

## F - 06

Bomb explosions have increased in number as a result of the ongoing-armed conflict in Sri Lanka. Understanding physical and psychological sequelae of such victims is important for planning rehabilitation services effectively. A study was conducted to understand the nature of the experiences of surviving victims of selected bomb blasts during 1995-96 period. Respondents to a notice offering medical, psychological and legal assistance for bomb blast victims, inserted in local newspapers were requested to answer a questionnaire. Twenty-two males and seven females were in the group. Their age range was between 17 years to 62 years.

Body ache, head ache and constant tiredness were the most common physical sequelae as reported by respondents. Difficulty in breathing, loss of appetite, pain in chest area and discomfort in palpitations were reported with lesser magnitudes. Twelve and ten victims experienced partial blindness and partial deafness, respectively. Two victims were totally blind while two were totally deaf. One victim had lost a limb.

Feeling of constant fear or sadness and depression were most dominant among psychological sequelae. Nightmares, constant feelings of anger and aggressiveness, loss of memory, and inability to concentrate were less reported. Feeling of shame and insomnia were identified by only one person.

Finding indicate that experiences of bomb blast victims from in Sri Lanka is similar to those from other countries. Constant fear, feeling of sadness and depression are dominant among their experiences. Ramifications of these psychological injuries alter persons' social relationships and productivity and thereby likely to cause adverse effects on the society. Focus of the present study is limited as it describes experiences of only those were responded the newspaper advertisement. Victims of bomb blasts are in number and a broader study is important to understand the complex effects of these traumatic experiences.