

NORTHERN INVESTMENT SUMMIT 2026



POWERED BY
TMC
The Management Club
SINCE 1982



NIS 26

NORTHERN INVESTMENT SUMMIT 2026
JAFFNA, SRI LANKA
21ST, 22ND JANUARY 2026

Jaffna Fort : Built 1618 -1625 By Portuguese





Adam's (Ram Setu) Bridge, Palk Strait in Mannar District

From Editor's Desk

I extend my best wishes to all investors, business leaders, policymakers, development partners and stakeholders participating in the Northern Investment Summit.

Sri Lanka's national development agenda, aligned with Vision 2030, places emphasis on inclusive economic growth, regional integration, export oriented development, innovation, and sustainability.



Within this national framework, the Northern Province holds strategic importance and possesses significant potential to contribute to overall economic progress.

The Northern Province offers investment opportunities across key sectors including agriculture and agro processing, fisheries and aquaculture, renewable energy, tourism and hospitality derivative, manufacturing, logistics, ICT and knowledge based sector. In the light of this ongoing improvements in infrastructure, connectivity and human capital significantly strengthen in the Northern Region readiness for investment.

The Northern Investment Summit 2026, organized by The Management Club, provides a platform to facilitate engagement between investors, policymakers, and regional stakeholders, supporting informed investment decisions and long-term collaboration.

It is our fervent wish that the Northern Investment Summit 2026 wish the Northern Investment Summit success and trust that it will support sustainable economic growth in the Northern Province and the country.

Chief Editor Mr. Jude M. Joseph

Founder Chairman of TMC Management Colombo
Member of Board Management (BOM)
Member of the NIS 2026 Core Team

Editor Ms Lakisha Perera

Member of TMC Colombo
Project Manager - NIS 2026



Jaffna fort Built by Portuguese in 1618

The Management Club, Sri Lanka

Nearly two decades ago, a timely and insightful observation laid the foundation for what would later become one of Sri Lanka's most respected management platforms. The then outgoing President of the Chartered Management Institute (CMI), UK – Sri Lanka Branch, Mr. Fayaz Saleem, identified a significant gap within the professional management landscape of the country. While technical and academic knowledge was present, there was a pressing need to further develop leadership capabilities, professional ethics, personality development and cross-disciplinary exposure among managers.



Critical institutional needs

The establishment of a Leadership Institute to nurture future leaders, and the formation of a Management Club – not as a social gathering, but as a professional forum where managers across industries and seniority levels could interact, learn, and grow together.

These observations inspired the incoming CMI Committee for the year 2001/2002. As a result, The Management Club (TMC) was formally established on 12th February 2002, at a ceremony held at the Galle Face Hotel, Colombo.

Today, The Management Club stands as a vibrant professional body bringing together managers from diverse industries, disciplines, and leadership levels, committed to advancing management excellence in Sri Lanka.

The vision of The Management Club is to bring together professional managers in a collaborative environment that enables interaction, continuous learning, and personal development, empowering them to make meaningful contributions to their organizations and to society at large.

TMC's objectives are centered on professional growth, ethical leadership and lifelong learning. These include:

- Providing regular opportunities for professional managers to interact through high-value management programs and forums.
- Enhancing managerial, leadership, and business skills through structured knowledge-sharing initiatives.
- Creating a professional yet congenial environment for networking, fellowship, and engagement.
- Facilitating exposure to emerging global and local management trends.
- Offering exclusive privileges and benefits through partner institutions for members and their families

Its leadership structure includes:

- A President.
- Vice Presidents representing functional and strategic areas.
- Committees dedicated to governance, administration, membership engagement, programs, communications, sponsorships, finance, and special initiatives.

This structure allows TMC to maintain professional governance standards while remaining agile and responsive to the evolving needs of the management fraternity.

Operations, Membership and Professional Activities

Club Network and Facilities

Over the years, TMC has expanded its presence through multiple affiliated club locations, enabling wider access to professional managers across regions. These clubs operate in partnership with leading hotels and hospitality providers, offering members access to meeting rooms, lounges, business facilities, and venues suitable for professional programs and networking.

Members enjoy a range of benefits, including preferential rates on food and beverages, accommodation, business services, and event facilities. The clubs also serve as popular venues for management forums, leadership programs, fellowship events, and family-oriented activities.

Plans are in place to further expand regional and reciprocal access, ensuring that members can benefit from facilities beyond their primary club location.

Membership

Membership to The Management Club is by invitation and is open to professionals with demonstrated management experience and leadership potential. Membership categories are designed to accommodate different career stages and organizational structures, including individual, associate, corporate, and premium memberships.

Corporate Membership allows organizations to nominate multiple members from their managerial cadre, encouraging collective professional development and organizational alignment with best management practices.

Management Development Activities

Professional development lies at the heart of TMC's mission. Over the years, the Club has organized a wide range of management-related programs, including:

- Evening talks and panel discussions on leadership, strategy, human resources, marketing, finance, technology, logistics, and governance
- Workshops and seminars conducted by local and international subject matter experts
- Special thematic series addressing economic trends, business resilience, and future challenges
- Member-focused initiatives such as "Members Meet" and "Members Speak," encouraging peer-to-peer knowledge sharing

In addition to professional programs, TMC also organizes inter-organizational activities, networking events, and informal engagements designed to foster camaraderie and collaboration among members.

CSR, Partnerships and Future Outlook

Enable the Disabled (ETD) – A Flagship CSR Initiative

Beyond professional development, The Management Club is deeply committed to social responsibility. One of its most impactful initiatives is Enable the Disabled (ETD), a national program aimed at promoting inclusion, empowerment, and dignity for persons with disabilities in Sri Lanka.

ETD focuses on:

- Improving accessibility and awareness
- Encouraging entrepreneurship and self-reliance among differently-abled individuals
- Advocating inclusive infrastructure and workplace integration
- Recognizing and celebrating achievements of differently-abled individuals across fields such as education, sports, arts, and business

Through partnerships with public and private sector stakeholders, ETD has evolved into a nationally recognized initiative, reflecting TMC's belief that professional leadership must be accompanied by social responsibility.

Knowledge Partners and Sponsors

TMC collaborates with respected professional institutions, corporate partners, and media organizations to deliver high-quality programs and initiatives. These partnerships enhance the value offered to members while aligning the Club with global best practices in management and governance.

Funding for TMC's activities is derived from membership subscriptions, program fees, and corporate sponsorships, ensuring sustainability while maintaining its not-for-profit ethos.

Looking Ahead...

As The Management Club continues to evolve, its focus remains firmly on:

- Strengthening professional leadership in Sri Lanka
- Expanding knowledge-sharing platforms
- Enhancing regional and international connectivity
- Deepening its social impact through structured CSR initiatives

Affiliation with international professional bodies and the development of reciprocal arrangements with management clubs locally and overseas are expected to further enrich the TMC experience for its members.

The Management Club, Sri Lanka stands as a testament to the power of collaboration, ethical leadership, and continuous learning—shaping managers who not only lead successful organizations, but also contribute positively to national development and society at large.



Fayaz Saleem

President Emeritus of Board
of Management of TMC
Founding Father TMC



Seated L to R

Shanthi Bhagirathan - NIS '26 Deputy Chair of TMC & VP Admin of TMC Board of Management

Indhra Kaushal Rajapaksa - NIS '26 Project Chair of TMC & Immediate Past President of TMC Board of Management

Roger Talayaratne - Member of Core Team of NIS '26 & President of TMC Board of Management

Fayaz Saleem - President Emeritus of TMC Board of Management

Standing L to R

Anu Rakavan - Co Chair of NIS '26 & Chairman of TMC Jaffna

Deepal Abeysekera - Member of Core Team of NIS '26 & Past President of TMC Board of Management

Chaya Ranaweera - Member of Core Team of NIS '26 & Member of TMC Board of Management

Chandima Hulangamuwa - Member of Core Team of NIS '26 & VP Finance of TMC Board of Management

Jude M. Joseph - Member of Core Team of NIS '26 and Advisor TMC Jaffna

Nasser Majeed - Member of Core Team of NIS '26 & Past President of TMC Board of Management

Absent

Murali Prakash - NIS '26 committee Advisor and TMC Board Director

Northern Investment Summit 2026

A New Era for Regional Growth

The Northern Investment Summit 2026 marked a historic moment for Sri Lanka's Northern Province, bringing together global investors, government officials, private sector leaders, and regional stakeholders to explore pathways for sustainable economic growth. Held in Jaffna from 21st and 22nd January 2026, the Summit spotlighted the region's potential as a hub for innovation, trade, and inclusive development.

After decades of post-conflict recovery, the Northern Province stands at a pivotal turning point. The Summit served as a strategic platform to align local aspirations with national economic goals, catalyzing investment opportunities across key sectors including tourism, agriculture, technology, logistics, and renewable energy.

A Diversified Agenda for Transformation

Over two days, the Summit convened a comprehensive lineup of panels and roundtables:

- Investment Showcases: Presentations from entrepreneurs and chambers of commerce highlighting competitive advantages.
- Sectoral Dialogues: Targeted discussions on tourism revitalization, agro-processing value chains, and digital infrastructure.
- Policy Exchange: Government commitments on regulatory reforms to facilitate ease of doing business.

These sessions were designed not just to attract capital but also to promote value-driven partnerships that prioritize sustainability, community impact, and job creation.

Catalysts for Change: Key Highlights & Commitments

1. Government Leadership & Policy Vision

The Summit's opening address by senior government representatives underscored the administration's commitment to inclusive regional development. Emphasis was placed on:

- Strengthening public-private collaboration
- Enhancing infrastructure connectivity
- Streamlining investment incentives

Policy measures announced included special economic zones and tailored tax benefits aimed at encouraging both local and foreign investments.

2. Sector Spotlights: Growth with Purpose

Tourism & Culture

With its rich heritage, pristine beaches, and unique cuisine, the Northern Province has emerged as a destination for cultural and eco-tourism. Leaders showcased new itineraries, boutique hotel projects, and community-led tourism models designed to elevate visitor experiences while preserving cultural identity.

Agriculture & Food Systems

Agriculture remains the backbone of many northern communities. The Summit highlighted initiatives to modernize farming practices, introduce value-added processing facilities, and link producers with global markets through digital platforms.

Technology & Innovation

Young innovators and tech start-ups took center stage with pitches on digital solutions for local challenges — from marine technology to smart logistics, signaling a new wave of innovation emerging from the region.

3. Investment Pledges & Partnerships

By the end of the Summit, several memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and investment intentions were announced, spanning:

- Renewable energy projects
- Agro-processing facilities
- Hospitality and cultural tourism
- Digital transformation initiatives

These commitments reflect investor confidence and the potential for long-term, inclusive economic impact beyond short-term capital flows.



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Message from the President

I am pleased to extend my warm greetings to all participants of the Northern Investment Summit 2026. This Summit represents an important initiative to unlock the economic potential of Sri Lanka's Northern Province and to advance equitable development as a foundation for the country's economic growth. Ensuring that all regions share fairly in national progress is essential for sustainable prosperity, social cohesion, and long-term stability. The Northern Investment Summit reflects our collective commitment to building an inclusive development pathway where opportunity is not limited by geography.



The Government's investment priorities are focused on targeted, strategic interventions that can deliver lasting impact. These include strengthening core infrastructure, expanding skills development aligned with emerging industries, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, and enhancing institutional capacities at national, provincial and local levels. National policies are being aligned with locally driven development priorities to enable faster, more responsive decision-making. Our approach emphasizes a focused set of high-impact investment areas where the Northern province holds clear comparative advantage, including agri-business, renewable energy, value-added fisheries, digital services, and sustainable tourism, ensuring that investments are economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and socially beneficial.

In closing, I commend the organizers and partners for bringing together government, the private sector, development partners, financial institutions, academia, and civil society through this summit. I am confident that the Northern Investment Summit 2026 will translate dialogue into action and contribute meaningfully to shared prosperity, national unity, and sustainable regional development in Sri Lanka. I wish the summit every success.

Anura Kumara Disasanayake

President

Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Message from the Prime Minister

I extend my best wishes to all investors, business leaders, policymakers, development partners, and stakeholders participating in the Northern Investment Summit.

Sri Lanka's national development agenda, aligned with Vision 2030, places emphasis on inclusive economic growth, regional integration, export oriented development, innovation, and sustainability. Within this national framework, the Northern Province holds strategic importance and possesses significant potential to contribute to overall economic progress.

The Northern Province offers investment opportunities across key sectors including agriculture and agro processing, fisheries and aquaculture, renewable energy, tourism, manufacturing, logistics, ICT, and knowledge based industries. Ongoing improvements in infrastructure, connectivity, and human capital strengthen the region's readiness for investment.

The Northern Investment Summit, organized by The Management Club, provides a platform to facilitate engagement between investors, policymakers, and regional stakeholders, supporting informed investment decisions and long-term collaboration.

I wish the Northern Investment Summit success and trust that it will support sustainable economic growth in the Northern Province and the country.

Dr. Harini Amarasuriya

Prime Minister

Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka



Message from the Hon. Minister of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development

Warm greetings to all delegates, investors, policymakers, industry leaders and stakeholders participating in the Northern Investment Summit 2026.

The Government of Sri Lanka remains firmly committed to strengthening the nation's industrial base through inclusive, regionally balanced, and sustainable development. In this context, the Northern Province holds immense potential for industrial expansion, value-added manufacturing, agro-based industries, fisheries processing, renewable energy, SMEs, and technology-driven enterprises. Unlocking this potential is essential not only for regional progress, but also for the long-term resilience of our national economy.



The Northern Investment Summit serves as an important platform to showcase opportunities, encourage public-private collaboration and foster meaningful partnerships between local entrepreneurs and both domestic and international investors. I highly appreciate The Management Club of Sri Lanka and all partners for organizing this timely initiative, which aligns closely with the Government's vision to promote industrial innovation, attract responsible investment, create employment and enhance export competitiveness.

I encourage investors and industry leaders to explore the opportunities presented through this Summit and to engage actively with stakeholders in the Northern Province. Together, through collaboration, innovation, and shared commitment, we can drive sustainable industrial growth that benefits communities and contributes to Sri Lanka's broader economic transformation.

I wish the Northern Investment Summit 2026 every success and look forward to its positive outcomes.

Hon. Sunil Hadunnetti

Minister of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development,
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Message from the Governor of the Northern Province

It is with great honor and deep commitment that I extend my greetings to all distinguished participants of the Northern Investment Summit 2026 (NIS 26). This Summit, convened under the theme “Empowering Growth, Insightful Innovations”, represents a defining moment in the journey of Sri Lanka’s Northern Province toward sustainable development, inclusive prosperity, and global connectivity. The Northern Province, with its rich cultural heritage, resilient communities, and strategic geographic position, stands at the threshold of transformation. Over the past decade, we have witnessed steady progress in infrastructure, education, and social development. Yet, the true potential of this region lies in unlocking opportunities for investment, innovation, and collaboration. The Northern Investment Summit serves as a vital platform to bring together policymakers, investors, development partners, and private sector leaders to chart a roadmap for regional advancement.



The Northern Province is uniquely positioned as a gateway for trade and investment. Its proximity to South India and the broader South Asian region offers unparalleled opportunities for cross-border commerce, logistics, and tourism. With ongoing improvements in road networks, ports, and energy infrastructure, the Province is steadily building the foundation for industrial growth, agricultural modernization, and digital transformation. Equally important is the human capital of the North—our youth, whose creativity, resilience, and entrepreneurial spirit are the true drivers of progress. By investing in skills development, vocational training, and technology adoption, we can ensure that the benefits of growth are shared widely and equitably. As we welcome investors and partners, we remain steadfast in our commitment to sustainability and inclusivity. Development in the Northern Province must not only generate economic returns but also uplift communities, protect the environment, and preserve cultural heritage. Initiatives in renewable energy, eco-tourism, and sustainable agriculture are central to our vision of a balanced and resilient economy. The Summit’s focus on innovation resonates strongly with our aspirations. By embracing new technologies, fostering research partnerships, and encouraging start-ups, we aim to position the Northern Province as a hub for knowledge-driven industries that complement traditional sectors.

Building Partnerships for Progress

The success of NIS 26 lies in the spirit of collaboration. Government institutions, private enterprises, civil society, and international partners must work hand in hand to realize the full potential of this region. The Summit provides a unique opportunity to forge partnerships that transcend boundaries, bringing together diverse expertise and resources to achieve shared goals. I warmly acknowledge the efforts of The Management Club (TMC) and the organizing committee for their dedication in convening this landmark event. Their vision to create a national-level platform for investment promotion reflects the collective determination to accelerate growth in the Northern Province.

A Call to Action

To all dignitaries, investors, and participants, I extend my heartfelt invitation to engage actively in the discussions, explore opportunities, and contribute to shaping the future of the Northern Province. Your insights, investments, and innovations will not only transform this region but also strengthen Sri Lanka's position in the global economy. Let us seize this moment to reaffirm our shared commitment to peace, prosperity, and progress. Together, we can build a Northern Province that thrives as a beacon of opportunity, resilience, and harmony—an enduring testament to the power of collaboration and vision. In conclusion, the Northern Investment Summit 2026 is more than an event; it is a milestone in our collective journey. May this Summit inspire bold ideas, forge lasting partnerships, and lay the foundation for a brighter future for generations to come. I wish the organizers, participants, and partners every success in this endeavor and look forward to the fruitful outcomes that will emerge from NIS 26.

Nagalingam Vethanayahan

Governor

Northern Province

Capital Allowance – Budget 2026 (Sri Lanka)

In the Official Budget Speech 2026, the Minister of Finance announced a reduction in the minimum investment threshold required to qualify for enhanced capital allowances, from USD 3 million to USD 250,000.

This measure expands eligibility to small- and medium-scale investors, enabling them to benefit from enhanced capital allowances on qualifying capital expenditure commencing from 2026. The concession will become effective upon the relevant amendments to the Inland Revenue Act and the issuance of corresponding regulations by the Inland Revenue Department.

Message from the Deputy Minister of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development

It gives me great pleasure to extend my warm greetings to the organizers, partners and participants of the Northern Investment Summit 2026, a timely and significant initiative that reflects Sri Lanka's collective commitment towards inclusive and sustainable economic development.

