

Introduction

It is widely criticized that the government has not treated the Muslim Tsunami victims fairly. According to statistics maintained by the Task Force to Rebuild the Nation (TAFREN) not a single house has been constructed during the last one year to resettle those Muslim 'Tsunami' victims within the 200 meter area from the sea in the Ampara, Batticaloa and Trincomalee Districts in the Eastern Province.

Muslim concerns were not given due publicity in the media. The worst affected Ampara district is a glaring example of how ineffective institutions, political rivalries and misinformation can make a mockery of the reconstruction and resettlement efforts.

The government has now relaxed the hotly debated 200 meter buffer zone in the Eastern Province due to the difficulties in finding alternate lands to resettle the Tsunami affected people. More than 2,000 acres of private land belonging to nearly 10,000 Tsunami affected families is now available in the Muslim areas in the Eastern Province.

For planning the reconstruction and resettlement programme, it is essential to have reliable and accurate informations about the impact on the lives and properties destroyed by the "Tsunami". It is a complex process that should be handled with care with the full participation of all stakeholders at the grass roots level.

The people affected expect individual attention and specific solutions to suit different families. The agencies that deal with issues of livelihood restoration will be required to visit each family and or household to find out how best they can be assisted. This is a painstaking exercise but we have no choice in the matter if the objective is to ensure that people who lost their livelihoods regain their economic strength within a reasonable period of time.

The Muslim Reconstruction and Resettlement Organisation - MRRO conducted an assessment survey of the damages to persons, residences and occupations of the Tsunami affected Muslim people in the Eastern Province with the following objectives:

- Systematically assess the damages caused to the Muslim victims by visiting each and every family.
- Prepare a comprehensive report based on the field investigations on a professional basis.
- The final Survey Report to be submitted to the Government of Sri Lanka and the International Community for assistance to rebuild the affected areas and resettle the Muslim victims.

Tsunami victims should be consulted and treated with dignity. This consultation should not only be with those in refugee camps, but also with those who have been displaced, made destitute and live with friends and relations.

Involving the Tsunami victims in re-building of the coastal areas has to be given the highest priority and village level welfare committees should be established.

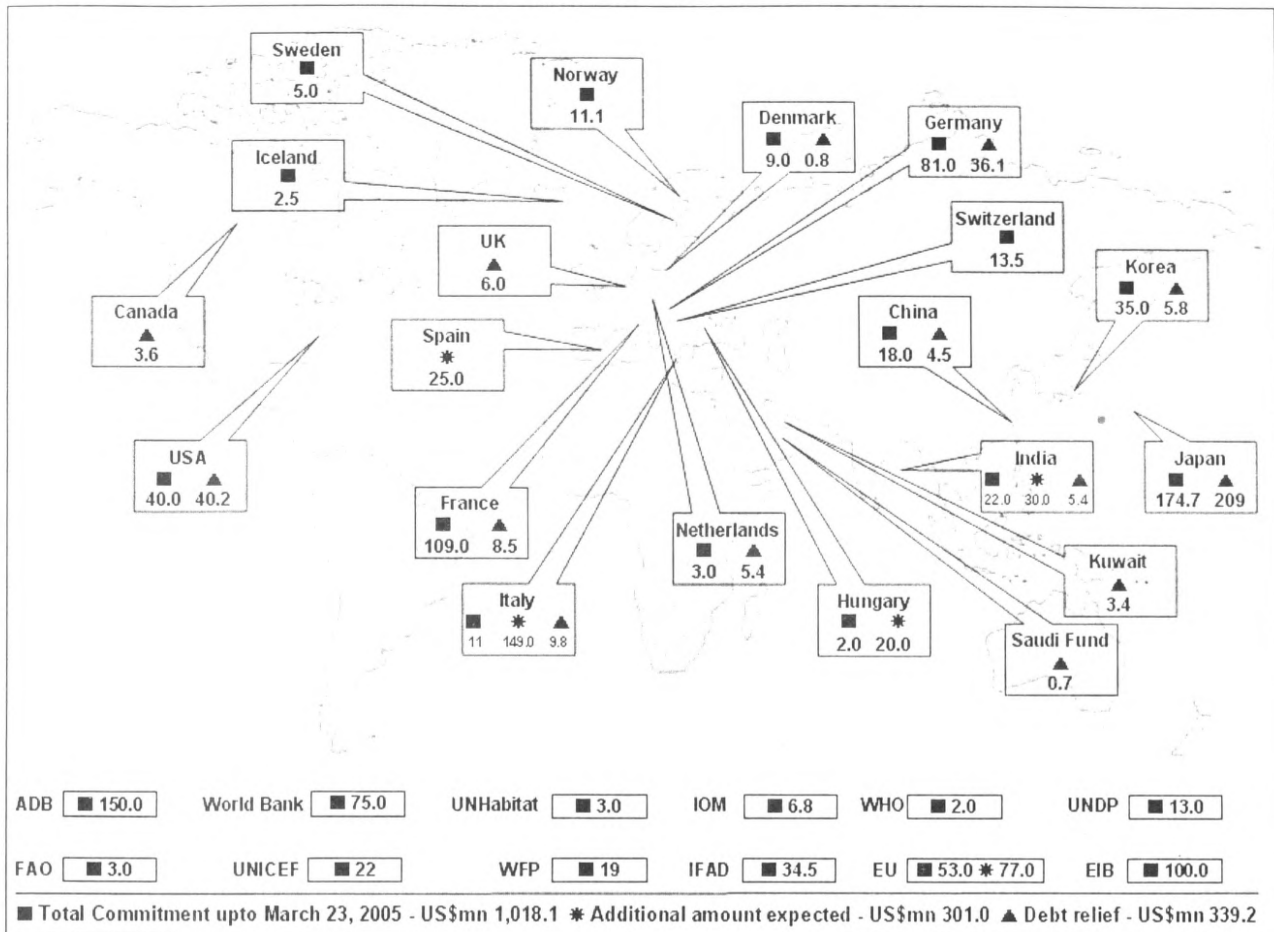
All private lands within the 200 meters from the sea has to be surveyed and layout plans prepared immediately for the approval of the Urban Development Authority - UDA. Tsunami disaster should be turned into an opportunity for planned reconstruction and resettlement in the Muslim coastal areas.

