

JANAKARALIYA – Theatre Of the People

➤ ***When was this started?***

We registered Janakaraliya and started organising activities legally on the 25th of February, 2003. Actually I initiated this as a collaborative work with one of my colleagues, veteran actor and dramatist H.A.Perera, who passed away in 2010.

➤ ***How did this name come to mind?***

In Sinhala language 'Jana' means 'people' without any ethnic, language or cast barrier. In Sinhala language 'Karaliya' means 'performing space'. As Janakaraliya Mobile Theatre also provides access to the people to watch dramas sitting around the performing space without any class, race or cast barriers I named it as 'Jana Karaliya'.

➤ ***What was the objective of starting this theatre?***

There are several objectives. I started my career as a street drama artist. I was a pioneer member of the first ever street drama group joining my theatre arts teacher, Dr.Gamini Hattotuwegama, in his street drama group in 1974 after studying theatre arts. We produced three dramas and travelled across the country performing them at waysides, under trees, open grounds, threshing floors, out-door stages and sometimes interior proscenium stages. It was a marvellous as well as a valuable experience for me to watch the common folk watching and enjoying the same dramas performed in different 'performing spaces'. What I saw made me realize that performing of dramas shouldn't be limited to urban 'proscenium theatres'. Fundamental weakness of our street dramas was they lacked in artistry, aesthetics and finesse. The principal objective of our street drama group was to take theatre arts to the underprivileged majority who cannot afford or no access to watch dramas in urban proscenium theatres. Not only during that period but even today distinguished dramas are performed in proscenium theatres. In my opinion we must inculcate the creative excellence, professional values, aesthetic qualities, smoothness and flowing seeing in those dramas in our creations too. I presented my theory that 'if we take theatre arts to the common folk who cannot afford to watch dramas at proscenium theatres our dramas should be quality and aesthetic dramas not propaganda type crude productions' to my teacher. There were arguments on that between us. In order to prove my position I created a drama titled 'Sekkuwa' (Oil Press) in 1976. (It was judged as the Best Drama at the State Drama festival that year) It depicted the existing political situation using various symbols. It was an aesthetic drama consisted of dancing, music and singing that could be performed at any performing space just like our street dramas. After that, in 1978, I produced Albeart Camu's 'The Just Assassins' in Sinhala and performed it in an open space in a village as an experiment. I realized that there should be a method to overcome obstacles from the environment when performing dramas of this nature in village spaces. The need of a fully pledged mobile theatre as an alternate option for a proscenium theatre emerged at that time. It was just

2 years for my drama career in 1978. I couldn't find either the rich nor the nongovernmental institutions prepared to fund such a project. That dream was realized after 25 years in 2003.

In 1977 an attack was launched against the Tamils living in this country. An organization was established to prevent this type of ethnic conflicts under the title 'Movement for Inter Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE)' with the participation of major leftist political parties and trade unions. I worked as a bureau member of that movement. This is the period 1979 / 1980. I created a street drama group under the title 'Open Arts Circle' during this period and tried to add a Tamil drama group to the team. Since there were different confrontational needs among the Tamil youth rather than acting in dramas my effort was unsuccessful. Another reason for the failure was that I was not known well among the Tamil community at that time. My endeavour was to create a multi ethnic drama group connected inseparably with my 'dream mobile theatre'. I wanted to establish such a cultural group capable of taking drama and theatre to perform in both Sinhala and Tamil languages for the entertainment, ecstasy, and wisdom to the Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim people living in far corners of this country. That aspiration also was realized in 2003 with the Mobile Theatre.

➤ ***What was the political situation back then?***

In 2002, while Chandrika Kumaranathunga was the executive President of Sri Lanka the opposition won the legislative power and Ranil Wickramasinghe became the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. He signed an MOU with LTTE leader Prabhakaran and established a temporary peace in the country. Janakaraliya was launched during this temporary peace pact in 2003.

➤ ***How was it accepted in the initial years?***

It is a common practice in other countries artists belonging to different ethnic groups working together. But due to the friction as the expectations of the Sri Lankan Tamils were not fulfilled by governments with a Sinhala majority and the resulting attacks against the Tamil population in 1956, 1977 and 1983 gradually these two communities started to drift away from each other. Therefore joint artistic creations by Sinhala and Tamil artists died away. In such a social context creation of a multi ethnic drama group after number of years was subjected to scepticism and mistrust by extremists blinded by Sinhala and Tamil racism. Some racist newspapers attacked us saying we were white washing LTTE tigers while Tamil extremists thought it was a joke to use drama as a tool for bridging differences in an environment where their problems are stagnated. Some others accused us we were taking advantage of the peace pact earn dollar and dirty money. For some others it was a temporary effort. Most of the artists' response towards Janakaraliya was perverse. The mammoth performances by Janakaraliya during 10 years have silenced unjust critics of it.

