

## **Salient features of JVP Proposals**

### 1. Minimizing nationalist suppression

The policy of the imperialists and the capitalist rulers on the national question is either the so called autocratic centralization or the so-called autocratic decentralization. Both these would aggravate the national question instead of providing a solution for it. The correct policy in solving the national question is democratic centralization. The Provincial Council structure which was imposed on Sri Lanka for the purpose of devolution of power which was said to be the solution to the national question in the country has turned out to be a complete failure.

It had served the purpose of separatism and not provided a solution to the national question; it will not be a solution in the future also. In addition, the Capitalist unitary state too has not found a solution to the national question. That is why it is appropriate to accept democratic centralization in place of autocratic devolution and autocratic centralization. It is essential to follow this principle in the genuine approach to solving the national question without dividing the country. Hence, it is essential to find immediate solutions to the burning issues and a long term constitutional amendment in the process of solving these problems.

- I. A new constitution must be adopted and the present constitution must be abolished. All factors of unequal treatment of various nationalities, all ethnically based motives and encouragement of disharmony and conflict among various ethnicities and religious groups should be declared unlawful by the Constitution itself. Equal rights of all nationalities and groups should be guaranteed by the Constitution.
- II. The Executive Presidential system should be abolished while the Constitution should guarantee the protection of people's democratic rights, sovereignty of the people, individual respect and the people must be empowered.
- III. The failed and unscientific structure of the Provincial Councils that was established by identifying it as the solution to the national question of the country, but was not helpful either to provide a solution to the national question or to build national harmony in the country should be completely abolished. The Provincial Councils Act must be abolished.
- IV. The new approach for the solution to the national question must be taken by establishing rights of the people on the basis of equality and by guaranteeing democratic rights and by providing special attention for the areas where there are special problems.
- V. The People's Councils (Janatha Sabha) as a special administrative structure should be established paying attention to economic development, solving the administrative problems, protecting, safeguarding and promoting cultural identities in backward areas due to unequal capitalist development.

### People's Councils (Janatha Sabha)

- This is not a structure to be established all over the country. These People's Councils will be established in areas where people with different cultural identities reside and in areas

in which intensive national oppression was experienced, and in areas with special requirements.

- A Commission consisting of Intelligentsia, Members of Parliament belong to the parties represented in the Parliament and Administrative officers must be established to determine the areas in which People's Councils must be established. The General Public will be guaranteed the opportunity to submit their ideas and suggestions before this Commission. The criteria on which People's Councils must be determined by the Commission itself.
- If a group of people living in an area are convinced that a People's Council must be established in their area, then they have the right to request the Commission to consider their requirement.
- People's Councils are elected for five year period by the people living in the area under consideration. They should not be dissolved prematurely except in case that they become inactive due to failure of running the Council until the end of the set period.
- People's Councils must be vested with powers of sending one of its members to Parliament. That representative must be selected by the majority of the members of the Council. He should represent the needs of the People's Council.
- Parliament should allocate sufficient funds for all economic, social and cultural development activities of each Council. It must be guaranteed by the Constitution itself.
- The main functions of the People's Councils are economic development in the area, maintenance and promotion of administrative functions and social-cultural activities. Local Government institutions must also provide their assistance to the functions of the People's Councils.
- People's Councils must function on the basis of wiping out the separatist mentality of people, building national unity, respecting different cultures and building reconciliation among them, promoting them, mobilizing people in the area in economic development activities and distributing all economic gains among the people equally in the area.

VI. Recognise the right of all citizens to work in any of their language of preference: Sinhalese, Tamil or English that are identified by the Constitution. Appoint people who can work in Tamil language for Police Stations, Government Institutions and other public institutions in the Northern Province.

- i. Encourage teaching and learning of National Languages to the Police Officers, Military and all working in the state sector.
- ii. Any court or tribunal should provide the facility of an interpreter to facilitate effective communications in the judicial service
- iii. Every Police Station in the North and other required ones in the East shall have a public relations unit established with 10 degree holders.
- iv. More practical programme to teach the three languages to the students
- v. Introduce an adult education system and motivate them to learn the second language

VII. A separate commission against discrimination should be established to accept complaints and examine such against all kinds of discrimination based on religious or ethnic grounds

VIII. A separate commission for the purpose of promoting peace and reconciliation should be established by an Act of Parliament to share all types of grievances of the peoples in the country due to 30 years long war.

