



Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TRO Abductions: Day 20

17 February 2006



Pre School Development Projects done by PSEDC throughout NorthEast

Mr. Kasinathar Ganeshalingam (53) a Director on the TRO Board of Directors is also the Coordinator of the Pre School Education Development Centre (PSEDC) for the NorthEast. He was abducted on Sunday 29 January 2006 and, along with 6 other TRO personell remains missing.

Coordinators trained and paid by TRO:
Sinhala 16, Muslim 17, Tamil 97

Teachers paid by TRO 630:
Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil

Motorbikes given by PSEDC with the
assistance of SCiSL and TRO:
Muslim 3, Sinhala 4, Tamil 28

The Pre School Education Development Centres' (PSEDC) mandate is to ensure the socialization, growth and development of the emotional, intellectual, sensual and behavioural potentials of every child between the ages of 3 and 5 yrs in the NorthEast through an integrated holistic approach.

Specific PSEDC Objectives

- To provide the opportunity to learn to interact socially with other children of their age group.
- To provide a space for children to be able to learn, sing, dance, draw, paint and play.
- To ensure the improvement of the health, morale and ethics of children.
- To assist in providing child-care and development
- Improve teachers' ability to recognize and cope with specific learning difficulties and emotional problems due to war, tsunami and child abuse.
- Provide opportunities for the children to organize conduct and excel in sports, games and cultural programs.
- Improve the achievement levels of children in war and tsunami affected areas to the level of the children in areas not directly affected by the war and/or tsunami (to the level of National Standards).
- Provide secure and safe activities for children in and out of pre schools.
- Improve the rapport between teachers and students, and teachers and parents.
- Identify children who have special needs or are "differently abled" due to blindness, deafness or other learning difficulties and provide counselling and education to mainstream them into society.
- Encourage parents living in temporary shelters, camps and permanent accommodations to take an active part in the education and welfare of their children.
- Build a sense of community in the families who live in shelters, welfare centres and permanent houses.
- Provide regular training opportunities to **Coordinators, Master Teachers, Teachers & Parents to develop their skills**

In the NorthEast there are **2,990 pre schools**, staffed by **5,318 teachers** providing care and education to over **87,045 children**. Many of the pre school teachers only have an "O" Level education and have not had any teacher training.



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Many teachers who did receive basic training have not been provided in-service training on a regular basis. One of PSEDC's roles is to provide training programs for these teachers.

There is no effective government mechanism in place to educate pre school aged children. As a result, in April 2004, TRO formulated a provincial policy for Early Childhood Development through PSEDC throughout the NorthEast. A grass root structure was created and is functioning in all districts and in all communities in the NorthEast.

Partners:

The following International NGOs & Local NGOs currently participate in PSEDC: **UNICEF, SCiSL, FORUT, World Vision, ZOA, IOM, DRC, Oxfam, World Food Program, Sarvodaya and NRC.** Religious institutions also participate in PSEDC: **HUDEC, CSI, Methodist church, Anglican Church, Valvuthayam, EHED.** Many of the Hindu Temple Associations, Islamic Organizations, and Buddhist Organizations are involved in various ECD activities and work in partnership with PSEDC.

District	Pre schools	Teachers	Children
Jaffna	729	1,179	16,783
Kilinochchi	178	290	6,152
Mullaitivu	167	254	4,495
Vavuniya	226	318	5,768
Mannar	163	240	5,351
Batticaloa	488	1,016	17,854
Amparai	636	1,211	18,861
Trincomalee	403	810	11,781
Total	2,990	5,318	87,045

SCiSL permanent pre schools being constructed:

Amparai 8, Batticaloa 10, Mullaitivu 4, Jaffna 8, Vadamarachchi East 5 & Kilinochchi 1

SCiSL Temporary Libraries:

Jaffna 10, Kilinochchi 2, Mullaitivu 5, Trinco 10, Amparai 15 & Batticaloa 13

Norwegian Refugee Council funded Temporary Post-Tsunami Pre Schools:

Batticaloa 5, Amparai 5 & Trincomalee 5

Linking Communities:

Pre school structure is an entry point for social change and progress. PSEDC serves as a bridge between pre school activities and the society. This link-up is done at Pre School, community, divisional, zonal, district and provincial levels. In this structure the village community, pre school children's parents, teachers, representatives of pre school administering organizations, the education department, the college of education, the teachers' training colleges, the Jaffna and Eastern Universities, local government departments, cooperative departments, the Health Department and the Provincial Ministry of Education are all play a vital role and their interaction is coordinated by TRO and PSEDC

Reconciliation

From the grass roots village level to provincial level PSEDC structure cuts through community barriers and lays the foundation for reconciliation and bridge building between the different communities in conflict. This structure represents all ethnic and religious communities on an equal basis and paves the way for the

representatives of different communities to participate in discussions, decision making, planning, curriculum formulation and finding amicable solutions to problems through dialogue. PSEDC structure and activities provide the base for better understanding and stronger relationships between different communities and reinforces the respect of human rights.

Mr. Ganeshalingam's team was travelling through Batticaloa district to gather data for the progress reports for the TRO/PSEDC permanent and temporary tsunami pre schools and temporary libraries funded by Save the Children in Sri Lanka (SCiSL) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) when they were abducted.

TRO personnel abducted: Still missing Day 20

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| ◆ Mr. Kasinathar Ganeshalingam | PSEDC NorthEast Province Secretary |
| ◆ Mr. Kathirkamar Thangarasa | PSEDC Driver |
| ◆ Ms. Thanuskody Premini | TRO Batticaloa Chief Accountant |
| ◆ Mr. Shanmuganathan Sujendram | TRO Accountant, Children's Home |
| ◆ Mr. Arunesarasa Satheesharan | Accounts Trainee, Vellavali |
| ◆ Mr. Kailayapillai Ravindran | Accountant, Children's Home |
| ◆ Mr. Thambiraja Vasantharajan | Accountant, TRO Batticaloa |