

Tour of Jaffna

The Name

It was a moving performance. The lutist's fingers caressingly plucked the strings and the ensuing melody coupled with his melancholic and clear voice produced a song that was sweet and almost celestial. The entire royal court was in rapture. The King was so captivated by the musical performance of the lutist that he rewarded him generously: the entire region of Jaffna was donated to him. Though the land was barren and arid, gardens and groves arose as a result of the hard work put in by the lutist. In order to develop it, he brought his relatives from India as settlers.

Thus began the history of Jaffna.

The name Jaffna is the Europeanized form of the original Tamil name *Yazhpanam*. *Yazh* means lute and *Yazhpadai* or *Yahppanan* is "one whose occupation and caste-duty is to play on the lute". *Yazhpanam* means, thus, the land of the lutist.



One need not wonder that there exist many variations of this legend. One version places the event in the remote past of the Ramayana epoch. After the death of Ravana, the defeated King of the resplendent Island called Lanka, Rama conferred the title of the King on Vibhishana, a brother of Ravana. It was from Vibhishana that a *Yazhpadai* or lutist who was serving at the royal court received the waste tract of land called Jaffna, then known as Manaltidal. The lutist brought a thousand families from India and settled them there. He also went to the city of Madura in Northern India and brought with him a son of Kulaketu, a relative of Rama's father, to become the ruler of the new colony. This event is said to have occurred in 101 B.C. The new King was called VijayaKulankaicCakkaravarti.

Another version names the lutist as the blind minstrel Virarakavan. This name was probably borrowed from historical records according to which a Tamil poet by this name visited the court of the King of Jaffna in the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

According to yet another version, the King who donated the northern region was Vararasasinghan, the first ruler of the Island.



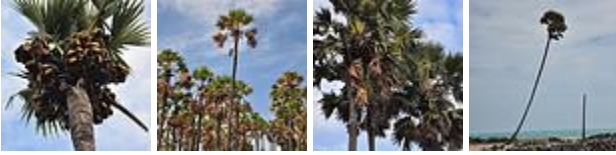
Varieties of Yazh

1. **Adiyazh:** A 1000-stringed yazh used for chasing away animals and rakshasa-s in forests.
2. **Naradaperiyazh:** A 1000-stringed yazh, in the shape of a triangle. This instrument had Mandara, Madhya and Tara sthayi (3-octave range) strings.
3. **Adikalaperiyazh:** A 100-stringed instrument.
4. **Periyazh:** A 21-stringed instrument.
5. **Seeriyazh:** A stringed instrument with 7 or 9 strings. It is stated that the instrumentalist playing Periyazh was known as "Banan" and that his wife (known as "Padini") played the Seeriyazh.
6. **MakaraYazh:** A 17-stringed instrument.
7. **Sakodayazh:** A 16-stringed instrument.
8. **Sengottiyazh:** A 7-stringed instrument. As in the present-day Vina, it had 4 main strings and 3 strings for tala.
9. **Tumuruyazh:** A 9-stringed instrument.
10. **Kichakayazh:** A 100-stringed yazh.
11. **Maruttuvayazh:** This was a single stringed instrument capable of presenting 62 types of notes and known as Deva yazh.
12. **Kurinjiyazh, Palaiyazh, Marudayazh and Mullaiyazh:** Corresponding to the 4 regions of ancient Tamil landscape.
13. **Vallakiyazh:** It is said that Brihaspati used to play on this type of yazh.

14. **Killaiyazh:** This instrument had a face like that of a parrot.

Reference: <http://www.eelavar.com/jaffna/page.php?index=110>

The Palmyrah Palm Tree



The palmyrah palm tree, *Borassus flabellifer* (Linea) from the Palmae-Arecaceae is known as panay or panam in Tamil and talgaha in Sinhala. It is common to the Jaffna district with about two thirds of the 10 million palms in Sri Lanka found here. The leaves are used for roofs and the dried young leaves can be woven. The fruit, when tender, yields a refreshing delicacy known as nungkus. The pulp of the ripe fruit is roasted or sun-dried and then eaten. The heart of the palm or palmito is also a delicacy but the sap is by far the most important as many products are derived from it such as jaggery, treacle, sugar, sugar candy, molasses as well as an unfermented drink known as 'sweet toddy'

Jaffna: Climate

The climate of Jaffna is dry and tropical as it lies within ten degrees of the equator. Humidity in the air and land-sea breezes makes the temperature conditions more equable on the sea board. The weather conditions in Jaffna are marked by extremes temperatures as it falls in the Dry Zone. The highest temperatures are recorded during the months of April - May and August - September, when the sun is directly overhead. December - January are the coolest period.

