

Broadest People's Centre to be launched this year

The broadest people's centre that incorporates civil society organizations including the National Intellectuals Organization (NIO) and various left and progressive organizations that would reject the 70 year political culture in this country but would raise high the policies of developing and protecting the country is to be launched by the middle of this year state reports reached by 'Red Power'.

There hasn't been any such centre in the history of the country that has extended beyond a mere election manifesto or based on a broad policy programme

and this political force would be a new experience in Sri Lanka's politics. The progressive sections of various social and professional forces that

realized the prevailing socio-economic-political system would not take the country forward anymore rallied round the National Intellectuals Organization (NIO) to formulate the programme to develop and protect the country. This programme is expected to be presented to the People in February this year. Subsequently, the Broad People's Centre will be built

with the contribution of the JVP as well to build a people's administration that would fulfill, based on the NIO programme, people's aspirations that have not been fulfilled for the last 70 long years said the General Secretary of the JVP Comrade Tilvin Silva speaking to 'Red Power'. "This centre will be a new experience for the masses. Also, a large

majority of the people who have been fatigued by the futile administrations that existed in the country for 70 years will receive it with delight. It would soon make available to the people a people's administration that would defeat the existing destructive, pillaging economic system and pave the way for a just, democratic and developed society," said Comrade Tilvin Silva.



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Danger - Handle with care

Having the above warning printed on explosives, toxic and other dangerous products is compulsory. It is for the protection of the consumer of such products. It seems such a warning is suitable for partisan media as well. For, the conduct of media institutions (TV channels, FM channels and main newspapers) in Sri Lanka, like the ones throughout the world, is harmful to society.

The main mass media in a society based on capital and ruled by the owners of capital serves the capitalist class or their main intention is profit. We need not be blind to this naked truth. However, when the media functions within a society they should follow morality at least to some degree and keep away from spreading lies and superstition. Of course, media in certain countries did follow certain ethics during certain periods. However, everything has become topsy-turvy now.

On one hand, mass media has become the victim of the 'everything holy has been defiled' situation created by the breakdown of social values that resulted due to the social crisis created as a result of the failure of imperialism and capitalism. On the other hand, imperialist and capitalist ruling cliques make use of mass media to exercise dominative influence on the masses to control their vision to have them as slaves of their dogmas. Certain capitalist media barons all over the world as well as in our country have become cats' paws of ruling cliques helping in their bid to cover up anti-social moves of hoarding black money. The result is spreading lies and superstition and transforming people into slaves of capitalists' dogmas preventing people to be free thinking and independent.

The results of the technological revolution that occurred in the world's information technology in the recent past or the development of science too have been made a convenience by these institutions for their reactionary moves. Generally, what exists at present is a vision and a society that is being manipulated by the media. This is a serious obstacle for social development.

We have seen how dominant media such as CNN and BBC created vision on behalf of imperialism. We saw how Iraq was invaded and then interpreting killing thousands of Iraqis including children and women as a humanitarian act of 'consolidating democracy'. According to the capitalist media, the USA was the 'protector of human rights'. However, Cuba that has never invaded any country but supports many countries was branded as an 'undemocratic state'. According to them, Fidel was a dictator. This is how the US media lead the US citizens astray.

Also, the imperialist media that turns a blind eye to poor countries in Africa and Latin America, directly or indirectly exploited by imperialism, ruled by pro-imperialist rulers, where fraud, corruption, murder are widespread and where extreme poverty is a way of life spreads tons of lies about the poorness in Socialist North Korea and shed crocodile tears on behalf of the 'starving people' in that country.

This tragedy exists within Sri Lanka as well. Television has a big impact on our people's lives. Newspapers too can influence people's views. Most of the mass media owners in Sri Lanka earn their capital through unethical and unjustifiable means. As such they have to satisfy the needs of capitalist political parties and their leaders. As a result, people have lost their right and means of getting correct information and the truth.

Moreover, people's minds and public opinion is polluted with false information. This is evident when studying how the principal media in Sri Lanka conducted itself during the recent conspiracy hatched to topple the government. The manner mass media in Sri Lanka acted to bring victory to the conspicuous political conspiracy and the manner they attempted to justify it is deplorable. They are playing with the vision of the people; their right to know the truth. This is indeed a tragedy!

A voice against the practice of anti-social mass media that lies about politics in the country, destroys ethics and social values through advertisements, ignores privacy, identity and dignity of people when publishing information should come through the society. Already, various youth groups, civil society organizations have expressed their opposition and commenced criticizing such media. It is a good beginning. The general public too should join them. For, the consumer of the mass media is the general public. If the general public rejects reading, listening or seeing lies, the owners of partisan media would have to change their ways. As such, the opposition and disapproval of the people for the wrong media practice should be broadened.

