



ROTARY CLUB OF BEHALA

VOL:LVIII-ISSUE 04
05 AUGUST 2021

Private Circulation Only

MAITREE



MEMBERSHIP

A group of raised hands of different colors,
to symbolize both union and diversity.

AUGUST : MEMBERSHIP & NEW CLUB DEVELOPMENT MONTH

Our Leadership 2021-22



Shekhar Mehta
RI President



Prabir Chatterjee
District Governor



Soumjojit Mukherjee
President



Debarshi Dutta Gupta
Secretary

Editorial Team



Dr Siddhartha Chakraborty
Editor



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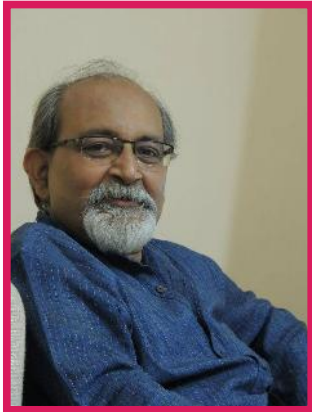
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EDITORIAL



Siddhartha Chakraborty
Editor 21-22

Welcome to August - Rotary Membership month.

For any organisation to grow - or even survive - a constant growth in number is a mandatory prerequisite, to offset the ill effects of retrogression due to disease, death or decamping of its members over time. Rotary is no exception, with the membership remaining stagnant at 1.2 million over last 20 years - thanks to failure of retention.

RI President Rtn Shekhar Mehta has a grandiose plan of 1.3 million members, and had threw the month-long Paul Harris Challenge. Here he is, in an article from Rotary News, summarising the experience and foretelling the importance of a hybrid club in the coming days.

Change is a sign of life. Innovations in running a club is one of crucial aspects encouraged by RI. The experience of two clubs innovating ways in membership make for a very interesting read, especially for a club like us.

One of our Past Presidents, Rtn Prasunjit Mukherjee, who was among the inspiring idols to the Rotaractors - three of whom have subsequently joined us - are here in the feature of "RCB & Me".

03 Maitree

That reminds us of the talk by PP Rtn Krishnendu Bhattacharjee on his journey through various organisations, delivered at the last RCM. Here is a report.

And in the segment of "Down Memory Lane" we can look back to the induction of few 'new' members in the club - fresh with dreams, full of enthusiasm.

Induction of lady members and Women Empowerment are among the focus areas of RIP Shekhar Mehta. One of us shares his experience of coming to understand how a 'common man' of our great country looks at 50% of the population.

Enjoy Maitree.
Enjoy Rotary.

Today's Speaker

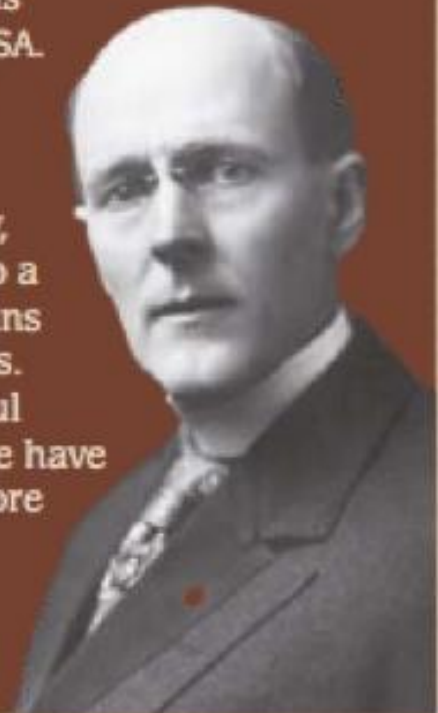


Ms Jayita Saha, noted Clinical Psychologist, Speaking on "Mental health during ongoing pandemic."

THE LEADER

REMEMBERING PAUL P HARRIS

Paul Harris, the father of Rotary Movement, was born on April 19, 1868 at Racine, Wisconsin, USA. When he passed away on January 27, 1947, he left behind for mankind a rich legacy of fellowship and brotherhood for international understanding and service to humanity. To-day, the seed he sowed in 1905, has blossomed into a large tree having more than 1.2 million Rotarians having 33,000 clubs in more than 200 countries. We fondly remember him and pay our respectful homage to him on this auspicious day when we have stepped into another Rotary year to make it more eventful & meaningful.



