



Friends Update

March 2016

News from Kolkata

Blood tests in Bibibagan

Many children living in city slums have a poor diet lacking in essential nutrients.

One widespread problem is iron deficiency anaemia which leaves sufferers tired and short of breath.

On 9th September 2015, CRS organised an iron deficiency anaemia clinic at Bibibagan which was sponsored by the Indian company, Larsen & Turbo.

Prior to the event, the health team spent two days making the community aware of anaemia and the importance of having their children checked.

On the day, 80 children between the ages of 4 and 14 were checked by Dr Sumit Shaw. They received iron supplements, along with deworming tablets and syrup. 23 of the children were identified for follow-up treatment.



Friendly football match

The serene grounds of St Paul's Cathedral in Kolkata were transformed on 11th September 2015 into a football pitch!

CRS established football teams for boys several years ago as a means of nurturing teamwork, giving children motivation and developing a sense of pride. A donation from Melbourne Parish Church (Derbyshire) in 2014 funded new kits and equipment for some of the teams.

The most recent match was a friendly between boys from G B Lane School facing a combined team from Basanti Devi Colony and Sukantanagar school. Both teams played well but B D Colony and Sukantanagar were the victors by five goals to nil.

The spirit of friendship was high between the teams and they are looking forward to meeting each other at the next match.



Handmade products on sale

Products made by underprivileged women as part of CRS's empowerment programme went on display at two large events: the St Paul's Cathedral Grand Carnival on 7th November and the annual Diocesan Education Mission Fete on 5th December.

On display and for sale were beautifully embroidered clothing, tablecloths and handkerchiefs, batik bags, crochet work, greetings cards, and edible produce such as jam and sweets, pickles and spices. Such outlets provide an opportunity for women to generate an income for their families.



News from UK supporters

New support from hi-tech company

Loft Digital, a hi-tech innovation consultancy based in the City of London, has generously agreed to support CRS by donating 1 per cent of its profits annually. They have undertaken to give not less than £2,000 in 2016.



In addition, the employees of Loft want to use their skills to help slum children, by teaching them to "code", that is to write computer programmes. This project is being developed with CRS at the moment.

School teacher exchange programme

Thanks to a British Council grant, head teachers from church schools in Kolkata visited schools in the Derby diocese in September 2015.



In October the visit was reciprocated with a Derbyshire teachers visiting a range of institutions in India from prestigious schools to CRS Education Centres which serve poor children in the slums. It is hoped that this is just the start of enriching and long-lasting links between schools in the two countries.

A season of thanks and celebration

Students gather to thank teachers

On 5th September every year, children across India report to school as usual but classes are replaced by celebrations to show appreciation for teachers.



Young people with various physical and mental disabilities who attend the CRS Training Center for Differently-abled Persons normally learn skills such as chalk-making and book-binding but on Teachers' Day 2015 gathered to thank their instructors, give them gifts and entertain them with dance.

Partying in style

Children from some of Kolkata's poorest slums were treated to gifts and games at the end of 2015.



One hundred children from CRS Education Centres were selected to attend the Mega Children's Day Carnival at La Martinere School on 6th November. Then on 14th December 45 children were selected to attend a charity Christmas Party in the grounds of Raj Bhavan, the official residence of the Governor of West Bengal.

Christmas celebrations

The majority of beneficiaries of CRS projects are Muslim or Hindu, but everyone celebrated Christmas in December 2015. Children at the CRS Education Centres enjoyed Christmas parties with food treats and balloons. Meanwhile, CRS staff gathered at the office on 22nd December, donned festive hats, and enjoying cakes and treats



Celebrating the three Rs

All CRS staff gathered in the main office in mid-January 2016 to celebrate three birthdays. Ratna works on the women's empowerment project, Rig is the CRS Director responsible, and Rao is the office helper. Together they have contributed decades of dedicated service to CRS. The birthdays were celebrated in the traditional way - with singing, cake and gifts!

