

Rotary News

INDIA

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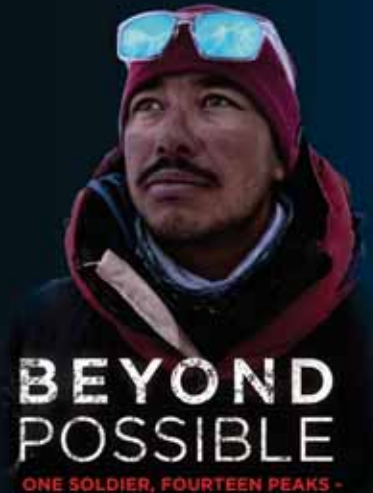
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A rich tribute to Queen Elizabeth

Enjoyed your coverage of Queen Elizabeth II in the October issue of *Rotary News*. Unusual also because I found no other coverage on her in other Rotary magazines.

I applaud Srinivasa Raghavan complaining of small European toilets. It's so very true. The more affluent the country, the smaller their toilets, with one of the Nordic countries being an outright winner. I've always wondered why no one was ever complaining!

*PRIP Kalyan Banerjee
RC Vapi — D 3060*

The October cover was superb with a beautiful picture of Queen Elizabeth during her coronation in 1953. The Queen was admired by all for her noble qualities. Was happy to note that the editor has paid rich tribute to Queen Elizabeth II, describing her leadership qualities and being a role model for world leaders. It is frustrating to read RI President



Jennifer Jones' message that there is an outbreak of polio in Israel, UK and in New York recently.

RID Mahesh Kotbagi explains the role of UN today and Rotary's active participation since its inception. RID AS Venkatesh stresses the importance of thinking long-term as mega projects can't be completed fully in a Rotary year. The cover story on the Queen, with attractive photos along with world leaders, especially our Indian leaders, is worth reading. Other articles on cervical

cancer, Pune Rotarians transforming Pingori village, fighting for disability rights, *British royalty's Rotary connection*, cycle rally in Delhi for cancer, and Prez Jones inaugurating a radiation centre in Pune are all informative and worth reading. *Club Hop* and pictures are good.

*Philip Mulappone M T
RC Trivandrum
Suburban — D 3211*

Thanks for an excellent October issue which has a well-written article on Queen Elizabeth II whose sad demise has left the world mourning. RI past president Huge M Archer had once said that he always found the letters column of *The Rotarian* magazine interesting. That's the view of many of us too, in respect of *Rotary News*. We thank the editorial team for allotting two full pages for the Letters column. When the magazine conveys a benevolent story and updates of

In her message, RI President Jennifer Jones says you have to take uncomfortable chances to reach important goals in life. Every lesson is an opportunity to grow, and each story adds a chapter to our collective *Imagine Rotary year*, she says rightly. The editor writes about the good work being done by Rotary in Sri Lanka by forging a partnership with UNICEF to collect funds to

help families and children hit hard by the economic crisis. Here is an excellent opportunity for Rotarians to help our distressed neighbour.

DRFC Dakshayani (*Tell your incredible stories*) says RID 3232 has 26 per cent women members (1,500) and the district will add 1,000 more this year, along with five all-women's clubs, which is commendable. This district

stands third in TRF giving in the world which is also praiseworthy.

*S Muniandi, RC Dindigul
Fort — D 3000*

The cover story *Where attending school is a luxury* by Rasheeda Bhagat was excellent. Her article *Don't water the weeds...* was superb. President Jones correctly pointed out that in the last 10 years 1.2 million members joined Rotary, but

the same number also left Rotary. We need to be more focused on how we treat our members and look after their comfort and needs, and engage them. Otherwise, they will quit Rotary. Jaishree's article *Changing the world...* was excellent. The picture of Jones and spouse Nick performing a Kerala style ritual for prosperity was captivating.

*Daniel Chitilappilly
RC Kaloore — D 3201*

Rotary in a hundred ways, the feedback and views of its readers are very important. A mix of brickbats, strong observations and much appreciation on the varied content of our magazine gives us an idea of what people are reading.

*R Srinivasan, RC Madurai
Midtown — D 3000*

As the UK's longest-reigning head of state, Queen Elizabeth II was widely admired for her grace, dignity and dedication. She was a reassuring presence throughout decades of sweeping changes, including the decolonisation of Africa and Asia and the evolution of the Commonwealth. Rasheeda Bhagat says it all when she points out that the Queen's legacy will loom large in the years to come.

*KMK Murthy, RC
Secunderabad — D 3150*

The cover story on Queen Elizabeth II is convincing with

deep meaning. The article titled *British royalty's Rotary connection* is inspiring. Rotary's role in communicating the UN ideals as shared by RI Director Mahesh Kotbagi is powerful and talks volumes about our organisation.

The Rotary Rain Run attracted 3,000 people boosting its public image. The recognition of NCERT is testimony to the kind of partnership that Rotary can bring to the forefront. The article *Fighting for disability rights from the wheelchair* is a strong message to show empathy and understand the needs of differently-abled. The work of Ahmedabad Interactors is an example in leadership development among students. I loved the statement from our RI President: "We are not only people of action but also people of purpose and influence."

*Vivek Khandelwal
RC Deonar — D 3141*

An elegant transformation of Rotary News

I am delighted to read *Rotary News* every month; you have changed it completely and it remains elegantly transformed. I was a regular reader of your articles in the *Hindu Business Line*. Expressing my gratitude for publishing the article, *Litfest in the mountains* by Sandhya Rao in the October issue. Happy to share that many Rotarians, including Geetha Srinivasan, participated. It is a wonderful moment for the members of our club to know that our iconic library building is shown in our magazine. Do participate in the Litfest next year; we would love to host you. Thanks to you madam, the *Rotary News* is elegantly transformed.

*R Thesinghraj
RC Ootacamund — D 3203*

The September issue is extraordinary and is full of inspiring quotes from RI President Jennifer Jones and other Rotary leaders. They include: *Every lesson is an opportunity to grow; imagine a new and green Rotary; don't water the weeds; and concentrate*

on the flowers etc. What is interesting is that the dreams of all these leaders are not the same. It proves that there is no one way of looking at Rotary, but many ways where we can transform communities.

*Piyush Doshi
RC Belur — D 3291*

On the cover: Seema, spouse of RID 3141 DGE Arun Bhargava, with children at an Army Goodwill School near the LoC in Kupwara district, Kashmir, where the district is doing welfare projects.

We welcome your feedback. Write to the Editor:
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Mail your project details, along with hi-res photos, to
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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.**

WHATSAPP MESSAGES
WILL NOT BE ENTERTAINED.

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www.rotarynewsonline.org
to read about more Rotary projects.

Sharing our Rotary stories from the heart

Being asked to *Imagine Rotary* can seem like a big, heady exercise, but the most important element of it is something quite small, even personal.

Not too long ago, Rotary members were expected to perform our acts of service quietly. I understood and appreciated the thought behind that — humility is a wonderful trait, and we should continue to nurture it in other ways.

But keeping Rotary to ourselves has a cost. And by sharing our Rotary moments, we are being generous with others and giving them an opportunity to understand the impact of Rotary.

It brings to mind that wonderful aphorism that poet Maya Angelou was known for: “People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But people will never forget how you made them feel.”

So how do we make people feel Rotary? The best way is to share our Rotary moments. We have all had them — when the ordinary collides with intention to create something extraordinary.

Some people have those Rotary moments the first time they go to a meeting. For others, finding such a moment can take years, perhaps when seeing the joy in the eyes of someone we serve. Or in hearing from another member something that hits close to home.

As Nick and I share this journey, we are amazed at the work you are performing and the lives that are transforming. Throughout the year, I’m going to share with you the sights and the stories that made those tours meaningful for us.

I hope you can do the same in your corner of Rotary. It can be something you share in meetings

November marks the 60th anniversary of Interact!

I want to express my fondest wishes to our Interact members and the people who support them.

Thank you for everything you do.

or on social media. For the most savvy and ambitious, it could be an event you publicise through local media. Even telling your stories to friends has impact.

We need ambassadors for Rotary’s message and our dreams for a better world. The best ambassadors are our members. The more you share stories — and share them from the heart — the more you encourage others to partner with us, to join us and to stay.

To give you just one small example, in the months ahead, I will be turning over this column to Rotary members who will share their personal stories as they relate to diversity, equity and inclusion in our organisation. It’s important that we hear these stories directly from the people who experienced them as a way of feeling the importance of DEI for the future of Rotary.

In everything we do, what people feel about Rotary will shape our future. I can only imagine what you will inspire through the stories you’ll tell.

Jennifer Jones

President, Rotary International

Khaula Jamil





Service at its best

As the war continues to rage in Ukraine, with no end in sight, and lives are lost on both sides, and violence continues to devastate the country, violence and conflict situations around the world have once again come into focus. Bringing peace into the world is one of Rotary's essential credos and the organisation's vital involvement in the United Nations, right from the signing of its charter, is well known. In this context, the cover story of this issue, which puts the spotlight on Rotarians from Mumbai, reaching out to villagers in Kupwara, so close to the Line of Control between India and Pakistan, where trouble or flashpoints can happen any moment, gains significance.

Just imagine the magic that a bunch of Rotarians from Mumbai created, when on a request from a senior Indian Army officer, a small group of Rotarians led by DGE Arun Bhargava, RI District 3141, visited a few remote villages in Kupwara, barely 8–10km from the LoC. They interacted with the villagers on their needs such as basic education, healthcare, and women's empowerment through skills and adequate training. It happened to be the occasion of Eid, and the Rotarians led by their DGE even performed *namaz* with the local imam, and on the spot approved their request for two motorcycle ambulances costing ₹8 lakh! The imam and the panchayat chief were both stunned and overjoyed at this gesture and marvelled at the fact that "Mumbai Rotarians have come all the way to Kashmir to give us an *Eid ka tohfa*".

As the visiting Rotarians point out, the villagers, most of whom are alienated from India, felt a sense of belonging to India, and the Rotarians and the villagers together sang our national anthem *Jana, gana, mana*, "some of them perhaps for the first time in their lives!"

But this is just the beginning; do read our cover story to find out more about how Rotarians will be sponsoring the education of children in the Army Goodwill Schools; getting midwives all the way from Kashmir to Mumbai to train them in private hospitals so that maternal mortality numbers, which are very high in Kashmir, start falling. This is service at its best.

In this initiative too, women's empowerment will take a pride of place, and the skilling of women undertaken by the Army to train women in handicrafts, food products etc, and its efforts to provide them a market linkage will further strengthen the Indian Army's hand in the initiative launched by the Indian government to "win hearts and minds" in Kashmir.

There are no quick fix or easy solutions to long-standing problems; they just have to be chipped away slowly, but surely. The commendable aspect in this whole initiative is that when the Indian Army needed a civilian partner from the voluntary sector to help it, its top officers sought the help of Rotary.

That's surely a salute to the Rotary pin that you wear on your lapel or the saree!

Rasheeda Bhagat

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Website



Director

The last mile to wipe out polio

The danger still exists

As the world has almost eradicated polio, wild poliovirus in places such as Pakistan and now New York cause concern. Recently, over 27 incidents of wild poliovirus have re-emerged from countries such as Afghanistan (2), Pakistan (19) and Mozambique (6). The detection of poliovirus, and even cases of polio, in places where it hasn't been found for years proves that eradicating a human disease isn't easy, especially in the final stages.

Polio anywhere is a threat everywhere. Polio-endemic countries should address this challenge on a priority.

Rotary's role

RI President Jennifer Jones on Sept 24 announced a \$150 million pledge to highlight Rotary's commitment to eradicate polio globally.

Rotary's contribution plays a key role in bringing a revolutionary change to the polio landscape. Rotary began its journey to overcome 350,000 polio cases in 125 countries with its first partners, GPEI in 1988, and along with WHO, UNICEF and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it has made several countries including India, Nigeria and the African region, polio-free. The fight to eradicate polio globally continues.

Mahesh Kotbagi
RI Director, 2021-23

It has been over three decades since the first World Polio Day (Oct 24) was marked by Rotary and its partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI). The day is observed to remember the struggles of polio victims, Rotary's significant contributions towards polio eradication, and to pave the way for a polio-free world.

India's journey to become polio-free

Polio eradication in India began on Oct 2, 1994, when the first PulsePolio immunisation programme, targeting one million children up to three, was executed. India accounted for 60 per cent of the global polio cases. Within the next few years, the National Polio Surveillance Project was launched to track and immunise all children. Monovalent and bivalent oral polio vaccines (mOPV and bOPV) were introduced to tackle type 1 or type 3 virus. Through concerted efforts of Rotary and GPEI, WHO declared India polio-free on March 24, 2014. India has not had a single case of wild poliovirus since 2011.

National Immunisation Day was observed twice a year from 1995 to 2017 to mass immunise children, after which it is being conducted once every year. Additionally, multiple rounds of sub-national immunisation day are conducted in high-risk states and areas. The government has also kept high vigilance and teamed up with Continuous Vaccination and Rapid Response teams to respond to any polio outbreak in the country.

Speak

Magnify your generosity

November is celebrated as the Foundation month by clubs and districts.

Over the years the work done by Rotarians through The Rotary Foundation has multiplied manifold with enormous impact on the communities that we live in. This is the external face of Rotary and it contributes to our brand equity. It also effectively contributes to our internal priority — membership growth.

There are two components in this. One is assessing the community need, identifying, planning and executing service projects in the seven areas of focus. The second part is the generous contributions made by Rotarians who choose to share their wealth through TRF. Both these aspects are intricately intertwined. I have been fortunate to participate in, and also witness, some path-breaking projects carried out by clubs and districts in our region.

I strongly urge every member of our Rotary family to engage in such work to truly experience the magic of Rotary. The ability to transform lives is an incredible gift that Rotary provides us. There is however an area that offers great scope for improvement in our region. That is contributing to the Foundation. Sadly, only about one in four Rotarians in our region contribute to TRF. All of us have something that we can share. All we need is the heart to share. Money is a magnifying tool. A miser has more to be miserly with,



and a generous person has more to be generous with. Money only accentuates your desire. It is for us to decide what we desire.

Often times, it is not the lack of resources that makes one decide not to contribute, but the lack of awareness about TRF. Simply put, we let ignorance dictate our choices. So let us intentionally try and find out more about the activities of TRF and the impact it has made around the globe and in our own communities. And armed with this knowledge, then decide which of our desires we choose to magnify. I am not asking you to open your wallets. Let us open our hearts, and the rest will take care of itself! Let your generosity be magnified.

AS Venkatesh
RI Director, 2021–23

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Magazine

From trees to a forest

Many of you will recall my challenge to Rotary clubs when I was RI president in 2017–18: to plant one tree per member to help the environment. Thanks to you, we estimate over 4 million trees went into the ground — quite a forest indeed.



This month, as we celebrate TRF, let's remember that each Foundation project is much like planting a tree. With each sapling of hope, health, and peace, we make an investment in the future that will one day grow into something even greater.

Such a tree was planted by Rotary in Sri Lanka, where more than 2,000 children born annually with a congenital heart defect can now get corrective surgery allowing them to survive to adulthood. Local Rotarians saw a need to make the surgery more accessible, and rallied 17 Rotary districts to contribute District Designated Funds. After the Foundation matched those funds, a total global grant of \$365,000 was used to create the first human heart valve tissue bank in Sri Lanka, with the government providing the building, staffing and supplies to ensure its sustainability.

Visiting this life-saving facility in 2017 was an unforgettable experience for me. But I have seen countless other great “trees” planted across our seven areas of focus. We planted PolioPlus in 1985 and it has grown into one of the greatest public health initiatives in history, helping reduce cases of wild poliovirus by 99.9 per cent. Seven Rotary Peace Centers around the world have also taken root and are now bearing fruits as scores of peacebuilders and community leaders go forth with the skills to make the world more safe and secure.

Charity Navigator, an independent agency, has given The Rotary Foundation its highest ranking for more than a decade. Why? Our overhead expense level is much lower than most similar organisations — 89 per cent of gifts to the Foundation went to programmes and operations in Rotary year 2021–22. Not only are we efficient stewards, but Rotary's requirement of a community-needs assessment for global grants helps ensure the sustainability of our projects. And the Foundation, run by your fellow Rotarians, is a charity you can trust.

However, only about 38 per cent of members actively support our own organisation's great charity. We can and should do better. Just as I challenged you to plant trees as president, as Foundation trustee chair I would like to challenge each club to make a giving plan for our Rotary Foundation this year.

Imagine our impact — Rotary's great forest of hope and peace that will flourish — and please give today.

Ian HS Riseley
Foundation Trustee Chair

Give to the Foundation every year

Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself.

— Anon



The Rotary Foundation works to bring just such happiness in the lives of people we touch and communities we transform. And this is made possible by our giving to TRF. The most basic need of a human being is to feel capable and have a sense of dignity. Thus, the best giving is to help people find their feet and support themselves and their family. This gives them a purpose, a sense of dignity and has the potential to transform the recipient into a giver. TRF believes not just in ‘giving the fish, but also teaching how to fish’.

Giving is an act of faith. There is true joy in giving. Experience the joy of giving to TRF. Your gift is going to make a difference in critical areas such as hunger, health, literacy, water and polio eradication.

November is TRF month; a time for relearning and rededication to the Foundation and its many worthwhile programmes. A time to focus our attention on the pillar which gives real internationality to Rotary — The Rotary Foundation.

From a tiny beginning in the mind and heart of Arch Klumph, as an endowment fund “for doing good in the world”, today it has evolved into one of the foremost agencies of humanitarian service — a foundation which is respected, transparent, increasingly nimble and one of the best managed charities in the world. It has been given the highest four-star rating by Charity Navigator on multiple parameters ranging from efficiency to transparency.

The opportunities and possibilities that we have in front of us can be transformed into success stories, thanks to TRF. That's why it is important to know about *EREY* — *Every Rotarian Every Year* — initiative of TRF. Only when every Rotarian contributes every year to TRF, can its stability and long-term health be ensured.

That's the goal and challenge. Taste the beauty of giving to TRF. I assure you, you will give again and again. Keep giving to TRF to do good in our world. Light the candle of giving and lead the way as you *Imagine Rotary*.

Bharat Pandya
TRF Trustee, 2022–26

New members of Arch Klumph Society from India

The members listed below were recognised in the 2021–22 Rotary year through a formal induction or elevation ceremony.

Chair's circle

Rajesh and Seema Gupta

Rotary Club of Delhi Rajdhani

Suresh and Usha Jain

Rotary Club of Delhi South East

Vinay and Rashmi Kulkarni

Rotary Club of Pune Parvati

Suresh Kumar and Kiran Poddar

Rotary Club of Jaipur Mid Town

Trustees circle

Ambalavanan M and Geetharani A

Rotary Club of Madras Mid-Town

Santiago Martin and

Leema Rose Martin

Rotary Club of Coimbatore Central

Rotary Club of Coimbatore Aakruthi

Nitinratilal and

Harsha Nitin Mehta

Rotary Club of Bombay Airport

VR Muthu and Malarvizhi Muthu

Rotary Club of Virudhunagar

Rashmi and Rajiv Sharma

Rotary Club of Bhusawal Tapti Valley

N Sundaravadivelu and

SV Murugambal

Rotary Club of Coimbatore

S V Veeramani and Radha

Rotary Club of Adyar

Bhaskar Ram V and Suchitra V

Rotary Club of Rajahmundry River City

Rotary at a glance

Rotary clubs : 37,014

Rotaract clubs : 11,436

Interact clubs : 18,767

RCCs : 12,550

Rotary members : 1,197,365

Rotaract members: 203,851

Interact members : 431,641

As on October 19, 2022

Membership Summary

As on October 1, 2022 (Interim)

RI District	Rotary Clubs	No of Rotarians	Women Rotarians (%)	Rotaract Clubs	Rotaract Members	Interact Clubs	RCC
2981	135	6,651	7.74	64	308	55	243
2982	78	3,597	7.23	49	1,233	106	74
3000	132	5,430	9.87	100	1,595	311	214
3011	123	4,647	27.29	82	3,092	136	37
3012	150	3,760	23.14	73	1,464	85	61
3020	85	5,105	7.58	35	791	168	350
3030	99	5,404	15.27	127	2,364	360	382
3040	111	2,684	14.57	59	809	85	186
3053	74	2,974	17.55	35	558	54	128
3054	173	7,156	20.64	115	7,617	204	574
3060	105	4,970	14.99	66	2,431	81	152
3070	127	3,352	16.62	48	628	62	59
3080	107	4,342	13.43	148	2,589	209	118
3090	102	2,515	7.08	46	725	112	164
3100	100	2,151	9.72	14	83	31	151
3110	150	3,849	12.08	14	98	31	106
3120	90	3,686	16.33	66	598	36	55
3131	143	5,759	24.31	121	2,687	250	143
3132	91	3,669	12.84	35	604	126	168
3141	108	6,078	26.69	147	9,311	197	112
3142	103	3,910	21.13	86	2,243	145	87
3150	109	4,389	13.26	147	2,012	152	120
3160	78	2,728	9.71	30	320	20	82
3170	146	6,629	15.79	99	1,750	262	176
3181	87	3,635	9.88	36	461	205	116
3182	88	3,732	10.05	45	165	132	106
3190	166	6,877	19.73	208	7,622	279	73
3201	165	6,456	9.76	126	2,391	105	88
3203	94	5,031	8.13	74	842	236	38
3204	74	2,552	9.09	23	201	32	13
3211	155	5,185	8.68	8	102	29	133
3212	128	4,868	11.52	84	3,531	293	153
3231	97	3,599	8.64	34	299	99	417
3232	174	7,692	19.07	133	18,835	238	100
3240	110	3,785	17.28	69	1,532	413	226
3250	105	4,002	21.24	66	1,195	79	188
3261	93	3,314	19.13	17	50	26	44
3262	129	4,260	15.12	76	806	653	277
3291	159	4,116	24.81	137	2,061	109	687
India Total	4,543	174,539		2,942	86,003	6,206	6,601
3220	72	2,133	16.22	96	5,394	144	76
3271	142	3,113	17.80	152	2,388	196	26
3272	161	1,846	18.04	70	965	22	47
3281	310	8,346	18.63	279	2,684	156	207
3282	184	3,729	10.70	202	1,652	49	47
3292	155	5,948	18.17	180	5,197	143	133
S Asia Total	5,567	199,654		3,921	104,283	6,916	7,137

Mumbai Rotarians help Kashmir villagers at behest of Indian Army

Rasheeda Bhagat

About 7 months ago, when Arun Bhargava, DGE of RI District 3141, got a call from a “top army person posted along the Indo-Pak border in Kashmir, I was puzzled about why he was calling me, a person located a couple of thousand km away in Mumbai.” It was a long call and the officer on the other end, Col Pranay Pawar, explained to him in detail that representing the Indian Army as a top Army officer, he was seeking Rotary’s help to improve the lives of villagers staying in a group of remote villages located barely 8–10km from the LoC, in Kupwara district, Kashmir.

