

Stop Pleasing the Mafia Give Relief to People

“The government should stop trying to appease the crony mafia by cutting off relief to the poor at a time the corona epidemic is ravaging the country.”

The Central Committee Member of the JVP, Comrade Sunil Handunnetti, said this at a media briefing held on the 29th. He further emphasized that the government should provide relief to the people who require relief at this moment.

“The government’s move has increased the prices of essential commodities and medicines, and the cuts in public relief in the wake of the covid epidemic while travel restrictions have been imposed have tormented the masses. The government states that the prices of essential goods go up due to the rise in the value of the dollar, the depreciation of the rupee, the imposition

of import restrictions and the recession on the economy.

However, they are not the only reasons why prices of essential commodities have risen. The government says the people should accept the current situation. The Minister of Consumer Affairs states that there is no answer at the moment. The government’s action is clear from the statements made by responsible ministers in the face of so much pressure on the people.

A gazette notification was issued on November 16, 2020, specifically regarding sugar. The wholesale price of Rs. 80 and the maximum retail price of Rs.

85 per kilo were prescribed. However, in the meantime, the tax on a kilo of sugar imports was reduced from Rs. 50 to 25 cents. Due to this, there was a tax fraud of over Rs. 15 billion. We complained to the Supreme Court in this regard. At that time, 90,000 MT had been imported.

Minister Bandula Gunawardena stated that there would be no price increase until May. The Minister of Trade signed agreements with only 12 importers, including Wilma. However, at that time, 65 people were engaged in importing sugar. Nevertheless, after May, sugar prices rose sharply to Rs. 240 a kilo. The maximum price limit ended in April. The trade minister said the problem was over because there was no shortage of sugar.

Now, the Minister of Consumer Affairs says that even if the price goes up by Rs. 100 there is nothing to do. Despite providing relief to the people, the government has allowed tax evasion and the establishment of a monopoly by a few. The rice market issue is the result of the monopoly of the government’s cronies. Farmers and consumers have been made helpless. The price of redraw rice consumed by the general public is Rs. 115, and the rice prices go up to Rs. 200 per kg.

When the market prices go up, some ministers talk about developing local manufacturers and local industries. That is how the Kantale Sugar Factory was started. What happened next? The same goes for the salmon factory. On the other hand, what

has happened today after stating that salmon and dhal would be subsidized? Today the prices of all essential food items are going up every day. The price of a kilo of potatoes has gone up from Rs. 150 to Rs. 200, and the price of local potatoes has increased to Rs. 250. A kilo of big onions costs Rs. 130. The price of a kilo of sprats that was Rs. 340 has increased to about Rs. 1100. A kilo of dried chillies is Rs. 650. A litre of coconut oil which was Rs. 380, is now Rs. 750. There is a shortage of milk powder today. Moreover, the prices of all kinds of vegetables are going up every day.

Today, the cost of living problems faced by people who have lost their livelihoods, who are under quarantine

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Conspiracy to subjugate country to America revealed

With the cabinet approval of Minister Udaya Gammanpila’s plan to obtain a US \$ 2,500 million loan from the American Petroleum Corporation, Finance Minister Basil Rajapaksa has launched a covert operation to transfer shares in the Kerawalapitiya Power plant to an American company.

Relevant official documents state that the Cabinet approved the transfer on Monday (6th). However, it is revealed that the Cabinet, which met through Zoom technology, did not discuss any such transfer of shares.

It is clear that there is an undisclosed connection between taking a direct loan from an American company to the CPC and transferring these shares. Meanwhile, Minister Udaya Gammanpila made a special revelation last week that oil and gas had been found in the Mannar Basin.

These reserves are said to have been valued at close to the US \$ 270 billion. Such propaganda is being carried out, and operations have been launched secretly to deprive the country of energy independence.

JVP Aids Health Workers Donation of health equipment to hospitals



“Pandemic capitalism” devours Sri Lanka

Covid 19 pandemic has now become a pandemic for capitalism as the collapsing capitalist system has now turned the pandemic into a new racket for its existence and a new arena for creating new markets. So everything from newly discovered vaccines to cardboard coffins have become commodities introduced by the pandemic. Among them, face masks, hand soaps, disinfectants, oxygen dispensers, breathing machines, oxygen gauges and many such things are sold in the market according to the price of the businessman; there is no bargaining. The strongest capitalists are also strong in the market. These capitalist companies sell their markets to poor countries, while the strongest ones of the poorer countries make bigger profits and sell to the weaker ones in their own country at a higher price. That is why an Antigen kit which is bought for around Rs.250 is sold for Rs.2000 in Sri Lanka.

Antigen has become a

treatment to the stock market of bourgeois cronies who are collapsing in Sri Lanka today. The same goes for maintaining hotels as quarantine centres. Even though tourists do not come from abroad, local Covid patients who have some money are now their “Tourist Patients”. That is how “Pandemic Capitalism” spreads. Although restrictions were imposed on the people of the country, tourists were invited to visit and was given a grand welcoming as a bio-bubble. It is for the “Pandemic Tour”. Capitalism values everything that can be priced. Now the pandemic is being distributed according to the gaps in the market. That is how Pandemic capitalism works. From the vaccine to the coffin, this applies to the market.

Quarantine for the low-income group

It can be said that the virus treats everyone equally, as death is the ultimate danger for the minister, the passenger, and the beggar who fall victim

to the virus alike. But the route to death or the route to health is not the same. It depends on many factors such as economic strength and political power. For some, after being positive for Covid, they are more comfortable than at home. When the same virus is contracted by the poor who have no power or wealth, they should continue to share the virus with everyone in the family until it becomes a serious problem at home. The government provided Rs. 10,000 bags of dry rations for all families in quarantine. It was to prevent them from leaving the house. It was a health requirement. But the government has now withdrawn it from those who do fall into the low-income category. They now have to go out with the virus to get the food they need, while being quarantined. Or they should remain at home and starve even if they have money. That is how the answer to the government’s shortcomings has been found.

