

Exporters Digest

Issue 65 | October 2026



THE NATIONAL CHAMBER OF
EXPORTERS OF SRI LANKA
Voice of the Exporter

www.nce.lk

* Exporters Digest | 65th Edition *

SRI LANKAN BATIK INDUSTRY

Weaving Heritage into Global Export Opportunities
Pg: 16

Interactive Workshop – Navigating Export Approvals & Requirements



The NCE organized an in-house interactive workshop on navigating export approvals and requirements for companies exporting goods and services in Sri Lanka. The workshop was organized in light of the fact that regulations can be one of the biggest challenges for agriculture-based exporters, and the timely need for awareness on changing regulations in the export sector.

The participants gained direct insights from Sri Lanka's key regulatory authorities on approvals, permits, documentation, and compliance.

The knowledge was shared by six key government institutions: National Plant Quarantine Service; Department of Forest Conservation; Ministry of Health; Department of Export Agriculture; and Sri Lanka Customs.

NCE Member delegation engages with Ruhunu Rasa Saraniya 2026 to promote export quality products



The NCE organized a delegation visit to the Southern Province on 11th September 2026, centered around the main event, Ruhunu Rasa Saraniya – 2026, a local food processing and food technology industry exhibition held in Galle. The event brought together innovative food products, processing technologies, and export-ready businesses from across the Southern Province, offering participants the chance to engage directly with the region's agri-business community. Held under the patronage of the Hon. Governor of the Southern Province, the Department of Export Agriculture, and the Industrial Development Board (IDB), and coordinated by the IDB and the Department of Export Agriculture, the exhibition showcased a wide range of product sectors including food products, spices, pepper, coconut products, tea, herbs, fruits, vegetables, dehydrated foods, ornamental flowers and foliage plants, handicrafts, and Kithul industry products.

Alongside the exhibition, the delegation held a B2B networking session in Galle, where participants connected with regional suppliers, producers, exporters, and aspiring entrepreneurs. Attendees engaged with over 100 agri-entrepreneurs, including GMP-certified producers, and took part in a workshop designed for Southern Province agri-entrepreneurs and exporters, all aimed at exploring export market access and growing their businesses beyond borders.

NCE Management Committee and Council Meeting convened in September



The workshop was designed for export-oriented businesses looking to increase international visibility, reach overseas buyers, generate qualified leads, and strengthen B2B connections using today's most powerful digital platforms and AI tools.

NCE organized two intakes, first on the 29th September, and the second on the 01st of October 2026. The workshops helped create the digital edge that export businesses need to connect with global markets and grow internationally.

NCE Council Meeting Spotlights Sectoral Challenges Facing Exporters

Sector representatives raised concerns over certification hurdles, rising raw material costs, high logistics expenses and approval delays at the National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka (NCE) Council meeting held on 17th September at the NCE secretariat.

Certification Delays Hit Food Exporters

A key concern was the certification process for processed food exports, particularly health and phytosanitary certificates required for shipments to Australia. Country-specific wording requirements and documentation inconsistencies have caused delays, with some shipments held up for months. The issue has been raised with Sri Lankan officials in Australia, and exporters are calling for procedures better aligned with destination-market requirements.

Rubber Sector Posts Gains, But Raw Material Costs Bite

Rubber export earnings grew 3.17% YoY to USD 87.24 million in July 2026, with industrial and surgical rubber gloves up 19.01% and gaskets, washers, seals and other hard rubber products up 47.56%. Despite this, Sri Lankan rubber remains pricier than imported rubber even after shipping costs, pushing exporters toward imports and weakening local value addition and margins. Productivity improvements are expected to take time.

Tea Earnings Fall Sharply on Middle East Slump

Tea earnings fell 17.22% YoY to USD 116.73 million, driven by a 47.93% drop in Middle East exports—including Iraq (-78.54%), Iran (-73.09%), the UAE (-57.49%) and Saudi Arabia (-3.44%). High logistics costs to the Middle East and Europe remain a concern, and alternative routes, while being explored, remain costly.

