

1. Background - Eastern Province

1. 1.General Description of the Province

1.1.1 Historical Background

The elected North East Provincial Council (NEPC) was constituted on 5th December 1988 as Elections were held to all the eight Provincial Councils for the first time in 1988. It had only a brief existence as it was dissolved in June 1990. Thereafter, it continues to be administered under the direction of the Hon.Governor of the North East Province.

Subsequently, the North East Province was demerged in compliance to the verdict of the Supreme Court on 16.10.2006. Accordingly a Governor was appointed with the staff attachments exclusively for Eastern Province and started functioning independently on 1st of January 2007 as Eastern Provincial Council. The Eastern Provincial Council which was established through the election on 10th of May 2008 and functioned up to 27th June 2012. The election for selecting the second Council was held on 08th September 2012 and the it has now been established since 1st October, 2012.

Present Structure of EPC

At present there are five Ministries headed by Secretaries. The Secretaries are appointed by the Hon.Governor.

The five Ministries are as follows:-

1. Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development, law & order, Skill & Manpower, Rehabilitation & Resettlement and Environment
2. Ministry of Health & Indigenous Medicine, Social Welfare, Probation & Child Care Services, Women Affairs, Youth Affairs, Sports, IT Education, Cooperative Development, Food Supply and Distribution
3. Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Production & Development, Rural Industries Development, Fisheries and Tourism
4. Ministry of Education, Cultural Affairs, Lands & Land Development and Transport
5. Ministry of Road Development, Irrigation, Housing & Construction, Rural Electrification and Water Supply.

There are 12 institutions functioning under the purview Governor's Secretariat, Chief Secretary's Secretariat and Assembly Secretariat. The Provincial Public Service Commission is functioning under the Governor's Secretariat. The other institutions viz; Provincial Treasury, Provincial Planning Secretariat, Provincial Public Administration, Engineering Services and Human Resource Development headed by Deputy Chief Secretaries are functioning under the Chief Secretary's Cluster.

In addition, 16 Departments and Small Sectors / Functional Units are functioning under the purview of the above mentioned five Ministries.

1.1.2 Location

The Eastern Province is situated between latitude 6°30' N to 9°5' N and longitude 81°00' E to 82°00' E, It is of 9,965 km² in extent and covers around 16.0% of the total land area of the island. Maximum length of Eastern Province is 286 km from Kumana in South to Pulmodai in the North and the maximum breadth is 89 km from Ulhitiya in the West to Kirankulam in the East. Furthermore, the Province is enriched with a 420 km of coastline (Ampara 110 km, Batticaloa 100 km and Trincomalee 210 km. The total

coastline of the country, and, water bodies cover just over 8.5% of the total land area of the Province.

The Eastern Province comprises three districts viz: Ampara, Batticaloa and Trincomalee, and covers an area of 9,792 sq. km. including 390 sq. km. of inland waters. It occupies 16% of the total land area of Sri Lanka and is located in the East coast of Sri Lanka. The Province is bounded in the East by the Bay of Bengal, North by the Northern Province, West by the North Central and Central Provinces and South by the Uva and Southern Provinces.

1.1.3 Population

The population of the province is about 1.54 million in 2012 which is about 7.6% of the total population of Sri Lanka. The distribution of areas and population by districts is given in the table below. The Eastern Province which comprises three Districts, namely Ampara, Batticaloa and Trincomalee cover an area about 10,000 square kilometers, which is about 15% of the total land area of the country.

During the last two decades, population in the Eastern Province has grown at an annual growth rate of 2.19% which is higher than the national rate of population growth rate of 1.14 %.

District	Area (Sq. Km.)	Population ('000)	Population Density (Sq.Km)
Batticaloa	2,850	525	201
Trincomalee	2,700	376	149
Ampara	4,400	645	153

The Eastern Province has low levels of population density. Except Batticaloa District, Trincomalee and Ampara districts have reported population density of less than 200 persons per square kilometer.

1.1.4 Topography and rainfall

The topography of the province is relatively flat in the coastal areas and undulating in the western part of the province. The landscape of the province is varied with paddy fields, forests scrublands wetlands and lagoons being predominant.

Since the Eastern Province is coming under the category of low country dry zone and located, it is privileged to receive more rainfall during the North-East monsoon period (October to February) and less rainfall during South-West monsoon period (April to August). Average rainfall is 91.6 mm in the province.

Climatically the province falls within the dry zone of Sri Lanka. It has a mean annual temperature of 28 degree Celsius (maximum of 31.7 C and minimum 24.4 C), high temperatures and dryness are the main climatic characteristics of this region. The clear skies, bright sunshine, high evaporation and rather low humidity are other significant characteristics.

