

RID 3291 Pulse Polio Orientation & Planning Workshop :Sunday 21.08.'11 : A Report.
By PP Prodeep Coomar

The RID 3291 Pulse Polio Orientation & Planning workshop was held on Sunday 21st August 2011 morning, at Rotary Sadan.

The programme started with the release of END POLIO NOW gas balloons by the Chief Guest, PRID & TRF Trustee Rtn Ashoke Mahajan, from the lawns of Rotary Sadan.

Inside the nearly full auditorium, the audience listened & learnt from several eminent speakers, about our efforts to banish the menace of Polio from the world. In an interactive session at the end, several queries raised were responded to by the panelists.

The speakers included District Pulse Polio Chairman PDG Raj Kumar Rajgaria, National Pulse Polio Committee Member, PDG Siddhartha S. Bose, DG Angshuman Banerjee, RID Rtn Sekhar Mehta, PRID & TRF Trustee Rtn Ashoke Mahajan, Dr Dipankar Mukherjee, Regional Head, East, WHO, National Polio Surveillance Programme, India, Mr Nasir Atique of UNICEF, Dr TK Mukherjee of the Health Dept, Govt of Poshchimbawngo & other State Govt & KMC officials.

The salient features/facts of the deliberations & interactions during the session included the following decisions :

In 1988, 350000 children suffered from polio. In 2011, only 309 children have been affected. This is about 0.1% of the original figure. Rotary has been able to save the rest.

TRF is the largest contributor for Polio Eradication.

So its NOW or NEVER for us Rotarians To END POLIO NOW !!!

It is our Top Priority!!!

- In India, 125000 health workers administer the Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) to 172 million children during each National Immunisation Day (NID).
- The next Sub National Immunisation Day (SNID), meant specially for Kolkata & north & South 24 Parganas in our state, is on Sunday, 28.08.'11. IEC Materials for that day needs to be collected by the club from Lansdowne Lane, as usual.
- Last year only one new polio case was detected in India ! Unfortunately it was very close to us, at Panchla , in Howrah District, WB.
- Since then we in India have had 31 weeks without any new Polio cases detected!
- This is the longest Polio Free period in 25 years!
- Rotarians should henceforth focus on Awareness creation, Advocacy & bridging the Fund Gap (the gap between our plan to meet the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation challenge, & our actual achievement , as also reported in the media) through:
 - Working Smart rather than working hard only.
 - If a club has to take up only one Project, It has to be about Polio.
 - Clubs not taking up Polio Eradication Programmes, not to be considered for DG's Citations.
 - District's annual Sharad Swikriti Awards to be limited to those Puja Committees which are actively involved in Polio Eradication Programmes.
 - Clubs to take up Awareness drives like, Padayatras/Rallies, holding Health Camps, etc.
 - Doctor Rotarians to be enlisted for involving in the drives of Advocacy.

- Rotary has spent 1.2 billion USD, & has raised 7 billion from various Govts, for Polio Eradication.
- Bill& Melinda Gates Foundation donated 355 million USD & challenged us to match by raising 200million USD.
- We are running short of our target.
- So each club should donate/raise 2000USD every year for the next 3 RYs.

This very important workshop was attended by 3 PPs of our club,each in their capacities as District Officials : PP Indrani Gupta, as District Interact Chairperson, PP Prodeep Coomar, as AG Zone 25 & PP Ashif Shah as Assistant District Secretary(Administration).