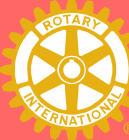


Rotary



Behala  
RI DISTRICT 3291

VOL : LVIII-ISSUE 09  
07 OCTOBER 2021

# MAITREE



**We Believe..**

## OCTOBER : ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY 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



PDRR Shuvratav Mitra  
Joint Editor



Shuvranshu Mitra  
Design & Execution

03 Editors Pen

04 4-Way Test

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A Passion



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**EDITOR'S DESK**



**Siddhartha Chakraborty**  
Editor 21-22

Welcome to October – the Rotary designated month of Economic and Community Development.

Soap operas do have their virtues. Thanks to a couple of popular mega-serials, we have come to know the life and time of Dr Kadambini Ganguly – one of the first lady doctors of India. But do we know of Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy from down south – the first lady graduate from Madras Medical

College and the first lady member of Legislative Council in the country, who dedicated her life to the betterment of women? Searchlight in this issue is on this great lady.

Ladies are the pivot of every family, we believe. Women Empowerment deserves a centerstage in any developmental programme of a community. So it became a primary focus in the vision of RIP Shekhar Mehta, and Independence Day this year was celebrated as Rotary Day of Service dedicated to this cause. But the idea has driven us over the years, and in 'Down Memory Lane' we look back to some of our efforts – two gracious ladies leading us in 2008-09 (incidentally, with another lady at the helm in the District) and also in 2015-16. And there had been many projects for ladies over the years. Happy memories indeed.


As we approach the festive season, Maitree wishes health and happiness to all its friends.

**OCTOBER IS**

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MONTH**

"To the world you may be one person; but to one person you may be the world."

Dr. Seuss

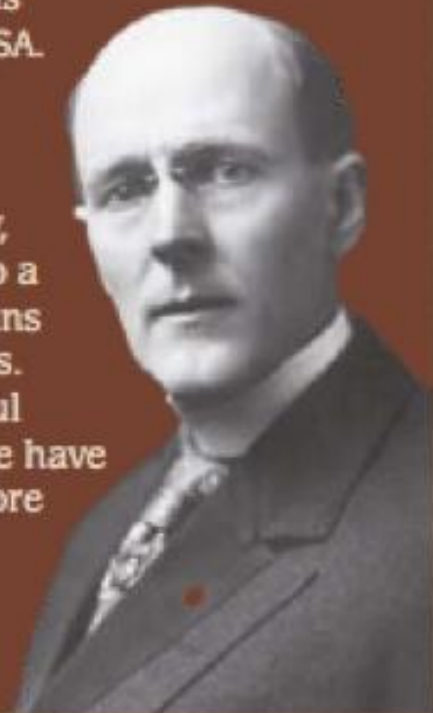
Rotary 

[www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org)

# 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

09th Oct : Secretary Rtn Debarshi Dutta Gupta

10th Oct : Rtn Shamshir Singh Kapany

11th Oct : Rohin son of PP Rtn Prasunjit Mukherjee

13th Oct : Hamandeep son of PP Rtn Amarjit Singh Thethi

16th Oct : Sayonee daughter of Rtn Susmit Bhattacharya

### Upcoming Club Events

10th October 2021, Sunday - New Clothes distribution on the occasion of Durga Puja to all the kids at Free To Be Kids Charitable Trust . Members are requested to join in numbers.

Rotary  
RID 3291



**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**

**2605th  
Regular Club  
Meeting**

**7:30PM  
Zoom Virtual**

We Are At

**facebook**

**CLICK HERE TO  
LIKE & FOLLOW**

# THE VISIONARY LADY WITH A PASSION

Mr S. Narayanaswami Iyer, the Principal of Maharaja's College at Pudukkottai of Madras Presidency – now a town in Tamil Nadu – had been ostracized by his family for the crime of marrying Chandrammal, a Devadasi lady. On 30th of July 1886, the couple was blessed with a girl whom they christened Muthulakshmi.

She started attending the local school, which she had to leave on attaining puberty. But study continued at home.



Narayanaswami Iyer and Chandramma along with their children. Muthulakshmi is seen holding a file in the picture.

After the Matriculation examination she applied for admission in Maharaja's College – a wish not welcome by local population because of her gender and background. But the enlightened Maharaja of Pudukkottai ignored these objections, admitted her to the college, and gave her a scholarship. Now she dreamt of becoming a doctor.

In 1907 she joined Madras Medical College, passing out in 1912 with several gold medals and prizes to



Muthulakshmi Reddy as a medical student.

her credit, and became the first lady House Surgeon in the Government Hospital for Women and Children in Madras.

