

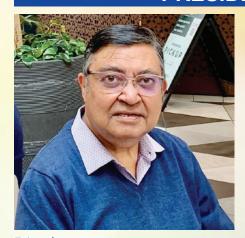


R. I. President: Jennifer Jones

**District Governor: Ashok Kantoor** 

# ROTARY CLUB OF DELHI SOUTH NEWSLETTER "ASHOKA" August, 2022

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO THE CLUB



Friends,

As we come to the end of the 2nd month of the Rotary Year, we can look back with satisfaction on the enjoyable Musical Evening we had on 28th August. While the club has known about the activities of its Musical club over the last 10 years, last week we were able to present a great musical experience to the entire club. Not only did we have 65 members and spouses joining the event, but many of them participated in actual singing, and even dancing. This was such a grand success that we may have to repeat it again, may be more than

once, during the rest of the year.

Our members and friends have already started their contributions to the **Beti ko Shiksha aur** Samman and Gift of Life projects; the Leprosy Camps (and Active Case Finding) are in full swing, and we have already taken on two new members, Vivek Gaur and Mrs. Pomela Prasad. We have looked back at our successes in the past and re-started our association with addressing Clubfoot Disabilities, our old association with the NGO Nai Disha, and 2 primary schools in Katwaria Sarai. And, we are continuing our Literacy project with Sankalp Society.

Of course we have already had the Installation of the Club's 54th President and the Leadership Team and the District Governor's visit, the installation of the 51st Rotaract President and team (in the oldest Rotaract Club in the District) and the installation of the Interact Club at Birla Vidya Niketan. We have also had a felicitation event for new Paul Harris Fellows and many PHFs who have got ++

PHF Lapel pins. In fact we are now on to taking up the plans for the new year, including thinking of long term projects in the areas of Leprosy Control, Child Heart surgeries, and taking on the lead in District projects in Water and Clubfoot.

We are actively involved with the District in many areas, with 10 Club members, Rotaractors and Interactors taking on different positions, including a Young Interactor making it to the Interact Advisory Council of Rotary International. These appointments should see our club getting actively involved in many district activities, e.g. we took active part in the Cycle Rally for women, where our Club and one of our friends were involved in giving Participants' Shields and Trophies.

Looking forward to the next fun month, when I also plan to visit an international club.

Sincerely Yours,

+ President, 2022-23



### From the desk of the

### EDITOR



In last month's editorial, I had committed to share our plans of the newsletter for the new Rotary Year 22-23 which, apart from reporting the club activities, meetings and fellowships, will involve and invite members to share their interests, family achievements, personal milestones and interesting and

unusual memorabilia which will enrich the history of the club.

It's an undeniable fact that, covid and it's restrictions and fears has dampened Rotary activities at the physical level, and personal engagements with new members has been a casualty too. The new members are still getting to know and engage with each other, which in yesteryears would have seen their seamless absorption in the club activities, and many a friendship would have started blossoming.

Last year a couple of new members were invited to a chat with the editorial team, but the awkwardness of a new environment and only a biodata to go by, did not trigger a free wheeling, black-slapping, no hold barred engagement which is possible, when an informality of relationship has been established.

In the meanwhile, President Lalit Sawhney's, who has donned the mantle of the President of the club and is a veteran Rotarian, and Jayshree the First Lady's chat with the Archana Katariya of the editorial team which was canned earlier this month, is being featured in the current issue of the Ashoka. Such chats will be a regular feature and you will get to know the members a little more intimately, more than what the biodata reveals!! Assuredly, this won't be intimidating- maybe a little close to the plimsoll line!!

The column - Know Your Member, will feature some new, but some old members as well, who even after years of membership remain somewhat shrouded in what I believe is a cultivated enigmatic mystery of sorts!! In

addition to this, we do believe we have members who are honing their world view and literary interests by reading and browsing through books - kindle or otherwise. We would love to invite them to share with members a short synopsis of the book which had captured their interest. It's divine to share and spread knowledge!!

But that's not all. In this addition Monica Krishan shares an interesting episode of their culinary adventure in the by-lanes of a less frequented Bangkok which she and Sanjeev went discovering!! Read, enjoy and do visit Steve's Cafe on your next visit. We invite members to share their experience of similar discoveries of quaint and hole in the wall eateries!! Five stars are excluded with their predictable food!!

We will be delighted to publish members and their children's special achievements, their interesting escapades and noteworthy events in their lives. However, these must be exclusive to the newsletter as anything already sent on the WhatsApp group is stale news and will not merit a readership. Please also note, newsletters are for posterity and WhatsApp messages are destined to be deleted!!

I promised in the last editorial our intent to evolve and make the newsletter more enjoyable, readable and I think we are getting there, but we need you to actively participate in what has been articulated in this editorial.

The country is celebrating it's 75 th year of independence. Har Ghar Tiranga, was a call given by the Prime Minister to hoist the tricolour at every house. I am sure we all as citizens did his bidding and proudly displayed the symbol of our national honour. I did a head count of several members of this club who were born before August 15, 1947, and requested them to share their memories of the momentous occasion. These are published in this issue under the tagline 'Slave Dynasty'!!

### Inderjeet Singh,

Editor

### **75th Independence Day**



We at RCDS are privileged to receive this account which of course must be , one of many inspiring and emotive accounts of the dawn of independence and the travails and tribulations of the armed forces on either side of the newly drawn borders, who weathered hostile environment of the partition, fiercely defending their turf,property and regimental honour. Overnight, the once upon a time comrades- in-arms turned foes, displaying scant emotion and would ferociously and willingly lay down their lives for their newly found independence.

I am indebted to my dear friend and fellow Rotarian Brig Biren Chibber for sharing some invaluable nuggets in the 75 th year of independence culled from the army folklore, and the personal narrative of the Commanding Officer, on which he must have held forth around a fireplace, with a convivial whiskey and soda. There must be many more such untold, unrecorded tales lost to posterity forever. Let's cherish what we have left.

**Inderjeet Singh** Editor

### First National Flag Unfurling on Midnight 14/15 Aug 1947.

- 1. The Battalion was deployed for IS Duties around Delhi following the partition carnage. They were then under the command of Maj Gen Rajendra Sinhji, DSO, the Delhi Area Commander. The Delhi Area was entrusted with the responsibility to carrying out the Flag Hoisting Ceremony both at the Red Fort and on the Lawns opposite National Stadium. 1/11 Sikh Regiment was concentrated at Princess Park, with its Quarter Guard, Men's billet & Officers Mess being co-located. Lt Col GC Wilson the last British Commanding Officer was in Command and under orders to move back to England.
- 2. On the night of 14/15 Aug the officers had assembled at the Officers Mess in formal Mess Dress, to celebrate the impending Independence. The Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs) had been invited to the Officers Mess for drinks. After the JCOs departed a formal Dinner Night followed. Nearing midnight the Officers walked to the Quarter guard. As pre planned, a ceremonial guard was mounted at the 1 Sikh Quarter Guard. On night 14/15 Aug 1947 at the stroke of midnight, the Commanding Officer and all officers saluted as the National Flag was unfurled for the first time. History was made. In the current times, the Duty Officer of the week turns out the ceremonial guard at the stroke of midnight on night 14/15 Aug every year. A tradition & Honour that continues.
- 3. The National Flag was formally unfurled by the first Prime Minister Pandit JL Nehru on the lawns opposite National Stadium at 6 PM on 15 Aug 1947. Out of the six contingents in ceremonials



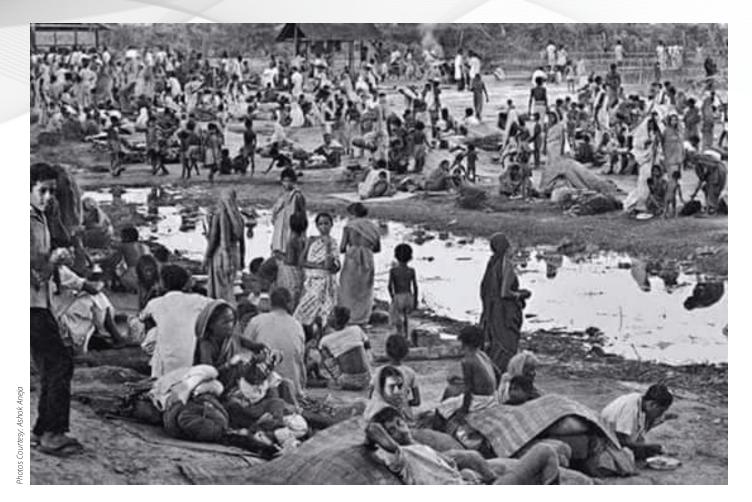
thotos Courtesy: As

Four were from 1/11 SIKH Regiment led by Maj Harwant Singh, MC. The other two were one each from the Air Force & the Navy. However, as Pt Nehru arrived with Lord & Lady Mountbatten the crowd swelled to unexpected proportions. The march past & drill could not be executed due to the milling crowds. The National Tricolour was faithfully unfurled and respects paid to the call of the bugles. That is the history of Independence Day Flag unfurling by 1 Sikh.@injogakhal.

