
Provincial Council Elections 2013

A Political Analysis

Central, Northern and North Western Province

Sumith Chaaminda

Nishan de Mel

Verité Research aims to be a leader in the provision of information and analysis for negotiations and policy making in Asia, while also promoting dialogue and education for social development in the region. The firm contributes actively to research and dialogue in the areas of economics, sociology, politics, law, and media, and provides services in data collection, information verification, strategy development, and decision analysis.

Research Assistance: Deepanjali Abeywardana, Daniel Alphonsus and Vidya Nathaniel

Email comments to: publications@veriteresearch.org

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Introduction

Three of Sri Lanka's nine provinces, the **Central (CP)**, **North-Western (NWP)** and **Northern Provinces (NP)** (in order of population), went to polls on 21st September. These provinces, when combined together, account for about a quarter of the island's Sinhala and Muslim populations and over half the Tamil population.

Cross-cutting implications arising from analysing results from all three provinces are found immediately below for the reader's convenience. However, in order to extract the greatest benefit, readers are advised to begin with the "Background" section, found on page 4, then read the province specific analyses, ending with the cross-cutting implications.

Highlights: Cross-Provincial Implications of Election Results

Extremist voices dwindling at the polls: The Sinhala extremist voices represented politically by the National Freedom Front (NFF) headed by Minister Wimal Weerawansa and the Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) headed by Minister Champika Ranawaka did very poorly at the election. The Tamil extremist voices lacked the confidence to even contest, but their objection to the elections was not endorsed by the voters.

- All five candidates fielded by the NFF, under the United People's Freedom Alliance UPFA ticket, in the CP and the NWP were defeated
- Both candidates fielded by the JHU under the UPFA ticket were also defeated.
- The extremist voices in the North were routed in the 2011 local government elections, and this time shied away from contesting – taking-up the position that they objected to the elections. But the very high voter turn-out in the North suggests that voters did not endorse their objections, but were persuaded by the more moderate Tamil National Alliance TNA instead.

Widening North-South divide: Despite extremist voices not having traction at the polls, the North-South divide is also widening.

- The UPFA with over 60% of the vote remains highly popular in the Southern provinces. But the opposite is true of the NP, where the UPFA lost ground. This is despite visible infrastructure investment and other developmental measures.
- The results suggest a growing divide between the "political messages" that are attractive to the Southern and Northern voters. Verité Research's *The Media Analysis* shows that the "development" message did not impress the Northern voter, even though the Southern voters, including the Plantation Tamil Voters in CP, seem to respond with trust and hope.

The UPFA openly and unfairly presented the TNA as a separatist group that is dangerous for the future of the country, and used this fear to attract votes in the South. While the Southern voter was thus galvanised in opposition to the TNA, 78% of Northern votes were won by the TNA.

Opposition politics in the doldrums: Both in the North and South, the TNA and the government seem to have consolidated their position by benefiting also from the disconnection between the people and opposition politics.

- Despite the cost-of-living and governance issues, the UPFA remains highly popular in the Southern provinces. There has been no political avenue to tap-into this discontent (Explained in Verité Research's *The Media Analysis* series).
- In the NWP and CP, the UNP vote share was 24% and 28% respectively. This was in contrast to the UPFA receiving 66% and 60% of the vote. That is, the UPFA received between 2 to 3 times as many votes as the UNP. The appeal of the UNP as the main opposition has been waning. The reasons are not likely to be due mainly on ideological issues; but substantially due to the decay of the ground level UNP infrastructure and allegiances in the Southern areas. (See analysis relating to the NWP).
- In the NP, the UNP had less than 1% of the vote, and the effective opposition to the TNA is the UPFA. Despite the near total dominance over every institution and the huge advantage of state resources, which the governing UPFA deploys quite brazenly for electioneering, The TNA received more than four times the votes of the UPFA. The UPFA is clearly interested in appealing to the Northern voter, but its assumptions have backfired and its actual conduct seems to have had the opposite effect.

Future of Left Politics: In the last few decades, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) has been at the forefront of energising left politics and combining economic issues of the poor with nationalist sentiment. Presently, however, nationalist-sentiment has been adopted more effectively by "right-wing" politics, and leftist concerns are largely without strong representation.

- One of the stark signals of left-political decay, in this election is the overtaking of the JVP by the newly emerged Democratic Party (DP) under the leadership of Sarath Fonseka (previously the army commander, as well as a joint opposition candidate for the Presidential Elections). Though lacking the organisational structure of established parties the DP still attracted almost twice as many votes as the JVP.
- Nevertheless, it is still premature to predict the future of the 'third space' of Sri Lankan politics. The JVP has recently been weakened by a break-up that created the Frontline Socialist Party (FSP). This fissure could be one reason for the current weakness. The vacuum created on issues of justice and poverty means that the JVP, FSP or other extant left-groups may yet be able to renew left-politics in Sri Lanka in the short to medium term.

Future of SLMC and Muslim politics: The failure of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress SLMC in this election is not surprising, given the series of criticisms leveled against the party leadership for its inaction and continuous alignment with the government by many sectors of the Muslim community. One of the main risks in the country's politics is the possibility of radicalising Muslim politics against the background of increasing anti-Muslim attacks and the inability of channeling their grievances through the conventional moderate leadership of the SLMC.

