

SPOTLIGHT

Love for dogs



Every now and then, we hear of a selfless story. Of people around us trying their best to make things right. In a world full of chaos and instability, these stories help us believe that good is ever-present and silently fighting a battle to curb malice.



This is one such tale, two girls who never thought they would have to fight the odds on a daily basis simply to ensure the survival of other living beings that share space with us on this beautiful planet.

Our story begins with Sabrina Sabbir, an ex-student of University of Dhaka (DU), and her friend Sayma Hasan, discovering a run-over stray dog near Curzon Hall. They personally took care of the wounded dog until it had recovered completely. But unfortunately, this dog, which they had lovingly named



'Furless,' was erroneously killed a few weeks later by an anonymous teenager who pelted stones at him, that too, under the sick notion of fun.

This is when Sayma and Sabrina realised how helpless animals were in this city, and with a few like-minded students, they immediately decided to form a group called Animal Welfare Club of Curzon Hall, and strive to put an end to the nastiness and cruelty. Their first and foremost task was to raise awareness in the DU area about the importance of the lives of all animals, including stray dogs.

They distributed leaflets amongst passers-by, and most importantly, amongst the guards and tea-stall owners of the area. According to the group, these people were the most crucial in ensuring a peaceful life for the animals, because they are the most vigilant regarding all activities occurring in and around the campus. Once the awareness campaign gained traction, other necessary activities like vaccination etc. materialised.

"Throughout the entire process, we received help from quite a few organisations like Obhoyaronno — which did a mass rabies vaccination campaign in 2015. We also got support from welfare organisations like People for Animal Welfare (PAW), Preserve the Earth (PTE), Stand for Animals (SFA) etc. Also joining our causes are Dr Md Anwarul Islam, Department Head of Zoology, DU, on various aspects during our journey," Sabrina said.

Things were going smoothly, until of course the pandemic happened and everything fell apart. And just a week after lockdown, it seemed like there

were a massive increase in hungry strays everywhere, according to the members.

"However, we refrained from panicking and being overwhelmed by extra work, because help came from all sides; our group joined hands with another group called the Dog lovers of Mokarram, ALB Animal Shelter, and we tried our best to feed the strays before and during Ramadan. Few selfless individuals, who's named must be mentioned; Taohid Tanjim, Md Julhas Mia, Anika Samin, our team members, Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) committee members Tanbir Hasan Shaikat, and Golam Rabbani worked tirelessly, day and night, even during the lockdown, to help feed the strays of our university area. But for any programme to last, it needs funding. And all the while, we were getting donations from students and locals only, which were not enough to meet demand created by the pandemic chaos," Sabrina added.

Regardless of funding however, the social welfare club's work has not stopped. They are hoping against hope to make it through the pandemic alongside all their animal friends.

Likewise, we believe that good always triumphs over evil. And every good initiative will be successful, no matter how demanding and stressful the journey may be.

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury
Photo courtesy: Animal Welfare Club of Curzon Hall

Essentials:

To donate to Animal Welfare Club of Curzon Hall, you can send any amount via Bkash at 01683317353
Reference: Stray Feeding, DU