Switzerland sends Aid Supply to Sri Lanka

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Switzerland sends aid supplies to Sri Lanka Switzerland has dispatched medical supplies worth CHF 3.5 million to Colombo, including half a million antigen tests, 50 ventilators, 150 oxygen concentrators and testing materials.

In response to the serious public health situation in Sri Lanka and calls for assistance from the Sri Lankan authorities, Swiss Humanitarian Aid immediately set up a crisis unit to provide aid supplies as quickly as possible to help Sri Lanka's efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the requirements issued by the Sri Lankan authorities, a list of supplies Switzerland was able to provide was drawn up in close cooperation with the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport and the Federal Department of Home Affairs.

An aircraft left Zurich today with 16 tonnes of supplies on board. In addition to the 50 ventilators provided by the Armed Forces Pharmacy, the supplies included 150 oxygen concentrators and other medical equipment (such as devices for measuring oxygen levels).

The Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) also added half a million antigen tests to the consignment. Before assembling the supplies, it was clarified that they would not be needed for the Swiss population.

The consignment will be received in Colombo by representatives of the Sri Lankan Ministry of Health and then distributed to the different locations. The Swiss Embassy in Sri Lanka is in close contact with the local authorities to ensure that the supplies are distributed fairly and in line with humanitarian principles.

Last year, Switzerland also contributed CHF 1 million to Sri Lanka's efforts to combat COVID-19. In October 2020, it funded a device for PCR testing in Colombo airport and provided 39,000 test kits – with the aim of helping Sri Lankan migrant workers who had lost their jobs abroad because of COVID-19 to return home. The Swiss Embassy has also given CHF 100,000 to local partners providing emergency COVID-19 aid to the neediest people, especially low-income families.

Today's consignment to Sri Lanka is the third Swiss Humanitarian Aid supply mission to South Asia within a month. Swiss Humanitarian Aid, which is part of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, sent 13 tonnes of supplies to India and 30 tonnes to Nepal in recent weeks. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, Swiss Humanitarian Aid has been continuously monitoring public health developments around the world and is ready to provide as much support as it can upon request. (Colombo Gazette)