Corona cost of living

It is no secret that Corona has made new additions to the economic crisis. It has had a direct impact on the Sri Lankan tourism industry. Like the large scale hotels in the tourism industry, the small scale hotels, those who rented a safari vehicle and worked as individual tour guides on the beach in Hikkaduwa lost their living. Not only did dollars stop flowing into the economy, but many who were directly and indirectly engaged in the industry had to suffer the consequences. What the government should have done was to give them the support they need and provide relief so they can survive during the lockdown and escape the Corona pandemic. What the government is doing instead is introducing new loans that will add more interest to the loans they have taken and extend the loan period. While the pals of the regime are protected by reserving large-scale hotels as quarantine centres with room prices ranging from Rs. 7,500 up to the luxury category, the small businessman and the masses who contributed to the tourism industry individually have no help whatsoever.

Borrowing for the crisis

The Gotabaya Rajapaksa regime, which came to power in 2020 as a continuation of the 73 years of failed rule, expressed its joy at taking over the reins of government by cutting off more than Rs. 500 billion in tax revenue to appeasing its cronies.

The people who voted for them did not get any relief from these tax cuts. But the government recovered the lost revenue through other various methods from the people. Since then, this new trajectory of prosperity has now seen a straight 3.6% collapse in the economy (The actual decline is worse). The foreign reserves of about \$ 7.6 billion at the time of taking office have now fallen to as low as 2.7 billion. According to international rankings, Sri Lanka is one of the leading countries in terms of the inability of debt repayment. As a result, the dollar crisis has been felt as a commodity shortage from the top supermarkets down to the village grocery store.

The first thing the government did was restrict the import of vehicles and auto parts. It was attempted as means of saving dollars. But it did not save

enough compared to the loan instalments and interest. In 2020, the dollar expenditure on imports could be reduced by \$ 3882 million over 2019, but by 2020 export earnings also fell by \$ 1893 million. The government was therefore unable to reap the benefits it had hoped for.

The tragedy of debt repayment was exacerbated in 2021 with the maturity of another \$ 1 billion in sovereign bonds. The foreign asset reserve, which stood at \$ 9.9 billion in April 2018, fell to 6.4 billion by April 2021. Now another \$ 23 billion in loan instalments and interest over four years from 2022 to 2025 is due to be paid. That’s about \$ 5.7 billion a year. But only around 2.7 is in hand. Adding in the rest of the gold and all the assets, it would still be about only \$ 4 billion.

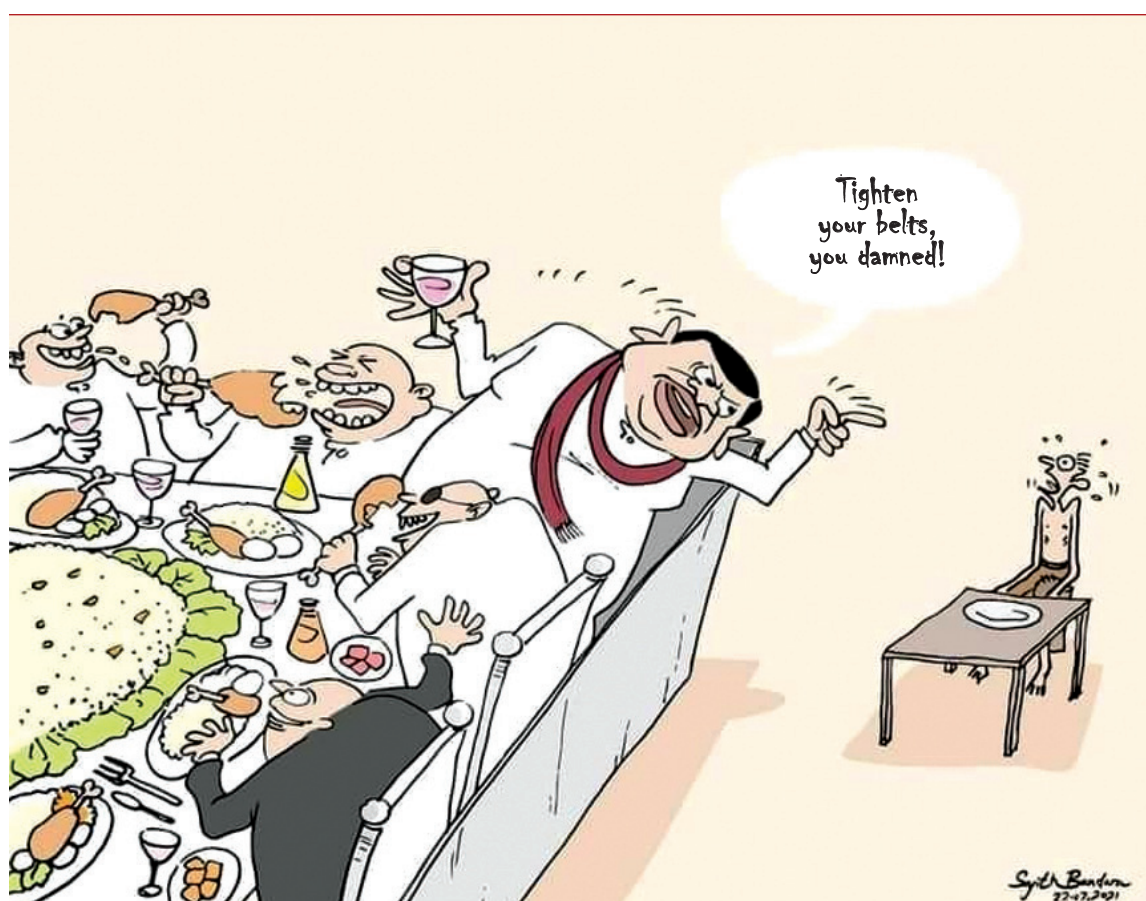
Even the fiscal 2021 report released by the Ministry of Finance on the situation over the four months from January to April 2021 is sufficient to get an overview of the extent of the crisis in the collapsing economy. Of this, government revenue and grants for the first four months of 2021 were Rs. 482 billion, while the expenditure was Rs. 1002 billion.

