

Rotary News

INDIA
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IMAGINE WHAT'S NEXT

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA | 27-31 MAY 2023

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#Rotary23



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Rotary's great work in Kashmir

The cover picture of Kashmiri children at an Army Goodwill School, Kupwara, in the November issue is superb. Kudos to leaders and members of RID 3141 for carrying out welfare projects in Kashmir. Rotary President Jennifer Jones has urged us to share our Rotary stories with others to take the organisation forward, and chart out a much better future for it. The Editor's note, *Service at its best*, describes how Rotarians from Mumbai assisted the people of Kupwara during Eid.

RI director Mahesh Kotbagi explains the major role played by Rotary in the eradication of polio. RI director AS Venkatesh has asked us to be generous in our TRF contributions. The cover story *Mumbai Rotarians help Kashmir villagers at behest of Indian Army* is readable and interesting. Articles like *India celebrates TRF*, *When the Rajkot Peda and Bhamarda fetched Rotary a bounty*, *Rotary transforms a government school*, *A mega empowerment project*



for 80,000 girls, *The magical weave of the Sambalpuri saree*, *Taste & flavours of Kerala cuisine*, and *A cool mind and active body can work wonders* are all excellent to read. Club Hop photos and their descriptions look good. Well done, editorial team!

Philip Mulappone MT
RC Trivandrum
Suburban — D 3211

The attractive cover picture egged me to read the story of DGE Arun Bhargava, RID

3141, and his team reaching out to Kashmir villagers and making efforts to improve their lives and livelihood. Also, the role played by Brig Vinod Negi who briefed Rotarians about the plight of the villagers is noteworthy. We can take pride in the fact that the RID 3141 team has decided to continue their welfare programmes in Kupwara village.

PPKM Shamikumar
RC Vellore South — D 3231

The sky is the limit for Rotary's service to humanity. I am referring to the Mumbai Rotarians who reached out to Kashmir villagers at the behest of the Indian Army.

When an Indian Army officer Col Pranay Pawar approached DGE Arun Bhargava to improve the lives of villagers living close to the LoC in Kupwara, 16 Rotarians from Mumbai flew to Kashmir and plunged into action. Since healthcare was important to the hill people, two motorcycle ambulances were donated by the Mumbai clubs.

I became emotional while reading the article by PRIP Rajendra Saboo in the November issue about his medical missions to African countries. Having worked as a volunteer in adverse situations, Saboo is an inspiration for all Rotarians. The work done by Mumbai Rotarians in partnership with the Indian Army in a remote area in the Kashmir valley is commendable. Congratulations to Dr Bharat Pandya for his appointment as TRF vice-chairman.

Omprakash Rawat, RC Nasik — D 3030

Rasheeda Bhagat's editorial, *Service at its best*, was superb. Kudos to the editor for such a marvellous

note. Also, her article *Taste & flavours of Kerala cuisine* was fantastic.

Daniel Chittilappilly, RC Kaloor — D 3201

The article *A mega empowerment project for 80,000 girls* is an excellent project and a very good initiative.

Dinkar B Palaskar, RC Pune Sahawas — D 3131

The initiative to empower so many girls is really a fantastic and impactful project. Hearty congratulations to Rtn Jignesh and RC Bibwewadi Pune; all the very best for their upcoming projects with unique ideas.

Shailesh Nandurkar, RC Pune Westend — D 3131

It is a matter of pride that RC Mumbai Parleshwar has sent 300 solar lamps to the Bhakarwals, a nomadic tribe, to improve their life. Surely, Rotary connects the world.

*N Jagatheesan
RC Eluru — D 3020*

RI President Jennifer Jones rightly says people's views on Rotary will shape the organisation in the future, thus urging Rotarians to share their Rotary moments with rest of the society. Editor Rasheeda Bhagat's write-up *Service at its best* has turned the spotlight on violence in the world including the Ukraine war. The work being done by RID 3141 Rotarians in Kashmir is commendable. They have taken up projects related to women's empowerment, healthcare and education which will go a long way in lifting their livelihoods.

*S Muniandi
RC Dindigul Fort — D 3000*

The cover story was really moving and heart-rendering. The very fact that Kashmir, which is embroiled in political turmoil

and drastic violence, gets this kind of support from the rest of the country is something that deserves credit and needs to be publicised. It is the need of the hour to support the development of a good rapport between the security forces and people in the valley and Rotary has created a fertile field for making a good beginning. Fellowship which nurtures care and offers unconditional love can bring about change in hearts and minds.

Unfortunately, one fears that an atmosphere of peace and amity might not last too long in a region like Kashmir. So it is best that organisations like Rotary do some solid work to bridge the gap and lack of trust between our soldiers and the local people. Let us do our bit to promote harmony and peace.

*Dr Jayasekharan VP
RC Payyanur — D 3204*

This is indeed a very noble project. Hats off to DGE Bhargava and his team for the work that they have done in Kashmir.

*PV Vijayalakshmi
RC Tiruchirapalli
Sakthi — D 3000*

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Clarification: With reference to the comments made in the Meet Your Governors column in the October issue, PDG Gurjeet Singh Sekhon, Rotary coordinator for Zone 4, writes to clarify that RID 3080 had a net membership gain of 86 last year and has added 101 new Rotarians so far this year. So, the district has seen a net growth in membership.

On the cover: A view from the Kalina Biodiversity Park in Mumbai set up by RC Bombay, RI District 3141.

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.

Messages on your club/district projects, information and links on zoom meetings/webinar should be sent only by e-mail to the Editor at rushbhagat@gmail.com or rotarynewsmagazine@gmail.com.

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

Hope for fighting a global scourge

While sitting with a group of Rotary leaders outside of Lusaka, Zambia, I ask a question: “How many of you have ever had malaria?” Every hand in the room goes up. They even begin to tell me about the first, second, or third time they experienced the disease, one of the main causes of death and sickness in many developing countries.

They are fortunate. They have access to medical treatment and lifesaving medicines. For the people of rural Zambia, their story is very different.

On a wooden bench in a small village, I sit

with Timothy and his young son Nathan. With a camera crew capturing our conversation, he tells me of the time Nathan showed signs of malaria. He brought the boy to the nearby home of a community health worker, where Nathan quickly received medicines that in all likelihood saved his life.

Calmly, Timothy tells me about his other son’s bout with the disease a few years earlier. He had to race that son to a medical clinic more than 5 miles away. Riding a bike and carrying his child on his back, he tells me, he could feel his son’s legs turn cold and then his little body go limp. As he

finally entered the clinic, he screamed for help, but it was too late. The camera stops rolling, and we sit in silence. He begins to weep, and I hold him tightly. “I lost my son, I lost my son,” he says.

This story is all too familiar for the families we meet over the next few days. And yet there is hope. Partners for a Malaria-Free Zambia is Rotary’s first Programs of Scale grant recipient, and it is saving lives.

Across two provinces of Zambia, 2,500 volunteer health workers have been selected by their communities. They are trained to bring medical care closer to those who need it, and they

While sitting with a group of Rotary leaders outside of Lusaka, Zambia, I ask a question: “How many of you have ever had malaria?” Every hand in the room goes up.

are able to diagnose and treat malaria and other ailments.

Jennifer Jones
President
Rotary International

RI President Jennifer Jones talks with Timothy (2nd from R) and his son Nathan (right), a family affected by malaria, a leading cause of illness and death in Zambia.

Esther Ruth Mbabazi



President Jones with Godfrey Musonda, a community health worker trained through Partners for a Malaria-free Zambia.



The woes of climate change... and the silver lining

With preservation and protection of the environment now being a focus area of Rotary, global climate change meetings are getting active participation from top Rotary leadership. Last year, at the COP26 meet, the then RI President Shekhar Mehta had participated and this year, at the COP27 held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, Jennifer Jones is passionately expressing Rotary's concerns on the fast-increasing ecological degradation that we, the earth's inhabitants, are subjecting our planet to.

But what causes concern is that at several global meets, as the world's politicians express concern about the environment, and make tall promises that they cannot keep, environmental activists who are waging a passionate battle to preserve Mother Earth's degradation, barely make it to the centre stage. Or even the venue.

Take the case of Egypt's human rights and environmental activists, who have been exiled from their country and are watching protests from afar, missing the rare opportunity to discuss civil rights, as that would put at risk any chance of returning to their country. The marches to protest against Egypt's clampdown on human and civil liberties have cast a shadow over COP27.

American President Joe Biden delivered a tough address at the climate summit, warned about the dangers to our planet and has promised to lead and fund the fight against climate change. "The climate crisis is about human, economic, environmental and national security, and the very life of the planet," he stated.

But Egypt is no exception when it comes to such vital issues. In the final days of the campaigning for Malaysia's general elections, economic issues took precedence over environmental ones, and the severe destruction caused by a wave of flash floods around the country, forcing thousands of

people to flee their homes, matters pertaining to climate change and the environment were largely absent in the campaigns and speeches of leading candidates in the November election.

And we in India have nothing to preen about. How many times do you hear our politicians talk about environmental degradation that is taking place in India? All they do is make false and fairy tale promises on creating jobs, reviving the economy, and of course cursing and abusing their political opponents.

When it comes to climate change, Africa is most affected and yet least responsible. We can even say there is much less awareness there, perhaps due to poverty, ignorance and illiteracy, just as in India. And this despite first-hand experience on the devastating impact of climate change and global warming leading to natural disasters in both Africa and India. But as environmental experts point out, Africa is also blessed with abundant renewable energy, making it well-placed to show the world the potential of clean energy growth leading to better lives and livelihoods for its people. Power Shift Africa (PSA) is a think tank providing cutting-edge analysis, solution-focused policy ideas, and up-to-the-minute media engagement from an African perspective, both within the continent and internationally. Those interested in climate change would do well to read up more on PSA, whose mission is to "mobilise climate action in Africa, amplify African voices through increased visibility in media and public communications, and leveraging this voice internationally."

But is it all bad and negative? No. Read our cover story to know the tiny dents that Rotary — in this case RC Bombay — is making to arrest environmental degradation. And look at the number of Miyawaki forests that Rotarians are developing all over India. Enough to generate a smile... as we from *Rotary News* wish you a great 2023!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rasheeda Bhagat'.

Rasheeda Bhagat

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Website



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The gift of the New Year

The new year is before us, like a chapter waiting to be written. We all get the same 365 days. The only difference is what we do with them. It's that time of the year when we make new resolutions and set new goals. But the question is, is it a good idea to set resolutions at the beginning of a year? Have we achieved the goals we set last year? The secret to getting ahead is getting started. As it is said, "There are only two days in a year when nothing can be done. One is yesterday and the other is tomorrow." So today is the right day for new beginnings, so let's get started. The purpose of our life is to be happy. So let us rebuild the passion for social and environmental causes, hobbies that need to be pursued, fitness goals that we had neglected due to the pressures of day-to-day life.

A new year resolution is a tradition where a person resolves to continue good practices, change an undesired trait or behaviour, accomplish a personal goal and improve his/her behaviour during the year. In a recent report, 35 per cent of participants who failed in their new year resolutions admitted that they had unrealistic goals, 33 per cent did not keep track of their progress, and 23 per cent forgot about them. One in 10 respondents claimed they

had made too many resolutions. A study by Richard Wiseman from the University of Bristol involving 3,000 people showed that 88 per cent of those who set new year resolutions failed, even though 52 per cent of them were confident of success at the beginning. Men achieved their goals by an additional 22 per cent, when they set small and measurable goals... for eg, 'losing one kg, a week', rather than just 'losing weight.'

We Rotarians must prioritise our family time, health, finances and business interests while doing good in the world, because our organisation needs successful people who can balance their lifestyle, and not people with poor self-esteem and those struggling with their own lives.

Rotarians should adopt a proper code of conduct and act with integrity, use their professional skills to mentor young people, improve people's quality of life and avoid behaviour that reflects adversely on Rotary or other Rotary members.

Let the new year and years ahead give you the satisfaction of giving the best to your community.

I have always believed that service is the path to purification.

Mahesh Kotbagi
RI Director, 2021-23

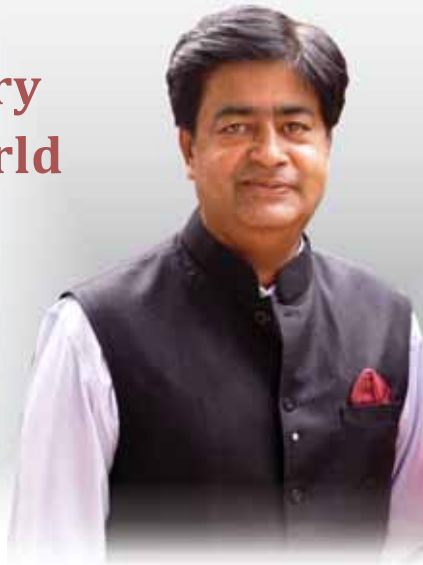
Speak

Tell your Rotary story to the world

Rotary has done so much over the years around the globe, making each of us proud. There have been countless stories of Rotary changing people's lives positively. Equally, many are the stories of Rotary changing Rotarians' lives when they witness and experience the magic of Rotary.

All of us are justifiably proud of our membership in this organisation but the question I seek an answer to is how may have leveraged this pride for the growth of this organisation. Many of us have a story to tell, but do we bother to tell our story? Rotary's success story in the eradication of polio is something all of us are happy to talk about. While I admit that PolioPlus is indeed a stunning success, the irrefutable fact is that many of the present Rotarians in our region have had no direct involvement or participation in it. Many of us are happy to bask in the glory of our predecessors' vision and hard work.

Time has now come to tell our personal story. It is the responsibility of every Rotarian to consciously and intentionally be a brand ambassador of Rotary. The process starts with wearing our pin at all times, not just at our club meetings. This might possibly be a starting point of a conversation about Rotary with someone who is not yet, but could potentially, be a member of our organisation. Second, have your own story ready. An experience



that Rotary gave you that made you believe in and continue with your membership. There is no substitute to a story that includes you. The impact and relevance of such a story can never be underestimated. Third, ensure that we create as many opportunities as possible, for others to experience the magic of Rotary so that they too could play their role in the growth of this organisation.

Being a brand ambassador is a choice that each one of us should make. It is a responsibility that we are committing to, when we accept the membership of this great body. It is our privilege to enjoy the fruits of the work of those before us over the last 11 decades. It is also our duty to sow the seeds today for the future generations to reap the fruits. Let us tell our story with pride.

AS Venkatesh
RI Director, 2021–23

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Magazine

Our shared values

We all make hundreds if not thousands of decisions daily. Whenever I need to make an important decision, I remember the words of Roy Disney, who co-founded what became the Walt Disney Co.: “It’s easy to make decisions when you know what your values are.”



Each of us brings a set of personal values into our clubs. Rotary also unites by a set of core values — service, fellowship, diversity, integrity and leadership — that guide our decisions and galvanise us to take action and, by doing so, change the world.

Another value is inextricable to Rotary: our giving spirit. From the club members who volunteer their time for service projects to the Rotary leaders in the Arch Klumph Society who sustain our Foundation, Rotary members are among the most generous people I have ever met. Combining our personal generosity with the countless ways Rotary affords us to give back makes us a global force for good. In Rotary, we take it a step further. We also value good stewardship, planning and sustainability. Not only do we give, but in Rotary we also give smart. We know that building sustainability into our projects means their impact will be felt over the long term.

In short, through the Foundation, your gifts keep on giving. This is why donating to The Rotary Foundation is one of the most intelligent decisions you can make. You know that your gift will align with those values you hold dear and that it will be administered by your fellow Rotarians, who share those values. It is quite an understatement to say that in giving to Rotary, we also receive. As someone who has been privileged to visit hundreds of Foundation projects around the world, I can tell you that the gift we get in return is priceless.

I hope you, too, will be as lucky as I have been, to see the look of amazement on the face of a person at an eye clinic in Chennai, India, who now sees clearly. The proud smiles of Guatemalan children who learned to read thanks to Rotary. Or the grateful tears of a parent in Pakistan whose child has received two drops of polio vaccine. Then you will understand what I’m talking about. We are so fortunate to be able to serve humanity by supporting our Foundation.

During this season of giving, I thank you for your generosity to The Rotary Foundation and for all the ways you give to our great organisation. Juliet and I extend our warmest holiday greetings to you all.

Ian HS Riseley
Foundation Trustee Chair

Art is all around

Eva Remijan — Toba



Public art is a staple in Melbourne, and exploring the city’s outdoor installations and lanes filled with graffiti and murals is one way to experience its beauty and creativity when you’re in town for the 2023 Rotary International Convention May 27–31.

Walk through the central business district to see a variety of favourite street art spots. The cobblestone Hosier Lane, one of the most famous displays, explodes with colour from art that changes overnight as people continually paint over the city-sanctioned graffiti. A few blocks away, gaze at portraits of legendary rockers from the hard-charging band that gives narrow AC/DC Lane its name. Turn the corner to take in the gritty vibes of the street art that enrobes sophisticated restaurants along Duckboard Place.

Presgrave Place offers a twist on the typical graffiti lane. The road has become an outdoor gallery lined with an eclectic accumulation of framed art, pasted-up posters and sculptural mini installations.

In a park along the Yarra River, which cuts through the heart of Melbourne, you can walk among the Federation Bells. The government commissioned the 39 upturned bells for the 2001 centennial of six British colonies which became a nation. The brass bells on pedestals and poles play music from various composers three times a day.

Look for sculptures all around the city. You might see a cluster of giant golden bees outside a skyscraper, a fragment of what looks like a library building jutting out of the sidewalk, and an upside-down cow in a tree.

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Rotary at a glance

Rotary clubs : 37,050

Rotaract clubs : 11,445

Interact clubs : 18,913

RCCs : 12,605

Rotary members : 1,201,081

Rotaract members: 201,785

Interact members : 434,999

As on November 16, 2022

Membership Summary

As on November 1, 2022

RI District	Rotary Clubs	No of Rotarians	Women Rotarians (%)	Rotaract Clubs	Rotaract Members	Interact Clubs	RCC
2981	135	6,652	7.74	65	336	55	243
2982	79	3,619	7.18	49	1,233	107	76
3000	131	5,453	10.14	100	1,595	314	214
3011	123	4,653	27.27	82	2,689	137	37
3012	150	3,773	22.98	73	1,465	86	61
3020	85	5,111	7.45	35	891	168	350
3030	98	5,396	15.27	127	2,333	360	382
3040	111	2,678	14.38	59	828	85	190
3053	74	2,983	17.73	35	555	54	128
3054	174	7,241	20.56	115	7,629	204	574
3060	105	5,002	15.03	66	2,441	81	152
3070	127	3,394	16.74	48	629	63	59
3080	108	4,364	13.29	148	2,610	210	118
3090	103	2,534	6.91	46	713	113	164
3100	100	2,139	9.68	14	83	33	151
3110	150	3,990	12.38	14	98	33	106
3120	92	3,784	15.99	62	607	36	55
3131	143	5,794	24.47	123	2,550	252	143
3132	91	3,660	12.98	35	589	126	168
3141	109	6,168	26.65	147	9,274	200	126
3142	104	3,967	20.95	87	2,431	148	88
3150	111	4,453	13.27	147	2,032	153	120
3160	78	2,734	9.69	31	333	20	82
3170	146	6,658	15.82	99	1,771	264	176
3181	87	3,658	9.87	36	461	220	117
3182	88	3,777	10.06	45	165	132	106
3190	166	6,899	19.74	209	7,442	279	73
3201	165	6,470	9.80	126	2,374	108	88
3203	94	5,037	8.04	74	857	238	38
3204	74	2,548	9.14	23	201	33	13
3211	155	5,170	8.68	8	113	29	133
3212	128	4,859	11.46	84	3,531	297	153
3231	97	3,604	8.60	34	299	99	417
3232	174	7,706	19.17	133	17,639	241	100
3240	110	3,789	17.26	69	1,529	413	226
3250	105	4,006	21.22	66	1,184	80	188
3261	93	3,332	19.18	17	50	26	44
3262	129	4,267	15.16	76	811	655	277
3291	159	4,137	25.02	138	2,098	111	688
India Total	4,551	175,459		2,945	84,469	6,263	6,624
3220	72	2,151	16.27	97	5,356	144	76
3271	143	3,132	17.88	156	2,450	223	28
3272	161	1,911	17.53	70	930	22	47
3281	310	8,233	18.69	279	2,717	156	207
3282	185	3,764	10.57	202	1,617	49	47
3292	155	5,965	18.21	182	5,361	143	133
S Asia Total	5,577	201,111		3,931	102,900	7,000	7,162

Source: RI South Asia Office

Mumbai gets a green lung, courtesy **RID 3141**

Rasheeda Bhagat

A metal sculpture of children springing from a rainbow at the park entrance.