**Courtesy: Brig B K Chibber** 



notos Courtesy: Ashok Aneja



During outing to the CP to see the illuminations, three of us walked in "Palace Heights" restuarant which was on 1st floor, I think around the Embassy corner. Pooled in our pocket change and ordered a bottle of Beck's Beer. Added JB Rose to the brew, watched the floor show and bragged about it to school mates. All of the above is only to give you a glimpse into our naughty childhood days and NOT for any publication.

#### **Brig B K Chibber**

Those of us born pre 47 were mostly between 4 to 8 yrs of age at the time of India getting Independence. There was no TV then and the media was restricted to AIR broadcasts by Melville de Mellow & Surajit Sen, with baritone voice, beside others and the famous Hindustan Times. As children we had no interest in above. Possibly due to massive uncontrolled crowds we were not encouraged to go beyond CP to see it lit up. So, I feel, there is not very much that our generation can say about 15 Aug 1947. Ofcourse individual experience may vary. However some of us may have some faint recollection of riots that followed Independence.

#### **Brig B K Chibber**



### **Account in first person**

I share a bit of Regt History of one of our sister Guards Battalion ( 4 Guards former 1/7 Rajput) . You admire the spirit of the Commanding Officer , his audacious outlook and his commitment to service and in a way to the nation , new India at birth .

It is an invaluable historical record of India's first Independence Day and the days following it. The account is given in the first person, by Brig Bakshi Kuldip Singh Commanding officer of 1/7 Rajput now 4 Guards in 1947.

"Here I wish to narrate the circumstances under which I brought my Battalion1/7 Rajput (QVOLI Queen Victoria's Own Light Infantry) now 4Guards (1Rajput) in 1947 from Razmak in the North West Frontier Province in Pakistan on the Afghanistan Border. In 1947 the Razmak Division was commanded by Maj Gen. Lee Fleming and it had there brigades, one each at Razmak commanded by a British Officer from 5/8 Punjab, Gardai Brigade commanded by Brig (later President) Ayub Khan and the Bannu Brigade commanded by Brig Khan.

1/7 Rajputs at Razmak decided to celebrate the Independence night 14/15 August 1947 in a befitting manner. I sent an officer on casual leave to Delhi to procure two National Flags for all officers and men to take an oath of allegiance to defend the newly independent India.

The officer returned with two flags in the first week of August. 1/7 Rajput at that time had 50 percentHindus and 50 percent Muslims in the Regiment. The Muslims were transferred to 5/8 Punjab which was also at Razmak and from the Punjabis we received two companies of Hindus. At this time, our Battalion had no British or Muslim officers posted and all officers were Hindus. There were two other Hindu officers in the Division and Brigade HQ plus some signallers and clerks. At the stroke of midnight, on the night of 14/15 August 1947, when Nehru was delivering the 'Tryst with Destiny' speech from the ramparts of the Red Fort, we hoisted the Indian Tricolour on

Pakistani soil, one in the unit lines and the other in the Officers Mess and we swore our allegiance to defend and protect our country.

During the last week of September, one evening I went to call on Maj Gen. Lee Fleming the GOC of the Razmak Division, at his residence. The Brigade Commander was sitting with him. This was tribal territory and very disturbed conditions were prevalent but I had failed to carry any weapon with me. But soon, my orderly Kalyan Singh, a Rajput from Agra, brought my loaded service pistol in one hand and a loaded .32 pistol in the other and placed them on a table in the Division Commander's drawing room and said in a tone of admonishment "Saab, aap apna hathiyar saath nahi laye hain." The Division Commanders guard had not been able to prevent him from entering his house. Noticing this, Gen. Fleming remarked to the Brigade Commander "nobody on the Earth can stop the 1/7 Rajputs from doing what they want to do and they will be able to get out of Razmak when they choose to". Both the GOC and the Brigade Commander told me "Kuldip, the orders of the Pakistan Army Headquarters are such that we cannot help you. The Muslim troops have given their pouch ammunition to the Pathans, Masaalchis and Khasdars and they are hell bent in ensuring that you do not take out your Regimental Colours and silver with you to India. The Pakistan Army HQ orders are such that we cannot help you. The Pakistan Army HQ orders are that no help is to be given to you. We are the only two British officers here and there is nothing that we can do." However, he added, "two of the senior most officers in the new Pakistan Army, Maj Gen. Raza, the Adjutant General and Maj Gen. Nasir Ali, the Quarter Master General are ex officers of your Regiment. Could you ask them for help to get your battalion out of here."I requested the Division Commander to make 1/7 Rajput the reserve battalion to the road opening force in October. In those days, the road from Razmak to Bannu was openedonce a week during the daytime. Gen. Fleming told the brigade commander to do so as requested by me. He had been my company commander in the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun and in one of my reports had stated "an old head on young shoulders," when writing about me. None of my officers or men knew of my plans, the only exception being my Subedar Major Devi Singh, an exceptional man and apillar of strength. (Sub Maj Devi Singh was the uncle of Gen V. K. Singh, the former Army Chief and now the Minister of State for External affairs. Sub Maj Devi Singh was succeeded as Sub Maj of the battalion by his younger brother, Sub Maj Ranjit Singh, another exceptional old warrior.)

We had a barrack at Bannu, where we kept our stores and it also served as a transit camp for our leave parties. We guietly sent all our baggage to Bannu in small batches on road opening days. During the first and second weeks of October we carried out normal duties of the reserve battalion, but during the third week, I decided to make a run through to Bannu. Onroad opening days, both the Division HQ and Brigade HQ used to move to Razmak-Narl, the highest point on the Razmak-Bannu road. On reaching there, I got down from my jeep and saluted the Division and Brigade Commanders and thanked them for helping me. On the way was the Bakshahi picket, commanded by Capt Limey and was manned by one JCO and twenty-eight Hindu troops, plus some signallers. I made arrangements with them to ensure that nobody knew about the move of my battalion to Bannu. I also ensured that all communication links — wireless and land line — were cut off. I had to do this for security reasons for I did not trust the Pakistani officers who would letloose the Pathans to interfere with our plans. On reaching Gardai, I called on the Commander of the Gardai Brigade, Brig. (later President and Field Marshal) Ayub Khan. After saluting him, I told him I am off to Bannu. In 1943 I was DAAG in the Peshawar Division and he was the Brigade Major of the Brigade so we not only knew each other but were also

friends. We shook hands and made our farewells."We will meet at Panipat," he said, to which I replied "I will be there to receive you with open arms". We reached Bannu in the evening and pitched camp on the camping ground. I, along with my Adjutant then went to meet Brig Khan, the Bannu Brigade Commander and informed him that 1/7 Rajputs was in Bannu and requested him to come and inspect the Battalion. "How the hell did you reach Bannu," he said. He had presumed that the tribesmen would not have allowed us to move out of Razmak. Now that we are here, Sir," I told him, "will you kindly make arrangements for our move to India." "No Muslim train engine driver will agree to drive your train," was his response. Fortunately, I had a wartime Emergency Commissioned Officer who had earlier been in the railways and he said "Sir I will drive the train." He trained another officer to also drive the train. At Bannu, almost all the non- Muslims came to see me and pleaded that I take their young girlsback to India for their safety. Against all rules and regulations I brought three hundred non-Muslim girls to Amritsar. I requested that four or five elders accompany the girls to look after them. From our supplies, we provided two weeks of rations to them, as except for cash and jewellery, they could not carry anything else.