It was during her work in this hospital that she developed close friendship with Sarojini Naidu and began to attend women's meetings. Here were ladies whose concerns about women's right touched a chord in her heart – she could easily correlate with her personal experience of the society treating her maternal family in her childhood. She also met and was influenced by Annie Besant and Mahatma Gandhi who persuaded her to devote herself to uplifting women and children.

She went to England for higher studies, came back and started medical practice. In the meantime, in 1914 she had married Dr Sundara Reddy with the provision that he promised to "always respect me as an equal and never cross my wishes", became well-known as Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy, and had a rewarding medical practice.



With husband and two sons.

In 1917 Annie Besant formed the Women's Indian Association, and Dr Reddy became one of the founding members along with Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Herabai Tata, Begum Hasrat Mohani and others, with an aim to liberate women from the deplorable condition they suffered in socio-economic and political matters.

In the year 1926, she attended the Paris International Congress of Women as a delegate, and in the next year gave up her practice in response to a request from the Women's Indian Association (WTA) to enter the Madras Legislative Council – becoming the first woman to be a member of any legislature in India – and subsequently elected as the first woman Deputy President of the Council.



The First lady Legislator.

But in 1930 she resigned from the Legislature in protest against the imprisonment of Mahatma Gandhi after the Salt March.

During her legislature days with persistent efforts she brought in the Anti-Polygamy Bill for the suppression of brothels and immoral trafficking of women and children which was passed in 1930. Her efforts led also to the establishment of a home for those rescued from brothels.

She fought hard for the removal of the Devadasi system that was widely prevalent in Tamil Nadu at that time. In support of the resolution, she met with and interviewed several hundred Devadasis across the Madras Presidency. The resolution became dormant after her resignation from the Council in 1930, but the Madras Devadasi (Prevention of Dedication) Bill was eventually passed in December 1947.

In the midst of the Devadasi debate in 1930 Dr. Reddy was approached by 3 girls from Namakkal, running away from being dedicated as Devadasis. She housed them while simultaneously attempting to put them into hostels and schools, failing miserably. This led her to establish the Avvai Home & Orphanage in 1931 to shelter, protect and educate the orphan girls, deserted women – irrespective of caste, creed or social status.

At Avvai Home



Of the three initial girls, one ultimately became a Teacher, another a Doctor and the third a Staff Nurse. The Home in Adyar, Chennai now also houses an English medium HS School and a Teachers' Training Institute.

She led the agitation for the municipal and legislative franchise for women, set up a scholarship for non-dominant caste girls and opened hostels for Muslim girls, and introduced a scheme of free education for girls up to class eight.

As the only lady member of the Hartog Education Committee of 1929, she travelled extensively across the country to study the progress of women's education and suggested many improvements.



Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy as a member of the Hartog Commission.

Her resignation from the Legislature in 1930 only freed her to devote more time to social causes. She continued as editor of Stree Dharma, an official organ of the Women's India Association from 1931 to 1940, became President of All-India Women's Conference and also edited Roshini, an important journal of AIWC, and was the Chairman of the All-Asian Conference of Women till 1935. At the age of 68, Muthulakshmi became

the first Chairperson of the State Social Welfare Board and brought about many improvements and additions to the Children's Aid Society.

But the concerns for health and hygiene never left her.

As a legislator she initiated measures for the betterment of medical facilities for slum dwellers and was actively involved in the construction of women's toilets, and recommended systematic medical inspection of students in all schools and colleges run by municipalities as well as other local bodies. The government also accepted her proposal to open up a children's section in all maternity hospitals. Then she passed a resolution to set up separate hospitals for women and children, and the first children's hospital in India, the "Prince of Wales hospital for sick children", now renamed the Kasturba Gandhi Hospital for Women and Children at Triplicane, Chennai is a monument to that effort.

During her address at the Golden Jubilee celebration of the Madras Medical College in 1935 she



Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy welcomes Jawaharlal Nehru to lay the foundation stone of the Cancer Institute.



expressed her desire to start a hospital for cancer patients. The Women's Indian Association started a Cancer Relief Fund, and the foundation stone for Adyar Cancer Institute was laid by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1952. The second such institute in India, the pioneer being Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai. The hospital, which started functioning on 18 June 1954, is currently a world-renowned institution and offers treatment to approximately 80,000 cancer patients a year.



A bust of Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy at the Cancer Institute, Chennai

She continued to fight for her cause till the end of her days and never let anything stand in her way. Even at the age of 80, she was energetic and vibrant. Her human preoccupations took her away from politics and she stuck to her mission and Gandhian ways.