Coconut Sector Eyes Growth, But Faces Capacity Limits

Coconut shell-derived activated carbon exports grew 26.72% YoY to USD 24.28 million, highlighting strong demand for value-added coconut products. However, the Coconut Cultivation Board's capacity for further planting is limited, and greater private sector participation is needed to sustain growth despite Northern region expansion efforts.

Trade Agreements and Broader Export Performance

The Council discussed the need for greater exporter awareness of preferential trade agreements, with the NCE planning to work with authorities to address barriers to their use. Overall, Sri Lanka's exports surpassed USD 10 billion in the first seven months of 2026, up 5.5% YoY, with merchandise exports leading at USD 8,188.32 million (+5.05% YoY).

NCE's Upcoming Initiatives

The NCE briefed members on planned delegations to India, South Korea and Italy, with discussions underway for Bahrain and Dubai in January 2027, alongside several MoUs with overseas business organisations. The Chamber is also preparing an AI-driven digital marketing programme with NIBM for export businesses, and a national youth awareness programme on the export sector is set to soft-launch in October, targeting school leavers through interactive sessions with industry representatives. With these initiatives underway, the NCE reaffirmed its commitment to supporting exporters through market access and business development programs.

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Jalinda Karunaratna

DIRECTOR - IMPERIAL TEAS GROUP

In this exclusive interview for the NCE Exporters Digest, we speak with Jalinda Karunaratna, Director of Imperial Teas Group, about legacy, leadership, innovation and the road ahead for the next generation.

LEGACY

1 What's a memory or moment from watching your father build this company that still shapes how you approach the business today?

When I started working in the company 14 years ago, I joined as a trainee marketing executive. I had to learn pre-shipment costings, post-shipment costings, market analysis, buyer analysis and more. During an exhibition in Dubai, a new potential buyer from Kuwait visited us. My father asked me to sit with him to discuss matters. They wanted their own label and asked for prices in different packaging. With the material I had on hand, I prepared a quotation within a few minutes and gave them approximate prices. They were happy and said they would return the next day to discuss payment terms, shipping and other details to start business.

After they left, I reviewed the costings again and realized the prices I quoted were far above our actual costs. I told my father, and said if they are happy with the prices, we can stick to them. He immediately told me never to do that. He said we're not here to earn quick money, but to run a business. It hit me hard, and I kept thinking about it. Isn't running a business about earning money? Does it matter if it's quick money or not?

The next day, before the meeting, I told them that I had made a mistake and gave them the corrected lower price. They were amazed and happy, and I felt they started trusting us from that day onwards. The conversation became very casual and friendly. Even today, they are one of our good buyers, and no matter what we say, they believe us, and we don't try to break that trust.

This is one of the most important things I learnt from my father.

**“Business is not quick money.
Business is future and business is family.”**

2 As a director now, how do you think about carrying forward relationships and a reputation that took your father over 40 years to build?

It is a profound responsibility. My father built this company on personal connections and a reputation for integrity. I don't try to replace him; rather, I try to build upon his foundation. I think my father has done most of it and for us it is to make sure the relationships and reputation maintains. Wherever we go, we have the recognition and it is easy for us to get things done in most of the places. We follow his path, his values and his legacy. But is it enough to do the same? The world is changing rapidly and shouldn't we change the way of doing things, without affecting any of the things he has built so far? What I personally believe is, bringing anything from Zero to one is quite challenging, but is easier, compared to taking things from one to ten.



NCE INVOLVEMENT

3 With your father repeatedly recognized and honored through the National Chamber of Exporters, how has that visibility influenced expectations — both from the industry and within the family — for the next generation?

The recognition through the NCE has set a very high benchmark. The industry expects us to maintain that standard of excellence, and internally, there is a clear expectation that we don't just rest on past awards. It pushes me to ensure that our compliance, quality and innovation are always at the level worthy of that recognition. It's not about pressure; it's about a standard we must uphold. Just as my father has.

