

On the brink of a severe economic crisis!

The absence of a production economy, the fruitlessness of modes of production, the decrease in import earnings have caused the economy of the country to alarmingly and uncontrollably tumble down warn economic analysts. They say that the rupee has currently slipped to its lowest trading Rs.162 against the dollar and point out the 5% depreciation of the rupee in 2018 as a manifestation of the breakdown of the economy. According

to them the breakdown of foreign assets of the country and the swelling of the trade deficit are the immediate cause of the situation. Currently, the total debt burden of the country has exceeded Rs. 100000000 million and the per capita debt has exceeded Rs. 500,000. The amount the country will have to pay for instalments and interest for 2018 would be US\$ 4000 million.

The general public has been severely distressed due to the situation and as a result of the depreciation of the rupee in the business sector too is confronted with a crisis. All, including the production and service sectors whose sales have been broken down but also the professionals and small and medium producers, have been inconvenienced, especially, due to the exorbitant taxes that have been forced on all sections of the society by the government in a bid to find solutions for its economic crisis. Also, the producers have been alarmed, as the Singapore free trade pact signed secretly by the government recently would further jeopardize production in the country. However, the government, in a bid to conceal the crisis, has launched three massive propaganda gimmicks named 'Gamperaliya', 'Enterprise Sri Lanka' and 'Grama Shakthi' spending colossal funds to deceive the masses. The first two gimmicks are carried out by the UNP faction of the government

while the third is directed by the President. These so-called programmes are similar to the propaganda gimmicks 'Dayata Kirula', 'Api Wawamu, Rata Hadamu' and 'Gama Neguma' of the previous government and in the final analysis, they would merely fill the safes of the stalwarts who manipulate the project but would not increase the GNP.

Comrade Tilvin Silva, responding to a question put to him by 'Red Power' said the present government, just as the previous regimes did, is following the imperialist economic recipe and to save the country from the economic destruction it is being dragged to a profound social change is necessary instead of resorting to 'patchwork'. The masses should be made aware of the economic fireworks the rulers display with various names so that they would not be deceived but would rally for a socio-economic transformation said Comrade Tilvin Silva.



Oppose Singapore – Sri Lanka illegal Trade Pact

The JVP launched a leaflet campaign from Colombo Fort Railway Station under the theme "Why Singapore - Sri Lanka illegal Trade Pact should be opposed?" to make people aware of the disastrous consequences of the Sri Lanka-Singapore Free Trade Agreement.

The members of the JVP throughout the island are expected to carry out the leaflet campaign in main towns of the country.

The Member of the Political Bureau of the JVP Parliamentarian Sunil Handunneththi, Central Committee Members Mahinda Jayasinghe, Lakshman Nipunarachchi, Sunil Watagala and several activists of the party were present.

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Presidential election, Mahinda & a third episode

Already the 20th amendment to the Constitution has been presented to Parliament by the JVP as an opening of the process to abolish executive presidency. If it is adopted in Parliament and is approved by a referendum there wouldn't be another presidential election in the country. However, other main political parties, while having an eye on the 20th amendment, are getting ready for a presidential election.

Mahinda Rajapaksa faction that assumes there would be a presidential election has stirred up a new argument. According to them, Mahinda Rajapaksa could contest for a third term. Recently, Rajapaksa faction had stated they would ask for the opinion of the Supreme Court regarding this.

The legal obstruction that a person could hold the post of President only twice or could be nominated for a presidential election only twice was removed by the Mahinda Rajapaksa regime by bringing in the 18th amendment. Mahinda Rajapaksa could contest for the 3rd time in 2015 due to this amendment. Before the 18th amendment, the stand was "No person who has been twice elected to the office of President by the People shall be qualified thereafter to be elected to such office by the People." However, the 19th amendment brought in during the '100-day administration' restricted a person contesting for a third term. The 19th amendment specifically stated that 'a person who has been twice elected by the people was ineligible to contest again'. As such, Mahinda Rajapaksa can never contest a presidential election in Sri Lanka again. It is a truth everybody is aware of. Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa too is sure to be aware of it. This is why, until recently, he kept silent regarding contesting a presidential election. However, he suddenly says he could contest again. Why is that? Comprehending the reason for this would be beneficial for all.

Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa has now come up with the statement that he could contest the presidential election again is to make his party members, who are ambivalent and dejected due to the absence of a definite leader to contest the presidential election, temporally hopeful. Mahinda's party members who are unaware of the regulations in the Constitution now have a reason to look forward to. They could dream that Mahinda would contest the presidential election. They could live in this dream until the end of 2019. This is a relief for Mahinda as well as his party members. For, this could temporally suppress the crisis and the division that has surfaced in his group.

