

## The Influence of The Constitution of The Second Republic Towards The Political Parties In Sri Lanka

W. M.Sarasi Chaya Bandara,

Temporary Lecturer, Department of Political Science, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.

Corresponding Author: W. M.Sarasi Chaya Bandara

---

**Abstract:** Today, a dialogue has come up more than the earlier time on the social stability, economic situation endurance of culture and the religion of the country, depending on the political relationship. That condition should prevail on political, social and economic situation of any country and today the ordinary people have commenced to speak with an emphasis the ballot, party, constitution etc. and those have become social topics for discussion. From this research it is studied the influence caused political parties in Sri Lanka by the second republican constitution of the Republic. The principle aim is to study the Sri Lankan constitution and to study the main force of differences in the political parties in political fields. I have read the books, written in this field, including daily papers and followed different debates, interviews between politician and political erudite and have used the findings as secondary sources to prepare the base of this study with regard to the election ; violence, recorded by the Paffrel organization and the data issued to the internet were used. The multiple parties were formed, to have parties to safeguard Buddhism, language and fundamental rights, as shown in the 1978 constitution and it was clear that these three had equal influence. Introduction of the constitution in 1978, of several small parties emerged with the introduction of equal representation and with the beginning of coalition states and it was evident to have unstable national political situation in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** Political Parties, Constitution, Multi- Party, Election, Sri Lanka

---

Date of Submission: 26-02-2018

Date of acceptance: 12-03-2018

---

### I. INTRODUCTION

In 4<sup>th</sup> of February 1948 Sri Lanka gamed independence and received a dominion states. Under the Soulbury government the independence was bestowed by the same government, removing all the condition which checked the full independence; from that time until 1972, the influence of the British was removed after adopting the constitution and instead of the governor the president was appointed by the Prime Minister. The influence of the Queen on judiciary to was removed and the full independence was gamed under the constitution of the republic. From that time until several important incidences on politics took place. Some are as follows;

- Change of political areas again and in 1977 election there were 160 seats and 168 members.
- Central Colombo, Beruwala, Harispattuwa, Pothuwil, Nuwaraeliyamakeing and Baticalo were considered as multi- member seats.( Seat as per Claus were stopped)
- Increase the power and value of cabinet.

1978 was considered as an important junction in the history of Sri Lanka; that was the second constitution of the republic. This changing point which influenced in the political field and in what was based on that; such probing are investigated in this study. In any country the existence of political parties are decided on the social, economic political systems prevailed there. There are situations to form political parties on the visions of social and economic aspect held by the society and winning over them. However it is seen from the working of the political parties that there is a more forward the depending their influences of different faction. The political parties are considered on a very essential part to the working of the parliamentary democracy.

Sir Ivor Jenings say;

1. How does the different representation, executive, constitutions and judiciary powers get formed in to a body?
2. How does the assigned powers used by them?
3. How do the powers used practically by them?

The above explanation will indicate how the constitution will affect the political parties direct, since a political party is a an organization to grasp political power and both will have a close connection with each other.

### **1.1 Conflict in the Study**

What is the influence of 1978, second constitution of the republic to words political parties in Sri Lanka? This is a problem.

### **1.2 Aims of the study**

Principle aim of this is to study the differences causes in the political party system which in a power in the political field cropped up from the second constitution in Sri Lanka.

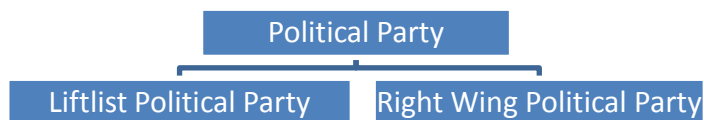
- Also to identify the classification of the political parties and the party system and the working of the modern political parties.
- To make an in depth study on the fore chapters chosen from the 1978 constitution.
- To identify the difference of the present political situation and the political situation which existed as a requirement at that time.

## **II. THE NATURE OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES IN SRI LANKA**

Some critics bear that the party system in Sri Lanka is shown as a multi-party concept. For example, the parties registered for parliament election in 1947 was 9, in 1956 it was 13 in 1994 it became 33 and in 2000 it was increased to 41. Due to this increased from day by day and this was shown as a multi-party system; though there are number of parties increased, the support from the people have not distributed accordingly; instead support of the people have released around the main two parties; viz United National party and the United Peoples Freedom alliance with the leadership of Sri Lanka freedom party. Accordingly the small parties to have rallied around the main two parties. This shows that there is no multi-party system but only a two party system.