- In the NWP (11% Muslim), the SLMC gained 2.6 % of the vote. In the CP (10% Muslim), the SLMC won 1.5 % of the vote. The results suggest that Muslims in the South are not enthusiastic about the main Muslim political party.
- In the NP, the SLMC won 1.5 % of the vote, despite a 3 % Muslim population. It declined not just in voter share but in absolute numbers as well. In the 2011 Local Government Polls in the NP, the SLMC received 9,540 votes, even though the voter turnout was 53%. Despite the turnout increasing to 68% the absolute number of the SLMC votes declined by a third to only 6,761 votes in the present election (Refer Annex 1).
- Even though voters might well recognise issues in terms of their Muslim identity (e.g. the rise of anti-Muslim Buddhist-Sinhala extremism in the South, and tensions between Tamil and Muslim populations in the North over resettlement and livelihood issues) the indications are that the SLMC is losing the confidence of the Muslim voter.
- In response to the perceived weakness of the SLMC, other political parties, including the TNA, have fielded Muslim candidates to attract Muslim votes. Political representation for Muslims could continue in this direction until the SLMC or other party better represents the Muslim people's concerns.

Post-war social contract: The NPC election created a fresh opportunity for productive dialogue on the “post-war social contract” between the numerically dominant Sinhalese and other ethnic groups in the country.

- The opportunity for opening such a dialogue on the “post-war social contract” was missed, when the war ended in May 2009. Within the Southern Polity, the “ethnic-conflict” was blamed exclusively on the LTTE, despite it having a much longer history.
- Since May 2009 there has been a resurgence of Sinhala-Buddhist extremism, outbidding even groups such as the JHU, which has made discussion of ethnic reconciliation difficult by promoting antagonism and intolerance.
- The huge democratic legitimacy gained by the TNA, along with its moderate political postures, provides an opportunity to forge a political solution and reduce the space for radicalism and extremism.
- The TNA has anchored its expectations on what has already been previously forged in proposals and agreements through political processes and dialogue in the South.
- The future potential for this “post-war social contract” will however also depend on how both the TNA and the government handle their respective social forces within their post-election environment.
- The government for its part may need to change its approach and incorporate a strong sense of justice and equality as the basis for forging its position rather than balancing its position between Sinhala-Buddhist ideology and the realist-pragmatism of managing its international relations and reputation.

Background

The Provincial Council (PC) system was introduced by the 13th amendment to the Constitution, pursuant to the Indo-Lanka accord in 1987, as a political solution for the ethnic conflict. Ironically, for the last twenty-five years, the PC system only functioned in predominantly Sinhala Provinces.

This is the first PC election exclusively for the North. The region was governed directly by the center since 1990 and before 1988. Between 1988 and 1990 the region was governed by the North-Eastern Provincial Government. This government existed as a result of the Indo-Lanka accord. The Accord stipulated that the Northern and Eastern Provinces be merged for a period so that it would be represented by one elected Council during that period. The first election for North-Eastern Province was held on 19 November 1988. The election was won by the “Eelam People’s Revolutionary Liberation Front” (EPRLF). The Council did not last long. On 1 March 1990, the Chief Minister Varatharajah Perumal moved a motion in the North Eastern Provincial Council, in violation of the constitution, unilaterally declaring the province an Independent Tamil State. President Ranasinghe Premadasa responded by dissolving the Council, as the President is constitutionally empowered to do.

The merger of the North-East Councils was contested before the Supreme Court in 2006. The Court determined that the merger was null and void, and the provinces were once again formally de-merged as 1 January 2007.

The first election for the Eastern Province was held on 10 May 2008, and the second on 8 September 2012. The NPC election was delayed citing practical difficulties. Despite this, since January 2010, General, Presidential and Local Government Elections were held in the Province.

Central and North-Western Province elections were held in 2009. By statute, provincial elections need to be called every five years. However, these two provincial elections were called early, after just 4 years. Calling elections early and holding them in piecemeal fashion (not holding all the provincial council or all the local government election on the same date – but staggering them over many months) is the UPFA government’s *modus operandi*. The Presidential, General, Local Government and many Provincial Government Elections over the last decade were called well before their due dates.

Northern Province

Setting and Context

The NP, with a total population of just over a million people (Census, 2012), consists of five districts: **Jaffna, Vavuniya, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullativu** (in order of population). The Jaffna District accounts for over half the province's population. On the whole, home to just over 5% of Sri Lanka's population; it isn't a very populous province.

The province's population is 94% Tamil, with the Sinhalese and Muslims at 3% each. Almost a third of Sri Lanka's total Tamil population lives in the NP.

Since the war's close in 2009, little or no progressive political debate about the post-war social contract exists in the country. Instead, helped by their participation in government, Sinhalese nationalist voices are amplified. They opposed the previously somewhat popular idea that government devolving power and forging reconciliation could address past concerns.

The JHU and NFF launched a campaign to dilute some devolved powers of the PCs before the NPC election was held. This campaign was resisted by other UPFA alliance members such as the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP), Communist Party (CP), Democratic Left Front (DLF) and a few detractors in the UPFA. Other senior government ministers and officials, including Defense Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, kept making public statements opposing the 13th amendment. In particular, they were against the status quo where land and police powers are devolved (though not administratively implemented) under the PC system.