The crisis and the division within the Rajapaksa faction that surfaced on the issue as to who would contest the presidential election from the group developed into a very serious situation. The reasons were the ineligibility of Mahinda to contest a third term and Mahinda's unwillingness to retreat after giving another (not even another member of Rajapaksa family) the candidature, the attempt by another clique around Mahinda to bring Gotabhaya Rajapaksa as the candidate and Basil Rajapaksa's dream of presidential candidature. Due to this state, a situation surfaced in which the Rajapaksa faction would split into three factions. Some campaigned for Gotabhaya while others were against them saying 'no one else but Mahinda' while a small group supported Basil.

The division developed into a situation where brickbats were exchanged in public. A good example is the clash between Welgama and Aluthgamage. Meanwhile, Mahinda, who was offended by the move by Gotabhaya to surface regardless of him obstructed Gotabhaya's presidential dream on several occasions. In one such instance, Mahinda said there was no such thing called 'Viyathmaga' and what would be implemented in the future would be 'Mahinda Chinthanaya'. On another occasion, at a temple, Mahinda said Gotabhaya could work under him when he came to power. This is how Mahinda suppressed Gotabhaya's attempt to become the President of this country.

However, the crisis has not been solved still. A leadership centre is essential to keep the party members within the faction. It is also tied to the presidential candidature. In spite of suppressing Gotabhaya's dream, the party members would disperse if there is no alternative as a candidate. Various names would be proposed. It would be another crisis. This insolvable internal crisis could be temporally subdued only by saying Mahinda could contest again. The view that Mahinda could contest for a third term has been publicized merely to pacify his party members at least temporally. Also, Mahinda cannot seek an opinion from the Supreme Court with regards to it as, according to the Constitution, only the President could do so.

Despite the crisis within Mahinda faction was temporally subdued with the fallacy that Mahinda could contest for a third term, it would surface again in a few months. Mahinda has only two options before him. Either he should retreat after handing over the candidature to another (maybe Gotabhaya) or support the 20th amendment and get the presidency abolished. Finally, it should be said that false conceptions cannot conceal political crises for long.

Programme to develop country would be presented in 5 months

The party's programme to build the country would be presented to the masses in January 2019 says the Leader of the JVP Comrade Anura Dissanayaka. He said this at a meeting held at Godakawela, the meeting held as a part of the 'Ten Thousand Meetings' programme of the JVP held throughout the country under the theme "People's Administration to Develop & Protect Country."

Comrade Anura Dissanayaka said the country could be built only if the present political system is changed and emphasized that no party that has ruled the country has taken the necessary steps to build the country. He said a proper programme is necessary to build the country and added that the first scientifically selected cabinet will be established under the government that will be formed by the force made up of intellectuals, scholars and professionals.

Speaking further the Leader of the JVP said, "The development of a country doesn't mean spreading concrete jungles. The people should have a higher living pattern, be healthy and lead contented lives. Today, nobody trusts government schools. Children are sent to school without an aim. There is no proper health service. The education of a child is determined according to the economic strength of the family. The ministers brag but there is no programme to educate the masses about proper health habits. There is no community health service.

Sixty million people have received treatment from government hospitals in 2017. This number goes up every year. There hasn't been a disease prevention programme for the last 70 years.

The JVP has taken the initiative to compile national policies for health, education, sports, economy, culture and several other sectors to be implemented under a people's government formed by forces that rally with us. For this, we have formed Compilation committees consisting of the most efficient and

experienced scholars, intellectuals, professionals, progressive citizens. The policies compiled by these committees would be presented to the country in January 2019.

Hand over the country to the JVP. We would hand over the administration of the country to the skilful and knowledgeable. Politicians are unable to do it. The experts and the skilful in particular subjects would be asked to carry out development in sectors they have specialized in. At the moment scholars, intellectuals, professionals and progressives are rallying with the JVP and are making great sacrifices.

Ranil Wickremesinghe says the country would be developed in 2050. We know how Ranil develops a country. Ranil is now 69 years old. In 2050 he will be 101 years old. Ranil has given the ministerial portfolios for those who should be in homes for the aged. John Amaratunga, Jayawickrema Perera, John Seneviratna should be given an allowance of merit and sent home. There are plenty of skilled people who could carry out the duties of ministers. Ranil has given these old people ministerial portfolios stating they are seniors.