She was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1956 by the Government of India in recognition of her meritorious services to the nation, and on 30 July 2019, Google showed a Doodle celebrating what would have been her 133rd birthday.

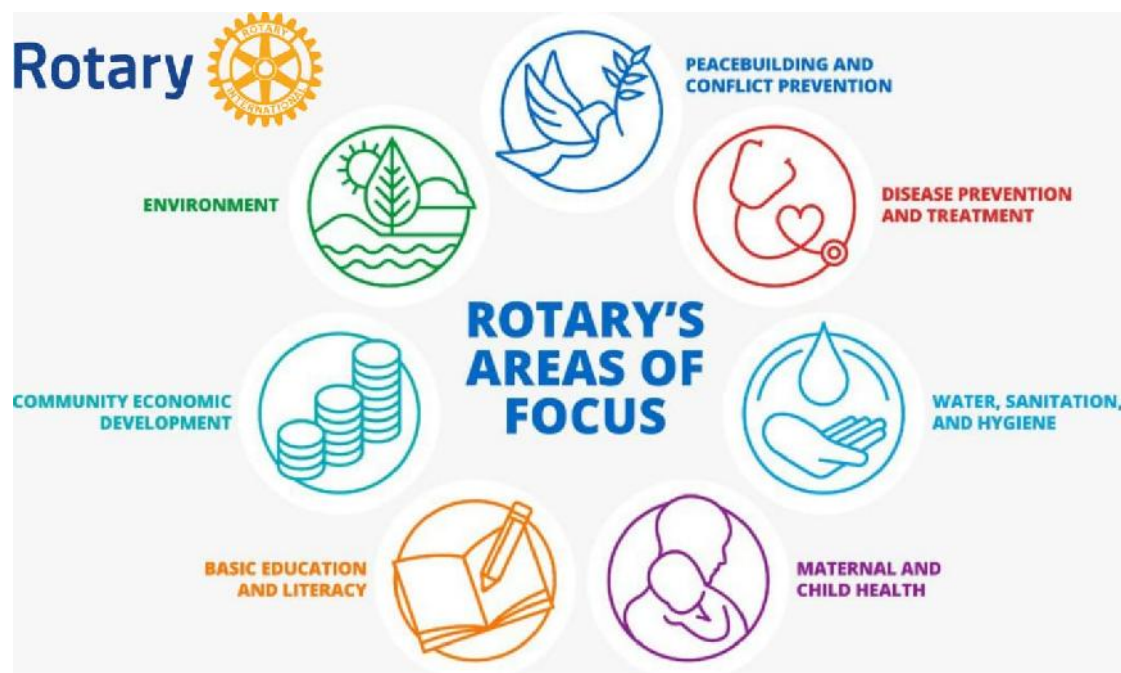
Our regards to the great activist and social reformer.

Sources : [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muthulakshmi\\_Reddy](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muthulakshmi_Reddy)

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<https://www.firstpost.com/art-and-culture/remembering-muthulakshmi-reddy-doctor-and-feminist-who-led-the-battle-against-indias-caste-based-misogyny-8653821.html>

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## FAMILY MATTERS



Rtr Sanandi Das daughter of PP Rtn Indu Bhusan Das graduated from Jadavpur University in B.Com. Congratulations to her.

## A Visit to RCC Sri Ramkrishna Ashrama at Chandanpiri

There they were, savouring hot singara and jilepi by the roadside. Club President Rtn Soumjojit Mukherjee led this team of President Elect Rtn Bikash Dutta, PP Rtn Anirudha Gupta with Mrs Urmi Gupta, PP Rtn Ajoy Krishna Chatterjee with Mrs Indrani Chatterjee, PP Rtn Amaresh Bhattacharya and Sikha Bhattacharya, PP Rtn Siddhartha Chakraborty and two distinguished guests from Gouri Gupta Trust – Sri Biswadip Gupta and Sri Raja Sarkar.

Enjoying the packed breakfast and surrounding greeneries, the team reached the RCC Sri Ramkrishna Ashrama at Chandanpiri amid customary welcome. Refreshing green coconut followed, and then it was time for business.

Invited local ladies were, in the meantime, being demonstrated the usage of the sanitary napkin vending machines, and now there was the formal handing over of a pair of them – one for the RCC building, other one for adjoining office of the Self Help

10 Maitree



Groups. The Strassenburg Pharmaceuticals Limited sponsored both the machines, courtesy PP Rtn Deepnath Roychowdhury.

