



ROTARY CLUB OF CALCUTTA METROPOLITAN

Club Regn. No. : 043290002/3842 • Charter Recd. : 17.06.1986



RY : 23-24

METRO VOICE



CREATE HOPE
in the WORLD

<https://rccalcuttametropolitan.rotaryindia.org>

PRESIDENT : RAKESH KUMAR GOEL - HONY. SECRETARY : RUNJHUN GUPTA - EDITOR : SASHI DHACHOLIA

1674th REGULAR MEETING

VOL 38, NO. 20

13 April 2024

We Welcome

DGE RTN DR KRISHNENDU GUPTA, SHRI PRADIP KUMAR AGARWAL,
PP RTN UTPAL CHATTERJEE AND SHRI KARTICK KALINDI
TO VOCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD CEREMONY



DGE RTN DR KRISHNENDU GUPTA FOR PROVIDING
LIFETIME SERVICE TO SICK AND NEEDY &
EXEMPLARY SUPPORT TO THE ROTARY FOUNDATION



PRADIP KUMAR AGARWAL
FOR LIFETIME CONTRIBUTION TO SPREAD OF
HOLISTIC EDUCATION IN INDIA



PP RTN UTPAL CHATTERJEE
FOR LIFETIME CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL
JOURNALISM AND GLOBAL PEACE



KARTICK KALINDI
FOR LIFETIME CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC
UPLIFTMENT OF DEPRIVED COMMUNITIES

APRIL IS ENVIRONMENTAL MONTH

KNOW YOUR AWARDEE



AKS RTN DR KRISHNENDU GUPTA

MBBS (Mangalore), DGO (Manipal), MD (Manipal),
FICMCH, FICOG, FRCPI (Ireland), FRCOG
(Ad eundem, UK), FACOG (Hon, USA)

District Governor, 2024-2025,
Rotary International District 3291.

Professor & Unit Head, Dept of Obstetrics & Gynaecology,
Vivekananda Institute of Medical Sciences, Kolkata,
West Bengal, INDIA.

Krishnendu joined Rotary in 1992 and is presently a member of RC Calcutta Victoria. He became a Paul Harris Fellow (PHF) in 1999, Major Donor (MD) Level 1 in 2012, MD Level 2, Benefactor and MD Level 3 in 2017, MD Level 4 in 2018, and Member of the 'Arch Klumph Society (AKS) - Trustees Circle' in 2017-2018. He was the first-ever 'AKS' member from RI District 3291. He has been elected to be the 'District Governor' of RI District 3291 for RY 2024-2025.

Born in Kolkata, he did his initial schooling from St Xavier's Collegiate School, Kolkata from 1969-1973, and thereafter from Mayo College, Ajmer, Rajasthan from 1974-1981. Subsequently, he completed his MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery) from Kasturba Medical College (KMC), Mangalore in 1986, DGO (Diploma in Gynaecology & Obstetrics) in 1989 and MD (Masters in Obstetrics & Gynaecology) from KMC, Manipal in 1990. He was awarded the 'University Gold Medal' being the best outgoing student in MD examinations in 1990. Krishnendu also completed two Diplomas in Surgical Pelviscopy & Hysteroscopy, and in Reproductive Medicine from Kiel, Germany in 2000. He has been awarded prestigious Fellowships from the Indian College of Maternal & Child Health (FICMCH) in 1995, Indian College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists (FICOG) in 2002, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (FRCPI) from Ireland in 2018, the highest honorary fellowship: 'Fellow Ad Eundem' (FRCOG), Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, United Kingdom in 2019, and 'ACOG Honorary Fellowship Award' (FACOG), American College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, USA in 2022. He was only the fourth Indian Obstetrician & Gynaecologist ever to receive the prestigious Hon FACOG award at the time of the fellowship conferment.

