

Rotary  Behala  
RI DISTRICT 3291

VOL : LVIII-ISSUE 11  
11 NOVEMBER 2021

# MAITREEE

इषोभोठ  
बौज्या - वीज्या  
इठोरोरुद





# CHAPTERS

03 Editors Desk  
03 Guest Speaker

04 The Founder & 4-Way Test

05 Happy Occasions  
05 Rotary Supports Covid Vaccination  
05 We Are On Facebook

## ARTICLES

06 Mrs. Sharmistha Bhattacharjee  
09 Dr. Madhumita Saha  
15 Ms. Anukriti Roy  
17 PP Rtn Debabrata Joardar  
18 Mrs. Sunetra Bhattacharyya  
20 Mrs. Harsimran Kaur  
21 Ms. Awishee Mazumdar  
23 PP Rtn Kaushik Bhattacharyya  
24 Rtn Amit Roy  
26 PP Rtn Ajoy Krishna Chatterjee  
28 President Rtn Soumjojit Mukherjee  
30 Mrs. Ruma Bhattacharya  
32 Mrs. Sanghamitra Dutta Gupta  
33 Ms. Manika Karmakar  
35 PP Rtn Dr. Siddhartha Chakraborty

37 Minutes of 2606 RCM

Drawings By  
Rajveer Mukherjee | Debankita Joardar  
Adhrit Roy | Arjun Bhattacharya

Woodwork By  
PP Rtn Amamresh Bhattacharya

## NOVEMBER : ROTARY FOUNDATION MONTH

# Our Leadership 2021-22



Shekhar Mehta  
RI President



Prabir Chatterjee  
District Governor



Soumjojit Mukherjee  
President



Debarshi Dutta Gupta  
Secretary

## Editorial Team



Dr Siddhartha Chakraborty  
Editor



PDRR Shuvratav Mitra  
Joint Editor



Shuvranshu Mitra  
Design & Execution

Achievements are milestones which carve a deep satisfaction for those who worked without reward but pure acts to improve stable & sustain.

### 2020-21 ROTARY CITATION



Awarded to the Rotary Club of

Behala

for helping **Rotary open opportunities** in the lives of people all over the world.

Holger Knaack  
President, Rotary International

## EDITOR'S DESK

**Siddhartha Chakraborty**  
**Editor 21-22**

Happy days are here again.

Our Club has received the coveted RI Citation for the RY 2020-21, bearing signature of Rtn Holger Knaack, RI President. A cause to celebrate.

And the festive season, thankfully, passed away peacefully without a spurt of Covid cases. A family get together after a couple of days beckons us. As a prelude, here is the special edition of Maitree, enriched with love of members and their families.

A woodwork by PP Amaresh Bhattacharya sets the tone, and we have memoirs of Puja in childhood or in current session. The lockdown and the restrictions imposed are looked through the eyes of a school kid and a senior citizen. We join our friends to gaze at the awesome beauty of the Himalayas and trek the high trails in her lap, walk at grounds of Versailles and corridors of an age-old medical institute.

We learn of an organisation holding hands of senior citizen and wonder, do they understand cashless economy and drink coffee from a rimmed cup and tumbler, in front of the TV set wondering how could the ladies cricket team fare so well or how did they shoot the favourite mega-serial, enjoying a real life detective story in between, and at times going back to the memories of ice-creams inside the Alipore Zoo.

And the NextGen today – from under ten to twenty – enliven our pages with their marvelous artworks.

Variety is the spice of life, they say.

Enjoy Life.

Enjoy Rotary.

**GUEST SPEAKER**



**Dr Siddhartha Chakraborty**  
**MS, MCh, FIACS**

Dr Chakraborty passed out from Medical College, Calcutta in 1974, and was privileged to serve his alma mater almost throughout his service life. He had been Head of the Dept. of Cardio-Thoracic and Vascular Surgery for seven years, and then the Medical Superintendent-cum-Vice Principal of this institution. He retired from Govt Service as Principal, Calcutta National Medical College, then was Principal, KPC Medical College, Jadavpur.

Now he has finally retired.

He continues as Honorary Faculty with Dept. of Bio-Medical Instrumentation, University of Calcutta and with Indian Institute for Medical Technologies, Kolkata.

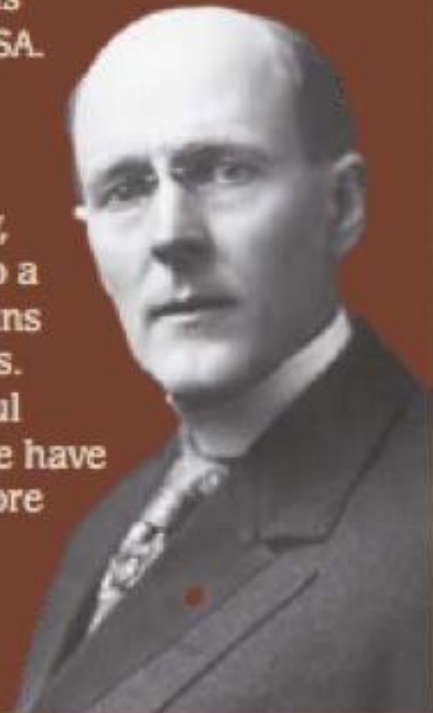
He is Past President of Medical College Ex-Students' Association, Past Secretary of Association of Thoracic & Cardio-Vascular Surgeons of West Bengal, and is actively connected with Ganadarpan – an NGO working in the field of Organ Transplantation.

He is a MPH, was President of Rotary Club of Behala in 2011-12, and Assistant Governor (Administration) of RID 3291 for the session of 2020-21.

# THE LEADER

## REMEMBERING PAUL P HARRIS

Paul Harris, the father of Rotary Movement, was born on April 19, 1868 at Racine, Wisconsin, USA. When he passed away on January 27, 1947, he left behind for mankind a rich legacy of fellowship and brotherhood for international understanding and service to humanity. To-day, the seed he sowed in 1905, has blossomed into a large tree having more than 1.2 million Rotarians having 33,000 clubs in more than 200 countries. We fondly remember him and pay our respectful homage to him on this auspicious day when we have stepped into another Rotary year to make it more eventful & meaningful.



Paul P. Harris (1868-1947)  
*Founder of Rotary*



### THE FOUR-WAY TEST

The Four-Way Test is a nonpartisan and nonsectarian ethical guide for Rotarians to use for their personal and professional relationships. The test has been translated into more than 100 languages, and Rotarians recite it at club meetings:

Of the things we think, say or do

- Is it the TRUTH?
- Is it FAIR to all concerned?
- Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
- Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

many many happy returns of the day

5th Nov : Ms. Papia spouse of President Rtn Summojit Mukherjee

12th Nov : Adhrit son of Rtn Amit Roy

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

many many happy returns of the day

21st Nov : Ms. Sunanda & PP Rtn Anindya Bose

## Rotary International Supports Covid Vaccination



Help us to help you - Get Vaccinated.

Care for the people around you.

Vaccination is safe and effective, get vaccinated now.

**Wear Mask | Wash Hands**

**Maintain Safe Distance.**

**Rotary India's Covid Vaccination Task Force**

**TODAY**

**2607th  
Regular Club  
Meeting**

**6:30PM  
Zoom Virtual**

We Are At

**facebook**

**CLICK HERE TO  
LIKE & FOLLOW**



# REJUVENATION AT NORTH BENGAL

Mrs Sharmistha Bhattacharjee

When I lost my mother during May this year, I was getting frustrated with some horrible words – Covid19, lockdown, pandemic. Suddenly, my childhood memories knocked the door of my mind and told me to rejuvenate the sweet memories of childhood in Kurseong. So, I decided to smell the soil of North Bengal during this Durga Puja holiday with my family. Family of Soumjojit also joined with us this year. When Kolkata people were madly waiting for hours after hours to see Burj Khalifa (Sreebhumi), I was waiting for my dream destination.

**KALIMPONG**

We reached Kalimpong Mayfair on the day of Maha Shasti.

Venue means a lot. Snow-capped Kanchenjunga (3rd. highest mountain in the world) was clearly visible from the courtyard as well as from the room. Next day we went to Rishop, Lava, Lolegaon. These are small villages of Kalimpong district.



Mayfair Kalimpong

Majestic view of Kanchenjunga is viewed from these areas.



Rishop



Kanchenjunga

We visited Delo Park, Dr. Grahams Home, Durpin Dara & Pine view nursery.

From Kalimpong, we went to Darjeeling.

Dolphin View Point



**TRIVENI**

Scenic beauty from Kalimpong to Darjeeling was mind blowing. On the way, we went to Tista river view point. It's an amazing experience of seeing the beautiful view of river Teesta meeting River Rangeet at Triveni. Looks like the hills are meeting and the river is flowing through them.

Felt so relaxed . . . didn't want to leave but had to, because the place is located on the highway and no one was seen. So got off in half an hour.

Reached Darjeeling in the evening.

**DARJEELING**

I visited Darjeeling many times with my parents. From the Mall, I used to see the oldest British Colonial hotel, Windamere, but

never stayed there. For the first time, when I checked into this nostalgic hotel, it felt like paradise. Darjeeling mall was so overcrowded, but the atmosphere of this hotel was totally different, calm and quite. We got the opportunity to have a small gossip & adda with our PDG Nayantara Palchowdhury in breakfast table everyday. She was staying there for last 5 days.

We also stayed there for 4 days and covered local sightseeing in Darjeeling including Mirik lake.

Mirik Lake



**KURSEONG**

Now our journey started towards down memory lane, my childhood soil Kurseong. My first halt in Kurseong was Margaret's Deck Tea Lounge (Goodricke Tea Pot). This restaurant has a breathtaking view. The place is really nice. Good ambience, spectacular hanging deck. They serve great quality Darjeeling tea. So .... if you

River Tista



Pine Forest, Kurseong





are a Tea Lover...you must explore this place. Good location for clicking pictures. Our hotel, Allita Resort was almost at the top of Gidda Pahar. Fantastic places, beautiful and mesmerising ambience and surroundings coupled with extremely courteous and caring staff. Lastly the view from the room is just wow.

