What follows is a personal account of the recent bombings in Batticaloa from Rev Jeyanesan. Naresh

Greetings from St. Johns Center .

Today again we are coming out with a sad and horrible story of our Tamil refugee community of Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

You are aware of our last relief work done 3 days back at Kathiraveli and in surrounding villages and the report of our relief activities were send to you with photographs.

Yesterday, on the 8th of November, 2006 another tragedy struck at Kathiraveli where we supplied relief items 3 days back. There were shelling and aerial bombing directed to the refugee camp in Kathiraveli where Vaharai, Mutur and surrounding village IDP s were sheltered. In the incident more than 58 were killed mainly infants, children under 10 years of age and women. More than 250 were injured some of them are very severely.

A school where all these IDP s were accommodated was directly hit by the aerial bombing and shelling. As usual the roads were closed and there were no movements to the un-cleared areas. After the incident ICRC tried to reach the IDP s with the necessary medical facilities but they were allowed only after several hours to reach the scene. If they would have allowed immediately, they could have saved some lives.

Ambulances were sent from Batticaloa and the injured were transported to Valaichenai, Eravur and the serious cases to Batticaloa hospitals. The death toll is keeping on increasing, as seriously injured people are still dying in the hospital. We feel this is a clear case of eliminating the Tamil population from the Eastern Province . There is much sorrow and heart burning due to this cruel and horrible crime against humanity. The Government is not concerned whatever happens to the Tamil communities but they are always quick to put the blame on the LTTE and safeguard the armed forces by coming out with flimsy reasons.

We, the Pastors and St. Johns Staff, are leaving to the affected area to take care of the affected with medical and immediate relief requirements. Our women guild have already left to Batticaloa hospital with cloths and essential food items to distribute to the sick and the suffering and also to be with them in the time of great sorrow.

Detailed and clear reports will be sending to you about our relief activity after our team returns from the affected area.

Please pray for Peace.

With Peace and prayers.

Jey.