4 Do you see yourself getting more directly involved in industry-level advocacy through bodies like the NCE, or is your focus more on the business itself?

I believe the two are interconnected. While my primary focus is running Imperial Teas and ensuring its growth, industry advocacy is vital. Bodies like the NCE provide the platform to address systemic issues—like export regulations or sustainability standards—that no single business can solve alone. I plan to gradually increase my involvement in NCE initiatives, as a strong industry ecosystem ultimately benefits our business.



INNOVATION FOR THE FUTURE

5 As global buyers' expectations shift — sustainability certifications, digital order processing, new product formats — where do you think Imperial Teas needs to invest next?

I think we need to focus more on digital platforms and give more attention to doing B2C business, separately or as a different business. Most of our current business is B2B, and let it continue that way. But if our interests are more on branding and value addition, we must make strategies now and gradually reach and cater to the final consumer. We have to make continuous improvements as their needs and wants change day by day. This is a very vast area to focus on, and we need a new team with a different way of thinking to our current business.

Tea is good. But anybody can do tea. We need to invest in new innovative products around tea — maybe tea-based makeup/foundation, tea-based wine, tea-based perfume, solid material like compressed wood from the fluff or even burners from the fluff, etc. — and manage them as different businesses. We should not do everything inside this company with the same people. People are specialized in particular areas. Most importantly, the people who are already working in the company are mentally established in a certain way of working. We must have new ways, new people, new strategies, new thinking to do new businesses. Yes, there could be risks, but isn't that how my father started this company and built it so far? J

6 If you could set one goal for the company that would define your generation's contribution to its legacy, what would it be, and how can NCE be a part of it?

My goal would be to transform Imperial Teas from a traditional exporter into a globally recognized, tech-forward and fully sustainable brand. I want my generation's legacy to be that we successfully modernized the company without losing its soul. The NCE can be a part of this by facilitating knowledge-sharing on global digital trade standards and supporting us in obtaining the international sustainability certifications that are becoming mandatory for future growth.

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Jeewaka Karunaratne

DIRECTOR - IMPERIAL TEAS GROUP
STRATEGIC PLANNING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

In this exclusive interview for the NCE Exporters Digest, we speak with Jeewaka Karunaratne, Director of Imperial Teas Group, about legacy, industry engagement, innovation and the road ahead for the next generation.

LEGACY

1 What's a memory or moment from watching your father build this company that still shapes how you approach the business today?

During the beginning, when I started working in the company 14 years ago, I worked as a trainee marketing executive. I had to learn pre-shipment costings, post-shipment costings, market analysis, buyer analysis, etc. We were participating for an exhibition in Dubai. There was a new potential buyer/partner visited us from Kuwait. Since they were a new company, my father asked me to come sit with him to discuss matters. He wanted his own label and asked for prices in different packaging. I said I will do, and with the material I had on hand, I did a quotation in few minutes and gave them approximate prices. They were happy with the prices and got convinced enough to do business with us. They said they will come again tomorrow to discuss payment terms, shipping and other relevant information to start business. After they left, I went through the costings again and noticed that the prices I've quoted are wrong and are far above our actual costs. I told this to my father and said if they are happy with the prices, we will stick to these prices, which gives us more profitability. He then told me never, ever to do that. He said we're not here to earn quick money, but to run a business. It hit me hard and I started to think about this when we were back in the hotel. Isn't running a business mean earning money? Does it matter if it's quick money or not?

The next day they came back and before the beginning of the meeting, I told them that I made a mistake and gave them the lower price which I corrected. They were amazed and they were happy and I felt that they started trusting us from that day onwards. The conversation became very casual and friendly. Even today, they are one of our good buyers, and no matter what we say, they believe us, and we don't try to break that trust.

This is one of the important things I learnt from my father.

2 As a director now, how do you think about carrying forward relationships and a reputation that took your father over 40 years to build?

