27 November 2021, Islamabad – During a visit to Pakistan, WHO's Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari with Dr Palitha Mahipala, WHO Representative in Pakistan, visited a fixed vaccination site and a school (outreach site) at Gulbahar Colony in Peshawar to witness a nationwide measles and rubella campaign. The campaign is the largest in Pakistan's history and aims to vaccinate 90 million children (9 months to less than15 years) in Pakistan from 15 to 27 November 2021.

"I congratulate the Government of Pakistan for executing such a large scale measles and rubella campaign. It requires commitment and passion towards the cause. I equally appreciate the efforts of front-line workers and parents in supporting the campaign in which measles and rubella and polio vaccines are being administered to children under 5," said Dr Al-Mandhari.

Dr Al-Mandhari and Dr Mahipala attended Peshawar Bar Council to inaugurate a community vaccination centre, established with WHO support, which will facilitate access to the COVID-19 vaccine. The site is visited by 15 000 citizens, lawyers and other officials on a daily basis. President of the Bar Council Amjad Marwat welcomed the WHO team and Dr Al-Mandhari expressed his appreciation of Bar Council members who had worked closely with WHO to set up the facility which will help accelerate administration of the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to citizens and lawyers.



WHO officials also participated in the 'wear a mask campaign' that began in September at the District Bar Council in Peshawar to promote public and social health measures to prevent the spread of the COVID -19 virus. Bar Council President Mr Marwat and lawyers distributed masks and encouraged individuals to continue following COVID-19 precautionary and preventive health measures in spite of reduced numbers of COVID-19 cases in the country.



"Vaccination is a key tool in ending this pandemic, but it is not the only measure that can keep us safe. People still need to adhere to proven measures that work, such as mask use and physical distancing. While it is reassuring to see so many people being vaccinated, no one is safe until everyone is safe and we all need to play a part in protecting others who may still be at risk," Dr Al-Mandhari stressed.

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