Meanwhile, a second voice emerged, arguing for the NPC elections and for implementing some devolution mechanisms in the North. Their argument took a pragmatic and realist approach, against the backdrop of increasing international pressure over human rights and minority issues in the country.

Holding this election departs from the government's general resistance to developing solutions to the ethnic conflict by devolving political power. The departure is explained by recognising that the decision was internally justified in realist and pragmatic terms, rather than on the basis of addressing minority concerns. As some government connected analysts have publicly claimed, the President's decision to have NPC elections should be understood as a decision based on careful assessment of "Sri Lanka's overall economic and strategic-diplomatic situation", especially after his recent visits in China and Japan¹.

It is within this context that holding the first ever NPC elections in a still militarised province is a significant event.

¹ Jayatilleka, Dayan, <http://groundviews.org/2013/07/06/northern-provincial-council-prudence-prevails-for-now/>

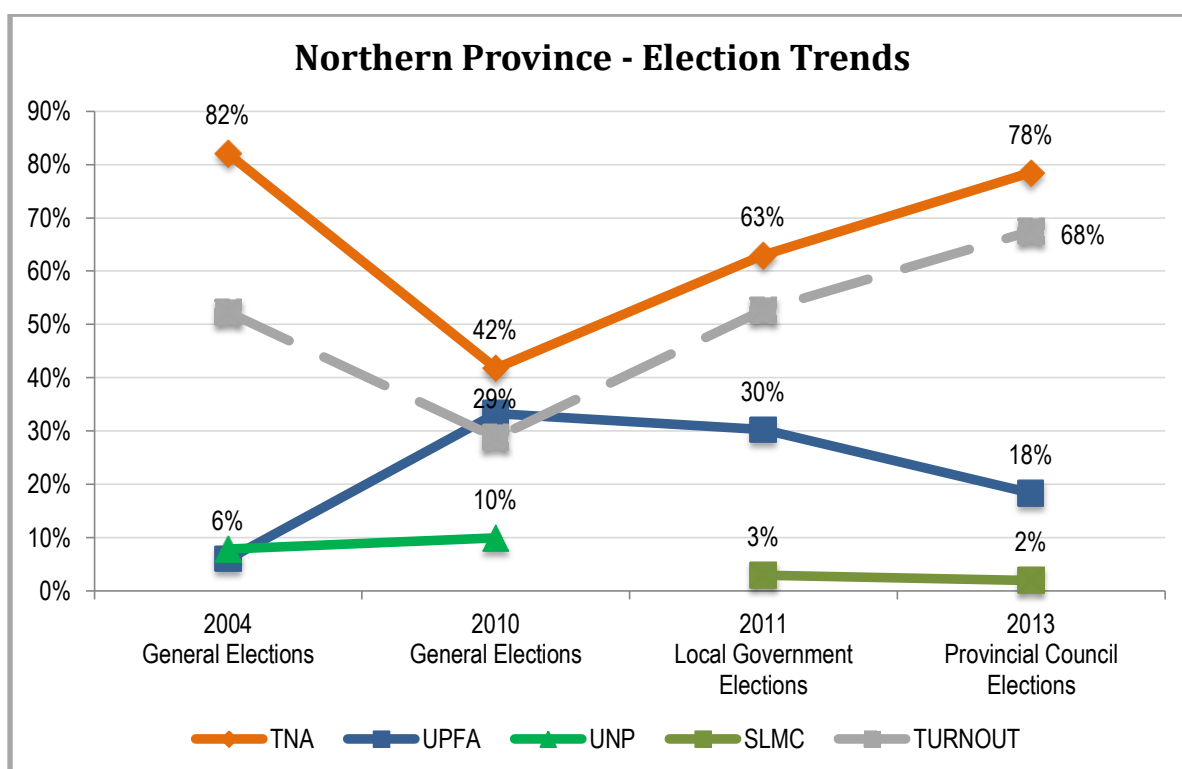
Analysis of Results

Table 1: Northern Province Election Results, September 2013

Name of the Party/Independent Group	Votes Received	Percentage of valid votes	No. of Members Elected
Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi	353,595	78.48%	30
United People's Freedom Alliance	82,838	18.38%	7
Sri Lanka Muslim Congress	6,761	1.50%	1
Others	7,380	1.64%	0
Total Valid Votes	450,574	100	38

Source: Verité Research Sri Lanka Elections Database

The TNA recorded a landslide victory, with a 78% vote share compared to the UPFA's 18%. In the Jaffna peninsula the TNA's margin was 85% compared to the UPFA's 14%. In the last local government elections in 2011, TNA received 63% of the provincial vote, while UPFA's vote share remained substantial at 30%.



Source: Verité Research Sri Lanka Elections Database

The Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP), a UPFA coalition member, fared particularly badly and failed to win a single polling division. The UPFA's vote share in the EPDP stronghold of Kayts was 31.48%, whereas it obtained 77% of the votes in 2011.

At a rudimentary level there are two basic factors that explain this gain by the TNA.

- The driving factor for the TNA's victory is their ability to "get the vote out" by encouraging and enabling its supporters to get to the polling booth. While the TNA vote share increased by 15%, the absolute number of votes polled by the TNA increased by 86% (162,970), an increase from 190,625 in 2011 to 353,595 in 2013.
- The second is its ability to win over some of those who voted for the UPFA in the past. However, compared with the local government election of 2011, the absolute number of the UPFA votes has declined by only 8,721 from 91,559 to 82,838 (despite it showing up as a large percentage drop). So this is not the driving factor.