Borrowing just through local financing was at Rs. 1397 billion. Foreign loans were at Rs. 127 billion. It is clear that the need to spend without generating revenue has been offset by the printing of billions of rupees. Borrowing through local financing is the new currency printing done by the Central Bank. It was recently reported that more than Rs.20 billion was printed in one day. This was the situation up to the onset of the 4th wave of the corona epidemic. Now we are in September. Economic data from April to August are yet to be publicised. However, the current economic downturn in the market is getting to us at a faster rate than the corona is spreading. The damage from the pandemic and the damage of the cost of living is immeasurable.

Andare eats sugar!

Andare ate sugar to deceive the king. Today, the cunning Andares’ of our time have joined the King to deceive and rob the people through the sugar scam. People who have lost their jobs and are confined to their homes due to the lockdown are witnessing the hike in sugar prices,

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The tragedy of the economy batters the whole country

Sri Lanka is facing a catastrophe at present, where the number of covid deaths per day exceeds the 200 mark due to the aggravation of the pandemic. Stating that the country's economy has collapsed, the government, however, is not ready to take the necessary steps to control the disease.

When everyone said that the country should go for an immediate shutdown to control this catastrophe, the government responded, stating that a 'complete shutdown' was not possible because the economy was at risk. The government stated that it could not provide relief to those who lose their income due to the closure of the country. One can better understand the extent of the devastation that has befallen the economy of our country. Why should we have an economy that cannot meet the basic needs of its people when the country is closed for two weeks? This question needs to be asked from the rulers who have ruled the country so far.

Not only that. Teachers and principals have been campaigning in recent days to demand an end to their salary anomalies. The government is not ready to meet that very reasonable demand that has been unresolved for several years. The government says the teachers' and principal's request is justified, but there is no money at the moment to fulfil it.

Suppose the country's economy has collapsed to such an extent that it is not possible to fulfil that reasonable demand of the teachers-principals. In that case, it is the fault of the economic policy pursued in our country until now. As such, it is not the fault of the teachers or the principals. It is the responsibility of all capitalist governments that have perpetuated this wrong catastrophic economy. At present, the prices of goods have begun to rise rapidly. The government has failed to control it. Two-thirds of the government and Gotabaya's super-executive powers have become 'helpless' in the face of rising commodity prices. A Gazette for reduction of prices of goods will not be issued now. The president's

During the past 73 years, especially in the last 40 years, none of the country's governments built up the Sri Lankan economy. Believing in the 'miracles' of the so-called open economy, they dragged the country down the same wrong economic path. They relied solely on foreign debt, either selling off the country's means of production, industry or allowing them to collapse.

executive 'bully' is not visible at present. The minister in charge of price control says there is nothing he can do. Why is that? It is due to the wrong economic actions of the government. It is the result of printing money when the country's goods and services have not increased. The rupee depreciation due to the collapse of foreign reserves has also contributed to the rise in commodity prices. Instead of trying to earn income for the country, the rulers who got used to finding solace in loans and more loans bragged they could get any amount of loans. Now the time has come to repay the loans. The bragging about borrowing is now over. Now we hear the lament of not being able to pay the debt. Lack of foreign currency has forced to limit importing of goods. Minister Udaya Gammanpila has been begging in front of the oil countries to find out whether oil can be borrowed. Ministers who boasted, "We have the money, we know how to make money" are now silent. It is the ordinary people who will ultimately have to suffer the consequences of wrong economic action.

Economists who said printing money is not an issue and will not lead to inflation are now silent. It is the ordinary people who have to bear the brunt of the rising prices. The crisis cannot be avoided with lies and boasting. What is happening is that the situation is only getting worse. The people of this country are now confronting this tragedy.

During the past 73 years, especially in the last 40 years, none of the country's governments built up the Sri Lankan economy. Believing in the 'miracles' of the so-called open economy, they dragged the country down the same wrong economic path. They relied solely on foreign debt, either selling off the country's means of production, industry or allowing them to collapse.

What happened to the billions of dollars borrowed over 40 years from foreign commercial banks, especially since 2005 at high-interest rates and short-term borrowings? None of these was utilized to start any production source. Instead, the loans were used for various constructions.

Government leaders squandered large chunks of it in the form of commissions. They even wasted the funds by awarding the contracts to foreign companies. Finally, the burden of the debt mountain is now on the people. That is the tragedy of the Sri Lankan economy.

At the root of all the economic problems facing the people are this wrong economic system and the stupid rule of those in power.

How can it be fair to maintain an economy that cannot make available funds to provide the consumer goods that people need for education, health care, and transportation at reasonable prices? But sadly, the leaders of all the capitalist parties in this country see no other way but this economic path.

All those who ruled the country, including the Rajapaksa regime, did not have an economic vision. They had no idea or desire to manage the country's natural and human resources and create a productive economy, an asset-generating economy. The fairness of the economy did not match their class needs. They used to work and are now working as contractors who depend on commissions and brokers who sell the country's resources and get their share of it. It is why they have become rich when the country is reduced to poverty.

The root cause of all the problems facing the people of this country, such as education, health, transport, housing, wages, income, unemployment, lack of fertilizer, etc., is the country's economic devastation. The country with so many resources getting down to begging can never be justified. The ruling classes are entirely responsible for it. That is the truth.

There is no point in blaming the cause of the current catastrophic crisis on person-centred factors or finding magicians again to overcome this crisis; It is unscientific. The only option now before the people of this country is a new political path that can change this erroneous, marauding economic policy and the lumpen political culture. The country should be turned towards policy politics. The people have no choice but to rely on the progressive force in the country led by the JVP.

A worthless ruler in frenzy pursues more power!

**Comrade Anura Dissanayake,
Leader of the JVP**

[Extracts from a speech made by Comrade Anura Dissanayake in Parliament]

The President has declared a state of emergency by enforcing Section 5 of Part 2 of the Public Security Act, and the Parliamentary debate on it will be held in Parliament tomorrow (June 6). Also, the money amendment bill presented by Minister Basil Rajapaksa to launder black money is to be presented in Parliament on the 7th. We will vote against these two bills and hold this press conference to explain our position on these two bills.

The President has grabbed the power to declare a state of emergency in our country and impose emergency regulations. The Constitution states that the President has the power to amend or suspend any provision of law other than the provisions of the Constitution. In general, our country has many laws enacted under the Constitution. Still, the President has the power to change, suspend or annul all

these laws if necessary and the ability to legislate through new regulations. It means that the legislative power of Parliament has been taken over by the President.

