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## CHA Highlights



A review meeting of the Peacebuilding Toolkit Phase II was held at CHA office with the co-facilitators.

## Feature Article

### Reports of Commissions and Committees on Disappearances, What Next?

By M.C.M.Iqbal, former Secretary of two Presidential Commissions of Inquiry into Disappearances and Secretary to the Committee of Inquiry into Disappearances Of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka.

#### The Committee of the HRC

Another inquiry into disappearances of persons has just been concluded and a report has been submitted to the Human Rights Commission (HRC) by the Committee of Inquiry into Disappearances in the Jaffna Region - appointed by the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka. The Report which was submitted on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2003, after having inquired into 281 complaints of disappearances between 1990 and 1998 in the Jaffna Region received by the HRC. It analyses the different reasons why such persons had been taken away, by whom and the whereabouts of such persons. The Report puts the blame squarely on the army in respect of the majority of the disappearances saying that there is clear evidence that they were responsible for the arrests of 245 of them and had found no evidence on where they are detained or that such persons are alive somewhere. The LTTE too has been found responsible for the disappearance of 25 persons from amongst the list of 281 of the remainder, 2 had been shot dead by the army, one had been taken by the navy, the rest had disappeared without a trace. The Committee had gone beyond its terms of reference and recommended ways in which such disappearances could have been prevented and suggests that such measures be adopted, at least to prevent the reoccurrence of such incidents in the future. The need to provide reparations to the victims has also been stressed with a plea for the NGO community to get involved in the process.

#### The Presidential Commissions

The four Presidential Commissions on Disappearances set up earlier by the President, too, had made similar recommendations.

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They were more concerned with the disappearances in the region other than the Jaffna Region because only a fraction of those affected in the North had access to these Commissions which were appointed at a time when the North was under LTTE control and virtually cut off from the South due to lack of communication facilities. All these Commissions and the Committee of HRC saw one common factor in the human right scenario of Sri Lanka, namely that the Police and the security forces are afflicted with the malady of impunity. The undesirability of letting this malady to breed had been highlighted and the need to stem the proliferation of this disease had been stressed more than adequately by all the Commissions of Inquiry and the Committee. Yet, this scourge continues and could be seen from the widespread prevalence of torture, deaths in custody and violations of fundamental rights by the Police of our country.

### **The role of the Police and Security Forces**

Though the scale of disappearance has diminished considerably, violations of other fundamental rights of individuals persist despite utterances at different fora both by state and humanitarian agencies calling for an end to such incidents. The state is to blame for not effectively dealing with indiscipline among the police and security forces personnel.

The Commissions on Disappearances have recommended that in addition to legal action against the perpetrators, disciplinary action should be taken against them for violating departmental regulations. For instance, in the few complaints of disappearances that the police had contemporaneously recorded, the entries had been made in *Minor Offences Registers* (disappearance of a person had been a minor offence!); soon after Commissions of Inquiry were appointed the IGP had issued a circular directing all Officers in Charge of Police Stations to preserve all Information Books and records pertaining to the relevant period, but the Commissions found many had not complied and but had destroyed all implicating evidence. Yet no action has been taken against such officers. In some of the cases filed against police officers responsible for causing disappearances, the officers had been interdicted from service in keeping with government regulations. But subsequently by a circular issued by the IGP all such officers had been reinstated in their posts and even promotions given in spite of court cases pending against them. These instances clearly indicate that the Police Department is not keen to maintain discipline amongst its ranks and try to improve the image of this institution which has descended to a very low depth. No wonder the UN Human Rights Commission has recently passed a stricture on the performance of this Department.

The performance of the security forces is not second to that of the police forces. The security forces chiefs in the respective areas where gross violations of rights had taken place, cannot be freed from blame. They are guilty of either condoning violations by their cadres or had given orders to indulge in such acts. Consequently they have to bear 'chain of command' responsibility for the events that brought disrepute to the country.

The content of the Report of the Committee of the Human Rights Commission, a summary of which was made available to the invitees, has had a mixed reception. Some called it a forthright document while others such as the perpetrators of such incidents and their supporters have called it a biased report. This is in spite of the Report pointing its finger both at the security forces and the LTTE for violations of the rights of individuals. In an effort to complete the picture, this report has listed over 36 instances of grave acts of violence in all parts of the country in the past which resulted in the death of a large number of civilians at the hands of the LTTE and the security forces.

### **The UN Human Rights Commission**

The United Nations Human Rights Committee has had its deliberations recently on Sri Lanka's Fourth Periodic Report on the human rights situation in Sri Lanka. The issue of human rights violations by state agencies and the question of impunity of the perpetrators were discussed. The steps taken by the Government to prevent future violations and the prosecution and punishment of persons responsible for disappearances, torture and other violations of the rights of individuals had been scrutinized. It has passed a stricture on the human rights record of Sri Lanka based especially on the inability of the government to effectively check the widespread prevalence of torture at the hands of police officers.

### **Inadequacies in the law**

In spite of the recommendations of the Commissions of Inquiry into Disappearances, causing the disappearance of a person is still not a criminal offence in our statute books. Until 1994 even causing torture was not a penal offence. Despite the passing of the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment Act No. 22 of 1994, not a single person has been convicted for the offence of torture.