In that conversation, the colonel explained the Gol’s initiative launched a

When they performed the *namaz*,
they invited us to join them,
and *meine meri zindagi ki sabse
pehli namaz us din padhi.*

DGE Arun Bhargava

few years ago in Kashmir to combat the alienation of Kashmiris, end their enchantment with Pakistan, and reassure them that they were Indians and the rest of India was interested in their welfare. “He needed the help of some NGOs, had identified Rotary, and offered to take a flight to Mumbai and explain the whole initiative of the welfare measures the Indian Army has been asked to take in that area to win the hearts and minds of people.” This initiative was connected to incidents of stone throwing by the locals in the Kashmir valley, and controversies connected to the Army’s response.



True to his promise Col Pawar flew down to Mumbai to meet a group of about 70 senior Rotarians from various clubs identified by DGE Bhargava. "I deliberately chose seniors and Rotarians from a mix of professions to watch the presentation by the colonel on how Rotary could help the GoI and the Army in their initiative in Kashmir. The gist of his presentation was that in order to prevent the locals from being sympathetic either to the militants or Pakistan, the Army is trying to win over their trust by

taking care of their basic needs such as education, healthcare, women's empowerment by enhancing their livelihood opportunities through adequate training, etc."

During the last 5-6 years the Army personnel posted in this region are working on the mantra that by using love and affection, rather than the bullet or force, the Army can build a personal rapport

Rotary clubs in Mumbai instantly raised ₹8 lakh to buy two motorcycle ambulances for the villages.

with the villagers. Towards this end, the Army has been building Army Goodwill schools, with some of the jawans even contributing the children's monthly fees of ₹150 from their pockets. Many of these villagers, who live close to the LoC, provide a lot of support and services to the Army, including acting as their eyes and ears and passing on vital and timely information on infiltration attempts from across the border.

"But, as he explained, the primary job of the Army is to protect the country, and hence it was trying to forge partnerships with voluntary organisations, corporates and other civilian groups to help win over the hearts of the people in those villages," says Bhargava. In the Army this project is called 'national integration' as it aims to give the alienated Kashmiris a feeling of belonging to India.

To establish a "personal rapport with the bunch of villages along the LoC, the Indian Army has



Future plans

Now that they have established a rapport with the villagers in Kupwara, what more are the Rotarians of District 3141 planning to do for them, in partnership with the Indian Army, I ask DGE Arun Bhargava, RID 3141.

The excited governor-elect whose core team on this “national integration” project is brimming with ideas, discloses his plans. First of all, the monthly fee of ₹150 in the Army Goodwill schools is not affordable to all children. Hence they attend the madrasas, where the education is free. “We have decided to undertake the responsibility of paying this fee of ₹150 a month for 1,000 children for four years, to begin with. We hope this will encourage more children to join these schools and get a decent education,” he responds.



DGE Arun Bhargava (R) being greeted by Col Pranay Pawar (Commanding Officer), 56 Rashtriya Rifles, Machhal.

Next, the Rotarians want to tackle the grave issue of a very high maternal mortality rate. They learnt that every year in one sector alone which has 10–15 villages, 10–12 women die during pregnancy and childbirth because of dismal medical facilities and ill-trained midwives. The Rotarians, after speaking to large private hospitals in Mumbai, have offered to get some midwives from Kupwara to Mumbai and put them through a

six-month training course in these hospitals. They will also set up facilities for telemedicine and long-distance consultation on complicated illnesses.

Bhargava adds that the Army has also told them about the need for a small stadium where the local children can play some sport. This will engage them during their free time and divert them from misadventures that beckon them. The Rotarians are examining ways to get this done.

now established the practice of undertaking every week a goodwill or *khairiyat* tour to the villagers’ homes. They inquire after the family’s health, ask if someone is sick and a doctor also accompanies them to treat sick members of the family, if any. In some places Army goodwill schools have been built and here quite often the teachers’ salaries are paid by the Army personnel themselves, Col Pawar explained in his presentation to the Rotarians.

The villagers felt a sense of belonging to India, and we all sang *Jana gana mana* together; some of these villagers sang the Indian national anthem for the first time ever!

It has also set up a women’s empowerment centre where training is given to women to enhance their skills in making handicrafts, food products, etc.

The Rotarians who form the core team of DGE Bhargava for his year as governor in 2023–24, were so enthused with this presentation and the Army’s invitation to help it improve people’s life in this region of Kashmir along the LoC, that several of them, including Anand



Motorcycle ambulances, donated by RID 3141, being presented to the sarpanch and maulvi of Machhal village in the presence of GOC Maj Gen Abhijit S Pendharkar and Brig Vinod Negi (second from R).

Ramnani, past president of RC Mumbai Parleshwar, volunteered to take up this cause.

“We got immediately interested as the Army, in collaboration with NGOs, wants to develop the villages close to the Indo-Pak border in Rotary’s core focus areas such as education, healthcare, women’s empowerment, etc,” he says.

So on April 30, 16 Rotarians, including Bhargava and Ramnani, from Mumbai set off to Kashmir to visit the remote villages, located about 45km from Kupwara. “We wanted to understand the needs of the villages and what kind of support was required, and thought it could be done best by visiting and staying in

that place for a couple of days. We landed in Srinagar and after a 5–6-hour drive in the hilly terrain, reached the village Machhal, which is barely 10km from the LoC,” says Ramnani.

What they saw in those villages literally melted away the 2,300-odd-km distance between Mumbai and Kupwara. As the group was there even as the villagers were celebrating the end of Ramzan and the arrival of Eid, not only did the Rotarians participate in the Iftar party but on Eid day they went to the home of the top military commander who had hosted an Eid-milan for the villagers to celebrate Eid. “We took some gifts for the sarpanch and the maulvi of Machhal, and on receiving these gifts, they became very emotional and said: “Look at this miracle; people come to our



Seema, spouse of DGE Arun Bhargava, gives sweets to Army personnel.

village from thousands of km and give us *Eid ka tohfa...* imagine Mumbai se Rotarians *aatey hei aur hamein Eid ka tohfa detey hei.*” They felt a sense of belonging to India, and we all sang *Jana gana mana* together.” Later they learnt that some of these villagers had sung the Indian national anthem for the first time ever!

For the Rotarians themselves there was a first! “When they performed the *namaz*, they invited us to join them, and *meine meri zindagi ki sabse pehli namaz us din padhi.* (I performed my life’s first ever *namaz* on that day),” says an excited

The primary job of the Indian Army is to protect the country, and hence it was trying to forge partnerships with voluntary organisations, and other civilian groups to help win over the hearts of the Kashmiri villagers.

Bhargava. Needless to say, he was guided by both the sarpanch and maulvi, who prayed on either side of him!

When he asked the top officer in charge, Maj Gen Abhijit Pendharkar, YSM GOC, Vajr Division, what more the Rotarians could do for the villagers, he said that when there was a medical emergency, as the terrain was hilly and narrow, an ambulance could not reach the villagers’ homes. “They needed a motorcycle ambulance, at the back of which is attached a stretcher on which a person can be carried.” The power and influence of Rotary came



into play; some calls were placed to clubs in Mumbai, and on the spot ₹8 lakh were raised to buy two such ambulances for the villages.

Subsequently, the officer presented the two motorcycle ambulances to the sarpanch and maulvi of Machhal village in the presence of the 16 Rotarians from Mumbai.

Later this news was carried on the Facebook page of *Voice of Kalaroos*, a local Kupwara media group, describing how the Army and Rotary had collaborated to provide two motorcycle ambulances for the Machhal sector of Kupwara district. The post explained how

located about 45km from Kupwara, “the entire population is spread all over the mountains with limited accessibility to healthcare services. The roads are narrow and during bad weather, cannot be accessed by four wheelers. Hence these two motorcycle ambulances will improve the Machhal bowl’s accessibility to medical assistance in this far-flung area.”

The Rotarians stayed in the accommodation provided by the

Army for three days, and gauged for themselves the kind of help the locals need, said Ramnani. “We were also taken by the Army personnel to see the women’s empowerment centre built by the Army. Here the local women make shawls, gloves, carpets etc and the Army is trying to establish channels to market their products at a good price, and has sought help from Rotarians for this venture as well. And we will now explore options to help market these products,” he said.

His club, RC Mumbai Parleshwar has been doing

Brig Negi (R) explaining how high altitude affects soldiers and the Army’s relief work for the locals.





DGE Bhargava and Seema, along with Rotarians of RID 3141, teachers and Army officers, in front of one of the Army Goodwill Schools.



projects for the Indian Army since 2014. “We were first introduced to the 36 Maratha Regiment and every year since 2014 we’ve been doing fundraising of around ₹3 lakh for them. This money goes into the Army Welfare Fund and is used to help the families of veteran soldiers for paying their children’s fees, home repairs, marriage expenses, etc.”

With the Army having established a good rapport with these Rotarians from Mumbai, on July 30, the club received a request from the 56 Rashtriya Rifles for 300 solar lamps to be distributed by the Army to the Bhakarwals, a nomadic tribe who rear cattle in

remote mountain areas and “collect information to help the Army keep a check on the infiltration of militants from across the border,” he says.

The amount required, just about ₹2 lakh, was raised by

The Rotarians have offered to bring some midwives from Kupwara to Mumbai and put them through a six-month training course in private hospitals.





Solar lamps being distributed to the Bhakarwals, a nomadic tribe in Machhal village.



Seema Bhargava (R) with teachers of an Army Goodwill School, discussing issues concerning educational challenges of primary school students.

RC Mumbai Parleshwar and the club took the responsibility of arranging and transporting the solar lamps to Machhal immediately, as they were to be distributed at an event on the eve of Independence Day by the Area Commander. As Aug 11 was Raksha Bandhan, the club also organised 300 *rakhis* for the jawans and the goods were loaded on the Jammu Tawi Express. Fortunately, a jawan from the same regiment was travelling by the same train to Jammu, so he took responsibility to reach the solar lamps and *rakhis*, says Ramnani. He adds that a Rotary club from Chennai, RID 3232, sent an additional 200 solar lamps. ■

India celebrates TRF

Jaishree



It is good to see so many AKS members and major donors in the district. I'd also encourage individual Rotarians to give to the Foundation every year. TRF transforms your gifts into service projects that change lives around the world," said trustee chair Ian Riseley at the TRF dinner hosted in Chennai by RID 3232. RI director AS Venkatesh, TRF trustee Bharat Pandya, PRID C Basker and DG N Nandakumar were also present. PDG Juliet accompanied Riseley on the India tour.

Increasing the number of Bequest Society members and generating contribution for the Polio Fund are two other aspects on his agenda. "Include the Foundation when you write your will. We are in no hurry to collect the funds. We want you to live a long, happy, healthy life. But it will be wonderful if you can leave a bequest for your Foundation," he said.

He complimented Rotary India for its role in making the country polio-free. "RI is enormously proud

of you. Back then people thought that India will be the last to eradicate polio, as with its huge population it would be difficult to manage immunisation." Referring to Pakistan and Afghanistan, the last two polio endemic countries, he said, "We will have to finish up fast. I am tired of saying 'this close'," gesturing with his thumb and index finger.

TRF has spent \$434 million during the last Rotary year for welfare projects, he disclosed. "This was made



Trustee Chair Riseley and Juliet, Trustee Pandya and RID 3012 DG Lalit Khanna (R) with Rtn Amita and Anil Mohindru and family.



Jaishree

Above from left: TRF Trustee Chair Ian Riseley and his wife PDG Juliet with (from R) TRF Trustee Bharat Pandya, RID 3060 PDG Parag Sheth, RIDE T N Subramanian, EMGA PDG Deepak Gupta and Reena Gupta at the TRF dinner in Delhi; Trustee Pandya, Trustee Chair Riseley and RI Director AS Venkatesh at the TRF Dinner in Chennai.

possible because of the generosity of donors.”

Earlier in the day Riseley inaugurated a dialysis centre, and visited an eyecare centre installed as part of the district’s ongoing *Project Orange* launched two years ago by PDG S Muthupalaniappan. Last year IPDG J Sridhar had initiated the setting up of 135 dialysis centres across 16 hospitals in Chennai. “These are fine examples of how funds from TRF can improve the world,” said

the trustee chair, appreciating the facilities.

Ten of the district’s 12 AKS members were honoured. Riseley recognised PDG JB Kamdar, also an AKS member, with RI’s Distinguished Rotarian Award. Three Rotarians —DRFC B Dakshayani, Mahaveer Bothra and Devender Dev — committed to join the elite society with their generous contributions this year. The district will also see five new endowment gifts, one pooled endowment gift where



25 presidents of 2013–14 will pool in \$1,000 each, four directed gifts and 10 major donors. Two Rotarians received the newly formulated End Polio pin for their individual contribution of ₹1 lakh.

Trustee Pandya recalled Rtn Ravishankar Dakoju and his mega contribution of \$14.7 million to TRF in 2019, and Harshad Mehta, the first Indian to give \$1 million to TRF when Pandya was DG in 2006–07. “Such Rotarians are so passionate about the Foundation that they not only give their money but also convince their friends and relatives to donate to TRF. It requires a heart to give, and the conviction that we are giving it to the right organisation,” he said and thanked the major donors and AKS members for their generosity.

An interesting fundraiser was organised for Polio Funds. Reputed artist AV Ilango’s two paintings were auctioned for ₹13 lakh and MS Dhoni’s helmet, which he wore when India won the World Cup in 2011, and a cricket ball autographed by Muttiah Muralidaran, Harbhajan Singh and Anil Kumble were both auctioned for ₹11 lakh.





Clockwise from top: Trustee chair Riseley presents RI's Distinguished Rotarian Award to PDG J B Kamdar in the presence of (from L) PRID C Basker, DRFC B Dakshayani, Sumedha and DG N Nandakumar, Juliet, Marlene Kamdar, Vinita and RID Venkatesh, and Trustee Pandya, at Chennai; Past RI presidents Kalyan Banerjee and Rajendra Saboo at the TRF dinner in Delhi; From L: RIDE Anirudha Roychowdhury, Shipra Chowdhury, Trustee Pandya, Reena and PDG Gupta, Trustee Chair Riseley and Juliet in Delhi; Trustee Pandya, Rtn Ravishankar Dakoju and PDG Gupta in Delhi.

DRFC B Dakshayani said that RID 3232, with its contribution of \$2.52 million last year under the leadership of IPDG Sridhar, ranked third highest in TRF giving in the world.

RRFC John Daniel, EMGA advisor Madhav Chandran and EPNC Chinnadurai Abdullah also attended the meet.

TRF Dinner in Delhi

The TRF dinner organised in Delhi in honour of trustee chair Riseley's visit had 325 delegates, including 35 AKS couples and 135 Major Donors. Trustee Pandya was the event convener and PDG Deepak Gupta, the chairman. RIDs TN Subramanian

and Anirudha Roychowdhury, and governors from nine districts attended the event. Dakoju pledged to create an endowment of \$1 million (₹8 crore) through RC Ghaziabad Sapphire, RID 3012, and promised to contribute \$250,000 as part funding for environment-related global grant projects through the club.

Trustee chair Riseley congratulated the AKS members, many of whom were upscaling for a higher level, and greeted the new members. There was significant commitment from the Mohindru family. Inspired by AKS couple Amita, past president, RC Delhi City, and Anil Mohindru, his brother Sanjeev Mohindru (RC Delhi Ashoka) and son Siddharth (RC Delhi Regal) signed the pledge to become AKS members and gave the initial cheque for \$150,000 each to TRF. Enthused, their friends Poonam and Ramesh Juneja of Mankind Pharma too committed to become AKS members.

Rajesh Gupta (RC Delhi Rajdhani) signed up to join the Foundation Circle with a commitment to contribute \$1 million. Amita and Navdeep Chawla of the Psychotropics India, and RID 3110 DG Pawan Agarwal, entered the Chair's circle by pledging \$500,000.

The event saw 12 new Major Donors and creation of new endowments by AKS member Mukesh Sahu (RC Sagar Phoenix, RID 3040). AKS member Uday Pilani was recognised for inspiring his club RC Lake District Moinabad, RID 3150, to become the world's first Promise Club with all its members signing up for TRF's Pooled Endowment of \$1,000 each.

Vidhi and Nidhipati Singhania of the JK Group, Nagma and Dr S Farooq (Himalaya Wellness), Sangeeta and Harish Agarwal (GR Infra and Suncity Sheets), and Anita and Sumit Goyal (RDS Projects) were the other philanthropists to join the elite society. ■

When the Rajkot *peda* and *bhamarda* fetched Rotary a bounty

Rasheeda Bhagat



In 2018, when a few members of RC Rajkot Midtown wanted to expand the diabetes prevention and management services that their club had set up in this Gujarat town, “the first idea that came to my head was that to raise big money, we should go outside Rotary and approach non-Rotarians as we needed to set up a permanent diabetes care facility,” recalls PDG Deepak Agrawal from RI District 3060.

At present the RPIC of Zone 4 for two years, Agrawal says that realising that India is the diabetes hub of the world, and Gujarat is the diabetes capital of India, the club members wanted to establish comprehensive services for diabetes awareness and management in Rajkot. “We realised that there was a huge need in our community to provide services for those who have diabetes and

complications resulting from it. The problem was that when somebody has a condition that results from diabetes, he goes to a doctor who first prescribes a blood test, and then next some other test if any organ has been affected.” By the time the root cause for the affliction was traced to diabetes, at least a few days have been wasted. “So we thought why not have a single detection centre where people get

In 2 1/2 days at
Chalo India,
₹1.28
crore
was collected.



really needed was a much more state-of-the-art facility. But big money was needed to set up such a centre, and “then the dilemma arises that while all Rotarians are rich, Rotary clubs are poor, so how to find the funds,” he chuckles.

In 2018, they decided to seriously look outside Rotary to raise funds, and “we thought we should do so by participating in an event called *Chalo India*, which is held in New Jersey every alternate year.” Earlier this event was meant only for Gujaratis and was called *Chalo Gujarat*. But the fee for putting up a stall at the New Jersey event was \$3,000. “We asked for a free stall there, they said it’s not possible, so we went to our club Board and floated the idea which was rejected immediately. The response: ‘we cannot afford it.’”

But instead of getting despondent, Agrawal got enthused, “because I’ve always believed that if an idea is shot down immediately, it must be both original and brilliant because nobody would have thought of it before, and hence it is rejected.”

Four members from the club — Divyesh Aghera, Kalpraj Mehta, Atul Ganatra and Nilesh Chagnani — apart from Deepak Agrawal, came together and picked up the gauntlet of going to *Chalo India*, finding a sponsor for the stall fee, and raising the required funds. “We said we

all the diagnostic tests related to diabetes detection and management in a single place, and where all the required tests can be completed in a short time... like one hour.”