It is a profound responsibility. My father built this company on personal connections and a reputation for integrity. I don't try to replace him; rather, I try to build upon his foundation. I think my father has done most of it and for us is to make sure the relationships and reputation maintains. Wherever we go, we have the recognition and it is easy for us to get things done in most of the places. We follow his path, his values and his legacy. But is it enough to do the same? The world is changing rapidly and shouldn't we change the way of doing things, without affecting any of things he has built so far? What I personally believe is, bringing anything from Zero to one is quite challenging, but is easier, compared to taking things from one to ten.

“For me, legacy isn't about preserving what we have inherited. It is about taking what the previous generation built, adding our own value to it, and handing something stronger to the generation that comes next.”



NCE INVOLVEMENT

3 With your father repeatedly recognized and honored through the National Chamber of Exporters, how has that visibility influenced expectations — both from the industry and within the family — for the next generation?

The recognition through the NCE has set a very high benchmark. The industry expects us to maintain that standard of excellence, and internally, there is a clear expectation that we don't just rest on past awards. It pushes me to ensure that our compliance, quality and innovation are always at the level worthy of that recognition. It's not about pressure; it's about a standard we must uphold. Just as my father has.

4 Do you see yourself getting more directly involved in industry-level advocacy through bodies like the NCE, or is your focus more on the business itself?

I believe the two are interconnected. While my primary focus is running Imperial Teas and ensuring its growth, industry advocacy is vital. Bodies like the NCE provide the platform to address systemic issues—like export regulations or sustainability standards—that no single business can solve alone. I plan to gradually increase my involvement in NCE initiatives, as a strong industry ecosystem ultimately benefits our business.



INNOVATION FOR THE FUTURE

5 As global buyers' expectations shift — sustainability certifications, digital order processing, new product formats — where do you think Imperial Teas needs to invest next?

I think we need to focus more on digital platforms and try to give more attention to doing B2C business, separately or as a different business. Most of our current businesses are B2B, and let it continue that way. But if our interests are more on branding and value addition, we must make strategies now and gradually try to reach and cater to the final consumer, to make sure they are satisfied. We have to make continuous improvements/changes as their needs and wants change day by day. This is a very vast area to focus on, and we need a new team who has a different way of thinking to the current business we do.

Tea is good. But anybody can do tea. We need to invest on new innovative products around tea (maybe tea-based makeup/foundation, tea-based wine, tea-based perfume, solid material like compressed wood from the fluff or even burners from the fluff, etc.), and manage them as different businesses. We should not do everything inside this company and with the same people. People are specialized in particular areas. Most importantly, the people who are already working in the company are mentally established in a certain way of working. We must have new ways, new people, new strategies, new thinking to do new businesses. Yes, there could be risks, but isn't that how my father started this company and built it so far? J

6 If you could set one goal for the company that would define your generation's contribution to its legacy, what would it be, and how can NCE be a part of it?

My goal would be to transform Imperial Teas from a traditional exporter into a globally recognized, tech-forward, and fully sustainable brand. I want my generation's legacy to be that we successfully modernized the company without losing its soul. The NCE can be a part of this by facilitating knowledge-sharing on global digital trade standards and supporting us in obtaining the international sustainability certifications that are becoming mandatory for future growth.

Strategic Engagements

Strengthening Market Access & International Trade - Market Engagement Meeting: Canada and the Philippines



The NCE hosted a Market Engagement Meeting on 3 September 2026 at the NCE Conference Hall, bringing together its members for an exclusive session focused on export opportunities in Canada and the Philippines. Held under the theme "Connect, Explore, Expand," the meeting gave attendees the chance to engage directly with senior diplomatic representatives, the nominated Sri Lankan Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines, Ms. Anzul Banu Jhan, and the nominated Sri Lankan High Commissioner to Canada, Mr. Rohana Ambagolla.

