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Saudi Arabia provides US\$10.8 million to UNHCR

ISLAMABAD: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) has provided US\$10.8million to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to support the agency's relief efforts for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Pakistan.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on Sunday at the Headquarters of the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) between the Fund and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), according to which a 10,841096 US Dollars relief grant will be offered to the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Pakistan.

The Refugee Agency will use this generous grant to purchase food and non-food items for tens of thousands of Pakistani IDPs, who were displaced by violence in the north-western part of the country.

The items include 25,000 tents, 379,200 blankets, 126,400 plastic sheets, 100,000 sleeping mattresses and 25,000 kitchen sets in addition to 20,000 food packages which would be distributed during the forthcoming Holy month of Ramadan.

"This is a timely and important contribution which is a testimony of the gesture of solidarity of the people and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the people and government of Pakistan at this difficult time," UNHCR's Representative Mr Mengesha Kebede said.

Expressing his gratitude for the generous support being provided by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Mr Kebede said that such aid will assist the vulnerable IDP communities.

Mr Abdul Aziz Al-Ghadeer, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia in Pakistan reaffirmed the Kingdom's support to UNHCR operations.

"We value our cooperation with UNHCR and we are delighted that Saudi Arabia is supporting the urgent humanitarian needs of the displaced families in Pakistan," he said. "We consider this to be our duty, according to our traditions and values."

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Currently around 920,917 IDPs in Pakistan are still displaced. Out of the total displaced, 124,000 individuals are residing in camps, 328,244 individuals are displaced from Orakzai and Kurram residing in Kohat and Hangu while 312,826 individuals are displaced from South Waziristan residing in DI Khan and Tank. Some 155,847 individuals are still displaced in the host communities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

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