

Sri Lanka: Malefic influence of Saturn affects ruler and the ruled

Thursday 22 October 2009, by [KARUNARATNE Vickramabahu \("Bahu"\)](#) (Date first published: 20 September 2009).

Astrologers said that as Saturn will be exalted on 9 Sep., rulers will be affected adversely while the proletarians will rejoice. Amazingly this obscurantist prediction was taken seriously by both political and business elites. They were running for safe places as directed by family astrologers. Workers sensed the fright of the bourgeoisie and gave vent to their frustrations and suffering, with demonstrations and strikes. The lethargic trade union leaders were forced to obey the direction of militant workers. Thanks to astrology, the plantation strike which we predicted in this column came out rather prematurely. Half a million, who were mostly Tamil workers, launched an unofficial strike and prevented the transfer of tea and rubber from estates. In addition, there were rumblings at the Electricity Board, while the Lever Brothers strike is still continuing. The Left and democratic forces were planning on a protest demonstration for sometime. Incidentally their action too was launched on 9/9/9. I am sure that, there were no astrological pressures for that decision.

There were more than 200 people representing Left parties, trade unions, social service organisations and professionals. Almost all of them who participated were leading elements. Rev Yohan Devananda, Rev Sakthivel, Rev Sarath Iddamalagoda, Sarath Fernando, Mahinda Devage, Ajith Rupasinghe, Wijendran, Saranapala, Gerard Gamage, Dharmasiri, Jenagan, Thiru, Mahendran, to name a few of them who participated. I also participated on behalf of the Left Front (Nava Sama Samaja party). Faizal and Najubideen of the Muslim Left front, men who led the Muslim protest on September 5th Friday, at Maligawatta, represented their struggle for human rights."

The general opinion expressed at this picketing campaign of the People's Movement for Freedom and Democracy, opposite Fort Railway station was as follows:

"It is a complete violation of human rights to keep the displaced people by force. Many, who are being kept, are capable of finding a place to live. Even those who are without a place to go, should be treated as free citizens and be provided with food and shelter by the state. The excuses given by the government are nonsensical. The Government maybe keeping them to seek international help or to use them for an election fraud. In the long run, there is the agenda of the global capital. That is to rob the IDPs of their natural resources, and then to convert them to regimented cheap labour for global capitalist investments. We demand the release of IDPs immediately!"

The Tamils came under this repression because of their national problem. The solution is to devolve power to the Tamil motherland and allow them the freedom to decide on their future. That is the path for self determination. We expect a solution beyond the 13th amendment on that basis. We demand the 13 plus now!

It is not possible for anybody, to survive in the context of present day wages. The wages of plantation workers, state and state corporations, free trade zones and other workers, are held down by the government. A plantation family could hardly live with a wage of even Rs.500 per day. They should be paid either Rs 500 or in the alternative land should be given to plantation workers. They should be assisted to develop land as small holdings in a new 'green, sharing system'.

The obsolete company system should be done away with. On the other hand, the salaries of state,

corporation and co-op workers should be increased in accordance with the Cost of Living Index. The minimum payment should be Rs 15,000 per month. This should be enforced in the private sector too. The time is opportune for higher wages.

The government resorts to repression using emergency regulations and prevention of terrorism act. The PTA is being used to silence the truth. The media, the intellectuals, artistes, political activists and HR activists are all attacked using these powers. Many are killed and some are in prison. The police, the courts and administration are politicised by abolishing the respective commissions. The opposition also has helped this repression by not opposing the emergency and use of the PTA. The twenty year imprisonment meted out to journalist Tissainayagam is a good example of the prevailing situation! Lift the Emergency and abolish the PTA now!

The government has failed to control inflation. In particular essential goods, medicine and infant food are expensive. Such items are almost inaccessible to the poor. The ministers say that they cannot control the free market. Thereby, they have put the masses at the mercy of racketeers and speculators. Not even in America, a free reign of this nature is given to mass exploiters. The state must intervene to change this unbearable situation. Bring down the prices now!"

P.S.

* lakbimanews column 20 sep 2009.