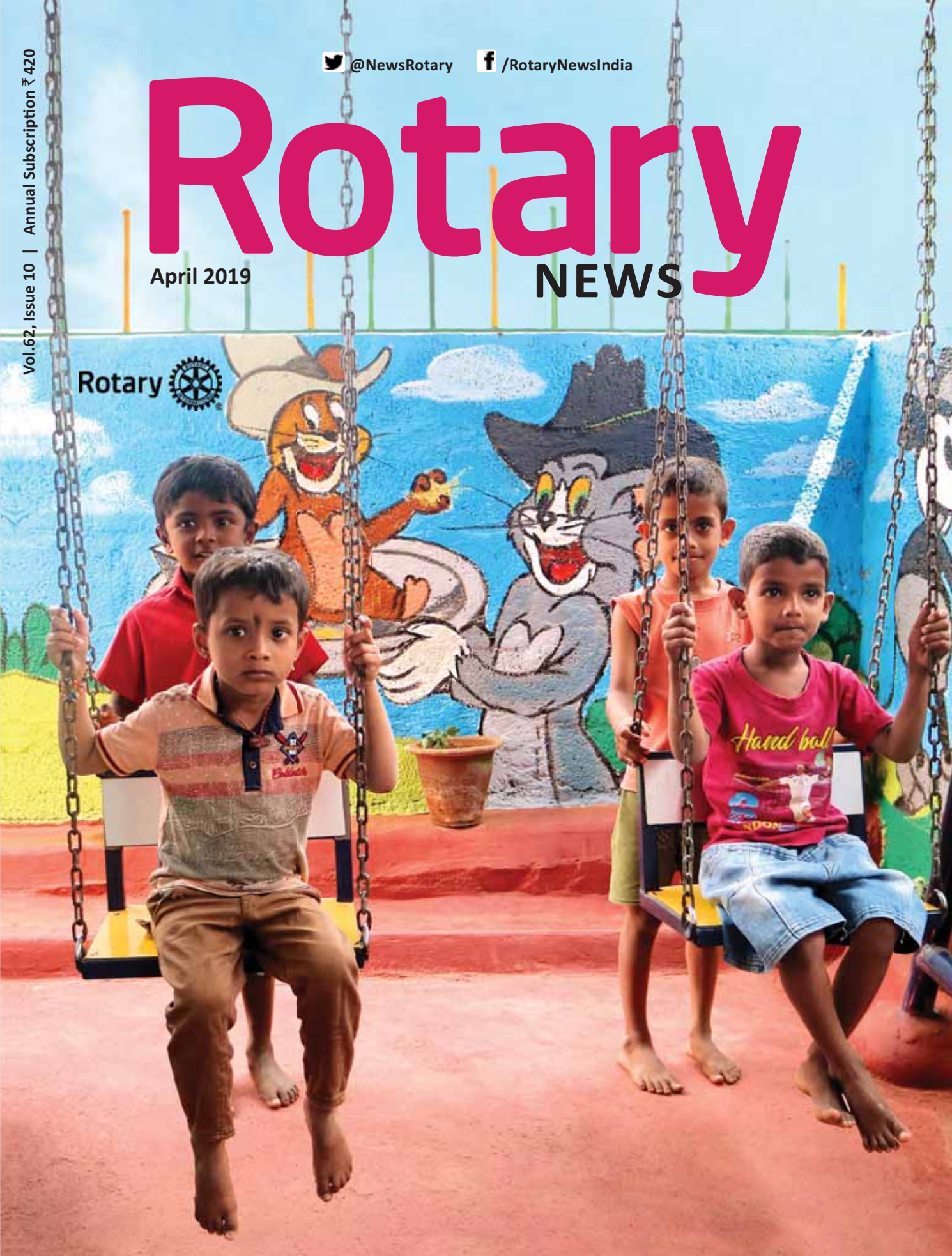
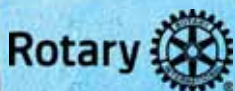




Rotary

NEWS

April 2019



Ready to take on 2019-20



RID C Basker, RIDs Bharat Pandya and Kamal Sanghvi with the DGEs at Disha, a training programme for incoming district leaders held recently in Kolkata.

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RI District 3181 has begun building homes for flood victims through RID 3181 Flood Relief Fund.



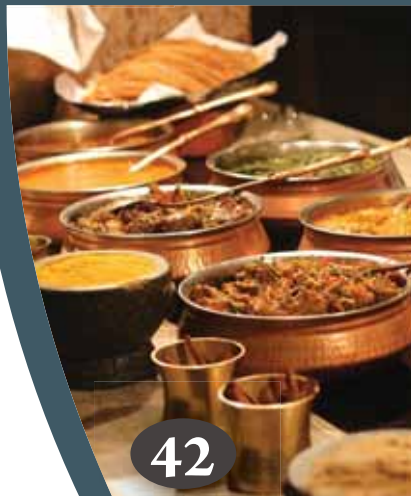
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During his recent visit to India, RIPE Mark Maloney launched six projects of RC Calcutta Mahanagar.



40 A roof over their heads

RC Cochin Harbour builds shelters for 10 families who lost their homes in the Kerala floods.



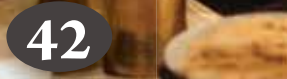
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RC Chennai ECR ushers in better facilities in a village.



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Explore the nuances of this enchanting dance form of Kerala.



On the cover: Children enjoy the swing at a village anganwadi near Mysuru.

Picture by Kiran Zehra

Rotary News: a reference point written from a human angle

I have gone through all the issues of *Rotary News* from cover to cover. I can vouch that the last four issues were remarkably well-produced. As an RIPR in Kolkata recently, the magazine helped me a lot to authenticate all my facts and figures for my speeches. After reading these issues I can write a full-page article on the new trends in Rotary.

The magazine has become very interesting, readable, informative and rich in content. I feel your news sense is so strong that you notice the focal point of



every topic that must be highlighted and which will interest Rotarians as readers.

I admire the way you touch new issues and present us with a new perspective all Rotary projects and activities. The articles and images make this monthly magazine a reference publication for all things related

to Rotary. Congrats to the editorial team.

Rtn Ajay Kala
RC Jaipur Round
Town — RID 3054

I loved the article *The neem tree with sweet leaves* by G Singh in the February issue. Human-interest stories such as these make life worthy. For that matter, I always find the articles in *Rotary News* are written with importance given to the human angle and that makes the magazine such an interesting read. Thank you for yet another lovely issue.

Atul Bhide
RC Thane
Hills — RID 3142

Rotary hospital a boon to Vapi

Started in 1980 by the Rotary Club of Vapi, it is unbelievable to note that this hospital, being run by the Rotary Charitable Trust, offers paediatric heart surgery. I congratulate cardiac surgeon Dr Kalpesh Malik and his team for doing a challenging surgery on a four-year-old boy who was having two chambers only in his heart.

It is great to note that the Chairman of this Trust, PRIP Kalyan Banerjee personally takes care to see that the hospital is

maintained clean and hygienic. Kudos to RC Vapi.

N Jagatheesan
RC Eluru — RID 3020

March issue has a good cover photo and inspiring articles such as *Talking peace in troubled times is not easy* (Editor's Note); *Inspire Rotaractors to Rotary* (RI President's message); *Maloney connects with Chennai Rotarians* by Jaishree; *Rotary Hospital in Vapi* by Rasheeda; *Rotary Endowment — a promise to tomorrow* by Ron Burton; and *A genetic compulsion for giving & doing good*.

My congratulations to Dr Azad Moopen, Chairman, Aster Healthcare Group for spending ₹50 crore every year for charity.

Daniel Chittilappilly
RC Kaloor — RID 3201

Ravishankar inspires Rotarians to give

By educating the girl child we are empowering women and thus curing many social ills, paving the way for a healthy society.

Whether we talk about *Nakushi* or *Dhonda*, all such age-old traditions have to be done away with by the Rotarians in India who are involved in the difficult task of building a better society.

The lovely pictures of the smiling, happy children of the North-East region in the Feb issue impel us to believe that individuals with vision can accomplish daunting tasks and show the world that Rotary can

alleviate illiteracy and strengthen the social fabric with its humanitarian service.

Thus, many Ravishankars will inspire Rotarians to go ahead with their new ventures for humanity with renewed zeal. There has been an upsurge of interest in the Rotary world, especially in India, after the example set by Ravishankar. You have captured the smiles, hopes, excitement and possibilities available to the disadvantaged people in our North-Eastern region in a few photos supplementing the editorial. The cover story is a well-structured article which will boost the spirits of

LETTERS

Rotarians in the country. We really need such stories of success.

Arun Kumar Dash
RC Baripada — RID 3262

In the article *While you are having Madurai idlis...* Rtn Ravishankar says, “If you keep money that is more than your need, it turns into poison.” I totally agree with his remark. I had been to Bengaluru and tried my best to meet the RC Bangalore Orchards President. His contribution to TRF is rich and praiseworthy.

Last year, our club has been upgraded to PHF club and because of good Rotarians, we are progressing well.

A Easwaramoorthy
RC Tirunelveli West — RID 3212

Rotary's peace efforts

Regarding the heinous terrorist attack on CRPF convoy in Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir last month which caused the tragic loss of 40 of our jawans, I convey my condolences to the families of the martyrs. Rotary's efforts through Peace Centres around the world that sponsor scholars for peace programmes deserve appreciation as rightly mentioned in the Editor's Note.

RI President Barry Rassin's remarks about Rotaractors are really encouraging and their valuable services in the African continent are laudable.

Glad to read that Karunguzhi is the first town in India to have an FST facility to undertake a 'full cycle of sanitation' as stated by RID C Basker in his message.

The article *Let us not build barriers to Rotary* by Rasheeda Bhagat is an informative and meaningful one. RIPE Maloney has made a suggestion to connect Rotary to the United Nations to get connected to the world, an innovative idea.

The article *A genetic compulsion for giving & doing good* is very inspiring. *Kathakali — Dance Drama; Building trust in the North-East; Rotary Hospital in Vapi offers paediatric heart surgery*; and even the smaller articles are worth reading. As usual, the photos are colourful and appealing to the readers.

M T Philip, RC Trivandrum
Suburban — RID 3211

I would like to know whether the Peace Centres run by RI teach peace in the Gandhian way, if not what is their curriculum approach. A police officer from Maharashtra went for higher studies under this scheme. We would like to hear more from him. An article on this will be useful. I also suggest, in addition to this course, 'Leadership in Action' for various professions can be included.

Sanat Jain, RC Raipur
Heritage — RID 3261

It's great to read about the International Assembly in the Feb issue where RIPE Mark Maloney unveiled the 2019–20 Presidential theme, *Rotary Connects the World*, and emphasised that Rotary allows us to connect with each other across geographical differences; to people we would never otherwise have met; to communities, professional

opportunities and to the people who need our help.

RID C Basker in "Peace through Service" mentioned former Canadian PM and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Rtn L B Pearson has said, "How can there be peace in the world when people do not know each other, when they have never met?" He added that Rotary's involvement in community work brings the world closer and helps to make it a better place through its global network of Rotary, Rotaract clubs and districts with good support from TRF.

Naveen R Garg
RC Sunam — RID 3090

Exemplary projects

On behalf of my club, I congratulate RC Nasik Grapecity, RID 3030, for taking up nice projects such as mammography, literacy and educating Adivasis on the importance of hygiene and sanitation, among other services.

My special thanks to Naresh Shah, the charter president, Rtn Asha Venugopal, PDG Dattathreya Deshmukh, DGE Rajendra Bhamre and DGND Ramesh Mehar for their contributions in these projects.

Cherukuri Santaram
RC Nashik Smart
City — RID 3030

My sincere congratulations to you and the editorial team on the way *Rotary News* is reinventing itself in this new era of publications. I look forward to read your magazine just like others who read it with eagerness.

Sajanan K Nambiar
RC Vapi Riverside — RID 3060

We welcome your feedback. Write to the Editor: rotarynews@rosaonline.org; rushbhagat@gmail.com
Click on **Rotary News Plus** in our website www.rotarynewsonline.org to read about more Rotary projects.

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Celebrating women, but introspecting too...

International Women's Day left behind mixed feelings. Heartwarming was this statement: "I didn't climb the Everest with an amputated leg. I did it all with my heart and mind," said Arunima Sinha on becoming the first female amputee to do so. The message is clear: look at your strengths and not shortcomings.

Signals from the developed world were mixed. Charlotte Valeur, the new chair of UK's very influential Institute of Directors accused Britain's biggest companies of stalling the entry of female and ethnic minority directors saying there weren't enough qualified people in this group. "Do we really think that's difficult? It's a lie. It's not difficult," she said. In one year the percentage of women on FTSE 250 company boards increased only marginally — from 22.8 to 23.7 per cent; with FTSE 100 companies performing equally dismally, going up from 27.7 to 29 per cent. In Italy, representatives of a far-right political group came under fire from women for an explicitly sexist leaflet, while talking about women's "natural role" being to "support life and the family". Even though cliched and patronising, nothing wrong in it, had the pamphlet stopped at that. But it added this "natural role of women" was harmed by "those who claim self-determination that arouses rancorous attitudes towards men!" Predictably, three female ministers in the Government jointly condemned this stance.

But it was really the New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern who won hearts and minds across the world through her compassionate, and yet firm, response to the terror attack on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, that gunned down 50 worshippers. In a world where machismo is considered a hallmark of good leadership, she stood up and said unequivocally: "We represent diversity, kindness, compassion, and are a home for those who share our values, and refuge for those who need it. You may have chosen us, but we utterly reject and condemn you." Taking a

cue from her, New Zealanders came out in droves to support the Muslim community, and on social media smitten fans from across the world called her "my hero, a pure soul, awesome leader" and so on.

In India, women's rights and the injustice meted out to them in a patriarchal society, that grandiosely put women on the pedestal as Sita or Durga and other goddesses, but harassed, abused and even burnt them for dowry, came into sharper focus after the Emergency. It was a dark era when human rights and civil liberties were crushed and as India reawakened to redefine these, women's rights and discrimination against them were readdressed. Forty-two years later, we've made progress, but how much can be judged by your propensity to see the glass as half full or half empty.

The push for legal reforms to safeguard women's rights, cutting across religions and communities has yielded results. A Muslim man can no longer say Talaq three times and discard his wife. Thanks to the Supreme Court, women of all ages can now visit the Sabarimala temple. But while these hard-won battles taste sweet, a lot more needs to be done for women from disadvantaged sections of our society.

Rotary itself began late enough in opening its membership to women in 1987, and at the intervention of the US Supreme Court. We should be proud that it was an Indian Rotary Club — RC Ahmedabad — that proposed way back in 1950... yes, 1950, that "male" be deleted from the Standard Rotary Club Constitution, but this was rejected by the CoL at the 1950 Detroit Convention. Attempts continued and in 1977, an American club defied this diktat and admitted women members, only to be terminated! Ten years later, this was overturned by the US apex court and now, to the credit of senior RI leadership, a concerted effort is being made to get more women members.

So you see... the wheel does turn!

Rasheeda Bhagat



Mother and Child Care



Dear fellow Rotarians,

Every two minutes, somewhere in the world, a woman dies from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. And babies whose mothers die within the first six weeks of their lives are far more likely to die themselves than babies whose mothers survive. As I've travelled around the world as President of Rotary, I've met families for whom these aren't simply tragic statistics. But I've also met people who are devoting themselves to helping mothers and children — and because of them, I'm hopeful. And because many of those people are Rotarians, I'm also proud. April is Maternal and Child Health Month in Rotary, so it's a perfect time to tell you about some things Rotarians are doing that will make you proud too.

Last fall, I paid a visit to a hospital in the town of Jekabpils in Latvia. It's a modern hospital, and the doctors and nurses there are caring, dedicated and skilled. But despite all their hard work, the maternal mortality rate at the hospital had remained stubbornly high due to a factor that was beyond their control: a lack of vital diagnostic equipment and even basic items like incubators.

And that's where Rotary came in. Twenty-one clubs from around the world joined forces for a global grant that provided what the hospital required. And in

September, when I walked into the maternity ward there, I saw state-of-the-art equipment, and I met patients who were getting the care that they needed — and that every mother and child in the world deserves to have.

In Brazil, club members worked with fellow Rotarians in Japan on a global grant project that dramatically increased the capacity of an overstretched neonatal intensive care unit. New incubators, monitors, and other equipment have enabled the local hospital to save many more babies' lives each year.

And in Mongolia, a vocational training team from New Zealand organised instruction in emergency response techniques for doctors and midwives, set up a programme that taught midwives modern best practices, and researched and wrote a culturally relevant childbirth education manual. Between 2013, when the team first went to Mongolia, and 2017, the neonatal mortality rate in the country fell from 11.2 to 9.1 per 1,000 births, and the maternal mortality rate has decreased as well.

That's what I mean when I talk about transformational service, and it's what Rotarians do best. Because of our networks, which span the globe; our community presence, which allows us to see what's most needed; and our expertise, which encompasses countless skills and professions, we're able to serve in a manner that has no equal. And we're able to *Be the Inspiration* as we help those who need us most.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long, sweeping tail.

Barry Rassin
President, Rotary International

Message from the RI Director



Maternal and Neonatal Healthcare

Dear Rotarians,

Public health requires a proactive approach, focusing as it does on ensuring the mother and child's health and prevention of infection and disease. The World Health Organisation estimates that 22 per cent of global maternal deaths occur in India, where millions of women suffer pregnancy-related morbidity. Let me share some more information on this subject.

Every 12 minutes a woman dies in child birth; three lakh children die as soon as they are born; 1.2 million children die before their first birthday. Infant mortality is a big issue. A large number of births happen by C-section. Even if women undergo periodic antenatal check-up, about 14–15 per cent of them will need caesarean section. That means 5.2 million C-section operations a year, for which we need two lakh gynaecologists. We have only 50,000. Most, if not all of them, live in small to big towns and cities but 60 per cent of new births happen in rural India. The practice of midwifery which used to be quite common some decades ago is now virtually extinct.

In this field of Maternal and Child Health, I would like to cite the example of the wonderful, inseparable and inspiring couple Dr Abhay Bang and Dr Rani Bang. This couple has selflessly dedicated itself to the health, social and educational improvement of the tribal people of the Gadchiroli district in North-Eastern Maharashtra, one of the most backward districts in that State, where they found 92 per cent of tribal women had

gynaecological disorders, a good part STD related. They also discovered pneumonia was a major child killer in 58 villages in Gadchiroli district. Determining that the major problems affecting mothers and children in India are malnutrition, infection and unregulated fertility, they went about improving the quality of care that mothers receive during pregnancy and childbirth knowing this to be one of the most effective ways to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality.

Dr Abhay Bang devised a novel Home-Based Neonatal Care (HBNC) programme to save newborns at remote places. A married woman in the village is given rigorous training in examining pregnant women, diagnosing their health, possible need for expert supervision and distribution of basic medicines to both the mother and the newborn child. This woman named Arogyadoot (wellness ambassador) is also trained to give injections to the newborn. HBNC has been extremely successful in the villages in Gadchiroli where the maternal and infant mortality rates have reduced significantly as a result of Dr Bang's interventions.

We are all inspired by Dr Bang's success story and it is time for us to create awareness on Home-Based Neonatal Care in our communities around. Maybe a small push in the right direction will lead to saving the lives of thousands of mothers and newly born babies. *Be the inspiration* and connect people for a healthy world.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Basker".

