

# An extraordinary flood relief campaign

Let's keep up this culture of volunteerism



The Daily Star view on

## RARE UNITY IN FLOOD RELIEF CAMPAIGN

An extraordinary example has been set [on the Dhaka University \(DU\) campus](#) over the past three days. Under the leadership of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, DU students have launched a massive relief campaign for the flood-affected people of the country. The campaign, which began on the morning of August 22, is still ongoing, with people from all walks of life—from corporate workers to homemakers, from small children to elderly citizens, from day labourers to rickshaw pullers—contributing whatever they can. While students from DU are working around the clock to collect and organise relief goods, students from other institutions and volunteers have also joined the effort. The nation has not witnessed such a display of compassion and unity in a long time.

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**We must stand together to help flood-affected people**



Since the start of the student-led mass uprising that led to the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government, Bangladesh has witnessed the power and unity of students, as well as the general populace, who have been desperate to bring about real change in the country. Now, as the country faces one of the deadliest floods in its recent history—which has already affected 48 lakh people in 12 districts—our students have once again shown us the way by uniting the entire nation. And it's not just the students of DU—other educational institutions and voluntary organisations across the country have also come forward to help those affected.



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Over the past few decades, we have somewhat forgotten the culture of volunteerism that once existed in the country. The last times we witnessed such volunteerism were during the floods of 1988 and 1998, when people from all walks of life came forward to help. After the fall of the Awami League government, when there was virtually no government in the country and the police force was reluctant to perform their duties, we saw how our students managed traffic and safeguarded their localities and places of worship of religious minorities. We must revive this culture of volunteerism and stand by our people during any future crises—whether they be natural disasters or other emergencies.

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## We must reduce our vulnerability to flood



Reportedly, by the second day of the relief campaign on August 22, around **Tk 1.5 crore** had been deposited into the relief fund operated by the students at the TSC, which is truly remarkable. While the biggest challenge in any such mass effort is organising the relief goods and utilising the received funds efficiently, it seems that the students are well-organised to do so. To help support the flood victims, we should all step forward to contribute whatever we can from our own positions. We must be prepared to help them after the water recedes, as they will need more assistance with rehabilitation and livelihood opportunities. And finally, we should continue such volunteerism for the sake of improving our country and for the betterment of all its people.