

MEDIA FACT-FILE

POLIO ERADICATION

Volume 6, September 2012



Indian, Afghan cricketers join hands for polio eradication



India and Afghanistan cricketers swapping signed bats during T-20 to support polio eradication.

INDIAN cricketers Virender Sehwag, Suresh Raina, Harbhajan Singh and Rohit Sharma met Afghanistan captain Nowroz Mangal and other key team members and exchanged cricket bats signed by both the T20 teams, as

symbols of both countries' commitment to end polio. "Stopping polio in India was like playing a long innings, it took a lot of focus and effort, but India has proven that this disease can be stopped everywhere in the world,

once and for all. We support Afghanistan and Pakistan in their fight against this disease, so that soon no child in the region is ever needlessly paralysed by polio again", said Sehwag at the event, organized on the sidelines of the T-20 match in Colombo.

At the end of T-20 series, the bats will be presented to the governments of Afghanistan and India to underline cricketers' support to the fight against polio.

During the India vs. Afghanistan match, with the support of the International Cricket Council, polio

eradication messages were displayed in English, Hindi and Pashto on the electronic advertising boards and on the electronic scoreboard, calling on parents in Afghanistan to immunize their children against polio.

Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria are the only three remaining polio endemic countries.

Though India has not reported any case of poliovirus since January 2011, the threat of poliovirus persists as long as poliovirus transmission continues anywhere in the world.

Kaif flags off 'Polio Walkathon' in Agra

HUNDREDS of Agra residents came out in huge numbers on September 7 to take part in the 'Polio Walkathon', flagged off by cricketer Mohammad Kaif, to support the cause of a polio-free India.



Kaif flagging off 'Polio Walkathon'.

"Every child has the right to have proper health. I congratulate each and every person who has contributed significantly to the cause and

this Walkathon," said Kaif, the UP Cricket Team captain, who has been an ardent supporter of the polio campaign over the

years. The event was organized and supported by The Times of India, the Amrapali Group, Vodafone and 92.7 BIG FM under the banner of 'India Unite to End Polio Now' campaign supported by UNICEF.

Dr Manju Sharma, Chief Medical Officer, Agra, and Mr Anil Kumar Sharma, Chairman and Managing Director, Amrapali Group, were among those present.

Cycle Rally rolls out polio message in Patna

A colorful cycle rally rolled out on the streets of Patna, Bihar, on September 9, the opening day of the sub-national polio immunization round, to spread the message for polio eradication. Donning polio caps and placards with polio messages on their bicycles, more than 50 students

from Arya Kanya High School and Ravindra Balika Vidyalaya participated in the cycle rally.

Bihar Food and Consumer Protection Minister Mr Shyam Rajak flagged off the rally in the presence of officials from the state health department and partners.

Organized in partnership with Aidmatrix, the rally commenced from Kargil Chowk in Gandhi Maidan and made its way through the city thoroughfares reminding parents to immunize their children against polio during the week-long polio campaign.

UPCOMING EVENT

On 27 September, UN Secretary General will host a high-level event on polio eradication, in the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York. The event, 'Our Commitment to the Next Generation: The Legacy of a Polio-free World' will bring together leaders of the remaining endemic countries, donor governments, development agencies, partners and media, to draw attention to the urgent need for focus and commitment to eradicate the remaining 1% of polio cases worldwide.

The event will be followed by a global civil society festival on 29 September, bringing together top artists with an audience of 60,000 to a concert in New York's Central Park, to catalyse further action to end polio.

GLOBAL POLIO UPDATE

In 2012 so far, 145 cases have been reported globally from four countries – Nigeria (88), Pakistan (35), Afghanistan (17) and Chad (5). This compares to 400 cases reported from 15 countries for the corresponding period in 2011.

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