



Voice of Victoria

Rotary
Club of Calcutta Victoria
District 3291



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Celebration of Independence Day Life in the armed forces



Past President Col Man Mohan Burman, veteran army officer, much respected and loved by the men he commanded as well as his seniors, spoke about life in

the armed forces in celebration of Independence Day on Saturday 15th August 2020.

Colonel was often asked why did he join the army and parents wanted to know when should their children join. He said in his era that is about 60 years ago, matriculation or senior Cambridge was the minimum educational qualification required to be eligible for appearing in the entrance examination of National Defense Academy (NDA). Now one has to clear class XII exams.

In those days there were few sources of entertainment besides sports, for teenagers and

limited career options. One day while having coffee with a friend at a coffee shop, two Army Captains walked in and they observed that the waiters were giving them a lot of attention. This event influenced 15 year old Col. Burman to think about a career in the Army. Nice stories from young men returning from NDA, the fun the officers seem to have, all this impressed him. Accordingly he approached commanding officer of N.C.C. for details about a career in the defense services. On being questioned as to why he was keen to join Indian Army, Col Burman stated that he liked sports and not interested in pursuing higher studies. The commandant cautioned that life in the army is not all fun and games and one cannot get away from studying. From preparing for the entrance exam to National Defence Academy (NDA), to clearing various semester exams at the Academy and later having to pass to be eligible for promotion to the next rank at regular intervals – there is no escape from studying. Besides one has to train for different weapons and learn about them. Family was not in favour of him joining the army ex-

cept his father, who supported him. With three wars having been fought many parents were wary of a career in the army for their sons.

After selection, boys travel to NDA at Khadakwasla, Pune for a three year course. All three branches i.e. Army, Navy and Air Force study and train there. 4 semesters are academic and same for all. Then according to the option chosen, different courses and training are imparted in the 5th and 6th semester. This is followed by a one year specialized course in the chosen branch which is: at Dehradun (IMA) for the Army, Lonavala in Maharashtra for the Navy and at Coimbatore/Jodhpur for Air Force (now at Secunderabad). One can also join the defence services after graduation, in the engineering wing. Direct entries have to undergo a 2 year course. Doctors can join the medical division and serve as army doctors.

What is special about defence services?

One is taught leadership qualities. Learns integrity, honesty, capacity to delegate, communication skills and willingness to learn. Courage, knowledge, fearlessness are the qualities that are taught. One acquires great confidence

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Today's Programme

Rotary Meeting on ZOOM

**Guest Speaker
Kashmiri Marwah**

will speak on **Virtual Classes Online**. Along with Mrs. Aloka Schafanski, Miss Archana Tiwari and Ms. Anastasia Chattopadhyay



Life in the armed forces

in life. Also all expenses are taken care of once commissioned. Perks like free medical expenses for the whole family including that of parents in hospitals which have state of the art equipment, subsidized groceries, good pay and pension, loan at lower rate, are some of them. Promotion is strictly on seniority unless the officer messes up. The rank of Colonel has a lot of power. Like man management, training of upto 1000 men (Jawan and Officers), have a say in their promotions etc. One can have a good life and a secure one. It is so heartening when boys follow orders without hesitation, sometimes they take great risk and tell their Seniors 'wait let me go first and clear the bunkers, will call you when ready' – it is a great feeling. Lastly one has a chance to serve the Nation in the true sense.

Today there are so many career choices, New business coming up, companies expanding in India, which offer high salary, the IIT's and IIM's, IAS and so forth. Boys and Girls are obsessed with MBA, Civil Service and chasing money. Not many opt. for the defense services. Gov-

ernment has increased defense budget, improved infrastructure, opened Sainik School in each state, built huge cantonments, upgraded equipments and built good roads between army stations and have increased pay/pension. Colonel Burman concluded by saying 'follow your strength and passion. Never get disheartened. Keep your humility intact and become a good human being.'

The China Scenario: Col M M Burman also briefly touched upon current China Scenario. Large number of India's troops and equipment are at the border with China defending our territory. China has expanded in the last so many years. They occupied Tibet – nobody objected then and now China has become our neighbour. In 1962 they took Akshai Chin and never left. If objections are raised they move one step backward after having moved two steps forward – that is their strategy. They do not want to lose what they have gained. China does not have great relationship with USA, Malaysia, India. They want control over Malacca Strait and South China Sea for trade. Their export is three times

greater than import. 2 US Ships have been deployed in the area to thwart Chinese ambition. Now they have tied up with Sri Lanka for developing Port Colombo to have access to the sea route. China is using the same method in Bangladesh and Pakistan. To expand trade, a trade route is being built from Shashkan Valley through several countries including Iran. This will give them a foot hold in the Middle East. To access Arabian Sea a road is being built from China through POK to Gwader Port in Pakistan. However Baluchistan is raising objections. China is the best economic power now and is ambitious. India and USA the two largest democracies should co-operate and join hands to curtail China's ambition said Col Burman.