*(Continued on page 3)*

The Asian Human Rights Commission has systematically been documenting acts of torture in Sri Lanka reported since 1994. It has submitted a report to the UN Human Rights Commission stressing the need to address the problems in policing and prosecuting perpetrators. Political interference with police functions has been found to be one of the main reasons for persons being tortured at Police Stations and is also a factor that stands in the way of effective prosecution of the perpetrators.

The Torture Act provides for an imperative seven years imprisonment on any person convicted of torture.

The definition of torture given in the Act is very wide. Even a slap on a suspect by a police officer is treated in the same plane as a suspect being hung upside down and assaulted mercilessly.

This has inhibited indictments by the Attorney General on perpetrators of torture. Though the need to have different grades of torture is understandable, but the state has taken no steps to change the law to make it overcome this inhibiting provision of the law and make it effective.

One of the important recommendations made by all the Commissions or Committees of Inquiry into Disappearances is the need for the establishment of an independent Public Prosecutor. No steps whatsoever have been taken by the state to make this a reality.

That even the President who appointed the Commissions of Inquiry into Disappearances had not been serious about the issues involved and the recommendations made is seen from the fact that none of the four Reports of the Commissions have been placed before the Parliament for a full discussion on them to enable the Parliament to take action on the recommendations contained in them.

The Reports of the UN Special Rapportuer on the Independence of the Judiciary has criticized the judiciary of Sri Lanka as being bias, adding another dimension to the already slurred human rights situation in Sri Lanka.

The case of Tony Michael Fernando, a torture victim who had been sentenced to jail, and the case of a senior Judge of the Supreme Court wanting to retire prematurely have been highlighted in this report. All these indicate that Sri Lanka has to go a long way before we could call ours a country where human rights violations are minimal and a victim could readily vindicate his grievance, if any, through easily accessible judicial remedies.

### **What next? Punitive action or restorative justice**

This brings us back to the question of the perpetrators of disappearances and the families of the victims who have waited in anguish for long years hoping to see that justice is done to them. They live with a heavy heart having lost their dear and near ones at the hands of the police or security forces personnel who have caused their disappearance.

With the long years that have gone by and the memories of the details of the incidents fading from their minds, the chances of the perpetrators being convicted in a Court of Law are remote. In the circumstances one has to think of other options available to wipe out this blot from the minds of people concerned and the history of this country. Greater importance needs to be given to symbolic forms of healings such as erection of monuments, award of meaningful reparations and the payment of adequate compensation which has to manifest from the State's acknowledgement of wrong doing. This is what is still lacking in our country. In spite of over 60,000 persons having gone missing, according to unofficial sources, and nearly 30,000 according to official sources, a general acknowledgement of guilt on the part of the perpetrators, is still to come.

### **Conclusion**

The concluding part of the Report of the Committee on Disappearances is very relevant here, I quote - "All that can be said at this stage is that these and many other tragedies need to be addressed on an all island basis with a view to healing and reconciliation, without prejudice to any steps that may be taken to secure justice. There should be no blanket amnesty. Rather, a balance needs to be struck between what Bishop Tutu, in his foreword to the report of the South African Truth Commission, referred to as 'retributive and punitive justice' and 'restorative justice which is concerned not so much with punishment as with correcting imbalances, restoring broken relationships, healing harmony and with reconciliation".

Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the UN had stated as follows:

"There can be no healing without peace; there can be no peace without justice; there can be no justice without respect for human rights and the rule of law".

*(Continues on page 4)*

## **BATTICOLOA**

### **General Situation**

The beginning of October was relatively quiet with the usual security force presence in the district. However towards the latter part of the month a spree of killings disrupted the relative peace, once again creating fear and tension among the people. Three killings were said to be those of former LTTE cadre, while the fourth was the assassination of Kingsley Rasanayagam who contested at the last general election. The assailants escaped on a motorcycle. Mr. Rasanayagam's bodyguard was injured during the attack and was admitted to the general hospital. (DO personal Observation)

On October 17<sup>th</sup> large crowds were seen gathered around a number of posters put up by the LTTE and the Karuna faction; the two parties have been putting up posters with slogans blaming each other for killings taking place in the district. (DO personal Observation)

Ten LTTE cadres, kept in remand for last year in Batticaloa Prison, were released on bail by the magistrate courts on October 14<sup>th</sup>. Officials from SLMM were also present at the time of release of the 10 cadres, who were to be handed over to the LTTE. The release facilitated the release of two home guards who were held by the LTTE in Trincomalee. (Field Report)

The MP for Batticaloa complained to Chief of STF and expressed his objection to the baton charge that took place on October 21<sup>st</sup> in Ariyampathy, when STF dispersed crowds of students and teachers who were protesting against the Karuna faction and its decision to form a political party. In Kaluwanchikudy the normal activities in the town were hampered when shops shut down in protest of formation of the new party. (Field Report)

### **NGO Activities**

A youth convention organised by Eastern Human Economic Development (EHED) and sponsored by CARITAS brought together 800 youth from all parts of the country belonging to various communities. The young men and women, mostly from the south visited war affected areas and met with families, women and young people. (Field Report)

## **TRINCOMALEE**

### **General Situation**

On October 8<sup>th</sup> the Secretary General of Sri Lanka's Government Peace Secretariat, Jayantha Dhanapala visited Trincomalee and held discussions with the local, Government officials and members of the SLMM. The secretary could not attend two other meetings scheduled at the district secretariat and the Provincial Council as they were cancelled due to the general shut down which was organized by Trincomalee Tamil Peoples' Forum.

