



A Time To Heal

A Reflection of MERCY Malaysia's Response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami

On 26 December 2004, an earthquake measuring 9.3 on the Richter scale occurred off the west coast of Northern Sumatra, resulting in tsunamis over all littoral regions of the Indian Ocean, from as far as Somalia to Sri Lanka, to Phuket in Thailand and Aceh in Indonesia.

It was the largest natural disaster of the new millennium, claiming 131,029 lives and rendering 500,000 people homeless in Aceh alone. In Aceh, the number of those missing still stands at 37,000.

A Time To Heal: A Reflection of MERCY Malaysia's Response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami is an in-depth look at how **MERCY Malaysia** responded to this crisis.

This book is a tribute to the selfless men and women who worked to quell the humanitarian crisis with an outpouring of service and mercy. It is the story of tragedy underscored by the soft, sweet music of the hope that **MERCY Malaysia brings.**





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to the Indian Ocean Tsunami**



MERCY Malaysia is indebted to Petroliaam Nasional Berhad for its generous contribution towards the production of this book.



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Published by
The Writers' Publishing House Sdn Bhd
(259664D)
Lot A10-3, 3rd Floor, Jalan Selaman 1/1,
Dataran Palma, Jalan Ampang,
68000 Selangor Darul Ehsan,
Malaysia.
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Fax: 603-4270 1933

Publisher: Faridah Stephens
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MESSAGE FROM HRH SULTAN AZLAN MUHIBBUDDIN SHAH, PATRON OF MERCY MALAYSIA



ISTANA ISKANDARIAH
KUALA KANGSAR

It is with great pleasure that I congratulate MERCY Malaysia for bringing this book to life.

A Time To Heal: A Reflection of MERCY Malaysia's Response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami is of great significance to the history of MERCY Malaysia as it documents the devastation of the Indian Ocean Tsunami and, importantly, the response and aid delivered by the many volunteers and staff of MERCY Malaysia.

Recognised by the international media and local government as the first international medical relief organisation to arrive in Banda Aceh, MERCY Malaysia's work began with emergency medical relief which today has moved into development and rebuilding. I am pleased to note that MERCY Malaysia's rebuilding phase for Aceh encompasses the building of houses, health centres, nursing schools, a pharmacy school, orphanages, rehabilitation of an ortho-prosthesis unit, capacity building and training. It is indeed an important contribution to the people of Aceh, Indonesia.

The needs in Sri Lanka did not go unnoticed and deployment of aid to the island nation was swift and resulted in MERCY Malaysia being one of the lead agencies in the service of psychosocial intervention. I am equally pleased to state that MERCY Malaysia is implementing a livelihood programme, providing medical aid as well as rebuilding two community health centres.

For the communities in Kedah and Penang in Malaysia, MERCY Malaysia provided medical aid and donated food and non-food items during the emergency phase. The building of 15 boats for fishermen in Tanjung Dawai completed MERCY Malaysia's programme exemplifying its view of strengthening communities with sustainable aid.

The spirit, tenacity and sacrifice of the many volunteers and personnel are honourable and I am proud to commend them for their tireless effort in bringing relief to those in need. They have shown compassion by placing the needs of others above their own.

Their work speaks for itself in the pages of this book.

A Time To Heal: A Reflection of MERCY Malaysia's Response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami captures the feelings of the people affected by the tsunami, the beneficiaries. Faced with such insurmountable challenges, they have chosen to rise with great dignity, to not only survive but also to choose to live. It is especially inspiring to read their stories.

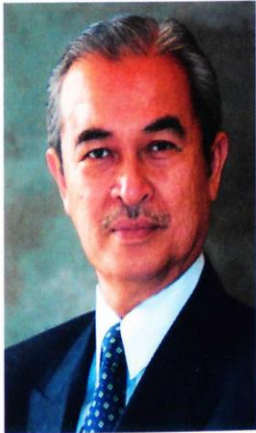
This is the story of an organisation committed to humanity. This is a story about the people it seeks to help. It is a special story of courage.

As Patron of this young and dynamic organisation, I am proud to see this effort materialise and I hope that MERCY Malaysia will continue to document its work as it traverses the globe to uphold its endeavour to heal across borders.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Azlan'.

H.R.H. SULTAN AZLAN MUHIBBUDDIN SHAH
THE SULTAN OF PERAK DARUL RIDZUAN

MESSAGE FROM YAB DATO' SERI ABDULLAH HAJI AHMAD BADAWI, PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA



**PRIME MINISTER
MALAYSIA**

FOREWORD

Of the remarkable efforts made by MERCY Malaysia, one that clearly stands out was their quick and immediate deployment to Aceh, MERCY was on the scene 48 hours after the initial devastation, the first among many groups, bringing aid and assistance to the point of greatest need. The sheer dedication, selflessness and humanity of Malaysians involved in this endeavour extending vital services and resources to our neighbours is truly something we can all be very proud of.

Indeed, MERCY Malaysia's commitment can still be seen today in Aceh and the nearby affected regions. Furthermore, their presence there now goes beyond responding to emergency medical needs. The help provided has strategically and effectively evolved to suit the growing and developing needs of the communities still feeling the after effects of the disaster.