After Col M M Burman's informative talk, Lopamudra Samanta sang a number of songs befitting the occasion. Her sweet melodious voice charmed every listener. A wonderful celebration of our 74th Independence Day.

"Maa Tujhe Saalam"



Career Counselling



On Saturday, 8th August 2020 at the regular meeting, Mr Nirmal Agarwal, who did his schooling from La Martinier for Boys and Graduation from Stanford University in Economics. He is an MBA and is founder director of Cognix Knowledge Group addressed the members and over 80 Interactors. This was a project on career counselling. Mr Dasani of CHS initiated this programme.

Mr Agarwal said while choosing a career one has to consider all the options available today which many parents are not aware of. Often if father is a doctor or lawyer he wants the son to be one too which is not always feasible. Students often choose the stream of education so as to be with their friends in the same class. While choosing, listen to everyone. One's interest, aptitude and personality are important factors in decision

making. Wrong decision can land one in a career one is not happy with. Then what? he asked. One can make a career out of anything almost – choices are a plenty. Whether sports, painting, community service, music – if one has an aptitude and determination, one can be on top of the world. He cited the example of Maradona who focused on his strength and worked hard. He was initially rejected by his coach in early years but later made history. 'Ichha' or wish and drive and determination are the key to success. One does not necessarily have to be very good in studies, he said. Genius after all is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.

Most do not become successful overnight. One should not be deterred by failure for through failure one learns. Learn to per-

severe. There is no age for learning – it is a lifelong process and a continuous one. Mr Agarwal reminded the young listeners that 10 lakh people are turning 18 every month. Thus 1.2 crore will be competing for the same job/profession. Thus focused hard work and dedication only will make one successful. He cited the example of Walt Disney. He was refused financial help from 82 banks for an animation film. The 83rd bank took pity and obliged. The rest as they say is history and Mickey Mouse was born. Mr Agarwal also cited the example of Christopher Columbus. His talk was followed by an interactive session (all on zoom) where he answered several queries.

Mr Nirmal Agarwal was introduced by Arvind Agrawal and thanked by Mukul Mittra. All the young participants were also thanked for their presence and interaction. President Gayatree Dhar specially thanked Mr Dasani for organizing this talk.

President Announced



■ The signatories have changed in the HDFC bank for this Rotary year. It has been accomplished in record time.

■ Ballygunge Police Station had requested for some sanitizers through Dr Jai Nath Gurtu and accordingly Rtn Subhojit Sinha Roy went to donate some. His experience was not pleasant at all. He was not allowed to meet the OC and was discouraged from taking any photographs.

■ Another batch of 40 ladies had an awareness programme about keeping self and family safe during this pandemic, at Kanthalberia. More such programmes will be undertaken in the future.

■ Today, on Independence Day two lunches have been sponsored: (i) at All Bengal Womens Union on Elliot road by Ashok Kothari and (ii) at New Age Orphanage near Baruiapur by Arvind Agrawal.

■ Sunita Agarwala will be donating some PPE Kits at a Nursing Home next week.

■ The much awaited project at Bally 2 island at Sunderbans will be done on 30th August 2020. It is a Mega Project of nearly 4 lakh, envisaged and organized by none other than our Col M M Burman. Together with his ex batch mates in the Army all of whom have given generous donation along with Interactors of CHS and Rotaractors, food stuffs, medicines and useful items will be given to Amphan affected families. Medicines have been donated by B K Agarwal and Dr Jai Nath Gurtu, handsome cash contribution by Rotary Victoria, Sarees by Rotaractors and snacks by Interactors and Mr Dasani.

■ Last week's programme on career counselling for Interactors and Rotaractors was in celebration of International Youth Day which happens to be on 12th August.

Atma Nirbhar Bharat



On Saturday 1st August 2020 at the regular meeting, Guest Speaker – Agnimitra Paul, noted fashion designer and social worker spoke candidly about the harsh ground realities concerning gender issues in rural West Bengal and her own observations. Even today, men in villages are very narrow-minded towards girls and women, and they are subjected to physical domestic violence. Mrs Paul said she was doing her best to see how these girls, in WB rural areas, especially

in tribes, minority groups /communities can receive vocational training so that they can become self dependent.

In the Sunderbans, for example, there is ample scope for honey bee cultivation by the local women, along with the men.

She also spoke of the possibilities of various Skill Development programme to help drivers, plumbers, electricians, carpenters.

The State of West Bengal is rich in culture, resources, art, craft, spirituality, literature and education. It is the birthplace of Rabin-dranath Tagore and Swami Vivekananda.

Mrs Paul said that to uplift the underprivi-

leged people, villages should be adopted. Free wi-fi for education may be given and use of the expertise and knowledge of research scholars should be utilised/made available.