C Basker
Director, Rotary International

District Wise TRF Contributions as on February 2019

(in US Dollars)

District Number	APF	PolioPlus	Other Restricted	Endowment Fund	Total Contributions	EREY Donors (in numbers)	EREY %
India							
2981	30,750	4,543	0	8,000	43,293	196	4.3
2982	43,548	5,394	0	243	49,185	267	9.3
3000	11,357	1,000	72,766	37,854	122,976	19	0.4
3011	63,915	5,668	26,453	19,930	115,966	113	3.4
3012	65,770	150	290,759	8,800	365,480	100	3.0
3020	14,850	70,398	2,625	5,000	92,873	57	1.5
3030	14,099	0	0	0	14,099	6	0.1
3040	2,519	0	21,851	0	24,370	3	0.1
3053	45,557	0	0	0	45,557	16	0.6
3054	(17,779)	0	116,413	0	98,635	32	0.6
3060	8,000	1,126	145,229	103,565	257,919	589	14.3
3070	81,732	300	2,236	0	84,268	280	9.7
3080	77,058	13,623	15,657	5,000	111,338	60	1.9
3090	32,641	0	0	0	32,641	84	4.2
3100	21,795	475	0	0	22,270	82	4.9
3110	24,920	2,630	33,990	0	61,540	42	1.1
3120	59,103	0	217,897	0	277,001	59	1.9
3131	247,138	20,185	206,297	33,203	506,823	732	14.3
3132	10,202	310	16,059	60,000	86,571	21	0.6
3141	459,028	10,883	805,554	26,286	1,301,751	567	11.3
3142	256,263	75	(438)	0	255,901	499	15.8
3150	71,968	2,360	61,487	313,467	449,281	481	13.9
3160	61,499	1,580	0	8,571	71,651	126	5.2
3170	61,927	2,944	38,331	0	103,202	296	5.6
3181	76,136	938	0	103	77,176	294	9.8
3182	63,838	100	11,367	0	75,305	269	8.6
3190	70,782	4,197	13,680	1,449,359	1,538,018	506	10.6
3201	47,491	9,737	181,015	0	238,244	131	2.5
3202	21,662	27,612	35,563	0	84,837	49	1.0
3211	36,700	2,423	0	1,515	40,638	175	4.0
3212	88,528	6,530	5,250	67,002	167,309	105	2.7
3231	24,222	2,480	4,286	6,528	37,516	223	7.5
3232	109,637	1,119	130,889	1,000	242,646	151	3.5
3240	53,275	421	525	0	54,221	99	3.4
3250	21,151	1,834	11,216	0	34,201	43	1.2
3261	11,718	1,100	(1,492)	2,000	13,327	16	0.6
3262	27,144	1,000	900	5,213	34,257	99	3.0
3291	100,123	0	80,328	51,800	232,251	206	5.7
India Total	2,500,267	203,136	2,546,695	2,214,437	7,464,536	7,093	5.1
3220 Sri Lanka	72,693	2,725	12,626	7,000	95,044	131	7.3
3271 Pakistan	34,444	27,799	2,275	0	64,518	26	1.9
3272 Pakistan	19,160	2,141	0	0	21,301	26	0.9
3281 Bangladesh	112,847	2,900	48,132	16,506	180,385	185	3.4
3282 Bangladesh	48,833	1,410	0	3,000	53,243	126	3.1
3292 Nepal	196,277	12,711	95,282	0	304,271	308	7.1
South Asia Total	2,984,521	252,822	2,705,010	2,240,943	8,183,297	7,895	4.9
World Total	73,747,545	18,854,105	11,785,613	17,553,634	121,940,897		

Source: RI South Asia Office

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Reconstructing anganwadis and changing the lives of children in Karnataka

Kiran Zehra

After a bumpy, 90-minute ride through the Kabini Reserve forest, 60 km from Mysore, we reach Brahmagiri Haddi, a remote Kurumba tribe settlement. Amidst the thatched roofs and makeshift huts stands the village's reconstructed anganwadi, a neatly painted concrete building overlooking a coconut farm. Peep over its compound wall and you can see children running in circles, playing games and laughing.

The cheering gets louder as the Rotarians of Rotary Club of Mysore Midtown, RID 3181, enter the compound. High-fives are exchanged between the Rotarians and the children, and the adults seem to know each child by name. Oblivious to who is stepping in or walking out of his classroom, three-year-old Nanda is enjoying his hot

glass of milk. He drinks up to the last drop, looks up at the Rotarians and in a cheerful tone says "Good morning."

Barely six months ago, this anganwadi was empty, desolate and in a state of disrepair. "The ceiling leaked and threatened to come crashing down, the water connection had been cut off, doors had been eaten by termites, and chipped floor and walls were covered with fungus," says anganwadi worker, or the Accredited Social Health Worker (ASHA) Lakshmi. Today, thanks to a collaboration between the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Karnataka, and District 3181, 517 such anganwadis have been transformed at a whopping cost of Rs 98.02 lakh in four revenue districts of this southern State. There

is running water in the kitchen and toilet, the rooms are freshly painted and clean. Each anganwadi serves around 20 children, but with the makeover and provision of water, more children are seeking admission.

Titled ASHA Spoorthi, this District project is the brainchild of DG P Rohinath, and it hopes to provide adequate infrastructure,





Where children are involved, the emotional appeal and mental satisfaction are indescribable.

DG P Rohinath

ensure school readiness and engage with the community to get good attendance from the children. DG Rohinath says all the 78 clubs are focused on this project. “This project concentrates on five of the six Rotary areas of focus. The clubs need to work on a sustainable project that falls within a focus area and this one allows them to concentrate on more than one.

Where children are involved, the emotional appeal and mental satisfaction are indescribable. Hence 3,300 Rotarians from 78 clubs have come together for this initiative.”

Most parents who send their children to anganwadis are



either daily wage workers, with most of the mothers working as maids, and have no safe place to leave their children. Rohinath says that when he visited an anganwadi in Mangaluru in 2009, its condition was so pathetic that he was in tears and decided that as a Rotary leader he would take up a big service project connected to anganwadis. Ten years later came the opportunity when he became a DG and this project took shape, in partnership with the Karnataka government. His club set up the first

model anganwadi at Boccapatna, Mangaluru at a cost of Rs 6 lakh.

He complimented Project Chairman HM Harish from RC Mysore South, for doing “a great job. He calls the clubs every week to check if the club has delivered its promise. He visits at least 30 centres per week to check the working of the project.” Coordinating with all the 78 clubs is not an easy task but Harish has learned the art to do it well. “You can have a fancy post in Rotary, but Rotarians will only do your bidding when you

are soft-spoken and use the magic word ‘Please!’”

Explaining how the clubs get involved in such projects, he says, “they start by providing uniforms and shoes, basic furniture, stainless steel containers and plates, and then want to do more. Some clubs have converted a few anganwadis into state-of-the-art centres. Other clubs want to do more but lack the funds. The aim is to make the anganwadis in the district cleaner and more hygienic with an interesting atmosphere for the holistic development of the children.”

Rohinath says self-sufficient clubs such

as RC Vittla, which has 29 members, have adopted 29 anganwadis. “Every Rotarian in the club is working with an anganwadi. This inspired a local publication to adopt an anganwadi and renovate it. This is the power of doing good.” Rotarians of RC Mysore Heritage have constructed a two-storied building that houses 80 children.

Stressing the importance of partnerships, the DG says the Brahmagiri Haddi anganwadi is supported by the Swami Vivekananda Youth



Every Rotarian in the club is working with an anganwadi. This inspired a local publication to adopt and renovate one.

Movement, a non-profit from Mysore. Not only do they engage in the anganwadi activities but help in developing local, innovative and cost-effective solutions to sustain community-driven progress.”

The clubs get access to anganwadi database,

funding, and other information from NGOs and CSR partners.

For example, RC Mysore South East has partnered with L&T to set up the Kukkarahalli anganwadi. The infrastructure is as good as a private creche and



children are taught reading, writing, math and English. “We give them picture books to inculcate in them a habit of reading and host meetings every month for mothers who are educated on nutrition, and other important healthcare information for their children, says Kalavathi, an anganwadi teacher.

At the Challahalli anganwadi, 35 km from Mysore, reconstructed by the same club, I find bright and cheerful children playing with toys and patiently awaiting their turn on the swing.

The centre has a water purifier, convertible beds and a child-friendly toilet. It was strange to see that the facility had no wash station. Club President Vishwanath explains that after the first wash station “was stolen, we have made one of brick and cement. Now it can’t be stolen!”

The Mathru Poorna scheme was launched in October 2017 as part of “the Karnataka government’s initiatives to fight



DG P Rohinath interacting with children at an anganwadi. Project Chairman H M Harish (third from left) is also in the picture.

The villagers think Rotary has an answer to all their problems — a solution for the growing mosquito menace, a bus stop, a house — we can try.

Project Chairman
HM Harish

hunger and malnutrition. Meant to meet the nutritional needs of pregnant and lactating women in rural areas, this scheme runs inside the anganwadi campus. Each of the 517 renovated anganwadis provide one meal a day for about eight mothers. Kavitha, a lactating mother, thanks Rotary for the working anganwadi at her village in Challahalli. “I had to walk close to seven km to the next village which has an anganwadi in order to get my meal. Shuttling between villages was exhausting. Now, with this anganwadi reconstructed, I don’t have to walk that far,” she says.

Also, when she became pregnant, the



anganwadi teacher “gave me the right information on the right type of food and nutrition I should take in order to deliver a healthy child,” she adds.

When the Rotarians of RC Kollegal Midtown wanted to casually show the DG around the Hondarabalu anganwadi at a village 20 km from Mysore, the villagers came together to thank Rotary. But they wanted more! They requested the Rotarians to build a bus stop, renovate an anganwadi in another village, build for them concrete houses and find a solution to the growing mosquito menace. Smiled Harish: “They think Rotary has an answer to all their problems and “we

can try. But right now, our focus is on developing anganwadis.”

At Karinanjanapura village, an emotional anganwadi teacher Sharadha said, “from feeling helpless that we could not do anything about the non-functioning anganwadi to now feeding and teaching 60 children, we cannot thank the Rotarians of RC Chamarajanagar enough, for the work you have done. Because of you these children will eat well and have healthier lives.”

Pictures by
Kiran Zehra

Designed by
Krishnapratheesh S



Work together for a healthy fellowship

As we begin the last quarter of the Rotary year, our thoughts turn to ensuring a strong finish. I hope that your goal has been to make your club stronger than it was at the beginning of the year. All clubs depend on members to do their part so the club doesn't just survive, but thrive.

But for that to happen, each member must contribute to that success every day of the year. It is important that we identify potential new members and sponsor them, that we reach out to former members and invite them back. Above all, whether they are new members or returning members, we must mentor and engage them to make them strong members of our club. We must roll up our sleeves and work on club projects, district projects and global projects, because nothing creates fellowship more than working together with other members of your club.

We must also support The Rotary Foundation. Doing good in the world doesn't just happen. In addition to having the people to carry out projects, we must also have the funds to make them viable. That's where each of us comes in. We, our partners, and our beneficiaries are the sources for those funds. I hope each member will make our Foundation a charity of choice so we can continue to change lives and improve the world. For the cost of just two "crafted" lattes a month, one can become a \$100-per-year contributor to the Foundation. That is a small amount to pay for all the good our Foundation does.

And giving to our Foundation has never been easier. You can make your contribution securely and conveniently anytime at rotary.org/donate. I plan to go online this month and make another contribution. I challenge each of you to do the same.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron D Burton".

Ron D Burton
Foundation Trustee Chair

Breakout sessions

Hank Sartin



Every year, the Rotary International Convention is the place to be — to meet up with old friends in the House of Friendship, get to know local Rotarians at host hospitality events, and hear inspiring speakers at general sessions. Breakout sessions, meanwhile, are a great way to learn about what your fellow Rotarians are doing and to gather new ideas. When you are in Hamburg for the 2019 convention, June 1–5, you can attend sessions on topics ranging from combating unconscious bias to using Lego Serious Play to help launch a project.

Other breakout sessions will be devoted to developing leadership skills ("Innovation Is No Coincidence: Design Thinking"), recruiting new members ("Membership Development Strategy: Rotaract into Rotary"), and keeping current members engaged ("Retention: Develop Your Club and Engage Members"). You'll have opportunities to hear from and about the next generation of Rotary leaders: Rotaractors, Interactors, Youth Exchange students, and other alumni.

Several breakout sessions will be dedicated to helping you publicise your club's accomplishments in your local news outlets, on social media — and in this magazine.

**Register for the 2019 (June 1–5)
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Professional Profile of Mr. P Seshadri



A qualified Production & Industrial engineer with management specialisation in Industrial Management from Nagpur University has industrial and consulting experience of more than 28 years in the domains of HRD, TQM and OD with Corporates, MSME's and Start-up's.

Practicing as Management Consultant since 2002, he has evolved his core competencies in three areas which include – Developing Management Systems, Facilitating Business Excellence Practices and Establishing Sustainability Reports for Industries and Institutions.

Active with professional / industrial bodies and social organisations, he has held leadership positions in several of such organisation like QCFI, NIPM, ISTD, IMCI, HDCF, FAPCCI, CII, BNI and Rotary International. His current passion as qualified faculty from Rotary Leadership Institute is strengthening Rotary Movement using several initiatives in Clubs, Communities and Corporates.

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Let's not make Rotary a touch-and-go organisation

Rasheeda Bhagat

One of the best things about leadership positions in Rotary was that most of these were confined to one year and rightly so, said RIDE Bharat Pandya, addressing *Qalb*, the conference of RID 3202 in Wayanad, Kerala. But this could be a huge negative too, because “every new leader wants to start something

new and we forget to continue the good work that was being done by our predecessor and that gives the impression that Rotary is a touch-and-go organisation. If everybody starts taking Rotary in a different direction... with due respect to (K R) Ravindran, who is present here, and other past presidents, over the last 10–15 years each president has started

giving different emphasis areas, so this is an area we need to address.”

Poor planning and improper preparation for leadership positions was another drawback. “There are 11 layers of leadership from club president to RI President. When there is improper communication through these layers, problems arise. And then there is the question of ego... I am president, assistant governor, secretary, they didn't make me sit on the dais, I was not given due importance. This ego holds us back from achieving our potential, and unless we overcome it, we will never be able to touch the top,” he added.

Keep doing good things that worked; and “stop what is not working and start new and meaningful practices. The time is ripe for Rotary to think and dream big,” he said.

Complimenting his “fellow professional — DG E K Ummer — for doing such a fantastic job as Governor,” Pandya said he had been asked to speak on the topic ‘Touch the top’; “if you



RID 3202 DG E K Ummer honours RI Director C Basker at his District Conference. Mala Basker and Conference Chair Bijosh Manuel (right) are also present.

can look at the sunset and smile, then you still have hope. If the smile of a child can warm your heart, the sight of a rainbow can make you stop and wonder at its brilliant colours; if the suffering of others can fill you with pain and make you want to reach out with a helping hand, then you still have hope.”

Rotary gives hope, opportunity

The two best words to describe Rotary were ‘hope and opportunity’; hope for a better world and the opportunity Rotary provides to fulfil that hope. Over centuries and decades our world had improved; in the mid-1800s a large percentage of the world population was living in abject poverty. Thanks to industrial and agri revolutions, tremendous achievements had been made in the last 150–175 years, despite the world population multiplying several fold during the last 150 years.

Quoting World Bank estimates, Pandya said that in 1981, 44 per cent of the world’s population was living

in poverty. By 2015, the figure had reduced to under 10 per cent. According to GoI estimates, in 1991, 45 per cent of Indians lived below the poverty line; by 2013, that number was down to 20–22 per cent. Today India was among the 10 top wealthiest countries in the world as far as total individual wealth of Indians was concerned.

But while our world is better than the one our ancestors lived in, even today, one billion people have no access to proper sanitation and water; one billion people are illiterate and millions go hungry to bed, a bulk of them in our part of the world. Out of 1,000 babies born, 45 die before the age of 5; “we may pat ourselves on the back for so much progress, but much more needs to be done.”

The incoming Director said that just like the stained glass of the windows at the landmark monument of Mumbai, the Rajabhai Towers, was visible in all its glory only when viewed from the right angle, the beauty of Rotary too could be appreciated from a particular viewpoint. “For some of us, the beauty of Rotary lies in friendship and fellowship; others feel pride and prestige in wearing the Rotary pin, to some it is an opportunity to develop themselves and to most of us it is the opportunity to lend a helping hand.”

Rotary was doing great humanitarian service; such as the Rotarians of Kerala reaching out to the flood victims, and doing the WinS project in 1,000-plus schools. And those in Sri Lanka had put up a bank for human heart valves to help children born with congenital diseases. “And we all know we are this close to polio.”

But at the same time, Rotary was at the crossroads and at a pivotal point in its history. “The new Strategic Plan is going to take us in a newer and better direction. TRF grants are allowing Rotarians to do bigger and more impactful projects. And yet so much

more needs to be done. That’s why I say ‘don’t look back, we have to touch the top’. We have to identify the factors which are holding us back and take corrective action to really touch the top.”

Striking a note of introspection, Pandya said one of the factors holding back Rotary’s progress was the “resistance to change. My club is like this only, this is our tradition, we don’t want women or younger members in our club.”

Change in attitude, shedding negativity and adopting a positive, optimistic outlook would really help Rotary march forward.

In his address, RI Director C Basker congratulated the Rotarians of the three flood-affected Rotary districts for speedily coming to the aid of the flood victims and “meeting their expectations at the appropriate time with a helping hand, providing food and medicines, saving lives and building shelters.”

Earlier in the day, he had participated in an event to dedicate two low-cost shelters to the needy in partnership with the Aster healthcare group. This had been taken up as a pilot project. “You should have been there to see the joy and hope in the eyes of the beneficiaries. In this pilot project, 75 homes are being built across Kerala at a cost of ₹2 crore. And the ultimate plan is to build 500 homes before the year-end,



In the true spirit of Indians who always reciprocate the help we receive, my District 3000 readily came forward to support a project in Poland to build a kitchen to feed the poor.

RI Director C Basker



From L: PDGs T George Sundararaj, Barbara Pawlisz from Poland, Rekha Shetty, Priscilla Sundararaj, Kamarunnisa, DG E K Ummer, Rtn Sanjeevesabu and Jery Jagoda from Poland.

with TRF support and in partnership with the Aster group,” he added.

A “performing” district

Basker said there were growing expectations from our population whose needs were increasing, and “at such times NGOs such as Rotary gain significance. As a performing district, whether in humanitarian, literacy or WinS projects, you have always outperformed other districts in showing your generosity whenever it is needed, and today DG Ummer has made this conference truly international.”

And this he had done by getting a musical band from the Middle

East and delegates from Poland, Brazil and Mexico. Underlining the international essence of Rotary, the RI Director recalled that after the Kerala/Karnataka floods when he got an appeal from the DGs of the three affected Rotary districts on the urgent need to rebuild destroyed homes, “I sent appeals to my colleagues on the RI Board seeking assistance from their clubs and districts. One day I got an email which was not in English and I was unable to read it. But as I have colleagues from Germany, Brazil, Poland and Italy, I forwarded the mail to all of them asking which part of the world it had come from.”

Within a few hours he got a reply from his colleague Piotr Wygnańczuk, the RI Director from Poland, saying a club from Poland had responded saying it was committing \$5,000 for a global grant project to rebuild homes in Kerala. “Through the delegates from Poland present here, we send them our thanks for helping our brothers and sisters in Kerala.”

Soon enough, “when I was having dinner with Piotr in San Diego, he mentioned he was looking for a partner to establish a social kitchen in Poland for one of their clubs. In the true spirit of Indians who always reciprocate the

help we receive, I took up the matter with my District 3000 and it readily came forward with a similar amount to support that project — a kitchen in Poland to feed the poor. This is the true international nature and spirit of Rotary.”

Basker added that today with a per capita income of ₹120,000 (nominal) and adequate foreign reserves, being No 1 in IT and No 2 in steel production, No 3 in auto production, and having the largest youth population in the world, India is in a position to give, and had emerged from a receiving nation in TRF to a giving one;

For some, the beauty of Rotary lies in friendship and fellowship; others feel pride and prestige in wearing the Rotary pin, for some it is an opportunity to develop themselves and to most it is the opportunity to lend a helping hand.

