

Let's get ready for a change

As the electoral process has been settled the local government election would be held in January 2018 under a new electoral system and the JVP has decided to call upon the people in the country to consider it the first step of changing the country towards righteousness.

Holding elections to local councils has been delayed by more than thirty months and there was also the necessity to compile a more democratic electoral system instead of the distorted system prepared by the previous Mahinda Rajapaksa regime. A

considerable number of defects in the original draft has been corrected while several appropriate changes including doing away with the preferential system, a ward getting a representative and a considerable representation of women have been

ensured.

On the other hand, it is going to be the first election to be held under Ranil – Maithri 'joint' administration. It has proved to the people that the two capitalist parties that have ruled this country for 70 years, either separately or together, have failed, would not be able to win anything for the masses and there is nothing left to experiment with them hereafter.

As such, we call upon all those who believe that the country should move along

a new path to make the forthcoming election a turning point. The JVP has decided to make room, in its lists of candidates, for those progressive people who are willing to accept the challenge of changing the country.

The General Secretary of the JVP Comrade Tilvin Silva talking to 'Red Power' said the JVP invites those progressive people who would dedicate themselves to change the country towards righteousness and prepared to protect political ethics to come forward to contest the election.



A Rational Land, a Just Society and a Liberated Human Being!

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Viciousness of imperialism & grandeur of the October Revolution

The Great October Revolution in Russia marks 100 years on 25th October (According to new calendar 7th November). It is the Great October revolution that liberated one-fifth of the Earth and people living there from the gloom of feudalism and capitalist torment and gave the world the first model of genuine human development and genuine human freedom. However, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republic that was created by the Great October Revolution is not among us at present. Imperialists, employing the bureaucracy that surfaced in the Soviet Union and traitors and utilizing certain theoretical and practical weaknesses, demolished the Soviet Union at the beginning of the 1990s.

However, the human society is now realizing more and more the value and the greatness of the Soviet Union, Socialism and the October Revolution. For, in a reality where a Socialist camp does not exist, the imperialist powers carry out their agenda of destructing the world to gratify their interests and drag the people towards barbarism.

The loss of the Socialist Soviet Union created by the Great October Revolution brought sorrow and suffering not only to the people in the USSR but a large number of countries and people living in them that avoided imperialist interventions and invasions as a result of the existence of the Socialist Soviet Union and also those countries that received various economic and political assistance have become defenceless, vulnerable, suffer and are distressed.

Had the Soviet Union existed, USA would never have got an opportunity to invade Iraq; the USA would never get to topple the left government in Afghanistan and invade that country. However, imperialists carried out several invasions to overturn Socialism and plunder oil resources in the Middle East and fostered religious extremism to carry out their vicious agendas using the advantage of the absence of the Soviet Union. The religious extremism that is spreading not only in the Middle East but throughout the world, killing people and turning them into refugees is a creation of imperialism that sometimes boomerangs on them. This would never happen if the Socialist camp existed.

At a time when the 100th anniversary of the Great October Revolution is celebrated, what does the distress of the downtrodden masses throughout the world crave for? Despite bragging that capitalism is highly-developed and it has made the world a 'global village', what do the people all over the world experience? It is the yield of the destruction imperialism has committed and is committing. People throughout the world are confronted with the hazards of poverty, illiteracy, cheap labour, child prostitution, drugs, rape, crime, wars, invasions, disease, communalism, religious extremism and destruction of the environment. People die with causes for which they are not responsible for. What does it mean? People have no future in a capitalist or imperialist administration. It means the world is not marching forward towards progress but is retreating towards barbarity. This withdrawal process should be halted and the world should be taken forward towards progress. It could be done only through Socialism. This is why the reminiscences of the Great October Revolution, its experiences and its greatness are important to us and the world.

The crises the world has experienced as well as the serious breakdown of capitalism that began in the USA in 2008 indicate capitalist system and imperialism do not suit the modern world; they belong to the past and should be laid down in a museum. However, this reactionary administrative system still exists in this world due to the failure to take throughout the world the Socialist Social transformation that began with the Great October Revolution and transform it to the World Socialist Revolution.

It is not only imperialism and capitalism that are responsible for the breakdown of the Socialist camp and the doom the world is confronted with today. The bureaucracy and certain leaders that gave leadership to it that gave up Leninism to embrace revisionism, abandoned the objectives of the Great October Revolution and its theoretical guidelines for their petit interests too are responsible for this state. This is why the genuine objectives and the theoretical base of the Great October Revolution, the living experiences of how such theories were practised should be studied over and over again.

Only Socialism could give people throughout the world life instead of death, a smile instead of the tears, freedom instead of slavery, peace instead of conflict and fill people with humanity. Still, it is the Great October Revolution and its experiences that have the ability to give theoretical and practical guidance and become the guiding star for it. Hence, the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Great October Revolution should go beyond admiration and should be widened to an important learning process. We call upon everyone to study from the Great October revolution.

Long live the Greatness of October Revolution!

Harassing Rohingya refugees is an insult to humanity



cannot be justifiable.

In Sri Lanka too conflicts due to various kinds of communalist and religious extremist groups have surfaced lately. Sri Lanka had

Harassing and assaulting a group of Rohingya refugees who had arrived from Myanmar and are temporarily settled under the care of UNHRC by a gang lead by Buddhist priests at Mt. Lavinia on the 26th is an act that should not have occurred in a civilized society. It could never be approved by anyone and should be condemned by all those who respect humanity states a statement issued by the JVP .