Two computer Training centres were opened in Mutur east villages (Chenaiyoor and Sampoor) by Trincomalee IT Tech in collaboration with the London TR Tec to provide free computer training for School students. Six computer-training centres have now been opened in Trincomalee district under this project.

### **Return and Resettlement**

The Chairman of the Trincomalee NGO Consortium requested the Additional GA to take immediate steps to settle a land dispute of encroachment concerning Sallimunai in Kuchcheveli as it was hampering the provision of aid and assistance to the people in the area.

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The request came as a result of a letter sent by the DS in Kuchchaveli to ZOA asking them to stop all activities in the area of Sallimunai until the issue of encroachment was resolved. (*Trincomalee Consortium*)

The Chairman of the NGO Consortium requested the additional GA to provide plastic sheeting from the Rehabilitation branch of the DS office to families from the Kandaloathu WFC in the Kinniya division, in response to a letter from the Upparu Village Development Society of the welfare centre requesting the Consortium to provide roofing materials to 24 Muslim families living in the camp. (*Trincomalee Consortium*)

A sit-in protest obstructing the traffic on the Trincomalee-Nilaveli road was held on October 8<sup>th</sup> morning, organized by a group of Tamil refugees from the Allesgarden Refugee Camp stating that they are unable to return to their villages of Kanniya and Kuchchaveli as their lands are still occupied by the Army and Navy. Tension escalated when SLA soldiers attempted to disperse the protestor

### **Security Issues**

According to a Tamilnet report on October 8<sup>th</sup>, The LTTE political head in Trincomalee had lodged a complaint with SLMM saying that anti-peace elements were trying to create chaos. He said this following an incident when a group of Tamil youths was allegedly attacked by some persons in the forces at the Anpuvallipuram junction, in Trincomalee.

The North East Sinhala Association (NESA) organized a hartal in Trincomalee on October 12<sup>th</sup>. They launched 24-hour road blockade preventing the transportation of fuel and flour until the release of the two Sinhala home guards arrested and remanded by the LTTE. More than 100 Army, Navy and policemen were deployed to maintain law and order and quell any disturbances in the district.

On October 16<sup>th</sup> two home guards who were previously abducted by the LTTE were released by them on cash and surety bail. Mr. Elilan, the LTTE political head in the district, signed a bond for a sum of Rs. 100, 000/- as surety for each home guard. Both home guards were ordered to appear in the Sampoor Thamileelam courts on November 26<sup>th</sup>. After release by the LTTE, the 2 home guards were brought to the town by SLMM with police protection and later taken to the Navy House in Sri Lanka Navy Dockyard.

### **JAFFNA**

#### **General Situation**

A group of high-ranking officials from the security forces met in Jaffna on September 30<sup>th</sup> at the Bishop's House. The meeting was also attended by the DIG of the area, a representative from the Peoples Committee for Peace and Goodwill, the Bishop of Jaffna and others. Representatives from civil society put forward a number of requests including compensation and re-settlement in HSZs, accessibility of roads closed for security reasons, etc. In response to this the Jaffna District Commander stated that arrangements are underway to open the A9 from 7am to 7pm; he said that further discussion with higher authorities would be needed with regard to other concerns.

In a meeting between the Jaffna District Commander, Chief Civil Affairs Officer, the Mayor and representatives of the NGO Council, which took place on October 6<sup>th</sup> at the Council's Office, it was stated that although arrangements were being made to open the A9 until 7pm, the process was being delayed, as there was a shortage of personnel. With regard to a concern regarding the intrusion of Indian fishermen, he stated that security forces had no authority to resolve these issues and that they were the responsibilities of the concerned government officials.

#### **Protection Concerns**

A 61-year-old supporter of the EPRLF's 'Varathar' faction was shot dead by unknown gunmen travelling on a motorbike on September 27<sup>th</sup> at KKS Road. The reason for killing is not known and police are investigating the incident.

(Continued on page 6)

The following complaint and incident was reported by the HRC in Jaffna;

When the HRC received a complaint from the parents of a 21-year old living in Kalviyankadu, saying that their son had been arrested and was being held by the Jaffna police without being produced in courts, the investigating officer for HRC visited the police station on September 27<sup>th</sup>. On his visit he found there was no entry recorded for the youth and he was not being held in the prison.

While leaving the station however he heard shouting from the first floor of the building and requested to go upstairs, however he was told to get prior permission to do so from the ASP of the crime unit whose office was across the road. The HRC officer, after summoning two of his colleagues (a UN volunteer and a HRC officer) requested permission from the ASP, and proceeded to the first floor of the Police station. However, policemen in civilian clothing, who verbally and physically abused the 3 HRC officials, prevented them from proceeding and pushed them outside the building. Meanwhile, some policemen carried a youth from inside the building and put him into a vehicle, which sped up to the station and then drove off. The HRC lodged a complaint regarding the incident with the same police station. The next day, the missing youth was produced before the Jaffna magistrate who remanded him till October 8<sup>th</sup> and ordered that he should not receive any visitors, including relatives and ordered that the youth have a medical examination the next day.