From Bannu, the battalion travelled in two narrow gauge trains to Mari- Indus, where we had to stop for two days to arrange for a broad gauge train to Attari. We put all the civilians in one bogey. Though uncomfortable and crowded, they were safe. From Mari- Indus we never stopped at any main station or town to avoid a general massacre. We reached Amritsar on 3 November, from where the train was to take the battalion to Ranchi. However, at the Amritsar Railway Station itself, we were met by Brig. M. S. Chopra along with his Brigade Major. They were carrying a TOP SECRET message from Indian Army Headquarters, asking him to inspect the battalion for fitness for war. After inspecting the battalion, Brig Chopra reported back to Arm iny Headquarters that 1/7 Rajput was fit for any task that may be allotted to them and in addition they were carrying thirty days of contact rate ammunition and also their battalion heavy weapons. This was contrary which stipulated that only twenty rounds per man was to be brought out from Pakistan. The train was immediately diverted to Gurdaspur with orders for the battalion to relieve 77 Para Brigade commanded by Brig Usman. On being relieved, the Para Brigade was to move to Jammu as the raiders had started pouring into Kashmir. We took over the responsibility for the border from Madhopur to Dera Baba Nanak.

The next day we were visited by Lt Gen. K. M. Cariappa, the GOC in C Western Army Command. Gen Cariappa was an old officer of the battalion and we were very happy to see him after coming out unscathed from Pakistan. The General inspected the unit and was pleasantly surprised to see the battalion not only fighting fit but overflowing with war like stores, over and above the authorised scales. He said that he did not have a pair of woollen socks whereas 1/7 Rajput stores were over flowing with stocks of winter clothing. We had even more than the authorised number of machine guns and 3 inch & 2 inch mortars. Gen. Cariappa requested us to share some of our excess stocks with other units who were woefully short of these essential stores. The very next day they were dispatched in trucks to the units that needed them and which were being inducted into Kashmir. I did however hold on to some extra machine guns which I needed for the defence of my sector, which earlier was held by a brigade. Thereafter, I was posted to Fatehgarh as Commandant of the Rajput Regimental Centre and Lt Col Guman Singh took over the command of the battalion. The battalion then moved to Kashmir and the command passed on to Lt Col BP Singh. The battalion went on to win one PVC, two MVCs and ten VrCs in the Kashmir War.

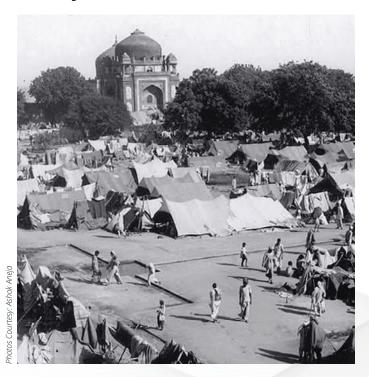
#### Brig Bakshi Kuldip Singh.

Articles Courtesy: Brig B K Chibber



# SLAVE DYNASTY!!

Whilst, the larger RCDS membership was born post 1947, some of us were born as slaves. Of course, the reprieve of freedom came quickly before we could consciously experience the differentials of slavery and freedom!!



A handful of us Rotarians were born prior to independence, but being of tender age, and the imminence of a looming independence, protected us from the brutality of a crumbling supercilious British arrogance. Thankfully, we escaped the savagery of the colonial arrogance that had held sway over the lives of our countrymen for more than two centuries of the British rule. They raped, plundered our resources, and reduced India to the brink of abject poverty. The natives were treated as second rate citizens in their own country, made to grovel and stripped of every ounce of pride and ownership of what should have been their rightful claim.

To that India we were born, but thankfully a resurgent country quickly overwhelmed our minds, sans a debilitating rancour against our past!! We grew up to the lessons of British history and their rule of India as part of our academic curriculum without much ado.

Since most of us were still masticating with milk teeth, our account of a personal tryst with a midnight Indian independence in 1947 is, and as it should be, a faithful reproduction of that night and those times.

Please read on......though not all the 'slaves' had much to say for different reasons- Suneel was just a few months old, Anand Gupta was residing in a village without much connect with the world outside and so on, though quite a few of us have shared their memories which alongside photographs of the exodus of refugees, front pages of the Hindustan Times and Times of India dated August 15, 1947 makes for an interesting walk down memory Lane of 75 years ago!!

**Inderjeet Singh** 

# REMINISCENCES

It was first Independence Day and one could, even in the as children, sense general air of euphoria all around! However, the celebrations were muted background of the heinous acts that were going around people killing each other along with heroic deeds of sublime bravery. But I must say as children we were actually oblivious of the horrendous deeds being carried out.

Living such protective and sheltered lives in what people are calling 'Lutyen' Delhi, we did not see the actual killings and blood-shed that was going on in other less-fortunate areas of the city! We just heard rumours from the kitchen staff.

The Schools were closed and we were thrilled at the extended holiday! And we suddenly saw couple of destitute families with toddlers living in the innumerable servant quarters attached to our bungalow but our resilient city recovered and the brave people who had to flee from their old and ancient homes during Partition struggled to make a new life!

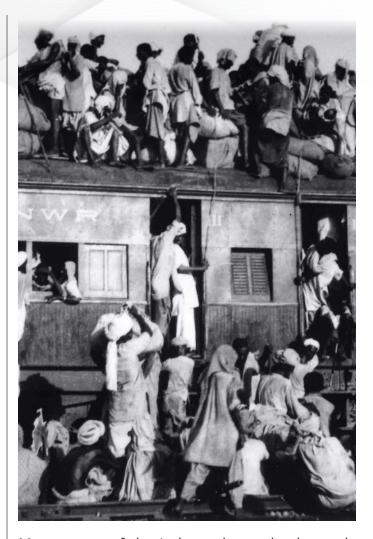
The memories and reminisces of living and growing up in idyllic surroundings of this beautiful city Delhi can never be forgotten! Memories of cycling around what is now known as New Delhi after School and during holidays and discovering the Lanes, bye lanes with are still fresh in my mind - persuading my brother to take us cycling to the Club for swimming, certain that the 'gang' would be there. It was such a safe and protective place that I could walk alone across Connaught Place even after 8pm or later or even cross University after 11pm! Living in such surroundings, one was oblivious of the horrors of Partition and the sufferings of so many people.

Now one feels the dreadfulness and sufferings and the horror of it all.

But some memories remain deeply ingrained in one's mind – Waiting with my sister on co-o-ld winter mornings for the school bud; walking with an uncle to Birla House to listen to Gandhiji to give his daily discourse to the assembled except to my great regret not on the day 1 when a madman took his life,

Sadto say our old Delhi is no more! From a peaceful and tranquil place from Pre - Independence days to the raucous hustling bustling City it has become But it still remains our Delhi!!

Rajni Mahajan



My memory of the Independence day honestly starts only from my joining Govt college Ludhiana when first time a national flag was hoisted. Prior to that in my school days in B C H Shimla I don't remember ever if the Independence Day was celebrated. The time between partition and my age in passing out of school I don't think there was much awareness of independence or any thing similar, except horrors of partition. The communication or source of info was only AIR.

Bollywood never made many movies which would give stories leading upto 15th August.

Atleast I don't recall if any films on patriotism were shown. Yes I remember 1962 Chinese invasion and the result of it.

I came to the UK in the same year after graduation and info about My country was scarce communication was poor.

