



MAITREE

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ROTARY CLUB OF BEHALA

CLUB NO.: 16149

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 3291

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VOLUME LVII

ISSUE 21

25

MARCH

2589th REGULAR CLUB MEETING

Rotary



Rotary Opens
Opportunities

COVER STORY

saves lifeform
eternal existence

the secret of the jar

rare
scanty
magical
unscented
giver of life
most precious



Magic Potion for Survival

March : Water & Sanitation Month

TOP STORIES



4 Way Test

Happy Occasions

Upcoming Days

Editorial Request

Cover Story - Editorial

Family on News

In Focus - Featuring Dr B K Manocha

The Fortnight That Was

Wash - Rotary Action Group

Living The Dream - RIPE Shekhar Mehta

Article by Arnold R Grahl

Minutes of 2588th RCM

March : Water & Sanitation Month



**THE FOUR-WAY TEST
OF THE THINGS WE THINK, SAY OR DO**

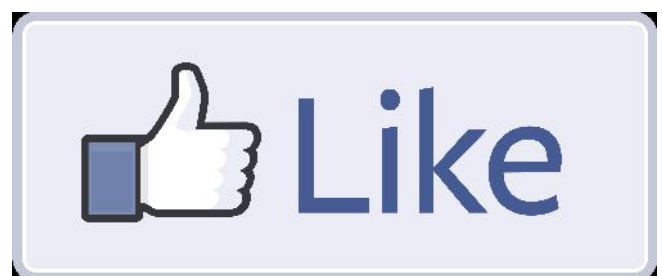
1. IS IT THE TRUTH ?
2. IS IT FAIR TO ALL CONCERNED ?
3. WILL IT BUILD GOOD WILL AND BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. WILL IT BE BENEFICIAL TO ALL CONCERNED ?

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY

26th March

Avinanda daughter of PP Rtn
Amaresh Bhattacharya

2nd April

Ms Nabamita wife of Rtn Debarshi
Dutta Gupta

2nd April

Rtn Dr Atanu Saha

7th April

Anushka daughter of Rtn Dr Atanu
Saha

UPCOMING DAYS

Computer Literacy Project at Free
To Be Kids Charitable Trust.
Inauguration date will be notified.

Team visit to Vocational Training
Centre at Rasapunja for
inspection.



ENVIRONMENT

RI UPDATE

New logo for
Supporting the
Environment

FAMILY NEWS

Rtn Ashish Das is recuperating
after a successful surgery in a city
hospital. We wish him speedy
recovery.

Editor Rtn Dr Siddhartha
Chakraborty will undergo
cataract operation at a city
hospital on 26th March, 2021.

EDITORIAL REQUEST

Thank You

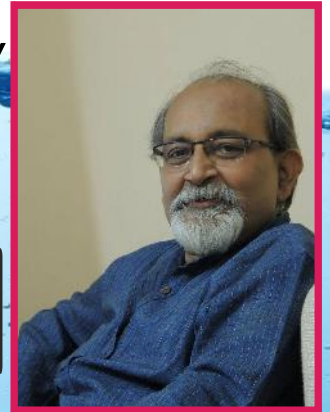
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EDITORIAL

COVER STORYPP Rtn Dr Siddhartha Chakraborty
Editor 20-21

Dwindling Elixir of

WATER

Charles Canning, appointed as first Viceroy of India in 1858 was a determined man. Now he was hunched over a map spread over the table, searching for a place to construct a big port as an alternative to Kolkata and a rival to Singapore. His eyes finally came to rest on a spot by the mighty river Matla. The murmur of professional warning by shipping inspector Henry Piddington, who knew about hurricanes and storms, was waived aside and work started in full steam.

A new township christened after him came up. Broad-gauge rail track was laid down in 1962, a strand and buildings erected. But in 1867 the Matla surged, reducing the place to a "bleached skeleton" and ending the dream. Only his 'kothibari' stands today.

Even in 1970s Canning was an important gateway to riverine Sundarbans,

*Matla in 1970*

but gradually Matla silted up.

By 2010, vast areas of riverbed became grazing ground for cattle during summers and the boats had to be stationed 460 metres from the jetty.

Thus came up a new bridge over once-gorgeous Matla.

Matla is not alone.

