



Mudita

ROTARY CLUB OF KOLKATA BENEVOLENCE

District 3291; Club No: 222538

Volume 3: Issue 2: September 2022

ROTARY MEMBERS

- RI President: Rtn. Jennifer E. Jones
- District Governor: Rtn. Ajoy Kumar Law
- Club Charter President : Rtn. Kaushik Sen
- President: Rtn. Reshma Narwani
- Vice President: Rtn. Chandan Gupta
- Secretary: Rtn. Shweta Singh
- Joint Secretary: Rtn. Aditi Jhunjhunwala
- Administration Chair: Rtn. Bijal Kabra
- Editor: Rtn. Rohit Raj Ghosh



From the Editor's Desk

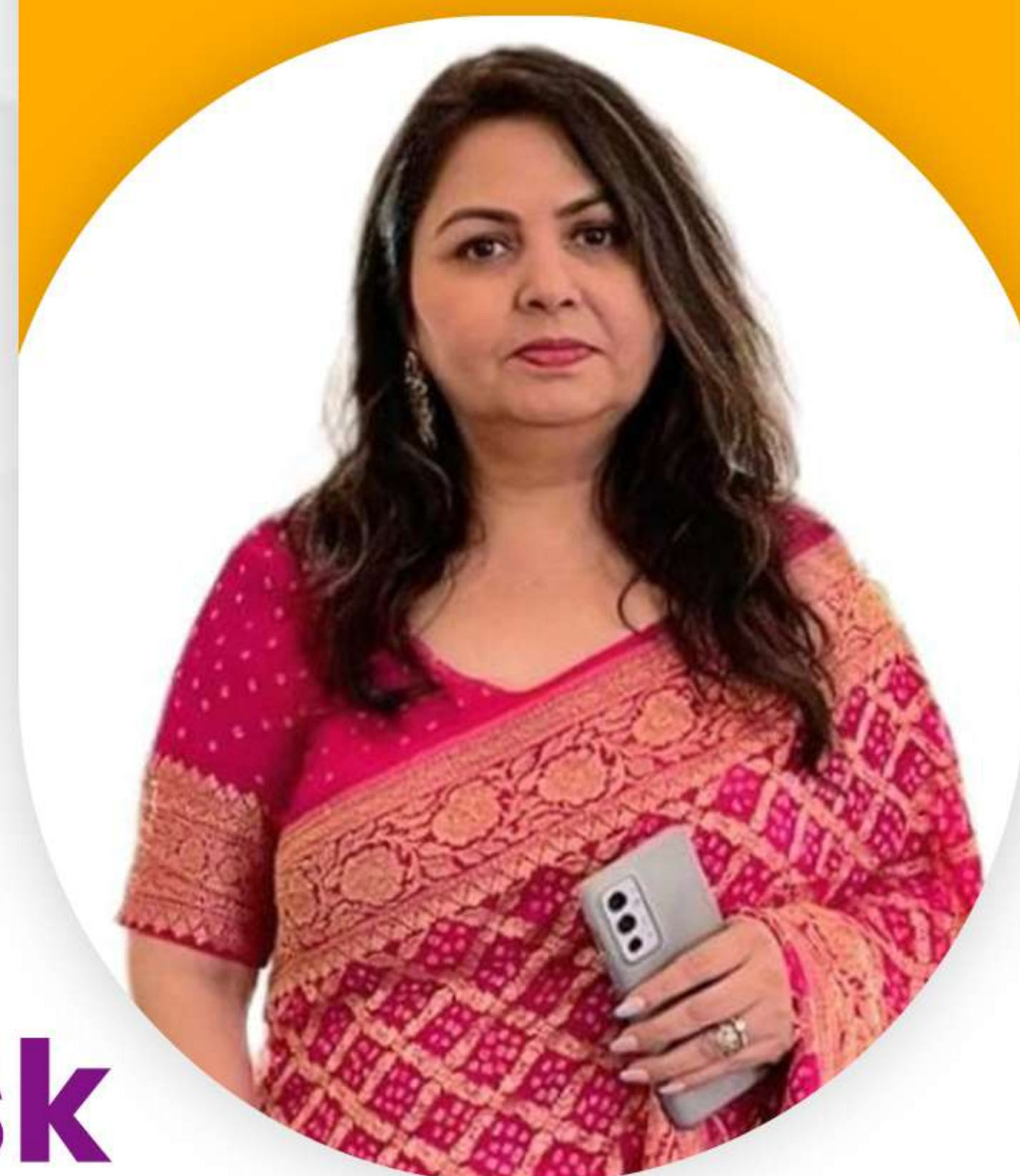
Dear Fellow Rotarians,

We have started this Rotary year with a ray of hope and promise. The past few weeks we have taken small steps towards our broader goal by serving, supporting and spreading the spirit of Rotary far and wide. We have managed to touch lives, even if on a smaller scale we have been successful in sharing our joys and happiness with many. With the commencement of the festive season let us all rise up to the occasion and conquer the demons within and unite in the awakening of the Shakti (power and wisdom). With the blessings of our "Maa", we will surely vanquish the evil and emerge victorious. Wishing you all a very happy Durga puja !!

Best Wishes,

-Rohit Raj Ghosh | Newsletter Editor | RY 2022-23





From the President's Desk

Greetings my dear Rotarians,

It looks like yesterday, 5th August, my installation as the second President of Rotary club of Kolkata Benevolence. A month has already gone, the grandeur still not left my mind.

It has been a busy month with the changeover process and lots of meetings and planning as to the events and projects done for the whole year which was presented by respective chairpersons at the first General meeting of the club. So, my dear Benevolence lets unite and propel our growth in the right direction. For the upcoming months of festivity my best wishes to you all. May the divine blessings of Ma Durga be with you all. Happy Durga Puja !!

Thanking you

Regards

Rtn Reshma Narwani

President 22-23





Rotary Club of Kolkata Benevolence

List of events for August 2022

Sl. No	Event's Name	Event's Date
1.	2 nd Installation Ceremony	5 th August 2022
