

Jetwing Jaffna Opens Its Doors



President Maithripala Sirisena declared open 'Jetwing Jaffna', a 55-room star class hotel that has changed the skyline of Jaffna.

Following the grand opening, President Sirisena said that he was happy to take part in the ceremonial occasion, as the hotel project demonstrated the investor confidence on the Northern Province in general and Jaffna Peninsula in particular, as well as resilience of the people in the peninsula. He was accompanied by John Amaratunga, Minister of Tourism Development and Christian Affairs; Faiszer Musthapha, Minister of Provincial Councils and Local Government; Lakshman Yapa Abeywardhana, State Minister of Finance and Milinda Moragoda, Founder of MMBL-Pathfinder group of companies; Among others who graced the occasion were, Reginald Cooray, Governor of the Northern Province; Wijayakala Maheswari MP and K Ganesh, Divisional Secretary, Jaffna.

The state of art 'Jetwing Jaffna' with its 55 standard and family rooms will be a welcome addition to Jaffna, which is displaying its vibrancy and taking commendable strides to regain its former glory as the capital of Tamil culture. The hotel, consisting of 8 floors and a basement, boasts of an airconditioned restaurant on its second level that could accommodate over 100 guests and a roof

top sky lounge from where guests could have a bird's eye view of the fast developing city, from the Kilali Lagoon in the east to the islands in the west and host of other buildings of religious and cultural significance.

Jetwing Jaffna stands tall in the heart of the city on the 'Clock Tower Road' and will provide comfortable and modern accommodation facilities to visitors to the northern peninsula. In addition to accommodation for visitors, the hotel is also designed to provide banquet and meeting facilities to satisfy the needs of the local population as well as visitors to Jaffna.

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Marshaling investment of over one billion rupees for Jaffna is a commendable achievement by the Jetwing Hotels, MMBL -Pathfinder Group, Regency Teas and several others, who had placed their confidence in the project. Among the institutional investors is Leon Holdings, headed by a Sri Lankan expatriate hailing from Jaffna, who is a partner of a successful business venture in Europe. The project has also succeeded in providing employment for over 80 youths from Jaffna, who were provided with training in hospitality industry by Jetwing Hotels.

It has been a long and arduous journey for Yarl Hotels to witness the successful culmination of the project. The land on which the hotel was constructed had been purchased in 1975 by late Deshamanya N U Jayawardena, the first Sri Lankan Governor of the Central Bank and entrepreneur, who realized the potential of Jaffna over 40 years ago! Jetwing Hotels and MMBL-pathfinder Group took the decision to go ahead with the project in July 2010 and the former Prime Minister D M Jayaratne laid the foundation stone for the hotel in February 2012. It took four years for the project to come to fruition, overcoming numerous obstacles.

Speaking at the event John Amaratunga, Minister for Tourism said that there were others interested in investing in Jaffna and that the Ministry of Tourism Development was planning to open a hotel school in the peninsula. Hiran Cooray, Chairman - Jetwing and Governor Reginald Cooray invited the Tamil Diaspora to return to Sri Lanka and make use of the investment opportunities in the Northern Province. Chairman Jetwing Hotels highlighted that it was a long and a difficult journey to realize the dream of having a Jetwing operated hotel in Jaffna. "Despite

initial difficulties we faced, I was convinced that Jaffna was ready for a modern hotel and youth in the peninsula would be eager to choose hospitality industry as a career option,” said Hiran Cooray.