Paul P. Harris (1868-1947)
Founder of Rotary



THE FOUR-WAY TEST

The Four-Way Test is a nonpartisan and nonsectarian ethical guide for Rotarians to use for their personal and professional relationships. The test has been translated into more than 100 languages, and Rotarians recite it at club meetings:

Of the things we think, say or do

- Is it the TRUTH?
- Is it FAIR to all concerned?
- Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
- Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

many many happy returns of the day

5th August : Rtn Amit Roy

7th August : PP Rtn Prabir Roy

10th August : PP Rtn Aniruddha Gupta

11th August : Darpan, son of PP Rtn Deepnath Roy Chowdhury

13th August : Sourav, son of PP Rtn Krishnendu Bhattacharjee

14th August : PP Rtn Dipak Kumar Mitra

18th August : Ms. Rachna, spouse of PP Rtn Prasunjit Mukherjee

19th August : PP Rtn Deepnath Roy Chowdhury

21st August : Dr Sudipta, spouse of PP Rtn Dr Siddhartha Chakraborty

22nd August : Alekhya, son of IPP Rtn Sugata Majumdar



Rotary International Supports Covid Vaccination



Help us to help you - Get Vaccinated.

Care for the people around you.

Vaccination is safe and effective, get vaccinated now.

Wear Mask, Wash Hands, Maintain Safe Distance.

Rotary India's Covid Vaccination Task Force

TODAY

**2600th
Regular Club
Meeting**

**7:00PM
Zoom Virtual**

We Are At

facebook

**CLICK HERE TO
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Club Innovation: New Membership Categories Attract New Members

When membership dropped below 20, the Rotary Club of Central Ocean Toms River, New Jersey took a leap of faith by offering a radically different membership structure to retain and attract members. The risk has paid off with a membership increase of 61 percent in two years.

When Mike Bucca took over as membership chair of the Rotary Club of Central Ocean in July 2015, he knew the club had a problem. Membership was down to 18 and dwindling. Bucca persuaded club leaders to look seriously at membership.

The Rotary Club of Central Ocean Toms River, New Jersey, is a diverse club with a nearly equal number of men and women ages 30 to 89. The club has a robust list of projects because members believe it is important to be directly involved in service. Members have tackled nine projects (and counting) during the 2017–18 Rotary year by breaking into smaller groups to work on multiple projects at the same time. Members in 2015: 18; Members in 2017: 29.

The club board held three membership summits where they discussed why people join Rotary and why they stay. The result was a proposal to dramatically alter the club's membership structure to attract new members by lowering the financial commitment.

“We want members to have a place in this club where they are contributing what they can – in time or finances,” Bucca explains. “It's really worked.”

The Rotary Club of Central Ocean still has standard and corporate memberships, in which a local corpo-

ration or business joins with a specified number of qualified employees serving as its designees. Members in both categories pay \$399 in dues every six months. The club also offers three alternative types of membership. The first is an introductory membership. New members can join at the rate of \$99 for the first six months and \$199 for the second. After the first year of membership, they pay the standard rate.

“When I joined, that was my biggest hesitation – the money,” says Bucca. “For \$99 I would have joined the first time I was asked and not three years later.”

The second membership offering is a discount to family members of existing members paying the standard rate. Family members can join for \$199 every six months, and that discount applies as long as another family member is paying the standard rate.

Again, Bucca drew from experience. “My wife and two other members' wives wanted to join the club, but the family could not afford it. But half price made sense, so we gained three members.”

The third type is called a friendship membership. This is designed for members who are interested in helping the club and taking part in projects, but cannot commit to meetings. Friendship members pay \$249 every six months.

“People felt guilty about not coming to meetings. This eliminates that,” Bucca says.

The results are clearly in favor of the new system. Membership climbed from a low of 18 in 2015 to 29 in 2017. Many of the new members are in their 30s and many are women, says Bucca. “In 2013, I was the only member under 40; now we have seven. Our club was No.1 in the district for the number of

women who joined.”