A 19-year-old youth was attacked and had to be admitted to the government hospital when army soldiers allegedly assaulted him at the check-post in Viyaparimoolai at Point Pedro on October 3<sup>rd</sup> while he was trying to restart his motorbike, which had broken down at the checkpoint.

### **Subsistence Needs of the General Public**

**Health** - A drinking water purification plant has been installed at Jaffna Teaching Hospital to supply safe drinking water for kitchen, laboratory and surgical wards.

**Relief and Rehabilitation** - Hygiene and psychosocial programmes are to be implemented for students of grade 6, 7 and 8 in selected school in the Jaffna District by the Danish Red Cross. 2,800 students will benefit from this programme.

NECORD has allocated approximately Rs. 15 Million for the construction and rehabilitation of buildings in three schools in Chavakachchery, Point Pedro and Karaveddy.

**Fishing** – Ten Indian fishermen who were found with explosives in their possession were arrested at KKS by the Sri Lanka Navy on October 10<sup>th</sup>. They were produced before the magistrate and remanded until October 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Water** - UNICEF has allocated Rs. 10 Million for the construction of water tanks in 75 schools in the District.

**Agriculture** – The President of the Farmers Association of Maravanpulo stated that although security forces had recently allowed cultivation in the paddy fields of North and West Sinna Nunavil which is within the Thenmarachchi HSZ; due to the lack of preparation time, lack of seed paddy and the bad weather conditions, cultivation cannot take place until August of next year.

### **Security Issues**

A meeting between Major General Sunil Tennakoon and LTTE Political Wing leader Illamparathy took place at SLMM office in Jaffna on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

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The security post situated by the A9 highway, opposite the Chavakachcheri Hindu College, on the platform of Chankaththanai railway station was burnt down for the second time by unknown persons on October 8<sup>th</sup> while security forces were not present at the site. The post was burnt down previously by unknown persons about a year ago.

## **MANNAR**

### **General Situation**

Police investigations followed an incident where a Muslim businessman was shot dead by an unknown group in Karisal, on the night of September 30<sup>th</sup>. In retaliation, some members of the Muslim community attacked 3 offices of the LTTE suspecting the group of the assassination; others attacked Tamil civilians and stoned buses on the road. The SP of Mannar taking action enforced a curfew on October 1<sup>st</sup> in order to prevent any further incidents following Friday mosque prayers. By October 2<sup>nd</sup> the situation was brought under control after a meeting was held between SLMM, GA, LTTE, and members of the community.

The LTTE complained that the police aided the mob in the destruction of the LTTE offices, as they had not shown up for nearly two hours after the violence began. (DO Personal Observation)

Nanattan Multi Purpose Corporative Society (MPCS) is issuing approximately 1,450 IDP families dry rations through their 10 branches. Details of the dry ration issue is as follows; 1 person Rs. 336/-, 2 persons - Rs. 616/-, 3 persons - Rs.840/-, 4 persons - Rs.1008/-, 5 persons and above - Rs.1260/-. Rice, dhal, flour, sugar, tea, match boxes, etc. are included in the issue, which is provided once a month to each family. (DO Personal Observation)

Security which was already tightened in the area following the killing of a Muslim businessman was further increased on October 7<sup>th</sup> following an incident where SLA soldiers arrested some masons who were constructing a monument to an LTTE martyr in the town. The SLMM however interrupted the arrest and released the labourers after recording their statement. (DO Personal Observation)

### **NGO Activities**

*The Murunkan Nanattan Seed Corp (MUNASCO) was founded 10 years ago for seed production. This Maha Season, the organisation has produced 1,500 bushels of various seed paddy for farmers. (DO Personal Observation)*

CARE inaugurated their Dry Zone Agriculture Development Programme on October 8<sup>th</sup> in Nanattan DS Division and Madhu AGA division for the benefit of 1,573 small-scale farmers. (DO Personal Observation)

SARVODAYA celebrated International Elders' day at the Mannar Town Hall, where many senior citizens were provided with clothes and other gifts. (DO Personal Observation)

## **PUTTALAM**

### **General Situation**

It has been reported that although sand excavation is illegal and has been banned in the district, youth from areas such as Arachchikattuwa and Rajakadaluwa, who are faced by the threat of unemployment risk the consequences and excavate sand for economical gain. This is especially lucrative, as the demand for has risen following the recent ban.

Mannar Road in Puttalam is facing severe shortage of water, and although the ADB has funded a water project, there is misdistribution and many complain that the water supplied to the IDPs is not equally distributed.

In addition, the Kamandaluwa primary school is also experiencing a lack of water. This has lead to them being forced to spend up to Rs. 500/- per week to buy drinking water. The school is requesting through the media and other sources for assistance and support to resolve this issue.

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## Issues of Self Reliance and Public Participation

In the Udappu area, following many requests made by residents, measures are being taken to restore connections and provide water from the Keeriyankalli tank to the many people in the surrounding areas who are affected by shortages of water.

### NGO Activities

Community Trust Fund conducted a two-day training programme on the risk of mines, in Puttalam last month.

The Puttalam District Reconciliation Centre (PDRC) has produced a drama on women's rights and empowerment with the support of FORUT. The groups' aim is to travel from village to village, conducting street dramas, which depict the difficulties and burdens that women are forced to undergo. The drama also provides the audience with options on how to respond to such issues.

