

My Thoughts about the Tsunami

Chirusha de Mel, Age 10
Douglas Elementary School
Douglas, MA

My parents celebrated my birthday on December 25th, it was fun and happy and ended with very sad news about the Tsunami. I wish this never happened. My mind was washed away; I was scared that something had happened to my cousins and my aunts and uncles. I give thanks to God for saving all of their lives. That was a terrifying moment in my whole life.

The Tsunami was really devastating. My heart was broken when I saw the children crying for their parents. I was really, really sad. That was a devastating moment I was so worried because my mom's family and my dad's family live close to the ocean. My mind was on the Tsunami for 3 weeks. I couldn't stop thinking of that moment. My dad is very lucky because he is helping our country.

It was sad because a lot of children lost their parents and a lot of parents lost their children. I'm glad my mom, dad and I are planning to go to Sri Lanka in June, so we can visit some of these families and do whatever we can to help them. I pray every day not to have any more Tsunamis or any other disasters in this world.

My Dream

Dilini Palamakumbura, Age 10
Lincoln Elementary School,
Winchester, MA - Grade 5

On December 26, 2004, not just kids, but teenagers and grown ups were swallowed by a monstrous wave that emerged from the little Indian Ocean. Those who survived have their lives, but besides them and their clothes they were wearing, they have nothing else. Some of those survivors are children. After this horrible Tsunami, some were turned into orphans.

A Tsunami (su-na-mi) is a wall of water that can be up to 40 feet. The latest one, which was in South Asia, had even disturbed the rotation of the earth! The areas affected by this disaster in South Asia are Southern India, 2/3 sides of Sri Lanka, Sumatra, Indonesia, and Southern Thailand. There has to be an earthquake to start a Tsunami. This time, the Tsunami started in Sumatra, Indonesia.



I know a town called Galle, which is located in the southern coast of Sri Lanka. I remember a bus station, a train station and lots of buildings in the center of Galle. After the Tsunami, the remains of the railroad looked like a big, twisted ladder. The buildings were either gone or completely destroyed. People who were waiting for buses and trains were swallowed up as well. There was a cricket field near the bus station. It was one of the most picturesque cricket fields in the world. After the Tsunami, the field was flooded and buses were floating at the surface of water. The players were nowhere to be seen. You might think the Tsunami would have destroyed every thing. But the two Buddha statues that overlook the police station and the train station were left without a scratch while everything around the statues was destroyed.



I feel really bad for the kids affected by the Tsunami, because most of them lost their families and houses. The kids were scared, lonely and confused. They are too small to understand what just happened. Even

bigger kids didn't know what a Tsunami was.

Those kids have nothing but themselves. To make it all worse, some don't see any familiar faces in the shelters. Every thing that was part of their lives was washed away by the waves. I feel very sad, so I want to do something about it. I want to get lots of baskets for the kids. In those baskets would be money, clothes backpacks, pens, pencils and much much more. The only thing I can't give them in their baskets is their parents. With the school supplies, they can go back to school. With the money, they can buy new clothes. I hope they can find some relatives to take care of them or some good families to adopt them.

I think my dream is already coming true. Some organizations like Sri Lanka Association of New England, the New York Buddhist Temple etc. are collecting donations from people in the USA. Another organization made Tsunami key chains and I helped sell them. Some of the members of these organizations have already gone to Sri Lanka with lots of supplies. I am also planning to visit Sri Lanka this summer. I want to go to "Sambodhi Lama Nivasaya" - home for disabled kids, in Galle. The building was flooded and destroyed as a result of the Tsunami, now they are rebuilding it. I want to give a basket to each of those kids, and then they will feel a little better after loosing all their things and some friends. I want to visit other shelters and schools too. After I give a basket to every kid, I hope they will be happy to know that some people care about them. If the kids become happy again, that would surely be my dreams come true.

How I Care

Nimindu Ambalangodage- Age 9
R.C. LaPerche School
Smithfield, RI

Last year an awful thing happened.

