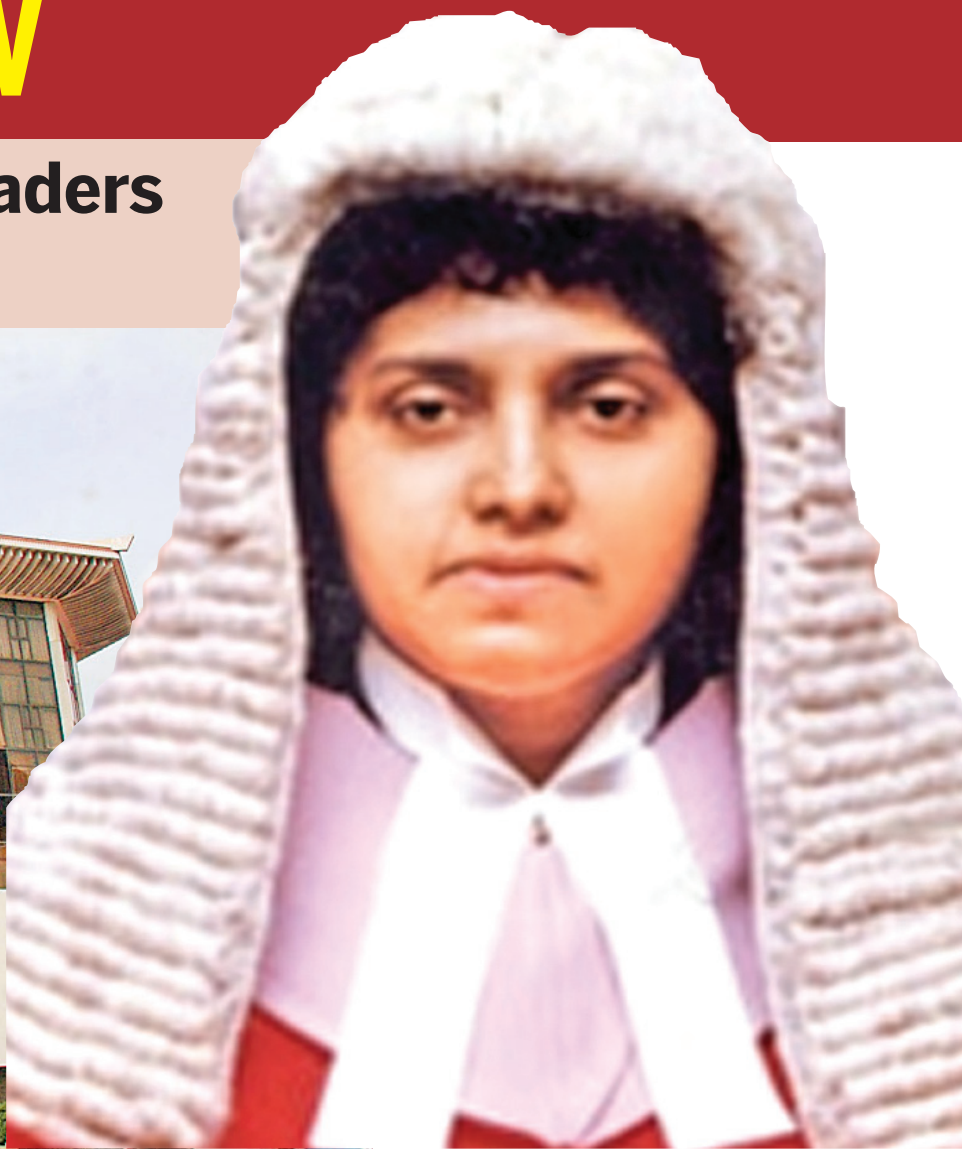


SF ETC., MAKING IMPEACHMENT POLITICAL CATSPA

‘Cat is certainly out of the bag’ - Religious leaders and social elite



CHAMIKARA WEERASINGHE, PRIYANKA KURUGALA

The government yesterday alerted the public to the stratagems of some defeated political parties trying to take advantage of the situation of the impeachment motion against Chief Justice Dr Shirani Bandaranayaka.

Economic Development Deputy Minister Lakshman Yapa Abeywardana said

Fonseka extended a similar invitation to former Chief Justice Sarath N Silva some time back, but fortunately he did not fall into the trap.

He said anybody had the freedom to enter politics in Sri Lanka, but it was the people who would decide their suitability to remain in the field.



The deputy minister said there was a hidden motive in the invitation as it comes in the backdrop of an impeachment motion against the Chief Justice. “Today, everyone wants to enter politics in Sri Lanka. This is a trend. A war specialist cannot do politics. All are not suitable to do politics,” the deputy minister said.

Deputy Minister Duleep Wijesekera

said that nobody can challenge President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Fonseka tried and failed miserably and he now wants the Chief Justice to experience the same fate. This is a laughing matter. The country is behind our President and he has won the hearts of the minds of the people. There is a saying that the man who is about to drown tries to cling onto anything to save himself and Fonseka seems to be doing the same thing.



Jathika Hela Urumaya Propaganda Secretary Nishantha Warnasinghe

said Chief Justice Dr Shirani Bandaranayake's affiliations with anti-government lobbyists and her recent conduct to incite the judiciary against the legislature over her impeachment motion shows that she is not fit to perform the duties of a Chief Justice.

