

Common candidate if executive presidency is not abolished

A powerful candidate will be put forward from the broad people's center that is being built representing left, progressive and democratic forces holding high the slogan to abolish executive presidency if the necessary support is denied by the government and other political parties for the process to abolish executive presidential system states the JVP.

The 20th amendment intended to abolish the

executive presidential system, presented in Parliament by

the JVP in September last year as a private member's

motion, needs to be submitted to referendum after its adoption by Parliament by a 2/3rd majority. The JVP had discussions with various political parties in a bid to get their support to get the '20' passed in Parliament. Many political parties, scared of the

public opinion, stated they agree to the amendment in terms of policy. However, due to their concealed agendas, hesitate to support the move.

Speaking to 'Red Power' the Information Secretary of the JVP Comrade Vijitha Herath said the

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Tele. +94112785612
Fax. +94112786050
www.jvpsrilanka.com
e-mail : niyamuwanews@gmail.com

Ever surging April reminiscences...

48 years have gone by since the '71 April uprising. April uprising that could never be forgotten in the politics of our country is a memory that surfaces quite so often. For, they were the first generation in the history of our country to struggle and sacrifice their lives on behalf of Socialism and the liberation of humanity; they are the beacon that shows the way for the new generation that struggles for Socialism and social justice. They are like volumes that contain perception, experiences and steadfastness for the struggle. Enemies still fear their grandiosity. This is evident from the space given in print and electronic media around this time (April) to vituperators to discolour the objectives of the struggle.

They were the ones who, within the capitalist history of our country, challenged the British queen. They did so with an armed struggle. They were the ones who proved to the people in the country that even by 1971 Sri Lanka was not an independent country, that genuine independence had to be won and Sri Lanka was a neo-colony under the British queen. The capitalist rulers who bragged about 'independence' and patriotism murdered the men who carried on an armed struggle against the British queen's government. This exposed their deception.

The comrades who sacrificed their lives in April 1971 were those who saw the cruelty of capitalism and resolved to eradicate it, who accepted that the only solution for the capitalist crisis is Socialism and who 'woke up' early to make their contribution for the society. They taught our generation that Social revolution could be carried out on this land and there were people in this land who would not hesitate to take up arms to fight for a just cause. This is why their memories invigorate us.

The 1971 uprising is not something that occurred accidentally or as a result of arbitrary action of an individual. It occurred on definite political objective factors. The '71 uprising was really a struggle carried out for the right of the downtrodden masses against the suppression of the capitalist administration, their noble right for organization and engage in politics. It was the armed response of the proletarian movement that surfaced against the capitalist suppression.

There are many many negative factors that are linked to the April uprising as well. There are many incidents of internal crises, vituperation against the leadership, tendencies for cliquism, betrayals, quitting the movement and certain individuals becoming government's witnesses after the struggle that harmed the movement. However, the determination, self-confidence, the faith, trust and the militancy of those comrades who sacrificed their lives for the cause was large enough to overcome such encumbrances. They were able to hold high the objectives of the Party and shout 'Long live the Revolution' before they were brutally murdered by butchers deployed by capitalist rulers.

Despite the '71 struggle ended with defeat, it and the experiences in the prisons aided the JVP to be built as a better organized, methodical and correct political movement. This is why '71 uprising becomes the second birth of the JVP.

Also, the impact the '71 uprising generated on the society and its influence was colossal. It was this struggle that made the United Front government to limit the private ownership of land to 50 acres and carry out a Land Reform Decree (LRD) of 1975.

Also, the influence of the '71 struggle on fine arts, literature, creativity as well as for left politics is tremendous. It was with the '71 struggle that the youths of the downtrodden class got the opportunity to challenge the political leadership that was hitherto reserved only for the elite.

Today, when 48 years have gone by since the '71 struggle, Sri Lanka's capitalism is in a massive crisis that prevents it from moving forward anymore. Currently, capitalism is dragging the society towards barbarism. It is being confirmed again and again that the capitalist crisis has no other solution and the only solution for the society is Socialism. As such, the task of the revolutionaries, Socialists and the progressives of the era is to make use of the capitalist crisis for a social transformation. In such an endeavour the determination, self-confidence, the faith, trust, sacrifice, the militancy and the quality of dedication for a cause displayed by the heroes of 1971 uprising would be the ideals the present generation should be guided with.

