

Sri Lanka: “We must defeat Mahinda’s fascist politics”

Thursday 27 August 2015, by [KARUNARATNE Vickramabahu \(“Bahu”\)](#), [PERERA Yoshitha](#) (Date first published: 12 August 2015).

Interview with New Left Front (NLF) leader Vikramabahu Karunaratne

Q: You openly supported President Maithripala Sirisena’s “Yahapalana” plan during the last Presidential election. So why are you hoping to contest independently at the general elections?

Actually all parties which were together during that period against former President Mahinda Rajapaksa and now they were separated out in many ways. Essentially even I am still providing my support to Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe with my agreement for “Vipaksha Virodaya” (Against Oppositional Parties). That agreement we had started long time back and I am still with that concord. Even in the last ten years we have been working together but when elections came we have separately represented ourselves. I am still with Ranil Wickremesinghe on democratic issues and as for an example against dictatorship, against racism, against the repression of homosexuals, against repression of other religions and for rationalist programmes, we are backing him. So even in the elections I work together with him in that sense. Getting elected is not a problem but we have to have a common campaign and that campaign is obtainable.

Q: What is the most crucial issue for you and your party that needs immediate attention?

The crucial issue is the Fascist movement of Mahinda Rajapaksa. He represents a very repressive movement. Mahinda Rajapaksa was corrupt so in that sense he is Fascist and it goes beyond the country’s rule of law. He makes use of ethnic campaigns to oppress others. We have to defeat that and that is the first democratic task before us. We are asking people to vote against the Mahinda faction. Even within the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) there was only a fraction that supported him and even the leader of the party opposed Mahinda. But they conspired by all their means and captured a section and we are trying to defeat them, which is our first task, even in this election. And at the same time we are trying to change the country into a hyper democracy further and we believe Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe’s democracy plan is liberal and is guided by parliamentary democracy and also the Commonwealth criteria. But we want to go beyond that because we feel that Mahinda Rajapaksa’s fascist faction is in the streets, and is going on in the mass movement. So we have to face it. I would like to give a piece of advice to Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe that we must defeat these conspiracies and must show them that we are not sacred.

Q: What is your view about the two main political parties alternatively ruling the country?

The development of the parties has created different factions. If we take the United National Party (UNP) of the early period, during D.S.Senanayake, it was a very conservative party but during Ranil Wickremesinghe’s period it has changed over to a radical party and only a radical party can go and have a peace agreement with LTTE Leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and he signed a peace agreement

with him. That was impossible to believe in the UNP even in those days. So therefore parties have changed. SLFP also have changed.

Q: Over history it has been proved beyond doubt that the majority of voters cast their votes to the two main parties. In this backdrop do you think it is practical for smaller parties to contest?

My purpose is that I have the right to talk and I can meet the general public. If I did not contest I do not have that right. So I am contributing that and it is a massive operation. I am going to see various places, and I am writing articles, I am giving interviews and it is an achievement. Then secondly I might be able to say things which are not said by the main parties. For example even in the UNP some of the criticism that I am making may not be there. And also I might get some votes and that will be crucial. In the sense that I could show the others "Look here, we have some votes and so that means some people are listening to us." That could pressurize them and have a mass agitation on the basis of them.

Q: You have been strong on behalf of the minority rights. At this moment there is a debate over the demand by certain Tamil parties for a federal solution for the ethnic issue. What is your view?

The name federal is not important. What is important is how much power they demand. Currently they demand land powers, police powers etc. I should take India as an example; it is not a country that is a federal republic but the States has a set of powers. It is a separate country but it is a Unitary State. Therefore captivating about federalism is not useful but what is useful is to itemise, what powers we need and do by experiments. How to get our culture, language and our identity reserved and improved and it can be discussed. Taking it as a word which has been debated in the country; "Power sharing", I used the word power sharing and let us talk about the power sharing. We should refer and have an accurate idea of how much we should share and how much power we should possess as a country.

Vickremabahu Karunaratne & Yoshitha Perera

P.S.

*<http://www.dailymirror.lk/83313/we-must-defeat-mahinda-s-fascist-politics>