



LUCKY: Nayanadini

Irish people thanked for tsunami aid

From LIAM HORAN in SRI LANKA

SRI LANKAN woman Nayanadini Nuvenna is only alive today because of her long flowing hair.

Two years ago Nayanadini was caught up in the horror of the massive St Stephen's Day tsunami.

The 59-year-old only survived because her hair became entangled in a tree as she was being swept away by the powerful surge of water.

Over 35,000 lost their lives in Sri Lanka alone - but Nayanadini is one of the lucky ones.

And this week, her luck was in again when she moved into a new house given to her by Irish aid agency Goal.

Her new home is in Kirinda which is along Sri Lanka's southern coast where the 2004 tsunami wreaked havoc.

Overjoyed Nayanadini said: "The tsunami just came like a massive roar."

"I was at home, and we all just ran. My husband got caught in the tsunami, and he died."

"I was carrying a three-month child of my neighbour in my arms. We both fell into the water as it poured in from the sea, and the child fell out of my arms."

"The child died as it was swept away in the water, and I was also headed for death, too, until my long hair got caught in a tree."

"Suddenly, I stopped moving and I was trapped in the tree. I stayed there for a while and I was saved."

Nayanadini is one of hundreds of Sri Lankans helped by Goal in the aftermath of the tsunami.

And the people of Ireland were yesterday thanked by a top Sri Lankan politician for their generosity following the disaster.

The Sri Lankan Minister for Housing Ferial Ismail Ashraff said: "We will be eternally grateful to Goal for the work they have carried out here, and also to the Irish people for the amount of money they donated to make this possible."

And Cork man John Wain, who is spearheading Goal's campaign, said: "The organisation took on a very ambitious programme here in Sri Lanka."

"For example, we have rebuilt 63 schools, which will be a huge help to the local communities."

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Gardai name road victims

By MIRROR REPORTER

THE three men killed in road accidents on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were yesterday named by gardai.

The 27-year-old passenger who died when a car hit a wall on Tipper Road, Naas, Co Kildare, early on Christmas Eve was named as Brian Ferris from The Gables, Kill, Co Kildare.

The 34-year-old motorist whose car struck a tree in Churchtown, near Rosslare, Co Wexford, at 2.30am on Christmas Day was identified as Stephen Clampett of Greenore Park in the town.

Massimo Lingi, 24, of Belvedere Hills, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, died in a single vehicle crash at Ballinderry, Mullingar, at 3.50am the same day.

The year's toll so far is 363.

ST STEPHEN'S

Pictures: ARTHUR CARRON/COLLINS



BROLLY GOOD: Jennifer and Maria McGrath, Laura O'Connor and Lauren Bermingham



CHILL OUT: Pals Lisa and Danielle



IT'S A WRAP: Emma and Lynsey



SMILES: Pdraig & wife Caroline



ON RIGHT TRACK: Friends get tips from Irish Daily Mirror

By GERALDINE COMISKEY

IT wasn't exactly A Beautiful Day, but Bono was hoping the clouds had a silver lining at the races yesterday.

On a day out with wife Ali, kids and friends Guggi and wife, the U2 front-man was banking on picking a horse to Elevate his day at Leopardstown, Co Dublin.

Bono, 46, said he was looking forward to some action on the turf, but added: "It's a bit wet out here. That changes everything."

Dressed in a brown jacket, grey trousers and a tweed cap, he looked as if he already belonged in the winners' enclosure.

The Hewsons had driven from their home in nearby Killiney for one of the racing calendar's biggest meets.

And onlookers were thrilled to see the star mingling with punters.

Bandmate The Edge, who arrived with wife Morleigh, was also hoping for a flutter.

Racing fans got to the track early and bagged their places on the stand.

Swaddled in waxed coats, scarves and tweed caps, they looked as if they knew what they were doing.

Others had come to check out fillies and studs of a different kind.

Teetering in stilettos, the girls came to see and be seen while a few men were spotted sporting their Christmas jumpers.

Janine Ryan and Jenny Barron, both 22, insisted they were serious punters.

Janine said: "We come with our friends every year. We won €150 each last year. This is the best race meet of the year."

The girls and their friends, all from Leopardstown, said they planned to pore over the form as soon as they'd had a chance to warm up.

Aoife Pierce and Ria Farrell, both from Sandymount, had come with Aoife's family. They had been given a few tips and were prepared to place a big bet on them.

Dubliners Lauren Bermingham and her friend Jennifer McGrath said they had been given a few tips.

Lauren said: "Our neighbour owns a horse and has given us three to back - two in this race and one in Limerick. We are bound to get something out of it."

Lisa Quinlan and Danielle Cummins, both locals, were enjoying their first ever day at the races.

Lisa said: "We live near here but we've never actually gone to the races before. It's a pity it's raining - but we'll enjoy it anyway."

news@irishmirror.ie



GOOD FORM: The Edge and wife Morleigh