

Rotary

INDIA NEWS

www.rotarynewsonline.org





Another Milestone

Our hard work has paid off. Through the work of Rotarians and our partners, the WHO African region has been certified free of wild poliovirus. This means that no child in any of the region's 47 countries will ever again have to suffer from the wild poliovirus.

While we celebrate this great achievement, we look to the next goal: to eradicate the wild poliovirus in the two countries where the disease has never been stopped, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"To all of our Rotary members: Thank you for your continued support and dedication, which has made possible the certification of the WHO African region as free of the wild poliovirus. We know this hasn't been easy, and there is still work to be done, but you have helped achieve something remarkable."

Holger Knaack
Rotary International President

Help us meet the next challenge by donating at
endpolio.org/donate



Inside

10 Reaching eggs to the nutritionally deficient

Hari Kishan Valmiki of RC Secunderabad has been instrumental in distributing 500,000 eggs to needy children.

16 Sushil Gupta conferred Rotary Award of Honor

RI recognises PRID Sushil Gupta with its highest award for his long and successful service to Rotary.

18 When the mouse roared

PDG Sylvia Whitlock, the first woman to head a Rotary club, goes down memory lane on women's membership in Rotary.

28 Indian Rotarians travel to

Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara

Rotarians from Amritsar meet Pakistani Rotarians at the gurdwara in Lahore, Pakistan.

32 RC Nagpur Fort gives hope to disabled children

The club facilitates corrective surgery and rehabilitation of disabled children through its Project Saksham.

38 When an eye hospital rejuvenated a Rotary club

An account of how the Hooghly Eye Hospital saved RC Hooghly from being de-chartered.

46 Rotary opens a 300-bed Covid care centre in Bengaluru

RID 3190 has set up the Rotary Advika Nayanika Covid Care Centre at Peenya to treat patients with mild Covid symptoms.

52 The empress of melodies

Beginning this issue, we bring to you a series of articles on India's greatest singers. Who else but Lata Mangeshkar to kick off this series.

On the cover: Children benefit from the egg-donation drive initiated by a Rotarian.

Picture: Pervez Bhagat

10



16



18



38



52



28



Left Rotary, but wants magazine!

I am Dr Veerajju Veera, a retired scientist from ISRO, now residing in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh. I am a past Rotarian from RC Kakinada Central, RID 3020, and was in Rotary for 15 years. In June 2020, I left the club on personal grounds. As a Rotarian, I got *Rotary News* regularly.

I am deeply interested in going through the magazine. In recent years, it has undergone so many improvements, attaining international standards by good coverage of Rotary events such as RI conventions, conferences, along with beautiful and high quality visuals of Rotary leaders. The articles are duly balanced by the Editor's views on different topics. All these have taken the magazine to new heights.

Considering the above, I have developed a fascination for *Rotary News*, and wish to continue reading the magazine even though now I am only a past Rotarian. I would like to continue to subscribe to the magazine. Please let me know how I can remit the subscription due as an individual subscriber, so that I may continue to enjoy the magazine uninterrupted.

Dr Veerajju Veera, retired ISRO scientist, Kakinada

We at *Rotary News* are delighted to note you'd like to continue reading the magazine even after leaving Rotary. We've got your subscription dues and will continue sending the magazine to you.

Editor



Raising the bar

I have gone through all the seven issues of *Rotary News* from January this year which I had not been receiving for a few months as my name had gone missing from your subscribers' list. Thanks for sending the copies. I was simply startled to see them! You have raised the bar tremendously and converted *Rotary News* into a proper, highly readable, national magazine. As an experienced magazine publisher and journalist, I should know! Well-done and keep up the good work.

Atul Dev

RC Indraprastha-Okhla — D 3011

The July issue is very interesting. Of all the articles, the one which

I liked the most is, *Work from home, an old norm* by TCA Srinivasa Raghavan in the LBW column.

Guru Dutt NK

RC Dombivli East — D 3142

It is a matter of immense satisfaction that we get *Rotary News* on time despite the lockdown. The new RI President Holger Knaack has rightly focused on opening up opportunities. All the articles with accompanying pictures are wonderful as usual.

The article *Withstanding adversity* by Sheela Nambiar (July) is very helpful for balancing our health, work and life. The coverage on Covid relief camps and webinars,

the write-up on Egypt with great pictures are all very good. The MoU with the HRD Ministry to make India literate and Africa's river restoration project under the focus area of environment are milestone programmes for Rotary in 2020–21, and will redefine our future.

Soumitra Chakraborty

RC Calcutta Innovation — D 3291

Print vs e-version

I saw a boxed letter of K Ravindrakumar, RC Karur, batting for the advantages of a print version, as it provides reading pleasure, with an assurance by the Editor that print version is continuing. But we shall show a better way to the world.

While it is a pleasure to hold a print version in hand, we have to think of the damage to the environment as it entails felling so many trees to produce newsprint. Also, waterbodies are polluted when printed ink is dissolved into them. We have to ponder on all these issues, and remember that the earth's natural resources need to be replenished.

Gopalakrishnan H

RC Hosur — D 2982

I received the July issue on the day GoI announced a new education policy. I wasn't surprised to read the comment in *Egypt... an awe-inspiring civilisation* by Usha Kumar that she had learnt the 'lacklustre' history of India while in high school. But when I read the famous book *The wonder that was India* by AL Basham, an Australian author, I felt elated, though history was not my subject.

The author cannot be blamed for her comments on Indian history. It is the result of an 'English' education system imposed by the British and followed by our rulers till date which

LETTERS

prevents us from appreciating our great history. We have to take pride in India's great culture and civilisation. There is nothing wrong in glorifying Egyptian history; but it should not be at the cost of denigrating our culture. I hope this new education system will change our inferior mindset.

Radhesh L Bhat
RC Cochin Midtown — D 3201

It is astonishing to read that RID 9212 in Kenya has taken up a unique river restoration project described in *Rotary-UNEP implement Africa's largest river restoration project*. This mega project for sustainable development partnering with UNEP has 74 clubs across 11 counties in Ethiopia and Kenya as joint stakeholders.

DG Joe Otin, who is also a Rotary Ambassador to UNEP, has done tremendous preparatory work since 2018 to take up this project aiming to provide fresh water, increasing the ecosystem along the river bank and enhancing the forest area, all laudable objectives. This project fits in with our seventh area of focus which is environment. Our best wishes to the project team of RID 9212.

Veeranna A Huggi
RC Shimoga — D 3182

Let's donate to TRF

Congratulations to the Rotarians of RC Nasik Grapecity for their commendable work on the water pipeline project. The happiness it would have brought to the tribal villagers is imaginable. Keep up the good work.

Rajagopal Iyer
RC Coimbatore West — D 3201

I earnestly request Rotarians to donate liberally to TRF as this will help the poor who need our help. Let us donate as much as we can and at the earliest.

We can join hands to make major contributions to the Foundation this year. In my RI District 3212, DGND V R Muthu and DG PNB Murugadoss have become AKS members by each contributing \$250,000 to TRF. Let us donate now instead of waiting for the right time.

A Easwaramoorthy
RC Tirunelveli West — D 3212

The cover photo of Kamalamma in the June issue, with her innocent smile, aptly shows her joy in giving to society even when her funds are limited, and she can give only ₹500 as her contribution in preparing fresh meals for the needy. She is a great example to Rotarians who are striving to make the world a better place.

RU Raman
RC Pon Puduppatti — D 3000

A true Rotarian

I am a former president of RC Madurai Next Gen and nephew of PDG AN Muthuraman, who passed away recently. As a child I accompanied him to Rotary meetings, when I visited his home in Trichy. Thanks to him, most of his children, nephews and nieces, including me, are in Rotary. He was an avid reader, and had a good command over the Eng-

We welcome your feedback.
Write to the Editor:
rotarynews@rosaonline.org;
rushbhagat@gmail.com.
Mail your project details,
along with hi-res photos, to
rotarynewsmagazine@gmail.com

Click on **Rotary News Plus**
in our website
www.rotarynewsonline.org
to read about more Rotary projects.



Jones is the name

In 2005, Carolyn Jones of Alaska in the US became the first-ever female trustee of The Rotary Foundation. In 2022, Jennifer Jones of Ontario, Canada, will become the first ever female president of Rotary International. Both these ladies have made their historical mark in our organisation. It is my sincere hope that when the book about Rotary's *Second Century of Service* is written, Jennifer Jones will not be forgotten as was Carolyn Jones when the book about the first one hundred years of the Rotary Foundation *Doing Good in the World* was published.

Carl-Wilhelm
Stenhammar
PRIP 2005-06

lish language. A couple of times, my letters were published in this magazine; even before I could read them, I would get a call from my uncle to appreciate me. In his passing Rotary has lost a member who was true to its objective till the last moment. And if this letter is published, I will no longer get a call from him.

A Ganesh, RC Madurai
Next Gen — D 3000



A Rotaractor evolves into Rotarian

Dear Rotarians, Rotaractors, and friends,

Rotary Youth Exchange — one of the many programmes for youth and young adults that we celebrate this month — was my path into true engagement in Rotary. My wife, Susanne, and I began hosting exchange students soon after I joined, and the experience helped me go from simply being a member of my Rotary club to being a true Rotarian. Now Rotary Youth Exchange is a family tradition, and a strong one: Over the past 24 years, we have hosted 43 students!

From the start, we loved it so much that, in addition to hosting students in our home, we became involved with the programme by helping to organise student summer camps. During one such camp, I met Christine Lichtin, who was a German high school student at the time and whose father is a past president of my Rotary club. To try something new during this year of embracing change, I am turning this space, normally reserved for the president of Rotary, over to Christine so she can share her story.

My first contact with Rotaract was about 13 years ago, when I was with Susanne and Holger at a barbecue for the summer youth camp. Holger turned to me and said: “Why don’t you visit a Rotaract club? You’ll meet a lot of great young people who come together to have fun and to make a difference.”

A few years later, when I was at Trier University, his words came back to me and I decided to give it a try. That was more than eight years ago, and I’m still at it. Once you are in Rotaract, you just don’t want to get out. Rotaract

has accompanied me everywhere, starting with the Trier club and then on to a club in Bologna, Italy, during the year I studied there. When I was in Kiel for my master’s degree, I got involved with Rotaract there before landing at the Rotaract Club of Hamburg-Alstertal as I began my career. Each of those clubs has its own identity and focus, but all have the same intrinsic motivation.

I am now taking on a senior advisory role in my Rotaract club, which I really enjoy. I carry Rotaract in my heart, and it shapes my values, even as my interests evolve. One day, as if she had sensed this evolution, Susanne knocked on my door, wanting to introduce me to a young, modern Rotary club located between Hamburg and Mölln, my hometown. The E-Club of Hamburg-Connect, which Susanne helped charter, holds e-meetings, all of them very relaxed and personal. With members of different ages, everything just seemed to fit, so I thought, why not try it out? After all, time is precious and should be filled with fun whenever possible; the rest happens by itself.

Now I am in both worlds — a proud member of Rotaract and a Rotarian. And my small personal goal is to build a bridge between these two parallel worlds. All of us have very similar reasons for being part of the Rotary family.

It took some persistence to persuade Christine to become a member of Rotary, but it was well worth the effort. It is our duty to put in this kind of effort with youth programme participants and Rotaractors so we can keep them in the family of Rotary. I hope you were inspired by her story. It’s up to each of us to ensure that more young people like Christine can experience the many ways *Rotary Opens Opportunities* for us and for the people we serve.



Christine Lichtin
Rotaract Club of Hamburg-Alstertal,
Rotary E-Club of Hamburg-Connect

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holger Knaack".

Holger Knaack
President, Rotary International



A woman RI president, at long last

Finally we have the answer to the question being asked for a decade now. When will Rotary International see a woman president? Well, the nominating committee answered that one by choosing Jennifer Jones for that magic position in 2022–23. Not only the women members in the Rotary world — upward of 20 per cent, but all Rotarians who stand by gender equity, have erupted into one big celebration. But we have to remember that Jennifer has been chosen for that post not because she is a woman, or to tick off a box, but because she has the capability, the energy, enthusiasm and vision, and above all, the leadership qualities so essential to lead this unique conglomeration of 1.2 million people of such amazing diversity across the world.

In an interview she gave me in Evanston in 2016 as RI director, Jennifer said as much. On few leadership positions for women in Rotary, she had said, “we’ve only been in Rotary long enough to achieve being at the Board table.” It had taken a while because women had to first become club presidents, then DGs, prove their worth through hard work in committees, etc, to then become RI directors. “And now we can see women sitting in the Board not because we are women, but because we’re qualified Rotarians.”

So what do women leaders bring to the Rotary table? Again, let me quote Jennifer, who had stressed on the “nurturing” and multitasking abilities of women. “Women do raise their families, constantly take care of all the needs, whether of parents or children.” Many men do the same, she had added, but women had to strike an interesting life balance. “I run a business, act as a director on the RI

Board, but still have to go grocery shopping, clean my house, buy the birthday and Christmas presents and the thank you cards!”

Well, that says it all, doesn’t it?

While Jennifer has her challenges cut out for her role at the helm of RI in a post-Covid world, let’s turn to the present, where this pandemic has hit business and industry, and taken away tens of thousands of jobs in India. For millions, getting a single nutritious meal a day, forget two, has become a challenge. We have witnessed the abject misery and starvation of migrant workers, who were forced to walk back home amidst the lockdown, and also noted with pride Rotary clubs across our zones come forward to feed the hungry... migrants, daily wagers, homeless and other underprivileged.

In this scenario, just imagine the plight of voluntary organisations that depend on the generosity of the community, particularly corporates, big and small. As stated in this month’s cover story, most of these organisations today serve their inmates — orphan or disabled children, elderly, destitute women, etc — just rice and *sambar* or rice and dhal, for lack of funds. In this scenario, a Rotarian — Hari Kishan Valmiki — from the Rotary Club of Secunderabad is focusing his energy on setting up and multiplying egg banks across India and other parts of the Rotary world. These banks help reach eggs, procured directly from poultry farmers at a subsidised cost, to NGOs to be given daily to their inmates in order to boost their nutrition levels, and hopefully their immunity levels as well.

It is such passion and generosity that keeps the world going...

Rasheeda Bhagat

Governors Council

RI Dist 2981	DG R Balaji Babu
RI Dist 2982	DG K S Venkatesan
RI Dist 3000	DG AL Chokkalingam
RI Dist 3011	DG Sanjiv Rai Mehra
RI Dist 3012	DG Alok Gupta
RI Dist 3020	DG Muttavarapu Satish Babu
RI Dist 3030	DG Shabbir Shakir
RI Dist 3040	DG Gajendra Singh Narang
RI Dist 3053	DG Harish Kumar Gaur
RI Dist 3054	DG Rajesh Agarwal
RI Dist 3060	DG Prashant Harivallabh Jani
RI Dist 3070	DG CA Davinder Singh
RI Dist 3080	DG Ramesh Bajaj
RI Dist 3090	DG Vijay Arora
RI Dist 3100	DG Manish Sharda
RI Dist 3110	DG Dinesh Chandra Shukla
RI Dist 3120	DG Karunesh Kumar Srivastava
RI Dist 3131	DG Rashmi Vinay Kulkarni
RI Dist 3132	DG Harish Motwani
RI Dist 3141	DG Sunnil Mehra
RI Dist 3142	DG Dr Sandeep Kadam
RI Dist 3150	DG Nalla Venkata Hanmanth Reddy
RI Dist 3160	DG B Chinnapa Reddy
RI Dist 3170	DG Sangram Vishnu Patil
RI Dist 3181	DG M Ranganath Bhat
RI Dist 3182	DG B Rajarama Bhat
RI Dist 3190	DG BL Nagendra Prasad
RI Dist 3201	DG Jose Chacko Madhavassery
RI Dist 3202	DG Dr Hari Krishnan Nambiar
RI Dist 3211	DG Dr Thomas Vavanikunnel
RI Dist 3212	DG PNB Murugadoss
RI Dist 3231	DG K Pandian
RI Dist 3232	DG S Muthupalaniappan
RI Dist 3240	DG Subhasish Chatterjee
RI Dist 3250	DG Rajan Gandotra
RI Dist 3261	DG Fakir Charan Mohanty
RI Dist 3262	DG Saumya Rajan Mishra
RI Dist 3291	DG Sudip Mukherjee

Printed by PT Prabhakar at Rasi Graphics Pvt Ltd, 40, Peters Road, Royapettah, Chennai - 600 014, India, and published by PT Prabhakar on behalf of Rotary News Trust from Dugar Towers, 3rd Flr, 34, Marshalls Road, Egmore, Chennai 600 008. Editor: Rasheeda Bhagat.

The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or Trustees of Rotary News Trust (RNT) or Rotary International (RI). No liability can be accepted for any loss arising from editorial or advertisement content. Contributions – original content – is welcome but the Editor reserves the right to edit for clarity or length. Content can be reproduced with permission and attributed to RNT.

Message from

One-to-One



If you want one year of prosperity, grow seeds, if you want 10 years of prosperity, grow trees, if you want 100 years of prosperity, grow people,' goes an old proverb. That is our Rotary opportunity to grow Rotary by growing leadership and leaders in Rotary. This pandemic has opened doors of opportunities that we never imagined before. As it unfolds with increasing numbers, our leadership is put to test. I am happy to note that our governors have risen to the occasion with positivity and conviction, and reached out with a helping hand in a hundred ways — by setting up dedicated Covid care centres, plasma banks, focusing on cervical cancer vaccination, myriad other service projects and moving forward with full force for Project Positive Health — a project to stop NCDs, which is vital for our communities as shown by the pandemic. They have proved the fact that 'kites rise against, not with, the wind'. Challenges have made us stronger, more committed, relevant and effective.

As Rotarians, we would do well to remember that we have to do our best, focus on excellence and not be content with mediocrity. Excellence comes from inside. It's an attitude. Aim to be the best, not because someone tells you to, but because you want to be the best. When you choose the path of excellence, you will bring to it your best and in return you will receive the best. The best leaders are servant leaders. They care about serving. Mahatma Gandhi said it so well: "No matter how insignificant the thing you have to do, do it as well as you can, give it as much of your care and attention as you would give to the thing you regard as most important. For it will be by those small things that you shall be judged." There are no small jobs. Each project, each activity is important and needed.

September is Basic Education and Literacy month. Helping someone to read and write effectively or acquire basic math skills we all take for granted, improves the future of everyone in society. Literacy is key to making our world more sustainable, peaceful and secure. Education has the power to transform people's lives. Parents from even the poorest families long to give basic education to their children, so that they do not have to face the terrible handicaps their parents had faced. Who can do it? It is you and I — we as Rotarians who can do it. Our work is more critical than ever as the pandemic keeps millions out of school who have no access to virtual classrooms.

The pen is truly mightier than the sword. As Rotarians we must ensure that more of our children are able to hold and wield the pen. That is our Rotary opportunity. Let's do it.

Dr Bharat Pandya
RI Director, 2019-21

RI Directors

Rotary promotes literacy

"If we talk about literacy, we have to talk about how to enhance our children's mastery over the tools needed to live intelligent, creative and involved lives."

- Danny Glover

Worldwide, 67 million children have no access to education, and over 775 million people over 15 are illiterate. I am glad that our members support educational projects. Our goal is to strengthen the capacity of communities to support basic education and literacy, reduce gender disparity and increase adult literacy.



Education for girls

If you want to empower societies, reduce poverty, improve basic hygiene and healthcare and fight high infant and maternal mortality rates, the answer is to educate girls. The old adage holds good: if you educate a man, you educate only one individual, but if you educate a woman, the entire family gets educated.

RILM: TEACH

Rotary in India through the Rotary India Literacy Mission has embarked upon a mission to achieve total literacy and quality education through T-E-A-C-H: **T – Teacher support; E – E-learning; A – Adult literacy; C – Child development; H – Happy school**

These programmes are inter-linked in objective and content, resulting in improved learning outcome.

Asha Kiran

Let each Rotarian pledge to send out-of-school children back to schools under the Asha Kiran programme through which children who have never been enrolled in school, dropped out or were irregular to school, or have lagged behind, are mainstreamed/regularised ensuring their retention in schools after the required brushing up. This will help them access mainstream state-funded schools. Sending a child back to school costs ₹2,500 for a year.

E-learning – NCERT

The pandemic has challenged the way children study and learn. Rotary in India quickly recognised this and is now on the path to creating history. This month RILM, partnering with NCERT, will launch the biggest e-learning programme which will be beamed over 12 television channels, benefitting over 15 crore children and enabling them to pursue their education from their homes. This e-learning programme is powered by RILM.

Remember what Malala Yousafzai said, "One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world."

Kamal Sanghvi
RI Director, 2019–21

Board of Permanent Trustees & Executive Committee

PRIP Rajendra K Saboo	RI Dist 3080
PRIP Kalyan Banerjee	RI Dist 3060
RIPE Shekhar Mehta	RI Dist 3291
PRID Panduranga Setty	RI Dist 3190
PRID Sushil Gupta	RI Dist 3011
PRID Ashok Mahajan	RI Dist 3141
PRID Yash Pal Das	RI Dist 3080
PRID P T Prabhakar	RI Dist 3232
PRID Dr Manoj D Desai	RI Dist 3060
PRID C Basker	RI Dist 3000
TRF Trustee Gulam A Vahanvaty	RI Dist 3141
RID Dr Bharat Pandya	RI Dist 3141
RID Kamal Sanghvi	RI Dist 3250
RIDE AS Venkatesh	RI Dist 3232

Executive Committee Members (2020–21)

DG Sanjiv Rai Mehra	RI Dist 3011
Chair – Governors Council	
DG Sudip Mukherjee	RI Dist 3291
Secretary – Governors Council	
DG Sangram Vishnu Patil	RI Dist 3170
Secretary – Executive Committee	
DG Prashant Harivallabh Jani	RI Dist 3060
Treasurer – Executive Committee	
DG S Muthupalaniappan	RI Dist 3232
Member – Advisory Committee	

ROTARY NEWS / ROTARY SAMACHAR

Editor

Rasheeda Bhagat

Senior Assistant Editor

Jaishree Padmanabhan

ROTARY NEWS / ROTARY SAMACHAR

ROTARY NEWS TRUST

3rd Floor, Dugar Towers,
34 Marshalls Road, Egmore
Chennai 600 008, India.

