

ROTARY NEWS



**March for
Literacy**



Act 2

Now that your District Leaders have returned from San Diego, having being further inspired, trained, equipped, to transcend barriers to lead each of you to further progress, support to development of plans to assist the global life's for a better future with better health, necessary comforts, proper educational with vocational and professional training bringing peace and tranquillity through international relations and not forgetting the youth, taking them along the correct path

supporting President Elect IAN RISELEY's - Theme **ROTARY: MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

It is now possible for you to globally participate in these programs; the successful result possible through directed efforts once again for Rotary as the best organisation of its kind in the world.

While you are busy planning or executing we are with you to assist you with our expertise in international quality globally acclaimed products, the way you would want them as we have being doing since 1976 and wining laurels, recognition, respect, prestige and honour of the fraternity.

Contact us for any requirements with digital technology available. We are available almost 24/7 and only a few whispers away.

Your

ICON

in Global Rotary since 1976.

'Better Services'

which has now taken its next generic form in

"Better Services Private Limited"

every time a little better

The same it is as it was till now with a continuity that may last forever on quality and service concerns

BETTER SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED

22, Meghna, 64, S.V. Road, Santacruz (W). Mumbai - 400 054, INDIA
Tel.: +91-22-26491143, 26491826, 65818819 Fax: +91 - 22-2649 8201 Website: better.in
E-mail: better@vsnl.com madhnanrang@yahoo.com better@betterservices.org

Every time a little better





14 Rotary in a mission mode

The Rotary South Asia Literacy Summit held at Chennai discussed RILM's initiatives to rid India of illiteracy.



20 Let's globalise human compassion

A summary of Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi's impassioned speech, at the Literacy Summit, advocating compassion for the children of the world.



58 RI President calls on President of India

RI President John Germ and Judy call on the President of India at the Rashtrapathi Bhavan.

Inside

32 Literacy Heroes felicitated

The Chennai Literacy Summit celebrated the silent crusaders of literacy with Literacy Hero awards.



36 TRF Challenge 2017-18

An account of the intensive training event for the incoming DGs convened by RIDE C Basker at Mumbai.

46 Importance of E-voting

E-voting is the way forward, says RID Manoj Desai and RIDE C Basker, at the Disha Meet.

54 Cleaning up the Ganga

A historic MoU was signed between Rotary India WinS Committee and the National Mission for Clean Ganga.

66 Is Trump wrong in putting America first?

Though the US President Donald Trump faces several criticisms, his focus is America's well-being, which is what he has been elected to do.



62 A romance with India's Textiles

An account on the rich variety and heritage of India's textiles.



70 A Venice experience in Mexico

A boat ride on the canals of Xochimilco, a World Heritage Site in Mexico, reminds you of the famous gondola-ride of Venice.

On the cover: School children at the launch of the Asha Kiran mascot at the Chennai Literacy Summit.

Picture by Rasheeda Bhagat.



Deepa inspires, Dutt shocks

I've had an opportunity to listen to Deepa Malik in person, interacted with her over email, and still find the cover story *Ability beyond Disability* bringing shivers to my body and instilling inspiration and pride in me as an Indian. Kudos to her spirit and courage. Making this the cover story in March, when we celebrate International Women's Day is a tribute to the spirit of womanhood.

In your Editorial you have highlighted the spouses' role and that made me think Deepa Malik's spouse Bikram Singh Malik's role in her accomplishments. We can all learn lessons from her as she is indeed an excellent example of 'Serving Humanity'.

Thank you very much for bringing out a yet another wonderful issue of *Rotary News* which I always love to read and share.

Manoj Kabre
RC Bangalore Whitefield
Central – D 3190

Hats off to Deepa Malik. It is difficult to imagine that one has undergone such a huge ordeal in a single lifetime. Hats off to her beloved family for the unstinting support and empathising with her. It should serve as an inspiration to us Rotarians.

It is wonderful that RI District chose her as a glorious example.

That is the grit part, but I do not approve of the showbiz

part. I hope it is just an aberration, as I feel a person like Sanjay Dutt fits nowhere into the Rotary scheme of things.

Shrikanth Kolathaya
RC Puttur – D 3181

I was shocked to see the photograph of Sanjay Dutt, a convict, on the cover. We speak so much about the importance of Rotary's public image. By putting his picture we've endorsed our unfortunate fascination for celebrities, irrespective of their background or track record.

PDG C Suresh – D 3150



I am surprised to see the picture of a convict on the cover page of the March issue. Is this in step with Rotary?

PDG Sajjan
Goenka – D 3140

I was aghast to see the picture of Sanjay Dutt; has he sponsored any Rotary projects, and if yes, does it free him from his past deeds? Such a person was invited for a District conference! Whose decision was it to invite him for the D 3141 Conference and on what basis was it felt that he deserves to be pardoned for all his sins in the past

and invited as a speaker for the conference? Does this fit into the Four-Way Test of Rotary? I have great respect and love for Rotary but such instances shake me completely.

Sanjay Vaidya
RC Thane North – D 3142

We deeply appreciate the challenging approach of Deepa Malik (*Ability beyond Disability*, March issue). The support of her husband is excellent. His words, "Don't worry about the legs. I will carry you in my arms all my life" is touching. Thanks Rasheeda for a superb article.

P Murugan, RC Golden City
Nagercoil – D 3212

I am sad to see the March cover. Sanjay Dutt might have served the sentence but we all know he committed a heinous crime. What made Rotary to associate with such a person? And to use his picture? Are you running short of good photos of Rotary projects done to serve humanity?

Sandeep Goel
RC Karnal
Midtown – D 3080

Sanjay Dutt was a guest speaker at the District 3141 conference, which I covered, and seated next to Paralympian Deepa Malik, whose inspirational story is told in the magazine, made a great contrast and hence the cover title 'Grit & Showbiz'.

Editor

A classy magazine

In 1912, a year after 1911, the delegates at the third RI Convention in Duluth, Minnesota, changed the name of *The National Rotarian* (12 pages) to *The Rotarian*. The then RI President Glenn G Head said our magazine should also contain reading matter of general interest. I'm glad this statement made 104 years ago is followed by the Editorial teams of *The Rotarian* and *Rotary News*. In the March issue, I find interesting articles such as *Ability beyond Disability*, *Serious Fun*, *Why Rotary has been branded a "unique organisation"*, *Hoarding money can make you crazy* and the Editorial on Rotary spouses. All the articles are captivating and classic examples of excellence in journalism. Congratulations.

The Editorial team of *Rotary News* is making improvements in each issue which motivates not only the Rotarians and their spouses but also non-Rotarians to read the magazine with interest. Felicitations to the Editor and her team for their good work and all the best to continue to bring us such a world-class magazine every month.

R Srinivasan, RC Madurai Midtown – D 3000

In the March issue, *Hands of Hope* was heart touching. To commemorate the TRF centennial, RC Vapi (D 3060), the home club of our beloved Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee, gave away prosthetic hands to 177 people. This was a dream project for the club president Harish Kothari. Certainly, Rotary is doing good through TRF.

N Jagatheesan, RC Eluru – D 3020

I was impressed by the philosophy of AKS member Manoj Israni on giving away money to serve humanity. I have decided to plan something big by identifying and cutting down my unnecessary expenses. Kudos to the Editor for bringing out the best from everyone she interviews.

G Karthikeyan, RC Mannargudi – D 2981

I joined Rotary Coimbatore East (D 3201) two years back. I am very proud as a Rotarian and participate in the maximum number of projects and meetings in my club. The February issue has many useful messages and articles that are very useful for young Rotarians like me.

Rajesh Chinnasamy, RC Coimbatore East – D 3201



Let's promote organ donation

There could be no better service than to donate one's organs, especially when they give a new lease of life to six persons. Congratulations to Rtn Puneet Mahajan. In June 2011, Rtn NV Lakshmi of RC Cantonment Secunderabad (D 3150) had cerebral haemorrhage and was declared brain dead. All her organs — heart, liver, kidneys and eyes were donated. Her family has established an NGO — NV Lakshmi Foundation (www.nvlakshmifoundation.org). Let's start an Action Group to further the cause of organ donation.

N Mohan, RC Cantonment Secunderabad – D 3150

The article *Why Rotary has been branded a "unique organisation"* is motivating, informative and worth reading more than once. It inspires a young club president like me. Being a TRF alumni (GSE Team member in 2008), I have experienced how and why Rotary is a unique organisation, be it in its internationality, the service above self motto, or the Rotarians' attitude of bridging bonds beyond boundaries. Rotary is unique because Rotarians across the world "act globally, impact locally."

R Murali Krishna, President, RC Berhampur – D 3262

A library endorses Rotary Samachar!

Thank you for sending a copy of *Rotary Samachar* to our library. Do ensure that we keep receiving it as it has become very popular among the readers of our library.

Suryavanshi, Secretary,
Su-Sahitya Pustakalaya, Amravati, Maharashtra

The lucid write-up *In the land of strawberries* (Feb issue) by Jaishree gave a full view of Mahabaleshwar. I was taken 15 years back, when I last visited the hill station. From the article, I could presume that nothing much has changed. Thanks for the wonderful narration, especially about the food.

I am happy to note that the property the writer stayed in belongs to a Rotarian. *Rotary News* should give priority to these types of ventures by Rotarians. Also, furnish the phone numbers of the owner so that interested Rotarians can contact them directly.

SS Nair, RC Kazhakuttom – D 3211

The cover page photo in the February issue does not confirm to Rotary's norm. Also 80 per cent of the articles are in the name of Editor Rasheeda Bhagat. She just can't be present at all these events and occasions. So, please name the reporters who have written these articles.

Hemant Gogte, RC Murbad – D 3140

She was very much present at ALL those events and did write ALL those articles!

Editor

We welcome your feedback. Write to the Editor:
rotarynews@rosaonline.org; rushbhagat@gmail.com

Governors Council

RI Dist 2981	DG	A Mani
RI Dist 2982	DG	T Shanmugasundaram
RI Dist 3000	DG	M Muruganandam
RI Dist 3011	DG	Dr N Subramanian
RI Dist 3012	DG	Sharat Jain
RI Dist 3020	DG	Dr S V S Rao
RI Dist 3030	DG	Mahesh H Mokalkar
RI Dist 3040	DG	Darshan Singh Gandhi
RI Dist 3051	DG	Dinesh Kumar V Thacker
RI Dist 3052	DG	Ramesh Choudhary
RI Dist 3053	DG	Bhupendra Jain
RI Dist 3060	DG	Hitesh Manharlal Jariwala
RI Dist 3070	DG	Dr Sarbjeet Singh
RI Dist 3080	DG	Raman Aneja
RI Dist 3090	DG	Sanjay Gupta
RI Dist 3110	DG	Dr Ravi Mehra
RI Dist 3120	DG	Dr Pramod Kumar
RI Dist 3131	DG	Prashant Deshmukh
RI Dist 3132	DG	Pramod Shashikant Parikh
RI Dist 3141	DG	Gopal Rai Mandhania
RI Dist 3142	DG	Dr Chandrashekhar Kolvekar
RI Dist 3150	DG	Ratna Prabhakar Anne
RI Dist 3160	DG	Sreerama Murthy
RI Dist 3170	DG	Dr Vinaykumar Pai Raikar
RI Dist 3181	DG	Dr R S Nagarjuna
RI Dist 3182	DG	Devarunda Subbegowda Ravi
RI Dist 3190	DG	H R Ananth
RI Dist 3201	DG	Dr Prakash Chandran Arackal
RI Dist 3202	DG	Dr Jayaprakash P Upadhya
RI Dist 3211	DG	Dr John Daniel
RI Dist 3212	DG	Dr K Vijayakumar
RI Dist 3230	DG	Natarajan Nagoji
RI Dist 3240	DG	Dr Rintu Guha Niyogi
RI Dist 3250	DG	Dr R Bharat
RI Dist 3261	DG	Deepak Mehta
RI Dist 3262	DG	Narayan Nayak
RI Dist 3291	DG	Shyamashree Sen

Board of Permanent Trustees & Executive Committee

PRIP	Rajendra K Saboo	RI Dist 3080
PRIP	Kalyan Banerjee	RI Dist 3060
PRID	Sudarshan Agarwal	RI Dist 3011
PRID	Panduranga Setty	RI Dist 3190
PRID	Sushil Gupta	RI Dist 3011
PRID	Ashok Mahajan	RI Dist 3140
PRID	Yash Pal Das	RI Dist 3080
PRID	Shekhar Mehta	RI Dist 3291
PRID	P T Prabhakar	RI Dist 3230
RID	Dr Manoj D Desai	RI Dist 3060
RIDE	C Basker	RI Dist 3000

Executive Committee Members (2016–17)

DG	M Muruganandam	RI Dist 3000
	Chair - Governors Council	
DG	Shyamashree Sen	RI Dist 3291
	Secretary - Governors Council	
DG	Sarbjeet Singh	RI Dist 3070
	Secretary - Executive Committee	
DG	Natarajan Nagoji	RI Dist 3230
	Treasurer - Executive Committee	
DG	Gopal Rai Mandhania	RI Dist 3141
	Member - Advisory Committee	

ROTARY NEWS / ROTARY SAMACHAR

Editor	Senior Assistant Editor
Rasheeda Bhagat	Jaishree Padmanabhan

Send all correspondence and subscriptions to

ROTARY NEWS TRUST
3rd Floor, Dugar Towers, 34 Marshalls Road
Egmore, Chennai 600 008, India.
Phone : 044 42145666
e-mail : rotarynews@rosaonline.org
Website : www.rotarynewsonline.org

Printed by Mukesh Arneja at Thomson Press (India) Ltd, Plot A-9, Industrial Complex, Maraimalai Nagar 603209, India and published by Mukesh Arneja on behalf of Rotary News Trust from Dugar Towers, 3rd Flr, 34, Marshalls Road, Egmore, Chennai 600 008.
Editor: Rasheeda Bhagat.

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



Enslaved children, undervalued daughters

For the second consecutive year, the 2,450 delegates at the South Asia Literacy Summit in Chennai got a taste of the magic that a Nobel Laureate can create. Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi mesmerised the hall packed with Rotarians, making them laugh with a dose of his wry humour, giving them moist eyes and shocking their sensibilities as he described the torture undergone by some of the children he had rescued. Children crying for their mothers were hung upside down from the fan and beaten, sometimes with large scissors used to cut cloth. Children made to sit for 22 hours in the same position, resulting in deformed legs and inability to walk again. Children burnt or beaten brutally for making silly mistakes at work. Instead of being given medicines or their wounds treated with an ointment; sometimes the cuts were filled with matchstick powder and burnt, so that the flesh and skin could burn and meld.

With these stories, Satyarthi appealed to the fantastic human being that resides in each of us. How can that human being condone the criminal act of a hostel warden punishing a group of girls by parading them naked and taking their pictures? Or a three-year-old girl being raped and killed by her uncle. "If our daughters are not safe in their homes, neighbourhoods, and more important, schools, then we have to act now, we cannot wait.

This is a serious challenge," he thundered, amidst pin-drop silence. Read the detailed article on Satyarthi's brilliant advocacy for our children on Page 20 of this issue. But his impassioned plea on safe homes and neighbourhoods for our children took me back to an all-India conference I had attended on female foeticide in Goa in 2004.

The discussion was focused on the unwanted girl child and Abha Bhaiya, one of the founders of *Jagori*, a woman's empowerment organisation, related the story of a workshop they had organised for training women in a remote village in Rajasthan. One of the women who had come with her eight-month-old son and three-year-old daughter, suddenly found the son ill, with high fever. "The boy was struggling to breathe, it was a remote village where there were no medical facilities and she pointed to the daughter and said: I wish this had happened to her." The boy was shifted to a hospital the next day and got well. Later when Abha confronted her over the disturbing comment, she said: 'Look, if my daughter had died, I could still go back home. But if my son, born after four daughters, had died, there was no way I could return home and would've had to commit suicide, as the family wouldn't have accepted me, because this is a prized son.' Added Abha, "No mother likes to kill her child, but this is the reality on the ground. The truth is that her son was her passport to return home."

Gives me goose bumps even today to relate this story, that a mother would wish her daughter dead, rather than her son. Not because she loves her less, but because the son is the prized possession of the entire family. A decade has passed but the bitter truth is that in many parts of India, daughters are still undervalued. And unsafe in their own homes, and schools.

Rasheeda Bhagat

President Speaks



Vaccines: their incredible impact

Dear Fellow Rotarians,

Globally, in developed as well as in developing countries, child mortality is on the decline and life expectancy on the rise. In 1960, 182 of every 1,000 children born died before turning five; today, that number is down to 43. A child born in 1960 could expect to live an average of just 52 years; by contrast, a child born this year can expect to live to 71.

Then as now, the factors most likely to determine a child's fate are set at birth: where he or she is born, the educational and economic condition of the family, the availability of medical care. Yet one of the most important advances in public health has reached every country and must now reach every child: immunisation.

The use of vaccines has, in many parts of the world, nearly eliminated diseases that once were widespread, such as diphtheria, tetanus and rubella. Thanks to vaccines, 20 million lives have been saved from measles since 2000. Smallpox has been eradicated — and polio is next.

Thirty years ago, there were an estimated 350,000 cases of polio per year worldwide. As this issue of *The Rotarian* went to press, only 37 cases of polio had been recorded in 2016 — the

lowest number in history. All of the other cases, and the paralysis and death they would have brought, were prevented through the widespread use of a safe, reliable, and inexpensive vaccine.

Overall, the World Health Organisation estimates that immunisation prevents an estimated 2 million to 3 million deaths every year. It also averts a tremendous burden of disability and economic loss. Yet we could be doing so much better: An additional 1.5 million deaths could be avoided by improving vaccine coverage worldwide.

This month, from 24 to 30 April, we join WHO, UNICEF, and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in celebrating World Immunisation Week, raising awareness of the incredible impact that vaccines have had on global health. This year's theme is "Vaccines Work" — and they do. Increased use of vaccines has broader repercussions for public health: controlling viral hepatitis, reducing both the need for antibiotics and the development of antibiotic-resistant microbes, and reaching more children and adolescents with essential health interventions. In every part of the world, routine immunisation is as crucial as ever to ensure that all children have the best chance at a healthy future.

In an uncertain world, vaccines offer something remarkable: a way to protect our children throughout their lives. By working together to safeguard all children against polio and other preventable diseases, Rotary is truly *Serving Humanity* — now and for generations to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John F. Germ".

John F. Germ
President, Rotary International

Message from the RI Director



Of Sanitation and Literacy

Kudos to Trustee Sushilji (Sushil Gupta) for the significant achievement of signing an MoU for the Clean Ganga Abhiyan under the Swachh Bharat Mission of our Prime Minister. One more time friends, Rotary's credibility is proven.

"Thousands have lived without love, not one without water," said W H Auden.

Friends, we have been hearing that if there is a Third World War, it will be fought over water. That shows how important it is for us to work for potable water and create awareness for saving water.

Regarding Sanitation, what more can I say? During the last twenty months, I have witnessed the magic of WinS. This flagship project of Rotary is praiseworthy. Schools are the focus as we want to cultivate behavioural change in children who are our hope for tomorrow, as Rotary believes in catching them young.

At the Chennai Literacy Summit, Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar paid a tribute to the Missile Man of India, late President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam and stressed the importance of 'Each One, Reach One and Teach One.' He also suggested an excellent formula that each student should educate illiterate family members and make India literate.

This reminds me of what Sir Winston Churchill had said:

"One cannot rise to become a leader in a community in this civilised world without being involved in its problems, without being convulsed by its agonies and without being inspired by its causes."

