



II

Recent Developments: An Opinion Poll Conducted from 23rd to 29th January 2002

IMPACT OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT ON THE PEACE PROCESS

In contrast to the high level of uncertainty (59.1%) that prevailed prior to the General Elections, 58% of Sri Lankans in January 2002 feel the new United National Front (UNF) government will have a positive effect on the peace process. At the same time 31.1% are uncertain of the effect the new UNF government will have on the peace process. 5.9% believe the UNF will not have an effect on the peace process, while 4.9% believe the new government will have a negative effect on the same.

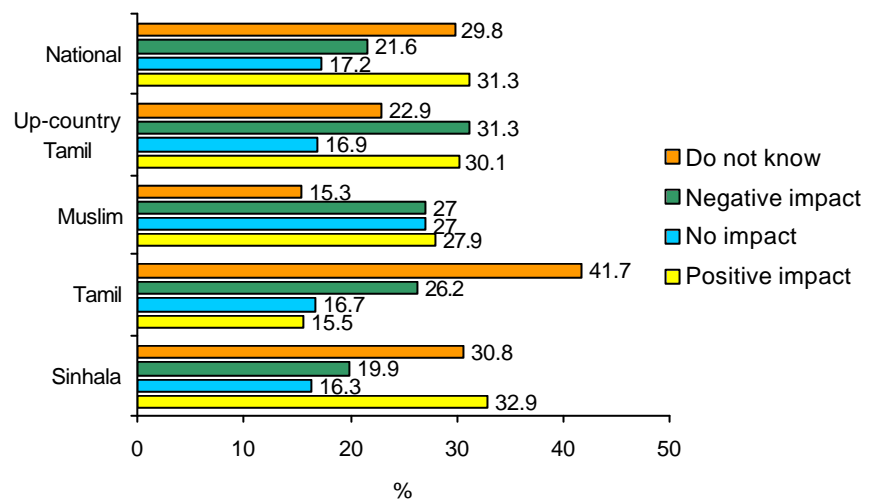
From an ethnic viewpoint, the minorities are more optimistic than the Sinhalese, of whom 36% are sceptical of the effect the new government will have on the peace process.

For the first time in Sri Lankan political history the General Elections resulted in the advent of a system of cohabitation i.e. the President and the Government belonging to two different political parties. Though 31.3% of Sri Lankans state that this formation will have a positive impact on the peace process, 29.8% of the population are sceptical of this political formulation. **This scepticism is expressed predominantly by the Tamils - 41% of whom are unsure what of the effects**

of cohabitation. The greatest optimism on the other hand, is shown by the Sinhalese, 32.9% of whom believe that cohabitation will have a positive impact on the peace process.

77% of Sri Lankans in January 2002 are aware of the existence of post-election violence, but 35.1% do not think that post-election violence has an effect on the peace process. At the same time 33.3% think the contrary. The percentage of those who do not think there is a link between post-election violence and the peace process is considerably higher amongst the Muslims and the Up-country Tamils, with 46.8% and 43.4% stating they do not believe that post-election violence has a bearing on the peace process.

The President and the present Government are from two different parties. In your opinion what will be the impact of this formation on the peace process ?