Phone : 044 42145666

e-mail: rotarynews@rosaonline.org

Website: www.rotarynewsonline.org

Now share articles from
rotarynewsonline.org on WhatsApp.

Reaching eggs to the nutritionally deficient

Rasheeda Bhagat

If a Rotarian from the Rotary Club of Secunderabad, RI District 3150, Hari Kishan Valmiki, is passionate about reaching nutrient-packed eggs to orphanages, old age homes and other voluntary organisations for destitute, the reason dates back some 70-odd years and is tied to a gripping human-interest story.

But before telling that story, let's have it on record that this Rotarian has in the last three years been instrumental in his own family charity and other NGOs, inspired or guided by it, distributing **five lakh eggs** to children in orphanages, homes for disabled children, senior citizens living in old age homes, etc.

His streak of charity, associated with nutrition and how it can wreck a childhood, is directly linked to his family history. "My father grew up in an orphanage; when he was four years old, his stepmother abandoned him in a crowded place. As a child beggar he survived for two years till a kind English police officer found him, put him

Today, thanks to the Covid pandemic, many NGOs are able to serve only rice and *sambar* to their inmates, food so low on nutrition.



in an orphanage, and paid for his education,” says Valmiki.

The child went on to become a medical doctor, worked as one for 10 years, before joining the civil services. Later an IAS was conferred on him and he retired as an IAS officer in 2003. His name is Dr Venkata Ramanappa. Because he had grown up in an orphanage, “the father of the girl, the richest in the area and to whom he was teaching English, and fell in love



Hari Kishan Valmiki (extreme R), member of RC Secunderabad, with children at the Valmiki Foundation.

with, refused to give his daughter in marriage.”

Anyway, they defied the father, got married and had seven children. “As children we always heard our father say there is no need for us to become multimillionaires; if we are able to get three meals without any difficulty, the fourth meal should be shared with somebody less fortunate in our community.”

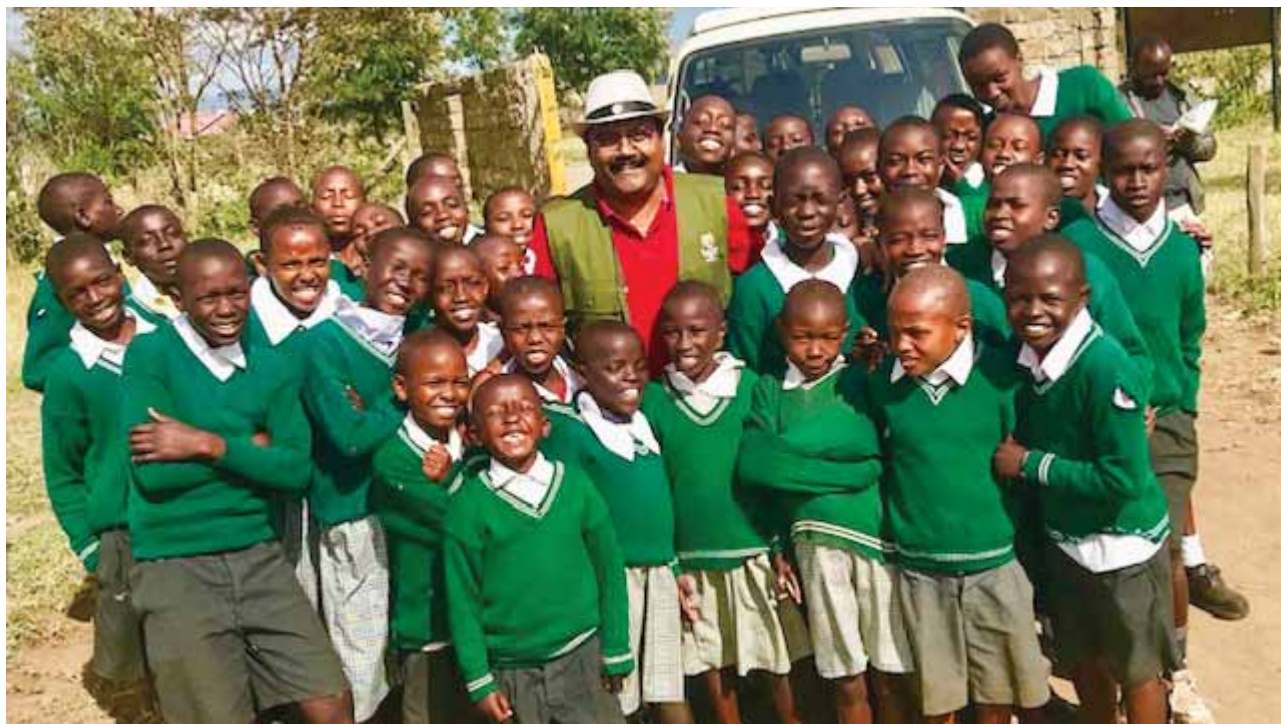
That seed of charity sowed in Valmiki stayed with him and led to his establishing the Valmiki Foundation in 2003, and later the Egg Bank with the motto: *One egg, One child, One smile.*

His Foundation runs *Valmiki Hriday*, an orphanage that takes care of 45 children. The idea to set up such an egg bank came to him when in 2017 he could barely find any support or funding to buy eggs at a subsidised cost to give these children, both to improve their nutrition and boost

immunity. “I was horrified to note that I could not find a single donor to sponsor the eggs for our orphanage. I could not even find a way to buy eggs at a subsidy. Then I started wondering that if I am facing such a huge problem in finding funds, what about the numerous NGOs in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad,” says Valmiki.

When after approaching many big names in the poultry industry, he drew a blank, he decided to approach Rotarians through his club and found favour at last, and Rotary became a partner in this venture.

Soon an egg bank was installed at the Home for Disabled at Bansilapet, Secunderabad, which has 350 inmates. RC Secunderabad donated 3,500 eggs, with a promise to continue this project in a sustainable fashion so that every inmate gets an egg daily. “Now our DG, RID 3150, Hanmanth Reddy, has taken to heart this initiative and



Hari Kishan Valmiki with children in an orphanage in Naivasha, Kenya.

I am confident that of the 88 clubs in our district, many will promote such egg banks,” he says.

Interestingly, Valmiki’s association with Rotary dates back to 1989, when he was a young child. “My father had made me join Scouts and I had won a medal when I was seven. I was supposed to receive the medal from the then President of India R Venkataraman. But we were seven siblings and in those days my father didn’t have the money to pay for my travel to Delhi. At that time a Rotarian came forward to pay for my train ticket to Delhi. So I was always grateful to Rotary which was at the back of my mind and this gesture led to my eventually joining RC Secunderabad,” smiles Valmiki.

How they set up their family Foundation is another interesting

story. Initially he and his brother donated money to orphanages and other NGOs in consonance with the family credo of giving back to society. “But we found that this money was often used for the personal expenses of people who ran those NGOs. So my brother and I took the bold decision of setting up our own NGO in 2003. By that time my father too had retired, and needed something to do with his time.”

Incidentally the first child they admitted went on to graduate in Sociology and got a gold medal. But because he had grown up in an orphanage, the father of the girl he wanted to marry refused to give his daughter to him. Valmiki’s family intervened and got the two married. “Today both of them are administering our charitable activities,” he adds.

He has special thanks to offer his brother Surya Ganesh Valmiki,

the founder president of the Valmiki Foundation “who gave me a platform to do experiments to benefit not only the 45 kids in our orphanage but so many other children, elderly people and children with special needs.”

This Rotarian has been associated with the travel and tourism industry, starting his career as cabin crew with Jet Airways, and working with other airlines before starting his own tourism business. And his profession has also helped him to set up egg banks in Mexico, an island in the Caribbean Sea, Thailand and Nepal.

“I was also instrumental in taking 500 orphan kids through a project called *Wings of Hope*, a kind of joy ride on an airplane, with help from Trujet Airlines.” The children were taken from Hyderabad

I am confident that this initiative to set up egg banks will grow much bigger than the *Rice Bucket Challenge*, if we promote this concept and make it viral on social media.



Malnourishment a huge concern

When it comes to malnourishment, the news for Indians does not bring cheer. In the latest or 2019 report of the Global Hunger Index (GHI), India is ranked at No 102 of 117 countries, behind its poorer neighbours Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Over the years, as we have marched towards the aspired status of a “developed country”, our nutrition status has only gone downhill. In 2000, we ranked 83 out of 113 countries. Now, that number has fallen to 102. It is small comfort that in 2018, India was ranked 103 out of 119 countries.

Seventeen countries, including Belarus, Ukraine, Turkey, Cuba and Kuwait, shared the top rank in the 2019 index, with a score of less than five.

to Vizianagaram, and once again it was Rotary that came to his aid, when during one such trip the sponsoring hotel pulled out at the last minute saying it could not give accommodation to the children as they had suddenly got a bulk booking. “But RC Vizianagaram came to my rescue; with just one day’s notice they organised accommodation for the children at the Jindal Steel guest house and ensured they had a good time,” says Valmiki.

His profession in travel and hospitality has taken him to

66 countries, and he has been instrumental in setting up an egg bank in a home for senior citizens in Cozumel Island in the Caribbean. Later another egg bank was set up in Cancun, the popular holiday destination in Mexico.

Bang in the midst of corona pandemic, Valmiki has been instrumental in the starting of an egg bank, the first in the country, in Nepal

India's egg/poultry consumption very low

Remember the jingle *Sunday ho ya Monday, Roz khao ande*? At a national workshop held last August to deliberate on the strategies to augment the potential and opportunities of exporting eggs and poultry meat, experts said that against the ICMR recommendation of per capita consumption of 10.5kg of poultry meat and 180 eggs a year, Indians consume only 30 eggs and 3.5kg of poultry meat a year. The world average is around the ICMR recommendation but India fares much lower. Of course, our low rate of consumption of this nutritious food is related to lower purchasing power as well as religious and cultural practices or vegetarianism.

But there is a chunk of our population, not vegetarian by religion or choice, which is nutritionally deprived, mainly due to lack of financial resources to consume food packed with protein and other nutrients. “An egg a day is the simple answer for children growing up in orphanages or living on streets, the elderly who are confined to old age homes, and other vulnerable sections which face hunger and poverty,” says Hari Kishan Valmiki, a member of RC Secunderabad.

While India is reportedly the third largest producer of eggs in the world and fourth largest of poultry meat, our own consumption rate is low and the NECC, with a membership of over 25,000 farmers, has played a significant role in the last two decades for the growth of the poultry industry and egg consumption. This it does through various programmes such as market intervention, price support operations, egg promotion campaigns, consumer education, market research, rural market development and liaison with the government.

Rtn Ravishankar Dakoju,
member of RC Bangalore
Orchards, RID 3190.



on August 10. On Aug 15, India's Independence Day, he organised a virtual meet, in which Rotarians from seven countries participated. At this meeting the logo of the egg bank was unveiled by popular badminton coach Pullela Gopichand, and an Indian postage stamp with the egg bank logo launched by Rotary India's iconic donor Ravishankar Dakoju from RC Bangalore Orchards. The meet was attended by DGs NV Hanmanth Reddy (3150), Kit Bing Wong Ho (4195, Mexico) and Rajib Pokhrel (3292, Nepal).

“Through our *Rotary News* magazine, I am appealing to all Rotary clubs in India and overseas to come forward to adopt at least two to four NGOs in their area, and donate eggs to them on a daily basis.” He points out that as our economy has slowed down and businesses have been impacted, “I know for sure that many NGOs running orphanages, old age homes and other facilities for destitute are now serving only rice and *sambar* to their inmates (must be dhal in North India).” Not only will this poor diet impact their nutritional levels, it will also reduce their immunity at a time the deadly coronavirus is posing such a threat to the entire world, he adds.

Valmiki recommends that Rotary clubs collect money and procure eggs directly from poultry farmers with support from the NECC (National

Once we have a foolproof project —
how to procure the eggs, at what
price, how to transport them, etc —
I will promote this project in our zones.

Ravishankar Dakoju
RC Bangalore Orchards



Launch of egg bank at Lalitpur, Nepal.

Eggs Coordination Committee). He recalls how after seeing his campaign on social media to give eggs to orphans, elderly and other undernourished people, the NECC had contacted him and put him in touch directly with poultry farmers. The result is that he is able to knock off 80 paise from the price of each egg, and buy them in bulk at the rate of ₹3.15 a piece.

He points out that the Telangana government is providing eggs to some 135 registered NGOs in the state, and also giving two eggs a week to schoolchildren. “I know many NGOs are giving one egg a month to each child in their orphanages, or they have to wait for donors to offer birthday or anniversary celebration special meals with eggs. But I feel all this is not enough; we need to give one egg daily to children and the elderly, and I am telling Rotarians who are interested in setting up egg banks that it is important not to break this chain — of daily availability of eggs to the NGOs you are supporting.”

After all, he adds, it should not be difficult for clubs to spend

₹10,000–20,000 a month for this worthy cause which will improve the nutritional and immunity levels of vulnerable people in our population. Many Rotarians, he says, have expressed interest in the egg bank project. “Whoever is interested can contact me (kishanvalmiki@gmail.com; M: 8688234560) and I will guide them how to go about setting up an egg bank, getting eggs directly from poultry farmers at a subsidised cost, etc.”

Heartened by the initial response that he has seen, this Rotarian is confident that the Rotary egg banks, with the objective to provide critical nutrition to undernourished people, “will grow much bigger than the *Rice Bucket Challenge*, if we promote this concept and make it viral on social media.”

Add to this the good response he had at the virtual meeting held on Aug 15. While unveiling the egg bank logo, Gopichand stressed on the importance of health and fitness, particularly during a pandemic such as the one we are facing now.

Ravishankar Dakoju, who released the postage stamp, recalled how RI Director Dr Bharat Pandya, “a genuine, practising doctor, says every time he speaks ‘*Ek chamach kum, char kadam aage.*’ But I would revise or tweak that mantra, particularly at a time when immunity is so important. Before *char kadam aage*, I would add *ek anda* (one egg), because to walk, or do exercise of any kind, you need proper nutrition and energy.”

He told *Rotary News* that he would support this programme and promote it at a national level. “But before that I want to assure myself that we have a foolproof project; how to procure the eggs, at what price, how to transport them and then choose the right beneficiaries. If we can have all this included in the project, and there are no loose ends, it would be a worthwhile project for Rotary to take up at not only national level, but in our entire zones — Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal.”

Designed by
Krishnapratheesh

Sushil Gupta conferred Rotary Award of Honor

Team Rotary News



PRIP Rajendra Saboo, PRID Sushil Gupta and PRIP Mark Maloney (Flie photo).

PRID Sushil Gupta has been conferred the Rotary Award of Honor by Rotary International by the RI Board of Directors, 2019–20, headed by President Mark Maloney.

In a letter sent to Gupta, Maloney said: “I am very pleased to inform you that you have been selected to receive the Rotary Award of Honor in recognition of your long and successful service to Rotary. It is my honor and privilege to have recommended you for this recognition, and the Rotary International Board

of Directors has approved my recommendation.”

Congratulating him on behalf of the RI Board, Maloney said, “Through your dedication and tireless efforts, Rotary is a force for doing good in the world. You have dedicated your life to Rotary since 1977. In those 43 years, you have served Rotary in many important positions including as a member of the Rotary International Board of Directors and as a Trustee of The Rotary Foundation. I find particularly noteworthy your work to meet the target challenge of Water and Sanitation in Schools. The

entire Rotary world recognised your service to and through Rotary with your nomination to serve as President of Rotary International.”

The Rotary Award of Honor is Rotary’s highest and most respected recognition. The award was established by RI in 1990 to be given to heads of state and other dignitaries who have made a significant contribution to international understanding and goodwill. Recent recipients of the award include His Holiness Pope Francis, Pranab Mukherjee, then President of India, Queen Elizabeth II, and Bill Gates, Jr. ■

Jennifer Jones

makes history through nomination as first woman RI president

Jennifer E Jones, a member of the Rotary Club of Windsor-Roseland, Ontario, Canada, has been nominated Rotary International's president for 2022–23, a groundbreaking selection that will make her the first woman to hold that office in the organisation's 115-year history.

She will officially become president-nominee on October 1 if no other candidates challenge her.

Jennifer says she sees Rotary's Action Plan as a catalyst for increasing Rotary's impact.

"As we reflect upon our new strategic priorities, we could have never envisioned that *our ability to adapt* would become our North Star during what is inarguably the most profound time in recent history," she said in her vision statement. "Silver linings rise out of the most challenging circumstances. Using metric-driven goals, I will harness this historic landscape to innovate, educate and communicate opportunities that reflect today's reality."

As the first woman to be nominated RI president, Jennifer understands how important it is to follow through on Rotary's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Statement. "I believe that diversity, equity and inclusion ... begins at the top and for us to realise growth in female membership and members under the age of 40 — these demographics need to see their own reflection in leadership," she said.

"I will champion double-digit growth in both categories while never losing sight of our entire family."

Jennifer is founder and president of Media Street Productions Inc, an award-winning media company in Windsor. She was chair of the board of governors of the University of Windsor and chair of the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce. She has been recognised for her service with the YMCA Peace Medallion, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal and Wayne State University's Peacemaker of the Year Award, a first for a Canadian. She holds a Doctor of Laws (LLD).

A current Rotary Foundation trustee, Jennifer has been a Rotary member since 1997 and has served Rotary as RI vice-president, director, training leader, committee chair, moderator and district governor. She played a lead role in Rotary's rebranding effort by serving as chair of the Strengthening Rotary's Advisory Group. She is the co-chair of the End Polio Now Countdown to History Campaign Committee which

aims to raise \$150 million for polio eradication efforts.

Jennifer recently led the successful #RotaryResponds telethon, which raised critical funds for Covid-19 relief and was viewed by more than 65,000. She has also received Rotary International's Service Above Self Award and The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service. She and her husband, Nick Krayacich, are members of The

Rotary Foundation's Arch Klumph Society, Paul Harris Society and the Bequest Society.

© Rotary.org



When the mouse roared

Jaishree

The mouse that roared” was how RC Duarte, a small club in then RID 530, California, USA, was described by its District Governor as it appealed to the US Supreme Court to admit women in Rotary following a relentless 11-year battle.

“Women have literally changed the face of Rotary; it is much prettier now,” said PDG Sylvia Whitlock, RI’s first woman club president, at the zoom meet organised by RID 3232. Industrialist Rajshree Pathy, member of RC Coimbatore Texcity and daughter of PDG G Varadaraj was the guest of honour.

Referring to the event’s title — *Edge of tomorrow* — borrowed from the Tom Cruise movie, Sylvia said, “I always use this phrase because tomorrow keeps changing. The tomorrow that I am really looking forward to is when

Jennifer Jones becomes RI president in 2022. We have waited for that for a long time, not because Jennifer is a woman, but because she is a capable woman.”

Filled with facts and anecdotes, Sylvia shared a fascinating glimpse into the journey of the Duarte club. In 1976 the club had invited four women — Donna Nogart, Mary Lou Elliott, Rosemary Freitag and Sylvia — as members in an effort to bolster its sagging roster. “Initially we were registered with our initials and not our real names because Rotary had a longstanding policy that Rotarians shall be ‘men of good character’,” she said.

The next year, on its 25th anniversary, RI representatives visited the club and saw the women members. After they returned to

Evanston and gave a report. RI informed the club president that it did not want women in Rotary and the club’s charter will be revoked for violating the bylaws. “But our members, instead of asking us to leave, renamed the club as ‘Ex-Rotary Club of Duarte’ and the name stayed for 11 years.” The club continued on its quest for humanitarian service but was not involved in international activities.

“Interestingly Duarte was not the first club that wanted women in Rotary. Years ago, a club from India (RC Ahmedabad) had suggested this at the CoL in Detroit. But nothing happened then,” she said. The Duarte club filed a suit against Rotary in California, but lost the case. “The ruling said that Rotary has the right to choose its

Women should not be treated as window dressers. They should be given responsible positions and they will perform as well as men.

PDG Sylvia Whitlock

**PDG Sylvia Whitlock
and RIPN Jennifer
Jones.**



members. We sat up and understood that this was not going to be some slam dunk that we thought it to be.”

The case was then taken up at the California Appellate Court where the club alleged that Rotary’s all-male policy violated the State’s Unruh Act, forbidding gender discrimination in public establishments. It won the case. But the ruling was limited to Rotary clubs within California.

That year Sylvia attended PETS as president-elect of her club. “It was 290 men and one woman,” she laughed. The men were all cordial and the DG suggested appealing to the US Supreme Court.

On May 4, 1987, the Supreme Court pronounced its historic verdict favouring women’s admission into Rotary. Justice Lewis Powell dismissed RI’s arguments that it has a constitutional right to exclude women members if it

chooses. “The evidence in this case indicates that the relationship among Rotary club members is not the kind of intimate or private relations that warrants constitutional protection,” he pointed out.

The news hit the headlines and the next morning while Sylvia, a school principal, was nearing her school, was interviewed by a CBS newscaster. To a question on how she was chosen club president, she blurted out, “I don’t know. I must have missed a meeting.” And that became the headline on television. “A dumb reply. I still regret that,” she laughed.

There were many questions after that including one on whether the food was any better now that women are in Rotary! “I explained that we weren’t cooking.”

For 11 years they continued the battle. Directors changed in RI; but each group of directors supported the exclusion of women. “And I always thought what kind of a world they were showing to their daughters,” she smiled.

Initially we were registered with our initials and not our real names because Rotary had a longstanding policy that Rotarians shall be ‘men of good character’.

