

THE CHATTER

FROM

CALCUTTA POINTERS

June, 2022 / Vol 1



Art Credit: Rtn. Nivedita Sanyal

PRESIDENT: RTN. DR. SUJOY MAJUMDAR; SECRETARY: RTN. ADITI DEY; TREASURER: RTN. SANJUKTA MAJUMDAR; EDITOR: RTN. DR. BABITA G. SAHA

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Rotary Club of Calcutta Pointers was honoured and excited to welcome RI President Shekhar Mehta at the Installation ceremony and Charter celebration on February 27th. While attendance by RI President at club charter celebrations is a rarity, RI President Mehta presented himself as an enthusiastic leader commenting that as an ex-Pointer himself, he was excited to be part of this event over Zoom. He congratulated the club for fronting a new idea of forming rotary clubs with school alumni and for this outstanding accomplishment of bringing together South Pointers across the globe. "You have been raised in a great school and now you will live in a great organisation"

he said, in describing Rotary, - "This is going to be a special journey". His message to the Calcutta Pointers emphasised the value of always being in the position of the "giver" and to give unconditionally knowing that "what we give" will always fall short of "what we get" in the balance sheet of life. "There is so much service needed in this world", that it is never enough, he said, drawing a parallel to Isaac Newton's quote: "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

(cont.)



*RI President Shekhar Mehta
speaks to Calcutta Pointers
at Calcutta Pointers' Charter
celebration event*

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CHARTER CELEBRATION

Rotary gives one the opportunity to touch lives and gives every rotarian the power to make a difference in this world. Every member of Calcutta Pointers has started this journey with RI President Shekhar Mehta's parting words of applause and encouragement to the club: "If you can reach out with your hand, heart and soul, the magic will begin to happen as the wheels begin to roll. Mr. President, let's turn the wheel together".

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CHARTER CELEBRATION

Rotary Club of Calcutta Pointers held their Installation ceremony and Charter celebration on February 27th at Princeton Club, Kolkata. As a global Rotary club with close to a third of the members overseas and the same out of state, we got to celebrate the big event in-person and virtually over zoom. Finding the right time across 4 time zones across almost 13,000 km was Calcutta Pointers' first challenge and success, as charter members in the pacific coast of USA joined those in Cardiff, Wales, Dubai, UAE and multiple cities across India to proudly wear their Rotary pins.

In addition to RI President and Ex-Pointer, Shekhar Mehta, and Past DG & DMC Rtn. Debashish Mitra being present virtually, the event boasted the in-person attendance of Chief Guest Rtn. Prabir Chatterjee, DG District 3291, 2021-22 and First Lady Rtn. Rubena Chatterjee, Rtn. Amitabha Chakraborty, District Secretary OCV, Past District Governor and District Literary Committee Chair Rtn. Mukul Sinha, IPDG Rtn. Sudip Mukherjee and Rtn. Dr. Bhaswati Ray, AG District 3291, 2021-22.

"If you can reach out with your hand, heart and soul, the magic will begin to happen as the wheels begin to roll. Mr. President, let's turn the wheel together."
- RI President Shekhar Mehta





Rtn. Dr Sujoy Majumdar
Charter President, 2021-22
Rotary club of Calcutta Pointers

From the desk of the President

Dear Fellow Rotarians,

It has been my proud privilege to be selected as the Charter President of this extraordinary Rotary Club of Calcutta Pointers. As the name implies, this club is of, by and for ex South Pointers. In District 3291, this club is unique as around one third of the members are based outside India and another one third is based outside Kolkata. As a consequence, our twice monthly general body meeting and executive committee meetings are held over zoom, so that from anywhere across the globe, members can join. We have specialists from many disciplines amongst our members – doctors, engineers, leaders of global multinational corporates, chartered accountants, lieutenant Colonel from the Indian Army, Principal of College, Faculty of Indian and American Universities, Faculty of Business Management of reputed business schools, professional counselor, just to name a few. In spite of their busy professional lives our members are quite passionate about their Rotary commitments. What is great about this group is the childlike enthusiasm shared by most of the members in our group while working on the Rotary projects.

As it stands now from March (Charter installation took place on 27th February), we have organized fundraising events and completed a broad range of service projects, Community Development and Disease Prevention being on the forefront last year. The Walk/Run/Ride Event in partnership with local groups such as Cycle Network Grow, Cycos Kolkata and Salt Lake Runners got us moving and off to a great start. Within a short span of time, we have formed partnerships with Nari Seva Sangha, providing stitching material to

women at their training center, established a strong association with Purono Kolkatar Golpo, donating sewing machines to Kathalberia Suchetana Mahila Samity, and helping Moitri Swarajgori Dal in Baruipur with local produce for making their food products. We also partnered with local NGOs in hosting a number of District sponsored Rotavision projects in Kolkata and in neighboring areas of East Midnapore and Bagnan.