Foods of Jaffna

Jaffna food guide for foreigners who are visiting Jaffna. The food of Jaffna is a speciality cuisine of the Tamils residing in Jaffna. The preparation of the food involves the use of coconut, coconut milk, green chilies, red chilies, chili powder, specially prepared Jaffna curry powder, spices and gingerly oil are. Often the food is cooked slowly in clay pots over firewood and this adds a distinctive flavour to the food. Traditional Jaffna food tends to be spicy and with a hot chili taste. Of course the strength of the chilli and spice can be reduced to taste preferences. The preparation of these foods are far different from the South Indian dishes prepared by the Tamils living in India.

Palmyrah tree products and seafood too play important roles in the preparation of the food here. Pittu, Iddiyappam, Thosai, and Iddly are served as equivalents of rice and bread dishes and side dishes are served to eat with them.

Reference:

http://www.tilkojaffna.com/clients/tilkojaffna_com_net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=57&Itemid=62

Do you want know more Jaffna Life style, Please refer the following link.

Read more: <http://transcurrents.com/news-views/archives/4134>

Places to visit in Jaffna

Jaffna Fort



Outside of the fort while sunset

Jaffna Fort was constructed by Portuguese in 1619. Portuguese have constructed the fort with external wall, water channel, and internal wall. In 1658, Dutch has captured Jaffna Fort from Portuguese and English has captured the Fort in 1795. Jaffna Fort was used as a Sri Lankan Army base in Jaffna, after the independence.

Directions to Jaffna Fort

Jaffna Fort is located 1km from the clock tower in Jaffna Town.

Thuraiappa stadium



The Duraiappa stadium mass grave (also spelled Duraiyappah or Thuraiappa) was discovered and excavated at the Duraiappah Sports Stadium (named after Alfred Duraiappah) in the formerly embattled northern city of Jaffna, Sri Lanka, during a period of relative calm between civil conflicts.

The Jaffna Public Library



The Jaffna Public Library, which had begun as a private collection in 1934, came of age in 1959. It had been one of the biggest and finest library in Southeast Asia in 1960-70s and until it was burnt on 31 May 1981 by hooligans. The library had around 97,000 volumes of books and rare and important Ola (palm leave) manuscripts, which disseminate the Jaffna Culture and Personal collections of the famous scholars. These included works of AnandaCoomaraswamy, the famous Lanka-born Tamil Indophil and eminent intellectual Professor IssacThambiah. It was a place of historic and symbolic importance to the Tamil people.

The library was built in many stages starting from 1933, from a modest beginning as a private collection. Soon with the help of primarily local citizens, it became a fully-fledged library. The Library also became a repository of archival material written in Palm leaf manuscripts, original copies of regionally important historic documents in the contested Contest, political history of Sri Lanka and newspapers that were published hundreds of years ago in the Jaffna peninsula. It thus became a place of historic and symbolic importance to the local minority Sri Lankan Tamil people.

Eventually the first major wing of the library was opened in 1959 by the then Jaffna mayor Alfred Duraiappah. The architect of the Indo-Saracenic style building was one Narasimhan from Madras, India. Prominent Indian librarian S.R. Ranganathan served as an advisor to ensure that the library was built to international standards. The library became the pride of the local people as even researchers from India and other countries began to use it for their research purposes.

Braving its first destruction in 1981, the Tamil community pooled thousands of books, to rebuild the library when the civil war caught up in 1983. The semi-built library was destroyed again in 1985. However, the library continued its services without any interruption after the destruction through decentralized branch libraries. In 1996, the then President Chandrika Kumaratunga commissioned a project to rebuild the library. The library was reopened in 2003.

