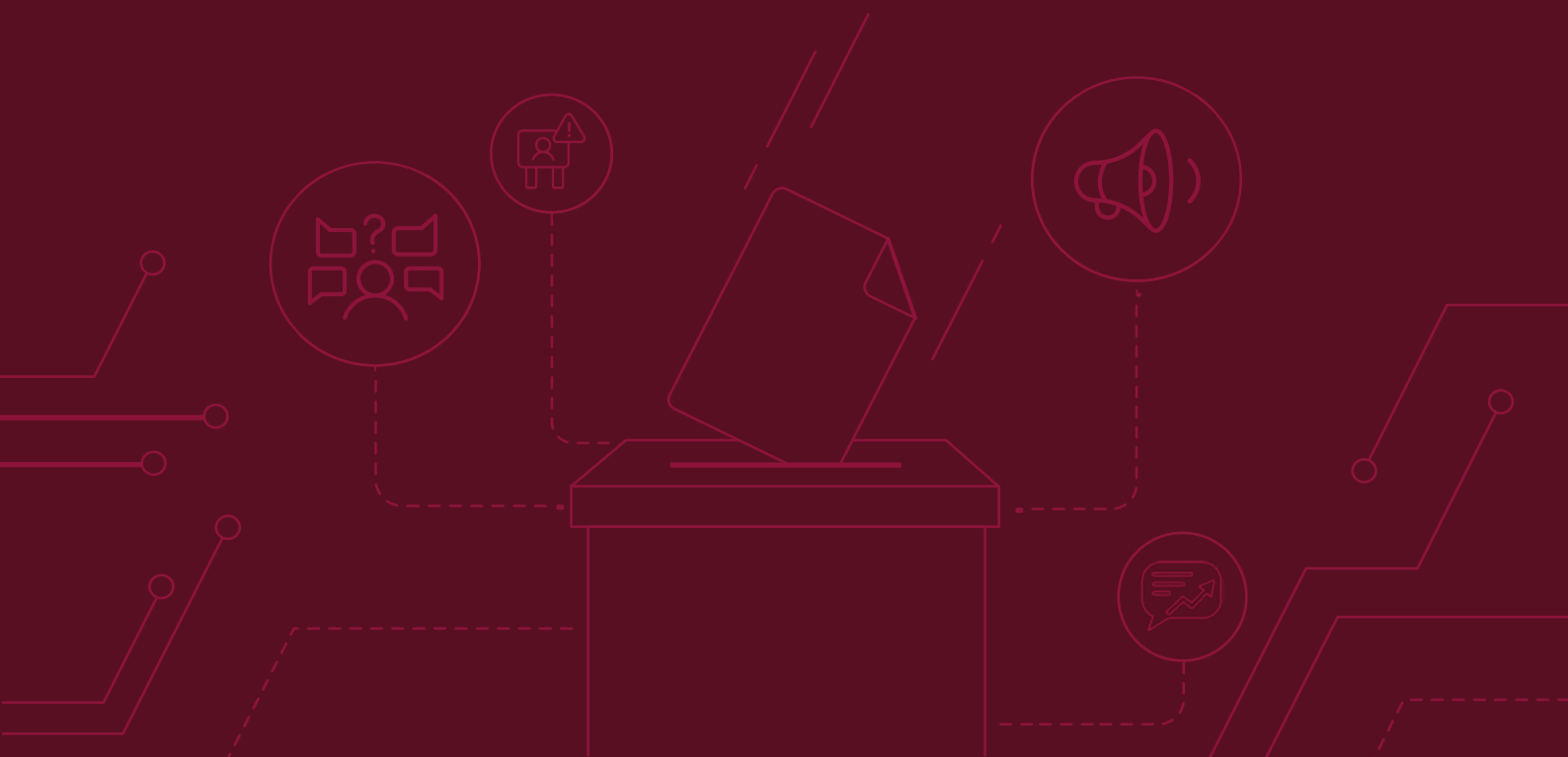


Beyond Formal Campaigning:

**Political Influencers
in Sri Lanka's 2024
Parliamentary Election**



About Democracy Reporting International (DRI)

DRI is an independent organisation dedicated to promoting democracy worldwide. We believe that people are active participants in public life, not subjects of their governments. Our work centres on analysis, reporting and capacity-building. For this, we are guided by the democratic and human rights obligations enshrined in international law.

About the Strengthening Resilience against Disinformation in Sri Lanka Project

The Strengthening Resilience against Disinformation in Sri Lanka project is co-funded by the European Union and implemented by DRI and Factum.

The project aims to reinforce Sri Lanka's democratic and electoral frameworks and protect human rights by prioritising inclusivity and responsible political discourse on social media through monitoring and debunking harmful online content. Leveraging the collaborative efforts of civil society organisations in Sri Lanka, the initiative capacitates fact-checkers and media outlets, creates counternarratives, and strengthens the technical expertise of the Election Commission of Sri Lanka (ECSL).

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Introduction	6
Main Findings	8
Overall Sample Composition	8
Evolution of Election-related and Non-election-related Content over the Monitoring Period	10
Most Active Political Influencers	12
Frequency of Party Mentions in Influencer-generated Content	14
Audience Reach of Party-related Content	16
Thematic Composition of Election-related Content during the Silence Period	18
What Do These Findings Show?	20
Policy Recommendations	21
Methodology	23
Annex: YouTube Channels, and Facebook Pages and Profiles Monitored in the Study	25

Executive Summary

Political influencers continued to play a significant role in electoral communication during Sri Lanka's 2024 parliamentary election, including after the legally mandated electoral silence period began. Unlike during the 2024 presidential election, when overall influencer activity declined following the start of the silence period, posting activity during the parliamentary election remained largely unchanged. At the same time, election-related content became more prominent, highlighting the capacity of influencers to sustain political communication beyond the formal campaign period.

This study examines the use of Facebook and YouTube by political influencers during Sri Lanka's 2024 parliamentary election, covering the period from 14 October to 14 November 2024. In particular, it focuses on whether influencer-mediated communication functioned as an alternative channel for electoral promotion during the legally mandated silence period. By applying the same analytical framework used in [DRI's previous research on the 2024 presidential election](#), this research enables a direct comparison of influencer activity across the two electoral cycles.

Overall, we found that:

- The start of the electoral silence period was not accompanied by a decline in influencer posting activity. Influencers published approximately **127 items per day** during the campaign and **126** during the silence period, contrasting with the 2024 presidential election, when influencer activity declined by around 11% after the silence period began.
- Election-related content increased by **7.8 percentage points** during the silence period, rising from 39% of posts and videos during the campaign to **46.8%**.
- The National People's Power (NPP) was the most frequently mentioned political party among the political influencers monitored, receiving more mentions than the other major parties combined. NPP received **715 mentions** across the monitoring period, compared with 177 for the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP), 125 for the United National Party (UNP) and 116 for the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB). This pattern persisted during the silence period, when the NPP accounted for 53 of the 100 party mentions identified.
- Election-related content published during the silence period reached larger audiences than content published during the campaign, with mean views per post increasing by **75%**, from approximately 12,000 to 21,100. Although the NPP accounted for the largest number of party

mentions, its overall visibility advantage was primarily driven by the volume of content referring to it, while posts mentioning opposition parties generally attracted more views on average.