Organizing and successfully completing the Diabetes camp for retired and current staff at our alma mater South Point has been the highlight and most satisfying to me and all club members, as we all hold a special place in our hearts for this institution. Planting of saplings at Maddox Square on Earth Day and individual club members collectively showcasing green initiatives across the globe on Environment Day, were small steps in addressing climate change but we are already at the drawing board, planning to continue this work in bigger and more meaningful ways. Of the newborn clubs, we are perhaps one of the most active clubs in District 3291. We are silently but steadily making our mark because of our solid foundation, the strength of which will take us far. I am indeed, as the Charter President, very proud of all members of Rotary Club of Calcutta Pointers for taking the club forward in such a short time. Long Live Rotary Club of Calcutta Pointers. Jai Hind.

Happy Birthday!

Aniruddha, Madhumita C (January)
Babita, Jay, Madhumita B (February)
Sanjib, Sugato (March)
Jayanti, Sachin, Sutapa, (April)
Indrajit, Kaushik, Paramita, Sarbari, (May)
Debarati, Diya, Gargee, Soumya (June)



Rtn. Sharmila Roy
Zonal Secretary Admin
RI District 3291 Zone 27 2021-22

A Warm Welcome

Dear Rotarians/Ex-Pointers:

It has been quite a few months since I set upon this journey of forming a Rotary Club dedicated to our alma mater South Point High School and the very first comprising only ex-Pointers. I have spent long hours talking to numerous ex-Pointers inviting them to be Rotarians. It is a dream come true and a moment of great pride for igniting your passion in Rotary. My heartiest congratulations to the President and the entire team for assuming responsibilities of your club for the Rotary year 2022-2023. As future leaders, I am confident that you will adopt our RI President Rtn Shekhar Mehta's philosophy and call to action, and keep moving forward with the rotary commitment to "Serve to Change Lives." Being a Rotarian is about the people we help.

I strongly believe that effective functioning of the Rotary clubs is a vital instrument in achieving not only District goals but also the success of Rotary International as a whole. It is important for this Club, with Pointers from across the globe, to have both in-person and online meetings to maintain inclusivity. You are encouraged to look for a diverse and balanced membership in electing club officers and in developing committee structures. Celebrate autonomy within the framework and bylaws of the Rotary Club constitution. Believe in diversity, equity and inclusion. Encourage members from different batches. Lead and promote the spirit of collaboration, fellowship and Rotary service within your club as we set out to achieve our goals for the Rotary year.

In conclusion, let me say that we have to light up Rotary to create a path so we can 'be a gift to the world.' Let us all make a difference by working together and supporting each other.

PROJECT SHOWCASE

Economic & Community Development

Fabric Donation to Nari Seva Sangha

Calcutta Pointers join hands with Nari Seva Sangha, a local NGO in Kolkata, in their mission towards Empowerment of Women. Nari Seva Sangha has been providing subsidised housing, training, workspace, tools and marketing support to economically challenged women for more than 75 years, helping them earn a living. The club donated



Silk Sarees for Batik work and Cotton Sarees for Block printing to the training centre, which will provide work and earnings to the beneficiaries.



Sewing Machines Donation for Shelaighar Project

Rotary Club of Calcutta Pointers donated sewing machines, thus adding new workstations, to Durgashakti Suchi Shilpa Prashikshan Kendra, one of the 5 tailoring centers opened by NGO group Purno Kolkatar Golpo Society, in the South 24 Parganas Area. Run by Kathalberia Suchetana Mahila Samity, village women are trained here in the art of tailoring free of cost and awarded proficiency certificates from Singer (Sewing machine company) upon successful completion of the program. This provides the women with a sustainable means of livelihood and the opportunity to work in the local community as tailors.



MOITRI SAROJGARAN DAL Produce Donation

Calcutta Pointers provided locally farmed Mangoes and Pineapples to Mohila Swarojgar Dal, a women's self-help group established in 2003 and located near Baruipur. At the training and food processing center backed by the Forum of Scientists and Technologists (FOSET), and originally funded by the grant-in-aid programme of CAPART, Govt of India, the local village women make jam, pickles, sauce, and other seasonal fruit and vegetable products. The donation by the club provided much needed relief to their shortage of funds resulting from the economic impact of the pandemic.



Disease Prevention & Treatment

ROTA VISION PROJECTS District 3291 & Vision RX Lab

APRIL 17, 2022
KAKDIHI, EAST MIDNAPORE

Calcutta Pointers, in association with Vision Rx Lab, and supported by Srijan AID to Helpless, a local NGO, organised and conducted their first district sponsored Rotavision camp in Kakdihi, East Midnapore in April. The event offering free eye check up and frame measurements, welcomed 152 attendees in the 40-55 age group, of whom 117 people were prescribed free spectacles to be distributed on a future date, and 34 of the attendees were referred for cataract surgery.