The evening was surprise marked by live performance with bonfire. Next day morning we went to Monteviot road near Kurseong station where I spent my 3650 golden days with my parents before 40 years; so disappointed to see that our old wooden bungalow converted to new concrete building, but Jeet hotel and old Bata shop was still there. Then I went to another nostalgic place – St. Helen Convent School. When I introduced myself to the Principal Ma'am, we both were crying. She told me "The school is yours. You are free to go everywhere." I showed our prayer room, nursery class, all other classrooms, library room and playing area.

For a moment, I went to the dreamland and saw my mother still waiting outside the school gate. My heart was blocked with many sweet memories with my mother. Krishnendu, Koustav, Soummojit and his family were overwhelmed. I have learnt a lot from this school. My sincere gratitude and pranam to this school. Krishnendu has given the best gift to me and I would love to go to Kurseong again if baby Sharmistha knocks the door of my unconscious mind.



St. Helen's Convent School



Drawing and Colouring done by Rajveer Mukherjee of Class UKG, Delhi Public School, Ruby Park. Son of President Rtn Soummojit Mukherjee.





# MY FIRST HIMALAYAN TREK TO DAYARA BUGYAL-THE LARGEST MEADOWS OF INDIA

Dr. Madhumita Saha

“Wandering re-establishes the original harmony that once existed between man and universe.” – Anatole France.

Challenge Yourself. Flipping through pages of adventure stories as a child, it has always been my childhood dream to go on a trek one day. However, settled in my professional space and as a mother of two growing kids hardly ever gave me the scope to think beyond. It takes immense mental strength to convince oneself and to muster enough courage to tread the unknown. Few dreams are translated into reality. Thankfully mine was accomplished successfully.

It all started with mesmerizing pictures of one of the largest meadows of India. Lush green open meadows whispering into the blue firmament, with snow capped mountain ranges in the background truly calls for a picture postcard snapshot. But, the hope and wish that I too might be able to savour the pleasure of watching it with my own eyes gave me an adrenaline rush. All thanks to India Hikes for bridging the idea into reality. For taking care in every step to ensure sumptuous freshly prepared meals, to camping, to medical attention and offloading backpacks– they made it all come true. I must say as a first time trekker I learnt every moment. My experiences were laced with moments of growth and epiphany. Not just bringing me closer to nature but also to my very self.

My journey began from Kolkata to Dehra Dun Via New Delhi. The Jolly Grant Airport is a busy airport, and I saw many trekkers in the airport area itself. Our journey to Raithal (at a height of 7089 ft) around 40 km from Uttarkashi from Dehra Dun began the next day. The Bhagirathi River basin is rich in floral and faunal diversity. The basin serves as a migratory route for the endangered golden mahseer and the snow trout (*Schizothorax richardsonii*) fish species. The birds found here include numerous species from Schedule – I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 These species are the Indian white-backed vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*), Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*), Cinereous vulture (*Aegypius monachus*), cheer pheasant (*Catreus wallichii*), western tragopan and the Himalayan monal. The mammalian species found here iSchedule I species such as the Himalayan brown bear (*Ursus arctos isabellinus*), Asiatic black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*), snow leopard, common leopard (*Panthera pardus fusca*), Himalayan musk deer, Himalayan tahr (*Hemitragus jemlahicus*), blue shee serow p and (*Capricornis thar*). The floral diversity includes that of the Indian maple (*Acer caesium*), Ativisa (*Aconitum hetrophyllum*), *Allium stacheyi*, *Arnebia benthami*, *Caragana sukienensis*, *Datisca cannabina*, *Epipogium aphyllum*, *Lilium polyphyllum*, *Nardos tachys jatamansi* and *Picrorhiza kurrooa* (Source: Rajvanshi et al. 2012).

Nonetheless, the region is at the receiving end of multiple stressors we humans throw at it.

The drive to Raithal was replete with zillion twists and turns. The winding roads surrounded by lush green mountains covered by clouds on one side, river on the other and river Bhagirathi accompanying all along made the journey quite a beautiful one.

Bhagirathi river on the way to Raithal



Followed by a morning briefing we went for village visit on the next day. The otherwise beautiful rainfall amidst the backdrop of the beautiful surroundings had become a hindrance for our trek. With no option on hand, the team stayed put inside the rooms. With ponchos on, like a squad out on an agenda, we ventured out to explore the tiny village Raithal. The quaint little village with just about 200 houses was looking prettier with raindrops falling and mist all around. We got to see the popular oldest house in the village – the 500 year old house, built completely using wooden logs that still stand tall to delight the visitors. The house once was an abode of the king of that region. There was an ancient Durga temple in the village as well.

There-  
after,  
we went  
out for  
a hike  
to soak

in some sunshine and make the most of the day. The sky was clearing away the clouds giving a candid view of crystal bright shades of blue. It was a beautiful walk that led to a gushing waterfall below the bridge. We were tempted to let our feet down into the chilled waters. We then discovered

500-year-old house in Raithal



View of Raithal village



and stopped at a cozy spot under the woods to grab our lunch. Our trek leader did not leave a single opportunity to bring the team closer with various activities that made us think deeper and get closer to nature.

Waterfall  
under the  
bridge



View of clear skies during the hike



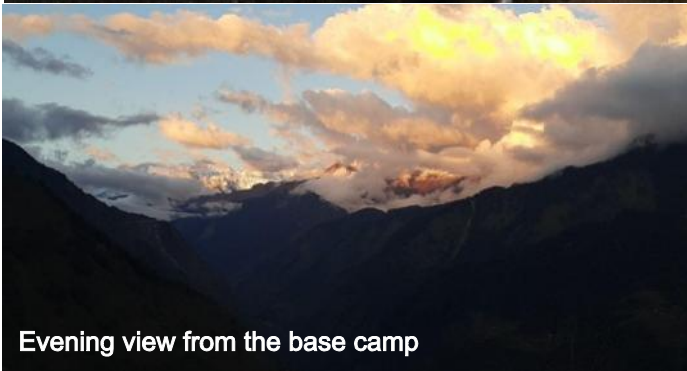
The road leading to the bridge

**Trek to Dayara Bugyal begins via Gui to Chilapada base camp**

The team's enthusiasm was at its peak. We started the trek at about 7:30AM after a sumptuous and healthy breakfast. The ascend began through the forests and a trail fully laid with stones of all shapes and sizes making us watch out for every little step.



Evening view from the base camp



Evening view from the base camp



Forest trail



Towards basecamp

After a 3 hour ascend the trail opened to the first clearing that further led into a lush green forest.

The ground was replete with dried leaves of maple and oak. The area was engulfed with the silence of the trees with the intermittent chirping of the birds. The crackling sound of the maple leaves never felt so clear. The surroundings had a magical effect that filled our hearts with tremendous gratitude towards mother nature. It seems that the roots of all the trees are connected, and they hold all the secrets that you tell them. We all hugged a tree and shared a deep secret – hoping that the secrets shared by thousands of trekkers are safe in the forests.

Reflecting on the experience, we started back on the trail and reached Gui at around 1 PM where we halted for lunch. It was a pleasant clearing with a



Forest area with oak and maple trees



Gui – on the way to Chilapada



View from Chilapada base camp

refreshing feel of the meadow. The base camp of Chilapada came at around 5 PM. We also encountered little rain on our way up but thankfully it receded after a while.

The basecamp offered a peek into the Gangotri range. The full moon made it a special night. That one minute of glaring full moon emerging out of the clouds, sneaking through the trees was

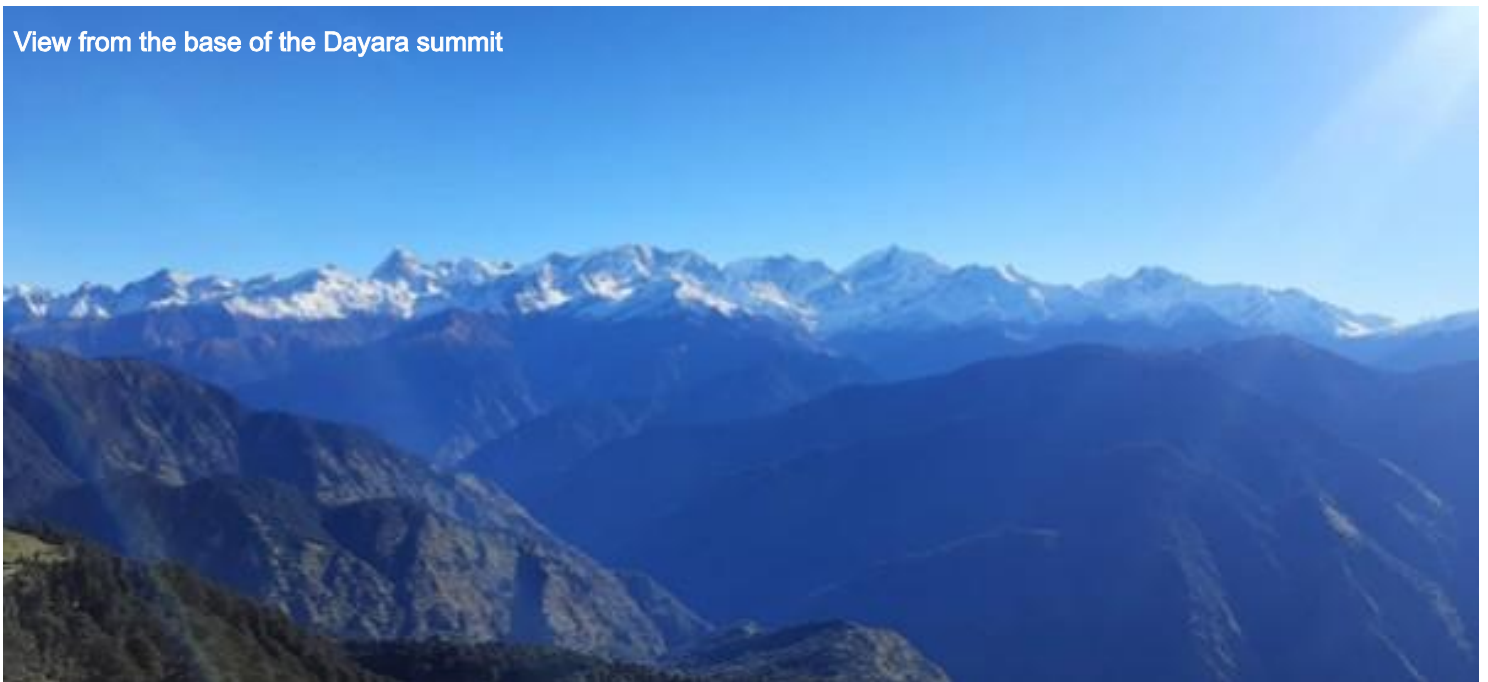
liken a message from a mother saying you are not in complete darkness, you are not alone...I'm watching over you.