Most importantly, the new members have invigorated the club. “Our club was dying; we were in trouble,” says Bucca. “We turned it around and are thriving.” –Susie Ma
[Source:<https://www.rotary.org/en/club-innovation-new-membership-categories>]

II

The Rotary Club of Philadelphia offers different levels of membership, including full, a la carte with "pay as you go" lunches, and a Happy Hour Club.

“When I joined there were around 120 members, but we bled members,” says Matthew Tae, past president of the Rotary Club of Philadelphia.

For some time, the officers had been tracking the demographics of the club, and it was clear that it was not attracting enough new younger members.

“We meet at the Union League, which is expensive relative to other Rotary clubs,” Tae explains. “These days, a person early in their career, in their 30s, can't get away for 90 minutes plus travel time at lunch on a workday. We needed a model where you could participate but not disrupt lunch hour.”

One solution was a la carte memberships, in which the dues are lower and the members pay separately for lunches they attend.

There was some concern that full-time members might move to the less expensive a la carte membership, but Tae points out that this idea doesn't pass The Four-Way Test. For some time, the club had been sustained on about a third of the members not showing up and still paying dues, effectively subsidizing the club. The a la carte model offered a more equitable distribution of costs.



Rotary Club of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA Website: philadelphiarotary.org/
Members: 53, Full: 29, A la Carte: 13
Corporate: 1, Happy Hour Club: 8, Honorary: 2
History: Founded in 1912, this was the 19th club to be chartered and was home to two RI Presidents, Glenn Mead (1912–13), above left, and Guy Gundaker (1923–23). Projects include purchasing and distributing dictionaries, thesauruses, atlases, and library books to over 20 Philadelphia schools and supporting literacy initiatives.

The club also started a Happy Hour Club, which was originally just a chance for fellowship outside the lunchtime meetings. When that became an official membership option, it focused on local service. The Happy Hour Club meets once a month for a happy hour meeting and once a month for a service project during the day.

The club redesigned its webpage and uses social media aggressively. “We've upgraded the Facebook page,” says club membership chair Joan Batory. “We announce every meeting and have videos of the speakers when we can find them. So Facebook and the webpage have plenty of information.”

The club leadership recognizes that all these innovations must be evaluated carefully to assess their impact. “We have six months to get to target membership,” stresses Tae. “When you go low on membership cost, you have to look at whether you are getting new members at the cost of not covering your expenses.”

The early signs are good, with a number of new members in the pipeline and inquiries coming to Batory on a regular basis.

“I'm getting messages on Facebook,

expressing interest in membership, in Rotaractors, in all the things we do.”

[Source:<https://www.rotary.org/en/club-innovation-membership-levels>]

WEARING YOUR ROTARY PIN

When you wear your pin people you know and work with will see that you are proud to be a Rotarian. They may even ask you about Rotary.

You might tell them that Rotary is a group of people who pool their resources and use their talents to serve their communities. That Rotarians' dedicate to serve is best expressed in our motto: Service Above Self.

Rotary



ROTARY & ME

Rotarian Prasunjit Mukherjee Story

Frankly I am not Rotary material. Never had seen myself as a Rotarian, even though my dad was a charter member of one of the biggest club in the zone and even though he could have become President, he never became one. Never had seen myself as a giving kind, specially the kind that entails giving beyond some money or some old clothes or books.

My surprise at being extended an invite by some very senior individuals and captains of industry and pillars of society was complete. Me??? Really?? And it was multiplied many times when this very proper trio of very nice gentlemen asked me to meet them at the Calcutta Club over a drink and some minor discussion. I was very sure. Eat the snacks. Get the two drinks. Decline. Get away. And again to my surprise this gentleman who ran a pretty big pharma set up asked me to join Rotary to party. Now that is a magic word to my ears. I am good at partying. No. I am very good at it. And here is a chance to party throughout the year. Great. Sign me in. And that is how the trio of Atin Da, Bacchu da and Debu da trapped me. And told me in their very suave manner that I will need to come over sometime every month and just do some adda and that's it. And my President, Swapan Marwaha promptly made me the editor in my first year which meant I had to go over every Thursday. My worst nightmare had come true. And because my office neighbour was a very serious Rotarian, he not only insisted I come along every week, he bummed a lift too off me. Talk about lack of justice in this world!!!