The Northern Province holds immense potential across key sectors such as manufacturing, agribusiness, fisheries, renewable energy, tourism and SME-led innovation. Unlocking this potential through strategic investments, public-private partnerships and enterprise development is essential in strengthening regional economies and ensuring balanced national growth.



The Ministry of Industries remains firmly committed to creating a conducive environment for industrial expansion by facilitating policy support, infrastructure development, access to finance and capacity building initiatives particularly for small and medium enterprises that form the backbone of our economy. We strongly believe that platforms such as the Northern Investment Summit play a vital role in connecting investors, policymakers and entrepreneurs to transform opportunities into impactful outcomes.

I highly appreciate The Management Club of Sri Lanka and all stakeholders involved for their dedication in organizing this important summit. I am confident that the discussions and collaborations emerging from this event will contribute meaningfully to accelerating industrial development, job creation and sustainable prosperity in the Northern Province.

I wish the Northern Investment Summit 2026 every success and look forward to its positive impact on Sri Lanka's economic future.

Hon. Chaturanga Abeysinghe

Deputy Minister

Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development

Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Message from Consul General of India in Jaffna

It is a distinct honor to associate myself with the first-ever Northern Investment Summit organized by The Management Club, and supported by the Consulate General of India in Jaffna. This is an initiative that marks a significant milestone in the economic and developmental journey of the Northern Province of Sri Lanka. This Summit represents a clear statement of intent, and an affirmation that the Northern Province is ready to engage, innovate, and partner with the world in shaping a prosperous future for its remarkable people.



The Northern Province, endowed with resilient communities, strategic geography, human capital, and untapped economic potential, stands at a defining moment. Investment today is all about confidence, collaboration, and commitment to sustainable growth. The Northern Investment Summit is set to provide an invaluable platform to showcase opportunities and foster partnerships that can transform vision into tangible outcomes.

I would like to place on record my deep appreciation for The Management Club's leadership, and the dedication shown by Mr. Indhra Kaushal Rajapaksa, Project Chairman of Project NIS 2026, and Ms. Shanthy Bhagirathan, Deputy Chair of Project NIS 2026. Their enthusiasm, clarity of purpose, and steadfast commitment were evident from the very beginning. Although I had the opportunity to meet both of them for the first time only last year, it was immediately apparent that their passion for this project went far beyond organizational responsibility. It was driven by a genuine desire to invite investment, opportunity, and long-term development to the Northern Province.

Conceptualizing and executing the first-ever investment summit for a region is no small task. It requires conviction and the ability to bring together diverse stakeholders around a shared goal. In this regard, the efforts of Mr. Rajapaksa and Ms. Bhagirathan deserve special commendation. Their initiative stands as a pioneering effort, one that sets a precedent for future engagement and underscores the vital role that visionary leadership plays in regional development.

Equally important is the role of collaboration. Government authorities of the Province, private sector entities, financial institutions, academia, and civil society must work in concert to ensure that investment translates into inclusive growth. Platforms such as the Northern Investment Summit are critical in facilitating dialogue and identifying opportunities where collective effort can yield impact.

I am confident that the Northern Investment Summit will usher in meaningful investments and inspire continued engagement with the region. May this initiative pave the way for enduring partnerships, shared prosperity, and a future defined by innovation and inclusive growth.

I wish the Northern Investment Summit every success and look forward to witnessing the positive outcomes that will undoubtedly emerge from this landmark endeavor.

Sai Murali S.

Consul General of India in Jaffna

Statement of the president of the Board of Management on the Northern Investment Summit 2026

Harnessing Collective Strength for National Economic Development

As President of the Board of Management of the Management Club (TMC), I am proud to speak on the upcoming Northern Investment Summit taking place on the 21st and 22nd of January 2026.

TMC was established nearly 25 years ago with a clear purpose: to create a platform where ideas, leadership, and innovation in management and economics can be explored, challenged, and advanced. At its core, the club exists to encourage meaningful dialogue, develop forward-thinking leaders, and connect individuals who are passionate about shaping sustainable economic and business futures.



The Northern Investment Summit 2026 was conceived as a reflection of these values. We recognized the need for a dedicated space where key economic issues affecting the northern region can be discussed critically, collaboratively, and with a future-focused mindset. We wanted to use the knowledge, capabilities and network of our membership to do something meaningful for the Nation by bringing together investors, professionals, policymakers, and industry stakeholders, the summit aims to foster informed conversations and practical insights that extend beyond theory into real-world impact for this nation.

At the heart of TMC's work is a deep sense of responsibility towards our nation. We believe that sustainable national progress requires informed dialogue, ethical leadership, and collective effort. We recognize our role in contributing thoughtfully to the country's economic and social development, using our knowledge and platforms to address real national challenges.

This summit represents TMC's commitment to thought leadership, collaboration, and responsible economic development. We look forward to two days of engaging discussions, shared learning, and meaningful connections.

Roger Talayaratne

Member of Core Team of NIS '26

President of TMC Board of Management

Message from the Chairman Northern Investment Summit 2026

It is my pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to all delegates, partners, investors, and stakeholders attending the Northern Investment Summit 2026.

The Northern Investment Summit, an initiative conceptualised by The Management Club of Jaffna and supported by The Management Club of Sri Lanka, comes at a pivotal moment, as the Northern Province enters a promising new phase in its development journey. The region holds significant potential across key sectors, including Agriculture, fisheries and livestock, education and IT, Tourism, and Energy, complemented by cross-cutting opportunities in infrastructure, healthcare, exports, and startups.



This summit has been designed to showcase these opportunities, facilitate meaningful dialogue, and foster strong partnerships between the public and private sectors, both locally and globally.

This platform brings together policymakers, business leaders, investors, development agencies, academic institutions, and industry experts, all united by a shared commitment to driving inclusive, sustainable, and innovation-led regional growth. We are confident that the insights exchanged and connections formed here will translate into tangible outcomes that stimulate economic activity, generate employment, and uplift livelihoods across the Northern Province.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Hon. Sunil Hadunneththi, Minister of Industries; Hon. Chathuranga Abeysinghe, Deputy Minister of Industries; Mrs J. M. Thilaka Jayasundara, Secretary to the Ministry of Industries; Governor Nagalingam Vethanayagam, Governor of the Northern Province; and the District Secretaries of all five districts for their continued leadership, guidance, and support in advancing national and regional investment initiatives. We also gratefully acknowledge the contributions of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Science and Technology, Agriculture & Livestock, Fisheries, Energy, Ports & Aviation, Urban Development, Ministry of Highways, and Transport, whose engagement has been instrumental.

My heartfelt thanks also go to The Management Club of Jaffna and the Board of Management of The Management Club (TMC) for their unwavering commitment, partnership, and dedicated efforts in shaping the vision and execution of this summit.

We encourage businesses at all levels to engage with Northern enterprises, SMEs, and startups. Such collaboration is key to unlocking regional potential, driving innovation, and fostering inclusive growth. This summit serves as the bridge to build lasting, mutually beneficial partnerships.

I extend my gratitude to all government institutions, partners, sponsors, knowledge partners, speakers, panellists, and the organising committee for their collective effort in making the Northern Investment Summit 2026 a reality. Your contributions are instrumental in positioning the Northern Province as an emerging, credible, and high-potential destination for investment.

I warmly welcome all participants and trust that the Northern Investment Summit 2026 will mark the beginning of impactful partnerships, shared prosperity, and long-term progress for the Northern Province and for Sri Lanka as a whole.

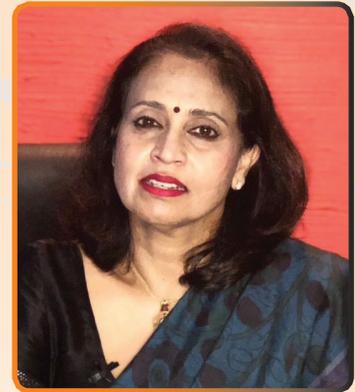
Indhra Kaushal Rajapaksa

NIS '26 Project Chair of TMC

Immediate Past President of TMC Board of Management

Message from Deputy Chair Northern Investment Summit 2026

As Deputy Chair of the Northern Investment Summit 2026, it gives me immense satisfaction to have played a key role in shaping this Summit, the first of its kind in the Northern province. We started with a small idea, which was to influence progress and development in the Northern Province. This idea, shared with a corporate professional, who was inspired with the courage to do things differently and to treat good ideas with an eagle eye, gave birth to the concept of a 'bigger, better, bold, move', for the region's development and economic growth. Under the theme of 'Empowering Growth, Insightful Innovations', we have been driven by a passion to promote the northern region of Sri Lanka as an economic and IT hub, promoting the area's rich natural and human resources.



This event sees the participation of a rare combination of key stakeholders including national government representatives and agencies responsible for facilitating overseas investments, exports, capacity building, and sustainable development. The presence of the Consulate of India, Sri Lankan missions overseas, particularly Tamil Nadu, the Tamil Nadu ASEAN Chamber, Northern universities and many more, adds tremendous value to the Summit. In addition, we are strongly supported by one of Sri Lanka's most admired top 10 companies, who have a well-established footprint in the North. Our working partners have been our strength in hosting such an unmatched event for the North. In planning a scaled-up event of this magnitude, every little detail has been in focus, ensuring this Summit will be a benchmark of what the region can offer.

We are indebted to the key speakers and personalities, both local and foreign who enthusiastically accepted our invitation to participate in the Summit. In particular, I extend our deep thanks to: Dr. Srimathy Kesan, the multiple award-winning Indian entrepreneur, space educator, and founder and CEO of Space Kidz India (SKI), an aerospace organization dedicated to promoting STEM education and designing student-built small satellites launched by ISRO and NASA.

Cecil Sundar, the Director of Data and AI at Microsoft who counts over 25 years of experience in technology and leadership. He leads AI and cloud strategy for manufacturing clients across the US and is recognized for driving digital transformation and innovation. A former Indian Air Force officer, Cecil is passionate about using AI for social good, including education for underprivileged children and early cancer detection in healthcare. As Co-chair, my wish is that this Investment Summit will be a spring board for fast tracking growth, not just for the Northern region but the entire country. In particular, we hope the Diaspora will demonstrate increased interest in supporting and being a part of the homeland's growth.

Thank you to the people of the North for embracing us and supporting this initiative for the region's sustainable growth.

Shanthi Bhagirathan

NIS '26 Deputy Chair

TMC & VP Admin. of TMC Board of Management

Message from TMC Jaffna Chairman and Deputy Chair Northern Investment Summit 2026

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Thank you to the people of the North for embracing us and supporting this initiative for the region's sustainable growth.

S. Anu Rakavan

Deputy Chair of NIS '26

Chairman of TMC Jaffna & Member of Board of Management

BOI Chairman's Message Northern Investment Summit 2026

The Northern Province of Sri Lanka is a key region, development of which would significantly impact the economic growth of the country. Once restricted and challenged by decades of conflict, the region is now in the process of redefining its capacity and contribution towards the country. The Northern Province is amply endowed with an advantageous geographic location, rich natural and human resources, and growing connectivity to domestic and regional markets, and considerable promise across various sectors such as tourism, energy, education, IT, agriculture, fisheries, and healthcare. Hence, the accelerated development of the region will uplift the local community while generating multiplier effects by positioning the country on course to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic development across all regions.



The Government of Sri Lanka recognises the importance of the region and is vehemently committed to pursue a targeted and active agenda for the development of the Northern Province; an agenda that is rooted in infrastructure development, enhancement of skills and livelihoods, and establishment of a strong flow of sustainable and quality investments in to the Northern Province. In this national undertaking, the Board of Investment of Sri Lanka, as the country's apex investment promotion agency plays a pivotal role by spearheading the development of three new zones in the region and extending its services in a proactive manner to attract and facilitate investments. These new dedicated zones are anticipated to catalyse commercial and industrial activities in the region while aligning with the regional development priorities. In addition to that these initiatives aspire to draw advanced technologies, innovation and quality employment to the Northern Province. As an organization striving to create a fostering environment for sustainable investments, the BOI views investors as long-term partners and believes in working in partnership in order to identify and create opportunities, address constraints, and facilitate investors throughout their journey in the Sri Lankan economic landscape. The Northern Investment Summit serves as a platform to engage in dialogue, collaboration and partnership with government representatives, policymakers, investors, development partners and private sector stakeholders; a timely initiative to unlock the potential of this region through shared vision and collective action.

I wish the summit success and anticipate that it will contribute to meaningful outcomes that can be translated into tangible and sustainable investments and development of the country.

Arjuna Herath

Chairman

Sri Lanka's Board of Investment (BOI)

Message from the Chairman & Chief Executive of the Sri Lanka Export Development Board

Unlocking Northern Horizons: A Strategic Leap for Sri Lanka's Export Frontier

It is with a sense of profound optimism and strategic purpose that I pen this message for the Northern Investment Summit 2026. As we converge in this region of immense resilience and untapped potential, we are not merely attending a summit; we are witnessing a new chapter in Sri Lanka's economic narrative. For the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB), the Northern Province is a growing powerhouse. From the fertile soils of Jaffna to the rich maritime resources, this region holds the keys to diversifying our national export basket and fortifying our presence in the global market.



The Northern Investment Summit serves as a critical bridge, connecting the visionary capital of global investors with the raw, high-value potential of the North. Our focus remains steadfast on sectors where this region possesses a distinct competitive advantage, beginning with the Blue Economy. With an extensive coastline, the North is poised to lead in sustainable fisheries and high-value aquaculture, catering to the sophisticated demands of European and East Asian markets. Parallel to these maritime advancements, the region is ripe for agro-industrial excellence.

Furthermore, the region is rapidly becoming a destination for the digital and green frontier. Boasting a highly literate workforce and world-class renewable energy prospects in wind and solar, the North is an ideal location for green-powered ICT/BPM hubs and sustainable manufacturing. We see this summit as the ultimate catalyst for an inclusive economic renaissance.

I invite investors and delegates present at this summit to look beyond and see the vibrant, skilled, and determined spirit of the Northern people. Together, let us transform the Northern Province into a global beacon of export excellence. I wish the Northern Investment Summit 2026 every success.

Mangala Wijesinghe

Chairman & Chief Executive

Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB)

Message from the Chairman Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau

It is with great pleasure that I extend my warm greetings to all stakeholders of the Northern Investment Summit 2026!

Sri Lanka's tourism sector remains a main pillar of our national economy, contributing significantly to employment generation, foreign exchange earnings and regional development. The Northern Province, with its rich cultural heritage, pristine coastlines, unique religious and historical attractions and emerging eco-tourism potential, represents one of the most promising frontiers for sustainable tourism investment in the country.



The Northern Investment Summit 2026 serves as a timely and strategic platform to showcase these untapped opportunities, encourage public-private partnerships and foster investor confidence in the region. By bringing together government institutions, private sector leaders, development partners, and international stakeholders, this Summit plays a critical role in positioning the Northern Province as a competitive and attractive destination for responsible tourism development.

The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau remains fully committed to supporting initiatives that promote inclusive growth, community-based tourism and environmentally sustainable investments. We firmly believe that targeted tourism investments in the Northern Province will not only enhance regional livelihoods but also strengthen Sri Lanka's overall tourism value proposition in global markets.

I highly appreciate The Management Club of Sri Lanka and all partners involved for their vision, leadership, and dedication in organizing this important national initiative. I am confident that the discussions, partnerships, and outcomes of this Summit will translate into meaningful investments and long-term economic benefits for the Northern Province and the country at large.

I wish the Northern Investment Summit 2026 every success!

Buddhika Hewawasam

Chairman

Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau

Message from the Chairman National Enterprise Development Authority (NEDA)

It is with great pleasure that we extend our warm greetings to The Management Club (TMC) and all participants of the Northern Investment Summit 2026 (NIS 2026), scheduled to be held on 21st and 22nd January 2026 in Jaffna.



The NIS 2026 serves as a timely and strategic platform to highlight the vast economic potential of Sri Lanka's Northern Province, while fostering constructive engagement among investors, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and development partners. Initiatives of this nature are vital in promoting inclusive regional development, strengthening private sector participation, and contributing meaningfully to national economic growth. This summit also stands as a model for other provinces that have embarked on integrated economic development initiatives.

As the apex government institution mandated to promote and develop Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Sri Lanka, the National Enterprise Development Authority (NEDA) remains steadfast in its commitment to empowering entrepreneurs, enhancing enterprise competitiveness, and facilitating access to finance, markets, technology, and capacity-building support. MSMEs play a critical role in employment generation, innovation, poverty alleviation, and balanced regional development, particularly in post-conflict and emerging regions such as the Northern Province.

NEDA firmly believes that investment-driven entrepreneurship, supported by effective public-private partnerships, is essential to unlocking the full economic potential of the region. Platforms such as NIS 2026 provide valuable opportunities to connect local enterprises with national and international investors, promote sustainable business practices, and encourage youth- and women-led entrepreneurship.

We commend The Management Club for its vision and leadership in organizing this important summit, to be held on 21-22 January 2026 in Jaffna. NEDA looks forward to continued collaboration with all stakeholders to build a resilient, inclusive, and globally competitive enterprise ecosystem in Sri Lanka.

We wish the "Northern Investment Summit 2026" every success!

Lakshman Abeysekera

Chairman

National Enterprise Development Authority (NEDA)

Sri Lanka

Message from the Country Managing Partner KPMG Sri Lanka

As the Knowledge Partner of The Management Club (TMC), KPMG Sri Lanka wishes to commend TMC for their visionary leadership, dedication, and tireless efforts in organizing the Northern Investment Summit 2026 for the very first time in the region. Their initiative reflects a deep understanding of the urgent need to attract investment that can accelerate economic growth and create sustainable opportunities for the people of the Northern Province. This landmark event represents a significant step toward unlocking the region's untapped potential and fostering inclusive economic growth.



Northern Province accounts for approximately 10% of Sri Lanka's total land area, providing meaningful scope for agriculture-led value addition, industrial development, renewable energy, tourism, and services. Combined with its strategic proximity to India—one of the fastest-growing major economies globally—the region is well positioned to benefit from enhanced trade, supply-chain linkages, and cross-border investment flows, with positive spillover effects for the national economy.

This summit comes at a critical juncture, as realizing Northern Province's development potential depends on active investor participation and sustained support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), the backbone of the economy and a key driver of jobs, innovation, and community resilience. Strong investor engagement, alongside a supportive ecosystem for SMEs, is essential to translate opportunity into tangible economic outcomes, stimulate entrepreneurship, strengthen local value chains, and ensure that growth is inclusive and deeply rooted within communities across the Province.