The most profitable business in Sri Lanka is politics. It is due to this, people in the two so-called main political parties as well as those from 'name board' parties jump from one party to another and try to be on the sided of the ruling party. None from the JVP has made politics a business. Most of the leaders of the party are graduates. All the people's representatives are graduates, talented and have had higher education.

Representatives from other parties as soon as they get elected try to increase their salaries, allowances. Mahinda Rajapaksa has admitted that there were rogues with him. We would like to know who those rogues are. Can he name at least one rogue who had been with him?"





Three years to take a breath...

The Ranil – Maithri ‘joint’ administration alias UNP – SLFP government officially completed three of administration on 17th August. The ‘joint’ government published a series of advertisements on mass media to commemorate its three years being in power and one of its themes was “Three years of breathing”. What the government attempted to imply was that people could live without fear or suspicion during the last three years. It may be true for a small minority of the population but does not apply to the common people. For, the common people had to undergo various kinds of hardships. During these three years, the common people were harassed with the spiralling cost of living with the increase in prices of goods, services and fuel as well as the burden of the ever-increasing taxes without leaving the common people to take a proper breath.

However, there is another lot that could breathe without

an obstacle. They are none other than the individuals in the present government as well as those in the previous government who were involved in large-scale frauds and corruption. In short, criminals and fraudsters have been ‘breathing’ freely during the last three years. Government’s slogan is very correct when it is applied to such individuals. In other words, the last three years were a period when fraudsters and criminals could breathe freely. For the people – it was a period of three years where they had to breathe laboriously.

The main promise of the present ‘joint’ government that came to power with the promise of good governance was to stop frauds, corruption and waste that were rampant under the previous regime and punish the perpetrators. It was also one of the main expectations of the people. However, what really happened during the last three years? The present government committed the Central Bank scam with precise planning.

A considerable number of members in the cabinet including the Prime Minister were involved in it. The issue could not be swept under the carpet due to the revelation made by the JVP, investigations carried out by Comrade Sunil Handunneththi in COPE amidst obstacles by Members in the UNP in COPE and also due to the investigation carried out by the Presidential Commission. However, no one involved in the fraud has been punished so far.

The ‘brain’ behind the heist – former Governor of Central Bank Arjun Mahendran is still on the run. He has fled the country. Mr Ranil Wickremasinghe who recommended him for the post and protected him is still the prime minister in our country. Former Minister of Finance Ravi Karunanayaka, who supported Aloysius for the scam and got money and a house, is still breathing freely. The ministers and Parliamentarians who have received money from Aloysius still enjoy their freedom. Not even a case has been filed

against them. Only Aloysius and Palihena are confined. The PM and the ministers are on the loose. This is how the three years have been a period where fraudsters and criminals have been able to breathe free.

Furthermore, there are many frauds, crimes and corruption that were committed during the Rajapaksa regime. A few members of the Army and the Police and several state employees who were involved in some of these were remanded and several of them have been given bail. However, the political leaders who were involved in the crimes are still at large.

All information regarding the murder of Wassim Thajudeen has been discovered but the assassin or assassins are at large. The godfathers of Lasantha Wickremetunga murder are still on the loose. The brains behind the murders at Rathupaswala and the disappearance of Ekmaligoda are still at large. Also, the murderers who murdered our comrades Naiduwawadu and Balage and the criminals

who made Lalith and Kugan in the North to disappear are still at large.

Also, those who were involved in large-scale frauds during the Rajapaksa regime were arrested and made heroes out of them but were never punished nor does it seem that they would be punished. It seems the incidents occur to prove that ‘water flows down a slope’. As such, it is very evident that the past three years of the ‘joint’ government is a period when criminals and fraudsters could breathe freely.

In such a situation the three-year period for the general public was one that did not allow them to breathe properly as they were burdened with increased prices of goods and services, the spiralling cost of living and enormous taxes they have been overloaded with. The depreciation of the rupee due to the wrong economic policy of the government (The rupee has plunged to a lifetime low of Rs.162 against the US\$), the tax burden, increasing fines for traffic offences have been carried out without leaving room for the people to have a deep breath. The people who were denied their drinking water have lived the three years breathing faintly.