2.	Sahayata- Valley of Smiles	13 th August 2022
3.	General Meeting	17 th August 2022



OUR PROJECTS EXECUTED DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2022

2ND INSTALLATION CEREMONY

On 5th August we had the installation ceremony of our club at the Park. It was the installation ceremony of our 2nd Club President Rtn Reshma Narwani. It was a gala event with the presence of personalities like, IPRIP Rtn Sekhar Mehta, RI Director Elect- Rtn Aniruddha Roy Choudhury , DG Rtn Ajoy Kumar Law and First Lady Mitali Law, DG Elect Rtn Hiralal Yadav, DG Nominee Rtn Dr. Krishnendu Gupta and 8 other Past District Governors. Also around 10 Rotarians from other clubs of the district had attended the event.



OUR PROJECTS EXECUTED DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2022

SAHAYATA- VALLEY OF SMILES

We had celebrated Independence Day and Raksha Bandhan with the children of Valley of Smiles, school for special children on 13th August. We had arranged diapers, note books, sweets, juice, biscuits, cakes and bananas for the children. It was heart-warming to see how the children had prepared for a performance on all the patriotic songs. The event was indeed a success, as we could celebrate and spread some amount of joy and happiness with the children and bring smiles to their faces.



OUR PROJECTS EXECUTED DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2022

GENERAL MEETING

On 17th August we had our General Meeting at Hotel Niharika. The main agendas included : presentation on Financial Literacy by Mr. Anurag Soumaya (Senior Relationship Manager, IDFC, AMC) from Balaji Nivesh, the Board members for the year 2022-23, awards were presented to the members, the previous year's account details was presented. The program was followed by a fellowship dinner arranged by Rtn Ashish Khandelwal.





EXPRESSIONS

GANESH PUJA IN THE MEHROTRA FAMILY

-BY RTN SRYASHI MEHROTRA

Ganesh Puja began in our Ballygunge home as a small household Puja ceremony in the year 2010. My sister Swetanjali bought a small Ganesh idol from Kalighat Patuapara in Kolkata, a place which is famous for Idol making. Around 900 idols are made at the Kalighat Patuapara every year.

