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ANNUAL IFTAR PARTY

With its traditional congregation of students, volunteers and distinguished guests, JAAGO celebrated its largest ever Annual Iftar Party on the 20th of August, 2011.

This year, instead of hosting the party inside the school premises we shifted the venue to a field opposite the school building to accommodate the large number of visitors expected.

As the feast began, students and guests were seen chatting with each other cheerfully while enjoying the food, as some of the kids had much catching up to do with their respective sponsors.

Korvi Rakshand, Founder of JAAGO, took this opportunity to explain the mission behind JAAGO's volunteer wing, Volunteer for Bangladesh (VBD). Videos of VBD's recent events, namely - the visit to the Cancer Ward of the Dhaka Shishu Hospital and the latest celebration, The Great Kindness Challenge, had the audience emotionally stirred.

Moved by the events, some of the guests also volunteered to say a few words.

Honorary guests present, such as Mr Ali Haider Chowdhury, General Secretary of Bangladesh Association of Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA) and Saleha Begum, Managing Director of Baybosa Bikash, Grameen Bank personally applauded the efforts of JAAGO in motivating the young generation

of Bangladesh to take on greater social responsibility.

"When I was asked by my friends to attend this Iftar party today, I wondered to myself 'Why am I going to Rayer Bazaar?' But now I realize that if I had not come here today, my life would have been futile," declared Mr. Ali Haider Chowdhury. "As a freedom fighter, I'd like to say that JAAGO is doing a great job of arousing patriotism in the youth of the nation, the same patriotism with which I fought in the liberation war of 1971."

Garrett Wilkerson, Cultural Affairs Officer of the United States Embassy, Dhaka, Hannan Khan of IUP Faculty, Faiyaz Khan of Fareast Knitting and Dyeing, Nurul Akter, Managing Director, Grace Properties and Mr Nessar Khan, Managing Director of MAKS Group were also present among other respectable personnel.

Korvi took an initiative also to personally thank all the volunteers for their hard work in the program. "It is because of you guys that we had such a great time today."

The volunteers lined up to form a group in front of the projector and on the count of five the guests and students showed their appreciation with an enthusiastic 'THANK YOU'. At Korvi's request, the audience and the volunteers all sang the song "We shall overcome" together.

VBD WELCOMED IN THE PORT CITY

On the 6th of August, Volunteer for Bangladesh (VBD) conducted its first workshop in Chittagong. The workshop was held at the city's American Corner, titled "Volunteer Activation Workshop: Identifying Potential in Chittagong". The purpose was to create a strong base of volunteers in the port city and the workshop mainly involved learning about JAAGO Foundation - its history, mission and vision, the birth of VBD and similarly, its mission and vision.

There were 23 participants coming from a diverse range of educational backgrounds - English medium, Bangla medium, and Madrasa. A large array of nine facilitators were there to conduct the workshop, including Korvi Rakshand, Founder of JAAGO Foundation and Imran Newaz Khurshid, Education Development Officer of JAAGO School, Rayer Bazaar.

The workshop was initiated by Korvi Rakshand with the brief introduction of the facilitators and that of the participants, followed by two icebreaking sessions. The first part of the session consisted of the ball-throwing game conducted by Korvi Rakshand; while the second part was facilitated by Imran Newaz Khurshid - a blind-folded game.

The next phase started with the detailed introduction of all the facilitators. Korvi Rakshand introduced JAAGO and VBD - the formation of the organization and its volunteer wing and the motivation behind their expansion. A discussion on social problems, where the participants were asked to find out five good things and five social problems in Chittagong, succeeded the introduction.

The final phase, facilitated by Korvi Rakshand, was an exercise describing the Universal Children's Day. Finally, a short evaluation was completed by the facilitator by asking the participants to state the positive and negative sides of the workshop. The session wrapped up after a unique game of cards teaching the participants about inter-personal skills.

To mark their determination to make Chittagong a better city, the newly-inaugurated volunteers organised an Iftar for underprivileged kids of Chittagong.



THE MEANING OF RESPECT



The Prabin Hitoishi Sangha is a senior centre and hospital for the aged who were abandoned by their family or were cast away. Volunteer for Bangladesh's (VBD) project, The School of Survivors (SOS)-2, aimed to make 18th of August, 2011 a special day for these people by giving them the respect and affection they deserve from their own children. With this view, the volunteers of VBD along with the students of the JAAGO School hosted an iftar party for these neglected citizens of our country.

The event intended to give back the elders their will to live, many of whom have laid down the core values of our nation since its liberation, but are now depressed and saddened by the neglect they receive from society.

Along with gifts, the volunteers and JAAGO students provided entertainment to make our guests feel like they were back at their families' dining tables, passing plates of food around. For one day, the residents of Dhaka's old home forgot what it's like to end a day of fasting in seclusion.



GREAT KINDNESS CHALLENGE

Volunteer for Bangladesh (VBD), the volunteer wing of JAAGO Foundation, observed the Great Kindness Challenge On August 13, 2011, for the second time in the country's history. On the day, the underprivileged students of the JAAGO Foundation School and the volunteers of VBD joined hands to show their appreciation for the police force of Dhaka and Chittagong.