The statue of goddess Saraswati at the entrance of the Jaffna library is an evidence to say how much the people of Jaffna revered the library; it's a temple for them. (Read more:<http://english.jaffnalibrary.lk/>)

Refer: <http://www.jaffna360.com/places/jaffna-public-library/>

Jaffna Clock Tower



The Jaffna Clock Tower is about 130 years old and situated near the old sector of Jaffna Town. This is part of Jaffna's colonial history under British. In 1875, the son of the then British Queen Victoria, His Highness The Prince of Wales who later became the King with the name Edward VII, visited Sri Lanka. Jaffna citizen collected money to celebrate this occasion and to give a present to him. After the occasion they were left with some balance and a decision was made to build a clock tower to commemorate the visit of The Prince. (Read more:[http://rmnathan.hubpages.com/hub/The History of Jaffna Clock Tower](http://rmnathan.hubpages.com/hub/The_History_of_Jaffna_Clock_Tower))



O.L.R. (Our Lady of Refuge) Church

Our Lady of Refuge Church looks like a whitewashed version of a Gloucestershire village church.

[St. Mary's Church](#)



The Cathedral in a diocese is the mother of all the churches in the diocese. St. Mary's Cathedral is a big Church in Sri Lanka. It is more than 200 years old. It has its own beauty and it attracts lot of visitors to see the magnanimous Church.

[Jaffna Archaeological Museum](#)

Jaffna had an interesting little Archaeological Museum on Main St, near the old rest house, which is worth looking for. You can reach the museum by NallurKovil road, Jaffna. The museum house has a good collection of antiques from Northern Sri Lanka culture and history.

[NallurKandaswamyKovil -Nallur](#)



NallurKandaswamyKovil or **NallurMuruganKovil** is one of the most significant [Hindu](#) temples in the [Jaffna District](#) of [Northern Province, Sri Lanka](#). It stands in the town of [Nallur](#). The presiding deity is [Lord Muruga](#) in the form of the holy [Vel](#). The idol of the Nallur Devi or goddess was gifted to the temple in the 10 century CE by the [Chola](#) queen [SembiyanMahadevi](#), in the [style](#) of [Sembian bronzes](#).

The NallurKandaswamy Temple foundation year was 948 CE. According to the [YalpanaVaipavaMalai](#), the temple was developed at the site in the 13th century by PuvenayaVaku, a minister to the Jaffna King [KalingaMagha](#).

[SapumalKumaraya](#) (also known as *ChempahaPerumal* in [Tamil](#)), who ruled the [Jaffna kingdom](#) on behalf of the Kotte kingdom is credited with either building or renovating the third NallurKandaswamy temple.^{[1][2]} Nallur served as the capital of the Jaffna kings, with the royal palace situated very close to the temple. Nallur was built with four entrances with gates.^[3] There were two main roadways and four temples at the four gateways.^[3]

The fourth and the present temple was constructed in 1749 A.D. during the benign [Dutch](#) colonial era by Krishna SubaIyer and RangunathaMaapaanaMudaliyar in the 'KurukkalValavu', which is the original temple premises. Initially the temple was built using bricks and stones and had a cadjaned roof. The original shrine had only two main halls and didn't have a clock tower, surrounding courtyard, enclosing wall, or any ornately carved towers or [gopuram](#).

The first clock tower was erected in 1899, and the main hall where the [vel](#) or lance of the deity resides was refurbished using rocks in 1902. The first enclosing wall was erected in 1909. Likewise, the temple has been gradually renovated from time to time with contributions from the general public. In 1964, the 'VasanthaMandapam' or grand hall was renovated to have the present look and feel.

The temple has the main entrance facing the east. It has an ornately carved five-story tower or [gopuram](#) in the [Dravidian architecture](#) style at the main entrance. In the surrounding inner yard, it has shrines for Lords [Ganesh](#), [Vairavar](#), Sun and [SandanaGopala](#). In the southern part of this temple, the holy pond and Thandayudhapaani shrine dedicated to another aspect of [Lord Muruga](#) can be seen. In the northern side there is a big holy garden.

An underground locked cellar of the temple was found to contain several Chola bronzes from the 10th century CE gifted to the shrine. (Read more:http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nallur_Kandaswamy_temple)

[Sankiliyan Curve at Nallur](#)



During the existence of NallurRajadhani, last king of the kingdom of the people in the northern part of the country was Sankiliyan. But with the arrival of the Portuguese rule in Sri Lanka the fall of the kingdom was inevitable. This arch is found in the land where the earlier Tamil King Sangiliyan's Palace stood. Now there is an entrance-arch, but this is said to be part of a later Dutch building. The SangileanThoopu is about 2.7 Km from Jaffna bus stand.

