

GREED AND FEAR THAT SPARKED THIS CRISIS



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Two Dynamics: Fear and Greed

In the first place, the current crisis in Sri Lanka is not a constitutional crisis. It is misleading to call it so since the constitutional guidelines set out in the 19th Amendment for the removal of a Prime Minister and an appointment of a new one are unambiguous and clear. The crisis is political and it is deliberately and unilaterally created by a desperate act **which is the outcome of two intertwining dynamics namely, a mortal fear within the ranks of the former regime leaders and an outrageous expression of greed by a foolish President.** A coincident occurrence of greed and fear!

Trial of Gamini Senerath

As reported in today's (3/11/18) Daily Mirror, the **Mara (Mahinda Rajapakse)-Sira (Sirisena) junta**, as a popular online journal calls it, wants to put off the very first scheduled Trial-at-Bar case by the Special Court against Gamini Senerath, private secretary of the former President Mahinda Rajapakse's. Gamini Senerath is charged with embezzling Rs 500 million belonging to Litro Gas. That there is some semblance of hope for this country, at least for now, is evidenced by the fact that the Judiciary has rejected the call for postponement of the case. This is the opening case of the special High Court. Others-cases bringing in Gota, Basil, Avante Garde, Shirani Rajapakse, the sons, and so many alleged offenders to boot are to get their turn and account for their actions done when in the seats of mighty power. The cases will be heard daily until finish. Among the Rajapakse family and

cohorts a deadly fear that badges and nags operates.

On the other side, Sirisena on whom "greatness was thrust," began his term announcing he would never ever seek to be re-elected. In the course of this unexpected journey Sirisena's taste buds for being in the limelight and in the company of world leaders, travelling the world so often with his kith and kin and receiving obeisances had developed. He wanted another term. First wanted to know if the current one could be extended. AG said, "no sir." He foolishly got himself surrounded by a selfish and crafty group of MPs of the Mahinda wing who had even mocked him mercilessly during the campaign. The latter were given Ministries but they were Mahinda men who kept on working on this foolish man. In a madness for another term in office he nervously navigated to the side of his erstwhile enemies. This caused rifts with his major coalition partner, the country's largest single party - the United National Party. Sirisena would never have won without the UNP forces. Through a process of action and reaction President Sirisena broke of ties and flirted with the Rajapakses. Like the cunning fox, "come into my parlour," said the Rajapakses. Gamaralalage Maitripala Sirisena, President of Sri Lanka, is now where he is as an outcome of a string of events that flowed from this situation.

Crunch Time

This is crunch time for Sri Lanka.

Anybody with patriotic feelings has to look at this situation. This is the test of your patriotism and your basic moral longing for the rule of law, democracy and decency in our public life. **If Sri Lanka isn't going to be a banana, third-rate republic; if the peace that the rule of law brings in its wake, is to prevail so that enterprises and ordinary people can be let to flourish; if a few ruling elites aren't going to be permitted to run the country at their whim and fancy; and if citizens alone can determine how they are to be governed-then there isn't any option but to defeat the evil forces (adharma) of the Mara-Sira junta, which has wrested the hold from the legitimate government of our country.**

Issue

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Brave Court Action

States the Daily Mirror: "The Special Trial-at-Bar yesterday dismissed a request by the defense to put off the trial until the Appeal Court order on the jurisdiction of the special trial-at-bar to conduct the trial against former president's chief of staff Gamini Senarath and three others.

The three-Judge Bench comprising Sampath Wijeratne, Sampath Abeykoon and Champa Janaki Rajaratna fixed the trial to be conducted on a day-to-day basis from November 7 onwards." How far away our courts have travelled since the defeat of the Rajapakse regime and the ouster of the regime's Chief Justice, Mohan Peiris! The new independent Constitutional Council set up during the first hundred days of the yahapalanaya government now picks our judges for the country's highest court and bastion of liberty. The purpose of the political transformation in 2015, now known as yahapalanaya, was to establish SYSTEMS that can control individual behaviour rather than the other way about where we rely on exhorting individuals-authorities or others- to conform to the right way of doing things. You put your naked finger on the hot oven and you will burn. Likewise, if you violate the laws of the land no politician can salvage you from the consequences. You must recourse to court for that. The Yahapalanaya government does invite a lot of criticism for its omissions and commissions. However, this much has been achieved in our country, namely, that government has set the system of justice right. Courts have given many a verdict against even the government. No Basilian Minister can revenge the court if his Ministerial plans are upset by court decision. Sri Lankans observed how a former

Chief justice, Shirani Bandranaike, was illegally removed merely because she blocked Basil's Divineguma Bill. How horrible was that! Yet, Rajapakses weren't the kind with any moral sense who can feel guilty about such wrong doing.

Amoral

Both components of the 'Mara-Sira Junta' by a high profile online journal, are totally devoid of moral sense.

Ethicists call such individuals 'amoral.' An appeal to conscience isn't relevant to such people. It is most unfortunate for a country to have such brutes ruling our country. It is dangerous, too, because these guys set an example to ordinary people. Other high-ups tend to fall in line with the new dysfunctional values. Ministers would think it nothing to demand bribes or to abuse the underlings. The consequence is that the Sri Lanka Parliament is black-star-studded with numerous venal and double-dealing MPs including SB Dissanayake, Wimal Weerawansa, Gammanpilla, Aluthgamage, Mahinda Samarasinghe, Wijayadasa Rajapakse, and Susil Prem Jayanth. Even the learned GL Peiris is seen pathetically metamorphosing into Mahinda Rajapakse's poodle. Like Mary and the little Lamb, GL is seen trotting behind Mahinda meekly and obediently. Cross-overs have become rife-all done for money. When the question about numbers-shortage was pointed out to the Mara-Sira junta it is reported that Basil responded, "I will look after that." He is, indeed, keeping to his word. A young mother writes in her blog: "We teach our children never to utter falsehoods, never to deceive, never to cheat, and never to betray." Could our mothers of the future mentor on such lines?

As every day passes, we now observe morally outrageous action by high-ups who wouldn't bat an eyelid. Down through the corridors of the wider society, the new and disastrous value system of "might is right," and "corruption is acceptable provided you don't do that aloud," penetrates. Whole governance systems deteriorate and break up.

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