From L: Environment Avenue director Sree Nandy, DG Sandip Agarwalla, sculptor Arzan Khambatta, RC Bombay president Vineet Bhatnagar and park architect Abhishek Kawitkar.

In Jan 2021, when RI District 3141 Governor Sandip Agarwalla, as the then DGN, was planning major projects for his year, he was determined to do something big for Rotary’s latest focus area — preserving the environment. “I wanted to develop a sustainable large green lung in Mumbai and started searching for a suitable place to do a long-term sustainable project.” He did identify some areas belonging to Indian Railways and other organisations. “But we faced a lot of restrictions on what we could do and what was out of bounds. Getting permissions and clearances was also turning out to be a major problem.”

As he got in touch with various Rotarians in the district

to suggest possible spaces, he was told that there was a large park in the Kalina campus of the University of Mumbai located in the suburbs of the metro, which needed rejuvenation.

Rajesh Choudhary, a past president of RC Mumbai Versova, who has some links with the university, and whose club had done some tree plantation and waste management work with the academic body earlier, did the spade work after getting Agarwalla’s nod. “The park is located over an area of 50,000 sqft, with water bodies over a sprawling 18,000 sqft, including a lake,” he says. This park was developed by the university many years ago, but was now in a decrepit state and the university wanted it rejuvenated.”

Once the varsity authorities were on board, “we signed an MoU with them detailing what we proposed to do, its sustainability and management over the next

The entrance has an impressive sculpture in metal of children springing from a vibrantly coloured rainbow of joy.

10 years, and started looking for sponsors,” says the DG.

HDFC Asset Management Company was quick to come on board as a CSR partner and provide the funding of ₹2 crore required to transform the park totally, and turn it into an educational and sustainable venture that would promote awareness on the need to protect the environment and the steps required to do so. Over and above this amount, ₹20–25 lakh will be required every year to maintain the park; right now his own club — RC Bombay — has contributed that money but the

A park resplendent with colour, fragrance and beauty

Sree Nandy

This unique initiative of the Kalina Biodiversity Park not only strengthens the conservation of natural resources in an urban matrix but also aids climate change adaptation by enhancing the quality of the environment and serving as a sink for carbon dioxide and urban pollutants. This ecological laboratory will raise curiosity, build awareness, and create a constituency for sustainability in Mumbai.

The park boasts self-sustaining ecosystems designed around the principles of multi-sensory stimulation and engages the primary senses of sight, smell, sound, touch and taste. The picturesque landscaping has been done by Mega Scapes India, led by its founder, Abhishek Kawitkar. A unique approach has been followed in designing the park, starting with baseline studies of biodiversity parameters, hydrogeology of the pond and ground aquifers, and selecting climate-resilient plants and native trees.

The Serenity Garden houses fragrant plants like ova, chives, passionflower, jasmine and other brightly coloured flowers, while herbs like stevia, peppermint and basil oblige our tastebuds. Medicinal plants like insulin, allspice, betel nut, lemongrass, *subja*, and the *akkalkadha* further add to the healing environs of the park.

Winged wonders of all varieties have their habitats laid out here. The Pollinator Pathway is a plant corridor tailored for bees and other native pollinators. The Butterfly Garden is replete with larval host plants, nectar plants, native grasses and leafy shrubs, including jatropa, ixora, haldi-kunku (*Asclepias*), dingala, *Stachytarpheta*, koranti and lemon. It is an inviting environ for butterflies and a site for sore eyes. The restored lake is home to many aquatic birds, animals and plants, and, come winter, we will see migratory birds flock here for refuge. At the Bird Park, keen-eyed visitors may spot golden orioles, small blue kingfishers, white-browed fantails, sunbirds, common kites, rock pigeons, egrets or parakeets.

The garden is home to a landscaped Miyawaki forest, which has become the *de facto* template for urban afforestation programmes. This micro forest with a native multi-layer vegetation of trees, grasses and shrubs and includes the hedu, Sita-Ashok, nagkesar, bahava, bija, kanchan, kakad, karma, shivan, pangara, wild banana,



Ochna, parijat and putranjiva, makes for a shaded green grove, a calming space for visitors.

Along with new techniques and technology like QR coding, best practices from traditional methods have been incorporated into the design of this green habitat. For example, a drip irrigation system using porous clay pots (*ghadas*), an erstwhile tribal practice, has been implemented to minimise evaporation loss and maximise plant water supply.

This signature green zone has been thrown open for visitors and students with prior appointments. Thoughtfully planned as an experience centre, a refurbished amphitheatre is the perfect venue for extracurricular activities and cultural events for campus students and school children.

Above all, stressing Rotary's core principle of being inclusive, this park has been designed for easy accessibility by the differently-abled.

The writer is a past president of Rotary Club of Mumbai Kalakar

search for sponsorship for this annual amount is on.

Once the MoU was signed, the core group working on this project started looking for a designer and architect. “We have several builders and architects in our club and district, but we wanted somebody who has done a lot of work in biodiversity and finally zeroed in on Mega Scapes from Pune, with a rich experience in this field,” he adds.

One of the main tasks was to rejuvenate the lake where there were leakages and the water had lost its purity. So the water body was completely drained, the entire area cleaned, and once the water filled after the monsoon rains, it was subjected to the required

water treatment to improve its quality. “Next we introduced aquatic life into the lake, put in water plants etc.”

As the central focus was on educating youngsters, particularly schoolchildren, on the importance of preserving and protecting the environment, the park had to be made attractive for this age group. So at the entrance, an impressive sculpture in metal of children springing out from a vibrantly coloured rainbow of joy was installed. The artist chosen for this installation was the nationally renowned sculptor,

A trained naturalist has been appointed to give groups of children a guided tour of the park, and the tour can be booked at a fee of ₹1,000.

Arzan Khambata, says RC Bombay president Vineet Bhatnagar. “To put up a biodiversity park in an urban setting is an innovative and positive approach towards promoting a sustainable environment. Apart from the aesthetics, it is crucial for our



DG Agarwalla with RC Bombay president Bhatnagar and architect Kawitkar.

ecosystem. Our club is immensely grateful to the vice-chancellor, registrar and management of the Mumbai University for giving us the opportunity to develop this park for the benefit of students and environmentalists,” he adds.

Help from HDFC Asset Management ensured that the Rotarians could expand the scope of the facilities on offer. Explaining these salient features, Agarwalla, a member of RC Bombay, the club which is driving and executing this project, said, “To send home the message to the children that this is a happy place... a place for fun and frolic, we are going to add in the near future fun features such as a small windmill, a small solar farm,

stationary bikes by pedalling on which water can be dispensed, and similar features. There is a small amphitheatre within this park and on the inaugural day a street theatre group had enacted there a play on ecology and biodiversity.

While Rotaractors have not yet been a part of this project, there is a plan to rope them in; RID 3141 has around 7,500 Rotaractors.

Detailing the educational components of this biodiversity park, Agarwalla says all the trees planted here had been QR coded and when scanned, gives all details

Planet Run, a series of half marathons, across the world have been planned through Rotary clubs in 52 countries.

of the species, whether it is native and so on. “We’ve also appointed a naturalist who will give guided tours of the entire park to groups of children. Her services and the park can be booked by schools in advance by paying a nominal ₹1,000, and the children can enjoy a guided tour of 3–4 hours.” Entry to the park, is otherwise free for everybody.

An ambitious part of this project is an attempt to weave “into our core curriculum environmental studies. Till now, environmental



science is only a co-curriculum and not core curriculum component in our school education system, and is mentioned fleetingly in a few paras,” he says. After a mega effort, investment of about ₹50 lakh and engaging the services of a few senior environment experts in our country, quality educational content has been developed on the need to protect our environment, sustainable use of planet earth’s resources and allied material. The content which is now ready in three languages — English, Hindi and Marathi — is being put into three textbooks; level 1,2 and 3. With illustrations each level will have some 250 pages, and each book will cost ₹500 to print. Three e-modules have also been developed and already offered to the NCERT free of cost through the Rotary India Literacy Mission (RILM) to be telecast to children across the country.

Under this project, master trainers have been hired and they will in turn train teachers on how to teach children the content on environment and sustainability that has been developed. “We are going around schools in Mumbai to motivate the trustees and principals to give us 2 classes of 45 minutes each per week, so that the teachers trained by our master trainers can teach this subject in the right manner to students. We are beginning with Palghar and in the first phase hope to reach this curriculum on environment to 20,000 students,” says the governor.

The module includes field visits, including to the Kalina Biodiversity Park, so that the child really absorbs the messages on biodiversity, sustainability, etc. The curriculum, training and field visits will together cost ₹1,000 per child. The entire project is expected to cost ₹2 crore.

To ensure its wide reach, RID 3141 will offer the curriculum developed free of cost to all the states, and it can be translated in different languages, and even tweaked, as different states have different ecosystems and biodiversity, and used for their schools, he added.

All this is going to cost mega bucks, but efforts are on to reach out to corporates and get pledges through their CSR funds. A major way to raise the money required is holding *Planet Run*, a series of half marathons, across the world. A total number of 52 half marathons are being planned in 52 countries, through Rotary clubs. While a single half marathon will be held in each foreign country, in India at least

**Saplings
being planted
at the park.**

To put up a biodiversity park in an urban setting is an innovative and positive approach towards promoting a sustainable environment.

Vineet Bhatnagar
president, RC Bombay

15 to 20 marathons are being planned. Apart from roping in corporates to pledge money, likeminded NGOs who are working on sustainability goals, will also be involved. Agarwalla’s ambitious target is to raise about \$1million in the next five years, through these marathons, to take care of the different components of this mega environmental venture.

Participating in the inaugural of the Kalina park, Navneet Munot, MD and CEO of HDFC Asset Management Company, said, “We decided to be the sole funding partner for this biodiversity park under our CSR activities, as a part of our sustainable environment initiatives, particularly in a city like Mumbai, where this park will establish the model of conserving nature’s ecosystems amidst this concrete jungle.”

Director of the School of Strategic Studies Shailendra Deolanker said this was a “momentous and historic moment for the 150-year-old university.” A documentary would be made on the park, and similar efforts would be encouraged in universities across the country, he added.

*Pictures by Atul Joshi
and Abhishek Kawitkar*

India makes history at the Rotary golf championship in Marrakech

Rasheeda Bhagat

On the sunny and pristine green golf courses in Morocco, Indian golfers from the Rotary fraternity made history by winning the first-ever 'Nation Cup' at the 57th International Golfing Fellowship for Rotarians (IGFR) World Championship 2022, which drew to a close in the first week of November.

Among celebrations and festivities, fine food and drink, and of course some serious golfing, 182 Rotarian golfers and partners from 22 nations met up in Marrakech, Morocco and enjoyed a week of fellowship, sunshine and golf. "I am especially pleased to have been able to welcome so many first time IGFR participants led by our friends in India and Estonia, to call out two countries who attended with first timers in large numbers. I sincerely hope you all enjoyed the week, made new friends and plan to come back next time. And of course: spread the word and bring a friend," said IGFR president Andrea Oddi.

A lot of credit for the success of golfers from India, and the rest of South Asia — Bangladesh,

Sri Lanka and Nepal — goes to PDG Parag Sheth from RID 3060, who had initiated the South Asian Fellowship of Golfing Rotarians in 2015–16. Both Sheth and his spouse Punam are keen and passionate golfers. "Today the Fellowship has a membership exceeding 460 members from South Asia and the SAFGR is affiliated with IGFR," he says.

Sheth himself won the runner-up prize in the handicapped category, while Indian golfers bagged many other prizes. Thrilled about "India making history at this prestigious golfing tournament of Rotary," says Sheth who has initiated the **RI President World Cup** last year when Shekhar Mehta was the RI president, and has been golfing with spouse Punam for more than 10 years. The couple lives in Bharuch, but they also have a home in Ahmedabad where every extended weekend, beginning Friday, they tee away at the Kensville Golf Resort. "We actually play golf four days a week," he grins.

The Rotarian who has been instrumental in organising numerous golf tournaments for

In 2021
SAFGR raised
\$280,000
through the RI
President's Cup





Left: Punam Sheth takes a swing at the ball.

fellowship in South Asia should be initiated as it would help both fellowship and fundraising for not only TRF and polio, but also for the service projects being done by various clubs and districts.”

He then motivated Nishant Ramani and Kalpesh Shah, both members of RC Vadodara Sayajinagari, to organise the first-ever golf fellowship of Indian Rotarians in Ahmedabad, in which 45 golfers from 9 RI districts participated. It was here that all the participants unanimously resolved to initiate the SAFGR, to further “promote fellowship, cement networking

the SAFGR as its founder chair, across the country and the world, says, “I will always be grateful to PRIDs Sushil Gupta and Yash Pal Das for the support and the encouragement they gave me for forming the SAFGR.”

Speaking about the trigger for forming SAFGR, the past governor says, “when I was selected DG for 2015–16, Punam and I thought a golf



and collect funds for TRF and other charitable activities.”

The inaugural tournament was played at Bengaluru in RID 3190 under the chairmanship of late K Vijay Kumar from RC Bangalore. “It was a great success, going by the scale and enthusiasm shown by Rotarian golfers from all over India and Bangladesh. With strong support from the then RI President Barry Rassin, and the late past RI directors Sushil Gupta and Yash Pal Das, the fellowship was registered in 2016 as a non-profit organisation.



Above: PDG Sheth with Maria, a Rotarian from the Czech Republic.

Below: PDG Parag Sheth and Punam, and the Indian team, with the Nation Cup they won at the World Championship 2022.



Target to raise
\$1.5 million
from the IGFR International tournament to be held in Delhi in 2025

Sheth says that the SAFGR always kept its focus on raising funds for both TRF and club/district service projects, lift Rotary’s public image and keep geographical diversity in mind while holding tournaments across India and the world. Its main objective to raise funds for charity has been quite successful. “For instance, last year we raised \$280,000 through the RI President’s Cup which was played in 28 countries and had 1,036 participants from all over the world, comprising Rotarians, their friends and family members. The YP Das

tournament raised in its very first year \$325,000.”

“Totally we have raised over \$1 million from the tournaments played in South Asia as well as rest of the world and most of the money goes to TRF, with some funds going to clubs for service projects,” he adds.

The SAFGR has held golf tournaments in Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Chennai, Kochi, Delhi, Dhaka, Jamshedpur, Jaipur, Kathmandu, Kodaikanal and many other places. It has also held two editions of virtual tournaments in member countries when over

At the golf tournament organised by Rotary International in March 2019, **\$5.25 million** were raised for TRF

567 and 782 golfers participated, and raised funds for TRF.

Punam and Parag Sheth were enthusiastic participants when RI organised a fundraising golf event with golf legend Jack Nicklaus, Rotary’s global ambassador for polio eradication, at the prestigious Bear’s Club in Jupiter, Florida, US, in March 2019. At that single event, a total of **\$5.25 million** was raised. Sheth has been invited as a member of





The Sheths at the SAFGR golf tournament in Jamshedpur.



Punam Sheth with her golf mates.

IGFR for a three-year term beginning Jan 2022.

Thanks to the enthusiasm and passion displayed by the SAFGR, it was selected to host the world championship in 2022, “but Covid played spoilsport and the entire IGFR calendar had to be churned. Now India will host the world tournament in Delhi in 2025. We hope to raise \$1.5 million through this championship. Through help and support from PRID Ashok Mahajan, we are trying to get \$100,000 from Rajashree Birla’s Aditya Birla Foundation,” says Sheth. The next IGFR tournament will be held in Italy from July 1–7.

On how the funds are raised through these golfing events, he says that each golfer who wants to participate in these tournaments has to contribute a minimum of \$50; “of course there are those who contribute much more. Those who donate \$1,000 are given the ‘supporter’ category.

RI President’s
tournament
2023 will see
participation from

5,000

players from

50

countries,
playing at

300

golf courses

And two of us, AKS members Navjeet Chawla and myself, have donated \$25,000.”

At the RI President’s tournament in Feb 2023, “we hope to rope in 5,000 players from 50 countries, playing at nearly 300 golf courses.” He explains the unique concept — these players will play at different locations, all of them will register online, each paying a minimum contribution of \$50 which will go to TRF. The results and other nitty-gritties will be done online.

He adds that “even during the pandemic, when most golf courses were shut, SAFGR thought of innovative programmes to stay connected such as ‘know our member’ talks, golfers’ ‘exchange programme’ on the lines of Rotary Exchange programme, etc. These are a few reasons why a golfer needs SAFGR’s handholding to experience the world,” smiles Sheth.

Designed by
Krishnapratheesh S

On the road to promote organ donation

Jaishree

Chased by a serial killer on the Alaska highway, a drive through a region of political turmoil and four bouts of Covid... not any of this has deterred Anil Srivatsa from pursuing his life's mission to promote global awareness

for organ donation and break the taboo surrounding it. Flagged off at the Houston Rotary convention by then RI president Shekhar Mehta in June, in the presence of RIPE Gordon McNally and RI directors Mahesh Kotbagi and A S Venkatesh,

he is now proceeding to Melbourne to be at the Rotary convention in May 2023.

Srivatsa (54), is a kidney donor and charter president of RC Organ Donation, RID 3232, sponsored by RC Madras. He has been on the road for seven years now, and has driven across 48 countries, gathering support for organ donation. In Sept 2014, he donated one of his kidneys to his brother Arjun Srivatsa, a neurosurgeon, and that triggered his passion to promote the cause. "My brother was diagnosed with chronic kidney disease. One day he casually asked me, hey, if I need a kidney, will you give it to me? I said okay. Initially it was a spontaneous response. But when I knew that I had to do it during that very year





Srivatsa being flagged off by PRIP Shekhar Mehta and RI Director A S Venkatesh at the Houston Convention in June.



Anil Srivatsa, charter president, RC Organ Donation, RID 3232, with his SUV.

I panicked,” he said, speaking to *Rotary News* from El Salvador where he had halted.

Back then, he was trekking in Kashmir when his father informed him that his brother had just gone into dialysis. “That was my wake-up call and I finally got ready to give a kidney to him. Having my family’s support gave me the courage to do it. When I woke up from the transplant surgery, he was the first person I saw on the bed across. We didn’t say much, but the thumbs up we exchanged was enough to say that together we made it. Three weeks after the surgery he was back to saving lives doing his job as a neurosurgeon. His was the best life I could have saved.”