The climatic data pertaining to the Eastern Province showed that the highest temperature was recorded during the months of June, July, August and September.

1.1.5 Ethnic composition

The population distribution by gender; male is 50.5% and female is 49.5%. This province has three major ethnic groups with significant concentration of three major ethnic groups namely, Tamil, Moors and Sinhalese, as 40%, 37% and 22% respectively. (Census, 2012)

1.1.6 Land use and settlement pattern

Out of the total land area of the Province, 0.32% is classified as built up areas. Land used for residential activities are 7.32%. and rural settlements covers 7 % of the total land area.

The land use for agricultural activities amounts to 22.87% of the total area of the province. Paddy is one of the most important crops in the Province, which covers about 17.74% of the total land area. These paddy lands are distributed mainly in Batticaloa and Ampara Districts.

Rice is the major crop in the hinterland in the Trincomalee District. Presently out of a total extent of 41,292 ha of paddy land in the Trincomalee District only 28,357 ha are cultivated. Forestland includes natural dense forest, open forest and forest plantations. Water bodies include the lagoon, bays, freshwater tanks and streams in the area. This use covers 9.49% (94565 ha) of the total land area of the Province. Out of this 54752 ha (5.49 % of the total land of the province) is covered by irrigation tanks and canal.

1.1.7 Any other relevant areas

Potential Resources

The long coast line with its famous sandy beaches, large number of inland waters, mix of forest and agricultural lands and the magnificent natural harbour in Trincomalee make the Eastern Province one of the most beautiful sought after Provinces in Sri Lanka.

The agricultural, fisheries, forestry and mining sectors, in particular, have a significant potential that can make an important contribution to economic growth, and thereby improve the living standards of the people in the region.

Opportunity for Tourism Development

At the end of conflict situation, the tourism becomes a booming industry in Eastern Province. The potential in the EP for the tourism development, which is mostly based on rich endowments, could be summarized into several areas. The coast line that stretches 436 km, large stretches of beautiful beaches and ecological conservation areas, could be tapped to support a vibrant tourism industry.

Vulnerable Situation

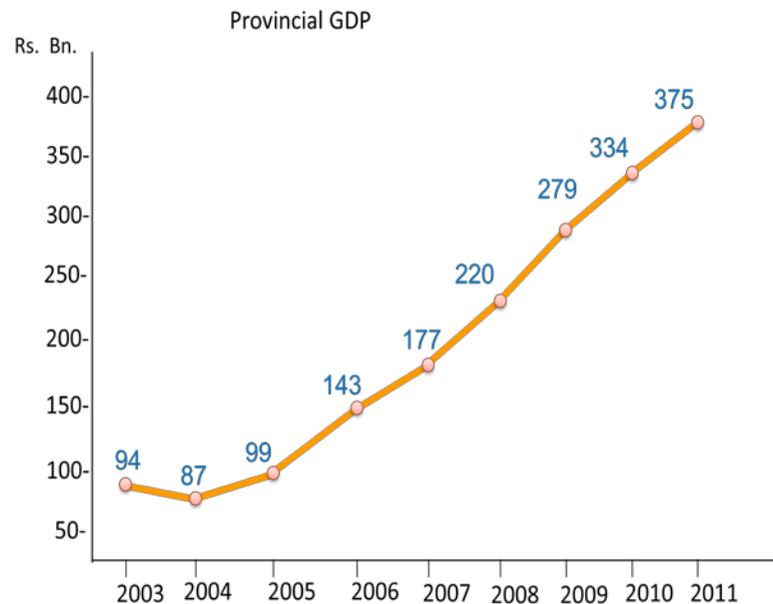
As a result of conflict situation, the vulnerable group increased significantly, it is reported more than 40,000 of widows and significant increase in orphans in Eastern Province.

1.2. Present Status of Socio-economic Indicators

1.2.1 Provincial Gross Domestic Product

The Eastern Province is quite less developed in comparison with most of the other provinces in the country. The regional economy is largely agricultural based. For the East, the highest percentage share of the National GDP in 1981 was 9.4% this share declined to 4.2% in 1990. Thereafter moderate growth rate prevailed in the East. In 2010, contribution to national GDP was increased to 5.7%.(CBSL report, 2011)

The Eastern Province is currently sixth in terms of the contribution to national GDP (ahead of North Central, North and Uva)



The protracted armed conflict has seriously affected the provincial economy, with a current contribution of 6.0% to national GDP. Agriculture which was the dominant sector has shown a steady decline between 2004 and 2007 showing signs of recovery after 2008. Industries Sector however, has increased its contribution from one fifth in 2004 to little more than one third in 2008. But the Services Sector sustained its contribution around 43% to 47% during this period. With the end of the armed conflict the Government in 2007 launched the “Neganahira Navodaya”, a comprehensive inter-agency programme to improve infrastructure and restore livelihoods.

