

Gala raises funds for people in need in Kolkata and Toronto

The Toronto Calcutta Foundation's annual gala raised funds and awareness for causes it supports recently.

The Toronto Calcutta Foundation (TCF) is a non-profit organization and registered charity in Canada, working to alleviate the poverty in Kolkata and surrounding areas.

Supporters gathered at the Hilton Garden Inn enjoyed *hors d'oeuvres*, dinner and entertainment. Master of Ceremonies **Piya Chattopadhyay** got the evening going, introducing guest speaker **Olivia Chow**, Member of Parliament.

Chow made a heartfelt appeal to the guests to open their wallets for the initiatives funded by the Foundation. She quoted lines from a Rabindranath Tagore poem:

*Where the mind is without fear
And the head is held high
Where knowledge is free...
Into that heaven of freedom,
My father,
Let my country awake!*

The lines applied equally to Canada, she said.

This was followed by a soulful reading of some of Tagore's poems by **Dr Ananya Mukherjee-Reed**.

Miss India Worldwide Canada, **Minu Jose**, shared her experience as a newcomer to Canada. She said she has set up a scholarship for girls in Kerala, India, and spoke of the importance of empowering girls. **Saswati Deb** made a presentation on the Foundation's work with underprivileged children in Kolkata.

"We work in three areas—health, education and vocational training. So our main objective was to raise awareness in these areas as well as raise money to fund these activities," said **Uttam Chakrabarti** of TCF.

"We are looking at ways to help needy people here in Toronto."

For more info, visit www.toronto-calcutta.org.

• **TOP:** Minu Jose, Olivia Chow, a guest and Saswati Deb. **MIDDLE:** Guests at the TCF gala. **BOTTOM:** Cozy in sweaters provided by TCF, children at the Ghutari Sharif School in Kolkata, India.

