

## COVID Spurs Creativity @ COVA

### COVA Peace Network

Contributions of COVA for COVID -19 Relief till 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021

### Constituencies Served

Teachers of Private Schools- Students- Migrants- Refugees- Destitute- Small Businesses- Service Providers - Volunteers of COVA

### The Innovations

1. Successful Advocacy for Free Rations for Migrant Workers
2. Relief for Teachers of Private schools and Other Lower Middle Classes during Lockdown
3. Negotiated with School Managements for free education for two students for one teacher supported

### Activities For Covid Relief

1. Cooked Meals
2. Ration Kits
3. Financial Support for Teachers – Service Providers
4. Financial Support for Students to Continue Education
5. Free Notebooks for Destitute Students
6. Restoration of Small Businesses
7. Facilitate Medical Support
8. Enumeration of Migrant Workers
9. Clothes
10. Social Media for Community Outreach
11. Study on Impact of COVID Pandemic on Communities

### Success in Advocacy for Migrant Workers

With the Lockdown, the Migrants were not getting their weekly wages and with their meagre savings depleted, they were on the verge of starvation. On COVA's representation, the Government of Telangana announced on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019 that free rations would be provided to all the migrant workers in the State through Government Ration Shops along with Rs. 500 in cash for sundry expenses. Over 3.5 Lakh migrant workers benefited from this scheme for two months.



**[Chief Minister of Telangana  
announcing Free Rations for Migrant  
Workers!](#)**

**Overview of Support Provided for COVID -19  
From March 2019 to October 2021**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Support Provided</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>COVID -19 / Floods</b>
	Cooked Meals	Migrants	72,000	COVID -19
		Refugees	5000	Flood Relief
		<b>Total</b>	<b>77000</b>	
	Ration Kits costing between 1500 to 5400 depending on Family Size and sufficient for 2 months	Teachers	1021	
		Migrants	142	
		Refugees	3174	
		Destitute	150	
			<b>Total- 4487</b>	
1	<b>Financial Support</b>	Teachers,	115	<b>COVID- 19</b>
		COVA Volunteers	23	
		Service Providers	3	
		Migrant	1	
		<b>Total- 140</b>		
	<b>Free Education by School Managements for Students for Financial Support to Teachers</b>	Students	168	
		<b>Note Books</b>	Students	1000
		<b>Total 1168</b>		
	<b>Clothes for Families</b>	Refugee Families	320	
		Destitute Families	54	
			<b>Total – 374</b>	
	<b>Support for Restoration of Small Businesses</b>	Local Businesses	231	
		Refugees	93	
			<b>Total – 324</b>	
		<b>Pre Matric Scholarships</b>		

<p><b>Despite the Pandemic and closure of schools COVA enabled over 11 thousand Students to apply online from 2019 till 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021. With the scholarship received, the students were able to pay their fees to continue education.</b></p>	<p><b>2019-20</b> Pre Matric Scholarships secured for 3522 Students</p>	<p>Total Amount Received as Scholarship: Rs.1,22,55,251</p>	<p>Average per Student: Rs.3480</p>
	<p><b>2020-21</b> Pre Matric Scholarships secured for 3296 Students</p>	<p>Total Amount Received as Scholarship: Rs.81,14,020</p>	<p>Average per student Rs. 2461</p>
	<p><b>2021- 22</b> Pre Matric Scholarships- Till 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021 Forms Received: Forms Uploaded: Target: 10,000 Students</p>	<p>Total Amount Expected as Scholarship: 3.5 cr</p>	<p>Average per student Rs. 3500</p>

**Relief for Teachers of Private Schools and other Lower Middle Classes during Lockdown**

COVA Peace Network was the first to foresee the effect of Lockdown on Teachers of Private Schools and initiated relief measures from 1<sup>st</sup> Week of April 2020 – Many organisations adopted this initiative that benefited thousands of teachers in Hyderabad and other cities. COVA Peace Network also identified persons working in the service sector like travel, hospitality etc. designated them as The Neo Poor- due to their vulnerability becoming more acute than that of the Poor- and initiated support programs for them also.

COVA Peace Network provided monetary and rations support to 1895 Teachers of private schools directly till September 2021 and facilitated other partner organisations to extend support to another 1000 teachers in Hyderabad. Some Neo Poor Families including volunteers of COVA Peace Network who were adversely impacted by the Lockdown were also given monetary and rations relief. Please see the Table above for more information.

