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New Constitution in the making

President to abolish executive presidency

by Zacki Jabbar

(Island.lk) - President Maithripala Sirisena said yesterday that in keeping with his pledge to abolish the executive presidency, he would submit relevant papers to Cabinet today. Addressing a ceremony to award dual citizenship to 2,000 Sri Lankans at Temple Trees, the President said that one of his key pledges as the Joint Oppositions Common Presidential candidate had been to scrap the executive presidency which, in the wrong hands, had become a dangerous tool and the root cause of unprecedented corruption and breakdown in the rule of law. "The 19th Amendment took away some of the President's powers. We now intend to complete the process by doing away with the institution, Sirisena noted, adding that he would also present a memorandum to introduce a new electoral



President Maithripala Sirisena handing over dual citizenship papers to a Sri Lankan during a ceremony held at Temple Trees yesterday, while Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and Internal Affairs Minister S.B.Navinna look on.

system based on First Past the Post and Proportional Representation. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, Internal Affairs Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs S. B. Navinna many other ministers also participated in the event. The President said that the ground work had been laid to introduce a new Constitution needed to meet the needs of a country that was emerging from decades of having faced many serious challenges. The current government, he observed had accomplished much in a short period of time and intended to fulfil all its pledges in due course. "Establishment of the Independent Commissions including the Elections Commission is a case in point, which previous rulers had pledged, but never implemented."

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said it was the duty of all Sri Lankans irrespective of political differences to work for the development of their country. "The people by electing Maithripala Sirisena as their President have given him a mandate to create a new country where all were treated as equals." Pointing out that even the United Nations Human Rights Council had acknowledged the progress the government had made in the furtherance of human rights Wickremesinghe said that they had created an environment for those had left their motherland for reasons such as racism and religious extremism to return.

INSIDE

Chronic Kidney Disease Prevention
Presidential Task Force on Chronic Kidney Disease Prevention



Katina ceremony at Samadhi Meditation Centre



Dr. Zimar Sivardeen Chairman BRISLA



Wesley walk of GRIT to Celebrate 141 years of Excellence



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