

# **A Brilliant Future**

(Prabhashvara Anagathayak)

**Janakaraliya External Appraisal / Evaluation Report**

**2006 – 2008**

by

Roy Rodrigo

## **1. Base reports, records and journals**

- Newspaper reports and journals published about Janakaraliya from 2000 onwards
- Sinhala, Tamil and English newsletters
- Janakaraliya publications
- Video documentaries produced by Janakaraliya
- 2006 Evaluation Report

### **1.1 Interviews**

- Board of Directors
- Janakaraliya main group
- Janakaraliya audiences

1.2 In addition dramas produced by Janakaraliya were watched in the Janakaraliya mobile theatre

## **2. Summary**

Considering all these aspects Janakaraliya could be described as a wonderful application of arts. It is also a pioneering cultural service for promoting communal harmony and a multi ethnic cultural force.

## **3. End of appraisal period**

01<sup>st</sup> August 2006 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008

## **4. Appraiser**

- Roy Rodrigo
- MA, Drama and Theatre Arts – University of Kelaniya
- Manages an academy for drama and theatre arts
- Teacher in drama and theatre arts
- Address – 64, Chilaw Road, Negambo, Sri Lanka
- 

## **5. Objective of the appraisal**

**5.1** Construe problems in maintaining Janakaraliya in its present status and foresee its future role and responsibilities

**5.2** Identifying positive and negative results due to the changes in the board of directors

**6.** Janakaraliya has no drifted away from its main task of performing dramas and theatre activities in different localities. A special feature was observed in the present compared to the past. The Board of directors were always present in the past but the theatre group has

developed in such a way that it could perform independently. It is good to see the development of second level leaders capable of working independently. The effort of the directors to train and develop the group to work independently should be appreciated.

**7.** Most of the time members of the drama group organize and implement theatre workshops for school communities and others in the districts the mobile theatre travels. Although a director guides them the members are quite capable of conducting these programmes independently.

**8.** It was observed during the appraisal that the members of the drama group have a positive and constructive attitude towards the newly appointed directors and their proposals. (e. g. 01. Instead of providing meals for the group paying a food allowance saving the cost of payments to a cook and cooking gas 02. Promoting the members up to professional level and paying them incentives for good performances)

**9.** As a result some of the members have become associate members participating at the drama performances and conducting of workshops only. They are performing as independent professionals with proper ethical conduct.

**10.** Members of the Janakaraliya Media Unit prepare the posters, banners, the Janakaraliya Newsletter as well as the Janakaraliya Newspaper. They are knowledgeable and skilled to handle these programmes and have saved considerable cost paid for outsiders for these services. Even if they leave Janakaraliya they are skilled enough to find employment or self employment. But none of them feel like leaving the group as they are aware of the love, affection and recognition by their audiences will prevail as long as they remain with the group.

**11.** In addition individuals skilled in different trades have been born or sprouted through Janakaraliya. Actors and Actresses, Lighting technicians, Video Cameramen and Video Editors, Computer designers and animators, Trainers of theatre arts are among them. Their skills are recognized by national and international awards. Another important feature is the ability of Sinhala members to work in Tamil and the Tamil members to work in Sinhala. Now the members attached to the Media Unit are capable of producing their video documentaries and presentation for local and international audiences for Janakaraliya. Therefore Janakaraliya group has become a force capable to challenge the communal conflict from a direct stance.

**12.** All the members of the Janakaraliya are of the view that the novel approaches of the new board of directors has initiated the revitalized Janakaraliya group.

## **Contents**

## New management structure and programmes of Janakaraliya

1. Practical programmes
2. Management – administration
3. Future Existence
4. Problems
5. Conclusion
6. End
7. Enclosures

### **Practical Programmes**

Today, Janakaraliya has a strong foundation to implement a series of defined practical programmes.

All these programmes are activated along the following divisions under the purview of an assigned director. But the leadership is delegated to the members of the group.

