

ZIA HYDER TRUST

Family keeps alive the late philanthropist's legacy

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR
TOPU with ANDREW EAGLE

Sometimes hopes and dreams should outlast a single lifetime. Sometimes it's a worthy endeavour for family and future generations to build upon the noble ambitions of those who've gone before. Such is the case in Pabna, where the late Professor Zia Hyder's determination to build a better world has been taken up, since his passing, by his family. Through the works of the Zia Hyder Trust they established, Hyder's relatives hope to ensure his philanthropic dreams live on.

Hyder was a founding professor of drama at the University of Chittagong who, in 2004, after his retirement, used his own pension benefits to fund a scholarship for students from ultra poor backgrounds. Hyder passed away in 2008. His family established the trust in his memory a year later.

"My elder brother worked for people's betterment," says Makid Hyder, the founding president of the trust. "He sought especially to help disadvantaged students and to make women from struggling families self-reliant."

Guided by Professor Hyder's vision, the trust decided to pursue the development of schools in remote areas of Pabna in order to spread the light of education among disadvantaged children. As a result of their activities 13 pre-primary schools have opened in remote areas of Pabna Sadar upazila, with more than 400 students in attendance.

"My father works in the field," says Eva Khatun, a student of one of the schools in Tingasa of Maligasa union. "I'm fortunate that the Zia Hyder Progoti School has a campus near my house because it's the only chance I have to go to school." There are many others like her who have, because of the trust's efforts, learnt to read.

The trust undertakes other social projects. Recently it organised for dozens of sewing machines to be distributed to economically disadvantaged women, with the sewing machines handed over by the deputy commissioner Rekha Rani Balo at a 10 March ceremony at Pabna

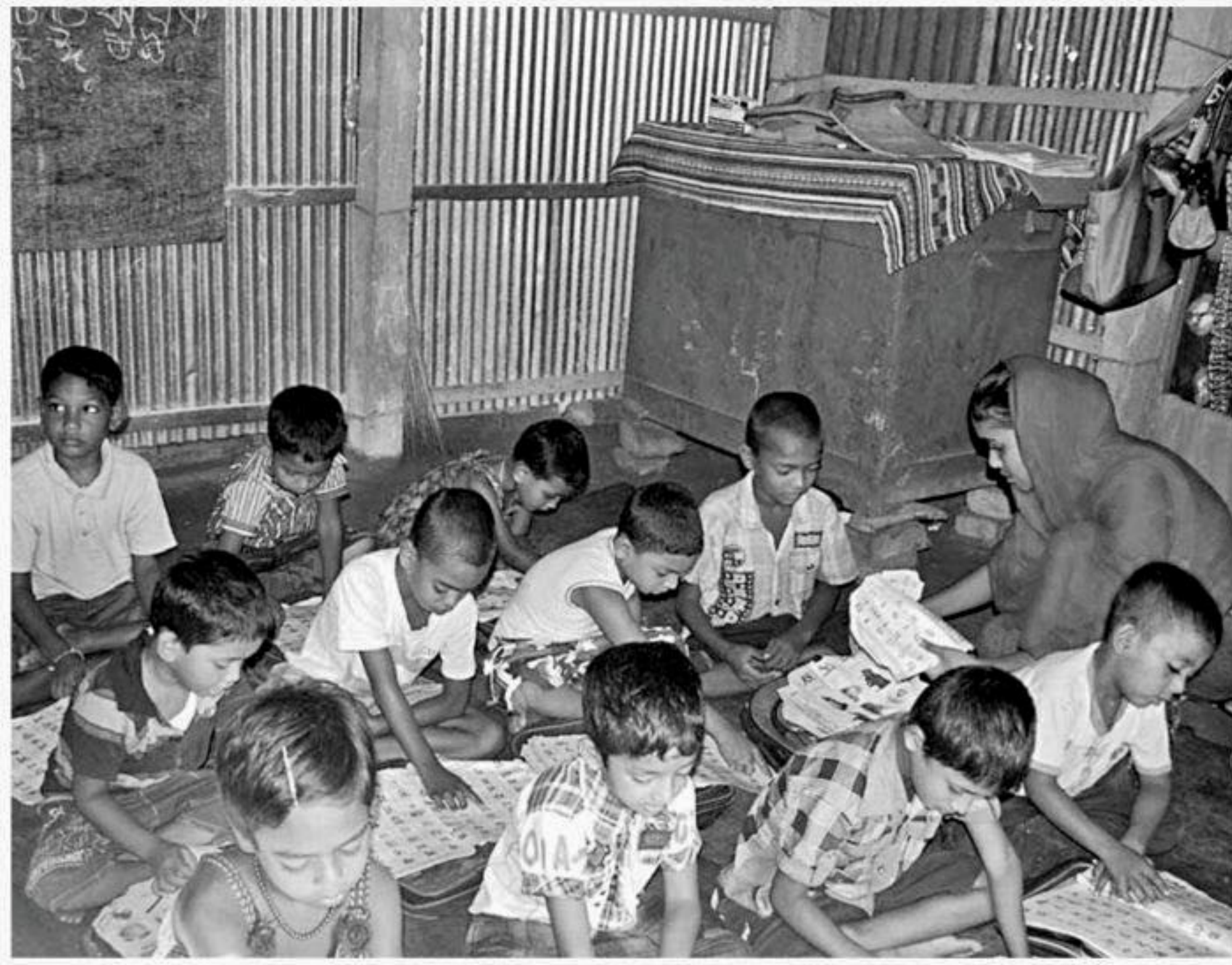


PHOTO: STAR

Women pose with sewing machines given to them under an income generating project meant for poor people, and below, underprivileged children get lessons at a pre-primary school in Pabna Sadar upazila. These are among quite a few benevolent initiatives undertaken by Zia Hyder Trust in Pabna.

