

## Press Release

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Every Sri Lankan was in debt to a minimum of Rs. 350,000 due to the UPFA governments ill conceived policies- Tissa

President Mahinda Rajapaksa had claimed that he was a democrat since he held elections regularly, but his unconstitutional actions which included arbitrarily donating state funds to other countries which had given him various titles proved that he was a dictator, the UNP said yesterday. General Secretary of the UNP, Tissa Attanayake MP addressing a news conference in Colombo said that Rajapaksa had recently donated one million US dollars to Palestine; funded the construction of a Vocational Training and Water Supply project in Uganda and donated Rs. 50 million to the Maldives because they had given him various titles. "The President had behaved in this manner even before, but it is unconstitutional, since any expenditure outside budgetary allocations has to also be approved by Parliament."

While expressing his sympathy for the Palestinian people who were being bombarded by the Israelis, the MP noted that Rajapaksa had donated money to Palestine since it had conferred the Star of Palestine on him.

In the case of the Maldives, Rs. 50 million had been gifted to carpet the road leading to the Maldivian President Abdulla Yameens house and in turn they had named the street after Rajapaksa. The President boosting his image while the vast majority of Sri Lankans were struggling to find three decent meals a day, he observed.

The powers that be repeatedly projected a rosy picture by resorting to its own peculiar methods of calculating the cost of living in violation of internationally accepted methods, the MP noted, adding that loans obtained from local and international commercial banks at very high interest rates had resulted in the debt burden zooming.

Attanayake said that while every Sri Lankan was in debt to a minimum of Rs. 350,000 due to the UPFA governments ill conceived policies, the President was gifting money to other countries as if it was his personal property.

Commenting on

President Rajapaksa's claim that he was a democrat since he held elections regularly, Attanayake said that Sri Lankans knew only too well how the UPFA had repeatedly violated polls laws, abused state resources, attacked and even eliminated its political opponents. "Actions speak louder than words and President Rajapaksa's behaviour ever since he came to office have proved that he is a dictator masquerading as a democrat. The holding of staggered polls at which all laws of the country are violated with impunity, gave the ruling party an huge unfair advantage."