On the other hand, the people have been further distressed due to the continued attempt of the government to slash public utilities while burdening the people with the overload of the failed economy. University students and their parents especially had to carry out a continuous struggle to defend the right for education, especially to defeat SAIMT, as a result of the government’s inclination to privatize education. This is, of course, a continuation of the privatization policy of previous governments the present government unashamedly attempt to carry out despite the promises given at elections to ‘protect free education’. The government deployed police to carry out baton and tear gas attacks on the anti-SAIMT agitations blatantly violating the right to breathe.

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RP: The National Intellectuals Organization together with the JVP started a process to formulate new policies to build the country. We have never seen a process of this nature. How was this process with the participation of intellectuals initiated?

Com. Bimal Rathnayaka: The intellectuals can be divided into two categories based on class; capitalist intellectuals and proletariat intellectuals. However, in a capitalist society, some of these

capitalist intellectuals join the left and progressive movements and later they become the leaders of those movements. For instance Karl Marks, Fredric Engels and V.I Lenin were capitalist intellectuals and later they became proletariat intellectuals.

In Sri Lanka, there were a lot of capitalist intellectuals engaged with the old left movement. Some of them became proletariat intellectuals and activists of the left movement. However, this tradition changed later, especially in the

70s and 80s as a result of the betrayal of the left movement, suppression followed by two armed insurrections, blinded by the illusion of the open economy, various personal perks and privileges they received and especially opening up of new opportunities for them in foreign countries. Engagement of capitalist intellectuals in the left movement declined sharply in the 80s and the 90s. After 2000, these capitalist intellectuals again divided into two camps with the

war against LTTE terrorism (one camp represented the nationalist forces that supported the war and wanted military action to defeat terrorism and the other represented devolution of power, federalism and even right to self-determination.) Some of them became neutral and dormant because separatism and the war became the central political issue.

The most important development we could see during this period is the deviation of intellectuals from politics as a result of arbitrary, unethical and corrupt political practice of the two capitalist political parties. They did not want to engage in this ugly and unethical political system. However, some of the capitalist intellectuals including those who were with progressive ideas joined with this unethical political process and supported to elect one party or the other just for their personal gains, perks and privileges. They received large salaries, important positions of the government. This trend could be seen until around 2010.

By 2015, this trend had been significantly changed. Since the Rajapaksa regime had secured very strong political power and held massive state mechanism. Toppling Rajapaksa regime couldn't be done only by the UNP or by the left movement, the JVP. The JVP launched a struggle against racism, totalitarian governance of the Rajapaksa regime and capitalist intellectuals with progressive ideas and artists joined this struggle and other protests and campaigns organized by the JVP. Some of these intellectuals worked closely with the JVP and some others worked separately and they included government servants, retired government servants,

professionals, artists and intellectuals. The Rajapaksa regime was defeated on 08 January 2015 by this collective struggle of the intellectual forces, the JVP and other political forces.

One of the most important features we can see here is those intellectuals and professionals who struggled to defeat Rajapaksa regime is that they did not join the new government of President Sirisena and Prime Minister Wickramasinghe for personal gains, perks or high positions of the government. They did not become a part of this corrupt new regime and they became observers and attempted to force the new government to fulfil its pledges made at the elections and make the country corruption free. A vast majority of these intellectuals were among this group.

During the last three years, president Siresena and PM Wickramasinghe have proven that they do not have the ability or the desire to fulfil at least 1% of the expectations of the people who voted them at the election in 2015. Capitalist intellectuals and leftist and progressive forces now join hands with the JVP due to this betrayal of the objectives of the January 08 mandate by the new government. Despite there were significant amounts of intellectuals with the JVP earlier, the new formation shows a very clear qualitative development in the political forces.

RP: Could you talk about the experiences of the JVP when working with intellectuals and scholars to formulate new programmes and their progress?

Comrade Bimal Rathnayake: Over 1000 intellectuals joined with the JVP and it is very clear that this state is a

significant development in the history of Sri Lanka. I think this is the first time after 1948 that intellectuals who believe leftist progressive ideas and do not expect any personal gains after forming a government are rallying as a political force. These intellectuals have been working with the JVP for the last three years at various social and political forums. There are agreements as well as disagreements with us on some issues and views but we have worked together despite those disagreements. We have learnt from each other on how to work together despite some disagreements.

With all these experiences we formed the National Intellectuals Organization a few months ago and held the national convention of the organization and decided to prepare new policies and a program to build the country. We have to go for a Marxist and Leninist analysis of the policies and the program. As we know there are two ways to build this country, the capitalist way and the Marxist way. The capitalist way has already proven its failure. In this imperialist era, only socialism can build a country in all economic, social and cultural spheres. Only socialism can improve the economic and cultural life of the people.

