



Rotary

NEWS

September 2018



Rotary 

**Washing
hands**



Rotary District 3090



BE THE
INSPIRATION



Dr. V.B. Dixit
District Governor 2018-19



Release of District Directory by
HE V.P. Singh Badnore, Governor of Punjab



Assistant Governors Review Meet



Installation of Rotary Club Ferozepur Cantt

Signature Project of The District : Water and Sanitation

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The National PolioPlus and MR Orientation Meet in Delhi discussed in detail the 'Plus' in PolioPlus.

22 Let's keep the spotlight on polio: RID Basker

RI Director C Basker cautioned Rotarians to be extremely careful till Afghanistan and Pakistan continued to report polio cases as the virus can easily cross borders.

26 Get the credit you deserve

INPPC Chair Deepak Kapur urges Rotarians to highlight Rotary's substantial role in polio eradication.

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An account of some of the interesting and well-attended sessions at the RI Convention in Toronto.

32 Moradabad Rotarians spruce up local schools...

Thanks to these Rotarians, children enjoy better sanitation and hygiene facilities in several schools.

42 Vajpayee... orator, economic reformer, affable politician

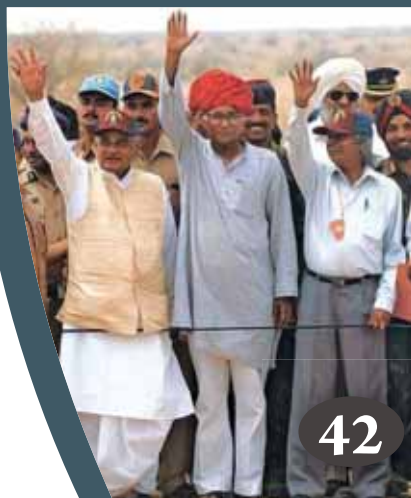
An IAS officer remembers his former boss, A B Vajpayee.

64 Rhythms of Kuchipudi

Explore the nuances of Andhra's traditional dance form.

74 Gift of Life for Assam's children

Rotary Clubs of Greater Tezpur and Delhi East End facilitate the heart surgeries of eight children from Assam suffering from CHD.



On the cover: Schoolchildren proudly display their clean hands after being taught proper handwash practice by Rotarians in a village in Andhra Pradesh.

₹100 crore donation inspires, motivates

Read every word of the article *A single gift of ₹100 crore for TRF* and mesmerised by the act of Ravishankar, his love for society and his approach to helping others. This is an eye-opener for those who take so much from society but do nothing in return. I'd like to meet and touch him to see if such people are real. My salute to him and the DG to motivate this person.

Kripal Singh
RC Durgapur Steel
City — D 3240

It's a wonderful, lion-hearted and exemplary gesture of D Ravishankar,

President of RC Bangalore Orchards, to donate ₹100 crore to TRF. It is rare to find large-hearted donors. May their tribe increase and inspire more to donate.

Hemant Gogte
RC Ambarnath —
D 3142

It was astonishing to read about the donation of ₹100 crore. His story is really wonderful as his explanation for giving away such a large sum: "society took the place of my father so I'm giving back this money." The support he received from his family members is laudable.

Also, articles like *A warm reunion* by Jaishree, *Trinidad, the land of humming birds*,



Honouring River Kopai by Rasheeda Bhagat are all worth reading. The centre page is magnificent with pictures of our DGs on the map of India. Congrats to the Editorial team for their dedicated service to Rotarians. We expect such good work in the coming years too.

M T Philip
RC Trivandrum
Suburban — D 3211

Heartiest congratulations and hats off to D Ravishankar for his kindness and generosity in donating ₹100 crore.

Dr D K Solanki
RC Banpur
Balugaon — D 3262

It is exhilarating to read about D Ravishankar's donation of 100 crore to TRF. His profile is wonderful. Hats off to him and his family. He has indeed set a lofty precedent.

M N Maheswarappa
RC Davangere
Vidyanagar — D 3160

As a regular reader of *Rotary News*, I congratulate you and your team for publishing a magazine with high-class articles, cover

Congrats to RIPN Sushil Gupta

Greetings from the holy place of Kwhaja Saheb Chisti Durgah and Lord Brahma's abode, Ajmer.



Congratulations to PRID Sushil Gupta who has been chosen as RI President Nominee for 2020–21. Thanks for sending the magazine regularly; I, a Rotarian for 46 years, find the content awesome, educative and inspirational, thanks to Editor Rasheeda Bhagat and her team.

Vishnu Agarwal, RC Ajmer — D 3053

Great Editorial

I am stunned by the Editorial titled *A season of heartbreaks and generosity* and could not stop till I finished reading the write-up. The Editor talks about sports and brings together Rotary and sports on one platform. The absence of arrogance in Roger Federer that she mentions, I also find it in the great donor D Ravishanker who donated ₹100 crore to the Foundation.

We can expect many more grand articles from her. *Rotary News* is informative and a classic

magazine. Best wishes to the team.

P S Gokhale, RC Dombivali
Midtown — D 3142

Retaining members is the key

The message from RI Director C Basker about retention of members was mind-blowing. But many Rotarians don't understand their responsibility due to lack of love for any of the five avenues of service. Prior to induction of new members, their preferences, interest and

pages, Rotary projects and inspiring letters. Congratulations to D Ravishankar for donating ₹100 crore to TRF. May God bless him and his family!

*Daniel Chittilappilly
RC Kaloor — D 3201*

It was a pleasant shock to note that a single gift of ₹100 crore for TRF was made by D Ravishankar. My hearty congrats to him and his family. He now is the second largest contributor to TRF after the Gates Foundation.

*N Jagatheesan
RC Eluru — D 3020*

It's really motivating and inspiring to read Ravishankar's life story. I am sure many readers'

eyes must have turned moist. It reinforces faith in Rotary's motto of *Service Above Self* and ability to do good. We all must work hard with integrity to see this faith remains intact.

*Dr Satish Dhamankar
RC Belgaum — D 3170*

Ravishankar is a truly humble and caring Rotarian who has brought fame to the deeds of Rotary all over the world. Not everybody can think and act the way he did. Posterity will remember him as a man who lived with divine thoughts and action. Rotary should be extremely proud of him.

*Nandan Varrier
RC Wadakkanchery
Cochin — D 3201*

availability of time for service have to be ascertained so that we get really service-minded people in Rotary. And get a line of promising leaders.

*Dr NRUK Kartha
RC Trivandrum
Suburban — D 3211*

River Kopai: A nice story

I was delighted to see the article *Honouring River Kopai*. Having trekked five rivers and spent 30 years in studying rivers through the world, I try to make people aware about rivers and

water bodies. Till date several papers and scientific journals were published on rivers, but this write-up had a different essence altogether. It has nicely documented our experience, emotions and the agonies of the people from various walks of life. The trekkers left their scheduled life and went on an 8-day trek to befriend a river and give her hope of a better future. Your write-up was like a feather in our crown as it brought contentment to all our members.

*Prof Malay Mukhopadhyay
Visva Bharati, Santiniketan*

It was an honour to see the article on the River Kopai. I felt overwhelmed when my thoughts were captured so accurately in your writing. My philosophy on rivers, the difference in perception of man and woman and their attachment towards their river which I witnessed during the trek, were well-documented in the article. As a geographer this is rewarding for me.

*Sanjukta Banik
research scholar, Visva Bharati*

Great show by Rotary India

The article *Top RI leaders commend India's performance* at the South Asia reception at Toronto Convention exemplifies the all-round achievements of Rotary India. World leaders saying so is a morale booster. India contributed \$19.1 million last year and now D Ravishankar has given ₹100 crore!

R Murali Krishna, RC Berhampur — D 3262

Editors meet in Evanston

The quality of Rotary magazines has become superior as rightly observed by the then RI President Ian Riseley at the Rotary Editors' meet in Evanston (July issue). The content of our India magazine now has a good mix of informative and innovative articles,

Piyush Doshi, RC Belur — D 3291

It was great to see the article *Rotary Editors meet in Evanston* with Rasheeda Bhagat representing India in our traditional dress. RC Ankleshwar ensuring that girl dropouts get back to school education shows once again the magic of Rotary working! Rotary clubs must set up vocational centres that offer courses like free computer training in Tally and other such programmes for unemployed youth.

The clubs must also take up community projects like medical services to remote villages. We look forward to reading more articles on vocational projects and community services by Rotary across India for other clubs to adopt the same.

Naveen Kumar Garg, RC Sunam — D 3090

We welcome your feedback.
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Coping with loss of leaders and a natural disaster

The last few weeks have brought a lot of grief to India. When Sanjaya Baru, an editor and media advisor to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh tweeted “No Indian politician has been so universally loved as Atalji,”, one spontaneously agreed with him. It could have been argued that Gandhiji was far more loved, or Jawaharlal Nehru. But when the passing away of former Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee was announced, there was a real and deep feeling of loss. Whether you agreed with his political ideology or not, Vajpayee commanded your affection, admiration, respect and approval. For so many of his sterling qualities... first of which was his being a poet. Who can forget the mesmerising recital of his poem ‘*Geet nahi gaata hu*’, which had so many layers of deep meaning... pathos, distress and then defiance, hope and optimism. Or his oratory; remember those speeches in Parliament in 1996 and then 1999, when his governments could not complete full terms? Watch them on YouTube and marvel at the master orator — voice modulation, nuances, and lashing out at his opponents, but not through raised voice, screaming, blame game or high drama. What sums it up the best is the very earthy phrase *zor ka jhatka dheere se*, which roughly translates in English, without conveying the full force of the meaning, as a “forceful push, but gently done”. It was his affability, and ability to take disparate elements along with him, that makes even his harshest critics mourn his loss today.

With Vajpayee’s passing away, as also that of the DMK patriarch and five-time chief minister of Tamil Nadu M Karunanidhi and veteran CPI(M) leader and former Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee, the country is running out of leaders of stature who could walk the talk, and had the ability to retain their composure and sensibilities whether they sat in the ruling or opposition benches.

Along with these leaders who have left a political vacuum, the nation also mourns for the people of Kerala who have seen nature’s fury vis-à-vis what has been called the worst monsoon in a century. Several districts of the southern State which annually promotes ‘monsoon magic’ holiday packages, have been devastated by torrential rain, which has caused unbelievable human suffering, pain and displacement, and a colossal economic loss. But this is also a wake-up call that insensitivity and cockiness when it comes to flouting ecological norms is bound to result in sheer disaster. While some ridiculous causes are being attributed for nature’s fury in Kerala, such as eating of beef or a bid by women in their menstruating phase of life to visit Sabarimala, the real cause of the crisis is the destruction of the ecologically sensitive zones in the Western Ghats. An expert panel on these eco-sensitive ghats, headed by Madhav Gadgil, appointed by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests, had recommended in August 2011 measures for the preservation of the natural environment of the region. The panel had suggested the entire ghat region, spread over six States, including Kerala, be declared ecologically sensitive. But this would have meant curtailing of “development” activities including banning of certain types of industrial and mining activities. Finger pointing aside, the way people within Kerala and other States, including several Rotarians, have risen to help the flood affected restores your faith in humanity. A short article with an appeal appears on page 54, with details of how you can help. In natural and man-made disasters Rotarians have always given generously... of their time, skills and money. Kerala needs our help right now and there is little doubt you will measure up...

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

Rasheeda Bhagat



Rotary needs strong clubs to do more good



Dear fellow Rotarians,

Imagine if we could take a snapshot capturing all of the work Rotary does on a given day. No one — except Rotarians — would believe that a single organisation was capable of accomplishing so much. In that snapshot you would see dedicated volunteers working to eradicate polio, setting up microloans, providing clean water, mentoring youth, and countless other actions.

We can do all this thanks both to our geographic reach and to the fact that our clubs are made up of people who are engaged in their communities. As a part of the community that you serve, you know the needs, you have the connections, and you're able to take immediate action. That's why every Rotary club's membership should reflect the diversity of its community.

We've made great strides in this. In Egypt, Indonesia and Kenya, Rotary is approaching 50 per cent female membership. We're also expanding the age diversity of our clubs. In each of our communities, young professionals are eager to contribute their talents, give back, and learn from mentors. Let's share with them what Rotary is all about. The Engaging Younger Professionals Toolkit at Rotary.org has an action plan to help you reach young leaders and Rotary alumni in your area.

Another resource that can help us better reflect our communities — one that is global like us, is a quarter-million members strong, and already shares our values of service and leadership — is Rotaract. Rotaractors are our partners: Team up with them on projects, ask them to speak at your events, and invite them to join your club. Dedicated Rotaractors worldwide are becoming members of Rotary and even starting new Rotary clubs while still serving as members of Rotaract.

The world needs Rotary, and Rotary needs strong clubs and engaged members in order to do more good. It is our responsibility — yours and mine — to make sure everyone who shows an interest in joining Rotary gets an invitation. Make use of the Membership Leads tool at Rotary.org, which helps people who are interested in joining Rotary connect with a club that's right for them. And let's ensure that every member has a reason to stay. By building strong clubs that engage in meaningful projects and have fun along the way, we provide value to our club members that they cannot find anywhere else.

Let's not keep Rotary's story — the story captured in those snapshots of service — to ourselves. I challenge you to invite leaders of all ages, men and women, who are looking for a way to give back. By doing so, you will *Be the Inspiration* in your community and help Rotary continue to do good in the world.

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

Barry Rassin
President, Rotary International

Message from the RI Director



Join hands to eradicate illiteracy

Dear Rotarians,

Basic education is an evolving programme of instruction intended to provide students with the opportunity to become responsible global citizens and contribute to the economic and social wellbeing of their communities. Rotary continues to promote the cause of basic education and the spread of literacy across the world.

Rotary believes that parents and teachers know what is best for students. Local clubs ensure their support to the students and teachers offer them the opportunity to achieve significantly higher levels of learning. Providing technology-based additional instructional aids gives more opportunities to students and helps those with cognitive difficulty to meet the essential academic learning requirements.

Let me highlight the funding aspects of the Literacy and Basic Education initiatives. In the Union Budget for the Financial Year 2018–19, allocation for school education has got a lion's share of ₹50,000 crores and at the State level, recent analysis of six States — Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Bihar and West Bengal — by CRY and the Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability, a think tank, shows States allocate about 14–20 per cent of their budgets to school education. Clearly money is not a constraint to promote literacy. The Central and State governments take care of the financial support.

The future is Digital Literacy. According to the biggest survey on mobile reading, released by UNESCO in collaboration with World Reader and Nokia, mobile devices are playing a big role in promoting literacy and

getting people to read in developing countries. Mobile phones are significantly boosting literacy skills in Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan and Zimbabwe. “Mobile reading is not a future phenomenon but a right-here, right-now reality,” states the report. “Mobile reading can open educational opportunities to nearly seven billion people, ultimately reducing illiteracy rates forever. In places where physical books are scarce, mobile phones are plentiful. While mobile phones are still used primarily for basic communication, even the simplest of phones are a gateway to long-form text.”

Girls and women are getting the most benefit from a mobile device approach to reading, says a heartening UNESCO study. They are reading up to six times more than boys and men.

A United Nations data reveals that of the Earth's estimated seven billion inhabitants, over six billion now have access to a mobile phone. Mobile technology can advance literacy and learning in underserved communities around the world. Rotary must be prepared to align with rapidly evolving technology and exploit opportunities to promote basic education and literacy. Why shouldn't we think of partnering with UNESCO on a global mission to eradicate illiteracy just like we together eradicated polio!

This is food for thought!

Let me conclude with the words of Kofi Annan: “Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope.”

Be the Inspiration, ask Rotarians to inspire and bring change in the world and in each other.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Basker', written in a cursive style.

C Basker
Director, Rotary International

District Wise TRF Contributions as on June 2018

(in US Dollars)

District Number	APF	PolioPlus	Other Restricted	Endowment Fund	Total Contributions	EREY Donors (in numbers)	EREY %
India							
2981	83,817	6,577	0	11,000	101,394	688	15.9
2982	137,880	12,357	2,725	0	152,961	697	25.7
3000	336,550	26,050	732,892	176,199	1,271,692	2,432	48.1
3011	438,463	2,506	416,349	22,977	880,295	795	26.2
3012	138,839	7,291	112,590	3,016	261,736	359	10.3
3020	151,992	27,437	110,475	58,728	348,632	680	15.9
3030	46,213	22,924	1,050	0	70,187	94	1.9
3040	43,586	93	42,344	127	86,150	237	11.1
3053	67,768	78	22,129	12,500	102,476	110	3.8
3054	85,841	223	531,342	26,000	643,406	171	2.9
3060	413,859	2,323	542,916	138,568	1,097,666	2,110	55.4
3070	83,465	198	25,794	1,084	110,542	562	19.0
3080	240,826	39,261	30,211	4,386	314,685	765	23.5
3090	4,509	0	2,500	0	7,009	10	0.5
3100	14,929	0	30	0	14,960	0	0
3110	137,151	4,516	127,931	0	269,597	298	7.8
3120	123,885	508	87,073	14,993	226,458	212	7.3
3131	622,032	16,917	455,495	121,399	1,215,843	2,237	43.9
3132	149,356	4,975	7,875	20,000	182,206	452	10.4
3141	898,670	35,464	1,076,054	147,751	2,157,938	2,024	39.7
3142	522,121	18,641	140,192	(1,000)	679,954	1,272	47.1
3150	77,619	12,557	52,932	143,882	286,990	786	21.9
3160	236,178	3,588	0	15,914	255,681	376	16.1
3170	430,554	12,405	153,231	0	596,189	1,515	28.4
3181	130,234	1,091	0	78	131,403	941	31.1
3182	102,863	462	40,126	0	143,451	795	25.3
3190	506,342	118,018	482,937	27,570	1,134,867	180	3.6
3201	480,598	27,738	343,092	5,323	856,750	675	13.2
3202	69,903	18,890	58,824	2,773	150,390	160	3.3
3211	239,790	1,100	0	179,186	420,076	302	7.0
3212	393,152	62,621	32,500	2,000	490,273	1,282	34.7
3231	355,222	78,101	551,431	130,914	1,115,668	121	4.8
3232	615,299	40,788	354,293	38,250	1,048,630	878	23.8
3240	129,775	5,338	0	8,367	143,480	595	20.4
3250	203,573	6,431	63,793	26,000	299,797	365	10.3
3261	114,366	130	66,129	1,000	181,625	197	8.4
3262	93,696	14,925	88,529	71,033	268,182	317	9.6
3291	158,517	26,790	131,036	119,294	435,637	200	5.3
India	17,175	1,000,658	3,313		1,021,145		
India Total	9,096,606	1,659,970	6,890,131	1,529,313	19,176,020	25,890	19.0
3220 Sri Lanka	164,292	10,652	12,538	4,217	191,699	654	34.3
3271 Pakistan	48,115	73,197	11,752	0	133,064	90	6.3
3272 Pakistan	37,137	3,301	3,150	3,000	46,588	109	4.0
3281 Bangladesh	482,839	15,306	427,921	106,038	1,032,104	855	15.2
3282 Bangladesh	136,432	14,023	3,600	3,000	157,055	641	17.0
3292 Nepal	171,451	33,566	712,104	0	917,120	735	16.8
South Asia Total	10,136,872	1,810,014	8,061,196	1,645,568	21,653,650	28,974	18.0
World Total	131,229,704	38,938,693	21,571,652	26,087,901	217,827,950		

Source: RI South Asia Office



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**RI President Nominee-designate
Sushil Gupta.**

Sushil Gupta selected to be 2020–21 Rotary president

Teresa Schmedding

Sushil Kumar Gupta, of the Rotary Club of Delhi Midwest, D 3011 is the selection of the Nominating Committee for President of Rotary International for 2020–21. He will be declared the president-nominee on October 1 if no challenging candidates have been suggested.

Gupta wants to increase Rotary's humanitarian impact as well as the diversity of its membership.

"As individuals, we can only do so much," Gupta said in a statement. "But when 1.2 million Rotarians work together, there is no limit to what we can achieve, and in the process, we can truly change the world."

Gupta has been a Rotarian since 1977 and has served Rotary as district governor, training leader and resource group adviser, and as a member, vice chair or chair of several committees.

He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Science degree by the IIS University, Jaipur, in recognition of his contributions to water conservation.

He has also received the coveted Padma Shri Award, the fourth-highest civilian award in India, conferred by the President of India for distinguished service to tourism and social work.

Gupta has also received the Distinguished Service Award from The Rotary Foundation for his support of its humanitarian and educational programmes. He and his wife Vinita are Major Donors to The Rotary Foundation and members of the Arch Klumph Society.

Gupta is chair and managing director of Asian Hotels (West) Ltd, and owner of Hyatt Regency, Mumbai, and JW Marriott Hotel, New Delhi Aerocity. He has served as president of the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India and on the board of directors of Tourism Finance Corporation of India Ltd.

He is the president of Experience India Society, a public-private partnership between the tourism industry and the government of India that promotes India as a tourist destination. He is also vice chair of the Himalayan Environment Trust and serves on the board of Operation Eyesight Universal in India.

The members of the Nominating Committee for the 2020–21 President of Rotary International are Kazuhiko Ozawa, RC Yokosuka, Kanagawa, Japan; Manoj D Desai, RC Baroda Metro, Gujarat, India; Shekhar Mehta, RC Calcutta-Mahanagar, West Bengal, India; John G Thorne, RC North Hobart, Tasmania, Australia; Guiller E Tumangan, RC Makati West, Makati City, Philippines; Juin Park, RC Suncheon, Jeonnam, Korea; Elio Cerini, RC Milano Duomo, Italy; Gideon M Peiper, RC Ramat Hasharon, Israel; Per Høyen, RC Aarup, Denmark; Paul Knijff, RC Weesp (Vechtstreek-Noord), the Netherlands; Sam Okudzeto, RC Accra, Ghana; José Ubiracy Silva, RC Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil; Bradford R Howard, RC Oakland Uptown, California, USA; Michael D McCullough, RC Trenton, Michigan, USA; Karen K Wentz, RC Maryville, Tennessee, USA; Michael K McGovern, RC South Portland-Cape Elizabeth, Maine, USA; and John C Smarge, RC Naples, Florida, USA.

