

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

SRI LANKA: CIVILIAN DISPLACEMENT

June 5, 2006

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

This information bulletin no. 02 (no. 01 issued 4th may 2006) is being issued for information only, and reflects the status of the situation and information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The Situation

Thousands of people remain displaced by the violence that began in mid-April in Trincomalee district in the north east of Sri Lanka (see map on page 3). The number of internally displaced people (IDPs) across the district continues to fluctuate but according to information gathered by the Government, the UN and other NGOs, the estimated number of IDPs on 18th May amounts to approximately 9,039 families (32,081 people). While the influx of IDPs has been slightly decreasing in Town and Gravets division, numbers have been rising in Eachchilampattai and Muttur divisions, reflecting an overall increase in movement of people to areas controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Not all those who have fled have been registered, most notably in the LTTE controlled areas of Muttur where population movements have fluctuated and access is difficult owing to heightened tensions and insecurity. Most IDPs are temporarily lodged with relatives or at schools and places of worship. Many families have sought refuge in jungle areas and have not been accounted for in the final numbers.

The government and the UN, together with local and international organisations, have established coordination mechanisms in a bid to ensure the humanitarian response is appropriate and timely. The governor of Muttur has established two groups comprised of government representatives to assist the displaced and has pledged to provide rations of food items for IDP's in Muttur (LTTE controlled area), Eachchilampattai and Town and Gravets. While distributions seem to have started in some areas, there are still delays reported in many other areas. NGOs and other organisations are supplementing this effort with food, non-food relief items and water.

Some IDPs also fear traveling to the NGO Multi Purpose Corporative Society (MPCS) since they have to cross areas of conflict. The IASC¹ (Inter-Agency Standing Committee) Country Team in Sri Lanka has stated that the food situation remains serious and has been advocating with the Government Agent (district secretary) to facilitate transportation of food items to vulnerable populations.

According to a report by a group of NGO's, efforts are being made to reopen clinics and hospitals in Muttur and Eachchilampattai but the lack of staff and transport due to tension has delayed implementation of this process. Safe drinking water and sanitation are still a problem and need immediate attention.

The violence in the eastern Trincomalee district has also resulted in over 4000 people moving across to the western coastal town of Mannar in a bid to travel to India across the narrow strip of sea that separates the two countries. At present, many of these IDP's are temporarily based in a church as well as with relatives or friends.

Offices of three NGOs engaged in post-tsunami reconstruction and peace activities in Muttur, Trincomalee were attacked with hand bombs on the 21st of May 2006, injuring three people. In addition, the government has imposed restrictions on the transport of construction material such as cement bags, steel rods, bricks, and timber to LTTE controlled areas. Prior permission for transport of construction material has to be sought from the Ministry of Defence.

Red Cross Red Crescent Action



Sri Lanka Red Cross volunteers distributing dry rations and non-food relief items to IDPs in Trincomalee District

The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) branch in Trincomalee has been working in cooperation with the Federation and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to provide assistance to the displaced. Dry rations and non-food relief items in the form of hygiene and kitchen kits, tents, clothing and jerry cans for water collection have been distributed and first aid and health services have been provided to IDP populations. Similar distributions and assistance is being provided to people who have moved to other districts following the recent displacement in Trincomalee.

From the 5th of May to the 3rd of June 2006, the Red Cross have distributed dry food rations to 2166 displaced families in Trincomalee district. Distributions were also due last week but were delayed owing to the security situation and have

been delivered this week. This distribution is in addition to the provision of food and nonfood relief items to approximately 3927 families in the preceding four weeks (5th May – 30th May). First aid and health support is also provided by SLRCS volunteers.

At present, the branch is supported by one DM delegate from Hong Kong Red Cross branch of China Red Cross Society, plus the Federation field representative who supports all the necessary coordination with other external actors.

The following non-food relief items (see table 1 on the right) have recently been transported to Trincomalee from the Federation's regional warehouse in Ampara to replenish stocks that have been distributed in recent weeks.

In Mannar, Red Cross volunteers and staff have commenced 1st

Item	Units
Hygiene Kits	2700
Kitchen Sets	500
Bed Sheets	1000
Sleeping Mats	4478
Water Jerry Cans (20 Liters)	1000
Hurricane Lamps	500
Tents	50
Packets of Candles	2000
Box of Matches	3000
Saree (woman's clothing)	3000
Sarong (men's clothing)	3000
Tarpaulins	500

Table 1

¹ IASC comprises of the following organizations RC/HC, OCHA, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, IFRC, IOM, CHA, OXFAM, OHCHR, CARE, World Vision, ZOA, Save the Children, MERLIN and Sarvodaya.