Friends, don't you think — we are the Right People, at the Right Time, for the Right Cause? If the answer is YES, then the real essence lies in the speed with which we deliver what we have committed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Manoj Desai'.

Manoj Desai
Director, Rotary International

Message from the Foundation Chair



Centennial celebrations spread the word

In communities worldwide, Rotarians are finding creative ways to celebrate The Rotary Foundation centennial and showcase our Foundation's century-long commitment to doing good in the world.

Rotarians have arranged for a commemorative postage stamp to be issued in Pakistan, sponsored a cruise on the Danube River with some proceeds going to our Foundation, and sold bottles of wine with "100 Years Doing Good in the World" printed on the label in Vancouver, BC

And, of course, there have been scores of centennial dinners. In Arch Klumph's hometown of Cleveland, Rotarians gathered to celebrate the centennial and honour the father of The Rotary Foundation with a banquet and concert by the Cleveland Orchestra. In addition to raising more than \$2.1 million for our Foundation, the event paid tribute to Klumph's virtuosity as a flutist.

Some Rotarians are honouring the Foundation by sponsoring global grant projects. They are fighting dengue fever in Indonesia,

providing sanitation facilities in Colombia, and promoting early detection of breast cancer in Turkey.

Rotaractors and Interactors have answered the call to perform 100 acts of good this year in honour of the centennial. They are donating blood, visiting the elderly, and volunteering at food pantries, to name just a few of the activities this challenge has inspired.

By celebrating this milestone, we are sharing our success stories with the world. In 2016, cable news channel CNBC named The Rotary Foundation one of the "Top 10 Charities Changing the World," citing our PolioPlus programme as well as our financial health, accountability, and transparency of reporting. In addition, the Association of Fundraising Professionals named The Rotary Foundation the World's Outstanding Foundation for 2016.

Our centennial year is not over yet. You still have time to plan a special event, make a centennial contribution, and add more acts of good. In June, I hope you will join me for the biggest centennial celebration of the year at the Rotary International Convention in Atlanta.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kalyan Banerjee".

Kalyan Banerjee
Foundation Trustee Chair



DONATE LIBERALLY

Childhood Cancer
is highly treatable and curable
Your donation will help save lives



More children than ever before are surviving cancer.

Most type of Cancers can be cured completely but either there were not many facilities equipped for the same or people were not aware. The reasons were varied, some patient specific and some trivial. For instance, not having the money to travel to the hospital or nobody to accompany them here, not being told that the disease can be totally cured in four or five sittings, etc.

Statistics reveal that, every year around 6000 to 8000 children are diagnosed with cancer in our state. The overall cure rate in our state is estimated to be a dismal 10% when compared to the worldwide standard of 90%.

40% of those children belong to BPL. Cancer treatment is very expensive and is beyond affordability for these people, resulting in mortality. Children of disadvantaged class have no means or financial support. Basavatarakam Indo American Cancer Hospital & Research Institute (BIACHRI) helps such people in terms of providing free treatment through generous donations from patrons like you. The treatment comprises of chemotherapy, radiotherapy and surgery, on need basis.

We truly appreciate your generous support in our endeavor to improve the care of children battling with cancer. Your contribution is entitled to IT benefits under Section 80 G of Income Tax Act.

The Donations received are accounted separately and judiciously spent for the purpose mentioned

We are offering donors of Rs. 50,000 and above a complimentary cancer check for self & Spouse, Rs. 25,000/- and above a complimentary cancer check for self & Rs. 10,000/- we are offering 10% discount on cancer screening for self.

For appointments please contact +91 95537 98500, +91 98493 98879

For those using EFT/ NEFT/ RTGS payment System INR donations to the following Bank Account.

Name of the Account: Smt. Nandamuri Basavataraka Rama Rao Memorial Cancer Foundation Corpus Fund A/c.

Bank Account No.: 151411100000070

Name & Address of the Bank: Andhra Bank, Road No.14, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad - 500 034

MICR Code No.: 500011118 | IFSC Code No.: ANDB0001514 | SWIFT Code: ANDBINBB

You can also pay Online or with your Credit Card. Visit our www.induscancer.com

Please download form from our website and send in duly filled along with your cheque/ DD to the below address



Dept. of Corporate Affairs and Strategic Alliance **BASAVATARAKAM INDO-AMERICAN CANCER HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

Promoted by Smt. Nandamuri Basavataraka Ramarao Memorial Cancer Foundation
and Indo-American Cancer Organisation

Road No. 14, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad - 500 034 India T: +91 40 2355 1235 Ext. 2315



WINNER 2015

CNBC TV18 & IICI LOMBARD
India Healthcare Awards, 2014

**Best Single Speciality Hospital
"ONCOLOGY"**

Amongst India's
15 Best Cancer Hospitals
The WEEK-NIELSEN Survey, 2013 & 2014

www.induscancer.com

Toll-free: 1800 4253 6666

WHERE WILL ROTARY GLOBAL REWARDS TAKE YOU?



THE MEMBER BENEFIT
PROGRAMME THAT
OPENS UP A WORLD
OF OPPORTUNITIES.



SEE MORE AT ROTARY.ORG/
GLOBALREWARDS

District Wise TRF Contributions as on February 2017

(in US Dollars)

District Number	APF	PolioPlus*	Other Restricted	Endowment Fund	Total Contributions
India					
2981	1,35,835	3,492	0	0	1,39,327
2982	27,258	4,160	0	0	31,418
3000	1,31,350	0	69,000	57,882	2,58,232
3011	1,55,516	2,399	3,078	35,373	1,96,366
3012	1,48,623	2,179	40,381	0	1,91,183
3020	26,987	12,985	0	71,643	1,11,615
3030	47,548	0	74,507	8,500	1,30,555
3040	1,075	0	10,000	0	11,075
3051	9,970	27	0	0	9,997
3052	(24,025)	0	53,175	0	29,150
3053	1,027	0	0	0	1,027
3060	69,193	160	22,686	55,851	1,47,890
3070	58,668	1,368	6,191	0	66,227
3080	24,190	17,420	1,10,528	17,333	1,69,471
3090	38,564	0	0	0	38,564
3110	26,607	26,815	0	0	53,422
3120	16,303	149	0	0	16,453
3131	2,28,309	29,338	2,25,183	1,09,955	5,92,786
3132	40,202	1,855	11,025	0	53,082
3141	6,05,611	21,025	2,51,121	3,640	8,81,397
3142	1,01,796	0	5,250	1,000	1,08,046
3150	1,53,695	15,044	26,241	97,585	2,92,565
3160	69,679	2,198	3,000	0	74,878
3170	55,733	16,154	(444)	53,735	1,25,178
3181	1,44,810	0	27,261	0	1,72,072
3182	42,557	2,411	6,043	35,373	86,384
3190	22,714	(11,938)	64,900	0	75,676
3201	40,804	664	34,303	0	75,771
3202	20,315	200	0	0	20,515
3211	58,142	1,015	1,400	1,015	61,571
3212	67,170	1,600	49,265	1,000	1,19,034
3230	1,49,569	203	65,029	23,525	2,38,326
3240	78,416	3,679	0	2,866	84,961
3250	13,343	0	722	0	14,065
3261	9,834	100	0	0	9,934
3262	77,775	5,608	1,15,067	2,000	2,00,450
3291	78,294	1,500	57,140	8,375	1,45,309
India Total	29,59,683	1,61,811	13,32,054	5,86,652	50,40,200
3220 Sri Lanka	44,591	25	705	11,068	56,389
3271 Pakistan	52,938	1,11,337	20,011	100	1,84,386
3272 Pakistan	83,432	16,610	0	3,000	1,03,042
3281 Bangladesh	1,42,815	6,256	28,551	7,000	1,84,623
3282 Bangladesh	43,965	100	0	2,000	46,065
3292 Nepal	3,12,685	1,421	1,36,561	0	4,50,668
South Asia Total	36,40,110	2,97,561	15,17,883	6,09,820	60,65,373
World Total	7,75,84,545	1,74,29,432	78,32,027	1,65,72,055	11,94,18,058

* Excludes Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Source: RI South Asia Office

Häcker

kitchen.germanMade.

Luxury of German Engineering
...in your home



DELHI	MUMBAI	BENGALURU	KOCHI	COIMBATORE	CHENNAI	HYDERABAD	AHMEDABAD	LUDHIANA	JAIPUR	INDORE	THRISSUR
9313134488	9322987229	9740999350	9895058285	9500210555	9442081111	9700058285	9879538977	9815048222	9414058718	9425803599	7025991000

E-mail: info@haecker-kitchens.com
Website: www.haecker-india.com / www.haecker-kuechen.com

Rotary in a mission

Rasheeda Bhagat



R

otary is an organisation that is in a “mission mode” and today India needs organisations in a mission mode. “It is a disciplined organisation with a pool of talented and dedicated people. For 110 years you’ve continued your legacy of service and have become a symbol of service in

society the world over. The polio drive is a special feather in Rotary’s cap, particularly in India, where we have eradicated polio and we all acknowledge the lead role you played in ridding India of polio.”

HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar, who was the chief guest, at the South Asia Literacy Summit organised in Chennai by the Rotary India Literacy Mission (RILM) said right from his college days he had attended various Rotary functions “because of my friend Pramod

Jejurikar; we joined the Bank of Maharashtra together and left it together too. In between we did many things there apart from banking!”

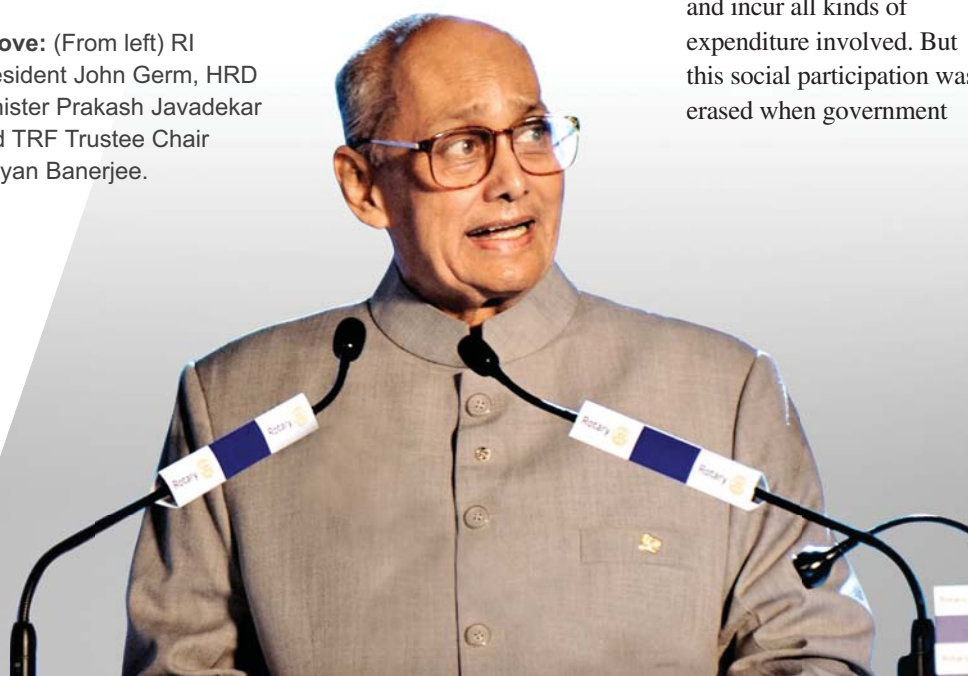
Today Rotary had taken on the challenge of ridding India of illiteracy and the Government of India looked upon Rotary as an important partner in this mission. India had only 17 per cent literacy when it became independent 70 years ago. “Today the literacy rate is over 75 per cent and that is a big stride we’ve taken. The British

never wanted India to be literate. They only wanted *babus* to be created through their education system, therefore from Lokmanya Tilak to Gandhiji, all the senior leaders started the national education movement, along with the *swarajya* movement”, he said.

But thanks to the *Sarva Siksha Abhiyan* launched by A B Vajpayee when he was Prime Minister and the Right to Education introduced in 2006, today we have 98 per cent enrolment of children in the



Above: (From left) RI President John Germ, HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar and TRF Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee.



Dreams are not what we get when we go to sleep; dreams happen when we are awake. In Rotary, real dreams are the vision and imagination we have when fully awake and we work to make them come true.

TRF Trustee Chair **Kalyan Banerjee**

age group 6 to 14 in our schools, which is a remarkable achievement. “Now the thirst is for quality education. But the Government cannot do everything, society has to partner with us and I consider Rotary one of the best partners. With Rotary, and other voluntary organisations, we have to bring everybody in the education system because only that can give an individual real freedom; education is emancipation.”

But such literacy or education should also include digital, financial and democratic literacy. While we had 270 million people who were illiterate, India also had 270 million youngsters in educational institutions... “from KG to PG. If each of these can teach one illiterate person, in the next 3, 4 or at least 5 years, we can make India totally literate,” added Javadekar.

The Minister said one major mistake India had made after Independence was not to involve the community in the task of educating its people. He recalled that in 1970, when as a college student he went to some tribal villages in Goa for some survey, in one village, the “villagers asked me if I could be the teacher in that village, because they had no school. I asked them if I come, what facilities will you give me. They said we have one house where you can run the school and another where you can stay. So the community was ready to do everything to educate their children and incur all kinds of expenditure involved. But this social participation was erased when government

entered the field of education and said that we will do everything.” And from a participating society we became “a complaining society”!

War against illiteracy

“Where else will you find nearly 2,500 volunteers assembled for three days for a war against illiteracy? And they have come from India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh,” said RILM Chair Shekhar Mehta, addressing the three-day summit, “these summits fill us with vigour, energy and new hope.”

Giving an overview of RILM’s TEACH (Teacher Training; E-learning, Adult Literacy, Child Development and Happy Schools) programme, he said it has now grown exponentially. Against a target of training 5,000 teachers, over 20,000 had been trained; in E-learning, the flight path was even higher. “In Gujarat, 25,000 schools were being set up, of which 10,000 were already functional, and at the summit, an MoU was being signed with the Maharashtra Government to set up 36,000 E-learning centres on a 50:50 partnership basis. These two programmes alone will



From left: Summit Secretary A S Venkatesh, Judy Germ, RI President John Germ, HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar and TRF Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee, RILM Chair Shekhar Mehta, Rashi Mehta, Marlene Kamdar, Summit Chair J B Kamdar and Sharmishtha Desai.

impact 3 million children and the value of the project is Rs 60 crore.”

MoUs galore

Other MoUs to be signed at the meet were with Nandan Nilekani’s *EkStep*, UNESCO, British Council etc. “And we’re soon coming out with an app *Learn English easily*. This year thousands of adults will be made literate under our programme,” he said. An MoU with the Loomba Foundation of UK, worth Rs 15 crore, was being signed to skill 30,000 widows in 30 States of India. This programme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Varanasi, where 5,000 widows are being trained.” Another MoU with Labour Net, a leading skill development company, would do more than just skilling people. “We’ve been assured by them that 90 per cent of the trained people will either get employed or be able to start their own ventures,” Mehta said.

Under the Asha Kiran programme, 45,000 children had been sent to 373 Asha Kiran centres run across the country. “Not only do we teach many such children in brick kilns but they have come from Bihar to West Bengal and when they get back to Bihar we are tracking them to ensure that they get back into schools. And 40–50 per cent of these children do get back to schools”.

Mehta said RILM had managed to forge partnerships in many States and by the year end, it hoped to have a presence in every State of India.

On the Happy Schools front too “outstanding work has been done by Rotarians and Inner Wheel members. Last month I inaugurated eight happy schools and felt exhilarated to see the happy smiles on the children’s faces. They were getting footwear for the first time as well as sports equipment, apart from books and stationery. We did 1,500





Happy Schools last year and a path breaking MoU being signed with the CII's Sports Committee will ensure that we bring sporting facilities to 50,000 schools."

On International Literacy Day, HRD Minister Javadekar had launched the programme for RILM setting up 5,000 libraries. "We had said we'll do it in five years but with 1,600 libraries already done, now it looks like it will be done in two years. We've also signed another MoU with an NGO to set up 10,000 libraries. They have collected 350,000 books and are helping us set up libraries."

Virtual eye for blind students

Mehta said that along with the Triumph Foundation of RC Thane Hills, "we are providing 'virtual eye' or non-braille computers for blind students in all the 410 schools for the blind in India. PRID Ashok Mahajan took only one

minute to say okay, I will underwrite the sponsorship of this programme. The cost: Rs 8 crore, or over \$1 million, but he did it."

All this work was possible, he added, because "we have given a new dimension to the PPP model and this project has now become a passion of Rotarians and hence the progress."

However, the time had now come for consolidation. Till now isolated projects — some making Happy Schools, others setting up E-learning centres, and so on — were being done. But now it was time to take a holistic approach to create a bigger impact. "Let us do two or three projects at one place — make one Happy School, train teachers, put E-learning facilities there and if you could add the fourth element of sending all the children of the area into those schools, it would be wonderful integration. And we'll salute the clubs who can add the fifth

dimension — using the same school in the evening for adult literacy."

If Rotarians could create 50 such islands of excellence in India, it would be a model that could attract corporates and NGOs as partners. If TEACH was doing well, it was thanks to the hard work and dedication of all DGs and District Literacy chairs, he acknowledged.

Right leadership

Addressing the inaugural session, RI President John Germ, who sat through the entire three-day event, said that through this mega project, Indian Rotarians had shown that "you are the kind of leaders we need in India". Education was

an important component among the six focus areas of Rotary. "We have found by experience that the kind of work we do in Rotary is the kind that needs to be done around the world. Rotary, by promoting peace, fighting disease, providing water and sanitation, hygiene, saving mothers and children, growing local economies and supporting education, was making an incredible difference in people's lives."

Education was the most powerful tool to fight illiteracy. "If you can't read, can't do basic math, there is no way to move forward. You can't make financial decisions if you don't understand numbers, and

India has Rotary that is growing stronger and more active with each passing year; a Rotary that says it is dedicated to moving this country forward, that took on the challenge of eradicating polio.

RI President **John Germ**

you can be exploited. But education gives you a stepping stone... more control over your environment and your entire life." Literacy can make a positive impact that extends far beyond an individual and helps raise more financially stable and secure families, he added.

Maintaining that entire societies benefit from education, Germ said the power of education was so great that for every added year of education the per capita GNP (Gross National Product) goes up by a median of 18 per cent. "What an astonishing number and what a great investment."

Unfortunately, there were too many illiterate people across the world; over 775 million people

over the age of 15 are illiterate. "That is 17 per cent of the world's adult population. It is estimated that 250 million children in the world cannot read, write or do basic math and of these, 130 million have attended school! Rotary focuses so much on literacy because it is the first step to remove poverty."

He reminded Rotarians that "it is our job to give children tools to learn by supporting schools. It is also our job to understand the obstacles that prevent them from doing so and remove them." These include building separate toilets for boys and girls in schools so that girls can also continue their education; providing clean drinking water, sanitation, uniforms, books, pencils and so on. "Sometimes the barriers that prevent children from attending school appear simple but to many families they are

The British never wanted India to be literate.

They only wanted *babus* to be created through their education system.

HRD Minister **Prakash Javadekar**

insurmountable. Literacy is a Rotary priority across the world, including in my home State of Tennessee." Here Rotary has forged a partnership through which hard bound books are given to children under five.

Germ said that India does face tremendous challenges and achieving the goal of universal literacy was one of them. "But India has Rotary that is growing stronger and more active with each passing year. India has a Rotary that says it is dedicated to moving this country forward. It has a Rotary that took on the challenge of eradicating polio, something that so many people said can't be done. It has

a Rotary that looks at India's challenges and says, "I think I can", just like the little blue engine in one of the books they had distributed to children in his home State. While all the bigger and more powerful engines balked at taking a big train across the top of a mountain, the little blue engine said: 'I think I can', and slowly but surely achieved the feat.