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Picture by Rasheeda Bhagat

Eliminating measles and rubella from India

Rasheeda Bhagat

On any Rotary platform when statistics are being discussed vis-a-vis polio, a set of impressive numbers are given to show the impact Rotarians have made by getting most of the world rid of polio. Prior to Rotary's PolioPlus programme, 350,000 children in 125 countries were being crippled by polio every year. And today 2.5 billion children are being immunised against polio

thanks to this programme. And so on.

But Chairman of the India Expert Advisory Group of Measles and Rubella, Dr Jacob John, who has played a pioneering role in the launch of the PolioPlus programme by Rotary, quoted a startling number at the National PolioPlus and MR (Measles — Rubella) Orientation meet held in Delhi in August. He said that keeping in mind how some health officials had believed

that it was unjustifiable to spend so much money, or force governments to spend so much money, on attempting to eliminate polio, a detailed economic analysis was done in 2014, and the economic benefit of eradicating polio from almost the entire world, bar three countries, was stupendous.

Dr John said that according to the World Bank, some \$2 billion or ₹14,000 crore (at present dollar rate) had been spent by the GoI on the polio

eradication programme in India. "Add to this another ₹10,000 crore, the money that we Rotarians spent from our pockets on campaign material and other expenses, and the upper limit of what we spent on the polio drive totals ₹24,000 crore."

But the 2014 study showed that the economic gain from eliminating polio from India is \$1.71 trillion. Taking 2012 as the cutoff year, "we have created ₹1,197 lakh crore (at present conversion rate)



From L: PRIP Rajendra K Saboo, INPPC Chair Deepak Kapur and RID C Basker.

of wealth by eradicating polio. Let us at least be aware that the huge effort we invested in polio has made India richer. Others may not realise this and not give Rotary credit but we must know that we Rotarians have contributed substantially to the socio-economic development of India. We should examine how the low-hanging fruit of disease elimination brings about huge socio-economic development in the process.”

Now that Rotary in India had decided to join the Government’s National Immunisation programme to increase the cover of routine immunisation with the focus being on eliminating measles and rubella by 2020, Rotarians will have to gear up for this journey. “Please learn the name of Measles and Rubella in your local languages. Then you will be able to communicate properly to your communities about the dangers both measles

and rubella pose (see box). Before vaccination began, one per cent of urban children and three per cent of rural children died due to measles and its complications,” he added.

SPELLING out the immense danger that the unborn child faced if a pregnant woman contracted rubella, Dr John said that “the baby can develop brain, heart, eye, bone and other diseases congenitally and some might think it is better that such a severely handicapped baby dies rather than lives with such insurmountable difficulties.” Also, in this case of MR vaccination, the scene is complicated. The first MR vaccine is introduced in school-based campaigns, covering all children up to 15 years. In parallel, community-based campaign covers all children from 9 months to 4 years plus the non-school going ones. Why 15 years? “It is a complicated situation but we want all the girls under 15 given rubella vaccination, so that even if the rubella virus survives in the community, young mothers will not get rubella,” he said.

“Did you know that Rotary introduced measles immunisation in India? In 1978 when the immunisation campaign



RIPN Designate Sushil Gupta with RIDE Kamal Sanghvi.

was introduced in India, measles was not included because the vaccine was expensive and not even licensed in India.” In 1979, D 3230 (Tamil Nadu) got special permission from the GoI to vaccinate children in the State against measles “thanks to our dear late MGR (former TN Chief Minister M G Ramachandran). And we got nearly four million doses of vaccine donated by Canadian Rotarians, and in partnership with the TN Health and Family Welfare Ministry, we virtually stopped child deaths due to measles in the State in five years!”

This experience, added Dr John, led the health ministry to get the licence for the measles vaccine in 1984 and introduce it in the EPI, (Expanded Programme on Immunisation), which was later renamed Universal Immunisation (UI).

ADDRESSING the meet, Past RI President Rajendra Saboo marvelled at the journey Indian Rotarians had made in eradicating polio from India. “At one time the world thought India

The low-hanging fruit of eliminating diseases such as polio brings about huge socio-economic development in the process.

Dr Jacob John

would never be able to eradicate polio. And if India can't do it then the world could never be polio-free, it was said. On the day India was declared polio-free, it wasn't just India but the entire Rotary world, WHO, UNICEF and all our global partners celebrated the event."

He recalled that at one time "the government rejected the idea of NID and said we will do it our own way. And how Rotary did advocacy at the highest level and how the policy of national immunisation days was adopted, is part of history. But our dream would not have been achieved without the government sitting on the driving seat. That was our biggest achievement. Yes, success has many fathers and many people will take credit for it."

Turning his ire on the Rotarians in the gathering who kept complaining that Rotary had not been given due credit for eradicating polio from the world bar three countries (Nigeria, Afghanistan and Pakistan), and implying that the same would be true of Rotary's involvement in the GoI's Universal Immunisation programme, Saboo said: "To be very honest, what have we done so far where measles and rubella are concerned? Resolve is one thing, action is another. We signed an MoU a year ago but then there has been no action. We have to have

active participation and involvement and then we can rightly get the credit."

Advising the assembled DGs, PDGs and others involved in the MR immunisation drive to first arm themselves with knowledge about the dangers of both measles and rubella, Saboo said this was Rotary's trump card in polio and it should be followed. "When we started on the dream to rid the world of polio, it seemed so easy. The estimate was that we would require just \$120 million to immunise the children of the world. We thought we'd be able to achieve our goal by 2005. So willy-nilly Rotary got into what it thought was a simple task."

But once India had eradicated polio a good deal of "complacency" had crept into Rotary and involvement in routine immunisation had waned. But we can't afford to forget that the

We promoted polio campaign more through traditional media, but now false information is spread through social media, particularly Whatsapp messages.

Dr Pradeep Haldar



From L: PDGs Nitin Dafria, Kranti Mehta, Badri Prasad, Dr Rajiv Pradhan, TRF Trustee Gulam Vahanvaty, PDG Sanjay Khanna, INPPC Chair Deepak Kapur, PRIIP Rajendra Saboo, RID C Basker, PDGs E K Sagadhevan, Anil Agarwal and Upkar Singh Sethi.

virus is present in our neighbourhood and could cross the borders anytime. "Also, there are pockets here in India where polio can appear any moment."

But apart from being vigilant on the return of polio, Rotary needed a new challenge... "a new thought to capture the imagination of Rotarians".

Touching upon the 'Plus' in the PolioPlus programme, Saboo recalled that in 1984-85, when Rotary approached its partners such as WHO, it was decided that while Rotary would take care of the polio immunisation, other communicable diseases — the 'Plus' part — would be handled by WHO. But by 1988 both WHO and UNICEF started

concentrating on polio and the 'Plus' part was sort of neglected. It however remained in government immunisation programmes.

Now that Indian Rotarians needed a "new challenge" both he and Past RI President Kalyan Banerjee had managed to convince the International PolioPlus Committee, RI Board and TRF Trustees that Indian Rotarians can now take up the 'Plus' part and get involved in India's UI programme. "We told them we are not asking for any money, we will find it ourselves and they said we will support you in your admin cost but the money collected for polio cannot be diverted



as long as polio continued anywhere in the world.”

Urging Rotarians to be vigilant on the return of the polio virus, Saboo said, “Rekindle the spark in your districts and clubs and motivate them to participate with the greatest enthusiasm in the MR immunisation. If you don’t do that, we will fail. But if we do, then I can assure you that this experiment of MR that India has been allowed by RI to incorporate in the PolioPlus programme can be replicated in rest of the world.”

In his address, TRF Trustee Gulam Vahanvaty stressed on “complete eradication of polio” being Rotary’s highest external priority; “this can’t be stressed enough. We’ve got to be on our toes and work wholeheartedly to

ensure that if we are this close, we have to close it completely. We have to reach 100 per cent.”

Thanking D Ravishankar, President of RC Bangalore Orchards, for his magnanimity in donating ₹100 crore (about \$14.7 million) to the Foundation, he complimented RID 3190 DG Suresh Hari for convincing the Rotarian to make this huge donation. “Now both Hari and Ravishankar are working on fine tuning the details of how that ₹100 crore is to be used.”

Vahanvaty added: “Of course this has changed the goal for every district governor in our country. My own DG Shashi Sharma who had given a goal of \$7 million, will now have to add many more ‘7s’ to that figure because he has to be higher than District 3190! And the same goes for DGs from across the country who have been motivated by this one

On the day India was declared polio-free, it wasn’t just India but the entire Rotary world, WHO, UNICEF and all our global partners celebrated the event.

Past RI President
Rajendra Saboo

donation to go for higher goals.”

He urged the assembled Rotarians to “work with the same commitment and zeal not only to ensure that India remains polio-free but also to eradicate measles and rubella.”

Earlier addressing the meeting, PRID Ashok Mahajan said it took less

than \$2 to vaccinate a child against measles and rubella. “We know it is not an easy task, but it’s not impossible. We have the experience of polio, which was difficult task too. In those 30 years we struggled and had many stumbling blocks and so much resistance, but every problem was solved. We can also rid India of MR if you work with the same enthusiasm.”

But funds to the tune of ₹5 crore were required in this fight against MR. “For polio eradication we had TRF to support our cause but this is our own programme and funds have to be generated, not an impossible task. If each RI district in the zone raises ₹12 lakh, our target will be met,” he added. If his help was required he would always be available to talk to corporate or individual donors, as also to religious leaders if resistance to the immunisation was seen in

Measles is “mini AIDS”



(From L) RI Director C Basker, PRIP Rajendra K Saboo and Dr Jacob John.

At RI's National PolioPlus and MR Orientation meet in Delhi, eminent virologist and Chairman of the India Expert Advisory Group (IEAG) on MR, Dr Jacob John made a startling revelation which equated measles to “mini AIDS”. “For every child who got polio in the past, one child also died of measles. But those children are not alive to tell their story.” He said there have been a lot of measles-related deaths that have not been categorised or recognised as measles related, because measles brings with it a lot

of complications... diarrhoea, dysentery, rain fever and several other complications which arise due to measles... which kill the child within a year of getting measles.

“But we understand today that measles is mini AIDS. It suppresses your immune system and it

In 1978 when the immunisation campaign was introduced in India, measles was not included because the vaccine was expensive.

takes two to three months for 90 per cent recovery and two to three years for 99.9 per cent recovery. So during this period of two years the children are still dying of diseases they wouldn't have had without getting measles. This is the tip of the iceberg... that's why I use the term that eradicating measles is the low-hanging fruit for social development.” There are no health economists who calculate the loss or long-term effects caused by measles-related complications but “please believe me, this is a terrible disease that is best got rid of.”

The only sure way of keeping measles under control, Dr John added, is to “get rid of the virus, as we got rid of the polio virus from the community.”

Coming to rubella, he said that if we underdid rubella vaccination and let this virus survive in the community, “it will infect a pregnant woman. So if you don't do a good job and slow down the spread of rubella virus in the community by underdoing your immunisation, then more girls will survive without either vaccine or the disease immunity, so you can actually, paradoxically and theoretically, increase the risk of congenital rubella syndrome if you botch up this programme.”

That's why the Government of India was so careful in balancing the availability of the vaccine and aiming for 100 per cent coverage. “The coverage has to be as high as we can achieve for we don't want children below 15 surviving without immunity, adding to the paradoxical and theoretical increase of rubella in future. We have to remove the virus to protect the unprotected women in the future,” he added. ■

any pocket, as had happened during polio too.

Addressing a session on WASH in Schools, RIPN Designate Sushil Gupta urged the DGs and other Rotary leaders in the hall to continue to work with enthusiasm on the preventive aspect of combatting infections and diseases. And that is hygiene and sanitation. “Please continue to work in schools to ensure that the children wash their hands with soap and water adequately, particularly before taking their food, and after using a toilet.” Work on building group handwashing stations and separate toilets for girls and boys should continue, “as we will have to focus our attention and energy on the younger generation to bring about behavioural change. Once we



TRF Trustee Gulam Vahanvaty with PRID Y P Das.

change their mindset, and through them their families’ and entire community’s mindset, so many preventable diseases can be tackled.”

Similarly, attention should also be paid to ensuring menstrual hygiene for adolescent girls by giving them privacy through separate toilets with adequate water supply. By doing this, Rotary will be ensuring education for a generation of girls, who otherwise tend to drop out of secondary schools for lack of basic and hygienic toilet facilities.

It’s not an easy task, but not impossible. We have the experience of polio; in those 30 years we struggled and had many stumbling blocks and resistance, but every problem was solved.

PRID Ashok Mahajan

today as it was in the yesteryears. As of today 13 cases of polio have been reported and the main reason for the Delhi meet was to evolve a strategy to use “our polio legacy” for GoI’s UI programme.”

The genesis of Rotary’s involvement in MR can be traced to the presentation that Dr Jacob John had made to senior Rotary leaders as the chief of the India Expert Advisory Group on MR, he added.

Referring to the humungous size of the polio immunisation events in India, he said on NIDs “we have 700,000 polio booths, 25 lakh



INPPC Chair Deepak Kapur cautioned the gathering that Indian Rotarians could not afford to relax on polio immunisation till the entire world was rid of polio. “Let us not forget that polio has gone from India but not the world... polio immunisation is as relevant

vaccinators, 22.5 crore IVP doses... This happens on every NID and during the *End Polio Now* campaigns Indian Rotarians have proved that you have the energy, capacity and now the confidence to scale up our efforts and rid India of other communicable diseases such as measles, rubella, TB etc. And you can raise the funds needed; if a single Rotarian can give ₹100 crore to our Foundation, just imagine what we can do collectively.”

Kapur also urged Rotarians to involve Interact clubs to make schools accept the MR programme. “And please also make use of the offer made by the champion of the Ulemas, PRID Mahajan, to overcome resistance, if any, in your region. He will be happy to help to protect our children.”

PRID Yashpal Das addressed the Rotarians on the “road ahead” and urged them to leverage the experience and infrastructure they had developed from the polio eradication programme in India and extend it to protect our children against measles, rubella, TB and other communicable diseases by their total and passionate involvement in the MR programme.

Dr Pradeep Halder from GoI’s Health Ministry said in the GoI’s MR immunisation programme, vaccination for viral diseases such as measles and rubella has got the highest priority. “In polio we had to vaccinate almost 17 crore children, here the number is higher at about 40 crore as it is a much higher population in the age group nine months to 15 years. Also this is an injectable vaccine so we can’t have as much flexibility as we had in polio.”

The MR campaign will be carried out through hospitals, health



PRIP Rajendra Saboo, RI Director C Basker, TRF Trustee Gulam Vahanvaty and INPPC Chair Deepak Kapur with the present batch of DGs.

centres, sub centres, etc “and we will use different strategies to reach all sections of the community.

In the first week, we try to target schoolchildren as they form nearly 70 per cent of our population. So we begin with schools and then go to the rest of the community.” But there were challenges in getting 100 per cent coverage, such as “inaccurate information, misconceptions and rumours spread through the social media. “Even in polio, we had encountered such problems but in those days we had promoted the polio campaign more through traditional media, but now a lot of false

information is being spread through social media, particularly WhatsApp messages.”

As the primary target group was schoolchildren the involvement and cooperation of teachers and principals was important. But coverage in private schools was more a challenge than public schools. Engagement with religious leaders, particularly in madrasas, was very important, he said.

A mistake in the first phase of the MR campaign was that “unlike in polio, we did not involve celebrities like Amitabh Bachchan, but now we have made him the face of this immunisation campaign.”

While many States have already been covered, the bigger States like UP, Bihar, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh will be taken up in November. To make the programme a success “high quality campaigns and partnerships are required” and Rotary’s

We have 700,000 polio booths,
25 lakh vaccinators, 22.5 crore IVP
doses...This happens on every NID.

INPPC Chair **Deepak Kapur**

PLUS & MR ORIENTATION MEET



participation and partnership were very important, Dr Haldar added.

PRID Yashpal Das and PDGs Rajiv Pradhan and Anil Agarwal were given awards for their special contribution in the End Polio drive.

In his address, Dr Danesh Ahmed, Technical Officer (Immunisation), WHO, highlighted serious concerns on the missing children in some pockets of India and the slow progress of immunisation in urban areas, particularly slums.

Acknowledging Rotary's tremendous contribution in making India polio-free, he recalled the time he wasn't even able to meet or convince the district magistrate in Noida about the importance of immunisation. "Thanks to Rotarians who met and convinced him, he now chairs the district immunisation meetings."

Similarly, between 2005–10, the polio immunisation programme had run into rough weather in Moradabad with huge opposition from the Muslim community. "We were trying to engage religious

Rtn D Ravishankar giving ₹100 crore to TRF has changed the goal for every DG. My own DG Shashi Sharma's original goal of \$7 million, will now need to get many more '7s' in that figure because he has to be higher than District 3190!

TRF Trustee
Gulam Vahanvaty

leaders and influential persons in the community, but without much luck. But then came Rotary with its ulema committee, and took the initiative to organise the meeting of such leaders. The way the Rotary ulema committee engaged and motivated the people and provided a solution is unprecedented. On no other occasion than such polio meetings, people of different faiths spoke the same language and conveyed the same message."

Right now intensive MR immunisation work is going on in Haryana and over 90 per cent coverage has been achieved. But in two districts, including Mewat, again a similar resistance is coming from the minority community, and "we have to once again bring them on board before we start the immunisation in bigger States like UP, Bihar and Maharashtra."

Stressing the need for cent per cent coverage in MR immunisation, PDG Rajiv Pradhan urged the Rotary leaders in the hall to "treat the operation manual given in your kits as your *Bible* or *Gita* as all the details are given there." It explained why children were missed... awareness gap, the child travelling etc. While there is a huge group not getting any doses at all, some get only one or two doses. "This is our major challenge."

Pictures by Rasheeda Bhagat
and Hemant Kumar Banswal

Designed by Krishnapratheesh S

Let's keep the spotlight on polio: **RID Basker**

Rasheeda Bhagat



RI Director C Basker

In a comprehensive address delivered at the National Polio Plus and MR Orientation meet held in Delhi last month that succinctly captured Rotary's polio story over some four decades, RI Director Basker linked the eradication of polio from India to the steady growth and development of India in the last couple of decades.

India stood at a “critical phase of transformation compared to some 40 years ago. In those days the perception was that in India we burn our brides or that India has no electricity. But this is changing mainly because we are such hardworking people... we've become the second largest steel producer in the world after China, and today the motor car is no longer a luxury here. What is more, for over three years, we haven't borrowed a single rupee from the World Bank. Our health care infrastructure has improved tremendously and thanks to Rotary, polio has been eradicated from India, when the rest of the world was so sceptical of our doing so,” he said amidst applause.

But he cautioned the assembled senior Rotary leaders from India, including DGs and PDGs, that on the polio front we needed to be extremely careful till our neighbours — both Afghanistan and Pakistan, continued to report polio cases as the virus can easily cross borders.

One of the proudest days of my life

Addressing the PolioPlus meet in Delhi, Director Basker said that during the TRF Centennial year, Indian Rotarians had contributed over \$20 million, getting the second slot in giving, and in 2017–18 a sum of \$19.17 million had been raised, allowing India to retain the second place on the TRF platform.

But on the first day of this Rotary year, July 1, an event had taken place which would catapult India's giving trajectory to a totally different plane. On that day "as I sat on the RI Board meet, I got a text message from RI District 3190 PDG Asha Prasanna Kumar saying one Rotarian, D Ravishankar, had contributed ₹100 crore (about \$14.7 million) to the Foundation." Thinking that the PDG had made a mistake and "instead of ₹1 crore had typed ₹100 crore, I went out of the Boardroom and called DG Suresh Hari and told him I have got such a message from Asha. So is it ₹1 crore or 100 crore? And he said 'Director, it is ₹100 crore!' I could hardly believe it, and Suresh added, 'we



told you, we are not miracle chasers but miracle makers'."

So this was the first miracle of the year; DG Hari had followed up with Ravishankar, the President of RC Bangalore Orchards, to get this contribution.

Next, added Basker, as they adjourned for a noon break and RI President Barry Rassin was having lunch, "I sat next to him and told him that on the first day of the new Rotary year an Indian Rotarian has contributed \$14.7 million to TRF. He put down his

fork and asked: 'What Basker, what did I hear?' So I repeated the statement, called DG Hari and handed over the phone to President Barry and said speak to the Governor. He did and then said: 'Basker, this is a miracle; Next to Bill Gates, an Indian has shown how to give.'

As they returned to the Board meet, Rassin invited Basker to make the announcement and "I had the pleasure and privilege of announcing to the RI Board that an Indian Rotarian has donated \$14.7 million to become the second largest contributor to TRF in the world. And this was one of the proudest moments of my life. So India is transforming and at RI we continue to hold our heads high on performance, show how generous we are and how hard we work."

Every person in the hall had been carefully chosen by the Rotary leadership. "Please justify the confidence and the responsibility we have placed in you. Let us not be complacent; we can't allow polio to return," he added.

Giving the assembled Rotary leaders a sense of the magnitude of work that Rotarians have done on the polio front across the world, Basker said that in 1988, when the global polio eradication campaign was launched, there were 350,000 cases of polio reported every year from 125 countries. Since then, Rotary and its partners — UNICEF, WHO, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the governments of the world, etc — had all come together to immunise 2.5 billion children every year. "Because

of the immunisation that we all did 16 million people are walking today who would otherwise have been paralysed. In addition, Rotary has committed over \$1.7 billion and contributed millions of volunteer hours to actively participate in the polio eradication campaign."

The result was that compared to 37 cases of polio reported in three countries — Nigeria, Afghanistan and Pakistan in 2016, and 22 cases in 2017, as of July 26, only 13 cases of polio have been reported in 2018. "This means that we have managed to eradicate 99.9 per cent of polio from the world. For most other

things, a 99.9 per cent result would be a remarkable success story. But for polio, nothing short of cent per cent success rate can be called a victory."

Underlining the danger of complacency that we could now relax as India is polio-free, the RI Director warned the assembled Rotarians that "within 10 years the world could see as many as 200,000 new cases every year if we do not reach zero cases soon. Rotary can't stop until our world is certified polio-free. That is why it takes at least three years to get such a certificate after no cases have been reported from a country."