PDG Sylvia Whitlock

She recalled a conversation with a Rotarian and his wife on her way to the Calgary convention which happened after a CoL where the club’s appeal to admit women in Rotary was turned down. The Rotarian, identifying her club from the CoL, said that he had voted for women’s membership at the Tokyo convention. “His wife was opposed to it and when asked why, she said, “because we have men going out for meetings at night and we don’t want women there.” I tried to clarify: ‘This is not a social club; it is a service club.’ But she didn’t seem to care.”

Although the club won the case, the women were not given a warm welcome into Rotary. In 1989, PRIP Frank Devlyn gave a passionate speech at the CoL and the representatives voted to accept women in Rotary. But it took 17 years after that, for *The Rotarian* to publish an article about women in Rotary, Sylvia said.

At the 2017 convention, RI introduced the Sylvia Whitlock Leadership Award to recognise Rotarians contributing to the success of women in Rotary. Sylvia was the first recipient and last year RIPN Jennifer was conferred the award. “It is not just for women



We must make Rotary a fire-place
meeting where there is more
camaraderie and inclusivity.

Rajshree Pathy
Past president
RC Coimbatore Texcity, RID 3201

but for anyone who advances the cause of women in Rotary,” she said.

Asking a question, PDG Rekha Shetty, the first and only woman governor of RID 3232, asked if gender disparity was the cause for the slow rise in women membership. “Women should not be treated as window dressers. They should be given responsible positions and they will perform as well as men,” said Sylvia.

Women in Rotary have come to stay and

they have started to outperform on every platform. Addressing the meet DG Muthupalaniappan said this year RID 3232 has a good number of women Rotarians at the helm. Of the seven areas of focus, four are led by women, and several women chair district committees this year, he said. The governor added in a lighter vein that women played “a very important part in my life”, and he was greatly influenced by all of them... his wife, two



Rajshree Pathy, chairperson and managing director, Rajshree group of companies.



daughters. “And even our pet dog is a female”, he said amidst laughter.

PDG S Krishnaswamy moderated the session with Rajshree, recalling his association with her late father, PDG G Varadaraj. “A strong woman can transform a home, a community and a nation,” said Rajshree in her interaction at the meet. As charter president of RC Coimbatore Texcity in 1990, “I ensured that we had 50 per cent women members in our club. But today the club has just four women Rotarians,” she observed, regretting that her business commitments had hampered her from her active involvement in Rotary. Making a passionate plea for involving the entire family in Rotary events, she said, “During my father’s days, Rotary was more a family affair. We knew children of other Rotarians and went

on picnics. Sadly I see Rotary has become more business-like and families are not participating as much as they used to. We must make Rotary a fire-place meeting where there is more camaraderie and inclusivity.”

B Dakshayini, district director, International Service, said that global membership of women is 22 per cent and that PRID Anne L Mathew was the first woman RI vice president in 2013. Rotary’s original motto: ‘He profits most who serves best’ was modified in the 2004 CoL as ‘They profit most who serve best’, and again in the 2010 CoL the ‘They’ was replaced with ‘One’.

Ganesh Suppiah of RC Chennai Coromandel gave details about the district’s signature project — *Project Orange* — to address avoidable blindness by establishing vision centres across the district. ■

Peace is a choice we can make every day



In late 1914, Europe was divided by hundreds of miles of trenches. British and French forces on one side were within shouting distance of German troops on the other. The Pope made a plea for a Christmas truce, but the shooting continued.

Then, on Christmas Eve, soldiers from behind British lines heard an unexpected sound — not gunfire, but singing. Next, they heard a single voice shout out, “English soldiers, merry Christmas!” followed by “English soldiers, come out to join us!”

Both sides cautiously emerged over the parapet into the no man’s land between the trenches. Before long, the soldiers realised that it was a real truce. They fraternised, singing Christmas carols, exchanging souvenirs and whiskey, and even taking up a friendly soccer match.

The ceasefire continued only two days before the troops returned to their trenches, resuming bloodshed for nearly four long years. But the story of the Christmas truce reminds us that peace is possible, if we choose to accept it. If peace can last a few days, could it not also last months or years? And how do we prevent conflict in the first place?

In his Nobel Peace Prize lecture in 1964, American civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr said, “We must concentrate not merely on the negative expulsion of war, but on the positive affirmation of peace.”

With Positive Peace, our society’s structures, policies, and everyday attitudes and actions promote justice at all levels, sustaining a peaceful coexistence. It’s an answer to the calls for justice and peace we have heard on the streets in protests from Minneapolis to Paris this year.

Positive Peace, studied at our Rotary Peace Centers around the world, is not just an academic idea for the Rotary Peace Fellows. Through Rotary’s partnership with the Institute for Economics and Peace, the Rotary Positive Peace Academy offers free training to every Rotary member on how to wage Positive Peace in every project we do at the grassroots level, including Foundation grants.

Positive Peace resonates at all levels of The Rotary Foundation. Our literacy projects help children gain equal access to literacy, so opposing sides on an issue can understand each other better. Through our Foundation grants that provide clean water communities gain stability as more children stay in school rather than fetching water for hours on end.

Our role as civil society leaders who wage Positive Peace will continue to expand, not only through partnerships and more grants, but also through our hearts, minds and hands as we offer our gifts to make the world a better place.

KR Ravindran
Foundation Trustee Chair

Pauses that refresh

Hank Sartin



When you’re in Taipei for the Rotary International Convention, June 12–16, you’ll find that the energy of the city never wanes. But should you need to reenergise, step out and explore two of Taipei’s best ways to enjoy a break: bubble tea and coffee.

Taiwan is known as the birthplace of bubble tea (also known as boba), that delicious concoction of milk, tea and flavourful “pearls” — tapioca balls — that fit through an extra-large straw. Put them together and you have a sweet treat with a fun element of slurping up those chewy pearls. Bubble tea shops around Taipei offer a variety of flavours, with many creating their own variations, so it’s worth stopping at more than one.

Taipei’s coffee scene is equally vibrant. One of the pioneers in the coffee boom is Jie-He Luguo, and you’ll find his Luguo Cafés, known for their rich dark roasts, at places such as the Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts and the National Theater and Concert Hall. The iconic Taipei 101 tower, meanwhile, is home to a location of IMPCT Coffee, which emphasises ethical sourcing of coffee beans. Yaboo, another recent entrant in the coffee game, favours a lighter roast for a different flavour profile.

Whether you go for a playful bubble tea, an intense dark roast coffee, or a lighter, fruitier blend, your experience is more than just a way to enjoy a hot or cold drink; it’s a chance to sample the local culture.

Learn more and register
at convention.rotary.org.



RC Pataliputra

gives dialysis machines, distributes food to disadvantaged

Rasheeda Bhagat

It was smiles of satisfaction and pride all around in RI District 3250, particularly on the faces of members of Rotary Club of Pataliputra, when RI Director Bharat Pandya expressed his utmost appreciation

for this club for completing a signature project of providing six dialysis machines at two medical centres in Patna, bang in the midst of the corona pandemic. An additional three dialysis machines were put up in Muzaffarpur by RC Muzaffarpur.

Addressing the members on a zoom conference, Pandya said: “You have achieved this feat and created an addition to critical healthcare facility during this difficult health crisis and a pandemic faced by the entire world.” This led him to believe, he added, that “nothing is

Members of RC Pataliputra, RID 3250, giving food to a rickshaw-puller.



impossible for this club when its members set their eyes on any goal.”

The project has been done with a global grant from The Rotary Foundation worth \$115,000. This iconic project of the district and these two clubs has been done through a partnership with RI District 7545, US. “We had submitted the application for the GG on March 2, and it was approved on March 31. But meanwhile the whole country, as well as the entire world was hit by the corona pandemic and everything came to a standstill,” says past president Bipin Chachan, the lead contact for the GG.

Adds his wife, and immediate past president of RC Pataliputra

Shilpi Chachan, “But our club members created an opportunity out of this pandemic, as we realised that dialysis facilities will be even more critical at a time like this when so many people will be fighting for their lives. So we put in concerted efforts, completed all the paperwork in time, liasoned with others, collected funds and completed the project. After all, this was the dream project of our club wherein we had planned to donate six dialysis machines to two centres in Patna, keeping our focus on Rotary’s central motto of serving humanity.”

Thanking past presidents Navin Gupta, Bipin Chachan, and Sandeep Sarraf, and club members Samir

Jhunjhunwala and Anjani Sinha, “who stood beside me whenever I needed to tick the boxes to accomplish the project,” she said, adding that their hard work and dedication were exemplary.

Shilpi said that both Patna and Muzaffarpur have deficient dialysis facilities, as a result of which the economically disadvantaged people really suffer. In private facilities, a dialysis session costs around ₹2,000 or more. She said on June 26, three dialysis units were donated at the charitable organisation Mahavir Arogya Sansthan, with the facility being jointly inaugurated by RI Director Kamal Sanghvi and IPS officer Acharya Kishore Kunal, and then DG Gopal Khemka. “All the dignitaries appreciated our effort and said we had fulfilled a critical need in the local community, as these units would contribute extensively in the coming days to the poor people requiring dialysis support at a very nominal cost.”

While past president Navin Gupta gave details about the project which would help those patients who can’t survive without regular dialysis sessions, Khemka congratulated the club and said Rotary would like further affiliation with this charitable organisation to serve more needy people. The other three dialysis units have been given to a private facility, and in both these places, Rotarians, and the extremely disadvantaged will be given dialysis free of cost. Others will have to pay a nominal fee of around ₹500.

The club has also donated to Patna Corporation, two Mukti Rath, each costing around ₹8.5 lakh, to facilitate the last journey of people and “these vehicles serve a great need in the community,” she adds.

Exemplary Covid relief work

During the Covid pandemic, as underprivileged people such as “daily wagers, rickshaw pullers, the handicapped, widows and other destitutes struggled to get





food, our club undertook a project — Annapoorna — to supply cooked meals to these people,” says Shilpi. On a few days, some Rotarians accompanied her but, she admitted, “due to the threat of infection, most people were scared to go to such poor areas to distribute meals.” But she carried on, and “my 21-year-old son, who studies in Mumbai, but is at home now, insisted I should not go out alone and accompanied me.”

During the lockdown period, beginning April 7, members of the club distributed food packets in slums of Kumhrar. “It was heartbreaking to see hungry children running for food behind the vehicle. On that day we distributed 300 food packets. The next day, in another area, 550 packets — *subzi puri*, bread and *khichdi* — of food, water bottles and masks were given. It was very sad to hear from them that they were starving because they had not got help in the form of food for days together.”





Left: A dialysis centre set up by the club.

Above & Below: Club members distribute ration kits to the less privileged as part of their Project Annapoorna.



From a kitchen that the club members use, the food was prepared and packed, and for several days an average of around 400 food packets were distributed. “But we soon realised that this would only give them a few meals. So we started giving out grocery provisions to the needy, including sweepers, domestic helpers, cart pullers, etc, so that they could cook their own food.”

The daily cost averaged ₹10,000 “but we did not have to use a single rupee from our club funds. The money came spontaneously once I sent out a message on social media. Club members would come forward to say today’s meals/provisions are on me, and at the end of the day the Annapoorna scheme gave us great satisfaction,” she smiles.

Nearly ₹3 lakh was spent on this project, and gradually the packets were bolstered with supply of soap, milk powder, sanitary napkins, fruit juice, and 5kg rice, 5kg wheat flour, 1 litre oil, pulses and vegetables. Along with her, club members such as Sachdanand, Bipin Chachan and police officer Kunal participated in the distribution drive. The beneficiaries included an orphanage in Patna. ■

Let's create innovative club models: John Hewko

V Muthukumaran

In the emerging post-Covid scenario, the world needs Rotary more than ever and “we have a great opportunity to create innovative club models to attract professionals of varying age groups,” said RI General Secretary John Hewko.

He urged Rotarians to study the growth trajectory of Rotary and its membership graph over the last 115 years to understand “where we are heading in terms of growth in the next 4–5 years.” Speaking at a webinar titled *Synergy Plus* to kick-off Membership Development Week in RID 3201, the RI’s top honcho pointed at four narratives that are critical to sustain growth in the near future — *Elevate Rotaract*, membership retention, implementing projects in a virtual environment, and holding fundraisers when field activities and events such as dinners, walkathons and fellowship may not be possible.

A big tragedy

While Rotaractors were elevated as part of Rotary, more than 90 per cent of them never make the



RI General Secretary John Hewko

transition as Rotarians. “Clubs must attract Rotaractors, make them comfortable and give them district leadership posts to make them responsible. We have to find ways to retain existing members as attracting new ones will be very difficult in these times,” he explained.

When it comes to raising funds and resources, Rotary clubs must leverage the skills of Rotaractors who are adept in the usage of tech platforms to network and connect with influential people. In the next 4–5 years, Rotary membership might

fluctuate in a negative bandwidth of 1–2 per cent, he said, but assured that “we are operationally and financially very strong to overcome this hurdle.”

During this pandemic, the RI Board has swung into action and sanctioned \$7 million under the Covid Disaster Grant, for which a special task force was set up, and \$29 million under GGs for Rotary clubs to execute emergency relief work such as distribution of food, PPE kits, setting up Covid centres and arranging logistics in managing the health crisis.

Let's re-evaluate

There should not be any let-up in polio-eradication efforts despite the corona challenges, he said, but added that it is only natural that part of the Rotary infrastructure under GPEI will be redeployed for fighting the pandemic in many countries. Africa will be declared polio-free by August-end and the “wild poliovirus will be left only in Afghanistan and Pakistan.”

Hewko added that for some years, the membership had stagnated at 1.2 million and now with the pandemic, “we are concerned over its decline in the US, UK, Canada, Australia and Japan. Hence, we need to step back and re-evaluate ourselves as the market is offering challenges,” he pointed out. Rotary is not selling soap or a product, “but selling a club experience where professionals enjoy spending their time, energy and money on social projects. While the core values of Rotary such as vocational service and the Four-Way Test will never change, members should not be rigid on rules or get bogged

down on procedural issues. Instead they must focus on ensuring quality projects and services which will attract new members, he said.

Unveiling his action plan for the year, DG Jose Chacko Madhavaserry said RID 3201 has targeted an addition of 700 new members, including 200 women, in 2020–21. With 145 Rotary clubs, over 5,600 members (445 women), 107 Rotaract clubs and 72 Interact clubs, he is aiming for a 15 per cent overall growth. Quoting Rotary founder Paul Harris, the DG said, “in a changing world be



We will add an additional 700 members, including 200 women, during this year.

**DG Jose Chacko Madhavaserry
RID 3201**

prepared to change with it.”

Toastmasters International, District 121, Director Nirmal Lilly said both the NGOs have similar goals and entering into a strategic alliance they can share best practices on leadership training and host joint events to facilitate excellence in service projects. DRR Janani, RID

3201, said Rotarians and clubs need to be proactive to attract Rotaractors, especially young professionals, as “most of them are not aware of the opportunities that await them in Rotary.” Perhaps Rotaractors can be offered discounts in membership fees by Rotary clubs as a bait to attract them, she opined.

District trainer PDG Baby Joseph, membership chair S Subramaniam, events chair Sundaravadivelu from RC Coimbatore, which organised the webinar, DGE S Rajasekhar, DGN Rajmohan Nair, PDGs Suresh Mathew and KS Pillai shared their views on membership growth. Earlier DG Chacko inaugurated a Fellowship of music loving Rotarians from Coimbatore zone which has already inducted 40 members and will be hosting an inter-district music fest soon. Around 450 Rotarians took part in the webinar.■

A Goan village gets solar lighting kits

Team Rotary News

Rotary Club of Panaji Riviera, RID 3170, gifted 16 units of solar home lighting kits to the residents of Keri, a tribal settlement in Cotigao village panchayat on a hill in Goa. It has 15 tribal huts comprising 120 residents, and one has to walk 5 km up a difficult, steep terrain.

Led by club president Ryan Costa and secretary Tanvi Sawant, a group of five Rotarians (including an Ann) visited the tribal community and donated solar lighting kits comprising three bulbs, a torch and a charger. The total cost was ₹33,600. Once fully charged with the solar panel, the system can work up to four hours. The panel will take six hours to charge fully.

“The hamlet was deprived of electricity, water, road, transport



Rotarians of RC Panaji Riviera at the tribal hamlet after distributing solar lighting kits to the residents.

facilities for long, and alienated from the rest of the taluk,” says Ajay Menon, assistant governor, RID 3170. One of the club’s annual goals is electrification of a remote village and as a “temporary measure,

we have donated the solar lighting kits to the villagers,”

Going forward, the club will be adopting this village and provide solar lighting on a large scale as a permanent solution for electricity woes.■

Indian Rotarians travel to Kartarpur Sahib gurdwara

Jaishree

From L: Assistant Governor Aram Sajid, PDGs Sajid Pervaiz (RID 3272) and Upkar Singh Sethi (RID 3070) at the Kartarpur Sahib complex.





Rotarians of India and Pakistan met at the Kartarpur Sahib gurdwara in Lahore, Pakistan, in March this year, just before the corona pandemic caused havoc in the world. “Around 50 Rotarians from nine Pakistan clubs, along with Rotaractors and Interactors, came to meet us at the gurdwara,” says PDG Upkar Singh Sethi, RID 3070.

It all began when Sethi and PDG Sajid Pervaiz, a member of RC Ruryila, RID 3272, Pakistan, discussed an initiative to further peace between the two countries when they met at the CoL in Chicago last year. “For me this was a long pending idea. In 2012–13 when the then RI president Sakuji Tanaka announced his theme, *Peace through Service*, as a serving governor I tried getting Pakistani Rotarians to attend our district conference. It did not happen due to visa restrictions. When we, as a delegation, planned to go to Lahore, our visas were also rejected,” says Sethi.

There have been other initiatives too for promoting Indo-Pak peace. A couple of years ago, Ravishankar Dakoju, past president of RC Bangalore Orchards, planned a rally from Bengaluru to Amritsar and put up a peace tower at Attari on the India-Pak border. Another initiative was a peace park to

be set up by Rotarians of the two countries. These programmes could not be realised due to various reasons.”

This meeting of Rotarians of both the countries was “a defining moment” for Sethi and Pervaiz. One of the reasons was the venue, Kartarpur Sahib, a holy site for Sikhs. Because of the tensions between the two countries, it had been difficult for Sikhs in India to visit the shrine, until in 2018, the Pakistan government opened up a corridor so pilgrims from India could visit the shrine visa-free.

A delegation of 20 Rotarians from RC Amritsar South led by Sethi reached the India-Pak border from where they boarded a bus to the gurdwara, a majestic structure across River Ravi. “It was an exciting experience. We had food at the *langar* together at the gurdwara.” The host Rotarians gifted *kirpans*, one of the five Sikh articles of faith, to the Indian Rotarians. “It symbolises the obligation of every Sikh to the ideals of generosity, compassion and service to humanity,” he explains.

Some children had accompanied the Pakistani Rotarians. “We were an interesting spectacle for them. I wish we had taken our children with us. It is a learning for them. The general



Pakistani Rotarians presenting the kirpan to Indian Rotarians.



perception in both countries is one of enmity to each other. In reality that is not true. We enjoyed each other's company. Political differences and boundaries keep us apart," says Sethi.

Lahore is 40km from Amritsar and the gurdwara, just 3km from

the zero-line. Sethi, a resident of Amritsar for over 60 years, recalls going over to Lahore in his younger days to watch a cricket match. "The nearest town in India for me is Jalandhar. But it is farther than Lahore. If I travel 30km this side I

will be in Pakistan. I really wish we could just walk through," he says.

Mythology

Sethi relates a tale connected with the shrine. Guru Nanak, founder of Sikhism, settled at this site and assembled the first Sikh community in the 16th century. When he died, the Sikhs and the Muslims claimed him to be their guru and wanted to perform the final rites in accordance with their tradition. "The myth is that they found only flowers, instead of his mortal remains, under the cover. So half of the flowers were buried and the other half were cremated." Both the sites — where he was cremated and buried — are present in the gurdwara complex.

After the pandemic settles and normalcy returns, Sethi wants to take a larger delegation to meet the Pakistani Rotarians.

"Being from Pakistan, I have seen how the tensions between my country and India have disrupted harmonious relationships. This was a unique friendship and goodwill visit across the border. We really enjoyed meeting and interacting with Rotary families from India.



Pakistan Rotarians join the Sikh tradition of partaking meals at the langar (community kitchen) at the gurdwara.

Designed by N Krishnamurthy

Chennai Rotarians honour Corona warriors

Team Rotary News



District Governor S Muthupalaniappan, RID 3232, launched the iChennai Awards, an online event of RC Chennai Mitra, to honour Covid warriors who have inspired and motivated others with their action. The club aims to showcase exemplary individuals to the public and hence, it was titled iChennai, that is, Inspiration of Chennai. Dr Sunita Jayaraman, a surgeon, at the Kannagi Nagar Public Health Centre and Dr Issa Fathima Jasmine who runs Ayyamittu Unn, an NGO that works to eliminate hunger and avoid food wastage, were honoured with the iChennai Awards.

It has been decided to honour Covid warriors every month for their yeoman service to mankind. The award was conceptualised by club member NS Saravanan. ■

Rotary provides ₹10 lakh-worth furniture to Jaipur schools

Under the focus area of Basic Education and Literacy, RC Jaipur Bapu Nagar, RID 3054, delivered classroom furniture worth ₹10 lakh to 10 government schools in rural areas with an aim to make them Happy Schools with a slew of revamp projects.

