

Sudan to vaccinate against yellow fever outbreak

19 November 2012, by Mohamed Osman

(AP)—Sudan has launched a massive vaccination campaign to immunize 2.4 million people against an outbreak of yellow fever in the restive region of Darfur, the U.N. said Monday.

The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said Khartoum's health ministry received an initial shipment of 800,000 doses of vaccine on Friday to battle the outbreak, which began in September after a heavy rainy season created additional breeding sites for disease-carrying mosquitoes.

As of Saturday, Sudan had reported 116 deaths out of 459 suspected cases. Health care services are not available to many in the remote Darfur region, where Sudan's government has been battling a rebel group since 2003. More than 300,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

A U.N. spokesman in New York said Monday that the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Darfur on Nov. 13 airlifted a dozen injured Sudanese soldiers from the field to medical facilities in el-Fasher, North Darfur's capital. Providing medical assistance is part of their mandate, Eduardo del Buey said.

The U.N. force has in the past provided medical evacuation services for both the Sudanese army and the rebels, he said.

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