

The Day On The Streets Of Kolkata; An extraordinary documentation of an extraordinary city

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Kolkata witnesses "never-before" street photography extraordinaire across a 24-hour calendar day on 15th March 2023

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

40 street photographers from 7 different nations converged at Kolkata and within a single 24-hour calendar day, from midnight to midnight, they roamed around the streets capturing moments of the Kolkata life as it unfolded, as it happened, as it really is. The contingent of street photographers was divided into smaller sub-groups and was sent to different regions of the city allocated for each group across different time slots. Many of these photographers stretched as long as 18 hours beyond their minimum time slots. They braved the scorching March sun, the rising humidity, the pollution, and the traffic congestion all for the love of street photography, people, and the City of Joy - Kolkata.

When asked, why DOTSO? And why Kolkata?

Kevin Unger stated: *"Street photography has become the most popular genre of photography, and it's no wonder that it would multiply due to the invention of the smartphone. There are so many street photographers and each has its unique style. It's easy enough to go into a city center for a few hours and take some real breathtaking photos. But I always felt, that to get a good sense and cross-section of a city, to really bring it to life it would take much more than one photographer can do. DOTSO is about bringing street photographers together, to share their perspectives and through photos show the heart and soul of a city captured within a twenty four hour period - one full calendar day!"*

"As a curator of a street photography forum, I see numerous images of Kolkata appearing on my screen on a daily basis. Kolkata is full of life, colour, culture, emotion, and most importantly Joy - The City of Joy! For every street photographer, Kolkata is like the mythological siren, constantly

alluring photographers to her. There's no end to the photo one can take there."

Street photographers as far as from Israel, Belgium, USA, Britain, Sweden, France, and India decided and volunteered to participate in this unique project, to capture the very soul and essence of Kolkata – The City of Joy!

A pre-event briefing on 13 Mar 23 was hosted by Sabyasachi Nath of the *Photography Club of India* and led by Kevin Unger & Abhishek Deb (*Director - Dais World*) to facilitate all the Indian and Foreign participants of DOTSO before the actual event scheduled for 00:00 hrs on 15 Mar 23.

DOTSO Kolkata has been different in a way that was never attempted in the previous editions. On 14th March 2023, the core team of DOTSO photographers went to visit school students at [Heritage School](#). Kevin Unger and the core team interacted about street photography and its benefits while speaking to a talented bunch of school students at The Heritage School - Kolkata. The workshop was followed up by a Street Photography activity on 15 March 2023 around the Golpark area, with a dozen selected students from the Photography club of the Heritage School. It was a dream come true for many budding street photography aspirants from the city and the passion displayed was exemplary.

Between the scheduled 24 hours of 15 Mar 23, the street photographers covered and documented Howrah Bridge, Howrah Railway Station, Red Road, Park street Nightclubs vicinities, Mallick Ghat, Maidan, Strand Road Bus Stations, Burrabazar, Esplanade, Park Street, Russell Street, Garcha/Ballygunje, St Pauls, Planetarium, Rabindra Sadan, Sudder Street, Ferry Ride & North Kolkata, Metro Rides, Cafe(s) in Central Kolkata, College Street, Kumortuli, Suburban Trains, High Court, Brabourne Road, Princep Ghat, Local Bus, Tram, Cafe(s) in Central Kolkata, Tangra, New Market, Bow Barracks as reported by Abhishek Deb, DOTSO's media spokesperson.

Abhishek Deb, the founding Director of the *Dais World* (*The popular and awarded news media startup of Young India*), being a street photographer himself, has played an active role in bringing organization and effective implementation of DOTSO Kolkata.

Abhishek Deb stated: "Sweat, rising temperatures and humidity, an overwhelming feeling, crowded city mongers everywhere looking at us skeptically.. challenges were abundant. But DOTSO Kolkata was accomplished the very day all the handpicked street photographers said "YES, I will be there". DOTSO Kolkata is an extraordinary exercise achieved perfectly by each and every soul who contributed perfectly to the cause. On behalf of the Dais World team, I thank Mr. Kevin Unger for putting his faith in and belief upon us. I would thank Mr. Sabyasachi Nath of PCI (Photography Club of India) and his team for the effective co-handling of all the responsibilities throughout this project. Gratitude to Mr. Pradeep Agarwal, the CEO of The Heritage School and the Principal Ms. Seema Sapru for giving us the opportunity to interact with the students. Thank you Kolkata Police. Thank you ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) for hosting us. And above all, Kudos to each and every brave and gritty photographer who participated in DOTSO Kolkata and converted a possibility into a reality. Street photography

wins, the city of joy wins”

Sabyasachi Nath, Director of the *Photography Club of India*, who is well known in the photography circles of Kolkata as an admirer of art & culture and for his enterprising efforts every year behind the annual international exhibition by PCI, played an important role in managing most of the groundwork around the logistics of the event.

Sabyasachi Nath stated: “PCI would like to thank all the photographers and management of The Heritage School, Kolkata Police, Team DOTSO and all others involved for taking the time out of your day from your busy schedule and coming to this important event yesterday 15th March 2023. We know that for many of traveling photographers and the organisers, the work spanned across couple of days if not weeks for the preparation itself. Your presence and support has been key to the success of DOTSO Kolkata and we are truly grateful. DOTSO will be collating the photographs in next few weeks and showcase them in our future events and in the digital medium as well. We hope you will be able to engage with us in social media and enjoy the photographs depicting glimpses of the ‘city of joy’ through the eye of lenses.

Thanks.

Team PCI”

Pradeep Agarwal CEO, *Heritage Group of Institutions* stated: “Let me congratulate Photography Club of India, ICCR, DOTSO and all the other associates to organize such an unique photo walk for 24 hrs, starting midnight to next day midnight. I believe that the team of eminent photographers from India and abroad joined such an excellent initiative in the City of Joy will definitely lead to a different dimension of photography. In this initiative, involvement of children from The Heritage School for street photography, after giving them a mentored workshop by eminent international photographers, has also made this event an exclusive one which may blend the impressions of young creative minds with professional one. I wish a great success of such an international event in India and hope it will create a new chapter in photography particularly in the context of sustainable development goals of our planet.”

ABOUT DOTSO

Kevin Unger expresses that he felt burnt out from more than 15 years of his photojournalism career. He felt it tiring being caught in the crossfire of war reporting and tired of a never changing narrative.

As he decided to put his cameras away for years, one of his photojournalist friends pushed him towards picking up the camera again to shoot street shots. As he picked up the camera again 4 years back, he never stopped again. He found his old passion for photography while doing street photography and he understood the therapeutic value it brought to his life. Now he was not setting his foot out on the streets with a preset story in mind and is free and in liberty to click anything. He believed it to have found a way back to the camera.

He mentions that as a kid he was also vulnerable to substance abuse and he strongly believes that street photography as an art, discipline, and genre can help socially challenged kids to use this as a tool to get back to a normal life. DOTSO comes with a purpose to spread the art of street photography to everyone not only as an expression but also as a way to revival and rejuvenation.

Starting with Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and now Kolkata, DOTSO focuses on taking this awareness to every corner of the planet, one city at a time

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