As polio continued to be a challenge till the entire world was reported polio-free, at the Atlanta Convention last year RI had committed to raise \$50 million annually over the next three years. “Do remember that every one dollar raised by us will be matched 2:1 by the Gates Foundation, so the total will translate into \$450 million for polio eradication activities; not only for immunisation but also for mapping the environment for signs of the virus.”

Even though massive strides have been made across the world in eradicating polio, and “we are now down to only two remaining reservoirs — Nigeria and the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, this region is one of the most challenging and complex environments in the world,” Basker added. That is why Rotary had come up with innovations such as getting female vaccinators, involvement of religious leaders, special attention to vaccinating transit population, surveillance and checking of water supply and sewerage systems for any signs of the virus.

“But let’s not forget that our No 1 weapon against polio is the vaccine,” he said, adding that investment and experience in polio eradication has given Rotarians the tools to fight other preventable diseases such as measles, rubella, cholera etc.

To “ensure that our children and grandchildren live in a polio-free world, we will have to meet our global fundraising goal of \$50 million a year for the next three years. We have to press the government for funding by writing to our legislators and bureaucrats. Remember that the \$1.2 billion promised at Atlanta was only a pledge; we have to ensure follow up. We must keep polio in the spotlight in our clubs.” ■

Message from the Foundation Chair



Let's End Polio Now

I was a district governor in 1987–88, the year that Charles C Keller was the RI President. As district governor, I attended the 1988 Rotary International Convention in Philadelphia. There, I heard that there were an estimated 350,000 cases of polio in 125 countries. But I also heard some exciting news: We had surpassed our goal of raising \$120 million for the eradication of polio. We had raised \$219,350,449 (and later, after the accounting was done, that figure was revised to \$247 million). What a celebration we had. We proved to ourselves and the world the strength of Rotary and that we could take on a global health challenge.

In the ensuing 30 years, we, along with our partners — the World Health Organisation, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, UNICEF and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation — have raised even more funds, organised National Immunisation Days, and advocated with world governments. Our goal has always been to keep our promise to give children a polio-free world, and in 2017, there were only 22 cases.

We’ve done incredible work, but we know the job isn’t over.

Once we reduce the number of cases to zero and no viruses are detected in the environment, we must wait for WHO to certify the world officially polio-free. That requires at least a three-year period without a single detection of the wild poliovirus in a person or the environment. During that three years, we will still have to vaccinate children and ensure through surveillance that the virus never regains a foothold.

Rotarians have always been on the front lines of this effort — we still are. So, what can you do? Tell everyone you know about Rotary and polio. Make a donation. Update your club and explore how together you could participate directly in the fight.

On October 24, we’ll celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative’s formation at our sixth annual World Polio Day event in Philadelphia, the city where it all started. Host a World Polio Day fundraiser or watch party, and tell us about it at endpolio.org/promote-your-event. For more inspiration, check out endpolio.org.

I need your help. I’m depending on you to help us keep our promise.

Ron D Burton
Foundation Trustee Chair

Master trainers groom teachers in Maharashtra

V Muthukumaran

In a major boost to the TEACH vertical in Rotary's Literacy mission, RC Khadki, D 3131, has taken up a 'master trainer programme', which has so far trained 140 resource people from private schools and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) affiliated to the Maharashtra State Council for Education Research and Training (MSCERT), to equip the teachers with the latest skillsets to make classrooms interactive and interesting for the students.

Called the *Train the Trainer, a 21st Century Educator programme*, the project was launched in 2014–15 in partnership with an NGO Socrates Foundation for Enhanced Learning to usher in a paradigm shift in classroom learning through technology and innovative pedagogy, says Charu Mathur, Project Coordinator.

The first batch of 20 master trainers from nine schools underwent an interactive 40-hour training over five months from October 2014. Titled *Teachers helping Teachers — 21st Century Master Trainers Programme*, the master trainers further identified 50 teachers from two schools in under-privileged areas, mentored and trained them the latest teaching skills.

The programme trained more than 100 master trainers and 65 teachers from ZP schools in the subsequent years. With the approval from MSCERT, the club is planning to hold workshops for seven more batches to train 240 master trainers, who will in turn equip 30,000 teachers with latest teaching skills, thus covering all the 33 DIETs in the State.

Further, the club plans to train another 100 master trainers outside the

MSCERT to enable them to train 500 teachers. "We have approached a few corporates to fund this massive project," says the Club President Vineet Mathur.

For Jyoti Bodhe, Vice Principal, DES English Medium School, Pune, the "workshops are an eyeopener. It helps us think out-of-the-box with new concepts and ideas."

The most valuable outcome of the workshop is the use of technology for teaching, the learning process and skills to be inculcated in both students and teachers, says Poorna Vidwan, Principal, New India School, Pune.

A report listing the advantages of the programme was sent to the Principal Secretary, School Education and Sports Department, by the MSCERT Director who commented the workshop helps to implement the State's flagship project *Pragat Shaikshanik Maharashtra* that aims to ensure that students achieve proficiency in a set of academic parameters. ■

A story-telling session for interactive classrooms.



Get the credit you deserve

Rasheeda Bhagat

INPPC Chair
Deepak Kapur



In an impassioned plea to Rotarians across India to embrace the government's Universal Immunisation programme to rid India of diseases such as measles, rubella, TB etc, INPPC Chair Deepak Kapur said, "For eight decades, from 1905 till the mid-1980s, Rotarians built toilets, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, sheltered the homeless, reached medicines to the sick and promoted world peace, but the local Rotary club was still called the *Roti club*. Then towards the end of the 1980s came PolioPlus and suddenly the man on the street discovered what Rotary was all about. He recognised the

Rotary wheel, and we got esteem, credibility, all thanks to PolioPlus. Today the United Nations proudly calls Rotary its partner, and Bill Gates insists on meeting Rotarians whenever he comes to India, courtesy PolioPlus."

Kapur then posed a query to the assembled Rotarians: "Do you know how difficult it was to meet the district magistrate? Today Rotarians are welcome in the office of the Joint Secretary or Secretary, and even ministers. Today Rotarians can shake hands with Amitabh Bachchan, Sachin Tendulkar and many other celebrities from Bollywood not because of our irresistible appeal but because of PolioPlus."

Despite all this, the most common refrain from Rotarians was that Rotary wasn't being given credit for eradicating polio from India. "And that we don't get recognition. This is not true; of course, we don't get credit in every newspaper or TV story. Why? Because we don't work for that recognition; Do we send out press releases? No polio case in India for seven years is a big story, it is such a big story that everybody is claiming a role in making India polio-free."

Kapur urged the assembled Rotary leaders from various districts to "narrate how Rotary transformed yesterday's impossible into today's inevitable, how it



made polio eradication into a people's movement and raised mega funds to make this dream possible. ₹10,000 crore raised by Rotarians through direct contribution and ₹44,000 crore through Rotary's advocacy have gone into the PolioPlus programme."

The Rotarians should also talk about the following:

- The involvement of corporates, and the \$12 million that Rajashree Birla has given.
- Rotary's advocacy with political leaders, bureaucrats, religious leaders.
- Rotary transformed polio eradication into a movement by the people and convinced vacillating leaders on the

need for supplementary immunisation.

- Rotary promoted the concept of NIDs and sub NIDs and blew the lid off the health workers fudging figures.
- Rotary pioneered the concept of small giveaways — balls and whistles — to children to attract them to the booths.
- Rotary acted as a bridge between the Centre and the States when they did not see eye to eye.
- Rotary transported the vaccine by rail, road, camel and even by boat.
- Rotary's ulema committee busted myths and helped overcome resistance.
- Write letters to editor and send short articles for magazines.
- Interact with local surveillance officers.
- Connect with the local politicians or MLAs; invite them to inaugurate Rotary polio booths.
- Have you ever asked a local FM channel to carry polio eradication messages?
- Do your clubs use social media to promote polio eradication?
- Have you spoken about polio eradication in schools, colleges, and put *End Polio Now* stickers on your cars?

No polio case in India for 7 years is a big story, it is such a big story that everybody is claiming a role in making India polio-free.

We don't get credit in every newspaper or TV story. Because we don't work for that recognition.

- Have you thought of *End Polio Now* message ring tones on your mobiles?
- Has your district paid for ads on polio eradication in the media?

If the answer to all these questions is 'yes', "then you are entitled to shout at every Institute, district or club meets that Rotary gets no credit for eradicating polio from India. Not otherwise. Do all this and see if Rotary gets a mention. Polio brought for Rotary both esteem and fame and commitment, created enthusiasm and energy among Rotarians and helped India develop one of the finest health infrastructures in the world. What a shame it would be if the potential of this infrastructure and enthusiasm was to die. Rotary in India has decided this won't be allowed to happen. We will leverage this infrastructure and enthusiasm to help our government get rid of measles and rubella," said Kapur.

"We have to make what was called in the olden days a carbon copy. In these days of Whatsapp, all you have to do is press 'Control-C' and 'Control-V' or copy and paste or fwd. All the tried and tested strategies for polio can be used for MR immunisation. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. If we don't do this, it would be a shame," he concluded. ■

Connecting over

Jaishree

The excitement and energy in the WinS Target Challenge programme in India is so high that “our model is being used in countries outside the pilot such as Mexico, Philippines and Uganda. More recently, RIPE Barry Rassin appreciated the group handwashing demonstrated by students when he visited some schools here,” said TRF Trustee and RI’s WinS Committee Chair Sushil Gupta, presiding over a breakout session titled, *Sharing success, overcoming challenges and finding partners*, at the Toronto Convention.

He stressed on bringing behavioural change in communities with children as ‘agents of change’ to make a lasting impact of the sanitation programme. “We must impress upon people that the toilets and handwashing practice are for their own good.

Healthy families mean fewer visits to hospitals.”

The five pilot countries — India, Kenya, Honduras, Belize and Guatemala — are always looking for partners and donors to implement the WASH projects in their schools. So a funding mechanism for a two-phase grant has been approved by TRF Trustees, he said. Of the 46 applications received by TRF, four were successful, with a total of \$1.5 million being given during the year.

PDG Ganesh Bhat, giving an update on WinS in India, said that with the introduction of toilets and handwash stations in rural schools, children are insisting upon such hygienic practices at their homes too. Teachers also counsel parents during the PTA meets on sanitation and hygiene and distribute sanitary napkins and soaps. He reiterated the need for ensuring a continuous water supply for the toilets and handwash facilities. Bhat highlighted an instance

where a school put up a huge board with the words, ‘Thank you, Rotary’ on its campus, after the inauguration of the toilet blocks there. This certainly promoted Rotary’s public image.

The session explored the conditions prevailing in other countries too. In Honduras, for instance, PDG Carlos Flores pointed out that shortage of water, poor sanitary modules, lack of awareness on hygiene issues and absence of cleaning supplies hamper the WinS programme. Whereas in Santa Barbara, the synergy between the school administration and parents has resulted in the programme’s success.

An appeal for help

Mariam Wanqui, President of RC Kenya, said that in Kenya, resources do not reach in time to schools as primary education is free. Elections further delay any action on the sanitation front. “When politicians are contesting for posts, finance is diverted



breakouts

there, and infrastructure facilities suffer.” Schools are overcrowded and the country ranks No 5 in diseases related to water and sanitation. Mariam made an appeal saying that the District 9212, comprising Kenya, Eritrea, Ethiopia and South Sudan, “badly needs help from clubs and corporates. We want to build better water facilities. Our underground water is rich in fluoride and is unsafe for children.”

In Guatemala, corporates are keen on working with Rotary, particularly for WASH projects, said Rtn Diego Furlan.

When a delegate from Bangladesh requested that his country be included in the pilot, Gupta said this project will expire in 2020. “But your clubs can apply for a global grant and do the project. WASH projects are not limited to pilot countries alone,” he said, and added that WASRAG (Water and Sanitation Rotary Action Group) provides the necessary guidance to implement a WinS programme.

Concluding the session, he said, “I am happy at the interest this programme has generated. It is rarely that we see the room so full in a breakout session!”

Garnering CSR funds

The session titled *CSR and its impact on Fund development*, moderated by PDG Vinay Kulkarni, gave an insight into attracting corporates to partner with Rotary to support community projects with their CSR funds.

Session Chair Sushil Gupta encouraged clubs to explore projects taking into consideration the environment and social factors. “Five of Rotary’s six Areas of Focus are included in the CSR policy of India. So identify programmes that will interest corporates to fulfill their CSR goals and help them get better mileage in society,” he urged.

PDG Sharat Chandra, D 3110, and Rakesh Bhargava, the District CSR Chair of D 3131, shared their success stories in attracting corporates to partner with their clubs. While D 3110 had struck a partnership with RDS Project Limited to set up a cath lab in Firozabad in Uttar Pradesh with CSR contribution of \$175,000,

D 3131 had implemented five projects with corporate partnership worth \$300,000, with Gestamp partnering twice, since 2016–17 and Tata Technologies spearheading their e-learning programmes in schools.

Show them what their money can do

Sharing the success strategy, Chandra said that he first reached out to Rotarians who owned a company or were connected with one in some way and impressed upon Rotary’s transformative work to few other corporates. “One corporate has doubled its contribution to a Rotary project in two years and another company has promised to repeat their contribution when we identify another good project.” Transparency is of utmost importance. Corporate heads must know how their money is being used, he warned. “We gave a clear picture to RDS Project on where and for whom their money was going. And during the course of the work, we invited the CEO Madanlal Goyal to accompany us to the hospital site where he could see for himself what huge difference his money can make for the heart patients in the village,” he said.



TRF Trustee and WinS Committee Chair Sushil Gupta addressing a session on WinS in the presence of (from L) PDG Carlos Flores (D 4250), Mariam Wanqui, PDG Ganesh Bhat and Mary Jo Jean-Francois, RI's Area of Focus Manager (Basic Education and Literacy) and WinS Target Challenge Co-manager.



Study the corporate world

Bhargava, sharing his lessons of how D 3131 bagged CSR partnerships, said that his team studied the published data on how each company spent its CSR money and those that had a CSR policy in place. What kind of projects were they interested in; did they have their own Foundation/Trust to implement projects or was it through their internal department. Most medium-sized companies and multinational companies did not have in-house departments to carry out their CSR projects. “We targeted companies that outsourced their projects to NGOs and impressed upon them about Rotary’s pan-India reach, our depth and planning, clear financials and control over expenses. We told them we bring leadership and skillsets and there cannot be a better partner.”

We must impress upon people that the toilets and handwashing practice are for their own good. Healthy families mean fewer visits to hospitals.

Sushil Gupta
TRF Trustee and
RI WinS Committee Chair

Anubhav Kapoor, Tata Technologies' Corporate Sustainability Head, listening to these “strategies”, said in a lighter vein, “I didn’t know that there was a marketing strategy behind all this. I thought Rotarians are simple, straight-forward people.” Complimenting the Rotarians of D 3131 he said, “I am very happy to be associated with Rotary. Rotarians are wonderful people who know what they are doing and how to go about the job. Your vast experience in various fields make you experts in knowing what a community needs and how you can fulfil them.”

He added that most of the corporates do not enter the social sector directly. About 65 per cent of them entrust the job to NGOs such as Rotary. “If Rotary comes up with more ideas and workable solutions, we will be ready to work with you,” he said, adding that his company is keen on implementing educational projects in 16 other countries across the world.

To a question on what if a company pulls out from a project, Gupta clarified that there must be a clear agreement between TRF and the corporate stating the details of the project, duration and how the money will be utilised.

TRF Trustee Bryn Styles and PDG Louis A Johnson shed light on the prospects of CSR in Canada and Australia. Vinod Bansal, the Vice Chair for the Rotary-CSR partnership in India, also provided some inputs on CSR practices world over.

Other interesting breakouts

A session for Rotary doctors explored possibilities of them extending their services to provide healthcare and save lives across the world. Rtn Dr S Sunder of RC Mambalam, D 3232, shared information about his club’s ‘Walk India’ project that puts thousands of orthopaedically-challenged people in Tamil Nadu back on their feet with artificial limbs, reaching out to them at their doorsteps.

PDG Dr N Subramanian, D 3011, spoke about the club foot challenge in India. “Many people in villages are still unaware that club foot is curable. They will not bring their children to the doctor as there is a misconstrued fear of the treatment being major and expensive.” District 3011 is partnering with CURE International India in setting up CURE clinics in hospitals and training orthopaedicians to correct club foot deformity in children across India.

Rotary fellowship groups and their activities were discussed in the session, *Fellowships: the hidden gem of Rotary*. “Whatever be your interest, you can connect with a fellow Rotarian who follows a similar passion and serve humanity through your common interest,” said Madhumita Bishnu, RC Calcutta South, D 3291. From music-lovers, photographers and magicians to lawyers, these groups are a fun way to make friends, participate in projects and share the enthusiasm for what you love, she added.

Pictures by Jaishree

Team Rotary News

Lack of basic facilities led to a gradual decline in the number of students from 600 in the 1960s to just below 150 at the Upper Primary School in Jungle Kauria district of Gorakhpur, UP. This made RC Gorakhpur, D 3120, to adopt it for its Happy Schools project.

Children used to sit on the floor in their classrooms which had neither lights nor fans. As it did not have a toilet, parents shifted their wards to other schools. “But the teachers were confident that if proper facilities were provided the school can regain its past status with children returning,” said Mahabir Prasad Kandoi, the Club Secretary.

Soon, when the Rotarians equipped the classrooms with desks and benches and fitted ceiling fans, student strength climbed to 190.



Girls enjoying the new seating facility in school.

Now in the second stage of the project, gender-segregated toilets and a handwash station, with sufficient water supply are being provided in

the school. “The remaining provision under the Happy School project will be completed very soon,” said Kandoi.■

Rotary installs plastic shredder at temple



Rotary Club of Nasik Grapecity, D 3030, has installed a plastic bottle crushing machine near Goddess Saptashrungi temple at Vani, 60 km from Nashik. Located in the middle of seven hills, the temple attracts thousands of devotees through the year and keeping the surroundings plastic-free is a herculean task, says Jyotika Pai, former secretary of the club.

The club bought the crushing machine for ₹60,000 from a private firm in Delhi. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis visited the temple site and was happy to see the plastic crushing machine installed by the club. “He was happy to note that we

are taking steps to preserve the environment,” she says.

With a capacity to hold 100 one-litre plastic bottles and a weight of 100 kg, the crushing unit can shred 15–20 bottles an hour under a power supply of 220 volts. “The temple officials are happy that they are now able to maintain the premises litter-free and clean,” says Alka Singh, IPP of the club. The shredded plastic will be sent for recycling by the temple authorities. Moreover, the equipment has become an attraction with villagers who are making full use of the facility.■

Moradabad Rotarians spruce up local schools...

Rasheeda Bhagat

In the brass city of Moradabad, Rotary clubs are enthusiastically taking up converting ordinary schools into happy ones.

The sleepy town of Fatehpur Bishnoi, about 22 km from Moradabad, the brass city of Uttar Pradesh, has suddenly sprung to life. Passersby on the street where the Prathmic Vidyalalya and a branch of Pratham Bank are located are surprised to find nice carry bags, with the Rotary name and logo displayed prominently, being handed out... not the usual polythene ones, but sturdy bags made of cloth and fibre.

The Rotarians from RC Moradabad Heritage, RI District

We have carried out WinS in this school; the toilets have been refurbished, there is water supply. We conduct yoga classes, do periodic health check-up.

PDG Akhilesh Kothiwal



3100, have taken seriously the announcement made by the UP government the previous week banning the use of polythene bags, and soon a small crowd gathers — of children, vegetable vendors and others, to collect these bags.

I am in Moradabad on an invitation from PDG Akhilesh Kothiwal, who is a member of this club and to keep my promise of initiating coverage in hitherto

uncovered regions. It's a hot and sultry day and the Rotarians take me straight from the Delhi airport and after a five-hour drive, to the primary school which educates about 100 students. Here the club has implemented the WASH in Schools or WinS project and Madhuri Gupta, who is to be installed club president that evening, has brought for the students some soap and hand towels donated by her club.

Cloth replaces polythene bags

As she takes the children to the hand pump and rehearses with them one more time how they should wash their hands, with a jingle, Kothiwal explains that the club has adopted this primary school for the last three years. "We have carried out all the components of WinS in this school; the toilets have been refurbished, there is water supply. We conduct yoga classes, do periodic health





Rotarians of RC Moradabad Heritage distribute eco-friendly bags to replace polythene bags.

check-up, distribute uniforms and books and have now given an e-learning kit and one computer.”

But the computer is yet to be installed because of lack of electricity. This project was initiated, he adds, when Devakinandan Jain was the club president in 2014–15, and till now the club has spent ₹1.5 lakh. The

club proposes to distribute three more e-learning kits.

