

Situation Update

Sri Lanka Brief
August 2020



Sri Lanka Brief Update General Election 2020 – Stats and Trends

12 August 2020

1. Elections for Sri Lanka's 9th Parliament were held on 5 August 2020 and first sitting day of the 9th parliament is 20th August 2020. From 22 electoral districts 196 members were elected and 29 members are being appointed from the National list. 7,452 candidates contested from 52 political and independent groups. Only 15 political parties were able to obtain seats in the 9th parliament. A detailed chart of election results is given at the end.

2. Comparison between 2020 and 2015 General Elections.

General Election	2020 Votes polled		2015 Votes polled	
Registered electors	16,263,885		15,044,490	
Total votes polled	12,343,302	75.89%	11,684,098	77.66%
Valid votes	11,598,929	71.32%	11,166,975	73.23%
Rejected votes	744,373	6.03%	517,123	4.43%

3. Although the elections were held under strict COVID 19 health guide lines total votes polled show only a 2% drop from 2015 general election.

4. Rejected votes stand at 6.03%. Since the introduction of preferential voting system under the 1978 constitution, percentage of the rejected (invalid) votes have been around 5%. This number cannot be considered a protest vote in total. In the four preceding general elections held before PR system introduced the rejected votes were around 1%.

5. Rajapaksa's led Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) obtained 145 seats and their allies have obtained 5 seats. Altogether ruling coalition has 151 out of 225 seats, surpassing the 2/3 majority. Samgi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) led by Sajith Premadasa came second with 54 seats.

6. While Rajapaksa's led SLPP received 70540 fewer votes than in the presidential election held in November 2019, main opposition UNP + SJB has lost nearly 2 million votes.

7. Members elected form Southern multi-ethnic districts show that Rajapaksas' led SLPP has won overwhelming percentage of Sinhala votes.

District	SLPP- No of Members Elected			SJB – No of Members Elected		
	Sinhala	Tamil	Muslim	Sinhala	Tamil	Muslim
Colombo	6	0	0	3	1	2
Kandy	8	0	0	1	1	2
Nuwara Eliya	3	2	0	0	3	0
Badulla	6	0	0	1	2	0

<https://www.parliament.lk/9th-parl-mp-gaz>

8. For the first time, alt-Buddhist organisation Bodu Bala Sena led coalition OPPP has entered the parliament with one member elected form the national list.

9. Left coalition National Peoples Power (NPP) led by Peoples Liberation Front (JVP) failed to make any headway, its MPs tally declined to 3 from 6 in 2015.

10. While in the Sinhalese dominated South of Sri Lanka SLPP has consolidated itself as the Sinhala Buddhist Nationalist-Socialist party in the North & East a fragmentation of Tamil nationalist politics has taken place. This development may have far reaching consequences.

11. Tamil National Alliance (TNA), the party dominated North and East politics since the end of the war has lost its unchallenged position. The TNA votes have decreased more than one-thirds from its 2015 tally. From 515,963 (4.62%) in 2015 the TNA has dropped to 327,168 (2,82%) votes. Number of MPs elected declined from 16 in 2015 to 10.

12.TNA lost its vote base to two advisories, i.e, on the one hand to the pro Rajapaksa Tamil political parties and on the other hand to the hard-line Tamil nationalist parties.

District	Votes received		
	TNA (ITKA)	Hard-line Tamil Nationalist Parties	Pro Rajapaksa Tamil Parties
Jaffna	112,967	91,320	45,797 + (SLFP 49,373)
Vanni	69,916	17,021	11,310 + (SLPP 42,524)
Batticaloa	79,460	4,960	67,692 + (SLPP 33,424)
Ampara /Digamadulla	25,255		29,379
Trincomalee	39,570	4,370	3,775

<https://results.elections.gov.lk/#12-details>

13. Number of female members elected has declined from 13 to 8. No political party campaigned for enhanced participation of women in politics. There were minimal number of women in candidate lists of almost all major political parties. There is only one female in the Cabinet of Ministers. Women's Affairs Ministry has been scrapped. State Minister in charge of "Women and Child Development" is a male.