SankiliyanManthirimanai at Nallur



This arch bears the name of King Sangili, or Sankili (1519) and some authors believe it marks the entrance of the palace from which only this ornamental arch, built later in the Portuguese tradition, still remains. Mandri (minister) manai (house). The central part of the building is said to have been built in the fifteenth century by Paranirupasinghan. People believe that this residence was sheltering a treasure in its foundations and in fact there is at the back of the house an entrance to a cellar in which there is a flight of stairs leading down to another room, itself linked to a third room by more stairs. The inhabitants were probably keeping their valuables safe, deeply hidden in the ground under their house.

Jamuna Tank at Nallur



"Eri" in Tamil Language means Lake. However **Yamuna Eri** is in fact not more than a small tank. It is believed that it was built by the first king of Jaffna when he built the capital of the kingdom, Nallur. As per the Tamil chronicle "YalppanaVaipavaMalai", water from the holy Yamuna river had been brought from India for the initial fill of the tank, hence the name YamunaEri. It was located closer to the king's palace and the original Kanthasami Temple of Nallur.

"Manalkadu" sand mountains and Vallipuram (Wallipuram) kovil



One of South Asia's largest beaches is located around the Manalkadu desert. The land on the West side has white clay which is used as Namam. It is an indication of the sea advancing inland and wiping out all the mineral contents of the clay particles and leaving only the pure clay in the soil.

Manalkadu or Manalkaadu is a village in the Kilinochchi District. In Tamil it translates to sand-bush, referring to the small desert in the area. Like its name suggests, Manalkadu is a semi-desert with soft golden sands and thorny undergrowth so you better be careful where you tread. It is a fishing village which is a kind of resettlement area called Vallipuram.

The name "Vallipuram" testifies to the nature of the soil here. Vallipuram was an ancient capital of Northern kingdoms of Sri Lanka with Point Pedro being its nearest town. Vallipuram is also a part of Thunnaalai. The place was previously under the sea (whenever a tsunami strikes or big cyclones takes place) as the soil structure was red clay. The place name Valli or Vali is a Ramayana name, and it is also a clear toponymic from "Valli", or "sand" in Tamil and Sinhala. The Vishnu temple here was constructed around the 13th century. (Read More: <http://www.sundayobserver.lk/2001/pix/PrintPage.asp?REF=/2010/10/03/mag10.asp>)

Point Pedro Light house - Point Pedro



Point Pedro is the north most town of Sri Lanka. It is Second town in Jaffna District. On this particular bright morning as we began exploring the town, the coastline where this actual 'point' is located was bustling with local fisher folk busy engaged in their everyday morning rituals of catching, drying and selling fish regardless of the scorching sun. About 50m ahead and out into the sea

beyond the working fishermen and their colourful boats, the northernmost point of Sri Lanka. 'Distance from Dondra to Point Pedro: 432km' it said on one of its pillars (Dondra is the southernmost point in Sri Lanka).

[SelvaSannithi Temple –Thondamanaru](#)



Selvasannithi Murukan Temple is situated in Thondaimannaru in the Vadamardchy division in the district of Jaffna in the North-Eastern province of Illankai (which is the Tamil name for Sri Lanka). In view of its location the circle of devotees of Sannittiyar is largely from the villages in the Vadamardchy and from other places, closer to Thondaimannaru - like Achchuvely. The worship at Selvasannithi is unique. It is the piety, with which the devotees worship which acquire for them His Almighty Murukan's Grace, takes precedence over rituals and traditions. The devotees surrender to Murukan and their thoughts and acts are merged with Him.

Even temple priests perform - puja as "first among the worshippers" as often pointed out by Professor K. Sivathamby. The priest covers his mouth with a cloth and does puja. This tradition is said to have commenced with pujas being done without chanting mantram. (Read More: <http://kataragama.org/research/neelakandan.htm>)

[Nilavarai Bottomless well](#)



Nilavarai (pronounced Nilaa-varai) is a location in the [Jaffna District, Sri Lanka](#). It is popular for a natural underground [Water well](#) where the water never gets depleted and it serves the irrigation of the neighbouring fields. There is another natural [Water well](#) in the [Jaffna District](#) by the name [Idikundu](#) (Idi-kun-du) Located Kaddudai-Manipay.