JVP condemns brutal attacks on people praying in 2 mosques in New Zealand



The JVP condemns the brutal act on innocent people engaged in religious observances in two mosques in New Zealand. In the message, the JVP states such attacks on innocent people the world has witnessed recently are the results of various phobias spread by the imperialists to cover up their declining state of world domination and also to exploit the wealth of third world countries. The message also refers to communalism spread by reactionaries in Sri Lanka to be in power or in a bid to come to power.

The message:

JVP condemns the fascist, terrorist brutal attack on innocent people at two mosques in New Zealand

It is reported that forty-nine people who had been engaged in religious observances have been killed in shooting attacks on two Christchurch mosques in New Zealand today (15th). According to reports, further 20 people were seriously injured.

The JVP (People's Liberation Front) vehemently condemns the fascist terrorist brutal attack, offers sympathies to the loved ones and relatives of the dead and wish a speedy recovery for the injured.

The increasing terror attacks on innocent people that the world has witnessed are the results of various phobias spread by the imperialists to cover up their declining state of world domination and also to exploit the wealth of third world countries.

In Sri Lanka too local reactionaries instigated by their imperialist masters spread communalism in the country to be in power and also to come to power.

While calling the progressive people of the world to raise their voices against such wretched acts and fascist terrorism encouraged by bankrupt imperialism we, of the JVP, state that we stand in solidarity with the people of New Zealand against this vicious act of hate.

Department of Foreign Relations of the Central Committee of the JVP

A crisis that seeks a political change



Sri Lanka has been trapped in a massive debt crisis for several decades. As a result of neo-liberal economic strategy and within the plundering open economic policy all production sections have broken down and the country has been imprisoned in a debt trap. Instead of breaking loose from this, more and more loans are taken so that the country is getting entrapped further. Recently, the Minister of finance himself said debt cannot be settled without taking loans. This explains how entangled the country is in the debt trap. As a result the tax burden heaped on the masses gets heavier and heavier. The masses are further burdened as services such as education, health and transport are in crisis. The income sources of the masses have broken down

causing distress. They are further distressed as crime, drug menace, abuse and violence against children and women have increased. It is in such an environment that everybody asks for a change. They seek an alternative to the existing futile political system.

This economic-social-cultural crisis that existed for some time has now worsened and has declined to a political crisis. Currently, the government is unstable, anarchic and all capitalist political parties are in crisis. The SLFP has splintered and a new party has been formed. Within the UNP the leadership of Mr Ranil Wickremesinghe has been challenged again. The UNP doesn't have a strong national leader. It doesn't have a strong and attractive second string either. The SLFP is in shatters. Mr

Maithripala Sirisena's faction that took the official ownership of the party is weak and small. Within Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa's faction too contradictions have surfaced among various groups. A presidential election would be a challenge to all these factions.

At the moment all three capitalist groups are staring at the presidential election. They don't seem to have any interest in abolishing the executive presidency as had been promised. It is in such an environment that the JVP is still struggling to get the executive presidential system abolished.

Despite all these have their eyes staring at the presidential election; it would not be an easy task for all of them. Naming a candidate itself is a challenge. Many in the UNP do not favour Mr Ranil Wickremesinghe

becoming their candidate for the presidential election. For, the party members too think that Ranil is a weak leader who is not suitable for such a contest. This is why names of Karu Jayasuriya, Sajith Premadasa and others are associated with the presidential candidate. As such, the UNP is not definite about its presidential candidate.

President Maithripala Sirisena's situation is not satisfactory either. As his faction is weak and small he cannot win the presidential election on his own. He can never become the common candidate again. Mahinda Rajapaksa faction would not support Maithri. As such, Maithri's presidential dream would be a dream only.

The presidential candidacy has caused a crisis in Mahinda faction as well. Legally Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa cannot contest the forthcoming presidential election. As such, there is an issue regarding the candidate of his faction. Despite Mr Gotabhaya Rajapaksa seems to be in front of the list, there is also a section of the faction that opposes him. There are only a few months for the next presidential election. Even so, the Rajapaksa faction has not officially put forward Mr Gotabhaya Rajapaksa as their presidential candidate. There seems to be a hesitation. It is not an advantageous situation for them.

