Resettlement in record time

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Over 40,000 resettled in 44 days, says Senior Presidential Advisor Basil Rajapaksa, MP: Lakshmi DE SILVA in Vavuniya Addressing a public meeting at the Vavuniya Urban Council grounds yesterday on the occasion of sending off several thousand Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) back to their original places of residence, Senior Presidential Advisor Basil Rajapaksa MP appealed to them to set aside ethnic and religious differences and rally round President Mahinda Rajapaksa to bring peace and prosperity to the country. Once the heroic Security Forces liberated the country what was uppermost in the mind of President Rajapaksa was to provide you with all possible facilities and resettle you in your original places of residence, he added.

In most countries, the resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) had taken decades and in some cases even a century but President Mahinda Rajapaksa had initiated the resettlement of IDPs in a 180 day program and three batches with over 4,000 being resettled in the North and East on Wednesday, Senior Presidential Advisor Basil Rajapaksa MP said. He said it had taken the Palestine 70 years and Bangladesh and Pakistan more than a decade to resettle some of their IDPs while in Europe some IDPs were resettled after a century. President Rajapaksa resettled 40,000 IDPs in 44 days in the East and had directed the rehabilitation and resettlement program immediately after the LTTE terrorism and any delay so far was due to land-mine clearing operations, he said. This is not only a Sri Lankan but also a world record, he added. The President had ordered the Task Force to resettle the IDPs in 35 villages in Vavuniya, in 45 villages in Kilinochchi and in 24 villages in Jaffna, the Senior Presidential Advisor said. President Rajapaksa wanted to have peace, amity and prosperity among all people and he had told the IDPs and the people of the North and East that the Government would give back all they had lost during the past 30 years other than the lives lost. “We would like to request the people of the north and east not to be deceived again as the President’s policy was reconciliation while doing everything possible for the IDPs,” he noted “Opposition Leader Ranil Wickremesinghe at one time went round the world asking other countries and lending agencies not to assist Sri Lanka and now he was trying to stop the aid being received for resettlement and rehabilitation of the IDPs in the North and East. Some Tamil politicians were spreading rumours and I would like to ask them to stop spreading hatred among the people but to cooperate to bring in peace and amity,” Rajapaksa MP said. Yesterday, 964 people of 387 families from the Menik Farm IDP village were sent for resettlement in Kantale, Trincomalee, Ampara and Batticaloa areas while 3,000 people were sent for resettlement in their villages in the Jaffna district also from temporary shelters in Vavuniya. The IDPs were dispatched in 70 SLTB buses with dry rations, clothing and other utility material. Parliamentarian Rajapaksa thanked the members of the Armed Forces and public servants of the north for their dedication and efficiency in expediting the process of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation and Disaster Relief Minister Rishard Bathiudeen requested the people of the north and east not to be deceived by the terrorists again as some elements were attempting to make political mileage out of the people’s problems. “Today even some of those who were leaders in the LTTE had joined the political mainstream and the President was doing everything possible to give assistance to all communities to achieve peace and amity with development.”

District Secretary Ms.Charles, officers of the Armed Forces and Government agencies were also present.

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