On the other hand, deploying alternative information communication means in a responsible manner is a strong answer to the issue. Already, this has begun through social media such as 'Facebook'. The monopoly of the partisan media would shatter if it could be used with restraint.

As such, we all should understand that time has come to struggle for a media practice that tells the truth to the people, that doesn't violate social values, ethics or that doesn't serve the reactionary.

New Year is for change. Let's make change happen!

According to the calendar we all use, the New Year 2019 has dawned. When a year ends and a new year begins, we wish each other 'Happy New Year'; send New Year cards. Despite this tradition of wishing each other at the dawn of the New Year being continued for ages, it has not gone beyond a mere wish for many of us. In reality, the past years have not been auspicious for a large majority in our society. This was the truth. It is not a question about the honesty of those well-wishers but what is linked to the broader socio-economic-political construction.

We wind up the old year 2018 and enter the New Year 2019 carrying with us the socio-economic-political crises and a number of challenges that have burdened us for 70 long years. The economy of the country that doesn't create new means has gravely deteriorated. The rulers who have no vision of building the country burden it with more and more debt while the masses are fatigued with the burden of taxes and the cost of living. National assets are further plundered with the greed for ministerial portfolios and prestigious. The defeated former rulers strive hard to prevent legal action being taken against them for plundering public assets during their term. This is what exists as an unholy axis.

Fraud, corruption, thieving and waste have spread from top to the bottom of the society and the media has reported that Sri Lanka is ranked top in the latest list of the most corrupt countries in the world. Now, would the new year become auspicious when wished with hollow words? This is the factor we all should ponder in the New Year.

Last year ended with a challenge to democracy in the country. As such, we also have, in this New Year, the responsibility of setting up an administrative system that strengthens democracy instead of continuing with a constitutional dictatorship.

However, we need not be pessimistic. There is a path before us to make the New Year auspicious. It is by getting away from the futile socio-economic-political path we have been following and resolving to enter a new political journey. We firmly believe that the new year, as well as the future of our people and the country, would be definitely auspicious if the masses in this country are capable of taking a new political decision in the New Year. For this, we should be bold enough to look at the society anew and take decisions with new ideas and attitudes after casting away old ideologies and attitudes.

This new year dawns with an omen for a new beginning. We wish all Sri Lankans, who are getting prepared to cast aside everything antiquated and futile so that they would think anew to take new decisions, courage and strength and a genuinely auspicious New Year.

New Year is for change. Let's make change happen!

Anura Dissanayaka

Leader

Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna

01.01.2019

With the conspiracy hatched together by Maithri and Mahinda on 26th October to pillage state power, two fronts of struggle surfaced in the country against the vile act. One was the front lead by the UNP and its supporters. The other was the struggle to protect democracy carried out by the JVP and various political and civil society organizations and individuals lead by it. Mahinda Rajapaksa had to relinquish the illegally grabbed premiership as a result of the defeats in two no-confidence motions brought in Parliament and the two verdicts given by two Courts against the unconstitutional, undemocratic, unethical and illegal move. This allowed Ranil Wickremesinghe to be sworn in again as the prime minister. With Ranil's sworn in as the premier, the struggle carried out by the UNP terminated. For, the objective of their struggle was a narrow limitation of getting back the premiership that had been illegally grabbed. However, the struggle of democratic forces including the JVP would not end just because Ranil Wickremesinghe has come back as the Prime Minister. For, the struggle to consolidate democracy is not over yet. Ranil becoming the Prime Minister has not ended the struggle for democracy.

The most serious harmful factor for capitalist democracy in Sri Lanka is the existing executive presidential system. Abolishing it is an essential factor for democracy. The JVP did put forward a proposal to hold investigations in connection with the conspiracy and take legal action against the conspirators as soon as the conspiracy was defeated was not only because the conspiracy was harmful to progressive forces in the country but it aimed a deadly blow on capitalist democracy in Sri Lanka as well. Also, the struggle begun by the JVP on behalf of democracy has been now converted into the struggle to abolish executive presidential system as abolishing executive presidency is an essential factor in consolidating democracy in the country. All organizations and the general public that associated with the

JVP against the 26th October conspiracy continue to struggle to achieve what they strived for. It is a very promising indeed.

It is difficult to deny that capitalist democracy is an essential factor when building a left movement for the Socialist revolution. The left movement should be prepared to continue its politics even if the capitalist class abolishes capitalist democracy. However, it is the responsibility of the left movement to protect, broaden and to struggle for the little bit of capitalist democracy if such a bit exists. For, as Lenin had said capitalist democracy is essential in the task of organizing our class. The struggle the JVP carries on for democracy is with this broad objective but not with a petty capitalist or bourgeois purpose.