RIDE Bharat Pandya





PDGs E K Sagadhevan, Sunil Zacharia, RIDE Bharat Pandya, PRIP K R Ravindran, Vanathy, Sangita, RIPR Vinod Bansal, PDGs Rekha Shetty and P M Sivashankaran.

retaining a consistent No 2 position in TRF giving for a couple of years now. “This shows how India and Rotary in India has transformed.”

Giving value to members

PDG Vinod Bansal, who was the RI President’s representative at the conference, said RI President Barry Rassin wants Rotary to continue to grow and “give the best possible experience to its members and be useful to your communities through sustainable service projects.”

He said Rotarians needed “to feel they get some value from membership

of a Rotary club. We have to ensure we are transparent and accountable, even as all the while we are changing the lives of the people in our communities.” This could be achieved by setting proper “goals and milestones” by club and district leaders who looked beyond their year, thus ensuring that the positive change they were bringing about would endure for a long time.

Bansal stressed the importance of two points to enhance the Rotary experience for all its members; understand the difference between charity and philanthropy and keep changing with the changing times. “Doing the same

thing again and again cannot take us forward.”

Complimenting DG Ummer and RID 3202 for the “wonderful work it has done in WinS in 1,000-plus schools which will improve the hygiene levels for all those children, giving them dignity and effect a behavioural change”, he said this is the ultimate objective of any Rotary project.

DG Ummer said *Qalb* meant “heart” in Arabic and gave an overview of the projects done by the district, its partnership with the Aster healthcare group to build 75 homes for the flood victims and the WinS project done in over 1,000 schools during his year. Thanking the district’s Rotarians for their close involvement in the district’s humanitarian projects, he said during a recent LN 4 medical camp project, the total cost of which was ₹3 crore, 1,300 handicapped people had been supplied with prosthetic hands. “Each of these costs ₹21,000 and is so good that the recipients can use it to brush his teeth, lift anything, write, cut vegetables, etc.”

He thanked Conference Chair Bijosh Manuel and Co-chair Dr Rajesh Subhash for the excellent arrangements made for the event.

Pictures by Rasheeda Bhagat



From L: RIDE Bharat Pandya, PRIP K R Ravindran, RIPR Vinod Bansal, Sangita and Vanathy Ravindran.

As a Rotarian are you confused about the difference between Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation?

Well, you are not alone, was the reassurance given by PRIP K R Ravindran, now a TRF Trustee, while addressing *Qalb*, the district conference of RID 3202 at Wayanad, Kerala. “Many people don’t know the difference between RI and TRF. For many Rotary is Rotary, so it seems quite confusing,” he said, before demystifying both the entities.

Very simply put, said Ravindran, “we created these two separate entities to get tax benefits from the Income Tax departments in our respective countries.” While TRF has 15 Trustees including four past RI Presidents, RI has on its Board a President, President-elect and 17 Directors. “The two come under different sections of the US tax code. One allows you to make contributions to the Foundation tax-free, the other one allows you to become a member and pay your subscriptions tax-free.”

But Indian Rotarians might well ask that this was for the Americans; how does it benefit us. “Hence we created regional offices all around the world — India, Australia, Brazil, Japan, Canada and UK, so members in these regions can also get some tax benefits under the laws of each of these countries.”

Till 1983, TRF operated as a charitable trust. As it continued to grow, its legal status was reviewed and “we felt we must address some risks if we continued to run it as a charitable trust. For example, as a Trust, the personal assets of the

Difference between RI and TRF

Rasheeda Bhagat

Trustees were subject to be included in lawsuits against TRF. And so TRF evolved into a corporation.”

Rotary International, in layman’s terms, said Ravindran, is the owner of TRF. In other words, TRF is an independent entity with just one corporate member and that member is RI.

To deal with tax structures, an “arm’s length distance” has been created between the two entities. This means that TRF pays RI for its portion of all the services shared, including information systems,

communication and public relations, finance and investment services, and international offices. It even pays for the floor space it occupies in the RI headquarters building in Evanston.

Going down memory lane, he said that thanks to some senior Rotarians (who subsequently became RI Presidents), who were walking down Sherman Avenue in Evanston and saw a building up for sale, and



then brought a proposal before the RI Board to purchase it. RI had acquired One Rotary Centre, its present headquarters, at a cost of about \$25 million, with borrowed funds. Its present worth is over \$100 million or INR 700 crore. “Today it is our biggest and best asset. By Nov 30, 2018, when I last checked, 580 staff are located in this building at our headquarters, 140 at the seven international offices; 151 at our own software development centre in Pune; and 137 directly support the Foundation.”

RI’s income comes from Rotarians’ subscription dues, investment income, licensing fees and building rental — of the 18 floors, 11 are used by Rotary and the rest are let out.

But the Foundation, on the other hand, relies only on the contributions from Rotarians “which we invest for three years and give the money back to you for service projects. Part of the income is used to run the Foundation,” he said.

But while Rotary had these two structures, “the reality is that this

whole organisation was built to support the purpose of our existence — to do good in the world. Only doing this will enhance our image, secure for us the funding we need and bring into our fold the members we require,” he added.

Ravindran said in the last five years, Asian Rotarians have contributed over \$330 million, roughly equivalent to 35 per cent of the total TRF funding of worldwide humanitarian projects. Asia accounts for \$230 million, 36 per cent of all-time annual giving to TRF, second only to the US/Canada (nearly \$246 million), and almost three times that of third-ranked Europe/Africa (\$85 million).

Also, in the last five years alone, Asian districts make up about 50 per cent of the list of top 50 giving districts. Asia is the fastest growing area in the world of Rotary in terms

of membership too and currently accounts for 10,795 clubs with 382,883 members, forming nearly 32 per cent of the total Rotary membership.

“But all of what I am telling you is just statistics, it means nothing. At the end of the day, what really matters is are we making a serious impact in the communities we live in, and through high quality projects?”

A bit of a paradox about Rotarians from Asia giving generously to TRF was that “we come from a region of the world which is not so rich and yet we give generously.” But then this habit of sharing whatever we have with others is common in Asia. “Also, too often we are prone to judge people by their wealth or the cars they drive, and RIPR Vinod Bansal put it aptly when he made a clear difference between charity and philanthropy.” Charity is “emotional reacting to a situation, whereas philanthropy is long-term. You come from a part of the world where you



Rasheeda Bhagat

(From L) Sangita Bansal, RIPR Vinod Bansal, Conference Chairman Bijosh Manuel, Kamarunnisa Ummer, Conference Vice Chair Dr Rajesh Subhash, DG E K Ummer, PRIP K R Ravindran, Vanathy Ravindran, and PDGs Dr E K Sagadhevan, P M Sivashankaran and PDG Barbara Pawlisz from Poland.

do charity at the highest level; in the last one year, the top 10 philanthropists in India have given ₹17,500 crore as charity. This tells you that giving and charity are part of our ethos, whether small or big amounts, and we also believe in this philosophy of sacrifice. People give because they believe somebody out there needs it more than they do.”

Ravindran also spelt out his “fundamental philosophy: When I give to temple, church or mosque, I am never sure if the money reaches Him above. But when I give to the needy through Rotary projects — imaginative, sustainable and big — I am

certain that the money reaches Him.”

The TRF Trustee gave an example of the recent project Rotarians in Sri Lanka have taken up. “In my country, 2,500 children are born with congenital heart defects every year. Some of them may last one, two, five or 10 years, but all of them are destined to have a short lifespan.” Many congenital heart diseases are related to faulty valves, “and to replace a heart valve costs \$2,500–3,000. Animal valves also cost about ₹2 to 3 lakh. So Rotarians in

our country got together to start a human valve bank which was inaugurated last year by Past RI President Ian Riseley. Because ours is a Buddhist country, citizens generously donate their eyes, kidneys and other organs and now we are well-stocked with human heart valves to help children born with defective valves. This is a complete Rotary project — designed and delivered by Rotarians.”

Another Rotary project coming up in Sri Lanka is a large complex to help the training and skilling of children with mental disabilities. This is being done in partnership with two corporates with the

objective of taking care of these children and equipping them with employable skills. “So Rotary is doing very well in Sri Lanka and I can confidently tell you that Sri Lanka would be poorer if Rotary did not exist there,” added Ravindran, urging RID 3202’s Rotarians to “do mega projects, but also show compassion to deal with a single individual to give her relief. You have shown that you were not intimidated by the recent floods and came forward to help the affected people in time. That is the true spirit of Rotary and exemplary service done by your district.” ■

Jaipur Central pays homage to Pulwama martyrs

Team Rotary News

On Feb 14, a convoy of vehicles carrying security personnel on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway was attacked by a vehicle-borne suicide bomber at Lethpora in the Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir. The attack resulted in the death of 40 Central Reserve

Police Force jawans. The terrorist attack has caused a wave of resentment among people across the country.

In remembrance of soldiers martyred in the attack and to promote World Peace, Rotary Club of Jaipur Central, RID 3054, conducted a cycle rally on Feb 17.

About 25 Rotarians participated in the hour-long rally which was flagged off from the Birla Auditorium in the city by D 3211 PDG KS Sasi Kumar, and the rallyists cycled their way through the Statue Circle, Jai Club on MI Road, Jauhri Bazar, Hawa Mahal and concluded at the auditorium. The

Rotarians then paid homage to the martyred soldiers at Amar Jawan Jyoti Smarak.

The rally was organised on the sidelines of ‘Sanidhya’, the two-day district conference that was held at the Birla Auditorium, for which PDG Sasi Kumar was the RIPR. ■



Rotarians lined up in front of the Birla Auditorium in Jaipur, all set for the bicycle rally.

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Bhoomi puja

done for two homes in Kodagu

Rasheeda Bhagat

While the devastation caused by the floods in Kerala got much more media attention due to the number of lives lost, the hilly area of Kodagu in Karnataka, also saw a lot of destruction of property and homes due to landslides.

After providing relief to the affected persons, Rotarians of RI District 3181 have formed a Trust — RID 3181 Flood Relief Fund — to build homes for those

affected by the landslides caused by floods. According to RID 3181 PDG Dr K Ravi Appaji, it is estimated that in the hill station area in and around Kodagu about 4,000–5,000 hectares of coffee estates were devastated by landslides, completely destroying many houses, including those of people working on the estates.

“Hence Rotarians of our district formed this Trust and with contributions

from our members, and Rotarians from neighbouring districts and Rotary News Trust, we have decided to launch an ambitious project to rebuild 25 homes at a total cost of ₹1.25 crore,” says Appaji.

They will be doing this in partnership with the NGO Habitat for Humanity India, for which an MoU has been signed and in the first phase a cheque of ₹30 lakh was handed over to the NGO from the district. With this



RID C Basker at the Bhoomi puja ceremony with PDG K Ravi Appaji (to his right) and DG P Rohinath.



money, six houses, each costing about ₹5 lakh, and with an area of 320 sq ft, will be built in the first phase.

In early February, *bhoomi puja* for two such homes was done in the presence of RI Director C Basker and District Governor P Rohinath. “You

should have been there to see the joy in the eyes of Panchali, the recipient of the first house for which the *bhoomi puja* was done,” said Basker.

Appaji added that the beneficiaries, who had clear titles to the land owned by them were identified with

help from the local gram panchayat leaders and Habitat. While the Rotarians are building houses that were totally destroyed, the Government of Karnataka has also committed to build around 850 houses, including partially damaged houses in the region, he added.

All efforts will be taken to ensure that the houses in this first phase are built by May-end, before the onset of the monsoon, he added. While the homes will now have a single bedroom, there is an option to add one more room at an additional cost in the future.

PDG Krishna Shetty and senior director of Habitat Sanjay Daswani were also present at the *bhoomi puja*.

(Those interested in donating towards this rebuilding of homes project can send their donations to: RID 3181 Flood Relief Trust; A/c no. 0178101016769; Canara Bank, Mangaluru; IFSC Code CNRB0000178) ■

Building peace in troubled times

Team Rotary News

A five-point Action Plan was drafted to promote peace and goodwill through State-level committees which will be formed to organise peace conventions. Besides, students and youth will be exposed to places of worship for better understanding of religions through regular visits.

This was the main takeaway at the three-day National Peace Convention held recently at Gurugram that saw participation of over 30 Rotarians from three districts. DG Gustad

Anklesaria, DGE Dhiran Datta, DGN Gajendra Narang, RID 3040, along with PDGs chaired the sessions. Anklesaria congratulated Rtn Fr Varghese Alengaden, President, National Peace Movement, for his “tireless efforts” in organising the convention each year.

Drawing inspiration from poet Rabindranath Tagore, Alengaden said that we have to “walk alone and work for peace with the right attitude.” Rtn Pradeep Wagh from Pune highlighted Rotary’s



DGE Dhiran Datta (3040), DGE Kiran Lal Shreshta (3292) and DG Gustad Anklesaria (3040) at the Peace Convention in Gurugram.

role in peace building and conflict resolution.

DGE Kiran Lal Shreshta, RID 3292, suggested that the next year’s convention be organised in Nepal and assured full support from his district. During the

valedictory session, chief guest Dr Jill Carr-Harris, a peace activist from Canada, called upon the delegates to be “inclusive in their approach and work for the empowerment of weaker sections of the society.” ■

Shayaris galore at D 3100 Conference

Jaishree

It was *shayari* after *shayari* interspersed with Rotary topics such as TRF giving, Rotary values and membership growth/retention, at *Harsoullash*, the two-day conference of RI District 3100 organised in Meerut. The excitement was palpable as the district has come to life this year after a hibernation of four years. So the Conference Chair Vikas Gurmukh had pulled out all the strings to present a grand event “where there was something for every delegate”, to quote Anuj Agarwal, President of RC Moradabad Central.

A sudden hush set in as the screen came alive with a personalised welcome address from RI President Barry Rassin, congratulating DG Deepak

Jain for the District’s varied activities in WinS and measles prevention. President Rassin called for the Rotarians to encourage Rotaractors to actively participate in their humanitarian programmes and updated the delegates on RI’s new tools such as the tie-up with Toastmaster’s International to develop leadership qualities in Rotarians and Rotaractors. This was followed by a message from RI General Secretary John Hewko.

PDG Sanjay Khemka, RID 3250, as the RI President’s Representative to the Conference, conveyed President Rassin’s message to grow a “healthy Rotary and help it stay vibrant.” He stressed on inducting quality members and observing utmost diligence with Foundation funds.



DG Jain gave an account of the district’s activities and achievements over the months. “Thanks to you, the district has done well in projects related to sanitation and menstrual health management. With your collective effort,





Above: (from L) Rakesh Rastogi, DG Deepak Jain, RIPR Sanjay Khemka, AGs Uma Shankar Garg and Puneet Jain.

Below: (from L) Geeta Jain, Mamta Dhama, wife of PDG G S Dhama, and Minakshi Khemka.

Facing page: RC Bangalore Orchards President D Ravishankar being greeted by S C Agarwal, PDGs Rakesh Singhal, Lalit Mohan Gupta, Shikha Singhal, Vandana Gupta, Bharti and RC Moradabad Central President Anuj Agarwal.



several schools have got sanitary napkin dispensers and handwash stations,” he said, appreciating the Rotarians of the district. Poets such as Saurab Suman, Anamika Amber and Mansoor Usmani recited poems in Urdu which were thoroughly enjoyed by the audience.

DGs Stuti Agarwal, RID 3120, Rajiv Sharma, RID 3030, and Arun Jain, RID 3110, were special guests at the conference. S C Agarwal, past president of RC Moradabad East, was conferred with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

RC Bangalore Orchards President D Ravishankar motivated the Rotarians to give generously to the Foundation and spoke about how he got the inspiration to donate ₹100 crore to TRF. He emphasised on the “individual social responsibility” that should “come from within each of us. Each citizen has his responsibility towards society and he must perform that, not by any compulsion or pressure, but it should come naturally, from within,” he said, amidst huge applause.

Pictures by Jaishree

Maloney launches projects totalling \$6 million in Kolkata

Rasheeda Bhagat

Very rarely will you find an RI President Elect coming to a single club's event; we are really grateful to RIPE Mark Maloney attending an event of Rotary Club of Calcutta Mahanagar, where we are going to launch six projects valued at over \$6 million or ₹40 crore, benefitting about 150,000 people," beamed PRID Shekhar Mehta at a mega event held

by his club in Kolkata to inaugurate these projects.

While four of those projects are of RC Calcutta Mahanagar, the other two were RID 3291 projects. "Have you been at a single event where projects worth \$6 million were being launched? The only place I can compare with today's event is the Atlanta Convention where outstanding amounts were pledged by nations and the Gates Foundation to fight polio." The projects

included skilling of 30,000 widows/ destitute women, 1,000 from each State of India, "and the other five projects are all related to literacy," he said.

Club President Chitra Agarwal said the club projects — including giving e-learning kits to 145 schools and training 300 teachers — are being done with the help of three global grants valued at \$400,000. "Our club has completed 1,000 heart surgeries on children, (Afraz, on whom a heart



From L: DG Mukul Sinha, RC Calcutta Mahanagar President Chitra Agarwal, RIDE Kamal Sanghvi, RIPE Mark Maloney (centre) and Rtn Pradeep Rawat at the distribution of e-learning kits to school representatives.

surgery was performed to celebrate Maloney's visit, was introduced to the incoming President at the meet), provided vocational training to over 2,000 young people, and done eye surgeries on over 10,000 elderly people."

Two other projects pioneered by the club included giving shelter kits to natural disaster victims over the last 10 years, helping nearly 40,000 disaster victims. "Our Bloodline is the place for people who can't get blood anywhere else in Kolkata," she said.

A compelling partnership

Mehta added that literacy "is a programme that has caught the imagination of both the Indian Government and Rotarians in India." While the GoI was putting e-learning kits in 150,000 schools, we are going to do it in 200,000 schools, so our programme is bigger." Some meaningful work was also being done in Happy Schools and sending children back to schools under the Asha Kiran programme.

With the three global grants that Maloney was launching that evening,

"our club today has 10 open global grants. I checked with the RI office and was told that very rarely a Rotary club would have 10 global grants open. RC Belur (in the same district) has eight global grants open and so we might be a district which probably has the highest number of open global grants in the Rotary world," Mehta said.

The e-learning programme done by the club in 100 schools, in addition to the 145 schools, a project launched that evening, would change the way about 75,000 children learn.

He recalled that RILM had signed last year an MoU with the Lord Loomba Foundation of UK, in the presence of its president Cheri Blaire, for skilling 30,000 widows/disadvantaged women. This project will be done through 30 global grants where the Loomba Foundation had committed \$1 million to TRF and Indian Rotary clubs would match it with another \$1 million; jointly the project would contribute \$2 million to the Foundation. The first five grants have already been approved, money for four grants had

TRF has raised and invested over \$4.7 billion and this has enabled Rotarians to promote peace, fight disease, provide clean water and sanitation, save mothers and children, support education and grow local economies.

RIPE Mark Maloney

come in, and applications for five more global grants had been filed already. "Seven of the 10 RI districts which are doing this project with us are present at this meeting," Mehta said, and also welcomed delegates from Nepal and Bangladesh who were present.

The lakh-crore syndrome

Launching the six projects, RIPE Maloney had the audience in splits when he described how grateful he was that he did not have to do the inaugural that evening by "smashing a coconut. The last time I inaugurated a project in India 15 years ago, I had to smash a coconut! And I could never get the coconut smashed! It was a project outside Surat; recently my friend Himanshu (Thacker) took me back to see the water project that I had inaugurated with an unsmashed coconut. I was happy to see it is going very well, is in good condition and giving good water to the residents."

He added: "As soon as I got up here, I asked 'Do I have to smash a coconut? Because if I couldn't do it 15 years ago, I won't be able to do it now!'"