Similarly, Rotary can look at the huge challenge of illiteracy in India, say

'I think I can', and one day, it will look at universal literacy and say 'we knew we could'!"

Stupendous efforts

Addressing the inaugural session TRF Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee said that thanks to the "stupendous efforts of over 15 lakh plus Rotarians, our ladies of Inner wheel, our youth wings — the Rotaract and Interact", everything is being done to achieve the goal of total literacy. The RILM team, led by Shekhar Mehta, was guiding clubs and its partners, tying up with the Government and other high profile NGOs such as UNESCO.

"So when I asked Shekhar what am I doing here, he said well, Kalyanda, it was you as Rotary's world President in 2011-12, who first mooted the idea of making India, indeed, all of South Asia, literate, and you set up the Committee and the structure to take it forward. I am only caretaking this literacy enterprise. I told him at RI, we are all caretakers."

Usually, an office is held for a year, and the baton passed over at the end of it. "Our Foundation, which was started 100 years ago, has been working with WHO, the



Gates Foundation and the Governments to free the world of the dreaded polio and we are almost there.” It provides scholarships to hundreds of students every year to study the nuances of peace keeping and peace making. Among its many areas of focus, literacy is one, and “we believe that a more literate world will be more healthy, peaceful, prosperous and safe. Thanks to our record performance, we are rated as one of the best Foundations in the world today.” And all this is done through grants for projects, with about \$300 million, collected and donated by Rotarians annually.

He had been told by Mehta that thanks to the Foundation’s support, the literacy programme is doing so well in India. The second highest number of grants that Rotary Foundation gives to RI districts and clubs, after grants for health projects, comes to literacy nowadays. The work being done by the clubs through this money is tremendous, Banerjee said.

And now Indian corporates, wishing to meet their mandatory CSR requirements, are joining hands and are giving term gifts through Rotary and partnering its literacy

projects. “This is sweeping our country, all States, all corners, including Jammu and Kashmir and the North-East States like Tripura and Manipur.” E-learning projects were catching up everywhere and Gujarat and Maharashtra in particular, were putting up thousands of E-learning centres. Apart from separate toilets for girls and handwashing stations in schools, “just 25 km into villages from Chennai, thanks to Rotary, every single home in the village is putting up toilets with water arrangements. It’s spreading like a small tsunami.”

When he was told all this by Mehta, “I cautioned him to ensure there are enough teachers in village schools”, with none of them subletting their Rs 25,000 a month job to unqualified persons for Rs 6,000 or so and engaging in other activities as he had seen happening in Himachal Pradesh.

Anyway, the RILM Chair was optimistic that by June 2017, India’s literacy rate could go up to 80–85 per cent. The dream of course was for total literacy, but “then dreams are not what we get when we go to sleep at night, a dream is what happens when we are awake. In

For every added year of education the per capita GNP (Gross National Product) goes up by a median of 18 per cent. What an astonishing number!

RI President **John Germ**



New Delhi
March 03, 2017

Dear Sh. Shekhar Mehta ji

I am happy to learn about The Rotary South Asia Literacy summit. I sincerely hope that the summit will result in a vibrant discussion on various facets relating to education & will enrich the current discourse on education. I am also happy to know about Rotary’s efforts towards its TEACH program.

Education is one of the most important focus areas of our Government. We are actively working to improve learning outcomes. The Government is also working to facilitate setting up of world-class education institution in India.

My best wishes for the successful organisation of Rotary South Asia Literacy Summit.

Regards,

(Narendra Modi)

Shri Shekhar Mehta
145, Sarat Bose Road
Kolkata

Rotary, real dreams are the vision and imagination that we have when we are fully awake and work to make them come true.”

Welcoming the delegates, RI Director Manoj Desai recalled how “we began our literacy journey in Sri Lanka when TRF Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee conceptualised this project, and then we went to Nepal, Hyderabad, Delhi, Pune, Kolkata and now the Literacy Summit has come to Chennai.” The passion and devotion with which Rotarians were working on TEACH ensured that “we will win this battle against illiteracy”.

Conference Chair JB Kamdar thanked his team

for helping him put together this mega event which had attracted 2,450 delegates from several countries. It was one of the biggest events to be held in not only Chennai but also Tamil Nadu. “I agreed to be the Chair because Shekhar (Mehta) tactfully underplayed the immensity of organising such a summit, where a micro picture would be given over three days about the kind of work done by Rotary to promote literacy through cooperation with the Government and partnerships with both corporates and NGOs.”

Pictures by
Vishwanathan K
Designed by
Krishnapratheesh

Let's globalise human compassion

Rasheeda Bhagat

In a world where globalisation is the new mantra and we're all connected with each other through high-speed internet, air travel and so on, "we are getting disconnected with each other in our hearts. We are squeezing inside ourselves and getting localised with various political slogans

and promoting the sentiment of selfishness, which we saw in Brexit and other cases. So why not start a movement to globalise human compassion?"

With such powerful words in an impassioned speech filled with anguish and anger, but also inspiration, challenging each of the 2,450 Rotarians assembled at the South Asia Literacy Summit in Chennai, Nobel Peace laureate Kailash Satyarthi set about the task he performs best — advocacy



for children. Children deprived of education, healthcare, freedom and their very childhood.

Compassion, he said, was inherent, and inbuilt in each of us. "Sometimes compassion is the most precious gift which we confine to ourselves or only to our biological children." But when millions of children in the world were deprived of their childhood and denied the most basic rights, and enslaved in demeaning and dehumanising bondage and labour, "the education and freedom of such

children can come only through the compassion which is inside each one of you present here."

The time has come to get out of our narrow selfish worlds and realise that while globalising economy and knowledge, we are becoming selfish. "When you see a child out of school and working on the streets, *dhabas*, restaurants or as domestic help in your friend or relative's place, just close your eyes for a second and think: If that girl working in such servitude was your own daughter, what would you do? Put your son, or

grandson in that child's place and try to connect with such children with the compassion that is inside each one of you."

Every few minutes reiterating that the assembled Rotarians were a very powerful group that could achieve anything it wanted, Satyarthi recalled that barely three weeks earlier, at his Mukti Ashram in Delhi, he noticed a 10-year-old boy who was unable to walk. "I was shocked to find that he was forced to work for 22 hours in a jeans factory in a small, dingy room in Delhi, seated on the ground in the same posture." This had resulted

in deformed legs for him and several other children who were rescued.

"Another boy said when I missed my mother I was hung upside down from a ceiling fan and beaten. Children have shown me scars and wounds... if they felt sleepy, they were hit with hammers or cut with big scissors used for cutting cloth. They were never given any medicine." His wife Suvedha and he consoled them and told them that they were now free and could go to school. Except two, none responded.

"When we pursued them, they said it is too late for us, we cannot go to



100 million for 100 million

Through his emotionally charged and stirring speech, Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi called upon Rotarians to join his campaign *100 Million for 100 Million*. Recently he had convened a summit for about 200 Nobel laureates, top academicians and world leaders, hosted by the President of India. “We have come out with a strong bill — Delhi’s Bill for children. We are trying to build strong moral voices. But here I see a moral leader in each one of you. I call upon that leader to rise up and fight against all kinds of barriers and boundaries and make South Asia a great region.”

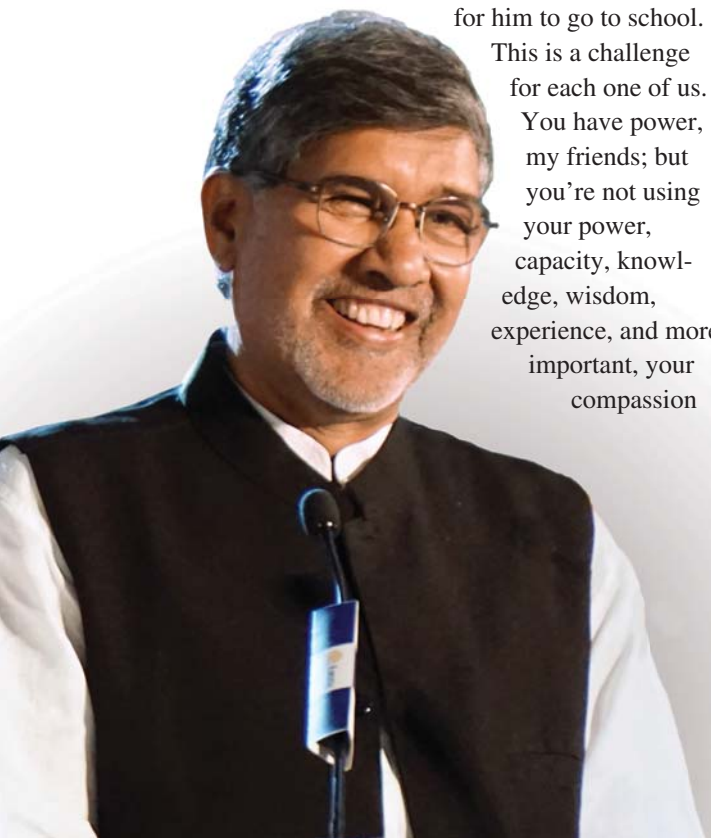
He invited Rotary to partner him in his campaign *100 Million for 100 Million*; 100 million young children were deprived of

education, healthcare and freedom. “Many of them are forcibly married at a young age, and are bought and sold like animals, often at a lesser price than animals. Many of them are radicalised by fundamentalist forces in different parts; some are going to become the bombers of jihadis. We cannot wait. We are inviting more and more dangers if we avoid the situation because the children who are not in schools are more vulnerable to such situations.”

But on the other hand, he was sure we also had at least 100 million young people, and “people like you across the world, who are willing to do something about these children. Your own children, brothers and sisters, have an element of idealism and values and hunger to do something good for society.”

More often, that energy and idealism go untapped, “so they spend their time connecting on social media, which isn’t bad, but shouldn’t remain a mere superfluous connect. We have to give them a challenging role to make our society a better, safer place. At least 100 million people in the world are hungry to take up challenges on education, peace etc.” His initiative was to connect these two diverse constituencies, and make one set of 100 million the champions for the other.

“If you feel there is a change-maker and champion inside each of you, I invite you to be one of the 100 million changemakers to create a child-friendly, fear-free world for our children. You have the energy and power, just channelise it. Let us march together and talk in the language of humanity and compassion to ensure a safe, happy, healthy and educated childhood for our children.”



school now. A 14-year-old boy feels he is no more a child and it’s too late for him to go to school.

This is a challenge for each one of us. You have power, my friends; but you’re not using your power, capacity, knowledge, wisdom, experience, and more important, your compassion

to the full extent. If a single child says in this country that it is too late for me to go to school and I am no more a child, and that his childhood is lost, then we have to stand before a mirror and ask ourselves if we are really civilised and cultured. This is the land of the Buddha and Kali whose power we worship as a deity; Saraswati, the goddess of wisdom and knowledge, Lakshmi the goddess of wealth and prosperity.”

Why not use such power, knowledge and prosperity to ensure that children retain their childhood, Satyarthi thundered.

Enumerating other shocking incidents, he said

the media had recently reported how a hostel warden punished a group of girls by parading them naked and taking their pictures. A three-year-old girl was raped and killed by her uncle. “If our daughters are not safe in their homes, neighbourhoods, and more important, schools, then we have to act now, we cannot wait. This is a serious challenge.”

Congratulating Rotarians for the “happy schools” they were making, he said the challenge was to make every school a happy school. “You have the power... instead of just 200 or 2,000 such schools, you can do much more.



Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi with RI President John Germ.

Why he said 'yes'

Disclosing the reason for agreeing to attend the Rotary Literacy meet for the second consecutive year, Kailash Satyarthi said "when I gave my consent, my office was surprised as I have 27,000 invites from across the world... if I have to accept them all, I have to live an additional 100 years!"

He went on to regale the audience saying that five people give you a medal and citation for peace "and take away your peace for the rest of your life. This is happening to me."

He then recounted the story of how he had learnt about his Nobel citation and replica of the Nobel medal being stolen when his house was burgled. "My wife Suvedha and I were visiting Latin America and were with the President of Panama and the First Lady when the news came. They thought I would cancel the trip and return to India. But I said it is up to the police to do their work. What can I do? Luckily the original medal I had dedicated to my nation immediately after bringing it to India. It is now with the President of India and in a museum. While giving it away to the President, which has never happened anywhere in the world, I recalled the great mystic and poet Kabir Das: '*Mera mujh me kichh nahi, jo kicch hei so toh. Tera tujh ko sopta, kya lage hei moh.*' (Nothing is really mine; it belongs to the nation. So I am giving it to her)"

With a twinkle in his eye, Satyarthi added, "So when I learnt about the theft, I thought of another *doha* from the same poet: '*Bhala hua meri matki toot gayi, mei toh paniyabharan se chhoot gayi.*' (Good I broke my pot; I don't have to fetch water anymore!)"

Following the theft, he received many calls and mails from across the world, but was really touched by one letter from an Inner Wheel member from Madhya Pradesh, who had attended last year's Literacy summit. "She wrote in Hindi to say: '*Bhaiyya*, it is shocking that the most precious thing on India's land has been stolen. But, you have something which is much more precious than the Nobel medal and citation... the love that we have in our hearts for you.' Thank you for that. Nobody can steal the love you have for me as your brother. That letter made me return to your conference!"

(Since the Literacy meet, the stolen citation has been found, thrown in a forest.)

Each of you can take bigger challenges and adopt more schools, villages, spend some of your time, energy and money for this cause. And make sure that every child is in school, safe and happy."

A literacy hero in each Rotarian

Satyarthi said that he saw in the literacy heroes getting their awards "unlimited power, light, energy and hope. I could see the spark in their eyes and yours, and

the glow on their faces and yours. That glow is not for being wealthy or educated, but pride for giving back to the nation's most deprived and needy children the gift of education, by way of making happy schools or creating libraries. Congratulations."

He recalled how as a child of 10, he had felt helpless to see his classmate dropping out of school and leaving town because he couldn't afford to pay fees

Children have shown me scars and wounds...
if they felt sleepy, they were hit with hammers
or cut with big scissors used for cutting cloth.

They were never given any medicine.

When Kalu challenged President Clinton

Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi related a riveting story about how Kalu, a boy from India who had been trafficked and enslaved for long years, challenged Bill Clinton “morally, spiritually but also politically”, when he was the US President. It was around 2000 and Clinton was slated to release Kerry Kennedy’s book *Speak Truth to Power* on some 50 human right defenders like Dalai Lama, Nelson Mandela, etc, who were changing the world. “There was a chapter on my work and she invited me to the US for the release. I said I am not a celebrity or champion; whatever I am is because of children, so it’s better if you invite a child. I’ll find one from India who is even more passionate than me in children’s rights.”

She was “even more delighted” and Satyarthi chose Kalu, who was trafficked from a Bihar village, enslaved for another six years in Uttar Pradesh and used as labour for carpet making. Along with 30 children, Satyarthi rescued Kalu. “They were beaten badly, branded with cigarettes or burnt with match sticks for making silly mistakes.”

It was shocking to find different parts of his body burnt with cigarettes or having wounds and cuts. “The boy said whenever I felt sleepy or cried for my mother or father and said I want to go back home, I was burnt and branded and no medication was ever given. Sometimes his cuts were filled with matchstick powder and burnt, so that the flesh and skin could burn together and meld.”



In 2015 Kailash Satyarthi received the World’s Children’s Honorary Award.

They were first taken to his centre Mukti Ashram in Delhi and then transferred to Balashram in Rajasthan for long term rehabilitation. Kalu was so passionate about education that after learning something in these two places, he was sent to school. The boy was brilliant, given double promotions and stood first in his class. “So we sent him to other places to motivate children to go to school in a *school chalo abhiyan* that we organise in hundreds of villages every year. The boy was able to bring about 60 children to school with his passion for education,” Satyarthi said.

At the book release, Clinton noticed the boy sitting in the galaxy of human rights veterans, called him and started chatting with him. “Kalu talked frankly and freely and after some formal talk, said: ‘I know you are the most powerful leader on earth and you can do anything that you want for children like us

who are not going to school and working somewhere as slaves.’”

Imagine Clinton’s surprise when Kalu added: “I also know you are not going to remain President forever. But is it necessary to be president in order to bring all children into schools? I could do it with 60 children, why can’t you do it with all the children in the world?”

Added Satyarthi: “A boy who was enslaved and treated so brutally, had the moral courage to challenge the President of the US. I want to see that moral courage in each one of you for education. I refuse to accept that the people sitting in this hall have no power to put an end to the scourge of illiteracy in this country. You have that power. Why did you become Rotarians? Because you have an element of humanity, love, service, compassion. Today I call upon globalisation of that compassion.”

or buy books. “I cried because it wasn’t his fault, then became angry wondering why didn’t he ask me; though I wasn’t born in a rich family I could afford to go to school.” So next year, after the results were out, along with a friend he rented a *thela* (wheel cart) and went around the locality requesting parents and students who were moving on to next class to donate their textbooks instead of selling them as *raddi*. “Within four hours, we were able to collect 2,500 used books.”

He had worked both in Pakistan and Bangladesh for freeing children from the shackles of child labour. “We know South Asia is a land of great values and leaders and has richness of knowledge. Can’t we take the lead in creating a world where all the children are free?”

The UN’s new Sustainable Development Goals had specific language on education, Satyarthi said, with its core components being inclusive, equitable, quality education and lifelong learning. “Education is the key to all human rights, it cannot be ignored any more. Unfortunately, 60 million children have never been to school, another 200 million children couldn’t complete their primary or secondary education. Globally, 263 million children are not in schools.”

What is most distressing is the fact that the money required every year to educate all the world’s children “is nothing but just 4.5 days of global military expenditure. I am not a big believer of arms and ammunition; what is the use of a world where the number of soldiers is more than teachers, the number of bullets produced, sold

If a single child says ‘it is too late for me to go to school and I am no more a child, my childhood is lost’, then we have to stand before a mirror and ask ourselves, “Are we really civilised and cultured?”

and used is more than the number of pencils and books. How can we call ourselves civilised and cultured? What do we need; toys and pencils in the hands of children or guns, bullets and bombs? Just 4.5 days of global military expenditure can bring all the world’s children into schools. So the world is not so poor in wealth! But it is poor in political will and our honesty... we say something but act differently. We make promises but these promises to our children remain hollow because we feel no moral accountability. We don’t feel accountable for children who are on the streets and not in schools.”

But these were not simply numbers and digits. “Every child has an eye which is looking at you; you may see it or not. Every (deprived) child is knocking at your door crying for freedom, for education, for her childhood. It is our moral accountability to take up this challenge,” he added.

Donations galore

Following his speech, RILM Chair Shekhar Mehta invited Rotarians to open their hearts, and purses, to donate to the cause Satyarthi was espousing so passionately. In a few minutes a total of Rs 46 lakh was collected and included donations from PDGs Ravi and Rajyalakshmi Vadlamani (Rs 5 lakh) Summit Chair J B Kamdar (Rs 2 lakh), PDG Ashish Ajmera (Rs 2 lakh), DGE Maulin Patel (Rs 2 lakh) and Rs 1 lakh each from DG Vinay Raiker, PDGs Ramesh Agarwal, Hanumanth Reddy and Savita Unani of Inner Wheel.

For RILM, PDG V J Patel repeated his donation of Rs 51 lakh, just as he had done last year.

