

Present and Future of the Northern Muslim and Tamil Returnees in Post-war Sri Lanka

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The main objective of this study is to examine the status of the livelihood of the returnees who were once forcefully evicted from their ancestral homes in the Northern Province. This research is predominantly a qualitative study based on both primary and secondary data. The data collection consists of two stages. In the first stage, a thorough review of the literature is done in order to understand the background of the research problem. In the second stage, data is collected from IDP returnees through a purposive sampling technique. Semi-Structured interviews and focused group discussions have been conducted to collect data. To accommodate different aspects of the lives of the IDP returnees, data is collected from samples. One sample consists of Muslim returnees living in the Moor Street North (J/87) GN division in the Jaffna province while the other sample consists of the Tamil returnees living in Myliddythurai North (J/251). The questions are aimed at exploring the main reasons for their decision to return to their ancestral homes and exploring the challenges they face as IDP returnees. As far as the findings are concerned, both Muslim and Tamil returnees continue to face challenges in terms of finding equal opportunities as IDP returnees. However, while the Muslim returnees have a positive opinion of their return to their ancestral hometowns, people in Myliddythurai hold a negative perspective. For instance, most of the respondents mentioned that they often or frequently face discrimination or challenges in finding work as a returnee. Furthermore, they do not believe that the country has made significant progress in promoting the quality of life of the returnees.

Keywords: IDP returnees, Civil conflict, Economic stability, Discrimination, Sri Lanka