Many years earlier, due to persistent efforts, they had managed to get a small diabetes facility running in two small rooms in a slum area in a property donated by a trust. But Agrawal and his colleagues thought what they

will buy our own tickets, stay in a hotel with our own money, and raise the \$3,000 too.” But one thing was non-negotiable. The club would have to pay for the cost of the banners that would be put up at the Rotary stall in New Jersey. The club agreed and the budget — a princely ₹3,800 — was sanctioned. Agrawal explains this, saying, “We wanted our club to have some stake in this project, and then we also needed the *duas* (prayers) of all the 145 club members.”

The background story of how this club of 145 was started deserves a mention! Agrawal first joined Rotary in 1990, by becoming a member of RC Rajkot, one of the oldest clubs in the district started way back in 1965. But for some reason, within a couple of years, about 16 of the members, including him, got disenchanted with both the club and Rotary and decided to quit.

But they had enjoyed their fellowship and friendship enough to know one thing: they wanted to remain in touch and meet regularly! “There is a race circle in Rajkot and we decided that we will meet every Friday here with our families.”

Initially these meetings went well; but within a few years attendance dwindled and “we realised that we need an umbrella to hold us together.” In the mid-1990s there were already two clubs in Rajkot; for some reason neither could

80kg
of the famous
Rajkot *pedas*
and
1,000
bhamardas
worked their
magic

or would sponsor the new club, so RC Rajkot Midtown became that rare club in the world which was sponsored directly by Rotary International, he says. The club was formed with 25 members. A really vibrant club, it has thrived since then, and has done some wonderful permanent projects, including establishing the International Dolls Museum in Rajkot with the help of PRIP Kalyan Banerjee, also from the same district.

Returning to the *Chalo India* event, Chagnani, one of the five members of the core group, who raised the initial funds to set up the Diabetes Prevention and Management Centre, happened to be in the US at that time, and he managed to get the stall fee of

\$3,000 from a pharma company in the US.

But while preparing for the US event, in their internal discussion, “we thought when we put up the stall, why would anybody be attracted to visit that stall, because after all, how many people would have heard of or be interested in Rotary and what it does? We needed an idea to draw people to our stall,” recalls Agrawal.

It was then that a brilliant idea popped into this past governor’s head; “we decided to take the famous Rajkot *pedas* with us... it is a delicacy, and we were sure that those who visited the exhibition would love it.” So they ordered some 80kg, packing each *peda* lovingly in a liquid nitrogen packet so that it would stay fresh and edible for three months, and shipped it to the US.

But the consignment of *pedas* had an interesting companion, the ubiquitous, colourful *bhamarda* (spinning top) made from wood by hand for which this area in Gujarat is famous. They identified an artisan in Dhoraji, about 100km from Rajkot, who was renowned for making beautiful *bhamardas*. Each handcrafted toy was packed attractively, with a short poem on the label. About 1,000 of these, each costing ₹62, were made and packed in specially ordered boxes, and shipped to New Jersey. The Rotarians were now ready for their fundraising.

The exhibition started on the afternoon of Aug 31, 2018, and the Rotarians patiently waited for footfalls. They had decided to give a free *peda* to every visitor, and a *bhamarda* to those who made a donation! But

Below:
A dentist
treating a
patient at RC
Rajkot Midtown's
Diabetes
Prevention and
Management
Centre.





Visitors at the club's *Chalo India* stall in New Jersey.

in the first few hours, hardly anybody visited their stall. Obviously, they knew little about Rotary, and cared even less to find out! Out of choice, the Rajkot Rotarians had not contacted any Rotary club in New Jersey or the US for that matter; their *mantra* was to approach non-Rotarians for funds to do a community service project.

The event would barely last another 48 hours, so the group decided to act. They started giving out free *pedas* to even those who were passing by the stall. Naturally, and more out of politeness, the recipients stopped, looked at the display material on the walls of the stall and started asking about Rotary, and the cause for which they were seeking funds.

But more than Rotary, or the display material about the

work it does, what attracted their attention were the colourful *bhamardas*, begging to be picked up! “So they asked us, what are these, and when we explained, they said can we buy them. So we said: ‘Sorry, these are not for sale. You’ll get one as a gift and a goodwill gesture, only if you make a donation for our cause!’”

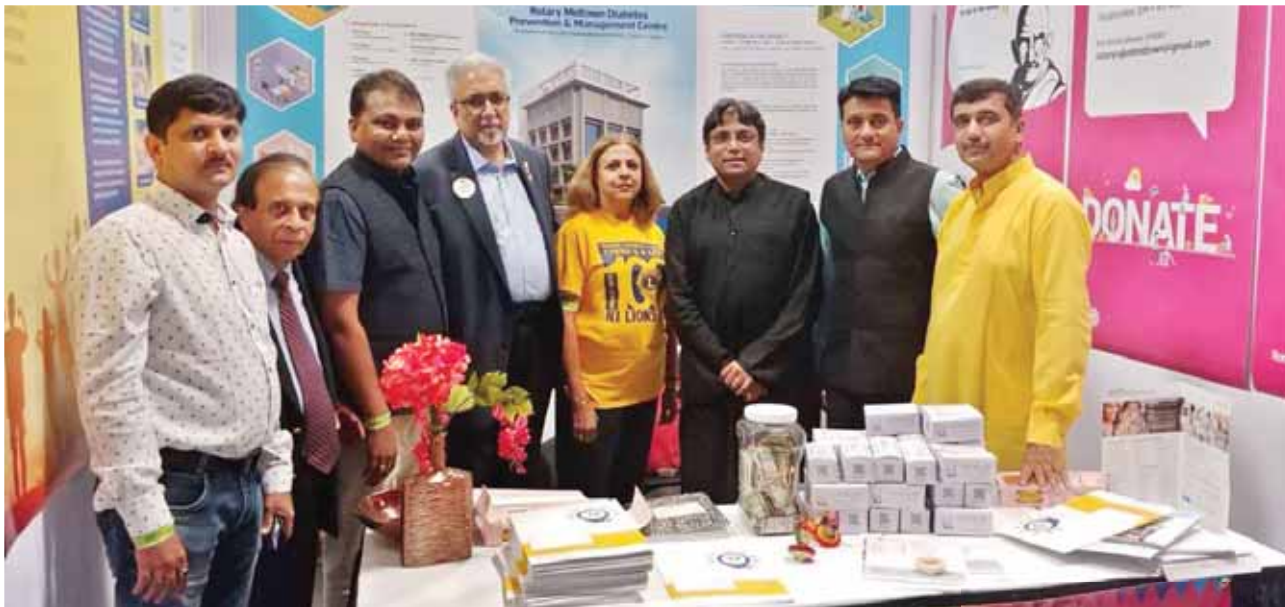
Slowly word of mouth spread and “we had more than 100 people visit our stall the next day and by lunch time, there was a queue of people waiting at our stall! People realised there was something called Rotary, learnt about the huge problem of diabetes in India/Gujarat, and why a diabetes centre was required there. We explained that India is the diabetes hub of the world and Gujarat is the diabetes capital of India. We said we needed help to put up this centre which would create awareness about prevention and provide treatment, specially to the underprivileged.

The goal is to raise a corpus of **₹10 crore** for the diabetes centre.

You will be surprised to know that in two and a half days of that event, we collected **₹1.28 crore** though donations, both from NRIs and Americans,” beams Agrawal.

The Rotarians at the stall were deeply touched when suddenly a woman walked in with a lot of home-cooked food and juices carried by her helper. “She said I heard that my brothers have come from Gujarat and they must be hungry. So from now on, food will come for you from my house.” She later talked to her husband, a doctor, and the two donated ₹7.5 lakh for the diabetes centre to be put up in Rajkot.

The whopping collection at *Chalo India* only confirmed his belief that “we should go outside Rotary and ask for funds for our projects. And when I became RPIC



for Zone 4, I thought every Saturday, why not talk about Rotary and the work we do to people who visit popular places, such as the Hanuman temple in Rajkot.”

As the club had its own trust (RC Rajkot Midtown Charitable Trust of which Agrawal is chairman and managing trustee), they were able to bring the ₹1.28 crore collected in New Jersey to India without any hassle. “The Municipal Corporation of Rajkot had already given us some land for our centre, and with the money raised, we constructed a 5-floor hospital with 14,500 sqft carpet area, and equipped it with all the necessary staff and machines required for diagnosis and treatment of various disorders associated with diabetes, including dental and eyecare,” adds Agrawal. The centre, inaugurated by the Gujarat Chief Minister, became operational in April, 2021. About 40–50 people visit it daily for

diabetes diagnosis and treatment, so every month nearly 1,500 locals benefit from it, most of them getting medicines at discounted prices and even free when somebody is too poor to afford to pay anything.

Their fundraising efforts have continued, and till now this club has raised ₹6 crore for this diabetes project alone. The club has done two global grants for their diabetes project; the first grant had for international partners two clubs from the US (RID 6000) and UK (RID 1200); the second one was supported by two American clubs from RIDs 5495 and 5170. This March, it received its first CSR funding from a pharma company called PAR Drugs which has given ₹11 lakh.

As for the future, Agrawal says that their objective is to have a corpus of ₹10 crore, so that this centre can be run efficiently from the interest income from the corpus. They’ve

Above:
From L: Atul Ganatra, Kalpraj Mehta (third from L), PDG Deepak Agrawal (sixth from L), Divyesh Aghera and Nilesh Changani with media team at the stall in New Jersey.

already collected ₹4 crore towards this goal. They look forward to participating in any future *Chalo India* events — one is due next year. Agrawal also hopes to try his luck at the *Atithi Diwas* that the GoI organises in Ahmedabad regularly for NRIs, as well as other major exhibitions held outside India. As one who regularly tracks FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 2010) data on foreign donations, he says, “You’ll be surprised to know that the maximum donations for the voluntary sector in India come not from the US, but Germany, so Germany is another place — especially the book exhibition — we are going to focus on in the future.”

He is sure he will find some connection there too; after all “isn’t Rotary mainly about two words — connection and donation.”

Designed by
N Krishnamurthy

Home district felicitates RIDE Subramanian

Team Rotary News



Clockwise from top:

From L: RIDE Anirudha Roychowdhury, RI Director Mahesh Kotbagi, PRID Kamal Sanghvi, RIDE TN Subramanian, PRIP Kalyan Banerjee, PRIDs Ashok Mahajan, Manoj Desai and C Basker, and TRF Trustee Bharat Pandya.

RIDE Subramanian with RID 3141 DG Sandip Agarwalla (L) and Malini, and Rajeev Tikka, president of RC Mumbai Sea Coast.

Trustee Pandya and Madhvi greet RIDE Subramanian and Vidhya as Sonal and PRID Kamal Sanghvi, and PRID Mahajan look on.

RI Districts 3141 and 3142 hosted a felicitation for RI director-elect TN Subramanian in Mumbai. The event was attended by RI director Mahesh Kotbagi, trustee Bharat Pandya, past RI president Kalyan Banerjee, past RI directors Ashok Mahajan, Manoj Desai, C Basker, Kamal Sanghvi and RIDE Anirudha Roychowdhury. PRIPs Rajendra Saboo and KR Ravindran greeted

RIDE Subramanian through video clips. Leaders from 39 Rotary districts attended the programme and conveyed their best wishes to him.

RIDE Subramanian, fondly called Raju, thanked the audience and said that the support of his own and his Rotary family has helped him achieve big. He added that he will not make any compromises with mediocracy and give his best to ensure that Rotary in India shines brightly. ■



Rotary transforms a government girls' school in Chennai

Jaishree



It was a unique occasion; three organisations celebrating their silver jubilee! At the centre of attention was the Mogappair Government Girls Higher Secondary School in Chennai, which last month celebrated its 25th year through the inauguration of a spanking new, vibrantly coloured block with nine classrooms, thanks to the help extended by RC Chennai Midcity, RID 3232, and VS&B Containers, both also celebrating their silver jubilee year. The VS&B Silver Jubilee Block, which cost a whopping ₹1.5 crore, was fully sponsored by VS&B, headed by club member Bijoy Paulose.

The spanking new block was inaugurated by Rajya Sabha

MP P Wilson in the presence of TN HR&CE minister PK Sekar Babu and DEO Selvaganesh. This is the first block under the club's silver jubilee project at the school campus spread across 4.5 acres.

RC Chennai Midcity has had a long association with the school, all the way from 2008, and has invested a mega ₹5 crore on its development.

It all began when the club adopted the school 14 years ago after providing it with a science lab, a water treatment plant and a library. "The school was in a bad shape then and the children's education was badly impacted," recalls club president Anup T N.

In 2011, the club led by Nandita Bansal, provided facilities such as well-ventilated classrooms, a sports track and a basketball court. "We introduced the children to the game and from then on there was no looking back. The new facility helped three students get admission in Queen Mary's College in the sports quota. Now many girls take to the sport with much enthusiasm," he says. In 2018, the club helped the school upgrade to the higher secondary level by adding infrastructure worth ₹2.75 crore.

"Now we are at Phase 3 of our commitment to the school and we will soon be inaugurating another 12 classrooms," says Anup. A toilet block



Above: RC Chennai Midcity president Anup T N (in blue blazer) and VS&B group chairman Bijoy Paulose (in blue blazer on the last row) with club members and the school teachers.

Below: Students in one of the new classrooms.

with 19 washrooms and equipped with sanitary pad dispensers and incinerators are also part of this project.

With this makeover, the student strength steadily rose from 320 in 2018 to 944 students now. “We are committed to making this a model school in Chennai. Our objective is not just building infrastructure, but also supporting the overall growth of the girls,” he adds. Soft skills workshops and seminars on personality development and personal safety are regularly organised for the students by the club.

It was heartening to hear P Dhanushree of Class 8 say, “I want to be a singer. Trust me, we have the best facilities here and the teachers are just



awesome.” She spoke with such confidence and flair that it was like hearing a private school student speak. Similar appreciation was echoed by L Bhuvaneshwari of Class 4: “Oh, I love my school,” while Preetha R dashed into our little group to say, “The computer lab, games court and our library are great.” Spoken English classes are also conducted for

the students, and that explains the fluency and the perfect diction. The entire ambience is so much different from any other government school, all thanks to this Rotary club.

“One of the seven students from the recently included Class 12 batch even got into a medical college in Erode after qualifying in the NEET exams,” says Anup. Most of the children are from the city outskirts. Following the

Covid pandemic, many people in private employment lost their jobs and couldn’t afford private schools for their children. For many such parents this school has been a blessing, he adds.

“There is continuity year after year and the entire club supports the project. Each president is equally committed to keep it going. That has helped in its overall development,” says Rajiv K P, last year’s club president.

“It is easy to say that money is what drives a project like this. But frankly it is not. It is actually the dedication of so many Rotarians who have put in so much time into the implementation of this project. It is an achievement for the club,” says the project’s major donor Paulose, adding that this is undoubtedly the biggest project that VS&B has ever donated to. “There is no better vehicle to do a CSR project than Rotary because every single paise given to Rotary can be seen in a building or in the services being given.”

The club had earlier stayed away from the school for 18 months “because the then headmistress didn’t want us. But when she realised that without Rotary things did not move, she called us back,” smiles Anup.

About 200 students will soon be getting bicycles through a government programme. “We only pitch in where the government cannot provide support,” he adds.

The club will be tying up with Nippon Paints to teach girls above 18 to paint and provide employment through the organisation. During the Covid pandemic the club raised ₹1.07 crore in two weeks to set up a Covid block at the Hindu Mission Hospital in Tambaram on the city’s outskirts.

The club has 43 members. “We are working on inducting new members but it is a slow process because we want to add like-minded members who share our thought-process and would want to stay with us for life,” says the president. ■



Know Your Rotary

(7th edition)

By Rtn. N.Bhaskaran Pillai

K*now Your Rotary* is the largest and most comprehensive book on Rotary in the world. The first edition of this book was published in 1998 and its sixth edition last year which was sold out in record time. In view of inquiries from various parts of India another edition is being published in December 2022, updated and with added material.

About the book: *Know Your Rotary* covers almost all aspects of Rotary. Here are a few excerpts from the reviews from hundreds of Rotary stalwarts who were all praise for the book:

PDG Ranjan Dhingra: D. 3011 : "Know Your Rotary is nothing less than the Rotary encyclopedia."

PDG Narendra Kumar Mishra IAS D. 3262: "Know Your Rotary is an excellent book"

PRID Yash Pal Das: 'Know Your Rotary covers every conceivable topic of Rotary'

PDG Dr. Sudhir Rashingkar D. 3131 "This is a wonderful book ..."

PDG Dr. George Sundararaj D.3203 & RLI Director: "Got addicted to Rotary through *Know Your Rotary*"

PDG Ravi N. Deshpande D. 3170: "It's a wonder book."

"*Know Your Rotary* is a beautifully produced compendium of knowledge, history and encouragement. This is incredible."

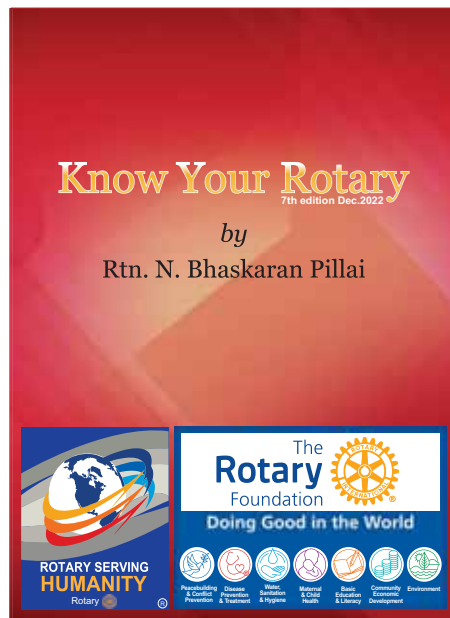
Past RI President Raja Saboo

"...*The Bible on Rotary, updated and completely current*"

Past RI President ('Ravi') Ravindran

PDG Ravi Vadlamani: D 3150 '...yes the book is an encyclopaedia on Rotary.'

PDG Suresh: D 3150: "...an excellent and comprehensive book on all aspects of Rotary."



PP Mohan Kumar: "I consider this book as a Holy Scripture of Rotary."

PDG A.V.Pathy, D. 3201: "Magnificent work. The content of the book is truly amazing, that gives one a perfect insight of our organization."

PDG Pathmanathan, D3220 "I have never seen or read a high-class informative publication of this nature on Rotary. I learnt a lot from your book. It is a fountain of Rotary information and a useful encyclopedia for every Rotarian."

PDG Udaya M Pradhan, D3240 It (*Know Your Rotary*) is simply fabulous.

Pre-publication offer

The 7th edition of *Know Your Rotary* will be released in December, 2022. Here is an attractive pre-publication offer:

The cover price of this 480 pages book will be Rs.425/- (shipping charges Rs.40/- per copy extra). But all orders received up to 30 November 2022 will attract a discount of 40 per cent on the cover

price. i.e. for one copy up to 30 November, pay only Rs.295/- including shipping charges. (Rs.1,475/-for 5 copies; Rs.2950/- for 10 copies.)

Payment can be made by Google Pay to 9847157170, (Bhaskaran Pillai N) **OR** by NEFT to N.Bhaskaran Pillai, A/c No. 055551000000256,

YES Bank, Cochin-682019, IFS Code: YESB0000555

For further information and any clarification please write to the author:

Rtn. N.Bhaskaran Pillai (RC of Kalamassery, D3201) 10 E, Tiknar Oline, Cochin - 682 024

email: bhaskaranpillain@gmail.com Phone: 9847157170

Know Your Rotary is a volunteer effort: Net sale proceeds will be contributed to TRF

Rural women offer homestays in Goa

Kiran Zehra



Members of the Shri Brahmani SHG at the Jungle Trails Homestay in Taldem, Sacorda-Goa.

Recently, RC Panaji Riviera, RID 3170, organised a one-day seminar for rural women from Self Help Groups (SHG) in Goa to educate them on the opportunity now available to boost their income by offering homestays. Ryan Costa, vocational chair of the club, said that the Goa government is now promoting village tourism in a bid to boost the tourism sector.

“Apart from providing travellers with a unique cultural experience this move will help locals make some extra money. The idea of a Goa vacation has undergone a transformation. Tourists

now want to experience local life, enjoy authentic seafood and relax on a clean, quiet beach,” he says. In this new milieu, homestays are now the preferred option as they are pocket-friendly and add to the travelling experience.

