



NEW LIGHT ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2018

Dear friends

Greetings from New Light!

In less than some hours the earth would have completed going round the sun one more time. We all would have completed another year of enjoying the bounty of nature brought to us unconditionally by this beautiful planet. As a year draws to a close, by custom and nature we tend to take stock of both good and bad things that make it up. But more than the events I feel it is the stories and the people who touch our lives during it that make any given year stand out from other years. So it is with great honour and gratitude I dedicate this letter to all of you who have touched my life personally and supported the work that is done at New Light. It is my distinguished honour to thank all of you on behalf of the children and women who remain at the very heart of New Light's mission.



2018 has been a year of great contrast. It's been a contrast in viewpoint, in action and in thought. The developed world, as known to us who were born, raised and lived for most of their lives in poorer and less privileged part of the world ironically watched the gender rights revolution coming silently through digital access. The global movement against sexual violence that found life at a victim's dining table hung by the fragile structure of a hash tag took on epic proportions almost two years ago. One person's Tweet gathered the force and momentum of an avalanche that

dismantled structures and systems which were thought to be invincible.

Unfortunately, when that happened there was almost no reaction to the now globally recognized **#metoo** movement in this country. Those who were expected to speak up and bring it to the Indian context chose not to join in or lend their voice.

Like many of my activist friends I watched in dismay and often urged women in power to express their opinion. My reaction was either met with disdain or with complete indifference. Bollywood, despite having many otherwise powerful voices reacted to the movement with deathly silence. Till date I have not understood what kept the immensely influential, articulate and talented women of Bollywood completely silent when came to talking about sexual harassment or violence at their work place. There seemed to have been a tacit understanding to protect the fraternity and thereby co-opt with patriarchy. Six years ago when lakhs of people took to the streets protesting against the brutal rape of **Nirbhaya**, those who are constantly fighting for women's rights and gender equity in this country thought the moment of reckoning had come.



Unfortunately, as the political and economic climate changed and the country plunged into the deepest abyss of post demonetisation economic hardship the movement was somewhat shelved to the back burners. 2018 saw a different story unfold. For the first time many of us found support and resonance with the Indian Judiciary when Supreme Court **Justice D Y Chandrachud** said, “To treat

women as children of a lesser god is to blink at the Constitution itself ‘, while opening the gates of the **Sabarimala temple** to women of all ages by an order. It was again Justice Chandrachud who while decriminalising adultery said ‘it deprives married women the agency of consent.. Offends the sexual freedom of women’. These pronouncements shook up the very fabric of the nation which tends to keep its women subjugated at all cost.

<https://www.ndtv.com/topic/sabarimala-temple>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/sabarimala-temple-protesters-continue-to-block-entry-of-women-in-temple/videoshow/66280841.cms>





In September 2018, actor **Tanushree Dutta** demonstrating incredible courage and conviction took on the Goliath Bollywood when she accused veteran actor **Nana Patekar** of sexual misconduct on a film set almost ten years ago. It was her narrative that truly opened the floodgates of **#metoo** in India. Hundreds of women from all walks of life came forward with stories of their routine abuse and harassment at work and at home.



Sharing about and laying down the narrative of sexual abuse no longer remained a taboo. The time had come to recognize that too many women have suffered for too long to remain silent or be gagged by the duct tape labelled with tradition and culture anymore. There is no glory in respecting or holding dear any tradition or cultural practice that keeps almost half of its population subjugated and denied. It is hard to doubt Nana Patekar would have gotten away with dismissing the claims of Tanushree Dutta for the second time if not for poet **Mahima Kukreja** and journalist **Sandhya Menon** who used their Tweeter timelines to give power to the

#metoo movement with their huge follower base. The list of men accused of sexual misconduct began to grow every day with the inclusion of names of actor **Aloke Nath**, comedian **Utsav Chakraborty**, writer **Chetan Bhagat**, Ad-man **Suhel Seth** editors **Prashant Jha** and **KR Srinivas** and finally editor and central **Minister MJ Akbar** to give just a few examples.



The shame that women had suffered and silently internalized was no longer a stranglehold on them. Heads began to roll in every sector as **the National Council For Women** opened the phone lines with a promise to bring the offenders to justice if the victims so decided. **Maneka Gandhi**, the sitting **Minister for Women and Child Development** came forward with her personal assurance to stand by the victims with due diligence. No industry was spared the wrath of women who began to call out abusers irrespective of their position and power. Even the political arena was not spared as one of the Youth leaders of the opposition was forced to resign as charges were brought against him.

In a stark contrast, in early October we watched Stanford professor **Christine Blasey Ford** testify against **Judge Brett Kavanaugh**, the US Supreme Court nominee with the highest degree of grace and dignity. Most of us who have been victims of sexual abuse would forever remember the helpless rage we felt as **Prof Blasey Ford** was repeatedly questioned about the obvious and the accused Kavanaugh was aided by his cronies to reduce the entire procedure to a farce. Kavanaugh an

accused sexual violence perpetrator was confirmed to the highest office to deliver justice for all.

This is also the year when **Section #377** an archaic ruling in British India since 1857 that criminalized homosexuality in India was removed. In a landmark decision, a five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court junked, albeit partially, Section 377 of the IPC. Taking up the cause of **the LGBT community**, the bench comprising **Chief Justice Dipak Misra, and Justices RF Nariman, DY Chandrachud, AM Khanwilkar and Indu Malhotra** said while they had four different judgements, they were unanimous in the decision. Speaking for him and Justice Khanwilkar, the then CJ Misra said, ***“The Court must try to protect the dignity of every individual of the society including people from the LGBT community. The sexual orientation is natural and people have no control on it.”*** He said denial of self-expression was akin to inviting death. Much celebration is due for lawyer Menaka Guruswamy. Here again in contrast we have seen the most powerful democracy in the world; the United States of America deny the very status of individuals from the LGBTQ community.





As the New Year approaches there is every reason to be filled with hope and expectation. We begin with the hope of having a country and a world where misogyny, abuse, discrimination and injustice is a thing of the past. We remain committed to working for peace and justice every day everywhere from the smallest to the greatest of issues. Let there be hope and love for all.

Happy Holidays and wish everyone a very prosperous 2019!

Something magical happened fifteen years ago when BONO Founder member Gereon Wagener, walked in through the door of New Light on a dark winter evening in search of a place to serve. A beautiful friendship and association was born as Bono- Direkthilfe and New Light decided to embark on a journey to bring light, hope and love into the lives of children in the dark lanes of Kalighat. What joy it was to welcome the team led by Gereon Wagener and Micheal Muller-Offermann who are gently introducing the next generation of compassionate crusaders to their lives mission.



New Light wholeheartedly thanks the entire team of BONO Direkthilfe e.V. for beginning the New Year with us. Your continuous support and your willingness to help create a safe haven for the underprivileged children keeps us inspired. It is with your support that we are able to provide these children with a place to live, learn, and feel safe. You are a part of their lives too. Hope to see you back in Kolkata soon!

A visit to zoo gives us true knowledge about the birds and animals. We can see the wildlife in their natural state in the zoo. It is a place of great recreation and information. On 5 January our dear volunteer Lonnie Bewick took 49 children accompanied by 8 teachers from New Light Kolkata to the Zoological Garden, Alipore. They spent nearly four hours in the zoo.



The zoo in Kolkata, situated in an open space is visited by thousands of people every day. It has a large number of different kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and snakes. They are kept in cages and are most carefully looked after. The visit added vastly to their knowledge and it was like a new world for the children. It was quite a rewarding experience to visit a zoo.

