

CRS PRESS OFFICE

The printing press located at the CRS premises is an extension of the Training Centre for Disabled Persons. The Press Office is currently staffed by two full time employees who fulfill orders mostly from the St. Paul's Cathedral office, the Diocese and orders generated from CRS. A typical day of work involves composing and then printing using the letter press. The offset machine is also used for orders requiring large volume fine printing. Installing a desktop publishing facility would help procure more orders from the outside market. Basically, this is a computer with a desktop publishing programme on it which allows printed material to be scanned to enable it to be incorporated into a document before printing. The disabled youth have been initiated into the process but the considerable degree of mental retardation among the current batch of students has prevented them from progressing very far in this training.



There is an opportunity here to promote this as a feasible printing facility. This Newsletter has been printed by the Kolkata team to show the quality they can achieve. If you think the print team may be able to help you, please contact Adrian Whalley (see below). The cost will depend on paper size, volume and colours required. As an idea of cost, to print 200 of these Newsletters cost £95 + postage

BANKER'S ORDER & GIFT AID?

The Friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service derives its funds from church contributions and individual donations. The raising of funds can be greatly helped by two factors. We carry out administration on a voluntary basis. Regular payments by Banker's Order enables us to build on current donations and to budget and plan ahead. By making a Gift Aid declaration you help us to recover some £2,000 per year from the government to forward to CRS. Current Friends are invited to review their giving. **Send your completed form to Adrian Whalley.**

Friends of CRS Banker's Order

To.....(Your Bank)
 at.....
(Postcode)
 Please pay the **Friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service**
 at Sort Code 20-98-57, Account No. 30389226 the sum of
 £.....(figures)(words) on.....(Date of First
 payment)
 and thereafter each(month, quarter, year)
 Until otherwise instructed by me. Supercedes any existing order
(Date)
(Signature)
(Your Account Number)

Gift Aid Declaration

I want the Friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service (Charity Commission No. 266302) to reclaim tax on all donations I have made since 6th April 2000 and on all donations I make in the future.
 I note that I should tell the Friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Services if I do not pay tax at least equal to the tax reclaimable on my donations.
(signed)(date)

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COMMUNICATION BY EMAIL?

Many of you will appreciate that email makes an important contribution to both the speed and cost of communication. If you are able to receive future Newsletters and communication by email, the cost savings will go to CRS in Kolkata.

Please email your address to Adrian Whalley at adrian@mpswebco.org.uk. Your address will be kept completely secure with Friends addresses and will not be used for any purpose other than for communications in relation to CRS and its business.



Friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service

Newsletter—February 2011

FAREWELL FOR MS. SUMITA SEN

CRS finally bid farewell to Ms. Sumita Sen after 37 years of service in a small yet joyful celebration of her contribution towards all of CRS' work. Ms. Sen started as a social worker under the direction of Father Subir Biswas. She ultimately went onto become the Chief Coordinator, Admin and Projects, and retired in this capacity. Her contributions towards CRS' work are many, but some of the more notable ones are her instrumental role in rehabilitating cross border refugees from Bangladesh to B.D. Colony and her work with women in the slums of Tiljala.



Current and former CRS staff joined in for the farewell celebration. Father Simmick, Chief Presbyter St Paul's Cathedral started with a prayer. Staff remembered her work and shared anecdotes of fond memories with "Sumitadi". She was honoured with a silver plaque from CRS and gift items and sweets from the staff.

Ms. Sumita Sen talks about her time at CRS



Ex-CRS staff sharing anecdotes with Ms Sumita Sen



Silver plaque for Ms Sen

SCHOOL HYGIENE & SANITATION PROGRAMME

As the toilets at G.B. Lane reached completion, a complete school health awareness programme on sanitation and hygiene was designed by CRS and implemented in the schools. The programme was launched in October 2010 in all of the 8 CRS schools and for the first time in the three CLPOA (City Level Programme) schools. It is estimated that not only will the children of the schools benefit from such a programme but it will also have a larger spillover effect on the communities. Topics discussed range from water borne diseases, to proper handwashing techniques, to sanitation in school and the homes, to water storage and food preparation. All of the sessions are interactive with the children participating in group discussions and question and answer sessions rather than just being told to keep themselves and their surroundings clean.



New first floor toilet at G.B. Lane – for boys



Girl being taught proper hand washing during health programme

CHILDRENS DAY

CRS held its annual Childrens Day programme on November 13th 2010 with about 350 children from the eight CRS schools and 3 CLPOA centres. The programme was opened by the Right Revd. Ashoke Biswas, the Bishop of Calcutta. This was followed by a football match between the two under-10 teams from G.B. Lane and B.D. Colony. The match was kicked off by Mr. Alvito D'Cunha, a footballer from India's premiership club, East Bengal. He encouraged the initiative as the right age for the children to be introduced into the sport. Alvito's presence was a source of great joy and inspiration for CRS' young footballers and BD Colony won the match 2-0. The football match was followed by children performing dances based on the theme of "unity in diversity". The theme signifies that whatever our religious and ethnic differences, we as children come together as one. We share the same hopes and aspirations, the same disappointments and failures. We the children are one. Overall it was a day filled with much joy and excitement for the children of our schools.



B.D. Colony & G.B. Lane teams line up for the match



Bishop Ashoke Biswas inaugurates programme



Kolabagan children perform a dance based on the festival of Eid

WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?

Standard definitions of "development" usually centre around the idea of progress and betterment on scales ranging from the individual to the national level.

