

RedPower

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THE CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION FRONT (JVP) - SRI LANKA

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

A series of agitations to get the postponed election Let's fight to win Democracy

"A vast force should be exerted on the government to hold the local government election, which was postponed illegally and fraudulently by Ranil Wickremesinghe," said Comrade Tilvin Silva, General Secretary of the JVP. He emphasized that it was the people's right and declared that a series of agitations would be carried out throughout the country to get the postponed election.

Comrade Tilvin Silva said this in a press conference held at the head office of JVP on the 31st.

He said, "On one hand, the government is destroying the country. Stating they were trying to

find answers to the crisis they created, they knelt at the IMF, submitted to their conditions, and imposed an unbearable burden on the people. On the other, they have started selling the country's national resources. The petrol

sheds are to be sold. On one side, they are selling; on the other, they burden the people and cut benefits.

On the one hand, education and health services are collapsing. Engineers, doctors and intellectuals are leaving the country in large numbers. While all this is happening, Ranil Wickremesinghe has been touring the world, holding discussion conferences like "Nero played his harp while Rome was burning".

Nevertheless, we know

that the economy is in a state of collapse. We have a country where people cannot eat three meals a day, where the prices of goods are increasing daily and where a man has not been able to get the protein, meat and eggs he needs. When the country's people are starving, the country's resources are being sold, and taxes are being imposed on the people, Ranil, who has no feelings for the people, is showing us pandals and having thamashas. The truth is that the country is

in a bottomless abyss.

The false arguments presented by the government for not holding the elections have now collapsed. Due to the indefinite postponement of this election, the government employees with political rights who presented the nominations for the election have suffered a lot. Due to this, many administrative crises have arisen. People need not bear this situation anymore. The limit of tolerance is being exceeded. It is now

necessary to apply force to get the election which is a right of the people immediately. We are ready to rally the people for that and to fight against Ranil Wickremesinghe's rule for people's voting rights. People have the right to fight for democracy.

It is planned to hold a series of peaceful, democratic demonstrations throughout the country from June 8 to get the election. Let us fight together to win suffrage and democracy."



Mihinthale NPP Electoral Convention

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

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Political monkey business

The Rajapaksas, who took a step back in search of their safety in the face of the massive public protest that erupted last year, appointed Ranil Wickramasinghe to the post of President, which was vacated by the resignation of Gotabaya, merely as a political tool they could use. Because Ranil had no public or parliamentary power, the Rajapaksas thought they could lead Ranil as they wanted, thinking that Ranil would not be a challenge for them.

Nevertheless, what has happened now is that instead of the dog wagging the tail, the tail is wagging the dog. Almost two-thirds of the Rajapaksa's parliamentary power has been turned into a monkey dance by Ranil with the cane of Presidential Executive power.

Without the majority power of the Parliament, it will not be easy for the Executive President to work no matter how many powers he has. Everyone must remember the helplessness of Chandrika's presidency in 2002 when Ranil became Prime Minister and formed the United National Party government.

At the Parliamentary vote to show going to IMF was ,correct the Rajapaksa group raised their hands on behalf of Ranil and expressed their support for the vote. However, earlier, they always appeared as patriots, anti-imperialists, and opposed to IMF. However, now, with Ranil as president, the government of the Rajapaksas has started to dance according to Ranil's command.

When heavy taxes were imposed on the people on a proposal by the IMF, The Rajapaksa movement gave its approval. However, in 2019, the Rajapaksas campaigned that Ranil would sell the country, and when they came to power, they would stop the sale and take back everything that was sold. Now, they raise their hands and support Ranil's proposals to sell the country's valuable resources.

An agreement was signed recently to hand over 150 fuel filling stations to the Chinese company as the first step in giving the fuel distribution process to three Australian, American and Chinese companies. Despite fuel distribution being related to Sri Lanka's national security, Rajapaksas, who had said that they would take back the Hambantota port that Ranil had leased to China, did nothing to stop the deal.

Today, the Rajapaksa gang is faced with the most tragic fate in history. Now, the Rajapaksas don't have the charisma they once had. The second tier group of ministers is closer to Ranil than to Mahinda. That is for ministerial privileges. The bud is coming off. The Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna has become leaderless and scattered. That is why they have to hide behind Ranil.

If necessary, the Rajapaksa regime has not lost the ability (parliamentary power) to remove Ranil Wickramasinghe through impeachment. Nevertheless, there is doubt whether they could gather all the people in Pothuttu to get the necessary majority. That is because the bud has already split.

On the other hand, if Ranil is removed, there is no one who will favour Rajapaksas and also will not be opposed by the people. Therefore, they have to stay with Ranil's help for some time.

Also, Ranil now has the power to dissolve the Parliament if needed. By showing that power, he is now inadvertently threatening the Rajapaksa gang. He had recently said that he would have to dissolve the Parliament if he was obstructed. The group of Pohottu MPs in this Parliament is mortally afraid of a dissolution of the Parliament.

That is because they cannot win the seats again. On the other hand, some people do not get the MP pension if the Parliament is dissolved before its term (five years). Therefore, now the Rajapaksa movement in Parliament has become a hostage of Ranil.