*Kothibari of Canning**Matla Now*

The 450 km long Ken river in Bundelkhand has dried up, and Godavari, Krishna and Cauvery have been severely distressed. Germany's Rhine river, critical in business and livelihood in Europe is entering dry summer months with water levels threatening shipping disruption.



A farmer Walks On The Dry Bed Of The Narmada River In Narsinghpur District, Madhya Pradesh

Vessels on the Rhine River



Tigris and Euphrates in Iraq are drying up, turning the country more arid, expanding desertification.

Same with lakes. The demise of the huge Aral Sea – the largest freshwater lake covering 68,000 Sq km in 1960 is an eye opener. With water from its two main feeding rivers being diverted for



irrigation, and the vast pool evaporating daily, the salt and mineral concentration raised gradually, extinguishing marine life and destroying fishing industry along the banks.

Near home, the water level in the Puzhal Aeri or Red Hill Lake, a rain-fed lake that contributes to the supply of drinking water to the city of Chennai has reduced from 1800 hectares to only 360 hectares in a span of just one year.



An Abandoned Ship In The Former Aral Sea, Near Aral, Kazakhstan



The Bhojtal, or Upper Lake of Bhopal has also shrunk from 2400 hectares to 700 hectares in two years.

These are the water sources visible on the surface of earth – the surface water. About 97% of all water is saline sea water, 2.15% is trapped in glaciers and ice caps. Of the remaining, vast majority is hidden under the crust of earth – the groundwater, trapped in subsoil level and in

aquifers and available through springs and wells, or are pumped off. This groundwater is the source of about 33% of the water that city water departments supply to households and businesses. It provides drinking water for more than 90 percent of the rural population who do not get their water delivered to them from a municipal or government water department.

How much water do we need for household purposes? Our Bureau of Indian Standards dictates a minimum of 135 litres per head per day, a big chunk of which goes towards flushing toilets and bathing. For simple drinking one needs only 2-4 litres of water. This, like our taxing system, is only a 'direct' requirement, far outweighed by other 'indirect' ones. The harvests that give the world its fruits, vegetables, grains, and seeds require lots and lots of water to grow and thrive. The animals that give the world its meats, eggs, and dairy products also cannot live without water (a cow, for example, needs around 50 litres of water daily). When water shortages occur, it's not just drinking water that disappears – it's food, too.



Indian Village



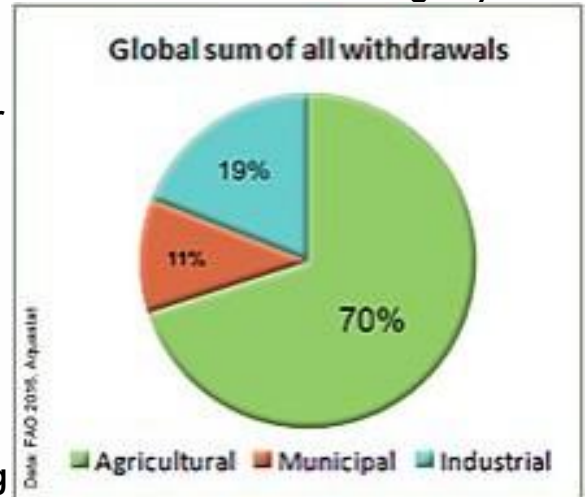
Dead Cow In Dry Land

Another aspect of water requirement – growing daily – is the demand from industry. Water is needed for either creating the product, or cooling the equipments used for the purpose. Large amounts of water are used mostly to produce food, paper, and chemicals, including plastic.

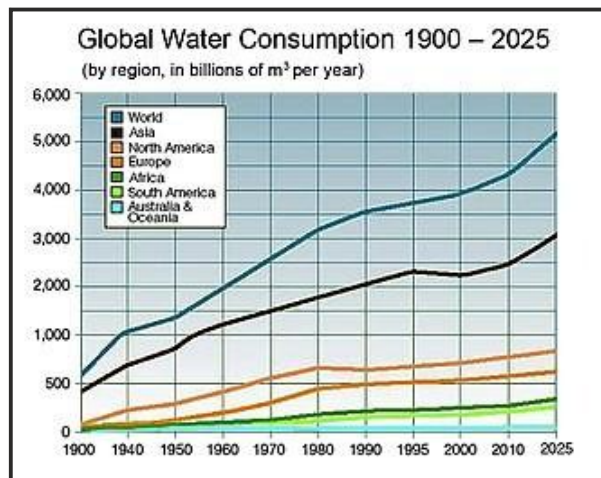
For example, it takes about 5.3 litres of water to produce a single PET bottle for drinking water that we use so often. China produces plastic in bulk, which is then shipped to Fiji where the signature square bottles get filled with Fiji artesian water and are exported around the world. As the aristocracy in Europe and America sip the classy mineral water, vast areas of China is turning dry and barren.