While seven schools were located at the club's RCC village Manpura Machedi, 50km north of Jaipur, rest of the schools came under RCC Madhogarh village, 50km east of the city. "Everyone was overwhelmed by the work done by our club members in the schools. The atmosphere at the handing over event was of great celebration



with joyous experience all around," said Vipin Bahl, the club's immediate past president. The club had already built a computer lab, provided training

to teachers and encouraged the local community to support their schools by providing them adequate drinking water and sanitation facilities. ■

RC Nagpur Fort gives hope to disabled children

Rasheeda Bhagat



Before surgery

Like in several villages of India, in the rural areas around Nagpur city and in Nagpur, Bhandara and Gondia districts of Maharashtra, Rotarians of Rotary Club of Nagpur Fort, RID 3030, came across a startling feature pertaining to handicapped children. They found there were hundreds of handicapped children, many of them confined to their homes and a burden to the family, because they could not or refused to attend school due to their

deformities. Thus was born a signature project of the club titled *Project Saksham*.

Recalling its genesis, past president of the club Anil Ambatkar, a retired group captain from the Indian Air Force who has been a Rotarian and member of this club for the last 32 years, says that in 2018, when senior members of the club were searching for a project “that required out-of-the-box thinking, we stumbled upon the unfulfilled needs

of disabled children from economically backward families who are forced to lead their lives burdened with a perpetual disability.” The club started exploring ways and means to enhance the capabilities of these children and to empower them to live as independent citizens.

These children had become a “burden” to their families because they had deformities, mainly due to birth defect caused by low levels of nutrition or other reasons, and found it unbearable to attend school because of their disability. “There are several children with a twisted arm or leg and other deformities, which attracts undue attention and cruel taunts from other able-bodied children. As a result of teasing at the school, such children often refuse to attend school. As they hail from very poor families, the parents being illiterate, are sometimes not even aware that correctional surgery can be done for such children,” he adds. Even if they are aware, they simply lack the financial resources to get medical intervention.

Club secretary Shashikant Khandekar adds that two years ago,



Young beneficiaries of
Project Saksham.



After surgery

as they were brainstorming on what project to take up, something that would really make a difference to the lives of people, they found that one of their own club members, Dr Viraj Shingade, an orthopaedic surgeon, was running his own NGO, the Nagai Narayanji Memorial Foundation (NNMF).

He had been regularly organising screening camps in remote rural areas to identify children with disabilities. "From him we learnt several heartrending stories about the plight of disabled children and decided to help them," says Ambatkar.

The members found that these camps had detected several children with deformed limbs, crooked arms, twisted legs, club feet and the like, and left untreated, many of the children with lower limb deficiencies were no longer able to walk, and actually were crawling to move within their homes or villages.

Giving the example of 10-year-old Akshay, hailing from a village in eastern Vidarbha, who was suffering

from a club foot, he said that the child's parents were "facing innumerable unwanted questions and suggestions, because Akshay could not walk properly, had frequent falls and was unable to manage even day-to-day activities.

He had developed ugly scars over his feet. Constant humiliation and isolation by his peers had made his life miserable and hampered his normal growth. As they lived in a place which has very poor access to medical facilities, the family thought treatment was out of the question for their child." He added that due to either being illiterate or believing in superstition, the parents often accept their child's "fate as a curse".

Another child the club members found and helped is 12-year-old Aarohi (name changed) who suffered from cerebral palsy. She too belonged to a poor family; born as a premature baby with a low birth weight and failure to cry at birth, "due to lack of medical treatment and proper guidance, she was headed for major developmental issues. Aarohi was an enthusiastic young girl but her

physical limitations were making things difficult for her as well as her family," said Ambatkar.

Another problem with such childhood disabilities, the club members found, is that if they are not noticed early, there is no intervention and they remain untreated in early years, the severity and complication of the disability gets multiplied. The club found out that there were 1,300 such kids who had been screened by NNMF and were waiting for corrective surgeries.

Dr Viraj, a Rotarian of the club, who runs his own hospital, was ready to conduct the surgeries free of cost, "but the problem was about the cost of investigation, operation theatre expenses, medicines, implants, etc. So RC Nagpur Fort carved out *Project Saksham* to fill the gap and arrange corrective orthopaedic surgeries for disabled children like Askhay and Arohi," says Khandekar.

While club members donated generously to fulfill the club's dream project, corporates and other kind-hearted people also donated and the club managed to collect an amount of ₹9.48 lakh. "With this project receiving a morale-boosting encouragement



Children on a hospital bed after correctional surgeries.

from District 3030, we organised the first surgery on a child in Oct 2019, and the 64th one on Feb 3, 2020. Disabilities for which surgeries were performed include cerebral palsy, club foot, burn contractures, radiolunar synostosis etc,” says Ambatkar.



Explaining the way in which this corrective surgery and rehabilitation programme is organised, he said the parents and children have to be brought to the city several times. For example, for a twisted hand or leg, the limb has to be first corrected using a splint, plaster etc. Then there are several physiotherapy sessions once the surgery is done. Often this process takes up to two months. “Dr Vijay does the procedure free of cost and the club pays for the hospitalisation, material used, etc. Post surgery, the children are provided rehabilitation services and orthotic appliances free of cost.”

Along with 62 other children, both Askhay and Arohi have been helped with correctional surgery and are now going back to school. “We will do follow up action to ensure that all these children lead a dignified life,” he says.

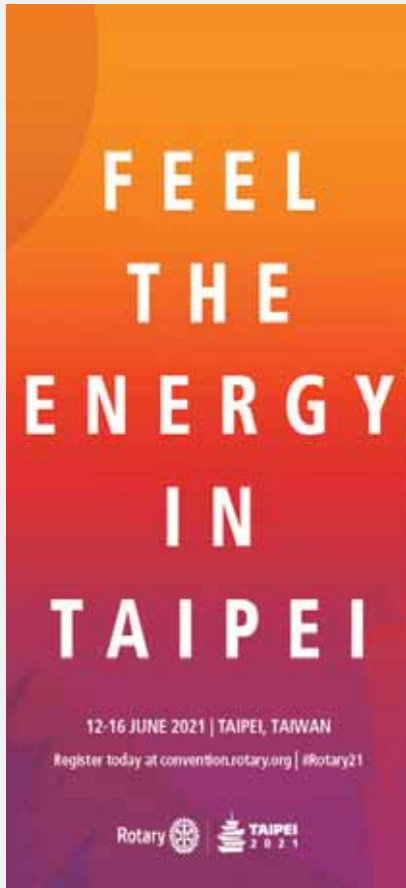
But the club members are not hanging up their boots on this project; at least not yet. Their major concern is that there is a long waiting list of more such disabled children, about 1,200 of them. The project has slowed down and come to a halt thanks to the Covid pandemic. Both the club members and the corporates who have helped in the past or can give some funds in the future have been impacted by this pandemic. “But we are not going to give up. We will keep trying to raise funds, knowing fully well that there are so many children out there who can be helped to lead a dignified and fruitful life with our help,” adds Ambatkar. ■

A drawing contest on water, sanitation

Team Rotary News



Under the leadership of DG Manish Sharda, RID 3100, conducted an awareness drive on water and sanitation, one of Rotary’s focus areas, and drawing competition for children on the topic *Bin pani sab suna* (Everything is lifeless without water). The drawing contest, hosted by the district’s Rotary India Water Mission, was held for three categories — junior, sub junior and special, and had received 140 entries. Every participant received a certificate and five children in each category were given prizes. The sketches were judged for best message, concept and elegance. ■




**TAKE YOUR CLUB IN A
NEW DIRECTION**

Is your club flexible and ready for the future?

New resources on Satellite Clubs, Passport Clubs, and Corporate Membership can help you create an experience that works for every member.

LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR OPTIONS
AT [ROTARY.ORG/FLEXIBILITY](https://rotary.org/flexibility)

Rotary 

District Wise TRF Contributions as on July 2020

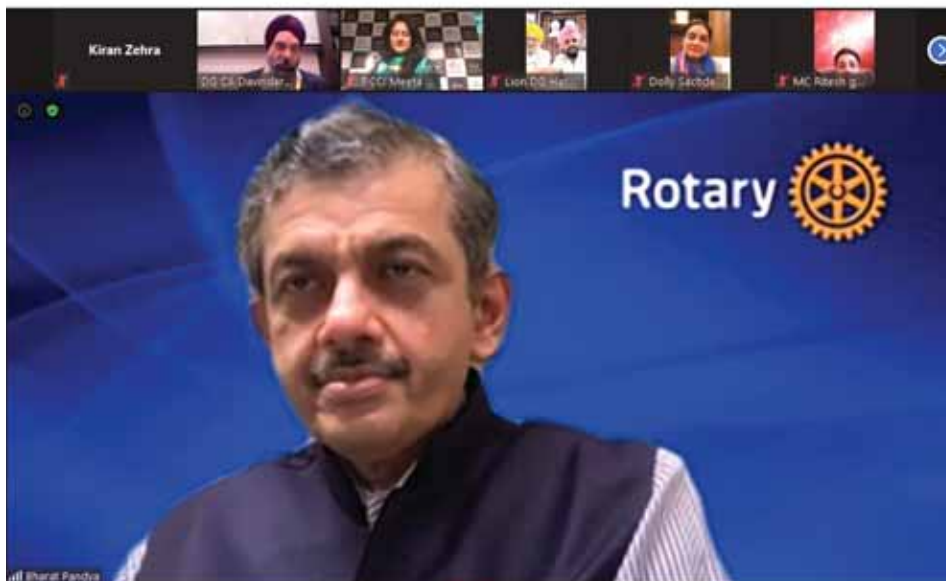
(in US Dollars)

District Number	Members	PolioPlus	Other Restricted	Endowment Fund	Total Contributions
India					
2981	4,879	609	3,082	5,000	8,692
2982	3,058	603	1,286	0	1,889
3000	5,142	0	2,367	10	2,377
3011	3,628	0	2,976	0	2,976
3012	3,675	200	6,335	0	6,614
3020	4,078	2,933	8,786	0	11,720
3030	5,092	30	(5,990)	0	8,807
3040	2,099	13	143	0	157
3053	2,755	100	1,220	0	1,320
3054	6,081	100	3,227	0	3,960
3060	4,360	272	4,827	313	5,412
3070	3,146	0	75	0	11,183
3080	3,297	778	3,947	0	4,725
3090	2,212	0	4,400	0	3,664
3100	2,248	0	0	0	0
3110	3,656	0	27	0	27
3120	3,309	0	0	0	0
3131	5,124	250	4,837	0	27,297
3132	3,342	27	889	0	1,222
3141	5,317	200	48,910	1,000	61,950
3142	3,206	4,200	31,672	0	38,482
3150	3,311	100	(7,213)	8,333	1,221
3160	2,520	1,300	2,203	0	3,503
3170	5,655	373	1,888	0	25,331
3181	3,345	104	(2,818)	0	1,336
3182	3,086	0	2,034	0	2,034
3190	4,996	60	4,791	0	8,946
3201	5,570	1,320	(1,985)	0	9,038
3202	5,398	833	10,187	0	21,520
3211	4,489	0	0	0	5,068
3212	4,126	1,573	3,657	0	5,967
3231	3,885	0	47	0	147
3232	5,694	466	10,253	0	30,720
3240	3,044	1,138	5,192	0	6,330
3250	3,687	60	1,445	0	1,505
3261	2,620	0	0	0	0
3262	3,590	0	200	0	200
3291	3,661	0	227	0	227
India Total	148,381	17,643	153,126	14,656	325,566
3220 Sri Lanka	1,904	5,071	3,434	0	12,924
3271 Pakistan	1,624	1,000	0	0	21,000
3272 Pakistan	1,674	1,100	829	0	1,929
3281 Bangladesh	7,061	300	8,407	0	19,366
3282 Bangladesh	4,096	0	4,800	0	4,800
3292 Nepal	4,945	154	900	0	23,798
South Asia Total	169,685	25,268	171,495	14,656	409,383
World Total	1,174,890	1,476,442	9,279,853	1,803,502	15,280,655

Source: RI South Asia Office

Rotary partners with Lions, FICCI Flo for cancer screening project

Kiran Zehra



RI Director Bharat Pandya at the webinar.

Saying that the best way to prevent cervical cancer is vaccination and screening, RID 3070 governor Davinder Singh launched the 'Freedom from Cervical Cancer' programme at a zoom meet to mark India's 74th Independence Day. Together with Rotaractors, Interactors, individual donors and NGOs, the district raised \$36,000 through an online pledge and signed an MoU with the Lions International District 321 and FICCI FLO, Amritsar, for this project.

"I am glad to announce that with an amount of ₹1 lakh, our district Rotaractors have taken the lead in the online fundraiser," said Singh. In his message, RID Bharat Pandya said, "The Rotaractors have yet again shown us that they are partners in Rotary and are ready to shoulder responsibility." He expressed his "heartfelt thanks to FICCI FLO and Lions District 321 for partnering with us." Pandya noted DG Singh was setting an example by showing that "we

are not competitors but partners who want to work together to make the world a better place." He congratulated RID 3070 for releasing videos on *Ek chamach kum, char kadam aage* and the national anthem with Punjabi folk instruments. "It is an excellent virtual PR initiative featuring the work of the Rotarians of your district," he said.

Quoting from an Urdu poem, Pandya said, "*Main akela hi chala tha janib-e-manzil magar log saath aate gaye aur karvan banta gaya* (I started all alone towards

the goal/but people kept joining and it began to turn into a caravan)" to remind Singh that this is not just a one-year project and "you will have to partner with more people to see bigger results. Make sure the *karvan* keeps growing."

RPIC Deepak Agarwal, said that within 45 days, "this district has done an amazing job in terms of PR." Addressing the MoU partners, he said, "Even during this pandemic, we have proved that we are a dynamic organisation willing to take on

any task. For Rotary no challenge is big enough and together we can do wonders.”

Thanking the Rotarians, Lions District 321 Governor Hardeep Kardka said, “in every Lion, there is a Rotarian and, in every Rotarian, there is a Lion and together we will protect our girls from cervical cancer.”

FICCI FLO chairperson, Amritsar chapter, Meeta Mehra said “FLO represents over 8,000 women

entrepreneurs and professionals throughout India and we are proud and honoured to be part of this drive.”

Rotary will match the contributions of both its partners in a 1:1 ratio for this project and the immunisation drive will start from January next year. Little Happiness Foundation, an NGO from the US, donated \$1,000 towards the cause. DG Singh thanked his team of 29 doctors led by Dr Hardas Singh



I am glad to announce that with ₹1 lakh our district Rotaractors have taken the lead in the online fundraiser.

CA Davinder Singh
District governor

Sandhu, Founder, Rotary Cancer Hospital, Amritsar, who has laid

down the guidelines for the vaccination programmes.■

All-women's club hosts a drive-in installation ceremony

Team Rotary News

Due to the pandemic, Rotary clubs are wanting to stay safe

and scale back their installation ceremonies. “Because of coronavirus,

clubs are inducting members from a distance,” says Gauri Hiremath, past

president of RC Seven Hills Dharwad, RID 3170. The club hosted a drive-in ceremony with just the six newly-added members and 12 other guests.

The meeting was organised in line with local regulations complying with basic preventive measures. “Despite challenging times, Rotarians are willing to adapt and do what they can. After all, making your new members feel welcomed is very important,” she says. PDG Ravi Deshpande inducted the new office-bearers and wished them good luck.■



Members of RC Seven Hills Dharwad with PDG Ravi N Deshpande at the installation programme.

When an eye hospital rejuvenated a Rotary club

Jaishree

In a way, this hospital breathed life into our club which was on the brink of extinction,” says Hira Lal Yadav, member of RC Hooghly, RID 3291, referring to the Rotary Hooghly Eye Hospital, of which he is the chairman.

Rewind to 1998: RC Hooghly, started in 1962, was earmarked for de-charter as its membership had fallen to just eight. The then DG Prabhat Rohatgi recommended withdrawal of the charter and said the club should be shut down. But three members — Yadav, Malay Kr Sadhu and Shiv Mangal Singh — were determined to revive it. “If not for RIPN Shekhar

Mehta the club would have been history by now,” says Yadav, who was club president then. Mehta, then DGE, suggested Yadav set up an eye hospital in the locality so that the club’s public image improves and membership increases in the process. “I had no clue how to proceed. Out of eight, four members were above 80 and had health issues. So it was a big challenge but I convinced my team to give it a shot.”

The club rented a building on the banks of Hooghly, renovated it and set up the Rotary Hooghly Eye Hospital in 2000 with a matching grant from TRF. “We faced severe manpower and financial constraints. Binod Khaitan,

the then district secretary, and Mehta helped in getting the grant. Samar Das, a member of RC Guildford, UK, contributed liberally,” he recalls.

Dr Manomay Banerjee, a GSE beneficiary and an ophthalmologist, became part of the hospital from its inception and has been performing several complicated surgeries ever since. Free treatment, including IOL surgeries, was provided for the less privileged and others were charged reasonable rates to meet recurring expenses. As the hospital became popular, new members joined the club. A trust was formed to take care of the hospital management.

PRIP Rajendra Saboo at the Rotary Hooghly Eye Hospital with PDG Anirudha Roy Chowdhury, RIPE Shekhar Mehta and Rashi.



Fund shortage again

To cater to more patients, the Rotarians began looking for a spacious building. “Again we faced a cash crunch; this time help came in the form of my father-in-law Kartick Chandra Ahir,” he says. During the course of a casual discussion, he offered to sponsor 9,000 sqft land costing ₹8 lakh for constructing a bigger facility. PRIP Kalyan Banerjee laid the foundation stone for the new hospital in May 2006. Construction began in April 2008 and was stopped three months later due to shortage of funds.

During this period several foreign Rotarians visited the old hospital at Bansberia and were brought to the construction site. Michael Ratcliffe from UK, impressed with the hospital’s services, donated £10,000 from his personal savings in Sept 2011, and followed it with another similar amount from UK Rotarians the following month. With another ₹35 lakh by way of donations from local philanthropists and surplus generated from the hospital, construction resumed



PRIP Kalyan Banerjee at an inaugural event in the hospital.

Below: Binota Banerjee inaugurating a department. Hospital chairman Hira Lal Yadav (R) and PDG Angsuman Bandyopadhyay are also seen.



in Feb 2012. “Initially we planned to build only the ground and first floors (about 10,600 sqft), but the builder Bijay Srivastava offered to construct the second floor on credit, payable within a year.” Construction was completed at a cost of ₹1.98 crore in Dec 2013. And the new facility was inaugurated by PRIP Kalyan Banerjee and Binota in the presence of Mehta.

Many clubs in the UK, USA, France, Canada and Germany supported the club through MGs to equip the hospital with sophisticated equipment to treat glaucoma and retinal ailments. The home club also contributed one-third of the cost of the machinery and surgeries for the poor. A bus was donated by SBI in Kolkata, which is used to conduct screening camps in rural areas and transport patients to and from the hospital after treatment. The hospital restricts its services to 100 patients a day.

Arvind Eye Hospitals, Madurai, is the technical partner and Global Sight Solutions, earlier called Guildford Rotary Eye Project, is supporting the operations for the last 19 years, says Yadav. He has helped establish 18



Rotary eye hospitals across districts 3291, 3262, 3250 and in 3281 and 3282 (Bangladesh), of which 14 hospitals are in RID 3291.

Yadav relates an interesting episode about the Kuchaykot Rotary Eye Hospital in Gopalganj, Bihar (RID 3250). His hometown is in

a village on the UP-Bihar border. With no hospitals in the area, people had to travel to Nepal for eye ailments. “So my father, Munshi Prasad Yadav, sold a portion of his farm and gave the money for building a hospital there and even learnt hospital administration.”

Tables turned

Today the club has 15 members actively involved in its various service activities. From a receiving club, RC Hooghly has evolved into one which supports international partners for GGs. “We are supporting eye hospitals in Kulna and Silhet in Bangladesh for their GG to purchase equipment and for Covid grants for RC Singapore.”

The takeaway from this project, he says, is that Rotarians must invite their foreign partners to visit their projects. “If a small club with just eight members can do this, why can’t other clubs,” smiles Yadav who is a Rotarian since 1995 and a past Rotaractor of RAC Triveni.

He now heads a committee to set up 50 Rotary eye hospitals across the country. “When I look back it is unbelievable that the club which was about to be shut down, today is a source of inspiration for Rotarians far and wide, and for me too,” says RIPE Mehta. ■

Rotary’s emergency care in Dharwad

Team Rotary News



PDG Ravishankar Bhooplapur (centre), RID 7255, USA, and PDG Girish Masurkar (third from R) handing over the ambulances to Police Commissioner R Deelip.

Rotary Club of Dharwad Central, RID 3170, provided one cardiac care and two accident relief ambulances to the Hubli-Dharwad Police Commissionerate. The vehicles worth \$48,000 were procured through a global grant supported by RC Gold Coast Lake Success, RID 7255, US, and TRF.

The ambulances will help the highway patrol police to provide immediate first aid to accident victims and shift them to the nearest hospital for further management. The vehicles, equipped with oxygen cylinders, automatic external defibrillators and monitors, were handed over to the Hubli-Dharwad Police Commissioner R Deelip and Deputy Commissioner Deepa Cholan in the presence of PDG Ravishankar Bhooplapur from the international partner club and then DG Dr Girish Masurkar. ■

A PDG Covid warrior

Kiran Zehra

With his expertise in emergent airway management, acute and intensive care, and peri-operative anaesthesia, PDG Dr Chandrashekar Kolvekar, RID 3142, an anesthesiologist, is actively treating Covid patients over the last five months. Like all other doctors wearing PPE (personal protective equipment) while treating Covid patients, he too carries the risk of infection while attending patients.

“Frontline healthcare workers are three times more likely to test positive for coronavirus compared to the general public,” he says. So far, he has distributed over 2,000 PPE kits to healthcare workers at Satyagraha Hospital, Bardoli, Gujarat; Shatabdi Hospital, Lokmanya Tilak Hospital, Sion Hospital and Ulhasnagar Municipal Hospital in Mumbai. RIPE Shekhar Mehta took to twitter to appreciate Kolvekar who was helped by his club, RC Ulhasnagar, TRF and Manish Mundra, a Bollywood producer, in this endeavour.

