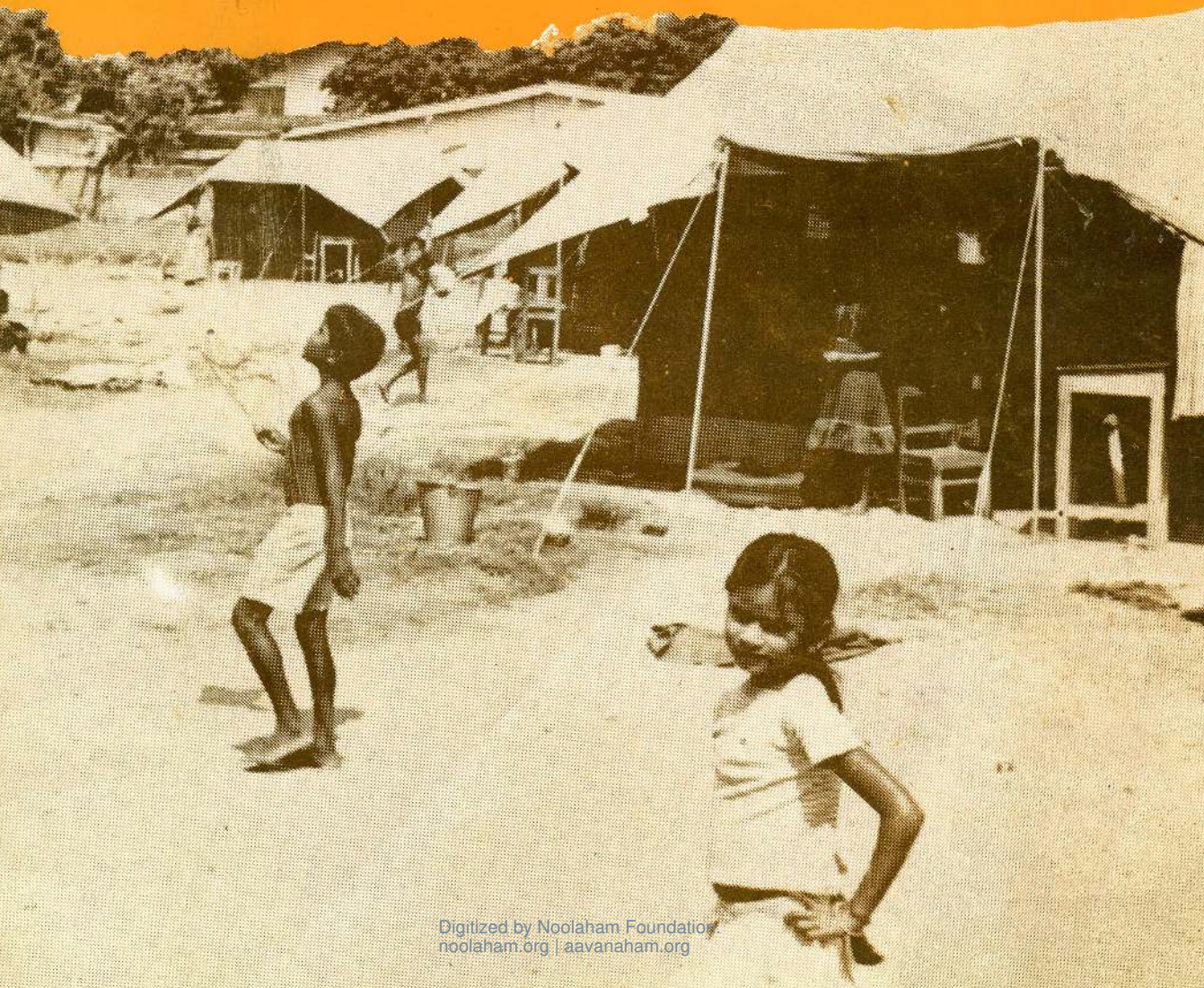


# Rehabilitation after Ethnic Violence

A report from the office  
of the Commissioner General  
of Essential Services  
August 1983 - February 1984









# Relief Operation

**1** With the outbreak of violence at the end of July, 1983 large numbers of persons were displaced from their homes and needed relief and rehabilitation.

**2** In Colombo alone, 18 welfare centres were opened, commencing from 26th July and at the peak which was reached around August 2nd, 65,000 men, women and children were in these centres.

In other parts of the country too, especially in Kandy, Matale, Elpitiya, Avisawella, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla and Moneragala and in the North and East subsequently, over 30 welfare centres were set up, and these contained around 15,000 persons.

The total of persons in welfare centres or camps was 80,000. There were also approximately 20,000 in informal refuges, such as, churches, schools and temples.

The Government relief operation was therefore directed at around 100,000 persons. About 95,000 were Tamils and about 5,000 were Sinhalese, mainly those in the Jaffna district and migrant fishermen.

**3** Phase I of the relief operation was that of ensuring security, accommodation, food and basic essentials to the displaced persons. Several of the welfare centres were established in schools and the organization of these, especially in Colombo was placed in the hands of very senior public servants of Secretary to Ministry level. Relief work was co-ordinated by the Commissioner General of Essential Services, who was appointed to the post by His Excellency, the President on 30th July, 1983.

While units of the Army guaranteed full security to displaced persons, food was supplied, either in cooked form or raw provisions through the Government agencies. Health needs were looked after by the Health Department and the Municipality along with interested Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's), like SARVODAYA, THE RED CROSS SOCIETY, SAUKYADANA etc., and International NGO's like UNICEF, WHO, FAO, CARE.



Water supply was handled by the Water Supply & Drainage Board and the Municipality. Sanitation by the Municipality and the Buildings Department which constructed a large number of temporary toilets. Personnel of the Social Services Department were placed in charge of welfare centres as OIC's supplemented by Social Service Officers.

**4** Once the welfare centres were stabilized, round about the 15th of August, began the task of moving the refugees to areas of their choice, chiefly in the North and East. This involved the massive transport of individuals at a period when the curfew was operated, by ship, road, train and air.

The Government of India provided 3 ships, while the Ceylon Shipping Corporation provided its cargo ships for transport of persons.

The Sri Lanka Air Force too, provided 2 small planes. Altogether 18,908 persons went by ship to Jaffna.

8,163 persons moved by train to Jaffna, Batticaloa and the plantation districts.

1,375 persons moved by air to Jaffna, Batticaloa and Trincomalee and 750 persons moved by bus to the plantation districts.

It is a tribute to those who organized this large massive transportation of persons that not one individual was lost in the whole course of this operation.





**5** With the movement of people, the situation in the welfare centres was dramatically changed.

Colombo presently has 3 welfare centres, with a population of 4,000 that is, around 1,000 families. In the North and East too, welfare centres were established. The camp population is in the region of 5,000 that is, 1,250 families. The centres in the North and East are greatly assisted by NGO's and are located in the Jaffna peninsula, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Vavuniya, Mullaitivu and Batticaloa. Here, the welfare centres are much smaller and consist of around 50 to 100 families in each welfare centre.

**6** Once the bulk of the displaced persons moved to their homes in the North and East, the next stage was to provide them and also the Sinhala population which had moved to the South with adequate basic food. This was done through a special rationing scheme which ensured for every individual, 3 kilos of rice, 3 kilos of flour and ½ kilo of sugar per fortnight. This special rationing scheme started in the first week of August and will continue till the end of February '84. The scheme caters to almost 100,000, including the displaced persons on the plantations.

**7** Immediately with the establishment of the Commissioner General's Office, the Government allocated for relief and rehabilitation a sum of Rs. 50 million. We give below a breakdown of the manner in which this money has been expended till the end of 1983.

For running of welfare centres upto 30th October 1983	Rs. 10 m.
Transport of displaced persons by ship, plane, train and bus	Rs. 10 m.

Payments for repatriation of displaced persons to India. (These were either passport holders or those who had applied for Indian Citizenship)	Rs. 1 m.
Repairs to schools used as welfare centres	Rs. 3.5 m.
Transit camp for displaced persons	Rs. 2 m.
Subsidy payments to persons leaving welfare centres (for clothing, cooking utensils, stock-in trade and repairs)	Rs. 5 m.

**8** The special rationing scheme of rice, flour and sugar has actually not cost the Government much expenditure. This is because these rations have been composed of donations received from friendly countries. Immediately on the outbreak of violence, the Minister of Finance addressed all donor countries in Sri Lanka and sought aid and assistance. Plentiful aid was forthcoming from all our friends abroad.