The Osmaniya Circle for Research, Education and Development, which was specifically established for the upliftment of the educational standards of displaced northern Muslims, revived its activities this month; the group is now working on its 6-year educational plan put forward last April.

## VAVUNIYA

### Issues of Resettlement and Relocation:

Statistics of Welfare Centre as at 09.10.2004

Welfare Centres	Families	Persons
Poonthoddam Unit I	135	549
Poonthoddam Unit II	117	491
Poonthoddam Unit III	137	525
Poonthoddam Unit IV	19	478
Poonthoddam Unit V	156	616
Poonthoddam Unit VI	103	377
Poonthoddam Unit VII	122	499
Poonthoddam Unit VIII	145	570
Poonthoddam Unit IX	112	469
Nelukkulam	98	380
Sithamparapuram	834	3246
Adappankulam	226	838
Kovilpuliyankulam (Iyankaravoor & Pavatkulam Unit IV & VI)	109	413
Total	2313	9451

### Subsistence needs of the general Public

**Health** - Health officials closed down Vavuniya College of Education for three weeks from October 11<sup>th</sup> after 70 students and teachers suffered from dysentery. Vavuniya MOH found stagnating garbage and leaking cesspits in the college when its premises were inspected after students and teachers started to fall ill.



## Protection Concern

On October 12<sup>th</sup> a three-wheeler, which was hired by 3 passengers to go to Cheddikulam from Vavuniya Town, was robbed after the passengers killed the driver who was identified as a resident of Jinna Nagar. Police investigations are being conducted. Following the incident all three-wheeler owners organised a protest and demonstration on October 13<sup>th</sup>. It has been reported that 5 three-wheeler drivers have been killed up to date.

We regret that due to unavoidable circumstances the report from Ampara district will not be available in this issue.

Web:- [http://www.humanitarian-srilanka.org/pages/situation\\_Report.htm](http://www.humanitarian-srilanka.org/pages/situation_Report.htm)

For more details, please contact Amali on 4610943/4 or via e-mail [neprog@cha.lk](mailto:neprog@cha.lk)

## Forum Highlights

### Northern Group and Eastern Forum

The Northern Group meeting was held on October 7<sup>th</sup> at the Puttalam DS Office. Issues discussed were very specific to the district and focused mainly on the proposed Nuraicholai Coal Power Plant, issues faced by internally displaced persons in the area and illegal migration of youth in Puttalam.

The Nuraicholai Coal Power Plant was discussed at length by Mr. Hemantha Vithanage a senior environmental scientist, along with Mr. Mubarak from the Solidarity Movement against the Power Plant Project. They presented information on the social, economical and environmental impact of such a project on the surrounding area.

Participants also discussed the resettlement issues faced by displaced persons, saying that some who wanted to return to their places of origin were waiting for the LTTE to ensure their safety and protection, although the probability of this taking place was minimal. It was argued that many people had moved back and begun to resettle on their own without this assurance from the LTTE, examples of this were cited with the resettlement taking place in areas of Mannar, where over 2,500 people had moved and sustained themselves with agriculture and farming.

The problem of youth in search of better future prospects risking their lives by migrating illegally, which is a serious issue in Puttalam, was also discussed with the District Officer citing examples of situations where young people would spend hard-earned money to travel only to be caught by the local police or Metropol and escorted back. The group agreed that leaders in the community should take measures to ensure that the young men are offered and encouraged to seek other options.

The Eastern Forum meeting was held at CHA in Colombo on October 15<sup>th</sup> and the main issue discussed was Human Security in the East. The group agreed and focused on the following areas of possible intervention;

1. The CFA should be maintained
2. Zero accommodation of even one death
3. No more displacement or destruction
4. Holistic approach to human security
5. Urge all those engaged to disengage from violent activities
6. Broaden the scope for human right interventions

briefly the situation in the east with regard to the security situation, the general situation and child recruitment, etc. to which several concerns such as whether the incidents at the district level were indications of the situation being dangerous and uncontrollable, the public continually being directly and indirectly affected by the situation, the ongoing Karuna faction-LTTE battles, etc.

The group agreed on the following next steps, to be taken and it was suggested that agencies should actively support and assist in these;

1. Visit by Ian Martin to the east with a specific focus of providing advice on the human rights environment and recommendations to improve the situation.
2. Peace Secretariats (Govt and LTTE) to meet civil society in Batticaloa separately
3. NGO representative group to meet with the LTTE and the SLA
4. Documentation of incidents that are taking place.

For more details, please contact Amali on 4610943/4 or via e-mail neprog@cha.lk

### Landmine Ban Advocacy Forum

The Forum met on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October 2004. The following activities are to be carried out by the forum

- o Press statement on the NSA conference organised by Geneva Call.
- o Letter to MPs with the objective of raising awareness about the issue with them.
- o Nairobi summit on a mine free world
  - Forum representation at the summit
  - Meet with official delegation to summit
  - Brief journalists prior to event through an organised visit to a mine affected area.

