



ROTARY CLUB OF CALCUTTA UNIVERSE

বার্তা

-The Message

Club No - 89711 • Charter Date - 12th November, 2018

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President : Rtn. Susmita Sarkar

Dist. Governor : Rtn. Ramendu Homchaudhuri
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November is Rotary Foundation Month

PROJECTS

Cervical Cancer Screening Camp



The Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe organized a **Cervical Cancer Screening Camp** on 6th September 2025 at the premises of *Uddami India Foundation*.

The camp focused on providing crucial healthcare support to 40 underprivileged women who often lack access to preventive medical services. Through thorough screening and expert guidance, the participants were educated about the risks, early signs, and preventive measures related to cervical cancer.

Contribution to Rotary Foundation India Polio Plus Fund



On the occasion of its Installation on 9th July 2025, the Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe contributed **USD 400** to the **Rotary Foundation India Polio Plus Fund**, supporting global efforts to eradicate polio. Four of our Club members personally donated **USD 100** each toward this noble cause. The contributions were formally recognized on 6th September 2025 when the Club members received their **Polio Plus Pins** from **PDG Mukul Sinha**, District Polio Plus Chair. This initiative reinforces the Club's commitment to global health and aligns with Rotary International's ongoing mission to eliminate polio worldwide.

Gift of Grains, Gift of Love



The Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe organized a service activity by distributing food grains to the residents of *Moms' Care*, a home dedicated to specially-abled individuals. This initiative was undertaken as a gesture of compassion and solidarity, reaffirming the Club's commitment to supporting

marginalized sections of society. *Moms' Care* has been providing shelter, care, and rehabilitation to differently-abled individuals, ensuring that they receive a dignified life filled with love and attention. Recognizing their noble work, the Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe reached out to extend a helping hand by providing essential food grains, which will assist in meeting the daily nutritional needs of the residents. The members of the Club interacted warmly with the inmates, spreading smiles and creating a sense of togetherness. Such initiatives not only provide material support but also inspire hope and confidence among the beneficiaries. Through this small yet meaningful contribution, the Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe continues its mission of "Service Above Self," demonstrating that collective goodwill can bring comfort and positivity to the lives of those who need it most.

Healthy Youth, Bright Future : Health Check-up Camp



Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe organized a **General Health Check-up Camp** on the campus of **Dream Institute of Technology** for the benefit of its engineering students on 11th September 2025. The camp was designed to raise awareness about the importance of regular medical examinations and to ensure that students are mindful of their overall health and wellness, especially at an age when academic pressures often overshadow personal well-being. The highlight of the camp was the gracious presence of **Dr. Sujit Bhattacharya, a reputed Endocrinologist**, who conducted health check-ups for the students. Dr. Bhattacharya patiently examined each participant, assessed their general health conditions, and addressed individual queries. He also offered valuable advice on nutrition, lifestyle, and preventive healthcare practices, tailored to the needs of young adults. Where necessary, he prescribed medicines and recommended further medical guidance for students requiring special attention. This project exemplifies Rotary's continued commitment to serving the community and nurturing the younger generation. By organizing such health-focused initiatives, Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe seeks to ensure that students are not only academically strong but also physically and mentally fit to face the challenges of life.

ARTISANS AT WORK – PHOTOWALK TO KUMORTULI



Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe and Uddami Youth Space brings back the enchanting photowalk to Kumortuli on 13th September 2025. A group of 32 enthusiasts participated in this event under the tutelage of the acclaimed visual artist Ms. Surasree Seal, the entourage picked up some useful insights on angles, light and frames along with some clever hacks to capture that perfect shot. The walk starts from