➤ ***Did you have any role models in mind when you started? Your inspiration?***

In 1978 'Asian Cultural Forum on Development' conducted a workshop in Raipur, India. I had the opportunity to participate in that session. The workshop was conducted by prominent Indian dramatist Habib Thanvir. There I was able to watch the drama 'Charandas Chor' performed by Naya Theatre Group in an open stage at a village in one night and on a bare floor of a ground at another village. After watching that aesthetic drama constituent with dancing, music and singing my opinion on 'street drama and how a drama should be created for performing for the common people' was consolidated. Two Japanese dramatists participated in that workshop. They are from the 'Black Tent' travelling drama group in Japan performing their dramas in their tent. During the workshop they showed a video documentary produced on the 'Black Tent' drama group. I saw how dramas are performed in their 'tent theatre' with approximately 250 seating capacity. This was a good answer for my 'imaginary' mobile theatre. But they performed in a stage constructed in the proscenium method. This reminded me of our rural dramas known as 'Teeter'. 'Teeter' dramas were shown in large thatched sheds with about three hundred to four hundred audiences. Also there are circus groups in our country. In their circus tents they performed for the audiences were seated in all four sides. Circuses and other sports are performed in the space in the middle. One day I took 20 actors drama group and performed in one of these circus tents. I realized it was ideal to perform dramas in a space where the audiences are seated around all four sides. Accordingly I made the audiences to sit around the performing space of my 'Mobile Theatre'. It is known as 'new arena' method. The actors used to perform in proscenium theatre method should be trained specially to perform for audiences sitting around rather than seated in one side.

➤ ***You worked right through the war. How was your experience?***

Yes, even during the terrifying period during the war we travelled with the Mobile Theatre and regularly conducted drama festivals in the mobile theatre. In all districts we travelled we conducted theatre arts programmes in the schools too. Our mission for an inclusive society with social and cultural harmony was conducted unbrokenly. Not only in the North but also in the South of our country there were tight security cordons. We encountered regular 'road blocks' and 'barriers'. The Tamil boys and girls of our drama group were subjected to tough security inspections. But as the higher officials of the central government as well as the key officials of provincial governments accepted the need of a cultural movement to ease the conflict situation our endeavours were supported at all districts. The civil status and country wide recognition and trust as artists entertained by me and my partner late H. A. Perera by 2003 has also helped in getting the support from different sections of the society.

Our biggest challenge was to protect the Tamil members from security forces and Sinhala extremists. The parents of the Tamil members were at ease since they thought

their children were better protected at Janakaraliya than in their villages. Two of the most skilled members (a boy and a girl) had to flee to India with their parents due to threats. They are still living in refugee camps in Tamilnadu.

➤ ***Did you face any resistance then?***

In two locations in the South we confronted two minor incidents. One day at location in the Southern Province (Hambanthota) a group made a big clamour in front of the lodge of our group. In another day while doing a street publicity campaign at another town in the same province the public surrounded the team and handed them over to the police. When the task conducted by the group was explained they were released.

During the first two-three days at locations where the majority is Sinhala the police emergency (119) has been informed about a ‘suspicious group’. In these instances the police have surrounded the lodge and inspected the group. Once they realized the truth they left. This has happened in several times. After we were known to the general public there were no such problems.

➤ ***Were your movements or plays banned?***

Other than the Forum dramas all our drama scripts are approved by the Public Performance Board. We neither produce ‘Agit Prop’ dramas openly talking politics nor dramas that the board is compelled to ban. If we continue to do dramas subjected to regular bans we won’t be able to carry out our mission. We produce dramas in order to widening the knowledge of the people and their astuteness through ecstatic and aesthetic entertainment.

➤ ***How do you decide the scripts for performance? Are they improvised or do you work on written scripts?***

We create some dramas using ‘improvisation method’. Others are produced basing scripts. For an example the first drama produced by us ‘Andara Mal’ was produced on improvisation method. The dramas ‘Charandas’, ‘Meti Karattaya’, Makaraksha, “Mrichchakateeham’ and ‘Seetambara Pata’ were based on scripts. Although scripts are used we always try to minimise the director's authority and use to give the team the opportunity to contribute their creativity too for the development of a play. Methods used in improvisation dramas are used by me for dramas produced on scripts.

