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REGULAR MEETING No. 2956

22 AUGUST 2025

President speaks:

After touring Xian, Shanghai, Beijing & Wuhan for 11 days we landed at Kunming to complete the last phase of our China trip in October 2011. Kunming is a modern city and the transportation hub of China's southern Yunnan province which has a temperate year round climate. This city has a large student population from all over the world and so, to our amazement, we found most of the people could understand and spoke in broken English. Bridges and pavilions cross the island of Cui Hu, a beautiful park designed in the 17th century. Nearby we visited the Yuantong Si Temple, which was founded by the Buddhists in the 8th century. It has a statue hall and a pond with an ornate stone bridge. Early morning of the last day of the tour, our guide Stella and the 20 of us headed for something called the 'Stone Forest'. We got off our 40 seater coach at a point and got into several 4 seater carts driven by young girls in colorful Chinese tribal costumes. We were busy appreciating the cute girls when suddenly I was awestruck seeing the vast stretches of black and grey stone high rises.

It looked like a tiny town of high rises....or may be a forest made of stone. Stella told us Kunming's Stone Forest Scenic Region in Yunan is specially known for its masterpieces of limestone scenery including waterfalls, lakes, causeways and caves. It is famous for its towering limestone karst formations. It is praised as the "best natural phenomenon" and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Stella also told us that millions of years ago the entire place was a huge lake. Over the years the water of the lake dried up and the stone structures hidden below the water got exposed.....I'm not sure of the authenticity of this story, but whatever said and done the Stone Forests of Kunming is amazing.

Club Secretary speaks:

Happiness is often misunderstood as something to be achieved through wealth, status, or material success. But true and lasting happiness does not come from what we acquire -- it comes from what we nurture within ourselves. It begins with gratitude for the life we have, with peace in our hearts, and with the knowledge that our actions contribute to the well-being of others. As Rotarians, we are privileged to serve humanity, and in that service we discover one of life's greatest truths--that the joy of giving far outweighs the joy of receiving. Every smile we bring to another, every act of kindness and every hand we extend in support adds not only to the happiness of others, but multiplies the happiness within ourselves. Let us remember that happiness is not a destination we reach someday--it is a way of living, here and now, when our hearts and actions are aligned with compassion, service and love.

Giving can lead to significant happiness and fulfillment for the giver. Research suggests that acts of generosity, whether volunteering time, donating money or simply offering emotional support activate brain regions associated with pleasure and social connection, creating a 'warm glow' effect. This feeling of happiness from giving is often more impactful than spending on oneself.

Birthdays:

8th September is the Birthday of Mrs. Rupa Mitra wife of PP Dr. Arup Kr. Mitra

Upcoming Theme Project:

- Sapling planting – PP Dr. SK Mitra has spoken to the Principal of CDDS regarding planting of saplings in their school field. He will get back soon with a date.

District Programme:

- Membership Seminar is on Sunday 31st August at Shibnanda Hall RK Mission Golpark. Registration Fee is Rs.500/- All are welcome.

RCCSW in OVER DRIVE MODE:

Since our last meeting on 8 August 2025, RCCSW has been on an OVER DRIVE PROJECTS MODE:

PUBLIC HEALTH PROMOTION PROJECT:

On 11th August Rotary Club of Calcutta South West in association with Bengal Obstetrics and Gynecological Society (BOGS) conducted an Awareness Programme on Gynaecological Cancer and Prevention Screening Programme, at Mansoor Habibullah Memorial School at Kudghat from 11:30 A.M to 2:30 P.M. BOGS is working with 6 Rotary Clubs, including ours, and an NGO, in this endeavor.

There was a huge gathering of students, parents, teachers, doctors, Rotary Club members, Press and Media. The Club Presidents were invited and felicitated. President of BOGS Dr. MMS Zoha conducted the Awareness Programme supported by PPT and slide shows. There was a Press Conference for Dr.Zoha, members of BOGS and the Club Presidents. The questions hurled at the team were answered tactfully. After the Press Conference got over, few girls were vaccinated with HPV Cervical Cancer Vaccines.

From RCCSW, President Rtn Ruma Mitra and Rtn Susmita Mitra Banerjee attended the Programme



CALCUTTA DEAF AND DUMB SCHOOL

Rotary Club of Calcutta South West donated 2 sewing machines to Calcutta Deaf and Dumb School in July this year and initiated machine embroidery for the girls of Classes 5 to 8. We provide all the items and articles needed regularly to run the classes. We even provide the monthly honorarium to the sewing teacher. On 14th August the 1st cheque was handed over to the teacher.

The entire Project is funded by the Trust formed by Dr.Susmita and her brother Dr.Partha Sarathi Banerjee in memory of their parents.