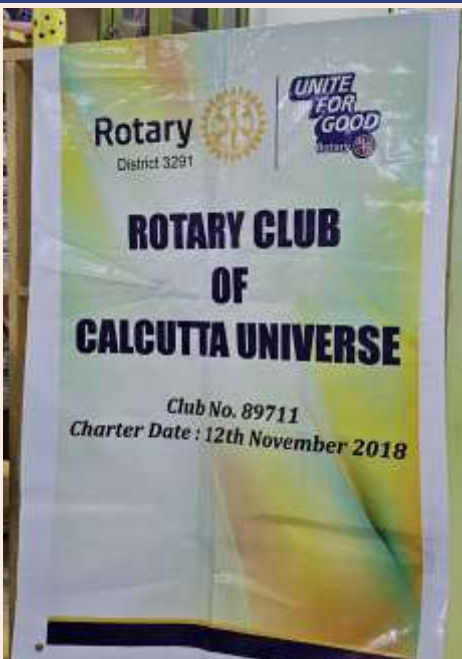
Uddami's Sovabazar Centre and ends at the partially lit narrow lanes of idol making workshops of Kumortuli. Durga Puja is the most awaited festival in Bengal and Kumortuli offers the most photo-worthy setting to capture the true essence of Bengali culture and traditions. The festive air, the paints, passionate artistry, the relentless hardship of the artists and their labour of love are finely captured by these budding photographers making our event indelible.

Iron Removal Treatment Plant System with Beautification and Fountain Integration



Groundwater in many regions often contains excessive concentrations of iron, which leads to undesirable color, odor, and taste in water, along with staining of fixtures and scaling in distribution systems. To ensure safe and aesthetic drinking water supply, an **Iron Removal Treatment Plant (IRTP)** is established, which not only purifies water but also integrates with beautification measures and a fountain system to serve both utility and community enrichment.

Nabadisha



Nabadisha is a flagship initiative of Rotary District 3291, undertaken in collaboration with the Kolkata Police to support the welfare of street children rescued by them. Through this project, Rotary Clubs donated essential study materials, food stuff and extended care to help these children pursue education and move towards a brighter future. This year, the Nabadisha event was held at **CINI, 63 Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, Kolkata – 700016** on 22nd September 2025, where the **Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe**, along

with **Rotary Club of Geetanjali**, joined hands to distribute basic study and food materials and spread the message of compassion and inclusivity.

Inclusion Meets Devotion Matir Durga



Matir Durga is a flagship annual initiative of the Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe, dedicated to empowering and celebrating the LGBTQ+ community, who continue to face marginalization in different spheres of society. With this project, our Club seeks to break barriers, foster inclusivity, and create a platform where diverse voices are respected and

celebrated. This unique event provides members of the LGBTQ+ community an opportunity to become the jury panel, visiting and judging the artistry, creativity, and inclusiveness of some of the most renowned Durga Puja pandals of Kolkata. By placing them in the role of decision-makers, we recognize their perspectives and reinforce the message that every individual, regardless of identity, deserves equal dignity and respect. The project culminates with the Sharad Samman, an award presented on behalf of our Club to the best-performing Puja pandals. This year, the Matir Durga event held on 27th September 2025, continuing our tradition of linking the spirit of Durga Puja with inclusivity, acceptance, and social empowerment. Through *Matir Durga*, Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe not only celebrates Kolkata's grandest cultural festival but also promotes the values of equity and acceptance that lie at the heart of Rotary's mission of service above self.

Polio Awareness Drive



On the eve of the Polio Immunization Day, i.e., on 11th October 2025, the Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe organized a **Polio Awareness Drive** to spread awareness among the public about the importance of administering Polio drops to children. Banners on Polio awareness were displayed on cars, autos, and tolos, which moved

across marketplaces, slum areas, and near health centres. Miking was also carried out to inform and encourage parents to bring their children to the nearest Polio booths the following day, 12th October 2025, for immunization. The awareness activities were conducted across **Samali, Rasapunja, Joka, Kasba, Haltu, Dhakuria, and Bagnan**, successfully reaching a wide section of the community.

Polio Immunization Day Awareness Drive



On the occasion of **Polio Immunization Day on 12th October 2025**, the **Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe** actively spread awareness about administering Polio drops to all eligible children. Banners were displayed on cars and autos, and miking was conducted across various areas including **Bibirhat, Shamukhpotaha, Raypur, and Joka** to inform and encourage parents to visit

nearby Polio booths. Club members also visited several **Health Centres at Maheshtala, Tollygunge, Bangur Hospital, and Deshapran Sasmal Road**, where they interacted with the frontline health workers and distributed refreshments as a gesture of appreciation for their dedicated service in making the immunization drive successful.