While most play to win, others win just by playing. On 7 January 14 children from New Light Kolkata participated in an Inter-Orphanage Football Tournament presented by Team One at The Khalsa High School grounds. The young boys made for a heart-warming picture at their play-off match and their unambiguous defeat in the tournament seemed to matter little to them. The children got jerseys, school bags and water bottles at the end of the tournament.



While a batch of 14 played football, a team of 70 children from New Light Kolkata participated in a cultural rally organized by Kalighat Nepal Bhattacharjee Street Clun (KNBS Club) on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary, also called Swami Vivekananda Jayanti.

"Two decades of working with women trapped in sexual exploitation haven't numbed me to this pain and suffering." Urmi Basu



New Light Kolkata launched its latest community empowerment program in Dhuliyán, Farakka, Murshidabad with the help of Kolkata Gives and MCKS Food for Hungry Foundation on 17 January 2018.

We received extraordinary support from the local police officers and administrative representatives in establishing contact and outreach into the Kalabagan red-light area in Shamsherganj, Mushidabad.

Thank you Mehboob Alam, Akhtarujjaman and Yusuf Ali for your wholehearted support and partnership in bringing services to this resource

starved community. There are at least 160 women working in this red light area perched on a sandy outcrop on the banks of the Ganges at a walk able distance from the center of this district town. The temporary tin shelters structured on bamboo scaffolding that go under water every monsoon is rebuilt by the brother keepers. The women in the trade though appear to be free agents are in the stronghold of the brothel keepers and the local sex mafia. The shacks without lockable doors, not more than 4 ft x 6 ft in size have bamboo slating for flooring and a hole in the floor for a toilet. The women keep themselves warm while waiting for customers by burning cheap wood or plastic.

Strangely this is an area that operates only during the day while at night the women return to a nearby location to cook and rest with their children or other family members. Most of the women were open to questions regarding their choice of this work while the brothel keepers, women again, stood at guard to guide the conversation away from queries about trafficking of young girls, availability of healthcare, condoms and rehabilitation plans.





This year, Zumba Fitness selected New Light Kolkata as the charity partner for their event hosted on 20 January 2018 at Princeton Club. New Light was delighted at this unique opportunity as so far not a single fitness enthusiast community in the city of Kolkata was offered this kind of an opportunity and probable support. 60 beneficiaries from New Light participated in the event. The children had a lot of fun! Thank you Zumba Fitness, #ZES Piu

Majumder and Mainak Banerjee for this opportunity! On the same day students who participated last year in Falguni Sangha were felicitated too.

On 23 January a dance program was conducted by our students at Falguni Sangha. Thank you Ms. Anita Nan Banerjee for this opportunity! In the same year 50 students and teachers were invited to attend a dance event by Jonathen Hollander organized by American Centre on 24 January



True empowerment drives people to seek higher social justice. New Light Kolkata's current students and graduates participate to voice their experience of growing up fighting stigma and exclusion at the National Conference on Sexual Violence organized by ARZ (anyay rahit zindagi), NGO in collaboration with the Center for Criminology and Justice, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai organized a National Level Conference for Female Youth on 'Sexual Violence' conducted between 27 January 2018 to 5 February 2018 in Goa. The conference was attended by 30 female youths between the age group of 18 to 28 years, from Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Goa.



On 30 January a Mental Health Workshop was facilitated by New Light Kolkata and conducted by Ishwar Sankalpa at New Light Syamatarra for the women and mothers of the Dalit community at the Kalighat Crematorium Grounds.

Thank you Lisa Spader from Global Pearls and Bonnie for your donation and for taking the time to visit New Light this year. We hope to stay in touch!

The Female Quotient partnered with Google Earth to help bring visibility to female change agents around the globe. The soon-to-be-launched platform is called Women Voyagers: Breaking Boundaries. This February, we are happy to announce that New Light Kolkata and Urmi Basu has been included in this initiative - https://earth.google.com/web/@23.40410702,29.4361894,-4933.85287122a,11012861.97133183d,35y,0h,0t,0r/data=ClcSVRIgYTQ4MTg4N2RINGNhMTFIN2I0YzRkZmNhM2NjNDcyNDiC2djc19saXN0XzE0GjRxb211biBwb3lhZ2VyczogQnJlYWtpbmcgQm91bmRhcmlscyA?fbclid=IwAR2oscTpmGWZOHxX8G5zLkOQZD_apkDOhI9WtDNc_DTSKqn6vrvbMPR4yE
The goal of this project is to raise the visibility of women everywhere and elevate their voices, in order to bring awareness and inspiration and help to shift the global gender imbalance. The initiative features female change agents from 144 countries in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report.

Miss World 2017 Ms. Manushi Chillar uses the power of her beauty to transform the lives of millions of girls around the world. Kicking off her global tour to bring attention to menstrual health and hygiene, Ms. Chillar stopped by at New Light Kolkata along with her entourage of



five other Continental winners led by CEO Ms. Julia Morley. We are proud of our innovator partner Aakar Innovations for making this happen. The team of seven beauty queens from around the world had joined Ms. Chillar and Ms. Morley who also visited New Light Kolkata Mukti Project, an empowerment-income generation health project manufacturing bio-degradable sanitary napkins, beginning the reigning Miss World's global tour to bring attention to menstrual health and hygiene. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HxO52OqFkV0>



Every kid has a creative side in him/her and loves to paint their imagination. Today was the chance! On 10 February 60 Children participated in the Sit & Draw Competition held at New Light Kolkata organized by Manasi The Healing Touch. Children from the Crèche-cum-Shelter, Syamatara and Khelaghar participated in the contest. Packets of goodies were given to the children at the end of the competition.

Thank you Spicer and family for your continued support and for making it a point to visit us every year! In the same month, we were honoured to have amongst us Mr. Shaun Made, member of the Ethics Committee, New Light.

One Billion Rising Revolution Solidarity
RISE! RESIST! UNITE!

Once again, the theme of SOLIDARITY remained the focus of One Billion Rising 2018



The unprecedented exploitation and poverty ravaging most of the world is becoming harder and impossible to ignore. Suffering has reached new heights and this year OBR is seeing a new, dynamic and radical militancy and vibrancy that is opposing and rising against such repression and oppression.

A focus continues to remain on “Exploitation” – because women across the globe are suffering from the reign of neo-liberalism that has worsened social and economic conditions for women.

New Light Kolkata welcomed every participant who chose to RISE with us in SOLIDARITY!

We were extremely happy to welcome the team from Kulczyk Foundation and TVN (Polish television network) who are also the producers of "Domino Effect", a documentary reaching to various places throughout the world to show local problems and steps taken locally to solve them. New Light feels honoured to be part of this documentary dedicated to Kolkata and to the work tht we do and the dedication that we put into it.



Fun with umbrella!

A unique umbrella painting competition was organized for the children from New Light Kolkata by APPEJAY to boost their creativity and persuade them to observe nature on 26 February

Monsoon is a time for kids to rejoice. Though they prefer to get soaked in rain, umbrellas are their favourite as well.

Different sizes, shapes, colours and patterns always attract children. What if kids could make their umbrellas look the way they prefer it to be?

