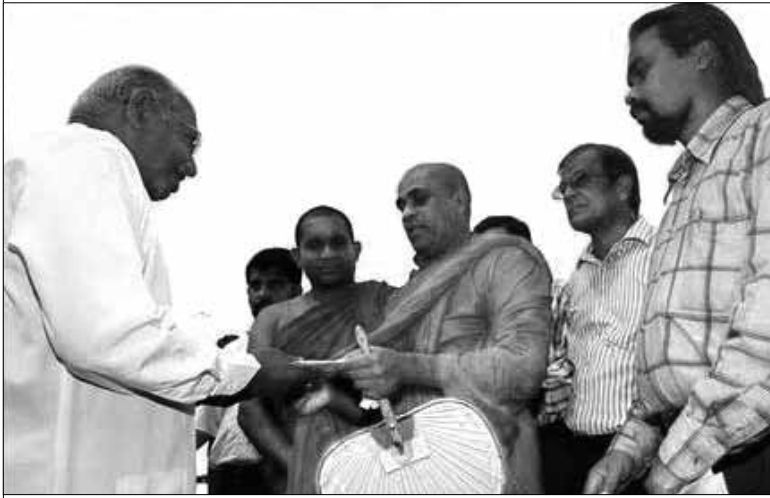


Sinhala hegemony taking a hold

By Dr. Vickramabahu Karunaratne
LAKBIMANEWS.LK



The recent provincial council elections show the nature of the consolidation of the Sinhala nationalist state. One could extrapolate from each district, and indications will show the consolidation of Sinhala hegemony throughout Sinhala areas except perhaps in the Western Province. This has intensified repression. Mano Ganesan maybe charged for "assisting" the LTTE.

An attempt is being made to track down all those responsible for the Hiru publication. Hiru was a Sinhala weekly that defended Tamil autonomy. However there are some oppositional forces that directly or indirectly challenge Sinhala hegemony.

Firstly the Tamil resistance in the north is still forceful. In spite of government claims of LTTE losses, the latter is continuing to be a formidable resistance. It is true that they have lost important avenues of resources but they appear to have overcome these setbacks. The most important gain has been the sympathy of the Tamil masses.

Appeals

In spite of the appeals of the government through leaflets and messages sent through the administrative mechanism involving GA, AGAs and gramsevakas, refugees have not come back to Sinhala army controlled areas. Even the social services' appeals of international agencies have failed to break this determination of these hungry and miserable people. Even in the Tamil diaspora the sympathy

for the resistance has grown. In other words Tamil resistance has taken a wider meaning. The Sinhala army's attempt to takeover the heart of the Tamil homeland has aroused strong feelings among all Tamils. Secondly the teachers' boycott of A/L examination work became a problem for the government. At a time when even the oppositional political parties, the UNP and the JVP, succumbed to Sinhala nationalist pressure, the stand taken by the teachers is remarkable. The Mahinda regime accused teacher union leaders of collaboration with the LTTE. Indirectly, it was taken by the government before the Supreme Court and the CJ ruled that the government should come up with a feasible solution. In effect the Supreme Court ruling accuses the government of negligence and playing with the future of students!

Trade union movement

In the meantime there are three tendencies within the trade union movement. Bala Thampo has convened a meeting of all trade union federations to organise a delegate conference of workplace leaders on the issues of war and inflation. It has attracted some of the pro government trade unions as well, indicating the dissension within the ranks of old left parties. Then there is the August 4 movement that proposed a protest day on the same issues. While the debate about the importance of a delegate conference before any island wide action programme is still going on, Lal Kantha of the JVP is still going on with their proposal of a three-day

general strike.

However, the JVP leadership is strongly influenced by the hegemony of Sinhala nationalism. It is doubtful whether Lal Kantha could go ahead displacing the Sinhala chauvinism of the leadership. We cannot underestimate the influence of the media freedom campaign against the authoritarianism of the government. Media personnel became targets of the government automatically when they displayed the truth about the war: corruption, Sinhala chauvinism and grave human rights violations. The media freedom movement is capable of calling together all parties and unions committed to the defence of media freedom and human rights and continue the campaign it started before the election. Apparently, a proposal for a common protest meeting in Colombo is under consideration.

What is the attitude of the international community? This is basically governed by the stand of the Indian rulers.

Delhi leaders are more frightened of the LTTE than of the Indian left or the Tamil Nadu agitations. They expect the Sinhala army to gain control over the Tamil homeland, before any meaningful steps are taken to persuade the Mahinda regime towards real power sharing or autonomy for the Tamil homeland. This position has been accepted by the world powers in spite of the liberal remarks that they make here and there. However, international left and far left movements have stopped believing government and the JVP propaganda. The former has taken a strong stand for devolution.

