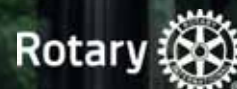




Rotary

NEWS



Incoming Governors meet in Chennai



A group of incoming DGs.



Rasheeda Bhagat

(From R) PRIP Kalyan Banerjee, PRID Shekhar Mehta and RIDE Bharat Pandya.



Jaishree

From L: DGEs Sivannarayana Rao, Sameer Hariani, Rajendra Bhamre, Girish R Masurkar, B N Ramesh, Ajay Agarwal, Bina Desai, Mohan Chandavarkar, RID C Basker, RIDEs Bharat Pandya and Kamal Sanghvi and DGE Jitendra Dhingra.

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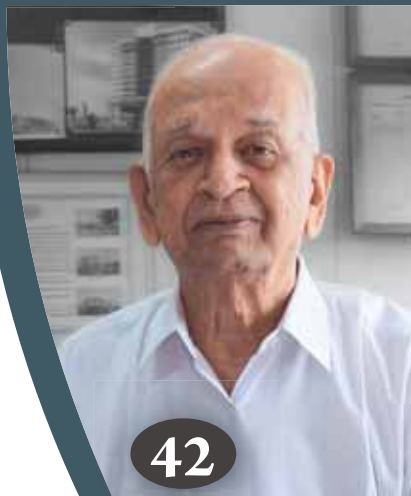
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On the cover: Incoming RI Directors Bharat Pandya and Kamal Sanghvi.

Picture by Rasheeda Bhagat

Do highlight Rotary's weaknesses too

It is always a pleasure to go through *Rotary News*. You not only cover the activities of the clubs but also the views of Rotarians. But the articles focus only on positive aspects of Rotary. Though an excellent organisation, Rotary has weaknesses that need highlighting. Over 20 years I have seen some good changes but also those that celebrate money rather than work. A big fat cheque rather than grassroots work gets appreciation. Work on the ground needs to be celebrated.

Rather than metros, Rotarians from small towns do small but effective projects without any desire for photo ops. These

days some members indulge in sycophancy to win favours from their DGs which goes against the Rotary culture of 'one amongst equals'.

The election system is confusing too; sometimes there is a nominating committee, sometimes canvassing is allowed by candidates. At one district event, I saw candidates being given a few minutes to project their vision. Now I am told canvassing for votes is not allowed. How then does a Rotarian know

about the capabilities of those in the electoral fray.

YK Kapoor, RC Panchshila Park — RID 3011



There were several inspiring articles in the April issue too, including the Editor's Note on *Celebrating women*, *Mother and Child Care* by RI President Barry Rassin, *Let us not make Rotary a touch-and-go organisation*, *Building peace in troubled times* and *Maloney launches projects totalling \$6 million in Kolkata*.

Congrats to RC Bilaspur Queens for empowering the destitute women in Chhattisgarh.

Daniel Chittilappilly
RC Kaloar — RID 3201

Your article on RID Basker's journey from a happy Rotarian to a serious man is really nice. He is a great leader; polite but firm in dealing with critical issues. Also, the report on PRIP KR Ravindran's speech at Disha is an eye-opener.

Sampathkumar
RC Coimbatore
Elite — D 3201

Rich content

The May issue looks very attractive with the cover photo of RIPE Mark Maloney and Gay. Maloney's interview by the Editor is worth reading, containing many valuable ideas which can take Rotary to greater heights. The Editorial 'Let's celebrate our gigantic democratic exercise' is informative and thought-provoking.

President Barry Rassin's message *Inspiring the youth* is apt, and RID C Basker's story about Deepak and Raju is interesting and depicts the difficulties faced by the poor in our society.

It is sad to read about the resignation of Sushil Gupta as RIPN due to health reasons. I wish him good health. *A journey from a "happy Rotarian" to a serious man* about RID Basker is fascinating and the service rendered by him praiseworthy. PRIP KR Ravindran says that RI spends \$11 million on DGs' allowance; this is news to us.

Mindful eating by Sheela Nambiar is useful in adjusting our daily eating pattern. *Of Turkish kebabs in Istanbul* with colourful photos and *Celebrating 31 years of Women in Rotary* are all very interesting.

Kudos to the Editorial team for this attractive magazine.

MT Philip
RC Trivandrum
Suburban — RID 3211

I am a regular reader of *Rotary News* and its standard has improved substantially. The cover photo of RIPE Maloney and Gay and the house of Paul Harris in Chicago visited by D Ravishankar and Paola are great. The interview of Maloney by Rasheeda and Jaishree's report *Celebrating 31 years of Women in Rotary* were great. Kudos to the RNT team for their hard work.

I enjoyed the May issue; *A journey from a "happy Rotarian" to a serious man* on RID Basker is a true reflection of a dedicated Rotarian.

PRIP KR Ravindran has sounded an alarm bell on RI spending so much on DGs' allowances.

Nan Narayenen
RC Madurai
West — RID 3000

LETTERS

A good piece from RID's desk

We join with RID C Basker to salute Jyoti and Neha, who dressed as boys to work in a barber shop in UP, fighting social taboos against employment of girls.

Rotarians are shocked to know that Sushil Gupta has resigned as RIPN for 2020–21 on health grounds. We pray he gets back to good health. I am happy to note the great work done by a team of 19 doctors from RIDs 3080 and 3070 in Madagascar, who treated 3,500 patients. Indian Rotarians can take pride that RC Ahmedabad way back in the 1950s had proposed the admission of women into Rotary, the first club in the world to do so.

S Muniandi, RC Dindigul
Fort — RID 3000

As usual the April issue is filled with rich content and noteworthy articles detailing various Rotary projects. I am happy to read the anganwadi project in Karnataka being undertaken by RID 3181 and salute DG P Rohinath, his district clubs and presidents who have brought a smile on the faces of underprivileged children. The accompanying pictures of kids add value to the story.

The article *Difference between RI and TRF* is informative and a ready reckoner for newly-inducted members. It is heartening to note that RID 3181 has set up a flood relief fund to build houses for Kerala flood victims. RIPE Mark Maloney's visit to Rotary projects in Amravati including the human milk bank and plastic surgery camp were explained vividly. Such articles will inspire Rotarians. The Tamil edition of *Rotary News* enables

the entire family to enjoy the magazine in their mother tongue.

Dr N Inbamani
RC Virudhunagar — RID 3212

In the April issue the multiple projects of RID 3181 under the leadership of DG P Rohinath are praiseworthy. In the article *Rotary makeover for Kovalam village*, a villager V Lalitha says that Rotary has changed their lives by installing toilets and requests piped water supply. Their expectations from Rotary enhance our credibility and will build public image.

Naveen R Garg
RC Sunam — RID 3090

Congrats to DG P Rohinath and Rotarians of RC Mysore Midtown for their excellent anganwadis projects. The article on RIPE Mark Maloney launching projects worth ₹40 crore, executed by RC Kolkata Mahanagar, is interesting. I thank the Editorial team for a magazine packed with information on Rotary activities.

Dr P Sangeethkumar, RC Salem
Grand — RID 2982

Your editorial (April) focuses on the strength and positive attitude of some women leaders. But more challenging days are in the offing, and women will have to fight to get equal opportunities in Rotary.

Arun Kumar Dash
RC Baripada — RID 3262

Great projects by RC Calcutta Mahanagar

Thank you for the article *Thane's Sanitation Crusader* on the project *Right to Go*, executed by RC

Thane Hills. Thank you, Jaishree. Editor Rasheeda never stops surprising us with her well-researched articles on inspiring Rotary projects; the gigantic projects by RC Calcutta Mahanagar that would benefit 150,000 people are awe-inspiring. Due credit must also go to TRF for supporting such worthy causes through six global grants worth ₹40 crore. Through *Rotary News*, I appeal to PRID Mehta and RC Calcutta Mahanagar to share details of how they identified the beneficiaries. It will be worthwhile to do similar work in Maharashtra.

Atul Bhide, RC Thane
Hills — RID 3142

I read *Rotary News* in detail as it has different types of news related to Rotary projects. The April issue has RIPE Mark Maloney launching mega projects in Kolkata; the *Difference between RI and TRF* clears the confusion with a lucid write-up. *Reconstructing anganwadis* is a great initiative. *WinS launched in 20 Bengal schools* in Howrah, is a powerful project under RID 3291. *Mother and Child Care* by RI President Barry Rassin and *Maternal and Neonatal Healthcare* by RI Director C Basker have further enriched our thoughts.

Soumitra Chakraborty
RC Tollygunge — RID 3291

I thank the *Rotary News* Editorial team for connecting us with the latest Rotary updates throughout the world. I am happy about the beautiful coverage of our club, which will motivate us to do more. A big thanks from my heart.

Naveesh Chhabra
RC Faridkot — RID 3090

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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Sending Sundara to school

As a Rotary year ends and one set of leaders lays down office at the clubs and districts-level to make way for another, it is a good time to take stock of the work done at the ground-level. As the topmost leaders in Rotary keep reiterating, Rotary really operates at the club-level, and the success of a club president, district governor, RI director, and the RI President himself, can be truly measured by the community service that Rotarians have done in their clubs. It is projects that you do to change lives in your communities that really measure the intrinsic worth of a service organisation like Rotary.

As the chosen ones get ready to step into leadership positions, from club presidents to district governors, right up to the level of RI directors, *Rotary News* caught up with incoming directors Bharat Pandya and Kamal Sanghvi, to quiz them on their Rotary journey. The single message that emerged from their freewheeling interviews was that they look upon their posts not as “positions of power”, but responsibility. And, they are extremely grateful to Rotary for providing them unique opportunities to serve the less privileged and bring smiles on the faces of the disadvantaged.

India today offers a wide range of opportunities to help the needy and the oppressed. Ranging from acute water shortage and severe drought conditions leading to agrarian distress or the misery of our unemployed masses, millions of Indians need a helping hand. Rotary's six areas of focus, be it literacy and education, healthcare and sanitation, or livelihood, are tailor-made to serve those in distress. Government welfare schemes are available for the deprived classes; but for the poor and illiterate to access what is earmarked for

them from the tax payers' money is often a Herculean battle. It is here that a service organisation such as Rotary can make a real difference. Be it in the Polio eradication programmes in the yesteryears or current healthcare and literacy programmes, Rotarians have always worked in partnership with the government, which has appreciated Rotary's help in better delivery of government's welfare programmes.

As a new government begins its five-year term in New Delhi, it faces multiple challenges related to the economy, development, education, income generation and livelihood. Yet another chance for Rotary to become a valued partner, something that the leadership in both Evanston and India values highly. The difference that you can make is captured in anecdotes related by Dr Madhavi, wife of Bharat Pandya, a past governor of Inner Wheel, who has worked closely with Rotarians in literacy. A group of smartly-dressed children were going to school, and little Sundara was watching them. “A couple of them asked her ‘Sundara, why don't you come to school too?’ She said I don't have uniform, shoes, a school bag, books and pencils. How can I come to school? And those children said don't worry, the Rotarians and Inner Wheel club members have done so much work in schools, they will give you everything. She joined the school; the moment Sundara came to school, they all hugged her. It was such a beautiful moment.”

Another story she relates is about an Ashram Shala, about 120 km from Mumbai, “where the kids were such great runners; they would run and win marathons barefooted, because they didn't have shoes. So the Rotarians and Inner Wheel members from our clubs gave them running shoes and also an instructor to train them in running.” Adds Pandya: “Such things keep us going.”

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

Rasheeda Bhagat



Rotary and its endless possibilities



Dear fellow Rotarians,

As I look back on all the things I have seen and the people I have met since becoming President of Rotary International last July, I am certain of this: Rotary's capacity to transform lives for the better is unparalleled. Our impact is far beyond anything I could have imagined when I first became a Rotarian.

I think about the Rotarians I met in Pakistan, who partnered with Coca-Cola to improve sanitation in Karachi's neighbourhoods while supporting polio eradication efforts. I think about the Puerto Rican Rotarians who are helping entire communities rebuild their lives after Hurricane Maria. I think about the German Rotaractors who are working to save bees — whose role as pollinators is so important to our planet — from extinction. I think about the six Rotarians and Rotaractors who were honoured as People of Action: Young Innovators at Rotary Day at the United Nations in Nairobi, Kenya, in November for their work to create novel solutions to tough challenges.

It seems like only yesterday that I stood on a stage in San Diego and asked you to *Be the Inspiration* in your clubs, in your communities and in the world. Your response was an inspiration to me. You are paving the way for Rotaractors to become

our future leaders, helping start new Rotaract clubs and working to include Rotaractors in Rotary events and projects in your communities. You are working hard to eradicate polio, participating in 4,200 events in more than 100 countries for World Polio Day. And you are carrying out transformative projects that will create lasting change in your communities and in the world.

This year, I also saw how Rotary's work to build peace is bearing fruit. The 98 Rotary Peace Fellows who are studying at our peace centres will soon graduate, joining more than 1,200 others in applying their conflict resolution skills to problems that need solutions. And this month, Esther and I will travel to Hamburg, Germany, for a convention where people of all races, nationalities, religions, and political backgrounds will unite because they want to make the lives of all people better.

Seeing what Rotary means to people — to the communities we serve and to Rotarians themselves — has deepened my affection and admiration for all that Rotary is and does.

Soon it will be time for Esther and me to return home to Nassau. When we get there, I will look out on the vast sea that surrounds our island, and it will remind me of Rotary's limitless possibilities, and of the amazing future that awaits us beyond the horizon. I look forward to sailing there with you.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry Rassin".

Barry Rassin
President, Rotary International

Message from the RI Director



A Big Thank You

Dear Rotarians,

According to Buddhist tradition there are three styles of compassionate leadership: the trailblazer who leads from the front, takes risks, and sets an example for others; the ferryman, who accompanies those in his care and navigates the ups and downs of the crossing; and the shepherd who sees everyone of his flock to safety before looking after his own. In Rotary, I have found all three styles of compassionate leadership but what all these have in common is a great desire to work for a conflict-free and happy world. I have completed 23 months of my 24-month tenure as Director, and this is my final over, to use a cricketing analogy. As Director I was fortunate enough to work with leaders in Rotary who practised each of these three styles of leadership quite successfully.

In my interaction with Rotarians in different parts of the world, I have often noticed that trust is a prime indicator of whether others evaluate them positively or negatively. By understanding the actions that emphasise trust, leaders are able to elevate the level of trust that others feel towards them. When we serve with integrity, our thoughts, feelings, words and actions are aligned.

Once, a few students met a seer and he asked them about their results and their marks in each of the subjects. The seer suddenly asked: “I have a question for you all. If you get 90 per cent in Physics, 60 per cent in Chemistry and 20 per cent in Maths, would you have passed the exam?” The answer was a resounding ‘No’. The seer asked ‘Why?’ The students started explaining the exam rules that one needs to pass all the three subjects to clear

the exams. The seer smiled and asked, “Is that so? Suppose you are very good in action and get 90 per cent. In your speech too, you are good and hence get 60 per cent. But you are weak in thoughts and get only 20 per cent. Can you be considered to have passed in God’s exam?” There was pin-drop silence. The seer continued, “Just as you cannot pass your academic exams without passing in all the subjects, you cannot pass in God’s exam without doing well in thoughts, words and deeds. This is essentially *Trikarana Shuddhi* (integrity) — the stepping stone on the journey to reach the Supreme Being.”

These 23 months have enhanced my vision to accomplish Rotary’s mission. It has been a great opportunity to learn and value the nuances of leadership from every Rotarian I met. Leadership is not just about leading, but more about stewardship, developing successors and creating value for Rotary through good work. Mala and I wholeheartedly thank all the RI senior leaders, my colleagues on the Board, TRF Trustees, magnanimous hearts, staff of Rotary International and RISAO, *Rotary News* Editor and staff, regional leaders, all past, present and incoming RI officers and every single Rotarian for their worthy contributions, wholehearted cooperation, and above all, for the love and affection showered on us at every place and event we visited, all of which helped me discharge my responsibilities as the Director of Zones 4, 5 and 6 to my entire satisfaction.

Thank you once again.

I wish all of you good health, prosperity and happiness!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Basker', with a stylized flourish at the end.

C Basker
Director, Rotary International



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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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Holger Knaack is the new RIPN

Holger Knaack, a member of RC Herzogtum Lauenburg-Mölln, Germany, has been selected to serve as President of Rotary International in 2020–21.

The Nominating Committee's decision follows the resignation last month of President-nominee Sushil Gupta due to health reasons.

To build a stronger membership, Knaack says Rotary must focus on increasing the number of female members and transitioning Rotaractors into Rotarians.

Knaack believes that the *People of Action* campaign offers new public awareness possibilities for Rotary. "This campaign conveys our global image while still respecting differences in regions and cultures," he says.

A Rotary member since 1992, Knaack has served Rotary as treasurer, director, moderator, member and chair of several committees, representative for the Council on Legislation, zone coordinator, training leader and district governor.

He is an endowment/major gifts adviser and co-chair of the Host Organisation Committee for the 2019 Rotary International Convention in Hamburg.

Knaack is the CEO of Knaack KG, a real estate company. Knaack and his wife, Susanne, are Major Donors to The Rotary Foundation and members of the Bequest Society.

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Message from Sushil Gupta

Dear Rotarians,

As you are aware, I have resigned from the post of President Nominee of Rotary International because of sudden health challenges which I have been facing for the last few months.

I know this decision of mine must have disappointed you since the whole of Indian Rotary was full of euphoria and joy that one of their fellow Indians was going to lead the Rotary world once again.

This decision for me was not an easy one but my inner conscience and Rotary values encouraged me to step down because I felt that due to my health condition I will not be able to give my hundred per cent to the Rotary world.

Let me assure you that I will continue to serve Rotary and the less privileged in our communities to the best of my capacity. I'd like to ask you not to lose heart because I know that there is a lot of respect for Indian Rotary across the Rotary world and very soon, I am confident, we will have another Indian to lead the Rotary world.

I continue to receive your messages that each of you is praying for my early recovery. This gives me a lot of cheer and having always been a believer in the power of prayer, I am sure that your prayers will do wonders.

Rotary continues to expand my horizon: Bharat Pandya

Rasheeda Bhagat

Incoming RI Director Bharat Pandya very obviously does not wear the power of his position on his sleeve. A soft spoken and erudite man and a voracious reader, he takes the trouble to note down striking lines/quotes from what he is reading. He engages his audience with such inspirational quotes so skillfully woven into his narrative that you can tell these are not pulled out from a Google search on memorable quotes!

I meet Pandya and his wife Madhavi, both medical doctors, at their home in Borivali in Mumbai, a simple and spacious place bereft of a glitzy interior or décor, but which makes you feel at home instantly. The other floors in the building serve as a hospital for the doctor couple.

If I don't practise
for sometime, my
patients will suffer.

RIDE Bharat Pandya
and Madhavi.



I begin by asking him why the post of an RI Director is so alluring to senior Rotarians; it looks so glamorous but I've seen the grind, hard work and gruelling travel involved... why did he want to get this leadership position?

Pandya smiles, and says, "In my profession, specially in my practice, I have the chance to do some charity,"... he quotes a percentage of the patients he sees free of cost and another from whom he takes a modest fee.... both of which I am not allowed to quote! ("Please don't; it embarrasses me, I do it by conviction and choice," he almost pleads).

"But in this position I also get a chance to make a different kind of impact in much more diverse fields. A reason I continue to be a Rotarian is that it expands my horizon." He

quotes former German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer: We all live under the same skies but we don't have the same horizons. "I believe that Rotary has continued to expand my horizons."

Coming to leadership, "before I became a club president if I was asked to make a speech to five people, my legs would have trembled even to speak five sentences." But once he headed his club he decided he would never read out written speeches and work hard on them. "People say you have a perfect memory etc, but nothing comes easy in life. You have to work for it. I have a cupboard full of written speeches with quotations."

Gently brushing off the tag of an "erudite director", he says that the quotes in his speeches are not "rattled off-hand; when I read a book, I make a note, mark a page so I can come back

People say you have a perfect memory, but nothing comes easy in life. You have to work for it. I have a cupboard full of written speeches with quotations.

to it, underline it if necessary, and write it down." Unlike earlier, he no more writes down speeches for every event. "To connect with the audience, I put in a story or anecdote but it has to be relevant."

Slipping in a cheeky question that many Rotarians are wondering about, I ask Pandya that except for once, India has always had one RI Director; this time there are two. So do Kamal Sanghvi and he have a plan of action to avoid a tussle for power?

Pandya responds calmly: "First of all, I see this as a position of responsibility and not power. And so does Kamal, I am sure. Coincidentally and fortunately, our wavelengths are similar; of course there are differences as no two persons can be the same. He is probably a little more outgoing and I am a little reserved. But neither he nor I have ever hesitated to pick up the phone and talk to each other if there is any issue."

Administratively, Pandya will handle Zones 4 and 7, and Sanghvi Zones 5 and 6. "But that is purely on paper. We've told the DGEs that for any issues, write to both of us. We'll talk to each other and respond. We have a smooth working relationship and I don't see any issues there."