Over time I had gone through many such entrapments from some very nice people at Rotary Behala but I suffered through and made it alive. I was made attendance in charge the next year and I introduced attendance by phone, much to the discomfort of some. If the seniors threw a googly at me, I was learning to hit the ball right out of the park. And I learnt diplomacy. With such seniors, throwing tantrums was not an option. They saw right through it. And I realised that Rotary indeed is a lot of fellowship and fun.

I learnt there was a tribe of youngsters who formed our Rotaract and the tribe had gone bust. And with the help of another dynamic young member, Avijit Deb and under Sid Da's (a name I gave him which is still in use) guidance we managed to revive our Rotaract and make it a thriving entity. Which went bust again. And revived it again to make it the dominant chapter in the district. And in the process made loads of young friends who would regularly bum cigarettes off me. Not to mention drop by to office to regularly take out twenty pages of print out for free. And bum some more cigarettes on their way back.

And became Secretary to a very sweet person who wants the best in everything..and everyone. Alas. He got me! Deepnath da had to work as President and Secretary for 6 months as I was doing live TV every day. And had to hear a lifetime of taunts from my wife who became Inner Wheel President before I became Rotary President. And then became President and pretty much moved the club from



Rtn Prasunjit Mukherjee as Secretary, Rotary Club of Behala.

the old Birla Planetarium venue to Mullik Guest House but held a fellowship every month, raised the highest amount, went off site for a meeting, visited new places, made loads of friends and had the best time ever. And suddenly one day the Principal of a school RCB had associated during my presidentship said in a meeting that in her eyes I had become the ideal Rotarian.

The cycle was complete. When it happened and how it happened I have no idea. But being a Rotarian is a calling that creeps up when you least expect it. And makes one a better person. A richer human being. And nowhere else does one get the opportunity to lead people who are far above us in every respect.

PP Prasunjit Mukherjee with spouse Ms. Rachna

A leadership opportunity like no other. And if the club is Behala toh baat hi kuuch alag haye. I THINK THE BIGGEST FAMILY IN 3291 and may the tribe increase. Some members left but remained great friends. Some members and great friends and guides we lost forever. Saw new people come in and make their place in the club. Became uncle from dada. And a new generation, a more dynamic generation emerge and beginning to take charge.

And today, whenever I need to bring in a new member I almost always use the trap Bachhu da laid on me. Want to party? Join the Rotary!!





BEYOND A CIVIL SOCIETY

PP Rtn (Dr) Siddhartha Chakraborty

“Valley bridge Batseri in Sangla valley of Kinnaur (HP) collapses : nine tourists from Delhi NCR are reported to be dead and three others are seriously injured” – the recent newsflash took me back 25 years in an instant.

Why not add a pleasure trip? I took my son along, planning to visit Kalpa in Himachal Pradesh – a less frequented area back then.

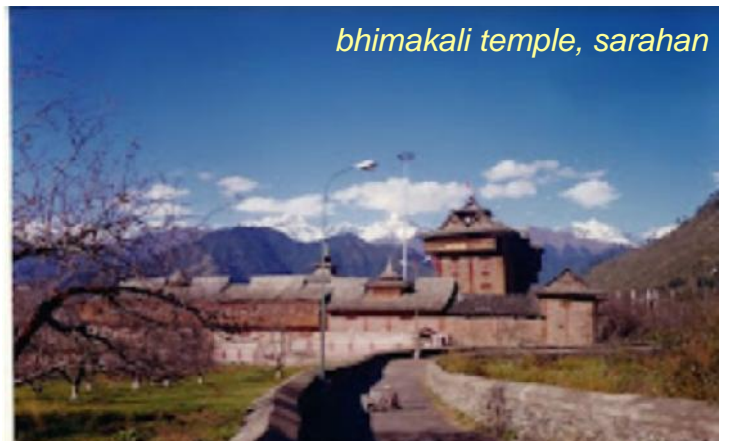
An early morning Shivalik Deluxe from Kalka ... picturesque landscape ... cute Shimla for a couple of days. Now, on way to Kalpa. The plan was for a leisurely trip, with a day or two at nice little nooks away from the highway, staying mainly in Tourist Rest Houses amid conifer and oak, maple and poplar, with a distant view of snow-capped Himalaya.



