

UNICEF Canada



May 13, 2008 10:45 ET

Eleven-year-old Bilaal Rajan Issues 'Me and You for the Children of Myanmar' Challenge to his Canadian Peers

TORONTO, ONTARIO--(Marketwire - May 13, 2008) -

Attention Assignment/News/Education editors:

Hundreds of Havenwood Public School children in Mississauga, Ontario applauded as they sat in an assembly listening to 11-year-old Bilaal Rajan, UNICEF Canada Child Ambassador, announce today the launch of a national fundraising campaign he is calling, Me and You for the Children of Myanmar to benefit UNICEF Canada's emergency appeal for the affected children of the Myanmar cyclone.

Me and You for the Children of Myanmar challenge encourages every child in Canada to raise up to \$105 for UNICEF Canada's Myanmar Cyclone Appeal. Children can participate in school-based fundraising activities, download information and a challenge poster at the UNICEF Canada Web site at www.unicef.ca, or engage in their own fundraising with family, neighbours and friends.

"I believe that other children in other parts of the world deserve to have exactly what we have," says Bilaal. There are so many children in Myanmar, right now, without access to safe water, medical supplies or shelter, and through the Me and You for the Children of Myanmar challenge, Canadian children can give them what they need to survive.

Schools in Ontario are already starting to talk to their students about the devastating effects on the children of Myanmar from Cyclone Nargis and are asking for donations. Peel District School Board kicked off today a voluntary fundraising campaign in support of UNICEF's emergency appeal. Other school-based fundraising activities in support of the victims of the Myanmar cyclone are planned across the country.

"As global citizens, we all need to join together and offer our assistance to the people of Myanmar as they rebuild their lives," says Jim Grieve, director of education with the Peel District School Board. "So many of our students will be personally touched by this tragedy and we are pleased to support the UNICEF campaign. We are asking all of our students and staff to help. Only a loonie or toonie from each staff member and student will make an enormous impact in the relief effort."

"Women and children are among the hardest hit by devastating cyclone Nargis," says Melissa Judd, National Manager, School and Youth, UNICEF Canada. "Participating in the Me and You for the Children of Myanmar is a great way for Canadian children, their families and teachers to make a life saving difference in the lives of Myanmar children."

Canadian children have already proven that they can come together to support and rebuild the lives of other children half way across the world. In 2004, Bilaal Rajan launched his first fundraising challenge, at the age of eight, to support children affected by the devastating earthquake and tsunami of south Asia. Called the Canada Kids Earthquake Challenge, children across Canada raised almost \$2 million for UNICEF Canada's emergency appeal.

Donations to the Me and You for the Children of Myanmar (part of UNICEF Canada's Myanmar/Burma Cyclone Appeal) can be made through school-based fundraising activities, or directly by mail at UNICEF Canada, 2200 Yonge Street, Suite 1100, Toronto, ON, M4S 2C6. For more information visit UNICEF Canada's Web site at www.unicef.ca or call 1-800-567-4483.

Since the cyclone hit on May 3, UNICEF has been distributing food, water, medicines and shelter equipment. In the wake of the disaster, lack of access to clean water and poor sanitation, inadequate shelter and poor nutrition pose particular threats to children. This leads to an increased risk of diarrhea which can be deadly to children living in precarious conditions such as these. Flooding can also be a source of mosquito breeding and can lead to outbreaks of malaria and dengue fever, which are endemic in Myanmar. UNICEF water and sanitation experts are also concerned that the breakdown in the power supplies and sanitation systems may lead to a high risk of infections and water-borne diseases such as cholera and dysentery.

UNICEF has 130 staff in country, 9 zonal offices and a headquarter office in Yangon.

Note to media across Canada: For journalists outside of Toronto, Bilaal will be available for phone interviews. Digital photos are also available.

For further information and to arrange an interview with Bilaal Rajan: Kathleen Powderley, on behalf of UNICEF Canada, kpowderley@unicef.ca, Tel. (416) 482-4444 ext. 810 and (cell) (416) 803-5597, or Karen Snider, Media Relations Officer, UNICEF Canada, ksnider@unicef.ca, Tel. (416) 482-4444 ext. 831.

About UNICEF

UNICEF is the world's leader for children, working in 156 countries and territories to save, protect and enhance the lives of girls and boys. UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, promotes quality basic education, protects children from violence, exploitation and AIDS, and is the world's largest provider of vaccines for developing nations. A global leader in emergencies with six decades of on-the-ground experience, UNICEF saves and rebuilds children's lives in natural disasters and conflict. UNICEF is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from individuals, businesses, foundations, schools, associations and governments.

To view a photo related to this release, please visit the following link: <http://media3.marketwire.com/docs/myan513.pdf>

For more information, please contact

UNICEF Canada
Kathleen Powderley
(416) 482-4444 ext. 810 and (cell) (416) 803-5597
Email: kpowderley@unicef.ca

or

UNICEF Canada
Karen Snider
Media Relations Officer
(416) 482-4444 ext. 831
Email: ksnider@unicef.ca

[Back](#)

Privacy Statement | Terms of Service | Sitemap | © 2008 Marketwire, Incorporated. All rights reserved.
Your newswire of choice for expert news release distribution.
1-800-774-9473 (US) | 1-888-299-0338 (Canada) | +44-20-7562-6550 (UK)