An Opinion Poll On Peace

Peace Confidence Index (PCI)

TOP-LINE RESULTS

Social Indicator

NOVEMBER 2001
While many studies have been conducted on various aspects of this conflict, none have attempted to capture the changes in public perception over a period of time. The lack of such a study was identified as a significant void by Social Indicator (SI), the social research unit of the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA). The Peace Confidence Index study (PCI) seeks to fill this lacuna. The study, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) under the Governance and Institutional Strengthening Project, (GISP) Sri Lanka, will be conducted bi-monthly to gauge the impact of local and international political developments on public attitudes towards the peace process.
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INTRODUCTION

It is no secret that the ethnic conflict and war has taken a heavy toll on the Sri Lankan public. While endless studies have been conducted on various aspects of this conflict, none of these studies have attempted to capture the movement and changes in public perception over a period of time. The lack of such a repetitive study which could help capture the changing trends in public opinion, particularly towards the ongoing peace process, was identified as a significant void by Social Indicator (SI), the social research unit of the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA). The Peace Confidence Index study (PCI) seeks to fill this lacuna. The study, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) under the Governance and Institutional Strengthening Programme, Sri Lanka (GISP), will be conducted bi-monthly to gauge the impact of local and international political developments on public attitudes toward the peace process.

SCOPE

The purpose of this study is two-fold. One is to develop a numeric indicator representing the level of public confidence in the peace process using a set of standardised questions which will remain unchanged with each passing wave. The other is to use a set of questions related to recent social, economic and political developments, which by definition will change from one wave to another, in order to gauge public opinion in terms of the level of confidence in the peace process.

Such information, when collected over a period of time, will provide civil society and policy makers a useful barometer of the opinions of the Sri Lankan polity, and ensure that the collective opinions of the masses are given due importance and incorporated into the policy debate.

METHODOLOGY

The study is carried out using a structured questionnaire administered through face-to-face interviews amongst a 1,200 respondent sample distributed throughout 17 administrative districts. Care has been taken to reflect the actual ethnographic makeup of the country in the respondent sample other than the 3 districts in which opinion was not surveyed. In addition, SI surveys the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and border village communities, given the importance of ascertaining the opinions of those directly affected by the on-going war. Furthermore, a structured questionnaire was used in the gathering of information from the respondents.

The entirety of the Northern province, barring the welfare centres in Vavuniya, is not covered in the survey due to inaccessibility as well as problems of logistics related to the on-going war. Areas with a high-concentration of Tamils, like Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Amparai could not
Peace Confidence Index

be fully covered.

Four waves of the PCI study were conducted in May, June, September and November of 2001. The results of these four waves offer us data for a comparative study on changing public opinion regarding key issues, ranging from the perception of war and peace to the proscription of the LTTE and the 2001 General Election. The results are subject to a 3% margin of error.

**KEY NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE RUN UP TO THE OPINION POLL**

- Lawyers for Lake House inform the Supreme Court that Lake House will not abide by the guidelines for reporting sent by the Elections Commissioner.
- The TULF headed alliance of Tamil Parties says the only way to solve the problems of the Tamil people is to accept their right to self-determination and recognise the LTTE as the sole representative in negotiations.
- Minister of Foreign Affairs Lakshman Kadirgamar, supporting peace talks, says that the country’s ethnic problem can only be solved through an honest attempt made locally.
- The United National Party in its election manifesto has proposed an interim council as a remedy to the problem in the northeast.
- Power cuts lifted.
- Canada and the United Kingdom list LTTE as a terrorist organization and freeze funds.
- The JVP supports People’s Alliance (PA) allegations about link between the UNP and the LTTE.
- The United States continues its bombing of Afghanistan.
- Escalation of election related violence reported in the media.
SELECTED FINDINGS

- The November wave reveals that a large majority (71.3%) cannot identify a time-frame for the onset of peace in Sri Lanka. It is also significant that 8.2% of Sinhalese, 13.7% of Tamils, 19.3% of Muslims and 16.5% of Up-country Tamils believe that there will never be peace in Sri Lanka. While a growing pessimism over the onset of peace is evident from May to November, it is also disturbing that the proportion of those who do not know and cannot tell when peace will dawn in Sri Lanka shows a steady growth.