End Polio on Wheels



On the occasion of **World Polio Day** observed on **24th October 2025**, members of the **Rotary Club of Calcutta Universe** took to the streets of Kolkata to spread awareness about Rotary's global mission to **End Polio Now**. To mark the day, club members visited various high-traffic zones across the city — including key intersections, marketplaces, and busy thoroughfares — and actively engaged with the public by **pasting "End Polio Now" stickers on car windshields**. The initiative aimed to enhance public visibility of Rotary's ongoing commitment to eradicating polio from the world and to remind citizens that sustained awareness and vaccination are vital to keeping the world polio-free. The brightly designed stickers served as moving messages of hope and advocacy, ensuring that the cause reached thousands of commuters and pedestrians throughout the day. This impactful drive not only promoted **Rotary's public image** but also rekindled awareness about one of its most significant humanitarian missions — creating a **Polio-free world**.

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS RY 2024-25



District outstanding AG Service Award RY 2024-25 and Outstanding President RY 2024-25 Group A

Outstanding Achievements by Members



*Banga Srestha Samman presented to our Executive Secretary
Rtn. Dr. Sailen Bhowmick*



*3rd Prize Group A Recognition
for Contribution to TRF (Total)*

The story of a little girl

For Bengalis, Durga puja is one of the best events. We buy clothes, go to different pandels, eat good food and what not! For us puja is only about enjoyment. But have you ever wondered about the people who cannot afford to do stuff like these, for them puja is no different than their normal day.

Today I am going to tell a story about a girl named Kamini. She was not different from any other child. If by different you mean being poor. But that never changed the curiosity in her little mind. Her father worked as a gardener in other people's gardens. He looked after plants, cleaned gardens, watered plants in other gardens. He earned a meagre amount and not even everyday. His works were seasonal. The financial condition of Kamini's family was not well. Her mother worked as a housekeeper who managed the house. Kamini being young never understood that her family was not financially well. Her parents always tried to give her whatever they could. Kamini like every child loved Durga Puja. She loved seeing the streets with full of light, joy and happiness. She felt that during the Puja, even the night would feel awakened. Every year Kamini's father by getting a small bonus for puja, bought her a good dress. She not wanting much would be really happy with that. But this year Kamini heard from her friend that they were going to a restaurant. Kamini being a child really wanted to go to a restaurant. She asked her father and tried to persuade him, but her father declined. Kamini did not know that he declined as he could not afford it. Kamini thought her father was just being rude and mean to her. With teary eyes she ran out and began crying. Her father looked at her mother with a sorrowful gaze. Kamini was so hurt that she refused to talk to them. Then, while she was walking down a street playing with a wooden stick, she saw a woman with dirty and torn clothes holding a small child in her arms. Kamini went over to them and asked the woman why she is out onto the streets with her child. The woman said that she had no choice. Kamini being a child asked her "Are you not going to a restaurant didi?" The woman with a sorrowful smile said that if she could even get a good piece of cloth to wrap her newborn child in, she would be happiest. She continued that ever since her husband died, she lost her house and had to go on the streets. Kamini after hearing this could not control her tears anymore and ran to her house crying. She hugged her father and said while crying "Baba I forgot that even if I cannot go to restaurants or have good things, I have a roof over my head and adequate food to eat, not just that I have the best thing in the world that is loving parents and a lot of love". Her father also started crying and said "My Kamini, I am so proud of you and that you have understood this". Kamini also told her father that "Baba I know you lose your wish to buy a land just to get me a new cloth, How could I have ever told that you were mean!" Her father said "It is okay my child, seeing you happy fulfils all of my wishes". Then Kamini told her father about that woman. Her mother came forward and gave them a saree to give to that woman. Kamini thanked her mother alot and with her father, rushed to see that woman. Her mother also cooked some food to give to her. Kamini gave that woman the food and cloth, and the woman thanked them immensely. Seeing that joy in her face made Kamini so happy. Her father then said "I may not be able to buy a land for a garden where I can plant flowers, but my home is my garden and you all are my flowers".

