

# Burning National Issues

THANKS for allowing me space in your newspaper. I have a few burning national issues to share with my fellow countrymen and women. I absolutely fail to understand how the political leadership understands their responsibilities and accountabilities in general.

It is a serious cause for concern to see or witness how irresponsible your representatives could be at the expense of the landless poor.

I think the respective legislatures are very clear on who should take what stringent steps and when. The song about the absenteeism of MPs is getting old and requires urgent action if democracy is to prosper in this country. Something reminds me that it was excellent that MPs had to declare their assets and financial interests although it would not eliminate nepotism, corruption and fraud etc. However, it is deplorable that all these warnings, sound practices and measures are falling on deaf ears.

His Excellency, the President, has on numerous occasions warned MPs to take up their parliamentary duties seriously and to at least respect the "oath of office" that they have taken. I wonder in whose interest the parliamentarians are rushing or delaying legislation at times - just to be patched up with the terminology of amendments to suit the interest of certain individuals. It appears to be an attitude of 'I have to take it and I need not to respect it

and/or I can break or amend it at any given time.' How fast can MPs who are frequently neglecting their duties, enact laws? They are rather paying more attention to their personal business and respective interests in the constituency from where they hail.

When will the Government remove the 'big thorn' (fraud at local authorities) in its eyes to see that stringent disciplinary action is needed against the CEOs convicted of corruption and fraud. I am of the opinion that repaying the stolen funds and firing should be weighed up as a remedial step in search of a permanent solution to the saga. It seems that democracy is busy dying a natural death as elections don't take place as scheduled. The leadership simply don't want to relinquish positions any longer or make way for others.

I am in agreement with those who feel that the National Council should rather be strengthened and not abolished. My argument is based on the time-consuming and much talked-about decentralisation policy. I strongly feel the electorate should have reputable local political representatives at national council level who know their problems and collective interests. Let the grassroots decide their own fate.

Land tax is another cause of concern for which the poor innocents will be punished in the end. Some emerging commercial

farmers are struggling to repay their loans to Agribank. Imagine how they will cope with that financial burden coupled with the prevailing drought

situation if no good rains are forthcoming. We should remember that the success of good governance is not being measured by the number of laws but rather on the successful implementation of these laws in the best interest of the public at large.

Finally, we should get serious about the enactment of laws and equally serious about their speedy implementation. Otherwise we can throw them in a waste bin once again at the expense of the poor electorate. The leaders should ensure that all elections should take place as stipulated and are not delayed unnecessarily. We must bear in mind that lawmakers and law drafters had been paid for their role already and next in the line are the implementers. Let's utilise energy, scarce resources and every second to put the available golden opportunities to good use.

Remember that turning a blind eye to reality, truth and facts borders on selfishness and self-enrichment schemes, which reminds us that political offices are temporary positions.

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