It is the conspiracy that was committed recently that showed us the strength and importance of democratic reforms that reduce, at least minutely, the absolute powers of executive presidency despite they are unable to block the draconian path paved by J.R. Jayawardene completely. Had the 19th amendment not been implemented the conspiracy would have been definitely successful and the political challenge the JVP would have to confront, as the left movement, would have been immense. It was thanks to the 19th amendment that the Supreme Court could declare that the arbitrary dissolution of Parliament by the President for his petty political agenda was illegal. According to the 19th amendment the Parliament cannot be dissolved by the President "until the expiration of a period of not less than four years and six months from the date appointed for its first meeting, unless Parliament requests the President to do so by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the whole number of Members (including those not present), voting in its favour."

Also, interpreting the Constitution, as well as the conduct of the Judiciary throughout the whole process, was comparatively independent and this was possible as the right of appointing judges to

To prevent democracy from being restricted to an election promise...



courts had been withdrawn from the President and had been handed over to the Constitutional Council and the Judicial Services Commission. This too was a victory achieved by the 19th amendment. As such, the contribution of the JVP on behalf of democracy has not been in vain.

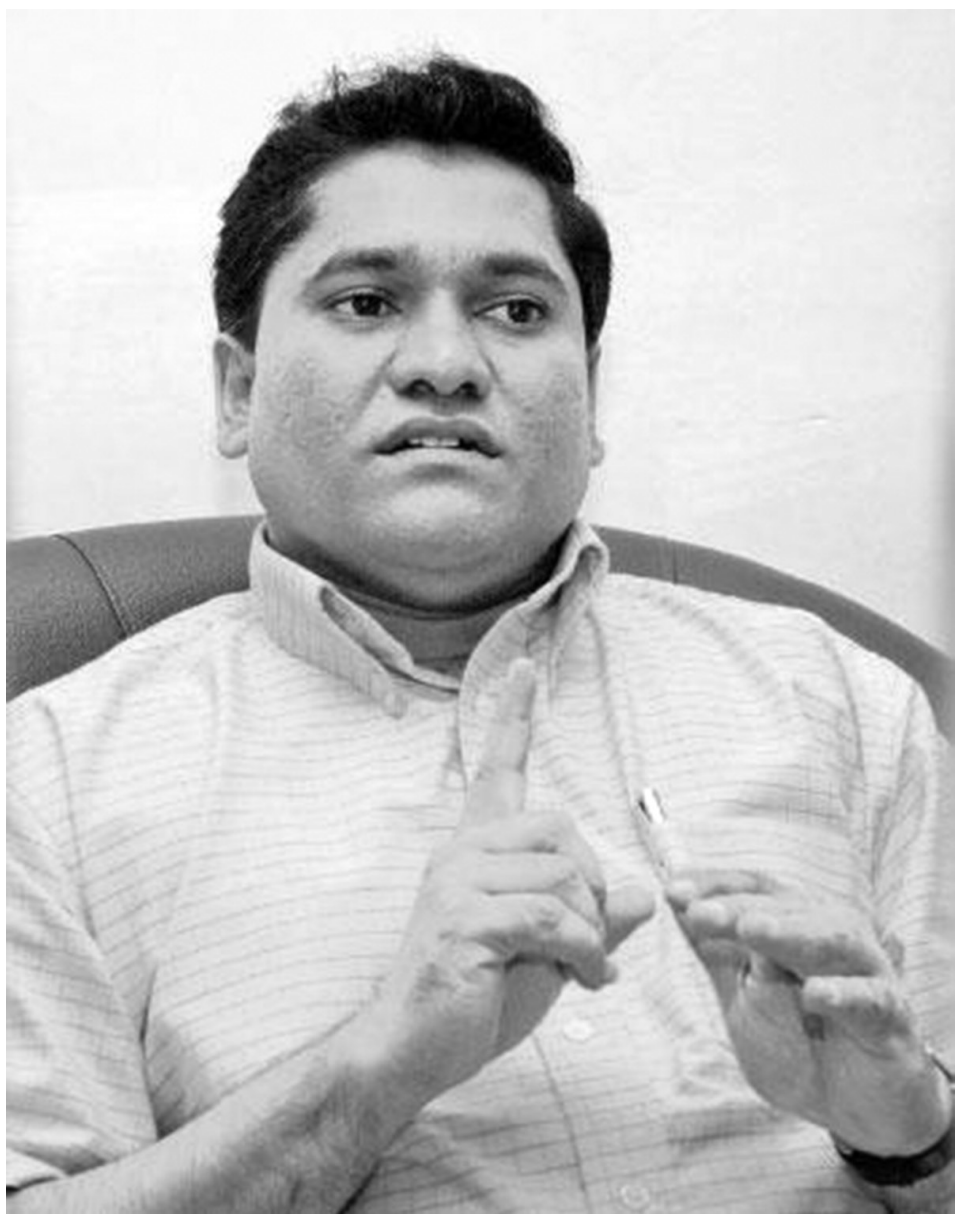
The main task before us in the struggle to protect democracy is getting the executive presidential system abolished. An advantageous environment to abolish executive presidency has surfaced due to the nature of the composition of MPs in present Parliament, the

contradiction that exists in the government, the inability of Mahinda Rajapaksa to contest the next presidential election if it is held and the perilous behaviour of Mr Maithripala Sirisena as the President during the recent past. The truth that can be seen at present is the forces that are struggling to get the executive presidential system abolished are more forceful and bigger in volume than those who attempt to protect it. This is a very favourable situation.