Nilavarai located 14km north of Jaffna town. It is popular among local tourist for its square well of unknown depth. Nilavarai has a large square well believed to be formed from an arrow shot by **Hanuman** to satisfy thirst of **Rama**. This is famous as the depth unknown (bottomless) well.

[Tellippalai Durga Amman Temple](#)



Tellippalai Durga Temple is one of the most popular places of worship in Sri Lanka. Tellippalai Durga Amman temple establishment is known as an epicentre for a multitude of social and cultural activities. Both administrative and spiritual leadership of the temple was spearheaded by Ms. Thangamma Appakkuddi (Jan 7, 1925 – Jun 15, 2008) over the past several years.

[Maviddampuram Temple](#)



Ma means horse; *vidda* means removed; and *puram* is holy city. Maviddapuram is the holy city where the horse face of the [Chola](#) Princess Maruthapuraveegavalli changed to a human face when she prayed to Lord Naguleswara of Keerimalai and took bath in the holy theertha (water) of the temple with the advice of the Saint Nagula. This is the place where the famous Maviddapuram Kandaswamy temple is found. The statue of the God [Muruga](#) is presented by the above the Chola princess, making it in her own country. The old name of the place is Kovil Kadavai, which was changed into Maviddapuram after the above event. (Reference:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maviddapuram>)

[Naguleswaram Temple and Keerimalai Springs](#)



Keerimalai is a natural spring lying next to the sea west of Palaly. A bathing tank is built surrounding this pool and only the walls separate the waters of the spring and the sea. Although the tank is so close to the sea, the water is fresh coming from an underground fresh water spring in Tellipallai-Maviddapuram. The water is not hot. This spring is popular among the Hindus for the miraculous powers it holds.

Keerimalai translates in to Mongoose Mound in Tamil. It is said that a Indian priest called Nagula Swami (Nagula Muni) bathed in this pond and his mongoose face was cured and turned in to a human face. According to Local folklore a pandiyan Princess named MaruthapuraVeeravalli built the Hindu Kovil at Keerimalai when she was cured of her horse shaped head after bathing at Keerimalai. (Read More: <http://amazinglanka.com/attractions/keerimalai/keerimalai.php>)

Popularly called Keerimalai (nagulam - keeri - mongoose), the place has its name wonderfully preserved in numerous legends. Previously it had been called Tiruthambaleswaram. The curative value of its waters is the theme around which many legends have emanated. Ancient texts refer to the confluence of fresh water from the springs on the coast, with brackish water from the sea, gangasamudrasangamam, as the union of the powers of Siva and Sakthi. The sage Nagulamuni found a cave nearby a haven for meditating and “faced the rising and setting suns with equal facility and had the summer and winter solstices directly overhead, when they occurred” (Dr.R.Vigneswaran in Naguleswaram, 2003). In his treatise, Tamil Culture in Ceylon (1950), MD Raghavan refers to the “sacred spring of Keerimalai –its very name signifies the hill of Nagula muni, the sage who was shrunken with austerities, that was likened to the Kiri (mongoose)”. Maruthapuraveehavalli, a Pandiyan princess, cured of her equine facial features by the waters, built MaviddapuramKandaswamy temple nearby. (Read More: <http://www.naguleswaram.org/naguleswaram.org/default.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>)

Sangamitta Point (Damba kola Patuna)–Mathagal



An ancient port in Sri Lanka, this is where Sangamiththatheraniya landed while bringing the Bo saplings. The Tamil name of this place called Mathagal and situated around 20 Km from Jaffna Town.

The sapling was brought here by SangamittaTherani, the only daughter of King Dharmashoka of India and the sister of ArhatMahinda who introduced Buddhism to Sri Lanka during the reign of King Devnampiyatissa (306BC-266 BC). Reference: <http://www.cimicjaffna.com/Dambakolapatuna.php>

Who is Sangamitta? Read More: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sangamitta>

Islands of Jaffna

Eelam is other name of Sri Lanka. Tamils called Eelam that mentioned eer ealu Theevugal (Sri Lanka has popular 14 Islands). Originally Jaffna district has eight Islands. The other Islands are in Mannar, Puththalam, and Batticoloa.