➤ ***What kind of topics do you handle? You have an assortment of actors- Tamil, Sinhalese, and Muslim. How is it working with such multi-ethnicity?***

Most of the time we choose topics close to our experiences those criticise political and social situations. Take the ‘Charandas’ drama, which was based on Habib Thanvir’s ‘Charandas Chor’, for an example. In that from the third scene the story was changed to suit Sri Lankan political and social realities. It strongly criticise the falsehood,

corruption and anomalies existing in our society. We produced a drama titled 'Makaraksha' based on the Russian dramatist Yevgini Swath's 'The Dragon'. That depicts pervasiveness of a backward society that fails to rise against a cruel autocratic ruler. The drama, 'Andara Mal', interprets the anomalies and unequal distribution of resources within the education system. 'Seethambara Pata' drama shows how rulers fool people. Although these dramas discuss politics and social discrepancies they are not populist dramas or 'Agit Props' that discuss raw politics.

Our dramas do not discuss 'peace' or send messages on peace. Our process of making dramas and the way we perform them help communicate and propagate philosophies of peace and harmony. Sometimes dramas with light substance help in this matter. For an example while we conduct workshops for Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim youth or for school teachers we use light entertaining stories such as 'How Andara Ate Sugar' or 'How the Village Chief Went to Heaven'. Making use of such lite and insubstantial stories sometimes helps to communicate solid messages. The important factor in these instances how a group of youth or teachers belonging to three communities work together in a creative process as 'one team'. Are there any better ways to promote or inculcate peace and harmony among people and teaching them to respect each other's cultures other than the process of working together? Students and teachers belonging to three communities are working towards a common goal of creativity! The process is stronger than any message given by a drama because the persons actively engaged in such processes understand better the values of inclusiveness and strength in unity.

There is an instance where this process was advanced. I used the Sanskrit drama 'Mrichchakateeka' believed to be produced in 400 BC by a king named Shuddhaka. At a glance it is a light entertaining drama based on a love story without deep substance. But there are more dramatic or theatrical features in this drama compared to other Sanskrit dramas. Initially we edited the script and produced a Sinhala drama under the title 'Meti Karattaya'. It was a great production bagging several awards at the State Drama Festival. Then the Sinhala and Tamil actors of that drama went to Batticaloa in the Eastern Province and produced a Tamil version, of it namely 'Mruchchakateeham', as a joint venture with the Tamil students of Swami Vipulanathan Aesthetic Education Institute affiliated to the Eastern University. Sinhala and Tamil traditional drama styles and music was infused into that drama. It became an outstanding production and created a wonderful demur among the Eastern Tamil community and scholars. It developed into a debate in the www.dbsjeyaraj.com website on usage of traditions and customs. It was the first debate had on a Tamil drama after 30 odd years. These are exemplary productions for our pluralistic society for promoting inclusiveness.

We can cite 3 similar examples. We established a drama group in the estate sector training a group of Tamil youth. I gave them a unique assignment during the training. It was to produce a drama based on a Sinhala, Buddhist Jathaka story 'Nalapana'. They produced a wonderful drama using dancing, singing and music of traditional

‘Kaman Kuttu’ style prevailing among the estate Tamil population. It’s being performed at Janakaraliya drama festivals to date after some improvements. It was recognized as a great infusion of two traditions. The ‘Enthayum Thayum’ drama script by veteran Tamil dramatist Kulanthei Shanmugalingam was translated into Sinhala and produced by the Tamil members of the Janakaraliya drama group. Parallel to that a Tamil drama was produced by the Sinhala members of the group. These types of integrating productions have not being produced in Sri Lanka for decades. In a multi ethnic society of Sri Lanka these productions have become outstanding creations.

- ***Did you face any problems with their being together especially as grounds of political ideologies and the conflict era?***

This was described in an earlier reply.

- ***From where do these actors come? Their background?***

We recruited members for the Janakaraliya drama group from far away localities of the country. Most of them are from rural families. Few of them are from urban middle class. Some Tamil members are sons and daughters of the labourers working in the upcountry tea estates. Majority have failed to secure university entrance not trained in any profession. They were given continuous theoretical and practical in house training.

