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PRESS RELEASE



'GENEROUS' UK BUS & COACH INDUSTRY GOES ON PLEDGING VEHICLES TO HELP REBUILD TSUNAMI-HIT COMMUNITIES

75 vehicles and counting: week two of Asia Bus Response has produced a further 10 vehicles and the promise of many more to come.

Translink, Northern Ireland's main public transport provider, is the highest profile donor of the campaign's second week. Also on board are East Yorkshire Motor Services, Emsworth & District Motor Services, Hampshire, Brentons of Blackheath, PRP Training of Pembrokeshire, and Evans Coaches, TRC Coaches and Harris Coaches, all of South Wales.

The UK-wide appeal for vehicles to help rebuild communities and livelihoods in the worst hit areas of Sri Lanka and Indonesia is a practical response to the need for reconstruction and rebuilding of infrastructure following the devastation of the tsunami.

As well as providing vital transportation for people and supplies, donated buses will be used to retrain drivers and engineers, and development agency, **Islamic Relief**, will then pay those people a living wage.

"The UK bus and coach sector has already given generously to the appeal in both vehicles and money, but this has been a catastrophic disaster and we need to ensure this generosity continues.

"I would urge transport operators, local authorities and parts suppliers to dig deep and release the resources that will mean so much to help recovery. Demand for vehicles, spares and equipment is going to grow fast as roads that were swept away are re-built and vast areas become accessible once again.

"We cannot begin to comprehend the devastation that has hit transport infrastructure. Without these vehicles it will be impossible for whole regions to get back to normal life. I urge you all to be as generous as you can."

Prof. David Begg, Chair, Commission for Integrated Transport

Robust, high-floor, low-tech vehicles are needed, from minibuses to double-decks. Vehicles must be in good condition and fit for a few years' hard work. Donor companies will be responsible for getting buses to a UK departure point. Buses, parts and equipment will be shipped and distributed by development agency, **Islamic Relief**. The charity is also co-ordinating and sourcing funding for shipping, taxes and registrations. Visit www.asiabusresponse.co.uk for full details.

To pledge buses, spares and equipment and to leave messages of support, email info@asiabusresponse.co.uk or call Mitch de Faria on Tel 01664 561711; for local authority co-ordination and ideas about how local authorities can help, email Andrew Varley at Lancashire County Council, andrew.varley@env.lancscc.gov.uk Tel 01772 263336. Or visit www.asiabusresponse.co.uk.

ENDS

Further information:

Asia Bus Response media information & bus donations:

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Editor's Notes:

Asia Bus Response is a voluntary, co-ordinating group of UK bus professionals that aims to help the UK bus industry respond appropriately and meaningfully to the tsunami disaster.

Asia Bus Response has undertaken to:

- ensure that buses dispatched fit the needs of the destination countries
- arrange for buses to convene at a UK location for assembly/shipping
- have all vehicles mechanically checked pre dispatch to ensure worthiness
- liaise with operators, local authorities & industry suppliers concerning parts, training and other opportunities
- encourage the filling of buses with supplies required by destination countries at the time of dispatch.

Islamic Relief has undertaken to:

- co-ordinate shipping, insurances, export & import tax, registrations & licences and arrange payments for same via the Governments of the destination countries and other organisations
- distribute buses as appropriate and do all possible to ensure that donated vehicles are fully utilised by those affected by the tsunami disaster, not left unused or co-opted by others or used in other areas
- use the buses as a means to reskill the local workforce, to rebuild confidence, pride & independence among the people and communities stricken by the disaster
- provide occasional updates on how the buses are being used and how they have helped local communities.

Asia Bus Response Supporters:

- Best Impressions
- Blazefield Holdings
- Brentons of Blackheath
- East Yorkshire Motor Services
- Emsworth & District Motor Services, Hampshire
- Essex County Council
- Evans Coaches, Pwllheli
- Go-Ahead Group
- Group Travel, Cornwall
- Harris Coaches, South Wales

- Ipswich Buses
- Lancashire County Council
- National Express
- Nottingham City Transport
- Oxfordshire County Council
- PRP Training, Pembrokeshire
- Southern Vectis
- Thamesdown Transport
- The Event Makers
- Trent Barton
- Translink
- TRC Coaches, Rhondda Valley
- Viacom Outdoor
- Wedlake Saint

www.asiabusresponse.co.uk
www.islamic-relief.org.uk