

ROTARY NEWS



On a
skilling
mission





OFFICIAL LICENSED VENDOR OF ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

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On the cover: Subroto Bagchi, Chairman of Odisha Skill Development Authority.

Picture by Rasheeda Bhagat



Thanks for inspiring articles

We are a two-year-old club and since inception, we are very much interested in *Rotary News*. We find every issue of the magazine is full of Rotary information and its activities which really encourage us and during our regular meetings, we always discuss the various topics covered by *Rotary News*.

We are grateful to Editor Rasheeda Bhagat and her team for inspirational articles in every issue which motivate us in our ventures and service towards mankind. As Rotarians, we are happy to subscribe and be proud readers of *Rotary News*.

Ashim Bhattacharjee
Charter President, RC Green
Land Silchar — D 3240

I am a regular reader of *Rotary News*, one of the best magazines covering a whole range of subjects, besides focusing on Rotary's key areas such as polio eradication, education, fitness and the need to help the poor across the world. Hats off to the Editor who has covered the major portion of the July issue as all the main



articles were her contributions. One can only wonder at her stamina and enthusiasm to work tirelessly by travelling long distances.

Bill Gates' generosity is matchless (*Polio has been my*

top priority over a decade, July issue). As philanthropic partners, Melinda and Bill Gates, are walking the 'extra mile' to eradicate the disease. Gates' announcement that "together we will raise \$450 million towards ensuring there is zero polio" in the next three years is wonderful. God bless the couple.

I loved RI President Ian Riseley's words of substance: "Rotary challenges us to become better people: to become ambitious in the ways that matter, to strive for higher goals, and to incorporate Service Above Self in our daily lives."

Rotarians are always ready to help, and are true followers of the *Bhagvad Gita* which says "service to mankind is service to God."

Raj Kumar Kapoor
RC Roopnagar — D 3080

Rotary's principles getting diluted

The article *We need clubs with Quality, not Quantity* in the June issue is well written by Jaishree and provides ample food for thought. Growth is vital and anything that does

not grow decays. We often see new clubs being formed. But is this really growth? At least some of them are mere artificial subsidiaries created to support personal or group interest. There must be some restriction and supervision in the formation of new

clubs. It is disturbing to see that Rotary's principles and standards are gradually being diluted. It has come a long way as an organisation of great value to society because of the dedication and selfless service of many. The hard-earned goodwill and appreciation need to be preserved without blemish. The core values and principles of Rotary need to be put to better test in the choice of new members.

P O Thomas
RC Alleppey — D 3211

This article is an eye-opener to club authorities. We have to select quality members who are willing to serve humanity. If strict scrutiny is not done during members' selection, the name of Rotary will be spoiled.

The message from RI President John F Germ (June issue) is impressive. He says the essence of Rotary is to be of assistance and show the willingness to work for the good of others.

I was happy to read *Happy hours leads to happy village, happy school* by Rasheeda Bhagat (July issue) which mentions the work done by Rotarians to help a school on the outskirts of Chennai by providing chairs, benches and tables. Hope Rotary can do something to overcome such pathetic condition of our schoolchildren.

MT Philip, RC Trivandrum
Suburban — D 3211

Let's shun hypocrisy

Hypocrisy is the gift of modern materialism where basic ethics are sacrificed at the altar of personal gains. Some of us Rotarians also show signs of hypocrisy when we do something contrary to what we preach.

This needs to be curbed before it takes shape so that this august organisation is not affected. Our

Four-Way Test is a strong safeguard against hypocrisy, if we practise it in our deeds and actions.

PDG Kuldip Dhir — D 3070

New RI President a real 'gem'

The new RI President, blessed with quality education and vast experience in various top posts of Rotary for nearly 30 years, will be an asset in planning and implementing projects.

We Rotarians feel proud of such a 'gem' who, along with spouse, PDG Juliet, can inspire us to implement Rotary programmes successfully.

*GV Sayagavi, RC Davanagere
Vidyanagara — D 3160*

You are making a difference!

I am delighted to see *Rotary News* getting more young, vibrant and informative. The coverage of Suchitra, the young ambassador of WinS (May issue) was great and I will share this story with school students when we do a WinS project. Articles on Odisha's handlooms (*Ikkat... the interlock of colours*); Goa: *Cashew Trail*; and *Beware of fat-burning myth* make the magazine interesting for the entire family.

With its changed format and content, *Rotary News* seems to be perfect, though I know the Editorial team will keep working to make it more interesting. Three cheers for your zeal and commitment as you are making a difference.

*Assistant Governor Niten Agrawal
RC Gorakhpur Midtown — D 3120*

I am grateful to you for publishing the article on Rtn Kulbir Dodd's MKD tablets (*Tablets to cure illiteracy*, June issue) which seeks to eradicate illiteracy.

Its publication has helped me to convince Kulbir to donate an additional \$60,000 in the last week of June, and he has now become eligible to be an AKS member with cumulative donation exceeding \$250,000.

*PP Kumar Shinagare
RC Poona North — D 3131*

Article on DGs welcome

Thanks for the *Meet your Governors* article, which spells out the vision and dreams of the new District Governors.

It gives immense pleasure to know that each district has its own projects to serve humanity. The wish-list of giving more and more to TRF, enhancing membership, extending healthcare to cancer and kidney patients, building hospitals, literacy projects and hygiene initiatives are interesting to read.

Hope this column will provide more ideas and thoughts for innovative projects to the incoming District Governors.

*Veeranna A Huggi
RC Shimoga — D 3182*

Clarion call for greener planet

Time is ripe for a total revolution in environment. Your clarion call in the June Editorial — *Plant a sapling, start a revolution* — is appealing.

RI President Ian Riseley has urged the 1.2 million Rotarians to plant trees and make a difference so that others will follow suit. And you have beamed this meaningful message to Rotarians all over South Asia. The drumstick revolution in D 3131 and the historic *Chipko* movements are spectacular models to benefit humanity.

Baseless charges against D 3070

The letter from PP Harjit Singh Khurana from Ludhiana, denigrating D 3070 has damaged our reputation. This man is a habitual critic who does not attend any function, including the Governor's visit to his club. Your publishing the letter without checking the facts has damaged our reputation. If our District is portrayed in a bad light, will it not affect Rotary's growth in India?

PDG Gurjeet S Sekhon — D 3070

I am shocked that this letter, which is in bad taste, was published without verifying facts and has denigrated the entire District 3070. Our action must serve the interest of Rotary and not otherwise by carrying unsubstantiated views.

PDG Arun Kapur — D 3070

Polio got the primary attention of Rotary for decades, followed by illiteracy. Now, let us take up the environmental challenge.

Arun Kumar Dash, RC Baripada — D 3262

This magazine is not a place for debatable articles like *The economics of Faith* (July issue). Without getting into the polemics of the case being made out by the author in support of cow slaughter, I feel such articles are best avoided. It is better to restrict the range of articles to friendship, fellowship and service through Rotary.

D Narayanan

RC Madras Midtown — D 3232

Correction

In the RI Director's July message it was erroneously mentioned that Rotary is entering its 117th year, while it should have been 113th. The typographical error is regretted.

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

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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.

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The ‘Sam smile’ will be missed

July has been a tragic month for Rotarians, as they lost an irreplaceable senior leader who had been elected as the incoming RI President for 2018–19. As Indian Rotarians prepared to go to bed on July 13 there flashed on their mobile screens, through facebook, whatsapp or other social media, the heavy hearted announcement from RI President Ian Riseley that Owori had developed complications after a surgery on his leg in Texas and was no more.

This was all the more shocking for the Rotarians who had seen him at the Atlanta Convention and clicked picture with him and wife Norah. Warm and teary tributes flowed in from all over the world, but for me, the one tribute that captured the essence of this leader came from Hilda Tadia, from RC Gaba, Uganda, a close friend of Sam and Norah. She told *rotary.org* that with an “engaging smile and a calming voice”, Owori put everyone he talked to at ease. “I call it the ‘Sam Smile’, it made him very approachable and easy to talk to. I think his smile is one of the things Rotary and his friends will miss the most.”

Known and respected in Uganda for his integrity and high ethical standards, he was a man everyone could trust. And, the most defining line from her interview: “He preferred listening to speaking. It’s one reason he was so well-liked.” PRIP Rajendra Saboo sums up the erudition of the man and the respect he commanded when he says in his homage to Owori: “He always spoke softly, but what he spoke thundered and people listened.”

A member of RC Kampala, he joined Rotary in 1978, and reiterated at the meetings I heard him

address... alas, too few... that Africa, a continent of one billion had so far thrown up only one RI President and he was going to be the second! That the Ugandan government has announced that his funeral will be conducted with full State honours speaks for the calibre of senior leaders who rise to the *numero uno* position in the organisation. May the powers above give Norah and the rest of the Owori family the fortitude to deal with this huge personal loss.

Distressing times continue even at home, where those who toil around the year to ensure enough food for 1.3 billion Indians, are devastated by a clutch of major problems. Two weak monsoons in successive years, long years of apathy and insensitivity by the authorities, rising cost of inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, etc without a corresponding increase in the MSP (Minimum Support Price), continuing curbs on exports even during periods of sufficiency, and sometimes even glut, in the local markets, and above all, overdependence on rainwater for their irrigation needs. Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh have been on the boil for many years now with grim statistics on farmers’ suicides, now Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh farmers are also protesting. Quick-fix solutions such as loan waivers will no longer do. Our farmers are crying out for long-term solutions; the situation is so bad today that farmers’ children do not even want to touch with a barge pole agriculture as a profession. That brings us to a question that has troubled me for years — do we, at least the more privileged, pay enough for the food that is put on our table by the hardworking Indian farmer who is in such dire straits today? Blaming government policies is one thing; but have we ever thought how we can extend a helping hand to them during these tough times? Food for thought...

Rasheeda Bhagat



Let numbers tell our story

Dear Fellow Rotarians,

When someone asks you, “What is Rotary?” what do you say? I think we’ve all had the experience of being asked that deceptively simple question and finding ourselves suddenly at a loss for words. Even the most articulate among us have a hard time capturing the essence of our organisation in just a few sentences.

As an organisation, Rotary has always had a difficult time conveying the scope of our work: not just what we do, but how we do it, and the value of what we contribute to the world.

As an accountant, I like numbers. They work in every language, and often they communicate complex information much more effectively than words. That is why, in this Rotary year, I am asking each club to provide Rotary headquarters with two numbers: the amount of money, both in cash and in kind, spent on humanitarian service; and the number of hours of work performed in Rotary’s name.

If we want these numbers to be useful, they have to be accurate. That means beginning now to accurately track the hours and the money that our clubs spend on their service.

The simplest way for clubs to provide this information at the end of the year will be by entering it every month on Rotary Club Central — a tool that has been completely rebuilt and relaunched to be significantly more useful, and user-friendly, than it has been in the past. If for some reason (for example, limited internet access) your club is not able to connect to Rotary Club Central, please be in touch with your district governor, who will ensure that your information can be submitted through other means.

I cannot emphasise strongly enough that the goal of this effort is not getting the largest and most impressive numbers. There is not going to be any competition, recognition, or public use whatsoever of the numbers reported by any individual club. The goal is accurate and reliable numbers that we can present confidently in our public image work, in our membership materials, and to our partners — numbers backed by specific data, on the club level, that answer not only the question, “What is Rotary?” but the question, “What does Rotary do?”

I strongly believe that with these numbers, we will be better able to demonstrate the value of *Rotary: Making a Difference* — which in time will enable us to make more of a difference, for more people, in more ways, than ever.



Ian H S Riseley
President, Rotary International

Message from the RI Director



Let's plan our growth

Dear Rotarians,

July was a busy month with so many events happening: new leaders taking over the mantle of leadership all over the Rotary world, Rotarians attending installation functions of their Rotary clubs, friendships being strengthened and new bonds between clubs and members being developed. For all of us Rotarians, August truly is a special month. It also signifies the start of a new period. This is the opportune time to rededicate ourselves and resolve to work on our commitment of service to our communities.

Friends, now it is the time to act. We have laid out for ourselves a detailed roadmap for the Rotary Year 2017–18.

Let me remind you of our main focus areas:

- Support and strengthen our clubs
- Focus on and increase humanitarian service
- Enhance Rotary's public image and awareness

We need to foster innovation and flexibility at the club level. We must support and encourage our clubs to participate in a range of service activities. We must look for new classifications to promote membership diversity. At the same time, we must encourage members to participate more actively in their clubs activities. A bird in hand is worth two in the bush: pursuit of new memberships cannot be at the expense of existing members. “Retention” is key, not only in corporates but also in our clubs. Go the extra mile to ensure 100 per cent retention. We must identify potential leaders at the club level and involve them in our clubs' weekly/fortnightly meetings and service projects, give them leadership roles and help them to develop into outstanding Rotary leaders of the future. Leadership is a bottom-up exercise. There is so

much talent and potential for leadership in our clubs. Do a membership survey; look for worthy members, new classifications and start new clubs. Encourage and involve members in the implementation of strategic planning at club and district level. Ensure every club learns to respect and adhere to its constitution and bylaws.

There is no such thing as overnight success. We need to have an open mind to constantly learn to adopt new approaches that will hone our skills in serving our communities. Learning is a never-ending process and it is only by adherence to this process we'll be able to make positive contributions to our mission of fellowship and service.

Let me quote Bill Gates who at the RI Atlanta Convention called the Global Polio Eradication Initiative the “single most ambitious public health effort the world has ever undertaken”. While doing so he thanked Rotary for being the catalyst and a visionary partner in helping to end this paralysing infantile disease worldwide. “Rotary laid the foundation with its unwavering sense of purpose and its belief that anything is possible if you put your mind and body to it. It is this talent for generating new ideas, learning lessons, and adapting them to new circumstances that makes me optimistic we will get to zero.”

Friends, our target is to raise enough resources (volunteers as well as financial aid) to completely eradicate polio from the face of the earth. The best way to do this is to contribute more to The Rotary Foundation and strengthen/expand our membership base.

On June 1, for the first time I addressed the Rotary webinar with the support of RISAO. As many of you know webinar is web-based seminar transmitted over the web using video conferencing software. A key feature of a webinar is its interactive elements: the ability to give, receive and discuss information in real-time. I received encouraging feedback and, going forward, I am eagerly looking forward to share and discuss with you (and also get your feedback) through webinars all aspects of the work we can do together in Rotary. For the benefit of those of you who may not have been able to access the webinar, here is the link for the recorded version: <https://vimeo.com/219854581>. *Rotary: Making a Difference!*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Basker'.

C Basker
Director, Rotary International

Message from the Foundation Chair



Talk to us; we'll listen

What does the chair of The Rotary Foundation Trustees do, anyway? What do the Trustees do? These questions are often asked of me in different ways. The Board of Trustees manages the business of the Foundation, the charitable arm of our organisation that transforms your gifts into sustainable outcomes that change lives — both close to home and around the world.

One thing we do is listen. We listen to you, the members. Your voice comes to us through many different channels and connections with feedback, ideas, concerns and recommendations.

We listen to our Rotary Foundation committees. We listen to our regional coordinators and advisers, to the district Foundation committee chairs and to our district governors. We listen to our associate Rotary foundations which provide local tax benefits in seven countries.

We listen to our colleagues on the Board of Directors, to our trusted Rotary staff, to our incredible PolioPlus committees and our polio partners, to our Rotarian Action Groups and to the Cadre of Technical Advisers. We listen to feedback from our six Rotary Peace Centers.

Rotarians are the backbone of the Foundation, so it's important to listen to you.

For example, listening to Rotarians' ideas at the 2016 Council on Legislation (COL) led to several significant reforms to enhance the membership experience. These reforms offer clubs more flexibility. For example, an exciting rules change allows a service project to count as a meeting. Importantly, Rotaractors can now become members of Rotary clubs while they are still in Rotaract.

How do these changes benefit The Rotary Foundation? The strength of the Foundation starts with our members, and we believe the new club flexibility options will attract and keep more members. What needs to be accomplished for Rotary to remain relevant today and for the generations to come? This is where the COL's three-year cycle is your opportunity to bring forward ideas to continue the evolution of Rotary. The deadline for submitting proposed enactments for the 2019 COL is 31 December. Share your ideas at: on.rotary.org/COLproposals.

You are our greatest strength. Let me hear from you. I can be reached at paul.netzel@rotary.org.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul A. Netzel".

Paul A Netzel
Foundation Trustee Chair



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More children than ever before are surviving cancer.

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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.

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District Wise TRF Contributions as on June 2017

(in US Dollars)

District Number	APF	PolioPlus*	Other Restricted	Endowment Fund	Total Contributions
India					
2981	577,426	27,464	0	7,000	611,890
2982	52,090	21,346	7,653	26,000	107,089
3000	686,313	36,482	174,105	181,618	1,078,518
3011	636,578	55,922	515,207	499,000	1,706,707
3012	397,657	87,253	159,124	109,280	753,313
3020	115,289	37,669	60,769	383,841	597,569
3030	1,371	23,496	(176,129)	(8,825)	(160,087)
3040	20,961	3,074	54,762	0	78,798
3051	39,357	494	0	0	39,851
3052	(6,327)	0	59,790	0	53,464
3053	152,265	0	0	12,500	164,765
3060	215,318	51,255	41,986	150,430	458,989
3070	134,849	1,525	27,764	25,090	189,229
3080	268,543	61,115	212,608	81,047	623,314
3090	72,512	0	0	0	72,512
3110	57,268	27,015	330,713	0	414,996
3120	77,027	2,881	72,075	47,291	199,274
3131	428,085	62,874	355,081	195,228	1,041,267
3132	126,124	7,363	16,877	20,462	170,824
3141	1,599,229	98,851	882,291	140,807	2,721,179
3142	284,741	10,429	5,250	29,000	329,420
3150	230,248	26,572	187,129	106,477	550,426
3160	203,161	4,332	3,000	8,489	218,982
3170	426,561	57,853	193,395	138,404	816,213
3181	213,175	7,572	27,261	0	248,008
3182	144,344	2,476	39,309	35,373	221,502
3190	978,673	73,380	467,721	1,150	1,520,924
3201	309,836	15,190	573,581	105	898,712
3202	116,553	7,717	0	15	124,285
3211	287,751	1,015	274,694	48,015	611,474
3212	158,044	26,092	49,265	4,000	237,401
3230	459,455	49,202	422,563	78,727	1,009,947
3240	164,452	17,443	1,050	17,522	200,467
3250	124,296	6,169	10,354	1,000	141,820
3261	72,814	100	121,140	0	194,054
3262	172,889	5,762	133,477	17,000	329,128
3291	244,564	5,577	150,943	12,125	413,208
India Total	10,268,053	1,923,479	5,454,913	2,368,171	20,014,615
3220 Sri Lanka	183,051	691	3,015	12,075	198,832
3271 Pakistan	82,423	123,235	20,011	100	225,769
3272 Pakistan	109,397	23,705	0	4,000	137,103
3281 Bangladesh	218,636	37,761	119,192	10,000	385,589
3282 Bangladesh	95,258	4,157	27	3,000	102,442
3292 Nepal	360,168	5,717	297,332	30,000	693,216
South Asia Total	11,316,984	2,118,746	5,894,490	2,427,346	21,757,566
World Total	136,292,585	35,860,155	17,091,686	26,169,508	215,413,934

* Excludes Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Source: RI South Asia Office

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Skilling Odisha

Rasheeda Bhagat

After an exciting and rewarding career in the IT industry, a prominent part of it as a founder of the IT services firm Mindtree, barely a few days after he had stepped down as its Executive Chairman on March 31, 2016, Subroto Bagchi got an unexpected call from the Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. “He said, please come and help us with skill development.”

On April 2, just two days later, Bagchi, one of the best orators from the Indian corporate world, had been invited to address Odisha’s top bureaucrats at the Odisha Knowledge Hub on the topic of leadership. The CM doesn’t attend these talks so the bureaucrats can have a free flow of ideas. Bagchi had no idea that the CM was watching the whole meet from his room through a video link.

“He took me completely by surprise as this is something I’ve never

done in my life, and the skilling is for school dropouts... not fancy stuff... basic, hardcore work.”

The State had promised employable skill development for 11 lakh school dropouts over five years; the programme was getting into its third year and eight lakh more children had to be skilled out of the promised 11 lakh. “It was a very flattering proposal”; a Cabinet position was on offer, “and he said I’ll give you a completely free hand... you can

Subroto and Susmita Bagchi at their lovingly nurtured garden at home in Bhubaneswar.



bring in whoever you want. So I told him that is not my style. I work with people who are already there. But I need time to decide.”