The club in association with WICCI Rural Tourism Council and Goa State Rural Livelihood Mission (GSRLM) hosted the Eco-friendly Homestay seminar for representatives from 25 SHGs from across Goa. Mini Ribeiro, state president of WICCI Rural Tourism Council, says that “though the women are enthusiastic about hosting

guests, they have a lot more to learn because this isn’t only about providing a room to stay; it’s also about linked services that travellers expect.

The seminar included sessions on documentation and licensing for homestay businesses, challenges involved, customer care, digital marketing, government schemes and loans to start a homestay, and basic décor ideas. Ribeiro says it was important for the women to understand that a homestay “is like having a whole ecosystem. If one or two women have homestays in a particular village, other women can exhibit cane

or other crafts specific to that village. Those who are good at cooking or making food products can provide a culinary experience and this will help the entire village. By helping each other and collaborating, they can have a new source of livelihood.”

Calling it “good use of tourism to create jobs and opportunities,” Costa says that “homestays promote advances inclusion by empowering rural women and putting villages on the tourism map. Tourism can also play a vital role in preserving and promoting natural and cultural heritage while reducing migration from the villages.”

Pravena Gaonkar, who runs a homestay at Dongurli village in North Goa, found the seminar very informative. The digital marketing session “was the most interesting and I have taken notes to improve my marketing plan. All my guests appreciate my homestay and love the food I serve. Now I will start an Instagram page and ask my guests to send a review so others can also see it and I hope I will get more guests.”

Shilpa Sawant, another participant, says “I am ready to change my house into a homestay. They say *Atithi Devo Bhava* (guest is like god) and this time the *athiti* will bring us Lakshmi. The initial

investment will be a little difficult but I am sure with the help of my SHG and the government schemes available I will be able to start soon.” Is she comfortable making changes to her village home for her guests? “Yes. If the change is going to help me pay my child’s school fees and lead a better life, why not?”

Raghavendra Shetiya, president of RC Panaji Riviera, says, “Our focus is to empower these rural women with the required skills and tools to run a sustainable business, which in turn will help the state government realise its goal of making Goa an all-round tourism destination.” ■



Women from the Shri Brahmani SHG preparing meals for their guests.

From RI South Asia Office desk



Crystals and pins to recognise Major Donors.

Major Donor recognition

The Rotary Foundation recognises all individuals or couples whose combined giving has reached \$10,000 as Major Donors regardless of the gift designation. This recognition level can be achieved only through personal/spouse contribution and not through matching contribution by another individual, club, district or any

other entity or through recognition points. Donors can choose to receive a crystal piece and pin(s) commemorating the gift at each new recognition level. Major donor recognition is not processed automatically. Donors need to submit the filled-in major donor form, along with engraving instructions, to the Donor Services Team, RISAO. Major donor recognitions are

processed at Evanston and takes 5–6 weeks to reach the donor. Please reach out to Madhu Mamgain (Madhu.Mamgain@rotary.org) and Manju Joshi (Manju.Joshi@rotary.org) for any further queries.

For RISAO staff contact details refer https://rotarynewsonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/RISAO_Staff_Contact_Details.pdf. ■

A mega empowerment project for 80,000 girls

Rasheeda Bhagat

If you need one concrete example of the amazing manner in which Rotarians and Rotary clubs have embraced the mantra to empower girls and women, articulated by Shekhar Mehta during his tenure as RI president last year, then you don't need to look beyond Pune and RC Bibwewadi Pune, RID 3131. Along with its CSR partner GTPL Hathway, it has scaled new heights in its project titled *Asmita* (Pride), which aims to make teenaged girls aware about their health and other rights, particularly those related to sexual harassment and abuse.

Thanks to the constant endeavour of this club — the project recently entered its 4th phase — around 80,000 girls in the three states of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa are now aware of not only their rights, but remedial action in case these are violated. The project's impact has been phenomenal... around 16–17 men who were charged with sexually abusing their daughters/relatives are now behind bars. This is only from preliminary data; the number is bound to go up when all data come in from 20-odd educational institutions.

Till now this mega project has seen an investment of **\$400,000**; with the involvement this year of 36 Rotary clubs from RI districts 3131, 3060 and 3170. Last year 25 clubs from these three districts were involved in this project. The funding pattern works like this: four times the money raised by each club is donated by the CSR partner.

Jignesh Pandya, charter president of the club and its counsellor for this impactful project, recalls that when the club launched this project four years ago, detection of sexual abuse and social media abuse wasn't really their objective. "We started on a small scale and our focus was on gynaecological health, distribution of sanitary pads and nutrition of girls. But while executing this project, we heard from several schoolgirls some horrible stories of sexual abuse from their dear and near ones, including uncles... *mamas* and *chachas*, and in some cases, even their own fathers."

"After hearing these stories, many of us spent sleepless nights; after all I myself have two daughters and I could not even imagine the torture those girls would be undergoing," he scowls.

So last year, these Rotarians consulted some experts and with their help, decided to come out with four video clips and a booklet in Q&A format. The subjects included were gynaecological guidance, myths related to menstruation, nutrition and what kind of food to eat to remain fit. The other two videos focussed on how to fight sexual abuse and exploitation and information on how and where to report such abuse. Helpline numbers were shared as also addresses of websites which could be approached to get help or guidance. "Basically, the information contained was about self-defence; if you are caught in an uncomfortable situation, how to fight back," says club president Wardhaman Gandhi.

The last video talked about social media abuse; if somebody was threatening the girls to publish their morphed pictures, they should not panic and be aware of their legal rights and how to report such threats, he added.

Pandya explains that as they held various sessions in different schools and interacted with the girls, "we found that in several unlikely places, girls had Instagram accounts. Some of them couldn't even pronounce the word; they would say 'Instagram', but they had a presence there. And at a very young age they faced girlfriend-boyfriend issues, and there were cases of boys threatening the girls that they would publish their indecent pictures through morphed images."

Very often, in such cases, many girls panic and delete their social media accounts, but that is exactly what they should not do, these Rotarians learnt after a detailed discussion with a Rotarian from Pune, Vaishali Bhagwat, who has specialised in various kinds of child abuse, including abuse on the social media. "She told us that the girls should be specifically educated that if they get any threats, they should not delete their accounts, because if that is done then the troublemakers can't be traced. These are some of the vital tips we have given in those videos."

But as video messages can be seen and forgotten after some time, the Rotarians have also printed booklets in all the three languages — Marathi, Gujarati and Hindi — containing crisp text messages and eye-catching graphics, which have been distributed to the girls, says Gandhi.

The club president added that this year alone over 36,000 girls across 220 locations in multiple districts in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa will be reached through 36 Rotary clubs who are partnering with his club to expand the reach of this project to



Girls with the booklets on safety and women-related issues distributed to them by RC Bibwewadi.

empower girls and will be showing the video clips in various institutions.

Impact on the ground

Pandya explains that in follow-up action, the statistics related to actual impact of this project are being collected. “Last year, when we met the heads of three institutions where we had launched this project, they said that till *Asmita* was introduced in their schools, they had barely got a few CSA (Child Sexual Abuse) complaints. But after *Asmita*, the floodgates had opened, and based on the complaints received from the girls, and action taken, about 16–17 men have been put behind bars.”

The saddest and most horrific case pertains to a girl from Class 8, who was being sexually

abused by her father right from LKG. “Unfortunately, the mother also knew about this but she remained silent. Even her younger sister was being abused by the father. After watching our video presentation, the elder sister made a complaint and based on it, the father has been put behind bars.”

In another bizarre instance, a girl was being sexually abused by her *mama* (maternal uncle); when the child brought this to her mother’s notice, the mother scolded her and asked her to remain silent, saying already her husband’s family did not respect her and her family. If this abuse by her brother was disclosed, they would face further shame!

He adds that they have compiled this data only after visiting about 10 institutions to

Project cost
\$400,00;
CSR partner
GPL Hathway





gauge the results of their drive to empower girls and make them aware about their rights. “We have gone to over 200 institutions and are in the process of gathering data; we are sure that many more such cases of abuse will come to light and action would have been taken because the girls have been sensitised and educated about not having to suffer in silence.”

Shocking role of mothers

Though the Rotarians are really chuffed about their ‘empower girls project’ getting so much traction, what is shocking to note is the horrible and negative role of several mothers. Not only have they found cases where the daughter complained to the mother who either ignored the complaint or asked her to

Girls impacted
80,000;
Clubs involved
61

remain silent, in one bizarre case where the father has been arrested following a girl’s complaint of sexual harassment, the mother has filed a case against the school for taking heed of the girl’s complaint and passing it on to the authorities for remedial action. Her grouse: the school had interfered in their family affairs!

Another interesting insight Pandya shares relates to orthodox minority Muslim institutions where the girls come from conservative families, and wear the hijab. “Some of these minority Muslim institutions were initially reluctant to participate in our project, saying that our biggest problem is to persuade the families to send their girls to school. If they learn about this initiative, they



DG Anil Parmar (fourth from L) with PDGs Pankaj Shah and Deepak Shikarpur, DGE Manjoo Phadke, PDGs Rashmi Kulkarni and Deepak M Purohit at the launch of the 4th phase of *Project Asmita* in Pune.

might stop sending their daughters to school. So we requested them that at least first you and your teachers go through our videos and booklets, and if you find them appropriate, you can share them with your students. They did that, found nothing objectionable, and have come back to us saying they are so happy that they implemented this project. They invited us to witness those sessions, and said that after seeing this material the girls have become aware of their rights and are asking so many questions. I am so happy that the language we chose in the educational material was such that there is no discomfort

in using it, even in a very orthodox environment.”

In all, there are four videos that are played during *Asmita* sessions in schools; the total time taken is 1 hour and 45 minutes. Apart from health and menstrual hygiene, the other two videos pertain to sexual and social media abuse. Simple tips are also shared in this material for physical self-defence; for instance, the perpetrator can be hit on vulnerable points such as the centre of the neck, groin, etc. Also when the girl takes an auto or a taxi, she should always share her location and keep the GPS on.

Below:
DGE Manjoo
in conversation
with Dr
Yajyoti Singh,
developmental
psychologist.

In September, Rotary Club of Bibwewadi launched the fourth phase of *Asmita* through a symposium held in Pune, in which RID 3131 DG Anil Parmar, CFO of GTPL Hathway Anil Bothra, Vishram Bhawe, director of St Crispin’s Home, Dr Yajyoti Singh, developmental psychologist, and PDGs Pankaj Shah, Rashmi Kulkarni, Abhay Gadgil, Deepak Purohit, Deepak Shikarpur, DGE Manjoo Phadke, DGN Shital Shah and presidents of over 20 Rotary clubs participated.

Congratulating RC Bibwewadi for taking this commendable initiative, DG Parmar said, “Today the daughters of India face a lot of issues in their day-to-day lives; *Project Asmita* is an attempt to provide confidence to the daughters, make them independent, fearless and brave.”

Project partner GTPL Hathway’s Bothra said “this initiative has received tremendous response and this project reconfirms our commitment towards making a positive impact on our community, and towards this goal, RC Bibwewadi has been a perfect partner for us.” ■



Rotary gifts toilet block to a government school

Team Rotary News



DG N Nandakumar and members of RC Madras Magnum with children at the VGP Marine Kingdom in Chennai.

Most of the children were visiting a walk-through aquarium for the first time and it was gratifying to see the excitement on their faces as they explored it.

RC Madras Magnum, RID 3232, recently dedicated a toilet block for boys in a government school in Chennai through its Madras Magnum Trust. The project, inaugurated by DG Dr N Nandakumar, will benefit 650 boys and 25 teachers in the co-educational school which was established in 1904. Akshay Patwari was the project chairman. “Last year during our visit to the school we found that the girls’ toilets were in good shape but the boys’ toilet block was totally unusable. We immediately

volunteered to help,” says Gaurav Jain, the club’s chairman, public relations. The construction was begun last year under the club’s flagship project *Shiksha aur Suraksha* which focuses on building infrastructure in schools for the less privileged.

The club, chartered in 2014, has executed over 55 projects “worth ₹1 crore raised from friends, family, corporates and connects from our social outreach programmes.”

Children’s carnival

The club has been organising carnivals for children

every year with contributions from club members and other philanthropists. The surplus funds are used for infrastructure development in schools.

The first carnival was organised in 2017 at the Adyar Cancer Institute to entertain children undergoing cancer treatment. This year on Independence Day the club organised the fourth season of the Magnum Carnival for 1,000 children from orphanages and destitute homes across the city. They were taken to the VGP Marine Kingdom. “Most of them were visiting such a

place for the first time and it was gratifying to see the excitement on their faces as they explored the walk-through aquarium which had marine life from across the world including sharks and sting rays.” The club served breakfast and lunch to the young guests, and distributed gifts to them.

“Each year, barring two years when the world was struck by the Covid pandemic, we have been entertaining 1,000–1,500 children, taking them to amusement parks in the city and it is always magical to see the joy on their faces,” smiles Jain. ■

Prachi & Pawan Agarwal
District Governor, RID 3110



*AKS & Major Donor Meet with
PRIP Ian Riseley, TRF Trustee Chair*

Gracias : The Gracious



Entrepreneurship Development Program

EDP with IIM Kashipur



District Membership Team

*Our District till 30th September, 2022,
has acquired in Zone 6*

1st Rank
Highest Net Growth Rate in membership
6.4%

2nd Rank
Highest Net Growth in Membership
231

DGN Neerav N. Agarwal
Chair, District Membership Committee



PDG Devender Kr. Agarwal
ARRFC

CSR Projects of 2022-23



PDG Sharat Chandra
DRFC

S.N.	Project Title	Host Club	Corporate Donor	Project Amount (₹)	CSR Amount (₹)
1	Donation of E-Tabs to Girl Students of Class 9th	RC Kashipur	Naini Papers Ltd.	79,79,000	79,79,000
2	Modernization of 3 Govt. Schools to Happy Schools	RC Kashipur	Naini Papers Ltd.	79,79,000	79,79,000
3	Complete Transformation of Govt School	RC Kashipur	Andritz Technologies	31,60,000	31,60,000
4	Upgradation of NBSU to SNCU at Govt. Hospital	RC Kashipur	KVS Premier Foundation	26,07,000	26,07,000
5	Providing Eyecare, ENT & ICU Medical Equipment to Govt. Hospital	RC Kashipur	Galwalia Ispat Udyog (P) Ltd.	26,50,000	26,50,000
6	Providing Medical Equipment for Diagnosis of Cancer at SSB Trauma Center, Firazabad	RC Agra	Sapphire RDS Projects Ltd.	1,05,26,320	35,00,000
TOTAL AMOUNT (₹)				3,49,01,320	2,78,75,000



Rtn. Raj Mehrotra
CDS (Admin)

Drone view of Blood Donors with Rotary Wheel
at Mega Blood Donation Camp of All Rotary Clubs of Kanpur on 2nd October 2022



Rtn. Vivek Garg
DGE

Looking beyond oneself to heal and serve humanity

Rajendra Saboo

When I completed my responsibilities as Rotary International president and chairman of The Rotary Foundation, Usha and I thought that now it was time for us to involve ourselves in hands-on service, an idea I had exhorted to Rotarians — “Look Beyond Yourself”.

Observing the immense needs of Africa, we decided to go to Uganda in early August 1998. Aware of the knowledge and expertise of our Indian doctors and surgeons, we finalised two specialties, eye and polio-corrective surgeries.

When we were all set to leave, a very disturbing news came of bomb blasts in Kenya and Tanzania, and there was an apprehension that Uganda would be next. The message

we got from doctors and friends was that we shouldn't take the risk. Then one evening Usha met a young lady, Shanti, who had served as a peace mission volunteer in Croatia war and had seen landmine blasts, gun fights and killings. Usha asked her, “Are you not scared to be in a place where life is at risk every moment?” Shanti smiled and said, “Not at all. We all have only one life to live. Living it meaningfully is all that matters to me.”

We got our message. Our spirits got uplifted and our team was ready to move.

The team comprising eight doctors and two of us departed on schedule to Kampala. We were eagerly looking forward to the adventure of service. Since Uganda had meagre resources, our team was carrying

medicines, lenses and equipment. We carried excess baggage on flight to Kampala.

From there doctors SPS Grewal and Uma Pradhan, ophthalmologist surgeons, flew on a small aircraft to Gulu, an insurgency-ravaged area. All the lenses could not be carried on the flight. So some were sent by road transport, and were stolen in transit. The lens, which surgeons carried with them, were used for cataract and other eye surgeries. The orthopaedic team, including us as volunteers, moved to Masaka by road on a bus with wooden seats. It took us over three hours to reach our destination. We had a very modest place to stay but we were least concerned. Upon arrival we went to the government hospital to see the operation theatre and examine children for polio-corrective surgeries. Next day, early morning we had to clean the children prior to surgery. Most children had severe deformities, which made them crawl on dirty, dusty, uneven grounds. We would start cleaning them but there was no soap, hot water, buckets, mugs or towels.

In tune with the adage ‘where there is a will, there is a way’, we managed everything. We washed the cracked and hardened, dirt-embedded little feet. While washing the legs of children and preparing them for the orthopaedic corrective surgery suddenly it struck Usha that it was August 11, my birthday. The fact that we were celebrating this day in such a special way was overwhelming for both of us.

Past RI President Rajendra Saboo helping a patient at a Rotary medical mission in Zimbabwe.



The surgeons started the operations. Even though there were limited facilities, our work never stopped. Suddenly Dr Madhav Borate called me to be in the operation theatre. I was hesitant as I was squeamish about the sight of blood but there was no choice. I saw a lot of blood, flesh, bones but I did not faint. From then on I developed the strength to help surgeons in OT.

We stayed 10 days completing the task, treating patients and training the local doctors. The hope and trust of the people we served was our biggest strength. We volunteers were humbled to see the untiring work put in by our doctors.

We decided to continue the medical missions. Many more doors opened in Africa. We got more than 40 children from Rwanda, Nigeria and Uganda for heart surgery to Chandigarh.

Having worked beyond borders in African and Asian countries we realised the need within our country. Thus from 2006 we started the medical missions within India in deprived or risky areas such as Kalahandi, the tribal areas of Mandla, the Jagdalpur Naxal region, Dimapur in Nagaland, and Udhampur in Jammu.

Success stories

There were many touching stories that came my way. Dr PS Chari, the competent plastic surgeon, was able to reconstruct the face of a man who was bitten by a ferocious pet dog, which became a huge success story in Malawi. In Madagascar, Dr RS Parmar, while doing laparoscopy, used a blood pressure pump in the absence of CO2 gas on a patient and completed the surgery. Dr NS Sandhu, a versatile surgeon, operated on many infants with problems such as hernia in Madagascar, and supported Dr Anju Huria in doing complicated vesico strokes ureteric original fistula. Dr Hemant Batra supported by Jagat Bhushan, dental surgeons, performed operation on a child who could not open his mouth since birth (TMJ ankylosis). Dr Ravjit Singh, an orthopaedic surgeon, operated upon an adolescent boy with post rickets bow on both sides and corrected the deformity of four long bones in both legs.

A three-year-old boy in Uganda who had lost his eyelids in accidental burns was heading towards blindness when he was rehabilitated by Dr VD Singh, a plastic surgeon. His eyelids

were reconstructed and he was saved from blindness. In Rwanda, Dr Karan Singh removed a big abdominal wall tumour weighing over 5kg while also repairing the abdominal walls.

In these last 23 years, we have done 48 medical missions at home and abroad. Nearly, 66,000 surgeries and procedures have been performed to bring relief to nearly 260,000 people. Eye surgeries and IOL implants were done on nearly 7,000 persons abroad. Over 5,000 people benefited from eye surgeries in India. But these numbers don't tell the entire story. The healing hands of our surgeons, anesthesiologists, dermatologists and others have transformed countless lives.

Many times I have been asked the cost of such projects. My reply has always been the same — can you put a price on the time, money and comfort sacrificed by the doctors? Or on their labour of love for the patients they served. This is the story of a tiny seed sown in 1998, which grew into a mighty tree of health and healing to serve humanity.

