

UK food banks at breaking point as cost-of-living crisis deepens



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London, November 13 (RHC)-- Food banks in the United Kingdom are coming under increasing pressure to help the poorest members of society as the soaring cost-of-living crisis puts more people in need while donations are declining. Currently, food prices in Britain are soaring at an alarming rate, which has strained many elderly people's limited pension, according to Elaine, a London resident who goes to food banks for handouts on weekly basis.

"No heating. No food. It's such a nightmare really. This one is good because you can have a full English breakfast, well, at least, you know, a hot breakfast. Last week, cause I came last week," answered Elaine when asked when was her last time to have a hot breakfast.

The consumer price index in the UK jumped to a record annual rate of 10.1 percent in September as staples such as milk and sugar became more expensive along with fresh food, data released by Office for National Statistics showed.

Now, not just the low-income group, more and more middle-class people in London are also turning to food banks for help, said Charlotte White, a food bank manager in London, adding that these charities are under mounting pressures as rising food bank applications have already outnumbered donations.

"So, this is our storage room. This used to be completely full. So, we used to have all the shelters full, used to have things on the floor. This is pretty much what it looks like these days. You can see many shelves are empty. Because the demand has gone up and donations have gone down. And we've actually had people that come to need us that say, 'you know, last year, I used to donate to the food bank. I used to drop some food for every week and now I need you'. So, this is becoming more and more difficult," said Charlotte White.

According to Trussell Trust, which runs the largest network of food banks in the UK, the charity distributed 1.3 million food packages for aid from April to September this year, a 52 percent increase compared to 2019, with more than 320,000 people sought help during the period.

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