The Puja arrangements were made and necessary offerings were prepared. At that time in Kolkata no popular Bengali sweetmeat shop made "Modak" the famous favourite of Ganesh. Laddoo was generally offered to Ganpati those days. We approached Mr. Prabir Mallick of Balaram Mallick and explained to him how it is to be made and arranged in a platter and for the first time Chocolate Modak was made by them and we offered various Ganesh Specials such as Modaks of different varieties and sizes including Pedas and Laddoos.

Since then, the Ganesh Puja ceremony continued in the Mehrotra residence. From doing the Puja ourselves, our Pandit ji started doing the rituals and our Little Ganesh Idol got bigger as years went by.



The 1st day of the Puja begins with Sthapna, Sankalpa and is followed by Chalisa and Aarti where every guest participates. We invite each guest to offer sweets and feed our Ganpati, post which they have Prasad and Dinner. Ladies who come are given gifts or sarees by Ganpati and all others get packets of Laddoos.

Barring the two years of the Pandemic, we have guests visiting us for 11 days and on the 1st and 11th day over 150 people come home. During the 11 days, we plan our Ganpati,s Bhog: Breakfast, Lunch, Snacks and Dinner. Every day Chalisa and Arti is done in the evening. Ganpati songs are played all day and we do not allow or consume any Non veg, Onion, Garlic or Alcohol during this period. Our endeavor is to show respect and shower our Ganesha with as much love as we can.



On the 11th day before the Visarjan puja happens we have made it a ritual to feed one meal to the needy. Earlier about 100 people would come from the nearby basti to have Khichadi and Prasad and in the last couple of years we make around 350 needy people sit and eat a sumptuous vegetarian meal followed by kheer. We serve them ourselves along with our guests.

The Visarjan puja happens with the Dhaki playing and some dancing and then we head to the Ghat where we go onboard a Ferry carrying our Ganpati admist the Ganga to say Goodbye to him.





AGOMONI

-BY RTN CHANDAN PODDER



DURGA PUJA IN BENGAL

The autumn season every year, marked by the white clouds, clear skies, cool breeze and the customary white flowers “Kaash Phool” marks the journey of Goddess Durga to our her natal home. Durga puja is supposed to be celebrated during spring time, “Basanti Puja” but according to ancient scriptures and Puranas it is believed that Lord Rama had worshipped the Goddess before commencement of the battle with demon king Ravana, and pleased her with an offering of 108 lotuses. Since then it is known “Akal Bodhon”, the untimely awakening of the goddess.

The celebrations of Durga puja dates back to 16th Century back in the Mughal era, though the exact date of commencement of the festivities in Bengal are yet to be deciphered. It is widely believed that King Kangshanarayan of Nadia District was the first to start Durga puja celebrations in Bengal. Back in the days the puja was considered as an annual festival with the homecoming of family members, friends and relatives it was a welcome break from the mundane routine. By the middle of 18th Century it became an occasion for the Bengali noblemen, the “babus” or “zamindars” to flaunt their wealth and power. They would mark the celebrations by inviting the British Officials and the Generals to take part in the celebrations. During those times, tie-ups with the East India Company or inviting the British officials to one’s house was considered prestigious. The oldest pujas of Kolkata are the ones held at Sovabazar Raj Bari, which was started by King Naba Krishna Deb and the puja at Saborno Roy Chowdhury’s residence at Sakher Bazar, Behala.





The concept of “Sarbojonin” meaning puja for all came in much later during the 1920s. The oldest “Sarbojonin Durgatsav” is that of Baghbazar Sarbajanin near the bank of the holy Ganges at Baghbazar Ghat and the one held at “Simla Byayam Samiti”, it is recorded that Subhas Chandra Bose , our beloved Netaji would actively take part in the celebrations held at Simla Street.

Durga Puja in Kolkata in the modern times is essentially an art festival and a socio-religious event, which provides the culmination of art, culture and business for many. It is often considered to be the Rio Festival of the Eastern Hemisphere. From this year onwards Durga Puja in Kolkata has been inscribed on the Intangible Cultural Heritage list of UNESCO.





Thank You

THIS BULLETIN IS

COMPOSED AND EDITED BY
ROHIT RAJ GHOSH

Dwarika's
GRANDSONS

DESIGNED BY
PAULAMI NIYOGI

 Paulami Niyogi
Consulting

PUBLISHED BY
TARAKJIT SAHA

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