As the Knowledge Partner, KPMG Sri Lanka is pleased to support TMC's vision through actionable insights, research-driven strategies, and capacity-building initiatives. We actively assist both local and international investors seeking to invest in the Northern Province through large-scale feasibility studies, financial modelling, and advisory support for fund raising and capital mobilization. Our experience in delivering complex feasibility engagements and supporting both domestic and cross-border fund-raising initiatives enables us to help translate opportunity into sustainable outcomes. We remain focused on Making the Difference.

This summit is more than a gathering—it is a platform for collaboration, a catalyst for transformation, and a beacon of hope for inclusive development. Together, let us seize this opportunity to turn aspirations into reality and pave the way for a prosperous future for Northern Province and beyond.

I wish TMC every success in this endeavor and look forward to witnessing a highly impactful and transformative Northern Investment Summit 2026.

Priyanka Jayatilake
Country Managing Partner
KPMG Sri Lanka

Message from Deputy Chairman/ Chief Executive Officer Cargills (Ceylon) PLC

It is a privilege to be part of the first Northern Investment Summit, and to share this moment with investors, industry partners, community leaders, and policymakers who care deeply about the future of the North and the future of Sri Lanka.

For Cargills, our journey in the North is not something that began recently. It is a commitment that has been part of our purpose for more than two decades. Long before peace was restored, in 2004, we opened our first supermarket in Vavuniya at a time when much of the region was still facing uncertainty and conflict. Many questioned why. But for us, the answer was simple: Sri Lanka cannot grow unless all of Sri Lanka grows. We believed then, as we believe today, that business can help connect people, create hope, and bring communities together.



Our goal was never just to sell products. It was to build opportunities and hope. It was to open doors. It was to ensure that the North was not only a place where we serve customers, but also a region where we empower farmers, entrepreneurs, youth, and families.

From the beginning, we focused on creating real economic linkages. We worked with smallholder farmers, not as suppliers, but as partners supporting them to improve quality, productivity, and market access. We do not own farms, land, or animals. Instead, we invest in people. We buy from rural farmers so that income flows back into their communities. Today, Cargills is the leading buyer of fresh produce, fresh milk, and poultry in Sri Lanka, and that strength has helped Northern farmers connect not only to local markets, but to the entire nation and even beyond, through our exports of value added food products.

Over the years, our investments in the North have grown steadily. We have established multiple Cargills Food City supermarkets, KFC restaurants, milk and vegetable collection centres, and processing facilities that integrate the North into national value chains. Our Cargills Square Mall in Jaffna was established in 2013 to give families and young people an international-standard entertainment and shopping experiences.

In Kilinochchi, our fruit processing factory under the KIST brand is particularly meaningful to us. It employs a workforce primarily consisting of women, including many war widows, giving them dignity, stability, and a pathway toward rebuilding their lives.

Most importantly, we have been able to create thousands of meaningful jobs for young people. Many have gone on to become professionals in retail, food manufacturing, logistics, and hospitality, building long-term careers and contributing to the nation's economy. That is something we are deeply proud of.

The Northern Province is rich in talent, agriculture, heritage, resilience, and potential. What it needs is sustained confidence, long-term investment, and strong partnerships between government, private sector, and communities. This summit is a powerful platform to deepen those partnerships. Cargills is honoured to be a partner of this important initiative. Our commitment to the North is not symbolic; it is structural, long-term, and deeply personal to us as a company that believes in inclusive progress.

We look forward to continuing this journey together, by investing, building trust, expanding opportunity, and above all, uniting hearts across our nation.

Ranjit Page

Deputy Chairman/ Chief Executive Officer
Cargills (Ceylon) PLC

Message from Managing Director / Chief Executive Officer Hatton National Bank PLC

It is with great pride HNB joins as the Official Banking Partner of the Northern Investment Summit 2026, a landmark initiative aimed at unlocking the immense potential of Sri Lanka's Northern Province. This summit represents more than an investment forum; it is a platform for collaboration, innovation, and inclusive growth that will shape the future of our nation.

At HNB, we believe that sustainable economic development begins with empowering communities. The Northern Province, with its rich cultural heritage and strategic location, offers unparalleled opportunities for agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, and technology-driven ventures. By fostering partnerships between government, private sector, and development agencies, we can create an ecosystem that drives entrepreneurship, generates employment, and uplifts livelihoods.



As a leading financial institution with a legacy spanning over a century, and its presence in the North for over 50 years, HNB remains committed to supporting national priorities and regional development. Our focus is on delivering financial solutions that enable businesses to thrive, while championing initiatives that promote sustainability and social progress. Through this summit, we reaffirm our dedication to bridging gaps, building trust, and accelerating investment flows that will transform the Northern Province into a hub of prosperity.

We commend the organizers for their vision and tireless efforts in bringing together stakeholders from across the country and beyond. Let us seize this opportunity to work collectively towards a future where economic growth is inclusive, equitable, and resilient.

HNB looks forward to partnering with all stakeholders in realizing this shared vision. Together, we can pave the way for a stronger, more vibrant Sri Lanka

Damith Pallewatte

Managing Director / Chief Executive Officer
Hatton National Bank PLC

Message from Chief Executive Officer International Distillers Limited

Gold Partner - Northern Investment Summit 2026

It is a privilege to convey our reflections on the Northern Investment Summit 2026, an important platform bringing together government, investors, and the private sector in a shared effort to unlock the Northern Province's economic potential. The Summit represents more than a convening of ideas, it is a commitment to collaboration, vision, and disciplined execution in advancing Sri Lanka's journey toward inclusive regional growth.



Purpose and Promise

The Northern Investment Summit 2026 (NIS2026) serves a vital purpose. It unites public policy, private investment, and community aspirations to shape a coherent pathway for regional development. At a time when the Northern Province is poised for transformation, the Summit offers a framework for aligning national priorities with regional opportunity, and for translating intent into impact.

Northern Province – A Strategic Moment

The Northern Province stands today as a region of growing opportunity, supported by improving infrastructure, a skilled and educated workforce, and a strong entrepreneurial spirit. Its geographic proximity to key trade corridors, coupled with developments such as the KKS Port, Palaly Airport, and expanding IT and education ecosystems, positions it as a strategic frontier for sustainable investment.

Opportunities exist in abundance, but realizing them requires vision, collaboration, and long-term perspective. The task before all stakeholders is not only to attract capital, but to channel it in ways that create enduring social and economic value.

IDL's Role and Commitment

Within this context, IDL, as part of the East India Holdings Group, is proud to participate as an active investor aligned with the priorities of NIS2026. Our approach to growth has always been guided by ethical investment practices, community respect, and long-term value creation. We view this Summit as an opportunity to reinforce our commitment to responsible enterprise, where investment supports livelihoods, strengthens local capabilities, and uplifts entire communities.

Quality Investment and Long-Term Values

The true measure of success lies not in the scale of investment, but in its quality. Long-term value creation depends on discipline, transparency, and a shared commitment to sustainability. Quick gains may offer visibility, but only patient, values-driven investment builds institutions that endure. At East India Holdings, we believe in investing where integrity meets opportunity, ensuring that development remains responsible, inclusive, and resilient.

Collaboration for Regional Advancement

Regional advancement requires a spirit of collective partnership. Sustainable outcomes emerge when investors, government bodies, development agencies, and local communities work side by side. At IDL, we recognize that the most meaningful impact comes from collaboration, aligning business capability with the public good, and ensuring that every initiative contributes to broader national goals.

Community Impact and Human Capital

Equally essential is the human dimension of development. Economic transformation must translate into employment, skills, and empowerment, particularly for youth and women. Through our partnerships, including initiatives with Thomas International, we continue to invest in developing people's capabilities and creating platforms for growth. It is this focus on human potential that gives economic progress its true meaning.

Looking Ahead

The Northern Investment Summit 2026 is not just an event, it is an invitation to think differently, act collectively, and invest responsibly. It calls upon all participants to adopt a long-term, values-driven mindset, recognizing that regional progress and national prosperity are inseparable.

We at East India Holdings remain committed to being part of this journey, as a responsible investor, a trusted partner, and an advocate for sustainable transformation.

May this Summit inspire collaboration, renew confidence, and serve as a catalyst for lasting partnerships that define a future marked by resilience, opportunity, and shared success.

Janek Jayasekara

Chief Executive Officer

International Distillers Limited

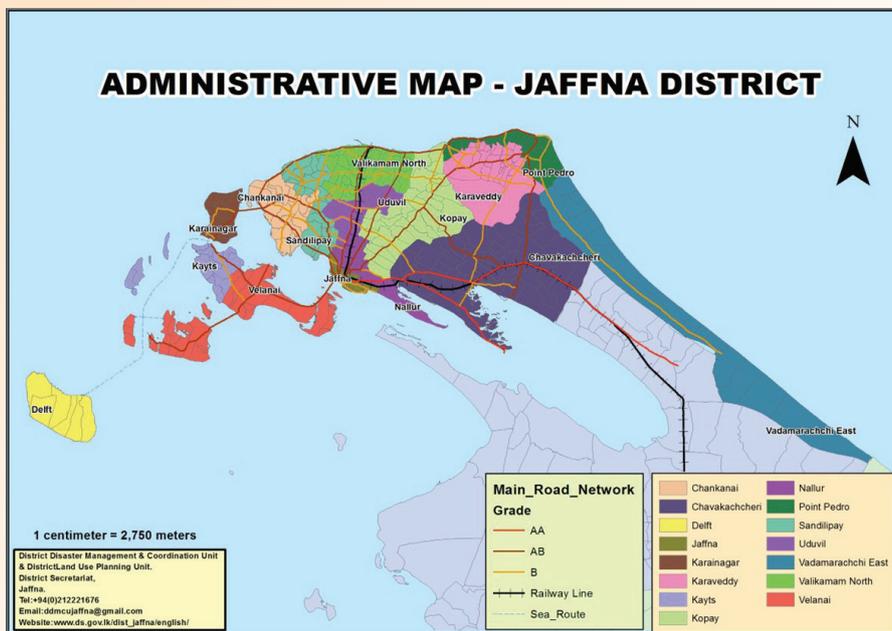
An Introduction to Jaffna District

1.1 Introduction

The Jaffna Peninsula is situated between longitude 79°54'-80°2'E and latitude 9°30'-9°50'N, covering an area of approximately 410 square miles (1023 sq. km). This unique landmass is predominantly surrounded by the sea yet connected to the mainland on one side. To its west and north lie the Palk Strait, while the Bay of Bengal graces its eastern shores, and the Jaffna Lagoon embraces its southern border. Comprising more than 18 islands, with seven inhabited, the Jaffna District is further divided into five sub-divisions: Jaffna, Islands, Valikamam, Thenmarachchi, and Vadamarachchi (Figure 1 shows administrative map of Jaffna)



M. Piiratheepan
District Secretary
Jaffna



Source: Disaster Management Unit, District Secretariat, Jaffna

Figure 1: Administrative map of Jaffna

1.2 Physical Characteristics of the District

Topography

The district has a flat, low-lying topography, mostly less than 10 m above mean sea level. It consists of a narrow coastal plain, wider in the east and more restricted in the west. The peninsula is separated from the mainland by the Jaffna Lagoon in the west and the Elephant Pass Lagoon in the east. Major internal lagoons include Thondamanaru in the northeast and Upparu from the central to southern areas. A non-perennial river, Vallukai Aru, lies in the southwest. The ecosystem is mainly influenced by fault topography and marine climatic conditions.

Geology

Jaffna peninsula is underlined by Miocene limestone that is dominated by patches of limestone which outcropped in the couples of areas such as North and North-Western part. Limestone is very karstic features such as caverns (Kerudavil), solution chamber (Nilavarai well) and sinkholes (Manipay Idikundu) the remaining areas are underlined by land formations such as beaches, dunes (North-Eastern part and

Gowdarimunai) calcareous sandy formations (Eg- Western Coast – Araly).The Miocene limestone is a main aquifer for drinking water and Seasonal rainfall is a source for groundwater which obtain mainly from North – East monsoon period (September to February). This groundwater meets basic livelihood of the Local Community of Jaffna District.

Soils

Four major soil groups are found in the Jaffna District: calcic red yellow latosols, solodized solonetz, sandy regosols, and soils on recent marine calcareous sediments. Calcic red and yellow latosols occur together, with red latosols in higher areas and yellow latosols in lower plains; red latosols have good physical properties suitable for diverse upland crops. Alkaline saline soils and sandy regosols are common in coastal zones due to marine influence. Alluvial soils occur in limited areas such as the Valukkai Aru region, while solodized solonetz and solonchaks are found in salt-affected areas.

Climatic conditions

The Jaffna District of Sri Lanka experiences a tropical monsoon climate, characterized by distinct wet and dry seasons throughout the year. The region is influenced by the Northeast and Southwest monsoons. The average annual rainfall during this season ranges from 1,200 to 1800 millimeters. Temperatures in Jaffna remain relatively consistent throughout the year, with average highs ranging from 30°C to 34°C (86°F to 93°F) and average lows ranging from 23°C to 25°C (73°F to 77°F).

1.3. History of Jaffna

The Yarlpana Vaipava Malai, written by the Tamil poet Mayilvagana Pulavar, records the history of Jaffna. It was translated into English by C. Brito and published in 1879. In ancient Tamil culture, musicians were called Pannan. A blind musician, Pannan Veera Raghavan, came from Chola to northern Sri Lanka during the reign of King Jeyathunga Veera Singhan. As blind people were not allowed to meet the king, he performed behind a curtain and was gifted land called Manatri.

He later became known as Yarlpadi, a musician of the Yarlp instrument, and the land came to be called Yarlpnam. The Yarlp instrument symbolizes (Figure 2) the historical origin of the name. During the Portuguese period, Yarlpnam was renamed Jaffna, though it is still called Yarlpnam or Yarlp in Tamil. The Yarlp instrument is no longer used, mainly because it was heavy.



Source: Destination Tour Guide, 2025

Figure 2 : The instrument of Yarlp

1.4. Historical Memories of Jaffna District

Pre-Colonial History of Jaffna

Jaffna peninsula together with several islands close to it and the neighbouring mainland areas had human habitation long before the start of the Common Era. Archaeological studies conducted since early 20th century, provide convincing evidence for this.

Artifacts such as pottery, coins and several other cultural objects unearthed during excavations at Kantharodai, Vallipuram, Anaikkooddai, Poonakary, Jaffna fort and many other places indicate that the people lived in these areas were civilized and had trade contacts with other world civilizations. It is not very clear what type of political organization existed here before 13th century.



Figure 3: The Statue of Tamil King Sangiliyan

Kingdom of Jaffna

Clear evidences are available for the emergence of a Tamil kingdom during 13th century CE. This was later known as the Kingdom of Jaffna.

This lasted until early 17th century. According to early literary and epigraphic sources, the capital of the Kingdom was referred to as Cinkainagar.

Later sources mention the name of the capital as Nallur. There are differences of opinion whether these two names indicate the same or different cities. Some scholars believe Cinkainagar was situated at Vallipuram, a place near the eastern coast of the Jaffna peninsula.

They say when the representative of Kotte Kingdom captured the Kingdom of Jaffna and occupied it for 17 years, shifted the capital to Nallur.

Others believe that the two names denote the same place or places very close to each other. Some identify Cinkainagar in the mainland near Punakary. However, archaeological surveys, conducted recently in and around the Dutch fort of Jaffna, revealed that this area functioned as a hub for ancient Indian Ocean trade. This made some researchers to propose this place as the location of the ancient Cinkainagar.

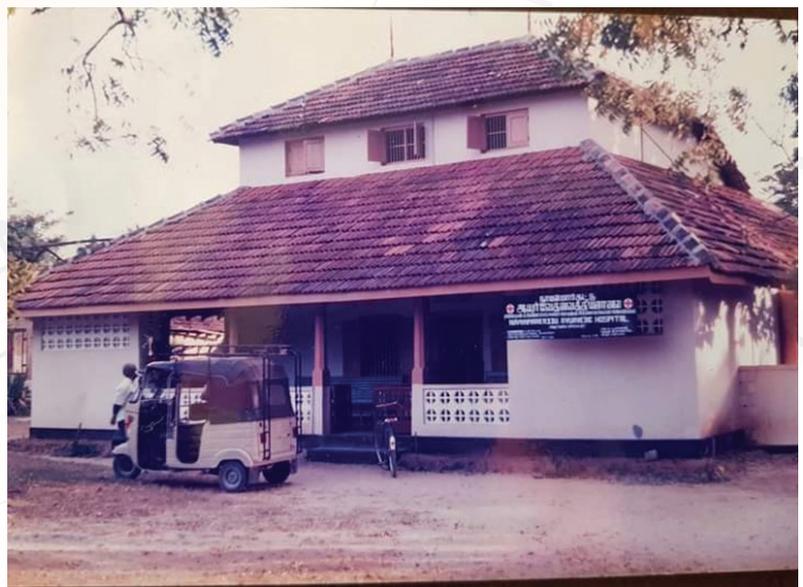


Figure 4: The Nayanmarkattu Siddha Ayurvedic Hospital, constructed by the Tamil kings during the Jaffna Kingdom

The rulers of Jaffna Kingdom belong to “Arya Chakravarthy” dynasty. From around middle of 13th century up to 1450, eleven kings ruled the kingdom. Then, a short interruption followed, during which the Kingdom of Jaffna fell under the rule of the Kingdom of Kotte. In 1467 Jaffna came under Tamil kings again and lasted up to 1619.

Portuguese, with the intension to wrest control over the Kingdom and to gain free access to propagate Catholicism, attacked Jaffna three times.

First time in 1560 and captured Nallur. But, they were unable to retain it more than a few months. Second attack took place in 1591. The king was killed and the kingdom was reduced to a tributary and a puppet king was installed on the throne.

The third attack of Portuguese in 1619 resulted in annexing the Kingdom of Jaffna to the Portuguese Empire of the East under the Portuguese crown.

Portuguese built a Fort at the location where the current Dutch fort stands, and made it as their headquarters. They also built the new town of Jaffna near it. Some believe that this place was already a developed area with several government buildings, probably including a fort under the kings of Jaffna.

