
Peace Secretariat coordinates supplementary assistance to IDPs

Friday, 22 May 2009

Last Updated Friday, 22 May 2009

Though the Government has been coping satisfactorily, with the assistance of its humanitarian partners, with the recent huge influx of IDPs, the demand for basic necessities has increased dramatically. The Peace Secretariat has therefore been assisting efforts to collect and distribute such necessities through mechanisms that supplement ongoing programmes.

It has sought and received the assistance of a number of private and public organisations for this purpose. The Rotary Club, the Attorney General's Office and Grant McCann Erickson have been noteworthy in their contributions. In March, on a request by the Security Forces Commander in Vavuniya, the Peace Secretariat coordinated with past Governor Mr. Thariq Thulba, who is also Chairperson of the Committee on Disaster Relief of Rotary District 3220, and the Rotary Club of Colombo East to send 5,500 slippers to Vavuniya IDPs. The Sri Lanka Army provided transportation. The Security Forces in Vavuniya reported that the slippers were distributed to IDPs in several zones in Menik Farm. In addition, Rotary Clubs of District 3220 also undertook to collect clothing, and food items such as tinned salmon, rice, flour, milk powder and biscuits. Rotarian Supem De Silva of the Rotary Club of Capital City coordinated this collection drive. SCOPP Deputy Secretary General Mr C.S. Poolokasingham received the items on behalf of the Government on 7th April and the truck load was sent to Vavuniya the same day. The Security Forces Headquarters informed that these items were distributed to IDPs in Gajasinghapura in the Mannar District. Meanwhile, on a request by Brigadier L. C. Perera, the Peace Secretariat coordinated with Rotary Clubs of District 3220, the Attorney General's Department and Grant McCann Erickson to send a consignment of water bottles. By 27th April, The Rotary District 3220 had collected 10,693 litres of water at the SOGO bottled Water Company in Millewa. The Attorney General's Department also collected 2,000 water bottles and all these were collected by the Air Force and airlifted to Anuradhapura. On 29th April, an additional 2,016 bottles were received from the Attorney General's Department and 10,000 from Grant McCann Erickson, while Rotary District 3220 arranged for 8,010 litres of waters to be collected from the SOGO Bottled Water Company in Millewa. All this was collected by the Air Force on 30th April and dispatched to the civilians entering government controlled areas. Later, Rotary District 3220 provided another 10,000 1.5 litre water bottles to be collected from Randiya Water Company in Malabe and these dispatched by the Sri Lanka Army on 15th May. Nearly 50,000 litres were thus sent up at crucial times. The Peace Secretariat's work in providing relief to persons affected by the conflict has been ongoing, especially through its partnership with the Rotary Club. The Secretariat has, for instance, been engaged in assisting women in the East, through a micro finance project in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Colombo North and the Rotary Club of Winward, Oahu (Hawaii) since 2007.

Policy Unit Secretariat for Coordinating the Peace Process
Courtesy: SCOPP