This has been proven by the few socialist countries in the world today. Vietnam, Cuba and China are getting strengthened as states. There is a significant improvement of the economic and cultural life of the people in these countries. Therefore there shouldn't be any doubt the socialist way of building a country.

Over 200 intellectuals are engaged in this process of policy-making

Intellectuals' contribution in policymaking to build the country

JVP MP and member of the Political Bureau Comrade Bimal Rathnayaka



Cuba to get new constitution



A new constitution is being compiled for Cuba. The draft of the new constitution has been debated in the National Assembly and is now is being debated by the entire people acting as a constituent body

The new constitution will expand rights, transform its state structure to better respond to citizens concerns, and adapt legislation to match changes which have taken place over the last decade in the country's economy to function within the difficult international situation.

Under the new constitution, the roles of head of government and head of state would be split. However, the Communist Party would still remain the most powerful political force in the country.

The new constitution reaffirms that the economic system is based on the socialist ownership of the means

of production by the entire people, and directed with planning.

The economic reforms proposed in the charter would provide constitutional recognition for market style changes that have already taken place. A novel element is the recognition of various forms of property coexisting with the economy (socialist, cooperative, private, etc), and that the state will encourage those of a more social nature, in line with the Conceptualization and the Guidelines.

It also proposes recognizing the presumption of innocence in the judicial system.

One of the main proposals of the draft Constitution, which is currently undergoing a popular consultation process, is the restructuring and distribution of different positions within the Cuban state.

The new proposal

separates the functions of the President of the Republic and those of the Prime Minister, which were previously merged into one, based on collegial decision making. Also, although the President is the head of the Executive, he must also be a deputy, approved by the National Assembly of People's Power (ANPP). The President of the Republic comes from within the Assembly, which is a representation of the people, and he or she is accountable to this body, which can recall or remove him or her. (This is similar to the proposal in the 20th amendment presented to Parliament by the JVP. According to this proposal the President is elected from the Parliament elected by the people.)

The proposed draft includes age and term limits for presidents. It states they must be under 60 when they take office and can carry out no more than two

consecutive five-year terms.

Some of the fundamental changes within the proposed constitution are:

The President will serve for a period of five years, and up to two consecutive terms, after which he/she cannot hold office again.

The National Assembly retains its status as the supreme body of the state, which represents the sovereign will of the entire people.

The President of the Republic will be the Head of State, while the Prime Minister will be in charge of the Government of the Republic. Both are required to be deputies of the National Assembly of People's Power

The charter will be put before the public in a series of meetings during the coming months and then it will be voted on in a national referendum.

Can World Cup winning captain deliver?

Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) emerging as the single largest party in parliament at the election held in Pakistan for 270 constituencies on 25th July. The PTI has broken the monopoly in governing Pakistan held by the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) for decades. Pakistan had also been directly ruled by the military for roughly half of its 70-year history.. At the provincial level, elections were held in each of the four provinces to elect Members of the Provincial Assemblies. PTI became the largest party in Punjab and remained the largest party in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP); the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) remained the largest party in Sindh and the newly-formed Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) became the largest party in Balochistan.

Before the election Imran Khan's rival's had hinted that the military was working behind the scenes to engineer an electoral outcome to get Imran Khan to form a government. Of course, Pakistan's military which ruled Pakistan for half of its 70-year history cannot be expected to be dormant specially when Navaz's Pakistan Muslim League's main challenger, the PTI has won in Pakistan.

Prime Minister Imran Khan in his first speech to the nation urged overseas Pakistanis to play their role in the fight against financial crisis in Pakistan. "The debt burden increased from Rs 6,000 billion to 28, 000 billion rupees during the last ten years and added two billion dollars was needed every month to pay back just interest on loans obtained in the past.

Outlining his governments approach to resolve the issues confronted by Pakistan, Imran Khan stressed on taking austerity measures, working on tax reforms instead of taking loans, rooting out corruption. He also spoke about revamping the judiciary, educational and health care reforms, civil service reforms, devolution of power, providing jobs opportunity to youths and building dams to end water crisis.

Modi's dilemma

There is speculation that India's general election might be sooner despite it is due, probably, in the first quarter of 2019. More than 800 million voters stretching from the remote Himalayas in the north to the tropical jungles of the south are qualified to vote.

The popularity of Modi's government has suffered as a result of a sharp economic slowdowns, sudden withdrawal of most bank notes and corruption scandals at state-owned banks.

