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NEWS LETTER

Alor Pothe Nobojatray (APON) Foundation

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About APON

Alor Pothe Nobojatray (APON) Foundation (literally translated as 'In the journey towards enlightenment') is a non-profit, government approved, charitable organisation dedicated towards enlightening and improving the lives of the economically and socially deprived members of the community. At APON (literally translated as 'warm and friendly'), we aim to provide basic education to child labourers and to create employment opportunities among the underprivileged and disadvantaged sections of the society. We also aim to provide relief materials to victims of natural calamities and to raise awareness about HIV-AIDS, trafficking of women and children, child labour, acid attacks and other social evils.

APON is registered with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms as a Society under the Societies Registration Act 1860, No- S 6923(111) 07.

Vision

Establishing a society where children are secured, healthy and educated.

Mission

Our mission is to protect, preserve and uphold the basic rights of the underprivileged and socially backward sections of the population with a view to alleviating poverty and eliminating all forms of discrimination from the society.

Programs

- Basic Education for Underprivileged Children
- Vocational Training for Underprivileged Children
- Health and Hygiene Program for Socially and Economically Disadvantaged mother and children
- Child Rights and Protection
- Disaster Support and Capacity Building Program
- Protecting Environment and Climate Change Adaptation Program
- Research and Development

1. APON Education Project

1.1. APON School for Working Children

In 2012 APON operated seven school centers at Dhanmondi Lake, Ramna Park, Karwan Bazar Slum, Mogbazar Slum, Uttara and Rayer Bazar of Dhaka city for 175 working children. These students received education thrice a week and were also given nutritious food twice a week. Among 175 students, about 120 students have been admitted to formal schools.

From the beginning of the current year we also started 2 (two) new branches of APON school - one in Uttara and another in the Sundarban region of Shymnagar, Satkhira. Most of the students of our Shymnagar branch come from disaster affected families. At present, APON is running 9 school centers with 350 students.



The students receiving education from APON School

Case Study-01 : Mim



Mim, a 6 years old girl, lives in Dhanmondi Lake, Dhaka. She sells flowers. Until recently, she had no access to education. After receiving basic education and nutritional support offered by APON, she can read and write her name and address. She can identify English and Bengali alphabets. She knows that she should love her country and respect her elders. She has a sense of what is right and wrong. Mim has learnt to dream about the future and is enthusiastic in building a career.

She wants to continue her education and to attend formal school or vocational training institute. She also wants to support her family financially.

1.2. Operating Schools for Children affected by Climate Change

Since January 2013, APON School has been operating a new centre in Gangramari, a remote village of Shyamnagar upazilla, Satkhira, which is prone to experiencing natural disasters such as floods and cyclone every year. Given the adverse impact of natural calamities on the education of the children, APON has organised a centre in Satkhira for the benefit of the children in that region.



Students are attending their classes in Gangramari, Shyamnagar



APON School students receiving awards from APON Foundation after successful completion of PSC Examinations

1.3. Primary School Certificate (PSC) Examination Results (2013) of APON Students

In 2013, 6 students of APON School, Dhanmondi branch participated in Primary School Certificate (PSC) Examinations and obtained the following grades:

SL	Name of the Students	Name of the Exam	Result
1.	Kajol Rekha	Primary School Certificate (PSC)	A+
2.	Tania		A+
3.	Rona		A
4.	Bijoy		B
5.	Sonia		C
6.	Awal		C



1.4. Workshop on 'Teaching Working Children'

On 21 November, 2013, a day-long workshop titled 'Teaching Working Children' was held at APON premises. Dr. Meer Monjur Mahmood conducted the sessions while Mr. M. Aftabuzzaman, Executive Director of APON, acted as the Moderator. The workshop was attended by 12 teachers from APON school project.

1.5. Monthly Teacher Meeting

Starting from January 2013, APON has been arranging monthly Teacher Monitoring and Coordination meetings with a view to evaluating progress of activities of APON School projects.