However many parties exist in Sri Lanka, but these parties are confined only to the name boards, with a limited membership. Only UNP and S.L.F.P are active at national level and from 1947 the leadership of power of the government was gained day these two parties from time to time, up to now. At present the People Liberation Front has become the third power.

When pursuing the political parties of Sri Lanka, they have separated structurally in to two sections. There are;



The people who believe in liberation though the philosophies of Marks, Lening are in the Leftist wing. However these difference sectors do not possess a common agreement with regard to their workings and their activities and these parties are Lanka SamaSamaga Party, Sri Lanka communist party, Nava Lanka SamaSamaga party, Peoples Liberation Front, Revolution Communist Party MahajanaPeramuna and soon. The right wing political parties are sectors, who consider the individual freedom of people, who work for the benefit of the people, and who believe in the betterment of the state. Such parties are UNP, S.L.F.P., Liberal Party, Democratic United Front; in addition to these there are many parties a prevailing in the society.

According to above it is difficultly to ascertain whether the party system in Sri Lanka is a multi-party system or a two party system, since, even though there exist a multi-party system only main two political parties could obtain power, and even these two parties should get the support of the other small parties to maintains their power.

## **III. THE DIFFERENCES CAUSED TO THE PARTY SYSTEM IN SRI LANKA FROM THE INFLUENCE OF THE SECOND CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC**

The 2nd, 3rd and the 4th chapters in the second constitution of the republic are on Buddhism, fundamental rights and the language. I am going to discuss the influence shown in these there chapter taken together, since thing are connected are affects the political parties.

### **3.1 Birth of parties confined only to the nation**

As per the 10<sup>th</sup> clause of Fundamental Rights Act in the 1978 Constitution, every citizen has the right to think, freedom of conscience and the freedom of professing his own religion; also under the (w) (wd)(we) and (wE) in the 3rd chapter every citizen has the right to speak, publish, to show his ideas, to assemble. The indirect influence of two chapters on Buddhism and Language affected the political parties in Sri Lanka in different ways. One is the parties formed mainly to limit the nationalism.

### **3.1.1 National Sinhala Heritage**

It shows that the nationalism was increased due to the Sinhala Language became the state language as per the 18 (1) clause in the dominant 4<sup>th</sup> chapter in the 1978 constitution and Buddhism being the religion as per the 9<sup>th</sup> clause in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter. This was prevalent in the party system in Sri Lanka from 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It can be shown that the National Sinhala Heritage came up as a party with the assent of the Buddhist clergy, which is now an important and an active political party which in now taking a leading role in the political area, prone for various discussion.

### **3.1.2 The political parties friendly with the LTTE**

It can be shown that due to the Sinhala Methodism came up as a result of the Buddhism and the Sinhala Language being given the prime position, the parties attached to LTTE come up. Tamil conflict which was against nationalism became quite adverse. These parties become active in North and East.

For Example: -Illangani Tamil Arasukachchi, Tamil United Liberation Front.

What has to be considered here is that terrorist organizations, come forward to the political arena after as political parties. The terrorist groups in the North, viz (T.E.L.O) Tamil Elam Liberation Organization, (E.P.D.P.), Elam Public Democratic Party, (LTTE), Tamil Elam Tiger Entity, (P.L.O.T.E), Peoples Liberation Tamil Eelam etc. were registered as political parties who were one time terrorists, demonstrated parties.

### **3.1.3 Sri Lanka Muslim Peoples' representation**

Severed parties came up to represent Muslim people and out of there Sri Lanka Muslim Congress came up first and the creator was Mr. A.H.M.Ashrof who was followed by Mr. Rauf Hakeem. In addition, Mrs. FeryalAshrof came to the political area taking the leadership of National United Front which was commenced by her husband.

### **3.1.4 Establishment of Bikkhu Political Party**

Establishment of Buddhist clergy political involvement was there from a very old time but the development has taken place only from a recent time. Foundation for this done in the 1978 constitution in chapter for Buddhism, state language and fundamental rights. On that basic bikkhus became members of that political party directly. In that manner, getup involved in popular politics, using the franchise to own hands, as politicians who do not adhere to the political activities, those who become very active at instances where the nation and religion face a scandal and goes back to the religion behavior, he who respect the decision of the political parties and make societies for bikkhus and spread such decision as the Doctrine are found in the politics. Venerable VelletotaPannadassiThero was the first elected Buddhist priest as a representative of people. We can show, another approach where, a group who are not supposed to come as a social group getting involved in the active polics, after the second constitution of 1978.

