

Govt committed to win 'war against polio'

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ISLAMABAD (Online): Parliamentary Secretary for Health Raheela Yahya Monday said that the eradication of polio was the government's top priority.

"Polio cannot be eradicated from the world unless it is eradicated from Pakistan," she said while speaking at the launching ceremony of National House to House Immunization campaign against polio held at Rural Health Center, Mandra.

"The war against polio is aimed at saving hundreds of thousands of children from being crippled for life," she said. The present government is particularly focused on providing quality health care to children and women and programs to protect them from deadly diseases, she said.

"The government is thus making extensive efforts and providing the required resources to strengthen these programs.

Children upto the age of 5 years is the most vulnerable and there is strong need to provide protection to these children against deadly childhood disease."

She told the participants that formidable success has been achieved in bringing the number of cases down from over thousands in 1993 to only 53 cases so far this year. She was of the view that the eyes of the entire world are on us since we are among the last three polio endemic countries of the world.

The Prime Minister is taking keen interest in this initiative and a monthly report of progress in each province is being sent to him, she told. She requested the parents of all children upto 5 years of age to ensure that their children get their polio drops during the 3-day campaign beginning Tuesday.

She also appealed to the polio teams trekking the length

and breadth of Pakistan to ensure that no eligible child is missed.

Speaking on the occasion, Rawalpindi District Nazim Raja Tariq Mehboob Kiani said that Rawalpindi district was about to get rid of this deadly disease as not a single case was reported in the district during the last two years.

He emphasized the commitment of the district government to root out polio from the district. He also elaborated the plan chalked out for the upcoming polio round.

Addressing the participants, Fumio Tamamura, president Trustee of Rotary International said that they will strive hard to save the humanity and were very much determined that Pakistan would soon become a polio-free country.

Dr. Khalif Bile Mohammad, WHO representative and Omar Abidi, UNICEF representative

to Pakistan were of the view that Pakistan had taken tremendous steps to eradicate this crippling disease.

They said that August, September, October and November was the time of highest transition of polio virus therefore this campaign was very important. They hoped that Pakistan would be first one which will get rid of this disease among the remaining affected countries.

Executive Director, National Institute for Health, Dr. Athar Saeed Dil and Ijaz Rahim, federal secretary health were also present on the occasion.

At the end, parliamentary secretary also administered polio drops to the children.

During the upcoming national round 75,000 teams will go house-to-house to administer polio drops to over 30 million children of less than 5 years of age.

'IBP deprived hospitals of experienced doctors'

Arif Yousafzai

PESHAWAR: The administration of Khyber Teaching Hospital, while putting an end to the much debated Institution Based Practice introduced by the NWFP governor Syed Iftikhar Hussain Shah, on Monday inaugurated the new health delivery system of evening time OPD.

In this connection the hospital administration arranged a simple but impressive gathering inside the hospital compound which was attended among others by Naib Nazim District Peshawar Dr. Iqbal Khalil, administrator and chief executive KTH Dr. Ziaul Islam and large number of senior health practitioners.

It merits a mention here that the gathering was to be presided over by the provincial health minister Inayat Ullah Khan but he could not grace the function due to an emergency meeting of the parliamentary meeting of the MMA in the Frontier House.

Talking on the occasion Dr. Iqbal Khalil said since IBP was a controversial system, therefore, its implementation in the province was absolutely impossible.

Expressing his regret over the way IBP was introduced the district Peshawar Naib Nazim said there was no doubt in the fact that this system was prepared in haste, adding even the stalk holders were not taken into confidence before embarking on a totally new health delivery system.

"Let me talk freely that IBP

served nothing except the deprivation of hospitals from the experienced and talented health practitioners.

It neither contributed any good to health sector nor benefited the poor patients who always remain the ultimate losers," Khalil observed.

He went on to say that IBP inflicted irreparable loss to the provincial health sector as on one hand senior doctors had to resign as protest against the new system which caused a real dearth of doctors in the government owned hospitals while on the other it adversely affected the quality of teaching in the medical colleges due to the rendering of resignations by renowned professors.

He added though IBP was introduced with the spirit and tall claims of benefiting the patients, however, it proved to be anti patients as they had to pay the same fee of Rs 300 to the doctors inside the hospitals at evening time.

In addition to the same fee, he said, the patients had to undergo quite a tough and miserable condition due to immense rush in the hospitals.

Khalil added that the administration of KTH deserved felicitation that they had succeeded in taking the pride of initiating the evening time OPD which, he believed, will proved to be a milestone towards bringing an improvement in the health delivery system of the province.

He urged upon the doctor's community to devote their energies to the treatment of ailing

people, saying the profession to which the doctors belonged was highly respectable.

Earlier in his speech Dr. Ziaul Islam, administrator Khyber Teaching Hospital, said there was great deal of resentment among the doctors over what he called the infamous system of IBP.

Appreciating the MMA provincial government he said he would not be wrong to say that provincial health minister Inayat Ullah had played a pivotal role in abolition of IBP and introduction of evening time OPD.

Ziaul Islam added besides the provincial government, health committee on IBP under the chairmanship of PML-N parliamentary leader Anwar Kamal Khan Marwat contributed a lot to put an end to the controversial system of IBP.

About the new system of evening time OPD he said that each senior health practitioner would be required to sit in the hospital once in a week from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm to ensure free of cost medical checkup to the patients.

He added that the patients would have to obtain a simple chit, the one they usually got at morning time, from the counter to have a medical checkup from the specialist doctors, adding there would be a number of junior doctors to assist the senior fellows.

He informed that other facilities like X-ray and ECG would be available at evening time too for the patients to take benefit from facilities.

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