It was wonderful for him to see "several examples of what we can achieve for our local communities with the support of our Foundation. Today





RIPE Mark Maloney with DG Mukul Sinha, RIDE Kamal Sanghvi, PRID Shekhar Mehta and Rashi and Inner Wheel members.

we've seen projects, which when complete, will have a total funding of \$6 million or ₹40 crore. The crore is an interesting concept to an American. We're troubled with your lakhs and crores and you put your commas in different places than we do. It throws us off, you know... and we say: 'I'm sorry that's a million; you forgot a zero!'"

But after about 20 years of coming to India "I think I have finally got it; that a lakh is 100,000. And a crore is... well, a lot more!"

While what RC Calcutta Mahanagar and District 3291 were doing was very impressive, "the striking thing about TRF and the projects we undertake is that they don't all have to be large projects where you measure the value in crores."

Small, yet impactful

Maloney said last October he had the opportunity to visit a project in St Thomas, one of the Virgin Islands in the Caribbean Sea, "where my Rotary club (Decatur) and my wife's Rotary club (you notice that we are in two separate Rotary clubs, my wife says there is no Rotary club in the world big enough for both of us!) have partnered with RC St Thomas East to distribute water filters."

It was a very simple project — handing out manufactured water filters with a two-minute education to the recipients — and it barely cost \$8,000 "which is nowhere near a crore and not even a lakh!" But yet, that very simple project will have a tremendous impact upon the island of St Thomas where the 2017 hurricane had tainted

the water systems, making the water in their taps at home undrinkable. And hence families had to spend anywhere between \$40 to \$150 a month to buy bottled water. The money having to be accommodated in their monthly budget was one thing; what was worse was the problem of disposing those bottles. They were being put into a landfill because the cost of recycling was not feasible as the number of bottles was too small. "And it's too expensive to ship the used bottles someplace else, where the plastic can be recycled, so all those plastic bottles are just going into a landfill on that beautiful Caribbean island."

The solution was giving the families a \$10 water filter. "This is what our TRF helps us do. That is not a global



grant project; it doesn't meet the dollar threshold. It is a district grant project with three clubs getting together and having an impact that could be measured in terms of hundreds of thousands of dollars in terms of saving money for the families and the saved landfill space on the island."

The TRF magic

It was amazing how flexible TRF could be; allowing mega projects costing millions of dollars on the one hand, and also allowing smaller project which make a big impact on a local community. "Since it was founded, TRF has raised and invested over \$4.7 billion for programmes that have a lasting impact on our communities. That money has enabled generations of Rotarians to promote peace, fight disease, provide

clean water and sanitation, save mothers and children, support education and grow local economies all over the world," he added.

Last year, as Rotary entered its second century of service, "we had an ambitious goal of raising \$360 million. At the Toronto International Convention, Trustee Chair Paul Netzel said we have once again a landmark year for the Foundation, setting a one-year record in 2017-18 of raising \$414.7 million. And all this money will be used by Rotarians to do good in the world as we have seen this evening."

Urging Rotarians to keep their focus on eradicating polio from the world and continue to immunise millions of children every year, Maloney added, "It is more important now than ever before not to move on to something else, or let our attention waver before we end polio. That remains our Priority No 1."

The second priority was to encourage every RI District to use its district designated funds, whether through global grants, district grants or polio fund. His message to all incoming DGs was clear: "Now is the time to review your district's funds. Determine how much you have available, and plan how you and your district will use these funds in the coming year. Your Rotarians did not contribute this money to your Foundation to build a savings account, but to do good in the world, and there is no shortage of opportunities as we've seen tonight."

Rotarians' third priority was to strengthen TRF resources, contribution to the Annual Fund, and build the Endowment Fund to \$2.025 billion by 2025. These three priorities will give us a stronger TRF and a stronger Rotary in our second century of service."

Empower women

RIDE Kamal Sanghvi said he was particularly happy to welcome the

Today we are going to launch six projects valued at over \$6 million or ₹40 crore, benefitting about 150,000 people.

PRID Shekhar Mehta

30,000 women who were going to be skilled under the programme as he had "signed that MoU with Lord Loomba."

When women are put at the helm of affairs, conflict decreases substantially. Quoting the results of a study done in 1995 in 72 nations, he said it found that if these countries had invested in 1975 in women's education and skill development, then by 1985 or 10 years later, infant mortality in those countries would have been reduced by 68 per cent. "This is the strength of educating and giving opportunities to women. To reduce conflict, the first step any nation should take is empower its women. We are going to do that through this programme of skill development for women."

Addressing the meet DG Mukul Sinha promised RIPE Maloney that District 3291 will go all out to increase induction of new members in their clubs and ensure retention. "After all, next year, a club in our district will be leading India into the 100th year of Rotary in this country. As the UN celebrates its 75th year in 2020, we will join it in celebrating 100 years of Rotary in India."

PRID Mehta announced that Inner Wheel members had raised \$19,500 for one of the literacy projects. A district project launched on that day was prevention of cervical cancer through vaccination of women.

Pictures by Rasheeda Bhagat

Inspiring projects by a single club in Amravati

Rasheeda Bhagat

During his one-day trip to participate in the PETS and SETS training programme of RID 3030 held in Amravati, Maharashtra, incoming RI President Mark Maloney showed a lot of interest in visiting

the local community projects being done by the Rotary Club of Amravati Midtown, a 40-year-old club with 180 members.

Accompanied by RIDE Bharat Pandya, he was first taken to the Rotary Human Milk Bank and Incubator





Unit put up at the Dr Panjabrao Deshmukh Medical College in Amravati as a joint project of RC Amravati Midtown, RID 3030, and RC Gautier, US, RID 6840, done through a global grant.

Here the nurses explained to Maloney that human milk is taken from lactating mothers and given to babies who have either lost their mothers in childbirth or whose mothers are not able to nurse them due to a medical problem or insufficient milk.

PDG Kishor Kedia explained that there are two units of this milk bank, the satellite unit being some 6 km away from the hospital. "This was the brainchild of one of our members, Dr Rajesh Boob, who is a paediatrician. He felt that so many babies were deprived of human milk for various reasons and we should set up such a bank to help them."

Maloney was introduced to one of the donors, Kavya Jagmalani, who is the wife of a Rotarian from this club. She has donated breast

milk to this unit, and said with pride, "I am so happy to do this for our community. It is a unique privilege that I have as a woman... to be able to help somebody else's baby and a mother who is not able to give her own milk to her child."

Maloney was next taken to a gas crematorium which has been set up by the club in partnership with a club in Brazil and through a matching grant. The crematorium cost around ₹1.4 crore and was inaugurated during 2013-14, when Kedia was the DG, and he donated ₹21 lakh for this project in the name of his parents.

The two RI leaders then inspected a mammography van which tours the surrounding villages to screen women for breast cancer. District 3030 has seen some tough times over stewardship issues. Kedia, a member of RC Amravati Midtown, said that the clubs in the district being barred from accessing TRF funds last year did not deter his club members from continuing their good work in the community. "Last year alone we did projects worth ₹3 crore, and

Above: RIPE Mark Maloney with PDG Kishor Kedia and RIDE Bharat Pandya visiting the plastic surgery camp.



Senior Plastic Surgeon Dr Bharat Shah giving details about the surgeries performed to the Rotary leaders. Club President Sushil Sikchi (second from L) is also in the picture.

Left: Human Milk Bank and Incubator unit at the Dr Panjabrao Deshmukh Medical College.

the mammography van cost ₹1.1 crore.” His personal donation in this project was ₹11 lakh, and “we raised the rest of the money from our club members and other citizens of Amravati.”

Asked about CSR funds from corporates, the PDG said that this isn’t feasible as Amravati doesn’t have many industries, being an agrarian area. But as this is a drought prone region, many farmers have committed suicides and “our club has given Rs 20,000 each to the families — widows or children — of 80 such farmers to help them start a micro enterprise such as a poultry or a goat farm, etc. Last year, we also organised nutritious food for AIDS-afflicted patients.”

The last project to which Maloney and Pandya were taken was the most impressive — a two-day mega plastic surgery camp for 110 people. Conducted in the spanking clean and sprawling Government Superspecialty Hospital in Amravati, the project was led by Dr Bharat Shah, a senior plastic surgeon, who is a member of this club and who has been running such a camp for 25 years. President of the club, Dr Sushil Sikchi, who accompanied the senior leaders, said this being the 25th year of the club’s project, as



many as 110 patients had been chosen for corrective surgery through prior screening.

Maloney, who visited the ward, asked detailed questions on how the patients were selected and what kind of problems were most common. “We conducted a

check-up camp earlier about which publicity was done mainly through social media and word of mouth,” explained Dr Shah, who added that he was assisted by 12 plastic surgeons from private hospitals in Amravati and three surgeons from Mumbai.

What was heartening to see was that apart from his wife, Dr Jagruti Shah, a gynaecologist, who has been assisting him with this camp for the last 25 years, the team of doctors were joined by their 25-year-old daughter Apoorvi, who has completed her MBBS degree

RIPE Mark Maloney with RIDE Bharat Pandya, DG Rajiv Sharma, DGN Shabbir Shakir and PDG Kishor Kedia at the gas crematorium.



course and is now training to be a plastic surgeon.

Asked about the main problems faced by the patients, most of them burn victims, Dr Jagruti explained that some of the patients who had been selected had suffered the burn injury long years ago, sometimes as far back as 20–25 years. “Most of these people are from poor families, many are from the Adivasi belt, interior villages and the neighbouring State too, and when they sustain burn injuries, they cannot afford to get the required operation done. So they go to a public health centre and get some basic treatment which is not good enough.”

Because they do not get immediate or appropriate treatment “they develop complications such as contractures,”

explained Dr Pandya, a surgeon himself.

We saw women at the camp with such contractures which had resulted in some women having their chin sticking to their neck or their elbows fused to their side. These defects will be repaired at this camp “so that we help the

women overcome a double stigma — social stigma due to their appearance and also inability to work when their elbow is stuck to their body,” said Dr Shah.

He added that the camp would also do operations on children born with congenital defects such as cleft palate, fingers stuck together, urinary deformity, etc. The club had raised ₹5 lakh to pay for the material to be used during surgery; while the surgeons volunteered their services totally free of cost, the hospital took care of the patients, their attendants and of course medical infrastructure, including operation theatres.

Dr Shah said that if a total cost was to be put on the camp for the doctors’ fees, the project cost would come to “around ₹50 lakh if the operations

were to be done in private hospitals.”

Dr Jagruti added that of the 110 patients, 22 were second, third, or fourth time patients because the deformities are so bad that the corrective surgery cannot be done in a single procedure. “They are returning to us because they have faith in Rotary and know that we will give them a solution,” she smiled.

The last word has to go to Apoorvi, the young plastic surgeon in the making. “Over the last so many years, I have watched my parents working so hard to serve the community. What they have been doing is so inspiring that I’ve always known that this is my calling,” she smiled, taking a few minutes off from the duties assigned to her.

Pictures by
Rasheeda Bhagat



RIPE Mark Maloney interacting with Ann Kavya Jagmalani, a milk donor, as RIDE Bharat Pandya looks on.



A roof over their heads

Jaishree

People in Kerala are still trying to pick up their lives after the recent floods washed away their belongings. The rains displaced nearly a million people across the State.

“Everything is lost. I have no more tears left in my eyes,” is a common lament that can be heard from every second affected person in the region. Shattered houses, household appliances

lying deep in the rubble and acres of cultivation submerged under the rainwater were a common sight in the aftermath of the floods.

North Kuthiyakode in Ernakulam district is

one such flood-affected region where seven people died. The Rotarians of RC Cochín Harbour, RID 3211, have identified 10 families in a Harijan Colony here to build new homes.



Actor Jayasurya laying the foundation stone for the cluster homes. Member of RC Calicut Midtown Dr Rajesh Subhash (third from left), and Project Chair Dileep Narayanan (fourth from left) are also in the picture.



RID C Basker lays the foundation stone for a home in Wayanad, in the presence of D 3202 DG EK Ummer, PDGs EK Sagadhevan and PM Sivashankaran.

“The area was unapproachable during the floods and most of the residents were evacuated to relief centres. We distributed relief kits, but some families needed homes so we decided to build them,” said Project Chair Dileep Narayanan.

Habitat Technology Group led by G Sankar came forward to design the homes and “we worked out a cost of ₹36 lakh.”

With the help of club member Krishnaprasad who is the CSR Head in Aster DM Healthcare, the club is partnering with the

corporate to build these homes.

The foundation stone for the construction was laid in January by Malayalam actor Jayasurya in the presence of the Club President CV Ignatius, Narayanan and Aster Group volunteers. “The houses will be Rotary’s gift to the families for Vishu (Malayalam New Year that falls on April 14) this year,” he said.

Livelihood restoration

The floods had washed away the source of livelihood for the people

in Parur, a village on the suburbs of Kochi. Workshops, general stores and tailoring shops had just vanished. The people running these small businesses were breadwinners for their families and they had nowhere to go for their next meal after the floods. “We got our act together and decided to assist them in whatever way possible,” said Narayanan. Project Jeevadhara was thus conceptualised and the Rotarians gifted sewing machines, tools and other assistance to 79 families to help them build a

livelihood. The project cost of ₹10 lakh was funded from the club’s own resources.

The club is now awaiting the approval of a global grant to build houses for eight families here.

In yet another ceremony in Wayanad district, where RID 3202 headed by DG EK Ummer has also signed an MoU with the Aster Healthcare group to construct 25 homes for flood victims in the first phase, RI Director C Basker laid the foundation stone in February. ■

Talking about **Real**

Rohan Kamicheril



Food

With its population of more than twenty million, Mumbai is home to some of the most refined dining in India. In this respect, it is not unlike the first cities of countries around the world — from New York to Singapore to Hong Kong. But it isn't at these genteel establishments that Vikram Doctor hunts for the most interesting cooking that Mumbai has to offer, but in its home-cooked meals, its street food and store-bought snacks — in short, in the way that normal people eat.

An encyclopaedic source on the cooking life of Mumbai, Doctor has spent years tracking down and documenting things that many other cooks, eaters, readers, and even fellow food writers routinely take for granted. In his writing, Doctor casts a wide net over the mayhem of topics that make up modern Indian food and its history, from the provenance and shifting fortunes of the sugar cube to the decidedly mixed ways in which the Green Revolution is received by Indians, depending on their ideological inclinations.

His frank, clear-eyed investigation of regional Indian food is as much a testament to his refreshingly old-school journalistic ethics as it is to his belief that one needn't be seated at the most elaborate tables to take part in the enriching and illuminating comestible life of a place. His work reaffirms that life is thriving everywhere in Mumbai — in the work of ingenious small-scale food entrepreneurs; in the cuisines of proud and insular communities breaking out of their isolation through the

act of sharing their food; and in the constant machinery of immigration that draws people of every economic station to the city.

I met with Doctor at his Bandra apartment. His home is lined with bookshelves that are bursting with books. In between brewing me a cup of coffee and offering me a slice of a friend's famous Christmas cake, Doctor expounded on the changing face of food in Mumbai as well as on the ways that change and flux are an essential and integral part of this fascinating, multicultural city.

Rohan Kamicheril: Can you tell me a little bit about how you got into food writing?

Vikram Doctor: I first got into food writing by doing restaurant reviews. But I got bored with that pretty quickly. At that time there wasn't a lot of diversity of restaurants in Mumbai. And restaurant reviewing needs a particular mindset — which I don't have. You need to just be interested in "restaurant food." In India there's a profound distinction between restaurant food and home food and I've always found home food to be much more compelling. Food is an interesting way to look at Indian society. Because everybody's interested in food, you can get anyone talking about it. Food is also a way to connect with people who are often disregarded — women in particular, and servants — people who are further down in the social hierarchy. And their history is reflected in their food.

There are all these dishes that poor people cook for themselves, which are nutritious, tasty, and environmentally sustainable. But they're vanishing.





A Bohra gathering enjoys traditional food from a large thaali.



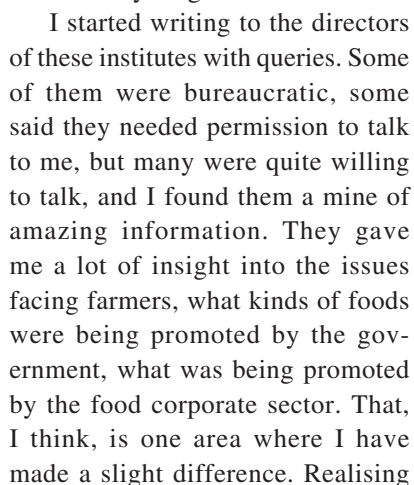
RK: How was it, logistically, making that move from writing reviews to writing about food in this more probing way? And how what you do is different?

VD: It's all just writing. I've been lucky to always have editors who've been supportive.

I think what's different about what I do is I put a little more research into it. As a journalist you're used to researching stories. I've found that there are all these sources of information that people are just not accessing.

People don't realise that there's an incredible network of agricultural research institutes across India. It's





Pulses are nitrogen-fixing, they grow on dry land, they produce income for marginal farmers. And, most of all, of course, they produce our main source of protein. But there's very little done on pulses. I started investigating this and found that the big problem with beans and pulses is that each part of India has its own pulses, which they're fiercely loyal to — or two or three, maybe. And often people won't eat pulses from another part of India. You could do a pulses map of India — so toor dhal in the south, because that's

RK: Do you think that some kind of tension between food and technology is inevitable in a country like India? The Green Revolution, which is often credited with changing the way millions eat, is also not without its critics — for those very same reasons.





VD: Being a food writer in India, you have to keep in mind that you're writing about food in a country where starvation is still a huge issue. This is why you will never find me criticising the Green Revolution. I know it's fashionable, and people like Vandana Shiva go on and on about the Green Revolution — but my perspective is, go back to the '60s, read the reports, read what was happening with food production then. The basic fact is that if there had been no Green Revolution, millions of people would have died. So, yes, many things went wrong with the Green Revolution, it encouraged fertiliser use, and, worse, pesticide use. But a lot of these problems are failures of implementation in the agricultural extension system which was supposed to educate farmers about the proper ways to use things, and in which they miserably failed. So the problems with the Green Revolution are many and the abuses are real and have to be corrected.

RK: Tell me a little bit about where you grew up.

VD: I was born in Mumbai and lived here till I was about twelve and then

Above: Fresh food prepared and served at an all-women's market in Imphal.

Below: In the Punjab even cold coffee is served besides lassi in a brass vessel.





grew up in Chennai and studied in Kolkata for about two years. All my working life I've been in Mumbai.

RK: Has food always been a big part of how you viewed the world?

VD: I think so. My parents are from different communities. My father is a Gujarati, my mother is a Malayali so I grew up in a household with multiple food traditions. The two from my parents, in addition to a third food tradition — which was the food of our servants. We always had cooks, because my mother was a working journalist. I always emphasise this because people

forget that the influence of servants is huge in Indian food. So much food gets produced by them, and influenced by them. We don't like to think about it because we have this lovely image of our mothers cooking everything.

I think that, in one way, not belonging to one particular community has helped me, because I'm an outsider in all these communities. But food is something that everyone loves talking about. So it's always a way to break the ice with people.

But I'm always more interested in talking to women, or to the servants where it's possible. A lot of people talk about food without knowing a lot about how it's actually produced or the circumstances it's produced in. You need to talk to the actual producers. Otherwise it's just these myths about food which get repeated all the time. So much of food writing is speculative. So many of the communities that traditionally produced the food — women, servants — were often illiterate and never wrote things down. So their

traditions are not recorded and hence a lot of what you have is necessarily speculative. But there's a difference between making educated guesses and relying on the same myths all the time. I'm very sceptical when some men talk about food. Many of them have very little idea about the actual production of the food.

RK: Mumbai has been a magnet for a lot of internal immigration in India. Do you find that those communities are changing the way that Mumbai-kars eat?

