

# Sri Lanka: AKD alleges MPs' votes were bought

Monday 25 July 2022, by [WARAVITA Pamodi](#) (Date first published: 21 July 2022).

## **Calls for General election ASAP, claiming P'ment doesn't reflect people's aspirations**

Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP)-led National People's Power (NPP) Leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who was one of the three candidates for the vote in Parliament on the eighth Executive President yesterday (20), while alleging that yesterday's vote was decided by "the usual horse trading and bribery", said that following the said vote, a General Election needs to be held expeditiously, as the current Parliament is no longer a fair representation of the people's aspirations.

"The (Dullas) Alahapperuma faction of the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP), the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), two independent groups, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), and the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) all publicly supported Alahapperuma. But did those people really adhere to those decisions? Did they not adhere to them just based on policies? I believe that it is not just a matter of policy. We have seen enough incidents in this Parliament - like when the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution was passed, during the 52-day coup, and during the enactment of the 20<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution - of enough MPs being traded from side to side. MPs are sold like how teak trees are bid on in villages," claimed Dissanayake.

He also explained why he contested an election in which he had virtually no chance of winning, without supporting one of the candidates.

"When the nominations were called for, SJB and Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa proposed SLPP MP Dullas Alahapperuma, backed by SLPP Chairman Prof. G.L. Peiris's faction of the SLPP. A schoolmate of United National Party (UNP) Leader and Acting President Ranil Wickremesinghe, SLPP MP and Minister Dinesh Gunawardena, who hails from an old Leftist family, proposed Wickremesinghe, backed by SLPP General Secretary and MP Sagara Kariyawasam's group in the SLPP. We also know that Kariyawasam is haunted by a certain ghost. I ran according to our principles and politics. I am not at all surprised by this election result. This is a reflection of our Parliament's composition. I also believe that the people on the ground are not reflected in the current Parliament. If anyone still believes that the people's aspirations were fulfilled in Parliament today, that is a myth. There is a huge gap between the people outside and those in the Chamber. But I did not expect any better from this Parliament," said Dissanayake.

He explained that when the need for a Parliamentary vote for a new President arose, the JVP had met all political parties and proposed to them that the President and the Premier posts should be held by those with no future hopes of holding political power.

"The names of Speaker of the House Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena and TNA MP M.A. Sumanthiran PC were proposed as President and Prime Minister, respectively. That is a great example of what this country should have done during such a crisis. As a note of respect, I should mention that Sri

Lanka Muslim Congress Leader and SJB MP Rauff Hakeem proposed that two female MPs should be selected for these two posts. If we could have given these positions to persons with no political aspirations, or to a Northern politician, or a woman, imagine the kind of trust we could have built among the people.

“We agreed to hold positions in such a Government for a short term period. The country is facing disaster, as people are dying in queues, babies have no milk powder, farmers are looking at their dying fields, fishermen are looking at their boats which cannot go to sea anymore, and the youth are wondering about their education. We wanted to build an interim, short-term Government for that country with a leader who did not have political aspirations. We wanted 10 Cabinet Ministers and only a limited time period. Those principles were what defeated that proposal. Afterwards, based on our principles, politics, and working plan, I stepped forward as a candidate. I knew what the result would be,” said Dissanayake.

He also congratulated Wickremesinghe at the start of his address, stating: “We hope that he would be able to work for the country and its people.”

Following a massive islandwide protest on 9 July demanding the resignation of former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the latter resigned on 15 July. The Parliament selected the new President through a vote, according to the Constitution, yesterday. A total of 223 Members cast their votes yesterday, of which, 219 were deemed as valid. Accordingly, Wickremesinghe obtained 134 votes, Alahapperuma obtained 82 votes, and Dissanayake received three votes.

---

## **P. Waravita**

[Click here](#) to subscribe to ESSF newsletters in English and/or French.

---

## **P.S.**

The Sunday Morning

<https://www.themorning.lk/akd-alleges-mps-votes-were-bought/>