

## **Social and Economic Disparities: A Case Study of Post War Period of Jaffna District in Sri Lanka**

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### **Introduction**

The economic activities can be explained using economic anthropology or economic sociology. Economic activities are directly related with the land, labor and money. In Sri Lanka, the consequences of the three decades of the war is felt in every sphere of social and economic life. The northern and eastern regions have been the main victims of the war. There was a wide spread sense of insecurity and vulnerability among the population, a feeling of despair and hopelessness among young and erosion of political, legal and social right. According to Tamil community is determined by caste, gender relationship, minority or ethnic group identity (socio-economic, cultural and political background of past). Thus, another major change that come with the war and post war transformation is that the elite began claiming economic activities and common resource in many ways. However, the living conditions of those who were disadvantage group of people in the Tamil communities are suffering a lot. This study focus on stories about the ordinary lives of people and socio- economic disparities through different human and non- human symbols in post war Jaffna.

## Objective

This paper attempt to explore the nature of existing socioeconomic disparities in Jaffna. The study especially focuses on two major components such as social and economic disparities in post war Jaffna within the framework of economic activities in every day with special reference to selected visual representation of the society.

## Methodology

To understand the way of social and economic disparities are constructed, this research is implemented visual methods. This research mainly focuses on different part of Jaffna district. Jaffna is the most important metropolitan district in the Northern Province. Data for this study has been collected through visual methods and analysis is also based on visual qualitative method. The photography captured in different part of Jaffna from 2015 to 2016 are used in the analysis. By using the purposeful random sampling method, total number of 25 photography have been selected for the study. This work has been carrying out within a framework of the comparative approach. The comparative approach helps to frame larger ideas and concepts about the society. Such comparative studies help us to move to a marked differences found in the society. Photography is used as a tool to understand different interpretations of a social and culture.

## Results and Discussions

Jaffna peninsula is a conglomeration of the higher and lower social groups functioning in a stratified social structure. This part of the paper discuss in detail the existing social and economic disparities in post war Jaffna.

Nallur Temple - Jaffna New Initiatives:  
Nallur temple is the most famous Hindu temple in Sri Lanka. Thitemple has the reflection of traditional architecture. The



Nallur festival in Jaffna in August is the island's longest festival. It gives an economic benefits for the rural people of Jaffna. Mainly, it has spanning 25 days of vibrant chariot processions, drumming, dancing, and acts of self- mortification held in honour of the war god Skanda. There are two building in front of the temple. It is called Kopuram or Thoolalingam (south and north side building- 2015).

This kind of the building gives social and economic benefits for the community. There are stiffening architecture engine. At the beginning some south Indian workers took part in constructing buildings However, above those buildings were a co-operative action and built by local workers. So, there was a high demand for local labor. These kinds of the building can work as a pattern of commodification in the contemporary Jaffna society. It is a new social advantage or social benefits. It brings many advantages from inside to the societies. It can bring economic advantages as well.

Jaffna Fish Market Different Narratives: There are a number of small fish markets around in Jaffna. Some of the fishing community activities which taken in this study. Community data (photography) show that the different stories or narratives. First one is an underage worker. It is a subculture in the fishing community. Another side is a fisherman; he is a really capable person by economically. It reflects on a symbol of mobile phone watch, gold ring etc. This is a new kind of economic disparities in the contemporary Jaffna society.



Diversity in Agricultural Economy: Jaffna has special features as a place. Jaffna peninsula is a conglomeration of the higher and lower groups functioning in a stratified social structure. The livelihood of Jaffna peninsula is based on agriculture.



There are people over 65% of the work force in the society depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Tobacco is one of the traditional cultivation in Jaffna. It was introduced by portholes. It is market-oriented or commercial purpose cultivation in Jaffna. Valigamam north and east which are the most important tobacco farming division in the Jaffna. It cultivated for a long time period. And also they sell tobacco not only inside of Sri Lanka but also south Asia.

There are traditional tobacco lands misused by military. There is around 400 hectares tobacco area of valikamam. This area is uncultivated land of the high-security zones by the military. Another side of the photography is a coconut coir business which is used as preservation for tobacco in Jaffna. Also it is a small scale production and Investments involved is also small scale.

Stories of Victims from Different Traumatic Events - IDP Camps People: Many of people are living in internal camps in different part of Jaffna. They dimpled from time to time and high-security zones established by Sri Lankan military in 1990. They are living the long



term in the temporary welfare centers. They did fishing and toddy activities at their own area. After the displacement they become bonded or wage Labor of Jaffna. Such an attempts by government and non government agent put them in a cycle of poverty. They are seasonal workers and caste based disadvantage group of people in Jaffna. Their life is a hard because they have been suffering without space to sleep in their temporary house without water and Toilet.

Palmyrah Products and Economic Replacements: The people of Jaffna specialize in palmyra products. This photography is a one of the palmyrah product. It is called in Tamil karruppattivellam or panaivellam or panakkaddy. Also, it is called jaggery or sugar. This kind of Palmyra products carries on small or large scale in the Jaffna society. This product gives a benefits for particular group of people in villages.



Tourism and Education Icons: Tourism is as effective on an economic and social development of countries, in which, economists call tourism as invisible export. The



The tourism industry in Sri Lanka has been evolving following the end of civil war. In order to cater the ever increasing demand, a significant investment is taking place in the identified tourism site and location. Tourist places bring new kind of work opportunities among the local people (small scale traders) and increasingly multiculturalism in the society.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that there are existing social economic disparities in post war Jaffna through different human and non-human symbols. An economic activity plays a fundamental role in sustainable life in all living beings and has multiple purposes. The existing social economic disparities are related to land, labor, and money. It is also observed that social economic and cultural life of Jaffna society is changing rapidly.

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