For more details, please contact Parveen on 4610943/4 or via e-mail marc@cha.lk

### Psychosocial Forum (PSF)

#### Strategic Planning workshop

A discussion was held on the strategic action planning workshop for the Psychosocial Forum for 2004-2006. The workshop is scheduled for the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of November and will provide members with an opportunity to be actively involved in identifying the future vision, mission and objectives of the Psychosocial Forum and its future strategic role. A two-year plan of action will be formulated for the PSF. For more details, please contact Lara on 4610943/4 or via e-mail psychcord@cha.lk

#### Reading Groups

Reading and discussion groups are held on issues in the field of psychosocial work and counseling. (The groups are open to students, psychosocial personnel and others involved in or with an interest in psychosocial work, counseling and conflict affected communities in Sri Lanka. For further information please contact Coomerene Rodrigo at pspdat@eol.lk or on 011-4515279.

Theme 01: Domestic Violence ,Resource Person: Prof. Jeanne Maracek ,(Swathmore College)

#### Dates

9<sup>th</sup> November - Tailoring Responses to Wife-beating to the Different Contexts in Sri Lanka (*Panel Discussion*)  
At 5.15 - 6.45pm at The Psychosocial Support Programme (PSP), 12 1/1, Ascot Avenue, Off Thimbirigasyaya Road, Colombo 05.

#### PSP Seminar Series

A Seminar was held on 'How do organisations conceptualise needs?' by Roshan Dhammapala.

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> October (Friday) at 5.30p.m.  
Venue: PSP Office

## KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

### CHA Knowledge Centre

The Knowledge Centre holds resources on Human Rights, Landmines, Peace Related documents, conflict Related documents, IDPs, Humanitarian Assistance, Development, Psychosocial and other documents relevant to the on NGOs sector and disseminated for members of the CHA by the Knowledge Centre. Now it opens for public and have computerised all the documents using WINISIS Library package and not only that all the important documents have been uploaded to the special computer called "Reference Computer" to easy access to information seekers any time.

### Northern & Eastern CHA Resource Centres

The Resource Centres for the districts of North and East has been set up to includes information on the Peace Process, Human Rights especially Internally Displaced Persons, Rights, Child Rights and Land Rights, Landmine related resources and also humanitarian activities etc. The resource Centres are open for public especially organisations, that work in the North and East. An Information seeker could make a request on a special reports or article published by researchers or professionals from CHA District Offices. An any organisation working in the North and East would like to obtain CHA support to setup Information Units or Resource Centres please discuss with the respective CHA District Officer or just email Chammika at infoanalyst@cha.lk

### Inter-library Loan System

The Inter-Library Loan System was discussed at length at the Knowledge Centre Steering Committee Meeting recently. Proposals were tabled to discuss to introduce the system to a wider audience Island wide including North, East and the South. Identifying the CHA Knowledge Centres in the Northern and Eastern districts, as focal points for the project will strengthen organisations to join with the system to share information within districts as well as on a regional basis.

The list of ILLS members can be obtained from the Knowledge Centre at CHA and all of the CHA publications could be obtained free on request or could be downloaded from the website.

### The Database of Non-Governmental Organisations in Sri Lanka

The updated version of the directory has been compiled and consists of sector wise data such as Human Rights Organisations, Conflict Transformation Organisations, Psychosocial Organisations etc, and activity wise data such as Child Rights Organisations, War-widow Organisations etc. The compiled existing database includes around seven hundred and fifty organisations' Island - wide. The CD version of the database is available at the Knowledge Centre.

## Project Highlights

### Resource Centre on Peacebuilding

The understanding of lack of opportunities and sharing of resources on peace in Sri Lanka, the project " Peacebuilding toolkit" is planed to setup two local language resource centers in Kandy and Trincomalee. The Sinhala Resource Centre would like to buildup at Satyadaya while selecting Tamil Resource Centre at CHA Trincomalee District Office under Eastern Rehabilitatio Organisation umbrella. The action has taken to setup comprehensive resource centres on peace while information sharing and expanding network throughout the districts to work together and closer to pretaing peace to Sri Lanka.

*For more details, please contact Chammika on 4610943/4 or via e-mail infoanalyst@cha.lk*

### The Directory of Peace Building Organisations in Sri Lanka

More than one hundred and fifty organisations have provided details for the directory so far to promote the provision of more details from other peace. Similarly, organizations, press advertisements, were used, whilst participants at the introductory workshop on the Peacebuilding Toolkit will also be provided an opportunity.

*For more details, please contact Niranjana on 4610943/4 or via e-mail pb\_co@cha.lk*

### Peacebuilding Introductory workshop

12 Introductory workshops will be conducted covering 24 districts catering to 50 participants at each workshop. The first 4 workshops to be conducted in November, have been organized in the following manner.

The workshops will be conducted in Sinhala, Tamil or in English according to the needs of the participants.

The Objectives of the workshop are:

- Introducing and promoting The Peacebuilding Toolkit - A Guidebook on Transitional Issues for Reconciliation.
- Inventories stakeholder interests to use the Toolkit.
- Build capacity of Sri Lankan stakeholders to develop their approaches towards peace-building
- Brainstorm and develop further community responses to advance the peace process and reconciliation.

*For more details, please contact Fareeha on 4610943/4 or via e-mail [peace@cha.lk](mailto:peace@cha.lk)*

### Peace and Development Project

Review of proposals from Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya and Trincomalee have been completed. The response form Jaffna, Killinochchi and Mullaitivu are still not satisfactory. The District Office in Jaffna will be re-circulating proposal forms - completed forms will be accepted until 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2004.