The first one he consulted was spouse Susmita; “you know her, she is a very private, reclusive person wary of public life. I thought she’d say no, but surprisingly, she said: ‘You are born in that State and you should do it.’” Next he spoke to Infosys co-founder and the brain behind *Aadhaar*, Nandan Nilekani, then to Manish Sabharwal, co-founder of TeamLease Services. Both said: ‘Do it’. When he asked his eldest brother, a retired bureaucrat from



Subroto Bagchi shares a meal with the trainees at a sewing machine operation centre.



Odisha, “he fired me saying why are you even asking me? You guys in the private sector talk about government inefficiency and demonise it, so come here and prove yourself.”

So he took the job, at a grand annual salary of Re 1 from May 1.

I am in Bhubaneswar for a TRF Centennial dinner and catching up with Bagchi after a gap of a few years. Susmita gives us a delicious breakfast, the highlight of which is thinly sliced and lightly fried *baigan* (brinjal) organically grown in the garden the couple tends so lovingly. Even before beginning the interview, Bagchi walks me through the expansive garden in his sprawling ministerial bungalow in Bhubaneswar, shows off his huge vermicompost tank and is a tad

disappointed I don’t go into raptures over it.

A journey begins

Immediately after joining, he started an exhaustive tour of the 30 districts in 30 days, to get a hands-on feel of his new job. “It was 45 degrees, and I covered 7,700 km, met thousands of training institute candidates, government officials, trainers, other stakeholders, and devised my strategy.”

The mainstay of this was developing the brand *Skilled-in-Odisha*. “It is not enough to give somebody just a set of skills, which are actually about human transformation and self-confidence. You just can’t say I’ll give you a skill and you go and get a livelihood,” he says.

The problem, he adds, is that in the whole skill business, “Delhi

downwards, everybody talks numbers and the human story gets lost. When I came on board, we had to skill eight lakh children; but behind those numbers there is a child.”

His first message to his officers: Don’t look only at data but have a human view and “the need to shift the conversation to *Skilled-in-Odisha*, so that over time — it can’t happen overnight — we can create the image that the best skilled people come from Odisha.” He also impressed upon them to build a three-year view of the programme, so that just as happens in the IT industry, employers can come and lock in talent ahead of time.”

Building a model

In five years, Bagchi hopes to build a success model



The old and the new uniforms.



In Tirupur alone there are thousands of Odiya girls; so if you buy a Polo or Tommy Hilfiger shirt in New York, chances are that an Odiya girl has touched it.



Role models from those *Skilled-in-Odisha*.

which is worthy of replication. During his initial travel, when he visited the ITIs, he found the conditions appalling; in some places the plaster was falling off, the ceiling was in shambles, the premises were cramped and so on. And even at 10.15 am, they were empty; the trainers had not come in. Some of the ITIs he visited in the districts were spanking new buildings, but deserted!

Bagchi explains that the Government of Odisha spends Rs 50,000 per child for a 75-day or short-term training course, done through a private agency. "In India, most skill development is done through private agencies." At a training centre at the bottom of the Niyamgiri hills, he found the Programme

Implementation Agency (PIA) had made the girls, training as nursing assistants, sit on the floor. And sleep on the floor too.

Showing me a clip he has compiled from his visits, Bagchi points to Shantilata Patra, a mother of two, who is being trained to make shoe uppers. A typical case of being abandoned by her husband; next she will move to the leather park in Bahadurgarh (Haryana), and join hundreds of other women, and earn at least Rs 10,000 a month. But one of their problems was the groundwater used for drinking was highly contaminated. "You expect to hear cultural issues, language, food and so on, not that they can't drink the local water, an irony because Odisha has the highest groundwater level in the country, and the



villages where they come from has clean water," sighs Bagchi.

Challenges abound

Bagchi's first challenge is to make the 44 Government ITIs, (against 600 private ITIs) the exemplars, but right now their shortcoming is good trainers, something that is common across the skills scenario in India. Next, his team will set up eight advanced world-class skill training institutes at a cost of Rs 1,000 crore at eight different locations in Odisha. "These will be like finishing schools; they will also improve the teaching quality of the ITIs."

While this initiative will account for 20 per

cent of the eight lakh to be trained in three years, "the remaining 80 per cent will still have to be done through short-term, employment linked programmes. The largest number of trainees from the State come with skills to operate industrial grade sewing machines. In Tirupur alone there are thousands of Odiya girls; so if you buy a Polo or Tommy Hilfiger shirt in New York, chances are that an Odiya girl has touched it," smiles Bagchi.

So, of the eight lakh Odiya youth to be skilled, will 50 per cent be girls, I ask. "Actually in the short-term employability programme, we're very encouraged that girls



Employment generation will not happen by setting up steel plants, it will happen when you set up mom and pop shops.

come forward much better than boys. Most sewing machine operators in Tirupur are girls; there are hardly any boys. But my problem is that in the ITIs, the involvement of girl children is only six per cent. We are saying that in 3–4 years we'll have to make it 50 per cent."

Smart new uniforms

As any training/skilling model has to impart self-confidence, along with the skill, he first tackled the "lacklustre archaic uniforms. How would girls wearing *salwar-kameez* and *dupatta* operate CNC machines? So we got NIFD to redesign their uniforms, and made the girls and boys, wearing their smart new uniforms, walk the ramp!" He also introduced the IT industry credo of casual dressing on Fridays!

But a challenge is to change the Indian social mindset that stigmatises the skilled. "In Switzerland or US, we offer the electrician a cup of tea, but here expect him to leave his chappals outside! We need to make society think differently and value and respect skilled people," he says.

Bagchi next hopes to leverage the skill sets that the self-help groups (SHGs) have. "Who skilled us the best? Our mothers.

This State is rich in SHGs, and I want those that are doing well to become skill trainers."

Making small entrepreneurs

Odisha's new skill development chief hopes to tackle the growing army of job seekers in India by promoting entrepreneurship at the grassroots level. "It is a challenge; I am calling this the Nano-Unicorn project. Everybody is talking of Ola or Flipkart but Nuapada, or Udala, or some other remote village here needs people to create tiny businesses that will grow to employ one or two more in a year, may be two. Employment generation will not happen by setting up steel plants, it will happen when you set up mom and pop shops. When a small person setting up a tiny business says 'I see growth and now need an additional person to lend me a hand'. So the way forward is to create Nano-Unicorns... small and capable entrepreneurs."



Sumati Nayak

Availability of money to do this is only part of the challenge; "breaking down the information asymmetry is the bigger challenge." Even in bank loans, the mountains of paperwork required are frustrating for small entrepreneurs. "Why can't philanthropic capital for impact investment come in here? This year I want to pick up, in the 30 districts, 100 Nano-Unicorns and hold them up like the example of Muni

Tiga (See box). And next year, expand it three times, then 10 times and create a groundswell by which skilled individuals won't have to go to Tirupur, and will stay right here!"

Girls build Bullet motor bikes!

As he hopes to make the *Skilled-in-Odisha* a brand to contend with, to attract quality employers, Bagchi says, "I was thrilled to get pictures from the Principal

The capacity to make a difference, being part of a system, part of government, is just unbelievable. For me it has been an absolute life-altering experience.

of the Government ITI in Berhampur, who said my girls are now building Bullet motorcycles! They've been hired by Royal Enfield, are on the shop floor, and have sent selfies with the Royal Enfield bus behind them. We want companies like Royal Enfield to look at those *Skilled-in-Odisha*."

The next frontier is to get them to open shop in the State. "Many people don't even know where Odisha is. Or they think Odisha is art, literature, culture, pilgrimage, but

nothing beyond that. So we have to build an ecosystem whereby they come and build shop here, or shop for talent here."

So how important was his being from the State and able to talk in Odiya? "Unbelievably important; it resolves a lot of issues. If you don't know the language you are not them," he smiles.

As he navigates me around his garden, pointing out mangoes, blooming red flowers, an amla tree... I ask him about the concerns, misgiving,

A challenge is to change the Indian social mindset that stigmatises the skilled. In Switzerland or US, we offer the electrician a cup of tea, but here expect him to leave his chappals outside!

doubts and fears that the young from disadvantaged families express to him. Bagchi smiles, recalls how when he visited the Jewish Museum on holocaust in Berlin, a very depressing place, he was stunned to see at

the entrance a big black and white photograph of 18–20 young boys, about 16–18-year-old, behind barbed wire and in prison uniform, on their way to a death march or a gas chamber. "But they were all laughing... It hit me



Creating role models



Haripriya, trained at an ITI, now employs 12 people at her boutique.

In typical *sarkari* style, when he visited the different facilities, people said: “We have four acres of land or so much machinery; somebody even said they had 3-phase electricity! I said don’t tell me that. Tell me about 10 kids who have graduated from your institute, and of whom you are proud. Of these six should have gone out of the State, and four should be girls and two entrepreneurs, however small.” At first of course there was quite a bit of fumbling, and exasperated Bagchi quips: “How can you build an educational institution without knowing who your children are?”

But when he started digging, the role models surfaced. One of these is Muni Tiga; a tribal girl from western Odisha. She has

lost her father, has seven siblings to support, so she did a two-year course at an ITI. Today she hauls the Shatabdi Express as a locomotive driver. Bagchi sought a meeting with her and she told him: “*Mei Muni Tiga, mei Indian Railways me loco pilot hu. Mei har roz Bhubaneswar station se Palasa tak Shatabdi Express ko khinch kar le jati hu aur wapas le kar aati hu* (I am Muni Tiga, a loco pilot in Indian Railways and I haul the Shatabdi Express from Bhubaneswar to Palasa and back). She is in her 30s, and I want to hold her up as a role model.”

Nunaram Hansda is a tribal boy and the family had to pledge its tiny piece of land for his ITI training. “He couldn’t even pay for his mess dues, so his teachers

collected money and paid. Today he is the shift-in-charge for the insulin line at Biocon!”

Jayanti Patra comes from a tribal district; she hasn’t even seen her father, who died before she was born; her brother is wheelchair-bound. She got trained as a sewing machine operator for 75 days, has gone to Bengaluru and sends money home. She is now returning as a trainer. Haripriya Behera, trained at an ITI, today employs 12 women in her boutique in Bhubaneswar. Another youth has rented an acre of land on the border district between West Bengal and Odisha and sells earthworms at Rs 1,200 a kg, through vermicomposting.

Bagchi shows me a picture of a very smart young woman, Sumati Nayak, from the Westside Mall in Bengaluru. Trained as a retail selling and hospitality assistant, he met her recently in Bengaluru and her manager said: “When she came, she didn’t speak a word of English. Now she speaks English and Kannada fluently and will take my job one of these days!”

When I wonder how he managed to locate all these young role models, Bagchi laughs, “I spend quite a bit of my time in the field, and know each of these role models personally. How I found them? That is the power of the government, if you want to find them you can get them in less than 10 minutes! We demonise the government, but the government’s capacity to move the juggernaut is unbelievable. When government moves, nobody else can move like that!”

that when you are that age, you see possibilities when others see a full stop.”

The truth, he adds, is that young people today are not looking at constraints, but opportunities and they have the courage and the spunk to do it their way. “Just give them the slightest opportunity and they can break through the cloud; that is the power of youth, it wants to go somewhere.”

Finally, the obvious questions; so how is it for a corporate head honcho like him to work for the government? He smiles, and says, “Somebody dropped by the other day to see how I am surviving the government. I told him, I wouldn’t give up my past one year for the life I led in the previous 40 years! Where would one have this capacity to make a difference? Being part of a system, part of the government, is just

The young of today don’t look at constraints; they have the courage and the spunk to do anything their way. If given the opportunity, they can break through the cloud; that is the power of youth.

unbelievable. For me it has been an absolute life-altering experience. I’ve worked very hard in my life and it looks like this is the ultimate reward for those years! That’s how I feel, honestly!”

In Odisha, he adds, “compared to most States I know, there is genuine respect for human beings and development is way high here. Having Navin Patnaik... the monk chief minister, as he is called, as the leader has made a big difference. There must be

some reason why he has been elected CM for four terms.”

At the end of the day, if all goes well, Bagchi’s ultimate reward will be helping “eight lakh people cross from one bank of the river, with an

acquired skill. After that, nothing will be the same again for those people for generations.”

He says his job would be much tougher if today’s India didn’t have jobs. “When was the last time you saw a “no vacancy” sign? Remember the cinema hero of yesteryears who goes searching for jobs and encounters the “no vacancy” sign everywhere? But in today’s India, the ‘no vacancy’ board is non-existent. The beautiful thing about the country today is that if you want to work, there are choices! But to get a good, respectable job, skills are important, and that is where we come in.”

Pictures by Rasheeda Bhagat and courtesy Subroto Bagchi



Shantilata Patra, a mother of two, now supports her children.



Jayanti Patra sends money home to support her physically-challenged brother.

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Rajashree Birla

donates another \$1 million to TRF

Rasheeda Bhagat

Atlanta is no ordinary city in the US. The first chord it strikes is that of Margaret Mitchell's incomparable literary work *Gone with the Wind*, with its riveting characters Rhett Butler and Scarlet O'Hara immortalised in the 1939 Hollywood blockbuster by Clark

Gable and Vivian Leigh. It is also the city of Coca Cola and CNN. But in Rotary International's history, it has a very special place in that, 100 years ago the then RI President Arch Klumph dreamt of a humanitarian Foundation that would do good in the world through the contributions given by Rotarians.

Indian Rotarians can be proud that the largest contribution to that entity — The Rotary Foundation — from a single contributor has come from India — Rajashree Birla who heads the Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development. Her contribution to TRF has crossed over \$11 million.



RI President John Germ presents a Rotary Crystal to Rajashree Birla, Chairperson of the Aditya Birla Foundation for Community Initiatives and Rural Development.

So it was fitting that she was one of the principal speakers at the grand opening of the Atlanta Convention, where she announced yet another donation of \$1 million to TRF, and was honoured with a crystal by RI President John Germ.

Addressing the meet, Rajashree came through as an unassuming, down-to-earth person, who lightly wears the label of being such a huge benefactor of TRF.

Describing herself as “a proud Rotarian”, she said, “today all of us Rotarians are on the threshold of creating history by eradicating a disease with such disastrous consequences such as polio from the face of the earth. For over 10 years I have been engaged with this organisation and your commitment, compassion and efforts to do whatever it takes to banish polio struck me deeply. Your clarion call across the world inspired me and I too began championing the Rotary movement.”

Sharing her personal experience with Vishnu, a polio stricken girl on the streets of Mumbai, she said that the CSR arm of her team spotted Vishnu “who sat desolately on the street; she was unfortunate not to receive polio drops in time.” Rajashree referred her to the Rotary medical team fighting the polio virus. “They examined her and she underwent polio corrective surgery, and with physiotherapy and other



Rajashree Birla addressing the Atlanta Convention.

medical treatment, she could walk again and was soon up and running.”

Five years ago, Vishnu got married; “today she has a healthy and chubby three-year-old child. Vishnu works on the farm to supplement her husband’s income.” Quoting Vishnu, Rajashree said, once upon a time she was only three feet tall as her ailment compelled her to bend; but today she is a proud mother who had ensured that her child is properly immunised against polio.

Reiterating that in their group of companies polio immunisation is a focal area in the health domain, Rajashree recalled how she became “personally and increasingly involved in polio eradication right after my first visit to Evanston in 2007 at the behest of PRIP Raja Saboo and in solidarity with the cause of polio eradication I made a personal commitment and became involved. Unhesitatingly I went into the streets and slums of Mumbai and Delhi to

administer polio drops to children from marginalised families.”

But to be “socially responsible” is an aspect that is “embedded in our family DNA. Ours is a 150-year-old organisation. We in the Birla family were very close to Mahatma Gandhi and my grandfather-in-law G D Birla was a close confidante of Gandhiji. Both of them cared for the poor and were cut from the same cloth.” In partnership with Gandhiji, the philosophy of giving became “part of our family legacy”, and her husband Aditya Birla zealously carried it forward. Her son Kumar Mangalam Birla has now taken it to “an entirely different height”. His vision is to be part of a generation that leaves behind a “safer, superior and more enlightened world than the one they have inherited”.

Rajashree added that service to society was “at the heart of our value system. Our group has immunised 10 million children against polio across 80,000 booths set up by us, besides

**The largest contribution to
TRF from a single contributor
has come from India —
Rajashree Birla — and her
contribution has crossed over
\$11 million.**



The Marinelli Brothers (Armando and Pasquale Marinelli) present the TRF Centennial Bell, handcrafted in Italy by the family, at the Convention in the presence of RI President John Germ, TRF Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee and 2017 Convention Committee Chair Barry Matheson.

supporting the immunisation of 80 million children collectively with Rotary International, the Indian Government and other agencies. Our group has been an ardent supporter of TRF and worked in step with it to make India polio-free in March 2014.”

She added: “I must applaud the Rotarians of India, particularly PRIPs Raja Saboo and Kalyan Banerjee and PRID Ashok Mahajan. Still, we have not reached the destination of a polio-free world. All of us

in the Aditya Birla group join you in keeping the promise to the children of the future. The message has to be loud and clear. We will not arrive late now as we did for Vishnu or many other children. Our collective goal is for a polio-free world.”

Amidst thunderous applause and a standing ovation she presented a cheque for \$1million to a visibly moved President Germ who said, “I am very seldom at a loss for words. But this is magnificent.” In appreciation of her partnership with Rotary “in the largest public health effort ever undertaken”, he presented her with a Rotary crystal, saying, “A polio-free world will be a historical achievement thanks to the efforts of those such as yourself. You are certainly an inspiration to all of us as we continue our action to eradicate polio.”

Centennial Bell

A highlight of the opening ceremony of the 108th Convention was The Rotary Foundation Centennial bell, whose resounding clang marked the Convention’s official start. This

bell was handcrafted in Italy by the Marinelli brothers.

Welcoming the 40,000-odd delegates, Convention Vice Chair Bob Hope, who has been named among the 100 most influential Atlantans, said, “All of you are part of a Rotary that is larger and stronger than Past President Arch Klumph could have ever imagined. We are here to celebrate not only a year of Rotary service but an entire century of doing good in the world through our Rotary Foundation. We have so much to celebrate!”

The End Polio Torch, which came all the way from Chennai, was received at the South Asia Reception.

Nathan Deal, Governor of Georgia, who is also a Rotarian, said there were over 200 Rotary clubs in Georgia, which had three Rotary districts. “Georgia is the largest geographical State of the US, east of the Mississippi, and the eighth most populated State with 10.3 million people. We are now recognised as the No 1 place in the world for feature film production which is good for revenue!” ■

**You are certainly an
inspiration to all of us as
we continue our action to
eradicate polio.**

RI President **John Germ**
to **Rajashree Birla**

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When mirrors helped keep toilets clean!

Rasheeda Bhagat



When a Rotary club in the northern part of Guatemala, one of the five target challenge countries for implementing Rotary International's WASH in Schools (WinS) programme, put up "flawless and well-built" gender segregated toilets in a village school, one of the Rotarians came up with the idea of putting up mirrors in the girls' toilets. "This is something not done regularly in public schools; I don't remember seeing mirrors in the toilets in schools. The result was that the girls did not stop going to the rest rooms to see themselves in the mirror and took care of the toilet like never before!"

This information was shared by District 4250 DGE Julio Grazioso, who heads the WinS programme in the three of the five target challenge countries — Belize, Guatemala and Honduras — at the breakout session at the Atlanta Convention titled *Creating Quality Education Programmes through WASH in Schools*. The mirror scheme became so popular "that they had to put mirrors in the boys' restrooms as well! While this addition may not seem important, when

this new element was incorporated by Rotarians in the school toilet, it had an impact even on school attendance," he added. The other two countries in the target challenge are India and Kenya.

\$15 million spent in 48 countries

Presiding over the session, TRF Trustee and RI's WinS Committee Chief Sushil Gupta said that since 2010, The Rotary Foundation has invested \$15 million in over 200 WASH in Schools projects in 48 countries. "So this is not a new programme, but we have given it a new shape. Target challenge aims to give this programme a momentum and encourages Rotarians to take their energy to the next level."

The pilot in these five countries was 18 months under way and "we've seen so much passion and energy in the programme." Rotarians in India were working with the Indian Government to take this programme forward in 15,000 schools and till now three million children had benefitted. Also, Rotary had joined hands with GoI "to take this programme to another 500

schools under the Clean Ganga water mission, a prestigious programme of the Indian government to clean River Ganges," Gupta said.

He added that the excitement and energy in the WinS programme was so high that "our model in the pilot is being used in countries outside the pilot such as Mexico, Philippines and Uganda."

Saying that the interest in grants geared towards implementing holistic projects in schools is increasing, Gupta disclosed that 42 of the 273 Water and Sanitation grants in 2015–16 were dedicated to WinS.