FOOD PACKET DISTRIBUTION TO THE INMATES OF CALCUTTA DEAF AND DUMB SCHOOL ON 14TH AUGUST 2025 ON THE OCCASION OF KANYASHRI DIBOSH

The members of Rotary Club of Calcutta South West (RCCSW) and Rotary Club of Calcutta North East (RCNE) got together to distribute food packets to all the students and staff of CDDS. The day's programme started at the school's

A.C auditorium on the 2nd floor with an opening song, sung by a male teacher. Representatives of RCCNE and RCCSW (PDG Siddhartha S Bose, President Rtn Ruma Mitra, Hony Secretary Rtn Samir Sur, IPP Rtn Kamalesh Bose, PP Rtn Dr.Sumit Kmar Mitra & Rtn Prosenjit Sarkar) gathered at the auditorium and were invited to take their seats at the TopTable. After the song ended one of the teachers explained to the students the meaning of the song in sign language. The Principal of the School Shri Madan Mohan Maity addressed the students, seated in the auditorium, the representatives of the 2 Rotary Clubs and family members of the founder of CDDS.

When the President of RCCSW was speaking to the students, their teacher was translating to them in sign language. Thereafter food packets were distributed among the students. The members of RCCSW then interacted with the family members of the Founder of CDDS. They expressed their willingness to plan and execute other sustainable Projects in their school, like the sewing classes that RCCSW have initiated recently.

In the end the students clapped for us to express their gratitude but there was no sound of their claps because they were not actually clapping.....their way of clapping was different.....all of them raised both their hands and shook their palms.....the silent clapping.



15th AUGUST CERVICAL CANCER VACCINE PROJECT

On the 79th Independence Day of India we Rotarians of the RCCSW have pledged to make India a cervical cancer free society, through cervical cancer screening and vaccination. To mark the occasion we started our campaign at Mansoor Habibullah Memorial School (Southend) at Kudghat today where 286 free HPV Vaccines were given to students between the ages 9-15; after prior awareness programme and parental consent .

The vaccination camp started after an Independence Day flag hoisting and cultural programme at 11am . Students were accompanied by their parents for the vaccination programme. The school authority and the teachers were exceptionally well organized and enthusiastic in their work. The supporting staff worked dauntlessly to make the camp run smoothly and efficiently. Cervavac vaccine was administered with utmost care to the nervous young students. The entire program

was sponsored by Bengal Obstetric and Gynecological Society (BOGS), Rotary Club of Calcutta Southwest and RCC Charnock City. Dilip Kumar Banerjee and Bani Banerjee Memorial Trust were specially felicitated for their philanthropic donations.

Dozens of Member Doctors from BOGS graced the occasion and helped to vaccinate the children in a very friendly environment. The School authorities felicitated the Rotarians and arranged for refreshments and lunch boxes. It was a very wholesome occasion where the somber mission of a cervical cancer free society pledge was camouflaged by the fun and frolic of the regular school programme of our Independence Day.



PROJECT REPORT ON KOCHIPATA NURSERY AND KG SCHOOL

Date : 15th August 2025

Time : 11:30 A.M to 12:00 Noon

Venue : Kochipata Nursery and KG School in Masat, Usthi

Beneficiaries : Students of the age group of 3 to 8 years

Kochipata Nursery and KG School is run by the meagre means of the Class 4 staff of Calcutta Rowing Club for the underprivileged and orphan children of the nearby locality. The owner of the school, Shri Borun Sarkar, a retired employee of CRC, started by teaching a few children of his neighbourhood. Gradually he dreamt of starting a school with many more children but he dared not think of it because he did not have the means. He shared his thoughts to his colleagues at CRC and together they started the school in a small piece of land which Borun Sarker gave away to set up the school. Slowly over the years (almost 15 years) with their joint effort a small 2-storeyed basic brick structure with asbestos roof having 10 rooms have been constructed.

This year to enhance the overall educational environment in the school, we donated 8 sets of benches and tables for the classrooms, each set costing Rs.4,400. RCCSW donated a total of Rs.35,200/- from the Sunshine Box Fund. The school authorities had placed the order for the furniture earlier and on Independence Day they were delivered and placed in the classrooms.

A 5-member team of Rotary Club of Calcutta South West (President Ruma Mitra, Hony Secretary Samir Sur, IPP Kamalesh Bose, PP Dr.Sumit Kr.Mitra along with his wife Mrs.Sipra Mitra and Rtn Prosenjit Sarker)started for Kochipata Nursery and KG School at Usthi from CRC sharp at 9:30 AM in 2 cars. It took 2 hours to reach the venue. We found the School representatives waiting for us on the road. They ushered all of us upstairs where a cultural programme was going on. We were offered tea and biscuits upon arrival. There was dance, recitation and singing, all based on India's Independence. After the programme got over we were called to the podium and felicitated with uttoriyo and flower bouquets. President Ruma Mitra addressed the students, parents and the teachers and handed over a cheque of Rs.35,200 to Shri Borun Sarkar.

Immediately 3 of us (Ruma Mitra, Samir Sur & Prosenjit Sarker)left the venue for Mansur Habibullah Memorial School in Kudghat to attend our 2nd Project of the day. The school authorities handed over to us a bag each containing a wholesome lunch of 6 items.



INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT.