Talking about the mental health of doctors and paramedics during the pandemic, he says “we are fighting both Covid and

mental health challenges. Imagine wearing a PPE for almost 12 hours, taking the stairs instead of the lift to protect yourself and others. Neighbours shut the doors at the very sight of us. Almost everyone who calls us wants to discuss Covid.” He has been talking to his staff and colleagues and has asked them to “talk to me if they feel helpless or isolated. The least we can do is be there for each other in times like these,” he says.

Kolvekar reached out to a pregnant woman who was stranded in Chennai on the way to Coimbatore for her delivery. Responding to her husband’s call for help on Twitter, he got in touch with his batchmate PDG Natarajan Nagoji, RID 3232, in Chennai and got a travel pass arranged for the woman to reach her hometown where she delivered a healthy baby boy.

Again, through Twitter, he helped a man living on the outskirts of Indore, who had suffered a heart attack and needed medical attention. “The man was alone and his son who was in Delhi tweeted about his condition. I contacted PDG Ravi Langer, RID 3040, who arranged the hospitalisation of the elder citizen



PDG Dr Chandrashekar Kolvekar on duty.

and also helped the son to reach Indore.”

But his service to those in need of his help doesn’t end here. Kolvekar wants to be updated about the health condition of the patients he had helped during the pandemic.

“I called them directly to inquire about their condition. You see, this business of service is very ungrateful,” he laughs. His daughter Dr Manasi Kolvekar is also involved in serving Covid patients. ■

Rotary fetes selfless workers of Bolpur

Team Rotary News

In a rare gesture to honour marginalised people who are doing exemplary work despite adversities during the pandemic lockdown, RC Bolpur-Santinektan, RID 3240, feted three social workers — a cobbler, tree cutter and newspapers picker — who have been doing vocational service for paltry amounts without any recognition or reward.

During the installation of the club, which is celebrating its golden jubilee, the three individuals were felicitated by RID 3240 leaders. “We have taken this initiative to honour these marginal persons to bring into limelight the silent social workers who are mostly neglected by others. They do not have any holiday or rest in life, rather they have to work hard through the year to earn and feed their families,” said Dr Biswadeb Chatterjee, club president.

Nepal Das, a cobbler, learnt his trade from his father at the age of 10. Over the last 50 years, he is a common face at a prominent junction in Bolpur as he sits on a corner stitching and repairing shoes, leather bags, umbrella etc.

He is assisted by his elder son Dinesh, who had passed Class 10 and brother Kalu in the work. On an average, Das earns ₹250–300 a day. His younger son Ganesh has got admitted to M Ed in Vivekananda University at Belur. Das had got his three daughters married and built a house with the help of a government scheme. The club sponsored his cataract operation at an eye camp four years back. He was feted by PDG Dr Rintu Guha Niyogi at the installation.

Tree cutter College Bagdi, 52, is a resident of Datina village at Nanur block and belongs to a family of daily wage labourers. He cuts, prunes outgrown trees and sells fruits as part of his vocation. He climbs tall trees with ease to remove the obstructing branches and his services are sought by many families. Besides cutting trees, he also takes up odd jobs as daily

wage earner during monsoon. While his three daughters were married, his son helps him in his vocation. Bagdi was felicitated by past district secretary Subir Roy.

Raddiwala Robu Khan, 40, makes daily rounds in his bicycle at Sansad village to collect old newspapers, discarded iron material, tin, plastic goods and other scrap items to make a living.

For the last 25 years, he has been doing this work to sustain his family. Robu had started this work at the age of 16 following his father’s death to support his family. Even with this meagre work, Robu gave good

education to all his three children, one daughter and two sons. While his daughter was married to a groom from a family doing real estate business, the elder son is studying at a Bolpur college. The younger son is in Class 11.

Robu nurtures a dream to have his own house. “A very honest and greedless person, Robu works hard almost the entire day from dawn to dusk,” says Chatterjee. He was felicitated by AG Dr Asim Kanti Adhikary.

Corona doctors of Solapur

On the first day of the new Rotary year, July 1, RC Solapur MIDC, RID

Tree cutter College Bagdi being honoured by past district secretary Subir Roy.





Doctors and paramedics being recognised with Corona Warrior Awards by RC Solapur MIDC, RID 3132.

3132, felicitated the doctors, paramedics, admin staff and other members of the specially formed Corona Ward

at Shri Markandey Solapur Sahakari Rugnalaya and Research Centre with Rotary Corona Warrior Awards.

The club has instituted the award to recognise “the brave corona warriors for their dedicated and untiring service towards corona patients.” The hospital Chairman Dr Manik Gurram and Vice-Chairman Tirupati Vidap presented the awards in the presence of Dr Vijaykumar Arkal, Rtns Dr Ravindra Gundeli, Dr Gore and other members of the club. In his speech, Dr Gurram appreciated the work of medical warriors and the social initiative of Rotary club to honour the frontline workers against the pandemic.

Club president Vitthal Vanga anchored the event held on the hospital premises. Rtns Buchayya Gundeti, Shrinivas Ittam, Parshuram Rapelli and Sunny Daulatabad took efforts to make the awards ceremony a successful event. ■

Rotary Bangalore South President joins AKS

Team Rotary News



RC Bangalore South president T Srinivas and his wife Gowri being honoured for becoming AKS members.

During his installation as the 54th Rotary Bangalore South President T Srinivas and spouse Gowri became Arch Klumph Society members; they are the 12th couple of RID 3190 to be inducted to this prestigious society.

Srinivas is the owner of Darshan International, exporters of agarbathies and is well-known for his philanthropic activities. Taking charge as club president at the investiture, he said, “It’s important for every human being to give back to the society, for, the happiest person is not the one who gets more, but one who gives more.” He is known to practise what he preaches and is evident from the generous contributions to the Rotary Foundation. Over the decades, he has held top positions in eminent charitable organisations such as Asaktha Poshaka Sabha, Karnataka Arya Vyshya Charitable Trust, Vasavi Vidyani Ketan Trust and Vasavi Union Charitable Trust. The couple has two sons Ashok Thambi and Harsha Thambi. ■

RID 3211 inducts a record 361 members through a single virtual meet

Kiran Zehra



I greet you tonight from my home,” said DG Thomas Vavanikunnel as he welcomed Rotarians of RID 3211 to the induction of 361 members in the district’s clubs through a zoom meeting. All new members lighted a candle and their spouses pinned the Rotary pin on them as the new members displayed their membership certificates on the screen.

TRF Trustee Chair KR Ravindran congratulated the DG for organising “this unique ceremony” and hoped

“other districts follow this solemn and humble idea.” Stressing on membership retention he said “Make these new members feel valued so that they choose to stay with Rotary. It will be my absolute pleasure to meet all the 361 of them in person when I come there next year.”

Ravindran shared with the new members how Rotarians, including himself, played an important role in saving the life of a little boy named Zachary from Mongolia. “You will

get opportunities to serve and make a difference in the life of other people because you are going to be part of this great organisation that makes the world a better place. Rotary will help you grow as a professional and make you a better person,” he said.

DG Vavanikunnel was happy to announce that 34 new women members were inducted this year. “They are all professional women eager to get involved in community service in our district. I wish them luck and hope their numbers grow in Rotary,”

he said. Dressed in the traditional white and gold Kerala sari, one of the new members, Dr Anu Antony Varghese from RC Travancore Trivandrum, said “I want to help my community, but realised that I can’t do it alone. I have seen and heard about Rotary making a difference and I am glad to be part of it now.”

The induction ceremony with a participation of over 750 national and international guests was organised by PDG R Reghunath and his wife Parvathy “and they have done an amazing job. Preparations began a month ago, there were rehearsals

Make these new members feel valued so they choose to stay with Rotary.

K R Ravindran
TRF Trustee Chair

of the ceremony and club presidents received clear instructions about what had to be done,” said the DG.

To ensure that the families of the newly-inducted members felt

included, Annets and Rotaractors shared their Rotary experience. “As the induction is taking place from the comforts of our homes you have a better chance to experience Rotary along with your family,” said PDG Reghunath to the newcomers. He added that “this is a glimpse of how you will enjoy Rotary together. You and your spouse will serve meals to the needy, be part of a cleanliness drive, aid in relief activities and attend district conferences.”

RI Director Floyd Lancia (RID 6540, US) was a special invitee. ■



Nellore Rotarians take care of the hungry

Team Rotary News

The members of RC Nellore, RID 3160, provided food to 250 hungry people every day for 45 days during the total lockdown. The club had set up a special food distribution centre, headed by club secretary Visweswara Rao, where it dished out two varieties of cooked food, buttermilk, water and banana for the hungry visitors all through the day. This service was hugely appreciated particularly during a time when all restaurants and street food stalls were closed. Police personnel, paramedics and security guards of establishments too visited the centre. “Some of the residents who had exhausted their vegetable

and grocery supplies too collected food from us,” said Jagannadham (80), a past president of this 60-year-old club, adding that the entire project cost ₹4.5 lakh.

Additionally the Rotarians distributed bread loaves and bananas among slum dwellers and at a leprosy home which housed 250 families. Bedsheets were also given to the inmates.

“Each member sponsored food for a day. We also received generous contributions from friends in the US,” said club president Narayana. ■



Food being distributed by members of RC Nellore, RID 3160.

Rotary opens a 300-bed Covid centre in Bengaluru

V Muthukumaran

With a spurt in Covid cases in Bengaluru and its suburbs, RID 3190 has set up a 300-bed Covid Care Centre at Basaveshwara Bus Terminus in Peenya, an industrial hub, in partnership with Prakriya Hospitals and Nayonika Eye Care Trust. Titan Company is the funding partner in this project with a contribution of ₹93 lakh.

Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has given space at its unused bus terminus at Peenya for setting up this 30,000 sqft-centre to treat asymptomatic patients and those with mild Covid symptoms. Named the Rotary Advika Nayonika Covid Care Centre, this is a makeshift hospital set up in accordance with government guidelines to manage Covid patients with mild symptoms, said S Jayaraman, Director, Disease Prevention, RID 3190. He had mooted the idea of such a Covid centre under a public-private partnership with Rotary providing support infrastructure such as PPE kits, medical supplies and consumables.

In the first phase, the Rotary Covid centre will have 200 beds and “we will



Karnataka State Deputy CM Laxman Savadi inaugurating the Covid care centre in the presence of DG B L Nagendra Prasad (second from R) and Project Chairman S Jayaraman (fourth from R)

add another 100 beds if the number of cases increase and the demand goes up,” he said.

The spadework

When Jayaraman and his district team were exploring avenues to provide Covid care to people with cases rising exponentially in Bengaluru, they shortlisted two things for urgent attention — “a place to set up a facility and a medical partner to diagnose and treat patients.” A chance meeting with S B Prashanth from Nayonika Eye Care Trust opened up an opportunity, as this Trust has been holding regular camps for the KSRTC bus crew, staff

and management. They were able to use their clout with KSRTC to get the required space at the bus terminus at Peenya. With Prakriya Hospitals, hardly 1km away from the centre, expressing its willingness to join as medical partner, the partnership materialised.

If patients need hospital care, Prakriya Hospitals will admit them at its multispecialty unit at Nagasandra. “This Covid centre will have full-time nurses, doctors, attenders, housekeeping staff, maintenance and security teams,” said Jayaraman. An ambulance will ferry the patients to and from the centre. Nutritious food is being

served to patients who are provided clean toilets and other facilities.

PPE kits are provided to doctors and paramedics working at this centre which has an emergency



ward and a 10-bed ICU sponsored by Titan Company. While 50 per cent of the beds are set aside for KSRTC and Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation staff and their families for free treatment, 10 per cent of beds are reserved for patients referred by Rotary and Titan. “The patients will be charged government-indicated rates. We hope to reach out to the poor and needy through this centre,” said Jayaraman.

As of now, the Covid centre will function for three months, and it can be extended by another six months, if the cases don’t abate by that time, he said. The Bangalore Indiranagar Rotary Trust is in receipt of the CSR amount from Titan and entrusted with the task of financial management of the project, while Rotary Bangalore Peenya, the home club of DG BL Nagendra Prasad, will provide medical infrastructure like cots, wheelchairs, oxygen cylinders, ICU monitors, beds, PPE kits, etc. “We have installed corona test equipment (RT-PCR) at NIMHANS and ₹40 lakh for its purchase was given by

Titan MD donates ₹40 lakh for a Rotary project

Project Chair S Jayaraman approached Titan Company AVP and Head of Corporate Sustainability N E Sridhar with a two-fold objective — to get CSR funding for the Covid centre and to sponsor the RT-PCR (real-time polymerase chain reaction) equipment worth ₹40 lakh at NIMHANS. “Though it takes more than 24 hours to get the testing done through RT-PCR, the results are accurate and very reliable. In the immediate future, if the testing load increases we can rely on this equipment,” he said.

Titan MD Venkatraman wanted to know more about the RT-PCR testing and he had a long phone conversation with Dr Manjunath at NIMHANS. After the telecon, the Titan head honcho was “so impressed by the efficacy of this machine that in three days, approved CSR funding for the project.” But there was a small twist. Jayaraman was expecting a call from Titan about the CSR funding but to his dismay, Sridhar, Assistant VP, informed him over phone:

“Our MD does not want to use CSR funds for the RT-PCR.” A dejected Jayaraman’s heart was about to skip a beat, but then he heard the magic words, “he wants to provide this ₹40 lakh from his personal funds.”■

Titan CMD CK Venkatraman from his personal funds,” he said. Arun Belur, district secretary, said that in the first two days four patients were admitted and the “number is bound to increase manifold as Covid cases rise.”

Past president Manoj Agarwal from Rotary Bangalore Indiranagar said this Covid centre has “received good traction from the local residents at Peenya.” Karnataka Deputy CM Laxman Savadi inaugurated the Covid facility in the presence of DG Nagendra Prasad and district Rotary leaders.

From L: DG Nagendra Prasad; Deputy CM Laxman Savadi; Rtn Srinivasamurthy; Shivayogi C Kalasad, managing director, KSRTC; district secretary Arun Belur and Dr Srinivas Chirukuri, CEO, Prakriya Hospitals at the centre.



Ripple effect

While the district clubs are active in providing Covid-relief in the form of food packets, sanitisers and PPE kits, “we wanted to do something that is permanent and opens up opportunities for Rotarians to do selfless service,” said DG Prasad. He had instructed his district clubs to contribute in both cash and kind to this makeshift Covid unit and “we have starting receiving donations from across the state.”

During the inaugural of a revamped PHC at Madiwala, “health officials, after hearing the good response to our Covid centre, has asked us to build a regular hospital at the Karnataka State Police Reserve Grounds, which we will be taking up soon,” he added.■

Rotary paints India green with tree plantation drives

Kiran Zehra

At the Mata Jag Sundari temple in Kangra in Himachal Pradesh, “you will be greeted by the bright colours of the marigold, lily and tecoma flowers with the scent of medicinal and herbal plants overwhelming you. We have planted fruit-bearing trees and *rudraksha* and *parijaat* saplings too in tune with this sacred place,” says Sunil Dogra, president, RC Kangra, RID 3070.

The temple land, once barren, was converted into *Rotary vatika* (Rotary garden) attracting farmers in this rural belt. The farmers were also given saplings for planting in their fields, says Dogra who is delighted that their club’s initiative has gained traction on social media. “We roped in Rotary leaders and local officials in our green initiative by planting each tree in their names at the garden,” he says. The club named *rudraksha* and *chinar* saplings after (RIPE) Shekhar Metha, (PRIPs) Kalyan Banerjee, Rajendra Saboo and Binota Banerjee.

Recently, the club approached the Himachal Pradesh chief minister Jai Ram Thakur to showcase their green drive and the CM planted two saplings of the “Rotary tree” at the secretariat. Under the club’s environment protection project, close to 300



Himachal Pradesh chief minister Jai Ram Thakur watering a plant at the secretariat under RC Kangra’s environment project.

saplings were planted at the temple garden at a cost of ₹2.25 lakh.

Green Gorakhpur

As part of its platinum jubilee celebrations, RC Gorakhpur, RID 3120, launched the *Mera Gorakhpur-Green Gorakhpur* with Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath kicking off the

green initiative which aims at planting 12,000 saplings in the city and creating awareness on environment protection.

At the club’s sapling stalls put up at various parts of the city, around 900 locals have picked up over 7,300 saplings given free of cost. A Rotary Green Helpline (95553 38497) was

set up and “anyone who wants to book a sapling in their name can call us,” says club president Arvind Vikram Chaudhary. The club is conducting essay-writing competitions for students from 22 schools on topics related to environment and hosted the Best Home Garden contest for homemakers to create awareness.

Project Hariyali

After Cyclone Amphan left a trail of destruction

in West Bengal, RC Calcutta Yuvis, RID 3291, has planted 4,500 saplings to replenish the green cover in Kolkata. The club has partnered with the Dakshin Barasat Gram Panchayat, the Royal Calcutta Golf Club and the Tollygunge Club to carry forward this plantation drive. “DG Sudip Mukherjee has been instrumental in forging this partnership and to honour him, we planted a sapling in his name at both

RC Gorakhpur hosted a Best Home Garden contest for homemakers to create awareness.



Rotarians of RC Shoranur planting saplings.



Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath launching the greening initiative of RC Gorakhpur.



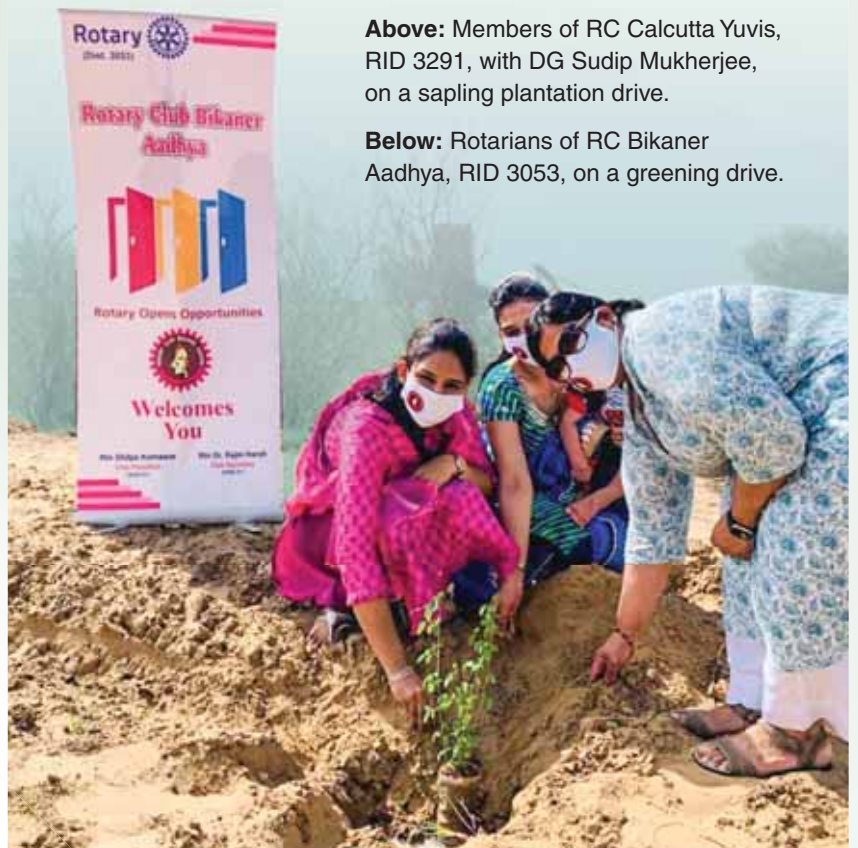
the clubs,” says Dilip Chowdary, president, RC Calcutta Yuvis.

Spread across 100 acres, the golf course and Tollygunge Club have a rich heritage of trees which are over 100-years old. “We plan to restore some denuded trees and plant native species on the vast borders of these clubs with guidance from horticulturists,” says Chowdary.

Nearly 150 farmers from 10 villages have received 4,000 fruit-bearing and 500 flower-bearing saplings. These plants will provide economic benefits to the farmers, he says. In association with the gram panchayat, the club distributed 2,200 saplings to 20 remote villages.

Hope Vanam

RC Coimbatore Smart City, RID 3201, and Spark Round Table 323



Above: Members of RC Calcutta Yuvis, RID 3291, with DG Sudip Mukherjee, on a sapling plantation drive.

Below: Rotarians of RC Bikaner Aadhya, RID 3053, on a greening drive.

have joined hands to create a green hub in this city. Under the project *Hope Vanam*, the club will be planting 30,000 trees in three phases. Together with locals, volunteers and Rotaractors, the club will take up this green drive which includes a number of local species at a total cost of ₹1 crore.

Rotary Forest

At Gandhidham, Gujarat, members of RC Gandhidham, RID 3054, are working on creating a Rotary Forest on 31 acres of land. In its first phase, land was cleared and 20,000 saplings were planted, following which a 60,000 litre-water tank was constructed for watering the saplings. Four borewells and a four-acre waterbody are being constructed. “The forest will go a long way in improving oxygen and water levels in the city, thus benefiting the locals,” says club president Ghela Ahir. The club has already spent ₹35 lakh for this project and



Rotarians of RC Jabalpur South, RID 3261, planting a sapling.

the club has targeted a budget of ₹2.5 crore.

RC Chembur Mumbai, RID 3141, celebrated World Tree Plantation Day by planting 100 trees at a telecom factory in Mumbai. Members of RC Bikaner Aadhyia,

RID 3053, conducted a plantation drive at Norangdesar village near Bikaner. The saplings included 300 flower and fruit-bearing plants. RC Jabalpur South, RID 3261, planted 100 trees at Kanthora village near Jabalpur. ■

‘My Rotary’ website upgraded

My Rotary is the member-facing website where Rotary shares resources, tools and information with Rotarians and Rotaractors. Over the years, RI received a lot of feedback from members, especially club and district officers, who asked for a more robust site that was faster and easier to use. With this input as the guide, RI set out to give members what they needed.

