



THE MIDTOWNER

BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF CALCUTTA MIDTOWN

President: Rtn. Preeti Agarwal | Secretary: Rtn. Ruchira Bhuwalka | Editor: Rtn. Bhupesh Kapoor
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From Editor's Desk:

Some are born with deficiencies. Some may become victim of fatal ailment or accident. They face many challenges including physical disfigurement, psychological, social and economical challenges. Nevertheless like any one else they also crave to be accepted, loved and adored.

Children born with cleft lip & palate or young girls becoming victim of cervical cancer are such examples. Recognizing the need to support such cases, our club has among other projects, undertaken projects for treatment of cleft lip and vaccination for prevention of cervical cancer. We have already vaccinated 158 girls and in the very first cleft lip camp identified 39 children to be operated upon in the next camp.

Another example is that of Acid Survivors. Acid attacks are a vicious form of aggression against women. The severity of hurt by acid is of enormous proportions which leaves the victim with visible scars and severe emotional challenges.

Laxmi Agarwal was 15 years old when she became the victim of a brutal act of revenge in Delhi in 2005. She met with this fate after refusing a marriage proposal. It took 7 operations over 7 years to undo the damage of a bruised ego. However, her struggles didn't end there. After her physical recovery, Laxmi started her fight against sale of acid in India. Alongside she filed a PIL suit to bring about new laws to ban the sale of acid or at least restrict it.

This met with some success. She established the Chhanv foundation to assist acid attack survivors with rehabilitation, medical and legal aid. As a victim of societal judgement herself, she faced limits and obstacles to her employment opportunities. Hence, her foundation also helps victims navigate through employment. Furthermore, she uses this platform to raise awareness on the continued prevalence of acid attacks in India as well as offer them advice. As a budding entrepreneur she also opened “Sheroes Hangout” , a cafe run by acid attack survivors. This is not only a safe space for said victims but also offers them employment opportunities. Consequently, it helps boost their confidence and promotes a more sensitive approach to the issue.

Laxmi has established herself as a human rights activist fighting for victims of acid attack and won empathy from her audience. For her activism, she has garnered international recognition and has also been the recipient of multiple awards. Through her grit and perseverance, she has become an epitome of courage, hope and empowerment for women.

On Laxmi Agrawal’s life story a film “Chhapaak” was released in 2020 and the character was played by Deepika Padukone.

A very informative talk, on Acid Survivors by Dr. Rahul Varma has been lined up, for the ensuing meeting on 5th December.



Speaker on 5th Dec

Dr. Rahul Varma

Vice Chairman & CEO,

Acid Survivors & Women Welfare Foundation (ASWWF)

Dr. Rahul Varma is a multifaceted Corporate Executive and Philanthropist with a distinguished career in diverse roles spanning over 40 years. A leader whether Corporate or Charity with a strong vision and dedication to his commitments. He has held Strategic Senior Positions with Large Companies & in Foundation in India as Director, Vice Chairman, CEO and President.

He has had a rich and varied experience of working in the Infrastructure Development Sector, Tourism, Agro Industries and has worked on large reputed projects in the country. He has represented his organization on various foreign assignments as a key member including the United Nations and is dealing with several international NGO's and Associates working on women empowerment, education, world peace and service to humanity.

He was associated with various Chambers of Commerce & Industries and has been instrumental in launching a nationwide initiative for promoting Spirituality[®] Work. As President of Srei Foundation he has initiated several projects with long-term and sustainable objects for Service to Humanity. This foundation is in consultative status with the UN.

He is the Vice Chairman & CEO of Acid Survivors & Women Welfare Foundation (ASWWF) which is a leading NGO in India for Acid Burn Survivors. This foundation also works in rehabilitating Trafficked Women & Women Empowerment in rural villages. The work of the Foundation has been acknowledged Nationally & Internationally.

He is the Director of Universal Spirituality & Humanity Foundation which organizes the World Confluence of Humanity, Power & Spirituality, the first of its kind in the world where all streams of thought and ideas converge to bring Peace and serve Humanity.

He is also the Secretary General of West Bengal Federation of United Nations Associations and Advisor to several companies including Education Institutions & International NGOs.

