

Sri Lanka: Independence is a woman with scars

Tuesday 13 February 2024, by [PEIRIS Binu](#) (Date first published: 5 February 2024).

A poem for Sri Lanka's Independence Day

The Lankan flag sways high and mighty on Galle Face Green,
The Lion roars with pride, bowing before Samarakoon's words,
A twenty-year-old is asked by her father,
'How do you feel on Independence Day?',
She feels a numbness in her throat,
She struggles to think,
Yet unbidden, understands.

The red carpets below,
The rotorcrafts above,
The sky troopers parachuting,
The road closures and rehearsals,
The pretentious broadcasting,
That is what Independence Day is.

Follow politics they say,
Democratic in theory,
Dictatorial in practice,
What is it, I wonder?
Is it a game?

Independence is a woman with scars,
A woman who lives,
Yet with no drive for life,
A woman who yearns for presence,
Unknown, but for her scars.

The words of a twenty-year-old,
It is me,
I stand on Lankan ground.
A ground where people prefer stability away from the motherland,
A ground where dreams are shattered,
A ground where freedom is unreal,
This is Independence Day.

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