He gives the example of the recent Disha training event for incoming district leaders where Sanghvi "took full charge. I never had to ask him for any slot or time but he



At a Glance



Dr Bharat Pandya and Madhavi with then RIPR Mark Maloney and Gay at the Dare 2 Dream conference in 2007.

Religious: In our family, Madhavi is the religious person, I am not religious in the sense of visiting temples regularly but I am not agnostic. I do go to temples but there are no hard and fast rules about this temple on this day. I believe more in humanity.

Food: I am a vegetarian, the food best suited to my palate is Indian food, and within that Gujarati food. I love *daal-dhokli* and *aam ras*. Outside Indian, I prefer Chinese cuisine.

Cooking: Making tea and coffee is as far as my cooking skills go!

Music: I like to hear old Hindi and Western English songs, one of my favourite bands is Abba.

Movies: I like comedy, action and thrillers. As such there is so much stress in daily life, that I don't want to see any family drama or melodrama!

Relaxation: My best form of relaxation is reading a book. For light reading, it is fiction, suspense stories and thrillers, but for serious reading, I read leadership books.

Favourite writer: In fiction, PG Wodehouse. Have also read Alistaire Mclean but Wodehouse's style of writing is something else.

Fitness: I have to work at it; I get up at 6 am every morning and start my surgeries around 7.45 am. But I do spend 30 minutes on the treadmill everyday.

Describe Rotary in 1 or 2 words:

Hope and opportunity. Hope that the community has from Rotary and the opportunity that we Rotarians have to fulfill that Hope.

Younger members: While we should focus on Rotaract and under 35 persons, we should not lose focus on people between 45–60. That is our

core group that is looking out to give back to society and are now reasonably well-placed and with spare time. That is the population we should not be neglecting. A judicious mix of both is required.

Women in Rotary: The most important thing that women bring to Rotary is discipline in the clubs. Being multi-taskers, they have limited time so they like the meetings to start and end on time. And when women are present, offensive jokes, etc get reduced. And they work very hard; I'd say most of them are very committed to Rotary.

What ails Rotary in India: So many election issues in our part of the world; but there are two aspects — ours is a democratic organisation and more people vying for positions probably indicates that more Rotarians are active. Ambition is not a bad thing, but how you handle that ambition is crucial. If we can learn to disagree without being disagreeable,

many of our election-related problems will disappear. At some point, we have to accept and say there will be another time. But Indian Rotarians do amazing service projects.

A point of introspection in Rotary: In Rotary when you are in the limelight, there is a lot of glamour. But the problem comes when the term finishes when we are not able to step back and step away from it all and still want to be in the limelight. I have made it clear that when the time comes, I will step back from the limelight and step away too!

Vision for Rotary in India and where it is headed:

Rotary in India is doing some great work. Today we are sitting on a volcano of NCDs (Non-communicable Diseases); the five big ones being diabetes, hypertension and heart disease, chronic kidney and lung diseases and stroke. Rotary can create awareness through schools and colleges, camps, etc. In these camps we should have the tagline 'one spoon less' (of both salt and sugar) and weight, blood pressure and blood sugar should all be checked, abnormal readings noted and the persons encouraged to go for treatment. My vision is to promote positive health. I am also keen on water projects, vocational training and skill development, specially for girls/women. Harmony between different sections of society and tackling hunger and malnutrition are other areas we must focus on. And of course literacy and education which is the key to everything.

ensured I was given my due slot. Even if some issues do crop up in the future, I am confident that we can sort them out through our personal relationship and dialogue,” he smiles.

To determine what has shaped him into the human being he is, let’s go back to Pandya’s childhood, why he became a doctor and who influenced the values he holds so dear.

As the only child, Pandya’s role model was his father, who as a medical student was deeply influenced by Gandhiji. It

was customary for medical students to go to the wards wearing suits. Heeding Gandhiji’s call to boycott foreign goods his dad and a few students threw their suits into a bonfire. From that day he wore only white cotton shirts and trousers — including for his marriage — till his passing away in 1998. “He was a man of principles, and very ethical and displayed total integrity in what he spoke and did. That was a very strong influence on me. He worked very hard for his patients and while giving every injection said ‘Jai Shri Krishna (invoking God’s name)’. Not “a god

For the first three years I was only a ‘Rotary club member’ but when the Polio immunisation began, a spark was ignited and I was transformed.

fearing but a god believing man”, he inspired his son to become a doctor.

And a doctor with a difference too... a general surgeon, who does not turn away patients coming for fever or diarrhoea. This, Pandya explains, is because his father was a GP who had a large practice begun in 1949 when there was no medical consultation available in

Borivali. “In 49 years he built up tremendous goodwill and when he suddenly passed away in 1998, the patients started coming to me. And I couldn’t turn them away saying that I am a surgeon and I can’t see you for small ailments.”

Hence, during various leadership positions in Rotary he has scheduled his Rotary responsibilities to ensure that his patients



RIDE Bharat Pandya and Madhavi with daughters Dr Nidhi (left) and Dr Sashmi.

don't suffer during his absence. And he plans to do the same during his directorship.

I comment that incoming RI President Mark Maloney has made it clear that by turning volunteer positions into full time commitments, Rotary is encouraging only retired persons to take up leadership roles and that he will devote five days a month to his legal practice during his presidency. Pandya smiles and says: "If the RI President can set aside five days for his work, then an RI director can definitely take 15 days for his profession. I don't plan to put

on hold my medical practice for two years."

He clarifies that income is not the issue here. "There are two aspects; one, the 30-plus staff who are dependent on me. Ours is a small and specialised gynaec and orthopaedic/general surgery set up. But the other more important aspect is my patients will suffer."

Coming to the incoming director's Rotary journey, he



joined Rotary in 1989, at the request of his father's patient JP Saxena, who was starting RC Borivli. Just having begun his practice two years earlier, "I was hesitant but he was insistent, and I couldn't refuse." For the first three years he was "only a Rotary club member, going for the meeting because the President phoned." But when the PulsePolio programme happened and prior to that polio immunisation began in 1991-92, "being the only doctor in the club, the president said you take care of it. We went to some really dark areas and slums, which were inaccessible... Borivali was very different then."

Immunising the children door to door "ignited a spark in me, and slowly the transformation came."

Madhavi is a leader in her own right; she was Inner Wheel District 314 Chairman last year; and her district is bigger than mine!



RIDE Bharat Pandya with PRID Ashok Mahajan (right) and DG Harjit Singh Talwar.

Left: Inaugurating a check dam project of D 3140.

Around the same time Pandya's club hit a rough patch with 15–20 members suddenly leaving and he was persuaded to become a reluctant president. This is where Madhavi's role in his Rotary journey became important (See box).

I ask Madhavi if she has ever resented Rotary taking away so much of his time; Pandya whispers to her in Gujarati 'Speak the truth!' She responds: "Yes sometimes, when

his Rotary schedule clashes with important family events I feel so, as our two daughters (both are training to be postgraduate doctors) but we are also very proud of him."

He adds that over the years Madhavi has been very supportive, during his governorship and later as membership coordinator, where a lot of travel was involved. Even as DG, he never lost focus on his medical practice and as his district comprised

only Mumbai and Thane, "the maximum travel time was about 3–4 hours. Every night I could return home, sleep in my own bed and next morning work in the hospital for a few hours before setting out again. If I had to close down my practice, I wouldn't have even thought of becoming a DG," he says emphatically.

Asks to comment on why RI and TRF command so much trust — recently D Ravishankar from Bengaluru donated ₹100 crore to the Foundation — he says, "Let me give you a background. In 2007 Bill Gates gave \$100 million to TRF for polio eradication. In 2009, he gave another \$255 million, while addressing the Governors Elect at the IA where I was present as a RI training leader." Gates said they wanted to work for children and polio and "when we zeroed down on polio, there was no doubt in our minds that we wanted to work with Rotary and TRF because when money is given to Rotary it



Dr Bharat Pandya being installed as President of RC Borivli.

Multiple role models

Incoming Director Bharat Pandya has several role models. While total integrity, ethics and compassion for the less-privileged he learnt from his father, “from Raja Saboo I have learnt the importance of commitment and serving. Even at this age the energy he has to carry out so many medical missions across the world is amazing. From Kalyan Banerjee I have learnt how to be gentle, never overpowering and to be persuasive. From KR Ravindran the focus on integrity and values, and when I was governor one of my focus areas was water and I was inspired by Sushil Gupta.”

From PRID Ashok Mahajan he has learnt the importance of “grassroots connect to the community, because his connect with the Imams and mullahs was one of the turning points in our polio eradication journey. So different people have given me different insights...”

Striking an introspective note, Pandya said somebody recently asked him which role he had liked best in Rotary. “I said each role brought out different things in me; club president helped to sharpen my leadership skills which I used as DG in my district. The role as Membership Coordinator to work with other Membership Coordinators and take India to the No 2 membership position after US. As an RI training leader, I learnt a totally different aspect of training, which is not lectures, but facilitation and ability to draw things out from people.”



Dr Bharat Pandya puts a Gandhi Pin on the lapel of RC Bangalore Orchards President D Ravishankar; Paola Ravishankar and RID 3190 DG Suresh Hari are also seen.

is used effectively, efficiently, transparently and only for the purpose it was given for and nothing else. Now that’s a very powerful endorsement of TRF.”

Another example Pandya gives is of Harshad Mehta, a diamond merchant and past president of a Rotary club in D 3141. “He is the first Indian to give \$1 million to TRF when I was governor in 2006–07 (In 2006–07 D 3140 contributed over \$2 million to TRF, thus for the first time an Indian district — D 3140 — became number 1 in TRF contribution in the entire Rotary world). When he and his wife Nainaben were honoured, she said that we are Jains who believe that what we own is not really ours, but only passing through our hands. And if it passes to Rotary we can be sure it will be used effectively. It requires a heart to give, and the conviction that we are giving it to the right

I have made it clear that when the time comes, I will step back from the limelight and step away too!





organisation. Rajashree Birla also became AKS member in 2006–07 and has continued to contribute generously every year ever since.” People like these generous donors do believe that giving to TRF is ‘effective giving’ and I’m sure Ravishankar thinks so too

He adds that while the US tax laws allow about 35 per cent of



RIDEs Kamal Sanghvi and Bharat Pandya

Madhavi’s role and Madhavi speak



Dr Bharat Pandya, as RIPR, at District 3272 Conference, presenting an award to Hina Rabbani Khar, Pakistan’s Foreign Minister. Madhavi is on his right.

Bharat Pandya: When I agreed to become club president, I told Madhavi that without your support I can’t do this. She was gracious enough, as she has been through my Rotary journey, to take a step back from her Inner Wheel responsibilities. She withstood pressure to take on positions there saying, ‘He is busy, both of us can’t take up leadership roles.’ So she held the fort both at home and the hospital.

She is a leader in her own right; she was Inner Wheel District 314 Chairman last year; and her district is bigger than mine! (RID 3140 has split into 3141 and 3142). And as president, my club bulletin

was brought out not by me but her. Except for my message as president, everything else was written and compiled by her, including the pictures!”

Madhavi: I am very happy and proud that Bharat has come to this position. He is very dedicated, committed and sincere and I’m sure he will work very hard during the next two years to make our organisation more robust.

You asked as a busy surgeon, how he’ll meet the demand on his time. Yes, it will be really challenging but he plans his schedule and travel in such a way, that his work and patients will not be neglected.



**RIDE Bharat
Pandya and
family.**

money collected to be used on admin, in “TRF barely 7–8 per cent is used for admin purposes. That is a very low figure.”

But what about the stewardship issues reported from our region?

“Yes, there have been such issues. But without defending those guilty of improper stewardship, I always say that Rotary is a reflection of the society we live. And if you see it from a positive prism, for the quantum of work being done these improper stewardship issues are a miniscule minority. But there is no excuse for misusing funds which are given with the confidence they will be used judiciously. And yes, action is being taken and things are being set right.”



Ambition is not a bad thing, but how you handle that ambition is crucial. If we can learn to disagree without being disagreeable, many of our problems will disappear.

We are fully committed to fiscal discipline, prudence and transparency.

On how Rotary has influenced his life, he says, “It has helped me develop myself, interact with people in a better way and really appreciate the good work that people do. I often talk about the three phases in our lives: learn, earn and return. Rotary has given me an opportunity to return even while I’m earning. I have no hesitation in saying that I have got much more from Rotary than what I have given to it in terms of my attitude, outlook and leadership skills. My attempt in these two years will be to encourage our clubs to be better clubs and make ourselves better Rotarians, so that we can make the world a better place.”

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My role as Director is more than administer:

Rasheeda Bhagat

RIDE Kamal Sanghvi
and Sonal.



to assist Kamal Sanghvi

It is with visible emotion that incoming Director Kamal Sanghvi vividly recalls that one moment in his Rotary journey of 28 years, that “completely transformed me and changed my thinking and view of life.”

We are seated in the Rotary News Trust office in Chennai on a hot and humid morning and he opts for a glass of buttermilk. But so absorbed is he in tracing his Rotary journey and describing the passion and energy it has infused in him that he barely touches it.

That defining moment came in the biting cold of a winter in 1991 in his home town of Dhanbad where the mercury plunges. As his father was a Rotarian, it was natural for him to follow him and join the same club, RC Dhanbad, Bihar, which he did on July 1, 1991. The club organised many eye camps “which those days were conducted in a school. At one such camp, there were some 400 people inside and over 100 waiting outside, where I was seated. As my family was well-known in the town, everybody came up and spoke to me,” he reminisces.

Watching him was a woman in her mid-70s; “her clothes were in tatters, she had no footwear and accompanied by her husband, she was sitting on the floor shivering. As everyone was greeting me she must have thought I was probably a person with some power and she told me:

‘Saab, please get my eye operated. So I said sure, called the doctor and requested him to attend to her. He said that she was over 75 and her eyes were beyond repair.’”

Sanghvi explained this to her but she kept insisting that she should be admitted and operated upon. “They had walked 10 miles to reach the camp. I told her we can’t help you so why do you want to get admitted. Her response shook me to the core and changed my entire philosophy of life, because in my privileged life, I had never seen anything like that. She said if you admit me, we will be here for five days, and get food for five whole days.”

But much more attractive than that was that “when we return we’ll get a blanket each. We have two grandchildren, and as our roof is leaking it gets so cold in the night that we cannot sleep. With these blankets (each cost barely ₹60) all of us will be able to sleep.”

This experience really blew the young Rotarian’s mind — that

**Governorship gives you
hundreds of friends and also
the ability to convince people
to do something good.**

At a glance



Religious: I follow religion as a lifestyle. I consider humanity my religion.

Reading: I read all sorts of books. Earlier I was a voracious reader but becoming a director leaves me with much less time. But I do read mythology books such as the *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat*. I love the writing of Devdutt Pattanaik... he brings out the ethos of *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat* in modern thinking. He is a fantastic writer.

Music: I love listening to both Hindi and Western music; I also love jazz, and classical Western, depending on where I am.

Fitness: I do yoga for an hour every morning; that relaxes and de-stresses me and keeps me fit. Because of my excessive travel and the food I eat, I tend to put on weight. When at home I also go for an hour's walk in addition to yoga, but when I am travelling I only do yoga in my room.

Food: I love food; I am a connoisseur of food; the quantity is very little but I like trying out different kinds of cuisine, and visit different restaurants. I love street

food and try to sample the street food of any city I visit, to better understand its ethos and culture.

Cooking: Only Maggi noodles, nothing more than that!

Travel: I love travel; mainly Europe for its history, culture and variety and the US for its adventure sports, and the way those facilities are organised so efficiently there. I do paragliding, mountaineering, snowmobile, etc. But Europe is beautiful, and like India; every 100 miles, it is so different.

More women in Rotary: 101 per cent; I believe that women are far more efficient than men; they are more focused, committed to their work and multifaceted as well. While managing a house, a woman is handling every department. Once given a job, women deliver in time. Any healthy and progressive organisation needs to involve women. And I don't think women need to be given equal opportunities; I find such statements condescending. Just open the doors, let them in and treat them as equals, and they will deliver. My club has had four women presidents.

Learnings from Rotary: It has taught me gratitude and compassion and that the deprived need your help. If you are strong and rich, you need to help the weak and poor. And to be grateful for what you have, when there is so much of strife and deprivation in the world. I believe a person gets a leadership role in Rotary for a cause. Why did I become a director? I am sure there are hundreds of Rotarians more capable and more qualified than me for this post. So surely, I was made a director for a purpose. There is no organisation in the world which gives you so much of love, friendship, goodwill and trust. When somebody tells you he is a Rotarian, he immediately inspires trust in you. I have been hosted by people in the US where somebody comes and picks me up from the airport! Who does that in the US? And I am welcomed into their home just because I am a Rotarian!

Proud moment in Rotary: Inking the *Aman ki Asha* pact under which through the Healing Little Hearts project 200 Pakistani children were operated.

Gift from Rotary: The fantastic opportunity to bring smiles on the faces of people.

Vision for Rotary: I've been saying let's aim for the Nobel Prize. Once polio is eliminated there will be hundreds of claimants. I feel Rotary definitely deserves that Prize for what it has done, what it is doing and what it will continue to do. Most people who bag the Nobel get it for doing something significant but then go into oblivion. But Rotary is here to stay, so Rotary definitely deserves it. My dream for Rotary is a world at peace, which I define not as absence of war but where every human being has the right to education, food and water, basic health and proper living. Only that will bring everlasting peace.



Kamal and Sonal Sanghvi on their wedding day.

somebody was willing to get her eye operated, knowing there was no cure, “just for five days’ guaranteed food and two blankets. That day I resolved that with my privileged background and my family willing to totally support me in such humanitarian work, for which Rotary was providing me such a fantastic opportunity, I will do whatever I can to help such people,” says Sanghvi, adding, “that experience made me a true

Rotarian from an RINP (Rotarian in name only).”

Incidentally his family, which owns the Virji Bank in Dhanbad, also runs a family charitable Trust to help the disadvantaged.

Sanghvi was born “with a golden spoon, and into a very wealthy Gujarati Jain family. Ours was a stable, traditional family, my grandfather had very traditional values and was a Gandhivadi to the core. But my father was the opposite and lived life king size, loved travelling, the passion for which I have inherited.” He was educated in a high-profile public school in Darjeeling, then studied in Mumbai and finally graduated in Pharmaceutical Sciences

I strongly believe that without literacy the effectiveness of whatever else we do will be very limited. Of course Polio remains the first priority.

from Manipal and set up a factory. But he had to short circuit that venture and return home as his dad suffered a heart attack.”

After returning home, he assisted his dad in the family business and also joined his Rotary club. Asked if it was awkward to be in the same club as his dad, Sanghvi says, “Not at all; ours was a unique club and had seven



Kamal Sanghvi being inducted into RC Dhanbad in 1991.



father-son members! Then Sonal also joined the same club.”

Interestingly, both of them had known each other as children as “Sonal’s *mama* (uncle) and my dad were thick pals.” But they were far from being childhood sweethearts; “ours was an arranged marriage because we never looked at each other that way till the family thought of it. The joke in my family till today is that I told Sonal that if it doesn’t work out we’ll say that till now you always called me Kamalbhai! But it did work out beautifully,” he beams!

Returning to Rotary, in 1998, within seven years, he became

club president and “for the first few years, Rotary for me was just my club. I didn’t attend a single district event till 2000. I was enjoying so much of service, so many projects, mainly eye camps, being done by my club.”

From then to the district governor’s post was not difficult at all, he says. His perception that a much larger Rotary world existed beyond his club changed when Sandeep Narang, a close friend of his, became governor in 2002–03. “I was his district secretary; we were considered the “Angrez” of our district...in those days in Bihar, not too many people spoke fluent English. We were both boarding school products and we led a flamboyant lifestyle. He advised me to go for the

DG’s post and I gave in my name,” smiles Sanghvi.

When he went home and told his father about it, “my dad sat me down and said ‘get ready to lose’, and made me promise him that if you lose, you will not leave Rotary. Also, if you lose don’t get disheartened. Two, are you ready for this post because till now you have not folded your hands before anybody. Our business was such that others came to me for favours and not vice versa. He said in this position you will have to meet people and ask for their consent. Third, if you do become governor, you will never consider it a position of power. Promise me all these things. And I said: ‘done Dad.’”

He became Governor at first shot! Asked about the highlights of his year

(2005–06) as a DG, he says: “It was a fantastic experience. Governorship gives you hundreds of friends and also the ability to convince people to do something good. And the unique thing of being a DG is that even people in top positions, positions of power, listen to you, when you ask them to do something.”

His biggest achievement as governor was setting up about 20 vocational training centres for women called *Saheli* centres in District 3250, that comprised Bihar and Jharkhand. The second achievement was creating a record in TRF giving. Till then his district had never crossed the \$100,000 mark; “during my year as DG, we collected \$240,000, and we were the second highest in per capita



giving in India. And that made everyone in Rotary in our zones sit up and take notice, that Bihar could be the second highest in per capita giving! That turned around everything and gave me inroads into the Rotary echelons.”