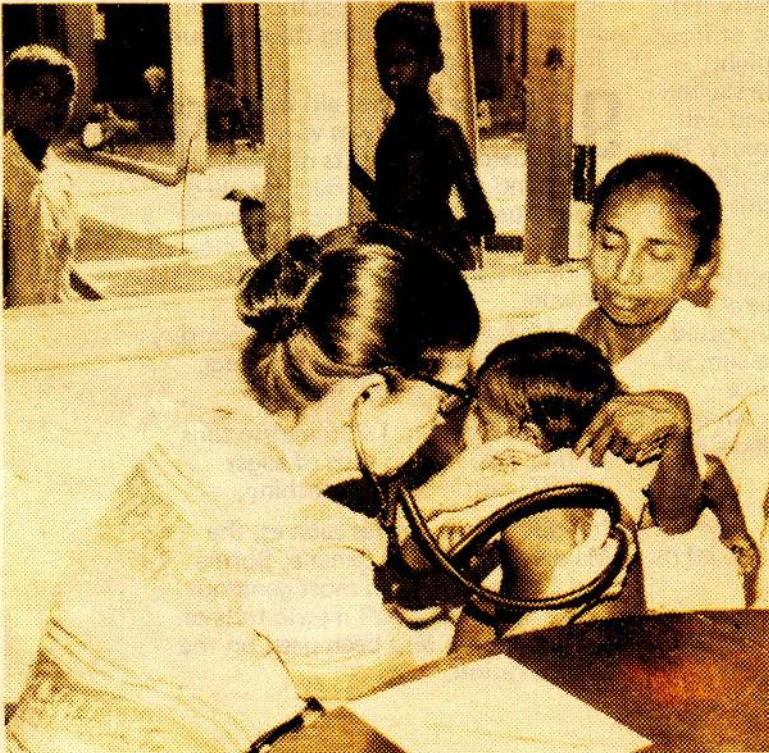
**9** As regards bilateral aid from donor countries, India, was very early in the field with air lifts of food, clothing and medicines. India supplied flour, sugar, dhall, tinned fish, palm oil, bread, soap and medicines, clothing of many varieties and milk powder.

The USA supplied tents for temporary housing, plastic sheeting, blankets, water cans and wheat flour.

Pakistan supplied 1,200 metric tons of rice, 200 metric tons of sugar and 35 metric tons of clothing.

In addition, countries such as, the Maldives, Malaysia, Canada, Burma and China have been most generous. China supplied 2,000 metric tons of rice which has also been used on the special ration.





The League of Red Cross Societies assisted greatly with clothing and medicines.

Contributions were also received from the World Food Programme, CARE, Redd Barna, UNICEF and the UK and US 'Save the Children Fund'. Donations were also received from organizations in Australia, Britain and the Netherlands and still more contributions have been pledged.

All these gifts have been utilized in the effort of relief to the displaced persons. Much clothing has been received and this has been distributed in an exemplary manner, so that all those in need, have been adequately supplied.



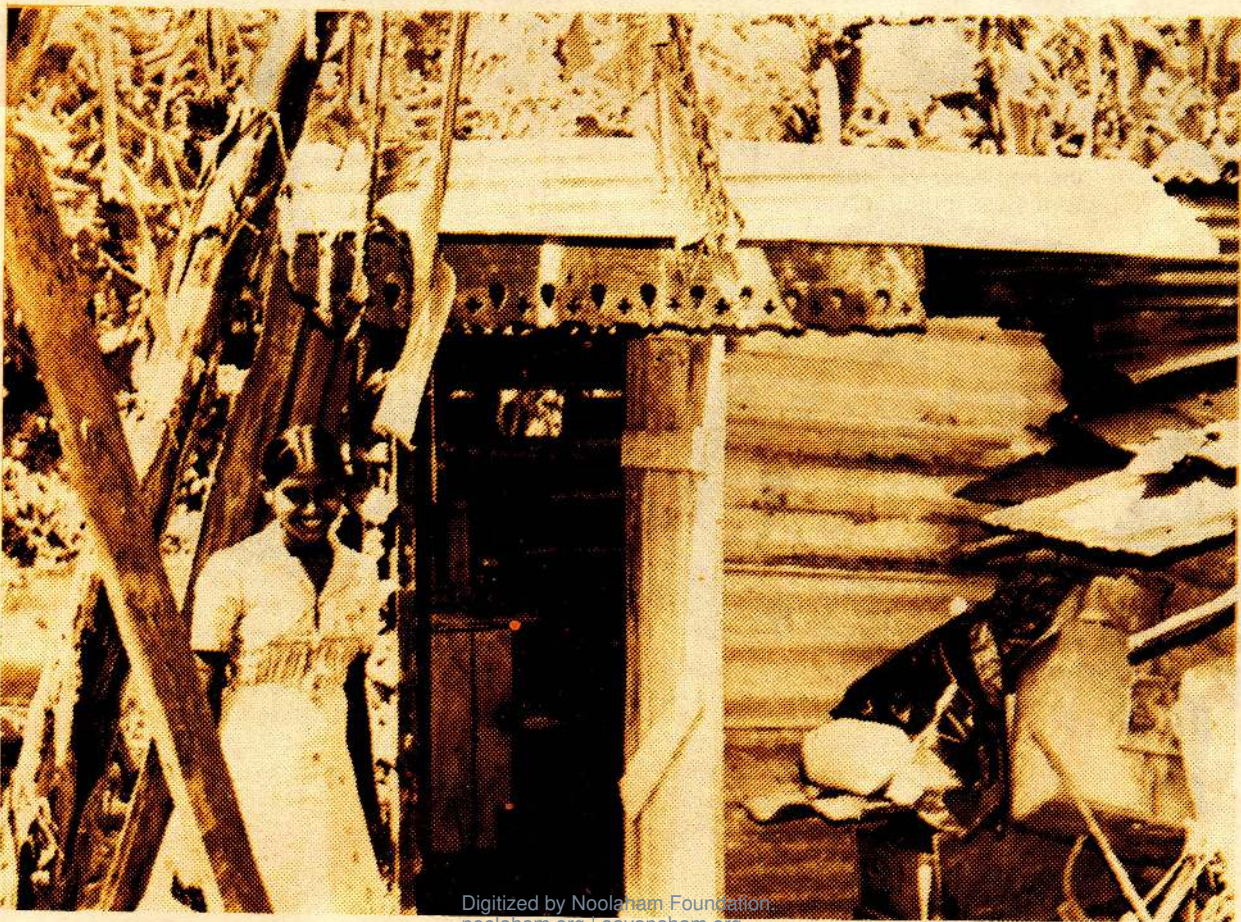
**10** The question may be asked as to why the welfare centres population which has come down considerably, still remains at around 9,000 both in Colombo and in the outstations.

The reasons are as follows:-

1. In the Colombo welfare centres (4,000) the population is mainly of Indian origin. Most of them are "state-less." These persons originally expressed a wish to leave for India in large numbers. Around 400 families still wish to leave to India and their cases are being processed. It is easier to do this when they are under welfare centre conditions. If they leave, it would be difficult to process

their applications. Already, 2,150 of them have been ferried across to India. In 1984, it is expected to despatch a further 1,500 to 2,000 still left in the welfare centres.

2. There is a large group who have lost their homes. These people are of the poorer classes and lived in shanties and huts, which are now no more. These huts were usually built on state land reserved for other purposes and were encroachments which are difficult to restore.





The position in the outstation welfare centres is somewhat different. These persons are also of Indian origin and are 'stateless'. They are those who have gone North from areas such as Kegalle, Matale, Nuwara Eliya, Nawalapitiya, Gampola, Badulla, Avissawella, Elpitiya and Kataragama. They have sought security and land in the districts of Mannar, Vavuniya and Mullaitivu. Since they are 'stateless' this poses serious problems, since non-citizens are not entitled to the grant of State land. Their rehabilitation is in the direction of:-

- i. Taking back to safer estates, those whose background was plantation labour.
- ii. Repatriation to India of those qualified to leave for India.
- iii Re-training of a number of persons in trades such as tailoring, masonry, carpentry etc.,
- iv, Settlement of those who are qualified by virtue of citizenship on Government sponsored colonization or village expansion schemes.

The number in the last category is likely to be very small.





# Rehabilitation Needs

Through an examination of the individual needs of displaced persons, it has been ascertained that their needs for rehabilitation fall into broadly 4 categories:-

1. Housing
2. Employment
3. Replacement of movable property and
4. Land for settlement.

## 1. Housing

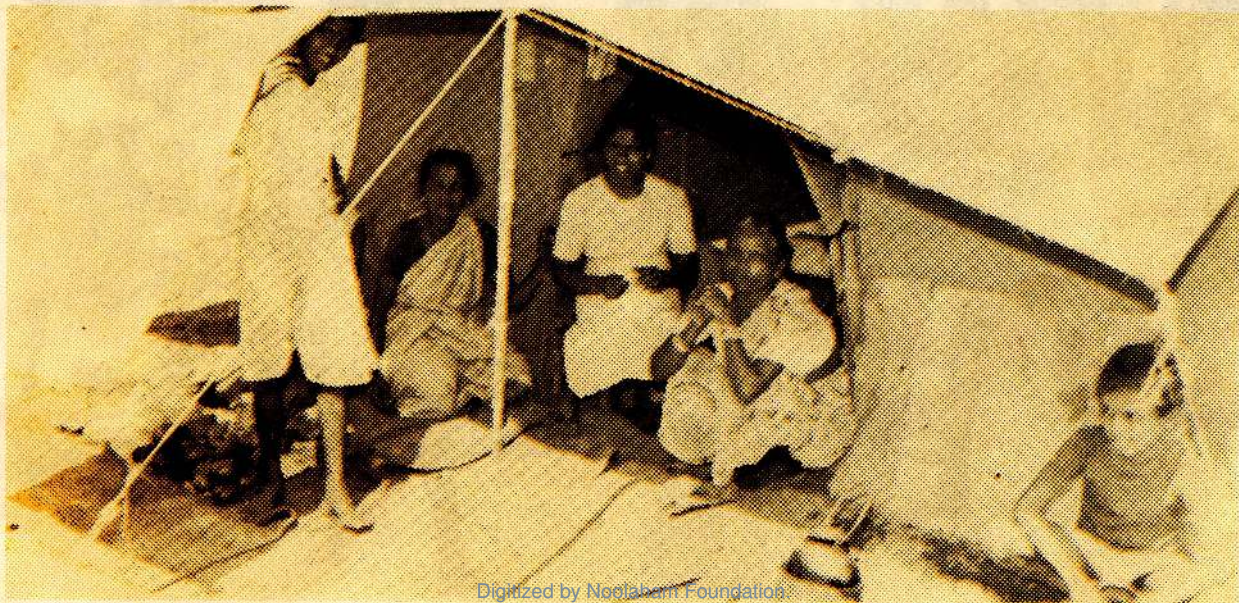
Regarding the need for housing, the repair of damaged houses is catered for through a loan scheme, which REPIA (Rehabilitation of Property and Industries Authority) has formulated. This enables the owner of the damaged property to obtain from the State Mortgage and Investment Bank (SMIB), loans upto Rupees 150,000 at a concessionary rate of interest as follows:-