At another level of analysis, we can examine the negative and positive messages that can be extrapolated from the vote. What did Northern Tamil people vote against? And what did they vote for?

Negative Messages:

- **IDP Resettlement Discontent:** If the increase in voter turnout also reflects to an extent the resettling of the Internally Displaced People (IDPs), then one message to the government is that the IDPs are registering their protest for the way they have been treated in the aftermath of the war and the outcome of their resettlement.
- **Rejecting Government's Recipe for Reconciliation:** It would seem that the Tamil voter has rejected the government's approach to reconciliation, despite its many tangible benefits. The government's approach has been based exclusively on restoring infrastructure and creating economic linkages, as opposed to expanding the political and democratic space for agency and decision making.
- **Rejecting Tamil Proxies of the Government:** The EPDP has been the government's main Tamil proxy in the North. Through its proximity to government, the EPDP was able to bolster its popularity through patronage opportunities. The serious decline of the EPDP votes share in this election suggests that the Northern voters are now less impressed by the ideas or opportunities presented by Tamil parties that are in coalition with the government, and do not register them as reflecting the Tamil people's aspirations.

Positive Messages

- **Consolidation and Unity:** The overwhelming support for the TNA notwithstanding the class, caste and regional differences, and in the midst of other more radical Tamil political groups, suggests that the Northern voter is for empowering the Tamil voice through consolidation and unity, and has made a clear political statement in that regard. (This could be considered a victory for Jaffna civil society groups and independent Tamil media that have been campaigning for consolidation of the Tamil voice for some time).
- **Priority to Political Citizenship:** The outcome also signals that the Tamil voter is more concerned about their political citizenship aspirations, over their economic and material aspirations. This is brought to focus sharply by the voting from amongst the fishing communities, which were generally a stronghold of the EPDP.

These communities had two sets of reasons to reject the TNA:

(1) The TNA leadership was not seen to have taken meaningful steps towards protecting them against the rampant illegal incursions by Indian fisherman.

(2) The traditionally high caste leadership of the TNA is generally not seen by them as being sensitive to the material concerns of the low caste fishing communities. Nevertheless, while their professional and caste-communitarian concerns may have been neglected, the TNA solidly championed the wider political citizenship aspirations of the Northern Tamil people, and their vote shifted to the TNA in this election.

- **Banking on the TNA:** Northern voters have shown themselves in this election to be firmly banking on the TNA, and endorsing it, as the most effective vehicle for uniting the Northern Tamil Voice and representing their political citizenship aspirations. When examining the preferential votes, Chief Ministerial candidate C.V. Wigneswaran came first, being marked in 132,255 valid votes. As a percentage of valid votes in the contesting district, Wigneswaran had 52% which was better than the much celebrated Dayasiri Jayasekera (Kurunegala district in the NWP), who was the next highest, with 43%. (Refer Annex 1 and Annex 2)
- **Three highest district percentages go to TNA's ITAK:** Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi (ITAK) is the major constituent party of the TNA and the TNA contests under the ITAK symbol. The highest share of district preference votes was gathered by ITAK's A. Pasupathi in Killinochchi, who was selected in 60% of the valid votes; and the second highest was also ITAK's T. Kurukularasa, also in Killinochchi who was selected in 58% of the valid votes. Wigneswaran contested in the more populous Jaffna district, and his is the third highest percentage on any district vote count. (Refer Annex 2)

North Western Province

Setting and Context

The NWP consists of just two districts: **Kurunegala** and **Puttalam** (in order of population). The Province is home to almost 12 %of Sri Lanka's population- the majority are Sinhala (86%), with Muslim (11%) and Tamil (3%) minorities.

The government's decision to hold PC elections in North Western and Central Provinces together with the Northern Province was a pragmatic choice based on strategic calculations on the balance between internal and external political forces. The pragmatism had two facets. One was in **buffering**, the other in **leveraging**.

Buffering: The election buffered the government's image in two ways. On one hand, the government could have calculated on a significant victory in the South that would help buffer its image against the prospected loss in the North. On the other hand, buffering happened by presenting the events (especially the NPC election) as an indication that democracy was marching solidly forward, and that the government was committed to expanding democratic space.

Leveraging: On the other hand, throughout the election campaign, the government leveraged the NPC election and associated electioneering to create fear among voters in the other two provincial councils, that the country faced a "separatist threat". This then helped the UPFA attract votes based on its credentials of defeating the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Prominent coalition partners in the government (not in numbers, but in voice), such as the JHU and NFF and some Sinhala nationalist voices within the UPFA argued that holding the NPC elections itself is tantamount to compromising the government's military victory against the LTTE and surrendering itself to Tamil separatism.

The Jayasekera Switch: In addition to this, the dramatic switch to the government provincial list by popular United National Party (UNP) parliamentarian Dayasiri Jayasekara slanted the odds significantly further in favour of the government in the NWP.

A Litmus Test: The NWP was the most predominantly Sinhala area in this election and an ideal testing ground for how Sinhalese voters are reacting to the mainstream political developments over the last four years after the end of the war.

