

PRESS RELEASE

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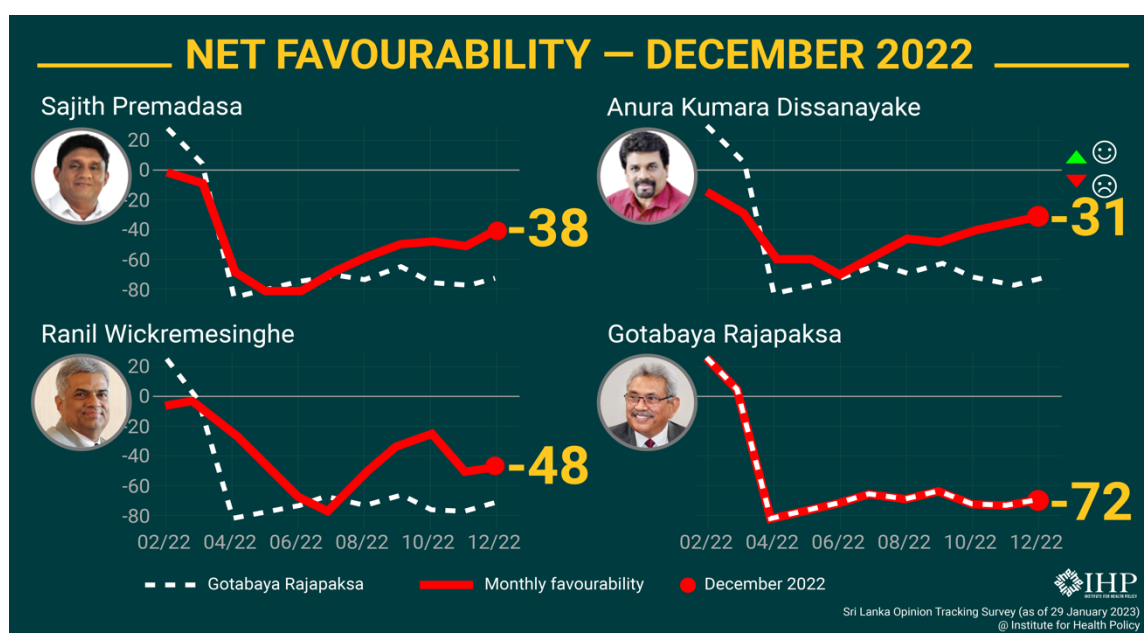
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President Ranil Wickremesinghe remained less unpopular than his predecessor as 2022 ended, but the public unhappy with all party leaders

All major political party leaders rated unfavourable by the public

The latest Sri Lanka Opinion Tracker Survey (SLOTS) polling shows that the net favourability ratings of all major party leaders remained negative through December 2022. The public's negative perception of former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has changed little since his resignation, with his net favourability rating deeply negative and stuck at -72 as the year ended.



UNP leader and President Ranil Wickremasinghe remains much less unpopular than his predecessor. But the boost in his favourability ratings after he took over the Presidency has dissipated, with his favourability rating falling back in November and December to end the year at -48.

The ratings of both SJB leader Sajith Premadasa and NPP/JVP leader Anura Kumara Disسانayake continue to recover from the lows they and other politicians reached in mid-2022. Their net favourability is now substantially better than the President's. But their ratings of -38 and -31 respectively in December, means that for every Sri Lankan who has a favourable view of them, there are another two who have a negative view.

Note to editors:

We have noted that some members of the public misunderstand media reporting of these numbers. Negative scores, *i.e.*, a net favourability rating of less than zero, means that the individual or institution is UNPOPULAR. Only positive scores, *i.e.*, net favourability is more than zero, mean that the individual or institution is POPULAR on average.

About IHP

IHP is an independent, non-partisan research centre based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The SLOTS lead investigator is Dr Ravi Rannan-Eliya of IHP, who has trained in public opinion polling at Harvard University and has conducted numerous surveys over three decades.

Methodology

SLOTS surveys a national sample of adults (ages 18 and over) reached by random digit dialling of mobile numbers, and others coming from a national panel of respondents who were previously recruited through random selection. SLOTS tracks favourability by asking respondents if they have a favourable or unfavourable opinion of a public figure or institution: net favourability being the average of the positive (+100) and negative (-100) responses. All estimates are weighted to match the national population with respect to age, sex, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sector, province, and past voting preference. Monthly estimates are based on samples of 1,000+ interviews pooled from interviews in each month and from weeks before and afterwards.

Funding

The SLOTS is made possible by funding support from the Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust, The Asia Foundation in Sri Lanka, and others, but the sponsors play no role in the study design, analysis, or interpretation of findings. Interested parties can contact IHP for more detailed data and results.