Warnasinghe said, certain things have come to light since her impeachment. One is that she is working according to a political agenda and that she has the backing of some notorious NGOs and several local and international elements, which are working against the present government with vested interests to divide the country. “The other is that she has a personal political agenda,”

Sabaragamuwa University Chancellor Ven Prof Kumburugamuwe Vajira Thera

commenting on Sarath Fonseka's invitation to Chief Justice Dr Shirani Bandaranayake to join politics described it as a conspiracy and a coup.



“We earlier mentioned that, there is a political hand behind all those actions. Coming to the court in procession, dashing coconuts near the side of the court is clear evidence in this regard,” the Thera said.

Interfering with the judicial process is not a good thing. There is not such tradition of tying *Pirith Nool* near the court premises is a very undemocratic action.

“When we see such activities, we can come to the conclusion that the Chief Justice has lost her way. The CJ has been trapped in corrupt politics,” the Thera said. “The CJ should have resigned when the motion

was presented to Parliament, but she is continued to stay in her position. She is staying by force in her position, due to the support of political characters, such as, Sarath Fonseka and Wickramabahu Karunaratne.

Co-operatives and Internal Trade Minister Johnston Fernando

said people should be alerted on the underlying conspiracy to destabilize the country by creating a clash between the judiciary and legislature, which came to light with Sarath Fonseka's invitation to Chief Justice Dr Shirani Bandaranayake to join politics. “Fonseka's invitation to the CJ to take to politics made it clear that the entire drama was an organized international conspiracy against the government and President Mahinda Rajapaksa,” the Minister said.

He expressed his confidence that the government at no cost would distance itself from the people. He said Fonseka's statement proves that the CJ has been working to a political agenda.

He commented that certain international forces wanted to reverse the war victory of the country by creating unwanted problems, adding that Sarath Fonseka, the JVP and UNP have also been supportive of this move.

He noted that a few segments of society too support this conspiracy knowingly or unknowingly. He asked the general public to be on alert as to what is taking place.

He recalled how Fonseka at one time attempted to influence the army against the government to cater to the needs of certain groups among the international community. He said this attempt failed since the overwhelming majority lined up with President Rajapaksa at the previous Presidential Election.



Irrigation and Water Resources Management Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva

said that leaders of some bankrupt political parties have decided that they can rouse themselves from the wilderness by using the impeachment motion.

He said, former Democratic National Alliance leader Sarath Fonseka's invitation to Chief Justice Dr Shirani Bandaranayake was one such attempt despite it being an indication of Fonseka's political bankruptcy.

The impeachment trial against the Chief Justice was carried out with due respect for the Constitution.

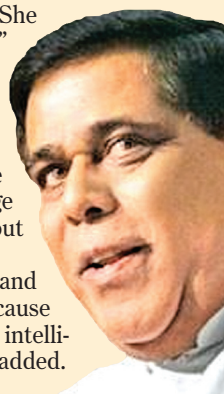
The Parliamentary Select Committee that investigated the charges that have been leveled against her, found her guilty on three counts.

“We investigated five charges. We said she was guilty of two. She was not guilty for the other two. It was a constitutional process,” he said.

“Under the circumstances, it is not so hard to understand the motive of those who invited her to join hands with them,” he explained.

The minister appealed to the public, not to get misled by the actions of political elements that try to make undue advantage over the situation and asked the public to be extra vigilant about the subversives that try to destabilize the country.

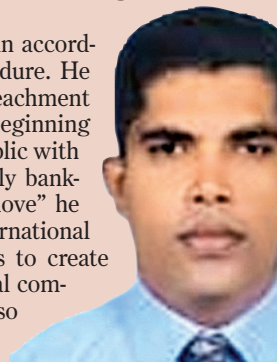
He said, “the public must not forget those remnants of LTTE and their overseas supporters are acting overtime at this juncture to cause major unrest in the country. We believe that the public will act intelligently.” “They are trying to hamper the country's progress,” he added.



UPFA Kurunegala District MP Shantha Bandara

said Sarath Fonseka's invitation to Chief Justice Dr Shirani Bandaranayake to join politics does not come as a surprise as this has been the intention of the drama enacted by the CJ and her supporters once the impeachment motion was brought against her.

He observed the impeachment process was carried out in accordance with the Constitution while following the due procedure. He recalled it was not the first time in history in which an impeachment motion was presented against a CJ. “However, since the beginning of this process, certain groups attempted to mislead the public with false allegations against the government. Certain politically bankrupt parties rejected by the people are also behind this move” he said. He observed this entire drama is linked to an international conspiracy to destabilize the country. “Their intention is to create gloomy opinions about the country among the international community,” he noted. He also recalled how Sarath Fonseka also catered towards these needs during the recent past.



Gampaha District UPFA Member of Parliament Vasantha Senanayake

commenting on Sarath Fonseka's invitation to Chief Justice Shirani Bandaranaike is ridiculous and shows Fonseka's ignorance of the norms of democracy.

Fonseka while being a high ranking officer in the Sri Lanka Army got involved in politics which was bad enough and now he wants the Chief Justice to do the same.

He seems to think that there is nothing wrong to get involved in politics while holding high government office.