2004 December 26 "Tsunami" destructions

- The coastal belt covering the Districts of Amparai, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Jaffna, Mullaitivu, Hambantota, Matara, Galle, Kalutara, Colombo and Puttalam were severely damaged by a Tsunami high rising and fast moving tidal waves on Sunday 26th December 2004.
- The giant Tsunami waves have not only caused the loss of precious lives in excess of 30,000 people but have caused 805,970 people to be homeless. Around 200,000 houses have been destroyed. This includes 130,000 fishermen's houses.
- Infrastructure of the tourist industry has been severely affected. Of the 25 beach hotels damaged in the coastal belt 06 in the Eastern Province have been washed away.
- Extensive damage has been caused to the fishery harbours and anchorages, access roads, ice and cold room facilities, community centres, electricity, drinking water facilities, and sanitary facilities have been destroyed.
- Extensive damage has been caused to the coastal railway line, 20 railway stations, 15 railway bridges, a large number of culverts and the signaling system have been affected. Three power sets and 04 locomotives have been completely washed away.
- The telecommunication networks in districts of Hambantota, Matara and Galle have been damaged.
- The drinking water supply and purifying plants have been damaged in Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Tangalle, Ampara, Ambalantota, Maggona and Hambantota causing these areas severe shortage of fresh water. The distribution network of fresh water (pipelines) in the coastal areas have been partially damaged and even completely destroyed in some places. Tube wells and the common wells used for fresh water in the absence of pipe borne water have been destroyed or polluted.
- Distribution lines of Electricity (low voltage lines of 600 km. Medium Voltage lines of 50 km. and 6500 km. of service lines) and substations were destroyed by the Tsunami in the coastal areas of the country.
- Damage has been caused to the regional storages and offices of Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (Galle and Kankasanturai), and fourteen filling stations in the tidal wave effected areas.
- Around 240 schools (primary and secondary) along the coastal belt have been affected by the Tsunami destroying the basic education facilities of the school going children.
- Several National Colleges of Education, Teachers Colleges and Teacher Centres in the coastal areas have been damaged. Three universities in the North and East (Eastern, South Eastern and Jaffna) have been affected.
- A section of the Yala national park has been severely affected.
- The rebuilding of the infrastructure damaged and replacement of the destroyed assets will cost about Rupees 125-150 billion. But the scale of human destruction is invaluable.

Source: Department of National Planning
Ministry of Finance and Planning, Colombo 01, Sri Lanka
January 2005

Donor Assistance for Post-Tsunami Activities



Assessment Survey by Muslim Reconstruction and Resettlement Organisation - MRRO

The Muslim Reconstruction and Resettlement Organisation - MRRO conducted an assessment survey by visiting each and every family in the Tsunami effected Muslim areas in the Eastern Province to evaluate the damages to persons, residences and occupations of the Tsunami affected Muslim people.

Data collection instruments (questionnaires) were so designed that some key indicators could be obtained with the following objectives:

- Systematically assess the damages caused to the Muslim victims by visiting each and every family.
- Prepare a comprehensive report based on the field investigations on a professional basis.
- The final Survey Report to be submitted to the Government of Sri Lanka and the International Community for assistance to rebuild the affected areas and resettle the Muslim victims.

Since, all the affected families were not available in their original places at the time of the survey, the required informations have been collected from 20,091 families which is about 70% of the total Muslim victims in the Eastern Province.

