

Sri Lanka: Nagamuwa says only the Left can save country

Sunday 14 December 2014, by [ARIYAWANSHA Niranjala](#)

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Presidential candidate Duminda Nagamuwa said he decided to contest the Presidential Election to expose the aggressive politics of the government and the Opposition's intention to plunder from the people. "The slogans of the government and the Opposition do not represent the people's problems. We must build an opinion regarding finding solutions for people's real problems. We must build a left force for that. That means uniting the scattered society by aiming at an objective. That is the reason for contesting this Presidential Election," Nagamuwa told *Ceylon Today*.

He questioned balance sheet of the outcomes of bringing the UNP and SLFP to power, from time to time. He pointed out that they have selected a difficult path for long-term benefit of the people as the collective of the common left comprised the Nava Sama Samaja Party, Frontline Socialist Party, Sri Lanka Socialist Party, Praxis Collective and Lanka Democratic Party.

"This is a decisive moment in Sri Lankan politics. We clearly say that President Mahinda Rajapaksa must definitely be defeated at this Presidential Election. But we must not let another capitalist to rule," said Nagamuwa, demanding that the people vote for the left's common candidate, to free the Sri Lankan society from the severe crisis it is facing.

Nagamuwa's opinion regarding contesting separately without joining the common Opposition candidate, Maithripala Sirisena at this Presidential Election appears quite similar to the idea of the JVP. Analyzing the point, the left common candidate's view differs from JVP, Nagamuwa said: "The JVP does not exactly say for whom we must vote at this Presidential Election. But actually, they indirectly urge people to vote for Maithripala Sirisena. But the JVP said earlier that both parties are alike. They say it no more. They vehemently criticize only the government. We point out that both the government and the Opposition represent the capitalist class and they will not bring good to the people. That is why we demand people to vote for the common left candidate."

Duminda Nagamuwa is a member of the Frontline Socialist Party (FSP). Some accused the FSP of being in a secret deal with the government to seek permission to bring its leader Kumar Gunarathnam to Sri Lanka from Australia.

Some others allege that the government is trying to manipulate the JVP's enemy, FSP, to attack the JVP. They say that fielding a common candidate from the left is a move manipulated by the government against the common candidate.

Most suppressed force

Rejecting such allegations, Duminda Nagamuwa said, "This is the argument against setting forth an idea against the government. This logic destroys the approach to socialize an alternate idea. These baseless allegations benefit the government in one way. The government began to suppress us when we were trying to emerge as a new movement, splitting from the JVP. Since then, we are the most suppressed force and not of the likes of Ranil Wickremesinghe. We have no deal with the government. The government knows too well that FSP represents the unity among races. They suppressed us because of this and what kind of deal can we have with such a government?"

FSP was the main target of the government's allegations of our having links with the LTTE remnants and the Tamil Diaspora. "All the groups that socialized a strong opinion against the government were branded as having LTTE or Tamil Diaspora links. They tried to divert the ideas against the government through those acts."

However, Nagamuwa added that the government is now forced to maintain relative democracy and the FSP would use that space to bring its leader to Sri Lanka.

"We have not given up the attempts to bring Comrade Kumar to Sri Lanka but it is not through deals with the government," he said. He also said that the FSP was not panicking over the claims by various sections that they were the real left of the country.

No hurry

"We are not in a hurry to get the deed for the ownership of the left. The history of our actions may prove who the real left is. Therefore, we think that the campaigns of any of the scattered left groups will gather momentum. We argue that we are the real left but we do not suppress the others' rights by saying so. The left is weak and it is open at the moment. We have to experiment in our practice. Therefore, we tell the people that we have set forth a left programme and action which must be taken by a left party. We have set forth an alternate programme to prevent society polarizing between the traditional capitalist ideologies of the two major parties. We urge them to trust us. People have lost trust in the left. The major need is to rebuild that trust."

Nagamuwa further said that the present political developments reflect the nature of the capitalist parties. "Look at the speed of changing sides. After changing sides they say something. They say they had no conscience then but they have it now. They say that they now think of the country. They jump from here to there and say something. They are playing a deadly game with the people. They are not afraid of the people. We must understand the bitter reality behind these statements. We urge people to understand this. The political cultures of both parties are alike. They act like this for money and not for people. We have to think of this and join with the left for a long march for change."

Building trust

He also said that only a Sinhalese representative of the downtrodden class can struggle against the oppression of the Tamil and Muslim people. He pointed out that the left common candidate is trying to build up trust among the Tamil and Muslim people that Sinhala oppressed class is appearing more for their rights than UN, Tamil Diaspora or Tamil and Muslim political parties.

He pointed out that the vision of the left common candidate is ending the politics of changing faces, and that always the slogan against a corrupt dictatorship was to join with the common opposition of the time. "JR's just society ended with killing of 60,000 young men and women. The time of President Premadasa, who identified himself as the associate of the poor man, was full of killings. Chandrika came to end the 17-year curse but what happened at the election of the North-western Provincial Council. Mahinda went to Geneva to lobby for human rights in Sri Lanka but we have to fight to defeat his dictatorship now. We must change this system. Same thing will happen under this system."

He argued that the country would not win democracy until the economic model is changed according to left principles. He said that the government had to resort to massive suppression to safeguard this economic system. Nagamuwa said that the introduction of the Executive Presidency was not JR's fancy. He argued that the planned Seeds Act and the water privatization could not be done with the consent of the people.

He says that the plans are underway for private universities and selling one-third of the land of the Northern Province to the multinationals. "None of these can be done with the consent of the people. The North is held under military rule. Journalists are attacked and not allowed to report. These cannot be done with democracy. Suppression is essential," he said demanding the people to be more thoughtful.

"Some say that people do not speak against the injustices spread throughout the country. We question them why they do not speak. People always tend to push the problem to others. The error of the left parties is taking the contract of resolving the problem. We are not here to undertake contracts. There are no super heroes in the left parties. They cannot perform miracles. We are ordinary people. We can give a message to the people. We can build up a political opinion and an argument. We are committed to it professionally. People must be political and organized and they must come to the battle field to change the system."

Eventually, Duminda Nagamuwa demanded the people to invest the courage gathered to oust this government to build up a just society.

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P.S.

*<http://ceylontoday.lk/90-79924-news-detail-nagamuwa-says-only-the-left-can-save-country.html>