



Taheatul Jannat,

Providing education free of cost for neglected children

In 2018, Taheatul Jannat started the free-of-cost school Hasimukh Pathshala with the neglected children of the sweeper community of Bandhab Palli at Faridpur Sadar Upazila. The school focuses on the mental development, moral education, cleanliness and proper care of children and adolescents in the sweeper community. At present 30 children are being taught at the school regularly.

To ensure proper hygiene facilities for women and girls during menstruation, a group of young people along with “Hasimukh Pathshala” and Taheatul Jannat have formed a voluntary organisation named “Nandita Suraksha.” The organisation works on gender equality, women’s empowerment, menstrual health hygiene, prevention of child marriage and dowry, prevention of sexual harassment, and mental health.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Taheatul Jannat worked for the helpless destitute women and children in Faridpur. During the flood, in addition to food, she distributed sanitary napkins among poor women. In any crisis in her community, Taheatul Jannat came forward to stand beside the helpless people.

To stop violence against women and children, Taheatul Jannat creates awareness among children regarding safe and unsafe touch where she is trying to educate women about their legal rights. Also, her self-defence training for women in her district is quite well known in the community.



Shila Guha,

A Birangana who has fought day in day out

A brave woman who had endured torture during Bangladesh’s War of Independence, Shila Guha’s story of misfortune is as horrendous as that of other girls and women who had been taken to the Pakistan army camps. She survived that experience by a stroke of luck. However, her second round of tryst with fate began when her father refused to take her in after the war, as the Pakistanis had picked her up. Her life since then has been one of despair, denial, and betrayal even without any fault of her own. Even at this age, the trouble and harassment she is going through speak volumes about the negligence of society toward our poor, elderly individuals, and especially Biranganas.

Shila Guha finally saw a ray of hope when the honourable Prime Minister, in a video conference, reportedly assured her that she would be accorded due respect, and her days of misery would end soon as she, at last, finds the peace and recognition she deserves.

Women deserve respect despite such tragedies happening in their lives. This mindset of society needs to develop for women to live a peaceful and respectful life. Although recognised by the government, society still owes the same respect to Shila Guha.



Jannatul Sarkar Champa,

An inspiring story of withstanding hardship through independence

Hailing from Pabna’s Chatmohar upazila, Jannatul Sarkar had a very hard life at a very early age after her father’s demise. In 2005, she got married and got divorced within a year, owing to her husband being a drug abuser. Once again, Champa was left stranded.

When she was selling newspapers, many people passed snide remarks at her for being a woman. In the beginning, she had no fixed customer and could barely sell five to seven newspapers a day. She never took the criticism to heart and continued doing her job with diligence. Now, she is earning Tk 500-550 a day selling newspapers, travelling 20-25 kilometres. People who had criticised her are now praising her.

In November 2021, she was elected as a female member in the reserved seat of wards 3, 4, and 5 of Parshodanga union.

“After serving her role as a newspaper hawker, she joined the Union Perished on time and performed her duty successfully. This is truly inspirational.” Azhar said.

UNsung Women Nation Builders 2021



Sabina Yeasmin,

Enlightening people about breast and cervical cancer in rural communities

Sabina Yeasmin has been spreading awareness about breast and cervical cancer in the rural communities, mostly in the south-eastern regions of Bangladesh, since 2017. Till now she has covered 33 districts and enlightened women from every social class and age group including women from schools, colleges, universities, garments, etc. She has already ensured proper breast and cervical cancer treatment for 310 women. The most unique part of Sabina’s journey is that she went deep into the remote areas of these regions on a bicycle.

Sabina rode across the villages of Chattogram, Feni, Lakshmipur, Noakhali, Chandpur, and more, with her favourite companion, her bicycle, to raise awareness among the women of these communities about the causes behind breast and cervical cancer, the prominent symptoms, preventive measures and steps to be taken if someone experiences these symptoms. In Hatia, a remote island of the country, Sabina spread awareness to more than four lakh people through a local radio called “Shagor Dwip.” As a woman, Sabina Yeasmin aspires to ensure proper awareness and treatment for every woman in Bangladesh.



Farmis Akhter,

A selfless hero standing beside people during Covid

Farmis Akhter is a generous person who always tries to help people around her. Days after the first Covid-19 infection was detected, the country went into a nationwide shutdown. At around 11:30 at night on one of these lockdown days, Farmis was driving home after helping a blood donor in Sylhet city’s Kazirbazar area, when she spotted a mentally handicapped man who fell sick. Some street children told her that the man had no food all day. Farmis rushed home, packed all the food she had cooked that night and returned to the spot. She fed the man by hand and shared the food with the street children too. On that day, she realised that people not only would die of the coronavirus, but some people would surely die of hunger.

That was just the beginning. Farmis withdrew all her savings from the bank and made it a routine to cook and distribute food among 250-300 distressed people in the city during lunch and dinner time till the shutdown was relaxed in June. She also gave grocery packets to 700 families in Sylhet city. Farmis’s help reached the stray canines of the city too. Regarding her interest in helping people, Farmis said she attained these characteristics from her father, Abdul Mannan, who was a kind-hearted person. It has been her lifelong wish to help people in distress.



Jahanara Islam,

A self-made visionary entrepreneur

Jahanara Islam, the owner of Jahanara Green Agro at Cox’s Bazar, is a self-made entrepreneur. She began her venture at a very early age after marriage. She started her journey with a cow and only Tk 4,400. With the profits she made from dairying, she opened a poultry farm with 100 broiler chickens with Tk 2,000 back in 1984. Then she moved on to operating a feed mill for chickens. With the profits from poultry and feed mill operations, she established 11 fish farms in Cox’s Bazar. Then she ventured into the hatchery business with the help of BFRI.

She then became interested in home gardening which propelled her interest in tissue culture. Back in 1983, she observed that Buddhist monks treated algae-based foods as holy and they live a long life. She instantly made a connection between eating algae-based foods with a long life. She eventually formed an active collaboration with Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University. To engage educated youths in order to create a bigger impact, she developed a network of university students who regularly sell her product and earn a fair margin to bear their expenses. So far, with all her activities and with direct and indirect supervision, she has changed the lives of more than 2 lakh people and has become a role model for many.



Fauzia Beethi,

A kind-hearted warrior standing beside underprivileged people

Everybody in Bogura’s Dhunat upazila knows Fauzia Beethi for her philanthropic works. When Covid-19 hit Bangladesh, Beethi started making masks and produced 400 bottles of hand sanitisers. Beethi provided 18 kg of food packages to 350 poor families who lost their jobs during Covid-19. Last April and May, Beethi sacrificed two goats she and her children nurtured at home and distributed meat among 93 families.

Her early life was so miserable that no one thought that she would ever bounce back. Beethi got married in 1995, but her married life turned unstable within a short time. Her husband and in-laws started torturing her for dowry. They even locked her in a room to stop her from

sitting for her HSC exam. Later, her family members rescued her and she got first division in her HSC. Next year, Beethi got admitted to Rajshahi University. Unfortunately, her husband also got admitted to the same university. In 1998, one day, her husband brutally beat her in the open campus demanding dowry. She divorced him and married Razzakul a year after the incident. This life lesson gave her the spirit to fight for oppressed women. On December 9, 2020, Bogura district administration recognised her as a Joyeeta considering how she bounced back in life and stood beside a thousand unprivileged people in their time of need.