

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2015

PRE ELECTION POLL SURVEY

*Colombo District: Homagama, Kaduwela, Maharagama
Electoralates
January 01, 2015*

Produced by:

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Presidential Election 2015:

COLOMBO DISTRICT: SURVEY RESULTS

Hon. Maithreepala Sirisena	48.3%	355
Hon. Mahinda Rajapakse	39.5%	290
Undecided	11.2%	82
Not voting	0.9%	7
Total valid sample	100%	735

Presidential Election 2010:

Hon. Mahinda Rajapakse	52.9%	616,740
Hon. Sarath Fonseka	45.9%	533,022
Total valid votes	100%	10,393,613

HIGHLIGHTS:

1. There is 23% shift of voter preference away from President towards Opposition candidate
2. Voter interest in the election is high and hence a higher voter turnout is expected.
3. The main reasons deciding voting are ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and LEVEL OF CORRUPTION. The first factor favors the President, and the second favors the Opposition candidate
4. Voters focus on Candidate's suitability than his political party.
5. Employed persons and the self-employed tend to favor opposition candidate.

A. SURVEY SAMPLE AND RESULTS IN BRIEF

Table 1: Sample distribution

Electorate	Total polled 2010	% Voting President	Sample size %	Sample size voters
COLOMBO DISTRICT	1,172,776	52.9	85.3	627
Homagama electorate	122,049	67.0	26.4	194
Kaduwela electorate	123,126	62.2	26.1	192
Maharagama electorate	96,023	62.3	21.4	157
Colombo	269,024	43.6	10.9	80
Outside Colombo District			14.7	108
TOTAL			100	735

Table 2: Sample voting pattern for 2015: by electorate

Electorate	Total	President	Opposition	Undecided	Not voting
Maharagama	<i>157</i>	61	79	17	0
Homagama	<i>194</i>	82	93	19	0
Kaduwela	<i>196</i>	81	90	24	1
Colombo	<i>80</i>	22	47	7	4
Outside of Colombo	<i>108</i>	44	46	15	2
Total	<i>735</i>	290 (39.5)	355 (48.3)	82 (11.2)	7 (1%)

B. SURVEY QUESTIONS

Find out answers to the following:

1. Who is the preferred candidate, MR or MS?
2. Respondent's likelihood of Voting?
3. What is the strength of voting preference?
4. What are the reasons that have affected voting preference?
5. Candidate vs. Party preference
6. Demographic data of the respondent: GENDER, AGE, RACE, RELIGION, EDUCATION
7. Type of employment

See Appendix A for the questionnaire form.

C. SURVEY METHOD

The three electorates of the Colombo district (Homagama, Kaduwela and Maharagama) were selected for the study on the basis of election results 2010 where the elected president received over 60% of the vote in each of these electorates, whereas the Colombo district vote for him was 52.9 percent. The purpose was to find out if the voting pattern in the highly favored areas has changed since the last election, and if so whether the president has further strengthen or weaken his position.

Sample size aimed at was 800, distributed among the three electorates according to the total number voted at the last election. In each sample, it was desired to have approximately 60 percent of respondents who had voted for the president last time, so that the sample represented the basic distribution of voting between the two candidates.

A team of eight interviewing enumerators visited the electorates and met voters on a random basis. They aimed at rural communities, various employment types, varied age groups, and male-female. Interviewers asked questions and recorded the responses on a questionnaire (see Appendix for the questionnaire used). They were told that the survey was academic and politically neutral and the project was organized by the Graduate School of Management under the direction of Prof. Gunapala Nanayakkara, who himself was in the field with the team as one of the interviewers throughout the survey period of 6 days (Dec.21 – 28).

The responses received were processed through the SPSS. A total of 758 responses were collected and 735 were accepted as complete questionnaires. The techniques of frequency distribution and cross-tabulation were used for the generation of statistics to answer the survey questions.

D. RESULTS

1. Preferred Candidate

Questions:

1. Which candidate will you vote for at the January Presidential Election?
2. Which candidate did you vote for at the last presidential election 2010?