The industrial countries use 59% of their water for industrial use only, while globally around 70% of freshwater withdrawals go into agriculture.

Where do the vast amount of water come from? It is mainly the subsoil ground water pumped out, with some contribution by surface water from rivers and lakes. Increasing world population, improving living standards, changing consumption patterns, and expansion of irrigated agriculture are driving forces for rising global demand for water.



Global Use Of Freshwater, 2016 FAO Data



Global Water Consumption 1900-2025, By Region, In Billions M3 Per Year

scarcity all year round. Half of the world's largest cities experience water scarcity. Humanity is facing a water crisis, as demand is expected to outstrip supply by 40% in 2030, if current trends continue.

By far the largest part of Australia is semi-arid land commonly known as the outback, with water restriction in many parts. Perth in Western Australia faced severe water crisis and they had to impose tight water restrictions in 2010. Another city facing a

On the other hand, global warming with receding glaciers, reduced river flow, and shrinking lakes, together with deforestation, and wasteful use of water can cause insufficient supply.

As of now, half of the global population (4 billion people) live under conditions of severe water scarcity at least 1 month of the year. Half a billion

Cape Town Water Crisis Warning



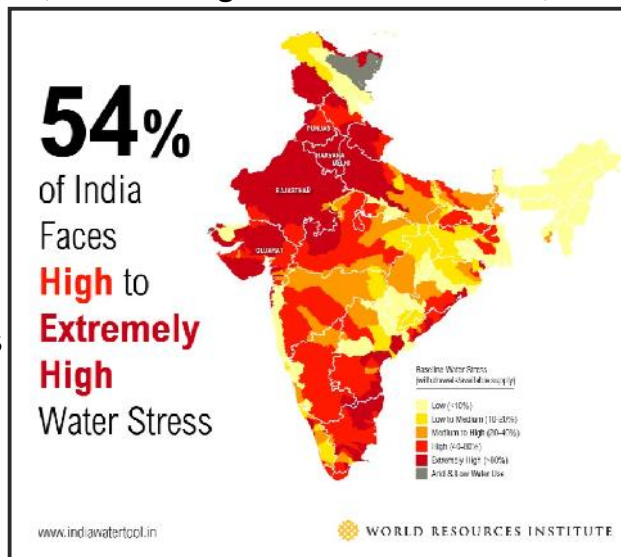
Water Crisis Warning

water crisis is Cape Town, South Africa. They were preparing for "Day Zero" meaning that the area would be almost completely out of water. Thankfully, Day Zero could be avoided and restrictions were lifted for residents, but conservation efforts are still in place with uncertainty in rainfall amounts.

Another physical effect of dwindling groundwater level is the phenomenon of Subsidence, or the gradual sinking of landforms. There is collapse of subsoil solids consequent on loss of water in between the particles. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that subsidence has affected more than 17,000 square miles in 45 U.S. states, 80 percent of it due to groundwater usage. In some areas east of Houston, the land has dropped by more than nine feet due to subsidence.

Back home, the situation is grim. India is one of the most water-challenged countries in the world, from its deepest aquifers to its largest rivers. It has 16% of the world's population and only 4% of the world's water resources, which are depleting rapidly. Groundwater levels are falling as India's farmers, city residents and industries drain wells and aquifers. What water is available is often severely polluted, or has high levels of arsenic, manganese or iron.