While the keenness and the effort of the society to get the executive presidential system are getting intensified,

an attempt is being made by the UNP to plunder this need of the society for its next election campaign. Our country has a history of various capitalist political parties making use of the need to abolish the executive presidency to plunder the votes for their election victories. This too is a repetition of the vile attempt.

Chandrika Kumaratunga in 1994, Mahinda Rajapaksa in 2005 and 2010 and Maithripala and the UNP in 2015 used this slogan to come to power but abandoned it once they were in power. It seems that Ranil and his UNP is preparing



The new front will bring a new political culture to the country

Comrade Vijitha Herath
Information Secretary of the JVP

Red Power: 2019 and 2020 have been already decided as election years. Meanwhile, there is a massive curiosity in the society regarding the broad political front that is being built with

contributions from the JVP and the intellectuals in the country. Could you shed light on the new political force that is being built?
Comrade Vijitha Herath: The presidential election has to be compulsorily held

in 2019. Also, the official term of three Provincial Councils come to an end. As such, both presidential election, as well as elections for Provincial Councils, are scheduled to be held in 2019. The general election has to be held in 2020. Unless a motion has been passed

with a 2/3rd majority, 2020 too would be an election year.

The intellectuals, civil society organizations, professionals, educated and intelligent artists and all progressive forces in the country are rallying together to confront the elections to be held in 2019 and 2020. They have come forward as a result of the serious economic and social breakdown that occurred in the country during the recent past. Also, the people in the country are craving for a genuine people's administration to develop and protect the country. Various organizations and individuals have come forward to rally with this new political front in a bid to build a people's administration. A broad alliance built by the JVP with the intellectuals and other progressive forces would definitely come into existence this year. We would contest the future elections through this broad alliance – the broad political front. It is this front that will protect this country and develop it. It will introduce a new political culture to the country.

Already, most of the work regarding building this front, the alliance has been completed. The National Intellectuals Organization (NIO) will present a programme to build the country by the 19th of February. The NIO will present a programme on 10 areas such as education, agriculture, health, sports, culture as well as national unity so that our country will be built and protected. This programme will be presented to the people by the JVP and the broad front at the future elections.

Red Power: One of the horrendous conspiracies in the

recent politics in this country has been defeated. However, the conspirators are at large. How does the JVP read this post conspiratorial period?

Comrade Vijitha Herath: It is true. The most horrendous conspiracy in the history of our country occurred on 26th October last year. The JVP acted strongly to defeat this conspiracy. We got involved directly to defeat it and at the very inception of the conspiracy, we said we would definitely defeat it. We have fulfilled our task. The conspiracy has been totally defeated.

After the conspiracy is defeated what is left is to take legal action against those who were involved in the conspiracy. We have already proposed that a special commission should be appointed through a Parliament Act. For, the economy of the country broke down as a result of the conspiracy. Also, society took a step back. Legal action should be taken against those who were responsible. Despite the conspiracy has been defeated, the political craze for power has not been defeated. Mr Maithripala Sirisena continues to long for another term. Rajapaksa clique too has the need to conceal their thieving. They are greedy for power. This is why there is a scramble to grab the post of the Leader of the Opposition. Also, Ranil's UNP government is seeking loopholes in the 19th amendment to increase the number of ministerial portfolios. Their attempt is to have more ministers so that they could enjoy more power.

The masses did not expect this kind of

situation. Maithripala – Ranil – Mahinda have their own petty, individual struggle for power. It is an uncivilized, brutish power struggle. This struggle will continue for some time. The executive president and the government do not see eye to eye. This conflict will continue. The executive president, who is the head of the government, and the leader of the opposition are on one side. The government is on the other side. This power struggled will continue. Despite the conspiracy has been defeated the power struggle has not stopped.

This is why we, the JVP, emphasize that the power struggle too should be defeated during the post-conspiracy period. Also, with this craze for power the democracy and the Constitution of the country are being violated again. There are attempts to wriggle through loopholes. It is a hindrance for future independence and democracy in the country. As such, the task and the responsibility of the JVP are to take the environment created after the conspiratorial period towards a genuine victory for the people. We will unite with the masses to achieve this victory.