What should have happened was that Ranil Wickramasinghe, who has only one member of the Parliament, should have become a hostage of the Rajapaksa gang. However, what has happened now is that they have become Ranil's hostages. This is how all the ironies of history have been turned upside down.

World history has taught that when the social system goes into crisis, and the ruling class also goes into crisis, the people's power is organized against them, and when it becomes a strong force, the ruling classes have to behave like this for the survival of their class and clan. This is what is seen in Sri Lanka today.

This shows that the old regime is becoming obsolete, they can no longer control the country in the old way, and the conditions are rapidly maturing for the birth of a new society.

Workers in France denounce pension reforms



Nationwide strikes and protests against the French government's pension reform in Paris. In recent history, the wave of strikes in France was the largest nationwide strike against reforms to raise the retirement age for workers from 62 to 64. The demonstrators denounced French President Emmanuel Macron's unpopular pension reform, but Macron says the reform is necessary for the future of France. President Macron used the antidemocratic

Article 49.3 of the French constitution to push through his pension reform, signifying a new level of his Bonapartist attempts to advance this agenda, one that is being denounced in the streets and rejected by the majority of the French population. It led to a new stage of radicalisation in the struggle, which reflects the multiplication of spontaneous mobilisations, strikes in strategic sectors, blockades of major roadways, occupations of high schools and universities, and intense

confrontations with the police. Over one million people marched through cities across the country on May 1. Unions say that while they will respect the Constitutional Council's decision on passing the pension reform as a law, they will continue protests to get Macron to withdraw the measure. The reform, which Macron signed into law last month despite weeks of protests and strikes, has crystallized discontent against a president perceived by many in France. Opinion polls show that a substantial majority of French people oppose the higher retirement age. Police clashed with hundreds of demonstrators in Paris and other cities during May Day union-led protests against the pension reform.

The French Constitutional Council will review a new bid by the opposition to organise a citizens' referendum on pension reform. Macron's centrist Renaissance group and their allies do not have an absolute majority in parliament but are still the biggest force.

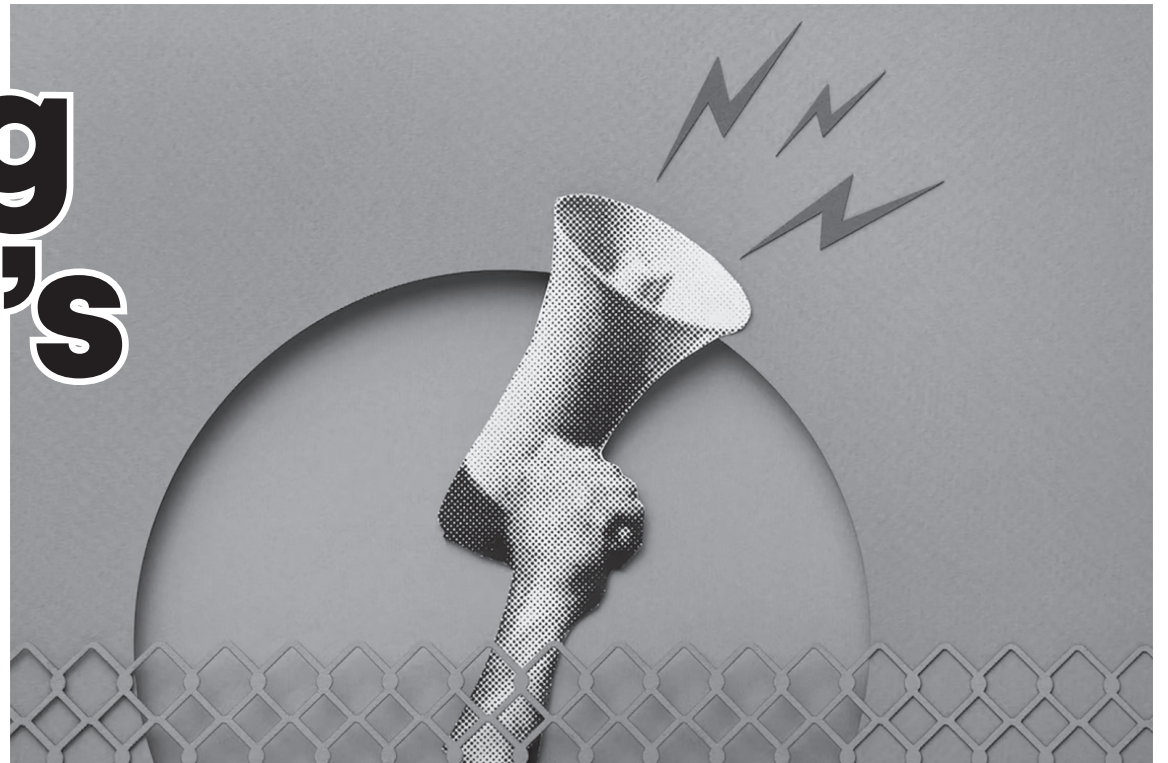
Workers in Italy denounce Meloni's economic policies

Meanwhile, in Italy, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni also faced demonstrations from labour unions who called on her government to increase wages and reform the country's tax policy. Meloni's government unveiled a labour package amid the recent protests, rolling back anti-poverty subsidies introduced four years ago. Cadres from various political groups, including the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC) also participated and expressed solidarity with workers. Around 40,000 people participated in the demonstration. Another protest took place in Bologna on May 6, and major mobilization was held in Naples on

May 20. The working class in Italy, severely hit by the COVID-19 crisis, is also facing a cost-of-living crisis marked by high inflation rates (8.1% in March 2023).