- Persuasion-orientated content remained prominent during the silence period. Political commentary, analysis and predictions accounted for **28.8%** of thematic assignments, while campaigning, promotion and demotion represented a further 24.3%. Together, these categories made up 53.1% of the election-related content analysed. Voter education content was also more prominent than during the presidential election, accounting for 21.5%.

These findings point to a growing tension between the structure of existing electoral regulations and the forms of political communication enabled by social media platforms. The continued presence of election-related content during the silence period, particularly content involving persuasion, evaluation and political interpretation, suggests that electoral influence may extend beyond communication originating directly from candidates and political parties. Therefore, the findings underscore the need for a clear and proportionate regulatory framework capable of distinguishing independent political expression from direct or indirect electoral promotion, particularly where content is sponsored, coordinated or intended to influence voting behaviour.

In this regard, we recommend that the Election Commission of Sri Lanka (ECSL) further clarify the status of political influencers within its Media Guidelines, specify the circumstances under which silence period restrictions may apply to influencer activity, strengthen transparency requirements for sponsored or coordinated political communication, and promote closer cooperation among electoral authorities, platforms, election observers and civil society organisations.

Introduction

Digital platforms have become central to contemporary political communication, providing accessible and highly engaging spaces in which citizens consume information, participate in public debate and form political opinions. As social media use continues to expand, these platforms play an increasingly important role in democratic processes by shaping how citizens interpret political issues, evaluate candidates and ultimately make voting decisions.¹

Within this evolving digital ecosystem, influencers have emerged as prominent intermediaries in political communication. Unlike political parties, traditional media outlets or journalists, influencers generally operate without formal institutional affiliations, while their public visibility is largely generated through the platforms on which they are active. Their personalised communication styles can foster high levels of audience engagement,² thereby increasing their capacity to amplify select narratives, frame political issues, and influence perceptions of candidates and political parties. These characteristics have contributed to their growing significance within contemporary political discourse.³

The growing prominence of these actors has also been observed in Sri Lanka's electoral context. Our previous study found that online political discussion during Sri Lanka's 2024 presidential election campaign was shaped by a relatively small number of highly visible influencers on Facebook and YouTube. Through memes, political satire and other platform-specific formats, these actors created alternative channels for election-related communication beyond official campaign messaging.⁴

The significance of such channels becomes particularly relevant during Sri Lanka's legally mandated **48-hour electoral silence period**. During this period, political parties and candidates are prohibited from engaging in active campaign promotion or paid political advertising.⁵ However, political influencers are not explicitly covered by these restrictions. Therefore, their position within the existing electoral framework remains open to interpretation, particularly regarding whether

1. Martin J. Riedl, et al., "[Political Influencers on Social Media: An Introduction](#)," *Social Media + Society*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (7 June 2023).

2. Isabel Linzer and Becca Branum, "[Political Influencers and Democracy in the Digital Age](#)," *Democracy Project*, 28 January 2026.

3. Xénia Farkas, "[Negative Campaigning and Mobilization Through Disinformation: Astroturf Political Influencers' Visual Disinformation Strategies on Facebook](#)," *Media and Communication*, Vol. 14 (17 March 2026).

4. European Union Election Observation Mission, "[Sri Lanka 2024 Final Report](#)," 21 September 2024.

5. The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka Extraordinary, "[Media Guidelines under Article 104B\(5\) \(A\) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka](#)," 25 September 2024.

influencer-generated political communication should be considered a form of campaign activity subject to silence period rules. This question is especially relevant in light of our previous findings, which showed that content promoting political parties and candidates by influencers remained prominent during the silence period of the 2024 presidential election campaign, despite the restrictions imposed on formal campaign activity.

Against this backdrop, the present study examines the role of political influencers during Sri Lanka's 2024 parliamentary election campaign. Focusing on Facebook and YouTube, it applies an analytical framework similar to that used in the previous presidential election study to assess whether influencer-mediated communication continued to function as an alternative channel for electoral promotion when formal campaigning was restricted. Whereas the presidential election study examined influencer activity within a nationally focused, candidate-centred contest, the parliamentary election presented a different political and communicative environment, characterised by multiple parties, a larger number of candidates and more decentralised campaign dynamics targeting district-level audiences. Examining whether similar patterns persisted under these conditions provides further evidence of the role played by political influencers within Sri Lanka's electoral communication ecosystem.

Therefore, the study extends beyond documenting the volume, reach and characteristics of influencer activity. It also addresses a broader regulatory question: whether electoral frameworks designed to restrict campaign communication during silence periods remain effective when political promotion is carried out by third-party actors rather than directly by candidates or political parties. On this basis, the study provides policy recommendations, particularly for the ECSL, regarding the application and clarification of media guidelines governing campaign communication during silence periods.

Main Findings

To examine the role of political influencers during the parliamentary election campaign and explore the types of content they published, the study distinguishes between election-related content – including posts focused on party promotion, policy-related discussion, voter education and broader political commentary – and content not directly related to the electoral process. The study also divides the monitoring period into two phases: the electoral campaign period, from 14 October to 11 November 2024, and the legally mandated 48-hour electoral silence period preceding election day on 14 November. These distinctions make it possible to assess whether electoral communication became more prominent as election day approached and, in particular, once formal campaigning was restricted.

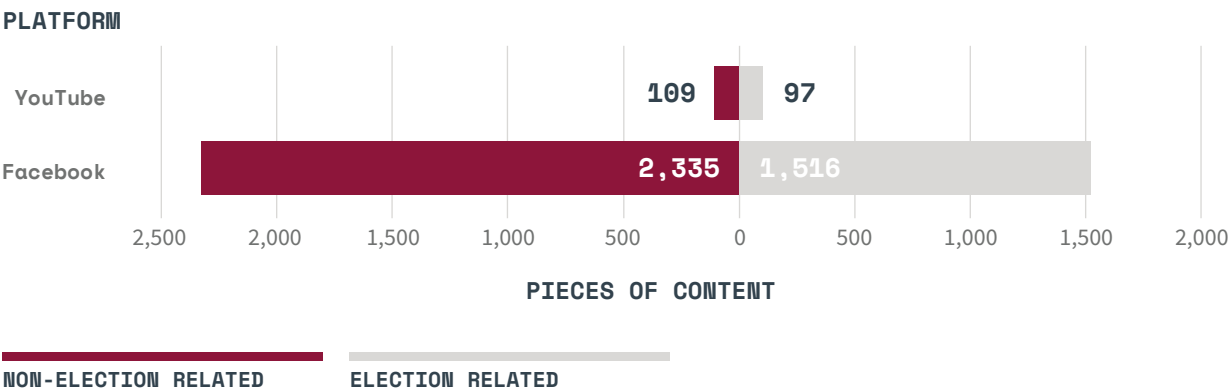
The findings are presented in six sections. The analysis begins by describing the overall composition of the sample, and its distribution across Facebook and YouTube. It then examines how overall influencer posting activity, and the relative prevalence of election-related and non-election-related content evolved over the monitoring period, with particular attention to changes observed during the electoral silence period. The third section identifies the influencers who were most active in producing content, based on their publication volume. The analysis then explores which political parties were most frequently mentioned in influencer-generated content, and assesses the reach of this content on Facebook and YouTube. The final section examines the main themes present in election-related content published during the silence period.