11 of India's 20 including Delhi, Bengaluru, Nashik, Jaipur, Indore face an water stress. Indian government's Ground Water Year 390 million cubic groundwater a year, higher than the rate of 310 million Bengaluru, Water ATMs have become regular feature.



largest cities, Chennai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and 'extreme risk' of According to the 2016-2017 Book, Delhi uses meters of about 25 percent natural recharge cubic meters. In

And the future may only be worse, with the national supply predicted to fall 50% below demand by 2030. With 54 percent of India's total area facing high to extremely high stress, almost 600 million people are at higher risk of surface-water supply disruptions.



Farmer in Maharashtra

In particular, there is extremely high

stress area blanketing Northwest India - the country's breadbasket. The States of Punjab and Haryana alone produce 50 percent of the national government's rice supply and 85 percent of its wheat stocks. Both crops are highly water intensive. Same is true of Maharashtra, a water-deprived State. With government encouragement, this is the sugar-belt - a crop that needs huge amount of water. Dwindling subsoil water dries up the land, and we find pictures of hapless farmers engaged in crop production.

Lady Carrying Water On Her Head, 2016



Roadside Bathing In Kolkata

With nearly 600 million Indians facing high-to-extreme water stress - where more than 40 percent of the annually available surface water is used every year - and about 200,000 people dying every year due to inadequate access to safe water, the situation is likely to worsen as the demand for water will exceed the supply by 2050, said the 'Composite Water Management Index'

(CWMI) report. 40% of India's population will have no access to drinking water by 2030, the report said.

Kolkata, a city with perennially flowing Hooghly River on its western side, and good amount of subsoil water is ironically staring at a bleak future with alarming levels of groundwater depletion. Water supply to vast areas of the city has been dependant on groundwater, to which has been added unauthorised extraction through illegal and private boring wells. Additionally, there is huge loss of water through roadside water points.

All these contribute to the groundwater level - more or less near the sea level originally - dropping drastically by 11 metres in the past five decades, and the city sinking at an alarming rate of 12-18mm per year. Naturally, the concentration of salt, iron, or fluoride in the water are on the rise.

Water crisis may not be a huge headache for Kolkata residents yet, but the signs of trouble due to fast groundwater depletion are evident and cannot be ignored.



Water Loss From Roadside Water Points

The global problem needs a multiprong approach for correction. Each and every household needs to adopt techniques of re-use of water and utilise gadgets with less water consumption, industry to plan ways to conserve water, modern scientific irrigation system for crops to be implanted. Simultaneously, recharging of ground water by rainwater harvesting has to be popularised. Efforts are on to devise commercially viable techniques for desalination of sea water (a costly affair at present), or capturing water from atmosphere for agricultural purpose.

Rotary has adopted Water and Sanitation as one of its Areas of Focus, and has a number of dedicated Rotarians in WASH Rotary Action Group with a mission statement of "Providing human, technical and financial support to Rotary clubs and districts seeking to help communities to gain sustainable access to water, sanitation and hygiene."

We can help to save the world. Rotary has opened the opportunity.



JUST FOR LAUGHS



'When I'm back in a real classroom how do I mute my teacher?'

FAMILY ON NEWS



RC Calcutta Charnock City awarded Vocational Service Award to three doctors who served during Covid period. PDG Rtn Angsuman Bandopadhyay did the honours. One of the recipients was our PP Rtn (Dr) Siddhartha Chakraborty.

রবিবার ৭ মার্চ ২০২১

ছুটি

মেঘধরার দল

জানেন কি এই কলকাতা শহরেই আছে এমন একদল আশ্চর্য খেয়ালি মানুষ যাঁদের নেশা মেঘ ধরা? ঝড় ও বিদ্যুতের সঙ্গে দোস্তি পাতানো? 'কলকাতা ক্লাউড চেজার্স' বা 'কেসিসি'



দেবর্ষি দত্ত গুপ্ত

বয়স: ৪৪

পেশা: ফার্মা কোম্পানির
ম্যানেজিং ডিরেক্টর

Rtn Debarshi Dutta Gupta featured in a article by Sangbad Pratidin along with other members of Kolkata Cloud Chasers or KCC. It's a interesting read.

[CLICK TO READ](#)

IN FOCUS

Featuring Pictures by Dr. B K Manocha



Dr Bhupendra Kumar Manocha, the distinguished Paediatrician and artist, is a personal friend. Here are few of his snaps from streets of Kolkata.
– Ed.