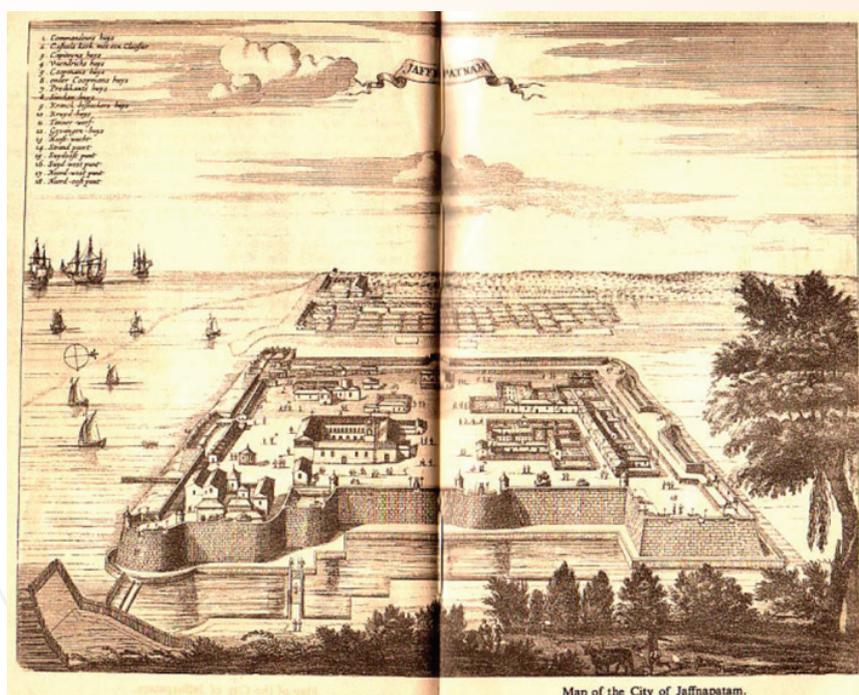


Figure 5: the city of Jaffna patam. in Portuguese period.

Source: True and Exact Description of the Great Island Ceylon by Phillipus Baldaeus in 1672

Portuguese rule lasted only 39 years. Dutch replaced Portuguese as rulers of Jaffna in 1658. After 138 years long rule, they lost it to the British in 1795.

British ruled Jaffna for 152 years till 1948. This also marked the end of 329 years long colonial rule in Jaffna.

1.5 Administrative system

There are 15 administrative divisions (Divisional Secretary's Division), headed by the District Secretary. Divisional Secretary and it has further to be divided into 435 Grama Niladhari Divisions. All these are regulated by the District Secretariat. These are selected government bodies. It has a further 17 local authorities, among them one is Municipal Council, three Urban Councils, and 13 Pradesha Sabhas, and these are elected government bodies (Table1).

Table 1: District Administration, 2025

No	Administrative Divisions	Numbers
1	Divisional Secretaries	15
2	Electoral Divisions	10
3	Grama Niladhari Divisions	435
4	Villages	1,453
5	Municipal Council	1
6	Urban Council	3
7	Pradeshiya Sabhas	13
8	Ministry of Health Div.	12
9	Education Zones	5
10	Education Divisions	15
11	Fisheries Inspector Divisions	14

Source: Statistical Handbook -2024, Jaffna District, District Secretariat, Jaffna

1.6 Socio Economic Characteristics of Jaffna District

Population

The population is estimated to be around 630,119 which is about 200,000 less than in 1981. The war and consequent migration have resulted in the population moving out of the district. (Table 2)

Table 2: Demographic Details of Jaffna District.

No	Description	Year	Numbers	No	Description	Year	Percentage%
1	Total population	1981	831,800	1	Male %	2025	48.62%
		2024	630,119	2	Female %		51.38%
2	Total Families	209,255		3	Birth Rate		12.68%
3	Population Density		614.75	4	Death Rate		9.20%
				5	Infant Mortality Rate		12.70%
				6	Maternal Mortality Rate		37.99%

Source: Statistical Handbook -2024, Jaffna District, District Secretariat, Jaffna

Table 3: Ethnic composition of Jaffna District

Ethnic Groups	Number	Percentage
Tamils	624,756	99.14%
Muslims	5,002	0.8%.
Sinhala	343	0.05%
Burgers	18	0.02%

Source: Statistical Handbook -2024, Jaffna District, District Secretariat, Jaffna.

Table 3 shows the ethnic composition of the district. The district is dominated by Sri Lankan Tamils – 99.14%. There has been a decline in the other ethnic groups with migration due to the war. Based on the 1971 and 1981 the Tamil population was 92.1% and 95.3 respectively.

Table 4: Religious wise population of Jaffna District

Major Religions	Families	Population	Percentage
Hindu	176,751	529,604	84%
Christians	31,017	95,194	15.10%
Islam	1,383	5,002	0.79%
Burgers	104	319	0.05%
Total	209,255	630,119	100%

The table 4 shows that Hindus form the majority of the population (84%), followed by Christians (15.10%). Muslims (0.79%) and Burgers (0.05%) represent very small minority groups. Overall, the population is largely dominated by the Hindu community.

Education

There are several educational establishments in the district for the population it serves. (Table 5) Historically, Jaffna has been a center of education, though recently the quality and standard has fallen.

Table 5: Number of Educational Institutions of the District

No	Type	Numbers	No	Type	Numbers
1	Pre- schools	737	4	University	1
2	Functioning Schools	451	5	Open University	1
	1. Government		6	Advanced technical College	1
	National	8	7	Technical College	1
	Provincial	437	8	Vocational Training Authority Centers	6
	2. Private Schools	6	9	College of Education	1
3	Non- Functioning	53	10	Teachers' training college	1
	Total	451	11	Ocean University	1
			12	University college	1
			13	NAITA	1

Source: Zonal Education Offices, Jaffna District.

Health

There are 106 state, public health care and medical institutions functioning in Jaffna district. There is one teaching hospital with all medical facilities which provides services to Northern Province. Table 6 shows the types of hospitals and medical institutions providing public health services to the population.

Table 6: State Medical Institutions, 2025

Type	Nos
Teaching Hospital	1
Base Hospital (Type A& B)	4
Divisional Hospital	23
Primary Medical Care unit	17
Medical Officer of Health Office	12
Public Health Clinic Center	39
District Ayurvedic Hospital	1
Rural Ayurvedic Hospital	4
Central Ayurvedic Dispensary	10

Source: Regional Directorate of Health Services, Jaffna.

1.7. ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISTRICT

Agriculture

Agriculture sector plays a pivotal role in the economy of Jaffna. Agriculture provides the main income for 46,869 families and 15,782 labours or one-third of the total number of households in the district. Paddy is the main cereal crop cultivated on 13,000 ha of land. It is primarily cultivated during the North-East monsoons (Maha). There has been an increasing trend in the production of high valued crops such as onions/chillies/potato /papaya and bananas.3.5 million palmyrah trees and 1076211 coconut trees which supports to local economy and fulfill the household needs.

Table 7: Agriculture statistics

No	Description	Numbers
1	Agro wells	21854
2	Ponds	1074
3	Farmers Organization	269
4	Agrarian Service center	15

Source: Department of Agrarian Development, Jaffna.

Livestock

Livestock/animal husbandry is an important component of the farming system in Jaffna District. It provides an important supplementary income to the poor farmers by way of milk, meat as well as a source of organic manure. Egg, poultry (broiler) production has been increasing from 2018 with demand. Milk production has constantly increased from 2018 onwards with increasing consumption and collection by the private milk companies and cooperative society (Table 8:).

Table 8: Average annual production of milk and Egg

Year	Egg (No. of Egg)	Milk (Liters)
2018	13,480,000	17,462,811
2019	19,696,102	20,655,228
2020	21,105,405	18,913,789
2021	24,715,095	19,141,608
2022	17,443,015	17,443,015
2023	17,338,462	17,643,803

Source: Department of Animal Production & Health, Jaffna.

Fisheries

Fisheries sector plays an important role in the Jaffna economy, given the extensive coastal length of 182 miles and lagoons. Eleven percent of the households are fisher families. landing centers – 103, Ice plants – 12, operation craft – 6,862. Total fish production is 22,037.863 metric ton in 2023. Table 9 shows Fisheries statistics in the Jaffna District.

Table 9: Fisheries statistics

Details	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Fishing population	84,963	86,971	87,284	87,584	88,758	89,017	89,190
Active Fishermen	20,603	21,243	21,268	21,362	21,755	22,196	22,182
Fishing Families	19,744	20,213	20,349	20,465	21,056	21,177	21,087
Fisherman Cooperative Societies	119	119	117	117	117	117	117
	Provincial	437	8			Vocational Training Authority Centers	6
Fisherman Pension Scheme	1,043	60	105	67	79	46	44

Source: Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Jaffna.

Services and Industry

The service sector and especially trade is the dominant industry in Jaffna district. Based on Jaffna district statistics there are about 13,426 trading companies, of which 17% are in retail. Small industries make up 8%. There 1,259 cooperative societies in the district out of which school credit societies 57. There are 9,824 industries functioning and which are classified as micro/Small/Medium. Table 10 reflects details of industries in the Jaffna District

Table 10: Details of Industries

No	Details of Industries	Numbers	No	Details of Industries	Number
1	Food and Beverage	1528	10	Light Engineering	61
2	Wood & wood based	956	11	Coir Based	120
3	Tailoring and Garments	1049	12	Palmyra based	555
4	Metal and Aluminum	130	13	Chemical based	64
5	Leather based	84	14	Rubber and plastic based	4
6	Paper Based	25	15	Services	757
7	Cement Based	159	16	Pottery	106
8	Beauty culture	332	17	Agro based (Mushroom)	31
9	Handicraft	381	18	Total	3478
				Total	9824

Source: Statistical Handbook -2024, Jaffna District, District Secretariat, Jaffna

Tourism Potential in Jaffna District

Jaffna District is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Sri Lanka. The district is endowed with a wide range of nature-based tourism resources, including lagoons, bird-watching habitats, mangroves, coastal vegetation, pristine beaches, and sand dunes, all of which offer significant opportunities for sustainable tourism development.

In addition, Jaffna District possesses a history spanning more than 2,000 years, with abundant evidence from the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods, supported by well-documented historical records and heritage sites. Beyond its tangible heritage, Jaffna is distinguished by a wealth of intangible cultural assets such as traditional housing styles, indigenous food systems, traditional medicine, lifestyles, livelihood practices, and occupational traditions. Collectively, these unique natural and cultural attributes represent immense potential for the promotion and diversification of tourism in the Jaffna District. Table 11 & 12 show most popular sites in Jaffna.

Table 11: Types of culture-based Destinations in the Jaffna District

No	Types of the culture-based destinations				Number
	Details of Industries	Numbers	No	Details of Industries	
1	Historical buildings/sites/Monuments	40	7	Exotic Plant	5
2	Religious places	55	8	Native Plant	1
3	Museum / Archives	4	9	Community Park	2
4	Geological sites	9	10	Critical Infrastructure facilities	1
5	Geomorphological site	1	11	Cultural Center	1
6	Beach as cultural destination	9	12	Agro Tourism Center	1
Total	131	159	16	Pottery	106
8	Beauty culture	332	17	Agro based (Mushroom)	31
9	Handicraft	381	18	Total	3478
				Total	9824

Source: Tourism Unit, District Secretariat, Jaffna

Table 12: Types of Nature-based Destinations in the Jaffna District

No	Types of Nature based Tourism Destinations	Numbers
1	Lagoons	03
2	Non-Perennial River	01
3	Birding Regions	09
4	Birding Sites	40
5	Major Mangrove sites (Regions)	06
6	Major Sand dune sites	08
7	Tourist Islands	13

Source: Tourism Unit, District Secretariat, Jaffna

Tourist arrivals are increasing after reopening of Jaffna Palaly International Airport and Ferry service between K.K.S to Nagapatnam. As per the data collected by District Secretariat, local tourists represent 150,982 and foreign tourists 53,210 excluding Tamil Diaspora. Table 13 shows Number of Service providers in Jaffna.

Table 13: Number of Service providers in tourism sector

S.No	Description	Numbers
1	Major Tourist Hotels	9
2	Semi Category Tourist Hotel	13
3	Guest Houses	126
4	Home Stays	18
5	Second Category Home stay	140
6	Special Tourist Restaurants	
	Veg	10
	Non Veg/ Veg	39
7	Ice cream cool bar (Large)	8
8	Pizza	5
9	Restaurant	105
10	Travel Agents	28
11	Government Tourist Bungalow	10

Source: Tourism Unit, District Secretariat, Jaffna

Sanitation

Nearly 90% of households have sanitation facilities. Of which 82% have septic tanks. It should not affect the groundwater. About 12% of the households still do not have any facilities share neighborhood toilets or use open toilets.

Infrastructure Facilities

Infrastructure development is key to the economic growth of the district. The Jaffna District has seen significant improvements in road facilities in recent years. Major highways and internal roads have been reconstructed and widened, improving connectivity between Jaffna town and surrounding areas.

Roads

There are five road classifications A-D and rural roads. The total length of the existing network is 4,414 kms A and B class roads (544 kms) are administered by central Road Development Authority (RDA); C and D class roads (507.4 kms) are administered by the Provincial Council Road Development Department. (RDD). The rural roads (3,317.9 kms) are administered by the municipal council, urban councils and Pradeshiya Sabahs.

Aviation and Port

The flight service to Jaffna was restarted on 22.12.2022. From 2nd September 2024, two flight services have been operating. At present, regular flights operate between Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, and Jaffna. In addition, the passenger ferry service between India and Jaffna was started on 16.08.2024. These flight

and ferry services are mostly conducted on a daily basis, strengthening transportation links between India and Jaffna.

1.8. Electoral and Political Profile of Jaffna District

Table 14: Details of Political representation

Political Representations	Numbers
Parliamentarians	6
Northern Provincial Council Members	16 out of 36
Jaffna Municipal Council Members	19
Urban Council Members (3) Each one 11	11
Pradeshiya Sabha (13) Each one 21	21
Registered Political Parties	10
Number of Electoral Divisions	11

Source: Department of Election, Jaffna.

Coordinating Committees

There are fifteen coordinating committees one for each Divisional Secretariat, and a District level Coordinating Committee. Minister or Parliamentarian can be Chairman for the Committees. The main objectives of this Committees are to approve programs and projects that are to be implemented at the divisional level and district level. Stakeholders are invited to participate.

An Introduction to Kilinochchi District

1. Introduction

Kilinochchi district is situated in middle of the Northern Province of Sri Lanka. Geographically most of the area of the district lies on the main land. The district covers a land area of approximately 1279sq.Km and inland water covers an area of 444.30 sq.km. The borders of the District are the North boundary is Jaffna District, East and South boundary is Mullaitivu District and West and South boundary is Mannar District. The District is divided into four Divisional Secretary Divisions, such as Karachchi, Kandawalai, Poonagary and Pachchilaipalli. Each headed by Divisional Secretary. The DS Divisions are further sub-divided into 95 Grama Niladhari Divisions (GN Divisions) and 354 villages.



S. Muralitharan
District Secretary
Kilinochchi

The land in Kilinochchi District is categorized as flat with less than 10% slop. There are 4 major, 5 medium irrigation tanks and 44 minor tanks and 716 ponds all over the district and connected 7 rivers to conserve rain water. These divisions are situated from the sea level as Karachchi 4m, Kandawalai 3m, Poonagary 2m and Pachchilaipalli 3m.

District Population - 31.12.2025

S. No.	DS Division	No. of GN Division	Total No. of families	Total No. of Members
1	Karachchi	42	27,714	78986
2	Kandawalai	16	9555	28091
3	Poonagary	19	8686	28240
4	Pachchilaipalli	18	4940	15028
Total		95	50,895	Rubber and plastic based

Climate and Rainfall

The climatic condition of this district is dry, humid and tropical. The average annual rainfall in the district is 4,960.60 mm and 75% of the rainfall receives during the period from September to December by North-West monsoon periodical wind. The remaining period other than a fore said of the year is dry and warm. Because of the warm temperature experiences every year from June to August, this period is considered as dry season. The monthly average temperature range is 25C to 30 C.

Soil and Natural Resources

The Soil of the District is fertile and having enough minerals for the better growth of any kind of crops.

Soil Structure and Types

i	Red and Yellow latosols	12.04%
ii	Flat to slightly undulating terrain	27.96%
iii	Solarized of Solo check Flat terrain	25.96%
iv	Alluvial soil of various drainage and texture	11.99%
v	Raga soil on recent beach and dourer sand flat terrain	17.99%
vi	Eroded land	04.06%
	Total	100%

Land Use Pattern

Land Use survey of 2024 reveals that 33.27% of the district land is coming under Agriculture land. Paddy is cultivating in 23.5% of the land. Specially used cropland and other crops cover 4.4% of the land and perennial crops like coconut, palmyrah, jack, mango, cashew and other fruit crops cover 17% of the agriculture land. The natural forest and forest plantation covers 28.94% of the district land area.

Agriculture

Kilinochchi District is predominantly an agriculture economy depending mainly on tanks and irrigation network. Paddy is the main crop and it is a surplus product. About 28,262 farmers and 18,512 farm laborers are involved in agriculture in the district. The total extent of asweddumized land coming under Major, Medium and Minor Irrigation schemes and rain fed paddy cultivation which is around 28,859 Ha but the highest cultivation recorded in 2023/2024 Maha 28,423.7 Ha.

The soil condition in certain parts of the district is more suitable for cultivation of vegetable and other field crops, high value cash crops and fruit crops. The development policy objective is to break away from subsistence agriculture by promoting high value crops under intensive and commercially oriented agriculture system since it will increase production, incomes and provide greater employment and higher standard of living.

Fisheries

Fishing is the second most important activity of the people. The district has two coastal belts, one of 21 kilometers in the East and another of 133 kilometers of the West. Fishermen are engaged in deep sea fishing, coastal fishing as well as inland fishing. The administrative district of Kilinochchi has four fisheries divisions. They are Nachchikuda, Poonagary, Kandawalai and Pachchilaipalli. 29 fishing villages and 26 fishing centers are available within these four divisions with an active fishing population of 5,217 Active fishermen.

Fresh water fishing is undertaken in 9 major & minor tanks in the district. The fisheries sector provides direct employment 3% of the population and in addition, provides indirect employment to a number of people in the field of marketing, transport and processing. Average Fish production has been decreased from 622,580 Mt to 7,986,560 Mt per year in 2024 the reason for the Economic crisis.