Overall Sample Composition

Our dataset comprises **4,056 observations**: 3,850 Facebook posts and 206 YouTube videos published by political influencers in Sri Lanka between 14 October and 14 November 2024. Facebook posts, representing 94.9% of the sample, were drawn from 37 monitored pages and profiles, each with a minimum of 25,000 followers. YouTube videos accounted for the remaining 5.1% and were published across 11 monitored channels. A detailed list of the monitored profiles and channels is provided in the annex.

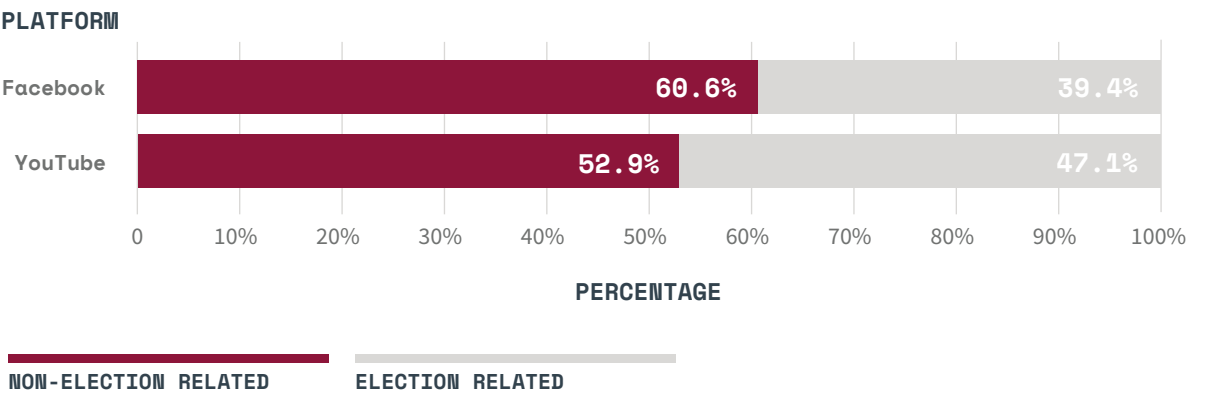
Figure 1: Distribution of Facebook posts and YouTube videos



Across the full monitoring period, election-related content accounted for 39.8% of the sample. This category encompassed party promotion, policy-related discussion, voter education and broader political commentary, while the remaining 60.2% was classified as non-election related. The share of election-related content was notably lower than that observed during the campaign period of the 2024 presidential election, when it reached 59.3%. Although the periods are not directly equivalent, this difference may reflect the comparatively lower salience of the parliamentary election following a decisive presidential contest, as well as a degree of campaign fatigue after an extended electoral cycle.

Turning to differences across platforms, Facebook contributed to the vast majority of observations, but the relative prevalence of election-related content was broadly similar on Facebook and YouTube. Election-related content accounted for 39.4% of Facebook posts and 47.1% of YouTube videos. The higher share observed on YouTube may reflect the greater prevalence of long-form commentary, interviews and talk-show formats on the platform, which are more conducive to sustained discussion of political and electoral issues.

Figure 2: Distribution of election-related and non-election-related content by platform



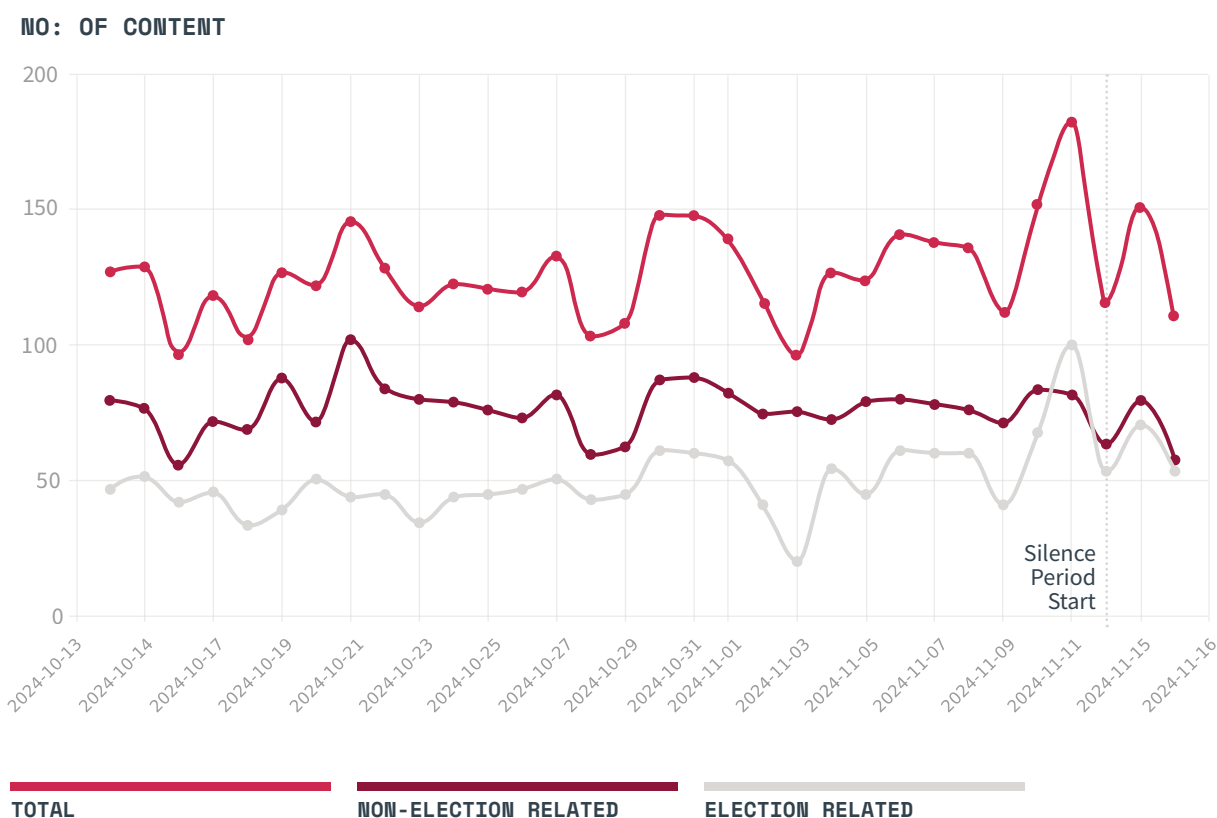


Evolution of Election-related and Non-election-related Content over the Monitoring Period

Overall influencer posting activity remained stable across the campaign and silence periods. Influencers published an average of **126.8 items per day** during the campaign period and **126** during the electoral silence period. This contrasts with the 2024 presidential election monitoring period, when the daily average declined from 133 to 118 items after the silence period began.