IN FOCUS

Featuring Pictures by Dr. B K Manocha





THE FORTNIGHT THAT WAS... RI DISTRICT 3291

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS CAMP

At macro level District's 22nd (overall) & 16th Service Project pertaining to RI Area of Focus: 'Disease Prevention and Treatment' and 13th exclusive 'Project Positive Health-Know Your Numbers' was held on 27th February '21. We had around 150 beneficiaries who were tribals (Boro, Lodha & Sabar). Good that we could organise the project outside Kolkata. AG Malay Khan along with Host Club Calcutta Sutanati & Co-host Club Jhargram Green organised it. Kudos to all.

At macro level District's 25th (overall) & 19th Service Project pertaining to AOF: 'Disease Prevention and Treatment' and 15th exclusive 'Project Positive Health-Know Your Numbers' project was held at Howrah on 13th, March '21.



27th Feb, 2021 - Vintage Car Rally organised by Rotary Club of Calcutta Centenary in association with Eastern Motor Sports Association. Rally theme "Say No To Plastic".

At macro level District's 24th (overall) & 18th Service Project 'SAKSHAM' pertaining to AOF: 'Disease Prevention and Treatment' was held at Mahavir Seva Sadan on 13th March '21. Kudos to Rotary Calcutta Presidency.



THE FORTNIGHT THAT WAS...

RI DISTRICT 3291

20th & 21st March Swabhumi witnessed the Biggest Rotary event of the year - "Samagam Conference for all", under the leadership of Sudip Mukherjee, District Governor, Rotary International District 3291. It was surge of personalities and beautifully crafted plenary sessions with speakers of national repute mesmerised the audience. The symposium food added an extra flavour to the mood. Tribute to R.D. Burman' and discussion on '100 years of Bengali Cinema' both conceived by DG Sudip was smash hits.



At macro level District's 24th (overall) & 18th Service Project pertaining to AOF: 'Disease Prevention and Treatment' and 14th exclusive 'Project Positive Health-Know Your Numbers' by organised by Lead hosted by RC Behala, Co-hosted by RCC Charnock City in association with Peerless Hospital on 8th March at Bishnupur, Kolkata.

14th Know Your Numbers

Free Health Check-up Camp | 8th March | 10am to 2pm
 Krishnarampur, Amgachia, Bishnupur, 24Pgs(s), Kolkata - 104

PROJECT POSITIVE HEALTH
 AN INITIATIVE BY ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 3291

ORGANISED BY FREE TO BE KIDS CHARITABLE TRUST
 LEAD HOST - ROTARY CLUB OF BEHALA
 CO HOST - ROTARY CLUB OF CALCUTTA CHARNOCK CITY
 IN ASSOCIATION WITH PEERLESS HOSPITAL, KOLKATA

Rtn Sudip Mukherjee, District Governor 2020-21
 Rtn Dr. Arabinda Ray, Director Projects (Medical)
 Rtn Dr. Krishanu Gupta, District Secretary Projects (Medical)
 Rtn Dr. Sudipta Chandra, Additional District Secretary Projects (Medical)
 Rtn Dr. Ramesh Chandra, Chair, Health Committee

All Covid Protocols Will Be Maintained

DISTRICT NABADISHA PROJECT

- Health Check Up
- Thalassemia Patient Care

HOST CLUB - ROTARY CLUB OF CALCUTTA KANKURGACHI

CO HOST CLUB - ROTARY CLUB OF COSSIPORE

DATE - SUNDAY 14TH MARCH 2021

TIME - 10.30 AM TO 12 NOON

Rtn. SUDIP MUKHERJEE
District Governor

Rtn. SANJEEV K. GHOSH
Chairman

Rtn. GIRUDHA DE
Asst. Governor service

VENUE : UNIVERSAL SMILE

73, MADURDAHANANDAPUR, (NEAR MADURDAHANANDAPUR SATYABRITI SCHOOL), KOLKATA - 100 107

At macro level District's 26th (overall) & 3rd exclusive Nabadisha Project for children pertaining to AOF::Basic Education & Literacy' and 'Disease Prevention & Treatment' was held on 14th March '21 .Kudos to host club Calcutta Kankurgachi and co-host club Cossipore.



THE FORTNIGHT THAT WAS...

