



Media and Reconciliation: Media Coverage of the October 26 Political Situation in Sri Lanka in relation to Minorities

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was produced by Verité Research for the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX), and examines both Sinhala and Tamil language press reports on Transitional Justice and Reconciliation, Women, and Minorities during September – November 2018. The topic selected in consultation with IREX for the above period was the ‘October 26 Political Situation in Sri Lanka in relation to Minorities’ following President Maithripala Sirisena’s purported removal of Ranil Wickremesinghe from the post of Prime Minister, and purported appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa to the aforementioned post. This topic was selected due to the high volume of coverage it received as well as its marked polarisation and perceived bearing on minority demands such as the release of military occupied land, emphasis on enforced disappearances during the war and evaluating cases under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) etc. The observations made with regards to this topic are given below.

- In total, 270 reports from 1,219 reports discussed the October 26 Political Situation in Sri Lanka in relation to Minorities. While the Sinhala language press featured 19 reports, the Tamil language press provided a greater volume of coverage with 251 reports. Accordingly, a quantitative analysis of press coverage highlighted the importance of the issue in the Tamil language press.
- With 104 articles, the stance of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) proved to be the topic that generated the highest interest in the Tamil language press. Three possible avenues the TNA could consider within the political impasse were discussed. Two of these avenues stressed the importance of obtaining a written agreement for the demands of the Tamil people. Meanwhile, the third avenue stressed the moral importance for the TNA to support the Prime Minister and cabinet of Ministers purportedly appointed by President Maithripala Sirisena on 26 October and thereafter (hereinafter referred to as the ‘disputed government’). The coverage of this topic took specific ethnic and political positions into consideration, featuring statements by political and non-political actors.
- 68 articles referenced the disputed government. Optimistic overtones, especially in the state-owned newspaper *Thinakaran*, were evident with regard to the solutions politicians in the disputed government promised the Tamil minority. Some of these solutions included: the release of political prisoners and state occupied land, and welfare for war victims. However, the reports did not feature the criticism levelled against these politicians by Tamil political parties or civil society groups for neglecting minority concerns during the post-conflict period.

- 29 articles pointed to the barriers to obtaining minority justice with the return of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa to power. These articles often defined minority justice as justice for the Tamil populace. By doing so, a large portion of reports missed out on pockets of civil society activists and journalists from varying ethnic groups, and religious minorities, who were threatened during former President Mahinda Rajapaksa's tenure in power.

- With 19 articles from a total of 270 articles, the Sinhala language press featured scant coverage on the above mentioned areas. In particular, the Sinhala language press gave coverage to the position of the TNA amidst the political impasse, views on the disputed government, and federalism. The Sinhala language press did not provide coverage on topics such as the position Muslim minority parties or people would adopt or Indian security concerns amidst the political impasse in Sri Lanka. By contrast, these issues received coverage in the Tamil language press.

- An overall lack of quantitative and qualitative balance in reporting (i.e. fairly equal volume of coverage and reported content in Sinhala and Tamil language newspapers) was observed during the monitoring period. The Sinhala and Tamil press had a tendency to prefer issues bearing ethno-linguistic relevance to its respective linguistic readership. This segregation of news may hinder national-level reconciliation by creating unequal access to information.

1. INTRODUCTION

This quarterly report was produced by Verité Research (VR) for the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX). It analyses both Sinhala and Tamil language newspapers to identify the role of print media in fostering national-level reconciliation. The report also contributes towards IREX's Media Empowerment for a Democratic Sri Lanka (MEND) programme by providing journalists with a comprehensive picture of reporting related to reconciliation. Moreover, it identifies ethical practices that could assist journalists and improve the overall quality of journalism, by incorporating the findings from VR's online platform, Ethics Eye, in relation to unethical press reporting on women and minorities. The findings from the platform are included where necessary and applicable.

This report belongs to a series of reports that monitors the following topics and subtopics:

1. Transitional Justice and Reconciliation – press coverage under this topic focuses on several subtopics such as the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), Office on Missing Persons (OMP), Enforced Disappearances Act, land-related issues, devolution of power, and constitutional reform.
2. Minorities – press coverage on minorities includes issues pertaining to justice between the state and minorities, such as ethnic and religious violence/discrimination.
3. Women – press coverage on this topic documents subtopics in relation to issues pertaining to justice between the state and women, such as female electoral quotas, political participation, labour force participation, and maternity leave.

Previously, the Media and Reconciliation report analysed coverage on the Office on Missing Persons (OMP) and the devolution of power.¹ For the reporting period September – November 2018, VR in consultation with IREX selected the October 26 political situation in Sri Lanka in relation to Minorities. As agreed by IREX and VR, this topic was selected due to two reasons: (a) the high volume and marked polarisation of coverage it received and (b) its perceived bearing on minority demands such as the release of military occupied land, cases

¹ Verité Research, *Media and Reconciliation: Media Coverage of the Office on Missing Persons and the Devolution of Power* (2018).

under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), cases related to enforced disappearances and constitutional reform etc.

The structure of the report is as follows: Section 2 provides a description of the methodology followed. Section 3 evaluates the October 26 Political Situation in Sri Lanka in relation to Minorities. Meanwhile, Section 4 features notable observations from the analysis. Meanwhile, Section 5 presents a general conclusion on the findings of the report.

2. METHODOLOGY

Press reports on the October 26 Political Situation in Sri Lanka in relation to Minorities were monitored from September to November 2018. For this purpose, the following Sinhala and Tamil language newspapers were examined (see Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1: Newspapers Monitored

Sinhala Daily Newspapers	Sinhala Weekend Newspapers	Tamil Newspapers
<i>Lankadeepa</i>	<i>Lankadeepa</i>	<i>Virakesari</i>
<i>Divaina</i>	<i>Divaina</i>	<i>Thinakkural</i>
<i>Lakbima²</i>	<i>Lakbima</i>	<i>Tamil Mirror</i>
<i>Mawbima</i>	<i>Mawbima</i>	<i>Thinakaran</i>
<i>Dinamina</i>	<i>Ravaya</i>	
<i>Ada</i>	<i>Anidda</i>	

The above monitored newspapers include both state-owned and privately-owned print publications. Privately-owned print publications comprise both mainstream and alternative press publications (please refer to the Media Ownership Monitor Sri Lanka in order to obtain comprehensive details on the media ownership and political affiliations of these newspapers).³

² The daily edition of *Lakbima* announced on 30 November 2018 that it would temporarily suspend its publication

³ Media Ownership Monitor Sri Lanka. <http://sri-lanka.mom-rsf.org/en/>

The content on the October 26 Political Situation in Sri Lanka in relation to Minorities that is considered to be of relevance from these Sinhala and Tamil language newspapers is analysed through the lens of media parochialism. Media parochialism in the context of this report refers to the differences in reporting between the Sinhala and Tamil press, particularly when the content considered to be of relevance is only featured in one of the vernacular newspapers. This lens could give insight into the gaps in coverage of certain issues, varying nuances in coverage of the same issue as well as the perspectives seen in the line of reporting as the Sinhala and Tamil press cater to two distinctive demographics. Therefore, by using this lens, the analysis determines whether a particular news item features bias that may stem from reporting towards or against a certain ethnic/religious community in the Sinhala/Tamil language newspapers. The corresponding newspaper summaries with respect to the analysis are chronologically listed in the Annexure of this report.

LIMITATIONS

The methodology of this report limits the analysis to a specific timeframe of coverage from September – November 2018. As such, it does not analyse coverage of the political situation after November 2018.

3. OCTOBER 26 POLITICAL SITUATION IN SRI LANKA IN RELATION TO MINORITIES

The ongoing political crisis began on 26 October, when the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) announced its withdrawal from the unity government established in 2015. On the same day, President Maithripala Sirisena announced that he had removed Ranil Wickremesinghe from the post of Prime Minister. Moreover, Sirisena sought to appoint to the post of Prime Minister his opponent during the 2015 Presidential election, former President Mahinda Rajapaksa. On 27 October, Sirisena prorogued parliament until 16 November, and on 9 November he dissolved parliament.⁴ ⁵ However, on 13 November, the Supreme Court issued an interim order on Sirisena's dissolution of parliament.⁶

From a minority perspective, the rupture of the coalition government established in 2015 and return of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa signaled a risk to long-standing minority grievances and rights.⁷ These included the desire for constitutional reform, functionality of the Office on Missing Persons (OMP), demilitarisation and release of political prisoners, among several other issues.

In relation to the overall coverage of the issue, the national significance of these events resulted in the vernacular press prioritising coverage of the events. For instance, these events were featured in 270 reports out of 1219 reports regarding minorities, from 27 October to 30 November 2018. From these reports, 251 articles were published in Tamil language newspapers and 19 in Sinhala language newspapers (see Exhibits 4 and 5).

⁴ On 4 November President Maithripala Sirisena issued Extraordinary Gazette No. No. 2095/50 and called for reconvening parliament on 14 November.

<https://www.parliament.lk/uploads/documents/gazettes/20181104-2095-50-en.pdf>

⁵ Extraordinary Gazette No. 2096/70. <https://parliament.lk/uploads/documents/gazettes/20181109-2096-70-en.pdf>

⁶ SC.FR No. 351/2018. <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/IE-dated-13-11-2018-SC-FR-No.351-2018.pdf>

⁷ The New York Times, 'Another Season of Trouble in Sri Lanka', (2018).

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/19/opinion/sri-lanka-troubles-strongman-minority-tamils-rajapaksa-srisena.html>; BBC, 'Mahinda Rajapaksa: Return of Sri Lanka's Wartime Strongman', (2018).

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-46137759>

Exhibit 2: Coverage in Tamil Language Newspapers

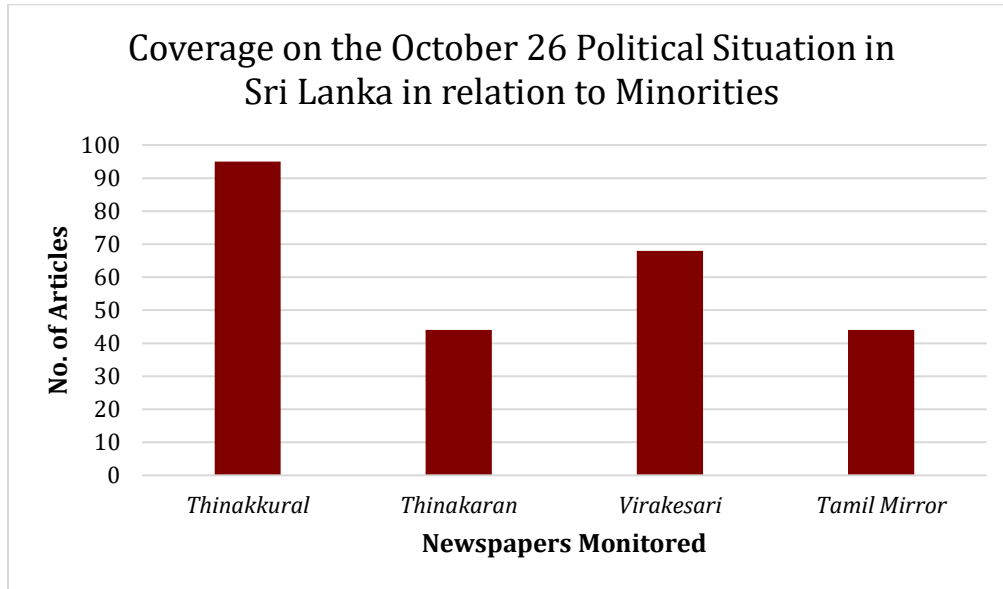
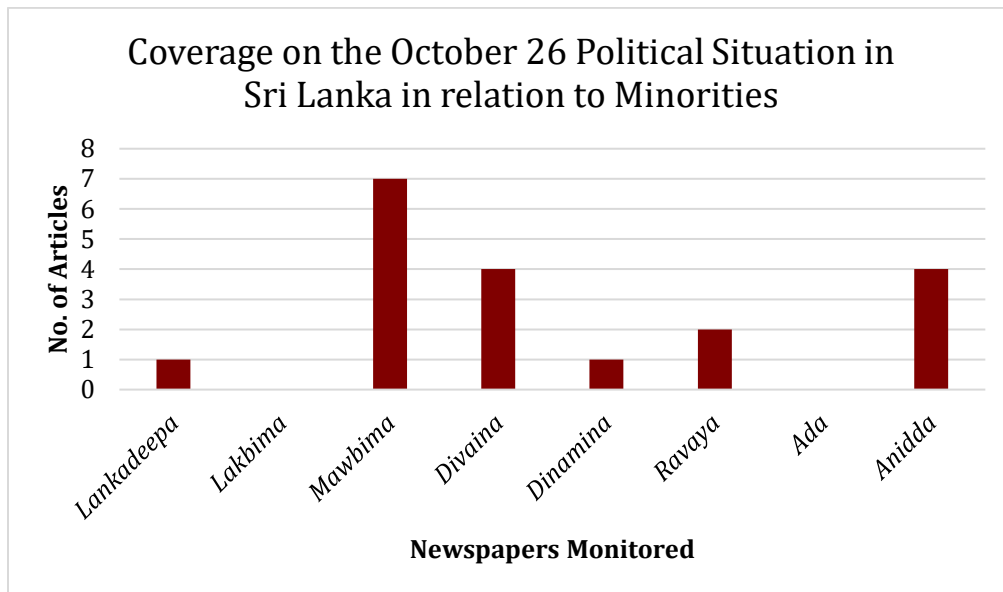


Exhibit 3: Coverage in Sinhala Language Newspapers



Bylines of news and opinion articles were taken into consideration due to the significance of bylines from a media ethics' perspective. The inclusion of a byline fosters ethical reporting practices such as transparency and accountability, while also providing due credit to journalists responsible for content. Therefore, the lack of a byline may imply a lack of transparency and accountability over ownership of content, and by extension, a reliability of content.⁸ Out of the total coverage, 30 percent of articles from the Sinhala and Tamil language press did not include bylines; 179 of these articles were from the Tamil language press, while 1 article was from the Sinhala language newspaper *Divaina*. A detailed outline of Tamil newspaper articles without a byline are as follows: *Thinakkural* (75 out of 95 articles), *Virakesari* (44 out of 71 articles), *Thinakaran* (39 out of 46), *Tamil Mirror* (21 out of 39).

With respect to the content featured, the areas of discussion were varied and included:

1. The disputed government: An end to Tamil grievances?⁹
2. The position of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA)¹⁰

⁸ Cornell University Library, 'Fake News, Alternative Facts, and Misinformation: Learning to Critically Evaluate Media Sources' (n.d.). http://guides.library.cornell.edu/evaluate_news/accountability

⁹ *Virakesari*, 01 November, p.09; *Thinakaran*, 31 October, p.03; *Thinakkural*, 28 October, p.10; *Thinakkural*, 31 October, p.12; *Thinakkural*, 05 November, p.06; *Thinakkural*, November 05, p.06; *Virakesari*, 31 October, p.16; *Thinakaran*, 31 October, p.20; *Thinakkural*, 28 October, p.08; *Thinakaran*, 30 October, p.18; *Thinakaran*, 28 October, p.01, 10; *Virakesari*, 31 October, p.21; *Thinakaran*, 05 November, p.04, 12; *Thinakkural*, 06 November, p.10; *Thinakkural*, 06 November, p.10; *Thinakkural*, 04 November, p.02; *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November, p.01, 02; *Thinakkural*, 29 October, p.04; *Virakesari*, 05 November, p.09; *Thinakkural*, 12 November, p.02; *Thinakaran*, 06 November, p.07; *Virakesari*, 06 November, p.08; *Thinakkural*, 07 November, p.09; *Tamil Mirror*, November 07, p.01, 02; *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November, p.01, 02; *Mawbima*, 13 November, p.09; *Virakesari*, 15 November, p.13; *Mawbima*, 05 November, p.12; *Thinakaran*, 11 November, p.01, 10; *Thinakkural*, 31 October, p.22; *Thinakkural*, 01 November, p.03; *Thinakaran*, 28 October, p.01, 10; *Virakesari*, 28 October, p.02; *Thinakaran*, 01 November, p.01, 04; *Thinakaran*, 04 November, p.07; *Thinakaran*, 05 November, p.03; *Thinakaran*, 08 November, p.12; *Virakesari*, 07 November, p.11; *Thinakaran*, 05 November, p.04, 12; *Thinakkural*, 05 November, p.06; *Thinakaran*, 08 November, p.03, 04; *Thinakaran*, 09 November, p.03, 04; *Tamil Mirror*, 31 October, p.08; *Thinakaran*, 08 November, p.01, 04; *Thinakaran*, 04 November, p.05, 21; *Thinakaran*, 07 November, p.12; *Thinakkural*, 07 November, p.09; *Thinakkural*, 22 November, p. 01, 08; *Mawbima*, 26 November, p.13; *Thinakkural*, 06 November, p.27; *Thinakaran*, 29 October, p.03, 04; *Thinakaran*, 07 November, p.12; *Thinakaran*, 05 November, p.01, 04; *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November, p.06; *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November, p.03; *Thinakkural*, 04 November, p.03; *Thinakaran*, 08 November, p.01, 04; *Thinakaran*, 07 November, p.01, 04; *Thinakkural*, 30 October, p.04; *Thinakkural*, 30 October, p.06; *Virakesari*, 29 November, p.19; *Tamil Mirror*, 29 October, p.08; *Thinakkural*, 30 October, p.17; *Tamil Mirror*, 07 November, p.08; *Virakesari*, 08 November, p.21; *Thinakkural*, 07 November, p.04; *Thinakaran*, 30 October, p.01, 04 and *Tamil Mirror*, 30 October, p.01, 02.

¹⁰ *Thinakaran*, 07 November, p.01, 04; *Thinakaran*, 08 November, p.12; *Virakesari*, 28 October, p.04; *Virakesari*, 31 October, p.03; *Virakesari*, 02 November, p.08; *Virakesari*, 09 November, p.01, 09; *Thinakkural*, 05 November, p.11; *Thinakkural*, 07 November, p.10; *Thinakkural*, 11 November, p.28; *Tamil Mirror*, 02 November, p.06; *Thinakkural*, 01 November, p.17; *Virakesari*, 02 November, p.18; *Tamil Mirror*, 29 October, p.04; *Thinakaran*, 09 November, p.01, 04; *Ravaya*, 25 November, p.02; *Virakesari*, 05 November, p.04; *Thinakkural*, 31 October, p.06; *Virakesari*, 31 October, p.04; *Virakesari*, 07 November, p.16; *Thinakkural*, 25 November, p.07; *Thinakkural*, 06 November, p.04; *Thinakkural*, 06 November, p.11; *Virakesari*, 08 November, p.16; *Thinakkural*, November 05, p.07; *Thinakkural*, 21 November, p.06; *Tamil Mirror*, 01 November, p.04; *Thinakaran*, 01 November, p.14; *Thinakkural*, 01 November, p.07; *Thinakkural*, 04 November, p.05; *Tamil Mirror*, 12 November, p.01, 02; *Thinakkural*, 12 November, p.04; *Thinakkural*, 04 November, p.25; *Virakesari*, 01 November, p.18; *Thinakkural*, 19 November, p.02; *Virakesari*, 07 November, p.08; *Virakesari*, 02

3. The positions of Muslim political parties and Muslim population¹¹
4. Minority grievances: Justice delayed is justice denied?¹²
5. Dissolution of parliament sparks Indian and Tamil security concerns¹³
6. Estate workers' pay increment postponed¹⁴

The marked polarisation in the volume of coverage, as depicted in Exhibits 1 and 2, suggests the gravity of the issue in Tamil language newspapers. For instance, the press queried the impact on reconciliation and transitional justice efforts with the re-entry of Sinhala nationalist political actors such as former President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Reportage also

November, p.15; *Tamil Mirror*, 02 November, p.01, 02; *Thinakkural*, 02 November, p.06; *Thinakkural*, 18 November, p.24; *Thinakkural*, 15 November, p.02; *Virakesari*, 08 November, p.16; *Virakesari*, 02 November, p.04; *Virakesari*, 01 November, p.04; *Thinakkural*, 31 October, p.01, 05; *Thinakkural*, 30 October, p.19; *Virakesari*, 31 October, p.01, 02; *Tamil Mirror*, November 07, p.01, 02; *Tamil Mirror*, 06 November, p.07; *Tamil Mirror*, 06 November, p.01, 02; *Virakesari*, 06 November, p.08; *Thinakaran*, 07 November, p.03; *Virakesari*, 07 November, p.04; *Virakesari*, 29 October, p.05, 09; *Thinakkural*, 23 November, p.14; *Divaina*, 22 November, p.03; *Mawbima*, 28 November, p.06; *Divaina*, 07 November, p.04; *Mawbima*, 01 November, p.01; *Lankadeepa*, 01 November, p.01; *Dinamina*, 19 November, p.01; *Virakesari*, 07 November, p.16; *Tamil Mirror*, 06 November, p.01, 02; *Virakesari*, 02 November, p.21; *Virakesari*, 04 November, p.22; *Thinakkural*, 06 November, p.27; *Thinakaran*, 01 November, p.12; *Virakesari*, 29 October, p.14; *Thinakkural*, 05 November, p.21; *Thinakaran*, 29 October, p.01, 04; *Virakesari*, 30 October, p.02; *Thinakkural*, 30 October, p.20; *Thinakaran*, 07 November, p.14; *Virakesari*, 04 November, p.13, 17; *Tamil Mirror*, 02 November, p.04; *Virakesari*, 29 October, p.07; *Virakesari*, 28 October, p.13, 21; *Tamil Mirror*, 31 October, p.04; *Thinakkural*, 30 October, p.05; *Virakesari*, 30 October, p.03; *Thinakkural*, 05 November, p.02; *Virakesari*, 05 November, p.20; *Thinakaran*, 05 November, p.12; *Thinakaran*, 06 November, p.03, 07; *Tamil Mirror*, 07 November, p.07; *Thinakkural*, 29 October, p.07; *Thinakaran*, 29 October, p.03, 04; *Thinakaran*, 05 November, p.14; *Virakesari*, 29 October, p.14; *Thinakaran*, 05 November, p.03, 04; *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November, p.04; *Virakesari*, 01 November, p.11; *Thinakkural*, November 01, p.01, 05; *Thinakkural*, 01 November, p.04; *Virakesari*, 06 November, p.15; *Thinakkural*, 12 November, p.07; *Thinakkural*, 07 November, p.05; *Thinakkural*, 09 November, p.06; *Thinakaran*, 08 November, p.01, 04; *Thinakaran*, 09 November, p.01, 04; *Tamil Mirror*, 09 November, p.08; *Tamil Mirror*, 01 November, p.08; *Tamil Mirror*, 07 November, p.08; *Thinakaran*, 07 November, p.01, 04 and *Virakesari*, 11 November, p.23.

¹¹ *Thinakkural*, 08 November, p.05; *Thinakkural*, 02 November, p.04; *Thinakkural*, 02 November, p.21; *Virakesari*, 09 November, p.04; *Tamil Mirror*, 09 November, p.01, 02; *Thinakkural*, 30 October, p.10; *Thinakkural*, 01 November, p.06; *Thinakaran*, 29 October, p.12; *Thinakaran*, 30 October, p.01, 04; *Thinakaran*, 30 October, p.19; *Virakesari*, 01 November 2018, p.15 and *Thinakkural*, 30 October, p.02.

¹² *Thinakkural*, 18 November, p.28; *Anidda*, 25 November, p.01; *Ravaya*, 25 November, p.01; *Thinakkural*, 04 November, p.27; *Divaina*, 22 November, p.13; *Thinakkural*, 28 October, p.03; *Tamil Mirror*, 12 November, p.04; *Virakesari*, 02 November, p.05; *Anidda*, 25 November, p.15; *Virakesari*, 29 November, p.04; *Thinakkural*, 28 October, p.18; *Thinakkural*, 28 October, p.10; *Thinakkural*, 04 November, p.31; *Virakesari*, 02 November, p.09; *Virakesari*, 01 November, p.03; *Tamil Mirror*, 31 October, p.04; *Anidda*, 11 November, p.15; *Tamil Mirror*, October 30, p.03; *Virakesari*, 31 October, p.14; *Thinakkural*, 31 October, p.01, 05; *Thinakkural*, 19 November, p.05; *Virakesari*, 28 October, p.13, 21; *Virakesari*, 28 October, p.23; *Virakesari*, 29 October, p.03; *Thinakkural*, 21 November, p.14, 15; *Virakesari*, 21 November, p.01, 10; *Tamil Mirror*, 22 November, p.01, 02 and *Thinakkural*, 22 November, p.03.

¹³ *Thinakkural*, November 11, p.08; *Thinakkural*, November 11, p.08; *Virakesari*, 11 November, p.24; *Virakesari*, 11 November, p.23; *Virakesari*, 11 November, p.10 and *Virakesari*, 12 November, p.18.

¹⁴ *Thinakkural*, 09 November, p.05; *Virakesari*, 09 November, p.09; *Virakesari*, 28 November, p.14; *Thinakkural*, 15 November, p.18; *Thinakkural*, 27 November, p.01, 08; *Tamil Mirror*, 15 November, p.05 and *Virakesari*, 14 November, p.14.

suggested concerns regarding increased uncertainty in the political arena. Therefore, when quantitatively analysing the comparatively lower volume of coverage in the Sinhala language press as opposed to the Tamil language press, media parochialism is visible. However, media parochialism is not limited to the Sinhala language press. Reports in Tamil language newspapers gave preference to issues of relevance to the Tamil minority. Notably, as observed in the previous monitoring report, this line of reporting conveys how issues tend to be viewed through an ethnic perspective in the Sri Lankan press.¹⁵ Such reporting could counter reconciliation efforts by helping to perpetuate ethno-linguistic or ethno-religious views through the media. The reportage of each key area that received press coverage is further analysed in the following section of this report.

(i) The disputed government: An end to Tamil people's grievances?

President Maithripala Sirisena appointed a number of politicians to his disputed government, which is currently being challenged in court.¹⁶ This was following his removal of Ranil Wickremesinghe from the post of Prime Minister. Against this backdrop, over 60 reports drew a correlation between the disputed government and a possible end to the grievances raised by the Tamil minority. The state-owned newspaper *Thinakaran*, and privately-owned newspaper *Thinakkural* led the overall coverage, while the privately owned *Mawbima* – with three reports – was the only Sinhala language newspaper that contributed towards this discussion.¹⁷

The coverage predominantly cited statements by supporters of the Sirisena–Rajapaksa coalition and displayed positive sentiments towards the disputed government. Numerous reports gave prominence to former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, who was seen as propelling the rights of the Tamil minority.¹⁸ The Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP) also referenced Rajapaksa's support towards post-conflict female-headed households in the North and East during the post-war period.¹⁹ This coverage did not account for the

¹⁵ Verité Research, *Media and Reconciliation: Media Coverage of the Office on Missing Persons and the Devolution of Power* (2018), p.13.

¹⁶ On 3 December the Court of Appeal issued an interim stay order, which restrained Mahinda Rajapaksa and other purported cabinet Ministers from functioning until the conclusion of the case. The petitioners in the case have sought a writ of *quo warranto* against Rajapaksa and the other purported Ministers. If the writ is granted by the Court of Appeal, Rajapaksa and the purported cabinet Ministers will be permanently prevented from functioning, and will effectively be removed from office.

¹⁷ *Mawbima*, 13 November, p.09; *Mawbima*, 05 November, p.12 and *Mawbima*, 26 November, p.13.

¹⁸ *Thinakkural*, 28 October, p.10; *Thinakkural*, 31 October, p.12; *Thinakkural*, 05 November, p.06; *Virakesari*, 31 October, p.16; *Thinakaran*, 31 October, p.20; *Thinakkural*, 28 October, p.08; *Thinakaran*, 30 October, p.18; *Thinakaran*, 28 October, p.01, 10; *Virakesari*, 31 October, p.21; *Thinakaran*, 05 November, p.04, 12; *Thinakkural*, 06 November, p.10; *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November, p.01, 02; *Thinakkural*, 29 October, p.04; *Thinakaran*, 06 November, p.07; *Thinakkural*, 07 November, p.09 and *Thinakaran*, 08 November, p.01, 04.

¹⁹ *Thinakaran*, 31 October, p.20.

vulnerability faced by female-headed households in militarised zones during the Rajapaksa era.²⁰ Additionally, the aforementioned positive commentary on Rajapaksa also differed from the blame assigned to him during much of the Sirisena–Wickremesinghe government’s tenure, especially in terms of neglecting transitional justice.²¹ While members of the TNA levelled criticism against Rajapaksa, only the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna’s (JVP) criticism received coverage in *Mawbima*.²² In a cynical tone, the JVP noted the irony of Rajapaksa welcoming a member from the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), despite having previously labelled the TNA’s demand for federalism to be part of a ‘separatist agenda’.

Aside from the coverage on Rajapaksa, voices in the press framed the events of 26 October and shortly after as stemming from the failure of *yahapalanaya* (good governance) and the TNA’s leadership. The *yahapalanaya* government, led by the United National Party (UNP), was criticised for its inability to meet the Tamil people’s demands for increased rights. Meanwhile, the TNA was criticised for failing in its role as the Opposition, and being ‘complicit’ in the UNP’s plans instead of representing the needs of the Tamil polity.²³

A portion of the coverage focused on the specific course of action the disputed government would follow to rectify the grievances faced by the Tamil community. The issue of releasing political prisoners gained traction within this discussion. This issue was a leading post-conflict concern posited by members of the Tamil population during the former Rajapaksa government. However, the issue went unresolved even under the *yahapalanaya* government. Renewed interest in the issue was raised by Namal Rajapaksa, the son of Mahinda Rajapaksa, following the events of 26 October. His comments on the imminent release of political prisoners, and similar comments made by Mahinda Rajapaksa, President Sirisena and Vasudeva Nanayakkara received traction in the press.²⁴ By contrast, the UNP criticised President Sirisena for allegedly preventing the release of political prisoners.²⁵

²⁰ Trevor Grant, ‘Sri Lanka’s Secrets: How the Rajapaksa Regime gets away with Murder’ (2014), p.169. <https://books.google.lk/books?isbn=1922235539>; United Nations Sri Lanka Media Centre, ‘Opening Remains by the UN Commissioner for Human Rights’. <https://lk.one.un.org/news/opening-remarks-by-the-un-high-commissioner-for-human-rights/>

²¹ Rachel Seoighe, ‘War, Denial and Nation-Building in Sri Lanka: After the End’ (2017), p.282.