Press Club auditorium.

"If more people stepped up to assist our underprivileged citizens," observes the deputy commissioner, "then real development would be possible." She hopes the activities of the Zia Hyder Trust can inspire other families to pursue a similar course.

Without any political ambitions and although the Hyder family are hardly tycoons, they manage the trust from family funding, consisting of the initial deposit of a retirement sum by the professor and dona-

tions from other family members thereafter. "Some of our family friends also contribute these days," says Makid Hyder. It's a promising sign.

Of particular assistance recently has been the donation by German businessman and family friend Saban Yeoskep which funded the sewing machine distribution.

Freedom fighter and leading social activist in Pabna, Baby Islam, believes the efforts of the Hyder family set an outstanding example. "They

have been implementing initiatives for the betterment of society on their own," she says, "and we really feel proud of Professor Hyder not only as a pioneer of modern drama but because of this wonderful ongoing legacy."

Mostafizur Rahman Russel, a leading cultural organiser, agrees. "These kinds of projects, where a family gets involved and manages achievements with their own steam, must produce real development for our society."

Teenage girl gang-raped in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A teenage girl was gang-raped allegedly by a group of youths at Bhatpiari village in Sirajganj Sadar upazila on Wednesday night.

The 15-year-old victim of the village is now undergoing treatment at Sirajganj General Hospital.

The girl's brother-in-law said she fell in love with one Russel Khan of Pachalia village in the upazila.

With the promise of marrying the girl, Russel took her to a char area at Bhatpiari village on Wednesday night. He along with his five friends raped her.

The victim was later admitted to the hospital in a critical condition, said Officer-in-Charge of Sirajganj Sadar Police Station Md Habibur Islam.

Her brother filed a case, accusing six people including Russel, the OC said, adding that Russel went into hiding soon after the incident.

PICKED UP BY 'PLAINCLOTHES' MEN

Nilphamari college boy traceless for 10 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari



Noor-e-Alam

A college student, who was picked up by some plainclothes men identifying themselves as members of administration in Nilphamari municipality 10 days ago, still remains traceless.

The victim is Noor-e-Alam, 22, a third year chemistry student of Nilphamari Government College, and son of late Yaqub Ali Barua of Ukiler more area in the municipality.

Md Kamrul Alam Nayan, younger brother of Alam, said on the night of April 11, when he was working at his mobile recharge shop, a convoy of four vehicles

carrying 20/25 men suddenly stopped near his shop adjacent to the house.

"Identifying themselves as members of administration, they entered our house and picked up my brother, saying that my brother would return in 30 min-

utes before leaving the place," he said.

Contacted, local police station, Rab and DB personnel said they were unaware about the matter, said Nayan.

On April 12, the victim's mother filed a general diary with Sadar Police Station in this connection, said Nayan.

Students of chemistry department of the college held series of a g i t a t i o n programmes in the town, demanding immediate steps to trace Alam.

Officer-in-Charge of Sadar Police Station Shahjahan Pasha said investigation is going on to trace out the victim.

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Man held for torturing wife for dowry

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police arrested a man on charge of torturing his wife for dowry in Gouripur upazila of the district on Wednesday.

The arrestee is drug addict Mosharraf Hossain, 30, of Lamapara village in the upazila.

Quoting the victim, Mohammad Morshedul Hasan Khan, officer-in-charge of Gouripur Police Station, said Mamota Begum, 23, mother of two children, and daughter of Abdul Khaleque of Sarishtola in Netrakona district, married Mosharraf four years ago.

After their marriage, Mosharraf often tortured Mamota, demanding Tk

50,000 as dowry.

On Tuesday evening, Mosharraf beat up Mamota and locked her in a room of their house following an altercation over the issue. He also assaulted her in the locked room the following day.

Informed by neighbours, the victim's brother Abdur Razzaq rushed to the spot and rescued her with the help of local people and took her to Gouripur Upazila Health Complex.

On information, police arrested Mosharraf from the spot in the evening.

Mamota filed a case, accusing Mosharraf in this connection, said the OC.

Yesterday, the arrestee was produced in a court that sent him to jail, he said.

Gang attack leaves four cops injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Four policemen were injured in an attack by criminals in Boalkhali upazila of the district early yesterday.

The injured are Sub-Inspector Abul Khayer, constables Md Bulbul Shikder, Abul Hossain and Abdul Gafur of Boalkhali Police Station.

Md Salauddin Chowdhury, OC of the police station, said they went to Kharandwip area to arrest Doulat Miah, accused in several cases including those for extortion and mugging.

Sensing the presence of the law enforcers, Doulat and his cohorts attacked them, leaving the four injured. However, police managed to arrest Doulat.

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