Pratham Bank Chairman Rama Naik, who inaugurated the “keep the city polythene-free” campaign with his bank donating 20,000 cloth bags being distributed, says the bank which lends mainly to the agri sector and SMEs, has 413 branches in UP alone. “In partnership with

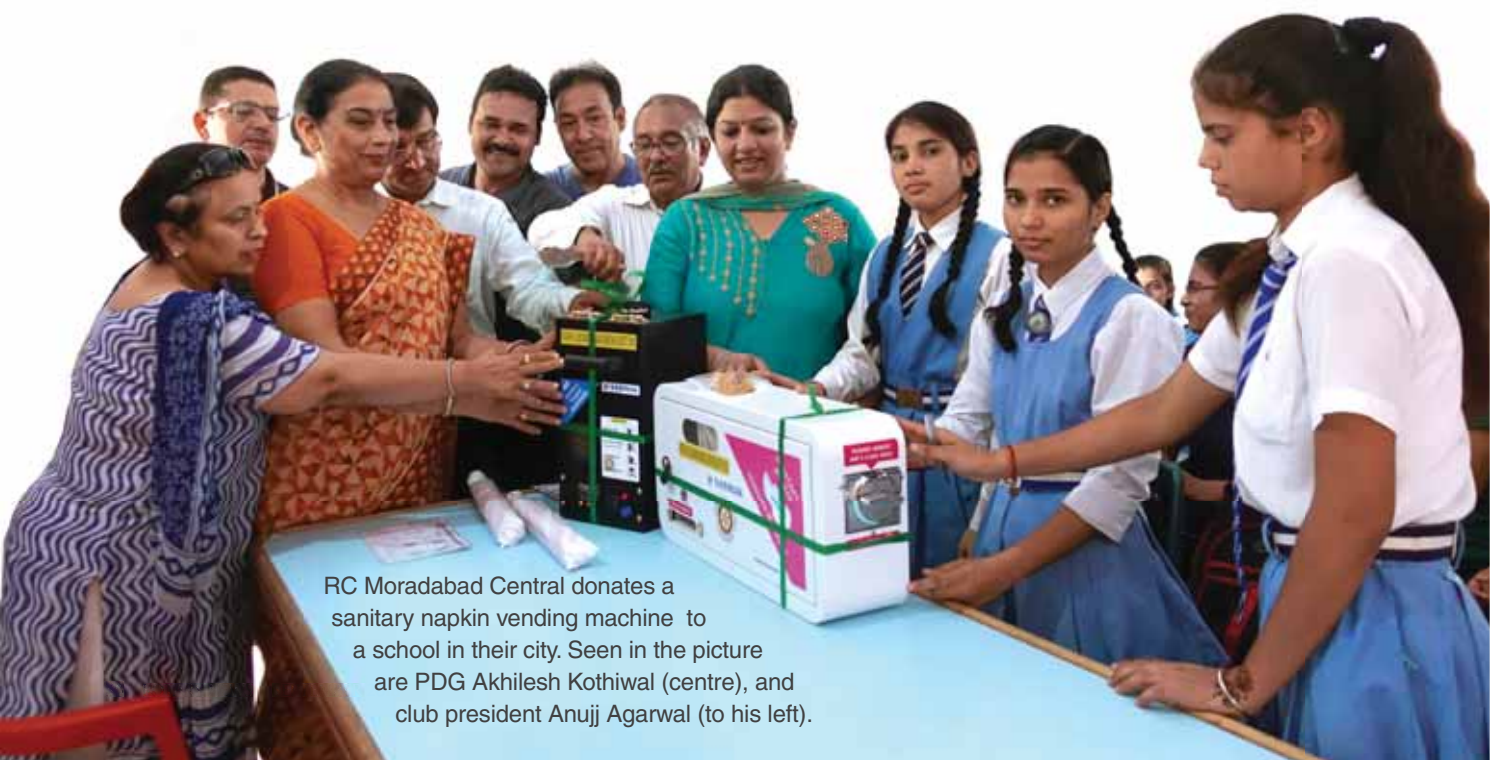
Rotary we are going to make this town polythene-free and our solar energy drive, which we started 10 years ago, had resulted in over 60 of our branches being run only on solar energy. This branch is also a solar energy branch.”

Kothiwal confirms that the bank has already sanctioned a solar system for the primary school adopted by Rotary.

Hygiene and sanitation

Club President Madhuri says, “I want to ensure that these children remain healthy and the first step is proper handwashing, hygiene and sanitation. We’re going to ask the school authorities what more these children need. If they don’t have shoes, particularly during the bitter cold winter months, we will make those available to them. I gave each child two napkins today and asked them to bring one with them to school every day.”

The next day I visit in Moradabad, the Adarsh Nagar Primary School, which had a very modest two room building, with passable hygiene and sanitation



RC Moradabad Central donates a sanitary napkin vending machine to a school in their city. Seen in the picture are PDG Akhilesh Kothiwal (centre), and club president Anuj Agarwal (to his left).



President of RC Moradabad Heritage Madhuri Gupta teaches children the right way of washing hands.

facilities. It is located in one of the poorer areas of the city and its 80 students — both boys and girls — are mostly children “of the poorest of the poor... mostly domestic servants, labourers, etc,” says former club president Tilottama Kothiwala. While this club will start implementing WinS in this school, and promise to make it shipshape in a year’s time, the club is also associated with the much more impressive secondary school on the way to Chandausi, where the Rotarians have put up

I want to ensure that these children remain healthy; the first step is proper handwashing, hygiene and sanitation. If they need shoes, we will get them.

Madhuri Gupta
RC Moradabad Heritage President

a water tank, and implemented a drinking water project and ensured hygiene and sanitation under WinS guidelines. In the next phase, the club is also going to put up a dispenser for sanitary napkins.

That the Rotarians of Moradabad have taken to their hearts the WinS programme is obvious when I visit another school — Ram Chandra Sharma Kanya Intercollege, which offers education till Class 12 to 750 girls. This school has been adopted by RC Moradabad Central. Its President, Anuj Agarwal, insists I “inaugurate” a sanitary pad vending machine.

Spanking clean school

At this impressive and spanking clean school, RCM Central has already implemented WinS. “During my year as president, whatever help we can render to make this school a clean and hygienic one, will be given. Today we gave them a sanitary vending machine. They have

now asked for an RO drinking water purifier and next week we will install an RO machine.”

As promised, he confirmed that the RO machine has already been installed!

Agarwal adds that the UP government has a scheme called 1090 in which girls are empowered as *power angels* “to make them competent in self-defence. We are in discussion with the IG as we want to train at least 100 girls in the art of self-defence.”

These girls, in turn will train others; a ‘power angel’ is supposed to be as competent and effective as a police officer. Principal Bharati Agarwal thanks RCM Central and Rotary for becoming “angels” for her school. “If you see the campus shining and so neat and clean, it is thanks to Rotary,” she says.

Pictures by Rasheeda Bhagat

Designed by Krishnapratheesh

CHUNA POSES GREAT DANGER TO THE EYE

Jaishree



Did you know *chuna* (slaked lime) that is used to spice up betel leaves has caused blindness in about 2,000 children in the last ten years? The Ocular Surface and Keratoprosthesis conference organised recently by Sankara Nethralaya in Chennai highlighted the extensive damage caused by the *chuna* powder to the eye.

Children are most susceptible to such accidents as they are the ones who are usually sent out to buy the *chuna* packet. The powder is sold in flimsy polythene packets for ₹1 at petty shops. The packet often breaks open when children play with it on their way home and the powder flies into their eyes. Despite a series of surgeries, vision is not restored to normalcy in most children, said Dr Geetha Iyer, senior consultant at Sankara

Nethralaya and organising secretary of the conference.

Lime, which is high on alkalinity, disturbs the acid-alkali equilibrium. The chemicals erode the surface layer of the eye and affect the cornea, lens and the optic nerve. Most of the damage is done by the time the victim reaches a hospital. Huge amounts of water fail to flush out the lime from the eye due to its poor solubility in water. "All this is done in an operation theatre under general anaesthesia. We then put an amniotic membrane and wait for it to heal. Some may require up to four surgeries just for primary healing of the wound. Yet only partial restoration of vision happens," she explained, adding that an injury such as this can derail a family. It can disrupt schooling, livelihood and can have a lifelong psychosocial and cosmetic impact.

Appeal to the government

Ophthalmologists representing the All India Ophthalmological Society, the Cornea Society of India and hospitals such as the LV Prasad Eye Hospitals, Hyderabad; Arvind Eye Hospitals, Madurai; and AIIMS, Delhi; and Rotary Club of Guindy, appealed for a ban on sale of *chuna* powder in plastic packets to the Vice President of India M Venkaiah Naidu, who presided over the conference. The appeal also urged the government to restrict sale of hydrochloric, sulphuric, nitric and carboric acids, which are being used to attack women, because the damage to the eye in acid victims is also equally severe and may result in a lifetime of blindness if not treated effectively.

Congratulating the team of doctors for their expertise in eyecare services, Naidu remarked that he was also a patient of Sankara Nethralaya.



Vice President of India Venkaiah Naidu, Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit, State Health Minister Vijay Bhasker, Fisheries Minister D Jayakumar with Dr SS Badrinath, Chairman Emeritus - Sankara Nethralaya at the Conference in Chennai.

“Dr Prema Padmanabhan has treated me for cataract few years ago; thanks to her and the team, my eyesight is good.” He commended Dr SS Badrinath, Chairman emeritus of Sankara Nethralaya, for providing eyecare free of cost to the poor, saying that his initials ‘S S’ stand for ‘Service to Society’.

The Vice President promised “to take the appeal of the ophthalmologists to Parliament and all concerned authorities and ensure safer packaging of *chuna* and to regulate sale of acids for household purposes.” He condemned the act of throwing acid as vengeful and atrocious.

Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit, State Health Minister Vijay Bhasker and Fisheries Minister D Jayakumar were also present at the event.

Rotary’s role

Rotary Club of Guindy, D 3232, supports the Dr G Seethalakshmi Memorial Clinic for Ocular Surface Disorders in Sankara Nethralaya and has provided sophisticated equipment and consumables worth \$48,500 through a global grant with RCs Alorstar and Penang, D 3300, Malaysia, and TRF. The clinic specialises in the treatment of ailments caused by chemical substances such as *chuna* and acids. It is one of the two hospitals in India which provides highly specialised treatment called the OOKP (Osteo-odonto-keratoprosthesis) that uses a patient’s own tooth in the eye to restore vision in most severe cases of corneal and ocular surface disorders.

“We have a long and continuous association with the hospital,” said L Neelakantan, a past president of the club. A global grant with RC Niles

Fremont, D 9170, California, and TRF has facilitated the club with \$97,500 to sponsor surgeries for 800 eye patients. The hospital operates a mobile surgery unit that travels to the peripheries of Chennai and perform surgeries at the doorsteps of the villagers.

Treatment is provided free for the poor at the hospital which “wants to associate with other Rotary clubs too to support its endeavour in extending eyecare for the underprivileged,” he said.

A one-minute video creating awareness on how *chuna* can blind the eye was sponsored by the club and was released at the conference. An advertisement sponsored by the club was also promoted in the print media across the State to create awareness about the harmful effects of *chuna* and acids on the eye. ■

RC Chandausi nurtures a 60-year-old eye hospital

Rasheeda Bhagat

It says a lot about the dedication of a group of Rotarians from a club if they have nurtured a project for 60 long years... actually from the very year their club was chartered. Here is the incredible story from a small place like Chandausi, about 40 km from Moradabad in UP, where the Rotary Club of Chandausi, chartered in 1958, started its eye hospital project the same year.

Sixty years later, what began as a small eye facility, has blossomed into a multi-speciality hospital, which apart from providing specialised eye care, including retina surgery, also offers medical services in pathology, physiotherapy, skin ailments, etc. Describing their early days, past

president of the club Hari Shankar Agarwal says the facility — started on a 5 acre-land donated by a resident Raj Dulari Devi, in memory of her late husband Sundarlal, a local jeweller — began with bimonthly services in association with the Aligarh Eye Hospital, about 11 km away. “In those days, patients used to come from nearby places for their eye problems,” he says, walking me around a strikingly clean, posh and huge hospital, which now attracts patients from a radius of 100 sq km... from the districts of Bareilly, Bulandshahr, Banayu, Sambhal, etc.” The Institute has been named after Sundarlal.

After a couple of years, eye consultation was given once a week,

and after 1980 it commenced a daily consultation and treatment service. But the eye surgeons still came from outside. Now this eye institute has four permanent eye surgeons; for the other medical services it offers, such as skin treatment, visiting doctors come from Surat and treatment is available for the weaker sections for skin grafting, cosmetic surgery and other skin ailments too.

In eye care, says Anil Kumar Agarwal, President of the club, the majority of cases pertain to cataract surgery; “we do 6,000 cataract operations a year and the surgery is done using the latest technology — phacoemulsification. (The cataract is emulsified into two or four pieces



Patients at the Rotary Sundarlal Eye Hospital, Chandausi.

and then aspirated out of the eye through suction). At the OPD, a whopping number of 65,000 patients are seen every year.

3 crore annual budget

Past president of the club Satish Chand Gupta adds that from last year, retina consultation and surgery have been started at this eye hospital and a retina specialist comes from Delhi every week. “About 60 per cent of the patients who get care at this hospital are poor and we give them subsidised treatment. For IOL (intraocular lens) for cataract patients we charge between ₹2,600 to 26,000, depending on the patient’s capacity to pay.”

Not one patient coming here for treatment has medical insurance, he adds. For this iconic project of D 3110, the annual budget is ₹3 crore, and the profit is used to upgrade the equipment at the institute or invested in the Rotary Institute of Management, another important project this club has undertaken.

He says the club has never approached The Rotary Foundation

Only ₹50 is charged to every outpatient, and if a poor person requiring surgery contacts any of us, we deposit the money out of our pockets and tell the doctors: Please don’t send anybody out without treatment.

Satish Chand Gupta

Past President, RC Chandausi



for any funds or attempted global grants, “because we never felt any need for it.”

What about CSR funds; do they have plans to involve corporates, I ask the Rotarians from the club who take me to the hospital. In unison, they say, “Not required; money is never a problem.”

Small wonder then that the charitable arm of the club that does these projects has a fixed deposit of ₹5 crore! And the value of the land they own is worth more than ₹5 crore. One of the members makes it clear that “not a single paise from the profit we make at the hospital or the management institute is used for club activities, meetings or fellowship.”

I even hear a comment that so absorbed are the club members in giving their time, energy and expertise to these two iconic projects that this 30-member club is not really interested in getting any new members.

Quality education made affordable

Giving details on the management institute, which is again located on a sprawling, neatly turned out campus of around seven acres, Gupta, who is this year the club secretary, says it was started in 2008 and offers to about 700 students courses such as B Ed, BSc, BBA, BCA, B Com and BA. It is heartening to know that 300 of the 700 students are girls, and some campus recruitment also takes place here. “We have built this institute on land that we bought for ₹50 lakh and the money for that was raised by our members.”

Aspirants for higher education through the Rotary Institute from the surrounding areas and the deserving poor are given a fee waiver. Anyway, the tuition fee is nominal at between ₹5,000 and ₹25,000 a year.

On future plans for the eye institute, Dinesh Agarwal, past president and secretary of the eye institute, says, “We have already started an Institute of Optometry



**Eye examination
being conducted.**

Not a single paise from the profit we make at the hospital or the management institute is used for club activities, meetings or fellowship.

last year and are offering a two-year optometry course. As far as eye care is concerned, we want to take it to the best level we can. Money will never be a constraint for us.”

Gupta proudly adds, “This is the only eye hospital in this region that sees over 200 outpatients a day, and doctors in this region agree that such a big OP turnout is not seen anywhere else in this area. Many people ask me what is this hospital like and I

tell them unless you come and see it for yourself, you can’t even imagine that such a modern and sparklingly clean hospital can exist in a place like Chandausi!”

“Only ₹50 is charged to every outpatient, and if a poor person requiring surgery contacts any of us, we deposit the money out of our pockets and tell the doctors: Please don’t send anybody out without treatment.”

“Even in our management institute, we charge ₹25,000 annual fee only for BBA and BCA courses. For B Com, the fee is only ₹6,000, for B Sc ₹5,000 and BA ₹4,000. Here too, many Rotarians sponsor deserving students’ education.”

I leave Chandausi totally in awe of the amazing humanitarian service done by this small club of just 30 members. What they are

doing in healthcare in a State like UP is commendable enough. But what is even more commendable is the quality of education on offer at the Rotary management institute. Particularly when you consider that at a nearby government college, classes have not been held for the B Com course for over a decade. But admissions take place; the students fend for themselves, appear for exams and pass out!

On the dedication of these Rotarians, PDG Akhilesh Kotiwal comments: “Even though our district was undistricted for over one year, the Rotarians of RC Chandausi continued with both their projects with the same amount of passion and dedication, and held regular polio camps with the help of Rotarian doctors.”

Pictures by Rasheeda Bhagat

Message from RI South Asia Office

Rotary International South Asia Office, Pullman / Novotel Commercial Tower,
First Floor, Asset No 2, Hospitality District, Aerocity (Near IGI Airport), New Delhi 110037

Rotary year 2017–18 highlights

India retained its No 2 position amongst the top giving countries worldwide with total contribution of \$19.1 million (unaudited figure)

- D-3141 is No 2 worldwide in terms of total giving.
- Seven districts crossed \$1 million-mark in total contribution.
- 15 new AKS members were added.
- 69 per cent clubs contributed to The Rotary Foundation.
- 100 per cent club participation in contribution from Districts 3080, 3131, 3132 and 3212.
- 535 new Major Donors (including level change) have been added to the overall list.

- 22 per cent of the members from India contributed. D 3060 lead with 64 per cent donor count followed by D 3000 (52%) and D 3142 (51%).

Top 5 Giving Clubs from India

Zone	District	Club Name	2017–18 Total Contribution
5	3231	Gudiyatham, Tamil Nadu	\$457,065.19
6A	3292	Central Butwal, Nepal	\$301,000.00
4	3054	Mehsana, Gujarat	\$244,384.67
4	3141	Bombay North, Maharashtra	\$243,779.31
4	3141	Mumbai Downtown Sea Land, Maharashtra	\$232,504.46

How to host a Rotary Day



RI President Barry Rassin has challenged clubs and Rotarians to *Be the Inspiration* in 2018–19. One of the ways President

Rassin would like to see clubs do this is by hosting a Rotary Day. Any club, big or small, can host a Rotary Day, and several clubs can combine to share ideas, talent and resources. For ideas, please refer <http://www.rotaryleader-en.org/rotaryleader-en/en201807?pg=3#pg3>

Hamburg Convention

Register for the 2019 Rotary Convention in Hamburg, Germany, by December 15, 2018 and save. Registration link: <http://www.riconvention.org/en/hamburg/register>

Register in My Rotary

Club officers are encouraged to register on *My Rotary* to access

member resources, register for the Rotary convention and manage email subscriptions. Club leaders can also:

- Set club goals and report achievements via Rotary Club Central
- Update club membership records and club meeting day or time
- Submit next year's officers list by December 31

- Update club member email addresses online
- Search the online Official Directory.

Rotary-CSR partnership

The Rotary Foundation has received \$1.4 million CSR funds from India since October 2016.

Current Corporate Donors



Vajpayee...

orator, economic reformer, affable politician



Shakti Sinha

It was an irony of fate that a communicator par excellence as Atal Bihari Vajpayee had to spend almost the last decade of his life in virtual silence. If irony has a macabre element, this was it. Fortunately for Atalji, as he was

popularly known, history and succeeding generations would remember him for his myriad achievements. And for his eloquence. It was often said that the Goddess Saraswati had stationed herself on his tongue because what he spoke was genuine wisdom and not just fine words.

The conventional opinion about him is that he was a conciliator, which he was, but that's not the full picture. On key issues, once he had come to a conclusion, there was no going back. His infinite capacity was to listen, try and understand different points of view and try and



With Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Also seen in the picture (from R) Jaswant Singh, Sartaj Aziz and Mushahid Hussain.

arrive at a consensus, not at the lowest common denominator. This meant that even junior officers in the course of official briefing could speak up. Because he used to be so absorbed in listening, he gave the impression that he had wandered off. But ever so often, he would ask for a clarification, linking something said to an earlier statement. That meant that no loose statements could be made.

For me, it was doubly difficult as I had to also pay close attention as he would sometime wonder why X had said Y! The mind, ever alert, was sifting information, analysing it and coming to a conclusion. It was normally not instantaneous, but once a decision was made, there was no going back. I remember after the Kargil war he told Yashwant Sinha, the then Finance Minister, to go ahead with taking tough

He was generous and far sighted. When Mulayam Singh as Defence Minister announced the successful conclusion of the Sukhoi deal, Atalji broke parliamentary tradition and praised the government, surprising everyone.



With L K Advani.

decisions, if required, to pay for the war. He was clear that people would understand, if a case was made out.

The empathy factor

I would attribute part of his success as a statesman to the empathy factor. Once, when advised to put greater pressure on Nawaz Sharif, his reply was classic — put yourself in Nawaz Sharif's shoes. There was silence and the issue was not raised again.

To give a further example of his capacity for empathy, once there was a stormy discussion in Parliament over Deve Gowda's decision to hike the price of urea or some other fertiliser. Atalji's reaction was classic. Though he himself had spoken against the hike, he told me in private that

Deve Gowda would not roll back the hike despite the near universal demand. He recognised Deve Gowda's obstinacy, but more than that revealed his astute understanding that the latter was asserting his leadership over his coalition partners.

But he was also very generous and far-sighted. When, during the tenure of the same government, Mulayam Singh as Defence Minister made a statement in the Lok Sabha about the successful conclusion of the Sukhoi deal, he got up, broke parliamentary tradition and praised the government for concluding the deal, which was in the national interest. This praise took not just the members but also the minister by surprise. I remember that a senior BJP parliamentarian

expressed surprise, even bewilderment, to me as to why Atalji had to praise Mulayam Singh's actions! The answer, I guess, was that some things were above party politics.

Economic reformer

After Atalji formed the government in 1998, we had a series of meetings on what should be the priorities of the government on the economy front. India was then facing the adverse effect of the Asian crisis and something concrete had to be done. While we struggled and were thinking of some big announcement that would catch the national imagination, he felt that better roads were the need of the hour.

We were five or six in the room, some with much greater exposure

to economics, but he was the one who recognised the importance of roads as the minimum requirement for solid economic development. That led to the launching of the Golden Quadrilateral and the North-South East-West national highway development programme. Later, the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana was added to it so that the rural areas did not get left out of the connectivity network. Today we take decent roads for granted and aspire for world-class access-controlled highways that are now coming up. This was unimaginable prior to 1998. This initiative's contribution to the Indian growth story cannot be over-estimated. At that meeting he resisted the populist impulse that we, the less-experienced, offered.

Pokhran blast

The attainment of India's nuclear status was something that he had long dreamed of, and managed



At Pokhran after the successful nuclear tests in 1998. Also in the picture: George Fernandes and former Indian President Abdul Kalam who was then Scientific Advisor to the Prime Minister.

Part of his success as a statesman is attributed to the empathy factor. Once, when advised to put greater pressure on Nawaz Sharif, his reply was classic — put yourself in Nawaz Sharif's shoes.

to succeed too. I remember clearly the tense waiting for the message to come from Pokhran. Adverse winds delayed the tests for a few hours. But when the call came, the room burst into whoops of joy and tears. These were senior leaders in charge of the country — Atalji, L K Advani, George Fernandes, Jaswant Singh, Pramod Mahajan and Brajesh Mishra. When calm settled, it was decided

to call the press. The late Pramod Mahajan scripted it perfectly. A single podium in the middle of the lawns with a national flag next to it. We prepared a short matter-of-fact announcement, Atalji, Pramod Mahajan, a few SPG men and I came out of the house and onto the verandah. The rest of us stayed back, Atalji strode to the podium and very solemnly announced

that India had carried out nuclear tests. It was a moment that he had been waiting for, at least since 1957.

