

Breakdown of Sinhala-Tamil Relations and Origin of Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

'Race' and 'Nation' were identified as the basis of human societies a long time ago. But 'Ethnicity' became an important topic of social research in 1950's. However at the early stage America, Canada and Australia used the immigrants' ethnicity as the base for most of the studies on ethnicity. There the attention was for used on how the culture and ethnic identities became important in colonization process in above societies. However, many of the early studies on ethnic related political riots were carried out in relation to colonial countries. It is evident when studying ethnicity that religion, language, Complexion or the entire riots on ethnicity emerged and they affected to the modern states. At present, it can be mentioned that it is not specific to the third world countries.

When referring to the third world countries multi religious and multi cultural community can be seen as a common feature. Hence the social and political conflicts which occurred in those countries have caused negative influence on their economic development. Most probably these countries are the poor countries in the world. These countries have experiences number of social problems due to civil war and the growth of poor population, accelerating of unemployment down fall of living condition are vital among them (Stewart 1988). Large scale social political conflicts block the growth of economy and it also hinders the opportunity to take the maximum benefits from physical and human resources of a country so a big amount of money has to be allocated for these countries to eradicate poverty.

Except few, all other countries in the world are considered as multi ethnic societies. When studying the international political process it is clear that various problems have occurred in these countries due to the ethnicity and inequality of spreading the resources. When one ethnic group is processing the ruling power of a country most probably the needs of the minorities are neglected and the needs of majority are legally established. This condition provides the seed for an ethnic conflict. That is why the National Integration is important for the success of contemporary state concept in the world. It is revealed through a lot of examples that when the majority rules the country, the minority face the exclusion in most of the countries in the world. Sri Lanka is also a fine example for it. The creation of National Integration was challenged by the Sinhala Buddhist monopoly in independent Sri Lanka. And according to the critics the civil war which prevailed in Sri Lanka was a direct result of this situation. The conflict which prevailed in Sri Lanka has influenced every section such as economic, Social and cultural situation of the country. As a result of that a large amount of physical and human resources were destroyed. It affected to the development of the country directly and indirectly to create various social problems.