

Sri Lankan government split on whether to lift ban on glyphosate herbicide

The Cabinet [the council of ministers that form the central government of Sri Lanka] is to decide whether the ban on the controversial Glyphosate weedicide should remain, amidst lobbying by ministers for and against the ban. The move comes after a committee of experts recommended to the Government that Glyphosate was not directly linked to Chronic Kidney Disease (CKDU) epidemic, a cabinet minister said.

Agriculture Minister Duminda Dissanayake told the Sunday Times that the committee's recommendations would be submitted to the Cabinet [the week of March 26-30] to decide whether the Government should lift the ban on Glyphosate.

But, Health Minister Rajitha Senaratne and Parliamentarian Ven Athureliye Ratharana Thera are insisting that the ban should stay.

The Ven Rathana Thera who is strongly campaigning for the use of organic fertiliser said he had met President Maithripala Sirisena who gave him an assurance that the ban would remain at least for one more year.

"The President told me that some groups are calling for the lifting of the ban, but he assured me that the ban will not be lifted at least for a year and we need not worry," he said.

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