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President to hand over 200 houses to tsunami victims in Car Nicobar

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CHENNAI The handing over of 200 houses to beneficiaries at Kinyuka village in Car Nicobar on Wednesday will mark the beginning of the culmination process of the tsunami rehabilitation programme in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

President Pratibha Patil will fly to the picturesque village to hand over the keys to the beneficiaries at a function. Before that she will pay homage to those who died in the disaster at the tsunami memorial at Port Blair, the headquarters of the islands. She will also interact with the tribal captains. (One hundred houses in Little Andaman will also soon be given to beneficiaries).

The construction of 9,797 houses is the important component of the tsunami rehabilitation programme, which is totally estimated to cost about Rs.3,140 crore.

The programme is funded under the Rajiv Gandhi Rehabilitation Package and the Additional Central Assistance, according to Dharam Pal, Commissioner-cum-Secretary in charge of disaster management, relief and rehabilitation.

Andamans: Allocation and utilisation of funds under tsunami rehabilitation package

Year	Outlay	Expenditure
	(Rupees in crore)	
2004-2005	125.02	123.05
2005-2006	532.00	521.15
2006-2007	580.30	508.99
2007-2008	550.00	234.29*
2008-2009	135473	-----

* Up to September 2007

Source: Office of the Commissioner-cum-Secretary (disaster management, relief and rehabilitation), Andaman and Nicobar administration.

Of the total number of houses being built on 10 islands, the Central Public Works Department has been allotted 7,966 permanent shelters, Andaman and Nicobar's Public Works Department 1,122 and non-government organisations 709 houses.

While Car Nicobar accounts for 3,941 houses, Little Andaman will have 1,973, Great Nicobar 995 and South Andaman 823.

Noting most of the houses will be completed by the end of 2008, Mr. Pal says there are environmental issues and sites not being accessible are holding up the finalisation of plans with regard to about 340 houses in Great Nicobar. Efforts are on to sort them out.

V.P. Malik, CPWD's officer in-charge of the project, says the execution of the works in Kamorta, Nancowry and Katchal suffered a setback when the executing agency decided to pull out. Now, with the separation of the works into fabrication and erection of superstructure, the implementation process has been re-activated.

As regards the lessons of the programme, Mr. Pal says planning was introduced in rural areas, be it in respect of landscaping or providing roads and sanitation or construction of houses.

When a programme of this nature and complexity is being done, supervision is a huge challenge and this is being effectively handled through online monitoring.