Krishnendu is currently Professor, Dept of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Vivekananda Institute of Medical Sciences (VIMS), Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratishthan (RKMS), Kolkata, West Bengal since 2002, and Unit Head since 2017. He has over 34 years of experience in Obstetrics & Gynaecology and has been a Professor in VIMS for 22+ years. In addition, he is engaged as an Adjunct Professor, Dept of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, KMC, Manipal since 2017 and has been honoured by his peers with two named Orations in ICOG and KMC, Manipal since 2018. 'Giving back to society' being his guiding mantra, Krishnendu has been providing voluntary service to the patients of VIMS & RKMS since 1997 till date.

Extremely active in the national and international academic circles, Krishnendu is currently the 'Deputy Secretary General' of Asia & Oceania Federation of Obstetrics & Gynaecology (AOFOG) and 'International Lead Fellow of Examinations' of RCPI, Ireland, in addition to being a member of various committees AOFOG, South Asian Federation of Obstetrics & Gynaecology (SAFOG),

Federation of Obstetric & Gynaecological Societies of India (FOGSI) and International Federation of Gynecology & Obstetrics (FIGO). He was 'Chair' of ICOG in 2016, 'Vice President' of FOGSI in 2011, 'President' of The Bengal Obstetric & Gynaecological Society (BOGS) in 2013, amongst numerous other appointments. He is on Editorial Board and a Peer Reviewer of numerous international and national journals of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and an 'Examiner' and 'Paper-Setter' for MBBS, DGO, MD / MS, DNB examinations in Obstetrics & Gynaecology since 1993 till date.

An active Rotarian for 27+ years [RC Calcutta Jadavpur: 1 year (1992) and RC Calcutta Victoria (RCCV): 26+ years (1997 till date)], Krishnendu served in various positions in RCCV being Secretary in 2004-2005 and President during its 'Silver Jubilee Year' in 2017-2018. He has since served RI District 3291 in different positions in TRF and as District Secretary Projects (Medical). He is a Faculty Member of Rotary Learning Institute (RLI) and a Member of the TRF Cadre of Technical Advisers, 2018-2024. He is also the 'Founding Member - AKS Forum of India' since 2020.

Krishnendu has been the recipient of numerous honours and awards from Rotary International and District 3291, namely, 'Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service in 2020-2021' from TRF; 'Best Rotarian of the Year Award', 2017-2018, RI District 3291; 'Rotary Vocational Service Excellence Award - Rotary Ratna', 2017-2018, RI District 3291, and Outstanding President Award in 2017-2018. He has been recognized for his giving to The Rotary Foundation from District 3291 receiving the 'Highest Contribution to TRF Award' in 2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2020-2021, and 'Second Highest Contribution to TRF Award' in 2019-2020.

Krishnendu has been a passionate crusader for empowerment of women and in the advocacy of adolescent HPV vaccination to eliminate carcinoma cervix since 2009, wherein he has created endowment funds in TRF in 2018 and in the RCCV Trust in 2021 to ensure sustainability of service projects in perpetuity. He has also been directly involved in the completion of three large Global Grants in the field of preventable oncology till date. Krishnendu is actively associated with 'Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vihar', a charitable school for the underprivileged and financially challenged children in a small village adjoining Kolkata, 'Saroj Gupta Cancer Centre & Research Institute', Thakurpukur, Kolkata, and 'Ramakrishna Mission & Math', Belur, West Bengal.

Krishnendu is an avid pianist, musician and a Charter Life Member of the International Fellowship of Rotarian Musicians (IFRM), RI District 3291. He is a 'Permanent Member' of Bengal Club, Calcutta Club, Calcutta Cricket & Football Club, Lake Club, Tollygunge Club; 'Life Member' of Cricket Association of Bengal, Mohun Bagan Athletic Club, Aryan Club; 'Annual Member' of Bengal Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Agri-Horticultural Society of India, Calcutta Wine Club (Secretary: 2021-2023, Vice President: 2023-2025), Indo-Italics Wine Club. He is also the recipient of 'WSET Level 1 Award in Wines' for his keen interest in the knowledge of fine wines.