His Foundation

Energised by the transplant’s success Srivatsa launched the ‘Gift of Life Adventure (GOLA) Drive — the Million Donor project’ to get a million people from around the world to sign up for organ donation. In April 2016, he embarked on the first leg of what he calls “the long road to organ

donor awareness” when the family comprising his wife Deepali and children Kavya and Soorya, and three of his friends drove from Bengaluru to Scotland, crossing 17 countries. Deepali was the timekeeper and navigator, while his daughter updated his social media pages with stories about the expedition and his son was his general assistant. “A modified Toyota Fortuner and another custom-made SUV were equipped with toolkits to tackle emergencies and we got trained in the basics of car mechanics before we set off on our mission,” said Srivatsa, adding that the journey was filled with incidents good and bad, and “they were our best life lessons”.

He started this expedition when he learnt about the fear among people when it comes to donating an organ. “I want to destroy the fear that comes in the way of donating organs. Fear comes from ignorance, superstition, misplaced religious beliefs... it comes from lack of love. Organ donation is an act of love, and when there is no love, there is nothing that can make you do it. The best way is to speak to the family because legally their

consent is necessary if you want to donate the organ.”

He has visited 20 countries in the second leg, and covered Italy, China, Norway, Myanmar, Uzbekistan, Bosnia, Dubai and Oman in the third.

Convention to convention

Now on the fourth leg, Srivatsa is on a 56,000km-ride, crossing 17 countries before reaching Perth, Australia, to represent India in throwball and swimming at the World Transplant Games (WTG) to be held in April 2023. He'll complete the journey at the Rotary convention in Melbourne. He won a gold medal in throwball competition at the 2019 WTG in New Castle where he had also participated in the 100m race. His brother who had won a gold in golf then will also be participating this year.

WTG is like the Olympic Games, but for the organ recipients and donors, similar to the paralympics for the differently-abled. It is conducted by the WTG Federation where

60 nations participate. “This is basically to highlight the quality of life, post-transplant. A living organ donor who is an athlete is the best inspiration for the cause. Nothing is more powerful than that to inspire people to donate organs to save someone’s life,” says this Bengaluru-based campaigner. He is the CEO and co-founder of Radiowalla Network, and former CEO of Kings XI Punjab.

Uniting Rotary for the cause

From Houston Srivatsa drove to Alaska and Argentina, addressing Rotary clubs along the way.

My work may give somebody, alive or dead, a second chance to live. The most important thing that it does for me is it reinstates the faith in love.

“I want to unite Rotarians around the world to pay more attention to organ donation and work towards a time where no one dies waiting for an organ. Just like how we worked together in eradicating polio.” He has committed to speak to 100 Rotary clubs to promote the cause, having addressed over 250 clubs in his earlier expeditions. “I achieved that goal when I was invited to speak at RC San Pedro Sula in Honduras.” Here he inducted the city’s only transplant surgeon Dr Roberto to RC Organ Donation. The club was chartered with 26 members from six countries and Srivatsa has been inducting activists, doctors, nephrologists and transplant surgeons to his club through this journey. “In the last two weeks we have added five members including actress Revathi who is passionate about the cause.” The film *Salaam Venky* directed by her is about organ donation and is to be screened as a fundraiser in RID 3232, he added.

His wife Deepali joins him in the journey wherever she can. The couple lives in the vehicle and also cook outside it for much of the journey to save money. He is using three vehicles on this expedition, based on the terrain.

In August, the GOLA team participated in the India Day Parade at Edison, NJ, “where our overland truck was the Float showcasing organ donation messages. We also threw some T-shirts into the crowd and got their attention to speak to them about it.”

On Feb 2, RIPN Stephanie Urchick will be addressing his club online to discuss

With his wife Deepali.





Srivatsa addressing members of a Rotary club.

“her plans as president and how Rotary can play a part in uniting for organ donation.” A GG application is underway for his club to undertake the ‘Lift up Project’ that aims to support 100 women and children who have a sanctioned legal donor but do not have the means to undergo the surgery.

The most common question he is asked during his expedition is:

What happens to the donor after donation? — or the more superstitious one — whether the donor will end up losing the same organ in the next life. “I stop at schools and colleges because spreading awareness among the young generation is very important,” he said. He has addressed people during the Ganga *aarti* in Rishikesh, and had held a session for the Indian Army in the

Kashmir valley. “It is difficult to get people to sign up. After death, only the relatives can take any decision on donating organs and this can only be done if the donor has communicated his decision to them during his lifetime,” he said. Even if someone has signed up with a donor bank, in many cases the death is never reported to the bank, he adds.

“My work may give somebody, alive or dead, a second chance to live. The most important thing that it does for me is it reinstates the faith in love. Had it not been for love it wouldn’t have been possible for me. I want to tell the world how one can live a fulfilling life,” he said, on a reflective note.

The Srivatsa brothers are beneficiaries of Rotary’s Youth Exchange programme, and hail from a family of Rotarians. His mother is a former Rotarian and brother Dr Arjun is a member of RC Bangalore. “My great grandfather was president of RC Hyderabad Deccan,” he said.



Deepali preparing food.

Designed by Krishnapratheesh S

RC Alleppey treats disabled children to a houseboat ride

Rasheeda Bhagat

This Diwali eve turned out to be memorable for the 45 physically and mentally-challenged children from the Kerala government facility Ambalapuzha Block Resource Centre (BRC) in Alleppey. Along with their parents, relatives and teachers, they were given an incredibly delightful ride over the serene waters of

the Vembanad lake in a luxury houseboat Ska, which normally hosts only the well-heeled or guests from the corporate world.

But this group of around 130 merry children and adults, including an MLA, some 25 Rotarians and a few others, managed to get this treat thanks to the generosity of Ska's owner, Jose Abraham, president of Rotary Club

Below: Folk artist Punnapra Jyothikumar entertains a young boy in the presence of MLA H Salam.



Above: Members of RC Alleppey, along with club president Jose Abraham (seated, centre, second row), with children and their parents.





Since I own a houseboat, I was sure that I wanted to organise a day of fun and joy for handicapped children from disadvantaged families.

RC Alleppey president
Jose Abraham

of Alleppey, RID 3211. The children took the ride from Kuttanad, the granary of Kerala, located about 6km from Alleppey, and enjoyed a day of not only music and dance, but also delectable food, prepared by none less than the club president Abraham himself, who is known for his culinary skills!

The upper deck of Ska, which has a swanky conference room, can house about 250 persons, and for a day trip, the normal charge per person is ₹700, plus taxes. This includes a welcome drink and lunch.

To mark his year as club president, Abraham launched a series of projects, which includes

one where the club will be spending ₹1 lakh to give a stipend of ₹2,000 to 50 pensioners. “Since I own a houseboat, I was sure that I wanted to organise a day of fun and joy for handicapped children from disadvantaged families. So we chose the BRC, and invited 45 children, their teachers as well as relatives.”

The waters resonated with the sound of lively music, songs and the children’s joyous laughter, clapping and dancing. As local popular and folk songs were sung to accompanying music, the children started singing and dancing, working up

a healthy appetite for the delicious lunch that was in store for them.

The main delicacies in this lunch — fish and chicken — were prepared by Abraham himself, who is “very interested in cooking; I often help my wife, and because the food I make is liked by both my son and daughter, I thought I will cook for these children too,” he smiles.

A 10-year-old boy decided to go up in the front, take the mike from the hand of the folk singer and make his own melody, much to the delight of everyone. He next jumped onto the president’s lap, and as other children



In my 52-year Rotary journey, I have never ever seen such joy and sentiments expressed in any service project.

Past president Tomi Eapen

started singing and dancing, the Rotarians also joined them and MLA H Salam, joined Abraham, in rendering a full-throated melody.

As the children were caught up in the celebrations, past president of the club Tomi Eapen was told by a mother, “with tears rolling down her cheeks, that this is the first time these children and their parents had stepped into a houseboat and the day’s event was like a fairy tale for them.” He added that in his 52-year Rotary journey, “I have never ever seen such joy and sentiments

expressed in any service project.”

Abraham was keen to find out what more these children needed. Later he told *Rotary News*, “I found that there were two 18-year-old girls, whose height was not even 2ft. They found it very difficult to use the toilet available at the centre. So I am now building a specially designed toilet to suit their needs, at a cost of ₹60,000.”

Enthused by the mega success of this event, next he is planning to take a group of senior citizens for a similar joy ride and day of fun on his houseboat.

Eapen added that in the last couple of years their club has started another service for disabled children by offering a learning centre in its building at subsidised rent. Around 30 children are trained here. ■

MLA Salam talking with a young girl as club president Abraham looks on.



Rotary leaders meet the President of India

Team Rotary News

A delegation of Rotary senior leaders including past RI presidents Rajendra Saboo and Kalyan Banerjee, past RI director Ashok Mahajan, India National PolioPlus Committee chair Deepak Kapur and PDG DN Padhi (RID 3262), along with Rajashree Birla, chairperson, Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development, met the President of India Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi on Oct 31.

The President handed over Rotary's recognition honouring Rajashree for her large contribution of over \$13 million over the years



President of India Droupadi Murmu presenting Rotary's recognition to Rajashree Birla, chairperson, Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development, in the presence of (from L) INPPC chair Deepak Kapur, PRIP Rajendra Saboo, PDG DN Padhi, PRID Ashok Mahajan and PRIP Kalyan Banerjee at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.

to TRF for the polio eradication drive. The President appreciated her generosity

and complimented the delegates for executing large humanitarian projects that

are transforming communities across the country and the world. ■



Saving little lives



Shivaay after the heart surgery.

Rotary Club of Muzaffarnagar Sanskrati, RID 3100, has initiated a project — child heart surgery — last year under the presidentship of Rajeev Singhal to identify children with congenital heart diseases and help them get treated at the PGICH Hospital, a government hospital in Noida. The Rotarians help parents with the paperwork to be submitted at the hospital to avail CHD surgery free of cost.

Little Shivaay from Shamli was the first beneficiary of this

project. His father Dinesh Kumar was trying hard for three years to treat his child at the district hospital in Shamli. He was then directed by Sudhakar Arya, immediate past president of RC Shamli, to contact Dr Nitin Jain, the nodal officer for the child heart surgery project.

Eight more children have been identified for heart surgery by the club which has called for all Rotary clubs in the district to direct children with CHD to get benefitted from this project. ■

Solar dryers to boost farmers' income

Jaishree

It is heart-wrenching to see or hear news of farmers throwing away their hard grown vegetables/fruits on highways or letting them rot on their land for lack of a decent price.

Now the farmers of Kattangur village near Hyderabad will not be forced to waste their produce harvested after so much toil, thanks to the solar dryer provided by Rotary to their association. Rotary Clubs of Smart Hyderabad and Hyderabad Deccan, RID 3150, have recently sponsored a solar dryer to the Farmers Producers Organisation (FPO) in the village.

The dehydrator removes moisture from vegetables to prevent contamination by micro organisms, thus increasing their shelf life. "In this village these dehydrators are now predominantly used to preserve tomatoes, lemons and

mangoes," says Shantikumar, member of RC Smart Hyderabad, adding that it is a safe method of preserving the produce without use of chemical preservatives.

"The farmers bring the entire harvest to be dehydrated to the FPO campus where we have installed the facility. The drying process takes 48 hours. The dehydrated produce can be stocked until the organisation takes care of the marketing," says club secretary Lathaa Subramaniyan. FPOs are aggregation of farmers who come together to gain better bargaining power in the purchase of inputs, obtaining credit and selling the produce.

"Fluctuating crop rates is a huge challenge. Sometimes the prices dip so low that farmers prefer to dump their yield on the highway or let them rot on the land to act as fertiliser for the

soil." The dehydrator helps them store seasonal fruits such as mangoes and sell them to food majors for making jams or sauces. "The dryer supplier has agreed to buy the dehydrated produce from the FPO and market it to the food industry," says Shantikumar. The FPO passes on the price benefit to the farmers, charging 3 per cent as processing fee. "Their incomes will go up by at least 25 per cent," he adds.

The actual cost of the dryer is ₹8 lakh. Post subsidy from NABARD, the club procured it for ₹1.2 lakh. "Some farmers are still reluctant to use it as they are unsure of its success. Slowly they will gain confidence and understand its huge benefits. It is not even a month now since we have installed it," smiles Lathaa.

The FPO has installed four solar refrigerators on its premises for cold

RID 3150 DGN Sharat Choudary (fourth from R) and Project chairman Shantikumar (on his left) with members of RCs Smart Hyderabad and Hyderabad Deccan at the FPO in Kattangur village after installing the solar dryer.





DGN Choudary listens to how lemons are being prepared for dehydration.

storage of the agricultural produce. It was bought at ₹15 lakh with the help of a loan and a subsidy from NABARD. “Now the FPO wants us

to set up a processed food unit, such as pickle-making, in their campus to provide employment to the village women. The income generated from

the unit may be used to repay the loan,” he says. The FPO stands on a 3-acre land in Kattangur, 120km from Hyderabad. ■

Home cancer screening for women

Team Rotary News

RI district 2982, under its *Project Malar*, has provided three portable healthcare devices — equipment for screening cervical and breast cancer and hearing impairment in children — to a primary health centre in Shoologiri near Hosur in Tamil Nadu, and trained the centre’s staff to use it. The project was soft-launched by RI President Jennifer Jones during her visit to Chennai. RCs Tirchengodu Redrock, Hosur Sipcot and Hosur Angels, along with Genworks Health, a Bengaluru-based healthcare solutions provider, coordinated the project



RI President Jennifer Jones launches *Project Malar* in the presence of RI Directors A S Venkatesh and Mahesh Kotbagi, DG P Saravanan and his wife Vijaya.

which will benefit about one lakh women around Hosur district, says assistant governor Pratheep Krishnan. These machines will help the hospital staff examine women in the privacy of their homes. The Shoologiri UPHC, with 10 doctors on its payroll, is the referral centre for the five neighbouring PHCs. Initially Rotary clubs will organise three awareness

camps every month in the villages to familiarise people with the machines.

“Our goal is to provide these equipment to 50 more PHCs in the next two years,” he says. The district aims to cover six neighbouring villages in the first three months. The hearing impairment screening gadget will benefit 100 newborn babies a month. ■

Lunch break for Mumbai students

Kiran Zehra



On several occasions, Deepali, a Class 3 student at Saraswati Vidya Mandir in Mumbai, was caught staring at the clock. “She would look at the clock so attentively that she would hardly hear me call her name,” says Sweety Singh, her class teacher. When asked to concentrate on the lesson being taught, Deepali would look into her book; but once the teacher turned around, “she would continue gazing at the clock!”

“My mother gives me only one piece of *pav* (bread) for breakfast. I look at the clock to see if it’s time for lunch so I can go eat as much as I want,” says Deepali. “There are many students who don’t even get to eat breakfast because they come from very poor families,” says Sweety and adds that the midday meal provided by RC Mumbai Western Elite, RID 3141, is “the only meal these children eat full stomach. There is no restriction, the children can ask for as many servings as they want.”

What started as a project to provide midday meals at a single private school by the club in 2016–17, has expanded to four schools with 450 students being fed every day. The project cost for providing meals for all four schools is ₹23 lakh annually and the funds are raised by the club. “We have a few other donors who give generously but club members are the main source of funds for this project,” says club president Pankaj Jaiswal.

In August 2016, when Sandeep Saraf, the then-club president, visited Santhosh Nagar Primary School to assess the needs of the school, “I wondered how any child could study there. The lane that led to the school was across a ditch and the campus was in a pathetic condition,” he recalls. The club provided basic infrastructure and asked the principal what else was required. Being a private school there was no provision for the midday meal programme so “we decided to provide the meals for a year.”

At the project inaugural, club members witnessed the children enjoying their



Club president Pankaj Jaiswal feeds a student as project coordinators Sachin Patodia and Devki Nandan Agarwal look on.

meals. “They relished every bite and were excited to be eating *garam garam khana* (hot food)! We were touched by the joy on the faces of these children and

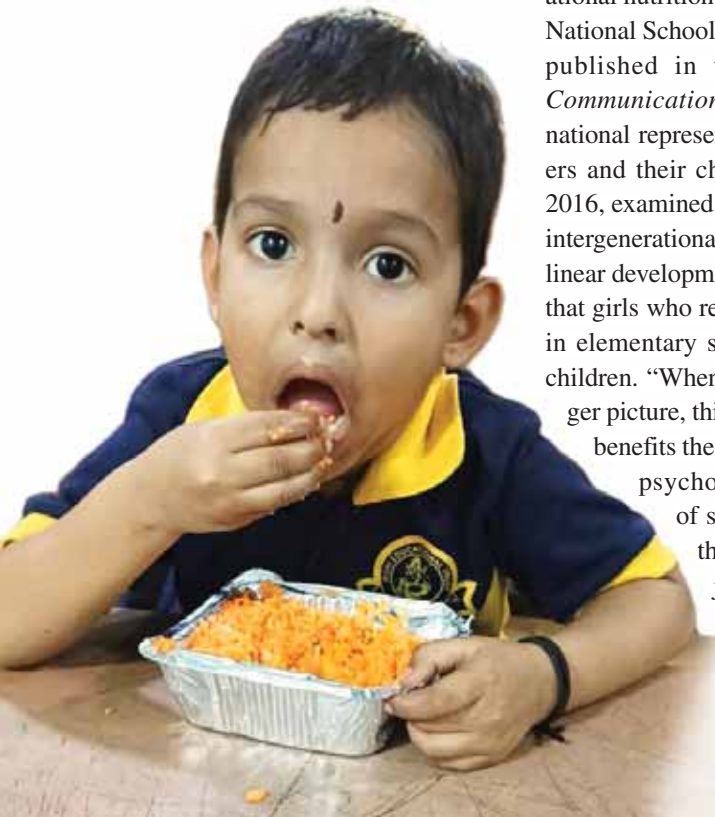
we decided to continue this initiative,” says Saraf.

While going through research material for finalising this project, he came across a study, titled ‘Intergenerational nutrition advantages of India’s National School Feeding Programme’ published in the journal *Nature Communications*. The study, using national representative data on mothers and their children from 1993 to 2016, examined if midday meals help intergenerational increases in a child’s linear development. It was discovered that girls who received midday meals in elementary schools had healthier children. “When you look at the bigger picture, this feeding programme benefits the physical, mental, and psychosocial development of school children across the country. We are not just alleviating classroom hunger, and ensuring that these children grow up

in a healthy environment, but we are also building a bright future for them, especially girls,” he says.

The club later identified three other schools — Saraswati Vidya Mandir, Students Academy and Srimati Ashabai Ware Primary School in Goregaon East, to extend the project. “We were informed by the school authorities that because of the midday meal the student strength and attendance have increased. We are looking forward to expanding the project further,” says Jaiswal. “This initiative is not limited to collecting the funds and paying the vendors for the food. We visit the school, check the quality of the food, and collect student and teacher feedback on the meal.”