All three capitalist political groups have not been able to name the candidate each of the parties would put forward. Nor have they been able to commence an election campaign. This is indeed very disadvantageous to capitalist parties that depend on election promises and deceptions.

Meanwhile, a large number of forces and civil organizations that supported Mr Maithripala Sirisena during the presidential election campaign in 2015 that put forward the 'good governance' concept have

withdrawn from him. They are frustrated with the UNP as well. They are searching for a strong political leadership that could defeat communal and reactionary group including Gotabhaya Rajapaksa. The situation is preparing an advantageous environment for left and progressive movements.

Having an advantageous environment only would not bring victories to the left or the progressives. The left progressive organizations should utilize such an advantageous environment for their victories; they should use tactics and strategies. What exists now is such a situation.

We should still strive to get the executive presidential system abolished. However, if the attempt fails and the presidential election is held the left movement should get ready to confront the situation. In such a situation it should strive to take advantage of the political confusion that exists. There is a way for that.

Specially, if Gotabhaya or any other Rajapaksa is nominated from Mahinda faction the progressives and the left should take the fight to defeat the communal, reactionary, sinister group to their hands without leaving the opportunity to the UNP as the UNP too is a similar group and is, at the moment, unable to match Rajapaksas politically as well as organizationally. A strong candidate from the left would be an ideal answer to the situation. It is important to build a strong people's center consisting of all left and progressive forces on a common policy agreement. It is important that this center doesn't confine to the election period only but should merge with the political struggle that seeks long term solutions for the capitalist crisis. For, the current political crisis craves for such an alternative intervention. It is the responsibility of all left and progressive forces to act immediately to achieve this.

People's Center is built to transform the society

Red Power:
Recently, your party met the Leader of the Opposition Mahinda Rajapaksa, Leaders of the TNA and the UNP. Why?

Comrade Tilvin Silva:

Yes. At the moment the 20th amendment to the Constitution we presented in Parliament to get the executive presidential system abolished has been included in the order book. What is left to do is to debate and get it adopted. In doing so there is a judgment from the Supreme Court. In addition to a 2/3rd majority in Parliament, it should be approved in a referendum. We too think that it is better to get it approved by the people. Hence, it is necessary to get it approved by a 2/3rd majority in Parliament first. For this, we need votes from the MPs. This is why we met Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa, the TNA and the UNP. We do not have any other transactions with them.

Red Power: What is the progress of the talks your party had with them?

Comrade Tilvin

Silva: The Leader of the Opposition Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa has said, as a policy, he supports abolishing executive presidency. However, he said the

present electoral system should be changed with the move to abolish executive presidency. It looks that they are hesitant regarding this. At the discussion held with the TNA, they said they, as a policy, agree to abolish executive presidency and they would vote to support abolishing executive presidency if it is subject to a vote in Parliament. They also expressed their willingness to work with us in common issues of the country. The UNP too states it supports abolishing executive presidency. However, they too are in a quandary.

Red Power: Do you, taking this situation into consideration, think that there is no possibility of getting the 20th amendment adopted?

