

Candidate Name: Dilith Jayaweera

Election Symbol: Star

1. Candidate Profile and Background

Dilith Jayaweera is the leader of the Mawbima Janatha Pakshaya and is endorsed by the Sarvajana Balaya. His candidacy for the 2024 Sri Lankan Presidential Election is backed by the Communist Party of Sri Lanka. Jayaweera is known for his involvement in political and social activism and his leadership within the Communist Party.

2. Candidate's Policy Platform and Vision

- **Economic Policies:** Jayaweera's economic policies are likely to focus on socialist principles, including the nationalization of key industries, equitable wealth distribution, and extensive state intervention in the economy. His approach may include promoting industrial development, ensuring fair wages, and increasing social safety nets.
- **Social Policies:** His social policies are expected to emphasize improving access to healthcare, education, and social welfare. He would likely support progressive reforms aimed at reducing poverty and ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens.
- **Foreign Policy:** Jayaweera's foreign policy might focus on strengthening relationships with socialist and progressive nations, advocating for a non-aligned stance in international affairs, and promoting international solidarity with anti-imperialist movements.
- **Environmental Policy:** His environmental policy is likely to include measures for sustainable development, combating climate change, and promoting green technologies. He may also support initiatives for environmental justice and equitable resource distribution.

3. Track Record and Experience

- **Previous Positions Held:** As the leader of the Mawbima Janatha Pakshaya and a prominent figure in the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, Jayaweera has been actively involved in political leadership and advocacy.
- **Accomplishments:** His accomplishments include launching the election manifesto on 31 August 2024 and leading his party in political activism. His work with the Sarvajana Balaya highlights his engagement with grassroots movements and social issues.

4. Values and Integrity

- **Ethical Standards:** Jayaweera is likely to emphasize ethical governance and integrity in his political activities, aligned with socialist values.
- **Consistency in Principles:** He has maintained a consistent commitment to socialist and communist principles throughout his political career, advocating for social justice and economic equality.

5. Public Image and Communication Skills

- **Public Engagement:** Jayaweera has been actively engaging with the public through rallies, speeches, and media appearances. His public engagement is focused on promoting his party's platform and addressing social and economic issues.
- **Leadership Qualities:** He is recognized for his leadership within the Communist Party and his ability to mobilize support for socialist policies. His leadership style is characterized by a strong commitment to ideological principles and social reform.

6. Party Affiliation and Support Network

- **Political Party:** Jayaweera represents the Communist Party of Sri Lanka in the 2024 Presidential Election.
- **Coalition and Alliances:** He is endorsed by the Sarvajana Balaya, which supports his candidacy. This endorsement reflects a coalition of leftist and progressive groups backing his platform.

7. Public Opinion and Endorsements

- **Polls and Public Sentiment:** Public opinion on Jayaweera may vary, with support likely coming from those aligned with socialist and communist ideologies. Polls and public sentiment would need to be assessed closer to the election date.
- **Endorsements:** He has been endorsed by the Sarvajana Balaya, indicating support from a significant grassroots movement and various left-leaning organizations.

8. Debates and Interviews

Jayaweera's participation in debates and interviews will focus on his socialist platform, criticisms of the current political system, and his vision for addressing Sri Lanka's socio-economic challenges.

9. Election Symbol - Star

The election symbol for Jayaweera's campaign is the star, which often represents guidance, vision, and the pursuit of high ideals in political contexts.

10. Challenges and Opportunities

- **Feasibility of Promises:** The feasibility of Jayaweera's promises will depend on the political climate and the ability to implement socialist policies within the current economic and political framework of Sri Lanka.
- **Potential Obstacles:** Obstacles could include resistance from other political factions, economic constraints, and the challenge of addressing complex social issues within a competitive political environment.

11. Personal Vision and Values

Jayaweera's personal vision revolves around creating a more equitable and just society through socialist policies. His values include a commitment to social justice, economic equality, and anti-imperialist principles.

12. Conclusion

Dilith Jayaweera represents a clear socialist alternative in the 2024 Sri Lankan Presidential Election. His campaign reflects a strong commitment to addressing socio-economic inequalities through socialist reforms, though it faces challenges related to implementation and political opposition.

From Wikipedia

Dilith Susantha Jayaweera (born 18 September 1967) is a Sri Lankan businessman, entrepreneur, media mogul, lawyer and politician.[1] In 2011, he was named by the LMD[2] as one of the ten 'Business People of the Year'.[3] In 2020, Dilith Jayaweera was among 100 corporate leaders named by the LMD[4] on its A-list of businesspeople who continue to drive the engine of growth in Sri Lanka. He is the Chairman of George Steuart & Co., Sri Lanka's oldest mercantile establishment and Derana, one of Sri Lanka's largest media networks. He entered politics officially in September 2023 and was appointed the leader of the Mawbima Janatha Party.[1]

Education

Jayaweera received his primary and secondary education at St. Aloysius' College, Galle, and later joined the Faculty of Law at the University of Colombo, and subsequently Sri Lanka Law College, where he qualified as an Attorney-At-Law. He also holds an MBA from the University of Wales.