The new menu includes noodles, *pav bhaji*, biryani, and *bhaji roti*. Aarav, a Class 3 student from Srimati Ashabai School, says, “On Tuesday we had noodles for lunch and that has become my favourite. I have asked my teacher to let me take some for my mother the next time. I want her to try it too.” ■



A Rotary hostel for cancer patients in Shimla

V Muthukumaran

A huge *langar* (kitchen) was erected on Dec 1 to mark the first anniversary of Rotary Ashray, a hostel for cancer patients and their attendants built by RC Shimla, RID 3080, at a cost of ₹3.5 crore. This kitchen will be used to cook and distribute over 1,000 food packets to the patients admitted at the

IGMC, the state-owned oncology hospital, and their attendants.

DG V P Kalta, the project chair, conceived the shelter home in 2010 when he was president of RC Shimla. “Most of the cancer patients and their families suffer great hardships, for, apart from the treatment cost, it is difficult to get accommodation in Shimla where tourists

visit throughout the year,” says Kalta. But the club had to wait for five years to get the patch of land, around 440 sq metres, okayed by the state government after environmental clearance. “It took more than five years to finish construction, as the work had to be done over a *nullah* (stream) and during cold months in Shimla it is difficult to get

the cementing done,” he says. Now, Rotary Ashray, a four-storeyed building, is just 50 metres from the cancer hospital and “has become a sought-after place for the patients.”

While the ground and first floors are for parking (35 cars), the other floors have 22 rooms and two dormitories. “The hostel can accommodate 32 patients and their attendants at a time. We charge ₹250, ₹600 and ₹800 a day for a dorm bed, double-bed and triple-bed rooms respectively,” he explains.

This project has been done in partnership with the CSR arm of SJVN, a state-owned hydroelectric firm, which donated ₹1 crore; Tulsi Ram Bhagirath Ram Memorial Charitable Society (TRBRMCS) chipping in with ₹1.5 crore; and members of RC Shimla contributing ₹85 lakh through its charitable trust. State urban development minister Suresh Bhardwaj, local MLA and Shimla MP Bimla Kashyap had donated ₹5 lakh each for the project. “We have set up a six-member



**Himachal Pradesh CM
Jairam Thakur (2nd from L)
with urban development
minister Suresh Bhardwaj
(to his left) and DG
V P Kalta (right) at the
inauguration of the Rotary
cancer hostel.**



panel — three Rotarians, including me, and three from TRBRMCS to run the cancer hostel efficiently,” says Kalta. Modern

amenities — centralised heating, power back-up, a small kitchen with an induction stove, utensils in each room, and a

subsidised canteen — make Rotary Ashray a comfortable lodge for patients. Lobhzang Dolma, 34, a patient from Spiti

village in Himachal, feels “at home here with all my needs taken care of, right from food to daily essentials.” ■

Rotarian bags coveted photo award

Team Rotary News

A wildlife photographer for 16 years, Sanjay Danait from RC Koregaon Park, RID 3131, has won the Sony-BBC Earth Award for his photograph in the wildlife category. Avid photographers covet such a recognition from Sony-BBC Earth, an Indian TV channel owned by BBC Studios and Culver Max Entertainment. Over the years, Danait has bagged international awards from National Geographic, BBC Wildlife channels, Fédération Internationale de l’Art Photographique (FIAP), Federation of Indian Photography (FIP), Photographic Society of America (PSA) and 35 Awards (Russia), among others.

This year, ‘Thrill of life’ is the theme of the Sony-BBC Earth Award competition and thousands of



The award-winning picture.

entries were received across the three categories — landscape, adventure and wildlife. Only one picture from a contestant is allowed in each category. The selected entries were first published on the Sony-BBC Earth website for public voting from Oct 6–27. The

top 15 entries in each category with maximum votes were chosen for final adjudication and three winners, one in each category, were selected by the jury in November.

Rotary News had featured his pictures in the May issue. ■

A rehab workshop for the blind

Jaishree

Bharat and his two friends are flushed with excitement after climbing a flight of about 15 steps of an office building. “I feel like I have summited the Everest. It is the first time in my life I have climbed up stairs without assistance,” he says. It was indeed an achievement for these young boys who are blind and who have been leading their day-to-day lives with assistance at every step.

Today they are brimming with joy to be able to walk independently, cross the road, identify vegetables and cereals, and eat food confidently without groping on their plates. These youngsters and 200 other visually-impaired people owe it all to RC Nagpur Ishanya, RID 3030, for the two-day rehabilitation workshop organised at Nagpur.

“It all began when we drew up a schedule for a mobility workshop for

the blind for an entry in the Asia Book of Records,” says club secretary Dr Manisha Prashant Rathi. Until now, the Book does not feature any record for providing professional training to the blind to use the white cane, “and we decided to be the first,” she adds. The club is waiting for the adjudication.

“Record or no record, we are happy to have made a huge difference in the lives of these people who would otherwise think twice before stepping out of their comfort zone. Today each one of them is putting all that he/she has learnt into practice and is raring to go,” says an excited club president Naresh Baldwa.

The workshop has hugely benefited Palash Hedau, a college student. “The white cane is my *sarathi* (charioteer) and my eyes. Now I can use the road confidently and even cross without fear. Earlier I would wait helplessly on the roadside for some good soul to guide me.” He is happy to identify the *rajma*, *channa* and *poha* on his plate. “It is nice to know what I eat,” he smiles.

Ishwari Kamleshpande, a para swimmer, is now happy to identify birds by their sounds while Gunwant Yelne is glad to “feel the beauty of life through our other sense organs. These two days have taught me to live life fully and rise above my physical challenges.”

Resource person Swagat Thorat and his team provided exhaustive training in proper use of the white cane to travel safely and access public transportation. “In Maharashtra only very few teachers are there to teach correct usage of the cane and provide mobility training. So, most blind people are not confident enough to step out alone beyond their comfort areas,” says Manisha.

Two techniques — two-point touch and shoreline — are followed by the blind to skilfully

Students learn to cross the road using the white cane.





Members of RC Nagpur Ishanya volunteering at the mobility workshop for the blind.

navigate their way, and these were taught at the workshop. The resource team shared such useful tips: “If there is an escalator, place the cane on the moving area to determine if it’s upward or downward. If the cane pulls away from you, it’s going up; When going up the stairs, remember that the final hit as you probe with your cane

means that you have one more step to go. When going down, you also have to make one more step before you are safely on the ground. Your head should be held high and shoulders kept relaxed while moving.”

The students were also trained to activate the midbrain which transmits information for motor movement, vision and hearing, and were taught to identify directions, objects, fruits, vegetables and cereals.

The club provided white canes to the delegates. The Rotarians were initially taught to use them and they mastered the act by being blindfolded. Students were drawn from schools for the blind from Nagpur, Chandrapur, Badravati, Wardha and Katool, and their transportation, accommodation and food were taken care of by the club. The club spent ₹3.5 lakh for the workshop.

Live sessions were conducted where the students were taken to the city’s busy road. “It was soul satisfying to watch them cross the road

confidently guided by their white canes during peak traffic. They were taught to judge vehicle distances by the sounds of the horn. The Nagpur traffic police helped us in regulating the traffic.” Rotaractors of the club’s three Rotaract clubs volunteered at the workshop. They held placards at traffic junctions to sensitise the public on the challenges faced by the blind, keep the pavements encroachment-free, and slow down or stop the car to allow them to pass at their pace.

Post the workshop, on White Cane Safety Day (Oct 15), the club conducted a follow-up. “We were amazed to hear that they are exploring new places armed with their white canes, and without any handholding or assistance,” says Manisha. The club helped a couple of them who were skilled acupressure practitioners with placements. “Some of the youngsters who had attended the workshop are now moving out of their comfort zone for work opportunities. The new independence is helping them go out and pursue their dreams.” ■

Record or no record, we are happy to have made a huge difference in the lives of these people who would otherwise think twice before stepping out of their comfort zone.

Naresh Baldwa
 president
 RC Nagpur Ishanya



Above: DG Gulbahar Singh Retole, DGE Ghanshyam Kansal and District Interact Committee chair Manik Raj Singla with Interactors after the Rotary Spell Bee competition.

Promoting Interact in RID 3090

Kiran Zehra



Monica Singh's artwork titled 'Incredible India' won the Rotary Painting Competition Award in her class. "I wanted to bring out the extent of our country's progress. We have advanced in many areas, especially space research which is my favourite topic, so I highlighted ISRO in my painting," says the Class 12 student of the Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Patiala, Punjab. .

Around 532 government school students, including 20 Interactors, participated in the competition organised by RID 3090 Interact Committee led by its chair Manik Raj Singla. The event, sponsored by Vardhman Hospital, Patiala, and supported by five Rotary clubs in the city, was conducted class-wise, including the kindergarten sections. Each class had a theme and the topics were given on the spot. All participants received certificates while winners were given trophies and a gift hamper. DGE Ghanshyam Kansal distributed the prizes.

“This was an opportunity for government school students to showcase their talent and enjoy a morning of art,” says Singla, adding that the regular school curriculum has “little or no place for extracurricular activities. We wanted to break the monotony and give them a platform to express their creativity and have fun.” The organising team provided art material to students who couldn’t afford them. Omkar Saini of Class 3 at Our Lady Fatima School is “very happy that I don’t have to return the box of crayons that my class teacher gave

me. I can take it home and colour whenever I want.”

The judges were amazed by the children’s creativity. Says Ranjit Kaur, a judge: “The ideas they brought to life on paper with just a few colours were mind-blowing. Even a Class 2 student’s submission was brilliant in colour scheme and concept. More such events must be organised for them to stimulate their creativity and help them realise their full potential.”

The committee has been organising various events for Interactors and

their schoolmates. “We want more students to join Interact. It is the perfect platform for them to learn new skills and help their community while enjoying the Interact experience. Through this association, hopefully some of these children would want to be part of Rotaract and even Rotary in the future,” he says.

Recently 467 students from 20 government schools were trained to compete at the Rotary Public Speaking contest. The Rotary Spell Bee Competition saw 1,032 students from 18 schools. ■

A membership high at RID 3142

Team Rotary News



DG Kailash Jethani and RC Dombivli East president Vijay Dumbre with the newly inducted members.

Raising the bar in membership growth with a new benchmark in RID 3142, RC Dombivli East president Vijay Dumbre inducted 56 Rotarians in August, Rotary’s membership month, at a single event.

In the beginning of the Rotary year, Dumbre sought the help of past

presidents who guided him in achieving the feat of inducting 56 new Rotarians at one go. “He requested all 170 members to look out among their friends, relatives and colleagues for potential candidates for membership. Thus, a mega membership drive was launched by the club,” said PDG

Chandrashekar Kolvekar, district trainer.

Members of fellowship groups like Karaoke, Dhaba, Cycling and Equity went out and invited like-minded people to join the club, “to enjoy fellowship and service projects.” Rotarians who joined in the last 2–3 years were responsible for getting a

large share of new members inducted at the August event, he said.

With the focus on gender parity, women Rotarians were given the responsibility of organising the Tejaswini Awards event in which nine women entrepreneurs were felicitated by Dr Medha Mehendale, founder, Tanvi Herbals. At present, the 35-year-old club has 220 members.

Having met the district target in the first quarter of the year, Dumbre has plans to induct another 56 members by November-end. He has earned the sobriquet, *Ab Tak Chappan* (Till now 56) for his success in adding new members. Not resting on his laurels, “he is working hard to achieve his next target,” said Kolvekar. ■

District 3110

Prachi & Pawan Agarwal
District Governor, RID 3110



PDG Devender Kr. Agarwal
ARRFC



PDG Sharat Chandra
DRFC

Major Donor Level 3



Rtn. Yogesh Jindal & Mrs. Sudha Jindal
RC Kashipur

TRF Contribution - \$7800



Rtn. Babita Jain
RC Nainital - President

CSR Projects

One more CSR project has been approved by RF(I) for our district. This is the 7th CSR project by our district in this Rotary year. The project aims at providing computer labs in 8 Nos. to Vidya Bharti Schools in Kashipur area.

The total cost of the project is ₹25,00,000 (or USD 30,500). The corporate partner in this project is M/S Kashi Vishwanath Textile Mill (P) Ltd., Kashipur.

The total value of the 7 CSR projects in our district in this Rotary year is ₹3,03,50,000.

Endowment Fund

It is matter of great pride for our district that the 1st ever Endowment Fund has been made in the district in this Rotary year. Rotary Club of Kashipur created a Pooled Endowment Fund of US \$ 25,316 (Rs 25 lacs) in "Share" basis.

A share of the earnings of this endowment fund will come into our District's DDF from next year onwards.

This share of earnings will come into our DDF for perpetuity and is expected to support several service projects in years to come.

Membership Development



Rtn. Neerav Nimesh Agarwal
Chair, District Membership Committee

Once again our District achieves Highest Membership Growth

in Zone 6

Absolute Numbers

379

Net increase in membership

Growth Rate

10.5%

Net Growth Rate

Source: Membership Report of RI (as on 31st October, 2022)



ANNOUNCING MEGA PROJECT

DISTRIBUTION OF E-TABS

635 Girl Students

88 Rotary Clubs of RI District 3110

DATE	TIME	DAY
DEC 4	11 AM	SUNDAY



PROJECT 'KARUNA'

District 3110 has initiated Project Karuna in which 450 Wheel Chairs are being distributed to individual and institutional beneficiaries by 35 clubs of the district. Each wheel chair is sponsored by a Rotarian of the district by paying a nominal amount of Rs 1,000 per wheel chair. The beneficiaries are even from far flung areas like Pithoragarh in the Himalayan hills, and institutions like Old Age Homes, Widow Homes, Charitable Hospitals, Railway Stations, etc.



Glimpses of "Arpan: The Rotary Foundation Dinner"

Chief Guest:
PRID Dr Bharat Pandya
TRF Trustee

Special Guest:
Ms Manushi Chhilar
Miss World (2017)

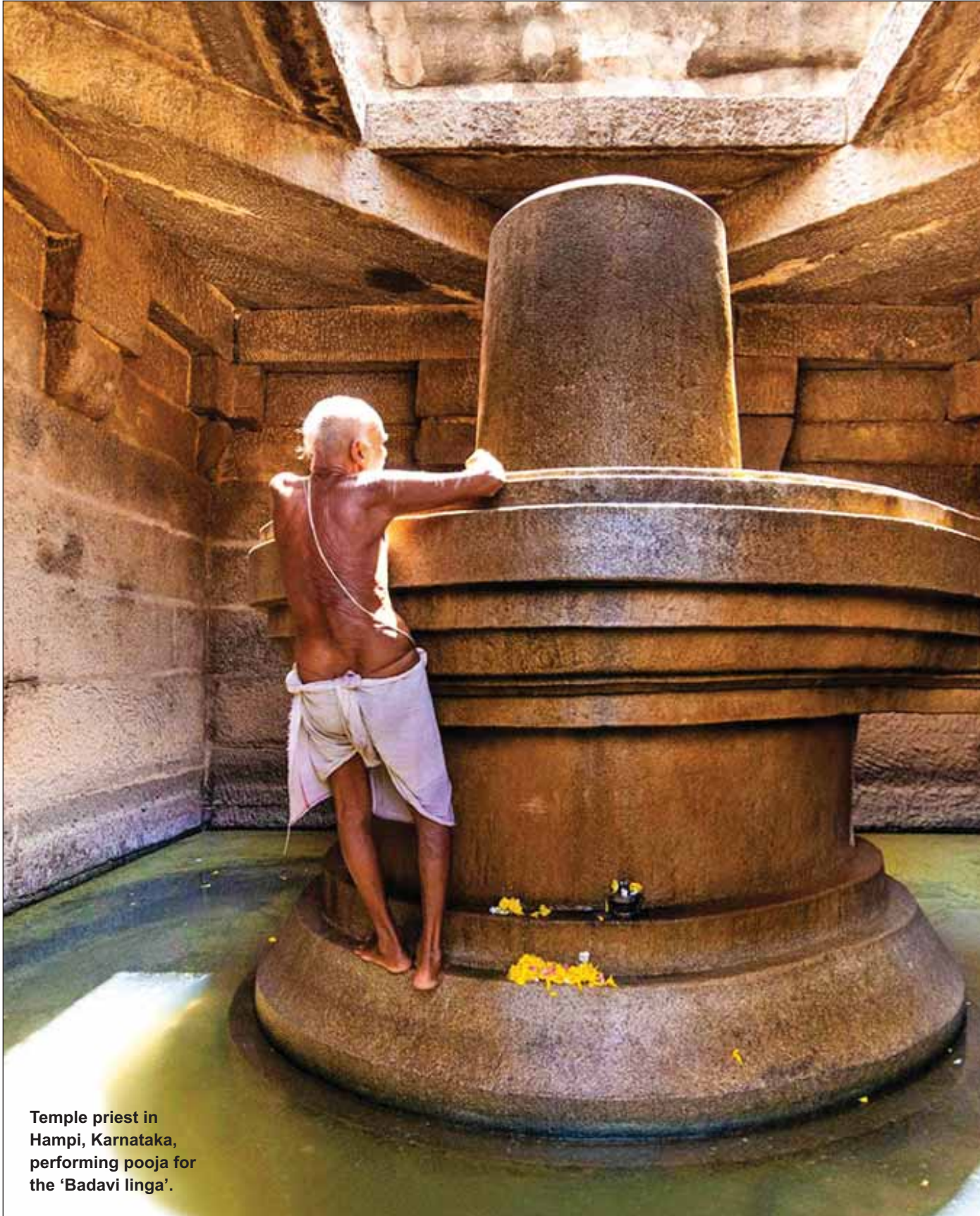
Special Awardee:
Padma Shree
Dr Jitender Singh "Shunty"



Miscellaneous Service Projects



Rtn. Raj Mehrotra
CDS (Admin)



Temple priest in Hampi, Karnataka, performing pooja for the 'Badavi linga'.

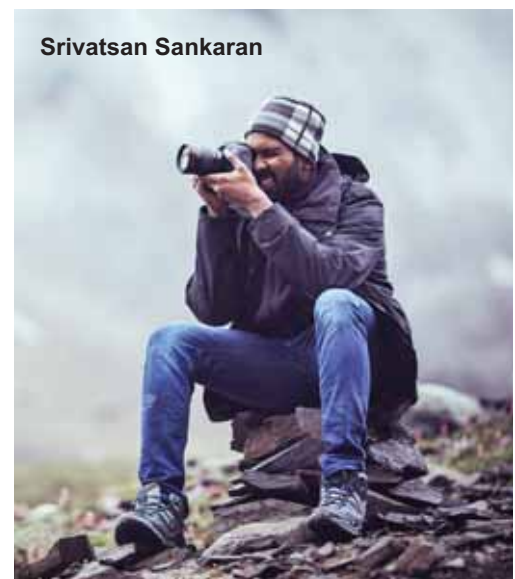


From flaming pinks to joyous yellows

SR Madhu

Srivatsan Sankaran's photographs glow with energy and vitality. The work of this 32-year-old engineer-turned-travel photographer is a celebration of people and nature — festivals, landscapes, the drama of everyday life. Take his photographs of the Kumbh Mela, the Kerala boat race or the bull-taming festival in Madurai. Or shots of the Marina beach in Chennai, at dawn or sunset, in glorious silhouette.

As Meghna Majumdar says in *The Hindu*, “The people in his photographs are often wrapped in colours, be it bright sweaters, plastic rain covers or the myriad watery, powdery hues



Srivatsan Sankaran



From top: Monsoon moment after overnight rain in Chennai; Holi festival at Sowcarpet, Chennai.

Right: Fish cart in Kasimedu, Chennai.

