

"In politics, absurdity is not a handicap." - Napoleon Bonaparte

Did any of you readers see the video of Deputy Minister Sujeewa Senasinghe going in a boat in a flood affected area in Colombo and distributing donations? Did you see the video of Minister Dayasiri engaged

One has to be thankful for these social media outlets. The word spreads like wildfire in a summer Australian bush country.

in cleaning up muck in a residential block somewhere? Both these gentlemen are well dressed, with the cameras turned on them. Senasinghe, in shorts, looks like a Walawwe Baby Mahattaya. Looking at the demeanour of these two politicians one could imagine that their meritorious manoeuvres couldn't have lasted beyond the click of the camera. Shifting to a serious note, aren't you shaken up by Minister Rajitha Senarathne having an open duel with the doctors of the GMOA?

These blokes, (and I am sure there are many of them in the yahapalanaya government) if allowed to go on overdrive like this will surely blow up Yahapalanaya. Young Minister Harin Fernando mercifully apologised for his use of raw filth in Parliament.

The first two performances are all over Facebook and social media. One has to be thankful for these social media outlets. The word spreads like wildfire in a summer Australian bush country.

At least social media is acting as a break where our civil society has gone, again, to slumber. De-mocracy is predicated on one major premise, namely, that the broad populace are engaged with what politicians do. They watch them. They pull them up if they go wrong. Here, in Australia one reason why democracy works reasonably well is that civil society organisations and organised trade unions don't let politicians off the hook. If even as simple as a prominent tree is felled down for "development" one witnesses

hordes of protestors. The media, in turn, falls in line with a conscientious public.

TWO AND ONE IN A YAHAPALANAYA THREESOME

It's not all lost in Sri Lanka, however. The Corruption Decade was brought down partly by Facebook and the civil society organisations. A huge salute to the memory of Venerable Maduluwawe Sobitha! While other prominent monks were aligned directly and impliedly with the corruption re-gime this monk made

the sacrifice. Praise to the monk and shame on others.

On the other hand when politicians like those three above dance the devil why don't we have some civil society boys hooting them down. I remember in the old campus days boys hooted Sir John Kotalawela when he came as Prime Minister. A little hooting isn't a dangerous thing especially when now we don't have White Vans.

Dayasiri and Senasinghe distribute not their personal donations but the givings of others not in powerful positions like them. What are they doing but exploiting the miseries of poor people for their political advantage? This is a plainly unethical act. In these instances it was literally a case of "bora diye maalu banawa" (fishing in muddy waters). Shame on them! Be-

from such a state of naivety and show the latter the respect that's due to them? That would be true leader-ship.

And now we come to the serious from the jocular. In a way, it is jocular again. This is the unnecessary warfare waged by Rajitha against his doctor colleagues. The GMOA charges that Rajitha's son is also unduly putting his fingers on Ministry mat-



ters. If true, this is another betrayal of yahapalanaya. Was Yahapalanaya gone wrong only when in the hands of the Rajapaksa family? And good when it is in the hands of Rajitha's family? What a sensible

sides, aren't these illustrations harking back to the Rajapaksa era when MR and his fellows became such accomplished actors whom Oscar winners would have envied? Kissing the tarmac at the airport. Hugging babies and touching old men and women with "compassion." Didn't Senasinghe criticise such episodes of acting and fooling around done by the previous government? Unlike the exercises of Rajapaksa those of Dayasiri and Senasinghe are disgustingly offensive to the senses. As long as our people are naive and stupid these cheap tactics work. But why not lift the people

Rajitha should have done is, firstly, to clear his personal life away from his public life. These are two different things which our politicians always conflate to their advantage. We had ten years to see the result. Minister Rajitha Senarathne must, for heavens' sake, keep his son out of Ministry matters. Secondly, Rajitha should have kept his ego behind and dealt with the GMOA in a professional manner.

Every conflict can be sorted out on a win-win basis but for that, one must send one's ego on holiday. The GMOA leaders, undoubtedly have been getting into political mode with inflated egos themselves. It spent a lot of unnecessary energy in battling against the ETCA without knowing even what the nature of that animal was. That was bad form. On the other hand, the Minister must be above the level of conflict and he must deal cleanly and not like a Chandiya. In this instance, Minister Rajitha Senarathne does not appear in good light. His competence is in serious question. He has brought the conflict to the point of bringing in a mediator. That mediation might end his sense of pride.