His Partner-in-Service for 31+ years, Dr Simran, a MBBS graduate from Mysore Medical College and MD (Anaesthesiology) from Kasturba Medical College, Manipal is a Consultant Anaesthesiologist and Intensivist, having extensive experience in cardiac anaesthesiology since 1996. Their daughter Aparajita after completing BSc with Distinction in Economics from University of Exeter, UK and double Masters degree with Distinction in Management and International Management from London School of Economics & Political Science, UK and CEMS respectively, is currently employed with Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD) in Prague, Czech Republic. She is married to Dr Jan Hospodka (PhD in Finance) and are blessed with a son, Kian, born in October 2021.

KNOW YOUR AWARDEE



SHRI PRADIP KUMAR AGARWAL

He is a Commerce Graduate from Calcutta University, an MBA in HR. He has successfully completed different management certificate programs from Harvard Kennedy School Executive Education, Wharton University of Pennsylvania, IIMs and IITs.

He has an experience of thirty years in managing Educational Institutions, besides an experience of six years in corporate sector.

Presently he is the is Chief Executive Officer of Heritage Group of Institutions providing K-12 Education, along with providing education in the field of Engineering, Management, Law, Media, Science, Arts and Commerce to over 10,000 students from its campus in Kolkata.

These institutions have been established by Kalyan Bharti Trust.

Mr Agarwal is also actively associated in the capacity of Life member, Association member, Expert member with various professional organizations viz, Indian Science Congress, Operational Research Society of India, Calcutta Management Association, Association of Corporate Advisers & Executives. He is also a member of leading Chambers of Commerce in the Country

- National Education Council on Higher Education,
- Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)
- National Expert Committee on Higher Education & Training,
- Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC),
- Vice Chairman, Higher Education Council of Eastern Region, ASSOCHAM
- Executive Member of Bharat Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Member, AIMA Vice Chancellors Council
- Member, FICCI ARISE



PP RTN UTPAL CAHTTERJEE

Utpal Chatterjee, now the Global Ambassador for Peace and a Global Peace Icon, is among the most Internationally acclaimed of Indian journalists and public speakers. As a journalist, he has worked for several leading Indian dailies including THE TIMES OF INDIA where he was the National Deputy Editor. Abroad, he became the India Editor of a popular New York based journal. He then joined BBC, London, on the panel of experts since 1997.

He has been recognized as the most outstanding Honourable Sheriff of Calcutta since Independence and its first citizen. So far, he has been the only journalist to have been appointed the Sheriff in India. He has interviewed, among others, 21 Heads of State, including U.S. Presidents, British Prime Ministers, the great Mikhail Gorbachev in a cold '89 Moscow (and so many

more), 10 Nobel Laureates and travelled with three Indian Prime Ministers as part of their respective media delegations. He has also met and spoken at length with the likes of, say, the late Princess Diana on her initiative.

Having done his fellowship in Journalism from Oxford under the mentorship of the fabled Sir Neville Maxwell, he has travelled abroad on other official assignments more than 55 times across all the continents except Africa and Australia.

He has been recognised for being an OUTSTANDING INDIAN for "his contribution to enriching National values, public service and international journalism" by NIFI (National Integration Forum of India). Now also a "Distinguished Professor" (the highest rank a Professor gets in countries like the U.S. and the U.K.) with the St. Xavier's University, Kolkata. He was recently bestowed with the National Education Leadership Award.

Incidentally, for the seventh year running, he is the Chief Rotary Ambassador and was earlier the Goodwill Ambassador for the Department of Income Tax, Government of India. The All India Human Rights Council has also recognized him as the LEGEND OF BENGAL.

KNOW YOUR AWARDEE



KARTICK KALINDI

He belongs to a community in Purulia, from where his leprosy disease affected parents were thrown out and begged to survive. Kartick Kalindi, was born on 4th July 1990, in City Centre area in Durgapur and spent his early childhood on streets, taking shelter from trees and bus stands, begging for food.

