

Norochcholai to be aborted?

An article in the '*Catholic Messenger*' of 4.11.2001, says that the Chilaw Diocesan Pastoral Council wants the Norochcholai project officially terminated. The writer has stated that "the report (meaning the report of the Denmark consultants M/s. Ramboll, emphatically rejects the 4.2 Km jetty which was to be the lifeline of the project.... In other words, even if the entire power plant is built and completed, one day, there would not be a single unit of electric current produced there".

In order to give the correct picture and not to mislead the readers, especially the Catholic Readers, it is absolutely necessary to state what the Denmark Consultants, who were appointed at the request and insistence of the Bishop of Chilaw, for an independent view. In their final report - under conclusions they have, it is understood, stated it strongly recommend a change from the long ocean jetty to a transshipment barge transfer solution with a barge landing harbour jetty.

This alternative recommendation, they say, is environment friendly, economically

viable and operationally advantageous.

It will therefore be seen that the consultants have not rejected the site but instead of a jetty they recommend a harbour, which I believe is acceptable to the CEB. Therefore the assumption of the writer in the '*Catholic Messenger*' calling for the scrapping of the project is unreasonable.

I am surprised that the good Bishop of Chilaw, who was very gracious to assign two Catholic priests to cooperate with the consultants and look after the interest of the church, and also chaired meetings with around 25 of the parties critical of the project allowed this article to be published.

I am also aware that the Bishop was given a copy of the final report by the consultants.

It would be appreciated if the editor of '*The Catholic Messenger*' or the Bishop of Chilaw Rt. Rev. Dr. Keneth Marcus Fernando clarifies its position on this matter especially to the Catholic readers.

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