The Gazette Notification of the imposition of the Emergency Regulations states that it is necessary to “enable him to maintain the essential supplies and services”. But by this law, they have been able to suspend and amend all laws in our country and enact new regulations through the Emergency Law. Under these orders, any citizen can be arrested without a court order; access to any place can be made without a court order; an arrested person can be detained at any time without being produced in court, and regulations can be imposed to take over any property other than land.

On the other hand, the possibility of establishing special courts outside the existing judicial structure in our country means that the President has

acquired the executive powers of the Executive President, the legislative powers vested in Parliament and the powers vested in the judiciary. However, the government issued a gazette notification on August 31 declaring that many services under this emergency law have been declared as essential services to avoid the great distress caused to the consumer by food concealment and other malpractices. Twelve sectors including Petroleum, Banks, Customs, District Secretariats and Divisional Secretariats, and Local Governments including waste disposal, health sector functions, and post offices have been declared essential services. These essential services have been declared not under emergency regulations but by enforcing Section 2 of the Essential Public Services Act No. 01 of 1979.

This shows that the President did not need such special powers to declare essential services. The decision was made using the Consumer Affairs Authority Act. There was propaganda that the maximum price of sugar and rice was decided under the emergency law. However, the maximum price of rice was previously determined in Section 20 (5) of the Consumer Affairs Act No. 09 of 2003. The Consumer Affairs Authority Act was used for this. These raids were carried out under the Consumer Affairs Act. The raids were carried out by another Act, the maximum price was decided by another Act and another Act sealed the stores. If so, the question arises as to why the President acquired such power.

On the other hand, he has the power to enforce Article 17 instead of Article 5 of the Public Security Act, but does not have the power to impose any regulation that goes beyond the law. However, Article 17 has the power to set the maximum price for essential goods in respect of the consumer.

On one hand, it is possible to

declare essential services under Act No. 61 of 1971, On the other hand, it is possible to declare essential services under Act No. 61 of 1971. However, Article 5 of the Public Security Act would give vast powers. It was stated that unprecedented powers were acquired through the Twentieth Amendment to gain executive powers to carry out the necessary work. He called for a two-thirds majority in Parliament and now has a number of additional powers under the Public Security Act. This means that a leader who can do nothing is in a frenzy of increasing his power again and again.

Without coming to this low level, the problem of essential commodities can be solved. There is the possibility of acting using the three clauses I mentioned earlier. Despite having three such clauses, why does the President attempt to grab more power? He should explain this to the country.

Although the President has declared an emergency, the Sri Lanka Disaster Management Act No. 13 of 2005 should have been enacted to deal with the epidemic. It is one of the most important Acts. According to the Act, landslides, hurricanes, floods, droughts, industrial disasters, tsunamis, earthquakes, air disasters, maritime: ship disasters, fire, epidemics have been defined as disasters.

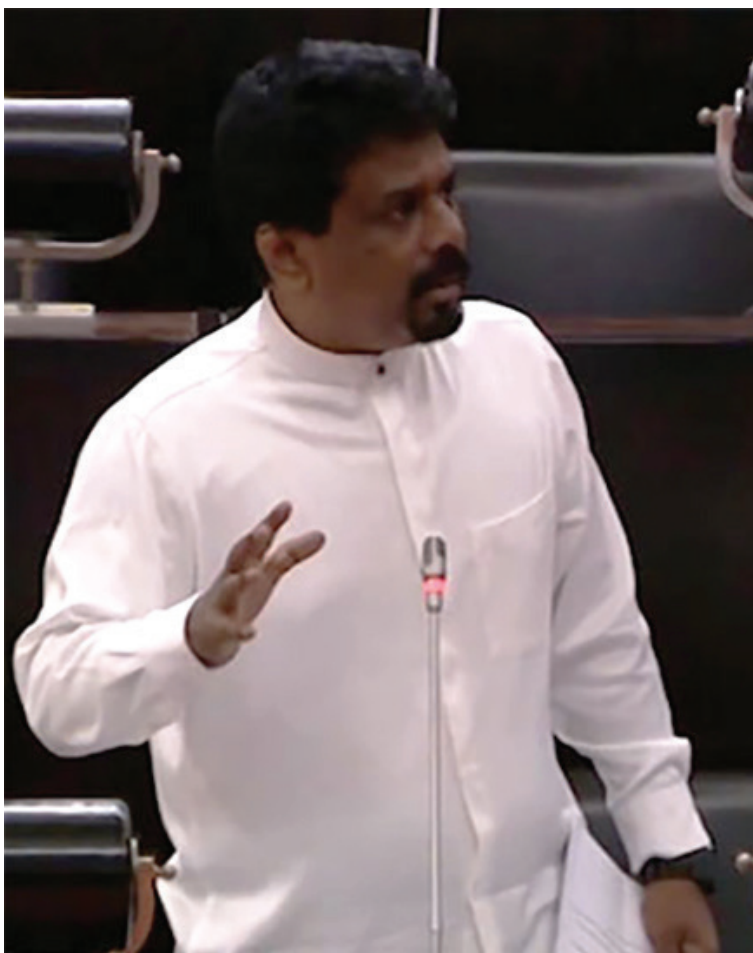
According to Article 11 of this Act, the President can declare a state of catastrophe. Hundreds of thousands of people are being affected by the epidemic today and thousands are dying, leaving people in a state of great fear and insecurity. However, the President does not declare this a catastrophic situation because a National Council for Disaster Management has to be formed if he declares such a situation. The President chairs it, Prime Minister is the Vice President and is also represented by the Leader of the Opposition. It also has ministers from 20 essential ministries, five provincial chief ministers and five opposition members of Parliament. The President has never set up such a council because, according to Article 17 of this Act, money from the Consolidated Fund is required

to be invested in the fund of this House. Everything belongs to this National Council. If so, antigen kits racketeering, drug and quarantine racketeering cannot be allowed, and all the money and borrowings that this council receives, including donations, belong to this National Council. The President does not appoint such a transparent body. He is in a frenzy. He wants to show ‘control of the prices of essential commodities and consolidate more power in his hands. He will not use this power to control the prices of any essential items.

