

## Derana

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19A has failed to address what it promised, says Attanayake

The 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which passed with a two third majority in the parliament, has failed to address what it promised to the people back in the January polls, former General Secretary of the United National Party (UNP) and former Health Minister Tissa Attanayake said. "There are 'good' and 'bad' terms in the 19th Amendment," he added, saying however the new legislation has failed to generate the much talked-about changes that the new government promised in the first place.

"The government demonstrated a larger view of the 19th Amendment. But, the Executive Presidency has not been abolished as promised. However, the establishment of the Independent Commissions will be a good fact," Attanayake said.

UNPers invite me to rejoin the party

The former General Secretary went on to say he receives a number of invitations from the fellow UNP Parliamentarians to rejoin the party following the historic judgment of the Supreme Court which ruled that expulsion of him was invalid as due process was not followed.

"I see myself as a UNPer who fought for the sake of the party during crucial situations. I had to take the crucial but quick decision to defect owing to a policy reason," he added.

"Though the Working Committee came to the ultimate conclusion to sack me, a disciplinary inquiry had not been conducted or a charge sheet had not been filed against me. The UNP leaders haven't responded with respect to

the verdict given by the Supreme Court yet," Attanayake said.

He also pointed out not only the UNP MPs but party's organizers, supporters, Pradeshiya Sabha members, Provincial Councilors and trade union leaders also push him to rejoin the party.

Good and bad Ranil

"What we witness here is a "temporary" Government, thus, it is hard to monitor its activities widely. When speak about Prime Minister Ranil Wickramasinghe, there are both good and bad in him. I'm of the view that the UNP was defeated at the 2001 election following some tough and stubborn decisions taken by Wickramasinghe," Attanayake claimed.

"During difficult times, I held the responsibility to safeguard the party. A conspiracy had also been underway to sack Wickramasinghe. But, I always endorsed to protect the UNP. These crucial decisions are also behind the victory of the UNP at the January polls. I'm happy about it. But, some MPs attempt to portrait it as an achievement which was gained in just 24-hours. Those who know the true history of the party only would understand," he pointed out.

The greatest mistake

"I admit the fact, my choice to defect to the former government has left me with a black mark on my career. But I never worried that I'm going to miss the greatest opportunity to be a part of the present government nor worry about getting any posts," Attanayake said.

The former General Secretary also asserted his daughter, Dulmini Attanayake, who was in the spotlight recently, would never enter

politics. &ldquo;As a senior politico, I know the bad and good aspects of politics. I would never suggest her to join as the present political culture is corrupt, unlike before,&rdquo; he said.