Here are a few of the updates and new features now available on My Rotary:

- It’s accessible on all mobile devices in eight Rotary languages.
- Club officers can create multiple meetings and add more detailed meeting information to their club profile, including time, place, meeting language, and whether the club meets in-person, online or both. This level of detail improves the club meeting search function.
- Member profiles may include a member’s name, club, leadership roles, and contact information, though the information that is visible depends on the member’s chosen privacy settings. When a member updates their profile, they determine

what information to share and with whom.

This is just the beginning. The goal is to make ongoing improvements so RI can continuously provide members with what they need to successfully serve their clubs and communities. Over the next several months, there will be more updates to My Rotary, like improving functionality for district officers and fully integrating Rotaractors and Rotaract clubs into the site. There are resources available for club officers in the Learning Center.

Rotary.org



A tribute to Lata Mangeshkar, who completes 91 this September.

In the 1970s, it was said that only two voices were heard over All India Radio — Indira Gandhi

The woman who didn't go to school, missed most of her childhood, never married, is the eternal empress of playback melody, having sung several thousand songs in 36 languages. She has been compared to Taj Mahal as an Indian brand, and has won more honours than anybody else in Indian cinema, including Bharat Ratna (2001); the Dadasaheb Phalke Award (1989); three national awards for best playback singer; six Filmfare Awards; and the French Knight of the Legion Award (the





In the 1970s, it was said that only two voices were heard over All India Radio — that of Indira Gandhi and Lata Mangeshkar.

highest civilian honour in France). Piece de resistance... a French perfume is named after her!

Shah Rukh Khan says he's sorry that since he is a male, Lata will never sing for him. SD Burman said Lata is "the best antidote to regional chauvinism" — because everyone from Kashmir to Kanyakumari loves her songs. Says Javed Akhtar, "If you collect all the fragrance, all the moonlight, all the honey in the universe, their collective magic can't create a voice like Lata's." Dilip Kumar remarked, "Lata resides in every one of us."

Lata's best songs

Lata's songs bring back memories of some of the greatest moments of Indian cinema... the Raj Kapoor-Nargis movies of the 1950s; Meena Kumari in *Baiju Bawra*, *Azad*, *Kohinoor*; Madhubala in *Amar*, *Tarana*, *Mughal-e-Azam*; Nutan in *Seema*; Vyjayanthimala in *Sangam*, *Gunga Jumna*; Sadhana in *Mere Mehboob*, and a host of other actresses and movies.

Coming to her best songs, how does one pick a few from the thousands of radiant gems she has sung? Here's a personal

selection from different moods and genres — duets, romantic, joyous and sad songs.

Duets

- *Pyar hua ikrar hua* — Lata and Manna Dey in *Shri 420* (composer: Shankar-Jaikishen)
- *Jaag dard ishq jaag* — Lata and Hemant in *Anarkali* (C Ramachandra)
- *Nain so nain* — Lata and Hemant in *Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baaje* (Vasant Desai)
- *Aja sanam* — Lata and Rafi, *Chori Chori* (Shankar-Jaikishen)
- *Hum tum ek kamre me band ho* — Lata and Shailendra Singh in *Bobby* (Laxmikant-Pyarelal)

Many of Lata's duets are emotional scorchers, and among the richest treasures of Hindi film music. All of her duet partners — be it Rafi, Kishore, Mukesh, Manna Dey, Hemant Kumar — enjoyed singing with her, exchanging notes and tips

and banter, and witnessing her professionalism and talent.

Romantic songs

- *Mujhe kisise pyar ho gaya* from *Barsaat* (composer: Shankar-Jaikishen)
- *Pyar kiya to darna kya* from *Mughal-e-Azam* (Naushad)
- *Nainon me badra chaye* — *Mera Saaya* (Madan Mohan)
- *Do hanson ka joda* — *Gunga Jumna* (Naushad)
- *Bindiya chamkegi* — *Do Raaste* (Laxmikant-Pyarelal)

Lata's romantic songs are pure gold. Those of the 1950s and 1960s are ageless, enchanting, everlasting odes to love. The more modern ones crackle with electric intensity.

Joyous songs

- *Woh chand khila* — *Anari* (Shankar-Jaikishen)
- *Aaj phir jeene ki tamanna hai* — *Guide* (SD Burman)
- *Jiya jale jaan jale* — *Dil Se* (A R Rahman)



From L: Lata Mangeshkar, her sister Usha Mangeshkar and South Indian playback singer P. Susheela.





Lata Mangeshkar has sung for (clockwise from top) Dimple Kapadia, Madhubala, Meena Kumari and Nargis.

- *Didi tera devar deewana* — *Hum Aapke Hain Kaun* (Ram Lakshman)
- *O Sajana* — *Parakh* (Salil Choudhury)

Lata's joyous songs have a compelling beat, they radiate positivism, sparkle with banter or mischief.

Sad songs

- *Aaja re ab mera dil pukara* — *Aah* (Shankar-Jaikishen)
- *Mera dil ye pukare aaja* — *Nagin* (Hemant Kumar)
- *Dua kar gham-e-dil* — *Anarkali* (C Ramachandra)
- *Nagari nagari dware dware* — *Mother India* (Naushad)
- *Megha chhayee aadhi raat* — *Sharmilee* (SD Burman)

Lata's sad songs are like beautiful paintings brushed with the colours of anguish. They

haunt you forever. Suffused with sorrow, they are fragrant with sweetness. Your heart bleeds for the heroines whose pain she articulates so melodiously. Nargis said, "When Lata sings a sad song for me, I don't need glycerine to shed tears."

Surprisingly, Lata considers the lyric (rather than the tune) to be the most important element of a song.

The Lata phenomenon

Here I try to decode the Lata phenomenon

- Her voice. There is nothing it can't do. And it has never lost its pristine quality. Said Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, "*Kambakth, kabhi besur nahi hoti* (She never sings out of tune)." Composer Ehsaan Noorani pointed out that Lata was a soprano who could sing

in three octaves, while other singers at best managed two. She could give a song depth like none else. No wonder every actress clamoured for Lata, and she acquired a vice-like grip on the music industry.

- Her musical knowledge, memory and grasp of the subtleties of melody and tune are all awesome. Manna Dey recalls that once he and Lata were to sing a classical duet for Anil Biswas and needed a seven-day rehearsal. Lata took all of one day to rehearse the song and sing it better than him. In 1977, she returned from a long foreign tour to record a song for Raj Kapoor's *Satyam Shivam Sundaram*. Composers Laxmikant-Pyarelal hummed out the outlines of the theme song for

about 10 minutes. That's all she needed for the recording. The resulting song was a chartbuster.

- She was an incredibly hard worker and learner, absorbing anything new like a sponge. She learned breath control from Anil Biswas and voice modulation from both Ghulam Haider and Naushad. She engaged a maulvi to teach her Urdu diction. This was because Dilip Kumar once remarked in Lata's presence that the Urdu diction of Maharashtrians exuded the flavour of *dal chawal*. Lata was hurt and ensured that her Urdu pronunciation was impeccable.
- A perfectionist, she took pains to study the song situation, screen character and the actress for each song. When Lata sang for Madhubala or Meena Kumari, she sounded like them. At 45, she sang for

When Lata sings a sad song for me,
I don't need glycerine to shed tears.

- Actress **Nargis**

15-year-old Dimple Kapadia in *Bobby* and her voice sounded so young. At 66, she sang for Kajol in *Dilwale Dulhaniyan le Jayenge* and projected the ebullience of a 20-year-old.

A poignant childhood

Lata's father Master Dinanath Mangeshkar, a much-respected classical singer and stage artist, from whom she heard devotional and classical music in childhood. On one occasion, she found her father's pupil singing out of tune

and corrected him. She was just five! Dinanath heard this, and told his wife: "We have a singer at home." He started teaching Lata then.

Film songs were banned at home — KL Saigal was the only exception. Lata would hum Saigal songs all the time, and as a kid, once announced that she would marry Saigal. "By the time you grow up, he will be too old," her father remarked. "Never mind, I'll still marry him," she said. But Lata never met her idol. When she switched on her newly acquired radio for the first time, the first news she heard was of Saigal's death. Devastated and distraught, she returned the radio to the shop where she had bought it.

Mangeshkar's company fell on bad days in the late 1930s, and he sought refuge in alcohol. He died at the age of 41 in 1942. Lata, at 13, became the breadwinner for a family of



Lata with carnatic music legend M S Subbulakshmi. Also seen: Hindustani classical vocalist Laxmi Shankar, Vyjayantimala Bali and MS' daughter Radha Viswanathan.





Lata with music director S D Burman (to her left), music director Chitragupta (second from R) and playback singer Talat Mahmood (extreme R).

eight. Lata got a role in a Marathi film, as the heroine's sister and had to sing three songs. She hated make-up and the arc lights, disliked crying or laughing on order, and only wanted to sing. But there was no option. "The day I went to work in that film, there was nothing to eat in the house," she once recalled.

The next few years were a nightmarish struggle and drudgery. Lata sang and acted in four Hindi and four Marathi films. Composer Ghulam Haider introduced Lata to composer Naushad, who gave her the song *Uthaye ja unke sitam* in *Andaz* (1949), filmed on Nargis. The pathos-drenched song was irresistible and endearing and made the music world sit up and take notice.

In 1949, *Barsaat* with eight solos by Lata was released and she created a sensation. The wizardry of Shankar-Jaikishan

and the Raj Kapoor-Nargis chemistry also worked magic. *Mahal*, released in 1949, was a trailblazer for both Lata and the film industry. The film was immortalised by the ghost song *Ayega anewala*, and Lata sounded ethereal. In fact she describes herself as a "bhootwali" singer. She has given cinema more ghost hits than anyone else.

The 1950s and 1960s were Lata's decades of triumph. The Lata juggernaut swept everybody else out. Shamshad Begum, the power voice of the 1940s, was sidelined, so were Amirbai Karnataki and Geeta Dutt. Asha Bhosle survived, thanks to OP Nayyar, her yen for peppy numbers, and Lata's rifts with some composers. Lata was active in the three decades from the 1970s too, thanks to the new crop of composers such as Laxmikant-Pyarelal and

Kalyanji-Anandji. Money flowed in from royalties and shows abroad. Lata sang in 2004 for *Veer Zaara*, a tribute to Madan Mohan produced by his son. She had completed more than 60 years as a playback singer, a world record for longevity.

In 1962 she suffered from severe stomach ache and body pain, vomited green fluid and the doctor diagnosed it as slow food poisoning. Lata's cook

If you collect all the
fragrance, all the
moonlight, all the honey
in the universe, their
collective magic can't
create a voice like
Lata's.

- Poet **Javed Akhtar**

suddenly vanished, without even collecting his salary. The obvious inference was that the cook was someone's plant.

Lata did not sing for a few months. The first time she sang after her illness was *Kahin deep jale kahin dil* for *Bees Saal Baad*. She was nervous and apprehensive, but composer Hemant Kumar was most understanding. The song was a super hit and won Lata her second Filmfare Award for best playback singer.

Lata and fellow singers

Lata had a beautiful relationship with Noor Jahan, the playback legend of the 1940s who migrated to Pakistan in 1947. They often met in London. The two singers would engage in long phone chats on the Bombay-Karachi line. Noor

Jahan would ask Lata to sing some of her hit songs such as *Dheere se aaja re*, the immortal lullaby from *Albela*, one of his favourites. Phone operators in the two cities started eavesdropping to hear the two celebrities chat and sing!

When Lata first met Kishore Kumar, she thought he was stalking her! They were actually going to the same studio, taking a train and then a tonga. During briefing sessions before song recording, Kishore would throw Lata into fits of laughter with his jokes and clowning. He would even dance at the recording studio, and she pleaded with him to stop, so that she could sing right!

Mukesh is the singer Lata was closest to, and he persuaded her to accompany him on a concert tour of the US in 1976.

Lata is the best antidote to regional chauvinism, because everyone from Kashmir to Kanyakumari loves her songs.

- Music maestro

S D Burman

But while in Detroit, he suffered a massive heart attack and died. A tearful Lata escorted his body back to Bombay.

Among composers, Lata was closest to Madan Mohan. Her songs under his banner "had a special sweetness" as composer Khayyam put it. Take *Baiyan na daro (Dastak)*, *Hum pyar*



Lata with (from L) music director R D Burman, playback singer Kishore Kumar and her sister Asha Bhosle.



me jalne walon ko (Jailor), Woh bhooli dastan (Sanjog), Yun hasraton ke daag (Adalat), Aap ki nazron ne samjha (Anpadh), to mention just a few. Lata is all praise for Shankar-Jaikishen, saying they changed the attitude to playback singing with *Barsaat*. SD Burman regarded Lata as a daughter, RD Burman always treated her with great respect. She learned a lot from Naushad, and she adored Hemant Kumar, saying he sang like an angel because he was one!

Controversies

Lata Mangeshkar is more admired than loved in the film industry, with a *prima donna* reputation. The late Raj Singh Dungarpur, who knew Lata well, said “If you rub her on

the wrong side, she becomes a tigress.”

Lata could be a tigress even as a child. Her school life lasted just one day. On the second day, she had brought baby sister Asha to class and was singing with gusto while other girls cheered. The teacher pulled up Lata. She stormed out of the school, saying “How dare anyone scold the daughter of Pandit Deenanath Mangeshkar!”

Lata denies that she has tried to undercut Asha. “She is my sister,” she points out. The two were estranged after Asha eloped with and married a neighbour. He wanted Asha to sever all her links with her family, particularly Lata! But as an abusive marriage, it broke up and Asha was back with *didi*.



Above: (From L) Asha Bhosle, Mukesh, Lata Mangeshkar, Kishore Kumar and Manna Dey.

From L: Naushad, Lata, Mohammed Rafi and Majrooh Sultanpuri.





Lata says Asha is more versatile than her; “I can’t sing the songs she did, like *Piya tu ab to aaja* or *Chura liya*, but she can sing both peppy numbers and classical *ragas*”.

She has had spats with singers, composers, directors and producers but has had her way most of the time. She fought aggressively for the rights of playback singers; broke with Mohammad Rafi after he referred to her as a “Maharani” while arguing about royalties and refused to sing for Raj Kapoor on the same issue. But later made up with both and went on to sing for the RK banner in *Bobby*.

Shanker-Jaikishen played a big part in Lata’s success story: the titanic popularity of their songs for the Raj-Nargis movies of the 1950s merits a separate chapter in the history of Hindi film music. Lata’s pet tease was that SJ stood for “silver jubilee”. But in 1956, SJ won the Filmfare Award for best music for *Chori Chori*.

The Lata juggernaut swept away everyone — Shamshad Begum was sidelined, so were Amirbai Karnataki and Geeta Dutt. Asha Bhosle survived, thanks to OP Nayyar, her yen for peppy numbers, and Lata’s rifts with some composers.

Jaikishen asked Lata to sing the song *Rasik balma* from this film at the awards meet, but she refused, quipping that the award was for best composition and “I have not been given a best singer award.” She refused to relent though Jaikishen was a good friend. Result: Filmfare introduced an award for playback singers in 1958, and separate awards for male and female singers some years later.

Personal life

In her younger years, she travelled often to London and the US. A cricket buff, she regards Sachin Tendulkar as her own son, and watched the 1983 World Cup final in London. On return to India, she did a big charity show for cricketers. India’s cricket fraternity will do anything for Lata Mangeskar.

Lata is fond of western classical music; she listens to Mozart, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky and Chopin. She admires Barbra Streisand, the Beatles and Nat King Cole. A remarkably good photographer, she enjoys cooking and loves good food, particularly Kolhapuri mutton. She simply can’t keep away from pickles though they aren’t supposed to be great for a singer’s voice.

Lata loves diamonds and white sarees. She is fond of fragrances; is very religious, prays every day and sometimes goes to the Mahalaxmi temple near her home on Peddar Road. She always appears barefoot on the stage or in the recording room. She is fabulously wealthy, but apart from her diamonds, lives unpretentiously. She has set up a hospital in Pune in the memory of her father.

Lata never got married, attributing the reason to the responsibilities she had to shoulder at a young age. When asked if she misses having children, she said: “My siblings’ children are my own.”

A versatile singer, Lata has sung in many other languages too.

Designed by Krishnapratheesh



Rotary helps a tribal girl get Govt ID, brighter future

V Muthukumaran

Young and bubbly Sangavi from a nondescript tribal cluster near Pichanoor village in Coimbatore was crestfallen. She got admission in a reputed college, but could not get scholarship for want of government ID cards such as Aadhaar card, ration card or a voter ID. The possibility of her missing higher education was worrying her. All the 35 Malasar tribal families eke out a living at a nameless hamlet close to Pichanoor located at a walking distance from the Palakkad highway. “This village where we had constructed low-cost shelters did not

have a name as it was cut-off from rest of the world and did not have power supply, or other amenities,” says M Sathish Kumar, president, RC Coimbatore Meridian. RID 3201.

A few journalists from the Coimbatore Press Club was told about this village by the locals when they were doing Covid-relief work in Pichanoor, 12km from the city. Shocked by the pathetic conditions of tribals living in rudimentary huts, the scribes returned and started networking to build decent shelters for the villagers. “One of my media friends called me and moved by his description, I visited this place along

with assistant governor CT Thiagarajan and club secretary T Loganathan in the first week of May. We were shell-shocked to find the tribals living in damaged huts with no source of livelihood,” explains Kumar.

A pilot survey

He, as incoming club president, and three of his colleagues, did a survey on the basic requirements of the tribals, listing out their immediate needs — a *pucca* house, toilet blocks, solar power supply (as government does not provide electricity to huts). Meanwhile, he and his friends brought to the notice

RC Coimbatore Meridian President M Sathish Kumar (right) along with club members at the tribal village.



of District Collector K Rajamani that these tribals do not have government ID cards. A tahildar was sent to take census and steps were taken to issue identity cards to these families.

Following a cover story in *Junior Vikatan*, a Tamil magazine, 18 Rotary clubs in Coimbatore joined hands to build 21 low-cost shelters, each costing ₹12,000–14,000 on average, having a cement floor, well-thatched roof and walls made of palmyra and coconut leaves. “There is no labour cost involved as the huts were made by the villagers themselves,” says Kumar. For Sangavi, the first from her community to pass Class 12, a concrete house was built at a cost of ₹80,000 as “a token of encouragement for her to pursue higher education.” She is among the first batch of five tribals to

**This village did not have a name
and did not have power supply, not
to speak of other amenities.**

M Sathish Kumar, president
RC Coimbatore Meridian
RID 3201

receive government ID cards including community certificate from the district collectorate. “She is now preparing for NEET exam (medical entrance) and Rotary is providing her all help in this endeavour,” he says. He is confident that the remaining families will get ID cards within a month or so. The rest of the 14 houses were built by the Press Club and other NGOs.

Finally, a name

On July 1 during the inauguration of the new shelters by district director R S Maruthi, this long-neglected area was christened M Nanjampanoor village. “We gave 23 bicycles costing ₹1 lakh to students to pedal their way to school and a cycle stand was also installed. Once a black-topped road is laid to this village by the government, a community hall, park, playground and vegetable farmland will come up,” says Kumar. As this village is spread over six acres, Rotary clubs will be taking up tree planting drives on vacant land (four acres). A vocational centre will be set up by RC Coimbatore Midtown at the community hall to train women on tailoring for gainful employment. ■

Rotary empowers differently-abled at Chandrapur

Team Rotary News

RC Smart City Chandrapur, RID 3030, organised a one-day *Divyang Melawa*, an event for differently-abled women. It was inaugurated by renowned social worker Dr Vikas Amte Anandwan.

Over 200 participants took part in a variety of programmes such as quiz, fashion show and cultural events to showcase their talent. Forty differently-abled women who had excelled in various fields were felicitated.

Guest speakers enlightened participants about the different government schemes, legal protection and aids available to them. Sewing machines, wheelchairs, crutches and white canes were distributed to the needy at the event.



The club has set up a vocational centre with 50 sewing machines to help women earn a decent livelihood.

Cloth and other raw material are provided by the club to make masks

and cotton bags which the women can sell and earn a good profit. “We are also trying to procure more jobwork for stitching school uniforms,” said Rtn Dr Vidya Bangde. ■



On a greening drive

R Balaji Babu

Realtor, RC Mayiladuthurai Delta, RID 2981

He is planning to make the entire district green by creating Miyawaki forests. “We are planning to grow trees in an 850,000 sq ft area across the district,” says Balaji Babu. Around 50 clubs have each planted saplings in 2,000-3,000 sq ft area in schools, hospitals and public places. All the 119 clubs are enthusiastic about the programme, he says. The region was badly affected by the tsunami and cyclones; growing native trees can help reduce the impact of natural disasters, he adds. “Sadly, we don’t keep track of the saplings we have planted and forget the plants after the hype around the event is over.” But this time the Rotarians have pledged to nurture the saplings they plant; also, the Miyawaki process requires less care and is easy to maintain,” he adds.

Babu is a Rotarian of 25 years. He aims at a 20 per cent membership growth and to double the number of women from 450 to at least 900. He is encouraging spouses of Rotarians to join Rotary. “I have waived their district dues.” He is walking the talk and has inducted his wife Alamelu as a member of his club. “So far 40 women have become Rotary members,” he smiles.

Babu is concentrating on installing rain water harvesting facilities across the district. “We get good rains but it is prudent to save water when we can.”

His goal for TRF is \$1 million.

He is planning a global grant to equip the district with a cancer screening van and has aligned with the ICC (Inter-country committee) to identify foreign partner clubs for executing bigger projects. “French Rotary clubs are showing interest to partner with us,” he says.

Babu likes the friendship, dedication and genuineness of Rotarians and that had attracted him to the organisation in the first place.