Minister Basil Rajapaksa, the President’s brother, has introduced a bill to amend the currency, which is expected to cover two key areas. All assets not yet disclosed can be disclosed before December 31. Those assets can be assessed and released with a one percent tax. The general public in this country does not have any such assets. A group of politicians in this country, a ring of swindlers loyal to politicians, and a handful of top officials have undisclosed assets. In addition, drug traffickers, extortionists and the underworld have such money. All such assets can be disclosed paying a nominal tax of one percent. If a case has been filed by the Commission of Bribery or Corruption to investigate, such assets cannot be disclosed. If there was no case regarding the land in Malwana said to be belonging to Mr Basil Rajapaksa, it could have been released by paying a one percent tax.

On the other hand, it is possible to get rid of money hidden abroad. There is also talk of large sums of money hidden abroad, such as accounts in Singapore, opening an embassy in Seychelles and appointing Shiranthi Rajapaksa’s brother as ambassador. According to this Bill all that wealth can be brought to the country and made it legal. Basil Rajapaksa has chosen to liberate the ‘black wealth’ of black people so that even Arjun Mahendran can get his wealth released through this. There is even a suspicion that Basil Rajapaksa has brought this bill to benefit less than 200 such people and that he will get legislature

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The fate of Afghan people amid U.S. withdrawal and Taliban rule



The U.S. military, which invaded Afghanistan on the pretext of destroying terrorism linked to the September attacks, has withdrawn its troops, allowing Taliban terrorists to seize control of the country. The United States withdrew its forces from Afghanistan, not because of opposition from the Afghan people or attacks by the Taliban or any other group. What appears is that they are abandoning Afghanistan. They are leaving Afghanistan fully aware that the Taliban will regain control of the country after their withdrawal from Afghanistan. The United States, which came to destroy Taliban terrorism, says it is leaving the country only after achieving its goals, has allowed the Taliban to gain control of Afghanistan. If so, the purpose of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan may not be to eradicate terrorism, as had stated earlier. So what could have been the purpose of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan?

On the other hand, the question is why the United States would have to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan without strong opposition from within. And is the U.S. leaving Afghanistan without a second plan, allowing it to fall to the Taliban? Is it just an innocent withdrawal of troops?

A country full of resources

Afghanistan is bordered on the west by Iran, south by Pakistan, north by Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and on the northeast by China. Its location, which connects Central Asia with South Asia, has given it great strategic importance. In addition, Afghanistan is rich in petroleum resources, including oil. Afghanistan is rich in minerals, including gold, platinum, silver, copper, iron, chromite, lithium, uranium, and aluminium. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, Afghanistan contains 60 million metric tons of copper, 2.2 billion tons of iron and 1.4 million tons of rare elements.

The strategic importance of location and the abundance of resources have made Afghanistan a battleground instead of making it a developed country. Instead of a peaceful and prosperous country, the Afghan people have inherited only the tragedy of war, famine and despair. Afghanistan overthrows its monarchy and comes under a president's rule due to a coup in 1973. The April Revolution of 1978, led by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, established socialist rule in the country.

However, the Soviet Union had to intervene

in 1979 due to internal conflicts. The U.S. imperialists created Mujahideen terrorists against the Afghan socialist regime. They seized power after the fall of socialist rule in the country in 1992 and after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. The Taliban took control of Afghanistan in 1996, ousting the Mujahideen. Under the Taliban,

Afghanistan became an Islamic state with Sharia law. The United States invaded

Afghanistan in 2001, saying it was to destroy Muslim terrorism, including Al

Qaeda, which they claimed was responsible for the 9/11 attacks. The Taliban have re-established an Islamic state in Afghanistan after the U.S. withdrew from Afghanistan. It is still too early to make a final statement about the Taliban regime and the situation that may develop in the future. Still, it does not rule out the possibility of a brief discussion of what might happen in the future.

International and regional impact

Commenting on the reasons for the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, political commentators, point to two main reasons. The first is the need to reduce U.S. war spending. Due to the growing economic

crisis in the recent past and the tax breaks given to the capitalists, their government revenue has decreased drastically. The second factor is the shift in U.S. war priorities. Currently, the U.S. war priority has shifted to the South China Sea and the Baltic.

The establishment of an Islamic extremist regime led by the Taliban in Afghanistan comes at a time when Islamic extremism is being defeated in international politics. The Taliban's new Islamic extremist regime is likely to give new hope to Islamic extremist groups worldwide. At the same time, Afghanistan is likely to become a centre of ideological, moral and material support for them. The main conflict of U.S. imperialism in international politics at the moment is with China and Russia. Islamic extremist groups are also active in China and Russia, especially in the Uyghur region of China and in Chechnya in Russia, with the blessing of the United States. This situation could lead to an escalation of the conflict. Islamic extremism is likely to grow in Central Asian countries such as Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, where most of the population is Muslim. In addition, the threat posed by Muslim extremism to countries in the South Asian region such as

India, Bangladesh and the Maldives will increase.

With the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan and the return of the Taliban to power, the refugee problem has escalated. It has already been predicted that it will cause severe problems in neighbouring countries and then in Europe. Thus, the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan and the return of the Taliban to

power have opened the door to several social and political crises, such as international and regional politics, as well as civil war situations.

How to defeat this tragedy

The Afghan people are severely affected by the activities of the world imperialist powers and the extremist organizations the imperialists have nurtured and nurtured by Afghans. On the one hand, they have been the victims of decades of war. On the other, they are unable to fulfill even their basic needs and have to live under the control of a terrorist organization without even basic human rights. The perpetrators of this tragedy they have inherited are extremist terrorist organizations and the imperialists who created and nurtured those organizations. However, only the Afghan people can defeat this tragedy and win their freedom and independence. It is very clear that it is something that cannot be made available by other countries or extremist organizations.

Iran: In the midst of covid and sanctions

In August, the death toll from Iran's covid 19 exceeded 100,000. This is the fifth wave of covid spreading in Iran these days. It started in late June with the spread of the Delta variant.