Destructions

1.0 Residential Destructions

1.1 Fully Damaged

Families	Land Value	House Value	Total
6806	2,536,025,700 (US\$ 25,360,257)	2,428,825,650 (US\$ 24,288,256.50)	4,964,851,350 (US\$ 49,648,513.50)

1.2 Partially Damaged

Families	Land Value	House Value	Total
7079	2,883,388,143 (US\$ 28,833,881.43)	2,363,360,600 (US\$ 23,633,606)	5,246,748,743 (US\$ 52,467,487.43)

1.3 Nature of Damage Not Given

Families	Land Value	House Value	Total
2091	918,999,700 (US\$ 9,189,997)	1,103,272,690 (US\$ 11,032,726.90)	2,022,272,390 (US\$ 20,222,723.90)

1.4 Residential Destructions Total

Families	Land Value	House Value	Total
15976	6,338,413,543 (US\$ 63,384,135.43)	5,895,458,940 (US\$ 58,954,589.40)	12,233,872,483 (US\$ 122,338,724.83)

2.0 Occupational Destructions

Families	Business Value	Other Value	Total
20091	1,768,518,711 (US\$ 17,685,187.11)	3,133,241,525 (US\$ 31,332,415.25)	4,901,760,236 (US\$ 49,017,602.36)

2.1 Businessmen

Families	Business Value	Other Value	Total
2383	391,348,494 (US\$ 3,913,484.94)	517,125,949 (US\$ 5,171,259.49)	908,474,443 (US\$ 9,084,744.43)

2.2 Casual Labours

Families	Business Value	Other Value	Total
4245	80,663,535 (US\$ 806,635.35)	615,978,618 (US\$ 6,159,786.18)	696,642,153 (US\$ 6,966,421.53)

2.3 Doctors

Families	Business Value	Other Value	Total
19	4,274,000 (US\$ 42,740)	3,065,300 (US\$ 30,653)	7,339,300 (US\$ 73,393)

2.4 Drivers

Families	Business Value	Other Value	Total
434	22,820,550 (US\$ 228,205.50)	101,107,000 (US\$ 1,011,070)	123,927,550 (US\$ 1,239,275.50)

2.5 Farmers			
Families 1310	Business Value 66,760,770 (US\$ 667,607.70)	Other Value 250,008,300 (US\$ 2,500,083)	Total 316,769,070 (US\$ 3,167,690.70)
2.6 Fishermen			
Families 5762	Business Value 921,187,479 (US\$ 9,211,874.79)	Other Value 692,674,008 (US\$ 6,926,740.08)	Total 1,613,861,487 (US\$ 16,138,614.87)
2.7 Government, State Employees and Retired			
Families 527	Business Value 16,881,013 (US\$ 168,810.13)	Other Value 97,819,550 (US\$ 978,195.50)	Total 114,700,563 (US\$ 1,147,005.63)
2.8 Skill Labours			
Families 959	Business Value 68,753,030 (US\$ 687,530.30)	Other Value 146,871,900 (US\$ 146,871,9)	Total 215,624,930 (US\$ 2,156,249.30)
2.9 Tailors			
Families 217	Business Value 16,874,450 (US\$ 168,744.50)	Other Value 30,066,900 (US\$ 300,669)	Total 46,941,350 (US\$ 469,413.50)
2.10 Teachers			
Families 277	Business Value 29,946,550 (US\$ 299,465.50)	Other Value 73,343,180 (US\$ 733,431.80)	Total 103,289,730 (US\$ 1,032,897.30)
2.11 Weavers			
Families 225	Business Value 54,266,150 (US\$ 542,661.50)	Other Value 55,757,400 (US\$ 557,574)	Total 110,023,550 (US\$ 1,100,235.50)
2.12 Others			
Families 417	Business Value 16,514,378 (US\$ 165,143.78)	Other Value 78,361,445 (US\$ 783,614.45)	Total 94,875,823 (US\$ 948,758.23)
2.13 Occupation Not Given			
Families 3316	Business Value 78,228,313 (US\$ 782283.13)	Other Value 471,061,975 (US\$ 4710619.75)	Total 549,290,288 (US\$ 5492902.88)
Total			17,135,632,719 (US\$ 171,356,327.19)