Like USA had spread their food network through MacDonalds, West Bengal/India should try and go global with delicacies like *Moghlai Paratha, Chicken Roll, Macher Paturi*.

India should promote its various products to neighbouring countries like Ceylon, Myanmar and others.

Mrs Paul said that united efforts of the state and the Centre could help India to develop economically as it was a country rich in nat-

ural resources, manpower, and unchan-nelized skills.

Her great desire was to see India foremost on the Global map. We should all join hands for Nation Building. She gave the example of the Swachh Bharat Campaign which had been successful.

She proudly said that India had enough resources to be a great economic power internationally.

She was introduced by Alka Jayaswal and thanked for her presentation by Captain Arnab Sen.

– Reported by Kashmiri Marwah



INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

International Youth Day (IYD) was designated by the United Nations in the year 1999, after endorsement by the General Assembly of the recommendations made by the 'World Conference of Ministers' Responsible for Youth, in an attempt to raise awareness on legal and cultural issues concerning youth. The first IYD was observed on 12th August 2000 and has been observed annually with a theme, relevant to the times.

This day is meant to signify and highlight the importance of young people, not just as a future generation but also as the current driving force of change in the world, and to bring their voices, actions and initiatives to the main stream.

This year (2020) the theme for IYD is 'Youth Engagement for Global Action' and this has never been of more significance than during the current conditions.

In observance of the day, the UN has launched a social media campaign, #31 Days of Youth, celebrating young people all throughout August.



Attended District Programmes

The second part of the District programme on tree plantation 'THE GREEN EXPEDITION' was done on 20-8-20 opposite ITC Royal Bengal on Eastern Bypass in the presence of Senior Government Officials and Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority.

President Gayatree Dhar along with member Subhadri Chatterji attended the programme.



■ **Sat, 15th Aug:** We at Rotary Club of Calcutta Victoria celebrated Independence Day by providing lunch to 200 inmates at All Bengal Women's Association. A sumptuous Bengali lunch along with *rosogolla* and *ledikeni* was served. Ashok Kothari one of the senior members of the club sponsored the lunch.



■ **Sat, 15th Aug:** On the same day, lunch was hosted at the orphanage New Age Society for all at Sitakundu near Baruipur. There are seventy five orphan boys who are hearing and speech impaired. They were served special biryani and sweets. The boys blessed the club by praying and enjoyed the meal. This lunch was sponsored by PP Arvind Agrawal.



■ **Tue & Wed, 11th & 12th Aug:** An awareness camp on Covid-19 was held at Kanthalberia in a very remote area of Poro Para. The villagers there are very poor and are hardly aware of the effect of the virus and the importance of wearing masks and washing hands. An awareness talk was given to fifty ladies. They were provided masks, soap and food for attending these talks. They were happy to get the knowledge and requested for more such awareness talks. We were helped by our RCC at Kanthalberia.

■ **Wed, 19th Aug:** 25 reusable PPE kits and 50 face shields were donated at Medview Nursing Home on Broad Street. The entire project was sponsored by PP Sunita Agarwala, her niece Dr Rachna Sonthalia and Sunita's son Rajat Agarwala. Subhadri Chatterji handed over the items to the authorities.



A wise physician said the best medicine for humans is **CARE and LOVE**. Some one asked, if it does not work? He smiled and said **"INCREASE THE DOSE"**

PROJECTS IN AUGUST 2020



■ **District Tree Plantation:** Rotary Club of Calcutta Victoria participated in the District 3291 Tree Plantation, The Green Expedition at Dhyana Ashram on 2nd August. We contributed Rs 10,000 and was one of the host clubs. The trees were planted at St Xavier's School, Raghavpur Campus. PP B K Agarwal and Dr Krishnendu Gupta attended the programme. We were given a certificate for participating.

■ **Mon, 3rd Aug:** Sanitizers, masks and gloves were donated at New Alipore police Station, which is the need of the hour. We were received warmly by the staff there. But since the area was in the containment zone, we were not allowed to go inside the police station. PP B K Agarwal, President Gayatree Dhar and Subhojit Sinha Roy gave out the items to the police. On 4th August,



the same items were donated at two police stations. Rtn Sutapa Das and Subhojit Sinha Roy went to Bidhan Nagar police Station and Belehata police station for the project. The entire project was sponsored by Subhojit Sinha Roy.



■ **Sat, 8th Aug:** A career counselling programme was arranged for the Interactors and Rotaractors of Rotary Club of Calcutta Victoria on Zoom platform. Nirmal Agarwal, a well known counsellor, addressed the participants.