The highest number of covid 19 deaths and the highest number of patients in the Middle East is reported from Iran. Currently, covid 19 has infected 4.5 million people. U.S. sanctions on Iran have severely crippled the country's economy and severely hampered the control of the covid 19 epidemic, including vaccination.

Britain: Environmentalists take to the streets

On August 24, about 50 protesters were arrested during a protest by environmentalists blocking Orkut Square in London. The environmental group called for an immediate end to the burning of fossil fuels. Large-scale wildfires have been reported in Turkey, Greece, Italy, Spain and Canada this summer.

This is due to global warming. Environmentalists say fossil fuel burning is a major cause of global warming.

Meanwhile, Police have arrested dozens of environmental protesters who blocked several junctions on the U.K.'s busiest motorway. The protests aimed at forcing the government to improve home insulation at various chokepoints on the M25 caused long delays for tens of thousands of motorists.

Get ready for a massive protest if the government does not provide relief to the people

Comrade Tilvin Silva
General Secretary of the JVP

The JVP states that the government should withdraw its decision to increase the prices of goods and provide relief to the people suffering for more than a year and a half due to the covid epidemic.

General Secretary of the JVP Comrade Tilvin Silva expressed these views at a media briefing held at the party head office today (10th). He said, "What a government should do is provide relief to the people in an epidemic situation. However, the government has allowed the prices of essential commodities to go up beyond the means of the people. It is challenging for ordinary people to live. Therefore, the people have to force the government to provide relief immediately.

Due to the corona situation, the people cannot make their voices heard. They have to bear

all the hardships imprisoned in their homes. Therefore, we demand the government to reduce the prices of essential food and medicine. The current government came to power with many fairy tales. They bluffed that they knew how to reduce the price of goods and earn money.

However, what kind of government is it if it does not even intervene to control the prices of essential commodities now? They are carrying out all the moves to make profits for business people and not provide relief to the general public. It is a very unfair situation. The government cannot evade responsibility by blaming Corona. It should take the responsibility of not controlling the increase in prices of goods.

The people have to bear the burden of the government

that came to power claiming to provide facilities to the people. That is why the prices of goods go up. The prices of everything from essential foods to soaps, toothpaste and medicines have gone up. There is no stopping the increase. It is why the government should intervene and exercise some control.

Mr Gotabaya Rajapaksa has not been able to control the prices of goods by using his executive power, two-thirds majority and the power passed by the 20th Amendment. In January this year, a litre of coconut oil cost Rs. 480. Now it has increased to 655. Just as they cheated by giving sugar tax concessions, they cheated regarding coconut oil as well. Meanwhile, poisonous coconut oil was imported, and there was a shortage of coconut oil, and the price was increased. No one

knows what happened to the poisonous coconut oil.

Also, dhal that was Rs.180 in January has increased to Rs. 260. President addressing the nation said that dhal would be given for Rs. 65. See how much its price has increased despite the President's promise. Sugar that was Rs. 85 has increased to about Rs. 220. The government bought it from business people who had hoarded sugar. Sugar that was at Rs. 85 has increased to Rs. 130. The prices of all essential food items such as dried chillies, sprats, dry-fish, potatoes, etc. have gone up rapidly.

In addition, a gas shortage has been created, and Permission was granted to increase the price by Rs.363. Oil prices were also increased. However, the income of the people will not increase. The prices of essential medicines also have been allowed to increase. A gazette notification issued on August 19 allowed increasing the price of medicines even more than Keheliya Rambukwella had allowed. It was done by increasing the maximum price beyond the set price.

Meanwhile, in a statement issued by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka on September 09, there is a list named non-emergency and non-essential goods. When importing these goods, it is necessary to pay the full amount to open the letters of credit. Initially, it was possible to pay an advance and pay the total amount after the goods arrived.

Such provisional solutions are used because there is a shortage of foreign exchange. As a result, there is a shortage of goods and the prices of existing goods increase. The list of items listed in this announcement includes essential items such as mobile phones. It has become essential to get an education and to work from home. The list even includes cell phones that children need to have their education at this time.

As a result, there is a shortage, and due to the increase in prices, ordinary people cannot afford to buy them. The list even includes water heaters, which are essential for catching steam in the face of the covid condition. Also, the government has been ridiculed for including things like underwear. The government and those who marched for the government have no problem with clothes. They may be thinking others, like those in the government, are exposing themselves without clothes.

There is no vision, no programme to handle the economy. All means of production are weakened, and a plundering economy is activated. A large number of industries in our country were destroyed or sold. As a result, all avenues of income were blocked, and the country was forced to live in debt. Now there is a situation where even that debt cannot be repaid.

As a result of not generating revenue, it costs more to repay these loans than government revenue. Wrong economic policies have further fueled the printing of money and increased commodity prices. When there is no programme to produce locally, and imports are stopped, there is a shortage of goods, and prices increase drastically.

There is no programme to reduce unnecessary expenses, limit borrowing and increase production. Their policy is doing something to pay for the day. As a result, the problem escalates, and the people suffer greatly. The responsibility of a government is to provide essential consumer goods to the public at reasonable prices. However, several racketeers around the government are allowed to make unlimited profits through sugar tax, coconut oil tax, maximum pricing of drugs and allowing them to trade in antigen kits. Even business people who bring in revenue to the country have fallen to a challenging level and are unable even to open letters of credit.

People are suffering greatly due to not doing anything to control prices even when they can do so. Many honest people who voted for the government have now left the government. All these people should unite, raise their voices, and demand the government provide relief to the people. As the JVP, we call on the people to speak up for controlling the prices of essential commodities.

We continue to pressure the government for it. We must be prepared to carry out massive public protests if the prices of essential commodities are not reduced immediately. Do not impose crises due to the stupid economic policies of the government on the people. It is the government that should start making sacrifices to confront covid.

However, the minister waiting to become the Governor of the Central Bank is making



Stop pleasing the mafia...

From Page 01

and are under curfew, are increasing rapidly with everything essential, including gas prices, fuel prices, bread and bun prices going up. Loss of income revenues, loss of wage increases batter the people. Even the price of a small packet of biscuits increases by about Rs. 19 every week.