Table 1.0: Shifting pattern of voter behaviour

Candidate	Voted 2010	Voting 2015	% of shift
President	465 (61.3%)	290 (38.3%)	-23.0%
Main opposition	204 (24.2%)	-	
Main opposition	-	355 (46.8%)	+22.6%
Not voted	83 (10.9%)		
No response		26 (3.4%)	

Observation: Form Table 1, it seems that as many as 23% of those who voted for President Rajapakse at the 2010 Presidential Elections are decided to vote for Mr. Maithreepala Sirisena at the forthcoming Presidential Election. This is the *net* result of shift of voting between the two sides between the two elections, only 6% shifting from opposition to government side.

2. Level of Voter Commitment

Question:

3. How likely is that you may change your preference by January 8th?

Table 2.0: Are they firmly committed to candidates?

Level of commitment	No. of voters	%
High	426	56
Medium	124	18
Low	145	19
Not declared	62	08

Asked whether they would change their current decision by the election date, 56% said that they are firmly committed to their candidate, and the rest are divided in between *unlikely to change* (moderate commitment) and *may change* (low commitment). There is no statistically significant difference of this result between the two candidates. See Appendix Table 2.1 for details.

3. Factors Affecting Voter Decision

Question:

4. What reasons have you considered for your decisions?

Table 3.0: How people choose candidates?

Factors considered	President	Opposition	Undecided	Total
Economic development	200	41	24	265
Corruption	15	237	29	281
Stability of the country	59	14	7	80
Good governance	06	34	5	45
Other	10	26	0	36
TOTAL	290	355	55	700

Economy and corruption are the two most important factors in affecting voter decision, and these two factors separate the two candidates. While the President is credited with developing the economy, he is faulted for corrupt ways of governing and managing the economy at the same time. President is credited with having a stable government and a united country, while he is faulted with lack of good governance.

4. Which is more important: Party or Candidate?

Question:

5. Are you voting for the party or the candidate?

Table 4.0: Voter's focus

Candidate voting for	Party	Candidate	Both candidate and party
President	63	179	48
Opposition	84	211	53
Undecided	6	57	12
Total			

At a presidential election, the large majority of people are looking for a suitable candidate whereas the political party is less and less significant.

5. Demographic Characteristics of voters

Table 5.0: Gender and voting

Candidate voting for	Male	Female
President	186 (39%)	94 (41%)
Opposition	241 (51%)	111 (48%)
Undecided	49 (10%)	27 (12%)

It seems that within the sample segment supporting the President, women have a slightly higher preference for the President over the opposition candidate, while more women support the opposition candidate in the overall sample.

Table 6.0: Age and voting

Candidate voting for	YOUNG 18+	THIRTIES 30+	OVER 45	Total
President	71 (25%)	124 (44%)	86 (31%)	281 (100)
Opposition	92 (27%)	162 (47%)	90 (26%)	344 (100)
Undecided	19 (26%)	41 (56%)	13 (18%)	73 (100)

Age-wise distribution shows that the younger generation has a slight alignment with the opposition while the older people have more attachment to the President.

Table 7: Ethnic composition

Ethnicity	Number of voters	%
Sinhala	732	96.5
Tamil	15	2
Muslim	11	1.5
Total	758	100

Table 8: Vote by ethnicity

Candidate voting for	SINHALA	TAMIL	MUSLIM
President	258	3	6
Opposition	325	9	5
Undecided	68	3	0
TOTAL			

The sample was overwhelmingly Sinhala Buddhist and hence the ethnic distribution as per Table 8 does not indicate any significant information.

Table 9: Voting patterns by level of education

Candidate voting for	< OL	OL - AL	TECH	DEGREE	Total
President	104 (38%)	143 (52%)	7 (3%)	23 (8%)	277(100)
Opposition	101 (30%)	186 (55%)	21 (6%)	29 (9%)	337(100)
Undecided	19 (26%)	49 (68%)	1 (1%)	3 (4%)	72(100)
Total	224 (33%)	378 (55%)	29 (4%)	55 (8%)	686 (100)

From the sample distribution in Table 9, it is difficult to conclude that education factor has a significant value in predicting voter preferences. However, the indications are that higher the level of education higher the preference for the opposition candidate.