The proposal for a Children's newspaper by Sri Lanka Children's Self Creation Development Foundation has been approved. The grant agreement has been signed and the first instalment of funds has also been released

DRB meetings in Vavuniya and Trincomalee were held on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of October, 2004, respectively. Of the proposals reviewed for Vavuniya only one was selected by the DRB. Fresh proposals are being called for and will be accepted until 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2004.

A workshop to build up the capacity of the Implementing Partners in Badulla, Moneragala and Hambantota is scheduled to be held in Moneragala on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November, 2004.

The Danish Development Co-operations have joined the programme. A MOU was signed for a period of one year commencing November 2004 and fund amounting to 1 million Kroner have been received.

Discussion with SIDA are still continuing.

The person to handle 'Research and Monitoring the Impact of the Programme' will be recruited.

Brochures have been printed in English, Tamil and Sinhala. The Newsletter (in English) is being edited - translation into Sinhala and Tamil to be done.

The 4<sup>th</sup> NCB meeting was held on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2004. A draft of the report resulting from the Strategic Outcomes meeting was circulated at the NCB meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2004. The final report is due by the end of November, 2004.

### The Practitioner's Kit for Return, Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Development

The booklet of A Practitioner's Kit for Return, Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Development: An Agenda for a Call for Action was published in English, Sinhala and Tamil languages and the toolkit will be disseminated through an Island and if you would like to obtain a copy please contact Chammika <[infoanalyst@cha.lk](mailto:infoanalyst@cha.lk)>

## NGO JICA Japan Desk

"Manual on Registration of NGOs" is being revised with latest and valuable information on NGOs in Sri Lanka directed by JICA, in partial fulfillment of one of the project's objectives. The revised Manual consists of eleven chapters to cover different fields of NGOs in Sri Lanka. Chapters on the Manual are as follows,

Chapter one - Sri Lanka at a glance

Chapter two - History of NGOs in Sri Lanka

Chapter three - Government towards NGOs in Sri Lanka

Chapter four - NGO Registration procedure in Sri Lanka

Chapter five - Recruitment procedure in Sri Lanka

Chapter six - Infrastructure facility for NGOs in Sri Lanka

Chapter seven - Peace process in Sri Lanka

Chapter eight - Government towards the Economy in Sri Lanka

Chapter nine - Tax Updates in Sri Lanka

Chapter ten - Summary and Analysis of the Budget of Sri Lanka

Chapter eleven - Important Websites for NGOs

### Regional Initiative for the Right to Sustainable Livelihood and the enabling of Social and Political Participation

#### Regional

- Continuation of a South Asian Data base of Organizations, network and individuals working in the areas of sustainable livelihood and social and Political participation. The mapping would look at existing campaigns and strategies followed by those working in the region.
- Continuation of critique of policies and practices in South Asia around livelihood and participation in terms of national provisions, policies and the assessment of vulnerability within the themes found detailed in the focus areas suggested by Novib, with specific reference to the Provisions of the SAARC Social Charter.
- Preparation for Regional Steering committee meeting scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> Dec, All regional partners will be present.

#### National

- Commencement of Database in the districts; translation of database structure and mapping note into Tamil and Sinhalese, commissioning of organizations/ individual to do the assignment together with the DOs .
- CPN meetings in Jaffna (20<sup>th</sup> Oct) Mannar, (30<sup>th</sup> Oct) Puttalam ( 14<sup>th</sup> Oct), and Tricomalee. ( 25<sup>th</sup> Oct) No meetings held in Vavuniya and Amparai due to DO s absence.
- Follow up meetings to the South meeting held in Colombo last month were held on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> and attended by CHA staff in Moneragala and Badulla. Meeting minutes and follow up very slow, hence CHA staff will make a visit together with PND staff during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of Nov. Requests for training by both districts.

### Workshop on Reconciliation - After Violent Conflict in the eastern Province

The workshop was one of two other similar workshops conducted in Jaffna as well as in Colombo targeting the Northern province as well as Southern province.

The project is based on the premise that peace after violent conflict can only be secured and sustained if a broad range of national actors including politicians, civil society, victims and armed combatants recognize the importance of reconciliation and work towards it.

## International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

It was felt important to engage the voices of the community and members of civil society as well as policy makers and the international community on this issue - to highlight the importance of addressing reconciliation, to make them aware of the expectations and apprehensions of national stakeholders in relation to the peace process and to encourage them to mainstream reconciliation into the peace negotiations.

The project objectives are to:

Stimulate a dialogue among a wide range of stakeholders on the importance of addressing, even mainstreaming reconciliation as an integral aspect of peace and democracy building;

Engender a national consensus on reconciliation that goes beyond traditional political actors with the view to stimulating a social process.

Assist in the process of rooting that national consensus on reconciliation around concrete political processes and institutions.

Build capacity of Sri Lanka stakeholders to professionalize their approaches towards peace-building by making them aware of comparative processes and experiences.

Create political spaces for dialogue and framing action plan to engender political reforms that may transform the conflicts in Sri Lanka.

The project aimed at providing comparative international experiences that are of relevance to the Sri Lankan context and generating a dialogue among the major political stakeholders, including political party leadership, civil society groups that represent the interests of democracy activists, women, marginalized communities, and if possible members of the military on selected themes for peace building through a series of meetings with international experts

Approx. 30 participants representing NGOs, Govt. institutions, CBOs (10 participants/district) from Amparai, Batticaloa and Trincomalee participated at the event.