Red Power: A new year has dawned after a year of turmoil. New challenges, as well as opportunities, have been created before the people. What is the preparedness of the JVP to get the people into line with the need of the country?

Comrade Vijitha

France: 'Yellow Jackets' want Macron out



France is undergoing the biggest public protest campaign that it has confronted during the past 50 years. For weeks, tens of thousands of protesters called "gilets jaunes" — or yellow jackets, because of the reflective safety coats French drivers are required by law to keep in their cars — have been hitting the streets of Paris and other cities in France.

Some see a spontaneous uprising against the policies and personality of French President Emmanuel Macron, sparked by a deeply unpopular hike in the gas tax. But others say the French political system is the target.

France is currently in the grip of widespread protests and riots that have led to violent clashes with police, leaving hundreds injured and thousands of dollars' worth of property damaged.

The protests began around 17th November, when French drivers sporting yellow vests led a demonstration of 280,000 people across the country to push back against raised taxes on gas and diesel fuel. French President Emmanuel Macron had announced the new gas tax earlier.

Yesterday (Saturday) saw one of the worst days of unrest yet, with the third large-scale riots in Paris described by some as "urban warfare" and "the worst riots in a generation." Around 133 people were injured — including law enforcement officials — and about 412 were arrested. 37,000 police officers, 30,000 firefighters, and 30,000 had been deployed to contend with the protest.

However, the movement has spread to many parts of the country — and in some cases turned deadly. An 80-year-old woman died in the southern port city of Marseille when she was hit in the face by a tear gas canister. Three other people have also died since the protests began.

Macron administration has increased the fuel tax by 20% in 2018 and there is another fuel hike due in 2019. The main demand of the 'yellow jackets' was a reduction in fuel prices. However, other demands were added later on and at present protestors shout that Macron, 'the President of the rich' should resign.

Cuba – the country with the best health service in the world

Cuba celebrated the 60th year of its Socialist Revolution on 1st January 2019. By now Cuba has become the country with the best health service in the world.

In 2018 Cuba allocated 51% of its income for health and education. 27% was allocated for health.

There are 13,000 institutes that provide health facilities throughout Cuba. Among them 150 are hospitals, 449 are multipurpose clinics while 10,896 are clinics of family doctors. By 2018 there were 94,000 doctors in Cuba which means the doctor-patient ratio in Cuba was 8.2: 1000. There are 19,000 dentists and 85,000 nurses in Cuba. 101,000 students study in 13 health educational institutions including medical colleges. 57.4% of workers in Cuba engaged in professional services while 92% of them serve in health services.

Infant mortality rate

(IMR) in Cuba is .39 which is the lowest in the whole world. The government provides 11 kinds of vaccines to protect children from 13 diseases. 8 of these vaccines are produced in Cuba. Cuba produces 1012 health products of which 582 are medicines.

Cuba also has made a massive mediation internationally to solve health issues in many countries. In the 60s it has made 600,000 international health mediations deploying 400,000 health workers including doctors and nurses. In 2018 alone Cuba has assisted 66 countries during times of disaster.

The Cuban health system is recognized worldwide for its excellence and its efficiency. Despite extremely limited resources and the dramatic impact caused by the economic sanctions imposed by the United States for more than half a century, Cuba has managed to guarantee access to care for all segments of the population and obtain results similar to those of the most developed nations.



Bangladesh: Sheik Hasina gets a third term

At the general election held in Bangladesh on 30th December the incumbent Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's ruling party and groups that support them won a massive victory. They were able to win 288 of the 300 seats contested by 1861 contestants.

However, the opposition complaints of vote rigging stating election violations have been committed in 221 seats and called for a fresh vote. Bangladesh's Election Commission said it was investigating allegations of vote rigging but rejected demands for another vote.

The victory consolidates Hasina's decade-long rule in Bangladesh in which her government claims to have brought about economic growth but is accused of human rights abuses and suppressing dissent.

Human Rights Watch expressed concern over the election's credibility and Amnesty International called for an impartial probe into "deeply disturbing" election violence.

We'd not allow people to fall into pitfalls dug by two main political camps

The likes of Ranil Wickremesinghe who deceptively appeared for democracy and political ethics are now engaged in a shameful attempt of saving their share. They, without any shame, prepared a list of 35 to get cabinet posts. As such, both these main political camps cannot bring civility to politics in our country. The economy in the country has broken down. As such, we have to commence a discussion to take the economy on a new path. Currently, the issues in the services sector are not being discussed. We promise the country that the JVP would take measures to save the people and the media that are lead round and round pitfalls and commence a discussion on genuine issues of the people," said the Leader of the JVP Comrade Anura Dissanayaka at a press conference held at the head office of the JVP on

02.01.2019.