Meanwhile, the Meloni-led government has resorted to anti-worker and anti-union policies and prioritised the war efforts in Ukraine. Progressive sections and anti-fascist groups in the country have criticized the recent visit of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to Italy and his meeting with the Pope, Italian President Sergio Mattarella, and Meloni to ensure Italian support to Ukraine's war efforts.

Changing Sri Lanka's Politics



Sri Lanka's economy and politics are currently in a severe crisis. As the aggravated economic crisis calls for a new economic strategy for the country, the crisis itself calls for a new qualitative change in the existing rotten politics.

Even now, a change is taking place that can turn the politics of Sri Lanka upside down. Sri Lankan voters have left the traditional major capitalist political parties they have been tied to. They rapidly turn to the National People's Power (NPP), a left-wing progressive mass movement. Ranil Wickramasingha and his supporters had to postpone the local government election indefinitely because of the fear of this change.

Various political survey reports conducted by various institutions in Sri Lanka over the past few months have shown that Comrade Anura Dissanayake has won the public trust over all parties and other leaders. It is very clear that the challenge posed to the traditional capitalist political power cycle with elite leadership is huge.

Indeed, there has been a significant quality change in the politics of Sri Lanka. A new situation has developed which has never existed in politics. Class politics is coming to the fore, surpassing the party politics that existed so far. The dividing line of society was once centred on two big parties of the same class. However, the political dividing line now has been marked with all capitalist reactionary parties on one side and the left progressive camp on the other. People who were concentrated around the capitalist political

parties in the past are now gathering around the left progressive force. For the first time in Sri Lanka's political history, a left-wing progressive force has come into the dialogue regarding gaining power. So this is a new state of politics from any angle; A leap in quality.

This situation grew in quantity for a while. It came to a qualitative point because of the failure of Gotabaya, who came to power with massive expectations of the people, the huge collapse of the economy, and the enormous public uprising against the government which did not create the change people expected, and the formation of the National People's Power as a force that wins the people's trust.

In this new political situation, the traditional capitalist parties, as well as all the reactionary counter-revolutionary forces, have gone into a crisis of their existence. They have also started adopting various tactics and various measures for their survival.

Ranil Wickramasinghe's and Mahinda Rajapaksa's cliques, which played as political enemies for a while, had to rule the country together, and many MPs and Ministers in Pohottuwa praised Ranil's leadership. The idea emerging from the ruling groups that all parties should unite for survival indicates the threat of extinction their class is now facing.

In addition to this, the existence of reactionary, opportunistic people who have always joined a major capitalist party, become part of the ruling power and obtained political privileges has also been challenged

by this crisis. Fleas always wanted a new dog, but now there is a situation where fleas do not have one.

This political upheaval has forced small, individual-centric groups to remove their outdated naming

are dreaming of joining one political camp and are working towards it. That is to preserve their existence, which is about to be wiped out, and to delay the coming to power of the left-wing progressive camp led by the

National People's Power.

The class division in politics has become so severe that they can no longer hide their true faces. All the reactionaries now have to accept that their 'common enemy' is the JVP and the National People's Power. It is why everyone is separately and also together attacking the JVP and the NPP.

These conditions create the

necessary factors for social transformation in Sri Lanka. No one can perform extensive social transformation according to his will and ambition. That is the lesson that history has taught us. A social transformation is the result of massive public action. Such a situation cannot be artificially created, nor can it be stopped once created.

People must rally with determination for social transformation. They should think differently and make different political decisions. For that, the people should

learn from politics and its experiences. That is what is happening now. It doesn't always happen.

People not being able to live in the old way and rulers not being able to rule in the old way are the main factors needed in social transformation. The factors that should prevail before a transformation are when the means of production under the capitalist system are no longer effective, the capitalist class does not have solutions to the capitalist economic crisis, the people are severely affected by the crisis, the people have the will and determination to change the existing situation, the ruling groups are weakened and disintegrated, and the people's trust on them is lost.

Among all that, it is also essential to have a political movement that is capable, mature, has won the public's trust and can gather the oppressed people and lead them to a social transformation.

The above factors are developing rapidly in Sri Lankan politics. This situation is developing sometimes speedily, sometimes slowly, sometimes with rapid dynamics and sometimes with a temporary pause. According to this situation, Sri Lankan politics is in a transitional phase. That is the truth. The task of the forces that want a profound change in society should be to understand this change that is taking place and consciously intervene in it.

Now all of them have put aside their false enmities and small differences and are dreaming of joining one political camp and are working towards it. That is to preserve their existence, which is about to be wiped out, and to delay the coming to power of the left-wing progressive camp led by the NPP.

wrappers and wrap them in new wrappers to adopt a 'new look'. Even though the 'package' is new, the "political consumer" understands it contains the same old goods. Moreover, politics has changed to such an extent that the small far-left gangs who refused to have any connection with capitalist parties and played the roles of the 'super clean' left wanted to form alternative interim governments under the leadership of Sajith.