14. All elected members of the Rajapaksa family have been given positions in the government.

Name	Position
President Gotabaya Rajapaksa	Minster of Defence
Prime Minster Mahinda Rajapaksa	Minister of Finance, Buddha Sasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs, Urban Development and Housing.
Chamal Rajapaksa	Minister of Irrigation & State Minister of , Internal Defence & Disaster Management
Namal Rajapaksa	Minister of of Sports & Youth Affairs
Shashindra Rajapaksa	State Minister of Paddy and Cereals, Organic Foods, Vegetables, Fruits, Chili, Onions and Potatoes Seed Production and High-tech Agriculture
Nipuna Ranawaka	Chair of the District Coordinating Committee, Matara

15. 10 Members of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's political platform "Viyath Maga" have been elected and 4 of them have been appointed as State Ministers.

16. Biggest loser of the general election 2020 is former PM and leader of the UNP Ranil Wickremasinghe. His party polled only 2.15% of the national vote and obtained one national list seat.

17. Some urgent constitutional changes to the 19th Amendment will be discussed at the first cabinet meeting. These amendments will include removing restrictions imposed on the executive presidency by the 19th Amendment.

18. Far reaching constitutional amendments will be introduced later. Powerful national organiser of the SLPP, Basil Rajapaksa has told media that instead of a patchwork, a new constitution will be introduced. A new electoral system based on "first past the post" system, to ensure the regime continuity is also on the cards. Offering an administrative role to the military in order to make military involvement in governance permanent, may also be considered.

19. Rajapaksas' political and ideological hold on majority Sinhala Buddhist constituencies has been consistent since 2005. Introducing an electoral system based on or close to the "first past the post" system may provide them an unassailable position in the current political configuration.

20. As stated by the leaders of the government establishing "Discipline and Order" to achieve economic growth will take precedence over human rights, democracy and reconciliation. New

political demarcations lines have been drawn, as the seismic shift has taken place in the country's electoral map as well as in the balance of political power.

Votes polled by political parties and MPs elected.

Political party	Votes received	Parentag %	MPs elected	National list	Total
Sri Lanka Podu Jana Peramuna (SLPP)	6,853,690	59.09%	128	17	145
Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB)	2,771,980	27.90%	47	7	54
Tamil National Alliance (TNA)	327,168	2.82%	9	1	10
National People's Power (NPP)	445,958	3.84%	2	2	3
Tamil National People's Front (TNPF)*	67,766	0.58%	1	1	2
Tamil People's National Alliance (TPNA)**	51,301	0.44%	1	0	1
Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP)	61,464	0.53%	2	0	2
United National Party (UNP)***	249,435	2.15%	0	1	1
Our Power of People Party (OPPP)****	67,758	0.58%	0	1	1
Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP)*****	67,692	0.58%	1	0	1
Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP)*****	66,579	0.57%	1	0	1
Muslim National Alliance (MNA)	55,981	0.48%	1	0	1
All Ceylon Makkal Congress (ACMC)	43,319	0.37%	1	0	1
National Congress (NC)	39,272	0.34%	1	0	1
Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC)	34,428	0.30	1	0	1

Notes:

* Coalition led by Gajendrakumar Ponnambalam.

** Coalition led by former Northern Chief Minister C. V. Vigneswaran.

*** Majority MPs of the United National Party broke away from former PM Wickremasinghe's leadership and formed Samgi Jana Balawagaya.

**** Party led by Alt Buddhist Bodu Bala Sena leader Galagoda Aththe Ganansara Thero.

***** Party led by former Batticaloa LTTE leader and Eastern province Chief Minister Sivanesathurai Chandrakanthan alias Pillayan.

***** Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) led by former President Sirisena contested as coalition partner of the Prime Minister Rajapaksa led Sri Lanka PoduJana Peramuna and won 15 seats.

https://elections.gov.lk/web/wp-content/uploads/election-results/parliamentary-elections/NL_SeatsbyParty_04.pdf