**Unique initiative for resource mobilization**

As Bakrid, the festival for sacrifice was approaching, COVA Peace Network circulated an Appeal urging people to one portion of their budget for the sacrifice and share two portions for providing rations to teachers of private schools who had not received their salaries since



April 2020. There was an overwhelming response from thought leaders, clerics and media-Times of India, Mumbai carried a special article on this proposal of COVA Peace Network and contributions started coming to COVA Peace Network and also to other organisations in Hyderabad and other cities providing much needed support to hundreds of teachers of private schools. This Program was successfully implemented in 2020 and 2021.



## Mumbai: This Bakrid many Muslims will take just one share in a cattle, donate rest of the money to the poor and deserving

Muhammad Wajidh | THE TIMES OF INDIA | Jul 15, 2020, 12:42 IST



MUMBAI: In view of the new guidelines which make giving animal sacrifice on Eidul Adha or Bakrid festival very difficult amid Covid-19 pandemic, many Muslims in the state will not sacrifice goats or sheep but will take share in a cattle (bull or buffalo) preferably out of the state. Bakrid falls on August 1.

The guidelines released on Friday said that no mandis or livestock markets will be allowed and people can buy cattle or goats online. "It will be very difficult to buy cattle or goats as there are no mandis and cattle are not reaching the Deonar abattoir. If it is not possible to give Qurbani of goats and sheep, here, people should do it outside the state where no such strict rules are enforced. By taking share in a cattle/bull or buffaloes they can save money which can be used to help poor relatives or others facing financial crisis," said Maulana Burhanuddin Qasmi, director, Markazi Maarif, a think tank at Jogeshwar.

According to the rules, meat of a sacrificed cattle (bull, buffalo) can be equally shared by seven people while Qurbani of a goat or a sheep is valid for just one person.

Meanwhile, Hyderabad-based Jamia Nizamia, one of the oldest Islamic institutions in the country, has issued a fatwa saying that, in case giving Qurbani is extremely difficult, the equivalent amount of the animal, can be donated to the poor and deserving people in the community. This fatwa is being hailed widely.

## NGO goes to aid of pvt school teachers

Even the paltry pay they were getting earlier denied since lockdown

By M. NIZAMUDDIN

Hyderabad: Private school teachers hailing from among the most affected during the lockdown. Despite their economic deprivation, most do not have relatives who can extend them to their families. They cannot reach out to teachers for help as to sense of middle-class dignity and others also feel hesitant to offer support.

According to a study, there is an average of 17 teachers in these schools with salaries ranging from Rs 4,000 to 15,000, mostly in the range of 10,000. Most have not received their salaries even for the month of March with the announcement of the Lockdown and are not likely to get till July or even August after the schools reopen and the students will pay their fees.

"We are in a horrible situation. I am the only member of my family who was earning Rs 15,000 per month with an ailing father with lung and liver infection. With no salary since March, it has been very difficult to buy medicines or even food for the family. I had to borrow money at 5% interest per month and do not know how long we will be able to survive on this money. We cannot tell anyone about our distress and there is no support from the government or anyone for people like us," Nazam Nazam, Mathematics Teacher, New St. Maria High School, Falakurua.

Syed Mohsin Ali and his wife work at Zehra High School together were earning about Rs 15,000 per month. They have a 7-month-old child born premature and his wife is afflicted with polio. Both wife and child need regular medication worth about Rs 1,000 per month. "We have no whole cotton cloth and cannot stand in a queue on the road to take free material being distributed. We are living from day to day and do not know from where the next meal will come tomorrow," said Ali.

Confederation of Voluntary Organisations (COVA) which works with 100 private schools in the city decided to support at least 1,000 teachers from 50 schools by raising Rs 1 crore through donations and grants. "We started supporting with Rs 5,000 through direct bank transfer. The total amount of Rs 10 lakhs were distributed amongst teachers which were collected through donations," Mazhar Hussain, Executive Director, informed THE HANS INDIA.

Moving beyond the grant programme, COVA is now launching an improved version where teachers are paid Rs 10,000 each as part of their salary so they are able to live with some comfort and dignity till August when they could get their salary dues, he added.

