

New French diplomat looks forward to enjoying Pujas

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Kolkata: The new French consul general, Virginie Corteval, who made her first public appearance on Thursday, with a project on promoting French in schools, said she was looking forward to enjoying the Durga Puja festivities in Kolkata.

Corteval took over from Damien Syed on September 1. "I am really thrilled to be here. Kolkata is very dear to me. It is so vibrant and colourful." The French consul general has visited the city several times, ("lost count on how many times"), especially during her stint in Bangladesh.

On Thursday, Corteval said she wished to brushing up on her Bengali, adding with a smile: "I was sampling my favourite Bengali dish — hilsa with mustard



New French consul general Virginie Corteval at an event in a New Town school promoting French learning

sauce — it was delicious."

Corteval said she was hoping to see lots of pandals during the Pujas. Harping on the many similarities between the French and the Bengalis, "adda", for instance, Corteval said, "The French in-

dulge in 'adda', too, but in a different way." She said: "I am committed to continue and foster links that were developed by my predecessor, and thank him for creating this cross cultural friendship on behalf of France.