*The writer is
past Rotary International president
©The Indian Express*



Bharat Pandya to be vice-chairman of The Rotary Foundation, 2023–24

Team Rotary News

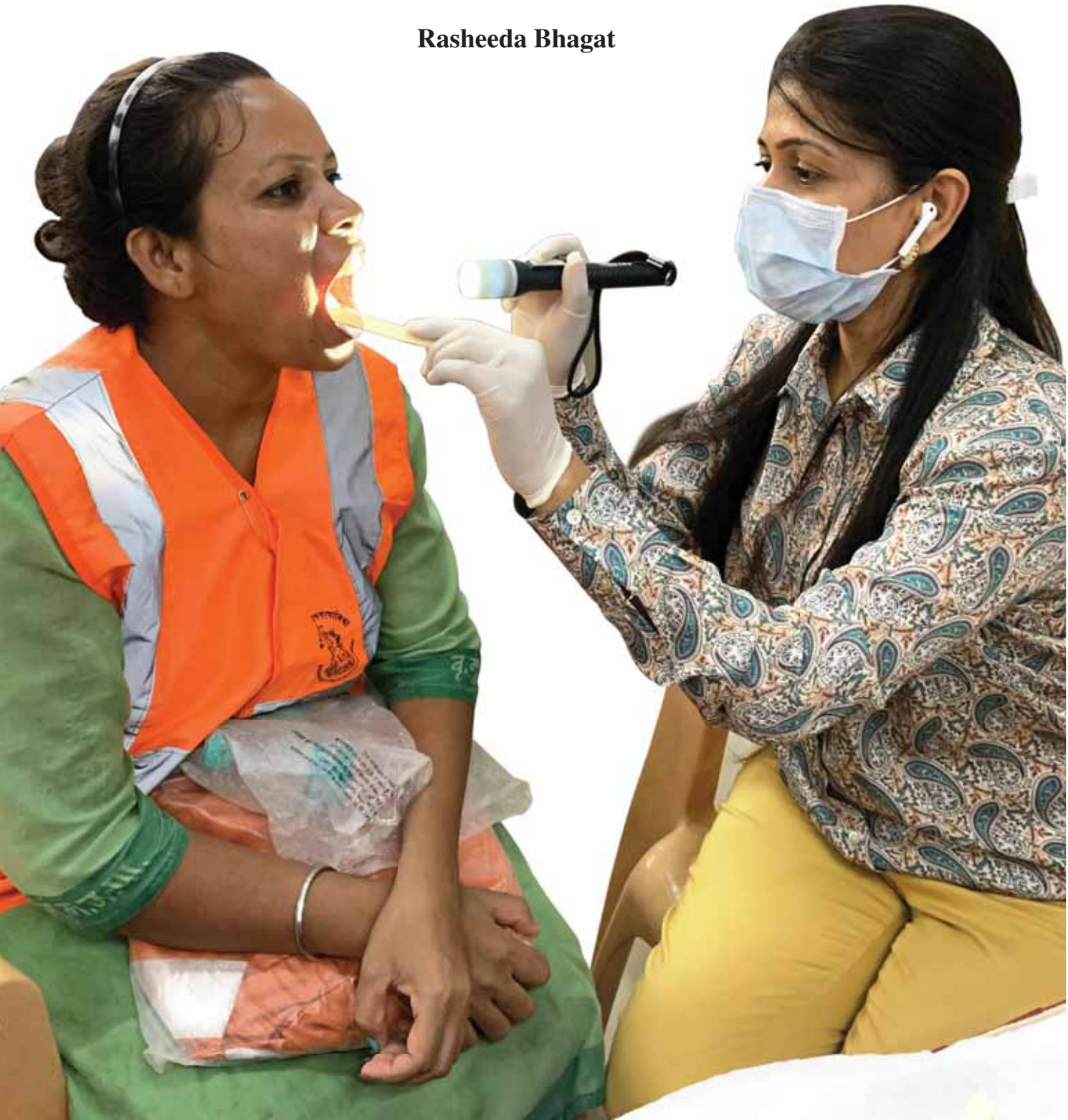
TRF Trustee Bharat Pandya will be the Foundation's vice-chairman for the Rotary year 2023–24 when PRIP Barry Rassin will be the chair. He will succeed past RI director Larry Lunsford who is the vice-chairman this year.

Trustee Pandya served as RI director during 2019–21, and was its treasurer for 2020–21. He was elected by the RI Board to serve as TRF trustee for a four-year term from 2022–26.

Rotary News congratulates Trustee Pandya for his new assignment. ■

Combatting addiction among Mumbai's sanitation workers

Rasheeda Bhagat



Workers who provide sanitation services to any of our big city corporations or municipalities lead a tough life. “We all know that they provide an invaluable and essential public service that is key to safeguarding not only the environment but also the health of citizens, and keep working despite a lethal pandemic, devastating floods or any other calamity. But most of the time they have no government policies or comprehensive health insurance to take care of their health needs,” says Dr Nilam Gada, president of RC Addiction Prevention in

Mumbai, RID 3141, that was chartered only last year.

It has only 15 members, and as the name of the club suggests, its main focus area is combatting addiction and substance abuse. In one of its discussions on the high levels of tobacco and alcohol addiction and abuse among sanitation workers of Mumbai, the members noted that hailing from marginalised and poor strata of society, with no government policies or laws or any health insurance, they are exposed to various occupational and environmental hazards putting both their health and lives at serious risk.

It is no secret that the hard physical labour and

drudgery involved in cleaning the metro’s gutters, sewers and underlying passages, gives the workers little cause for cheer, making it easy for them to fall victims to substance abuse. Intake of tobacco and alcohol has become a normal part of their life as this intoxication allows them to work in filthy conditions, she says.

Therefore, “most of the workers face health risks including cancer and heart-related problems, vascular diseases, paralysis due to stroke, and lung illnesses due to chewing tobacco, smoking and consuming alcohol. She adds that the club members were

Left:
Dr Nilam Gada, president, RC Addiction Prevention in Mumbai, examines a sanitary worker.



Right:
A medical camp for sanitary workers.

extremely concerned when given the statistics that compared to the general population, in which the incidence of tobacco consumption, as also cancer is around 20 per cent, in this group (sanitation workers) it is as high as 51 per cent.

Hence the club launched a project titled 'Deaddiction and cancer screening for sanitation

workers,' because it had to first find out how many people were at risk, what kind of medical treatment or preventive care and counselling they required, etc. The amount raised, by this club, along with RC Mumbai Sobo, to meet the cost of this project, was ₹1.8 lakh.

The target group chosen for this comprehensive project which included education and awareness, counselling and screening for different kinds of ailments such as hypertension, eye defects,

diabetes, high sugar levels, low haemoglobin due to iron deficiency, and various kinds of cancers, was 622 sanitation workers in solid waste management from the Lower Parel area of Mumbai.

Dr Nilam adds that 125 of these were women, and tobacco addiction was found in many of them. Alcohol addiction was more common among the male workers. Education remained the main focus of the project and at the camp it was explained to the addicts that

Below:

Nilam Gada,
Els Reynaers,
president,
Rotary Club of
Mumbai Sobo,
and Rotaractors.



substance abuse had the danger of causing cancer and other serious complications. Women were taught self-examination for breast cancer and to watch out for signs and symptoms of cervical cancer. The screening included checking blood pressure, blood sugar and haemoglobin levels and both dental and eye check-up were also done. Cancer screening involved looking out for oral cancer by visual examination, breast cancer by manual palpation and

Pap smear test was done for cervical cancer. Medication for deworming, iron and calcium supplements as well as multivitamin tablets were provided to the entire group for 1–3 months as required.

However, added the club president, “Our core focus stays on deaddiction where we educate them, give them individual counselling along with free access to our teleconsultation services, consultations with the psychologist and follow up action for six months. We’ve

The incidence of tobacco consumption, as also cancer, is **20%** among the general population, while it is **51%** among the sanitation workers.

referred them to support groups that are in their vicinity to reinforce motivation and experience sharing as this has a proven track record of being the most effective way of maintaining sobriety.”

About the results of the screening, Els Reynaers, president, RC Mumbai Sobo, says that of the 622, 44 per cent had high blood pressure and 21 cent had elevated sugar levels, but despite that very few were on medication required for both these





conditions. About 47 per cent had low haemoglobin levels and they have been put on multivitamins and iron tablets. Nearly 20 per cent needed cataract surgery and they have been referred to three Rotary clubs in Mumbai which are organising free cataract surgery for the underprivileged.

Pre-cancerous oral lesions were found in 22 per cent, including women, and breast abnormalities in about 10 per cent and cervical cancer in five women. About 40 per cent were addicted to tobacco and 53 per cent — more than half —, mostly men, were found addicted to alcohol. Cases requiring cataract or retinal surgery or dental procedures were referred to appropriate hospitals. As they are all government workers, some of the cases were also referred to government or charitable private hospitals.

It is heartening to know that apart from the 20 Rotarians from the two clubs who were actively involved in executing this project, 25 Rotaractors were also deeply engaged in the work. Asked about their experience in working with Rotaractors as partners, Dr Nilam says, “They were extremely energetic and very involved. They had a no-complaint attitude, were very flexible and hardworking.”

Apart from helping with crowd management, filling forms, assisting the doctors, their partnership was a big help because they were members of two community-based Rotaract clubs of Mumbai — RAC Medicrew and RAC Caduceus. “They were either doctors, interns or medical students and were a tremendous help

in screening the sanitation workers for BP, sugar, etc.,” she added.

On future plans Dr Nilam, a dentist by profession, says they want to replicate this project for another 25,000 sanitation workers of Mumbai and is considering going in for a global grant too. On the time frame, she says that BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation) has 24 wards and for ease of implementation “we will do one ward at a time; we’ve already covered two. There are about 1,000 workers in each ward but not everybody turns up for a health screening camp.”

Luckily, the club has great cooperation from the Maharashtra government as the beneficiaries are all government workers. “Last time they gave us a big auditorium of a BMC school for our camp,” she adds. ■

The club wants to replicate this project for another **25,000** sanitation workers of Mumbai.

A medical camp in Mukroh

Kiran Zehra

For Ram, an 8-year-old boy from Mukroh village on the borders of Assam, a common cold and fever are “a normal thing. He has fever once or twice a month and this is the case for many children in our village,” says his mother, Hema Devi. At a recent medical camp conducted by RCs Jowai and Orchid City Shillong, RID 3240, doctors were shocked to find that almost all the children in the village had a Vitamin D deficiency “which resulted in poor immune system leading to frequent spells of cold and fever,” says Dr Ruchika Lato, member of RC Jowai.

While the children were given four free dosages of Vitamin D supplements, over 200 adults were screened at the camp for blood sugar

and hypertension. Free scanning and haemoglobin, among other tests, were done on pregnant women who were later given iron and folic acid tablets. Doctors conducted an awareness programme on menstrual health and hygiene and the importance of maintaining a balanced diet. Medicines worth ₹65,000 were distributed at the camp.

“Through these camps we are able to collect medical data to gain a better picture of the existing health deficiencies in people in a specific village or area. This allows us to plan and execute other projects that can provide effective preventative solutions for these deficiencies,” says

Devesh Wallia, president, RC Orchid City Shillong. A good example of this integrated approach, he points out, is that “many Rotary clubs in the North East have distributed smoke-free *chullas* in villages where women suffer breathing problems. Likewise, we could plan our next project to improve the immunity of these children.”

Samhi Lallo, president of RC Jowai, says “People from rural areas do not have easy access to medicines and doctors. Some do not have the money to get any treatment or buy medicines. A medical camp like this is a boon for them.” The two clubs have been conducting regular medical check-up in villages in this region, equipping hospitals with life-saving facilities and recognising the contribution of health workers by giving them awards.

The camp was organised at Christ School, Mukroh, where RC Orchid City Shillong is reconstructing the school’s main building and improving its infrastructure. “We want to establish a safe physical space for teachers and students to engage in learning and offer basic utilities like drinking water and clean toilets for them. In the process of doing so, we have also gained the communities’ trust, which is important.” says Wallia. ■



Patients awaiting their turn at the medical camp.





The magical weave of the Sambalpuri saree

Jaishree

It is 5.30am and Tope, a quaint village near Sambalpur, is buzzing with men and women, young children and old folk, busy dying colours on cotton threads tied across bamboo poles outside their little homes, unmindful of the hens and chicks darting all over the place. At some homes one can hear the rhythmic tak-tak sound of the *mongas* or weaving looms. This is one of the hundreds of villages engaged in making exotic Sambalpuri sarees — which take their name from the tribal belt of Sambalpur in Odisha, where these sarees originate, reflecting an ancient tie-and-dye art called *bandhakala*, also known as Sambalpuri *ikkat*. Bargarh district is also a bastion of this art.

Almost all women in Tope are wearing Sambalpuri sarees in myriad designs and colours and it is impossible to spot any other kind of saree. “My son made this for me,” says Rinky Meher, showing off the richly coloured

saree she is wearing, as her son Prashant Meher beams with pride, even as he continues colouring the yarn, along with his brother Ramakanta Meher, and their father.

Indigenous industry

It is an indigenous industry manned mostly by the Meher and Golia tribes, hailing from western Odisha. The Sambalpuri sarees, made from cotton, silk, or tussar silk woven on a handloom, enjoy national and international patronage due to their exquisite workmanship, colour and design. Rinky, like every other woman in the village, suggests designs and the colours which are mostly a combination of red, green, black, blue and yellow. “It is something to do with Lord Jagannath,” explains Rinky, referring to the predominant god of the region — Puri Jagannath. The most common motifs include the *shanka* (conch), *chakra* (wheel) and *phula* (flower). Only organic colours are used.

A unique method of tie-and-dye known as *bandha* is used to weave

the Sambalpuri saree. The process involves preparing the yarn, tying and dyeing, drying it and finally weaving the masterpiece. All the family members have to get involved in this entire process. This art is passed down to generations. “No amount of teaching will help them perfect the art unless they keep practising,” says Rinky.

Dhananjay Meher (57) says, “I have learnt this skill of weaving from my father and grandfather. These days, it is no longer a remunerative business; still I am in this profession because I don’t know any other work.”

Their conversation in Odia is translated by Rtn Santosh Hota who, along with his wife Sunita, accompanied me to the village.

It takes eight days to make one Sambalpuri saree, with an intricate design taking up to six months. The varieties include Sonepuri, Saptapara (pasapalli), Sachipara, Udiaan-taraa, Panchavati, Bomkai, Barpalli, Baptaa and Paradaa sarees, all of which are popular. Some villages such as Jilimanda

specialise in making shirts and bedspreads, while Sonapur and Barpalli weave silk sarees. The cost ranges from ₹2,000–7,000 for fine cotton sarees, and anything above ₹15,000 for Sambalpuri *paat* (silk) sarees. The high cost is due to the labour-intensive and time-consuming nature of its production.

Challenges

The unfortunate part is that mastering the vocation takes precedence over education. So most of the village youth are school dropouts or stop with Class 12. Prashant has studied up to Class 12 while his brother discontinued school after Class 3. It is difficult for a *bhulia* (weaver) youngster to get a bride, says Rinky. Her two sons aged 37 and 34 are unmarried. “Young girls these days do not want to be tied down to this work. They want their men to be employed in big offices,” she says grimly.

Tope hosts 50 families, who work down to dusk every day. It is a challenge for the weavers to market their products and get a fair price for their creations, says Hota. They mostly depend on middlemen. The state’s handloom and handicrafts department supports weavers “but there are also instances where officials visit, take our signature and pay us a pittance as incentive,” says Prashant. With cooperative

societies providing online outlets to market textiles, direct sales have taken a huge hit. “Not many people come here to place orders. Earlier we used to get visitors from Japan, America and Singapore,” says Rinky.

Rampant duplication of Sambalpuri sarees is posing another threat to their livelihood, says Hota.



Rtn Santosh Hota and his wife Sunita interacting with the weavers.



“Duplicate sarees with similar designs are available for just ₹300,” says his wife Sunita.

With little patronage and after the Covid pandemic, the weavers’ families are left with meagre income. “Many families have migrated elsewhere to work in teashops or driving autorickshaws,” says Prashant. The brick houses lining both sides of the road in Tope show prosperity on one hand, but the poorly maintained doors and broken clay-tiled roofs tell how poverty is slowly creeping into their lives.

Rotary support

Chinmay Satpathy, secretary, RC Sambalpur, RID 3261, says that his club has tied up with his foundation Village Kraft this year to extend support to the weavers. “We are assisting them with raw

materials like threads and colours, short-term loans and in marketing their creations both online and offline. For the past so many years they have been working with the same designs. Now we are encouraging them to create new designs to appeal to the evolving market.”

Satpathy has requested the club to build an online platform called *Sambalpur Haat* “where the weavers’ creations will be showcased and the proceeds will reach them directly.” This move will help eliminate middlemen “who pocket ₹1,000–1,500 a saree, while the weaver gets just ₹150–200 profit.” The club will organise exhibitions for the physical market through the foundation. The government is organising exhibitions “but when there is a bulk order the weavers are not able to execute it due to shortage of manpower and funds,” he says. RC Sambalpur is also planning to address illiteracy rampant among the communities, says club president Ranjit Singh Hura.

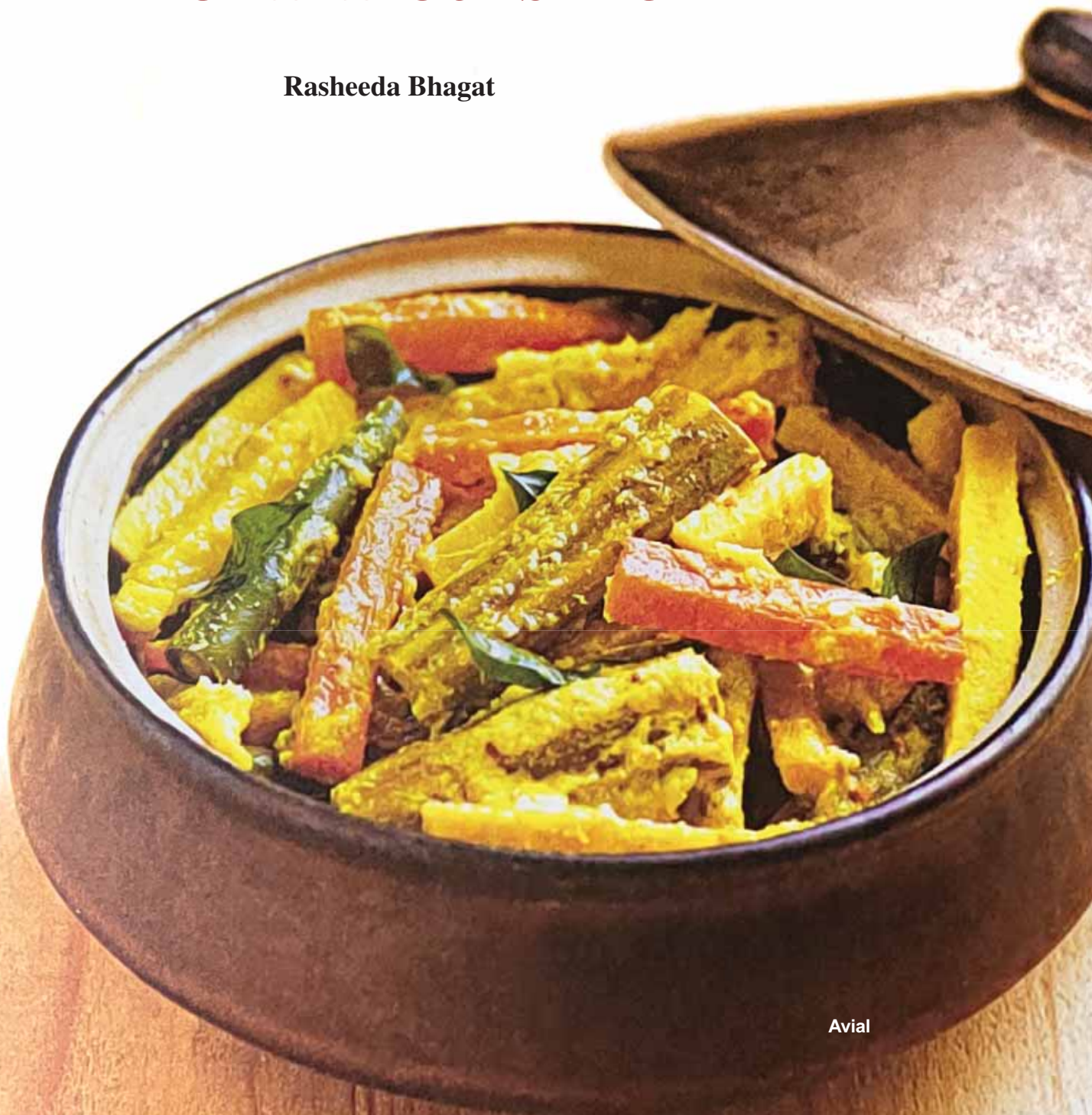
IIM Sambalpur recently took the support of Satpathy and Sanjay Meher, a club member who is also a weaver and a retailer, to set up an incubation centre in its campus to encourage the trade, educate the weavers about digital marketing and groom them to be customer-friendly.




Pictures by Jaishree

Taste & flavours of **Kerala cuisine**

Rasheeda Bhagat



Avial



Whichever part of India we live in, most of us just wait for that part of the year when we can feast on traditional *sadhya* on the occasion of Onam. *Sadhya* (feast) is a traditional Kerala vegetarian meal served with boiled rice and a host of side dishes, and is always served on a banana leaf. The traditional food items include sambar, *aviyal*, *kaalan*, *theeyal*, *thoran*, *inji pulli*, *puliserry*, *appam*, *rasam* and *chakka* (jackfruit) payasam. Coconut, an integral part of any Kerala meal, is used liberally in any *sadhya*.

