
One-billion-rupee boost for higher education facilities in the North

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by Dasun EdirisingheHigher Education Ministry has allocated Rs. 1,058 million for upgrading the higher education facilities in the Northern Province. The projects have already commenced under the 'Uthuru Wasanthaya' programme.

Higher Education Minister Prof. Wiswa Warnapala told a recent meeting at the Ministry that the UGC had not been able to enroll Sinhala and Muslim students for the Jaffna University and its Vavuniya Campus due to LTTE threats. Now that the situation had improved after the decimation of the LTTE, the UGC was in a position to increase the intake of students to the Jaffna University, he said. Prof. Warnapala said: "We have to develop facilities there for the benefit of students. The construction of a hostel for the Jaffna Medical Faculty has already commenced at a cost of Rs. 90.33 mn. The Ministry allocated Rs. 125 millions for a new building complex for the Commerce and Management Faculty of the Jaffna University. We will spend Rs. 40 millions to enhance students' welfare activities." The Vavuniya Campus would get Rs. 60 million for the development of basic facilities, the Minister said. Most students had failed to gain university entrance and there was a pressing need for introducing courses for them. The Ministry is expected to introduce new academic courses for GCE (Advanced Level) qualified students in the North at the Jaffna University at a cost of Rs. 23 mn, Prof. Warnapala said. He said the government would spend Rs. 65 mn to set up a new Advanced Technological Institute in Vavuniya. It was scheduled to be completed within two years. The Ministry had also allocated Rs. 609 millions for the construction of a new administrative building for the Jaffna Advanced Technological Institute and another Rs. 14 mn for the development of its infrastructural facilities, the Minister said. Minister Prof. Warnapala directed Ministry and university officials to complete by next year several foreign funded projects at a cost of Rs. 576 mn. Funds from Australia, Pakistan and Sweden would be utilised to develop infrastructure facilities related to information technology in Ruhuna, Peradeniya, Moratuwa and Colombo universities (Rs. 143 million), to increase the internet facilities (Rs. 182 million) of all universities and to establish the National Electronic Education (e- education) Centre (Rs. 225 million), the Minister said. Courtesy: Island.lk