Comrade Tilvin

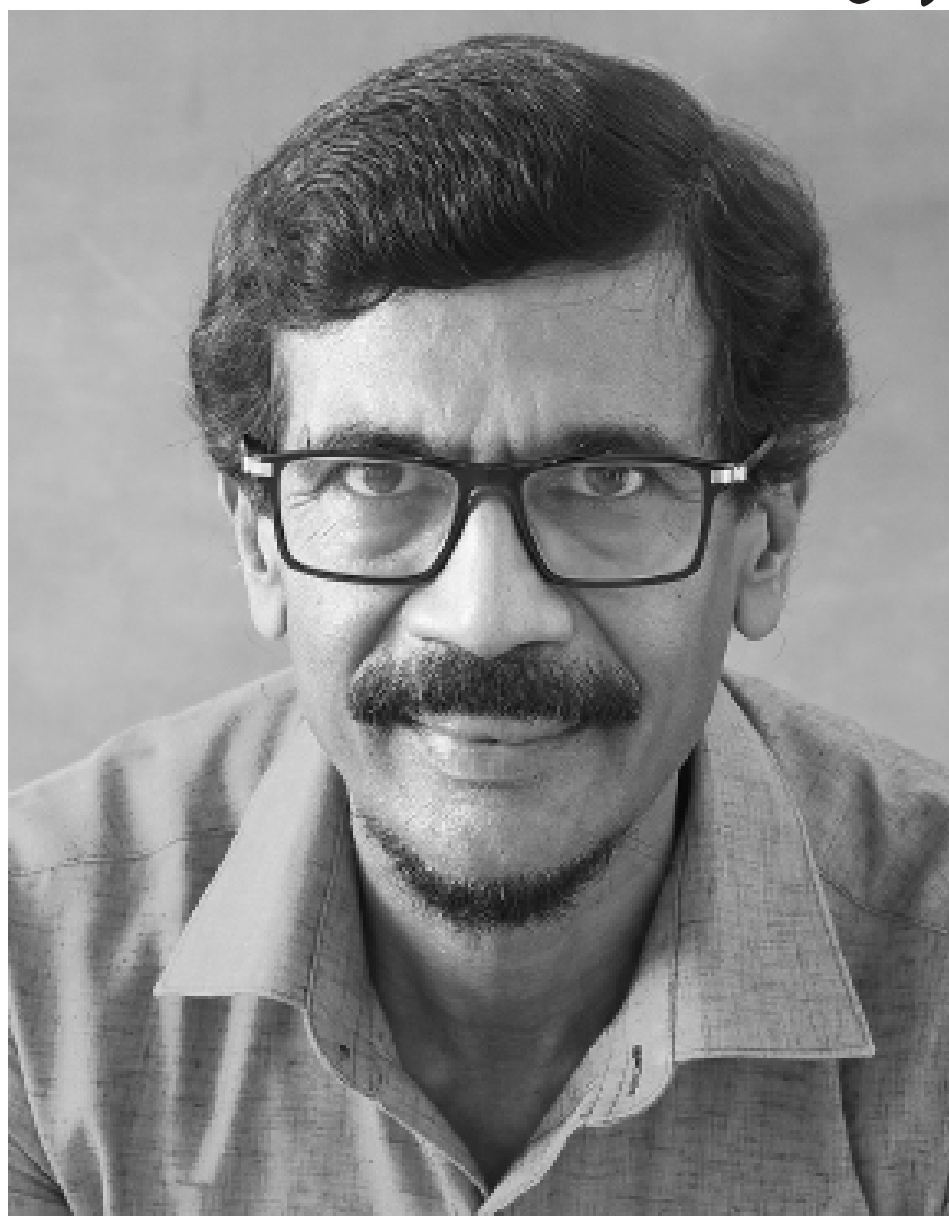
Silva: No. We are still optimistic. We would not give up this struggle. There is still a likelihood of getting the 20th amendment adopted within this political crisis. However, we are also aware that a massive barrier has been built against it. Especially, those who dream of becoming the President again and those who want one of their bigwigs to become the President so that they could enjoy privileges obstruct this move. However, we

would do the maximum to get it adopted. We would discuss with all the parties that represent parliament. Also, we would carry out awareness programmes and agitations to create a favourable public opinion.

Red Power: All right. What happens if the 20th amendment cannot be adopted before acceptance of nominations for the next presidential election is announced?

Comrade Tilvin

Silva: Yes, we are aware that dates to announce the next presidential election are getting nearer while we are making the effort to get the '20' adopted. The dates for the Presidential election process should be announced by October this year. If we are unable to get the '20' adopted and announcing the presidential election is unavoidable, we will put forward a strong candidate from the people's center that would be established soon against the camp represented by Rajapaksas' communal and unholy forces and the camp that represents UNP's neo-liberal policies. This is definite. We believe that our candidate who would definitely get the support of progressive forces and the masses



Comrade Tilvin Silva
General Secretary of the JVP

against the two reactionary, communal, pro-imperialist and corrupt cliques would have a massive impact on the society.

Red Power:
You talked about a 'people's center'. What is its composition? Is it established only for the presidential election?

Comrade Tilvin

Silva: No. The broad people's center we have planned to establish is not a temporary front formed for an election only. It is a long term, permanent, political headquarters. The JVP is conferred with the chief responsibility of this. This is the present reality. The JVP, the National Intellectuals Organization (NIO), left and progressive political parties and groups, progressive civil society organizations

have already expressed their readiness. The discussions are going on. The center will also include trade unions, farmers' associations, fishermen's organizations, women's organizations and workers' organizations in the estate sector and also with the participation of Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim and other communities. We believe it will get the blessings of all religious leaders in the country. It is a permanent organization built on correct policies. It would be active and struggle in all spheres to transform the existing bankrupt social system. It will be an organization that will be built on democratic principles. The left and progressive ideology would be the main orientation. In

addition, the center would contest elections whenever they are held. It is evident that this center, built on policies, would be a strong and broad organization of a kind that has never been created in our country before.