CLUB

Official District Governor's Visit

District Governor Rtn Sudip Mukherjee, accompanied by District Secretary (Administration) Rtn Sunny Kollannur, Joint Chief Aide Rtn Sibabrata Roy, Zonal AG Rtn Susanta Sarkar, and ZS Rtn Rina Sinha Roy paid the official visit to the club at 'Venerable Room' Calcutta Rowing Club.

The activities of the club were presented to him by club President Rtn Sugata Mazumdar and club Secretary Rtn Shuvranshu Mitra through a powerpoint presentation. Seven members of the club handed over to DG their contributions towards TRF - PP Krishnendu Bhattacharjee, PP Deepnath Roy Chowdhury, PP Dr Siddhartha Chakraborty, Debarshi Dutta Gupta, PP Anirudha Gupta, Dr Atanu Saha & President Rtn Sugata Mazumdar.

District Governor was pleased with the activities of the club, specially mentioning the club bulletin and wide spectrum of service activities. He advised the club to undertake a signature project of the club and to participate in projects through District grants. The meeting was followed by fellowship & dinner.





THE FORTNIGHT THAT WAS...

CLUB

14th Know Your Numbers Camp

The Club celebrated International Women's Day by undertaking a free medical camp for ladies under the District's Project 'Positive Health'.

Lead Hosted by Rotary Club of Behala and Co-Hosted by Rotary Club of Calcutta Charnock City organised 14th Know Your Numbers - Free Health Check Up Camp at Krishnarampur in association with Free To Be Kids Charitable Trust and Peerless Hospital on 8th March, 2021 from 10am onwards.

The beneficiaries were female students of our adult literacy program and ladies from nearby areas. The total number of beneficiaries were 116.

Apart from basic BMI, ECG and general health check up was also done.





THE FORTNIGHT THAT WAS...

CLUB

International Women's Day

On the same day the Club participated in an Awareness Programme "Ekla Cholo" at Satyajit Ray Auditorium of ICCR, Ho Chi Minh Sarani, Kolkata.

The programme, focusing on Breast Cancer and Cervical Cancer, was organised by Peerless Hospital and two other NGOs.

On behalf of our Club PP Dr Siddhartha Chakraborty and Dr Sudipta Chakraborty addressed the gathering .



Team RCB @ Samagam



President Sugata, Sec Shuvranshu & PP Dr Siddhartha attended Samagam.

We had a stall in association with peerless Hospital at the venue for BMI check up. We were also the host club in the Bronze category.





THE FORTNIGHT THAT WAS...

CLUB

Tour De Jhargram



A Silver lining in the sky, always, after the storm is weathered out. Post Ampan, in continuation to the mind shattering soul-scarring and universal affliction caused due to Covid 19, a pause stop over in respite, Rotary Club Behala tour to Jhargram to knit within warmth Rotary displays in its

Detailed Report of Bonding, Fellowship & Friendship with Pictures & Testimonials in the Next Issue

By Rtn Shamshir



"Fellowship", and an important part of the genesis that Rotary is made up from.

The RCB excursion trip, 3days-2nights to Jhargram included RCB members family and guests, start day being 12th Mar with 14th Mar our return much infused with comrad erie shared in love, affection and respect for each other an exhilaration.....

WASH FROM THE WORLD OF ROTARY

Want to Know More Click - <https://wash-rag.org/>



There is no other
single **issue**
that can **impact** the health,
education, economy, equality and
progress of all people
than the need for
clean water
and **sanitation**

About Us

The WASH Rotary Action Group was formed in 2007 by a group of Rotarians, recognized by Rotary International, and focused on WASH projects. Since then it has facilitated many hundreds of projects – helping clubs find partners, ensuring sustainability, stressing the importance of a needs-driven approach, and developing best practices. We encourage a holistic, integrated approach in which water is not the end in itself, but is rather the means to a better life and livelihood in the community. Most importantly, WASH Rotary Action Group links water and sanitation to improved hygiene, better health, and empowerment of the community – especially women, irrigation and agriculture, education and literacy and, ultimately, child mortality.

Calling all Rotarians

As a Rotary Action Group, WASH invites Rotarians from around the world to join them and engage in the battle to provide safe water, sanitation and hygiene for all. Any Rotarian interested in supporting us can get involved with our activities and be Linked to global WASH assistance efforts.