Puja is not same for all, some people do not even get the privilege to sleep in a house. In every corner of this city, people are found on streets in the cold and heat. It is time for all of us to help them as much as we can.

Name : Mayukh Manjunatha, Narayana School, Barasat, Admission number - 5228569

A Ray of Hope

Meera sat by the hospital window, staring out into the rain. The surrounding plants alive and thriving, enjoying the rain. She felt a pang of jealousy, maybe even a little guilt as she looked back at her son, Aarav lying there on the hospital bed. He had Thalassemia major, a genetic blood disorder that prevented his body from making enough red blood cells. She stroked his hair lovingly, hoping that her poor boy wouldn't have to suffer so much.

Every time Aarav would come to the hospital for blood transfusions, the nurses would smile at him. They would sit with him, tell him how brave he was and how things will get better. He was just ten years old, but even he knew that possibility of this being cured was low to none.

Sometimes, during their regular visits to the hospital, he would stare at his mother, and ask if he would get better. She would smile slightly, saying that one day, maybe they would be able to cure him. He would hold onto that ray of hope, smiling back at his mother gently. To her, each of those transfusions carried a bittersweet memory. A reminder of what her poor boy had to suffer through.

At the end of the day, she would hold her son, as he gently drifted off to sleep. Staring lovingly at him, she would realise that he was one of the strongest persons she knew.

Name : Sreejana Chakrabarty, Narayana School, Barasat, Admission number - 5552128



"In the silent rhythm of transfusions thalassemia whispers tales of hope, where every drop of donated blood becomes a verse of resilience, painting lives with hues of perseverance."

Name : Antara Das (XI Humanities), Narayana School Barasat

Festivals & Awareness : Celebrating with a Cause

As Bengal welcomes *Sarodiya* with lights, music, and devotion, we're reminded of the beauty of culture and community. Durga Puja is more than a festival — it's a celebration of strength, togetherness, and the triumph of good over evil. But while we rejoice, let's not forget those silently fighting their own battles — like individuals living with *Thalassemia*, a serious blood disorder. Through awareness, timely screening, and support, much can be done to ease their struggles. Rotary Interact Club encourages every Interactor to spread awareness about *Thalassemia* and extend compassion. Through blood donation drives, educational campaigns, and compassionate outreach, we aim to make a difference. So, this Puja season, as we revel in lights and laughter, let's also light the lamp of awareness. Let's pledge to be more than just celebrators — let's be changemakers.

Name : Yashraj Choudhary, Class – XI, Narayana School, Barasat

When autumn winds begin to sing, and skies turn crystal blue,
The shiuli flowers scent the air, a promise fresh and true.
The city glows with colorful lights and doorsteps with alponas
Sharadiya has come again, the best time of the year.
From Kailash high she journeys down, our Ma so fierce, so kind,
With Lakshmi, Saraswati, Kartika, and Ganesh aligned.
The dhak beats loud, the conch shells blow, our hearts in joy unite,
We wait for Ma with folded hands, our souls embrace her light.
From Panchami's dawn to Dashami's dusk, her glory lights the days,
Through ashtami's prayers, nabami's songs, devotion finds its ways.
And as she leaves, we call again, "O Ma, come back so soon,
Until the year renews its turn, beneath the autumn moon."

Name : DEBOPARNA MANDAL (XI IIT), Narayana School, Barasat

So let the world hear their story
clear, A tale of bravery year
by year.
The patient's strength is a guiding
flame,
In life's great book, they sign their
name.

