
Massive inoculation drive starts today

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Internally Displaced Children in North: Rasika Somarathna The Health Ministry has initiated a series of programs to upgrade health facilities provided for the displaced people in the North including an immunization project targeting over 40,000 children in welfare villages, which is set to start from today.

During the three day program supported by the UNICEF and WHO, over 40,000 identified children under the age of five are to be immunized against diseases such as Polio, Tetanus, Japanese Encephalitis and Rubella. According to Health Ministry sources, these children had been identified in accordance with a survey conducted by officials of the Public Health Division of the Ministry under the instructions of Health Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva recently. The Ministry has deployed over 150 medical assistants and over 1,200 trained volunteers to effectively carry out the program within the stipulated period of three days. The Ministry is to implement the project through its Public Health Division covering all welfare villages, housing IDPs. In addition, the Health Ministry has also equipped the Chettikulam hospital with a state of the-art operating theatre at a cost of Rs. 35 million. This new addition at Chettikulam is expected to ease the congestion experienced in the Vavuniya hospital and also lessen travel costs and difficulties of patients from remote villages and welfare camps in the area. Ministry sources said the Health Minister had put forward a Cabinet proposal seeking its consent to bring the Chettikulam hospital and relevant health service providing units at all welfare villages under the direct control of the Ministry (Central Government). The direct intervention if given, is expected speed up decision making procedures and supplement efforts in providing an enhanced service to improve health facilities provided to the IDPs.

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