6. Type of employment and voting

Table 10: Voting patterns by type of employment

Employment type	President	Opposition	Undecided	Total
Government	22 (31%)	41 (59%)	7 (10%)	71 (100)
Private sector	62 (34%)	105(57%)	15 (8%)	185 (100)
Self employed	27 (30%)	48 (53%)	11(12%)	90 (100)
Farmer	2 (100%)	0	0	2 (100)
Business	72 (49%)	55 (37%)	19 (13%)	147 (100)
Unemployed	15 (43%)	15 (43%)	5 (14%)	35 (100)
House wife	26 (52%)	17 (34%)	7 (14%)	50 (100)
Retired	7 (32%)	14 (64%)	1 (5%)	22 (100)

Type of employment seems to have some significance in predicting voter behavior. Small businesses such as shop owners favor the President while government servants, private sector employees, the self-employed (such as taxi drivers) and the retired persons support the opposition candidate. Interestingly, the support of the unemployed is divided equally between the two candidates.

*Appendices:***Table 2.1: Vote * firmness Crosstabulation**

Count								
		firmness						Total
			LOW	MOD	HIGH	4	99	
vote		23	0	0	0	0	0	23
	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	MR	0	42	55	187	1	5	290
	MS	0	55	59	225	0	16	355
	undecided	0	44	8	13	0	14	79
	not voting	0	2	2	1	0	2	7
	99	0	1	0	0	0	2	3
Total		23	145	124	426	1	39	758

Table 3.1: Vote * reasons Crosstabulation

Count									
		reasons						Total	
			DEVEL	CORR	STABL	GOVER	other		99
vote		23	0	0	0	0	0	0	23
	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	MR	0	200	15	59	6	0	10	290
	MS	0	41	237	17	34	0	26	355
	undecided	0	24	29	7	5	1	13	79
	not voting	0	0	0	0	2	0	5	7
	99	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3
Total		23	265	282	83	48	1	56	758

Table: vote * party Crosstabulation

Count							
		Party					Total
		PARTY	CANDI	BOTH	99		
vote		23	0	0	0	0	23
3		0	0	1	0	0	1
MR		0	63	179	48	0	290
MS		0	84	211	53	7	355
undecided		0	6	57	12	4	79
not voting		0	0	1	0	6	7
99		0	0	2	0	1	3
Total		23	153	451	113	18	758

Table: vote * party Crosstabulation

Count							
		Party					Total
		PARTY	CANDI	BOTH	99		
vote		23	0	0	0	0	23
3		0	0	1	0	0	1
MR		0	63	179	48	0	290
MS		0	84	211	53	7	355
undecided		0	6	57	12	4	79
not voting		0	0	1	0	6	7
99		0	0	2	0	1	3
Total		23	153	451	113	18	758

Table: vote * gender Crosstabulation

Count							
		Gender					
			MALE	FEMAL	3	99	Total
vote		23	0	0	0	0	23
3		0	1	0	0	0	1
MR		0	186	94	2	8	290
MS		0	241	111	1	2	355
undecided		0	49	27	0	3	79
not voting		0	3	4	0	0	7
99		0	1	1	0	1	3
Total		23	481	237	3	14	758

Table: vote * gender Crosstabulation

Count							
		Gender					
			MALE	FEMAL	3	99	Total
vote		23	0	0	0	0	23
3		0	1	0	0	0	1
MR		0	186	94	2	8	290
MS		0	241	111	1	2	355
undecided		0	49	27	0	3	79
not voting		0	3	4	0	0	7
99		0	1	1	0	1	3
Total		23	481	237	3	14	758

Table: vote * age Crosstabulation

Count								
		age						Total
		YOUNG	11	THIRTIE	OVER45	99		
vote		23	0	0	0	0	0	23
3		0	0	0	0	1	0	1
MR		0	71	0	124	86	9	290
MS		0	92	1	162	90	10	355
undecided		0	19	0	41	13	6	79
not voting		0	1	0	3	2	1	7
99		0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Total		23	183	1	333	192	26	758