**Name : SAAHIL SINGH, Class XI Humanities
Narayana School, Maheshtala.**



Club Members Corner

Dhaki

We too are artists of rhythm and percussion,
But not the likes of Alla Rakha Or Zakir Hussain.
No one places the title Ustad or Pandit before our names.
We are the ones from impoverished, oppressed villages,
Living on the fringes.
Some of us are day laborers all year, some share croppers,
Living without wealth, without honor.
Our instruments lie silent in our huts,
Gathering dust in solitude.
Only once a year —
At the onset of the Goddess' fortnight —
Do people suddenly remember us.
Everyone longs to hear the sound of our dhak,
From eight to eighty, all want to dance to its beat.
So when the call comes,
We rush —
To showcase our craft,
For we belong to a special kind of artist :
We are the Dhakis.
Our instrument too carries
Bol, Taal, Laya,
Matra, Theka, Tihai.
Yet through the year,
Does anyone call upon us to perform?

Once a year they summon us,
Not so much for the sake of art,
But because the dhak's rhythm fuels their frenzy,
Their wild dancing.
And we too, for the sake of food, shelter, and money,
Forget the dignity of art,
And match their steps, their beats.
We too are artists, we too have
Honor, discipline, training in our art.
But for survival, for hunger's demand,
We set aside all choices, all pride,
And run with the dhak on our shoulders.
The truth is —
We belong to the poor and deprived,
While those who hire us are the wealthy.
Knowledge today is sold at the door of knowledge,
And Goddess Saraswati herself
Has lost her dignity.
For the Creator, for art, for all things —
What comes first
Is the need to live,
The pull of an empty stomach.

Rtn. Susmita Sarkar, President RY 2025-26

— People's SINGER —

"And still I'm searching. Yes, I'm still searching for a way we all can learn to build a world where we all can share. 'The work, the fun, the food, the space. The joy the pain and no one, no one will ever want or need to be a millionaire.'"

These words have emerged from the depths of truth and the other name of this 'truth' is Pete Seeger, which as some say, spells better as 'People's Singer', whose singular contribution to the noble cause of international folk music is an elixir of a divine existence.

Rtn. Soumitra Chakraborty, Vice President RY 2025-26

Durga Puja in Kolkata : A Festival Beyond Worship

Durga Puja in Kolkata is not merely a festival; it is an emotion, a way of life, and a celebration that binds the city and its people in an unbreakable thread of joy, artistry, and devotion. As the autumn breeze carries the fragrance of shiuli flowers and the dhaak begins to echo through narrow lanes and grand pandals alike, Kolkata transforms into a city that never sleeps — dazzling in lights, colours, and spirit.

The origins of Durga Puja in Bengal are deeply rooted in tradition, yet the Kolkata celebration has evolved into a unique blend of heritage and modernity. On one hand, bonedibarir pujos (household pujas) carry forward centuries-old rituals with simplicity and devotion. On the other hand, sarbojonin pujos (community pujas) in sprawling pandals showcase the city's unmatched creativity — from larger-than-life idols of Goddess Durga to breathtaking pandal themes inspired by global art, architecture, and social issues.

Every year, Kolkata's neighbourhoods compete to outdo one another with innovation. Streets are decked with intricate lighting, pandals are built to resemble anything from ancient temples to futuristic structures, and idols are sculpted with astonishing detail. Yet, amid all the glamour, the essence remains spiritual — the invocation of the Goddess, the triumph of good over evil, and the togetherness of community life.

Durga Puja is also about inclusivity. It brings people of every age, background, and belief together. For five days — from Shashti to Dashami — the city beats to one rhythm. Crowds throng the streets late into the night, families and friends embark on pandal-hopping marathons, and strangers become companions in queues that snake around city blocks. Food stalls line every corner, offering everything from street delicacies like phuchka and rolls to sit-down traditional Bengali feasts.

The festival is more than a cultural extravaganza; it is an economic lifeline for countless artisans, idol-makers, lightmen, and workers in Kumartuli and beyond. It is also a showcase of Kolkata's talent, with local artists, craftsmen, and organisers gaining recognition on a national and international stage.

In 2021, UNESCO recognised *Durga Puja in Kolkata* as an *Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, affirming what the people of Bengal have always known — that this festival is not just about worship but about art, community, and human connection.

When the final day, Dashami, arrives, and the idols are carried to the Ganga for immersion, the city is filled with bittersweet emotion. Women bid farewell to the Goddess with sindoorkeha, while chants of “Aschhe bochor abar hobe” (Next year, it will happen again) fill the air. It is not an ending but a promise — that the Mother will return, and with her, joy will once again flood the city.