To commence a special cultural reconciliation programme by introducing

- I. A separate TV channel operating from the North in Tamil Medium
- II. A separate institution to promote drama and theatre

### III. Measures to groom new Tamil artists

#### 2. Establishing democracy and freedom.

- I. The semi military administration in the North must be ended with the establishment of a civil administration.
- II. Remove the Police service from the Defence Ministry.
- III. Release all political prisoners and provide them with the security and assistance needed for them to reintegrate with society.
- IV. In comparison with other areas in the country, measures should be taken to limit the militarization in the North as it obstructs civilian lives.
- V. Refrain from appointing security forces personnel or even retired security forces personnel to civil institutions that deal with civilians in the North.
- VI. Guarantee freedom for media personnel and media institutions to carry out their operations in any part of the country, especially in the North, without any obstructions.
- VII. Establish courts in the North to expedite the legal requirements of the people in those areas and to provide them with the necessary legal assistance.
- VIII. Public establishments that are appointed by public votes should be given the freedom to carry out their work and the necessary financial allocations along with other facilities should be provided to them.
- IX. The existing obstacles to setting up voluntary organizations (sports committees and community development committees) that would help the public should be removed
- X. Abolish the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

#### 3. Providing relief and social welfare to the suffering masses.

- I. Gather details of the war displaced and those who have not yet been properly resettled. Persons who were displaced by the war and those who are still living in shelters must be resettled in their own homes or lands. Arrangements should be made to resettle all persons who have not yet been resettled in their own homes and lands.
- II. Commence a programme to bring back Sri Lankan citizens who have fled to India during the war and are living as refugees and to provide them with the necessary assistance to restart their lives in Sri Lanka.
- III. A special Authority to be established to provide social security and welfare to the war widows, orphans, children who have lost a parent, disabled and parents who have become destitute following the death of the children who looked after them.
- IV. A Lands Commission to be appointed to address the issues related to lands in the North since it has become a sensitive issue.
- V. Conduct a study on the debts of the people in the North and write off the agricultural and fisheries loans taken by persons who cannot repay them.
- VI. Assist the women who have been left destitute by the war through a Social Security Fund.
- VII. Centers to assist the community at Divisional Secretariat level to be established in order to direct the people to the relevant Authority to solve their administrative and other related issues.

#### 4. Restoring the conflict affected areas

- I. Commence an accelerated programme to be completed within six months to renovate the divisional and rural roads in the Northern Province.
- II. Steps to be taken to streamline the education and health sectors in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, which would include the renovation and setting up of schools and hospitals in the relevant areas.
- III. Recommence operation of industries that previously operated in the North (i.e. Paranthan Chemical Factory and Mullaitivu Tile factory).
- IV. The state owned farm in the North should be reinitiated, while the farming community must be provided with the required facilities. All tanks and related irrigation systems in the North should be renovated within a period of two years.
- V. Set up an ice factory in the Mullaitivu District that is predominantly an area of fishing communities. Implement a three-year programme to uplift the fisheries industry and to provide the latest technology in the fisheries sector. Make arrangements for the local fishermen to engage in their livelihood without any threat from encroaching Indian fishermen.
- VI. Introduce a self-employment scheme to improve the livelihoods of the people in the North and establish vocational training centers at district level. Also, provide concessionary loan schemes for persons willing to engage in self-employment.
- VII. The state should take the responsibility of restoring places of religious worship (Hindu kovils, Buddhist temples, Muslim mosques and Christian churches) that have been destroyed by the war and conserve places that are of archeological value.

#### 5. Uniting instead of separating.

There is a national question in the country that has not been solved. National unity cannot be established without getting rid of the inequalities between ethnic groups. The solution of the imperialists, Indian expansionists and Tamil Nadu communalism is to push the country towards separatism.

The actions of the communalist elements in the Rajapaksa regime are also pushing the country towards separatism and an arbitrary decentralization.

However, the approach of Marxists and Leninists is to promote unity among nationalities. That is to promote the assimilation of ethnic groups. Therefore Marxists and Leninists are opposed to random decentralization or random centralization. The permanent solution believed by Marxists and Leninists is democratic centralization. Such a solution can be reached only through socialism.

**Source:** <http://www.jvpsrilanka.com/en/>