The meeting offered participants first-hand insights into the Canadian and Philippine markets, allowing exporters to discuss trade challenges and expectations directly with diplomatic officials. Beyond market intelligence, the session created space for business networking, exploring potential business and trade opportunities, and laying the groundwork for future NCE business delegations to both countries.

The meeting reinforced NCE's ongoing efforts to strengthen Sri Lanka's international business network and to support exporters, mainly members of NCE, in expanding into new markets. More than twenty NCE members participated in the meeting, highlighting how these efforts to connect high-level diplomatic officials with local businesses are in demand, as exporters are willing to directly engage with respective government authorities to develop market linkages.

Strengthening Bilateral Trade & Export Partnerships!



We were honored to host Mr. Dhammika Fernando, His Excellency the High Commissioner to Kenya during an official visit to the National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka (NCE) for a special bilateral engagement session!

The programme focused on unlocking new economic avenues, expanding Sri Lankan exports into East African markets, and building stronger B2B linkages between Sri Lanka and Kenya.

Key Highlights of the Session:

- **Strategic Trade Opportunities:** Exploring high-growth sectors for Sri Lankan exporters, including Ceylon Tea, spices, textiles, rubber-based products, and value-added agricultural goods.
- **B2B & Institutional Collaboration:** Discussing closer partnerships with East African trade bodies to facilitate seamless trade workflows, investment channels, and market entry for Sri Lankan businesses.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** A dedicated interactive session with NCE members, highlighting trade policies, market trends, and regulatory updates for doing business in Kenya and the broader region.

The National Chamber of Exporters remains steadfast in its mission to drive Sri Lanka's export sector forward through global diplomacy and active market development.

NCE and Sierra Cables PLC Forge Strategic Partnership to Strengthen Sri Lanka's Export Sector



The National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka (NCE) is pleased to announce the signing of a Strategic Partnership with Sierra Cables PLC, strengthening collaboration between Sri Lanka's leading export chamber and a prominent cable manufacturer and exporter.

The partnership reflects a shared commitment to advancing Sri Lanka's export sector through industry excellence, innovation, knowledge sharing, and sustainable growth.

As an established exporter with a strong presence in international markets, Sierra Cables PLC brings valuable industry expertise and manufacturing excellence to the collaboration. Together, NCE and Sierra Cables PLC will work towards creating greater opportunities for industry engagement, strengthening exporter competitiveness, and supporting Sri Lanka's export-driven economic growth.

This partnership reinforces the NCE's commitment to building meaningful alliances with industry leaders to empower exporters and enhance Sri Lanka's position in global markets.

NCE–CanCham Forum Explores Sri Lanka–Canada Trade, Investment, and Market Access Opportunities



The National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka (NCE), in partnership with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Sri Lanka (CanCham), hosted the Sri Lanka–Canada Trade, Investment & Market Access Forum at the Cinnamon Grand Colombo, in September 2026. The event brought together exporters, policymakers, diplomatic representatives, and industry leaders to discuss strategies for deepening bilateral economic ties, improving market access, and attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) from Canada.

Shift Toward High-Value & Diversified Exports

Delivering the opening address, the NCE President emphasized moving beyond traditional volume-based discussions toward building long-term business partnerships, innovation, and value addition.

In his keynote speech, Export Development Board (EDB) Chairman Mangala Wijesinghe stressed that Sri Lanka must transition toward higher-value exports, technology, and integration into global value chains:

- **Export Milestones & Targets:** Sri Lanka's coconut export sector recently crossed USD 1 billion (growing over 42%), while the food and beverage sector continues to grow at over 15% annually. The electrical and electronics sector, currently contributing over USD 600 million, is primed for further expansion.
- **Digital Economy:** Strong growth potential exists in digital services and ICT to serve international markets without physical goods transport.

CanCham Director Mohamed Hameez highlighted that Canada offers the technology, innovation, and capital Sri Lanka needs to scale across key sectors such as education, healthcare, agriculture, renewable energy, and financial services, with an emphasis on supporting SMEs, women entrepreneurs, and young businesses.