Pictures by
Vishwanathan K
Designed by
Krishnapratheesh S



Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi takes a selfie with RILM staff and RILM Secretary Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury.

Literacy



PRIP K R Ravindran and
TRF Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee.



PRID Shekhar Mehta
welcomes Nobel Peace
Laureate Kailash Satyarthi.



(From Left) PDG Vishram Jadva
Patel, who donated Rs 51 lakh this
year for the TEACH programme,
Literacy Summit Chair J B Kamdar
and RILM Chair Shekhar Mehta.



warriors



Above: Sharmishtha Desai and Rashi Mehta.



TRF Trustee Sushil Gupta and PDG Nayantra Palchoudhuri.

Left: (From L) PDGs ISAK Nazar, G Olivannan and DG Natarajan Nagoji.







RID Manoj Desai and Sharmishtha.

Below: DG Jaya Shah and PDG K P Nagesh.



(From L) DG Vinaykumar Pai Raikar, RRFC Raja Seenivasan, DG Hitesh Jariwala, Bhishma Jariwala, DG Natarajan Nagoji and Jayanthi Seenivasan.

Left: (From L) Marlene Kamdar, Sharmishtha Desai, Purnima Patel and Rtn Nayan Patel.

Pictures by Rasheeda Bhagat and Vishwanathan K
Designed by Krishnapratheesh S



Vandana Singh, CEO of Food Security Foundation of India Food Banking Network, with PRIP Rajendra K Saboo. Also present RI President John Germ.



Atul Palta, Director, The Loomba Foundation, signs an MoU with RILM Vice Chair Kamal Sanghvi in the presence of RILM Chair Shekhar Mehta.



RI President John Germ, Director and UNESCO representative Shigeru Aoyagi and PRID Shekhar Mehta.



Deputy Secretary of the School Education Department - Maharashtra Suvarna Kharat with PRID Ashok Mahajan, in the presence of PRID Panduranga Setty (centre).

MoUs

The Literacy Summit, in total, witnessed signing of eleven MoUs.

Teacher support: An MoU with **Global Education** to train 18,000 teachers in Maharashtra.

E-Learning: An MoU worth Rs 74 crore with the **Maharashtra Government** to set up 37,010 E-learning centres on a 50:50 partnership basis in 18,510 government schools in the State.

Another MoU was signed with Nandan Nilakeni's **EkStep Foundation** with an objective to use technology to deliver primary education to 200 million children.

In an MoU worth Rs 8.2 crore with **Triumph Foundation**, virtual e-learning centres will be established in 410 schools in India.

Adult Literacy: An MoU with **The Loomba Foundation** of UK worth Rs 15 crore to skill 30,000 widows in 30 States of India. It would also benefit unmarried daughters of the widows as well as single mothers.

In another MoU, **LabourNet Services India**, partners with RILM to train

galore

8,000 widows in Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.

Child Development: An MoU was signed with **India Food Banking Network** to provide one million free meals to children through Asha Kiran centres and schools.

Another MoU with **The Loomba Foundation** was signed to send 2,000 children back to school.

Happy Schools: An MoU with **Ratnanidhi Charitable Trust** will help set up 10,000 libraries across India.

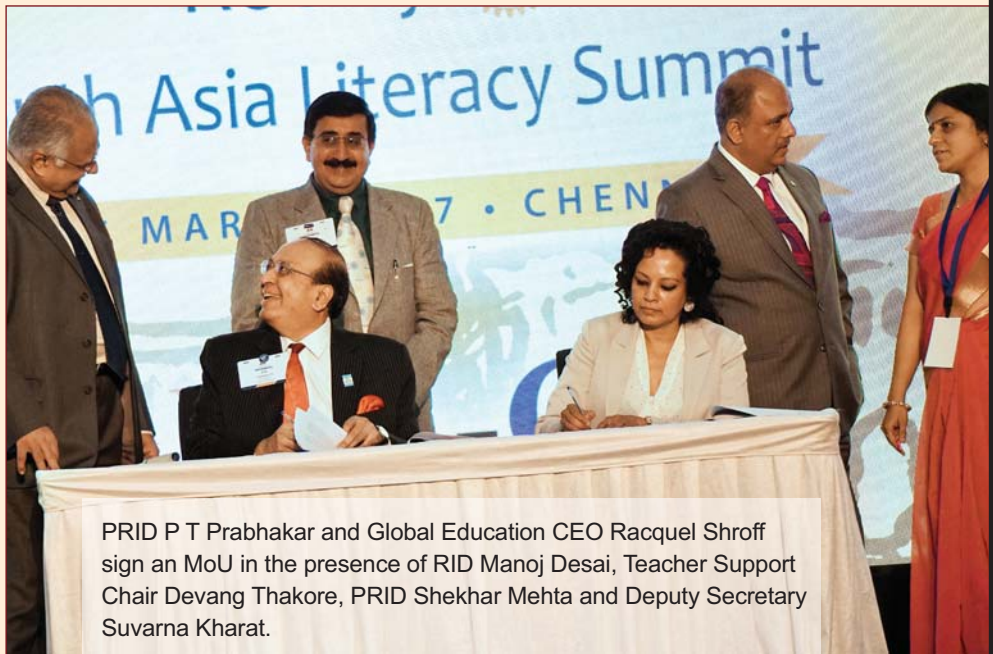
An MoU with **CII Sports Committee** will help provide better sports facilities in 50,000 schools across the country.

An MoU with **UNESCO** will focus on adult education, primary and secondary education, girls' education, technical and vocational education, ICT in education and lifelong learning.

Pictures by K Vishwanathan



CEO of EkStep Foundation Shankar Maruwada and RILM Chair Shekhar Mehta sign an MoU in the presence of PDG Rajendra Rai, PRID M K Panduranga Setty and E-learning Chair Ravi Prakash Langer.



PRID P T Prabhakar and Global Education CEO Racquel Shroff sign an MoU in the presence of RID Manoj Desai, Teacher Support Chair Devang Thakore, PRID Shekhar Mehta and Deputy Secretary Suvarna Kharat.



RID Manoj Desai and Ratnanidhi Charitable Trust Trustee Rajiv Mehta sign an MoU in the presence of Happy Schools Chair Ravi Vadlamani, PRIDs Y P Das, Ashok Mahajan and Shekhar Mehta.

Literacy Heroes felicitated

V Muthukumaran

They are ordinary people with extraordinary will; they share a common passion of driving out illiteracy from India. These unsung heroes were felicitated by RILM at the Rotary South Asia Literacy Summit. Not deterred by numerous hurdles and the daunting task ahead of them, all the six recipients are role models worthy of emulation.

A six-member jury led by Justice Munish

Bhandari of Rajasthan High Court picked the winners from 155 applicants. "We received 7.5 million online votes on our website in the People's Choice category," said the Awards Chair Anil Agarwal. The award carries a citation, plaque and cash prize of Rs 1 lakh.

Lauding the winners, RIDE C Basker recalled his participation, as DG of D 3000, in a project where the Rotarians of RC Tiruchirapalli

transformed a government school which was in a pathetic state, with a TRF matching grant. The school was renovated and the students were given new uniforms, shoes, stationery, etc. "I still remember the smiles and happiness on the faces of the students who felt they were at par with other schoolgoing children," he said, expressing confidence that in the next five years, India would become fully literate.

Literacy Heroes

Achyuta Das has been working in nearly 300 remote, tribal villages of South Odisha and runs three tribal schools, educating tribals, dalits and other underprivileged. "Literacy is the only tool for empowerment which will transform tribal lives, tribal society and the way they are being governed."

Khimjibhai Karsenbhai Prajapati, though physically challenged, begs on



From left: RI President John Germ, PRID Y P Das, Uniphos Vice Chair Sandra Shroff, PDG Nancy Barbee, RC Madras Industrial City President G Murugesh, Shima Modak and PRID P T Prabhakar.



RSALS Chair J B Kamdar hands over the Literacy Hero Award to Aspire's Secretary Dayaram in the presence of Judy Germ and RIDE C Basker.

the streets of Mehsana in Gujarat, on a tricycle. The money he gets goes to educate nearly 2,500 girls in 14 schools. He provides them with uniforms, shoes, stationery and sweaters.

Rajesh Sharma has empowered 1,500 children through his school started under a Metro railway line in Shakarpur, Delhi, in 2007.

Shima Modak has provided education to 2,000 children since 2010, through her NGO Spark at Anjali and Rangmen villages near Shillong. "Though we have the RTE Act in place, do we see children of beggars, ragpickers in school?" she asks. Her students were also trained in martial arts like Taekwondo and have won medals in competitions abroad.

Aspire, an NGO, with a network of 600 volunteers, has reached out to 400 villages that had not seen a school and has trained 2,000 teachers from 1,500 government schools.

Sarath Puppale (People's choice) is taking care of destitute children through his orphanage Manchikalalu since 2007. With counselling, quality education with moral values and homely stay, he provides a healthy childhood for orphans. His munificence has benefitted 15,000 children so far and 2,000 children are now



Latha Rajnikanth felicitates Literacy Hero Sarath Puppale in the presence of Awards Chair Anil Agarwal.



Literacy Heroes Achyuta Das (left) and Khimjibhai Karsenbhai Prajapati.



RIDE C Basker, RID Manoj Desai, RI President John Germ and IPRIP K R Ravindran felicitate jury members Shanta Sinha, Chairperson of National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and Sandra Shroff (second from right).

studying in schools and colleges.

“Each one of the 155 applicants need to be applauded and the winners are the true defenders of RTE (Right to Education). Rotary’s huge work has inspired the families of first-generation learners who don’t have cultural

capital at home to support school education,” said Shanta Sinha, the Chairperson of National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and a jury member.

The awards sponsor Sandra R Shroff, Vice-President, United Phosphorous Ltd, comparing Rotary’s literacy

project to the polio eradication campaign which knocked out the disease from the country, said it was just a matter of time before illiteracy was history in India.

A torch for Literacy
RI President John Germ received the Flame of

Literacy from a 10-member team that arrived at the summit venue after driving 20,000 km traversing through 26 States and five UTs, spreading the message of Rotary’s Literacy mission along the way. The Flame was passed on to a four-member women team — Meenakshi Arvind of RC Coimbatore Textcity, Rukmani Shekhar of RC Aakruti, Mookambiga Rathinam and Priya Rajpal. These women will take the flame to the UK on a car expedition, crossing 24 countries in 70 days. Later the flame will be taken to the US, and brought from Evanston to Atlanta in time for the July Convention by Rotarian Prashant Babu and spouse Shoba.

Germ flagged off the women’s team in the presence of RID Manoj Desai, Shekhar Mehta, TRF Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee and PRIP Rajendra Saboo.



Rajesh Sharma receives the award from RI President John Germ in the presence of IPRIP K R Ravindran.

Pictures by
K Vishwanathan

Literacy is more than teaching alphabets

K T P Radhika

Hunger and learning do not go together, said PRIP Rajendra Saboo, addressing the Literacy Summit. “Our country is full of children who are missing their breakfast and at times lunch.” Such children rebel and drop out, and “they are called the dirt of society.”

The mid-day meal scheme doesn’t get adequate funding. In Chandigarh, schools receive only Rs 1.40 per child and this sum includes food material, fuel and payment for staff. Quoting R K Narayan on the apathy of both the government and the larger community, he said: “The past is gone, present is going and tomorrow is day after tomorrow’s yesterday, so why worry about anything? But Rotary’s missions like Asha Kiran give hope for our children.”

Last December when he visited a slum in Chandigarh, along with spouse Usha, Saboo found the children’s plight pathetic — they lacked healthy food, adequate warm clothes and even birth certificates.



PRIP Rajendra K Saboo

One night, at a hut they found six children between one to ten years, “hungry and shivering, without any woollen clothes or shoes to beat the cold.” Their mother was boiling some rice with salt and there were no lentils, vegetables or spices. None of the children go to school because they don’t have

birth certificates. “We went to other huts and it was the same story everywhere. These children are not in any list,” he said. “What is their future?” However, Snehalaya, a government centre where Rotary is running the Asha Kiran project, has done the mapping and gradually all children in

Physical contact is the single most important thing for brain development.

Children need that hug, that love.

and around Chandigarh will be covered, he added.

Hug the child

Stressing the importance of physical touch, Saboo said that it was the single most important thing for brain development. “I have experienced personally that children need that hug, that love.” Happiness during childhood makes a child confident. In school, teachers need to provide such support. “Only then can children grow to become caring citizens.”

Quoting Chilean poet Gabriela Mistral’s lines: ‘Many things we need can wait. The child cannot. Now is the time his bones are formed, his mind developed. To him we cannot say tomorrow, his name is today,’ Saboo said that the Literacy mission should be understood in this context, — and not just teaching alphabets, but as a stepping stone towards complete education. Asha Kiran is working in this direction and has been successfully implemented in eight States. This will transfer child bondage to child bonding. “We have the resources for that. And we have to set up our own examples.” ■



TRF Challenge 2017 – 18

Rasheeda Bhagat

There was both energy and adrenal in the hall as for the first time ever, a mega “gaggle” of some 300 senior Indian Rotary leaders, along with those from Sri Lanka and Nepal, including PRIPs Rajendra Saboo, Kalyan Banerjee and K R Ravindran, came together at one event — Disha — convened by RIDE C Basker in Mumbai in the last week of February.

The meet was an intensive training event for the incoming DGs of 2017–18 and Basker urged the DGEs

to make the best use of the “collective wisdom” at the venue, culled from the top leadership such as RCs, RRFCs, RPICs, and their deputies, as well as the coordinators of the two flagship projects — Literacy and WinS.

He announced that at a previous meet held with the DGEs in Kumarakom, the trendsetters, as he has labelled the incoming DGs, had promised to collect for the TRF a whopping sum of \$31 million in 2017–18, which would double what had been collected last year (2015–16). The

TRF target for this Rotary year from India is \$26.5 million.

This challenge could be met because it was found that nearly 60 per cent of Rotary clubs do not contribute anything to the Foundation. So it had been decided that in 2017–18, every Rotarian will be asked to donate at least \$100 to TRF.

Both Basker and RI Director Manoj Desai said that India was doing so well on the various parameters of Rotary such as membership, TRF giving, Literacy, WinS and various



From left: RID Manoj Desai, RIDE C Basker, PRIDs P T Prabhakar, Ashok Mahajan, Y P Das, Shekhar Mehta and IPRIP K R Ravindran.

India has grown faster and higher in Rotary, but the question we need to answer is have we grown stronger.

RIDE C Basker

community projects that this region — now confined to zones 4, 5 and 6A would soon expand to 4, 5, 6 and 7. This would mean greater clout with two RI Directors from our region.

Faster and higher, but stronger?

But while India was doing so well and there was no doubt that “we have grown faster and higher, the question remains: Have we grown stronger?”

This question could only be answered by what RID Desai had said

was an integral part of the Strategic Plan: support and strengthen clubs. “We all agree that the clubs are the most important places for Rotarians to meet and do their best for the community through service projects. So let us touch our hearts and answer if all the clubs are functioning as prescribed or desired by RI?”

If the answer was ‘no’, then “it is not theirs but our fault that we have not properly trained the club officers and presidents who’re going to lead the clubs. So there is some disconnect somewhere that has to be bridged. Otherwise, if you grow fast and high without having a proper footing in the ground, we will collapse.”

He said India had come a long way from the days when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had to go to the US to ask for wheat as we had a great scarcity and had got 12 million tonnes of wheat exported to India from the US. Last year, we exported 9 million tonnes of wheat, we now have \$5 billion in foreign exchange reserves and recently put 104 satellites into space at one go.

Basker added that to strengthen clubs the District Governor was the most important entity, followed by the District Chair. “For the first time, all District Chairs, including those from Sri Lanka and Nepal, have come to one place to be trained. We want all of you to go back and share the knowledge you gain here with your clubs. And be interactive; if you don’t know, ask questions as all the senior leaders of our zones have come here to share their knowledge with you.”

Retention, a big problem

Basker said the biggest problem we have in India is retention; “about 40 per cent of the Rotarians leave within the first or second year, which shows clubs are not able to engage the members, who don’t find Rotary interesting. So how are we going to deal with this exodus and retain every man or woman in our fold? This is a big

RIDE C Basker looks on as Disha Chairman PDG Bharat Pandya addresses a session.



challenge for the district membership chair.”

Analysis had shown that while 1,500 Rotarians were added, 1,200 of them leave and “we don’t want to know why they leave. We analysed district-wise data for the last five years for their exit which is available. Please study it.” The main reason was that the clubs were not able to engage those who leave through proper conduct of club meetings and good community projects, he reiterated.

It had also been decided to focus more on northern and eastern India, which are still greenfield regions for Rotary, as many towns there do not have a Rotary club, so more clubs can be started in this region. But both the new and the existing clubs should ensure that they do signature service projects in their region after assessing community needs and addressing them. “Only then the community will appreciate you and Rotary’s public image will increase.

And you don’t have to run around looking for large projects, as we have two excellent projects in Literacy and WinS; if you can do a project under either, you can get a global or district grant.

How geese fly

Addressing the meeting Disha Chairman PDG Bharat Pandya explained the visual on the screen — that of a flock of geese (gaggle) flying together in a perfect V formation. “By flying thus, they get 70 per cent more traction, and each one is able to see what lies ahead. They honk or make noises to encourage each other. The gaggle “has laid down a path, and the geese follow it year after year, for successive generations.”

That was what Disha, which had brought together about 300 Rotary leaders from across India on one platform, was aiming for... “working together as a

team. Our aim is to increase the range, breadth, depth and visibility of our projects so that we can make a difference. What matters is not the path but the *disha* or the direction. All of you are the backbone of Rotary in your district, and that is why you are here... to set a direction for the coming year.”

Pandya added that there were two kinds of Rotarians in any team... the Will Work and Can Work Rotarians. “The Will Work guys will work regardless of anything and goal setting will help them reach targets. And under your leadership, the Can Work group can be converted to Will Work, at least to some extent, and the success of your year will be assured,” he added. That was the purpose of the Disha team which had been named *Hum hai na*.

Disha Secretary Raju Subramanian said it was a unique training event under one roof and at one time.

Our aim is to increase the range, breadth, depth and visibility of our projects so that we can make a difference. What matters is not the path but the *disha* or the direction.

PDG Bharat Pandya

RI manuals in regional languages



PRIP Rajendra K Saboo and PRIP K R Ravindran release the Club Presidents' manual in regional languages done by PDG Sam Patibandla and DGE G V Rama Rao. Also present (from left): PDG K Ramalinga Reddy, DGE J Abraham, PDG T V R Murti, RIDE C Basker and PDG Bharat Pandya.

Addressing the incoming DGs, RIDE C Basker said that many club presidents had said they found it difficult to read the RI manuals in English. "But this is such a comprehensive book that if the president reads it, he/she doesn't have to consult anybody. So I decided to translate the RI manuals in all the regional languages."

The task was completed because of volunteers, he said and thanked PDGs Krish Rajendran and Suri (B Rajan) who translated it into Sinhalese; Gujarati was done by PDGs Ashish Desai, and Marathi by PDG Deepak Shikarpur, Bengali by PDG Angsuman Bandyopadhyay, Oriya by PDG Rabi Narayan Nanda, Tamil by PDG G Olivannan, Malayalam by PDG KS Sasi Kumar and Telugu by PDGs Sam Patibandla and TVR Murti.

It wasn't an easy job and took nine months to complete but was done and "they sent me soft copies and I got them printed. Now these translated soft copies have become a treasure for RI, and now the presidents and secretaries will know what to do. DGE Asha has sent a

mail that every president likes the Kannada version better," Basker said and urged the DGEs to ensure that the books in regional languages, released by PRIP K R Ravindran, reach the presidents-elect and that they open and read it!