The statement by the Political Bureau of the JVP states it is the country, the people and the religious institutions that are humiliated as a result of such perverse acts by diminutive extremist groups and asks the government to intervene immediately to prevent such acts.

Full text of the statement:

It is reported that on the 26th a gang lead by Buddhist Priests harassed and assaulted a group of Rohingya refugees who have been temporarily settled in Sri Lanka under the care of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). We consider this act of harassing a group of about 30 that included children and women who had fled as they had been made destitute due to communal and religious extremist conflicts and have arrived here seeking refuge is one that should not have occurred in a civilized society, that could never be approved by anyone and should be condemned by all those who respect humanity.

A large number of people including women and children are killed and made to suffer due to communal and religious extremist conflicts that exist throughout the world. Communalism and religious extremism, in whichever country it exists and whatever language or side it is manipulated by, is harmful to the masses and an act of barbarism that is an insult to humanity.

This is why we should condemn all sorts of communalism and religious extremism in the world. Just because one communalism or a religious extremism is wrong any other such communalism or religious extremism

to undergo a grave period and was confronted with a 30-year separatist war due to communalist conflicts. The country is still facing the ill effects of this war. Such conflicts were also a reason for foreign interventions in the country. In such an environment it is regrettable to see diminutive communal and religious extremist groups repeat their manipulations.

This is not the first time that Rohingya refugees came to Sri Lanka. Small groups of these refugees had arrived in Sri Lanka from time to time since 2008 and they were later settled down in other countries through the UNHRC. The small group that has arrived in Sri Lanka at present stays here temporarily and under the care of UNHRC. As such, terrorizing these refugees and attacking them are ignoble acts that cannot be justified by any moral norms or religious philosophy. It is the country, its people and the religious institutions that are humiliated as a result of such perverse acts.

There is another side for this. The moves of the authorities, especially of the government, who are responsible for preventing such acts are shoddy, lethargic and irresponsible. A small group has been able to spread various fabrications regarding Rohingya refugees as the authorities failed to inform the truth to the masses. Also, politically bankrupt leaders of capitalist political parties seem to be behind these extremist groups. In the end, it is not they but the country that is insulted.

Hence, whichever side comes up with whatever arguments to spread communalism and religious extremism, it is harmful and it should not be allowed to exist. We believe that all should condemn harassing Rohingya refugees as it is against humanity and civilized society.

Political Bureau,
Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna.
28.09.2017

The truth about amendments to election law



The Provincial Council Elections Amendment Bill was passed in Parliament on 20th September. The amendments required a 2/3rd majority and the MPs of the JVP too voted for the amendments. With this Mahinda Rajapaksa clique and several other individuals who are political destitute, whose only aim is to sling mud at the JVP, got thoroughly disturbed and started slandering the JVP. Their grumble was that the JVP helped the government to postpone elections. They also moaned that the JVP's act accords with the agenda of the government. Their move is to conceal their bankruptcy and the true story of the amendments to the election law from the people. Hence, it is beneficial for the people to know what really happened.

A genuine proletarian movement that campaigns within capitalism to defeat capitalism always carries out its work while also acting to win capitalist democratic reforms that would be advantageous for its political journey. The capitalist class always attempts to deny democracy to the movement of the proletarian class while the proletarian class always struggles to win it. This is the nature of the class politics. Whenever the capitalist class has been strong and formed strong capitalist administrations democracy has been curtailed in a manner that would harm the proletarian movement. This is why JR Jayawardene regime that came to power in 1977 framed a new constitution with the executive presidential system. It has not been possible to abolish this system of executive presidency yet. Only the 17th amendment brought in during the short period of probationary government in 2001 and the 19th amendment passed during the present regime could partially reduce the powers of this despotic system. It was only when the capitalist administration became weak. Also, during Mahinda Rajapaksa regime Mahinda Rajapaksa utilized the powers not to remove the executive presidency

but instead to increase the powers of the executive presidency and to enable him to contest for a third term through the 18th amendment to the constitution. All those who are with Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa at present and shed crocodile tears for 'democracy' put up their hands like slaves to vote for the undemocratic 18th amendment. The harmfulness of the 18th amendment was reduced only by the 19th amendment which was brought in during the '100-day programme' of the weak 'joint' government after intense pressure.

The truth that could be comprehended from this is that every time strong capitalist governments are formed they use their strength to make away with democracy and the masses could win democracy when capitalist governments become weaker and using this weakness to pressurize them. The JVP has always campaigned to win democratic rights of the people by utilizing the weaknesses of capitalist rulers. This is what was achieved through the Provincial Council Elections Amendment Bill presented in Parliament recently.

More than two years have gone by without holding elections for local government councils. Generally, the present government is panicky about minor elections. It is because they are weak and the 'partnership' of the 'joint' government would become

a pickle. Also, the SLFP too is scared of elections. It is because their party has splintered. As such, they would always attempt to get elections postponed if they have reasons to justify such postponements. We need not allow them to do so.

The Local government election could not be held in 2015 due to both the presidential election and the general election were held at the time the LG elections were to be held. However, the LG election was not held in 2016. What was the reason for it? Rajapaksa regime and Basil Rajapaksa and the group should be held responsible for this. During Mahinda Rajapaksa regime Basil Rajapaksa manipulated with several individuals using the power they wielded and got a new electoral system passed. It was a distorted electoral system. The system compiled on the pretext of doing away with the preferential system and bringing in 'first past the post' system was intended to drive away all other political parties other than the two capitalist parties from politics so that a two-party system would be established in the country. There were also too many errors in the proposed system. Also, the delimitation process was unscientific and was advantageous to Rajapaksas. As such, it was necessary to investigate the delimitation process and errors had to be corrected. This needed time and the government made use of

this to postpone the election.

