



PAVING THE PATH FOR **SUSTAINABLE** PEACE

Peacebuilding, Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Activities
Conducted by The Government of Sri Lanka



Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms

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Peacebuilding, Transitional Justice and Reconciliation
Activities Conducted by The Government of Sri Lanka
During 2015-2018



Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms

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■ ACRONYMS

A/L	Advanced Level
CoA	Certificate of Absence
CPC	Community Policing Committee
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
ICPPED	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
NPC	National Peace Council
O/L	Sri Lanka
OMP	Office on Missing Persons
ONUR	Office of National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR)
OR	Office for Reparations
PBF	Peace Building Fund
PERU	Peace Education and Reconciliation Unit
PTA	Prevention of Terrorism Act
RTI	Right to Information
SCRM	Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms
SL	Sri Lanka
TJ	Transitional Justice
TJR	Transitional Justice and Reconciliation
ToT	Training of Trainers
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UN	United Nations

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INTRODUCTION

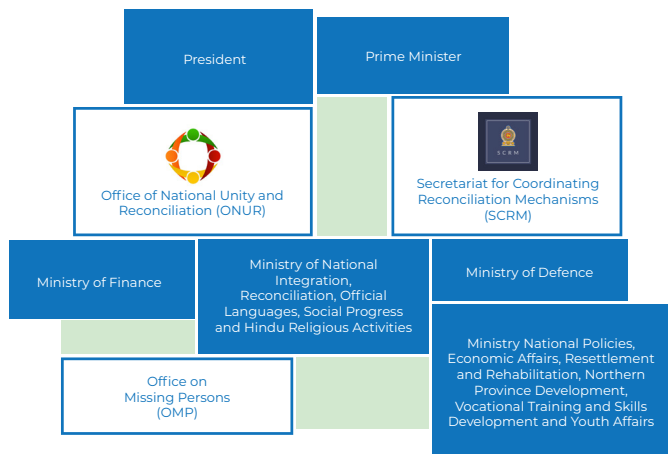
January 2015 ushered in a new era of hope for Sri Lanka, and the opportunity for every citizen to envision a future that would be built on the pillars of Good Governance, Democracy and Reconciliation. Since 2015, the Government of Sri Lanka has consistently prioritized reconciliation in its agenda, owing to the understanding that inclusion and non-discrimination largely matter in achieving progressive and unhindered socio-economic development. In short, there is no development without reconciliation.

This recognition led to the co-sponsoring of UNHRC Resolution 30/1 on 'Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka' by the Government of Sri Lanka in 2015. The rationale for Transitional Justice and Reconciliation (TJR) in Sri Lanka was set out in the final report of the Consultation Task Force on Reconciliation Mechanisms (CTF). The CTF was responsible in collecting and consolidating public opinion on the proposed TJR mechanisms following island wide consultations and was a useful tool in framing and informing the TJR policies that were implemented by the Government.

This booklet presents a summary of the TJR activities conducted by the Government since 2015. While the implementation of some mechanisms have been initiated by His Excellency the President Mr. Maithripala Sirisena and Honorable Prime Minister Mr. Ranil Wickramasinghe the implementation of many TJR activities have been carried out through a number of other state institutions/ ministries such as the Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms (SCRM), Office of National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR), The Office no Missing Persons, Ministry of National Integration, Reconciliation, Official Languages, Social Progress and Hindu Religious Activities, The Ministry of Defence , and the Ministry of Finance and Media.

For the purpose of this booklet, all TJR activities carried out by the Government will be broadly categorized under the areas of [Legislative and Policy Reform](#), [Awareness building](#), [Capacity building and Livelihood Development](#), [Education](#), [Rehabilitation and Resettlement](#) and other key activities.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK



Office of National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR)

ONUR was set up with the commitment to achieve national unity and reconciliation was a key feature of January 2015 Presidential campaign. To give effect to this commitment, the Government of Sri Lanka established the Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR).

Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms (SCRM)

The Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms is tasked with the design and implementation of Sri Lanka's reconciliation mechanisms.

