

## **Support Siritunga's Candidature Against the Capitalist Butchers!**

The presidential election of 2010 has come at one of the most decisive moments in the past 62 years of post-independence Sri Lanka. At this particular moment, the unity of the country, freedom and democratic rights of the people, the future of the young generation, and so on are at stake.

There is no choice for the common people between the two main bourgeois candidates. Instead of having stable or specific policies on various issues, they opportunistically latch on to any given matter at hand. They do not care about the Tamil people in the North, Muslims in the East or the plantation workers in the hill country. Instead, they are competing with each other to win over the Sinhalese in the south at any cost.

Government leaders are boasting about the military victory over the Tamil Tigers and claim that there is no need to worry anymore about dangers such as bombs. However, the frightening situation which has arisen due to state terrorism continues to be unabated. The Mahinda Rajapakse regime, which engaged in murdering and intimidating journalists, lawyers, artists, trade union activists, human rights activists and opposition political figures over the last four years, is trying to win this election by hook or by crook. The clear reason is that, if they are defeated in this election, it will not be possible for any of the Rajapakse clans to stay in the country any longer.

The Rajapakse administration has failed and neglected to put forward even a nominal solution to the national question of the Tamil-speaking people through so-called "all party representative committee". Once the war was over, the government leader claimed that they would put forward a political solution to the ethnic issue, which has now been established as a farce. It is very clear that the two main capitalist parties in the south are incapable of solving the national question in Sri Lanka.

A large number of people in the North are imprisoned in so-called relief villages. Their future is uncertain. Only the socialists are committed in solving the national question on the basis of accepting the Tamil people's right to self-determination. The United Socialist Party (USP) is in the forefront of the struggle against all sorts of chauvinism and capitalism. USP fights for the building of a society where Tamils and Muslims can live with the majority as equal citizens with their freedom and national liberation guaranteed.

On the other hand General Sarath Fonseka has become a pawn in the hands of warmonger chauvinists and neo-liberal capitalists. His military prestige is no matter for the ordinary public. He was part of the crimes perpetrated by the Rajapakse government during the last four years. His break with the Mahinda-Gotabhaya duo is not on any policy difference. He himself displayed the same arrogant style that is intrinsic to these two Rajapakses. Voting Fonseka to get rid of Rajapakse, or vice versa, would be equally disastrous.

### **For class unity and socialism**

Therefore, it is the need of the hour to create a social order which stands in opposition to the blood-drenched neo-liberal capitalist economic policies which both the UNP and SLFP coalition governments carried out since 1977. This will be based on the abolition of the repressive anti-terrorism laws and emergency rule to create an environment in the country in which workers, peasants, students, and our children in the north as well as the south can live without fear.

The most urgent tasks today are solving the national question through a political solution which ensures the basic rights of the Tamil-speaking people in the North, East, and hill country, building a society devoid of exploitation, ensuring the equal distribution of national resources and wealth, and eliminating corruption which has spread like a cancer. This can only be done by creating a political order where politicians are held accountable directly and constantly (even in-between two elections) to the people. The USP is committed to fight for these tasks to be fulfilled as the initial steps in a transitional program towards building a socialist society.

Siritunga Jayasuriya, the USP's presidential candidate, was the chairperson of the Civil Monitoring Commission (CMC) which spearheaded the struggle to eradicate the State Terror situation in the last four

years where mainly Tamil people have been abducted, murdered, or made to disappear. Millions of rupees were extorted as ransoms from Tamil people in the North and East. Siri is the only political leader who intervened in the Supreme Court against the case filed by the JVP with the tacit approval of the Rajapakse administration for the de-merger of the North and East.

Siri has dedicated his whole life to the struggles of the oppressed poor people for their due rights. He came third in the last presidential election held in 2005 because of his militant working class politics. Hailing from a left-wing working class family in Thimbirigasyaya, Colombo, he stands in this presidential election to fight for the same objectives.

Siri was the leader in the forefront, together with other left and democratic forces, in the struggles against the state terror and repression launched through the suppression of the trade union actions and the assaulting and killing of journalists and media workers. The strenuous efforts made by the USP to build a genuine unity elections among the left forces and groups based on a left perspective and program for real working class unity not restricted to only contesting elections, and not opportunistic fell through. In that backdrop there was no other option for Siri but to stand in this election. He is the only candidate in this election who can address working class and poor farmers, on an equal footing, whether they are Sinhala, Tamil or Muslim voters.

We seek your support for the campaign of Siri who is the socialist left candidate in this election standing on these main objectives, i.e. solving the national question on the basis of freedom, democracy and power - sharing, good government, and the fight for a just society. If you broadly agree on these lines please let us know how you can contribute to this noble struggle in which we have been engaged.

Srinath Perera

On behalf of the election campaign committee

Please see the United Socialist Party website: <http://www.lankasocialist.com> and that of our International sisters and brothers, the CWI: <http://socialistworld.net>