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Interim Report Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha Election 2024 24th October 2024

Background

The Galle District Returning Officer rejected the nomination paper submitted by the Democratic United National Front for the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha in the 2018 local government elections. The reason for the rejection was that an authorised officer of the party did not personally submit the nomination paper. Following this incident, the party's candidates filed a fundamental rights petition.

As a result, the Supreme Court issued an interim injunction preventing the holding of the election for the Elpitiya local council until the case was resolved. A year later, a three-judge panel ordered an immediate election for the Elpitiya Local Council (Pradeshiya Sabha). The Election Officer was also instructed to accept the previously rejected nomination papers.

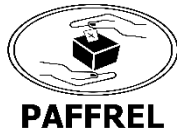
In Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha Election 2019, Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna received 23372 votes (56.31%) and secured 17 wards while United National Party received 10113 (24.37%) votes, United People's Freedom Alliance received 5273 (12.71%), and People's Liberation Front received 2435 (5.87%) votes. With 53384 registered electors of the election, 41503 (98.58%) votes were valid and 597 (1.42%) votes were rejected. 42100 votes were polled.

The Election Commission of Sri Lanka (ECSL) has announced that the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha Election will be held on 26th October 2024. A total of 55,643 voters are registered across 17 constituencies for the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha election. The first nomination paper includes 17 candidates, while the supplementary nomination paper lists 14. Female representation includes two candidates on the first nomination paper and seven on the supplementary nomination paper.

The Returning Officer in-charge of the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha of Galle district regarding the election of Chairman, Deputy Chairman and the members of the Local Council made an announcement of acceptance of nominations for the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha Election on 26th August 2024. This came when the Election Commission formally declared that the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha Election would be held in 2024 immediately following the next presidential election. After the budget was rejected for the fourth time in a row, the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha's tenure, which began in November 2019, concluded on March 6, 2024. The Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha was taken over by a special Commissioner in accordance with the Provincial Council Act, and members' terms were extended until November 4, 2024, through a special gazette.

Nominations

Nominations for the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha Election 2024 were accepted from September 09th to 12th September 2024 at the Galle District Secretariat, according to the Election Commission and Election deposits were called on August 26 to 12:00 noon on 11th September 2024.



09 recognized political parties and two independent groups have submitted nominations, though two were rejected. A total of 10 recognized political parties and two independent groups have placed cash deposits. The Democratic People's Congress, which had previously placed a deposit, did not submit their nomination papers to contest.

Nominations were accepted submitted by the Political Parties, namely, People's United Freedom Alliance (UPFA), Janasetha Peramuna, Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP), Dewana Parapura, Jathika Janatha Pakshaya, Samagi Jana Balavegaya (SJB), National People's Power (NPP), Podujana Eksath Peramuna, and Independent Group 01 while the nominations were rejected submitted by Sri Lanka Communist Party and Independent Group (led by K.G Chaminda Prasad). Democratic People's Congress that placed deposits has not submitted their nominations. The election will elect the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and the members of the local council. Out of 28 council members, 17 members will be elected by vote on a divisional basis, while 11 will be selected through proportional representation. Voting will take place at 48 polling stations to elect 28 members to the Local Council and 279 candidates are contesting in the election.

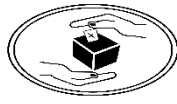
Voter Instructions

ECSL has revealed that the legal provisions have been granted in Section 54 (2) of the principal Act by Elections (Special Provisions) Act No. 28 of 2011 for persons who are totally or partially visually handicapped or physically disabled to be accompanied by another person to assist in marking the ballot paper.

Also, ECSL stated that a certificate of eligibility prescribed in the Tenth Schedule to the Parliamentary Elections Act should be handed over to the officers at the polling station. ECSL also made a media release on the application for special transportation facilities by physically disabled persons. This facility can be obtained through an application which is available at Grama Niladhari Offices in the area of authority of the relevant local authority or from the website (www.elections.gov.lk) of the Election Commission.





