



DOMANDE ALL'ARCIVESCOVO DI COLOMBO - I

What are the conditions of the survivors in the areas hit by the tsunami?

The conditions of the survivors of the tsunami would be different in the different areas. Most of those in the southern region of the Western Province are now back in their own homes or temporary homes. The ones remaining in the camps are relatively few. Their initial requirements have been looked after. They were given food and shelter during that first few weeks and encouraged to go back to their locations to commence life gradually.

They were given the dry rations and a card each to call for food if they still require. Accordingly, many returned to their own locations occupying temporary constructions such as cajan houses or tents or to neighbourhood homes with the hope of constructing their own when they get the resources.

Their houses were cleaned and made habitable to the extent possible. Now they have to repair or (most often) to totally rebuild their houses.

Most of these being fisherman have to be provided with boats and fishing gear to commence employment and sustain themselves to commence normal life.

In the Archdiocese of Colombo there were 61 Refugee Camps with 25,707 refugees from 6583 families. The number of deaths is 82 and 58 are still missing. A total of 5036 houses have been fully destroyed and a total of 3772 families have lost their means of livelihood.

In the South the devastation is worse. Here too the camps are getting gradually depleted. The government and some Non Governmental Organisations have commenced the rebuilding of houses. The Government commenced a development program here last week to relocate some of the towns and roadways. The first initiative was to build houses and relocate the towns.

The East had the worst of the tsunami. The destruction of life there was very high. As on the 26th of December 818 persons were found dead and 37,815 families were displaced. There were 58 Welfare Centres in which 78,728 persons were being looked after. And this is not including the Amparai district. The worst affected district in the eastern province is Amparai. Batticaloa and Trincomalee come after that. Kattankudy, Kallady Dutch Bar and Panchankerni here suffered very badly. In Batticaloa alone there were 23,000 fishermen living. Almost all these have been affected in their employment.

As at present there are at least 65,000 people in the camps. They have no homes to return to. The Church and the other Organisations are supplying them with temporary shelter made of cajan and zinc sheets but this is minimal. There was an initial delay in reaching these areas due the lack of roads and transport facility. Some of these people had enormous suffering and are now been reached and helped. Here too there is a great need for reconstruction as there is a great destruction of houses and buildings. The building of houses and the supply of fishing boats and gear would be very important.

(- segue)

800.086808

E' il numero verde dell'unità di crisi al quale devono rivolgersi i parenti di coloro che inizialmente erano stati segnalati fra i dispersi e che invece successivamente hanno dato notizie certe di sé.

286.000 MORTI

Sono già state censite 286.000 vittime, tra le quali 54 italiani. I nostri connazionali ancora irripetibili ammontano a 53. La gestione della lista dei dispersi è di competenza del Viminale.

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