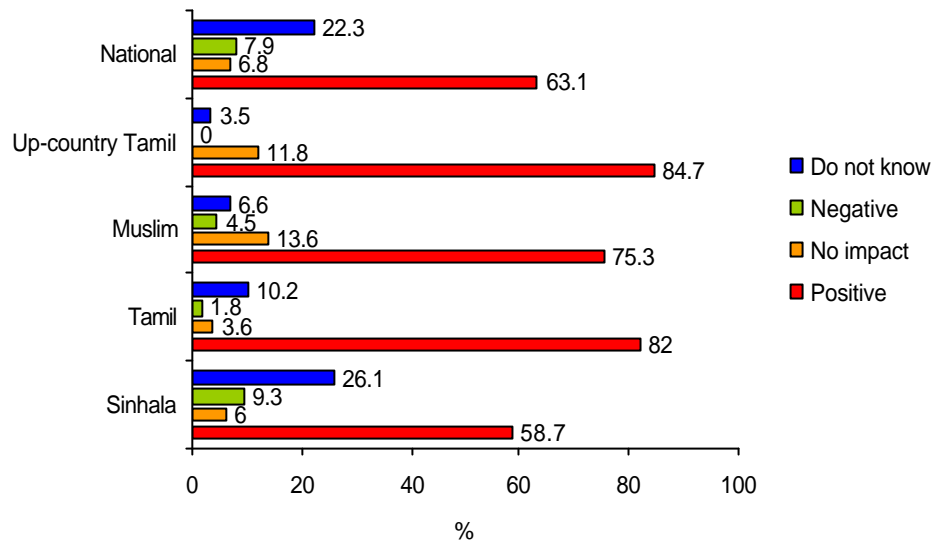


CEASEFIRE

91.9% Sri Lankans are aware of the unilateral ceasefires declared by the Government and the LTTE. But 17.5% of the Up-country Tamils are unaware of the declaration of ceasefires.

Furthermore, over half of those who are aware of the ceasefires believe they will have a positive impact on the peace process. This optimism is found mainly amongst the minority communities, rather than the Sinhalese, of whom 26.1% are doubtful of the impact the ceasefires will have on the peace process. At the same time 13.6% and 11.8% amongst the Muslim and Up-country Tamil communities assume the ceasefires will have no impact on the peace process.

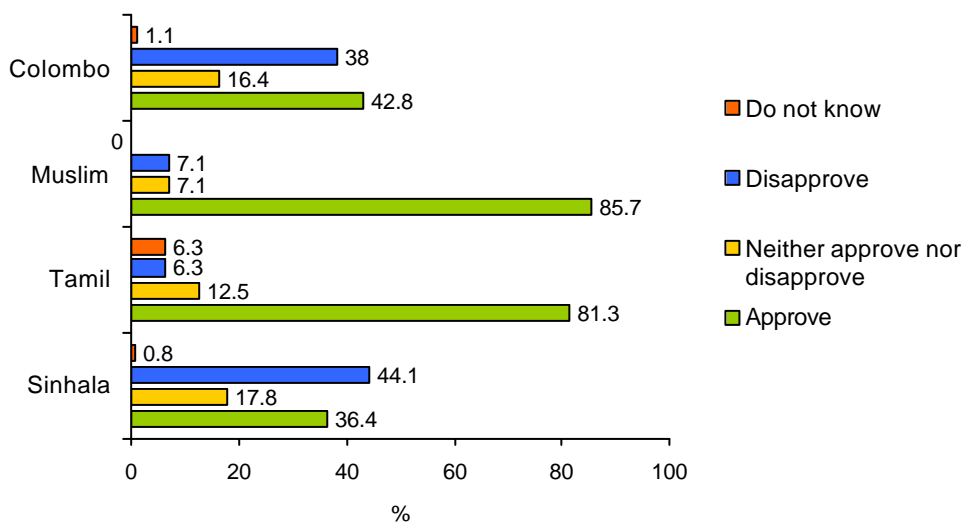
If aware of the ceasefires, the impact of the ceasefires on the peace process.

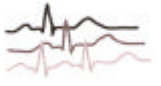


REMOVAL OF TWO MAJOR ROADBLOCKS IN COLOMBO

An overwhelming majority in the Colombo district (88.3%) are aware of the removal of two major roadblocks as a part of the peace process. The highest level of ignorance of this removal is demonstrated amongst the Sinhalese community (13.2%). 38% disapprove the removal of the