On 15th August, PP Rtn Satya Sundar Sarangi distributed bread and milk to the 150 children from a village in Masai Mara in Kenya.



.....and then, we LET OUR HAIR DOWN:

FELLOWSHIP HILSA LUNCH PICNIC

DATE : Sunday, 17th August 2025

VENUE : IBIZA – At the Bungalow of PP Rtn Debasis De in IBIZA

PARTICIPANTS : RCCSW members and spouse

PDG SS Bose, PP RK Dasgupta, Ashoka, IPP K Bose, Mitali, PP S Behera, PP Dr.SK Mitra, Sipra, PP G Banerjee, Capt R Dutta, Mishti, S Sur, P Sarker, Dr.S Mitra Banerjee & R Mitra started for IBIZA from CRC in a hired 21 seater bus at 9:30 A.M. The entire journey kept us busy chatting. We stopped at a local eatery after Amtala for a “Shingara Break”. We reached IBIZA & then Debasis’ bungalow at around 11:30 where he and his lovely wife Srirupa welcomed us at the gate and ushered all of us into their beautiful abode. We made ourselves comfortable in the living room and began our fun, laughter and adda session. Soon tea, chicken and cheese pakoras were served which we gobbled up in no time. Then to uplift every body’s spirits, some magic liquids started doing the rounds. There was music and dance and jokes and loud laughs and photo shoots and in the midst of all this some serious discussions as well.

The huge spread of lunch was fabulous – rice, ilisher tel and deem, ilisher matha diye chhachrah, dal, jhurjhuri aloo bhaja, ilish mach bhaja, shorshe ilish, chutney, papad, misti doi, rosogolla and paan. SSB and GB had bhetki paturi and chingri malai curry instead of ilish. This heavy lunch restricted our vigour and energy so we decided to sit around and chat. Mr.Dilip Kr Dey (prospective member) and his wife Ruma, who were with us all through, also have a bungalow a few yards away from Debasis’. We all walked to his house for tea. After tea, we all posed in front of the bus for a group photograph and then boarded for our journey back to CRC.



Guest Column:

Dr Partha Sarathi Banerjee

Director of DEX DEFT Research and Consulting OPC PVT LTD

Former Director Partner of Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC)

About Calcutta Deaf and Dumb School

293 Acharya Prafulla Chandra Road, (opp. Rajabazar Science College), Kolkata – 700009

The Calcutta Deaf and Dumb School (CDDS) was established in 1893. It was founded through the philanthropic endeavours of individuals devoted to the education of children with speech and hearing impairments. Located in

Kolkata with a history of more than 130 years, and now sponsored by Government of West Bengal (GoWB), this venerable institution stands on the belief that every child, irrespective of physical challenges, deserves quality education and the opportunity for a fulfilling life.

CDDS Rajabazar has an impressive physical infrastructure. It operates in a heritage building, well-maintained, and equipped with facilities such as classrooms, vocational training rooms, playgrounds, hostels, and maintains high standards of hygiene and cleanliness. Over the years, the school has significantly influenced the educational landscape for learners who are deaf in the region; and its enrolment capacity has grown to 340 students, with present enrolment being 304 students (179 boys and 125 girls).

The school premises also houses a Training College for the Teachers of the Deaf which has a capacity to train 30 such teachers. There is a scope for provisioning additional facilities and further increasing the enrolment capacity, if deemed necessary. The learning environment is enriched with adequate seating arrangements, accessibility to books and other educational material, and showcasing exemplary crafts made by students.

Rotary Club Calcutta South West work at Calcutta Deaf and Dumb School

There is a need improve learning outcomes for the Speech and Hearing Impaired (SHI) students in the state-sponsored special schools in West Bengal. A few areas of potential interventions were identified in consultation with the concerned GoWB department and other experts. In our joint meeting with Aspiration Bengal Foundation (ABF) with GoWB on 25 November 2024, it was agreed to start vocational education in the state-sponsored special schools for the SHI students, followed by such initiatives for the visually impaired students. The meeting participants thought it to be appropriate to begin such interventions at CDDS Rajabazar, which can then be suitably adopted by other state-sponsored schools for SHI students.

To give impetus to this initiative, Rotary Club Calcutta South West has aimed to help students acquire some vocational skills which they can utilize to pursue livelihood opportunities once they graduate from the school. Our first joint intervention with ABF is to support girl students enrolled in classes 5 to 8 to begin learning embroidery work; the intervention proposal was submitted to CDDS Rajabazar. We followed it up with visits to the school to meet the principal, faculty members, and the concerned GoWB District Officer. The Rotary Club Calcutta South West project proposal, sponsored by ABF referred donor organization M/s. Dilip Kumar Banerjee and Bani Banerjee Memorial Trust, was formally approved by CDDS in April 2025 with a request to commence embroidery classes for the girl students from July 2025. The duration of our project is envisaged to be two years with progress to be reviewed after the first year's work to factor in any learning before embarking on the second year's work.

Our project was formally launched at CDDS Rajabazar on 18-July-2025.