Office on Missing Persons (OMP)

The Office on Missing Persons is a Sri Lankan government department tasked with bringing closure to suffering victims and their relatives by determining the status of all missing persons in Sri Lanka.

Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance is a cabinet ministry of the Government of Sri Lanka responsible for developing and executing the government's public finance policy, economic policy and long term fiscal planning.

Ministry National Policies, Economic Affairs, Resettlement and Rehabilitation, Northern Province Development, Vocational Training and Skills Development and Youth Affairs

This is a cabinet ministry of the Government of Sri Lanka responsible for National Policies, Economic Affairs, Resettlement & Rehabilitation, Northern Province Development and Youth Affairs.

Ministry of National Integration, Reconciliation, Official Languages, Social Progress and Hindu Religious Activities

This is a cabinet ministry of the Government of Sri Lanka responsible for National Integration, Reconciliation, Official Languages, Social Progress and Hindu Religious Activities

Ministry of Defence

The Ministry of Defence is a cabinet ministry of the Government of Sri Lanka responsible for its National defence.

**A SUMMARY OF PEACEBUILDING,
TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE AND
RECONCILIATION ACTIVITIES**



LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY REFORMS

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE ON MISSING PERSONS (OMP)

- The OMP was established under The Office on Missing Persons (Establishment, Administration and Discharge of Functions) Act No. 14 of 2016, and later amended under Act, No. 9 of 2017.
- The Chairman and seven commissioners for the office were appointed in February 2018 to fulfill its objectives of,
 - searching and tracing of missing persons
 - to provide assistance to relatives of missing persons
 - setting up of a database of missing persons
 - setting out the procedures and guidelines applicable to the powers and functions assigned to the Office on Missing Persons, and
 - to provide for all connected and incidental matters.



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

■ Regional Offices

In order to make the services of the office more accessible to victims island wide, the OMP is currently in the process of setting up regional offices in key districts with **Matara** and **Mannar** already set up and the five others soon to follow.

■ Certificate of Absence (CoA)

The OMP is engaging with families of the missing and disappeared as well as the general public to create awareness of the process obtaining a CoA and its validity.

The OMP intervened with local banks to address complaints made by families with regard to accessing banking services using a CoA. Further, the OMP initiated a discussion with the Governor of the Central Bank to address issues raised by financial institutions that accepting CoAs could conflict with their regulatory obligations.

■ Support for Mannar Grave Excavation

The OMP was granted permission to act as an observer at the excavation of the suspected grave site by Mannar Magistrate's Court on 4th June 2018. The OMP has been observing the process of excavation since.

■ Interim Report

The Interim report of the Office on Missing Persons was published in August 2018. In its Interim Report, the OMP recommended that interim relief be provided to families of the missing and disappeared who are left most vulnerable as a result of their missing loved one. In its Interim Report the OMP recommended that several interim relief measures such as **Financial aid programme, Debt relief programme, Housing development programme, Educational support programme** and etc. to be included in the 2019 Budget.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF ALL PERSONS FROM ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES (ICPPED)

- Sri Lanka signed the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED) on 10th December 2015, and ratified the Convention on 25th May 2016.

The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance Act, No. 5 of 2018, which incorporates the provisions of the Convention, was thereafter enacted by Parliament in March 2018.



RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI)

- **Right to Information Act, No. 12 of 2016;** This law was introduced to provide for the right of access to information and to set up a right to information commission.
- It also specifies the grounds on which access to certain information may be denied.
- The law recognizes the need to foster a culture of **transparency and accountability in public authorities** by giving effect to the right of access to information and thereby promote a society in which the people of Sri Lanka would be able to more fully participate in public life through combating corruption and promoting **accountability and good governance**.



VICTIM AND WITNESS PROTECTION

- The GoSL has realized that many - especially victims and witnesses of violations are unsettled by the possibility of a threat to their safety, and also gaining the people's trust and support towards implementation of TJR mechanisms also means taking effective measures to protect them.

