

Rotary Club of Amelia Kolkata

RID : 3291

Charter Date : 21st July 2022

Club No : 224648



TRANSCEND



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President 2024-2025
Rotary International



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Rotary Club of Amelia Kolkata's Mushroom Cultivation Project Goes Global.

In 2024, Rotary International recognized the Mushroom Cultivation Project for Empowering Women and economic development and Ms. Etelka Lehoczky of Rotary International blog writer, after several calls conducted a Zoom interview in December to explore its growth and impact. The project's success was officially highlighted in an international blog, bringing global recognition to our small club in District 3291, Rotary Club of Amelia Kolkata.

This milestone showcases how small clubs can make a big impact and inspire change worldwide. The Blog is published worldwide on Rotary International website, follow the link Below

<https://on.rotary.org/3WBga67>

Rotary members find an unusual way for people in poverty to supplement their income
By Etelka Lehoczky

Houray for mushrooms! Rotary clubs around the world are leading workshops on growing and selling edible mushrooms. The extra cash makes a big difference to people living in poverty. "We wanted to empower people so their families could reach a higher level," says Nilanjana Mitra (above), of the Rotary Club of Amelia Kolkata, West Bengal, India. That's a bag of growth medium he's holding, with mushrooms sprouting from it.

In Nepal, a Rotary global grant of US\$64,000 provided training and facilities to rural farmers.

In Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India, resident Mamina Munda sells oyster and paddy straw mushrooms. "I make 3,000 to 4,000 [US\$35-\$47] a month," Munda says. "Now I can provide better food for my son."

In an impoverished area of Bhubaneswar, a city in eastern India, residents have found a surprising source of income: the humble mushroom.

Salia Sahi is one of the most crowded and underserved communities in the state of Odisha. Its largely migrant population of 100,000 lacks necessities such as a regular supply of clean water, and many people struggle to support themselves and their families.

"I have been earning about 11,000 [US\$129] a month working in a park, as a gardener. Now I earn additional money by cultivating mushrooms," says Mamina Munda, who has lived in Salia Sahi for 15 years. She's one of around 120 women in the neighborhood who have participated in Rotary-led workshops on growing mushrooms.

"I'm growing oyster and paddy straw mushrooms. I sell them at a nearby market. I make 3,000 to 4,000 [US\$35-\$47] a month," Munda says through an interpreter. "Now I can provide better food for my son. He is 10 years old."

Why grow mushrooms? It requires relatively few resources and offers many benefits. That's why several Rotary clubs around the world are starting mushroom cultivation projects, including the Rotary Club of Bhubaneswar Flamingo, Odisha, India.

Munda and her fellow entrepreneurs grow their mushrooms in bags of straw. First, the straw is boiled or treated with lime to prevent the growth of bacteria and mold. Then it can be inoculated with mushroom spores or spawn (living fungal mycelium). Within a month, the mushrooms are ready for harvest. The medium can continue to produce mushrooms for several growing cycles before it needs to be replaced.

How to grow mushrooms

1. Find a good indoor space. Mushrooms need a cool, moist environment that's not in direct sunlight.
2. Gather a container and growing medium. The medium can be straw, wood chips, sawdust, manure, or even coffee grounds.
3. Pasteurize the medium to kill bacteria and mold spores. If you're using straw, sawdust, or wood chips, you can soak it in a solution of water and hydrated lime (calcium hydroxide) for around 12 hours.
4. Plant your mushrooms. You can use mushroom spores or mushroom spawn. You may need to make some holes in the container to give the mushrooms room to grow.
5. Use a spray bottle to spritz the medium with water twice a day.
6. Harvest your crop. The mushrooms should reach full size in three to four weeks.

Another key benefit of mushroom cultivation, or fungi culture, is that it doesn't require much time. After the medium is prepared and inoculated, it just needs to be kept cool, dark, and damp. The grower can simply mist the medium regularly with a spray bottle.

Jayshree Mohanty, a member of the Rotary Club of Choudhury, Odisha, helped lead the Bhubaneswar Flamingo club's workshop. She advised the participants on how to package their mushrooms and how much to charge for them. First, though, she had to convince them that they could master the growing process. "We showed the women pictures of various stages of mushroom growth to say, 'This is what it will look like,'" Mohanty says. "I could see them thinking, 'This looks simple.'"

Mohanty and Sinha were particularly eager to work with women in Salia Sahi because the neighborhood's female residents can't have many ways to earn money. Members of the Rotary Club of Amelia Kolkata, West Bengal, India, had the same priority when they launched a similar program last year.

"We reached out to women who needed some money in their hands because their husbands were daily workers earning a maximum of 300-400 [US\$3-\$4] per day," says Nilanjana Mitra, the executive secretary/director of the Amelia Kolkata club. "They require money for their children's education also. We wanted to empower them, give them some economic development, so their family could reach a higher level."

Members of the Rotary Club of Umahia North, Abia State, Nigeria, also wanted to help underemployed women develop a source of income. They recruited young men as well, ultimately hosting 200 people in a series of workshops. Emeka Sopuruchi, the club's executive secretary/director, says that gaining a sense of purpose can be almost as transformative as adding a source of income.