- upto Rs. 50,000 at 2% interest
- upto Rs. 100,000 at 4% interest
- upto Rs. 150,000 at 6% interest

In addition, grants of upto Rs. 25,000 are possible for those in indigent circumstances. Till end 1983 half a million rupees in grants and a further half a million in loans have been given by the SMIB. However, there is the need too for new housing for displaced persons, both Tamils and Sinhalese. The extent of new housing at low-income and middle-income levels is estimated to be around 2,000 homes in and around Colombo and around 4,000 in the North and East. It is proposed to bring this new housing under the One Million Houses Programme of the Ministry of Housing. This will enable prospective house builders to obtain loans of upto:-

- Rs. 7,000 for rural housing and upto
- Rs. 15,000 for urban housing.

Since many of these persons have lost their incomes, it has been considered that part of the aid be in the form of a grant.





In addition to government support for such a programme, the assistance of foreign countries which have evinced interest in our rehabilitation programme, would be harnessed.

## 2. Employment

Many of the displaced persons were government servants and in respect of them, government has made many concessions.

It has been decided to accommodate as far as possible, affected persons in their home districts through a process of transfers.

In addition, government is contemplating giving the right to retire to non-technical persons who have been affected and who have done 20 years of service in government. This would enable them to thereafter seek employment in the areas of their choice or proceed abroad.

In the case of the self-employed who constitute a large section of the affected persons like Sinhalese bakers from Jaffna or retail trade Tamil salesmen formerly from Colombo, a specific programme aimed at making these persons obtain employment in their new areas of residence, has been commenced. Sometimes, training in new skills will have to be done.

A survey of the camp population in Jaffna regarding occupational categories, reveals the following:-

Petty traders	300
Casual labourers	68
Farmers	45
Plantation workers	370
Cooks	14
Tailors	15
Masons	60
Drivers	14
Mechanics	7
Clerks etc.,	22





The Colombo welfare centres too have a similar variety, with domestic servants, cooks etc., carrying a high proportion.

With the intention of encouraging persons to move out of the welfare centres, the government has worked out a scheme of financial assistance to help persons in welfare centres to re-establish themselves outside. This has had good results and during the first 26 days this has been in operation, 643 families, constituting 2,112 persons had left the 4 Colombo welfare centres by end November 1983.

It is expected that the welfare centre population will be rapidly brought down through this scheme of assistance.

### 3. Replacement of movable property

Many of the displaced persons lost almost all their movable property.

There is, therefore a great need for movable property such as tables, chairs, beds, cupboards, crockery, cutlery etc., Government servants have been assisted through the facility of a 2 year salary advance repayable over 8 years at 7½ % interest.

A scheme whereby non-governmental servants too may obtain small loans for the purchase of movable property is under consideration.

### 4. Land for settlement.

As mentioned earlier, the question of settlement on land, especially in the North and East has security and political implications. However, since there is a great need for agricultural land by those who were formerly occupied in farming, especially in the Matale district, some land for farming in integrated communities, may have to be found.





A large portion of rehabilitation involves that of affected industries and businesses. The Task Force appointed to survey damaged commercial and industrial units within the 30-miles radius of Colombo, identified 116 large industrial units, employing 13,400 people, as having been damaged.

A survey done by the Government Agents also came up with the following figures:-

(a) Colombo District - Business establishments and production units damaged	445
Retail trade	252

The number of business establishments affected in the outstations are:-

(b) Kalutara District	109
(c) Galle District	40
(d) Matale District	62
(e) Puttalam District	47
(f) Batticaloa District	14
(g) Vavuniya District	15
(h) Moneragala District	30
(i) Badulla District	506
(j) Nuwara Eliya District	98
(k) Kegalle District	182

These are the districts in which substantial damage has been reported.

As a consequence of this, government established a body called REPIA, whose functions are:-

- (i) the repair and restoration of affected property,
- (ii) the rehabilitation of affected industries and businesses.

By virtue of an Emergency Regulation, all affected property was vested absolutely in the State on the date of the regulation coming into force.

This was an action taken to protect both the owner and the tenant of these properties, since otherwise, sales and illegal eviction would have taken place. REPIA has thereafter on application made by the owner of the property proceeded to divest these properties, enabling the owner to undertake the repairs.

In cases where financial assistance has been required for the repair of affected property, REPIA has recommended to the State Mortgage and Investment Bank that loans may be granted on concessionary terms. In consequence of the destruction of industries, a large number of employees have been put out of employment for varying periods from 6 months to 1 year. It has been estimated by the Ministry of Labour that approx. 24,000 persons would have been thrown out of employment. Leaving out those persons who were in welfare centres and receiving relief, it has been estimated that there are approx. 12,000 persons, mainly in the garment trade who have been thrown out of employment. While the Labour Department has been attempting to find these persons alternative employment, the Commissioner General of Essential Services



# Rehabilitation in Progress

has commenced a scheme of issuing dry rations on a fortnightly basis to support displaced workers. This involves a ration of:-

- 3 kilos of rice
- 3 kilos of flour and
- ½ kilo of sugar

and has been extended to 8,000 displaced workers in and around Colombo.

This work has been assisted by 5 prominent NGO's namely SARVODAYA, THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN WORKERS, THE GIRL GUIDES, THE RED CROSS SOCIETY and THE SASANA SAMITHIYA of Maharagama, who have undertaken the work of packing and distributing these rations.

Relief was the immediate response; rehabilitation takes longer to do and more elaborate arrangements. It is easier to isolate the victims in Welfare Centres and care for them than to re-introduce them to a community which has even temporarily rejected them. The range of social classes from which the victims came also necessitated a variety of approaches. The fabric of society had even temporarily been rent in many places and needed repair. Nor could human suffering be completely separated from the damage to institutions and things.

## FINANCE

The Minister of Finance in his budget for 1984 sought approval for a 1 % rehabilitation levy.





on wages and salaries and a 10% surcharge on income tax for the year 1984. He thereby sought to lay the burden and responsibility of rehabilitation on the more stable section of the community. The levies are expected to yield around US \$ 8 million (Rs. 200 million).

#### PERSONS AND PROPERTIES.

The Commissioner General of Essential Services has as his special responsibility the rehabilitation of persons while property is the responsibility of

the Rehabilitation of Property and Industries Authority (REPIA) which was set up almost immediately after the disturbances.

#### PACKAGE OF INCENTIVES

A package of incentives to encourage the remaining 15,000 inmates of refugee centres in Colombo and 8,000 in centres outside Colombo to return to community life was offered and publicised through the media in end October, 1983.

SUN - 19.10.83

### GRANTS, LOANS AND ACTION TO MEET ANY EVENTUALITY

#### Package of incentives for refugees

By Kendall Hopman

*The Government which is spending about 7.5 million rupees a month to maintain refugee camps has devised an incentive scheme to encourage refugees to leave the welfare centres. This scheme will cost the Government only Rs. 13.5 million.*

*Mr. Bradman Weerakoon, Commissioner General of Essential Services described the scheme as a 'package of incentives'.*

*"The objective is to expedite the process of people moving out of camps" he said.*

*A printed leaflet, comprehensively covering all facilities available to refugees when they leave camp is being distributed among refugees throughout the country. The leaflet takes into consideration every possible eventuality and explains what actions will be taken to meet these.*

*All refugees who lived in their own houses which now need repairs are eligible to an outright grant of Rs. 2,000 in three instalments, if their monthly income is less than Rs. 600. Should this sum be inadequate for the repair an application may be made to repia for an additional grant.*

*Anyone who wishes to avail himself of the REPIA loan scheme may apply for a loan upto Rs. 75,000 at two percent interest.*

*Provision has also been made for people who lived in rented houses. The landlords of such persons cannot refuse them occupancy, and they too will receive the grants to repair their houses. In the case of rented houses the tenants will receive a grant of Rs. 900 to be used as an advance of rent. In such cases landlords will be compelled to guarantee the tenant a specified term of occupancy.*

*Additional allowances for the purchase of clothing and kitchen utensils and for the stock in trade are available to all refugees. These allowances amount to Rs. 500.00 for the former and upto Rs. 1,500.00 for the latter.*

*The transport and settling in costs of families have also received the attention of the administration. Such families are entitled to a settling in allowance of Rs. 500.00*

*"The refugees in the camps enjoy all essential facilities such as food, clothing and security. This makes them reluctant to leave the camps as they do not know what their future outside will be like," Mr. Weerakoon said.*



## GRANTS, LOANS AND ACTION TO MEET ANY EVENTUALITY – Cont/d....

*In order to allay their fears in this respect, the government has decided that every family leaving the welfare centre will be entitled to a special food ration.*