The National Authority for the Protection of Victims of Crimes and Witnesses was set up for this purpose in 2016, an amendment to the Act in April 2017 further included victims and witnesses from overseas into its mandate.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE FOR REPARATIONS (OR)

- The establishment of the Office for Reparations was provided for by Act No. 34 of 2018. The OR will be responsible in identifying aggrieved persons eligible for reparations and for the provision of individual and collective reparations to such persons.

- *Applications for the positions of Commissioners were called in January 2019.*
- *Three commissioners have been recommended by the Constitutional Council.*
- *The office will begin its functions once the appointment process is complete.*

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION (TRC)

- Draft legislation for a Truth Seeking Commission complete and is under discussion and consultation with experts before being presented to the Cabinet of Ministers.
- With the support of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) the government has benefited from insights shared by international experts on both Truth Commissions and Accountability mechanisms from Colombia.



AWARENESS BUILDING

THE “AHANNA” CAMPAIGN

- An awareness raising campaign for reconciliation titled “Ahanna” (Listen) launched on the 8th of August, 2018, under the initiative of the Ministry of Finance and Media.
- It is a grass roots-based discussion platform that aims to facilitate discussions on the need for reconciliation and to promote social cohesion and communal harmony by bringing communities together to share personal stories and present efforts for reconciliation.
- The campaign traveled across the island as a street-theatre performance, promoting social cohesion and communal harmony with the aim of bringing together communities by sharing among them a collective of personal stories as a creative initiative that fosters unity and reconciliation.
- The “Ahanna” campaign is designed to highlight the idea that *“Development Begins with Reconciliation”*.

• Towns Visited:
44 towns
• Time Period:
08.08.2018 - 31.08.2018
• People Engaged:
8000+ general public



MILITARY DIALOGUES

- A series of 09 Military Dialogue Programs were conducted as part of a TJR training of trainers (TOT) workshop for military officers in 2018.
- A total of 499 officers from the Sri Lanka Army, Navy, Airforce, Police, Special Task Force (STF), and Civil Security Division (CSD) participated at these interactive workshops which were held as two-day programs.
- The methodology of the sessions allowed each group to share their observations and feedback and were facilitated by the team of military resource personnel who were trained as trainers in transitional justice and reconciliation.

• Programmes Conducted:
09 ToT Programmes

• Target Audience:

Sri Lanka Army, Navy, Airforce, Police, Special Task Force and Civil Security Division

• People Engaged:
499 Officials

COMMUNITY POLICING COMMITTEES (CPC) TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT) PROGRAMME

- The TOT focused on Transitional Justice and Reconciliation for Community Policing Officers and was conducted successfully in four districts with the aim of building a team of trainers to conduct awareness programmes for CPCs in order to promote the national unity and coexistence dialogue of the Government of Sri Lanka.

- Expected Events:
09 ToTs (04 completed)
- Expected participation:
585+ CPC officials



SENSITIZATION OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

- The SCRM in collaboration with the OMP organized a series of Government sensitization workshops in 07 key districts to increase awareness among state officials on TJR related matters.
- The aim of these workshops were to sensitize state officials to the issues faced by victims of war and conflict and to build awareness on their role and responsibility in supporting victims to access the services of the TJR processes including the functions of the OMP.

- No. of Events:
07 events
- Target Audience:
State officials who directly deals with victims in provincial level
- Participation:
542+ individuals



MEDIA SENSITIZING WORKSHOPS FOR PROVINCIAL REPORTERS AND JOURNALISTS

- In order to share information on Government-led TJ Initiatives to counter any misinformation or knowledge gaps among media personalities and journalists, the SCRM conducted TJR Sensitizing Workshops for Provincial Journalists and Reporters that represent popular state and private media organizations.

- No. of Events: **09 (03 completed)**
- Target Audience: **Journalists, Reporters & Media Personalities**
- Expected Participation: **3600+ individuals**

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPLEMENTING A NATIONAL DAY FOR THE DISAPPEARED

- As part of the memorialization of disappeared persons, the interim report of the OMP recognizes the need to formally declare a National Day of the Disappeared which is currently being commemorated by victim's families and Civil Society groups on the 27th October.



