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**Pakistan's Pop Princess Annie Khalid backs Surya campaign**

## **'RICE FOR LIFE' CAMPAIGN TO HELP PAKISTAN'S FAMILIES REGAIN THEIR INDEPENDENCE**

*On the Anniversary of the Pakistan floods aid agencies warn the emergency is far from over as one of the UK's leading world food suppliers launches a major fundraising campaign.*

IN a bid to keep the spotlight on the continuing humanitarian crisis in Pakistan leading world food suppliers **Surya** this month (AUGUST) launch a '**Rice for Life**' campaign – donating vital funds to the **British Red Cross** for every pack of Laila rice it sells.

Spanning the month of August, to coincide with Ramadan - the Muslim season of giving - all funds raised from the promotional packs will be ploughed into the British Red Cross' relief efforts in Pakistan following the worst floods in the country's history.

As part of the recovery process, the British Red Cross is providing people with seeds and fertiliser; enabling them to restore their financial independence, benefit the local economy, look after their families and live with dignity. Seeds and fertiliser have been identified as playing a key role in the recovery process for thousands of families which rely on agriculture as a source of income.

**Pakistan pop singer Annie Khalid** who is backing the campaign said: *"Almost a year to the day, it is heartbreaking to see so many people still in desperate need of help. I am proud to*



*support this fantastic campaign, which is not just about providing aid, but about giving families in Pakistan an opportunity to regain their independence.”*

*She added: “I have visited the worst affected areas several times in my capacity as a Norwegian Red Cross goodwill ambassador and cannot express how terrible the conditions for these families are. It is essential that we don’t forget these people and keep up the momentum to help Pakistan get back on its feet.”*

Using the country’s agricultural experts, tomato, pea, spinach and turnip seeds have been identified as the best seeds to provide in the current landscape and every promotional pack of Laila rice sold will go directly towards providing these life giving supplies.

At least 18 million people were affected by last July’s floods and, a year on, millions of people remain homeless and in need of food and emergency aid, with new warnings about serious malnutrition in the worst-hit areas. More than four million people are still without adequate shelter and countless families still don't even have tents.

During the last year the International Red Cross has provided emergency relief, including food, shelter, clean water, cooking equipment and other items to more than 2.2 million people. As part of that response, the British Red Cross has helped provide food for almost 500,000 people.

More than 70,000 children are estimated to be severely or moderately malnourished across affected provinces, and villages in the south remain surrounded by contaminated water, creating breeding grounds for waterborne diseases.

**John English, British Red Cross country representative in Pakistan**, said: “The emergency is far from over here. Much more help will be needed for people to get back on their feet, and without that help, survivors will be forced further back into poverty, hunger and vulnerability.”

The British Red Cross continue to make a demonstrable difference on the ground. As 40 year old **Begum Khatoon**, whose family has been given seeds and fertiliser, said: “Only the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (the Pakistan arm of the British Red Cross) has helped us. We will use these seeds and anxiously await the food they will produce. But they won’t only give us food, these seeds also give us hope that our future will get better.”

Announcing ‘Rice for Life’, **Surya’s Managing Director, Harry Dulai** said: “This campaign marks our solidarity with the people of Pakistan at this challenging time.

He added: “We’re almost within touching distance of Ramadan, and we hope people will be doing their charitable best, digging deep into their pockets to help people who have lost everything. We urge people to get behind our simple campaign, which enables them to put food on the plates of families in Pakistan, while feeding their own.”



Laila premium quality basmati rice is one of the leading rice brands in Europe.

To donate to this campaign please visit: [www.britishredcross.org.uk/Laila](http://www.britishredcross.org.uk/Laila)

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**Note to editors:**

### ***The British Red Cross campaign***

- The British Red Cross will be directing all funds raised from this campaign to the Pakistan Red Crescent, the Pakistan arm of the International Red Cross.
- Details of promotion: 20p from each pack of 20kg Laila rice sold will be donated to the British Red Cross' vital work in Pakistan. (Registered Charity number 220949). The funds raised from this promotion will enable the British Red Cross to provide support to communities devastated by the floods in 2010 across Pakistan. As part of the recovery process, the Pakistan Red Crescent is providing people with seeds and fertiliser; enabling them to restore their financial independence, benefit the local economy, look after their families and live with dignity. Seeds and fertiliser play a key role in the recovery of thousands of families which rely on agriculture as a source of income.

### ***Surya***

- Founded in 1971, Surya has experienced a meteoric rise to the top of the world food sector and, in 2010, has firmly established itself among the industry's major players - with an annual turnover of £60 million.
- In 2010, within just two years of trading with the multiples Surya became the largest supplier of world food lines to supermarket giants Tesco and Asda.
- The company has its own rice mills in India, Pakistan and the UK and is the market leader - or in the top two - of the rice and flour market and also Afro-Caribbean and Polish foods.
- Ethnic market share estimates are: Basmati Rice: 25%; Chapatti flour: 30%; Afro-Caribbean market: 35% and Polish market: 30%.
- The core product of the business has been rice - Basmati rice in particular. In addition, the company also imports and distributes ethnic products from all over the world including: **Asia:** India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka. **Far East:** Vietnam, Thailand,



Malaysia, Singapore, China, Hong Kong. **Africa:** Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Sierra Leone. **The Americas & Caribbean:** Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, USA, Canada. **Europe:** Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Germany, France, Sweden, Holland, Italy, Spain

- Surya currently has over 2000 outlets distributing its products, including national retailers, independent stores, cash and carries and wholesalers.
- The company has created some leading ethnic brands in Europe such as Laila, Salaam, Shahi, Jamaica's Pride, Island Sun and Tropiway and represents over 50 agency lines from some of the World's leading companies.