a bridge on way

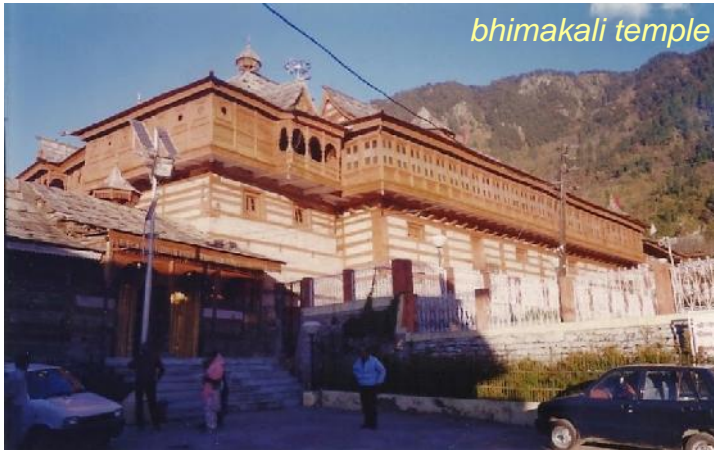
Narkanda. May be the site of Indo-Pak Shimla Agreement to a historian, or a skiing location to an enthusiast, but to me remains a spot where a bite in a green apple from roadside vendor sent a stream of nectar down my unsuspecting elbow to the amusement of my driver.

bhimakali temple, sarahan



It was 1997, and I had a conference to attend at Chandigarh.

Next point was beautiful Sarahan with the tourist bungalow hanging over the cliff, supported by few pillars, and the gorgeous wooden Bhimakali temple – one of 51 Shakti Peethas – nearby. Coming morning we would be off to Sangla.



Back then there was no tourist bungalow or recognised hotel at Sangla, only accommodation available on prior booking was an Adventure Tourism Camp and we had a tent booked.

But where is the camp ? Below the signage declaring its existence lay the valley with ruins of torn tents, mangled camp-cots, broken basins. A landslide. A couple of days ago, a local gentleman informed. Have we to miss a visit to Chitkul in the Baspal valley – the last village on the old Hindustan-Tibet trade route, and currently the last point in India one can travel to without a permit, and accessible only through Sangla ? A place with chamree gais roaming among few households with slanted roof of slate ? He pointed towards a building on an upper plane. “Try your luck.”



A mid-age gentleman was sitting idly in the portico. Yes, it is a hotel indeed. The landslide has robbed it of business, but lunch for three can definitely be arranged. Lodging ? No problem.

There was this small wooden room with arrangement of 'running hot water' (courtesy 'Kahani'). Enough for us.

After a hearty lunch of noodle and soup, I came out in the open to enjoy a smoke. He came along.

“Sab, aap kaha ka rahnewale hain? Dilli?”

“Nahi. Kalkatta.”

“Ai baap! Who toh bahot dur hai!!”. I nodded in agreement.

“Sab, aap kya kaam karte hain? Bizness?”

“Nahi. Nokri” I always try not to unnecessarily disclose my profession on my tours.

“Konsi depart?”

“Health.”

“Sab, aap dagdar hain?”

Had to admit.

“Sab, aapko kitne tankha milte hain?”

I could not lie to this simple man. It sounded real vulgar at the spot.

“Ai baap! Eeeetney!!” His face lit up with 1000 watt, eyes sparkled. Such a rayees admi has accepted to be his guest! What a luck !!

“Sab, woh aapka larka lagta hain?”

“Hna”

“Woh kya karte hain?”

“Engineering par raha hai.”

“Wah, wah! Baap dagdar, larka engineer. Bah! . . . Sab, maaji nehi ayee?”

I explained that she is looking after my doggies back home.

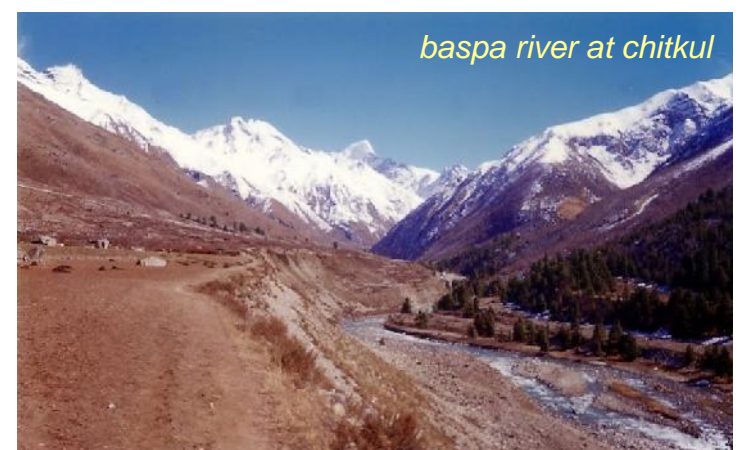
“Aur apka larki?”

