

Rotary Clubs of West Bengal Celebrating Durga Puja 2024 as a Blend of Tradition, Service, and Social Impact



Durga Puja is one of the most important festivals in West Bengal, and Rotary Clubs across the region actively participate in the celebrations by organizing a variety of social initiatives, events, and community service activities.

For Durga Puja 2024, Rotary Clubs in West Bengal are expected to engage in several meaningful activities, such as:

Community Service Projects:

Rotary Clubs frequently organize charitable activities during Durga Puja, such as distributing food, clothing, and other essentials to underprivileged communities.

Some clubs extend their support to old age homes, spending time with the residents and donating necessary items.

Rotary also collaborates with local organizations to conduct healthcare camps, blood donation drives, and other welfare initiatives during the festival.

Cultural Programs:

Many Rotary Clubs host cultural events, such as musical performances, dance shows, and art competitions, either as part of their celebrations or to raise funds for charitable causes.

Club members and their families take an active role in organizing cultural exhibitions, storytelling sessions, or puja-themed events, bringing communities together during the festival.

Sustainability Initiatives:

In line with Rotary's focus on sustainability, many clubs promote eco-friendly practices during Durga Puja. These initiatives include encouraging the use of biodegradable materials in pandals, promoting eco-friendly idols, and engaging in waste management and recycling projects.

Celebratory Gatherings:

Rotary Clubs often organize fellowship gatherings, such as luncheons or dinners, for members to celebrate Durga Puja. These events allow members to exchange greetings and felicitate notable members or special guests.

Special Felicitations:

During Durga Puja, some Rotary Clubs take the opportunity to honor local artisans, craftspeople, and other individuals who contribute to the cultural vibrancy of the festival. Offering honours to the extraordinary endeavours made by the Puja organisers in many ways.

Impact of the RG Kar Medical College Case on Durga Puja 2024

This year's Durga Puja has been marked by the shadow of the RG Kar Medical College case, where the tragic assault of a female doctor has sparked widespread protests across West Bengal. This incident has led to a somber mood, particularly in Kolkata, where the festival is usually celebrated with much fanfare. Many are viewing the festival through the lens of this tragedy, seeing a stark contradiction in worshipping the goddess Durga, a symbol of strength and protection, while real-life women face injustice.

Several prominent Puja committees in Kolkata have chosen to scale down their celebrations, and some have even declined state government grants to show solidarity with the protests. This has impacted the grandeur of Durga Puja and created economic challenges for vendors and artisans who rely on the festival for their livelihoods.

The Significance of Durga Puja 2024 Despite these challenges, Durga Puja 2024 stands out for its unique

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themes and innovations. Many pandals this year have adopted eco-conscious themes, with one notable example being the "Rainwater Conservation" pandal, which features artificial raindrops harmonizing with the beats of the traditional dhak to raise awareness about the global water crisis.

Heritage and tradition have also been showcased in several pandals, with some emphasizing royal customs and historical roots, adding a nostalgic layer to this year's celebrations.

The dual focus on sustainability and heritage reflects both contemporary concerns and the timeless cultural significance of the festival, ensuring that Durga Puja 2024 remains a memorable event in West Bengal, even amidst the unrest.

Rotary Clubs in West Bengal continue to play an important role in supporting communities through meaningful initiatives during Durga Puja. Despite the challenges the festival retains its deep cultural significance, serving as a platform for reflection, sustainability, and the celebration of good triumphing over evil.

Minutes of the RWM 2757 held at the Mahendra Smriti Sabhagar RC Dumdum on 04.10.24 at 6.30 pm

ADDRESS:

President **Rtn. Sanjib Roy** called the meeting to order, warmly welcoming all members present.

BEGINNING:

The meeting began with the National Anthem, led by **IPP Rtn. Tarun Kanti Biswas**, upon request.

CLUB BUSINESS:



The Secretary **Rtn. Chinmay Roy** requested all the attendees to join the belated birthday celebration of

the President by cutting birthday cake. Everyone wished the President a long happy and prosperous life.

He then conducted the Club Business:

a) Extended advance birthday greetings to **IPP Rtn. Tarun Kanti Biswas**, whose birthday falls on October 15th, with members joining in the celebration.

b) Announced the receipt of the newsletters "METRO VOICE" from RC Calcutta Metropolitan.



c) Informed members about the distribution of Dress materials to the 21 HIV+ girls at **SNEHANEER**, 24/4 *Jhaowtala* Road, near *Lokenath* Temple, on 2nd October. Members spent some quality time with the inmates who were very happy with the gesture.

d) Shared the invitation from the Secretary, *VIP Park Kalyan Samity*, to all club members for attending *Durgapuja* and participating in Mosquito Net distribution program on 7th October at 5:30 PM at the *Puja pandal*.

e) Informed that 8 District directory would be procured by the Club based as requested by the members.

f) President shared 4 sewing machines would be collected from RC Calcutta on 6th October under their *ATMANIRBHAR-II* Community Service Project.

g) He declared Club would co-host RYLA at Bankura by contributing ₹3K from 11th. to 13th. November with the Lead Host: RC Samaritan.

h) President declared the receipt of invitation from *Brahma Kumaris* to all the members for visiting Living Goddesses at their Bangur premises

during *Durga Puja* from Maha Sasthi to Maha Dashami.

i) He further announced that a team from the club would be visiting Community Centre at *Khudiram* colony on 5th October at 12PM to meet the local body for extending electrical power connection and constructing boundary wall.

DISCUSSION:

a) President appreciated **PP Rtn. Swarnendu Sekhar Saha**, **Rtn. Rajeev Sinha** and **Rtn. Tarun Kumar Ghosh** for their outstanding service while receiving RI President Elect **Mario Cesar Martins de Camargo** at the Kolkata International Airport on 30th September. All members joined him.

b) On request, Club Service Chair **PP Rtn. Dr Asoke Das** proposed to celebrate Club's Bijoya-Deepabali Meet on 16th. November at Outram Club either on contributory basis or being sponsored by the board members.

c) On request, **PP Rtn. Kumar Brata Ghosh** suggested to revive existing Dum Dum Rotary Trust at the earliest for obtaining 12A & 80G certification.

ENDING:

The minutes of RWM 2756 circulated via email and WhatsApp were confirmed by 13 members present in the meeting. Sunshine was collected through billing. President wished a happy *Durga Puja* to all the members and concluded the meeting after reminding them that there would be no RWM in the next week and wished to meet all in the next RWM on Friday, October 18th.