Basker added that another major problem, rather an aberration, he had found was the improper and shoddy conduct of club meetings. "I've been to some of the clubs where the presidents don't even know how to conduct an orderly meeting. You bring in a new member, and if you can't impress him, he won't stay with you. If he finds everything in order and perfect discipline, he'll want to stay on. But I find most of the clubs have forgotten how to conduct orderly meetings."

To take care of this, "we have brought out a 5-minute video clip on Rotary Club Meetings: Dos and Don'ts, with English subtitles. Later these will be translated into regional languages." The DVDs were given to each of the DGEs and the RIDE urged them to share copies with their clubs and tell them to watch the video clip and conduct meetings in an orderly manner.

Nepal triumphs

Addressing the DGEs, RID Desai said that when he was put on the RI Strategic Planning Committee, “I heard there right at the beginning that when the change outside the organisation is faster than that within, we are in danger of becoming extinct. We need to change.”

The changes he had effected in the last 19 months included 34 District visits last year and 28 this year till now. Apart from holding Troika meets of the DG, DGE and DGN, Vision 20:20 seminars were held in the districts. Another important issue was elections and this year 15 unanimous elections for DGs were held. “This is the path India needs to take.”

Even though we were No 1 in membership last year, the DGEs would have to concentrate on getting more women and young

members. “And public image can no longer remain a silent service exercise; in the time of selfies, silent service is no good, and we have to tell the world what we are doing.”

Desai said 25 districts had submitted their strategic plans and others are working on it. He had singular praise for D 3292 (Nepal), which had brought out a booklet that looked at strategic planning beyond 2020, to 2022. “It is the best growing district at the moment. They have added 11 more clubs and 624 members, and are doing such wonderful projects. They’ve given two AKS members and last year they gave \$1 million to TRF and have promised me this year we will go beyond \$ 1.25 million... and all this from a small little country called Nepal!”

Both Basker and Desai reiterated that electronic

Public image can no longer remain a silent service exercise; in the time of selfies, silent service is no good, and we have to tell the world what we are doing.

RID Manoj Desai

voting was the best option for elections and promised to take some of the concerns of the DGEs to the RI.

Unique opportunity

PRID and WinS Vice Chair P T Prabhakar, had the audience listen to him in rapt attention at the end of a long day, by juxtaposing his address on leadership and other nuggets against video clips of popular songs from Hindi movies.

“In keeping with your title, you must set the

trends in your respective districts and give the best Rotary year your District has ever seen. Quoting PRIP Clem Renouf, who had said Rotary takes ordinary people like you and me and gives us extraordinary opportunity to do more with our lives than we ever thought was possible, he added, “you will never get such a great opportunity again, so make the best of it.”

The biggest opportunity they had was utilising CSR



PDG Bharat Pandya, DGEs Ven Som Awansa, GV Rama Rao, RIDE C Basker, PRIP KR Ravindran, RID Manoj Desai, DGEs Prafull Sharma and Rajkumar Bhutoria.

funds — Rs 14,000 crore in all — to do great service projects. “We are a service organisation, take service away and we become a Gymkhana or a cosmopolitan club, so never lose sight of doing good service projects,” he said.

Prabhakar said that leading the RI world in getting new members, being second in TRF giving, and helping India get rid of polio were no mean achievements. “And we are going to get 4 zones and two Directors; we can truly say we are leading the Rotary world,” he added.

Some of the leadership tips he left them with:

- * It doesn’t matter how much you have, what matters is what you do with it. Take the example of Beethoven and John Milton who overcame their physical handicaps to give the world some of its greatest gifts — best music and poetry.
- * Attitude is everything. Have a positive attitude.
- * Do not be afraid of critics...if you do well, you will get a lot of criticism. Many DGs begin well, but at the first criticism, they become like deflated balloons and stop.
- * Don’t be afraid of critics; *kuch toh log kahengey, logo ka kaam hei kehna* (Kishore Kumar’s famous song from *Amar Prem*.)
- * Learn to handle dissent with a positive attitude.
- * Overcome tough times and challenges and march on. *Ruk jana nahi, tu kahi haar key*. (Don’t stop at the first defeat).

We are a service organisation, take service away and we become a Gymkhana or a cosmopolitan club, so never lose sight of doing good service projects.

PRID P T Prabhakar



RIDE C Basker

- * Management lesson from the *Bhagvad Gita*: Defeat is not when you fall down, it is when you refuse or fail to get up.
- * We do great Global Grants but in one per cent of the grants, TRF funds are not properly utilised. Stop that.
- * Basker does not want any election complaints next year.
- * Set up a community project of long duration which will be remembered for many years after you give up office. *Kal khel mei hum ho nah ho*. (*Mera naam Joker*)

Smashing Literacy goals

PRID and RILM Chair Shekhar Mehta began his update on Literacy by telling the DGEs to make the

best of this mega training event. “I haven’t seen a hall which is full of such powerful people!”

He said till now the Literacy project was at a taxiing stage but had now really taken off “thanks to great partnerships, and great work at the grassroots level by the clubs. We set tough targets but they just met all of them. We had thought it was a difficult task to train 5,000 teachers, but just one district — 3131— did 10,000 teachers’ training. And 5,000 teachers had been trained in two years.”

Similarly, another target was starting 10,000 E-learning centres, “But Gujarat alone is going to do 35,000 centres with the Government of Gujarat.”

Pictures by
Rasheeda Bhagat



Senior leaders' day out

RI President John Germ, Past RI Presidents Rajendra K Saboo, Kalyan Banerjee, K R Ravindran, RID Manoj Desai, TRF Trustee Sushil Gupta, PRIDs Panduranga Setty, Ashok Mahajan, Y P Das, Shekhar Mehta, P T Prabhakar and RIDE C Basker. Also present: Rashi Mehta (spouse of Shekhar Mehta), Uniphos Vice Chair Sandra Shroff (behind Shekhar Mehta) and Founder and CEO of MPower Neerja Birla (in conversation with President Germ).



Pictures by Rasheeda Bhagat & K Vishwanathan
Designed by N Krishnamurthy

Remembering the Centennial journey

Jaishree



From left: RID Manoj Desai, Judy Germ, RI President John Germ, PRID Shekhar Mehta, Rashi Mehta and Sharmishtha Desai.

It was a remembrance night at the Centennial Dinner on Day 2 of the South Asia Literacy Summit where RI President John Germ, RID Manoj Desai and TRF Trustee Sushil Gupta recounted the growth of The Rotary Foundation from a modest \$26.5 in 1917 by RI's sixth president Arch Klumph, to what it is today. "When Klumph created an endowment for doing good in the world, Rotary was already involved in community projects. It just didn't look outside its geographic area. But looking back now at the end of 100 years, each one of us is proud to see the number of lives we've touched with grants worth \$150 million. Today ours is the only Foundation with a four-star rating and recognised as the world's outstanding philanthropic organisation — all this was possible because of your contribution," said Germ.

He touched upon the polio eradication programme that PRIP James Bommar initiated at Philippines, immunising six million children. Germ and Judy have visited the historic spot "where Bommar gave the first two drops." His voice choked with emotion when he spoke about the five vaccinators who were killed recently in Afghanistan where two cases of polio have been reported. "They gave their lives for our cause, so that a child will not be crippled. How can we not give it our all to honour them by eradicating polio and fulfilling our promise to the children of the world?"

Germ added, "You need to continue to contribute to the Foundation as it pumps in the money for what Rotary does around the world." On Rotary partnering with the government, he warned that Rotary should not replace

the responsibility of the government. He complimented RILM Chair Shekhar Mehta for the successful functioning of the Literacy campaign and said that educating a girl is educating a family and the first step out of poverty.

Quoting American writer Edward Hale who said "I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything; but still I can do something", Germ added, "You have the courage to move forward to do what is necessary for Rotary to continue to serve humanity."

Trustee Gupta recalled the rocky path traversed by TRF, which without Arch Klumph's persistence, would have died a dozen deaths. If that had happened there would've been no 3H grants to support even the first polio immunisation programme or access to clean drinking water, healthcare or education to people across the world.

“Nor would we have had the friendship that our Foundation has fostered across borders or the peace builders and scholars that we’ve educated at our peace centres. And today, without Rotarians’ support, it would not be celebrating its 100th anniversary. TRF will live to see another century and keep our dreams alive.”

On Rotary’s focus after polio eradication, Gupta said, “It has to be part of the six areas of focus but with a caveat that the Rotary world is not ready to adopt another programme which might take 30 years and cost billions of dollars.”



TRF will live to see another century and
keep our dreams alive.

TRF Trustee Sushil Gupta

Referring to the recent contribution of Rs 5 crore to TRF by PDG Triloknath as Donor Advised Funds in memory of his wife, quoting Swami Vivekananda, Gupta said: “Give willingly, for, sooner or later, you’ll have to give it all up.” RID Desai lauded Rotarians for the various humanitarian projects and added, “Dare to do the impossible, care for the needy and share what you have. Let’s continue our work with this positivity for the simple reason that Rotary is a never-ending journey for a better tomorrow.”

Summit Chair J B Kamdar gave a vote of thanks. ■

Boxes of Love

K T P Radhika

50-year-old Pramila Khadse, a vegetable vendor at the Mahatma Phule fruit and vegetable *mandi*, Pune, could not control her tears when she received a stainless-steel tiffin box on March 8, International Women’s Day. “I am selling vegetables here for many decades, working almost six hours daily. I have never had a proper lunch. I would have biscuits with tea whenever I’m hungry. Now I will carry roti and dal for lunch,” she said wiping her tears. She was one of the 400 beneficiaries who received lunch boxes from women Rotarians of D 3131. “Most of these women come from neighbouring villages, 50 km away, for earning their daily bread,” said Gauri Shikarpur, the District Director of Women in Rotary. “They pack their lunch in old cloths as they can’t afford a proper



Women Rotarians delivering tiffin boxes.

lunchbox which will keep their food fresh. So we decided to gift them good quality tiffin boxes.” Padmaja Deshmukh, spouse of DG Prashant Deshmukh, and local corporators Manjushri Khardekar and Madhuri Sahastrabudhe helped in identifying the beneficiaries. Thanking the

Rotarians, the women vendors gifted them traditional Maharashtrian turbans called the *Pheta*.

In a similar event, women Rotarians of RC Khargar presented umbrellas to women street vendors, while RC Nigdi also offered tiffin carriers to women ragpickers. ■

Importance of E-voting

Rasheeda Bhagat

A good deal of time was devoted at the Disha meet on the importance of e-voting by both RI Director Manoj Desai and RIDE C Basker, with PRIP K R Ravindran chipping in to tell the DGEs that manipulation or malfeasance in elections will not be tolerated. Both of them pointed out that when the ballot form was being followed there were a spate of complaints, and hence e-voting was the way forward.

Said Basker, “Don’t forget that it is your job to conduct free, fair and transparent elections. We have introduced e-voting because there were continuous reports and complaints when you followed the ballot. Last year for the first time, RI introduced e-voting for Directors and I also went through e-voting. You must have seen the system was robust, and clubs had no problem because more than 2,500 clubs in our Zone had to vote to elect a Director.”

Desai added that RI leadership felt that the way forward in this digital world is e-voting, as it is cost-effective and efficient. About 15 districts have elected their DGNs unanimously and this is commendable.

Added Basker: “This is what we expect governors should do. Your role is to ensure that you don’t have elections in your district. If you are able to do this, 90 per cent of your problems are solved. But if your district is going through an election, please ensure free and fair elections. Get in touch with

RISAO on how to conduct an election, and follow the procedures.”

He added that some of the DGEs, who went through e-voting had expressed some concerns to him and RID Desai, who was headed right from the Disha Meet to Evanston, would take them up with the RI Board on how to address them.

Some of the important points flagged by RIDE C Basker at Disha

RI Director Manoj Desai talks about the Strategic Plan of Rotary International. But few in the clubs understand what it really means. It is the DG’s job to break it down into simple components and explain it. The most important component is to support and strengthen clubs because they are the most important component of the district. Without clubs, there is no district and without districts there can be no RI. How will you do it? First of all, we’ve found that many clubs do not

About 15 districts have elected their DGNs unanimously and this is commendable.

RID Manoj Desai



RID Manoj Desai and RIDE C Basker.

have a constitutional bylaw. But in 2017–18 every club will have one and those who don’t have it, we are going to help them to get one. I’m getting the help of Raju Subramanian, a constitutional law expert.

- Strong and vibrant clubs should have a good number of members. If the membership is very low or the club is weak, or exists just for voting, close it. We have no problem.
- A lot of discussion on PETS being organised in exotic locations. We have standardised the format this year for all the zones telling the president what to do and what not to do; you can add anything to it, but do not subtract.
- Some of the district assemblies have become mere speaker meetings. We’ve decided that these will now become exclusive training programmes of the club officers. This is the most important training event in your agenda, if your focus is on strengthening the clubs and making



Even now some Rotary clubs use the old logo. Branding is very important and for that, uniformity is essential.

RIDE **C Basker**

the good work we are doing across the country.

- Even now some Rotary clubs use the old logo. Branding is very important and for that, uniformity is essential. Today DVDs cost just Rs 10; give these to the clubs so that the logos and print material are uniform across the country.
- Every club in your district should get a Presidential citation next year.
- Under-reporting of membership is a big problem; such as a club having 50 members and reporting only 20. One district has dealt with it by giving ID cards. Can all districts do this?
- District dues and Rotary magazine dues are compulsory. Subscription to at least one Rotary magazine is compulsory. The deadline for both is September 30. Some clubs are sending district dues even in June. If by Dec 31, the money has not come, the clubs can be suspended. The clubs which have not paid by Sep 30, will not be eligible to vote in the District elections.
- Submit accounts within three months of demitting office. You are responsible for all district finances... send all the accounts to the clubs with a copy to RI.
- PETS attendance is mandatory; ensure you get every single president to attend.
- Leaders will be those who empower others, says Bill Gates... you have a very good team; train, empower and guide its members so that our Himalayan targets for next year will be achieved.

Picture by Rasheeda Bhagat

them most vibrant, training district officers is very essential.

- At Kumarakom, we agreed to reduce the number of district events; we need less events, so membership and public image will be clubbed together, and Literacy and WinS will come together to reduce four events to two.
- Governors' official visits are being taken very lightly. I want to take it very seriously; try and complete it in the first six months, because only then you'll be able to identify shortcomings in clubs and address them. DGs should visit as many clubs as possible, and use the services of Assistant Governors when this is not possible.
- Communicate with your presidents in the language they follow, and bring out the GML in the language they prefer, otherwise the effort is wasted.
- Always get feedback through proper forms on meetings: did the attendees

get anything useful, is change necessary, etc. Unless you seek feedback, you won't know and can't improve.

- Rotary Club Central: By July 31, I want 100 per cent clubs to update their data here. I expect 100 per cent compliance; let's become the first country in the Rotary world to do so.
- Focus on humanitarian services. Some clubs have become more of recreational clubs. This has to change and only you can inspire them to change.
- You've learnt how to do Global and District Grants. Go back and educate your club presidents and office bearers.
- Concentrate on service projects and constitute specific awards for doing service projects. We were known for doing service and we have to regain that identity in the community. Give awards to clubs doing excellent service projects.
- From next year we are going to use a lot of digital technology to showcase

Literacy Awards

Areas	Zone 4	Zone 5	Zone 6A	InnerWheel
Teacher support	3131	3202	3250	325
Number of teachers trained	9,500	710	670	
E-learning	3051	3190	3240	313
No of centres opened	5,430	3,450	3,033	
Adult Literacy	3012	3150	3291	314
No of adults trained	12,000	10,250	6,800	
Child Development	3030	3201	3262	306
No of children brought back to school	1,676	2,748	932	
Happy Schools	3040	3230	3250	305
No of happy schools	77	158	25	
Best overall performance in Literacy Mission	3051 and 3060	3190 and 3201	3250	313
Best DLCC	H K Kripalani (D 3051) and PDG Mayur Vyas (D 3060)	V R Ramesh (D 3190)	Dr. B C Das Purkayastha (D 3240)	Sunanda Hulyalkar (D 313)



PRIP Rajendra K Saboo presents an award to D 3030 team.



Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi honours D 3060 team.



PRID P T Prabhakar presents an award to PDG Bindu Singh.



District 3230 team receives an award from PRID Y P Das.



The District 3190 team with PRID MK Panduranga Setty.



D 3240 team receives an award from PRID Panduranga Setty.



Inner Wheel members being recognised by RI President John Germ.





Finding a **Disha**



PRIDs Ashok Mahajan and
Shekhar Mehta share a
hearty laugh.





The incoming members of the RNT Executive Committee (from L) DGEs R Srinivasan, Vivek Kumar, RIDE C Basker, RID Manoj Desai, DGEs P Gopalakrishnan, Abhay Gadgil and B M Sivarraj.



Same pinch: PRID Y P Das and RID Manoj Desai exchange tie-talk.

Below: RID Manoj Desai with RRF C Raja Seenivasan and Disha Secretary T N Subramanian.



Rotary Club Presidents' Manual in Malayalam being launched by TRF Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee and RIDE C Basker in the presence of (from left) DGEs Suresh Mathew, Vinod Krishnan Kutty, PDG K S Sasi Kumar and Disha Chair Bharat Pandya.





Above: PRIDs Ashok Mahajan, P T Prabhakar, DGE Asha Prasanna Kumar and PDG Gulam A Vahanvaty.

Right: PDGs Lalit Shrima, Ashok Tanted, IPRIP K R Ravindran, PDGs Joitabhai Patel, Satyanarayan Lathi, T N Subramaniam, Narendra Kumar Jain, DGE Zamin Hussain, Rotary Coordinator Ashok Panjwani, RIDE C Basker and PDG Gulam Vahanvaty.



Left: RID Manoj Desai with (from left) PDGs Ashish Desai, RC Ashok Panjwani, DGE Ruchir A Jani, PDGs Parag Sheth, K P Nagesh and RC Vijay Jalan.

Below: IPRIP K R Ravindran in conversation with PRID P T Prabhakar, Disha Chair Bharat Pandya and RIDE C Basker.



Cleaning up the Ganga

Jaishree

Rotary India WinS Committee has signed an MoU with the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation. The two year agreement was signed by WinS Vice Chair P T Prabhakar and the NMCG Director General U P Singh in the presence of RI President John Germ and WASH in Schools Target Challenge Committee Chair and TRF Trustee Sushil Gupta. PRIP Rajendra Saboo, Judy Germ, Unicef's Chief Communication Officer Mario Mosquera Vasquez and WinS Member Secretary

Ramesh Aggarwal were also present.

Through this agreement, Rotary will support the Clean Ganga mission through campaigns in schools located on the river basin to promote positive sanitation practices. "We have already undertaken to usher in good hygiene practices and behavioural change in children in 20,000 government schools across the country, and we will integrate that with the Ganga Rejuvenation theme. The idea is to reach out to approximately 500 schools in Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal's Nadia district and sensitise students and communities to

participate in revitalising the Ganga and discourage open defecation and polluting the river with domestic and industrial wastes," said WinS Chair Gupta.