The JVP from the very beginning carried on a struggle demanding that the LG elections should be held forthwith. We, rejecting the 'new system' brought in by Rajapaksas, demanded that LG elections should be held immediately according to the old system if it took time to correct the errors in the 'new' system. However, the government and Rajapaksa clique made a big noise stating there was no need to go back to the old system but the preferential system should be changed. As such, it is the Rajapaksa clique that compiled an erroneous system and gave an excuse for the government to postpone elections that should take the major portion of the responsibility for the delay in holding LG elections. However, the distortion in the electoral system had to be removed to hold the elections without any postponement. If it was not possible to go back to the old system and the 'new' system adopted by Rajapaksa regime was erroneous, a new system had to be created. By now a new electoral system was proposed for the parliamentary election which was a comparatively good one that did not promote preferential battle but a mixed system of proportionate and first past the post systems. The JVP and several other parties demanded the government to utilize this system for the LG

elections and as a result, a new system with the amended LG act that also included women's representation was adopted on 25th August.

This removed the technical obstruction of holding the LG elections. However, due to the long period of time taken by the government to make this move and its anarchic behaviour when the legal environment to hold the LG elections was at hand the official term of three provincial councils was about to be terminated. The official terms of Eastern, North – Central and Sabaragamuwa ended in September and despite holding the elections was compulsory according to the Provincial Council Act, it was not possible to do so as two elections could not be held simultaneously. As the GCE O/L examination is to be held in December, it was not possible to hold the elections in December either.

At this, the government attempted to find a way to make use of this situation to postpone PC elections. The government prepared the 20th amendment to hold PC elections on the same day so that it could postpone PC elections until all the existing PCs have completed their terms. During Rajapaksa regime PC elections were held intermittently making it a political gamble. As such, having elections for all the PCs was a good move but what the JVP objected was the attempt to postpone PC elections for 2 years on the pretext of compiling the 20th amendment. However, the government had to abandon the 20th amendment as the Supreme Court had stated it was necessary to have a referendum to make it law.

However, a new issue was left. It is the postponement of elections for local government councils. The government too did not dislike it. For, the government wouldn't have minded avoiding holding elections. However, our need was to hold the local government election that is held throughout the island as soon as possible. There are clear reasons for this. First, it is the local government election that has been delayed for more than two

The Centenary of the October Revolution will be the beginning of a new journey

Comrade Tilvin Silva
General Secretary of the JVP

Red Power: Recently you visited China to attend the centenary of the October revolution. Can you share your experience with the Red Power readers?

Comrade Tilvin Silva: A theoretical workshop of Marxism had been organized for left parties in the South Asia to mark the centenary celebrations of the Great October Revolution by the foreign ministry of China and the Chinese Communist Party. Representatives of 14 left parties and other parties representing Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh and Nepal attended the workshop. At the workshop, the participants discussed the experiences in forming left parties and how Marxism could be applied for each country in the future. In addition, field visits had been organized to demonstrate the victories China has achieved in industries, science and technology and agricultural sector. The programs were organized in Beijing, capital of China, in Shandong, the most developed region in China and in Yan'an, considered as the headquarters of the Chinese Revolution. The discussion in Yan'an, was held in the Communist Party School and the JVP Member of the Central Committee Comrade Adikari and I attended the programme.

Actually, it was a good experience. In the whole programme, the discussions were focused on the Chinese experience in building Socialism. Also, they shared their experiences in building the Communist Party, the stern action they take against corruption within the party as well as in the country. When compared with measures taken in our countries, they are taking tremendous efforts to curb fraud and corruption. Also, they punish anybody who found guilty of corruption without considering their

status. They have punished even the higher ranked officials of the Communist Party. The discussion was also focused on two factors; firstly, the issues in building the party and secondly, how to apply Marxism to local situations of each country. It was a theoretical discussion and we also involved actively in this discussion presenting our proposals.

After these meetings, the ties between the JVP and the Chinese Communist Party were further strengthened. We think that the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party got a better understanding about the JVP, disciplinary within our party and theoretical views of the JVP. Generally, we can consider this tour as a very successful workshop and a foreign tour. We got an opportunity to gather theoretical and practical experience and to confront challenges in building socialism and left movements.

Red Power: The centenary celebration of the Great October Revolution is celebrated this month. How do you see the impacts and present day influence of the revolution to the mankind and how does the JVP celebrate this great event?

Comrade Tilvin Silva: In fact, the Great October Revolution that directed the world towards a new path would mark its centenary this year. It is a magnificent event. Since this is the greatest political event in the human history, all the left movements around the world and Socialist countries commemorate this event and have started fresh advanced dialogues on Marxism and Socialism. As I said earlier, all the workshops and programs arranged in our China tour were focused on the centenary of the October Revolution. The 19th World Festival of Youth and Students will also be

held in Russia this time as a commemoration event of the October revolution.

As the main left movement of Sri Lanka October revolution is a very important event for us. It was after the Great October Revolution that Communist parties were formed in countries like ours. After the victory of the October Revolution in 1917, within the next decade between 1921-1932, Communist parties or left parties emerged in many countries. There are many reasons why the October Revolution is important to us. Firstly, it was the October Revolution that put into practice Marxism advocated by Karl Marx and Fredrik Engels for the first time. Also, it proved that Marxism can become a reality. Also, October Revolution developed Marxism and established Socialism in a backward country like Russia defeating imperialism and offered many experiences in theory and practice to the world in building Socialism.