Tourism

Tourism development in Kilinochchi district is in initial stage. This industry can be developed, because of it has many prominent historical places such as Poonagary fort, Mannithalai Sivan Temple, Kuveni fort, Uttupulam well and other famous beaches as Mannithalai beach, Gowtharaimunai beach, Pallikuda beach and include Iranaimadu tank as well. Further bird sanctuaries are such as Vannerikulam and Chundikulam. Hence, the historical religious places also important locations for tourism, the places are Uruthirapuram Siva Temple, Iranaitive St. Antony's church and Puliampokkanai Nagathampiraikovil.

Kilinochchi District stands at a transformative crossroads — one shaped by resilient communities, abundant natural resources, and a strategic vision for economic resurgence. As Sri Lanka ushers in the Northern Investment Summit 2026, Kilinochchi's unique growth potential offers compelling new pathways for investors, development partners, government stakeholders, and private sector leaders. This official souvenir article highlights Kilinochchi's investment prospects, development priorities, growth sectors, and its integral role within the broader national development agenda.



Kilinochchi District is a place of profound cultural heritage, untapped economic potential, and strategic importance. Once impacted by decades of conflict, Kilinochchi has demonstrated remarkable recovery and resilience. With renewed peace, stability, and visionary planning, the district is poised to become a key investment destination in Sri Lanka's economic landscape.

The Northern Investment Summit 2026 is a pivotal national initiative designed to promote investment, facilitate regional development, and catalyze inclusive growth across Sri Lanka's Northern Province. The Summit brings together government representatives, investors, diplomats, development partners, and private sector leaders — creating a collaborative platform to shape shared prosperity.

Kilinochchi's participation reflects its commitment to economic transformation, sustainable development, and strategic engagement with domestic and international stakeholders.

2. Strategic Location and Infrastructure Advantage

Kilinochchi's geographical position gives it a strategic edge. Situated close to major transport corridors and gateways to Northern Sri Lanka, the district is well positioned for trade, logistics, and regional connectivity.

Proximity to Ports and Airports: With ongoing improvements to road infrastructure and easy access to major ports and air links, Kilinochchi enables efficient movement of goods and services to local and international markets.

Industrial Zones: The Paranthan Industrial Zone — a centerpiece of Kilinochchi's economic revival — offers significant opportunities for industrial investment, technology deployment, and economic clustering.

The Government's long-term vision for national development includes strengthening regional infrastructure in a way that enhances competitiveness, supports diversified growth, and attracts inclusive investment.

3. Key Investment Opportunities in Kilinochchi

Kilinochchi District offers a diversified portfolio of investment opportunities across sectors such as industry, agriculture, tourism, and services. The following highlights some of the most promising development prospects.

3.1 Industrial Zone

Paranthan Chemical Company

The Paranthan Industrial Zone is a flagship initiative aimed at revitalizing industrial activity in the Northern Province. Anchored by the proposed Paranthan Chemical Company, this zone represents a hub for manufacturing, value addition, and employment generation.

Why Paranthan is Strategic:

- **Industrial Anchor:** Paranthan Chemical Company will serve as a catalyst for industrial activity — promoting forward and backward linkages in manufacturing and services.
- **Skilled Workforce:** The region's recovering labor market, combined with skills development initiatives, offers a growing talent pool for industrial investors.
- **Economic Clustering:** As industries cluster around the Paranthan zone, ancillary services — from logistics to support infrastructure — will amplify local economic benefits.

This initiative aligns with Sri Lanka's broader industrial policy objectives of diversification, technology adoption, and export-oriented growth.

3.2 Agriculture & Irrigation Development: Iranamadu and Kilinochchi Tanks

Agriculture continues to be the backbone of Kilinochchi's rural economy. With fertile lands and a well-established irrigation heritage, the district holds significant promise for agricultural expansion and agribusiness investment.

Key Agricultural Assets:

- Iranamadu Tank Area: A major irrigation reservoir supporting year-round cultivation and livestock activities.
- Kilinochchi Tank Area: Another crucial water resource that facilitates high-yield paddy cultivation and diversified farming systems.

Investment Potential:

- Agri-tech Adoption: Investors can leverage modern agricultural technologies — from precision irrigation to value-added processing.
- Agro-Industries: Processing facilities for rice, pulses, fruits, and vegetables can create jobs, increase farmer incomes, and enhance export earnings.
- Sustainable Practices: Focus on climate-smart agriculture offers both productivity gains and environmental resilience.



These agricultural zones exemplify how natural resources can become engines of inclusive economic growth.

3.3 Coastal and Marine Development: Gowtharimunai

The Gowtharimunai coastal area offers vast potential for tourism and marine-based economic activities. With pristine beaches, cultural heritage, and marine biodiversity, it is ideally positioned to become a hub for sustainable coastal development.

Investment Opportunities Include:

- Eco-Tourism Resorts: Environmentally responsible tourism facilities that enhance local livelihoods.
- Marine & Coastal Services: Fishing industry support, seafood processing, and maritime logistics.
- Recreational Infrastructure: Water sports, cultural tourism circuits, and community-based tourism programs.

Gowtharimunai's development aligns with global trends in coastal tourism, emphasizing environmental stewardship and community engagement.

3.4 Eco & Wildlife Tourism: Chundikulam and Vannerikulam Bird Sanctuaries

Kilinochchi is home to extraordinary biodiversity and natural habitats that appeal to nature enthusiasts, researchers, and eco-tourists. **Chundikulam and Vannerikulam Bird Sanctuaries** are ecological gems that offer unique wildlife experiences:

- **Avian Diversity:** These wetlands attract hundreds of migratory and resident bird species — making them ideal for birdwatching and eco-tourism.
- **Conservation Investment:** With thoughtful planning, sanctuaries can serve as centers for conservation education, research, and sustainable tourism.
- **Community-Based Initiatives:** Local partnerships can ensure that eco-tourism benefits are shared with villages and indigenous communities.



Investment in eco-tourism infrastructure enriches Kilinochchi’s offerings while preserving in natural heritage.

4. Supporting Sectors and Enabling Environment

Kilinochchi’s investment potential extends beyond major sectors to include supporting services and cross-cutting enablers:

4.1 Skills Development and Human Capital

The district is prioritizing skills training — particularly in industrial services, tourism, and agribusiness — to match investor needs and enhance employability.

4.2 Connectivity and Digital Infrastructure

Efforts to improve digital connectivity, broadband access, and smart services are strengthening Kilinochchi’s capacity to participate in the digital economy.

4.3 Public-Private Partnerships

The Government’s commitment to public-private partnerships (PPPs) aims to balance risk, improve service delivery, and accelerate development impact.

4.4 Inclusive Growth and Social Development

Policies are designed to ensure that economic growth is inclusive — generating opportunities for youth, women, and marginalized communities across the district.

5. Government Support and Policy Framework

The Government of Sri Lanka has introduced a range of policy measures and incentives to facilitate investment in the Northern Province, including:

- Investment Incentives: Tax holidays, duty exemptions, and financial support for priority sectors.
- Regulatory Facilitation: Streamlined processes for business registration and compliance.
- Land and Resource Access: Dedicated zones for industrial and tourism development with clear land-use plans.



These frameworks ensure a transparent, predictable, and competitive environment for investors, aligning with international best practices.

6. The Role of Partnerships

Kilinochchi's development journey emphasizes partnerships — among public institutions, private sector firms, development partners, and local communities. Strategic collaboration can drive large-scale outcomes in:

- Infrastructure financing
- Skill development programs
- Technology adoption
- Market linkages for local producers

The Northern Investment Summit 2026 serves as a catalyst for forging these alliances — offering a platform for shared vision, innovation, and action.

7. Sustainable and Inclusive Development

Kilinochchi's development is guided by principles of sustainability and inclusion:

- Environmental Stewardship: Conservation of natural ecosystems such as wetlands, coastal belts, and waterways.
- Cultural Preservation: Promotion of Kilinochchi's heritage through tourism and cultural benefits reach all segments of society — initiatives.
- Inclusive Prosperity: Ensuring that growth especially smallholder farmers, youth, and women entrepreneurs.

By embedding sustainability into investment planning, Kilinochchi aspires to be a model of balanced regional development.

8. Success Stories and Emerging Momentum

Several early-stage initiatives reflect the district's growing momentum:

- Local entrepreneurs investing in agro-processing and services.
- Community tourism projects attracting domestic and international visitors.
- Skill development centers partnering with industry stakeholders.

These stories showcase Kilinochchi's rising confidence and readiness to scale investment outcomes.

9. Vision 2030: Kilinochchi's Growth Roadmap Looking ahead, Kilinochchi's development blueprint focuses on:

1. Industrial Expansion: Growth of the Paranthan Industrial Zone and linked industrial parks.
2. Agricultural Productivity: Enhanced irrigation, processing, and value chain integration.
3. Tourism Diversification: Development of eco-tourism, coastal resorts, and cultural circuits.
4. Innovation and Technology: Digital infrastructure and smart services for enterprises and citizens.
5. Human Capital: Workforce skills aligned with emerging industries.



This roadmap aligns with Sri Lanka's national development priorities — fostering equitable growth across regions.

10. Invitation to Investors and Partners

Kilinochchi invites investors, development partners, and stakeholders to join its journey of transformation. With strategic assets, growth-ready sectors, and a supportive investment environment, Kilinochchi offers opportunities to create lasting socio-economic impact.

Whether in industry, agriculture, tourism, or services, your engagement will contribute to shared prosperity, regional connectivity, and sustainable development.

Kilinochchi is open for investment, partnership, and growth.

11. Conclusion

As Sri Lanka convenes the Northern Investment Summit 2026, Kilinochchi stands proudly among the nation's emerging investment destinations. Anchored by resilience and future-oriented planning, the district's growth narrative is one of opportunity — where strategic vision meets real potential.

Through collaborative investment, responsible development, and inclusive planning, Kilinochchi will continue to chart a path toward prosperity — serving as a model for sustainable regional transformation in the Northern Province and beyond.

An Introduction to Mannar District

Introduction: Mannar at a Strategic Turning Point

Located along Sri Lanka's northwestern coastline in the Northern Province, Mannar District stands at a decisive moment in its development trajectory. Emerging from decades of conflict and underinvestment, the district is repositioning itself as a frontier for sustainable, climate-resilient, and inclusive investment. Endowed with exceptional renewable energy resources, rich marine and coastal ecosystems, resilient rural livelihoods, and a strategic location close to regional maritime routes, Mannar offers a compelling proposition for public and private sector partners alike.



K. Kanakeshwaran
District Secretary
Mannar

The Northern Investment Summit 2026 provides a timely platform to showcase Mannar's readiness to engage investors, development partners, and climate finance institutions. Guided by the Mannar Development Plan 2021–2030 and aligned with national climate and development priorities, the district's vision places equal emphasis on economic growth, environmental stewardship, and social inclusion—ensuring that development today strengthens resilience for generations to come.

Strategic Location and Economic Context

Covering approximately 2,000 square kilometers, Mannar occupies a uniquely strategic position between the Indian Ocean, the Gulf of Mannar, and the Palk Strait. Its proximity to India's southern coastline and major maritime routes enhances its potential role as a gateway for regional trade, renewable energy cooperation, and blue economy development.

Traditionally, the district's economy has been anchored in fisheries, agriculture, livestock rearing, and salt production—activities shaped by dryzone climatic conditions and coastal geography. While Mannar's current contribution to national GDP remains modest, this reflects historical constraints rather than limited potential. Improved connectivity, renewed policy focus, and growing private sector interest are now repositioning Mannar as an emerging growth corridor within the Northern Province.

Blue Economy and Fisheries: Strengthening Coastal Livelihoods

The waters surrounding Mannar rank among Sri Lanka's most productive fishing grounds. Fisheries remain a cornerstone of the district's economy, supporting thousands of households and contributing significantly to national seafood supply.

Beyond traditional capture fisheries, Mannar offers strong potential for value-added investment across the fisheries value chain. Priority areas include modern fishery harbours and landing sites, cold chain and ice production facilities, seafood processing, export-oriented aquaculture, and marine-based small and medium enterprises. The Mannar Development Plan 2021–2030 underscores the importance of sustainable fisheries management and marine conservation, creating space for private sector partnerships that balance productivity with ecosystem protection.

For investors, Mannar's blue economy represents an opportunity to combine commercial returns with positive social and environmental impact—particularly when investments are designed in partnership with local fishing communities.

In addition, Mannar's lagoons and coastal waters provide strong opportunities for culture-based fisheries and environmentally responsible aquaculture, including shrimp, crab, seaweed, and finfish farming. These activities support livelihood diversification, enhance export earnings, and strengthen coastal resilience.

Strategic Tourism and Investment Opportunities

Mannar District has demonstrated a strong capacity to attract and implement large-scale national and international investments, with Wind Power Project Phases contributing significantly to Sri Lanka's national objective of meeting at least 70% of total energy requirements from renewable sources by 2030. Building on this proven track record, future international partnerships and trade agreements should strategically focus on high-potential sectors beyond energy, particularly eco-tourism, which offers significant opportunities for sustainable economic growth, employment generation, and local enterprise development.

The district is endowed with pristine beaches, offshore fishing sites, island ecosystems, globally significant migratory bird sanctuaries, and iconic cultural and religious landmarks such as the Shrine of Our Lady of Madhu, Thiruketheeswaram Temple, Adam's Bridge (Rama Setu) Marine National Park, Giant's Tank Sanctuary, historic forts, and coastal heritage sites. Planned development of star-class beach hotels, boutique eco-lodges along offshore fishing sites, and at tourism hot spots and locally operated tourism enterprises can attract international visitors, stimulate investment, and support inclusive economic growth. The planned opening of an entrance to Wilpattu National Park on Mannar's border further expands opportunities for safari-based tourism, complementing bird-watching circuits, marine excursions, sand diving, surface skating, heritage trails, and eco-tourism enterprises linked to conservation and community participation.

Tourism development in Mannar is guided by a low-impact, high-value approach, prioritizing eco-tourism, community-based initiatives, heritage trails, and nature-based experiences. Strategic initiatives including reopening the Mannar Lighthouse, strengthening tourist police presence, establishing comfort centers along North South travel corridors, and promoting integrated tourism routes linking southern and northern attractions are designed to enhance visitor experiences, increase investor confidence, and preserve the district's unique natural and cultural assets.

Moreover, Mannar's strategic location between the Indian Ocean, the Gulf of Mannar, and the Palk Strait positions it as a natural gateway for cross-border tourism and trade. Re-establishing the historic Rameshwaram–Thalaimannar ferry service would connect international and regional visitors directly to Mannar, boosting tourist arrivals, facilitating people-to-people exchanges, and stimulating economic activity across multiple sectors.

Collectively, these initiatives position Mannar as a premier destination for sustainable tourism and investment, supporting long-term regional development, resilient livelihoods, and inclusive economic growth.

Agriculture, Livestock, and ClimateSmart Value Chains

Agriculture and livestock remain central to Mannar District's rural economy, with paddy cultivation, livestock farming, and palmyrah based livelihoods providing critical income streams. The district's palmyrah products ranging from food items such as sweet toddy, jams, beverages, toffee, and jaggery, to handicrafts and fiber-based goods offer distinctive opportunities for value addition and access to international markets. These products combine cultural authenticity with growing global demand for sustainable and specialty goods, presenting a compelling investment opportunity for agribusinesses, export-oriented enterprises, and socially responsible ventures seeking to leverage Mannar's unique agricultural and artisanal strengths.

Mannar also offers commercially attractive investment opportunities in value addition for paddy and green gram—through modern milling, grading, storage, packaging, and branded processing—enhancing market competitiveness, reducing post-harvest losses, and improving returns for both investors and smallholder farmers.

The district's development strategy promotes climateresilient and marketoriented agriculture through improved water management, droughttolerant crops, livestock valuechain development, agroprocessing, and enhanced market access for smallholder farmers. In this context, the ADAPT4R Project plays a critical role as an integration partner, supporting climatesmart agriculture, livelihood diversification, and resiliencebuilding initiatives across vulnerable communities in Mannar. By linking climate information services, adaptive practices, and privatesector engagement, ADAPT4R helps bridge technical and financial gaps—creating bankable opportunities for investors while strengthening food security and rural incomes.

Industrial Development and SME Growth

To accelerate employment creation and privatesector participation, Mannar has been identified for targeted industrial and enterprise development. Potential areas include agroprocessing, fisheriesbased industries, saltbased products, and SME clusters linked to local value chains.

With improving road connectivity, reliable electricity supply, and expanding digital infrastructure, Mannar offers a competitive operating environment for investors seeking costeffective locations beyond traditional urban centers. Supporting local entrepreneurship and SME growth remains central to inclusive economic development in the district.

Infrastructure and Connectivity: Foundations for Investment

Recent infrastructure investments have played a catalytic role in Mannar's transformation. The construction of the Mannar Bridge has significantly improved connectivity between the mainland and Mannar Island, facilitating trade, tourism, and service delivery. Continued investments in roads, rail connectivity, water supply, urban services, and climateresilient infrastructure are strengthening the district's integration with national markets.

Efficient logistics, resilient infrastructure, and improved public services remain essential enablers of longterm competitiveness and private investment.

Policy Vision: Mannar Development Plan 2021–2030

The Mannar Development Plan 2021–2030 provides a coherent roadmap for the district's future, positioning Mannar as a center for blue economy growth, a destination for ecotourism, and a model for inclusive, people-centered development. This policy clarity offers confidence to investors and development partners seeking stable, long-term engagement.

Investing with Responsibility

While Mannar presents strong investment fundamentals, sustainable success depends on responsible and inclusive approaches. Environmental sensitivity, community consultation, skills development, and climate resilience are essential components of durable investment outcomes. Projects that prioritize transparency, local employment, and shared value creation will find strong institutional and community support.

Conclusion: Mannar's Moment

Mannar District is no longer a peripheral economy—it is a frontier of opportunity. With abundant resources for eco-tourism, rich marine assets, strategic location, and a clear development vision, Mannar is ready to partner with international and investors who seek growth with purpose. As highlighted at the Northern Investment Summit 2026, Mannar invites the public and private sectors alike to participate in shaping a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable future—transforming natural potential into shared prosperity for generations to come.