A remote area with no public transport available to commute to cities for work. Kartick was 5-years old when they moved to this colony. He got admission in a school and hostel in Barrackpore, and graduated Madhyamik with first division. He graduated high school in a village close by, with first division. He went to college, but had to leave it half way, due to poverty in family. He got through IIT and took up horticulture. He let go of the high paying job to work as scientist in Israel and Japan.

His burning desire was to be a teacher. Not having any guide, education, or support, facing discrimination, he made up his mind that no matter what he studies, he will ensure he uses all knowledge to make his community and people self sufficient and safer, so they can lead a life of dignity.

To change the situation, he knew he would first need to change the mindset to make them aspire life of respect and change introductions being limited to leprosy patient or children of leprosy patients. Community is called Nabodinganto Leprosy Colony. Total 250 people with about 25 still affected with leprosy. Out of which 66 are female, 70 Male, 72 students and close to 46 people still beg due to old age or disability.

He first identified the abled ones and unaffected ones and got them to train and work on various forms of income generation activities like cultivation of mushroom farming, vermicompost, fish culture, harvesting super food like moringa, etc. Power loom setup, food processing unit. He reached out to find NGOs and organisations like Rotary, Inner wheel to support with education needs of the children, providing food and shelter to immobile leprosy patients.

He is invited by organisations like Ramakrishna mission, government organisations to deliver trainings on modern equipment. He was covered by Times of India and Telegraph for sacrificing everything and dedicating his life towards the cause. Recognitions help gain mental strength, but at times he gets into depression thinking about the future but seeing the bigger picture and realising that there is so much to be done gets him back on track. His request is support to bring the desired change of a positive mindset and healthy body with right education, so that this community is seen as building the nation and not a burden.

SOLAR POWER PLANT COMMISSIONED AT PACE LEARNING CENTRE

The much-awaited Solar Power Plant at PACE Learning Center School was commissioned on 3rd April, 2024 in the presence of President Rtn Rakesh Kumar Goel, PP Rtn Jayanta Chatterji and Secretary Rtn Runjhun Gupta.

We have observed that with full school operating, we found that only 70% of the Plant capacity was being utilized so the plant can meet the future requirement.

This was the dream project of the President Rtn Rakesh Kumar Goel, who relentlessly worked on this at every stage.

We would like to thank and grateful to our International Partner RC of Singapore, RID-3310 for providing USD 5,000 equivalent to Rs.4,09,361.00 and Rtn Vivek Bajaj for Rs.2,80,000.00. The total cost of Solar Power Plant was Rs.7,19,800.00



REPORT ON DG RTN HIRLAL YADAV OFFICIAL VISIT TO OUR CLUB ON 23.03.2024

District Governor Rtn Hiralal Yadav, started by comparing the importance of DG visit to a Regular health check-up done by a doctor to ensure every part of the body is functioning well. He appreciated all the good work the Club has been doing, backed by senior seasoned members and acknowledged their presence too.

His shared that there are areas that we all need to come together to make it better. First one being the membership growth. He said currently there are 145 clubs with 3876 members and our District 3291 has not been able to show positive net-growth in the last 2 years. He further informed that for a President to be eligible for DG Citation, the club needs to meet the target of net growth of 12 percent. He congratulated the club for inducting 2 members in his presence, making it a total of 4 during the current term till date, and urged to add 1 more to meet the requirement for RI and DG citation.

The second area was the Foundation. He mentioned that he had set a collection target of 600,000 dollars for the rotary year 23-24. He explained the reason that whatever we contribute in a year, 45 percent technically is supposed to come back to DG as DDF after 3 years to be utilised for supporting grants only and the surplus is rolled over. Through the years what we get is 4 times more, including additional 25 percent being matched by international clubs and another 25 percent by foundation. So ideally district gets 8 to 10 times more. We are second highest in terms of receiving grants and fifth from the bottom in contributing to foundation. He urged the club to make larger contributions and shared his expectation of 25,000 dollars contribution from club.

