

A photograph of a person fishing from a rocky shore. The person is standing on a large, dark, jagged rock formation, holding a long fishing rod that extends into the water. The water is a mix of light blue and green, with small waves. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall scene is serene and captures a moment of solitude in nature.

Hold the Line

Steven Tabor
2020 (c)

Hold the Line

These images were shot in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka in January 2020. In pre-colonial times, much of the Northern Province was ruled by the Jaffna Kingdom. During the conflict years of 1983 to 2009, the Northern Province was under the control of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The entire province was then recaptured by the Sri Lankan military in 2009. Since then, reconstruction efforts have moved forward, and although poverty and unemployment levels remain stubbornly high, daily life has largely returned to normal. The images presented in this series were taken in Anuradhapura, Mannar, Jaffna city, Point Pedro, Jaffna Peninsula, and the islands of Karaitivu and Nainativu.

Artisanal fishing is the main occupation in the North as the province is surrounded by the Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay to the west, the Palk Strait to the north west, and the Bay of Bengal to the north and east. The fisherman in the North are a rugged lot. They work long hours in the salt, sand and sun, and their families pitch in to help with the drying and the salting of the fish. But they also have good fun, both at work and in their spare time. The fisherman chant together when they bring in their nets; they repair their nets and boats together; and they catch short naps in the shade when time allows. On their rare days off, the fisherman and their families go to the temples and participate in village fairs and sporting events, such as the Point Pedro tug-of-war contest shown in the first series of images. Indeed, whether at work or at play, the fisherman of the Northern Province seem to have a rope, a net or a line close at hand.









































































































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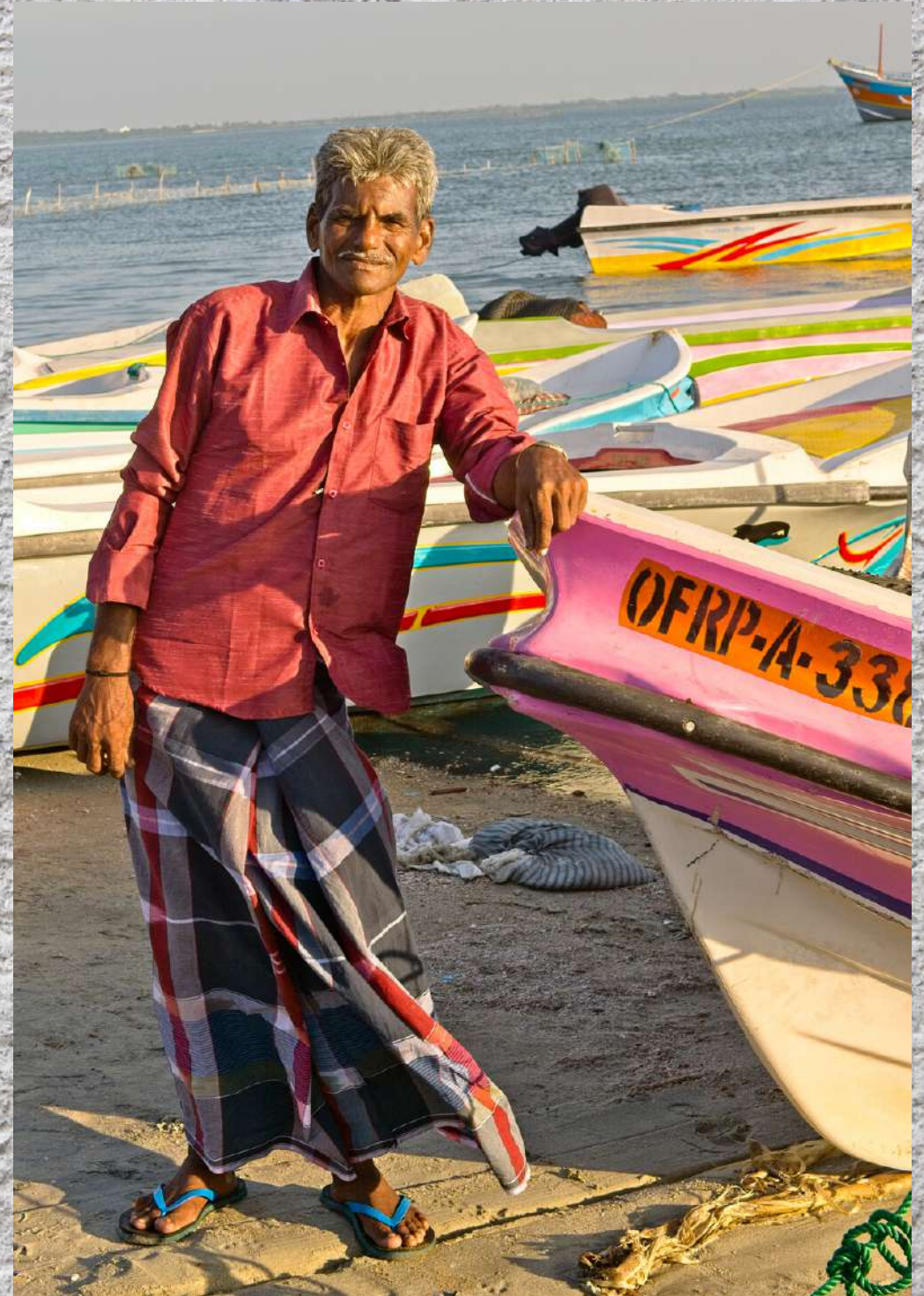
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SLON PUNK









A photograph of a body of water with a small boat in the lower right and a large, dark, circular object in the upper center. The water is textured with small ripples. The overall tone is muted and blue-grey.

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