Before next year's national elections, there will be four state elections held this year. The states are Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Mizoram. The results of these elections could decide who would be the next Prime Minister.

Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh are presently ruled by Modi's BJP. However, BJP will be facing a strong challenge from a "united" opposition and discontented voters over the promises of "good days" made by the BJP during its 2014 election campaign.

'20' is to strengthen democracy in the country



"A vast majority of the people in our country expects that democracy should be established in the country. It is the responsibility of the politicians to fulfil this expectation of the people. We would do our best to get the 20th amendment passed in Parliament. We also ask other political parties to support the amendment. We ask the masses not to be deceived by false propaganda. The JVP will never support any move to divide the country. If a referendum is necessary regarding the amendment, the JVP would be prepared for that as well. We ask the people to use their valuable vote to establish democracy," says Information Secretary of the JVP Comrade Vijitha Herath.

Speaking at a press conference held at the head office of the JVP at Pelawatta yesterday (6th) Comrade Vijitha Herath said, "The executive powers given to one person should be removed and democracy should be established in the country. The JVP opposed when the constitution with the executive presidency was introduced. Later, various programmes were carried out against the executive presidency. We have presented to parliament the 20th amendment to the Constitution as a final

programme to abolish executive presidency. We presented it to parliament and the Speaker forwarded it to the Attorney General. Subsequently, it was put on gazette with Attorney General's observations on 6th July 2018. Later, we requested the Speaker to enter it to the agenda to be presented in parliament and asked the Speaker for a date. It had been entered on the agenda on the 5th and it is how the amendment was presented officially to parliament after a prior announcement.

As the JVP, we are very pleased with the approval to officially present the 20th amendment to Parliament. Next, the Speaker will have to refer the amendment to the minister in charge of the subject. However, there is no minister in charge of the Constitution. As such, the amendment has to be presented to the head of the government, who is the Prime Minister. The stand of the government should be presented to parliament within six months. The government also can present its stand to parliament in two weeks or a month. The time depends on the government. Once the stand of the government is presented the amendment should be presented for the third reading in Parliament and should be adopted with a 2/3rd

majority.

We, as the JVP, hope to officially discuss with political parties in a bid to get a 2/3rd majority in Parliament. Meanwhile, we expect proposals from Parliamentarians and political parties regarding the amendment. We would study the proposals that would be forwarded and make necessary amendment. Already, we have been able to have discussions with Parliamentarians. That's how it was possible to get the approval to present the amendment to parliament. We think a discussion with all parties that represent Parliament is necessary. We never thought of an advantage or a disadvantage to an individual or a party when we brought in the proposal. The main objective of the proposal is to strengthen democracy in our country. We have immensely experienced the destruction caused by the executive presidency. Executive powers have been and are being used to postpone elections, plunder votes, grant presidential pardon for thieves, fraudsters etc. A civilized and democratic rule should be established in our country. We bring in this proposal with this noble objective.

We hope to apprise the masses regarding this proposal. At various instances, false

information has been given regarding this proposal. The amendment will not give the President's powers to the Prime Minister. What happens is the executive powers with the President will be decentralized and will be with the Parliament, the cabinet and the Constitutional Council. There is no clause included that divides the country. Hence, anyone who loves the country need not fear the amendment. We, as the JVP, assure the people that the amendment will have nothing destructive to the country.

A 2/3rd majority is necessary to pass the amendment in parliament. As such the support of Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa's faction, Mr Maithripala Sirisena's faction, the UNP, the TNA and the EPDP is essential to get the amendment adopted. We may

not get all 225 MPs to support the amendment. However, we believe that a majority of the MPs would support it. A vast majority of the people in our country expects that democracy should be established in the country. It is the responsibility of the politicians to fulfil this expectation of the people. We would do our best to get the 20th amendment passed in Parliament. We also ask other political parties to support the amendment. We ask the masses not to be deceived by false propaganda. The JVP will never support any move to divide the country. If a referendum is necessary regarding the amendment, the JVP would be prepared for that as well. We ask the people to use their valuable vote to establish democracy."

JVP questions why legal action not taken regarding murders of comrades Balage & Naiduwawadu

The Leader of the JVP Comrade Anura Dissanayaka questioned in Parliament the reason for the delay in carrying out legal actions against the murder of JVP Member Comrade Nandana Balage who was murdered by thugs of the previous Mahinda Rajapaksa government while engaged in the election campaign for the Western Provincial Council election that was to be held in April 2009 and that of the JVP Member for Ambalangoda Urban Council Comrade Chandrasena Naiduwawadu who was murdered by thugs of Mahinda Rajapaksa government while engaged in the election campaign for the election held in 2010.

