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Sweet harvest on saline shores

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Aid to Gaza still 'drop in the ocean': WFP

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Rohingyas may go hungry after Nov

Warns WFP, calls for immediate funds

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and MOKAMMEL SHUVO from Cox's Bazar

Food assistance for over 1.2 million Rohingyas in Bangladesh will end after November 30 unless urgent funds are secured, the World Food Programme has warned, urging donors to act immediately.

"We have enough money until November 30. On December 1, the situation will be zero -- no food for 1.2 million people. To maintain the minimum ration, we urgently require funds," WFP Bangladesh Country Director Domenico Scalpelli told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We need around \$173 million for the next 12 months," he said during a high-level delegation's visit to Cox's Bazar Rohingya refugee camps, warning that any further cut from the current \$12 per person per month would be devastating.

"If we drop it to \$6, malnutrition rates will rise, and children will die. Already the malnutrition rate is very high," Scalpelli cautioned, appealing to traditional donors as well as Gulf states, ASEAN, and OIC countries for help.

Currently, each person's \$12 (around Tk 1,500) food basket includes 13kg of rice for Tk 650, one litre of vegetable oil for Tk 180, half a kilogram of salt for Tk 19, 200g of red chilies for Tk 23.40, five eggs for Tk 53, 400g of onion for Tk 26, 500g of lentils for Tk 47.60, 1kg of sugar for Tk 109, 510g of tilapia fish for Tk 113, 1kg of potato for Tk 14.70, 1kg of chicken for Tk 172, and 1kg of hog plum for Tk 39.

Scalpelli stressed that continued support is essential as the Rohingyas cannot simply stop eating after November. "They want to return home, but until safe and voluntary repatriation is possible, they must be able to eat every day."

A Rohingya man at a food distribution centre said the support is already too little. Requesting anonymity, he said, "Families survive on this



PHOTO: STAR



Food items, which a Rohingya gets a month for \$12, are on display at a refugee camp.

PHOTO: JAMIL KHAN

- ❖ WFP needs \$173m for the next 12 months to maintain minimum ration
- ❖ Each refugee now gets \$12 worth of food per month
- ❖ Rohingyas say \$12 is inadequate
- ❖ WFP says reducing ration to \$6 would trigger malnutrition, child deaths
- ❖ Bangladesh officials warn of chaos, famine at camps if food aid stops

BUSINESS

Heading head heading

Country's four mobile phone operators has bought 190MHz of spectrum for \$1.23 billion or Tk 10,645 crore yesterday, a development that could alleviate customers' woes centring agonisingly low internet speeds and subpar voice services.

The spectrum auction was participated by Grameenphone, Robi, Banglalink and Teletalk at InterContinental Dhaka. Facea dolecaborio opta pa conse conseribus.

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PHOTO: STAR