<https://books.google.lk/books?isbn=3319563246>

²² *Mawbima*, 05 November, p.12.

²³ *Thinakkural*, 06 November, p.27; *Thinakaran*, 05 November, p.01, 04; *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November, p.06; *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November, p.03; *Thinakaran*, 08 November, p.01, 04; *Thinakaran*, 07 November, p.01, 04; *Virakesari*, 29 November, p.19; *Tamil Mirror*, 29 October, p.08; *Thinakkural*, 30 October, p.17 and *Virakesari*, 08 November, p.21.

²⁴ *Thinakaran*, 28 October, p.01, 10; *Virakesari*, 31 October, p.21; *Thinakaran*, 05 November, p.04, 12; *Thinakkural*, 06 November, p.10; *Thinakkural*, 04 November, p.02; *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November, p.01, 02; *Thinakkural*, 29 October, p.04; *Virakesari*, 05 November, p.09; *Thinakkural*, 12 November, p.02; *Thinakaran*, 06 November, p.07; *Virakesari*, 06 November, p.08 and *Thinakkural*, 07 November, p.09.

²⁵ *Tamil Mirror*, 07 November, p.01, 02 and *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November, p.01, 02.

Media parochialism could be observed in the above reportage in two ways. First, the limited coverage of these discussions in the Sinhala language press suggested a perception that the concerns reported were only considered relevant to the Tamil community and Tamil press. Second, the positive coverage of Sirisena's actions by the state-owned paper *Thinakaran* suggested that it shares the views of the disputed government.²⁶ Accordingly, it neglected the narrative that government change in 2015 was supported by minorities due to the failure of the Rajapaksa government to advance transitional justice and minority rights. This is further discussed in section (iii).

(ii) The position of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA)

The stance that the TNA should adopt amidst the political standoff between the UNP and the parties backing the Sirisena–Rajapaksa coalition was discussed in three ways in the press: (a) TNA's parliamentary seats as political currency, (b) TNA's position contingent on written conditions, and (c) TNA's moral imperative to support the disputed government. Beyond these discussions, press reports also featured (d) the need for international intervention. With over 100 reports, coverage on the TNA's position received the most traction, particularly in the Tamil language press. In the Sinhala press, the TNA's position was only featured in *Ravaya*, *Lankadeepa*, *Mawbima*, *Divaina* and *Dinamina*.²⁷

The first discussion identified the TNA as a decisive player in the political impasse due to its 16 parliamentary seats.²⁸ In light of this view, several civil society organisations and Tamil politicians encouraged the TNA to use its numbers as political currency, in exchange for receiving written agreements to its longstanding reconciliation-related demands. Featuring a minority perspective, reports advocating this view hinged their premise on ethnic interests as opposed to the legality of President Maithripala Sirisena's actions, and the TNA's potential endorsement of it.²⁹ In terms of coverage, these reports were only published in mainstream Tamil language newspapers. There was one exception in the alternative Sinhala language

²⁶ Following President Maithripala Sirisena's appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa to the post of Prime Minister, state media institutions were coercively taken over, reportedly by Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna Unions. For more information see: *The Media Analysis*, Vol.08, #41.

²⁷ *Ravaya*, 25 November, p.02; *Divaina*, 22 November, p.03; *Mawbima*, 28 November, p.06; *Divaina*, 07 November, p.04; *Mawbima*, 01 November, p.01; *Lankadeepa*, 01 November, p.01 and *Dinamina*, 19 November, p.01.

²⁸ While the TNA has 16 seats in parliament, member of the TNA S. Viyalendran crossed over to join the disputed Sirisena – Rajapaksa government.

²⁹ *Thinakkural*, 05 November, p.11; *Thinakkural*, 07 November, p.10; *Thinakkural*, 11 November, p.28; *Tamil Mirror*, 02 November, p.06; *Thinakkural*, 01 November, p.17; *Virakesari*, 02 November, p.18; *Tamil Mirror*, 29 October, p.04; *Thinakaran*, 09 November, p.01, 04; *Virakesari*, 05 November, p.04; *Thinakkural*, 31 October, p.06; *Virakesari*, 08 November, p.16; *Thinakkural*, 05 November, p.07; *Thinakkural*, 21 November, p.06; *Tamil Mirror*, 01 November, p.04; *Tamil Mirror*, 12 November, p.01, 02 and *Thinakkural*, 04 November, p.25.

newspaper, *Ravaya*, which claimed that the TNA would not benefit from either political camp to achieve their demands.³⁰

The second discussion, held by members of the TNA, was linked to the first discussion. It outlined the TNA's conditions for supporting either political camp. Assuming an assertive tone, these reports suggested that the TNA's support would be extended to the political camp that was willing to commit to a written agreement. Two key demands, among many others, were highlighted by Leader of the TNA, R. Sampanthan: (i) constitutional reform, and (ii) the implementation of UN resolutions. Sinhala language publications concentrated their coverage on the first demand for federalism through constitutional reform. Within this discussion while federalism for the TNA was synonymous with self-rule and the decentralisation of power, voices in the Sinhala language press framed it as a threat to the unitary state.³¹ These voices in the Sinhala language press included President Maithripala Sirisena, former President Mahinda Rajapaksa and the Yuthukama organisation (the members of the Yuthakama organisation are perceived to be aligned with Sinhala-Buddhist ideologies and the Jathika Chinthana movement).³²

The third discussion framed the TNA's position in binary terms: support for the disputed government as authentic concern for the Tamil people vs. opposing the disputed government as an act of self-interest. Using this framing, several articles considered the TNA's support for the disputed government to be a moral imperative. Prominent voices under this discussion included political actors either in the disputed government or affiliated with its members such as former Secretary of Defence Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Namal Rajapaksa, Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) MP Douglas Devananda and Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan also known as Karuna Amman.³³ While the unemployed graduates of the Eastern University advocated for the TNA to adopt a neutral position, this view received minimal traction in the Tamil language press.³⁴

Beyond the discussions focusing on the TNA, reportage presented a fourth position which either directly, or indirectly by appealing to the TNA, sought international intervention. This appeal was based on the perception that majoritarian Sinhalese parties often conflicted with each other, which had heightened due to the political situation, and would further hinder barriers to reconciliation. Certain articles also suggested that political solutions for the Tamil minority would not be granted by the Sinhalese polity and parties. In general, what emerged

³⁰ *Ravaya*, 25 November, p.02.

³¹ *Divaina*, 07 November, p.04; *Mawbima*, 01 November, p.01; *Lankadeepa*, 01 November, p.01; *Mawbima*, 20 November, p.06 and *Dinamina*, 19 November, p.01.

³² Ranjith Nirmal Dewasiri, 'New Buddhist Extremism and the Challenges to Ethno-Religious Coexistence in Sri Lanka' (2016), p.30 <http://ices.lk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/New-Buddhist-Extremism-and-the-Challenges.pdf>

³³ *Thinakaran*, 05 November 2018, p.12; *Thinakkural*, 12 November, p.07; *Tamil Mirror*, 07 November, p.07 and *Thinakkural*, 29 October, p.07.

³⁴ *Thinakkural*, 09 November, p.06; *Thinakaran*, 08 November, p.01, 04 and *Thinakaran*, 09 November, p.01, 04.

from the viewpoints in the reportage was the space provided to partial perspectives. Collectively, these articles may encourage the readership to interpret events in the political sphere through specific ethnic and political positions.

(iii) The positions of Muslim political parties and Muslim population

In anticipation of the effects the current political situation could have on the Muslim minority, several Tamil language newspapers provided space for predetermined political positions. Two camps emerged in the reporting: (a) voices in support of the disputed government, and (b) voices opposing the disputed government. Overall coverage saw voices in support of the disputed government obtaining greater traction than voices in opposition.

Voices from proponents of the disputed government were documented in the state-owned *Thinakaran* newspaper and mainstream newspaper, *Thinakkural*. Press reports containing strong headlines, such as ‘*Muslim MPs must support the new government*’, directly appealed to the Muslim populace. Coupled with optimistic overtones in several other headlines such as, ‘*Can gain protection by supporting the Southern Sri Lankan Buddhists*’ most favoured Sinhalese Leader – *Basheer Segu Dawood*’ and ‘*Muslims will get redemption during Prime Minister Mahinda’s era*’, there was clear advocacy in favour of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa.³⁵

Voices of opponents of the disputed government included the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) and a collective of Muslims in *Virakesari*.³⁶ Similar to the Tamil National Alliance’s (TNA) stance outlined in section (ii), the SLMC pledged support for a government that recognised the needs of their party and the Muslim people. Alternatively, the Muslim collective in *Virakesari* called upon Sinhala-majority parties to unite with minority parties and defeat Sirisena’s ‘unconstitutional’ appointments to political office.

Overall, reportage appeared to make recommendations to the readers, by weighing ethnicised interests and positions beneficial to the Muslim population. These positions were not published in Sinhala language newspapers.

(iv) Minority grievances: Justice delayed is justice denied?

Over 25 reports referenced minority justice in the wake of the political situation. Tamil language publications claimed the timing of events caused a delay, and by extension, a denial of justice on post-war issues raised by the Tamil minority – especially constitutional reform.

³⁵ *Thinakaran*, 29 October, p.12; *Thinakkural*, 02 November, p.04 and *Thinakaran*, 30 October, p.19.

³⁶ *Tamil Mirror*, 09 November, p.01, 02 and *Virakesari*, 09 November, p.04.

Certain articles held the view that the political situation was orchestrated to impede constitutional reform. As such, criticism was cast onto President Sirisena, whose actions were cited as the catalyst for the political instability. Only *Anidda*, an alternative Sinhala language publication, adopted a gendered perspective when referencing the drawbacks women in the North and East would face due to the lack of constitutional reform, and the need for independent female political representation.³⁷ Meanwhile, *Ravaya* and *Divaina* provided limited coverage on the overall topic of minority grievances and justice.³⁸

Minority justice was also discussed in relation to the purported appointment of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa to the post of Prime Minister. His appointment was widely questioned in Tamil language publications, given that minority community votes contributed to the government change in 2015. The reports further recalled the optimism regarding possible solutions to minority grievances following the change in government in 2015. Rajapaksa's return to power therefore appeared to be underpinned by a sense of dejection and fear by both political and non-political actors. These actors characterised Rajapaksa as a repressive figure, and saw his appointment as threatening minority justice. Moreover, President Sirisena was condemned for breaking his mandate to the Tamil minority by paving the way for Rajapaksa's return. However, two reports in *Virakesari* quoting Admiral Sarath Weerasekara and one in *Tamil Mirror* positively framed Rajapaksa by either referencing his protection of Sinhala nationalist interests or suggesting that he would work towards resolve the issue of missing persons.³⁹ In particular, the latter discussion saw Rajapaksa as an efficient individual who would solve the grievances of the Tamil population.

Aside from denouncing specific political players, the coverage featured negative sentiments regarding the attainment of justice under Sinhala leadership. This strand of coverage claimed that post-Independence politics in Sri Lanka were racialised, as certain Sinhalese leaders were perceived as championing the interests of the Sinhala polity to gain power. On the whole, press commentary on minority justice focused mainly on accountability towards the Tamil community. Moreover, the coverage concentrated on the perceived threats towards the Tamil minority with the return of former President Rajapaksa. The Tamil language press did not feature civil society activists and journalists from other ethnicities or minority groups, who were also subjected to intimidation and harassment during the Rajapaksa government. By contrast, only *Anidda*, *Ravaya* and *Divaina* provided scant coverage in the Sinhala press of the issues discussed.

³⁷ *Anidda*, 18 December, p.15 and *Anidda*, 25 November, p.15.

³⁸ *Ravaya*, 25 November, p.01 and *Divaina*, 22 November, p.13

³⁹ *Virakesari*, 02 November, p.09; *Virakesari*, 01 November, p.03 and *Tamil Mirror*, 31 October, p.04.

(v) Dissolution of parliament sparks Indian and Tamil security concerns

On 9 November President Maithripala Sirisena issued an Extraordinary Gazette to dissolve parliament and hold general elections on 5 January 2019.⁴⁰ Responses to Sirisena's decisions and its effect on minority communities received limited traction in the Tamil language press. Sirisena's decisions were strongly condemned and interpreted through two security-based lenses: as a (a) threat to Indian security, and (b) threat to the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. A number of reports documented statements from political actors in Tamil Nadu, India. Notably, these statements were only documented in mainstream Tamil language newspapers such as *Thinakkural* and *Virakesari*. No state-owned Tamil language newspaper or any Sinhala language newspaper featured these statements.

Within the context of the 'unconstitutional' dissolution of parliament, Tamil Nadu politicians considered Sirisena's decisions to be threatening to India and called for immediate Indian intervention.⁴¹ Taking a national security perspective, urgent calls for Indian intervention were evident in titles such as, '*India must intervene immediately on the Sri Lankan issue – Anbumani Ramadoss*'.⁴² According to the reports, the push for Indian intervention came amidst India's vested commercial interests in the island as well as competition for regional power with China. Moreover, the possible political instability in a neighbouring democracy, following President Sirisena's reported disruption of parliamentary affairs, was also point of concern raised by these politicians in India.

From a minority perspective, the Tamil Nadu politicians cautioned against the dangers that Sirisena's disregard for democracy and the appointment of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa held for Sri Lanka's Tamil population. Concerns of Tamil Nadu politicians over Rajapaksa holding political office can be traced back to Sri Lanka's conflict, and immediate post-conflict years.⁴³ At the time, they alleged that Rajapaksa was associated with state-perpetrated violence. Following Rajapaksa's appointment by Sirisena and the dissolution of parliament, these allegations were reiterated. Similar allegations referencing Rajapaksa's repressive rule were also raised in section (iv). By contrast, one report in *Virakesari*, which

⁴⁰ Extraordinary Gazette No. 2096/70. <https://parliament.lk/uploads/documents/gazettes/20181109-2096-70-en.pdf>

⁴¹ On 13 November 2018, the Supreme Court issued an Interim Order, staying the operation of the Extraordinary Gazette issued by President Maithripala Sirisena, which was used to dissolve parliament. On 13 December, the Court unanimously held that the Gazette violated the fundamental rights of the people, and struck the Gazette down, thereby preventing the President from prematurely dissolving parliament. For further information see: <http://www.ft.lk/news/Supreme-Court-decree-on-dissolution-of-Parliament/56-666916>. <http://time.com/5479633/sri-lanka-supreme-court-dissolve-parliament-unconstitutional/>

⁴² *Thinakkural*, 11 November, p.08.

⁴³ Neil DeVotta, 'China's Influence in Sri Lanka' in *Rising China's Influence in Developing Asia* (2016), p.137. <https://books.google.lk/books?isbn=0191076147>

featured President of the Council of Justice of Peace for Justice and Human Rights (CJPJH) Fahath A. Majeed, supported the dissolution of parliament and the call for general elections.⁴⁴

Nevertheless, in limiting the lens of interpretation to Indian national security and the Sri Lankan Tamil community's security, the reportage did not feature a wider range of voices in the discussions. Additionally, commentary on the dissolution of parliament and its impact on minority communities remained ethnicised, and solely restricted to the Tamil population. By doing so, the reportage bypassed the larger ramifications of unconstitutionally dissolving parliament for all citizens.

(vi) Estate workers' pay increment postponed

Several protests demanding a wage increment of Rs. 1,000 were launched by estate workers during the reporting period of September–November 2018. The overall reportage of these protests with respect to the political situation and its relation to minorities received minimal coverage. Moreover, this coverage was restricted to mainstream Tamil language newspapers. Three groups of actors were primarily featured in the reportage:

(a) Parties representing up-country Tamil estate workers – utilising a rhetoric of accountability, the parties assured that they would not betray the mandate entrusted to them by Tamil estate workers. In accordance with this premise, the parties reportedly refused financial compensation to join the disputed government.

(b) Estate trade unions – rendered through an ethnicised, minority perspective, estate trade unions claimed the delay in obtaining a response to their demand was due to the current political situation. As mentioned previously, their demand was for a wage increment of Rs. 1,000.

(c) The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) – in line with the socialist ideology that is characteristic of their party, the JVP asserted that the political situation cannot be used as an excuse to overlook workers' wage demands. Although *Thinakkural* reported that the issue was brought to the attention of Mahinda Rajapaksa after 26 October, the issue remained unresolved during the reporting period.⁴⁵

With the exception of the JVP, the reportage suggests that the issue of estate worker wages remains an ethnicised issue in Sri Lankan politics and media, and is largely confined to the Tamil language press. There was an absence of similar reports in Sinhala language newspapers.

⁴⁴ *Virakesari*, 12 November, p.18.

⁴⁵ *Thinakkural*, 27 November, p.01, 08.

4. OBSERVATIONS

This section lists the main observations in the analysis of report with respect to media parochialism on the political situation in Sri Lanka.

- From the key issues discussed in the report, the stance of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) amidst the political impasse received the highest coverage, especially in the Tamil language press. In particular, one strand of coverage focused on how the TNA could use its parliamentary seats as political currency to obtain its respective demands. Within this strand of coverage, only the Sinhala paper *Ravaya* saw both political camps as having failed the TNA and the demands of the Tamil community.
- Coverage on the above issue also saw polarised views in the Sinhala and Tamil press with respect to interpretations of federalism. In general, the TNA interpreted federalism to be a form of self-rule and decentralisation. Meanwhile, coverage of voices in the Sinhala press saw federalism to be threatening the unitary status of Sri Lanka.
- Articles pertaining to the solutions promised by the disputed government to the Tamil minority received limited coverage in the Sinhala press. Meanwhile in the Tamil press, the coverage by the state-owned newspaper *Thinakaran* on this specific topic implied its support towards the disputed government. This coverage did not account for the past discontentment expressed by minority populations against members of the disputed government.
- In light of the appointment of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa to the post of Prime Minister, articles focusing on minority grievances were featured in the Tamil press. By underscoring the issues relevant to the Tamil minority, these articles did not feature other groups who were also subjected to injustice during the Rajapaksa government. Meanwhile in the Sinhala press, only *Anidda*, *Ravaya* and *Divaina* provided limited coverage on minority grievances in the context of Rajapaksa's return to power.
- Support towards the disputed government by Muslim political parties and the Muslim minority population received greater coverage than opposition towards the disputed government by the aforementioned groups. Articles analysed in this section were only featured in Tamil language newspapers.

- Coverage on President Maithripala Sirisena’s dissolution of parliament and its bearing on minorities focused on the perceived threat to Indian security and the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. These articles were only featured in mainstream Tamil language newspapers.
- Reportage on the estate workers’ demand for a wage increment amidst the political situation did not receive coverage in the Sinhala press. This lack of reportage suggests that estate worker issues remain ethnicised in Sri Lanka and largely limited to coverage in the Tamil press.

5. CONCLUSION

When taking the sum of articles on the political situation in Sri Lanka in relation to minorities during the reporting period into consideration, the volume of coverage (274 articles) points to public interest in the issue. Upon categorising these reports, however, a sizeable contrast between Tamil language reports (251) and Sinhala language reports (19) becomes apparent. In addition to a quantitative analysis, a qualitative analysis on these reports suggests that a balanced coverage on transitional justice and reconciliation is lacking in the local language press. Apart from a few reports, in general, each language press narrowed its focus to issues and perspectives that were perceived to be largely of relevance to its respective ethno-linguistic group. By prioritising information according to ethnic relevance, such reporting paved the way for each language press to often present a one-sided narrative. However, in order to have meaningful reconciliation, the general public may benefit from seeing multiple perspectives in reporting. Given the role that the media plays in shaping public thinking, greater efforts could be made to accommodate balanced coverage both quantitatively and qualitatively. Such measures could help to counter reporting bias, which, over the course of time, could contribute towards reconciliation by providing equal access to information for members of different linguistic groups and creating a more inclusive public discourse on national-level issues.

ANNEXURE 1

LIST OF EXHIBITS

1. Exhibit 1 – Newspapers Monitored
2. Exhibit 2 – Coverage in Tamil Language Newspapers
3. Exhibit 3 – Coverage in Sinhala Language Newspapers

ANNEXURE 2

Tamil Press:

1. Sampanthan meets and speaks with Maithri and Ranil individually. Spoke to Mahinda in a phone conversation | *Virakesari*, 28 October 2018, p.01, 10 | By: R. Ram

Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and the Opposition R. Sampanthan, in light of the recent political events, met for a discussion with Leader of the United National Party (UNP) Ranil Wickremesinghe, and President Maithripala Sirisena. Further, Sampanthan spoke to newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa over the telephone. While speaking to the three actors on behalf of the TNA, Sampanthan raised two major problems i.e. the new constitution and the resolution passed at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). Sampanthan stated that some progress is visible in accomplishing the UNHRC resolution. However, he expressed that further progress must be achieved without any barriers.

2. "A political solution for the Tamils very soon" – Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa | *Thinakaran*, 28 October 2018, p.01, 10 | No Byline

Newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, while speaking to his party members including Secretary General of the Sri Lankan People's National Party (Illankai Makkal Thesiyak Katchi) Vishnukanth at his residence yesterday (27 November), stated that he will soon find a solution for the persistent political problems faced by the Tamils. On hearing this, Vishnukanth expressed his happiness and stated that there wouldn't be any hindrance in finding solutions as there is just one political party, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), that would take decisions. He also added that problems concerning the Tamils such as the Tamil prisoners, takeover of lands, compensation, rehabilitation, and resettlement will be solved with ease.

3. "The reason for the collapse in government is to prevent the draft of the new constitution being brought to parliament" – Suresh Premachandran | *Thinakkural*, 28 October 2018, p.03 | By Roshan Nagalingam

Leader of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) stated that although the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) claimed that it has the power to decide on matters of governance, it is doubtful that such a need exists. Moreover, in a situation where the

constitutional draft is to be presented in parliament on 07 November, the toppling of the government may be a strategy. The political instability of the Sri Lankan government has been explicitly displayed through the ongoing political crisis. An attempt to form a new government by toppling the former one has occurred during a time period when the country is facing a period of adverse economic conditions. The parliament is to be convened on 16 November, and during this period, Mahinda's faction needs four more people to prove their majority. In such a situation, the new constitution will only be stripped. No one will be there to speak about it, the accountability to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) will not be enforced and the law related to missing persons will not be implemented.

4. Swamy is coming to meet Mahinda | *Thinakkural*, 28 October 2018, p.08 | No Byline

With Mahinda Rajapaksa having taken oaths as Prime Minister, senior Leader of India's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Subramaniam Swami stated that he was looking forward to paying a visit to Sri Lanka soon in order to address issues such as illegal fishing by Indian fishermen and resolving the problems of the Tamils. While extending his wishes to Rajapaksa, Swami stated that he will hold an extensive discussion with the Tamil people on the issues they face during his visit to Sri Lanka. He emphasised that his future plans were to declare the Rama Setu as a national monument and permit Hindus devotees to reach the Pillars of Ashoka by foot from Dhanushkodi. He said that he would work towards this once the Rameswaram and Ayodhya Airports were constructed and flight services could commence from all three destinations.

5. "More than ten Tamil political parties with the new Prime Minister Mahinda" - Praba Ganesan | *Thinakkural*, 28 October 2018, p.10 | No Byline

More than ten Tamil parties have joined the new Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, according to former MP and current Leader of the Democratic People's Congress (DPC) Praba Ganesan. Speaking at a media briefing after discussions held at Mahinda Rajapaksa's residence in Wijerama on Saturday (27 October), he said that Mahinda Rajapaksa was happy. He also claimed that Rajapaksa had promised to rebuild the nation and that all services required for the people will continue. He asserted that only Rajapaksa could resolve the communal issue. He added that they hoped to exert pressure over the salary issue of estate workers.

6. President Maithripala who emotionally spoke to Sampanthan about the danger to his life | *Virakesari*, 28 October 2018, p.4 | By: R. Ram

President Maithripala Sirisena met with Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) R. Sampanthan yesterday (27 October) at the Presidential Secretariat to discuss matters pertaining to the recent developments in the political situation of the country. Sampanthan raised the major concerns of the Tamil community such as the need for a permanent political solution, a new constitution and the need to further progress in relation to the resolution passed at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). He urged the President and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to address these issues together as one. Responding to the questions raised by Sampanthan on the sudden political changes in the country, Sirisena had emotionally referenced the danger to his life.

7. "Maithri has mocked the UN by making Mahinda the Prime Minister" – Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam | *Thinakkural*, 28 October 2018, p.10 | No Byline

Prime Minister of the former Provisional Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam Visuvanathan Rudra Kumaran stated that the UN, having extended its support to Sri Lanka in the past four years, has now found that its activities are changing. However, the former Provisional Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam has repeatedly stated that these changes were strategies and that President Maithripala Sirisena has confirmed it through his actions. He said that by appointing an individual who allegedly contributed to genocide as the Prime Minister, Sirisena had made a mockery of the UN. He pointed out that the UN had praised Sri Lanka on setting up the Office of Missing Persons (OMP), and claimed that the only person left to be investigated was Mahinda Rajapaksa. He also said that there was no difference between any of the leaders among the majority community in Sri Lanka.

8. "The Tamil National Alliance will reveal its decision at the correct time" – Sampanthan | *Thinakkural*, 28 October 2018, p.16 | No Byline

Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and the Opposition R. Sampanthan stated that the TNA would reveal its decision at the correct time. Former President Mahinda Rajapaksa took oaths as Prime Minister yesterday (27 October). Speaking to the media regarding the stand taken by the TNA in relation to this, he claimed that decisions cannot be released based on political persons as such decisions should be in line with certain policies. He said that at present, there are two important matters that would take place in the country: a decision considering the welfare of all the people in the country was taken in parliament, and steps to form a new constitution are in process and should be completed soon. He affirmed that

the decision taken by the UNHRC will be executed before March next year. He claimed that these two matters are of importance where the people of the country are concerned. He maintained that he had not thought about an independent party. He also said that the TNA's decision will be based on the two matters that have to be fulfilled.

9. "The Tamils will not get justice regardless of the party that comes into power" – Vaiko | *Thinakkural*, 28 October 2018, p.18 | No Byline

Founder and General Secretary of the Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) Gopalsamy, also known as *Vaiko*, stated that whichever party comes to power in Sri Lanka, the Tamils will not receive justice. He said that former President Mahinda Rajapaksa taking oaths as the Prime Minister suddenly has been widely discussed in Sri Lanka and around the world as well. Although this has received the support of a few, he said that many opposed this. He noted that Ranil Wickremesinghe stated that according to the 19th Amendment of the constitution, Rajapaksa's appointment is not valid. Yet, he claimed that the truth is that the Sinhalese are bent on wiping out the Tamil race and it is unlikely that the Tamils will receive justice. He said that they must also take note of all issues pertaining to the Eelam Tamils even at the UNHRC. He claimed that the Narendra Modi government has extended its support to a Sinhala government since assuming power.

10. Douglas congratulates Prime Minister Mahinda | *Thinakaran*, 28 October 2018, p.01, 10 | No Byline

Leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) Douglas Devananda in a statement congratulated the newly sworn in Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and added that if they take part in governance, they will work more than they did during their last tenure and find solutions for the Tamil people. Devananda also stated that in the past they worked together and will continue to work for the benefit of the people, unlike the Tamil political leaders who came into power with the promise of solving their problems and did not accomplish anything. Devananda explained that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) has not affectively expressed the problems of the Tamils including concerns such as a political solution, investigations into missing persons, employment opportunities for the youth, and livelihood opportunities. He affirmed that under the leadership of Rajapaksa, he would strive to solve them.

11. "There is no change in the stance of the Tamil National Alliance that the national government should be extended" – Sumanthiran | *Thinakkural* 28 October 2018, p.04 | No Byline

There is no change in the policy that the national government should be extended according to Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP M.A. Sumanthiran. An Indian media unit released this stating that he had informed this matter to the Indian media. The appointment of the new Prime Minister and the exit of the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) were the attacks made over the intentions of the national government. He said that the stance of the TNA was that the national government should continue.

12. A great victory for the people's aspirations | *Thinakaran*, 28 October 2018, p.04 | No Byline

Former MP, organiser for the Ampara District of the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) and Tamil representative for Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa – Podiyappu Piyasena – while celebrating in Akkaraipattu stated that former President Rajapaksa's re-entry into power is happy news for all the people of the country. He added that Rajapaksa's return was a form of justice given by god and a great victory achieved by the people of the country.

13. President Sirisena has planned this! Mavai has stated that they will work based on the wellbeing of the people | *Virakesari*, 28 October 2018, p.13, 21 | By: M. Newton

When questioned on the recent changes in the political situation in the country, Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP Mavai Senathirajah stated that President Maithripala Sirisena planned this political change along with the same individuals he campaigned against during the elections. Senathirajah stated that the Tamil community brought Sirisena into power considering the atrocities, war crimes and acts of ethnic violence committed by former President Mahinda Rajapaksa. However, he noted that the TNA will decide on whether to align with any actors only after considering the wellbeing of the Tamil community.