- This study reveals that in November, 69.3% think that both parties should declare a ceasefire through mutual agreement - thus, the support for a bi-lateral ceasefire is high in November.

- What is also important is that when asked on how we can have peace in Sri Lanka, 71.9% express their confidence in peace talks. Placed in context, the uncertainty surrounding the onset of peace has to be juxtaposed with a very high percentage of those who believe in peace talks.

- 84.9% in the Tamil community believe peace to be the most important issue the new government should address.

- Reminiscent of 45.9% of those polled in September identifying the Cost of Living as the most important issue in the country, 51.8% in November identify the Cost of Living as an issue that would concern them when casting their vote. On the whole, voter concerns are equally divided between issues related to the economy and issues related to the ongoing ethnic conflict.

- 33.6% state that the election campaign has not informed them at all of the way to peace.

- Asked to what extent the election campaign influenced their attitude towards how peace can be achieved, 33.9% say that the campaign has no part to play in the shaping of their attitude. However, 32.1% also say that the election campaign is, to some extent, influential in the moulding of their attitude on how peace can be achieved.

- When asked what impact the new government would have on the peace process, 59.1% say they are unsure what the impact would be.

- Of those who agree that there is a close relationship between war, election violence and malpractice, the greatest number (32.6% nationally) believe it is on account of official security used as private armies and thugs.

- 74.8% believe that the freezing of LTTE bank accounts by the United States and the United Kingdom would have a positive effect on the peace process in Sri Lanka.

- Asked as to what kind of impact an interim administration would have on the peace process, 50.2% believe that it would have a negative impact.

- Asked as to what kind of impact the stance of the JVP on negotiations with the LTTE would have on the peace process (with the JVP agreeing to negotiations only if the LTTE gives up the demand for a separate Tamil Eelam), 43.9% say that it would have a positive effect.
Peace Confidence Index: Changing Perceptions from May to November 2001

The Meaning of War and Peace

In the November poll, peace means ethnic harmony for a majority of the Sinhalese (38.7%). For 33.2% of them it also means the end of the war. In the case of the minorities an even larger majority (Tamils 54.7% Muslims 77.8% and Up-country Tamils 95.9%) feel that peace means ethnic harmony.

In November, the 42.8% thought of war as death and destruction. 24.5% thought of war as disharmony amongst races, and 12.3% perceived war as a fight for rights.

Significantly, the view that war means disharmony amongst the races persists largely amongst the Tamils (51.9%) and Muslims (38.7%) rather than amongst the Sinhala and Up-country Tamil communities, of whom 20.4% and 26.8% respectively believe in the same. The perception of war as a death and destruction remains almost constant from June to November.
In November, one observes the inability of a large majority (71.3%) to identify a time-frame for the onset of peace in Sri Lanka. This uncertainty appears to arise mainly amongst the Sinhalese and Tamils.

It is also significant that 8.2% of Sinhalese, 13.7% of Tamils, 19.3% of Muslims and 16.5% of Up-country Tamils believe that there will never be peace in Sri Lanka. While a growing pessimism over the onset of peace is evident from May to November, it is also disturbing that the combined percentage of those asked who do not know and cannot tell when peace will dawn in Sri Lanka shows a steady growth.