On the other hand, Russia, a huge and under-developed country where even the capitalist revolution had not been completed was made a world power within a few years. They have marked significant historical achievements such as the first space travel, the first woman astronomer to go to space and took giant strides in the field of science and technology. They eliminated poverty in Russia. Under Socialism, they completely solved the unemployment issue. They had built a country that provided jobs, housing, free education for all and a country where all the people could live without fear.

Although these victories of the October revolution were reversed by the imperialists and opportunist fractions in the Soviet Union, we think



that they cannot delete these victories from history. Especially in the Second World War if the Soviet Russia was not there Nazi forces of Hitler would have captured the whole world. In the second world war, Soviet Russia did the greatest sacrifices and was able to defeat Nazism protect Socialism and the Revolution with the sacrifices of nearly 200 million Soviet citizens. As such, many are the contributions the October revolution has gifted to the world.

We know that many countries support Sri Lanka with ulterior motives and hidden agendas. However, it was the Soviet Union that helped Sri Lankan governments in the 1970s without expecting any economic returns. We had many industries donated by Soviet Russia. Many factories such as those manufacturing steel, tire and plywood were given free to our country. On the other hand the task carried out by the Soviet Union by publishing and distributing books on Marxism – Leninism was a boon to spreading Marxism in the country.

Therefore the influence of the Soviet Russia to the world was great. After the collapse

of the Soviet Union, the imperialists too have been confronted with a crisis. Imperialists are carrying out a massive destruction to keep the world under their control. Today, there are racist and religious divisions and conflicts all over the world. Thousands of people are dying as a result of these conflicts and various diseases. Environmental destruction has intensified. Therefore in place of capitalism and imperialism that has given death and destruction to the people Socialism should come back to give life, smiles and happiness to the people. For that, we believe that a dialogue should be set in motion among the masses regarding Socialism, Socialist Philosophy and Marxism – Leninism. This is the best time for it.

JVP has planned to celebrate this great event on a grand scale. From 27-28 of October, we have organized an exhibition about the Soviet Union at Viharamahadevi open theatre together with a book launch, discussions and a series of events. Representatives of the Russian Communist Party, diplomats of the Russian Embassy, professionals, intellectuals and artistes who have been educated in Soviet Russia will attend

these events. We have organized this celebration on a grand scale to make an impact on people and we hope this will be an opportunity to launch a fresh dialogue about socialism. It is essential for us because this country has been suffering for over 70 years in this bankrupt and backward capitalist path. The country has been ruined by bringing two capitalist parties into power one after another. Crimes, fraud and corruption, poverty, debt burden have been increased. A culture of protecting corrupted ones has been developed. Sri Lanka cannot go along this path any longer and therefore we have to deviate from this path. We should change to a new society where social development and social equality are in place. We have to form new forces of the people for it. In creating such a force it is important to make them believe in Socialism and give them confidence that Socialism can solve problems. When taken in this context, we believe the centenary commemoration of the Great October Revolution is a very important event for us. We

Myanmar: Rohingya issue being internationalized



The issue of Rohingyas in Myanmar has become a point of debate not only locally but internationally as well. Various political forces and groups within Sri Lanka, all governments and left parties in the South Asian region, the USA as well as the UNO have responded to the issue in various ways. Some responses have taken a communal turn while certain responses have been ones that invite imperialist interventions.

The Rohingya issue escalated during the last two years. However, the issue has a history of several decades.

The Rakhine (previously called Arakan) on the western coast of Myanmar is largely believed to be the original home of the Rohingyas. Majority of a population of about 1 to 1.3 million Rohingyas live in Rakhine state which is bordered by Bangladesh and India to the North and India Ocean to the West. The majority in Rakhine are Buddhists. Rohingyas are a minority in the state. The majority of the Rohingyas are Muslims while a minority is Hindus. Despite living in Myanmar for several decades they are not considered citizens of Myanmar. Myanmar authorities consider Rohingyas as illegal immigrants that have migrated from Bangladesh. However, Bangladesh and India do not accept them as their citizens. As a result, they have become a community without a nationality. They are also continuously harassed

by Buddhist communalist sections. They are also restricted from freedom of movement, state education and civil service jobs. The legal conditions faced by the Rohingyas in Myanmar have been compared with Apartheid.

During the second world war, Myanmar (then known as Burma) supported Japan. However, Rohingyas supported Britain on condition that they would be given a separate state. The promise was not kept and their request that they are attached to East Pakistan was rejected by Ali Jinnah. From 1948 to 1961 Rohingyas Mujahideens fought for autonomy. Their aim was to sever from Myanmar and link with East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh). They were defeated by Myanmar government forces resulting in most of the Mujahideens surrendering to government forces. In 1972 Rohingya Liberation Party (RLP) was established, led by former Mujahideen leader Zaffar Kawal. This organization too had to be dissolved and in 1974 Muhammad Jafar Habib, the former Secretary of the RLP founded the Rohingya Patriotic Front (RPF). The fighting culminated with the Burmese government launching a massive military operation. However, a refugee issue was left. In 1982 a group that broke away from RPF formed Rohingya Solidarity Organization. Later, in 1998 Arakan Rohingya Islam Front and Rohingya Solidarity

Organization joined to form Arakan Rohingya National Organization (ARNO). The Rohingya National Army founded under ARNO is fighting to win a separate state for Rohingyas. Muslim extremist organizations throughout the world support this organization in various ways.