Recollecting his involvement in the Gangotri Conservation project undertaken by the Himalayan Environment Trust, of which he is a Founder Trustee, and having made several trips between Gomukh, the glacier from where river Ganga originates and Haridwar, Gupta said the first human pollution begins at Uttarkashi. Without means for proper garbage disposal, the waste is dumped in an open site

which is washed into the river during heavy rains. Further downstream after leaving the Himalayas, it picks up effluents from sugar refineries, distilleries, paper mills and tanneries, along its course and the contaminated agricultural runoff from the Great Gangetic Plains, home to half a billion people. "By the time it drains into the Bay of Bengal, more than 1,500 miles from its source, it has passed through Allahabad, Varanasi, Patna, Kolkata and a hundred small towns, cities and villages — all lacking in sanitation. We are emotionally and spiritually duty bound to carry out



WinS Vice Chair P T Prabhakar (extreme right) and NMCG Director General U P Singh after signing the MoU in the presence of RI President John Germ, WinS Target Challenge Committee Chair Sushil Gupta and Member Secretary Ramesh Aggarwal.



Judy Germ, RI President
John Germ, PRIP
Rajendra K Saboo,
WinS Chair Sushil
Gupta at the Rotary-
NMCG MoU signing
event.



this programme, with full zeal, because Ganga is not an ordinary river, it is the lifeline of India,” he said.

An AV rendition of the *Namami Gange* anthem sung by Trichur Brothers — Srikrishna Mohan and Ramkrishna Mohan — gave an overview of the significance of the river to the visiting dignitaries.

Every eight seconds, some child dies due to lack of clean water and proper sanitation. “We are here today because Rotary shares a deep commitment for healthy, clean environment for children,” said President Germ,

who visited three schools where the WinS project has been implemented. Complimenting Trustee Gupta for initialising the WinS programme now being implemented in five countries as a pilot, he said, “Judy and I were impressed by the handwash stations installed at these schools and I particularly liked the jingle that the children sang while washing their hands. As a TEAM — Together Everyone Achieves More — I am sure we can do more. Not just cleaning the river, we can provide clean, healthy water to many children that right now do not have the opportunity.” He said he would play this jingle to the RI Board members.

We are emotionally and spiritually duty bound to carry out this programme, because Ganga is not an ordinary river, it is the lifeline of India.

WinS Committee Chair Sushil Gupta

PRIP Saboo said, “The Ganga is our *Amrit-dhara*. There are little children residing on her banks and their lives are also at stake due to the heavy contamination of the river. For me this an auspicious moment as we take this significant step to address the issue.”

Prabhakar observed that March being designated Rotary’s Water and Sanitation Month, “it is only appropriate that we are launching our support for the Clean Ganga mission today. Our first major partnership with the GoI for polio eradication resulted in a Polio-free India in 2014. In December that year we signed an agreement with the government to provide water and sanitation facilities in 20,000 schools under *Swachh Bharat*. We have completed 9,000 schools so far. I am sure that by extending the WinS programme to meet the NMCG’s objectives, we can effect positive behavioural change in communities on the Ganga basin,

and help reduce pollution of the river.”

Singh said that the collaboration will help in utilising Rotary’s strength to spread the message and reach out to communities effectively. “I have been working with Rotary for more than 30 years now. Rotary has made its mark and its presence is felt throughout the country. Educating people about our mission is no mean job and a step in the right direction.” But it is a huge effort as the river passed through 11 States. “Besides addressing industrial contamination, we have to work on the mindset of people. It is difficult to reverse long-ingrained traditional practices.”

Vasquez assured Unicef’s support to the cause while complimenting Gupta for the successful performance of the WinS programme.

Pictures by Jaishree

Designed by
N Krishnamurthy

RISAO celebrates TRF Centennial

Team Rotary News



RISAO team with its Regional Head Rajeev Ranjan (centre) at a project site.

To celebrate The Rotary Foundation's centennial year, RISAO staff members came together and resolved to participate in different service projects, in addition to strengthening their support to Rotarians.

A blood donation camp was organised in association with the Rotary Blood Bank in Delhi. Thirteen staff members donated blood and more

than 30 units of blood were collected at the camp. The staff also provided support to blood bank camps organised by RC Delhi East, RC Delhi Femina, RC Gurgaon, RC Delhi Central and RC Delhi South East during September, October and November 2016.

WASH project

A group of 18 staff members adopted the Municipal Corporation Pratibha

School, Chaukhundi, in West Delhi to provide a handwash area with taps, supply of liquid soap for the students to wash hands and committed to sensitising the students on good hygiene habits. Each of the 18 members contributed Rs 3,000 for this project which aims to bring behaviour change amongst the students on hygiene practices, which will prevent disease, improve both attendance and academic performance. The handwashing station was inaugurated by Rajeev Ranjan, Head-South Asia Office in the presence of Sushma Sharma, School Principal. These staff members are committed to visit the school periodically to monitor the project and later evaluate the parents' response. They will also continue volunteering their services during blood bank camps in TRF Centennial year.

Jatinder Singh, Head - Club and District Support team, sporting Rotary and TRF logos on his running gear, completed the Delhi Half Marathon (21.1 km) in a bid to enhance Rotary's public image. ■



Jatinder Singh, Head - Club and District Support, after completing the Delhi Half Marathon.

From darkness to light

K T P Radhika

Once the sun set, it was complete darkness inside our homes for the past 50 years. This is the first time we are having some light at night,” says Ramanan, a 16-year-old boy from Vallankulam, a tribal village in the Kodaikanal Hills. Thanks to RC Kodaikanal, D 3000, for installing solar power in twelve houses in the village. “We can even charge our mobiles from our own homes now,” says Ramanan with delight.

The club spent Rs 3.24 lakh to equip each house with two LED lights which can go on for 12 continuous hours and a plug point to charge mobile phones. A five-year maintenance service will



be provided by the company that installed the solar lamps.

Vallankulam tribal hamlet is situated 15 km from a reasonably developed village Pannaikadu and the people are mostly daily wage-earners employed in the neighbouring coffee estates.

“This was one of our dream projects. It will be of great help to children like Ramanan who go to school at Pannaikadu,” said the Club President Rajkumar Raman. He added that the club will make similar studies on tribal communities and try to fulfil their long pending needs while priority will be given to fulfil the basic infrastructure.■

Nurturing champions of tomorrow



Winners along with D 3141 DG's special aide Virendra Widge and Rotarians of RC Bombay Midcity.

It was a superb show. Players, parents and audience enjoyed it best,” says Rtn Bharat Parekh, President of RC Bombay Midcity, D 3141, referring to

the inaugural edition of the Rotary Cup, an All India Ranking Championship Series under-14 Tennis Tournament conducted by the club in association with All India Tennis Association and

Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association. Over 100 players from Maharashtra and Gujarat participated.

The club is now planning to conduct this tournament every year. District Governor Gopal Rai Mandhanja says, “The idea behind this tournament is to groom and nurture young talents and give them a platform to showcase their potential and become future stars.”

Says Parekh, “Tennis is a great game. We want to make it as one of our flagship event to promote it under Rotary. In the coming years, we will also conduct tournament for under 16.”

The club also had organised a ‘Rotary Fellowship Tennis Tournament’ for Rotarians, Rotaractors and their family members.■

RI President calls on President of India

Team Rotary News

In February, RI President John Germ and spouse Judy Germ, accompanied by PRIP Rajendra Saboo and TRF Trustee and WinS Global Chair Sushil Gupta, called upon the President of India Pranab Mukherjee at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.

During this courtesy call, President Germ presented a crystal memento and a silver plaque to President Mukherjee, recognising his guidance and engagement in making India polio-free. He also briefed him of Rotary's various activities in India and the progress made by Rotary International in eradicating polio from the world.

President Mukherjee was happy to learn about Rotary's work in India and appreciated its efforts in the social sector. He also discussed with his visitors the progress and



From left: DG N Subramanian, TRF Trustee Sushil Gupta, PRIP Rajendra K Saboo, RI President John Germ, Judy Germ and DG Sharat Jain with the President of India Pranab Mukherjee (centre) at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

development India had made since Independence, specially in strengthening its democratic processes and institutions.

DGs Sharat Jain and Dr N Subramanian accompanied the senior Rotary leaders to the Rashtrapati Bhavan. ■

Convention

Atlanta embraces its sports history, and when you're there for the Rotary International Convention from June 10 to 14 you might want to plan on a few side trips to local shrines of sports.

Even if you don't make it to the Host Organisation Committee's special event baseball game hosted by Hank Aaron, you should check out the Braves' old and new homes. Sculptor and Rotarian Ross Rossin's iconic statue of Hall of Famer Aaron stands outside Turner Field, where the Braves played until this year. With the team moving into its new SunTrust Park, Rossin sculpted another statue of Aaron for the new stadium.

Field trips



Georgians love their college football, and Atlanta is University of Georgia country. (Their love extends to Uga, the bulldog mascot with a proud 10-generation lineage.) And in college football, coach Vince

Dooley, an honorary Rotarian for many years, is a legend. He was the head coach at UGA for 25 years. Under his leadership, the school had a 70 per cent winning record.

If the mention of football gets your blood pumping, you'll want to visit the College Football Hall of Fame, which has acres of exhibits and even a 45-yard indoor field. The host committee is hosting a special evening there on June 12, but if you can't make it then, the hall is just steps away from the convention.

— Hank Sartin

Go to riconvention.org.

Join us in Atlanta!



Join the Traditional
South Asian Reception
At
RI Convention Atlanta, Georgia USA



My Dear Friends,

I would like to convey my sincere thanks to you for registering for the Atlanta Convention. The number has gone up several times more than what was expected. It is praiseworthy because each Convention showcases great internationality and excellent Rotary speakers. It is awe-inspiring always.

The South Asia Reception will be held on June 10 from 6 pm to 9 pm at the official venue, Hotel OMNI CNN, adjoining the convention center. Chairman Ranjan Dhingra and co-chairs Dr John Daniel and Dr Vinay Kumar are working hard to live up to the raised expectations after the grand success of DDZI and the Chennai Literacy Summit this year. I am pretty sure those who attended the South Asia Reception at Seoul would not like to miss the opportunity. It is time to connect again and celebrate the Centennial Year.

I have received confirmation from RI President John Germ and Lady Judy, Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee and Binotaben, RI President-elect Ian Riseley and Lady Juliet, and other dignitaries including the Board Members and Trustees.

I request you to register early as the capacity of the hall is just 450 and we do not want to disappoint anyone at the last moment.

We have chosen the evening before the Convention so that everyone can unwind and be ready for the big event the next day.

With best wishes,

Dr Manoj Desai - RI Director (2015–17)
Dr Sharmishtha Desai



PDG Ranjan Dhingra
Chairman

South Asia Reception
r.dhingra@laraon.com | 091-9810052200

VENUE
OMNI HOTELS & RESORTS

Grand Ball Room
Atlanta | CNN Center
100 CNN Center, Atlanta, GA 30303
PHONE: (404) 6590000

Registration Fees:
INR 5,500 per person/US \$ 80

Payment Details:
Ranjan Dhingra, Yes Bank, Green
Park, New Delhi
A/c. No. 012790700000893.
IFSC Code: YESB0000055

Moulding global citizens at IRYLA

V Muthukumaran

District 3131 hosted a three-day International RYLA in Panvel on the Pune-Mumbai highway. This dream project of DG Prashant Deshmukh was jointly hosted by RCs Pune East and Panvel with an objective to groom young, able leaders, foster goodwill and understanding and help the youth realise their potential.

The 232 participants came from 30 countries, including the African countries, Afghanistan, Brazil, Bangladesh, Iraq, Yemen, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Saudi Arabia and a few from the US and France. Also, the Rotaractors from Pune and Raigad formed a sizeable contingent.

Shaping a bright career

“The focus was on offering innovative skills to cover the syllabus through which noticeable leadership skills can be imbibed among the students. And this will go a long way in making their careers prospective

and fruitful,” said Deshmukh. DGN Shailesh Palekar, IRYLA convener Manjoo Phadke, Youth Director Shital Shah and DRR Arjun Dev worked for this event.

Speakers from the corporate world and Rotary motivated the youngsters, said Pankaj Shah, District Secretary. An icebreaking session enabled students to bond with each other and share notes on current social issues. On day-two, four parallel sessions moderated by eminent persons on subjects like public speaking, the power of happy thoughts, effective communication, etc were organised.

PDG Mohan Palesha gave a peek into the world of Rotary to the young participants.

Giving thumbs up to the youth camp, the foreign students were happy to learn new concepts and modules in leadership skills. “I learnt to be a good leader, to coexist peacefully and work on myself to achieve my goals. Most importantly, this RYLA taught me the importance of service to humanity,” said Rasheedah Adisa from Nigeria. For Rohullah Hassani from Afghanistan, it has been ‘the best workshop’ that he had ever participated. “I will try hard to put into practice the concepts taught at the sessions,” he said.



A section of foreign students at the international RYLA organised by D 3131 in Panvel.

You must visit our city prison now. We've made it colourful and aesthetically beautiful,"

says Manu Aggarwal, President, RC Shimla, D 3080. The cells and barracks of the Kaithu Jail in Shimla have been transformed with vibrant paintings organised by his team through artist Ghanshyam. It was an idea mooted by the prison's Chief Welfare Officer Bhanu Prakash when the club approached him with its offer of a service project. The prisoners were also involved in the creative activity, with Ghanshyam teaching them to paint and mix colours.

The prisoners welcomed the splash of colours that have now replaced the monotony of stark white walls. "The idea was to trigger a positive mindset in the inmates. Each of the paintings conveys an optimistic message — birds flying indicate freedom, sun rise depicts a new beginning, and so on. We wanted to let them know that there is always a new beginning, an entire new life waiting outside for them," said Aggarwal.

The Director General of Prisons Somesh Goyal appreciated the new look during his visit to the prison.

The club has also planned an ayurvedic camp for the inmates and will establish a Rotary-Singer Vocational Centre at the Kanda

RC Shimla

transforms a prison

Jaishree



From right: Club President Manu Aggarwal, Jail Superintendent Isha Thakur, Chief Welfare Officer (Prison) Bhanu Prakash, Director General of Prisons Somesh Goyal, Artist Ghanshyam and Club Treasurer Kuldip Butail with a painting of Ganesha at the prison.

Jail near Shimla with about 300 inmates. "We will provide training in embroidery and tailoring to skill the prisoners and provide them livelihood opportunity." There is a huge market for woollen garments made in the city. The Rotarians are also engaged in tree plantation activities in the prison campuses, he added.

Regular medical camps for school children, providing support for orphanages and a school for the differently-abled, organising *Nukkad Natak*, highlighting social issues such as female foeticide, illiteracy and enabling women's empowerment, are some of the regular projects of this 46-year-old club. ■



A romance with India's Textiles

Sabita Radhakrishna

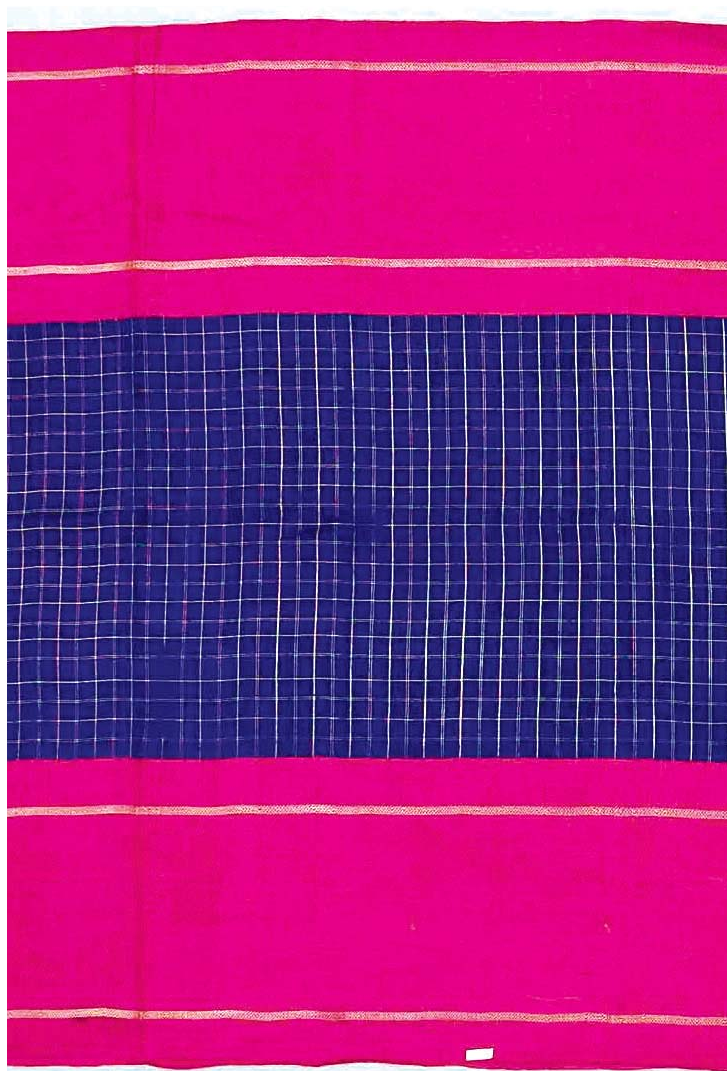
With this issue we begin a series of articles on the rich variety and heritage of India's textiles.

Recently I had the honour of taking Duke of Wellington Charles Wellesley and Duchess Antonia along a textile tour of Kancheepuram, the city of silks. It was as much a pleasure for me to explain, as it was for them to see, what a loom looked like, to distinguish warp from weft, to see a common sight in the little town, which was colourful yarn being warped on the streets, and visit the homes of the weavers, where each giant loom is the centrepiece and all life in the household revolves around it.

Suddenly it seemed to rain celebrities! I hosted the Lord Ricketts (former British Ambassador to France) and Lady Suzanne, and they loved our home, the cool breeze which wafted through, gently nudging my collection of textiles, cooling the dining room. They also enjoyed the food and watched in fascination the little *kuzhi panniyarams* emerging, golden brown and soft, the *oothappams* and the curries, and tried to learn how to make them!

They were fascinated with the slides of the textiles from different

What a significant discovery it was, when through excavations at Harappan sites, a scrap of coarse, madder dyed cloth was stumbled upon!



States from my powerpoint presentation. They came across as extremely warm and friendly people and theirs was a memorable visit. I tried to explain what *korvai* weaving meant, the expertise it involved, and how till recently the art of weaving was an oral tradition passed on from father to son.

