

UNITED NATIONS



জাতিসংঘ

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OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS RESIDENT COORDINATOR IN BANGLADESH

MEDIA RELEASE

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Joint Statement by the United Nations Country Team

UN Agency Heads Visit Areas Most Affected by the Cyclone SIDR

Mirajgonj, Amtali and Morelganj - A high-level Joint UN Mission yesterday visited three of the districts worst affected by Cyclone Sidr: Patuakhali, Barguna and Bagerhat.

The members of the mission were Renata Lok Dessallien, UN Resident Coordinator, Louis-Georges Arsenault, UNICEF Representative, Douglas Broderick, WFP Representative, and Dr. Marc Bellemans, FAO.

"These districts have been hard hit and many people are suffering from the loss of loved ones. Homes and livelihood have been largely affected and there has been significant loss in crop and livestock. The poor are the worst affected," said the team, having made contacts with local officials and two UN assessment and relief teams operating in the area for the last 72 hours.

"We found the Government and the Bangladesh Military active and engaged in rescue and relief operations. UN agencies and NGOs are also delivering aid to the affected population. The aid is now reaching people in remote areas too," the UN executives said.

"Based on our discussion with local administration and affected people, the priority needs for the coming days are food, shelter, water and essential drugs," the UN officials assessed. Support for household economic activities will be needed in the medium term, especially for fisheries and agriculture.

According to the mission, rehabilitation works for roads, highways, culverts, embankments, schools and other infrastructure will also be required in the longer term.

Travelling through the storm-affected area, the UN officials were struck by the degree of destruction, but also impressed by the response from the Bangladeshi people.

"Once again we have witnessed the high level of resilience of the Bangladeshi people in facing natural disaster and calamities. We have seen small scale economic activities such as local markets, ferry and road transport and even agricultural activities are starting to resume," the UN officials stated.

"In solidarity with the people and the Government of Bangladesh, the UN system will continue to provide relief and support for the affected population for the immediate as well as the recovery phase," they concluded.

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For further information please contact: Mr. Sakil Faizullah, Communications Officer via email: sakil.faizullah@undp.org phone: 8118600 ext 2498, mobile: +88 01713 049900

জিপিও বক্স ২২৪, ঢাকা ১০০০, বাংলাদেশ, টেলিফোন: (৮৮০-২) ৮১১ ৮৬০০, ফ্যাক্স: (৮৮০-২) ৮১১ ৭৮১১, ই-মেইল: rc.bd@undp.org
GPO Box 224, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh • Tel: (880-2) 811 8600, Fax: (880-2) 811 7811, E-mail: rc.bd@undp.org, Internet: www.un-bd.org