



## **Summary of Policy Proposals by Candidates for the 2024 Presidential Election**

Sri Lanka's presidential election is scheduled for Saturday, 21 September 2024. In anticipation of the election, many of the candidates have published manifestos detailing their visions for Sri Lanka. In the interest of comparing these visions for the country, the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) has prepared this document which categorises the policy proposals of the candidates in their manifestos. It was practically impossible to include the policy proposals made by all Presidential candidates in this document; as such, CPA had to limit itself to the manifestos of Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe, Mr. Sajith Premadasa, Mr. Anura Kumara Dissanayake and Mr. Namal Rajapaksa.

CPA divided the candidates' policy proposals into the categories of economic governance, constitutional reforms, rights and related issues, infrastructure and accountability, truth, and reconciliation. The table on Constitutional Reform contains policy proposals made by candidates on the issues of abolition of the Executive Presidency, the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment and devolution of power, and other constitutional amendments proposed by the candidates.

The content of each column for candidates are direct quotations from their individual manifestos on specific issues. Though CPA recognises the intersectionality of issues of many of the policy proposals made by candidates, the quotations inserted have been categorised based on the strength of relevance to the issue and ease of reference for the reader. CPA hopes that this document will be a useful tool for all citizens interested in learning more about the candidates and for anyone who is interested in engaging in a deeper analysis of the key policy proposals put forward by the candidates.

## Constitutional Reforms

Issue	Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe	Mr. Sajith Premadasa	Mr. Anura Kumara Dissanayake	Mr. Namal Rajapaksa
<b>Abolition of the Executive Presidency</b>	“The new Parliament will need to decide whether or not to abolish the Executive Presidency.”	“The SJB / SJB Alliance is committed to change the present constitution and formulation of a new constitution with proper consultation with religious dignitaries, political parties representing the parliament, and members of the civil societies. In that process, our principle is to convert our present political system to parliamentary system and with maximum devolution based on 13th amendment under one country.”	“Abolishing the executive presidency and appointing a president, without executive powers, by the parliament.”	
<b>13th Amendment/ Devolution</b>	<p>“Implementing the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Devolve power to the Provincial Council as per the</li> </ul>	“The government will be committed to fully implement the current constitution including the 13th amendment to the constitution till the passage of the new Constitution. Reaffirm the	“Introduce a new constitution that strengthens democracy and ensures equality of all citizens. This initiative will build on the constitutional reform process started in 2015 which remains incomplete. The proposed	

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	<p>Constitution. The powers of the Provincial Councils that come under Schedule 1, which are now vested under the Central Government will be devolved back to the Provincial Council.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The decision of vesting police powers to Provincial Councils will be decided by the Parliament.”</li> <li>• “The powers given under Schedule 3 that are approved by the party leaders will be given to the Provincial Councils.”</li> </ul>	<p>commitment to provincial councils by not retracting the powers granted to them, and instead, strengthen the developments made at the provincial level.”</p>	<p>constitutional reforms will guarantee equality and democracy and the devolution of political and administrative power to every local government, district and province so that all people can be involved in governance within one country.”</p>	
<b>Other Amendments</b>	<p>“The new Parliament will introduce a new election procedure based on the recommendations presented</p>	<p>“The Constitutional provision which permits Parliament to increase the number of Ministers/Deputy</p>	<p>“Introducing a new parliamentary electoral system.”</p>	<p>“A parliamentary committee consisting of MPs from the main opposition political parties will be formed to</p>

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	<p>by the Commission headed by the retired Chief Justice Priyasath Dep in making the election reforms.”</p> <p>“Peoples’ Initiative Act will further enable citizens to submit proposals to the Parliament.</p> <p>In this manner, citizens could be directly involved in the law and policy-making process of the country. This Act will further strengthen democracy practised in the country.”</p>	<p>Ministers/State Ministers in the event a National Government is formed shall be repealed.”</p> <p>“Necessary legal reforms will be implemented to ensure a minimum of 25% female representation in Parliament, Provincial Councils, and Local Government institutions”</p> <p>“The scope of the chapter on fundamental rights will be broadened to include social and economic rights, cultural rights, rights of women, children, the aged, the disabled, environmental, housing and development rights”</p>		<p>scrutinise and certify all proposed capital expenditures before approving them. This will prevent fraud or corruption before it happens.”</p> <p>“To achieve the goals of integrated development, the entire political system, including the public service, will be adapted to international standards and will be modernised in a manner suitable for the 21st century.”</p>