An Introduction to Mullaitivu District

Introduction

Nestled along Sri Lanka's northeastern coastline, Mullaitivu District is emerging as one of the country's most promising yet under-explored investment destinations. With its vast land resources, a 70-kilometre pristine coastline, rich marine ecosystems, fertile agricultural landscapes, and a young, trainable workforce, Mullaitivu presents a compelling proposition for investors seeking long-term, sustainable, and socially responsible growth.

Following decades of conflict, the district has transitioned into a phase of stability, recovery, and opportunity. Supported by strong government commitment, expanding infrastructure, and an enabling administrative environment, Mullaitivu is now positioned as a priority development zone under national and provincial development frameworks. For investors willing to be early movers, the district offers first-mover advantages and a unique opportunity to shape inclusive growth that directly uplifts local communities.



A. Umamaheswaran
District Secretary
Mullaitivu

Strategic Location and Development Context

Mullaitivu occupies a strategic position in Sri Lanka's Northern Province, with strong road connectivity through the A9 and A34 corridors linking it to Jaffna, Vavuniya, and the rest of the island. Covering an area of over 2,500 square kilometres and comprising six Divisional Secretariat divisions, the district combines coastal belts, inland plains, forested areas, lagoons, and irrigation networks.

The district's economy is traditionally anchored in agriculture and fisheries, employing over three-quarters of households. While these sectors remain dominant, significant scope exists for diversification into manufacturing, renewable energy, tourism, logistics, and modern services. Since resettlement, public investment in roads, electricity, water supply, schools, hospitals, and digital connectivity has laid a solid foundation for private sector participation.

Importantly, Mullaitivu's development pathway is guided by principles of sustainability, climate resilience, and community participation—aligning well with contemporary Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) expectations of global investors.

Agriculture and Agro-Processing: From Production to Value Addition

Agriculture remains the backbone of Mullaitivu's economy, with approximately 57,000 hectares under cultivation and over 23,000 farming families actively engaged. Paddy is the dominant crop, supported by major, medium, and minor irrigation schemes. In addition, the district produces a wide range of other field crops such as groundnut, maize, black gram, green gram, cowpea, gingelly, and finger millet, alongside vegetables and tropical fruits including banana, mango, papaya, and jackfruit.

While primary production is well-established, the true investment potential lies in value addition and modernization. Opportunities exist for:

- Commercial-scale cultivation of other field crops and vegetables
- Climate-smart agriculture using drip irrigation, greenhouses, and protected cultivation

- Agro-processing facilities for rice milling, pulses, oilseeds, spices, fruits, and vegetables
- Cold storage, packaging, and logistics solutions to reduce post-harvest losses
- Organic farming clusters and export-oriented production

Coconut cultivation is another high-potential sub-sector, with over 4,000 hectares and many estates exceeding 25 acres. Investors can explore coconut-based food processing, virgin coconut oil, coir and fibre products, and certified seedling nurseries. Similarly, Mullaitivu hosts nearly 400,000 palmyrah palms, offering opportunities for modernized value-added products such as jaggery, treacle, beverages, handicrafts, and branded export goods.



Livestock and Dairy: Strengthening Rural Value Chains

Livestock farming—particularly cattle, goats, and poultry—plays a vital supplementary role in rural livelihoods. The district produces over 7 million litres of milk annually, yet much of it is sold as raw milk due to limited chilling, processing, and cold-chain infrastructure.

Investment opportunities include:

- Village-level milk collection and chilling centres
- Dairy processing for curd, yoghurt, ghee, and flavoured milk
- Semi-commercial dairy and goat farms
- Poultry farms, hatcheries, and feed mixing units
- Climate-smart integrated crop–livestock systems and biogas units

Such investments not only generate attractive returns but also strengthen food security, women's economic participation, and rural resilience.

Fisheries and Aquaculture: Unlocking the Blue Economy

With a 70-kilometre coastline, four major lagoons, and extensive inland water bodies, Mullaitivu is ideally positioned to become a hub of Sri Lanka's blue economy. The district supports 29 fishing villages and numerous landing sites, with strong potential for marine fisheries, prawn farming, lagoon-based aquaculture, and inland fish culture.

Key investment avenues include:

- Modern fishing harbours and landing infrastructure
- Expansion of multiday fishing fleets
- Ice plants, cold storage, and refrigerated transport
- Dry fish processing zones and value-added seafood products
- Fish canning, packaging, and export-oriented facilities
- Hatcheries and fingerling production centres

Sustainable and well-regulated investments in fisheries can significantly enhance incomes, reduce post-harvest losses, and integrate Mullaitivu into national and international seafood value chains.

Manufacturing and Industrial Development

Industrial activity in Mullaitivu is currently at an early stage, dominated by micro and small enterprises. However, this very gap presents a major opportunity. Large tracts of suitable land, competitive labour costs, and proximity to agricultural and fisheries raw materials make the district ideal for agro-industries, light manufacturing, and logistics.

Proposed initiatives such as the Mankulam Industrial Park along the A9 corridor are expected to catalyse private investment in food processing, manufacturing clusters, warehousing, and renewable energy-linked industries. With appropriate incentives, streamlined approvals, and public-private partnerships, Mullaitivu can evolve into a vibrant industrial node in the Northern Province.



Tourism and Hospitality: Sri Lanka's Last Unspoiled Coast

Often described as Sri Lanka's last unspoiled coast, Mullaitivu District presents a distinctive tourism proposition rooted in pristine nature, cultural authenticity, and community life. Stretching along a largely untouched coastline, the district is characterised by expansive sandy beaches, calm lagoons, mangrove ecosystems, bird habitats, and tranquil rural landscapes—offering a stark contrast to Sri Lanka's more commercialised resort zones.

Domestic tourism to the Northern Province is steadily increasing as improved connectivity and post-conflict recovery open new destinations to local and international travellers. Mullaitivu is strategically positioned to capture this growth by promoting low-impact, high-value tourism that prioritises environmental conservation and meaningful visitor experiences. The district's calm setting is especially attractive for eco-tourism, wellness travel, experiential tourism, and heritage-based exploration.

Key Investment Opportunities

- **Eco-lodges & Boutique Hotels** – Small-scale, eco-friendly accommodation that integrates seamlessly with the natural landscape
- **Sensitively Designed Beach Resorts** – Low-density resorts following sustainable and environmental design standards
- **Lagoon Safaris** – Guided boat tours highlighting lagoons, mangroves, and coastal ecosystems
- **Bird-Watching Trails** – Nature trails and observation points for resident and migratory bird species

- **Cycling Routes & Eco-Trails** – Curated cycling paths and soft-adventure routes through scenic landscapes
- **Guided Nature Experiences** – Interpretive tours focusing on biodiversity, conservation, and local ecology
- **Community-Based Tourism** – Homestays operated by local families with authentic cultural immersion
- **Agro-Tourism Experiences** – Farm stays, agricultural demonstrations, and rural lifestyle activities
- **Local Cuisine & Culinary Tourism** – Traditional food experiences showcasing regional flavours and produce
- **Cultural & Heritage Circuits** – Integrated tourism routes linking temples, memorial sites, traditional livelihoods, and local crafts

Tourism development in Mullaitivu is guided by strict environmental safeguards, low-density construction norms, and active community participation. This approach ensures long-term ecological sustainability, preserves the district's unique character, and delivers direct socio-economic benefits to local communities—making Mullaitivu an ideal destination for responsible investors seeking inclusive and sustainable growth.

Renewable Energy and Green Growth

Mullaitivu possesses high solar irradiation, coastal wind potential, and abundant biomass resources from coconut and palmyrah residues. As Sri Lanka accelerates its transition towards renewable energy, the district offers ample scope for solar parks, wind projects, biomass energy, and hybrid systems.

Investments in renewable energy not only meet growing power demand but also align with national climate commitments and the district's vision of green, climate-resilient development.



Services, Education, and Health: Supporting a Growing Economy

As productive sectors expand, demand for modern services is rising. Opportunities exist in ICT and digital services, logistics, finance, education, skills training, healthcare, and wellness services. With a large pool of educated youth and improving connectivity, Mullaitivu can support business process outsourcing, training centres, and specialized social services.

An Enabling Environment for Investors

The District Secretariat of Mullaitivu is committed to facilitating responsible investment through coordination, guidance, and streamlined approvals. Investors benefit from a supportive administrative framework, collaboration with line agencies, and alignment with national development priorities.



Conclusion

Mullaitivu District stands at a pivotal moment in its development journey. Rich in natural resources, resilient communities, and untapped potential, it offers investors a unique opportunity to achieve commercial success while contributing to inclusive, sustainable, and regionally balanced growth. As Sri Lanka looks northward for its next wave of development, Mullaitivu invites visionary investors to partner in shaping a future where prosperity is shared, environments are protected, and opportunities reach every community.

An Introduction to Vavuniya District

Introduction

Geographical Location of Vavuniya District

Vavuniya District is situated in gate way of the Northern Province of Sri Lanka about 266KM away from Colombo. Geographically most of the area of the district lies on the main land. The District approximately covers a land area of 1891sqKm.

The boundaries of District are:

- North - Mullaitivu District,
- South - Anuradhapura District
- East - Trincomalee & Anuradhapura Districts
- West - Mullaitivu & Mannar Districts



P. A. Sarathchandra
District Secretary
Vavuniya

The district is consisting of four Divisional Secretary Divisions, these are Vavuniya, Vavuniya South, Vavuniya North and Vengalacheddikkulam. The DS divisions are further divided into 102 Grama Niladhari Divisions and 517 villages.

The climatic condition of this district is dry humid and tropical. The average annual rainfall in the district is 1461.10mm and 70% of the rain fall receives during the period from September to December by north-west monsoon period.

The remaining period other than afore said of the year is dry and warm. Because of the warm temperature every year from June to August is considered as dry season. The monthly average temperature range is 23°C to 25.4°C.

Total population of Vavuniya District is 193,891 consisting of 59,898 families as at 31/12/2024 male 94,632, and female 99,259 are living in vavuniya District.

Religions wise composition of the district is as follows.

- Hindus : - 68%
- Buddhist : - 10%
- Catholics : - 14%
- Moors : - 8%

Ethnic composition of District is as follows

- Tamils : - 79 %
- Sinhalese : - 10 %
- Muslims : - 11%



Sectoral Opportunities/ Investment Facilitation

1. Agriculture

Agriculture in Vavuniya is a rich tapestry of traditional paddy farming, resilient highland cropping, and burgeoning commercial fruit production. Located in the Dry Zone, the district's agricultural diversity is a strategic adaptation to its seasonal rainfall and unique "cascade" irrigation system. Agriculture in

Vavuniya is strictly divided into two main cultivation seasons:

- **Maha Season (October–March):** This is the major cultivation season supported by the North-East Monsoon. Nearly all available land (over 29541 hectares) is utilized, primarily for paddy.
- **Yala Season (April–September):** This season is characterized by water scarcity. Cultivation is restricted to lands under major irrigation tanks (like Pavatkulam) or areas with access to groundwater (agro-wells). Farmers often shift from water-intensive paddy to Other Field Crops (OFCs) during this period.

The agricultural diversity in Vavuniya is categorized into three main sectors: major crops (paddy, OFCs, vegetables and fruits), livestock and irrigation system.

I. Major Crops : Paddy (Rice)

Rice is the staple and most significant crop. Vavuniya has over **29541 hectares** of land (land prepared for rice).

- Maha Season: Mostly rain-fed or supported by major tanks like Pavatkulam. In the year of 2023/2024 total paddy production of maha season in vavuniya district is 84267 Mt.
- Yala Season: Limited cultivation due to water scarcity, primarily occurring under major and minor irrigation tanks. . In the year of 2023/2024 total paddy production of yala season in vavuniya district is 22162.22 Mt.

Other Field Crops (OFCs) & Pulses

Vavuniya is a leading producer of “subsidiary” food crops. This diversity is crucial for the district’s economic resilience. In the year of 2023/2024 total OFC production of maha season in vavuniya district is 15894 Mt and also at yala season it is 2421.47mt.

- Pulses: Black gram, Green gram, and Cowpea are widely grown.
- Cereals: Maize and Kurakkan (Finger Millet).
- Oil Seeds: Groundnut and Sesame (Gingelly) are major cash crops.
- Condiments: Red onions and Chilies are significant, with Vavuniya being a key supplier to the Dambulla and Colombo markets.



Vegetable Production

Commonly grown vegetables include Brinjal (eggplant), tomato, pumpkin and various leafy greens. These are often grown in home gardens and small-scale farms using groundwater from shallow dug wells.

Fruit and Perennial Crops

Vavuniya has gained a reputation for high-quality fruit production, particularly for export.

- Papaya
- Mango & Banana

II. Livestock and Dairy:

Livestock rearing is deeply integrated with crop farming in Vavuniya, providing a “safety net” for farmers during droughts.

- Cattle & Buffalo: Essential for milk production and traditional organic manure. Vavuniya is a major contributor to the Northern Province’s dairy supply. In the year of 2024 total milk production per day is 29791 liter. According to the 2024 statistical data, totally 849 milk products are produced per day.
- Goats: Well-suited to the dry climate and shrub lands of the Vanni region.
- Poultry: Both broiler (meat) and layer (egg) farming have seen a significant rise in recent years to meet local demand.

III. The “Tank” Culture (Irrigation):

Agricultural diversity in Vavuniya is physically mapped by its water sources. The district lacks perennial rivers, making it dependent on a historical network of tanks.

- Major Tanks: Such as Pavatkulam, muhathankulam, Irattaperiyakulam, provide water for large-scale paddy.
- Minor Tanks: Over 848 small village tanks sustain local biodiversity and small-scale farming.
- Groundwater: The use of Agro-wells (large diameter wells) has allowed farmers to diversify into off-season vegetable and chili cultivation.



2. Tourism

The main tourism Connectivity center:

The A9 Highway (Kandy-Jaffna Road) is the lifeblood of northern tourism, and Vavuniya sits directly at its center. Its unique position offers several opportunities for connecting the northern districts (Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu) and also other nearest districts within the short period time.

- Vavuniya <-> Jaffna: (145km via A9 - within 2 hours)
- Vavuniya <-> Kilinochchi: (75 km via A9 - within 50–60 minutes)
- Vavuniya <-> Mannar: (82 km Via the A14 - within 1 hour)

- Vavuniya <-> Anuradhapura: (55km via A9 - within 45 minutes)
- Vavuniya <-> Trincomalee: (105km via A29/Horowupotana - within 1 and 1/2 hours)
- Vavuniya <-> Mullaitivu: (92 km via A34 - 1 hour)

Vavuniya is geographically the “Heart of the Vanni” and serves as the primary gateway connecting the North to the rest of Sri Lanka so it has significant potential for hotel development in vavuniya district targeting mainly the tourist.

Agricultural Tourism: The Tank Cascade Experience

Vavuniya is famous for its “Cascade Tank System,” an ancient irrigation network where water flows from one village tank to the next.

- Harvest Tourism: During the Maha harvest (Feb/March), visitors can join local farmers in the paddy fields. Many rural guest houses now offer “Tree House” stays, originally used by farmers to guard crops from wild elephants, providing a unique vantage point for bird watching.
- Inland Fishing Safaris: On the large tanks like Pavatkulam, tourists can go on traditional dugout canoe rides with local fishermen to see how Tilapia and Carp are harvested.

Cultural & Heritage Opportunities:

Vavuniya is often called a “Living Model of Harmony” because it is one of the few districts where the Tamil Hindu, Muslim, and Sinhala Buddhist communities are almost equally integrated into the city’s daily life.

Vavuniya’s tourism sector is currently in an “exploration” phase, shifting from being a transit stop to a destination in its own right. Developing cultural events can leverage its unique position as a cultural bridge between the Sinhala-Buddhist and Tamil-Hindu heritages

Vavuniya’s tourism sector is defined by its role as a “Cultural Gateway,” where the traditions of the Sinhalese south and Tamil north blend seamlessly.

Traditional Food Opportunities:

Vavuniya’s greatest culinary strength is its cultural diversity. Where Tamil, Sinhala, and Muslim communities live together, so the traditional and cultural food is available in vavuniya districts. There is an opportunity to build a “Vavuniya Food Street” that features authentic stalls from all three communities in one place.

Down MEMORY Lane



Cargills in the Northern Province: A journey of belief, growth, and empowerment

Cargills' engagement in Sri Lanka's Northern Province is a story of early belief, long-term commitment, and inclusive growth. At a time when the region was still affected by war and uncertainty, Cargills stepped forward with the conviction that sustainable development must be rooted in economic opportunity, community empowerment, and trust.

A Pioneering Presence

In 2004, Cargills became one of the first leading corporates to invest in the Northern Province with the opening of Cargills Food City in Vavuniya, marking the beginning of a long-term partnership with the region.



Cargills Express at Mannar



Cargills Express at Mannar

Creating Value Through Agriculture and Industry

Cargills' journey into Kilinochchi began in 2009 with a comprehensive needs assessment of over 2,500 smallholder farmers. Conducted through field studies, community dialogues, and surveys, this exercise helped shape future investments that aligned the company's strengths with local aspirations.

In 2010, Cargills established its first vegetable collection centre in Alaveddy, Jaffna, followed by centres in Kilinochchi and Nedunkerny. These centres provide farmers with assured markets and access to island-wide distribution through the Cargills Food City network.



Cargills partners with thousands of smallholder outgrower farmers across Sri Lanka

Building on this foundation, Cargills set up the KIST fruit processing facility in Kilinochchi in 2013, becoming the first large publicly listed company to establish a manufacturing presence in the North. The facility opened new commercial opportunities for farmers and vendors while generating stable employment, particularly for women, including war-affected widows.

Cargills also strengthened the dairy sector with milk collection centres in Meesalai, Poonagary, and Kilinochchi. These initiatives have integrated Northern dairy farmers into formal value chains, improved incomes, and supported quality-driven production through technical assistance and dairy modernisation programmes.



The KIST Kilinochchi processing facility

Modern Retail and Lifestyle Infrastructure

In the same year, Cargills redefined the retail and lifestyle landscape of the North by opening Cargills Square in Jaffna, the first shopping and entertainment complex in the region. The mall became a social and economic hub, generating employment, supporting local businesses, and offering the Northern community access to modern retail experiences. Cargills Square also marked the first presence of a global restaurant brand in the North, with KFC introduced by Cargills as its exclusive local franchisee. Today, five KFC outlets operate across the Northern Province, creating employment and skills development opportunities for local youth. The region while creating employment and skills development opportunities for local youth.