So how did he do it? “Oh, it was very simple. Bihar was the richest *riyasat* in earlier years, with so much of natural wealth. And while discussing it with my dad, he said: ‘Kamal, it is very simple. If I could afford to pay for your education in the best

of schools and colleges, there are also thousands of people in Bihar whose children are studying in boarding schools. Each one of them is a potential major donor.’ So the issue was not wealth but the fact that Bihar did not have a history of giving.”

Armed with his dad’s advice to find potential donors, Sanghvi made a point during his DG visits to knock from door to door to raise money for TRF. The response was so good that at the end of his year “I thought it was an

Women are far more efficient, focused, committed to their work and multifaceted as well. Once given a job, women deliver in time.



A “bundle of energy” called Sonal



Ask RIDE Kamal Sanghvi about his wife Sonal, and his entire face lights up. “She is fantastic and my rock support. Both my sons studied in boarding schools and were out for long years and both my parents were ailing for 10 years; my father had cancer and a severe cardiac problem... he passed away last year. My mother has multiple ailments. But Sonal totally managed the home front; I’d say she has an uncanny ability to tolerate and deal with my absence,” he says.

Their elder son Khwab is a biotechnologist who is doing research in brain cancer in Germany; the younger one Raavishu (god of love) has completed his computer engineering and is joining Swiss Bank.

Sanghvi adds that not only does Sonal manage the home front and the children’s needs, she also manages their construction business, “apart from running her own NGO which trains women to make paper products... she hates polythene bags and other products. Both a Rotarian and a past Inner Wheel club president, she has trained so many women and helped them get decent livelihood. She is a bundle of energy and extremely loving.”

So she doesn’t grumble when Rotary activities take away so much of his time? Sanghvi laughs: “Of course she grumbles; they all do... but she knows my passion for Rotary and allows me to pursue it.”



Kamal Sanghvi with PRIP Kalyan Banerjee.

underachievement. Had I set my goal above \$155,555, I could have raised more than \$240,000."

Known for his work in reaching shelter kits to disaster zones, I ask Sanghvi to spell out how he got involved. He says that once he was seated in the office of PRID Shekhar Mehta, "who along with PRIP Kalyan Banerjee and PRID Sushil Gupta has always handheld and guided me, when the Kosi River floods struck Bihar."

They were desperately trying to reach ShelterBox and finally when the list came "I told Shekhar (Mehta) that this is not going to work in our district to help the flood-ravaged people. We have to create our own shelter kits."

And thus came into the picture the ubiquitous steel trunk "one of which almost every house in Bihar has, where they store grains and other essentials. We acquired such trunks, filled them up with all essential items and rushed them to the flood victims." The Rotary India Humanity Foundation was thus set up, and it has given about

10,000 shelter kits to the victims of natural disasters in Bihar, Nepal, Odisha and Kerala. "At any given time we have at least 300 such shelter boxes ready to meet emergency requirements when a disaster strikes. We can ship them within 48 hours."

Sanghvi adds this is going to be one of his priorities during his directorship; "I want to expand on this project."

Then there is of course his passion for literacy; so how far away does



RIDE Kamal Sanghvi with Sonal and RIDE Bharat Pandya at the Chennai Institute.

Role models

Kalyanda (PRIP Kalyan Banerjee) for his ability to listen, and human values. He has an uncanny way of calming you down when you rush to him, agitated about anything.

Sushil Gupta: For his ability to identify leaders and create a path for them.

My father: For teaching me to be level-headed, and be always prepared to accept defeat for you cannot win every time.

Late PDG Santosh Agarwal, who trained me extensively in my formative years into the various nuances of Rotary, to

create large goals and how to think like a Rotarian.

Shekhar Mehta, who is my elder brother... he is mad and has driven me mad too! He is totally *paagal*, in a positive way. He has really crazy ideas, and has taught me to set your standards high and never back down. Rather, uplift yourself to meet them. And we have done it. The RILM is a juggernaut that has achieved so much in seven years... the unthinkable.

Manoj Desai: For his depth and detailing, and his unflinching trust in me.



Working with another Director is a boon

When asked how delicate or tricky it might be to share the position of a director (hitherto only one in our zones except for 2011–13) with a fellow director, incoming Director Kamal Sanghvi beams and says he sees “having to work with another director a great boon for me. I do not consider this as a position of power and I do feel that just one director cannot do justice in handling such a big region. It is no longer possible physically or mentally. If someone can do it, fine. But I feel that to administer such a huge country, two directors can do a much more effective job than one.”

He adds, “Two minds taking decisions is always better than one doing so. If one person’s decision goes wrong sometime; the other can correct it. So if two people take decisions, it’s always better. It’s also a balancing act. Each of us has our own strengths; I know Bharat’s and he knows mine! So we tell each other that you handle this and I’ll take care of the other.”

Spelling out his fellow director Bharat Pandya’s strength, Sanghvi says, “Bharat is very swift at writing letters, at which I am not that good. I prefer to pick up the phone and talk and get things done. But if you ask Bharat to write a letter, within five minutes he will shoot it out. But it takes me time. So we can balance our strengths.”

It also helps that “Bharat is a dear friend; and we’ve worked together. In Literacy, he was the chief trainer and I am the Co-founder and Co-chair of RILM. We’ve worked extensively together.”

Sanghvi also sees this as an opportunity “to show the rest of the world that if you ask others to work together as a team, it’s your responsibility to show that you can work with your fellow director on a common goal.”

he think we are from PRIP Banerjee’s dream of making India totally literate?

“Not very far; Kalyanda (Banerjee) gave Shekhar (Mehta) and I the thought some seven years ago at a meeting that let’s make India totally literate.

Mehta and I sat through that night... from 8 pm to 5 am, and formulated a basic goal, which then came to ₹100 crore! And we didn’t even have a bank account, forget having any money! And thus RILM was set up; I am its deed writer, with



Mehta being the founder and I the co-founder, of course under the patronage of Banerjee. I think we can do it by 2025.”

Looking back he says that the two of them have worked very hard and extensively for this cause. “Everyday there were pains but they were joyous pains.

From the beginning we’ve focused on training, both at the macro and micro-levels; clubs and leadership levels. So clearly literacy, along with WinS, for which I am the director in charge internationally, will be my two major priorities. I strongly believe that without literacy the

Sonal Sanghvi with their two sons; Khwab (right) and Raavishu.



effectiveness of whatever else we do will be very limited. Of course Polio remains the first priority.”

Sanghvi also believes that Rotarians should be doing far bigger projects than giving pencils and notebooks to schools. When he addresses clubs he asks them if each of its 25-odd members is worth at least ₹4 crore. “They say yes; so I say you are a ₹100 crore-company with 25 CEOs or GMs and you are still distributing pencils and notebooks. You should be building those schools. I don’t say don’t do the small things; they are important too and every bit makes a difference. Today every club in our region





**Kamal Sanghvi and
Sonal rowing a canoe
in Koh Samui, Thailand.**



can do fantastic work; it is only a question of guiding and motivating them to do it. That's where my role comes as a director... to give the correct guidance."

To mark Rotary's Centennial and its arrival in Kolkata 100 years ago (RC Calcutta), "we are pushing our districts to do projects worth ₹100 crore each to celebrate the event," says Sanghvi. The centennial celebrations will be spearheaded by Sanghvi

(Convenor) and Mehta (Chair). "We are going to give the districts a bouquet of projects, assist them to get global grants and find foreign partners.

I look at my job as director more to assist than to administer... assist to meet and fulfil RI's aims and goals."

Pictures: Courtesy
Kamal Sanghvi

Designed by
Krishnapratheesh S

District Wise TRF Contributions as on April 2019

(in US Dollars)

District Number	APF	PolioPlus	Other Restricted	Endowment Fund	Total Contributions	EREY Donors (in numbers)	EREY %
India							
2981	56,197	14,668	0	8,000	78,865	246	5.4
2982	54,137	7,294	0	243	61,674	301	10.5
3000	13,069	2,119	298,409	49,995	363,592	21	0.4
3011	112,227	5,958	105,345	47,930	271,459	140	4.2
3012	159,059	1,440	322,461	8,800	491,760	166	4.9
3020	24,375	80,608	2,625	7,250	114,859	81	2.1
3030	25,861	29	0	3,000	28,890	8	0.2
3040	2,880	0	47,976	0	50,856	6	0.3
3053	94,943	1,950	10,500	0	107,393	80	2.9
3054	(17,179)	14	136,010	0	118,845	38	0.7
3060	58,063	78,326	195,453	208,081	539,924	915	22.2
3070	111,703	315	4,857	0	116,875	442	15.3
3080	78,768	18,730	45,671	5,000	148,169	71	2.3
3090	45,219	0	0	0	45,219	131	6.5
3100	21,795	475	0	0	22,270	82	4.9
3110	32,742	3,127	34,863	0	70,732	55	1.4
3120	79,122	0	217,897	0	297,020	70	2.2
3131	372,199	25,229	367,497	83,203	848,128	1098	21.5
3132	23,737	310	17,129	60,000	101,176	77	2.1
3141	577,534	19,014	1,120,620	77,280	1,794,447	789	15.7
3142	299,851	75	246,041	0	545,968	577	18.3
3150	88,106	4,664	88,978	338,467	520,214	546	15.7
3160	66,008	1,644	0	9,277	76,929	139	5.8
3170	82,729	3,260	118,237	0	204,225	263	5.0
3181	151,325	938	0	103	152,365	600	19.9
3182	89,806	100	11,367	0	101,273	436	13.9
3190	119,138	19,126	117,087	1,871,889	2,127,240	848	17.7
3201	161,854	26,978	238,625	0	427,456	256	4.9
3202	23,377	32,124	35,563	0	91,064	54	1.1
3211	137,456	2,892	0	1,515	141,863	220	5.0
3212	108,820	14,045	7,350	76,502	206,716	129	3.3
3231	28,468	2,524	7,286	6,528	44,806	246	8.2
3232	174,461	3,600	278,422	12,475	468,958	274	6.4
3240	55,468	421	7,374	0	63,263	159	5.5
3250	26,657	1,834	11,216	4,812	44,519	52	1.4
3261	22,135	1,100	(1,492)	3,000	24,743	47	1.8
3262	31,072	1,000	3,900	5,413	41,385	124	3.8
3291	154,390	437	103,828	51,860	310,515	347	9.5
India Total	3,747,570	376,367	4,201,096	2,940,622	11,265,656	10,134	7.3
3220 Sri Lanka	77,189	3,025	15,676	8,000	103,890	146	8.1
3271 Pakistan	34,947	33,431	2,275	0	70,653	27	1.9
3272 Pakistan	25,675	2,166	0	0	27,841	55	1.9
3281 Bangladesh	160,377	3,825	81,163	17,696	263,062	302	5.5
3282 Bangladesh	60,241	5,095	1,050	3,000	69,386	245	6.1
3292 Nepal	184,561	25,014	117,160	25,000	351,736	402	9.2
South Asia Total	4,290,561	448,923	4,418,421	2,994,318	12,152,223	11,311	7.1
World Total	94,330,398	23,336,289	15,993,352	21,551,466	155,211,505		

Source: RI South Asia Office

Message from The Rotary Foundation Trustees

The Rotary International Convention has just concluded and there is so much positive energy in the air. We, as people of action, are making the world a better place — through our connections within clubs and transformative power of The Rotary Foundation.

Rotary implements projects that will help communities long after we're all gone. Clubs in one country pool funds with those from another to make communities healthier, more prosperous and better educated. We partner with global health leaders to bring the scourge of polio to its knees. And we can proudly note that much of the good that Rotary does now and will do in the future is because of the Foundation and its promise to transform gifts into projects that change lives.

At publication time, we had approved 1,078 global grant applications with total funding of \$76.5 million.

Last July, we launched the community assessment component as a requirement for all global grant or vocational training team applications as part of our commitment to sustainability. That approach also informs why we established the Rotary Disaster Response Fund and Grant this year, which allows distribution of grants up to \$25,000 for worldwide Rotarian disaster response.

We also saw the Rotary Peace Centres significantly grow and increase their impact. From among record number of applicants in 2019, around 100 Peace Fellows will be chosen, and once they graduate, they will join more than 1,200 others in applying their conflict resolution skills to global problems.

We are committed to strengthening and growing the Foundation for the future. As we look forward to a new Rotary year and opportunities to make an even greater impact in communities worldwide, we thank our Chair, Brenda M Cressey, for her leadership during the past two months. Please visit rotary.org/myrotary for information on the Foundation's recent leadership transition.

End your Rotary year on a high note: Visit rotary.org/donate. We thank you for your generosity and for all you do in Rotary.



TRF Trustee Chair
Brenda M Cressey

Support our Annual Fund

The inspiring book *Doing Good in the World* documents TRF's history, and the difference its programmes have made to communities across the world. Primary funding for TRF's work is the Annual Fund, which is supported solely by voluntary contributions from individual Rotarians and friends of the Foundation who share its vision to create a better and more humane world.



The Fund truly drives the Rotary Wheel and helps our clubs to make a difference by assisting efforts to enhance livelihood, and improve education, health and habitats of disadvantaged communities all over the world.

A common concern among some Rotarians is contributing to a fund that helps people in other communities. They would rather contribute to make a difference through a 'local' fund.

So let's go back a few decades to TRF's mission to 'End Polio'. Even though North America had no incidence of Polio, Rotarians from the US and Canada, as also every other remote corner of the globe, contributed to make the world free of this debilitating disease. If they had thought that they should contribute only to 'local' funds, we would never have succeeded in making India, and 99 per cent of the world, Polio-free.

Besides 50 per cent of what you voluntarily contribute to the Annual Fund comes back to your district three years later through the District Designated Fund (DDF). Of this DDF, the district leadership can decide to use a maximum of 50 per cent for local projects through District Grants.

By not making the Annual Fund our priority and contributing liberally to it, we will be severely constraining our districts' future leadership to do worthy projects. Both District Grants and Global Grants will suffer. Your contributions to the Fund helps to change lives throughout the world in ways you never dreamt of.

I appeal to you, open your purses and contribute generously to the Annual Fund of our Foundation.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Gulam A Vahanvaty'.

Gulam A Vahanvaty
Trustee, The Rotary Foundation

RIPE Maloney

maps out a course for Rotary's future



Mark Daniel Maloney knew the routine. For, he had served as chair of the committee that nominated Sam Owori as Rotary International President for 2018–19. In the summer of 2017, Maloney was one of six candidates who had travelled to RI headquarters seeking that nomination for 2019–20.

“I was interviewed before lunch, so I knew I had a few hours before the committee made a decision,” recalls Maloney. “It was a lovely August day, and I went for a long walk through the beautiful neighbourhoods of Evanston. I had a late lunch, and then I came back to my hotel room and waited.”

Given what had happened in years past, Maloney expected to hear from the committee by late afternoon, but with evening coming on, there was still no word. “I was texting to my wife,

Gay, ‘Haven’t heard anything yet,’ and then the phone started ringing. It was Anne Matthews, the chair of the nominating committee, and she asked me to return to the building.”

This was an unexpected twist. In years past, candidates received a phone call telling them if they had been chosen. Anticipating that would happen again, Maloney had shed his suit and tie and was wearing khakis and a Rotary logo shirt. Now he had been summoned back to RI headquarters.

“I was bumfuzzled,” he says. “I was not expecting that. I didn’t want to keep anyone waiting, so I didn’t even put on a sports jacket. I’m on the phone with Gay saying, ‘I’m heading into the building. I think this is it.’”

In the lobby, Andrew McDonald, RI’s deputy general counsel, greeted Maloney and escorted him to the

18th floor boardroom, where the nominating committee waited. Matthews rose. “As I recall, she said, ‘Ladies and gentlemen, may I present Mark Maloney, the nominee for president 2019–20.’ So that was pretty exciting.”

Fourteen months have passed. It’s a fine October morning, and Maloney sits in the president-elect’s office, an 18th floor aerie overlooking Lake Michigan, talking with *The Rotarian* editor-in-chief John Rezek and senior editor Geoffrey Johnson. For the next 90 minutes (and for another hour a week later), they discuss Maloney’s aspirations for his presidency.

A lawyer — he and his wife are partners in the Decatur, Alabama, law firm founded by Gay’s father — Maloney speaks in thoughtful, well-formed sentences and long, carefully

constructed paragraphs as he charts out his hopes for Rotary's future growth (His rich baritone also does creditable double duty when he breaks into song, a booming chorus of "R-O-T-A-R-Y / That spells Rotary").

Like the good lawyer he is, Maloney immediately steers the line of questioning into a direction of his own choosing.

The Rotarian: Let's start at the end. What do you want your presidential legacy to be?

Maloney: Let's not start at the end. Let me give you a preliminary response, and then I'll answer your question.

Rotary is like a United Nations of individuals. The United Nations is an international organisation of countries; Rotary is an international organisation of individuals. We are having a tremendous impact in the world. Just within the past month I've had some experiences that brought that home to me. Two weeks ago, Gay and I joined with Rotarians from our two Rotary clubs — my Rotary Club of Decatur and her Rotary Club of Decatur Daybreak — in a water filter distribution project on St Thomas in the US Virgin Islands. Our partner club, the Rotary Club of St Thomas East, hosted a dinner meeting during which a panel of local experts addressed water issues on the island following the hurricanes that happened in 2017. Toward the end of the meeting, a Rotarian got up and said: "When I listen to the news or read the newspapers, I can become despondent. But when I come to a meeting like this, Rotary makes me realise that the world has a great future." Rotary's work completely changed this individual's attitude about where the world is going.

And this weekend here in Evanston, we inducted 32 individuals and couples into the Arch Klumph Society. These were Rotarians who

had contributed substantial sums of money to support polio eradication, peace and conflict resolution and prevention, maternal and child health, and other causes. And there were so many stirring stories about what these Rotarians see Rotary accomplishing in the world today, so much so that they want, to use a colloquialism, to put their money where their mouths are. So that's the Rotary that I want to facilitate, that I want to make happen.

So now that I've laid that predicate, I'll answer your question. At the end of my term, I want to have inspired changes in our Rotary culture that make it possible for Rotary to continue doing the things that heartened the soul of that Rotarian in St Thomas and that inspired those Rotarians at the Arch Klumph ceremony to make those significant contributions to The Rotary Foundation to keep that work going.

TR: How do you ensure that happens?

Maloney: We need to grow Rotary. We need more hands doing service, more brains coming up with ideas. We need more partnerships, more connections. To accomplish that, I have four priorities for my presidency, and No 1 is growing Rotary.

TR: How do you do that?

Maloney: First, we redouble our efforts to support our clubs to attract new members and engage current members so that they stay with Rotary to perform greater and more innovative

service. That means clubs being more flexible than they have been.

But the other aspect is to form new Rotary clubs. Our tradition was to form new clubs in areas where clubs didn't exist. We need now to focus on forming new clubs where Rotary not only exists, but thrives. In many of those areas, we are serving only a certain segment of the population. We need new clubs with alternative experiences that meet in nontraditional ways. That would help us attract a different demographic — be it age, gender, ethnic background — so that we are serving all aspects of the community.



TR: What are your other priorities?

Maloney: My second and third priorities support the first. At every level of this organisation we need to design our club meetings, service projects and social events so that they are family-friendly. We need to provide opportunities that complement younger individuals' family lives rather than compete with those family lives.

And my third priority is that we must change our culture, our attitudes, and the way we do business so that it is possible and apparent that you can be actively engaged in Rotary and even assume positions of Rotary leadership while you are still actively engaged in your business or profession. If we want Rotary to be attractive to a younger demographic, we have to make Rotary leadership accessible to the younger demographic.

Rotary is all about connection.

When you join a club, you connect
with the business leaders in your
community. Rotary connects you
and clubs and districts for service
around the world.

TR: What's No 4?

Maloney: In June 2020, the United Nations will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter. Rotary has been involved with the UN even before it began. Because of that, I want to focus on Rotary's relationship with the United Nations. The annual Rotary-UN Day will be returning to the UN headquarters in New York after having

been in Geneva and Nairobi. We also hope to have three presidential conferences focusing on Rotary's relationship with specific UN agencies at different locations around the world and a final celebration of Rotary's UN relationship before the convention opens in Honolulu, Hawaii.

So in terms of legacy — just to wrap that up — for those of us who are working together in 2019–20, our success will not be measured on June 30 of 2020, but on June 30 of 2025 or 2030, when others can determine whether the things we started had an impact as the years went by.

TR: When will there be a female president of Rotary?

Maloney: I think it will be in the next five years. The structure of Rotary is such that to be district governor, you must have served as club president. To be an international director, you must



RIPE Mark Maloney at a meeting of RC Calcutta Mahanagar, along with RIDE Kamal Sanghvi.

have been a district governor. And to be RI president you must have been an international director. Women have worked their way up through those ranks, and we have now several past directors who are women. They are gaining experience in other positions as well, and that makes it ever more likely every year that a woman will be nominated.

I am certainly conscious of promoting gender diversity in Rotary. I've chosen a woman to chair my convention committee and nominated another to serve as a trustee of The Rotary Foundation. And next year we will have two women on the Board of Directors, and the following year we'll have five.