RESIDENTIAL DESTRUCTIONS IN MUSLIM AREAS IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE

Villages	Fully Damage				Partially Damage				Damage Not Given				Total							
	100 m	200 m	Over 200 m	Distance Not Given	100 m	200 m	Over 200 m	Distance Not Given	100 m	200 m	Over 200 m	Distance Not Given	100 m	200 m	Over 200 m	Distance Not Given	Total			
																		Total	Total	Total
AMPARA DISTRICT																				
Maruthamunai	192	146	366	2	706	10	16	649	11	686	50	69	215	13	347	252	231	1230	26	1739
Kaimunai	365	221	149	11	746	80	201	272	4	557	37	43	29	2	111	482	465	450	17	1414
Sainthamaruthu	28	7		368	403	25	6	8	405	444	11	9	3	21	44	64	22	11	794	891
Malikaikadu		1			1				3	3					0	0	1	0	3	4
Ninthavur	225	140	79	16	460	77	247	574	46	944	101	94	166	17	378	403	481	819	79	1782
Oluvil	17	6	5	3	31	20	25	8	4	57	3	10	26	3	42	40	41	39	10	130
Addalachchenai	42	3	5		50	111	25	29	2	167	14	9	8		31	167	37	42	2	248
Akkaraipattu	51	29	11	111	202	53	104	98	47	302	17	27	15	30	89	121	160	124	188	593
Pottuvil	583	149			732	230	141			371	4	3			7	817	293	0	0	1110
Total	1503	702	615	511	3331	606	765	1638	522	3531	237	264	462	86	1049	2346	1731	2715	1119	7911
BATTICALOA DISTRICT																				
Kattankudy	291	481	680	14	1466	22	158	1037	15	1232	11	14	21	1	47	324	653	1738	30	2745
Palamunai	45	85	155	4	289	5	28	262	2	297	2		3		5	52	113	420	6	591
Manchanthoduvai	1	2	8		11			17		17					0	1	2	25	0	28
Poonochchimunai	26	42	51	3	122		18	18		36	2		5		7	28	60	74	3	165
Total	363	610	894	21	1885	27	204	1334	17	1582	15	14	29	1	59	405	828	2257	39	3529
TRINCOMALEE DISTRICT																				
Mutur	185	43	14	102	344	128	69	17	45	259	104	15	16	88	223	417	127	47	235	826
Kinniya	451	176	173	76	876	524	266	472	97	1359	262	117	235	65	679	1237	559	880	238	2914
Kuchchaveli	115	58	33	23	229	18	54	107	30	209	40	64	71	28	203	173	176	211	81	641
Trincomalee Town					34	57	2	1	4	64	66	16	3	6	91	123	18	4	10	189
Total	751	277	220	201	1449	727	391	587	176	1891	472	212	325	187	1196	1950	880	1142	564	4536
Grand Total	2617	1589	1729	733	6668	1360	1360	3569	715	7004	724	490	816	274	2304	4701	3439	6114	1722	15976

**CONSTRUCTION STATUS OF DONORS BUILT HOUSING PROJECTS
DISTRICT AND PROVINCIAL SUMMARY**

Province & District	Total Houses Damaged	No. of Housing Units Assigned to Donors	Balance which required donors	Land Details			Site Details					Construction Details								
				No. of Lands	Perimeter survey Plans Completed	Layout Plans Completed	No. of Housing Sites	No. of MoUs Signed	No. of Units MoUs signed	No. Building Plans completed	Clearing completed	Blocking out completed	Site Handing over completed	No. of Units Constructed	Foundations	Walls	Roof	Finish	Total Completed	
Eastern Province																				
1	Ampara	12481	5167	7314	30	26	21	34	24	3687	18	17	17	23	3146	176	148	72	1	31
2	Batticaloa	4426	3762	664	24	22	16	29	27	3650	7	11	6	25	511	37				3
3	Trincomalee	5737	5383	354	51	36	29	71	54	4656	18	32	12	42	2577	169	181	60		24
	Total	22644	14312	8332	105	84	66	134	105	11993	43	60	35	90	6234	382	329	132	1	58
Northern Province																				
1	Jaffna	4551	4592		48	19	17	55	21	2936	11	23	9	29	1480	276	156	18	10	1
2	Kilinochchi	288	1327		16	0	0	17	0	0	3	16	1	16	1214	98	48			
3	Mullaitivu	3011	1228	1783	4	0	1	5	3	700	0	0	0	0	0					
	Total	7850	7147	1783	68	19	18	77	24	3636	14	39	10	45	2694	374	204	18	10	1
Southern Province																				
1	Hambantota	1057	4852		40	32	24	50	38	4044	39	47	44	49	4760	373	610	184	419	916
2	Matarara	2316	3682		59	53	32	64	49	3047	26	24	16	36	1908	399	214	34		4
3	Galle	5196	4179	1017	72	54	39	93	79	3704	65	56	54	71	2360	219	417	207	46	215
	Total	8569	12713	1017	171	139	95	207	166	10795	130	127	114	156	9028	991	1241	425	465	1135
Western Province																				
1	Kaluthara	4275	2617	1658	40	26	18	44	37	2398	25	21	21	29	1171	311	113	78	51	63
2	Colombo	5150	1120	4030	12	10	7	11	9	936	9	7	6	10	464	148		8		
3	Gampaha	650	502	148	6	4	3	5	2	272	3	3	3	4	303	132	168			
	Total	10075	4239	5836	58	40	28	60	48	3606	37	31	30	43	1938	591	281	86	51	63
South-western Province																				
1	Puttalam	95	0	95	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	95	0	95	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total				49233	38411	17063	403	282	207	478	343	30030	224	257	189	334	2055	661	527	1257

Irregularities in Reconstruction and Resettlement

We have just completed the first anniversary of the Tsunami tragedy which took over 35,000 lives and displaced one million people in 13 coastal districts of Sri Lanka.

According to the Task Force to Rebuild the Nation (TAFREN), total donor commitments to date amount to Rs. 178 billion (\$1.78 billion), almost the total direct cost of rehabilitation and reconstruction of tsunami damages estimated at Rs. 180 billion (US\$1.8 billion).

TAFREN has said that pledges for 96,630 permanent housing units have been received. 212 donors have already signed 343 Memorandum of Understanding - MoUs for 30,030 units.

The World Bank has made about \$150 million available to Sri Lanka for reconstruction of the damages caused by the tsunami and about \$ 36.5 million has been disbursed so far.