*The ration will consist of 3 kilos of rice, 3 kilos of flour and half a kilo of sugar for each family. The ration will be issued every fortnight for a period of two months. All children below the age of 14 will receive half this quota.*

*In order to ensure that none of the refugees are forgotten or neglected their names and addresses will be issued to prominent non governmental organisations which will monitor their progress over a period of one year and render whatever assistance possible.*

*Some of these organisations which are involved at present are Sarvodaya, The Red Cross, The Lanka Evangelical Alliance Development Service (LEADS) The Catholic organisation (SEDEC) and Save the Children Fund.*

*The main concern of the refugees in the camps is their security when they leave. The government has assured them that special arrangements will be made for their security through the intervention of the Police and AGA's.*

*"This is why we can't push them" the Commissioner General said. "The sense of security has to come from within a man's mind. We encourage people to get out and see for themselves that the country has returned to normal" he explained.*

*The Commissioner General revealed that there are approximately 23,000 refugees in the island, 15,000 of them are in camps in Colombo while the remainder are in the outstations. The entire scheme will be funded through the Essential Services. It will be implemented by the Welfare Centres.*

*Colombo accommodates 3,000 refugee families of which 2,000 are stateless. 95 per cent of the refugees in the Vavuniya, Mulaitivu and Batticaloa camps are also stateless. These people have no way of going to India at present, Mr Weerakoon said.*

Meetings were also held in the Welfare Centres to explain the package to the refugees and to boost their morale with assurances from prominent Sinhala personalities.







Mr. Bradman Weerakoon, Commissioner General of Essential Services holds a Press Conference on Monday at his office about the rehabilitation scheme for the refugees in camps and also inauguration of a social security scheme for them. ISLAND

### PRESS RELEASE

At the Ratmalana Hindu College where there are 2,665 displaced persons in the Care and Welfare Centre a meeting was held on 28.10.83 to discuss the proposals for going back to their houses set out in the information leaflet issued by the Commissioner General of Essential Services.

The Meeting was presided over by the Hon. Sunethra Ranasinghe, Minister of Women's Affairs and Teaching Hospitals and M.P. for Dehiwela-Mt Lavinia.

Mr Nadarajah representing the inmates said that there were people in the camps who were willing to go back to their homes if they were given adequate security and finances to establish themselves. There were also others who wish to go back to India since there were stateless or wished to go into camps in the North and East. He requested that a new set of clothes be given to each family to celebrate Deepavalli next Friday.

Mr. Bradman Weerakoon the Commissioner General of Essential Services said that the Government was not trying to force the displaced people out of the camp but was

offering them a package of financial support which will enable them to go back to normal life. These included monies to repair their houses, pay advance of rent, buy clothes and kitchen utensils and set themselves up in business. They would also be fed for two months by issue of free rations. He requested them to consider their present position, the future of their children and try to re-enter normal life as early as possible.

Mrs. Sunethra Ranasinghe said that she had discussed with other Members of Parliament the need to bring back the inmates of these Centres back to their homes. She said that there were many who were going out for work - as much as 750 from Hindu College - every day and they would have realised that conditions outside were normal. She said that she would give a categorical assurance that their lives and property will be protected. The names and addresses of those who were going back would be given to each M.P. and Police Station and they would see to it that they would be protected.

She hoped that they would make a decision after considering these matters.

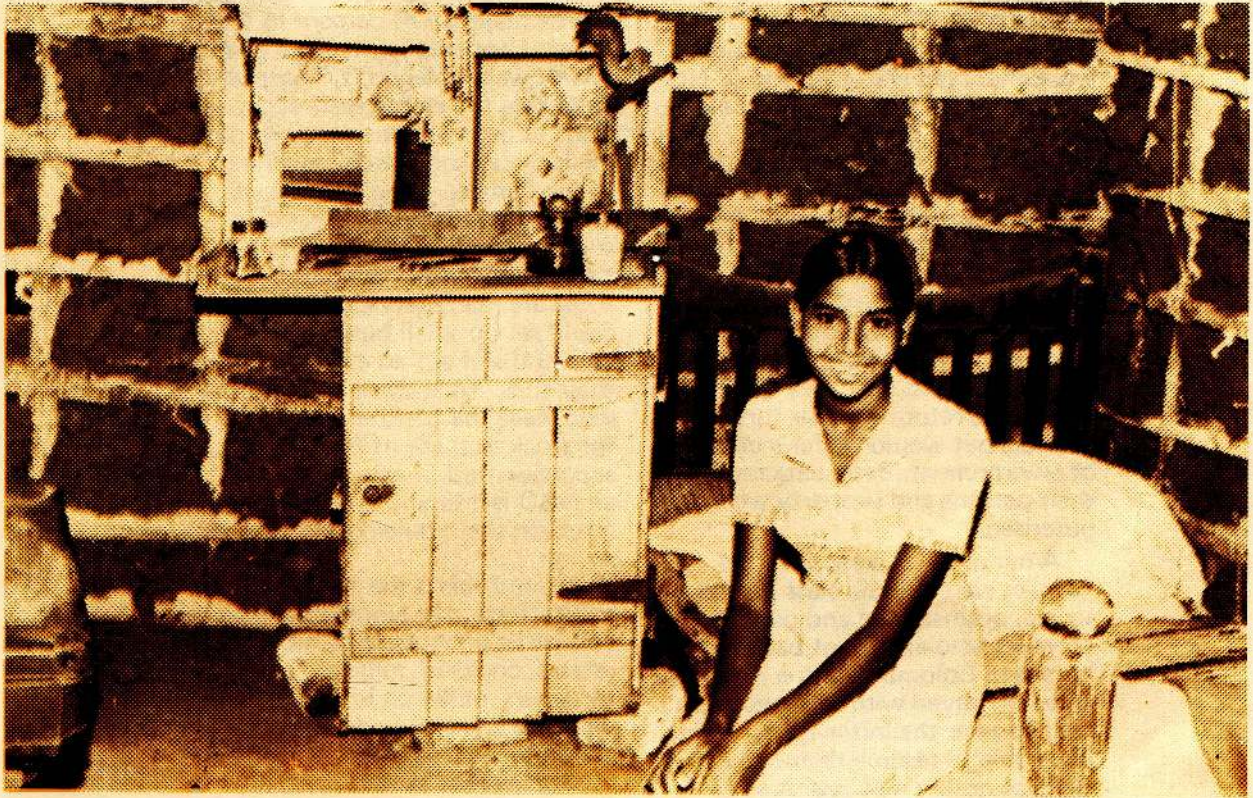
The result of this concerted effort was that 12000 persons had returned to the community between 1st November 1983 and 31st January 1984. The large majority of those who have left or will eventually leave the centres are the very poor who have provided a pool of labour to the city or have engaged in itinerant trades such as gram, bottle and gunny business, carriers of loads from lorry to store in the wholesale and retail

markets, cobblers, milk vendors, pavement sellers of cooked foods and domestic servants. These receive sums ranging from Rs. 1,000/- to Rs. 4,500/- for housing, stock in trade and consumption needs. These sums were sometimes supplemented by grants from Non-Governmental Organisations such as the Lanka Evangelical Alliance Development Service (LEADS), The Norway Save the Children Fund, (Redd Barna), The



U.S. Save the Childred Fund, The Social and Economic Development Centre (SEDEC) amd The Salvation

Army while the Red Cross supplemented financial grants with utensils and food and the YWCA with clothing.



#### NEW HOUSING FOR REHABILITATION

##### COLOMBO.

Of the 1,250 families in the centres at the end of January, it is expected that the majority would need new housing of the low income category while the others would either repair their houses or obtain houses for rent. A further number may need middle income new housing. The first category would receive a 100% grant of a house worth Rs. 8,500/- while other would repay Rs. 15,000/- at 10% interest for middle income houses. The total requirement is estimated at 2000 houses including those who are homeless after leaving the centres.

#### JAFFNA AND BATTICALOA.

Four thousand new low income houses and middle income houses are expected to be required. The availability of spare housing in Jaffna and Batticaloa for repair or rent is less since displaced persons have migrated to these districts.

#### PLANTATION TOWNS.

Need a further 500 Houses.

Total Needs.

The total needs for new housing are expected to be around Rs. 20 million (U.S. \$ 1 million roughly). A substantial component of it is already available from Norwegian Aid for 1984 and 1985.



## EMPLOYMENT

Early in August a limited survey was conducted with the help of Non-Governmental Organisations especially the United States Save the Children Fund, the Marga Institute of Development Studies and the Social and Economic Development centre of persons in the camp, with the intention of obtaining their views on returning to the community. While many of them stated that being stateless they wished to go to India others indicated that they would not like to return to their former habitats but would prefer a change of environment. Basic data regarding their persons and property were computerised.

A minority of persons in the Centres were middle class professionals, businessmen and public servants who either got back to homes in Colombo, Jaffna or Batticaloa or stayed with relatives and friends after the initial crisis. They were able to resume their occupations or obtain new positions or survive on their bank balances for some time.

The majority of persons in the Centres were casual workers of the lowest wage categories. Those who were able to resume their occupations or get new jobs began employment once again while remaining in the Centres. Others who were self-employed and had access to some habitation outside, left the Centres and began normal life. Among these are many service categories who could set up small businesses on their own and eke out an existence from their toils. To these as well as others who leave the Centres the payment for stock in trade of Rs. 1,500/- plus supplementation where available from an NGO is a timely boost designed to establish them quickly in some occupation.