What is also important is that when asked on how we can have peace in Sri Lanka, 71.9% expressed their confidence in peace talks. Placed in context, the uncertainty surrounding the onset of peace has to be juxtaposed with a very high percentage of those who believe in peace talks.
When asked about the genesis of the war in Sri Lanka, 33.8% feel that it is due to communal politics, while 24.3% believe that it is on account of discrimination against the Tamils. The view that the root cause of war was discrimination against the Tamils is high amongst the minorities (57.1% of Tamils, 29.4% of Muslims & 43.3% of Up-country Tamils concur), but most Sinhalese (33%) believe that it was on account of communal politics. However, as borne out by the graph, there is a significant drop from May to November of those who feel that the war originated as a result of communal politics in general.

**Solutions to the Conflict**

In November, 71.9% of Sri Lankans feel that peace can be brought about through peace talks rather than by the Government defeating the LTTE through war (19.9%) or through a devolution of power (6.2%). However, 24.7% of Sinhalese believe that the Government defeating the LTTE will bring peace in Sri Lanka.
In November, 47.4% of the Up-country Tamils believe that there has been no solution for the past 15 years as a result of corrupt military and political leaders, a view shared by the other minority communities. On the other hand 41.8% of the Sinhalese feel that no solution has arisen due to a lack of political will. Overall, most Sri Lankans feel there has been no solution for the past 15 years as a result of corrupt military and political leaders (39.1%). 38.5% also believe the lack of political will to be one reason for the continuation of the conflict. 22.2% state that there has not been a solution for the past 15 years because of the necessity of war for people in power.

In comparison to the polls in May, June and September, there is a convergence in November of those who believe that there has been no solution to the ethnic conflict for the past 15 years on account of corrupt political and military leaders (39.1%) and the dearth of any political will (38.5%).

The effects of the Katunayake attack could have a bearing on those who believe that corrupt military and political leaders are the reason why there hasn’t been a solution for the last 15 years.

It is interesting to note that 54.3% of Sinhalese, 53.8% of Tamils and 52.8% of Muslims clearly indicate that total victory cannot be achieved by one party in the war. Overall, there is a steady increase in those who believe that total victory cannot be achieved by one party to the conflict - from 38.5% in May to 53% in November.
On Credibility

In comparison to the opinion in May and June, in September and November, the proportion of Sri Lankans who are of the view that the Government is committed to bringing about peace through talks remains the same. In November 44.1% of Sinhalese and 62.9% of Up-country Tamils share the opinion that total victory cannot be achieved by any one party to the conflict.

In sharp contrast, 68.5% of the population believe that the LTTE is not committed to bring about peace through talks. Those who do believe in the commitment of the LTTE slide from 15% in May to 9.8% in November. Furthermore, while 78.9% of Sinhalese do not believe in the commitment of the LTTE to peace talks, 58.5% of Tamils, 19.6% of Muslims and 43.3% of Up-country Tamils do believe in the LTTE’s commitment to find peace through talks.

Why do you think the Government would go in for talks with the LTTE?

When asked why they think the Government would go into talks 39.5% feel it was as a result of their commitment to peace. 44.7% Sinhalese concur, but only 15.1% of Tamils believe in the same. The highest percentage of Tamils (34.4%) believe that the Government goes in for talks
on account of international pressure, as opposed to the 15.1% who believe in the Government's commitment to peace when going in for talks. 34.4% of Muslims are of the view that the Government would go in for talks to fool the people.

On the other hand, 53.5% of Sinhalese in November feel that the LTTE would go in for talks to fool the people. However, 45.4% of Up-country Tamils and 36.4% of Tamils believe that it would be the LTTE's commitment to peace that would bring them for talks with the government.

**ON CONDITIONS FOR PEACE TALKS**

There is overall agreement in November that the Government should declare a ceasefire for peace talks (45.2%), a view that remains unshaken from May to November. 44.7% of Sinhalese believe that the Government should not declare a ceasefire for peace talks, more than the 33.8% who think that the Government should declare a ceasefire for peace talks. A far greater percentage of Tamils (94.3%) believe that the Government should declare a ceasefire for peace talks. This high percentage is also seen in the Up-country Tamil and Muslim communities, 88.5% and 84.7% respectively who concur with the Tamil opinion.