Full moon night

### Chilapada to Dayara summit to Gui base camp

It was the summit climb day and the excitement was evident. With a filling breakfast to sustain for a long day, we started the trek at 7 AM. Passing through the forest trail, we reached the base of the summit at around 10 AM. It was a massive opening offering a clear view of the entire Mt. Srikanth and Gangotri range. The morning sun rays falling on the snow clad cliffs left us in awe. It was a sight to behold with each mountain range adorned with a different colour. We were at 11,000 feet already.



View from the base of the Dayara summit

Awestruck with the beauty, we continued the climb to the summit thinking of what could be better than this! Well, little did we know what's in store. The climb opened to a massive meadow followed by miles and miles of a rolling landscape of smooth meadows appearing as though someone just neatly trimmed

them. Crossing every meadow was giving a different view of the landscape in the backdrop of the Himalayan range. The summit point was right in front of us. The last half hour was high on adrenaline to reach the top as if it was some kind of a race to win. Here, it was not a medal but the treasure of beauty that was to be won! Here we were – finally at the top of Dayara Bugiyal Summit – 11,800 feet. My eyes could not hold the beauty of the majestic Himalayan range which was beaming straight at me. Tears flowed automatically for most of us without any hesitation. We sat there in silence soaking in the magnificence of the 360 degree view of the surroundings. Every angle posed a different and equally mesmerizing view with Mt. Bandarpooch on one side and Gangori and Draupadi ka Danda on the other side.



Close view of the mountain range

Mt. Bandarpooch on one side and Gangori and Draupadi ka Danda on the other side



Descend route after Dayara summit

It was time to descend. Unlike the ascend, the descend offered spectacular views of the mountains and valley on one side. Passing through the meadows, the trail was quite a pleasant one until we reached the base camp of Gui at about 5 PM.



Descend route after Dayara summit



Gui campsite

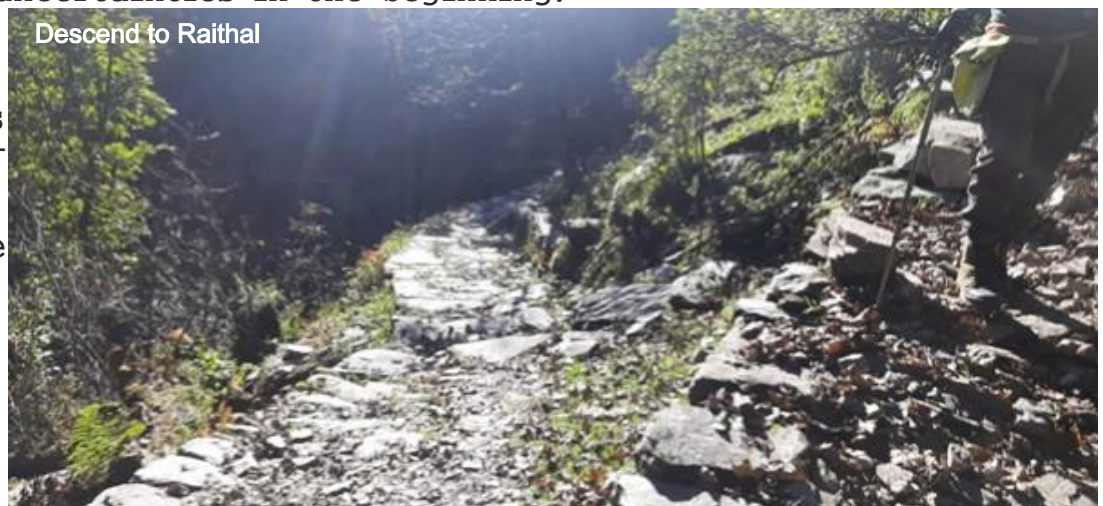
Every dinner was followed by a ritual of trek leader giving us a briefing and plans for the next day, but this dinner was special. Special because it was the last dinner together. It turned out to be quite an emotional one with everyone

sharing their experiences and learnings. It is surprising how a trek can bring out so much in an individual!

### Gui base camp to Raithal

It was time to descend to Raithal base camp through the same forest trail that we took for the ascend. The stones made it challenging, adding extra pressure on the knees. It was the last leg of the trek and I wanted to take it slow, enjoying every bit of the trail, soaking all my senses absorbing the beauty around. As we reached Raithal, there was no time left to relax as it was already noon and we had to reach Dehradun by night. As per the original itinerary, we were to reach Raithal a day before which would give us some time to relax in the night and start to Dehradun the next day. However, for us, the most important thing was that we finally completed the trek despite the various hurdles and uncertainties in the beginning.

So, what are my learnings? Out of the many experiences and learnings, I realized the true meaning of minimalism after seeing how one can live in a backpack for a week. I now pledge to unclutter my life in every possible way. Irrespective of the varied backgrounds and ages of trekkers,



Descend to Raithal

I truly felt like an equal amongst the group. I realized how you can achieve greater heights when aligned with like minded souls. I felt a deep sense of gratitude and connection towards nature. I pledge not to leave a single opportunity to be with nature. Lastly, I can vouch for one learning that the team collectively felt was the "never give up" attitude – be it about holding on to the hope of doing the trek amid the red alert or about not giving up climbing the peak. One of our trek members said 'keep walking until you fall' – this statement resonated in my ears all through the trek and kept me going. For me personally, this trek will hold a special place in my heart for everything that I experienced!

# BREAKING DOWN THE PROS AND CONS OF ONLINE CLASSES

Anukriti Roy



Myself Anukriti Roy, currently studying in the 8th standard. Since last year I have been subjected to online classes and have experienced the migration from physical classes to classes on zoom, which was a “MAJOR SHIFT”.

Here are my take on a pro and con of online classes –

## THE CON:

### SOCIAL ISOLATION –

Socializing is a very crucial activity during our childhood. School is the first place where we start making friends. And this school from home or online classes affected our social skills more than anything. By the term social isolation we usually mean the lack of contact between other people. School is everyone's favorite place, yes there are a few scary things like getting punishments from teachers, maintaining uniforms, keeping our nails in check, keeping our regular home works updated but...What about playing with our friends during our lunch break? What about stealing each others lunch during break? What about the silly pranks we pulled out on our teachers? Don't you miss them? The exchange programs which always helped to clear awkwardness between people and helped us socialize in certain places, the seat changing system..we always did get angry when the teachers shuffled our seats but thinking about now it was for that we could mingle with people who were of different culture, taste and preferences.

## THE PRO:

### OFFERING FLEXIBILITY –

We have the options to take classes from wherever we want. It gives us time to spend with our friends, family and also invest ample time on our favourite activities. Other





than a few important due dates we are able to make our own schedules for completing our requirements & assignments. Most importantly we have our instructor available 24/7 all week and don't have to wait for the class time and keep our studies on hold for doubts. Having online classes makes us familiar with the internet, in our professional life ,most of our works are through internet and thus makes us experienced .When we are in physical class we prefer to stick with our friends but during online classes we get the opportunity to interact and mingle with all attending the class through bulletin boards, chat box and mailing lists.

Most importantly it has prepared us to continue with life and studies amid challenge like pandemic. We are now confident to tackle such roadblocks with the help of technologies and gadgets. And will continue to progress in life.



Sketch by  
Debankita Joardar,  
granddaughter of  
PP Rtn Debabrata  
Joardar.



# DIGNITY FOUNDATION - A FEW WORDS

PP Rtn Debabrata Joardar

Please allow me to talk to you about DIGNITY FOUNDATION. I am indeed proud to be a member of this organization, as much as being a member of ROTARY INTERNATIONAL.

This is a NGO with a vision to create an enlightened society in which senior citizens feel secure, confident and valued, and can live with Dignity.

The mission of Dignity foundation is that the members are committed to changing the way people look at ageing in India. We enable senior citizens to lead active lives through easy access to trusted information, opportunities for productive ageing and social support services.

Dignity foundation was founded in the year 1995 by its Founder President Dr.(Mrs) Sheilu Sreenivasan , who continues to be the President till date. The head office is in Mumbai. Besides Mumbai, it now has branches, called CHAPTERS, in Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Pune and Delhi. Kolkata chapter has branches in Dhakuria, Behala, Salt Lake and Baguiati with an office at Dhakuria.

Before Covid spread in March 2020, the members of all centres used to meet physically regularly. Behala centre used to meet thrice in a week in Parnasree in local club premises. In these meetings the members used to spend some quality time together with tea, and hence these were also called 'Chai Masti Centers'. There were discussions, Interactions and sometime performances by members and at times by invited guests.

Since April 2020, the physical meetings had to be suspended and switched over to virtual meetings. This proved to be a huge hindrance as many members are not very virtual-friendly. Incidentally the minimum age to join Dignity is 50+.

Very recently, we resumed Physical meetings once a week. We even had AGOMONI programme before Durga Puja, which was a huge success.

But due to spurt in Pandemic situation, we had to revert to ZOOM meeting again.

We are sure we will get over the situation soon.

After all, one lives on hopes. .

DIGNITY

The word 'dignity' is mentioned in the Preamble to the Constitution of India:

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens

JUSTICE, social, economic and political:

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship:

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all

FRATERNITY assuring the **dignity** of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation:

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this 26th day of November 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.



# ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL-AT THE ZOO

Sunetra Bhattacharyya

Remember your childhood visits to the zoo? A visit to the zoo is one of the most enthralling and exciting things.

Rare is the person who hasn't ever visited the zoo.

Winters meant a mandatory visit to the zoo. It was an exhilarating experience for us to spend time with friends and family, to watch the migratory birds, imitate the monkeys or simply watch the tigers and the lions strolling in their cages. In that pre-selfie era, all children and adults alike posed in front of their favourite animals and clicked photos. The restaurant inside the zoo was a favorite place to eat.