## **IV. THE INFLUENCE CAUSED BY THE (VII) AND (XIV) CHAPTERS OF 1978 CONSTITUTION, TO THE POLITICAL PARTIES OF SRI LANKA**

In the 1978 2<sup>nd</sup> constitution and its 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, two chapters are for the executive president of the Republic and his powers casting of votes and for the election. I hope to study here, how the above two chapters influence the political system in Sri Lanka. Also it will be studied here, pardoning of convicts, removing or lessening the penalties, granting judicial power, waging war or to main Tamil Pease etc., are some of the unlimited powers vested on executive president which affects the party system in Sri Lanka and also the influence caused by executive presidency and the political system toward party system in the country.

### **4.1. Improving further, the multi-party system**

There were many tendencies caused in political parties with the introduction of proportional representation shown in the 1978 constitution, resulting the political party system in Sri Lanka becoming multi-party system. In the year 2004, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party and the People's United Front with several parties joined together faced the presidency election, won the election gave executive power and formed leading party in the country. During this period (if after 1978) the political parties cause to existence on the basis of proportional representation and ever the conflicts occurred in the main parties resulted to emerge number of small political parties, Examples are Sri Lanka Pragathisheeli Front, Multi Public Freedom Front, Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, Democratic United National Front and National freedom Front. The other important aspect in when multi parties emerge, a coalition government too will come to existence; this means any major political party or any other party can not form a government alone. When there is no majorities form a government then the assistance of small parties are sought and a coalition government will be formed.

When we study further the UNP Government which came to existence from 1977 to 1994, is by joining Lanka Labour Congress Party of Thondaman. Also, from 1994 to 2002, the government had representation of

SLFP, Lanka SamaSamagaParty, Lanka Muslim Congress, Lanka Labour Congress, Independent Labour Congress of Chandrasekaram and Eelam Democratic Party. Also the UNP Government in 2002-2004 was a coalition government the United Peoples Independent alliance government which is ruling from 2004 to date also a coalition of nine parties.

#### **4.2. Small parties becoming a powerful group who could influence the national politics**

With the development of multi seat system, the small parties were formed to a position who could influence the national politics, in the political system in Sri Lanka. Their power is shown clearly and there are times such power is being misused for their benefit in many times. During a budget vote, and in a decisive moment the small parties do not hesitate to show their might and necessity. This was clearly demonstrated from small parties as an example in 2007 budget vote; since this was a coalition government, and could be defeated by not casting their vote. Similarly there was a fear during the 2007 budget vote that the JVP will not cast the vote for the government; also there was such a fear with regard to the Lanka Labour Congress.

It was from the 1978 constitution which changed the proportional voting system, that the small political parties could influence the national politics and placing them in to a difficult position. Another political characteristic is that the small political parties as well as the small ethnic problems are entwined with the major political parties and it is for the benefit of getting their work done easily as they cannot work directly within the national politics like the major parties; therefore they get rallied around the main parties to get their principles carried out. Even the main parties require the assistance of the small parties, hence the need of the small parties are full filled. The parties like Lanka Labour Congress and Muslim Congress, assemble with the parties of national level, totally for their benefit and they are able to full fill their principles by influencing such major parties.

Some of the small political parties in Sri Lanka are; National Sinhala Heritage, Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, Tamil National Alliance, Eelam Peoples Democratic Party, Akilallankai Tamil United Front, All Ceylon Muslim Congress, Multi Peoples Independent Front, Lanka Democratic United Front, Democratic Peoples Liberation Front, Eelam Democratic Front, United Lanka Peoples Party, National Development Front, Leftist Front, Sri Lanka Liberation Party, Muslim Liberation Front, Muslim National Alliance, National Congress, National People's Front, National United Alliance, New Sinhala Heritage, New Leftist Heritage ( 4 parties included) all citizen are all kings organization, PadmanabhaEalam Revolutionary working clan Party, Sri Lanka National Front, Ruhunu Peoples Party, Socialist alliance, Social Socialist Party , Sri Lanka National Front, Tamil Democratic National Alliance, Tamil makkalVidhuthalaiPulikal, EalavaranDemocratic Front, United National Alliance, United Socialist party, Patriotic National Front, Sri Lanka Progresses Front, United National Alliance Front.

#### **4.3. Decline of the importance of independent candidates**

This was caused with the introduction of the proportional representative system. In the regional representative system, the person was more important than the party and many popular people in many areas could win over the election as an independent candidates, but this was changed in the proportional representation system where the importance of the individual was coupled with the leaders authority. Under this system the members could be removed without considering their independence from the parliament with the consent of the party.