Minutes of the 1248th Regular Meeting of Rotary Club of Calcutta Victoria held on Saturday, 1st August, 2020 at 12:00 noon on ZOOM

- President Gayatree Dhar called the 1248th regular meeting to order.
- National Anthem was played and all joined in.
- President welcomed guest speaker Sm Agnimitra Paul, guests and members.
- Minutes of the 1247th regular meetings were confirmed by Seema Danda and seconded by Capt Arnab Sen.
- **President's Announcements:**
 - ◆ RCCV is co-hosting a District project

of tree plantation 'Green Expedition' The club will be contributing Rs 10,000. The project will be at St Xavier's School, Raghavpur campus

- ◆ Masks, gloves and sanitizers will be donated next week at various police stations. The entire project will be sponsored by Subhojit Sinha Roy Police stations envisaged are New Alipore, Beliaghata and Bidhan Nagar. Many other po-

lice stations will be taken up later.

- ◆ The club along with the Indian Army and our Rotaractors are all geared up to donate ration, medicines and essential items to the Amphan stricken people of Bali II island at Sunderbans sometime in August. This project will be to celebrate Independence Day. PP Col Burman will oversee this project.
- ◆ Requested to please pay up the half yearly dues as the statutory

payments have to be made to the RI and District.

- PP Alka Jayaswal introduced the Guest speaker Sm Agnimitra Paul.
- Smt Agnimitra Paul spoke on 'Atman-

irbhar Bharat'. The vote of thanks was given by Capt Arnab Sen

■ **Secretary's announcements:**

- ◆ Birthday greetings were extended to K K Nanglia for 13th August

- ◆ Next meeting will be on 8th August 2020 at 12 noon on Zoom. Speaker will be Mr Nirmal Agarwal, who will speak on career counselling.

- There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1 pm.

Members Present: 28 • Guest: 1

Minutes of the 1249th Regular Meeting of Rotary Club of Calcutta Victoria held on Saturday, 8th August, 2020 at 12:00 noon on ZOOM

- President Gayatree Dhar called the 1249th regular meeting to order.
- The National Anthem was played and all joined in.
- President welcomed the guest speaker Mr Nirmal Agarwal, Mr Dasani and all the Interactors who had joined the meeting.
- The minutes of the 1248th meeting was confirmed, proposed by Vinita Dutt and seconded by Rakesh Macwan.
- **President's Announcements:**
 - ◆ Rotary Calcutta Victoria has participated in the district tree plantation project 'Green Expedition' on 2nd August 2020 at Dayan Ashram. Victorians Dr Krishnendu Gupta and B K Agarwal attended the programme.
 - ◆ Mask, Sanitizer and gloves were given out in three police stations

- on 3rd and 4th August 2020. IPP B K Agarwal and President Gayatree Dhar was present at Alipore PS, Subhojit Sinha Roy and Sutapa Das attended the project at Beliaghata PS and Bidhan Nagar PS.
- ◆ Distribution of relief material to Amphan affected victims in Sunderbans along with Indian Army and others will be in the last week of August. It is a project of nearly four lakhs.
- ◆ Received an email from PDG Aniruddha Roy Choudhury enquiring about the status of GG 1637079 and GG 1873091. Reports have to be sent to RI. The past president handling these projects have been spoken to regarding this matter.
- ◆ Ashok Kothari has donated Rs 50,000 to the school (Sree Sattyananda Mahapeeth) at Baruipur. Cheque was directly sent to them.

- Discussion took place about tree plantation to be held at Gosaba which Lata Bhatia is handling along with Arvind Agrawal.
- PP Arvind Agrawal introduced the guest speaker, Mr Nirmal Agarwal, who gave an inspiring talk about how to choose a career followed by an interactive session with the Interactors. The speaker was thanked by PP Mukul Mittra.
- **Secretary's Announcement:**
 - ◆ Next Meeting on Saturday 15th August 2020, at 12 noon. It will be an informal meeting. Speaker will be PP Col M M Burman who will speak on 'Life in the Armed Forces'
 - ◆ No Birthdays and Wedding anniversaries this week.
- There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 1.15 pm

Members Present: 20 • Guest: 80



Rotary India Mobile App

The Rotary India mobile app is the brainchild of RIPE Shekhar Mehta. It is a one stop solution for connectivity between Rotarians of a club and across India. Available on both Android and iOS platforms.



Features:

- ◆ Club and District directory.
- ◆ Search for any Rotarian by name, classification and keywords.
- ◆ Access to clubs' events, news and announcements.
- ◆ Club project pictures and contents can be uploaded on the Gallery and seen by all club admins and district admins.
- ◆ Notifications for birthdays/anniversaries of club

members so that you can wish them on their special days.

- ◆ A Rotarian can never be far away from a Rotary club. Find A Club option will help you in locating the nearest club from your present location.
- ◆ Fellowship across Rotary India is now a reality. Search for any Rotarian anywhere in the country just by a tap.

This is a useful app that should be in the smartphone of every Rotarian.