

A Full-Fledged Commission to Determine the Frustrations of Jaffna University Students Must be Appointed: NPC

Northern Provincial Council - NPC (Sri Lanka)

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The recent fisticuffs among Jaffna University Students was an unfortunate incident. We welcome the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry in this regard by the University Authorities. But such incidents should not be viewed from a purely criminal law standpoint. We must first try to find out the underlying causes that led to their violent behavior. Thereafter we must determine ways and means of dealing with such underlying causes and implement them. This would ensure that such incidents will not be repeated.

Merely condemning such incidents or punishing certain students after an inquiry would not be able to bring about understanding and unity.

In the past when the legitimate demands of the Tamil People were disregarded and they in turn ventured to claim justice for their demands peacefully and by non-violent means, their actions were identified as criminal activities and such identification led to youngsters taking up to arms.

Therefore when University Students have decided to resort to violence it is our responsibility to determine the underlying causes that had led to their behavior. It is for that reason we demand a full-fledged Commission of Inquiry into all aspects of the incidents. Such a modus operandi would bring to light the frustrations of the University Students. Thereafter we could formulate ways and means of dealing with them.

Any attempt to deal with these incidents at a very shallow level would only precipitate matters and would not pave the way for real understanding and goodwill.

At a time when the demographic pattern of the North and East after the War is being consciously changed, when the independent 'War Crimes' Inquiry is being dragged on indefinitely, when students from other Provinces are being admitted in large numbers into the Jaffna University, when such entrants are bent on forcing their arts and cultural background on the Jaffna soil, when there is reluctance and delay on the part of the powers in delivering political solution that would allow the Tamils to look after their political affairs in their areas of historical habitation, when there is a tendency to retain in the Province the Military far in excess of its the needs (seven years after the War) all these activities must be considered by such a Commission in consonance with the recent violence to determine whether all such activities added fuel to the behavior of the students.

The appointment of such a Commission would prevent the racialists in the South trying to make political capital out of such incidents.

We both have come together to issue such a joint statement to show the world that the Northern

Provincial Council views such incidents beyond the mundane political differences that usually engulf us.

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