On the other hand, 56.5% of the population feel that the LTTE should declare a ceasefire for peace talks. This is an opinion shared by well over 80% in all minority communities, though it only finds a lesser acceptance amongst the Sinhalese (48.1%).

This study reveals that in November, 69.3% think that both parties should declare a ceasefire through mutual agreement - thus, the support for a bi-lateral ceasefire is high in November. Those who believe in the same in the Tamil community and Muslim community are very high - 81.1% and 88.3% respectively. The high percentage of people in favour of a mutually agreed ceasefire in all communities provides a window of opportunity for the commencement of negotiations.

64.6% in November feel that the Government should not de-proscribe the LTTE to commence peace talks. This is a sharp rise over September, as can be seen from the graph above. However, while 73.3% of Sinhalese are not in favour of de-proscribing the LTTE to commence peace talks, 80.2% of Tamils and 77.3% of Up-country Tamils believe the Government should de-proscribe the LTTE to commence peace talks.
Furthermore, in November, more than half of the Sri Lankan people (59.9%) are against the lifting of restrictions of certain items to the Vanni as a precondition to talks. Yet many in the Tamil communities (89.9% of Up-country Tamils and 91% of Tamils) are of the opinion that the Government should lift the restrictions on items to the Vanni as a precondition to peace talks.

**LEVEL OF TOLERANCE AND PLURALISM**

Though throughout the study the findings reveal that an overwhelming majority of Sri Lankans think that the Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims can live together, there are also those who feel this cannot be - 11.9% in May, 11% in June, 10.9% in September and 9.6% in November.

When asked if the Tamil community and the LTTE are identified as the same, 74.7% in November did not believe this to be true, a figure that has been on the rise since May (when it was 66.3%). In November, 25% of Tamils did identify the Tamil Community and LTTE as one, though only 13.6% Sinhalese, 4.3% Muslims and 12.4% Up-country Tamils concur.

In contrast, 44.7% in November identify the Government as a Sinhala Government. - a view that has been predominant since May. While 57.3% of Tamils identify the Government as a Sinhala Government, 19.9% do not think so.
THE PEACE PROCESS

In November there is approval amongst the people (78%), especially amongst the minorities, for the Government and the LTTE going in for peace talks. 92.8% of Up-country Tamils and 91.5% of Tamils approve the Government and LTTE going in for peace talks, while 83.4% of Muslims and 75.2% of Sinhalese concur.

As can be seen from above, 56.7% approve of the Government and LTTE negotiating after a ceasefire - an increase from 46.7% in June. Those who disapprove, though on the decrease, still constitute 22.5%. The minorities show strong support for a ceasefire for peace talks - 89.6% of Tamils, 82.8% of Muslims and 87.6% of Up-country Tamils believe in the same.

On the other hand, there is a high rate of disapproval amongst Sri Lankans (45.7%) for the Government and the LTTE going in for talks whilst fighting in November. Moreover this view remains largely unchanged from June (46.8%) to November (45.7%). A vast majority of Upcountry Tamils (82.5%) and Muslims (80.2%) are against the Government and the LTTE engaging in talks whilst in combat. While 32.7% of Sinhalese concur, 37.6% of Sinhalese object to this strategy.

The majority recognise that the conflict can be resolved only by talking to the LTTE after a mutually agreed ceasefire.