WinS challenge in India

Giving details of the WinS project in India, PDG Ramesh Aggarwal, Member Secretary of Rotary India WinS Committee, and member, RI WinS Committee, said that India had 1.45 million schools, with one in a radius of every two to three miles, and 113 million children went to school every day to "learn, play and eat and providing them a conducive environment to do so is the challenge. Every 20 seconds, a child dies



Rasheda Bhagat

Area of Focus Manager (Basic Education and Literacy) and WinS Target Challenge Co-manager Mary Jo Jean-Francois addressing the session in the presence of (R to L): WinS Target Challenge Committee Chair Sushil Gupta, WinS Committee Member Secretary Ramesh Aggarwal, DGN Jeffery Bamford and DGE Julio Grazioso.

in India; over 1,000 children die every day due to poor water sanitation and hygiene facilities in many areas.” A big cause for this worrying statistic was that many schools have “child unfriendly water and sanitation facilities, many of which are either vandalised or are dysfunctional.”

Another major problem was 600 million people defecating in the open, “60 per cent of the world’s open defecation takes place in India; six million children are estimated to be out of schools and 1.4 million children die before turning five.”

The excitement and energy in the WinS programme is so high that our model in the pilot is being used in countries outside the pilot such as Mexico, Philippines and Uganda.

WinS Global Chair **Sushil Gupta**

Taking this “huge challenge” into account, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched a ‘Clean India Clean Schools’ campaign to ensure every school has a basic water and sanitation facility and he had also appealed to corporates and NGOs to support this initiative. Schools in India did have a basic gender segregated toilet but the challenge was operating and maintaining the water and sanitation facilities to ensure a clean and hygienic environment for the children, said Aggarwal.

Huge water shortage in Kenya

District 9212 DGN Jeffery Bamford, who leads the pilot in Kenya, one of the five target challenge countries, said in Kenya “we have a situation where most schools don’t have the necessary facilities. We have recently adopted free schooling for primary schools but there is inadequate funding from the government for water and sanitation facilities. Water shortage is a big problem particularly in rural areas.”

In many areas children consumed water that was not tested and the result was diseases such as cholera.

Maintaining that unique solutions have to be found for particular problems he said that in one particular school when the Rotarians gave “sanitary pads to the girls, the boys were jealous, so we provided them with underpants because most of them didn’t have underpants, and they were happy. This taught us that when you have a particular problem, you learn to deal with it.”

He called for partnerships and help from other regions of the world to improve the situation in Kenya, where there are huge health care challenges.

One of these was dental problems, and Rotarians have incorporated oral hygiene and screening for dental problems in their work in schools. “For a population of 43 million we have less than 1,000 dentists. And we have a song on teeth cleaning similar to the one in India for handwashing,” said Bamford.

So the District’s Rotarians, in partnership with Rotarians from Districts 5160 (Northern California) and 6150 (Central and Northern Arkansas), had implemented the project ‘Kenya Smiles,’ “which is a simple, scalable and sustainable project for comprehensive oral health and nutrition programme.”

Incorporating WinS message in curriculum

Giving an overview of the programme’s challenges in the target countries, Mary Jo Jean-Francois, Area of Focus Manager (Basic Education and Literacy) and WinS Target Challenge Co-manager, said “I can’t tell you how many times I’ve gone to schools in some of these countries where teachers say you seem like a very good woman who has come from the US to help us. But we have just four hours a day and a national exam at the end of the year which the students have to pass. So if we had a choice whether to teach them math, science or reading or washing their hands, I am going to go for the math and science because the children have to pass their exams.”

She overcame this challenge by telling the teachers to incorporate some of the components on WinS in one of their subjects, such as reading. For instance, while teaching a child how to read, a story could be told about a community which was sick because the

people were not washing their hands properly. “So while still teaching a subject, our WinS goals can be achieved.”

Aggarwal added that in India 113 million children were being given a free noon meal everyday and this had a very big impact on school attendance and preventing dropouts. “We are establishing *Bal Sansad* or child cabinets to give leadership qualities to the children, and one of their responsibilities is to ensure that the water and sanitation facilities we set up, including group handwashing stations, are maintained properly and they usher in a behavioural change.”

Concluding the session, Trustee Gupta said, “I am happy at the interest

India has 1.45 million schools, and 113 million children go to school every day to learn, play and eat and providing them a conducive environment to do so is the challenge.

PDG Ramesh Aggarwal

this programme has generated. It is rarely that we see the room so full in a breakout session!” WinS has become an important programme because not only did it build the capacity of Rotarians for collaboration on “how to plan, design and execute a project that will have a lasting impact in our communities, but was making Rotarians come together all across the world to take the benefit of clean water, adequate sanitation facilities and better education to schools.”

The primary objective of the programme, to usher in a behavioural change, with children taking the message of proper hygiene back to their homes and communities was already happening in India. ■

International Polio Summit

Team Rotary News

Rotary District 3291, in association with D 5240 (USA), organised an International Polio Summit — Life after Polio — at Kolkata.

The event, chaired by Rotary International PolioPlus Committee Chair Michael McGovern, deliberated on topics such as Rotary’s efforts in eradicating the disease in the remaining three countries, challenges faced by our country to sustain the polio-free status and rehabilitation solutions for polio survivors. Relaxing the immunisation practices may prove costly and dangerous as the polio virus lurking around the corner in our neighbouring countries may just find a way in, he said and shared instances of Rotary’s efforts worldwide to eradicate polio, including local challenges impeding Rotary’s initiative to completely eradicate the disease worldwide. The then DG Shyamashree Sen welcomed the delegates. RC Calcutta Metropolitan was the host club.

Decreasing the number of immunisation days may result in resurfacing of the virus which may be detrimental to the hard-won crusade; regular



IPPC Chair Michael McGovern and INPPC Chair Deepak Kapur present a basket of goodies to Rukhsar Khatun in the presence of Host Club President Subir Dutta, DG Shyamashree Sen and PDG Rajkumar Rajgaria.

immunisation programmes should be continued, said INPPC Chair Deepak Kapur. James Lewis, past president of RC Moorpark, D 5240 and PDG Ashok Agarwal, the two polio survivors, highlighted the need to rehabilitate such survivors to help them lead an independent, meaningful life. Vocational training and assistance in employment will give them a new lease of life, said Lewis.

The host club gave an account of the mega corrective surgeries camp that it had organised with the help of a global grant and presented a cheque for Rs 10,000 to the parents of the country’s last polio victim Rukhsar Khatun of Howrah, to help her education. The club members promised to extend financial support for the 11-year-old until her graduation. ■

The immersive power of Virtual Reality

Teresa Schmedding and Sallyann Price



Around 2,000 people watched the premiere of Rotary International's new virtual reality (VR) film, *One Small Act*, at the Atlanta Convention. It was one of the largest simultaneous viewings of a VR film.

The film follows the journey of a child whose world has been torn apart by conflict and supports the causes that Rotary champions, including polio

eradication and peace-building. The story evoked strong emotions and sensations from the crowd.

Angus Fraser of RC Quirindi in New South Wales, Australia, one of the registrants to the event, said, "The film was great. A bit shocking; I didn't really know what to expect from it but it was really cool. The film's message will open up the world a bit, to make

people realise there are terrible things happening and there are people trying to help — Rotary being one of the main groups doing that."

Virtual reality allows people to "see the magic of Rotary first-hand," said RI President John F. Germ.

"This will definitely have a positive effect on people," said Angela Ofili, of the Rotaract Club of Lekki Phase 1, Lagos, Nigeria. "Rotary has evolved, and that goes a long way towards having an impact in other people's lives."

'One Small Act' isn't Rotary's first VR film. *I Dream of an Empty Ward*, which premiered on World Polio Day 2016, takes viewers to India to follow Alokita, a young woman

who was paralysed by polio as a child.

The film can be viewed with a VR viewer on Android and Apple devices, by downloading it from the 'Rotary VR' App.

Powerful advocacy tool

VR films can be a powerful advocacy tool, connecting with people on a visceral, personal level.

"The final push to end polio requires significant resources and emotional investment. This type of innovative technology has the potential to inspire that," says Vincent Vernet, director of digital and publishing with Rotary's communications team, who spearheaded the project.



VR viewer

© www.rotary.org

Rotary Flag flies high

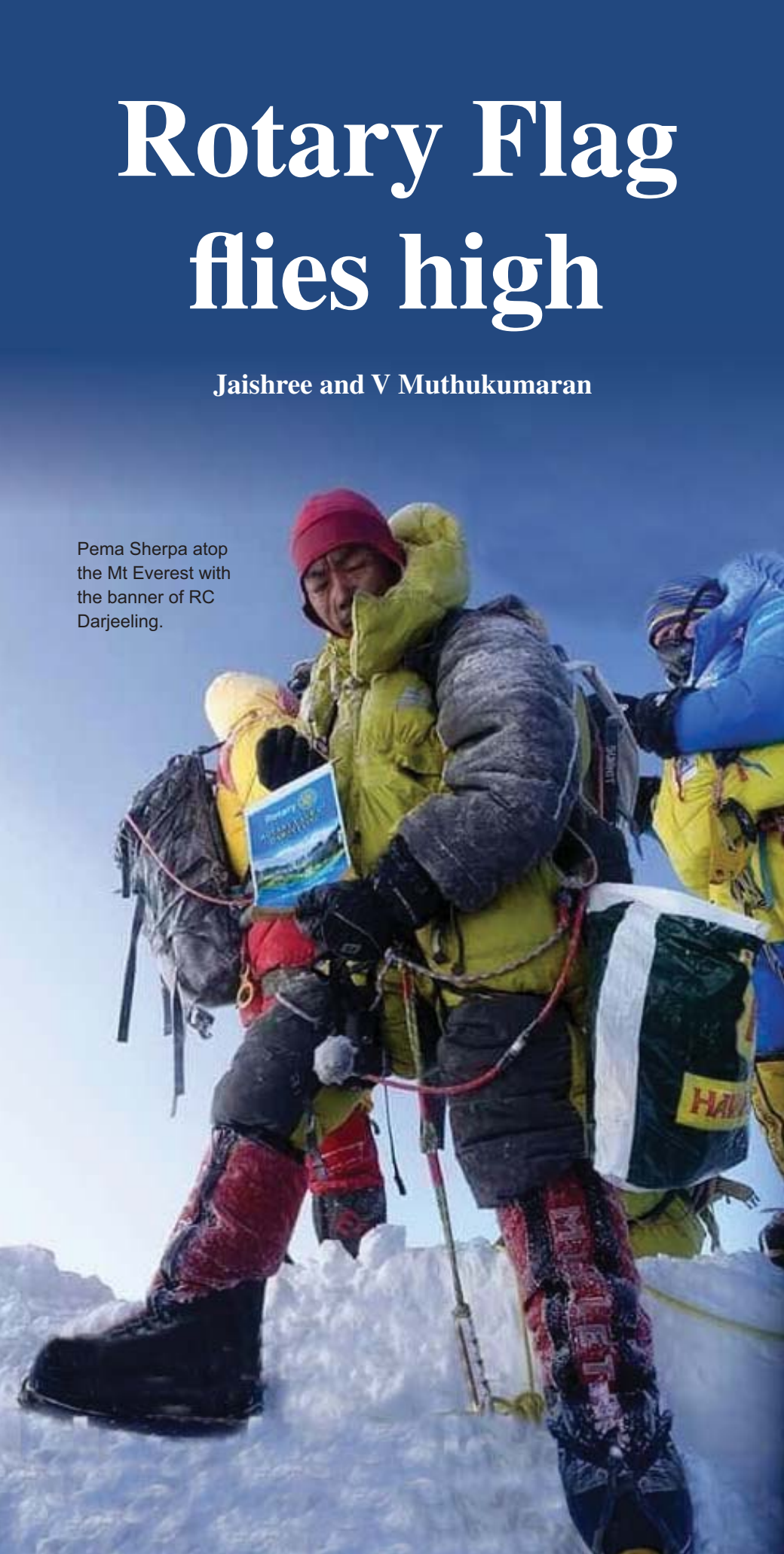
Jaishree and V Muthukumaran

Pema Sherpa atop
the Mt Everest with
the banner of RC
Darjeeling.

In four separate events recently, the Rotary flag/banner was hoisted on two peaks — Mt Everest and Mt Norbu in Manali.

When Jamling Norgay said, “It was like touching my father’s soul. I felt at home being on the Himalayas. I belong there,” it gave me goosebumps. And more so, when he added that he helped in getting the Rotary flag atop the Everest, in not one, but two sites — one on the Nepal side and another on the Tibetan side.

Jamling Norgay is the son of legendary mountaineer Tenzing Norgay who, along with Sir Edmund Hillary, was the first to summit the mighty Mt Everest, in 1953. Jamling Norgay, himself an ace mountaineer, is member of RC Darjeeling, D 3240. When he knew that his cousins Pema and Pemba Ongchuk Sherpa were planning an expedition to the Everest, “I suggested to my President Mukesh Singh Adhupia to have our club banner hoisted up there. The entire team was excited about the idea.”

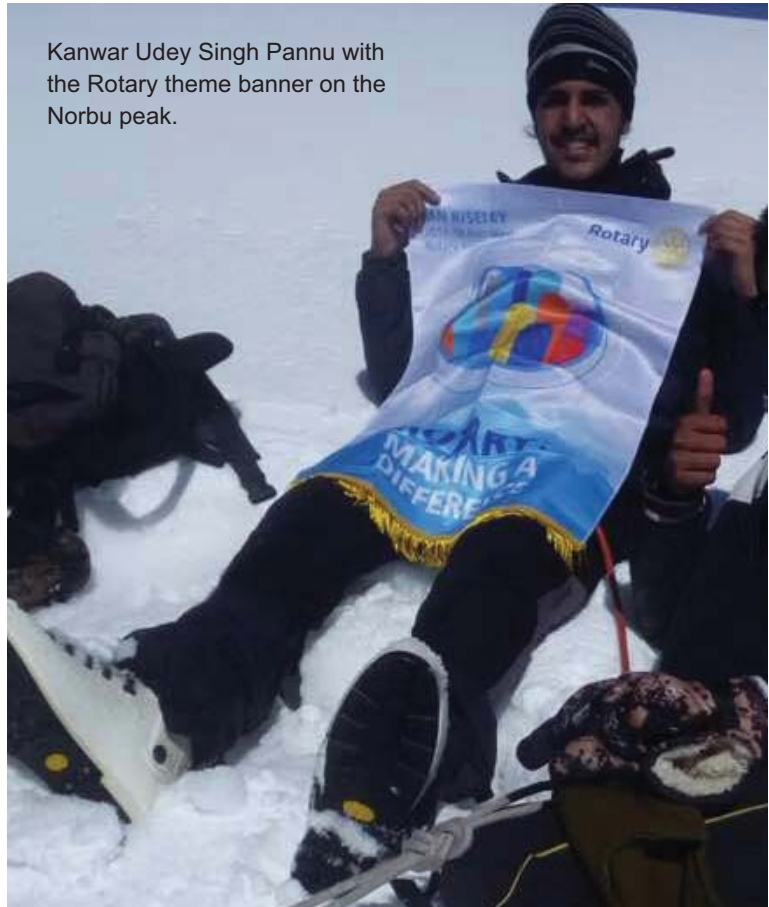


Adhupia handed over two banners to Norgay, who in turn gave one to Pema Sherpa making the ascent from the Tibetan side. Norgay journeyed up to the Everest Base Camp on the Himalayas and handed over the other banner to his other cousin Pemba ascending from the Nepal side.

Both banners were hoisted successfully in May 2016 within a gap of six days. “The climb itself is highly risky, but for us Sherpas, the mountain is our god. There was much celebrations in our club,” recalled a beaming Norgay.

A teenager’s adventure

On June 19, 2017, Kanwar Udey Singh Pannu, son of D 3090 DG Bagh Singh Pannu, hoisted his school flag and Rotary theme up on the Norbu peak at 17,106 ft. Kanwar is an aspiring boxer and student of Yadavindra Public School, Patiala.



Kanwar Udey Singh Pannu with the Rotary theme banner on the Norbu peak.



Rtn Olivier Vriesendorp on the Everest summit.

“I’m proud of my son’s achievement. It was his maiden attempt; the credit goes to his school which helped him explore his full potential,” says DG Pannu.

All the way from Holland

Rtn Olivier Vriesendorp of North Holland crowned his accomplishment of scaling the world’s seven highest mountains by reaching the Everest summit in June where he unfolded the wind flag of ‘100 years of Rotary Foundation.’ He likens his feat to the satisfaction that Rotarians experience while ‘Doing good in the World’ through TRF.

“Rotarian Olivier Vriesendorp holds The Rotary Foundation’s Centennial banner atop Mt. Everest to celebrate Rotarians doing good in the world,” tweeted RI General Secretary John Hewko.

Designed by N Krishnamurthy

Rotary remembers Sam Owori

Ryan Hyland and Abby Breitstein



The Rotary flags in front of RI World Headquarters in Evanston, Illinois, USA, and Rotary offices around the world flew at half-staff for a week as friends and colleagues mourned President-elect Sam F Owori, who died on July 13 from complications after surgery.

With an engaging smile and a calming voice, Sam put everyone he talked to at ease, says Hilda Tadria, a member of RC Gaba, Uganda, and a close friend of Sam and his wife, Norah.

“I call it the ‘Sam Smile,’” says Hilda. “It made him very approachable and easy to talk to. I think his smile is one of the things Rotary and his friends will miss most.”

Sam, who had been elected to serve as president of Rotary International in 2018–19, would have been the second African Rotary member, and the first Ugandan, to hold that office. He joined Rotary in 1978 and was a member of RC Kampala, Uganda.

“No matter the situation, Sam was always upbeat, always joking around

and putting everyone else in a good mood,” says Hilda.

One of the admirable things about Sam, she says, was his love and devotion to his wife. They met in a primary school in Tororo, Uganda. Sam described Norah Owori as beautiful, well-educated and full of character.

“He adored Norah and always put her first. They were best friends and partners for life. It was very sweet to see them together. They never left each other’s side.”

Sam was highly respected in Uganda, for his high integrity and consistent ethical standards. Those qualities, she says, are important in a Rotary president. “He was a man everyone could trust.”

She adds, “He preferred listening to speaking. It’s one reason he was so well-liked.”

The road to president-elect

Like many members, Sam was invited to Rotary by a persistent friend. “I did not want to go,” he cheerfully acknowledged years later. “I had no interest. But I had respect for my friend, so I went. And when I got there, I was in shock. The room was full of people I knew.”

The more Sam saw of Rotary’s good work, the more enthusiastic he became. He is largely credited with the tremendous increase in clubs in Uganda: from nine in 1988, when he was district governor, to 89 today. His friends called

**“Optimism is what
brings us to Rotary.**

**But Rotary is not a
place for those who are
only dreamers. It is a
place for those with the
ability, the capacity
and the compassion
for fruitful service.”**

Sam F Owori, 1941–2017

With an engaging smile
and a calming voice, Sam put
everyone he talked to at ease.

Hilda Tadria
RC Gaba, Uganda

his enthusiasm “the Owori madness” — to which he mildly replied, “If it is madness, I would be glad if more people would catch it.”

Sam described himself as “an incorrigible optimist” who chose to see the best side of everyone and the bright side of any situation. Gentle in manner, unfailingly modest, and quick to smile, Sam is remembered as “Smiling Sam,” says RI President Ian Riseley.

PRID John Smarge, who was selected by Sam to be his presidential aide, called Sam a “rock star” among Rotary members. “In just the two weeks he was President-elect, you could see how much he was loved,” Smarge says. “The Rotarians in Uganda view him as a national treasure. He spoke with quiet confidence and simple complexity.”

Sam brought an unyielding sense of right and wrong to his work as CEO of the Institute of Corporate Governance of Uganda, to his previous work with the African Development Bank and other institutions, and to his work with Rotary.

Sam, who was one of 15 children, attributed his deep ethical sense to his upbringing, and particularly his father, who had been a school principal and then a county chief in Uganda. “He was a very strict disciplinarian,” Sam remembered, “and when he became chief, he ran that county like a big school — with a ruler. He insisted that everything was done the right way.”

Sam’s Rotary career spanned some of Uganda’s most difficult years, including the dictatorship of Idi Amin, who was deeply suspicious of Rotary and often sent agents to spy on Rotary meetings. “Sometimes people came as

guests, and you wouldn’t know exactly where they were coming from or who invited them,” Sam said later. “We always welcomed them. We had nothing to hide.”