A Rotary Action Group is an association of Rotarians from around the world who are dedicated to a particular, unique area of service. Members of a Rotary Action Group conduct hands-on, global service projects that advance the objectives of Rotary International. Each Rotary Action Group is officially approved and recognized by the RI Board of Directors, but functions independently of Rotary International and sets its own rules, dues requirement and administrative structure. Rotary Action Groups shall be entitled to use the Rotary Marks, consistent with existing RI policy governing use of the marks. Rotary Action Groups shall be entitled to communicate with the worldwide network of Rotary clubs, districts, and multi districts as per RI's communication policy.

Vision Statement

Health, education and prosperity for all through safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

FROM THE WORLD OF ROTARY

Want to Know More Click - <https://wash-rag.org/>



Mission Statement

Providing human, technical and financial support to Rotary clubs and districts seeking to help communities to gain sustainable access to water, sanitation and hygiene.

WASH Rotary Action Group Goals:

- Access and connect with experts in WASH
- Provide technical guides for all stages of WASH projects including program life cycle
- Seek funding outside the Rotary domain to complement internal resources
- Facilitate connections with other organizations sharing Rotary goals
- Alert Rotarians to the availability of expertise and financial resources
- Identify and share Rotary and other resources available to Rotarians.
- Assist and enable clubs to seek support from other clubs, from TRF and beyond Rotary
- Ensure clubs can learn of the needs of other clubs
- Maintain and build a collaborative working relationship with RI and TRF
- Implement appropriate processes to monitor and evaluate the impact , efficacy and sustainability of Rotary projects and programs
- Facilitate the exchange of idea and information

Mailing Address

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CONTACT US
501(c)(4) 20-8656760

ROTARY SAFE WATER & SANITATION FOUNDATION, Inc.
514 West 12th Street
Newton, KS 67114
CONTACT US
501(c)(3) 26-1214659

LIVING THE DREAMS

President-elect Shekhar Mehta isn't afraid to make big plans. With a little teamwork, he has a way of making them reality

THROUGHOUT AN HOURLONG INTERVIEW with Rotary magazine, Shekhar Mehta mentions dreaming no fewer than a dozen times. Dreams about repairing broken hearts. About eradicating polio from the world. About reaching a 95 percent literacy rate by 2026 in India, a country where 1 in 4 people can't read.

"Dreams have to be big enough for people to be motivated to achieve them," he says. "Gandhi once said that if you find the goal, the means will come. That's how it's been my whole Rotary life."

Mehta grew up in a home committed to service; both of his parents were members of Lions Clubs International. Having learned from an early age about the good that service organizations can do, when his friend Chittaranjan Choudhury asked him to become a Rotary member, Mehta readily agreed. Though only 25 years old at the time, he was quickly tapped to take on additional roles within Rotary — his motto being that if somebody asked, he would say yes. Mehta, who values the contributions of a team, would then enlist others to help.

That exemplifies his ability not only to dream big, but to get things done. "I either have done it or have a plan for it; otherwise I won't ask others to do it," he says. He is a director of the India arm of Operation Eyesight Universal, a former trustee of ShelterBox (he helped build nearly 500 homes for families affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami), and the architect of a literacy program that has reached thousands of schools. Yet he didn't mention any of that during this interview, and when talking about accomplishments, he always says "we," rather than "I."



CLICK TO READ

WATER PROJECT UNITES LEBANON CLUBS ACROSS ALL DIVIDES

[Source : <https://www.rotary.org/en/water-project-unites-lebanon-clubs-across-all-divides>]

Arnold R. Grahl

A project to provide clean water to all of Lebanon's schools is uniting leaders from many of the country's diverse religious, cultural, and political divisions.

In 2011, Rotary members in northern Lebanon decided to install new tanks and water filters in a few nearby schools with the help of a Rotary Foundation grant. The idea caught on and a few other clubs followed suit.

Two years later, District 2452 Governor Jamil Mouawad and other district leaders saw the potential of creating one giant water project that could reach every school and involve all 24 of the country's Rotary clubs. They formed a committee to handle publicity and gather technical knowledge, while each club was asked to provide volunteers, contribute funds, apply for grants, and secure contributions from outside organizations.