- ***While lecturing at the university esp. in Batticaloa, I realised that many drama students were involved in community theatre and your mobile theatre. Is it a common feature for students from the university to be a part of the troupe?***

The Eastern University is situated in the Eastern province of Sri Lanka at Batticaloa. Affiliated to the University there is an Aesthetic Educational Institute named Swami Vipulanathan Aesthetic Institute of Aesthetic Studies which teaches Aesthetic arts including drama and theatre. Majority of the students in both institutions are Tamil. I have taught at the main University only for few days. But I have imparted knowledge in practical aspects of theatre arts to the students of the Swami Vipulanathan Institute on several occasions. From time to time I have conducted practical (training) workshops on Acting, Drama scripting and direction for the students of that institution. In addition the ‘Meti Karattaya’ Sinhala drama script was translated to Tamil under the title ‘Mruchchakateeka’ and produced in Tamil as a joint venture with the Tamil undergraduates of the institution to impart practical knowledge in drama production. Other than that they have not contributed for Janakaraliya dramas. We have not tried to get their participation for our productions.

I must say something about these institutions ‘mostly, engaged in ‘community theatre activities’. There are two methods practically used in theatre arts as ‘Performance Theatre’ and ‘Applied Theatre’. Producing a drama either after writing a drama or by

improvisation method and performing it at the proscenium theatre or in any performing space is called 'performance Theatre' method. The connection between the drama and the audience is basically an enjoyment based one in 'Performance Theatre' method. World renowned dramatists like Antonin Artaud, Bertolt Brecht, Peter Brooke, Mayakautisky and Meyerhold endeavoured to make the audiences see through the society and changed their pattern of thinking for better while enjoying dramas. But 'Applied Theatre' is used for human development directly. Community theatre, Forum theatre and other theatre methods introduced by Augusto Boal and the recently discovered 'Therapeutic Theatre' method comes under 'Applied Theatre'.

Your understanding of 'the students of Batticaloa University' is mainly engaged in 'Community Theatre practices' is correct. Lecturers teaching theatre arts in the University of Batticaloa in Tamil language mainly, probably only, use 'Community Theatre' as practices for the students. They also focus on sending raw messages to the Tamil people through this Community Theatre on subjects such as Women's liberation, House Hold aggression, Child abuse, Consumption of liquor, Usage of insecticide and modern machinery in farming etc. Other than that they concentrate mainly on teaching traditional and historical styles like 'Kuttu' in these educational institutions. Teaching universal theatre arts of the category of Performance Theatre method is limited to theory only. In both institutions there are no teachers knowledgeable in teaching modern or contemporary usage in theatre arts. They are caged firmly within their traditional styles and Applied Theatre. Both students and teachers are engaged in theatre arts without a Universal attitude but with an Anthropological or Tribunal attitude. It is a great obstacle for the development of Sri Lankan Tamil theatre arts. The reason for this situation is that due to the conflict situation prevailed for years has separated the Tamil people including the scholars from the external world limiting resources to acquire universal knowledge of theatre.

➤ ***What is your method of training the actors?***

Since Janakaraliya is engaged in both 'Performance Theatre' and 'Applied Theatre' methods the members are trained to equally skilled both. Therefore they were given methodical knowledge and training in Stanislavusky's 'Method Acting' and Bertolt Brecht's 'Alianation Theory'. In addition they are trained to act in folk drama methods. For 'Applied Theatre' we follow mainly Augusto Boal's theories and practices. Out to those 'Forum Theatre' and 'Image Theatre' are foremost. For training of actors we use training exercises introduced by Augusto Boal and Theatre Games and exercises often. We faced a new challenge in 2003 while training the members. Tamil members recruited to the group couldn't speak Sinhala while the Sinhala members couldn't talk Tamil. When they were trained fulltime as a single group, under one roof, the language problem created so many issues within the team. The antagonism and suspicion that prevailed between these two communities in the country at large was another obstacle for training them as one team. We were

compelled to create theatre games anew in order to relieve the suspicion and animosity. New exercises were created for them to learn each other's languages.

➤ ***Do they also get to know other aspects of theatre- lights, set design, makeup, production etc?***

Yes, during the training period and while rehearsing they were trained in all aspects of drama production. Some members are capable of shouldering all the responsibilities in the production of new dramas for Janakaraliya. Not only that, they have bagged State Awards for Theatre Lighting, Makeup, Choreography, Stage Management, Production, Script Writing and Direction. The drama 'Pianihal' which represented Sri Lanka at the 'New Delhi International Drama Festival' was directed by two Janakaraliya members.

