

"..Thatone may smile and smile and be a villain." –Hamlet, Act I, Scene 1

Paul Babiak and Robert D Hare published a book titled, "Snakes in Suits- When Psychopaths go to work."

Take a look at our ruling political elite in Sri Lanka from the top, right through the hierarchy of tail-wagging, incompetent Ministers, to the lowest Pradeshiya Sabha ranks. Look at the Para-political levels, namely the myriad hangers-on- of this mainstream elite: servile lowly monks who confer exalted and inflated religious titles on corrupt leaders; opportunistic Public Servants willing to concoct bogus statistics to boost the government; media personal who are recipients of royal patronage; the kind of artist that announces that Mahinda Rajapakse belongs to the lineage of the Buddha; the kind of artist who sings the anthem for the rowdy and beefy Bhikku brigade that is going round the country blasting churches, mosques, meat stalls etc in the name of the Great

ers of just a few that would be enough to establish our perspective.

One can go back to the jailing of the one who the President himself described as "the greatest army commander in the world." That is now old hat although an unforgivably shameless and ungrateful act. The removal of Chief Justice Shiranee Bandaranayake was declared by the Supreme Court to be plainly unconstitutional. The installation of Mr Mohan Peiris to that position is consequently unconstitutional. The case challenging the latter's constitutionality has been heard by a panel picked by the accused and predictably dismissed.

In this way, Sri Lanka's once prestigious and proud judiciary, manhandled and mutilated by politicians has today lost its credibility as a body that can hold the scales evenly. The new incumbent in the high office of Chief Justice apparently didn't have a prick of conscience to accept an inappropriately engineered installa-

billions while wastage takes place in other places to an equal amount. But who cares for the COPE?

Sons of high profile politicians can disable DIGs by assaulting the latter and dispatching them to hospital. Once cajoled, the Cop meekly announces he has hit himself. Another high profile politico runs night- time motor races in



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Cop who is expected to uphold law and order. Dr Merv is more a shameless joker than an effective criminal. He once tied a Public Servant to a tree as punishment to the latter but when the outcry came he got the poor devil to say that he has tied himself. Our psychopaths either have a sense of innocent humor or they believe people are brain-dead. The case of Duminda who had been suspected of first degree murder of Bharata Lakshman (besides allegations of drug trading and rape) was an even worse shocker that preceded the story of Vaas Gunawardena. Duminda claimed he was almost paralyzed and got bail.

Immediately after release he merrily trots away to meet His Excellency the President. He has resumed his position as Supervising MP for Defence! Duminda must be having a hard time supervising himself!

And then came Weliveriya! Hundreds of residents in Weliveriya, Gamapaha District, had been complaining bitterly to authorities that a plastic factory belonging to a political bigwig had been contaminating the ground water supplies. Many persons in the village depend on well water for their living. The pleas had been ignored and the residents themselves organized a public protest on the main road. In came the army and opened fire killing at least three innocent youths. The actual number dead is said to be more. The big questions are why the army and not the police had been called in? Who gave orders? Why was the army assault out of proportion to the provocation? What effective action have the authorities taken to address the complaint? Nobody knows the answers. The President is silent. The Defence Secretary is silent. The District Organizer, Basil Rajapakse, had to speak because everybody knew he had not lost his tongue. What did Basil say? He decried the act and said "sorry," like Kevin Rudd saying sorry to Aborigines. He had a simple route, namely to go to his brothers and seek answers.

the heart of Colombo, closing down all roads. Luxury racing cars are being imported when ordinary people can hardly pay their water, electricity and gas bills. Pradeshiya Council Chairman and Councilors appear to be specializing in raping women and young girls. One guy in the

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Hambantota District is alleged to have raped and killed a British tourist. He was arrested and released whereas General Fonseka was kept in jail for three years for nothing. The PC member in Aanamaduwu had ordered a lady school teacher to kneel down for admonishing an undisciplined son of his. His

B-I-L is given nomination again for the current election.

The case of DIG Vaas Gunawardena is a recent shocker. This big cop is suspected of carrying out assassinations for influential ruling party persons. It is alleged that he has even charged a fee for this service. We desist from going into the truth or otherwise of these serious criminal allegations. On the other hand, our interest is in the aspect of criminal suspicion about a top-level

Dear reader, I can go on with more and more illustrations that only reveal the psychopath residing in the psyche of our ruling politicians. But let this be enough to prove my point about the sad state of our once resplendent isle where we were born, nurtured, and where we breathed. We have a totally unaccountable government that wouldn't listen and wouldn't care. Why care and why listen after the 18th Amendment? One thing it loves to do is to engage in big ticket expenditure items. This is called development. We are yet to see the development that resulted from building an International Airport in Mattala or a Port in Hambantota, or International Sports Stadium in Hambantota.

Birds still fly there unimpeded, we are told. At least the birds are free.



Compassionate One or even the simple naïve men and women who go to Lanka and return with stories of "great improvement" or "miracles," as the ancient Arab traders did.

In repose, all these guys smile, and smile, and even hug. One of the most disarming and charming psychopathic smiles I've ever seen is that emanating from the high profile politico under suspicion of raping a school girl, trafficking of drugs, and the daylight murder of a rival politico of the same side.

Even our President smiles although whilesmelling rot goes on under his watch? Why all these smiles? It is not as mysterious a question as the Mona Lisa smile. Babiak & Hare have done an exhaustive study of psychopaths. "Callous and manipulative, adept at conning people a psychopath relies on superficial charm, makes great first impressions...they never feel bad about anything they do that is shameless."

To say that you can spot a law-abiding psychopath is an oxymoron (i.e. something weirdly self-contradictory). Psychopaths are by definition masters of emotional disguise. If there were an Olympics for impression management our psychopathic leaders would be exultant medalists. Sri Lanka's ruling politicians have proved themselves to be deceitful and shameless and masters of flying and subterfuge. At the same time, our general public including some formally educated types have proved to be gullible, naïve peasants.

The litany of shameless things that have been happening in Lanka under the watch of the government is very long. We remind our read-

tion that hits at the bottom of the sovereignty of the people and turns the island into a Mugabe-like comic opera. From the days of Magna Carta we know that the independence of the judiciary both in real and manifestation is a prime requirement for democracy. Rule of Law and democratic governance is inconceivable without that.

Again, buying members of the Opposition to strengthen the hands of the President (Deth shakthimath karanna) was an act of shameless public bribery. Creating thereby a Parliament that is ready to raise hands for anything the government wants-good or bad or ugly- was a brilliant way of working out the democratic system to convert it into a dictatorship while retaining the surface of Parliamentary governance. Parliament which should be the voice of the people and which should be the forum for public debate over public issues affecting the people is now a docile instrument. MPs are looked after by an elaborate system of inducements and threats. Many MPs are having corruption claims on them kept under the carpet to be resurrected if they dare challenge the government.

With Parliament and the justice system now emasculated, it is an open field for the government and its lackeys to literally play hell. Play hell they do. The Auditor General who should be free to investigate financial transactions of the executive is also rendered docile in similar fashion. The Police now takes orders from the local Pradeshiya Sabha member. The COPE headed by a government MP, DEW Gunasekera, has reported that over 40 Corporations and Public agencies are neck-deep in corruption to the tune of hundreds of