



President Rajapakse kicked off his campaign against the Common Candidate, Maitripala Sirisena, with a statement he should never have made. He said he had 'the files' of all those who crossed over. Did he not realize that this veiled threat would boomerang on him in a bad way?

cover.'

With the advent of Mahinda Rajapakse the covers were out. An era of total immunity emerged while the Presidential system became a most oppressive system. It has been a case of "I don't care a damn," and his entire executive line of command from Ministers seemed to say, "We don't care a damn as the boss will protect us." Yes, the boss would protect as long as the Ministers and the rest of the line of command didn't jack up to dissent or to challenge.

President Rajapakse kicked off his campaign against the Common Candidate, Maitripala

THE REAL ISSUE BEFORE SRI LANKAN VOTERS

"For those who believe in astrological predictions, the major Saturn change on 2 November 2014 for his Aeris Raasi is definitely not helpful for him. According to general predictions- Overview:

'Sani Bhagawan is moving from the 7th house to the 8th house. You are coming out of Kandaka Sani but entering onto the worst part of Asthama Sani. Right now things are bad, but going forward it will become worse and terrible. You may expect to have problems in each and every aspect of your life. The intensity of the problems will be extreme from Dec 2014 to July 2015.' (Quote from KT Astrologer - Network Bandwidth Monitor, in a piece from Colombo Telegraph 29th November 2014).

their cronies share the spoils, the commissions, the bad money and they plunder the land. The people are needed for the rulers only for purpose of obtaining periodic consent at fake elections. That provides the veneer of 'righteousness' for these mandarins that can help global funders pretend they are doing the right by giving. It is important to realize that all the recently ousted dictators had been enjoying 90-95 per cent of electoral support at elections even just prior to their ousting. This is what called 'manufacturing consent.'

Do Sri Lankans deserve such a form of dark rule? Voters must decide. Sri Lanka is not Africa. Most Sri Lankans live in the modern age. They are highly literate as a nation; very

intelligent, as they pick up things quickly and they are creative. The light of the Dhamma has over centuries spread over villages and nooks and corners. I am not saying that Sri Lankans all live the religion. Few do and many monks don't. However, one thing ordinary Sri Lankans have imbibed from the Dhamma is the belief in themselves. The large majority of Lankans are no longer in wonder of gods and goddesses whom they placate on a daily basis. The crafty among them would rather give godly status to powerful politicians and hover around the latter to eke out what they want. Decades of free education has been a decided blessing and one must thank all those who helped keep free education going.

the US and French constitutions. Hence, JR delighted in becoming the most powerful President in the world even though he was ruling over downtrodden populations unlike the US and French Presidents. JR boasted he could do anything except making a man a woman or vice versa.

However, despite all this boast JR did not go that far in converting his constitution into a repressive instrument. He had the sophistication to make even his abuses look lawful. Premadasa who came after JR went into repressive mode but, there again, he was deeply concerned about basic good governance and good discipline countrywide. CBK started off a 'pathola yugaya' where nothing really was done and nothing undone. CBK did quite a lot of things under 'democratic

Sirisena, with a statement he should never have made. He said he had 'the files' of all those who crossed over. Did he not realize that this veiled threat would boomerang on him in a bad way? Rhetoric is key at election time and this statement would echo throughout the Opposition campaign. If he has 'files' then he should let the law take its course and not use them only against those who oppose him and chuck them away in respect of those who are on his side. He cannot go long in such a vein.

Will the astrologer cited at the commencement of this article, be proved right? Will Lanka move to darker days? I say, borrowing from Shakespeare in Julius Caesar, the fault is not in our stars but in ourselves. We can change all this for the better by our own effort.




Shyamon Jayasinghe

President Rajapakse isn't addressing the formidable Opposition argument to his long rule, namely, the evil of absolutist rule. He should have seen this issue gather momentum over the last few years and taken rectification steps in time but he seemed to have been blocked from reality check. This inability to see beyond one's power horizons has been the common bane of all authoritarian political systems. Political history has shown how such a blinding veil can block the ruler's vision. Coteries of self-serving 'friends' and flatterers gather around a power-loving ruler, sing hosannas and tell the latter that all is right. It is a mental feeding that leads to a suffocating personality delusional disorder. The moot fact is that our President has been on the wrong foot since his triumph over Prabhakaran. He gave scant attention to do things that will make the common man feel he/she has a place in his world. On the country Mahinda went on a slippery slope right up to the point of the 18th Amendment and now cannot get out of that trap. Revolt came from within and what has happened over the last few days is already history.

Sri Lankans have learnt to exercise universal franchise from the days of the Donomough Constitution. Our women exercised such right even before Australian women. We have employed the power to change governments when they got rotten. A political culture grew up that made such behavior the accepted norm. The possibility of change acted as a check on the rule of our political leaders who therefore took the electorate seriously.

All of this system and the political culture that it engendered began changing in 1978 when JR Jayawardena decided he must use his 5/6 majority in order to give himself more power and more pakum. JR's introduction of the PR electoral system bolstered the new power of the new Presidential executive. The 1978 constitution was a patchwork that used the power components of the Presidents under

African countries have been and are hosting dictatorships The rulers in these countries lord over the people as of divine right. They and



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