The third area was the need to publicize all the good work being done by the clubs through social media. He shared the need for more sustainable projects and gave an example of how taking Thalassemia as district project led to setting up of blood banks and thalassemia tests as part of diagnostic centres in remote areas. He shared how clubs have been coming together to help with various grants for blood banks, eye check-up on wheels, cancer detection, and 4 schools.

The fourth was his passion area of helping girl child, as 38 percent of girls are deprived of basic needs of health and hygiene. DG said "A nation will not grow until every girl's health, hygiene and self-sufficiency needs are taken care of". A healthy woman can give birth to and/or nurture healthy future leaders, because weak leaders cannot help build a strong nation. He said toilets with running water, sanitary pads are needed for their healthy lifestyle. Helping the girls with skill development and vocational training will prevent them from being suppressed and live with dignity.

For the fifth area of adult literacy, DG shared, Rotary India, has signed MOU with the government to make the country 100 percent literate and that is only possible by educating both the young and old.

DG Rtn Hiralal Yadav concluded by saying that, we should be proud that we are engaged in changing lives across the globe and creating hope through various projects and after all the check-up, our DG Rtn Hiralal Yadav, declared Rotary Club of Calcutta Metropolitan healthy and strong.

By Rtn Runjhun Gupta, Secretary



REPORT ON DG RTN HIRLAL YADAV OFFICIAL VISIT TO OUR CLUB ON 23.03.2024



FELLOWSHIP ON 23.03.2024



FELLOWSHIP ON 23.03.2024



WE WELCOME AS METROPOLITANS



INDUCTION OF RTN SATISH MOHAN BANSAL BY DG RTN HIRALAL YADAV



INDUCTION OF VINITA GANGULI BY AG RTN SRABANEE CHAKRABORTY



CODE OF CONDUCTED READ BY SECRETARY RTN RUNJHUN GUPTA FOR NEW MEMBERS



NEW MEMBERS WITH DG

PLC STUDENTS FIELD TRIP TO BITM

On 6th March 2024, the students of class IX, X and Secondary Board Examinees of PACE Learning Centre received the privilege to visit the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum (BITM) as an educational trip under the leadership of our respected teachers, Mr. Asim Ray, Ms Shilpa Gorai, Ms Debika Rej and Ms Suman Ghosh. The students spent the day in the first science museum in the country under the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India which is situated at the heart of the town. Its facilities are specifically designed to augment the learning curves of the students not only on curricular concepts in basic physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology, astronomy, electricity, electronics etc., but also on current topics of interest in science & technology and related social issues.

Here, the students observed various activities of multiple reflections of the mirror, frozen shadow, electromagnetism, air pressure, frequency and loudness, experiments on gravitational force, escape velocity, the digital flowchart on nuclear fusion and fission, model of Newton and Darwin, artificial human-robot and its activities, experiments on Barlow wheel, induction of charges, demonstration on hydroelectricity, solar cell, nuclear reactor, generator, model of car etc. 3D Structure of the DNA model, various types of variation in humans due to chromosomes, scanning machines placed on the human body, showing different systems of the human body etc. helped them in increasing their conceptual understanding and clarified the doubts on the relative topics.

In addition to that, our Geography teacher, Shilpa Ghara commented "3D model on the interior of the earth, Plate movements, planetary geography, demonstration of Wagner's theory, solar system, regional and economical maps of India had been enjoyed thoroughly by the students". Besides these,

- o **Coal mining show:** Demonstration on how coal mining takes place and it helped them to have a real-life experience and gave them a clear image of the processes.
- o **Science show** - A few science experiments using concepts from Physics and Chemistry were the main attraction here.
- o **Math show** - A few shortcut methods in Mathematics for calculation and the importance of Mathematics were explored here.