Meanwhile, a gazette was issued on August 19, determining the maximum price of drugs. A gazette should be issued stating lower prices than the existing ones. However, what has happened is that even during the covid epidemic, it has become impossible to buy medicine for other diseases. The price is indicated using the generic name, but the drugs are sold at a much higher price under the brand name. However, the prices of the drugs have been increased by the gazette notification itself. Lozatan Potassium 25 mg prescribed for high blood pressure has been increased from Rs. 4 to Rs. 9.62. Also, 50 mg has been increased

from Rs. 7 to Rs. 13.49. Also, 10 mg of atorvastatin taken for cholesterol has been increased from Rs. 4.50 to Rs. 14.60. Also, 20 mg has been increased from Rs. 7.50 to Rs. 23. 500 mg of metformin for diabetes has been increased from Rs. 3.20 to Rs. 5.17. Also, glycoside 80 mg has been increased from Rs. 5 to rs. 14.80. 20 mg of omeprazole for gastritis has been increased from Rs. 4.80 to Rs. 5.89. Also, pantoprazole 30 mg has been increased from Rs. 3.50 to 22.25 and the same 40 mg has been increased from Rs. 4.50 to Rs. 36.65.

We see that the government is taking revenge on the people by increasing the prices of essential commodities and essential medicines. It is how the government has worked to please its cronies. We say the government should give relief to the people instead of appeasing the mafia. Gazette notification should be issued for providing relief.

Pandemic capitalism...

From Page 02

as it surpasses the rate of daily COVID-19 fatalities. The media reports the number of daily infections as the highest number of infections. The same is true of sugar prices as well. A kilo of sugar which used to be Rs.85/- has gone up to Rs.230/-; and it keeps increasing.

The Gotabaya Rajapaksa government first set a maximum retail price for sugar in February by reducing the tax of Rs.50/- to 25 cents. The loss caused by this measure exceeds Rs. 1,500 crores. The loss affects the government and the people. Sathosa had to buy sugar from Wilma, a company that evaded the tax, at a higher rate, and sell it to the public at a controlled price. Sathosa incurred a loss through this. This is also a loss to the government, and it is the public that has to ultimately pay for this. Last week a kilo of sugar was priced at Rs.135/- and at the time of writing this article, it has shot up to Rs.230/- which is a Rs.55/- increase within a week.

When journalists questioned Bandula Gunawardena as to why the controlled price of Rs.85/- was removed, the government's response in April was that there were 90,000 metric tonnes of imported sugar and that since that was sufficient until May 2022, the price would not be increased. However, Bandula Gunawardena and the government has failed to provide any explanation as to why the price of sugar keeps increasing.

Speaking on behalf of the government that did away with the gazette stipulating the controlled price, the Minister of Consumer Affairs provides that even if the price goes up by Rs.100/- there is nothing that can be done. The sugar mafia that took advantage

by paying a tax of 25 cents instead of Rs.50/- for a kilo of sugar is now making a profit of more than Rs.150/- for every kilo. The government continues to protect these racketeers and the people continue to pay exorbitant prices.

A kilo of rice which was Rs.70/- when Gotabaya came to power is now Rs.120/-. A litre of coconut oil which was Rs.300/- at the time is now Rs.600/-. A kilo of mung beans which used to be Rs.400/- has increased threefold and is now Rs.1200/-. A coconut that cost Rs.60/- is now Rs.90/-. A kilo of dhal which was Rs.120/- is now Rs.230/-. A salmon tin has gone up from Rs.135/- to Rs.380/-. Earlier a kilo of vegetables would cost around Rs.150/-, but now you can only purchase about 500g or less for that same amount. Import of turmeric was halted citing the local turmeric plantation sector. It is high time now for locally produced turmeric to enter the market since imports were halted. But to date, 100g of turmeric costs a whopping Rs.1140/-. It is the general public that has to bear the cost of all these commodities, the very people who are prohibited from leaving their homes due to the pandemic. If they step out, they might catch the virus, but if they remain at home, they might die of hunger. The government is operating on the mentality that even if people die, it would be alright so long as the economy is sustained.

The concern for the government is to find a solution to the economic crisis and the debt crisis that they are facing, even by using the pandemic as means for it. The crisis of the people is to find the daily income required to meet the rising cost of living while also

staying safe from the pandemic. These two requirements do not go together. The government says to show up for work unquestioningly. The health sector experts say to stay home unquestioningly. Health regulations must be followed if people want to save themselves. But that does not give a solution to the rising cost of living. If the government stick to the health regulations, they are unable to pay off the debts. Moreover, the continuation of the pandemic gives solutions to several crises of the government. The price of commodities is going up because of the corona. So people should not talk about the rising cost of living. The dollar deficit, the collapse of the rupee, the rise in oil prices, and the rise in drug prices by about 60% are all due to Corona. Corona was spread by the teachers. Therefore, the salary disparity too cannot be resolved. This is how the government use the pandemic to its benefit.

All that remains for the Gotabaya Rajapaksa regime to do now is take out loans, repay them with more loans, and then borrow some more. There is no other economic strategy. Although they snatched people's votes by having them entangled in a fantasy of prosperity, it is clear that they have no solution for the people to the pandemic or the cost of living. The corona pandemic will also become a normal part of the capitalist machinery itself and will be used as another mode of selling goods in the market. Therefore, as a united force, the people must defeat this pandemic as well as the regime that markets it for oppression.

A worthless...

From Page 04

passed for the release of the black money he has earned. The second part of this bill will be applicable till March 21, 2021.

Although the Nation Building Tax, Economic Service Charges and many other old taxes have been accumulated, an opportunity has been created to ignore unpaid taxes. In other words, a tax amnesty will be declared for those who have defaulted paying indirect taxes to the Income Tax Department, and all those taxes will be deducted.

The government, pointing out daily about the covid epidemic, says it has no money to maintain the general services for the people and increase teachers' salaries. When the President told the people to tighten their belts and prepare to make sacrifices, his other brother proposed cutting taxes owed to the government. This shows that instead of being accountable to the general public, the government is only responsible for black traffickers. These people set a high price for the consumer in the competition in the business world, but the tax evader can offer goods and services to their customer at a lower price. There is a serious injustice being done to the businessmen who pay taxes here. Taxes are legally inactivated, and these bills are amended and stimulated not to pay taxes. It is to protect tax evaders. Basil Rajapaksa's tax policy is to protect taxpayers and exalt tax evaders.