The writer was private secretary to Prime Minister A B Vajpayee and is currently Director of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

Designed by
Krishnapratheesh

Allahabad Rotary celebrates milestone year

V Muthukumaran

A Special Postal Cover, along with a cancelled stamp bearing the Rotary Wheel, was released by the West Bengal Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi to commemorate the platinum jubilee year of Rotary Club of Allahabad, D 3120. Over the decades, the club had implemented several projects reaching out to the weaker sections of society.

Following a call given by renowned physician Dr Baijnath Vyas, the then President of RC Lucknow, Allahabad University Vice Chancellor Dr A N Jha convened a meeting that led to the formation of the club in April 1943. Charter President Justice Mohammad Ismail was assisted by Vice President G M Harper and Secretary Captain Bhagwat Dayal in the formative years of the club.

One of the notable projects, Rotary Viklang Kendra, was set up nearly two decades ago by a team led by Dr J B Banerjee to provide a range of services for the physically-challenged. Besides prosthetic fitting, the Kendra offers a whole range of rehabilitation services including physiotherapy for the beneficiaries who come from all over Uttar Pradesh. "In a day, it serves over 150 people," says Sanjeev Goel, former secretary of the club. However, four years back, after the demise of Banerjee, his family had formed a society to look after the Kendra.

Last year six eye camps were held in which over 120 rural patients were treated for cataract. Recently, two freezer-boxes costing ₹3 lakh were donated to preserve, free of cost, the mortal remains of the dead until cremation.

Rotary Traffic Park

A symbol of the club's pride, the Rotary Traffic Park in Allahabad will get a major facelift with the Allahabad Development Authority (ADA) infusing ₹25 crore-worth projects as part of upgrading the city's amenities for the upcoming Kumbh Mela. "A nullah (drainage) plot was developed into a beautiful park in 1972 by our club, at a cost of ₹67,000, to teach children traffic rules," says Goel.

Right now, ADA has taken possession of the four-acre park for building a new boundary wall, laying roads, installing solar lights, a modern signalling system and introducing a number of small motor cars for teaching safe driving for youngsters. Once the project is completed, the park will be handed back to the club. So far, the traffic park has trained thousands of schoolchildren on traffic rules, adds Goel. ■

West Bengal Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi (centre) at the platinum jubilee celebrations of RC Allahabad.



Ich bin ein **Hamburger**

Jenny Llakmani

Drop anchor in Germany's gateway to the world, where it's easy to feel like a local.

Walking through Hamburg's main train station on our first day in the city, my husband, Anton, spots a man sitting in a tiny bar enjoying a beer and a smoke. His peculiar garb — black corduroy jacket, vest and bell-bottom pants, along with a battered top hat — gives him away. He's one of Germany's *Wandergesellen*, a journeyman carpenter who, in a tradition that dates to the Middle Ages, travels the world for two or three years

carrying only a change of clothes, a few euros, and his skills.

Like us, he's just another visitor to Hamburg. A real person in a real city — a city, as we come to realise, that's the coolest place we never knew we wanted to visit.

In an age when every destination seems to be making itself over to please tourists, Hamburg steadfastly chooses to please itself. Undeniably authentic, the city greets visitors with a friendly *ahoy!* and then goes about

its business — and business *is* the business of Hamburg — leaving you to enjoy its many charms.

Situated on the Elbe River, the city's pathway to the North Sea, Hamburg — which will host the 2019 Rotary International Convention — is the third largest port in Europe, a thriving hub of global trade. Across the river from the colossal harbour is the inviting downtown, with bridges and canals that locals claim outnumber those of Amsterdam and Venice and a



picturesque lake that serves as the city's playground. As befits a *Marktplatz* for the world's goods, shopping abounds, as do options for entertainment. On Saturday nights, people of all ages converge on the Reeperbahn, the once notorious red-light district where, in the early 1960s, the Beatles became the Beatles. And jutting out into the river like a ship at full sail is the new Elbphilharmonie (the Elbphi for short), a brick and glass concert hall whose dramatic exterior and finely tuned interior proclaim Hamburg's intent to establish a serious performance heritage rivalling anything the continent might offer.

All of this in a city that's compact and easy to navigate on foot, by bike, on public transit and — maybe even especially — by boat.

Getting to know Hamburg's waterways is key to understanding what makes the city tick. Holger Knaack, co-chair of the convention's

Be our guest

Moin, moin is the traditional Hamburg way of saying hello, and the city's Rotarians are eager to greet you. The Hamburg HOC, chaired by Andreas von Möller and Holger Knaack, has planned cultural events for every night of the convention to show you the many sides of Hamburg and introduce you to local Rotarians. To learn more and buy tickets, visit ric2019.rotary.de/en

Saturday: Hamburg Rotarians will host a welcome party for 2,000 convention goers in the historic Hamburg Chamber of Commerce building in the heart of the city.

Sunday: The renowned National Youth Ballet, whose general director, John Neumeier, is celebrating both his 80th birthday and his 46th season with the State Opera of Hamburg ballet company next year, will perform for convention goers. (Balletomanes, take note: The 45th Hamburg Ballet Days begins shortly after the convention ends, on June 16.)

Monday: The HOC has reserved Hamburg's show-stopping new

landmark, the Elbphilharmonie, for two performances of classical music. Celebrated for its architecture as well as its acoustics, the building also offers breathtaking views of the city and its harbour.

Tuesday: Local clubs will organise host hospitality events. Experience German *Gastfreundschaft*!

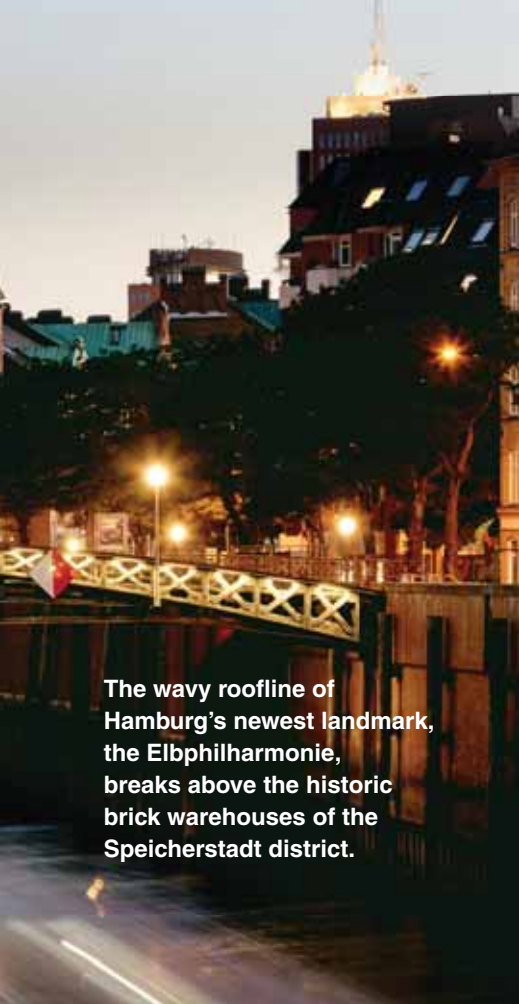
Public events: The HOC is also planning several free public events, including a 14-day bicycle tour that will take some 200 riders from Austria through Germany to Hamburg. Each day, the group will stop for an event to raise awareness of polio. Rotarians from around Hamburg can join the ride for the final 20 kilometers, arriving at the Rathaus (city hall) on the morning of Saturday, June 1. Riders need to register in advance, but everyone is welcome to come to the Rathaus square to celebrate the end of the ride. One of the city's major thoroughfares, meanwhile, will feature booths presenting Rotary's six areas of focus to the public.

Host Organisation Committee and a past governor of District 1940, puts it succinctly: "Hamburg is water, everywhere." Even the *Ham* in Hamburg comes from an Old Saxon word meaning "marshland".

The aqueous heart of this maritime city is the Alster, a lake created 800 years ago by damming a small river. It's divided into two parts: the Binnenalster, or Inner Alster, and the

larger Außenalster, or Outer Alster. The Elbe, meanwhile, is the city's pulsing lifeline: Though Hamburg lies 65 miles from the North Sea, here at the city's centre the river and its canals still rise and fall with the tides.

Along the Jungfernstieg, a stepped terrace that runs along the Inner Alster, Hamburg's wealthy merchants once promenaded with their unmarried daughters. It's still a chic showcase



The wavy roofline of Hamburg's newest landmark, the Elbphilharmonie, breaks above the historic brick warehouses of the Speicherstadt district.

of the city's inhabitants. Anton and I grab a table at one of the open-air cafés and watch the red-and-white tour boats that dock here before heading out to explore the Outer Alster, the city's canals, and the Elbe.

We opt to take the footpath around the Outer Alster. People are fishing, sunbathing, reading, walking dogs, biking and boating. With no private motorboats allowed, says Andreas von Möller, a Hamburg native whose roots here go back for generations, "sailing on the lake is a dream." PDG Von Möller, District 1890, serves as Knaack's fellow HOC chair.

A little more than four miles around, the lakeshore is dotted with cafés and restaurants. At the Alsterperle, a self-service café housed in a former public toilet — far more appealing than it sounds — we pull out our map to plot our next move. The lady sharing our table asks where we're from. We've hardly begun to reply when another café-goer appears at our side and asks, "Did you say you're from Chicago? I love Chicago!" Our new friends have tips for us in the nearby neighbourhood of St Georg: The bar on top of Le Méridien hotel, we learn, has the best view of the Alster, while

the terrace at the Hotel George is a fantastic place to enjoy the sunset. With friends like that, who needs a map?

Though defined by its waterways, Hamburg was forged by fire. Two major conflagrations — the first in 1842, the second ignited by Allied air raids during World War II — devastated the city, leaving few traces of its medieval origins. The first fire broke out on the Deichstrasse, a short street built on a 13th-century dike; despite that, the street today contains the only cluster of buildings in the old Hamburg style of architecture. One of them, Deichstrasse 25, houses a restaurant called *Zum Brandanfang*, which means "the place where the fire started"; on the other side of the Old Town, there's a street called *Brandsende*, or Fire's End.

The destruction wrought by war was on a different scale. During 10 days of bombing in July 1943, at least 40,000 people died as entire neighbourhoods were obliterated. To better understand what occurred, we visit the St Nikolai memorial. The tallest of Hamburg's five major churches, St Nikolai remains in its bombed-out state as a memorial to all victims of war. Its crypt houses a small but powerful museum whose account of the air raids provides perspective on the experiences not only of the people of Hamburg, but of the bomber crews themselves.

As we walk through the city, another reminder of World War II is at our feet: *Stolpersteine*, or 'stumbling stones.' These brass plates are fitted in among the cobblestones in front of buildings where Jewish people, Roma, gays, dissidents and other victims of the Nazis last lived. Each plate is engraved with the name of an individual and, in most cases, the years when he or she was born, was deported to a concentration camp, and died. Conceived in 1996 by Berlin artist Gunter Demnig, the stones are now found in cities throughout Europe.

When in Hamburg...

Locals share their favourite things to do in the city

"Sailing on the Outer Alster; driving along the Elbchaussee to the Michelin-starred restaurants Landhaus Scherrer and Le Canard Nouveau; and exploring the riverside village of Blankenese."

— **Andreas von Möller**

HOC co-chair

"Café Paris in the city centre. They have a great chocolate tart that my dad loves. My favourite is the breakfast for two with champagne."

The North Sea and the Baltic are both an hour or two away. Lübeck, on the Baltic, is a beautiful old town."

— **Yvette Grave**, Rotary Club of Hamburg-Winterhude

"Take a walk around the Outer Alster; it's really cool, and you see a lot of Hamburg. Every 500 metres there is a restaurant or café. The

best is Portonovo, an Italian restaurant with great views of the lake. Hamburg is a harbour city, and the fish is good everywhere. A famous restaurant, Fischereihafen, is one of the best in Germany."

— **Andreas Wende**

HOC Marketing Chair

"The Fischmarkt is an open-air Sunday morning market with fish, fruit, flowers, souvenirs and food. The proper way is to party Saturday night away in St Pauli and then go directly to the Fischmarkt for *Fischfrikadellen* (fishburger on a bread roll)."

If you are looking for good German bread, go to Bäcker Gaues in the Europa Passage. Another bakery, Dat Backhus, is a chain but also quite good. Ask for *Franzbrötchen*, a sweet Hamburg treat made with cinnamon and sugar."

— **Gundula Miethke**

Rotary Regional Communication Specialist



From the Deichstrasse, we walk down a narrow alleyway to the canal behind the historic row of merchant houses. Here, goods originating in ports around the world were delivered by boat and stored on the lower floor of a house; the second floor traditionally featured offices and a large reception space for clients, while the family occupied the upper floors. Canals also define the nearby district called the Speicherstadt, where the narrow waterways between tall brick warehouses, or *Speicher*, conjure a Northern Germany-meets-Venice vibe.

The 19th-century uniformity of the Speicherstadt yields to the modern sensibility of the adjacent HafenCity. When finished in 2030, this riverside development project — which features shops, restaurants, apartments

and offices housed in a mix of older buildings and new ones designed by Renzo Piano, Rem Koolhaas, Philippe Starck, among others — will almost double the size of the city centre.

The architectural highlight of HafenCity is already in place: the two-year-old, 26-story Elbphilharmonie concert hall. (None of Hamburg's buildings rise taller than the city's principal church steeples.) The building's base, a repurposed brick warehouse, gives way in dramatic fashion to a glass superstructure that evokes soaring waves. Its midlevel terrace commands contrasting perspectives that capture the city's ethos: in one direction, a view of the Elbe and the giant cranes lining the immense port, which occupies 17,500 acres of land and water on the opposite side

of the river; and in the other direction, the city proper, with its Rathaus (city hall) and the spires of Saints Nikolai, Michaelis, Petri, Jacobi and Katharinen.

"Hamburg is a very special city, a very open city, and one of the most modern cities in Germany, both architecturally and in mindset," says Knaack. This cosmopolitan outlook is a consequence of 800 years of history as a free port — and as not merely a city, but an independent city-state. The city's official name, *Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg* — the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg — recalls Hamburg's membership in the Hanseatic League, a confederation of northern European cities that dominated trade on the North and Baltic seas from about 1200 to 1500.

Hamburg on the page

Hamburg: A Cultural History by Matthew Jefferies

Every great city deserves a book like this. Concise and full of interesting tidbits, it reaches back to the city's earliest history and covers the waterfront of its neighbourhoods and landmarks, its values and customs, and its people.

Buddenbrooks by Thomas Mann

This 1901 family saga is set in nearby Lübeck, Nobel laureate Mann's native city and, like Hamburg, a Hanseatic port peopled with merchants and traders.

Inferno: The Fiery Destruction of Hamburg, 1943 by Keith Lowe

This deeply researched history describes the Allied firebombing of Hamburg during World War II and its aftermath from the point of view of both the city's residents

and the men who carried out the bombing.

The End: Hamburg 1943 by Hans Erich Nossack

This eyewitness report, written three months after the bombing, reflects with heartbreaking clarity on the event itself and how it reverberated through the survivors' souls.

The World That Summer by Robert Muller

Hamburg in 1936 is the setting for this semi-autobiographical story of a boy whose life is shaped by that time and place.

Baby's in Black: Astrid Kirchherr, Stuart Sutcliffe, and the Beatles by Arne Bellstorf

Fans of the Fab Four can go back in time to the early 1960s, when a group of Hamburg art students befriended the still-unknown lads from Liverpool.

"We live from the port," von Möller adds. "That's where Hamburg breathes. It's a gateway to the world."

For a close encounter with the towering cargo ships, Knaack and von Möller recommend one of the harbour cruises that depart from the Landungsbrücke, a floating dock in the St Pauli neighbourhood. The boat takes us downriver as far as the suburb of Övelgönne, where hillside villas overlook a popular beach. We pass the U-434, a Russian submarine that has been converted into a museum, and the Altona Fischmarkt. Heading back upriver, we encounter vessels in drydock and watch as massive ships are loaded with as many as 20,000 containers. Finally, we glide past the *Rickmer Rickmers*, another museum ship, before turning around under the Elbphi and steaming back to the dock.

In St Pauli, the Reeperbahn — a long thoroughfare where rope-makers once stretched out their hemp — has been home to sailors' watering holes for well over a century; in 1848 the district had 19 legal brothels. Since the Beatles lived here in the early '60s, playing nightly gigs in the Kaiserkeller and the Star Club, it has become much more respectable.

"My wife and I are regulars on Saturday night on the Reeperbahn. We go to the theatres," says Andreas Wende, the HOC's marketing chair and a member of RC Ahrensburg. "It's typical for young people ages about 20 to 40 to go to the Reeperbahn on Friday and Saturday evenings. They go out at 10 or 11 on Saturday night, party until 5 or 6 am, then go to the Fischmarkt on Sunday morning" — a sort of hard day's night in reverse.

Hamburg's efficient public transit system is another great way to see the city's sights; passes will be included in the registration for the Hamburg



'Stumbling stones' embedded in sidewalks around the city are another reminder of the human cost of war.

convention. “You’ll have access to trams, ferries, everything,” says the Convention Chair John Blount.

A city that prides itself as a global gateway — and that is home to the first Rotary club in Germany — Hamburg is an ideal place to bring together Rotarians from around the world. The convention’s theme, *Capture the Moment*, “is about the power and potential and force Rotary has in your life and in the world,” says Blount. “We want to capture where we are and what we can do — the possibilities of Rotary as an organisation and in our clubs. We want you to be there to experience that.”

The Messe, the city’s convention centre, is centrally located — about a 10-minute walk from the major convention hotels, and easily accessible by public transit. Several distinct neighbourhoods filled with restaurants, cafés, shops, and parks are nearby: the bohemian Karolinenviertel; the sumptuous Rotherbaum; the historically Jewish Grindel, now the leafy university quarter; and the hip Schanzenviertel, which should be an irresistible draw to young Rotarians and Rotaractors.

Breakout sessions

The Hamburg convention will draw attendees from around the world. Help Rotary build a breakout programme that celebrates our diversity. We are seeking sessions in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. Visit on.rotary.org/IC19sessions to learn more and submit your proposal. All proposals must be submitted online by September 30.



The ruins of St Nikolai church were left as a reminder of the horrors of war. Its 482-foot high spire, still Hamburg’s tallest, features a viewing platform that is accessible by elevator.

Back in the Altstadt (Old Town), the Mönckebergstrasse, which runs roughly from the main train station to the Rathaus, is the city’s major shopping thoroughfare. Haute boutiques line the arcades of the Neustadt, and more than 100 shops and restaurants fill the five floors of the Europa Passage. And that’s just a taste of Hamburg’s offerings, which we’ve only begun to explore when our five-day stay concludes.

As Anton and I head out of town, already plotting to return, we finally figure out Hamburg’s allure. Hamburgers, as its citizens are known, have created a city designed for their own enjoyment — though they happily share the pleasures

of their museums and parks, their theatres, restaurants and cafés, with visitors.

“It is an attractive city, but the people are modest and humble,” says von Möller. “We don’t show off. We say, ‘Gosh, you might like it. You should have a look.’”

Come June 2019, I recommend you do just that.

(The title translates to ‘I am a Hamburg citizen in spirit’)

Register for the 2019 Rotary Convention (Jun 1–5) at www.riconvention.org

Pictures by Samuel Zuder

© The Rotarian



Giving them limbs

Jaishree

Kuppusamy, all of 70, gives me a toothless smile when I ask him how it feels to be up on his feet again. Pointing to his wife, he says, “I don’t have to trouble her anymore. She too will be relieved now that I can do my chores all by myself.” He was at the artificial limb centre run by RC Coimbatore Midtown, D 3201, getting his left leg custom-fitted. He had lost his

limb, following a fatal fall from a tree while plucking coconuts.

The centre, called the Rotary Midtown Sri Gopaldas Kikani Artificial Limb Centre established in 2004, is a spacious campus where limbs are custom-made and provided free to the needy across Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Pondicherry.

The centre was set up after a three-day polio corrective surgery camp treated

300 children in 1985. “While providing calipers to the children, we realised the mammoth need for this kind of a centre,” says Suresh Gokuldas, the Charter Secretary of this 45-year-old club.

Camps are conducted regularly in association with other Rotary clubs, NGOs and corporates and the club has distributed 18,500 limbs so far.

“It gives us all great satisfaction to see so many men, women and children hitherto confined to

From L: Suresh Gokuldas, Pragash Angappan, CT Thiagarajan, Vallal, Ketan Desai and Baboo Kannan with a beneficiary at the artificial limb centre.



a wheelchair or bed, and who had come in crawling, being able to walk, their dignity restored,” says Rtn Baboo Kannan. He was instrumental in setting up outreach centres in the Philippines and Sri Lanka, having signed MoUs with the respective governments in 2005.

The project — Walk Again — is funded by the club members through a trust for which Gokuldas is the chair. The 12-member committee includes Virendra Chopra, Pragash Angappan and S Rajasekhar. With the then District Collector N Muruganandham sanctioning 22 cents of land in the city’s suburbs, the Gopaldas Kikani Trust under its Managing Trustee Tushar Kikani sponsored the construction of the building. A van was donated by club member and industrialist Balchand Bothra.

Rotarians and the general public sponsor few limbs on special occasions like birthday, anniversaries etc. “It feels good to say that you have put five or ten people on their feet instead of saying that you donated so much money,” says Angappan. Recalling an occasion when a Jain family sponsored and participated in a limb donation programme, he said that they were deeply moved when one of the beneficiaries, who walked a few tentative steps after having his limb fitted, fell at the donor’s feet.