Mitra adds "We entered the community and asked questions to find out if there was anything we could do," he says. They found that many people needed more income, but one thing they had was enough time to grow and sell mushrooms.

Mitra says that mushroom production is one of the few businesses that don't require much money to start, or even a plot of land.

"There's a minimal initial investment, and you can earn 15 times what you put in," he says. "In our district, they can earn US\$33 in a month."

Most important, people can use what they learn in these workshops to make an impact on their lives for years to come. After learning how simple it is to cultivate mushrooms, Munda taught her neighbors. Now they all work together. Munda even found another way to make money from mushroom farming: When the bag of straw can't produce any more mushrooms, she can sell it.

"After the mushrooms are cultivated, I can sell the residue for compost and make 20 [US\$ 25] a kilo," Munda says. With multiple revenue streams, she says, "my lifestyle has changed for the better."

Learn more about how Rotary works with communities to find sustainable solutions to poverty.



SNID Pulse Polio Immunisation Day observed on 16-02-2025 at Milan Mandir, Belegkata, where 29 Children were immunised & given a token of gift to the Children.



22-03-2025, 73 nos Spectacles distributed to the Students & Guardians of St Paul's High School for Clear Vision.



Sukho-Dristi-11, 02-03-2025, Distribution of 82 nos Spectacles to the Students & Guardians' of Belegkata Deshbandhu Girls High School, Kolkata.



LIVE ACT, 15th February, 2025 at Rabindra Sadan , Fight Against Padiatric Cancer 5th Annual Fund raiser Concert, where RC Amelia Kolkata were Associate Co Host of this Event.



SHANTIHI-Dist 3291 Seminar dtd: 22-02-2025 on Peace & Public Image organised by RC Ballygaunge Where RC Amelia was a Bronze Host of this event. A programme with especially abled people, A Braille Competition, Art exhibition and Panel discussion was held.





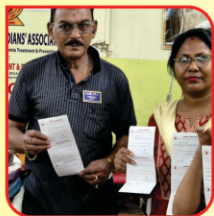
Sukho-Dristi-12; on 02-03-2025, 150 nos beneficiaries checked their Eyes For Supporting Healthy Vision Eye Wellness Check Up & Free Distribution of Spectacles Camp at Challabagan, Kolkata,



HASHI-KHUSHI - 10-03-2025, IPP Rtn Anamika on her birthday distributed Essential daily usage items, Food Packets & Drawing Kits to the Paediatric Cancer Children of our little heroes at NRS MC Hospital. These were gifted to bring smiles to the faces of our little heroes.



Sukho-Dristi-13, On 11-03-2025, Successfully operated 17 nos IOL cataract Surgeries at Shusrut Eye Foundation & Research Centre. It's our 4th no Cataract surgeries project, where 79 beneficiaries in total were operated in this Magical Rotary Year.



22-03-2025, handed over 35 blood cards to the Thalassemic Children at TGA office for Blood Transfusions to survive & thrive. Each pint of Blood can save up to 3 lives.



Empowering Women & Economic Development: Tailoring training continuing at Sonkhali, S-24pgs & Lalgarh, Jhargam. Beautician Course & Bridal Make Up Training course at our RCC-MCS Institution, Chowhati, S-24 Pgs. Digital Education (Computer Training) at Pranabnanda Vidyamandir, run by Bharat Sevashram Sangha at Sonkhali, S24Pgs and Mohanananda Happy School & Chattrabas at Lalgarh, Jhargam



Rtn Sarbani Bhattacharya
President Elect in PELS 2



AG & ZS Club Official Visit
on 18-03-2025



IPP Rtn Anamika Mitra selected as a
Zonal Secretary, for RY 2025-26

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Minutes of 59th RM & Holi Meet Date : 09-03-2025
Members attended : 10 The Cub Official Premises

1. President called the 59thRM to order and requested members all to stand for the National Anthem
2. President informed 10th March Joy of Giving Project will be handed over to Paediatric Cancer Children at NRS Hospital, on the occasion of IPP Rtn Anamika's Birthday.
3. President informed our club official AG & ZS meet will be on 18th March, Venue, The Commune at 7:00 pm and request all members to attend.
3. PP Rtn Nilanjan informed about EIRWT project, CCTV camera will be installed at Belegghata Deshbandhu Girls' school after H.S Board exam. Also declared on 11th March, 2025, 17 no. IOL Cataract Surgeries will be at Shusrut Eye Foundation & Research Centre, Salt Lake, this Eye camp was organised on 02-03-2025.
5. Secretary Rtn Lilamoy did the Club business
6. There were no other issues, Minutes of the last RM were confirmed & President terminated the meeting and requested members enjoy for Cake Cutting, Fellowship & Dinner for the occasion of IPP Rtn Anamika's birthday



BIRTH DAY

10th March: **IPP Rtn Anamika Mitra**



14th March: **Rtn Lilamoy Mukherjee**

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