Below: Hefty fish catch, Kasimedu harbour.



of Holi. Colours dominate his work — from flaming pinks during Holi celebrations to the joyous yellows of Kolhapur’s Pattan Kodoli festival.”

Srivatsan likes to highlight the uniqueness of India, particularly rural India. “Many foreign photographers make a living documenting India. I thought why shouldn’t I do it?” He has travelled to some 40 cities and countless villages. He photographed the world’s highest post office in Hikkim, Himachal Pradesh; spent three days at the Taj to soak in the atmosphere; visited Cherrapunji, one of the world’s wettest places, thrice.

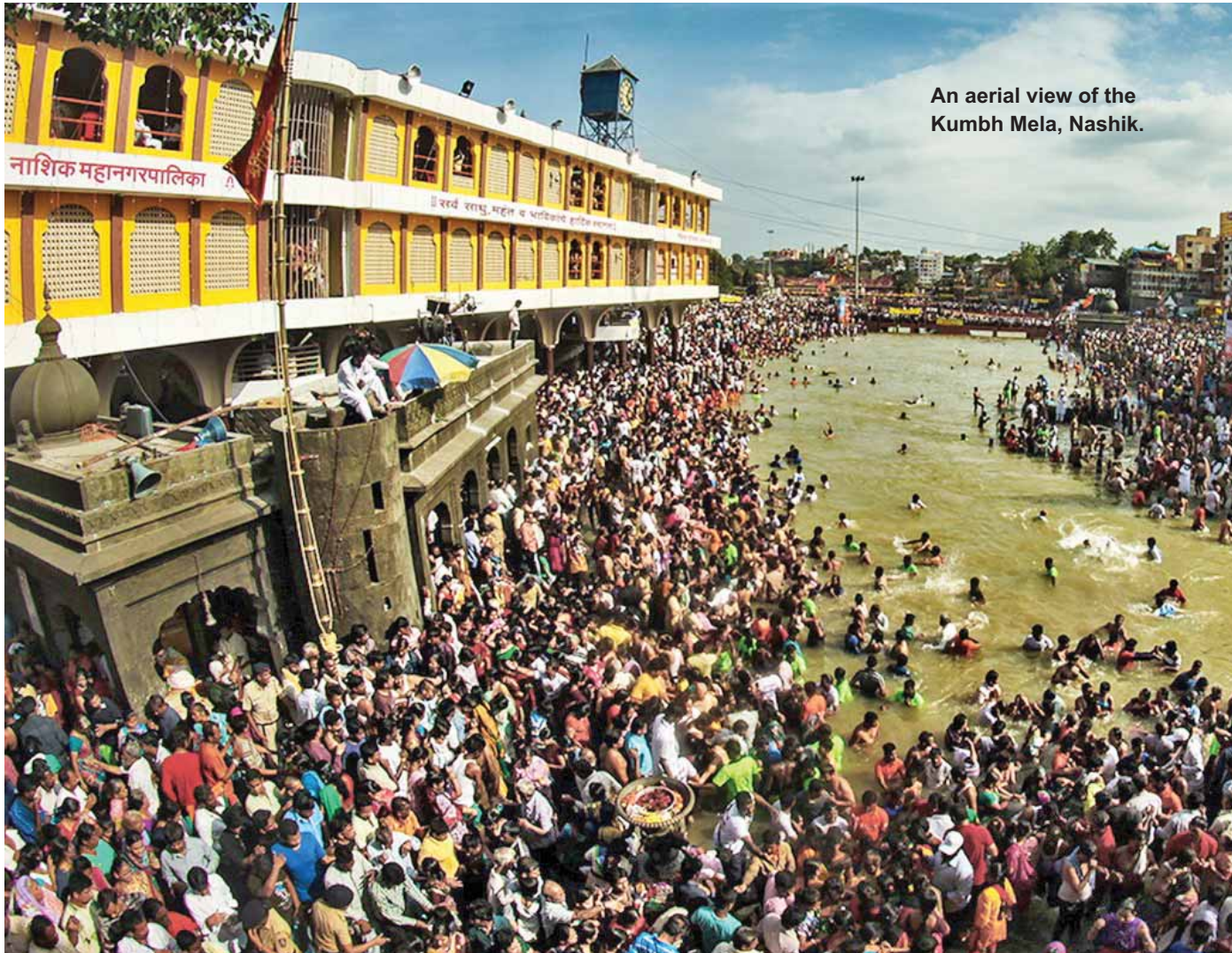
He says that his “pictures bring out the relationship between mother nature and the people who nurture her. I believe that the best possible way to explore a place is to blend into the indigenous culture and heritage of the people and understand their lifestyles.” Henri Cartier-Bresson and Raghu Rai are the photographers who have influenced him the most.

Srivatsan suffers from a serious disability — he has a hearing impairment. When he was six, the doctor said he was fully deaf in the right ear and profoundly afflicted in the left. His mother burst into tears.

“Being deaf was a big challenge,” says Srivatsan. “It was difficult to make friends. I was shy and unable to connect with the world.”

However, through sheer determination, he managed. He laboured through school, graduated from an engineering college and worked with TCS for two years. At the age of 23, he gave up his profession and a coveted

Colours dominate his work —
from flaming pinks during
Holi celebrations to the
joyous yellows of Kolhapur’s
Pattan Kodoli festival.



An aerial view of the Kumbh Mela, Nashik.

job at India's leading IT major for his passion — photography.

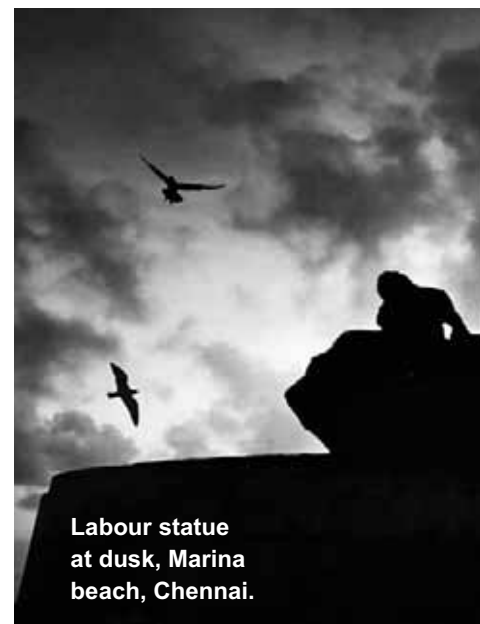
Srivatsan was fascinated by photography very early. He taught himself, practised a lot and shot a great deal, read photography magazines, and learnt by making mistakes. "This hobby gives me so much happiness, something I never felt before."

"I started with a Canon 500D and learned the basics. After three years, I bought a Canon 6D with my own money. Now, I own a Sony A7R3 camera with a 16–35mm lens. I am also a brand influencer of the Sony Alpha Camera. Sony supports our activities."

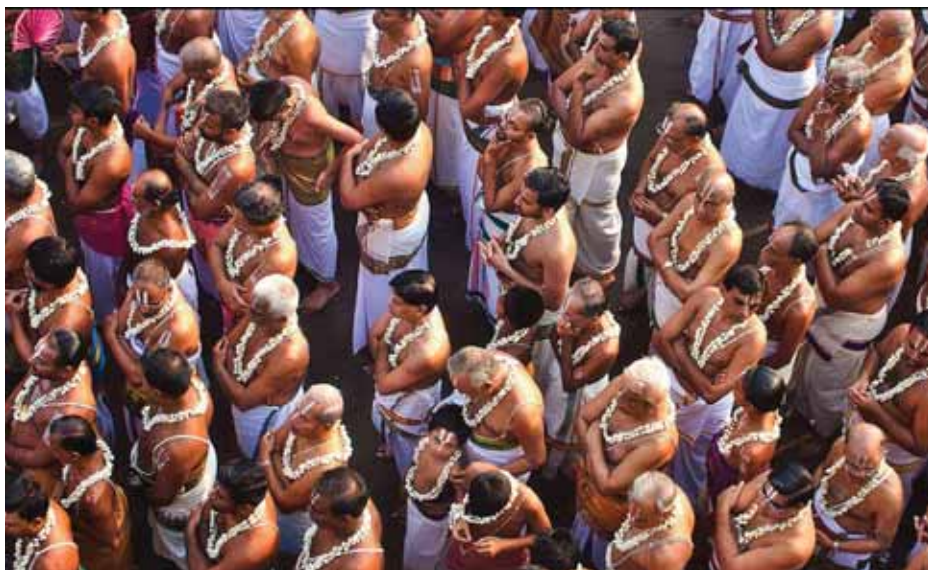
Today he travels, teaches, conducts photo expeditions, interacts with clients and organises events for Madras Photo Bloggers (MPB) which he founded.

MPB is a community of more than 4,000 photographers. It enables networking and mentoring and creates a platform for new photographers. It regularly organises workshops and exhibitions, and photo walks, sometimes in collaboration with the Tamil Nadu tourism department. It has conducted more than 10 photo contests.

MPB helps the hearing-impaired in many ways. It has come up with a basic photography course in sign



Labour statue at dusk, Marina beach, Chennai.



Aerial view of devotees walking during the Triplicane temple car festival.

I believe that the best possible way to explore a place is to blend into the indigenous culture and heritage of the people and understand their lifestyles.

Srivatsan Sankaran

language, for a batch of eight to 10, where the facilitators use sign language, facial expression and practical methods to communicate. A camera is provided for course participants who don't own one. The hearing-impaired participants acquire skills, grow in confidence, and meet others with similar challenges. "Photography opens a new window to the life-impaired. It thrills me to make it possible."

Photography in Ladakh

Srivatsan is eloquent about one of his most wonderful landscape experiences — his visit to the Leh palace in Ladakh which is several storeys high. But much of the palace was inaccessible because of renovation

when he visited. There were no stairs or pathways to the higher storeys, so Srivatsan and his group used ladders to explore its seven storeys!

Equally challenging in Leh was the Namgyal Tsemo Gompa, a Buddhist monastery atop a cliff which has a three-storey-high gold statue of the Buddha. They had to do strenuous trekking to reach the cliff, but the stunning panoramic view of Leh city from the monastery was worth the effort.

The story didn't end there. They had to get down, and that was scary. "We had to descend with the camera in one hand and balance with the other. Regaining our energies with a sip of Ladakhi tea, we recalled a day spellbound with fascinating memories," he smiles.

Srivatsan's photographs of Chennai — its markets, temples, festivals and statues, its people and their lifestyle — reflect his love for the city, as can be seen in this photo essay.

Courtesy: *Between the Lines*,
Madras Book Club

Designed by Krishnapratheesh S



Meet your



Balwant Singh Chirana
School education
RC Sikar, RID 3054



Bhaskar Ram Viswanatham
Chartered accountant
RC Rajahmundry River City, RID 3020

Boosting membership is his goal

One of the largest RI districts comprising parts of Rajasthan, Kutch and northern areas of Gujarat, this region's DG has a goal "to make my district the world's largest in membership, and this I will achieve by inducting over 1,000 new Rotarians," says Balwant Singh Chirana. He governs 174 clubs having 7,214 members, and has already formed eight new clubs, and will add 26 more this year, taking the total membership to over 8,300 by June-end.

To its existing blood bank and thalassaemia centre at the Prajapita Brahmakumaris Global Hospital on Mount Abu Road, one more centre costing ₹3 crore, funded through a global grant and by club members, will be added. A skin bank for ₹2 crore was set up in Jaipur recently with a GG funding and private donors. Chirana has plans to develop an urban forest over five acres (₹2–3 crore) at Kota through a GG, Rotarian and corporate donors. Herbal and ayurvedic plants are being grown at the two Miyawaki forests (one-acre each) in Ahmedabad, set up with the help of Catch Foundation.

An anti-drugs campaign will reach out to five lakh students across 5,000 schools and colleges. "Booklets and pamphlets on drug abuse are being distributed," says Chirana. While 52 Happy Schools are underway, "I want to start 100 more such schools." Around 200 health camps will be done in the district. TRF giving target has been raised from \$600,000 to \$1 million. Influenced by PDG Ashok Gupta and Rtn Sunil Mor, he joined Rotary in 1997. "Over the last 25 years, Rotary has transformed me completely through its humanitarian work," he says.

A Rotary park to boost public image

A Rotary Municipal Park (₹38 lakh) over 1.5 acres in Rajahmundry is showcased across the six revenue districts of Andhra Pradesh as a model environment project. "Filled with walking tracks, an open air gym, colourful lighting and aesthetic plants, this green hub is earning goodwill in the community," says Bhaskar Ram. He has formed seven new clubs (out of 15 planned) taking the total number to 85 clubs and inducted 769 new members as part of his aim to add 1,500 Rotarians for the year. At present, the headcount is 5,799.

With the installation of six RO units (₹30 lakh) at primary schools, around 4,000 students will have potable water. "The nearby communities also will have access to these RO units for potable water," says Ram. Around 7–8 GG projects are under process with district GG project chair PDG G Vishwanath working on the details. A Rotary multispecialty hospital will come up over a one-acre land gifted by a Rotarian at Kovvur village near Rajahmundry at a cost of ₹8 crore. "We have contributed ₹2.5 crore, and the balance will be from CSR funds." His target for TRF giving is \$450,000.

Ram joined Rotary in 1994 after his visit to RID 6070, Missouri, US, as a GSE member the previous year. In 1996, he initiated *Project Kailash Bhoomi*, that renovates Hindu crematoriums and is a signature project of 65 clubs. He is an AKS member and says "the thrill in doing service projects keeps me going as a Rotarian."

Governors

V Muthukumaran



Dr Anand A Jhunjhunuwala

Eye surgeon, RC Khamgaon, RID 3030

Farmers' welfare is his top priority

As 14 revenue districts of central and Vidarbha regions of Maharashtra have vast stretches of agricultural land, "we have formed a team to launch several programmes for farmers' welfare. Every club was instructed to take up at least two farm programmes, and we will be doing at least 200 such welfare projects," says Dr Anand Jhunjhunuwala. "The farm projects done with the support of agricultural varities will be funded by club donors." Apart from this, his focus will be on tree plantation, rainwater harvesting and blood donation camps. He wants to induct 500 new Rotarians, of which 200 have already joined, thus raising the membership to 5,500 by June-end; and charter 10 new clubs in areas without Rotary. At present, the district has 99 clubs. He is keen to add 500 Rotaractors, taking their count to 1,500-plus.

Five dialysis centres (₹50 lakh) with five units each will be set up at government and trust hospitals through global grants and CSR funds. Jhunjhunuwala wants to do 10 Happy Schools. Around 2,500 women will be trained and certified at the 30 Rotary Singer Vocational Centres. "They run three and six-month courses, after which exams are held and certificates given." He aims to collect \$500,000 for TRF. He joined Rotary in 2003 inspired by his father Ashok Jhunjhunuwala, also a Rotarian. "As a child, I accompanied my father to club meetings and volunteered in service projects." Mega projects and fellowship are two features of Rotary that he adores.



Gulbahar Singh Retole

Advocate, RC Fatehabad Town, RID 3090

Saving youth from drug abuse his focus

Weaning away the young from drug addiction is the top priority of Gulbahar Singh Retole. "Clubs will hold workshops and awareness sessions at schools, colleges under the *Project Be Aware of Addiction*." The youth will be educated on how to alert the police when they see a drug peddler or witness substance abuse.

Singh aims to charter 10 new clubs (four already formed) to take the total to 114; and induct 250 Rotarians to raise their count to over 2,750. Among the 40 Rotaract clubs, only 20 are active and "I will add 50 new Rotaractors." *Project Going to School* will motivate less privileged families to send their children to school. "First, workshops for clubs will deal with school dropouts. We will tell parents from disadvantaged families to send their wards to school to keep them away from criminal activities," he says. Rtn NS Sodhi is the project chair and "he will lead *Project Care of Senior Citizens* which will provide food, clothing and medicines to elderly couples neglected by their children." Around 100 health camps and 50 breast and cervical cancer detection camps are targeted. A government school at Bhiwani has done TEACH projects. His target for TRF giving is \$175,000 and the 25-member CoG is working on GG projects. He joined Rotary in 2006 inspired by his father, the late Rtn Harminder Singh Retole. "Serving the communities gives me great satisfaction," he adds.

Designed by N Krishnamurthy



RC Nainital president Babita Jain presents a sewing machine to a woman in Mehragaon village. Her spouse PDG Subash Jain (RID 3012) is present fourth from right.



Sewing machines for Mehragaon women

Kiran Zehra



Interactors of Interact Club of Mehragaon on a cleanliness drive.

Rekha Narula, spouse of Ravi Narula, a member of RC Nainital, RID 3110, has been working with underprivileged women from Mehragaon, a village near Nainital. Many of these women were part of self-help groups (SHG). “They did not want money from us. Instead, they needed a means to earn a living and augment their income,” says Rekha. She approached her husband’s club and “in no time they raised funds to donate sewing machines to eight beneficiaries at ₹3,800 each.”

Some of the beneficiaries had completed a sewing course through the SHG support and they could immediately start taking stitching orders. “We did not stop with just donating the sewing machines. We procured the stitching material and brought them bulk orders,” says club president Babita Jain. The initial order was to make 2,000 cloth bags for ₹20 each. “They received payment directly for the work done,” she says.

Hema Jatin, a beneficiary, says that each woman could earn ₹1,250

It may seem like a small amount but we were able to either repay a debt, pay school fees, or buy necessary household items that we could not afford earlier.

Hema Jatin, a beneficiary



A beneficiary shows off the apron she had stitched.

from that order. “It may seem like a small amount but we were able to either repay a debt, pay school fees, or buy necessary household items that we could not afford earlier.”

Last Diwali, they designed and stitched hamper bags, and “we helped them sell it,” says the club president. Now they have orders for wine bottle covers, bags and aprons. They can make between ₹50 to ₹150 per piece. “The women are excited about their work and some of them even give a personal touch to their products by adding lace or decorative buttons. We are planning to help them market their products so that they can get better deals,” she adds.

The women can have free access to healthcare facilities at the Rotary dispensary at Farsoli village. The clinic, set up with the support of the Indersheel Jain Trust, will soon turn into a Rotary diagnostic centre with the help of a global grant, says

Babita, adding that the hospitals in the region lack proper equipment and villagers have to travel to Nainital for tests and something as simple as an X-ray. “We have raised \$30,000 for the project and are waiting for a partner club.”

The club has recently installed benches sporting the Rotary logo on the Mall Road in Nainital to promote the organisation’s public image. “We have put up posters and banners across Rotary Joggers Park to promote cleanliness and curb littering,” says club secretary Narinder Kumar Lamba.

This year the club has installed five new Interact clubs. Post Diwali, the Interact Club of Mehragaon organised a cleanliness drive in their village. Interactors collected and safely disposed of plastic and fire-cracker wastes. They were treated to a healthy breakfast by the parent Rotary club before starting the cleanliness drive. ■

RC Bangalore Southwest's fight against paediatric cancer

Team Rotary News

RC Bangalore Southwest, RID 3190, is on a mission to support treatment of children afflicted with cancer through its *Rotary Health For Life* (RHFL) series of projects initiated in 2010. Until November, 228 children were being treated at the Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology and St John's Medical College Hospital, Bengaluru, with financial support from Rotary, says Gnanamurthy, a charter member of this 41-year-old club.

The above number includes six-year-old Noor Ahmed and his 90-year-old great grandmother Noor Jahan. "Having lost the entire family during the pandemic, they

were the only two survivors — the oldest a cripple, and the youngest suffering from acute blood cancer," he says, having met them at the Kidwai hospital during the club's routine *Annadaana* programme, when the members visit the hospital to serve food to attendants of young cancer patients. "Almost all of them looked impoverished, and were looking forward to the only meal for the day."

