



Friendship

SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES

President: Amar Kr. Malhotra • Secretary: Suresh Ch. Khunteta • Editor: Ajay Khanna



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REPORT ON HOLI MEET



The Rotary Club of Belur celebrated the Holi meet on the 23rd of March 2024 from 5:15 pm onwards on the river Ganges aboard the boat MV Matskanya. More than 100 members, spouses, and family members attended the program.

Members were greeted with Tilak and presented with turbans and Utaria. Thandai and delicious snacks were served.

The program began with a fantastic couple dance to a popular Hindi Holi song by President Amar Malhotra and First Lady Swati Malhotra.

Following that, Rtn Santosh Mohta and Secretary Suresh Khunteta called upon all present members, giving them interesting Holi titles and entertaining them with their hilarious jokes and poetry, which was greatly appreciated.

Rtn Prashant Maheshwari beautifully sang a song, while Ashim Mitra played the mouth organ fantastically, much to the enjoyment of all.

Rtn Alok Kanoria, Manoj Agarwal, and Ankit Kanoria, along with their spouses, acted in TikTok videos that were full of laughter. Rtn Santosh Mohta and Ann Sarita Mohta recited a poem in appreciation of the efforts of Swati Malhotra in making every club program a great success.

This was followed by beautiful dances of Radha Krishna to popular bhajans and songs. Later, there was PHULO KI HOLI, where everyone had a great time filled with joy.

All those present enjoyed the delicious mouthwatering dishes served.

The boat sailed back at 8:30 pm, concluding a memorable evening.



TODAY'S SPEAKER



Dr. Sumitra Agarwal

Director Artificial Eye Co
City President International
Vastu Academy

Dr. Sumitra Agarwal, born and brought up at Kolkata in a family of doctors, is a trained, certified Astro Vastu specialist. She has done her Ph.D. in Vastu on main entrance planning. She has completed her Vastu Praveena and Vastu Visharad from ICAS Kolkata. She has done Vastu Visharad from International Vastu Academy Jaipur under the leadership of Pt. Satish Sharma (an internationally acclaimed celebrity vastu Shastri). A Ph.D. in Vidhya Vachaspati of Philosophy in Vastu on main entrance from Udaipur is a trained Mahavastu Acharya, Mahavastu Expert.. She has completed her Jyotish Visharad and Jyotish Praveena from ICAS Kolkata. She is trained by Ernst Wilhelm (USA) in Medical Astrology. At present she is attached with International Vastu academy as city president and looks after the training and consultancy of eastern India under the leadership of Pt. Satish Sharma.

Dr. Sumitra Agarwal is also a 3rd generation doctor in her family. She is a renowned doctor, a rehabilitation specialist. She is skilled in making artificial body parts for cancer patients- Artificial eye, ear, finger, nose, breast, surrogacy pregnancy bellies. She makes prostheses for leading cancer hospitals in Kolkata. She also runs an NGO for visually impaired patients, acid attack victims and trafficked girls.

Awarded an Iconic Women creating a better world for all at Women Economic Forum. She is also being awarded by our Lok Sabha speaker Shri Om Birla for her contribution in the field of Vastu Shastra. More than 500 newspapers, digital media, magazines and tv shows publish her articles and telecast her shows.

APRIL is MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH!



EVENTS

28th April : DG VISIT - 6 p.m.
 4th May : Club Project
 11th-12th May : District Training Assembly

18th May : Regular RCM
 25th May : Club Project
 2nd June : Joint Board Meeting
 8th June : Club officers Facilitator Seminar
 15th June : District Grants Seminar

16th June : Club project
 22nd June : RCM
 28th June : Installation Ceremony (Friday Evening)



23rd March 2024 - Rtn Dr Sarbari Swaika Project Chair imparted ab initio training on **'BASIC LIFE SUPPORT TRAINING'** (CPR) alongwith a team of Doctors at Government Girls' General Degree College, Kolkata.
Club Director **PP Rakesh Bhatia** was the coordinator.

ACHIEVERS' AWARD



Rotary Club of Belur takes the initiative to recognise **Smt Danensheri Devi Shaw**, as at an age of 90, she remains independent by delivering newspapers to various residents of Bhawanipore. She states – Age is just a number.