The Member of the Central Committee of the JVP Comrade Dr Nalinda Jayatissa MP too was present.

Comrade Anura Dissanayaka said, "This year is turning out to be a year of elections. Elections to nine provincial councils are due during this year. A presidential election is due in November this year if no measures are taken to abolish the executive presidential system before that. Also, the present government set up after the conspiracy that was defeated a few weeks ago has no ability to govern the country and we as a party intend struggling to win a general election this year.

Meanwhile, two parties are spreading communal fabrications to create a communal conflict in the North and the South. The communal group in the North and the communal group in the South are spreading communalism

targeting the forthcoming elections. Mahinda Rajapaksa camp sows in the South communalism that hints at a division of the country and a federal system of government. They also charge that the JVP is assisting to divide the country. We would categorically like to say that the political practice of the JVP has always been a policy that keeps the rights and needs of the people and the Motherland foremost. Every time there was a threat of the country being divided the JVP struggled against such attempts with dedication and sacrifice. Even when some who pose as patriots now were hiding under beds the JVP fulfilled its social obligation defending the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Motherland.

After signing the Indo – Sri Lanka pact the Northern and Eastern provinces were merged. According to the pact a referendum had to be held within a year to decide

whether to continue with the merge or not. However, no referendum was held but the former Presidents extended the merge through gazette notifications. Even after Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa came to power he implemented the gazette that had been signed by Ms Chandrika Kumaratunga, who was the President before him, The East was demerged only by legal action taken by the JVP in 2006. We did so to establish the rights of the people in the Northern and Eastern provinces.

After the war, the situation has changed. If a political movement cannot adjust its politics according to changes that occur, people have nothing to do with such a political movement. As such, we appear and raise our voice for a new constitution that is consistent with the new situation emerged after the end of the war and protects the rights and dignity of all people. In all our election manifestos we would definitely state that it is essential to have a new constitution to replace the 1978 constitution. However, various communal groups say a new constitution would be passed before 4th February. We would like to say a constitution cannot be formulated according to fantasies that blobs in the heads of Ranil, Sumanthiran or Mahinda. The '78 constitution contains how a new constitution could be established. We are fully aware that a new constitution cannot be presented in this Parliament due to the way

it conducts itself. Hence, we would like to request the media in this country not to report irresponsibly various things uttered by various people on various stages. We would like to emphasize to media institutions that reporting such statements is an act of treachery.

On 9th January 2016, a new proposal was presented in Parliament regarding the process to formulate a new constitution. This explains how the new constitution would be formulated and how it would be adopted. We ask the media institution in our country to report the processes of formulating and adopting the constitution correctly. The process proposed in Parliament includes 33 factors. The first is turning the whole Parliament into a Constitutional Assembly. Its head will be the Speaker. The Constitutional Assembly with 225 MPs will meet in Parliament. In addition, a Steering Committee was appointed with MPs from all political parties representing parliament. Then several sub-committees have been appointed for various subjects. A report is being prepared by the Steering Committee on the three subjects of the electoral system, devolution and abolishing the executive presidential system. In addition, a committee to get the public opinion is functioning.

Already, the Steering Committee has met on several instances. A report is being prepared by the sub-committees as well. Another report is being prepared based on the information received from the public. The draft should be prepared based on all these reports. It should be debated in parliament, get new proposals and then the new constitution should be prepared. Next, a vote is taken from the Constitutional Assembly and if it doesn't receive a 2/3rd majority the Constitutional Assembly would be dissolved. However, if it receives a 2/3rd majority, the process would go forward. It will be referred



The new front ...

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Herath: We have learnt a lot of lessons during the 70 years of capitalist rule. The country has tasted the potpourri of green and blue politics. Recently we also saw how they got together to rule the country. As such, it is time to salvage the country from the quagmire. This is the challenge we have before us in the New Year. The savage power struggle that unfolds before us continuously has not been able to conceal the issues of poverty, starvation, unemployment, education, health and housing that exists in the country. Also, the burden of tax, debt and COL has been thrust upon the masses. As such we have to confront these real issues.

We, instead of being an audience for Maithri – Mahinda

– Ranil savage power struggle, should interfere to solve the real issues of the people. As such, we should direct the social dialogue towards finding a solution for the issues. Instead of the media gimmicks that serve the rulers’ interests, we should get people’s real issues to the fore in all forums. We believe that the real challenge we have in the New Year is to find solutions for the issues of the downtrodden masses in our country and how an administration that could find such solutions could be established in the country.

We have this challenge before us and the people are waiting for it impatiently. People are thoroughly disgusted with the administrations that have ruled the country for 70 years.