Noor Jahan was directed to Kidwai by the municipal doctor in her village. "She said people in her village were talking about some group helping out with medicine for the patient and food for the attendants in Kidwai. She had no

idea about the magnitude of blood cancer. She said that her faith in god sent her to us. Our club is trying to save the child — the least we could do for the devastated great grandmother," says Gnanamurthy.

Genesis

Talking about how this heartening project took off, project chairman SK Bhagavan narrates an incident from 2010–11, when the then DG (late) Pandurang Potnis had set his heart on supporting this cause. Bhagavan, the then club president, had visited the paediatric oncology department of Kidwai hospital along with Potnis. "It was heart-wrenching to see the helplessness of parents who painfully witnessed their little ones succumb to cancer because of lack of funds. We decided right there to provide free or subsidised medicines to children suffering from cancer." Thus was born RHFL with an initial capital of \$1,000.

"We raised \$43,000 through matching grants to provide paediatric chemotherapy to 43 patients at Kidwai; 37 children survived translating to a survival rate of 86 per cent."

Encouraged by the project's outcome, the club applied for a global grant in the first year of its launch from TRF, and with support from RC Redmond, RID 5330, USA, raised \$63,000 for the cause. Under *RHFL2* which was carried out

It was heart-wrenching to see the helplessness of parents who painfully witnessed their little ones succumb to cancer because of lack of funds.



Project chairman SK Bhagavan with a cancer patient and his mother.



Young cancer patients with their parents and members of RC Bangalore Southwest.

from 2015 to 2019 at Kidwai and St John’s Medical College Hospital, “we helped treat 102 children; 84 of them were successfully cured,” says Bhagavan.

Heartened by the promising results of both the versions, the club applied for another GG in partnership

with RC Richmond, RID 5080, USA, for \$75,000. As the need to support more children became acute, the club joined hands with RC Bangalore Indiranagar to raise funds under guidance from the then DG Dr Sameer Hariani. Funds were raised through www.fueladream.com,

a crowdfunding platform. The children and teachers of the Delhi Public School Bangalore South raised ₹60 lakh. *RHFLA* was launched in Aug 2019 to support the treatment for 135 children.

Bhagavan recalls the successful treatment of Krishna, son of a small farmer, Thippa Reddy, from Andhra Pradesh. Krishna was diagnosed with leukemia, a curable cancer, in Feb 2021. He completed his intensive chemotherapy in Oct 2021 at St John’s Hospital through the *RHFLA* project and is now on regular follow up. “Success stories such as these push us to do more and save many more lives.”

Adds Gnanamurthy, “Childhood cancer is curable if the child receives timely and appropriate treatment. The diagnosis of cancer comes as a major challenge for families on hand-to-mouth existence. If the missing link is money, we believe it is available here and elsewhere in the world, and we will bridge the gap.” ■

An artificial limb fitment camp at Jalgaon

RID 3030 DG Anand Jhunjhunwala inaugurated an artificial limb fitment camp at the Rotary Bhawan in Jalgaon. RC Jalgaon West organised the camp in association with RC New Kalyan, RID 3142. RCs Thane

North, Chopda and Rotaract Club of Jalgaon West also participated.

The camp helped 121 physically-challenged people to walk. The total project cost ₹7 lakh, said Sunil Sukhwani, president of RC Jalgaon West. ■



Rotary India observes World Polio Day

Team Rotary News



RAC Birupa sponsored by RC Cuttack, RID 3262, marked World Polio Day at Sanyasipatna village by organising an awareness rally with the help of children from an anganwadi and government school students.



Students and Rotarians participating in the End Polio Now walk.

In association with Sri Vinayaga Vidhyalaya, Karamadai, RC Karamadai, RID 3203, conducted an End Polio Now awareness walk.



DG Ashok Kantoor rides a bicycle as part of the awareness rally.

RC Delhi South, RID 3011, Delhi Fellowship for Cycling to Serve and the Delhi Public School conducted a cycle rally to raise awareness about leprosy and polio. As part of this initiative, Rotary members contributed ₹20 lakh to support the fight against polio across the world.

Interact Club of Narthanasala, sponsored by RC Vizianagaram, RID 3020, performed a polio awareness dance in three strategic spots in Vizianagaram on World Polio Day. This programme created a good public image for Rotary in the region.



Interactors performing a dance to spread awareness about polio immunisation.

Club president Col Vijayakumar (L) serves breakfast in the presence of MLA H Salam (R).



RC Alleppey, RID 3211, Greater observed World Polio Day at the Medical College Hospital, Alleppey, where club members served breakfast to over 300 patients and their attendants. Club president Col Vijayakumar spoke about Rotary's role in making India polio-free and its fight against polio world over.



Rotarians of RCs Greater Silchar, Silchar Pink, Silchar Central, Silchar, RID 3240, and Rotaractors of RAC Silchar took out a rally to sensitise the public about the importance of administering polio vaccine to children.



As part of the World Polio Day programme RCs Mysore South East, Vijayanagar, HD Kote and Mysore Stars, RID 3181, jointly conducted polio awareness programmes at important locations in Mysuru.

In association with the club's Rotaractors and Scout and Guide cadets, RC Dharmanagar, RID 3240, organised a polio rally.



Say No to plastic



School children collecting plastic waste with the help of the J-Hook.

To encourage a safe method for disposing plastic waste, RC Nasik West, RID 3030, has taken up a J-Hook project. These hooks are distributed to schoolchildren, who are asked to collect plastic waste at home or on the streets using these hooks and give it to the Nashik Municipal Corporation, which in turn will adopt suitable and safe disposal methods. ■

A tree plantation scheme



Villagers plant palm saplings.

The Environment team of RI District 3231 has started a campaign to arrest the fast disappearing forest wealth of India. As a first step, the team under the leadership of DG JKN Palani planted 250,000 palm seeds. Vellore district collector P Kumaravel Pandian participated in the programme, along with villagers around Vellore, including 50,000 women. ■

Madurai club helps flood-affected in Pakistan



RC Madurai Metro Heritage, RID 3000, has made a modest donation for flood relief in Pakistan to RC Lahore Shaheen, through assistance from past president Dr Tina. The picture shows a man cooking food in a flood-hit area. “The money we sent from our club was used for food grains and medicines. As the water receded, gastroenteritis, dengue, malaria, skin, eye and ear infections, snake bites etc were rampant. Andleeb Sandhu, past president of the Lahore club co-ordinated,” said C R Venkatesh, president of RC Madurai Metro Heritage. ■

Bicycles for girls



PRIP Shekhar Mehta and Rashi hand over bicycles to students.

PRIP Shekhar Mehta distributed bicycles sponsored by RC Muzaffarnagar Midtown, RID 3100, to 200 school girls in the presence of project chairman Suneel Agarwal, club president Ankit Mital and secretary Sushobh Bindal. ■

RID 3170 celebrates service

Team Rotary News



Goa tourism minister Rohan Khaunte presenting the RI's Distinguished Service Award to PDG Dilip R Salgaocar and Pramod Salgaocar in the presence of RI Director Mahesh Kotbagi, IPDG Gaurish Dhond and Pratima Dhond.

RID 3170 IPDG Gaurish Dhond organised an event in Goa where several district leaders and club

presidents were given appreciation awards. RI director Mahesh Kotbagi and several PDGs from various districts

participated. PDG Dilip Salgaocar, an AKS member from the district, was presented with the RI's Distinguished Service Award.

Goa tourism minister Rohan Khaunte attended the event and acknowledged the great service carried out by Rotarians in the state. ■

RID Kotbagi with the award winning Rotarians of RID 3170.





Mukesh: Emperor of pathos

S R Madhu

Way back in 1945, KL Saigal heard

the song *Dil jalta hai jo jalne do*, which was all Saigal in voice and style and a masterpiece of melancholy.

“I don’t remember singing this song,” he said. He was astonished to hear that it was actually rendered by a young singer named Mukesh for the film *Pehli Nazar*, with music composed by Anil Biswas. Saigal described Mukesh as “*Dard ka shehzada*” (Emperor of pain).

Anil Biswas, and later Naushad, urged Mukesh to get out of the Saigal mould and carve his own style. And that he did in nearly a thousand

songs including some of the most memorable ones in Hindi cinema.

Mukesh may have lacked the vocal range of Rafi, the flamboyance of Kishore, the classical charisma of Manna Dey, but the *sachai* in his sonorous voice — a moving honesty, simplicity and goodness — made his songs lovable. Two Mukesh immortals, *Awara hoon* and *Mera joota hai Jjapani*, are identified not just with Mukesh or Raj Kapoor but with India. They are hummed with relish as much in Moscow or Manhattan as in Mumbai.

An anecdote. In the 1950s, visiting Chinese Prime Minister Chou en-lai was entertained to live Bollywood music at a party in Bombay hosted by Governor MC

Chagla. The singers:

Talat Mahmood and Geeta Dutt.

The VIP guest suddenly asked whether he could listen to *Awara hoon*. Talat and Geeta knew the tune of this Mukesh song but not the words. A solution was worked out. They sang the first few lines of *Awara hoon*, then retained the tune of this song but used the words of some other song they knew. Talat and





Mukesh has sung for (clockwise from top right): Dharmendra. Manoj Kumar, Raj Kapoor and Dilip Kumar.

Geeta cloned Mukesh effectively; Chou en-lai was pleased to hear his favourite song.

Another head of state — Benazir Bhutto, former Prime Minister of Pakistan — was an ardent Mukesh fan. While travelling on road, she would listen to one of the many Mukesh cassettes she kept in her car.

Perhaps the unlikeliest Mukesh fan was India’s celebrity spin-and-googly bowler B Chandrasekhar, who owned a large collection of Mukesh songs. Introduced to Mukesh at a recording studio, Chandrasekhar was tongue-tied. He subsequently visited Mukesh and his family often while in Bombay and dined out with his idol. It is said that Sunil Gavaskar was once troubled by Chandrasekhar’s googlies in a Ranji Trophy Bombay-Karnataka match. The strains of a Mukesh song from a transistor in the crowd wafted on to the pitch. Gavaskar went forward and told Chandrasekar “Did you hear that?” It was a tactic to distract Chandrasekhar by mentioning his idol! Mukesh has a son named

Nitin. Chandra too named his son Nitin!

Mukesh’s voice plumbed the depths of despair with pathos, even sweetness. He rendered

While travelling on road, former Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, an ardent Mukesh fan, would listen to one of the many Mukesh cassettes she kept in her car.

several romantic solos and duets, and some philosophical, introspective songs. But it is his sad songs that cast a spell: he captured many shades of melancholy — loneliness, love and longing, depression, despair, hopelessness — with hypnotic allure.

Early days

Mukesh was born in Delhi on July 22, 1923, to an engineer father and was the sixth child in a family of 10. He was not



Mukesh and Suraiya in the film *Do Dil* (1947).





interested in studies and gave up education after SSC. During his teens, he discovered KL Saigal, was besotted for life and hummed his songs all the time. While he took up a government job, his mind and heart lay in music.

A distant cousin, actor Motilal heard Mukesh sing. He was charmed, brought him to Bombay, and got him trained by a guru. After a few songs in films, Mukesh grabbed the attention of two composing giants — Anil Biswas initially, and later Naushad. The 1945 *Dil jalta hai* attracted much notice, while his song *Gaaye ja geet milan ke* (for Dilip-starrer *Mela*, 1948, composed by Naushad) was a hit. In fact, Dilip had been reluctant to act in *Mela*, but heard a recording of the Mukesh song *Mera dil todnewale* in the movie, and changed his mind.

Andaz immortals

Mukesh mesmerised millions in the 1949 blockbuster *Andaz* which brought Raj Kapoor, Dilip and Nargis together (it never happened again!) The four Mukesh solos filmed on Dilip — *Tu kahe*



Clockwise from above: (From L) Mukesh, Lata Mangeshkar, Pandit Ravi Shankar and producer/director Trilok Jetli during song rehearsals for the film *Godaan* (1963); With Mohammed Rafi; From L: Salil Chowdhury, Mukesh and Asha Bhosle.





Troubled by Chandrasekhar's googlies in a Ranji Trophy, Sunil Gavaskar tried to distract this Mukesh fan by drawing his attention to the strains of a Mukesh song from a transistor in the crowd wafting on to the pitch.

Aah, Shri 420 and Jagte Raho. All of them featured Nargis as heroine and Shankar Jaikishen-Shailendra as composers and script writer. The trio rewrote the story of Bollywood music. But my own favourite Mukesh song for Raj Kapoor is the angst-ridden *Teri duniya mein dil lagta nahin*, a Roshan gem from *Bawre Nain* (1950).

A blunder

However, Mukesh blundered away his fame and goodwill. He decided to become an actor, and later, a producer as well. A spate of undistinguished films resulted.

agar, Jhoom jhoom ke nacho, Hum aaj kahin dil kho baite and Tootte na dil toote na (the last song was rehearsed 23 times before Naushad okayed it), were classic melodies. Dilip rendering these songs on screen made for unforgettable visuals.

But it was Mukesh's songs for Raj Kapoor around the early 1950s that took the music world by storm. Mukesh sang 13 hit songs (solos, duets with Lata or group songs) for six famous Raj Kapoor films from 1948 to 1953 — *Aag, Barsaat, Awara,*





While these films bombed, rival singers — Rafi, Kishore, Manna Dey, Hemant Kumar — turned out a stream of chartbusters. The singer who was a national rage a few years ago became a has-been.

The mid-1950s were a bleak period. Contracts and money dried up. The local vegetable vendor loaned Mukesh money occasionally. Mukesh's son Nitin was in Class 5, daughter Rita was in Class 3. They were barred from writing exams as they hadn't paid the school fees. The two kids walked home on a stormy, rainy day, much to Mukesh's anger and anguish.

Wonderful comeback

But his old friend Salil Chowdhury helped Mukesh begin a second avatar as singer, with *Suhana safar aur yeh mausam haseen* in the 1958 *Madhumati*, filmed on Dilip. The same year, Mukesh sang for Dilip again in *Yahudi* with *Yeh mera deewanapan hai* (Shankar-Jaikishen), and 1958 turned out to be a wonderful comeback year for Mukesh. He sang two poignant songs for Raj Kapoor — *Woh*

subah kabhi to aayegi (*Phir subah hogi*) and *Aansoo bhari hai* (in *Parvarish*). The success continued in 1959. *Anari* gave film fans two glorious Mukesh songs under the baton of Shankar-Jaikishen (*Sab kuch seeka humne* and *Kisi ki muskurahaton pe ho nisar*).

Mukesh went on to enjoy the most prolific phase of his career, sprinkled with numerous hits. He took his playback career very seriously, to make up for his blunder of the 1950s. He played a valuable role in the rise of Kalyanji-Anandji, something they acknowledged handsomely. He rendered hits for Salil Chowdhury, Shankar-Jaikishen and Madan Mohan and boosted the acting careers of both Manoj and Dharmendra.

To mention just a few of his best songs of the 1960s and 1970s: *Saranga teri yaad me* (*Saranga*, 1960); *Chal ri sajni* (*Bombai Ka Babu*, 1960); *Mere toote hue dil se* (*Chhalia*, 1960); *Jaane wale ho sake to laut ke aana* (*Bandini*, 1963); *Dost dost na raha* (*Sangam*, 1964); *Ohre taal mile nadi ke jal mein* (*Anokhi Raat*, 1967); *Chandan*

sa badan (*Saraswatichandra*, 1968); *Jaane kahan gaye woh din* (*Mera Naam Joker*, 1970); *Koi jab hamara hriday tod de* (*Purab aur Paschim*, 1970); *Kahin door jab din dhal jaaye* (*Anand*, 1971); *Kabhi Kabhi mere dil mein* (1976).

He won the national award for the best male playback singer for the song *Kai baar yuhi dekha hai* (*Rajnigandha*, 1974, music composed by Salil Chowdhury). He won four Filmfare awards: for the songs

Dilip Kumar had been reluctant to act in *Mela*, but heard a recording of the Mukesh song *Mera dil todnewale* in the movie, and changed his mind.



Sub kuch seeka humne (Anari, 1959, Shankar-Jaikishen); *Subse bada nadan* (Pehchan, 1970, Shankar-Jaikishen); *Jai bolo beimaan ki* (Beimaan, 1972, Shankar-Jaikishen); and *Kabhi Kabhi mere dil me* (Khayyam, 1976). In all, he sang 110 songs for Raj Kapoor, 46 for Manoj Kumar and 19 for Dilip Kumar. Mukesh's last recorded song was *Chanchal Sheetal Nirmal Komal* for the 1978 Raj Kapoor movie *Satyam Shivam Sundaram*, with music composed by Laxmikant-Pyarelal.

Mukesh was totally free of envy or pride. He showered lavish compliments on Rafi, Kishore and Mahendra Kapoor whenever their songs appealed to him. College-going son Nitin once remarked that his friends drove cars to college while he, Mukesh's son, took a bus. Mukesh quietly handed over his car key to Nitin, who was

Below: (from L) Talat Mehmood, Mukesh, Lata and Rafi.



With Raj Kapoor.

overjoyed. But he discovered that Mukesh had started travelling everywhere by bus. Nitin shamefacedly returned the car key!

Mukesh was the singer closest to Lata Mangeshkar. In 1976, Mukesh went on a concert tour of the US and persuaded Lata to join. On August 27, 1976, when the troupe was to perform in Detroit, Mukesh suffered a massive heart attack, his fifth. This time he didn't survive. He was only 53.

A tearful Lata brought his body

to Bombay. Said Raj Kapoor "When Jaikishen died, I lost an arm, and another arm when Shailendra departed. But with Mukesh gone, I have lost my life." Bollywood fans around the world were disconsolate. However, Mukesh's unique power-packed yet tender voice continues to rule the airwaves.

The author is a senior journalist and a member of the Rotary Club of Madras South

Designed by Krishnapratheesh S



Interactors shape a school's vision

V Muthukumaran

Out of over three decades of pursuing academic excellence at the Sri Kamakshi Vidyalaya Matric Higher Secondary School in Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, over 25 years, this Interact club has enriched students with extracurricular activities and all the noble ideals of Rotary, as it celebrates its silver jubilee this year. Run by the Kamakshi Seva Trust, one of the charitable arms of the SPIC Group of companies, the school "is creating a database of Interactors joining Rotary after their Rotaract stints in college, as this will strengthen our umbilical cord," says C Arunachalam, school secretary and member of RC SPIC Nagar, RID 3212, which has sponsored the Interact club.

The main aim of the Interact club, chartered in 1996, was to inculcate a service attitude in students. "This will extend a platform for the young minds to join Rotary in the future," says the

Rotarian, recalling his experience as a GSE member to Oregon, US, that transformed his life in 1997. "Excluding the Covid break, our Interact club has been very active on our campus, having taken up WinS projects, a smart class, mini libraries in classes and providing crucial support to Rotary's field activities and programmes," says G Meenakumari, the school principal and Interact coordinator. Only students from Classes 9–12 are allowed to join the club which has 27 Interactors who make their presence felt in Rotary projects such as the PolioPlus campaign and during governor's visit to RC SPIC Nagar.