Unlike during the presidential election campaign, non-election-related content remained more prevalent on most days of the monitoring period. Nevertheless, election-related discussion persisted throughout and became increasingly prominent in the final week, narrowing the gap as polling day approached.

Figure 3: Distribution of election-related content and non-election-related content across the monitoring period

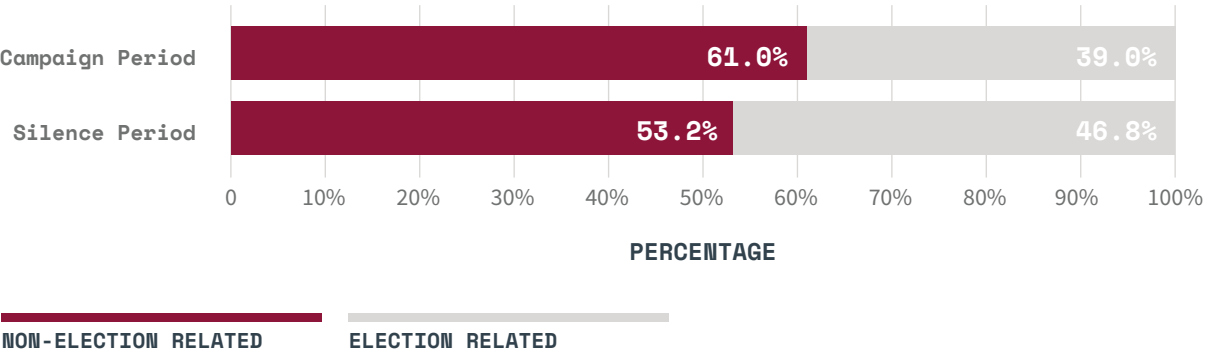


Therefore, day-to-day fluctuations in non-election-related content should be interpreted with some caution. As noted in the methodology, the classification relied primarily on machine-readable text. Consequently, posts conveyed mainly through images or videos may not always have been identified

as election related, even when their visual content referred to the election. At the same time, some variations in non-election-related content may have reflected responses to events unrelated to the electoral process.

Although overall influencer posting activity remained stable and non-election-related content was more prevalent throughout the monitoring period, the relative prominence of election-related content increased once the electoral silence period began. As shown in Figure 4, election-related content accounted for 39% of all posts and videos published during the campaign period, rising to **46.8%** during the silence period, an increase of 7.8 percentage points. A similar shift towards a greater relative presence of election-related content was observed during the 2024 presidential election.

Figure 4: Share of election-related content and non-election-related content across both platforms during the monitoring periods



Although overall influencer posting activity remained stable and non-election-related content was more prevalent throughout the monitoring period, the relative prominence of election-related content increased once the electoral silence period began.



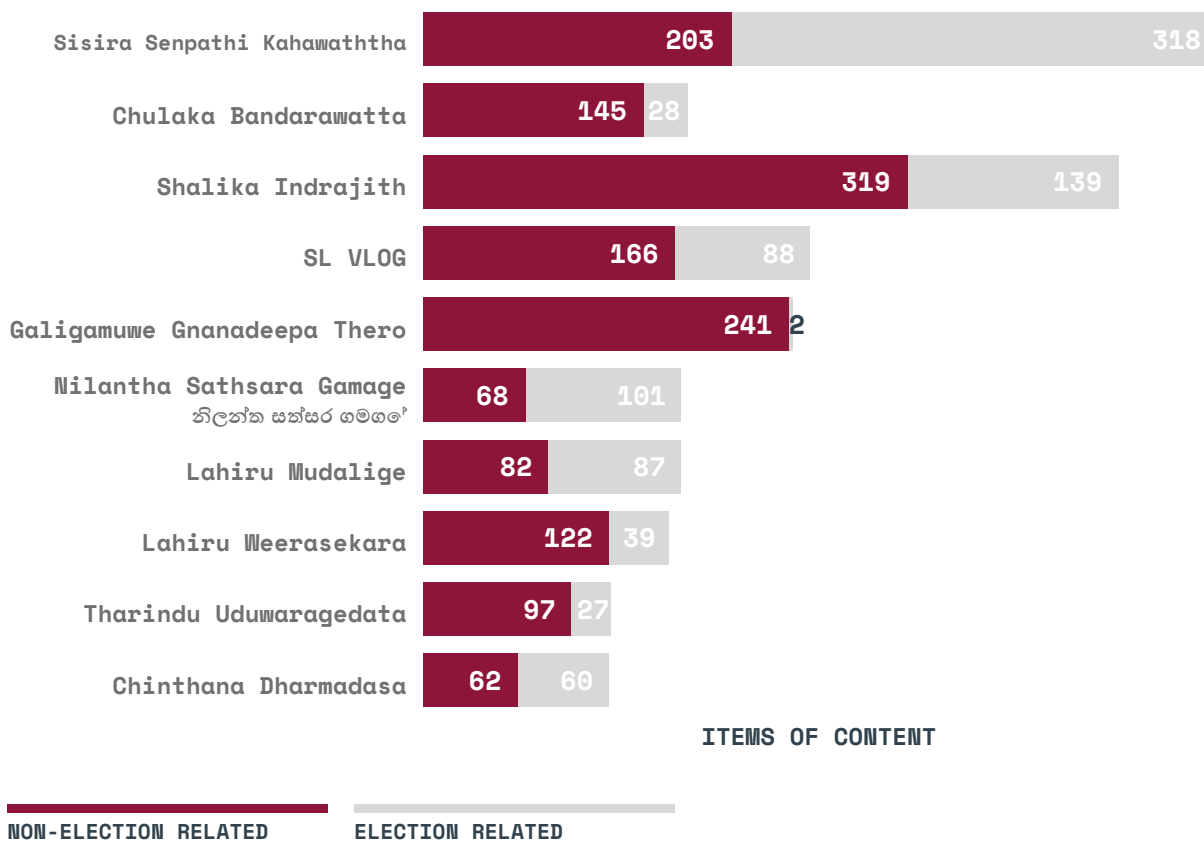
Most Active Political Influencers

To identify the actors contributing most extensively to online political discussion, we examined the influencers with the highest posting volumes and the types of content they published.