14. "These are actions that frighten the minority communities" – Callum Macrae a journalist for Channel 4 regarding the appointment of Mahinda | *Virakesari*, 28 October 2018, p.13, 21 | By: C.C.N

Callum Macrae, a journalist for Channel 4, via his Twitter handle stated that the news about the appointment of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister is both confusing and frightening. Macrae added that Rajapaksa was responsible for the deaths of

thousands of Tamil civilians. Further, he stated that Rajapaksa's appointment raises concerns about human rights, law and peace in the future.

15. Mahinda's new political appearance. Prominent Indians who were furious | *Virakesari*, 28 October 2018, p.23 | No Byline.

The appointment of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa as the new Prime Minister gained media attention even amongst the international community, particularly in India. Founder and General Secretary of the Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK), Vaiyapuri Gopalsamy commonly known as Vaiko, was critical about Rajapaksa. Vaiko was quoted saying that Rajapaksa, as the former President, was responsible for the murder of over one hundred and fifty thousand Tamils which included children, adults and pregnant mothers. Further, Vaiko reiterated that transitional justice for ethnic killings and war crimes must be met and added that the international community must understand the Sri Lankan government's abusive actions. Meanwhile, both Thol. Thirumavalavan and Gauthaman stated that India was involved in the government change in Sri Lanka and that both the Tamils and India will be affected by Rajapaksa's appointment.

16. "If I take part in governance, I will work towards finding solutions to the problems of the Tamil people" – Douglas Devananda while congratulating Prime Minister Mahinda | *Virakesari*, 28 October 2018, p.02 | No Byline

Secretary of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) Douglas Devananda, while congratulating the newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, stated that he will work hard to solve the issues faced by the Tamil community if he were to take part in governing. Devananda further stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) has failed to guide and find solutions to the major problems faced by the Tamil people despite the trust they had received from the voters. He stated that the need for a permanent political solution, matters pertaining to missing persons, release of lands, employment opportunities for the Tamil youth, livelihood opportunities and the release of political prisoners are some of the major problems faced by the Tamils. Devananda said that the EPDP will strive to solve these problems along with Rajapaksa.

17. Human Rights Watch fears that human rights violations might occur | *Virakesari*, 29 October 2018, p.03 | No Byline

Executive Director for the Asia Region of Human Rights Watch (HRW) Brad Adams, in light of the appointment of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister, stated that the human rights violations that occurred during Rajapaksa's presidency might occur once

again. Elaborating more on the issue, he stated that the current government's failure to bring justice to the victims of war crimes under the Rajapaksa government reopened the door for perpetrators of war crimes to return to their terrible practices. Adams added that it is critical that foreign governments which helped Sri Lanka return to a more rights-respecting government act to ensure those gains are not lost.

18. "The Tamil National Alliance has not decided yet" – Sampanthan | *Virakesari*, 29 October 2018, p.05, 09 | No Byline

Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and the Opposition R. Sampanthan stated that all major factions spoke to the TNA but the decision to align with one or the other has not yet been reached. President Maithripala Sirisena, the newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, and Ranil Wickremasinghe all approached Sampanthan. However, though these discussions are ongoing, Sampanthan assured that the TNA will consider the long overdue problems faced by the people before deciding on whom to align with.

19. Mahinda will release the Tamil political prisoners soon? Informs Namal | *Thinakkural*, 29 October 2018, p.4 | No Byline

The new Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa will take some important decisions regarding the Tamil political prisoners. Many political changes and activities are in progress after Mahinda Rajapaksa assumed power. A very strong decision will be taken regarding the political prisoners who have been detained for a very long period. MP Namal Rajapaska informed the public that a special document related to political prisoners is to be prepared and handed over to political experts. He stated that a strong decision will be taken in a short period of time for the quick release of political prisoners.

20. "Sampanthan must act intelligently and support Mahinda" – Karuna provides advice | *Thinakkural*, 29 October 2018, p.07 | No Byline

Former Deputy Minister and current Leader of the Tamil United Freedom Front, and Deputy Leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan (Karuna) stated that Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) R. Sampanthan is widely referred to as an intelligent politician but the action taken by him at the last Presidential election was foolish.

Karuna stated that they would welcome the TNA if they would show genuine concern for the welfare of the public instead of using parliament for their personal gain. In one situation, he said that they had to beg at the feet of the President and Ranil Wickremesinghe for the release of political prisoners. He added that this could have been achieved through better

negotiations. He said that they have many issues such as the political solution and release of political prisoners, and therefore, they should lay down the conditions to solve this.

21. “We will decide only after speaking to the international community including India” – Mavai Senathirajahh | *Virakesari*, 29 October 2018, p.07 | By: R. Virushan

Leader of Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) and a senior MP of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) Mavai Senathirajahh stated that the TNA will decide on whom to support in the current political situation in Sri Lanka after consulting the international community, including India and the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). Senathirajahh added that the TNA was surprised by President Maithripala Sirisena’s actions of coming into power in 2015 to fight against corruption, and subsequently joining hands with individuals who campaigned against him. Similarly, he added that a chaotic situation had arisen in the country amidst many plans such as the release of military occupied lands by 31 December, a new constitution and development projects, due to these recent political developments.

22. "The President has ignored the people's mandate" – Batticaloa MP Gnanamuthu Srineshan | *Virakesari*, 29 October 2018, p.14 | No Byline

Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP for the Batticaloa District Gnanamuthu Srineshan, while speaking on the appointment of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister, stated that President Maithripala Sirisena has forgotten and ignored the people’s mandate. Srineshan added that in 2015, people brought Sirisena to power and the President ignoring the people’s mandate is not healthy. Srineshan further explained that a government must give its priority to solve the national problem and that without solving the national problem, there won’t be development in the country. He, considering the prevailing situation in the country also states that the TNA will function based on the necessary means to solve the problems of the Tamil people.

23. "Minority groups must take advantage of the current political situation" – Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP) | *Virakesari*, 29 October 2018, p.14 | No Byline

General Secretary of the Tamil People’s Liberation Tigers (Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal/ TMVP) P. Prashanthan stated that minority communities must take advantage of the current political situation. He made this statement while addressing the media from the head office of the TMVP in Batticaloa. Prashanthan added that the future of the Tamil community depended on how Tamil political leaders acted during the current political situation. He also defended President Maithripala Sirisena’s decision to appoint Mahinda Rajapaksa as the new Prime Minister by stating that Sirisena understood that a government headed by the United

National Party (UNP) was not suitable for the country. Prashanthan said that a similar political situation arose in the 1960s and since Tamil political leaders did not use that opportunity correctly, the Tamil people had to face many problems.

24. Must support with conditions | *Thinakaran*, 29 October 2018, p.01, 04 | By: Maheswaran Prasath

Leader of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) and Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP Dharmalingam Sithadthan stated that the TNA must provide conditions to solve the problems faced by the Tamils if they were to support the new government. Sithadthan claimed that some of the conditions that were needed to be addressed included: the release of political prisoners, release of lands, a political solution for the problems faced by the Tamils, and the issue on missing persons. He also said that two things could be done immediately, i.e. the release of political prisoners and the release of lands.

25. The good governance government that did not fulfil its promises. Selection of Prime Minister is a great decision by the President | *Thinakaran*, 29 October 2018, p.03, 04 | No Byline

Former Deputy Minister and current Leader of the Tamil United Freedom Front, and Deputy Leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan (Karuna), while speaking on the President's decision to appoint Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister, stated that the government of good governance caused a decline in the country's politics, political rights, and economy over the last three years without achieving the election promises. He further stated that the new government will pay attention to the problems faced by the Tamil community such as the need for a political solution and the release of political prisoners.

26. The Tamil National Alliance must use the political situation in the South | *Thinakaran*, 29 October 2018, p.03, 04 | No Byline

Leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) Douglas Devananda, while taking part at a parliamentary committee meeting held under the leadership of President Maithripala Sirisena and newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) must use the prevailing political situation in the South as a great opportunity. Devananda further said that the fact that Tamil people are celebrating the change in government is an indicator of their hopes for a solution for both their daily issues and other important problems. He went onto state that the TNA, which claims to have

brought the last government into power and promised to solve the problems of the Tamil people including achieving a political solution, did not fulfil their promises.

27. Muslim MPs must support the new government | *Thinakaran*, 29 October 2018, p.12 | No Byline

Former Minister of the Eastern Provincial Council M.S. Subayir, while speaking to the media yesterday (28 October) about the recent change in government, stated that leaders who represent the Muslim community and Muslim MPs must support newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. In a call to protect both the country and its people, Subayir criticised the United National Party (UNP) for taking sides and favouring one faction during the ethnic problem. He also criticised the UNP for: ignoring the Muslim community in the drafting of the new constitution, bringing injustice to the Muslims through the new electoral system and for supporting the release of lands for only one ethnicity. Subayir urged the representatives of the Muslims to support President Maithripala Sirisena and Rajapaksa to gain a political solution for the Muslim community and the aspirations of the Muslims.

28. Will Ranil allow Sampanthan to remain in his position? | *Tamil Mirror*, 29 October 2018, p.04 | No Byline

In light of the announcement that Ranil Wickremesinghe was sacked from the post of Prime Minister, senior leader of the Democratic Leftist Party Dr.Chithambaram Mohan questioned if Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) R. Sampanthan will be allowed to function as the Leader of the Opposition. Speaking further on this at the Jaffna media auditorium on 27 October, he stated that former President Mahinda Rajapaksa made a come-back before the country could process whereby it could achieve a level of development that was prevalent prior to 2015. The Tamil people should try to resolve political issues on their own instead of expecting the West or the international community to do so, which would only result in disappointment. Presenting these issues to the majority in a way that would change their minds should be done strategically through smart political action.

29. The rights of Tamils and Muslims will be protected in Maithri's government | *Tamil Mirror*, 29 October, p.01, 02 | By: P. Nirosh

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), comprising of a small 15-member faction, informed that the rights of Tamil and Muslim minorities will be protected. They also stated that the mistakes which occurred during the regime of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa and the Maithri–Ranil government will not occur in the new government formed by the Maithri–Mahinda factions. This was stated by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa while issuing his

first press release after assuming duties as Prime Minister. He also stated that with the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) deciding to quit the national government, the responsibility of forming a new government fell upon the President. He said that therefore, "I was called to accept the post of Prime Minister with the view of setting up a new government." The Maithri–Mahinda faction stated that it would call upon MPs of the United National Party (UNP), Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) and Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) to render their support to the new Maithri–Mahinda government. These views were expressed by MPs S.B. Dissanayake, Thilanga Sumathipala and Dilan Perera at the media briefing held at the Independent Media Unit in Borella.

30. The minorities must use the prevailing political situation positively for themselves| *Tamil Mirror*, 29 October 2018, p.08 | By: V. Krishna

Secretary of the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP) P. Prasanthan requested the minorities to use the prevailing political situation positively for themselves. He also stated that the fate of the Tamil people depended on how Tamil leaders took advantage of this political climate. He stated this at the media briefing that was held on 28 October at the TMVP office situated in Vavikarai Veethy, Batticaloa.

"President Maithripala Sirisena was elected as the President of the minority people and prevented the country from falling into a bottomless pit by appointing the Prime Minister through his powers" Prasanth said.

He further stated that, "realising that the good governance government is not capable of doing anything, the President appointed Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister. The political leaders should take the prevailing political situation as an opportunity to help their community achieve its goals. Meanwhile, the Leader of the TMVP's women's wing and member of the Batticaloa Provincial Council stated that unlike the Mahinda regime, female-headed houses in the Eastern Province have not received any support in the last four years.

31. "No one was concerned to solve the problems of the North" – President Maithripala Sirisena | *Tamil Mirror*, 30 October 2018, p.1,2 | No Byline

President Maithripala Sirisena stated that those responsible for resolving the issues of the people of the North did not take the necessary action nor were they capable of resolving such issues. He stated that he would carry out extensive tasks in order to strengthen the economy of those living in the areas affected by the war in the North. He said that since 2015, only discussions had taken place in the cabinet regarding the housing programmes for the North. He added that in three and a half years, only back and forth discussions had occurred in trying to figure out who is to undertake this programme and which Minister should benefit from the foreign loans and financial aid. The President mentioned this while addressing a

meeting held at the Vap Magul ceremony held in Tissamaharama yesterday (29 October). He also went on to say that issues should not be resolved merely for the North or East but for the entire nation.

32. "There is no change in the release of lands" – Mavai stated that the President told him | *Tamil Mirror*, 30 October 2018, p.03 | No Byline

Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) MP Mavai Senathirajahh stated that the President had informed him that there will be no change in the functions that are being carried out to release the lands belonging to the general public, despite the political crisis in the country. These lands are being occupied by the three-armed force. He further stated that the new government should render its complete support towards this. This was a statement given by Senathirajahh to the media after a meeting that was held regarding the release of lands at the Jaffna District Secretariat headed by the Jaffna District Governor on 29 October.

33. Muslims will get redemption during Prime Minister Mahinda's era | *Thinakaran*, 30 October 2018, p.19 | No Byline

Former Chairperson of the Weligama Urban Council S.M. Mohammed, while speaking on President Maithripala Sirisena's decision to appoint Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister, stated that Muslim people would get redemption during the new Prime Minister's era. Mohammed added that in the past, Rajapaksa was falsely accused for the Digana and Gintota incidents. Mohammed assured that Rajapaksa was concerned about the Muslim people's concerns.

34. Muslims must not engage in protests against the new government | *Thinakaran*, 30 October 2018, p.01, 04 | No Byline

Leader of the National Congress A. L. M. Athaullah requested the Muslim community to refrain from participating in the protests in Colombo against the new government. Athaullah made this comment in light of the request made by Leader of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) Rauff Hakeem and Leader of the All Ceylon Makkal Congress (ACMC) Rishad Bathiudeen to take part in the protest organised in Colombo against the new government headed by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. He also said that the Muslim people should stay at home and not get caught into the schemes of certain individuals who were trying to start an ethnic problem between the Sinhalese and Muslims.

35. "TNA must make a decision to support based on the problems faced by the Tamil people" – Suresh Premachandran | *Virakesari*, 30 October 2018, p.03 | By: M. Newton

Leader of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) Suresh Premachandran, while addressing the media from his house yesterday (29 October), stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) must decide on showing their support based on the problems faced by the Tamil people. If favourable conditions for Tamils are not negotiated, he said that they must remain neutral in the current political situation. Premachandran further said that Sirisena came into power in 2015 based on the votes of the United National Party (UNP), the Tamil community and other minority votes but has appointed the very same people he opposed. Despite some progress regarding the issues faced by the Tamil people under the leadership of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, most of the concerns of the Tamil people were lagging. Considering this, Premachandran said that the TNA must decide whom to support based on the concerns of the Tamil people.

36. "Must reach a decision only after negotiating with conditions" – Dharmalingam Sithadthan | *Virakesari*, 30 October 2018, p.02 | No Byline

Leader of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP Dharmalingam Sithadthan stated that the TNA must provide conditions to solve the problems faced by the Tamils, such as the release of land and political prisoners, and negotiate to arrive at a decision. Sithadthan further said that both the United National Party (UNP) and the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) requested the support of the TNA. The PLOTE, he confirmed, will not act separately and go along with the decision of the TNA.

37. Muslims must not engage in protests against the new government| *Thinakaran*, 30 October 2018, p.01, 04 | No Byline

Leader of the National Congress A. L. M. Athallah requested the Muslim community to refrain from participating in the protests in Colombo against the new government. Athallah made this comment in light of the request made by Leader of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) Rauff Hakeem and Leader of the All Ceylon Makkal Congress (ACMC) Rishad Bathiudeen to take part in the protest organised in Colombo against the new government headed by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. He also said that the Muslim people should stay at home and not get caught into the schemes of certain individuals who were trying to start an ethnic problem between the Sinhalese and Muslims.

38. No need to support anyone who does not comply to our requests | *Thinakaran*, 30 October 2018, p.03, 04 | No Byline

Leader of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) Suresh Premachandran, while addressing the media from his house yesterday (29 October) stated that the EPRLF or the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) need not support any party that does not comply by the requests that are put forward. Explaining his statement, Premachandran said that the appointment of a new Prime Minister has created a political crisis in the country and that both actors – Mahinda Rajapaksa and Ranil Wickremesinghe – are claiming to be the Prime Minister and have requested the support of the TNA. He added that even though the TNA supported the former government, the question as to what they achieved during the last four years to solve the problems of the Tamil people have arisen. Premachandran stated that if both actors do not support the requests of the Tamil people, then the Tamil representatives must stay neutral.

39. The Muslim Congress must consider the wellbeing of the Muslims and should remain neutral | *Thinakkural*, 30 October 2018, p.02 | No Byline

It is the need of the hour for the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) to function independently in parliament for the welfare of the Muslims during this period of political turmoil, stated senior member of the SLMC and former member of the Kalmunai Municipal Council F.M.A. Ansar. Speaking at a media briefing held at his Maruthumunai residence regarding the sudden change of governance in the country, he said that the welfare of Muslims is challenged by the prevailing political climate that poses threat. Therefore, the Muslim Congress should think wisely and be patient since it is best to remain unbiased and function neutrally. This would enable the SLMC to regain its former composition. The SLMC should attain its true goal of its existence by functioning independently as the Muslim nationality has been threatened like never before in history.

40. "The time is ripe for Sumanthiran to deliver on the promises he made to the Tamil people" – MP Annamalai Nadesu Sivasakthi | *Thinakkural*, 30 October 2018, p.04 | No Byline

The time is ripe for Sumanthiran to deliver on the promise that he would step down from politics if a political solution for the Tamils could not be found by the good governance government. This was stated by member of the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) and Vanni MP Annamalai Nadesu Sivasakthi. He expressed this view to the media while participating at the protest staged by the estate workers for a basic salary of Rs. 1,000. He added that the good governance government came into power with the support of the North, East and the

upcountry, but now the government has stumbled and collapsed. He claimed that in 2017 when they had the TNA Coordination Committee Meeting, they foresaw that they would not be able to gain anything from the government if they permitted time to pass.

41. "Muslim MPs must come forward to support the new Prime Minister" | *Thinakkural*, 30 October 2018, p.10 | No Byline

Former Minister of the Eastern Province M.S. Zubair stated that political leaders and MPs, including those of the North and East who represent the Muslim community, should support the new Prime Minister and the new government headed by the President in order to protect the country and its people. He said that they should take advantage of the political crisis to succeed in achieving a political solution and fulfill the aspirations of the Tamils.

42. "The minorities must use the current political situation in their favour" – TMVP | *Thinakkural*, 30 October 2018, p.17 | No Byline

Minorities should use the current political situation in their favour, according to General Secretary of the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP) P. Prasanth. He emphasised that the fate of the Tamil people lies in the hands of Tamil leaders and they should use the current political situation in their favour. When a similar situation occurred in 1960, he claimed that it was not used in favour of the Tamils and resulted in the Tamils having to face many losses. Meanwhile, the Leader of the women's wing of the TMVP said that female-headed households in the Eastern Province received great support under the former regime yet did not receive any support in the past four years.

43. Sampanthan put forward two conditions to Ranil and Mahinda in exchange for support | *Thinakkural*, 30 October 2018, p.19 | No Byline

Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and the Opposition R. Sampanthan stated that they would extend their support to the faction that is willing to fulfill the two conditions put forward by the TNA. He stated that these conditions were made known to Ranil Wickremesinghe at Temple Trees on Sunday following a personal phone call from the latter inviting Sampanthan's presence. The creation of a new constitution and implementing the decision that was put forward by the UNHRC in agreement with Sri Lanka were the two conditions that were presented to Ranil and Mahinda. He also stated that he explained to Maithri, Ranil, and Mahinda that parliament would decide on who the next Prime Minister would be.

44. "The Tamil National Alliance will support the side that releases the Tamil political prisoners within a month" – Dharmalingam Sithadthan | *Thinakkural*, 30 October 2018, p.20 | No Byline

Leader of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) Dharmalingam Sithadthan stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) should support the faction that accepts the condition to release the Tamil political prisoners within a month. He stated this to the BBC. The TNA should unite and decide to whom it would extend its support; either to the United National Party (UNP) led by Ranil Wickremesinghe or the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) led by Mahinda Rajapaksa. The decision taken by the TNA should be for the welfare of the Tamils. The two conditions that the TNA should present are clear. The first being the release of the Tamil political prisoners and the second being the immediate release of land belonging to the Tamils. The other important matters related to the issues of the Tamils is acting to resolve the ethnic problem. Decisions taken by the TNA should not be based on the dominance of its constituent parties such as the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) but rather the alliance.

45. "We have left the Tamil National Alliance" - Member of Parliament Annamalai Nadesu Sivasakthi | *Thinakkural*, 30 October 2018, p.6 | No Byline

Leader of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) Suresh Premachandran stated that he has left the Tamil National Alliance (TNA). He stated this to the media while participating in the human chain protest that was staged in Vavuniya by estate workers who were demanding a basic salary of Rs. 1,000. He also said that the central committee of the EPRLF hopes to hold a discussion over the country's political crisis and possible solutions. He claimed that they left the TNA on the grounds that the promises made to the Tamils were unfulfilled. He added that the TNA did not fulfill the election mandate and that they only acted for the welfare of their party. He saw this to be a grave injustice that they are committing towards the people.

46. "If no support is given to our requests, then we will be neutral" – Suresh Premachandran | *Tamil Mirror*, 30 October 2018, p.04 | By: S. Nidarshan

Leader of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) Suresh Premachandran stated that there is no benefit in supporting anyone if no support or approval is given to their requests. He insisted that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) should take a neutral stand in matters much like his party hopes to do. He said this while responding to the questions raised at a media briefing held at his residence yesterday (30 October). He also said that it was important that Tamil factions take appropriate decisions during this

time. He highlighted that many are anxiously looking forward to the decisions that will be taken by the TNA. As such, he insisted that all decisions should be for the benefit of the Tamil people.

47. The Tamil National Alliance must support the faction that promises to fulfil the requests. Suresh Premachandran says if not, it is best to remain neutral | *Thinakkural*, 30 October 2018, p.05 | By: T. Vinojith

Leader of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) Suresh Premachandran made the following remarks at a media briefing held at his residence yesterday (29 October). The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) should render its support to the faction that support its requests on behalf of the Tamil people and their welfare. The stand taken by the Tamil faction should be unified, either towards the Ranil faction or the Mahinda faction. If the Tamil faction wishes to take another stand then it should avoid joining other factions and take a neutral stand and the EPRLF would follow this. We cannot expect the promises of the Tamil people to be fulfilled when the President, who is not in favour of abolishing the executive presidency or eradicating bribery and corruption in the country, appoints Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister instead. Therefore, President Maithripala Sirisena's thoughts on bribery and corruption become questionable and no one can trust him. He holds no concern for the issues faced by the Tamil people, all he wants is another term as President.

48. "By strengthening the hands of Mahinda, the Tamil people will gain redemption" - Alayadivembu SLFP Organiser | *Thinakaran*, 30 October 2018, p.18 | No Byline

Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) Organiser for Alayadivembu Kanesapillai Ragupathi, while congratulating newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa on behalf of the Tamil people, expressed his happiness at Rajapaksa's return. Ragupathi further credited Rajapaksa for being able to draw the attention of the international community through his extensive development projects and thanked him for building carpeted roads throughout the country. Ragupathi stated that unlike Ranil Wickremesinghe who didn't like to give any solutions, Rajapaksa will provide the necessary solutions for the concerns of the Tamil people and bring light into their lives.

49. Muslims will get redemption during Prime Minister Mahinda's era | *Thinakaran*, 30 October 2018, p.19 | No Byline

Former Chairperson of the Weligama Urban Council S.M. Mohammed, while speaking on President Maithripala Sirisena's decision to appoint Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister,

stated that the Muslim people would get redemption during the new Prime Minister's era. Mohammed added that in the past, Rajapaksa was falsely accused for the Digana and Gintota incidents. Mohammed assured that Rajapaksa was concerned about the Muslim people's concerns.

50. President's speech at the Vap ceremony: Delay in taking responsibility for taking funds to build houses for the people in the North| *Thinakaran*, 30 October 2018, p.01, 04 | No Byline

President Maithripala Sirisena, while speaking at the 'Vap Magul' ceremony held in Tissamaharama on 29 October, stated that the people who held responsibilities failed to respond to the issues of the people in the North within the last three and a half years. Proposed housing projects for the people in the North, he says, were only limited to mere cabinet discussions and added that the funds were taken over by any Minister. Sirisena also stated that people in the North were the most affected by war. MPs Chamal Rajapaksa, Mahinda Amaraweera, Angajan Ramanathan, Kader Masthan, Chief Minister of the Southern Province Shan Vijayalal De Silva, religious leaders as well as several other dignitaries took part in the ceremony. Prior to the event, President Sirisena was joined by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa at the Tissamaharama Raja Maha Vihara for religious observances.

51. "Must forget the differences and support with conditions" – Rev. Joseph Ponniah | *Thinakaran*, 31 October 2018, p.03 | No Byline

The Bishop for Batticaloa and Ampara, Reverend Joseph Ponniah, spoke to journalists regarding the current political situation in the country and how the Tamil representatives should act in this instance. He stated that the Tamil parties must forget all the differences between them and support the new Prime Minister with certain conditions. Ponniah added that the current situation was a great opportunity for the Tamil people to express their concerns and obtain a solution. Quoting the Bible, "Ask and it will be given to you; knock and the door will be opened to you", Ponniah stated that this situation was the proverbial knock on the door, and the time to respond has dawned. Ponniah also stated that the Tamil people have suffered significantly, and that the future of the Tamils rested in the hands of the representatives.

52. "Tamil people must provide their fullest support to the joint rule of Maithri and Mahinda" – Former Deputy Minister Praba Ganesan | *Virakesari*, 31 October 2018, p.16 | No Byline

Former Deputy Minister and current Leader of the Democratic People's Congress Praba Ganesan stated that the Tamil people must provide their fullest support to the joint rule of President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to gain the fullest benefits. While defending Sirisena's decision to appoint Rajapaksa, Ganesan stated that the country has declined in terms of its economy during the last three and a half years. As such, he said that the appointment of former President Rajapaksa, who developed the country after the end of war, is positive for the future of the country. Ganesan added that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) must realise that no solution could be reached under the United National Front (UNF) government which was under the leadership of Ranil Wickremesinghe. He outlined that solutions to the problems faced by the Tamils, including the release of political prisoners, can only be gained through the joint rule of Maithri and Mahinda.

53. TNA's decision must be a decisive one | *Virakesari*, 31 October 2018, p.04 | No Byline

The current political situation with the appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa has created a political crisis in Sri Lanka. The two major political parties – the United National Party (UNP) under the Leadership of Ranil Wickremesinghe and the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) – are currently involved in attempts to persuade MPs to show their majority in parliament. The minority parties that are part of the United National Front (UNF) coalition government such as the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), Tamil Progressive Alliance (TPA) and the All Ceylon Makkal Congress (ACMC) have chosen to remain with the coalition. Meanwhile, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) has chosen to remain neutral in this political situation. This has left the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) as the decisive force for both the main actors.

President Maithripala Sirisena, Leader of the UNP Ranil Wickremesinghe, and members of the UPFA have approached Leader of the TNA R. Sampanthan wanting the party's support. Leader of the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) Mavai Senathirajahh stated that the TNA will decide after discussing with other countries, India, and the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). Meanwhile, the Leader of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) Suresh Premachandran requested the TNA to base their decision mainly on the problems faced by the Tamil people and if not, for the TNA to remain neutral in this situation. Leader of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) and Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP Dharmalingam Sithadthan requested the TNA to come to a

decision by presenting the issues of the Tamil people, including the need to release political prisoners and the release of lands. Similarly, several other Tamil politicians have given their own opinions on the situation. Given this situation, the TNA must use this opportunity to solve the problems of the Tamil people. In this situation, all the TNA MPs must unite and present the problems faced by the Tamil people.

54. "Will there be happy news with Rajapaksa's return?" – Relatives of the missing persons | *Tamil Mirror*, 31 October 2018, p.04 | By: S. Geethanjan

The relatives of missing people in Mullaitivu hold high expectations and expect to hear positive news regarding their children, after Mahinda Rajapaksa's return to governance. They are requesting for information regarding their children through protest for the 603rd day up to yesterday (30 October). Secretary of the Association for relatives of the missing persons P. Ranjana stated that 1400 individuals in the Mullaitivu District alone were abducted after the war was ended in 2009, and that they were holding protests from that time. Although they approached the government to seek the support of the international community to resolve this issue, it was taken into consideration. Therefore, they are filled with hope once again that they can expect to hear some good news regarding their children upon the return of Mahinda Rajapaksa.

55. "President's notion of releasing lands in the North is welcome" – Mavai Senathirajahh | *Virakesari*, 31 October 2018, p.14 | No Byline

Leader of the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) Mavai Senathirajahh, while briefing the media after taking part in a meeting at the Jaffna District Secretariat on 29 October regarding the release of lands, welcomed President Maithripala Sirisena's statement. As per this statement, the President promised further progress in relation to the releasing of people's land even amidst the political crisis in the country. The meeting on the release of lands was held under the leadership of Governor of the Northern Province Reginald Cooray with the participation of officials from the tri-forces, police, officials from the Department of Lands and several other representatives. Senathirajahh stated that Sirisena promised to release all lands that are currently under military occupation before 31 December 2018 and that meetings were already held in Mullaitivu and Mannar regarding the steps that needed to be taken. Commenting on the meeting held in Jaffna, Senathirajahh stated that all participants at the meeting agreed to release a certain amount of land under military occupation, and that a financial amount was requested by the military and the police to release the lands under their occupation.