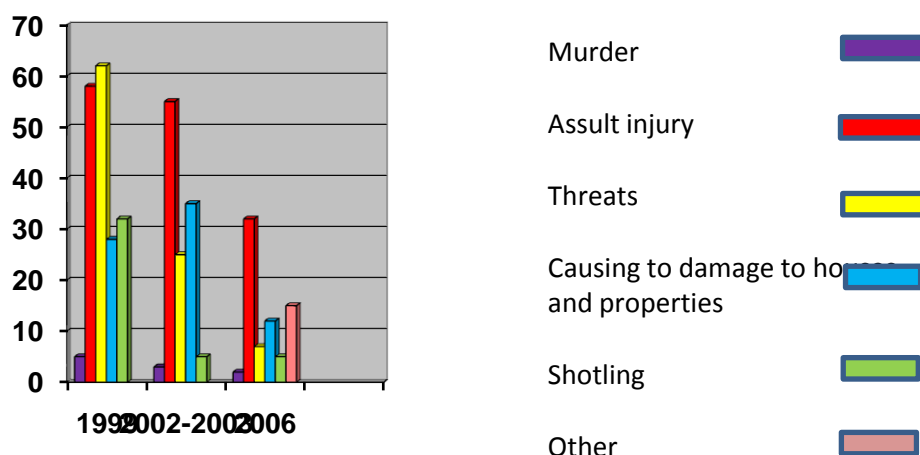
#### **4.4. Political parties becoming fierce**

It has become very common to hear about political violence and election violence in Sri Lanka today. From the day the election is proclaimed, media used to bring out election violence day after day and such violence has goes to the root of the politics. In the present day, the number of active political parties have increased in Sri Lanka, resulting the increase of the member of parties coming forward for election. Due to the competition to obtain power within the political parties, it could be seen the development of political party violence. It can be shown that, the political violence and election violence is caused specially due to the proportioned.

System coupled with the preferential voting system. It is evidently seen that not only the candidate of different parties but also candidate of the same party used to collide and fight for power through this preferential system. When probed in to the political history it was revealed that various parties have indicated that this had been the direct influence of the second constitution of the republic after 1977. In a political frame work its publication media or as controlling media received a higher value. However it had a problem to find whether the controlling power is safe destroy of election forms to drive away of voters casting legal votes have seen that such influences towards vote have existed in recent times, in a large scale. The 1999 regional council election in the Northwest is a good example to exhibit election violence. There 50 000 election leaflets were made dormant in 200 voting centre.

What is clearly evident here is, all this is due to immense power collected from the proportional representation system in the executive presidency system. The member of the same party who complete for election other are causing violence to each other has influenced in this condition. This has increased due to the introduction of the proportional representation, for not allowing a personal to contest as a free representative to enter the political area, and the appointing candidates through the party to obtain preference was the root cause of it.

Report of the violence caused before the election.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup><http://www.paffrel.lk>

Above is the note prepared by Paffrel organization a prior election violence in the three year period. We can be see that the incidents are getting reduced year after year from the data of 1999 to 2006.

#### 4.5 Peoples Liberation Front coming forward as a third power

We can show the composition of the People Liberation Front as a special character. This revolutionary political party. People Liberation Front who has followed the social, political theory and has established against right wing capitalism old left wing and the Indian generalization. This party was formed during the 1960 decade early days, secretly and became very violent way. This party approached in a revolutionary way in 1989 and was banned. In 1994 leaving the belligerent way, it look a democratic political way and became the third power within political parties in Sri Lanka. It is famous for welfare activities, won the Tissamaharama Pradeeshiya Sabha and that Pradeeshiyasabha was name the best Pradeeshiya Sabha. The People Liberation Front who followed revaluating road have become a party very close to democracy.

#### 4.6 Political parties and poster culture

This poster culture is what we have actually received with election system, election culture here through political parties from the second constitution of the republic in 1978. We can see many colourful posters during the election period, to get many preferential votes and to gain popularity and its usage is very high. Every political party is using the poster politics, and make every Endeavour to fix posters of very high value and quality and spending a tidy sum of money. Other feature here is the conflicting using found when fixing posters, where the supporters of different parties as well as of same party is involved in the struggle. It is seen that there are many rules imposed clearly on poster exhibition from 1988 No 2, Regional Council Act and in Clause 74 and rigid limitation were imposed in this connection. From this act an immense environmental pollution is caused but every political party is using this media to the let most; this is purely due to the preferential voting system.