Many schools also organized excursions to the zoo to educate the children about the animal world. It is an interesting way to let the children see animals, which they cannot see otherwise. A visit to a zoo is an entertaining activity not just for children but also for adults as it increases their knowledge and makes them wonder at the marvels of nature. Apart from the known species zoos have



some rare species also. In fact the zoos are a safe haven for many animals or species that might otherwise become extinct and it also acts as an educational and economic resource for the society.

However, the pandemic has affected the poor animals too. The animal world is in need of our support. Humans have realized that the animals are their co-travellers in this world and form a part of nature. Hence we must take an active role to ensure that the animals too get to live.



The maintenance of a zoo is a huge task. Animals, birds, reptiles, and fishes, from foreign lands with different climatic conditions have to be kept in such surroundings, climate and temperature that match their natural habitat. Additionally these animals also need food as per their original tastes and appetites. A leopard, a lion or a tiger has to be served its due quantity of raw meat for every meal. Likewise a gorilla or a monkey needs a vegetarian diet.



There are some animals that have to be fed with fishes. The python can devour a whole goat and so, it has to be fed accordingly.

A zoo also needs to have its own medical staff and qualified, efficient and competent veterinary doctors. Sometimes these animals undergo major surgeries and treatments for their ailments. All of it has to be taken care of in a zoo and are expensive especially in the lockdown.

The West Bengal Zoo Authority, which has 12 zoos spread over the whole state, has issued an appeal to individuals and corporates to come forward and adopt any animal of their choice and budget and thus help the zoo authorities take care of the animals.

Should this be of any interest to any of you, dear readers, please visit their website for more details: <http://wbza.co.in/za/index.php>  
And if you are interested in adopting an animal, please visit: [http://wbza.co.in/za/zoo\\_animal\\_adoption.php](http://wbza.co.in/za/zoo_animal_adoption.php)  
You might also consider volunteering. Check out the details at: [http://wbza.co.in/za/web/pdf/schemes\\_animal/zoo\\_volunteers.pdf](http://wbza.co.in/za/web/pdf/schemes_animal/zoo_volunteers.pdf)

A zoo is a place which brings us closer to the living beings that we co-exist with on this earth – the animals, birds, reptiles, insects, and so on. Should we not support the animals who give us so much of joy, in these difficult times?



Drawing by Adhrit Roy, student of Standard I and son of Rtn Amit Roy.





# “BELIEVE THAT BIG THINGS CAN HAPPEN! AIM BIGGER!”

Harsimran Kaur

Harsimran Kaur is the founder of Power Women.

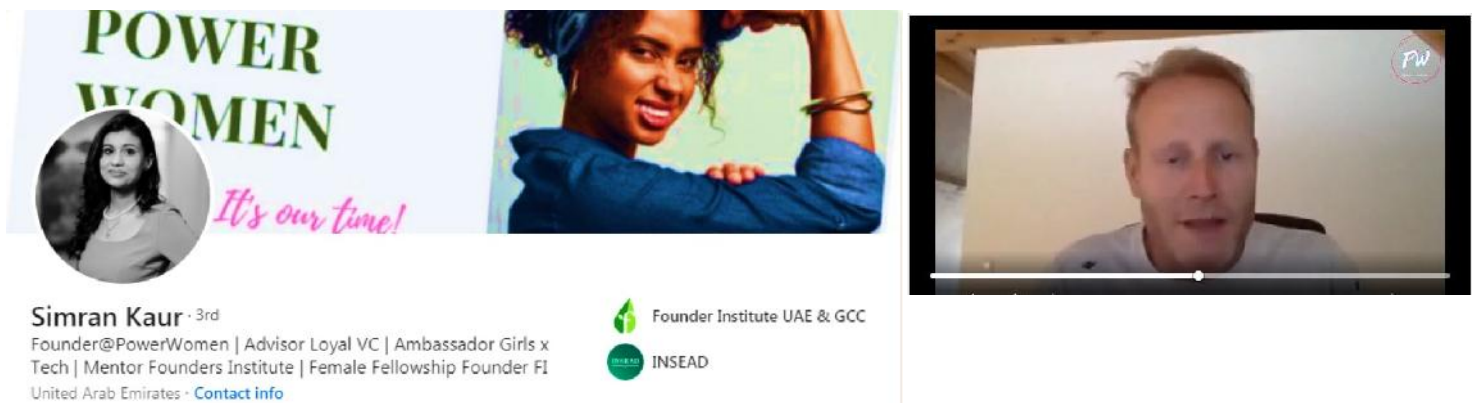
## About Power Women

We don't need fixing, workplaces do! We believe, the old maxim "it's lonely at the top" is not a mere cliché. The world needs more women to reach the top and to stay there, and we are aiming to impact change at the highest levels. Come build your tables with us! Join our life changing and impactful platform, built by women for women. Become a member and get access to our life changing Personal Advisory Boards, support network and thought leadership to drive personal and professional growth.

Power Women recently hosted Sjoerd Marijne.

Link to LinkedIn: [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/kaursimran\\_powerwomen-coach-sports-activity-6845589125840551936-vMrp](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/kaursimran_powerwomen-coach-sports-activity-6845589125840551936-vMrp)

Sjoerd Marijne former coach of the Indian women's national team. Marijne is widely credited for the Indian team's turnaround after decades of dismal showings.



**Simran Kaur** · 3rd  
 Founder@PowerWomen | Advisor Loyal VC | Ambassador Girls x Tech | Mentor Founders Institute | Female Fellowship Founder FI United Arab Emirates · [Contact info](#)

Founder Institute UAE & GCC  
 INSEAD

**Extract from Harsimran's LinkedIn update:**  
 "Believe that big things can happen! Aim bigger!"

Though we might have struggled a bit with the pronunciation of his Dutch name, for 1.3 billion Indians he's become synonymous with "COACH".

It's not everyday you meet someone who has achieved so much and is so humble about it! We were really fortunate to host Sjoerd Marijne at Power Women. Not only did he kindly overstay but also patiently answered every question we had. His kindness, vision and motivation to impact the life of every person he meets is what makes him so successful and special!

Many thanks again Sjoerd Marijne, I took away so many life lessons from the stories you shared. The Goal to inspire young girls in India definitely was larger and more meaningful and impactful than any medal, and it has inspired me to stay focussed on the larger goal as an entrepreneur. Thank you very much for your generosity!

Thank you Kavitha K. for being an amazing chair for the session!



# PALACE OF VERSAILLES : A VIEW

Awishee Mazumdar

When we think about Paris, what's the first thing that comes to our mind? That's right, it's the Eiffel Tower. However there are many more iconic places to visit in Paris, which have much more significance than the Eiffel Tower.

Palace of Versailles, popularly known as, Chateau de Versailles in French, is a must visit place in Paris, especially for all the History enthusiasts. It is located at about a distance of 12 miles from Paris, and is a former royal residence.



King Louis the 13th originally built this place as a hunting lodge, but Louis the 14th expanded the area and made it into his official residence.

The palace and park were designated as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1979 for its importance as the center of power, art, and science in France during the 17th and 18th centuries.

The palace is a magnificent example of French baroque architecture and is the most famous royal chateau in France. The gigantic scale of Versailles exemplifies the architectural theme of 'creation by division' – a series of simple repetitions rhythmically marked off by the repetition of the large windows – which expresses the fundamental values of baroque art and in which the focal point of the interior, as well as of the entire building, is the king's bed. Among its celebrated architectural designs is the Hall of Mirrors, which is one of the most famous rooms of the world. From 1682 to the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789, the Palace of Versailles housed the King and the entire French royal court, a total of some 3,000 residents, making it a symbol of the absolutism and decadence of the Ancien Regime in general, and the French monarchy in particular. The royal chateau itself is not the only building complex in the grounds, which also include five chapels, plus the Grand Trianon, the Pavillon Francais, and the Petit Trianon as well as 800 hectares of gardens, landscaped in the classic French Garden style.

A part of the palace is turned into a Museum and is open to the tourists, while another part is turned into a five star hotel. A few rooms such as the rooms of Queen Marie Antoinette were removed in 1789, during the French Revolution, but is remade for the purpose of the museum.