Durga Puja in Kolkata is, quite simply, the heartbeat of the city — a celebration where faith meets festivity, art meets devotion, and humanity meets itself.

Rtn. Ashmita Dey, Secretary RY 2025-26

Thalassemia: Balancing Science and the Human Spirit

Thalassemia is one of the most common inherited blood disorders in the world, yet it often remains hidden in silence. Affecting nearly 200 million people globally as carriers, and hundreds of thousands as patients, it is both a scientific challenge and a deeply human journey.

What Is Thalassemia?

At its core, thalassemia is a genetic condition that disrupts the body's ability to produce normal hemoglobin — the oxygen-carrying protein in red blood cells. Without enough healthy hemoglobin, oxygen delivery to tissues is compromised, leading to chronic anemia, weakness, and fatigue.

There are two major forms :

Alpha Thalassemia — caused by missing or defective genes that make alpha chains of hemoglobin.

Beta Thalassemia — caused by abnormalities in the beta chain-producing genes.

The severity ranges from minor, where carriers live normal lives with little or no symptoms, to major, where patients require lifelong medical care.

Science and Treatment

Modern medicine has significantly improved the outlook for thalassemia patients. Standard treatment involves :

Regular blood transfusions to maintain healthy hemoglobin levels.

Iron chelation therapy to remove excess iron, since repeated transfusions can cause dangerous iron overload.

Bone marrow transplantation, the only established curative treatment, though limited by donor availability and cost.

Gene therapy, still experimental but offering new hope for future generations.

With these advances, children who once struggled to survive beyond their teens are now living into adulthood, pursuing careers, and building families.

The Human Side

Behind every medical term lies a personal story. For patients, thalassemia means more than transfusion schedules—it means missed school days, restrictions on travel, or the burden of lifelong medical expenses. Yet, it also builds resilience. Families and support groups often become strong networks of hope and courage, showing that chronic illness does not define identity.

Take the story of a young college student living with beta-thalassemia major. Between transfusions every three weeks, she still excels in academics, advocates for awareness, and dreams of becoming a doctor. Her life is a reminder that science may treat the body, but the human spirit fuels the will to live fully.

Why Awareness Matters

In countries like India, nearly 1 in 10 people is a carrier, often without knowing it. When two carriers marry, the risk of having a child with thalassemia major increases sharply. Simple premarital or prenatal screening can prevent new cases—but only if people are aware. Public health initiatives, school-based education, and genetic counseling are vital tools to control this silent disorder.

Looking Forward

Thalassemia challenges us on two fronts : scientifically, to discover better treatments and cures; and socially, to build empathy, reduce stigma, and ensure patients live with dignity. With research progressing and awareness growing, the future is brighter than ever before.

Thalassemia may begin in our genes, but how society responds determines whether it remains a lifelong burden—or a challenge that compassion and science can overcome together.

By: Rtn. Dr. Tapan Kumar Pal, MD (PMR)

....Bandemataram...

I bow to thee-Mother

Abundant

Affectionate

Fresh as sandalwood

Having moon-like calmness

One whose radiant light gives delight

Whose flowering and blossoming trees are splendorous

Ever smiling

Pleasant speaking

Who gives happiness and blessings

Mother..

By- Rtn. Soumitra Chakraborty, Vice- President RY 2025-26

Where earth meets water, a Forest rises...

The Sundarbans is not merely a Forest—it is a thriving, breathing entity, straddling the delicate delta where the Ganga, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers merge. Spread across 105 islands in India and many more in Bangladesh, it forms the largest contiguous mangrove ecosystem on earth. This estuarine wonder hosts more than 95 mangrove species, perfectly attuned to tidal rhythms, saline winds, and muddy substrates. This forest is a paradox of integrity and strength. It absorbs cyclones, cradles biodiversity and nourishes 1.5 million people. The Sundarbans does not just exist-- it transforms the destiny of an entire region.

By Rtn. Soumitra Chakraborty, Vice- President RY 2025-26.