benefit that during the peak the system loss in CEB could be considered as 25% and this loss of units for the 450,000 units can be prevented. This can be estimated to be 328 million rupees per year which is also an added bonus. However what is the benefit to our country if with all these emergency purchases of electricity the price of electricity is more than in neighbouring Tamil Nadu where there is coal power.

Eng. M. V. R. Perera
Pannipitiya

27/03/02 Island.

Norochcholai: J'wickrema Perera jumps his gun

Mr. Gamini Jayawickrama Perera - The Minister for Irrigation and Water Management, has said that there wouldn't be a Coal Power Plant built at Norochcholai. He has also said the following.

- 1) The available hydropower is not sufficient.
- 2) The demand for power is increasing daily.
- 3) Solutions will have to be found for the settlement of power dispute.
- 4) Coal Power will be very economic.
- 5) Coal Power would be very helpful.
- 6) Coal Power Plant will have to be built somewhere else in the island.
- 7) Government will not build the Plant at Norochcholai.
- 8) Some Sundry generating stations will be built at some reservoirs.

Mr. Perera has said all these at a Puttalam District Secretarial discussion.

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My confession is that I fail to understand Mr. Perera, his rationale, and also his context. I am confused by what he has said for the following reasons: Firstly electricity is not his subject. Secondly, Norochcholai has

nothing to do with inland water for any type of management.

On the other hand, Norochcholai is such a hot issue that its final verdict should come from the Minister in charge of the subject or at best from the Premier.

The fate of any government in Sri Lanka will very largely hang on the issue of sufficient electricity generation. In another four years, even the existing hydro power potential will suffer heavily due to predicted shortfalls in rains. Even the sundry reservoir generators would want water to run. When he says somewhere, where? It sounds as if he won't allow that at Norochcholai, that's all there is to it.

It will be pertinent to find out if we all are giving in to some hidden command. In this context, I wish to refer everyone concerned with power generation in the country to a very revealing account given by Rev. Fr. Ivan Petersz last year - (Island 20/09/2001) where he potently disagreed with the role played by the church to stall the project.

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27/03/02 Island.