Hence, in every way, students got exposed to sensor technology, 3D technology, and artificial intelligence which made them curious about the technology and its use. Students did different hands-on activities based on basic Physics and Mathematics. The students were served with delicious lunch from the BITM canteen and were provided with other essentials. The experience was truly awesome and enriching as per the students' feedback. I believe it has a lasting impact on the student's education.

By Mahashweta Maity (Vice Principal)
PACE Learning Centre



HOLI CELEBRATION AT PACE LEARNING CENTRE

The most colorful and vivid festival of India - "Holi" or "Spring Festival" was celebrated with a vibrant cultural program and a splash of colorful herbal Abir on 22.03.2024 at the campus of PACE Learning Centre. The students welcomed Spring, the season of hope with some evocative performances.

The lively melodies of Rabindranath Tagore and a chorus dance drama were the major highlights of this event. It truly matches the spirit of Spring. The enthused students and teachers sprinkled colors on one another. These colors are believed to signify energy, life and joy. Organic herbal Holi colors were arranged to keep the play safe.

Holi is a festival of new hope, new beginnings and new opportunity. Holi is celebrated as the victory of good over evil. It also marks the time for enjoying warm Spring's abundance of colors and bidding farewell to cold winter.

It welcomes the affluence of the upcoming spring harvest season. All the students and staff members felt the exuberance of warmth and the joy of attractive colors. There was laughter, zeal and merry-making in the air. They spent an enjoyable day and left the school campus with joyous memories.

Mahashweta Maity (Vice Principal)
Pace Learning Centre



DOWN THE MEMORY LANE CLIPPING DATED 25.3.2017

10:58

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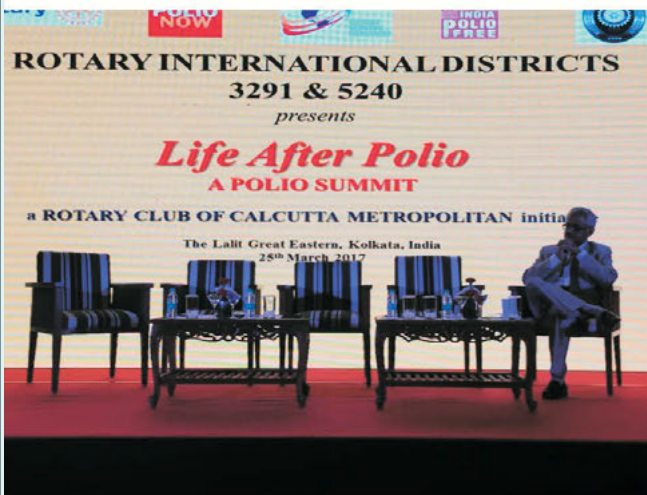
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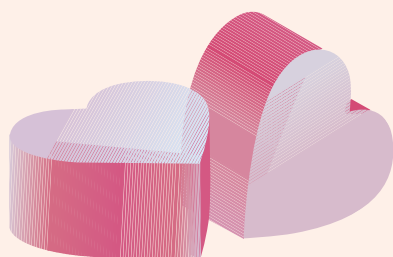
As a result of this summit many Polio survivors received corrective surgeries, calipers, braces, wheelchairs and help with vocational training. Done with a Rotary Global Grant and carried out by very dedicated Rotarians from the RC of Calcutta Metropolitan and Moorpark RC and other clubs in D5240 and D3291.



Very successful Polio Summit held yesterday in Kolkata, India Deepak Kapur waits to speak. This was a dream come true for me.