BBC here naturally broadcast or show any programmes about Indian Indepence and events leading to it. In any case TV had only just come in homes

Sorry Inderjeet there is not much to write as far as I am concerned about many events.

Best regards

**Ashok Aneja** 



### DELHI EDITION The Hindustan Times



NEW DELHI, FRIDAY, AUGUST 15, 1947.

## INDIA INDEPENDENT : BRITIS

RULE ENDS

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TAKES OVER

MOUNTBATTEN'S APPOINTMENT AS GOVERNOR-GENERAL ENDORSED COLOURFUL CEREMONY MARKS BIRTH OF NATION

(By Our Special Representative)

NEW DELIII, Thursday — At midwight tonight the Constituent As-sembly consisting of the chosen representatives of the Indian people, assumed surereign power and the members soletnnly took the pledge to serve India and her people. — We end today a period of all fortune and India discovers besself again, said Pandit Nebru in calling upon the mem-bers to take the new pledge.

Earlier the president of the constituent governby. Its Rajembra Pracad, said, "To all give the associative that it will be not evidence to end proverty and openior and it's consistent, honger and disease to abolish distinctions, and exploitation and to constructed initiation of living,"

Hoose of revenge.

After the assembly had set for 75 minutes, during which it assumed powers of governand endought the appointment of Lord Mounthatters in Governor general, De Rajendra
ad and Pl. Nebru procycled to the Governoral Horse to inform Lord Mounthatters of
an analysis of reviews. Later, the National Plag powerfield to the Assembly in the Litana
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red outside (the yenized House.)

### Governors Sworn In As Free India Is Born

### THE PLEDGE

### NEW STAR RISES IN THE EAST

#### LEADERS TELL NATION OF TASKS AHEAD

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INDIA'S FREEDOM

NEW LIFE Mr. Nehru Calls For Big Effort From People "INCESSANT STRIVING TASK OF FUTURE"

Assembly Members Take Solemn Pledge

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To White Falls To SINGH & CO.

Father Of India's Freedom

### INDEPENDENCE DAY

The Times of India



ORD AND LADY MOUNTBATTEN'S GREETINGS TO INDIA



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INDIA





Architect Of Pakistan

Its Breath .....

INTERDEPENDENCE OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN Long-Term Defensive Pact Inevitable A Nation Held Apr Minn Paless, the attributes (1875) 1945. Malastan distributes the single state depth in the Apr Minn, the attribute printer when in half less included up without state of attribute that in the deep and dependent of the state of the sta a process message Traducibal Tord and Company, a quarter melony of business companies organized for the lateral surface and only of sprinchmal templatury and quarters, well-stated to on longer Coll that Polymore meeting, Polymore State Alexander Lateral Administration of Management Colleges and Colleges M. M. LOND LIMITERSON VICEROY OF ENDIA NEW DELMI

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AND SECRETARY MUNICIPAL SAMPS: INMEDIATE
LOCAL SECRETARY MAY SEE THE SECRETARY SECRE

And long live lighterns Guerlie, so that " with realise towards note and with charity lie all, this colline under that may have a new high of Frenches, and Germannest all the people, but the people, by this people, may not people hour the seasts."

My recollection of independence is derived from short bouts of memories of a five year old. My comfort and the sense of security I felt was probably derived from living in Lutyens Delhi and to be precise at Safdarjung Lane which afforded the advantage of sharing a back to back boundary and a service lane with the Tughlak Road Police station. On both sides were two army officers- Maj Genl Sen on one side and, whose son was later in school with me, and Brig Grewal a mechanised Sikh officer (he had shorn off his hair and beard) on the other, and whose daughter later became a celluloid celebrity -Simi Grewal!! Delhi Gymkhana Club was just three hundred yards away and housed many resident military officers which offered additional sense of security!!

The nights, despite the comfort of being ensconced in security all around was terrifying at times, with loud shrieks and war cries of Har Har Mahadev, Bole So Nihal Sat Sri Akal and Allah Ho Akbar from habitats and colonies such as Lodhi Colony, Aliganj and little hamlets that still dotted the area around. One could see the dark skies turn orange from the burning fires. Businesses and homes were being looted and set on fire. Population was sparse, vehicular traffic almost non existent and the sounds and cries, mingling with the howls of jackals could be heard from as far as and beyond the Viceregal Lodge (Rashtrapati Bhavan)!!

The partition has left deep scars and scalded the very soul of India, and as I am sure, of Pakistan as well. Every family has a story to recall of loss and tragedy. The import of the horrors of partition came jarring into our home when I heard my mother wailing. She had just heard that her fatherour grandfather, dragged out of a tonga on his way to Lahore railway station, had been knifed, disemboweled and left to die on the road, a fate he shared with millions of people migrating from either side of the border. We opened our doors to migrant friends and family, happily sharing abode and sustenance till they were comfortably settled. We had relatives trooping in, who had survived the holocaust. There was a bed and food for everyone. It was a large house with ample accommodation, large grounds spread over 3 acres and an ample kitchen garden with abundant vegetables for the pot. It was monsoon time and most of Delhi slept under the sky, as did all of us. Verandas provided quick shelter from rain and inclement weather. I guess every home this side of the border, opened their homes to provide care and relief and succour to their distressed family and friends. Our friends from Lahore who were one of the General Motors and Hudson Car Company dealers had to flee, leaving behind a clutch of thriving businesses, homes and all they possessed. I mention this incident, as the family was able to recoup some losses, by rerouting a consignment of Hudson cars from Karachi to Calcutta and over a couple of dozen cars found a parking space on our lawns at Safdarjung Lane. You can temporarily immobilise an entrepreneur, but can't keep him down. They have rebounded and rebuilt their business empire manifold and today are the largest automotive ancillary manufacturing group in India. By and large, almost every refugee family has toiled hard and are thriving today!! 75 years of independence has been a witness to the spirit of Indian enterprise!!

### **Inderjeet Singh**

### Feisty baby in Arms - Neerja Khanna!

Hello Inderjit, you are right! I can happily share the August 1947 event from Ajmer, I continued to be happy and showed tremendous intelligence despite being a babe in arms! ps Lck has seen your post!

PS: Neerja's feisty response though in jest, is representative of the new age crop of ladies who have scaled fresh heights, and are crashing through bastions of male dominance or, dare I say, chauvinism!! A loud cheer and a hurrah for this newly minted personality- soft in motherhood, supportive and fiercely protective as a housewife and a resolute and firm partner at work!! Cheers to another landmark change in 75 years!!

Inderjeet Singh.

### **Independence Day 15 August 1947**

I was born in Lahore in 1941 at Number 30 or Number 32 Jail Road. While my Father was employed as a senior engineer with the Government of Punjab at that time, the adjoining house was occupied by my eldest Uncle who was a very senior Commissioner of Taxes at that time. There was no lack of playmates and sports activities. While our family was originally from Amritsar a large number of uncles and senior cousins were educated at colleges in Lahore. My Father completed his Engineering studies at the prestigious Thompson College of Engineering, Roorkee. He was awarded the title of Rai Bahadur in 1945/46.

In 1945 we moved from our house on Jail Road to a beautiful large house on Tollington Road. This house had large gardens and the evenings were dedicated to outdoor games like hockey, cricket and seven tiles with our Father participating with enthusiasm. At the time of partition, two younger Uncles, both engineers with the Government of Punjab were also based in Lahore.

In the years before India became independent, both the Government of India based in New Delhi and the Government of Punjab moved to the cooler climes of Simla for approximately 3 months in the summer. 1947 was no exception; we moved to Simla in May/June of 1947. Our Father personally drove us from Lahore to Simla in his recently acquired Chevrolet making a short stop - over in Amritsar where our Grand Father had recently completed a beautiful and very large House. Enroute to Simla, until the time we reached the foothills (Kalka) we experienced a lot of traffic; buses, carts full of refugees moving in the direction of Lahore. We passed a few trains full of refugees, including persons sitting on the roof, moving in the direction of Lahore. Our Father, very fair in complexion, dressed in white with his solar hat, stopped several times on the roadside, and advised refugees that they should not relocate from their homes and that they would be looked after well in their home towns. He made several trips to Lahore in his car (without a police escort) during the period from the day we arrived in Simla through to our Independence day on 15 August 1947. Notwithstanding advice to the contrary, he continued to stop enroute to speak to refugees. With him he had his faithful peon who was always dressed in a red uniform.