VD: Every community has changed Mumbai's food to some extent. What's interesting now is how, partly because of the Internet, you're now seeing many more small communities promoting their food — communities that never had much of a visible presence in Mumbai's food scene earlier. Bohra Muslim food is a good example. There's this guy who used to work for Google who started promoting his

Not belonging to one particular
community has helped me,
because I'm an outsider in all
these communities.





Local food at Hotel Imoinu in Imphal.

The ubiquitous
Mumbai falooda.



mother's food on Facebook. He's quit his job now and he runs a blog called *The Bohri Kitchen* and he's made a business out of it. He holds dinners at his house and his mother cooks the food. He's become an entrepreneur. Bohra food was always a part of Mumbai, but it was such a small, insular, and also a rich community, so they never felt the need to sell their food outside the home. Usually it's poorer people who've traditionally sold their food. Rich communities rarely need to share their food in that way.

Being a food writer in India,
you have to keep in mind that
you're writing about food in
a country where starvation is
still a huge issue.

RK: Your podcast was called *The Real Food Podcast*. How do you define real food?

VD: When we developed the podcast we were always clear that we would focus on home food, on the food that people actually ate but somehow never wrote about. We did a podcast about *papads*. There's very little thought about what goes into *papads*, about the difference between *papad-ams* and *appalams* and all the other kinds of *papad*. There's a paradox in how insular people can be about food in India. People are willing to try food when it's very different from their own food. But when it's even slightly similar to their food, they're not interested, because they think, this is just like our food!

So people will try Italian or Chinese, but not only will they not try the food from the State next to theirs, but they'll actually be prejudiced against it. Their objection isn't



Some caterers insist on cooking biryani over a particular type of wood fire because they say that wood and the metal of the utensils they use have an effect on the taste of the finished dish.

just that the food is similar, but that they're making it wrong!

RK: Do you think that there's been some kind of effort to forge a national culinary identity? Has that made it difficult to celebrate the deeply regional cuisines?

VD: I don't know how conscious it's been, but the process definitely has been taking place. Certainly with some groups, you do see a concerted effort to define what is Indian and what is not Indian. You see a lot of that with the whole beef debate.

Another problem is this dichotomy between vegetarian and non-vegetarian food. First and foremost, this term non-vegetarian is a particularly Indian one. And if you're a non-vegetarian it doesn't just mean that you eat meat but you have to eat a lot of meat. You have to eat primarily meat. And if you're a vegetarian, you can't eat any meat. But the truth is that a lot of recipes in India are what I call semi-vegetarian — recipes that are largely vegetarian but use a little bit of meat as a flavouring. For instance, right down the Konkan coast there's a whole range of recipes that are basically vegetables that are flavoured with dried shrimp. And these are quite healthy because they're quite low in oil, and they're completely balanced, but they're vanishing. And this is partly because dried shrimp is



very smelly, so people don't stock it at home or cook it in restaurants. One chef told me, I don't want to cook these dishes in the hotel, because if I did then the whole hotel would smell of dried shrimp. So this whole range of semi-vegetarian foods is vanishing.

RK: So much of meat consumption in India is almost fetishistic. Do you think this is because it's been so suppressed?

VD: People are getting split. It's an example of how a dominant narrative is changing the way we eat. When my grandmother was old, in Chennai, she had these ladies who worked as caregivers and cooks for her. They cooked very simple food for her because by then she was mostly vegetarian. But she knew that they ate meat, so she would give them a little money to make food for themselves, too. It wasn't a lot of money, so they would buy the cheapest stuff they could get. She knew that I was interested in food, so she would ask them to make that same food for me. And they were very reluctant. They said, "How is he going to eat this food?" And I had to say, no,

I really am interested. And then they started cooking all this fascinating food for me. They would cook things like intestines, which are actually widely consumed by Dalits, very poor people, but that's not the food that you'll often see written about.

And no Indian restaurant is going to serve you intestines. But these women would cook beans with a bit of chopped-up intestines, or they would cook dried fish. One of them had an amazing dish of brinjal flavoured with dried fish. There are all these dishes that poor people cook for themselves, which are nutritious, tasty, and environmentally sustainable. But they're vanishing.

RK: Cooking like this often illustrates rituals and habits that are reflective of local cultures in ways that restaurants aren't. Do you think it's unfair or unrealistic to expect restaurant dining to be an engine for a revival of interest in regional Indian food?

VD: A lot of young chefs are interested in regional food. A lot of the older chefs have to work within the constraints of five-star hotels and so



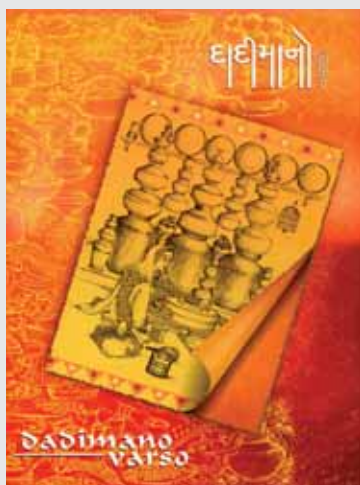
Invaluable self-published food books

On the future of food writing and food books, Vikram Doctor says:

It's going to be fascinating. A lot of people are documenting the foods of small, local communities. I think some of the most interesting recent food books in India have been self-published and this helps people collect their communities' stories.

But it costs money, and hence the more affluent communities can do it. Like *Dadimano Varso*, which is one of the most amazing cookbooks produced in India. It's in Gujarati and English. It was produced by a ladies' association in the Palanpuri Jains community, which has diamond traders spread out across the world. They wanted to document their food, being worried that their traditions were getting lost. And the book is extraordinary beyond the typical books of this sort.

Another example of a great self-published book is *The*



Indecisive Chicken, which was produced by Prajna Desai. This came out of the Dharavi Biennale, an attempt to find different ways to look at lives in Asia's largest slum, and is certainly one of its most famous. Prajna is an art scholar by training who was looking at a way to connect with women in the slum. She was interested in cooking and realised that, as always, food is a way to get women to start speaking about their own lives.

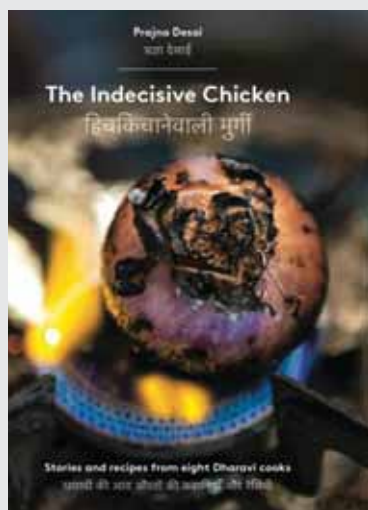
So she got a group together and had them talking about their lives and the food they cook daily and she got them to document it and also had it photographed. The result is quite amazing because it's a chronicle of regular food that people cook in their homes. It has community influences, too, like when a woman from a potters' community heats a shard of broken pottery and stirs it through her *baingan bharta* to give it an earthy flavour.

But mostly what you get from the recipes and images is a sense

of food as it is really lived. But Prajna had to produce it herself since no publisher would take it on as a commercial proposition. It says something disappointing about publishers, but it's still empowering that she could still do it.

Or there's YouTube and all the thousands of Indian cooks who are putting up cooking videos on it. This is really important when it comes to things like breads, where videos allow you to capture the hand movements that are so important. Or there are channels like *Village Food Factory*, where a guy with a camera captures the food his father makes — and shows how food is actually cooked in villages, and that there is this whole non-vegetarian side to Tamil cooking. It's not always in the form of writing, but it is documentation.

Such documentation gives you the chance to connect dots and start assembling larger pictures. There are so many stories to be told in Indian food. You have stories about community, about the caste and gender hierarchies and how they affect cooking. There are stories about environmental change and how food is changing as a result of it. The increasing access to packaged foods is creating its own changes, too. Sure, some of the effects may be problematic and that can be pointed out, but there's also the sheer fascination in how it is all working itself out. There's so much to write about!



they have to produce food that caters to luxury tourists and that's distorted things. But even the way that food is produced in a large catering system is fascinating. Wedding caterers, for example, have their own distinct food. There's a lot to be learned from chefs and caterers. Like the difference that cooking with different kinds of wood makes. Certain caterers will insist on cooking their biryani only over a particular type of wood fire because they say that wood and the metal of the utensils they use have an effect on the taste of the finished dish.

While stainless steel is ubiquitous nowadays, especially in households, many caterers will still use traditional metals. Stainless steel came into Indian kitchens for one reason: because it was easy to clean. It doesn't react with acids. And a whole generation of housewives, who'd



Traditional Gujarati delicacies.



grown up as daughters-in-law and spent large portions of their lives washing brass utensils, took it up. If you've ever washed a brass vessel you know it's a real pain. You have to use tamarind water and really scrub it. And that's how stainless steel entered Indian kitchens. The *kabbadiwallahs* would go around from door to door exchanging brass vessels for stainless steel. And they had this whole barter scheme so no money was involved. Many of these women who didn't control money, but who did control utensils and saris, were able to do these barter schemes and get stainless steel into their kitchens.

It's much easier to take care of, it's lighter, it's easier to clean. But it's not a good cooking medium — it doesn't conduct heat very well, which is why many caterers have resisted stainless steel and stuck to copper or brass or tin. They insist, correctly, that in order to get a particular taste, they need those utensils. Temple cooking is still done to a large extent in traditional vessels and with traditional utensils.

Courtesy www.onceuponatiffin.com

Pictures by Rasheeda Bhagat

Designed by N Krishnamurthy



Rotary makeover for Kovalam village

V Muthukumaran

One of the objectives of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is to make India an open defecation free (ODF) country. But it is easier said than done given the enormous challenges being faced by policy planners, civic officials and the voluntary sector working towards this aim. For example, a majority of the 2,400-plus families in Kovalam, a village panchayat spread over nine hamlets and located 24 km from Chennai on the scenic ECR highway, don't have a toilet in their homes and they are used to defecating either on marshlands or open fields.

But this is changing with RC Chennai ECR, RID 3232, adopting the village and setting up 32 toilets. During their preliminary study, the club members found that across the 4 sq km-large village, there are just over 800 toilets for a population of over 8,000 including 4,000 women.

"So our members came together to plan and execute this project in this village," says Ravi Kandasamy, Project Chairman.

Membership Director Rafiq Sait, Club President Anjan Rangarajan and



Project Chairman Ravi Kandasamy with a beneficiary family at the Kovalam village.

Photo: V Muthukumaran

Secretary Ajit Nair discussed features such as the ODF objectives, providing sanitation facilities, drinking water, improving green cover, delivering healthcare and offering vocational skills to the jobless youth at Kovalam.

When the project took off in the latter half of 2017, "the task of setting up functional toilets seemed huge as even public urinals were in disuse and most of the families can't afford the sanitation facility. Also, the mindset to maintain and use toilets in a proper way

was non-existent," says Kandasamy.

The club augments its resources for building toilets through fundraisers. Each toilet costs ₹32,000 — while the club's contribution is ₹20,000, the balance is a grant from the Central government under the Swachh Bharat scheme.

A family should be below poverty line, have a clear title deed over the property and its breadwinner should have an Aadhaar card to become eligible for the Rotary toilet here. "We have roped in a

team of local youth skilled in construction and they also help us in building a database for expanding our project," says Nair.

A detailed survey is being undertaken to understand the existing conditions and basic facilities that are needed on a priority basis. "We aim to complete at least 100 toilets by December," he says.

Abundant resources

Despite having six ponds and a lake, besides eight overhead tanks (OHTs)

with capacities ranging from 50,000 to one lakh litres, the villagers don't have access to safe drinking water. "This village has street taps installed by the panchayat, but they run dry as the OHTs are in a state of disuse with no one pumping water into these storage tanks," says V Lalitha, a 65-year-old villager.

Her family of four, with two children, is the recipient of the first model toilet built by the club outside their thatched house. "Rotary has changed our life for good with a toilet, but we have to fetch at least 12 pots of water daily from a common well in the morning for our daily chores. We have requested them to lay a pipeline for regular water

supply at our house and in the toilet," she says.

Kandasamy adds that the revenue records also point out that there are nearly 30 hand pumps and few common wells across the village, but most of them are neglected and in dire straits. "For effective implementation, we are forming core groups consisting of local youth who will help in maintaining the facilities for the community." The Rotarians will make regular visits to ensure that sanitation units are put to optimum use and are in good condition.

More funding is expected by joining hands with other clubs and filing a global grant application with TRF, he says. A reverse osmosis plant

is being considered for providing drinking water for the villagers.

Other programmes

The Anns of the club are training the women of the village to make handbags and artificial jewellery. "We are now mulling over setting up an evening clinic with a service-minded doctor offering consultations and free medicines."

An Interact club is planned at St Joseph's HS School, a 200-year-old institution started by a Portuguese missionary in Kovalam. The children will be taught good values and practices dear to Rotary which will percolate down to their family members, he adds. ■

Empowering women in Bilaspur

Team Rotary News



PDG Vivek Tankha (centre) and RC Bilaspur Queens President Perna Surana with beneficiaries of Project Pinkline.

Rotary Club of Bilaspur Queens, RID 3261, in association with the Bilaspur Police, are helping destitute women in Chhattisgarh become self-reliant under an initiative named Pink Line. It is a global grant project, executed with RID 5300, USA and TRF, where electric rickshaws were given to 15 needy women in the first phase. The total cost was around \$32,000, of which \$10,000 was contributed from

RID 3261's DDF; \$5,000 from the DDF of RID 5300; and RC Bilaspur Queens President Perna Surana gave \$1,270; the rest was matched by TRF. The initiative will help 75 underprivileged women to be financially stable, said Perna.

The e-rickshaws were handed over to the women by PDG Vivek Tankha, in the presence of DG Nikhilesh Trivedi, PDGs Harjit Singh Hura, Subhash Sahu and Rakesh

Chaturvedi. PDGs Raghada Khoury and Michele Driebe from RID 5300 were also present. The women were given driving lessons and licences, and trained in self-defence skills by the police. To keep the women drivers' identity distinct, the Bilaspur police have provided them with pink uniforms and is working on tie-ups with schools and colleges for pick-up and drop services, especially for girls and women. ■

Be vigilant against Polio

The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International commenced its own version of 'Mission Impossible' in 1985, with its Polio Eradication Programme — PolioPlus. In 1988, it became a partner with WHO, UNICEF and the US Centers for Disease Control in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI). Rotarians across the world were enthused by this worthy cause and contributed by loosening their purse strings and their wholehearted participation in the National Immunisation Days (NIDs).



The booster dose to TRF's quest was provided by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which continues to match the funds raised by Rotary for Polio eradication on a 2:1 basis.

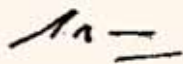
Since the initiative launched in 1988, the incidence of Polio has plummeted from about 350,000 cases in 1988 to 33 cases of the Wild Polio Virus in entire 2018, all of which were reported either from Afghanistan (21) and Pakistan (12).

Besides Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria, labeled as endemic countries, the situation in Niger, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo and Papua New Guinea is also being closely monitored.

Five years ago, on March 27, 2014, WHO declared India 'Polio-free'. But we just cannot afford to drop our guard because the Wild Polio Virus is literally at our doorstep. So we need to plan finances and reach the last mile, which, in telecom, refers to the final leg of the network that delivers service to customers. This last mile is the least efficient and the costliest.

With the Wild Polio Virus at our doorstep, complacency will only endanger two decades of our efforts. Rotarians across the world are united and contributing towards the effort to eradicate the menace of Polio from our world. When achieved, this will be only the second disease, after small pox, to be fully eradicated.

Whilst the rest of the world is contributing its share, we as a country need to show more resolve in terms of contributions. Every Rotarian and every Rotary district in India must contribute financially towards the global initiative to rid the world of this crippling disease. With the virus at our doorstep, our vigilance should never cease.



Gulam A Vahanvaty
Trustee, The Rotary Foundation

WinS launched in 20 Bengal schools

Team Rotary News

Twenty government schools across Howrah, Hooghly, Paschim Medinipur and Murshidabad will get better sanitation facilities and safe drinking water, thanks to the global grant initiative of four clubs of RID 3291 — Belur, Calcutta Chowringhee, Calcutta North Suburban and Chandannagar. The clubs are partnering with six clubs of RID 5160 — Danville/Sycamore Valley, Alamo, Danville, Richmond, San Ramon and San Ramon Valley of the US, and TRF for implementing the WinS project worth \$127,000 to be completed in 18 months.

The project was launched by West Bengal Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi at the Rotary Sadan in Kolkata on Feb 23, Rotary's 114th anniversary in the presence of DG Mukul Sinha, DGE Ajay Agarwal and Dr Ranjit Chakravarty from RC Danville/Sycamore Valley.

Menstrual health management training is also an integral part of this project, said Project Chair Vishnu Dhandhanian and the meet explored the idea suggested by Dr Meenakshi Bharat of RC Bangalore West, RID 3190, to donate reusable pads that last for 2–3 years. "They have no chemicals, are environment-friendly and cost only ₹200," he said.



West Bengal Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi launching the WinS project in the presence of DG Mukul Sinha, DGE Ajay Agarwal.

Pune Rotarians set up a human milk bank

Jaishree

PDG Virpi Honkala from Finland inaugurates the milk bank facility in the presence of Dr Bhagyashree Patil, Vice Chancellor, DY Patil Hospital; PDGs Leila Risteli, Matti Honkala; Project Director Ravi Rajapurkar and PDG Deepak Shikarpur.



The DY Patil Medical College Hospital and Research Centre in Pune now has a dedicated Mother's Milk Bank, thanks to the initiative of RC Nigdi-Pune, RID 3131. The 100-member club joined hands with Rotary Clubs of Finland and Wien, Austria, and TRF, to establish this life-saving facility at the hospital costing \$65,700. It involved the import of sophisticated equipment to preserve and provide human milk in its safest form for neonates.

Three years ago, the DY Patil Hospital, which delivered at least 20 babies a day, was operating a milk bank on a small scale. "We were on the lookout for a partner to implement a human milk bank project. That's when the then president of RC Nigdi Dr Shubangi Kothari discussed the issue with the Centre Head Dr Shailaja Mane and things started rolling," says Club President Subhash Jaysinghani. Kothari appointed past president Ravi Rajapurkar as director for the project which sought a global

grant as the estimate worked to over \$65,000.

Prashanth Deshmukh, the then governor, and DRFC Deepak Shikarpur contributed \$13,000 from the DDF and Rotary clubs from Finland came forward to help as "we had already partnered with them for a phaco machine eye care project in Ethiopia through PDG Virpi Honkala."