56. Minority communities must use this situation wisely| *Thinakaran*, 31 October 2018, p.20 | No Byline

General Secretary of the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP) P. Prashanthan stated that minority communities must use the prevailing political situation positively. He made this statement while addressing the media from the TMVP's head office in Batticaloa. Prashanthan further stated that the future of the Tamil community depended on how the Tamil political leaders acted at this moment. He also defended President Maithripala Sirisena's decision to appoint Mahinda Rajapaksa as the new Prime Minister, adding that Sirisena understood that the government headed by the United National Party (UNP) was not suitable for the country. Meanwhile, Prashanthan said that during the previous reign of Rajapaksa, many families that depend on the leadership of women were aided.

57. "War criminal, who is once again in power" - Samantha Power | *Thinakkural*, 31 October, p.01, 05 | No Byline

Former United States Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power stated that Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena has once again appointed a war criminal in the seat of power. As per her tweet, she said that President Sirisena, who promised that he would bring forth accountability, has now appointed someone who is responsible for war crimes and missing persons. Therefore, she said that immediate diplomatic action is essential.

58. Mahinda, who requested support from Sampanthan | *Thinakkural*, 31 October, p.01, 05 | No Byline

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa requested Leader of the Tamil National Alliance and the Opposition R. Sampanthan to prove his majority in parliament. Sampanthan met with the Prime Minister yesterday (30 October) at Rajapaksa's official residence where G. L. Pieris was also present. Rajapaksa requested the support of the TNA's 16 MPs in order to prove the majority in parliament. Sampanthan, in response to this, stated that the TNA would not render its support unless they are promised in writing that the requests of the TNA will be fulfilled, and this too will be subject to review by all parliamentarians in the alliance. Rajapaksa supposedly replied to this in anger, by stating that if the TNA's support cannot be assured, they should take a neutral stand.

59. "The constitution is not a concern for Sinhala Buddhist political parties" – Tamil Civil Society Forum | *Thinakkural*, 31 October 2018, p.06 | No Byline

The Tamil Civil Society Forum informed that there is no difference in what happened in 2015 and this was proved without doubt. The statement released by the joint speakers of this group included the disrespectful state the country reached due to the constitutional culture. They said that the constitution is not a concern for Sinhala Buddhist political parties. They cited the political crisis to support this and reminded that the Tamils had once again witnessed the complications involved in reaching their aspirations through a democratic liberal political system. They claimed that the events that occurred toppled the “changes” that were supposed to have occurred in 2015. As such, they said that there is no doubt that both the main political parties share a Sinhala Buddhist ideology. They advised that before Tamil MPs decide on whom they will support in parliament, the MPs should get their promises in writing from the party to which they hope to extend their support.

60. "Cannot suspend the needs of the people by stating national security" – S. Siva Mohan | *Thinakkural*, 31 October 2018, p.10 | No Byline

Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) MP S. Sivamohan stated that he explained to the military at a meeting held with the Governor at the Mullaitivu District secretariat, that the lands of the people which were acquired could not be taken from the people in the name of national interest. A discussion arranged by the Northern Province Governor over land issues in the North was held with military officers, MPs, and officers of departments related to land. Although a conclusive decision was not taken at this meeting, healthy matters were discussed, and the Governor stated that he would inform the President of the meeting’s developments.

61. "The solutions to the problems faced by the Tamils will be given by the joint governance of Maithri and Mahinda" – Former Deputy Minister Praba Ganesan | *Thinakkural*, 31 October 2018, p.12 | By: Roshan Nagalingam

Former Deputy Minister Praba Ganesan stated that he believed that solutions to the problems faced by the Tamils will be given by the joint governance of President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. He emphasised that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) shouldn’t miss this opportunity to support the President and Prime Minister, with conditions. He added that the Tamil people will not forgive them if this opportunity is missed. He believed that the President and Prime Minister joined hands by taking the future of the country into consideration. Therefore, he said that the TNA should take a neutral stand while voting for the majority in parliament.

62. "The Tamil National Alliance didn't do anything. We will solve the problems of the people" – Douglas Devananda | *Thinakkural*, 31 October 2018, p.22 | No Byline

According to Minister of Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Northern Development and Hindu Religious Affairs Douglas Devananda, from the time they joined in governance, they worked hard and did a remarkable service. While wishing Mahinda Rajapaksa, he said that if they joined the government once again, they would make better efforts and work towards resolving the issues of the Tamils in an environment free from war. He said that the TNA claims to have been in the pedestal of governance in the previous regime, yet the TNA seized votes from the Tamil people and failed to resolve the main issues. He also stated that the Eelam People's Liberation Front (EPRLF) would exert effort and provide guidance to the government headed by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. In the meantime, he said that they hope that the provincial council election will be held on time as this would result in a representative of the people being elected to the provincial council.

63. Sampanthan presents conditions to Prime Minister Mahinda. He also stated that they can consider supporting, if it is put into writing| *Virakesari*, 31 October 2018, p.01, 02 | No Byline

Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and the Opposition R. Sampanthan met Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa yesterday (30 October) at the invitation of the Prime Minister. At this meeting, Rajapaksa requested the TNA to support the new government. However, Sampanthan presented several conditions and requested that the conditions be put into writing as a guarantee. He also emphasised to Rajapaksa on providing a solution for the Tamil people without continuing to trick them. Some of the conditions put forward by Sampanthan included the major concerns of the Tamil people such as: the release of political prisoners, release of lands, a political solution, and a new constitution. Responding to the conditions of the TNA, Rajapaksa stated that it was not possible for them to accept these conditions amidst the current situation. Rajapaksa affirmed that they would give these conditions in writing once the new government receives the people's mandate through an election.

64. Parliamentary members of the TNA met to examine the political crisis | *Virakesari*, 31, October 2018, p.03 | No Byline

A meeting was held between the members of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) who were elected as members of parliament at the office of the Opposition Leader in parliament. The meeting was organised by Leader of the TNA and the Opposition R. Sampanthan and was attended by 11 of the 16 TNA MPs. Three members were unable to attend the meeting as they were out of the country, while another member was in Jaffna. At this meeting, Sampanthan

briefed the members of his meetings with both Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and the Leader of the United National Party (UNP). It was emphasised that a decision must be reached with the considerations put forward by Sampanthan which will help to solve the problems faced by the Tamil people.

65. "Danger for the Tamils in the hands of evil powers" | *Tamil Mirror*, 31 October 2018, p.08 | By: A.S.M. Haneez

The Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna Party's Divisional Organiser for Karaitivu, R.Tharmalingam, along with supporters from his area met former MP and Pottuvil Area Organiser and Coastal Coordinator B.H. Piyasena at his office yesterday(30 October) to extend their wishes to Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. While here Piyasena stated that the Tamils were in danger at the hands of evil powers. R. Tharmalingam stated that evil forces had raised their hands in Tamil areas. Therefore, he asserted that he would work to redeem the Tamil people from these evil forces and uplift their lives.

66. The Tamil National Alliance did not act as the voice of the people | *Tamil Mirror*, 01 November 2018, p.04 | By: S. Rosarian Lambert

Emmanuel Sebamalai, a prominent Tamil Catholic activist, stated yesterday (31 October) at a meeting held in Mannar that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) has not been the voice of the Tamil people in many instances. He stated that the TNA remains the decision-making force during a time when the country is facing a political crisis. He insisted that although the TNA has not been the voice of the Tamil people in many instances, they should take advantage of this political crisis in the right manner. He further said that the TNA should render its support to the government that promised to resolve the issues of the Tamils and to fulfil the promises made at the UNHRC.

67. Where are the Tamils in this political crisis? | *Tamil Mirror*, 01 November 2018, p.08 | By: Kanagalingam Kobikrishna

Sri Lanka has sent shockwaves locally and across the world with the current political crisis, but the position of the minority people and the Tamils is in question. Where are the Tamils in the political dialogue considering it would be the Tamils who will become the most affected if the anticipated political change comes to stay? President Maithripala Sirisena criticised Ranil Wickremesinghe during his address regarding the political crisis. The unexpected political change where President Maithripala Sirisena united with Mahinda Rajapaksa did not surprise the Tamils. Political activists in Colombo champion only some causes such as targeting Mahinda Rajapaksa alone for war crimes. Meanwhile, the Tamil people are concerned that a

government with many members from the majority in the country will not investigate into the wellbeing of the Tamil people. Any change that is to take place in Sri Lanka should be structural, otherwise it would end up similar to the change that was brought about on 08 January 2015 to satisfy the political activists of Colombo and the international community. As a result, small changes would take place, but true democratic change would not be possible. It is explicit that power and authority are with the majority. Therefore, all those who raise their voice and request to "protect the constitution" should accept that the same constitution is used to suppress minorities.

68. "Need the cooperation of everyone to serve the people in a great manner" – Douglas Devananda | *Thinakaran*, 01 November 2018, p.01, 04 | No Byline

Leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) and Minister of Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, and Hindu Religious Affairs Douglas Devananda assumed duties at his ministry yesterday (31 October). While speaking at the ceremony, Devananda stated that since the previous government did not serve the people in an appropriate manner, he had obtained this opportunity to be a Minister. He claimed that services should be granted to the Tamil people without fooling them and worrying them. He extended his support to officials who face difficulty when providing important services to the people. Secretary to the Ministry V. Sivagnanasothy and Advisor to the Ministry Prof. Wigneswaran took part in the event.

69. "International organisations that are scared of Mahinda" – Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekara | *Virakesari*, 01 November 2018, p.03 | By: Rajadurai Hashan

Leader of the Organisation for the Protection of the Rights of the Army, Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekara, stated that international actors are showing their opposition in fear of newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. Weerasekara added that there won't be further accusations against the military at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). While criticising the previous government, he said that for the last three years the government has been working according the promptings of the international community and diaspora communities which affected the sovereignty of Sri Lanka and negatively impacted the army. He added that Rajapaksa will not allow any form of foreign intervention. Speaking on the UNHRC resolution and the accusations against the army that is to be taken up next March (2019) for debate, Weerasekara stated that the rights of the army need to be safeguarded.

70. "Sampanthan's conditions will destroy the Tamils" – Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam | *Thinakkural*, 01 November 2018, p.01, 05 | By: K. Hamsanan

Leader of the Tamil National People's Front (TNPf) Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam stated that the two conditions presented by Leader of the Opposition and the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) R. Sampanthan to elect the Prime Minister would destroy the Tamils. He also queried as to what guarantee the TNA has to prove that the issues of the Tamils will be resolved by Mahinda Rajapaksa, Ranil Wickremesinghe and Maithripala Sirisena who disappointed them in the last regime and are keen to possess power and authority. The constitution that accepts a unified government and the Geneva decision that insists on internal inquiry to be carried out are the two conditions put forward by the TNA. This however could completely destroy the welfare of the Tamils and clearly shows the state in which the TNA has kept the Tamils. It was only after the President appointed Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister that the TNA accepted the presence of the Tamil people that the good governance government had not kept its promises in the past three and a half years.

71. "Got this chance as a Minister due to the dysfunctionality of the previous government" – Douglas Devananda | *Thinakkural*, 01 November 2018, p.03 | No Byline

Minister of Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Northern Development and Hindu Religious Affairs Douglas Devananda states that he obtained his chance as a Minister due to the dysfunctionality of the previous government. While assuming duties as a Minister, he said that they will provide the people with the right service at the right time without causing any disappointment or discomfort. He confirmed that he will come forward to relieve any issues faced by employees while attempting to deliver their services, and added that people may come at any time to him to present their grievances.

72. "The Tamil National Alliance that is acting under the guidance of super powers" – Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam | *Thinakkural*, 01 November 2018, p.04 | By: K. Hamsanan

Leader of the Tamil National People's Front (TNPf) Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam accused the Tamil National Alliance of acting under the guidance of super powers. The TNA's Spokesperson released a media report that says Leader of the Opposition and the TNA R. Sampanthan in his capacity as an MP, sought Mahinda Rajapaksa out to present the TNA's conditions. He levelled these accusations during a media briefing held at the TNPf office in Jaffna. Here Sampanthan visited Mahinda Rajapaksa, accepting him the leader of the country, in order to protect his position as leader of the opposition and sub committees, for which he was severely warned by the masters of the TNA. The meeting Sampanthan had with Mahinda

was not considering the welfare of the Tamil people but personal gain and the guidance of foreign super powers.

73. "Muslim political parties can come to the government's side to support Mahinda's government" – Hizbullah | *Thinakkural*, 01 November 2018, p.06 | No Byline

Muslims parties can take the side of the government headed by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa according to former State Minister and MP M.L.A.M. Hizbullah. We have the confidence that appointment of the new premier would stabilize the economy and improve economic growth. The President took such a decision considering the economic crisis and the conspiracy to assassinate the President over which inquiries were not made. Many political changes can take place before parliament is convened on 16 November, in which case many parliamentarians may join the new government. We have 96 seats and we will need another 17 seats, which we will take. Discussions over this are being held.

74. "The TNA must support the actors who fulfil the promises made to the United Nations" – Rev. Sebamalai | *Thinakkural*, 01 November 2018, p.7 | No Byline

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) was elected by the people. The representatives who are considered to be Tamils have not been the voice of Tamil people on many occasions according to human rights activist Rev. Sabamalai. He stated this during a media interview at an event held in Mannar on Wednesday (31 October). He further stated that the TNA remains a decision-making force amidst the current political crisis that has arisen in the country. HE maintained that the TNA should extend their support to those who will promise to resolve the issues of the Tamil people and the promises made at the United Nations.

75. "Must use this situation as an opportunity for the rights of Tamil people"- Former Eastern Provincial Council Member R. Thurairatnam | *Thinakkural*, 01 November 2018, p.17 | No Byline

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and the representatives of the people should use the political change as an opportunity in relation to the Tamil people's rights. This request was made by Eastern Provincial Council member R. Thurairatnam. He also made the following remarks. The sudden appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister by the President was news that flashed in the media across the world. This election which has been viewed from legal perspective, forces the majority to be proved in parliament. Since a political climate where the minority parties can strike a bargain using their representation has been created, it is a great opportunity. The TNA has the responsibility of using this for the rights of the Tamil people. Those who have been elected in the national parties have a greater share of power, to

affirm the governance the support of particular MPs is vital, crossovers from the South are also not impossible. Such is the impact of the political change that has taken place which has not spared the hill country nor the North and East. Therefore, this is the ideal time to harvest and gain a profitable guarantee for the welfare of the people.

76. Sampanthan's conditions | *Virakesari*, 01 November 2018, p.04 | No Byline

Leader of the Opposition and the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) R. Sampanthan, while meeting newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa on 30 October listed certain conditions considering the concerns and problems of the Tamil community. Sampanthan further requested that Rajapaksa must pledge to solve these issues in a written form. Some of the conditions that were laid out were the release of lands, release of political prisoners, issues pertaining to the drafting of a new constitution and the providing of a political solution for the Tamil people. Rajapaksa has stated that he will not be able to provide a written pledge as the appointment of the new government was not made through people's mandate and that once they receive the peoples mandate through the elections, they will be able to grant a written pledge. Sampanthan has made these requests considering the history of previous governments in not providing solutions and fooling Tamil people. For instance, during the last Presidential elections held in 2015, the incumbent President Maithripala Sirisena was able to come into power based on the votes of the minority including that of the Tamil people. The TNA at this instance too made certain conditions to solve the problems of the Tamil people, however trusting Sirisena and in order to not affect his campaign the TNA did not get a written pledge from him. Considering that the previous government did not progress much on the problems of the Tamil people, Sampanthan and the TNA has requested that the conditions must be provided in a written format.

77. "Should not let go of this golden opportunity" – Former Deputy Minister Radhakrishnan requests from the leaders of the minority community | *Virakesari*, 01 November 2018, p.09 | No Byline

Former Deputy Minister P. Radhakrishnan, while speaking on the appointment of the new Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, stated that the appointment of Rajapaksa is a golden opportunity for the minority communities to solve their problems and therefore, they should not let go of this opportunity. Radhakrishnan added that Rajapaksa is a person who ended the inequality that persisted for a long period of time and that he had the support of the majority of people as evidenced through the last local government elections. He further urged the Tamil and Muslim community leaders to use this opportunity to build a permanent and secure future for the people they represent.

78. The two conditions of the TNA will destroy the wellbeing of the Tamil people. Tamil National People's Front accuses | *Virakesari*, 01 November 2018, p.11 | No Byline

Leader of the Tamil National People's Front (TNPF) Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam, while speaking to the media from the Kokkuvil office of the TNPF, stated that the conditions laid out by the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) to support the Prime Minister in the current political crisis will destroy the wellbeing of the Tamil people. Ponnambalam outlined the drafting of a new constitution and the implementation of the United Nations Geneva Resolutions as the conditions set forth by the TNA. All the people, he claimed, knows Mahinda Rajapaksa's character and how he fooled the Tamil people, which raises questions of trust. Ponnambalam added that the TNPF accepts that the government of good governance in the last three and a half years have not done anything for the Tamil people and have fooled them as well.

79. "The story that I joined with Mahinda is a fable" – Sri Lanka Muslim Congress Member Nazeer | *Virakesari*, 01 November 2018, p.15 | No Byline

Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) MP A.L.M. Nazeer confirmed that the information circulating that he had joined with newly appointed Mahinda Rajapaksa is a fable. Nazeer added that his decision is aligned with what the SLMC decides since they have been appointed to represent the people to solve their problems. Nazeer explained that they have decided to support the actor who will work and solve the problems of the Muslim people such as the issues in lands of the Muslim people in areas such as Vaddamaduru, Kiran Komari, Ashraf Nagar, Pottuvil Paliyaddyvattai, Nuraicholai housing scheme, Irakkamam Mayakkali, sea erosion and problems faced by the fisherman in Oluvil, appointment of a Muslim government agent for Ampara – the only District in Sri Lanka with a majority Muslim community – changing of the electoral system and the demarcation of boundaries for the provincial councils.

80. The international community must change its policies towards Sri Lanka. Tamil Civil Society Forum requests | *Virakesari*, 01 November 2018, p.18 | By: M. Newton

The Tamil Civil Society Forum (TCSF), issuing a statement on the prevailing political situation in the country, stated that the international community must at least now change its policies towards Sri Lanka. While explaining the appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister, the TCSF stated that time and time again the Sinhala polity reminded them of the limits of liberal constitutional democratic solutions to the political aspirations of the Tamil people. The TCSF further condemned both the major political parties in Colombo as sharing in hegemonic ideologies of Sinhala Buddhist exceptionalist nationalism. Further, the TCSF urged Tamil MPs to take a decision on the party they would support. This decision was to be made by considering the solutions required for the problems faced by the Tamil people such

as the release of land (both private and state), release of political prisoners, release of detainee lists demanded by the families of the disappeared, unconditional repeal of the PTA, withdrawal of the Counter Terrorism Bill and a willingness to enact a federal constitution that respects the Tamils' right to self-determination.

81. Our support is for those who comply with our requests | *Thinakaran*, 01 November 2018, p.12 | No Byline

Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP Gnanamuthu Srineshan, while speaking on the decision of the TNA regarding the current situation, stated that the TNA will support those who comply with their requests. He further stated that the TNA has still not decided on whom to support and that the TNA, who are fighting for the liberation of the minorities, cannot be blamed for speaking to both factions in this political crisis. He added that a final political solution must be provided for the problems faced by the Tamils and that the individual who intends to sit in the position of the Prime Minister must fulfil the promises made to the United Nations on behalf of the country. Moreover, Srineshan stated that the release of prisoners, release of lands, paying of compensation, rehabilitation, and resettlement are some of the concerns of the people and that the TNA will support those who agree to fulfil these issues.

82. The Tamil National Alliance must exert pressure on the international community | *Tamil Mirror*, 02 November 2018, p.01, 02 | By: S. Nidarshan, M. Roshanth, S. Jeganathan, S. N. Nipojan, K. Aharan

As the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) is a deciding force that would determine the majority in parliament, it should exert pressure on the international community to find a suitable solution to the problems faced by the Tamil people. This view was stated by the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF). The political hierarchy of the EPRLF held discussions on 01 November in order to examine the political crisis that has emerged in the country. A media report this was issued by Secretary of the EPRLD and Vanni District MP Annamalai Nadesu Sivasakthi. Since the international community is prepared to intervene and resolve the political crisis prevailing in Sri Lanka, this is the ideal time to convey to them that the Tamil people need a guarantee that their prolonged requests would be fulfilled. The report states that this should be conveyed by Leader of the Opposition and The TNA R. Sampanthan to the international community.

83. "Must try to table our requests and gain solutions" – C. V. Wigneswaran | *Virakesari*, 02 November 2018, p.04 | No Byline

While answering questions raised in during an interview with CMR Tamil FM on his new political party and the prevailing political situation, Former Chief Minister of the Northern Provincial Council and founder of the Tamil Makkal Kootani (TMK) C.V. Wigneswaran stated that they must table their requests and gain solutions. While commenting on the prevailing political situation in the South of Sri Lanka, Wigneswaran said that the Sinhala leaders were fighting for their political powers and that there was no connection between them and their political struggle. He added that if any actor accepted the requests to solve the problems of the Tamil people, it must be done under the leadership of a foreign government. He said that the Tamil political parties must proceed with tabling issues pertaining to prisoners, missing persons, the Prevention of Terrorism Act and other issues in order to fully exercise the rights of the Tamil people.

84. "Maithri and Mahinda joined to defeat the new constitution that will divide the North and East" – Chief Minister of the Western Province Isuru Devapriya | *Virakesari*, 02 November 2018, p.05 | By: Rajadurai Hashan

Chief Minister of the Western Province Isuru Devapriya, while speaking at a media briefing held yesterday (01 December) at the office of the Chief Minister stated that both the leaders (President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa) have joined together to break the goals of the Tamil diaspora community i.e. to divide the North and East through the constitution. While commending President Maithripala Sirisena's act of appointing Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister, Devapriya criticised former Prime Minister and Leader of the United National Party (UNP) Ranil Wickremesinghe for causing the decline of the country's economic condition and supporting matters related to the division of the country. Devapriya added that the goals of the Tamil diaspora community are to cause ethnic disharmony and that the two leaders have come together to break these goals. Devapriya assured that the government will now function for the people of the country and that no further foreign intervention in the internal politics of the country will occur.

85. High-level committee of the TNA is meeting today in Colombo | *Virakesari*, 02 November 2018, p.08 | No Byline

Leader of the Opposition and the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) R. Sampanthan informed that a high-level committee meeting of the TNA will happen today (02 December) at Sampanthan's official residence in Colombo. Sampanthan met and held talks with Ranil Wickremesinghe and Mahinda Rajapaksa and put forward the conditions of the TNA which include: the creation of

a new constitution and the completion of the United Nations Geneva Resolution. Sampanthan requested for a written pledge to confirm that these demands will be met. However, no progress was achieved in this regard.

86. "The removal of Ranil Wickremasinghe from office is delightful news" – Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekara | *Virakesari*, 02 November 2018, p.09 | By: N. Thanuja

Former MP and Leader of the Organisation for the Protection of the Rights of the Army Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekara criticised Ranil Wickremesinghe for attempting to divide the country based on a new constitution as per the wishes of the minority Tamil political parties. His criticism was with regard to the arresting of soldiers who fought to end the three-decade war by betraying them to the international community. He further accused Wickremesinghe of making the country a puppet of the international community.

87. "Can gain protection by supporting the Southern Sri Lankan Buddhists' most favoured Sinhalese Leader" – Basheer Segu Dawood | *Thinakkural*, 02 November 2018, p.04 | No Byline

"The Muslims can gain protection by supporting the Southern Sri Lankan Buddhists' most favoured Sinhalese Leader" according to former Minister Basheer Saegu Dawood. Addressing the gathering as the Chief Guest during the prize giving of the Geli Oya Kalugamuwa Falah Madrasah, he said that identity politics had failed and that changes in the political realm will also take place. He claimed that it was important for the Muslim community to support someone who is favoured by the Sinhalese majority. He added that the Muslims thought that they would win in the previous election, but this was not the case.

88. "The Tamil National Alliance must exert pressure on the international community" – EPRLF | *Thinakkural*, 02 November 2018, p.06 | No Byline

The Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) must exert pressure on the international community. A report was issued by Secretary of the EPRLF and Vanni District MP Annamalai Nadesu Sivasakthi regarding the matters that were debated during the meeting. The EPRLF believed that it was the appropriate time for the international community to come forward to redeem Sri Lanka and resolve the long-term issues of the Tamils. Meanwhile, the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TVMP) also considered that this should be guaranteed by the international community. As such, they requested the Leader of the TNA and the Opposition R. Sampanthan to play a central role in uniting all foreign envoys in Colombo. They also wanted Sampanthan to be firm

in finding a permanent solution to the issues of the Tamils. The EPRLF said that with the elections scheduled for 05 January, they will take the right decision at the right time.

90. The TNA must exert pressure on the international community. Decision reached at the high pedestal of Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) | *Virakesari*, 02 November 2018, p.15 | No Byline

The Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) in its high pedestal meeting yesterday (01 December) in Jaffna decided that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) must exert pressure on the international community. Secretary of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) Annamalai Nadesu Sivasakthi Anandan said that discussions on the prevailing political situation in the country took place. The EPRLF urged the TNA to exert pressure on the international community to find solutions to the problems of the Tamil people and the problems in Sri Lanka. The EPRLF added that the government did not achieve much progress with regard to several issues including the creation of a new constitution, fulfilling the United Nations Geneva Resolution, creating a commission for accountability, the release of lands, release of political prisoners, issues pertaining to missing persons, and the removal of the military from the North and East.

91. "Use this political change to discuss matters relating to the human rights of the Tamil people" | *Virakesari*, 02 November 2018, p.18 | No Byline

Former member of the Eastern Provincial Council R. Thurairatnam urged the people's representatives and the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) to discuss matters pertaining to the human rights of the Tamil people amidst the current political change in Sri Lanka. He added that the parties representing the minorities, specifically parties representing the upcountry community, Muslims, and those in the North and East, will bargain with the government if the latter requests for help to show a majority in parliament. Thurairatnam stated that this was a great opportunity to raise the issues faced by the people such as a wage increment for upcountry workers, distribution of land, joining of the North and East, devolution of power, release of prisoners, and permitting investigations at an international level.

92. "Will not act in a manner that will affect the national aspirations of the Tamils. Will support the faction that guarantees these in writing" – TNA MP S. Shritharan | *Virakesari*, 02 November 2018, p.21 | By: M. Newton

Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP S. Shritharan, when questioned on what kind of decision should be taken in the current political crisis stated that they will not act in a manner that will affect the aspirations of the Tamil people. He added that they will only support the

faction that guarantees solutions for the problems of the Tamils in writing. He claimed that they were elected to parliament based on the mandate given by the Tamil people. As such, he claimed that they will not betray or act in a manner that will produce a negative outcome for the future of the Tamil community. Shritharan also explained that former President Mahinda Rajapaksa's goal is to take over the government, dissolve parliament and distort the Tamil people's representation. He said that the Rajapaksa faction had tried to distort the Tamil people's requests from 2010 to 2015. He said that currently, Rajapaksa is thinking of creating new political parties, dividing the electoral votes and reducing the strength of the Tamils. He claimed that Rajapaksa's actions would compel the TNA to support Ranil Wickremesinghe, who must guarantee to solve the problems of the Tamils in writing. By taking these reasons into consideration, Shritharan said that the TNA has not yet decided whom they would support.

93. "Will support the faction that gives a solution" – Suren | *Tamil Mirror*, 02 November 2018, p.04 | By: Subramaniam Baskaran

Chairperson of the Pachilaipalli Divisional Council Subramaniam Suren stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) hoped to take advantage of the current political crisis in an attempt to fulfill the long-term aspirations of the Tamil people. Addressing a gathering while distributing sports equipment in the Pachilaipalli area, he stated that the TNA decided that it would render its support to the faction that agreed to resolve their long-term issues and confirm this in writing.

94. Swamy advices Sampanthan to join and work with Mahinda | *Thinakkural* 02 November 2018, p.02 | No Byline

Member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Subramaniam Swamy urged Leader of the Tamil National Alliance R. Sampanthan to try and work with Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa for the sake of solving the Tamil people's issues. This was stated via his official Twitter handle yesterday (01 November).

95. "Must use the change in government to win the rights of the Tamil people" | *Tamil Mirror*, 02 November 2018, p.06 | By: P. Krishna

Former member of the Eastern Provincial Council R. Thuraisingham requested the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and representatives of the Tamil people to take advantage of the current political crisis and highlight the rights required by the Tamil people. At a media briefing he stated, "A situation has arisen where the minority parties, particularly the upcountry parties, Muslim parties, and the parties of the North and East, could strike a

bargain with the government to by using their parliamentary representation. This is a great opportunity that the minority communities have received, and the TNA holds the responsibility of taking advantage of this situation.”

96. If people give their mandate, I will take up the Chief Minister Post | *Thinakaran*, 04 November 2018, p.07 | No Byline

In an interview to *Thinakaran Vaaramanjari*, newly appointed Minister of Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, and Hindu Religious Affairs Douglas Devananda stated that the people had to resort to organising protests in order to request solutions for their problems because the leaders of the Tamils were ineffective. Commenting on the problems faced by Tamils, Devananda stated that he was determined to examine and find solutions to issues such as the release of land under military occupation, resettlement, rehabilitation, the release of Tamil political prisoners, building of housing schemes, providing employment opportunities and paying compensation to those affected by war. Further, when Devananda was questioned if his name was nominated to represent the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) for the position of Chief Minister of the Northern Province, Devananda's response was affirmative.

97. "We will never betray the sacrifices made by Maaveerar" – S. Shritharan | *Virakesari*, 04 November 2018, p.22 | By: M. Newton

While taking part in an event publishing a book in Chavakachcheri, Jaffna MP for the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) representing the Jaffna District S. Shritharan stated that they will never betray the sacrifices made by Maaveerar (Great Heroes) to protect that Tamils should live in this same land. Shritharan added that the Sinhala political rulers have always had the perception that Tamils should be ruled by supressing them and that both Ranil Wickremesinghe and Mahinda Rajapaksa have the same perception. Shritharan further explained that even when the Leader of the TNA R. Sampanthan met Mahinda Rajapaksa and presented certain conditions and requested to guarantee them in writing they have rejected it. He also added that no one can forget the truth that they are continuing to repress the Tamils based on ethnicity and identity and that that TNA will not support Mahinda Rajapaksa who is burying democracy by digging a pit and for refusing the aspirations of the Tamil people.