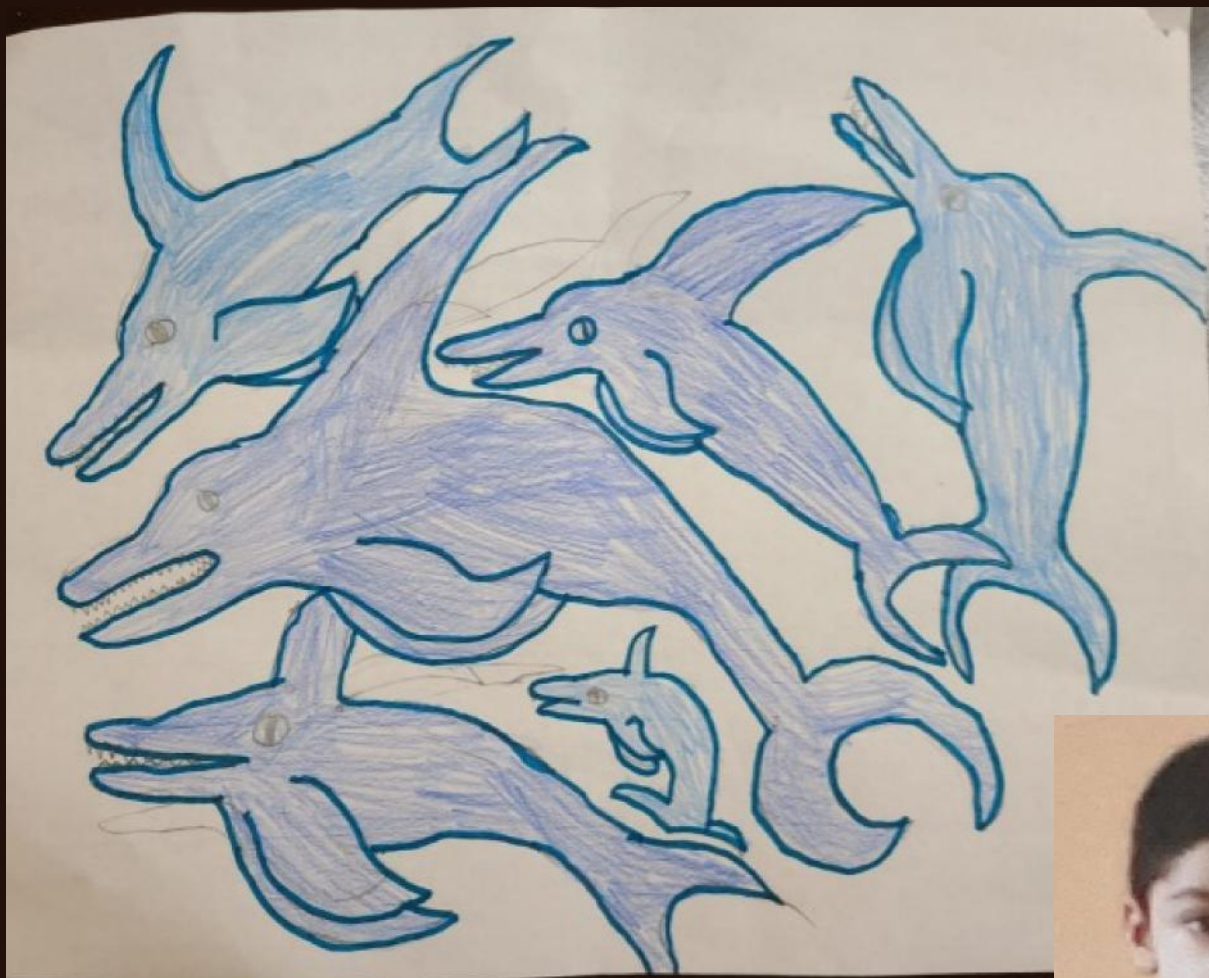
**MAIN HIGHLIGHTS :**

**The Hall of Mirrors** – the central gallery of the Palace – which comprised 17 mirror-clad arches reflecting the 17 windows. A total of 357 mirrors were used in its decoration. It looks magnificent while you walk through it.

**Garden of Versailles** – A picturesque French style garden, where you can enjoy and stroll for hours, it is also claimed to be haunted by the spirit of Queen Marie Antoinette.



Don't miss the wonderful palace on your next visit to Paris – the citadel of art.



Drawing by Arjun Bhattacharya, 6 years grandson of PP Rtn Amaresh Bhattacharya



# WHY SOUTH INDIANS USE A RIMMED CUP AND A TUMBLER FOR COFFEE!

PP Rtn Kaushik Bhattacharyya

Coffee was an Arab invent but they always sold roasted coffee beans so that plantations cannot be spread

their control.

Baba Budan, a Sufi saint from Chikmagalur smuggled coffee beans from Yemen. He got 7 beans. Being a saint, he wasn't searched on his way back from Mecca.

In India, especially in South India, it became popular soon. But it has to be brewed with milk unlike tea which could be brewed in water. So it became rich man's drink.

Rich ladies in South India took to coffee as a drink while their male counterpart had alcohol.

Someone wrote to Gandhiji that the addiction of coffee among South Indian ladies is the cause of them not joining his freedom movement.

When public outlets started serving coffee, they had separate counters and cups for Brahmins and Non-Brahmins. However, Periyar removed this practice and coffee was served at a common place with common cups to all.

But Brahmins didn't want to drink from the same cup. So, rimmed glasses came into use so that coffee could be poured directly into the mouth without lips touching the lips.

But hot coffee burned the mouth of the drinkers. So the tumbler came into existence for pouring the coffee and cooling it before pouring it in the mouth.

Have a Cuppa!



## CALCUTTA & COFFEE

Indian Coffee House is a cafe located opposite the Presidency University in College Street, the most famous of Indian Coffee House branches in Kolkata. It has been for a long time a regular hang out and a renowned meeting place (adda) for intellectuals and students (and ex-students) of various institutions in and around of College Street. It has played an important part in Calcutta's (Kolkata) cultural history and known as the hub of intellectual debates.

In 1958, the management decided to shut down the Coffee House, but it was re-opened the same year, after professors of Presidency College and Calcutta University rushed off a special petition to the government, to save the heritage place.

The coffee house is famous for its adda sessions, and as the breeding place of several political and cultural personalities and movements.





# CASHLESS ECONOMY - INDIAN STORY

Rtn Amit Roy

The shift to a cashless economy is often presented as a silver bullet that could deliver solutions to all problems like fighting poverty, corruption, to modernising our society and help to sustain development. However our recent experience shows that cashless transactions have not eliminated the illicit behaviour and are still vulnerable to exploitation by the corrupt.

The abrupt demonetization in 2016 was probably the most extreme monetary experiment in recent history to have occurred anywhere in the world. It was supposed to eliminate 'black money' & corruption but has not met any of these intended goals. On the contrary it resulted in disruption of the economy, loss of jobs & incomes. The magnitude of these effects was amplified by the fact that Central Bank (RBI) was not able to quickly re-monetize the system by replacing the notes that counted for 86% of the value of currency in circulation.



A propaganda in favour of low cash economy began, the central Govt. left no stone unturned to promote and incentivise non cash transactions and also to restrict cash transactions. Some of these measures were unplanned – such as not putting enough currency notes back in system, putting limits on cash withdrawals from banks, banning high value cash transactions. Still others were placatory, such as reducing charges for digital transactions while dealing with official agencies and offers to speed up installation of point of sales devices.



## Push for Digitalization-

While during covid we have seen push coming from authorities, banks & institutions but this had started even before demonetization exercise. Proponents of digital transactions typically highlight a number of advantages: reduction of corruption and criminality, since illegal activities tend to be disproportionately funded in cash; convenience and ease of transactions; reduction of tax evasions as this brings in greater visibility to authorities; faster execution of transactions and providing scale to execute large volumes with minimum cost- which brings over all efficiency in economy. But these arguments in favour of completely cashless transactions are made in context of advanced economies, and assume highly developed levels of infrastructure,

connectivity & cyber security.

Within the broader push to cashless economy certain types of transactions are particularly valorised by policy: the relatively low value retail purchases that make up the vast bulk of transactions in the country. The Govt. push to promote digitised economy was based on pushing these in particular, through credit and debit cards, mobile wallets & mobile banking. Companies associated with these forms of payment were also most excited as they smelled the future profits and players like - amazon, google etc entered the space with billions of dollars capital burning.



### Hurdles to enter cashless Economy -

India still has constraints set by inadequate physical & institutional infrastructure. A basic requirement is a system where banking access is universal, so that those transacting digitally can hold deposits that validate those transactions. A critical factor determining access to banking is access to bank branches, which is crucial not only for opening accounts but for many other activities including accessing loans. Despite various initiatives like 'Jan Dhan Yojana', Banking correspondences etc, banking reach is still nowhere near universal. 80% of women still do not have bank accounts. Less than 40% of all account holders in India hold a Debit Card or ATM Card.

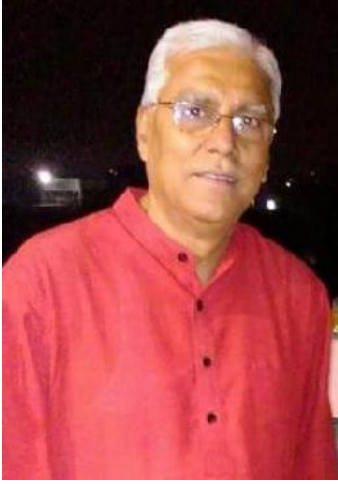
Most adults in India still do not have smart phones and cannot access the internet directly. Only 7% of the low income families have access to smart phones. There is a general lack of bandwidth and connectivity in many areas and over prolonged periods even in biggest cities. As per NSSO survey, the proportion of households in which at least one member has access to internet was 16% in rural areas, only 48% in urban areas and 26.7% in rural & urban combined. Thus India is far from being connected enough to be able to claim digitisation fully. In any case there are large number of people in the rural areas, in the informal economy and among the poor, who are completely outside the digital economy that exists. For them arriving at 'less cash' world requires crossing multiple hurdles to enter the digital economy. Insufficient functional literacy in these subjects forces them to lean on intermediaries to make transactions for them.

### Silver lines -

Given hundreds of hurdles and road blocks, there are good signs as well in recent years which are playing favourable roles for making India Digital - like rise of NPCI (National Payment Corporation of India) which is making sea changes in payment and collections space through continuous digital innovations & timely implementation of these tools for public usage - such as IMPS (Instant Money transfers), UPI 2.0 (Unified Payment Interface), introducing API in connecting banks and merchants for instant results and updates; rise in number of Fintech companies in India likes of Razorpay, PineLabs etc. who are further strengthening the digital platforms in India; new licenses to Payments banks like - PayTM, Airtel, India Post Payment Bank etc. Most importantly, with availability of data thanks to telecom companies like Jio, Airtel etc. people are getting opportunity to access internet & the number is improving every passing day.



Overall the direction is right while this may take few more years to achieve Digital Economy tag for India.



# 10 LETTERS -DEATH, DECEIT & FRAUD

PP Rtn Ajoy Krishna Chatterjee

In this article real names and identities are not disclosed.

On a hot and humid afternoon just a few days before the high court summer vacation my table mate asked me whether I had any vacation plan. When I replied in the negative he said a hotly contested suit was going on in Alipore Court and whether I would be interested to appear for the defendants. I was interested. Two days thereafter my table friend told me that the clients have agreed to engage me in the matter.

The matter related to a property worth crores at Raja Santosh Road owned by mother & her 2 sons which was unauthorized sought to be occupied by one Mr. Duryodhon (a kalwar), a highly influential person having contacts with both the bureaucrats and the police.

When I first appeared in the matter I found Mr. Duryodhon in court with 3 bodyguards. The vicious looks of the bodyguards indicated they can commit any crime on the instruction of their master.

The case was framed by Mr. Duryodhon with the connivance of the son / brother in law (a gharjamai) of the owners of the property. With the active collusion and conspiracy between Mr. Duryodhon & son in law a tenancy agreement was fabricated in the former's favour with the option to buy the property after sometimes.

