

Ministries Respond Quickly to Tidal Wave Disaster

Dozens of Christian relief organizations rushed to aid survivors of the giant tsunami that devastated southern Asia in late December. Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India and Thailand were among the worst hit by the Dec. 26 tidal wave, which swept thousands of people out to sea.

The death toll from the catastrophe, which rocked 12 countries, had soared beyond 150,000 at press time. Millions were homeless from the disaster, with many more still missing.

World Relief, World Vision and Gospel for Asia were just a few of the many groups that organized large relief efforts. Smaller ministries also launched aid projects immediately.

Paul Tan, who pastors five Indonesian churches in the Los Angeles area, said his ministry sent a team of 55 doctors, pastors and leaders to Banda Aceh, Indonesia, where thousands were killed by the rushing waves.

"This is the time to extend our hands and hearts to minister the compassion of Christ to those in need in Asia," Tan told Charisma. Tan's Indonesian Relief Fund is partnering with a Christian group in Indonesia to distribute food, clothing and medical supplies in the predominantly Muslim nation.

Christopher Alam is the founder of Dynamis World Ministries, a charismatic ministry that oversees 76 churches in Burma. Alam said communication glitches have prevented him from getting

information from contacts in Burma. "I was planning on going to Burma, but now I want to send every single penny so they can get the maximum help," Alam said.

Evangelist K.A. Paul, founder and president of Houston-based Global Peace Initiative, said within days of the tragedy his ministry's Boeing 747 was slated to transport 76,000 pounds of medicine, food and supplies to the disaster region, along with a medical team.

Paul proceeded with plans to hold a crusade Jan. 8-9 in the Indian state Andhra Pradesh, which suffered casualties. "It's an incredible opportunity to preach the gospel," he said. "God can use this situation to bring more people from these countries into His kingdom than ever before."

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