Red Power: What is the political necessity and intention of creating such a broad people's organization?

Comrade Tilvin

Silva: At the moment Sri Lanka is immersed in a massive socio-economic-political-cultural-moral crisis. The blue and green rotating administrations in our country have defeated, destroyed and downgraded our country during the last 71 years. That is the cause of the suffering of our people.

(Merry) Go round Indian election politics

India's Election Commission has taken measures to hold India's next general election from 11th April to 19th May this year. Counting of votes will take place on 23rd May and the results will be announced on the same day. The election is held to elect the 17th Lok Sabha. The number of seats in India's Lok Sabha is 543 and a party to get a majority in Lok Sabha should get at least 272 seats. MPs are using 'first-past-the-post voting'. The elected government will govern for 5 years until 2024. Currently, India is ruled by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). It has 336 seats. The country is having a total of 2,293 political parties.

The main fight is between the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by BJP and the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) led by the Indian National Congress. In addition to these two alliances, a new alliance called the Federal Front (Mahagathbandhan) has been formed to challenge the two main parties. It is lead by Bahujan Samaj Party. Several left parties including the Communist Party of India are contesting the election. Despite left parties including the Communist Party of India (Marxist) attempted to form an election alliance with the Indian National Congress, it was not successful. The attempts to form a no-contest pact in West Bengal and form an alliance in Bihar were

not fruitful.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) will contest 15 out of the 29 states while Communist Party of India will contest 4 states Communist Party of India (Marxist Leninist) will contest 2 states. The Revolutionary Socialist Party and All India Forward Bloc will contest only one state.

At the 2004 election, the Lok Sabha representation of left parties was 59. However, at the 2014 election, it dropped to 10 (CPI (M) – 09 & CPI-1). At this year's election, it is predicted that this number would go down further. Despite left parties have shown success at trade union struggles and mass struggles, they have not been able to attract voters and this is an issue being



Party	No of states	Electorates
Communist Party of India (CPI - M)	15	59
Communist Party of India (CPI)	04	09
Communist Party of India (Marxist Leninist) (CPI – ML)	02	06
The Revolutionary Socialist Party	01	03
All India Forward Bloc	01	03

discussed in the Indian left movements.

Not fulfilling the given promises, increasing unemployment, frauds and corruption, failure of the economic growth, inability to find solutions for the issues of the farmer community are the issues against the ruling BJP but the general view

is that the weakness of the leadership of Rahul Gandhi in the Congress Party is an advantage for them.

The BJP, as usual, employs Hindu communalism and India's opposition to China and Pakistan to increase its voter base. Especially, they are making a valiant

attempt to get the advantage of the incidents that occurred in Kashmir state recently.

One of the main alliances would get the majority at the election. However, there is no guarantee that it would make a significant difference in politics or society in India.

Russian troops to Venezuela

Amidst the conspiracy by the USA to topple the legal administration of Nicolas Maduro, two Russian military planes carrying 100 Russian troops and 35 tons of material aid landed in Venezuela's main airport.

US President Donald Trump responding to the move has called on Russia to pull its troops from Venezuela and warned "all options" were open to making that happen. However, Russia's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova in an outright rejection of President Trump's call stated Russian troops will

remain in Venezuela as long as they are needed by Venezuela's legal government. She said the troops are there to fulfil prior agreements. They are involved in the implementation of agreements in the sphere of military and technical co-operation and added, "Russia is not changing the balance of power in the region and Russia is not threatening anyone."

Meanwhile, responding to a statement made by Trump's National security adviser John Bolton that 'the United States will not tolerate any interference by hostile

foreign powers into the Western Hemisphere's affairs', China's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Geng Shuang said, "countries in the western hemisphere, including Latin American countries, are all independent and sovereign states. They have the right to determine their own foreign policy and their way to engage in mutually beneficial cooperation with countries of their own choosing."

