

Press release: UK government doubles public donations to the Disasters Emergency Committee appeal for people fleeing Burma

PHOTOS: [UK aid reaching those who have fled the violence to Bangladesh](#)

The UK Government today (Wednesday, 4 October) pledges extra help for the victims of the Burmese military's atrocities by doubling donations made by the British public to the cause.

In the last month alone, more than half a million men, women and children from the country have fled their homeland and made the perilous journey to neighbouring Bangladesh to seek refuge.

The UK Government was quick to recognise the unprecedented scale of the crisis in Burma and the impact it's having on Bangladesh, and has already given £30 million to provide lifesaving food, water, shelter and healthcare to victims of the violence.

Britain continues to take a leading role in responding to the crisis as the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) today launches its emergency appeal for people fleeing Burma.

The UK will double all donations up to £3 million, meaning even more aid is available for those in need.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

I am appalled that more than half a million Rohingya have been forced to flee their homes because of the horrific violence in Burma.

Those who escaped, carrying little or nothing, have had to make the treacherous journey across the border into Bangladesh to seek safety, with countless people dying or losing loved ones.

The relentless denial of aid is a matter of life and death for those still in northern Rakhine. It is utterly intolerable that the military who are responsible for this inhumane catastrophe have not heeded calls for restraint, and pleas to allow those who are now refugees to return safely to their homes.

In this time of crisis, the UK will do everything it possibly can to help and is leading the way internationally to save the victims of this tragedy, who are in desperate need of food, water, shelter and healthcare.

By matching pound for pound public donations to the DEC Appeal, we will double the impact British people can have in helping those who are displaced in Bangladesh or who remain in Burma.

UK taxpayers' money is already making a significant difference to those who have been displaced and the announcement of the DEC appeal will allow more people to receive aid.

The distribution of further lifesaving aid in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh began yesterday (Tuesday, 3 October). Through our partner, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) 10,000 shelter kits, 10,500 mats and 20,000 blankets will be distributed throughout this week. Emergency shelter for up to 26,355 people has already been provided since the first refugees made their way to Bangladesh.

Food for 65,000 of the most vulnerable victims and healthcare for 50,000 people has already been provided through other partners and we are also supporting 7,500 children, many of whom have suffered traumatic ordeals and are at risk of sexual violence and trafficking.

For every £5 the British public donates this could provide a family with clean water for a week, £100 could provide two families with food for a month and £30 could provide emergency shelter for a family, and with the UK Government's further support the impact on the ground will be doubled.

Notes to editors

The DEC brings 13 leading UK aid charities together in times of crisis: ActionAid, Age International, British Red Cross, CAFOD, CARE International, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Oxfam, Plan International UK, Save the Children, Tearfund and World Vision; all collectively raising money to reach those in need quickly.

The UK is appalled by the violence taking place in Rakhine State, particularly by the hundreds of thousands of people fleeing that violence and the reports of grave human rights violations taking place.

As of Monday, 2 October 507,000 people have fled the violence into neighbouring Bangladesh. Numbers are rising.

The UK has been a leader in responding to the crisis – in speed and size – to help meet the urgent humanitarian needs of vulnerable men, women and children in both Bangladesh and Burma.

Prior to the latest violence which began on Friday, 25 August 2017, we committed £5.9 million to meet the needs of the most vulnerable refugees and the host communities who support them.

In response to the latest influx we have provided a further £30 million of support.

Our existing work in the region meant that we were already in position to

provide life-saving support when the crisis flared – without this, aid would have taken much longer to reach those in need. And we are sending more aid to Bangladesh.

In Rakhine State in Burma, aid workers have been getting British-funded humanitarian assistance to many tens of thousands of people. DFID's partners are ready to provide emergency food to 30,000 people and to treat more than 3,000 severely malnourished children and pregnant women, but the Burmese authorities must stop refusing to grant access.

This lack of access on the Burma side means vital needs will not be met and lives lost. Britain urgently calls upon the Burmese military to end the violence in Rakhine and the government of Burma to allow immediate and full humanitarian access and support for the people and communities affected.

