

## **Premadasa Sri Lanka's New President**

COLOMBO, (PTI) — Mr Ranasinghe Premadasa was sworn in as Sri Lanka's new President at the sacred Buddhist temple of Kandy on Jan. 3.

Mr Premadasa (64), took the oath of office at a two-hour ceremony marked by religious performances at the historic temple famous for the tooth relic of Lord Buddha.

Attired in his spotless white national dress, and accompanied by his wife, Mr Premadasa took the oath before the Chief Justice, Mr Parinda Ranasinghe.

Religious heads and political leaders, including Ministers of the outgoing Government, members of the diplomatic corps, including Indian High Commissioner J.N. Dixit, witnessed the ceremony.

In a message to the nation after taking over as second executive President of the island, Mr Premadasa reiterated his call to the extremists and militants to join the democratic process, warning that "destruction must end" and "democracy can no longer tolerate it."

Without naming either the Sinhalese JVP or the Tamil LTTE, he said: "Once again I call upon all those who have still to join the democratic process to do so."

Saying that he was available for any discussion to arrive at a "constructive solution," the President assured the extremists all protection and security necessary for this purpose.