TR: Explain how you came up with your presidential theme — and was it more difficult than choosing your presidential tie?

Maloney: Oh, no, it was far easier than choosing the tie.

TR: So tell us about your theme: *Rotary Connects the World*.

Maloney: Rotary is all about connection. When you join a club, you connect with the business leaders in your community. Rotary connects you and clubs and districts for service around the world. The whole basis of The Rotary Foundation is to connect Rotary clubs in one part of the world

We need new clubs with
alternative experiences that
meet in nontraditional ways.
That would help us attract a
different demographic.

with Rotary clubs in another part of the world, typically Rotary clubs from a developed country with Rotary clubs in a developing country to undertake a humanitarian service project.

Rotary connects the world on a less formal basis internationally. Rotary International conventions and other international meetings are wonderful events. You see people there year after year that you don't see at any other time of the year, and you connect with them through friendship. You've seen the promo: "Rotary, the original social network". That's true.

TR: Rotary's efforts toward peace: reasonable aspiration or exercise in head-banging futility?

Maloney: It's a reasonable aspiration. My father-in-law, Gilmer Blackburn, told Gay and me 15 or 20 years ago that if peace is going to come to the world, he's convinced that it's going to be through Rotary. We have the opportunity to have an impact towards a more peaceful world. Do we have the opportunity to create the *Pax Romana* that existed at the time of the birth of Christ? No, but we do have the ability to contribute to peace, to put leaders out there through our Peace Fellows programme who may help lead to some version of the *Pax Romana*.

TR: Why did you join Rotary at age 25?

Maloney: I joined Rotary because it was the thing to do. I was a new attorney coming into Decatur, and it seemed as if that's what all young professionals did: join a civic club.

TR: But why Rotary?

Maloney: I joined Rotary because my father-in-law was in Kiwanis. In terms of networking and making connections, the law firm already had a representative

My father-in-law, Gilmer
Blackburn, told Gay and me 15
or 20 years ago that if peace is
going to come to the world, it's
going to be through Rotary.

there; we ought to have a representative in the Rotary club. It turned out to have been a terrific decision.

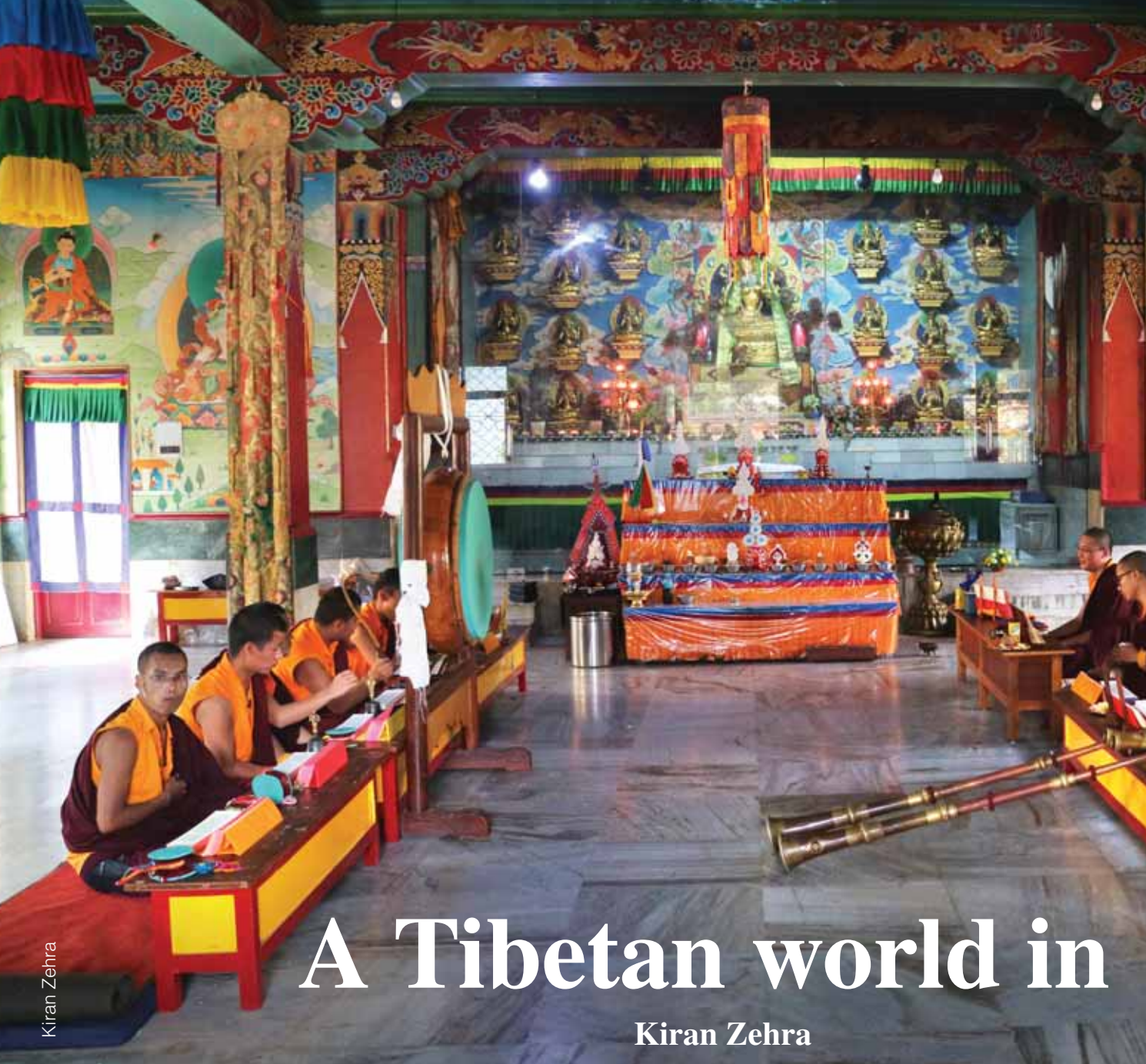
TR: Why is that? What kept you in Rotary all these years?

Maloney: One, because of the connections — because of the friendships in the local club, and then the friendships in the district, the friendships internationally.

Two, because I was engaged in Rotary from the beginning. Gay and I have always been organisers. I belonged to 4-H, and I was the president of the county 4-H federation in my early teenage years. I was a state officer for the National Beta Club. I was the president of the Catholic Youth Organisation for the Roman Catholic diocese of Belleville, Illinois, and at Harvard I was a football manager. I didn't just join things. I organised things, and I moved up in those organisations.

So I was engaged in my Rotary club immediately. I joined in December 1980. About a year later, they put me on the programme committee, and a year later I was the committee chair. It may have been three years after that, that I got on the board. The precise timing is lost in the mists of time. Either way, I can't imagine a life without Rotary.

© The Rotarian



Kiran Zehra

A Tibetan world in

Kiran Zehra

The endless green stretch of paddy and maize fields on either side of the road narrow down to small lanes where traditional Buddhist prayer flags over shops announce the arrival of the Tibetan settlement — Bylakuppe, 84 km from Mysuru. “The flags do not carry prayers

to gods, that is a misconception. We Tibetans believe that the prayers and mantras written on the flags will be blown by the wind to spread goodwill and compassion throughout the land,” says Tenzin Yangchan, Secretary, RC Lhasa Bylakuppe, RID 3181, as she takes us inside the Namdroling

Monastery. Interestingly all the members of this club are Tibetans.

“This is the heart and soul of Bylakuppe,” she says gracefully bowing and greeting monks dressed in maroon robes at the monastery, also known as the Golden Temple. The simplicity is intriguing and makes

you wonder what kind of life the monks live in this tucked-away Buddhist temple. Surprisingly, not everyone in the monastery is male. “It is home to over 5,000 monks and nuns, who fled from China, and for those shunned by their families or whose families are no more.” Tenzin adds that



Bylakuppe

the Nyingma Institute, inside the monastery, houses a nunnery for women, a practice that is allowed only by a few monastic orders.

The second largest Tibetan settlement in India after Dharamshala, the seat of Tibetan government-in-exile, is home to thousands of

Tibetan families. “East or west Bylakuppe is the best,” says Tenzin, whose grandparents were “forced out of our homeland. This place is our home now and we couldn’t have asked for more. Here we freely practice our religion and raise our children as Tibetans and not as Chinese in a foreign land.”

A neat pathway carved alongside well-manicured lawns leads to the Golden Temple where three towering golden statues of Lord Buddha, flanked by Lord Padmasambhava and Lord Amitayus on either side, are placed on a high pedestal. The murals on the walls tell a tale of how Lord Padmasambhava and Lord Amitayus, also known as the Second Buddha, played a vital role in the spread of Buddhism to Tibet and Bhutan. All the pillars in the hall are red and the ceiling is covered in traditional *thangka* paintings. Gigantic doors with hand embroidered tassels hanging from the knobs add to the traditional charm.

As we stepped out to reach the old temple, a group of monks’ chant mantras in rhythmic chorus undisturbed by the hustle and bustle such as the visit of tourists, some taking selfies and others overawed by the aesthetic beauty of the monastery. Tenzin, pointing to the prayer wheels, asks us to

wish for something and rotate them clockwise. The group chanting by the monks is mesmerising as it plays in your head for a very long time.

The souvenir shop at the entrance has a display of tiny ceramic monks, colourful dreamcatchers, windchimes, flutes and whistles, that you can pick as gifts for friends and family. For a proper Tibetan lunch experience, you can visit the monastery canteen, where monks usually have their meals. This place is especially recommended for travellers with light wallets. The *thukpa* noodle soup, vegetable gravy (curry) and *tingmo* (steamed bread) are delicious. All the vegetables in the soup are organically grown by the Tibetan farmers. Tenzin says, “For Tibetan Buddhists, it is more sustainable to till the earth naturally, as our ancestors did for centuries in the Himalayas. Organic farming is helping our people return to a lifestyle they have left behind.” The “Tibetan Organic”

We have made a lot of progress ever since we arrived here. We have become self-sufficient and do not need support. That is why we are supporting other communities around us.

Tenzin Yangchan
Secretary, RC Lhasa Bylakuppe



Kiran Zehra



Young monks at the Namdroling Monastery.

label patented by the Mundgod settlement, north of Bylakuppe, has already won brand validity in the US and the European Union, she says. In India, there are more than 27,000 acres of farmland employing Tibetan labour, with around 4,000 acres having the organic tag.

The RC Lhasa Bylakuppe has been providing drinking water facility, school uniforms and is holding medical camps for nearby villages. Ask Tenzin about projects for their own community, she says, “we have made a lot of progress ever since we arrived here. We have become self-sufficient and do not need support. That is why we are supporting other communities around us.”

Designed by N Krishnamurthy

From RI South Asia office desk

RI Exchange Rate – Revised Policy

Beginning July 1, 2019, Rotary exchange rates will be based on the prevailing market rate as of the first of each month. Rotary exchange rates cannot be sent in advance. Rotary Exchange rate can be accessed at <https://my.rotary.org/en/exchange-rates>.

TRF guidelines for reclassifying contributions

The Foundation does not accept or process reclassifying of contributions from one gift designation or restriction to another made in previous Rotary year(s). For example: Annual Giving to Endowment, Polio to Annual Giving, Annual Giving to grants etc and vice versa. **Corrections can only be made within 90 calendar days of the gift receipt date and must be made within the same Rotary fiscal year.**

For example, if the gift receipt date is March 1, 2019, corrections can be made within 90 days, i.e by May 30, 2019. However, if the gift receipt date is of the last quarter (April to June) of the Rotary fiscal year 2018–19, corrections can only be made within the same Rotary fiscal year, i.e by June 30, 2019.

Transfer DDF funds for Polio Eradication by June 30, 2019

Many districts in South Asia still have unutilised DDF and it is highly recommended that they utilise the same during the period it becomes available. Unutilised DDF may be

donated towards Rotary's top priority, eradication of polio. For every \$1,000 of DDF, Rotary gains \$4,500 for use in the polio eradication effort.

Update membership through My Rotary

The club secretary is responsible for making membership updates, including adding new members and removing terminated members, as they occur or within 30 days, to ensure invoice balances are accurate. Please note that:

- These changes can no longer be made retroactively
- It is essential to keep your club's member data current, so you receive a correct invoice
- Opt for receiving paperless invoice in My Rotary's Club Administration Invoice preference
- For more information, please visit the Membership Dues page on *My Rotary*.

If you are unable to report member data online, print and complete the Member Data Form located in *My Rotary's* document library and submit by scanning it and sending it to data@rotary.org, or mail it to RI South Asia Office before June 25, 2019, to enable updating member information in Club Invoice by July 1, 2019.

Find more information at <https://my.rotary.org/en> and visit the Club Administration

page. Please direct questions about membership to data@rotary.org.

CSR-funded global grant

All Rotary clubs/districts are encouraged to approach corporates and plan to implement CSR global grants in their district. Access <http://www.csr.gov.in>, a national CSR data portal maintained by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, to get more information on CSR activities carried out by eligible companies. The information will help in approaching corporates.

Rotary Year 2018–19 Top 5 Giving Districts from South Asia as of April 2019

Zone	District	Rank in South Asia
5	3190	1
4	3141	2
4	3131	3
4	3142	4
5	3150	5

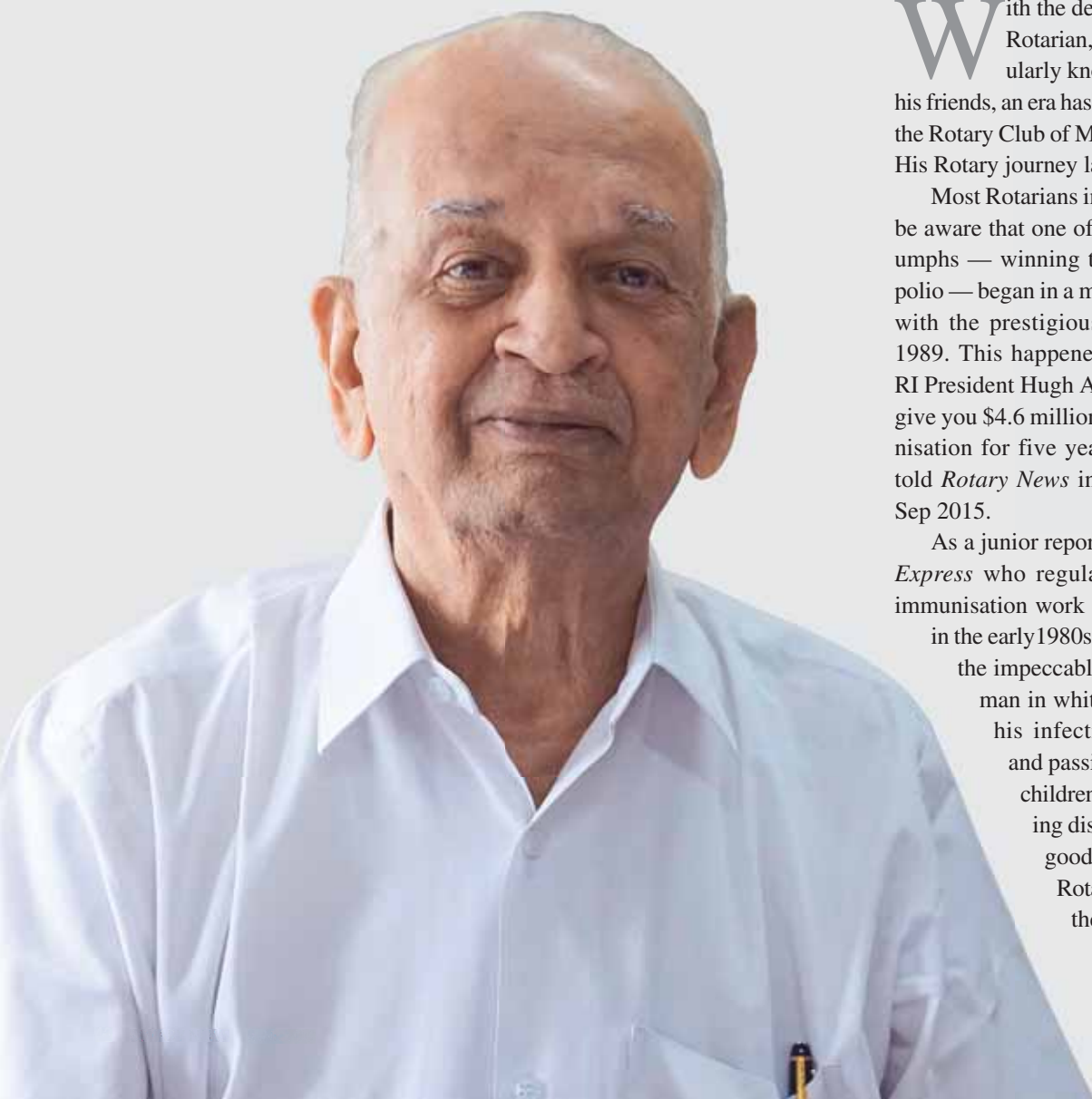
Rotary Year 2018–19 Major Gifts as of April 2019

Zone	Directed Gift	Endowment Gift	CSR Gift
4 & 6A	13	11	15
5	9	16	3
Total	22	27	18

Kris Chitale...

a dedicated Rotarian, passes away

Rasheeda Bhagat



With the demise of a vintage Rotarian, S L Chitale, popularly known as Kris to all his friends, an era has come to an end in the Rotary Club of Madras, RID 3232. His Rotary journey lasted 54 years.

Most Rotarians in India would not be aware that one of their biggest triumphs — winning the battle against polio — began in a major way in India with the prestigious RC Madras in 1989. This happened when the then RI President Hugh Archer said “we’ll give you \$4.6 million for polio immunisation for five years,” Chitale had told *Rotary News* in an interview in Sep 2015.

As a junior reporter in *The Indian Express* who regularly covered the immunisation work done by the club in the early 1980s, I well remember the impeccably dressed gentleman in white who passed on his infectious enthusiasm and passion for protecting children against debilitating diseases and getting good coverage of this Rotary programme in then Madras.

Chitale joined RC Madras in

SL Chitale with PRIP Rajendra Saboo.



1965; earlier this service-minded architect, one of the most eminent in Chennai, was a Round Tabler. In 1979, as the club celebrated its golden jubilee, its president V Chidambaram urged club members to do a big project which was bound to leave a lasting impact. As it was also the International Year of the Child, they zeroed in on vaccination for measles, then the biggest killer of children and collaborated with RC Whitby of Canada, RID 7070, which agreed to gift the Indian Rotarians 65,000 doses. “This was sufficient to immunise the children of only Nungambakkam or Mylapore, and not Madras,” Chitale had quipped in the interview. But this partnership gave the club its biggest benefactor and Chitale himself, a lifelong friend in Ken Hobbs, who came down as a volunteer.

Hobbs got so hooked to the Madras Rotarians and the immunisation project that for the next 30 years he visited the metro every year. With

eminent virologist and past president of RC Madras, Dr Jacob John, too being part of the team, measles immunisation really took off.

Led by Chitale, a bunch of Rotarians really worked hard to get the government duties waived, and Air India to fly the vaccines free of cost for five years. Shoring up the cold chain to ensure “that we didn’t give just distilled water as vaccination

He was an absolute gentleman
to the core and always set an
example to other Rotarians
by showing the importance of
personal involvement.