A Motivational Speaker in several reputed National & International platforms. Was awarded the "Degree of Doctorate of Philosophy", Awarded the Indian Humanitarian Ambassador recognition and several other Prestigious National & International Awards on Leadership, Asia and Honorary Datu of the Royal Maharlika" in recognition for unparalleled impact to humanity and the world.

Minutes of the 2155th Continuous Meeting and 9th Regular for the year 2024-25 of Rotary Club of Calcutta Midtown held on Thursday, 21st November, 2024 @Room No.1, The Saturday Club.

Meeting called to order: President Preeti called the 2155th continuous and 9th regular meeting of the year 2024-25 to order.

National Anthem: Rtn. Nirmal led the National Anthem and everybody joined in.

Welcome: President extended her hearty welcome to all the members, and a special welcome was given to our parent club Rotary Club of Calcutta who had come for a goodwill visit. She praised the legacy that our club has inherited.

Confirmation of previous meeting minutes: The minutes of the last meeting were floated over WhatsApp and proposed to be passed by Rtn. Dr. Kapoor and seconded by Rtn. Gulati.

Toilet Proposal at The Refuge: President apprised that we have received a proposal from The Refuge regarding the urgent need to construct and renovate toilets for the 150 girls and 20 elderly ladies residing there. The existing facilities are in very poor condition, making it difficult for them to manage. President said that during a visit, Rotarians Rakesh, Nirmal and herself observed the dire need for this infrastructure improvement. The project involves constructing 20 toilets with complete fittings, including tiles, pipes, water systems, and more. The estimated cost is Rs. 6 lakhs, which also covers replacing the main drainage pipe with KMC's cooperation. This proposal has been approved by the board, and we can proceed with detailed plans and start work. Additionally, we will apply for a district grant to support the funding. The floor gave a go ahead for this wonderful project.

Cervical Cancer Vaccine Project: President Preeti apprised that on 16th November, our Rotary Club of Calcutta Midtown, in collaboration with our Inner Wheel Club, successfully conducted a Cervical Cancer Vaccine Project at Saroj Gupta Cancer Centre and Research Institute.

Vaccines were administered to 58 girls by hospital staff and Serum Institute representatives, and the girls received food packets. The event was a smooth and joyful success, leaving the girls happy and satisfied. The IW member Dr. Neerja Chand thanked the President and secretary for a perfect execution of the project.

Health Camp for Cleft Lip at Diamond Harbour: President announced that we're having our first health camp at Diamond Harbour on Sunday 24th November, where our team of doctors will identify babies with cleft lip and palate who need treatment. They'll also check in on previous patients and provide speech therapy to help with their progress. Starting from 10th November, the health workers had started sharing pamphlets and making announcements around the area to spread the word. This will help more families bring their children for the treatment they need. So we are expecting quite a lot of babies coming for registration. She asked members to join this noble cause. The time was mentioned from 9.30-2 PM.

Certificates for Sewing Class Girls at our RCC: President updated that certificates will be awarded to 16 girls who have successfully completed their sewing class for the year 2023-24. This ceremony will take place on Sunday, 1st December, at 10:30 AM at our RCC.

Kolkata Kettle 6.0: President laid emphasis on our flagship event Kolkata kettle. She asked members to spread the word and share contacts. She exclaimed that it's not an event, it's an experience.

Any other matter: President asked our mentor Rtn. Dr. Kapoor to present Rtn. Nirmal Nahata the PHF pin and certificate as he had generously donated 1000\$ to the TRF. She also acknowledged the hard work of Rotarians Mayuri, Shalini, Ruchira and Nirmal for organising the Diwali Get-together flawlessly. The floor applauded for all of them.

Goodwill visit by Rotary Club of Calcutta: President welcomed the Parent club saying that 50 years ago RC Calcutta chartered our club and we are proud of the legacy that we have inherited. Their support, guidance has been an inspiration. She asked members from RC Calcutta to come and say a few words.

They laid emphasis on having joint meetings, projects and also apprised that we should use their facilities of various hospitals set up by them by sending our beneficiaries. They particularly talked about the Dialysis Centre, Blood Banks, Thalassemia Transfusion Centre, Women and Child Health card etc and urged to use these high-class facilities and make it our project too. Flag and pins were exchanged.

Secretary's report: Secretary Ruchira announced the birthdays and anniversaries. Attendance was reported as 33%.