He said incidents of crime were swept under the carpet and legal action against such crimes were abandoned or delayed during the previous regime. The present government came to power promising justice to the people and to punish the criminals. However, three years have passed since this government came to power, but no justice has been done to the distressed during the previous regime.

Intellectuals...

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and preparing a program to build the country and they are working under 10 themes and in 10 committees. The policies and the program they prepare will not be a fully socialist one. They will be within the capitalist framework but definitely will not be an imperialist project. They will make a people's socio-economic program.

We have to make the people awake to go for a socialist society. Without awakening people, we cannot go for a government with socialist policies. The middle class, amounting to around 5 million people representing intellectuals, professionals, working people, farmers, students and people who are being oppressed in other forms has been playing an important role in politics. They are the most decisive and influential segment of the population in politics and they have realized that these two capitalist parties cannot develop in this country. Also, they have realized that even under some reservations/conditions, JVP is the only party that they can work with. We are not a small leftist group. They know that we are a massive political movement with the capability of influencing all segments of the national politics and the society.

The policies that are being formulated by them is to rescue the country from the political, economic and cultural crisis. Theoretically, this program aims to form a progressive government and implement broad people friendly reforms to rebuild the country. We think that with this program there will be new enthusiasm and trust in people about socialism and progressive left movements. Therefore this program will make the basic political background for a modern socialist government.

The policies are being formulated in 10 sectors such as economic, education, health, national reconciliation etc. They have already completed basic work and from August to October these committees will visit all districts and meet people to get their views and they will hold at least 250 public meetings. We expect to complete this policymaking by January next year.

RP: You represent the education policymaking committee. Can you explain the participation of intellectuals in it and progress of the overall program?

Com. Bimal Rathnayake:

Yes, I am a member of the education committee and the committee is chaired by Professor Rahula Athalage. Other members of the committee are university professors, the former highest officials of the National Institute of Education, Deans of Faculties of Education, teachers, teacher trade union representatives and student union representatives. This committee has met on several occasions and from September we will go to 20 districts for public discussions. We will meet education sector professionals, parents, teachers and other interested persons and these discussions will be held in the form of Public Hearings.

I think this is the first serious attempt in the history to formulate national policies. Governments have made small initiatives in the past but this is the first serious and comprehensive process. The intellectuals engaged in this process have taken the matter seriously and they are working hard for it. They are making the best policies that can address the issues the people face. Therefore we believe that in the end practical and modern policies will be formulated. We have based on certain basic principles such as protecting the free education, enhance the quality

of education, modernization etc. Serious intellectual discussions are going on about equality in education and quality of education. After public consultations, we expect to complete the final draft of the education policy by the end of November.

RP: JVP has been conducting 10,000 public rallies under the theme of "people's government to build and protect the country". How is the peoples' response to this campaign?

Com. Bimal Rathnayake: We started this campaign on July 15 and already we have conducted public rallies in all districts from Jaffna to Hambantota. Around 25 JVP leaders including the party leader comrade Anura Dissanayake address these rallies. An important feature that we can see is people now have a significant interest in politics. At the village level, people affiliated to UNP and Podujana Peramuna attend these rallies.

At the local government election people voted for Podujana Peramuna but as we know so far they have done nothing in the local councils they won. On the other hand, most of the local council MPs of Podujana Peramuna have been accused of fraud, corruption and other forms of antisocial activities. Although the Podujana Peramuna has secured some victory at the election they have failed to do any practical thing. Therefore the people who voted for them are now disappointed and they come to our rallies. Internal issues of the Podujana Peramuna, especially the power struggle within the factions of Rajapaksa family such as Gothabaya faction and Basil faction have created a crisis in the party. It is also a reason the people to gather around the JVP. On the other hand, the government is becoming unpopular rapidly and therefore UNP supporters too are coming to our rallies.

We hold all these rallies in most rural areas of the country. An important feature we can see here is our young provincial council members and candidates have actively involved in organizing these rallies. They are our new organizers at grass root level and they do it very successfully with large public participation.

At the local council election, there was a large public attraction towards the JVP but it did not reflect in the votes we received. With these results, some thought that people had deviated from the JVP. However, with the participation of large crowds at our rallies now we are sure people are still with us. In addition, people who voted for other parties too are coming towards us. They are listening attentively to what we say at our rallies.

