

## Mawella coal power crucial for southern development

I read with much interest the article of Mr. Carlo Fernando, under the above caption which appeared in *The Island* of 5.1.2001. With all due respect to his vast knowledge on water resources and the electricity requirement of this country, I fail to see why he insists on Mawella as a site for the proposed coal power plant.

Surely, he should now realise that the government has already taken a decision to abandon this project at Mawella, and I understand from the Fisheries Ministry and the Coast Protection Authorities, they have completed the fisheries harbour at Kudawella and other projects in this area are underway with further development in the future.

It is unimaginable that such a knowledgeable person talks of development of the south by having a coal plant there, when electricity generated from any other place, be it Norochcholai, could be transmitted. He appears to tickle the ego of the Minister of Southern Development by saying "it is fortu-

nate Mr. Ronnie de Mel has been appointed the Minister for Southern Development. At least now let us hope that he places the whole matter in the proper perspective along with Mr. Mahinda Rajapakse, Minister for Fisheries.

I hope they will not fall a prey to this subtle manoeuvre and hamper already planned fisheries and coast protection work. The priority in this coastal belt is protection of the coast and development of fisheries industry to which the government has rightly directed its attention. This also is the southerners wish.

Come Mr. Fernando, let us all pressurise the government to have the coal plant at Norochcholai, irrespective of personal feelings, politics and religious objections, and save the country from economic disaster. Then your dream of coal power generation in Sri Lanka will materialise, for which you could be happy personally as one who advocated it.

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