- COVA works with 100 private schools in the city. It will support at least 1,000 teachers from 50 schools by raising Rs 1 crore funds
- COVA ensure each teacher gets Rs 10,000 so that they are able to live with some comfort and dignity till August

**WE CAN HELP**

THE HANS INDIA Tue, 02 June 2020 <https://easr.thehansindia.com/524>

### COVA offers financial grant to Hyderabad school teachers affected by COVID

September 10, 2020



School teachers are among the most affected segments due to the lockdown. Many did not receive their salaries since March, and might not receive any at least until August 2020. Some teachers will get their salaries only when the schools reopen. This would mean spending 6 months without any salary. Experts say economic recession and job losses can be further expected. With a sense of middle-class dignity, they cannot reach out for credit or help.

On the other hand, there are high chances that many students (especially first-generation learners from poor families) may be forced to drop out of schools. Confederation of Voluntary Association (COVA) has come up with a unique plan to help both segments with a Rs. 10,000 grants to each teacher, from selected small private schools in the old city area, as part of their salary. For every teacher supported by COVA, the school allows 2 students to study free for a year. Bright students from challenging backgrounds who are most vulnerable to dropping out will be selected. It is estimated that at least 35 students at each school can be saved from dropping out through this project.

Mazhar Hussain, Executive Director of COVA said "This innovative project is a win-win arrangement for teachers, students, management and society. Since we are working with schools on various projects from so many years, we want to help educational institutions sustain during COVID period."

COVA works with 100 private schools in Hyderabad. The Support Program started in the 1st week of April 2020 and so far around 750 teachers have been supported. Through the fundraising campaign with Milaap, COVA wants to raise Rs. 25 Lakhs to support additional 250 teachers from 15 schools. This campaign will also ensure the continuation of schooling for 500 students. Overall the organisation is planning to support 1500 teachers from the old city of Hyderabad.

### Free Education for 2 Students for 1 Teacher Supported

With the Lockdown in March 2020 and the abrupt closure of schools, managements could not collect fees and pay salaries to teachers in April and thereafter. With the Pandemic expected to last for a while with adverse impact on the economy, there was apprehension that parents will not be able to pay fees when the schools reopen and large number of



students will drop out. COVA Peace Network proposed that it will pay for the salary of teachers and the Management should permit two students to study free for every teacher supported. Managements agreed and 168 students are able to continue their studies free when schools reopened for 2021-22. Please see the Table above.

### Facilitating Pre Matric Scholarships for SC, ST, BC and Minority Students

Due to the pandemic and lock-down many families are facing extreme financial issues and are unable to afford the school fees of their children.

The rate of school dropout is high since the pandemic has started. With schools shut for 18 months now and going digital, children belonging to marginalized and economically weak backgrounds are left out. It is unfortunate that some children are helping parents with labor work or doing odd jobs.

While male children are being sent to work leading to increase in child labor, many girl children are being forced into child marriage.

Continuing its Pre Matric Scholarships Program, COVA Peace Network enabled over 11 thousand Students to apply through online counselling and facilitation from 2019 till 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021. Please see the Table above for details of Scholarships received by students.

With the scholarship received, these students were able to pay their fees to continue education despite severe financial constraints at home.

#### CASE STUDIES



**M. Sushmita** is a class 10<sup>th</sup> student of MH Gupta High School in Santoshnagar. Her father is an attender in a private school and mother works as a maid in houses. Belonging to the SC community, Sushmita and her parents had never heard about the Pre Matric Scholarships Scheme. After the awareness about the scheme provided by COVA along with facilitation to obtain all the required documents and free online submission of the form by operators of COVA who had visited her school, Sushmita got a scholarship of Rs. 3000 in February 2020.

Her father, Mr. M. Jangaih while thanking COVA expressed hope that his two other children will also be able to get the scholarships when they reach higher classes and this will greatly ease the pressure on him about the expenses for educating them and make it possible to continue their studies.



**Jabeen Unnisa** and **Faiz Unnisa** are siblings and students of Class 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> standard at Zehra High School located in Chandrayangutta. Their father passed away in 2010 and since then their mother has been supporting the family by working as a tailor. It has been very difficult for their mother to support her family as the school fees along with stationary prices are also increasing day by day.