➤ ***When not on tour where do they stay? Do you have a repertory? Are they paid- cash or kind?***

We travel with the Mobile Theatre only for 7 months from 15th January to 15th August. During the balance period it's difficult to assemble the Mobile Theatre due to rain. On the other hand the examinations for the school children are usually held from 15th August making it impossible to conduct our activities in schools. During this period we store the Mobile Theatre and take a well deserved long vacation. Then we start production of new dramas or engaged in additional training and learning. Janakaraliya is somewhat similar to 'Reportary'. But the responsibilities of Finance, Productions, Propaganda, Mobile Theatre, Organizing Programmes and other ancillary divisions and administration are given to, or shared by, the members. They are paid allowances depending on the responsibility, the activity and the time spent on particular tasks.

➤ ***Currently you have a big mobile theatre space. Was it always so big from the beginning?***

Janakaraliya has two different mobile theatres. One is big and known to us as 'Mother Theatre'. We are using this from 2004. 600 adults or 800 school children could be seated in it. This can be arranged or assembled as 'New Arena' method for watching from all four sides, as 'Thrust Theatre' for watching from 3 sides or as Proscenium Theatre where the audiences are seated against the performing space at one side.

We have two more mobile theatres known as 'Mini Theatres'. Most of the time these are assembled in schools grounds where there's no space for performances. 300 children can watch dramas in these theatres seated on the ground. It is constructed similar to a wide spread shadow under a tree.

- ***Who are your audiences for the plays? Are they used to watching plays other than your mobile theatre? Do they pay for watching the plays?***

Janakaraliya audiences include Provincial Governors, Ministers and Members of Parliament, senior officers of armed forces and people from states including people traditionally considered as lowest ranks. Our common seating arrangement cannot be separated class wise. Our audiences' congregate without biases of race, class, creed, cast or status. We charge Rs. 100/- for and adults and Rs. 50/- for a child to watch dramas at our festivals. We perform our dramas free of charges for rural peasants and marginalized communities in open spaces. With a support of receive funding from local sponsors, funding agencies or NGO's.

In addition Janakaraliya dramas are performed for the urban population at proscenium theatres in towns. These are organized by professional contractors engaged in organizing drama performances. Urban audiences pay for these performances ranging from Rs. 50/- to Rs. 3000/-. Janakaraliya and its members are able to earn additional income through these performances.

- ***Do you encourage post-production discussions with the audiences?***

After performing at urban proscenium theatre we do not get opportunities for discussions with the audiences. They are prepared to leave the theatre as soon as the drama is over. But, during the interval and before the start of the drama we show them videos on Janakaraliya and educate them about Janakaraliya.

We conduct discussions and dialogs with the audiences after every performance in the mobile theatre and in the open spaces in villages about what they have seen

- ***Considering that you have Tamil, Muslim and Sinhala actors, how do you handle the language issue? How do you decide which language to do the play in? Is it decided by the area in which you are performing? Have you done plays which are bilingual or trilingual?***

Majority of Tamil and Muslim people in our country know Tamil language. Most of the Sinhala people do not know Tamil language. Therefore we perform dramas in Sinhala when the majority living in that particular location are Sinhala and if the Majority of the audience is Tamil or Muslim the drama is performed in Tamil. When all three communities are congregated we perform in both languages. Our multi ethnic drama group is trained to perform all our dramas in both languages.

- ***How do you plan the budgeting? Do you get grants or government support? How do you cater to the travel cost, lodging and boarding for the artistes and the troupe when you are travelling?***

Other than permission and approval to perform dramas and other activities we do not receive financial assistance from the government of Sri Lanka. From 2003 to 2011 we

received financial assistance from HIVOS Institute of the Netherlands. We used their assistance to produce dramas and sustain the drama group. USAID provided funding for the mobile theatre, sound system and theatre lights. GIZ Institute financed our educational and provincial programmes. We managed the transport, food and accommodation costs with their assistance by economizing. All such financial assistance have ceased now. We are trying to generate income for our sustenance using resources available for Janakaraliya. For an example we have purchased a land with a house for Janakaraliya using the funds collected by sale of tickets. A fan of Janakaraliya has donated a land to the extent of 1 ½ acres with 2 houses to us. Our objective is to use these properties and earn enough for the sustenance of Janakaraliya.