Latest figures published by the Department of Census & Statistics show that a total of 77,561 houses were damaged of which 41,393 were fully damaged and 36,168 partially damaged.

The Department of Censes & Statistics has not given the figure on how many of these are within and outside the buffer zone.

All construction work will be carried out directly by the donors, using suppliers and contractors of their choice, a TAFREN official said.

But the question is whether we have achieved the set targets in the rehabilitation and reconstruction directed by the Task Force to Rehabilitate the Nation (TAFREN).

The Government's attempts to provide relief to those affected by the tsunami has turned into a colossal and miserable failure.

Auditor General Questioned TAFREN

The Auditor General has reported glaring irregularities in the management of tsunami funds, incompetence and serious shortcomings in the construction of houses. It was determined that of the foreign funds amounting to US\$ 1.169 billion, only 13.5% had been utilized. He has also referred to the utter confusion in the payment of the Rs. 5000 monthly allowance to affected families.

TAFREN, which was supposed to coordinate and ensure accountability of the entire tsunami relief and reconstruction process in the country, has so far not responded to the findings of the Auditor General in spite of several remainders.

The International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) has raised a massive US\$ 2.1 billion in tsunami aid for all affected counties, including East Africa. They are planning to construct 15,000 houses in Sri Lanka and have set aside US\$ 375 million – (Rs. 37,500 million) for this purpose.

IFRC which was questioned by former President regarding reconstruction delays, states that the majority of land were allocated only in July, and the beneficiary lists were still pending.

Aid organization Oxfam states that only “5,000 out of 78,000 homes – 6.41% for Sri Lanka's tsunami victims would be completed by the end of 2005.”

World Bank Questioned TAFREN

A strongly worded letter was sent recently to the Treasury by the World Bank accusing the government's Task Force for Rehabilitation of the Nation (TAFREN) of not properly accounting for Rs. 125 million of the tsunami aid granted by its International Development Association (IDA).

The letter to the Treasury was sent by the World Bank following a supervision exercise undertaken by a World Bank Mission during September and October 2005.

The biggest challenge the Government is facing to-day is the immediate restoration of the lifestyle of the "Tsunami" affected people to normalcy. This requires reconstruction of their damaged houses and providing them livelihood assets.

The TAFRAN has been renamed as Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency (RADA) recently and infused with competent persons to handle tsunami rehabilitation programs. According to the progress report of RADA, NGOs have completed only 4,299 houses.

Muslim Areas Discriminated

Muslim concerns were not given due publicity in the media. It is widely criticized that the government has not treated the 'Tsunami' affected people equally. Thousands of Muslims have been languishing in several temporary camps without sufficient food, medicines and other basic facilities. Muslims who are trying to resettle in their own land are still confronting threats from the government bureaucracy. In fact they are deprived of their fundamental human rights.

According to statistics maintained by TAFREN, only half a percent (½%) of the total permanent housing demands to compensate those destroyed within the buffer zone had been met. Up to now not a single house has been handed over in the districts of Ampara, Batticaloa and Trincomalee for the Muslim 'Tsunami' victims in the 200 meter buffer zone.

In the three districts of Ampara, Batticaloa and Trincomalee alone there are 22,644 houses to be reconstructed. In Batticaloa the assessment is to construct 4,426 houses while Ampara, the worst affected district, the need is for 12,481. While construction has commenced on 1,200 houses in Ampara, in Batticaloa only 511 units are under construction according to figures maintained by TAFREN and Housing Ministry.

Ampara, the country's worst affected district is a glaring example of how ineffective institutions, political rivalries and misinformation can make a mockery of disaster management. Not a single houses had been built within the 200 meters from the sea in the coastal Muslim areas of Maruthamunai, Kalmunai, Sainthamaruthu, Ninthavur, Oluvil, Addalachchenai, Akkaraipattu and Pottuvil.

In the LTTE controlled areas of Batticaloa District, the TRÖ (Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation) a LTTE-backed organization has been channeling funds to resettle the affected Tamil people. But Kattankudy's coastal villages such as New Kattankudy, Palamunai and other Muslim concentrated areas still remain untouched.

