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**COLOMBO COLUMN**  
By Reggie Fernando -  
**OUR MAN IN COLOMBO**  
SL off to Australia.  
See page 25

*All political party leaders to be consulted on national question*

## President denies promising India to go beyond 13-A

Ravi Ladduwahetty

(Island.lk) - President Mahinda Rajapaksa yesterday denied that he ever told India he would go beyond the 13th Amendment to the Constitution as a solution to the ethnic problem.

Responding to a question at a breakfast meeting with heads of print and electronic media yesterday at Temple Trees whether he had promised India to go beyond the 13th Amendment, the President said: "Oh, No! How can I make promises like that? I have referred the issue to Parliament. I have nominated government representatives to the PSC. But unfortunately, neither the UNP nor the JVP has nominated theirs. It is the same with the Tamil National Alliance as well."

When asked for his personal opinion on the matter, President Rajapaksa said that if he spelt out his views, then there would be criticism in the media that he had brought in his opinion and that he was

trying to push it through Parliament. He said, "We can use our parliamentary majority to do that, but I won't. The Parliamentary Select Committee is an open forum. I will be implementing what is agreed upon there."

The President said the land powers were vested with the Provincial Councils and the contentious issue was the police powers. "The TNA is now talking the way the LTTE used to. What it is asking for is not of concern to the people of Kilinochchi. These are the matters that we should take cognisance of. The stand of the TNA is not clear."

President Rajapaksa said that he would meet all political party leaders to discuss the national issue. "The Opposition, the media, social activists and all

stakeholders should unite to find a lasting solutions to these long standing issues, but no one seems to be making use of the open form that is available."

Asked whether he thought it advisable to call an all party conference to deliberate on these matters, President Rajapaksa

said he would summon all political parties and devise a mechanism to ascertain their views on the issue. "We want the support of not only the political parties but also the media. This is a national issue and we need the support of all stakeholders."

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**64th Anniversary of Independence**  
**SATURDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 2012**

*Reveals US attempt to bribe serving officer*  
**GR rejects testimony attributed to unnamed Gen.**  
by Shamindra Ferdinando

(Island.lk) - Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa said that none of the Majors General directly involved in eelam war IV had made a testimony to any US lawyer, in New York in 2010, alleging extrajudicial killings of civilians, surrendering LTTE cadres and dissident journalists during eelam war IV.

"Those directly involved in the campaign are still in service. They'll never betray the country for personal benefit," Defence Secretary Rajapaksa told The Island.

He was responding to a report by Emmanuel Stoakes posted on

[www.truth-out.org](http://www.truth-out.org) on Sunday (Jan.29).

The Defence Secretary said that the government expected more anti-Sri Lanka propaganda in the run-up to UN Human Rights Council sessions in Geneva late Feb-March 2012. Citing testimony of a former General, recorded in an affidavit, the report captioned 'Sri Lankan General admits war crimes; US may hold crucial supporting evidence', claimed that the military officer had backed war crimes allegations made by human rights watchdogs. Claiming that the officer had been extremely well-placed to comment on military activity during the war as he held high-level security clearance and access to the flow of orders during the final days of the conflict, the website declined to name the officer for reasons of safety.

Asked whether any senior officers ... **CONT ON P2**

**64th National Day of Sri Lanka**  
The High Commission of Sri Lanka in the United Kingdom will celebrate the 64th National Day of Sri Lanka on Saturday, 04th February, 2012 at 1030hrs.  
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