*It feels good to say that you have
put five or ten people on their
feet instead of saying that you
donated so much money.*

Pragash Angappan
Secretary
Mobile Artificial Limb Project

“We use export quality HDPE tubes sourced from Hyderabad for making the limbs. They are sturdy, flexible and light-weight, and if maintained well, serve for a minimum four years,” says Rtn Ketan Desai, demonstrating how the limb works. There is a lock mechanism at the knee joint for those in need of a full limb. This enables the person to squat after releasing the lock and put it in place while standing or walking. “The beauty of these limbs is that they don’t limit the wearers’ activity, and they can even ride a bicycle,” says Kannan. He says a recent beneficiary, Kannaiah, pedalled from Pondicherry to Chennai with an artificial limb. Children as young as three years have been fitted with artificial limbs at this centre. The limbs can be affected by deformity at birth or due to a serious accident, he explains. The centre has now diversified into providing assistive devices and gait training for cerebral palsy patients, upper limb prosthesis, calipers and other supportive devices for the needy, he adds.

On the beneficiaries, he says that until two years ago diabetic amputees were more, but of late, more accident victims come here for the artificial limbs.

Out of six matching grants executed by the club, four grants, worth \$85,000 were executed exclusively for providing artificial limbs. Recalling Wilf Wilkinson’s visit to the centre when he was the RI President, Kannan says that he was “overwhelmed by the extensive reach of our project. ‘So happy



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with a beneficiary at a camp organised by the club in Manila.

to see that Rotary could put so many thousands of physically-challenged people back on their feet. Congratulations,’ he had recorded in our Visitors’ Book.” Many senior Rotary leaders have visited this centre.

Kannan highlighted Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to the club’s centre in the Philippines and said that he had recently given \$200,000 from the PM’s fund for this cause.

While the cost of making each contraction here is ₹3,000–4,000, it costs ₹50,000 in the Philippines due to the transport cost involved. The demand for artificial limbs is so high there that “we have been advised not to advertise whenever we conduct a camp there. We go by the government hospital



Hariharan (7) is the 18,500th and the youngest beneficiary last year.

records where there is a huge waiting list. The limbs are given to the people free of cost everywhere and we don't charge any registration or repair fees," says Gokuldas. About 7,000 limbs have been distributed to date in that country. The centre also caters to war and mine victims in Sri Lanka and is also reaching out to Cambodia now.

Vocational support

Apart from fitting limbs, the club members also ensure that the beneficiaries are gainfully employed, as watchmen, door-keepers and clerks. "An army jawan in Chhattisgarh who lost his limb in a mine blast, and is now employed as a watchman, thanked us profusely after he was fitted with an artificial limb. He is very happy to be

independent. Earlier he was abused by his own family," related Kannan. Some of them are even delivering milk or newspapers riding bicycles.

Other projects

The club chartered in 1973 is engaged in various other projects that include geriatric care, a neuro-surgical rehab programme for children where the club sponsors treatment of neurological disorders, substance abuse de-addiction camps, adoption of Ekal Vidyalaya schools in tribal villages and sponsoring the nutritious porridge programme in schools to address malnourishment in children. The club is also running the Mahaveer Blood Bank, in association with the Indian Medical Association, since 2004. ■

Kerala flood victims need your help

Rekha Shetty

In August, the beautiful coastal areas of God's own country Kerala were flooded with the heaviest rainfall in a hundred years. Severe sea erosion has caused even more damage. Over 600 houses have been badly damaged and many more submerged. Many have died and life is at a standstill.

Many homes in the low-lying regions of Kuttanad which is Kerala's rice bowl were submerged. Landslides were reported in the hilly Idukki, where the Idukki dam swelled to its capacity.

Rotarians in Vaikom and Kottayam were the first rescue workers to reach out to the flood victims. They hit the ground running, waded through flood water, taking boats and vans to deliver



Rotarians ride on a boat to distribute relief material to flood victims.

food, medicines and other basic necessities including clean drinking water.

Raju Thomas, President, RC Vaikom, recalls: "When the floods began, people shifted to temporary camps. Our club took the initiative and provided them with the immediate needs. People are unable to go to work, and the situation is worse for daily wage earners. We need help to provide them food items such as rice, wheat and pulses and also medicines."

Please contribute generously; D 3211 Governor **E K Luke** can be contacted at 9895045650 or rtn.ekluke@outlook.com. Contributions can also be sent to DG **A Venkatachalapathy**, D 3201: 9443069686. Email: pathy.av28@gmail.com or DG **E K Ummer**, D 3202: 9847025578; Email: dr.ekummer@gmail.com.

The author is past governor of District 3232.



Rotary fortifies Cancer Dharamshala

Team Rotary News



Food being served to cancer patients.

The acute shortage of accommodation at Shree Gadge Maharaj Cancer Dharamshala, a five-storey building at Dadar, caught the attention of RC Bombay Queen City, D 3141, to add two more floors consisting of 30 rooms with two large halls, at a cost of ₹4.5 crore.

The dharamshala houses cancer patients undergoing prolonged treatment at the Tata

Memorial Hospital, and their caretakers. The extended facility can now accommodate 60 more patients and 120 relatives, says Murari Agarwal, past president of the club.

Vandana Gupta from V Care Foundation mooted the idea of taking up the extension work at the cancer centre. Before the construction work could start, the club had to pay up the pending property tax and municipal tax dues for the building

totalling ₹1.5 crore, which was cleared by social groups Shree Shankara Hindu Mission and Hari Om Group of Friends, Ghatkopar.

Rotarians Ramesh Poddar and Pawan Poddar of Siyaram Silk Mills funded the construction, while Jayesh Botadra and Arun Garodia from Hari Om Group helped the club get necessary clearances and permissions for the building extension. Rtn Sailesh Mahimtura,

a structural engineer, undertook the construction work.

Following the audit report that the 30-year-old building's columns and beams were weak and cannot take the load of two more floors, the Poddars volunteered to bear the extra cost of ₹ 65 lakh to enhance the structure's strength.

The extended building will be thrown open for the patients by September, says Agarwal. ■

D 3150 takes WASH on a war footing

Kiran Zehra



Under Rotary's WinS (WASH in Schools) Target Challenge initiative, ten schools in D 3150 now have cleaner toilets and healthier learning environment. "Wherever the WASH initiative has been implemented girl students are more regular to school," says PDG Ravi Vadlamani, adding that the district's partnership with TRF and international

Rotary clubs has resulted in the distribution of 60,000 desks and benches to governments schools across Andhra Pradesh.

Through the WASH in Schools Target Challenge programme, Rotarians from the five pilot countries — Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, India, and Kenya — are working in partnership with schools, Rotary clubs and districts around

the world to achieve key milestones in basic education, water, sanitation and hygiene.

The WASH project was implemented by RC Parchur Central at two schools in villages Upputur and Veerannapalem in Andhra Pradesh. The schools have a strength of 200 students each. The club has constructed gender-segregated toilet blocks at both the schools,

and trained the school management committee in improving teaching quality. A reverse osmosis plant was installed in one of the schools. "Children are best sensitised to behavioural changes and environmental issues at school. WinS helps us instill a sense of responsibility and ushers in behavioural change at the same time," says P Chandra Sekhar Rao, IPP of the club.

The Rotarians of RC Pandaripuram worked with SKBR High School in Ganapavaram village to set up toilets and



group handwash station, repaired the water tank and gave a fresh coat of paint to the school. The school has 900 children, including 465 girls. The club's past president S Bhaskar Reddi says that after the construction of the toilet blocks, many girls who had dropped out because of the lack of a decent toilets are returning to school. "This is what matters to us."

The other clubs that have constructed toilets and are working on improvising schools in the region, with support from D 6920



PDG Ravi Vadlamani with students in one of the schools.



PDG Rajyalakshmi Vadlamani (right) and DGN Pandi Sivannarayana Rao (second from left) with members of RCs Guntur Aadarsh and Parchur Central after inauguration of toilet block in a school.

and TRF, are Rotary clubs of Piduguralla, Ongole Central, Chimakurthy, Inkollu, Guntur Aadarsh and Chilakaluripet.

To make the project sustainable in all the schools the clubs are providing soap and detergent for one year and have engaged caretakers to maintain the toilets in each school. The clubs have set a benchmark for the quality of water and sanitation facilities, hygiene education and teacher training, so that behaviour change happens in these schools, and they enter the Star Clubs league soon.

Successful completion of a Rotary One Star project will earn clubs district-level recognition; completion of the Rotary Two and Three Star requirements will earn recognition from Rotary International and UNICEF. ■



Our Esteemed Guest

Rtn Barry Rassin & Ann Esther
RI President 2018-19



Rotary Institute 2018
Chennai | 5-7th October
Zone 4, 5 & 6A

Convener's Message



RID Basker Chockalingam
Ann Malathi

Dear Rotary Leaders,

Rotary Zone Institutes give opportunity to Rotary leaders, past, present and future, to meet and greet each other, exchange ideas and debate on how to take Rotary forward. **Malathi & I** deem it a privilege and pleasure, to invite you and your spouse, to Rotary Institute 2018, to be held during October 5-7, 2018, at **Hotel Leela Palace, Chennai**. With a set of wonderful speakers and world class entertainment, this will be truly an Institute with a difference. We will have the rare opportunity of having with us the Rotary senior leadership, who will make the event a memorable one for us. The dynamic Institute Chairman PDG ISAK Nazar and his wonderful team are making every effort, to ensure that, we all have a grand Rotary Institute 2018 — **Passion To Serve** — at Chennai.

With warm regards,

RID Basker Chockalingam, RI Director (2017-19)



Chairman's Message



Ann Afzalunnisa
PDG ISAK Nazar

Dear Rotary Leaders,

Greetings from Team — Rotary Institute 2018.

It's a great opportunity given by Director / Convener Rtn C Basker to have our **Rotary Institute 2018** at Chennai, at the grand venue — **Hotel Leela Palace, Chennai** — on 5th, 6th and 7th October 2018. Please be ready to witness one of the most memorable Rotary Institute at Chennai. We are all set to deliver an outstanding and memorable Institute. With a galaxy of eminent speakers, a new experience in entertainment and all that a successful Rotary Institute can be remembered for, awaits you. On behalf of Rotary Institute 2018 Team, I welcome you to **Passion to Serve, Rotary Institute 2018**. Please register immediately.

PDG ISAK Nazar

Chairman — Rotary Institute 2018

Please send this form duly filled by post / courier to:

Rtn PDG ISAK Nazar, Chairman, Rotary Institute 2018

Manna Foods, 129, Z Block, 6th Avenue, Anna Nagar, Chennai – 600 040, Phone: 044 2683991, Mobile: 94449 76846
e-mail: rotaryinstitute.chennai2018@gmail.com, nazarisak@gmail.com

REGISTRATION DATA SHEET



Name: Rtn. Call / Badge Name:.....

Classification:

Address:

City: Pin Country

Mobile: e-Mail:

(Note: Include country and area code for Telephone / Fax Number)

☐ PDG ☐ IPDG ☐ DG ☐ DGE ☐ DGN ☐ DRFC ☐ DMC ☐ DRC

Home Club: RI District:

Name of Spouse: Call Name:

Food Preference			Collar size				
	Rotarian	Spouse					
Veg	☐	☐	☐ 38	☐ 40	☐ 42	☐ 44	☐ 46
Non Veg	☐	☐					

REGISTRATION			Couple	Single	Amount
Institute Registration	Couple	Single			
Upto 30th June 2018	INR 25000	INR 15000			
After 30th June 2018	INR 26000	INR 17000			
GETS (Couple)	2,3,4 October 2018	INR 60000			
DGs Training Seminar	4th October 2018	INR 5000 per Person			
DGN Training Seminar	4th October 2018	INR 5000 per Person			
Dist Trainers Seminar	4th October 2018	INR 5000 per Person			
COL Seminar	4th October 2018	INR 5000 per Person			
TRF Dinner	4th October 2018	INR 5000 per Couple INR 3000 per Single			
TRF Seminar	5th October 2018	INR 5000 per Couple INR 3000 per Single			

HOTEL ACCOMODATION

The Leela Palace	Double Executive	INR 10000 Per Nite			
	Single Executive	INR 9000 Per Nite			
Ramada Plaza	Double Deluxe	INR 8000 Per Nite			
	Single Deluxe	INR 7000 Per Nite			
The Savera Hotel	Double Deluxe	INR 7000 Per Nite			
	Single Deluxe	INR 6000 Per Nite			
Total					

*Kindly tick whichever is applicable.

*Please note that the Accomodation is purely on first come first serve basis.

The cheque and draft shall be in favour of "Rotary Institute 2018" payable at Chennai.	Online payment details: Account Name: Rotary Institute 2018 Bank: Karur Vysya Bank Branch: Saidapet, Chennai - 15 Account No.: 1651155000067299 IFSC Code: KVBL0001651
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The Institute registration covers the following:

- Inaugural plenary on Friday, Oct 5, 2018 followed by dinner.
- Lunch and dinner on Saturday, Oct 6, 2018.
- Lunch on Sunday, Oct 7, 2018.

The other events such as GETS (Couple), DG Seminar, Membership Seminar, DGN Seminar, COL, TRF Seminar, Foundation Dinner have additional registration as mentioned above.

Date:

Signature:



Serving the rural poor is his priority

Vishwa Bandhu Dixit

Dermatologist , RC Bhiwani, D 3090

As a doctor he knows the benefits of the preventive aspects of healthcare. So one of this DG's priorities is "water and sanitation. My priority will be to put up at least 200 to 300 group handwashing stations in schools during my year, and also work on menstrual hygiene for adolescent girls".

A doctor by profession, actually a dermatologist and an HIV specialist, V B Dixit joined Rotary in 1995. "I was working in a government hospital and one day one of my seniors came up to me and said: "You must join Rotary, because that is the place you will be able to meet so many top professionals, businessmen etc. It will give you the opportunity to help many people and serve society in a much better and bigger way than you can do now."

Dixit's district 3090 has 76 clubs with 2001 members. Apart from promoting health and hygiene, his other two priorities will be increasing membership, with the focus being on women. At present women's membership in his district is only 13 per cent and the DG wants to improve this figure. He also wants to convert all the Rotaractors in his district into Rotarians.

On the Foundation giving front, he says, "Last year was not a good year for our district in TRF giving, but otherwise we normally raise about \$70,000 to 80,000. This year my goal is to take up this figure to \$100,000."

On what Rotary has given him, he responds in a flash: "Oh, Rotary has given me lots and lots of satisfaction. Our district is a rural district, and even though earlier I had worked as a medical officer in rural areas, Rotary has given me a platform to reach out to a much larger number of people in rural areas. Reaching the maximum benefits to the rural people through Rotary is my priority."

Meet your Governors

Rasheeda Bhagat and Jaishree

He wants to balance “fun and fellowship with service”

Ravikiran Kulkarni

Chartered Accountant, RC Sangli, D 3170

During his year as governor, this DG wants to focus on community service through global grants. “My main aim in joining Rotary, which I did in 1987, was to do something for society and now that I have got an opportunity, I want to reach the unreached in our community and also work towards giving them financial literacy,” says Ravi Kulkarni.

Heading a district with 128 clubs and 5,500-odd Rotarians, he is anguished at the “present status of Rotary. These days we are having less of Rotary and more of fun. The sound training that we had in Rotary once upon a time is getting slightly diluted. I’d like to restore it.”

It’s a lofty objective alright, but how will he do it?

“By adopting certain strict procedures such as giving Rotarians the right kind of Rotary information at the start of every meeting; telling the members to balance the fun and fellowship with service activities,” he responds.

On TRF giving, he says that his district has had a good record on this front. “Last year we raised \$816,000 to our Foundation, and had one AKS member. My aim is to raise that figure to \$1 million.”

On membership front, Kulkarni’s focus is to get more women members. “We have three all women’s clubs and about eight per cent of our members are women. I want to increase that number,” he adds.



Building stronger clubs

Ramesh Vangala, Auditor, RC Ameerpet, D 3150

He wants to promote better engagement of Rotarians as he feels that “members leave Rotary only when there is nothing interesting for them in it. It is our job to make Rotary fun for them.” Ramesh Vangala wants all members to do at least one activity. “It could even be an invitation for lunch, tea or dinner at their homes,” he says. The district covers a vast area comprising Hyderabad-Secunderabad, Telengana and Andhra Pradesh and so he encourages clubs to do joint projects that will help forge better relationships.

He has identified seven designated dates to concentrate on the six areas of focus and one environmental programme for the entire district. It includes providing water bottles and soaps to promote hygiene and sanitation among schoolchildren; distribution of sewing machines to women; health camps for women and children and a multi-district peace conference to be held in Hyderabad. “We have

donated 5,000 benches and desks to government schools and installed AEDs in 170 ambulances,” he says.

Vangala is a Rotarian since 2001, following in the footsteps of his father who was a member of RC Warangal for 50 years. He cherishes his visit to Finland in 2013 as a GSE Team Leader. “The host club president invited us to stay in his cottage in the woods. It was winter and we had to stay indoors in the evenings. We communicated through translations done on the I-pad, as we didn’t know Finnish and he didn’t speak English. We spent three days like this.”

He plans to increase the district membership by 600 members, including 100 women Rotarians and add eight new clubs. His idea to rope in parents of Rotaractors to Rotary has been well received in his team. “A lot of Rotaract clubs are non-functional in our district. Only 44 of them are active,” he laments, adding that he will increase the number to 100 by the year end. For this, Vangala plans to coordinate with the DRCC and the DRR whenever a Rotaract club is being installed by a Rotary club.

His aim is to raise \$750,000 for the Foundation. “It is achievable as we had a contribution of \$69,000 from a past governor who is on his way to becoming an AKS member and the first month’s collection was \$200,000,” he smiles.





From a Leo to a Rotarian

P Rohinath

Security Services

RC Mangalore North

D 3181

He was a Leo during his college days and then a Lion. He joined Rotary in 1999 after his friend compelled him to attend a Rotary meeting. “I simply loved the fellowship of Rotary. Four of us joined the same club at that time,” says Rohinath, who transformed into a “service-minded Rotarian after taking over as club president in 2008.” He recalls his childhood when he had to walk to school 8 km away from a remote village where he was brought up. “I have seen poverty and hardship at close quarters. That motivated me to be a part of such a service organisation.”

He is all praise for RI Director C Basker for organising numerous training seminars and says these have helped the district leaders and club officers to operate effectively.

Rohinath plans to upgrade the 7,600 anganwadis in his district, having seen their pathetic state when he had organised medical camps for children during his presidential year. “Many of them lack basic amenities such as clean drinking water and electricity, and have bad flooring and leaking roofs. So the clubs will each adopt five anganwadis and focus on their refurbishment,” he says.

His aim for membership growth is to increase it by 10 per cent and for TRF, he wants to raise \$300,000, although the last two years the contribution from the district was not satisfactory.

He and his team are engaged in mobilising relief material for the flood victims of Kerala and coastal Karnataka who have been devastated by torrential rain.

A grassroots polio worker

Mukul Sinha

Lawyer, RC Calcutta New Town, D 3291

Rotary is life for me. It has given me everything and taught me what life is,” says Mukul Sinha. A Rotarian since 1993, Sinha remembers the years when he used to campaign door-to-door for polio immunisation. “Immunising children with polio drops in Murshidabad when six polio cases were detected in 2010 gave me so much satisfaction.”

He is proud of Rotary’s two eye hospital and one multi-specialty hospital in Purulia which serves the tribal community living in the Maoist-afflicted Jangal Mahal region.

Sinha has urged his clubs to undertake projects such as cervical cancer screening and vaccination, providing safe drinking water facilities, skill development programmes for women and planting saplings. Presently he is mobilising relief material for the flood

victims of Kerala. “All the clubs in my district are contributing money and relief material and we are sending it to the governors of the region,” he says.

His aim for membership growth is to increase the number to 4,000 and he is keen to merge weaker clubs. Retention is a huge challenge, he observes, adding that he has a committee in place to address this issue.

As for TRF contribution, he has a goal to raise \$500,000, for which he has requested all members to contribute generously. His focus is on ‘non-contributing clubs’ and he wants to “make the district a 100 per cent contributing district.”

Sinha is all praise for his wife Rakhi, who provides him all support in Rotary activities, although she is not a Rotarian.



Designed by N Krishnamurthy



Reaching out to rural Delhi with eye camps

V Muthukumaran

Last year, when Rajendra Singhal began his presidential tenure at RC Delhi Regency, D 3011, he introduced a programme to extend eyecare services to the rural regions in and around the national Capital. Thus was born the project of monthly two-day eye check-up camps in villages located around 120–180 km from Delhi. The project continues this year too.

Singhal has set up an exclusive Rotary Desk at his office to coordinate and plan an eye camp every month. A schedule is drawn up to hold an eye camp in

a region where there are little or no medical services. “We first identify the locality, meet the panchayat officials and create awareness among the people about the camp so that they can register and get screened at the booths,” he explains.

The club has tied up with the Venu Eye Institute and Research Centre, New Delhi, which deputs a six-member team of doctors who examine at least 300 patients a day. After a thorough eye check-up at the camp, those in need of further tests or cataract operations are brought to the hospital.

Each month the club pays ₹2.5 lakh to the hospital for helping it organise the rural camps. “The fund is mobilised by our members, some being our corporate sponsors. In 2002, we had set up an eye bank at the hospital under a global grant. It gets nearly 400 organs from deceased donors in a year, of which 75 per cent are good enough for use,” says Singhal. The hospital deploys its 45-seater bus for the camps.

Micro-planning

“Over 5,000 people have benefitted from our camps, of which around 720 patients have undergone cataract procedure so far. On an average, 55 patients are taken to Venu Hospital for cataract every month,” says Singhal. This year the club has set aside ₹30 lakh for its monthly camps and the timetable and logistics have already been worked out for the next six months.

Village Pradhan Choudhary Kartar Singh in Muzaffarnagar district, UP, 140 km from Delhi, says his people are “always grateful to Rotary for providing medical facilities to senior citizens and the unemployed living in far-flung areas where there is no hope for such healthcare delivery.” Last year, eye camps benefitted the villages of Muzaffarnagar, UP; Rohtak and Mewat areas of Haryana. Free cataract surgery is done for patients recommended by Rotarians. ■



Rotarians Rajendra Singhal (left) and Dalip Dagha (right) with the patients after their cataract surgeries.