Lakshmi C. Khanna

I was born on 13th August 1939. I was 8 years old. Due to private information we left kolkata for my native place in Rajasthan one day before the Direct Action Day of 16th August 1946 and returned after 6 months. Our house built in 1911 or so was quite safe, the business, residenceschoolwere inwalking distance. The memory of 15th August-We had a big Ford car bought in 1940 or so. At that time the cars had footboard where people could stand. On that day we went out to see the illumination. People would climb on the footboard and shout 'Hindu Muslim Ek Ho' I suggest that if you can find about 'Gopal Patha' who saved the hindus from massacre.

**BK Garodia** 

I was born on 28th December 1932, in a very small but remote village BHATTLAN, District Sangrur, with no means of communication even to the nearest small town, about 7 Km. away. We had no option but to walk. I can't recall if any one in our village owned even a bicycle. Mode of transport was bullock carts. My parents were illiterate, but hardy and hard working. My father was a tenant farmer who tilled the land and shared the proceeds with the owner. After school I helped my father by cutting fodder for the cattle and collecting cattle dung for my mother who would make 'pathis' which is fuel for cooking!!

Our school was a huge open yard with many trees including a huge banyan tree, under which we used to sit and attend classes. In the evenings I used to go to my teachers house for tuition, carry some milk for him and read under the light of a mustard oil diya. This was the no frills, bare subsistence life of an Indian in rural India. The larger Indian population lived and survived in the rural areas and this was their life.

Coming to the Independence day 1947, I was with my elder sister at Mandi Dabwali. On 15th August a strong sand storm was raging, dust was in the atmosphere, everything was looking brown and the visibility practically nil as the wind howled and battered the town. Since I had to return to Nabha to continue my studies, my sister managed to send me with an escort for safety. I cannot till today forget the most horrifying, frightening and brutal scenes that I witnessed at the Railway Station RAMPURA PHUL. A train loaded with Muslim migrants enroute to Pakistan, was waylaid by Hindus and Sikhs shouting blood curdling slogans and killing the Muslims .They were killed and butchered like GAJJAR MULI the memory of which frightens me even today, Fortunately, nothing went wrong with our train, and I safely reached Nabha, my destination. I was not yet 15 years of age when we became independent.

My exposure was limited to my life in the village or the years I spent as a student in Nabha as a ward of my elder brother who was a senior functionary of the State of Nabha. These are some of my recollections of the times leading to the Independence of our country.

#### **Amarnath Goyal**

Dear IJS my memory of the Independence day honestly starts only from my joining Govt college Ludhiana when first time a national flag was hoisted. Prior to that in my school days in B C H Shimla I don't remember ever if the Independence Day was celebrated. The time between partition and my age in passing out of school I don't think there was much awareness of independence or any thing similar, except horrors of partition. The communication or source of info was only AIR. Bollywood never made many movies which would give stories leading upto 15th August.

Atleast I don't recall if any films on patriotism were shown. Yes I remember 1962 Chinese invasion and the result of it. I came to the UK in the same year after graduation and info about My country was scarce communication was poor. BBC here naturally broadcast or show any programmes about Indian Independence and events leading to it. In any case TV had only just come in homes Sorry Inderjeet there is not much to write as far as I am concerned about many events.

Best regards

### **Ashok Aneja**

### **Partition Memories of United India**

I was about seven years of age, studying in II Standard when the partition took place. At that time we were at Mandi Chak Chumbra near Gujranwala. My father was posted as a doctor, incharge of dispensary, enjoying a good position in the town. I remember the uneasy environment which started, I think, in early August, but we felt safe; as the dispensary was away from the main town, but near the railway station. Soon we were advised by my father's friend not to spend the night in the dispensary quarters & we used to shift to his place every night for sleeping. Tensions & disturbances were increasing gradually. Now my father was advised to leave the town for some time & come back when the disturbances stopped.

I remember, we just locked the house, collected some clothes in about three - four boxes & reached the railway station one night to catch a special train leaving for Delhi. (Trains were not regular during that period). Only one box could be adjusted in the compartment because of the huge rush. The local Station Master helped us put our luggage with the engine driver. (but it was looted on the way). Soon the train left for Ludhiana where my father had a friend.

The journey was very scary. It left an indelible mark in my heart & memory. The train used to stop in isolated places frequently & the night seemed very threatening. My mother wanted me to sleep but I was full of fear in the face of uncertainty. Some military men used to come & check on us to see if we are carrying any weapons. My mother held me more closely every time to give me comfort. I could see fear on the faces of all seven of us -my parents & us five siblings- & no one knew what would happen. The train halt at Lahore was assuring but there was fear that whether the train would start again. Three four passengers were picked & taken down & they never came back. This caused us a lot of trauma. We felt pangs in our stomach & my father wanted to get some food for us but everyone advised against getting off the train.. The train moved & we all heaved a sigh of relief that we had been spared. Next thing I remember was reaching Amritsar with happiness on our faces.

We got some grams to eat - distributed by the local people at the station as a humanitarian gesture before the train left. After this everything was a haze. I remember only reaching Ludhiana & getting off the train. We seven, homeless in a strange land, got one room to stay for a week or so in a friend's house to make our own arrangements. My trauma started again when I saw a few houses on fire & people running here & there with looted goods. It seemed madness had taken over & people had gone crazy. There was an uneasy calm. Indians were pitted against Indians & there were scenes of horror. It was hard for me to understand why those things were happening. Only my parents were my pillar of strength & tried to comfort me in every way. Luckily, it was calm in our locality & I started playing with the local boys. My father could establish his contacts with the health department & got his posting for village Barwala near Hisar. It was all Gods grace that we moved to Barwala soon.

Would you believe that after six years or so my father got his posting in Ludhiana as incharge of Model Town dispensary. I could meet my two school friends from Sukh Ram Nagar, where we stayed as refugees. Those two friends are still in my WhatsAp group from Ludhiana The scars are not forgotten but borne with fortitude & the desire to move on prevailed. I feel lucky & blessed that though partition uprooted us but with resilience & God's grace we bounced back & we all did well in our lives. God bless us all.

Som Dua

### **Visit to Mother Teressa Home:**

- 2nd of July, our second day of the rotary year, started with the July lunch at the Home being sponsored by Sanjay and Shirin Khajuria, followed by mangoes, the King of all fruits!
- It was attended by President, Rtn. Lalit Sawhaney, Rohit Sadana and Secretary Sarvpreet with Sakshi and their charming young son.
- A young, 17 year- old, bright and chirpy girl, (she has extremely low vision) took to introducing us to each of the 33 children in the Home aged from 2 years to 18 years. Most were being affectionately hand fed and taken care of by the many attendants and sisters. Sister Jessi, as always, was most hospitable! We left them with big smiles on their faces and ours!
- On 5th August, Sunil and Rita Bhasin hosted a meal followed by Gulab jamuns. They also provided 20 kgs of phenyl needed by the Home.
- RCDS has an ongoing program to sponsor a meal on the first Sunday of the month to the specially abled children at the





Missionaries of Charities, Bhogal, for the past many years since Sunny started it. Once a month a member gets an opportunity to sponsor the meal – please let Rohit know if you want to sponsor a meal – or visit the Home when RCDS next sponsors a meal – it is an opportunity you won't want to miss!

 July and August also saw our club provide a total of 150kg of detergent and 17 boxes of Diapers to the Home.