In 2010, agriculture contributed 22.3% of the provincial GDP. Crop farming is the foremost potential growth sector in the Eastern Province contributing approximately 52% of the share of agriculture in the provincial GDP. Historically the Province has been an important source of rice, contributing to around 25 percent of the national rice production.

The 20 years of war has demolished almost all the industrial infrastructure of the province and the skilled human resources. But the large scale industries situated in secured zones (Prima Flour,

Prima Logistics, Mitsubishi/Tokyo Cement, Fugi Cement, Bio Mass Power plant and the Indian Oil Company) were able to function and contributed to pushing up share of provincial GDP to 29.3% in 2010. However the contribution of the industrial sector of the EP to the PGDP and its growth rate do not reflect a growth in the quality of life of the people.

In 2009 service sector contributed 43.6 % and 2010 contributed 48.4 % of the provincial GDP. The contribution from the service sector increased in 2010. The greatest contribution to GDP from this sector was observed in the Eastern Province.

1.2.2 Regional development process

The government has introduced a “three – year Eastern Province Development Plan 2007- 2010 (Neganahira Navodaya or Eastern Revival) which intends to improve and upgrade the infrastructure and supportive services in the province, enabling a sustainable economic revival. The plan, envisages the immediate restoration of fundamental rights and ensuring the safety of the people and communities of the region before delving into reinstating their livelihoods.

The Neganahira Navodaya Programme intends to develop the agriculture, fisheries, industries, tourism sectors through the development of economic infrastructure, human and natural resources over the next three years.

The total investment required for the implementation of the strategies in the Neganahira Navodaya Programme is estimated to be Rs.26.6 billion made for the financial year 2007. The highest amount Rs.83.8 billion would be allocated for improving economic infrastructure, while Rs.33.9 billion would be allocated for productive sectors and the regional economy. Rs.59.5billion would be allocated for the development of human settlement s and resettlement of returnees.

The short – term initiatives include a 180 day programme undertaken by the ministry of Nation Building, which ended by December 2007, for the restoration of civil administration and service delivery in the EP. The programme included clearing land mines to allow for the resumption of farming, re establishing road connection and restring basic needs such as water supply, sanitation and electricity for returnees to settle back.

The Nagenahira Navodaya intends to develop the rural areas through the revitalization of the productive sectors of the economy.

The government intends to establish industrial zones and estates to facilitate industrial development. The Nagenahira Navodaya has also devised strategies to develop the domestic and international tourism sectors in the EP through the rehabilitation of existing resorts along the coast.

1.2.3 Poverty status of the province

The poverty or poor exists where some persons fall short of reasonably defined minimum levels of wellbeing such as access to certain consumption or income levels, housing, health and education facilities and certain rights recognized according to standards of human needs and socio economic conditions of the society. The Eastern Province reported relatively low poverty headcount. It is noted that some of the remote areas of the Batticaloa and Ampara districts where high existence of poverty is suspected and the Trincomalee district was also under poverty. According to a survey by the Department of Census & Statistics, the poverty head count ratio in 2009/10 of the Eastern Province is 14.8 and poverty index for the province is 10.8, district wise poverty index are Batticaloa – 20.3, Ampara – 11.8 & Trincomalee – 11.7, due to the conflict and natural disaster many people lost their lives, displacement is a reflective effect on people's lives and their ability to earn a livelihood contributing to additional need.

1.2.4 Per capita income

The Eastern Province per capita income in 2011 is about Rs.237,000/- whereas the National per capita is approximately Rs.314, 000/- which is 32.5 % higher than that of the Eastern Province

1.2.5 Employment status

According to the Department of Census & Statistics figures 41.4% of population in the province occupied in the labour force, about 64.6% is of the male & 20.3% of female populations are engaged in labour force. Employments by sectors are Agriculture, forestry & Fishing 34.8%, industry 18.2% and Services 47%. Unemployment rate in the province is 5.3%. Service sector is the main source of employment of the population. The highest employment contribution of 47% to the service sector, 35% agricultural sector and 18% is industrial sector.

1.2.6 Service delivery

The Government of Sri Lanka has set in motion a policy of devolution of power and authority. The unit of devolution is the Province, and its Provincial Councils. Legislative powers are vested with the Provincial Council, while executive powers are vested in the *Governor* who is appointed by the *President*.