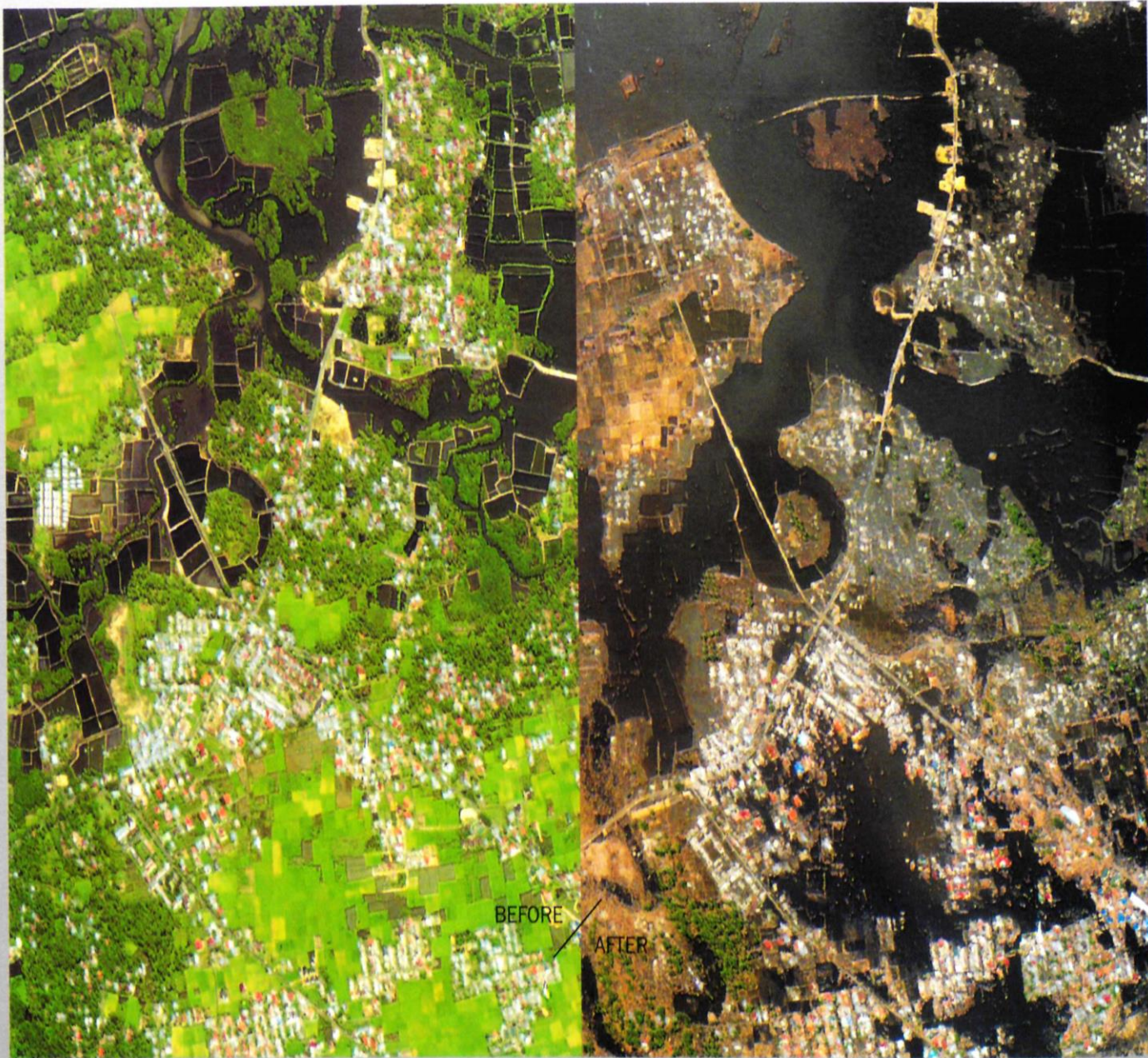
MERCY Malaysia's rapid response to emergencies as well as their ability to flexibly adapt and best alleviate the hardships of the afflicted communities have not gone unnoticed. Internationally, this Malaysian NGO stands side by side with other more experienced and established international aid NGOs. The quality of their services and professionalism of their organisation have received due recognition from the United Nations.

It is indeed significant that a small band of altruistic medical specialists who managed to reach out and touch the hearts of people through their sincerity to help fellow human beings, has ignited the spirit of volunteerism and humanitarianism in many Malaysians across the country.

This book is not only an account of MERCY Malaysia's Indian Ocean Tsunami relief efforts, it is a telling story of the power of the human spirit. It is one that narrates the attitude, drive, commitment, planning and camaraderie forged between its volunteers and contributors. It is also a story that can inspire other Malaysians towards selflessly giving of themselves and helping those who can least help themselves.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abdullah', written over a horizontal line.

DATO' SERI ABDULLAH HAJI AHMAD BADAWI



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ISBN 983-3633-00-5



9 789833 633005