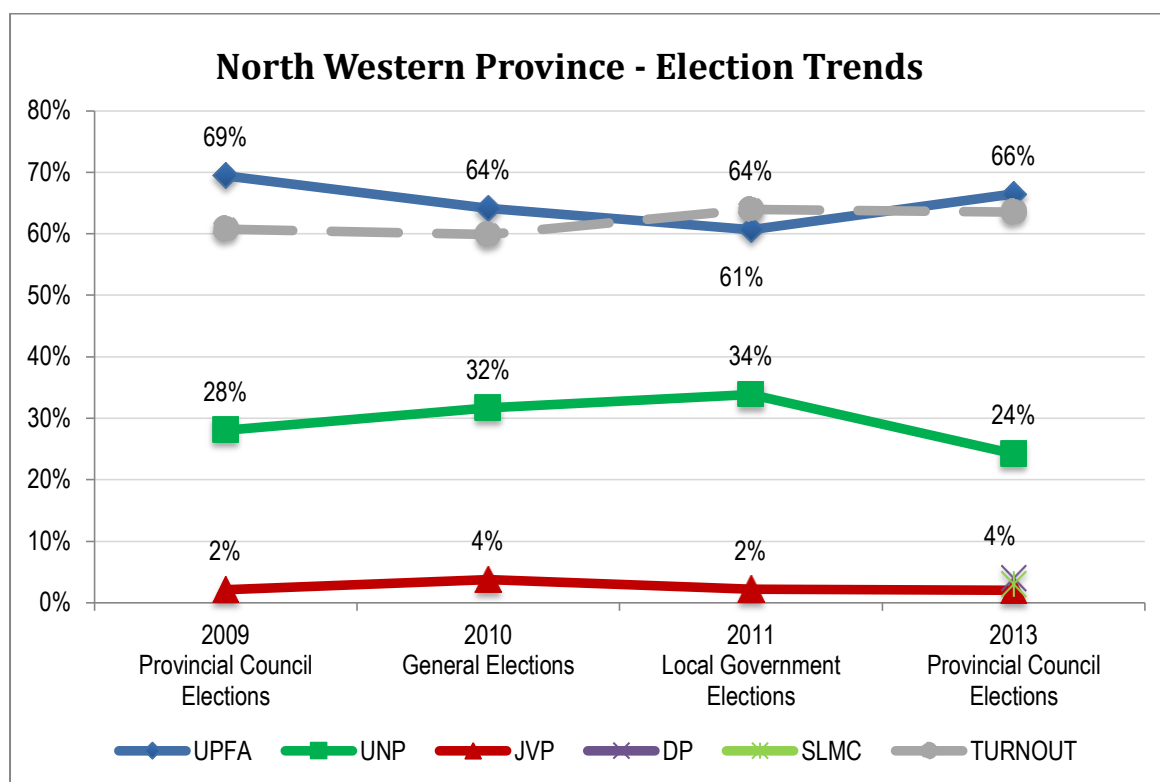
Analysis of Results

Table 2: North-Western Province Election Results, September 2013

Name of the Party/Independent Group	Votes Received	Percentage of valid votes	No. of Members Elected
United People's Freedom Alliance	705,188	66.43%	34
United National Party	257,011	24.21%	12
Democratic Party	46,114	4.34%	3
Sri Lanka Muslim Congress	27,860	2.62%	2
People's Liberation Front	19,624	1.85%	1
Others	5,690	0.54%	0
Total Valid Votes	1,061,487	100%	52

Source: Verité Research Sri Lanka Elections Database

The UPFA recorded a comprehensive victory, winning two-thirds of the total votes. The UNP on the other hand slid to an all-time low of 24% voter share. Past conventions of election analysis, that place the UNP with an unshakeable base of about 33% in the Southern Provinces, are becoming invalidated by such election results in the last 5 years.



Source: Verité Research – Sri Lanka Elections Database

The UPFA increased their vote share from 2011 by almost 6%, and this could have been entirely at the UNP's expense. The Jayasekara switch is the likely cause of most of this increase. His personal preferential vote count amounted to 43% of the Kurunegala district, from which he stood, and (because it is a highly populous district) 32% of the total NWP valid votes.

The Democratic Party: The DP championed by the ex-Military Commander, Sarath Fonseka, who contested the Presidential Election in 2010 was the new kid in the block. The DP made a respectable entry, gathering 4% of the votes. Compared to 2011 the UNP lost 9% of vote share: both the Jayasekara switch and the DP would have contributed to UNPs poor showing.

JVP in the Doldrums: The JVP vote share showed no increase from the past and remained the same at 2%. The fact that the JVP failed to capitalise on growing discontent on bread and butter issues as well as governance issues (the military suppression of villages protesting the pollution of their water in the Gampaha district) would not have been far from voters' minds. It seems that the dissenting voter chose the DP over the JVP.

Government's Resilience

The "big story" of the NWP elections is the comprehensive victory of the government with a record number of preferential votes for Dayasiri Jayasekara. The government vote share increased to 66%, which was a big jump-up from the 61% it had at the 2011 local government elections and higher even than the 64% it had in the General Elections in 2010.

Vote not affected by discontents: The government showed its ability to consistently win elections in the Southern Provinces with same level of popular support, despite issues such as the increasing cost of living and lack of tolerance for democratic dissent. There are two popular explanations for this phenomenon. One is on the basis of **Nationalism**, and the other on the basis of **Opposition**. But the actual mechanics of this victory are more complex, and involves an understanding **Ground-level Allegiances** and **Elite Local-Networks**.