Annual project fund

Every year, their parent Rotary gives a corpus of ₹15,000–20,000 to the Interact club to kickstart its activities. "Apart from our monetary help, the Interactors are supported by the Kamakshi Seva Trust with its chief

P Muthukumar taking keen interest in them. Whether it is installing a sanitary pad incinerator at the school, holding a district *Project Vignana Ratham* (science chariot) or the *Save the Girl Child* programmes, our Interactors are critical to our success," says Arun Jeyakumar, president, RC SPIC Nagar.

Recently, they installed mini libraries called *Books Bouquets* in each class where the book shelves are rotated across the sections of all the three blocks once the students have read them. "Interactors are also helping us to provide vocational skills to adults. On Diwali eve, sparsely used clothes were ironed, packaged and donated to Anbu Ullangal, an old age home with 180 inmates. Around 10 girl Interactors visited Arumugasamy Anbu Ashram, a shelter home for abandoned girl children below 18 years and spent the day with 55 inmates," recalls Jeyakumar. Last year, Interactors fixed bull's eye on heavy vehicles and, along with Rotarians, gave helmets to 10 two-wheeler riders as part of road safety awareness campaign.

Interact Club president Aashiv Muthusuthan, Class 12, aspires to study Electrical and Electronics Engineering, plus a major in Computer Science. With 700 students and state-of-the-art facilities including smart class, computer lab, RO water units and gender-segregated toilets, "the school owes a lot to its Interactors who are our visible interface with the public and the community," smiles the principal. Industrialist AC Muthiah, founder, SPIC Group, is the patron of the school. ■

Interact club president Aashiv Muthusuthan gives dress material to RC SPIC Nagar president Arun Jeyakumar (3rd from L) in the presence of DG V R Muthu (centre) and school principal G Meenakumari (left) to be delivered to a special home.



Rotary autos make women self-reliant

Team Rotary News



IPDG Rajendra Agarwal flags off an auto rickshaw in the presence of club president Vidhya Subramanian (on his left) and vocational director Alka Murali (seen on his right).

auto rickshaws, thanks to the *Pink Angels* initiative of RC Deonar, RID 3141, which was rolled out last year following a proposal from its vocational director Alka Murli.

“Back then getting even one woman to become an auto driver was an uphill task,” says Alka. The steely resolve of the mem-

bers and support from the community not only got women participants and their family’s support, but also instilled

courage among homemakers who had a will to do something for themselves and their families. In addition to training women to drive the three-wheelers, the club is assisting them in buying their vehicles and getting the licence and loans. The 20 women are in various stages of training, and getting their licences and loans processed.

IPDG Rajendra Agarwal flagged off four pink auto rickshaws in August at Chembur in the presence of club president Vidhya Subramanian, past president Sudhir Mehta and district avenue director Indumathi Gopinathan. The women got their auto rickshaws through the Gol’s finance scheme, Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana. ■

Twenty women in Mumbai will soon be sitting on the driver’s seat of their own

members and support from the community not only got women participants and their family’s support, but also instilled

An Institute for past presidents

Rotary District 3054, under the leadership of DG Balwant Singh Chirana, organised a ‘Past Presidents Institute’ named *Umang*. The two-day event was hosted by RC Jaipur Royal. PRID Kamal Sanghvi and RIDE Anirudha Roychowdhury were the chief guests.

The highlights of the event were the unveiling of the past presidents’ directory and candid Q&A sessions with the PDGs of the district. DG Chirana said that this move will



PRID Kamal Sanghvi with (from L) PDG Ratnesh Kashyap, DG Balwant Singh Chirana, PDGs Ajay Kala, Ashok K Mangal and DGE Nirmal Kunawat (RID 3056).

encourage past presidents to actively engage in current projects and boost

retention. “Rotary has a treasure trove of able and experienced past club

presidents. Their skills can be applied to improve our organisation,” he said. ■



Wordsworld

A film, a book, a writer



Sandhya Rao

Long before *Ponniyin Selvan* hit the silver screen, the story of the powerful Chola dynasty of South India had been read by hundreds and thousands, young and old.

Before *Ponniyin Selvan* was a film, it was a book in five parts, and before it was a book, it was serialised in a Tamil magazine called *Kalki*, starting October 29, 1950, concluding May 16, 1954. *Kalki* was a magazine started by Kalki. And Kalki was the nom de plume of R Krishnamurthy, a writer and editor of amazing virtuosity, a freedom fighter with a passion for the Tamil language. At various times he signed off under various pseudonyms such as Agastyar, Tamil Teni, Ra Ki and Carnatakam. But the one that stuck was Kalki. As to why he chose

Kalki, there are several theories and no solid answers.

But before we get into all that, there's a small piece of wonder I'd like to share. As happens so often, this time too, the 'universe' threw into my lap a gift connected to the subject of this column: a two-volume, hardbound book set titled *Kalki Krishnamurthy, His Life and Times* by Sunda, MRM Sundaram, translated into English by Gowri Ramnarayan, Kalki's granddaughter! In the very first pages of this elegantly produced offering from the Kalki Biography Project lie some clues to the 'Kalki' mystery. So, to get back...

According to SS Vasan, founder of the Tamil magazine *Ananda Vikatan* and of the film production company Gemini Studios, Kalki first used this pseudonym in an article for the magazine way back in 1928. At a time when verbosity was seen as the hallmark of 'good' writing — indeed, it sometimes still is — Vasan wrote about that piece in 1954 that Kalki had 'adopted a style that even a child could understand. It sprang from deep thought and provoked laughter'. Thereafter, the ink in Kalki's pen never dried and, 13 years later, he founded his own magazine, *Kalki*.

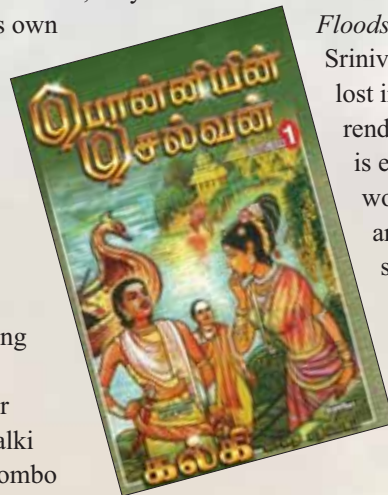
While one theory is that the pen name derived from the tenth avatar of Vishnu, Kalki, supposedly signifying change through the discarding of old, outmoded conventions, another recalls a talk that Kalki himself gave in Colombo in 1950 where he apparently said that he had shortened his name because Krishnamurthy

was difficult for some people to say. Yet another theory links the 'kal' part to 'Kal-yanasundara Mudaliar with whom I studied Tamil, or from the town *Kal-lidaikurichi*, where I was born' or even to Kalyani, supposedly his wife's name (it was not!).

Kalki packed in a lot in a comparatively short lifespan of 55 years. Apart from being a prolific and widely read writer, he participated actively in the freedom struggle, opposed antediluvian customs and practices, and was a champion of the Tamil language. He wrote articles, short stories, novels; his *Alai Osai* (Sound of the waves), with the freedom struggle as its backdrop, won the Sahitya Akademi award in 1957. Best-known, possibly, are his historical romances: *Parthiban Kanavu*, *Sivakamiyin Sabatham* and *Ponniyin Selvan*. All these were first published in magazine instalments and later as books. PS comes in five parts. The CV Karthik Narayanan translated version from Macmillan, has *The First Floods*, *The Cyclone*, *The Killer Sword*, *The Crown* and *The Pinnacle of Sacrifice*.

There are many English versions and at the moment I am listening to the audio of *Book 1: Fresh Floods* translated by Pavithra Srinivasan whom we sadly lost in June 2021. This rendering by Amit Bhargava is engaging, the Tamil words are spoken clearly, and the translation seems to reflect Kalki's prowess as a storyteller, keeping in place his vivid descriptions, sharp conversations and flashes of humour.

Just for the heck of it, I listened to 'Chapter 31: Thieves! Thieves!' while simultaneously following the text in





'Kalki' Krishnamurthy

the book. Remember, the book version is Karthik Narayanan's translation and the audio is Pavithra Srinivasan's. I discovered that the audio was far more detailed than the book, which could mean one of two things: either that the former is an embellished version of the original Tamil or the latter is a pared down one. Since I have only rudimentary Tamil reading capability, I will have to get someone to check this out.

In an interview with Anjana Shekhar in *The News Minute* in August 2018, Pavithra Srinivasan speaks about being introduced to 'the cult series' at the age of 12 by her mother and being instantly hooked despite stumbling a little over names such as Chinna Pazhuvettarayar, Irattaikkudai Raajaliyaar! 'A translator is giving a part of themselves to it (the work),' she points out. 'Only the translator

knows what the original source is. Therefore, the readers trust the translator to give them the most accurate, rich experience,' she says, adding that the best compliment is to hear a reader say, 'I am so happy with this translation, I don't feel like reading the original.'

My friend from the book club didn't read the original, she did something else. Married at 18, she said one of the first things her 14-year-old sister-in-law asked was, 'Have you read *Ponniyin Selvan*?' It was being serialised in *Kalki* at the time — in fact, it's been serialised several times in the magazine because it was so popular and newer readers were being added to the ranks of its subscribers. My friend, although a Tamilian, had grown up in Bangalore, so she couldn't read and write Tamil. So, the 14-year-old took it upon herself to read aloud/tell the story to the 18-year-old! That was her exposure to PS! How family members would vie with each other to be the first to grab the magazine in order to catch up with the latest instalment of whatever was being serialised is the stuff of Kalki legend.

What was so special about Kalki's writing that he continues to be remembered and read to this day, that newer translations continue to be published? Karthik Narayanan's version has an introduction by T Sriraman from CIEFL, Hyderabad, that's not in the style of a hagiography, it's an objective analysis of the writer and offers a context for his historical fiction. Interestingly, he refers a great deal to Sunda's work on Kalki, in the original Tamil. In answer

to the question as to what makes Kalki's historical fiction tick, he quotes Prof Meenakshi Mukherjee as observing that 'in many languages the most popular themes of historical novels centred around Shivaji and the Rajput kings who successfully resisted Mughal power', and clarifies that 'Kalki found no need to look outside Tamil Nadu for true tales of heroism'. He goes on to say: 'Kalki's acknowledged achievement as a writer consists in a transformation of Tamil prose style into a medium eminently suited for discourse — literary, political, even historical — in the modern world. In fact, Kalki had to rescue the Tamil of his day from its votaries as well as its detractors. ... Among the writers of Tamil there were two kinds:

those engaged in religious writing who wrote a highly Sanskritized, and therefore incomprehensible variety, ... and secondly, those fanatical purists who assiduously avoided any trace of Sanskrit but who in the process inflicted the most stilted kind of style on their readers and listeners. (These people called their Tamil 'Sentamizh' — high tamil — but Kalki described it as 'Koduntamizh' — cruel Tamil!) Kalki steered clear of these extremes.'

Anybody who knows Tamil will understand the paradox and appreciate Kalki's refreshing approach which, some 80–90 years on, remains relevant. That, perhaps, is his lasting legacy.

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



Kalki had adopted a style that even a child could understand.

It sprang from deep thought and provoked laughter.

S S Vasan
founder of Tamil magazine
Ananda Vikatan

A memorable charter nite for RC Chennai Legends

Team Rotary News

RIDE Anirudha Roychowdhury presided over the charter nite celebrations of RC Chennai Legends, RID 3232, in Chennai recently. He stressed on engaging every member of the club in all its activities. “Active member engagement and fellowship strengthen relationship among members, and would pave way for a well-balanced and vibrant Rotary club,” he added.

DGN N S Saravanan offered practical tips for the club to adopt and

grow. Edward, a member of RC Malta, RID 2110, was felicitated for his help in various service projects in India since Dec 2004, when tsunami struck the Indian coast. The club has instituted an award in his name to be presented every year to an outstanding Rotary community service project.

The club had received the charter in 2019 from PRIP Shekhar Mehta but the ensuing Covid pandemic and

lockdown had hampered its progress, says PDG G Olivannan, the governor’s special representative to the club. “Now it is all set to scale new heights, thanks to the incessant motivation of its charter president Elanchezian who has steered the club effectively in the last three years, building its team spirit,” he adds.

The club with 25 members has so far done service projects worth ₹1 crore including humanitarian aid worth

₹70 lakh to Sri Lanka in the form of food material and medicines. A mega plantation drive was organised in the campuses of two colleges in the city under the leadership of club president Rajashekhar Subbaiah. “We have planted around 175 saplings,” he says. The entire greening drive has cost ₹20 lakh. Scholarships were distributed to meritorious government school students in the city. ■



RIDE Anirudha Roychowdhury (seated, centre, second row) with PDG J Sridhar, DGN N S Saravanan, club president Rajashekhar Subbaiah, PDG G Olivannan and charter president Elanchezian at the charter nite of RC Chennai Legends. Edward, member of RC Malta, is seen seated in the front.

District Wise TRF Contributions as on October 2022

(in US Dollars)

District Number	Annual Fund	PolioPlus Fund	Endowment Fund	Other Funds	Total Contribution
India					
2981	11,520	127	0	625	12,271
2982	6,805	1,494	2,001	32,116	42,416
3000	16,477	2,680	0	0	19,157
3011	19,969	4,358	127	155,057	179,512
3012	7,970	752	65,235	78,188	152,144
3020	32,657	3,062	30,000	0	65,719
3030	11,661	43	0	1,275	12,979
3040	7,135	1,028	0	15,471	23,635
3053	19,606	136	0	0	19,742
3054	4,221	0	0	0	4,221
3060	21,713	200	0	61,476	83,389
3070	29,473	811	23,581	8,038	61,904
3080	5,690	1,787	0	37,163	44,641
3090	4,054	0	4,447	0	8,501
3100	41,770	400	17,762	0	59,932
3110	11,129	354	25,317	469,185	505,985
3120	5,974	0	0	0	5,974
3131	119,081	4,129	29,035	115,645	267,889
3132	9,508	1,346	25,000	500	36,354
3141	348,977	28,281	86,500	371,582	835,341
3142	113,439	2,893	1,098	25	117,455
3150	20,301	1,171	13,000	313	34,785
3160	1,310	2,338	0	0	3,648
3170	36,054	16,287	1,006	275	53,622
3181	34,696	56	25	912	35,690
3182	20,202	253	0	0	20,455
3190	15,977	4,059	0	985	21,021
3201	59,865	11,161	0	258,145	329,171
3203	1,427	7,732	0	26,479	35,638
3204	3,825	250	0	152	4,227
3211	56,068	0	0	1,049	57,117
3212	40,799	12,553	0	31,646	84,998
3231	44,302	19,845	32,025	569	96,741
3232	31,862	11,593	18,038	50,122	111,616
3240	19,754	11,200	1,000	3,622	35,576
3250	5,666	175	0	10,500	16,341
3261	11,008	13	0	5,277	16,298
3262	2,920	413	0	27,471	30,803
3291	21,209	248	15,033	8,190	44,679
India Total	1,276,072	153,231	390,230	1,772,053	3,591,586
3220 Sri Lanka	16,111	2,321	0	0	18,432
3271 Pakistan	25	11,125	0	250	11,400
3272 Pakistan	305	61	0	5,000	5,366
3281 Bangladesh	40,245	1,146	20,125	27,978	89,494
3282 Bangladesh	25,886	2,389	1,000	2,906	32,182
3292 Nepal	25,253	13,643	35,000	13,730	87,627
South Asia Total	1,383,897	183,917	446,355	1,821,918	3,836,086

Annual Fund (AF) includes SHARE, Areas of Focus, World Fund and Disaster Response.

Source: RI South Asia Office



New members from different groups in our communities bring fresh perspectives and ideas to our clubs and expand Rotary's presence. Invite prospective members from all backgrounds to experience Rotary.

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Rotary Kalpetta provides dialysis machines

Team Rotary News

Kalpetta is a small town located on the hills of Wayanad in Kerala. It is populated with a fairly large number of tribals and backward people. The Shanthi Pain and Palliative Care facility located in this town provides free dialysis service to the poor with its seven dialysis machines. When the facility needed more dialysis machines to serve the large population, its management turned to RC Kalpetta, RI District 3204, with whom it has been associated for several service projects.

The club went in for a global grant for ₹20.16 lakh, along with Rotary Club Riberao Preto Jardim from Brazil, and provided three dialysis machines, under what was called the *Happy Bean* project. In addition, the club also provided 30 KVA UPS units, costing ₹2.93 lakh, for backing up power supply to ensure that there was



From L: Project coordinator Jose Mathew, DG Pramod Nayanar, IPDG Rajesh Subash, Manoj MSP, DRFC Padmanabhan and Assistant Governor Shyju at the palliative care facility.

a smooth and uninterrupted dialysis process. A water purifier to provide safe potable water to the dialysis patients and two television sets were also gifted to this centre.

While the project was initiated last year during Dr Rajesh Subash's governorship, it was recently inaugurated by the

present DG Pramod Nayanar. DRFC Dr Padmanabhan and Project Coordinator Jose Mathew were also present.

Explaining the enigmatic title 'Happy Bean', Dr Subash said that "the kidney is a bean-shaped organ and when dialysis is done, it takes the load off the kidneys and makes

them happy, hence the title 'Happy Bean'!"

He added that the additional three dialysis machines can help with dialysis on six more patients every day totally free of cost. "If we put the cost of each dialysis at ₹1,000, every month this centre will be providing service worth ₹1.5 lakh to needy patients," he added. ■

Bicycle ride to school

Team Rotary News

RC Lake District Moinabad, RID 3150, in partnership with the Aurobindo Pharma Foundation, RCs Ameerpet, Hyderabad Armour and Hyderabad Deccan, distributed bicycles to girls studying in government schools in Narayanpet, a town 165km from Hyderabad. RC Lake District Moinabad president Patanjali Rao and project coordinator Uday Pilani led the project. A medical camp was also held in the same region.

Past president Ragnathan Kannan, chairman, Aurobindo Pharma, said that under the CSR initiative 800 bicycles worth ₹39.2

lakh were given to underprivileged girl students from 76 government schools.

Cancer screening for women and men, and ENT screening for children were done at the medical camp. A blood donation drive was also held at Narayanpet on the same day. Malla Reddy Hospital and MAA ENT Hospitals supported the medical camp by



providing the equipment and staff to oversee the camp. DG Rajasekhar Reddy Talla appreciated the clubs for their effort. ■

From RI South Asia office desk

2021–22 Foundation banners

Foundation banners for Rotary year 2021–22 and ‘End Polio Now’ certificates, along with list of winning clubs, have been dispatched to 2022–23 DGs for distribution to eligible clubs.

Paul Harris Society (PHS)

The Paul Harris Society recognises individuals who commit to contribute \$1,000 or more each Rotary year to the Annual Fund, PolioPlus Fund, or an approved global grant. PHS contributions count towards Rotary Foundation Sustaining Member (Annual Fund contributions only), Paul Harris Fellow Multiple Paul Harris Fellow and Major Donor recognition and club recognition banners. The recognition consists of a chevron-style pin and certificate provided by the district PHS coordinator who may visit the club or district to honour new members or entrust another Rotary officer to do so. For more information, visit <https://www.rotary.org/en/about-rotary/history/paul-harris-society> or read the PHS brochure.

Ways to expand PHS within your club/district

- Show how Foundation contributions are transformed into high-impact, sustainable solutions to the world’s pressing needs
- Explain the importance of the society through club and district presentations

- Encourage members to join online by visiting the website or signing in the PHS form
- Use Foundation reports to identify prospective members and invite them for a one-to-one meeting.
- Plan recognition events for PHS members or recognise them during other suitable events.