The children got an opportunity to paint umbrellas, win prizes and proudly carry their unique creation to the school for rest of the year, grabbing some envious looks



On 28 February New Light celebrated Holi in the grandest scale! This year we celebration Holi with one of our priced visitors from The Kulczyk Foundation and TVN

'Wondrously February withdraws to warm March with a golden glow from Spring's shining sun sent down to lead the way for April's soothing showers soon to bring fragrant flowers and dance on May's blossoming bounty' A very happy and prosperous Holi to everyone!!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gmcokvnSnp0&fbclid=IwAR2FN5SpY6a-LC9Kl0ygBC8sJO1cjdDfA93v2vfTyjPnl-eFlhuuOikVBoY>

If we must celebrate a day for women, let us celebrate freedom from stereotypes, from expectations, from idolisation, from sacrifice. Stop congratulating women for being the secret behind a successful man. Start saluting them for being successful. Stop saying the mother is sacred for all the sacrifices she makes, try to reduce those sacrifices! Stop telling women they are beautiful, try telling them it's not important to be beautiful! Stop praising her roles as mother, wife, daughter, sister.. Celebrate her as an individual, a person, independent of relationships. Stop justifying her necessity to multi task. Give her



chance not to! Stop these constructs which are aimed at making her strive for an impossible balance. Let her be inadequate and happy! Stop making her look at herself through a conveniently male viewpoint. Let her be imperfect, whimsical, irresponsible, boorish, lazy, fierce, opinionated, loud, flabby, un-groomed, adventurous, unpredictable, unprepared, impractical..

Let her be.. Her

On IWD New Light featured a lively discussion with guests, entertainment programs and lunch. There was also a special movie time and more. It was a spring afternoon of celebration of all things women. Special mention and thank you to Frances Gillard and Barbara Hartley for choosing to spend the day with us at New Light!



We know that you are committed to your studies. We know that you have worked hard endlessly. We know that you believe in taking things head on. We know you have studied from dusk till dawn.

All your hard work will pay off handsomely. You are destined to shine out brightly.

Lots of luck and good wishes to **Shikha** and **Reshmi** from New Light Kolkata Soma Memorial Girls Home, **Riya** and **Ryzoo** from Syamatara and **Sambhu** from Khelaghar, who appear for their Class X board exams beginning on 12 March 2018

Honoured to have attended the conference on Global Vision towards poverty free India through sustainable social infrastructure organised by CREDO Orbis. Ramdas Athawale, Ministry of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, MP Shanta Kumar, MP Sunil Kumar Singh and MP Pashupati Nath Singh were the chief guests.



15 March to 18 March was the National Consultation on Rehabilitation of Women Enabling victims of commercial sexual exploitation to define REHABILITATION.. Meeting of survivors of trafficking was held in Goa, India to discuss "Rehabilitation" and "Anti Trafficking Bill" organized by Arz. Three women from Kalighat, Kolkata accompanied by Sima Banerjee and Krishna Mondal from New Light Kolkata participated in the three-day conference.

The main take away from the conference as stated by Arun Pandey from ARZ was "Listening to victims of commercial sexual exploitation makes us feel how less we know about them and that how clear they are about their needs and wants. One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what they have to say and it solves half the problem."



She talked about reproductive health and feminine hygiene with women involved in sex work at New Light. Thank you Gina Rogers Guddat for the huge supply of condoms that you brought for the women this year!

We have rock-stars at New Light Kolkata Soma Memorial Girls Home!! ☑ The month of March was a month of winners and prizes!

At St. Sebastians School, Shibani won the 1st prize in singing and Bengali handwriting and secured the 2nd position in poster making. Not only that she also won the 3rd prize in elocution. Madhabi secured the 1st position in poster making and Rani won the 2nd prize in non flame cooking and drawing.



The young ones at Soma Home are no less. Sagarika and Sonia won the 1st and 3rd prize respectively in Bengali and English handwriting. Also, all the girls passed with flying colors and have been promoted to the next class!!

Physical health is a key factor in young children's proper growth. 134 children from New Light Kolkata main shelter, Jhinuk, Syamatara, Soma Home, Khelaghar and Star Fish attended a health camp organised in partnership with Lions Club of Calcutta District 322B1 on 23 March. The children underwent an eye, dental and general checkups ensuring the fact that young children need a healthy start. Thank you President Dilip Jhalaria and members of Lions Club of Calcutta for supporting New Light with a comprehensive health check up for 134 children between age 2 and 16 conducted at the project location in Kalighat. Appreciation and gratitude.





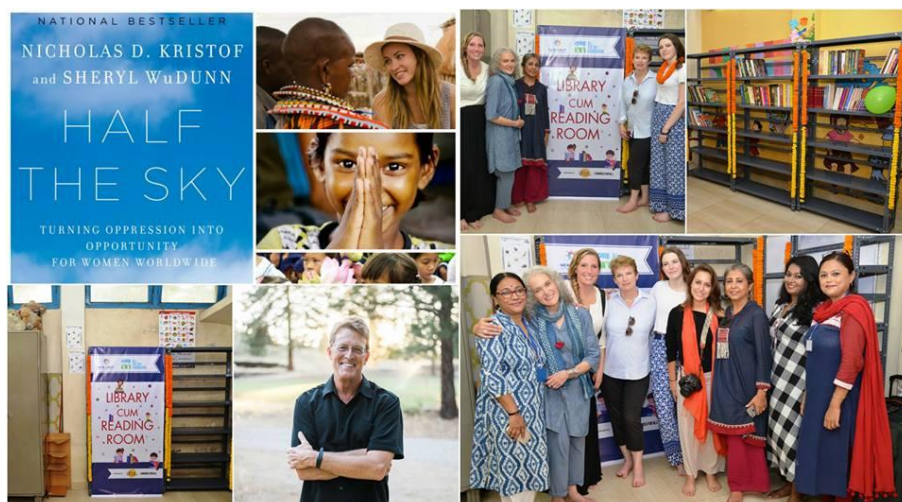
World Tuberculosis Day, observed on 24 March each year, is designed to build public awareness about the global epidemic of tuberculosis (TB) and efforts to eliminate the disease. World TB Day is one of eight official global public health campaigns marked by the World Health Organization (WHO), along with World Health Day, World Blood Donor Day, World Immunization

Week, World Malaria Day, World No Tobacco Day, World Hepatitis Day and World AIDS Day.

Ever wondered why solar is a great alternative to standard grid electric? The most important reason being solar is green. Green is the new black. Solar lamps emphasize the importance of solar energy as an alternative to fossil fuels for lighting systems in terms of environmental pollution. It is renewable, available anywhere, durable, eco-friendly, economical, low voltage, easy to install and saves a lot energy. We began the month of April by spreading smiles at the Nadia District, West Bengal by distributing Solar Lamps.

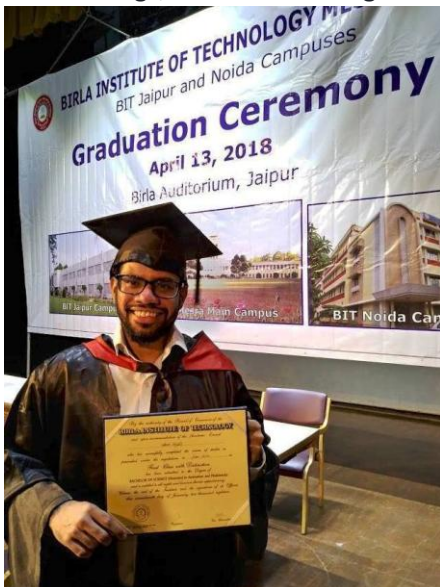
Little did The New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof know about the global movement that his notes from the field would ignite in the form of #HalfTheSky. Eight years and innumerable projects later from Cambodia to Somali land, the movement keeps growing. Inspired by Kristof's #HalfTheSky, Seattle based #AllTheSkyFoundation gives the gender equality conversation a new twist. Fifteen year old high school student Alina Guyon with a library building grant from #AllTheSkyFoundation collects 1800 books under her personal project 'Library' for all to set up the first free public library and reading room in the Kalighat red light district under New Light Kolkata on 12 April 2018.