98. "I am not in a position to speak and name a price for the Mullivaikal misery" – Vanni District MP Charles Nirmalanathan | *Virakesari*, 04 November 2018, p.13, 17 | By: M. Newton

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP for the Vanni District Charles Nirmalanathan, when questioned on whether they will join Mahinda's group, said he is not in a position to speak and name a price for the Mullivaikal based on the attempts to pursue them to join Mahinda's group with magical words of releasing political prisoners and providing cabinet positions. He states that Member of Parliament Namal Rajapaksa attempted to pursue him, who (referring to himself) was also born on the same soil as the leader of the Tamil ethnic group, Prabhakaran, via a phone call with the promise that Rajapaksa will on behalf of the Tamil people will only promise to release the political prisoners. Nirmalanathan added that there were many more problems for Tamils and that he was not a person who would be swayed by money or Minister positions.

99. Continuing to keep the Ministry for Resettlement is a sad matter | *Thinakaran*, 04 November 2018, p.05, 21 | By: M.R.M. Nilam

The newly appointed Deputy Minister of Resettlement, Rehabilitation, and Northern Development K. Kader Masthan in an interview has stated that it was a sad matter to continue the Minister of Resettlement even after nine years have passed from the end of the civil war. Masthan also stated that they must examine as to the reasons for the delay in resettlement and find the appropriate solution soon after having discussions with the higher officials in the government. Masthan also stated that resettlement was not the mere building of houses, rather it was the development of their livelihood, and the providing of financial assistance.

100. Releasing of Tamil political prisoners before the reconvening of parliament? President to act | *Thinakkural*, 04 November 2018, p.02 | No Byline

President Maithriplala Sirisena has taken action to have the Tamil political prisoners who were detained during the war and afterwards released before the parliament is convened. Political parties, civil organisations and the TNA have been requesting for the release of political prisoners for many years, but it has been of no avail on the part of the government for the past three years. The Finance Minister of the 'good governance' government stated that there were no political prisoners in the country. It is said that the President ordered the relevant authorities to arrange for the release of Tamil political prisoners. Namal Rajapaksa had visited the political prisoners at the Welikada Prison recently.

101. "I took up the Ministerial post to protect the Tamils from the East" – Deputy Minister Viyalanderan | *Thinakkural*, 04 November 2018, p.03 | No Byline

I took up the post of Minister to protect the settlements of the Tamils of the East their political aspirations along with intention of protecting them, states the TNA Batticaloa District MP and the Regional Deputy Minister of Development for the East, S.Viyalendran. This is what he said when contacted after being appointed the regional Minister. I have accepted this ministry while holding the post of MP, due to my farsighted thoughts of the welfare of the Tamils. There is no development amidst the Tamils and the financial allocation for the community is very low when compared to other communities.

102. "Tamil leaders must support the person who can win the hearts of the Tamils" – Former Eastern Provincial Council Member | *Thinakkural*, 04 November 2018, p.05 | No Byline

Former MP for the Eastern Province N. Krishnapillai stated that the good governance government has continuously disappointed the Tamil people. Speaking during a media briefing held on Sunday at his residence in Batticaloa he said that the TNA should take advantage of the current political crisis in favour of the Tamil people. Whoever assumes power they should be able to win the hearts of the Tamils and fulfill their aspirations and instill the feeling of true Sri Lankan identity.

103. Who will the TNA support? | *Thinakkural*, 04 November 2018, p.25 | By: Nilandan

Opportunists are appointed as MPs and expected to be loyal. The next phase of the parliament depends on the number of opportunists that could be bought up or won over, which means that the change of governance has not come to an end yet. Mahinda Rajapaksa is the biggest opportunist and he can establish a stable government unlike Ranil Wickremesinghe as Maithripala Sirisena will obey him (Maithripala Sirisena ate his hopper and shifted his trust). Mahinda's position in local politics is strong unlike Ranil, who's position locally is weak and internationally strong. Being politically strong in local politics is a plus point as moves could be made to defend oneself from foreign powers tactfully and continue holding power. The interim report of the draft constitution was supposed to be submitted by the constitutional committee on 07 November, which would strengthen the efforts towards drafting a new constitution. However, since this constitution would oppose executive presidency it is opposed by Mahinda Rajapaksa and the Maha Sanga.

104. The constitutional violations that occurred against the Tamils | *Thinakkural*, 04 November 2018, p.27 | By: M. Thirunavakarasu

A change of governance has occurred fast, despite reasons attributed to the background of this incident, what is important is that the Eelam Tamils were not involved in this. If Tamils were linked to a conspired assassination plot or toppling of the government then, definitely rivers of blood of Tamils would have flown. This essay focuses the issues related to the political crisis; the toppling of the government and the violations of the constitution. The violations, rejection and refusal to implement the constitution in matters related to the Tamil people is a natural occurrence. However, the constitutional crisis that has occurred at present is not directly related to the issues of the Tamils rather it is a display of the competition for power amidst the ruling class of the Sinhalese, which has been presented as an issue by the Sinhalese and is continuing to be a political crisis. If it was a violation of the constitution directly related to the Tamils, the Sinhalese would have justified their actions. What has to be observed here is that the tradition of violating the constitution against the Tamils has emerged. In effect, what has really occurred is that the Sinhalese have picked up a repression method from the bottom of the repression method that was carried out against the Tamils.

105. An upper house must be formed to examine the Tamils' problems | *Thinakaran*, 04 November 2018, p.05, 21 | No Byline

The Minister of Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, and Hindu Religious Affairs Douglas Devananda while speaking at an event held yesterday morning has stated that an upper house with 50% representation of the Tamil speaking communities must be formed in parliament to examine the problems faced by the Tamil people. He had also stated that he will bring this to the attention of the government very soon. In addition to the above, Devananda has stated that the ministry will take necessary steps to begin building five thousand houses in the North before the end of November, and to provide compensation for thousand individuals who have registered and requested compensation for being affected by war. Further, Devananda assured that they can find solutions to the ethnic problems with discussions with the government and through the 13th amendment.

106. The Tamil National Alliance decides to vote against the government | *Thinakaran*, 04 November 2018, p.01, 10 | No Byline

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) in a statement released yesterday (03 November) has stated that they have decided to support the No Confidence Motion against the government which is under the leadership of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. This decision has been

reached at a meeting held day before yesterday (02 November) with the party leaders of the TNA to examine and reach a decision on who to support.

107. Tamils who continue to be fooled | *Thinakkural*, 04 November 2018, p.31 | By: Prof. S.J.K. Ponkalan

The editorial of one the leading of France's newspapers described the current political situation as a ' Sri Lanka's bad dream'. The western media and editorials have portrayed 'Mahinda Rajapaksa' as a monster and Sri Lanka' s bad dream, following Halloween celebrations recently. The foreign media has expressed its tension over the appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister and this tension has caught on to the Tamils who are continued to be fooled. The diasporic Tamil community too is experiencing a tense situation, unsure of whether can visit Sri Lanka after this. The TNA portrayed Mahinda Rajapaksa as monster to gain the votes of the Tamil people in order to form the 'good governance government. But now what has happened now is that the monster has taken the seat of governance which means the person who appointed him is a bigger monster. Which means the North and East would be unified only upon the death of the bigger monster and there is no room for a federal state. Although this is a tactic to draw the attention of Sinhalese and Muslim voters, it is an outcome of the thoughts of the Sinhala Buddhist dominance prevalent amidst Sinhalese leaders. The current situation is what the western world very much anticipated, along with a suspicion that hovers over China's relationship with Sri Lanka. The representatives of Sinhala Buddhist ideology are those who govern the undemocratic whose colors change from time to time. The time now is to remove the paint called good governance. This is the time the doors are open in the international arena for the Tamils.

108. "Maithri who ate our salt and became the President is now trying to destroy us" – M.A. Sumanthiran | *Thinakkural*, 05 November 2018, p.02 | No Byline

Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP M.A. Sumanthiran states that the President ate their salt and has intended to split us which is the beginning of destruction. Speaking on behalf of the TNA at the Vavuniya youth and girls conference he says, the TNA should make use of their unique place in favour of the Tamil people with caution, and it should be used as a deal. If the parliament is not open, we will open it and prove the majority. Maithripala Sirisena was unfortunately elected as President by the Tamils. How can we support someone who has committed such a serious deed as to split us?

109. "The minority parties must not get caught in the political cyclone in the South" – Former Eastern Provincial Chief Minister Nazeer Ahamed | *Thinakkural*, 05 November 2018, p.04 | No Byline

The minorities should keep a close watch on the political moves that are a result of the current crisis in the country and should create their own security posts stated Former Eastern Provincial Chief Minister Nazeer Ahamed. The election process of the minority should be taken care of and a democratic political culture should be built. Minorities should not get engulfed in the political cyclone and be destroyed. At present only 3 provincial councils' function in the country, the tenure of the rest has come to an end and they are under purview of the governor. The provincial border report will have to be revived and an election will be held under a mixed system for the provincial council. Such practices should not be encouraged but the usual system of conducting elections should be followed. If any action takes place behind the scene to reduce the representation of the minority especially Muslims, then we will struggle against it. The border determination done in the Eastern province was detrimental to Muslims, we shall not give any consideration to this.

110. "An upper house is needed to examine the problems faced by Tamils in parliament" – Minister Douglas Devananda | *Thinakkural*, 05 November 2018, p.06 | By: No Byline

Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Northern Development and Hindu Religious Affairs Minister Douglas Devananda states that an upper house is needed to examine the problems faced by Tamils in parliament. Speaking at an event with District government officials, held in the Northern province on Sunday (04 November), related to the funds that were allocated and were not utilized thereby depriving people of their basic needs, he says action would be taken to build five thousand houses by the end of November. The Minister states that fifty percent of this upper house suggested should comprise of Tamil speaking representatives, which he would bring to the notice of the parliament soon.

111. "No benefits for the people from the East from the government for good governance" – Deputy Minister Viyalanderan | *Thinakaran*, 05 November 2018, p.01, 04 | No Byline

The newly appointed Deputy Minister of Regional Development (Eastern Development) S. Viyalanderan while speaking at a media briefing held in Battaramulla has stated that no benefits were granted to the people from the Eastern province from the government for good governance. He further explained that he left the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and joined the government trusting President Maithripala Sirisena because the TNA protected the

Prime Minister, supported the budget and did not do anything for its people by staying in the opposition. Viyalanderan also stated that he spoke to President Sirisena and got a favourable answer to the 11 requests he put forward. Sirisena has assured that a decision would be reached regarding the 11 requests including the release of political prisoners, a political solution, the livelihood of that depend on the leadership of women, investigations into the missing persons, and the employment opportunities for graduates.

112. Plans to start work on building houses in the North to begin from this month | *Thinakaran*, 05 November 2018, p.03 | No Byline

The Minister of Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, and Hindu Religious Affairs Douglas Devananda held a meeting with both domestic and international officials and experts from the field of housing yesterday (4 December) regarding the resettlement of people affected by war and building of housing schemes in the North. Devananda has stated that during the previous government the building of houses were not provided for the people because of the self-interest of certain individuals and that he was determined to develop plans and commence the work on building houses for the people in the North from this month.

113. The Tamil National Alliance must change its historical path | *Thinakaran*, 05 November 2018, p.03, 04 | No Byline

General Secretary of the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP/ Tamil Peoples Liberation Tigers) P. Prashanthan, while speaking to the media on Saturday evening from the party office in Batticaloa, stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) should change its historical path and journey with a government that that will be favourable for the Tamil people. Prashanthan made these comments in light of the recent political situation in the country. Prashanthan also criticised that the Tamils were most affected during the government of the United National Party (UNP), hence the TNA must change its course of supporting the UNP for the people.

114. Tamil National Alliance MPs who care about the Tamils will join the government | *Thinakaran*, 05 November 2018, p.12 | No Byline

Former Secretary of Defence Gotabaya Rajapaksa, speaking to the media after taking part in a religious ceremony in Ruwanwelisaya, stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) has never been supportive of them. The TNA is currently divided among themselves, Rajapaksa further added. He said that the TNA members of parliament who care about the Tamil people will join the government. Rajapaksa has also stated that they are praying that all the legal

provisions brought against the security forces under the former government be destroyed and that they are requesting the new government that came into power to throw away any such legal provisions.

115. The Tamil National Alliance must journey behind the government says Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal | *Virakesari*, 05 November 2018, p.28 | No Byline

The General Secretary of the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP/ Tamil Peoples Liberation Tigers) P. Prashanthan while speaking at a media briefing held at the TMVP office has stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) must journey behind the government to change history and create a favourable environment for the Tamil people. Prashanthan has further added that the prevailing political situation is very important for the leaders of Tamil speaking minority political parties and urged to use this opportunity correctly to put forward the problems faced by the Tamil people that have been persistent for a long period of time.

116. "The Tamil National Alliance must support Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa" – Prof. Tissa Vitharana | *Virakesari*, 05 November 2018, p.20 | No Byline

Prof. Tissa Vitharana while speaking on the current political crisis has stated that the Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) R. Sampanthan has accepted that without the support of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa a solution for the ethnic problem cannot be reached. He also urged the TNA to support Rajapaksa if the TNA was concerned to solve the ethnic problems. Vitharana also explained that the decision made by President Maithripala Sirisena to appoint Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister was constitutional.

117. "The act of pawning the TNA with some individuals is an act that deceives the Tamil community" – Namal Rajapaksa | *Virakesari*, 05 November 2018, p.09 | No Byline

MP Namal Rajapaksa via his Twitter handle stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) should act based on the future wellbeing of the Tamil people. He tweets in relation to the TNA's decision to support the No-Confidence Motion against Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. Namal Rajapaksa added that the actions of certain individuals based on their self-interest to pawn the TNA that represents the Tamil people is an act of foolery. Rajapaksa has also stated that they are ready to negotiate and solve the problems of the Tamil people and that both President Maithripala Sirisena and Rajapaksa will act very soon regarding the release imprisoned former militants.

118. The new government will announce its decision on the political prisoners soon | *Thinakaran*, 05 November 2018, p.04, 12 | No Byline

The Member of Parliament for the Hambantota District Namal Rajapaksa via his twitter handle has stated that the new government made up of President Maithripala Sirisena and the new Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa will announce its decision on the political prisoners who have been detained for a long time very soon. Namal Rajapaksa has also stated that they are prepared to have extensive talks to solve the fundamental problems faced by the Tamil community. Further, he has stated that during the tenure of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, around twelve thousand former members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were released after rehabilitation and more than three thousand among those who were released were provided with employment opportunities. Namal Rajapaksa added that similarly, the remaining detainees will be rehabilitated and released by the new government. Meanwhile, Subramanian Swamy have also stated that leaders of the Tamils such as the leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and Opposition R. Sampanthan must come forward to support the new government to solve the problems faced by the Tamil community.

119. The Tamil National Alliance who decided to support Ranil must explain their decision to the people | *Thinakaran*, 05 November 2018, p.14| No Byline

At a media briefing held day before yesterday (3 December) at the Jaffna Press Club, former Member of Parliament S. Gajendran stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) must explain its decision to support Ranil Wickremesinghe to the people. Gajendran also added that people must be briefed on what promises Wickremesinghe made for the TNA to support it. He further questioned whether the TNA's decision was reached considering the wellbeing of the Tamil people or based on the wellbeing of the Western superpowers.

120. "No benefits for the people from the East from the government for good governance" – Deputy Minister Viyalanderan | *Thinakaran*, 05 November 2018, p.01, 04 | No Byline

The newly appointed Deputy Minister of Regional Development (Eastern Development) S. Viyalanderan while speaking at a media briefing held in Battaramulla has stated that no benefits were granted to the people from the Eastern province from the government for good governance. He further explained that he left the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and joined the government trusting President Maithripala Sirisena because the TNA protected the Prime Minister, supported the budget and did not do anything for its people by staying in the opposition. Viyalanderan also stated that he spoke to President Sirisena and got a favourable

answer to the 11 requests he put forward. Sirisena has assured that a decision would be reached regarding the 11 requests including the release of political prisoners, a political solution, the livelihood of families that depend on the leadership of women, investigations into the missing persons, and the employment opportunities for graduates.

121. "Both will pay attention to the prisoners who have been detained for a long period" – Namal Rajapaksa | *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November 2018, p.01, 02 | No Byline

MP Namal Rajapaksa on his Twitter handle stated "Our faction is prepared to hold valuable discussions to resolve the basic issues of the Tamils, President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa will continue to pay attention and will arrive at a suitable conclusion regarding former fighters who are long term prisoners. The actions of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) should take into consideration the wellbeing of the Tamils in the future."

122. "Release the political prisoners today itself" – M.A. Sumanthiran | *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November 2018, p.01, 02 | No Byline

Spokesperson of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) M. A. Sumanthiran addressing the Vavuniya youth conference of the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) which was held in Vavuniya yesterday (04 November) stated "we will examine rendering our support to Mahinda Rajapaksa later on, now that he accepted the post of Prime Minister it is not enough for Namal Rajapaksa to say that the Tamil political prisoners would be released upon receiving support from the TNA, let them be released now. Batticaloa MP and member of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) an alliance of the TNA who claimed that TNA will not sell itself for the love of any money has crossed over from the party, the party will take necessary action against him. We created President Maithripala Sirisena and former chief Minister of the Northern provincial council, both of them have kicked down the ladder they used to climb up". During the last Presidential election, the President had stated that his political life would be buried but now he has formed an alliance and is involved in violating democracy.

123. "If they stay neutral, I will stay neutral as well" – Deputy Minister Viyalanderan | *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November 2018, p.03 | By: P. Nirosh

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) has announced that it would support the no confidence motion (NCM) against premier Mahinda Rajapaksa in parliament. The deputy Minister of development for the Eastern province S. Viyalendran states that he already knew that the TNA would take such a decision and that it was an action carried out to save former Prime

Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe. He has challenged that he would take a neutral stand if the TNA takes a neutral stand. While stating the above at a media briefing held at the Ministry of Plantation and Industries yesterday (04 November), Viyalendran also states that the TNA should examine itself before calling him a traitor. Two individuals from the United National Party (UNP) have staged a protest condemning him of having accepted a position in the new government for an offer of 30 million, against whom he will file a defamatory case during which they he will have to prove that he is guilty of having accepted money. He also stated that he was only in support of Mahinda Rajapaksa and not anyone else and queried as to why the TNA was not registered as a party.

124. "Must support Mahinda to see developments in the Tamil and Muslim regions in the East"- Karaithivu Sri Lanka Freedom Party organizer | *Thinakkural*, 05 November 2018, p.6 | No Byline

Karaithivu Sri Lanka Freedom Party Organiser A. M. Jahir states that the appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka took place due to the sudden decisions taken by the President. While explaining to the youth of Maligaikadu regarding the political crisis in the country, he states, the Tamil and Muslim communities of Ampara should extend their support to the new Prime Minister and should apply pressure over their political representatives to do the same. Hatred is building up towards the government due to the suffering of the people, having full knowledge of this is why the President appointed Mahinda Rajapaksa which has brought happiness to the people. Development under the good governance government was slow; not even one third of the development that took place under Mahinda Rajapaksa's regime as President.

125. "The Tamil National Alliance must work by putting the wellbeing of the Tamils first" - Jaffna University Students' Union | *Thinakkural*, 05 November 2018, p.07 | No Byline

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) should not put their personal or welfare of the party before the welfare of the Tamil people, requested the Jaffna student union leader K. Krishnamenon. This was stated during the discussion with representatives of the Jaffna students Union, Tamil Civil Society Groups, Tamil Lawyers Association at the Jaffna Media Centre journalist interview.

126. The TNA is working for the benefit of India | *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November 2018, p.04 | By: S. Nidarshan

The general secretary of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) Selvaraja Gajendran stated, at a time when decisions must be taken for the benefit of the Tamil people, taking decisions based on the benefit of India and the Western nations will only affect the Tamils. He accused the TNA saying that it is not in support of Mahinda Rajapaksa as they want to protect democracy, this shows that they do not take decisions based on the welfare of the Tamils. The TNA, he said at a media briefing on 3 December, must handle the situation in a way that they could take advantage of the current political situation for the benefit of the Tamils.

127. Don't let the country be spoilt | *Thinakaran*, 05 November 2018, p.08 | No Byline

The Muslim division organizer of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) for Karaitivu and additional chairman of the Karaitivu Pradeshiya Sabha A.M. Jaheer while explaining to the youth of Malikaikaddu on the prevailing political situation has urged that no one should support the country from getting spoilt. While stating this, he has also urged the Muslims and Tamils of Ampara District to give their fullest support to Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and exert pressure on their political representatives. Jaheer has also stated that the country is backwards due to the journey with the United National Party (UNP) through the good governance government.

128. "It's a good thing if they release the Tamil political prisoners" - Mangala Samaraweera | *Thinakkural* 05 November 2018, p.02 | By: N. Jeyakanthan

United National Party MP Mangala Samaraweera stated that the best thing that could happen during the current political crisis would be the release of the political prisoners. This was the response made by him through his twitter handle yesterday (01 November) over the news that was received regarding the action President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa were to take over the Tamil political prisoners. He also stated that the President refused to release the political prisoners in 2015, but he is coming forward now purely for political gain.

129. "If Ranil's faction guarantees then the Tamil National Alliance can support them" - Nandakumar | *Thinakkural*, 05 November 2018, p.11 | No Byline

Former Trincomalee Urban Council member C. Nandakumar (Nandan Master) states that politics means handling situations well, he requested the Tamil leaders who are members of parliament to make use of the situation for the welfare of the Tamils. The Tamil leaders

should get their promises in writing from the Western world that requests them to support Ranil, and India. This is a great opportunity for the Tamil people.

130. "No one else will go to Mahinda's side from the Tamil National Alliance" | *Thinakkural*, 05 November 2018, p.21 | No Byline

No one will go to Mahinda's side in the future from the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) stated Vanni District MP Selvam Adaikkalanathan. He also stated that although Viyalendran had been untrue to the TNA he had been extremely untrue to the Tamil people. Mahinda Rajapaksa is someone who should be inquired over human rights violations, our people were very determined that he should not return to power and elected the President. Even the new President's views are contradictory; as he has stated that the federal system cannot be implemented and that the North and East cannot be unified. We will remain loyal to the people by remaining neutral and will not support Mahinda to form a government by proving the majority. There is no chance of members of the TNA joining the Mahinda faction.

131. "Compensation will be given in the North on Friday" – Douglas Devananda | *Tamil Mirror*, 05 November 2018, p.06 | No Byline

Checks for compensation of payments will be provided to a section of people who faced losses as a result of war and terrorism. Minister of Rehabilitation, Resettlement, Northern Development and Hindu Religious Affairs Douglas Devananda stated that the first phase of providing compensation for those affected by the war would begin by providing 790 persons with reparation on Friday 09 November.

132. The continuing political crisis and the decision of the Tamil National Alliance | *Virakesari*, 05 November 2018, p.04 | No Byline

Sri Lanka is currently facing a political crisis following the appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister on 26 October 2018. Since then developments have occurred including the proroguing of parliament. Given the situation the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) has decided to support the No-Confidence Motion against Mahinda Rajapaksa. At the same time, the TNA has met with Rajapaksa and expressed the issues faced by Tamil people and requested him to provide a guarantee to solve these problems in writing, but Rajapaksa has not agreed to accept these conditions. However, it cannot be predicted as to how matters would progress in the next few days and if such a situation arises then President and Rajapaksa's government will continue. In this situation, it must be examined as to how the TNA's decision will be affected.

133. "I accept the requests made by Sampanthan" – Maithripala Sirisena | *Tamil Mirror*, 06 November, p.01, 02 | No Byline

President Maithripala Sirisena stated that he completely agrees with the requests of the leader of the opposition R. Sampanthan as he too shares the firm belief that everyone in this country should live with equal rights. The President stated this at the Deepavali celebrations held at the Presidential palace yesterday (05 November). A solution to the political crisis and the missing persons would be a possibility only through the parliament, but no one seemed to take interest. He also stated he had no right to interfere with the rights of the parliament, therefore it is the fault of those who had the right to voice these matters for not addressing them. He affirmed that immediate action would be taken by the present government towards the issues of the Tamil people and the missing persons by the next Deepavali.

134. "A huge mess will occur if what was spoken by the Mahinda faction to the Tamil National Alliance was spoken outside" – Sithadthan | *Thinakkural*, 06 November 2018, p.04 | By: K. Hamsanan, T. Vinojith

President Mahinda Rajapaksa did not call us to speak about the issues related to the welfare of the Tamils, stated TNA MP and PLOTE leader Dharmalingam Sithadthan. Although a meeting with the President would not mean discussions related to the Tamils, yet the TNA would participate. If what was said by the Mahinda faction is revealed outside huge issues would crop up. This was mentioned by him during a media interview held at his residence in Jaffna, yesterday (05 November). The President's call to hold talks with the TNA is not to discuss the issues of the Tamils. The Mahinda faction continues to hold discussions with all TNA parliamentarians. If what is spoken of is revealed outside great chaos would occur, therefore we will speak to the President tomorrow (07 November) and will openly disclose what he says.

135. "We trust Mahinda, but not the people around him" – Leader of PLOTE Sithadthan | *Thinakkural*, 06 November 2018, p.5 | No byline

Jaffna District TNA MP and PLOTE leader Dharmalingam Sithadthan, claims to trust Mahinda yet not the people around him. The central committee meeting of the Tamil People's Liberation Association and the regional PLOTE organisation's party member meeting was held at a private wedding reception hall in Jaffna yesterday. It is difficult to trust Mahinda all at once based on his past action, but he could be trusted to definitely get things done. But the issue is that, he is surrounded by Wimal Weerawansa, Udaya Gammanpila and now the President. When the UNP and the SLFP were together we had some hope that there was an opportunity for our issues to be resolved.

136. Mahinda is asking the Tamil and Muslim people to trust him | *Thinakkural*, 06 November 2018, p.10 | No Byline

President Mahinda Rajapaksa informed that the Tamil and Muslim people should trust him. He said this while participating at the government support campaign held on Monday 05 November. Speaking in Tamil he called for the support of the Tamils and Muslims whom he said he trusts and wanted them to trust him in return saying that a good period has dawned for them. He also said that no one can ever think of dividing a government that has been formed with a lot of dedication to win the future rights of the children as Ranil Wickremesinghe was on the verge of selling the rights of the children of this country.

137. "Implement the constitution that is ideal for a permanent solution" | *Tamil Mirror*, 06 November 2018, p.04 | By: Subramaniam Baskaran

Stating that implementing a constitution that would fulfill the aspirations of the Tamil people and their issues resolved permanently was important, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) Member of Parliament (MP) Shanthi Sriskandaraja who went on to mention that a resolution on Sri Lanka should be fulfilled at the United Nations Human Rights Council. This is how Mahinda Rajapaksa could make amends with the Tamil people. Speaking to the media of the current political standpoint on 05 November said that God has made Mahinda Rajapaksa stand on bended knees before the Tamil people, as they hold the power to take the decision over who governs the country.

138. "Need a permanent solution by next Deepavali" – Sampanthan | *Tamil Mirror*, 06 November 2018, p.01, 02 | No Byline

Leader of the opposition R. Sampanthan while attending a function organized by the Presidential secretariat held at the Presidential palace on 05 November stated that he expected the issues of the Tamils to be resolved by the next Deepavali. He also stated that the Tamils required a permanent solution where they could live with equal rights in an undivided nation.

139. Talks to be held next week with the Attorney General regarding the release of Tamil political prisoners; President says at the Deepavali festival | *Thinakaran*, 06 November 2018, p.07 | By: Lawrence Selvanayagam and Maheswaran Prasath

While speaking at the Deepavali festival held yesterday (05 November) at the Presidential Palace, President Maithripala Sirisena has stated that important talks will be held with the attorney general regarding the release of Tamil political prisoners. Sirisena has also stated that Tamil representatives including members of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) will be

invited to attend this meeting. Further, Sirisena stated that the Tamil community greatly took part in making him the President and that he has greatly served the people in the North in the last three years. Sirisena also added that there were no other state leaders in Sri Lanka who have gone to the North as he has and understood that a solution is needed for the problems faced by the Tamils. Sirisena assured that he will work along with the newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to solve the problems faced by the people.

140. "The minority parties journeying together is the need of the hour" – MP Imran Maharooft | *Tamil Mirror*, 06 November, p0.6 | By: F. Mubarak, Olumudeen Kriyaz, A.M.A.Fareeth and Hasbar A. Haleem

United National Party (UNP) Trincomalee District MP Imran Maharooft said that it is the need of the hour for minority parties to journey together amid the current political turmoil. He stated this while sharing his views with the media at the Temple Trees yesterday (05 November). Saying it was through the conspiracy of the racist forces from the majority that MP Mahinda Rajapaksa was appointed as Prime Minister contrary to the constitution. Considering the suffering the minorities will have to face if Mahinda Rajapaksa's term as Prime Minister is extended, he welcomed the decision of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) to vote against him. He stated that he believed that if all minority parties took one path under the banner of the United National Front (UNF) and formed a government their needs could be easily fulfilled.

141. "President has ignored the people who protected him from danger" – Mavai Senathirajahh | *Virakesari*, 06 November 2018, p.19 | No Byline

Leader of Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) Mavai Senathirajahh, while taking part as the Chief Guest at a conference for the youth wing of the ITAK in Vavuniya, stated that President Maithripala Sirisena has appointed the same person who he was earlier afraid of. Senathirajahh further explained his statement by saying that the President has ignored the votes of the Tamil people who brought him into power and protected him from danger. He went on to criticise the former Chief Minister of the Northern Provincial Council (NPC) C.V. Wigneswaran for forgetting the political path in which he travelled and for forming a new political party subsequently.