5th April'24 - Rotary club of Belur gifted 50nos. YOGA MATS to the Institute of Psychiatry, Kolkata, sponsored by KSB Charitable Trust. These mats will give comfort to the patients to perform yoga exercise resulting in mind calmness and will boost their self confidence.

Project Chair **PP Rakesh Bhatia** alongwith Project Coordinator **Rtn Dr Sarbari Swaika** initiated this project alongwith President **Amar Kr Malhotra**

GLOBAL GRANTS :

Three Global Grants have been submitted by our club on 31st March. Evaluation process by Rotary International is going on and we are hopeful for a positive outcome.

Cervical Vaccination- (Global Grant #2454823) - Vaccination drive for 1100 girl child(2200 vials) .Value 44000 Dollars.
International Partner clubs : RC Singapore Heartlands and RC Singapore, District 3310. Primary Project Chair: **PP Vishnu Dhandhan**

WASH - (Global Grant #2350427) - Drinking water and Sanitation facilities for 13 schools . Value 63000 Dollars. International Partner Clubs - RC Danville Sanramon, District 5160 USA and RC Singapore, District 3310.
Primary Project Chair : **PP Ajay Agarwal**.

Nigerian Heart Surgery - (Global Grant #2454258) - Heart Surgery for 10 children . Value 35,000. International partner clubs - RC Ota, District 9110 and RC Singapore, District 3310. Primary Project Chair: **PP Vishnu Dhandhan**.

Our sister club Rotary Club of Singapore and Rtn Ranjit Chakravorti club in Danville, USA are our International partners.

CSR PROJECT :

A toilet block project is under construction at Beltala Social Welfare Society at Jhargram. This project is being done with funds given by Rashmi Ispat Ltd as their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) facilitated by Rtn Rashmi Patwari. The toilet block will have two toilet facilities, one each for men and women, with shower facilities for men and changing area for women.

Funds have been received by our trust and work is in full swing. This is the first CSR project undertaken by our Club. ~ **Rtn Manish Tibrewala**, Project Chair.



Rtn Amar Malhotra, Rtn Piyush Doshi and Ann Rita Doshi on behalf of our Rotary Club of Belur handed over 300pcs doctor SCRUBB suits and large Air Purifier to Lions KANKURGACHHI Hospital senior Trustees Shri Nand kishor Agarwal (Chairman) and Shri Ashok Shah and other medical officers on 5th April ,2024.



16th April : Amar and Swati Malhotra

19th April : Ranjan Kumar and Swastika Yadav

20th April : Pratima and Anirudha Saraf



11th April : Rtn Shveta Sharma

12th April : Ann Madhu Todi

14th April : Ann Sunita Agarwal

15th April : Rtn Promod Kr. Sharma

The Telegraph

WASH IN SCHOOLS PROJECT ENCOURAGES SANITATION AND HYGIENE, BRINGS ABOUT REMARKABLE CHANGE IN SCHOOLS



The WASH in Schools Project has facilitated hand washing and sanitation in schools



The project has benefited young children as well as older students in schools



Girls are now being empowered to access sanitary pads and associated facilities in their schools

In India, poor water and sanitation facilities are commonplace in thousands of schools, making students vulnerable to diseases that hamper attendance and lead to higher dropout rates. However, in the heart of Calcutta and nearby districts of Howrah, Hooghly, Midnapore and Murshidabad, a transformative project has been unfolding over the past few years. This project, initiated in April 2019 and completed in January 2024, has brought clean water, sanitation, and hygiene to 20 schools, benefitting 10,557 students (6,830 girls and 3,727 boys) across six districts in Bengal.

The programme, known as WASH for short, has been made possible by the collaboration of several Rotary clubs. Spearheaded by the Rotary Club of Belur and along with the Rotary Club of Calcutta Chowringhee, Calcutta North Suburban and Chandernagore, the initiative was also supported by Rotary Clubs from the USA, including Danville/Sycamore Valley, Danville, Richmond, Alamo, San Ramon and San Ramon Valley.

WASH has brought about the construction and renovation of 35 gender-segregated toilet blocks, 21 handwashing stations, 18 safe drinking water stations, 17 clean water sources and the installation of nine sanitary pad vending machines across all these schools. "With a total

cost of \$142,600, the project has been a significant investment in the future of these children," said Amar Malhotra, president of Rotary Club of Belur.