When asked how negotiations should be conducted 31.3% feel that it should be only between the Government and the LTTE. The inclusiveness of the process of negotiations, as a process that involves the greatest number of actors and solicits the widest spectrum of political opinion, steadily declines from 36.7% in May to 13.5% in November. The widest support, from May to November, is for a process between the Government and the LTTE only.
Though 32.6% in November are of the view that an international third party's involvement is necessary to solve the north east war a significant percentage - 24.2% - are uncertain of the same. A majority within the minority ethnic communities, especially amongst the Tamils (72.2%) thinks international third party involvement is necessary - in contrast to the Sinhalese, of whom 26.8% are uncertain about the involvement of an international third party.
**Norwegian Facilitation**

Perhaps on account of the stagnation of the peace process, coupled with no overt signs of any negotiated settlement to the ethnic conflict, the outlook for the peace process looks bleak in November. 42.2% of the Sinhalese disapprove of Norway's role as a third party assisting the peace process in Sri Lanka - nationally, the figure is close to 40%. On the other hand, 71.7% of the Tamils, 50.5% of the Up-country Tamils and 37.4% of the Muslims approve of Norway as the third party assisting in the peace process. However, the overall approval for Norway's assistance continues to decline from May to November (45% in May to 26.9% in November).

Moreover, 39.1% are uncertain of Norway's impact on the peace process, while 21.7% also feel that it will have a negative impact. Uncertainty of Norway's impact on the peace process gets reflected mainly amongst the Up-country Tamil (41.2%), Sinhalese (40.7%) communities and Muslims (31.1%) while most Tamils (39.2%) feel Norway's impact will be positive on the peace process.

**Media and Information**

66.2% of Sri Lankans in November think that they do not get accurate information on the war. The lack of accurate information is a problem that persists from June. Furthermore, 75.9% in the Tamil community and 51.5% of Up-country Tamils also believe that the media is biased when reporting war.
While 33.8% in November believe that the media is not very supportive of the war, those who agree have fallen from 28.4% in June to 15.6% in November. The feeling that the media influences individual opinion regarding the conduct of war is 37.3% in November in contrast to 48.6% in September.
COMMITMENT

70.7% in November say that economic hardship is the primary reason that motivates people to join the forces or the LTTE.

58.3% think that the primary reason to join the forces is to defend the motherland. 42.5% also think that defending the motherland is the same reason that motivates those who join the LTTE. Interestingly, while 27.5% of Sinhalese think that the thirst for revenge motivates people to join the LTTE, 39.4% think that people who join the LTTE do so to defend their motherland.

What motivates people who join the forces?

What motivates the people who join the LTTE?
Recent Developments: An Opinion Poll Conducted from 10th to 16th November 2001

GENERAL ELECTIONS 2001

The statements and manifestos of political parties and politicians in the run-up to the General Elections on December 5th informed the atmosphere within which the most recent Peace Confidence Index survey was carried out.

91.1% said they were going to exercise their vote in the upcoming General Election. There was no difference in the percentage of those who wanted to vote in the Urban and Rural areas – in both cases, 91.2% say they would vote on the 5th of December.

What are the issue/s that would concern you the most when you cast your vote in the upcoming general election? (Multiple answers)

Issues that concern you the most when you cast your vote in the upcoming general election? (Multiple answers)
Reminiscent of 45.9% in September identifying the Cost of Living as the burning in the country, 51.8% in November identify the Cost of Living as an issue that would concern them when casting their vote. However, nationally, 57.4% perceive the North-East war as the one issue that would concern them the most when casting their vote. While, 62% percent in the Sinhala community believe the North-East war to be the single most important issue, 50.9% within the Tamil community hold the same opinion. For both the Up-country Tamils and the Muslims, the Cost of Living is the most important issue (47.4% and 51.5% respectively).

Revealingly, 57.5% in Urban areas believe the Cost of Living to be the most important issue when casting their vote. In Rural areas however, the percentage of those who believe the same is 49.3% but those who believe the North-East war to be the most important issue is almost 64%.

When asked to what extent the election campaign has informed the public on issues related to war, 37.5% say that the campaign has indeed informed them on issues of war to some extent. 36.2% of the Sinhalese community and 62.7% of the Tamil community believe likewise, while only 24.7% of the Up-country Tamils concur.