Rhythms of KUCHIPUDI

Seetha Ratnakar

It was love at first sight when I saw Kuchipudi for the very first time when I was barely ten years old. My mother took me to learn the dance form from the illustrious guru, Vempati Chinna Satyam who had me spellbound with his graceful movements and iconic poses when he demonstrated the dance. He was a great visionary who had walked from his Kuchipudi village to Madras with merely two rupees and a pocketful of dreams and succeeded in establishing a centre of excellence for Kuchipudi in Chennai. Before he started the Kuchipudi Art Academy in 1963, he initially taught dance in two small rooms down the street close to my home. I became one of his earliest students since my mother nurtured a hope that I would imbibe some Andhra culture. I suspect that her motivation was more to encourage a struggling artist than to make a dancer out of me as her earlier attempts to teach me dance had proven futile. But this time around, my initiation to Kuchipudi transformed my life; my love affair with dance began when I discovered the dancer in me.

Kuchipudi (pronounced Koo-chipoodi) is a living dance tradition of Andhra Pradesh named after the village Kuchelapuram or Kusilava puram (village of actors/travelling bards) in Krishna district which became the home of Kuchipudi dancers in the 17th century. Dance flourished in Andhra from the third century BC and reached the zenith of glory during the rule of the Vijayanagar kings in the 15th and early 16th century. After the fall of

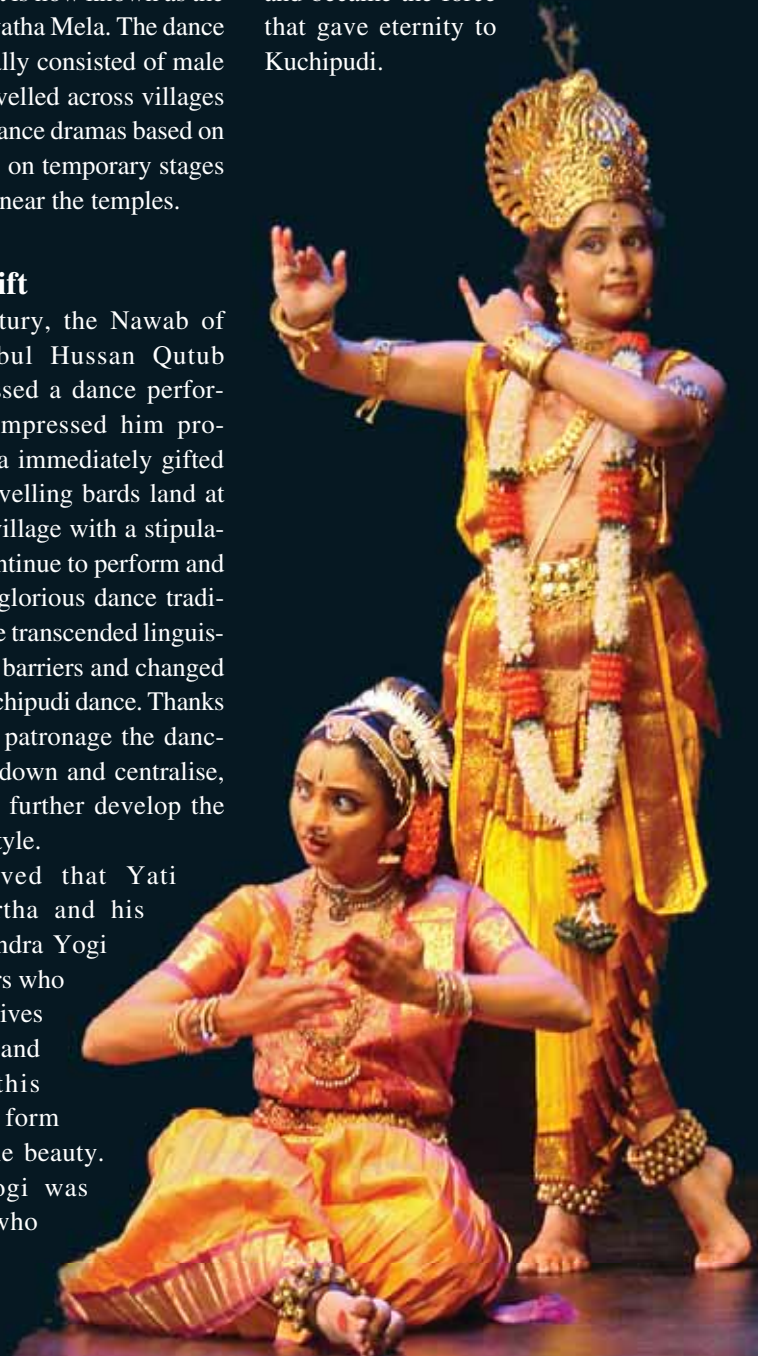
the Vijayanagar Empire there was a steady decline due to constant invasions and the musicians and dancers migrated South for survival. Some of them were granted land in Thanjavur by Achyuthappa Naicker where they popularised what is now known as the Melattur Bhagavatha Mela. The dance troupe traditionally consisted of male dancers who travelled across villages and performed dance dramas based on religious themes on temporary stages that were set up near the temples.

A Nawab's gift

In the 17th century, the Nawab of Golconda, Habul Hussan Qutub Tanisha, witnessed a dance performance which impressed him profoundly. Tanisha immediately gifted the group of travelling bards land at Kuchelapuram village with a stipulation that they continue to perform and propagate their glorious dance tradition. This gesture transcended linguistic and religious barriers and changed the course of Kuchipudi dance. Thanks to the generous patronage the dancers could settle down and centralise, consolidate and further develop the brilliant dance style.

It is believed that Yati Narayana Teertha and his disciple Siddhendra Yogi were the pioneers who dedicated their lives to resurrecting and propagating this glorious dance form in all its pristine beauty. Siddhendra Yogi was the harbinger who

turned Kuchelapuram into a dancing village Kuchipudi by persuading the community to dedicate every male child to the God of Dance. He infused new aesthetic spirits by composing masterpieces like the *Bhama Kalapam* and became the force that gave eternity to Kuchipudi.



The dance format underwent several transformations along with the historical changes in the land. During the early part of the middle ages when the Veera Saiva cult held sway over Andhra, dynamic and virile dance dramas based on *Siva Leelas* were popularly performed in the Yaksha Gana style. Later, the Vaishnavite Bhakti movement gained popularity and a dance drama format closely related to the Bhagavatha Mela tradition evolved. The *Vishnu Leela* operas used to be performed by male dancers known as Kuchipudi Bhagavathulu. In the early 20th century three prominent artists — Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastri, Vempati Venkatanarayana Sastri and Chinta Venkataramayya — contributed tremendously to the enhancement of the dance.

Later it took an entirely new direction when Vedantham Lakshmi Narayana Sastry took the bold step of teaching women dancers and paved the way for future gurus.

Vempati Chinna Satyam ushered a renaissance of Kuchipudi in post

independent India and was largely responsible for placing it firmly on the world map of dance. He was a brilliant performer, teacher and choreographer, who systematised the dance format without sacrificing its purity and made it more sophisticated to appeal to the larger global audiences. Renowned Bharatanatyam dancers like Vyjayantimala Bali, Rhadha, Lakshmi Viswanathan, Rathna (Papa) Kumar, Hemamalini and many others learnt Kuchipudi under the maestro's tutelage at the Kuchipudi Art Academy. One of his senior disciples, Rathna (Papa) Kumar, established the first Kuchipudi dance institute in the United States in 1975 to popularise and propagate the remarkable Vempati 'Bani' (style). Talking about how destiny brought Kuchipudi into her life, Rathna says, "When I say Kuchipudi changed my life, I am not saying it for effect. I had learnt a little Kuchipudi from Vedantham Jagannadha Sarma when I was about eight, but that did not impact me as much as my brief stint under Vempati Pedda Satyam and advanced training a year later under



Rathna Kumar

Vempati Chinna Satyam. I was at a very vulnerable point in my life at that time, having just recovered from a terrible attack of small pox that had scarred my whole body, destroyed my eyesight, and pushed me to a psychological low. I was 14 and miserable."

But then the miracle happened; she found Kuchipudi. "It was exciting and unpredictable, its moves and body language so different from those of Bharatanatyam, which I had been doing for 10 years. I fell in love with the sweeping movements, the leaps, the sheer energy and vibrancy of the dance form and immersed myself into learning it as thoroughly as I could. I never dreamed, at that time, that it would one

day become an integral part of my life!"

Like all classical dance forms of India, Kuchipudi too traces its roots to the ancient classical treatise on arts, the *Natya Shastra* and shares several similarities with Bharatanatyam. But the repertoire is vastly different with each style having distinct characteristics that define it. In the traditional Kuchipudi dance drama format each character is introduced through a short preliminary dance called *Pravesa Dharavu* before the story unfolds. Until the last century, all the female roles used to be performed by men who dressed as women. Some of them continue to keep this great traditional format alive with their

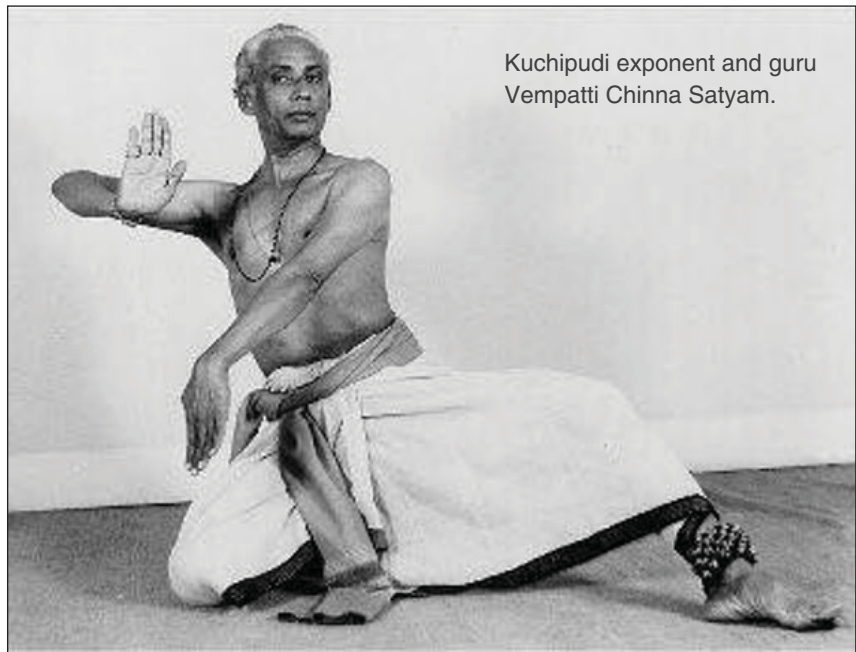
The Nawab of Golconda, Habul Hussan Qutub Tanisha, after witnessing a dance performance, gifted the group of travelling bards land at Kuchelapuram village in the 17th century.

excellent portrayal. The late Vedantam Satyanarana Sarma was renowned for his outstanding portrayal of female heroines in dance dramas such as Satyabhama in *Bhama Kalapam*, Usha in *Usha Parinayam*, Mohini in *Mohini Rukmangada*, Sasirekha in *Sasirekha Parinayam* and Gollabhama in *Gollakalapam*. Dancer Kala Krishna says that it takes more than two hours for him to don the makeup and costume for Satyabhama but when he performs, people completely forget his age and gender. Vempati Chinna Satyam further enriched the traditional repertoire by choreographing and staging many more dance dramas like *Sri Krishna Parijatham*, *Ksheera Sagara Madhanam*, *Srinivasa Kalyanam*, *Vipranarayana* and *Sakuntalam* to name a few.

Yati Narayana Teertha composed the *Krishna Leela Tarangini* as a libretto for a dance drama and introduced rhythmic dance syllables at the end of the canto. Excerpts from it are often performed as a *Tarangam* by soloists where they elaborate stories of Krishna and build it up to a culmination of pure dance performed while balancing on a brass plate. Some dancers add water in a pot and balance it on the head in addition and dance to elaborate rhythmic patterns. The combination of the exposition of popular stories through dance interspersed

I found Kuchipudi exciting and unpredictable, its moves and body language so different from those of Bharatanatyam, which I had been doing for 10 years.

Rathna Papa Kumar
Kuchipudi dancer



Kuchipudi exponent and guru
Vempatti Chinna Satyam.

with mnemonics makes *Tarangam* a most enjoyable dance experience.

Bhama Kalapam, a dramatic dance expression called *Prabandha Nartanam* composed by Siddhendra Yogi, is the quintessential dance replete with eloquent emotions and intricate dance patterns. The *Kuchipudi Kavutvams* are distinctly different, distinctive from their Bharatanatyam counterparts. The *Vinayaka*, *Mayura* or *Simhanandini Kavutvam* is performed with the dancer spreading coloured rice powder on the stage and covering it with a white cloth or paper and dancing on top of it to preset music. At the end of the segment a beautiful painting of *Vinayaka*, peacock or lion is created by the artist through footwork according to the precise pattern of each dance.

Vasanthalakshmi Narasimhachari, wife and dance partner of the multi-talented guru, the late Narasimhachari says, "If a man is to be described as one who considers his life and art inseparable, it would be my husband and guru Sri M V Narasimhachari. Having imbibed the nuances of music and dance from his own father, he went on

to enrich the repertoire of Kuchipudi with his exquisitely beautiful creations like *Shivaleela*, *Subhadra Arjuneeyam* and *Ravana Mandodari*, to name a few. Now our daughters Lavanya and Lasya are doing commendably in taking our work further while aesthetically expanding the horizons of art."

Kuchipudi today is a highly respected and sought after dance style in India and abroad. The dance that used to be taught only to Brahmin boys in the Kuchipudi village became inclusive in the 20th century and opened its doors to every devotee of art irrespective of caste or creed. It no longer remains an exclusive male bastion with women dancers outnumbering men today and even dressing and performing the roles of male characters.

When the art became more flexible and adaptable, it reached out to a far wider dance circle. Wherever art flourishes, so does life and as Havelock Ellis says: "Dancing is the loftiest, the most moving, the most beautiful of the arts, because it is not mere translation or abstraction from life; it is life itself."

Designed by N Krishnamurthy

Top 10 Districts from India Total Contributions

India Rank	District	Total Contribution (USD)
1	3141	2,157,938
2	3000	1,271,692
3	3131	1,215,843
4	3190	1,134,867
5	3231	1,115,668
6	3060	1,097,666
7	3232	1,048,630
8	3011	880,295
9	3201	856,750
10	3142	679,954



Rotary at a glance

Rotarians : 12,04,289

Clubs : 35,712

Districts : 538

Rotaractors : 2,58,198

Clubs : 11,226

Interactors : 5,28,701

Clubs : 22,987

RCC members: 2,28,597

RCC : 9,939

Membership Summary

As on August 1, 2018

RI District	Rotary Clubs	No of Rotarians	Women Rotarians	Rotaract Clubs	Interact Clubs	RCC
2981	113	4,681	219	64	229	170
2982	68	2,919	130	65	112	46
3000	127	5,074	436	297	671	195
3011	80	3,424	713	58	110	25
3012	85	3,421	664	41	128	56
3020	78	3,992	229	117	466	351
3030	88	4,686	542	84	304	164
3040	96	2,132	224	62	124	140
3053	69	2,776	456	20	56	95
3054	128	5,874	939	96	319	469
3060	100	4,176	496	64	123	137
3070	103	2,913	282	68	158	57
3080	77	3,220	218	74	216	108
3090	76	2,017	55	32	37	122
3100	71	1,709	84	11	72	146
3110	114	3,866	322	51	49	104
3120	74	3,177	384	38	61	52
3131	129	5,201	1,103	115	284	90
3132	97	3,650	357	66	211	150
3141	90	5,153	1,104	120	254	83
3142	94	3,236	552	72	196	65
3150	98	3,525	335	93	234	109
3160	71	2,408	123	30	48	81
3170	125	5,393	467	62	310	161
3181	73	3,073	241	35	181	105
3182	83	3,153	230	37	275	95
3190	131	4,892	605	155	359	51
3201	141	5,287	332	104	132	49
3202	129	4,792	232	105	436	46
3211	139	4,445	273	14	89	124
3212	98	4,004	356	114	280	142
3231	78	3,054	220	56	203	239
3232	107	4,325	641	150	321	80
3240	88	2,985	339	65	151	154
3250	98	3,830	657	51	209	183
3261	70	2,567	343	17	102	42
3262	90	3,294	398	48	73	75
3291	145	3,686	683	82	132	596
India Total	3,721	1,42,010	15,984	2,833	7,715	5,157
3220	66	1,824	240	86	199	76
3271	81	1,416	249	54	16	13
3272	161	2,859	401	46	37	38
3281	205	5,545	803	237	92	187
3282	143	4,055	441	134	48	41
3292	117	4,386	639	124	117	108
S Asia Total	4,494	1,62,095	18,757	3,514	8,224	5,620

Source: RI South Asia Office



Every stamp has a story

Pradip Jain

Did you know that more than 150 nations have issued over 1,000 postage stamps honouring Rotary on various occasions. This is the highest tribute paid ever to any organisation by a nation. The first ever Rotary Postage Stamp was issued in Austria to commemorate the 1931 RI Convention at Vienna. A set of six postage stamps were printed and released on this occasion. The greatest interest in Rotary came in 1955 with the issuance of more than 80 stamps by 27 nations. Belgium was the first country to issue Rotary's 50th anniversary commemorative stamps.

The word 'philately' was coined in 1864 by a Frenchman named George Herpin who used two Greek words *philos* (love of) and *atelie* (tax free) to indicate that a letter affixed with postage stamps did not have to be paid for by the receiver, and so was tax free for him.

Philately is the study of stamps and a philatelist is a student of stamps. There is a difference between a person who collects stamps at random, and a philatelist

who studies each stamp, examines its design, looks for errors, flaws and variations in printing, the paper on which it is printed, its watermark, the perforation etc. It is this study and systematic collecting that distinguishes philately from collecting stamps and a philatelist from a collector of stamps.

It is often said that stamp collecting has more benefit than any other hobby. Stamp collecting teaches every subject like History, Art, Culture, Geography, Science, Flora-fauna, Institution-organisation. It is a mental therapy for both the young and the old. It's an affordable hobby, and an investment that pays off.

There is a sense of pride and accomplishment in assembling a collection of stamps. The Rotary commemorative stamps were all issued to salute our organisation — what it stands for and what it is striving to do. They are things of beauty, rarity, and compelling interests, not only



commemorating an international organisation, but also depicting its commitment to service around the world.

Returning to Rotary, RI has 75 fellowship groups interested in different areas. 'Rotary on Stamps (RoS)' is one of the most active area of 'Recreational and Vocational Fellowships.' Rotary on Stamps is a group of stamp collectors with an interest in the philatelic material commemorating RI, its districts, local clubs and service projects around the world, and it operates in accordance with RI policy. In one of its publications, RI states: "Rotarians who share common interests in worthwhile recreational or avocational activities are encouraged to associate themselves in groups for the purpose of furthering acquaintance and fellowship."



My journey in Rotary started from Rotaract which I joined in 1974, and in 1977, I was invited to join Rotary under the classification 'Philately'.

One day I read an interesting article on Rotary on Stamps and its fellowship in *The Rotarian* magazine. I soon became a member of RoS. RoS publishes a quarterly newsletter. In every RI Convention

the RoS sets up its booth, where Rotarians display their collection and interact with each other intimately.

I attended the RoS meeting during my first visit to the RI Convention at Las Vegas in 1986, and have, since then, attended three more conventions at Singapore, Bangkok and the Rotary centennial convention at Birmingham (UK) in 2009.



In India too Rotary Stamps have been issued; a set of two stamps were issued in 1987 to commemorate the Asia Regional Conference held at New Delhi and Rotary's Polio Immunisation in 1998. India again issued a stamp of ₹8 denomination commemorating the Rotary Council on Legislation held at

New Delhi on January 12, 1998, and the centennial issue of Rotary services in 2005.

Rotarians were once urged to "write the history of good" individually, through clubs and districts by national efforts; Rotarians over the years have written and illustrated just

such a history in postage stamps. Let these messengers stand as a record of accomplishment. For more details visit: <http://www.rotaryonstamps.org/>

The author is member of Rotary Club of Pataliputra, D 3250.

Designed by N Krishnamurthy

D 3131 sets a Guinness Record

Team Rotary News

With a whopping 23,181 pledges for organ donation, Rotary Club of Pune Gandhi Bhavan, D 3131, has set a new Guinness Record for the 'maximum number of people to sign up online for organ donation in eight hours'. People from 950 cities across the country signed up for the cause.

"The recent loss of a close relative due to kidney failure triggered this initiative in me," says the Club President Amruta Deogaonkar.

A website, www.giftlife.co.in was created as a platform for the organ pledge activity and the

Sahyadri Hospital in Pune was the healthcare partner. Aarti Gokhale, the Chief Coordinator of Zonal Transplant Coordination Centre, provided the guidance. Promotions were done through social and print media. DG Shailesh Palekar promoted the cause through a press conference which was telecast on the local channels and aired on radio channels. Over 300 volunteers manned the special kiosks set up in 40 companies and institutions in the city for people to register their pledge.



DG Shailesh Palekar and RC Pune Gandhi Bhavan President Amruta Deogaonkar with the Guinness Certificate.

The Rotarians had to face challenges such as the Maharashtra State bundh and network failure in certain areas, but "despite all that I was thrilled to hold the Guinness Certificate at the end of the day," beams Amruta. Dr Vimal Kumar Bhandari, Director of the

National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation, was the Guinness World Records Adjudicator.

Pledges were received for donation of eyes, kidneys, heart, lungs, liver and pancreas. There were four donors beyond 100 years, the highest being a 110-year-old, says Amruta. ■

Is your trainer **FIT FOR YOU?**

Dr Sheela Nambiar

When you start on your fitness journey, or even if you are already immersed in it, you may want to hire a personal trainer to coach and guide you. Many people need that extra motivation they hope their trainer will provide. So how do you go about engaging the right trainer and how do you decide if he is the right fit for you?

There are several bodies that certify trainers. It could be the IFAA-India (International Fitness and Aerobic Academy); ACE (American College of Exercise); ACSM (American College of Sports Medicine); or the National Academy of Sports Medicine and several more. Your trainer may be a physiotherapist by qualification who is specialised in a particular field such as strength training or pilates. Many trainers who are perhaps athletes or sports persons, or have been body builders, are absorbed by a fitness facility and trained there to work with their clients. Check into their background when you start to work with a trainer.