PROMOTING INTER-FAITH AND INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE BY NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL (NPC)

- **Inter-faith and Inter-ethnic Dialogue in Sri Lanka** is supporting inter-faith and inter-ethnic dialogue to reduce ethno-religious tensions and ensure that national reconciliation processes and policies take account of ethnic and religious viewpoints.
- Religious leaders in the Trincomalee and Batticaloa Districts are being empowered to better understand and contribute to policy advocacy at the local and national level.
- The project is supported by the Peace Building Commission and Asia Foundation with funding from the British High Commission.





CAPACITY BUILDING AND LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT

MODEL/ INTEGRATED VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

- This project was aimed at promoting micro, small and medium scale enterprises in selected villages in the North and East provinces by improving supportive infrastructure and providing other needs for enterprise development.
- Implemented on the concept of Hon. Prime Minister, this housing programme is carried out by the National Housing Development Authority utilizing the state funds given by the General Treasury.



• Projects Expected: **127 (115 done)** • Villages Benefited: **44**

LIVELIHOOD ASSISTANCE IN KILINCHCHI AND MULLAITIVU DISTRICTS

- ONUR initiated 02 livelihood development projects in the conflict affected communities in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts selecting *women household heads for Commercial Home Gardening* and *Ex-combatants For Maize Cultivation*. The projects provided additional livelihood support for these vulnerable target groups.

Commercial Home Gardening Project

- Beneficiaries: 500 women household heads
- Achievements: 500 home gardens & 174 agro wells

Maize Cultivation Project

- Beneficiaries: 500 ex-combatants
- Achievements: 700 acres of land cultivated

NORTHERN PRODUCER COOPERATIVES SMALL INDUSTRIES INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

- The programme is part of a package of initiatives supported by the Government in 2018 to revive the rural economy of the Northern Province.
- In 2018, the Government responded to the economic crisis in the North by allocating Rs.1 billion to revive its rural economy through investing in 50 co-operative-run small industries.

• No. of Investments: **50** • Allocated Fund: **LKR 1 Billion**

CONFLICT AFFECTED VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

- Initiated by the Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR), the project runs with its main objective to develop socioeconomic and infrastructure segments in 60 border villages in Anuradhapura, Monaragala and Ampara districts.
- The target is to promote agriculture, fisheries, handicrafts, small scale industrial products (SME) and other products of these villagers; and to contribute inclusive social empowerment by engaging village people at all levels.



• Projects Expected: **35 (29 completed)** • Villages Benefited: **60**

TRAINING TOUR TO COMMITTEE ON MISSING PERSONS IN CYPRUS

- The SCRM, in partnership with the ICRC, facilitated two study tours to Cyprus pertaining to the work of the Committee on Missing Persons (CMP) in Cyprus which took place between 2nd - 6th July 2018 and 19th - 23rd November 2018.

LANGUAGE AUDIT PROCESS

- The Ministry of National Integration, Official Languages, Social Progress and Hindu Religious Affairs in collaboration with the SCRM and with the support of the UN is conducting a language audit to ensure that the public can access services in Sinhala, Tamil and English in the country.
- An initial informal audit was conducted by the SCRM and the UN at the Department of Immigration and Emigration, Department for Registration of Persons and at the Registrar General's Department.

COMPUTERIZATION PROJECT

- Recognizing that community-based credit institutions in the North have been unable to become efficient banking institutions due to the significant loss of assets during the war, the Government of Sri Lanka identified the need to upgrade banking and accounting packages utilized by Cooperative Rural Banks (CRBs).
- With the support from the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, the Government of Sri Lanka supported the computerization of 36 CRBs. The project was officially launched on the 14th February 2019.

Beneficiaries: **36 Cooperative Rural Banks**

DEBT RELIEF PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN IN THE NORTH AND EAST

- The Government of Sri Lanka took the initiative to write-off nearly Rs. 1400 million in capital and interest costs of more than 45,000 women borrowers from North, North Central, and Eastern provinces.
- The Government is committed to introduce other necessary legislation and regulation to govern the microfinance industry as well as the Enterprise Sri Lanka loan scheme and the Gamperaliya rapid rural Development Programme.