We have raised the situation in three UN Security Council meetings and led work in the Council to develop an international response. The Foreign Secretary also held a Ministerial meeting of General Assembly members at the UN General Assembly on 18 September to drive this process forward.

Mark Field, Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, visited Burma, including Rakhine State from Monday, 25 – Wednesday, 27 September. He held talks in Burma with State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi to press for an urgent resolution to the crisis in Rakhine.

On Thursday, 28 September Minister Burt and Minister Field hosted a series of high-level talks in Dhaka, Bangladesh with key Government officials and aid agencies to identify how best to provide lifesaving support to the large influx of refugees in Bangladesh.

Britain is ready to support the recommendations of the Kofi Annan led Rakhine Advisory Commission to assist the long-term development of all people in Rakhine state, but right now the immediate action is for the security forces to end the violence and the government of Burma to allow humanitarian access.

[News story: Battle of Britain Reception](#)

Battle of Britain Sunday commemorates the great victory won by the Royal Air Force, which saved Britain from invasion in 1940. On Sunday, September 15th came what Sir Winston Churchill called "one of the decisive battles of the war" and with it the Luftwaffe's greatest defeat.

Many Argentines, decedents from British families living in Argentina listed themselves as volunteers to serve and join the British forces in World War II. Multiple of them were assigned to the Royal Air Force (RAF) and were part

of the legendary No. 164 "Argentine-British" Squadron which was composed by Argentine and Polish volunteers.

The No. 164 Squadron's coat of arms finds its origins in 1918 although, by that time, it didn't have a motto. Mr Miguel Angel Carcano, who was the Argentine Ambassador in London, suggested that it should be "Firmes volamos" (Firmly we fly). The idea for the insignia of the British lion in front of a rising sun representing Argentina was also Carcano's. The coat of arms wasn't recognised until 1943 when the Duque of Gloucester presented the Squadron officially at a ceremony in front of the Air Marshalls Sir Hugh Sanders, Roderick Hill, and members of the British community in Argentina. It was the only Squadron whose name was inscribed in Spanish.

Argentine men from British families were not the only ones who volunteered, there were many women who also had a prominent participation during World War II: Maureen Dunlop, an Argentine volunteer, became an ATA pilot in the RAF during the Second World War, and Rosemary Simpson another Argentine volunteer who participated in the Royal Army Ordinance Corps (RAOC), part of the British Army.

In a reception at the HM Ambassador's residence, we honoured Ronnie Scott, the son of a Scottish immigrant, who in 1943 enlisted as a pilot in the British military; Stanley Coggan, a veteran of the Second World War who was a Flying Officer; Mary Chapman, as well Scottish, who has been living in Argentina for 70 years, but before that she was a cryptographer in British military defence during World War II; Antoni Żebrowski, who was born in Poland and was trained as a combat pilot by the RAF, and then fought between 1943 and 1944 and Dennis Crisp.

One of Sir Winston Churchill's most famous quotes was delivered in the midst of the Battle of Britain: "The gratitude of every home in our Island, in our Empire, and indeed throughout the world, except in the abodes of the guilty, goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger, are turning the tide of the World War by their prowess and by their devotion. Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

Press release: £2.5m cash boost for garden towns

A £2.5m cash boost to speed up the delivery of over 155,000 new homes across England, has been announced by the Communities Secretary Sajid Javid today.

Nine locally-led garden town developments, from Bicester to Taunton, will each receive new funding to fast track the build out of these large housing projects.

The new funding will support local authorities and communities in delivering ambitious proposals, speeding up the progress of developments through additional dedicated resources and expertise.

Garden towns being supported by government are committed to delivering high quality, well-planned and well-designed new communities that will stand out as exemplars of good development in years to come.

The funding will support the development of nine new locally-led garden towns at Bicester, Didcot, Basingstoke, Otterpool Park in Kent, Aylesbury, Taunton, Harlow-Gilston, North Northamptonshire and North Essex.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Locally-led garden towns have enormous potential to deliver the homes that communities need. This new funding will help support the construction of more than 155,000 homes in 9 places across the country.