Ranjit Pratap
President, RC Madras

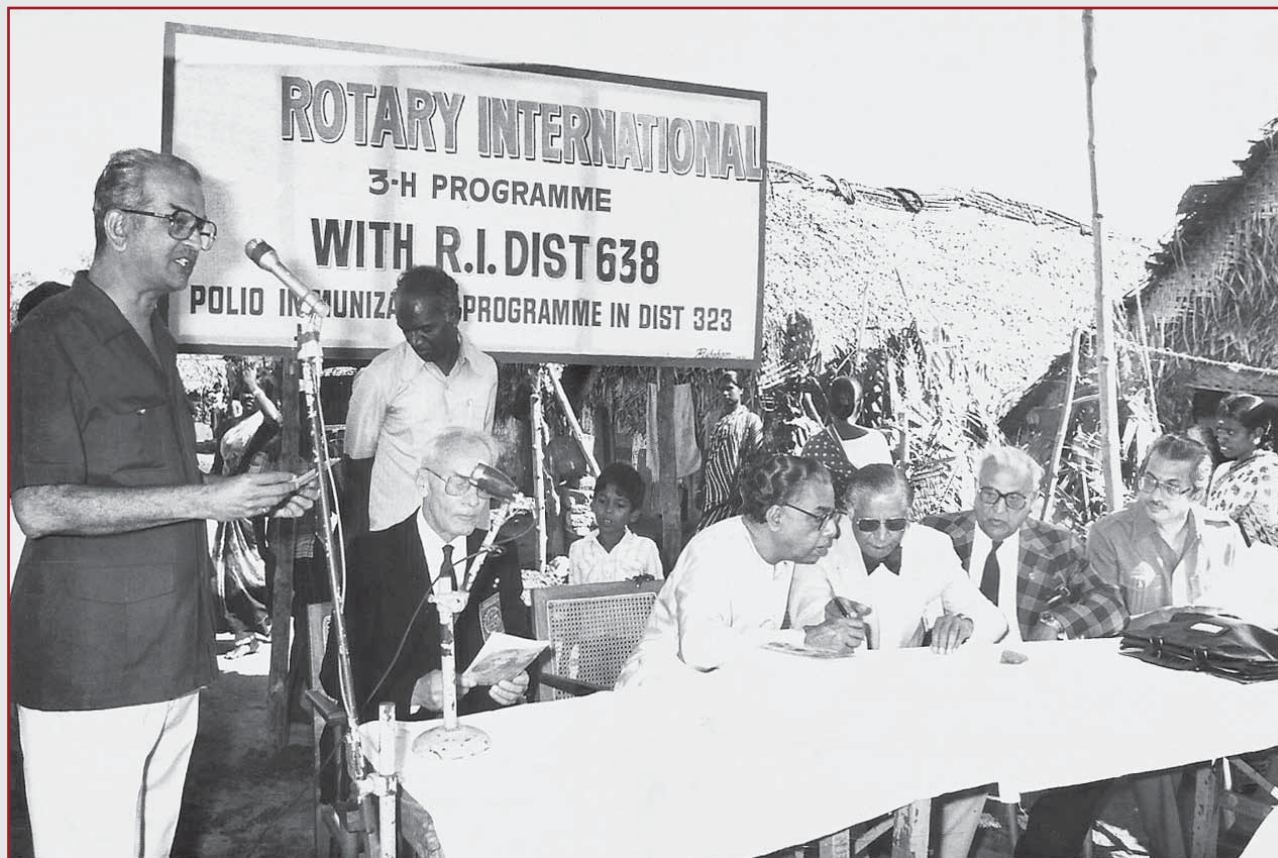
doses to our children” required ₹40 lakh, a huge amount in those days but that was managed too.

Polio vaccination

Meanwhile, much earlier in 1979, RI had begun its polio vaccination initiative with the Philippines. “While there it remained more of a government project, Indian Rotarians got wholeheartedly involved in polio immunisation and Tamil Nadu was the first State in India to be declared polio-free,” Chitale recalled.

Asked what he had enjoyed the most about being a Rotarian, Chitale had smiled and said: “Oh, it was forming a team and forging great friendships. And the opportunity to go to the camps and do all the work, which included taking down the names of the beneficiaries, maintaining account, etc.”

Expressing his “anguish” at Chitale’s demise, PRIP Rajendra Saboo said even though he had not met Chitale in the last few years, “his



SL Chitale addressing a Rotary meet; the then Tamil Nadu Health Minister Dr HV Hande is seated second from left.

memories dwell in my heart — his integrity, values, service-mindedness. I must have met him over three decades ago, and remember his total involvement in the red measles vaccination programme. He initiated and implemented so many projects — cleaning of temple tanks, vocational training centres, etc. He was a totally action and service-oriented Rotarian, who never cared for a post or position.” Many times Saboo had encouraged him to seek the DG’s post but Chitale had “always politely shunned this advice. He has left a legacy exemplifying the Rotary motto Service above Self.”

As members of his club bid him a tearful farewell, President of RC Madras, Ranjit Pratap, says, “For us at RC Madras, he was the father of polio immunisation and earlier the red measles vaccination programme. He was

an absolute gentleman to the core and always set an example to other Rotarians by showing the importance of personal involvement. He would always tell Rotarians that however busy a professional you might be, please set aside some time for working for the underprivileged. Don’t tell me you don’t have the time, if you have the intent to help others, you will find the time. He was such a great inspiration to all of us as he always walked the talk.”

Pratap has known Chitale since 1964 “when my father (MR Pratap) requested him to join the Worth Trust which works for the handicapped and he rendered yeoman service in that organisation too.”

PDG M Natarajan, who succeeded Chitale as RC Madras President in 1984, said “Chitale was a great Rotarian and an excellent friend. We worked very closely on the polio programme

in the initial years; I would do the medical work and he would take care of the admin and finance, along with a core group of Rotarians. He was a great host, a dedicated worker and very gentle; though he had a short temper because he was very honest and never hesitated to speak the truth.”

In his 2015 interview to *Rotary News* Chitale has left some thoughts which the present generation of Rotarians would do well to ponder upon. When I asked him what had changed in Rotary over half a century, Chitale had thought for a moment and said: “I think the involvement, friendships and participation were much greater in those days. In any project that Rotary did, we became personally and passionately involved. I am afraid today it is more chequebook charity, and not so much personal involvement.” ■

President of RC Bangalore Orchards, D Ravishankar and Paola at the AKS induction ceremony in Evanston.



Paola and Ravishankar with TRF Trustee Ron Burton (right).

A Rotarian's dream creates a ₹8 crore-housing project for Irulas in Tamil Nadu

V Muthukumaran



PDG Abirami Ramanathan with Rtn Vinod Sarogi, Project Secretary P B Ravi Kumar and villagers in front of the model house at Kuyil Kuppam village.

His dream was to create a happy village where rural settlements had no source of livelihood and tribal families had a hand-to-mouth existence. One day, one of his Rotarian friends, A G D Durairaj from RC Chengalpet, RID 3231, took PDG Abirami Ramanathan, film distributor and owner of the Abirami Mega Mall, to the Kuyil Kuppam village in the Kancheepuram district of Tamil Nadu.

After visiting this hamlet in Oct 2017, “I approached the district collector for a housing project approval at Kuyil Kuppam. Within no time, a *bhoomi puja* was done at the site on July 1, 2018 by my club RC Madras Central (RCMC), RID 3232, for the construction of 64 houses in two phases,” said Ramanathan.

While the first phase comprising 32 units of 2BHK houses of 600 sq ft with concrete roof will be inaugurated in June, the surprise package is that

“all the houses come equipped with gas stove, fridge, wet grinder, mixer, TV set, steel cupboard, a set of kitchen utensils and two mattresses with pillows, besides all the electrical fittings including ceiling fan and tubelight,” said VS Raghavan, the chief project supervisor.

A big responsibility

So far, 33 non-saleable *pattas* have been received and the title deeds each measuring 3.5 cents will be given to the

heads of the Irula families who work as farm and construction labour. “We have selected six clubs, namely RCs Eagle Town Thirukkazhukundram, Chengalpet, Maraimalai Nagar, Mammandur, Kancheepuram Temple City and Mahendra Industrial City, to maintain the houses and educate the Irulas on the upkeep of their prized possession,” said P B Ravi Kumar, Project Secretary.

With the aim to usher in behavioural change, “we have chosen a woman village leader as the change-agent.” She convenes weekly meetings and monitors the progress of preventing alcohol abuse by the men, which is a big evil here. Regular health camps are conducted by these six clubs which are also educating the Irulas on hygiene and sanitation practices,” said Dr Manoj Rajan, past president of RC Madras Central.

Funding

Major sponsor Ramanathan has donated ₹2.5 crore, including a Term Gift of ₹65 lakh. RCMC has mobilised ₹60 lakh through its members, 25 Rotary clubs in the extended areas have pitched in with ₹75 lakh, few other NGOs have contributed



An Irula woman with her child in a mud hut waiting eagerly to move in to the new house.

₹25 lakh and many non-Rotarians have donated in cash and kind for this project valued at ₹8 crore. “We are laying a black-topped road, installing solar streetlights and a 3,000 litre-overhead tank for water storage and supply. Besides, we have planned a community hall and a Dhanvantri temple for the happy village,” said the main sponsor.

Dairy farm

Chengalpet-based Gosamrakshana Trust which is into rearing milch cows will be helping the club set up a

dairy farm in this village. “To begin with, 10–15 cows will be donated by Rotarians and the Irulas will be trained in nurturing the cows. The *goshala* will help the families to sell the excess milk after their consumption,” said Ramanathan.

A cooperative society will be formed to take care of the dairy farm and a general provision store that is being planned at the village.

Winds of change

Village leader Latha Ravi is all smiles as she says, “We can’t ask for more. The beautiful houses are a boon to us and we are excited to start our dream life. We won’t forget this great help from Rotary for generations.”

Echoing the sentiments of Latha, her friends R Anjali, V Vasuki and R Sangeetha, all housewives, said they would maintain their shining and colourful houses well and feel blessed to start a totally different lifestyle. A far cry from present existence for all the 64 families in mud and low-thatched houses with no basic amenities.



PDG Abirami Ramanathan at a *goshala* along with Ravi Kumar and RC Madras Central past president Dr Manoj Rajan (centre).

Pictures by V Muthukumaran

Preparing leaders for WinS programmes

Jaishree and V Muthukumaran

A training workshop for WinS facilitators from 12 districts, presided over by WinS Global Chair PT Prabhakar, was held in Goa recently. The main focus of the programme was to make trainers

understand the vital parameters required by clubs to qualify for different star recognitions prescribed by RI while executing WinS projects in their regions. “Though clubs are doing a fantastic job in installing functional toilets and handwash stations,

and reaching out to adolescent girls with our MHM programmes in schools, their work is still in the dark as very few clubs are reporting it with our office,” said Prabhakar.

WinS Committee National Chair Ramesh Aggarwal and WinS

From R: WinS Global Chair PT Prabhakar, WinS Committee National Chair Ramesh Aggarwal and PDG Natarajan Nagoji with schoolchildren demonstrating handwash at the WinS workshop in Chennai. RISAO Programme Officer Nida Hasan (right) is also in the picture.



Programme Officer from RI South Asia Office Nida Hasan shed light on the methodology to assess One-star recognition. The event was a platform for district leaders to share experiences and learn good practices on the subject.

The workshop had 112 delegates from 12 districts, including 20 representatives from RID 3150. These included DG Ramesh Vangla, DGE Pandi Sivannarayana Rao, DGN Hanmanth Reddy and PDG Ratna Prabhakar Anne. Dressed in blue t-shirts, the group, called the 'WASH Task Force', stood out at the two-day event.

"Our children are not asking for a luxury car or a five-star hotel. All they want is a good, clean toilet," said Prabhakar, highlighting a recent global baseline report of UNICEF and WHO which says that over one-third of schools worldwide and half the number of schools in developed countries have no hygiene facility. "Rotary's biggest strength is our partnership with UNICEF. So cash in on this to rope in corporates to support

your WinS endeavour." Stressing the need for behaviour modifications in communities, Prabhakar said that children are the catalysts for change and "our efforts should strike a chord in them, so they go back home and inspire their parents and neighbours to follow hygienic practices such as using toilets and washing hands."

The Rotary Foundation lays great stress on operation and maintenance of toilets and handwash stations in schools for a minimum of two years. "That's our strength. Anybody can build a toilet and go away. But that does not help. We involve the school management, PTA and students committee in our programme and handhold them to make this a sustainable project so that the practices stay long after Rotary has moved over from the site," he added.

A corporate, Pentair Water India, was felicitated at the workshop for its crucial partnership with RC Margao Midtown, RID 3170, in sponsoring \$100,000 worth of WinS components in schools. The partnership has resulted in handwash stations in 100 schools, toilets in 80 schools and 40 MHM units.

RCs Dharwad Central and Margao Midtown hosted the workshop and Ganesh Bhat, a member of the WinS Recognition Committee, was the Convener. He said, "This is a Target Challenge pilot programme of TRF initiated in 2016 in India, Kenya, Guatemala, Honduras and Belize,

and runs up to June 2020. Of the 40 districts from across the five Target Challenge countries, 38 are in India. We have to make it a success so that TRF decides to roll it over to the rest of the world."

He urged the delegates to take the lessons learnt in this workshop to "the clubs in your district and inspire every Rotarian to implement important features of WASH in Schools in the region so that no school lacks toilets or handwash station, and no child drops out of school due to ill-health or lack of toilet facilities." He said his objective was to get Rotary clubs to install toilets and handwash stations in at least 7,000 schools in the zone in three years.

PDG Aggarwal explained the processes to achieve different levels of star recognition. "Involve the school management committee in your programme from the start," he said and suggested use of local products, technology and local labour to make the programme sustainable. "Clubs can also apply for Government of India's *Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalay Puraskar* for which PRID Sushil Gupta is a nominating committee member."

PDG Deepak Shikarpur spoke on how to attract corporate support for WinS projects. Approach small and medium-sized companies that cannot set up their own CSR trusts, he said. PDG Jorson Fernandes shed light on training teachers and other stakeholders through an interactive session.



Rotary's biggest strength is our partnership with the
UNICEF. So cash in on this forte to rope in corporates to
support your WinS endeavour.

WinS Global Chair **PT Prabhakar**



WinS Task Force of RID 3150 with WinS Global Chair PT Prabhakar, WinS National Committee Chair Ramesh Aggarwal and its Committee Member Ganesh Bhat at the workshop in Goa.

RID 3150 PDG Ratna Prabhakar shared the district's success story of how a demo where 25,000 schoolchildren washing hands in 100 handwash stations helped propagate the idea. The district has implemented WinS projects worth ₹2.31 crore with nine global grants and MHM awareness to 25,000 adolescent girls in the district.

RID 3190 DG Suresh Hari pointed out how repeated visits to schools and the team's uniquely designed bookmarks with handwashing illustrations distributed to students are paying off. PDG KS Nagendra stressed on the importance of needs assessment to plan the budget and timeframe. "Work on it as you do a project management."

Nida Hasan from the RISAO presented the WinS Target Challenge framework, TRF's process for review and approval of application, and helped the delegates in filling up the recognition application forms.

Dr Meenakshi Bharat, a gynaecologist and member of RC Bangalore, promoted reusable pads and menstrual cup to manage menstrual cycle. "The

pads we use now are not harmless as they seem. They are toxic," she said and discouraged clubs from promoting disposable sanitary napkin vending machines and incinerators. "So much so we promote the 'Meenakshi Bharat napkins' said DGE Dr Sameer Hariani of the same district in a lighter vein.

A similar workshop was held in Chennai with participation of ten districts from Tamil Nadu and Kerala. In the southern city of Tirunelveli, nearly 1,000 delegates registered for the WinS seminar hosted by RC Tinnevely, RID 3212. District WinS Chairman A S P Arumugaaselman presided over the sessions.

The pads we use now are not
harmless as they seem. They
are toxic.

Dr Meenakshi Bharat
RC Bangalore

Prabhakar felicitated the Rotary clubs with Achievers' Awards for creating a record in holding WASH events in schools in the district. All the 84 clubs had reached out to 412 schools through WinS projects benefiting over two lakh students to create a record. Likewise, 57,000 girl students were sensitised on menstrual hygiene. "I congratulate the district for taking such efforts in making an impact in schools," said Prabhakar, and lauded Arumugaaselman for spending his personal funds to provide one lakh soaps to encourage students to adopt better hygiene.

DG Rajagopalan said that after Rotary's efforts in polio eradication, its role in ushering in better sanitation among school students has taken centre stage. Out of 44 applications received world over for global grants under the WinS programme, only four were sanctioned by TRF; two were received by Indian Rotary clubs. "RC Virudhunagar Elite from the district got a global grant for ₹47 lakh to implement a WinS project," he noted. ■

A village comes to life

Team Rotary News



From R: DG Mukul Sinha, Corinna Huang, RID 3490 DG Chih Ming Tsai, PRIP Gary Huang, PRID Shekhar Mehta and Rashi with foreign delegates and local children in the village Bamon Mollar Chak near Kolkata.

Bamon Mollar Chak, a tiny village 62 km from Kolkata and close to the Sunderbans, sported a festive look recently as the villagers got ready to welcome 85 foreign Rotarians from RID 3490, Taiwan, led by PRIP Gary Huang, spouse Corinna and DG Chih Ming Tsai; and 15 Rotarians from Singapore; along with PRIDs Sushil Gupta, Shekhar Mehta and RID 3291 DG Mukul Sinha. They were all there to inaugurate the Rotary Skill Centre established by RC Calcutta Metro South to skill the women in the village. International partners and TRF have supported the club with funds, while DG Sinha sanctioned \$25,000 from the DDF to upgrade the centre with requisite infrastructure.

Now with water provided by Rotary, their single-crop lands have become multiple crop yielding fields. Around 200 acres of land has turned fertile.

The village has undergone a massive transformation, thanks to the dedicated efforts of the club. The Rotarians came across this village three years ago and found it a backward hamlet, without toilets, electricity, drinking water, medical facilities or a school. “It was in a state of complete neglect when we first visited it,” says club member Anirudha Guha.

The Rotarians led by their President Asit Talukdar came up with solutions to transform the village into a livable space. Toilets were constructed for 123 families; “we are only 40 toilets away from making this village ODF,” smiles Guha. Four tubewells have been dug to take care of the drinking water needs of the people and two borewells with pumpsets will provide water for irrigation. “Like most other villages, this is an agricultural community, but the people depend heavily on the monsoon. But now with water provided by Rotary, their single-crop lands have become multiple crop yielding fields. Around 200 acres of land has turned fertile.” The Rotarians are supporting the villagers

with financial assistance and training them in vocations such as pisciculture and organic farming. Women are trained to make pickles, jams and sauce.

Medical camps are being conducted regularly, and the pothole-filled roads have been given a makeover. The club also facilitated construction of a wide wooden bridge across a river for easy mobility from one part of the village to the other. “Earlier the villagers were using a makeshift bridge made of bamboo poles tied together and when the river swelled during monsoons, the bridge was unusable. People had to sail across on rafts. This bridge is sturdy and dependable now,” he says.

The club built a school in this village in 2016 and is providing all assistance for the students. Two years later they built the skill centre in 2018. PRID Gupta expressed his appreciation for the enthusiastic endeavour of the club members and asked them to make it a “centre of excellence so that women get to learn various skills that will help them in income generation and lift them above the poverty line.” ■

Rotary literacy classes a boon to rural women

V Muthukumaran



DG A V Pathy and spouse Veena giving the certificate to the nonagenarian Kulandhaiammal. Also seen is RC Coimbatore Zenith President Raviraj Krishnan (right).

A 94-year-old Kulandhaiammal sports a shy, toothless smile as she walks slowly to the dais to collect her medal. She has every reason to be happy and proud as she has learnt to read, write and even sign, all thanks to the members of RC Coimbatore Zenith, RID 3201. Kulandhaiammal and 22 other neo-literate women received their certificates and medals from DG AV Pathy and

spouse Veena at a special event held at the club's adopted Kunnathur village.

Over the last four years, the club is running Adult Literacy classes here with help from a retired teacher. "We empower the women with basic functional literacy and awareness on health and hygiene practices, child care and also teach them to open a bank account," says Club President Raviraj Krishnan. He was

pleasantly surprised when Rukmani, a beneficiary, thanked him profusely as she is now able to deposit her government pension and other surplus cash in her own savings account. The club's annual medical camp is a much sought-after programme at Kunnathur. "Patients get free supply of medicines prescribed by the doctors for a year," says Project Chair Samuel Raj.

More recently, the club launched the 20,000

Trees Mega Project which aims to create a green and healthy environment in the middle of an industrial hub. A vast, barren patch of 132 acres at Karamadai on the Ooty highway is being turned into a green hub.

But developing a social forestry in a patch of land ironically called 'Shanti Garden' is not easy going for this 12-year-old club. "First we did a field survey with the help of soil experts and

agronomists from the TN Agriculture department. They advised us to begin with planting neem seedlings as it cleans the environment, absorbing large quantities of CO₂ and release oxygen,” says Krishnan, So far 8,000 neem seedlings are being nurtured with drip irrigation sprinklers and “we will be planting teak and other varieties such as red sanders and even banyan trees in the near future.” Two borewells and two open wells irrigate the nursery farm ‘which will be transformed into a Shanti Vanam (forest) by June 2020.’

The mega greenery will be a giant natural filter against pollution, besides providing the much-needed lung space for the expanding city, he says. With the enthusiastic feedback from locals, the club has extended the goalpost to 50,000 seedlings of various trees at the Shanti Garden. So far, the green mission has cost ₹18.5 lakh — including the expenditure for motor pump,



DG A V Pathy along with Rotarians at the launch of a Mega Trees Project at Shanti Vanam near Coimbatore.

borewells and plantations — with the club pitching in with ₹4.5 lakh. The balance amount was contributed by the main sponsor Arun Basna and his family, owners of Shantiniketan Silks.

Other initiatives of the club include installing a smart classroom and providing classroom

furniture under a global grant worth ₹4 lakh at the Corporation Middle School, Sanganoor.

“We had spent around ₹6.5 lakh for revamping the school with furniture, stationery, academic books and play equipment since we adopted it last September,” says Project Chair Gokul Raj. ■

Rotary installs CT scan at Ghaziabad hospital

Team Rotary News

A CT scan machine was installed at the Vardan Multispeciality Hospital under a global grant project jointly undertaken by RCs Ghaziabad North and Ghaziabad Central, RID 3012. DG Dr Subhash Jain inaugurated the new facility at the hospital.

The healthcare project will service the needs of three million people in and around Ghaziabad as only

2–3 diagnostic centres are present in this city in Uttar Pradesh. This is a humanitarian project done by roping in an international partner



(From L) DGE Deepak Gupta, DG Subhash Jain, DGN Alok Gupta, PDGs J K Gaur and Sharat Jain at the new CT scan facility.

