EU gives six million euros to help Sri Lanka refugees

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BRUSSELS (AFP) – The European Commission on Wednesday granted more aid for tens of thousands of people who fled fighting between Sri Lankan forces and Tamil fighters, voicing concern for their lack of protection. The commission is "concerned by the lack of protection for the internally displaced, especially for female-headed households and single women returning alone to their villages as well as for the disabled", said EU Humanitarian Aid Commissioner Karel De Gucht, announcing six million euros (8.7 million dollars) of fresh aid.
"I urge the government of Sri Lanka to enter into a constructive dialogue with the international aid community to allow for a transparent, credible and realistic handling of the humanitarian situation, including full and unimpeded access for all aid agencies and donors ready to provide assistance," he added. Five million euros of the aid announced will go towards providing humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees and host families in Sri Lanka. A further one million euros will be in the form of humanitarian aid for Sri Lankan refugees living in camps in Tamil Nadu, India. Sri Lankan government forces defeated the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels in May, after wiping out the leadership of the once-powerful movement, which began its armed struggle for an independent Tamil homeland in 1972. During the war's finale, the United States and other Western nations voiced alarm at Sri Lanka's treatment of non-combatants, along with its internment afterwards of up to 280,000 people, most of the Tamil minority population, under military surveillance. Last month Colombo announced that it would allow all civilians to leave the camps. The final closure is promised for next month. The new money brings the total of commission aid for victims of the humanitarian crises in Sri Lanka to 48 million euros.Courtesy: news.yahoo.com