"Every student has the right to drink clean water. It goes without saying that clean drinking water leads to less diseases, healthier students, and consequently, better education," says Mouawad. "The bigger the challenge, the greater its positive impact on humanity."

While clean water is the main objective, the leaders also saw the effort as a means of helping heal Lebanon's long history of sectarian strife. A civil war divided the country from 1975 to 1990, leaving an estimated 120,000 people dead. In recent years, Lebanon's government is a shifting coalition of religions, political parties, and sects.

Lina Shehayeb, president of the Rotary Club of Aley, is a Druze by faith. Shehayeb says working alongside club members who are Catholic, Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, and Muslim to promote the project has deepened her understanding of those with different religious or political views.

"We are building peace and understanding," she says. "There has never been anything quite like this in our country."

Even the distribution of club responsibilities is designed to foster peace. Each club is responsible for a certain number of schools, some in their area but some in a totally separate region. The clubs nominate a project coordinator, find qualified suppliers, arrange for sponsors, and allocate contributions from sponsors, district funds, and global grants to finance the installation of filters in the schools.

“For example a club from Jounieh, a Christian resort town north of Beirut, might be assigned schools in the southern mountains near the Israeli border, an area that is considerably poorer and primarily Shia Muslim,” explains Mouawad. “After all, who — no matter what their political or religious views — could argue with providing clean water for children?”

The effort could not have come at a better time. With the crisis in Syria, Lebanon's population is ballooning with refugees, including many school-age children. By improving the schools these kids attend, Rotary members are laying the groundwork for future peace in the region.

The committee is working in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, World Vision, UNICEF, and the Red Cross. Red Cross volunteers take water samples in each of the schools a few times a year and send those samples to the Lebanese Agricultural Laboratory Institute for testing.

According to the committee's technical team, it will cost roughly \$2,500 a school to install water tanks, filters, and provide ongoing monitoring. About 200 schools have been covered so far. The goal is to reach all 1,535 schools within three years.



ROTARY MONITORS THE GLOBAL CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

Read how Rotary is responding to the impact of the global COVID-19 crisis. We are closely monitoring updates and recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to ensure the safest and most appropriate actions are taken by and for our members and the communities they serve.

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**MINUTES OF THE 2588th RCM OF ROTARY CLUB OF BEHALA HELD
AT CALCUTTA ROWING CLUB ON 4th MARCH, 2021.**

- # Club President Rtn Sugata Mazumdar called the meeting to order.
- # National anthem was led by ZS Zone 20 Rtn Rina Sinha Roy.
- # Club President Rtn Sugata Mazumdar welcomed all and started discussion on upcoming projects :
 - > 8th March Medical Camp in association with Free To Be Kids Charitable Trust at Bishnupur for the women who are part of our adult literacy program and nearby areas.
 - > Computer Training Centre will be established in association with Free To Be Kids Charitable Trust at Thakurpukur. He requested all members to donate computer, printer etc. Four second hand but working desktop computers with requisite furniture is ready for handover.
 - > Books and teaching materials worth Rs 18,000/- will be given to students of the school run by RCC Chandanpiri Sri Ramkrishna Ashram.
 - > A discussion on International Women's Day at ICCR in association with Peerless Hospital and other organisations. PP Rtn Siddhartha Chakraborty & Dr Sudipta Chakraborty will be the guest speakers.
- # Club President Rtn Sugata informed that 7 members including himself will contribute to TRF at the DG visit.
- # He also informed that the details of our proposed trip to Jhargram, including arrangements for conveyance will be posted in our WhatsApp group.
- # Official visit by District Governor Rtn Sudip Mukherjee will commence after the RCM.
- # Club Secretary Shuvranshu Mitra conducted the usual business.
- # ZS Zone 20 Rtn Rina Sinha Roy felicitated the President and Secretary.
- # The minutes of 2587th RCM of the club as published in Maitree of the day was confirmed.
- # President Sugata terminated the meeting after thanks from and to the chair.
- # With the arrival of DG Sudip Mukherjee and District officials the Club Assembly & DG visit commenced.

Members Attendance

Total Members : 32. Members Present: 23. Guests: 07