Now all of them have put aside their false enmities and small differences and

The 2.9 billion dollar extended credit facility given to Sri Lanka by the International Monetary Fund is now coming to an end. Instead, the topic has now become debt restructuring and domestic debt restructuring.

It is now clear to everyone that IMF hastily intervened not as a move to support rescuing the country's economy from debt but to give legitimacy to Ranil Wickramasinghe's unethical presidential appointment, help suppress the people's opposition to the illegal and undemocratic action of postponing the local government elections that were scheduled to be held and to keep the illegal government's power intact. Raising taxes without opposition and implementing the legal and operational plan to sell public property is a part of this programme. Above all, the topic that has come forward now is debt restructuring.

What is debt restructuring?

By the end of 2022, Sri Lanka's total debt was US\$ 83,595 million (Rs. Bn 30,355). Of that, US\$ 41,474 million was foreign debt and US\$ 42,151 million was domestic debt. Sri Lanka was officially declared a debt-insolvent state on April 12, 2022, when the government announced that it could no longer pay this debt.

According to the alternative programme to recover from the crisis presented by the IMF in providing a debt relief of 2.9 billion dollars, the government should provide a debt relief of 14 billion dollars from the foreign debts to be paid. The government calls it debt restructuring. Under this restructuring, either a debt write-off, a loan maturity deferment, a coupon adjustment, or a combination of all three forms. For that, the government of Sri Lanka should reach an agreement with the creditors.

Official bilateral creditors account for \$11 billion (\$11,419 million) of external debt. Meanwhile, Sri Lanka owes \$ 4.7 billion to the Paris Club aid group. The main creditor is Japan, with \$ 2.8 billion. Among the non-Paris group countries, the main country is China. That amount is \$ 4.4 billion, and Sri Lanka

owes \$ 1.8 billion to India. Under the debt restructuring, Sri Lanka should come to an agreement with Japan, China and India to postpone the payment of any afore mentioned debt in the foreign bilateral debt restructuring.

According to the debt settlement and collection plan to be completed in 2023 and according to the plan presented by the IMF, the gross foreign financing requirement in 2023 to get a solution to the government's crisis is \$ 6.6 billion (US\$ 6636 million). Of which \$ 2109 million should be obtained from foreign countries or multilateral institutions this year. Another \$ 950 million should be obtained by foreign institutions, and the private sector is also expected to provide \$ 900 million. The deficit of \$ 4939 million after financing in all those ways will be met through alternative financing methods. Of which \$ 663 million is provided by the IMF. It is the \$ 2.9 billion, which is the relevant part of the year 2023 for the extended credit amount. The International Monetary Fund is going to provide another \$900 million.

For the foreign financial deficit that will arise after that, the government will have to provide a loan relief under the debt restructuring of \$ 3.3 billion (\$ 3376 million); this amount is normalized as the write-off of foreign debt. When the financial fund gives a loan of \$ 2.9 billion under the interest basis in 04 years, we as a country should agree with the creditors who have given loans and get these

concessions in the form of 3.3 billion, 3.6 billion, 2.2 billion etc. annually until 2028. Failure of the government to carry out that restructuring means that the foreign financial deficit will be transferred to the next year. The crisis will add to the deficit next year.

Domestic credit optimization

When the government got the loan from the financial fund approved, the emphasis was on restructuring the foreign debt to the country and the people, not on the government's domestic debt. But the main issue that has emerged now is that in order to get relief for foreign loans, the heads of the financial fund have imposed conditions that the domestic debt should be recapitalized as a prerequisite.

According to the Financial Fund's report on the government's domestic debt, the amount is \$ 42 billion or Rs. 15,595 billion. Out of which, Rs. 13,817 billion in loans taken by the government from local currency units and Rs. 1478 billion is taken from foreign monetary units. The amount obtained by the issuance of treasury bills as local financial unit loans is Rs. 4126 billion, and the amount provided by treasury bonds is Rs. 8722 billion. 709 billion has been procured as bank loans.

There are several ways in which loans can be obtained through the above treasury bill issue. The main one is that the government issues treasury bills and obtains a loan from the central bank. Then what

happens is that the central bank records those treasury bills as an asset in the accounts, re-moulds the money and gives a loan to the government. Now the government can write off the debt obtained through the treasury bills under debt optimization without paying the central bank.

Nevertheless, if the government has taken loans from the EPF, the right of the government to cut them off is questionable! When the government obtains a new loan from the central bank, it is an asset to the central bank and a liability to the treasury. The government's liability can be offset by removing the central bank's assets. That amount can be cut off from both sides, and the debt can be shown as a lesser amount.

But the money in the EPF belongs to the working people of this country. That money does not belong to the central bank or the government treasury. The central bank is the custodian of the EPF, not the owner. The EPF has invested in treasury bonds or bills so that the interest income received is distributed to the 2.6 million members who are the beneficiaries of the fund.

As of 31.12.2021, Rs. 2957 billion from the EPF money had been invested as lending to the government. These investments included 467 billion rupees in the Employees' Trust Fund and 220 billion rupees in the Sri Lanka Insurance Fund.