This money bill will allow black money to be laundered and tax evaders to be protected. The task of the President and Basil Rajapaksa is to protect black wealth instead of protecting the people from the pandemic. These rulers do not take decisions on behalf of the people of this country. We shall vote against these two bills, and we urge the public to be vigilant about the actions being taken by the government. We urge the public to be vigilant about bills that seek to be passed by Parliament without resorting to transparent measures to control the disaster. The government is doing everything to give black businesspeople privileges while the people are suffering and their loved ones are dying. The President has amassed a number of additional powers to carry out their black agenda. We call on the people to raise their voices against these destructive actions of the rulers. We also invite everyone to intervene to overcome these situations actively.

Get ready for...

From Page 06

arrangements to get his pension in lakhs. The government is serving their plates with large spoons while the people's plates are served with ear-picks. If we want to change the country by making sacrifices, the rulers should set an example. Without doing so, there is no point in telling people to tighten their belts. People are already making sacrifices on all sides.

At the same time, we emphasize that there is no temporary solution to the current crisis, that it cannot be solved by magic. We need to change the wrong economic and political policies pursued in our country. We need to build a productive economy instead of the plundering economy in which a handful of racketeers embezzle public money, depend on the government for that money and subjugate a section of the government.

We need a system that distributes the benefits of that economy democratically and fairly. We also need a political culture that makes public service a voluntary service. Apart from that, we have to change the system that brings one leader instead of another and be determined to bring about a serious socio-economic change. The JVP is the force that the people can trust for that. We ask the people to rally around it. We also ask the government to be prepared to face massive protests if it does not provide relief to the people by bringing down the prices of essential commodities."

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Digging their own grave...

It is less than two years since Nandasena Gotabaya Rajapaksa became President. The Rajapaksa government is just one year old. There is hardly a government in Sri Lanka that has been subjected to so much widespread opposition and ridicule, humiliation and failure in such a short period of time.

The current regime, which used the Easter attack to intimidate the people and incite racism and religious extremism, has begun to be rejected by the very people who voted for it. It is now clear that what Gotabaya Rajapaksas can do in Sri Lanka's backward, capitalist system, which has been in crisis, is to send it into further crisis, not to solve any of its issues.

The people who voted for the government are frustrated, and the government, including the President, is frustrated and angry and can do nothing. The result has been that the government has drawn up 'weapons' of repression and carries out slanders against the people who gave it power.

It has now been proven that the President is an arrogant ruler who knows nothing about government and does not even know that he knows nothing. Accordingly, instead of listening to the just issues of the common people and solving them, instead of seeking the support of 'those who know', the government is now encircled by a lot that is allegiant to the 'royal palace' and is leading the country to ruin.

At the same time, instead of resolving the just demands of the people politically, they are wielding the hand of repression against the forces that struggle and those who criticize the government on the one hand and slander on the other.

Recently, several youths who criticized the government on facebook were arrested several times, interrogated by the CID and attempts were made to intimidate them. Some were arrested and detained. Protesters were also remanded in custody on false charges. Several are still in jail. A young doctor at the Avissawella Hospital was recently visited by the CID when he said that covid patients were dying. The CID had also summoned a youth who had recently held a press conference criticizing the government's conduct regarding the Easter attack. More examples like this show that instead of listening to their critics, the government is trying to intimidate and silence them. The government's attempt to arrest and remand teachers during the teachers' agitation also failed because the judiciary acted in accordance with the country's constitution.

On the other hand, the government continues to use its 'mud force' to sling mud at its opponents and create false news using facebook. Their main target here is the JVP and its leaders. No matter how many complaints were made to the CID, it was all like asking for a revelation from the thief's mother.

Undaunted, the government has used its mudslinging force to attack teachers who are now fighting for their just demands. They were expecting a covid 'Guru pokura' (Teachers cluster), but as it was not actually created, they have started creating and publishing 'covid guru marana' (Teachers' covid deaths) using various females and male pictures. No other examples are needed to show the political bankruptcy of the government. What is the government doing here? The only thing that perceives is that the government is 'insane' at its failure and is attacking the very people who put it in power and is losing their allegiance.

Considering only the process of intimidation and slandering by the government in the teachers' struggle, it seems that what the government is doing is an irreparable mistake. There are over 200,000 principals, teachers and pirivena teachers in Sri Lanka. The ideological impact they can have on society is also massive. On the other hand, most of these teachers voted for Gotabaya Rajapaksa in the last presidential election. The same goes for the general election. The government has set aside ethics and is attacking the same teachers and principals, the majority of whom supported it to come to power. That is the tragedy.

What does this indicate? The government, including the President, which has no solution to the crisis but is full of arrogance and egotism, is now behaving in a way that loses friends, but not in a way that wins friends. Due to this arrogant and egotistic behaviour of the Rajapaksas, the cabinet ministers and other ministers of the government, who raised their hands to the 20th Amendment and gave maximum powers to the President, are disappointed though they remain with the government scolding the Rajapaksas under their breath. Moreover, the statements being made these days show that the Rajapaksas have taught some good lessons to some people who have made it a profession to slander their opponents on behalf of the President.

There is a saying among our people that "Salt is made of water; it also disappears in the water." This is what is happening now. What the government is doing now is digging its own grave. The government now has wielded its 'weapons' of mudslinging and repression not only against its opposition political organizations but also against those who contributed heavily to bring it to power.

It shows that the people and the social group that formed the government will also lead the fight to send the government home in the near future. Those who understand politics should lead that struggle to a real people's victory without allowing it to fall back into a trap of betrayal and deception.

JVP Aids Health Workers Donation of health equipment to hospitals

The JVP has taken steps to provide the necessary medical equipment and essential medicines to the staff of the hospitals where covid patients are being treated.

The equipment was recently distributed to Colombo National Hospital, IDH Hospital, Karapitiya Teaching Hospital, Badulla General Hospital, Kurunegala General Hospital and Nagoda General Hospital.