These visits and the exercises associated with them, triggered wonderful memories of my

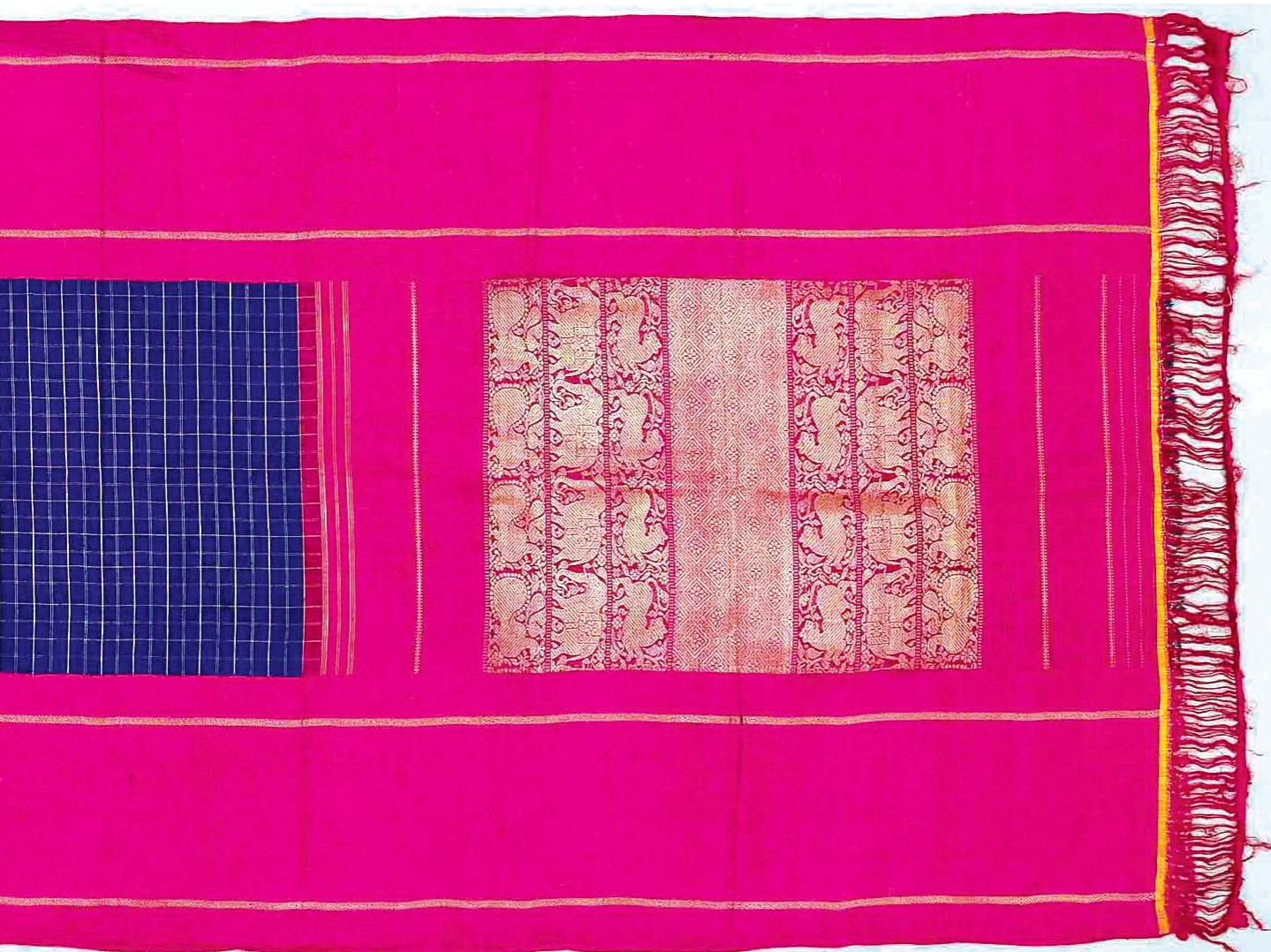
association with Indian's rich history of textiles.

The textile industry in India is second only to agriculture, and the history of weaving cloth in India goes back to the third millennium BC when the Indus Valley civilisation was unearthed at Mohenjodaro. What a significant discovery it was, when through excavations at Harappan sites, a scrap of

coarse, madder dyed cloth was stumbled upon! The fragments of cloth were found wrapped around a silver pot, preserved by the metallic salts that impregnated the pot. The fact that the cloth was dyed with red madder indicates the knowledge of dyes in ancient India.

Ancient Sindh deserts unearthed terracotta spindle whorls and a bronze needle. It established the fact that not only did the early inhabitants of the Indus

Valley know how to spin and weave, but the coarse scrap of madder indicated that they also knew how to dye the cloth they wove. By-products of medicinal remedies from plants and minerals resulted in the delicate-toned Indian palette of colour which was vital for producing a variety of dyed indigenous cloth, sensational in their muted colour codes. These natural dyes obtained from barks of trees, leaves and nature,





A handloom weaver at work in Kancheepuram.

were the only colours known before the brilliant burst of chemical colours came to enrich the world of textiles.

The amazing diversity in textile weaving came about with every State projecting its own vocabulary of textiles. Handloom weaving and the weaver who creates the music of the loom should rightfully occupy a prestigious niche in

the cultural history of India. Unfortunately, we take our heritage skills for granted and not many have pride in them.

With the passion I always had from childhood for Indian textiles, I decided to do my bit in preserving at least an infinitesimal part of our textile culture. That was how *Amrapali*, my boutique was born in Madras in the early 1970s, when, apart from Varnali, which specialised in Venkatgiri saris, there was not a single

shop in Madras which had a range of handlooms, hand-block prints or exclusively designed textiles. Of course Government-owned shops had some of these, but they hardly stocked the kind of products the buyers could be excited about. To some extent, I filled that lacuna, and happily the journey took me to explore looms in other parts of India, studying their designs, their culture, their romance with yarn, gaining a rich knowledge of the textiles of India.

The challenge was introducing handlooms to a public which was oblivious of their beauty, and incorporating design and colour which made the textiles difficult to resist, through exhibitions and ramp shows,

and centrespreads in leading women's magazines. In those days *Femina* and *Eves Weekly* were popular women's magazines and they sent their reps to me without my asking, as their editors had heard of my boutique and the exciting designs I stored. I had the honour of having Hema Malini model for the centrespread in one magazine at a time when the dream girl was at the height of her career. Those were the days when due credit was given to talent without payment!

After being 25 years in the business, I turned to voluntary work. I decided to work with weavers across

Femina and *Eves Weekly* were popular women's magazines and the editors sent their reps to me without my asking, as they had heard of my boutique and the exciting designs I stored.

the country, beginning with South India and to locate and help hapless weavers stuck in a groove, their looms empty and not being able to market their textiles. Unfortunately, modern methods of manufacturing textiles has taken its toll and most weavers prefer to join the industry with better wages and are moving out of traditional vocations. Unless we attract foreign buyers and inspire our fashion designers to use the plethora of handloom fabrics available in the country we are going to lose our heritage textiles and future generations can only gaze at them in museums.

Till today, I do not pass up a chance to show off our textiles to foreigners who visit our country. Knowing



The warp before it joins the weft to make the fabric.



this, tourist companies send me from time to time small groups of foreign visitors who visit our home, learn about family life in Chennai, taste my cooking, learn how to make these dishes, then listen to my lectures on textiles, and admire my own textile collections.

The next article will dwell on how the textiles from different regions touched me, inspiring me to design garments with them and place them in my boutique in all their splendour with pride in their ethnicity.

Pictures by
Sabita Radhakrishna

Designed by
N Krishnamurthy



**TCA Srinivasa
Raghavan**

Is Trump wrong in putting America first?

For the last 50 days, Donald Trump, the newly and, I should reiterate, fairly, elected President of the USA has come under the most tremendous attack by his opponents. Never before has any elected leader anywhere ever been attacked so comprehensively and forcefully immediately on assuming office.

But while much of the criticism may be justified, on one issue at least Trump cannot be faulted. That issue is globalisation.

The mildest criticism of him on this is that he is damaging globalisation. The severest criticism is that he is ending it.

The truth, however, is that he is doing neither. He is merely correcting it in America's favour, which is what he has been elected to do. Why fault him for that?

To see why, it is necessary to understand that contrary to the propaganda, it was actually the 20th century which ended globalisation by restricting the international flows of the two main factors of production: capital and labour. It also restricted trade as was never seen in any century before.

So despite claims to the contrary, real globalisation of the pre-20th century kind never really got going in the last century, except somewhat in the matter of capital flows after 1950. Labour flows, of course, never happened in any significant way. Migration was always a controlled affair.

This has to be understood in the context of decolonisation after 1945. The years between 1947 and 1970 saw the emergence of many new countries; that too with democracy. This created pressures on the elected governments of those countries to follow two or three sets of policies: one, to trap domestic savings within national

boundaries so that national savings were available for domestic investment; and to increase the export of goods to earn the dollars needed to pay for imports.

If you look at the trends between 1950 and 2008 when the global financial crisis struck, this is what happened. Most of it was made possible by the availability of plentiful and cheap finance that came from Western



financial institutions and Western governments. The latter were keen to block the spread of communism and were generous with funding.

The threat of communism vanished after the USSR collapsed in 1990. Over the next decade and a half, financial interests almost completely replaced political interests. Unchecked by anyone, they played havoc with the financial systems of the West, which, ironically, also

collapsed like the USSR in 2008! The resulting economic crisis affected the whole world.

The aftermath in both the USSR and the West, as also Asia, has been the emergence of strong political nationalism. Trump, Vladimir Putin, Shinto Abe, Xi Jinping, not to mention Brexit, etc, are all singing the same song, words as well as tunes. They all want to strengthen their countries militarily and economically.

In order to do this, they are following a set of economic policies

that is not very different from the policies followed by the newly de-colonised countries in the second half of the 20th century: xenophobia and protectionism. Their political policies also reflect the need for legitimacy, which they are trying to achieve via enhanced appeals to nationalism.

The problem is that often political nationalism poses an opposing force to economic nationalism which is what we are seeing now everywhere in the world. But the culprit is not

Trump or Xi or Abe or any of those leaders. The culprit is the world population.

In 1900, it was one billion. Today it is over 7 billion. This sudden increase by over six billion people in just 110 years lies at the root of all of the world's economic problems. It is as if a bus designed for 72 people is now carrying 432 people. Such a bus is bound to break down and there is no point in blaming the driver, conductor and the mechanic for it. ■

Celebrating Kolkata's heritage

K T P Radhika

To commemorate Unesco's World Heritage Week, RC Kolkata Metrocity D 3291, along with the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) Kolkata chapter, conducted a Heritage Awareness programme — 'Sangbardhan', at the lawns of the Marble Palace — a magnificent heritage building in Kolkata.

As part of the programme, DG Shyamashree.Sen honoured four heritage families — Garg Raj family of Mahisadal who were zamindars and contributed substantially to the social welfare of the area, the Doogar Raj family of Murshidabad, an ancient Jain family of bankers and merchants, the Mitras of Chorebagan — known for their philanthropy and contribution to the arts and cultural scene of Bengal and the Roy Raj family of Cossimbazar, Murshidabad, a non-Bengali family, who first imported the American automobile Studebaker to India.

"Kolkata is rich in heritage. Apart from heritage monuments, we have very old families living here in heritage houses for several centuries. We want to preserve those buildings and our culture. The aim of 'Sangbardhan' was



DG Shyamashree Sen felicitating Prasanta Roy, his son Kallab and grandson Saurav of the Cossimbazar Roy family.

to create awareness about our tradition and heritage buildings amongst the next generation," said Shyamashree.

G M Kapur, Convenor of INTACH Kolkata Chapter, who is also a Rotarian, spoke about the need to preserve heritage buildings and keep alive its traditional style of architecture. Chairman of the West Bengal Heritage Commission Shuvaprasanna and historian Anup Motilal discussed the various heritage sites in the city.

The programme concluded with a Santoor recital of the *Maihar Gharana* by Grammy nominee Pandit Tarun Bhattacharya, a disciple of Pandit Ravi Shankar. The club will organise a heritage walk for Rotarians, Rotaractors and Interactors to create awareness about the city's heritage.

More than 350 Rotarians, Rotaractors, consular representatives, members of INTACH and NGOs participated in the programme. ■

Make peace with your aversions

Bharat and Shalan Savur

An extraordinary human being and spiritual teacher Tony De Mello tells this story: A man who took great pride in his lawn found it plagued with a large crop of dandelions. He tried every method to destroy them but in vain. Finally, he consulted the Department of Agriculture (DOA) and after enumerating all that he had done, asked them, ‘What should I do now?’ The DOA in its infinite wisdom replied, ‘Learn to love them.’

De Mello adds: “I too was plagued with dandelions that I kept fighting with every means in my power. So learning to love them was no easy task. I began by talking to them each day in a cordial, friendly manner. They maintained a sullen silence, smarting from the war I had waged against them. But the day came when they smiled. And relaxed. And we started to be friends.

My lawn, of course, was ruined. But how attractive my garden became!”

Live life with great acceptance
and in the present continuous.

Accept what is. Let go of
what was. Have faith in
what’s to be.

Avert aversions. When we stop beating up our dandelions and learn to love them, life becomes...well...dandy! Life dances. Our aversions are a self-made plague. They hurt the mind, wound the body and haunt the spirit. Get rid of them and the sunshine of harmony, health and happiness floods in.

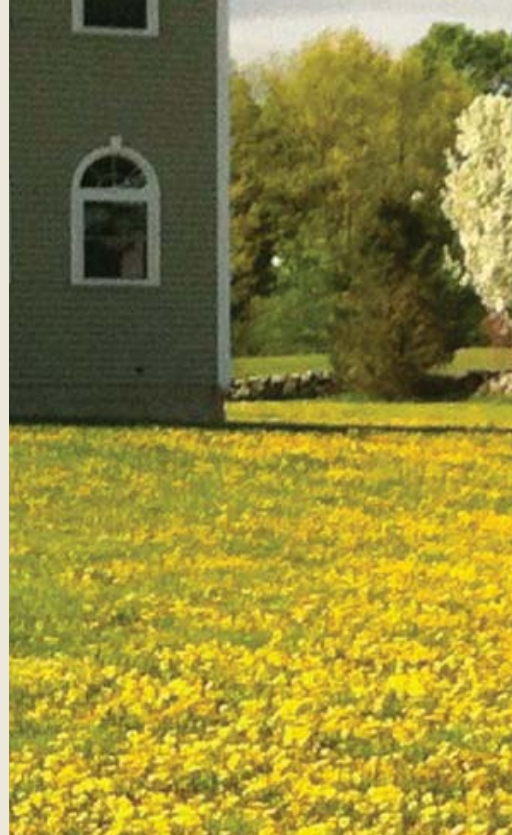
Do you know what it is to be totally aversion-free? I’ve experienced it for hours and hope to make it permanent soon. You take the first step when you stop blaming and start taking responsibility for your health, relationships, happiness, the place you are now. Responsibility does not mean taking the blame on yourself. It is reaching a deep understanding that: *there is no one to blame*. Then your outlook, your attitude change ever so subtly. You become response-able. You gain a measure of tranquility, steadiness, maturity.

Welcome serenity. Serenity is a greatly desirable and health-giving quality. It is a tonic to the body, specifically to the heart, an anti-depressant to the mind. It brings strength and courage which we all need. When we lose our serenity, we do what is disturbing to ourselves and to others. I have seen it and felt it in a student — too much restlessness, an overload of thought and calculation. She could not exercise in class — all she did was walk in circles around the room, a dazed look in her eyes. She

could not meditate — you cannot meditate if you cannot sit or lie down.

Four questions You have to up your response-ability by continually asking your core self, the very heart of your enlightened essence untouched by worldly avarice and competitiveness, key questions: How may I help? How do I make things better? How may I bless myself into usefulness? How may I help myself and others?

This is how we catch the attention of the aimlessly wandering mind and give it something purposeful to chew on. Its destructive thought patterns are channelled into constructive processes. By continually asking, these questions *become* our meditation. The more respectful “How may I alleviate this pain?” displaces the self-pitying “Why am I suffering?” When the ‘how’ becomes dominant, there arises a strong determination to help yourself and others, a response-ability that marches hand-in-hand with responsibility. At this stage, the agitation dies down and a contemplative mood sets in. It’s a marvellous breakthrough. The ‘how’ places the reins in your hands.





Most of us live with pebbles
in our shoes and hobble
through life instead of walk-
ing with ease. Throw
out those pebbles!

You may think nothing has happened. But, as the Master says, “A king idea can link man’s strength to a transcendent force.” Something *has* happened. The aversions begin to dislodge.. long-held aversions towards people or circumstances. You have to let them go. When aversions disappear, good intentions expand and bloom, harmony prevails, joy’s radiance floods our being.

Connect continually Loving your dandelions is loving existence in all its glorious beauty and yes, its glorious ugliness. It’s a Tao thing. When you live in conformity with all and everything, you never become disheartened, depressed, exhausted or fall ill. Life has to be lived with great acceptance and in the present continuous. There is no other way. It’s about imbuing all your actions with love and meaning. It’s about connecting continually.

When I exercise with my springs, I’m holding the world in my hands. When I stretch the springs, I’m unkinking the clenched pain in all beings. As I stretch, I sing a medley

of melodious songs to infuse the process with beauty and harmony. Please try this while you’re walking, cycling, weight-training, whatever. It’s about connecting your practices to your activities, your environment, the people around you, and situations, be they board meetings or family get-togethers with a new kind of awareness. Beliefs are empty bowls until you fill them up with practices based on the spirit of the beliefs. Your belief could be “Some day I’ll be enlightened.” No, not some day, because you *are* an enlightened being now. And when you practise in harmony with your activity and environment, you are being who you are.

Live with ease Most of us live with pebbles in our shoes. We hobble through life instead of walking with ease. Throw out those pebbles! When you stop liking this and disliking that, your peace of mind doubles. When you cast out arrogance, you come twice as alive. And one of the sweetest, most loving gifts you can give yourself and the world is when you steal life’s poetic moments of utter beauty

with people who’ve stolen from you. Forgiveness illuminates darkness and prevents onset of disease. Every moment has happiness in it. Forgive every moment and it never becomes a sad memory. Love every moment and it becomes an ongoing joyous life.

The story goes: An old lady looked into the mirror one morning and found she had just three strands of hair left on her head. Being a positive soul, she said, “I’ll braid my hair today.” So she braided her three hairs and had a marvellous day. Some days later, she saw only two hairs remaining. She parted her hairs and as always had a fantastic day. A week later, only one hair was left. “A ponytail would be perfect,” she mused. And once again, had a great day. The next morning, she was completely bald. “How beautiful!” she exclaimed. “I won’t have to waste time doing my hair anymore!”

Accept what is. Let go of what was. Have faith in what’s to be. And dance in wellness.

The writers are authors of the book ‘Fitness for Life’ and teachers of the Fitness for Life programme.



A Venice experience in Mexico

Rasheeda Bhagat



The green waters of the winding canal and the plethora of colourful gondola-like boats crisscrossing their way deftly through the water, instantly reminds you of Venice and its famous gondolas. But we are in Mexico City and Xochimilco is one of the 16 boroughs or districts within Mexico City, and can be reached through an hour's drive from the city centre.

But here the similarity ends... instead of the Bridge of Sighs in Venice, which takes you back to not so happy times in the City of Romance, Lake Xochimilco is filled with smiles and chatter, music, food and spirits. Also, compared to Venice, where a private hour-long gondola tour can set you back by a cool Rs 10,000, in Xochimilco, you can have your own private, colourful boat, known locally as a *trajinera*, for just Rs 800 an hour. Affordable enough to take a three or four-hour ride.

As we approach the lake and the place the boats are moored, the

first cheerful sight that greets us is that of scores of excited schoolchildren out for a picnic and a boat ride. We get into one of the boats, which is made of solid wood, the boatman exchanges a few words in Spanish with a young man and in a flash a bucket filled with ice and stacked with a copious supply of different types of beer, and aerated drinks, is kept on the narrow central table.

We move from the narrow starting point of the canal, wondering how the boatman will make his way through scores of empty boats that are anchored to the sides, leaving hardly any negotiating space. It is a treat to watch several helping hands, and legs as well, that pop up suddenly to expertly squeeze our boat through the narrow space and soon we are out in clear territory with a wide expanse of water around us.

Colourful boats pass us by filled with both domestic and international tourists and we notice that some of them are carrying an entire bunch of musicians. You can engage them for a fee... if you do, they get onto your boat, sing a couple of songs and climb back into their boats. The mood is festive, the sights around you so colourful that you can't help jumping around in your boat to get the perfect picture. The boats are so rock solid and stable that the boatman is not





A musician takes time to get his shoe shined.

The mood is festive, the sights around you so colourful that you can't help jumping around in your boat to get the perfect picture.

one bit anxious about loss of balance as you do so and he manually steers the boat along the canal.

As you are enjoying the drink of your choice, several smaller boats and canoes float around you offering a rich variety of fares, including shawls, bangles and a variety of toys and trinkets, as also food and drink. I am in the land of corn and soon sight the *bhutta* which is on offer just as in India; roasted on open flame and served with salt, chilli powder and a dash of lime.