### **Speaker Meeting**

### 5th August, 2022

### Maj. Gen Vikram Dev Dogra (Retd.) at Rotary Club of Delhi South on the 5th of August

On the 5th of August we had the privilege of hosting Maj Gen V. K. Dogra AVSM for our speaker meeting at Hotel Claridges, New Delhi. Besides having served in the army, he is a committed sportsman and an adventure enthusiast. He has completed the "Ironman Triathlon" competition twice (first time he was 58 years of age) and will be competing again for the third time in Oct 2022. For those who are not aware, it is a gruelling and physically challenging competition wherein the participant has to Swim 3.8Km, Run for about 42 Km and Cycle for 180Km, all under 14 hours and that too in one go.

Gen. Dogra is also a motivational speaker and spoke to us about his own experiences and how and when he decided to take part in the competition while serving in the armed forces. His advice to us? MAKE SMALL GOALS AT A TIME... THEY ARE RELATIVELY EASIER TO ACHIEVE. He also emphasised that there never is a right time to pursue our passions. "ACT NOW.. LATER BECOMES NEVER"



### **Nai Disha School**

### 6th August, 2022

"NAI DISHA SCHOOL", on the 6th of August, 22. The School showcased their achievements of last 20 years. The function was attended by Our Club President Lalitji, Pramodji, Somji, Rajini, Suneel & Rita Bhasin and Survpreet. When Mr. Suneel Bhasin was the President he gave the School through RCDS nearly 25 Sewing Machines and got the Sewing Classes started, which is flourishing. They have now requested to arrange for proper Certificates for the Students. They were introduced to the BVN School to interact and BVN students visited them and taught them how to make Candles .



### **Rotaract News- Mitrata Sang Swatantrata**

#### August 6, 2022 at Ssrishti learning center at Kishangarh Mehrauli.

The Rotaract club celebrated friendship day on 6th August 2022 with students of Ssrishti learning center at Kishangarh Mehrauli. It was a fun session as our young brigade connected and danced and played a few games with the not so privileged children. The team discussed with the the importance of Independence and the responsibilities that come along with it. Also they celebrated the spirit of friendship and fellowship and by sharing some goodies and presents for the students and their teachers





### **Hope on the Wheels**

21st August, 2022



The members of Fellowship of Cycling to Serve and District 3011 Leadership team came together to host a Cancer Awareness Cycle Rally for Women, "Hope on the Wheels" on Sunday, 21st Aug '22.

The Chief Guest was Ms. Sayali Bhagat, Actress and Femina Miss India 2004 and Guest of Honour was DG Rtn Ashok Kantoor District 3011.

The 20km cycle rally started and ended at Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute & Research Centre . There were two pit stops where the women cyclists were made aware of the proactive steps, symptoms to look out for and the treatment on various types of cancers that impact them.

The Rotary Club of Delhi South contributed in the following ways:

- A. Sarvpreet Singh and his nephew, Aditya Pandey were the marshal's during the rally.
- B. Vikas Mahajan, Sarvpreet's golf buddy and the owner of Vikas Exports, agreed to support RCDS by sponsoring 200 Finisher plates and 15 customized trophies.
- C. The following Senior RCDS Rotarians specially came in the morning to support the cause:
  - 1. President Lalit Kumar Sawhney
  - 2. First Lady Jayshree Sawhney
  - 3. Pradeep Bahri
  - 4. Ganesh Katariya
  - 5. Archana Katariya
  - 6. Amarjit Singh
  - 7. Kirit Javali
  - 8. Dr. Vaneeta Kapur
  - 9. Arvinder Brara
  - 10. Dolly Brara
- D. Special invitees who represented RCDS:
  - 1. Aditya Pandey
  - 2. Varnit Mahajan































### **A Musical Evening of Rotary Club of Delhi South**

28th August, 2022





Canyou imagine your life without music? It's almost impossible. Whether we are driving in the car from the heated plains of Delhi to a holiday in the hills, listening elevator music as we go up a lift in a high rise building in Gurugram, taking our morning walks or working out in the gym, we are constantly surrounded by songs. Proposals, weddings, breakups and makeups, parties and dancing, hanging out with friends or singing along with our kids and grandkids — songs and music encompass nearly every aspect of our life. Most of us have songs that we associate with each phase of our lives, melodies that take us down memory lane and instantly bring us back to specific moments or memories, whenever we hear them.

We therefore decided to organize a Musical Evening to commemorate - Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, an initiative to celebrate 75 years of India's independence. We undertook this Musical journey, to go hand in hand with these 75 years of India's Freedom. The themes of our Musical Journey aptly chosen were "Aazadi" and "Barsaat". This was also an initiative to be able to meet our Rotary colleagues and their spouses physically with a lot of 'Jappi-Pappi', back-slapping and laughter.

While, in Bollywood the first Indian Film song may be traced to the advent of India's first sound motion picture "Alam Ara" in 1931, in Rotary Club of Delhi South, our Music Group (called – 'Aawaz ki Duniya Ke Doston') was conceived at Suneel and Rita Bhasin's place, almost a decade ago, when they nudged me into starting this Group. We took it forward with the help of Sat Bawa ji in the lead. He became our 'Tatshree' (like the one of Mahabharat fame!).

The Aawaaz ki Duniya is a group of some of the likeminded members and spouses of our Club who decided to get together every alternate month, with one of the members hosting us in their house, in rotation, for drinks, snacks or lunch or dinner, where we hire an orchestra and pay for it from our pooled money, and then sing, dance and chat. I always say that there is nothing 'official' about this group. This is similar to our Clubs's Golf Group (headed by Captain Amarjit and Chairman Sarvpreet) where likeminded golfers get-together, play together, organize tournaments with similar groups of other Rotary Clubs and culminate these games with breakfast or drinks and snacks.

While our Music Group moved from strength to strength, we lost some members of this group over the years – Sat Ji, Rishab, Mina, Chanchal ji and recently, Sunny. We remember them fondly and are sure they are smiling at us today, from wherever they are. We have taken on new members like Sunny, Deepak Kapoor, Hemant Ahuja, Amarjit Singh, Rohit Sadana. Meeting in someone's house is so much more personal and gives each one of us an opportunity to interact

with the hosts' children, parents, relatives, etc. In addition, the host may invite additional guests like other Rotarians, other singers, new probable members, and the like. We, who form part of this club, are not the best singers in the Club, but the ones who enjoy hosting, elbow bending, singing, laughing and eating. The kids and the elders in the house get involved and the event becomes even greater fun. I have a blurr of beautiful random thoughts that flash across my eyes when I look back in time at our music group get-togethers - Inderjeet's late brother who joined us when Inderjeet hosted, how Mandira and Shiv Katariya become part of the Music family when Archana and Ganesh host, how Juhi, Ritesh and Partho add the flavor to our singing in Ila's house, how Yuko surprised us when she sang 'Kabhi Kabhi Mere Dil Mein Khayal Aata hai' at my house during one of the Music group get-togethers, how Shristi and her husband take over the service and the bar respectively when we are hosted at Dua Towers, how the singing of Natasha (Suneel & Rita's daughter) reminds us of the singing of famous Reshma, and so many other memories.

Our Musical evening, organized at Claridges on Sunday, 28th August, invited every member and spouse to participate, sing and dance. Nineteen people from the RC of Delhi South Family, volunteered to sing on the final day. Practices in the individual bathrooms, drawing rooms, on Zoom, on 'StarMaker and Smule'....., followed. The interest of the members was so high and kept building up with Musical Quizes – seven of them, with fastest finger first!

On the day of the Musical Evening, all of us arrived at the Viceroy hall, dressed in our finery in the National Flag colours (the dressing up theme), with smiles on our faces, some with a little nervousness of performing in front of audience, and others looking forward to meeting their friends and listening to a couple of hours of their favourite songs. Our musician Ashwani Sharma, who had started with us a decade ago, was ready once again to accompany us with his scintillating music! His percussionist Pradeep (my name type) was ready with is 'drum-pad'!