Approval or disapproval of the removal of 2 major roadblocks in Colombo

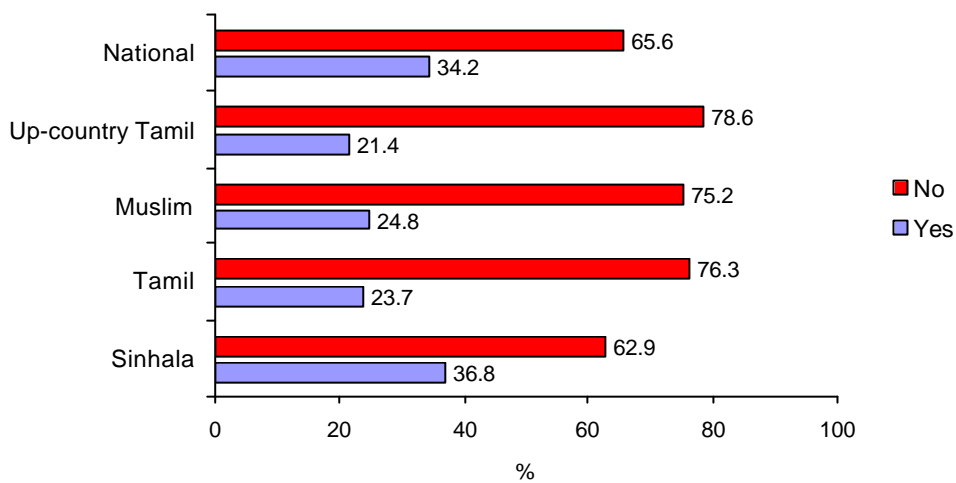




roadblocks while 16.4% are unsure of what effects the removal might have. While a majority (44.1%) in the Sinhalese community show disapproval at the removal of the roadblocks, 17.8% do not know what to make of it. **Furthermore, while 81.3% of Tamils approve of the removal of the roadblocks only 36.4% of Sinhalese concur.**

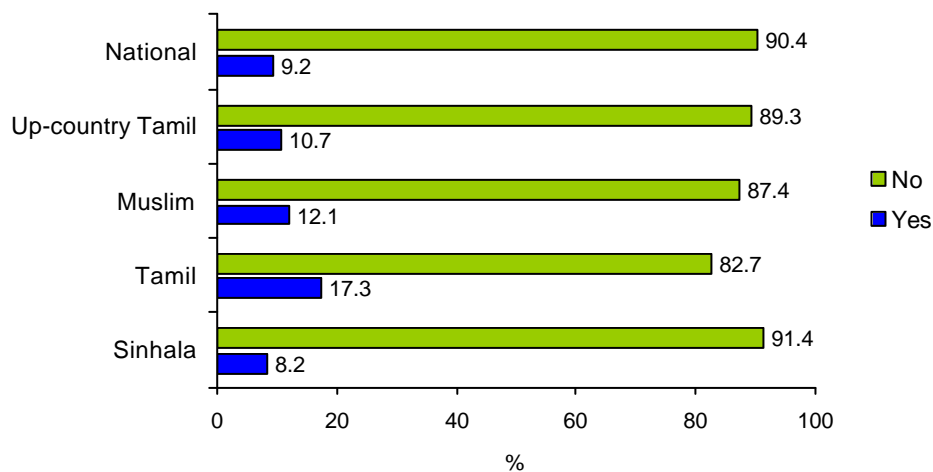
POSTER CAMPAIGNS

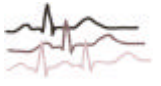
Have you seen the posters put up by the JVP about the Government's initiatives towards peace talks with the LTTE ?



The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) poster campaign on the Government's initiatives towards negotiations with the LTTE captured the attention of 34.2% of Sri Lankans; the highest level of awareness is demonstrated amongst the Sinhalese community, 36.8% of whom had seen the JVP posters.

Have you seen the posters that say 77% of the population are for negotiations ?





On the other hand, an overwhelming majority (90.4%) were ignorant of the poster campaign conducted by the Initiative for Political and Conflict Transformation (INPACT). Again, the highest level of ignorance is demonstrated amongst the Sinhalese community, 91.4% of whom had seen not seen the INPACT posters.

The January poll shows that people who had seen the INPACT posters were influenced* by their message - that peace talks were a means to bring peace. In contrast, the JVP posters influenced* people to believe that an outright military victory could be claimed by the government. While only 9.2% in January had seen the INPACT posters, 34% had seen the JVP posters.

* (Statistically significant at a 5% level)

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