RC Kathmandu, RID 3292, to provide the much-needed CT scan to Vardan Hospital as around 1,200 patients were turned away by the hospital each year for want of this diagnostic facility, said DG Jain.

“It will help the people of Ghaziabad and nearby areas access medical services at an affordable cost. Also, the facility will enable doctors to diagnose more patients with potential diseases,” he said. With the CT scan, over 1,200–1,500 patients will benefit each year at the hospital. The machine cost \$136,986 (around ₹1 crore). ■

De-fanging stress

Bharat & Shalan Savur

We have to take stress out of life *and* life out of stress, and do it as soon as possible. Unattended, stress raises blood pressure, accelerates heart-beat, increases inflammation that pushes us into anxiety and depression. Irritation over trivial things, feeling overwhelmed, saying the same words accusingly over and over again, simmering anger that refuses to die down, headaches and lower backaches are some signs to watch out for. In this state, you will upset your family members and colleagues with your offensive words and behaviour. Your spouse will maintain a distance, ditto your friends, at least, most of them. Under stress, the mind paints monstrous pictures of all the people you interact with. Somebody has ‘cheated’ you, another is ‘corrupt’ and so on — your feelings become facts in your perception.

Cycle mindfully. Armchair-cycling is a lovely stress-buster. It’s so simple and effective. On the 32nd minute comes a perceptible lightening. Just as clouds are shifted by a strong wind to reveal the vast sun-lit sky, the dark perception is lifted from the mind to give us a glimpse of its natural, open radiance. Here, it is important to remember that *whatever our circumstances, our open, sky-like mind is always there*. It is only a 32-minute ride away. And just as clouds are not part of the sky, our perception is not part of our

mind. It only hangs there, a puff of smoke which can be dispersed.

As you cycle, let your mind be full of emptiness. In the beginning stages, you can count the rotations. In time, the mind lets go the numbers and what is left is a wonderful awareness. In this state, you can cycle for an hour without even realising how the minutes have ticked by. When the mind suspends thought, the brain gets a welcome break from anxiety, pressure, stress and pain.

Tackling tremors. There are two kinds of anxiety. One is caused by what you’ve gone through earlier. Say, you went for a walk in the park and a huge snake slid across your path causing you to turn tail. The next day, when you go for your walk, there’s a tremor in you. Will that snake cross your path? This is an anxiety from anticipating that things won’t go well — such as a job interview or a meeting with a client. If this happens despite having cycled in the morning, say “Cancel. I am well-prepared and I’ll do well!” The tremor subsides and you stride with a friendly air into the interview room. “Cancel” is a powerful word. Please use it.

The other kind of anxiety is a fear that rises by itself even before you see or think anything. You have to force yourself to go for a walk. You ‘see’ problems where there aren’t any — you feel you don’t have enough money though your bank balance is healthy, you





feel you will be sacked by your boss any day, you have a sinking feeling for no apparent reason. This kind of anxiety comes from having an excessively intense way of looking at life. The best way out is to relax.

Restore balance. Have a refreshing bath. Rinse your face in cool water. Keep a cold napkin on your forehead or on the nape of your neck. Take breaks between tasks and allow your body to slump in a relaxed position. Yes, cycle daily. Do stretch exercises with a terra band. Listen to music. Read inspirational writing. Listen to motivational talks. Take charge of your investment. Tighten your belt. Simplify your life. Attend fewer functions. Get into a hobby that channelises your intensity and makes you feel good. Essentially, create an environment where you are relaxed. Meditate. Do slow breathing. Drawing up a blueprint for a relaxing lifestyle may take some time and a lot of letting-go, but it's worth it — you get a balance for your buck, in a manner of speaking.

Our perspective darkens because we are not living our truth. How do you know you *are* living your truth? When you are relaxed about it, when your brain — especially its limbic system that makes stress feel like a crisis — is relaxed about it.

Look at stress not as an enemy, but as an unexpected ally. For example, a tight deadline can be stressful, but it makes me push aside trivialities and focus on what's important, strengthens my will power, concentration, hones my ability to analyse and express myself through writing *and* gives me satisfaction in completing what I've started.

In this context, a parent who has a difficult child told me, "He is teaching us patience. And since he's a slow learner, he is teaching us how hard work can bring decent results."

She stopped feeling stressed when she changed her viewpoint. The mind is vast and sky-like. Keep it open and unclouded. It understands, learns what strength, determination, motivation, concentration, endurance and acceptance are through stress and helps us experience satisfaction, contentment, happiness, humour and joy.

A stressful situation is not a crisis.

Don't let stress daunt and dent you, rather, let it make you ask creative questions: "What can I do to make things better?" "What am I not doing that I'm being reminded of?" As James Carroll says, "There are times when we stop, we sit still. We listen and breezes from a whole other world begin to whisper." Stress has fangs only if you give it power over you. De-fang it by not feeding it fear. Sometimes, you may need to consult a psychiatrist and be prescribed anti-anxiety tablets. Don't be fazed by them — they teach your hyper brain what it feels to be calm.

One of the greatest favours stress confers is making our mind more supple, humbler and more poised. It becomes a liferider — moving gracefully with the ups and downs of existence. Life is wonderful, then heavy, then wonderful. In between, it's blessedly ordinary, routine and okay. Be wildly loving in its wonderful phases, tender and thoughtful when it's heavy, enormously grateful when it is routinely ordinary. This is how we learn a new language called wisdom and shape out a beautiful beginning from an end. And we understand our truth: that the light at the end of the tunnel is always there. The tunnel is only our perception.

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

A project initiated by the Rotary Club of Baroda Sayajinagari, RID 3060, to boost the public image of Rotary, has had synergy with other Rotary clubs in the city — RCs Baroda Metro, Baroda Main, Baroda Cosmopolitan, Baroda Sunrise and Baroda Jawaharnagar have all joined hands to take this project forward.

RC Baroda Sayajinagari first conceived and initiated the task of putting up core Rotary messages such as 'End Polio' and 'Swachh Bharat' on 'No Parking' boards. This idea and the impact it made appealed to other Rotary clubs in the city who "also joined this mega PR project", says DGE Anish Shah.

The clubs got ready about 1,000 such 'No Parking' boards



Rotarians display the No Parking boards.

which "emphasised Rotary's efforts to end polio and its mission towards clean cities."

These boards have been put up at various public and private places such as banks, government offices, and the like. "We are of the view that the estimated PR effect of this project will at least

last for 4-5 years and further strengthen the brand of Rotary," he added.

On the day the boards were unveiled, 3060 District Chairman (End Polio Movement) Dr Jayant Shastri shared a few vital details about Rotary's work for Polio eradication. ■

AKS Members from South Asia as of April 2019

RID	Name	Rotary Club
3141	Nischal H Israni	Bombay North
3141	Amit Chandra and Archana Chandra	Bombay
3141	Vijaylaxmi Poddar	Bombay
3141	Taizoon Fakhruddin Khorakiwala and Edith Khorakiwala	Bombay Worli
3141	Kishorilal Jhunjhunwala	Mumbai North End
3132	Asa Singh and Jagdish Kaur	Aurangabad
3150	Ravindra Reddy Marri and Sarala Devi Marri	Hyderabad
3190	Ravishankar Dakoju and Paola Dakoju	Bangalore Orchards
3150	Uday S Pilani and Roopal Pilani	Hyderabad Deccan
3000	Rathinasamy Theenachandran and Vasanthi Theenachandran	Madurai Metro
3281	Abul Hasan M Sadeq and Saleha Sadeq	Dhaka Scholars

Source: RISAO

Team Rotary News

Rotary Club of Vapi, RID 3060, recently handed over medical equipment worth \$63,771 to Haria Rotary Hospital. The appliances included 11 monitors, an adult ventilator, a neonatal ventilator and a defibrillator for the Intensive Care Unit at the hospital run by the Rotary Charitable Trust of the club.

The project was funded by TRF through a \$30,000 Term Gift contribution by Girdharilal Modi, a member of RC Mumbai Downtown Sealand, RID 3142, and DDF of \$10,000 from last year. RC Biratnagar, RID 3292, Nepal, was the international partner.

PRIP Kalyan Banerjee handed over the equipment to the hospital authorities in the presence of PDGs Ruchir Jani and Ashis Roy, Club President Ketan Patel and past president Prakash.



PRIP Kalyan Banerjee with PDGs Ruchir Jani and Ashis Roy at the Haria Rotary Hospital in Vapi.

“This is our maiden global grant project and we now realise the power of the Foundation,” said Patel, adding that he will urge each one of his club

members to contribute generously to the Foundation so that “more good work can be done to transform communities.” ■

An E-club implements a drinking water project



DG RVN Kannan inaugurating the drinking water facility in the school.

Chartered in 2013, the Rotary E-club of Chennai, RI District 3232, meets online and has members drawn from different parts of the world. This year the club under the leadership of G Venkatesh who lives in the US, provided a drinking water facility to a Panchayat Middle School in Thangalacheri village near Madurai which comes under RID 3000. The project included deepening of a borewell in the school, provision of a water tank and construction of a motor room. RID 3000 DG RVN Kannan inaugurated the project in the presence of the E-club President Venkatesh who flew in to be part of the event. The headmaster of the school thanked the Rotarians for their effort. The cost of the project was ₹1 lakh, contributed by members of the club living in Dubai, Bangkok, Malaysia, the US and Chennai. ■

Mumbai, Almaty

Rotarians hold joint meet

Team Rotary News

It was a moment of pride for members of RC Bombay Hanging Garden (RC BHG), RID 3141, as their club organised a four-day sightseeing tour to Kazakhstan for around 150 Rotarians from the district under the leadership of DG Shashikumar Sharma. And to cap it all, they had a joint meeting with RC Almaty, a part of Turkish RID 2430, at the end of their memorable visit.

PDG Rahul Timbadia gave an overview of the various projects and community initiatives taken up by RID 3141. DG Sharma expressed his keenness on a global grant project with

RC Almaty for upgrading sanitation facilities for tourists in his district. The exchange of Rotary flags between the visiting and the host club members was done amidst cheers.

RC Almaty President Tolkyun Abildayeva reciprocated the sentiments of DG Sharma and her club members too talked on similar lines. A couple of Rotaractors from Almaty also shared their thoughts on Rotary and fellowship.

DGN Sunil Mehra thanked Rotarians for having joined this foreign tour and especially mentioned Rtns Sameer and Sonia Karnani from the lead club for making the travel arrangements.

Visual treat

During their visit to the Central Asian Republic, the Mumbai Rotarians were taken around some captivating places including the Kok Tobe, a scenic mountain; the Charyn Canyons, the second largest after the Grand Canyons of Colorado, US; Shymbulak Ski Resort amidst the Alatau mountain ranges; a peek into the falcon show; and finally, the shopping blitz. “We are thankful to Rtn Amrish Daftary for coordinating, arranging and rescheduling this meeting with RC Almaty which was a first-of-its-kind between RIDs 3141 and 2430,” says Dilip Shah, President-elect of RC Bombay Hanging Garden. ■

RID 3141 Rotarians with DG Shashikumar Sharma and spouse Rita at a scenic spot in Almaty, Kazakhstan.



D 3000 spruces up Madurai villages

V Muthukumaran

Under its Happy Village project comprising a number of iconic programmes, RI District 3000 has set up a Village Knowledge Centre (VKC), a sanitation complex, an anganwadi and a Children's Parliament as part of a skills training initiative, to benefit around 665 rural families.

While TVS Srichakra Tyres through its CSR arm, Arogya Welfare Trust, has contributed \$32,000 for the project, "TRF okayed our grant and we now have a sum of ₹45.25 lakh to set up a number of facilities," says R Srinivasan, Project Advisor and past president, RC Madurai Midtown. A number of programmes, medical camps and skill training are being organised in four villages — V Manickampatti, Musundagiripatti, Vellalampatti and Kathapatti — with the focus on women's empowerment and skilling youth.

The upcoming VKC building at Manickampatti, estimated to cost around ₹10 lakh, will house



DG RVN Kannan along with the District Collector R Natarajan at a children's programme on avoiding plastics in one of the adopted villages.

a coaching centre for students providing a cordial learning environment, apart from imparting physical, cognitive and intellectual training. "Once the building is completed, we will hand it over to the government. But we will offer classes for the youngsters," he says.

A community toilet and sanitation complex at Musundagiripatti is

under construction and an anganwadi building in another village is awaiting final inspection from government officials.

Life skills for women

Through workshops and vocational training, rural women in all the four villages are being taught life skills such as opening bank account, accessing

insurance schemes and availing incentives and entitlements offered by government for their well-being.

Children's Parliament

So far, 83 children have enrolled in this novel parliament and they have adopted 88 elders in their villages for mentorship on sanitation and best practices. The children have taken up social problems and grievances at the official forums.

"We have formed health brigades among children in these villages to create awareness on healthy and disease-free living," says Srinivasan. ■

Through workshops and vocational training, rural women in all the four villages are being taught life skills such as opening bank account, accessing insurance schemes and availing incentives.

Dance of the Goddess

Seetha Ratnakar

*Myth is truth which is subjective, intuitive,
cultural and grounded in faith.*

— Devdutt Pattanaik



The meiteis, as the largest ethnic group of Manipur are called, dwell in a picturesque oval shaped valley surrounded by nine hills in Northeastern India. The name Manipur literally means a *jewelled land* and the meiteis trace their lineage to the Gandharvas, who are the celestial musicians and dancers in the epics *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. They call the region Gandharva-desa and believe that Usha, the Vedic goddess of the dawn, created and taught the art of dance to young girls. Celebrated as *Chingkhiehol*, this oral tradition has

been handed down through generations. Manipuri, also known as *Jagoi*, is the classical dance of this region and one of the eight major classical dance forms of India.

Manipuri dance is a religious art which expresses spiritual values. The roots of this dance, like all the other classical dances of India, are based on the ancient Sanskrit text *Natya Shastra* by Bharata. Traditionally, the dance was based on themes of Vaishnavism which became a dominant force in Manipur in the 18th century during the reign of King Charai Rongba. His successor, King Gareeb Niwaz, converted to the Krishna Bhakti Vaishnavism of

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who propounded singing and dancing to the themes on Lord Krishna from the *Vaishnava Padavali*. Maharaja Bhagyachandra adopted Gaudiya Vaishnavism and ushered the golden era of Manipuri by refining, documenting and codifying the dance style. He designed an elaborate costume for the dance called the *Kumil* and also composed three of the five varieties of *Ras Lilas* — the *Maha Ras*, *Basanta Ras* and *Kunja Ras*. The dance repertoire also included themes on Rama, Shiva and regional deities. *Lai Haraoba* is an ancient festival celebrated by the *Meitei* community to honour the sylvan deities known as *Umang Lai*. They believe that the gods visit the earth every year at the advent of summer to bless the people with peace and prosperity. The *Lai Haraoba* which means “merry making of the Gods”, is a ritual enactment of the myth of creation, origin and evolution of the universe. It reflects the cultural identity of Manipur with its harmonious blend of religious chants, indigenous music and dance, social values and ancient customs, all beautifully interwoven into the fabric of the dance. Eminent filmmaker Satyajit Ray said, “Being an art born out of the soil, Manipuri dance which achieves classicity through the ages, retains still the abstract, magical quality associated with the *Lai Haraoba* tradition.”

The most striking feature of Manipuri dance is the uniquely gorgeous costume. The female dancers dress like Manipuri brides in *Potloi* costumes, of which the most notable is the *Kumil*, an elaborately decorated barrel-shaped long skirt stiffened at the bottom, decorated with intricate gold and silver embroidery and embellished with tiny mirrors. It is bordered at the top with undulating gauzy translucent top skirt



shaped like an open flower, and tied in *Trikasta* or three places around the waist at the front, back and side with spiritual symbolism as prescribed in the ancient Hindu texts. It is usually worn with a velvet blouse and a white translucent veil that covers the head. The dancers do not wear bells on their ankles as in other classical Indian dances, but adorn the face, neck, waist, hands and legs with jewellery and delicate flower garlands that flow in symmetry with the dance. The male dancers dress in a dhoti, which is known as *dhotra* or *dhora*, a brilliantly coloured cloth that is pleated and tied at the waist allowing free movement of the legs for elaborate and spatial movements.

The *lasya* or feminine aspect of Manipuri dance is ethereal and lyrical and the *tandava* or more vigorous masculine movement is also full of fluid grace. The basic dance movement is known as *Chali* or *Chari*. The most popular dance is the Manipuri *Ras Lila*, which is in three styles — *Tal Rasak*, *Danda Rasak* and *Mandal Rasak* — traditionally performed on full moon nights three times in autumn (August through November) and once again in spring (March/April). The *Vasant Ras* takes place during Holi, while others coincide with Diwali and post-harvest festivals. The songs and dances describe the love and interaction between Radha and Krishna, in the presence of Gopis named Lalita,

Vishakha, Chitra, Champaklata, Tungavidya, Indurekha, Rangadevi and Sudevi. There is an individual composition and dance sequence for each Gopi where the words have two layers of meaning, one literal and the other spiritual. The lyrics, which are in Sanskrit, Maithili, Brij Bhasha and others dialects, are usually taken from the classical poetry of Jayadeva, Vidyapati, Chandidas, Govindas and Gyandas.

The musical accompaniment for Manipuri consists of a vocalist, a percussion instrument called the *pung*, *kartals* or cymbals, a stringed instrument called the *pena* and a wind instrument like the flute. The drummers who are male artistes play the

Dancers perform
the *Lai Haraoba*.





**Acclaimed Manipuri dancer
Soma Dasgupta**

pung and dance while drumming. They dress in white dhotis and turbans and wear the drum strap over the shoulder and perform the *Pung cholom* with intricate rhythmic movements in beat to the drums. *Kartal cholom* is a similar dance where the dancers perform with cymbals. When it is done by female dancers it is known as *Mandilla cholom*. The male dancers also perform *Tandava* dances of Shiva that are called *Duff cholom* and *Dhol cholom*. When they perform the *Gopa Ras* they synchronously enact the chores of daily life, like feeding the cows and in total contrast is *Uddhata Akanba*, an elegant dance full of leaps, squats and spins.

The reach of Manipuri dance spread beyond the northeastern region in the early 20th century when Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore invited Guru Budhimantra Singh as faculty to teach Manipuri at Shantiniketan.

By the 1950s, the Jhaveri sisters — Nayana, Ranjana, Suverna and Darshana — started performing all over India and abroad, and took the world by storm. In 1956, they were the first non-Manipuris to perform the dance at the Govindji Temple inside the royal palace of Imphal. Along with

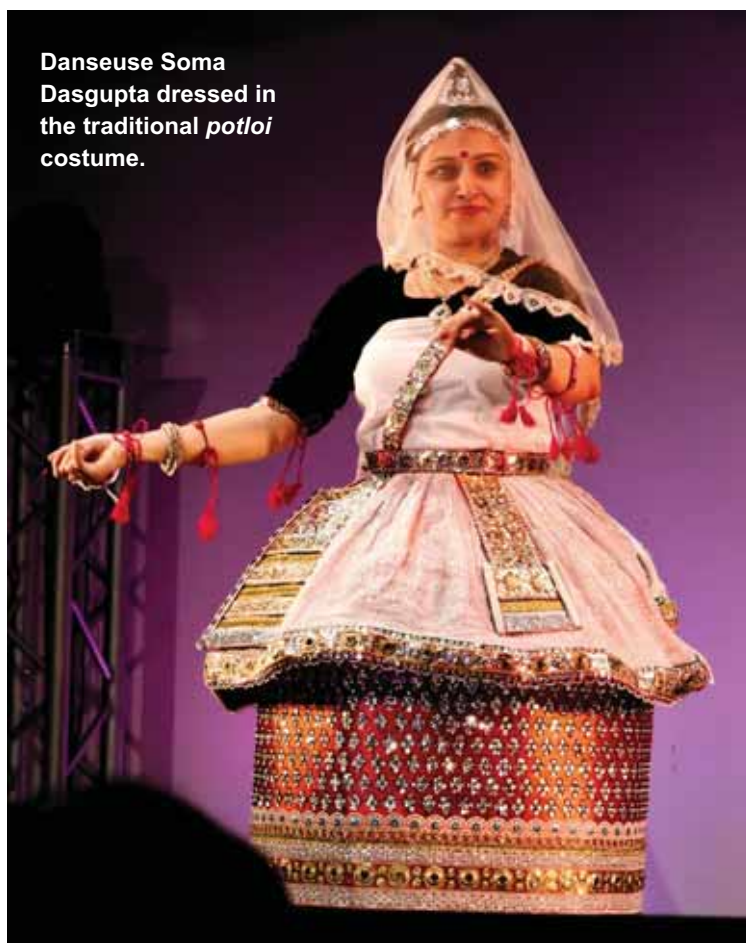
their gurus Bipin Singh and Kalavati Devi, they founded the Manipuri Nartanalaya in 1972, with centres at Mumbai, Kolkata and Imphal. Guru Singhajit Singh who hails from a family of dancers from Manipur, established Manipuri Nrityashram, in New Delhi along with his wife Charu Sija Mathur. They travelled extensively with their dance troupe to several countries in Europe, North and South America, performing and popularising this ancient dance form.