Prominent Ugandan Rotary members, including Sam’s own manager at the bank where he worked, were picked off the streets by Amin’s forces and killed. Many Rotary clubs closed and most members withdrew: from a high of 220 members, Rotary membership dropped to around 20.

One day, Sam recalled, a member was taken right in front of Sam’s club. “We had just finished our meeting and were standing in front of the entrance of the hotel. He got picked up right there in front of us. Two guys threw him in the truck of a car and we never saw him again.”

Undeterred, Sam was back at his meeting the next week.

An avid learner, Sam held a graduate degree in labour law from the

The Rotarians in Uganda view
him as a national treasure. He
spoke with quiet confidence
and simple complexity.

John Smarge
Presidential aide to Sam Owori



Sam and Norah Owori.

University of Leicester, England; a business management degree from California Coast University; and a management graduate degree from Harvard Business School.

He served Rotary in many capacities, including RI Director, TRF Trustee, RRFC, regional RI membership coordinator and RI representative to the United Nations Environment Programme and UN-Habitat. He was a member or chair of several committees, including the International PolioPlus Committee, the Drug Abuse Prevention Task Force and the Audit Committee.

Sam and Norah became Paul Harris Fellows, Major Donors and Benefactors of The Rotary Foundation.

Sam is survived by his wife, Norah; three sons, Adrin Stephen, Bonny Patrick and Daniel Timothy; and grandchildren Kaitlyn, Sam and Adam. Condolences can be addressed to Mrs Norah Agnes Owori, c/o Institute of Corporate Governance of Uganda, Crusader House, Plot 3 Portal Avenue, Kampala, Uganda or via sam.owori@rotary.org.

Memorial contributions in honour of Sam can be directed to the *Sam F Owori Memorial to Polio*.

Rotary’s 2017–18 nominating committee will select a new president-elect, in addition to the president-nominee, during its scheduled meeting in early August.

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Owori's legacy will live on

Rajendra K Saboo

After the concluding session at the 2017 International Assembly, all African DGEs and other leaders were assembled in the suite of RI President Nominee Sam Owori. I was one of few privileged non-Africans in the crowded room; when I commented on the privilege of being there even though not born African, Sam said, “Raja, you are more African than many”, having been regarded as a family of Africans. Sam’s words echo in my ears even now... in his address to the gathering he said, “Raja is my mentor, my guide, my brother — I am glad he will be by my side.” My dear Sam, if you can still hear me, I am still there but you left me and I miss you terribly. Why me alone, the Rotarians of Africa and the whole Rotary world are missing you.

I first met Sam in 1990 in Dallas, Texas at the International Assembly. He was a Training Leader and I was RI President

Nominee. Such an irony that in Dallas he got the news of being confirmed RI President for 2018–19 on October 1, 2016, and in the same city he breathed his last on July 13, 2017 and departed to his Heavenly Abode.

As RI President and subsequently, I met Sam from time to time but he was then fairly active in his

profession being the top knowledgeable and experienced banker in Uganda. However, in 1998, when Usha and I initiated the very first medical mission, which was to Uganda, Sam took time to be with us as much as he could. Later, at such missions and more so at the African Institutes, we became close friends, sharing our Rotary philosophy,

thoughts and ideas. ROTA — Reaching Out to Africa — became yet another platform where I got a glimpse of his vision of Africa based on the strength of membership, Rotary’s values and self-dependence as a prerequisite of interdependence. He always spoke softly but what he spoke thundered and people listened.



From R: PRIP Rajendra K Saboo, Sam Owori, then RI President Kalyan Banerjee, then RIPN Ron Burton and then PRID Orşçelik Balkan in Mauritius.

Sam was on the threshold of becoming our world leader — Rotary's 108th President — and the more we heard him, the more we recognised the conviction of that man whose smile was infectious, humility disarming and the courage to follow his conviction unlimited. He gave the message as President Nominee which was stunning and carried his forthright approach. This is what he said: "We became Rotarians because we were carefully selected on the basis of the values we subscribe to. Rotary defines for us a wonderful value proposition. We started as a

fellowship organisation and today we are also a service organisation and that is the spring board to make an impact in our drive to serve humanity. Our world is upside down; we live in a world where greed has gone through the roof. In a world where the honest are called fools and crooks are called smart. Where patience is considered obsolete and a weakness. Where young people are in a hurry to get rich overnight by hook or crook. Where protector becomes the persecutor and where leaders are insensitive to positive criticisms, where the values of freedom and globalisation are twisted to undermine our cherished values. This may sound like a naive lamentation, except that the list is actually longer and you can all add to it. Albert Einstein once said, 'We live in a dangerous world not because of the evil that people do but because of the men or good people who look on and do nothing.' Confucius said, 'To know what is right and not do it is the worst cowardice.' This is where we Rotarians and our Four-Way Test comes in."

To Sam, ethics and values were the fundamental pillars of Rotary. His own life was nurtured under his parents from where he got the DNA of high values and high standards in business and profession and he made these the philosophy of his own life. He used

His legacy is to create happiness for the world that seeks happiness.

to say that you cannot just be ethical in business and profession without being correct in your own personal life. Talking about his childhood, Sam had once said, "Our father was an unrepentant disciplinarian who insisted that we, his children, as everyone else, had to earn everything in life and not expect to gain anything without sweat. Although he was a man of means, he ensured that we grew up as part of the community in which we lived".

Sam joined Rotary in 1978 which was a tough time for Rotary. It was 1971–79, the barbarous period of Idi Amin's regime in Uganda, when attending Rotary meetings was dangerous as the clubs were almost a banned group. But Sam was fearless. He joined the club on the persuasion of his friends and recognised the strength of friendship and work his club was doing although he saw how his friends just disappeared, some picked up by the secret police as soon as they left the club. What attracted him were the remarkable service projects that he saw such as a young Ugandan girl Margaret Rose's entire face chewed by a hyena being reconstructed and restored with the help of Rotarians from Australia. I met Margaret at an RI

Convention. The other project that touched Sam's heart and converted him into a lifelong Rotarian was the Gift of Life project through which three Ugandan children underwent heart surgery in the US.

I have known the couple; they were most loving people, loving each other and together loving others. In Bangkok I once saw Sam, who was then an RI Director, pushing the wheel chair of Norah who had a fractured leg. I remarked that he could get help to do that and he replied: "Norah always looks after me and this is the little caring that I can personally do for her". They often used to talk about their three sons and grandchildren. Very devout Christians, believing in the goodness of religion, they lived in a joint family, as many of us do in India.

Uganda had the practice of bride price to be paid by bridegroom. When Sam and Norah, who were in school together and fell in love, wanted to get married, all that Norah's mother, a staunch Christian, asked for was for Sam to take care of her daughter and give her a good marriage. These are the values that the



couple inherited from their parents and passed it on to their children.

Sam Owori was exceptionally educated, knowledgeable having varied expertise with international flavour. With a degree in management from Harvard, he was fully conversant with the labour laws and had in-depth theoretical and practical knowledge of banking and

finance. A consummate professional and a gentleman of international repute, this towering small-statured man managed to swim against the currents, above the crest, and maintained an impeccably clean record of integrity in a country that had become inundated with corruption. No wonder that the Government of Uganda is paying formal tribute to this great son of the country.

Sam was an enlightened person, and an incorrigible optimist, and one who saw goodness in others and believed in extending himself in help and service. He was a good Rotarian — a good human being.

The first President of Rotary International from Africa was Jonnathan Majiyagbe, who despite many challenges led the Rotary world with the

theme, “Lend A Hand” remarkably. Sam Owori would have been the second RI President from Africa; an invaluable gift of Africa to Rotary. Now he has been Rotary’s gift to God and has left with us the gift of his legacy. And his legacy is “to create happiness for the world that seeks happiness.”

(The writer is a past RI President)

Irreplaceable loss to Rotary

C Basker

Though I had met RIPE Samuel Owori few times earlier, my real acquaintance with him happened when we attended the Directors Elect orientation programme at San Diego and Evanston. Most of the time we were sitting together and I found in him a true Rotarian, lawyer-turned-economist, and above all, a good soul. Norah and Sam were extremely simple and kind to everyone, including Mala and me.

I was really amazed by the depth of knowledge he had in various subjects including corporate governance, world economy, marketing strategies, micro-finance, employment relations, etc. His passion to upgrade his qualifications by continuously pursuing study in leading institutions such as Oxford, Harvard and Stanford carved him out as a true leader with very high capabilities.

One of his areas of focus in Rotary was encouraging Rotaractors so that they develop as better Rotarians and better citizens of the world. He fondly called the Rotaract as “life insurance for Rotary.” I still remember his words suggesting that India should aspire to have at least one per cent of the population as Rotarians. His vision was to have 1.2 million Rotarians in India alone.



Sam Owori and RID C Basker at the Rotary Zone Institute in Dubai.

Rasheeda Bhagat

It is a great challenge indeed, but he said when Sweden has achieved this percentage why not other countries? It is unfortunate that a visionary and a performer who was to lead the Rotary world in 2018–19 is not here with us today.

Friends, Sam is no more and now we will follow his legacy. A far-sighted

Rotarian and a gentleman among leaders, Sam Owori’s untimely demise is an irreparable loss to the Rotary world. Mala joins me in conveying our heartfelt condolences to Norah and the bereaved family. May his noble soul rest in peace.

(The writer is RI Director)

Promoting hand hygiene

K T P Radhika

From now on my friends and me will wash our hands thoroughly with soap and water before lunch,” says Vandana (14), a Class 9 student and Rotary Hygiene Ambassador of Malleswaram Government Girls High School, Bengaluru. She ensures that her family including her siblings follow the habit regularly because “handwashing will keep diseases away and help us stay healthy.” Vandana was one of the participants of a ‘mega handwash and hygiene awareness drive’ that was conducted by D 3190 in 603 government schools across the District as part of their WinS initiative.

“This is one of our flagship programmes and around 93,000 students participated,” says PDG and District WinS Coordinator K S Nagendra.

Volunteers in action

A WinS committee was formed with 550 volunteers from 58 Rotary clubs and 17 partner clubs including Innerwheel, Rotaract clubs, RCCs and NGOs like Akshaya Patra. Two



IPDG H R Ananth briefs a news channel about the WinS project in the presence of (from L) B K Bhaskar, past President of RC Bangalore West, WinS Coordinator K S Nagendra and Sudheer Srinivas, GM - Himalaya Drugs.

volunteers were sent to each school to educate students on proper personal hygiene practices. They delivered a 20-minute demonstration on handwashing and hygiene, distributed awareness materials and put up posters. Rotary Hygiene Ambassadors were appointed from among the senior students to monitor sanitation habits of the children in

each school. The committee will ensure continuity of the programme through scheduled visits.

The programme, supported by the Karnataka Government was inaugurated by State Primary and Secondary Education Minister Tanveer Sait. Appreciating Rotary’s initiative, he invited Rotary to be part of a core NGO committee that the State will be soon forming for the development of Government schools. “Rotary’s action is stronger than words and can definitely achieve the desired goals,” he said.

Pharma major Himalaya Drugs provided the handwash kits which contained a bookmark with instructions on handwash procedure, in English and Kannada, soaps and a poster on personal hygiene.

Last year, almost 200 Government schools had benefitted from a similar project. “We constructed toilets, refurbished handwash stations and provided RO drinking water facilities to schools. We will extend these programmes to more schools this year too,” says Nagendra. ■



Students demonstrate the handwash exercise in one of the schools.

A medical mission to Accra

V Muthukumaran

Rotary medical missions to Africa are welcomed at the hospitals there by both the patients as well as the local doctors who look forward to learn from the expertise of their Indian counterparts. And, they come packaged with a bonanza of medicines, consumables and gadgets in large cartels for patient care.

But what came as a shock for the 22-member Medical Mission from District 3250 (Bihar and Jharkhand) to

Accra, capital of Ghana, led by IPDG Dr R Bharat, was that the doctors in Ghana rarely administer general anaesthesia for patients undergoing surgery. “We had to source nitrous oxide, a base used for anaesthesia, from outside as the hospitals don’t stock them,” says Dr Bharat. PDG Jogesh Gambhir was the team leader, and a volunteer.

With good exposure to African hospitals through his previous missions to Rwanda and Malawi, this plastic surgeon consulted PDG Jogesh

Gambhir who came on board as Project Director for the mission comprising 17 doctors across specialties and four volunteers. A global grant of \$80,000 from TRF was finalised with the help of PDG Madhukar Malhotra, D 3080, after RC Accra Ring Road Central, D 9102, was chosen as ‘host beneficiary’ partner.

“The Ghanaian doctors had screened and shortlisted over 2,500 patients. We landed in Accra on May 4, and for nine days the entire operations



Gynaecologists Vina Kumari and Mamta Datta with anaesthesiologists (L to R) Rajiv Shukla, B C Mahapatra and Vamsi Uppalapatti and the local team of nurses.

shifted to Lekma, La General and Ridge Hospitals, where we did 172 surgeries in major disciplines,” recalls Dr Bharat.

It was a ‘historic mission’ for the medical team from D 3250 as, for the first time, doctors from this region had gone to Africa. “We were exposed to working in unfamiliar situations at the hospitals that lacked specialty care; thanks to our excess baggage of equipment and consumables, we could deliver our best.” But the irony is they had to pay a duty of Rs 1.75 lakh for that baggage at Kolkata airport. Unlike in India, government hospitals in Ghana charge patients.

The Accra club had arranged the logistics and coordinated patient management with the hospitals. The Indian doctors extended their services in secondary care including surgeries in orthopaedic, laparoscopy, ophthalmology, dentistry, gynaecology and facial deformities (plastic surgery), besides some rare cases like treatment of cancerous knee and post-burn deformities. However, what amazed them was the stoicism of the African patients. “They have a strong will and loads of stamina to endure post-operative trauma,” says Dr Vijaya Bharat, cardiologist.



Ophthalmologist Biphuti Sinha examining a child.

For ophthalmologist Biphuti P Sinha, this mission was an eye-opener as he found that Africans are exposed to a peculiar cornea disorder due to their genetic disposition.

Hands-on training

The Rotary team also provided ‘hands-on training’ to junior consultants, resident doctors, nurses and paramedical staff. “While 20 local doctors were trained across specialties, nearly 50 paramedics and support staff were

educated on modern procedures in patient care,” says Bharat.

As only primary care services are available in Ghana hospitals, even in metro towns there is acute shortage of facilities, manpower and medical skills in delivering secondary and tertiary care.

At the end of the mission, the team donated medical supplies, gadgets and consumables to the hospitals. The Indian High Commissioner to Ghana Birendra Singh Yadav gave a reception to the medical team at his office.

Doctors on a mission

- Plastic surgeons: R Bharat, Veena Singh
- Cardiologist: Vijaya Bharat
- Laparoscopic surgeons: Ashok Chatteraj, Manoj Kumar
- Orthopaedic surgeons: Indroneil Bhaduri, Ravi Kumar
- Gynaecologists: Mamta Rath Datta, Vina Kumari
- Ophthalmologists: Jags Bedi, Biphuti P Sinha
- Dental surgeons: Jahar Banerjee, Nimmi Singh
- Anaesthesiologists : B C Mahapatra, Rajiv Shukla, Vamsi Uppalapatti, Sanjeev Kumar
- Volunteers: Jogesh Gambhir (Team Leader), Manju Gambhir, Sharat Chandran, Anuradha Jaiswal and Avinash Dugar

The original idea

In 2016, when PRIP Rajendra K Saboo and then TRF Chair Kalyan Banerjee visited Africa, they found that people in Ghana were suffering from poor health care. Returning home, Saboo mooted the idea of undertaking a Rotary Mission to Dr Bharat at a club meeting and this was readily accepted by the surgeon who has to his credit more than 5,000 cleft lip procedures done on children through Operation Muskan and the hospital train Lifeline Express that meanders through villages. Now, he is getting ready to lead another medical mission to Mongolia from District 3080 in August. ■

Convention Captures





Clockwise: RI President John Germ and Judy with PRID Ronald Beaubien and spouse Vicki at the candle light vigil to end human trafficking; TRF Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee and Chair-elect Paul Netzel. Also in the picture (second row from left): Trustees Sakuji Tanaka, Seiji Kita with spouse Nobuko and Sushil Gupta (standing far right); RIDE C Basker and spouse Mala; RIPE Ian Riseley's daughter Jill and her husband Scott and grandchildren Jack, Will and Lachlan at the Convention; Sergeants-at-arms Jawahar V, Ranjan and Anjali Dhingra.





SAVE OUR SCHOOLS





Clockwise: Women in red: Spouses of Indian DGs at the Convention; PRIP William B Boyd, Lorna Boyd, Deniz Alpay and other international delegates; PRIP Rajendra K Saboo and TRF Trustee Chair Kalyan Banerjee; RI President John Germ and spouse Judy; (From left) PDGs Tamanamu Vijendra Rao, Rajya Lakshmi Vadlamani and Ravi Vadlamani at a stall in the House of Friendship.



The Great Migration

M Swaminathan



Wildebeests crossing the Mara river
on the Tanzania-Kenya border.

The Annual Wildebeest migration is one of the travel wonders of the world and is the largest animal migration on our planet. The sight of 1.5 million wildebeests and 200,000 zebras braving fearsome predators on their 800 km search for food is the African safari experience of a lifetime. They make this annual round trip from southern Serengeti in Tanzania to the northern edge

**When they reach Masai
Mara at the Tanzania-Kenya
border, they are the densest
population of game on earth.**

of the Masai Mara national reserve in Kenya. The Great Migration is probably Africa's greatest safari spectacle and the most exceptional natural wonder of the world. I was extremely lucky to be present at the right spot at the right time at the Tanzania-Kenya border Mara river bank to witness this great spectacle, on August 28, 2013 at noon time. The animals crossing the river that day were also lucky as none of them were attacked by the crocodiles and everyone crossed the river safe





and alive from Tanzania to Kenya. However they were to face the greedy predators across the land.

River crossing

Herds of these animals walk across the Serengeti's various water

bodies, mostly during August-October, with the most dramatic crossings at Mara, Grumeti and Sand rivers, bordering Kenya and Tanzania. Groups congregate to fret about steep banks of these rivers. Water

currents and predators (17-foot crocodiles) hide below the surface and in waterfront thickets. When they finally cross, it is by hundreds of thousands; with plenty landing on the chops of aggressive crocodiles.

What is a wildebeest?

It is a bovid antelope, belonging to the family of ruminants having hollow unbranched horns such as sheep and cattle. An East African folklore says the wildebeest has a thin face of a grasshopper, a lion's mane, buffalo's horns, a horse's tail and the lithe body of a hyena!

Most adult wildebeests weigh over 400 lbs, all muscle. They only live to eat, following the rains in search of their food, the short green grass. When they reach Masai Mara in August at the Tanzania-Kenya border, they are the densest population of game on earth. One could easily spot 250,000 wildebeests and zebras in one day.



Pictures by:
M Swaminathan

Rotaractors create records in blood donation

Kiran Zehra

National and international Rotaract clubs, along with Rotary clubs, collected 28,556 units of blood from 412 camps and entered the India Book of Records for the most number of blood donation camps in a week and most number of countries participating in a blood donation camp. The idea was to “raise awareness on blood donation and collect blood for people who would otherwise die due to the lack of it,” says Sahil Bhateja, Project Head, Mahadan.

With World Rotaract Week approaching during his term (2013–15) as DRR of D 3090, Bhateja had to choose between planting saplings or organising a blood donation camp. He chose the latter. “I remember reading an article about the death of a man because of shortage of blood, and thought why not get the entire Rotaract community to host a blood donation week.” He discussed his thoughts with PDG Vijay Gupta of D 3090, “who guided me throughout the event.”