- No. of Beneficiaries: 45,000 women
- Allocated Fund: LKR 1400 Millions

“AMMACHI/ HELA-BOJUN”

- “Ammachchi” concept is where women affected by the war are facilitated to engage in small trader businesses. The concept has been derrievied from the already existing, “Hela-Bojun” venture and helps to develop reconciliation by promoting home-made traditional ethnic food items.





EDUCATION

“SAHODARA PASAL”/ “PADASALAI”

- The Sahodara Pasal programme is a long term initiative organised by ONUR in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Provincial Departments of Education with the objective of bringing student of diverse origins together for a five-day residential workshop followed by series of exchanges and student led projects. This is to address the absence of common ground that has been the root cause of prejudice and ethnic and social divides in Sri Lanka.

- No. of Student Beneficiaries:
4.4 million students
- No. of Staff Beneficiaries:
1450 teachers
- No. of Trained Facilitators:
540 facilitators
- National Conferences Held:
08 (in 2018 alone)



“AHANNA” FOR SCHOOLS

- Upon the successful completion of “Ahanna (Listen)” programme aimed at the general public the “Ahanna for School” Programme was launched in October 2018, under the Ministry of Finance and Mass Media. It aims on promoting social cohesion and communal harmony among school children. The programme consisted of 10 main schools in the Colombo District with the participation of over 4000 school children aged between 15-19 years.
- The campaign was organized with the support of National Youth Services Council (NYSC) and Community Police Committee (CPC).

- Schools Reached:
10 Selected Schools
- Audience:
School Children (Age 15-19)
- No. of Student Beneficiaries:
4000 students



ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE EDUCATION AND RECONCILIATION UNITS

- Upon the request of the Ministry of Education (MOE), ONUR facilitated the drafting of a roadmap towards mainstreaming Social Cohesion and Reconciliation through general education in Sri Lanka.
- This was done to ensure that general education fosters reconciliation, cross-cultural understanding, sense of belonging and responsibility and a sense of social cohesion among the children in Sri Lanka.

Objective: 8 Peace Education and Reconciliation Units

"IF YOU KNOW TEACH, IF YOU DON'T KNOW LEARN"

- 'If You Know Teach, If You Don't Know Learn' is a broadcasting (Radio) programme carried out by the Ministry of National Integration, Official Languages, Social Progress and Hindu Religious Affairs since 2016. The target group of the program is O/L students.
- The objective of this initiative is to increase listening skills of the students and to develop their language skills. The programme is conducted island wide and the Ministry plans to extend this programme to the Northern Province this year.



REHABILITATION AND RESETTLEMENT

PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT (PTA) DETAINEES TRANSFERRED

- Release of the detainees detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) has been taking place during the last several years, most of them after being placed under rehabilitation to assist their mental, physical and social well being.
- Further to this they have been given vocational and industrial training through different development programmes in order to smoothen the resocialization process.

REHABILITATION OF EX-CADRES

- Rehabilitation of ex-cadres has is a vital part of the achieving a long lasting peace and reconciliation. It is also a necessary procedure to attain development of a nation.
- Ministry Of National Policies, Economic Affairs, Resettlement And Rehabilitation, Northern Province Development, Vocational Training And Skills Development And Youth Affairs and its agencies have been facilitating many different programmes under this agenda throughout the last several years.



Total No. of Ex-Combatants Rehabilitated: **12,097**

CONSTRUCTION OF 25000 HOUSES

- The Sri Lankan government has received Cabinet approval to enter into an agreement with a UNOPS and UN-Habitat led Consortium to build 25,000 houses for conflict affected families in Northern and Eastern provinces.
- Under Phase I of the project, 25,000 housing units will be constructed at a cost of Rs.1.25 million per housing unit.