Navigating Canada's Market & Tariff Disparities

Yasoji Gunawardena, Consul (Commercial) at the Consulate General of Sri Lanka in Toronto, outlined Canada's market landscape—a 41 million population high-income market where 75% of imports enter via Ontario and Quebec, and 10% through British Columbia.

NCE–CanCham Forum Explores Sri Lanka–Canada Trade, Investment, and Market Access Opportunities Contd..

Key market access and tariff insights include:

- **Apparel Sector:** Canada's apparel import market was valued at USD 11 billion in 2025, but Sri Lanka holds a modest 1.6% share. Sri Lankan apparel faces an 8% Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) tariff, placing it at a competitive disadvantage against countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam, which enjoy duty-free access.
- **Non-Apparel Opportunities:** Significant demand exists in Canada for agricultural and food products (USD 50 billion total market import), rubber products and gloves (USD 4.2 billion), tea (USD 160 million), activated carbon (USD 40 million), and cocopeat/coconut products (USD 30 million).

Unlocking Canadian Investment (FDI)

The forum underscored a major disparity in investment flows. Historical Canadian FDI in Sri Lanka stands at a moderate USD 120 million, compared to over USD 20 billion in institutional investments in India by 2025.

To bridge this gap, priority sectors identified for attracting Canadian capital include:

1. High-Tech Agriculture & Agritech
2. Digital Infrastructure & ICT
3. Transportation & Logistics
4. Renewable Energy
5. Commercial Real Estate & Tourism

Actionable Outcomes

During the panel discussion—moderated by NCE Council Member Edward Fernando, featuring Designated High Commissioner to Canada Rohan Ambegolla, Director General of Commerce Charitha Yattogoda, and CanCham Secretary General Nilupul De Silva—panellists addressed participant queries regarding trade policy, trade fair engagement, distribution networks, and institutional support under the existing NCE–CanCham MoU.

The forum concluded with a unified call to convert dialogue into tangible commercial agreements, strategic joint ventures, and expanded market presence in Canada.



NCE featured in Media

NCE had yet another successful month, with a regional delegation to the Southern Province and NCE Export Awards applications coming to a close on the 30th September.

The enthusiasm of the NCE members to join the southern regional delegation was commendable. Their contribution and evaluation of the products during B2B meetings highlighted the export sector's readiness to develop more supply chains to benefit local producers.

Read more: [DailyNews](#) / [FT](#)

The NCE Council members raised several concerns affecting export businesses, including certification requirements for food shipments, the cost of locally sourced rubber, logistics expenses, and delays in obtaining approvals at the NCE Council meeting held on the 17th September at the chamber Secretariat.

Read more: [Hiru News](#) / [Hiru News 02](#) / [FT](#)

Driving Sri Lankan Exports to Global Heights!

The National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka (NCE) was featured on TV Supreme! <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xpyt42bKh5I>

President Indra Kaushal Rajapaksha and Assistant Treasurer / NCE Export Awards Committee Chairman Lakshan Algama Perera shared key updates on empowering Sri Lankan exporters and driving national economic growth during a discussion on TV Supreme on the NCE Exports Awards 2026.

They highlighted how NCE has become the Voice of the Exporter, serving over 750 members with a mission to grow foreign exchange earnings through strategic partnerships and supporting national export goals to reach \$19 billion this year and aiming for \$36 billion by 2030.

A key highlight of their discussion was encouraging Sri Lankan exporters to apply for the 34th NCE Export Awards, with applications closing on 30th September 2026, honoring top performance and ethical trade, culminating in December at the Shangri-La Colombo.

Check out the full discussion on TV Supreme to learn more about NCE's initiatives and flagship event, the 34th NCE Export Awards 2026!

