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Presidential Secretariat invites public comment

Draft 10 year National Plan for Trilingual Lanka

(DailyNews.lk) - The Presidential Secretariat has invited the public to send their comments and suggestions to be considered for inclusion in the historic Draft 10 Year National Plan for a Trilingual Sri Lanka (2012 - 2021) which will be launched by the President later in the year. The public can access the Draft Plan on the official website www.info.gov.lk. The public are invited to send their response before October 12, 2011, states Sunimal Fernando, Presidential Advisor and Co-ordinator of the Trilingual Sri Lanka.



Sunimal Fernando

According to Fernando, the 10 Year National Plan for a Trilingual Sri Lanka is the first comprehensive document on Language Planning in Sri Lanka to originate from a post independence Head of State.

It sets the foundation for a national initiative to be driven by the President himself to encourage the acquisition of trilingual skills and competencies by all citizens of the country.

The proposed National Plan is based on the vision of the President for a Trilingual Sri Lanka announced more than 2 years back in February 2009: A

vision confirmed by the results of the Socio-linguistic Survey of Sri Lanka conducted in August 2010 which demonstrated progressive, liberal views and aspirations on language learning and language use and a great yearning for national integration and harmony by people across the ethnic, linguistic and geographical divide, living in all parts of the country.

According to Presidential Advisor Sunimal Fernando, one of the main objectives of the proposed National Plan developed under the guidance of the President and the direction of Presidential Secretary Lalith Weeratunga will be to enhance national harmony, integration and development by liberating Knowledge,

Opportunity and Communication from the clutches of Language. Sinhala and Tamil will be aggressively developed as the languages of discourse, debate, discussion and assimilation on all aspects of modern knowledge, science and technology together with English as a Life Skill and an instrument of communication both within and outside the country. "The President's 10 Year Plan, if implemented in the country with passion, commitment and dedication, will enable the vast majority of our people to break through the present ethnic and linguistic barriers and participate both individually and collectively in national discourse and thereby help grow a vibrant, practising democracy in the country".

UNHRC sessions

By Sandasen Marasinghe (DailyNews.lk) - The Sri Lankan government secured two significant victories during the recent United Nations Human Rights Council sessions in Geneva, Plantation Industries Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe said. He made this observation at a press conference at the Plantation Industries Ministry with the participation of Irrigation and Water Resources Management Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva and former Attorney General Mohan Peiris PC.

Minister Samarasinghe explained that at one stage, the Sri Lankan delegation protested when an European Union representative said that the UN Human Rights Commissioner had decided to submit the Darusman Report to the

Human Rights Council. This resulted in the Report not being submitted. The minister said that the second instance was the successful counter attack by the Sri Lankan delegation at the interactive dialogue initiated by Canada on Sri Lanka's LLRC Report, suggesting that the Report should be discussed at the next UNHRC session in March 2012. This convinced the forum that the contemplated move was procedurally flawed.

Minister Samarasinghe who was the Head of the delegation said that when the matter of the Darusman Report was raised, External Affairs Minister Professor G L Peris stated it sets an incorrect precedent and that the Report was not prepared in keeping with the UN procedural requirements.

He also expressed his regret that the UN Human Rights Commissioner's move was revealed through a third party. Minister Samarasinghe quoted the external affairs minister as saying that the Darusman Report was not prepared on a decision of the UN Security Council or on a decision reached at the UN General Assembly. "Such a Report should not be sneaked through the back door to be submitted to the UN Human Rights Council," Prof Peiris had said. Minister Samarasinghe said that from that stage, the delegation formed an opinion that these were not just accidental occurrences and that any nation could face the same scenario some day in the future. Pakistan, Cuba, Algeria, Malaysia, Bangladesh, China and Russia in writing agreed that the Darusman Report should

not be submitted even as an information report.

Minister Samarasinghe with reference to the matter of the LLRC Report said that the Sri Lankan delegation attended the meeting of the interactive dialogue and brought to their notice that the LLRC Report is not yet released and was due on November 15. "So how could one decide to discuss the matters in a report yet to be released. On the other hand, there is an accepted legal procedure in the country to act in connection with such a Report." He added that thereafter most countries acknowledged the danger in allowing action on a domestic process which is yet to see the light of day.

JVP rebels to form leftist movement

(DailyMirror.lk) - The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) dissidents for the first time yesterday (October 4) announced that they would form a mass movement based on leftist principles after carrying out a thorough awareness campaign among the people.

Senadeera Gunatillake also known as Opatha told the Daily Mirror in an interview, that there was an urgent need for a real leftist movement in the world particularly in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Gunatillaka who is leading the dissidents with Kumaran Gunaratnam is a central committee member of the JVP. He played an active role in revamping the party after the 1989 insurrection. He also contested the 1994 elections from the Kurunegala District.

Mr. Gunatillaka said the JVP had chosen

right wing politics under the present political system.

"There is an internal debate in the party to distinguish left wing politics from right wing politics. This dialogue has dragged on for 12 years. Now it is no longer a dialogue. It has now become a struggle for a leftist movement. It is not a question of retaining the party name, symbol or headquarters. The JVP has abandoned its historic duty in this case," he said.

When asked whether a new political party would be formed soon, Mr. Gunatillaka said it was all the more important to solicit the support of people for a leftist movement through awareness rather than registering a political party in a hurry.

"We have already launched a series of seminars. It is part of this campaign. Once the ground support is secured, we can go

for the next step of forming a party. It will take time. Only the future will decide how soon we can do it. It is too early for us to mention it in weeks or years at the moment," he said.

When asked how they would contest elections if declared before such a party was registered Mr. Gunatillaka said, "We had the idea of registering the JVP in 1977. Yet, we could not do it. We contested the election later as an independent group under the leadership of Rohana Wijeweera. We believe in electoral politics. If an election is declared, we will look at a different option to contest it."

Responding to the allegation that the international intelligence agencies such as RAW and the CIA are behind the recent split of the JVP, he said it was an idea planted by the JVP leadership to distract

the people's attention from the real issues confronting the party.

"They have tried to link our struggle to LTTE separatism, the Tamil Diaspora and international forces such as this. All these are attempts to deceive the public and convince them that there is no issue in the party," he said.

Mr. Gunatillaka said his group still believed in 'Indian expansionism' as pointed out by founder leader Rohana Wijeweera. "Today, India is trying to establish its regional hegemony in social, economic and political spheres in a novel approach. The situation is even more serious today. China is also doing the same as a world power. Of course, we have to restudy the changing world order. We have to do strategic studies about China in today's world," he said. (Kelum Bandara)

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