Transferring PHF recognition points

Your request for transferring Foundation recognition points is processed at the South Asia Office in the order it is received. We request district and club leaders to review the respective club recognition summary report and share with the Donor Services team information of eligible donors for PHF recognition. We will process the recognition accordingly. Contact Manju Joshi at Manju.Joshi@rotary.org (011-42250148) for more details. It takes approximately 4 to 6 weeks to process and ship the recognition items.

PHF Recognition Transfer Request Form is available at <https://my.rotary.org/en/document/paul-harris-fellow-recognition-transfer-request-form>

Foundation Recognition Points Fact Sheet is available at <https://my.rotary.org/en/document/foundation-recognition-points-fact-sheet>. ■



Environmental responsibility in festival season

Preeti Mehra

Think Christmas and New Year and you will be thinking of get togethers, celebrations and parties. These are events that traditionally generate huge quantities of waste and can add substantially to our carbon footprint. But does that mean that we stop holding family gatherings once the yuletide spirit sets in? No, you don't have to do anything so drastic. Luckily there are several ways of generating less waste and disposing it off responsibly. And if choosing the right food and accessories makes a lifestyle statement and also sends a message to our guests that there are green alternatives that can be fun, then we would have done our bit to add a green touch to the Xmas and New Year dos.

Choose the right food and accessories to add a green touch to the Xmas and New Year dos and send a message to your guests that there are green alternatives that can be fun.

Let's start with the invitations — keep them simple and digital. And if you are the kind who wants a one-of-a-kind invite, there is the possibility of designing it yourself or using an app or a website that does it for you. However, do not make it too complex as at the end of the day your digital carbon footprint also matters!

Let's move to the decorations next. When it comes to Christmas most households keep trees, nativity sets, cribs and baubles very carefully from previous years and bring them out during the festive season. But if recycling is not an option, you could always make these from zero waste — use scraps of cardboard, repurpose wrapping paper, old greeting cards, calendars of the year gone by. In fact, to involve children in such an activity makes the festival even more meaningful. They can make strings of stars, trees, even nativity sets cut out from cardboard and then painted in vibrant colours. And if it is a New Year party that you are planning, fresh leaves, flowers, tinsels and paper stars strung together could do the trick very well.

Now for the tableware. Here too, use what you have. Take out your cloth napkins, ceramic plates, glass bowls and cutlery. Using them is much more eco-friendly than buying single use plastic tableware or throwaway paper plates. Yes, it would mean a bit of washing up later, but it is worth the resolve of shifting to sustainable living. If washing up is not possible or

the get together is outdoors, it would be best to order biodegradable leafware. Today leafware party packs made from bamboo, sugarcane pulp or dried leaves and wastepaper are available online, they are just a Google away on popular retail outlets. Even organisations like Tribes India and some NGOs produce leafware that they retail or sell online.

Last, but not the least is the food and drink you are going to serve. To go truly 'green' keep your food local, simple, organic, tasteful and as close to nature as possible. The technique is to cook fewer dishes in larger quantities, especially dishes that have a low carbon footprint.

Now, how will you determine if you have chosen a menu that is more sustainable? It is simple — the closer the ingredient is brought from, the less your carbon footprint. For instance, vegetables grown within the city, town or even state you live in has a lesser distance to travel than, say, an imported ingredient that has seen thousands of miles of air travel and consumed enormous energy in cold storage. So, make full use of locally grown crops and it goes without saying, use your neighbourhood vendors wherever possible so that their livelihood is not 'disrupted' — however interesting the 'd' word sounds to entrepreneurs.

Again, when it comes to beverages, try to convince guests to go for fresh home-made drinks, but if you have to buy beverages go for aluminium cans and glass bottles that can be recycled with more ease than plastic bottles. There are compostable or even edible cups and straws now available, why not spend on these instead of their plastic counterparts that are non-biodegradable. These plant-based, food-grade material are compostable and will not remain in landfills for years to come.

Recently, at a lunch I was invited to, a friend served coconut water straight from the shell itself, making one feel close to nature. She had also used a hollowed-out pineapple to hold her salad platter. I have also seen friends scooping out watermelons and adding more fruits to the pulp to make a fresh fruit mix to go with the dessert. Through these innovative creations, they were, no doubt, making a definite statement of being close to mother earth and savouring its natural resources.

And now for the after-party blues. Clearing the dishes and washing up

become a pain if you see it as a mindless chore. But if you consider it as a favour to the environment and take it in your stride then it would hurt less. Involve the rest of the family in the endeavour and don't take it all on yourself. After the job is done, the garbage properly segregated and disposed of in the right manner, you can face the world without the hangover and guilt of having hosted an irresponsible party.

The writer is a senior journalist who writes on environmental issues

Designed by N Krishnamurthy



Treating those aching shoulders

Bharat and Shalan Savur

When excruciating pain hits the shoulder joint, the whole world darkens. Our shoulders are great allies. They hold our bags, they come handy for distressed friends to lean their heads upon, they help us reach out to a box of cookies on a high shelf, they sportingly add power when we draw back our arm to throw a ball or a javelin to a great distance.

So when I meet three people in just one month complaining about severe pain in the shoulders, I really feel for them, even more so because they are hands-on persons. They dust, they drive, they lug their monthly groceries home, all on their own.

Two of them had a fall while walking on the pavement, which could have led to this shoulder condition I'm about to discuss. The fact is, we are all blessed with eight little sacs of fluid around each shoulder. There are 89 more, but we are focusing only on the shoulder today. These sacs help our joints to function smoothly without friction. They are quiet and uncomplaining until... one day, one of them suddenly gets inflamed and the pain can be so acute, you awaken in agony when you turn on that shoulder in your sleep. So, here's the first tip: When your shoulders hurt, find a comfortable sleeping position and then hem yourself in with pillows and cushions so that you can't move easily. Even if you wake up while trying to shift your position, at least, it won't be to pain.

To continue, when this sac, clinically referred to as bursae, gets inflamed, it is called bursitis.

Note: 'itis' means inflammation. And the good news is that it gets better on its own in three weeks or so if you pay attention to it and treat it with some home remedies within 48 hours.

The remedies are:

Stop...and rest

Please stop lugging around heavy stuff, stop any activity that makes your shoulder joint twinge. Give it a complete break from its labours. Let it rest. Any pain in the body should always be respected, so much so that naturopathy says one of the signs of good health is not to have any pain in the body whatsoever. Being sensitive to physical pain is important.

Tip: The shoulder does need prescribed exercises but these should be done only four to five days later when the pain has subsided.

Ice it

If there is a swelling or the area is hot to touch, then put a few ice cubes in a

handkerchief and place it on the joint as long as you can bear it. Then take it off and place it again, say, 10 minutes of icing, respite for 10 minutes, and resume the cycle.

Cold and hot

Later, when the swelling and pain subside and it's not hot anymore, doctors recommend the cold-and-hot treatment — 10 ice, 10 heat, 10 ice, 10 heat.

Tip: Initially, wrap a towel around the hot water bag. You don't need a burn on the skin to add to your woes.

Pills to swill down

If you are not allergic to anti-inflammatory medication, either have ibuprofen or the humble aspirin. Tip: Time-release aspirin is good as the



gradual release ensures you don't need to take it often. If you have ulcers, check with your doctor whether it's okay to have enteric-coated aspirin. If not, ask which topical cream can be rubbed on the sore spot. Take the pill at bedtime. Don't forget the pillows and cushions arrangement. A sound sleep always hastens the healing process.

Calm with castor oil

If you don't want to call up your doc, get a bottle of castor oil. It has anti-inflammatory properties. Gently rub it over the joint. Place a warm cloth on it. If you are hesitant about 'wasting money' on a bottle of castor oil as once the bursitis is healed, you may not need it, you'll be happy to know it has varied uses:

- Applied daily, its anti-bacterial agents rid the skin of acne.
- It reduces wrinkles, stretch marks and it moisturises.
- Massaged in the scalp twice a week, it gets rid of dandruff and promotes hair growth.
- It increases the white blood count and boosts immunity and relieves constipation when taken orally.

So, your money is well spent!



Swing low

As the pain recedes, start strengthening some muscles in the key areas. Do this great exercise: Support yourself with your good arm by placing your hand on the arm of a chair, bend forward a little, allow the afflicted arm to drop downward loosely, then gently swing the arm back and forth...back and forth, just twice. Increase it to 10... 20 times... over the weeks.

A piece of wise advice; continue doing this swinging exercise even after the bursitis is healed. In fact, do it 20 times with each arm. It's a good preventive measure. One of the three people I mentioned earlier in the article endearingly calls this exercise her 'jhoola'!

Walk on the wall

Another wonderful exercise which I recommend is the walk: Stand with your afflicted side to the wall. Now, walk the fingertips up the wall to as high as you can. It's not important to feel the stretch because with the stretch can come pain. It's important to do it to the distance you can reach comfortably. Do it just twice for each side. Then, increase over the weeks to 20 walks. This is effective for a frozen shoulder too.

What is delightful about these exercises is that they are easy to do. And you feel heartened as you gradually increase the swings and the walks. It's a sign that good days are around the corner. Continue your daily walk outdoors as well. A revved up blood circulation does wonders to the body.

Can it recur?

That's the question in everybody's mind, isn't it? Can it recur? Yes, it can. So, do the exercises to prevent future episodes. Strengthen those muscles. Don't overuse the shoulders — no heavy lifting... ever. Some useful suggestions:

- Use hands-free accessories for your mobile. Unless it's a very

private conversation, put the mobile on speaker phone.

- Keep your shoulders squared as a good posture is mandatory.
- Gently massage your shoulders daily — it's both physical and psychological. Pain experts say that what happens in the body affects the brain and what happens in the brain affects the body.
- For the same reason, neither take stress nor create stress. Keep away from nasty people — the impulse to hit even if you don't literally raise your arm induces pain in the shoulders. On the same lines, please don't feel you are carrying the responsibilities of the world on your shoulders — that suppressed pressure, anger and resentment does result in shoulder pain. Delegate wherever possible. Take several breaks to relax, to be on your own, to enjoy a nice warm bath, to listen to music. Sow leisure spots in your lifestyle.
- Check with your doctor whether you need to take glucosamine or Omega-3 fatty acids in capsules. Include foods rich in Omega-3 such as salmon, tuna, walnuts, flax seeds, chia seeds, guavas.

Finally, every day, keep this sentence going in your mind: 'The best is yet to come.' It gives a tremendous boost to your spirits. It gives you something to look forward to at a time when patience is needed. The language of patience is beautiful. It says, 'I allow.' I allow time to heal my shoulder. I give permission to myself to rest and relax. As an ancient Swahili proverb goes: 'Patience attracts happiness, it brings near that which is far.' Never fret, dear readers. Healing happens. It's in the natural order of things.

The writers are authors of Fitness for Life and Simply Spiritual – You Are Naturally Divine and teachers of the Fitness for Life programme.

RC Chidambaram Central — RID 2981



Ten glucometers were donated to the Government Medical College and Hospital. Its dean, Dr Thirupathi, received the devices that will check blood sugar level of patients.

RC Khamgaon — RID 3030



DG Anand Jhunjhunuwala's birthday, Oct 13, was marked by completing seven projects under each focus area of Rotary on that single day, a special occasion for this home club of governor.

RC Madurai Sangamam — RID 3000



Furniture worth ₹70,000 was donated to Puliyangulam Government HS School in the presence of club president Vanchinathan.

RC Surat East — RID 3060



Around 500 people benefited from two cancer screening camps. Breast scan, mammography, PAP smear, PSA tests and a dental check-up were done.

RC Ghaziabad North — RID 3012



Two freezer boxes (₹1lakh) for corpses were donated to the government health department. CMO Dr Bhavatosh Shankdhar received the equipment.

RC Bhiwani Downtown — RID 3090



Over 50 persons were checked for BP and blood sugar at a medical camp held jointly with the Chugh Multispeciality Hospital headed by Rtn Dr Mayank Chugh.

RC Meerut Cosmos — RID 3100



Club president Vartul Agarwal led a tree plantation drive at a primary school in Sardhana village after cleaning the premises. Ten students will take care of the 10 saplings.

RC Mumbai Bandra Kurla Complex — RID 3141



During the installation of RCC Malipada, Wada, Palghar, 15 bicycles (₹55,000) and 100 solar study lamps (₹1 lakh) were given to Adivasi students of a zilla parishad school.

RC Poona Midtown — RID 3131



A health camp was conducted for differently-abled students at the Sevasadan Dilasa Karyashala. Rtn Dr Walvhankar and his team examined the patients.

RC Tadepalli — RID 3150



Ten concrete benches worth ₹40,000 were donated to an anganwadi at the adopted Mellampudi village in the presence of PDG Ratna Prabhakar and RCC members.

RC Wai — RID 3132



More than 60 stray dogs were inoculated with anti-rabies vaccine at the Veterinary Hospital, Wai, to mark World Zoonosis Day.

RC Gulbarga — RID 3160



Sweets and fruit were distributed to leprosy patients and their families at the Leprosy Colony on Gandhi Jayanthi.

RC Gajendragad — RID 3170



Over 1,000 students of the Girls Government High School were screened at a dental check-up camp led by Rtn Dr TH Shankar and his team.

RC Mettupalayam Prime — RID 3203



Two hundred persons were screened at a heart check-up camp held with the support of Lakshmi Hospital, Koundampalayam. ECG, Echo and blood tests were done.

RC Shankaranarayana — RID 3182



An LED TV was handed over to the Anganwadi Kendra, Mavinakodlu, as part of the club's outreach programme.

RC Sulthan Bathery — RID 3204



A swing (₹25,000) was donated to a primary school in association with RC Tirupur North during a bike rally hosted by the clubs in Tirupur.

RC Coimbatore Monarks — RID 3201



Groceries worth ₹10,000 were donated to an old age home-cum-orphanage at Podanur with the support of Rtn Gurusurthy Vignesh.

RC Chengannur — RID 3211



A drug abuse seminar for 500 students was held at the MMAR Central School, Chengannur. 'Say No to Drugs' badges with RI logo were pinned on the students.

RC Sivakasi — RID 3212



Groceries including rice bags worth ₹2,000 was donated to a physically-challenged on Diwali-eve for him and his family to celebrate the festival.

RC Gaya City — RID 3250



The full nursing course fee of ₹70,000 was given as cheque to Urmila Kumari, a tribal student. BP machine, stethoscope and first aid kits were donated to her.

RC Vellore Fort — RID 3231



Around 590 girl students were examined for health issues at a mega health camp held jointly with the Sri Narayani Hospital, Auxilium College and JP Dental Clinic.

RC Rourkela Riverside — RID 3261



Course completion certificates and gifts were given to candidates of two adult literacy schools at the Birsamunda School. DGE Manjit Singh Arora and DGE Jayashree Mohanty, RID 3262, were present.

RC Aarch City Madras — RID 3232



DG N Nandakumar handed over a van worth ₹6 lakh to Sai Illam, an old age home, in the presence of club president Suganthi Kannan and other members.

RC Bhubaneswar Meadows — RID 3262



Scholarships were given to 11 poor girl students for joining government colleges. DG Prabhudatta Subudhi and PDG Aswini Kar were present.

Compiled by V Muthukumar

To paint or not to paint...

TCA Srinivasa Raghavan



All houses everywhere need to be repainted from time to time. But in India the problem is more acute because of our climatic conditions. Northern and central India have an excess of dust that turns the walls brown. Regions in southern, western and eastern India have an excess of humidity that turns the walls grey. And, of course, there is the ever present problem of seepage. Thanks to the occasional earthquake in North India, microscopic cracks develop in the corners and edges of the walls. Then all you need is three days of heavy rain before the walls start developing moisture patches. And woe betide anyone if this happens near a set of switches. You enter a room in the evening and press the light switch only to get the shock of your life. Literally. It's happened to me a couple of times and believe me, it's very unpleasant. Hence the need for periodic repainting or recolouring and filling of cracks.

For sheer nuisance value, there are few things that can beat this repainting business. That's why people tend to postpone the misery for as long as they can. Usually the gap between each repaint or recolouring job is 6-7 years. This is because it's only after the third year that the walls begin to look really shabby and even grotty. If you are unlucky and the seepage happens earlier than three years, you either live with it or call in the painters for what is touchingly called a 'touch up.' This

reduces the nuisance but leaves you with a two-tone wall. It all depends on how finicky you are.

There is now a new risk caused by people who buy an adjacent house or flat and start renovating their new acquisition. I have been singularly unlucky in this regard. About 10 years ago, the house to my right was bought and demolished by the new owner. The contractor brought it down with huge hammers and the breaking went on for almost four months. It was horrible and left many cracks in our walls. We had to spend a small fortune to get them repaired. Then, earlier this year, the house on my left was also bought by someone. Instead of hammers they used bulldozers and drills this time. The demolition job was over in two weeks and noise was only occasionally

For sheer nuisance value, there are few things that can beat this repainting business. That's why people tend to postpone the misery for as long as they can.

unbearable. But there were more cracks this time and thanks to some very heavy rains this monsoon, we have seepage on the walls of all the rooms.

Coincidentally, it's nearly five years since the last full repaint job and we are now wondering when to get it done. Thankfully my 96-year-old mother lives with us. The last time when the cracks had to be fixed and the house repainted my 88-year-old mother-in-law was staying with us. So like now, then also we had a valid reason to postpone repainting. It was finally our son's wedding that forced us to get it done. But thanks to the postponement, what could have been done in a month took two-and-a-half months. I cannot describe the utter misery of those weeks and days and hours and minutes. I am still shaking chalk dust out of my books even though they were inside closed shelves.

There is also the question of timing. The four monsoon months are ruled out. In North India you should rule out the three winter months also. During these seven months everything takes much longer to dry. That leaves just the five months from February to June. So I have a huge decision to take: should I do it next February or should I wait till 2024 by when my mother would have moved to my sister's house? I think I will ask my mother. What else are mothers for than to take these hard decisions? ■

In Brief



A headphone that treats ear infections

Leanne Fan (14) from San Diego has won America's Top Young Scientist

Award for designing headphones that treat ear infections. The Finsen Headphone is a low-cost device that uses machine learning and blue light therapy to detect and treat mid-ear infections and prevent up to 60 per cent hearing loss in children.



Fun prescription for depression

England's National Health Services have rolled out a Social Prescribing Programme, under which doctors in 10 regions can prescribe surfing, roller skating and gardening for teens and pre-teens suffering from anxiety, depression, or anger issues. Participants will be monitored by researchers at the University College London to check if the activities boost their mental well-being.



US women diplomats commute by auto rickshaws in Delhi

Four US diplomats — Ann L Mason, Ruth Holmberg, Shareen J Kitterman and Jennifer Bywaters — use personalised black and pink auto rickshaws, instead of their bullet-proof vehicles, for their work trips, not just for fun, but to set an example.



Refugee camp recycles plastic

Design Academy in Eindhoven, the Netherlands, is training refugees at a camp in the northern Sahara to convert their plastic waste into furniture, bricks and other useful objects with the help of portable plastic recycling machines.



Cancer-stopping pill

City of Hope, one of the largest cancer research and treatment organisations in the US, has developed AOH1996, a cancer medicine, for people with recurring solid tumours. The organisation has announced that the first patient to receive the cancer-stopping pill is doing well. The clinical trial aims to determine the maximum tolerated dose of the pill and to evaluate it for preliminary efficacy.



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