

# INDIA HELPS MALDIVES TACKLE MEASLES OUTBREAK

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

India has stepped in to help the Maldives tackle a recent outbreak of measles, identified at a government hospital about three weeks ago. The Indian Embassy in Male on Thursday handed over 30,000 doses of measles and rubella (MR) vaccine to the Maldivian Health Ministry.

The outbreak comes less than three years after the World Health Organisation declared the Maldives measles-free. As many as six persons have so far been affected by the contagious viral infection. Following the development, health authorities in the Maldives said they have intensified the vaccination drive, to prevent the infectious disease from spreading further.

## Preventive measures

“The first case was identified on January 9. Since then we have stepped up screening and preventive measures to ensure we contain it,” Minister of State for Health Shah Abdullah Mahir told *The Hindu* over telephone. “On rare occasions, there could be an outbreak of a disease considered to have been eradicated in a country. However, if we contain it swiftly and effectively, we will not lose the eradication status,” he said.

The six cases of measles so far identified are from Hulhumale — the reclaimed island adjoining capital Male — and capital Male, according to the Minister, who is heading a task force to handle the outbreak. The Maldives, he said, is observing 2020 as the year of public health, when an unexpected public health challenge emerged. “With our ongoing vaccination and re-vaccination drives, we hope to be able to contain it soon. We are grateful for the support from the Indian government at such a time,” he added.

The vaccine provided by India reached Male within 72 hours after the government made a request, a statement from the Indian Embassy said, adding that Minister of Health Abdulla Ameen presented a certificate of appreciation to Indian Ambassador Sunjay Sudhir, thanking the Government of India for the “gesture of goodwill and solidarity.”

## MoU on health

The Indian government’s initiative comes even as the two countries implement the Memorandum of Understanding on Health cooperation — signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Male in June 2019. Secretary-level delegations met in Male early January to draw a roadmap for cooperation, in capacity building and training of doctors and medical professionals, disease surveillance, training of mental health professionals, setting up of digital health capacities in Maldives, officials said.

India is also helping build a 100-bed Cancer Hospital in Hulhumale as part of its \$800 million Line of Credit to the island nation, a popular tourist destination and home to over 4,00,000 people.

GET RARE PAGES OF JAN 26, 1950 EDITION FREE with the Hindu subscription

Already have an account ? [Sign in](#)

Find mobile-friendly version of articles from the day's newspaper in one easy-to-read list.

Enjoy reading as many articles as you wish without any limitations.

A select list of articles that match your interests and tastes.

Move smoothly between articles as our pages load instantly.

A one-stop-shop for seeing the latest updates, and managing your preferences.

We brief you on the latest and most important developments, three times a day.

\*Our Digital Subscription plans do not currently include the e-paper ,crossword, iPhone, iPad mobile applications and print. Our plans enhance your reading experience.

To continue enjoying The Hindu, You can turn off your ad blocker or Subscribe to The Hindu.

[Sign up for a 30 day free trial.](#)

**END**

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS