



(L) The bus, Chakar School, operates in different slum areas of the city. (R) Teachers and students of Chakar School are equipped with face masks, face shields and other safety precautions during classes.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF IHF



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YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

Reach Oxford Scholarships 2021 at Oxford University, UK

Oxford University offers Reach Oxford Scholarship for Undergraduates to learn any of the courses in the UK except medicine. A number of Reach Oxford scholarships are offered to students from low-income countries who, for political or financial reasons, or because suitable educational facilities do not exist, cannot study for a degree in their own countries.
DEADLINE: October 15, 2020 | Scholarships



Ellen Fitzgibbon Memorial Photography Competition 2020

This photography competition welcomes photographers who share Ellen's appreciation for the natural world and who find inspiration in knowing their photograph might one day grace the wall of a cancer hospital as a messenger of Ellen's wish "to bring hope and beauty to those facing cancer."
DEADLINE: October 16, 2020 | Competitions

British Chevening Scholarship for International Student 2021/2022 in UK

Applications are now open for the 2021/22 Chevening Scholarship. Chevening offers a unique opportunity for future leaders, influencers, and decision-makers from all over the world to develop professionally and academically, network extensively, experience UK culture, and build lasting positive relationships with the UK.
DEADLINE: November 3, 2020 | Scholarships

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY SPECIAL

A school on wheels turning around lives

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

It's Humanity Foundation (IHF), a social welfare organisation, aims to build opportunities for disadvantaged communities. Through their various endeavours, IHF intends to create facilities in education and vocational skills, while establishing a sustainable system for their beneficiaries. IHF has been providing underprivileged children with free education since 2010. Ahead of World Teachers' Day (October 5), we caught up with the team to find out more about their recent initiative, Chakar School (school on wheels).
IHF's innovative education system, based on a bus called Chakar School, is funded by Community Partners International (CPI) and TAO Foundation. Children from different slum areas attend pre-primary level classes in the bus. After a one-year course with Chakar School, these children will be enrolled into various government schools. Through Chakar School, Mohammad Adnan Hossain, the founder of IHF, aimed to reach out to different places and create a sustainable system for education.
Chakar School offers both traditional and digital lessons to their students. Well-trained instructors conduct these classes and each student is provided with a tablet

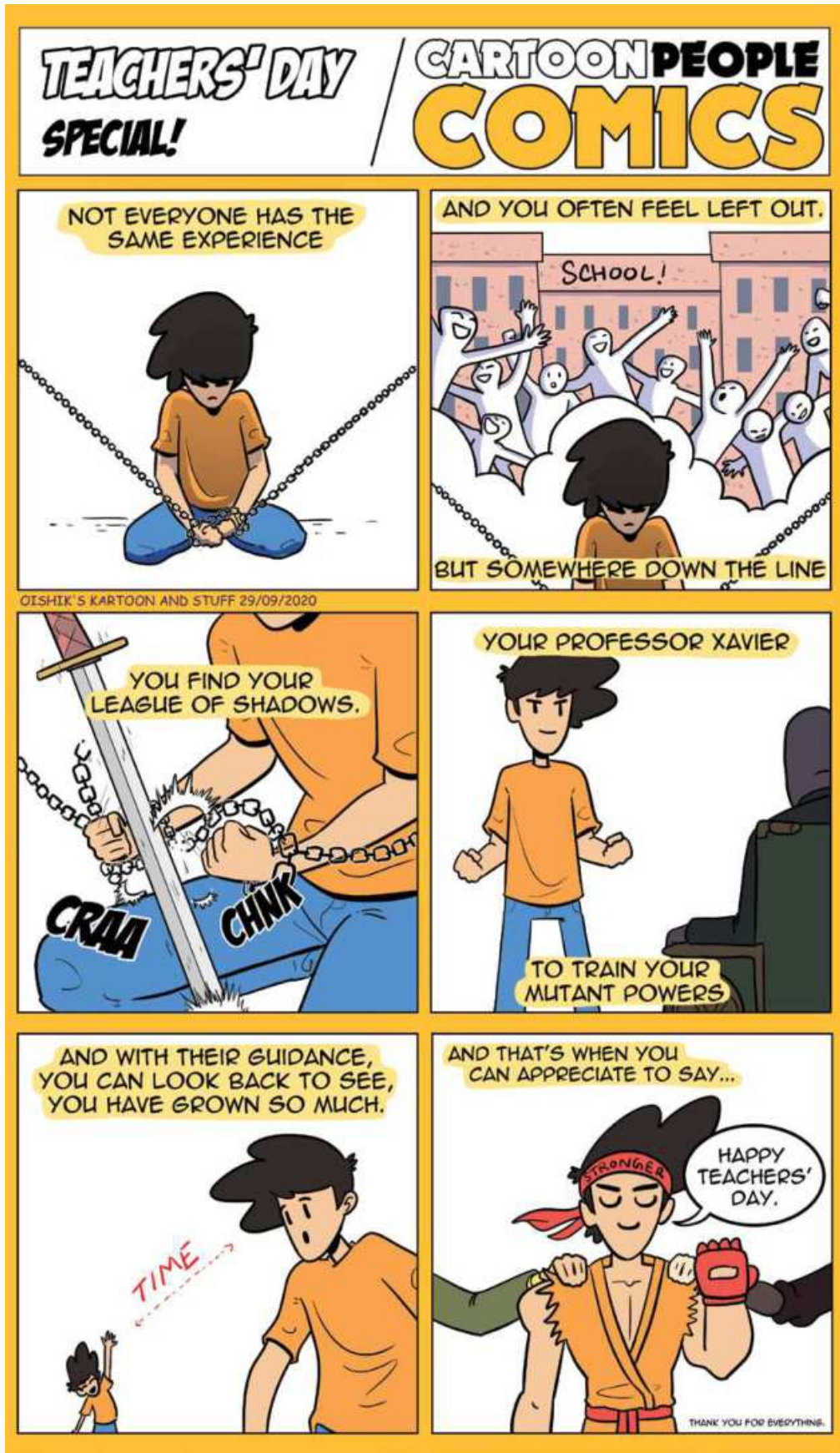


The team of Chakar School are currently conducting classes, following safety and social distancing guidelines as strictly as possible.

that helps them enhance their listening and pronunciation skills, through different cognitive games. "This is a happy place for our students, as they get to learn and play in a supportive environment. Every child deserves quality education. Through our platform, we encourage students to reinvent themselves through cognitive learning, life skills and different activities," shared

Sarah Jabeen, Project Manager, Chakar School. Due to the ongoing pandemic, they are currently emphasising on safety and hygiene lessons, along with extracurricular activities. For the first phase, Chakar School gathered 25 students from Diabari. IHF plans to reach out to slum areas in Mohammadpur and Banasree as well. The foundation also organises Protibha,

a project that empowers disadvantaged communities by providing them with handicraft training and promoting commercial sales for their products. Their other initiative, Center For Youth Development (CFYD), offers professional and soft skills training to the youth.
IHF further provides packed lunches to the students of Chakar School. Once a week, the instructors organise role playing, storytelling and arts and crafts sessions. They also arrange basic health checkups for their students every month. "Working with the organisation makes me feel that I am making a difference by inspiring these children to continue their education," added Tawhidul Islam Khan, an intern of Chakar School. The bus also includes CCTV cameras, an attendance machine and an emergency alarm.
Currently, the team of Chakar School is conducting the classes, following safety guidelines as strictly as possible. They are prepared with disinfectant sprays infrared thermometers, sanitisers, masks and face-shields for their teachers and students. "During classes, we show animated videos about how to prevent the spread of coronavirus. We are also trying to maintain social distance inside the bus," concluded Adnan.



Happy Tails volunteers protesting DSCC's decision to relocate stray dogs outside the capital.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF HAPPY TAILS

Happily assisting the four-legged

LABIBA KABIR

Happy Tails, a non-profit youth organisation, aims to ensure the physical and psychological well-being of stray animals in different areas of Dhaka. Their journey started in 2019, when a bunch of school students noticed a distressed dog on the streets. They acted on it quickly, and their teachers helped them to take the dog to the nearest veterinarian. After the incident, Ayman Mustakim, founder of Happy Tails, teamed up with his friends to start their programmes of looking out for stray animals.
The organisation operates in Kalabagan, Lalmatia, Dhanmondi, Shyamoli, Mohammadpur and other areas of Dhaka South. They work on neutering and sanitising the animals. They especially look out for stray dogs that are underfed or in need of medical attention for any signs of rabies, pica, parvovirus and leptospirosis. Their team also ensures that these dogs go back to their territories and receive proper medications and food, at least until they recover.
Happy Tails also organises campaigns about protection of animal rights and



Happy Tails volunteers at a veterinarian's clinic with rescued animals.

training courses for volunteers and the general masses, as well as fund raising events for the animals that require medical attention.
In August, Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) announced a plan for relocating 30,000 stray dogs of the city to other districts, to contain the spread of rabies around Nagar Bhaban, Dhanmondi and

other areas. However, DSCC started off the programme under a verbal order and moved 15 stray dogs on an experimental basis from Dhaka to the Matuail landfill.
Several organisations and animal lovers protested the authorities' decision. They demanded vaccination and sterilisation instead of relocation of the dogs, citing that the decision goes against the Animal Welfare Act 2019, which prohibits killing stray dogs or removing them from their habitats. Happy Tails volunteers participated in the protests. Noted actor Jaya Ahsan and two animal welfare organisations collectively submitted a writ petition as a public interest litigation to the High Court, requesting it to stay the DSCC's decision to relocate the dogs.
"Neutering of stray dogs is already happening in different areas of Dhaka. Relocating them will not solve anything. This city belongs to them, as much as it belongs to us," says Ayman. With a mission to spread positivity and fight for the well-being of animals, Happy Tails marches on with their committed members and volunteers.