Also, regarding Special Transport facilities for Physically Disabled persons, Any person who is unable to travel to the polling station on foot or by a service provided by the Sri Lanka central transport board or by a regional transport board or by Sri Lanka government railway or by any public transport, by reason of any physical disability, may apply in writing under section 82 (g) of the act, by himself or on his behalf by any other person, not being a candidate, to the returning officer of the district to use any vehicle for the purpose of such conveyance.

ECSL issued a notice dated 07/10/2024 to all Electors and Postal Voters who are eligible to vote at the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha Election. Notice mentioned that every elector is entitled to one vote, which means one elector receives only one ballot paper. The ballot papers issued to voters at the polling station are printed with only the names and symbols of the contesting Parties and the words "Independent Group" and the symbols in the case of Independent Groups. The names or number of candidates or wards do not appear on the ballot paper.



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Specimen of the Ballot Paper

“A” Party		
“B” Party		
“C” Party		
Independent Group		

Adapted from the notice dated 07/10/2024 issued by the Election Commission of Sri Lanka

Voters are requested to mark only one “cross (X)” in the space provided on the right side of the name and symbol of the Party or number and symbol of the Independent Group they wish to cast their vote.

According to Section 53A(3) of the Local Government Elections Ordinance (Chapter 262), voters will have their left thumb marked with an appropriate sign to prevent double voting and ensure transparency, the Election Commission announced on 17th October 2024. This measure has been introduced in response to concerns raised about potential confusion during the polling process for the recent Presidential Election. If a voter’s left thumb is unavailable, the mark will be applied to the right thumb, or if necessary, another finger.

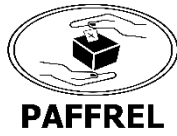
Postal Voting

The circular for Postal Voting of Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha Election was issued on 26/08/2024. Applications for the Postal Voting were accepted between 26/08/2024 to 13/09/2024. Certification of Postal Voting lists took place on 20/09/2024 while the notice of the issuance of Postal Voting on 23/09/2024 and Issuance of Postal Voting by 07/10/2024.

14/10/2024 was fixed as the Postal Voting day for all the Postal Voters of the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha Election while 18/10/2024 was the day for the Postal Voters to cast their vote on 14/10/2024 at District Election Offices in the districts where their working places are located. A total of 1576 Postal Voting applications were received and Postal voting for the election had already taken place on 14th October (Monday) while those who could not vote on the first day were given another opportunity to vote on 18th October (Friday) at the District Secretariat office Galle, the Deputy Election Commissioner said.

Election environment in Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha area

According to certain Galle District-based correspondents, the election campaign (pre-election period) appears to be proceeding peacefully overall. They are aware that, particularly in the more remote areas of the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha, there are no cut out banners of political parties, independent groups, or candidates, and that there are just paper posters of the candidates. However, one political party showed enthusiasm in the election campaign.



Social media is occupied with the Post-Presidential Election from last month, related topics, and the General Election that takes place next month, while the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha election has received little media attention.

Cooling-Off Period

Before the Cooling-Off Period commenced, on 21st October, an incident was reported on holding a banquet for party supporters by a candidate contesting the election. The Elpitiya Police, on the instructions of election authorities has stopped this. About 100 party members attended a meeting hosted by the candidate running under the cup symbol at his Elpitiya home, where he also provided food for them. The candidate who neglected to take that notice into account had already made the necessary arrangements to hold the dinner. The food and drinks that were scheduled to be provided were confiscated by the Elpitiya Police after their operation.

However, all candidates, competing political parties, and independent groups must end their election campaign operations by midnight 23/10/2024. According to ECSL, the "Cooling-Off" phase, which starts at midnight on the said date, will last until the election is conducted and the results are announced.

Election observation mission of PAFFREL

Following the announcement of the Elpitiya Pradeshiya Sabha Election 2024, PAFFREL has launched an election observation mission. This mission will deploy 46 Stationary Observers (STOs) in 48 Polling Stations, 17 Counting Centre Observers (from STOs), and 02 Mobile Team Observers (MTOs) to monitor the election process throughout the Elpitiya area.

Contact Us

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