Content production during the parliamentary election campaign was highly concentrated among a small number of political influencers. The ten most active influencers together accounted for approximately **66%** of all content in the sample, publishing a combined **2,697** posts and videos. These accounts represented a diverse range of influencer profiles, including openly partisan content creators, non-partisan commentators, talk-show hosts and political podcasters.

High posting volume did not necessarily correspond to a strong electoral focus. As Figure 5 shows, Galigamuwe Gnanadeepa, a Buddhist monk with a substantial social media following, was the fifth most active account in the sample, yet only 0.8% of his posts were classified as election related. By contrast, election-related posts represented a substantially larger share of the output of **Sisira Senpathi Kahawaththa (61.2%)** and **Nilantha Sathsara Gamage (නිලන්ත සත්සර ගමගේ) (59.8%)**.

Figure 5: Top ten most active political influencers across content types





Content production during the parliamentary election campaign was highly concentrated among a small number of political influencers.

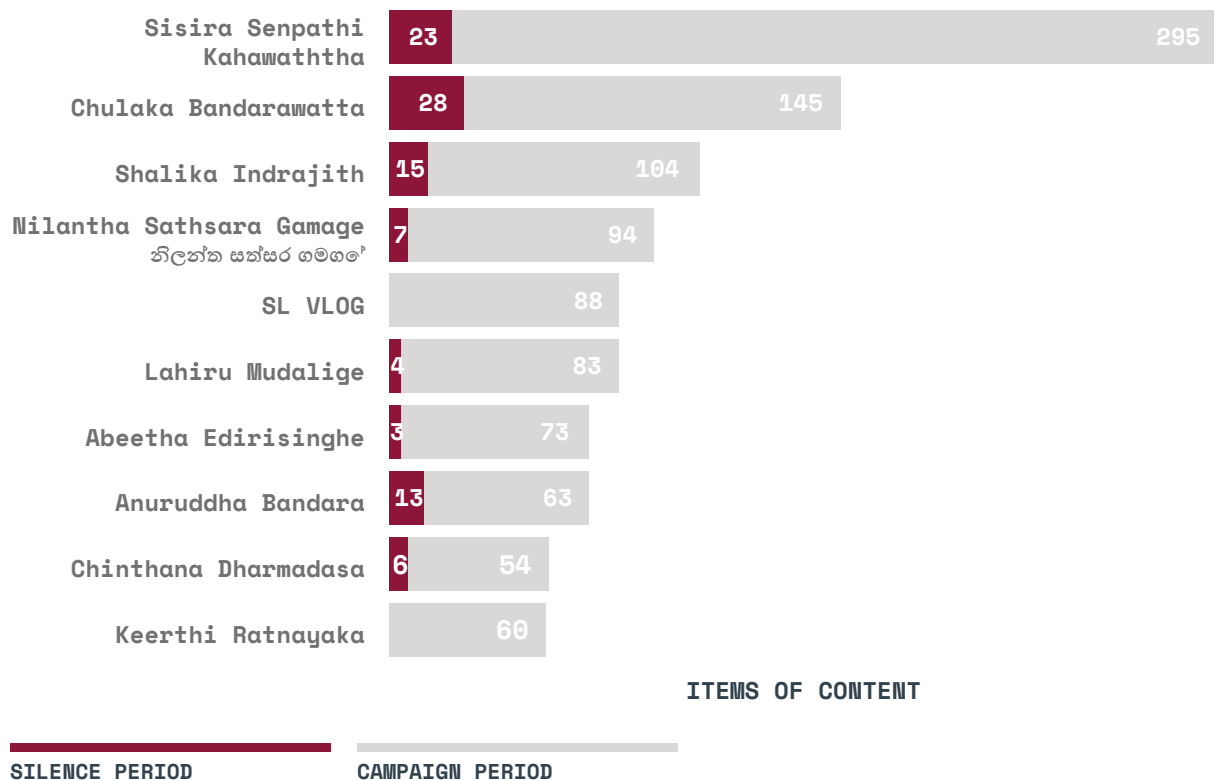
Looking at the distribution of election-related content across both periods (campaign and silence period), we found that the three most active election-related influencers produced **610 items (37.8%)** and the top five accounted for 799 items (49.5%).

Figure 6, which presents the most active political influencers during the electoral silence period, reveals a notable degree of continuity across election cycles. Chulaka Bandarawatta and Sisira Senpathi Kahawaththa, the two most active publishers of election-related content during the parliamentary election silence period, had also ranked among the most active accounts during the corresponding period of the presidential election. Together, they accounted for approximately **29%** of all election-related content published during the parliamentary election silence period. More broadly, the ten most active accounts produced 76.3% of the total. These findings point to a relatively stable core of accounts that continued to sustain electoral communication when formal campaigning was restricted.



These findings point to a relatively stable core of accounts that continued to sustain electoral communication when formal campaigning was restricted.

Figure 6: Top ten most active political influencers across monitoring periods



Frequency of Party Mentions in Influencer-generated Content

As Sri Lanka's parliamentary election was contested primarily through party lists rather than individual presidential candidates, this section examines the frequency with which the main political parties identified in the sample were mentioned in influencer-generated content on Facebook and YouTube. Party references included both explicit and implicit references, such as party names, symbols, slogans and colours. These references should not be interpreted as evidence of support, as they may occur in the context of promotion, criticism, satire, non-partisan reporting, fact-checking or political analysis.