The impact left behind by the project has been profound, especially for young girls who now have access to sanitation facilities for the first time in their lives. Nine-year-old Shahanara Khatoun previously had to travel back home for half an hour whenever she needed to use the latrine, but now, thanks to WASH, there are new lavatories in her school and she doesn't have to wait anymore. "I am delighted with the new latrines, I can wash my face and hands during break-time and after playing," she said. What's more is the fact that Shahanara and her classmates are benefiting from segregated latrines that provide privacy, whereas previously it was estimated that less than 20 per cent of schools in Murshidabad had separate restrooms for girls.

Hygiene training has also been taking place in full swing in these schools, bringing about a marked change in behaviour of the students. Vital lessons such as washing hands with soap, using water in the latrine, personal hygiene and waste management have successfully been imparted through fun activities, story-telling and interactive sessions. A teacher at Saradapally Free Government School described how he has witnessed the behavioural changes that the project has brought about. "The children used to treat hand washing as a cursory activity. They would

use only water and then wipe their hands on their clothes, gathering more dirt. Soap was not readily available in the wash basins and the students never asked the teachers for it. All this changed after the WASH in Schools Project was introduced. WASH trainers engaged the students in interactive games in which they saw soap being used as an important accessory. Now the children not only demand soaps in school but also wash their hands the correct way," he shared.

The schools themselves have started to do their bit to make WASH a success by making staff attend capacity-building workshops on WASH, arranged by project as well as in association with UNICEF. Nita Dey, headmistress of Barai Balika Vidyalaya, inspired not just her staff but also the parents of the students to take an interest in the WASH Project that took place in her school. "Necessity is the mother of invention. Our school had run out of soap and cleaning items and we did not have a ready fund to purchase the next stock immediately. So I decided

to purchase the soap from my own pocket. The teachers also chipped in. It is a small cost but a big move that signals a change in the mindset of the teachers. This is our school and we must do our bit to sustain the WASH Project that benefits us and our students," she said.

At Kalighat Mahakali Pathshala, a secondary school for girls near Kalighat temple, one-shy students now openly discuss menstrual health and hygiene, thanks to WASH mentors sharing their own experiences. The school now provides a sanitary pad vending machine and incinerator, empowering girls to access pads easily. Similarly, boys at Shree Maheshwari Vidyalaya in Burrabazar, Calcutta, demonstrate environmental responsibility by making classroom trash cans and promoting the segregation of biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste. These initiatives showcase the legacy WASH has left behind in terms of inclusivity, empowerment, and

sustainability.

The WASH in Schools Project has had a ripple effect in surrounding communities. Parents proudly share anecdotes of their children's newfound priorities, such as using snack money to purchase soap for home or admonishing siblings for neglecting water usage in latrines. Children eagerly recount lessons learned at school about the dangers of unhygienic practices and stress the importance of covering water and food to prevent disease transmission by flies. The community surrounding Aror Nityananda School in Purba Midnapore celebrates the implementation of clean water and gender-segregated bathrooms, with community members attending the inauguration of the WASH facilities. An alumna of Karatberia School, now a teacher herself, reflects on past hardships due to inadequate WASH facilities and expresses gratitude for the positive changes she witnesses today.

Rotarian Ranjit Chakravorty of Rotary Club of Danville/Sycamore Valley has been the force behind so many US Rotary Clubs joining the project. While inaugurating the WASH facilities in Aror Nityananda Primary School in April 2022, he said: "There is a saying that to raise a child, you need a village. The success of the project will truly reflect on the children and their health, when every community member participates in the WASH programme and makes the community a WASH-friendly one."

It is safe to say that the journey of the project has not been without its challenges. The pandemic had caused multiple delays and disruptions; however, the impact of the WASH in Schools Project has been nothing short of monumental ever since. More than 90 per cent of the schools in question now boast of clean, well-maintained washrooms and other WASH facilities, becoming not only institutes for education but also symbols of dignity and equality for the children who frequent them. Students, once limited by the lack of access to proper WASH amenities, have undergone a remarkable transformation. They have embraced positive changes in their hygiene practices now, and benefit from far-reaching consequences for their overall health and well-being.

Subhalakshmi Dey
Pictures: WASH in Schools Project

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