

17 May 2005

PRESS RELEASE



100 DONATED BUSES ASSEMBLE FOR SHIPMENT: FOR USE BY CHILDREN IN TSUNAMI-HIT AREAS

The mid-life buses, from double-deckers to minibuses, have been donated by bus and coach operators from Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, England and Eire, as a practical response to the devastation of the Boxing Day tsunami. The appeal has taken six months to realise.

At an official handover tomorrow (Wednesday), to be attended by ministers of the governments of Sri Lanka and Indonesia, the vehicles pass into the hands of Islamic Relief. The charity will ship and distribute the buses with the receiving governments, and provide training for drivers.

The buses will be used exclusively by children; in Sri Lanka, Asia Bus Response vehicles will provide essential transportation to children currently unable to get to school in Galle, and in Indonesia they will become much-needed mobile classrooms for communities in the Aceh area.

Mr Jeyaraj Fernandopulle, Minister of Trade, Sri Lanka High Commission, said, "The arrival of these buses from Asia Bus Response will be seen by ordinary Sri Lankan people as the most visible and concrete benefit from the international community."

PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES: TODAY, TUESDAY 7 JUNE

The buses are being washed and mechanically checked at Solent Blue Line, Barton Park, Eastleigh, for assembly this afternoon at Marwell Zoological Park, near Winchester.

OFFICIAL HANDOVER: TOMORROW, 10am WEDNESDAY 8 JUNE

Treetops Restaurant, Marwell Zoological Park. With bus donors from all UK regions, representatives of Islamic Relief, Sri Lanka High Commission and Indonesian Embassy. Buses accessible from 8am.

ENDS

For the full story and a list of bus donors, visit www.asiabusresponse.co.uk.

Further information:

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