Beyond this is the slightly more institutionalised employment sector consisting of agricultural workers in estates, cooks in middle class homes, gardeners, milkmen in dairies, attendants for the sick and companions for children and domestics. A surprisingly strong demand to employ them has been forthcoming for these categories of inmates in the Centres. Employers who range from Ambassadors to Police women





who guarantee security display a surprising spread. In a period of about two weeks about 25 persons have been found employment as a means of rehabilitation by bringing prospective employer and employee together. It is hoped that this trend will strengthen the position of the returnees to the community and save them from being the flotsam and jetsam of a marginalised proletariat.

Those who already had institutionalised employment were able to recover their positions in a very short period. The foremost category is that of the Government Employee. Many of these employees who were stationed outside the Northern and Eastern provinces sought to remain in them after they were translocated for security. It was clearly difficult to match available positions for these with the new and clamorous demand. While relief measures such as full pay leave for a period, salary advances repayable on easy terms and even premature retirement are available the major task is to bring them back to their former positions if they were needed. This implies security for persons as well as rehabilitation of property. REPIA became an important agent in this task by offering funds vested with it on easy repayment and interest terms through the banking system. Compared with the prevailing short term lending rate of 20% housing loans were offered very concessionally.

#### HOUSING LOANS

Rs; 75,000/-	@ 2%
Rs. 100,000/-	@ 4%
Rs. 150,000/-	@ 6%

These facilities are also available to private sector employers and employees of Public Corporations.

By end January 1984 of the 6,500 Public Sector Employees who had fled from their workplaces more than three fourth had returned to work and live in their former places. Some of those who have not returned are Government teachers who have been attached en masse temporarily to schools in the North and East as the children whom they had taught had also largely sought admission to those schools.

The new scenario would indicate a reversal to a pattern of living which had prevailed a few decades ago. At that time the Tamil public sector employee would live and work in Colombo but his wife and family would live mostly in Jaffna. Anticipating such a reversal it is expected to provide for upto 4,000 housing units to be constructed in Tamil areas to be funded through District Development Councils which are the representatives of the local community. Housing is a prescribed function of a District Development Council and such funding would be an immediate sign of the effective devolution of power in certain sectors.

The other institutionalised sector to which many displaced people belonged was the plantation sector. This sector contains Indians with a minimum of three generations domicile in the country and they form the backbone of the tea industry. The plantation sector being dominated by two public sector giants the Janatha Estates Development Board and the State Plantations Corporations it was easy to mobilise their resources to take back 14,000 displaced persons to houses and employment.

The present remainder from the plantation sector in the centres in Colombo and the outstations will also be absorbed into this sector which has many vacancies for them.



## RESETTLEMENT

The immediate effect of the ethnic riots was to concentrate refugees in camps in Colombo, Kandy and major towns in the Sinhala areas. Those who could flee from the violence found their way to the security of the Tamil areas or were later transported there by Air, Sea and Rail by the state authorities. Those who could find refuge with relatives and friends did so while others had either to seek the protection of the state or Non-Governmental Organisations which were willing to succour them. Many too built themselves huts in safe territory on state land as their substitute homes. The recipient districts of these forced population movements were Jaffna, Batticaloa, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya and Mannar. In Trincomalee, Nuwara Eliya, Monaragala and Anuradhapura camps were established to protect those who could not get away. The total exodus has not been properly counted, in the nature of the event, but it might well have reached a 100,000 persons.

While immediately the major concern of those who moved was security, food and shelter which Welfare Centres established by Private and State bodies sought to offer, the relief from tension and violence and the gradual re-establishment of peace and security throughout the country brought up again the question of the longer term decision -; Did they wish to remain in their new habitat or go back or a third alternative: seek some other place to live? This question surfaced in the minds of public servants and other employees of organisations in Sinhala areas who had to get back to their workplaces to hold their jobs or seek transfers or retirement. In the minds of the self-employed businessmen and traders and artisans the question was acute as they would have to rebuild their businesses and their professional practice in difficult and hostile circumstances. In the minds of the unskilled workers who perhaps formed the largest category the uncertainty of their finding employment loomed large. In view of all





these a safe option appeared to be to resettle themselves on agricultural land in the border districts of Mullaitivu and Vavuniya or in the Tamil speaking districts of Batticaloa and Mannar where land is available. The seeming ease of this solution was however complicated by the statelessness of the many who sought to resettle themselves as they were not eligible to hold state land. The matter was further complicated by the fact that a good portion of the land available for resettlement was mapped out for development and irrigation, under Systems A, B and C of the Mahaweli Project and the state already had plans for resettlement of these areas which it wished to adhere to. These factors may partly account for the slow movement of persons out of the camps in the Northern and Eastern Provinces even after the original cause of their entering them had ceased.

District	No. of families in camps on 30th Sep.	30th Oct.	30th Nov.
Jaffna	1441	1589	1542
Batticaloa	151	198	120
Mannar	283	293	228
Mullaitivu	199	171	131
Vavuniya	206	278	250

The solution of this problem appears to lie in determining an "absorbable number" of stateless. The legal solution is found either in authorising temporary leases or in a final decision to give citizenship either in Sri Lanka or in India on the basis of possible arrangements with the Indian Government. Apart from this political solution a purely human solution can be found in the employment of stateless persons on land belonging to private individuals or organisations as has been done in the case of tea estates in the past. Stateless persons continue also to be employees of state institutions such as the Janatha Estates Development Board and the State Plantations Corporation. The Government has set up a special Resettlement Authority to handle this sensitive and difficult area of territoriality in the context of ethnic disagreement. This matter is also crucial to whatever future political settlement is reached between the communities.

Till these matters are finalised the need of human beings for land and shelter have been satisfied in a small way by two projects on private land in Batticaloa. In these around 100 families have got small lots with

### SUN REPORT OF 22.12.83 "DISPLACED . . ."

*"The Batticaloa district accommodates 10,248 displaced people from 2,569 families outside the refugee camps. Mr. Weerakoon said many of these people had been rehabilitated on private lands belonging to the church. One interesting feature he said, was that many displaced people from other districts had expressed willingness to remain in Batticaloa and develop their lives with the facilities provided by various welfare organisations.*

*These people who had the opportunity to speak to the Commissioner General had told him that they would continue to live there and search for employment. Many of*

*them who lost everything during the July violence had decided to rebuild their lives in the security of Batticaloa, Mr. Weerakoon said*

*The four northern camps in the districts of Jaffna, Mannar, Mullaitivu and Vavuniya have almost 1,900 displaced families in them, Mr. Weerakoon said, these too would have to be rehabilitated on the same lines as in Batticaloa. Many land-owners in the north were willing to donate land for this purpose, he revealed. Regarding those occupying State lands, no decision has been arrived at yet, he added."*



semi-permanent houses and wells and latrines and from their new homes they look to the future with re-awakened hope. The cost per lot has been less than Rs, 7,500 with facilities and these seem to indicate a way out of the current impasse.

#### FOREIGN AND LOCAL ASSISTANCE

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the generous, timely and vigorous help given by Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations, both local and foreign to the rehabilitation effort. Perhaps 'help' is not an adequate term, one could even say 'initiative! Certain it is that in the

earliest and most critical days of trouble it was the self motivated persons from all sections that made the moves that led to the establishment of informal Welfare Centres in temples, churches, schools and private houses, the speedy provision of medical assistance and food and clothing under great stress and pointed the way to state authorities to take up the responsibility. Between the 23rd of July and the 1st of August the field was entirely theirs with support from the state officers (particularly the Secretary/Ministry of Plan Implementation) who normally liaised with them. The pattern of private/public effort was thus welded in the heat of the moment.





## STATEMENT BY THE LOCAL NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS ON RELIEF WORK

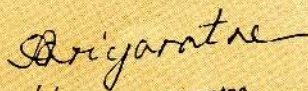
As private local organisations who are involved in continuous social service work throughout the Island, we wish to go on record that the Government of Sri Lanka moved immediately and effectively to provide relief and rehabilitation to displaced persons as soon as disturbances and violence broke out in the city of Colombo and subsequently in other parts of the Island.

The cooperation of our organisations was offered to the Government and the Government immediately accepted our offer.

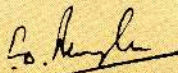
We wish to state that relief and rehabilitation of displaced persons were organised promptly and efficiently. We worked in close collaboration with the Government. The relief camps were provided with food, clothes and all other basic amenities including a steady supply of water, adequate sanitary facilities and all drugs which were needed in these camps.

Prompt rehabilitation of displaced persons is now steadily being undertaken and day by day the numbers in the refugees camps are dropping dramatically. All those who want to go either to their homes or homes of their relatives in any part of the Island are speedily and comfortably despatched either by train, bus or ship.

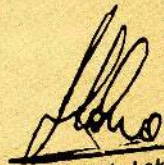
We appreciate the efforts of the Government in providing quick relief and rehabilitation. We are happy that we were able to work in close collaboration with the Government in this humanitarian endeavour.



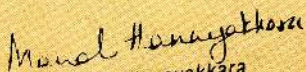
Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne  
President  
Sarvodaya Movement  
Sri Lanka



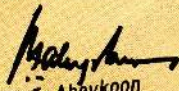
E. B. Abeyssekera  
President  
Sri Lanka Red Cross Society




Dr. Vajiranath Lakshman de  
Silva  
Secretary General  
Saukyadana Movement  
Sri Lanka



Mrs. Manel Nanayakkara  
General Secretary  
National Y.W.C.A.