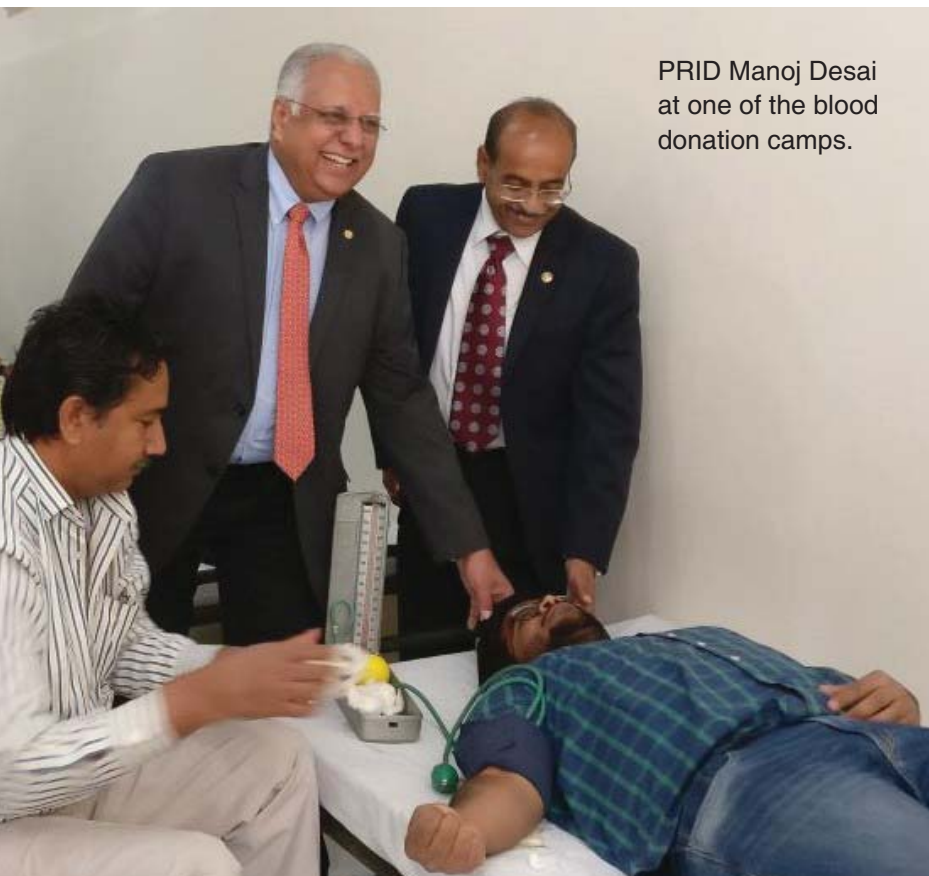
After finalising the dates and venues, local blood banks were contacted and everything seemed to flow smoothly. “Rotaractors and the incoming DRR team were positive about this initiative and RI Director Manoj Desai too encouraged our efforts,” he says.

In its first edition Mahadan collected 19,364 units of blood from 250 camps across India. “The incoming DRRs were all set for a second edition. They, along with the DGs and other Rotarians, helped in conducting 50 per cent more camps during Mahadan 2.0.”

During the course of the event issues such as shortage of resources, manpower, inaccurate reporting and time schedules did crop up, but Bhateja learnt from his mentor PDG Gupta to “take everything positively.”

In 2017 the blood donation camps were extended to 18 foreign countries and 47 RI Districts outside India collected 2,520 units of blood from 40 camps adding to the 23,524 units of blood collected in India from 325 camps and 2,512 units from the general public across 47 camps.

“Since the blood donation policies were different in other nations, we had to ensure everything fell in place before the Rotaract Week. Many Rotarians helped us with the process.” Bhateja is particularly happy that the cause was appreciated by PRIP Rajendra Saboo as a “remarkable work” and is all set for Mahadan 3.0. ■



PRID Manoj Desai at one of the blood donation camps.

Meet your **Governors**

Jaishree

Public image is his priority

Bagh Singh Pannu

Realtor

RC Patiala Central, D 3090



Rotary, for me, is the world's best organisation for brotherhood and social service," says DG Bagh Singh Pannu, who has been a Rotarian since 1999. He is passionate about spreading Rotary's good work and attracting more people to the organisation. "Our new theme — *Rotary: Making a Difference* — is fluttering high up on the Norbu Peak at a height of 17,106 ft. My 16-year-old son Kanwer Udey Singh Pannu hoisted the Rotary flag over there recently when he went on his maiden expedition," says the proud father.

Pannu is planning to recognise 20 Rotary clubs that have their own Rotary halls. "I am installing Paul Harris busts in these buildings to enhance Rotary's public image."

Promoting organ donation is another priority and he is a registered donor too. He has set a target of raising \$150,000 for TRF. "It's a big jump, considering past records where we have contributed an average of \$30,000–40,000." He will urge Rotarians to contribute a significant sum while installing the Paul Harris bust.

In membership, he will "focus on retention rather than extension," and aims at a 20 per cent increase. "While our *puranas* glorify women as Maa Saraswati, Lakshmi and Sakthi, it is high time we understand women-power and their role in building societies," says the DG, keen on inducting more women members.

Greening the earth

Taking cue from RI President Ian Riseley's call to green the planet, he plans to plant one lakh saplings and seed balls across the district, and has directed his team to involve friends and families, Rotaractors and Interactors in this drive.

Chengappa, Suresh to friends, says that he was never a keen businessman, and was active in working towards the betterment of his 'kodava' community, prior to joining Rotary in 1995. "My wife is my greatest supporter in all my social endeavours," he says.

He is all geared up to provide solar lamps to 1,700 households. "These are in a remote village where government electrification has not reached."

He wants each of his members to contribute a minimum \$26.5 to TRF and through an exclusive corporate dinner, he is hopeful of striking partnerships with corporates to tap their CSR funds for projects.

On membership growth, Chengappa wants his presidents "to conduct club meetings effectively, as directed by Director C Basker. I've requested them to highlight Rotary's humanitarian projects to their friends and relatives and woo them to be a part of the organisation." He proposes to add 15 new clubs to the existing 72 in his District.

Referring to an artificial limb camp that he had organised as club president, he says he was deeply moved when one of the beneficiaries, a tailor who had lost his legs in an accident, came up and thanked him with tears in his eyes, saying "I never dreamt I can walk again, but thanks to these pairs of Jaipur feet, not only can I walk, I can pursue my vocation too." Such is the magic of Rotary, gushes the DG reverently.

M M Chengappa

Packaged-food manufacturer
RC Madikeri, D 3181



His focus is community-based projects

The DG has his plans for the year all set — a 25 per cent membership growth with 95 per cent retention, and TRF contribution of \$500,000 including 10 Endowment donors.

"Although ours is a 90 per cent rural region, I am happy to say that 80 per cent of our Rotarians are actively engaged in providing need-based projects for the community," says Ramesh Babu, citing activities such as desilting canals and ponds to improve groundwater and help agriculture. "All my presidents are dynamic, ready to learn and set to serve. I was amazed to see a 100 per cent attendance throughout the PETS and SETS," adds this district leader of 111 clubs and 4,304 Rotarians.

On membership, he plans to install an all-women's club in Chidambaram and is all praise for RC Kumbakonam Shakthi, an all-women's club in Kumbakonam that is "doing great work." He also highlights the recently formed RC Kumbakonam Kings — "a young, vibrant club" — whose members are the offspring of Rotarians of RC Kumbakonam Temple City.

Presently, Babu is keen on processing a global grant with a Japanese club to improve a school in Nagapattinam, a tsunami-affected town. Another priority is to root out the wild, invasive *seemai karuvelam* plants that suck ground water. NEET coaching for school children, and sanitation and e-learning facilities in schools are on his agenda too.

"I have a limited DDF — just \$46,000. I am working with corporates and global grants to realise my ambitious plans," says the governor who has been a Rotarian since 1997.

P S Ramesh Babu

Transporter
RC Kumbakonam East
D 2981



Women must prefer Rotary to Inner Wheel

Serving as a Governor is a lifetime opportunity and I thank my team for it," he says. Abraham began his Rotary journey in 1997 as a Rotarian. His club's mobile limb centre which he kickstarted, eight years ago, as president is close to his heart. "It has given mobility to thousands of people across the States, especially in rural areas," he says. The district spans two States — Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

He is confident of raising \$1.2 million for TRF and a net growth of 750 members with focus on the newgen. He is also working at introducing at least 20 women Rotarians, which he says, are barely 10 per cent now. "I have insisted the Rotarians to bring their spouses for club meetings. Let them understand the magic of Rotary. In my opinion, Rotary women membership is greatly affected by the Inner Wheel. Most women prefer to join an Inner Wheel club rather than a Rotary club."

There is no "signature" project for his district. He wants the clubs to concentrate on the needs of their localities. "Fulfilling those needs is an excellent PR exercise." Water, sanitation and healthcare, however, seem to be the predominant needs of the region. Abraham is therefore focusing on implementing global grant projects to equip schools with toilet blocks and reverse osmosis plants. He has also directed clubs to organise health camps in schools and rural areas.

"I want my clubs to be vibrant and revive the old charm that was there a couple of decades ago," he says.

J Abraham

Educationist

RC Kothagudem, D 3150



Ranjeet Singh

Air-conditioning business
RC Lucknow Rajdhani

D 3120

Blood bank is his dream

A huge Rotary hoarding on the Faizabad-Lucknow highway that welcomed visitors into his city, got him interested in Rotary and he became a Rotarian in 1997. Ranjeet Singh is keen on establishing a blood bank in his district. "In 2004, when I went to see a Rotarian who had met with a road accident, I donated blood, for the first time in my life, and that saved his child. I consider that my Rotary moment and the blood bank has been my dream ever since."

He is planning to distribute 100 freezer boxes across the district through his clubs at a cost of \$109,000. "This is a very thoughtful project, particularly in this age, when many people are settled abroad. The freezer boxes will help preserve the mortal remains of the dead until their loved ones arrive to give a fond send-off," he says. Adult education is another of his focus area.

Singh has set a target of \$350,000 to TRF and he proposes to collect \$100 from each of his 2,980 members. He has given a piggy bank to each member which will be opened at his District conference on November 2.

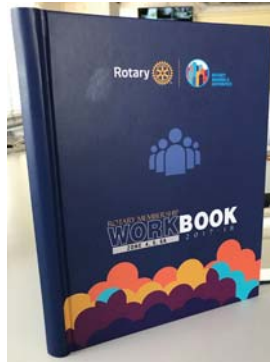
On membership growth, he says he is "very lucky. I have inducted 152 members during my visit to 13 clubs so far." He aims to introduce 750 new members and is targeting the spouses of Rotarians. "I have already enrolled 25 spouses as Rotarians, 18 of whom are under-40." He wants to improve the district's enrolment to Club Central and has hired an IT professional who will visit each club and enroll members online. ■

Membership handbook for club leaders

Roopa Mathur

Rotary's influence on the world is directly proportionate to the number of communities that are exposed to its ideal. Hence, it is imperative that we not only find new clubs but also strengthen existing ones. The *Rotary Membership Workbook 2017–18*, authored by Rotary Coordinators Ashok Gupta (Zones 4 & 6A) and H Rajendra Rai (Zone 5), and edited by ARC Ajay Kala (Zone 4 & 6A), is a significant tool for membership growth for club and district leadership.

The Annual Performance Review chapter provides assessment criteria for Districts and clubs on membership aspects such as retention, growth, women membership and registration with Rotary Club Central. The 'Rotary Basics' and other relevant information will acquaint new members to the Rotary world. The section on



membership process — proposing, introducing and induction of new members — is a valuable tool for club presidents. The book also expands on guidelines as to developing vision for the club, creating diverse membership, engaging existing members and communicating with clubs, Rotary fellowship and Rotary Action Groups. Other topics include an insight into vital retention issues, membership best practices, CoL decisions on

flexibility in membership, Citation and Rotary Global Rewards.

Alumni Relationship, Strategic Plan and details about the club invoice also find place in the book. Proformas of the mandatory quarterly club reports to be submitted to the DG/DMC, membership oath, club committee structure, and sitting layout in meetings will all be good reference material for club presidents. The authors have also included contact details of the Rotary coordinators, DGs and membership chairs of all districts.

The book represents the mission of Rotary leadership to strengthen clubs for a stronger and more vibrant Rotary.

The writer is President Elect of RC Jaipur Gurukul, D 3054.

Happy School enthuses students

V Muthukumaran

A complete makeover of a Government Middle School at Barnala village, near Mansa, the district headquarters of Punjab, has spread cheer among the villagers. This project of RC Mansa Royal, D 3090, was inaugurated by the then DG Sanjay Gupta. "Apart from classroom amenities like benches and blackboards, we have installed a drinking water facility. Separate toilet blocks for boys and girls and handwash stations were already present," said PDG Prem Aggarwal.

The School Principal Balbir Singh, who is also a Rotarian, is one of the chief architects of the image makeover. "We mobilised around Rs 2 lakh from our club. While the water cooler cost Rs 60,000, the balance was spent on other structural changes like whitewash, adding a library with books and uniforms for the students,"



said Aggarwal. An exclusive staff room for teachers and a headmaster's cabin has enthused the teaching fraternity who were bereft of this luxury before. "The change in the student's attitude is quite visible as they now have a school to be proud of," said Gupta. ■

Costa Rica

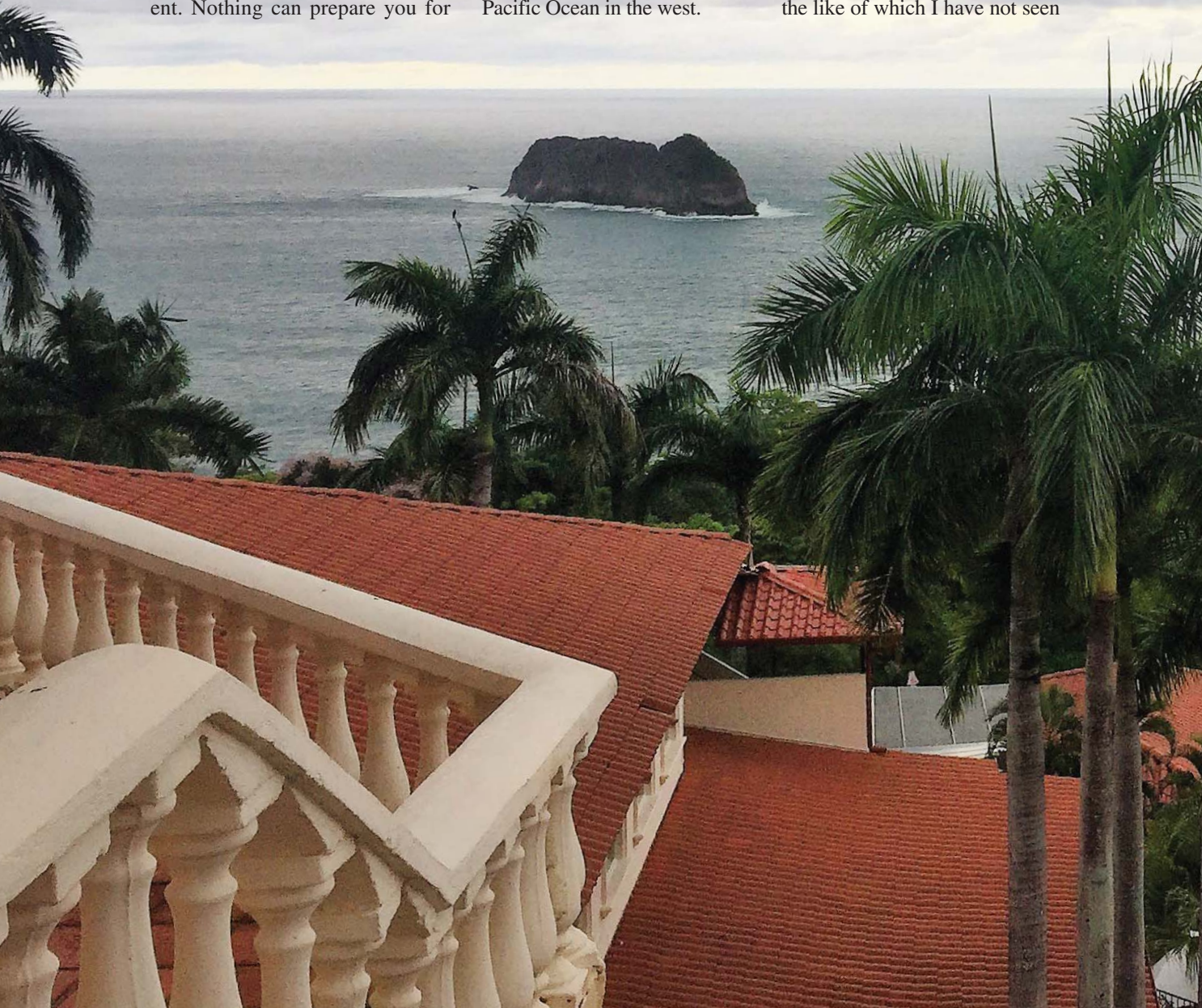
a tropical paradise

Pervez Bhagat

Reading about Costa Rica in either a travelogue or the *Lonely Planet* is one thing. Going there and experiencing this enchantingly beautiful country is totally different. Nothing can prepare you for

the incomparable lushness of this tiny Central American country, barely 51,000 sq km, situated between Nicaragua in the north, Panama in the south, the Caribbean Sea in the east and the Pacific Ocean in the west.

As you travel anywhere from San Jose, the capital, where we land, you find yourself surrounded by mountains all around you, and huge stretches of land totally covered by lush green tropical forest, the like of which I have not seen







A beach strip at the Manuel Antonio National Park.

is home to the sprawling Manuel Antonio National Park. The drive takes about three hours; our driver is absolutely courteous, friendly and helpful and the van has free Wi-Fi. Not surprisingly, the Wi-Fi password is *pura vida*, Spanish for ‘pure life’, a sign that we see on many hoardings across the country. The road to the National Park is steep and narrow, bounded by heavily forested hills on one side and lovely strips of beach on the other side, which unravel as you walk through the park.

There are several trails inside the reserve and we see plenty of iguanas, white faced capuchins (monkeys) and occasionally the mantled howler monkeys prancing around the tree branches. And what must provide a big relief to the locals as well as the tourists are the monkey bridges built overhead which allow the monkeys to cross the roads without coming down.

anywhere. During our week-long stay, it became amply evident why the country was so green; at our first stop Manuel Antonio, there was torrential rainfall every afternoon, without fail, and uninterrupted for at least a few hours.

We head straight from the airport by a private van to Manuel Antonio, which is located on the Pacific Ocean and



The boat ride from Jaco to Montezuma.



An aerial view of Costa Rica from a flight to San Jose.

Below: A one man army at the tiny Tambor airport for flight to San Jose.

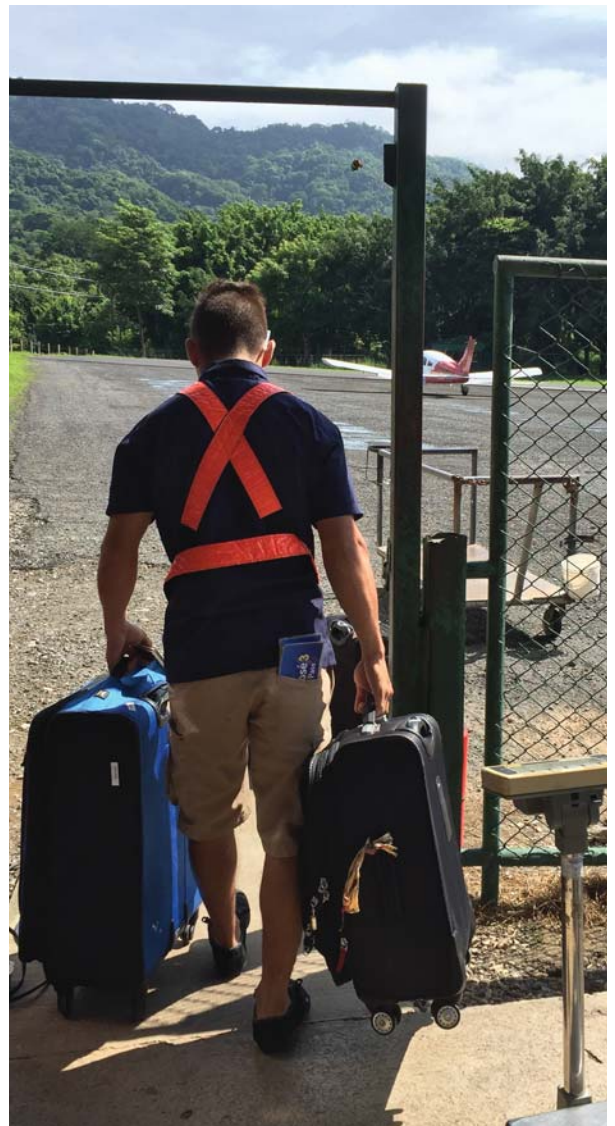
Nestling higher up in the trees are many sloths, who, we are told by the guide, come down to the ground only once in three to four days, sleeping the rest of the time. For bird lovers, this reserve is a paradise and you can sight trogons, humming birds, pelicans and kingfishers easily as they are almost everywhere. You just have to look!

The national park, which is packed with tourists, most of them from the US, Latin American countries and Europe — we do not spot any Indians anywhere — has three gorgeous beaches; Playa Espadilla, Playa Manuel Antonio and Playa Puerto Escondido. ‘Playa’ is Spanish for ‘beach’.