Career

A lawyer by profession, Dilith Jayaweera set up Triad Advertising (Pvt) Limited in 1993, in partnership with Varuni Amunugama, whom he had met at the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo.[5] Triad is the most awarded indigenous advertising agency in Sri Lanka.[6]

Jayaweera's agency is known to have been behind several high-profile campaigns including 'Api Wenuwen Api'[7] created on behalf of the Sri Lanka forces to raise the profile of the army, navy and air force during the latter stages of the Sri Lankan civil war against the LTTE.

The company has been heavily diversified and Jayaweera has set up over 20 subsidiaries. His media investments includes two national television channels Derana Macro Entertainment (Television),

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one national radio channel Derana Macro Entertainment (Radio) and three national newspapers Liberty Publishers.[8][9] With the aim of building a modern conglomerate, Jayaweera entered industries such as travel and leisure, pharmaceuticals, property and manufacturing where he has established a strong presence through the George Steuart Group of companies.[10]

Political career

Dilith Jayaweera played a main role in bolstering Gotabaya Rajapaksa's 2019 Sri Lankan presidential election campaign through multifaceted support and strategic media influence.[11] As the Founder and CEO of Derana, Jayaweera orchestrated a media strategy that significantly amplified Rajapaksa's visibility and message dissemination, providing a powerful platform for Rajapaksa's campaign, reaching diverse audiences across the country.[12] Jayaweera's astute guidance and the network's tailored programming not only showcased Rajapaksa's policies and promises but also shaped public discourse in favor of the candidate. This concerted media backing contributed substantially to Gotabaya Rajapaksa's successful journey to the presidency.

Dilith Jayaweera formalised his entry into Sri Lankan politics in 2023 through his appointment as the leader of the Mawbima Janatha Party (MJP), succeeding Hemakumara Nanayakkara, who shifted to an advisory position as 'Senior Leader'. [13] [14]

Before the announcement, he resigned from Board positions held in several listed companies including Citrus Leisure PLC, Colombo Land & Development Company PLC, Waskaduwa Beach Resort PLC, and Hikkaduwa Beach Resort PLC.[15]

Jayaweera's active engagement in politics marks a significant shift in his career, generating interest in potential changes to the political landscape given his intention to nurture a new brand of politics based on the philosophy of an entrepreneurial state. [1][16]

2024 presidential election

Jayaweera was announced as the presidential candidate of Sarvajana Balaya, an alliance consisting Jathika Nidahas Peramuna led by Wimal Weerawansa, Pivithuru Hela Urumaya led by Udaya Gammanpila, Mawbima Janatha Party, Democratic Left Front, Communist Party and the Independent MP's Forum on 04 August 2024.[17] He submitted nominations from the Communist Party to contest under the 'Star' symbol.[18]

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Post-war investments

In the post-war Sri Lankan economy, Jayaweera rose to prominence as an aggressive investor[19][20][21][22] – his investment arm Divasa Equity is a majority shareholder in public listed companies such as Citrus Leisure PLC[23] and Colombo Land & Development Company PLC,[24] and in October 2011 took over the 176-year-old George Steuart Group,[10][25] Sri Lanka's oldest mercantile establishment and a successful diversified conglomerate. He has held Board positions on the Boards of several companies including Citrus Leisure PLC, Colombo Land PLC, and Triad (Pvt) Ltd, and is Chairman of the George Steuart Group of Companies.

Controversy

The District Judge of Colombo in 2011 issued an enjoining order against Telshan Network of Opposition Leader Ranil Wickremesinghe's brother Shan Wickremesinghe and one of his directors preventing them from defaming Dilith Jayaweera on a local radio channel Isira Radio. Order was given consequent to action filed by Dilith Jayaweera against Shan Wickremesinghe and his co-host for defamatory comments made on a radio show.[26] Jayaweera also sent the BBC Sinhala service a letter of demand for defamation for carrying a story on the subject.[27]

Personal life

Dilith Jayaweera is married to Nelum, his contemporary at the University of Colombo. Dilith – along with his three brothers, Lalith, Gayan and Upul grew up in Galle, on the southern coast of Sri Lanka. His Father was an Additional Registrar of Lands and the Mother was a School Principal.[28]

Dilith Jayaweera has been linked to Dinesh Palipana, Queensland's first quadriplegic intern.[29] Palipana has credited Jayaweera with helping him progress through the accident that left him a quadriplegic.