The EmCee started the evening's proceedings with Lata Mangeshkar's famous song 'Aye Mere Watan Ke Loogon' performed by Rachna Sadana so beautifully. This was followed by the song which was the regimental quick march of the Indian National Army - 'Kadam Kadam Badaye ja' melodiously brought to us by Sanghamitra and Tridibes. The ladies' choir consisting of Archana, Rajni, Geeta, Ila, Sanghamitra, Rachna and Ashima sang Vande Mataram and then Garjat Barsat Sawan Aayo Re. And then, as the EmCee introduced the next singer and conversed with the audience with his humour and an attempt at shayari, and the singers sang beautifully, the hall was submerged in music and merriment. People sat quietly listening, applauding their fellow Rotarians, who were

brave enough to sing and perform for them. Except for a 10 minutes break to pick up our drinks, the audience were glued to their seats and listened to us patiently and appreciatingly. We are so proud of each one of you who was present that evening!

The singers who sang that evening, in addition to the ones already mentioned, were – Som Dua, Archana Katariya, Ila Jain, Rita Bhasin, Pradeep Bahri, Rajni Dua, Priyanka Agarwal, TS Shashinath, Rajiv and Geeta Gujral, Ashima Agarwal, Amarjit Singh and Arvinder Brara. We missed singers like Raman Baluja, Rohit Sadana and Rita Kumar, who were indisposed. We all wish them a speedy recovery. The best aptly dressed couple that evening was Manish and Sheetal Dhawan

And how can we forget the audience on the floor, shaking a leg, when the medley played with Kausy, Vinay, Dolly Suri,

Pankaj & Aarti Poddar, Kriti, Sumit, Arvinder and Dolly, and so many others, letting their hair down and showing us their dancing prowess.

We all acknowledge that the galaxy of RCDS singers kept the audience foot tapping the entire evening!! Voila- it was an evening to remember- the food was outstanding; the bar provided the spiritual comfort and Claridges the extra oomph!!

Bravo team RCDS- President Lalit Sawhney for making this happen, Dolly Suri and Rajiv Gujral who worked behind the scenes to make this occasion a memorable one. Seventy people attended – record of sorts!

And before I sign off, good news is that President Lalit has kindly agreed to have many more such Musical Evenings!! So keep singing and keep smiling!





### DOWN MEMORY LANE















### THE TEACH CAMP

### **30th August, 2022**

The objective of Rotary India Literacy Mission (RILM), is Total literacy and Quality Education in India. To achieve that, RILM have designed a comprehensive program called "T-E-A-C-H", where T stands for Teacher Support, E for E-learning, A for Adult Literacy, C for Child Development and H for Happy Schools.

As a part of this Project, Rotary Club of Delhi South organized a TEACH Camp at the SDMC Primary Boys School at Katwariya Sarai from 11 am to 1 pm on Tuesday 30th August 2022. The camp was held under the leadership of President Lalit and Literacy Chair Sonya, both of whom led from the front!

The Camp included the following activities:

- A talk on Oral Hygiene This was delivered by Dr. Shweta and her team. Here the session was interactive and digital resources (e-learning) were used with the laptop being connected to the smart TV. The children listened with interest and enjoyed watching and learning from the videos, etc on the screen. They enthusiastically answered question raised by Dr. Shweta and her team. At the end of the talk they had a crafts exercise and we also presented with toothbrushes and floss sticks, thanks to Dr. Shweta.
- Blood Testing Camp A camp was organized, on the request
  of the school principal Ms Anita Kumari to check up the
  Blood Group and hemoglobin of all the school children. It
  was interesting to see our Rotarians and R'annes cheering up
  the kids and ensuring that there were very few tears when
  the blood was extracted from their tiny arms. Sonya and
  Bhuvana were busy organizing this, noting down the names,

- giving away Frooti and biscuit packets, ably supported by Rita Bhasin, Usha Aneja, Ila Jain and Dolly Suri. This camp was sponsored by Dr. Vaneeta Kapur and the refreshments were sponsored by Sonya Bahri.
- Distribution of Steel Plates for Midday meals Ms Anita Kumari, the Principal had requested us to help them with proper plates for the kids in which they could be served their midday meals. We agreed to do so. Rajinder Sehgal and President Lalit Sawhney, sponsored these plates 200 numbers of this school and another 200 numbers for the neighbouring SDMC Girls Primary School. And yesterday the excited children were served their meals in these plates! In addition, the ladies from our Club present there decided to pay a monthly charge to a lady working in this school, a monthly salary of Rs. 1000 to wash and store these plates every day once the children have rinsed them.

It was a great day of service. Rtn Vikas Seth from the District, joined us for sometime and was impressed to see the project and the involvement on the ground of so many of our RCDS family members. The people present were:

- Vikas Seth Zonal Incharge
   RI M
- President Lalit Sawhney
- Ms Sonya Bahri
- Ms Bhuvana Shashinath
- Ms Rita Bhasin
- Ms Usha Aneja
- Ms Ila JainMs Dolly Suri
- Ms Dr Shweta and team
- Cdr Pradeep Bahri
- · Assistant Naresh

Lalit and Sonya say, 'this is just the beginning'! We are impressed with this 'Josh' and wish them all the best for the future.





















### **SANKALP LITERACY CENTRES**

**JULY & AUGUST 2022** 





















The following important days were celebrated:

• Doctors Day on 1st July The occasion of

Sankalp literacy Centres became operational in Delhi since 2018. The aim of these Centres is to empower children from marginalized groups through education. The focus of Sankalp Centres has been on imparting quality education. Sankalp has adopted a dual approach. Children who are not enrolled in schools are identified and they are enrolled un neighbourhood schools. Besides, children who are enrolled in schools are given post school support in education with the aim to bridge the learning gaps. The objective is to address their learning gaps and deficits.

The aim is to develop in children age and grade appropriate competencies by giving them a wide exposure to diverse activities, both curricular and co curricular. Some of the key features of the literacy centres are learning support program, comprehensive assessment, computer literacy, English speaking program, training and capacity building, regular monitoring and strengthening community linkages. Sankalp believes in equality in education to ensure that no child is left behind. Slums are visited on a regular basis and interaction is done with community people to make them aware of their child's rights, etc.

A total of 331 children are enrolled in Sankalp Literacy centers. There are 184 girls and 147 boys enrolled in the centers. Every month in the Centres special days are celebrated to expose children to specific themes. Children take part in regular major events and festival which bring changes not only in the level of knowledge they gain but also in the abilities to think and acquire habits, skills and attitude. Students are encouraged to embrace other traditions culture just like the way they do their own.

Progress documentation and monitoring is done regularly to set standards for the child's grade level and to develop goal that can be measured and tracked.

- Class tests of all subjects are conducted every month.
- Database of each and every student is maintained which is updated on a regular basis.
- Initial form with basic relevant information is filled up for every child.

Every effort is made to give support to the weak children for their studies. This is an area of concern. Improvement is needed in this area. Some children have shown improvement in their writing and reading levels. Sometimes relevant material which is not in the curriculum is also taught to the children.

Special Days Celebrated in Sankalp Literacy Centres – July & August 2022

- Doctors Day on 1st July- The occasion commemorates the spirit of doctors across the globe who work day and night consistently to ensure well-being of patients. Doctors play a crucial role in our society.
- Nelson Mandela Day on 18th July Nelson Mandela International Day is celebrated every year to shine light on the legacy of a man who changed the 20th century and helped shape the 21st. This is a moment for all to renew with the values that inspired Nelson Mandela.
- Kargil Divas on 26th July Kargil Vijay Diwas is celebrated on 26 July every year in honour of the Kargil War's Heroes. This day is celebrated all over India
- Har Ghar Tiranga Mahotsav on 12th August- Har Ghar Tiranga' is a campaign under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to encourage people to bring the Tiranga home and to hoist it to mark the 75th year of India's independence.
- Annual Day on 21st August Sankalp celebrated its Annual Day on 211st august. Children from different talents showcased their talents.
- Senior Citizens Day on 22nd August On this Day, the message given to children was clear - value the presence of senior citizens in your life and treat them with love, care and compassion. Children narrated their personal experiences with senior citizens, including their grandparents.