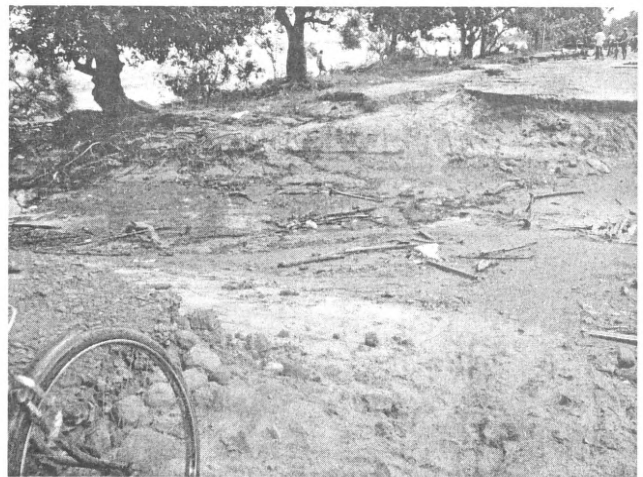
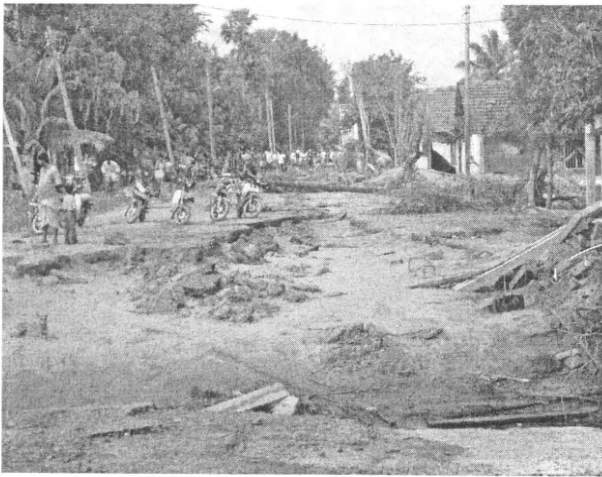
Mutur, Kinniya, Kuchchaveli Pulmoddai and Trincomalee town are the main Divisional Secretariats Division in the Trincomalee District where thousands of Muslims have been affected by the Tsunami. Political confusion has greatly contributed to the mismanagement of relief. LTTE held areas in the district have come under LTTE-backed relief and resettlement works. But Muslim areas are still suffering from having not enough infrastructure development such as roads and hospitals.

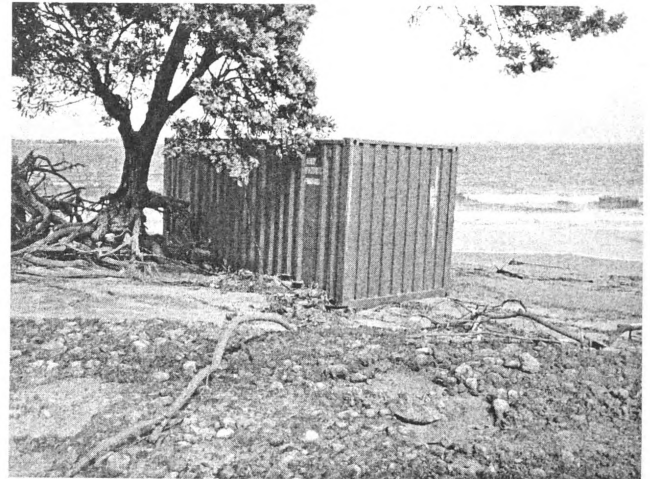
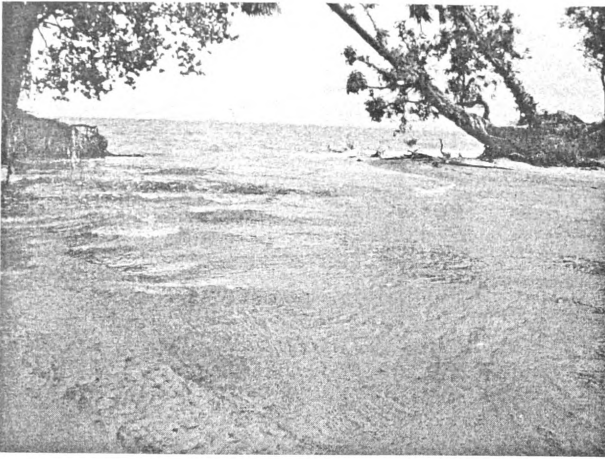
The situation in the South is different. In Hambantota, the need is only 1057 houses. But the donors have been allocated, 4852 houses. A recent internal memo circulated among the donor agencies said that the number of houses donors have been assigned was 11 times more than what was required within Hambantota.

26 December 2005 "Tsunami"
Destructions to Muslim Coastal Areas

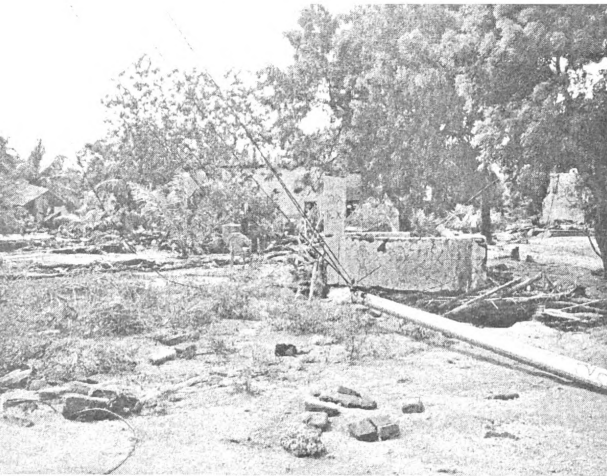
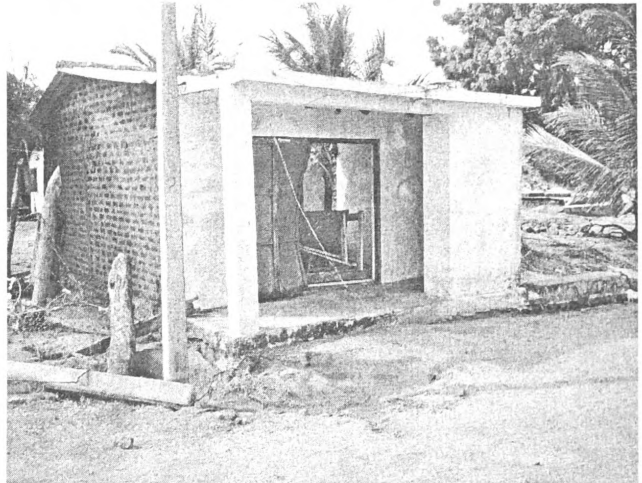