Thank you Sheryl Guyon, Executive Director, #AllTheSkyFoundation for supporting this priceless project. Shana Greene of Village Volunteers, you continue to nurture and strengthen the links and network that spread happiness everywhere. New Light Kolkata reaches out from #HalfTheSky to #AllTheSky through its treasure of books and journals on literature, science, art, history and movies in the library that will be partly managed by its graduating students.



Starting with a site visit a month ago Association of La Martiniere Alumni (ALMA) members of the year '78 came together to support reproductive health care intervention at New Light Kolkata on 23 April . A team of dedicated doctors and activists led by Rahul Banerjee, Dr. Rupali Dey, Subhadra Khaperde and Dr. Puja Chatterjee offer investigation, diagnosis and treatment to the women of the community having limited access to reproductive healthcare information and services. Also this month we participated in the first Kolkata Classics Hathor Event health camp.

Hand-held to New Light by Avijit Gayen, one of New Light Kolkata's first batch of students 16 years ago, changed the life of his fellow class mate Amar Gupta forever. From Kalighat High School to B.I.T Noida, his journey has been something that movies are made of. Born and raised by a mother who struggled to keep him at school, youngest of three siblings, Amar showed signs of exceptional artistic



talent, intelligence and deep sensitivity. New Light Kolkata did everything to keep his educational support going for more than 10 years while keeping his family supported through a family sponsorship.

Today, while he graduates after five years from one of the great institutions of higher learning in the country, Birla Institute of Technology, Noida, the moment has come for all who know Amar to feel proud and overjoyed at his success. Cristina de la Vega this moment is yours as much as it is ours. Sourav Chatterjee and Anurag Rana, Amar could not possibly have found better teachers and mentors. Congratulations to you too! And for all of us at New Light Kolkata, this is a moment to reaffirm our commitment to transform lives through education and opportunity.

In April, on one of our most prized volunteers, Francisco Cinque Ventuno's second visit to New Light Kolkata, opened a new world of magic for the boys at Khelaghar. Under the direction of Francisco and his team, the street became the stage for these young enthusiastic magicians and they performed street magic for passersby in the city of Kolkata, performing an entire act for them. They learnt that whether card magic or magic performed with coins, balls, scarves, or rope, regardless of the props involved, the ability to draw and hold an audience is a skill of greater importance than the illusions themselves. Magic takes you by the hand and explains not only how to create an illusion in someone's mind but why the psychology works to create the illusion. The boys were able to literally make someone see things they are not really seeing and we cannot thank Francisco, Veronika Šromová and their team enough for this incredibly amazing experience!





First time fliers, especially children; usually don't forget their first flight. The experience, beginning from leaving home, the way to the airport, checking in, boarding and finally take-off is more than enjoyable.

16 children from New Light Kolkata - 7 boys from Khelaghar, 5 girls from Soma Memorial Girls Home, 3 children from Symatara and 1 from the main shelter, accompanied by two of our teachers Sima Halder and Puja Prasad experienced their first travel-by-air during the first weekend in the month of May. The trip was organized by Ladies Circle India – Round Table India for the children. The children were able to experience in-flight hospitality by two leading airlines namely Jet Airways and IndiGo during

their trip and were flown to Guwahati, Assam from where they experienced a road trip to scenic Shillong.

On the way they spent their time at the Elephant Falls, Shillong, India, a dramatic, multi-tiered waterfall in picturesque surrounds, with an easy walking trail and stairs. The children also had the opportunity to visit the Umiyam Lake Shillong (commonly known as Barapani lake) a reservoir located in the hills 15 km to the North of Shillong, the Don Bosco Church & Museum and also spent time at the Game Zone in Shillong. Even though the trip was extremely short, the trip was surely fun-filled and their little hearts were fluttering with happiness as they explored something very new!

Rabindra Jayanti is celebrated at all the centres of New Light Kolkata including the main shelter, Syamatara, Starfish, Soma Memorial Girls Home and Khelaghar, on 9 May every year, to mark the birth anniversary of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore.



Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man.

- Rabindranath Tagore -

This year we celebrated Tagore's 157th birth anniversary.

Rabindranath Tagore's legacy and contribution to the field of Bengali and English Literature can be gauged from the respect his name demands at every utterance. From being the first non-European to clinch the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913 to establishing a full-fledged university with the aim of challenging conventional education, Tagore is a name that is revered even today. With his profound and articulate poetry and prose still shaping the literary universe, the genius preached imperative life lessons through the 80 years of his life.



New Light Kolkata participated in an anti-smoking rally ahead of the World No Tobacco Day in Kolkata on May 27, 2017. Every 31 May, the World Health Organization (WHO) celebrates World No Tobacco Day, a day in which the public is encouraged to abstain from smoking in order to raise awareness of the health problems caused by this addiction.

On World Menstrual Hygiene Day, New Light featured in the article published by The Impact Guru as an organization that is providing sustainable solutions for menstrual hygiene and eradicating the taboo around menstruation in India - https://www.impactguru.com/blog/world-menstrual-hygiene-day-organisations-promoting-a-healthy-period?fbclid=IwAR0mCi-Zhe5vqQ0mEMFwJ8Zt-U_6Xn90mJKBSWJGVZr2nSVII93cT27osU Interview | Today we have the pleasure to count in the studio with Urmi Basu, founder of the NGO New Light Kolkata ~ Voces de A Coruña -

On World Menstrual Hygiene Day, New



https://www.lavozdegalicia.es/.../vi.../0003_201805H31C11993.htm

Star Fish accompanied by our teachers Sima Halder and Sutapa Bhattacharya which marked the end of the month.

A trip to NiccoPark, an amusement and water theme park in Kolkata, was organized by one of our dear volunteer Émeraude Lapointe for the students of New Light Kolkata HTS Operation

The park, loaded with a variety of rides and an international standard indoor sports complex with bowling, pool and air hockey as well as an up – market restaurant, is a pride of the city. The multi – cuisine food court in the park houses some of the leading restaurants of Kolkata. Popularly known as Jheel Meel and located in Salt Lake, the Nicco Park, has innovative entertainment for all ages.



The children thoroughly enjoyed themselves and were greatly amused by the rides and all that the park had to offer. It was a fun-filled day and the children enjoyed to their fullest.



Many congratulations to Reshmi Paul, Sikha Pal, Muslima Khatun and Joystna Khatun from New Light Kolkata Soma Memorial Girls Home, Sambhu Thakur from Khelghar and Riju Mondal from Syamatara on their remarkable success! You've run the course and passed the class 10 board examinations! The month of June began with this great news which thrilled all of us and we are so proud of them all!

There are no secrets of success. It is the result of preparation, hard work and learning from failure. Well done! We hope you keep succeeding with such flying colors and always make all of us proud of yourself. Wish you as bright a future as your present.

Urmi Basu, founder of the New Light, Asha's first counterpart in

India: <http://eldiariodelaeducacion.com/blog/2018/06/06/cuando-educas-a-una-generacion-de-ninas-tendran-una-gran-influencia-en-la-vida-de-sus-familias/>

Hardworking students always perform successfully in their exams. Diya Mitra, Priyanka Shaw and Ruma Mondal, did a great job this time and made themselves and New Light Kolkata proud! Congratulations on your outstanding result in the class 12 board examinations. Doing well in exams is the only shortcut to success. Congratulations!! We wish them all the best for their future endeavours

A team is only as good as its achieved goal. Incredible #team New Light Kolkata meets for the first quarterly review to set new goals and face new challenges on 3 July 2018. Proud of you folks!