The Rohingya issue has received a massive attention internationally as it has spilled out of Myanmar administrators and Rohingyas to other parts of the world. It has become a refugee issue for Bangladesh and India. Without stopping at that it has also become an issue of world economic and political powers.

Rakhine state is a very sensitive centre of the 'silk route' being built by China. The Kyaukpyu area in Rakhine is especially important for the new Silk Road project of China. The 2806 km long gas pipeline linking seaport of Kyaukpyu with Kunming in Yunnan province of China is especially important to China. This would allow China to avoid the Strait of Malacca to transport natural gas and fuel from the Middle East. Also, a consortium of six countries headed by China is developing the port of Kyaukpyu. Also, the area is being developed as a special economic centre. As such, China cannot ignore the Rohingya issue.

Europe and the USA have identified the issue as a 'Humanitarian Crisis'. This means the issue has developed into a stage where an international mediation is required without considering the independence of a country. On one side it is an issue regarding the rights of Rohingyas and on the other, it is a conflict between Rohingyas and Buddhist extremists. However, it has also become a nursery to create conflicts between the requisites of world's economic

and political forces. As such, the parties that are showing an interest and responding to the issue do so according to the effect the issue has on them.

Several political analysts talking about the developing situation warn that Rohingya issue could become Asia's Yugoslavia. According to them, Europe and the USA have analyzed the issue as a 'Humanitarian Crisis' with the intention of preparing the ground for an international military intervention. It is to convert Rakhine state into a US base of operation like in Kosovo.

China's attitude is that it is an issue that should be solved by Myanmar. They also state the issue should be settled through discussion and accord. Many expect that the issue would not deteriorate to the level of the issue that surfaced in Yugoslavia.

It seems that the Rohingya issue has developed beyond a mere struggle for rights or an ethnic issue. As such, the solution for the issue should protect the rights of Rohingyas and at the same time should not allow imperialism to make a cat's paw of the situation to get its economic, political and military interests fulfilled.

China: Getting ready for the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China

The 19th Congress of the Communist Party of China is scheduled to commence on 18th October. A new Central Committee and members of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection will be elected at the Congress.

Already, 88 million members of the Communist Party of China have elected 2300 members to represent them at the Congress. It is expected to review the work done since 2012.

Cuba: Seeking democracy for the Security Council



Cuba, on 28th August, criticized UN Security Council for its lack of transparency. Cuba proposed a Security Council with increased democratic participation and transparency. Cuba's Deputy Permanent Representative Ana Silvia Rodríguez also called for the Security Council to urgently change its working methods in favour of a far more inclusive style that guarantees its members' genuine participation in decision-making processes and the work of the group. Accordingly, she proposed:

1. end to closed-door meetings
2. end the obsolete and anti-democratic power of veto
3. end to the division of permanent and non-permanent members and
4. end the procedure that has been following for 70 years

Cuba also criticized the report on the work of the Council over the past year saying the document was "merely a descriptive summary of the meetings, activities and decisions taken," despite calls from the majority of fellow General Assembly members for in-depth analyzes of the body's work.

Germany: Merkel wins 4th term but loses her coalition



Angela Merkel has won her fourth term as German chancellor, but her coalition partners for the last four years, the Social Democrats, have likely received their worst result since World War II. The right-wing populist AfD has secured more than 13 percent of the vote.

Merkel's conservative Christian Democrat (CDU) and the Christian Social Union (CSU) bloc has seen its worst result in almost 70 years but will remain the largest in parliament.

Its current coalition partner, the social democratic SPD, says it will go into opposition after historic losses. With the possibility of an alliance with the SPD rejected, Mrs Merkel's options are narrow, and the process of forming a new coalition could take months.

Thieves & hoodlums in cabinet delay presenting Audit Bill in Parliament

Comrade Anura Dissanayaka

“An Audit Service Commission was established through the 19th amendment to the Constitution 20 months ago. However, the Bill that would allow the Audit service commission to function has not been adopted yet. Now, a new situation has surfaced. It is to audit the Audit Service Commission. For, a staff has been appointed; they have been paid, provided facilities but no action has been carried out by the commission which is a waste of public money. As such, this institute should be audited. A gang of thieves and hoodlums in the cabinet attempts not to present the Audit Bill in Parliament. We, as the JVP, would take all the possible measures to get the Audit Bill passed in Parliament,” said the Leader of the JVP Comrade Anura Dissanayaka.

He said this speaking at a press conference held at the head office of the JVP.

Speaking further Comrade Anura Dissanayaka said, “This government is delaying adopting the Audit Bill. This government, just like it was with the previous regime, is accused of misappropriation, waste, fraud of public funds and corruption. Misappropriation of public money, fraud, corruption and waste have become cancers of the economic structure of the country. A legal provision is necessary to minimize this menace. However, it would not be possible to consider that adopting of the Audit Bill would stop all corruption and frauds. However, a legal covering is necessary against misappropriation, waste, fraud and corruption.

The Expressway to be built by this government from Pothuhera to Galagedera is 32.5 kilometres. It is expected to spend Rs. 135 billion for this project. Construction of one kilometre would cost Rs.4150 million. The cabinet has presented this project to a company that had been



rejected earlier. Do the people in our country have to spend Rs. 4150 million for a kilometre of road? Also, an agreement had been signed with a French company during the previous regime to buy four A350 planes. The agreement was not only a very unfavourable one but also involved a large transaction. The present government cancelled this agreement and had to pay US\$108 million to the company and also agreed to buy an A330 plane and to extend the lease of a plane for 10 years. As such, this administration too is one that misuses people's money, commit frauds, corruption and waste of public funds.