Mr. W. F. Abeykoon  
Commissioner  
St. Johns Ambulance Assn:



Fr. Rufus  
Good Shepherd Complex  
Kotahena  
Sri Lanka



## INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS (NGO) ASSISTANCE FOR RELIEF AND REHABILITATION FOR DISPLACED PERSONS CONSEQUENT TO THE EMERGENCY IN SRI LANKA WHICH BEGAN ON 25TH JULY 1983

Acting upon a request from the Government of Sri Lanka, representatives of NGO organisations commenced relief operations to assist displaced persons both in the capital city of Colombo and in out-stations who numbered approximately 150,000 (100,000 in relief camps in Colombo and the balance outside).


At the request of the Government, our organisations made available to the displaced persons considerable supplies such as:

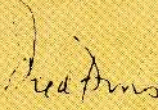
- Food items including Thripicsha, biscuits, bread and milk products
- Cooking utensils, plates, cups, etc
- Soaps, disinfectants, sanitary articles, etc
- Medicines, drugs, bandages, etc
- Firewood and water
- Cloths, textiles, towels, etc
- Recreational games and equipment

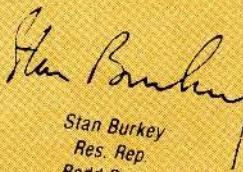
In addition, also at the request of the Government, our organisations assisted in the running of the relief camps, transport of supplies with professional personnel.

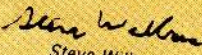
We would like to take this opportunity to place on record our collective appreciation for the speed and efficiency with which the Government mobilized the necessary resources to meet the immediate emergency, as well as the good co-ordination of the efforts of so many Governmental Agencies. We also wish to record our satisfaction with the sufficient and correct security measures provided for the camps. Likewise, we have been impressed with the order and efficiency of the evacuation by sea and train of these refugees wishing to leave Colombo for other parts of the Island, and especially the consideration shown to the refugees in providing provisions medicines, security, etc during their stay in the camps, and in transit to the points of departure.

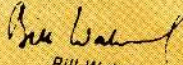
We greatly appreciate the opportunity given to us to have been of assistance and for the co-ordination given in order to make this assistance as effective as possible under the difficult circumstances prevailing during the first two weeks of the emergency.


  
Dr. Hoda Badran  
Res. rep.  
UNICEF

  
Fred Davis  
Country Director  
CARE

  
Stan Burkey  
Res. Rep.  
Redd Barna

  
Steve Wiibur  
Country Rep  
IHAP

  
Bill Wakely  
Field Director  
Save the Children  
UK

  
Dr. Marina Fernando  
Field Director  
Save the Children Federation  
USA



Private organisations were an essential part of the intricate mesh of activity which we have inadequately

described here. They included: the most personal attention required during birth, death and grievous illness.



'The acts of mercy:' feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, comforting the comfortless, clothing the naked, housing the most deprived and dehousing.

The generous and prompt giving of stocks of food, clothing and medicine.

The engagement in running voluntary services of an organised nature e.g. health centres, scavenging and cleaning, storage and distribution/administration.

These activities were not limited to the main city of Colombo, but were spread throughout the country wherever needed.

'Informal welfare centres' were converted and consolidated into formal welfare centres from the beginning of August onwards with the appointment of a co-ordinator the Commissioner General of Essential Services. This officer had all the powers of a Civil Defence Commissioner vested in him excluding security functions. All the multifarious acts that have been described were co-ordinated by him in one grand personal effort. The creation of a centre of authority responsible only to the President is an index of the urgency with which the state viewed its responsibilities in this matter.



The sources of assistance from abroad were both Governmental and Non-Governmental . An 'Assesment of needs' was circulated among Foreign Embassies and International NGO's within the first couple of weeks and this helped donors to decide on commodities and quantities. Based on an assesment of 110,000 displaced persons and their normal requirements of food, clothing and drugs, household consumer durables and capital goods for housing, detailed commodity data was made available for response.

Summary of commodity requests: an assesment of needs.

Consumption Goods:

Requirements for 6 months

Rice — 800 MT

Wheat flour — 150 MT

Sugar - 90 MT

Milk powder

Canned fish )

Bread ) 365 MT

Biscuits etc., )

Drugs —

Anti-Diarrhoeal 1.5 m tablets

Psychiatric 150,000 tablets

Asprin 1 m

Water purifying tablets 1 m

Eye drops & oinment

Normal Saline

Dextrose

Disposable Syringes

Bandages, other drugs specified.

Clothing )

Trouser materials )

Shirting )

Sarees ) 3,670,000

Ladies and girls ) metres

clothing material )

Dhoties and Sarongs )

Household linen 366,000 metres

Household Consumer Durables

Mattresses

Beds

Pillows

Dining tables and chairs

Parlour furniture

Other furniture

Cups and glasses

Kitchen utensils for a total of Rs.23 m

Capital goods for housing

Cement - 100,000 MT

Asbestos Sheeting 8.8 m.sq.ft

Timber 1.75 m. cu.ft.

In the case of certain items arrivals of foreign assistance was very prompt. India sent food, clothes and drugs by air and sea while the USA sent roofing material, tents and blankets by air. Among NGO's Red Cross was one of the first to rush drugs and medical equipment and followed it up with clothing and food. Details of foreign assistance, receipts as well as pledges are:- (Values are given only where available).

India

Palmolien, sugar, flour dhall, tinned fish, bread, milk, soap, clothing.

USA

Family size tents, plastic sheeting, cotton blankets, plastic water cans — U.S. \$ 1.5 million.

Maldives

Textiles for sarees, sarongs, shirting

Pakistan

Rice, sugar, clothing - US \$ 750,000

Indonesia

Medicine (52 packages)

China

Rice 2,000 tons (Rs. 10 m)

Malaysia

Rice 1000 MT,

Timber

Japan

Food, canned fish - Rs. 50 million

Burma

Plywood sheets - US \$ 5000

This is however not a complete list of countries, organisations or items.





Besides this official assistance private organisations received cash and commodities from counterparts abroad. Non-governmental organisations dealt directly with donors. Receipts and their tally of arrivals and distribution has not been centrally documented. Organisations such as Oxfam, The World Relief Fund, Norad, Red Cross, Redd Barna, U S Save the Children Fund made emergency allocations which were utilised for relief and rehabilitation. A typical report from one of the local Agencies receiving such funds reads:-

"Summary of Rehabilitation activities from October - 10th Dec. 1983.

1. We have assisted a total of 109 families.
2. Clothes were issued to 46 families value Rs. 100 - 400 each.
3. Clothes and utensils were issued to 72 families - value Rs. 800 - 1500 each.
4. Assistance for self employment were given to 32 -Rs. 1000 - 4000 each.
5. House rent advances were paid to

- 3 families - Rs. 2000 - 40000 each.
6. Assistance for house repairs were given to 5 families-Rs.100-1,000 each.
7. Travel facilities were given to 2 families - Rs. 500 each."

The distribution of official assistance was often done through Private Agencies. The best example of this is the distribution of clothes to about 50,000 persons in the Jaffna District through the Red Cross. Charges of maldistribution of assistance received are often levelled against recipient countries and the responsible agency the Commissioner General of Essential Services was well aware of this possibility. The need to combine speed with care was well understood. Deliveries of aid were effected through a mixture of channels so that if one failed another might succeed. We are proud that there has hardly been any charge of misallocation of aid. The tables indicating receipt and distribution of aid from India and Pakistan give an indication of the care exercised.



## DISTRIBUTION OF AID

POSITION RE. INDIAN AID (TEXTILES AND COOKING UTENSILS) RECEIVED AS AT 30th NOVEMBER 1983

A. RECEIPTS	ISSUES TO				ISSUES TO			Balance
	4 Colombo Camps	Displaced Public Servants on return to work	To Plantation Labour J. E. D. B.	To S. L. S. P. C	To Camps and Displaced persons in affected Districts G. A. Jaffna	G. A. Trinco	G. A. N' Eliya G. A. Badulla	
1. Lungis (sarongs) 15780 ps. in 44 bls.	5250 ps. in 14 bls.	4000 ps. in 11 bls.	3000 ps. with 8 bls.	3000 ps. 8 bls.			27 ps.	503 ps. in 3 bls.
2. Sarees 15886 ps. in 91 bls.	4550 ps. 23 bls.		3000 ps. 14 bls.	2600 ps. in 12 bls.		640 ps. in 5 bls.	27 ps.	1024 ps. in 8 bls.
3. Dhoties 26600 ps. in 93 bls.	260 ps. in 1 bls.	8400 ps. in 21 bls.			8000 ps. in 20 bls.	2000 ps. in 5 bls.		800 ps. in 2 bls.
4. Bedsheets 30,900 ps. in 308 bls.	500 ps. in 56 bls.	4300 ps. in 23 bls.				1000 ps. in 10 bls.	27 ps.	1000 ps. in 10 bls.
5. Towels 45,375 ps. in 92 bls.	2300 ps. in 4 bls.	7195 ps. in 18 bls.	5000 ps. in 8 bls.	2700 ps. in 5 bls.		800 ps. in 2 bls.	27 ps.	1150 ps. in 2 bls.
6. Jamakalams 13600 ps. in 272 bls.	900 ps. in 18 bls.	1500 ps. in 30 bls.	5000 ps. 10 bls.	2700 ps. in 54 bls.			27 ps.	2973 ps. in 60 bls.
7. Durries 1000 ps. in 4 bls.	250 ps. in 1 bls.					250 ps. in 1 bls.		500 ps. in 2 bls.
8. Readymade garments Approx 18500 ps. in 80 bls.	3700 ps. in 12 bls.	1750 ps. in 6 bls.				500 ps. in 2 bls.	250 ps. in 1 bls.	250 ps. in 3 bls.
9. Aluminium pots 15,000 ps. in 250 bls.			7200 ps. in 120 bls.	4200 ps. in 70 bls.			66 ps. in 1 bls.	3534 ps. in 59 bls.
10. Aluminium pans 13500 ps. in 100 bls.			2430 ps. 18 bls.	1350 ps. 10 bls.			66 ps.	9654 ps. in 71 bls.
11. Aluminium tumblers 15200 ps. in 9 bls.			500 ps. in 3 bls.	3200 ps. in 2 bls.			54 ps.	6946 ps. in 4 bls.