Next steps:

The Districts drew up specific action plans as to how Reconciliation should be promoted in their respective districts, in terms of activities, what the expected outcomes would be, who the key players and target groups would be as well as specific time frames of when it should be done. The detailed report is under development and would be available with the Information Unit by end November.

## Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA)

Navsharan Singh Representative from International Development Research Centre Regional visit to evaluate the progress of the PCIA project on 26<sup>th</sup> of October in Colombo.

She was here to do an evaluation of sorts with regard to the progress of the PCIA project. She met with trainers, who were able to provide her with ample information regarding their experiences in conducting conflict sensitive workshops.

She also met with Jeevan, Shirantha and Chamindri, on the 27<sup>th</sup> which was a good opportunity in which they were able to bring to her notice several matters including the set-backs, faced in this project, and its future.

*For more details, please contact chamindri on 4610943/4 or via e-mail [pcia@cha.lk](mailto:pcia@cha.lk)*

## Conflict Sensitive Approaches workshops

Workshops of conflict sensitivity approaches were held in various Districts (Ampara, Batticaloa, Puttalam) in the North and North-East, mainly for CBO's, NGO's, Governmental Organizations, and other various organizations upon request. So far these workshops have been extremely successful, and have received many positive responses.

## Human Security

### District Consortium review meeting on Human Security

Planning meeting for next year was held in October at the CHA Secretariat with the Heads of the District Consortia. All the District Consortia were requested to prepare project proposals for the year 2005.

CHA was requested to assist the Kilinochchi District Consortium and a proposal was submitted by its consortium in October. CHA was able to obtain funds from the Swiss Embassy for their on going activities up to December, 2004.

### **CHA / Berghof collaboration on Human Security**

Discussion on Human Security Project with Berghof Foundation for Conflict Studies was held on 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2004

### **DEVELOPMENT WORK IN SRI LANKA: THE CHALLENGES OF INTEGRATING A PSYCHOSOCIAL PERSPECTIVE**

The second workshop on Development work in Sri Lanka : The challenges of Integrating a Psychosocial Perspective was organized by jointly CHA and PSF on 22<sup>nd</sup> of October at Galadhari Hotel, Colombo. The workshop intended to provide policy makers, managers and administrators of development and humanitarian programming with the forum to achieve further clarity regarding the following:

- Psychosocial wellbeing;
- Links between development and psychosocial interventions;
- Gamut of approaches currently utilised in the psychosocial sector
- Principles and examples of good practices of psychosocial work in Sri Lanka.

Workshop was to enhance capacity to review existing policies, practices and structures and initiate changes if necessary to ensure psychosocial appropriateness of interventions; hence a greater psychosocial sensitivity in programming.

### **Event Highlights - (Attended by Staff)**

- Review workshop on Advisory Services on Minority Rights was held at Mount Lavinia on 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2004
- Asia Pacific Forum consultation with National Human Rights Commission India, was held in Delhi on 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2004.
- Finalisation of Peace and Development Agreement, with Government of Denmark at the Danish Consulate on 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2004.
- Discussion on Disappearances and Relief was held at Human Rights Commission in Colombo on 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2004
- Meeting was held on 13<sup>th</sup> of October 2004 with Immigration Review Board of Norway in Colombo
- Meeting with Director of Non - Governmental Organisations was held on 14<sup>th</sup> of October 2004 in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan
- E-connect 2004 the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Seminar on Internet Resource Management hosted by the Ministry of Information and Communication, Republic of Korea with ICTA was held between 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of October 2004.
- The mid term review of the Government of Sri Lanka and UNICEF programme of cooperation for 2002-2006 was organized by the Department of External Resources and held on 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2004
- Civil Society Forum meeting was held on 14<sup>th</sup> of October 2004, organized by CHA at SEDEC in Colombo
- Meeting to discuss Performance Improvement Project for Development Actors of North East Sri Lanka was organised by DFID on 18<sup>th</sup> of October at GTZ Office in Colombo. David Whaley who had undertaken a consultancy which looks at some of the institutional and political economy issues impacting on the implementation of the PIP project made a presentation to share and discuss his findings with some agencies with operational activities in the North East.
- Celebration of United Nations Day was organized by UNDP, Colombo on 25<sup>th</sup> of October
- Initialization of Peace and Development Grant with the Government of Denmark was held on 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2004

**NON-CHA WORKSHOP  
[CHA Participation]**

**Financial Management Function for Non-financial Managers**

Workshop on the Financial Management Function for Non-financial Managers (An introduction to basic accounting) was organized by Hayleys Ltd on 26<sup>th</sup> of October 2004

**Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation**

Dikonia - Sri Lanka Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation workshop was held on 27<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2004 at Digana Resort in Kandy. The workshop was organised by Dikonia

**Calendar for November - Meeting**

**Landmine Ban Advocacy Forum Meeting**

Date : 10 November 2004

Time : 10 am

Venue : CHA

**Northern Group Meeting**

Date : 17 November 2004

Time : 10 am

Venue : CHA

**Eastern Forum Meeting**

Date : 18 November 2004

Time : 10 am

Venue : Trincomalee

**We are on the web!**  
**[www.humanitarian-srilanka.org](http://www.humanitarian-srilanka.org)**

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