Meet your Governors

Jaishree

A German connect

Dr Thomas Vavanikunnel

Sonologist, RC Palai, RID 3211



The district is keenly working with the police and recognising police personnel for their good work by giving awards. “We are grooming youngsters as traffic wardens, training them to provide first aid to accident victims and have formed community corps of autorickshaw drivers to help traffic police,” says Thomas Vavanikunnel. He is urging clubs to distribute masks, shields and sanitisers to protect them from coronavirus while on frontline duty.

He joined Rotary in 1995 after returning from a 12-year sojourn in Germany and is happy to be “able to speak the RI President’s language”. He was instrumental in his club executing six global grants (GG) with German clubs since 2008 and one more is under process. “I can communicate in German and probably that is an added advantage,” he smiles.

He is proud that his club has 152 members, including 50 women, and says this is due to the service projects undertaken by it.

Recalling his induction to Rotary he says, “A friend invited me to the club in 1994 and said that attendance is compulsory and if you miss three

meetings you will be out of Rotary. That put me off. I decided against joining until the next year when I got inspired after seeing the service activities.”

The best part of Rotary, according to the governor, is that “Rotary connects the world. You need not know the person. Just that he is a Rotarian and the lapel pin is enough to connect with him. And seeing the Rotary wheel anywhere will make every Rotarian excited.”

Vavanikunnel fondly remembers the district’s work in facilitating schools with WASH facilities when he was WinS chairman two years ago. “We constructed toilet blocks in 36 schools, thanks to a GG with Germany,” he says.

His membership target is 600 and he has achieved 50 per cent so far in addition to chartering four new clubs, including a satellite club. “My wife Omana was the first woman member of my club,” he says.

The governor is planning to become major donor and include more major donors. His target for TRF is \$1 million.

Promoting cervical cancer awareness

CA Davinder Singh

Chartered accountant, RC Amritsar, RID 3070



He joined Rotary in 2007 to connect with people and “get to know more about the world”. Davinder Singh is keen on promoting cervical cancer awareness in the district and is planning to inoculate young girls against the disease. “Initially we planned for 1,000 vaccines; the number has tripled as all clubs are interested in the project. So we have applied for a global grant,” he says, adding that 1,200 Rotarians and Rotaractors who participated in an awareness programme organised on zoom have together raised \$36,000 for the project.

The governor has chartered eight new clubs since July and inducted 250 new members. He is finding ways to engage the 3,200 Rotarians in the district during this pandemic. “I want to sustain their interest in Rotary.”

Singh’s wife, Dolly, is also a member of his club.

Global grants are his focus

B Chinnapa Reddy

Engineer, RC Nandyal Midtown, RID 3160

He joined Rotary in 2000 but “had not been actively involved in club activities for the initial five years. Later, when I started focusing on the projects I got hooked,” says Chinnapa Reddy who is also an avid badminton player.

He is proud of the Rotary schools in his district. “Our clubs have constructed schools even in small towns and the quality of education is so good that it is difficult to get admission in these schools. Many people come to us for recommendations,” he smiles.

Reddy has planned 10 global grants this year of which four applications are being processed by the Foundation. “We want to establish more dialysis centres, a blood bank and eye hospitals,” he says.

For TRF, his goal is to raise \$300,000, although his target is \$210,000 considering the district’s average performance last year when it could contribute only \$57,000 to the Foundation. He is urging all the 76 clubs to contribute around \$3,000 and the AGs to become major donors.

He has chartered two new clubs of the 10 clubs planned for the year. “We will have one all-women’s club and I am serious about getting more women into Rotary. Our RIPN Jennifer Jones is an inspiration for women Rotarians and prospective members,” he smiles. He wants to add at least 30 Rotaract clubs and energise the existing 21 clubs.

He is happy to share that his district has risen up well to the Covid relief challenge and have distributed face masks, face shields and PPE kits in large numbers and have fed hundreds of hungry migrants and helpless people throughout the lockdown period. Three Rotarians have contributed ₹100,000 each to the PM CARES Fund.

Reddy’s wife, a former IW president, is a member of his club and he intends to induct his daughter into Rotary during the district assembly.



Developing school infrastructure

M Ranganath Bhat

Tyre retailer, RC Mangalore Metro, RID 3181

Rotary has been a part of his growing up years. His father was a member of RC Mangalore North and Ranganath Bhat would accompany him for most of his club meetings. Bhat has been an Interact club president in 1973 and joined Rotary in 1989. His wife and son are also Rotarians in the same club.

He is gung-ho about the latest addition of environment as a Rotary area of focus. “All the 82 clubs will be planting and distributing at least 500,000 saplings during the year,” he says, adding that the Rotarians were a little disheartened that they couldn’t have grand installation ceremonies this year due to the corona pandemic. “But the zoom meetings we had with leaders such as President Holger Knaack, General Secretary John

Hewko and RID Valerie Wafer made up for that and is keeping the interest alive among members,” he smiles.

Bhat aims to increase district membership by 30 per cent and raise \$500,000 for TRF. “Women’s membership is just 8 per cent. Not much. But we will try to improve that,” he says.

His district projects include tree plantation, promoting positive health through health camps, WinS and first aid training for students in partnership with the Indian Red Cross Society.



Designed by N Krishnamurthy

Rotary sets up first plasma bank in UP

Team Rotary News



Niraj Khemka, member of RC Noida, RID 3012, donating plasma at the new facility. DG Alok Gupta (second from L) is also seen.

While on his morning walk during the stressful Covid pandemic era, RID 3012 DG Alok Gupta suddenly had an idea... why not set up a plasma bank to help those infected by coronavirus.

In a record time of one week he was able to complete all the formalities and get the licence for setting up such a facility, the first of the plasma banks in Uttar Pradesh, in Noida. Naveen Agarwal, President of Rotary Club of Noida, "was equally instrumental in the execution of this project," says Gupta.

Thereafter the work progressed fast and the

plasma bank was inaugurated on July 25 by the UP Health Minister Atul Garg, with the top state officials from various services participating in the inaugural. PRID Yashpal

Das, members of the governing body of the Rotary Noida Blood Bank, PDGs of the district and other Rotarians participated in the inaugural through an online platform.



IPDG Deepak Gupta (R) and PDG Pamesh Aggarwal at the plasma bank in the Rotary Blood Bank, Delhi.

DG Gupta says this facility will be a great service in helping corona infected people with complications, as plasma taken from patients who have recovered from infection can help fight complications brought about by this virus. "Any patient 21 days after recovering from Covid infection can donate plasma. Our plasma bank has a storage capacity of 10,000 units of 200ml and the Rotary Noida Plasma Bank shall be providing plasma free of cost to BPL card holders and pregnant women of Gautam Buddha Nagar."

He was happy to announce that Niraj Khemka, a member of RC Noida, who has recovered from corona infection, became the first plasma donor at this facility.

A Rotary plasma bank is installed at the Rotary Blood Bank in Tuglakabad in Delhi. The blood bank, established by late PRID Sudarshan Agarwal, is managed by both RIDs 3011 and 3012. The plasma bank will provide convalescent plasma for treating Covid infected patients free of cost, said PDG Ramesh Aggarwal, secretary of the blood bank. The plasma bank was inaugurated with donation of plasma by a person who had just recovered from Covid. ■



Wordsworld

Moving stories about moving

Sandhya Rao

Those who have not been forced to flee their homes
can never know its pain.

Every time August 15 comes along, there are events galore to remind us that it's time to wave the flag and feel all patriotic. An organisation dedicated to the welfare of senior citizens decided to do something different: they planned a panel discussion among people who had actually lived through that momentous period in history leading to the special day in 1947. They were invited to share their experiences and thoughts just before and after Independence so that young people would get a glimpse of lived history. It was moving to listen to their stories and I felt a pang as I saw them gamely negotiate the challenge of using technology in order to make the online event happen. That's the stuff our grandparents were made of.

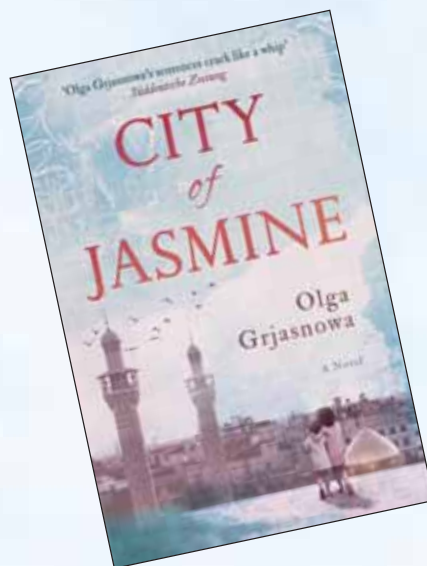
However, it triggered a memory that continues to shame me. Some years ago, it so happened that a friend was working on his doctoral thesis. The topic revolved around Partition literature. Casually I remarked, "Oh no, not that again.

When will we ever move on?" I will never forget the expression of incredulity followed by disappointment on his face. Immediately contrite, I tried to apologise, but the words had been spoken.

Yes, in that split second, I realised that separation from the homeland is one of the most painful and

unforgettable experiences of life. Living in faraway Madras, I had no clue as to the extent of its impact on thousands and thousands and thousands of families living both in India and in Pakistan. We continue to experience the consequences of those political manoeuvres. This pain is brilliantly evoked in Saadat Hasan Manto's short story, *Toba Tek Singh*. It's a piece of writing that talks about a dilemma confronting the two new nations upon Partition: what to do with the mentally-ill housed in asylums on both sides of the border? Set in an asylum in Lahore, it brilliantly satirises the event through the reactions of various inmates, focusing on one in particular, Bishan Singh, from a village called Toba Tek Singh, incarcerated for fifteen years. His feet are swollen because he never lies down and he goes around spouting gibberish.

To quote a little from the story, which is best read in the original Urdu, or at least Hindi: the inmates "...had no idea where Pakistan was. That was why they were all at a loss



whether they were now in India or in Pakistan. If they were in India, then where was Pakistan? If they were in Pakistan, how come that only a short while ago they were in India? How could they be in India a short while ago and now suddenly in Pakistan?" In fact, one of them is so bewildered he climbs up a tree and says he doesn't want to live in India and Pakistan, he will make his home on the tree.

You don't feel like laughing, however ludicrous the scenario, because the story unravels intangible but bitter aspects underlying Partition and, by extension, of separation from homeland, exile, forced migration... It impels the reader to think about what's happening around the world today where, for a host of reasons, people are having to flee their homes.

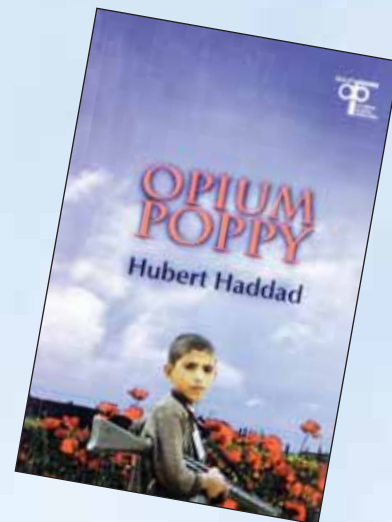
At one point, Bishan Singh is very confused because no one is ever able to tell him where his hometown, Toba Tek Singh, is: "...nobody seemed to know where it was. Those who tried to explain themselves got bogged down in another enigma: Sialkot, which used to be in India, now was in Pakistan. At this rate, it seemed as if Lahore, which was now in Pakistan, would slide over to India. Perhaps the whole of India might become Pakistan. And who could say if both India and Pakistan might not entirely disappear from the face of the earth one day?" The best answer to Bishan Singh's question comes from an inmate who "had declared himself God". He says Toba Tek Singh is "neither in India nor in Pakistan. In fact, it is nowhere because till now I have not taken any decision about its location."

As the story reaches its dramatic conclusion, you are stunned by the layers of meaning it contains. Manto

was known for this. He was a writer whose ideas were way ahead of his times. He was radical, he was forthright, he was searing in his observations, and the guardians of society, both state and self-appointed, didn't know what to do with him. So, they reviled him, they imprisoned him, they proscribed his writing. Remember Perumal Murugan? How he was so hounded by the state for his writings that he declared one day that he would stop writing? Luckily for us, he rescinded on that decision. Lucky for us, Manto continued to write. You can even listen to a reading of *Toba Tek Singh* online. Do look for it, you will not regret it. Don't worry if you don't understand Urdu. Read the story in English first. Then listen.

Through all the instances of separation, dislocation, exile, migration, life still goes on. This shines through in a book I recently purchased when my local bookstore announced that it had gone online. *City of Jasmine* by Olga Grjasnowa is translated from the German by Katy Derbyshire. It revolves around the actions and decisions taken by three young people — Amal, Hammoudi and Youssef — when civil war rips apart their homeland, Syria. Set largely in Damascus, the reader gets a sense of young peoples' lives even as bombing and shelling lay the city low. They still dream of becoming actors and doctors and falling in love; they try to pursue these dreams. The reality is harsh, though. The book provides perspective to impressions formed mostly on the basis of news reports.

When we speak of assimilation and integration, books on these subjects remind us that attachment to the homeland is as intrinsic as breathing. You are alive as long as you breathe, you breathe as long as you are alive. So too, the longing for home courses



through your consciousness as long as you are alive.

I don't quite remember how the book, *Opium Poppy*, by Hubert Haddad came into my hands. Translated from the French by Renuka George, it is the stomach-churning story of a small boy, Alam, who escapes from war-torn Afghanistan and the opium trade to become a refugee in France, living among other young refugees like himself, in the shelter of a bridge. There, instead of protection, he becomes a victim of the heroin trade and political discrimination. It's a slim book, a mere 126 pages, but much of it is almost impossible to imagine. Yet, we know this is happening, even today, if only we keep an ear open to hear their voices. As Maya Angelou writes in her poem, *The Caged Bird*:

The caged bird sings / with a fearful trill of things unknown / but longed for still and his tune is heard / on the distant hill for the caged bird / sings of freedom.

The columnist is a children's writer and senior journalist.

Gift of dignity

Kiran Zehra



Wheelchair-bound Sharaffudeen makes and sells eco-friendly pens and pencils.

Sharaffudeen (28), a technician working in Dubai, was visiting India for the birth of his second baby boy. In an accident, he suffered a major spinal injury and was paralysed waist down. But that did not stop the

wheelchair-bound man from starting his eco-friendly pen and pencil business in 2018 with the help of RC Shoranur, RID 3201.

After being bound to a wheelchair, he wondered if he could ever “start a business for a decent

livelihood?” His wife told him about the vocational training camp of RC Shoranur for disabled which he attended and learned to make eco-friendly pencils. After research and many failed attempts, he finally made an eco-friendly product

that has a seed at the end of it. “When the pencil is discarded or thrown away it grows into a plant,” he says.

But he was sceptical about approaching buyers. “Though I started this venture to earn some income, I did not want sympathy buyers. I wanted people to see my pens as a way to protect our environment and did not want to haggle for a good price as I don’t compromise on its quality.” Again the club helped him by buying his pens and distributing them to local schools and offices. “Club members came back with more orders. Gradually the demand increased and I was approached directly by other offices and institutions as well,” he recalls. Today he sells close to 9,800 pens a month and “the money I make is enough to lead a dignified life,” he smiles.

Club secretary Krishna Kumar says, “We are glad our training programmes can change the attitude of disabled people. Now, Sharaffudeen makes good quality pens and has learned to get an income with dignity.” The club has added the



Members of RC Shoranur gift an LED TV to a student.



A student gets a bicycle under the district's 'Pedal to School' programme.

Rotary logo to the pens which are also given as mementos and return gifts during events. Rotary's vocational programmes have not only "developed my skills and knowledge, but helped me understand that physical disability is a mindset," says the entrepreneur.

Pedal to School

As part of RID 3201's *Pedal to School* initiative which aims to provide free bicycles to 3,000 underprivileged students aged 12–18 across the district that comprises parts of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the club has distributed 11 bicycles.

"When we distributed the cycles, a few parents came to us and asked us for laptops. All schools have started online classes and these kids had no medium to keep up with the classes," says Kumar. The club then approached the school headmasters to select

meritorious students from economically weak families. At a recent club event, seven students received LED TV sets and three others received tabs. With the help of a local internet company, the club has organised internet for these students. ■

RC Karkala donates ambulance to government hospital

Team Rotary News

Rotary Club of Karkala, RID 3182, donated an ambulance to the Karkala Government Hospital under a global grant project. The club has roped in RC Crown Point America, RID 6540, as its global partner and with TRF contribution, handed over the vehicle to the hospital authorities.

DG BN Ramesh was the chief guest at the hand-over event which also saw the presence of local legislator V Sunil Kumar, project coordinator PDG Bharathesh, PDGs Ranjan Kini, Dr Narayan, DGE Rajaram Bhat, Rtn Mohan Shenoy, one of the sponsors, and chief medical officer Dr PK Mallya. Club president Jagadish TA welcomed the gathering. ■



Rotary's Covid billboards a big hit in Mangalore

Team Rotary News



A mega Covid awareness campaign titled 'Let's fight back together' is being implemented by RC Mangalore, RID 3181, in partnership with the Indian Red Cross Society and the District Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka to sensitise the public on the right use of masks, hand-wash method and maintaining social distancing.

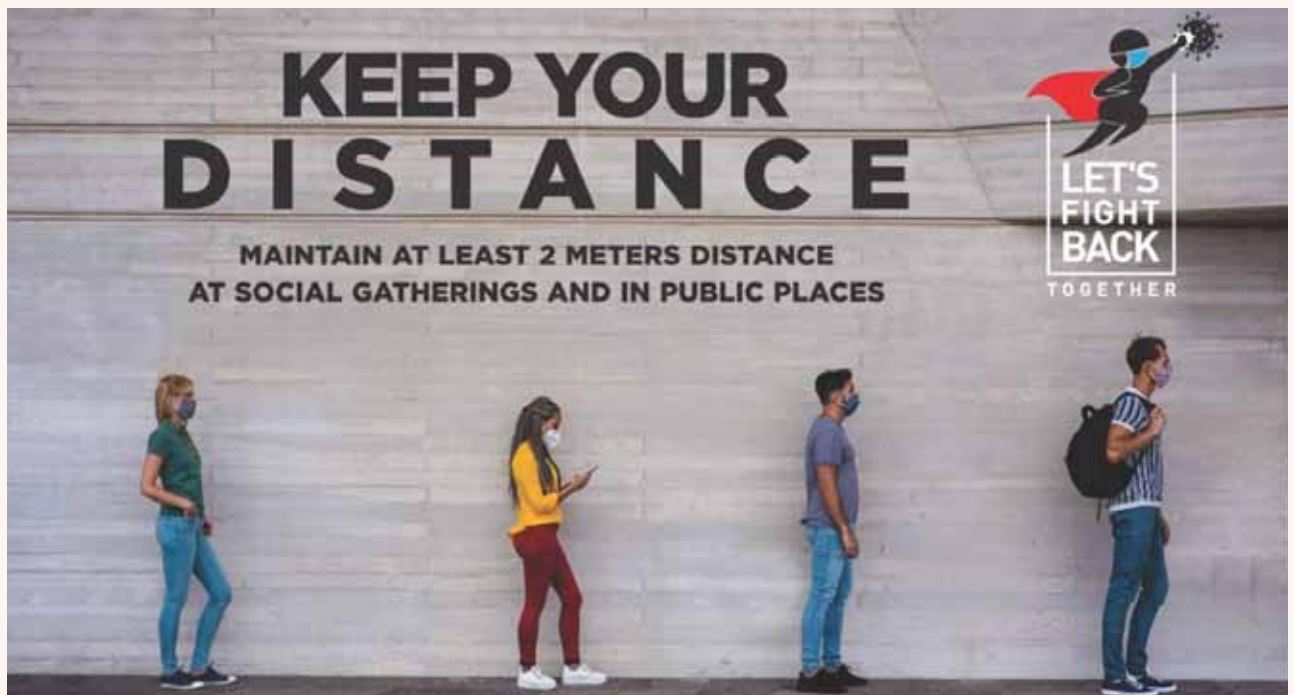
The anti-Covid campaign mounted on digital media and outdoor billboards is expected to reach at least two lakh of

the six lakh population in this district, said Archibald Menezes, club president. Giant billboards were erected at strategic locations since July 25 and "we are confident the campaign will bring the required awareness," he said.

A creative agency was roped in to design impactful messages with striking visuals. Many people were found using masks inappropriately. Wearing a mask in a scientific way by covering both the nose and mouth is imperative to control droplets that spread the virus. "We need to rise above our

inconvenience to fight the virus," said Menezes.

The billboards were presented in both English and Kannada, and the Rotary campaign, that trended on social media "has become the talk of the town, a good sign that it is being well-received by the people." In all, 14 hoardings are on display. "Many business houses have shown interest in participating in this public awareness campaign," he said, adding that he is hopeful that this campaign will play a key role in battling the pandemic. ■



Rotary News Subscription Remittances

You can pay the
Rotary News / Rotary Samachar
subscription online

Our Bank details:

Bank : HDFC Bank
SB Account

Branch : Montieth Road
Egmore, Chennai

A/c Name : Rotary News Trust

A/c No. : 50100213133460

IFSC Code : HDFC0003820

E mail us following details:

Name of Club

President/Secretary's name

Amount/Date of transfer/UTR Number

For physical payment by cheque or cash in bank, write **Club Name only** without prefixing "Rotary club of". Eg. Rotary Club of Delhi Central should be written: Delhi Central.

Rotary at a glance

Rotarians : : 1,186,144

Clubs : 36,235

Districts : 525

Rotaractors : 203,537

Clubs : 10,750

Interactors : 345,023

Clubs : 15,001

RCC : 11,244

As on August 17, 2020

*Please note Interact clubs that have not reported Interact Adviser in the past two Rotary years, are placed in "Suspended" status effective Oct 1, 2019.