#### **The divisions are;**

Coordinating Division

Mobile Theatre Division

Lighting Division

Drama Producing Division

Educational and Training Division

Electronic Media, Sound Equipment and Music Division

Drama Performance Division

Publication and Propaganda Division

Office and Recording Division

Outside the divisions mentioned above there exists the Financial Division under the direct supervision of a Financial Director and a Financial Manager

### **Management – Administration**

Janakaraliya has been able to improve its management and administration divisions considerably compared to the 2005 – 2006 period. Due to increased personal commitments the former directors H. A. Perera and Ravindra Mapitigama have opted to stay away from the fulltime services of Janakaraliya. The replacement directors have appraised the situation thoroughly and decentralized the administration paving way to current improvements rapid development of the group. Administration shows positive signs due to decentralization of powers and limited supervision by the directors. Leadership responsibilities of the divisions

has been entrusted without ethnic and gender biases. When one of the members neglected responsibilities entrusted the group decided to dismiss the member. It shows that the group members have taken the correct decision when the directors upheld their decision.

### **Future Existence**

Janakaraliya is prepared to take the challenge and the responsibility of their future existence. There are no recurring problems at present. They were able to successfully solve the problems existed in the past. Since they are taking collective decisions on the areas such as food, accommodation and allowances, which were the problem areas in the past, no tricky issues arise in these areas now.

As such there is no uncertainty where the future of Janakaraliya is concerned.

But, it is not yet possible to find the considerable expenditure incurred in taking the Mobile Theatre from place to place locally. Since it is the main task of Janakaraliya it is imperative to find solutions urgently. Until such times self sustainability of is achieved in the near future the funds needed for transporting the Mobile theatre should be sourced from donor agencies.

### **Problems**

Janakaraliya is methodically lessening their problems. Once they realized their future existence is stable most of the problems were solved automatically. They believe the main reason for this positive development is the changes implemented by the new directors.

This does not mean that Janakaraliya has no problems whatsoever. It means the problems are not acute as it were in the past.

Janakaraliya is journeying smoothly like a well maintained vehicle. Vehicle is maintained in time. Janakaraliya also has the strength to remove defunct parts and replace them with functioning ones. But you must have preventive measures for accident at any time.

An evident problem at present is while some of the divisions are functioning quite well some other divisions are not functioning so well. Although the reasons for their underperformances are known well the remedial actions could not have not been taken.

It is evident that appropriate measures are been taken to solve this problem and the problem areas are under scrutiny.

There occurred a problem of this nature in the Lighting Division. The main issue was how to provide external lighting requirement while the Janakaraliya Mobile theatre is functioning. Two newly recruited members were trained in lighting as a solution.

## **Proposals**

Janakaraliya has a special place among the theatre groups in Sri Lanka as it is professionally developed and as it is the only multi ethnic theatre group in Sri Lanka.

Uniting young men and women belonging to two communities divided for decades in animosity in strong brotherly ties is one of the most important achievements by the Janakaraliya. We propose to expand this trend among the other cultural groups.

To activate Janakaraliya in a broader sphere its character has to be broadened. E. g.

1. To develop the group members as social activists and discharging their services to the larger society.
2. Develop them as a cultural force throughout the island especially in the North and the East.
3. Turn the fulltime members into associate members and develop the newly recruited as fulltime members within a specific time frame.
4. Engaging the associate members as provincial cultural activists based in their localities. Janakaraliya should take immediate measures to implement these activities.

## **Conclusion**

Janakaraliya was not journeying on a smooth avenue from the beginning. They have now almost on the threshold of getting on to a smooth track overcoming all the obstacles.

Delegating powers and responsibilities entrusted in the board of directors to the group members has contributed towards the progression of Janakaraliya. Transparency in all dealings and activities in the organization has been inculcated as one of the topmost priorities in Janakaraliya. This has inculcated leadership qualities among the members convincing each of them as leaders. As a result all of them are acting as leaders.

The fulltime group has determined to act in a matching manner to prove their worthiness as a method of repayment for the honour and prestige bestowed upon them by the audiences and the board of directors.

## **End**

At the initial stage of Janakaraliya its board of directors did not entertain a decent response from the society. These reputed artists were branded as NGO'ers during this stage because of Janakaraliya.

By this time these abuses has simmered down to a great extent. Now they are treated with the former respect. They are also recognized as the only group doing enormous service in finding solutions for the ethnic problem in this post-war era.

During the height of the war and conflict Janakaraliya travelled throughout the island with its multiethnic drama group. It was considered as treading dangerous grounds by most of the people.

At present, even some of the government ministries have started to see the positive side of the Janakaraliya programmes. One of the best examples for this trend is the Eastern cultural tour of Janakaraliya organized by the Ministry of Education. Tem Ministry was instrumental in providing Janakaraliya with legal and logistic support for conducting drama performances and theatre education workshops for the schools in the Eastern Province.