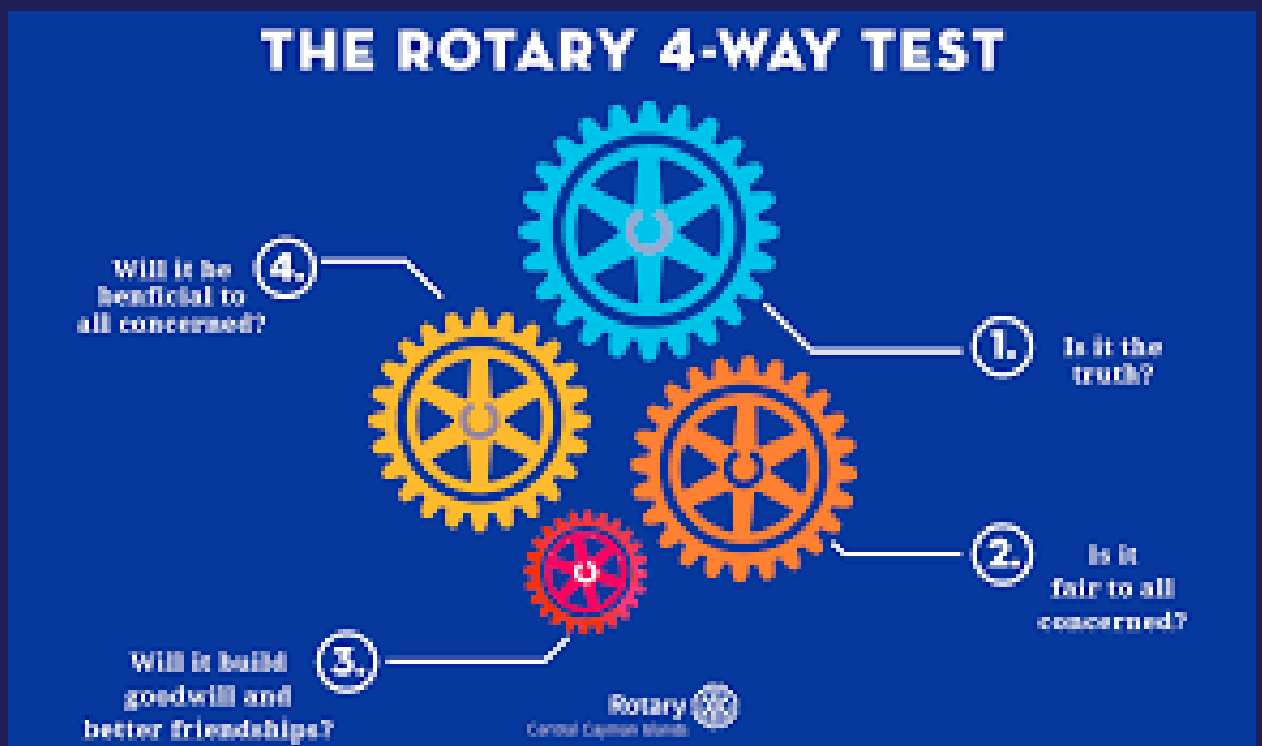
Meeting Closed: President Preeti thanked the members and closed the meeting.

Minuted by:

Rtn. Ruchira Bhuwalka

Secretary 2024-25 RCCM

“The only thing standing between you and outrageous success is continuous progress.” <http://rccalcuttamidtown.rotaryindia.org>



Health Camp to identify Cleft lip & Palate cases at Diamond Harbour on 24th Nov.



Certificates distributed to Sewing Class students on 1st Dec. at RCC.



Birthday's

"Cheers to another wonderful year"



Rtn. Sunil Agarwal (8th December)



Rtn. Rakesh Sahni (13th December)



Rtn. Hardeep Singh (18th December)