WEDDING ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS

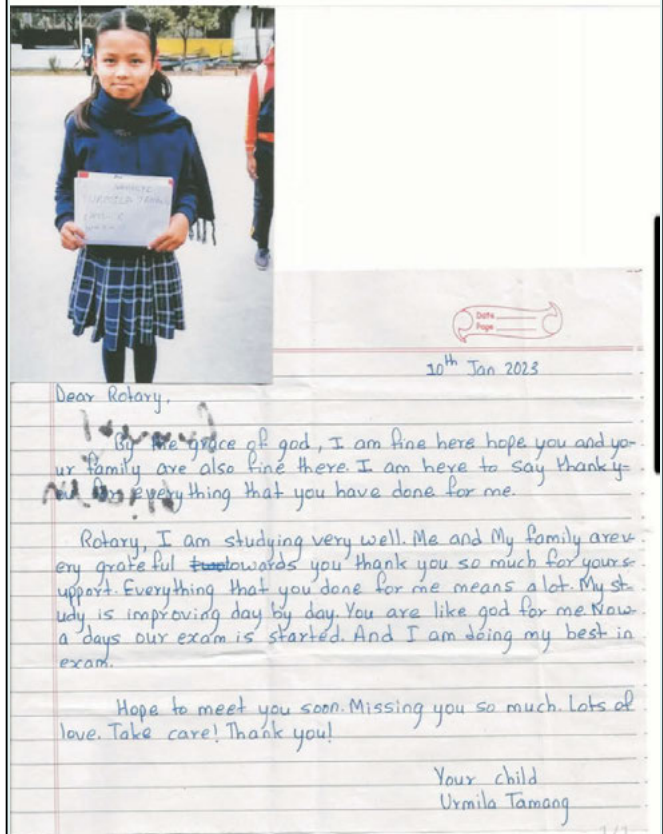


- 21.04.2024 Rtn Vanita Ganguli and Spouse Rtn Partha
- 21.04.2024 Rtn Partha Sarathi Ganguli and Ann Vanita

ROTARY SUPPORT IN EDUCATION CLIPPING OF EDUCATION NEPAL A VERY TOUCHING NOTE FROM YOUNG GIRL URMILA TAMAG FROM NEPAL



This is Rotary...
We are so proud of our Rotary Club's support of #empoweringgirls Nepal Education Fund Rotary Club of Merritt, BC #D5060



Forthcoming Events

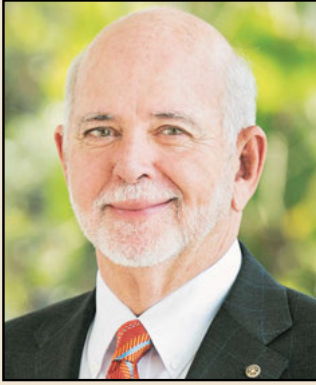
CLUB

- 27.04.2024 Regular Meeting. Guest speaker Shri Abhinav Ubuntu, who will speak on "VEGAN" followed by 10th BM for the RY-2023-2024.
- 04.05.2024 Regular Meeting & Fellowship at Kenilworth Hotel, 1 & 2, Little Russel Street, Kolkata-700 071 at 7.00 PM with spouses.
- 27.05.2024 Regular Meeting and 11th BM & 4th Trust Meetings
- 08.06.2024 COTS and Regular Meeting
- 17.06.2024 Charter Night
- 29.06.2024 Thanks Giving /Regular Meeting/12th Joint BM with RY-2024-2025

DISTRICT

- 25.04.2024 Magic of Service-Exclusive Lunch with President Elect for RY-2024-2025 with RI President Elect Rtn Stephanie Urchick at ITC Royal, Kolkata at 12 Noon
- 12.05.2024 District Training Assembly and District Team Training Seminar for the RY-2024-2025 at Hyatt Regency from 9.00 AM to 6.00 PM. Registration Charges Rs.2450/-

TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE – APRIL 2024



Barry Rassin
R I Trustee Chair 2023-24

For many, the Bahamas is a place to escape colder climates, relax on white-sand beaches, and snorkel in clear, turquoise waters. For me, it's home. I grew up sailing on these waters and to this day, anytime I can, I am out on the water with family and friends. It's where my heart is.