DESTRUCTIONS TO MUSLIM COASTAL AREAS - (200 METERS FROM THE SEA) IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE

VILLAGES	Families													Occupation Not Given				Destructions		
	Businessmen	Casual Labors	Doctors	Drivers	Farmers	Fishermen	Government Employees	Skill Labors	Tailors	Teachers	Weavers	Others	Land Acres	Value of Land	Value of Houses	Total Value				
AMPARA DISTRICT																				
Maruthamunai	43	112	1	16	2	68	8	18	8	7	38	9	153	361,675,000	496,725,000	858,400,000				
Kalmunai	154	271	0	47	15	291	16	84	9	0	0	13	47	778,253,000	428,607,000	1,206,860,000				
Sainthamaruthu	14	31	0	5	8	33	1	18	0	0	0	1	40	8,300,000	38,395,000	46,695,000				
Ninthavur	39	291	0	30	51	224	17	33	6	4	0	55	261	425,631,300	492,129,000	917,760,300				
Oluvil	5	10	0	0	4	46	1	5	0	0	0	6	32	11,225,000	38,974,000	50,199,000				
Addalachenai	13	14	0	6	11	120	7	6	0	5	0	4	108	79,955,000	106,447,000	186,402,000				
Akkaraipattu	24	128	0	15	17	35	3	4	3	0	0	1	57	60,433,000	54,566,000	114,999,000				
Pottuvil	9	200	0	2	547	255	1	2	0	2	0	2	180	200,000	416,201,150	416,401,150				
Total	4482	1057	1	121	655	1072	54	170	26	18	38	91	878	1,725,672,300	2,072,044,150	3,797,716,450				
BATTICALOA DISTRICT																				
Kattankudy	304	248	4	31	7	64	35	67	29	26	10	33	186	432,604,600	203,870,000	636,474,600				
Palamunai	18	39	0	10	0	40	7	3	2	2	1	5	39	50,251,500	45,547,000	95,798,500				
Poonochechimunai	16	7	0	0	1	44	2	0	3	3	0	5	17	58,820,100	23,483,320	82,303,420				
Total	1308	294	4	41	8	148	44	70	34	31	11	43	242	541,676,200	272,900,320	814,576,520				
TRINCOMALEE DISTRICT																				
Mutur	79	49	0	3	6	506	12	24	2	4	0	7	49	97,414,800	128,126,500	225,541,300				
Kinniya	199	383	0	21	53	884	121	78	12	58	1	38	269	571,436,095	622,242,475	1,193,678,570				
Kuchaveli	48	32	0	5	58	258	0	3	5	2	0	0	46	75,657,400	85,882,650	161,540,050				
Trincomalee Town	10	26	0	0	0	150	5	0	0	4	0	4	22	36,258,000	51,085,000	87,343,000				
Total	3536	490	0	29	117	1798	138	105	19	68	1	49	386	780,766,295	887,336,625	1,668,102,920				
GRAND TOTAL	9326	1841	5	191	780	3018	236	345	79	117	50	183	1506	3,048,114,795	3,232,281,095	6,280,395,890				

Buffer Zone

The government has relaxed the hotly-debated 200 metre buffer zone in the coastal areas due to the difficulties in finding alternate land to resettle the Tsunami affected people.

The buffer zone in Mutur, Kinniya, Kuchchaveli in the Trincomalee District has been relaxed to 60 metres, Kattankudy in Batticalao District to 80 metres, Pottuvil and Arugambay to 50 metres, and Kalmunai to 65 metres in the Ampara District from the earlier 200 metres.

Land available within 200 meters from the sea

2,000 Acres owned by Muslim Tsunami Victims in the Eastern Province

Ampara District - 1,000 Acres

Maruthamunai 120 Acres, Kalmunai 220 Acres, Sainthamaruthu 20 Acres, Ninthavur 220 Acres, Oluvil 20 Acres, Addalachchenai 50 Acres, Akkaraipattu 70 Acres and Pottuvil 280 Acres

Batticaloa District - 300 Acres

Kattankudy 240 Acres, Palamunai 40 Acres and Poonochchimunai 20 Acres

Trincomalee District - 700 Acres

Mutur 140 Acres, Kinniya 435 Acres, Kuchchaveli 90 Acres and Trincomalee Town 35 Acres

Urban Development Ministry Secretary confirming the relaxation of the buffer zone regulations said that the revisions came after representations from various quarters seeking permission for construction purposes.