Soma Dasgupta is a versatile Manipuri dancer and choreographer who has been performing and teaching in Houston, Texas, USA for the last 17 years. She is teaching Manipuri to the younger generation at her Tripti Dance Academy. Her speciality is choreographing the compositions of Rabindranath Tagore in the Manipuri style. When asked about her experience Soma says, “I have performed

Manipuri dance spread
beyond the North-East in
early 20th century when Nobel
Laureate Rabindranath Tagore
invited Guru Budhimantra
Singh to teach Manipuri at
Shantiniketan.



Artistes performing the *pung cholam*.



Danseuse Soma Dasgupta dressed in the traditional *potloi* costume.

Manipuri dance in many places in the US and it has been highly appreciated. I feel so elated when Americans come and ask me more about the dance form. I look forward to teaching the pure dance form to students here. The main challenge is getting the costume from Manipur. My dream is to organise a programme inviting Manipuri dancers from India and showcase the *Khol* dance which is performed by the male Manipuri dancers as my Gurujji used to do.”

I was fortunate to learn a little Manipuri besides Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Mohiniyattam and Odissi, thanks to my mother’s all encompassing love for classical arts which made her seek dance teachers from all over India to teach various styles. The exposure helped hone my artistic sensibilities for creative expression with an unbiased respect for all art. As Oscar Wilde says, “*Art is the most intense mode of individualism the world has known.*”

Designed by N Krishnamurthy

Get your projects featured in Rotary News



Rotary News is committed to featuring projects from clubs across our zones. So do share with us the more significant projects that your clubs/districts have done to change the lives of people in your community.

Do identify someone from your club who can prepare good reports about your work, and send us the details with good candid pictures. Even if they are from your cellphone camera, they should be emailed directly from the photos gallery and not via Whatsapp, which reduces the size and hence the quality of the picture.

Here's a checklist of what your project report should include: How the project was conceived; what was the need; cost and how the money was raised; challenges; execution and beneficiaries.

Pictures — a picture is worth 1,000 words. Take good, action photographs of the project, its beneficiaries, and send them in high resolution, original size.

Do differentiate between projects which are fit for the GML, and those which can go into the national Rotary magazine.

Send your projects to either rushbhagat@gmail.com, or rotarynewsmagazine@gmail.com. ■

RID 3190 honours corporate partnerships

Team Rotary News

For a second consecutive year, RI District 3190 hosted the Rotary Karnataka CSR Conference and Awards at the FKCCI Auditorium in Bengaluru to felicitate partnering corporates for their contributions to community development. Olympian boxer and Rajya Sabha MP Mary Kom gave the Rotary awards to eight companies in the presence of DG Suresh Hari. RC Bangalore Jeevanbimanagar led by its President Anil Kumar Radhakrishnan anchored the programme.

In her address, Mary Kom said, “the remarkable support from corporates makes a huge difference not just to individuals but to the society at a macro level.” Citing her own boxing career, she said thanks to the generous attitude of corporates, sports have become much more competitive.

Event Chairman Abhishek Ranjan said the focus of the conference was to create a roadmap for the future and

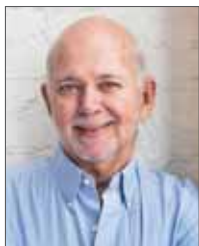


Event Chairman Abhishek Ranjan and boxing champion Mary Kom hand over an award to a corporate representative in the presence of (from L) RC Bangalore Orchards President D Ravishankar and DG Suresh Hari.

recognise the contributions made by various stakeholders in community service. RC Bangalore Orchards President D Ravishankar and DGE Dr Sameer Hariyani were among the speakers who addressed the delegates.

The conclave had five panel discussions on skill development and entrepreneurship; empowering youth through education; Swasth Karnataka; Swachh Karnataka; and exploring partnerships for scale.

Over 60 companies took part in the conference. The SRF Foundation got the award in Basic Education and Literacy category; ACC Trust for Disease Prevention and Treatment; Toyota Kirloskar Motor and HAL for Water and Sanitation; and UltraTech Cement for Economic and Community Development. A Special Recognition Award was given to Capgemini Technology Services. ■



RI Board passes diversity policy

RI President Barry Rassin

One of Rotary's top priorities is diversifying our membership to ensure that we more fully reflect the communities we serve. There has been an ongoing conversation about the lack of diversity in Rotary's leadership. For example, while 22 per cent of Rotary's members are women, that statistic is not reflected in our leadership. We can do more, and in January, Rotary's Board of Directors approved a diversity, equity and inclusion policy for Rotary International:

As a global network that strives to build a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change, Rotary values diversity and celebrates the contributions of people of all backgrounds, regardless of their age, ethnicity, race, colour,

abilities, religion, socio-economic status, culture, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity. Rotary will cultivate a diverse, equitable, inclusive culture in which people from underrepresented groups have greater opportunities to participate as members and leaders.

This is a statement for every one — from the club-level to the Secretariat. All of Rotary needs to make diversity — of age, race, gender, culture, sexual orientation and identity, etc — a priority. The Board has also set a goal to increase the number of women both in Rotary and in Rotary leadership positions to 30 per cent by June 2023. To achieve this goal, we all have work to do. We still need to bring in good people to our organisation, so we should not

lose sight of good men either; we want qualified individuals from all sectors.

We have made great strides this year by appointing more women to serve as International Assembly training leaders, regional leaders and RI committee members. At the local level, clubs can encourage more women and those from other underrepresented groups to take on leadership roles. As more diverse candidates are elected, the pool of candidates who can serve at the senior leadership level increases too. It is time for Rotary to create a new future for the organisation, one that is more open and inclusive, fair to all, builds goodwill, and is beneficial to all of Rotary.

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Rotary job fairs for unemployed youth

A mega job fair for unemployed youth was conducted at the Gaja cyclone-hit areas of Tiruvarur and Kumbakonam, Tamilnadu, by RID 2981 under the guidance of DG S Piraiyon. A total of 18,750 candidates were interviewed and appointment orders were given to around 7,500 aspirants.

The first job fair was held at the Veludaiyan HS School and College in Tiruvarur town. In this fair, 6,880 youngsters were interviewed by 56 MNCs and appointment letters were given on the spot to 2,330 people.

The second job fair screened around 11,900 candidates at the Sastra University campus in



DG S Piraiyon issuing a placement order to a candidate.

Kumbakonam. There were 42 MNCs from Chennai and 26 HR personnel from various parts of Tamilnadu at the campus to interview the candidates. Over 5,000 people got their appointment orders.

District General Secretary S Ramesh, Project Chairman S D Poongundran, and AGs P Ganesan, S Balasubramaniam and Sivagurunathan coordinated for the success of the job fairs. ■

In Brief



A R Rahman has Iftar dinner at Cannes

Grammy and Oscar-winning musician A R Rahman breaks his Ramadan fast and has Iftar dinner at Cannes. The music maestro was at the

film festival to promote his directorial debut *Le Musk*, India's first virtual reality film. He took to Instagram, where he posted a photograph of himself holding a glass of apple juice.

India's G S Lakshmi becomes the first female ICC match referee



Former India cricketer G S Lakshmi became the first female match referee to be inducted into the International Cricket Council (ICC)'s International Panel of Match Referees. Lakshmi, 51, officiated her first match in women's domestic cricket in 2008, and has supervised three women's One Day Internationals, and three T20 Internationals. Subsequently, following Australian Claire Polosak, who became the first female umpire to officiate a men's ODI on April 27 between Oman and Namibia, Lakshmi will become eligible to referee international matches with immediate effect.



New species of viper found in Arunachal Pradesh

A new species of snake has been found in

Arunachal Pradesh's West Kameng district. The reddish-brown pit viper, a venomous snake with a unique heat sensing system, was found by a team of herpetologists led by Ashok Captain. Comparative analyses of DNA sequences and examination of morphological features suggested that the snake belonged to an earlier unknown species.



Sherpa climbs Mt Everest for record time

Sherpa climber Kami Rita scaled Mount Everest for the 24th time, breaking his own record for the most successful ascents of the world's highest peak. Rita, 50, first scaled Everest in 1994 and has been making the trip nearly every year since.



Feel the Jail

The Heritage Jail Museum administered by the Telangana State Prisons Department runs a unique jail tourism called 'Feel the Jail' where anyone can spend 24 hours inside the Sangareddy prison for a fee. Recently a dentist and a restaurateur flew all the way from Kuala Lumpur to Hyderabad to get jailed in this 220-year-old prison.

Rotary opens toilets, handwash stations in Nashik

Team Rotary News

Thirty toilets and two handwash stations were inaugurated by RC Nasik Road, RID 3030, at the Vidya Prashala High School and Junior College in Talegaon, 25 km from Nashik.

This global grant project was carried out by the club with funding support from its international partners — RCs Box Hill Central, RID 9810; Warnambool East, RID 9780; Cobar, RID 9670 — from Australia; and Amesbury, RID 7930; and Clayton, RID 7710, US.

TRF Trustee Julia Phelps, who was in Nashik as the RIPR for RID 3060's district conference, handed over the new sanitation facilities to the school authorities.



Rotarians of RC Nasik Road with the Australian partners at the project site. PDG Dattatraya Deshmukh is also in the picture.

The sanitation project was completed within 60 days as the date for the handing over ceremony was finalised before the work began. Along with Julia, a host of Rotarians from partnering clubs — Stephen McKenzie, PDG Jennifer Coburn, Roger Coburn, PDG Brian Martin, PP Don Sweeney, Anita Sweeney, Mark

Balla and Anne Balla, all from Australia — and DG Pinky Patel, RID 3060, attended the inaugural ceremony.

This school serves about 1,200 students who come from 17 villages walking or cycling their way for up to 6 km each way. PDG Dattatraya Deshmukh and DGE Rajendra Bhamre were

also present on the occasion.

The students gave a warm reception to the delegates and performed a traditional *Lazeem* dance. An exhibition of vocational skills being provided to the students, and some of the science projects done by them were shown to the delegates. ■

Stirring the poll pot



To encourage citizens to cast their votes for the Lok Sabha elections, RC Ulhasnagar, RID 3142, along with Pet Oxford School, made waves with an awareness campaign — *Ungali dikhao-discount/gift pao*. The club tied up with 20 leading organisations which included restaurants, garment stores, sweet shops and retail stores to treat the responsible citizens who had cast their votes with gifts or discounts, some of the stores offering discounts up to 25 per cent.

"We propagated the idea on Whatsapp, Facebook and Instagram and distributed pamphlets. All this created a buzz about our campaign," said Club President Dinesh Dandalia.

The Rotarians were pleased with the result, "a significant 48 voting percentage, probably the highest voter turnout in the past 25 years." Dandalia was all praise for the Project Chairmen Vijay Makhija and Gul Advani. ■

Snapshots



It is awards galore for RI District 3012. PDG Sharat Jain received the TRF Citation for Meritorius Service Award; Satish Gupta of RC Delhi Riverside was honoured with RI's Service Above Self Award and Surendra Mishra of RC Kaushambi was presented the Regional Service Award for a Polio-free World.



RID 3240 DG Sayantan Gupta was presented the Manav Seva Samman Award by the High Commissioner of Bangladesh in India Syed Muazzem Ali at Delhi. He was recognised for his services in the field of medical science.



Rotary Club of Jaipur, RID 3054, observed International Women's Day this year by conducting an all-women's bicycle rally in the city to raise awareness on women's education and empowerment. The event was flagged off by Rajasthan Minister of State for Women and Child Development Mamta Bhupesh and former Speaker of the State Sumitra Singh.



Wordsworld

Of dance, the dancer and an eye into history

Sandhya Rao

A fictional story spun
around devadasis leads
to discovering more
about the art and times
of pioneering women.

My mother tells this story of a time, back in the 1970s, when she and her sister-in-law decided their families could take care of themselves while they attended every concert they possibly could during the 'season' of music and dance in Chennai (then Madras). Balasaraswati, one of the greatest bharatanatyam dancers of India, was performing at the Music Academy and a few minutes into the performance, she expressed dissatisfaction with the mridangam player and insisted he be replaced. Someone was dispatched to find the mridangist of her choice. At the very least it must have taken half-an-hour for the replacement percussionist to take the stage: during that entire time, Bala essayed a range of facial expressions (*abhinaya*) and hand

gestures (*mudra*) as the vocalist sang the phrase '*pulli maan*' (spotted deer) over and over again.

You won't find this story in *Balasaraswati: Her Art & Life* written by her son-in-law Douglas Knight, but you will find several others, particularly about her legendary grandmother Veenai Dhanammal with whom Bala lived. A high point of the performing arts scene in Madras of those days were the Friday evening veena recitals at the Georgetown residence of Dhanammal, attended by artists, art lovers and members of high society. Balasaraswati told Knight that once, when she was a child, she had introduced herself to someone as the granddaughter of Veenai Dhanammal. Overhearing this, her grandmother had demanded to know who had dared to introduce herself as her granddaughter. That moment, Bala said, she promised herself that her grandmother would one day be forced to identify herself as the grandmother of Balasaraswati. That day came, as the book reveals.

Bala hailed from a family of devadasis of Thanjavur.

Dedicated at a young age to the service of a deity in the temple, these women of matrilineal descent were traditionally highly trained and gifted, professional dancers and musicians, and lived under the patronage of powerful, upper class men. During the best of their times, devadasis were powerful and wealthy, but along with British rule came Victorian-era values which, along with other changes in society, resulted in the system gradually degenerating into the exploitation of these women.

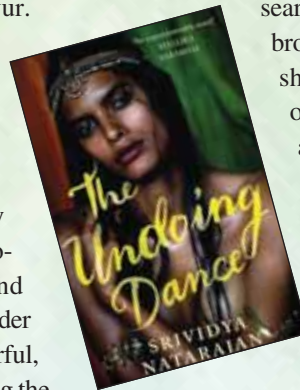
As Leela Samson writes in *Rukmini Devi: A Life*, "The devadasis' ability to straddle the worlds of private and public

life, involving duties in the temple, was truly remarkable. Dance was an ideal and was pursued with diligence. Many devadasis had vast repertoires of compositions which, unfortunately, have been mostly lost to us. For all the ills that society brought upon the community at the time Rukmini was growing up and India finding its voice against foreign rule, it did provide dignity and a vital space for the devadasis to become consummate dancers without the social encumbrances that hold back women."

Leela Samson records that Bala must have been about 14 and performing at the home of TK Chidambaranatha Mudaliar when Rukmini Devi Arundale, then about 28, first saw her dance. The latter was an upper class woman from a family of theosophists married to an Englishman some 25 years older. She had first been fascinated by the dance of ballerina Anna Pavlova and then *sadir* or *chinna melam*, the traditional dance of the devadasis, fascinated enough to want to learn herself. She was in the process of visiting the home

of every devadasi in Madras in search of a teacher. That's what brought her to this house where she was struck by the music of Jayammal (Bala's mother) and the grace and *bhava* (emotion) of Bala's dancing. Eventually she found her teacher in Mylapore Gowri Ammal, a devadasi at the Kapaleeswara temple, renowned for her *abhinaya* and a close

friend of Veenai Dhanammal. Within a year of herself performing publicly at a Theosophical Society event, she established a school of dance and music, later named *Kalakshetra*. With this she opened the floodgates to hordes of young people from the upper classes learning bharatanatyam which had so long been 'shunned' as a thing only 'certain' people did.



There's all this and more in the two books, with their many anecdotes and references to the social, political, economic and performing arts history. In this context, we also briefly meet another pioneering woman, Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy, herself the daughter of a devadasi, the first woman to be admitted to a men's college and the first woman legislator of India. She set up the Cancer Institute in Madras, only the second dedicated to treating cancer in the country at the time. But what does a doctor-politician have to do with two dancers? Well, she was instrumental in having the devadasi system abolished through a Bill in Parliament that labelled them prostitutes.

The worlds of Balasaraswati and Rukmini Devi come together in Srividya Natarajan's engaging fictional work, *The Undoing Dance*, a book I found I couldn't put down. Perhaps this was because the context of the novel was familiar and fascinating to me personally; perhaps because as a young journalist I had many opportunities to write about dance and dancers; perhaps because at that time both Bala and Rukmini Devi, though old, still commanded great respect and influence; but most of all, perhaps because I was enthralled by their individual stories.

The Undoing Dance gathers the reader into the world of three generations of women in a story set in the context of 13 generations of devadasis. The stories of these three women — Rajayi, Kalyani, Hema — are told in their own voices to which is added the voice of one man, Balasankar, who is upper class but sympathetic to the cause of devadasis, and that of his mother, Vijaya, who spurns

them. Kalyani is the second wife of Balasankar who has a child, Hema, by his first wife who dies early. Kalyani longs to dance, but cannot; Hema questions the contradictions in tradition; Rajayi sells flowers near the temple as she recalls her days as a devadasi. There's more by way of plot that must remain unspoken so as not to ruin the experience of reading the book. Suffice it to say that the lives of the characters crisscross each other, and secrets and sacrifices are revealed as also the politics of power play in the dance field and under social pressure. Dance is at the heart of the story: equally, it brings freedom and imprisonment.

As a book, it's not perfect, but it resonates at different levels and triggers many questions: about the status of women and dancers in particular, commercialisation of a traditional performing art, role and place of the teacher, caste discrimination, about the way grants and research scholars work, about bhakti (spirituality) and *sringara* (eroticism) in the context of bharatanatyam and so on.

In an interview to *The Hindu* in December 2018, the multifaceted author made a thought-provoking comment. She said, "Whatever their intentions, women as powerful and progressive in their own ways as Rukmini Arundale and Muthulakshmi Reddy ended up disempowering Isai Vellalar (the community to which the devadasis belonged) women because they were responding to an ethos in which women's legitimate public presence depended on the erasure of their sexuality. Arundale

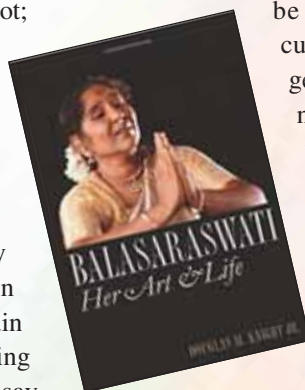
genuinely believed that if she did not 'clean' off the traces of its devadasi roots, bharatanatyam would be lost to her project of cultural nationalism. Reddy genuinely believed that she needed to equate devadasis with 'prostitutes' to make sure there was medical intervention into their 'immorality,' which would save them and their children from sexually transmitted diseases. Her solution

for performing women was marriage, which is a dubious form of empowerment for any woman, but particularly destructive for courtesans who used their bodies to create art."

The debate still rages over prostitution, even though sex work is being slowly seen in large sections of society as a legitimate profession. As in everything, there are many sides to the issue as *The Undoing Dance* unravels. Fundamentally, though, the novel, in Srividya Natarajan's own words, is "my attempt to articulate the awe and admiration I felt when I saw my Isai Vellalar teachers present their art, and my bafflement at the disappearance of these riches from our collective artistic memory."

An important feature of the two biographies is the plethora of photographs in them. One of them, c 1937, shows two women, one standing up straight, the other leaning forward, both dressed in striped pyjamas and matching shirts, wearing no bindi, holding cigarettes in their hands, obviously posing in a studio. They are good friends Thanjavur Balasaraswati and Madurai Shanmukhavadivu Subbulakshmi. As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words.

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





RC Thanjavur Cosmos — RID 2981

Relief material worth ₹6.5 lakh was distributed to Gaja cyclone victims who were sheltered at 18 camps across 10 villages in Thiruthuraipoondi taluk. The funds were received from the Japan Tamil Sangam.

RC Villupuram — RID 2982

Rotree Day was observed by planting 25,000 palm saplings in the Erikkarai Salamedu village in association with Rotaract Club of Sri Venkatachalapathy Polytechnic College and RCC, Virattikuppam. AG M Manikandan and Project Chairman M Senthil Kumar took part in the event.



RC Vizag Couples — RID 3020

An educational tour was organised for students of Zilla Parishad High School, Veeranarayanam, to the Navy facility and the Skill Development Institute.

RC Pon Pudupatti — RID 3000

Diabetic eye camp was organised in association with Ponnamaravathy Sri Durga Hospital and Arvind Eye Hospital, Madurai, in which over 200 patients were screened for eye ailments. A general health camp was also held in which over 600 people benefitted.



Matters

RC Chandrapur — RID 3030

Around 30 schools from the district took part in a quiz competition titled *Chandrapur Genius*. Cash prizes and trophies were given to the winning teams. More than 1,000 students took part in the grand finale. Rtn Rekha Dandekar was the project convener.



RC Bhuj Wallcity — RID 3054

A Night Cricket tournament was organised for various local teams which enhanced the public image of Rotary in the city. The participating teams displayed their enthusiasm and sporting skills on the field thus entertaining the crowd.



