



"One country, one nation" should be the aim of any country if it is to make progress both economically and socially in this complex world where countries vie for supremacy besides endeavouring to sustain their independence and sovereignty. It is more so with smaller countries, especially in developing countries.

Sri Lanka is no exception. It is a small country where all races should be able to live peacefully as one nation without any geographical divisions.

History shows that division of a country based on political or racial grounds, whether due to pressure from internal or external forces, brings about disaster as the progress of the economy is hindered by the need to divert the resources and energy to

Palestine is yet another hot spot.

Palestine was viewed by the Jews as the "Promise Land" but it also contains Islamic holy sites associated with Muhammad.

After World War II, UN recommended that there should be separate Jewish and Arab States in Palestine and the State of Israel came into being in 1948. Since then, there have been uprisings and wars between the two States. A peaceful and permanent solution to the problem is not yet in sight.

On the contrary, divided countries such as Germany and Vietnam have shown tremendous growth and development after reunification.

## Theme of One country, one nation: Key to peace and prosperity

quell the civil disturbances often brought about by such divisions.

A classic example is the power struggle between the Democratic People's Republic (North Korea) and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) established in 1948. The formation of North and South Korea has its



genesis in the global power struggle between the US and USSR

The Korean War broke out in 1950 when North Korea invaded the South on June 25, 1950. North Korea was backed by the People's Republic of China with support from the USSR, and South Korea by the UN. A stalemate was reached in July 1951 but a peace treaty was never signed.

South Korea has a high-tech, industrialised economy with GDP - per capita (PPP) (2009) estimated at \$28,100 and is ruled by a democratically elected government. North Korea's GDP - per capita (PPP) for 2009 is estimated at \$1,900. North Korea is a single-party state under a united front.

There have been periodic clashes between the two countries over the years. In March this year, a South Korean naval vessel was sunk by an explosion near Baengnyeong Island in the Yellow Sea and 46 sailors were killed. A torpedo was blamed for the sinking but North Korea had denied its involvement.

On November 22, two South Korean soldiers were killed and 15 others injured by North Korean artillery shell on and waters surrounding Yeonpyeong Island. South Korea returned fire and it is expected that this might escalate into all-out war.

The defeat of Germany in World War II led to a reduced area that was occupied by UK, USA, France and Poland. This Western occupation was softened with the creation of Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) in 1949 out of the three Western Zones excluding Poland, and a Socialist German Democratic Republic (East Germany) out of the Soviet occupied Germany. Western forces continued to occupy West Berlin and a democratic government was established. Eastern Germany was governed on the communist Soviet model.

The flow of refugees from the East to West Germany continued till 1961 but it was stopped by building of the Berlin Wall by East Germany. It was, however, removed as a result of revolutionary upheavals and mounting economic crisis. Following reunification in 1989, the opening of the Berlin Wall and other border crossings to the West were affected.

The German economy is now the fifth largest economy of the world and a leading exporter of machinery, vehicles, chemicals and household equipment. It is supported by a highly skilled labour force.

Germany's current GDP - per capita is estimated to be about US \$34,200.

An independent socialist state in Indo-China, which was under the influence of China for many centuries, Vietnam was occupied by



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the Japanese in World War II. After the war, Vietnam came under powerful Ho Chi Minh but it was not recognised by the French who had conquered the Vietnam Empire that was formed in the 19th century.

The Indo-China War (1946-54) resulted in the withdrawal of the French. In 1954, the armistice divided the country between the communist Democratic Republic in the north and the State of Vietnam in the south. The Civil War in 1964-75, popularly known as the Vietnam War, led US to intervene on the side of South Vietnam from 1965 until US withdrew its troops in 1973. Saigon in South Vietnam fell in 1975 and

to Page 42

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