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THE ISLAND

Urgency of Coal Power Project at Ruhuna

As the Coal Power Projects at Trincomalee and Noracholai have been abandoned on security grounds, there is an urgent need to take up the Mawella Coal Power Project immediately, if Sri Lanka is to avoid a serious power crisis in the year 2004, as stated by the CEB. It was reported in *'The Island'* 19.10.99 titled Rs. 6 billion loss due to power cuts — Ratwatte, regarding the power cuts in 1996 alone. It was a colossal loss for a developing country like Sri Lanka and every one in authority should avoid a repetition.

The Mawella project, the second best after Trinco was vetoed by the late President Premadasa, on wrong advice tendered by the Diesel lobby and other vested interests in the CEB, ably assisted by the environmentalists,

for reasons best known to themselves. In this connection I am constrained to draw the attention of powers that be — to a well analysed and thought provoking article 'Coal Power at ruhunu' in *"The Island"* 24.10.90 — nine years ago by Mr. A. C. H. Pereira, a former power Consultant, who had devoted his full time to the Power Industry in the CEB.

This article was his reply to the late Professor Alawatugoda Premadasa's devastating but untrue anti-coal article "Coal Power Plant is a monster to ruhuna". A re-

publication of extracts of Mr. Pereira's article will be of immense value. Even now this article is valid, as we are at a standstill. Nothing has moved since then, so it can be said that 'desperate situations require desperate remedies'!

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Opinion