Most non-Keralites know this much, and little else, about Kerala food. Of course the non-vegetarians know about, and salivate, just thinking about the rich variety of fresh and delicious seafood items prepared in Kerala. A true blooded foodie who travels to Kerala and experiences a houseboat stay doesn't... cannot... return without asking the boatman to navigate to one of the seafood markets, pick up the oh-so-fresh *kari meen* (pearl

A true blooded foodie who travels to Kerala and experiences a houseboat stay doesn't... cannot... return without asking the boatman to navigate to one of the seafood markets, and pick up the oh-so-fresh *kari meen* (pearl spot) and prawns.

spot) and prawns, take in the heavenly aroma as the resident cook prepares a meal from the fresh catch. A host of vegetarian side dishes — even the *karela poriyal* (bitter gourd) tastes so good in Kerala. A pint of beer to wash down the freshly prepared heavenly meal, as the houseboat gently moves along the calm tranquil waters of the Vembanad lake, and you can't ask for anything more.

To know more about the rich variety of different types of Kerala cuisine, we now have a great book titled *Paachakam-Heritage cuisine of Kerala*, written by Sabita Radhakrishnan.

In this attractively designed and well brought out book, she gives us a brief description of the traditional and defining food from five dominant communities of Kerala, along with recipes. It includes delicacies and staples from the Syrian Christians, Nairs, Mappilas, Thiyas and the Namboothiris. There is a separate general section on food that is common to all the communities of Kerala.

Syrian Christian

We learn that the Syrian Christians boast of a rich and varied cuisine with *kal appam*, *kuzhal appam* and *Errachi*

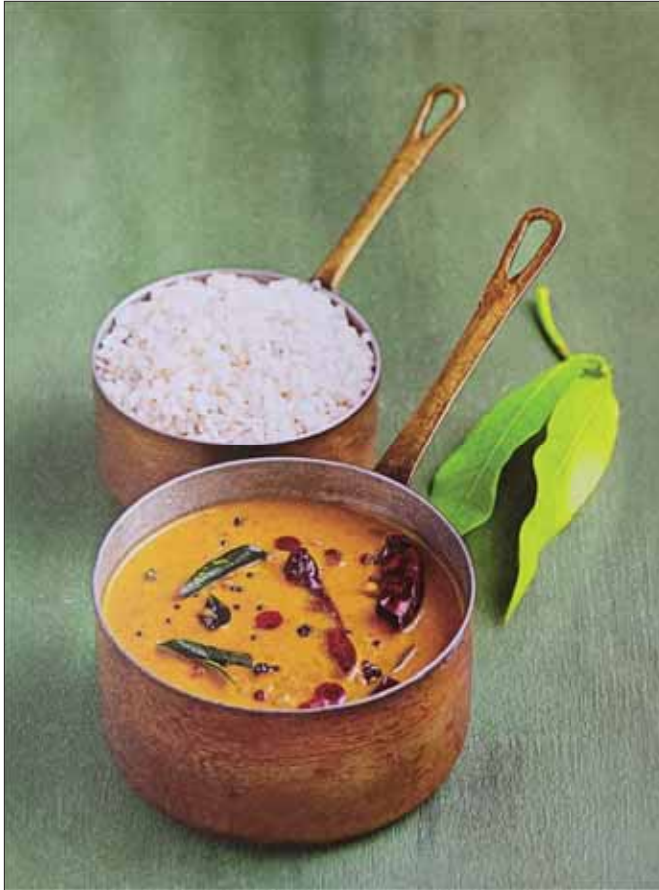
Title
**Paachakam — Heritage
cuisine of Kerala**

Author
Sabita Radhakrishnan

Publisher
Roli Books

Pages
200

Price
₹1,495



Serves 4

Mampazha puliseri

Ripe mango in yoghurt coconut gravy

A curry made with ripe mangoes and curds. The sweetness and sour taste of the fruit melds with the tartness of curds imparting an unusual flavour, and the touch of Kashmiri chilli powder enhances the taste.

Note: If using small mangoes, peel and cook whole. If using large mangoes, cut them into pieces. The taste of this curry will depend on the flavour of the mangoes. In Kerala, a small variety of delicious nattu mango (native mangoes) are used for this curry.

Ingredients

- 4 small ripe mangoes or 2 large mangoes (see note)
- 2 green chillies, slit lengthwise
- 1 tsp turmeric (*haldi*), powder
- 1 tsp Kashmiri chilli (*Kashmiri lal mirch*) powder
- 1 tsp salt, or to taste
- 1 cup (240 g) sour yoghurt (*dahi*)
- ½ cup (40 g) fresh coconut (*nariyal*), grated
- 1 tsp cumin seeds (*jeera*)
- 1 marble-size piece jaggery (*gur*)

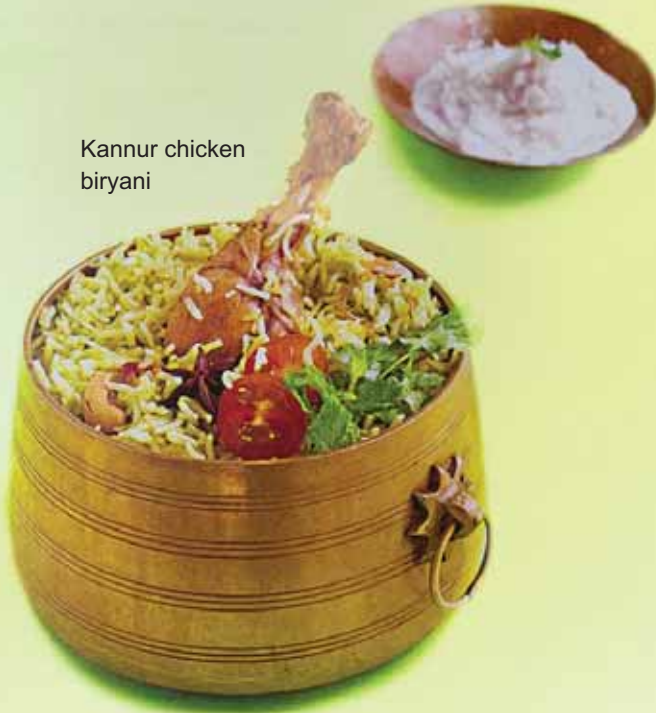
Tempering

- 1 Tbsp (15 ml) coconut oil or any oil of your choice
- 1 tsp mustard seeds (*rai*)
- ½ tsp fenugreek seeds (*methi dana*)
- 1 dried red chilli (*sookhi lal mirch*)
- 1 sprig curry leaves (*kadhi patta*)

Method

- **To make the mango curry:** Mash the mango pieces slightly, only so the juice comes out. Place them along with the green chillies, turmeric, chilli powder and salt in a saucepan. Add enough water to cover the ingredients. Place the pan over medium heat and bring to a boil. Lower the heat to a simmer and cook until the mangoes are well cooked and soft.
- In a food processor or blender, combine the yoghurt, coconut and cumin seeds. Grind to a very fine paste.
- Add this paste to the mango curry. Stir to combine. Add more water to gain sauce-like consistency.
- Add the jaggery to balance the sweetness and sourness of the curry. Stir continuously and let the gravy simmer for 1 minute.
- **To make the tempering:** In a small pan over medium heat, heat the coconut oil. Add the mustard seeds and fenugreek seeds. Cook until the seeds begin to crackle.
- Add the dried red chilli and curry leaves. Pour the tempering over the mango curry. ■

Kannur chicken biryani



Olayathi, a special dish made with beef, being their staples. Roasted duck or wild boar, with strong masala, is served at Christmas. Sabita tells us that a typical Syrian Christian meal is a “feast, replete with fish, mutton, chicken or beef. While I cooked Kerala meals for a year to understand their spices and familiarise myself with an alien food culture, this food never failed to fascinate me,” she says.

Mapillas/Moplahs

Coming to the Mapillas, also known as Moplahs, the Arab influence is seen in the biryanis and the *alias*, a Mapilla dish derived from *harees*, a traditional Arab dish made with wheat, meat and salt. Arab traders, who are believed to have arrived in Kerala in the seventh or eighth century might have introduced Islam in Kerala. They married Kerala women, and hence the Arab influence on the Mapilla food. *Meen*



pathiri, a curried fish placed between two rice *pathiris* and steamed, is an unusual but popular variation in their food and serves as a meal-in-one.

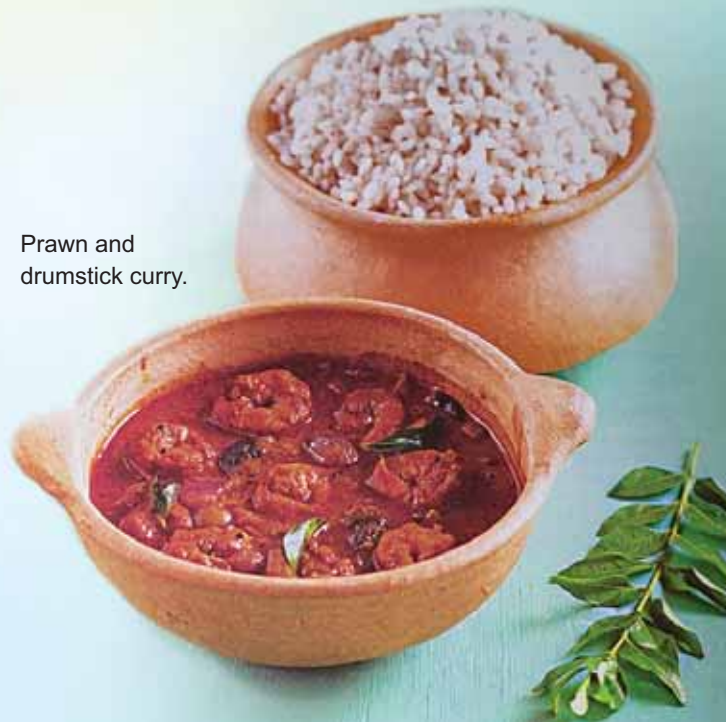
Thiyas

The Thiya community originally comprised toddy tappers. That famous Kerala delicacy, *appam* and stew, popular throughout Kerala, is a breakfast delicacy. Non-vegetarian variants served with *appam* and very popular, are fish in a coconut sauce, cooked with mango or mutton cooked in coconut milk.

Nairs

The Nairs were the warrior community of Kerala and their non-vegetarian cooking is extremely popular. “They make the *vella appam* for breakfast or the *puttu* steamed in hollow bamboo teamed with sweet milk and bananas, drumsticks, beans and cashews cooked in coconut milk and

Prawn and drumstick curry.





Serves 4

Meen pollichathu

Fish wrapped in banana leaf

One of the signature classic dishes of Kerala cuisine, the fish is cooked in coconut oil and then steamed, wrapped in banana leaf.

Ingredients

- 9 oz (250 g) pearl spot (*karimeen*), pomfret, or slices of seer fish
- 1 tsp fresh lime juice
- 1 tsp salt, or to taste
- 1 tsp red chilli (*lal mirch*) powder
- ½ tsp turmeric (*haldi*) powder
- 1 tsp freshly-ground black pepper (*kali mirch*)
- 1 heapful tsp coriander (*dhaniya*) powder
- 3 to 4 tbsp (45 to 60 ml) coconut oil, or any oil of your choice

- 10 shallots (*ulli*), very thinly sliced
- 3 green chillies, slit lengthwise
- 1 tsp fresh ginger (*adrak*), peeled and finely minced
- 1 tsp finely minced garlic (*lahsun*)
- 1 sprig curry leaves (*kadhi patta*)
- Salt to taste
- 1 small tomato, finely chopped
- ½ cup (120 ml) thick coconut milk
- ½ tsp fresh lime juice
- 1 banana leaf, washed and dried

Method

- If using *karimeen* or whole pomfret make three ½-inch gashes ¼-inch deep on both sides. In a small bowl, combine the lime juice, salt, chilli powder and turmeric. Rub the fish with the marinade and refrigerate to marinate for 1 hour.
- **To make the spice paste:** In a small bowl, stir together the chilli powder, turmeric, pepper, and coriander. Add a little water and stir into a paste.
- In a large skillet over medium heat, heat the oil. Add the fish and fry until done or 5 minutes per side. Remove from the skillet and set aside.
- In the oil remaining in the skillet, sauté the shallots, green chillies, ginger, garlic, and curry leaves until the shallots turn transparent
- Add the spice paste and salt to taste. Stir to combine.
- Stir in the tomato and sauté until mushy.
- Stir in the coconut milk. Simmer until thickened and reduced. This should take about 5 minutes.
- Add the lime juice and mix well.
- Spread half the masala paste on the banana leaf. Place the fish on it. Spoon the remaining masala paste over the fish. Fold the banana leaf to make a parcel. Tie it securely with kitchen string. Alternatively, wrap the banana leaf parcel in aluminium foil so it does not open.
- Heat a tawa or griddle over medium heat. Place the fish parcel on it and cook for 10 minutes on each side. Alternatively, you can microwave it (not in the foil) at medium-low heat for 3 minutes on each side. Remove from the tawa, open the parcel, and serve hot. ■



Nei pathiri

mixed with sour curds and coconut oil.”

Namboothiris

The Namboothiris are the Kerala Brahmins and are strict vegetarians and eat idlis, dosais or *puttu* for breakfast and have rice with *kootu*, *kalan* and *olan* for the main meals. They avoid eating garlic. The *avial* and mango *pachidi*, a semi-cooked curd-based salad, is a speciality and most welcome as a cooling delicacy during hot summers.

Classic favourites

The best part of Kerala cuisine, the author tells us, is the thread of commonality that runs

through most Kerala cuisines, as defined by the wide use of coconut, coconut oil and tamarind in their cooking. There is a separate chapter in this interesting book on “classic favourites”; common ingredient that appear in various Kerala cuisines include the tapioca, jackfruit, and of course, the all-pervasive and most popular *kari meen*.

In this section, you will also find recipes for what most non-Keralites struggle with — basic batter for *appam* and *kalappam*, as well as *Pachai kozhi* biryani (green chicken biryani).

Designed by
Krishnapratheesh S



Wheelchairs for 90 special children in Dharwad

Team Rotary News



With the support of the Rotary India Humanity Foundation (RIHF), 90 wheelchairs were distributed to mothers of special children by the Rotary Hubli Dharwad Task Force, RID 3170, in the presence of DG Venkatesh Deshpande and block educational officer Girish Padaki, Dharwad.

Event convener PDG Ganesh Bhat had received a list of 90 beneficiaries from Padaki, and 16 Rotary clubs in Hubli and Dharwad took care of the transportation cost of wheelchairs from Kolkata. AGs Dr Renuka Salunke, Girish Nalwadi, Abdul Sadik, Ashok Patil and Girish Hampiholi, along with club presidents and secretaries, were present at the handover event. Deputy director of public instruction SS Keldimath participated. ■

A palliative centre to mark 50 years of RC Cochin East

V Muthukumaran

To mark its golden jubilee year (2021–22), RC Cochin East, RID 3201, has set up an Oncology Pain and Palliative Care Centre at the Indira Gandhi Cooperative Hospital, Ernakulam, at a cost of ₹50 lakh. The CSR Foundation of Muthoot Finance is the major contributor for this medical facility.

Dr V P Gangadharan, HoD, Oncology department, has approved

the club's plan to donate ₹20,000 each month to patients at the Indira Gandhi Hospital. The medical expenses of patients are being fully subsidised. *Project Kelkamo*, a five-year-old initiative, is providing hearing aids to children from less privileged families. "We have identified special schools for the hearing-impaired, and assessed their families' financial capacity," said Jaya Subramanian, club secretary.

The club is also creating awareness among parents of hearing-impaired children that they need to be given the right acoustic devices and other support to their children to enable them to lead a better quality of life.

Around 165 students at the Agostino Vicini's Special School, Mundaveli, and the Assissi School for the Deaf, Muvattupuzha, have received hearing aids from the club.

DRFC (2021–22) Jayashankar Raghava presents a hearing aid to a beneficiary in the presence of then AG Subramanian Sitaraman and then club president Dr Kuriakose Antony at *Project Kelkamo*.





Club's past president Dr Kuriakose Antony (centre) and other members at the inauguration of the Oncology Palliative Care Centre. Also seen is current president Arun Reddy (2nd from L) with his wife Durga Devi to his right.

These were funded by the CSR wing of Next Education in this project.

Having realised the impact of *Project Kelkamo* the club applied for a global grant worth \$30,000 by roping in its global partner RC Ribeirao Preto-Jardim Paulista, RID 4540, Brazil. "Apart from global grant funds, we utilised CSR funds, taking the total cost of the project to around ₹35 lakh," said Jaya. Since 2017, hearing aids were given to 500 children. "A two-day flea market, 'Kochi Angadi', was held in October to raise funds and a second GG worth \$30,000 was also applied for *Project Kelkamo*," said club president Arun S Reddy.

Glorious decades

Chartered in June, 1972, the third oldest club in Kochi was formed with 14 members, with retired captain PK Alexander and Dr Thampy as charter president and secretary respectively. Both the Rotarians were 'loaned' to the new club from the parent RC Cochin.

With the aim to promote education and trade, the club members invited a group of Rotarians from Canada and the US who they had met at the International Rotary Convention in Birmingham. A matching grant of ₹1.75 lakh was received from RC Huntsville, RID 7010, Canada for starting a Trade School. "The condition was that the land should be provided by our club RC Cochin East and Rtn K Varghese donated 20 cents in memory of his late father C K Varghese," recalled Jaya. Following the inauguration of Trade School in 1982, the club trained 30 school dropouts in wiremen course, which was recognised by the Kerala Electricity Licensing Board.

The club has its own Rotary hall where weekly meetings and other events are held. As part of its RCC outreach, the club adopted Nochima village near Kochi and has been conducting regular medical camps and serving that community through sustainable projects for decades. Through sustained efforts, a lower primary school without toilet and

other sanitation facilities at Nochima was transformed into a gleaming high school with modern amenities.

During its silver jubilee year (1996–97), the club set up a Mahila Samajam Library, as well as bus shelters which gave this nondescript village a mega facelift. "Thanks to the work done by the then RCC chair late Francis our work at Nochima earned us goodwill and enhanced our public image," said Jaya.

Over the last five decades, the club has sponsored two Rotaract clubs, four Interact clubs and was instrumental in chartering four Rotary clubs in RID 3201. "We have conducted many RYLAs, the last one online, which attracted over 500 participants from around the world."

Late PDG G Viswanathan (2010–11), a club member, conducted an End Polio roadshow during his tenure for which he is remembered even now. Organ donation was one of his favourite projects, and after his death, his organs were donated for transplantation. ■

Meet your



Jeetendra Aneja

Medical equipment, RC Bangalore
Junction, RID 3190

Lake restoration, Project Arogya his priorities

All good people should be in Rotary as it is the purest organisation in the world that believes in service and fellowship, and does not differentiate between people based on their nationality, caste, creed, religion or ethnicity, says Jeetendra Aneja. With 6,900 Rotarians across 165 clubs, he is “aiming for 20 per cent membership growth, taking the headcount to over 8,500.” He wants to charter 25 new clubs during his term. On the Rotaract front he wants to add 50 new clubs to the existing 210 Rotaract clubs, and “I will be happy to retain our strength of 10,000 Rotaractors.”

One of his thrust areas is lake rejuvenation as part of environment protection. The Konanakunte lake in Hoskote taluk will be rejuvenated (GG: ₹41 lakh), followed by reclamation of similar water bodies in and around the city. “The funding for lake restoration will be mostly through CSR grants and club contributions.” *Project Koti Nati* (seed bombing) in rural areas is an ongoing project with the aim to recharge groundwater through reforestation.

Project Arogya (wellness) will screen two lakh people for BP, blood sugar and BMI through 500 medical camps; and awareness sessions will be held for adopting a disease-free, healthy lifestyle. “Our partners, the Karnataka government, Arogya International, a US-based NRI group and B-PACK, a think tank, will provide support during the health camps,” says Aneja. The clubs have taken up 300 Happy Schools with CSR funding and member donations. He joined Rotary Bangalore South Parade in 2001, and later in 2011 became a charter member of his home club. TRF giving target is \$1.5 million. “My vision is to make RID 3190 one of the best administered Rotary districts in India,” he adds.



Pawan Agarwal

Electrical engineer
RC Kashipur, RID 3110

A big thrust on GG, CSR projects

Rotarians are financially capable to contribute for the betterment of society, says Pawan Agarwal. “But we have to pool in our resources to do some big projects for inclusive growth,” he avers. He has formed seven new clubs so far, and will charter eight more, taking the strength to 158 by June-end. He wants to induct 325 new members, and has already added 175 Rotarians, raising the headcount to 4,150. “I am giving a big push to Interact clubs and so far, have added 20 new clubs. We want to double the number of Rotaractors to 1,200.”