On the other hand, 33.6% state that the election campaign has not informed them at all of how peace can be achieved. While, 39.1% did say that the election campaign has informed them of the way to peace to some extent, only 7.7% believe that the campaign has informed them of the way to peace to a great extent. The uncertain atmosphere surrounding issues of peace is reflected across all communities. 64.7% of the Tamil community believe that the election campaign has not informed them on the way to peace at all, or at best, only to some extent. The figure for the same in the Sinhala community is just over 72%. This trend can be seen within the Muslim and Up-country Tamil communities as well (67.6% and 80.4% respectively). Nationally, only 7.7% believe that the election campaign has informed them to a great extent of the way to peace.

To what extent has the election campaign influenced your attitude towards the war?

34.9% nationally believe that the election campaign has not influenced their attitude towards the war in any way. Nationally, as well as across all communities, the percentage of those stating that the election campaign influenced to a great extent their attitude towards the war is very low (5.9% nationally, 6.1% Sinhalese, 8.5% Tamils, 3.2% Muslims and 4.1% Up-country
Tamils). 49.5% of the Up-country Tamils believe that the election campaign has not influenced their attitude towards the war in any way, while 34.8% of the Sinhalese community think the same way. 36.2% within the Muslim community are unsure or don't know the influence the election campaign has on their attitudes towards war.

Asked to what extent the election campaign influences their attitude towards the way to peace, 33.9% say that the campaign has no part to play in the shaping of their attitude. However, 32.1% also say that the election campaign is, to some extent, influential in the moulding of their attitude towards the way to peace. 42.9% within the Tamil community share this belief. The Sinhalese community is equally divided on the influence of the election campaign on their attitude towards peace – while 35.4% believe that the campaign had no effect whatsoever in the shaping of their attitudes, 35.3% believe the campaign did in fact colour their attitude, either to a great extent, but more commonly, to some extent at the least.

**IMPACT OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT ON THE PEACE PROCESS**

The uncertainty of the future of peace processes in Sri Lanka is highlighted by the fact that 59.1% are unsure of or don't know what impact the new Government would have on the peace process. This percentage is even higher in the Sinhala community, with 62.2% stating they are unsure of the impact of the new Government on the peace process. While it has to be said that both nationally, and in every community, the percentage who say...
that the new government would have a negative impact on the peace process was very low (3.5% nationally), those who believe the new government would have a positive effect on the peace process is also low – 29% nationally. 17.5% of those in the Tamil community also believe that the new government will not have any impact on the peace process - the highest amongst all communities ascribing to this view.

84.9% in the Tamil community believe peace to be the most important issue the new government should address once in power. The figure for the same nationally is 70.9% with 73.6% of the Muslim community and 70.3% of the Sinhala community holding the same opinion. 44% of the Sinhala community think priority should be given to reviving the economy. 48.5% of the Up-country Tamils believe that steps to reduce the cost of living should be high on the agenda of the new government once it comes into power, a figure that is much higher than all other communities.

An overwhelming majority (82%) give voice to the fear that election violence and malpractices will take place during the General Election of 2001. Only 3.8% think that violence and malpractice will not take place.

However, 38.2% disagree that there is a close relationship between war, election violence and malpractice. The Up-country Tamils disagree the most vehemently, with 63.9% disagreeing that there is a close relationship between war, election violence and malpractice. However, amongst the Tamil community, the majority – 44.3% - believe that there is indeed a close relationship between war, election violence and malpractice. 36.1% of Sinhalese believe that there isn’t a close relationship between war, election violence and malpractice, while 27.9% do agree to such a connection.

Of those who agree that there is a close relationship between war, election violence and malpractice, the greatest number (32.6% nationally) believe it is on account of official security used as private armies and thugs. The Up-country Tamils believe army deserters used as private security and official security used as private armies and thugs (86.7% and 80% respectively) account for the close relationship between war, election violence and malpractice. However, 25.5% in the Tamil community are of the opinion that the easy availability of fire-arms contributes to the close relationship between war, election violence and malpractice.