Table: vote * race Crosstabulation

Count							
		Race					Total
		SINHAL	TAML	MUSLIM	99		
vote		23	0	0	0	0	23
3		0	1	0	0	0	1
MR		2	258	3	6	21	290
MS		0	325	9	5	16	355
undecided		0	68	3	0	8	79
not voting		0	7	0	0	0	7
99		0	1	0	0	2	3
Total		25	660	15	11	47	758

Table: vote * education Crosstabulation

Count								
		education						
		NO OL	OLAL	TECH	GRAD	99	Total	
vote		23	0	0	0	0	23	
	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	
	MR	0	104	143	7	23	290	
	MS	1	101	186	21	29	355	
	undecided	0	19	49	1	3	79	
	not voting	0	2	3	0	1	7	
	99	0	1	1	0	1	3	
Total		24	227	383	29	57	758	

Table: vote * electorate Crosstabulation

Count								
		electorate						
		maharagama	homagama	kaduwela	colombo	other	99	Total
vote	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	MR	61	82	81	22	42	2	290
	MS	78	93	85	49	49	1	355
	undecided	17	18	24	5	14	1	79
	not voting	0	0	1	4	2	0	7
	99	1	0	1	0	1	0	3
Total		157	194	192	80	108	4	735

Appendix A

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION POLL JANUARY 08, 2015

This survey is conducted by Graduate School of Management in selected electoral districts to predict electoral behavior at the Presidential Election on January 08, 2015.

Electorate:

<p>1. Which candidate will you vote for at the January Presidential Election?</p> <p>2. Which candidate did you vote for at the last presidential election, 2010?</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Mahinda Rajapakse</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Mahinda</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Maithreepala Sirisena</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fonseka</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other candidate</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Not decided</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Not voted</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Not going to vote</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mahinda Rajapakse	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Mahinda</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Maithreepala Sirisena	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fonseka</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other candidate	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not decided	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Not voted</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not going to vote	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mahinda Rajapakse	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Mahinda</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/> Maithreepala Sirisena	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fonseka</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/> Other candidate	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/> Not decided	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Not voted</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/> Not going to vote											
<p>3. How likely is that you may change your preference by January 08th?</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Will not change</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Unlikely to change</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> May change</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Will not change	<input type="checkbox"/> Unlikely to change	<input type="checkbox"/> May change							
<input type="checkbox"/> Will not change											
<input type="checkbox"/> Unlikely to change											
<input type="checkbox"/> May change											
<p>4. What reasons have you considered for your decision?</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Development</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Corruption</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Stability</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Governance</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Corruption	<input type="checkbox"/> Stability	<input type="checkbox"/> Governance						
<input type="checkbox"/> Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Corruption										
<input type="checkbox"/> Stability	<input type="checkbox"/> Governance										
<p>6. Are you voting the party or the candidate?</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Party</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Candidate</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Both</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Party	<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/> Both							
<input type="checkbox"/> Party											
<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate											
<input type="checkbox"/> Both											
<p>7. What are the main sources of information on politics?</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Print media</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phone</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> TV/Radio</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Propaganda</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Internet</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Print media	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phone	<input type="checkbox"/> TV/Radio	<input type="checkbox"/> Propaganda	<input type="checkbox"/> Internet	<input type="checkbox"/> Other				
<input type="checkbox"/> Print media	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phone										
<input type="checkbox"/> TV/Radio	<input type="checkbox"/> Propaganda										
<input type="checkbox"/> Internet	<input type="checkbox"/> Other										
<p>Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Age group: 18+ <input type="checkbox"/> 30+ <input type="checkbox"/> 45+ <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Sinhala: <input type="checkbox"/> Tamil: <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Catholic: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Education: Below OL <input type="checkbox"/> OL-AL <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Technical <input type="checkbox"/> Degree <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Employment:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Govt.</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Private</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Self employed</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Farmer</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Business</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> House wife</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Retired</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Govt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> Self employed	<input type="checkbox"/> Farmer	<input type="checkbox"/> Business	<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/> House wife	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<input type="checkbox"/> Govt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> Self employed									
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<input type="checkbox"/> House wife	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired	<input type="checkbox"/> Other									
<p>Notes:</p>	<p>Compiled by: _____ Date:</p>										