In support of the case so framed Mr. Duryodhon appeared to have sent about ten letters addressed to the owners which were refused to be accepted by them. The envelopes containing those letters with the remarks by post office "refused by the addressees" were submitted as exhibits in the suit. For proper appreciation of the facts pertaining to those letters readers would note that with the second letter the first letter was enclosed, likewise when the 3rd letter was sent the previous 2 letters were enclosed therewith. Maintaining this process the 9 earlier letters were enclosed to the 10th letter. So each envelope was thicker & weightier than the previous one. Postal stamps on each of those 10 letters however, remained the same irrespective of their weight.

The contents of those letters went to show that the owners not only accepted Mr. Duryodhon as the tenant but were also agreeable to sell the property to him on his agreed appointed date.

Owing to the pressure of the litigation and the threat unleashed by Mr. Duryodhon the mother and the elder son could not take it anymore and died. The youngest son continued to fight the suit.

Perusing the contents of those letters the judge hearing the suit prima facie opined that the surviving son had no defence in the matter and a decree would follow in favour of Mr. Duryodhon. This was because in law refusal to accept delivery of letter amounts to good service.

I however had my doubts from day one about the authenticity of the refusal endorse—

endorsement and also the veracity of the signatures of the owners in the agreement.

At this juncture on one afternoon after court I went to the Calcutta club and there I met former post master general, a regular at the club, with whom I was very friendly and spent good time over tea. My doubts about the letters prompted me to tell my friend PMG about those envelopes with the postal remarks thereon especially with the value of postages remaining same inspite of the weight increasing with each letter. Appreciating my views He then replied that stamps are put on the envelopes on the basis of the weight of its contents and asked me to send my clerk to one officer he named next day in GPO to collect the schedule of stamp rates. Accordingly the same was collected.

With the said document in hand I prayed to the judge to issue summons upon the post master of the local post office, the prayer was vehemently opposed by Mr.Duryodhon's lawyers but the court granted the prayer.

In response to the summons the post master was examined as witness by me and when those sealed "refused" envelopes were shown he deposed that excepting the first two letters the other eight needed higher postage stamps. He further mentioned that unless the deficit amount of the stamp is paid up it would not be delivered to the addressee. To my further questioning he named the postman in charge of delivering letters in that area.

The judge, despite objections, allowed my prayer to call the concerned postman. In the face of my grilling the postman finally admitted that the envelopes were never tendered to the addressee and the remarks "refused" was put by him since he was threatened to do so by the interested party.

The evidence of local post office man proved that those letters were created as records of grant of tenancy in favour of Mr. Duryodhon alongwith the agreement to sell the property to him.

Once this was proved a hand writing expert was called in to examine the genuineness of the signatures of the owners. The signatures were also proved to be forged.

Based on the above findings the suit was dismissed with costs and the property remained with the youngest son, the lawful owner. The appeal filed in the Calcutta High Court was also dismissed.

Sometimes thereafter when I went to the Calcutta Club I was invited by a former Calcutta Police Commissioner and a former Chief Secretary of government of West Bengal to join them for tea. They congratulated me for winning this matter and informed that they were the family friends of the owners. They also disclosed that they had advised the family to engage me as their counsel in the case.

Solving this very complex case successfully was a life time experience in my career.





# ACTING IS A CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ART

Rtn Soumjojit Mukherjee. President 21-22

Creative or performing art is a medium that is performed in front of an audience. That includes drama, music, dance, physical theatre, audio drama and many more. Actually it involves a wide range of specialists.

Now here I'm going to discuss about acting in front of camera. For the last 18 months or 2 years I'm into this profession where I got the golden opportunity to perform in front of camera for various Bengali Television serials. Though it is just a beginning for me, but I found it very interesting and challenging. Rather I would say this particular section of creative or performing art really appealed me as a person or as an artist. It changed my entire outlook and perspective towards this wonderful art. Each and every day I try to learn something new whenever I hit the shooting floor.

Though I have never worked as a theatre actor, I have a huge respect for the artists who perform in front of live audience. This stage acting is very different from the type of acting us – the TV, cinema, or web series actors do. But the basic thing of acting remains the same. This theatre actors always have to pick up huge liners or long dialogues as they are used to perform long in front of live audience. They also spend a lot of time in their rehearsals before the live theatre performances. So when this theatre actors come to work in front of camera, it helps them in certain ways. But that's not all. Working in TV serial, Cinema, or in a webseries is a different ballgame altogether.

## **My experience as a TV actor.**

With my little bit of experience in front of camera, I can say it is not as easy as it seems to be. Working in front of camera has a lot to do with techniques. Technical aspects are very important, whether from the aspect of directors, actors or cameraman – of course now-a-days cameramen are known as DOP – Director of Photography. After remembering your dialogue you have to maintain your look towards the camera. Not only that, you have to take light on your face properly so that your face doesn't get darker on screen. An actor's duty is to showcase himself properly in front of the camera. Be it the dialogue delivery, accent, body language, facial reaction or eye expression – everything should be in proper order and, more importantly, an actor should keep all this in mind while performing in a scene. Only then his or her character will look realistic on screen.

Another very important thing is listening to your director – what the director exactly wants from you in a particular scene. In a master shot 3, 4 or 5 actors are there. You have to know how many steps I have to take, then at what time I have to turn my face towards left or right or at exactly what time I have to deliver my dialogue. Sometimes what happen, may be you are doing your things right but your co-actor is committing mistakes again and again. In our industry we call it NG. This kind of mistakes disturb the entire scene. So it's not all about you, your co-actors should also be equally focused and technically sound about the aspects of shooting in front of camera.

For people like me who don't have any formal training in any kind of acting, facing camera becomes very difficult in the initial stages. But the thing is the quicker you

learn all these aspects of facing camera, the better for you as an actor. Lots of money is involved in making a TV serial, cinema and webseries. So it is an duty of an actor to perform his or her part perfectly within time. It keeps the work process smooth.

Normally on screen we see master shot with 4,5 or more actors. On that same scene we see the characters on close shot. So how does it happen? When we see a close shot of an actor it means he has given a 'one shot'. That means the same dialogue or performance that you have performed while doing a master shot, you have to repeat again – keeping the same expression, emotion and other things as you performed in the master shot. Director and DOP normally take this part separately with that particular actor. Then there are two shot or three shots, meaning two or three actors repeating their performance as in the master shot.

Then there is Chroma. Another very important technical part which is mostly used while filming mythological TV serials, cinema and web series as well. What is Chroma? That's shooting a person or objects in front of a flat screen of solid colour, usually green or blue. Then by digitally removing or keying out that color, you can drop that scene on to the background of your choice during post- production editing. Removing the colored background is also referred to as Chroma keying.

Shall come up with more technical and creative aspects of performing arts in front of camera as long as I gain experience from the Film Industry.

Wish your days be merry and bright



Drawing and Colouring done by Rajveer Mukherjee of Class UKG, Delhi Public School, Ruby Park. Son of President Rtn Soumjojit Mukherjee.





# আমার পূজা

রুমা ভট্টাচার্য

মা যেদিন আমাদের দোতলার পুৰদিকের বারান্দায় মোটা চাদর পেতে পালিশ করা শাড়ীগুলো আলমারি থেকে বের করে রোদদুরে দিতো, ঠিক সেদিনই আমার বুকে আগমনীর সুর বেজে উঠতো। কী সুন্দর একটা প্যাটার্নে শাড়ীগুলো বিছিয়ে দিতো মা—আমি আর বোন অবাক হয়ে দেখতো। ফি বছর এই সময়টায় মার রোদে দেওয়া চাই শাড়ী।

দোতলার পুৰমুখো বারান্দাটায় অনেকক্ষণ রোদ থাকতো। বিশ্বকর্মা পূজো তখন সবেই গেছে, রোদের রঙটা সোনালী। চাদরে পরিপাটি বিছানো পিঙ্ক, আকাশী, বেগুনী, কমলা, নানারঙা শাড়ীগুলোর কাছে ঘুরঘুর করতাম আমি আর বোন।

“এবার সরস্বতী পূজোয় আমি এই পিঙ্ক শাড়ীটা পরবো”...বোন আগেভাগে ঘোষণা করে দিতো। আমি বরাবরই একটু ইয়েমতো, ঠিক সময়ে ঠিক কথাটা চট করে বলে উঠতে পারি না। আতিপাঁতি চোখ বুলিয়ে আমিও অবশ্য কোনো একটা পছন্দ করে ফেলতাম। মা খুব শৌখিন ছিলো শাড়ীর ব্যাপারে, সব শাড়ীগুলোই ছিলো সুন্দর।

“রোদে কেন দাও মা শাড়ীগুলো”...আমাদের প্রশ্নের উত্তরে মা খুব সুন্দর করে বুঝিয়ে বলতো, রোদদুরে যে বেনীসহকলা (ভিবগিওর) আছে, তার থেকে শাড়ীগুলো নিজের নিজের রঙটা নিয়ে আরোও চকচকে হবে, যেমন, নীল শাড়ীটা নীল নেবে, কমলাটা নেবে কমলা রং। আমরা অবাক হয়ে ভাবতাম সাদা রোদদুরটার মধ্যে কি করে এতোগুলো রং লুকিয়ে থাকে! সত্যিই যেন শাড়ীগুলো রং খেয়ে চকচকে হয়ে উঠতো।

বিশ্বকর্মা পূজো চলে গেলেও আকাশে প্রচুর ঘুড়ি, নানারঙের ঘুড়িতে আকাশ ছয়লাপ।

আড়চোখে একবার দেখে নিতাম ধ্রুবদাদের ছাদের দিকে, ও-ও কি ওড়াচ্ছে ঘুড়ি! ওর ঘুড়ির সঙ্গে সঙ্গে আমার মনটাও লাট খেতো আকাশে।

“শরতের মিছা মেঘ ডাকডোক সার”— এই কথাটা তখন মা কাকীমারা খুব বলতো। কড়া সোনালী রোদদুর, অথচ গুড়গুড় মেঘগর্জন থেকে থেকেই। মেঘ ডাকলেও বুপবুপ করে বৃষ্টি হতো না যখন তখন।

মনটা ভারী খুশী খুশী, সামনেই পূজোর ছুটি, বইখাতাগুলোর গীর মুখে পুরো পর্দাটানা। সবচেয়ে উত্তেজনার ব্যা পার—পূজোবার্ষিকী পত্রিকাগুলো। আনন্দমেলা, কিশোর ভারতী...।