## DISTRIBUTION OF PAKISTAN AID (CLOTHING) – STATEMENT AS AT 30.11.83

RECEIPTS			ISSUES TO						Balance	
No. Bales	No. Pcs	Jaffna	Mannar Mullaitivu Vavuniya	Batticaloa	Moneragala	Badulla	Trinco	To displaced Public Servants on return to work.		To Colombo Camps Mercantile Sector employed
Sarees	125	25000	30/6000	11/2200	15/3000	5/1000		25/5000	8/1600	31/6200
Bed Sheets	76	15200	25/5000	10/2000	16/3200	3/600		20/4000	2/400	
Towels	72	14400	42/16800	5/2000	8/3200			16/6400	1/400	
Blankets	180	5400	152/4560				10/300	01/34	2/60	15/450
T. Shirts	25	5000	5/1000	3/600	8/1600	2/400		03/600	2/400	2/400
Shirts	65	13000	17/3400	3/600	11/2200	4/800		12/2400	13/2600	5/1000
Shorts	20	4000	5/1000	1/200	3/600			2/400	7/1400	2/400
Trousers	50	10000	10/2000	6/1200	10/2000	3/600		14/2800	1/200	6/1200
Skirts	15	3000	5/1000	1/200	1/200				6/1200	3/1200
Frocks	15	3000	3/600	3/600		1/200		3/600	4/800	1/200
Lungis	58	20300	26/9100	7/2450	8/2800	2/700		6/2100	2/400	6/2100
	701	118300	320/50460	50/12050	80/18800	20/4300	10/300	102/23734	48/9460	71/12150



## REPIA

### Trade & Industry

The Finance Minister in his budget speech identified three main areas where damage has taken place;

1. The wholesale and retail trading sector
2. The industrial sector
3. The housing sector

The wholesale and retail trading sectors suffered extensive damage and a major achievement of the Commissioner General of Essential Services and the public sector supply organisations chiefly the Food Ministry and the Co-operative distribution network was to keep supplies near normalcy. This was possible because of the availability of lorries to transport them to the co-operatives and private shops. The Tamil community excelled as traders and the strategic positions occupied by Tamil owned shop buildings in many city centres pays tribute to their ability. These are yet to be rebuilt and activity in them is yet to commence. Small beginnings may however be noted in isolated restorations and revivals. Our picture shows a retail shop at Duplication Road, Colpetty. St. Mary's Stores run by Mr. Sivapalan, which was affected by the riots but had started business. (Page 16)

The mechanism used by the State to protect affected properties including housing, industries and trade outlets was to vest them in the state in an organisation called REPIA. This was a paradoxically effective move. Though it looked like expropriation the purpose was for the state to come forward as temporary owner to protect property. The bona fides of this move were

demonstrated by the quick de-vesting that took place on requests by the original owners. In end December 1983 the position was:-

	Number affected	Number de-vested
Industrial Establish.	122	103
Trade outlets	2300	1340
Houses	7500	4437

- "The affected property was vested temporarily in the state to protect owners and tenants from distress sales, forced evictions and squatting. It is not the intention of the Government to expropriate anything" Budget Speech 1984

The rehabilitation of these sectors is costly but not slow if resources are available. The main steps taken in this direction were:-

1. The Insurance Corporation paid 50% of the insurance claims in advance.
2. Funds available for development of the small and medium scale industrial sector from the World Bank were partially diverted to industrial rehabilitation,
3. Commercial Banks contributed a portion of their profits (Rs. 35 m) to a rehabilitation fund for industries and have gone out of their way to assist in financing rehabilitation.
4. REPIA itself made part of its Rs. 90 m available for loans to home reconstruction while the Export Development Board made special arrangements to advance monies from their cash grant scheme to affected exporters.

The budget speech gave the following data regarding affected industries.

Replacement value of damaged plant & equip	Rs. 1750 m
Total work force of the damaged industries	13,366





A survey covering 116 affected industries located within 30 miles of Colombo reported that of these 28 were substantially damaged and they employed a work force of 4000. The most prominent of these was the Hirdramani Garment Industry at Maharagama which by end December 83 had already started functioning. Another large establishment was the Sri Krishna Corporation Coconut Oil Mill which is due to come back into production shortly.

Though thirty two industries which had export orders amounting to about Rs. 800 m were damaged. The negative impact was reduced by increased capacity utilisation by unaffected industries, often, through the operation of an additional shift. This was true of the two major sectors - the garment

and the coconut products sector affected by the disturbances.

To relieve the distress caused among the workers rendered unemployed by the damage the Commissioner General of Essential Services distributed rations of rice, flour and sugar to them till such time as they find employment. The number benefitted by this programme was approximately 12,000 at the end of November. Distribution is effected through voluntary organisations such as the Sarvodaya, the Young Christian Workers, the Sasana Seveka Samithiya and the Girl Guides Association. These voluntary organisations often supplement the rations with cash, commodities and gifts from their own resources and this programme is a happy blending of public and private effort. This is also the first unemployment relief grant or dole that has ever been



undertaken by the state in Sri Lanka and is an indication of the partially transformed nature of the economy from an agricultural to a semi-industrialised condition. The redeeming features on the industrial scene were the non-involvement of the Investment Promotion Zone around Katunayake and of the plantation industry in the damage.

In the trading sector through many wholesale and retail outlets were damaged trade itself was hardly affected because of the substantial over capacity in the distribution sector typical of a developing country.

The destruction of thickly crowded trading areas such as the Pettah had indirect benefits in enabling Urban Development Planning to operate effectively by translocating trading establishments to less crowded areas leaving open spaces for beautification, roads, fire gaps and car parks. Colombo has grown up over the centuries from a small port town to a metropolis of more than a million people and needed internal structural adjustments to redeem its ugliness. The congestion on the roads, particularly by the multiplication of traffic made adjustments urgent.

#### INCOME SUPPORT FOR MOST AFFECTED FAMILIES

It has been estimated that around 300 families have been affected by the loss of the breadwinner or other income earner

The Government Agents of Batticaloa and Jaffna have set up trust funds, composed of prominent individuals of the districts, with themselves as Chairman to provide for regular funding of the educational needs of the children in such families. Monies for the trust funds come from private charitable sources.

There is also the proposal to have families particularly among the Sinhalese community to link with the affected families and provide continuing support to the affected families.

#### REPATRIATION OF THOSE WISHING TO LEAVE FOR INDIA

- Initially, a large number of those in the welfare centres, both in Colombo and Jaffna sought repatriation to India. However, it is presently possible only to repatriate those who were eligible in terms of the Indo-Ceylon Pact of 1964. Accordingly, a screening of all individuals in the welfare centres has been done and eligible persons (i.e. those who had at that time sought registration as Indian citizens under the Pact) have been identified and repatriated to India. As of 31 December 1983 1,800 individuals have been assisted to leave for India. The process involved the issue of passports through the assistance of the Indian High Commission, collection of EPF and other dues, and the making of transport arrangements and payment of repatriation allowance. This process is ongoing.