LAND RELEASES IN NORTH AND EAST

- In January 2016, a Committee headed by the Secretary of Defense was appointed by President Sirisena to expedite the release of lands, reconstruction and resettlement work in the North. Followed by the committee set up commit to expedite land releases.
- Studying the land releasing statistics from May 2019 to 25th of January 2018, it is very much evident that there is a drastic improvement in land releases from 2015 onwards.

Tme Period: January 2015 to January 2019	
Land Type	Land Released (Acres)
State	41,662
Private	5,901
Total	47,563

Total Released Land up to Now:
89,222 Acres (75.5% of the total land to be released)

RESETTLEMENT ACTIVITIES

- The total number of houses constructed as of 2019 was 150,857. Funds have been allocated to construct another 11,750 houses for 2019.
- The Office for Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Nothern Development (ND) has committed to constructing another 4750 houses for 2019.
- Resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) have been continued efficiently throughout the last 03 years.

Total No. of Houses Constructed:

150, 857 Houses

Total No. of IDPs Resettled:

891,628 Houses

**THE
RECONCILIATION BUDGET
- 2019 -**

01. RESETTLEMENT PROJECTS IN NORTH AND EAST

Work on 15,000 brick houses in North and Eastern Provinces to commence in 2019 with Rs.4500 Million already made, and Rs.5500 Million to be made later. Accordingly, resources will be channelled to the the resettlement of Muslims who were forcibly removed during the war.

Allocated Rs. 4500 Million
Proposed Rs. 5500 Million

02. SECRETARIAT FOR COORDINATING RECONCILIATION MECHANISMS

Allocation of Rs.200 Million to the SCRM under the PM's Office for communication and awareness programmes on reconciliation efforts.

Proposed Rs. 200 Million

03. OFFICE FOR REPARATIONS

Required resourced will be passed to OR's establishment and adequate staffing.

Proposed Rs. 700 Million

04. OFFICE ON MISSING PERSONS

OMP will be provided with adequate resources. Families with CoA's will be provided Rs.6000 per month until OR is established and cases of missing are resolved.

Proposed Rs. 500 Million

05. PALMYRAH FUND

To fast track development in the North and East Palmyrah Fund will be established with investment of Rs.5000 Million over two years and will be administered by the Treasury. Will be routed to development activities in war-affected areas. Additionally, resources will be channelled to programmes that address alcoholism, drug abuse, youth unemployment, civil society-initiated counselling and support programmes.

Proposed Rs. 2500 Million

06. DEBT RELIEF SCHEME

Debt Relief Scheme will be continues through cooperative rural banks, thrift and credit cooperative societies.

Proposed Rs. 250 Million

07. INDUSTRIAL SCALE JAGGERY PRODUCTION & TODDY BOTTLING

An Integrated Project to create Industrial Scale production of Toddy Bottling and production of Jaggery will be set up in the Northern Province, in collaboration with relevant Co-operative Societies.

Proposed Rs. 100 Million

08. CENTRAL ECONOMIC CENTRE IN NORTH

Central Economic Centre will be established in the Northern Province.

Proposed Rs. 100 Million

09. GIANT TANK PROJECT IN MANNAR

Facilitation of the Giant Tank which will promote agriculture especially in Mannar.

Proposed Rs. 300 Million

10. WATER/ ELECTRICITY FACILITIES IN NORTH AND EAST

Rs. 2000 million has been allocated to provide facilities such as water and electricity for houses in the North East including those that partly built or destroyed.

Proposed Rs. 2000 Million

11. DEBT RELIEF FOR WOMEN IN DROUGHT AFFECTED AREAS

Debt Relief has been provided to 45,000 women of drought affected areas including Trincomalee, Jaffna, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya, Puttalam. They have availed themselves of microfinance loans of up to Rs.100,000. To be followed up by the "ENTERPRISE SRI LANKA" programme .

Proposed Rs. 500 Million

12. OFFICE OF NATIONAL UNITY AND RECONCILIATION (ONUR)

Support for ONUR activities and programmes such as "Sahodara Pasal", "Viruliya Shakthi" and etc.

Proposed Rs. 750 Million

Total Proposed Budgetary Allocation
for Reconciliation in 2019

LKR 12.4 BILLION

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