Nationalism: The nationalism argument explains support for the government not on the basis of governance and economic results but on the basis of it becoming the repository of popular Sinhala-Nationalist ideology. The argument presumes that the government's Sinhala-Nationalist credentials have become unshakeable after the routing of the LTTE and the associated triumphalism.

Opposition: This explanation argues that the anemic image of the opposition prevents voters defecting from the UPFA despite many discontents that they might have. This image is especially acute for the main Opposition Party, the UNP, damaged by a string of losses, weakened by a host-of crossovers (away from the party), and discredited by a perennial leadership crisis . That is, voters do not see a viable, attractive alternative.

Ground-level Allegiances: Jayasekera's stellar performance in the NWP election, after leaving the UNP, might open an analytical window to understand the limitations of the **Nationalism** and **Opposition** explanations.

First, Jayasekera is not strongly identified with Sinhala-Nationalist ideology; rather, he supported the idea that ethnic conflict should be resolved by political means (even though he

was also critical of the UNP leadership's political miscalculation in appearing unsupportive of the military during the war).

Second, Jayasekera's votes did not come to him from only UPFA voters, despite his switch to the UPFA. From results in his home of Paduwasnuwara, it is clear that huge support for Jayasekera came from his customary base, which he had while in the UNP as well.

The overwhelming support he received from his own hometown indicates another important factor in winning elections in the local level; that is the ability to harness ground-level organisers and mobilisers that broker popular support, mostly through personally cultivated allegiances. Many previously UNP Pradeshiya Sabha members and local organisers joined Jayasekera soon after he crossed over to the UPFA and worked to bolster his campaign.

Elite-Local-Networks: Another important factor of Jayasekera's success was his ability to engage the support of some senior Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) strongmen in the area including Minister S.B. Navinna, Jayarathna Herath and Salinda Dissanayake. These seniors representing elite-political networks of the area started endorsing Jayasekera, which suggests that their ground-level-allegiances may also have been tapped in Jayasekera's favour.

This combination of Ground-Level Allegiances and Elite Local-Networks placed Jayasekera ahead, even while the President's son, Namal Rajapaksa, publicly pledged his support to the Johan Fernando, who was Jayasekera's main contender from within the UPFA.

The manner in which Ground-Level Allegiances function in the present day Sri Lanka has evolved significantly in the last two decades and a deeper discussion of it is not be provided here. The point is that the electoral resilience of the UPFA and the weakness of the UNP cannot be explained simply by the ideological strength of the UPFA or the leadership crisis within the UNP. It is governed substantially by the present day anatomy of ground level and area specific mechanisms that work to make political campaigns successful.

Central Province

Setting and Context

The CP consists of three Districts: **Kandy, Nuwara-Eliya, Matale** (in order of population). The Central Province is home to almost 13 %of Sri Lanka’s population.

The CP has a relatively large Tamil population. But the political identity of these Tamils is different from the Northern Province Tamils. 19% identify themselves as “Indian Tamil” (tracing their legacy to the indentured labour brought from India under colonial rule). Only 5% are identified as “Sri Lankan Tamil”. The Muslim population accounts for 10% of the Province. The Sinhala population at an overall of 66 % is still predominant in the province, though the distribution is not even: in the Nuwara-Eliya District “Indian Tamils” account for over 50 % of the population.

The voting patterns of this “Indian Tamil” population (still for the most part working as plantation estate labour) have long been shaped by a sense of feudalistic obligation that workers have to union bosses and the Ceylon Workers’ Congress (CWC) is the oldest standing, largest in membership and best financed union. The CWC’s greatest strength is the last name of its leader: the “Thondaman” name entrenched its power in the times of the father of the current leader.