The volunteers and kids were split into a number of teams and visited almost every police station in the capital and the port city wearing the official VBD t-shirts. They visited the police stations of Gulshan, Tejgaon and Ramna, as well as the offices of the Dhaka Police Commissioner and the Inspector General. The teams presented the officers with roses and greeting cards prepared by the JAAGO kids and a letter of appreciation from the President of Volunteer for Bangladesh and Founder of JAAGO Foundation, Korvi Rakshand. The letter compassionately thanked the Police Department of Bangladesh for its tremendous effort in ensuring safety and upholding the law and urged the force to utilise its full potential to make Bangladesh an even better place to live in.

The volunteer were unable to meet the Inspector General, but when the Additional Inspector General heard about the program, he came out to greet the

volunteers personally. He stated how happy he was with the project. "By taking this initiative, you have further increased our responsibility to the people of this nation."

Another officer also expressed his views. "It is true that there are a number of inadequacies on our part, but after seeing such an initiative from the young people of our country we are only motivated to try harder to fulfil our duties and serve the nation better."

An officer of the Kalabagan Thana mentioned how he had faced a lot of criticism in his life but how few people bothered to express their gratitude. 'People often misbehave and shout at us (police), but no one ever bothers to thank us for what we do.'

The dedicated participants waited four hours to meet the Police Commissioner. When one volunteer managed to get through to meet him, the Commissioner refused to accept anything. However, after the cause behind the project was explained to him, he became very appreciative of their effort. He explained that as he had not heard of this event, he would dispatch a team to verify the project later in the day. A police team visited the JAAGO Foundation Office in Rayer Bazar later that afternoon to verify the story, and returned pleased with the information they received.



HSBC BRINGS SMILES TO KORAIL

As a part of their “Joy of Giving Campaign” during Ramadan, HSBC Amanah organized an Iftar party and gift distribution ceremony for our kids at Korail.

160 students from our Korail branch received books, toys, clothing and other presents on 24th August. HSBC collected these gifts through “Boxes of Hope” placed in all their branches in Bangladesh.

Sanjay Prakash, Chief Executive Officer of HSBC graced the event alongside Md. Shafquat Hossain, Head of Retail Banking and Wealth Management, Talukdar Noman Anwar, Head of Marketing and Communications, Amrita Nandini Biswas, Officer, Marketing Promotions, Rifat Faruq, Officer, Brand and Research and Ummay Summaiya M Rasul, Future Leader. Korvi Rakshand, Founder of JAAGO was present to greet the distinguished guests.

JAAGO thanks HSBC for making this Eid memorable for our students. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to the officials and clients of HSBC for making a difference in the lives of the underprivileged kids.



WORDS FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Dear Supporters,

A heartfelt Eid Mubarak from all of us at JAAGO and Volunteer for Bangladesh (VBD)! Whether it was the spectacle of Yasin from reception class dressed up for the Iftar party, or the sight of our volunteers saluting the police force at Ramna Thana, August has been a memorable month alongside the festivities of Ramadan. This year JAAGO witnessed a new face of the youth of Bangladesh - a generation that was not hesitant to delay their iftar, or spend a day away from their families to make Ramadan special for others.

Volunteer for Bangladesh (VBD) was welcomed with open arms and enthusiasm at Chittagong and district of Sylhet. We journeyed to the port city and the north east corner of Bangladesh to find armies of enthusiastic youngsters eagerly anticipating the opportunity to make a change in the lives of their compatriots. Needless to say, VBD will soon provide the chance to make a difference to every single youth in the nation.

Our students teamed up with the volunteers from VBD to spread the message of sharing, respecting and showing gratitude to your fellow citizens. For the second time in the history of Bangladesh, JAAGO students and VBD volunteers in Dhaka and Chittagong visited almost every single police station in the cities to mark The Great Kindness Challenge 2011. Their show of gratitude to the Bangladeshi Police Department was followed by a promise from the police force to provide better security for the citizens of Bangladesh. I cannot conclude my anecdote on The Great Kindness Challenge without quoting a traffic police officer, who after being thanked for his dedication to the country, tearfully claimed "In my 15 years as a Traffic Police, I have never been thanked for my work or shown respect."

Following their success at The Great Kindness Challenge, our volunteers and students then proceeded to celebrate iftar with the residents of Dhaka City's Prabin Hitoishi Sangha Senior Centre for the School of Survivors II.

Kids caught up with their sponsors while enjoying Iftar at our Annual Iftar Party in Rayer Bazaar. HSBC Amanah made Eid special for our students in Korail by organizing an iftar feast and gift distribution program as a part of their "Joy of Giving" campaign. The young rock stars of Days of Tragedy (D.O.T) came forward with the initiative of donating all the profits from the sale of their new album "Shesh" to JAAGO.

With every new volunteer, every new initiative and with every fresh cause, JAAGO grows and so does our sense of social responsibility. I would like to take this opportunity and thank every volunteer, sponsor, supporter and patron of JAAGO for their endless support in our journey so far. Surely, it is your encouragement and belief in our cause that has been our strength in the battle against poverty.

As General Secretary, watching the JAAGO revolution unfold has been a personal honor.

Yours sincerely,

Zihad Zaman
General Secretary
JAAGO Foundation