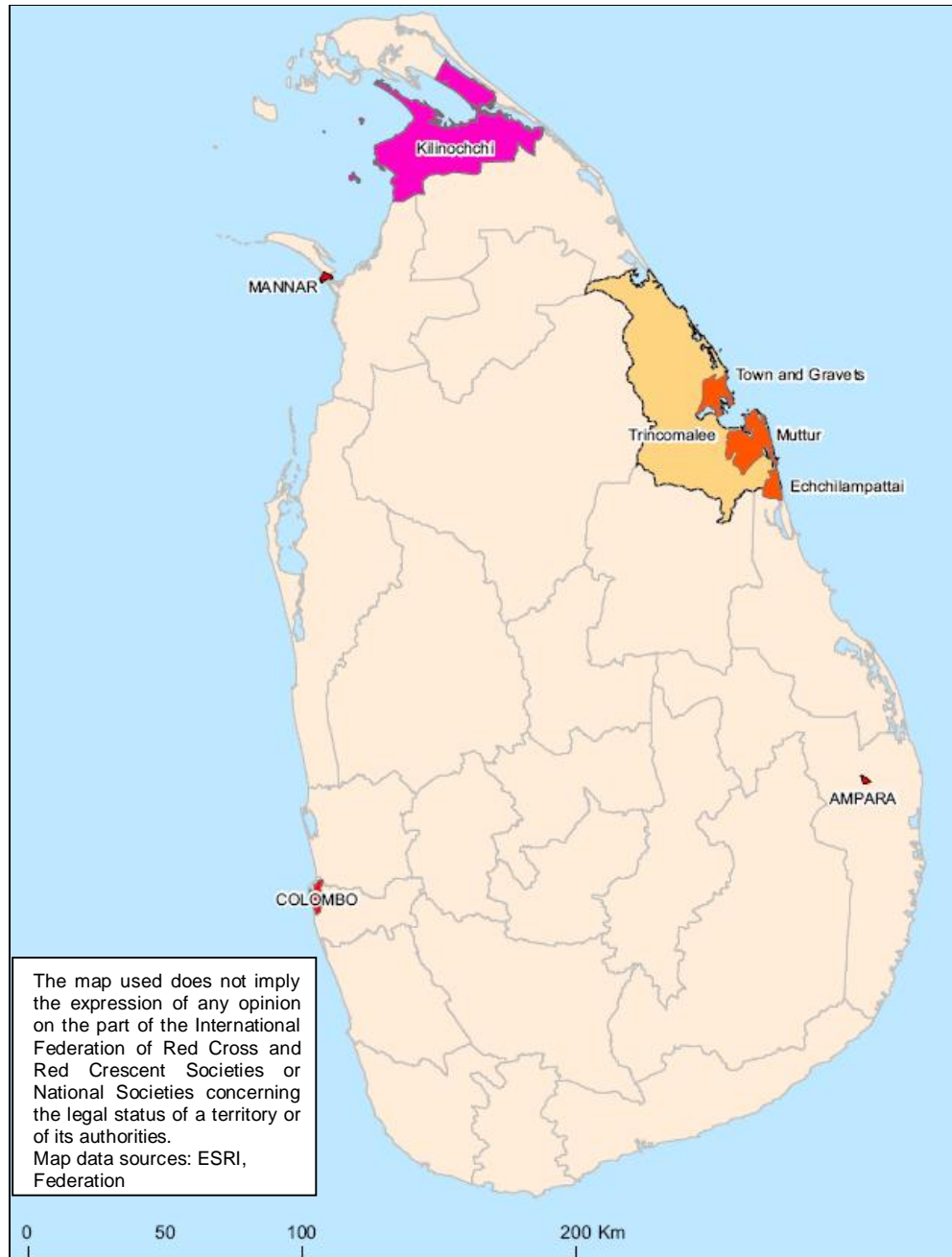
June, the distribution of NFRI to civilians awaiting transport to India. The following items were transported to Mannar for distribution (Table 2)

SLRCS together with UNHCR had previously conducted a needs assessment and had also carried out a clean up campaign around the area where the IDPs are housed.

In the Kilinochchi district, the Red Cross is providing assistance to people displaced from Kayts Island in Jaffna. SLRCS has distributed 50 sleeping mats and NFRI of 200 packs of soap and 25 packets of washing powder.

Items	Quantity
Sleeping mats	3478
Packets of candles	2000
Boxes of matches	3000
Hygiene parcels	700
Sarongs	1750
Sarees	1750

Table 2



[Please see first page for contact information](#)