RISAO has okayed six CSR projects worth \$440,000 in the domains of education and health. Among them, two Happy Schools are being implemented by RC Kashipur. Soon, the next set of three CSR projects (\$150,000) will get approval. “Out of 10 GG projects worth \$400,000 in the pipeline, five were submitted to TRF, and the balance are in the drafting stage,” he says. So far, he has collected \$500,000 for TRF, as against the target of \$450,000 and “we are now aiming to reach \$1 million by end of this Rotary year.” Along with Sumit Goel from RC Agra Sapphire, he has become AKS member this year. A Rotarian since 1997, Agarwal says he is giving emphasis to GGs, CSR projects and meeting Foundation targets.

Governors

V Muthukumaran



Lalit Khanna

Water handpump exporter
RC Delhi North, RID 3012



Venkatesh H Deshpande

Builder
RC Belgaum South, RID 3170

A new mental health centre in Delhi

Rotary is not just a platform to serve the poor, but also offers a great opportunity to network with like-minded professionals to create a better world, says Lalit Khanna, who has personally contributed \$75,000 to TRF so far. To the 150 clubs in his district, he wants to add eight more, and aims at an 8 per cent net membership growth, taking the headcount to 4,000-plus by June next year. Khanna wants to induct 300 new Rotaractors; the present number is 1,200.

A mental health treatment centre (GG: \$150,000) will be set up with high-tech machines, four doctors and a 25-member staff to offer treatment for mental illnesses, depression and stress. Two dialysis centres (with 25–30 machines) will be inaugurated through a GG worth \$250,000. “Through a mix of CSR grants and club contributions (\$230,000), tablets will be distributed to students of Classes 9–12 at government schools. We are doing projects worth ₹20 crore through GGs, CSR funds and club donations this year.”

Water coolers with RO units, computer and biology labs will be installed at schools. “At least 5–6 skilling centres will come up; two centres were set up recently.” A mini paediatric ICU will be added to the Vardan Multispecialty Hospital, Ghaziabad, in which a blood bank and oxygen cylinder plant were already installed. Around 2,000 cataract surgeries are planned. His TRF target is \$2 million. Khanna joined Rotary in 1991, is supported by wife Neelu, a former chairperson of Inner Wheel district 301. His two sons and three grandchildren are Paul Harris Fellows.

A neonatal ICU at a Ratnagiri hospital

Recalling his Rotary journey after he joined in 1990, Venkatesh Deshpande says, “my life has undergone a sea change. I have seen through many service projects and they have shaped my personality by opening an avenue for doing good to the community.” With 145 clubs, he wants to add five more to take the tally to 150 and is aiming at a 10 per cent net membership growth so that the headcount crosses 7,000 by June. Only 60 out of 100 Rotaract clubs are active, “and I will be happy if I can make 10 more clubs active this year.” He plans to induct over 200 Rotaractors, taking their strength to 1,200.

A neonatal ICU will be set up at a government hospital in Ratnagiri (Konkan area) through a GG worth \$40,000. Five Happy Schools (₹7 lakh each) are under various stages of implementation through a mix of GGs and district grants; and 20 dialysis machines (₹8 lakh each) will be set up at taluk/government hospitals through a global grant and club contributions. A clutch of five check dams are coming up through GGs (₹35–40 lakh) across the district. He plans to collect over \$1 million for TRF. “Once committed to Rotary values, it is a lifetime addiction for Rotarians to carry on their noble work,” he adds.

Designed by N Krishnamurthy

Helping a village



Club members distributing sewing machines to beneficiaries.

RC Chidambaram Central, RID 2981, donated three sewing machines and four goats, apart from giving educational assistance to three students, at the club's adopted village Melathirukazhipalayam. Saplings were distributed to all the houses in the village. The project cost was ₹90,000. ■

Support for RID 3182



Members of RC Ambala Industrial Area with the Rotarian motorcyclists from RID 3182.

Members of RC Ambala Industrial Area, RC 3080, welcomed a group of 12 Rotarian motorcyclists from RID 3182 during their halt at Ambala to raise money for heart surgeries for underprivileged patients. Rotary flags were exchanged and the group was served breakfast. ■

Industrialist receives Rotary award



Sanjay Kirloskar receives the award from DG Anil Parmar in the presence of PDG Deepak Shikarpur.

RID 3131 conferred the Rotary Vocational Excellence Award to Sanjay Kirloskar, chairman, Kirloskar Group, at its International Yuvan Conference in Pune. ■

Clinic on wheels in the Nilgiris



DG B Elangkumaran (third from L) examining the new ambulance and its facilities.

RC Nilgiris, RID 3203, dedicated an advanced life support ambulance costing ₹30 lakh to the people of the hills. The project was done in partnership with Kotak Asset Management Company. ■

Howrah Rotarians celebrate platinum jubilee

Team Rotary News

As RC Howrah, RID 3291, celebrated its platinum jubilee, club president Rabindra Nath Dutta and secretary Subhrangshu Dutta took charge of the second oldest club in the district. The club has lined up a series of gala events to mark 75 years of its existence.

A team led by past president Santanu Banerjee, convener, Platinum Jubilee Committee, said some high-visibility projects include distributing bedroll packages through RCCs to poor children. Each bedroll has a school bag, story-books, water bottle, steel plate, an umbrella and other essentials.

At the district assembly (2022–23), the spouses of Rotarians who have served for more than 40 years in RID 3291 will also be felicitated at the membership session. “We strongly believe that spouses are a good avenue for Rotary’s growth and they will be recognised for the first time in the district conclave,” said Banerjee. The club will be arranging a fellowship tour for members and their spouses to mark the platinum jubilee.

The ‘Each One Bring One’ mantra of PRIP



From L: Gopa Mondal, project chair Dr Manosij Dhara, club secretary Subhrangshu Dutta, Biplab Data, past presidents Maya Pal and Shibnmath Dey at the Covid booster vaccination camp.

Shekhar Mehta will be followed to increase the membership to 75 from the present 36 by June 2023. The club will construct the first floor of a pre-primary school maintained by one of its RCCs at Amta, a small town near Howrah, install a gallery of past presidents at its own building and release a platinum jubilee souvenir.

An illustrious past

A group of Rotarians from Calcutta led by Sukumar Das with encouragement from PRIP NC Laharry and other members of RC Calcutta like Saroj Ghosh did the spadework for a Rotary club in Howrah. “The first meeting was held on Oct 3, 1947, and a provisional club was formed with 35 members. It was the third

club in West Bengal in the then RID 53 and the charter was presented on June 23, 1948 by PRIP Laharry during the tenure of DG Clifford Agarwala from Patna,” recalled Banerjee.

An eminent lawyer and academician, Bankim Chandra Dutta was the charter president and Sukumar Das the charter secretary; and the club had 25 charter members in its first year. Till the club moved to its own Rotary Community Hall in 1982, the members had their regular meetings at the Railway European Institute Hall, now known as the Eastern Railway Officers Club. RC Howrah is the 57th club in India to celebrate the golden jubilee in 1998 under the then president late Madan Datta. So far, the club has

sponsored an Interact and a Rotaract club, five RCCs and an Inner Wheel club. One of its remarkable feats is the club bulletin, *The Bridge*, which was first released in 1948 and has been a source of bonding and networking for its members.

Covid booster vaccination

A Covid booster vaccination camp was held for people in the 18–59 age group, with the support of the Howrah Municipal Corporation. “Around 180 booster doses were given to the beneficiaries. Dr Monosij Dhara led the project team which was assisted by three officials from the corporation. Eighteen members from our club were present in this camp,” said Banerjee. ■



Wordsworld

The world of Young Adults



Sandhya Rao

There are interpretations galore of William Wordsworth's enigmatic line in his 1802 poem about the rainbow. Here's one more.

My heart leaps up when I behold / A rainbow in the sky: / So was it when my life began; / So is it now I am a man; / So be it when I shall grow old, / Or let me die! / The Child is father of the Man; / And I could wish my days to be / Bound each to each by natural piety.' Most of you will recognise the line in question — The Child is father of the Man — and many of you will have your own theories. Thanks to attending a couple of literary festivals recently, yet another layer has been peeled

off in my understanding of what this line could mean. To begin at the beginning...

Literary festivals bring our attention back to books through interactions with writers, illustrators, translators, publishers, editors and, of course, a mad bunch that go by the name of 'readers'! You listen to readings, you get close to the writing process, you get a sense of how pictures are read and words are pictured, you hear sounds combine to make words that perfume our sensibilities with meaning... It's a heady time if you are close to books and often, you grapple with imponderables. The best part, though, is meeting, in person, those whose work you admire.

After the events, a lock in my brain suddenly clicked open. There is a category of books labelled 'Young Adult' that are supposedly intended to catapult the reader from childhood to adulthood. YA books present 'adult' themes and narratives that may include such features as swear words, ideas of sexuality and socio-political issues. Now that light had managed to streak into my brain, I started looking seriously at YA writing. Not surprisingly, there was some really good stuff there, so good, they deserve to shake off the labelling and be read by adults too. Juvenile they were certainly not, even if some of them told the stories of young people.

Then shone another bright light: 'those who matter' are constantly reminding us of the 'demographic dividend' India seemingly enjoys. It appears that something like 67 per cent of our population is between 15–44 years of age; soon, while the rest of the world will be mostly 'old', we will remain 'young', the word redolent with all that it implies. How ready are we

Literary festivals bring our attention back to books through interactions with writers, illustrators, translators, publishers, editors and, a mad bunch that go by the name of 'readers'!

for this change? To welcome the young, their ideas, the pressures they encounter, their view of the world, their priorities? At the very least, are we equipped to understand how their minds work?

One way would be to start reading about them. It is in this context that I allude to YA books and, in this column, to two writers: Adithi Rao and Devashish Makhija. Their books are not just for 'growing up children', they are for grown-ups as well. Wordsworth could well be interpreted to imply this too.

Let's first look at *Candid Tales: India on a Motorcycle* by Adithi Rao. It's a fun-filled, fictionalised account triggered by the travels of Candida Louis from a town called Hubballi in Karnataka. At 24, she took five months off from a day job in Bengaluru to traverse the country, alone on a Royal Enfield motorbike. She was a baby when her parents took her on a bike ride to stop her nonstop bawling. She was seven when she found herself navigating the handlebar as she sat on the fuel tank in front of her dad, his hands no longer guiding her own tiny ones. She was 13 when she took off alone on a bike her friend had stolen from his father's garage. A tree on Nrupatunga Hill

ended that ride but, as she told her friend, 'The bike came to the garage for repairs, no? Now there'll be something to repair.'

Adithi does an imaginative and engaging job of piecing together Candida's journey to many states including Himachal, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa and Puducherry. She spent a memorable time in Gurais Valley in J&K where she saw a woman carry a load of about 40kg of firewood. Upon inquiry she discovered that in the winter, families required 80–90kg of firewood a day. A day! En route to Jodhpur, she stopped at the shrine of Om Banna where the deity is — a motorbike! She also claims to have tripped over ghosts along the way. And of course, she finds herself in several uncomfortable situations, inevitably. As she says to a group of children with whom she interacted in an orphanage in Hubballi, 'Don't be afraid of the unknown. Travel will



energize your mind and change you in extraordinary ways.'

Devashish Makhija describes a completely different kind of journey. Initially produced as a film and taking nearly 10 years to write thereafter, *Oonga* tells the story of a young Adivasi boy from the Dongria Kondh tribe who makes a perilous journey from his village to a distant town where a theatre group has been staging a play called 'Sitaharan'. He wants to see the play, he wants to 'be Rama'. The journey involves the possibility of encounters with armed Naxalites, CRPF personnel out to hunt the Naxalites and anyone else they consider suspicious, company people mining bauxite from the land that the Adivasis hold so sacred and protect with their lives. By the time he returns to his forest home, *Oonga* does indeed 'become' Rama. In order to learn how, you will have to read the book which is a work of mesmerising fiction born of everything that is real and happening in the world even as I write these lines. The filmmaker's sharp vision brings the story alive in taut yet sometimes terrifying prose.

One of the characters in the book, Hemla, is modelled on the activist/politician Soni Sori, an *Adivasi* school teacher from Chhattisgarh who was accused of being associated with Maoists. Tortured and sexually assaulted during her incarceration, she was eventually acquitted.

Devashish also speaks of an anecdote that the local head of Action Aid shared with him. In an interview to journalist Shillpi Singh

he says '... (she) told me how she took a group of Adivasis to

Oonga is a work of
mesmerising fiction born of
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watch a dubbed version of *Avatar*. They hollered and cheered the Na'vi as if they were their fellow tribals fighting the same battles. It was their story, they felt, but were shocked when the film ended happily. Here the Adivasis were fighting the same battles and losing. It wasn't reflected in *Avatar*, and that distressed them.'

In a thought-provoking conversation with Hercules Singh Munda, the founder of Trilingo, a tribal language learning platform, Devashish says that what he saw and heard during his travels in northern Andhra and southern Odisha 'tore my heart into little bits' and he finds himself still telling those stories. 'I have not lived that life,' he clarifies, '... so my experience is at best second-hand'. There is a context to this clarification because the appropriateness of telling others' stories remains a vexed issue. He says he has often been questioned about it. But he is the first, always, to admit that he is only a bridge and we need to hear the stories in the people's own voices.

Still, *Oonga* is exceptional, a book that Hercules Munda says Adivasis themselves would relate to. There cannot be a bigger compliment than that.

The columnist is a children's writer and senior journalist

Bilaspur's Rotary Marg to get a green pathway

Team Rotary News

In its golden jubilee year (2021–22), RC Bilaspur, RID 3261, laid the foundation for its green project, OxyZone Pathway, at the Rotary Marg in the presence of PRIP Shekhar Mehta, Rajya Sabha MP and PDG Vivek Tankha, RI director Mahesh Kotbagi, PRID Kamal Sanghvi and IPDG Sunil Phatak.

Rotary Marg, a busy thoroughfare, was built over the global-grant-funded Project Rosemary, a 4.5km-long canal known as Jwali Nallah, constructed by the club in 2002. “We completed the canal project at a cost of ₹2.5 crore with a GG amount of ₹1.5 crore,” said Ashish Srivastava, club’s past president (2021–22). It protected the entire city from flooding during monsoons.

An LN-4 prosthetic hand fitment camp, organised in the presence of IPDG Phatak and DGN Akhil Mishra, benefited 174 amputees from 12 states. The camp was conducted with the support of Akhil Bhartiya Viklang Chetna Parishad, Agrawal Mahasabha (Bilaspur) and guidance from a team led by Rtn Sharad Seth from RC Jamnagar. “The artificial limb fitment camp was a great accomplishment by the club in its golden jubilee year,” said Srivastava.

A year-long plantation drive with the slogan ‘Plant a tree and get oxygen free’ was taken up by the club to mark its milestone year; an RCC was set up at Jonki village; oxygen concentrators, automatic sanitisers and masks were distributed; over 500 blankets were given to rural families during winter; and Charter Day was celebrated by honouring its charter president Dr Riyazuddin (94) and his team. ■



PRIP Shekhar Mehta and Rashi being honoured by RC Bilaspur president Hamida Siddiqui (L) and past president Ashish Srivastava. **Below:** DGN Akhil Mishra (second from L), Srivastava and PDG Sunil Phatak (third from R) at the LN-4 camp.



Bicycles for girls in Aligarh

Team Rotary News



RC Aligarh Icon, RID 3110, under its ‘Kanyashree cycle donation drive’, provided bicycles to 22 girls doing their higher secondary studies. Twenty club members sponsored the bicycles costing ₹1 lakh, said club secretary Alok Chaturvedi. DG Pawan Agarwal, DGN Neerav Nimesh Agarwal and the club members led by president Rahul Verma were present to distribute the bicycles to the schoolchildren. ■

DG Pawan Agarwal (centre) and club members with girls after giving them bicycles.

Rotary support for paediatric cancer care

An early stage cancer support programme, *Gift of Smiles*, for children has been devised by the Rotary Cancer and Research Foundation (RCRF) with the help of a global grant worth \$40,000, in partnership with RC Madras Midtown, RID 3232, and RC Melawati from Kuala Lumpur, RID 3300, Malaysia.

Under this project, 25 children from low-income families, diagnosed with early stages of leukaemia and lymphoma, the most common forms of paediatric cancer, will be supported with financial assistance of up to ₹1 lakh. “The Cancer Institute, Adyar, will provide complete treatment for these children till they are discharged. If there is a need for more funds, other philanthropic support will be availed by the institute,” said Shankar Duraiswami, managing trustee, RCRF. Post-treatment support for medicines and nutrition would be continued for the children, and wherever needed RCRF would extend help.



Cancer afflicted children work on their colouring books.

The objective of *Gift of Smiles* is not only to seek funding on a larger scale for early cancer detection and treatment of children, but to “inform the Rotary world about this programme and create a support base as we carry this to a large number of beneficiaries and increase financial

support to children with other types of cancer,” said Duraiswami. The *Gift of Smiles* is just a beginning of a major plan of RCRF to create awareness, extend counselling/support and train people in taking care of cancer-affected people in their communities. ■



Instill green values at a young age

Preeti Mehra

How do you convince those in the tricky 7–16 age group to set aside time for sport, music, or dance lessons instead of playing video games? For a start, you convince them that playing cricket, tennis or learning the keyboard is a leisure activity that they will enjoy. Once you have done that and they have zeroed in on a pleasurable and healthy activity, you will notice that they begin to look forward to it as a welcome break from the tedium of their studies. It has been rightly said that extra-curricular activities play a key role in character building in the growing up years.

Well, the same initiating process can be applied in convincing your children to be environment conscious. It is not as difficult as it may sound. No, you don't have to tire them with lectures on climate change or give them a copy of the COP 26 resolutions to memorise. The idea is not to make going green a chore. Let it be a fun activity they participate in, even as they become responsible without being subjected to any boring drill. I am sure children would



dread playing cricket if they have to memorise the International Cricket Council's voluminous manual of rules before playing the game.

The same goes for adopting an eco-friendly lifestyle if it is seen as a tiring regimen. So, how does one go about injecting some fun into the process? One way is by making recycling a natural outcome in the house, and not a special task.

In the pre-teen years, it could start with the pleasurable activity of painting used cardboard boxes in rainbow colours to store the children's toys. Or making them design and build their own innovative bookshelf with scraps or blocks of waste wood, a carpenter could also help them in that. Or, during the holidays, stitching a shoe-storing bag for the family from leftover cloth. Or even fancy designer patch work bags for placing gifts. It just needs thinking out of the box and spending a bit of time channelising the child's mindset.

These ideas are for household items. But injecting the habit of recycling leftovers is not too difficult either. For instance, involve the children in making a trifle pudding with spare cakes or biscuits. Or help them turn the remains of a chicken dish or a veggie they love, into an interesting stuffing for delicious toasties. With a splash of cheese and oregano, and a bowl of soup to accompany it, toasties could turn into an amazing dinner that no one complains about. Or you could transform remaining rotis into irresistible wraps by introducing an interesting stuffing. The possibilities are limitless—as far as the imagination stretches. It makes the children's ability to innovate and experiment that much sharper.

Why only food, teaching your kids not to waste water is a crucial input

you can give them. For example, at a young age they need to pick up the habit of not letting the water run when they brush their teeth. Turning the tap off between washing your hands, brushing your teeth or shampooing your hair, should come automatically. So should conserving water while bathing.

Even when it comes to school, you could start a trend of sorts and pass the idea on to the teachers as well. Encourage children to buy clean but old textbooks every year to save paper and printing ink. The kids could be nudged into making their own pencil boxes from the tins or boxes that lie around the home unused. It would be great if outgrown uniforms are not wasted—instead, they are handed over to someone younger. Or the children are helped to turn them into laundry bags or even shopping bags. If this takes place as a school activity, it will help inculcate recycling as a natural process in the lifecycle of a product.

Teenagers could also be involved in the crucial endeavour of segregating waste and if the chore helps them earn a wee bit of extra pocket money, so much the better. It would make them feel good. Besides, recycling brings down significantly the amount of waste we disperse into the environment, especially non-biodegradable waste.

Apart from segregation, it would be another lesson for life to get them into composting the wet waste. Here, they could have fun playing with soil even as they learn the secrets of nature and follow it up with planting some trees. If the movies and TV shows they see or the books they read reinforce the same values, then the possibility of these values becoming second nature is a distinct possibility.