It is China's consistent position to develop friendly and cooperative ties with all countries, including Venezuela and



other Latin American countries, on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

Regarding the Venezuela issue, we want to stress that it can only be resolved by the Venezuelan people, and

stability is in the interests of Venezuela and the region. China would like to work with the international community to help Venezuela restore stability at an early date. Meanwhile, we will continue to advance

friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation with Latin American countries.

Latin American affairs are not a certain country's exclusive business, nor is Latin America a certain country's backyard.

JVP meets political leaders for the '20'

The JVP in a bid to get the 20th amendment to the Constitution that would abolish the executive presidential system adopted in Parliament has decided to meet leaders of all political parties that represent Parliament.

They first met the Leader of the Opposition Mahinda Rajapaksa at the office of the Leader of the Opposition on 6th March. The Leader of the JVP Comrade Anura Dissanayaka, Members of the Political Bureau Comrade Vijitha Herath and Comrade Sunil Handunneththi participated on behalf of the JVP while Parliamentarians Dinesh Gunawardene and Dallas Alahapperuma joined the Leader of the Opposition Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Speaking to the media after the discussion Comrade Anura Dissanayaka said, "Six months have gone by since the 20th amendment was presented in Parliament and according to standing orders the debate on the 20th amendment could be taken at anytime the party leaders decide. We had the discussion with the Leader of the Opposition as we do not want the amendment not to be restricted to Parliament but would want the people to take a decision regarding it.

We want to get the executive presidential system abolished as we believe that an administrative system that centred on a Parliamentary system is suitable to our country than an administration that is based on the executive presidential system."

The Leader of the Opposition

Mahinda Rajapaksa, at the discussion, had said they, as a policy, agree to abolish the executive presidential system but were concerned as the executive presidential system was linked to the 13th amendment. As such, Mr Rajapaksa has told the JVP delegation that they would have to take a decision after having discussions with political parties with his alliance.

Next, the JVP delegation of Comrade Anura Dissanayaka, the General Secretary Comrade Tilvin Silva and the Member of the Political Bureau Comrade Lal Kantha met TNA Leaders at the JVP head office on 11th March. The TNA was represented by the Leader of the TNA R. Sampanthan, Messrs. M Sumanthiran, Selvam Adaikalanathan and D. Siddharthan.

A common agreement was reached between the TNA and the JVP to identify sectors in which both parties in politics could ideologically agree.

Speaking to the media Comrade Anura Dissanayaka said abolishing the executive presidency and getting all to contribute in power-sharing was discussed and the leaders of both parties paid attention to the need for a new political direction in an environment where the so-called main political parties have degenerated.

He said despite there were differences as political parties, there were many areas the JVP and the TNA could ideologically agree and the TNA's support ideologically to abolish executive presidency was a healthy sign he pointed out.

Comrade Anura Dissanayaka said accordingly, both parties were able to



hold an important discussion that would lead the politics in the country towards a new horizon.

The Leader of the TNA R Sampanthan, speaking to the media about the discussion said he agrees with the views expressed by the JVP Leader to the media. He also pointed out that the JVP was informed about the discussions the TNA had with the President and the Prime Minister in connection with the devolution of power.

Mr Sampanthan said the JVP and the TNA should work together to get the politics in the country along a correct path and emphasized that it would definitely occur in the future.

A discussion was held between UNP Leaders including Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and the leaders of the

JVP at the office of the Prime Minister on 22nd March.

Comrade Anura Dissanayaka, the Information Secretary Comrade Vijitha Herath and Comrade Dr Nalinda Jayatissa MP participated representing the JVP while the UNP was represented by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and the Minister of Development Strategies, International Trade, Science, Technology and Research Malik Samarawickrema.

The UNP has stated they agree, as a policy, to abolish the executive presidential system and a resolution too was passed at the convention held last to abolish the executive presidency. They have said their decision would be informed after discussing the issue with other political parties in the UNP.

Futile is the govt. that fails to supply electricity continuously..

What's the use of a government if it cannot supply electricity for 24 hours due to the absence of rain for a few weeks asks the General Secretary of the JVP Comrade Tilvin Silva. The country has not achieved victories in any sector during the past several decades and at present, all spheres in the country have thoroughly deteriorated he pointed out.

The JVP General Secretary

made these observations speaking at an event held to re-organize the JVP Electoral Organization for Ratgama.

