



CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE

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Parliamentary Election 2024

Media Monitoring – CMEV

Methodology

Parliamentary Election 2024, Sri Lanka

Air Time Provided for Candidates during the Main News Bulletin (Evening News Belt) of TV Channels from 17th October to 14th November, 2024 - (Data will be presented by Minutes Vs. TV Channels for Candidates of Political Parties or Independent Groups).

TV Channels

CMEV Media Monitoring Plan for the Parliamentary Election 2024.

CMEV will conduct a comprehensive media monitoring initiative focusing on the air time allocated to campaign-related coverage of parliamentary candidates during the main evening news bulletins. The initiative will include the following key elements:

Selection of Media Channels: CMEV will monitor the main evening news bulletins of 10 selected TV channels across Sri Lanka during the election campaign period.

CMEV Media Monitoring Initiative for Parliamentary Election 2024

As part of its broader election monitoring efforts, the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) will implement a media monitoring initiative during the 2024 Parliamentary Election in Sri Lanka. The primary focus will be on the analysis of air time and coverage of campaign activities for political candidates, parties, and independent groups during the prime-time evening news bulletins across selected media outlets.

By tracking and analyzing media coverage, CMEV aims to understand how media outlets act on their obligations under the Election Commission's guidelines. It will promote fair media practices and encourage media organizations to provide balanced and unbiased election coverage.

Media plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinion, especially during elections. This initiative is critical to ensuring that no candidate or party is unfairly disadvantaged or favored by the media, thus contributing to the overall integrity of the electoral process.

One of the objectives of this initiative is to ensure that marginalized candidates – including women, youth, and minority groups – are provided fair and meaningful representation in media coverage. This not only promotes inclusivity but also ensures that all segments of society have a voice in the political process to which space in electronic media outlets are available.

1. Scope of Monitoring

CMEV will monitor the main evening news bulletins of 10 selected TV channels in Sri Lanka. These include both state-owned and private channels, ensuring that a comprehensive range of media outlets is covered. The monitoring period will span the entire election campaign, focusing on how electronic media outlets allocate air time to campaign-related coverage during their main news bulletin.

2. Key Focus Areas

The key focus areas of this media monitoring initiative are as follows:

Assess Adherence to Media Guidelines of ECSL

CMEV will evaluate whether media outlets are adhering to the Media Guidelines issued by the Election Commission of Sri Lanka. These guidelines ensure that both state and private media provide balanced coverage, ensuring equal representation of all candidates, political parties, and independent groups contesting the election.

Analyze of the Fairness of Air Time Allocation

The monitoring will carefully analyze the distribution of air time for different candidates and political entities. This involves tracking the duration and frequency of coverage provided to each candidate or party during the main news bulletins. The goal is to identify if there are any disparities in coverage and whether media outlets are offering equitable platforms to all participants.

Identify Media Biases

One of the major goals of this initiative is to assess potential media biases. CMEV will track trends in media coverage to determine whether certain candidates, political parties, or independent groups receive disproportionate attention, either positively or negatively.

3. Focus on Inclusivity in Media Representation

A significant aspect of this media monitoring initiative is to examine how media outlets cover candidates from traditionally underrepresented or marginalized groups. The focus will be on ensuring that these groups are given fair and sufficient visibility by main in the election campaign coverage. Specifically, CMEV will monitor-

3.1 Women Candidates/Supporters¹

Evaluating whether women candidates/their supporters receive equal/reasonable air time compared to their male counterparts during media coverage of news telecasting and whether media outlets highlight their policies, campaigns, and achievements.

4. Selection Criteria of TV Channels

TV channels (News Channels) mentioned below were selected based on core three criteria.

1. Number of subscribers to respective news channels (Playboard).
2. The nature of the ownership of media outlets (State and Private).
3. Representation of medium of news telecast (Sinhala/Tamil/English languages).

Selected TV Channels

TV Channel ²	Medium (S/T/E)	Ownership (State/Private)
1. Derana TV	Sinhala	Private
2. Hiru TV	Sinhala	Private
3. ITN	Sinhala	State
4. Rupavahini	English	State
5. Rupavahini	Sinhala	State
6. Shakthi	Tamil	Private
7. Sirasa TV	Sinhala	Private
8. Swarnavahini	Sinhala	Private
9. TV1	English	Private
10. Vasantham	Tamil	State

¹ The focus is on analyzing the media coverage allocated to candidates and their supporters from various political parties during evening news bulletins on 10 selected television channels. This includes assessing the comments made during campaign events held by candidates and their supporters and evaluating the overall media exposure received by the candidates and their supporters. Therefore, the analysis examines the **frequency of coverage** given to both male and female candidates and their supporters.

² [Number of subscribers of each news channel \(You Tube\)](#) were considered as one of the criteria for selecting TV channels. TV channels are listed in ascending order.

Criteria for calculating the air time:

Inclusions	Exclusions
Time allocated for news that shows election propaganda (Meetings/rallies/press conferences) of political parties/independent groups	Time duration of News Headlines
Other news with the symbol or the name of the respective political party/independent group	Air time allocated for official matters of candidates and when not identified as candidates of the parliamentary election
Official or other statements that include explicit or implied canvassing for a particular candidate/political party/independent group.	Personal news that does not carry anything about the parliamentary election candidacy
Any news related to anyone who supports the particular candidate/party/independent group/alliance	News about government statements
News that carry the term 'Parliamentary Election Candidate' or the respective symbol of the respective political party/independent group or the preferential number with name of a candidate.	General news that does not have the symbol of a candidate of the respective political party/independent group
News about any press conferences or events that directly or indirectly carry a name/a symbol/a preferential number of a candidate/s of the respective political party/independent group.	Any news that talks about common programs where there are more than one political party/independent group.

Duration of Monitoring

Starting from 17th October to 14th November, 2024.

Reporting method

Data analyses in the form of a graph/infographic will be included in CMEV's reports and disseminated via social media platforms.

Note:

Disclaimer: The air time calculation is subject to an error margin of +/- 5 seconds per day for each political party/independent group.