142. "It is the need of the time for minority parties to journey together"- Member of Parliament Imran | *Virakesari*, 06November, 2018, p.17 | No Byline

At a media briefing held yesterday (5th) at Temple Trees, Member of Parliament for the United National Party (UNP) Imran Maharooft has stated that it is the need of the time for minority political parties to journey together. Maharooft added that the appointment of

Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister was a conspiracy of the racist powers and further explained that this appointment was in violation of the constitution. Maharooof also welcomed the Tamil National Alliance's (TNA) decision to vote against Rajapaksa. He also stated that he hoped that some minority community parties such as the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), All Ceylon Makkal Congress (ACMC), the TNA, Tamil Progressive Alliance (TPA) will journey together in one path and come under the United National Front (UNT) to fulfil their needs easily.

143. "The current political change is a great disappointment to the Tamil people"- Sampanthan requests for a solution before next year Deepavali | *Virakesari*, 06 November 2018, p.8 | S.J. Prashanth, K. Sukuna

The Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and Opposition R. Sampanthan while speaking at the Deepavali festival held at the Presidential Palace day before yesterday (5 December), has stated that the Tamil people worked hard to remove the former President and bring in Sirisena in 2015 and that the current political change has created a great disappointment to the Tamil people. While stating this, Sampanthan has informed President Maithripala Sirisena that he has requested a solution for the Tamil people's issues at each Deepavali ceremony and reminded him once again to find a solution before next year's Deepavali festival.

144. "The Tamil race is being fooled time and again" – SLPP Organiser Piyasena | *Virakesari*, 06 November 2018, p.15 | No Byline

Former MP and the current organiser for the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) for the Pottuvil area P.H. Piyasena while taking part in a meeting in Akkaraipattu has stated that by supporting the Prime Minister who is not cunning and not self-interested the Tamil speaking people will have a good future. Piyasena also criticised the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) for not taking up cabinet positions and solving the problems of the people who were affected by war and added that they could have use this opportunity to gain solutions to release the political prisoners. Piyasena also stated that the appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa was welcoming to the country.

145. "President and Prime Minister are ready to release the political prisoners" – Namal says again | *Thinakkural*, 06 November 2018, p.10 | No Byline

MP Namal Rajapaksa stated that the President and Prime Minister were ready to release the political prisoners. Moreover, he stated on his Twitter handle that measures towards this would be taken soon. Our faction is prepared to hold valuable discussions on resolving the

fundamental issues of the Tamils for which the President and Prime Minister are very much in support.

146. "Talks with individuals including the Attorney General regarding the release of political prisoners" – President at the Deepavali event | *Thinakkural*, 06 November 2018, p.10 | By: N. Jeyakanthan

President Maithripala Sirisena stated that a meeting will soon be held with the attorney general and the department regarding to resolve the issues of the political prisoners in the best way possible. He stated this at the Deepavali Festival event held at the Presidential palace yesterday (05 November). The Tamils have contributed immensely to elect me as President, I have served with a great sense of responsibility towards the people in the past three and a half years. The participation of the leader of the opposition and the TNA MPs in resolving the issues of the political prisoners is vital.

147. "Because of the decision we have taken, the amount that will be given to us will increase" – Mava Senathirajahh| *Thinakkural*, 06 November 2018, p.11 | No Byline

The TNA is struggling to protect the democracy it believes and not to bring Ranil Wickremesinghe to power stated the Ilankai Thamilarasu Katchi (ITAK) leader Mavai Senathirajahh. The President should not forget that he came to power with the help of the Tamil people, which he should not forget. He stated this while participating in ITAK's youth conference held in Vavuniya. We have no discrepancies with those who gain the majority being appointed as Prime Minister. The amount we receive will be increased due to our decision. We wonder from where and how this cash is being acquired, our stand would always be there for the welfare of the community.

148. "Injustice against minority communities occurred during the United National Party's period" – State Minister Keheliya Rambukwella | *Thinakkural*, 06 November 2018, p.27 | No Byline

Participating in the party policy brief meeting conducted by the Podujana Muslim Front at the Galagedara electoral District, the state Minister of media Keheliya Rambukwella said that all Sri Lankans are accountable for this country. Looking back at the history of politics we could see that Mahinda Rajapaksa's regime Muslims enjoyed freedom, in 2008, 25percent of the Muslim population voted for him. The North and East were governed independently and the Tamil speaking Muslims who were previously evacuated from their areas within 24 hours were given protection by him. The support of Muslims for Mahinda Rajapaksa increased in 2010. Those of the good governance government schemed and diverted the

support of the Muslims, so that 20 percent of votes for Mahinda decreased in 2015, which led to the Darga town incident. The July riots that began 1983 was during the UNP regime, they ruined the reputation of the Tamils worldwide.

149. "We will never betray the people who trusted and voted for us" – MP S. Shriritharan | *Thinakkural*, 06 November 2018, p.27 | No Byline

MP S. Sritharan, addressing a youth conference of the Ilankai Thamilarasu Kadchi (ITAK) held in Vavuniya stated that the ITAK will never betray those who trusted and voted for them. The Tamils in pursuit of resolving their issues have been voicing them in different ways for many years. They were silenced at gun point by Sinhalese rulers, and were forced to fight back with arms. This came to an end in 2009 and the country moved towards a new revolution in 2010, which paved the way for a federal system that would ensure the independent governance for the Tamils. But every Sinhala ruler in this country has disappointed the Tamil people, from the time the new constitution was introduced in 1978, former President J. R. Jayawardena waged war against unarmed Tamils, and Premadasa in the guise of peace talks committed brutal murders, Chandrika identifying herself as an ambassador of peace carried out many important activities to murder thousands of women which led to a huge influx of people moving out of Jaffna. To wipe out ethnic minorities Mahinda Rajapaksa is guilty of one of committing one of the biggest genocides in the 21st century against the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

150. "All minority parties must stay on one side" - MP Imran Maharooof | *Thinakkural*, 06 November 2018, p.19 | No Byline

United National Party (UNP) Trincomalee District Member of Parliament (MP) Imran Mahroof said that it is the dire need of the hour that minority parties' journey together in the midst of the current political turmoil faced by the country. He stated this while sharing his views with the media at the Temple Trees yesterday (05 November). Saying it was through the conspiracy of the racist forces from the majority that MP Mahinda Rajapaksa was appointed as Prime Minister contrary to the constitution. Considering the suffering the minorities will have to face if Mahinda Rajapaksa's term as Prime Minister is extended, he welcomed the decision of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) to vote against him. He stated that he believed that if all minority parties took one path under the banner of the United National Front (UNF) and formed a government their needs could be easily fulfilled.

151. Mahinda invites the leaders of the North, East and upcountry to join the new government in Tamil | *Virakesari*, 06 November 2018, p.08 | By: M. Manochithra

At a protest held yesterday (5th) near the Parliamentary Complex, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa in Tamil language has stated the leaders of North, East and up-country must be prepared to join with the new government. Further, he has urged the minority communities to join with them and asked the Tamil and Muslim leaders to come together and journey forward. Rajapaksa also stated that he has joined with President Maithripala Sirisena after a temporary separation and added that no one can separate them after this.

152. "Advice from the relevant experts regarding the housing schemes to be built in the North" – Douglas Devananda | *Thinakkural*, 06 November 2018, p.12 | No Byline

A team of local and foreign professional experts met with Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development and Hindu Religious Affairs Minister Douglas Devananda regarding housing to resettle those displaced in the North. Provision of housing slipped through the hands of some during the previous regime due to selfish political motives. However, since providing housing for these people came under his ministry, he said that he would undertake this once again. Therefore, all arrangements would be made to have this implemented from November onwards.

153. Former Prime Minister is the reason for the delay in finding a solution for the Tamils. President states that a good solution for the issue on political prisoners will be granted soon | *Virakesari*, 06 November 2018, p.08 | By: S.J. Prashanth and K. Sukuna

While speaking at the Deepavali festival held yesterday (5 December) at the Presidential Palace, President Maithripala Sirisena has stated that providing a solution for the Tamil people was delayed due to the former Prime Minister and that he changed the Prime Minister in order to bring in solutions for the problems in the country. Sirisena also added that important talks will be held with the attorney general regarding the release of Tamil political prisoners and that he is taking steps to bring in a good decision within the next few days.

154. "A good day that beats the evil powers" – Sampanthan | *Tamil Mirror*, 06 November 2018, p.07 | No Byline

"The Festival of Lights that combats evil forces and enables the establishment truth and justice, facing an environment where the hopes and aspirations of our people have been challenged, my prayer on this day is for our people to achieve peace and true freedom". This was the leader of the opposition R.Sampanthan's Deepavali greeting. He also said, "let us pray that our people and this country progress toward a prosperous future and may

Almighty God bless our people to overcome the issues that they face every day and attain prosperity".

155. "President is acting without respecting democracy" – Tamil National Alliance MP S. Shritharan| *Virakesari*, 06 November 2018, p.19 | By: M. Newton

Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP S. Shritharan while taking part in the prize giving of Jaffna Karanavay Maha Vidyalaya has stated that the very same person who the people of this country trusted to up- hold democracy has now become the person who is burying democracy in a pit and disrespecting the law of the country. Shritharan added that the Tamil people contributed a lot to elect Maithripala Sirisena as the President removing former President Mahinda Rajapaksa who acted in a manner totally forgetting the rights of the Tamil people but now Sirisena has appointed the same person who campaigned against as the Prime Minister. Further, Shritharan stated that Maaveerar (Great Heroes) have sacrificed their lives for the idea that Tamil people should live in this country with all the rights.

156. Will the protest for democracy also solve the Tamils' aspirations? | *Tamil Mirror*, 06 November 2018, p.08 | K. Aharan

Having gained strength in its struggle for democracy, the question rings in almost everyone's mind if the nation of Sri Lanka is being ruled by dictatorial thinkers. Saying that war crimes were being investigated within the synonym of sovereignty at one time, Sri Lanka is now compelled to hold the international view above sovereignty due to its condemnation it received from the international community. The political tug-o-war in Sri Lanka has called for the review of both the constitution and executive presidency. With the political moves that have been made in the guise of establishing justice by supporting Ranil and opposing Mahinda, what is highly questionable is the extent to which the Tamil leaders will move forward to fulfill the aspirations of their people.

157. "Proroguing parliament is against the values of democracy" – Leader of the Opposition Sampanthan tells the US Ambassador | *Virakesari*, 07 November 2018, p.01, 10 | By: R. Yasi

The newly appointed US Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Maldives Alaina B. Teplitz, Deputy Chief of Mission, Robert Hilton and the Head of the Political Division, Anthony Renzulli met with the Leader of Opposition and the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) R. Sampanthan yesterday at his residence in Colombo. At this meeting Sampanthan expressed the changing of Prime Minister and the proroguing of parliament were in violation of the constitution and democracy. Further, Sampanthan has stated that the national government did not deal

enough with the problems faced by the Tamils and explained this statement by saying that the recent actions have shown discontent while promises made to solve issues such as the release of political prisoners, resettlement, rehabilitation, release of lands under military occupation, and the issues pertaining to missing persons have not been fulfilled yet. Sampanthan has expressed to Teplitz wanting America to constructively cooperate to fulfil the promises made by Sri Lanka to the international community and the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). While responding to these the US ambassador has stated that America is emphasising Sri Lanka to follow democratic principles to solve the prevailing situation and that America will continue to devote and work towards the implementation of the UNHRC resolutions.

158. "Tamil people are discontent because there is no progress in finding solutions for the problems" – Sampanthan | *Tamil Mirror*, 07 November 2018, p.01, 02 | No Byline

There is much discontent amidst the Tamil community as developments to the resolution pertaining to their issues is yet to be seen. Leader of the opposition R, Sampanthan, speaking to Alaina B. Teplitz US envoy to Sri Lanka mentioned this. The government didn't put in enough effort to resolve the issues of the Tamils; release of political prisoners, resettlement, rehabilitation, the release of lands occupied by armed forces and issues of missing persons which are all being handled in a very slow-paced manner. The US envoy in response stated that USA insisted that Sri Lanka follows democratic guidelines and that the current issues should be addressed using democratic guidelines. She also assured that USA will continue to work with dedication towards the aims of the United Nations Human Rights Council and its implementation.

159. Ethnic conversions in the East | *Tamil Mirror*, 07 November 2018, p.01 0,2 | By P. Nirosh

TNA MP S. Vivalendiran Deputy Minister of Regional Development (Eastern Development) stating that the Eastern Province was ignored by Ranil Wickremesinghe for the past three and a half years and insisted that President Maithripala Sirisena should be given due honor as President. He also stated that the people of the East were undergoing a great ethnic conversion and that when the issues of the Tamils are resolved, there should be Tamils still present to receive it. He stated this during a media briefing held at the Prime Minister's office yesterday (06 November). The rights and development of the Tamils should be carried out parallelly. The Tamil population which was formerly 59.87 percent in the Eastern province has now reduced by 30 -20 percent in 2018. There is no change in the Tamil's struggle for their rights.

160. Tamil people did not gain anything useful from good governance | *Thinakaran*, 07 November 2018, p.01, 04 | No Byline

The Secretary of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) and Member of Parliament Annamalai Nadesu Sivasakthi Anandan has accused the previous government with the name of good governance as having not done anything useful for the Tamil's or the wellbeing of the Tamils in the last three and a half years. Similarly, Anandan accused the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) of not giving anything to the Tamil's despite promising to find a solution within this year. Anandan also stated that the government is advertising the release of lands after the war as providing new lands for the people, acting as being concerned about the political prisoners after releasing a very few prisoners, acting as starting the Office on Missing Persons (OMP) given a situation where the two year extension is going to end in next March, and acting as rebuilding houses of the Tamils that were destroyed during the war. He further stated that during the previous elections, the EPRLF requested the TNA to support the government with a few conditions but that was rejected and now the Tamil people are experiencing its consequences. Similarly, Anandan also added that the TNA supported the Maithri-Ranil government without any conditions thinking that they would provide a permanent solution to the problems with a joint North and East through a new constitution, but that too has been ignored. Anandan also criticised the TNA leadership of going against the EPRLF's request to not agree with providing a two-year extension to the 30/1 (UNHRC) resolution.

161. "Must provide a political solution for the Tamils before next Deepavali" – Leader of the Opposition R. Sampanthan| *Thinakaran*, 07 November 2018, p.03 | No Byline

The Leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and Opposition R. Sampanthan while speaking at the Deepavali festival held at the Presidential Palace day before yesterday (5 December), has stated that a political solution must be provided for the Tamil's national problems at least before the next years Deepavali festival so as to see progress in the country. Sampanthan stated that he has reiterated this even at last year's Deepavali festival and hoped that the President would provide the needed solution at least before next year's Deepavali festival. The leader of the opposition further added that during father Chelvanayakam's (father- honorary) time the Tamils protested through the righteous path, after that there were three decades of armed conflict and despite these a solution has not been provided for the problems of the Tamil community.

162. Continuing talks with the Tamil National Alliance to take up Ministerial duties | *Thinakaran*, 07 November 2018, p.12 | No Byline

The former Member of Parliament Vinayagamorthy Muralitharan via his twitter handle has stated that the members of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) have reject the request to join the new Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and take up Ministerial posts to serve the Tamil community. He added, that even though they have declined it, he is continuing talks through diaspora organisations that control some of the TNA's members and has congratulated Sumanthiran as Member of Parliament of the TNA.

163. "If the government proves its majority, then a joint North and East for the Tamils; South East for Muslims" – Basheer Segu Dawood | *Thinakaran*, 07 November 2018, p.12 | No Byline

Chairperson of the United Peace Alliance (UPA) and former Minister Basheer Segu Dawood on Monday (5 December) challenged the new government saying that if the new government gains a two third majority in parliament, then they must address the ethnic problem in the country. Segu Dawood's challenge was for the government to provide a joint North and East for the Tamil people through the 13th Amendment and provide the unit without any land connection in the South East to the Muslim community. He has further stated that if the problems of the minority communities are solved then there won't be any reason for the international community to intervene and for them to threaten the country stating violations of human rights.

164. Sampanthan explains to the US Ambassador regarding the prevailing condition in the country | *Thinakkural*, 07 November 2018, p.02 | No Byline

The foreign envoy of United States for Sri Lanka, Alaina B. Teplitz met with the Leader of the Opposition and the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) R Sampanthan yesterday (06 November) at his residence. Briefing the Ambassador on present situation in the country, Sampanthan said, events that have taken place in the past week in removing the Prime Minister are unconstitutional. Further, he said proroguing Parliament for a longer period is only paving the way to legitimize what has been done in an undemocratic manner by offering various benefits to those who want to shift sides. He further stated that he had written to the Speaker to take steps to reconvene the parliament at the earliest. He highlighted that the issues of the Political prisoners, resettlement, and rehabilitation, the release of lands occupied by the armed forces, issue of missing persons the progress has been slow. He further stated inadequate delivery on these matters has caused a sense of disappointment among the Tamil people.

165. "Ranil continues to betray the Tamil people from Batticaloa" – UNP Kalkuda Regional Organiser | *Thinakkural*, 07 November 2018, p.04 | No Byline

The Kalkuda area organizer for the UNP, Arumugam Jegan stated that Ranil Wickremesinghe ignores the requests of the Tamil people, taking more interest in supporting other communities-if he is unable to perform, he should resign from his post. He stated this at a media briefing held by voice of media organisation in Batticaloa yesterday (06 November). The Tamil community is deprived of financial allocations where development related to the Tamil community is concerned, having approached Ranil Wickremesinghe many times and presenting several requests we have been turned down. He also stated that the TNA should remain neutral in its stand and not vote in favour of any faction unless the requests of the Tamils are met.

166. "Forget about the Mullivaikal mass murder. Supporting Mahinda right now is best for the Tamils" - Gopalakrishnan | *Thinakkural*, 07 November 2018, p.05 | No Byline

Senkathiron Gopalakrishnan, Coordinator of the Eastern Tamil Union stated that it was very clear that Tamils will not derive any benefit by the TNA voting for Ranil Wickremesinghe. It is important to focus on how well the Tamil use the consequences of this political crisis in their favour more than finding fault if the appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa. Although the requests of the Tamils for a new constitution and the international inquiry on war crimes seems to be fair, they cannot be passed without winning the hearts of the Sinhalese through the ordinary parliamentary political procedures. The Tamils will not benefit from any parliamentary portfolios or appointments, what is more important is the release of political prisoners, the release of lands acquired by the military and the implementation of the constitution. Decisions should not be taken on the basis of the 'Mullivaikkal Massacre', it is not incorrect to support Mahinda Rajapaksa.

167. "The Prime Minister and I will work for the people who were affected by the war" – President Maithripala Sirisena | *Thinakkural*, 07 November 2018, p.09 | No Byline

President Maithripala Sirisena said that he and Mahinda Rajapaksa would take quick action to resolve the issues of those affected by the war. He stated this while addressing a UPFA meeting held at Battaramulla. Though many programmes were carried out in the country, programmes have not been implemented for those affected by the war. He also stated that he had requested either speaker Karu Jayasuriya or Sajith Premadasa to take up the post of Prime Minister, two months ago. He appointed Mahinda Rajapaksa upon their refusal. He also said that he will not back out due to any sort of pressure.

168. "The new government must unite the North and East and provide the 13th Amendment to the Tamil people" – Basheer Segu Dawood | *Thinakkural*, 07 November 2018, p.09 | No Byline

Chairman of the United Peace Alliance (UPA) and former cabinet Minister in charge of Productivity Promotion, Basheer Segu Dawood stated that the first thing everyone should agree on is the first issue to be addressed if the new government receives a two third majority in parliament. The 13th Amendment and unification of the North and East should be given to the Tamil people and land measurement that is not connected to the Muslims. The concerns of the minorities and development of the areas they reside in should be carried out. If the issues of the minorities are resolved there would be no need for foreign intervention nor threats against human rights violations. Moreover, if this is resolved the increase in local production which would enable the rupee to gain power against the dollar. This would in turn elevate poverty and help Sri Lanka gain a good reputation. He also advised Mahinda Rajapaksa to appoint someone from our area to undertake the responsibility of developments in the North and East and not a Sinhalese from the South. He also stated that the Sinhalese terrorists should not be allowed to attack Muslims in fear of losing Sinhala votes, which would result in not only losing Sinhala votes but also the votes of pure Buddhists.

169. "The Tamil National Alliance must not auction the politics of the Tamil people" | *Thinakkural*, 07 November 2018, p.10 | By: Roshan Nagalingam

The National movement for the release of political prisoners stated that the TNA should not fall into the conspired trap of the new government when there was no assurance that the aspirations of the Tamils would be fulfilled. The caller of the movement V.M. Sakthivel stated that a lot of bargaining is going on to capture political power. The release of political prisoners should not be centred along the lines of politics and political parties. Moreover, the TNA should not mortgage the politics of the Tamil people nor destroy it.

170. "The President did not like to release a few Tamil political prisoners" – Ranil Wickremesinghe | *Tamil Mirror*, 07 November 2018, p.01, 02 | No Byline

The "good governance" government decided to release Tamil political prisoners in stages. Leader of the United National Party (UNP) who was informed that he was removed from the post of Prime Minister; Ranil Wickremesinghe stated that he never obstructed the release of political prisoners. It was Maithripala Sirisena who was not in agreement with the release of political prisoners. It is only the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) that has requested for the

union of the North and East and included it in the recommendations of the new constitution. Other parties were not in support of this.

171. President to meet the Tamil National Alliance members today | *Thinakaran*, 07 November 2018, p.01, 04 | No Byline

Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP Dharmalingam Sithadthan has stated that a meeting will be held on the invitation of President Maithripala Sirisena and the TNA today (7 November) regarding the prevailing situation in the country. He has said that the TNA is going to meet Sirisena to directly express their stance under the leadership of the leader of the TNA R. Sampanthan. Further, Sithadthan has stated that his opinion is that the President has invited them, not to speak on the wellbeing of the Tamils. He has further assured, that the TNA will speak to Sirisena considering the wellbeing of the Tamil community and if Sirisena make any promises based on their requests then they will see if there needs to be any change in their stance.

172. "It is important that people from minorities work with patience" – Naushad | *Tamil Mirror*, 07 November 2018, p.06 | By: R.K. Rahamatulla

Former MP and current Sammanthurai Chairperson A. M. A. Naushad, a senior member of the Akila Ilankai Makkal Congress, stressed that minorities should act intelligently with patience bearing in mind the political turmoil prevalent in the country. In the history of the country consecutive governments that ruled the have never completely undertaken to resolve the issues of the minorities. They have provided concession to issues that occur on and off and as and when required. The representatives of minority parties should use opportunities that come their way in an appropriate manner instead.

173. Maithri who removed Ranil for the Tamils? | *Tamil Mirror*, 07 November 2018, p.08 | No Byline

President Maithripala Sirisena heading the Deepavali national function organized by the Presidential secretariat at the Presidential palace on 05 November stated that he wanted to find a permanent solution to the issues of the Tamil people, which Ranil Wickremesinghe kept obstructing. Being the head of the cabinet if he could not have taken a decision related to the Tamil people, the entire responsibility for not doing so should be borne by him. Maithri has only promised that a solution would be found by next Deepavali after holding discussions with Mahinda. If Ranil is the trouble maker related to the issues of the Tamils, then even President holds responsibility as head of state.

174. Maithri's somersault and the TNA's decision | *Tamil Mirror*, 07 November 2018, p.08 | By: Purujothaman Thangamayil

Turning towards Maithripala Sirisena, general opposition candidate at the last Presidential election, Mahinda Rajapaksa's faction used uncivilized jargon and humiliating words. After a period of four years President Maithripala Sirisena has stepped up the same platform in support of Mahinda Rajapaksa. As President who has received the order of the people, he has the responsibility of maintaining dignity in speech instead of addressing others in a manner that would defame their character in public. When no one has the right to speak openly in public about personal matters of another, it is uncivilized for first citizen of a country to use obscene language for his political gain. President Maithripala Sirisena conducted himself this way at the '*Jana Mahi Maya*' rally that was held at the parliamentary roundabout (05 November). While the country enters into a period of continuous polls, it becomes unnecessary for Ranil, Maithri and Mahinda to be involved in bargaining or getting into a written agreement. The fact that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) didn't do such a thing is an investment towards its success in the future.

175. No one needs to take Gajendrakumar's stories seriously | *Thinakaran*, 07 November 2018, p.14 | No Byline

The Leader of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) and Member of Parliament for the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) Dharmalingam Siddharathan claims no attention needs to be paid to the words of Leader of the Tamil National People's Front (TNPF) Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam. Sithadthan's statement was made in light of the statement made by Ponnambalam asking the PLOTE to leave the Tamil People's Council (TPC). Defending the TNA's stance, he reiterated that this political situation came into existence when attempts to solve the problems of the Tamils were progressing and that they have come to this decision based on the issues of Tamils.

176. "Minority communities must work with patience and intelligence" – Pradeshiya Sabha Chairperson of Samanthurai Naushad | *Virakesari*, 07 November 2018, p.21 | No Byline

A senior leader of the All Ceylon Makkal Congress (ACMC) and the current Chairperson of the Samanthurai Pradeshiya Sabha A.M.M. Naushad has stated that in the prevailing political situation minority communities must work with patience and intelligence. Naushad explained that the governments that have been ruling the country in the past have not fully solved the problems of the minority communities and only provided certain minor solutions and that at this political juncture the leaders representing the minority communities must

use this opportunity correctly. He also added that several problems of the Muslim people have not been solved by both the governments and cited the Karanga Vattai land issue as one of the concerns.

177. "Cannot maintain the wellbeing of the Tamil people inside the structure of the Sri Lankan government's configuration" – Political Analyst Jothilingam | *Virakesari*, 07 November 2018, p.16 | By: M. Newton

When questioned on President Maithripala Sirisena's statement that he will not allow the joining of the North and East and a federal system during his lifetime, senior Attorney-at-law and Political Analyst C.A. Jothilingam has stated that it was a very complicated matter to maintain the wellbeing of the Tamil people inside the Sri Lankan government's structural configuration. Jothilingam added that for the people in the South regardless of any political party breaching nationalism cannot work, and that Sirisena through this statement has proved to them that he is a nationalist. Jothilingam explained further that it was the responsibility of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) to inform the international community of this and that the international community must intervene to find a solution and maintain the wellbeing of the Tamil people in such a situation.

178. "President didn't invite us to enquire about the wellbeing of the Tamils. We are going to state the TNA's stance" – MP Dharmalingam Sithadthan | *Virakesari*, 07 November 2018, p.16 | By: M. Newton

Member of Parliament for the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) Dharmalingam Sithadthan has stated, President Maithripala Sirisena has not asked to meet with the TNA to speak about the wellbeing of the Tamil people, the TNA will meet with Sirisena to directly state the TNA's stance. Sithadthan made this statement while addressing the media from his residence in Kandarodai- Jaffna. He further explained his statement saying that during the current political crisis both Mahinda Rajapaksa and Ranil Wickremesinghe have approached the TNA for their support. Sithadthan also assured that the TNA will always consider the well-being of the Tamil people as the major concern.

179. "The international community must pay close attention to the President's statement"- Requests the Secretary of the Tamil Makkal Kootani (TMK) C.V. Wigneswaran| *Virakesari*, 07 November 2018, p.8 | No Byline

Secretary and Founder of the Tamil Makkal Kootani (TMK) C.V. Wigneswaran made a statement that close attention must be paid by the international community to President Maithripala Sirisena since during his lifetime, he will not allow for either the joining of the

North and East or the federal solution. He added that it is pointless for the Tamil political leaders to complain that the government has once again fooled the Tamil people. He also explained that it was Tamils that supported them to form a government which bailed from the Human Rights Council and destroyed the Tamil peoples' aspirations. Wigneswaran also criticised the President that to attract more votes from the Sinhala people he has stated that he will not allow for a joint North and East or a federal solution for the concerns of the Tamil people. Wigneswaran also assured that without the international community's actions to submit Sri Lanka to war crimes investigations and other issues the Sinhala brothers will not know what happened during the later stages of the war, how many people were killed, and how many women were sexually assaulted which is vital for reconciliation to take root.

180. The clear-cut requests of Sampanthan | *Virakesari*, 07 November 2018, p.04 | No Byline

The Tamil speaking community's contribution was significant in electing the government for good governance and at this instance with the current political crisis the expectation of the Tamil people for supporting the good governance government to solve their long-lasting issues have now become like pounded bran. Concerns of the Tamil people have not been fully addressed i.e. the need for political solution that has been there for a long period of time have not been granted, mechanism for accountability has not been established, lands have not been fully released, the issue with the political prisoners are still in effect, the development and livelihood of people affected by war in the North and East are stagnant, and no solutions have been provided for the issue concerning missing persons. Leader of the Opposition and the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) R. Sampanthan states at the Deepavali festival held day before yesterday (5 December) that the Tamil people have been fooled and requested that a solution be granted to the Tamil people before the next Deepavali festival. Considering all of these, it is important that President Maithripala Sirisena and political leaders from the South come forward, pay attention to the concerns raised by Sampanthan and solve the issues of the Tamil people.

181. The Tamil National Alliance that rejected all three requests | *Tamil Mirror*, 08 November 2018, p.07 | No Byline

Member of Parliament Mano Ganesan, leader of Tamil Progressive Alliance (TPA) stated that his party rejected three requests put forward by the President at a meeting held yesterday (07 November). The three requests were, to accept the Ministerial portfolio and join the government, not to participate during the no confidence motion (NCM) voting session against Mahinda Rajapaksa and not to support the appointment of Ranil Wickremesinghe in case the United National Front (UNF) emerges victorious. There will be no change in the

decision taken by us in the future. The 120-member majority within the parliament is with the UNF.