For international institutions, such as the World Bank or United Nations, development is generally seen as a series of financial and technical interventions made 'from above' which are designed to bring about improvements in conditions – building a dam to provide a city with a regular water supply; research into improving crop yields; a tarmac road to improve farmers' access to markets; eradication of diseases through vaccination programmes; budget support to a government so that it can provide free primary education.

Large scale development programmes like these are important, but they are matched by thousands of small scale development programmes run by NGOs such as CRS.

For many NGOs, development is construed as something coming 'from below'. It is about enabling people to bring about improvements in their own lives and conditions – a small loan helps a slum dweller to set up a business as a market trader; children are taught about health and hygiene at school and, in turn, teach their families; village women deposit savings into a shared account every week. In this way, poor and marginalised people are not passive recipients of aid but rather active agents in their own development.

Of course, both development 'from above' and 'from below' is needed to address global problems of poverty and inequality. By supporting CRS you are enabling people in Kolkata and West Bengal to make improvements in their own lives and bring about development in slum and village communities where it is most needed.

SPOTLIGHT: THE KOLKATA KUBS WIN TROPHY

The B.D. Colony football team recently got a new name for their squad. The Kolkata Kubs, as they will be called henceforth, are one happy team after their resounding victory over G.B. Lane (or 'Kolkata Colts') on Childrens Day, whom they beat 2-0! Pappu Das, the captain gushes "I got the prize from Alvito" while his teammate Kartick Makal adds "I scored two goals". The team is bonding strongly as a group as they practice each day after school. Pappu and Raju serve as mentors for the younger children with a strict warm up session before the actual game practice. The children are indeed so inspired that the *Shishu Jagat* (children's leadership group) children, many of whom are part of the football team have decided to hold a football match with children from the community on Christmas Day. Pappu has taken on the initiative to raise funds to buy a cup for the winners. Several members of this match winning side will be mainstreamed to government schools this year but they promise to come back to coach their younger peers so as to form the next line of players. Three cheers for the Kubs!



IMPRESSIONS OF A VISITOR WITH KOLKATA HERITAGE

Last November my wife and I spent a month in India, with our two young children, Benjamin (four) and Maya (two). During our time in Kolkata, we spent a day with the Cathedral Relief Service team, visiting three projects for women and children. We were privileged to have been accompanied by Rig David and three of his colleagues.

We first learnt of the CRS through St Margaret's Church in South East London, where Rig gave a presentation during his visit to London. My parents came to London from Calcutta (as it was) in 1961, and this trip was our first to India as a family. Besides visiting family, as well as the must see tourist destinations, we were keen to see the CRS in action.

We set off from St Paul's Cathedral, in the lush Maidan district of the city for Topsia, a crowded, Muslim slum to the east. Although illegal, the area is well established, with brick built homes, informal businesses and roadways (including roadworks).

Our first stop was a pre-school nursery. Barely measuring 10ft by 20ft the single room was packed with around 30 happy children, attending classes in Bengali and English, allowing their mothers to seek work. Here we met an inspirational doctor, checking teeth and charting the weight of the children who, prompted by their teacher, enchanted us with a chorus of Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star much to

the delight of our children. The second school was for slightly older children and even more crowded. The children proudly showed us their work; beautiful pictures and writing in English, and entertained us once more with their songs.

Our final stop, after a walk through the narrow alleys of Topsia, meeting residents as well as goats dressed in winter woollies(!), was a women's project. Livelihood skills such as embroidery, sewing and henna designs were taught here, enabling and empowering young women to gain economic independence and a real sense of pride. We were shown beautiful samples; and the children were given a pair of handcrafted dolls to take home.

We concluded our day back at the Cathedral, meeting the CRS's team of volunteers, some of whom travel more than two hours each way from surrounding areas. As we left we were given yet another gift, handmade Diwali candles made by working with children with learning difficulties at another CRS project.

In just a few hours we caught a glimpse of the work of CRS and the difference it makes to just a handful of residents of a few streets and alleys; these projects are have been replicated throughout West Bengal over the last 30 years touching the lives of over 250,000 people living in 16 slums in Kolkata.

Neel Dakshy



Scenes during Neel's visit with his family

WORLD AIDS DAY

HIV/AIDS is not a concept but rather a harsh reality for people residing in the slums. Despite the mass awareness programmes held by the Government, AIDS still remains a killer disease with unknown symptoms and vague causes, for the slum people. On World AIDS Day, *Shishu Jagat* children from the three CRS schools at B.D. Colony, G.B. Lane and Kolabagan took it upon themselves to organize street rallies to make the communities more aware of the plague of HIV/AIDS. Children carried banners and posters as they walked through their communities. Student leaders put red badges on individuals and explained to them about the disease. This effort was much appreciated by both the locals as well as community development committee members.



Children wearing pink bows parade in their community

SOUTHWARK DIOCESE BISHOP'S LENT CALL



The Friends of Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service was one of the beneficiary charities selected in the Southwark Diocese 2010 Bishop's Lent Call. Supported by the members of all the churches in the Diocese, the sums raised each year result in generous donations to the selected few and in 2010 the Friends received a cheque for £5,000 at a ceremony held at the Diocesan Synod.

If other Friends would like assistance in preparing the case for CCRS to be included in similar systems in their diocese, please contact Ray at raymond.brookes@btinternet.com from whom you can receive an appropriate package.

Ray Brookes (in blazer by Bishop) receives a £5,000 cheque