

Media Update-2

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WFP

PRESS RELEASE

WFP HANDS OVER HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE FACILITY TO AZAD JAMMU & KASHMIR TO BOOST GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY RESPONSE CAPACITY

Muzaffarabad – The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) today handed over a state-of-the-art Humanitarian Response Facility (HRF) to the Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The facility will be used to store and dispatch humanitarian relief supplies for future emergencies, augmenting national capacity and reducing the time needed to respond to crises.

The Honorable Prime Minister of AJK, Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan, expressed his gratitude to WFP, donor countries and the United Nations for their support and assistance in relief and rebuilding efforts following the 2005 earthquake. He thanked WFP for standing with the people and the Government in times of such grave humanitarian needs and in strengthening the capacity of the State Disaster Management Authority.

“Pakistan is a disaster-prone country frequently hit by earthquakes, floods, droughts and blizzards. Due to climate change, incidents of natural calamities are on the rise and so are their damaging force,” said Chris Kaye, WFP Pakistan Country Director.

“We hope through the Humanitarian Response Facility, local authorities and communities can be better prepared for future

hazards. WFP is committed to continuing its support to the National Disaster Management Authority and the Provincial and State Disaster Management Authorities in building such resilience against future shocks,” he added.

The total storage capacity amounts to 960 metric tons within two 15 x 32 metre warehouse units and an open storage space of up to 10,000 metric tonnes. A second phase to expand the facility will commence soon. The facility in AJK is the eighth central storage response facility built by WFP to strengthen the disaster management capacity in the country. Similar humanitarian response facilities have been set-up in Muzaffargarh, Quetta, Lahore, Hyderabad, Peshawar, Sukkur and Gilgit Baltistan and have played an important role in responding to droughts, floods, snow emergencies and more recently, COVID-19.

The handover ceremony held in Muzaffarabad also commemorated the 15th anniversary of the devastating 7.6 magnitude earthquake that struck on 8 October 2005. Thousands of lives were lost and many more were injured, with massive destruction to infrastructure.

The new facility was built in close collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the AJK State Disaster Management Authority, with generous contributions from the governments of Australia, Canada, Denmark, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, and the United States.

The event was also attended by the representatives from ECHO, Australia, Islamic Development Bank and Canada, government line departments, NDMA, SDMA, government departments, civil society and media.

The United Nations World Food Programme is the world’s largest humanitarian organization, saving lives in emergencies, building prosperity and supporting a sustainable future for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change.

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For more information, please contact:

Ms. Mahira Afzal, WFP Communications Officer. Islamabad,
Mobile: +92 345 8559333, mahira.afzal@wfp.org