Planned Reconstruction and Resettlement in the Coastal Areas

Tsunami has affected only the coastal belt. For almost all those who were affected, the only belonging they are left with now is the plot of land they lived in. It is not right or just to adopt a policy of frightening people on a very rare natural disaster, projecting it as one that could occur often.

The victims of Tsunami should be consulted and treated with dignity. This consultation should not only be with those in refugee camps, but also with those who have been displaced, made destitute and live with friends and relations.

Involving the victims in re-building the coastal areas has to be given the highest priority. Village level vigilant committees should be established including all stake holders.

This disaster should be turned into an opportunity for planned reconstruction and resettlement in the coastal areas.

When we talk about planned resettlement of Tsunami victims within the 200 meter areas, we are talking about an extremely diverse population. In addition to their socio-economic differences, there are also other characteristics that need to be taken in to account. These include ethnicity, religion, culture, age, health condition, and gender. All these factors need careful attention in the process of resettlement. If not, it can lead to serious problems.

For planning the rebuilding and resettlement programme in the 200 metre area from the sea, it is essential to have reliable and accurate informations about the impact on the lives and properties destroyed by the "Tsunami". It is a complex process that should be handled with care with the full participation of all stakeholders at the grass roots level. If this is not done properly, it can have adverse effects on the quality of life of the victims.

The extent and the value of land and other assets owned by the affected families cannot be ignored in finding solutions to their resettlement problems. No arbitrarily designed resettlement should be imposed on helpless victims of Tsunami as such solutions are likely to aggravate the problems of the people who are already traumatized. Makeshift housing should be replaced by solidly built structures at a reasonable distance from the beach.

The people affected expect individual attention and specific solutions to suit different families. The agencies that deal with issues of livelihood restoration will be required to visit each family and or household to find out how best they can be assisted. This is a painstaking exercise but we have no choice in the matter if the objective is to ensure that people who lost their livelihoods regain their economic strength within a reasonable period of time.

Over 8,000 tsunami survivors have complained to the Disaster Relief Monitoring Unit (DRMU) of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka about the delay and the violation of their rights.

UN Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) – Tsunami Victims

The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement were adopted by the UN Commission on Human Rights and Economic and Social Council in 1998.

Rights of IDPs

Persons who have been forced to flee or to leave their homes or place of habitual residence, as a result of armed conflict, violence, natural or man-made disaster and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border, are known as Internally Displaced Persons. Those who have been displaced due to Tsunami fall into the category of IDPs. They are entitled to all human rights enjoyed by the other citizens. In addition, they have special needs which should be addressed by the state authorities.

Choice of Residence

Principle 15: The IDPs have the right to remain in the area they used to reside before the displacement or have the right to move to any other part of the country or another country on their will. This right is crucial for those who have lost their families, homes and belonging and have completely been uprooted.

Family Unit

Principle 16 and 17 highlight the importance of preserving the family unit. The responsible state authorities should help the IDPs in protecting the family unit by assisting in seeking family members who have been separated. A family unit provides security to a persons. Separation from one's family also leads to violation of other human rights. Where the families insist on remaining in the same location during the period of displacement the authorities should facilitate it.

Adequate Standard of Living

According to Principle 18, the state is responsible to provide the IDPs with an adequate standard of living including essential food, potable water, shelter, appropriate clothing, essential medical services and sanitation. The highest number of deaths among IDPs is caused by malnutrition. Vulnerable groups such as children, elderly and single heads of households should be given special attention in providing an adequate standard of living.

Property Rights

The IDPs have abandoned their property in haste and are not able to secure them. Especially, the boundaries of the lands may not be visible due to natural disasters such as the Tsunami. The property remaining in the possession of the IDPs is also prone to theft. The responsible authorities have to take steps to protect the property of the IDPs against such occurrences.

Right to Return or Resettle

IDPs have the right to return voluntarily, in safety and with dignity, to their previous homes or resettle voluntarily in another area of the country. Right Return or resettle is vital especially when the cause of the displacement is ceased. As for an example, Tsunami victims are entitled to return or resettle when the danger of another Tsunami is not in existence.

After resettlement, the IDPs should not face discrimination as a result of having been displaced. They, like all other citizens, have the equal right to participate in public affairs and to have access to public services.

Primary Objects:

- i To ensure the safety and security of the Muslims displaced as a result of ethnic conflict and Tsunami destruction in Sri Lanka.**
- ii To protect and promote the welfare of the Muslims in Sri Lanka.**
- iii To assess the needs of Muslims affected by ethnic violence and Tsunami destruction in Sri Lanka.**
- iv To obtain aid and support for the reconstruction and resettlement of Muslims affected by ethnic violence and Tsunami destruction in Sri Lanka.**
- v To reconstruct the Residential Houses, Business Premises, Educational, Religious and other properties of the Muslims affected as a result of ethnic violence and Tsunami destruction in Sri Lanka.**
- vi To resettle the Muslims displaced as a result of ethnic conflict and Tsunami destruction in Sri Lanka.**

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