People detest the oppressive government. As such, people are anxiously waiting for a new, alternative force to be built. The JVP is prepared to go on a new journey with a broad national front to build the country that is being dragged towards a precipice day by day. We are prepared to organize the masses for such a task. We have already planned to carry out several massive political programmes from the beginning of the New Year. We would definitely make a change for the better. We would definitely put forward a programme to bring victory to the people and the country and will rally the masses to achieve it.

To prevent...

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to play the same drama once again. The forces that cherish democracy should not allow the fabricators to deceive the public.

When bringing an amendment to abolish executive presidency or drafting a new constitution a 2/3rd majority is needed to get it adopted in Parliament. None of the political parties in the existing Parliament has such a majority. However, it doesn’t mean that an amendment to abolish executive presidency cannot be passed in this parliament. We believe that the most favourable situation for such an amendment exists in an unstable Parliament like the present one. Every time a political party has received 2/3rd majority by itself has attempted to increase its powers.

Mr J.R. Jayawardene created this system utilizing the 5/6th majority he had in Parliament. Subsequently, Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa bought MPs from the UNP to set up a 2/3rd majority and used this power to increase presidential powers and to pass the 18th amendment that removed the two-term limit for a President. There are only two democratic amendments that have been passed in this Parliament that marginally decrease the powers

of the executive presidency. They are the 17th and the 19th amendments. Both these amendments were passed when the power of the capitalist governments was unstable. In both these instances, it was the JVP that took the initiative as it is the JVP that knows well the value of democracy.

What did Ranil Wickremesinghe say at the rally held after being re-appointed as the Prime Minister? This is when the cat jumped out of the bag. He said a 2/3rd majority was needed for a new constitution that abolishes the executive presidency and his party should be given a 2/3rd majority at the next general election. The definitions of political theory are not needed to understand what happens when the ‘bullock turns towards the coconut sapling’. Just like rulers before him, Ranil too is preparing again to plunder the struggle carried out to abolish executive presidency and win democracy for his election campaign. The forces that struggle for democracy should prevent this. For, just like Rajapaksas, the UNP would never fulfil people’s inspirations when they have absolute power.

All forces that raise high the banner of democracy and

struggle to abolish executive presidency should clearly identify this threat. Those forces should resolve not to allow the UNP to pillage their struggle. These forces including the JVP have two moves that are intertwined. The first is to struggle to get the 20th amendment passed in this Parliament by applying pressure on political parties including the UNP and the SLFP. This has to be done by creating a huge public opinion. However, if the other parties are not willing to fulfil it in this Parliament a massive social force should be created to win power at the next general election or become the decisive factor in Parliament. In such an endeavour the only political party the people in the country could depend on is the JVP. Also, the JVP has the responsibility of initiating such a struggle and giving leadership to it. Now, what should be done is to build a people’s power – a people’s centre, independent of Ranil – Mahinda – Maithri so that it would not allow Ranil to plunder the struggle for democracy. This is the responsibility of all those who genuinely struggle for democracy.

We’d not allow..

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to the cabinet for approval and will be presented to Parliament again with the report from the Prime Minister. Next, a gazette notification will be issued and it will be referred to the nine provincial councils for their approval. Subsequently, it will be debated in Parliament again, passed with a 2/3rd majority and the President “shall submit to the People by Referendum”. If it is approved by the people the new Constitution should be endorsed by the President. It is with such a long procedure that a new constitution could be adopted. Just imagine the demon those communalist groups are creating to deceive the masses!

It is the media institutes in our country that acts as the conveyor of communal lies to the society. We could definitely say that the present Parliament will not be able to adopt a new constitution. Mrs Sirimawo Bandaranayake had a 2/3rd majority in Parliament. In 1978 Mr J.R. Jayawardene had a 5/6th majority. Ms Chandrika Kumartunga had only a simple majority with 113 MPs. Today’s Parliament is like a hotch-potch. Such a Parliament cannot pass a constitution. It cannot get a 2/3rd majority. Rajapaksas who have carried out a conspiracy and have been totally defeated and exposed are now spreading communalism based on the constitution to conceal their defeat. Hence, we ask the people and the media in this country not to be a victim of those communal slogans. There are two communalist groups in the North. One is the TNA including Sambanthan and the other is Vineswaran’s group. Both these groups sow communalism in the North. Both these groups have not fulfilled anything on behalf of the people in the North. The weakest provincial council in the country is the Northern Provincial Council. Instead of working for the people they are spreading communalism for power. The attempts of these communalist groups should be defeated. We would not allow the masses in our country to be deceived by their false demons.

