

## “We are not willing to go back to our village, till a permanent solution for the Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka”

Interview was taken from: **Mrs. Gopalakrishnan Kalaivani**, 33 years. On 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2007

Displaced from: **Manalchenai, Muthur** Trincomalee

Place - welfare Centre ( Cultural Hall Refugee's Camp, Trincomalee)



On the day, when a suicide attack was attempt in Colombo Army Head Quarters (on chief Army Officer), there were a terrible Artillery Shelling and Multi Barrel attack were done, to our village, and suburb villages. In these attacks some houses were damaged, some people were died, and many injured. Our villagers and suburb villagers ran through the forests, with our children, to save our and children lives. Attacks continue more and more people killed some people who came by running with us. We buried some bodies, and left in the same position, the others. Without food or water we walked several miles with small children, elders and sick persons in the forest. Finally we

reached to Kilivetti village, from there; we were brought to the St. Joseph's College Refugee Camp by a Non Government Organization at 7.00 P.M. There, they provided meals to us. While we were coming through the jungle some children and elders were fainted. Some of their relations stayed with them till they awake, some carried them. We spent a full day in walking through the jungle, without food or water. Most of us didn't take our Identity Cards even while running, at that time, we think only about the safety of us, our children and parents. We didn't bring any of our belongings with us while coming, including valuable articles and jewelries.

In the Refugee Camp, we were provided meals. Several NGO, INGO AND UN Agencies provided house – hold things to each families. Now my husband is going labour works around this camp. He has no Identity Card, while we were running from our village to save our lives. We couldn't even think of any of our belongings, than our and our children lives. His earnings, is not even sufficient for our children studies. He never gets works always and he is unable to go for work to the long distance, without National Identity Card. Four of my children are studying in Trincomalee. They earlier studied in Periyaveli, Manalchenai and Mallikaitheevu in our village. We and our parents are born and bread in our village Manalchenai. Those schools have no better facilities, than the Schools now they attend. We are sending our grown up children for the tuitions, to promote their Education, in the earnings my husband brings. My grown up girls are staying in my relation's house and going for the schools. The environment and the facilities of the camp are not suitable to study. I have no money to admit my grown up children in the Hostels'.

About two months before, we both went to our Village. Our house is not damaged at that time, but I came to know, from one of our villager, that our house was damaged now. When we go and see our House, there were nothing of our belongings were there. All were looted by unknown people. There is no one lives in our area, owing to fear.



Security Personals held a search operation on last Monday. They didn't take any one for further inquiry. They had a meeting after that, and said, they are going to re-settle the people of all the villages, excluding the village Sampoor. We are not willing to go to our village, till a permanent solution for the Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka. This is not the first time that we are in a Refugee's Camp, through out of our life period; we were in several Refugees' Camp, from Childhood.

Most of the people of our and the suburb villages, lost their Children, Husband, Brothers, Sisters and Parents, in the past.

They are not prepared to loss the balance very valuable lives also, by returning to the village, till an end comes to the war.



Actually, we prefer to live, even under the tree, in our own village, with our traditional food. Then only we will be very happy, but the past experiences of our life were very terrible. That makes us not even to think about going back to the village till a conclusion comes to the ethnic conflict war.

Even if we re-settle, there is no any way to earn for our Existence. Farming and Paddy cultivations are the main sources there, from the ancient time. We don't have Money, Tractor facilities, Seed Paddy, Fertilizer and Chemicals for us to do Cultivation, Farming or Live stock generation. If the Government provided every thing even, we have to wait for another one or two months to start our works, for the season. There is no Law and Order at these villages; therefore there is no safety for us and the belongings at all.