

# Amphan relief: Aid pours in for kids in city & Sunderbans

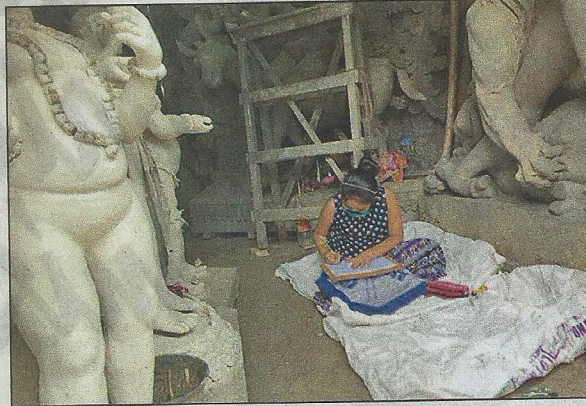
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TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Kolkata:** After Cyclone Amphan had devastated villages in the Sunderbans, relief poured in from all quarters. From NGOs to individuals, several hundred compassionate people risked the threat of acquiring the Covid-19 infection to reach out to people in need with relief packs containing rice, pulses, salt, flattened rice, edible oil, soap, candles, matchboxes and tarpaulin.

However, one segment of the affected population felt utterly neglected. The children who had lost their schoolbags, books, notebooks and pencils in the fierce storm excitedly milled around the men and women who brought in relief. But they were repeatedly disappointed as none seemed to care about making good the things they had lost. Till West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights (WBCPCR) heard of their plight and responded.

"A member of WBCPCR who had gone to Sunderbans saw the despondent children. We realised that children in the Amphan-affected areas had lost all study material. With schools shut due to the pandemic, they were on the verge of losing the reading habit that would eventually lead to them dropping out of schools. We knew we had to step in. Some people extended help and we went to Gosaba where we handed out schoolbags with writing books, colouring books, pencils, crayons and umbrellas to 500 children," said the WBCPCR chairperson, Ananya Chatterjee Chakraborti. In a fortnight, the team will visit Kakdwip



From NGOs to individuals, hundreds reached out to children affected by Cyclone Amphan — in villages of the Sunderbans and urban areas like Kumartuli

and Patharpratima where 200 children in each locations will be handed out schoolbags with the contents.

In the city, too, help has been generously forthcoming to the needy. Joydeep Mukherjee, a travel agent who has been passionately promoting Durga Puja abroad for over a decade, was providing aid to artisans in idol hub Kumartuli when he learnt that many artisans were planning to stop their children's education due to the paucity of funds. Mukherjee assured the

two artisans' associations — one comprising idol makers and the other comprising the ones who embellish the idols — that Meghdutam Foundation would help.

"While distributing ration to the artisans at Kumartuli during the lockdown, we had also given drawing books and crayons to their children so that they could sketch Ma Durga as the saviour from this pandemic. Now, we have decided to sponsor the education of 55 children," said Mukherjee.