In these political rallies, we talk about the political transformation we expect in 2020 rather than criticizing the past and present governments. We can see a significant interest among the people on this matter. We discuss how to build this country, how to solve the transport issue, how to develop agriculture etc. Therefore we expect intellectuals who support us in formulating national policies to join in future rallies. In addition to JVP orators intellectuals, university teachers, economists, agronomists and other professionals will address these rallies in the future. We have requested those committees to join in these rallies.

We expect to continue these rallies with new qualitative changes within the next two months. In addition, we are planning a household level campaign in all districts. We will discuss 20th amendment, the Ranil-Maithri government that betrays national economy and the 2020 program. Therefore we can say that the 10,000 public rally campaign has been successful more than we had expected.

Three years..

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struggles carried out against the government by fisher folk to get their issues solved, by estate workers to get a monthly salary instead of daily wages, by the state sector employee to get a salary increase to meet the cost of living and the artist to get the issues in the aesthetic sector solved and for the freedom of creativity did not give them any breathing space.

Also, the present government sold or leased assets of the country to foreigners and companies without allowing any breathing space for the masses. The government that leased Hambanthota Harbour to a Chinese company for 99 years

is now attempting to hand over Mattala Airport and the oil tank farm at Trincomalee to India. Also, the government is attempting to hand over more than 60,000 acres from Uva – Wellassa ignoring the opposition from the people in the area. Handing over about 15,000 acres of land from Hambanthota and Monaragala was prevented as a result of the opposition of the people in the South. If this move was carried out the breathing right of the people as well as that of the elephants would have been lost.

The masses that have been denied many things in life within the 70 years of capitalist administration have been

allowed only a small breathing space. The drinking water that Mother Nature made available freely to the people has to be bought now. Everything has been made a commodity under the 70-year capitalist administration. The country has been buried under a massive debt mountain denying several generations their 'freedom' and making them debtors. The last three years, without exception, belongs to the cursed 70 years of capitalist rule. No miracle has happened. The only marvel was the income for the ministers and Parliamentarians. It was the Chief Minister for the Western Provincial Council who decided to import from Belgium

chairs worth Rs. 640,000 each for councillors. If not for the exposure by the JVP members the chairs would have adorned the Council. It is under this administration that millions are wasted for a building rented for the Ministry of Agriculture. These are wasteful spending that stops citizens' breath.

The three-year bragging of the 'joint' government is certainly a mockery. The consequence of the 70-year capitalist rule that includes the three-year rule of the 'joint' government is indeed horrendous. Masses who have been denied everything are sighing. What is left for them freely now is only 'breathing.'

However, the 'breathing' freely available at present would not be available for long within capitalism due to the spiralling cost of living, the burden of debt and slashing of relief as well as the destruction of the environment. The day a price would be charged for breathing would not be far away. As such, the masses, without being deceived by the bragging of the government should at least now rally to defeat not only the 'joint' government but also the capitalist system that tormented the masses for the last 70 years and then create a society where people could breathe freely.

Comrade Tilvin Silva addresses National Bhikku Day



Rallying against communalism



Mediating regarding farmers' issues



10,000 meetings from JVP to apprise masses



Communist Party of Australia & JVP meet

A meeting between the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) and the JVP Committee in Australia took place in Australia recently.

A clarification of the political situation in Sri Lanka was made why the executive presidency should be abolished and the facts included in the 20th amendment the JVP has presented to parliament were discussed.

Both parties stated that the solidarity between the CPA and JVP should be strengthened.

JVP reveals move to get Rs.15 million door to Western PC



has already questioned the Chief Minister Isura Devapriya regarding the matter. As he did not receive a proper response from the Chief Minister Comrade Lakshman Nipunarachchi said he entered the matter as a written question to the agenda of the next Provincial Council meeting.

It is said that the door that has cost such a massive amount has been built similar to the main door in Parliament and with engravings similar to the ones during the Kotte period.

Comrade Lakshman Nipunarachchi who has questioned the Chief Minister regarding the door in Parliament says the Chief Minister avoids revealing information about the door.

The Western Provincial Council that came to public attention regarding buying 125 chairs spending Rs.650,000 for each chair has come to limelight again in connection with a move to spend over Rs. 15 million for the main door of the main chamber.

The JVP Councillor for Western Provincial Council Comrade Lakshman Nipunarachchi