With an astounding figure of 54.7% percent of rural marriages in Bengal being that of minors the state is one of the four high risk zones. Many of these marriages result in gross violation of child rights and end up as means to traffic young girls. New Light Kolkata in partnership with local organisations and support from international partners BONO Direkthilfe e.V. and Mundo Cooperante is launching a chapter of the global Girls Not Brides

campaign. Partner agency orientation and day long training session was conducted in south 24 Parganas by New Light Kolkata team today. The campaign with its goal to report and reduce incidents of child marriage will involve local administration, law enforcement agencies, civil society members and families. New Light Kolkata remains committed to fight the evil practice of child marriage everyday till it is completely abolished.

Undoubtedly the world seems a better place when the work you do and the effort you put into doing that work is appreciated, loved and readily supported by your volunteers. Thank you so much Emeraude and Claudine Lapointe for your hard work and commitment. It would be hard to expect more from anyone! Your time and effort in making the children feel special is deeply appreciated. Come back soon for more hours of boundless joy!



New Light Kolkata Syamatarata celebrated its 15th birthday on 16 July 2018. The evening program began by singing the National Anthem. Ms. Urmi Basu, Executive Director, New Light, blessed the students and wished them the very best in their future endeavors. The cultural programme started with power packed dance performances by the students, namely, dance acts on classical, patriotic and Rabindra Sangeet. At the end, every one enjoyed the delicious snacks organized and offered by the children and teachers at Syamatarata. Would like to congratulate the entire team for putting in such tremendous effort for exhibiting such a wonderful show!

New Light Kolkata is inspired to have you as project partners Mundo Cooperante for Girls Not Brides and BONO Direkthilfe e.V. for #Unmochan to make this world a safer place for women and girls.

The team from New Light arrived at New Farakka, Murshidabad on 18 July for a daylong session on girls' safety and empowerment through education. Impressed by the proactive partnership of institutional heads at Noor Mohammad Biswas Smriti MSK, Haji Karimuddin High School and Bottolla Primary School.

The smile on the faces of these children in the remote tribal village schools will take your heart away!



Thirteen children from New Light Kolkata were extremely happy and honored to be a part of the Annual Program of "Upasana Centre for Dance" under the guidance of Guru Ashimbandhu Bhattacharya held at Gyan Manch, Kolkata on 23 July. The Upasana Centre for Dance is virtually engaged with the performing art form of Kathak, in all respect.

We all at New Light were delighted at

the prospect of receiving volunteers from Management Solutions this summer between July and September 2018.

Silver Point School had a humble beginning on 26th July in the year 1997. The aim of the institution includes promotion of education as well as providing ample opportunities for the all round development of every student. Today was its 21st Annual Day and New Light Kolkata feels honored to be a part of this celebration. 9 children from Soma Home were invited to perform and celebrate the day with the school team.

Hearty congratulations to Silver Point School for reaching this milestone!





It was a bittersweet moment at New Light Kolkata. Sad because we had to say goodbye to two of our most loved students from Sonar Tori, Lata Mondaland Supriya Majhi on 1 August 2018. Why? Because they are offered a job at one of the most prestigious hotels in the country under the banner of Taj Group of Hotels!

Therefore it was a moment of extreme joy and pride for all of us at New Light as we bid farewell to Lata and Supriya who head for their first job in a different city, today! After a journey of 12 long years at New Light, both of them will now encounter a beginning of many new things including new colleagues, new bosses, new friends, new home, new relationships and countless new experiences.

Undeniably, a first job is not only the beginning of people's careers, but also a foundation of the rest of their lives. All we wish is that their first job is awesome and may it set the tone for the rest of their career. Good luck!!

India is the highest TB burden country with World Health Organisation (WHO) statistics for 2011 giving an estimated incidence figure of 2.2 million cases of TB for India out of a global incidence of 9.6 million cases. This public health problem is the world's largest tuberculosis epidemic. But that was almost seven years ago. Today with an alarming increase in the number of MDR- TB (multiple drug resistant) the poor and the marginalised largely bearing the burden of the disease.

New Light in partnership with other outreach agencies has been working to identify, support and treat patients under its THALI program. One cannot stress enough the need for nutritional support alongside the medical protocol for treatment. On the 3rd of August 30 patients under New Light's community outreach programme were provided with food hamper by MCKS-



Food for Hungry , Kolkata . The awareness event and food hamper distribution was attended by State Chief Tuberculosis Officer Dr Bijoy KAR, District Tuberculosis Officer Dr Swapan Mukherjee, Project Director THALI programme Dr Milan Dinda, Isita Roy , in charge Community Engagement THALI , Anuradha from THali, Anondo, and Nishkriti STS RNTPC. New Light is honoured to joined hands with multiple significant partner agencies in bringing support and care to those who are suffering not only from the disease by the terrible degree of accompanied stigma.

The month of August began with a number of performances by the children of New Light. 26 Children (15 NL + 11 Khelaghar) participated in a program organized by Lamartinere for Girls. Girls from Soma Memorial Girls Home performed at a program jointly organized by Maitree and Anjali. The same month Right to be a Girl-Girl2Be organized a program at Mahakali Pathshala and Adarsh Hindi High School where representatives from New Light participated.

'Being a girl is a right' ~ Urmi Basu has been fighting for the dignity of women for decades. Know more through the interview and video published in El Plural during her last visit to Madrid, Spain - https://www.elplural.com/el-telescopio/ser-nina-es-un-derecho_201474102?fbclid=IwAR0Twhf82p-rQtmrPnR8b-EP9D2gEXdcBeSeRiHT_6l1e3jnfUoYHtycgl



India's struggle for freedom has been well known all over the world and Independence Day celebrations bring out our patriotic side and help us celebrate the true spirit of various inspiring freedom fighters like Bhagat Singh, Mahatma Gandhi, Chandrashekhar Azad, Subhash Chandra Bose and others.

Independence Day celebration on 15 August at New Light Kolkata, Soma Memorial Girls Home and Khelaghar began with the hoisting of the national flag, a unanimously sung National Anthem followed by cultural festivities where the children at the various centres remembered the unsung heroes through some patriotic songs and poems.

As we celebrated India completing 71 years of independence, we would like to thank our group of volunteers from Management Solutions, Spain, Lim from Malaysia along with our local volunteers Sanili and Tamoghna who celebrated the 72nd Independence Day with us and made the day more special! Last but not the least, we also chose this special day to distribute free ration to 400 people-in-need supported by MCKS Pranic Healing Trust, West Bengal.

"I also gave each of the children from New light their own hand wrapped gifts which consisted of a large pencil case stuffed with school supplies and candy. They loved them. One of the little boys refused to nap unless he was holding his. I was also pleasantly surprised when the staff of New Light presented me with a chocolate cake. It was very unexpected and very appreciated." Amy Crespo

Operation – New Light Kolkata

Amy's journey to India

Amy's journey to

India <https://operationnewlight.blogspot.com/>





Windsor Johnston, from Washington DC NPR mother-ship to the back lanes of Sonagachhi, you held up amazing well through some of the darkest and most dangerous places on this planet. From Jhinuk to Khelaghar via Starfish it's been an amazing eight days in August of telling and sharing the unheard stories.. the silenced voices.

Listen to NPR presenter Windsor Johnston bring you the stories from the darkest back lanes of Kalighat and Sonagachi in Kolkata.

It is a story that will make you believe in hope, dreams and above all human courage. The struggles and the women and the children in these areas face and rise above every day can only be attributed to the infinite resilience of human spirit.