I have no daughter. Informed him.

In flash of a moment that beaming face was covered with a dark cloud of sadness.

“Tst tst . . . apke ghar me lachhmi nahi hai sab? . . . tst tst . . .”

Today, as they talk of women empowerment and inducting lady members, that voice of a simple man back of beyond reverberates in my heart . . . “apke ghar me lachhmi nahi hai sab? . . . tst tst . . .”



DOWN THE MEMORY LANE

This section features some of most rewarding and memorable moments of Rotary Behala and its partners



PP Rtn Anirudha Gupta being welcomed by our seniormost member PP Rtn Pijush Ranjan Sengupta. 2005.



PDG Rajkumar Rajgaria inducting Rtn Vijay Kumar Fatehpuria – who will become a pillar to many of our club projects. July 2003.



PDG Rtn Siddhartha Sadhan Bose inducting Ex-Rtn Sumon Ganguly, who went on to become a virtual storehouse of Rotary information.



PDG Ravindra Prakash Sehgal pinning PP Rtn Anjan Kumar Bhowmick in July 2000.



PP Rtn Kaushik Bhattacharyya being inducted by PP Rtn Rajani Mukerji on 13th July 2013.



PP Rtn Manika Karmakar being inducted by our very own PDG Rtn Shyamal Datta. July 2003.

MINUTES OF THE 2599th RCM OF ROTARY CLUB OF BEHALA HELD AT ZOOM VIRTUAL PLATFORM ON 22nd JULY, 2021.

Club President Rtn Soumjojit Mukherjee welcomed all and called the meeting to order.

National anthem was led by PP Rtn (Dr) Siddhartha Chakraborty.

On request from the Chair, PP Rtn Debabrata Joardar and PP Rtn (Dr) Siddhartha Chakraborty expressed their views on the club programme on 1st July and the Installation Ceremony held on 6th. Both expressed their extreme satisfaction and congratulated President Soumjojit and his team.

President Soumjojit then briefed members about the District Project of 'Birangana' where the clubs will need to organise a two-day training programme of self-defence to girls in a batch of around 20, the District taking responsibilities for the trainers. President Soumjojit has already contacted our RCC at Chandanpiri and the Sonar Tari Ladies Cooperative of Rasapunja, and both are willing to organise it at their places.

A visit to Rasapunja has been planned to check the functioning of sanitary napkin vending machine, water purifier and the sewing training school, and also to assess formation of another RCC over there. Rtn Angshuman Bhattacharya has been requested to coordinate the programme.

As there is a thrust towards extending membership to ladies and young, the issue was discussed and Rtn Shuvranshu Mitra reported his discussion with PP Rtn Bollori

Mukerji, member of District Membership Committee. It has been decided to discuss the issue in next Board meeting.

The next Board Meeting will be held online on 30th July evening, and the next RCM on 5th August, followed by a guest lecture on 'Depression during the pandemic situation' by noted Clinical Psychologist Ms Jayita Saha.

Club Secretary Rtn Debarshi Dutta Gupta conducted club business. He informed members of the upcoming District projects like District membership Seminar on 24th July and talk on cervical cancer on 28th.

It was now the time for Speaker of the Day PP Rtn Krishnendu Bhattacharjee.

PP Rtn Krishnendu Bhattacharjee talked on his journey with many organisations, including his first love - Rotary.

On behalf of members of the club, PP Rtn Debabrata Joardar complimented PP Rtn Krishnendu.

The minutes of 2598th RCM of the club as published in Maitree of the day was confirmed.

President Soumjojit terminated the meeting after thanks from and to the chair.

Total Members : 34
Members Present : 24
Visiting Rotarians : 02
Guests : 04

TOTAL ATTENDANCE : 30