KFC at Nelliady Jaffna



The iconic Jaffna Cargills Square shopping and entertainment mall at night

Financial Inclusion and Access to Banking

Recognising the importance of financial inclusion in regional development, Cargills Bank expanded its footprint in the North with the first branch opening in Vavuniya in 2015. At present, three branches operate across Jaffna and Vavuniya, improving access to banking services for individuals and businesses, supporting overall economic activity in the region.

Empowering small local businesses

Cargills' commitment extends beyond infrastructure to strengthening local enterprise ecosystems. The 'Village to Home' programme was extended to Jaffna, creating market access and growth opportunities for small local businesses through mentoring and consumer linkages. In addition, SME training programmes have supported over 50 enterprises, equipping entrepreneurs with the skills needed to build sustainable businesses. Building on this focus on human capital development, Cargills introduced the 'ELEVATE' soft skills development programme in 2025, empowering Northern youth and young professionals with essential workforce-ready skills and enhancing their readiness for meaningful employment.

Investing in Education, Health and Social Wellbeing

Cargills Foundation expanded its Early Childhood Education programme to the Northern Province, enhancing learning opportunities for preschool children, with Thiruvallavur Preschool in Manipay being the first to onboard the programme. Healthcare access was strengthened through the adoption of two Suwa Seriya 1990 ambulances serving Achchuveli and Kilinochchi, improving emergency response and healthcare accessibility for surrounding communities.

Advancing Sustainable Agriculture and Fisheries

Cargills has actively supported farmers in Mullaitivu and across the Northern Province through the GAP Promotion Project, implemented in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Department of Agriculture (DoA). By promoting modern agricultural practices and providing direct market access, the initiative has helped farmers enhance yields, improve quality and increase incomes.

In 2025, Cargills partnered with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Government of Norway, and the Iranamadu Freshwater Fishers Cooperative Society, with support from NAQDA, to introduce cage culture tilapia farming in the Iranamadu tank, Kilinochchi. This project represents a significant step towards sustainable inland fisheries, livelihood diversification and climate-resilient food systems in the North.

Further reinforcing its commitment to innovation and inclusion, KIST (a Cargills Group company) entered into a grant agreement in 2025 with GIZ to launch a high-tech Aloe vera cultivation project in Kilinochchi. The project directly supports 100 female farmers, providing modern farming equipment, climate-resilient and chemical-free cultivation techniques, and a guaranteed buy-back mechanism at a pre-agreed price ensuring income security and long-term sustainability.



University Business Link. Connecting Academic Inspirations to Commercial Markets

By Jekhan Aruliah

Entrepreneurs turn ideas into business and money.

Rubbish rescued from tips make valuable construction materials and fuels. Microwave ovens and matchsticks, accidental discoveries, became huge industries. An annoyingly sticky substance sold as Superglue. Another pathetically weak glue led to Post-It Notes. Antibiotics and Insulin, discovered by chance observation, are multibillion dollar businesses.

It's not just money at stake, also fame.

Have you heard of Mr. Loud? No? Have you heard of Mr. Biro? A name made famous by the biro ballpoint pen. Mr Loud's ballpoint pen was patented in 1888. Without business success Loud's patent lapsed. If he had hooked up with an entrepreneur we would

be borrowing and losing each other's Louds. Biro's patent was issued fifty years later in 1938. For decades Biro's pens have been in huge demand. In 1950 another entrepreneur, Marcel Bich (with an 'h'), used new plastic manufacturing techniques to produce the biro so cheaply it became disposable. When empty of ink you didn't refill it, you threw it and bought a new one. The Bic (without an 'h') biro became a great commercial success found today in offices, homes and pockets around the World. By 2006, 56 years after its launch, one hundred billion Bics had been sold.

The combination of Inspiration, Invention, Innovation, Execution and Commercialisation is the magic. It is the magic that creates businesses, jobs, wages and profits. And generates taxes to

pay for schools and hospitals. Taking Inspiration to Investors and Manufacturers. Guiding Inventions down Development Paths and Sales Channels into Markets. Selling Innovations to Consumers. Bringing Incomes to workers and dividends to shareholders.

The famous universities

including Stanford and Harvard, Oxford & Cambridge, Imperial and UCL, and numerous Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) successfully link academics and entrepreneurs. They boast thousands of spinoffs raising billions of dollars of capital. These leading universities have very sharp expensive business lawyers representing them to negotiate lucrative linkages with very sharp lawyers expensively representing the entrepreneurs. Negotiating not least to ensure the university gets its bite taking

a share as equity or royalty. Students and professors give birth to companies, with some growing into world leading giants.

Our Sri Lankan universities and higher education establishments want and need to do the same. Sri Lanka's University Business Link, UBL, is a nationwide programme running at universities and higher education establishments. UBL's stated purpose, I quote from Sri Lanka's University Grants Commission: Strengthening of University Business Linkage (UBL) in State Universities :

"The recommended focal areas for the development of University Business Linkages in universities are as follows.

- Developing practice and business oriented student's projects
- Organizing trainings and coaching activities for businesses
- Implementing (technical) consulting services for businesses
- Implementing an IP policy at universities
- Promoting the creation of University Spin-offs
- Promoting research cooperation between businesses and the university

- Promoting strategic alliances with the private sector in order to develop the research infrastructures and capacities at universities"

UBL-Jaffna link with Mullai Milk Products

Jaffna University UBL

I was invited to visit the Jaffna University UBL office by its director Professor T.Eswaramohan, Professor of Zoology. Here I met some of the team managed by Anu Rakavan, a Jaffna University graduate. I have met Rakavan before, he is involved in many other projects particularly environmental. His team includes two recent graduates and a school leaver from Hartley College, a leading Jaffna school. The university is transitioning research into patents. It is still early days, just 14 patents applied for with 3 granted. But these three are the first patents owned by Jaffna University in its 48 year history.

One of these patents, from the Sri Lanka Patent Office, is a 'smart tap' programmed for running time and quantity of soap depending on the circumstance. A hospital may need more soap and time than a school or restaurant. Ensuring proper hygiene, reducing waste of water and of soap. Other ideas include 3D printed face masks, to ensure close and comfortable fit for hospital workers and also for all of us if there is another pandemic.

Sea cucumber, a very high value industry now taking off in the Jaffna peninsula, suffer from calcium depositing on its skin. Jaffna University has developed an alternative to the commonly used labour intensive manual scrubbing that bruises the animal reducing its value. The university has developed a process to raise Black Soldier Fly larvae in huge quantities which make a great food source for fish, pigs and poultry.

Jaffna University's Agriculture Department developed a syrup of Bael fruit. This fruit readily available in Sri Lanka rich in vitamins is also used in ayurvedic preparations. In 2022 the university licenced the syrup, working with the Mullaitivu based firm Mullai Milk Products to produce a tasty healthy yoghurt drink which is already on sale.

A particularly interesting piece of research uses palmyrah pulp, from the fruit of the iconic ubiquitous Jaffna palmyrah palm, to make food for ornamental fish. Rakavan tells me the particular commercial attraction of this healthy supplement is it greatly improves the colour of the ornamental fish, displayed as pets in fish tanks.

UBL-Jaffna provides various support services: Filing for Patents, Trade Marks, Copyright and Industrial Design. Finding Commercial Partners, negotiating agreements, forming startups and spinoffs.

The people are the product

The greatest products of any university, more than inventions and bright ideas, are its students and graduates. If ideas are the fish, the graduates are the fishermen. As part of the strategy to build up its students UBL-Jaffna conducts 'pitching events'. Here small teams of undergraduates engage with real life micro and small enterprises in the North. Together they develop a business proposal, which the undergraduate team pitches to experienced entrepreneurs. In February this year the event was facilitated by Prof. Kanesh K Rajah from the UK. A Member of the Advisory Board of UBL-Jaffna, Prof Kanesh has been Professor of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Innovation at the Royal Agriculture College in the UK. Currently he is Executive Director of the Centre for Executive and Professional Development in London.

Jaffna-UBL pitching event, 2023 Linking is a two way street. Universities can pitch their research at industry, optimistically hoping there is a lucrative application for it. But in reality many academics don't know what is already out there on the market, nor what is needed, nor what is profitable. Industry knows what the market wants, what will sell, what will make money. Industry should do far more actively seeking and commissioning targeted research from the universities.

The universities may not know the commercial potential of what they are doing. Businesses in turn have inadequate knowledge of the bright ideas bubbling in the universities. University Business Link creates a ladder from the Ivory Towers of academia to the shops and markets around the World. A ladder that brings benefit to our economy at both ends.



The Chamber of Northern Exporters (CNE) Delivering Goods and Services From Jaffna and the Northern Province

By Jekhan Aruliah

We have heard it so many times, “We must export more!”. We have heard it from politicians and economists and assorted commentators of assorted quality through miscellaneous channels. “We must export more” deserves the internet acronym SOTBO. Internet slang for a “Statement Of The Bleeding Obvious”. A statement so basic, so self-evident, why say it? We already know it. What are we doing about it?

For the country as a whole exports are obviously vital. Not only do exports bring us foreign currency. Selling only within

Sri Lanka is a very limited and crowded opportunity. Exports offer a virtually infinite market. But there is even more to exporting than that.

Exporting brings us more than only dollars. Competing internationally forces us to keep up with the international markets. We see the latest market opportunities and innovations as they come. We stop being ‘frogs in the well’ waiting to be plucked out by predators. Crucially we can compete with foreign companies who come to sell into our homeland Sri Lanka.

**Suganthan Shanmuganathan,
Chairman Chamber of
Northern Exporters**

The Northern Province has its own USP over other provinces, the Diaspora. This powerful though waning and disappointingly under-used network of investors and mentors and customers and networkers. Not only reaching the Diaspora directly, but through their network reaching those with no Sri Lankan heritage: their friends and business partners. Foreigners who have built strong and trusting relationships with the Diaspora. Friends of Diaspora

friends, business partners of Diaspora businesses, a network that stretches far beyond émigré Sri Lankans. The real power of the Diaspora is not what it can buy from us. The real power is reaching markets and investors through and beyond the Diaspora.

The Chamber of Northern Exporters (CNE) is a Jaffna based alliance of companies who are already successfully exporting. They represent a diverse group: Agriculture, Fisheries, Food & Drink, Handicrafts, Ayurveda, ICT, and other industrial sectors. Already 40 foot containers loaded with produce regularly leave Jaffna carrying goods to the Colombo ports. But too few of these 40 footers are going. The Northern exporters have the same issues faced by enterprises across Sri Lanka: Logistics, Warehousing, Shipping, Packaging, Financing; etc. And not least the inefficient and incorrigible bureaucratic friction getting approvals suffered by everyone in every part of the Sri Lankan economy. Key for CNE is collective advocacy, raising these issues and making better deals for exporters from logistics to loans. Representing exporters with the bureaucrats and policy makers in both Provincial and Central authorities.

CNE is active mentoring young entrepreneurs and supporting women headed businesses. The North has huge underdeveloped potential in these youth and

women sectors, which is true across the nation. According to the Department of Census and Statistics in 2025 Q2, national unemployment (people who want a job but can't find one) in 15-24 age group is 26.2% for women and 17.5% for men (2025 Q2, Dept of Census & Statistics).

Graph (and spelling) is taken from the Dept of Census & Statistics report https://www.statistics.gov.lk/Resource/en/LabourForce/Quarterly_Reports/2025Q2report.pdf

CNE is a recognition that we are not competing with each other inside the Northern Province, we are competing with the rest of the World. Northern companies helping even their own competitors inside the North makes them all stronger. When we are all stronger we create a Northern Province brand of quality, capability, capacity and excellence to attract worldwide customers to come to us.

The Jaffna brand needs to be far more than a temple, an ice-cream parlour, and a fort. The North outside Jaffna hardly has any brand at all.

CNE is promoting direct exports from the Northern Province. Before the civil war the North was an agricultural and fisheries and industrial powerhouse. Before the civil war the North was the largest fisheries producer in Sri Lanka. Now, even 16 years after the end of

the war, the North remains well behind in fisheries catch. Major northern factories for garments, chemicals, boat building and other industries that thrived before the war hardly exist.

We see little value add in the North. Most of Northern produce goes to the South where the value add is done and the export profits are reaped and spent in investments and in fun. CNE's objective is to change this. To build Northern value add, export direct, and enjoy the GDP share in the North.

There is much optimism. But optimism doesn't put food on the plate. There is talk of extending the Palaly Airport runway, enabling direct flights to the Middle East and Far East can be made. This immediately opens the prospect of direct export of fresh produce including seafood and high value agri-products. There are optimistic dreams of tourists and executives making intercontinental flights direct to Jaffna. We have had talk of new industrial zones in key Northern towns: KKS, Paranthan and Mankulam.

So far we have only seen a boom in foundation stones, lay and leave. If these promises become reality then they create immense opportunities for our Northern industries and exporters. Great opportunities for the Northern Province to contribute more to the national economy.



Apptimus Tech, Jaffna's software firm from bedroom to 7,000 square feet in 5 years

By Jekhan Aruliah

The Yarl Geek Challenge has a strong record as nursery for tech startups. By 2022, its 11th season, YGC alumni have started more than 60 companies employing hundreds of people. This doesn't include those who emerge from these companies to setup their own startups. Yes It's great when competitions and colleges give birth to startups. However the real Virtuous Cycle comes when these companies themselves develop people who leave and spawn even more startups. This is when the engine starts. Teams launching teams with real world experience and momentum truly achieves "critical mass". This achieves the dreamed of self sustaining growth of the industry. We've seen this in California, in London, in

Colombo. It's starting in Jaffna.

The ICT sector is particularly suited for entrepreneurial startups. The setup costs of the company are low. A decent laptop and internet connection can be bought for less than US\$1,000. An office setup on mother's kitchen table costs nothing other than a strained relationship with mother. Access to market is fast. Via the internet a bedroom in Jaffna's Kokuvil is connected to an office on New York's Wall Street.

ICT has a huge advantage over most other products. The best mango chutney or the finest handicraft in the World made in rural Kopay has a slow difficult journey to get onto a supermarket shelf, having to convince layers of corporate executives. An app, whether

good or not, gets an international audience in seconds. GooglePlay has space for an infinity of apps. Though making money, whether a chutney or an app, depends on your product and your marketing.

Tech startups around the World have kicked off by building an application for a single shop, or a single hospital, or a single business. This first system may have been built by two people in their bedrooms. Once the first system is built, they find more customers who want a similar system. They make a loss on the first system, where they had to put in thousands of hours of effort while earning little or even zero cash. On the second sale they only need to make small changes to this existing product, expending little effort but charging the client more

making a decent profit. They sell the same product to ten more customers, making even more profit. They expand the team, chase bigger clients, diversify into more lucrative sectors. In time a pulsating company is born. Hungrily searching for opportunities, creating jobs to generate the revenues to keep itself fed. Apptimus Tech, the subject of this article, is a company like this.

Apptimus Tech Team

The ICT sector is very much suited for this Darwinian world, where the fittest survive. Even the startups that fail teach their founders valuable lessons. Lessons for them to try again with another startup. Or take their experiences to get a job with one of the established companies as employees on their payrolls.

I have already written about some of these companies that came through the Yarl Geek Challenge: 3 Axis Labs; SenzMate; Arogya Life. This article is about the winner of YGC Season 8 in 2018, Team Magenda, setup by Apptimus Tech a company based in Jaffna.

Apptimus Tech was founded by Anojan Kaneshathas, later joined by his younger brother Manojan. They come from a prosperous family in Chunnakam a few kilometers north of Jaffna Town. His father is a retired Grama Sevaka (senior local government official), his mother a registrar of marriages. Both brothers

attended the prestigious Jaffna Hindu College, known for high academic performance particularly in maths and sciences. Anojan took his Bachelor's degree at the University of Kelaniya and then his MSc at the University of Moratuwa, with Manojan graduating from Esoft in Jaffna.

Manojan and Anojan

As part of his degree programme in 2014 Anojan went to Delhi to do his six month internship with the NGO HISP (Health Information Systems Programmes). While in Delhi Anojan developed a Point Of Sales (POS) system as a way to learn the C# programming language.

In 2015 Anojan sold the POS to a small Jaffna business. From there he made more sales in Jaffna through his network of friends. A restaurant needed a basic POS. A fashion clothing store wanted the POS integrated with stock control. For other clients he developed the system to integrate with finance and HR modules, and also with a payment gateway for online shopping. In this way Anojan's software product evolved.

Anojan's parents were pushing the two brothers to get government jobs. The stubborn brothers saw the potential in IT and stuck to it. In 2015 Anojan took on his first employee Vithushan to do marketing and support even before the company had been created. It

was not until late in 2016 that he recruited his next two staff. Anojan formally incorporated Apptimus Tech in 2017.

To start their office was inside the family home. Then they built a separate office in the garden. By the end of 2018 the company had 10 employees, too big for the garden shed. So they moved back into the family home, taking over the first floor.

In 2019 Apptimus Tech won its first big client, the Valampuri Hotel. Valampuri is one of Jaffna's most successful hotels. Even through the crash of the tourist industry in Sri Lanka starting with the Easter Bombings in 2019, Valampuri's restaurant stayed busy. Valampuri isn't dependent on tourists, its authentic and consistently good Jaffna food is popular with Jaffna's local people.

In 2022 Apptimus Tech, by now employing 52 staff moved into a new 7,000 square foot office in Mallaham, a town in the Jaffna peninsula. Anojan is aiming for 300 staff in the next two years.

Over time the Apptimus Tech applications developed into a fully-fledged integrated ERP system for small and medium enterprises to run their businesses. They branded the system naming it "Apptimate" (<https://apptimate.io>). As Anojan prospected for clients he saw a pattern and a particular opportunity. Anojan realised many of the older larger

businesses had highly disjointed systems. Over many years when they were still small these larger businesses may have bought a POS from one supplier and a simple finance system from another. They might have had a stock control system developed by an independent local programmer, and perhaps had no CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system at all. For many businesses in their early stages a key driver for selecting systems would have been cheapness. But as they became established and successful they were ready or could be persuaded to invest in something better. Apptimus Tech saw great opportunities in these growing businesses ready to integrate their systems, successfully seizing them.