The cool waters of the sea are a fitting reward for the long walk through the winding paths of the forest on a hot and humid day, and most of the tourists, make a beeline for the sea sooner than later. In terms of facilities the park is well organised, there are showers and changing rooms for visitors but the huge popularity of this forest means you have to be patient and often wait in queues for your turn to use these facilities.

Our resort in Manuel Antonio — Parador Resort and Spa — has to be mentioned, both for its spectacular location and the comfort and uniqueness of its facilities. Located on a hill overlooking the deep blue waters of the Pacific, it offers real

The reason for the greenery is evident; torrential rain for the whole week of our stay, every afternoon.





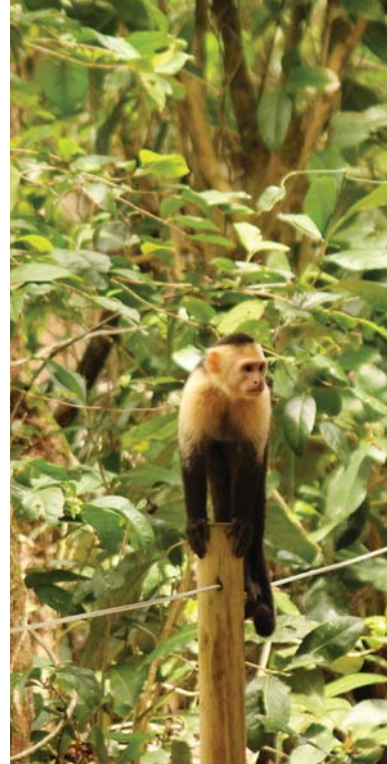
**The funicular
that takes us to
our rooms at the
Parador Hotel.**

value for money, even though it's a bit pricey at around \$200 a night. Situated in 12 acres of the rainforest, it offers you a luxurious stay; the breakfast is sumptuous, the service is good, the staff helpful, the rooms well appointed. It gives you access to a spectacular beach through a 15-minute walk down the road. Even though we missed a few heartbeats as the lady at the Reception couldn't find our reservation that had been made online, the advantage was being upgraded to premier rooms.

And access to these rooms was through a little elevator-type of funicular that went up at an angle of almost 60 degree! Leaving the room and returning to it each time was a lovely experience.

And the view from our room was to die for... a spectacular expanse of the Pacific through coconut palms dotted in the foreground... and right from your bed.

Our journey to the next destination we had chosen — the quiet little town of Santa Teresa is nothing short of exciting and spectacular. First, from Manuel Antonio we take a 60-minute cab ride to the beautiful beach town



of Jaco, from where we are transferred to a speed boat for a nerve-tingling hour-long journey over the Pacific at 60–80 km, and finally a 30-minute ride, most of it on a *kutch*a or dirt road in a van to Santa Teresa, a one street town boasting fabulous beaches for surfing.

This transfer for four people costs a modest and affordable \$170. We are picked up from our hotel on the dot and the most fascinating part of the journey is the seamless transfer from van to boat to van, with our suitcases being deftly and speedily packed into huge plastic bags before they are transferred on the boat. There is no jetty to board the boat; you have to

The Costa Ricans are friendly,
courteous helpful; *pura vida* (pure life)
seems to be the nation's motto!



Monkeys galore at the Manuel Antonio National Park.

wade in ankle or knee-deep waters of the sea, depending on the tide, to hop onto the speed boat.

At Santa Teresa we opt for an Airbnb Property, which is a very comfortable apartment in a gated community, which is ...

oh, so green, once again. It comes with a fully equipped kitchen and knowing this beforehand, we have come armed with all the Indian herbs and spices, including *garam masala*! It is fun to shop for lamb and chicken at the tiny store grandiosely labelled the “supermarket”, and lo and behold, my wife dishes out the perfect chicken biryani that

evening. The Indian palate is satisfied, and we laze for three days in this little town which is filled with surfers armed with gigantic surfing boards before returning to San Jose.

And that return is surely the stuff of dreams. We drive to a tiny airport, where there is one man... yes, literally and physically a single man... manning the entire airport. He takes our bags, transfers them on a trolley and wheels it to the runway where two tiny aircraft — a 10-seater and 12-seater — are parked. His duty includes charging the batteries of these aircraft, which are really shuttles.

A 40-minute flight takes us to San Jose for the journey back to Mexico City,

from where we have flown to Costa Rica.

Costa Rica, a nation of 40 lakh people, is a costly destination, a decent meal for four in a restaurant will set you back by a \$150, but the experience of this destination is worth every cent spent there. A rare country with no army, it has many volcanoes, several of which are active and its highest mountain peak is at 13,000 ft. Though this is a Spanish speaking country, English is spoken and understood everywhere.

There is good scope for adventure tourism. All parks have zip lines and jungle canopy tours, surfing, sea diving, rafting, etc. The tours are well organised and the Costa Ricans are one of the friendliest people I have ever met.

Indians, who hold a valid US visa, do not need a visa to travel to Costa Rica, where the local currency is the Colon (\$1 gets you 550 Colons), but you barely need to change your money, as the US dollar is accepted everywhere. And unlike in most countries of the world, where they fleece you on the exchange rate, whether in restaurants or shops; you get a fair exchange rate for the greenback.

Pictures by Pervez Bhagat
Designed by Krishnapratheesh



Textile
trail





Naturally Ajrakh

Sabita Radhakrishna

Think moonless, think midnight, think darkness or a star spangled sky, against a stark blue-black background... this is what *ajrakh* is likened to, with the word in Arabic meaning blue.

It is the synergy between handloom textiles and vegetable dyes which creates this magic. The introduction of chemical dyes led to the decline of natural dyes towards the end of the 19th century. *Ajrakh* printing, one of the oldest techniques of resist printing in India, uses natural dyes and is one of the most complex and sophisticated methods of printing. It is also said that it could have come from “*aaj rakh*” (keep it for the day). The longer the wait between each process, the finer the result.

Legend has it that the *ajrakh* printers were originally Kshatriya

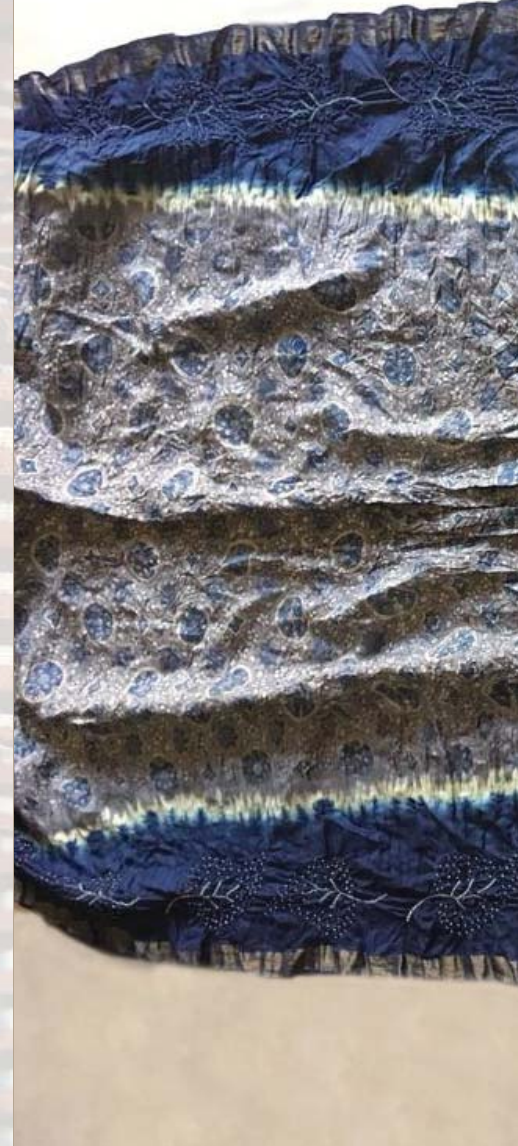
Brahmins and descendants of Rama's sons, Luv and Kush. The king of Kutch brought them, along with dyers, printers, potters and embroiderers, to his land which was barren and uninhabited. The dyers were Khatri Brahmins. Two generations later they embraced Islam and settled in Dhamadka. This place was devastated by severe earthquakes twice and the artisans shifted to Ajrakpur, 12 km from Bhuj. The *ajrakh* craftsmen claim that their art harks back to early medieval times. Scraps of printed fragments which were believed to originate from Western India were unearthed at Fostat near Cairo.

The finest designs were printed in Sindh which is now in Pakistan but traditions are maintained in Khavda (Kutch) and Dhamadka and Barmer in Rajasthan where few Khatri families





A combination of tie and dye and *ajrakh* print on a saree designed by a Khatri family.



are engaged in *ajrakh* printing. With almost 200 traditional geometric and floral designs, they plan to bring out a design directory.

Ajrakh printed cotton is traditionally worn by the pastoral Maldhari community. Apart from *pagdis* and *lungis*, women wear printed skirts, and use *ajrakh* printed material as bed covers to line cradles. Every colour tells a story and the





design proclaims the status. The Khatriis have developed a contemporary market for *ajrakh* yardage and the print is used in kurtas, skirts, furnishings, scarves and more.

The process

A remarkable feature of *ajrakh* printing is that on a single fabric, using the same design, 'resist printing' is combined with other

The *ajrakh* makers believe that the printed fabric has warm and cool colours which steady the body temperature. Blue is cooling and red is warm.

printing and dyeing techniques. The whole process is repeated on both sides of the fabric in perfect cohesion, which calls for unsurpassed skill. *Ajrakh* uses mud-resist in the various stages and another unique feature is that the dyeing and printing is repeated twice on the fabric to ensure brilliance of colour. Superimposing the repeats is done so perfectly that the clarity is sharpened.



With almost 200 traditional geometric and floral designs, the Khatri families plan to bring out a design directory.

The second line of printing, which is *kat* printing, gives a black colour using a solution of ferrous sulphate and ground seeds. When it is dyed in alizarin (synthetic madder), it turns black. After the third printing with a resist made of natural elements, the fabric is dyed in indigo. It is then washed and dyed in alizarin which produces the red colour in areas that were covered initially by resist. The second dyeing is in indigo to produce another shade of blue. After this the final wash consists of successive washing in soda ash, detergent water and then in running water which results in a luminous and beautiful product.

Today, the process has been scaled down with shortcut methods resulting in the intricacies of lines being sacrificed. Inclusion of chemical dyes diffuse the quality of the colours, and scarcity of water has also interfered with the production. The natural products used now include gums, oil, clay lime, *sakun* seeds and molasses.

The late Khatri Mohammed Siddique was instrumental in keeping the magic of *ajrakh* alive, and he passed on the tradition to his three sons, Ismail, Razzaq and Jabba. After the 2001 earthquake devastated Bhuj, the State government and other NGOs have extended significant support to the artisans so that the craft does not fade into oblivion. Today, it has a huge demand and even enjoys an international market.

Pictures by Sabita Radhakrishna

Designed by N Krishnamurthy

An *ajrakh* fabric can be identified by its red or blue background. Other vegetable dyes like yellow and green are also introduced. Traditionally, four colours — red (alizarin), blue (indigo), black (iron acetate) and white (resist) are used. The *ajrakh* makers believe that the printed fabric has warm and cool colours which steady the body temperature. Blue is cooling and red is warm.

The printing blocks have to be finely chiselled by experts in the field. A set of three blocks create a dovetailing effect which finally results in the

design. A white cotton cloth is placed in a copper container with water and soda ash. It is then softened by steaming and washed in running water, preferably in a river. Soap is applied to it after spreading it over a large cauldron of water. The cloth is then dipped in a mixture of oils, squeezed out and kept overnight. The fabric is washed the next day and soaked in a mixture of powdered *sakun* seeds and oil and dried again, after which it acquires a dull beige colour. Specially designed blocks are used to print the fabric in gum using an outline block.

Dialysis made affordable

V Muthukumaran



Tanker Foundation Founder Trustee Dr Georgi Abraham interacts with a patient while Fairfax Holdings Chairman Prem Watsa, IPDG Natarajan Nagoji and Tanker Foundation Trustee Latha Kumaraswamy look on.

Low-cost, quality dialysis will be one more reason for Thiruverkadu Medical Centre, on the suburbs of Chennai, to be sought after by the poor, as RC Madras West, D 3232, opened its 12-bed dialysis unit on the premises.

The Rs 8.5 lakh worth project was set up through a global grant from RC Colombo West, D 3220, and TRF. Tanker Foundation and Fairfax Financial Holdings also partnered in the initiative. “Past RI President William Robbins (1974-75) had earlier inaugurated a maternity centre here. The medical centre caters to 21 villages in Tiruvallur district,” said its Chairman G Panchanathan. Each dialysis cycle costs Rs 375, benefitting nearly 800 patients every month.

Over 200 women are receiving vocational training in skills such as tailoring, jewellery-designing and computers at the facility. “Every 10th person is affected by a kidney ailment and the need for dialysis is huge,” said IPDG Natarajan Nagoji, thanking the donors. The club had initially planned to install just four dialysis machines due to resource constraint; “but fortunately, we received sufficient funds to even raise the floor level of the centre to prevent flooding during the monsoons,” said Club President Sashi Menon. Fairfax Chairman Prem Watsa recalled how PM Narendra Modi had earlier urged him to set up at least 1,000 dialysis units as part of their CSR activities. “Madhavan Menon (Country-head, Thomas Cook) and Dr Georgi Abraham (Founder-trustee, Tanker Foundation) also associated themselves with us in the initiative,” he said. ■

Convention

Games people play



When it comes to sports, Toronto, home of the 2018 Rotary International Convention from June 23 to 27, has something for everyone. In Maple Leaf Square, you’ll find the beating heart of “Leafs Nation,” millions of hockey fans who support the NHL’s Toronto Maple Leafs.

During playoff games, thousands of people jam into the square in front of the Air Canada Centre, the Leafs’ home arena, to follow the action on a giant screen while waving white “rally towels.”

On other spring nights, the square is packed with people clad in red and black holding signs that say, “We the North.” These are fans of the NBA’s Toronto Raptors, who also play at the ACC. When they’re in the house, the square is known as Jurassic Park.

If you want to catch a big-ticket sports event during the convention, your best bet is the Toronto Blue Jays, who play the New York Yankees on June 27. You’ll find the Blue Jays’ home, the Rogers Centre, next to the CN Tower.

If you’re a football fan, you may want to return in the fall to watch the Canadian Football League’s Toronto Argonauts. Their stadium, BMO Field, is also home to Toronto FC, a soccer team that has a small but devoted fan base. They’re playing against the New England Revolution on June 23, the opening night of the convention.

— Randi Druzin

**Register for the 2018 Rotary Convention
in Toronto at riconvention.org.**



Now Global Grants for Low-cost Shelters & Simple Schools

Low-cost Shelters

Programme Requirements

1. Low-cost shelters are to be built as part of a comprehensive project that fits with one of Rotary's six areas of focus, with sustainable elements and training in the chosen focus area to ensure that the project meets its goals and the shelters do not deteriorate into a state of disrepair.
2. All low-cost shelters must include toilets, sinks, electricity and potable water. Residents must be trained in hygiene and sanitation and home maintenance to help in the collective upkeep of elements like water wells, latrine blocks and roofs. Training must be provided by experienced professionals in the local language and supplemented by illustrated handouts, also in the local language. Toilets and water supply may be commonly located for a batch of four to six shelters in a separate facility close to the homes. Adequate common toilet/wash facilities may be provided where individual toilets etc at homes are not feasible for some reasons.
3. All global grant applications for low-cost shelters must be accompanied by a completed application appendix.
4. A committee of the shelter residents must be formed to work with Rotarians to establish sustainable practices for housing maintenance, water access, sanitation, security and waste management. For each of these items, Rotarian project partners and the village committee should agree on a long-term maintenance plan and training sessions for long-term support. Alternatively, the village committee can form an RCC of non-Rotarians to help sustain the new housing.
5. A draft letter signed by the shelter residents, preferably the women heads of households, should be included along with the applications. Members of the selection committee must be present at the time of signing the agreement to read the agreement aloud for residents who cannot read. The signed letters are required at the time of reporting, and must be written in local language and translated in an official Rotary language. It should include:

Clubs and Districts in India can now build Low-cost Shelters and Simple Schools under Global Grants. It's presently functional for three years but its popularity and functioning will determine its continuity.

So, please get going, start now. Today. Guidelines and Application appendix for availing global grant can be downloaded from the link: <https://my.rotary.org/en/global-grants-available-low-cost-shelters-and-simple-schools>.

For more information, please contact PRIP Kalyan Banerjee at banerjeekm@yahoo.com or TRF Trustee Sushil Gupta at sushil.gupta@yahoo.co.in.

- a. Family name and number of family members
- b. Size and location of the home being provided
- c. Proposed date of occupancy
- d. Confirmation that the residents agree to live in the shelter for at least five years after the first day of occupancy. Should a resident move within this time, the village committee is authorised to provide the shelter to another family of similar size. Any new residents in this initial five-year period need not pay to own the shelter or the land
- e. Confirmation that the residents have received training as agreed in the application
- f. Verification that the residents own the shelter and the land thereof
- g. Verification that the residents will be responsible for maintaining the shelter and property after occupying it
- h. Verification that the residents will be responsible for paying for all utilities, including electricity
- i. Verification that the residents are not Rotarians or lineal descendants of Rotarians
- j. Confirmation that Rotary's responsibility is limited to the amount of the grant award.

Construction Requirements

1. The global grant funds must be used to build only single-storey shelters. If residents wish to add a second storey after the project's completion, they are responsible for confirming that the shelter is structurally safe to support a second storey.
2. Duplex shelters may be built, as long as each unit is designed to house an individual family. The dividing wall must be built with fire proof materials.
3. Under a global grant project, the minimum number of shelters to be built on a single site is 10, and the maximum is 100.

4. The project sponsors should ensure that the form and type of materials for the shelters conform to local conditions and comply with local building regulations. Global grant projects allot 10 per cent of its budget for project management. Beyond this, the project sponsors can add the cost of licensed construction management to the project budget to help them ensure that contractors are coordinated, construction timeline is met and quality is maintained.
5. Materials and labour used in construction must not harm the local economy or environment. Construction materials deemed hazardous to human health (example: asbestos) cannot be used in building low-cost shelters and corresponding toilet blocks.
6. Construction of shelters must conform to reasonable local construction costs and building standards to ensure building sustainability and safety, and adhere to all applicable local building codes.
7. Demolition of existing structures on the donated land can be included in project costs as long as the costs are only a small part of a comprehensive project that provides shelters and meets the area of focus requirements.

8. Expansion or addition to an existing building are not allowed under the grant. Additions can be made to the shelter only after completion of the project, and at the owner's expense.
9. RI and TRF's financial responsibility is expressly limited to payment of the total grant award. Any additional obligation, including but not limited to, expanding, altering, or maintaining the shelter beyond the initial approved design must be undertaken at no cost to RI or TRF.

Land Procurement

The shelters are to be built on donated land whose dimensions permit easy

and safe access. The recipients need not pay for the shelter or the land. Shelters must be in a safe environment which, to the extent possible, should be free of natural disasters or accidents such as chemical contamination etc.

Payment and Reporting

1. Payments for all low-cost shelter global grants will be made in installments, based on an agreed spending plan, with the first payment released on receipt of all payment requirements, and subsequent payments will be made on completion of acceptable visits by a member of TRF's Cadre of Technical Advisers, along with the receipt of acceptable interim reports, that include photographic evidence of the project's progress.
2. A cadre member will review all global grant applications for low-cost shelters during the application review phase and during construction, before a second installment is paid.
3. Final reports to TRF shall include photos of the shelters with the beneficiaries, along with the permanent Rotary signs, which these shelters must display.

Simple Schools

Programme Requirements

1. Simple schools are an extremely limited project type that permits construction of modest school buildings (eg. one to four classrooms with two to three extra rooms for the principal, teachers office plus suitable toilets for boys and girls).
2. Simple schools must be built as part of a comprehensive project that fits with the basic education and literacy area of focus. Providing a school building alone cannot educate children; in order to enhance educational outcomes, teachers should be trained either as per local or government rules. For private simple school, pedagogical teacher training should be provided.