- ***You said this is the only one of its kind in Sri Lanka. Any particular reason for that?***

I always use to say "this is the first ever Mobile Theatre in Sri Lanka and the first ever multi-ethnic theatre group in Sri Lanka". It is the truth. This wonderful theatre and the multi ethnic drama group inseparably connected to each other. We were able to establish the Mobile Theatre and the Multi Ethnic Drama Group because we opted to stay away from the traditional method of drama performance and focused on our mission of social integration and communal harmony.

- ***How many productions do you do in a year and for how long do you all travel?***

We produce a drama during August and February every year. It could be a long drama or a short drama. Or else it could be few forum dramas. I described our travelling time earlier.

- ***You work in multiple spaces- outdoors, mobile, proscenium. Which do you prefer for this kind of movement?***

I commented on this earlier. By using different performing spaces we have to opportunity to reach larger audiences across the country.

- ***You spoke of your association with Habib Tanvir and have done some of his plays in Sinhalese- Agra Bazaar and Charandas Chor. Something about this association and experience of doing these plays.***

I met Habib Thanvir in 1977. He came to Sri Lanka to select dramatists to participate in a workshop and a session to be held in Raipur. I met him through a teacher of mine. During that time I was performing my first drama 'Sekkuwa' (Oil Press). He travelled in the same bus our drama team was travelling about 100 kilometers away from Colombo and watched the drama. We became close friends during this journey. After watching my drama he selected me to participate in his workshop and session. The workshop was held in Raipur in 1978. I had the opportunity to watch his dramas 'Charandas Chor', 'Agra Bazar' and 'Mitti Ki Gadi' performed by his drama group

‘Naya Theatre’ in the open. Out of those I liked ‘Charandas Chor’ most. I thought of producing a Sinhala version of it drama as soon as I saw it. But I managed to get an English script only in 2000. I could produce it as a Janakaraliya drama in 2003 with quite a lot of changes. Since meeting Habib Thanvir in 1978 I spoke to him over the phone on several occasions but I couldn’t meet him until his death.

- ***Have you done any other Indian plays? Or any plays from other parts of the world as at the Universities I realised that they seem to have done a lot of the old Greek classics?***

My production ‘Meti Karattaya’ (Clay Cart) is a translation of Sanskrit drama ‘Mruchchakateeka’. It also could be cited as an Indian drama. Although Habeeb Thanvir produced it under the title ‘Mitti Ki Gadi’ I didn’t follow his style.

In addition I have produced several dramas based on some European dramas. Albert Camu’s ‘Just Assassins’, Bertolt Brecht’s ‘Galileo Galile’, Fredrich Durenmatte’s ‘The Visit of the Old Lady’, Dario Fo’s ‘Accidental Death of an Anarchist’ and Yevgini Swath’s ‘The Dragon’ are such dramas produced by me.

As you mentioned, it is true, that some of our universities are producing Greek dramas in Sinhala. But they have produced dramas of other western dramatists such as Fredrico Gasia Lorca, Luiji Pirandelo, Dario Fo, Bertolt Brecht and Athol Fugard.

- ***Currently how is your mobile theatre viewed? Is it gaining popularity? Does the government recognise your efforts?***

At each and every location we get large as well as positive audience responses that motivate us. We are compelled to do repeat shows in order to accommodate congregated audiences in and around the Mobile Theatre most of the time. It is distressing to state that we have no State recognition yet in Sri Lanka.

- ***What the future plans for the mobile theatre?***

My objective is to find ways and means of revenue for self subsistence for the continuity of the institution and its members. Janakaraliya now has the resources collected for that purpose. There is a massive fan support for us. As such we can work for a continuous existence.

- ***Any other point that you may want to add!***

Today Janakaraliya has arrived at an important juncture. Many of its artists have won highest awards at the State Drama Festivals and National Youth Drama Festivals. Dramas considered being ‘Best Drams’ have been produced by Janakaraliya. Members’ hhave had opportunities to participate in international drama festivals and travel overseas. As a result Janakaraliya is recognized nationally and internationally. It should be mentioned specially that Janakaraliya has been selected by the Freedom

to Create global competition as one of the 10 'Best Cultural Groups' among the Asia-Pacific region. In addition Janakaraliya has received numerous donations and resources. From 2011 International Organizations stopped assisting Sri Lankan NGO's. Under such a situation Janakaraliya will not receive international aids but with above mentioned positive factors the need to forge ahead is our challenge today.