The cabinet, the Prime Minister and the President hinder the move to present audit Bill in Parliament. The Audit Department in our country is 200 years old. However, the country doesn't have an Audit Bill. Sri Lanka is one of the few countries in the world that doesn't have an Audit Bill.

In 1987 then Chairman of COPE presenting a report said an Audit Bill was essential as public funds were being misused. Also, in a report of a research carried out with the assistance of several foreign countries in 2003 it was stated that an Audit Bill

was necessary for the country. Accordingly, a draft of an Audit Bill was compiled in 2013. 14 years have gone by but the Bill has not been adopted. If it is the people in this country that have to adopt the Bill a large majority would vote for it. However, it is the cabinet that has to pass the Bill. It is the cabinet with fraudsters, thieves and squanderers that has to pass the Bill to stop misappropriation of public funds, fraud, corruption and waste. These thieves, fraudsters and plunderers in the cabinet continuously obstruct the adoption of the Bill in Parliament.

In the 100 day programme of Maithri – Ranil government it is clearly stated that the Audit Bill would be presented to parliament on 19th February 2015 and get it adopted on 19th March 2015. On 20th April 2015, the Prime Minister presented it to the cabinet. 30 months have gone by since then. During this period the cabinet has met about 120 times. However, the Bill has not been approved. The Bill was amended on several instances. The Constitution in the country has been amended only 19 times. However, the Audit Bill has been amended 22 times. The amended draft was

presented to parliament again on 9th August 2017. However, ministers want more time saying they want to study it. Why is it so? They want to see whether their stealing, frauds would be exposed if the Bill is adopted.

As such, we decided to present the Bill in Parliament as a private member's bill through Comrade Sunil Handunneththi.

The audit process in our country is similar to a postmortem. The FCID investigates only financial crimes that have been already committed. The Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption investigates only after frauds and bribery that have been committed. The CID investigates after a crime has been committed. The Audit Department carries out investigations after transactions have been completed. As such, what is being carried out now is, instead of taking measures to minimize the harm being done, the auditing process is carried out only after the harm has been already done.

As such, it is necessary to have a pre-audit process. Isn't it justifiable to have a pre-audit carried out on the Pothuhera – Galagedera Expressway project? Isn't it necessary to audit why

the Minister had handed over the project to a company that had been rejected earlier? There should not only financial audits in connection with this project there should also be a technical audit. There are provisions for such audits in the Audit Bill. Isn't it necessary to audit the Pothuhera – Galagedera project when the contract was given to a company that bid Rs.135000 despite the estimate of the Engineering Corporation was only Rs.123000 million?

There is a lot of provisions in the Bill to protect independence. The officials appointed to the Audit Service Commission are to be removed from Public Service Commission and are attached to Audit Service Commission. Also, it is the Treasury that finances the Audit Department. This would allow the Ministry of Finance to have its influence. However, according to Audit Bill finances to the Audit Department should be allocated from Parliament. Then the Ministry of Finance would not have any influence over it. Also, according to this Bill all financial matters, administration and other matters are carried out independently. It would be a hindrance against thieving, frauds, corruption and waste. Despite this, the rulers are postponing passing the Bill.

An Audit Service Commission was established through the 19th amendment to the Constitution 20 months ago. However, the Bill that would allow the Audit service commission to function has not been adopted yet. Now, a new situation has surfaced. It is to audit the Audit Service Commission. For, a staff has been appointed; they have been paid, provided facilities but no action has been carried out by the commission which is a waste of public money. As such, this institute should be audited. A gang of thieves and hoodlums in the Parliament attempt not to present the Audit Bill in Parliament. We, as the JVP, would take all the possible measures to get the Audit Bill passed in Parliament.”

The Centenary of the October...

>>> Page 04

invite everyone to participate in these celebrations.

Red Power: An anarchic and uncertain fluctuation could be seen in the present government and in Sri Lankan capitalist politics at present. The best example is the uncertainty regarding the provincial council election and the dialogue on the new constitution. What is the stance of the JVP about this situation?

Comrade Tilvin Silva: Present Sri Lankan government is not one that was formed by the people; it was one that was set up. We all know that at the 2015 presidential election Mahinda Rajapaksa was defeated but no new government was formed. The general election was held only in August 2015. At that election, there was neither of the two main parties received a mandate to form a government of their own. The result is forming a hybrid government by the UNP and the SLFP. From the inception of this assembled hybrid government, there was anarchy and confusion. These confusions and conflicts created a situation where the decisions taken by the government couldn't be implemented. On the other hand, as a result of the deterioration of the capitalist system in the country whether they form governments separately or together, it has been proved that capitalist parties cannot resolve any issues confronted by this country. Therefore, this crisis is not merely a result of the hybrid government now in power. It is a hybrid and a capitalist government and both these factors are the causes for the crisis. Both parties in the government UNP and the SLFP are attempting to secure and strengthen their power and on the other hand, they are attempting to take the country along the bankrupt neo-liberal path. These are the reasons for this crisis.