The Gouri Gupta Trust has been helping the education of girl students with annual stipends to a number of them through our Club, and this was the fifth episode of the programme. Two students present on the occasion were handed over their cheques, and cheque for other twenty students was handed over to the President of Sri Ramkrishna Ashrama by Sri Biswadip Gupta.

The resident boys had their share of joy too. A good quality football was gifted to them, along with a bagful of fruits and savouries.

Then started the session of discussion, learning of their problems and aspirations and sharing our suggestions. Mrs Indrani Chatterjee, Past District Chair of Inner Wheel District 329 and Mrs Urmi Gupta, Past President of Inner Wheel Club of Behala actively participated in the discussion, offering very useful suggestions.

After a hearty lunch with garden-fresh vegetables and local fish, the team took leave of the wonderful people. The majority of the team went back home, but a few took a left turn on the State Highway to visit Bakkhali. They turned back after spending about an hour and having enjoyed a good coffee in earthenware at Diamond Harbour, and reached home through thronging crowd busy with Puja shopping in Behala even after nine in the evening.

A nice mix of business with pleasure. It made our day.



Singara and jilepi on way to Chandanpiri



One of the two sanitary napkin vending machines handed over



Local ladies being demonstrated use of the machine.



Formal handing over the machines.



Stipend being handed over to a girl student admitted in a college after clearing the HS Exam.



Another fresher receiving her stipend.



Cheque for 20 girl students being handed over to President of the RCC by Sri Biswadip Gupta of Gouri Gupta Trust.



A detour to the sea . . .



Happy kids with their football.



Coffee break at Diamond Harbour on the return leg.

# A report on the visit to Adult Literacy Centre at Nepalgunge

PP Rtn Kaushik Bhattacharyya

We met in front of Genexx Valley at about 10:30.

Club President Rtn Soumjojit Mukherjee, Rtn Amit Roy and his daughter Anupriti along with me and Sunetra proceeded to Nepalgunj FTBK. Mr Binu was waiting for us in front of Genexx Valley and he accompanied us through the adventurous road with water bodies on both sides of a 10 ft road!

The arrangements made at the FTBK venue was commendable. The kids were waiting for us with coupons and some were accompanied with their mothers as well. We carried the Rotary District Literacy kits. And along with the kits were some education aids. There was a pencil box with a pencil, eraser, ruler, slate-pencil. There were two writing note books. There was a slate. And the Bag looked very attractive. The kids loved the gifts from RCB. Incidentally, all the kits were sponsored by Rtn Amit Roy.

The Kits were handed over to the kids in a disciplined manner. All of us present there handed over the kits to the kids. President Rtn Soumjojit addressed the gathering with a short speech.

Then, Rtn Amit Roy was formally handed over the Membership kit by me and president did the pinning.

A cheque for the regular teacher salary was handed over by the president to Mr Binu and we left the venue by 12:15 pm.



Back to Home..



Happy Club President with happy students.



The team with some of the little students.



Gift to a cute kid by an angelic young lady.

# DOWN THE MEMORY LANE

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



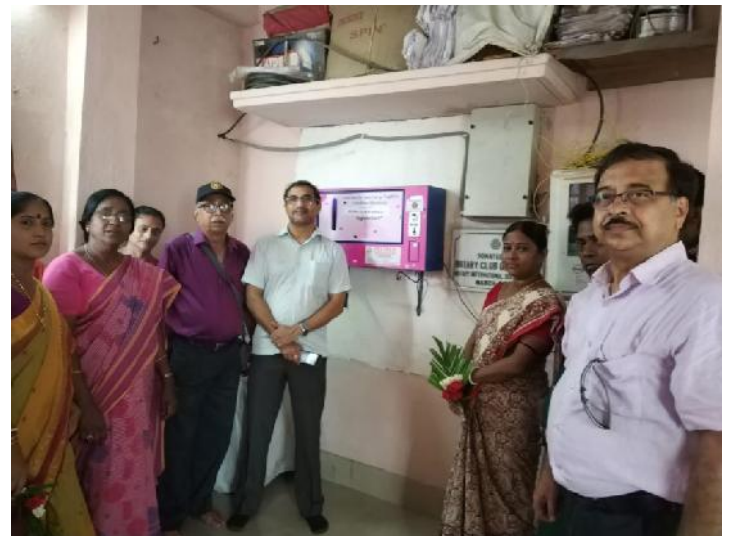
Club President Rtn Manika Karmakar taking over the mantle.



Club President Rtn Rita Das exchanging flags at a Joint Meeting.



E-learning at Baidyapara High School, Behala.