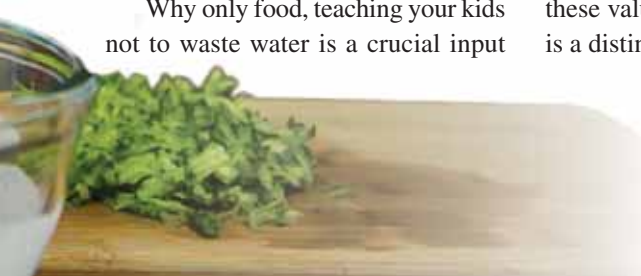
Meanwhile, to make children think and imbibe green, you as parents

It would be great if outgrown uniforms are not wasted — instead, they are handed over to someone younger.

have to do the same. For instance, when planning a holiday choose a wildlife sanctuary, a nature park, or woods in the wilderness instead of a five-star staycation, as many do today. Being close to nature helps children appreciate life and keeps them in touch with the raw elements—the wind, sun, snow, and trees, forests, mountains, rivers and seas. Even during short breaks, try to head for places with fair weather and involve yourself in activities like taking bike rides, organising a camp, fishing in a river, swimming or hitting an easy hiking trail. If you don't help children experience these pleasurable activities, they never will. If you make the effort, your children will associate the outdoors with fun. This will ensure that they grow a healthy respect for nature and take to habits that conserve the environment. This could include taking a walk or cycling short distances instead of using fossil fuel and polluting the air.

Have you ever thought why children throw garbage out of the car or outside a dust bin? It is because their family members do so too. So we parents have to present green living and cultivating eco-friendly habits as a responsible and fun thing to do. If the family is environment conscious, then the children will follow in the footsteps.

The writer is a senior journalist who writes on environmental issues



Providing digital literacy to schoolchildren

Team Rotary News

When RC Calcutta, RID 3191, began the Rotary year in July, the club's community service team led by Arindham Roy Chowdhury, visualised imparting digital literacy to 10,000 children studying in government/government-aided and RCC schools in and around Kolkata under its project 'Siksha Labh'. Children from Classes V to XII were identified and taught basic computer education such as MS Word, Excel and Powerpoint.

The project was launched by past RI president Shekhar Mehta and RIDE Anirudha Roychowdhury on July 18 at the Kamalapur Balika Vidyapeeth school where 350 students were enrolled. "We had fixed the deadline as Nov 14 but by September we



Arindham Roychowdhury (R) and members of RC Calcutta at a Siksha Labh in a school near Kolkata.

had enrolled 9,800 students across 11 schools for computer education," says Chowdhury. The project was entirely funded by the club members. Computer labs were set up in these 11 schools after discussion with the school administration and 100 computers,

along with accessories such as printers and UPS, were installed at a total cost of ₹14 lakh.

It is an ongoing project and regular classes will be conducted as part of the academics for the identified students in these schools, he says. ■

2023 Convention

The grand tour

E V A Remijan-Toba

By foot, tram, boat, or even waterbike, there are plenty of ways to tour Melbourne while you're in town for the 2023 Rotary International Convention 27-31 May. Each mode offers a unique perspective on the city's architecture, culture, history, and hidden places.

Get in some extra steps and check out one of Melbourne's walking tours. A company called I'm Free Tours offers (you guessed it) free walking tours guided by local artists, musicians, and travel aficionados. Its tours cover the city's architecture, gardens, best-kept secrets, and more. Along the way, you'll learn about the rich history of Melbourne, including its Indigenous beginnings and its path to become the vibrant, multicultural metropolis of today.

Running through the heart of downtown, the Yarra River offers another vantage point for exploring the city. Board a river cruise at

Southbank. There are tours for all tastes, including sight-seeing, photography, cocktail, dinner, and sunset cruises. Or you could tour the river on a waterbike, which is a pedal bike set on pontoons. Coastal cruises let you take in the skyline, beaches, coves, rock formations, and wildlife — possibly including dolphins and seals.

The City Circle Tram in Melbourne's business district is a free hop-on hop-off ride popular with tourists. Making about two dozen stops, the tram lets you move easily between landmarks. Notable highlights include the historic Flinders Street train station, State Library Victoria, and the Melbourne Museum of cultural and natural history. The tram provides audio information on each attraction's significance and background.



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District Wise TRF Contributions as on Sept 2022-23 (interim results)

(in US Dollars)

District Number	Annual Fund	PolioPlus Fund	Endowment Fund	Other Funds	Total Contribution
India					
2981	10,428	127	0	625	11,180
2982	5,995	1,369	2,001	28,789	38,154
3000	6,305	1,361	0	0	7,666
3011	11,878	1,470	127	120,718	134,193
3012	794	100	60,235	22,284	83,413
3020	13,709	160	30,000	0	43,869
3030	8,724	43	0	1,150	9,918
3040	6,647	359	0	11,816	18,822
3053	19,606	0	0	0	19,606
3054	3,484	0	0	0	3,484
3060	21,514	200	0	60,476	82,191
3070	21,378	201	11,469	6,980	40,029
3080	5,390	1,787	0	0	7,178
3090	1,798	0	2,190	0	3,988
3100	23,149	400	1,000	0	24,549
3110	8,760	354	1,013	301,329	311,456
3120	5,671	0	0	0	5,671
3131	92,435	656	29,035	113,016	235,143
3132	9,508	1,121	25,000	500	36,129
3141	323,759	27,363	76,000	144,264	571,385
3142	100,554	2,596	0	25	103,176
3150	13,299	1,121	3,000	313	17,733
3160	1,134	2,313	0	0	3,448
3170	29,621	14,991	1,006	275	45,893
3181	31,311	31	25	399	31,766
3182	14,657	253	0	0	14,910
3190	13,650	1,520	0	985	16,155
3201	53,116	2,024	0	251,245	306,384
3203	1,077	447	0	26,479	28,002
3204	3,825	0	0	152	3,977
3211	54,687	0	0	1,049	55,737
3212	27,815	11,356	0	31,646	70,817
3231	44,302	19,645	32,025	569	96,541
3232	33,951	4,824	0	16,439	55,214
3240	14,641	6,738	1,000	0	22,379
3250	4,442	100	0	10,500	15,042
3261	8,471	13	0	200	8,684
3262	830	33	0	27,471	28,333
3291	20,609	223	15,033	0	35,864
India Total	1,072,925	105,299	290,159	1,179,694	2,648,077
3220 Sri Lanka	11,011	861	0	0	11,872
3271 Pakistan	876	1,025	0	250	2,151
3272 Pakistan	305	0	0	5,000	5,305
3281 Bangladesh	35,140	446	20,000	17,259	72,845
3282 Bangladesh	2,785	1,100	0	2,806	6,691
3292 Nepal	22,953	2,818	0	10,368	36,139
South Asia Total	1,145,995	111,549	310,159	1,215,378	2,783,081

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

Source: RI South Asia Office

A cool mind & active body can work wonders

Bharat and Shalan Savur

The festive season rings in a lot of song and dance, laughter and love... It's beautiful. But those who suffer from migraines have to keep a firm, loving hold on themselves. You are bound to meet those over-bearing people, coaxing, 'Oh, come on, one little cashewnut barfi won't hurt you!' and thrust it on you. It's done with goodwill, but you've got to look after yourself.

In short, be diplomatic, be patient, be vigilant. Don't get angry with them. People who have never had a serious headache don't understand the disabling pain a migraine causes. Sometimes, I wonder whether we are more sensitive in body, mind or spirit. What else satisfactorily explains the sudden throbbing pain on one side of the head which 60 out of 100 people get, while 40 get it on both sides?

It's crazy, but there's sensitivity to bright lights, intolerance to sound and smells, there's nausea and vomiting leading to tremors and, sometimes dizziness. It can be unnerving. There are also pre-migraine indications — blurred vision, floating visual images, flashes of light, zigzag patterns, or blind spots that last for 20 minutes.

How do we navigate through the heat and dance of festivities? Here are some wonderful tips that really help:

Go green

Health, like charity, begins at home. So, don't decorate your environment with flashing lights that go off and on incessantly. Use steady ones, preferably

green lights. Prof Rami Burstein of the Harvard Medical School and team studied the effect of lights on migraine sufferers. They found that blue and red lights generated the largest signals in the retina and brain's cortex — that's pain. And green generated the smallest signals, even reducing pain in some people. So, going green seems to be the answer for many negatives in life! When you visit friends and family, wear your computer glasses. At least, they'll keep the blue lights out.

Water, water everywhere

Keep away as far as you can from fire-crackers' noise and smoke. If out, wear the mask you bought for Covid. Some doctors recommend carrying earplugs and slipping them into your ears when the explosions begin. Guard against dehydration caused by alcohol. In fact, alcohol itself triggers a migraine — so try and keep off the bar. Pack a bottle of water in your bag. Keep sipping it. The smile on the host's face fades if you ask for water instead of a cocktail or mocktail. So, if you're handed one, accept it with grace, but, don't drink it. Pack pain-relief pills too just in case.

No extremes

If you already know which foods trigger your migraine, good for you. Largely, they include cheese, chocolates, nuts, fenugreek leaves and corn. So, turn away from pizzas, chocolate confectionaries, methi parathas, baked dishes, pastas, foods containing MSG. While on foods, don't overeat and

don't skip meals. Always eat light. And never work, work-out or socialise on an empty stomach. The migraine doesn't like extremes. Avoid eating a banana or drinking lots of water on an empty stomach. Either can lead to acidity and the head throbs, signalling the onset of a migraine.

Treat the throb

When the throbbing starts, don't ignore it. Migraines are not like ordinary headaches — they don't go away on their own. Depending on your circumstances, you can do either of these two things: If at a social gathering, take that anti-inflammatory pill. It takes about



20 minutes to work. Meanwhile, slip away where you can be yourself. Too much smiling and talking and nodding worsens the throb. Sipping a cola is a good idea in these early stages, the caffeine in it eases the throb.

If you're home, hunt for the tender spots on your temples and scalp, including neck. You'll find maybe three to four. Massage each in turn non-stop with your index and middle fingers. Most often, the pain subsides. Try a hot pack. Or stand under a warm shower. Water pressure and warmth relax the nerves and muscles and help you slip into sleep.

The rhythm of routine

Pain experts warn that the migraine brain doesn't like change. It loves its routine. So, festive season or no festive season, stick to your routine — regular mealtime with light meals; regular sleep and waking times. Don't gulp down your meals. There's no hurry. As Eknath Easwaran says, 'When you are eating, eat.' That is,

don't plan your next move, don't put morsels of worry and grievances into your mouth along with the food. Mealtimes and sleep times are designed to help us relax, unwind and get back our personal rhythm.

Keep a gap of at least two hours between dinner and bedtime. Lying down can cause acid reflux which every migraine sufferer has to watch out for. For the same reason, sleep with two pillows arranging them in a way so that your shoulders and head are positioned at a gradual slant. To ensure a restful sleep, do progressive relaxation when you lie down. Eyes closed, relax every bodypart from toes upwards to your shoulders, neck and head. There's less chance of changing your position or posture when you drift into a relaxed sleep.

Don't oversleep. When you wake up early, get out of bed. If you look at the clock and dive back into a sleep huddle, you wake up with that terrible throb. A huddle contracts muscles — that hurts. Never sleep beyond 7am.

Start the day by sipping a cup of warm water, followed by your favourite beverage. Schedule something so pleasant in the morning that you want to rise early. A beautiful awakening ensures a beautiful life.

Say 'No' to stress

The migraine sufferer seems more sensitive than most, not just to sound and light, but to stress as well. Stress is self-created; partly from seeking perfection and putting a lot of pressure on oneself, and partly from wanting predictability, stability and ideal situations in our lives a little too intensely. Would you believe it? Forty-one migraine patients showed high neural activation to fearful faces. How emotional can one get? How do you get around this? One, quit over worrying, overthinking, exaggerating a situation. When we are awake, we are in the beta state; when about to fall asleep, our brain goes into a calm, trance-like alpha state. And the good news is that stress-related tension always responds favourably to trances. So, do *Yoga Nidra* meditation 2–3 times a day. Two, build your life on gratitude instead of expectation. Why agitate because a dog is barking somewhere? Why fret that you were overcharged by ₹100 when your income is ₹one lakh? Keeping a sense of proportion makes life easy. Ask yourself, 'Am I overreacting?' Yes, you are! Focus on empathy — maybe the dog is hungry. Focus on gratitude for the one lakh and many more things. Don't build up things, build up yourself. Build your health, happiness, humour. Walk off your stress daily. Let the great outdoors in. Friend Jai says, 'As cold water and a warm iron take away the wrinkles off clothes, a cool mind and active body take away the crinkles in the head.' They do.

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



RC Nagapattinam — RID 2981



DSP K Jawahar inaugurated a tree plantation drive at a coastal area. Rotaractors from Sir Issac Newton College of Arts and Science took part as volunteers.

RC Porbandar — RID 3060



A two-day haemoglobin testing and cancer awareness camp benefitted 4,500 school and college girls. Inner Wheel club, Kundaria Foundation and BT Savani Cancer Hospital were partners.

RC Pudukkottai City — RID 3000



Over 100 children were screened at a cardiac camp at the Punitha Arputha Matha Middle School, Alangudi, with the support of Apollo Hospitals.

RC Amritsar East — RID 3070



Over 50 saplings were planted by club members, teachers and students at the Government Girls High School at Bhagtanwala in a greening mission.

RC Nasik Godavari — RID 3030



Micro loans with nil interest were given to 18 women for self-employment under *Project Ek Chhoti si Asha*. So far, 85 women availed loans of ₹6.75 lakh.

RC Patiala Mid Town — RID 3090



A medical camp was held at the Omini Hospital, Patiala, with the support of Fortis Hospital. ECG, Echo, blood sugar and BP tests were done.

RC Moradabad — RID 3100



Stationery items were distributed to children and 250 patients were examined at a health camp in a slum colony. Grocery items were distributed.

RC Pune Laxmi Road — RID 3131



Mahalunge Madhyamik Vidyalay was converted into a Happy School with 50 desk-benches, an e-learning kit, inverter, cupboards, a podium and furniture sets.

RC Bareilly Metro — RID 3110



Around 90 people were screened at a medical camp in which medicines were given to all patients. Health camps are being conducted in Bareilly since 2002.

RC Latur Central — RID 3132



An anti-rabies vaccination and health check-up camp was conducted for pets at Janwal village. Medicines for dogs were distributed at the Pashmi Caravan.

RC Kushinagar — RID 3120



Sewing machines were given to 10 underprivileged women on Gandhi Jayanthi.

RC Dombivli Diamonds — RID 3142



Over 100 transgenders benefitted from a health camp in which eye, dental, BP, blood sugar and blood tests were done. A Wi-Fi-enabled computer was donated to Kinnar Asmita Garima.

RC Guntur Vikas — RID 3150



The club distributed rice bags and books worth ₹30,000 to special children at Dakshinya, an institute for differently-abled students.

RC Bengaluru Harmony — RID 3190



Around 250 children were screened at a health camp at the Gubbalala Government School with dental, eye, ENT and gynaecology check-up.

RC Vita City — RID 3170



Bicycles were donated to 12 girls who had to travel 3–6km to school. Also, five wheelchairs were given to the physically-challenged.

RC Coimbatore Vadavalli — RID 3201



An English Club was started at the Marudhamalai Devasthanam HS School to improve the reading, writing, vocabulary and spoken skills for Class 9 students.

RC Kota City — RID 3182



In two months, the club distributed 13 sewing machines worth ₹1.3 lakh to help them earn a regular income.

RC Karamadai — RID 3203



The club donated a Smart TV and books to a government school at Periamadam palayam village in partnership with RC Tirupur Kumaran.

RC Alleppey Greater — RID 3211



An eye camp was conducted for students at the Lutheran School, Alleppey, under *Project Amirtam*. AG Gireesan inaugurated the camp.

RI District 3232

A day-long sports event titled 'Rotary Chennai Olympiad' for 2,000 government school students was inaugurated by DG Dr Nandakumar at the Nehru Indoor Stadium.



RC Sivakasi — RID 3212



A medical camp was held at the Rotary School for eye, heart and dental check-up with the support of Inner Wheel club and Sivakasi Groceries Merchants Mahamai Fund.

RC Gaya City — RID 3250

Four wheelchairs were donated to the Gaya railway station to help disabled pilgrims arriving for the Pitrupaksha Mela.



RC Vellore North — RID 3231



Saplings were planted around the Sozhavandan lake area in Kazhinjure village with a large number of villagers taking part.

RC Rajdhani Bhubaneswar — RID 3262

A sand art Rotary logo, created by Rtn Subala Moharana, an international artist, was inaugurated by DG Prabhudutta Subudhi at the SBI branch.



Compiled by V Muthukumaran

The annoying babu/ NRI entitlement syndrome

TCA Srinivasa Raghavan



Indians have a peculiar failing. Not all, of course, but enough of them to make you notice it. I am referring to that sense of entitlement that comes from status, whether inherited or acquired. Coming as I do from a family of bureaucrats and with a large group of friends who were also bureaucrats, I have seen this at close quarters. Again, not all of them are like that but, as I said, enough of them for us to take notice. Basically, this sense of entitlement manifests itself in many ways, of which the most pronounced is not saying ‘please’ or ‘thank you’ when talking to people they don’t know, especially those who they think are of a lower status, which is everyone else.

This inability to say ‘please’ or ‘thank you’ shows they don’t respect others. And the tone of their speech embellishes that disrespect. I once asked my father why this was so. He said it’s because they are treated like superior beings from the age of 23 or 24 when they join whichever service they have qualified for after passing that one single UPSC examination. After that, for the next 35–37 years, unless removed from service, they are the bosses. Everyone is a subordinate except their seniors in government service. It was a good explanation, not just of the rude behaviour but also the sense of entitlement arising from being the Sahib.

But what I don’t understand is why our NRIs feel so entitled. I have seen this in our own family where, for the last 30 years, many have gone overseas to work. This includes my son, I must confess. These people, merely because they live outside India, think they are entitled to different treatment. Their attitude is “look, when we are overseas, we aren’t given any special treatment. So when we are back home we must be given preference and special attention.” You see this most in the class of people that should know better, the educated NRIs.

A peculiar manifestation of this happens within families where the son or daughter who is working abroad wants special treatment, both when he or she is outside India and when he or she is back home. Thus, I have heard from dozens of parents

Coming from a family of bureaucrats and with many friends who were also bureaucrats, I have seen this sense of entitlement at close quarters.

who complain that as soon as their jet lag is over their children assume that while they are visiting, all food will be cooked by the mother. This plea that “we want *ghar ka khana*” appeals to the maternal instinct. The mother then ends up cooking three meals a day for the entire duration of the stay.

Well, you might say if you are a man who watches TV all day, that’s ok isn’t it, what are mothers for? My problem is that when these brats come home, they say “Look, we work so hard overseas and do all the housework ourselves, that when we come home we will only lounge about all day. So pamper us.” No ‘please’, either! Again the mother ends up catering to this sense of entitlement.

Don’t get me wrong. It’s nice to be able to do things for your children, whether they are NRIs or residents in India. That’s not the problem. The problem is the sense of entitlement — that this is our due and the rest of you should do what’s needed, namely, give us special treatment. And do you know when this behaviour is most pronounced and therefore the most annoying? It’s when these people are in the foreign service because then not only are they bureaucrats, they are also NRIs because they live abroad most of the time but with a full complement of domestic help for which the Indian taxpayers pay. It’s thus a triple whammy for everyone else. ■

In Brief



India's first solar village

Modhera, a village in Mehsana district, Gujarat, known

for the beautiful Sun Temple has been declared India's first 24x7 solar-powered village. Along with a ground-based solar power plant, 1,300 rooftop solar systems have been installed on top of residential and government buildings and integrated with a 15Mwh battery energy storage system.



Thermal energy dance floor

A Scottish night club SWG3 has a dance floor that absorbs body heat from the dancers and converts it to thermal energy, which can be between 250 and 600 watts depending on the intensity of the music. The energy is channelled via a fluid carrier to a 650ft deep borewell where it is charged before being sent up to provide heating/cooling to the club.



The 'Maa' robot

Bipin Kadam, a daily wage worker from Goa, has built a robot from scratch to feed his specially-

abled daughter. The robot has an inbuilt bowl and spoon attached to an arm that helps in feeding her. The Goa Innovation Council will provide financial assistance to further develop the robot.



Save the Date

Iraqi families under the initiative *Adopt a Palm*, are trying to preserve Iraq's palm trees and boost the date industry. Over 70,000 palm trees have been planted in Baghdad,

Karbala, Najaf and other parts of southern Iraq. Families are offering their trees for adoption in return for the harvest of the dates.



Dance events to fix Ukraine

In Ukraine DJs are combining dance events with fixing up bombed-out buildings under the initiative 'Repair Together'. At a recent event 200 people danced among the debris in Yahidne village, north-east of Kyiv. The initiative has so far hosted nine clean-up events in three villages, carrying out repairs to homes damaged by shelling.



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