More Islands were joined with main part of Sri Lanka. Now ten Islands are available in around the Sri Lanka. Public were live in these popular Islands and these Islands has Natural, religious, and wonderful characters.

Read More "Islands of Sri Lanka": http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_islands_of_Sri_Lanka

Islands of Jaffna

Now more Jaffna Islands were joined main part of Jaffna that Karainager, Keyts, Velanai, Mandativu, and Pungudutivu. The other Islands Kachchatheevu, Neduntheevu, Nainativu, Analativu, Paruthitivu, Eluvaitivu were Separated now.

Tourist's interested places are Karainager, Keyts, Nainativu, and Neduntheevu.

Jaffna Pannai Bridge



This is entrance of Jaffna Islands. The Jaffna town and all Jaffna Islands are connected by this bridge

Chatti-Velanai Sandy Beach



One of the beautiful beach in entrance of keyts whereas Jaffna Islands. More visitors came and enjoying here.

Kayts Town



Kayts is a heart of the town in Jaffna Islands. Few Islands were joining with Kayts. Close to the beautyfull town of Kayts, at the northern tip of Kayts Island, stands the island fort of Hammenhiel, which is accessible by boat from Kayts. The name means 'heel-of-the-ham' and relates to the Dutch view that Ceylon was shaped rather like a ham.

Kayts Sea Fort/The fort of Hammenhiel



The fort of Hammenhiel was built by the Portuguese in mid 17th century of quarried coral and was named Fortaleza Real (Fort Royal). The Dutch renamed it as Hammenhiel (Heel of the Ham) and was rebuilt by them in 1680. The fort is built around a small island between the island of Kayts and Karaitivu/Karainagar of Jaffna Peninsula.

Nainativu Hindu Kovil/Nagapooshani Amman Kovil



Nainathivu or Nainatheevu ([Tamil: நயினாதீவு](#)), is a small but notable island off the coast of [Jaffna Peninsula](#) in the [Sri Lankan Tamil](#) dominated [Northern Province, Sri Lanka](#). The name of the island alludes to its aboriginal inhabitants, the [Nayanair or Nāka people](#). It is home to the ancient [Hindu](#) shrine of Sri Nagapooshani Amman, one of the 64 [Shakti Peethas](#).

The festival of the Sri Nagapooshani Amman Kovil is generally held in the Tamil month of Aani (June/July) each year for fifteen days. During the festive season, many childless couples come on pilgrimages to the Kovil to receive the blessings of the Nagapooshani Amman, the patron Mother Goddess of the Kovil. The devotees, whose wishes are bestowed, too come with their new born babies to fulfill their vows. As such, the Sri Nagapooshani Amman Kovil becomes a place of high activity during the festive season.

NainadivuBuddhist Temple



It is here, it is said, that Buddha on his second visit to Sri Lanka preached his sermon on reconciliation. Two Nagas kings, called Mahodasa (Nagadipa) and Kulodasa (Kelaniya), had been fighting for the simmasanam (throne) for several years. When Buddha came to [Nagadipa](#) he settled the dispute.

Paruthitivu



It is a small beautiful Island that Between Analaitivu & Eluvaitivu.

Delft Island Fort - Jaffna



This island was called by the Portuguese ilha das Vacas, had a fort built by them. The Dutch called it Delft Island. The tamils call it the Neduntheevu or Neduntivu. This is the largest island in the Palk Strait, northern Sri Lanka.

DelftHarbor



This jetty is Delft's main link to the outside world. People in Delft travel to and from Jaffna by ferry .The two ferry points are b Mavili thurai in Neduntheevu and Kurikadduvaan in Punkudutheevu. Punkudutheevu in turn is approachable by road from Jaffna due to the Pannai causeway built in 1960.

Casurina Beach



Casurina Beach is the best beach in the Jaffna Peninsula. You can walk a long way in the deep blue water with gentle waves moving towards the land.

This is my few information when I working as a tourist guide, I was collected.



Kasi.Jeevaligam

This Page is a part of <http://kasig1.yarlsoft.com/>

Mathagal East, Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Mobile Web: <http://kg1.wirenode.mobi>

Email: Yarlpavanan@hotmail.com

Mobile: 0094 776564693