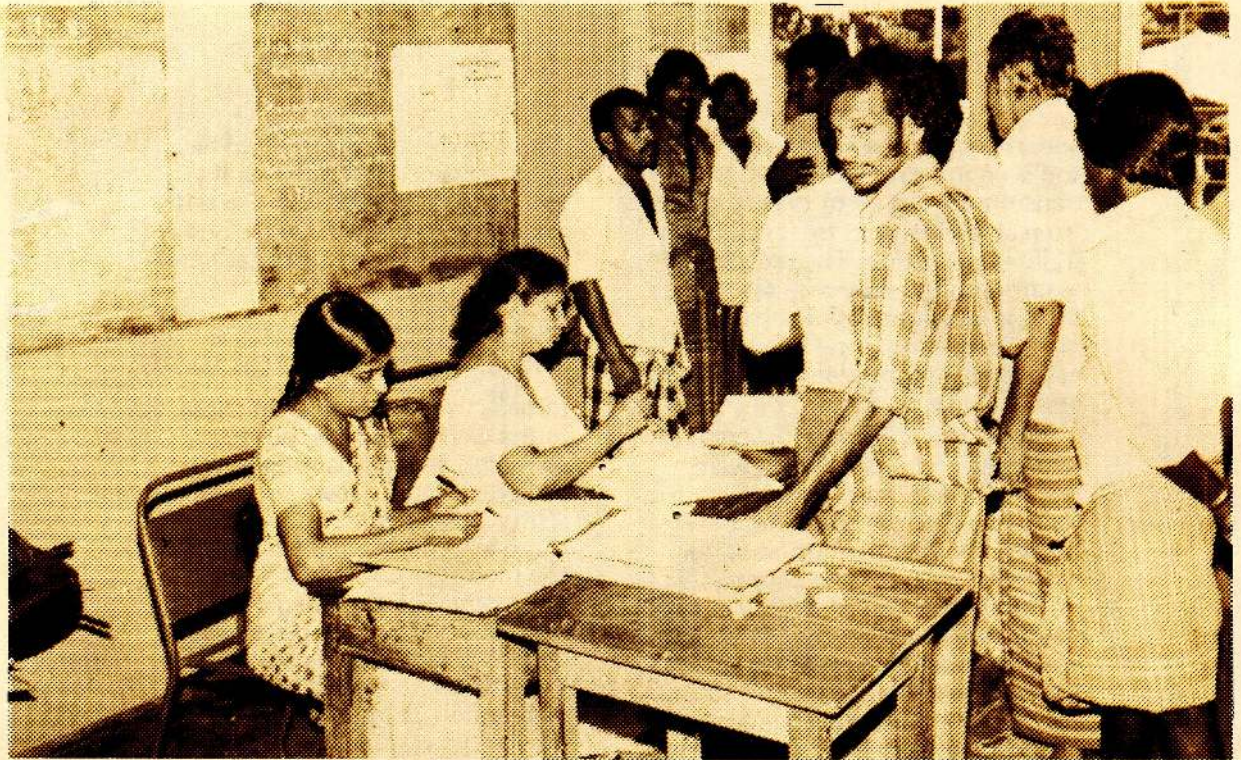
**SUN. Feb. 26th 1984.**

**Rs. 14 m. given out to refugees.**

*"Government has given Rs. 14 million through the financial incentive scheme for inmates of the refugee camps during the past four months, Commissioner General of Essential Services Bradman Weerakoon disclosed at a news conference on Friday.*

*Of this Rs. 10 million was disbursed to 6,000 families in the welfare centres while 2,500 families who had already left the camps were paid 4 million rupees, Mr Weerakoon explained."*





**Relief arrangements in respect of the displaced persons who arrived in Jaffna in August and September, 1983.**

*" In the first two weeks the rate of arrival averaged about 1,500 per day and in the third week about 1,000 per day.*

*The first and most urgent problem was to receive the displaced persons, attend to their immediate needs and despatch most of them to homes of friends and relatives, a smaller number to welfare centres (refugee camps) and a few to hospitals.*

*The entire operation was projected as the concerted effort of the people of Jaffna with the district administration keeping a low profile.*

*At the pier there was a very active first aid post serviced by personnel of the newly formed Jaffna branch of the Red Cross Society, the Jaffna Medical Association, the St. John's Ambulance Brigade Scouts and a variety of para medical volunteers. From the pier a fleet of vehicles, mostly privately owned mini buses, carried passengers free of charge to a transit camp established in the premises of a secondary school situated a mile away. At the transit camp the displaced persons were provided with refreshments toilet and washing facilities, medical care and a hot meal. The Transport Board operated a special service to take the*

*passengers virtually to their door steps anywhere in Jaffna or even into neighbouring districts on the same day or at the very latest the next morning.*

*The rate of flow of displaced persons into Jaffna gradually dropped from an unprecedented level in August 1983 to more easily manageable levels in succeeding months. Displaced families were encouraged to stay in the homes of relatives and friends with the offer of fortnightly dry rations issued by the government to all who found such homes. Over fifty thousand of the displaced persons were accommodated in homes in Jaffna, but about six thousand had to be found places in camps specially established to accommodate displaced persons.*

*In a Crisis as defined by Hippocrates, the task of the physician is to bring the patient back to the state he was in prior to the onset of the disease - so too in crisis management, the task of the district administrator is to take charge, effectively control the situation and bring it speedily back to normal."*

*Devanesan Nesiah - Government Agent Jaffna.*

*speaking at a Seminar on Crisis Management*



## FUNCTIONS OF THE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER GENERAL OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES

**Commissioner General – Mr. Bradman Weerakoon**

### 1. OVERVIEW OF WELFARE CENTRES

Staff Officers in Charge:

Mr. Dhammika Amerasinghe  
Mr. Tilak Chandrasekera  
Mr. M.J. Silva.

Functions:—

- a. Daily review of conditions in camps in Colombo, other outstations (and Jaffna Batticaloa).
- b. Supplies to camps
- c. Transfers between camps.
- d. New Entrants to camps.
- e. Conduct of Survey and Analysis of findings relating to inhabitants of camps.

### 2. REHABILITATION, SUPPLIES & SERVICES

Staff Officers in Charge:-

Mr. Y.W. Gunawardene  
Mr. C. Abeygunawardene.

Functions:-

- A. (i) Monitoring of general food and fuel supply situation to the public. Transport of aid supplies to Government Agents. Monitoring of special rationing scheme. Monitoring of advances and salary payments to public servants.  
(ii) Distribution of clothing obtained from GCEC to public servants.  
(iii) Providing residential accommodation for returning displaced public servants in Colombo.  
(iv) Arranging for transfers of public servants where possible.
- B. Attention to individual needs of displaced persons.

### 3. REHABILITATION INDIVIDUALS

Staff Officers in Charge:-

Mr. Donald Speldewinde.  
Mr. Raja Wickremesinghe.

Functions:—

- (i) Responding to letters sent by individual displaced persons and building up of case histories.
- (ii) Counselling regarding compensation claims.
- (iii) Assisting in obtaining copies of documents lost - Passports, Identity Certificates etc.,
- (iv) Assisting individuals to liaise with REPIA.

### 4. FOREIGN AID

Staff Officers in Charge:—

Mrs. I.M. Abeysekera.  
Mr. S. Sivananthan  
Mr. V.K. Nanayakkara

Functions:—

- (i) Liaison with agencies with whom aid has been negotiated by DER
- (ii) Receipt of Foreign Assistance commodities.
- (iii) Storage of Foreign Assistance commodities
- (iv) Issue of commodities through Government Agents and other agencies to displaced persons.
- (v) Accounting for assistance received.

### 5. PRESS RELATIONS AND NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Staff Officers in charge:-

Mr. Wilfred Jayasuriya

Functions:—

- (i) Attendance at Press briefings.
- (ii) Monitoring of daily newspapers, magazines, TV and radio broadcasts.
- (iii) Transmission of information to Press Radio, TV and drafting of releases.
- (iv) Liaison with Non-governmental Organisations.

### 6. SECURITY CO-ORDINATION

Staff Officers in Charge:-

Mr. S.B. Senaratne S.P.

Functions:—

- (i) Liaison with Police/Military Guards at camps.
- (ii) Escort duty of displaced persons and transfers between camps.
- (iii) Issue of Curfew Passes.
- (iv) Maintenance of Radio Communication links with 24 Districts.
- (v) Administration of transport pool.

### 7. ACCOUNTS

Staff Officers in Charge:-

Mr. Jayaweera Bandara  
Mr. Karunaratne.  
Mr. Siriwardene

Functions:—

- (i) Laying down accounting systems
- (ii) Making of all payments from Commissioner General's Votes.
- (iii) Liaison with Treasury and Government Agents.
- (iv) Drafting of circulars having Financial Implications.
- (v) Payments of salaries, advances, allowances to staff.

### 8. OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Staff Officers in Charge:-

Mr. D.C.H. Perera A.O.

Functions:—

- (i) Establishments Matters
- (ii) Office supplies
- (iii) Supervision of buildings, equipment and minor staff.
- (iv) Receiving, opening of tappal and distribution and dispatch of mail.

### WELFARE CENTRES.

Offices of the Ministry of Social Services were in operational charge in Colombo, while in the outstations they were run by the Government Agents and their assistants. They with the N.G.O's bore the main burden of direct relief work among the affected.



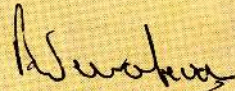
**FOREWORD**  
**To the Master Plan for Rehabilitation**

*The necessity for a Plan of Action on Rehabilitation, responding to the various 'needs' of affected persons, was under lined as we moved ahead from the stage of providing immediate relief to that of the more long term and continuing effort at reconstruction and rehabilitation.*

*This document attempts to synthesise the collective thoughts and policies of the Government, Bilateral Donors, International Agencies and non-Governmental Organizations, both foreign and local, as they faced the problems of Rehabilitation. Some of the proposals made in response to the identified needs are innovative. This is not unexpected in view of the severity and magnitude of the crisis that had to be addressed.*

*I take this opportunity to thank all those who assisted in various ways in the task of formulating these measures aimed at rehabilitation of those affected. A special word of praise is due to the officers of the Essential Services Secretariat, who shared with me, so willingly, the burden of translating Government's welfare policies into personalised acts of aid and assistance.*

*Above all, this Plan of Action is dedicated to those who bore with such courage and fortitude, the calamity that visited them in that fateful week of July, 1983.*



**Bradman Weerakoon,**

*Commissioner General of Essential Services*

February 1, 1984  
Office of the Commissioner General  
of Essential Services,  
Colombo 1.



Script:  
Relief Operations/ Rehabilitation Needs  
Bradman Weerakoon

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Progress in Rehabilitation  
Wilfrid Jayasuriya

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Photography:  
Reggie Candappa

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Designed By:  
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