The government has faced issues in holding elections. We all know that the local government election was to be held in 2015. It was postponed due to the presidential election and in 2016 it was postponed again. Now the election of members to the local authorities has been postponed for two years. This important election should have been held immediately. However, there was an issue as a result of the new election system introduced by Basil Rajapaksa and others to get an undue advantage for them. It was a system to establish two-party system and most of the political parties opposed it. UNP did not oppose it and SLFP had no issue with it. But all other parties opposed it and finally we had to struggle and amend the system and get a mixed system with the combination of preferential and first-past-the-post system.

We think that the new system is fairer than the previous system. However, it took a long time to get the amendments to the Local Authority Act passed and correct demarcation done during the Rajapaksa regime. During this period the term of office of three Provincial Councils came to an end. Therefore local government elections cannot be postponed further. Also, it was necessary to stop having provincial council elections intermittently but to have elections for all provincial councils on the same day and the electoral system proposed to local government councils to be used for the provincial councils as well. There was a massive opposition in the country for the preferential voting system. In such a scenario and in a situation where local government election system has been changed, having provincial council elections under the preferential voting system was not logical. The proposal for a 20th amendment the government tried to bring in with the intention of postponing provincial council elections had to be abandoned due to the necessity of a referendum. We too do not agree to some of the points in the 20th amendment proposal. It is in such a situation the

provincial council act had to be amended.

We believe that holding PC poll under the preferential voting system and applying different voting systems for different elections is not fair. Also, it is unfair to further postpone LG election that has been already postponed for over two years just for PC elections in three Provincial Councils. Under this basis, we voted for the amendment of the Provincial Council Act. Now the LG poll can be held in January and the PC poll can be held under the new election system (not the system brought by Basil Rajapaksa) in mid next year. Actually, we intervened to create a situation that the government could not postpone elections, hold elections as scheduled and not to approve postponement of PC elections.

We have intervened to hold LG poll in January next year and PC poll in mid next year under the new election system and with an increased women's participation in the PCs.

Red Power: Although there is no exact dates for elections political arena is warming up. What are the programs that the JVP has to stop people being trapped in old camps as had been their habit in the past but to attract them to your party?

Comrade Tilvin Silva: Yes, there is no exact date for the election. But we believe the dates will be fixed soon and LG election will be in the first or the second week of January. The Prime Minister has said that the PC election will be held in March under the new system. Whatever the system and whenever it comes we should try to win elections.

The first election we have to face is LG election and it is the election that mobilizes the strength of the people in the grass root level. JVP is in full readiness for this election. We have built "Diriya Puravasi" Societies at village level and organized people. It has been a success. We have held district conventions of DPS in 14 districts and we expect to complete district conventions in all districts in mid next month. All these conventions were extremely successful and there was a massive peoples' participation. This demonstrates that the people at the grass root level have realized and have the motivation to change this society. The reason is this capitalist system has ruined the expectations of these people during the last 70 years.

Today they have created a society where there is no education for the children, no medicine for patients, no proper shelter and no employment for youths; a society that has no expectation about the future. On the other hand, there is an increase in crime, drug addiction, theft and humanity have been drained from the society. People are suffering from illnesses, poverty and crimes and they cannot tolerate this anymore.

The two main political parties that ruled this country are similar and people have realized it. Due to all these factors, we think that there is a tendency in the people to change and what we tell them is learn lessons from the 70 years history and take this country along new path and create a new political force. We invite people to join hands with the JVP. We expect to increase our strength at this LG election.

Also, the next general election will be held in 2020. We are building a new political centre and new political force to change this country, take it to a new path. This LG poll will be used to gather strength to that political change in the country. The JVP need significant victories to strengthen and motivate the forces. Therefore, we request the people to give that power to us at this upcoming LG poll.

The truth about...

>>> Page 03

years. It should be held immediately. As the local government councils are linked to day to day lives of the people, their right to elect their representatives to these bodies should not be delayed. The Provincial Council election was relevant to three provinces only whereas the local government election is relevant to the whole country. Postponing the election held for councils throughout the country on behalf of three provincial councils was not justifiable and democratic.

On the other hand, the elections for the three provincial councils were to be held according to the old 'preferential' system. Despite the 'preferential' system being not an issue for the JVP, many in the country as well as Mahinda Rajapaksa clique and the SLFP were clamouring for a change. As such, holding the election according to 'preferential' system would not be fair. On the other hand elections in a country should be held according to one system and under one law. There cannot be one system for provincial council elections and another for elections for local councils. This is why the government was pressurized to amend the Provincial Councils act, to substitute the electoral system utilized to local government councils for provincial council elections, delay having this election for a short period and bring forward the elections for local government bodies. This was our stand as well and many political parties demanded this move. In the end, the government had to agree to amend the Provincial Councils act and include the new electoral system, to hold provincial council election by the middle of 2018 and to hold the elections for local councils by mid-January, 2017. The JVP voted for the amendment to the Provincial Councils act that was brought in for this move. Now, it has been possible to hold local government elections in January next year and within a few months, it would be also possible to hold the provincial councils election under the new system. With this, the government was denied the opportunity to postpone elections quoting various reasons. It created an environment in which elections could be held without postponing them for various reasons.

To hide this truth Rajapaksa clique, exposing its treachery and hypocrisy, has come out with the slander that the JVP contributed to postponing elections.

Despite Mahinda Rajapaksa clique screamed that the adopting of the Provincial Council Elections Amendment Bill was a serious crime, Mahinda Rajapaksa was not available in parliament to vote against the amendment. It may be because the amendment was not very relevant to Mahinda and could be due to the underhand transactions he has with Ranil. On the other hand, Rajapaksa clique bragged throughout the past that a group from the government was with them and soon the government could be toppled. If so, Mahinda Rajapaksa clique could have prevented the government getting a 2/3rd majority. No such thing happened. Mahinda clique got defeated dashing all their hopes of a victory. Now, their braying is due to the pain of this defeat.