RC Dhule Femina — RID 3060

A mega health camp was organised for bus crew at the Dhule bus depot. Around 250 bus drivers and conductors were given medicines after consultations.



RC Hoshiarpur North — RID 3070

In a novel project to create road safety awareness, Yamaraj intercepted motorists on the busy roads urging people to wear helmets and seat belts while driving and distributed roses to drivers who observed road norms.



RC Yamunanagar Riveira — RID 3080

More than 1,000 patients were screened at an eye camp held in association with RC Wagga Wagga, Australia, RID 9700, as a global grant project. Also, 300 patients were identified for cataract surgeries. An eye donation centre being run by the club has collected 370 pairs of eyes in the last 10 years.



RC Bathinda Cantonment — RID 3090

Shoes, socks and jerseys were distributed to students of Appu Society School by the club members. The faculty and students thanked Rotarians for this gesture.



RC Udupi Manipal — RID 3182

An eye camp was organised at Spandana School of Special Children and lunch was also provided to the inmates. The club donated a steel rack to the home.

RC Firozabad — RID 3110

Food was distributed among the underprivileged families at the Kaila Devi temple in the city. Club President Santosh Agarwal and Rtn Laxmi Kant Bansal took active part in this project.



RC Nagercoil — RID 3212

Eleven teams took part in the Kanyakumari District Hockey Tournament for girls which was inaugurated by DG K Rajagopalan. The winners were selected for the State-level tournament with the District Sports Authority praising Rotary for organising such a sporting event.

RC Bombay Queen City — RID 3141

A three-day mega medical camp was organised at Lower Parel in which over 3,000 people were screened for various ailments. DG Shashi Kumar Sharma inaugurated the camp which is being organised since 2008.



Matters

RC Vaniyambadi Midtown — RID 3231

A Science exhibition was organised in partnership with the Interact club at the Government High School in Nekkundhi village. Students demonstrated their knowledge through displays on various concepts.



RC Chennai Coastal — RID 3232

LPG iron boxes were distributed to 100 needy dhobis. The ₹14 lakh worth project was supported by Rotarians Ram and Rajiv Gupta. DG Babu Peram was present as the guest of honour.



RC Ranchi Midtown — RID 3250

A sanitary pad vending machine was installed at the barracks of women constables of the Jharkhand Armed Police. The police personnel were sensitised about hygiene and cleanliness by Club President Sunita Wadhwa.



RC Jabalpur Excellence — RID 3261

Over 200 pairs of shoes were distributed to the students of a government school. The teachers and students thanked Rotarians for their thoughtful gesture.



RC Ballygunge Uptown — RID 3291

A special camp titled 'Ushnota' was organised in which over 200 needy people in a remote village received blankets from the Rotarians. The project elevated the image of Rotary in that locality.

Compiled by V Muthukumaran
Designed by L Gunasekaran

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5. Those joining after July can pay only for the remaining Rotary year at ₹35 an issue.
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7. Names of all members, with their complete postal address with **PIN CODE**, mobile number and e-mail ID must be typed and sent along with the form and DD/cheques payable at par.
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Making neonatal care affordable

V Muthukumaran

Rotary has entered into an iron-clad, stamp paper agreement with the VHS Hospital, Chennai, while setting up the Rotary Central-TTK-VHS Blood Bank in 1995 that is still being cited by the RI Board at Evanston as a “model and successful partnership for a sustainable project,” said PRID PT Prabhakar.

Taking inspiration from the Rotary-TTK Blood Bank set up by his uncle PT Kasturi in Bengaluru in 1991, the PRID once again forged a strong alliance with the TTK group through a blood bank on the VHS campus. “While the land, equipment and other facilities were provided by my club RC Madras Central, the hospital

contributed the staff and the expertise and the company took care of operational expenses by giving ₹50 lakh per annum.” He was addressing Rotarians, doctors and paramedics at the VHS after inaugurating a set of five high-tech neonatal equipment and an ambulance provided by RC Madras Metro, RID 3232, for the Maternity and Child Health Department at the Abhimanyu Block. “More than 12,000 units of blood are being transfused by the blood bank each year and the VHS founded by Dr KS Sanjivi, a social engineer par excellence, is living up to his ideals thanks to the contributions of Rtns Ramana Shetty, Dilip Bajaj and Dr S Suresh, secretary of the VHS Hospital,” said Prabhakar.

While the Abhimanyu Block costing ₹5 crore was funded by Ramana Shetty’s GK Shetty Charitable Trust and inaugurated by PRIP Kalyan Banerjee in March 2017, Bajaj had given \$100,000 through his family trust Usha K Jolly Trust to TRF for a global grant of \$158,000 in 2015–16. This gesture helped in sourcing medical equipment and furniture for the maternity and neonatal block.

In his address, DG Babu Peram said the 50-plus members of RC Madras Metro have excelled in a range of community projects over the decades and noted that their TRF contributions would reach the million dollars soon. The club has given \$900,000 to the Foundation so far.

PRID P T Prabhakar at the unveiling of neonatal diagnostic gadgets at the VHS Hospital along with (from left) RC Madras Metro Treasurer R Radhakrishnan; Project Coordinator S P M Shivakumar; PDG P T Ramkumar; Vinod Sarogi; Club President Sunder Natarajan; PP T Ravichandran; VHS Secretary Dr S Suresh; Dilip Bajaj; DG Babu Peram; Ramana Shetty; Roma Bajaj; and DRFC Suchitra Sagar.



Finding global partner

With the newly inaugurated neonatal block in need of critical equipment, “we took up our second global grant project for which also Bajaj came forward to provide a Term Gift of \$31,000 through his family trust. But we had to go for a global grant partner as the cost of equipment was much higher,” said PP T Ravichandran giving an overview of the project.

At this juncture, he learnt that Ray Caparros — with whom he struck a working relationship during his visit to Central Valley, California, as GSE leader in 2010 — was the governor of RID 5220. “More to my surprise, I found that PDG Dave Mantooth, one of my hosts during my GSE visit, was the member of the Global Grant Commission of this district.”

Within two hours of an e-mail, “I received a reply from Mantooth expressing interest in the project.” They have been doing similar projects

in Guatemala, the Philippines and Mongolia. Thus RC Escalon Sunrise came forward to donate \$5,000, while the home club (Madras Metro) pooled in \$1,900 and TRF \$4,800 to make the total project value of \$43,000. The funds were used to buy critical care devices for neonates — Fetal Doppler (2 units); Anaesthesia workstation; Traze Duo (3 units) for measuring BP through non-invasive method and oxygen levels in blood; surgical diathermy; and Neopuff infant resuscitator (2 units).

The neonatal ambulance was bought for ₹17 lakh and the money was raised through a fundraiser, a stand-up comedy event held in November 2018. Project Chair SPM Shivakumar recalled that the club has done projects worth crores at the Cancer Institute in the last decade and, through the Abhimanyu Block, has committed a couple of global grant projects at the VHS too.

RC Madras Metro has 102 PHFs, seven Major Donors and one AKS member in Ram Sundaram. Bajaj announced that he is contributing ₹50 lakh each to club projects and the Foundation.

Club President Sundar Natarajan welcomed PRID Prabhakar, DG Peram, donors Bajaj, Ramana Shetty and other Rotarians for the inaugural event at the Dr K S Sanjivi Hall.

Free screening of newborns

The VHS will offer free screening for newborns to detect abnormalities, said Dr Suresh. “With the cost of neonatal and paediatric care rising in recent times, some pregnant women who can’t afford the medical costs are going for abortions which is unfortunate. We can provide health-care to newborns at a very affordable cost along with a free screening made possible with Dr Jayaraju Endowment Fund,” he said. ■



Feeding less fortunate children in Kolkata

Team Rotary News



DG Mukul Sinha (third from left) and RC Rabindra Sarobar President Ritwik Ganguly with club members at the Nirmala Shishu Bhavan.

Either orphaned or abandoned by parents, 20 children at the Nirmala Shishu Bhavan run by the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata were treated to a scrumptious lunch by the members of RC Rabindra Sarobar and RC Calcutta Victoria, RI District 3291.

This event, part of the regular service activities of the clubs, saw children aged six and below enjoy the delicious food sponsored by Rotary. “They are neglected by their families, single parents or orphaned and need care and support,” says Ritwik Ganguly, President of RC Rabindra Sarobar.

Rotarians also donated milk powder, clothes, food kits, and toys for the children. DG Mukul Sinha appreciated the efforts of the club. The total cost of this project at the Shishu Bhavan was ₹40,000. ■

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Rotary at a glance

Rotarians : 1,228,117

Clubs : 36,005

Districts : 538

*Rotaractors : 167,007

Clubs : 10,038

*Interactors : 555,266

Clubs : 24,142

RCC : 10,409

**Estimated*

As on May 14, 2019

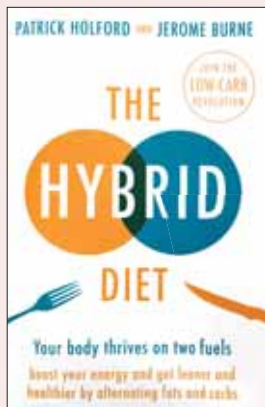
Membership Summary

As on May 1, 2019

RI District	Rotary Clubs	No of Rotarians	Women Rotarians	Rotaract Clubs	Interact Clubs	RCC
2981	114	4,695	211	41	233	205
2982	68	3,117	164	69	117	53
3000	131	5,506	540	233	686	203
3011	82	3,506	746	47	117	25
3012	91	3,626	816	57	132	56
3020	77	4,087	228	56	467	349
3030	92	4,981	625	81	326	195
3040	95	2,130	241	33	138	142
3053	69	3,088	545	10	57	96
3054	128	6,336	1,114	77	325	475
3060	103	4,369	572	59	128	139
3070	103	3,173	344	47	164	58
3080	82	3,480	304	77	226	109
3090	79	2,014	64	36	39	122
3100	78	1,932	118	12	78	146
3110	116	3,874	317	30	52	104
3120	76	3,246	397	31	63	52
3131	132	5,564	1,244	95	315	90
3132	101	4,014	436	39	217	151
3141	96	5,708	1,366	112	274	84
3142	95	3,524	677	77	205	64
3150	95	3,620	370	61	249	109
3160	75	2,627	162	28	48	82
3170	126	5,730	633	59	351	165
3181	84	3,788	367	57	276	115
3182	85	3,414	257	32	282	96
3190	128	5,146	696	126	372	52
3201	145	5,504	367	96	141	49
3202	131	5,107	258	79	448	47
3211	140	4,531	294	8	98	129
3212	99	4,125	329	96	300	142
3231	83	3,543	345	50	217	306
3232	120	5,077	832	118	352	83
3240	89	3,153	405	49	181	171
3250	102	3,928	688	62	217	178
3261	73	2,660	349	11	112	43
3262	92	3,451	423	38	77	77
3291	147	3,748	734	84	137	604
India Total	3,822	151,122	18,578	2,373	8,217	5,366
3220	72	2,038	289	77	215	73
3271	89	1,569	263	55	19	16
3272	148	2,316	386	51	40	40
3281	211	5,903	880	224	94	189
3282	148	4,112	405	126	50	43
3292	117	4,653	721	123	133	113
S Asia Total	4,607	171,713	21,522	3,029	8,768	5,840

Source: RI South Asia Office

On the racks



The Hybrid Diet

Author : Patrick Holford and Jerome Burne
 Publisher : Hachette India
 Pages : 383; ₹499

This book shows you how to make the best use of glucose (which comes from carbohydrates in fruit and vegetables) and ketones (which are made in the body from fat) when you need them.

In their quest to discover the perfect diet, leading health journalist Jerome Burne and nutrition expert Patrick Holford, have explored latest cutting-edge science and put together a plan that is sound, simple and delicious — one that is based on how your body works best.

Recent research has shown that a diet that is very low in carbs and high in good fats is effective for weight loss, can counteract many diseases and will enhance athletic performance and endurance. The drawback is that it is difficult to stick to such a diet as most people love carbs. But as *The Hybrid Diet* demonstrates, we don't need to choose.

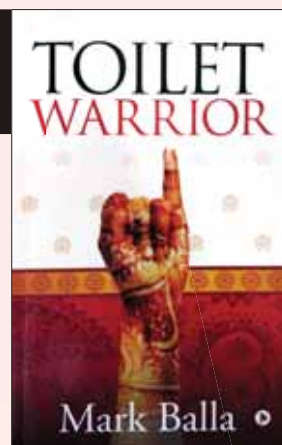


Magical Women

Author : Sukanya Venkatraghavan
 Publisher : Hachette India
 Pages : 215; ₹399

Here is a compelling collection of short stories that speak of love, rage, rebellion, choices and chances. *Magical Women* brings together some of the strongest female voices in contemporary Indian writing. The stories combine astounding imagination with superlative craft to intrigue and delight readers in equal measure.

A weaver is initiated into the ancient art of bringing a universe into existence; a demon hunter encounters an unlikely opponent; four goddesses engage in a cosmic brawl; a graphic designer duels with a dark secret involving a mysterious tattoo; a defiant *chudail* (witch) makes a shocking announcement at a kitty party; a puppet seeking adventure discovers who she really is; and finally, a young woman's resolute choice leads her to haunt 'Death' across millennia. With lots of emotion, fantasy and mystery, the stories have a gripping narrative.



Toilet Warrior

Author : Mark Balla
 Publisher : Notion Press
 Pages : 223; ₹499

During a business trip to India in 2012, Mark Balla, member of RC Box Hill Central, RID 9810, Australia, struck a friendship with two youngsters in Dharavi, one of the largest slums in the world. He was surprised to see that girls stayed away from a Dharavi school for want of toilets and decided to build exclusive toilets for girl students in India.

Toilet Warrior is his journey from Queenstown in Australia to India and how Rotary and the World Toilet Organisation helped him transform the lives of 30,000 girls. Highly inspiring, witty, and cleverly narrated, the book tells the story of his awakening and its impact. In the *Final Word*, PRID Sushil Gupta says, "I hope the readers will enjoy reading this real story, a story of how one man can change society."

When you buy this book through www.operationtoilets.org.au, you will be making a contribution to projects that will change the lives of some of the most underprivileged people in the world.

Compiled by Kiran Zehra
 Designed by Krishnapratheesh S

Western classical music wave in Korea



TCA Srinivasa Raghavan

Six years ago when I had just retired, my wife who is a professor of Korean studies at JNU, decided to undertake some research in Korea. I also went along. Although we had TV in our bedroom, there was nothing at all in English. So I would watch IPL on the laptop while my wife watched Korean entertainment television. From what she told me the serials were absolutely top class. What a pity, she would say, that you don't know Korean. I had no idea what she meant until Netflix came to India and my wife returned to her Korean programmes. But this time there was joy for me too: Netflix has subtitles and, believe me, the text is done absolutely right with just the right words and every nuance captured properly.

Over the last two years we have watched around two dozen serials of different genres because they are so good. My wife tells me that for modern Koreans the pursuit for perfection is a reward in itself. The plots are simple and clean. The scripts are very crisp. The editing is top class. The scenes are never more than three minutes long, thus making the episode move along smartly. And they get the accompanying musical score mostly right. The acting, possibly because the lighting is so good and because 90 per cent of the shooting is in close-up, is superb. The actors know they have to get it just right, which by and large, they do. They have to because competition is very stiff and the pay, not all that much.

Korean entertainment television has a most remarkable subset: serials based on, of all things, Western classical music. The stories are about the foibles of all the usual human relationships. But they are woven around strong themes of Western classical music and musicians. They assemble a huge cast to portray huge orchestras. For example, there is one called 'The Beethoven Virus', a 2008 award-winning show. It is a splendid piece of work, lush and rich, stretching over 18 episodes which on average are over an hour long. If you like Western classical music and a good story, you should definitely watch this serial.

Then there is 'Cantabile', which is Italian for sing-able. Another is called 'Secret Affair' in which a masterclass pianist falls in love with a young man very much her junior. Some are on YouTube, like 'Five Fingers', which is about a pianist and his angry relationship with his family. Another is 'Spring Waltz' which is also about a pianist and his past.

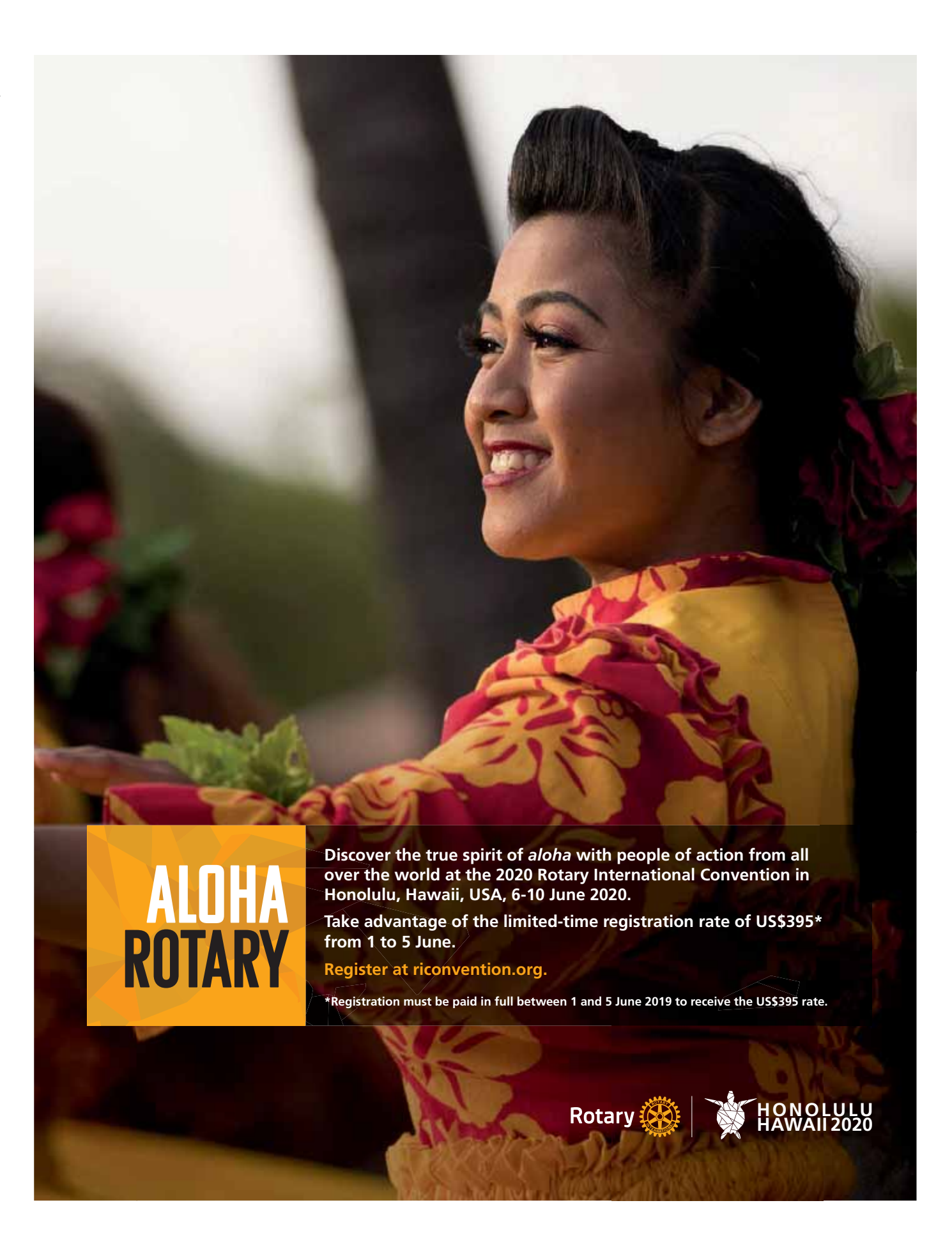
While watching these serials it is impossible not to wonder how Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Bach, Tchaikovsky and the rest of those

guys have struck a chord in Korea. And when did it start to happen? What is it about Western classical music that persuades parents to send their children to learn it and, if they are any good at all, to send them for advanced study? How come there are so many renowned Korean conductors and composers now, some of them, superstars?

Western classical music came to Korea with the missionaries at the end of the 19th century. Then in 1910 the Japanese invaded Korea and colonised it and with them came another wave of Western classical music which took hold as the Korean elites took to it, possibly to please their Japanese masters. There is a very famous serial that highlights this aspect called the 'Hymn of Death', based on a true story.

In 1945 the Japanese were evicted by the Americans and quite out of the blue in 1948, a musician called John S Kim started the Seoul Philharmonic. By the sheerest of chance I heard him when his orchestra played Beethoven's *Ninth* in the open air. Kim was sent to the US to study classical music. After he returned to Korea he started spreading the gospel of classical music and it fell on highly receptive ears. Today Korea, along with Japan and China, also funds Western classical music generously. In the West orchestras are now reduced to doing flash mob gigs to raise money. That, I would say, is the real power shift from the West to the East. ■

If you like Western classical music
and a good story, you should
definitely watch the 2008 award-
winner, *The Beethoven Virus*.



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