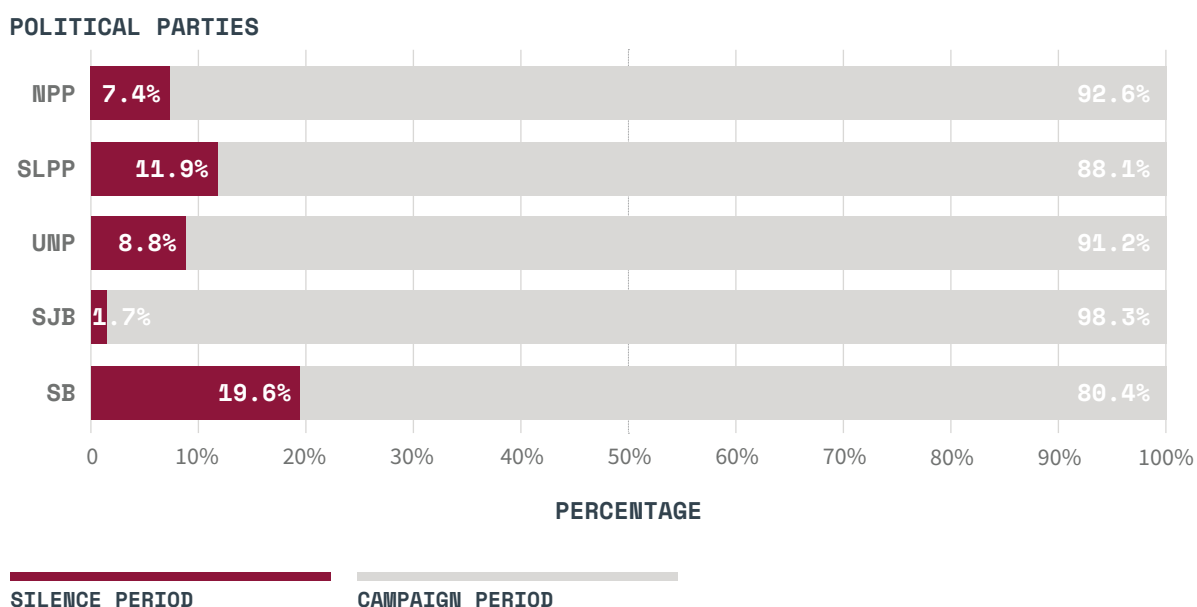


The NPP was referenced substantially more frequently in influencer-generated social media content than other major parties.

Of the 1,133 references to the four most prominent parties, 63.1% related to the NPP, more than the combined total for the SLPP, UNP and SJB. This pattern echoes the prominence of Anura Kumara Disسانayake in candidate references during the presidential election.

Figure 7 shows considerable variation in the proportion of each party's mentions that appeared during the electoral silence period, ranging from 1.7% for the SJB to 19.6% for Sarvajana Balaya. For some parties, this indicates that a notable share of their overall mentions was concentrated in a period when formal campaign activity was restricted. Although these mentions cannot be interpreted as evidence of support without examining their content, their continued presence shows that influencer-generated content remained an important channel through which political parties featured in electoral discourse during the silence period.

Figure 7: Mentions of political parties across monitoring periods



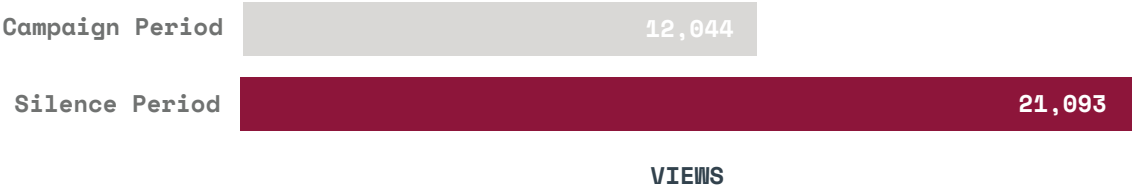
Audience Reach of Party-related Content

To complement the analysis of how frequently political parties were referenced in influencer generated content, we examined the reach of this content to assess how widely it may have circulated. View counts were used as a proxy for reach. These findings should, nevertheless, be interpreted with caution, as the figures represent cumulative totals recorded at the time of data collection rather

than views generated exclusively during the monitoring period. In addition, Facebook and YouTube define and measure views differently, meaning that comparisons across platforms and electoral periods should be regarded as indicative rather than directly equivalent. Despite these limitations, view counts provide a useful indication of how widely content referring to different political parties may have been seen.

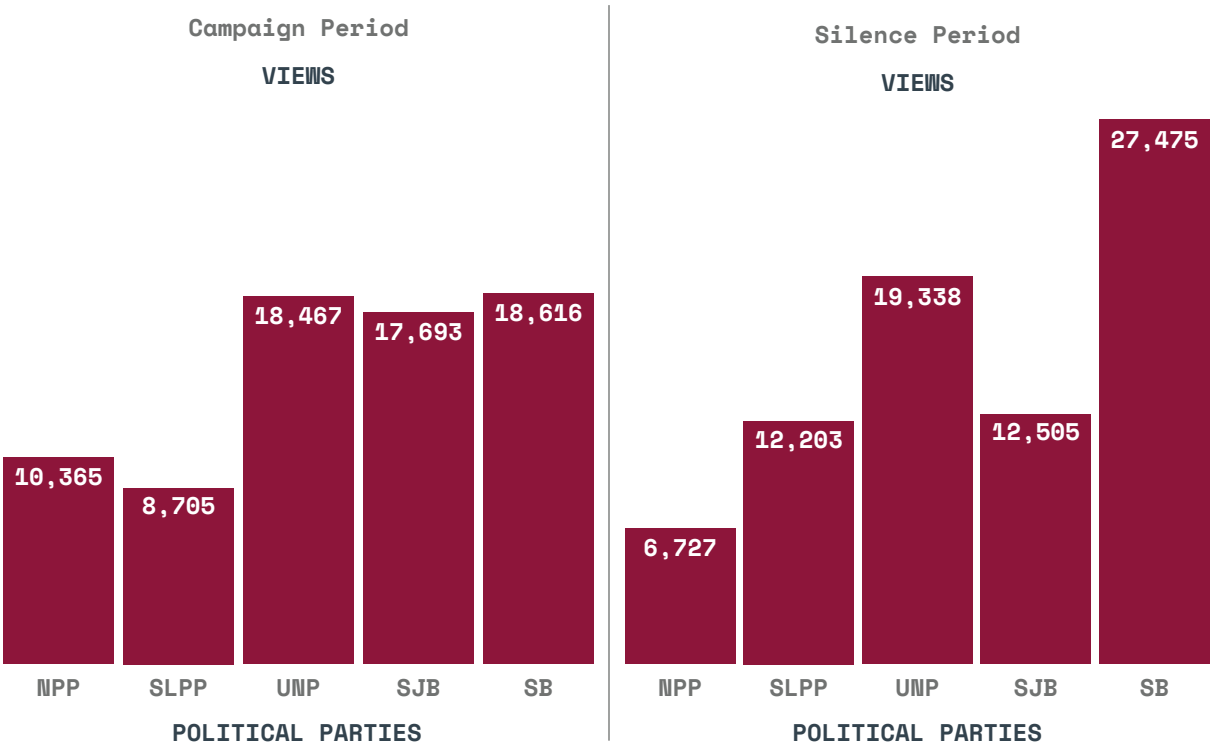
Election-related content published during the silence period reached larger audiences than content published during the campaign period, with mean views per post increasing by 75%, from approximately 12,000 to 21,100.

Figure 8: Mean views of election-related content across monitoring periods



A higher frequency of party mentions did not necessarily translate into greater audience reach. As shown in the previous analysis, the NPP was referenced substantially more often than the other major parties in influencer-generated content. However, posts referring to the NPP recorded a lower mean number of views per post during the campaign period (approximately 10,400) than those referring to the UNP (approximately 18,500), SJB (approximately 17,700) or Sarvajana Balaya (around 18,600). Therefore, the NPP’s prominence in the dataset was driven primarily by the volume of content in which it appeared, rather than by the average reach of each post.