New communities not only deliver homes, but also bring new jobs and facilities and a big boost to local economies.

The Government's Housing White Paper sets out bold new plans to ensure the housing market works for everyone, so that more people can have the security of a decent place to live.

Across England, Government is supporting the locally-led development of 10 garden towns and cities, as well as 14 garden villages – with the combined potential to deliver 220,000 new homes across England.

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Further information:

Allocations for the 9 garden towns are as follows:

| Garden town | Funding allocation | Number of proposed new homes |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Bicester | £500,000 | 13,000 new homes |
| Basingstoke | £95,000 | 10,000 new homes |
| Didcot | £295,000 | 15,000 new homes |
| North Essex Garden Communities | £700,000 | 43,000 new homes |
| North Northants Garden Communities | £50,000 | 18,000 new homes |
| Otterpool Park, Shepway | £155,000 | 12,000 new homes |
| Taunton | £375,000 | 13,000 new homes |
| Aylesbury | £155,000 | 15,000 new homes |
| Harlow & Gilston | £175,000 | 16,000 new homes |

- A garden town is a development of more than 10,000 homes. Garden villages are smaller settlements of between 1,500 and 10,000 homes.
- Government is encouraging different and ambitious solutions to fix the housing market. There are pioneering examples of this already taking place in garden towns around the country: for example, as recently announced the Graven Hill site in Bicester Garden Town is providing 2,000 serviced plots for self builders.

[News story: UK team returns following major success at the Invictus Games](#)

The 90-strong team of wounded, injured and sick (WIS) Service personnel and veterans returned from Toronto yesterday with an impressive 87 medals and over 170 personal bests. The haul of medals included 26 golds, 34 silvers and 27 bronzes.

The eight-day sporting event ran from the 23 to 30 September and saw 550 individuals from 17 nations compete across 12 sports including archery, wheelchair rugby and sitting volleyball.

Highlights for the UK Team included: sitting volleyball team captain Sgt Netra Rana, Royal Gurkha Rifles, leading his team to a silver; former musician with the Royal Marine Band Service, Poppy Pawsey, winning an unexpected bronze in the Womens 100m swimming freestyle race; and two golds in golf.

For the majority of competitors, their success at the Games was achieving an individual goal specific to their recovery such as setting a new personal best, or performing in front of a large audience under pressure.

The Invictus Games, founded by HRH Prince, demonstrate the power of sport to inspire recovery. Getting involved in sport provides significant physical and mental health benefits including increasing self-confidence. At the closing ceremony on the 30 September, Prince Harry said:

To the thousands who filled the stands this week, and the millions who watched at home, let me issue you a challenge. Don't just move on from these games with happy memories. Instead, make an Invictus goal for yourselves. Let the examples of service and resilience that you have seen, inspire you to take action to improve something – big or small – in your life, for your family, or in your community.

The fourth Games will take place in [Sydney](#) next year with 500 competitors from 18 nations competing from the 20 to 27 October 2018. WIS members of the British Armed Forces and veterans who have been inspired to get involved in sport are invited to [register their interest](#) in the 2018 Games. Registration of interest will remain open until 1 December 2017.

The UK Team Captain, Bernie Broad, former Army Major in the Grenadier Guards, said:

Invictus lit a spark in my belly and at the end of the Games it has become a raging fire. It has kick-started a new phase in my recovery journey and one that will continue for a long time. I have a renewed purpose and it's brought back my determination and confidence.

What it has done for me it will do for many others. So apply for Sydney and potentially watch your life change in ways you couldn't imagine.

The Ministry of Defence worked in partnership with Help for Heroes and The Royal British Legion to deliver the UK Delegation for Toronto 2017.

The Ministry of Defence is a partner in the [Defence Recovery Capability](#), a programme which helps wounded, injured and sick Service personnel either return to duty from injury or provides a mechanism to help them back into civilian life.