2. Health & Hygiene

APON appreciates and understands the necessity of a basic health and hygiene education for the children. Many APON students spend the entire day in garbage dumps sifting through filth to collect paper/plastic bags which has resale value in the market. These children are highly susceptible to various respiratory and skin diseases. While considerations of health and hygiene demand a complete abstention from such activities, the harsh realities of life dictate otherwise. Most children are significant income earners for their family. Not going to work for even a day means not enough food for the family. APON seeks to minimize the inevitable risk that these children are exposed to by teaching them how to clean themselves after handling rubbish and also explaining the toxic effect of materials they handle every day.

2.1. Celebrating Global Hand Washing Day at Rayerbazar Center

On 6 October, 2013 APON Foundation celebrated Global Hand washing Day (GHD) 2013 at its Rayerbazar School with the view to raising awareness about the importance of cleanliness. "Clean hands Save Lives" was the slogan of the Global Hand Washing Day (GHD) 2013. More than 100 street children of Rayerbazar slum were present at the event.



The students are celebrating 'World Hand Washing Day' 2013



Students receiving food at Rayerbazar Slum Center

3. Disaster and Relief program

Every year APON provides relief materials and undertakes rehabilitation programs for victims of floods, cyclones and other natural disasters. In 2007, APON distributed relief materials in the Manikganj district, more than 63% of which had been inundated by the flood waters. In May 2009, widespread destruction was caused to coastal villages by Cyclone 'Aila' which hit the Bangladesh border. Much of the damage was caused by massive internal flooding, which contaminated drinking water sources with seawater and killed the fish in fresh water ponds. Thousands of people were rendered marooned or homeless by the cyclone. APON's Disaster and Relief Programme is currently conducted on an 'ad-hoc' basis, i.e. as and when necessary. The experience of distributing warm clothes in December 2009 taught APON an important lesson - that the inhabitants of Dhaka city receive sufficient aid, in terms of warm clothing during winter. These aid are mainly provided by various government and non-governmental organisations. In fact

most of APON students, who are all based in Dhaka city, received ample supplies of warm clothes from such organisations. APON decided that henceforth warm clothes and blankets should be distributed on a priority and need basis, for instance, in remote villages, particularly in the northern districts of the country, where the temperature during winter season is the lowest and the people, being the poorest, suffer the most.

3.1. Warm clothes distribution among distressed people of Shaymnagar, Satkhira

On January 12, 2013 team of APON members including Vice Chairman and Managing Director, distributed a large quantity of warm clothes among 150 families of Gabura Village, Shamnagar, Satkhira.



An old woman receiving blankets distributed by APON



Children at Uttara,& Karwan Bazar branch receive new dresses during Eid with beaming faces!

3.2. Distributing new dresses to APON School Students as Eid Gifts

On 22 July, 2013, APON distributed new dresses as Eid gifts among 100 students of Uttara and Karwan Bazar branches of APON School.

On April 2013, Rana Plaza, an eight-story commercial building, collapsed in Savar. The final death toll was published to be 1,129. On September 25, 2013, a 3 member team of APON distributed two sewing machines and clothes among the parents of two victims of Rana Plaza Tragedy at Ataikula, Pabna. Mr. Jahangir Alam Biswas and Mr. Amzad Hosan, (Chairman and Member of Ataikula Union Parishad respectively) were also present at the event.



Parents of Khalil and Parvin Akhter, victims of Rana Plaza tragedy receiving Sewing Machines from APON

3.4. Sharing the joy of Qurbani Eid with Working Children

On 16 October 2013 on the occasion of holy Eid-Ul Adha, APON foundation distributed Qurbani meat among 200 street children of Dhanmondi, Ramna Rayer Bazar and Uttara school.



APON students receiving their packets of Qurbani meat

Case Study-02 : Sani



Sani, a 12 years old boy, lives in Mohammadpur Slum, Dhaka. He used to sell cigarettes. He had no access to formal or informal education. After receiving basic education and nutritional support offered by APON, he can read and write his name and address now. He can identify English and Bengali alphabets. He has a sense of what is right and wrong. After receiving financial assistance from APON, he now supports his family members by earning through the sale of tea to passers by.

4. Future activities: Environment and Climate Change

Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable nations to the impacts of climate change. It is now established that climate change has adverse effects on the health, nutrition, education and emotional and social wellbeing of a child. Such adverse impact is often exacerbated by development pressures at the local and household levels, such as rising food prices, spread of disease and illness, and competition over scarce natural resources. Unfortunately, there has been little or no studies in Bangladesh focusing on the impact of climate change on children.