Speaking further Comrade Tilvin Silva said, "What is the purpose of a government if it cannot supply electricity for all 24 hours merely because it doesn't rain for a few weeks? These parties have ruled the country for 71 years and they have bragged about

development.

I remember the likes of JR Jayewardene when bringing in Accelerated Mahaweli Development Programme said they would build 6 reservoirs with loans obtained and after supplying electricity to the whole country the excess would be sold to India. That was the dream then.

What is the purpose of a government if it cannot



continuously supply electricity, which is an essential commodity in a country? Why did so much money spent on those projects?

Why did Kerawalapitiya and

Norochcholai power stations were built spending millions if a continuous supply of electricity cannot be supplied for the people?

Other countries in the world attempt to grow plants on other planets. In our country when electricity cannot be continuously supplied and there have to be electricity cut downs the engineers carry out poojas for 'rain gods'. They should shed their engineering titles. Governments are not necessary if gods can find solutions for the electricity and other crises."

People's Center...

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The country and our people should be saved from this crisis. Everybody wants change. Changing the faces of rulers, changing the names, colours and symbols of old parties cannot salvage the country from the abyss or the snare it is trapped in. That is why an alternative political force, one that is different from administrations that ruled the country for the last 71 years, is needed at present. There is a political vacuum that is needed to be filled up by such a new organization. There is an objective necessity. This is why we intend building this people's center.

Red Power: What are the political vision and the basis of such a people's center?

Comrade Tilvin Silva: It would never be a simple election front. The political vision and the basis of this center will be left and progressive. The left should take the biggest responsibility in it. For, what has failed in the country is neo-liberalism and backward capitalism. As such, this center should be built for a social system with a left and progressive vision instead of tinkering with the failed capitalism. Accordingly, the task it is assigned with would be a long term, broad and a colossal one. It will be responsible for transforming society.

In doing so, our country will need accepted and correct policies for all sectors. Already, the National Intellectuals Organization (NIO) with the participation of its experts has formulated a set of policies for several sectors including for economy, education, health, transport, fine arts, environment, sports etc. They seem to be correct and practical. As such, these policies could be utilized as the

basis to build this center. Also, policies on preventing frauds and corruption, national unity, social justice as well as democratic and humanitarian policies of respecting rights of all communities including that of downtrodden masses should be included in the center. This is how this center is different from the so-called election fronts set up by plundering cliques of the capitalist camp. All political parties and groups that take the initiative to build the center will do so with complete understanding and agreement.

Red Power: Finally, how will the masses accept this people's center that will be built anew? What are your thoughts about it?

Comrade Tilvin Silva: We know that this task is not easy. However, the country and our people have no other alternative for progress other than moving to this path. The traditional behavior of our people, their backward thinking, the weak mentality of worshipping and honouring the powerful, the poverty and the nature of surrendering to temporary privileges would be challenges to us. There would also be conspiracies and sabotage acts by our enemies. However, none of them would be solutions for the crises that exist in society. As such, a situation will come up where the people will be forced to change their lives. In such a situation if we go to the people with new policies, new hopes and new examples, we believe, people could be changed to think anew. Hence, we dedicate ourselves for this task with optimism. We call upon all left and progressive forces and people who have been oppressed to rally with this center.

Common candidate

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attempt the JVP is making to get the executive presidency abolished has not been abandoned but the party would carry on a ceaseless struggle to get the sinister position eradicated. However, if the move doesn't get the necessary support from other political parties, a common candidate will be put forward by a people's center that will be built by rallying all left, progressive and democratic forces to abolish executive presidential system, fulfill people's aspirations and to implement a programme to 'build Sri Lanka'.

"Some saying they agree to abolish executive presidency dream of sitting on that chair. However, the JVP is prepared to make the presidential election one that changes the history of this country if they go ahead with holding a presidential election. Despite many individuals smacking their lips to taste the executive presidency, no one would be able to get 50% + if such an election is held. This would create a very different situation in the history of our country. A front that would fulfill promises will come forward against those leaders who have broken promises. A front of genuine, honest people who genuinely love the country and the people will be built against cliques of thieves, fraudsters and the corrupt. Who ever present their nominations, people will have only two alternatives. They will have to choose between the old path that destroyed and destructs the country and the new path that develops Sri Lanka into a modern country. In such a situation we invite the people in our country to rally with the people's center that puts forward the programme to build the country and make it a modern country where people live with happiness and contentment.