Michelada time

We pass close to a woman vendor who is selling *Michelada*, one of the most popular beer-based drinks in Mexico; this beer is served along with lime juice and assorted sauces, sometimes clamato (tomato juice, with salt, pepper and clams), chilli powder and salt. It is both delicious and refreshing, and costs around 30 Mexican pesos — around Rs 100.

As we've taken the boat for three hours, it is soon time for lunch and the variety of fare available through the clutch of floating eateries is unbelievable — from sandwiches to burgers to typical Mexican food. We choose chicken enchiladas and as they are being prepared fresh in the adjoining floating café, I am astonished to find a helper from that boat jump across to ours, and lay the table with a flourish — dining mats, serviettes, cutlery and crockery. The plates and bowls are not fancy, being made of melmaware, but they are spanking clean.

Piping hot enchiladas are served along with a copious accompaniment

of green salad and hot tortillas. We've ordered the boatman's lunch too, and as he joins us on the table, the task of rowing the boat is taken over without any fuss, by the young helper from the café. There is enough food for him too, and once the boatman finishes his lunch, he asks the young man to have his. There is so much of good manners, courtesy and camaraderie, along with quick and efficient service, that generous tips are in order. Not a single seller of wares harasses any of the guests on the lake to buy his/her ware.

Our tourism service providers have a lot to learn from this popular picnic/leisure spot in Mexico City. All along the sides of the canal, plenty of restaurants and cafes are located and absolutely clean washrooms are available there for a mere 5 or 10 pesos a person, even for those who don't use them for a meal or snacks. You just tell the boatman you want to use one and he anchors the boat near one of those, which provide comfortable platforms to disembark. The washrooms



Hungry? Just summon a floating cafeteria and get your food.

Michelada is, one of the most popular beer-based drinks in Mexico, made with lime juice and assorted sauces, salt and chilli powder.

are clean, there is both running water and toilet paper.

According to Wikipedia, the Xochimilco canals are left from what was once an extensive lake and canal system that connected most of the settlements of the Valley of Mexico. This vestige of the area's pre-Hispanic past, and all that is left of what used to be a vast lake and canal system that extended over most parts of the Valley of Mexico, has made Xochimilco a World Heritage Site and internationally famous.

This system of waterways was the main transportation route, especially for goods from the pre-Hispanic period until the 20th century. But over the years and decades, the water table fell and the lake shrunk and all that is left of the canals is in Xochimilco. The canals are fed by fresh water springs which is artificially supplemented by treated water. There is concern that falling water tables will make the remaining canals disappear and hence the place has been declared a World Heritage Site.

Pictures by Pervez Bhagat

Designed by N Krishnamurthy





Please pay your Rotary News Dues at the earliest

to enjoy uninterrupted supply. Please note that *Rotary News* subscription is mandatory and defaulting clubs can be suspended by RI.

List of defaulting clubs and the club dues details on our website www.rotarynewsonline.org



Rotary at a glance

Rotarians : 12,27,469

Clubs : 35,454

Districts : 534

Rotaractors : 2,28,091*

Clubs : 9,917*

Interactors : 4,85,944*

Clubs : 21,128*

RCC members: 2,13,578*

RCC : 9,286*

* As on January 2, 2017

Membership in India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives

As on March 1, 2017

RI Zone	RI District	Rotary Clubs	No of Rotarians	Women Rotarians	Rotaract	Interact	RCC
5	2981	109	4,477	188	53	217	171
5	2982	65	2,870	79	54	109	41
5	3000	118	5,275	439	215	498	112
4	3011	72	3,161	566	43	97	28
4	3012	85	3,627	763	59	111	54
5	3020	83	4,228	216	107	452	351
4	3030	99	5,377	671	71	258	156
4	3040	89	2,141	241	50	109	135
4	3051	66	2,481	189	47	146	335
4	3052	61	3,905	899	39	140	130
4	3053	62	2,491	395	16	31	93
4	3060	98	4,053	392	55	110	126
4	3070	108	3,191	291	66	152	54
4	3080	76	3,302	195	62	207	106
4	3090	79	2,137	79	33	36	122
4	3100*	71	1,721	68	10	71	146
6	3110	110	3,851	198	52	49	95
6	3120	74	2,950	288	36	59	50
4	3131	124	5,345	974	84	253	70
4	3132	92	4,013	416	58	141	118
4	3141	85	5,243	1012	100	234	86
4	3142	78	2,973	416	56	180	64
5	3150	95	3,413	327	88	220	108
5	3160	65	2,322	107	17	43	81
5	3170	127	5,543	356	50	279	158
5	3181	67	3,074	204	28	167	102
5	3182	78	3,344	246	25	265	90
5	3190	147	5,724	676	130	335	48
5	3201	138	5,141	295	89	116	46
5	3202	130	4,990	246	91	417	40
5	3211	133	4,298	238	11	70	121
5	3212	95	3,870	207	104	254	126
5	3220	69	1,902	233	79	190	75
5	3230	147	6,173	516	167	452	310
6	3240	86	3,001	347	57	141	141
6	3250	98	3,714	620	32	196	173
6	3261	70	2,344	226	15	100	42
6	3262	85	3,185	377	41	71	73
6	3271	69	1,330	187	42	16	13
6	3272	134	2,670	430	36	36	36
6	3281	195	5,686	774	220	79	184
6	3282	127	3,578	269	122	31	40
6	3291	146	3,839	667	63	126	569
6	3292	114	4,392	651	109	105	101
Total		4,319	1,62,345	17,174	2,982	7,369	5,320

*Non-districted

Source: RI South Asia Office



Freeze frame on child abuse

Smita Deodhar

Making movies can be exciting, engaging, epic, heart-felt, purposeful... and that's what young film students from 17 colleges across Maharashtra discovered as they created short films to sensitise viewers about the heinous, yet completely invisible, crime of child abuse. Eight months later, as everyone gathered in Mumbai for a special screening, film-after-film brought up sombre yet subtle nuances of the kind of abuse that children and young people encounter in their everyday lives. Dramatic, sincere, reflective, and inspirational, the movies achieved what they had set out to do — raise awareness and spark a conversation around addressing child abuse.

The films were made for a short film competition organised by the UNICEF in Maharashtra, to raise awareness on violence against children and motivate the youth to understand and speak up for child rights. To equip them to embark upon a rewarding cinematic journey, the participants — students of mass media, who are relatively new to the process of film-making — underwent a one-day workshop that not only covered important technical basics, but also relevant information on what qualifies as child abuse, how to create sensitive on-screen portrayals, maintain confidentiality, adhere to the protocols of working with child actors and be mindful of ethics.

According to Shreyas, a student filmmaker, “Exploring the available material on cyber bullying, corporal

punishment and child sexual abuse (CSA), the three themes under which the short films had to be made, proved an eye-opener. Researching for the project was very emotional and gut-wrenching. But more importantly, the competition presented us an opportunity to do something about it and take a stand.”

CSA emerged as the dominant theme, with impactful, creative narratives effectively conveying the pain and trauma of children who are caught unawares and unable to convey their fears. Interestingly though, the helplessness almost always gave way to knowledge, empowerment and hope.

The films that caught the attention of the three-member jury comprising filmmaker and screen-writer Urmi Juvekar, National Award-winning

critic Ashok Rane, and writer-director Ganesh Pandit, were ones that expanded on the theme, focusing on concerns that are not immediately perceived as abuse. The winning entry, for instance, addressed the issue of body shaming, a subtle yet increasingly common form of abuse. *Thank You Letter* by students of the Mumbai-based R D National College, despite being made by first-timers, packed quite a punch, with its stark, black-and-white images and poignant script.

According to Juvekar, “The competition has been successful in motivating youngsters to deliberate on an important subject and join forces to make something meaningful. Although, of late, CSA has been getting lot of space in the press and other media, it’s crucial to encourage young people to look at the lesser discussed aspects of abuse as well. Take cyber bullying; it’s a crime that is rapidly on the rise and is directly connected with them.”

For the participants, the process of making the films turned out to be an educational experience in every way. For example, most of them admitted that whereas they had always thought that beating children was normal, they were truly surprised to learn that corporal punishment is a serious child rights violation. Their research threw up more surprises. A team interviewing children on corporal punishment discovered that boys are thrashed more than girls, and that beating children for poor academic

performance was more common in urban areas than in rural ones.

Apart from their limited understanding of the gamut of issues that come under the subject of child rights, there was another tough challenge that most teams had to encounter before they even got down to shooting — first, convincing parents to let their children act in the film and later explaining to the kids how to act in scenes, especially those that depicted sexual abuse. “It was not easy to elicit performances out of children, as they were simply unable to comprehend the concept. By the end of the project, we had learnt so much about rights; we have started perceiving ourselves and the world differently,” said Vaidehi Joshi of HPT College, Nasik. Her team

The film project was a huge learning curve for someone like Sandeep Rathod of MGM College, Aurangabad, for whom everything from making a film to coming to Mumbai for the awards event was no less than a landmark. “I come from a peri-urban area and do a part-time job besides going to college. Never had I imagined I would get to make a film and learn so many life lessons in the process. This project taught my friends and me to treat girls with dignity and speak up for children’s rights, particularly when someone misbehaves with them. I have now decided to continue to do socially relevant work in the future and use my talent to do some good,” he said.

If movies are a reflection of real life, even though more dramatic, larger-than-life, then these youngsters have



won the second and third prizes. Their mentor Megha Vaidya, who teaches television journalism at HPT College said, “My entire class of 40 students worked together to produce five films, two of which — *Going Back Home*, which deals with eve-teasing, and *Scratch*, on sexual harassment — won prizes.”

Just like Megha, Rane felt such a rich experience will help budding filmmakers make quality films later in life. Offering the participants some constructive advice, he said, “Taking slick camera shots is not the same as making a film. It must share some insights about life. For newbies, it’s crucial to watch good films, read good literature and have great exposure to the right issues that can be brought before people in a sensitive manner.”

created montages and told stories that inform, sensitise and jolt viewers into recognising and taking action against the largely invisible crime of child abuse and violence. Some visuals linger on long after the screen’s gone blank — a child beating her teddy bear to pulp in front of horrified guests; a teenage girl putting aside her overwhelming sense of helplessness and standing up to eve-teasers; a handshake from which the girl is desperately trying to disengage; a little boy who firmly pushes away a man who’s trying to get handsy with him. Dramatic, sincere, reflective, deliberate and inspirational, the movies have definitely achieved what they had set out to do — raise awareness and spark a conversation around addressing child abuse.

(© Women’s Feature Service)

Corporal punishment is a serious child rights violation.

Boys are thrashed more than girls, and beating children over poor academic performance was more common in urban areas than in the countryside.



RC Pondicherry Elites — D 2981

The Rotarians presented a scooter to Puthuvai Cluny Social Service Trust in Dubrayapet for their outreach activities in villages such as counselling against suicide, youth progress, women empowerment, child care, HIV prevention and rural survey among others.

RC Salem Young Town — D 2982

The club celebrated the Republic Day with the students of Sri Vallalar High School in Salem and distributed sweets and gifts to over 700 students. They painted the black boards in the classrooms.



RC Karur Angels — D 3000

Forty Annets from the District were exposed to adventure, fun sports and leadership training in a four-day RYLA hosted by the club in the Nilgiri hills. Sweaters were given to the participants. DG M Muruganandam, DGE R Gopalakrishnan and DGN R VN Kannan visited the programme site and offered guidance to the participants.



RC Faridabad – D 3011

A healthcare seminar was held at KL Mehta Dayanand College for women with focus on cervical and breast cancer. Oncologists and gynaecologists addressed various issues on the topic. The club-run mammography van was used to screen the students.

Matters



RC Akola — D 3030

A girl child suffering from cerebral palsy was presented with a spinal splint (TheraTogs) which provides orthotic support (to correct physical irregularities) and helps in improving coordination, balance, strength, endurance and posture of the individual. Rtn Sumedha Harshe is helping the child in this long-term treatment.



RC Godhra Midtown — D 3040

A thyroid detection camp held in association with the club's Rotaractors, screened patients for hormone abnormalities and blood sugar. Medicines were given to the afflicted.



RC Bhiwadi — D 3053

The club honoured three students — Navya, Alisha and Vanshika — as 'Angels of Change' for teaching functional literacy to a domestic help and a driver as part of the 'Each One Teach One' programme of the RILM. The programme is supported by the UCSKM school which had pledged to train 584 students, who in turn will teach another 584 adults and children.



RC Ladwa — D 3080

A free medical camp was organised in partnership with Cygnus Hospital, Kurukshetra, in which specialist doctors checked the health condition of over 150 patients. The Club Vice-President Amit Singhal and Rotaract President Shiv Gupta, along with other Rotarians, coordinated the screening camp.



RC Jaipur — D 3052

The club, in association with RC Jaipur Majesty, conducted a prosthetic hand fitment camp at a village in Sikar. Over 350 LN4 hands were fitted and the club recorded its name in the Golden Book of Records for the most number of arm fitments in a single day.



RC Kanpur Shaurya — D 3110

The club organised a cataract screening camp at Amar Brothers, a brick kiln of Rtn Dinesh Bhawani, in Majhpurwa village near Kanpur. Over 30 patients in need of surgery were treated at Dr Jawahar Lal Rohatgi Hospital, Kanpur.

RC Dahanu — D 3141

The club organised a cycle rally in which 350 people took part to promote a clean environment and healthy lifestyle. A sand art work with a 22 ft Rotary wheel was created on the beach. The Rotarians gave bicycles to 20 students.



RC Kalyan — D 3142

In association with Jain Charitable Trust, the club, under its 'Gift of Hope' programme, fitted LN4 prosthetic hands on 270 persons in a special camp. The artificial hands were supplied by RC Bangalore Peenya, D 3190.

RC Silk City — D 3190

Nearly 130 students of Classes 8 and 9 took part in a two-day RYLA organised by the club. The training sessions focussed on instilling leadership values and career development support for the youngsters.



RC Tirupur West — D 3202

A Smart Classroom was inaugurated at Vanjipalayam High School in Tirupur by DG Jayaprakash Upadhy. The digital facility, installed by the club at a cost of Rs 2.5 lakh, will benefit about 350 students.

Matters



RC Vellore Presidency — D 3230

The club conducted a district-level football tournament with participation from 17 schools. DGN Chandrabob was the chief guest at the valedictory session. It was a good PR exercise for the club, says the Club President V Kamal.



RC Calcutta Dhakuria — D 3291

A drinking water facility was installed at Aaynar Pathsala, a village school in Purulia district, where water scarcity is acute. The new facility will benefit at least 500 children and villagers in this tribal belt.



RC Green Land Silchar — D 3240

A free gynaecological check-up and awareness camp on cervical and breast cancer was held in partnership with BSF Wife's Welfare Association in Masimpur near Silchar. Nearly 50 women were screened and they were further advised on follow-up procedures and medicines.



RC Cuttack Mahanadi — D 3262

Mosquito nets were distributed to residents of a tribal village at Naraj to prevent outbreak of malaria, dengue and other vector-borne diseases. Mosquitoes are a big menace in the areas.



RC Lumbini Siddharthanagar — D 3292

Over 60 Rotaractors participated in a four-day RYLA held at Basantpur in Nepal which was inaugurated by DG Jaya Shah. Besides covering topics such as peace building, leadership skills and personality development, a Polio Peace Rally was flagged off during the event.

In Brief



Wi-fi on Air India

Soon Air India customers will be able to check their mails and exchange

Whatsapp messages, as the airline will be soon joining many others in offering wi-fi. Airlines such as Emirates, British Airways, etc, already provide connectivity to their passengers, but almost always for a fee. In the UK even budget airlines such as Norwegian and JetBlue offer free wifi, but only on certain sectors.



US to register 4.3 million lesser tourist footfalls

Thanks to recent travel bans imposed by the United States

government, and rising incidence of hate crimes, the country will see a fall of a whopping number of 4.3 million tourists this year. This number has been projected by Tourism Economics, a partner of Oxford Economics, which is one of the world's foremost independent global advisory firms, providing reports, forecasts and analytical tools for 190 countries, 100 industrial sectors and over 2,600 cities.



One lakh school drop-outs in 4 years

Meghalaya saw nearly one lakh children drop out of school in the

last four years. There were 33,557 dropouts in 2013, 31,276 in 2014, 14,957 in 2015 and 17,299 in 2016. Poverty, sibling care and migration were the reasons cited for this. The State government is stepping in with initiatives such as training centres, teachers' training, flexible timings for students, transport and escort allowances, to bring students from remote areas, and retain them in school.



India drops down on Happiness Index

Are we an unhappy country with unhappy

people? Well yes, if we are to go by the six parameters that measure happiness in the World Happiness Index. These are income, a healthy life expectancy, having someone to fall back upon, generosity, freedom and trust. We have fallen from the 118th position last year to the 122nd position. The latest happiness index is topped by Norway, Denmark and Iceland, in that order. Sadly, all of India's neighbours are ranked better than us: China (79), Pakistan (80), Bhutan (97), Nepal (99), Bangladesh (110) and Sri Lanka (120).



Rivers as human entities

The Ganga and Yamuna rivers have been granted the same legal rights as people and are accorded the status of living human entities by the Uttarakhand High Court.

This means polluting the rivers is equivalent to harming a person. This decision has been hugely welcomed by environmentalists. The court has also appointed three officials as legal custodians responsible for conserving and protecting the rivers and their tributaries. The judges referred to the Whanganui river, revered by the Maori tribe, being declared a living entity by the New Zealand government, while passing this judgement.



Lost and Found

How many times have we wished for a device that could help track a misplaced car key, wallet or specs or

the car itself, having forgotten the exact location where it was parked in a parking lot? TrackR, designed by a Californian startup company, helps locate lost objects. Attach the device to the object and install the TrackR App on your smartphone. Click on the App to locate your 'lost item' and its exact location flashes on your screen.



Future leaders

The batch of incoming DGs for 2017-18 at the Disha meet in Mumbai, along with RI Director Manoj Desai, RIDE C Basker and Disha Chairman PDG Bharat Pandya.



American Life, Inc. EB-5 Regional Center welcomes all Rotarians to RI convention 2017 in Atlanta, USA. June 10 -14

Visit our booth
in the Hall
of Friendship

Special Hilton Hotel rates
For Indian delegates
99 US\$ / night at RI Convention 2017
Group Code: ROTARY
Email: ric@h1solution.com

Investment opportunity in 255 South King Street LLP– a 282 room
Hilton Embassy Suites Hotel and Avalara Hawk Tower in Seattle.
Open for business in December 2017

Visit www.amlife.us for the American Life story and photos of completed projects.

RC ATLANTA



RC SEATTLE



RC SEATTLE



INVEST IN YOUR AMERICAN DREAM!

American Life, Inc. of Seattle, Washington USA is a real estate developer of hotels and office buildings in Seattle, Los Angeles and Atlanta. We develop, build and manage our projects.

- Established in 1996
- U.S.Government approved Regional Center
- 2,459 Permanent Green Cards awarded
- 4,778 Conditional Green Cards awarded
- 24 Completed EB-5 Projects
- Over One Billion US\$ of EB-5 capital invested
- Equity and Preferred Equity investment model

For more information, contact us at :

india@americanlifeinc.com | 001-206-381-1690

270 S Hanford Street, Suite 100 | Seattle, Washington 98134 USA

3405 Bobby Brown Pkwy, Atlanta, GA 30344, USA Tel: Sachin Patel - 404 491 4325

This does not represent an offer or solicitation to buy or sell securities. Investments are available only to qualified accredited investors via the confidential offering memorandum.