APON is planning to work in this field by conducting surveys in the coastal regions of Bangladesh to assess the nature and scale of climate change impacts on the children in the coastal regions of the country. In this situation, APON is trying to raise awareness about environment and climate change impact among APON students.



APON children participate in a procession to celebrate World Environment Day 2013

4.1. Celebrating World Environment Day 2013

On 5 June, 2013 APON celebrated 'World Environment Day' with APON school students at Dhanmondi lake, Dhaka. The program aims to raise awareness about environment and climate change impact among APON students.

5. Celebrating National and International Days

5.1. Celebrating International Mother Languages Day

The event started off with a short speech by the Vice-Chairman on the history of International Mother Languages Day. This was followed by an Art Competition, where the children drew pictures of Shaheed Minar. Later, presents were distributed among the winners. The event ended with a lunch organised by APON for its children.



The students participating in a procession to celebrate International Mother Language day



The students prepare for a race at Dhanmondi branch

5.2. Celebrating Independence Day with APON School Students

On 26 March, 2013, APON celebrated Independence day with APON School students at Dhanmondi Lake, Dhaka. The students took part in various events. Later, presents were distributed among the children.

5.3. Art competition on the eve of Independence Day, 2013



APON School students taking part in an art competition at Dhanmondi branch

5.4. Celebrating Victory Day 2013

The event started off with a short speech by the Executive Director on the history of our Victory Day. This was followed by a procession. The event ended with a lunch distributed by APON for its children.



The students taking part in a procession to celebrate Victory Day

6. Humanitarian Program

6.1. Success story : Supporting families- Donating Equipments for starting up a Tea Stall



A guardian of a student receiving weighing machine from APON authority



Mother of Nayan and Tonni receiving support for setting up small business from APON

On 28 May, 2013 APON Foundation donated a weighing machine to the father of Hashi, Khushi & Tushar, all students of APON School, Ramna Park Center, thereby enabling him to start a small business.

6.3. Medical Aid: Supporting medical expenses of a Poor Patient

On 15 October, 2013 APON Foundation provided donation to a poor patient at Jhaudanga, Satkhira. Mr. Abdul Hamid received money from Mr. M Aftabuzzaman, CEO, APON Foundation.



Mr. Abdul Hamid receiving donation from CEO of APON for his wife's treatment

Case Study-03 : Bahar



Bahar, a 7 years old boy, lives in Modhubazar Slum, Dhaka. His father left his mother few years ago. His mother now makes ends meat by selling tea and cigarettes near Dhanmondi lake. He has two brothers and one sister. Unfortunately he had no access to education. But now he is receiving basic education and nutritional support offered by APON and can read and write his name and address. He can identify English and Bengali alphabets. He can count the numbers also. He knows that he should respect his elders. He has a sense of what is right and wrong. He hopes to join police force one day.

7. Past Activities of APON at a Glance:

APON has been involved in various charity works since 2006. The previous activities of APON are set out below:

YEAR 2006

- **December 2006:** Distribution of blankets and warm clothes to slum dwellers among 200 street dwellers in Moghbazaar and Malibag, Dhaka.

YEAR 2007

- **May 2007:** Providing donation for medical treatment of a brain tumor patient in BSMMU (PG Hospital).
- **June 2007 :** Providing scholarship to 6 students in Satkhira to help them continue and complete their primary education.
- **August 2007 :** Setting up a medical camp in Manikganj and providing free medical treatment and donating relief materials among 200 flood victims of the area.
- **September 2007 :** Donating medicine to Fatema Sangstha for free medical treatment of the villagers in Gaibandha.
- **September 2007 :** Providing donation to 25 SSC examinees in Gaibandha to help them register for the SSC Examinations 2007-2008
- **November 2007 :** Providing donation to Red Crescent for distribution among SIDR (Cyclone) victims.

YEAR 2008

- **January 2008 :** APON School Project launched for providing education to street children in Dhanmondi. APON School classes are regularly attended by 30 street children in a

park in Dhanmondi,

- **September 2008 :** APON School project expanded to provide education among domestic helps in an apartment in Purana Paltan, Dhaka
- **June 2008 :** Mini-Marathon and Boating Trip at Shotauongon (adjacent to Dhanmondi lake).
- **September 2008:** Eid-Ul-Fitr Gift Distribution Program among 35 students at Dhanmondi Lake branch.
- **December 2008:** Qurbani Meat Distribution Program among APON School Students at Dhanmondi Lake branch.