Thank you Shana Greene for being the link in our ever expanding circle of love and support

<https://www.npr.org/2018/11/23/670373258/calcutta-woman-helps-children-of-sex-workers-break-the-cycle?fbclid=IwAR0EQWIAaUzalAzx5jaoOAoMzdPYEo-c2skVsWBPgkTL70mcStS5U428ouE>

On 22 August The Empowerment Bag helped empower survivors of trafficking and exploitation. A LOT of effort has gone into creating the best bags and campaign over the last couple of months. Check the special discounts (up to 35%) for our early backers!!!

<https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/the-empowerment-bag?fbclid=IwAR0Lwx2IHjoiqSlxXLkOsMrL3wkWux3B6vG4qpBsLJnUGdOHk8a2WLBObM#/>

New Light Kolkata celebrated Raksha Bandhan (Rakhi) in the darkest lanes of Kalighat to promote communal harmony on 25th August. There have been so many incidents of communal/civil/political unrest of late and therefore celebrating Rakhi was an obvious way to bring people closer to each other and humanity. This was the path shown by Rabindranath Tagore, who himself once propagated the festival to reach out to communities.

Rakhi's were tied on each other's wrists as a show of solidarity. Over 50

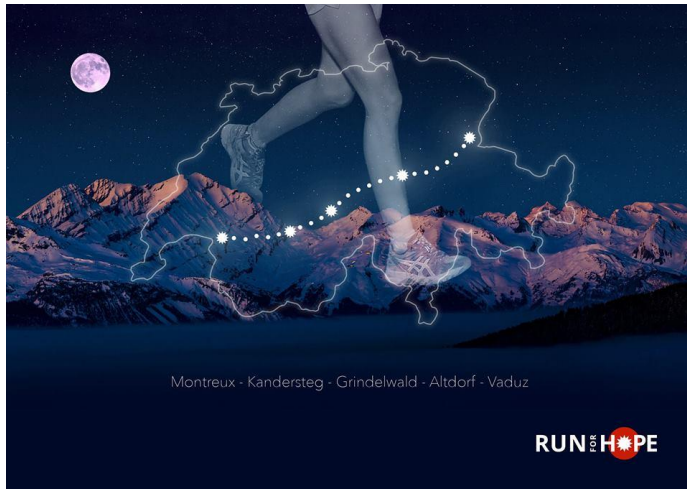
women from the red light community in Kalighat participated in the event. The event helped remove social stigma for the women in the profession.



We organized the event with the help and participation of Rakhi Radiance Chapter III, who for the past 3 years have been bringing smile on the faces of these women.

Love and solidarity to all!

During the end of the month the children from New Light attended a Kaatha Event @ The Kolkata Centre for Creativity.



Everyone can make a difference!
From 5 to 9 September 2018, Via Alpina 2018 | Mit Brigitte Daxelhofer raced across the VIA ALPINA across Switzerland. 380 kilometres and 25,000 vertical meters in 5 days was the athletic goal of Brigitte. The Via Alpina leads across six cantons and crosses 14 of the most beautiful Alpine passes.

Brigitte started on September 5th in Montreux and finished in Vaduz together with other runners on September 9th. The route along the VIA ALPINA has

never been officially run – <https://run-for-hope.ch/was-wir-bewegen/>

Nonetheless, the private run focused on one thing in particular: the financial support of New Light Kolkata, which supports outcasts and discriminated children in Kolkata, India.

A Big Thank You to www.run-for-hope.ch and Chance Swiss for supporting New Light!

Since 1962, India has been celebrating Teachers' Day on 5th September as a symbol of tribute to the contribution made by teachers to the society. The day marks as a day of gratitude and respect to the selfless efforts of teachers.



A wide range of activities were performed on this special day by the students aged between 2 to 20 years which made the day very special for all the teachers at New Light Kolkata. It is the best day to express the love and gratitude that students feel towards those who have taught them to be a better person every day by believing in them and guiding them. Such days create a strong bond between the teachers and students relationship.



The latest health camp conducted at New Light Kolkata was for the benefit of 41 children till the age of 14 years and it was an ENT (Ear-Nose-Throat) camp, in collaboration with All India Women's Conference, New Garia Branch, who graciously helped us by way of doctors as well as medical equipment.

Those detected with ENT problems will have access to further treatment as well. We thank the group from All India Women's Conference for their cooperation for organizing this camp and for helping us reach our goal to protect and treat more children and give them access to better health every day!

Poverty, food insecurity and poor nutrition in the population are important contributors to the burden of tuberculosis (TB). For poor and food-insecure individuals, accessing and successfully completing anti-tuberculosis treatment over an



extended period of time is challenging. Food and nutritional support as an incentive and enabler is employed by national TB control programmes (NTPs) worldwide as a means to encourage treatment initiation and adherence and to improve the nutritional status of patients with TB. Direct benefit transfers often may not be the best way to ensure that tuberculosis patients get essential nutrition. New Light Kolkata in partnership with MCKS - Food for Hungry Foundation, West Bengal, Kolkata conducted its second dry food hamper distribution program to 30 patients on 7 September 2018. The awareness event and food hamper distribution was attended by Mrs. Neena Saha, Director – MCKS-Food for Hungry. Gratitude to all in this great initiative!

“New Light Kolkata will always be there for the women from the red light communities in Kolkata”
~ Urmi Basu

https://m.dw.com/bn/%E0%A6%AF%E0%A7%8C%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%AA%E0%A6%B2%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%B0-%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B0%E0%A7%80%E0%A6%A6%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B0-%E0%A6%9C%E0%A6%A8%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%AF-%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%89%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%87%E0%A6%9F/av-45426007?maca=bn-Facebook-sharing&fbclid=IwAR1UAQR3_gZPgEr7 - IRSLbXdsV6aCqB8TODNRJAXzP7tpRJmwxHdh500



Exploring potential Kolkata based partners working on Safe Migration and Anti-trafficking issues Manuel, Asha Rani and Kusum from AWO Nepal visited New Light. We hope to have fruitful collaboration with AWO in the future. Thank you for visiting us!



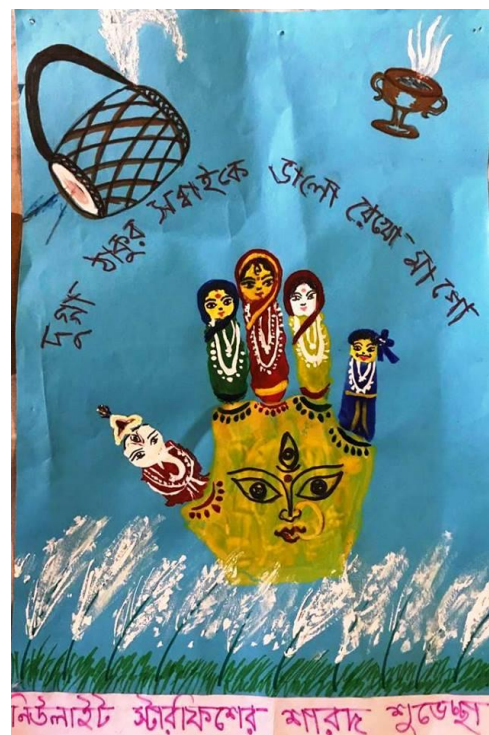
At this first-of-its-kind conference, 200 professionals and practitioners in the field of mental health, along with NGOs, government representatives and others, came together to learn from the experiences of Barefoot Counsellors (lay mental health workers) across the country on 15 and 16 September 2018.