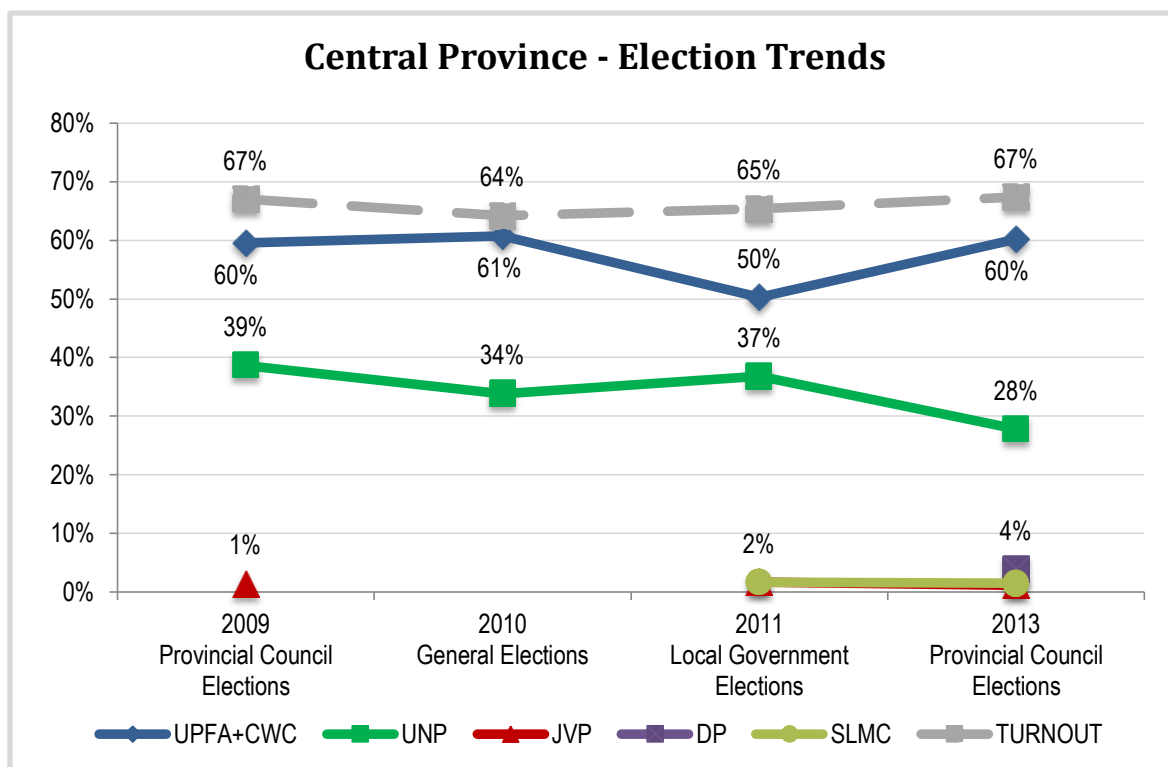
The CP has long been a UNP) stronghold, throughout the 1980s and 90s, with the Nuwara-Eliya district represented in the 80s by UNP stalwart Gamini Dissanayake. Election pacts with the CWC made the UNP especially strong in the Nuwara-Eliya district. But as the UNPs organisation and voter attraction has waned, the CWC has also drifted away and is now a UPFA coalition member.

While the living conditions of a large numbers of estate workers in the CP is among the poorest in Sri Lanka, their education and exposure is generally too weak to challenge the paltry representation they receive from those they elect to parliament and regional government.

Table 3: Central Province Election Results, September 2013

Name of the Party/Independent Group	Votes Received	Percentage of valid votes	No. of Members Elected
United People's Freedom Alliance	716,247	60.16%	36
United National Party	330,815	27.79%	16
Democratic Party	45,239	3.80%	2
Ceylon Worker's Congress (P.Wing)	29,285	2.46%	2
Up-Country People's Front	24,913	2.09%	1
Sri Lanka Muslim Congress	17,788	1.49%	1
Others	26,221	2.20%	0
Total Valid Votes	1,190,508	100%	58

Source: Verité Research Sri Lanka Elections Database



Source: Verité Research – Sri Lanka Elections Database

In the CP the UPFA’s vote share increased, quite remarkably, from 50% at the local government elections in 2011, to 59% in the provincial election two years later. At the same time, the UNP’s vote share decreased by 5%.

Four possible explanations can be considered for the significant success of the UPFA-CWC coalition in the estate sector:

- **Poverty Reduction:** The government’s statistics indicate a significant reduction in absolute poverty within the estate sector during 3 years. While the underlying data has been questioned due to the large swings in poverty statistics in the estate sector, the voting results could be reflecting significant improvement in incomes/opportunities, and appreciation of the same.
- **Collective Agreement 2013:** The collective agreement, for worker’s wages, which is signed every two years, between the major unions, government and estate owners usually undergoes months of negotiation during which time the awareness on the economic issues of workers is increased amongst the community. This year however agreement was signed hurriedly in less than two weeks of negotiations. As such, the increased awareness of community level economic concerns was bypassed, and voting seems not to have reflected these concerns either. Ironically, the collective agreement 2013, while it was positively hailed by the CWC provided much less improvements to the wages/benefits of workers than past agreements. A *Verité Insight* published in April 2013 offers a detailed analysis.
- **Future Prospects:** there is an expectation amongst estate workers, based on government promises, that their conditions will undergo a significant structural improvement, especially with regard to new housing schemes and infrastructure development.

- **Contrast with Northern Tamil Voter:** Developmental promises by the present government are often framed in patronage terms and are presented as barter for political support. That is, *clientelism* is openly asserted. Whilst the Northern Tamil voters might respond to such a prospective barter with anger and rejection, it might be the case that estate voters are more submissive and more open to clientelism, as is the Southern polity.

Coalitions of Convenience: The UPFA while it contested in coalition with the CWC in the Nuwara Eliya district, contested without the CWC in the Kandy and Matale districts, where the Sinhala Buddhist composition of the population is much greater.

SLMC: In a province with 10% Muslim population, the SLMC received only 1.5% of the vote. Muslims have been under significant pressure, especially in the Kandy district, with public anti-Muslim campaigns by Buddhist-Sinhala extremist groups in the last year. But the Muslim voter is not putting their hope on the SLMC to find a solution to this social intimidation. The SLMC performance is particularly weak when compared against the newly formed DP , which garnered almost 4% of the vote.