Tamil liberation

They have recognised Tamil liberation as an authentic movement against oppression. The left in India, particularly the communist parties, have taken Tamil autonomy as a serious demand and both parties have dropped their special connection to the JVP.

In this scenario there is a strong tendency developing for a way out challenging the Sinhala hegemony of the government. Left currents from many directions are coming together to put together a common programme to struggle against not only Sinhala hegemony but also the pseudo opposition of the UNP. The need of the hour is to make democracy and freedom a reality.

War Rhetoric and the Numbers Game



Sarath Fonseka



Ranjan Wijeratne



General Ratwatte

Sachi Sri Kantha
TAMILNATION.ORG

● "The IPKF got rid of the hard core elements. What is left (of the LTTE) is the baby brigade of young boys and girls. They will wet their pants when they meet my armed forces..." Sinhala Sri Lanka Deputy Defence Minister, Ranjan Wijeratne, 15 July 1990

● "...Linking of the land based Main Supply Route (MSR) to Jaffna through Killinochchi would be achieved by February 4, next year - I will shake hands with Pirabaharan after we defeat him" - Sinhala Sri Lanka Deputy Defence Minister, General Ratwatte, 14 December 1997 and

● "We are almost at the beginning of the end. We have finished almost two thirds of the LTTE that's about 9,000 of them which is a large number. One third of the war has to be fought. The tail enders of a cricket team do not perform the same way, like the middle order batsmen and the opening batsmen do." Sri Lanka Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka On Democracy and the Beginning of the End]

Just like any average Tamilian possessing a modicum of common sense, I do not trust the contents of what appears in the Colombo's daily newspapers owned by the Sinhalese media moguls. This is because they strain simple logic inculcated by our primary school teachers. Nevertheless, infrequently some material that gets published in the Colombo newspapers (especially by the Sunday Leader, an anti-SLFP organ) do some justice to common sense. One such commentary appeared in the Sunday Leader of Aug. 24, under the byline Ranjith Jayasundera. It was entitled, 'War Rhetoric and the Numbers Game'.

Here are some interesting numbers, that appear in this commentary about

the current job performance of Sri Lankan armed forces, as they are purported to be "annihilating" the LTTE cadres in the North of the island. These numbers were delivered by none other than the current SL military spokesman Brigadier General Udaya Nanayakkara and the prime minister Ratnasiri Wickremesekere.

(1) "Over 14,000 soldiers have deserted the forces in 2008, Military Spokesman, Brigadier General Udaya Nanayakkara told The Sunday Leader. This figure is around 5.4% of the army's total strength over a period of just over half a year." This works out to a desertion rate of an average 2,000 per month, until the end of July.

(2) "The military spends over Rs. 1 million on the 15 week training periods for each and every one of these soldiers, the Brigadier said." At the current exchange rate of approximately 1US dollar being equivalent to 108 SL rupees, this works out to 9,270 dollars spent "on the 15 week training periods" for each SL soldier.

(3) "Even the lowest ranking soldier serving in an operational area would collect just under Rs 30,000 monthly, according to the military - a figure that even adjusted for inflation, is far higher than that ever paid to soldiers over the last few decades of conflict." Thus, the SL army's foot soldier pay of Rs. 30,000 equates to nearly 278 dollars per month.

(4) "Brig. Nanayakkara also said that during the late 1990's, the desertion rate was much higher and over 30,000 would desert the army in a year." Isn't this stupendous? Now, he tells us. If one has to believe this, in late 1990s the SL army was nothing but a deserter's paradise.

(5) "The most worrying part of the Prime Minister's statement was that he said 622 - six times the number killed - soldiers were 'injured' in battle.

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பார்வையொன்றே போதும் உங்கள் ஜாதகத்தை கணிப்பதற்கு...

முதல் முறையாக இந்தியாவில் இருந்து வருகை தந்திருக்கும் குரு ரிஷிஜி. உங்களது பிரச்சனைகளை நீங்கள் கூறுமுன்பே எழுத்தில் தரும் உண்மையான ஆன்மீகவாதி. "தந்திர" வழிமுறைப்படி ஒழுக்கும் ஆன்மீகவாதி. 1973ஆம் ஆண்டு தொடக்கம் உலக புகழ் பெற்ற "தந்திர" நிபுணத்துவம் உள்ளவர். பண்டைய இந்திய "தந்திர" வித்தைகளை உபயோகித்து சூனியம், பில்லி, பிசாசு ஆகியவற்றை அகற்றுதல், பணக்கஷ்டம், நோய், நொடி, காதல் தோல்வி ஆகியவற்றிற்கு நிவாரணம். இந்த செய்தியை உலகிற்கு தெரியப்படுத்துவதற்காக ரிஷிஜியின் அனுமதி பெற்று விளம்பரம் செய்கின்றோம்.

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