

Harnessing Sri Lanka's Mineral Wealth for Industrial and Economic Development

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Sri Lanka is endowed with a diverse and strategically significant mineral resource base, including industrial minerals such as calcium carbonate, graphite, mineral sands, quartz, and clay, which constitute an important foundation for industrial development and economic growth.

The mineral sector can be broadly classified into three interdependent segments: exploration and mining, processing and refining, and manufacturing and production. Each stage within this value chain contributes distinctively to value creation through employment generation, technological advancement, industrial diversification, and export development.

Over the past decades, Sri Lanka's mineral industry has achieved notable progress in mineral beneficiation, processing technologies, and downstream manufacturing. The presentation will provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of value addition within the sector, highlighting existing industrial capabilities, successful applications, and the contribution of mineral-based industries to the national economy.

While the objective of maximising value addition is widely advocated, the long-term viability of value-

added products depends on their competitiveness within global markets. Strategic decisions regarding downstream processing and product development must therefore be informed by considerations of market demand, technological feasibility, economies of scale, and integration into international value chains. Identifying opportunities that leverage Sri Lanka's comparative advantages and unique resource endowments is essential for fostering sustainable industrial growth.

This presentation further emphasises the importance of strengthening collaboration among academia, industry, and policymakers to bridge the gap between scientific research and industrial application. Sri Lanka possesses both abundant mineral resources and a strong scientific talent base; however, unlocking the full potential of these assets requires enhanced knowledge exchange, innovation, and coordinated action across stakeholders.

Harnessing Sri Lanka's mineral wealth necessitates a shared vision for industrial transformation—one that aligns resource potential, scientific expertise, industrial capability, and market realities to advance globally competitive, value-added mineral industries.