YEAR 2009

- **January 2009:** APON started 3 school centers at Dhanmoni Lake, Ramna Park and Farmgate Part with 75 students.
- **February 2009:** Celebrating International Mother Language Day with APON school students at Dhanmondi Lake Branch.
- **June 2009:** Prize Distribution Ceremony for APON School Students on the basis of their Annual Exam Results 2009.
- **August 2009:** Organizing Free Medical Camp in partnership with FANTASIA at APON School Dhanmondi branch. 63 students were took treatment by the doctors.
- **September 2009:** Distributing Eid gifts among 50 students of Ramna and Dhamondi branch.
- **November 2009:** Distributing Qurbani Meat

among 40 students of APON School; Dhanmondi branch.

- **December 2009:** Celebrating Victory Day with APON school students at Dhanmondi Lake Branch.

YEAR 2010

- **January 2010:** APON started 2 school centers at Dhanmoni Lake, Ramna Park with 75 students.
- **February 2010:** Providing 6 months vocational training for two of its regular students , Sunny (13) and Tanya(14).
- **June 2010:** Celebrating World Environment Day 2010with APON School students at Dhanmondi Lake Branch.
- **August 2010:** Distributing EID gifts among 75 students of Ramna and Dhamondi branch.
- **September 2010:** Celebrating Global Hand Washing Day and Food Day at APON School Ramna Park branch.
- **October 2010:** Helping a Street Children (Sunny) with a thermal flask, a tea pot and 6 tea cups for his income generating purpose.
- **November 2010:** Distributing Qurbani Meat among 40 students of APON School Dhanmondi branch.

YEAR 2011

- **January 2011:** APON started 3 school centers at Dhanmoni Lake, Ramna Park and Farmgate Part with 90 students.
- **February 2011:** Celebrating International Mother Language Day with APON school students at Ramna Park Branch.
- **March 2011:** Distributing Sewing Machines

among two Students of APON.

- **August 2011:** Celebrating Anisa's aikah with APON school students at Ramna Park branch.
- **September 2011:** Distributed EID gifts among 50 students of Ramna and Dhamondi branch.
- **October 2011:** Celebrating Global Hand Washing Day at APON School Ramna Park branch.
- **November 2011:** Distributed sewing machine to a destitute woman and a human wheeler to a poor family at Patuakhali, Barisal.
- **December 2011:** Celebrating 40 Years of our Victory Day with APON school students at Ramna Park Branch.

YEAR 2012

- **January 2012:** APON started 8 school centers at Dhanmoni Lake, Ramna Park, Moghbazar Slum, Karwan bazaar slum and Rayer Bazar Slum. ith 350 students.
- **May 2012:** Celebrating Rodoshi's birth day with APON school students at Ramna Park branch.
- **August 2012 :** Distributed EID gifts among 50 students of Ramna branch.
- **October 2012:** Distributed Qurbani Meat among 40 students of APON School Dhanmondi branch.
- **December 2012:** Celebrating Victory Day with APON school students at Dhanmondi Lake Branch.
- **December 2012:** Distributed Warm Cloth among APON school students at Dhanmondi Lake Branch.

8. Get Involved

APON seeks your co-operation and contribution in sustaining and expanding its activities. While APON has already started making a difference to the lives of hundreds of children, we are conscious of the fact that this is only the beginning of a long journey. A long and arduous journey can be fruitful, rewarding and enjoyable with your participation and assistance.

You can contribute by making a donation, or even by volunteering to work on the numerous on-going projects of APON Foundation. By donating a small amount, you can make a child smile the entire month. Let us not forget that the child on the street has the same claim on us as do our own children. If we abandon them, indeed we abandon our own children. Let us work together to help our children, wherever they may be. The time to act is now. Delayed action on our part is denial of their rights.

A small contribution from you could go a long way towards our goal of lighting up lives. Please take a little step with us for a big change.

Join APON now and let us make a difference together!

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