3. Only primary and secondary schools, and early-childhood education centres that follow a mandated government curriculum are eligible for construction. Construction of buildings for colleges, universities, vocational training centres or additions to existing schools, such as computer labs or dormitories, are not eligible for global grant funding.
4. All simple school projects must include gender-specific toilets identified with signs, hand-washing stations, electricity and drinkable water on each property. School administrators and teachers must receive training in hygiene and sanitation and menstrual hygiene management (for primary and secondary schools) for teachers to provide additional training to students after the project is complete. Simple schools must also provide bins in the girls' toilet areas for disposal of sanitary napkins.
5. School maintenance personnel must receive training in the upkeep of construction elements like computers, electric connections, water wells, latrine blocks, roofs etc. If the school does not have maintenance staff, sponsors must identify personnel to handle these matters and provide suitable training.
6. All global grant applications for simple schools must include a completed application appendix.
7. A school management committee (SMC) comprising teachers, students, school administrators and parents must be formed to work with Rotarians to set sustainable practices for school maintenance, governance, water access, sanitation, waste management and training. Members of the SMC who will work with the school budgeting must receive financial management training. When possible, the committee is encouraged to work with local officials in the government's education office to create sustainable practices or follow requisite government instructions.
8. Under the Rotary Foundation Code of Policies, grants may not be used to promote political or religious viewpoints. Therefore, religious schools are ineligible for global grants.
9. The project's sponsors should conduct community assessment to identify the community that will receive a school.
10. As part of the application, project sponsors must complete an MoU between Rotarian project sponsors and either the government's education office or the responsible entity for private schools. The statement must include:
 - a. Name of school
 - b. Number of students and teachers anticipated
 - c. Education levels or grades of school
 - d. Size of school
 - e. Agreement to form an SMC
 - f. Verification that all stakeholders agree to be involved in planning and implementation throughout the project's lifecycle
 - g. Verification that the government's education office or the owning entity, in the case of a private school, agrees that it will not sell or lease the school or conduct other business in the school within the first five years of occupancy
 - h. Confirmation that the teachers, students and maintenance staff will complete the training agreed upon in the application
 - i. Verification that the teachers are trained and certified by the government's education office
 - j. Guarantee that the government or owning entity of the private school will be responsible for maintaining the school and property
- k. Verification that either the government's education office or the owning entity, in the case of a private school, will be responsible for paying for all utilities
- l. Acknowledgment that teachers must be hired and certified before the project can be closed
- m. Verification that tuition will not be charged for public schools and that tuition costs for private schools will be reasonable and affordable
- n. Verification that those benefiting from the school are neither Rotarians nor their lineal descendants
- o. Confirmation that Rotary's responsibility is limited to the amount of the grant award.

Construction Requirements

1. The global grant funds must be used to build only single-storey schools. If the SMC, the government's education office, or the owning entity of a private school is interested in adding a second storey after the project is completed, it is responsible for confirming that the school can safely support a second storey.
2. Simple schools built as part of a global grant must meet local government access requirements for children and adults with physical disabilities. Requirements may include ramps, wide doorways and hallways and toilet accessibility. If the local government lacks accessibility requirements, the school must at least make these accommodations. Toilets must have water available at all times and necessary storage tanks which receives water supply from municipality/government or through working pump system. Necessary waste disposal system shall be installed and be functional. Toilets should have electricity connection.
3. The project sponsors are responsible for confirming that the form and materials for the school conform to local conditions and

comply with local building regulations. Global grant projects allot 10 per cent of the project's budget for project management. Beyond this allotment, the project sponsors can add the cost of licensed construction management to the project budget to help them ensure that contractors are coordinated, that the construction timeline is met, and that quality construction is maintained.

4. Materials and labour used in construction must not harm the local economy or environment. Construction materials deemed hazardous to human health cannot be used in building schools and corresponding toilet blocks.
5. Simple schools must adhere to local regulations for teacher-to-student ratios established by the government's education office, and the room size should be designed to accommodate this ratio.
6. Construction of simple schools must conform to reasonable local construction costs and building standards to ensure building sustainability and safety. Construction also must adhere to all applicable local building codes.
7. Demolition of existing structures on the donated land can be included in project costs as long as the costs are a small part of a comprehensive project that provides a simple school and meets the requirements of Rotary's basic education and literacy area of focus.
8. Expansion or additions to existing building are not allowed under a global grant. Additions can be made only after completion of the project, and at the owner's expense.
9. Additional school buildings can be built on the property of an existing school if the new school buildings

are not next to other structures and the construction does not interfere with the health, safety and productivity of students currently on the property. Such a building constructed on the property of an existing one must meet all water, sanitation and training requirements. Additional buildings must be used as classrooms.

10. Contractors or construction managers must meet local regulations in acquiring necessary building permits. When local regulations do not require contractors/construction managers to acquire such permits, the Rotarian host project committee must acquire them.
11. The entire financial responsibility of RI and TRF is expressly limited to payment of the total grant award. Any additional obligation, including but not limited to, expanding, altering, or maintaining the school beyond the initial approved design must be undertaken at no cost to RI or TRF.

Land Procurement

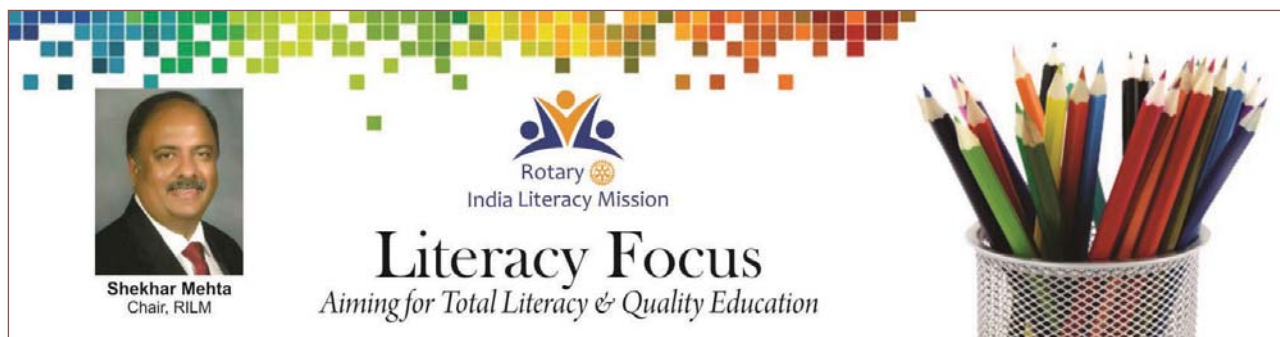
1. Schools are to be built or installed on donated land whose dimensions permit easy and safe access. Parents and community members must not be required to pay for the school or the land on which the school is built.
2. Donated land intended for simple school construction must be within short walking distance from the beneficiary community or accessible via public transport.
3. Simple schools must provide safe environment for children, if possible, free of threat from natural disasters or accidents such as chemical contamination etc. Teachers must be trained to move children to safety in case of an emergency.
4. The municipal government, government education office and

land donor must provide written commitments expressing full support of the grant and permitting the project to start as soon as grant funds become available. The written confirmation must indicate that the land is without any legal encumbrances or disputes, is zoned for school construction and is suitable for the purposes of the global grant.

5. Water quality tests are to be completed as part of the land procurement process, to ensure that school administrators, teachers and students have access to potable water. If the goal is to connect the school to municipal water or an electrical grid, project sponsors should complete an MoU with municipal service providers, stating that the utilities plan to serve the area at a reasonable price.

Payment and Reporting

1. Payments for simple school global grants will be made in installments, based on an agreed spending plan, with the first payment released on receipt of all payment requirements and subsequent payments made upon the completion of acceptable visits by a member of TRF's Cadre of Technical Advisers, along with the receipt of acceptable interim reports that include photographic evidence of the project's progress.
2. A cadre member will review all global grant applications for simple schools during the application phase and during construction, before a second installment is paid.
3. As standard construction practice, Rotarian project sponsors are advised to withhold 10 per cent of the final payment to contractors until the sponsors do a final walk-through of the completed school.
4. Final reports to TRF must include photos of beneficiaries and the school with permanent Rotary signs, which are to be prominently displayed in the school. ■



PRIP Kalyan Banerjee and The Loomba Foundation President Cherie Blair after signing the MoU. Also in the picture: The Loomba Foundation Director Lord Raj Loomba (second from right) and RILM Advisor Nayen Patel (extreme left).

Skilling widows

Rotary India Literacy Mission has joined hands with The Loomba Foundation to provide necessary literacy and livelihood skills to 30,000 widows in India to enable them to live a life of dignity, and also send 2,000 of their children, who have dropped out of school, back to school.

This project will primarily be executed through global grants of The Rotary Foundation. The Chief Advisor of RILM and the Trustee Chair of The Rotary Foundation Kalyan Banerjee signed the agreement with The Loomba Foundation at London on June 23. This project is the beginning of a beautiful journey that will help the widows re-write their own future.

The first phase of the project will be executed in the States of Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. Rotary Districts/ Clubs from these States will apply for a global grant to implement it and work with the skill training partners to identify the beneficiaries. Post training all beneficiaries will either be provided with a job opportunity or supported to start their own small-scale business.

100 Happy Schools by Bangalore Rotary

RC Bangalore, D 3190, celebrated the 100th year of The Rotary Foundation by creating 100 Happy Schools. Their priority was to build a 'better world, one student

at a time' focussing on skills and continuous improvement in the education sector. Government schools in the vicinity of Bengaluru were identified and given a fresh makeover to attract more children from underdeveloped areas to get better educational opportunity. The project was officially inaugurated at MAF Rotary Government Primary school at Harokethanahalli on November 27, 2016.

"Creating Happy Schools is indeed a panacea to the rural literacy scenario. The malady of dropouts is as concerning as not enrolling in the schooling system," says the Club President Ranga Rao, adding "since Karnataka has one of the highest number of children enrolled in schools, a lot

of work needs to be done.” The club spent an average Rs 4 lakh per school and impacted over one lakh people. The club maintains a strong Corporate-Rotary partnership. Nearly 70 per cent of the total funds was raised internally through the generosity of the members and balance 30 per cent came from corporates, friends and well-wishers of the community. In the second stage, the club plans to train teachers to stay motivated and energise children. The third stage would be to create model schools.

Happy at ‘Rotary Happy School’

Rotary Club of Panaji Riviera, D 3170, transformed a government primary and middle school in Valpoi, Panaji into a ‘Rotary Happy School.’ It was inaugurated by the State Health Minister Vishwajit Rane and DG Vinaykumar Pai Raikar.



A Happy School by RC Panaji Riviera.

The club provided desks and benches, hand-washing station, writing boards, water purifier and gender-specific toilet blocks, painted

the entire school and repaired the electrical fittings. The club also provided two e-learning projectors through DDF at Agarwada and Chandel. ■

Download the T-E-A-C-H App
and with oneclick  view your Asha Kiran... Child

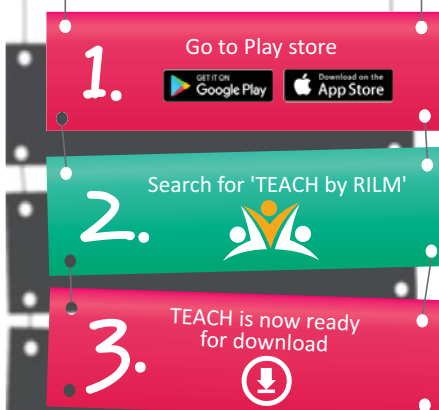
Each of the approximately 32,000 Donors has been tagged for long now



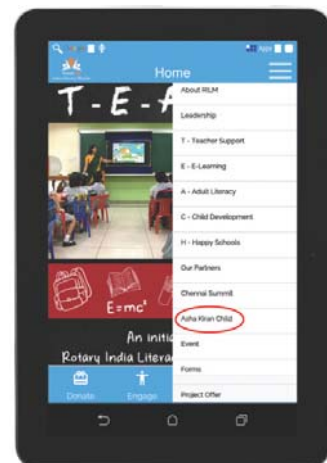
More than **32,000 children** are enrolled in the *Asha Kiran* centre for the bridge course. These children are in process to get back to school. Each of them are tagged with **32,000 donors**. You can now view your sponsored child with just 'ONE CLICK'.

Have you seen you sponsored child yet? If not then then download the **T-E-A-C-H App** today and reach your sponsored child with just 'ONE CLICK'

Simple Steps to download the T-E-A-C-H App



In the TEACH app menu go to 'My Asha Kiran' and just with ONE CLICK on it, you will be able to view you Sponsored child and you will also be able to view his/her detailed report.



Did you know?

1. 32,000 children are enrolled in the program
2. Of these more than 10,000 children have been mainstreamed in Government schools
3. You can view the child you have sponsored with just ONE click !



RC Thanjavur Cauvery — D 2981

The Rotarians provided dustbins and put up banners at the Annai Sathya Stadium in Thanjavur. The dustbins and banners were placed at strategic spots to ensure cleanliness at the stadium.

RC Delhi South Metropolitan — D 3011

The club, in association with Singer India, is running a Rotary-Singer Centre at Kusumpur Pahari for the past 25 years to provide training in tailoring for underprivileged women. It has trained over 300 women so far, and 60 more are undergoing training at this centre.



RC Vuyyuru — D 3020

The club installed a water cooler costing Rs 10,000 at Vuyyuru Library. It was part of the club's efforts to provide clean, safe drinking water in local places for the benefit of people on-the-go in the region.

RC Indore Malvika — D 3040

The Rotarians are providing clothes and healthy food for the children of daily wage earners in a colony at a nearby village. They have also constructed a toilet block to address sanitation issues and are conducting literacy programmes for the children and adults in the colony.



Matters

RC Jodhpur Sanskaar — D 3053

The club gifted special beds for mentally-challenged patients at the Guru Kripa Mansik Vimandit Ashram in Jodhpur. Rotarians Bhavana Kanunga, Priya Kothari, Kanchan Agarwal, Deepa Bohra, Priya Bhandari, Anita Nagar and Shweta Jain celebrated their birthdays with this special gesture.



RC Mahemdabad — D 3060

The Rotarians sponsored sewing machines for 21 women to help them pursue a vocation and achieve financial independence. DGN Pinky Patel handed over the machines to the beneficiaries.



RC Shimla — D 3080

The club organised a yoga programme at the Ridge Shimla for school students to mark the World Yoga Day on June 21. Children from 15 schools took part in the demonstration where the State Governor Acharya Devvrat was the chief guest.



RC Rajpura Greater — D 3090

A traffic awareness seminar was held at Patel Public School with the help of the Traffic Education Cell, Patiala. Chief guest S Balraj Singh, SP (Traffic), Patiala and PDG Vijay Gupta addressed the students on the need to follow road norms to avoid mishaps.



RC Bareilly Metro — D 3110

Twelve health camps were held at Mundia Ahmed Nagar, a village near Bareilly last year. Nearly 170 patients benefitted in each camp which screened the villagers on general health parameters with free consultation, said PP Anil Mehrotra.

RC Mumbai Ghatkopar — D 3141

The club provides braces and orthodontic treatment for crowding or spacing of teeth at the clinic of IPP Dr Amar Ravjiani and his wife Dr Swati Ravjiani, under its 'Donate a Smile' project. Children who undergo such surgery show a marked improvement in their self-confidence, said Ravjiani.



RC Gulbarga Midtown — D 3160

The club organised a dental camp for schoolchildren. They were checked for oral diseases and given advice on oral hygiene. Toothpastes and brushes were distributed to the children.



RC Panaji Riviera — D 3170

The club gave a facelift to the Government Primary and Middle School in Valpoi and provided a range of facilities, including classroom furniture, wash stations, toilet blocks, water purifiers etc. The 'Happy School' was inaugurated by the State Health Minister Vishwajit P Rane. IPDG Vinaykumar Pai Raikar was also present.



RC Kadur — 3182

The club distributed school bags, notebooks and stationery kits to students in government middle schools at the Inglaradalli and K Gollaratti villages. President K H Srinivas presided over the event.



RC Tirupur South — D 3202

As part of its 'Empowering Women' project, the club donated sewing machines to poor women to help them generate income by pursuing the vocation.



Matters



RC Siliguri Central — D 3240

The club donated 25 sets of desk and benches to a government school in Siliguri. The Rotarians have also planned to sponsor more furniture, light fittings, fans, sanitation facilities and toilet blocks for the school in the current year.



Inner Wheel Club of Patna — D 325

The members have completed a series of projects including setting up 10 Happy Schools, eight toilet blocks, seven vocational training centres and adult literacy centres in various slum localities, including the one in Beur jail.



RC Raipur — D 3261

The club has set up a drinking water-cum-hand wash station at a government school in Parsada village in Durg district. The Rotarians also provided a computer lab and employed a teacher to impart digital education for the students.



RC Cuttack Mahanadi — D 3262

A handwashing station was installed at Sitadevi Joglekar School as part of WinS project. The facility was inaugurated by DG Narayan Nayak and PDG A B Mohapatra. Over



150 students took part in the WASH programme conducted by Rotarians.

RC Belur — D 3291

The club, in association with Jagriti Club, organised a drawing competition and a quiz contest to mark Gandhi Jayanthi. Over 130 children took part in the programme held at Adarsh Hindi High School in Bhawanipur.

Compiled by V Muthukumaran
Designed by L Gunasekaran

Health comes in little things

Bharat & Shalan Savur



Do yourself a favour. Each day become a *little* healthier, *little* fitter, *little* happier and a *little* freer. “Those who are careful in little things everyday draw great strength and light from life,” says the Master. It’s the *little* things we do that allow clean healing winds to sweep through our world, keep it a cool, fresh, verdant green and prevent it from turning into a dry, airless, burning desert.

Take the pill. For example, recently, Vijay felt his heart palpitating. On checking his blood pressure, he

found that it had shot up to 203/110. He immediately got into a hospital. Strong medication brought his BP down to 150/90. Being contemplative by nature, he reflected on what could have caused this upset. Everything was going well in his life. There were no issues, nothing to be worried about.

Then it hit him. He’d had a complete check-up just three weeks ago. All his valuations and parameters were perfect, the doctor assured. Vijay felt good too, full of all’s-well-with-the-world feeling. He was so buoyant that he forgot to take his BP medicine regularly from then on! That was it. That one *little* everyday act of swallowing a pill would have saved him days of discomfort, worry and fear.

For strength. Annie went through a similar experience. Diagnosed with spondylitis, she was taught some exercises to strengthen the muscles of her neck, spine and shoulders. After

a month of diligent exercise, she felt her normal healthy self again — free of pain, she could move her neck without that terrible twinge. She stopped exercising and the pain re-surfaced within four days.

We forget, but life does not. The mistake lies in our thinking. At some level, we have decided that medicines and exercises enslave us. See it another way: they ensure that whatever the ailment in our body, we are not enslaved by it, we are not tied down by it, we ride it and rise above it. Exactly as Vijay and Annie had done earlier. When we take medicines and do exercises with this new awareness, we learn that medicinal and therapeutic aids are there to serve the health and life in us — *to enable and not enslave*. So, shift your thinking to: “I choose to use these tools for my well-being.”

A space called grace. To choose is to drop all resistance. To drop all resistance is to open yourself to fresh, new

Survival is history. Living is today. And living well with simple little practices is wisdom.



possibilities. Like Bharat who limped into the doctor's clinic and said, "Doctor, my knee hurts so much; I can hardly walk." The doctor said, "How old are you?" And Bharat said proudly, "98!" The doctor sighed and said, "Sir, I'm sorry. I mean, look at you. You're practically a hundred years old and you're complaining your knee hurts? What did you expect?" And Bharat said, "Well, my other knee is 98 years old too, and it doesn't hurt." Like Bharat, when you carry no resistance in you, you place yourself in grace — a space of healing possibilities.

It is about thinking and doing the right little things regularly so that you never sink into illness via anger, resentment, jealousy, self-pity, depression, beliefs and lifestyle factors.

Most of us erroneously believe that life is about survival. The fact is: we have already survived the day we were born and took our first breath. Survival is history. Living is today. And living

well with simple little practices is wisdom.

Suggestions:

- * Walk/cycle for 30 minutes; stretch for 15 minutes — experience definite positive biochemical effects that stave off depression, cancer and heart disease. Exercising is like downloading a healing app from the cosmos into your body.
- * Meditate for 25 minutes with a guided meditation CD. It gently soothes away creases in our attitude. A mental fist opens out enabling you to widen your area of acceptance. Complexities collapse and a simple awareness lights up your insides.
- * Choose anti-inflammatory foods. Inflammatory foods cause inflammation in the brain and lead to depression. A 2015 Canadian study showed that the severity of depression depended on the degree of inflammation in the brain. Avoidable foods are: the gluten in wheat, the omega-6 in cooking oils and sugar. Safe foods are: berries, tea, coffee, rice, grapes, ginger, turmeric, rosemary, chocolate, sprouts, nuts, fresh raw vegetables and fruits. Please experiment. Find out what works for your brain.
- * Sleep restfully. Think restfully. Do your work restfully. Conduct yourself and your relationships in restful harmony. For harmony to pervade you, you need to be in a deep state of acceptance. The world of acceptance is full of light, vigour and wisdom. Forgoing self-assertion brings wholeness, energy and fullness to life. Acceptance has no boundaries — like the vast endless sky, it covers all space. When I see laughter in a child and a child in the laughter, when I see you in me and me in you, my thoughts, emotions and energies flow as one. There are no divisions. This is deep acceptance. It happens when I lay down my

Inflammatory foods cause inflammation in the brain and lead to depression.

demanding little self without any sense of loss or accompanying fear in any situation. That is why there is so much ease, so much beauty and light, such pure harmony and perfect health in complete acceptance.

