

President of Sri Lanka stresses need to guard against non-communicable diseases

Language Undefined



The following news story was published in the Sri Lanka Daily News:

The government always stands to safeguard and strengthen the free health service while implementing qualitative and timely measures such as free education, President Mahinda Rajapaksa said.

The President was addressing a meeting at Temple Trees yesterday to create awareness among the people on leading a healthy lifestyle and forming a wholesome society. The event was jointly organised by the Health Ministry and the World Health Organisation to prevent non - communicable diseases (NCD) among Sri Lankans, which have become a major reason for the increase in deaths.

Health Ministry statistics reveal that NCDs such as heart attacks, strokes, hypertension, diabetes and cancer claim around 70 percent of lives annually.

The President said that everyone has to pay attention to lead a healthy lifestyle to prevent major NCDs.

The government has taken every possible step through the Health Ministry to protect people from NCDs, President Rajapaksa said

However, the public are also duty bound to take care of their own health and lead a healthy lifestyle, he said.

President Rajapaksa said the government allocates millions of funds annually to provide health facilities. "Earlier, much attention was paid to communicable diseases and epidemics. However, as a result of busy lifestyles in a competitive world, attention has to be paid to prevent NCDs. Unlike the present day, in the past, NCDs were reported mainly from urban areas. But NCDs are reported from almost all parts of the country today," he said. President Rajapaksa said that students are not free to attend extra curricular activities such as sports.

"Most students go even to nearby schools by bus or school van. Schoolchildren take fast food as a result of the busy lifestyle of their parents. We have to play a pivotal role to be safe from NCDs," President Rajapaksa said. The President noted that it has been observed that more people are paying attention to their health. "The recently

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constructed jogging tracks are popular among the people. The law cannot prevent people from NCDs but it has to be achieved by individual dedication and determination," he said.

The media is duty bound to educate the people on leading a healthy lifestyle. Certain media criticise certain positive trends in a sarcastic manner, the President said.

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