এখনকার মতো এতো সাত তাড়াতাড়ি বেরোতো না, স বত মহালয়ার পরে পেতাম হাতে। রোজ হাত বুলিয়ে গন্ধ শূঁকে রেখে দিতাম, এখন না, পূজো কেটে যাক, তারপর। পূজোর উন্মাদনা চলে গেলেও যাতে জীবন আবার নিস্তরঙ্গ না হয়ে পড়ে, তাই পূজোর পরে পড়বো বলে রেখে দিতাম।

মহালয়ার সকালটা ছিল বড় পবিত্র। বীরেন্দ্র কৃষ্ণ ভদ্র মহাশয়ের কণ্ঠস্বর ও বাচনভঙ্গীতে সত্যিই মনে হতো মা দুর্গা অসুরনিধনে মর্ত্যে নেমে এসেছেন।

পরের সাতটা দিন ছড়মুড়িয়ে চলে যেতো। কবে কোনদিন কোন জামাটা পরা হবে, সব আগে থেকে ঠিক করা, নতুন জুতো বারবর বাস্র থেকে খুলে ঘুরিয়ে ফিরিয়ে দেখা—এসবের মাঝেই মা দুর্গা এসে যেতেন মন্ডপে। তখন মন্ডপে প্রতিমা আনা হতো পঞ্চমীর সন্ধ্যাতে।

ষষ্ঠীর সন্ধ্যায় মায়ের বোধনের সময় প্রথম ঢাকে কাঠি পড়তো—সঙ্গে সঙ্গেই যেন বুকো লাফ দিয়ে উঠতো একটা মস্ত খুশীর ঢেউ, যা এক নিমেষে তরঙ্গায়িত হয়ে যেতো পুরো চেতনায়।

তারপরের চারটে দিন স্বপনের মতো...

জীবন চলতে থাকে, পাল্টে যেতে থাকে পূজো-চেতনাও। এখন থিমপূজোর আড়ম্বরে চোখে ধাঁ ধাঁ লাগে—অপার বৈভবের ছড়াছড়ি। কোনো কোনো বছরে সেপ্টেম্বরে ঘটে যাওয়া বন্যায় টিভিতে দেখা বানভাসি মানুষগুলোর মুখচোখ মনে ভেসে ওঠে—আহা এই আড়ম্বরের বিনিময়ে দেওয়া যেতো না ওদের একটু নিরাপত্তা!

আমার ছেলেরা যখন বোঝায়, এই থিমপূজোর বিশাল কর্মকাণ্ডে ওই মানুষগুলোর অনেকের জীবিকা জড়িয়ে আছে, তখন ভাবি, সে তো ঠিকই! শুধু এতো আড়ম্বর দেখতে দেখতে মায়ের মুখের দিকে আর বেশিক্ষণ চোখ রাখার সময় পাওয়া যায় না।

মনে পড়ে, ছোটবেলায় আমরা বন্ধুরা একদৃষ্টে মা দুর্গার চোখের দিকে তাকিয়ে থাকতাম—

বড়রা বলতেন, অষ্টমীর রাতে সন্ধিপূজোর সময় মায়ের নাকি চোখের পাতা পড়ে!

ঢাকের আওয়াজ, কাঁসর-ঘন্টা, শঙ্খধ্বনি, একশো আট প্রদীপের আলোয় ঠাকুরমহাশয়ের মন্তোচ্চারণ, ধূপ ধূনোর ধোঁয়ার কেমন একটা মায়াজাল তৈরী হতো সন্ধিপূজোর সন্ধিক্ষণে। আমরা একদৃষ্টে চেয়ে থাকতাম মায়ের মুখে। চেয়ে থাকতে থাকতে গায়ের রোম খাড়া হয়ে উঠতো। একসময় নিজের চোখের পাতা পড়লে মনে হতো যেন দুর্গামায়েরও চোখের পাতা পড়লো। ঢাকের আওয়াজ, শঙ্খ, উলুধ্বনি, ধূপ ধূনোর আবেশে হয়তো ইলিউশন থেকেই এমনটা মনে হতো।

এখন অগুনতিমানুষের ভীড়ে ফ্যাশনদুরস্ত জামাকাপড়ের অভিনবহে মন্ডপসজ্জার বাহাদুরিতে, লাইটিংয়ের কারসাজিতে দিশেহারা, কোনটা ভালো করে দেখবো ঠিক করার আগেই ভীড়ের ধাক্কায় বাইরে ছিটকে আসি—যাঃ মায়ের মুখটাই তো দেখা হলো না ভালো করে!

পাঁচ বছর আগে ঠিক পূজোর মুখে বাবার শরীর খারাপ হলো। মহালয়ার দিন ভোরে নার্সিংহোম থেকে খবর এলো, তখন পাশের বাড়ির রেডিওতে—“রূপং দেহি জয়ং দেহি দ্বিষো জহি”, বাজছে।

আমি আর বোন যখন বাবার পিণ্ডানের ভাত মাখছিলাম, পাড়ার মণ্ডপে তখন সপ্তমীপূজোর ঢাক বাজছিলো। মাথা ভাতে আমার আর বোনের নীচু করা চোখের জল টপটপ করে পড়লে ঠাকুরমশাই বলেছিলেন— “উঁহু উঁহু সরিয়ে দিন ঐ মণ্ডটা, নতুন নিন....চোখের জল মুছুন।”

আসলে জীবনের কোন বাঁকে মৃত্যু ঘাপটি মেরে যে বসে থাকে। আগে তেকে জানলে তো বলা যায়, ক’দিনপরে এসো না বাপু! পূজো পার্বণের দিনগুলোতে আত্মজনদের সঙ্গে কোথায় জীবনের টুকরো টুকরো সুখগুলোকে একটু ছুঁয়ে-ছেন ভাগাভাগি করে নেবো, তা নয়! মৃত্যুটা বড় কেমন নিষ্ঠুর যেন।

মার সব শাড়ীগুলোই এখন সাদা রঙের, আর ওদের বেনীআসহকলার দরকার পড়ে না।

তবুও জীবন একপাক করে ঘুরে আসে সূর্য্যকে।

এখন পূজোর সময় মা ফোনে যখন বলে—“আবার একটা পূজো এসে গেলো”...আমার বুকের মধ্যে ধবক করে ওঠে। শপিং, চারিদিকে পূজোর প্রস্তুতি লহমায় কেমন বিবরণ লাগে।

তবু ষষ্ঠীর সন্ধ্যায় যখন প্রথম ঢাকে কাঠি পড়ে, আজও অনুভূতিগুলো বুকের মধ্যে চকিতে চঞ্চল হয়ে ওঠে।

অষ্টমীর রাতে সন্ধিপূজোর সময় ঢাকীদের সমবেত ঢাকের সঙ্গতে ঠাকুরমশাইয়ের ললিত ভঙ্গীতে পদ্ম-শঙ্খ আরতি, ধূপ ধূনোর ধোঁয়ায় মায়ের ঘামতেলমণ্ডিত চকচকে মুখে আজও নিম্পলক চেয়ে থাকতে ইচ্ছে করে—যদি একবারটি মায়ের চোখের পাতা পড়ে।

Rotary  
People of Action







# অজানা পৃথিবী

শ্রীমতী সঙ্ঘমিত্রা দত্তগুপ্ত

এ এক অজানা পৃথিবী, যাকে আমরা  
চিনি না, জানি না,  
সমস্ত বিশ্ব এক লহমায় গেছে থেমে,  
কি হবে তার নেই ঠিকানা।  
মানুষের মৃত্যু মিছিল, ক্ষুধার্তের হাহাকার,  
দিনে দিনে ক্রমবর্ধমান আতের চিৎকার।

এতদিন ধরিত্রীর বুকে মানুষ করেছে  
অন্যায়, অত্যাচার,  
আজ তাই ধরিত্রী বুঝি দিচ্ছে জানান,  
কোথা এর প্রতিকার।

মানুষের প্রতি মানুষের সহমর্মিতা,  
মানুষ অনুভব করেছে একে অপরের ব্যথা।

হয়ত এই শিক্ষার মধ্য দিয়েই  
জেগে উঠবে মানবজাতি,  
ভগবান তুমি সদয় হয়ে শোনো,  
সমগ্র বিশ্বের আরতি।।



# পূজার বিচিত্র অভিজ্ঞতা

PP Rtn মনিকা কর্মকার

শেষ কবে বন্ধুদের সাথে দুর্গা পূজোতে এতো নির্ভেজাল আড্ডা দিয়েছি আর আনন্দে সময় কাটিয়েছি মনে করতে পারছি না। দুর্গা পূজো মানে আমার কাছে রোজকার নিয়মের বাইরে অখন্ড অবসর, কারন সারাবছর আমাদের হাসপাতাল প্রায় কোনো ছুটিই থাকেনা কিন্তু পূজোতে ষষ্ঠী থেকে লক্ষীপূজো দশদিন ছুটি। Club এ আমার Presidentship বাদ দিলে শেষ কবে আমি মগুপে ঢুকেছি মনে করে বলতে পারবো না। না তবে এ সময় কোলকাতার বাইরে যাবার কথা ভাবতেই পারি না, ঠাকুর না দেখলেও পূজার আমেজটা উপভোগ করার লোভ সামলাতে পারি না।

Facebook এর দৌলতে প্রায় তিরিশ বছর পর পুরোনো বন্ধুদের সাথে নতুন করে যোগাযোগ হয়। যোহেতু বেশীর ভাগ বন্ধুই কোলকাতার আশেপাশেই থাকে (দু তিনজন ছাড়া) তাই বিভিন্ন সময় বিভিন্ন জায়গায় আড্ডা হতেই থাকে।

ধরা যাক আমার বন্ধুদের নাম A B C D E F .....