The environmental threats my country is facing are real. Our coral reefs, vital for biodiversity, are in danger due to warming seas and pollution. Hurricanes and tropical storms seem to get more intense with each passing year. Rising sea levels pose an existential threat to the Bahamas, eroding our beautiful coastlines as saltwater intrudes on our precious and limited freshwater resources.

Late last year, I was fortunate to represent Rotary at COP28, the United Nations climate change convention in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The consensus coming out of the meeting was that progress on addressing climate change has been too slow. Participants said the world needs to pick up the pace to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, help communities become more resilient to climate change, and better support countries that are most vulnerable to it.

Rotary can be part of the solution.

As you know, protecting the environment is one of Rotary's areas of focus. Many clubs are active in their communities with projects such as beach and roadside cleanups. With The Rotary Foundation, you can increase your impact by pooling resources with clubs and districts around the world. Foundation grants let you put the generous contributions of your fellow Rotary members to work to make the world better.

Imagine the possibilities. Perhaps Rotary districts in Canada and Australia could protect wetlands in New South Wales in Australia. Rotary leaders from Brazil, India, and Taiwan could lead grant projects to train farmers in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh in sustainable agriculture. Rotary and Rotaract clubs from the Bahamas, South Africa, and New York could work with their districts to help my country restore its natural resources, one reef or mangrove at a time.

The problems our environment faces seem overwhelming until you realize that many are fixable. There are so many ways to help through Rotary. Even if we don't lead a grant or volunteer on the project, we can all help protect the environment through our giving to the Foundation.

Rotary can't save the planet all by itself. But as our progress in ending polio proves, Rotary's impact is great when we put our vision for a better world in motion, and just get started.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE – APRIL 2024



R. Gordon R. McNally
R I President 2023-24

These are times that cry out for peace. The Middle East is in its most volatile condition in years. The war in Ukraine is the largest in Europe since World War II, and there are armed conflicts in Sudan and parts of Central Africa. Nearly every continent is experiencing a major armed conflict.

Rotary has a vital role to play in advancing the cause of peace - I often say Rotary needs to work toward peace as aggressively as those who wish to wage war. It's the spirit found in our vision statement: "Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change - across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves." We must never lose track of that last call - that to bring about change in the world, we need to foster change within.

It is up to us to model peacebuilding behaviour among each other. We can do better than questioning the motives of one another and jumping to the harshest possible explanation. After hearing words that might strain or offend us, we have an opportunity to ask, with compassion and curiosity, the intent of those offending words. And then we have another opportunity to repair the breach.

If we wish to be a beacon to the world, let us start by being so to one another. Let's help each other find greater understanding and productive alternatives to words that cause hurt and distrust. And let's stick to our principles, but never doubt the sincerity of each other to end conflicts, not inflame them.

I'm reminded of a speech that U.S. Senator Robert Kennedy made on 4 April 1968, that dreadful day when the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. Kennedy was in Indianapolis speaking to an audience in a predominantly African American neighbourhood where people had yet to learn that Dr. King had been killed.

He shared the terrible news. He honoured Dr. King for all he had done for the cause of justice and peace. And then he connected with the fuming, grieving crowd by saying: "For those of you who are Black and are tempted to be filled with hatred and distrust at the injustice of such an act, against all white people, I can only say that I feel in my own heart the same kind of feeling. I had a member of my family killed." It was the first time he had spoken publicly about President John F. Kennedy's assassination. And while many American cities exploded in violence that night, Indianapolis did not.

It is in times of crisis and despair that we need empathy most of all. Empathy is the most powerful tool of peace, and it is vital if we are to take the first brave, humble steps to Create Hope in the World.

Sponsored by : A WELL WISHER

We meet every Saturday at 2.00 pm at The Calcutta Swimming Club, 1, Strand Road, Kolkata-700 001
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