The following NCE Members have been awarded the Certificate of Ethical Trading and conform to changing regulatory needs and consumer preferences through good practices related to Trade, Labour, Ethical Behavior, Environment & Society

	 Advantis Express (Pvt) Ltd Licensee of Federal Express Corporation			
				
				
				
				
				

 greenkeepers Let's Eco-Cycle	 HAC HALAL ASSESSMENT COUNCIL	 hSenidBiz EMPOWERING PEOPLE THE WORLD OVER	 IMPERIAL TEAS GROUP	
 Janet AYURVEDA	 Kandrick EST.1972	 KANDYGS HANDLOOMS	 KEELLS TM Food Products PLC	 LAUGFS RUBBER
 LUMBINI AQUARIA Living Colours Since 1952	 MABROC	 Multilac	 Maliban [®] Inspiring goodness...	 MCLARENS CONTAINERS
 BAM	 Natural Product Network Napronet (Pvt) Ltd	 NM NEIL MARINE	 SPECTRA ⁺ SYNERGIZING LOGISTICS	 TAPROBANE SEAFOODS
 T4 TEXTTRIP (PVT) LTD.	 ARIPALAN COMPACT SOLES (PVT) LTD SRI LANKA	 TROIKAL	 WICHY COCONUT	 Derana Fresh from Sri Lanka
 Noritake Standard of Perfection	 NIDRO	 NPS PACKAGING	 OCEANEEDS SRI LANKA	 Overdime
 PANASIA COLOURED YARNS	 PODIE	 PREMIER PACKAGING		 Regency Teas

				 Royal Fernwood Porcelain Ltd	
					
					
					
					
					
					
					

OUR STRATEGIC PARTNERS



We thank our strategic partners for their continued support and collaboration in empowering Sri Lankan exporters and strengthening our nation's global footprint.



Sampath Bank
WE PRESENT YOUR FUTURE



**SRI LANKA
TEA BOARD**



Sri Lankan Batik

Heritage
Handcrafted
Global Appeal.

Transforming Heritage Craft into a Global Export Opportunity.

FROM ARTISAN CRAFTSMANSHIP
TO INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

1 From Rich Heritage to New Opportunities

Sri Lanka's handloom tradition dates back over 2,500 years, while the modern batik industry emerged in the 1970s, developing into a recognised craft sector with its own distinctive identity.



2,500+ years
Handloom tradition in Sri Lanka



1970s batik
Modern batik industry emerged

Although both industries grew significantly in the 1970s and 1990s, export earnings have remained around **USD 1 million** over the past decade. Today, changing global consumer preferences are creating new opportunities for Sri Lankan batik to reposition itself as a premium, sustainable and value-added export product.

4 Creating Export Growth Through Innovation and Branding

To expand global market presence, Sri Lankan batik businesses need stronger branding, digital visibility and market access. Many enterprises currently have limited online presence, restricting their ability to reach international buyers directly.



1. Digital Commerce & Global Visibility

Build strong online platforms, participate in international marketplaces and use digital storytelling to connect with global buyers.



2. Modern Design Integration

Combine traditional Sri Lankan artistic elements with contemporary fashion trends to attract premium international customers.



3. Export-Oriented Product Development

Move beyond traditional clothing into hospitality textiles, lifestyle products and designer collections to create additional export opportunities.

[Click here to read more..](#)

2 A Unique Identity in the Global Textile Market

Sri Lankan batik is renowned for its traditional wax-resist techniques and unique artistic designs. Unlike block-printed alternatives, it is recognised internationally for authentic, handcrafted waxed batik products.



Beyond traditional garments, Sri Lankan batik has expanded into multiple lifestyle categories:



Designer apparel



Scarves & fashion accessories



Home furnishings



Curtains & decorative textiles



Bags and lifestyle products

The sector is no longer limited to sarees and traditional clothing, with growing demand for diverse textile-based products.

5 Strengthening Sri Lanka's Batik Export Ecosystem

The industry includes established entrepreneurs, exporters and producers who have contributed to Sri Lanka's textile heritage. It provides employment to around **15,000 people**, with a substantial portion being women.



