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Sri Lanka: Current information about the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) (People's Liberation Front - PLF); violence, arrests and/or disappearances associated with demonstrations organized by the JVP; treatment of members of the JVP by authorities in recent years (2002-2004)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

TamilNet describes the political party, Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) (People's Liberation Front - PLF) as a "Sinhala nationalist opposition party in Sri Lanka that espouses radical Marxism" (25 Apr. 2003). Electionworld.org describes it as an "extreme-left Sinhalese nationalist party" (10 June 2004). Others label it "Marxist" (ABC Radio Australia 13 Aug. 2003) and "left-wing" (BBC 11 Mar. 2003).

A brief search for information about the recent actions of the JVP produced articles about various protests and demonstrations organized by the JVP in 2002 and 2003: Most of the events were protests against the Norwegian-led peace process, which the JVP alleges gives too much power to separatist forces of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) (Lankaweb 28 Aug. 2003; TamilNet 25 Aug. 2003; *ibid.* 24 Aug. 2003; *ibid.* 20 Aug. 2003; *ibid.* 29 July 2003; *ibid.* 25 Apr. 2003; *ibid.* 10 Mar. 2003; ABC Radio Australia 13 Aug. 2003; Daily Mirror 13 Aug. 2003; BBC 11 Mar. 2003; SPUR 1-5 Apr. 2002).

Information on violence, arrests or disappearances associated with these protests was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. However, there were articles in the *Daily Mirror* in February 2003 regarding a JVP protest that the police allegedly attacked (22 Feb. 2003a; *Daily Mirror* 22 Feb. 2003b). According to the articles, the protesters had not received permission for the route that they took and the police reacted by spraying water at them (*ibid.*; *ibid.*a).

In January 2004, the JVP signed an agreement of cooperation with the ruling coalition to create the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) (Amnesty International 27 Feb. 2004). Several members of the JVP became cabinet members in the ruling coalition as a result of this merger (Asian Tribune 28 Apr. 2004).

In April 2004, the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA), which includes the JVP (UPFA 6 Apr. 2004) won the largest number of votes and seats in the Parliamentary General election and retained power in Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka Apr. 2004).

The JVP Website offers details about alleged violence and intimidation directed at JVP members during the 2004 election campaign (2004). The Website claims that the police did not act in an impartial manner since they seemed to disregard complaints made by members of JVP and ignored violations of election rules committed by members of the opposing party, the UNP (JVP 2004).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sources: Human Rights Watch, United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

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