A *Board of Ministers* headed by the *Chief Minister*, is constituted to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions. The Board of Ministers with the Chief Minister as the head constitutes the apex of the devolved administration, and the responsibility of the Board of Ministers to the Provincial Council is a collective one. *Sectoral Secretaries*, functioning under the overall supervision of the Chief Secretary, are responsible for the sectoral subjects assigned to the respective Minister.

The legislative power of *Provincial Council* extends to subjects listed under the Provincial Councils List, delineating the exclusive areas of devolved authority, and the Concurrent List, which comprises subjects shared with the Government, such as planning, higher education, irrigation and water management, tourism. The Reserved List with areas exclusively reserved for the Government - have been set out in the Ninth Schedule to the 13th Amendment.

The subjects and functions of Provincial Councils are mainly matters of regional concern and focus directly on the daily life of the people. The Provincial Council becomes the provider of basic services to the community in the following areas:

1. Public Order and Local Government services;
2. Planning and Implementation of Provincial economic plans;
3. Economic and social services such as land development, Industries, health and education
4. Institutional, Human Resources and Rural Development
Employment planning and manpower development;
5. Infrastructure, Urban Development and Environment;
6. Trade and Commerce, Tourism.

1.2.7 Health

The situation in the Eastern Province suggests a weakened health care delivery system. Problems, constraints and issues in the health sector are centered on human resources, disparity in service provision, and health service delivery. Poor inter-sectoral coordination and the lack of real-time information limit the efficacy of planning and targeting the services.

The provincial ayurvedha healthcare system possesses a reasonable delivery network but the services are constrained by problems in regard to the supply of drugs. Further the ayurvedic hospitals are usually located away from the main town centres and poor transport facilities make referral of patients difficult. Physical facilities are limited. The ayurveda health care system continues to

function with shortage of nurses and pharmacists making treatment of patients difficult without trained assistance.

1.2.8 Education

Education services at all levels, Pre-School, Primary, Secondary, Tertiary and Technical- Vocational were severely disrupted in the Eastern region due to the prolonged conflict and the tsunami. Problems such as non- enrolment, drop-outs, absenteeism and poor learning quality are aggravated while many children and young people who have grown up in an environment of conflict show symptoms of insecurity, stress and varying degrees of psychosocial distress. A dearth of equipment, lack of infrastructure and other support facilities as well as of basic facilities as toilets and safe drinking water make most rural schools deprived. There is also a shortage of Teachers in the rural and difficult areas.

1.2.9 Infrastructure

The existing road network constructed about 60 years ago is not suited for the volume and weight of the vehicles that presently ply in these roads. Though different agencies like Road Development Authority, Provincial Councils and Local Authorities are responsible for the road network in the Eastern Province, almost all roads were found in dilapidated condition as a result of the 25

years conflict situation. Making all roads motorable is a development priority in Eastern Province. The major and medium irrigation schemes have failed to offer an effective irrigation facility due to the lack of water management systems. Damage caused to thousands of minor tanks is detrimental for irrigation. The damages to salt water exclusion schemes have failed to protect the valuable cultivation land in coastal areas. The available high land was under-utilized without adequate lift irrigation facilities in the Eastern Province.

While 85% of the population is considered to have access to safe water, the situation in the Eastern Province registers very much less (Batticaloa has only 10% household connection of piped born water). The rural population depends on ground water supply (open and tube wells).

Vision

East to be the Best Province in Human Values, Governance and Quality of Life

Mission

Ensure sustainable development and prosperity of the Province for the empowerment and the quality of life of the people through rational management of resources, enhanced productivity and good governance maintaining transparency and accountability

Development Strategy

The vision of the Eastern Provincial Council will be operationalized through a four-pronged strategy comprising “Enhancing the quality of life”, “Promoting sustainable development”, “Good governance” and “Securing human values”. The development strategy guides the journey towards achieving the vision.

- ***Enhancing the quality of life***
 - i. Create opportunities for rapid growth that reduces poverty and creates employment.
 - ii. Access to essential services for all
 - iii. Empowerment through education and skill development

- ***Promoting Sustainable Development***
 - i. Rational management of resources.
 - ii. Enhanced productivity
 - iii. Systems and procedures for community management of assets and benefits
 - iv. Empowerment of the people to face future challenges

- ***Good Governance***
 - i. Effective and efficient governance which operates in a transparent and accountable manner.
 - ii. Building institutional capacity
 - iii. Equality of opportunity
 - iv. Gender equity

- ***Securing Human Values***
 - i. Build goodwill and understanding among the communities.