Today there is no dialogue about social issues in our country at present. The political dynamism is decided by the media institutions. At times the real issues are concealed and fake issues are brought to the surface. It is the media institutions that decide what topic to be debated. Certain media institutions have become the prey of main political parties. As a result, genuine issues of the people have been concealed. During the 50 days of the conspiracy, the genuine issues of the people were suppressed. In our country the least paid are journalists. Even their issues are not discussed. The real issues of the farmer community, fisherfolk, unemployed youth, working people in state, private and estate sectors have been concealed. The two political camps take to the surface fake issues for their benefit. The JVP would strive to bring to the fore real issues of the people during this year. This is the political resolve for the JVP in the New Year. The tragic and the regrettable destiny confronted by the masses in our country should be changed. Politics of civility should be established to drive away the savage political culture that exists at present.

The likes of Ranil Wickremesinghe who deceptively appeared for democracy and political ethics are now engaged in a shameful attempt of saving their share. They, without any shame, prepared a list of 35 to get cabinet posts. As such, both these main political camps cannot bring civility to politics in our country. The economy in the country has broken down. As such, we have to commence a discussion to take the economy on a new path. Currently, the issues in the services sector are not being discussed. We promise the country that the JVP would take measures to save the people and the media that are lead round and round pitfalls and then commence a discussion on genuine issues of the people.”

JVP pays tribute to Prins Gunasekera



With lawyers after the historic judgment



Comrade Madhu Kalpana, Vice-President of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and Secretary – International Affairs of Socialist Students' Union (SSU) participated in the 19th Pancyprian Congress of EDON held in Nicosia in Cyprus representing Socialist Students' Union and Socialist Youth Union of Sri Lanka.



Youth rallying for Democracy



Aid for students with support from 'Ethera Api'



“Mr. Prins Gunasekara was a principled human being with humanitarian values. He, instead of being mum before injustice and iniquity, raised his voice against it. This is why he deserves to be remembered with dignity,” states a message of sympathy issued by the Political Bureau of the JVP on the death of Advocate Prins Gunasekara.

The message further states, “During the terror reign that existed after proscribing the JVP in 1983, Mr Gunasekara appeared for the right of the JVP to engage in politics democratically. He fought tirelessly against brutal UNP regime that blatantly violated human rights and did a yeoman service to protect human rights. However, when the brutal Premadasa regime resorted to murder lawyers active in the field of Human Rights, Mr Prins Gunasekara had to flee the country to save his life. Even while he was away in London Mr Gunasekara helped the JVP whenever it was possible for him to do so.”

The message in full:

The message of condolence on the death of Advocate Prins Gunasekara

The JVP expresses its profound condolences on the death of Advocate Prins Gunasekara, who was a politician that represented the left and the progressive camp in Sri Lanka and was a robust human rights activist.

The association between Mr Prins Gunasekara and the JVP could be traced to the beginning of the 1970s. He had very close relations with the JVP as well as with our founder Comrade Rohana Wijeweera.

He was elected to parliament from the SLFP at the general election held in 1970. However, during the 1971 uprising, he acted against the government’s move to repress of the JVP. It was Mr Gunasekara who accompanied British Senator Lord Avebury, a human rights activist, when he toured the areas in the South during the uprising.

Also, he came forward to provide legal assistance to those who were imprisoned during the 1971 uprising. The contribution he made since then to the JVP in its legal matters is immense.

After 1977, when the JVP entered mainstream politics, Mr Prins Gunasekara affiliated himself with the JVP in many instances. He was a speaker at the series of public rallies held by the JVP throughout the country against the communal clashes that broke out in Sri Lanka during 1978.

When Comrade Rohana Wijeweera contested the presidential election in 1982, Mr Prins Gunasekera was his legal adviser. Also, when the JVP decided to take legal action against the referendum held to plunder votes of the people, it was Mr Prins Gunasekara who took the responsibility of filing the petition. It was also Mr Gunasekera who got the services of Mr Felix Dias Bandaranayaka for the case despite Mr Bandaranayake being a staunch member of the camp against the JVP.

At the by-elections held for Habaraduwa in 1983, Mr Gunasekara contested as an independent candidate and the JVP supported Mr Gunasekara without fielding its own candidate which indicates the close association he had with the JVP.

During the terror reign that existed after proscribing the JVP in 1983, Mr Gunasekara appeared for the right of the JVP to engage in politics democratically. He fought tirelessly against brutal UNP regime that blatantly violated human rights and did a yeoman service to protect human rights. However, when the brutal Premadasa regime resorted to murder lawyers active in the field of Human Rights, Mr Prins Gunasekara had to flee the country to save his life. Even while he was away in London Mr Gunasekara helped the JVP whenever it was possible for him to do so.

Mr Prins Gunasekara was a principled human being with humanitarian values. He, instead of being mum before injustice and iniquity, raised his voice against it. This is why he deserves to be remembered with dignity.

Finally, at this moment of his demise, we express our deepest sympathies to the members of his family and we, together with the progressive people in this country, salute Mr Prins Gunasekara who was a true friend of the JVP.