

## Presidential election interviews

# Sri Lankan voters reveal deep disaffection

**Our correspondents**  
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Growing political tensions surrounded yesterday's presidential election in Sri Lanka. It is expected that the results will be announced today. Whichever candidate of the two main capitalist parties—Mahinda Rajapakse of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and Ranil Wickremesinghe of the United National Party (UNP)—wins the ballot, the stage is set for a deepening political crisis and major class battles.

Election Commissioner Dayananda Dishanayaka last night announced that there had been about a 75 percent voter turnout, except in the war-ravaged north and east of the island. However, this relatively high turnout is full of contradictions.

Every day, Rajapakse and Wickremesinghe issued increasingly long lists of promises, desperate to defuse discontent among the masses toward both parties. Having ruled the country since independence, these parties have proven incapable of addressing any of the basic problems of the working people. Instead, they have intensified attacks on democratic rights and living conditions, and plunged the country into a devastating two-decade-long communal war.



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