Electricity crisis due to mafia in CEB

Comrade Sunil Handunnetti



The Member of the Political Bureau of the JVP Comrade Sunil Handunnetti Speaking at a press conference said the current electricity crisis was not due to any hydro-electric crisis or weather conditions. He said the President and the government do not reveal the real reason for the crisis and said the real reason for the crisis is the electricity mafia that controls the electricity sector.

He said the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) continued to ignore the warning of the Public Utilities Commission of Sri Lanka (PUCSL) that continuously asked CEB to come up with a long-term plan for power generation.

Comrade Handunnetti said that even President Maithripala Sirisena who blames the PUCSL doesn't come out with the truth as he has close relatives who are involved in the fraud and therefore he prefers to turn a blind eye and blame some other party. He pointed out that Minister of Power and Energy, Ravi Karunanayake too is aware of what was taking place and added there were top officials in the Ministry involved in the fraud,

Comrade Handunnetti said the Public Utility Commission had predicted the present electricity crisis in 2016 and had prepared 'Electricity Supply 2020 and Beyond', an electricity generating plan. However, CEB did not take any notice of this plan revealed the JVP Parliamentarian. He said the Public Utility Commission had also called for the CEB to

develop a plan for renewable energy as Sri Lanka had adequate sunlight and wind for this purpose. This too had been ignored pointed out Comrade Handunnetti.

He said although the Government wanted the people to believe that the power cuts were due to weather condition, the lack of rainfall and water, they had nothing to do with the present power cuts that were being implemented in the country. He said it is the failure of the CEB to come up with a long-term plan for power generation and added that the country would have to go through the same process next year and in 2021 and 2022 as proper tender procedures and procurement plans have not been adhered to. He said it is not late to implement such plans if they have a will to do so

Comrade Handunnetti said that last year the COPE summoned the CEB and the PUCSL to discuss the issue. "When we questioned as to why the CEB engineers continued to ignore the warning from the PUCSL in formulating such a plan so that the public would not be severely inconvenienced by power cuts the engineers stated that they would only adhere to it if one of the top officials of the PUCSL was removed. The PUCSL was finally forced to take legal action against the CEB and go to Court. As a result, the Board has been summoned to Court on 9 April," he said.

The CEB and its engineers prefer to carry out emergency power purchasing while inconveniencing people with power cuts, he claimed, adding that the present power cuts had impacted the economy of the entire country as well.

The reason behind this colossal power crisis is the mafia within the CEB which prefers emergency power purchasing rather than listening to the warnings of the PUCSL said Comrade Handunnetti.

RED POWER



Commemorating the centenary of the 3rd International



Making left parties in Italy aware of JVP policies



Re-organizing JVP electoral organizations



International Women's Day in Colombo



JVP commemorates International Women's Day internationally

To April Heroes...



**Your undefeated clarion call
spreads through villages, cities farms and workplaces
Giving the downtrodden vigor, resolve and inspiration
To make this land pure, righteous and contented!**

(48th Commemoration of April Heroes)

The estate community should gather round an alternative force



As a result of traditional trade unions in the estate sector campaigning in favour of administrators the estate community has not been able to win their rights as such, the estate community should gather round an alternative force says the National Organizer of the JVP Comrade Bimal Rathnayake MP.

He said this addressing a meeting held at Bagawanthalawa under the theme 'The Right to Life' to discuss the issues of the estate community.

He pointed out that the state and private sector employees, whose trade union membership is lower than the employees of the estate sector who has a membership of 80%, have won more rights.

Comrade Bimal Rathnayake said among the trade unions formed for state and the private sector employees it is the trade unions affiliated to the JVP that win more rights to the employees.

Certain politicians who represent the estate sector and certain ministers have their own estates and are reluctant to pay better wages or give more rights for the estate employees emphasized Comrade Bimal Rathnayake.

The JVP Organizer for Nuwara-eliya Comrade Manjula Suraweera, the Asst. Secretary of All Ceylon Estate Workers' Union Comrade K. Kalaiselvi the Organizer for Norwood Comrade Lalith Surendra and Comrade S. Manoharan were present.

The estate employees and the people who participated in the meeting said it was time to get rid of traditional trade union politics and find a new path and pointed out that people in the estate sector, especially the youths, have rallied with the JVP.