

Life Stories of Helpless Disabled Individuals

Chuadanga was the first capital of Bangladesh. This small district town, through which the Mathabhangha River flows, is located southwest of the capital, Dhaka. According to the latest survey, approximately 1,152,000 people of various religions and ethnicities reside in this district. Due to the limited availability of agricultural land and factories, the poverty rate here is among the highest. The prevalence of disability is also significant due to lack of education and deep-rooted superstitions.

Poverty on one hand and disability on the other have made life in this district extremely difficult. Disabled individuals are often considered burdens on both their families and society. People believe that their birth itself is a curse, and they are looked down upon. According to a survey conducted by the Department of Social Services, there are approximately 32,279 disabled individuals in this district. Among them, the most significant numbers are found in Sadar and Alamdanga upazilas, where 4,069 helpless disabled individuals are being supported by Prattasha Samazik Unnayan Sangstha (PSUS), in collaboration with Manusher Jonno Foundation and funded by UKAid, to ensure their rights and access to opportunities.

A sudden global pandemic has spread fear across the world—COVID-19, commonly known as the coronavirus. This has become a major source of fear for all of humanity. As the outbreak worsened in Bangladesh, the government imposed a nationwide lockdown to ensure public safety. However, alongside the general population, helpless disabled individuals also fell victim to severe hardship and scarcity. Their means of livelihood have become increasingly difficult to sustain.

To help alleviate their suffering, the PRPDP Project, with the support of Manusher Jonno Foundation, has been working continuously to improve the lives of these vulnerable individuals.



Md. Kachim Uddin lives in Nimtala village of Padmabila Union, Chuadanga Sadar Upazila. He is a physically disabled person. His father is Abul Khaleq, and his mother is Sagari Khatun. He lives with his family of four members. Due to financial hardship, Kachim Uddin had to work as a day laborer alongside running a small shop. This is how he managed his household.

However, when the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the country, he lost his work opportunities. Meanwhile, his shop's stock ran low, causing a decline in sales. He became uncertain about how to support his family. At this time, he received BDT 7,000 from Prattasha Samazik Unnayan Sangstha (PSUS). With this money, Laboni purchased new grocery items for their shop. Now, their business has improved significantly, and their household is running much better.



Laboni Akter is a physically disabled person. She is the daughter of Md. Badar Uddin and Amena Khatun from Garabaria village in Shankarchandra Union, Chuadanga Sadar Upazila. Laboni Akter was born with a disabled leg.

Unfortunately, when Laboni was young, her father passed away. After his death, Laboni and her mother became completely helpless, struggling to figure out how to manage their household. Eventually, they borrowed some money and started a small shop at home to sustain themselves. The shop was running quite well, but suddenly, when COVID-19 spread across Bangladesh, the government imposed a nationwide lockdown.

During this time, the stock in their shop decreased, causing financial hardship for their family once again. They were constantly worried about how they would survive. At this difficult time, she received BDT 7,000 from the Prattasha Samazik Unnayan Sangstha (PSUS). With this money, Laboni was able to restock their grocery shop.

Now, their shop's sales have increased significantly, and their household is running smoothly once again.



A few days ago, Ahsan Habib's family was doing well. However, the deadly disease of elephantiasis took away one of his legs. All their savings were spent on his hospital admission and surgery, leaving them with nothing but their homestead.

Ahsan Habib is a resident of Makhaldanga village in Shankar Chandra Union of Chuadanga Sadar Upazila. Losing his leg to elephantiasis, he felt lost and uncertain about what to do. With a small amount of saved money, he set up a small tea stall in front of Makhaldanga Secondary School. However, sales were poor, mainly because his shop lacked sufficient supplies.

Finally, through the Manusher Jonno Foundation, the Prattasha Samazik Unnayan Sangstha (PSUS) provided him with BDT 7,000 under the Livelihood program to stock his shop. With this money, Ahsan Habib was able to purchase more supplies, which significantly boosted his sales.



Mamun Hossain is a resident of Baliapara village in Alukdia Union, Chuadanga Sadar Upazila. He is the only son of **Md. Borkot Ali and Nasima Khatun**. Mamun has been physically disabled since birth. His father, a daily laborer, somehow manages to support their family with his meager income. As days and months pass, Mamun grows up, but he cannot walk without crutches.

Mamun's father sets up a small tea stall near their house for him. However, the earnings from the tea stall are not enough for him to sustain himself. Mamun struggles to find a way to improve his situation. Seeing his hardship, **Prattasha Samazik Unnayan Sangstha (PSUS)** steps forward to help. He is given **7,000 BDT** for his livelihood. With this money, Mamun stocks more items in his tea stall. As the shop gets better stocked, his sales increase, and he starts making a good profit. Now, he no longer has to worry about running his household like before.



Shopkeeper **Farukh Hossain** is a physically disabled person. He is a resident of Baradi village in Baradi Union of Alamdanga Upazila, Chuadanga District. With a small amount of saved money, he set up a small grocery shop in front of his house. His family depended on the shop for their livelihood. However, due to the lockdown, his shop remained closed, leading to financial hardship for his family. Apart from his home, Farukh Hossain had nothing else. Days passed in struggle for him.

Finally, to support his grocery business and restock goods, he received BDT 7,000 through the Livelihood Program, provided by **Manusher Jonno Foundation** and facilitated by **Prattasha Samazik Unnayan Sangstha (PSUS)**. With this financial assistance, Farukh Hossain was able to purchase more products for his shop. As a result, his sales increased significantly, and he started making a good profit.



At noon, **Fazlur Rahman** and his wife, along with their two daughters, filled their stomachs with vegetable khichuri. However, they had no idea what they would cook for dinner. **Fazlur Rahman** is a resident of Kulpala village in Chitla Union, Alamdanga Upazila, Chuadanga district. After losing both of his legs in an accident, he couldn't figure out what to do. With a small amount of saved money, he set up a small tea stall in front of his house. However, the sales were not good—how could they be when his shop lacked sufficient goods? This is how **Fazlur Rahman's** days passed.

Finally, to stock up his tea shop, he received BDT 7,000 through the Livelihood program of Proyas Social Development Organization (PSUS), funded by **Manusher Jonno Foundation**. With this money, he was able to add more products to his shop, increasing his sales. Now, he has no trouble running his household.