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Central Environmental Authority

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CNCI welcomes progress on Norochcholai, Upper Kotmale power projects

The Ceylon National Chamber of Commerce (CNCI) last week welcomed the signing of Sino-Sri Lanka economic agreements by President Chandrika Kumaratunge during her China visit, particularly the one to establish the Norochcholai Coal Power Plant.

It said that with the Sri Lankan economy being battered with major set backs time and again the chances of revival appear remote in the foreseeable future. Domestic and external factors both are accountable for the ever deteriorating situation and unless political stability is reached through an all party consensus the country may reach a point of no return socio economically, the statement said.

The CNCI said hydro power generation is totally dependent on rainfall but the climatic changes due to global warming resulting from dwindling forest cover and melting glaciers have certainly affected rainfall patterns in Sri Lanka too for

the worse. This situation limits the availability of water for hydro power generation. "Therefore, that leaves us with no choice but to look for alternate power resources," it said.

It said the government had the courage to implement the Phase I of the Upper Kotmale Hydro Power Project amidst protests from parties with hidden agendas. It is heartening to note that the people have now realized the truth and the myth about UKHP, it added.

"We are not averse to power sector reforms. Certainly in a globalized economy, reforms are needed in all sectors from time to time. However, it is our ardent belief that CEB and CPC reforms alone will not solve the energy crisis in Sri Lanka.

Now the alternate power projects are becoming a reality, let's look at the proposed reforms with sincerity without any political or individualistic interests," the statement added.