The following graph indicate the data on registered voters votes cast from the year 1947 to 1989

| Year       | Registered Votes | Votes cast |
|------------|------------------|------------|
| 1960 March | 3724507          | 2889282    |
| 1960 July  | 3724507          | 2827075    |
| 1965       | 4710887          | 3821918    |
| 1970       | 5505028          | 4672656    |
| 1989       | 9374164          | 5962031    |

## V. CONCLUSION

There are different opinions are seen with regard to the political parties in Sri Lanka, Some think that there is only a dual party system here. There are many political parties been active to think that it is a multi party system that prevail in Sri Lanka. However during the study it is noted that what is existing is a powerful dual party system.

We can arrive at several principle conclusion when we discuss on the influence of 1978 constitution on political parties. At the inception it exhibits the influence of the 1978 constitution towards Buddhism, Language and the Fundamental Rights which was limited to the nationality and this could have caused to emerge multi party system in Sri Lanka. It is seen that the introduction of executive presidency and proportional representative system in 1978 caused an immense social revolution here, resulting to emerge, ethnic parties, national parties and young radical parties to the National party system in Sri Lanka. The introduction of ethnic parties was due to the ethnic conflicts, this is evidently seen from the introduction of parties attached to LTTE after the religion and language issues came up with the constitution.

It was noted that parties came up rallied round the main two parties resulting to form a dual governments and due this system will be conducive to the government in the long run. However the result expected from a government with proportional representation has become negative causing to have a weak state.

- From this study, it is found that people are loosing interest on politics, through the behavior within the political parties; mainly due to political violence and political violence.
- In the proportional representation system the relationship of the voter and the candidate is getting wider
- The displeasure caused due to the supported candidate, after becoming a member and young another different party at the parliament.

## REFERENCES

- [1]. De Silva C.R., **Political Party System Of Sri Lanka**, Sri Lanka Foundation Institute, Colombo 07,2987.
- [2]. Dissanayaka T.D.S.A., **The Politics Of Sri Lanka**,(Volume Iv) Swastika Private Limited.2001.
- [3]. Goonasekara R.K.W., **Changes In Constitutional Government In Sri Lanka**, Sri Lanka Institute Of Social Economic Studies, Colombo.1998.
- [4]. JayasooriyaLaksiri, **The Changing Face Electoral Politics In Sri Lanka** (1994 – 2004), Sarasavi Publishers, Nugegoda,2005.
- [5]. Silva K.M.De, **The Electoral System** (1947 – 1978), Department Of Information Government Of Sri Lanka, Colombo, 1981.
- [6]. WarnapalaWiswa, **The Sri Lanka Political Science**, Nirmal Single For Mar Rang, New Dilhi,1993.

### Web Sites:-

- [7]. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_political\\_parties\\_in\\_Sri\\_Lanka](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_political_parties_in_Sri_Lanka)
- [8]. [www.parliament.lk/members-of-parliament/political-parties](http://www.parliament.lk/members-of-parliament/political-parties)
- [9]. <http://www.jpp.co.jp/lanka/gov/govr/govre/gov03e.htm>
- [10]. <http://www.jvpsrilanka.com/english/about-us/brief-history/>
- [11]. [www.parliament.lk/files/pdf/constitution.pdf](http://www.parliament.lk/files/pdf/constitution.pdf)
- [12]. <https://www.parliament.lk/constitution/1978-constitution>
- [13]. <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/sr1132846.pdf>
- [14]. <http://www.manthri.lk/en/parties/jathika-hela-urumaya-jhu--2>
- [15]. <https://www.peaceinsight.org/conflicts/sri-lanka/peacebuilding-organisations/paffrel/>
- [16]. <https://www.newsfirst.lk/tag/paffrel/>
- [17]. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sri\\_Lanka\\_Freedom\\_Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sri_Lanka_Freedom_Party)
- [18]. <http://www.manthri.lk/en/parties/sri-lanka-freedom-party-slf>
- [19]. [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=1978+constitution+of+sri+lanka+in+sinhala](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=1978+constitution+of+sri+lanka+in+sinhala)
- [20]. <http://www.manthri.lk/en/parties/united-national-party-unp--2>
- [21]. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_United\\_National\\_Party\\_MPs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_National_Party_MPs)
- [22]. <http://www.parliament.lk/members-of-parliament/political-parties/view/4>
- [23]. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_People%27s\\_Freedom\\_Alliance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_People%27s_Freedom_Alliance)
- [24]. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Sri\\_Lankan\\_Tamil\\_militant\\_groups](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Sri_Lankan_Tamil_militant_groups)
- [25]. <http://www.nytimes.com/1988/12/26/world/mainstream-tamil-party-returns-in-sri-lanka.html>

W. M.Sarasi Chaya Bandara,," The Influence of The Constitution of The Second Republic Towards The Political Parties In Sri Lanka." IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS). vol. 23 no. 3, 2018, pp. 51-56.