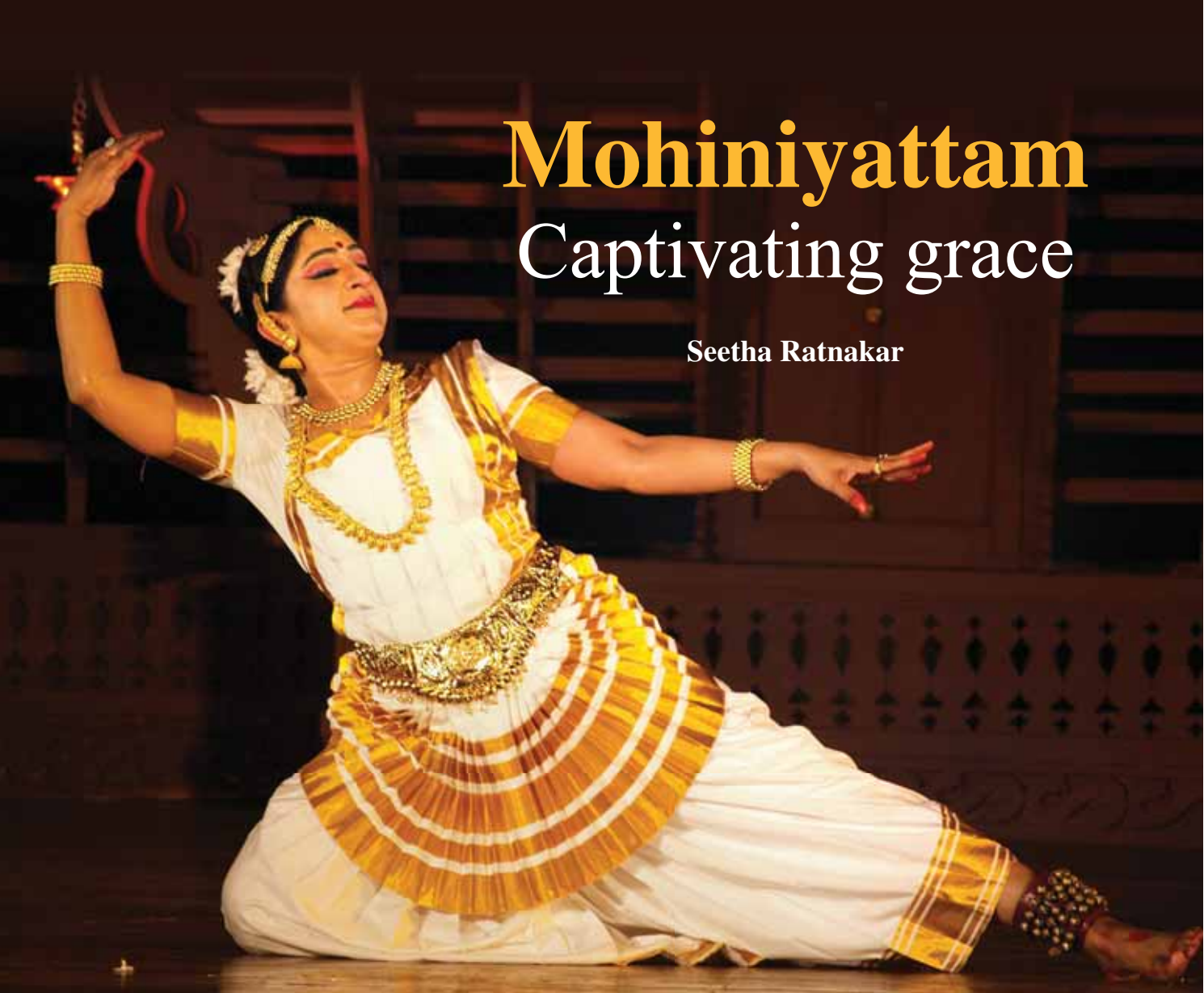
With Virpi's initiative, five districts — 1360, 1380, 1390, 1400 and 1410 from Finland — contributed \$15,000, while RC Wien, RID 1910, Austria, pitched in with \$4,000 and Rotary Clubs of Pradhikaran Pune, Chinchwad Morya and Akurdi contributed \$500 each. With a matching amount from TRF, a sophisticated milk bank with state-of-the-art equipment took shape at the hospital.

The milk bank now has a capacity of pasteurising nine litres of milk in two hours, which will benefit not only the infants in this hospital but also the newborns in other hospitals in the vicinity. "The hospital estimates that

the facility will annually serve 1,800 newborns from this hospital, along with an additional number of 2,500 babies from neighbourhood hospitals and clinics," says Jaysinghani.

An MoU signed with the hospital declares that the hospital will bear the operating cost and provide the facility free for newborn babies. The centre has a research and training facility which will promote awareness among mothers and the community at large of the need for breastmilk and its impact in reducing infant mortality. "We reiterate the fact that apart from it being the ideal nutritious food for neonates, human milk reduces the risk of diseases in both mother and child. The human milk bank is the best solution for women who have excess milk," he says. Needless to say the wonders it does for babies whose mothers can't breast feed them are immeasurable.

The facility was inaugurated in January in the presence of PDG Virpi and six other Rotarians from Finland. ■



Mohiniyattam

Captivating grace

Seetha Ratnakar

The gentle swaying of luscious coconut trees in the breeze dancing to the rhythm of the undulating waves of the Arabian Sea lapping Kerala's coastline is truly a wondrous sight to behold. These intrinsically graceful movements are reflected in the lilting movements of Mohiniyattam, a traditional dance performed by women in Kerala. The dance is based on *Lasya* or the feminine aspect of dance attributed to Goddess Parvati, the consort of Siva. The name is derived from Mohini, an avatar of Vishnu who appears as a divine beauty during a battle between the *Devas* (good) and the *Asuras* (evil).

She uses her supreme charm to procure the *Amrita*, the nectar of immortality, and distributes it among the *Devas* thus ensuring that only good will prevail in the world.

Mohiniyattam was initially known as *Thevaradiachi* which means the *daasi* or servant at God's feet and originally a temple dance performed exclusively by women. It was banned by the Dutch during their regime in Kerala and later revived by Maharaja Swati Tirunal Rama Varma who

brought the court dancers to Kerala and composed many new *padams* to create a new repertoire. The anti-naught movement by the British in 1892 created a further decline of classical dances all over India and stigmatised Mohiniyattam in the princely States of Cochin and Travancore. The supposedly seductive gestures of the temple dances were caricatured in *The Wrongs of Indian Womanhood* published in the beginning of the 20th century and a ban was imposed which was partially repealed in 1940. Mohiniyattam was revived and reconstructed by the nationalist poet Vallathol Narayana Menon who helped repeal the ban and initiated its

preservation by establishing the Kerala Kalamandalam. This iconic institution has honed the dancing skills of many legendary Mohiniyattam artists who have taken this art to many parts of India and also foreign shores. Kalyanikutti Amma was one of the legendary Mohiniyattam alumni of Kerala Kalamandalam and was married to the Kathakali maestro Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair. She was instrumental in resurrecting the dance from a near-extinct state and including it in mainstream Indian classical dance by giving it a formal structure. Her book, *Mohiniyattam - History and Dance Structure* is regarded as an elaborate and authentic documentation of the dance form.

Mohiniyattam is traditionally an expressive solo dance or *Eka-harya abhinaya* performed in the *Kaisiki Vritti* (graceful style) that is prescribed in Bharatha's *Natya Shastra*. The repertoire is similar to Bharatanatyam and the seven main items that are performed are *Cholkattu* (invocation to Goddess Bhagavati), *Swara-jati* or pure dance, *Varnam*, where the dancer elaborates a story or theme, *Padam*, describing emotions, *Tillana* or pure dance, *Shloka* and *Saptham*. The dance can be recognised by the basic posture of standing with feet wide apart and knees bent outwards and the gentle swaying movements of the body. The footwork is also soft with sliding movements and hand gestures that synchronise with the rhythm. The lyrics of many traditional songs are in *Manipravalam* which is a mixture of Sanskrit, Malayalam and Tamil. The costume is stunningly beautiful in its very simplicity. It is usually an off-white and gold dress made of cotton and ornaments of the region are worn as embellishments. The hair, tied in a knot

on the left side, is decorated with jasmine flowers. The stone carvings of dancing girls adorned in similar attire found across many temples in South India establish a rock solid connection between dance and the temples.

Dr Kanak Rele was a Gujarati from a business family who started learning Mohiniyattam after her marriage at the age of 28. She was a Kathakali and Bharathanatyam dancer before she became a Mohiniyattam artiste. She had her initial training from Guru Rajalakshmi from Kerala Kalamandalam on the suggestion of her Kathakali guru 'Panchali' Karunakar Panicker and later delved deeper into the art under the tutelage of great gurus like Chinammu Amma, Kalyanikutti Amma and Kunjukutti Amma aided with a grant from the Sangeet Natak Akademi and a scholarship from the Ford Foundation. She is the founder-director of the Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya in Mumbai, which trains students for a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Mohiniyattam

and is recognised as a research institute by the Ministry of Science and Technology. "My desire to keep the tradition of Indian classical dance alive made me establish Nalanda. I don't want an art lover or learner to face such problems which I went through during my learning period. It used to be an oral tradition. People should know that apart from dancing on stage we have so much to study to know the subject well. Mythology, temple architecture and dance therapy are all important subjects that I have introduced in Nalanda" she said.

Kanak Rele has played a key role in the revival and popularisation of Mohiniyattam. She brought a scientific temper and academic rigour to it. Her concept of body kinetics in dance is a pioneering innovation that disaggregates body movements in Mohiniyattam using a notation system. "This idea of wanting to learn the science behind the body kinetics



of dance came upon me when I got involved with specially-abled children. I began working with the children under experts in physiotherapy, orthopaedics, learnt anatomy and related it to dance. It was an eye-opener. I began to dissect each and every move of the limbs, muscles, nerve twitches, etc. and deduced my theory on body kinetics in dance.”

Bharati Shivaji, Founder of the Centre for Mohiniyattam, New Delhi, says that the dance did not have an identity earlier because, a little this way, it would lean towards Kathakali, a little that way, towards Bharatanatyam. Like in *Nritta*, for example, “I felt the technique of Mohiniyattam

was very limited. When I attended a workshop with the Krishnattam group in Guruvayur, I found the *Nritta* is so beautiful. It is so *lasya*.”

Dancer Gopika Varma says, “Mohiniyattam is a highly evolved dance where the *bhava* (emotions) and *abhinaya* (expressions) play a pivotal

I’m against this ‘classical dance’ nomenclature. It is very British.

Mohiniyattam exponent **Kanak Rele**



role where there is no such thing as *jathis* (rhythmic footwork patterns). It requires an exclusive sense of involvement and exceptional *tala* pace as the dance is to be done in a calculated slow and steady motion and there is always this temptation to quicken. It calls for contained, conscious and restrained pace setting if the dancer is to maintain perfection in *laya*, *tala* and *katha*.” Since the dance has no external trimmings like elaborate costumes or gimmicks, “we have to bank entirely on our eye language, facial expression and hand gestures throughout the three-hour recital with sway and swinging movements/footwork.”

Mohiniyattam has grown from solo to group presentations and the themes have also moved from regional to a global level. Another interesting development is breaking stereotypes by welcoming male dancers into its fold. The cascading dance movements, melodious music and alluring costume harmonise to create an ethereal effect. Little wonder that it is described as the dance of the enchantress.

Kanak Rele says, “I’m against this ‘classical dance’ nomenclature. It is very British. The word ‘Shastra’ envisages more than mere classicality; it also means science; the science of body movement which translates itself into an art through imbibing certain aesthetic characters aided by music and rhythm. This when taken to its highest level of conclusion culminates in a bliss which is akin to spiritual enhancement.”

Photo courtesy: wikicommons.org

Advanced cancer care in Gorakhpur

Team Rotary News

Rotary Club of Gorakhpur Midtown, RID 3120, has upgraded the Hanuman Prasad Poddar Cancer Hospital and Research Institute in the town with a '5-channel HDR Brachytherapy cancer treatment unit'. This facility, also called internal radiation therapy, involves placing a higher dose of radiation to kill cancer cells and shrink tumours in a shorter time than the conventional external beam radiation therapy.

Project Coordinator Niten Agrawal recalls how a visit by Shailaja Chaturvedi, a psychiatrist from Sydney, to her home in Lucknow ushered in such advanced facility to the hospital. When Shailaja expressed her desire to her brother Sunil Chaturvedi, the then District Secretary, and member of RC Lucknow Rajdhani, "he connected me to Shailaja because our

club was looking for resources to help this hospital." And a meeting with the hospital's director Dr H R Mali took the proposal forward. "This is only the beginning. We have plans to upgrade the hospital's other facilities soon," says Agrawal.

Dr Shailaja offered \$100,000, her brother Sunil contributed \$10,000 and the then DG Ranjeet Singh sanctioned \$20,000 from the DDF. Club member and Founder of the Niine movement and Niine Sanitary Napkins Amar Tulsiyan contributed \$35,000, while \$25,000 was collected from other members. With assistance from DRFC Pramod Kumar and TRF Cadre Indumati Gopinath, the global grant project was executed with support from RC Butwal, RID 3292, Nepal, and it has replaced an outdated 3-channel brachytherapy unit in this 36-year-old hospital which gives free

cancer treatment for the underprivileged across eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and adjoining Nepal. The new machine costing \$275,000 was exported from Swiss manufacturer Varian.

The new facility was inaugurated by Oncologist Somasundaram Subramanian, founder and CEO of the Eurasian Federation of Oncology, Moscow, in the presence of DG Stuti Agarwal, IPDG Ranjeet Singh and DGN K K Srivastava. Addressing the Rotarians, the oncologist promised to get more support to the hospital. Club President Vijay Prakash Agarwal and Secretary Sudhir Agarwal promised to organise cancer awareness and screening camps around Gorakhpur and announced the club's plans to set up Rotary Rural Community Centres in the region to sensitise people about various diseases and their preventive measures. ■



From L: Krishna Kumar Tulsiyan, Amar Tulsiyan, IPDG Ranjeet Singh, DGN K K Srivastava, Dr Shailaja Chaturvedi from Australia, DG Stuti Agarwal, Sunil Chaturvedi and Niten Agrawal with the new brachytherapy machine.

GUINNESS WORLD RECORD

Education Secretary Nila Mohanan launches the event in the presence of Club President Ajay Menon, Secretary Ashley Delaney, PDG Dilip R Salgaocar, AG Prakash Pilankar and DRR Nishita Pednekar.



RC Mapuca creates a Guinness record

Team Rotary News

Rotary Club of Mapuca, RID 3170, has become another Rotary entity to create a Guinness World Record. This time it is for forming the 'Largest Human Representation of a Text'.

There was a twin objective in attempting this record; Rotary International's 114th birthday in February, which coincided with Rotasia 2019, the South East Asia conference for Rotaractors, which RID 3170 was hosting for the first time in Mapuca, Goa. The current DRR Nishita Pednekar is also from the Rotaract Club of Mapuca.

RC Mapuca President Ajay Menon said the planning for this attempt began in Oct 2018 and "our research focused on a record that can be realistically broken and one that will boost Rotary's

public image, while highlighting Rotary's humanitarian service.

It was decided to try for "the largest Human Representation of a Text", the existing record for which was created in Wessex, UK, with 268 people. To create such a record, each individual forming the entire text should hold an alphabet, numeral or punctuation mark, with a space being denoted by a person holding a blank placard.

A core team of 20 Rotarians from RC Mapuca led by Raaj Khalap was formed and a total number of 962 persons including Rotarians, Rotaractors, Interactors from three schools, Anns and Annettes, all from Mapuca, and the Rotaract delegates attending Rotasia, were selected to form the record-breaking human text.

Menon said that officials from the Sports Authority of Goa and retired teachers were roped in to help and adequate videography and other technological inputs stipulated by the Guinness World Records team were used and the final submission made.

Education Secretary of Goa, Nila Mohanan, presided and the club has now got an official communication saying that they have successfully created a new Guinness Record.

The core message of the text, pertained to RI's 114th anniversary; the Rotary motto *Service Above Self*; RI's mission to promote world understanding, goodwill and peace; its mission to eradicate polio and this year's theme: *Be the Inspiration*. ■

The core team.



Message from RI South Asia Office

January 2019 Club Invoice

Non-payment of financial obligations for 120 days (four months) will result in termination. Terminated clubs must pay up all their outstanding dues, along with a reinstatement fee of \$30 a member within 150 days to get reinstated, after which they can maintain their name, history and charter and will be eligible to receive full services of the association. Terminated clubs that have not fulfilled the reinstatement requirements within 150 days of termination shall lose their original charter and will not be eligible for reinstatement.

Contribution to Rotary Foundation (India)

Donors who wish their contributions to be included in Rotary year 2018–19 must contribute no later than June 30, 2019. Donors making contribution to Rotary Foundation (India) should mention their Permanent Account Number (PAN) in their contribution form/letter or attach the scanned copy of the PAN card, for reporting contributions received during current financial year.

Grant reporting deadlines

Interim/final reports for activities up to Mar 31, 2019, for all open grants must be submitted by May 31, 2019, or the grant will become overdue on reporting. New grant applications from clubs/districts, as well as their international partners, will not be accepted by the Foundation if there is an overdue report for any Foundation grant from those clubs/districts.

Below is a chart showing supporting documents to be submitted in original to the Foundation along with online report submission.

Reporting Documentation	Interim Report	Final Report
Submit report online	Yes	Yes
Upload bills/invoices/receipts	Not required	Yes
Upload undertaking	Not required	Yes
Upload beneficiary information	Not required	Yes
All original hard copies required		
Original Utilisation Certificate and receipts/payment statement	Yes	Yes
Bank statement in original/certified true copy	Yes	Yes
Refund, if any	Not required	Yes

CSR-funded global grants

For CSR-funded global grants, in addition to the requirements for global grants mentioned above, the following are required along with interim/final reports:

- Project photographs
- An undertaking from beneficiaries for receipt/maintenance of facilities

Timely receipt of all reports will help CSR team at SAO to comply with provision of submission of report to the corporates within standard timeframe.

Paul Harris Society (PHS)

The Paul Harris Society became an official Rotary programme in 2013–14. The members of PHS are dedicated donors who share a desire to give on a sustained basis and empower Rotary clubs to change lives in their own communities and around the world.

The membership of PHS has doubled since its inception and as of December 31, 2018, it has 22,525 members. India ranks No 7 in PHS membership.

Every Rotarian, Every Year

Every Rotarian is encouraged to make a personal gift to the Annual Fund and participate in a Foundation grant or programme every year. The Annual

Fund is the primary source of fund for TRF. Contributions help Rotarians carry out a broad range of local and international projects making their communities better.

The State of Rotary Membership — 2018–19 midyear update

No two clubs in the Rotary world are the same, and yet many of them share similar membership challenges. The State of Membership Midyear Update reports on how we are doing halfway through 2018–19 and suggests ways to address some common membership challenges so we can finish the year strong. Visit www.rotary.org to download a 15-slide Power Point presentation. It can be shown as it is or regionalised to create a customised presentation for club members or for sharing it at PETS or other in-person training events.

Help your club earn a Rotary Citation

Clubs can track their achievements and report them to Rotary using resources such as Club Administration, Rotary Club Central and Rotary Showcase, and ultimately earn a Rotary Citation. Citation achievement guides for Rotary clubs, Rotaract clubs and Interact clubs can be downloaded from RI website and through My Rotary. ■

Flower Power

Jaishree

Ever wondered if flowers have a power to calm the mentally-ill? The patients at the Richmond Fellowship Society in Bengaluru have proved that it certainly does.

This Holi, Bengaluru is all set for an organic riot of colours, thanks to the patients of the Richmond Fellowship Society, a 32-year-old NGO that cares for people with severe mental illness, who have made 300 kg of colour powder with

flower petals this year. Beyond that, what is more significant is that this 'Green Skill Project' has brought a vast transformation in the patients. You may call it the Flower Therapy. And from the environment point of view, the project promotes waste recycling too.

Three years ago, Craftizen, an organisation that provides craft skill training and livelihood for unemployed, floated an idea to Dr S Kalyanasundaram, a psychiatrist,

to train patients in making colour powders from flowers. "I agreed to try this exercise more as a therapy for the patients and told them that our interest is only to train patients and not in large-scale production," says Dr Kalyanasundaram, who heads the centre.

Discarded flowers, collected from temples, festivals and marriage halls, got a new avatar with this endeavour. A team from the centre goes around and collects used



flowers from various spots. The inmates were taught to de-petal the flowers, group them according to the colours. Each flower gives a different colour: roses for the red, pink, white and yellow; chrysanthemums for yellow, white and lavender; tulsi for green and



Flowers being de-petalled by the patients.



marigolds for yellow and orange. “The colours we get after powdering dried petals are similar to the original colour of the flowers, maybe a shade lighter,” explains the doctor.

The petals are dried in the shade, “not in sunlight as they will lose colour,” and are powdered separately in a pulverizer. Additives are added to retain colour, and then they are packaged for sale.

