

off to Disneyland in America with his kids. Besides Victor is an intellectual and he edits the left paper called Ravaya. I also bought a copy of his other book entitled "Fansale Viplavaya".

Let's get to the subject. Chaura Regina is a scathing attack on the alleged doings and misdoings of our former President. The allegations if proved in court can surely take her to jail. Two things surprise me, firstly, why there is no demand either by the government or opposition for a special Commission of Inquiry into the last regime. Apart from meting out punishment, such a public inquiry would keep all future Presidents on their toes.

Actually, Victor Ivan states in the prelude that the purpose of his book is to create a tradition of investigating the conduct of Presidents at least after the latter are out of power. The presidential immunity clause in the JR constitution prevents any enquiry during the regime of a President.

A tradition of post-regime investigation would serve to warn Presidents that they are going to have a hard time at least after their rule ends. I take this point of the author of "Chaura Regina" as a valid objective.

The second thing that surprises me is why

Chandrika has not instituted action for libel when so much has been said about her varied deals and about her personal and love life.

Newspaper reports alleged that she had requested the President to ban the book. It is in the



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President's interest to ignore such a request quite apart from the practicality of such action.

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The current constitution creates the path for a monstrous President who cannot be challenged while in power unless by the operational dynamics of Parliamentary power-play. In the latter sense, President Rajapakse is somewhat hamstrung by the possibility of provoking the UNP and the JVP. Yet, the potential for abuse prevails.

I must say that some of Victor's allegations are not adequately substantiated in the book, which, therefore, appears as a polemical tirade rather than a serious exposition. Other charges provide something in the nature of circumstantial evidence, that requires further investigation. Be that as it may, the charges are of a very serious nature that bring Chandrika into disrepute.

Victor Ivan had been closely associated with Chandrika until the early stages of her Presidency. The latter had been a key campaigner and mentor for her during the 1994 and 1999 elections. When friends fall out it can be dangerous. In Chandrika's case, Chaura Regina is the outcome. The story about the 112 acres of crown land in Madwela, which she wanted to keep for herself, appears to have substance. It was Victor Ivan who blocked the deal with a court order.



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Chandrika is also implicated with the accidental deaths of Ashroff and Kumar Ponnambalam, the murder of Rohana Kumara the journalist, the attacks on filmstar Anoja Weerasinghe and singers Rukhantha and Chandralekha.

According to the author, CBK did run a mafia in the President's office comprising Baddegana Sanjewa, Dhammika Perera, Moratu Saman, and Tara Ajith and it was these people who carried out the criminal program. Victor Ivan makes the point that Chandrika loved to live dangerously and go for the risk. In support of this, he gives the Suriyakanda mass burial ground episode as illustration. However, even Suriyakanda she had not followed up to its logical conclusion because all that was interested was to take political advantage of it with her 'Mothers' Protest Meetings' that helped bring her to power. In fact it was Victor Ivan that had brought Suriyakande to her attention. The book gives details of fraud said to have been perpetrated by the former President. According to the book her inner cabinet comprised Ronnie Peiris, Rajan Brito, Tara De Mel, Rajan Aseevathan, Udaya Nanayakkara, Kusumsiri Balapatabandi, Sanath Gunatilleka and, later, Harry Jayawardena. The Emirates deal and the Katunayaka Highway deal are among the

major citations. These assertions seem mere speculation to me but the author categorically nails the charge on Chandrika's door.

Chaura Regina is also explicit and specific about Chandrika's love life with Sanath Gunatilleka and openly charges that Sanath used her "sexual hunger" to make money and go places. "Although he (Sanath) was not a cabinet minister he was more powerful than such a person", states the author. "When a minister receives a liquor licence he (Sanath) receives four". It is also stated that when Sanath visits a foreign country the Sri Lankan ambassador comes to the airport to receive him.

Chandrika, Sanath Gunatilleka, and the "inner cabinet" have enough material for libel action. Why are they silent in the face of Victor Ivan's outrageous allegations?

I don't know why

Shard Jayasinghe



"මියාත්, අත්තන් උයන් ගෙල තෙරුම්බි මියාන් ගොඳ, ගේ" "මොරටු - ආ?" "සෙරුන්බි නම් ගොඩබි සෙරුන්බි මියාන්. අත්තන් උයන්බි උයන් ගේ. අත්තන් මොරටුන් උයන්. මියාන්ගා උයන් ගේ."

"මගේම මොරටුන් මියාන්ගේ උයන් ගොඳ. මියාන්ගේ ගේ?" "ගොඳ මියාන්ගේ ගේ?" "මා ගේමිලාම අත්තන් ගේ මොරටුන් මියාන්ගේ?"

- වෙඩිය -

The Sri Lankan Book Publishers' Association held a most successful International Book Fair at the BMICH last September. One event stole the whole show at this fair and that is the launch of Victor Ivan's book on former President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunge. When I was in Sri Lanka last month, a publisher told me that this book sold at the rate of two copies a minute! It is still selling like hot cakes and I could not resist buying myself a copy from a Kandy book store. I read it and I am still aghast!

Is this a portrait of the abuse of power? A case study for all to read and learn a lesson? Lord Acton famously said "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely". Is Chaura Regina about that? Or is it the vengeance of a writer?

Victor Ivan was one of the original JVP hot-heads who put his neck under the movement and lost an arm when a bomb that he handled exploded. That vintage of JVPers were a far cry from the current affluent-seeking types like Wimal Weerawansa who has a special hair crop at a luxury saloon, and who recently took

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