[Government response: Online charitable giving summit: statement of meeting](#)

Key discussion areas and next steps agreed at a summit about online giving held by the Charity Commission and the Fundraising Regulator

A number of concerns have been raised in the media and by parliamentarians about online giving, including possible fraudulent activity, oversight over the end-use of funds, and transparency about fees charged by sites. Recent events including terrorist attacks in Manchester and London and the Grenfell Tower fire have heightened these concerns given the large amount of money raised for victims on these platforms in a short amount of time.

On 27 September 2017, the Charity Commission and the Fundraising Regulator convened a meeting with senior representatives from 14 of the major giving platforms in the UK, to discuss these issues and collectively agree principles to increase public understanding and transparency about the

different forms of donating on online platforms in order to secure public trust and confidence.

The Charity Commission and the Fundraising Regulator will report back to the Minister for Civil Society on the progress of discussions and their assessment of the adequacy of the current regulatory framework.

Online fundraising platforms not in attendance at the summit are warmly invited to confirm their commitment to high fundraising standards and join future discussions.

The following areas were discussed during the summit and a number of actions were agreed:

- the role online giving platforms play and will increasingly play in the future in connecting people and communities who want to give and those in need is of huge value.
- platforms acknowledge a tension between the speed of public response to disasters and high profile humanitarian events and the pace with which charities can distribute funds raised to beneficiaries. Platforms stand ready to contribute their expertise to further work reviewing the government and civil society response to humanitarian crises in the UK.
- platforms which offer the opportunity for crowdfunding and person to person fundraising as well as donating direct to a charity feel confident that the advice they give to individuals setting up pages about the choices available to them and the consequences of those choices is clear. More can be done, working collaboratively, to ensure clear and consistent advice across different platforms and generally to the public. It is critical to avoid confusion about, for example, accountability to the Charity Commission, eligibility for Gift Aid, and what happens in the event of a failed appeal. Platforms agree to work with the Charity Commission and Fundraising Regulator to agree and disseminate clear and consistent public advice about the choices available for donating.
- all the sites confirm that they have robust counter-fraud processes in place and committed to providing regulators and ministers with more detailed information. Using reputable sites which meet high standards and have good fraud prevention and detection measures in place gives the best assurance for the donating public. The Charity Commission and Fundraising Regulator will work with the platforms in reviewing their resilience to fraud and to create a new forum to share advice and intelligence about potential fraud threats.
- platforms recognise their legal responsibility when acting as commercial participators for charitable donations to make it clear to donors upfront what proportion of their donation will reach the charity. Platforms consider that organisations and individuals setting up pages have good understanding and acceptance of the charges and fees involved but acknowledge that donors and the general public may not always be so clear and that it is not easy to compare fees and charges across different platforms and routes. Platforms confirm their commitment to transparency on fees and charges and will work together with government

and regulators to explore how this can be improved.

- the Fundraising Regulator is reviewing the Code of Fundraising Practice and wants to update and expand the standards for online fundraising set out in the Code. Platforms will work with the Fundraising Regulator to contribute to the review of the Code.
- registration with the Fundraising Regulator is now open to third party fundraisers including online platforms and this offers an opportunity to demonstrate public commitment to meeting the highest standards for fundraising. The Fundraising Regulator welcomes those platforms which are already registered and invites those platforms which have not registered to consider doing so.
- the Fundraising Regulator occasionally receives complaints from the public related to online giving platforms and welcomes engagement with platforms to resolve complaints and address areas of growing public concern. Platforms will engage with the Fundraising Regulator to share information about their complaints processes and address any areas of concern.

Representatives from the following platforms attended the summit:

1. Just Giving
2. GoFund Me
3. Virgin Money Giving
4. BT MyDonate
5. PayPal Giving Fund
6. Total Giving
7. Charity Choice
8. Givey
9. Everyclick Ltd
10. Local Giving
11. The Big Give
12. Wonderful
13. The Good Exchange
14. Everydayhero