Lifestyle of IDPs in North enhanced: Rotary International
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By Kurulu Kariyakarawana The living standards of over 3000 Internally Displaced Persons, who are currently residing at
the Menik farm IDP Camp in Settikulam, had been considerably enhanced with the facilities and special care granted to
them by Rotary International, amidst various organisations committed to do so along with the government.
Rotary International District 3220, Sri Lanka is a leading organization committed to uplift the lives of nearly 300,000 IDPs
in these camps supervised by the government presently. Addressing a special press briefing Rotary International District
3220 Secretary, Gehan Siribaddana, said that the government had permitted them to look into the welfare of 3800 IDPs.
As a result, a 20-acre block of land was cleared with the assistance of the army to build temporary shelters. Five hundred
makeshift tents were donated by District 3220 for the IDPs. Sanitary facilities were also looked into including the setting
up of 100 toilets and a proper system to make use of the waste to create biogas. Mr. Siribaddana said that until the IDPs
get proper resettlement, the District 3220 was willing to look after them. “Not only do we grant them what they
want but hold a constant dialogue with them to uplift their living standards”. The cooperation rendered by the
government to conduct the work is commendable. He said the local Rotary Clubs contribute to the programme by
donating dry rations while Rotary International Districts help us with most of the funds. The brief was held in order to
educate the public on several important projects conducted by District 3220, including the Tsunami schools project and
the Polio vaccination programme. District Governor Rotary District 3220, Suri Rajan emphasizing on the social service
rendered by the Rotary District 3220 said that currently 64 Rotary clubs in the country were contributing their time and
resources, which had a membership of 1800 dedicated Rotarians. Since its inception in 1917 in New York, Rotary
International has been the driving force behind the activities of District 3220, which in Sri Lanka is celebrating its 80th
year. Granting scholarships, holding training programmes and youth exchange programmes are some of the other
programmes being conducted by the Rotary Club instead of getting involved in major humanitarian projects. Schools Re-
awakening Project, Implementation Committee Chairman, Krish Rajendran, explaining the fundamentals of this project
said that District 3220 took over 25 schools that were destroyed in the Tsunami and 19 schools were rebuilt using state-
of-the-art machinery to build modern laboratories, libraries, playgrounds etc. A sum of Rs.1.3billion was allocated for this
project and the 19th of these schools is to be reopened on July 22 in Kalkudah, Batticaloa. The District had spent around
Rs.60 million on each school making it the largest financial project in its history, Mr. Rajendran said. District Foundation
Chairman Lucky Pieris, commenting on the Polio Vaccine Programme said, Rotary International is working towards the
total eradication of Polio by 2010. Courtesy: dailymirror.lk
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