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# Next President Public consultation findings out soon – PAFFREL

**By Ruwan Laknath Jayakody**

Election monitoring body, the People's Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL) has planned to reveal the fruits of their ongoing district-level public consultations, pertaining to ascertaining the attitudes, skills and qualities a majority of the masses expect from the next President.

PAFFREL Executive Director Rohana Hettiarachchi, told Ceylon Today the date on which the results of the 'dream President' campaign will be made public, is likely to be 5 October.

He explained the issue was not concerning a particular candidate or a political party, but about who the ideal President is for the people.

"When we speak to people and look at what they have given in writing regarding this matter, we find that for example, while a certain citizen may identify that he or she wants a leader who protects national security, another may emphasise on a leader who strengthens the economy. But, there are aspects such as the foreign policy and education that they omit or fail to consider. The fact of the matter is that the President should be multitasking, and not solely an expert on a particular aspect or someone who looks at only one aspect."

He also pointed out that owing to ongoing litigation and judicial proceedings, no new political party or independent group can register with the Election Commission, which is an unfair situation for political parties and independent groups seeking to register newly, adding that this may also precipitate a situation where these political parties or independent groups may align with registered ones for money.

The poll monitor further observed that a situation may arise, where the second or third preference may have to be ticked in the case of a presidential election, adding that voter awareness was minimal about these preferences, and therefore elector education was required in this connection. He also voiced his opposition to including a 'none of the above' category in the list of preferences.

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