Also, the Bank of Ceylon is the main state-owned bank that has lent Rs. 1566 million

to the government, while the National Savings Bank has lent Rs. 961 billion and the People's Bank Rs. 906 billion to the government. 79% (Rs. 10,112 million) of the central bank's local loan stock of approximately Rs. 13,000 million consists of the number of loans provided through the funds, including the Employee Provident Fund and investments in local state bank government treasury bills and bonds. If the debt or the interest income payable by the government is cut under the government's debt optimization, the loss will be borne directly by the beneficiaries, the employees and the public, who are the depositors of the banks.

As such, it is not the people who stole and defaulted on loans that suffer from the government's proposal to cut debt but the general public.

This is how many proposals presented by the International Monetary Fund as solutions to Sri Lanka's crisis have started many new crises instead of a solution. The sale of national resources as well as the new crisis regarding the abolition of provident funds, are new crises created by the debt solutions of the International Monetary Fund.

Therefore, the people cannot have confidence that the IMF or the government will recover even an iota of the current crisis except creating new crises for the people. They do everything to protect the capitalist ruling class.



IMF trap

Is debt restructuring the solution or the problem?

Tragedy Strikes Sri Lanka's Seas: Xpress Pearl Disaster Raises Concerns Over Accountability and Compensation

The sinking of the Xpress Pearl ship in Sri Lankan waters, carrying hazardous cargo, has led to the world's most enormous recorded chemical ocean pollution. This catastrophe has caused extensive damage to seaweeds, marine species, beaches, and the atmosphere, devastating the ocean ecosystem that will persist for generations. The sheer scale of the damage makes it impossible to quantify in monetary terms alone.

Sadly, Sri Lanka has experienced numerous tragedies, often followed by politically motivated fraud and crimes. The 2004 tsunami, which claimed over 35,000 lives

and caused widespread destruction, was marred by embezzlement of Tsunami funds. Similarly, the 30-year civil unrest in the North and East of the country resulted in a loss of lives and billions in property damage, followed by fraud in relation to military aircraft and weapon deals.

The recent Covid-19 pandemic has provided yet another opportunity for politically motivated individuals to exploit the situation for personal gain. Billions of rupees have been misappropriated through questionable practices such as importing antigen test kits, procuring sanitisers, and allocating quarantine

centres and hotels. The country's bankruptcy last year led to fuel and gas shortages, limited electricity supply, and a scarcity of essential goods. Allegations of fraud in coal imports and soliciting commissions from petroleum tenders have further deepened the crisis. The healthcare system is partially paralysed, and the unchecked importation of unregulated drugs continues to be a lucrative business for corrupt politicians. The Xpress Pearl disaster has become another avenue for such individuals to engage in corruption.

During recent parliamentary debates on the Xpress Pearl disaster, the focus

was primarily on the potential compensation amount, disregarding the immeasurable damage inflicted on the ocean. However, the loss incurred cannot be adequately measured in terms of mere dollars or rupees due to the colossal scale of the devastation.

The State Minister responsible for the matter raised concerns about potential delays in the lawsuit, the adequacy of the investigations conducted, the thoroughness of beach examinations, and the possibility of undue influence to prolong the process. These suspicions were strongly supported by Minister

of Justice Dr Wijedasa Rajapaksha, who publicly mentioned an alleged bribe of USD 250 million, revealing the account number and owner where the money was purportedly deposited. Such disclosures further fueled existing suspicions. The ministers themselves accusing each other further justify the belief that manipulation has occurred and the culprits are within the parliament. It is crucial to identify how this fraud occurred and who bears responsibility.

The country is facing bankruptcy, and many wonder if the compensation amount will be sufficient to alleviate the economic difficulties. Nonetheless, it could have provided some assistance in mitigating the problem. The politicians and officials responsible for this catastrophe display no concern for the destruction inflicted upon the ocean and the environment. Instead, they have shamelessly exploited this tragedy to embezzle money. The people of this country must reject such kleptocracy.

Despite the gravity of the situation, authorities have allowed salvage teams to remove the ship from the Sri Lankan maritime boundary, even though it capsized within the country's jurisdiction. Even in

minor road accidents, vehicles cannot move away without proper inspection by insurance or the police. The massive destruction of the Sri Lankan sea ecosystem occurred due to the Xpress Pearl, and yet certain authorities permitted the ship's removal, raises questions about those who issued such orders. If this removal affects the claim for compensation, it becomes even more important to investigate. Some experts entrusted with compiling a report on the accident stated that containers with poisonous chemicals were burnt, but the fuel tanks were not. However, these experts were denied access to the ship for a thorough investigation, and salvage teams prevented them from approaching the accident site beyond a 500-meter radius.

Given the available evidence, it is the government's responsibility to address all doubts surrounding this disaster. There are suspicions that the sinking of the ship in Sri Lankan waters may have been a deliberate act orchestrated by fraudsters. It is also concerning that not all containers were burnt, and a comprehensive investigation is needed to assess the potential harm caused by the

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US Hegemony Challenged

Significant changes were taking place which would affect the arena of the power equilibrium of the world during the past few months. One of them is Saudi Arabia establishing diplomatic relations with the main anti-US countries, namely Iran and Syria.