182. Must accept the decision of minority parties | *Tamil Mirror*, 08 November 2018, p.08 | No Byline

Views of minority representatives should be accepted by the President Maithripala Sirisena who has created a crisis in the country. The great responsibility of maintaining a peace in the country falls on the shoulder of the President, but the country is facing a pathetic situation due to his hasty decisions. All minority parties have joined together and expressed their dissatisfaction to the President. Together they have opposed the undemocratic move made by the President. He gives many reasons for not accepting the decision of the minorities such as Ranil was the barrier that prevented him from resolving the issues of the minority and why he removed Ranil from the post of Prime Minister. If he has any personal rivalry with Ranil he must deal directly with the party concerned instead of flatly rejecting the consensus reached by all the minorities, which is nothing less than anti-democratic.

183. A solution for the Tamil people's problems with support from the people in the South | *Thinakaran*, 08 November 2018, p.01, 04 | No Byline

The Minister of Skills Development and Vocational Training Dayasiri Jayasekara has stated that the problems faced by the Tamils can be solved with the support of the people in the South. Jayasekara made this statement while responding to a question raised by a journalist at the media briefing held yesterday (7th) at the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) headquarters asking if the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) will support the new Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. Further, Jayasekara has said that the power to solve these problems were only with President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and that if the United National Party (UNP) tried to solve the problems of the Tamil's the people from the South will create more problems. He also urged that the TNA must come to a decision favouring the Tamil people.

184. The Tamil National Alliance is fooling itself and the Tamil people | *Thinakaran*, 08 November 2018, p.01, 04 | By: Lawrence Selvanayagam

Deputy Minister of Regional Development (Eastern Development) S. Viyalanderan while speaking on the meeting held in between the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and President Maithripala Sirisena yesterday (7 December) has stated that the TNA has been fooling itself and the Tamil people in the past and that they need to use this opportunity to solve the problems faced by the Tamils. He further criticised the TNA of staying in the opposition and

supporting the past government without any conditions. Viyalanderan also inquired as to whether they got their requests in a written format from Ranil Wickremesinghe similar to the way they have wanted from President Maithripala Sirisena and stated that this was a great opportunity for the TNA to solve the problems of the Tamil people.

185. "It is not suitable to join with religious leaders and taken a decision" – Basheer informs Muslim political leaders | *Thinakkural*, 08 November 2018, p.05 | No Byline

It is not suitable for Muslim political heads and religious leaders to collaborate and take political decisions, stated former Minister Basheer Segu Dawood. He further stated that it was not healthy for Muslim political parties to call for the advice of Ulemas (Muslim religious heads) in the event of having to support either the government faction or the opposition. If such decisions are taken based on the advice of Ulemas, then the Sinhalese of the two major factions would be under the impression that the final decision was that of the Ulemas. Another anticipated outcome of this would be that the politicians could finally blame the religious leaders for the final decision and stir hatred that would go beyond the Muslim politicians and towards the entire community.

186. "Remove Sumanthiran from the party for speaking disrespectfully about the President" – Siva Senai requests from leader Mavai | *Thinakkural*, 08 November 2018, p.13 | No Byline

Maravanpulavu Sachithananthan, Chief Organiser of the Siva Senai, had written a letter to Leader of the Ilankai Thamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) Mavai Senathirajahh asking him to remove MP M.A. Sumanthiran from the TNA, as he addressed the President in a very insulting tone while delivering a speech at the TNA youth conference in Vavuniya. This will instigate hatred and will result in detriment to the Tamils. He also cited examples of similar incidents that created misunderstandings between Sinhalese and Tamils during speeches addressed in the second election of 1990 and the election of 1971. The Sinhalese will form a government without Tamils, similar to that of 1960 and 1971 which crushed the Tamils. Therefore, Sumanthiran should be removed from the TNA and from all his responsibilities related to the TNA.

187. "The minority community must be cautious regarding the prevailing situation in the country" – Former Chief Minister of the Eastern Province Nazeer | *Thinakkural*, 08 November 2018, p.13 | No Byline

At present, only 3 provincial councils operate in the country. The tenure of the rest has come to an end and they are under the purview of a governor. The provincial border report will

have to be revived and an election will be held under a mixed system for the provincial council. Such practices should not be encouraged but the usual system of conducting elections should be followed. If any action takes place behind the scene to reduce the representation of the minority especially Muslims, then we will struggle against it. The border determination done in the Eastern province was detrimental to Muslims, we shall not give any consideration to this.

188. The mistakes of the Tamil leaders in the past must not be repeated. Must use the opportunity correctly | *Thinakaran*, 08 November 2018, p.03, 04 | By: Maheswaran Prasath

Leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPD) and Minister of Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, and Hindu Religious Affairs Douglas Devananda while speaking at a media briefing held yesterday (7 December) has stated that the mistakes of Tamils leaders in the past must not be repeated. Devananda made this statement in light of the meeting held between the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and President Maithripala Sirisena, where the TNA has communicated that they will not change their decision to not support the current government. He also added that the mistakes of the Tamil leaders in the past have led to the problems faced by the Tamils. Devananda defended Sirisena stating that he has acted constitutionally and prorogued the parliament due to the lack of time in creating a new budget. However, Devananda also stated that it was proven through investigations that there was no truth in the accusations laid against the previous government for murder and other crimes.

189. Plans to begin the housing schemes in the North and East that were delayed under the last regime to begin before the end of this year | *Thinakaran*, 08 November 2018, p.12| By: Maheswaran Prasath

Leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPD) and the Minister of Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, and Hindu Religious Affairs Douglas Devananda has stated that there were plans to begin the building of housing scheme's in the North and East which was delayed under the last regime to begin before the end of this year. He made this statement while speaking at the media briefing held yesterday (7 December) at the ministry along with Deputy Minister Kader Masthan, and the Secretary to the Ministry V. Sivagnanasothy. Devananda has stated that as the first stage of the housing scheme they are expecting to start building fifteen thousand houses with the support of *Thiraiseri*. In addition to the housing schemes, the Minister had stated that compensation for those affected by war will be provided for 300 people in Mullaitivu District, 300 people in Killinochi District, and more than 100 people in the Jaffna District and that they are expecting to take steps to

provide compensation for over ten thousand people affected by war. Devananda has also stated because the development of the North comes under his ministry's purview, they are able to find solutions to resettlement, release of lands, fostering of the culture of Hinduism and the development of the North.

190. President and the Tamil National Alliance meet | *Thinakaran*, 08 November 2018, p.12 | No Byline

A meeting was held between the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and President Maithripala Sirisena yesterday (7 December) at the Presidential Secretariat. At this meeting Sirisena has emphasised the positive aspects of that could come out of his decision for the people, while the TNA has expressed their stance to the President. Further, the problems faced by the Tamil people in Sri Lanka was discussed and in responding to that, President Sirisena has assured the TNA that he will pay close attention to the problem immediately.

191. "It is the need of the hour for minority parties to journey together" – MP Imran Maharoo | *Virakesari*, 08 November 2018, p.23 | No Byline

Member of Parliament for the United National Party (UNP) Imran Maharoo says it is the need of the time for minority political parties to journey together in the prevailing political crisis. Maharoo added that the appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister was a conspiracy of the racist powers and further explained that this appointment was in violation of the constitution. Maharoo also welcomed the Tamil National Alliance's (TNA) decision to vote against Rajapaksa taking into consideration the problems the minority communities will have to face if Rajapaksa continues to govern. He hoped that some minority community parties such as the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), All Ceylon Makkal Congress (ACMC), the TNA, Tamil Progressive Alliance (TPA) will journey together in one path and come under the United National Front (UNT) to fulfil their needs easily.

192. "Ranil who is failing to fulfill the needs of the Tamil people must resign" – Arumugam Jegan | *Virakesari*, 08 November 2018, p.21 | No Byline

The Organizer of the United National Party (UNP) for the Kalkudah area, Arumugam Jegan has stated that while the requests are being submitted to the Leader of the UNP, Ranil Wickremesinghe he is failing to pay attention to them and that if he is acting in such a manner then he must be removed and replaced with another individual (leadership of the party). Jegan made this statement on Tuesday (6 December) at a media briefing held in Batticaloa. He further added that Wickremesinghe is helping all the other communities and ignoring the Tamil people. In order to explain this, Jegan cited that the Leader of the UNP while taking

part in a campaign for the last parliamentary elections promised to provide the former Batticaloa District Organizer for the UNP Sasidaran a seat in the parliament through the national list but has failed to fulfil his promise. Jegan while criticising Wickremesinghe also welcomed the appointment of a Tamil from Batticaloa as a Minister in the government.

193. “We need international intervention; we have taken steps needed for that” – Leader of the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) Mavai Senathirajahh | *Virakesari*, 08 November 2018, p.16 | By: M. Newton

Leader of the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi (ITAK) and Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MP Mavai Senathirajahh when questioned on TNA’s stance on the prevailing political solution has stated that they needed international intervention and that they are in the process of implementing the next steps after making connections with the super powers. Senathirajahh stated that currently the international communities are emphasising the need for Sri Lanka to follow the rules and constitution of the country to solve the issues. Senathirajahh also added that a complex situation has occurred with gaining a solution for the ethnic problem of the Tamils, being more specific on ethnic liberation and ethnic protection due to the prevailing political crisis and questioned as to whether the progress achieved under the national government will continue. Explaining his statement in relations to progress, Senathirajahh has stated that matters concerning a constitution was progressing, progress in releasing some lands have occurred, and that plans to develop regions that were affected by war with the help of foreign funds have also progressed. He also stated that in a situation like this, President Maithripala Sirisena’s statement saying that he won’t allow for a federal system and a joint North and East is a matter of concern for the Tamil community and based on this the TNA have reached out to the international community.

194. The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) must support the conditions that favour the interests of the Tamils | *Virakesari*, 08 November 2018, p.16 | No Byline

Eight civil society organisations in a statement urged the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) to support the conditions favouring the interests of Tamils in this moment when the Tamil political parties are acting as a decisive force in the prevailing political situation. The request was made by the Tamil Civil Society Forum, Tamil Lawyers Forum, Jaffna University Employees' Society, Jaffna University Students' Association, Jaffna University Arts Faculty Students' Union, Centre for Social Science Research, Centre for Evergreen Future (Pasumai Edirkalathukana Nilayam), and the Citizens Group of Vadamarachchi. The statement adds that the TNA must receive written guarantees for problems faced by the Tamils. Their requests included some of the issues faced by the Tamil people i.e. (1) need to gain a political solution based on self-determination, sovereignty, nation and a federal system, (2) when

drafting the constitution factors such as powers for self-rule, equal participation in joint governance, and protection of the powers need to be considered to maintain the integrity of Tamil regions, (3) plans should be implemented for the Tamil people to look into their own affairs while the political solution is provided, (4) repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act (TPA) and release the Tamil political prisoner without any conditions, (5) must stop the Mahaweli settlement scheme and stop the attempts of Sinhala settlements from being created in Tamil areas, (6) must release lands that have been forcefully taken and kept under military occupation (7) the violations undertaken by the Department of Wildlife and Department of Archaeology must be halted immediately (8) the development activities in Tamil areas must be taken by the interim administration, Northern Provincial Council (NPC), and local councils (9) Sinhala fishermen's dominance in Tamil areas must be stopped immediately (10) powers of the District secretariats must be provided back to the provincial councils (11) NPC's chief Ministers fund has to be approved (12) Kalmunai Tamil Pradeshiya Sabha must be elevated (13) need to provide compensation for those affected by missing persons as a temporary relief (14) the request of the estate workers in the up-country for a raise in salary to Rs. 1,000 must be granted immediately (15) when finding solutions for the ethnic problems, solutions for the up-country people's political problems must also be solved and (16) the need to continue the housing scheme and the approval of lands for the up-country people without any hinderance. The civil society organisations have sent these requests to the leaders and members of parliament of the TNA.

195. Graduates request the Tamil National Alliance to remain neutral. Eastern graduates request not to vote for Ranil | *Thinakaran*, 09 November 2018, p.01, 04 | No Byline

Unemployed graduates of the Eastern Province has request the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) not to support former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and to remain neutral in the current political situation. They accused the former Prime Minister for ignoring the many protests held by the unemployed graduates in the North and East amidst heavy rains, scorching sun, during both day and night while mosquitos were biting for the last two months. Meanwhile, they stated that the current Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa while being in the office of President created a record by creating employment opportunities for over forty-five thousand people and more than that provided motorcycles for government servants at a subsidised price. Further, they had stated that the former government ignored the release of Tamil political prisoners and that Wickremesinghe created record by committing over thirty-two genocides. Therefore, having considered this, they have questioned whether it mattered if Raman or Ravanan ruled the country and requested the TNA to remain neutral.

196. Chaos in Colombo and the politics of the Tamils | *Tamil Mirror*, 09 November 2018, p.08 | By: K. Sanjayan

The decision taken by the President in the politics of Sri Lanka has not only disturbed the politicians of the South but also the national Tamil politicians as well. The opinions of the national Tamil political factions that were shared as a means of providing advice to resolve the political crisis are not practical. The TNA is the only national Tamil political faction that has seats in the parliament and can therefore actively handle this unlike the other Tamil parties. This is why when the need arose to gain a majority Ranil Wickremesinghe and Mahinda Rajapaksa started arguing over how to get a better bargain of the TNA. The Sinhalese political leaders will never give the Tamils a fair solution. It is explicit that the national Tamil factions have yet not understood the Sinhala political leaders. A fear has crept into some of the Tamil factions that Sumanthiran will capture their seat by aggravating the Maithri- Mahinda opposition. This chaos in Colombo has disturbed the Tamil factions of the North and East, in a way it makes it seem as though even if the Colombo chaos comes to an end, the issues and brawls within the national Tamil factions are here to stay.

197. "We will not engage in politics by auctioning the mandate give to us by the Tamil people" – MP Velu Kumar | *Thinakkural*, 09 November 2018, p.05 | No Byline

The Tamil Progressive Front (TPF) is not a party that would mortgage the mandate given by the people in an uncivilized way. The political journey on the straight path will not waver for millions stated the deputy leader of the TPF and TPF MP for the Kandy District Velu Kumar. The parties that function centered in the hill capital don't conduct 'frog politics' rather the ITAK has proved what politics for the people is. The President's request to the ITAK support the new government was rejected by us as the President didn't hold any discussions with any of the factions prior to his sudden decision which is unconstitutional as well. The people of the hill country voted for us to secure their rights and our values, we cannot mortgage their mandate for privileges offered by others.

198. The Tamil National Alliance must not support Ranil who did not respect the protests held by unemployed graduates | *Thinakkural*, November 09, p.06 | No Byline

The unemployed graduates of the Batticaloa District have staged a protest on behalf of the unemployed graduates of the North and East who were not payed any heed by Ranil Wickremesinghe. The protest that went on for 2 months in the main cities in the east was completely ignored. Present Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa while he President, created history by providing suitable employment to over 45,000 graduates in the same day. He even went beyond that by providing motorcycles to government employees at a subsidised rate.

Ranil Wickremesinghe should be removed from the political arena and the TNA should not render its support to him.

199. "Supporting Mahinda will affect us" – Rauff Hakeem | *Tamil Mirror*, 09 November 2018, p.01, 02 | No Byline

"The new change in governance cannot be accepted, we are continuing from a standpoint that this is an illegal move" stated leader of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) Rauff Hakeem. It would not be fair to say that we would cooperate with Mahinda Rajapaksa just because we have been with him in the former regime, as this would affect our party, we would not want to do it. Moreover, we will not let anyone from our party to form an alliance with Mahinda.

200. The Tamil National Alliance must support along with serious conditions | *Thinakaran*, 09 November 2018, p.01, 04 | No Byline | By: K. Asok Kumar

Former Member of the Northern Provincial Council (NPC) and leader of the Tamil Eelam Self-Governance Organisation Anandi Sasidharan has stated that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) must think well and work in this current political crisis and must support any actor with serious conditions. Sasidharan further added that they were fooled when they supported in 2015 without any conditions and that the TNA must function based on the problems of the Tamils. Some of the concerns raised by Sasidharan included the release of lands, release of prisoners and the solving of basic problems faced by the Tamils.

201. "We will not engage in politics by auctioning the mandate give to us by the Tamil people; policies won't change due to millions" says Velu Kumar| *Virakesari*, 09 November 2018, p.09 | No Byline

In a statement regarding the prevailing political situation in the country, the Deputy Leader of the Democratic People's Front (DPF) and Member of Parliament for Kandy Velu Kumar has said that they will not engage in politics by auctioning the mandate given to them by the Tamil people. Kumar has further added that not all parties in the up-country work in 'frog politics' (cross overs) and that the Tamil Progressive Alliance (TPA) has proved this. Kumar further explained that the people from the up-country elected them into power to see development, protection of rights and policies. Kumar also assured that they will never change these and betray the people for millions of rupees.

202. Provision of compensation to those affected by the war will be hastened | Thinakaran, 09 November 2018, p.03, 04 | No Byline

The Deputy Minister of Resettlement, Rehabilitation, and Northern Development K. Kader Masthan while speaking at a media briefing held day before yesterday at the ministry has stated that the providing of compensation money for those affected by war will be hastened. Masthan has further stated that he, the Minister of Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, and Hindu Religious Affairs Douglas Devananda, and Secretary to the Ministry V. Sivagnanasothy are determined to see that compensation for war that ended long time ago will be provided at least now under the new government. Further elaborating on the plans of the ministry, the deputy Minister has stated that plans to build fifteen thousand houses will be implemented before the end of this year from the total twenty five thousand houses that has been envisioned to be given mainly to the internally displaced, refugees who are returning from India, people living in welfare centres, those who were rehabilitated, and for families that depend on the leadership of women.

203. A request from the Sri Lankan Muslims | Virakesari, 09 November 2018, p.04 | By Ameer Ali

Currently Sri Lanka has reached a critical stage to decide about its future due to the prevailing political situation in the country. At this juncture, a golden opportunity has arisen for Tamil and Muslim political leaders to join with Sinhala people who love the nation and are willing to protect its democratic and constitution. In this moment, it is sad to see some Muslim members of parliament have ran to support President Maithripala Sirisena's action of removing and replacing the Prime Minister who was elected for their own benefits. Uniting together to defend the constitution and democracy will open a new chapter in Sri Lankan politics that will be remembered forever. Hence, the Muslim members of parliament should think well and use this golden opportunity.

204. Deputy Minister S. Viyalanderan at the Presidential Taskforce meeting | Virakesari, 09 November 2018, p.01, 09 | No Byline

The newly appointed Deputy Minister of Regional Development (Eastern Development) S. Viyalanderan who crossed over from the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) took part in the meeting of the Presidential Taskforce for the development of the North and East held yesterday, at the Presidential Secretariat In addition, several from the new government as well as members of the TNA under the leadership of R. Sampanthan took part in this meeting. Discussions on the release of lands that were under military occupation was discussed. The representatives of the army have stated that the army required Rs. 2,300 million to make

necessary arrangements to release the lands. Further, President Sirisena has requested all parties relevant to this matter to cooperate and take necessary actions to release all the lands within the month of December. Although, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa was expected to attend this meeting, the chair allocated for him was removed at the last moment as he was unable attend the meeting.

205. "The Tamils will get a permanent solution by giving the authority to EPDP" – Douglas Devananda | *Thinakaran*, 11 November 2018, p.01, 10 | No Byline

Leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) and Minister of Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, and Hindu Religious Affairs Douglas Devananda has stated that a permanent solution will be provided for the problems of the Tamil people by giving the political authority to the EPDP and that he has hopes that at the next parliamentary elections the Tamil people will vote for his party. Devananda made this statement at a media briefing held yesterday (10th) at the EPDP party head office in Jaffna. While stating that the up -coming elections will be for the wellbeing of the people, Devananda has assured that unlike the previous political leaders who came into power through the Tamil votes and betrayed them for their own self benefits, he along with the others will work for the benefit of the people continuing the projects that has already been implemented through his ministry. Devananda has also stated that if political authority is given to them, they will work not only for the development of the people but also to provide a life with all the rights.

206. "India must intervene immediately on the Sri Lankan issue" – Leader of Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) Anbumani Ramadoss | *Thinakkural*, 11 November 2018, p.08 | No Byline

Anbumani Ramadoss said although it was Sri Lanka's internal issue, the Centre cannot overlook the developments as the security of India and the welfare of the Tamil population of the island nation was at stake. "It is a brutal murder of democracy since Parliament's tenure ends only in August 2020," Anbumani, who is also the party's Dharmapuri Lok Sabha MP, said. He alleged that the Maithripala Sirisena-Rajapaksa combine would try to win the January 5 polls through intimidatory tactics and by indulging in poll irregularities. If they succeeded, it would lead to "both anti-Tamil" and "anti-India measures" in Sri Lanka, Anbumani claimed. "Strategic locations in Sri Lanka may be given on a platter to China, jeopardizing India's security interests," he alleged.

207. "The safety of Eelam Tamils is in danger; India must intervene without any delay" – M. K. Stalin | *Thinakkural*, 11 November 2018, p.08 | No Byline

Tamil Nadu political parties, including the main opposition Dravida Munnetra Kalagam(DMK) termed the dissolution of the Sri Lankan Parliament as “murder of democracy”. They also sought the Central government’s intervention to ensure that the security of India and the welfare of the Tamil people in the island nation are protected chief M K Stalin said the dissolution of parliament was “trampling of the Constitution” and “atrocious” since the Sri Lankan constitution says that only a resolution by two-thirds of its members can pave the way to dissolve the House within four and a half years of its convening. The leader of the opposition in the Tamil Nadu assembly, dubbed the move as a political emergency that threatened stability and jeopardized the welfare of Tamils. Urging the Centre to condemn the “murder of democracy”, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) leader said the Union government must take steps to ensure a dignified life for Tamils with peace and security.

208. "The dissolution of parliament is the murder of democracy" – Pattali Makkal Kadchi | *Virakesari*, 11 November 2018, p.24 | No Byline

The President of the Youth Wing of the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) Anbumani Ramadoss in a statement released on Saturday (10 November) regarding the political situation in Sri Lanka has said that the act of dissolution of parliament in Sri Lanka was the murder of democracy. Ramadoss has further elaborated his statement saying the dissolution of parliament by President Maithripala Sirisena was in violation of the constitution and that Rajapaksa was appointed when he lacked the majority. Ramadoss added that in order to get the majority in parliament for Rajapaksa, opposition members of parliament were bought with money, and to gain the support of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) they attempted to release the Tamil political prisoners who were detained for more than ten years after the end of the war but they did not achieve any victory with that. Ramadoss criticised Sirisena saying that it was not fair for him to have been elected through the votes of the Tamil people in 2015 and then to have joined with his old friend Mahinda Rajapaksa who committed genocide. Ramadoss also urged the Indian government to not continue showing any indifference and intervene in the Sri Lankan problem to protect the countries democracy.

209. Democracy-constitution-accountability. What is the selection of the Tamils? | *Thinakkural*, 11 November 2018, p.28 | By: Sudanraj

In a situation where the country is upside down, the angle from which the Tamils should view this problem is important. The tension experienced by the international community in

particular shows the shows the importance Sri Lanka holds as the hub of the Indian ocean. They consider this political crisis, a scratch on their strategy. At the moment the main problem Tamils face and what they plead for is accountability for the injustice faced and a fair compensation. Democracy in Sri Lanka that calls out for the establishment of a new constitution, was the same democracy that committed human rights violations through the same constitution. This crisis serves as the ideal opportunity to expose Sri Lankas democracy and the human rights violations to the entire world and also to insist that Sri Lanka is not prepared to be accountable. It is important that Tamil political powers handle this well.

210. "The Indian government is watching with amusement while the larynx of democracy is being crushed" – President of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam M.K. Stalin | *Virakesari*, 11 November 2018, p.24 | No Byline

In a statement released on Saturday (10 November) President of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) M.K. Stalin has said that the Indian government is watching with amusement while the larynx of democracy is being crushed in Sri Lanka. Stalin blamed Sirisena for creating a political crisis and through that for betraying and creating a frightening situation for the Tamil people's wellbeing and safety. He also blamed Sirisena for bringing back to power Mahinda Rajapaksa, who in Stalin's view should have been submitted before the International Criminal Court as a war criminal for assaulting and committing mass murder of Tamil people without any compassion and care for them. Stalin having said the above, urged the Indian government to protect the Tamils in Eelam after the dissolution of parliament.

211. "India must condemn the dissolution of parliament" – Thol. Thirumavalavan | *Virakesari*, 11 November 2018, p.10| No Byline

Leader of the Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK/ Liberation Panther Party) of India Thol. Thirumavalavan in a statement on behalf of his party released yesterday has stated that India must condemn the dissolution of parliament and that the dissolution of parliament was a massacre of democracy. Thirumavalavan has also added that the decision taken by the President of Sri Lanka Maithripala Sirisena to join with Rajapaksa who is a criminal who has committed genocide is a matter that is frightening to the Sri Lankan democracy and Tamils from Eelam.

212. "World countries must intervene" – P. Nedumaran | *Virakesari*, 11 November 2018, p.23 | No Byline

In a statement regarding the political crisis in Sri Lanka the Leader of the Tamil Nationalist Movement (TNM) of India P. Nedumaran has said that President Maithripala Sirisena has killed democracy by violating the constitution and dissolving the parliament. Nedumaran hence urged the world countries to intervene in the situation in Sri Lanka and protect both democracy and the Tamil people from Eelam.

213. What must the Tamil National Alliance do? | *Thinakkural*, 11 November 2018, p.30 | By: Thambiyappa Gopalakrishnan

In today's political environment it is not wise to lay down conditions that are impractical, rather focus towards matters that are practical such as a political solution to release political prisoners, the release of lands under the military which need not wait till the new constitution is implemented. The 13th Amendment could serve as a good solution if it is accepted by the government and implemented. The basic reason for the TNA to remain backward is because it does not have a clear agenda as to what it can achieve within the political pathway of the parliament and outside of it from the time the ITAK was established upto the present period with the TNA. It has been unproductive politics all the way. Moreover, the Tamil faction is not going to achieve anything great by holding a life time grudge against Mahinda Rajapaksa over the Mullivaikkal massacre. The Tamil National Alliance (TNA), having expressed its willingness for a political solution within a united country should request the future government to resolve some of the basic issues of their people in exchange for their support, failing which should take a neutral stance and leave it to the ruling class to resolve their crisis.

214. "The executive power has not been lessened anywhere in the 19th Amendment of the constitution" – Wijeyadasa Rajapakshe | *Virakesari*, 11 November 2018, p.04 | By: R. Vidusha

At a media briefing held yesterday (10 November) at the Department of Government Information, Presidential Counsel Wijeyadasa Rajapakshe stated that there was no legal problem in the dissolution of parliament by President Maithripala Sirisena. Further, defending Sirisena, Rajapakshe has added that the executive powers granted to the President has not been lessened anywhere in the 19th amendment of the constitution. He made this in light of the questions raised regarding the legality of Sirisena's action to dissolve the parliament even after the 19th amendment came into being.

215. Minister Vasudeva Nanayakkara to take immediate action on the release of Tamil political prisoners. Promises to submit a cabinet paper | *Thinakkural*, 12 November 2018, p.02 | No Byline

Minister of National Integration, Reconciliation and Official Languages Vasudeva Nanayakkara stated that a cabinet paper related to the release of Tamil political prisoners would be submitted soon during his visit to a community service center in Ampara, Saturday (31 October).

216. "President's actions are against the Tamils" – Mavai Senathirajahh | *Tamil Mirror*, 12 November 2018, p.04 | By: S. Nidarshan

The recent activities of the President seems to be against the Tamil people who placed implicit trust and elected him stated Mavai Senathirajahh, a former MP from the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and Leader of the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK). He stated this on 10 November while addressing the gathering that participated to commemorate the 12th death anniversary of former MP Raviraj in Chavakachcheri. He further stated while measures were taken to form a new constitution, due to shortcomings an interim report was submitted, it was during this time that President violated the constitution and interrupted the interim report being handed over.

217. "Maithri has become the man who has fallen back" – Selvam Adikalanathan | *Thinakkural*, 12 November 2018, p.05 | No Byline

Former Leader of the parliamentary committee Selvam Adaikalanathan stated that the President has sown the seed for the county to face a back log. Speaking to the BBC Tamil he stated that democracy has been violated in his country. If this political crisis had not occurred, we would have witnessed the submission of the final copy of the new constitution on 07 December. The Tamils rendered their support to Maithri amidst many issues, but we have finally been disappointed. We favoured Maithri expecting him to adhere the advice of India, Britain, USA, and Canada and run a stable government.

218. "Tamil political powers must unite and work together" – Thol. Thirumavalavan from Jaffna | *Thinakkural*, 12 November 2018, p.04 | No Byline

Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) Leader Thol Tirumavalavan requests all Eelam Tamil national parties should work together with clear far sightedness based on the Security welfare of the Tamils. He also said that it was important that they worked together despite political contradictions. Speaking at a media briefing at the Jaffna media station on 11

November, he further stated that they should do their best to give up all negative actions of suspicion and criticism against each other. If this continues it will severely affect the next generation. Lessons that we should have taken from the past have been wasted in the 10-year period following that by being critical.

219. "Tamil National Alliance is not representative of the Tamil people" – Namal Rajapaksa | *Thinakkural*, 12 November 2018, p.07 | No Byline

Former MP Namal Rajapaksa in an interview with India media stated that the TNA is not a representation of the Tamil people. He further stated that Ranil Wickremesinghe leaned on the Western world that was detrimental to the welfare of Sri Lanka. He gave more prominence to the welfare of the west than to his own country. He depends on the west and not over the people of our country. We are willing to work with the Tamil factions, but unfortunately, they cannot work together with their own community. The Tamil parties' function for their own welfare and not for the people. Majority of the Tamil parties do not represent their community the TNA, does not represent the community.