There was a Tsunami in Sri Lanka. Millions of people died including some of our friends and relatives in Sri Lanka. I am so sad about that. That's why I decided to help out to restore Sri Lanka. I



helped by asking my friends if they could donate some food items. A lot of people including the parents of school friends brought food, cloths and medicine to be sent to Sri Lanka. I helped by packing the food and we sent it to New York temple to donate. I thank people who came to our house and gave us some food to donate. Oh yeah.. I also helped by giving up all my Christmas money to give to the poor. My cub scouts got involved too. Each one of them brought one thing to donate and got spare change from there piggybanks to donate. My school made a charity basketball game and all the money got donated. The game was police officers against school teachers. I can't believe the teachers won. There was another fund raiser at my school. It was a walkathon where everybody walks a lap and gets a certain amount of money for each lap from there parents. We raised a lot of money on that. That is pretty much it. But now you know I care.

GIANT Tsunami Waves

Shani Mallikarachchi, Age 12
Fuller Middle School, Framingham, MA

On December 26th of 2004 the worst tragedy in world history happened. This is about those huge tsunami tidal waves that affected many countries. One of those countries is Sri Lanka. A tsunami is a great sea wave produced as a result of an earthquake or

volcano eruption under the sea. The tsunami occurred off the coast of Indonesia. The earthquake was the highest on the rector scale, a 9.0. So many Sri Lankans suffered a great deal of pain. They lost family, friends, their shelter and personnel belongings. For many days they had to view rotting corpses. The death toll was close to a 50,000. It's unsanitary for people to live with corpses around them and dirty water. Some people were very fortunate to have family and friends living around them.

Luckily there are tsunami relief groups, working their hardest to end all the horrible suffering. They spend money on food, clothing, and the materials to build shelters and all the basic items human needs to survive in life. It helps them regain health and strength. There are also doctors helping the physically and mentally suffered people.

The New England community too donated money, clothes, blankets, food and medicine. I hope there will never be another Tsunami in our world.

How we helped.....

Dileni Bandarage – Age 14, Grade 8
Dineth Bandarage – Age 11, Grade 6
Diamond Middle School
Lexington, MA

We remember the day when we sat in front of the television watching the tragic news of the tsunami. After seeing the devastating footage, my bother and I were encouraged to help. We wanted people to realize how great this tragedy was, so we spent many hours preparing flyers to motivate other people to donate. After school and during weekends, my brother and I went door-to-door in Lexington, we raised 710 dollars.

My brother and I decided to celebrate our birthdays together and asked for to-door with my mother and some friends, to raise money for the

tsunami relief fund. Thanks to all the residents in donations towards the fund instead of birthday gifts. From the birthday party, we collected 460 dollars, thanks to all our generous Sri Lankan friends. In total we collected 1,170 dollars. Because one U.S dollar is about one hundred rupees, we were soon excited, as we had raised a lot of money for the relief fund!

After looking through many horrific pictures and stories of students who were affected by the tsunami, my brother and I finally chose a student to sponsor. His name is Lahiru De Silva, a seventh grader who lost his father due to the tsunami. Their house was seriously damaged, and his



Wijeyamuni Sanja Lahiru
Dishan de Silva

mother doesn't work, so his family has no income at the moment. With the money we raised, we are going to sponsor him until he graduates high school. If he is diligent he can get into a university (which is free in Sri Lanka) and have a better future. With the rest of the money, which is about 270 dollars, we are going to sponsor the parents of a student who died in a train that was swept away by the sea. His parents are very poor and lost their only son, and by sponsoring them, they will be able to have enough money to survive. Even many years after the tsunami, this tragedy must not be forgotten. There are still going to be people in need, people whose lives and future have been altered forever. Hopefully within the next few years my brother and I can continue to change the lives of people in my country.

**Send a story, poem or a drawing
for the next issue of
SLANE.NOW.
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