What do you think is the relationship between war, election violence and malpractice?

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INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

When asked whether they were aware that the United States and the United Kingdom had frozen LTTE bank accounts, 45.4% reply in the affirmative. Nationally, only 14.5% do not know this fact. The highest level of ignorance is amongst the Up-country Tamils, 76.3% of whom are not aware of the freezing of LTTE bank accounts by the United States and the United Kingdom. Awareness is highest in the Sinhala community, with 48.6% aware of the freezing of accounts, as opposed to 34% in the Tamil community, 46% in the Muslim community and 13.4% in the Up-Country Tamil community.

74.8% believe that the freezing of LTTE bank accounts by the United States and the United Kingdom would have a positive effect on the peace process in Sri Lanka. This opinion is dominant within the Sinhalese community – 81.2% subscribe to this viewpoint. Significantly, in contrast to the Sinhalese community, 54.2% of the Tamil community believe the freezing will have a negative impact on the peace process in Sri Lanka.

PARTY POSITIONS

The survey took place while the manifestos of political parties were in the process of being released or disseminated.

Nationally, people are divided equally when asked whether they are aware that the UNP led United National Front (UNF) in its election manifesto is committed to setting up an interim administration in the North-East, with 40.4% saying that they are not aware and 40.5% saying that they are. The highest level of awareness is reflected in the Tamil community, with 49.1% who say they are aware of plans for an interim administration. Amongst the Sinhalese community, 38.1% percent do not know of plans for an interim administration, while 32.3% do. The highest levels of ignorance of plans by
the United National Front is demonstrated by the Muslims and Up-country Tamils, of whom 58.3% and 56.3% respectively are unaware of plans for an interim administration.

**Asked as to what kind of impact an interim administration would have on the peace process, 50.2% believe that it would have a negative impact.** Significantly, in contrast to this figure, 51.9% in the Tamil community and 50% of Up-Country Tamils feel an interim administration will have a positive impact on the peace process in Sri Lanka. 35.1% in the Muslim community also share this opinion. However, a majority within the Sinhalese community (57.4%) believe that an interim administration will have a negative impact on the peace process.

Nationally, 48.9% are not aware that the JVP would agree to negotiations only if the LTTE gives up the demand for a separate Tamil Eelam. The Sinhalese community shows the highest degree of awareness, with 21.4% aware of the JVP's stance. 55.2% of the Muslim community are not aware that the JVP would agree to negotiations only if the LTTE gives up the demand for a separate Tamil Eelam.

**Asked as to what kind of impact the stance of the JVP on negotiations with the LTTE would have on the peace process, 43.9% reply that it would have a positive effect.** The Tamil and Up-Country Tamil communities however, are deeply sceptical about the JVP’s stance - 72.7% of the Up-country Tamils and 63.9% of the Tamil community feel that the JVP agreeing to negotiations only if the LTTE
gives up the demand for a separate Tamil Eelam would have a negative effect of the peace process. On the other hand, 55% in the Sinhalese community feel that the stance of the JVP would have a positive effect on the peace process.
Social Indicator (SI) is an independent social research organisation, which conducts polls on socio-economic and political issues. Operating under the Board of Directors of the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), SI was established in September 1999, and filled a longstanding vacuum for a permanent, professional and independent polling facility in Sri Lanka on social and political issues.

Polling is an instrument of empowerment, a means by which the silent majority of the public can express their opinions on issues affecting their lives. Our mission is to conduct surveys on key social issues, thereby providing a means through which public opinion can influence the public policy debate.

Published by:

Social Indicator
Centre for Policy Alternatives
105, 5th Lane
Colombo 3
Sri Lanka

Tel: +9411 2370472/6
Fax: +9411 2370475
Email: info@cpasocialindicator.org
Web: http://www.cpalanka.org