

Kolotan School; Site Visit Report of May 29 and June 3, 2026

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Background:

KOLOTAN, established on 2nd November 2018, is a charitable trust aiming at multifaceted social developments. Kolotan aspire to educational development in rural areas, want to spread environmental awareness, want to ensure the retention of indigenous culture, aims at child development, works towards skill development so that employment can be created for the independence of the economically challenged families. They aspire to build an educated, sympathetic, and democratic society.

Kolotan abide by the Tagorean philosophy of education where teaching is done primarily with the aid of music, dance, arts and crafts, drama, and recitation within an environmentally sustainable system

They strongly believe that these methods can ensure better retention and application of education. This approach also adds to the pupils' vocation for the future.

In order to achieve these goals, they run a School, currently up to grade VII and plan to add a grade every year. They also run a Women's self help group called Sumangali, involving local women and train them on various handicrafts. In line with their goal of environmental sustainability, they are building a schoolhouse of their own, made mostly of bamboo and muds.

Site Visit:

On 29th May, 2026 I visited Kolotan in their school along with my friends Kushal and Anindita Maitra. The school was closed due to Eid celebration, but all the teachers, staff and Trustees were present. I had a very good conversation with the Trustees and all the

teachers. The school has moved to a new rental premise since my last site visit in September 2024. This premise is a three storied building and the whole building and terrace is used for the school. The trustees shared that the current landlord is very cooperative unlike the last one which caused the move. They have organized the house into classrooms, offices, computer room, Library etc. I could see the beautiful art works made by the students everywhere in the building.

I had a meeting with the teachers and the trustees, and it was evident that they were very passionate about their teaching the subjects like Bengali, English, Math, History, Geography, Music, Art and Science. They shared that they get continuous encouragement and support from the Kolotan Trust and many of the trustees are working full time for the school along with the teachers. They have a holistic student evaluation approach with a detailed subjective reporting opposed to providing mere scores or letter grades for the subject. They discuss the result with each guardians on a one on basis. The method has recently been published and praised in the media.

<https://medium.com/@insideeducation/how-a-school-in-bengal-is-redefining-student-assessment-6d2856c04bbe>

My friend Kushal runs vocational training, and he shared with the Kolotan trust how they could further train the members of Sumangali on making better handicrafts that would be marketable. He may also help them to market their products for self-sustenance. He promised to come back with his Textile Engineering staff to discuss the next steps for work on Fabrics.

As the school was closed on May 29, I visited the site again on June 3, along with my Wife Sreelekha. while the school was in session. The school house was very lively with the classes in progress. I witnessed first hand their practical methods of teachings. The students appeared to be very enthusiastic to learn. I saw several classes in progress like English, Bengali, Drawing, Tabla and Music.

The school house was cleanly maintained but the bathrooms could be cleaned better. There was electricity and water supply in the building. Attendants or ayas were there to take care of the small children as and when needed.

They have also started extended hours for the grade 6 and 7 students to help them with their homework so that they don't need to attend outside tutorials or tutors, which has become a wide practice in the state.

Their teaching methods have been praised by any organizations including The Wipro Foundation. They have sponsored three of the Kolotan teachers to spread their learning methods to a neighboring government school.

Kushal also visited the site on the same day along with his Textile Engineering staff Atanu. They purchased several handicrafts made by Sumangali and discussed about conducting a monthlong workshop with them in recent future.

We also visited the Kolotan school house under construction and was impressed by the progress made of the phase 1 of the building. The building plan has been divided into three phases and the plan is to move the school from the rental premises after Phase 1 is completed. The superstructure has been built to the second floor and soon they plan to start on the third-floor work.