220. The highest level of democracy was maintained by the dissolution of parliament | *Virakesari*, 12 November 2018, p.18 | No Byline

President of the Council of Justice of Peace for Justice and Human Rights (CJPJH) Fahath A. Majeed while speaking to the media in Addalaichenai yesterday (11 November) has said that the dissolution of parliament and going for a general election is the highest form of democracy has been maintained in the country. Explaining his statement Majeed has stated that the former government of Ranil Wickremesinghe which came into power with promises to the Tamil and Muslim minority communities in the North and East saying that they will release their lands, stop the ethnic violence in the country, provide employment opportunities and livelihood opportunities did not hold up to their promises after coming into power. Considering these, Majeed has stated that the CJPJH will support for the holding of a fair election.

221. "People are coming to the North and East from the South to exploit it" – Wigneswaran | *Thinakkural*, 12 November 2018, p.10 | No Byline

Those who come from the South in the guise of protecting the Tamil people, do so with the intention of exploiting the North and East, stated former chief Minister of the Northern Provincial council C.V, Wigneswaran. Addressing a gathering in Nallur, Jaffna as the chief guest at an event organized by the Tamil National Prosperity Movement, he further stated that his perceptions of the people of the South was that their mentality towards the North and East

was to exploit. He also spoke about the role of man in upholding nature's balance which was vital for human survival and the advancements in technology and how this could be controlled so that it does not harm our existence.

222. "Tamil people must use the political change in the country correctly" – EPRLF | *Thinakkural*, 12 November 2018, p.11 | No Byline

A VIP of the EPRLF R. Thuraiingham stated that the present changes that are taking place in national politics will not secure the welfare of the Tamils. Therefore, Tamils should prepare for another election. The anti-democratic action of powerful forces has taken the law into their hands. The Tamil factions have failed to reach a consensus in favour of the Tamil community, which displays our weakness. National factions have crept into the North and East and over the Tamil factions too. This type of opportunistic politics is not true. Therefore, this interim change should be used to yield positive results towards the welfare of the Tamils.

223. "The creation of the new constitution is now questionable" – Sivagnanam | *Tamil Mirror*, 12 November 2018, p.4 | By: S. Nidarshan

All efforts taken towards the creation of the constitution including a solution to the political crisis, are lost due to the recent actions of the President stated the Northern Provincial Council Chairperson and Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) Asst. General Secretary, C.V.K. Sivagnanam. Addressing a media briefing on 10 November at his residence, further state that President's actions based on boldness and that legal action could not be taken against him. He blamed the President for his actions that had badly affected the Tamil people.

224. "Even if there are political conflicts, it is important to join and work together" – Thol. Thirumavalavan from Jaffna | *Tamil Mirror*, 12 November 2018, p.01, 02 | No Byline

Leader of Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) Thol Tirumavalavan requests all Eelam Tamil national parties should work together with clear far sightedness based on the Security welfare of the Tamils. He also said that it was important that they worked together despite political contradictions. Speaking at a media briefing at the Jaffna media station on 11 November, he further stated that they should do their best to give up all negative actions of suspicion and criticism against each other. If this continues it will severely affect the next generation. Lessons that we should have taken from the past have been wasted in the 10-year period following that by being critical.

225. Workers' wage raises are ignored amidst the political crises | *Virakesari*, 14 November 2018, p.14 | No Byline

Former member of Central Provincial Council and General Secretary of the Ceylon Workers' Unity Front S. Sathasivam said that the workers' wage demand is ignored among the current political crises. In this context, considering the economic barriers of the workers, the unions have to take immediate action to increase the salary. Workers were mostly affected by the country's political situation. The issue of collective agreements remains without a proper solution, he concerned.

226. When we come to power, solutions will be given to Tamils | *Virakesari*, 15 November 2018, p.13 | By: R. Yasi

Ranil Wickremesinghe pledged solutions for the Tamils if the United National Party (UNP) were to come to power. The Tamil Nations Alliance (TNA) questioned Ranil Wickremesinghe on the next steps of the current constitutional issues. They also they pointed out the nonfulfillment of the promises that the government had given. Further, they insisted that Wickremesinghe should provide solutions to the problems of Tamils.

227. The international community should pay attention to Sri Lanka: Tamils' Council calls| *Thinakkural*, 15 November 2018, p. 2 | No Byline

The Tamils' council, appreciating the interim order given by the Sri Lankan Supreme Court, called on the international community to pay attention to Sri Lanka. It alleged that the demands of the Tamils to achieve justice and devolution of power were being denied. Also, they alleged that the mechanisms to address the human rights violations during the war time were politicised. In this context, they said that upholding democracy is important.

228. Major success for democracy and the unity of minorities | *Thinakkural*, 15 November 2018, p.10 | No Byline

Deputy Leader and the former Eastern Province Chief Minister, Nazeer Ahamed said that the interim order given by the Supreme Court is evidence for the success of democracy and the unity of the minorities. This success was possible due to the collective effort of the minority political leaders.

229. Negotiations for the collective agreement will be further delayed | *Thinakkural*, 15 November 2018, p.18 | No Byline

Trade unions have indicated that negotiations between the unions and the Employers' Federation will be delayed. Despite the Rs. 1,000 salary demand of the plantation workers, the Employers' Federation has stated that workers' salaries can be increased to Rs. 600. Further, the trade unions said that the date for the fourth round of negotiations have not been announced yet. The negotiation was delayed due to the prevailing political crisis in the country, they said.

230. Negotiations will be delayed; trade unions state | *Tamil Mirror*, 15 November 2018, p.05 | No Byline

Trade unions have indicated that negotiations between the unions and the Employers' Federation will be delayed. Despite the Rs. 1,000 salary demand of the plantation workers, the Employers' Federation has stated that workers' salaries can be increased to Rs. 600. Further, the trade unions said that the date for the fourth round of negotiations have not been announced yet. The negotiation was delayed due to the prevailing political crisis in the country, they said.

231. Minority parties influence the governance | *Thinakkural*, 18 November 2018, p. 11 | By: Samanthika Madhavi

Protecting the minorities is the duty of the majority. There are several political parties representing the minorities in Sri Lanka. The main majority parties need the support of the minority parties to show the majority in the parliament. In that context, minority parties have some strength which was well-shown in 1960 elections. Since 1989 the persons who received 12.5% votes out the total votes could be appointed as Ministers; but this stand was changed by Ranasinghe Premadasa. According to the change, persons who received 5% votes out the total votes can be appointed as Ministers. This led to the small parties to acquire Ministerial posts. Since the minority parties are well needed to show the majority, those parties impact the politics in a higher level. Also, they often change their support. This has been a current problem. Majority parties should show the majority alone without the support of minority parties.

232. The international community should realise that no government will solve the problems of Tamils | *Thinakkural*, 18 November 2018, p. 24 | By: Pattiruppu Correspondent

The civil societies based in Batticaloa said that no government will provide solutions to the Tamils in Sri Lanka; therefore, the international community should make a determination to resolve the problems of Tamils. No government would realise the grievances of Tamils who fiercely affected during the 30 years civil war. Minority people made a regime change in 2015 with the hope of getting solutions to their problems, but nothing was happened in the so-called good governance. Also, as another hope, new constitution making process was started. While the new constitutional draft is supposed to be submitted on 7 December, the current political crises has taken place and the majority parties use the views against to the minority as their political investment. It is crystal clear that minorities will not be given their rights in any regime in Sri Lanka. Therefore, they requested the international community to take a resolution solve the problems of North-East Tamils.

233. Shaking transitional justice in Sri Lanka | *Thinakkural*, 18 November 2018, p. 28 | By: Suthanraj

The international community including the United Nations urge Sri Lanka to uphold the democracy and the constitution under which thousands of Tamils were brutally killed. While the affected victims, Tamils demand the international investigation for justice saying that the democratic process is not credible, the Leader of the main representative party of Tamils, the Tamil National Alliance declared that the democracy and the justice of Sri Lanka are ensured through the Supreme Court injunction order. The appreciation of the Sri Lankan judiciary by the Tamil representatives might affect the demand of the affected Tamils, namely the demand of international investigation.

234. International community can assess now: Former Chief Minister of the Northern Province says | *Thinakkural*, 19 November 2018, p.02 | No Byline

Responding to a question posed by a journalist, the former chief Minister of Northern Province said that through the recent behavior of the parliamentarians at the Sri Lankan parliament, the international community would assess that how they could treat the minorities by their own forces during the war period. International community would realise now that why we demanded the international investigation to the war crimes investigation. No government will give solutions to the Tamils, international community has to provide solutions to the problems of Tamils, he emphasized. The international community should take proper resolutions to facilitate the justice to the Tamils.

235. Bringing Rajapaksa back to power would be the ruin of Sri Lanka | *Thinakkural*, 19 November 2018, p.05 | No Byline

The dangers of a return to power of Mahinda Rajapaksa cannot be overstated; when he was President, torture in Sri Lanka was routine, stated the Executive Director of the Freedom from Torture, Sonya Sceats. Tens of thousands of civilians were killed in just a few months at the end of the civil war in 2009. Whatever emerges in the short term from the current political chaos, we face the real possibility that a man who presided over mass torture and enforced disappearances will again hold the reins of power. On no account should the UK send people back to the risk of torture and ill-treatment there, as it has repeatedly done before. Last year alone, UK provided care to more than 230 Sri Lankans, the vast majority of whom were tortured under Rajapaksa's rule. Most of those we see are Tamil, but some are Sinhalese or of mixed ethnicity. The official antipathy towards the Tamil diaspora was displayed earlier this year by a Sri Lankan defence attaché caught on film making a throat-slitting gesture to Tamil protesters in London. The clear and present risk of escalating repression and our specific evidence of torture on return from the UK requires a halt to removals and an urgent review of the Home Office's asylum policy on Sri Lanka to match our evidence of who is likely to be targeted.

236. The safety of Tamils are at risk; Mavai Senathirajah worries | *Virakesari*, 21 November 2018, p.01, 10 | By: R. Yasi

Member of the Tami National Alliance and Leader of the Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi (ITAK) Mavai Senathirajah said that the new constitutional effort to provide a solution to the long-standing political problem of Tamils felt down due to the current political crisis. The current political situation creates threat to the minority communities, he added.

237. President's actions create ethnic conflicts | *Thinakkural*, 21 November 2018, p.05 | No Byline

Addressing at a discussion held on 20 November at Nuwara-Eliya District Secretariat, Nuwara-Eliya District parliamentarian Radhakrishnan alleged that the President who was elected as the President with the support of minorities is ignoring the opinions and aspirations of Tamils. He accused that President is acting in contradiction to the constitution and democracy principal. All minorities in Sri Lanka desire the democracy, he added. He requested the President to protect and follow the democracy.

238. The changes in national politics will not protect the Tamils | *Thinakkural*, 21 November 2018, p.06 | By: Pandiruppu Correspondent

The former member of the Eastern Provincial Council, R. Thurairathinam said that any of the changes in the national politics will not save the Tamils. The majority governments try to halt the minority representatives. Tamil politicians should utilize the current political situation and be wise in the upcoming elections, he added.

239. Another tragic period in Sri Lanka | *Thinakkural*, 21 November 2018, p.14, 15 | By: Gittana Anantha and V.V. Ganeshanandan

The fear of arbitrary rule and of oppression over minorities has been emerged due to the appointment of Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Prime Minister of the country. Mahinda Rajapaksa won the election through his attitude of Sinhala racism and the promise of ending the war. The war was ended with the killings of thousands of Tamils. After the end of the war, Mahinda Rajapaksa became prominent and started ruling the country in an arbitrary manner. Specifically, he did not allow anyone to critic him, he made them silence. He kept the minority areas under severe surveillance and threat. Sexual abuse had been increased and the freedom of association was totally breached. After the war, the Muslim community became a target of the Sinhala racists. In this context, the support for Mahinda gradually decreased and in the next Presidential elections people chose Sirisena as their President as he promised to keep the democracy, rule of law and prevent corruption. The new government of Sirisena allowed the human rights investigations and allowed the democratic practices. It provided the freedom of association and the other rights and freedoms to the people. The affected victims of the enforced disappearance have been protesting and the mother of Keppapilavu protesting for more than one year to get their lands back. At least, they have got the freedom to protest to show demand something from the government which was prohibited in the Rajapaksa regime. Though the regime moved forward a little on reconstruction of the state, it facilitated the establishment of the Office on Missing Persons. Consequent to the fights in the coalition government, mainly the fight between the President and Prime Minister, the President appointed Mahinda Rajapaksa as new Prime Minister and removed Ranil. This led to the fall of democracy in Sri Lanka.

240. The changes in national politics will not protect Tamils | *Thinakkural*, 21 November 2018, p.06 | No Byline

Former member of the Eastern Provincial Council, R. Thurairathinam said that any of the changes in the national politics will not save the Tamils. The majority governments try to

halt the minority representatives. Tamil politicians should utilise the current political situation and be wise in the upcoming elections, he added.

241. The continuing political crisis and the aspirations of minority | *Virakesari*, 22 November 2018, p.4 | No Byline

The people voted for the good governance with the hope of getting a solution to the ethnic problem of the country. Particularly, the President was elected as a President with the support of minority communities for which he gave multiple promises. Most of the promises remain as promises. The progresses made in terms of solving the problems of minority have been suspended due to the current political crisis. The President who was elected by the minorities and who gave promises to the minorities should immediately resolve the current political crisis and resolve the problems of Tamils.

242. President should not forget that he came to power with the support of the minority communities| *Virakesari*, 22 November 2018, p.06 | No Byline

Kandy District Parliamentarian Velukumar said that the President was elected as a President through the support of the minorities; he should ensure the safety of minority groups. The current political situation creates threat to the minority communities, he added. People voted to Sirisena against Mahinda to rescue the country from arbitrariness and discriminations based on race and religion; but now President Sirisena cheated the people who voted for him by appointing Mahinda as Prime Minister, he accused. He requested the President to protect the good governance and the minorities.

243. Wigneswaran provides a new solution to solve the current problem | *Thinakkural*, 22 November 2018, p.01, 08 | No Byline

At a meeting between former Chief Minister of Northern Provincial Council and an Australian Deputy High Commissioner, Victoria Coakly, in Jaffna on 21 November, Wigneswaran suggested that under the leadership of Maithiripala Sirisena, Ranil and Mahinda could form a coalition government to solve the most nagging problems of the country, particularly to the problems of Tamil. He said the coalition government can strengthen the Office on Missing Persons, release the Tamil political prisoners and solve the other problems of Tamils.

244. President should ensure the safety of the minorities | *Thinakkural*, 22 November 2018, p.03 | No Byline

Kandy District Parliamentarian Velukumar said that the President was elected as a President through the support of the minorities; he should ensure the safety of minority groups. The

current political situation creates threat to the minority communities, he added. People voted to Sirisena against Mahinda to rescue the country from arbitrariness and discriminations based on race and religion; but now President Sirisena cheated the people who voted for him by appointing Mahinda as Prime Minister, he accused. He requested the President to protect the good governance and the minorities.

245. Ensure the safety of minorities; Velukumar presses the President | *Tamil Mirror*, 22 November 2018, p.01, 02 | No Byline

Kandy District Parliamentarian Velukumar said that the President was elected as a President through the support of the minorities; he should ensure the safety of minority groups. The current political situation creates threat to the minority communities, he added. People voted to Sirisena against Mahinda to rescue the country from arbitrariness and discriminations based on race and religion; but now President Sirisena cheated the people who voted for him by appointing Mahinda as Prime Minister, he accused. He requested the President to protect the good governance and the minorities.

246. Sampanthan warns | *Thinakkural*, 23 November 2018, p.14 | No Byline

During the meeting held on 20 November in Colombo, the Leader of the Tamil National Alliance, explained to foreign diplomats that worse effects will affect the Tamil people if the current political crisis continues. He had told them that if the current political context continues, it will constitute drastic impacts. The probable confusions and lack of law and order will be inimical to minority people, especially Tamil people, he had said. The progresses on transitional justice process such as the establishment of Office on Missing Persons, the Bill to establish an Office for Reparations and land releases and the release of Tamil Political Prisoners are halted due to the current political crisis, he stated.

247. We don't trust either Mahinda or Ranil | *Thinakkural*, 25 November 2018, p.07 | No Byline

In an interview with *Thinakkural*, the Leader of The People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), Dharmalingam Siddharthan said that if the undemocratic activities continue in the country, minorities will have to face the risk. He said that if they permit the violation of the constitution, the minorities will face major problems than now. He said that they do not trust Mahinda or Ranil, but they will come to an agreement with the ruling party on a timeframe to solve the major problems of Tamils such as power devolution, land releases, release of the political prisoners.

248. Negotiations under the leadership of the President on Wednesday; the result of the huge protest | *Thinakkural*, 27 November 2018, p.01, 08 | By: Pattana Correspondent

Addressing a media brief held at Thondaman Vocational Training Centre on 26 November, Minister of New Rural Infrastructure and Community Development Arumugan Thondaman said that nothing can be done through negotiating with the Employers Federation anymore on the salary issue. However, the secretary of Finance Ministry has told that he brought the attention of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa on this issue in response to the protests staged across the country.

249. Dragging the salary issue by citing the regime change as an excuse is not acceptable | *Virakesari*, 28 November 2018, p.14 | By: Kothamala Correspondent

The former parliamentarian of Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), Iramalingam Santhirasega said that the regime was changed when the negotiations were taken place seriously to determine the salary increment; thus, no can permit the drag out of the salary issue citing the regime change as a reason. He said that ruling parties often neglect the plantation workers. The politicians only talk, but do not act, he alleged.

250. Don't forget the war affected people | *Virakesari*, 29 November 2018, p.04 | No Byline

The war affected people commemorated the persons killed during the war on 27 November. Though the war ended ten years ago, the affected people still have issues which are not addressed so far. Particularly, no answer is given to the disappearances, killings and abductions took place during the war period. The lands acquired by the forces are not completely released. Also, the persons who were arrested and have been detained are not released yet. People are given no reparations at all. Justice should be given to the human rights violations in the past. The female headed households should be given livelihood assistance to uplift their economy. Above all, a permanent political solution should be provided to avoid such war in the future. Despite the several resolutions passed by Geneva, still the issues remain. In this context, another resolution was passed in 2015 which was cosponsored by Sri Lanka. The 2015 resolution called Sri Lanka to ensure the accountability, justice and solutions for the problems of Tamils. The Office on Missing Persons was established according to the resolution. Also, the Office for Reparations and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are supposed to be established. However, no step has been taken to ensure the justice. The actions taken to enact a new constitution to ensure the non-recurrence are waived. Given the current constitutional and political crisis, it is questionable

whether the government will consider the problems of Tamils. The government and all relevant stakeholders should think and act to provide solutions to the problems of Tamils.

251. They go to courts not for Tamil political prisoners but for Ranil | *Virakesari*, 29 November 2018, p.19 | By: Manmunai Correspondent

The District organiser of Sri Lanka Freedom Party, S. Satheeskanth accused that the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) is going to the court to ensuring the premiership of Ranil which is not willing to access to the court for the Tamil political prisoners. He said that the TNA should join with Mahinda Rajapakse to achieve a solution for Tamils. Tamils do not forget the fact that Ranil destroyed the good proposal submitted by former President Chandrika Bandaranaike to solve the problems of Tamils, he added. TNA supported to such kind of person, he alleged. He said that Eastern graduates got employment opportunities during Mahinda Rajapakse regime. He said that nothing was happened during the current regime.

Sinhala Press:

252. If Ranil comes back to power, I will not Hold my position for at least an hour – President | *Lankadeepa*, 01 November 2018, p.01. | By Ajantha Kumara Agalakada

President Maithripala Sirisena assured that he will not merge the North and East Provinces and will not agree to grant federalism. The President also mentioned that if one wants to fulfill such desires, he will have to be assassinated. President Sirisena has also submitted a letter to the UNP saying that though Ranil Wickremesinghe can be appointed as the Prime Minister, he will not be granted any Presidential powers. He has also criticised former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe for failing to take measures by paying attention to the warning given by people at the local government election. Furthermore, the President added that he strongly opposed the UNP policies of privatisation, westernisation and transfer of natural resources of the country to foreign powers.

253. Until I remain in power, I will not allow to divide the country, merge the North and East and establish federalism | *Mawbima*, 01 November 2018, p.01. | By Pahan Wijesekera and Ruchira Dilan Madusanka

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Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe for failing to take measures by paying attention to the warning given by people at the local government election. Furthermore, the President added that he strongly opposed the UNP policies of privatization, westernization and transfer of natural resources of the country to foreign powers. He also claimed that he assures that he can easily work with Mahinda Rajapaksa who has never sold local resources to foreign powers and has never divided the country.

254. Cannot silence the JVP by aligning them with the UNP | *Mawbima*, 05 November 2018, p.12 | By Anuradha Herath

Those who welcome MPs when they crossover to their side will criticise those who leave their side. The Rajapaksa group mentioned that the TNA is demanding federalism and strengthening separatism. The Mahinda faction have taken the TNA MP who insulted the military saying that they are cleaning dirty drains and protested against the settlement of Sinhalese in the Mullaitivu area to their side. Hizbullah has become a patriot after he sat on their laps. Mahinda Rajapaksa has stooped to such a low level. This was stated by Propaganda Secretary of the JVP Vijitha Herath.

255. Prime Minister rejects Sampanthan's request for Federalism | *Divaina*, 07 November 2018, p.04. | By Keerthi Warnakulasuriya

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa has rejected the request made by the leader of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) to establish a federal rule in North and East. During a discussion with the PM, the leader of the TNA has requested permission to release 110 ex-LTTE cadres and also requested for land and police powers to the North and East. Sampanthan had further requested for the decentralization of powers during this discussion.

256. Is Mahinda trying to come back to power to grab everything which we won on behalf of those who disappeared? | *Anidda*, 11 November 2018, p.15. | By Brito Fernando, President of the families of the disappeared

After 30 years, enforced disappearances are being addressed and an office has been established to investigate it. At present, Mahinda has been appointed as the Prime Minister. Though we are proud that he was the only Prime Minister who represented us in Geneva, he failed to grant compensation to the families of the disappeared and also promised that there won't be any disappearances if he achieves power. The greatest number of disappearances took place during his term. During recent times, though there is evidence against 11 navy soldiers on their involvement in disappearances, since the President has stated not to touch war heroes, we have no faith in him as well. There will be fear that Mahinda will turn

everything upside down after obtaining power was expressed at a ceremony commemorating the national day for the disappeared in front of the memorial at Raddoluwa, Seeduwa on 27 October.

257. Though the previous regime tried to solve issues of the Tamil community, they were not given a chance | *Mawbima*, 13 November 2018, p.09. | By Rasadi Chathurangi Gamage

Though the previous regime tried to find a solution to the grievances of the Tamil community, they were not given a chance to do so. The leader of the TNA R. Sampanthan who is also the leader of the opposition has stated that the previous regime has shown slow progress in releasing political prisoners, resettlement and enforced disappearances. He made the above statement while meeting with the US Ambassador Alaina B. Teplitz.

258. This crisis should be countered | *Anidda*, 18 November 2018, p.15. | By Jayani Abeysekera

The leaders of this country are behaving in an arbitrary manner by creating an unstable situation in the country. Such a situation has arisen because the people are not strong, and women are also divided into political parties. The female representation is low because of ideological differences in patriarchal politics. Another way of seeing this is that while a quota for women was brought forth, women's contributions remain minimal due to a male-centric political landscape.

259. UNP is trying to establish a government with the support of the TNA | *Dinamina*, 19 November 2018, p.01. | No Byline

The Yuthukama Discourse Group claims it has information that the UNP (United National Party) is getting ready to establish a government with the support of Tamil National Alliance (TNA). The Yuthukama Discourse Group questioned as to whether the remaining supporters of the UNP and Hela Urumaya agree with the decision taken by the UNP to establish a government with the TNA which is in favour of a federal system.

260. Finding a political solution for the grievances of Tamils in the East is pointless | *Mawbima*, 20 November 2018, p.04. | By Rasadi Chathurangi Gamage

Finding a political solution for the grievances of Tamils based in the North and East amidst the current political crisis is pointless. Although the previous regime tried to find solutions to the North-East crisis, the unexpected political turmoil faced by the President and the government at present, the wellbeing of the Tamil community is halted, according to MP M. A. Sumanthiran.

261. Demanding a solution to the crisis of Tamil persons in the North and East is useless | *Divaina*, 20 November 2018, p.11. | By Dinasena Rathugamage

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262. The hidden story behind the power transition | *Mawbima*, 20 November 2018, p.06. | By Nalaka Godahewa

Ranil Wickremesinghe tried to submit a proposal for a constitutional reform after he won the Parliamentary election of 2001. The main motive of this was to abolish the powers given to the President under the 1978 constitution to dissolve the Parliament before the term of Parliament ends. After obtaining power in 2015 once again, he tried to do the same thing. He tried to implement a new constitution at the end of November amidst the opposition from the majority of the country including religious leaders.

263. An election should be called immediately to solve the crisis – Ven. Bengamuwe Nalaka Thera | *Divaina*, 22 November 2018, p.13 | By Keerthi Warnakulasuriya

"A terrible and dangerous situation has occurred in the country. Those who are hungry for power are trying to destroy the country by giving false information to Ambassadors. The new constitution promoting federalism could not be implemented because the good governance regime toppled." However, according to Bengamuwe Nalaka Thera they have agreed to support the Geneva proposals. He further mentioned that the best solution to for the current political crisis is to conduct an election immediately.

264. "Will support a government which grants federalism and implements the Geneva proposals" – The TNA will inform foreign ambassadors | *Divaina*, 22 November, p.03. | By Keerthi Warnakulasuriya

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) has informed 14 foreign Ambassadors day before yesterday (20 November) that they will support a government which will implement a constitution promoting federalism and implement the Geneva proposals containing the war crimes allegations. The TNA has also informed the foreign ambassadors that after Mahinda Rajapaksa became the Prime Minister, the implementation of the Geneva proposals and passing the draft of the newly proposed constitution have taken a backseat.

265. Tamil people have become victimized – Sampanthan | *Anidda*, 25 November 2018, p.01 | By Rekha Nilukshi Herath

R. Sampanthan has stated at a meeting with Ambassadors and High Commissioners at the Temple Trees on 20 November that the members of the Tamil community are the biggest victims of the current political crisis. He also noted that solving the problems concerning the minority Tamils are facing delays and two no-confidence motions have been passed at the Parliament against Mahinda Rajapaksa with 122 votes from the MPs. This discussion lasted for more than an hour and representatives from 16 countries including USA, Great Britain, India and Norway.

266. This would not have happened if the government had the same interest which we had in implementing a constitution| *Anidda*, 25 November 2018, p.15. | By Sarala Emmanuel of the Suriya Women's Development Centre

Though the war has ended, the problems concerning women living in the North and East have not ended. Women made many sacrifices on a local level expecting justice after 2015. We can clearly see that the state is taking measures without changing the shortcomings of the constitution. During recent times, though women fought bravely to find solutions for their grievances, they fear that they will have to go backwards with the current political transformation. Though there is no clear view on how the political change will affect the North and East, we are implementing plans on how to move forward as an organisation.

267. The Tamil community are the victims of the current political crisis | *Ravaya*, 25 November 2018, p.01. | By Leo Perera

The website of India Today has mentioned that the Tamil people are the victims of the current political crisis. 14 members of the TNA (Tamil National Alliance) participated at the discussion and R. Sampanthan mentioned to the above website that if the current situation continues, it will have dangerous consequences. According to the above website, the TNA is ready to accept Ranil Wickremesinghe as the Prime Minister.

268. Will the Tamil community go for the next struggle? | *Ravaya*, 25 November 2018, p.02. | By T. Nadarajah

What type of security do Tamil, Muslim and Estate workers have due to this political crisis? At a time like this, it is not suitable for the TNA to support one party. If Ranil wins, Mahinda will be reluctant to provide solutions to the grievances of Tamil people. Therefore, they will suffer from a political vacuum. Various parties have criticized Opposition leader R. Sampanthan for stating he failed to fulfil his duties on behalf of the Tamil community. Since the TNA has begun to engage in coalition politics, raising a voice for the rights of Tamil community will encourage racist politics of the South. Though the war had ended, land in the North has not been released and no proper solution has been given for the enforced disappearances which took place. If the good governance regime fails to provide a proper solution to the grievances of Tamil persons, they will be pushed towards the next struggle.

269. Mahinda and Ranil should establish a coalition government after getting together | *Mawbima*, 26 November 2018, p.13. | By Lakshmi Jayakody

"Political prisoners can be released if Mahinda and Ranil get together to establish a coalition government. The Prevention of Terrorism Act can be abolished. The Office on Missing Persons can be strengthened. A proper solution for the Geneva proposals can be adopted. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party, United National Party and Tamil parties should get together to find solutions for the national crisis. A new state concept can be created under the Unitary state concept" Stated the Chief Minister of the Northern Province.

270. Only the Mahinda-Maithri coalition can create a prosperous law-abiding nation | *Mawbima*, 28 November 2018, p.06. | By Upatissa Perera

No one from the UNP, including Sajith speaks on behalf of Ranil. It is Anura Kumara and Sumanthiran who speak on behalf of Ranil day and night. Through he is wearing red, why can't Sumanthiran function without Ranil. Because the separatist constitution cannot be implemented without Ranil. The TNA can not rule the North according to their desires without the help of Ranil. Anura Kumara cannot enjoy the privileges of being the organiser of the Opposition when Ranil is not the Prime Minister.