The siblings and their mother had never heard about Pre Matric Scholarships Scheme. COVA Peace Network provided awareness about the scheme along with facilitation to obtain all the required documents and helped in free online submission of the forms through their operators who visited their school. Both

students received Rs. 5000 each as Pre Matric Scholarship for the year 2020-21. The mother, Ms. Majeebunnisa, while thanking COVA expressed hope that her two children will be able to get the scholarships in coming years also and this will greatly ease the pressure on her about the expenses for educating them and make continuation of their studies possible.

### Scholarships For Orphans

COVA Peace Network also provides scholarships for students from low income group who have lost their parents or their fathers who were the sole bread winners of the family. For 2021- 22 six girl students are being supported to continue their education whose fathers had expired in 2020 and 2021. Four of these parents had succumbed to COVID. All these scholarships are made possible thanks to 3 Endowment Funds that are started with COVA Peace Network to support education of orphan girls from the marginalised communities.

Mr. K.R. Venugopal, former Secretary to 3 Prime Ministers of India, has generously instituted two funds to honour the memory of his father Mr. Kasba Ramaiah to support one Christian and one Muslim orphan girl to continue education.

Another Fund is instituted to Honour the Memory of Col. Naem Ahmed by his family to support education of an orphan girl.

### Notebooks Distribution For Students of Government Schools

#### Making Empathy Part of Education

Schools have reopened and students are back in classes with bags and books. Government schools are also teeming with students with free text books provided by government. Unfortunately, many students are without Note Books due to financial distress of the family due to the pandemic.

A student would need at least 6 note books of 200 pages to get through the year. So, COVA Peace Network came up with a proposal requesting the School Management of private schools to motivate one student of their school to support another student of a Government School. This Program is receiving good response and plan to help 10,000 students from government schools in Hyderabad.

### Use of Technology for Community Outreach

The Premier Program of COVA Peace Network of Pre Matric Scholarships received a big setback with the closure of schools. But crafting a new path, COVA Peace Network created audio visual and text messages in different languages and propagated these through different social media platforms to the students and parents with the help of managements and teachers. [CLICK HERE](#) for the Video.

**Net Result:** Despite the closure of schools, over 11 thousand Students SC, ST, BC and Minority students were facilitated to apply for Pre Matric Scholarships from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 till 30<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Another 5000 students will be helped to apply online till April 2022.

### a) Restoration of Small Businesses

Most people engaged in small businesses like selling vegetables, fruits, tea etc. had lost their working capitals during the Lockdown and had no means to restart their businesses. Immediately with the easing of the Lockdown, COVA Peace Network launched a program from 7<sup>th</sup> June 2020 to provide working capital to help restore small businesses.

Grants of Rs. 2000 to 10000 were provided to 264 persons and rickshaws of 60 scrap collectors were repaired at an average cost of Rs. 2500. This is helping beneficiaries of this program to start earning Rs.500 to Rs. 800 daily and thereby support themselves and their families for years to come.

112 of these beneficiaries were provided loans by SAFA as part of their Build Back Program.



## Small businesses face cash crunch

ADITYA CHUNDURU | DC  
HYDERABAD, JUNE 13

Owners of small businesses, mostly operating along roadsides, are facing an acute shortage of funds to restart their livelihood. Most of them have exhausted their meagre savings during the lockdown. Now, they do not have money to buy raw material to start their business again.

Mohammad Afzal Taj used to operate a tea stall in Moosanagar. Following imposition of the lockdown, he spent all his money to support his family of five. Though the government has allowed people like him to open their stalls, he is unable to do so. "I don't have money to buy tea leaves, milk and other items," he said.

The husband of Rajeshwari, a vegetable vendor from Malakpet, had lost his job as a driver following the lockdown. "Since he was not earning, we have exhausted our savings. I do not have money to buy vegetables from the wholesaler," she said. Rajeshwari is further saddled with payment of her daughter's school fee. Rabia Bee, a fruit seller, is the sole breadwinner of her family. Her husband had suffered a paralytic attack many years ago. "We were surviving on free rations the government was supplying. Now, even that has stopped," she says. The Confederation of Voluntary Associations (COVA), a Hyderabad-based NGO, last Sunday distributed cheques of ₹2,000 to ₹ 5,000 to 26 persons in Old City.