15,000
people employed



Majority
are women

Key Challenges



Ageing artisan communities



Limited export promotion opportunities



Lack of online market presence



Difficulty in innovation due to limited specialised skills



Need for stronger industry strategies

Addressing these areas will be essential to transform batik from a traditional craft sector into a globally competitive creative industry.

3 Global Trends Supporting Sustainable Fashion

International consumers are increasingly choosing ethical, sustainable and handmade products. Trends such as **Fair Trade**, **Green Living** and **Slow Fashion** create opportunities for artisan-based industries.



Fair Trade

Supporting responsible production and fair livelihoods



Green Living

Growing demand for eco-friendly and natural products



Slow Fashion

Preference for unique, artisanal and long-lasting products

Handcrafted batik products offer authenticity and storytelling value, aligning with consumer interest in heritage and social impact. The industry also contributes to **Sustainable Development Goals** by supporting rural communities, preserving indigenous skills and creating livelihood opportunities.

6 The Road Ahead

Future growth requires collaboration between artisans, exporters, designers, government institutions and international partners.



Increase participation in international trade fairs



Improve quality standards and develop authenticity marks



Strengthen public-private partnerships



Introduce structured training from school-level education to professional qualifications.



Encourage design innovation



Integrate batik into Sri Lanka's tourism strategy

A Story of Creativity, Heritage and Opportunity

With the right export strategy, digital transformation and global positioning, Sri Lankan batik has the potential to become a recognised ambassador of Sri Lanka's cultural excellence in international markets.



MAIN SERVICES OF THE CHAMBER

- **Unique Membership Certificate**** – Establish your credibility as a distinguished member of Sri Lanka's premier export chamber.
- **Lobbying & Advocacy**** – NCE represents your interests at trade forums and engages with policymakers to address industry concerns.
- **Market Information & Insights**** – Stay ahead with trade-related updates, market trends, and business opportunities.
- **Training & Development**** – Enhance your expertise through seminars, webinars, and industry-led workshops.
- **"Sri Lanka Exporter" Magazine**** – Showcase your products and services in a leading trade publication, available in print and digital formats.
- **Export Documentation Services**** – Obtain certified export documents, including Certificates of Origin, at exclusive member rates.
- **Professional Courses (NIOE)**** – Gain valuable skills in International Trade Management through accredited programs.
- **Trade Fairs & Delegations**** – Expand your global presence with access to international trade fairs, B2B meetings, and market entry programs.
- **Producer-Exporter Linkages**** – Connect with suppliers and regional producers to strengthen your export network.
- **SME Exporter Support**** – Special membership for SMEs (Aspiring Exporters) with free advisory services to help them become future exporters.
- **Certificate of Ethical Trading (CET)**** – Get recognized for ethical business practices with an internationally accepted certification.
- **PCQI Certification**** – Train and certify food sector professionals under US FDA preventive controls regulations.
- **NCE Annual Export Awards**** – Gain industry recognition at Sri Lanka's most prestigious export awards ceremony.

THE NCE SECRETARIAT

WE ARE HERE
TO SERVE
YOU!



Shiham Marikar
Secretary General/Chief
Executive Officer



Sandun Koswattage
Manager Finance



Susantha Rupatunge
Senior Executive -
Member Services



Deandra Weinman
Senior Executive -
Business Development



Enuri Gurusinghe
Senior Executive -
Operations



Ayodhya Amarajeewa
Senior Executive -
Publications



Sayuri Sumanathilake
Executive -
Member Services



Romain Fernando
Administrative Executive



Chamila Perera
Accounts Executive

The National Chamber of Exporters of Sri Lanka

131/6, Elvitigala Mawatha, Colombo 08, Sri Lanka

Hotline: +94 11 465 17 65, Email: nce@nce.lk

****DISCLAIMER****

"The National Chamber of Exporters (NCE) is not responsible or accountable for any errors, defects, or other misrepresentations in the articles that have been subscribed to the magazine, advertisements, or other contents due to lost profit or other consequential damages that may have arisen due to the use of such information, which have been provided in good faith."