- * Let only happy, healing, soothing thoughts hum inside you everyday, all day. Don't allow "I'm stressed," or "I'm unwell" to cross your mind or be expressed by your tongue. Words like 'stress' can become self-fulfilling, says Seth Swirsky, a clinical psychotherapist. "It can set off a cascade of chemicals — epinephrine and cortisol — in the body and neurotransmitters in the brain that make us feel completely stressed out. Our hearts beat faster, our breathing becomes more rapid, our blood pressure rises, we can't think straight and are filled with fear and anxiety." In short, be mindful how you think and talk. Square your shoulders, straighten your back and bless yourself with, "I'm fine," "I'm good". A wise person told me, "There are many ways to sing. The song of the mind is positivity, the song of the senses is beauty, the song of the heart is love and the song of the soul is purity."

When you fill each day with your own melodious songs, with your soothing whispers of wellness, with your sunny, smiling habits, you will walk forever in healing light and be young forever.

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

New directors and trustees take office

Ten new directors join the the Board of Rotary International from July 1, 2017. The Board manages Rotary International affairs and funds in accordance with the RI Constitution and Bylaws. The Rotary Foundation's Board of Trustees manages the business of the Foundation. The RI president-elect nominates the trustees, who are elected by the RI Board to four-year terms. The trustee chair and three new trustees took office on July 1.

Directors

Basker Chockalingam

RC Karur, India



Basker Chockalingam is a managing partner at the manufacturing firm VNC, the retail distributor of Tata Steel for Tamil Nadu. Recognising his contribution to the growth of small industry, the State government honoured him with the Best Small-Scale Entrepreneur Award in 1986.

He has held high-level positions in several industrial groups and sports associations. His honours include the Vijay Shree Award, National Unity Award, Shiromani Vikas Award and Hindu Gaurav Award for outstanding performance in a chosen field and in service of society.

A Rotarian since 1988, Basker is a Benefactor and Major Donor of TRF and a recipient of the Foundation's Citation for Meritorious Service.

James Ronald Ferrill

RC Martinsville, Virginia



Ron Ferrill retired after more than 33 years with DuPont, where he held various engineering and management positions. He is involved in several religious, civic and community service activities.

A Rotarian since 1967, Ferrill has received The Rotary Foundation's Citation for Meritorious Service and Distinguished Service Award, and the RI Service Above Self Award. He is a member of the Paul Harris Society and a Foundation Benefactor. He and his wife, Elaine, are Major Donors. (Ferrill is finishing Joseph Mulkerrin's term.)

Peter Iblher

RC Nürnberg-Reichswald, Germany



Peter Iblher is a retired consultant. He served as managing director of a hospital group, lecturer at the Bavarian civil servant university, head of business development for the city of Fürth, and CEO of consulting companies in Basle and Munich.

A Rotarian since 1990, Iblher is a multiple Paul Harris Fellow and Major Donor to TRF.

Keiichi Ishiguro

RC Tsuruoka West, Japan



Keiichi Ishiguro is chair of the Ishiguro Dental and Orthodontics Clinic. He has served as vice chair and secretary of the Japan Dental Association, and as board member, chair, and adviser of the Yamagata Dental Association. He is chair of the Tsuruoka Comprehensive Planning Council. In 2014, he received

the Order of the Rising Sun for achievement in dental health and hygiene.

A Rotarian since 1985, Ishiguro is a multiple Paul Harris Fellow and a Benefactor of TRF.

Robert C Knuepfer Jr

RC Chicago



Robert C Knuepfer Jr retired as senior partner of corporate practice at the global law firm Baker McKenzie. He is a shareholder, director and senior

executive at Hallstar, a specialty chemical company with global operations and a director of many corporate and civic organisations. A Rotarian since 1982, Knuepfer and his wife, Nancy, are Rotary Foundation Major Donors.

John C Matthews RC Mercer Island, Washington



John C Matthews was senior vice president of Costco Wholesale for 25 years. He also served in the US Navy for 20 years before retiring as a commander in the supply corps.

Matthews is active on corporate and community boards, including the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, University of Washington Bothell advisory board, Mercer Island Presbyterian Church, Rotary First Harvest, and NW Reinsurance.

A Rotarian since 1988, Matthews and his wife, Mary Ellen, are Paul Harris Fellows, Major Donors and members of the AKS and Bequest Society of The Rotary Foundation. Together, they have established the John and Mary Ellen Matthews Endowed Rotary Peace Fellowship.

Eunsoo Moon RC Cheonan-Dosol, Korea



Eunsoo Moon is a dentist, CEO of Cheonan Moon Dental Hospital and chair of HAN-A Medical Foundation. He is director and chair of several organisations in Korea.

Moon and his wife, Hyunjoo Yang, are AKS members. He has received the RI Service Above Self Award and The Rotary Foundation's Distinguished Service Award and Citation for Meritorious Service.

Brian A E Stoyel RC Saltash, England



Brian Stoyel qualified as a music teacher before he moved to a teaching post in Slough, then to Newbury as an independent school headmaster. He later established an education consultancy, providing guardianship for international students studying throughout the United Kingdom.

A Rotarian since 1981, Stoyel has served as president of Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland. He is founder of a Rotary Action Group Rotarians Eliminating Malaria in Tanzania and a trustee of the Jaipur Limb project.

Stoyel and his wife, PDG Maxine, are multiple Paul Harris Fellows, Benefactors of TRF, Major Donors and Bequest Society members. He has received the Service Above Self Award, the Citation for Meritorious Service and the Distinguished Service Award.

Gregory F Yank RC O'Fallon, Illinois



Greg Yank serves as business coach to six owners of small- to medium-size businesses. He spent 25 years in health care executive management and leadership positions, serving twice as a hospital CEO and as president of a Catholic health system. For 11 years,

Yank owned a business coaching/peer advisory board franchise called the Alternative Board (TAB). He is the principal of GY Consulting and Facilitation Services, specialising in business coaching, strategy, facilitation, strategic governance, and board development and education.

He is a commissioner of the Metro East Park and Recreation District, advisory board member for the Nielsen Healthcare Group in St Louis, and board member of the O'Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of Commerce and chair of its strategic planning committee.

A Rotarian since 1978, Yank is a recipient of the RI Service Above Self Award. He and his wife, PDG Catherine, are Major Donors and members of the Arch Klumph, Paul Harris and Bequest societies.

Paulo Augusto Zanardi RC Curitiba-Cidade Industrial, Brazil



Paulo Augusto Zanardi has been director of the transportation company Zalog Operadora Logística since 1984. He is also director of a geophysical company called WS do Brasil Inovações Tecnológicas Ltda.

A Rotarian since 1988, Zanardi has received the Foundation's Citation for Meritorious Service and Distinguished Service Award. He and his wife, Luly, are Benefactors and Major Donors of the Foundation.

Trustees

Ron D Burton, Chair-elect 2017–18

RC Norman, Oklahoma



Ron D Burton retired as president of the University of Oklahoma Foundation Inc. in 2007. He is a member of the Cleveland County, Okla., and American bar associations and is admitted to practice in Oklahoma and before the US Supreme Court. He is a founder and past president of the Norman Public

School Foundation, and founder and past board member of the Norman Community Foundation.

Burton has been a Rotarian since 1979 and has served RI as president, director, Foundation trustee and vice chair, RI Board Executive Committee member, RI president's aide, committee vice chair and chair, task force member, and International Assembly group discussion leader, assistant moderator and moderator. He has been a regional Rotary Foundation coordinator (RRFC) and Permanent Fund national adviser, and has served as assistant moderator and moderator of RRFC training institutes.

A recipient of RI's Service Above Self Award, he has also received The Rotary Foundation Citation for Meritorious Service, Distinguished Service Award and International Service Award for a Polio-Free World.

Brenda M Cressey

RC Paso Robles, California



Brenda M Cressey is president and CEO of Office Support Systems, a telecommunications business in Maine. She has served in many volunteer capacities with civic organisations such as the American Cancer Society.

A Rotarian since 1989, Cressey has served as a regional membership and Foundation coordinator and RRFC training institute moderator, an Endowment Major Gift adviser, Council on Legislation representative, RI president's representative, 2012 International Assembly executive committee and partner moderator, RI training leader and district governor. Cressey is a recipient of Rotary's Service Above Self Award and The Rotary Foundation's Citation for Meritorious Service and Distinguished Service Award. Brenda and her husband, Dick, are Major Donors, Bequest and Paul Harris society members and recent inductees of the Arch Klumph Society.

K R Ravindran

RC Colombo, Sri Lanka



KR "Ravi" Ravindran is CEO and founder of a publicly listed company with a worldwide clientele in printing, packaging, and pre-media solutions. His company, Printcare PLC, is one of the largest producers of tea bag packaging in the world and is the winner of national and international awards of excellence.

He serves on the boards of several other companies and charitable trusts in Sri Lanka and India. He is the founding president of the Sri Lanka Anti-Narcotics Association (a project of his club), the largest such body in the country.

A Rotarian since 1973, Ravindran has served RI as president, treasurer, director and Foundation trustee. As his country's national PolioPlus chair, Ravindran headed a task force of representatives from the government, UNICEF and Rotary, and worked closely with UNICEF to successfully negotiate a cease-fire with the northern militants during National Immunisation Days. After the tsunami of 2004, which killed an estimated 35,000 people in his country, he chaired the Schools Reawakening project, sponsored by all the Rotary clubs in Sri Lanka, to build 25 new schools to benefit 15,000 children at a cost of \$12,000. In 2017 his government conferred on him the title of Sri Lanka Sikhamani (Jewel of Sri Lanka).

Michael F Webb

RC Mendip, England



Mike Webb is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, and senior partner in an accounting practice in the City of Wells, in southwest England. He is also involved locally and nationally as treasurer and trustee of a number of charitable and sports organisations.

A Rotarian since 1976, Webb has served Rotary International as director, RI president's representative, committee member and chair, vice chair for the 2016 Council on Legislation and the Council on Resolutions, RI training leader and district governor. He has served Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland as treasurer and president. Webb and his wife, Alison, are Major Donors and Paul Harris Fellows, and he is a member of the Bequest Society.

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Membership Summary

As on July 4, 2017



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Rotary at a glance

Rotarians : 12,09,022

Clubs : 35,664

Districts : 539

Rotaractors : 2,33,312*

Clubs : 10,144*

Interactors : 4,95,857*

Clubs : 21,559*

RCC members: 2,16,315*

RCC : 9,405*

* As on April 3, 2017

RI Zone	RI District	Rotary Clubs	No of Rotarians	Women Rotarians	Rotaract	Interact	RCC
5	2981	110	4,331	187	55	223	172
5	2982	65	2,711	73	57	109	43
5	3000	126	5,093	421	287	626	193
4	3011	72	3,152	622	46	102	28
4	3012	86	3,563	740	65	121	55
5	3020	97	4,176	195	110	460	351
4	3030	93	4,989	602	74	284	163
4	3040	95	2,174	239	52	109	135
4	3054**	126	6,035	970	89	290	471
4	3053	74	2,870	449	16	36	93
4	3060	97	3,839	357	58	111	128
4	3070	106	2,994	240	66	151	54
4	3080	77	3,310	202	64	213	106
4	3090	77	2,061	83	33	36	122
4	3100*	71	1,618	60	10	71	146
6	3110	113	3,924	246	53	49	104
6	3120	74	2,964	271	36	50	50
4	3131	133	5,148	932	89	265	74
4	3132	110	4,380	471	60	180	121
4	3141**	89	5,253	1,065	110	241	86
4	3142**	77	2,715	367	61	180	67
5	3150	100	3,589	345	93	227	108
5	3160	68	2,269	99	21	44	81
5	3170	128	5,364	359	54	290	160
5	3181	72	3,026	196	29	168	103
5	3182	79	3,161	226	27	265	92
5	3190	132	5,090	558	134	336	48
5	3201	139	5,126	286	93	123	46
5	3202	131	4,867	226	95	425	44
5	3211	136	4,295	251	11	85	123
5	3212	95	3,702	179	107	261	126
5	3231**	66	2,505	83	53	175	235
5	3232**	93	3,621	435	121	287	82
6	3240	87	2,930	329	59	145	146
6	3250	92	3,555	609	38	197	175
6	3261	68	2,328	222	16	100	42
6	3262	97	3,256	366	42	72	74
6	3291	150	3,831	728	66	129	579
India Total		3,701	1,39,815	14,289	2,550	7,236	5,026
5	3220	71	1,888	239	80	191	77
6	3271	75	1,400	214	44	16	13
6	3272	140	2,505	386	37	36	36
6	3281	199	5,572	754	222	83	186
6	3282	133	3,707	287	131	36	40
6	3292	116	4,413	662	118	106	106
S Asia Total		4,435	1,59,300	16,831	3,182	7,704	5,484

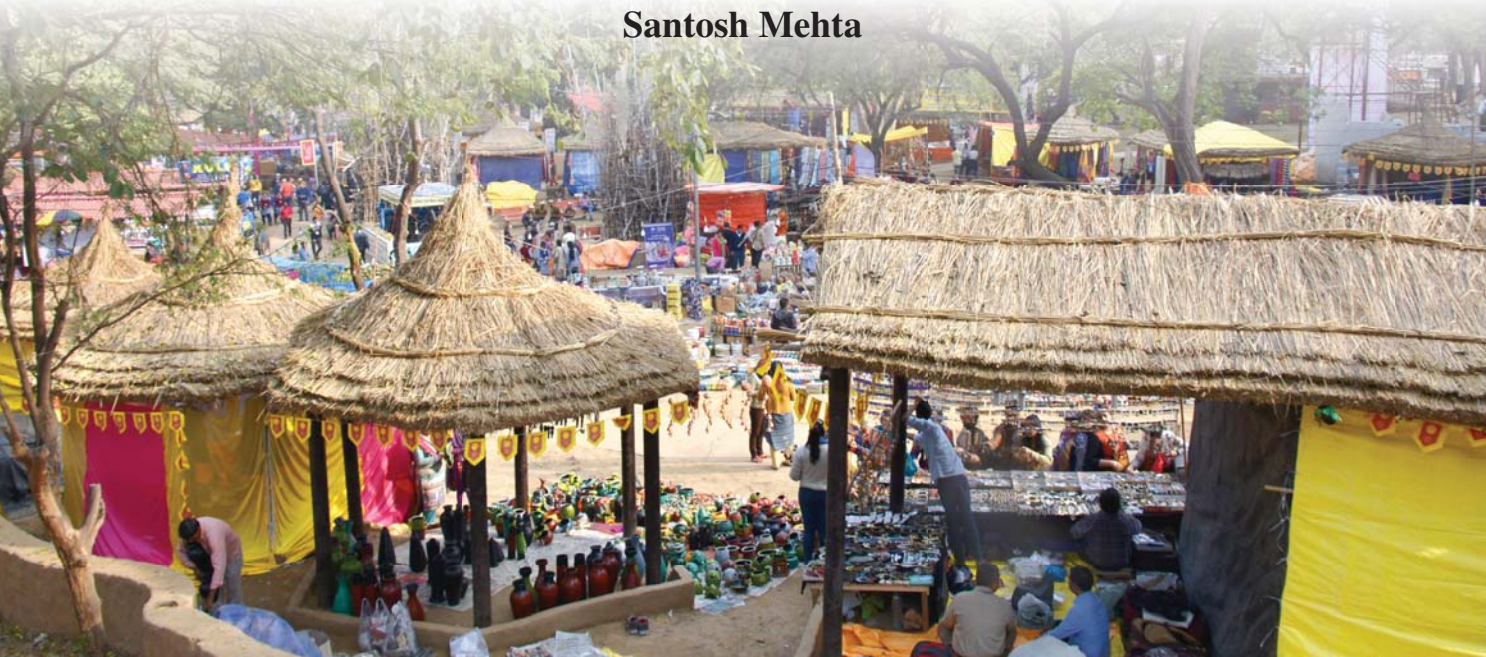
*Non-districted

**Newly formed districts from mergers/bifurcation.

Source: RI South Asia Office

A million visitors at Surajkund mela

Santosh Mehta



An estimated one million visitors thronged the two-week Surajkund International Crafts Mela at Surajkund in Haryana. Talented artists come from India and across the world to showcase the traditional handicrafts of their region.

In 2013, it was upgraded as an international fair and in 2015, 20 countries participated in the Mela. Lebanon was the partner nation and Chhattisgarh, the theme State. About

300 artistes from Jharkhand performed famous folk arts like Chhau, Khaira, Karsa and Paika at the mela.

Every year an Indian State gets to be the 'Theme State' to showcase its arts and crafts. And there is an international partner; this year it was Egypt. Sri Lanka, Nepal, Tunisia, Thailand, Kyrgyzstan and Lebanon have now become regular participants.

Cultural programmes included rib-tickling *Hasya Kavi Sammelan*

by renowned poets, sarod recital by Aayan Khan and Amaan Khan, vibrant dances of Jharkhand, *Sufiana Kalam* by the Nooran Sisters and Ranjana Gauhar's beautiful dance.

A large variety of handicrafts, textiles, olive wood products, leather bags, carpets from Afghanistan, shawls from Nepal, tribal artefacts etc were the main attractions in the 969 huts built over six zones reserved for foreign arts and crafts.

Among crafts the exquisite handlooms and handicrafts of India are an attraction every year. Hand-made fabrics in ethnic colours dazzled the visitors. The mela also has multi-cuisine food courts.

Spread over 40.5 acres, with over 1,000 huts for the craftsmen, Surajkund derives its name from the ancient amphitheatre 'Sun Pool' constructed in the 10th century by Raja Suraj Pal, a Tomar chieftain.

V S Kundu, Additional Secretary and Chairperson of Surajkund Mela Authority, says this year, many new initiatives were introduced, and tickets were offered online at *BookMyShow* and at Metro stations. ■



In Brief



Forest bus

With moss-covered seats surrounded by vibrant flowers wrapped around poles, Taiwan's 'forest bus' is now charming passengers with a lush green ride. Florist Alfie Lin has decorated an ordinary single-deck city bus with

moss, orchids, ginger lilies and a variety of ferns, converting it into a mobile green house. The bus, that targets tourists, will be driving through Taipei with stops at art galleries, temples and a night market, and can carry 20 passengers.

Flying suit

Ever fantasised about flying in an Iron Man-style flight suit? Well, British inventor Richard Browning can help your dream come true. He designed a Daedalus-inspired suit and amazed delegates at a recent TED Conference when he lifted off from the Vancouver Harbour. Powered by six gas turbine engines and attached with a helmet and body armour, the suit is capable of flying at 320 kmph at an altitude of a few thousand feet. Browning is eyeing a business opportunity and sees potential for its use in the military, search and rescue work, and theme parks. The suit could cost around \$250,000.



Green funerals

Shandong Ecoffin International, a coffin making company set up by Chinese businessman Alex Sun, has come up with a green way for burial. Coffers made of paper, wicker and seagrass were on display at an expo held at Hong Kong. European customers are aware of this concept, now Asian clients, especially from Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam and China, have expressed great interest, says the company.

Youngest club president

Manchester Trailblazers Rotary Club in the UK is now led by Martin Judd.

At 22, he is probably the youngest serving president in the world. Judd, son of a racehorse trainer, was born in Tokoroa, New Zealand. He shifted to UK in 2012, joined the newly formed Manchester Trailblazers in 2014, and was elected President Nominee within a year. He works in customer services at Manchester Piccadilly's Waitrose branch. The average age of a UK Rotarian is 72. The youngest Rotary president in Rotary's 112-year history is Tony Mendez, who was 21 when he became President of RC Roaring Fork, Colorado, US in 2015.



Globetrotter dog

Chapati, a stray dog from Kochi, Kerala, once starved and dying on the roadside, now has a passport and is touring the world. Chapati was adopted by a Ukrainian couple, and has visited Thailand, Philippines and Nepal till now, apart from covering 5,500 km, touring 10 cities, staying in 13 hotels and travelling in 16 trains within the country. Chapati has been on every mode of transport — buses, trains, planes, cars, rickshaws, ferries, catamarans, and even a motorbike. She has an Instagram account too where she shares photographs of her travel adventures.

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