On 10th March 2023, Iran and Saudi Arabia signed a special treaty with China, acting as mediators. Here it was agreed to recommence diplomatic relations that were stopped about seven years ago between Iran and Saudi Arabia and to reopen the diplomatic

missions within two months. The point of view of the unbiased analysts is that this step would pave the way to promote political stability, diffuse tensions, and establish peace in the region. The General Secretary of the UN, Antonio Guterres has highly commended China, Oman and Iran for taking the initiative to intervene in this matter. In addition, the other countries of the region, namely UAE, Qatar, Lebanon, and Bahrain have expressed satisfaction with these happenings.

In the meantime, on 20th March, Saudi Arabia

decided to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) which China and Russia head. King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and his cabinet have taken this decision. Accordingly, Saudi Arabia would be the third country to join the said organization. Before this, Egypt and Qatar became members.

The Shanghai cooperation organization was established under the leadership of Russia by joining Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Subsequently, India and Pakistan became members. By the end of



this year, Iran has agreed to obtain membership. Apart from this, Saudi Arabia has agreed to become a member of this organization at the next meeting. Israel and Saudi Arabia were the only Middle Eastern countries that intervened on behalf of American interests. Nevertheless, it is clear from these incidents how at the moment, Saudi Arabia is aligned with the Anti-American group.

members of BRICS, record a population of 40% of that of the world, while the economies of those countries are 25% of the GNP of the world. Apart from this, the BRICS organization is expanding in the future as BRICS Plus. Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Algeria, UAE, Mexico, Argentina and Nigeria are tipped to join.

US Hegemony is Being Challenged

It is now established that the US dollar's status as a global reserve currency is eroding. When corporate Western media begins to attack the world's de-dollarization narrative in earnest, you know the panic in Washington has fully set in. The numbers: the dollar share of global reserves was 73 per cent in 2001, 55 per cent in 2021, and 47 per cent in 2022. The key takeaway is that last year, the dollar share slid 10 times faster than the average in the past two decades.

Now, it is far-fetched to project a global dollar share of only 30 per cent by the end of 2024, coinciding with the next US presidential election.

In the meantime, in 2018, the US imposed economic sanctions on Iran. When the Ukraine war erupted, they imposed sanctions on Russia in 2014 after the annexation of Crimea. They also strengthened comprehensive sanctions after the Ukraine war and confiscated 300Usd Billion worth of Russian sovereign assets. As a result, new exchange

The Progress of the BRICS Organization

In August this year, at the next convention of the BRICS Organization, they are preparing to introduce a new currency against the hegemony of the USA. In the initial stage, bilateral business among the member countries is to be conducted using the countries' currency, and in the second stage, a digital monetary unit or a new currency will be introduced.

The new monetary unit which will be introduced in the future, instead of strengthening either the dollar or the Euro, or getting affiliated with either of them, might be affiliated with precious metals. On 29th March, the world's second-biggest economy China, and the largest economy in Latin America, Brazil, decided to use the Chinese Yuan and Brazil Riyal when conducting business with each other. Even now, the Chinese Yuan is the third largest reserve in Brazil.

Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa, which are

China to build new modern socialist Tibet



Chinese President Xi Jinping has called for continued efforts to build a "new modern socialist" Tibet "that is united, prosperous, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful." Xi spoke at the two-day seventh Central Symposium on Tibet Work, which ended in Beijing on Aug. 29.

Xi has stated. "Some Western governments and politicians have long been inciting anti-China separatist activities, with the malicious intent of fanning up instability in the region and using Tibet as a bargaining chip

for their political gain,"

He has said that the Communist Party of China's conceptions of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" and regional ethnic autonomy must be upheld in Tibet. "Tibetan Buddhism should be guided in adapting to the socialist society and should be developed in this context."

However, certain international movements have demanded Tibet's independence from China, which liberated the region from feudalism in 1950. The U.S. has imposed travel bans on some Chinese

officials it accuses of restricting foreigners' access to Tibet. The U.S. insists that it supports "meaningful autonomy" for the region.

Also, many so-called Tibetan independence campaigners want Dalai Lama, who fled in 1959 following a failed CIA-backed uprising and has been living in India ever since to return to Tibet. But China has successfully resisted reactionary separatist movements, bringing significant social and economic progress to the autonomous region which was languishing in medieval conditions at the time of the 1949 revolution. Today Tibet has been vastly developed. In 2018, the region's GDP was 147.76 billion yuan (\$21.11 billion USD), about 192 times the 1959 figure of 174 million yuan, calculated at comparable prices. The region's GDP reached nearly 170 billion yuan in 2019. Tibet has basically eradicated absolute poverty.

Tragedy Strikes SL's Seas

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chemicals within the capsized containers to the ocean. More than claiming compensation, it is crucial to investigate any violations of environmental protection laws and relevant sections of the penal code, including sections 273, 278, and 279. It is disconcerting that the authorities have not sued the ship owners, giving rise to suspicions that they are trying to protect the culprits.

Despite numerous requests from civil organizations, relevant authorities, and the State Minister of Urban Development, who oversees this subject, the case has been filed in a court in Singapore, raising suspicions about the motive behind this choice instead of conducting

proceedings in Sri Lanka.

The insurer of the Xpress Pearl ship has already obtained a court order from a UK court, setting the maximum cap of insurance claims for accidents like this at USD 26 million. Despite one and a half years since the judgment, the Attorney General's Department in Sri Lanka has not intervened. These matters warrant serious consideration, particularly in light of allegations of corruption involving specific individuals.

