

# **Eastern Development Projects' Success Crucial for Solving National Debt Crisis**

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Senthil Thondaman, Eastern Province Governor.

The Governor of the Eastern Province, Senthil Thondaman, emphasized the

importance of successfully executing the development projects outlined for the Eastern Province to overcome the country's debt crisis. Governor Thondaman noted that the President's guidance is crucial in this regard, and he urged all parties to rally behind the President and offer their support.

During a press briefing titled 'Collective Path to a Stable Country,' Governor Thondaman elaborated on the matter, stating that the Eastern Province has faced developmental setbacks due to the effects of a thirty-year-long war. However, under the guidance of President Ranil Wickremesinghe, the province has initiated numerous development projects, with several more slated to begin soon.

To prioritize the development of the three districts within the Eastern Province, Governor Thondaman noted that multiple projects are being devised and executed based on President Wickremesinghe's guidance. The goal is to establish the Eastern Province as the leading economic contributor among the country's provinces, given the significant development potential present in the region.

Governor Thondaman outlined key sectors with promising prospects, including shrimp farming, mineral resources, ports, airports, water resources, tourism, agricultural modernization, and land development. He emphasized that managing these abundant resources efficiently is crucial for developmental endeavors.

The Governor also anticipated financial support from international financial institutions to aid in this effort. He noted that the successful implementation of the development projects as directed by the President in the Eastern Province will suffice to address the nation's debt crisis.

Governor Thondaman further noted that President Wickremesinghe has directed attention to the salary concerns of the hill country communities, emphasizing the importance of fair wages for plantation workers. Negotiations are underway with estate companies regarding salary increments, which are typically reviewed every two years. The issue has been brought before the Wages Board, with input received from estate companies.

Efforts are also being made to link the plantation industry with foreign exchange, ensuring that salary adjustments align with the local cost of living in response to fluctuations in the dollar's value.

Governor Thondaman firmly believes that President Wickremesinghe is the only

leader capable of leading the country out of the economic crisis. During his tenure, President Wickremesinghe secured support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), leading to the country's swift restoration within a few months. The Governor emphasized that regardless of who holds the presidency in the future, the conditions set by the IMF cannot be altered. Countries that did not receive IMF support during their economic crises have struggled to recover fully. Therefore, as Governor states, it is essential to underscore that it is the obligation of all parties to lend their support to the President to rebuild the country.