Although your trainer's skill and knowledge are important, what is even more important is his or her interpersonal skill, emotional and social intelligence and ability to guide and motivate. He or she may be very qualified and knowledgeable but lack in empathy and understanding of the clients' needs.

What is your trainer's fitness philosophy?

It is worthwhile to ask your trainer what his idea of fitness is. Is it just about looking buff or lean, or is it more holistic, combining nutrition, motivation and overall wellbeing? Does he understand his clients' needs or works solely from his own perspective? Does he believe in helping others achieve their goals?

Here are some questions to address

- Does he understand the various aspects of fitness such as aerobics,

strength, flexibility etc, and how these should be applied to you?

- Does he understand the importance of diet and can he advice the right diet for you or refer you to a nutritionist? Does he talk to you about your dietary habits?
- Does he know enough to handle your health condition? Say, you are diabetic and on medication, does he know enough to manage you while exercising? Does he ask about the medication you are taking? Or, if you are a senior person,





- Does he constantly compare you with other clients?
- Are you motivated and inspired by him?
- Does he use encouraging language and praise you often when you achieve small goals or does he make you feel you are just not good enough?
- Does he help you set realistic goals and achieve them?
- Does he teach you your exercises, explaining them to you, helping you understand why you do them and what body part they address etc?

Every individual is different and needs to be treated as such. The goals you set for yourself should be your goals and not your trainer's. Your trainer should be a person who can guide you towards your specific goals. He should also educate you about your fitness routine. The objective should be to exercise independently when necessary and not be dependent on a trainer telling you exactly what to do and how to do it for the rest of your life. It's okay to want to be motivated or inspired, but at some point the motivation should come from within you.

Finally, a trainer who wants you to be dependent on him is not really working with your best interests in mind. If you have a great trainer, you should eventually be able to exercise on your own, know enough about it and understand why you are doing what you are doing. You should be confident enough to be able to handle your own fitness routine and perhaps even inspire others.

The author, an obstetrician and gynaecologist, is a fitness and lifestyle consultant, and has published two books: Get Size Wise; Gain to lose. www.drsheela.nambiar.com

can he handle an older client? Has he worked with older clients before?

- Does he ask you detailed questions to understand your lifestyle? For example if your job is sedentary, if you travel a lot, if you socialise a lot, where you eat, if you have trained before, what kind of exercise you enjoy the most and so on.
- Does he give you motivating tips to fill in the rest of your day (not just the hour in the gym)?
- How does he motivate and challenge you? Does he use negative associations (by saying — you are fat and need to lose weight) or is he positive in his approach (by saying something like losing weight will help you lead a healthier, more enjoyable life and praising you when you improve)?
- Does he know just how much to push and challenge you or does he absolutely insist on pushing you beyond your capabilities to a point of exhaustion and injury?



Books by chance

Sandhya Rao

Circumstances transform reading into strange and surprising experiences

A few months ago, my son mentioned that he had recently read and enjoyed Somerset Maugham's *The Razor's Edge*. Although I couldn't recall what it was about, I was pleased that he had attempted to read Maugham, a brilliant writer believed to have been the highest paid author in the 1930s. His *The Moon and Sixpence* which we had studied back in college was loosely based on the life of painter Paul Gauguin; it's a favourite even if the semi-autobiographical *Of Human Bondage* is the most famous.

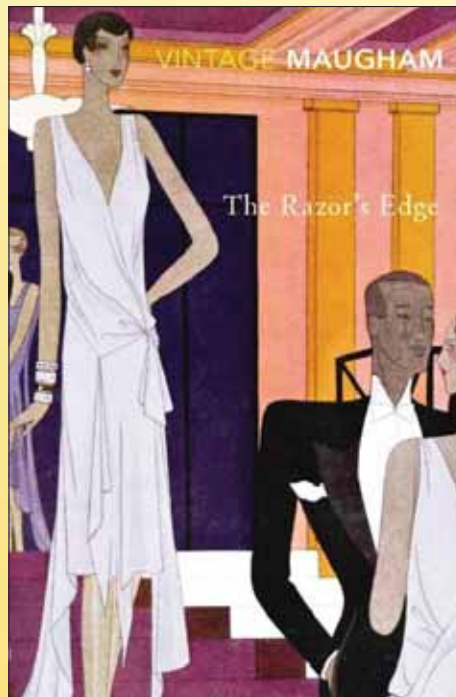
A few weeks later, I had the opportunity to visit Tiruvannamalai, a town south of Chennai in Tamil Nadu famous for its temple and for 'holy' personages having set up ashrams around the hill of Arunachala, popularly believed to have 'sacred' attributes. The most revered of these sages is Ramana Maharishi; it was to his ashram that we went. When I mentioned to Mani Sir at the ashram that my great-grandfather had been a *bhakta* of Ramana Maharishi and had also been on the panel of doctors attending to the Maharishi, he introduced me to John who's been

working on the archives there. John generously pulled out all the pictures featuring my great-grandfather, Dr Srinivasa Rao. When we came to a couple of pictures of him with Ramana Maharishi and a Caucasian gentleman, John said, "That's Guy Hague. Maugham is believed to have based his central character in

The Razor's Edge on Guy Hague; and the holy man he describes in the book is certainly Ramana Maharishi."

This information was way too exciting to ignore, nor could it be dismissed as a coincidence. It seemed more like a sign: Read the book! Find out more! Meanwhile, at the ashram bookshop, I had picked up a book with an intriguing title: *The Search in Secret India* by someone called Paul Brunton. The back of the book described him as "one of the twentieth century's greatest explorers of the spiritual traditions of the East". But what clinched the deal was that he was "also a journalist with a healthy regard for critical impartiality and for commonsense". I couldn't wait to get back to the guesthouse to start reading, and didn't stop during the taxi ride back to Chennai.

I had not heard of Brunton, but as always, the internet yielded many answers. For starters, Paul Brunton was the pen name of Raphael Hurst and this book, first published in 1934, the year my mother was born, was a bestseller and was reprinted several times. From all accounts, it was he who introduced Indian spiritualism to the West and the West to yoga practices. The book begins: "Early travellers returned home to Europe with weird tales of the Indian faqueers and even modern travellers occasionally bring similar stories. What is the truth behind those legends... concerning a mysterious class of men called Yogis by some and faqueers by others? What is the truth behind the fitful hints which reach us intimating that there exists in India an old wisdom that promises the most extraordinary development of





Ramana Maharishi

mental powers to those who practise it? I set out on a long journey to find it and the following pages summarise my report.”

After setting out the context by talking about his childhood and curiosity and the events that led him to embark on a journey, he writes about such different individuals as an Egyptian magician and a thought reader in Bombay; a self-styled ‘messiah’ of Persian origin, Meher Baba, near Ahmednagar, whose first ‘communication’ with Brunton via an alphabet board is: “I shall change the history of the world”; the ‘anchorite of the Adyar river’ Bramasuganandah, a yoga practitioner in Madras, whose mastery of breath control appears to even conquer death; and even the Shankaracharya of Kanchipuram. It is he who, when Brunton asks to be directed to a master who “is competent to give me proofs of the reality of higher yoga”, directs him to Ramana Maharishi.

Brunton’s description of his experience in the silence of the sage’s presence will resonate with many: “There is something in this man which holds my attention as steel filings are held by a magnet. I cannot turn my gaze away from him. My initial bewilderment, my perplexity at being totally ignored, slowly fade

away as this strange fascination begins to grip me more firmly. But it is not till the second hour of the uncommon scene that I become aware of a silent, resistless change which is taking place within my mind. One by one, the questions which I have prepared in the train with such meticulous accuracy drop away... I know only that a steady river of quietness seems to be flowing near me, that a great peace is penetrating the inner reaches of my being, and that my thought-tortured brain is beginning to arrive at some rest.”

However, my mind was restless regarding *A Razor’s Edge* and since I was impatient to read it, I launched into it alongside *A Search in Secret India*. Larry Darrell is one of several characters whose lives intertwine and whose stories are told in fairly great detail in *The Razor’s Edge*; Maugham appears in the novel as himself. After serving in the war, Larry returns to society seemingly at peace with the world. But as the novel reveals, he has no ambition to ‘become’ somebody, he is on an inward quest. This journey takes him to different parts of the world and through different experiences; eventually he finds himself at the ashram of a holy man who wears only a loin cloth and who speaks little, but he speaks to Larry’s soul. This is a poor and imprecise précis of a brilliant novel, but it only points to the terms of reference.

When, towards the end of the novel, Larry tells Maugham that the

It seems Somerset
Maugham visited
Ramanashrama and met
briefly with the Maharishi.

Paul Brunton was the pen name of Raphael Hurst who apparently introduced Indian spiritualism to the West and the West to yoga practices.

“greatest ideal man can set before himself is self-perfection”, the latter reacts sceptically, saying, “Can you for a moment imagine that you, one man, can have any effect on such a restless, busy, lawless, intensely individualistic people as the people of America?”

“I can try,” replies Larry. “It was one man who invented the wheel. It was one man who discovered the law of gravitation... If you throw a stone in a pond the universe isn’t quite the same as it was before... It may be that if I lead the life I’ve planned for myself it may affect others, the effect may be no greater than the ripple caused by a stone thrown in a pond, but one ripple causes another, and that one a third; it’s just possible that a few people will see that my way of life offers happiness and peace, and that they in their turn will reach what they have learnt to others.”

What Larry’s way of life is, requires a reading of the novel, and there is no doubt that some of Brunton’s characters have caused ripples that continue to remain in play. It seems Maugham visited Ramanashrama and met briefly with the Maharishi. Surely he was influenced by Brunton’s work; after all he published his novel some ten years after *A Search in Secret India*. The way the two books came together for me is nothing short of a miracle.

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

Gift of Life for Assam's children

Kiran Zehra



Little Ekbal Hussain being treated for congenital cardiac disorder.

We did not know that heavy breathing and a fast heartbeat were symptoms of congenital heart disease,” says Manika Baruah of Billpurai village in interior Assam. She took her one-year-old daughter, Taposhi Baruah, to a local healthcare centre but nothing helped and one day the child fell unconscious while playing and had to be rushed to a hospital in Tezpur.

When the doctor said that Taposhi required a heart surgery to treat a congenital abnormality, Manika felt lost and hopeless. “We could not afford the cost of a surgery,” she says. The cardiologist told the family about Rotary’s ‘Gift of Life’ initiative that facilitates free heart surgeries for children up to 18 years, and put them in touch with the Rotary Club of Greater Tezpur, D 3240.

A worried Manika met Shivani Tiberwal, the coordinator for the Gift of Life initiative of the club. Shivani says that the families of the children who need surgeries are extremely poor and come from remote or small villages. “They have never travelled anywhere and cannot speak any other language fluently except their mother tongue. It was very difficult for us

to convince them that they will be safe and that we had no hidden motive. They weren’t ready to believe that someone who wasn’t even a far-off relative would fund such an expensive surgery.”

After gaining their trust and convincing the families, eight children including Taposhi from rural Assam were sent for heart surgery to Delhi. The club contributed ₹1.5 lakh for the initial diagnosis and tests, and travel for the patients and the accompanying family members. The accommodation, with three meals a day, was arranged by Manav Ashray, a non-profit in Delhi. The cost of the surgery and post-surgical care were covered by a global grant for the Gift of Life project by RC Delhi East End, D 3011, and TRF.

All the eight children were successfully treated. “My child has returned home healthy and happy,” says Taposhi’s mother, adding that the Rotarians “were not my family or friends, not even people

I know. But, they reached out to me and gave my child a new life. Thank you, Shivani M'am, and thank you Rotary."

Having suffered from congenital heart disease herself, Shivani says, "I could associate with the pain of both the parent and child, and wanted to help these children." She thanks Rtn Kiran Joshi from RC Shillong, D 3240, for having introduced her to this project at their district conference last year. "This project is beyond borders, caste, creed, religion, race and colour. Because every week, a minimum of three children from India and

overseas are operated upon under Gift of Life," she adds.

"The aim of this initiative is to reduce the economic and physiological burden faced by families of children with congenital heart problems and help children live a happy and healthy life," says AC Peter, National Coordinator of the Gift of Life Project. From the main diagnosis to finalising the hospital and keeping the identification of a "Rotary patient" confidential, Gift of Life does everything to ensure "the safety of the child." ■



Taposhi Baruah with her father at the hospital room.

Jaipur Rotary's show of solidarity

Team Rotary News

In a significant display of solidarity and fellowship, five Rotary clubs of District 3054 — Jaipur Metro, Jaipur East, Jaipur Heights, Jaipur Mahanagar and Jaipur City — had their joint installation with the chief guest RIDE Dr Bharat Pandya administering the oath to the newly-elected presidents and secretaries.

Over 250 Rotarians along with family

members were present on the occasion. Pandya, in his address, urged Rotarians to take up "service projects and be the inspiration for all to serve the society." He praised the clubs for showing such unity and expressed confidence they would repeat such joint installations in future too.

K L Jain, the senior-most Rotarian

of D 3054, was the event chairman and was assisted by co-convener D S Bhandari, charter president of RC Jaipur Metro. Thirty-five new members were inducted by the five clubs on the occasion and a few service projects were also announced.

Pandya distributed uniforms and school kits to 300 schoolchildren, a project undertaken by RC

Jaipur Metro. While RC Jaipur Mahanagar installed a water cooler in a district court at Bani Park.

An MoU was signed between RC Jaipur Heights and Shyam Nagar Vikas Samiti to set up a Physiotherapy and Dialysis Centre at a cost of ₹2 lakh. RC Jaipur City promised to take up a tree plantation drive on either side of Drayavati River during this Rotary year. ■



RIDE Bharat Pandya with the new presidents and secretaries of five Rotary clubs in Jaipur.



RC Kumbakonam Central — D 2981

Specially designed footwear worth ₹50,000 were given to leprosy patients at the Sacred Heart Hospital. Lunch was provided for 200 patients at the hospital.

RC Tiruchengode Hi-tech — D 2982

The club gave a range of utility items such as stainless steel plates, stationery etc in various government schools for the benefit of the students. A dental check-up camp was also organised for the children.



RC Godavari Palakol — D 3020

A medical check-up camp organised by the club benefitted 600 people from 35 villages around Palakol, a town in coastal Andhra Pradesh. Medicines worth ₹ 50,000 were distributed to the needy.

RC Madurai — D 3000

A vocational training centre was constructed at a cost of ₹7.6 lakh to provide tailoring courses for underprivileged women. The members donated 15 sewing machines for the centre which will train 120 women every quarter.



Matters

RC Bhusawal Railcity – D 3030

Under the Joy of Giving project, the club members visited a government primary school at Mushaltanda, a tribal village, and provided stationery, umbrellas, tiffin boxes, snacks and toothpaste to the students. The gifts brought a smile on the face of children.



RC Ajmer Metro — D 3053

An IAS officer Namit Mehta, Commissioner, Ajmer Development Authority, was inducted into the club in the presence of DG Priyesh Bhandari. The new member hails from Jodhpur.



RC Udhampur — D 3070

A five-day eye check-up and surgical camp was held, in partnership with RC Rajouri, at the District Civil Hospital, Rajouri. Cataract surgery was performed for 150 patients, including a 15-year-old girl who was blind due to traumatic cataract.

RC Shahabad Markanda – D 3080

Fifteen large umbrellas with the club's name and Rotary wheel embossed on them were installed to provide shade and comfort to the cobblers under the Project Chhaya. Passersby lauded the token gesture of the club.



District 3141

An MoU was signed with the Maharashtra State government, in the presence of the Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and PRID Ashok Mahajan, to financially support treatment of congenital heart disorder, cochlear implant and orthopaedic issues for underprivileged children.



RC Pandaripuram — D 3150

Sewing machines were distributed to needy women at the installation event of the new club president P Kotayya. The machines costing ₹75,000 were donated by Kalpataruvu Spinning Mills as part of its CSR endeavour.



RC Nellore — D 3160

An eye camp was organised, in association with Reddyjana Seva Sangham, at Penchalakona village in which nearly 100 people were screened for ailments. Corrective surgeries were performed and spectacles were distributed for the needy. Stationery and school-bags were distributed to students of a government primary school at Guntakatta village.



RC Moodbidri — D 3181

Water purifiers were handed over to the government schools to ensure safe and clean drinking water to the students.



RC Kadur — D 3182

School bags, notebooks and stationery kits were distributed to the students in a government school in Y Siddaralli village. Club President K H Srinivas was present along with other Rotarians.



RC Trichur Central — D 3201

Relief assistance in the form of bedsheets, towels, soap, rice and other provisions were given to over 850 flood victims who had taken shelter in a government school. Some members contributed both in cash and kind.



Matters

RC Tirupur South — D 3202

IPDG PM Sivashankaran inaugurated a waiting shelter, built at a cost of ₹2 lakh, at the District Government Hospital. The new facility will be of use to the public visiting the hospital.



RC Sivakasi Central — D 3212

The club distributed notebooks worth ₹10,000 to school students in the town. The club also donated rice bags worth ₹4,000 to an old-age home along with educational assistance of ₹8,000 for four students.



RC Vellore North — D 3231

Cots with mattresses and pillows were donated to a primary health centre at Tharapadavedu village in Katpadi. The cots will be used to treat nearly 250 pregnant women at the centre and also in the breast-feeding of infants.



RC Gangtok South — D 3240

Handwash stations and water filters were installed and benches and cleaning material were provided by the club to Aho Kishan Secondary School in East Sikkim with the help of district funds.



RC Belur — D 3291

Scholarship and books to students and raising funds for buying sewing machines for needy women marked the club's new year installation programme. PRIP Rajendra Saboo was the chief guest and DG Mukul Sinha the guest of honour.

Compiled by V Muthukumaran
Designed by L Gunasekaran

Kiran Zehra

In its fifth successful year *Vaellai Illa Pattadhari* (jobless graduate), a job expo conducted by the Rotary Club of Madurai Next Gen, D 3000, has changed the lives of 5,000 jobless youth.

The average membership age of this club is under 45 years and its members believe in addressing “the pressing issues and unemployment faced by our youth. Youngsters today graduate with multiple degrees and still cannot find work that pays enough to sustain a decent lifestyle. Jobs offered to fresh graduates with no experience pay little,” says Amar Vora, the club’s IPP.

While online recruitment is the in thing these days, “most of those who are seeking employment in Madurai are first-generation graduates. We celebrate individuals from low-income families who graduate despite all

odds. But what next?” asks Vora, adding that “it is difficult to get them to apply online because the concept is new and most of them need to be guided.” In the last five years the club has collected enough data and plans to start an online portal next year.

Along with the Rotaractors of Pandian Saraswathi Yadav Engineering College, Madurai, a team of 12 Rotarians began working on the job fair to identify employers. College recruitment cells were contacted and posters sent out through social and print media about the career fair.

HCL, Honeywell and Solamalai were among the 35 companies that participated in the fair. In less than four hours 1,200 job seekers walked in for registration. A guidance session was organised and the employers were happy to connect with their potential



employees without shelling out mega bucks for advertisements, adds Vora.

About 100 graduates received their appointment letter on the spot. The project has gained popularity in D 3000 and will be hosted in different cities within the Rotary district. ■



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When autobiographies fall flat



TCA Srinivasa Raghavan

Those who read autobiographies will be familiar with what I am about to say, namely, that there are two types of these: the reflective ones and the one-damn-thing-after-another ones. The former are the best; the latter the worst. I mean, after all, you read an autobiography for the insights the great achievers can provide, not for a chronological narration of their lives which, when the achievers are not going about achieving, are as humdrum as yours and mine.

The worst offenders, I have concluded, are the civil servants who use their autobiographies to explain and justify why they messed up. So I have stopped reading them. That leaves, for me at least, cricketers, economists, politicians and judges. And therein lies a peculiar paradox. For example, as far as cricketing ability goes, there is no comparison between Sanjay Manjrekar and Sachin Tendulkar. But while the former produced a wonderful autobiography, the latter's book is deadly dull. In batting, they were the exact opposite: Manjrekar was quite a boring batsman and Sachin an absolute marvel. The exception is David Gower who was a batting genius and has written a wonderful autobiography as well.

It is not just the players who have insights from the stories they tell. The umpires also have many. Of all of them, Dickie Bird's is probably the best. He has terrific stories from his long career as an umpire which

started in 1974. The best is from the 1983 World Cup Final, which India won. He says around the 15th over — yes, as early as that — Kapil Dev told him India was going to win the match. Bird asked him why. Kapil said because the West Indies were taking it very easy. Bird didn't believe him. But in the end, that's exactly what happened.

Of the other four categories — politicians, civil servants, judges, and economists — only a few are reflective. Irritatingly, most of them tend to be boastful, either in an understated way or a loud one. Considering they have all been involved in making India what it is, they rarely discuss the choices that confronted them, and how they finally chose one course of action over all the other options. Civil servants, for the most part, simply air their grievances about their careers. This could be because they rarely get any recognition, which must hurt. But there is one

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redeeming feature: because they are faceless, civil servants never get any public criticism either. So they make a mess and move on to some other job to make another mess.

Politicians, however, are closely watched and they get a lot of abuse. But rarely do they get any recognition or adulation, which is a pity because the majority of them indeed do a lot of good work. But it is in the nature of things, possibly in the nature of power, that only their misdeeds receive attention, hence the need to boast.

Many judges have written their life stories and for the most part, if that sort of thing interests you, these stories are fascinating. But in the last twenty years or so, the quality of their writing has deteriorated. Nor do many of them write about how they arrived at a particular conclusion. But this could be because they have already provided this in their judgements. The only problem is that judgements are extremely tedious because Indian judges deliver such long judgements — often, as I say, in very bad English.

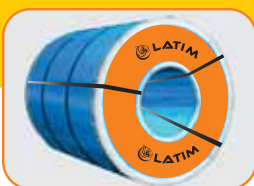
As for economists, very few of them write autobiographies, which is very surprising considering they always think that the world goes around because of them. Nor, for that matter, do other academics from the diverse disciplines. I asked my wife who is an academic why this was so. She said "Oh, that's easy. They are waiting for someone to write their biographies!" ■



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2018-19



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The last date of submission of videos is **May 31, 2019**.

Please submit your video entries to Rotary News Trust online at:
rotaryprojectsvideo@gmail.com

You may also mail in your entries to:

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