



DOMANDE ALL'ARCIVESCOVO DI COLOMBO - II

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

The most important thing to be done at the moment is to restore the roads and bridges. Almost all the bridges were broken and the roads are damaged. The situation remains much the same to this day. This stretch of the east is almost 300 kilometres along the coast.

Initiatives of the Sri Lankan Church

Of the eleven dioceses in Sri Lanka the affected dioceses are Colombo, Galle, Jaffna and Trincomalee-Batticaloa. The priests, religious and lay faithful immediately set to work to help the displaced with food and shelter. They also did their best to find the lost and to bury the dead. Most of the people were sheltered initially in the churches and Buddhist temples that were not affected by the tsunami.

The parishes in the surrounding areas rushed immediately with supplies of food and clothing for the distressed. Immediately after this initial response the Caritas units of each of these dioceses became active to organize the assistance and the camps that had to be helped.

The Archbishop of Colombo who was celebrating Christmas Mass with the Estate Workers and their families in Puttalam (three hours from Colombo) on the 26th December morning, rushed to the southern end of the diocese to see the people hardly three hours after the incident. He visited all the camps in the area and gave them financial aid where necessary. He visited the affected regions in the north of the archdiocese on the next day and the diocese of Trincomalee-Batticaloa on the 28th December. He also visited the southern diocese of Galle on the 29th December.

The Archdiocese has a three-staged program to help the victims. The first is the immediate relief by way of helping the victims with food, clothing and shelter. The dead were buried and the living who suffered the tsunami and others who were evacuated for the fear of another tsunami were supplied with these facilities in the camps. This process is now largely completed in Colombo. There are only a very few in the camps.

The second stage was to supply temporary shelter for the refugees to return. Several temporary shelters were supplied and youth from the surrounding parishes joined in clearing the debris from the homes and lands of the tsunami-affected areas. Accordingly, most of the refugees in the camps have returned to their own locations and are living either in their own homes, temporary shelters or with friendly neighbours. They were supplied with clothes, bedding and utensils for their food preparation. This second stage is now nearing an end and we are commencing the third stage.

(- 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 irrimediabilmente ammontano a 53. La gestione della lista dei dispersi è di competenza del Viminale.

PARTECIPATE ALLA SOTTOSCRIZIONE

A FAVORE DELLE VITTIME
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