MAY 16 2022
DHAKURIA, KOLKATA

Calcutta Pointers, organised and conducted the second district Rotavision camp in Dhakuria, Kolkata. The event which took place in May, was organised at Dhakuria Sitalatala Kalibari, and conducted with the support of Dhakuria Sitalatala Kalibari Unnayan Samiti. This initiative was attended by 130 beneficiaries, of whom 105 people were prescribed free spectacles for later distribution, with 30 diagnosed as needing cataract surgery.

MAY 25, 2022
HALYAN, BAGNAN

Calcutta Pointers travelled to Halyan, in the Bagnan 2 block of Howrah District, to conduct another Rotavision Eye Camp in May at Nabajagaran Sangha Club, supported by the local Panchayat. With registration and organisation help from the Dewantala Nursery, the club brought in a record number of registrants from the local community and completed the project successfully with 164 beneficiaries and 132 spectacles prescribed.

Diabetes Screening & Awareness Camp at South Point School

Calcutta Pointers organised and held a Diabetes Screening & Awareness event, in partnership with ASPEXS (Association of South Point Ex students) care wing, and as part of their Medical Screening and Educational Camp held at South Point Junior School. Almost all club members residing in Kolkata showed up for this special occasion to give back to their Alma Mater, South Point School. The initiative was led by Club Charter President, Rtn. Dr. Sujoy Majumdar, who is by profession a renowned endocrinologist, and is the current Honorary Head at the Department of Diabetology at GD Hospital & Diabetes Institute in Kolkata. Rtn. Dr. Shipra Chowdhury and her nursing staff at Merryland Nursing Home offered their services free of charge as well and technical support for the running of the event was sponsored by two pharmaceutical companies M/s Indoco Remedies Ltd and M/s Novo Nordisk India Pvt Ltd. Current and retired teachers, as well as non-teaching staff at the institution took part in the event held in May. The goal was to not only educate on the need and the importance of prevention, but also to offer screening, evaluation and diagnosis of Diabetes. Screening was then followed by a lecture on the misconceptions and myths about diabetes towards the goals of disease prevention and to encourage timely treatment of the disease.





Protecting the Environment

Planting Saplings at Maddox Square Garden - April 22, 2022

On Earth Day, Calcutta Pointers planted saplings to increase greenery in urban spaces. Flowering plants like Gulmohar, Kamini, Geranium, Hibiscus and Ghetu were chosen with help from a local nursery, to beautify a section of the Children's Park inside Maddox Square complex in Kolkata, until plantation on a bigger scale can be continued during more inclement weather.



Planting Across the Globe - June 5, 2022

On International Environment Day, Calcutta Pointers participated worldwide to plant in their own surroundings and created a collective rendering of the new green spaces. This was another example of aligning with Rotary's philosophy of service beyond boundaries.



UPCOMING PROJECTS

- ❑ Spectacles Distribution to approximately 354 beneficiaries is planned during the months of July through September as part of the district sponsored Rotavision Eye camps held earlier this year.
- ❑ Batighar Pathshala: Calcutta Pointers plans to kick off their initiative in the next Rotary area of focus in Basic Literacy and Education in July. It includes setting up a classroom and providing children with books and lunch, as well as providing the teachers with modern teaching tools such as laptop, printer and projector. The project aims to supplement the efforts of Bondhu Collective, a group of social workers, in running a school for the children of sex workers from the Kalighat red light area in Kolkata.

PROJECT SHOWCASE



International Women's Day Walk/Run/Ride



Calcutta Pointers concluded the Rotary year with a memorable evening of food, fellowship and laughter, again, with an informal fundraising opportunity in the Rotary Fellowship month of June. The dinner event held at Mainland China, was hosted by Club Charter President, Dr. Sujoy Majumdar, and attended by the Founder of the club, Rtn. Sharmila Roy, Zonal Secy. Admin, Zone 27, along with 15 other members and officers of the club. The event provided an opportunity to present the Rotary pin to some of the members who were previously unable to attend the club's charter celebration earlier this year, and for the Club President to share the vision of the club moving forward into the next Rotary year.

The path to Rotary service started for Calcutta Pointers with a week-long initiative in the spirit of camaraderie and friendship with new local partners. Cycle Network Grow (CNG), Cycos Kolkata, and Saltlake Runners, as we hosted a series of walk, run and ride events to celebrate International Women's Day. The fundraising event took place both physically as well as virtually (through Fitness Apps), both in the local community, as well as in other locations across the world. Proceeds from the registration and donation were used to fund projects towards Empowerment of Women, and Rotary International's Economic and Community Development area of focus.