Figure 9: Mean views of party-related posts across monitoring periods



However, posts referring to the NPP recorded a lower mean number of views per post during the campaign period (approximately 10,400) than those referring to the UNP (approximately 18,500), SJB (approximately 17,700) or Sarvajana Balaya (around 18,600).

Changes in audience reach between the campaign and silence periods also varied across parties. The mean number of views for posts referring to the SLPP increased from approximately 8,700 to 12,200, while the corresponding figure for Sarvajana Balaya rose from approximately 18,600 to 27,500. By contrast, the mean reach of posts referring to the NPP declined from approximately 10,400 to 6,700.

These patterns suggest that audience attention during the silence period was distributed differently across party-related content. Posts referring to the SLPP and Sarvajana Balaya achieved greater

average reach, whereas the NPP's continued prominence was sustained by a larger number of posts with comparatively moderate view counts rather than by a small number of highly viewed items. Estimates for the SJB should be interpreted with particular caution, as it was represented by only two posts during the silence period.



Overall, the findings suggest that the restriction of formal campaigning did not eliminate the audience for influencer-mediated electoral content, but instead altered how that audience was distributed across parties.

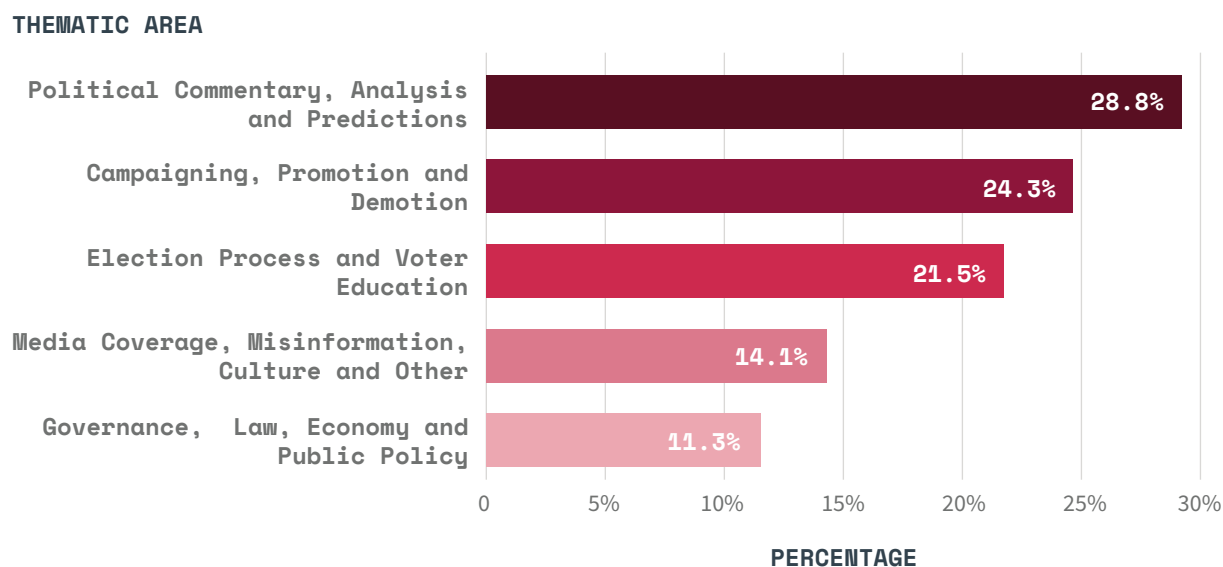


Thematic Composition of Election-related Content during the Silence Period

To better understand the nature of electoral communication that persisted after formal campaigning was restricted, we manually classified the main themes addressed in all 177 election-related posts and videos published during the silence period. Each item was assigned to one of five broad thematic categories, as shown in Figure 10.

Political commentary, analysis and predictions (28.8%), and campaigning, promotion and demotion (24.3%) together accounted for 53.1% of all thematic assignments. In other words, more than half of the election-related content published during the silence period either interpreted the political contest or sought to influence perceptions of parties, candidates and likely electoral outcomes. Although commentary did not necessarily include explicit appeals to support or oppose a political actor, it could still perform a persuasive function by framing parties and candidates, forecasting results, or presenting particular outcomes as likely or inevitable. This was especially relevant in a parliamentary election widely expected to reflect the political momentum generated by the September presidential election.

Figure 10: Thematic distribution of election-related content during the electoral silence period



As in the presidential election, election-related communication during the silence period focused primarily on political persuasion, evaluation and interpretation rather than on procedural information. Nevertheless, the thematic composition differed in two important respects. First, explicit campaigning, promotion and demotion represented a smaller share of silence period content in the parliamentary election, at 24.3% compared with 38.6%. Second, election process and voter education content was more prevalent, accounting for 21.5% compared with 16.3%. This may reflect the greater procedural complexity of the parliamentary ballot, including district-level candidate lists and preferential voting.



In other words, more than half of the election-related content published during the silence period either interpreted the political contest or sought to influence perceptions of parties, candidates and likely electoral outcomes.

What Do These Findings Show?

Overall, the findings show that political influencers remained an important component of Sri Lanka's online electoral communication during the 2024 parliamentary election, including when formal campaigning was restricted. Although election-related content represented a smaller share of influencer output than during the presidential election, its relative prominence increased during the electoral silence period, from 39% to 46.8%. Election-related content published during the silence period also reached larger audiences than comparable content published during the campaign period, with mean views per post increasing by 75%, suggesting that its increased prominence was accompanied by greater visibility. More than half of the election-related content published during the silence period focused on political persuasion, evaluation or interpretation. This indicates that electoral communication continued not only through explicit promotion but also through commentary, analysis and predictions that could shape audiences' perceptions of political parties and electoral outcomes.

This communication was also highly concentrated. A small group of influencers accounted for a substantial share of both overall activity and election-related content published during the silence period. Several of the most active accounts were also prominent during the presidential election. Party mentions were similarly uneven: the NPP was mentioned far more frequently than other major parties, although this higher volume did not consistently translate into greater reach per post.



Taken together, these findings indicate that restrictions on formal campaigning did not prevent election-related communication from persisting on social media during the silence period.

Instead, such communication was sustained by a relatively stable group of third-party actors, although its volume, reach and thematic framing varied considerably across influencers and political parties.

Policy Recommendations

Whereas the previous study on political influencers during Sri Lanka's 2024 presidential campaign offered broader recommendations on electoral law and platform accountability, this study focuses more narrowly on measures to clarify the role of political influencers and the implications of their communications during election periods, particularly during the electoral silence period. These recommendations are intended to help clarify when influencer activity should be regarded as independent political expression and when it may function as direct or indirect electoral campaigning.

