

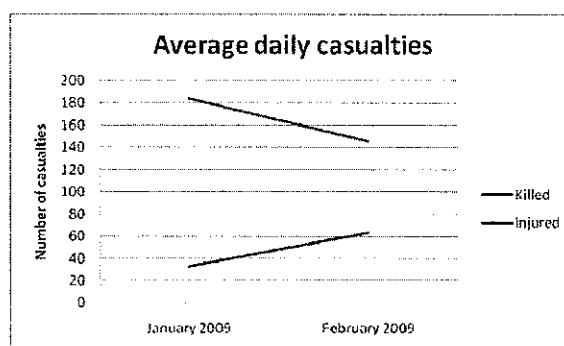
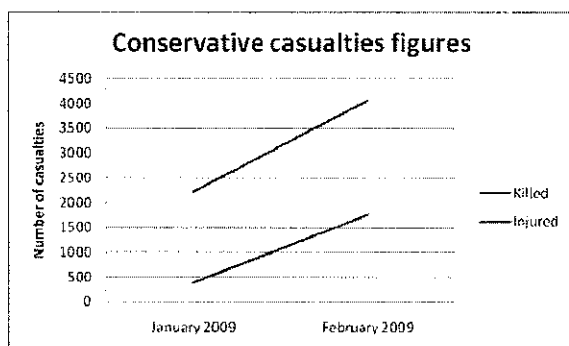
# Civilian casualties in the Vanni

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March 2009

## Casualty figures

Total minimum number of documented **civilian casualties** since 20 January 2009, as of 7 March 2009 in the conflict area of Mullaitivu District: **9,924 people including 2,683 deaths and 7,241 injuries**<sup>1</sup>. The number of people killed each day has doubled in one month.

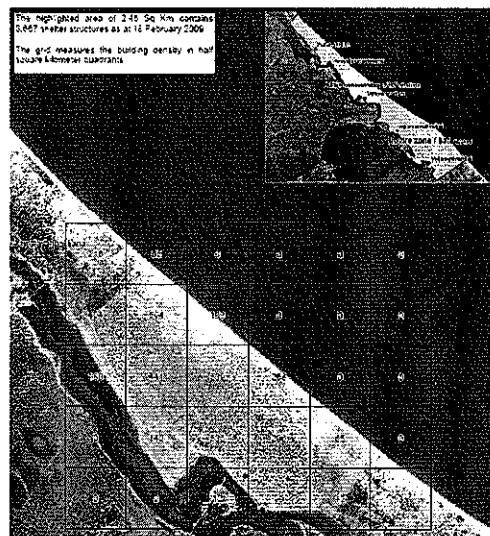


Attempts were made to indicate children under 15 years as an indicator of the presence of civilian casualties in general. Only partial figures were accumulated due to the difficulty of obtaining a constant breakdown. Nevertheless, there are **at least** 135 deaths, and 707 injuries since 20 January. However, like the basic casualty figure itself, this is thought to be a gross under estimate. Based on a population assumption the figure is likely to be closer to 400 deaths, and 1,100 injured. The recruitment of children by the LTTE must now be factored into the numbers of children who will perish.

## Density

Between January and February 2009 the combat area was reduced from 100 km<sup>2</sup> to 45 km<sup>2</sup><sup>2</sup> including the NFZ of 14 km<sup>2</sup>. As the combat area reduces the daily average shows an increase in the number of people killed (from 33 to 63) and a slight decrease in the number of injured (from 184 to 145). This is due to increased density, the use of heavy weapons which continue to strike the NFZ, and inadequate medical treatment.

**Two thirds of the documented casualties occurred in the NFZ**<sup>3</sup>.



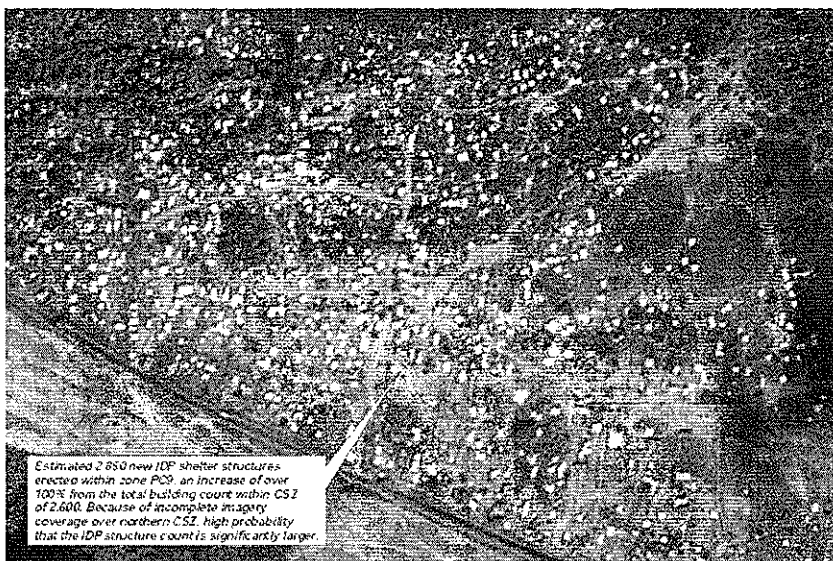
<sup>1</sup> The ratio of deaths vs injuries is estimated to be 35.5%

<sup>2</sup> Colombo town is 40 Square Kilometres

<sup>3</sup> Between January and 12 February, the reporting network was spread over a broad area. Since most civilians are now in the small NFZ – including the reporting network – the information is better. The assumption is that casualties were greatly under-reported prior to 12 February.

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Satellite imagery of the NFZ allows us to calculate the population and density. Based on shelter structures and head counts performed inside the NFZ, the conservative UN estimates is that there are at least 100,000 people within the NFZ.

This figure excludes an estimates 30,000 people outside the NFZ.

## Snapshot of evacuated casualties

The evacuation of a total of **1,861 patients<sup>4</sup>** and 928 care givers between 11 February and 05 March 2009 was performed using a ferry flying the ICRC flag that went to the No Fire Zone on seven occasions. The Medical Officer in charge in Trincomalee has recorded that 708 patients major injuries and that 94 of them are children. An additional 449 suffered from minor injuries including 101 children. The remaining 704 suffered from other diseases (653 including 288 children), were pregnant (45) or died in Trincomalee (6).

<sup>4</sup> DPDHS Trincomalee