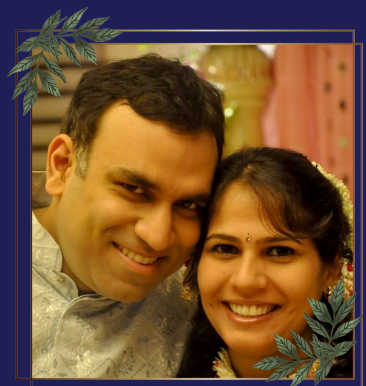
Anniversary



Shalini & S.K Mehra
1st December



Bindu & Hitesh Dani
2nd December



Disha & Ravi Kedia
3rd December



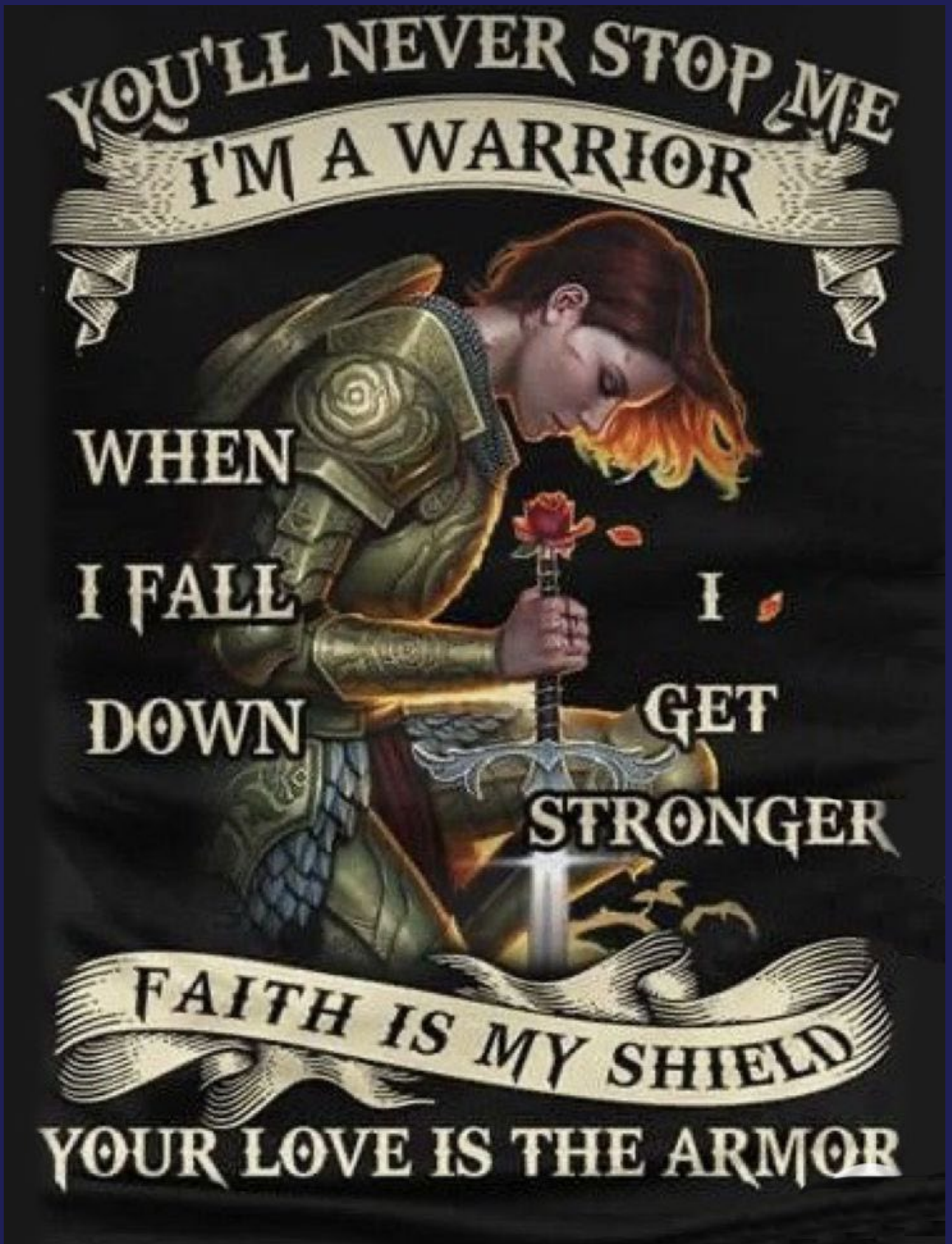
Sushma & Nirmal Nahata
6th December



Ruchira & Ashish Bhuwalka
7th December



Nupur & Samir Prasad
13th December



Upcoming Fundraising Event

Fashion

Craft

Accessories

Jewellery



Kolkata Kettle
an exhibition for CRAFT • COUTURE • CAUSE
10 & 11 JANUARY 2025
Erwin Bart, Gurusaday Road
(Opp Birla Tech Museum)

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