"What is the end result of this? Is it advantageous for the masses?" This is what is important to the people in the country. The people who clamoured for elections have got the local government elections that would be held throughout the island, without the hated preferential system but with a comparatively fair system. Those who expected a change and wanted to teach the government a good lesson have got the opportunity to do so. This was not served on a platter but a victory achieved with the strategic mediation of the JVP. Also, people have got the provincial council election too under the new system and it would be held by the middle of next year.

Finally, one more matter should be explained. Rajapaksa clique that is unable to accept its defeat and attempting to hang on the last straw states the number of members has increased due to the new system and it is a burden to the country. If it is so, it could have been thought of earlier. When the likes of Basil Rajapaksa adopted the new system during Mahinda Rajapaksa regime the number of members proposed was higher. The number of local councillors that was 4800 was increased to 8000. Those who were mum then talking about the increased number of members now is hypocrisy. It is true that all these institutions are a burden for the country. Hence, what should be done is to do away with this social system that is a burden for the country and the capitalist political parties that wastes and robs people's money and replace it with a new society. The Local Government election should be made a turning point and a threshold for this new journey.

RED POWER



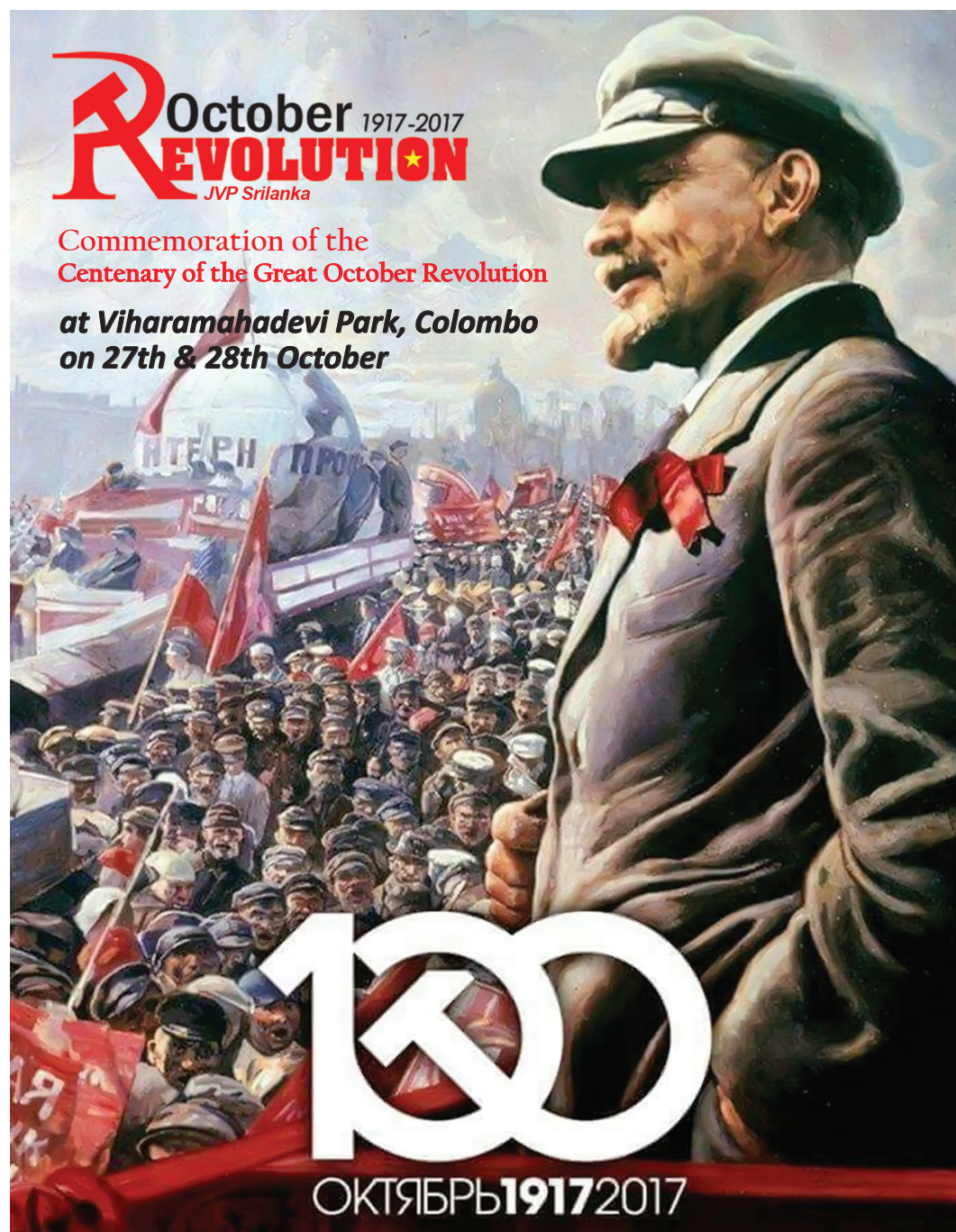
Comrade Tilvin Silva attending Theoretical Workshop in China



Marching to 'Dhiriya Purawesi' summit at Badulla



Comrade Vijitha Herath addressing Sri Lankans in Washington



Hands off Venezuela!



Against levying tax for fine arts