Undeniably, undue intervention, delays, and deliberate actions by various influential individuals have hindered the country's claim for the estimated interim compensation of USD 6.4 billion. It is truly disheartening

that the Minister of Justice, Dr Wijedasa Rajapaksa, referred to those who stood against this catastrophe as traitors. At the same time, those who supported the perpetrators were hailed as patriots. In Sri Lanka, many political fraudsters often hide behind the facade of patriotism.

In conclusion, the Xpress Pearl disaster represents a tragic event of immense ecological significance. It is essential to hold those responsible accountable and ensure a transparent investigation. The compensation amount, although inadequate, must be pursued for the betterment of the affected communities and the preservation of Sri Lanka's precious marine ecosystem.

US Hegemony...

From Page 06

systems were introduced by Russia and China. The SPFS is the Russian international banking payment system that started in 2014, and CIPS was introduced by China in 2015.

Although China and Russia are working on homegrown alternatives to the SWIFT payment system, the USA threatened to evict China from the SWIFT system if this came into effect. Anyhow China and Russia have commenced using their own currencies for their transactions. Currently, the Chinese Yuan is being used for 7% of the trade transactions of the world, and it is now the fifth largest foreign reserve and third largest currency unit used in various transactions.

Recently while French President Macron was touring China, he stated that Europe should lessen their dependence on the USA. Europe should avoid meddling in problems that were not theirs and maintain strategic independence to avoid problems that hamper their sovereignty.

He also said they should avoid the conflict between

China and the USA regarding Taiwan. This statement of Macron highlights the developing conflict between the USA and Europe. At this point, the organizations such as IMF and WB, which are serving economic supremacy, are being overpowered, and a new banking system is emerging. One is the BRICS banking system, and the other is the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. All these incidents are factors towards an emerging change of power balance. The USA, a dominant power to date, now has its superpower hegemony challenged.

Opinion

We are experiencing a tectonic shift in the global political structure, which has been shaping since the end of the classical capitalist stage and the emergence of the imperialist stage of capitalism (since the 1870s !). Imperialism is a global system; it is not a country, particularly the USA. Yes, the US, as the core political centre of imperialism, has influenced the present design of

the imperialist political structure heavily. Due to the fierce competition among monopolies due to the enhanced contradiction between the development of productive forces and outdated productive relations, there will be many changes in the political sphere of the world. It will give some favourable short period, politically, not economically, for the socialist countries and left movements to thrive and enhance their political power, which has always been disturbed by US lead imperialist apparatuses. At the same time, we believe that the decline of US imperialism only will not bring peace or development to the world's people. Because the above changes in the political sphere do not change the capitalist-imperialist economic structure. It looks like imperialism is changing its old guard with new ones. We believe these changes will need another decade or two to be completed. The world left movement must use this political opportunity wisely and effectively.



UK workers strike

In the UK, over 500,000 state sector workers, including railway workers, nurses, teachers, and university academia, protested the rising cost of living. In the private sector, the strikes have achieved some important victories. For example, in mid-February, bus drivers in London lifted their strike after winning a record-breaking 18 per cent salary increase. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Thatcher-based strike-breaking operations are being implemented across the country. More recently, Sunak has tried to reach separate agreements with different unions. As a result, the series of strikes in the public sector has

acquired a more political dash in open confrontation with the government.

National Education Union (NEU) called the strike, where more than 300,000 teachers were on strike at 23,000 schools. 51.7 per cent of state-funded schools were partially closed or closed. Strikes also closed all 150 universities due to action by 70,000 lecturers who are members of the University and College Union. Also striking were 100,000 civil servants and Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) members. Rail travel was severely affected, with only a third of services operating across the network.

Mega-strike in Germany



The increasing cost of living and inflation in Germany leads to strikes in many sectors such as schools, ports and hospitals. On March 27, transport sector workers managed to paralyse most parts of the country. Two major transport unions in Germany Veri and EVG initiated the strike demanding a salary hike. Verdi represents about 2.5 million public sector employees, while EVG represents 230,000 workers on the railways and at bus companies. Verdi is demanding a 10.5%

rise in monthly salaries, and EVG is seeking a 12% rise for its members. Planes remained grounded at every big German international airport except for Berlin's Brandenburg airport, where inner-European flights took off with minor delays.

With inflation hitting 8.7% in February, various working-class sectors in Germany have been severely affected. Persistent inflation has helped push Germany into recession in the

year's first three months.

These strike processes have been marked by the new economic and political conditions opened in Europe after the pandemic, rising inflation, and the war in Ukraine. The governments of the main European powers have increased their military budgets and the war offensive through NATO while keeping aside people's issues. Meanwhile, their respective internal sectors have begun to crack and show important contradictions. This indicates an uneven class struggle in Europe once again. Faced with the rapid deterioration of living conditions and the Bonapartist activities of their respective governments accompanied by imperialist old fashion theories, workers and youth sectors are becoming more radicalised, while broad sectors of the working class are beginning to awaken, giving optimistic message to the world.