A বন্ধুর সাথে আমার একটু বেশী ভাব কারন আমাদের যোগাযোগ প্রথম থেকেই আছে, ও Tollygunge আমি Dhakuria, এমনকি আমরা বেড়াতেও যাই একসঙ্গে।

B ও C বন্ধু (husband & wife) থাকে Benaras এ। B এর বাড়ী ধানবাদ আর C উত্তর কোলকাতার। ওদের মেয়ে কোলকাতায় চাকরি করে আর ছেলে এবছর দেৱাদুন IIM এ admission নিয়েছে। এরকমই এক দিনের আলোচনায় উঠে এলো ওরা অনেকদিন কোলকাতার পূজো দেখেনি আমরা সবাই এই সুযোগটা হাতছাড়া করবো না ঠিক করে ফেললাম। এমনিতেই ওরা দুজনেই খুব হজুগে একেবারে উঠলো বাই তো কটক যাই, না হলে তিরিশ বছর পর যোগাযোগ হওয়া মাত্রই আমরা পুরী যাচ্ছি শুনে আমাদের সাথে দেখা করার জন্য দুজনে বেনারস থেকে পুরী চলে এসেছিলো। তাই যেমন বলা তেমন কাজ দুজন ব্যাগ গুছিয়ে গাড়ী নিয়ে কোলকাতার উদ্দেশ্যে রওনা দিলো। ঠিক হোলো প্রথমে ধানবাদে ওদের বাড়ীর পূজাতে অষ্টমী পর্যন্ত কাটিয়ে নবমীর দিন কোলকাতায় আসবে। কথা ছিলো সবাই মিলে নবমীর দিন D বন্ধুর Complex এ পূজো হয় সেখানে হইচই খাওয়াদাওয়া সেরে দশমীর দিন সকালে A বন্ধুর বাড়ীতে এসে দুদিন থাকবো। কিন্তু বিধি বাম। অষ্টমীর দিন C বন্ধুর পা-টা গেলো মচকে। ওরা যখন মন খারাপ নিয়ে বেনারস ফিরে যাবার কথা ভাবছে তখন A বন্ধু বললো ওর বাড়ীতেই আমরা সবাই মিলে থাকবো কারন ওরা মহিলারা মিলে বহুবছর ধরে পূজো করে, আর ও এবছরের Secretary. ওর বাড়ীর দরজাতেই মগুপ। সবাই পৌঁছে গেলাম।



বহুদিন বাদে পূজোতে সবাই একজায়গায়। গান গল্প হইচই খাওয়া দাওয়া যেন মনে হচ্ছে আনন্দের হাট বসেছে আর পুরোনো দিনে ফিরে গেছি সবাই। দশমীর বিকেলে ঠাকুর বরণ পর্ব শেষ করে ওদের সাথে আমরাও ভাসানে অংশ নিলাম। ফিরে এসে বিজয়ার শুভেচ্ছা বিনিময় ও মিস্ত্রিমুখ করে আমি, B ও C ছাড়া সব বন্ধুরা বিদায় নিলো আসছে বছর আবার হবে এই আশা নিয়ে।

আমাদের এখানেই শেষ নয় পরের দিন আমরা গেলাম দক্ষিণেশ্বর, পূজো দিয়ে ফেব্রার সময় B বন্ধু আমাদের বাড়ীতে পৌঁছে দিয়ে B ও C বন্ধু Salt Lake এ নিজেদের বাড়ীতে চলে গেলো ওখানে দুদিন কাটিয়ে বেনারস ফিরে যাবে বলে।



আমাদের এখানেই শেষ নয় পরের দিন আমরা গেলাম দক্ষিণেশ্বর, পূজো দিয়ে ফেব্রার সময় B বন্ধু আমাদের বাড়ীতে পৌঁছে দিয়ে B ও C বন্ধু Salt Lake এ নিজেদের বাড়ীতে চলে গেলো ওখানে দুদিন কাটিয়ে বেনারস ফিরে যাবে বলে।

বহুদিন বাদে এরকম নির্ভেজাল আনন্দে এবারের পূজাটা কাটাবো ভাবতে পারিনি কারন CORONA যেন আমাদের সব সময় চোখ রাঙাচ্ছে তবুও সব ভয় উপেক্ষা করে কটাদিন এই যে পুরনো দিনে ফিরে যাওয়া এটাই বোধহয় মা দুর্গার আশীর্বাদ। সব মিলিয়ে বহুদিন বাদে এ যেন এক বিচিত্র আনন্দ অভিজ্ঞতা যার রেশ অনেকদিন পর্যন্ত থাকবে।



openness to change  
flexibility action inclusive  
atmosphere mentoring  
friendship  
passion culture focused planning  
fellowship projects simplicity creative solutions  
family-like networking  
per-mir dad people



# THE DROPOUT

PP Rtn (Dr) Siddhartha Chakraborty

I was at the brink of depression.

After a tumultuous tour of duty in a busy Health Centre, I could land in Kolkata as a Medical Officer with Central Blood Bank, then located at the dingy basement of MCH building of Medical College. Instead of the hundreds of sick milling around, there were only blood sample in tubes bearing their names. Not a really delightful job for an aspiring 'barber'. My application for permission to undergo MS course has been turned down by the authorities . . . have I to spent my life in this drab environ so far away from patients?

The Director counselled me. Why not be ready with a plan B? Equip yourself with better understanding of community health, and start private practice. Enroll for the



DTM&H course (Diplomate in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene being the full form) at the School of Tropical Medicine. And this is a course for which permission is not needed from Writers' Building – the local authorities are empowered. (Back then, they understood the importance of advanced learning of local maladies, it seems). So be it.

In mid 1980 I found myself in the third floor of the high – ceilinged old building practically sharing the campus of Medical College – my workplace. The wide corridor was flanked by cavernous rooms and halls with grave gentlemen in white coats, busy in their laboratories or absorbed in thick volumes and current journals. All communications

were in hushed tones. A serious place indeed.

The classes started with a dong – literally – at ten. After rows of lecture for three hours and a welcome relief of an hour of lunchbreak, there were practical classes. A plethora of blood slides was not enough to train us up adequately, they needed some other novelties too. Someday, there would appear a large glass container buzzing with quite a number of mosquitoes, akin to a disturbed beehive (where the hell could they procure such a concentration of predators . . .). A cotton swab dipped in some solution was thrown in and all the creatures dropped dead. The lid was opened, and we were to take out a mosquito, place it on a glass slide, use a pair of strong needles to dissect off the head from the body and put it under a microscope. Now would appear the teacher. “Look at the antennae – how beautiful, isn't it? And those fine bristles? Well, this is a Culex specimen. Let us now compare with an Anopheles ...”

On some other days there would be another surprise. There was kept a covered big earthen pot – like one for a kilo of curd. The cover was removed – and there was a sample of excrement, freshly out of bowel, thin wafts of vapour emitting. We scooped

out a sample, mixed it with little water to make a suspension, put a drop under microscope, and then “ Oh! What a lovely piece! Just see the golden colour, those stripes . . . This is an egg of Orebbas kisarbanash. Draw it, draw it quick. We can then show you eggs of Arechhichi kibichchhiri for comparison”.

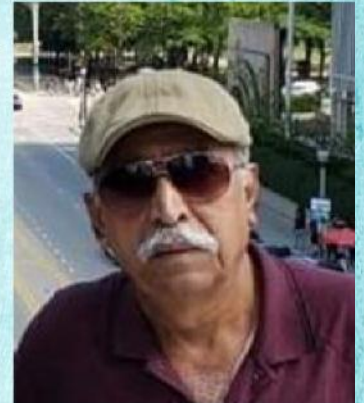
It went on day after day, five days a week.

Then my Lady Luck smiled. Got myself in the dreamt world of gown and gloves, blood and scalpel, surrounded by equipments and instruments never seen before. I was in Cardio–Thoracic Surgery, never to return to the classrooms at STM.

I remain one of the rare dropouts from the course.

Today, when I find someone with those hallowed words of DTM&H attached to the name, I look in awe – here is a guy who has gone through the ordeal! And I silently bow to the suppliers who delivered our fresh laboratory specimens at right time, day after day.

Woodwork by PP Rtn Amaresh  
Bhattacharya



## MINUTES OF THE 2606th RCM OF ROTARY CLUB OF BEHALA HELD AT ZOOM VIRTUAL PLATFORM ON 21st OCTOBER, 2021.

Club President Rtn Soummojit Mukherjee welcomed all and called the online meeting to order.

The meeting started with National Anthem played online.

Club President Rtn Soummojit Mukherjee started with the reporting of the visit to Thakurpukur centre of Free To Be Kids with distribution of new clothes to the sheltered children.

On request from the Chair, PP Rtn Debabrata Joardar detailed on that visit. He described it as one of his finest moments in 40 yrs of Rotary.

In the prevailing situation of closure of schools, our RCC Sri Ramkrishna Ashram at Chandanpiri has organised some informal coaching centre for local kids. That requires about Rs 25,000/- per month, and they have requested our Club to sponsor the effort for one year. The matter was discussed, and it has been decided to rather go for a few long-time sustainable projects as had been detailed by PP Rtn Anirudha Gupta and discussed with leadership of the RCC during our visits over there.

PP Rtn Siddhartha Chakraborty reported about sending to Mr Swapan Chakraborty two reports on preparation of 'gur' from watermelon and use of fibres from banana stem for producing different products. PP Rtn Deepnath Roy Chowdhury pointed out that marketing of the products have to be ensured for success of any such project.

IPP Rtn Sugata Mazumdar informed that a Health Check-up Camp may be organised in November or December, fixing up the date after consultation with the RCC.

A request has been received for a couple of sanitary napkin vending machines at Navin Chandra High School at Dhosa Chandaneswar near Jainagar. It has been resolved to sponsor 50% of the expenditure pending a visit to the area in December.

On request from the Chair, PP Rtn Siddhartha Chakraborty spoke about his family trip to Falta, along with PP Rtn Kaushik Bhattacharyya and Rtn Amit Roy with their families.

Rtn Shuvranshu Mitra spoke about his family trip to Bakkhali and a sudden visit to Chandanpiri.

The Bijaya-Diwali get-together of the Club will be held physically on 14th November at Calcutta Club. PP Rtn Krishnendu Bhattacharjee is working on it, and relevant information will be posted in our official WhatsApp page.

Club Secretary Rtn Debarshi Dutta Gupta conducted club business.

Next Board Meeting will be held on 29th October

Next RCM will be held online on 11th November, with a Special Bijaya-Diwali issue of the club bulletin 'Maitree'.

The minutes of 2605th RCM of the club as published in Maitree of the day was confirmed.

Club President Rtn Soummojit Mukherjee terminated the meeting after thanks from and to the chair.

**Total Members : 34**  
**Members Present : 11**