The activity has been a huge success with these patients suffering from chronic mental illness such as bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, obsessive compulsive disorder, autism and intellectual disabilities. Dr Kalyanasundaram gives the example of a woman who suffered from schizophrenia and was prone to screaming at people for no reason. “For months, she was aloof, watching from the sidelines as others de-petalled the flowers at the vocational training hall. Suddenly, one day she came forward and said, “*Nanu bartini,*” (I too will join.) She has been with this project for over a year now and her family says that

she is much calmer.” Flower power had a similar effect on the rest of the patients too.

This skilling-therapeutic project has won Dr Kalyanasundaram many accolades — including a British Medical Journal award last year. With 47 years of experience in psychiatry and treating mental illness, he has been with the centre for 30 years now on an honorary basis. “The satisfaction that I derive working here cannot be measured,” he says.

Last Diwali, the team made Rangoli powder with the same concept. The flower show organised at the Lal Bagh on the sidelines of Independence and Republic days are popular in the metro and the authorities give a huge number of dried flowers to the centre. “Last year they gave us 100 kg of fantastic red roses,” smiles the doctor.

The activity has caught on well with the patients so much so the centre is planning to give cash incentives to them post Holi and Diwali for their participation. “It will be a morale booster and will help them feel proud to say that they have earned it,” he says.

Apart from flower powder, the centre offers various other vocational activities such as making greeting cards, paper cups, paper bags and tailoring to engage patients. The tamboolam bags and cloth bags made out of used saris sell like hot cakes, says the doctor.



The Society, founded by Elly Jansen in Richmond, the UK in 1959, is a worldwide organisation with its presence in 30 countries and has three centres running under it — a day care, a short stay and a long stay home. ■

WinS impact at Amravati school

V Muthukumaran



DG Rajiv Sharma inaugurating the handwash station in the presence of Club President Rajan Subhash Silhi and AG Subhash Yadav.

A handwash station and drinking water facility installed by RC Amravati Indrapuri, RID 3030, at Pragati Vidyalaya, a government primary school, was inaugurated recently by DG Rajiv Sharma. More than 250 students will benefit from this facility. A well feeds sufficient water for the school's needs and the club has installed water filters to ensure safe drinking water for the

students and staff, said Club President Rajan Subhash Silhi.

Since inception in 2001, the club has executed at least four WinS projects installing 12 handwash stations with drinking water units. Six toilet blocks costing ₹4 lakh have been built at Mahuli village adopted by the club, and the money was raised through a Rotary Utsav. In addition, the club distributes school bags to about 1,000

children from under-privileged families each year, he added.

The 43-member club is popular in Amravati for the rainwater harvesting work they undertake each year during July-August before the onset of monsoon. "We take up recharging of wells in about 35-40 houses each year and this is our signature project," said Silhi. With this on-going activity for the past 10 years, the club has enhanced Rotary's image.

Eye camp

A mega eye camp was organised at 14 schools in the city with the help of Dr Atul Kadhane, a past president of the club. More than 13,000 students were examined, and 1,655 students were given further treatment free of cost. "The entire cost of eye check-up and follow-up treatment at the hospital would have exceeded ₹30 lakh; but all the expenses were borne by Dr Kadhane," said Silhi. ■

Why the last mile is so important

with Michael K McGovern

International PolioPlus Committee Chair

Diana Schoberg



1 There were more cases of wild poliovirus in 2018 than in 2017. Should we be discouraged?

No, not at all. We've always expected the number of cases to fluctuate somewhat as we get closer to zero. We've gone four straight years with fewer than 100 cases per year. That's an indicator of great progress. With dedication from governments and Rotarians in areas still affected by polio, we'll get there.

2 Why is it so difficult to eradicate a disease like polio?

Remember that even in the United States, where the polio vaccine was readily available, it still took 20 years to become polio-free. And the areas we are working in now don't have health systems that are as well-developed as in the United States.

3 What challenges are you seeing now?

We have been working intensely in the endemic countries — Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan — for a number of years, and some of the citizens in those countries are getting concerned that we are spending money on polio eradication when they have so many other needs. There's some resistance

to keep on receiving immunisations for polio, and polio alone. Our challenge is to find ways to provide other services to the citizens and children so we still have the parental support we need — to provide the “plus” in PolioPlus.

4 What role does armed conflict play in those areas?

It makes the logistics of immunisation far more difficult. The Global Polio Eradication Initiative partnership is not only dealing with governments — we're dealing with anti-government elements as well. While we've worked to gain everyone's trust and support, we've had areas that were inaccessible to immunisation teams for months and sometimes years at a time.

5 Do immunisation teams know when they miss children? Or are there children they don't even know about?

I think we have a good handle now on knowing when and where we're missing children. The challenge is to keep reducing the number we miss. In Nigeria, we have done a lot of work since we were surprised by the discovery of several polio cases in Borno State in 2016, two years

after the country had last seen a polio case. We now know through GPS mapping where the children are, and we are working with authorities there to make sure all children receive the polio vaccine.

6 Where are we seeing successes?

We haven't had any cases of wild poliovirus anywhere in the world in nearly five years except in the three endemic countries. And in Nigeria, it's been almost three years since we had any wild poliovirus cases, and those occurred in a small area of the country.

7 What's the most important thing Rotarians should know?

I've been extremely impressed with the dedication and persistence of Rotarians in Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan. They are working hard to make sure polio is eradicated. It's pretty amazing what they do in those countries.

Rotarians should continue to be optimistic and to support eradication. We also need Rotarians to bring the need for continued funding to the attention of their government leaders. We can't lose sight of the goal.

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From R: Atul Bhide, Club President Nilesh Puranik and PDG Jayant Kulkarni with beneficiaries in one of the villages.

Thane's Sanitation Crusader

Jaishree

He has been instrumental in constructing 621 individual toilets, benefiting over 4,000 people across three villages in Thane district of Maharashtra, including one in an anganwadi in Sogaon village.

"It is not about just building toilets; it is more important to get people to use them," says Atul Bhide, member of RC Thane Hills, RID 3142, who has also been featured in Aditya Birla Capital's calendar and diary. The Department of Post acknowledged his

sanitation project, 'Right to Go' by issuing a special cover and cancellation in 2014.

As president-elect in 2012, Bhide zeroed in on a signature project — building toilets. Between Dec 2012 and Mar 2013, along with a team of Rotarians, he visited 100 villages "which were stinking, as people were defaecating in the open. None of the houses had toilets."

So he started talking toilets to villagers and after great difficulty convinced them. By the time he

took over as club president, he had constructed 10 toilets, and during his tenure all the 250 families in Sogaon got their toilets. "From the beginning he and his team made sure that the people used the toilets and that these were not meant to be store rooms. "We made sure that they understood that we were there because they wanted us. Nothing can be achieved through compulsion. The drive has to come from within. And in each of the three villages, we were able to achieve that. Now toilets are part

of their home and are used for the purpose they are meant for.”

The club has a database of all the 622 toilets, and the villagers are involved in the maintenance.

To develop a sense of ownership, each family pitched in Rs 3,000 for the toilet and pitched in with labour too.

He soon roped in Indian-born-American Dr Renuka Desai to get her club, RC Cherry Hill, RID 7640, New Jersey, involved as an international partner. They have contributed over \$157,000, with a chunk being her

personal contribution. Soon two more clubs from the US came on board.

After a short break, Bhide is back on the job and has applied for another global grant to construct 170 toilets in the village Aghai. He acknowledges

*It is not about just building
toilets; it is more important to
get people to use them.*

Club President Nilesh Puranik, a civil engineer, who has been an “immense support right from the start. He visits or sends his staff to every site where we are constructing toilets to ensure quality and standard.”

He is now also working on providing handwash stations, promoting the ‘Tippy Tap’, which he came across in the Satara, Panchgani and Wai region when he was heading the CSR department of an MNC. It is a simple contraption designed with four bamboo sticks and a plastic container and can be assembled by the beneficiaries. ■

A Cyclothon to spot local talent

Team Rotary News



DG Nikhilesh Trivedi (left) and Champion cyclist Minati Mohapatra flagging off the rally.

Rotary Club of Rourkela Royal, RID 3261, hosted its annual Cyclothon to popularise cycling as a commuting and fitness medium, and identify talented cyclists and groom them to compete in professional cycling events at State,

National and International levels. DG Nikhilesh Trivedi, along with eight-time cycling champion Minati Mohapatra, flagged off the programme which had a participation of 1,200 cyclists including 200 students from government schools and 40 police personnel.

The event was co-sponsored by Mahanadi Coalfields Limited. The Police Department of Rourkela set up a safety stall to create awareness on road safety. All participants received helmets which they could take back home and use for their daily rides. Cash prizes were given to winners. ■



Insider, Outsider

Sandhya Rao

A recent book about North-East India shows how ideas of belonging and unbelonging emerge and are often misplaced.

At the local beauty parlour recently I met a bespectacled 19-year-old whose disarming smile instantly got us chatting. “Are you from Nepal?” I asked, as she attended on my mani-pedi needs. “Darjeeling,” she replied. Right, I thought to myself, Nepali doesn’t mean she’s Nepali. Nepali means Indian too. And vice versa.

Of course, this little interaction is no metaphor for *Insider Outsider: Belonging and Unbelonging in North-East India*, a collection of writings edited by Preeti Gill and Samrat. Besides, Darjeeling is in West Bengal; we know that. However, it does pierce a pinhole into a largely unexamined slice of our political, geographic, social, economic and cultural history, among others, and by extension, the idea of India. The insights the book offers as you peruse its 17 entries are unsettling; they reiterate the lack — my lack, at any rate — of information, knowledge and sensitivity regarding an integral part of our country.

Coincidentally, just before I discovered this book at a bookstore, someone had asked me: Why do we

use the term ‘north-east’ to describe the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh? If Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan are ‘west’, and Bengal, Bihar, Sikkim ‘east’, these seven states are also ‘east’.

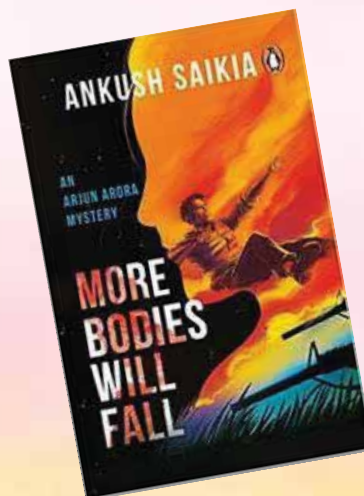
It’s a valid question, and attempting to answer it seems to only push the ‘North-East’ further away from India. We forget that these seven States were carved out fairly recently, and few remember or even know that Shillong, now the capital of Meghalaya, was once

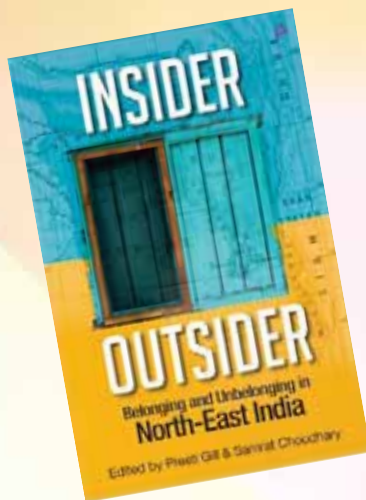
capital of a more all-encompassing Assam. But that’s not the only thing I learned from this book, although much of it recalls the city with an aching nostalgia, and is a mix of political and social history.

In recent years, young people from the region have moved to other parts of India in search of jobs and better opportunities. While some of them have settled comfortably, many others have been subjected to discrimination and abuse. *Chinki* and *Momo* are words often used to address or describe them, and nobody cares that they come from different States and tribes in the same way that anybody from south of the Vindhyas is a *Madras*i. Or a non-tribal is *dkhar* in Shillong, *bangal* in Garo Hills, *mayang* in Manipur or *vai* in Mizoram. The presence in this region, predominantly of people of Bengali origin, is the source of the insider/outsider sentiment, and the book attempts to examine this in various ways through different eye and experiences.

I didn’t know, before reading Suhas Chakma’s essay titled *Outsiders in Their Own Lands*, that Chakmas, traditionally Buddhist, and other non-Muslims comprised 98.5 per cent of the population in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHTs) and had lived there for generations. When Partition happened, they wanted to be part of India, but the CHTs were given over to Pakistan. Soon, Chakmas living in undivided Assam, including Mizoram and Tripura, became targeted as foreigners. Those living in Arunachal Pradesh were safe for a while — until 1980 when the State government passed a resolution prohibiting their employment.

Most of us remember the unique protest by the ‘mothers’ of Manipur after a young woman, Thangjam Manorama, was raped and murdered while in army custody, and Irom Sharmila, who fasted for 16 years demanding the withdrawal of the





AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Powers Act) giving the Army free rein in what the State deems a 'disturbed area'. In *Phenomenon of Impunity*, Thounoujam Brinda shows how Manipur has been governed by a series of repressive ordinances affecting basic human rights of citizens, resulting in State brutality and a litany of officially sponsored massacres, even as, consequently, over 30 armed insurgent groups operate there today.

Home and identity are matters close to every human being's heart. Mahua Sen (*Chronicles of a Death Untold*) and Ankush Saikia (*Man in the Middle*) examine home and identity in unique ways that touch the reader. As Mahua Sen writes, "The Bengali Hindu population of Shillong is the only community in India to have suffered double displacement on communal grounds, twice within a generation. We inherited the collective fate of the Punjabi Hindus of West Pakistan and the Kashmiri Pandits. In the majoritarian spectrum, if Kashmiri Pandits are the acne of secular India, the Bengali Hindu of Shillong is the genital wart. Nobody knows you have one." When xenophobia was at its worst in Shillong from 1979 onward until the early 1990s, "the vital point deemed unworthy of consideration was that we were not

conquerors. We were refugees with a right to citizenship." She recalls the ghastly, cold-blooded rape and murder on the open streets of a pregnant Gauri Dey as she took a walk one fateful day in 1987. "Over the years," Mahua writes, "I have reached a position where what happened in Shillong is less important than how the world chose to ignore it. Eventually, brutality will always be outplayed only by one other thing — the indifference of others towards that brutality. As descendants of refugees are bound to ask, who owns the land more than whom, and why?"

While we drive ourselves crazy over Kashmir, we ignore the cries of help emanating from the East. On what basis do we choose to listen to some voices, and not others, insider or outsider?

Saikia writes crime fiction and his detective, Arjun Arora, with a Punjabi father and a Nepali mother, comes with all the social history and personal baggage of such a lineage and its possible future course. This thread, says Saikia, runs through all the books featuring Arjun: *Dead Meat*, *Remember Death*, and *More Bodies Will Fall*. "It seemed to me," Saikia explains, "that there was a good opportunity to treat through fiction, to dramatise the North-Eastern experience in Delhi (and also the outsider's experience in the North-East), especially in the context of those vexed words one hears nowadays — 'racism' and 'discrimination'."

Other pieces talk about the transfer of Sylhet to what's now Bangladesh,

Chinki and *Momo* are words often used to address or describe people from the North East, in the same way that anybody from south of the Vindhyas is a *Madrasi*.

and with it a whole culture and way of life being displaced. We see the effects of colonialism and how early efforts by missionaries to communicate with local populations through publications in their own tongues made them standardise the languages in ways that often trivialised other languages and/or dialects. Language is an important tool, and very vulnerable to exploitation. Samrat, one of the editors of the book, provides this beautiful passage in 'How We Got Here': "The spoken language of the common people remained local dialects until mass media and mass education began to change that in the twentieth century... A traveller travelling from Sibsagar to Kolkata by boat ... would encounter a gradual change in the spoken language, with Assamese changing by degrees into Bengali. En route, the traveller would hear Kamrupi dialects such as Goalpariya and Rajbongshi that have elements common to both standard Assamese and standard Bengali."

This sense of a continuum, a gradual convergence that also contains divergence, is reiterated when Sanjoy Hazarika, in *Insiders, Outsiders and Those In Between*, refers to the joint citizenship of Indians and Myanmarese. Despite the preeminence of the Inner Line Permit, he discovers, people living on the 2,000-odd km border with Myanmar, especially in Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur, can go 15 km into Myanmar without travel permits on the basis of a simple identity marker.

Contradictions, paradoxes, prejudices... all these prevail in abundance all over India. It just appears to be more pronounced in what we call the 'North-East' mainly because we know so little. *Insider Outsider* opens our eyes and our hearts. Meanwhile, I can't wait to meet Arjun Arora.

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

Designed by Krishnapratheesh S

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**RI Exchange
Rate - March 2019**
\$1 = ₹69

Rotary at a glance

Rotarians : 1,219,438
Clubs : 35,848
Districts : 538
*Rotaractors : 157,811
Clubs : 9,827
*Interactors : 549,677
Clubs : 23,912
RCC : 10,238

**Estimated*

As on March 15, 2019

Membership Summary

As on March 1, 2019

RI District	Rotary Clubs	No of Rotarians	Women Rotarians	Rotaract Clubs	Interact Clubs	RCC
2981	114	4,710	210	41	232	199
2982	68	3,056	152	67	117	53
3000	128	5,387	508	232	682	201
3011	82	3,498	737	47	115	25
3012	90	3,613	823	54	131	56
3020	76	4,039	229	54	466	349
3030	91	4,912	609	81	325	166
3040	95	2,095	234	33	135	142
3053	68	3,055	539	9	57	96
3054	128	6,263	1088	77	324	475
3060	102	4,325	555	59	127	138
3070	103	3,137	332	47	164	58
3080	79	3,400	282	73	226	109
3090	78	1,995	65	36	39	122
3100	78	1,932	117	12	78	146
3110	115	3,815	320	28	52	104
3120	75	3,197	388	31	63	52
3131	132	5,495	1220	94	310	90
3132	98	3,894	397	38	214	151
3141	95	5,629	1347	111	271	84
3142	95	3,512	659	76	205	64
3150	95	3,572	360	60	248	109
3160	72	2,550	148	27	48	81
3170	126	5,710	630	56	346	164
3181	79	3,581	319	56	268	114
3182	84	3,340	255	28	278	95
3190	127	5,065	692	125	369	52
3201	143	5,395	346	95	137	49
3202	130	5,065	258	76	445	47
3211	139	4,457	289	6	98	128
3212	99	4,100	324	95	292	142
3231	80	3,341	288	48	216	305
3232	117	4,821	766	114	349	82
3240	88	3,114	397	47	166	170
3250	101	3,926	698	59	217	176
3261	73	2,641	343	8	105	43
3262	91	3,431	420	37	77	76
3291	147	3,731	725	83	136	600
India Total	3,781	148,799	180,69	2,320	8,128	5,313
3220	71	2,004	286	76	211	73
3271	88	1,524	259	51	19	16
3272	145	2,451	380	50	38	38
3281	208	5,774	853	221	94	189
3282	148	4,263	475	118	48	42
3292	117	4,587	703	121	129	113
S Asia Total	4,558	169,402	210,25	2,957	8,667	5,784

Source: RI South Asia Office

Students say No to Drugs in Bikaner

Team Rotary News

Rotary Club of Bikaner Marudhara, RID 3053, and the Rajasthan Police, put together an awareness programme to address drug abuse among adolescents in rural Rajasthan. Rotarians and police personnel urged the student community to join the campaign against drug addiction at various awareness programmes organised by the club for over 15 days.

Through interactive sessions, the students learnt the facts about drugs and how to step out when faced with the challenge.



Rotarians with students pledging against drug abuse.

Addressing the students, IG BL Meena said, “Young boys and girls easily become victims of drug addiction. This will critically impact their lives.” Club President Punit Harsh added

that they were pleased to partner with the police and introduce this “important, education programme which will equip the students with the skills and knowledge to prevent abuse before it begins.”

With the cooperation of the Rani Bazar Industry Association, an awareness programme was conducted for taxi drivers who later pledged against the use of drugs. ■

Rotary blankets for migrant workers



Rotarians distribute bedsheets to field workers.