Representatives from New Light Kolkata were honored to be a part of this conference where they learnt what goes on behind the success of numbers, to the challenges the foot soldiers of mental health face every day, as well as their success stories across various parts of the country. Experience sharing was the major learning method of the conference.

The conference was a collaborative effort of Anjali Mental Rights Organization Calcutta and Sangath Goa supported by The Hans Foundation, New Delhi.

The five days of festivities during DURGA PUJA are like no other anywhere else in the world. It is bigger than the Mardi Gras and crazier than the Oktoberfest!

Millions of people walk the streets of Kolkata visiting the bamboo scaffolding structures that take installation art to a different level. For Bengalees these five days mean nonstop celebration with great food.. home cooked and off the street, music, dance, fashion and art. Drummers from remote villages whose everyday occupation could be anything else descend upon the city with deafening nonstop beating of the drums that turn into serious competition. Devi Durga is installed inside the make shift temples that play upon various themes. Every self respecting even seriously atheist Bengalee lines up at the temple to offer their annual often irreverent homage to the Goddess and her brood of four children all resplendent on their animal or bird mascots. This is also the time when people and communities come together to show support and love for each other. No one goes home hungry or without at least one piece of new garment as a gift during these days. For three hundred and sixty days Kolkata, Bengal and Bengalees around the world plan and prepare for these auspicious five days of nonstop revelry.



The children and all whose lives are touched by New Light Kolkata are acknowledged in love and sharing. This year amidst much difficulty and many challenges the children and women were showered with unconditional love and affection by a huge group of people. Anita Agarwal of Minu Sarees most generously provided 250 sarees to the women both within the city and in project locations deep inside remote villages of Bengal. Students of Dps Kolkata organised a garment donation campaign and gifted all those to the kids. Ashutosh College Praktoni, Manjushri Chanda and friends of A Little Contribution, Fuljhuri Mitra Basu, Banasri Bhattacharyya, Dina Dutta Sarkar, Madhurima Ghoshal and friends, Devika Biswas, Soumik Saha, Samrat Dasgupta and another



generous soul who chooses to remain anonymous have filled the hearts of the kids with more joy than they can hold. The students and faculty of International Institute of Hotel Management brought and served a hot meal to more than two hundred and fifty people. Director IIHM, International Institute of Hotel Management, Sanjukta Bose your support is invaluable. Others who brought food, toys, crayons and books went back loved and appreciated. Rj Arvind.. Special thanks to you for your reach to a few millions with the story of New Light Kolkata. We at New Light Kolkata are overwhelmed with such outpouring of generosity, love and commitment. Happy festive days to all. Stay well stay safe. Prayers and grace.

Five years ago on 24 October, New Light Kolkata started its day care program for toddlers #HTSOperationStarfish in one of the darkest and most dangerous red light districts in Kolkata namely Sonagachhi. The tiny starfish are growing up to be beautiful mermaids with no fears of the deep.

May the eternal light of the universe surround you.. keeping you safe secure and loved.



Halloween, the spooky celebration observed every year at New Light Kolkata is here!

The amazing celebration is favourite for both kids and adults. Nevertheless, it provides an opportunity of dressing up in a scary manner. The night of celebration involved fun, costumes and snacks. Indeed, every age group had a role to play!

New Light Kolkata wishes all of you a very Happy Halloween! Hope your Halloween is just crawling with happiness 😊

This year was special! The children from New Light got to watch the ISL match in Kolkata, the tickets for which were organized by organized by BookMyShow. Thank you so much BookMyShow!



Diwali, the festival of lights, is celebrated by millions across the world. The word Diwali comes from the Sanskrit word Deepavali, meaning "rows of lighted lamps". The festival marks the victory of good over evil, knowledge over ignorance.

The children celebrated Diwali with the staff members at New Light Kolkata by burning crackers and lighting lamps during the evening. The festival truly is a harbinger of fun, harmony, enthusiasm and prosperity. May the light of the lamps guide every one of us on the way to happiness, success, patience and peace.



“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive” – The Dalai Lama

Bhai Dooj or Bhai Phonta is a festival celebrated two days after Diwali which signifies the importance of family bonding and relationships like most Indian festivals. Although every relationship possesses its own value, the brother-sister relationship is quite unique and unmatched. This auspicious occasion reveals the importance of

siblings in someone's life.

New Light Kolkata is like family to all of us who work here and of course for the children. Keeping this in mind, the children celebrated Bhai Phonta on 9 November, revealing and rejuvenating the eternal love of brother and sister.

Think Global School students found their visit to New Light to be so inspirational last year, that 10 students and 3 staff travelled back to Kolkata in November this year, to revisit the same educational program. We look forward to welcoming the group every year!





Ah! What would the world be to us
 If the children were no more?
 We should dread the desert behind us
 Worse than the dark before.
 What the leaves are to the forest,
 With light and air for food,
 Ere their sweet and tender juices
 Have been hardened into wood, --
 That to the world are children;
 Through them it feels the glow
 Of a brighter and sunnier climate
 Than reaches the trunks below.
 Come to me, O ye children!
 And whisper in my ear
 What the birds and the winds are singing
 In your sunny atmosphere.
 For what are all our contrivings,
 And the wisdom of our books,

When compared with your caresses,
 And the gladness of your looks?
 Ye are better than all the ballads
 That ever were sung or said;
 For ye are living poems,
 And all the rest are dead.
 ~ **Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**



To all the children around the world,
 wish you pure air which you can
 breathe, uncontaminated environment,
 fresh water to drink and a world where
 all living beings live in harmony and
 peace. Wish you a very Happy
 Children's Day!

On 18 November theactreact with Clowns Without Borders (Sweden) presented Panchatantra, at Daga Nikunj. The children from New Light were special invitees and were witness to abounding folk music, mime and storytelling, playfulness was mandatory.



Farakka Ganga Convention 2018 –
 Our beloved social activist Medha
 PatkarJi and NAPM stand together to
 fight against Ganga River Erosion. -
 "নদী বাঁচাও জীবন বাঁচাও", saving
 the River Ganga with Urmi Basu



The British Deputy High Commission, Kolkata hosted a three day long workshop addressing gender based violence involving NGO partners, survivors, members of the judiciary, the media and other important stakeholders. The event that came to a close marked the International Day to End Violence Against Women with a panel discussion on many urgent and relevant issues.

Thank you Deputy Chief of Mission Sahida Khan, Economic and Political Consul Ajitha Menon and Deputy Consul Sanjibita Sen for a rare opportunity to attend the session with a courageous group of survivors of trafficking from New Light Kolkata



We'd like you to save the date for Earth Day Network-India Sunday Fun Day Mela on November 25, 2018 at Alka Jalan Foundation, Daga Nikunj - 25/1 Ballygunje Circular Road

(beside Paramount Apartments) from 11 AM to 7 PM

New Light was excited to be part of this event where everyone had the opportunity to enjoy stalls of organic, natural, up-cycled and recycled products. Do your grocery shopping of natural and organic products and make your choice from a wide range of handicrafts, hand-looms, fashion accessories, home linen, decorative items, natural skin and hair care products etc.

Just a month before Christmas it was a great time to enjoy a couple of hours of fresh air, eat healthy and organic brunch/lunch/snacks available on sale at many stalls.



An average person would probably not want to draw attention to the fact that their birthday, which falls on December 1st, coincides with World AIDS Day. But New Light Kolkata is not an average organization. This year, New Light Kolkata celebrates its 18th birthday on Saturday December 1 acknowledging World AIDS Day as well!



Every year, World AIDS Day is celebrated on December 1st to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and to demonstrate international solidarity in the face of the pandemic. The day is an opportunity for everyone who cares to disseminate information about the status of the pandemic and to encourage progress in HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care around the world, particularly in high prevalence countries.