Membership Summary

As on August 1, 2020

RI District	Rotary Clubs	No of Rotarians	Women Rotaians %	Rotaract Clubs	*Interact Clubs	RCC
2981	119	5,060	5.77	51	39	225
2982	72	3,094	6.47	85	96	56
3000	129	5,216	8.55	188	256	211
3011	102	4,026	25.61	56	90	35
3012	106	3,794	24.54	56	71	59
3020	73	4,224	5.92	54	155	351
3030	95	5,117	14.68	117	173	304
3040	91	2,173	11.52	39	52	147
3053	64	2,762	16.36	20	39	103
3054	132	6,165	19.32	84	144	524
3060	100	4,510	14.83	60	63	145
3070	111	3,325	16.98	48	20	59
3080	84	3,337	8.93	91	141	116
3090	79	2,392	7.94	38	9	122
3100	99	2,307	7.80	13	14	146
3110	135	3,735	8.86	29	7	105
3120	82	3,336	14.11	47	18	53
3131	138	5,204	21.25	112	176	117
3132	87	3,399	10.11	34	94	158
3141	104	5,479	24.47	122	137	93
3142	90	3,235	20.50	83	118	68
3150	88	3,406	10.34	59	123	117
3160	78	2,578	7.45	28	3	83
3170	133	5,716	13.62	82	198	169
3181	82	3,358	8.96	63	192	118
3182	83	3,131	8.14	49	96	98
3190	139	5,412	15.59	154	145	64
3201	145	5,631	8.25	109	72	52
3202	138	5,514	6.15	96	251	46
3211	144	4,526	6.91	8	24	132
3212	105	4,171	8.67	102	187	149
3231	99	3,888	12.13	53	81	419
3232	127	5,809	19.37	130	198	93
3240	92	3,101	13.23	50	393	195
3250	100	3,735	17.68	67	65	185
3261	72	2,646	15.94	20	21	43
3262	106	3,679	12.35	50	38	77
3291	157	3,701	20.62	92	88	621
India Total	3,980	151,892		2,639	4,087	5,858
3220	71	1,918	14.44	85	125	74
3271	108	1,671	18.06	67	19	22
3272	151	1,720	17.67	52	15	43
3281	240	7,135	17.41	245	48	199
3282	160	4,140	10.92	178	39	46
3292	126	4,990	15.73	134	118	118
S Asia Total	4,836	173,466		3,400	4,451	6,360

Source: RI South Asia Office

Reaching your fitness goals successfully

Sheela Nambiar

Staying with a fitness routine is not always easy. Here are some of the tips and tricks used to stay on course and reach your goals.

Self-efficacy and self-regulation

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's own ability to achieve goals. Self-regulation is the ability to set your course toward the goals and follow through consistently with the required behaviour.

Both self-efficacy and self-regulation are very important qualities for achieving fitness goals. Unless you truly believe in your own ability to continue to exercise, it's most likely you will stop or find reasons not to continue. Similarly, being able to stay disciplined on a regular basis, or stay

self-regulated is important to achieve your goals. One must necessarily follow the other.

Believing you can lose weight, but not exercising or eating clean every day, is not going to get you very far.

When you develop belief in yourself that you are truly capable of achieving a goal and stay on course by working out regularly, you get motivated to continue. It is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Along the way, in your fitness journey, you are likely to face setbacks and failure. The ability to bounce back is greater when you have self-efficacy and resilience.

Psychologist Albert Bandura developed the theory of self-efficacy.

He said that people with self-efficacy truly believe that they have influence over events in their own lives and their behaviour.

Ways to improve self-efficacy

One of the best ways of increasing self-efficacy is to **develop mastery** over the task. This means that you do something till you are good at it, at which point, you actually start to enjoy it and develop a deeper sense of self-belief.

Another way to improve self-efficacy is through **vicarious experiences**. This means finding a role model and following her example. Watching other people that you can relate to and observing their lives



and successes can boost confidence. By the same token, watching them fail may lower your judgment of your own efficacy if you are too dependent on vicarious experiences.

Social persuasion – being told that you are capable and possess the qualities it takes to keep going can bolster self-efficacy. Bolstering self-efficacy by using social persuasion alone is difficult, as when one fails in one's efforts despite social persuasion, it actually undermines self-efficacy.

Ultimately, while vicarious experiences and social persuasion can help in improving self-efficacy, it is the mastery that truly improves it.

Find your WHY

“He who has a why to live can bear almost any how.” – Friederich Nietzsche

Put into the fitness perspective, if you have a compelling enough reason to continue to exercise, you will do so no matter the circumstances.

For instance, most people start exercising to lose weight. Asking the question, “Why do I want to lose weight?” will put things in perspective. If your ‘why’ is vague and not internalised, you can be easily swayed. Having a strong ‘why’, like reversing a chronic disease or training for an event can be strong motivators.

Even a simple ‘why’ like — I want to keep my mood elevated/positive because I know I don't feel good when I don't exercise, can be a good enough motivator when truly internalised.

Writing down why you intend to keep exercising and adding as much detail as possible will keep it real for you. Stick it on your mirror so you see it every day.

Internal locus of control

People with an internal locus of control tend to be more centred and able to combat adversity. It means you believe you have the capacity to influence and

control the events in your own life. Whereas an external locus of control implies that you believe everything that happens to you is the result of things you have no control over and therefore cannot change.

For instance a person with internal locus, intending to go for a run but finding it pouring outside would easily change course and train indoors. On the other hand someone with an external locus of control may just throw their hands up and get back into bed blaming the weather for their inability to exercise that day.

People with internal locus of control have a “plan B”.

There are innumerable excuses one can come up with when trying to exercise. Finding alternatives, not giving in to the excuses are features of people with internal locus of control.

Goals

Set proper goals. Your goal is not necessarily one such as “I will lose 10 kg in four months”.

Instead it should sound more like I will walk for 40 minutes covering x distance everyday in the first week; I will include strength training twice a week; I will stop all processed foods and sugar... and so on.

The weight on the scale could be just one of the goals (if realistic) but ideally, you should focus on what *you can control* in terms of your *behaviour*.

Goal setting is an art. If the goal is too daunting and unrealistic, it can overwhelm you. Breaking it up into smaller segments and being very specific about how you will go about achieving the goal can make it more realistic and achievable.

Following through with the behaviour to achieve the goal is related to your self-regulation. If you have problems with self-regulation, make it simple and look at short-term goals that are easily achievable. Something as

Other simple hacks to stay with your exercise routine:

- Find a fitness buddy
- Find a good personal trainer
- Find a mentor who inspires you
- Do something you like and enjoy
- Tie your routine to something you enjoy (music, nature, holidays)
- Vary your workout
- Challenge yourself at frequent intervals
- Eat healthy
- Start slow and increase momentum to prevent injury
- Believe that doing something is better than nothing at all
- Ask yourself the important question — “what will happen if I don't exercise?”

simple as, “I will walk for 15 minutes every day” is good enough to begin with. Once you stay with this goal for a week, make it, “I will walk for 20 or 30 minutes every day” and so on.

Rewards

Give yourself rewards as you progress. Obviously these rewards need to be thoughtful and not sabotage your goals themselves. Treating yourself to a large pizza because you have lost your first 5kg would hardly be productive.

Rewards can be something as simple as the mere acknowledgement that you have made it this far. When you give yourself that acknowledgement, it allows you to feel good about yourself and it produces a small surge of neurotransmitter dopamine that causes you to seek out your next reward, thereby helping you progress.

The author is a lifestyle medicine physician.
sheela.nambiar@gmail.com
www.drsheelanambiar.com

From RI South Asia Office desk

Fundraising highlights from S Asia for Rotary year 2019–20

- India retained its no 2 position amongst the top giving countries worldwide, fifth year in a row, with a total contribution of \$20.02 million (unaudited figures).
- RIDs 3141 and 3292 ranked no 2 and 6 respectively, across all districts worldwide in total TRF giving.
- 26 new AKS members were added.
- 68 per cent clubs contributed to TRF.
- Donor participation remained at 33 per cent from S Asia region.

AKS members from S Asia for 2019–20

Zone	District	Donors – Trustees Circle
4	3012	Reena and Deepak Gupta
4	3012	Anil K Mohindru and Amita
4	3060	Anish Shah and Swati
4	3141	Baldev Arora and Usha Rani
4	3141	Dilip Piramal and Shalini
4	3141	Swati A Piramal and Ajay G Piramal
4	3141	Nirav Shah and Devina
4	3141	TN Subramanian and Vidhya
5	2982	A K Natesan and Parvathi
5	3201	Santiago Martin and Leema Rose Martin
5	3212	VR Muthu and Malarvizhi
5	3232	Ravi Raman and Shobana
6	3240	Debashish Das and Charismata Budnah
6	3292	Lam Lee Heng
6	3292	Harish Chandra Neupane and Mamata
7	3131	Nitin Desai and Meena
7	3131	Anil Goel and Nirupama
7	3131	Pune Neurosciences Trust and Research Society
7	3170	Kishor Lulla and Sunita
7	3190	Ghanshyam Agrawal and Saroj
1B	3271	Prof Farhan Essa Abdullah and Nadia
1B	3281	Prof Dr Hosne-Ara Begum and Md Ansar Ali Talukder
1B	3281	Syeda Ummay Habiba
1B	3281	Md Anwer Hossain Khan MP and Tahmina Afroz
1B	3281	Dr Gazi Mizanur Rahman and Tania Rahman
1B	3282	Dato' Dr Mir Anisuzzaman and Shereen Kwi-Hong Bon
Next Level Change - Chair's Circle		
4	3011	Suresh Jain and Usha
1B	3271	Aziz Memon, Samina

2019-20 Top 10 districts from S Asia in total giving

District	Total Contribution (in \$)	Worldwide Rank
3141	3,990,967	2
3292	2,101,956	6
3131	1,651,907	13
3201	1,276,931	20
3232	1,201,879	26
3190	1,193,523	27
3012	1,035,296	42
3060	936,558	54
3202	754,739	79
3011	717,812	88

2019–20 Top 5 giving clubs from S Asia

District	Club Name	Total TRF Contribution (in \$)
3292	Chitwan, Nepal	698,863.34
3141	Bombay	607,344.26
3131	Pune Central	485,298.44
3141	Bombay North	378,559.60
3141	Bombay Worli	369,244.31

Wash-in-Schools Target Challenge

In June 2020 meeting, the Trustees extended the WinS Target Challenge pilot programme for a year as requested by the programme's Steering Committee, as WinS activities were interrupted due to the Covid pandemic. The pilot was originally scheduled to end on June 30, 2020. The committee will now submit a final report to the Trustees at their June 2021 meeting. In addition, RI will also commence the thorough external evaluation of the programme through an independent third party. ■

On the racks



Only angels can fly

Author : Somanth Sapru
Publisher : KW Publishers
Pages : 525; ₹1440

Back in 1927 when the Directorate of Civil Aviation was set up, and Indians learned to fly, to the fascinating glimpses of how women pilots faced bias before succeeding in flying, to the year 2020 where India has recorded the highest number of women pilots in the world, this book is a complete insight to the Indian aviation history. The book elaborates on how the British empire strategically and commercially used the new form of transport and gives a detailed account of the nationalisation of the aviation industry. It will take you back in time when the flying clubs were first started in major cities to attract young people to learn to fly. Challenges faced by entrepreneurs who tried to set-up an aircraft factory in the country during the inter-war period (1919–1939), the post-World War II struggles of individual airlines and anecdotes of brave pilots are interesting parts of this book.



Never visit a doctor: How to stay fit and healthy forever

Author : Sapna Priyadarshini
Publisher : Notion Press
Pages : 392; ₹499

This book highlights the positive aspects and benefits of yoga. It takes into account the problems we face because of the hectic lifestyle we have adapted. Through simple *asanas*, breathing exercises and meditation tips, the author guides us in creating a stress-free atmosphere around us. Learn to understand your body, *dosha*, *guna*, and *prakriti* and how to use *asanas* to fix your physical and mental suffering and lead a fit and healthy life with the help of this book. The second part of the book helps you fix lifestyle-related diseases through diet and regular practise of yoga without having to turn to medicines.

The zero side affect plan will restore your health and help you understand your body like never before. The author is a member of the Rotary Club of Bombay Seacoast.



Shhh! Don't talk about mental health

Author : Arjun Gupta
Publisher : Notion Press
Pages : 206; ₹300

A simple, sensitive 19-year-old boy, Yashasvi, suffering from clinical depression decides to end his life. Timely and appropriate, the story walks you through the history of depression, baseless theories, and the mentality of the society towards the subject. The book shares an account from the bygone eras from 500–1,400 AD where the mentally-ill were considered to be possessed by demons and holes were drilled on their skulls as treatment. In 1247, the Bethlehem Hospital in London was established for the mentally sick, but they were chained, beaten and experimented on. Today they are called names and abandoned by their friends and family.

How Yashasvi fights his emotional outbursts, anger and suicidal thoughts forms the crux of the story. This is not a self-help book but with the help of the protagonist, history, facts and statistics, the author creates awareness on mental health issues.

Compiled by Kiran Zehra



RC Thanjavur South — RID 2981

A tree plantation drive was taken up at the Little Scholars HS School with participation of their Interactors. A drip irrigation system and an RWH unit were installed at the school.

RC Salem South — RID 2982

The club, in association with Salem Corporation, built a retaining wall to an existing well at Thathampatty village to prevent it from caving in. The project cost ₹2.75 lakh. Water from the well is used for plants in the nearby Miyawaki forest.



RC Thuraiyur Perumalmalai — RID 3000

An Oximetre for checking oxygen level in blood was donated to Thuraiyur Municipality to help battle Covid-19.

RC Gurgaon Cosmopolitan — RID 3011

Braille and large print books were donated to the National Association for the Blind, New Delhi, which will benefit 25 schoolchildren. The project initiated by club member Bharat Singh and president Abhinav will add to the e-book library at the NAB.



Matters



RC Achalpur — RID 3030

The club members distributed masks among 200 families in a slum area to provide protection against coronavirus.

RC Indore Meghdoot — RID 3040

The club's women's empowerment centre employing 10 people is making masks which are sold at ₹7 per piece. The women get ₹3 for each mask and the centre is producing around 950 masks in two days working four hours a day. The project is being coordinated by Rtn Sadhana Singh.



RC Guna Royal — RID 3053

Masks and sanitisers were distributed to corona warriors, traffic police personnel, officers and the public as part of the club's ongoing projects to prevent the spread of Covid virus.

RC Ahmedabad Asmita — RID 3054

This all-women's club has planted 6,700 trees at various localities in the city. PDG Maulin Patel, AG Sangita Shah, club president Dr Varsha Prajapati and other Rotarians took part in the green drive. The plantation activities of the club created a buzz in Ahmedabad.



RC Tarapur — RID 3060

Fruits were distributed to over 2,000 women in the town and in the nearby areas for five consecutive days as part of *Gaurivrat* celebrations. The beneficiaries thanked Rotary for their gesture to mark this unique festival.



RC Jammu Elite — RID 3070

This all-women's club distributed bird feeders to provide food for birds. The members also put up bird feeders in their homes.



RC Moradabad Achievers — RID 3100

The Rotarians donated a sewing machine, gifts and ₹15,000 in cash to a poor family for their daughter's marriage.

RC Kanpur Chamber — RID 3110

The Rotarians distributed around 550 four-layered cotton masks among the public, along with pamphlets with dos and don'ts to protect themselves from coronavirus.



Matters

RC Panvel Elite — RID 3131

The club members, in association with RAC Panvel Elite, donated 100 face shields to local journalists, the Panvel Press Club, RSS-Jan Kalyan Samiti and Dr Prabhakar Patwardhan Smruti Rugnalaya, an orthopaedic hospital in the city, as part of its efforts to support the frontline workers against the Covid pandemic.



RC Akkalkot — RID 3132

Doctors and paramedics from rural hospitals, taluk health centres and Akkalkot Taluka Medical Practitioners Association were honoured with Corona Warrior certificates for their work in containing the pandemic. Taluka health officer Dr Ashwin Karjakhede was the chief guest at the event. Club president Jitendra Kumar Jaju and secretary Sunil Boralkar were also present.



RC Chilakaluripet — RID 3150

A mega health camp was organised for the staff of a local cotton products industry. Around 425 workers were screened and medicines were given to them after consultations. The project cost ₹4.25 lakh.

RC Kavali — RID 3160

Two sewing machines sponsored by Rtn Vishnuvardhan were presented to needy women. Food packets sponsored by club president K Gopikrishna and his friends were given to needy persons and underprivileged families in view of the pandemic.



RC Mundgod Heritage — RID 3170

More than 300 patients benefitted from a mega health camp organised at Baddigeri village in Mundgod taluk. Free medicines were given to all the patients. *Van Mahotsav* was observed by planting 20 saplings at the Rotary school and government hospital.



RC Belthangady — RID 3181

The club members took part in paddy cultivation along with the Anns. Karnataka MLC Prathapsimha Nayak, also a Rotarian, was the chief guest at the unique event. The Rotarians enjoyed planting the paddy seedling.



RC Kalamassery — RID 3201

Bicycles were gifted to schoolchildren under the district's *Pedal to School* project. The club also donated 36 sets of cot, bed and pillow with sheets and covers to the first line Covid treatment centre being set up in Kochi.

RC Payyanur — RID 3202

The club donated 50 beds, bedsheets and other accessories to set up a first line treatment centre at the Ramanthali Government HS School. Legislator C Krishnan inaugurated the centre in the presence of panchayat chief A Valsala. Club secretary P Surendran briefed the gathering on the project.



Matters

RC Trivandrum Suburban — RID 3211

A smart TV was presented by the club to a girl student to help her in her studies and follow educational content required for her class.



RC Madras Chenna Patna — RID 3232

As part of its efforts in fighting Covid, the club joined hands with two other clubs to provide 170 oximetres to the Tamil Nadu State Health Minister Dr Vijaya Bhaskar at his office. The project cost ₹1.7 lakh.



RC Siliguri Central — RID 3240

The Rotarians donated one-month ration to 30 families of tea garden workers who were badly hit due to the Covid pandemic. The project cost ₹30,000.

RC Belur — RID 3291

PDG Ravi Sehgal and IPP Rakesh Bhatia handed over infrared thermometers to the Little Sisters of The Poor, an old age home in Kolkata, where 120 elders are accommodated. The club got masks from DG Ajay Agarwal and gave it to the Shakespeare Police Station.



Compiled by V Muthukumaran
Designed by L Gunasekaran

Why Indian TVs make more noise

TCA Srinivasa Raghavan



A few days ago we had our first guest in 135 days. Just one person. We made sure the three of us — wife, guest and me — sat at the regulation distance from each other. Thankfully our drawing room is just about large enough for that. But it's not designed for people to hold conversations sitting six feet away from each other. And, in any case, the ceiling fan and the air conditioners also do their bit.

So we had to nearly shout to be heard. It wasn't much fun. Fortunately, we were not wearing masks. The alternative was to turn off the AC which, in August in Delhi, was unthinkable. So we had to turn off the fan. We could now hear ourselves but since we were seated in an equilateral triangle, we had to take turns on who would sit directly under the AC.

A word about ceiling fans here seems to be in order. There used to be a time, until the late 1970s, when the blades were heavy, very curved and wide. So they scooped up a lot of air, which meant you could run them at a low speed and still be comfortable. But they needed heavy motors. Since the early 1980s the motors have become lighter and blades lighter still. The curvature is also much less. This means they have to rotate at high speed to generate a reasonable breeze. And for the last ten years fans imported from China have only made it all that much worse.

This has also meant that TVs play that much louder. And since we all keep our windows open when the ACs are not running, the noise level is ridiculously high. I am not making this up. I was told this by a Korean TV manufacturer when I asked him about the sound settings. These are kept higher for the Indian market, he said, because Indian cities are so noisy. But noisiness is an intrinsic part of Asian culture.

The reason why we had had a guest was that she had just flown in from London where she had been stuck for four months and was now on her way to Jaipur. It is about 250km away from Gurgaon where we live. Her flight had arrived at noon and, since our house is on the way to Jaipur, she asked if she could come for a shower and a change. The flight, she told us, had been pure hell with all that protective gear and no

I was told this by a Korean TV manufacturer when I asked him about the sound settings. These are kept higher for the Indian market, he said, because Indian cities are so noisy.

food. Even the water was rationed and, as to the other passengers, she said, the less said the better. They had made enough noise to last her a lifetime.

My wife and I made clucking sounds of sympathy. We had once been on a flight that had about 50 lower level government employees. They thought they could behave without any restraint — all only shouted to each other — and the four hours back from Bangkok where they had gone for some training programme had been the worst I have ever experienced. From what our guest said it seemed to have been exactly like that on her flight, utterly uncomfortable because of the uncouth and noisy behaviour of the other passengers. Mind these when they had to remain seated through most of the flight.

In fairness, though, it must be said that the Chinese when they travel in groups are even worse. We once had a tourist group of about 100 Chinese — even here it is scale that matters to get lower prices. This was on a connecting flight from Hong Kong to Korea. It was pure hell. It's a three-hour flight and the Chinese yelled, sang and laughed loudly throughout. In the end three Chinese men loudly demanded that they be allowed to stand when the plane was landing. I think the poor stewardesses were nervous wrecks by the time we landed. We certainly were. ■



1.8 million

wild polio cases averted*

9 billion

oral polio vaccine
doses provided*

220 million

children vaccinated multiple
times every year

2 million

volunteer vaccinators
support polio campaigns
every year

** Estimates between 1996-2020*



African region certified wild poliovirus free by WHO



In 1996, the great African leader Nelson Mandela launched the Kick Polio Out of Africa campaign with Rotary International's support, setting out a vision for a polio-free Africa. At the time, wild polio paralysed 75,000 children each year. To protect communities from this crippling disease, African leaders, health workers, volunteers, parents, global donors and organisations united to reach every child with polio vaccines.

On 25 August 2020, after four years without a single case of wild polio, the African region has been certified free of wild poliovirus. Decades of extraordinary investment has paid off.

Yet, the job is not finished. These efforts must continue to prevent wild polio from returning and to end all forms of polio for good — both in Africa and globally. ■