We are gathering massive people's power with discipline, an objective and a vision

Comrade Tilvin Silva, General Secretary of the JVP



JVP & NPP Leader AKD meets Ambassador of France



JVP UK Committee Joins May Day celebrations in the UK



Meets International Representatives in Cuba



Discussing Student issues...



Meets Leader of the Communist Party in Nepal



Participating in a Trade Union Summit in Kerala



Comrade Tilvin Silva, General Secretary of the JVP, says, "We are gathering a massive force of people working with an objective, disciplined and a vision as a political movement. He said that power is in front of the May Day platform and added that it is not a power that can be changed by postponing a small election. He said if anyone thinks they could do so is a bad mistake.

Comrade Tilvin Silva said this while addressing the JVP Red May Rally on May 1st. Addressing the massive crowd, he said, "Now we have to record our victory officially. We have a significant role to play in achieving that. In

a world like this, in a plundering open economy, in a neo-liberal system, we all have accomplished the challenging task of building such a force amid difficult conditions, even while the enemy was directing their mass media and distorting the minds of the people while carrying out mudslinging campaigns against the JVP, NPP and its leaders. Left movements in many countries have not been able to reach this state. Even though capitalism has declined and crises have increased, many countries in the world have not been able to reach such a point. Nevertheless, we have been able to put all the capitalist groups in one place and challenge all the ruling groups. Tomorrow, our movement can be accepted as a model movement worldwide.

We need to take this power together with the people. For that, we need a massive mass

movement, mass power. We need to expand this movement so much that we can defeat the enemy groups and take power into our hands. We must defeat these groups and establish a people's government. There is no point in forming a people's government if we cannot salvage the country. We need to join hands with that government to recover the fallen country. We know that nation-building is not an easy task. We need determined people to salvage a fallen country where its production lines have been destroyed, where people's spirit has been broken, and its natural resources have been wasted.

There was a Russian saying that Comrade Rohana Wijeweera used to say. "It is easy for anyone to give good for good. Nevertheless, courageous people have the ability to replace bad things with good things." We must build a good country instead of a destroyed and lousy one. For that, we need determined, creative and courageous people."

Working women and men are on the threshold of a new social transformation

Comrade Samanmalee Gunasinghe
National Organizer of the Socialist Women's Union



Despite having a thousand duties, everyone has come from far and wide to celebrate

working people's Day. They carry the Red flag with courage to celebrate that day and have come together with a new hope. Meanwhile, the five thieves who have ruled the country are holding joint rallies. I don't like to call them May rallies. It is an insult to the working people. All the thieves get together and hold rallies. To stop the political culture of lying and stealing, our country's working women and men are standing on the threshold of a new transformation.

Working women have no cultural life, no life. A woman who protects the family carries a load of work and contributes to the economy to keep society alive. Therefore, having our struggle only in the kitchen is not right. Housewives and working women have taken to the streets with one voice to contribute to the struggle for social transformation. Today's plate is filled with taxes instead of a grain of rice. The needs of schoolchildren are filled with taxes so much that their parents cannot provide for them. It does not matter if women work. In addition to the pressure at home, they are under such severe pressure that they cannot survive at work. All we have done all along is maintain the capitalist rulers. For 75 years, the women of our country have been bearing economic and social pressure at home. Therefore, with a change of attitude, they have come forward with the red flag to fight from the front.

If a society is to change, the majority of people in that country must be prepared for it. They must be prepared and organized and must struggle. To win our rights, in all factories, farms, and institutions, all people should join the united fight against injustice. Women have a unique role in giving life and adding new hope in that battle. More sacrifices should be made than today. They need to be more organized. The Socialist Women's Union is ready to lead those women. Let us resolve on this May Day that we all have the strength and courage to come together and achieve victory for all.

JVP is the driving force to unite all the people

Comrade Ramalingam Chandrasekhar
Central Committee member of the JVP



There is an economic crisis in the country. As a result, various social crises have emerged. All the people are trying to get out of those

crises. We must come out of this crisis. It has become the aspiration of the entire people without distinction between north, east, west, south and central mountains. The rulers who ruled this country for 75 years destroyed the country, created divisions between nations and destroyed religious harmony, but failed to build a good country. They did not try to build such a land. Therefore, the future of the entire country has become questionable.

We need to salvage this country from the curse of 75 years. For that, a change should be made. Only the JVP can bring about that change. The JVP is the driving force to unite all the people. Therefore, this is the proud May Day of the JVP.

Therefore, the only May Day rally held in Colombo for the working people is the JVP's Red May Day rally. The people of the north have been marching behind different political parties for many years in the north. They did not even look at the JVP. Nevertheless, today is the only May Day rally attended by thousands of people from the north. Even though many years have passed since the celebration of May Day, since 200 years ago, it has not been possible to change the lifestyle of the working people on the plantations of this country. They followed other parties and trade unions, but now those people have finished that journey. Therefore, we request that you join the All Ceylon Plantation Workers' Union, the trade union of the JVP.

There was a period of doubt about the JVP among the people of the north. However, today, the JVP and the NPP have become the words uttered by all the country's people. The fact that thousands of Muslims participated in our Red May Day this year is a remarkable event in history. Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims are gathering under the shade of one flag. Therefore, the government is trying to bring repressive laws. Racism and Rajapaksa's religious frenzy are active in the north. Therefore, the people must unite to establish a people's government.