Sanitary napkin vending machine being installed at Sonartari Cooperative of SHGs at Rasapunja on 21-06-2019.



Sewing machine provided at RCC Nawoabad, Nalgora. 2006.



Scholarship to 25 girl students of the area surrounding Chandanpiri.



Shekhar Mehta

A quarter of the Rotary year is now behind us. I am sure you are helping Rotary to grow more and do more. And I hope you have already done your part for the Each One, Bring One initiative by introducing one person to Rotary.

Do you ever think about your earliest days as a Rotarian? I often do — because those first moments of discovering the power of service shaped who I am today. When I joined my Rotary club, our efforts focused on India's rural communities, where people were living without toilets, getting their drinking water from the same pond they bathed in, and sending their children to outdoor classrooms set up under a tree. The nearest health care provider often was miles away — and the services were inadequate. But after Rotary clubs carried out some service projects, the villages had toilets, clean drinking water, a classroom for early learning, and a nearby health care center.

The spark that Rotary kindled within me forced me to look beyond myself and embrace humanity. It

## RI Presidents Message

October 2021

made service a way of life and led me to a guiding principle I still stand by: Service is the rent I pay for the space I occupy on Earth.

If you feel the need to reignite the spark of service in yourself or your club, October — Community Economic Development Month — is a great time to do so. When we work to improve the lives of people in underserved communities — through, for example, projects that provide vocational training and access to financial resources — we help build and sustain local economic growth.

The need is great. According to the United Nations, 9 percent of the world's population — that's 700 million people, a majority of them in sub-Saharan Africa — live on less than \$1.90 a day. By supporting strong community development as well as entrepreneurs, we can help improve conditions for people in that region and others.

Your club can also promote economic development in your own community by expanding vocational training opportunities through local schools and community colleges, partnering with lenders to improve access to financial services, or working with a nonprofit that provides resources to entrepreneurs and connects them with the business community.

Of course, developing strong communities is impossible without

strong public health. On 24 October, World Polio Day, we'll celebrate our tremendous progress in the effort to eradicate polio. But we also know the fight is not over. We still need your help raising funds and awareness to ensure that all children are immunized against polio. Please don't forget to activate your clubs on that important day and

encourage them to donate here: [endpolio.org/world-polio-day](http://endpolio.org/world-polio-day).

Service has been rewarding for me throughout my life. I know the same is true for many of you. Join me this month in becoming a good tenant of our planet by helping others to better themselves and their communities. Together, we can Serve to Change Lives.



Handing over the 'Induction Kit' physically by PP Rtn Kaushik Bhattacharyya.

Rtn Amit has been very active from the start of his rotary journey. We are proud to say our newest family member is among the most active group of rotarians in Rotary Behala presently. We wish for his long rewarding journey with rotary.

Pinning of our New Rotarian Amit Roy, by President Soumjojit. Rtn Roy was officially inducted online on 3rd June 2021.



# Our Newest Active Force

## MINUTES OF THE 2604th RCM OF ROTARY CLUB OF BEHALA HELD AT ZOOM VIRTUAL PLATFORM ON 30th SEPTEMBER, 2021.

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

The meeting started with National Anthem led by President Rtn Soumjojit.

On request from the Chair, Club CICO PP Rtn Siddhartha Chakraborty launched the new Mobile App of the club with a PowerPoint presentation on installing the App. The App is available on android devices, and the developers will be requested to arrange for an iOS version too.

President Soumjojit informed about two programmes coming up soon.

1). On Saturday the 2nd October there will be a visit to RCC Ramkrishna Ashrama, Chandanpiri. There would be two projects :

a) A cheque of Rs one lakh towards scholarship to 25 girl students of the surrounding area will be handed over. Like previous years, this will be sponsored by Gouri Gupta Trust. Sri Biswadip Gupta from the Trust will accompany us in the trip.

b) Two sanitary napkin vending machines will be donated to ladies' Self Help Groups attached to the RCC. PP Rtn Deepnath Roychowdhury will sponsor both the machines.

2) On Sunday the 3rd October there will be a visit to our Adult Education Centre at Free To Be Kids centre at Krishnarampur in the Nepalgunge area. Forty Literacy Kits – comprising of school bag, notebooks, pencils etc – will be distributed to school kids. Rtn Amit Roy is sponsoring the entire project.

Club Secretary Rtn Debarshi Dutta Gupta conducted club business.

Next RCM will be held online on 7th October.

The minutes of 2603rd RCM of the club as published in Maitree of the day was confirmed.

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

**Total Members : 34**  
**Members Present : 14**

