



CSC members and volunteers with children, at their blood group campaign.



Members and volunteers of CSC distribute food boxes to children during their first event.



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## YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

### Jakes Gerwel Fellowship 2021 for High School and University Students of South Africa

Jakes Gerwel Fellowship is a full university scholarship that provides extensive mentoring and leadership development for top learners with a passion for teaching and education. In short, they want to make the strongest possible case and provide the greatest possible support for best students to become best future teachers.

DEADLINE: July 20, 2020 | Fellowships



### KIT Innovation Challenge 2020

Each day, women and girls in the developing world experience immense injustice. The injustice that limits their agency and their capacity to flourish as individuals and thrive within their communities. The KIT Impact Challenge is open to organizations that are driven by the desire to create meaningful change in the lives of women and girls. If a team has an initiative that positively impacts health, education or livelihoods opportunities

DEADLINE: July 24, 2020 | Competitions

### Global Peace Summit Turkey 2020 (Fully/Partial/Self-Funded)

Global Peace Summit Turkey 2020 (GPST) is providing opportunities too extraordinary young, competent and enthusiastic peacebuilders from 100+ countries. This summit aims to inspire youth to sharpen skills of peace education, facilitate the exchange of ideas and project sharing, and new network to form with like-minded individuals and world leaders.

DEADLINE: August 30, 2020 | Conferences

# CSC looks out for vulnerable communities

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

Cholo Swpno Chui (CSC), a youth-led social welfare organisation founded by Muhtasim Abshad Zisan, a student of Khulna University, supports orphans and people with physical disabilities, through their different projects. At their first event, 'Hashi Futanor Utshob', in 2019, they distributed food, dresses and school bags to around 65 underprivileged children. They also provide monthly financial aid to two individuals in need.

CSC arranges annual programmes, including winter clothing and blanket drives, for underprivileged communities. Last year, they distributed blankets to 175 orphans at a madrassa. "These children find happiness even in the simplest things, and they inspire us to keep working," added Zisan. Team members and volunteers of the organisation also plant close to 100 trees every year, during their tree plantation drives.

Competitions, arranged by the organisation, are aimed at raising awareness on different issues. "Our recent online drawing contest for kids, focusing on life during the coronavirus pandemic, had several enthusiastic and creative participants," Zisan said.

The organisation's response to the coronavirus crisis is commendable. They distributed iftar packets to over 72 underprivileged families across Rangpur during Ramadan this year, with their event, 'Shobar Jonno'. On the other hand, through their project, 'Khet Khawa Rojdar, Pothoi Pabelftar', they served home-cooked meals to over 1,500 people. In collaboration



CSC members and volunteers distribute face masks, promoting safety practices.

with Ispahani Limited, they distributed 50 grocery packets to vulnerable communities in the region. During the last week of Ramadan, CSC handed over food packets from Bidyandondo Foundation to over 500 people in Rangpur, Lalmonirhat and Pirgacha. Volunteers and team members of the organisation took all necessary precautions when they stepped out. They celebrated Eid at different orphanages in the area, serving

the children with food.

Many of their projects are focused on healthcare. "It is crucial for rural women to have proper knowledge about reproductive health and menstrual hygiene, to minimise risks of diseases," said Ilma Hosain, a student of Rangpur Medical College and the secretary of women and children's welfare affairs at CSC. With their project, 'Aparajita', they intend to distribute

sanitary napkins to hundreds of women in rural areas across the country. "We want to install sanitary napkin vending machines in village schools and run campaigns to normalise talks about menstruation," added Ilma. CSC plans to conduct at least five healthcare campaigns every year.

Through their distribution event, 'ShamorthoDan', they extended their support to over 52 families in need, with groceries, medicines, soaps and masks. Additionally, they ran awareness campaigns on the coronavirus with posters and leaflets. "Our volunteers disinfected public places and drew circles in crowded areas, for people to maintain social distance," said Mohammad Nurunnabi Juwel, a student of Rangpur City College and the publication secretary of CSC. In a recent collaboration with Shunte Ki Pao, CSC also provided groceries to 15 physically-challenged individuals in Rangpur. "As a part of our awareness campaign, we have started wall art as well," added Juwel.

In response to recent floods in the country, members and volunteers of the organisation plan to distribute food packets, medicines and sanitary napkins to affected families. "To curb the spread of water-borne diseases, we will conduct virtual medical campaigns as well," said Zisan.

Moving forward, CSC plans to establish a school for underprivileged children, providing them with talent pool scholarships, and expand their operations throughout Bangladesh.

PHOTOS: COURTESY

# AIDING COMMUNITIES IN NORTH BENGAL

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SA-MADDAR

Active Bangladesh, an organisation founded by Moshir Shafi and Tasin Al Rafid, has been working relentlessly to help underprivileged communities, since two disasters hit the nation — the coronavirus pandemic and Cyclone Amphan. With over 450 ambassadors voluntarily working with them, Active Bangladesh was established with an aim to guide and employ young, promising individuals to combat social calamities.

Their first project, 'Spread the Hand' is a food distribution initiative based in areas of North Bengal, including Bogura, Natore and Rajshahi. "Through this project, we intend to help daily labourers who have been unemployed due to the coronavirus pandemic," shares Moshir, Executive Director, Active Bangladesh. Till date, they have facilitated food boxes on a weekly basis for over 500 families in the aforementioned regions.

People in regions of Khulna and Barishal have been harshly affected by Cyclone Amphan. To help locals who have been completely dependent on the Sundarbans for their livestock, Active Bangladesh started their initiative 'Mission Mangrove'. For the past one month, this project, based in the Naldanga and Tildanga areas of Khulna, has been rehabilitating villagers who stay far off into the forest, and providing them with basic necessities such as food, medicines, and cleaning products, as they are not receiving enough relief materials. On the other hand, Active Bangladesh's project, 'Reduce Her Risk' has been providing menstrual hygiene kits to around 150 women and young



Through their project, 'Spreading Happiness', Active Bangladesh members and volunteers distribute chips or other snacks to underprivileged children.

PHOTOS: COURTESY

girls on a regular basis in regions of Jhalokathi.

During Ramadan this year, the organisation provided iftar boxes to over 600 families in need. "We can only get through these trying times by helping each other," asserts Tasin, who is also the Executive Director of the organisation. "We all had a different Eid-UL-Fitr this time. Although some of us had the privilege to celebrate it with our loved ones, many were left starving on the streets. Our ambassadors shared their Eid salaams with at least one family who are

financially struggling due to the pandemic." Through their project 'Spreading Happiness', which started off in Bogura, Active Bangladesh has distributed chips or other snacks to underprivileged kids. Furthermore, Active Bangladesh's 'Feed the Paws' project, which provides food for stray animals, has been running since March.

A team of 20 executives, with Assistant Directors Koushik Sarker and Estiuk Ahmed, and Deputy Directors Shaikh Rishad Ul Arab and Azmayeen Akmal, provide guidelines for the ambassadors. Ac-

tive Bangladesh plans to establish a youth networking programme, called 'Connecting the Stars' soon, where young people from 492 upazillas of the country will collaborate. "Amid the pandemic, we have gone a little astray from our main goal, which was to work for career development and stand by lower-income families. Gradually, we are reaching out to young people in remote areas across the country. Once things get better, we will contact them and help them develop their soft skills for better careers," concludes Moshir.