Reaching out with timely help for the deprived people and engaging the less fortunate children are the highlights of the all-women RC Gargis Kolhapur, RID 3170. The Rotarians donated 75 new blankets and bags full of used clothes in good condition for the migrant population

who work in the sugarcane fields in the city.

“Their children don’t even have proper clothes to protect them from the winter chill. Most of them could not attend school as they have to go along with their parents in search of work,” says Sujata Lohia, Club President.

In another initiative, the club members are taking care of the education needs of 35 special children at the Swayam School and, along with members of Interact Club of Maitreya of Kolhapur Public School, distributed white canes for the 40 visually-challenged children of Andh Shala. ■



RC Pondicherry Central — RID 2981

Over 8,000 people attended a Star Nite programme to mark the 30th year of the club. The club, in association with the Alpha School, organised 'Art of Parenting' as a public image project to celebrate Rotary's 114th year. More than 500 people took part in the event.

RC Rasipuram Royal — RID 2982

A mega polio awareness rally was organised by this new club which saw a turnout of over 800 students from schools and colleges. The Anns of the club took part in the event which enhanced the image of Rotary in the city.



RC Gandhi City Wardha — RID 3030

Sixty bicycles were distributed to meritorious students of a rural area in the presence of PDG Mahesh Mokalkar. A large number of Rotarians took part in the event.

RC Pudukkottai City — RID 3000

An anaemia and diabetes screening camp was organised in association with Athma Blood Bank at Adapangaram Chathiram village. Over 200 villagers were screened and given consultations by the doctors.



Matters

RC Greater Vidisha — RID 3040

A set of furniture was donated to a government school through a global grant executed in partnership with RID 2041, Italy and TRF. A teacher training programme was also implemented in the school.



RC Yamunanagar Riviera — RID 3080

The Rotarians distributed large umbrellas to roadside vendors and cobblers to shield them from the sun.



RC Faridkot — RID 3090

Shoes and sweaters were distributed to students in various government schools in the town. The staff thanked the club for this thoughtful action as the children hail from underprivileged families that cannot afford such basic necessities.

RC Moradabad Central — D 3100

A 'Say No to Plastic' campaign was organised at Fatehpur Vishnoi village. The club members distributed cloth bags to the households and discouraged the villagers from using plastics of any form.



RC Ahmedpur — RID 3132

A water purifier costing ₹1.4 lakh was donated to Parchhanda village in partnership with a local Trust. With a capacity of 1,000 litres an hour, the purifier will benefit around 50,000 people.



RC Guntakal – RID 3160

A RYLA was organised for school students in partnership with the Inner Wheel. Children of a primary school were given new slates and a tree plantation drive was taken up by the Rotarians.



RC Perumbavoor Central — D 3201

D G A V Pathy inaugurated a kitchen constructed by the club at Marthoma Lower Primary School in Krariyeli, a small village in Ernakulam district. The facility will help provide hot food for students at the school.

RC Mysore Vijayanagar — D 3181

A team led by the club's past president HM Harish won the first prize — a cash award of ₹2,000 and a shield — at the Rotary Awareness Quiz being hosted by RC Mangalore Central for the last 13 years. PDG B Devdas Rai was the quiz master.



RC Sivakasi Central — D 3212

During the DG's official visit, the club donated a napkin incinerator worth ₹30,000 to the Coronation Girls School in the town as part of its efforts to usher in better hygiene among students. An iron box was donated to a needy person.

RC Ambalpady — RID 3182

Sanitary pad incinerators were installed at 25 schools and colleges in the town benefitting 4,800 girls. The project is executed in association with RC Central Chester County, Lionville, RID 7450, USA.



Matters

RC Katpadi — RID 3231

In partnership with the local government, the club organised a dengue awareness camp and presented a tricycle to a beneficiary. They also organised a tree plantation drive at K V Kuppam village.



RC Malda Central — RID 3240

An immunisation camp was held at the Malda Medical College and Malda District Hospital to mark the World Polio Day. A seminar was organised in the presence of DG Sayantan Gupta on the occasion.



RC Pataliputra — RID 3250

A fully air-conditioned hearse van was dedicated to the people by former State Minister Shyam Rajak in the presence of PDG Sanjay Khemka and other Rotarians. The van is being operated by Maa Vaishno Devi Seva Samiti.



RC Sundargarh Town — RID 3261

A mega health camp was organised with a panel of eight doctors who screened over 2,000 patients for various ailments. The club distributed 70 shawls to mentally-challenged women at a special home.



RC Calcutta Mid South — RID 3291

After an evaluation, the club donated 50 pairs of desks and benches to a government primary school in Dhaska village at a cost of ₹73,000. The club got financial assistance of ₹47,840 from RC Battersea, Brixton and Clapham, UK, to execute this project. DG Mukul Sinha was present at the event.

Compiled by V Muthukumaran
Designed by L Gunasekaran

In Brief



No more *dhindhora*

Soon, the customary beating of drums announcing auction of an attached property, will be a thing of the past. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed to replace 'archaic'

methods, such as beating drums and public auction for disposing attached assets, with more efficient ones such as newspaper advertisements and e-auctions. It is mandatory, according to the IT Act, to proclaim the attachment order and affix a copy of the order on a conspicuous part of the property and on a notice board of the office of the Tax Recovery Officer.



'Eggboy' gets financial support

Around ₹30 lakh has been raised so far in an online fundraiser for Will Connolly who slammed an egg on Australian Senator Fraser Anning's head for blaming Muslim immigration for the recent terror attack in two mosques in New Zealand. The fundraiser was started to help fund Connolly's "legal fees and more eggs."



Nari Shakti, Word of the Year

The Oxford Dictionaries announced 'Nari Shakti' as the Hindi Word of the Year 2018 at the Jaipur Literature Festival. The phrase was chosen by a panel as it "has attracted great attention and reflects the ethos, mood or preoccupations."



No Swiggy lunch in schools

A circular to parents from a popular school in Chennai, forbidding them from ordering lunch for their children through online food apps, went viral over social media recently. "It is a question of security. I cannot let random people come to the school and deliver food. We generally discourage children from bringing junk food for lunch or snacks," explained the Principal in the circular.



Calvin Klein's Nepali transgender model

Anjali Lama, a transgender, has recently bagged the campaign for Calvin Klein, making her Nepal's first transgender, among only a handful worldwide, to model for an international brand. She burst into the fashion scene in 2017 when she walked for Lakme Fashion Week, which took her three attempts over two seasons before she was finally included in the brand's pool of models.

Better technology to the rescue

Team Rotary News

Better technology and innovative ideas are now being used more and more by Rotary districts in India to train incoming district officers. According to the staff at RISAO, the DGEs of at least two RI Districts, 3170 and 3240, have tried to use “new age technology tools” during their recent training programmes for their club and district officers. “Apart from the in-person training event, they also used internet-enabled conferencing tools to connect with RISAO staff members — who provided live training modules — in these training events. The participants liked these new innovative training techniques and several other districts are also planning to use similar practices as their training tools.



RID 3170's training event was attended by more than 180 delegates who included club presidents, secretaries, trainers and assistant governors. Apart from DGE Girish R Masurkar, District Trainer PDG Vinay Pai Raiker and other district leaders were present.

The officers of RID 3240 were given orientation and training in person as well as over a web-conference with RISAO staff during the District Training Assembly at Burdwan. It was attended by more than 150 Rotarians and the innovative practices were welcomed by the participants. ■



Creating better awareness among girls

Rotary Club of Sonapat Midtown, RI District 3012, under its project ‘W-1000’ trained and skilled 1,000 girl students from government schools in and around Sonapat, Haryana, with lessons aimed at building their confidence and motivated them to achieve bigger goals.

The girls were sensitised about menstrual hygiene and the Rotarians distributed sanitary napkins among them. “Not many can afford sanitary pads as they come from poor economic



A police personnel demonstrates karate to students in a school.

background,” says Club President TN Tiwary. So the club, in association with a corporate Brake Parts India, identified

needy students hailing from underprivileged families and worked out an arrangement to provide monthly supply of

napkins for them. Sanitary napkin vending machines have also been installed in various government schools.

An awareness drive on HIV, breast and cervical cancer was conducted by the club. A team of specialist doctors addressed the students and informed them about the availability of free cancer screening facility in the club.

Sessions in career counselling and legal awareness, and training in self-defense and yoga were few other activities done by the club members to benefit girl students. ■

Give love a chance to step forward

Bharat & Shalan Savur

Can your rudeness keep a person awake? Can his rudeness keep you awake? Yes. A recent research done at the Portland State University in the US says it most certainly can and does. Sarcasm, put-downs and abuses, prick, hurt, wound. The mind continually replays the hurt more than even the words. You can get up at midnight even if you've finally fallen into an exhausted sleep, troubled by your seething emotions. Apparently, rudeness doesn't keep only you staring at the ceiling all night from your bed, it keeps your partner awake as well.

I remember that years ago, when I was sarcastic to somebody, she said gently, pleadingly, "Don't say tha-a-t!" That soft reproach went straight to my heart. The need for the shield of sarcasm fell away. From then on I watch my words and tone. When I slip, I feel uneasy and ask myself, "Which part of me did that come from?" While the question itself serves as a self-controlling mechanism, it is interesting to really learn from exactly where, it came from.

A wave in the ocean. Fascinatingly, Albert Einstein wrote how by falling into the delusion of being separate from one another — separation being an "optical illusion of our consciousness" — we see things

only in that limited framework. That is, when I am rude, I become like the deluded wave in the ocean barking at another wave, "You are blocking my view!!@@**! Get out of my way." Similarly, when I feel my ways or values are being disrespected, I get disconnected from my larger sense of self and react rudely from my smaller sense of self.

Once I knew where my rudeness came from — my smallness, I could justify my sarcasm self-righteously, but I'd only go deeper into my smallness. It's not a good place to be in — there's pain there, numbness, denial, a crying without tears, isolation, fear, brittle hardness, tension and depression. All these put tons of unnecessary strain and suffering on our biology.

Thankfully, my friend's "Don't say tha-a-t!" led me to a better place. Before I said anything that could be construed as remotely rude, I questioned my intentions. Such a self-reflective stroll within oneself is very pleasant. You come across a wordless teaching that illuminates by showing you your better silent self. You deeply understand that silence is golden and speech can be too. Ever since, I've entered a new life of gentle peacefulness, well... at least, most of the time!

Be humble, be gentle. The renowned philosopher J Krishnamurti (JK) was

a great example of genuine courtesy, grace and refined behaviour. When he was erroneously greeted by his chef Michael Krohnen at 1.15 in the afternoon with a "Good morning, Krishnaji," JK replied politely, "Good morning, Michael." And when JK accidentally spilled water on the kitchen floor, he exclaimed with spontaneous remorse to Michael, "Oh, I'm sorry. I spilled some water. I'm so sorry, sir. I'll wipe it."

Humility is one of the most beautiful seeds present in all of us. It keeps us calm, composed and dignified. When we are rude, we inject spiteful, petty, presumptuous vibrations in the universe and mess it up. When we are humble, we emit vibrations that are gentle, sweet, unassuming that freshen the atmosphere. To be humble is an art — you expect nothing, you appreciate and are thankful for everything. Even the mighty ocean waits with hushed humility for the rivers to flow into it. We could be coming across an attitude of rudeness daily. Here, it is important to know that it is drawn to you when you resonate to it. Consequently, towards the end of the day, you may find yourself feeling disgruntled and irritable. Rather than raise more negative vibrations by blaming others, it is more effective to become aware that we need to do something about our button being pressed because it

is there. Our mental system has to be healthy for our physical immune system to be healthy. And we have to be watchful to ensure that the uneasy, unpleasant feeling does not trigger a serious health issue.

Step back from drama. There are two beautiful ways to stop ourselves from being rude or being affected by another's rudeness. One, mentally take a few steps back, detach yourself from the drama so that you are not a part of it. We grow through love, not through abuse. When we step back, the strong urge to be scathing or retaliate fades. It keeps you free of angry palpitations inside and it keeps the atmosphere free of unpleasantness. When only one hand claps, it can only touch silence. In stepping back, you give love and all that's good and healthy and whole to step forward. When you remember this, the stepping-back becomes more spontaneous, more natural.

The second way is to simply offer all the rudeness we carry in us to a higher, greatly intelligent idea — in our mind — like peace. It helps to experience peace, to taste the sweetness of serenity flowing like ambrosia through you.

For me, it was a progression: I didn't like my heart palpitating to my agitations. This was followed by intensely wanting life to be simple, for somehow, simple seemed synonymous with peace... as I understood vividly that even in simplifying life, conflicts still continued and marred the peace, I longed for harmony — and, yes, I backed off from drama and remained there... It's an incredibly quiet and reassuring inner place to be in.

Finally, practise the lovely art of paying attention every now and then to the things that you appreciate in life. Researchers in Boulder Creek, California, say that this practice allows positive emotions to emerge and slows the heart rate to a healing

rhythm. It also makes the brain release beneficial neurotransmitters. The Dalai Lama often pauses in his busy day to gaze at the picturesque scenery outside the window. Whenever JK returned to his Pine Cottage in Ojai, California, he'd gaze with tender affection at the different coloured flowers swaying on the walkway. He'd gently hold an open, crimson blossom in his cupped palms and breathe in its perfume. I read about a wheelchair-bound person

who "attaches" his mind to thoughts on "God and fairy tales". That's also a terrific idea, truly a wonderful way to live. After all, you can't be rude to a sweet, little, delicate fairy, can you?

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

Designed by N Krishnamurthy



Snapshots

D Ravishankar, President, RC Bangalore Orchards, RID 3190, gave a cheque for Rs 10 lakh to Innocent Divya, District Collector, Udagamandalam (Ooty) for the education of the children of the local tribals — the Todas — of the Nilgiris.



RIPN Sushil Gupta presented the Award for Exemplary Humanitarian Service to PRID Ashok Mahajan conferred by RI District 3142 at their District Conference held recently in Mumbai. In the picture: (From L) Nandita Ganguly, Vinita, RIPN Sushil Gupta, PDG Chandrashekhar Kolvekar, PRID Ashok Mahajan, PDG Venkat Gadwal, PDG (D 3141) Lata Subraidu and PDG (D 3142) B M Sivarraj.



Rotary Public Image Coordinators for 2019-20 from various zones with RIPE Mark Maloney at the Rotary International headquarters in Evanston. RPIC Deepak Shikarpur is seen fourth from right.

On the racks



Limca Book of Records 2019

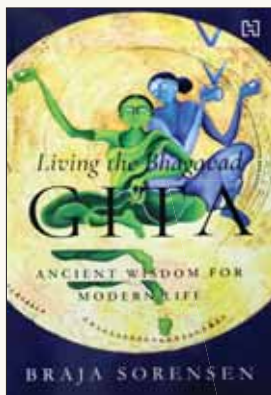
Publisher : **Hachette India**
Pages : **440; ₹550**

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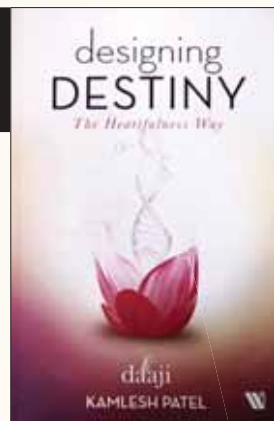
Living the Bhagavad Gita: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Life

Author : **Braja Sorensen**
Publisher : **Hachette India**
Pages : **196; ₹299**

In this book, Braja Sorensen combines the teachings of Krishna and the sage Patanjali to emphasise the real purpose of yoga: it is a way of life, and its goal is the union with the Divine.

She presents a lucid analysis of the multiple meanings of the word 'yoga' that Krishna teaches in the *Bhagavad Gita*. The yogic journey is a process of training and refining the mind, senses and emotions, until the very consciousness is altered and ready to meet the Divine. Patanjali explains the link between the body, mind and soul, and how the practice of yoga affects each.

This book brings to you the life-changing qualities that Krishna taught, and shows you how the *Bhagavad Gita* is the finest guide to understanding life, love and relationships, the body, mind and senses, and the nature of the soul.



Designing Destiny - The Heartfulness Way

Author : **Kamlesh Patel**
Publisher : **Westland Publication**
Pages : **219; ₹299**

What does destiny mean in the course of our lives?

How can we design our own destiny?

These are questions that some of the world's greatest philosophers have asked since time immemorial. In this ground-breaking book, Kamlesh Patel addresses such questions with simple solutions and practical wisdom. He elaborates on the subject of consciousness, the role of evolution, and explains what happens to us at the time of birth and death — and how we can act in those pivotal moments when life takes a turn.

He inspires us to believe in ourselves and find a way forward, no matter what the challenge, and look at even the most difficult situation as an opportunity to grow. He says that with a few simple practices, a heart full of enthusiasm and an expanded consciousness, we can all discover our potential and the destiny we were born to fulfil.

Compiled by Kiran Zehra
Designed by Krishnapratheesh S

Picking books, a summer dilemma



TCA Srinivasa Raghavan

Soon the summer will be upon us in earnest. People will start to make travel plans. They will look for destinations and cheap tickets well in advance. But there is one thing they will not plan for: what books to take with them. Believe me this can be as disastrous as what happened to me once 40 years ago. I ran out of cigarettes in Odisha which was quite ill-supplied in those days. What followed was misery of monumental proportions. The same thing can happen if you get short on books. It becomes worse when you grumble and your wife tells you to be quiet and watch TV instead. TV? I'd much rather go to a dentist unless there is cricket to be watched.

That said, what book to take, is one of the hardest choices in life. If you take the wrong books, not only are you stuck with nothing to read, there is the extra weight as well that has to be lugged around. After all, who likes to throw a book into a dustbin? So, once bitten, twice shy. Ever since that cigarette experience, I have started stocking up on my favourite genres well in advance. Which are political and/or spy thrillers. I even read a few pages to make sure I am not taking duds.

But you will be surprised to learn that even though India has a rich tradition of political intrigue — like the

Ramayana and the *Mahabharata* — very few Indians write political or spy thrillers. Some have started now but they aren't really very good. Instead, what we have is books by former heads of India's intelligence services and autobiographies of politicians.

Neither group of writers is very good — certainly not thrilling — but they can be quite informative, if not very entertaining. I have read around 30 such books. They all think the Army and the IAS are not as sharp as they need to be. Naturally, the opposite view is held by the Army, politicians and the civil servants who see both RAW and IB as bumlbers, if not worse. The truth, as is its wont, lies somewhere in the middle. You should read these books to get a flavour of national security issues.

Everyone gets it right sometimes and everyone goofs up. Once in a while the goof-up is monumental. In 1977, the IB got the General Elections wrong and on 26/11, RAW failed the country. But you have to feel sorry for

these guys. As is generally conceded everywhere in the world, information gathering agencies are known only for their failures, not their successes.

One big failure can wipe out 99 smaller successes. 9/11, 7/7, 26/11 all stand testimony to this. But then that's the price these agencies pay for not being accountable in the way others are. This is especially so when they fail to tell the difference between serving the country and serving the regime currently in place. Sadly, this also seems to happen.

However, if you don't like this type of books and prefer simple mysteries, let me suggest a writer called Lillian Jackson Braun. All her books, 29 in all, are mystery stories in which two cats — Koko and Yum-Yum — are the key, if not central figures.

All of her books have titles that start "The Cat Who..." She has dedicated her books to "the husband who..." The first book was called *The Cat Who Could Read Backwards*. Another was called *The Cat Who Ate Danish Modern*. Before she died in 2011, aged 97, her books had sold a few million copies. Of course, it is not the cats who solve the murders but their owner, a slightly goofy but detached journalist with long hair. But these books are written so well that you actually end up thinking that it was the cats who solved the mystery. ■

In 1977, the IB got the General
Elections wrong and on 26/11,
RAW failed the country.

Defining moments of Disha





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