

FLASH

Communications Service
Suore Santa Famiglia di Bordeaux
Via dei Casali Santovetti, 58
00165 Roma, Italia
Tel: 0039. 06 66 500 71
Fax : 0039 06 66 41 14 70
Email: infoservice@sfbint.org
infoserv2@sfbint.org

No: 55

May 2022

Sri Lanka New Situation

Dear Sisters & Brothers of Holy Family,

It has been nearly a month after the 1st Flash regarding the situation in Sri Lanka. During this month of chaos, political deals were taking place in the country.



Sri Lanka is facing its worst economic crisis ever in history. The fuel prices went up by nearly 65%, medicines by 40%. The prices of essential food items like wheat flour also increased. This forced many people to skip meals. The long queues for fuel and gas are still lengthening. Due to this condition, there were protesters in a number of areas in the country. On 19 May, the crowds

in Rambukkana (Sabaragamuwa province) had been protesting for about 15 hours demanding fuel. Unfortunately, the police fired to disperse the crowds. One of the young men was shot dead while a few others were seriously injured.

The protesters kept the on-going slogan of demanding that the President and the government quit. In responding to these; two siblings of the President, Basil and Chamal, nephew Namal who held key positions in government resigned. But nei-



ther the President nor the Prime Minister. After this, the President Gotabaya called the opposition to join a unity government; but they refused it. None of them wanted to work under a Rajapaksa government. However, President's deals were able to find 21 men for a new cabinet, which was refused by the majority of people.

During this time, Sri Lankan officials headed by the IMF requested urgent financial help. People have a little hope in this process.

The heart of the revolution "Gota Go Home Village" marked its one-month protest by bloodshed. Until then it was a quiet peaceful site with a lot of creativity. 'Gota Go Home Village' is in Galleface green. It was created by people around Sri Lanka who gathered here with one voice "Gota Go Home". Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa used his goons to attack the peaceful protestors at the Galleface on the 09th May. These goons were all in Temple Trees (Prime Ministers' residence) to support him and pleading him to not to resign. After meeting their leader, they were given sticks and poles and led to Galle-

face. They were all drunk. They burnt the tents and huts, beat the protesters mercilessly. The media were hit. Women and Children were hit. The positive vibration, peaceful atmosphere was violated at the Galleface. There is clear evidence even the Police or the Army didn't want to stop the ruling party supporters.

Sri Lanka was under nationwide curfew after this sponsored violence by Prime Minister. One of the long-awaited moves took place during this bewildered period. The Prime Minister, Mahinda Rajapaksa, resigned sending his resignation letter to his brother president Gotabaya. It was a partial victory to the protesters; because their real target is the President.

Due to this brutal violence by the Prime Minister 8 people have died, including a ruling party Minister and more than 200 are injured.

This was one of the saddest days in the country where supporters of Prime Minister attacked the people. This also shows they are incapable of governing this country any longer. They have already lost the confidence of the people.



Now they have begun to govern by using military power. The President enforced the State of Emergency, granting extensive powers to the police. The military started to prevent the protesters from marching to the Galleface. However the religious leaders, lawyers and Professionals assured their presence at the Galleface soon after this incident. That was a great support to the frustrated protesters. Now 'Gota Go Home' village has once again been resurrected. The young protesters demand that law enforcement authorities serve justice to victims and punish perpetrators of this cruel attack - including the former Prime Minister.

The Galleface Green protests were non-violent, demanding a system change, asking President Gotabaya and the government to "go home.." However, in the rest of the country, anti-government people didn't have the same mentality. After being frustrated by the planned attack at Galleface Green, groups in other places went on the rampage; they burnt the buses which were used to bring Rajapaksa supporters from rural areas to Colombo. They burnt more than 50 houses and offices of the Parliamentarians including Rajapaksa Museum, which was built by Gotabaya Rajapaksa on private land using state funds. To control this situation the gov-

ernment ordered troops to open fire on anyone looting public property or causing harm to life. It also deployed tens of thousands of army, navy and air force personnel to patrol the streets of Colombo. But crowds remain outside the office of president Gotabaya calling on him to quit.

Despite the curfew, the protesters continue to gather at "Gota Go Home Village" in Galleface. While these protests were taking place, former Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa escaped from the people outside his office and was holed up in a naval base in Trincomalee (Eastern Province) for his own safety. People started protesting near the naval base asking him to restore stolen money before he leave the country. The Colombo Fort Magistrate's Court has issued a travel ban on former Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa; former ministers Namal Rajapaksa, Jonston Fernando and 13 others. The second son of Mahinda Rajapaksa, Yoshitha had flown to Singapore with his family just before the Monday attack.

After two days, the nationwide curfew was lifted; still there is curfew from 2pm – 6am everyday where the students have lost their school life again. The 2021 O/Level examination scheduled for the



23rd of May remains in doubt.

Worse things are still to come. The President appointed a new Prime Minister, Ranil Wickremasinghe. Gotabaya came to power by promising to punish the latter over the failure to prevent the Easter Sunday attacks and over a Central Bank Bond Scam where Ranil Wickremasinghe is one of the accused. Representing the religious leaders Cardinal Malcom Ranjith and Omalpe Sobitha Thera opposed the decision made by President to appoint Ranil Wickremasinghe as the new Prime Minister. But Ranil Wickremasinghe has been sworn in and assumed his duties. The new cabinet will also be elected soon.

Sri Lanka is under super frustration at present. But yet it hasn't lost hope for the future, we earnestly ask you to keep our motherland in your continuous pray-

ers, so that God will change the hearts of these corrupted leaders as God did to Pharaoh. God didn't remove the Red Sea; but God parted it and made a way to the Promised Land. Therefore God will definitely help us to find a way to overcome this problematic situation and lead us to a new Promised land:

Sri Lanka.



With love

Sisters from the Unit of Colombo, Sri Lanka