Annex 1

Northern Province: Votes 2004-2013 – By Political Party

Table 4: Northern Province, Results of Elections, 2004 -2013

	2004 General Elections		2010 General Elections		2011 Local Gov. Elections		2013 Provincial Council Elections	
	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
TNA	257,320	82%	106,792	42%	190,625	63%	353,595	78%
UPFA	7,259	6%	85,144	33%	91,559	30%	82,838	18%
UNP	18,612	8%	25,407	10%	7,551	2%		
SLMC					9,540	3%	6,761	2%
TURNOUT		52%		29%		53%		68%

Source: Verité Research Sri Lanka Elections Database

Annex 2

Preferential Votes

Brief Guide on preferential voting:

In the current system of provincial council elections, the voter cast his/her vote first to the party s/he prefers; secondly, s/he can cast up-to three preferential votes for individual candidates in the respective party. However, candidates can contest by district-wise, and therefore they can get preferential votes from their respective electoral district only. This system is more favourable for candidates who are contesting from relatively high populated districts when it comes to the preferential vote count. Hence, political parties are more careful to field their most favorable candidates in mostly populated districts.

Central Province

District	Party	Candidate	Votes	% of Total Valid Votes
	UPFA	Anuradha Jayaratne	107,644	16.9%
		Sarath Ekanayake	70,174	11.0%
Kandy	UNP	Azath Salley	55,385	8.7%
		J. Abdeen	45,752	7.2%
Total Valid Votes			638,097	

District	Party	Candidate	Votes	% of Total Valid Votes
	UPFA	Ramasami Muttiah	50,600	15.5%
		Ram Kanagaraj	48,825	14.9%
Nuwara Eliya	UNP	K.K. Piyadasa	21,972	6.7%
		Jayalath Dissanayake	16,556	5.1%
Total Valid Votes			327,143	

North Western Province

District	Party	Candidates	Votes	% of Total Valid Votes
	UPFA	Dayasiri Jayasekera	336,327	43.0%
		Johan Fernando	134,433	17.2%
		D.B. Herath	60,960	7.8%

Kurunegala

UNP	J.C. Alawathuwala	22,408	2.9%
	Shamal Senerath	21,958	2.8%
	M. Perera	20,474	2.6%
	Ajith Rohana	17,807	2.3%
	A.S. Perera	15,658	2.0%

Total Valid Votes	782,832
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District	Party	Candidates	Votes	% of Total Valid Votes
Puttalam	UPFA	Sanath Nishantha Perera	62,996	22.6%
		Sumal Tissera	26,695	9.6%
		Sandhya Kumara Rajapaksa	24,818	8.9%
		Chinthaka Mayadunna	24,504	8.8%
		Indrani Dassanayaka	21,830	7.8%
		Piyasiri Ramanayaka	21,323	7.7%
		Pravenn Fernando	20,085	7.2%
		Palitha Rohana	17,410	6.2%
		Ashoka Wadigamangawa	17,218	6.2%

UNP	Hector Appuhamy	19,762	7.1%
	Kingsly Lal Fernando	17,674	6.3%
	Jagath Chithral Fernando	15,382	5.5%
	Ashoka Priyantha	14,852	5.3%
	Hemantha Sisira Kumara	14,278	5.1%

Total Valid Votes	278,655
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Northern Province

District	Party	Candidates	Votes	% of Total Valid Votes
	ITAK	C.V. Wigneswaran	132,255	52%
		Anandi Sashidaran	87,870	35%
		D.Siddharthan	39,715	16%
Jaffna	UPFA	K. Kamalendran	13,632	5%
		A. Ramanadan	10,034	4%
Total Valid Votes			253,542	

District	Party	Candidates	Votes	% of Total Valid Votes
	ITAK	A. Pasupathi	27,267	60%
		T. Kurukularasa	26,427	58%
Killinochchi	UPFA	Y. Thawanathan	3,753	8%
Total Valid Votes			45,459	

District	Party	Candidates	Votes	% of Total Valid Votes
	ITAK	A. Jeganadan	9,309	26%
		S. Sivamohan	929	3%
Mullaitivu	UPFA	A.L.J.Javahar	1,726	5%
Total Valid Votes			35,982	

District	Party	Candidates	Votes	% of Total Valid Votes
	ITAK	A.S. Primoos Seraiva	12,927	24.3%
		B. Deniswaran	12,827	24.1%
Mannar	UPFA	A. Rifkhan Bathiudeen	11,130	20.9%
Total Valid Votes			53,226	

District	Party	Candidates	Votes	% of Total Valid Votes
	ITAK	P. Sathyalingam	19,656	31.5%
		A.K.T. Linganathan	11,901	19.1%
Vavuniya	UPFA	Dharmapala Seneviratne	5,148	8.3%
		A. Jayathilake	4,806	7.7%
Total Valid Votes			62,365	

Data Sources:

'Provincial Council Elections 2013 – Results and Preferential Votes – Central Province, 2013'. Available at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/infographics/36076-provincial-council-elections-2013-results-and-preferential-votes-central-province.html>

'Provincial Council Elections 2013- Results and Preferential Votes –North Western Province, 2013', Available at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/infographics/36080-provincial-council-elections-2013--results-and-preferential-votes-north-western-province.html>

'Preferential votes of 10 districts released 2013', Available at <http://www.newsfirst.lk/english/node/28940>

**CONTACT: VERITÉ RESEARCH, NO.5A POLICE PARK PLACE, COLOMBO 05, SRI LANKA
TEL: + 94 112 055544; FAX: +94 719379567; EMAIL: RECEPTION@VERITERESEARCH.ORG**