The company also started building systems for different specific sectors:

Hospitals: Apptimus Tech has hospital clients in the Northern Province, including the North Central Hospital. It sold a system to India's Apollo Hospital in Telangama State who wanted a custom built application to sit on top of the standard Apollo group systems. Apptimus Tech is pitching an integrated system at a well known Colombo private hospital, which currently runs on about 30 different applications.

Legal Firms: Working with a respected Colombo lawyer Apptimus Tech is developing a system for legal firms. A system to make this notoriously inefficient profession less so.

One only has to walk around Hultsdorf in Colombo, or the Jaffna courthouse to see the swarming black clad legal eagles wandering around. One only has to watch the lawyers seated patiently and their clients waiting impatiently on courtroom benches (I have been there more than a few times as observer, not participant) to realise the huge market potential here.

Tourism: Apptimus has already implemented systems in well known Jaffna hotels including The Valampuri, Tilko Jaffna City Hotel, and Reecha. The system has been installed at hotels in UK and France with other sales in the pipeline.

Recruitment: Placements.lk (<https://placements.lk>) is another service developed and run by Apptimus. Anojan describes it as "Sri Lanka's first candidate-centric recruitment ecosystem". Apptimus is partnering with the private and government universities/institutes in Sri Lanka to enrol their students onto the platform. Several hundred companies have registered to advertise vacancies in the last 12 months.

Placements.lk

Anojan told me Apptimus is serving over 500 clients from 16 countries in 13 sectors. Along with their products, they are also building custom software solutions as per the client needs. Be it a Web, Mobile, or Desktop Application, they have the expertise and team capacity to build them all.

Anojan's strategy for the future is to develop overseas sales. He will be putting branches in Australia, UK, Canada and India where he has many clients and sales opportunities. Anojan commented while small clients are happy to be supported out of Sri Lanka, larger customers like to see a local presence in their countries. He plans to spin-off certain subsidiary companies, to focus on different market segments and innovations.

Anojan started his company as a hobby, building a POS system simply to teach himself to code in C#. The hobby grew into a company. First in his parents' house, then their garden then taking over their home's first floor, and in 2022 moving into a new 7,000 square foot office. Starting with just him alone, the company employs over 100 staff with plans to multiply this. Apptimus Tech sells product and services to 16 countries around the World. Still a young man Anojan has plenty of time and energy and ambition to take his company much much further.



3AxisLabs another welcome entrant to Jaffna's IT ecosystem

By Jekhan Aruliah

The Yarl Geek Challenge (YGC), run by the Yarl IT Hub, has been a launch pad for hundreds of IT careers, and for a number of successful companies. What YGC showcases is not the products brought by the teams, YGC showcases the people the teams are made up of. Often the YGC's products hardly survive the end of the competition. But the people have linked up to do greater things. In the case of 3AxisLabs both product and people were launched together into entrepreneurial enterprises.

Bootstrapping Bus Seats

Let's start the story with Busseat.lk, an online booking system for coaches plying the roads around Sri Lanka. Busseat.lk

was conceived and presented at the Yarl Geek Challenge Series 3 (YGC3) in 2014. Having won YGC3 four of the five man team left, three to join top IT companies with one heading off to do a PhD. Only Prasanth Subendran stayed, the leader of the team. He wasn't dreaming of rising into a CTO position with a famous company. Prasanth successfully applied to a top tier IT company in Colombo just to prove to himself he could. He didn't accept the offer and stuck with busseat.lk.

Jestan Nirojan, co-founder of 3AxisLabs, had been a mentor at the YGC3 supporting and advising the YGC competitors. Though not mentoring Prasanth's team, he watched them carefully. At YGC3

Nirojan was impressed by Prasanth focussing more on the business problem than the technical challenge. By chance sometime later Nirojan bumped into Prasanth in the Colombo suburb Wellawatta, and agreed to join him on his quest.

Left to Right the 3AxisLabs founders: Prasanth; Nirojan; Saahithyan

At the end of each day Nirojan would leave his office at Hsenid, one of Colombo's leading tech companies, to moonlight for their dream. He would join Prasanth Monday to Thursday from 7pm to midnight, Friday 7pm to 3am, Saturday and Sunday more or less full time. No time to cook or iron, the crumpled duo snatched meals from Wellawatta kades. They

would break the technological routine by chasing up bus operators striving to bring them onto the busseat.lk service and with an occasional trip to the cinema. Development started in May 2015, the service was launched less than 5 months later in August.

Prasanth wryly commented that while his Moratuwa University peers were putting on smart shirts and trousers heading for posh airconditioned offices, he was sweating going door to door meeting bus mudalalis. Getting bus operators to use the system was almost impossible. Bus mudalalis don't generally fit the profile for high tech early adopters. The owners of more than 20 bus companies who were based in Sri Lanka were approached without success. Then they made contact with the diaspora owner of a luxury coach service running in Sri Lanka who lived in Norway. To start he gave them 4 seats on each coach to sell. As the other operators saw Busseat.

buy xenical online buy xenical online no prescription lk in operation they started to sign up too. These coach operators became the prime drivers for ongoing development of the system. Their feedback focussed on making it easy for them to maintain their timetables and routes, and process bookings from the public and from agents.

Minimum Viable Product (MVP)

Following the MVP strategy the first launch of busseat.lk was imperfect but far better than the alternatives. For the traveller it was better than ringing around the coach hotlines, or walking along Jaffna's dusty hot roads to their ticket booths hoping they would have seats on the days they needed them. I myself have rung hotlines, walked down Hospital Road, and used busseat.lk for my Jaffna-Colombo trips. Busseat.lk was not only more comfortable and convenient, it solved my chronic incompetence speaking Tamil by circumventing incomprehensible human interactions.

Launched as a Minimum Viable Product (not perfect, just good enough to provide the service and continue evolving from live lessons learned), busseat.lk's first incarnation focussed on the passenger experience. Easy and quick to use for the passenger ordering the tickets at the frontend, at the backend there was a lot of behind the scenes manual processing going on where the bookings were actually made and confirmations emailed back.

Over the years the passenger experience on busseat.lk evolved to become very similar to checking in on an airplane. Now you can see all the seats in the bus and choose your

own. Ladies can choose to only have another lady sitting next to them. Those who love to watch the country whizzing by can choose window seats. Families can ensure they are seated together, or perhaps apart! <https://busseat.lk/>

Having launched busseat.lk in 2015 Prasanth and Nirojan seriously looked into starting a software company. But at the time they weren't able to get enough projects to make it sustainable. So in 2017 Nirojan moved back to Jaffna while Prasanth stayed focused on Busseat.lk in Colombo. Nirojan joined Arogya Life Systems as Chief Technology Officer. Arogya is another tech company born out of Yarl Geek Challenge. Arogya is successfully developing and selling hospital management systems across Sri Lanka to leading hospitals including Durdans, Hemas, and more.

3AxisLabs launched in 2021

The COVID lockdowns starting early 2021 dealt busseat.lk a near fatal blow. With the extended bans on travel, busseat.lk had negligible business. From 2019 Prasanth and Nirojan had returned to planning setting up their own tech company, 3Axis Labs. Nirojan brought his friend Saahithyan Vigneswaran who was working at Arogya's sister company Arima. From 2019 until 2021 they crystallised

their strategy. 3AxisLabs took off in April 2021 with its three founders: Prasanth, Nirojan and Saahithyan . One year later, in April 2022, they had 9 more staff.

3AxisLabs team, not including 2 on leave and 1 working from home

Prasanth commented that it is very difficult to be alone when starting a company. It's good to have partners with complementary skills. Each taking the lead according to their own strengths, all having confidence in the others to hand responsibilities over. Prasanth heads product development, sales, project management, customer and investor relations. Saahithyan as Technical Lead takes care of mobile apps, front and back ends, and system architecture. Nirojan as Chief Technology Officer drives technology strategy.

International Clientele. Exotically named tech

3Axis Labs have developed software for clients in Australia, Singapore, Denmark and the UK. Customers have come via Diaspora and through social media such as LinkedIn. A client in the UK had a product developed in India in 2017. The Indian developers had disappeared presumed moved on to other things. So 3Axis Labs took on a poorly documented system, studied and upgraded it. They have developed new products,

integrated existing systems onto new platforms. And they have provided programmers to work as part of a Singaporean client's development team.

I asked Prasanth what technologies they can develop in. He came up with a long list of improbably named tech: Clojure; Quarkus; Flutter; MongoDB; Neo4j; Hadoop; Kubernetes; JanusGraph and many more. In my coding days software languages had more basic names like BASIC. Techies are so much more imaginative now.

Between them the founders can do anything that needs to be done. If a job isn't done to high standard by one of the staff, then one of the founders can mentor the team member or if necessary just do it themselves. Whether it is a new software company, bakery, or candlestick factory the founders of small startups need to be able to ensure the quality by stepping in themselves when needed.

If not now, when?

3Axis Labs gets the bulk of its projects from the Diaspora. This is one of the most effective ways the Diaspora can support the renaissance of the North. Not just with cash, but with business and with networks that bring business.

Prasanth, Nirojan and Saahithyan are building their young company with great

enthusiasm and ambition. Jaffna is not yet the 'go to' place for software and IT. Jaffna needs to build a track record not only to attract customers, but just as critically to lure back experienced staff. Companies like Arogya, 3Axis Labs and a few others, and organisations like Yarl IT Hub and the Yarl Geek Challenge are trying to kickstart the virtuous circle. In the current Sri Lankan economic crisis we see in stark focus that organisations like these deserve support for all our benefit.

Many who could invest or setup companies or bring business to the North have said to me they are only waiting for "the right time". Waiting for the Perfect Moment has left many waiting forever, and allowed good opportunities to wither away. "Perfection is the enemy of Progress" said Winston Churchill. "A flawed diamond is better than a pebble" said Confucius.

Catumaran Jaffna

a Classic Boutique Homestay

Catumaran is an intimate boutique stay in Vaddukoddai, Jaffna, rooted in architectural heritage, personal history, and thoughtful restoration.

This 100-year-old bungalow, is one of the four houses built by a Malaysian Tamil for his daughters. The current owner Ajantha Subramaniam, inherited the ancestral property from her grandmother, who migrated from Malaysia, and chose to restore it rather than see it dismantled.

The renovation was led by one of Sri Lanka's most renowned architects, Channa Daswatte, who she had met during the years she was working at the office of the late Geoffrey Bawa. Channa along with Roshan Rajapaksa, an interior designer then working with him, carefully introduced modern comfort whilst preserving the essence of traditional Jaffna architecture: high ceilings, thick lime-plastered walls, and shaded verandahs.

Today, Catumaran operates as a boutique homestay with three double rooms that can accommodate six adults and two children.

Catumaran has made its name offering authentic Jaffna cuisine, prepared by a women-led team of local chefs. Jaffna food is celebrated across Sri

Lanka for its bold flavours, rich spices, and exceptional seafood. Northern Tamil cuisine is known for its darker curries, deeper spice profiles, and strong coastal influences, setting it apart from other regional styles.



The house itself has seen many changes and disruptions, including the civil war, during which it was commandeered in turn by both the rebels and the Sri Lankan military. Thoughtfully restored by its rightful owners, it now offers a peaceful setting beside Jaffna's iconic paddy fields and near the historic Jaffna College campus.

Catumaran stands as a strong example of how old ancestral homes can be repurposed and given new life, rather than demolished. It is an ideal place to slow down, reflect, and experience Jaffna with depth and care.

“A historic ancestral home that has withstood the test of time, witnessing decades of change, including the three-decade war in Sri Lanka's northernmost region. Once a command center for both rebel forces and the Sri Lanka military, it has now been lovingly restored by its rightful owners into a stylish boutique homestay. Located just minutes from Jaffna town, this charming retreat offers an authentic experience, with Ajantha and her team serving traditional Jaffna delicacies. Don't miss their signature Jaffna crab curry and pittu, a true culinary delight.”

Sandeep Dinal Jayawardhana

Travel Advisor | Destination Specialist
@sandeepjayphotography

Transforming War-Torn Land into Global Impact: The Sakti Agro Story



In the war-ravaged landscapes of Northern Sri Lanka, where landmines once littered the ground and destruction scarred the earth, an extraordinary story of resilience and social entrepreneurship is taking root. Sakti Agro, a premium coconut coir company, stands as a testament to what's possible when business acumen meets humanitarian vision.

The story begins with Raj Janan, who fled Sri Lanka when civil war erupted in 1984. For two generations, his family had farmed coconuts in their plantation in Northern Sri Lanka. His father had built a business empire that included an aluminum manufacturing factory, private hospital, a textile factory, and the Tamil newspaper—all destroyed during the war.

In 2010, Janan returned to visit his homeland after more than 25 years away, finding his once-

beautiful country transformed into a war zone wasteland. The devastation was overwhelming. Simply clearing his family's land proved dangerous with live bullets, hand grenades, and rocket launchers lay scattered across the property. But Janan saw something beyond the destruction: opportunity to rebuild and restore hope.

John Tastad an American entrepreneur and investor with



25 years of experience building companies across energy technology and manufacturing sectors. The two had met back in 2001 and had already collaborated on three ventures together, including rebuilding houses after the 2004 Sri Lanka tsunami.

In May 2016, Janan approached Tastad with a proposal to build a coconut processing facility to create jobs and economic development for the region, with a mission to hire war wounded individuals and women, recognizing that 30,000 ladies had been widowed by the conflict. They both agreed on a financial and strategic partnership establishing Sakti Agro, a modern coconut fiber and coco peat processing facility that has become a cornerstone of economic development in one of Sri Lanka's most underserved regions.

A Revolutionary Approach to Employee Welfare

What makes Sakti Agro unique isn't just its premium coconut coir products, it's the company's profound commitment to its people. The company was the first agriculture-based Board of Investment (BOI) company to initiate a project in the war torn region of Northern Sri Lanka. Today, 60% of Sakti



Agro's employees are physically and mentally scared from the war, and 70% are women all receiving equal pay regardless of gender.

The company's employee benefits package goes far beyond industry standards, reflecting a deep commitment to worker welfare and dignity. All employees receive daily free meals, ensuring nutrition and reducing household expenses, while the company makes full contributions to both the Employee's Trust Fund and Employees Provident Fund, securing their financial futures. Sakti Agro invests in the next generation by providing education assistance for employees' children, breaking cycles of poverty through access to quality schooling. Transportation support ensures reliable access to work, removing a common barrier

to employment in rural areas. Perhaps most significantly, the company practices equal pay for equal work, breaking gender wage gaps that persist across many industries and empowering women with true economic independence. Beyond the 36 direct employees, an additional 62 individuals benefit from indirect employment through the company's operations, creating a ripple effect of economic opportunity throughout the region.

Building Community, One Initiative at a Time

Sakti Agro's social impact extends deep into the fabric of Northern Sri Lanka's communities. The company partners with 250 coconut grower's cooperatives to collect raw materials, supporting 2,500 to 3,000 families across the district.

The founders' vision of community development manifests in tangible ways throughout the region. Raj donated one acre of his family's ancestral land to establish critical community infrastructure, including a primary school ensuring local children have access to quality education, a women's clinic addressing healthcare needs, and a community center where residents can connect and organize. Beyond land donations, the company constructed an access road to the local hospital, dramatically improving healthcare accessibility for the entire community. Sakti Agro actively funds six neighborhood schools, providing resources for children's award ceremonies, sports competitions, and educational events that enrich young lives. Perhaps most transformative is the company's approach to economic empowerment by prioritizing employment of war affected individuals and women, Sakti Agro is reshaping social dynamics and creating pathways to financial independence for the most vulnerable members of society.

Awards

Sakti Agro's exceptional blend of business excellence and social responsibility has earned prestigious national recognition. In 2020, the company won the National La Lakriya Award for





uplifting local communities, validating their transformative impact on Northern Sri Lanka's war-affected populations. Their commitment to quality and innovation in coconut processing was recognized with the Bronze Winner of the National Excellence Award in the coconut fiber industry in 2022, followed by an impressive Gold Winner in 2023. Most recently, Sakti Agro received the Sri Lanka Coconut Award 2024 in recognition of their superior contribution to the coconut industry in the Northern Province. These accolades underscore that Sakti Agro has successfully demonstrated that ethical business practices and industry leadership are not just compatible, they reinforce one another, creating a model where commercial success and community development go hand in hand.

Integrated Farm

As Sakti Agro's premium cocopeat gained recognition in modern greenhouses

worldwide, Raj Janan recognized an opportunity to take their mission to the next level—making agriculture more profitable and resilient, free from the devastating effects of adverse weather and other calamities that have long plagued Sri Lankan farmers. This vision led to the establishment of Blue Lagoon, a Board of Investment company designed to demonstrate the transformative potential of controlled environment agriculture.

Blue Lagoon represents an integrated approach to modern farming, combining hybrid net houses that utilize Sakti Agro's premium quality cocopeat as the growing medium, freshwater fish farming operations, and a farm science center dedicated to teaching surrounding farmers and youth the skills of modern farming under controlled environments. The innovation extends beyond methodology to accessibility—Blue Lagoon has developed the most cost-effective net houses in Sri Lanka, slashing costs by two-thirds compared to current market prices, making this technology affordable to the majority of farmers who previously couldn't access such solutions. Through controlled environment agriculture, farmers can now produce high-quality vegetables with minimal loss, protected from external factors like unpredictable weather, diseases, and insect attacks. This new venture continues Janan and Tastad's vision of empowering communities

through sustainable, profitable agriculture that builds resilience against the uncertainties that have historically kept rural populations in cycles of poverty and dependence.

A New Model for Ethical Business

For Janan and Tastad, Sakti Agro and Blue Lagoon represents more than a successful business venture. It's proof that ethical commerce and social impact aren't just compatible, they're inseparable. The company demonstrates that businesses can be profitable while prioritizing people over profits, that employment can be dignified and empowering, and that private enterprise can be a powerful force for post-conflict reconstruction.

In a region once synonymous with conflict and devastation, they're cultivating prosperity, dignity, and hope. The employees who bear scars from war now have stable employment and hope for their children's education. The female workforce challenges traditional gender roles and provides economic independence. The children attending schools have access to opportunities their parents never imagined.



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An aerial photograph of a coastal fortification. A road curves along the edge of a dark green body of water. The fortification consists of stone walls and a central courtyard area with a grid pattern. The water is dark and has some darker patches. The sky is not visible.

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