

Sinhalese IDPs Want to Go Home

By Yohan Perera

Nearly 125 Sinhalese families, who had been chased away by the LTTE from Kokilai and Kalkudah in 1990, and are insisting that they be allowed to return to their original places of residence. They are to meet the North East Development Task Force Chairman Basil Rajapaksa MP next week, to discuss the matter.

A spokesman from Caritas Sri Lanka, the social service arm of the Catholic Church, told Daily Mirror that its officers had visited these families, following a directive from Archbishop Malcolm Ranjith and had arranged the meeting with Mr. Basil Rajapaksa to discuss the matter.

According to sources, these families are scattered currently, and are living in Negombo, Kurunegala, Kalutara and Maggona.

These families had been chased out by the LTTE on July 6, 1990. They had told Caritas officials that some of their people were killed by the LTTE while the others managed to escape. They had originally been sent to Trincomalee on the boat Suraya Weeraya and then to Polonnaruwa, after one week. These IDPs had been stuck in the Trincomalee for one week.

They have been engaging in various jobs, including fisheries and agriculture. But now they have lost all these jobs.

According to Caritas, around 20 families of this group had gone to Kalkudah recently on a visit and found their houses completely destroyed. It was reported that they still have the deeds for their property and other documents, which are written in Tamil.