President's Dinner/Fundraiser



MEMBERS SPEAK



From my childhood I wanted to work for social causes and help the underprivileged. I used to think - when I grow older, I will do something to change the world. Having tried on my own in many ways through the years I know now that it is the most stressful and difficult thing to do all by yourself. Our Rotary club is unique in that we all are from the same school. It renders a fantastic platform to serve others with the added bonus of working with childhood friends. In a few months we are already delivering some great projects - many thanks to friends in Kolkata who are doing the field work. Let's keep moving forward as "People of Action" and bring on the change we seek.

-- Rtn. Nivedita Sanyal

When I was approached by our rotarian friend Sharmila to join this new club of ex-South Point students, my first thoughts were that of connecting with my childhood friends after so long and being able to give back to the community. Although it is difficult to be physically present in the service activities being out of state, I can still take part in philanthropic causes. I feel that I am a part of every project and that gives me immense joy...

-- Rtn. Sarbari Ghose

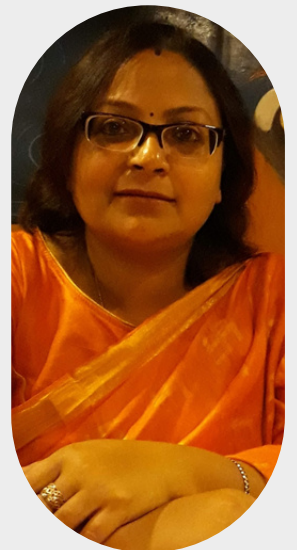


Being part of our Rotary club lends me the opportunity to give back to my country of birth and be a part of a team that consists of my school buddies. This gives me a feeling of content and peace of mind.

-- Rtn. Aniruddha Bhattacharya

Being associated with the Rotary Club is a great honour for me. I believe that this may be the beginning of another learning process which will open up new places and cultures, and will lead to new ideas. I hope to apply my existing skills and knowledge for a greater good and simultaneously, learn new skills, make new friends, and create different networks which take me out of my comfort zone for an amazing personal experience as a Rotarian.

--Rtn. Paramita Chowdhury



MEMBERS SPEAK (CONTD.)

It is an honour to be associated with Rotary and to serve especially here . This club has a special place for me with rotarians who are from the same school where we all were nurtured. It makes me happy to help others as I have always been doing through NCC. Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the Strength, the Patience, and the PASSION to reach for the stars and change the World!

-- Rtn. Diya Roychaudhury



আজ মধ্যবয়েসে পৌঁছে মনে হয় , ' এ পৃথিবীকে এ শিশুর বাসযোগ্য করে যাবো আমি, নবজাতকের কাছে এ আমার দৃঢ় অঙ্গীকার'। আর সেই বাসনাকেই বাস্তবায়িত করতে সহায়তা করেছে Rotary Club of Calcutta Pointers। স্কুলে পড়ার সময় সংবেদনশীলতা ও সহমর্মিতার যে পাঠ আমরা পেয়েছিলাম, তারই বাস্তব রূপ Rotary Club of Calcutta Pointers. এই ক্লাবে কাজ করে যে শুধুমাত্র সামাজিক দায়িত্ব পালন করার সুযোগ পাচ্ছি তাই নয়, কাজ করার সময় বাল্য বন্ধুদের সহাস্য উপস্থিতি কাজের উৎসাহ ও আনন্দ আরো বাড়িয়ে তুলেছে। আর এইখানেই এই ক্লাবের বৈশিষ্ট্য।

-- Rtn. Dr. Atashi Karpha



EDITOR'S NOTES

Dear Readers,

I stare at this newsletter in disbelief after fulfilling the roles of reporter, writer, designer and editor, in my very first experience of creating an entire newsletter. I am grateful to Rotary and my fellow ex-Pointers for showing me a way to give back to the place I left behind 36 years ago, in spite of being thousands of miles away. Rotary Club of Calcutta Pointers has found a way to engage members near and far - my favorite so far being our Walk/Run/Ride fundraiser managed through a fitness app which dissipated all distances. I have been lucky to be part of many projects in reporting and project coordination roles, but I am most appreciative of fellow Pointers who represent all of us out-of-state and overseas members every time we set out to serve those in need.

My sincerest thanks to my rotarian friend Nivedita for allowing me to use her painting and to all our photographers on site, with special mention to our key photographer and dear friend, President-Elect, Dr. Sachindra Rao, for capturing the key moments with such dexterity. It gives me much pleasure to take our first publication off the ground today. The only thing that will make me happier is to see more of our club members join our Digital Media/Newsletter adventure in 2022-23. So who's in?

Rtn. Dr. Babita G. Saha
Editor of "The Chatter" from Calcutta Pointers.