### LIVELIHOODS LOST

## 'Capital' conundrum for small-time vendors

Several people desperate for some monetary help to get back into business

MD NIZAMUDDIN

Hyderabad: Afzal Taj, a chatwala who used to support his family till March by running a tea-stall, found it difficult to sustain during more than 2 months of severe lockdown. Coping with ailments like blood pressure and diabetes, he also struggles to procure medicine on time.

In a similar instance, Rajeshwari, whose entire family depended on her husband's income, an autowallah, used to sell vegetables in the past.

But now, she lost all hope after spending all their savings and is desperate for help. Echoing the sentiment, Rabia Bee, a fruit seller for 15 years, laments that her husband had a paralytic attack and she had been taking care of her family. But with the lockdown all was lost, and they had to survive on the ration kits provided by different people. Now people have also stopped giving rations and she does not have any money to restart her business.

According to the NGO, Confederation of Voluntary Associations, which studied the cases of petty businessmen before and after the lockdown, most of them survived the ordeal with the help of voluntary organizations, which mostly engaged in 'distribution of kits'. But helping

them stand back on their feet should be the priority, lest they should fall prey to money lenders, which would set in motion a vicious cycle of poverty and debt. "If grants of just Rs 2,000 to 5,000 can be provided, thousands can get back into business and support themselves and their families for years," feels Dr Mazhar Hussain, Executive Director of COVA, while speaking to The Hans India.

On Sunday, the organisation launched a programme to provide working capital to petty business persons to restore their businesses by



giving grants from Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000 to 26 persons who were engaged in selling vegetables, fruits, flowers and running tea stall to enable them to restart their businesses at Chaderghat. "Average tenure in business for these 26 people was 10 years but most could not restart their businesses despite easing of the Lockdown due to lack of working capital. It is proposed to identify and to provide grants to at least 1000 such small trades in Hyderabad in the coming weeks to enable them to restore their businesses," he added.





**b) Cooked Food**

COVA provided lunch and dinner to 1000 migrant workers and their families at Gagan Pahad and 50 migrant workers at Jalpally for 21 days till they received rations from the government. From 1<sup>st</sup> May to 31<sup>st</sup> June 2020 COVA started a Community Kitchen in collaboration with Surge Impact Foundation to provide cooked food twice a day to 500 migrant workers and their families to help them to fast with ease during the month of Ramazan at Kishanbagh, Hyderabad.



**c) Ration Kits**

COVA provided 3036 kits with ration to migrants, teachers of private schools, destitute families and Refugees from 6 countries viz. Myanmar, Sudan, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Syria and Somalia. These kits were prepared on the basis of the size of a family and contained rations for about 2 months.



Distribution of Ration Kits for COVID-19 Relief



#### d) Enumeration of Migrant Workers

COVA has enumerated 10,000 persons from 4000 families of migrant workers in Gagan Pahad, Katedan and Kishanbagh areas and facilitated them to get cooked food and rations from the Public Distribution System.

COVA Peace Network provided relief and livelihood restoration, apart from providing cooked meals to 77,000 migrants and refugees during COVID 19 Pandemic and the floods.

The total cost for these relief, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction programs serving 34,000 families was Rs. 1,11,23,000/- in direct monetary expenses incurred by COVA Peace Network and Rs. 51,63,800 (approximately) received in kind from different individuals and donors making a total of Rs.1,61,86,800/- from 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020 to 31st March 2021.

#### Study on Impact of COVID 19 on Vulnerable Communities

Collaborated with UNICEF, CSEI and WNTA on a 9 Months Project Titled:

**Community based monitoring (CBM)** with the objective to monitor socio-economic impact of COVID 19 on vulnerable populations and their coping leading to development of policy papers and evidence fact sheets to build relevant policies and provisions to reduce current and future risk of widened inequalities in the aftermath of the pandemic.

24 trained volunteers were involved in the program to undertake monthly structured surveys of 460 selected vulnerable families and their habitations spread across Hyderabad to cover a broad range of issues ranging from livelihoods, access to essential goods, basic services, awareness on critical health and hygiene, access to direct benefit transfers and allied social protection measures to provide evidence for policy making

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We are grateful to all our Partners whose trust in our Vision, partnership in our Mission and inspiring support in a variety of forms from financial donations, time, talent and expert guidance enables us to strive for and contribute to social transformation for an equitable, just and peaceful world for all.

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