In this context, this study considers how the Media Guidelines issued by the ECSL under Article 104B(5)(a) of the constitution could be strengthened.⁶ While the existing guidelines recognise social media as a form of media communication, they could be further revised to address the realities of digital campaigning and the growing role of political influencers.

The ECSL should revise its Media Guidelines to more explicitly address the role of political influencers during election periods, particularly during the silence period. While influencers may exercise legitimate political expression, their communication may also function as indirect campaigning when it promotes parties or candidates, amplifies campaign messages, or results from coordination with political actors.

In light of these considerations, we recommend that the **ECSL**:

1. Recognise the role of political influencers

Acknowledge political influencers as relevant actors in digital election campaigning and clarify when their activities fall within the scope of electoral regulation. Such activities may include endorsing or opposing a candidate, political party or electoral alliance; amplifying campaign messages; or producing political content in exchange for payment, benefits or other incentives.

6. The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka Extraordinary, "[Media Guidelines under Article 104b\(5\) \(A\) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka](#)," 3 March 2025.

2. Extend silence period restrictions to influencer campaigning

Restrictions applicable during the silence period should cover political influencers when their content constitutes direct or indirect electoral campaigning. Such activities may include endorsing or collaborating with candidates or parties, publishing sponsored political content, or disseminating content intended to influence voting behaviour.

Any restriction should be clearly defined and proportionate so that it does not amount to a general prohibition on political discussion, independent commentary or individual expression.

3. Strengthen transparency around sponsored political content

Political influencers should be required to clearly disclose content that is sponsored, funded, coordinated or otherwise supported by candidates, political parties or campaign organisations.

4. Strengthen multi-stakeholder cooperation

Cooperation between the ECSL, social media platforms, election observers and civil society organisations should be strengthened. Platforms should establish rapid communication and response channels for content officially identified as potentially breaching silence period rules. Election observers and civil society organisations should support the monitoring, documentation and reporting of influencer-led campaigning.

Methodology

This study examined the role of political influencers during the critical phase leading up to Sri Lanka's 2024 parliamentary election, including the silence period. The temporal scope of the dataset spans from 14 October 2024 to the conclusion of polling on 14 November 2024, capturing a 30-day window in which campaign communication is naturally intensified. Under Sri Lankan law, active campaigning is restricted during the 48-hour silence period immediately preceding the polling day. Accordingly, this analysis treated 12–14 November 2024 as the silence period and 14 October to 11 November 2024 as the campaign period.

The resulting dataset comprises 4,056 distinct pieces of content gathered from two platforms: Facebook, which accounted for 3,850 items from 37 monitored actors, and YouTube, which contributed 206 items from 11 monitored channels. The monitored actor list was carried over from the presidential election study, in which a master list of political influencers was compiled and matched across platforms wherever cross-platform profiles existed.

Facebook data was extracted through the Meta Content Library interface using the finalised actor list together with strict temporal filters to isolate every public post published within the defined window. Using political influencer actor mapping, YouTube data was collected through the YouTube API for all content published by the identified channels during the same time period. A detailed list of the monitored profiles and channels is provided in the annex.

The compiled dataset then underwent a review, cleaning and coding pipeline, combining automated computational classification with manual human validation. In the first stage, textual data was processed using Google's Gemini 3.5 large language model to classify each item as either election related or non-election related. Content was classified as election related when it contained references to or could reasonably be understood as having relevance to the election, electoral actors or the broader electoral process. Content published during the silence period was subject to manual cross-checking by the research team. The second stage identified actor alignment by determining whether specific political parties were referenced, capturing direct name mentions as well as references through party symbols, campaign slogans and other commonly understood identifiers; silence period alignment coding was manually verified in full. The third stage involved granular topic classification of the 177 election-related items published during the silence period into five thematic areas.

Our findings should be interpreted in light of several methodological limitations:

- Image- and video-based content without machine-readable text, such as captions, transcripts or detectable text overlays, may not have been identified as election related in all cases. This may have led to an underestimation of election-related content, particularly on Facebook.
- The YouTube sample during the electoral silence period was small, comprising 13 videos, only five of which were classified as election related. Therefore, the findings do not support firm platform-specific conclusions about silence period activity on YouTube.
- View counts represent cumulative totals recorded at the time of data collection rather than views generated exclusively during the monitoring period. In addition, Facebook and YouTube apply different definitions of a “view”. Comparisons of reach across platforms and electoral periods should, therefore, be treated as indicative rather than directly equivalent.
- The analysis covers only publicly available content published by the monitored actors. Political communication in closed groups, on other platforms or by accounts outside the monitored sample was not captured.

Despite these limitations, the recurrence of several key patterns across Facebook and YouTube, and across two successive electoral cycles, provides a sufficiently robust basis for the conclusions and recommendations presented in this report.

Annex

YouTube Channels, and Facebook Pages and Profiles Monitored in the Study

Table 1: YouTube channels

Number	Channel name
1	Sudaa Creation
2	Bankaraya TV
3	Chamara Sumanapala
4	Hari Tv
5	Truth with Chamuditha
6	Iraj Show
7	Dr. Rohana Weerasinghe Official
8	Harindra Jayalal
9	Anura Chandrasiri
10	KONARA VLOG
11	Bharatha Thennakoon

Table 2: Facebook pages and profiles

Number	Page/Profile Name
1	Galigamuwe Gnanadeepa Thero
2	Gangasiripura Dhammaloka Thero
3	සුපිත් අන්තමලේ
4	SEDA BRO
5	Shalika Indrajith
6	Anuruddha Bandara
7	Uvindu Kurukulasuriya
8	Sisira Senpathi Kahawaththa
9	Sudaththa Thilaksiri
10	Ashen Sri Lanka
11	Chulaka Bandarawatta
12	Lahiru Weerasekara
13	Arun Siddharth - අරුන් සිද්ධාර්ථ
14	Tharindu Uduwaragedara
15	Chameera Jeewantha Dedduwage
16	Chinthana Dharmadasa
17	Mahinda Pathirana
18	Lahiru Mudalige
19	Nandana Weeraratne
20	Abeetha Edirisinghe

Number	Page/Profile Name
21	Ratta
22	සමේම - some
23	නිලනික සක්සර ගමගේ
24	Namal Amarasinghe - Editorial Cartoons
25	Bharatha Prabhâshana Thennakoon
26	කණිෂ්ක වාමනීද ජයලත්
27	SL VLOG
28	Wasantha Mudalige
29	Indika Kodithuwakku
30	Keerthi Ratnayake
31	Ranga Jayawardhana
32	Riz Razak
33	Shiral Lakthilaka
34	Konara Vlog
35	IRAJ
36	Dilka Samanmali
37	Don Supz

Beyond Formal Campaigning:

Political Influencers
in Sri Lanka's 2024
Parliamentary Election