The audacious aspiration becomes an established reality as New Light Kolkata turns 18.

Thank you Mr. Sujoy Roy from The White Ribbon Alliance West Bengal for introducing us to the campaign 'What Women Want' focusing on quality health care for women on this special day. Thank you Ms. Sumita Mahatodas and friends from #TheSareeSaga for promoting menstrual health and hygiene by distributing our very own Mukti product. Happy to have you with us again, Ms. Sushmita Banerjee and Ms. Parbati Mukherjee of Cancer Fight Foundation as you brought awareness and information on cervical and breast cancer that could save many in the

community. We take this opportunity to thank all our well-wishers, supporters and friends who joined us for this special celebration and also helped keep our commitment to reducing the impact of HIV/AIDS in the community we serve. Thank you all for being our backbone for the past 18 years and with gratitude we step into yet another year to promote gender equality through education and life skill training thereby reducing harm caused by violence and abuse to women and children.

As New Light Kolkata attained adulthood, in its fight to bring greater social justice, our student from the first batch Avijit Gayen, now a trained professional chef on a luxury liner brought his best gift back to us.. A sumptuous treat of delicious biriyani for us all!

Thank you Avijit and all other graduates of New Light Kolkata.. you make us proud

On the august occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration Of Human Rights (UDHR), on 10th December 2018, the Consulate General of France welcomed an exclusive "open to all" gathering at Basusree Cinema to a free thinking discourse on Human rights issues tracing the shifts in the narrative of the LGBTQ community and Women's_ empowerment groups across India and also the world.



The Acting Consul general Mr Olivier CASSIN who was moderating this interaction and highlighted the core agenda in a brief introduction.

The stage was then left open to the very erudite panel of speakers Mr. Anubhuti Banerjee, with Tatasteel, Kolkata, and as the company's first openly TransGenders employee, Dr. Debjyoti Ghosh a human rights lawyer from Kolkata, Diya Jaiswal a certified Life Coach and Counsellor and Ms Urmi Basu of NGO New Light Kolkata to assess and discuss the Improvement /or absence of Improvement in the last decade in terms of: legislation, social environment, awareness of population,

medias/artistic approach and coverage. The conversation ranged from Women’s empowerment and LGBTQ rights - the topic centred around the challenges for the future, the next institutional steps.



Clowns Without Borders together with Rednose Entertainment (Mumbai) conceived the Laughing Curry (India) project in 2012 to offer humor as a means of psychological support to communities that have suffered trauma. Through the magic of theatre and clowning the group has successfully shared playfulness and laughter with people in communities as well as with local performers and social workers in India. This year between 17 to 20 December Clown POPO chose to visit the New Light main shelter, Starfish, Syamatarra, Soma Memorial Girls Home and Khelaghar Boys Home offering relief through laughter to the children.

What an amazing show did the children witness!
#ResilienceInLaughter

December is a month of cakes and pastries! 5 girls from New Light Kolkata Soma Memorial Girls Home and 5 boys from Khelaghar Boys Home enjoyed being part of a baking workshop organized by A Little Contribution where their interest in baking was discovered and honed.

The children got to engage their sense of sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing. Making something from scratch with their own hands, gave them an immense sense of achievement, especially when they completed baking a cookie of their own!





8 first and second year medical students from Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine Nanyang Technological University, Singapore visited New Light who were interested in understanding and helping victims of sex trafficking in Kolkata

This is Christmas!
A time of reflection,
A time for good cheer,
A time for friends and family,
During a special time of the year!!

New Light and all its other centres enjoyed an evening of fun at our annual "Christmas Celebration" on December 22nd this year!

Wish everyone a very happy and healthy Christmas!

~ O COME ALL YE JOYFUL ~



As we bring this 2018 year to an end, let us pray the new year will be a year with new peace, new understanding, new happiness and new hope. New Light Kolkata wishes all its friends, partners, well wishers, donors, supporters and all those who have stood beside us through thick and thin a very Happy & Prosperous New Year 2019!!

New Light would like to thank our supporters, volunteers and interns such as you for their dedication and commitment to our cause. Our NGO is devoted to promote gender equality through education and life skill training thereby reducing harm caused by violence and abuse to women and children.

BONO Direkhtilfe, The Kulczyk Foundation, Inditex, Clean Water for Children, Village Volunteers, CINI, , Mundo Cooperante, Girl 2 B, Association Les Enfants De Personne Switzerland, Asha for Education, Jamal & Alisha Ahmad, Victoria Fraga Lopez, Frances Gillard & Barbara Hartley, Bidyut Dumra, Margriet Janssen, Diyana Fardnanez , Spicer & family, Verena Meyer, Maria Fernanda Parias, Brooke Lindee, Janet Gray, State Bank Of India, Raghuram, Chowrenghee Rotary Trust, M C K S Food For Hungry Foundation (W.B.), Ana Oliver, Kolkata Gives Foundation, Pankaj Lunawat, Reshmi Sengupta, Jyotirmai Club, Aninda Bhattacharyya, Windsor Johnston, Sharmila Chowdhury, Anvar Ali Khan, Devika Biswas, Manavi Mehta, Alexandra, Rquel Casaves, Think Global School, Zarin Imam, Madhuchhanda Bhoumik, Sangeeta Ganeriwalla, Vedaprana Purkayastha, Krishnananda & Mary Eileen Bonnerjee, Premanjali Gupta, Arlene Plevin, Elena Solana, Sanjivani Hinge, L Ghosh Dastidar from Marami the Healing Touch, Anshu Agarwal from Ladies Circle India, Advocate Koushik Bakshi , Dr. Prabhat K Rohatgi from Rotary Victoria, Sukanya Rakshit Gupta, Kallu Babu, Lal Chand, Mr. Gourab Sasmol and Ms. Anindita Ghosh, Isabel Flemming, Lonnie Bewick, Sunny Niklaus, Archana C Nair, Priyanjali Biswas, Srijit Naskar, Sumit Mitra, Aarush Sharma, Nidhi Verma, Mairead Brady, Dr. Sreelata Roychowdhury and team, Upoma Saha, Antarleena Pal, Ishani Kaluthotage, Ishani Das, Luigi Gabriello and friends, Debasmita Das, Briana Dawes, Jean Manners, Henrique Schmeil, Ana Gamallo, Naomi Fisher, Satvika Khera, Agnivesh Dutta, Nikita Mathur, Koushik Kar, Srila Banerjee, Tapojay Mukherjee, Meena Chatterjee, Korah Allen, Iona Mahonymoyer, Maria Zarauza, Isane Goudonde Lalande, Marisha Chakrabarti, Debasis Mitra, Trisha Bhattacharya, Emeraude Lapointe, Amelia Crespo, Ispita Har, Saloni Mohanty, Fozia Faiyaz, Zamar Khan, Utsa Mukherjee, Daniel O Mahony, Kanishka Roy, Rohitashwa Guha, Myriam Rodríguez, Shanili Saha, Ishita Burman, Nayaneeka Dutta Choudhury , Anumanjari Dutta Choudhury, Tamoghna Sarkar, Ananya Dey Sarkar, Lim Yi Fang, Marion Frys, Juhi Roy, Anushka Ghosh, Marta Garcia Pineda, Janvi Doshi, Alexandra Foote, Luciano Romanelli and Julie, Breanna Reynolds, Sofia Duffo Vilaplana, Laura Ceriani, Syed Aazam Jonaid, Arlene Plevin, Krishangi Bansal, Gina Crews.