Annual Day - This was a special occasion for Sankalp Society. Annual Day was celebrated on 21st August. Sh. Lalit Sawhney, President, Delhi South Rotary Service Foundation was the Chief Guest on the occasion. In his address, he mentioned about the work done by RCDS. He also mentioned about the educational activities being undertaken at the Sankalp Literacy Centres He focused on the holistic development of children through varied activities and mentioned that this approach to education means focusing on all aspects of a child's growth, not just their academic advancements. Most importantly, it's about establishing the child's overall wellbeing. He wished the programme a great success. Children showcased their talents in a variety of ways. The theme was the 75th Independence Day, Aazadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. Children put up a variety of acts. The programme comprised of traditional dances, speeches, songs and poems. The programme ended with a tribute to the Indian Army.

#### **National Sports day celebration**

Celebration of National Sports Day today across all RCDS Sankalp Literacy centers on 29 th August 2022. Children were also told about Major Dhyan Chand, the Hockey legend. Some glimpses.

### **Leprosy Camp Report**

Camp No.: 46 & 47

Organizer: "Leprosy Control Project - "GG2010288" of Rotary & LEPRA Society, In Collaboration with National Leprosy Eradication Program (NLEP), Delhi

Topic: Awareness, Active Case Finding and Disability Care

Camp

**Date:** 13/07/2022 & 20/07/2022 **Time:** 11:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m.

Venue: Kasturba Leprosy Colony, Tahirpur, Shahdara

District, Delhi

Resource Person: Chanda Jha (Project Manager), Mr. Lakhinder (Physiotherapist), Mr. Shiv Kumar (Shoes Technicians)

Support for ACF: ASHA Worker, Shahdara District

Type of Target Group: People Affected with Leprosy and their family Members.

#### Topics covered:

- a. Health education on early signs & symptoms of Leprosy
- b. Importance of Self-care practices at home to prevent disability & recurrent ulcers.
- c. Importance of wearing MCR Protective Footwear
- d. Physiotherapy Session
- e. Door -to- door Active Case Search Screening (Contact Survey) by ASHA Worker.

Methodology: Demo, Lecture, Interactive

Material used: Pictorial charts, Footwear, Self-care kits

#### **Major Activities Conducted:**

- Health Education on Signs & Symptoms of Leprosy and importance to prevent the skin from drying & cracking to further prevent from recurrent ulcers.
- ii. Awareness on the importance of wearing MCR protective footwear was covered and it was advised to wear it instead of any normal footwear.
- iii. Measurements were taken for customized footwear and customized in the colony
- iv. Door to Door active Case Search in the Colony by the ASHA Worker, Shahdara District
  - a. Total Population- 494 (Male- 182, Female-217, Male Child- 57, Female Child-38)
  - b. Total Number of Household survey -140+ 28=168
  - c. Total Number of old Cases-65+15=80
  - d. Examination: Total- 85 +25= 110 (Male-39+3=42, Female-44+20=64, Male Child-0, Female Child-2+2=4)
  - e. Number of New Cases- Nill
- v. Distribution of Self Care Kits & MCR Footwear. The Details are in below table:

No. of Self-care Kits distributed			No. of MCR Footwears Grade -I			No. of Customized MCR Footwears Grade-II			No. of Aids/ Appliances		
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
5+5 =10	12+6 = 18	28	1+3 =4	8+1 =9	13	5+2 =7	4+5 =9	169	7	0+1 =1	8
28			13			16			8		

No. of Direct Beneficiaries: Direct Beneficiaries services reached on 13th & 20th July

Male	Female	Male child	Female child	Total Population		
24	37	Nill	Nill	61		

No. of Indirect Beneficiaries: Approx. 400 (IEC)











### **Leprosy Camp Report**

Camp No.: 48

Organizer: "Leprosy Control Project – "GG2010288" of Rotary & LEPRA Society, In Collaboration with National Leprosy Eradication Program (NLEP), Delhi

Topic: Awareness, Active Case Finding and Disability

Care Camp

Date: 10/08/2022

Time: 11:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m.

Venue: Anand Gram Kushta Ashram, Tahirpur, Shahdara

District, Delhi

Resource Person: Chanda Jha (Project Manager), Mr. Lakhinder (Physiotherapist), Mr. Shiv Kumar (Shoes

Technicians)

Support for ACF: ASHA Worker, Shahdara District Type of Target Group: People Affected with Leprosy

and their family Members.

### **Topics covered:**

- a. Health education on early signs & symptoms of Leprosy
- b. Importance of Self-care practices at home to prevent disability & recurrent ulcers.
- c. Importance of wearing MCR Protective Footwear
- d. Physiotherapy Session
- e. Door -to- door Active Case Search Screening (Contact Survey) by ASHA Worker.

Methodology: Demo, Lecture, Interactive

Material used: Pictorial charts, Footwear, Self-care kits Major Activities Conducted:

- Health Education on Signs & Symptoms of Leprosy and importance to prevent the skin from drying & cracking to further prevent from recurrent ulcers.
- ii. Awareness on the importance of wearing MCR protective footwear was covered and it was advised to wear it instead of any normal footwear.
- iii. Measurements were taken for customized footwear and customized in the colony
- iv. Door to Door active Case Search in the Colony by the ASHA Worker, Shahdara District
  - a. Total Population- 454 (Male- 164, Female-206, Male Child- 45, Female Child-39)
  - b. Total Number of Household survey 110
  - c. Examination: Total- 138 (Male-32, Female- 89, Male Child-4, Female Child-13)
  - d. Number of New Cases- Nill
- v. Distribution of Self Care Kits & MCR Footwear. The Details are in below table;

No. of Self-care Kits distributed			No. of MCR Footwears Grade -I			No. of Customized MCR Footwears Grade-II			No. of Aids/ Appliances		
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
4	6	10	0	1	1	4	5	9	0	4	4
10			1		9			4			

No. of Direct Beneficiaries: Direct Beneficiaries services reached on 13th & 20th July

Male	Female	Male child	Female child	Total Population	
8	16	Nill	Nill	24	

No. of Indirect Beneficiaries: Approx. 138 (IEC)



















### THE PRESIDENT AND OUR FIRST LADY

### A CANDID INSIGHT

**AK:** Mr President, Our First Lady, Jayshree..... It is such an honour for me to be conducting this interview today with the two of you. Thank you so much for inviting us to your beautiful home.

**Lalit:** It is a great honour for us to be in your Club.

Jayshree: And to be interviewed by you.

Lalit: Pleasure for us too, We were born only a year ago in your Club.

**AK:** For me, it's a real privilege and let me tell you, there is Nothing Official About It. Basically We want to know rather the Nation wants to know and take a peek into your personal lives.

Lalit: Sure

**AK:** All your achievements are already on the RCDS domain. We want to know something more personal. So, let's start at the very beginning, and like the song goes, A very good place to start. Tell us about your childhood.

**Lalit:** My father was in the government service, Ministry of Rehabilitation. He was in Delhi and I was born in a place near Jama Masjid. I studied in a Corporation school near Jama Masjid and then I went to a government model school, in Ludlow Castle, which is next to St. Xavier's in Old Delhi, near Civil Lines. Then, I got a Govt. merit scholarship and moved into Modern School. That merit scholarship required us to move into the hostel. I was a merit scholar, but the other students in Modern School were from much more affluent families. All of us were allowed only Rs. 10 per month as pocket money. Since I was in Delhi, I used to go home once in a fortnight and I would bring things like toothpaste, soap, etc. from home and save my ten bucks. Everybody had to buy their own soap and toothpaste from their ten bucks. So, actually in the end, I had more money in hand than the affluent friends. That was a plus point for me, and I could spend some of my pocket money with friends. And, I made many more friends in hostel, than I was used to earlier. I had four younger sisters, who went to Lady Irwin School. They were not hostel-ites, they stayed at home with parents. After school, I got admission into IIT Kharagpur. I wanted to do electronics and telecom. I was interested in telecom even at that time. But unfortunately, I got jaundice and I could not go to IIT at the time. The doctors advised me to stay at home because I would have problems with water and all that. Then I got admission into Delhi College of Engineering. I did electronics engineering and after that I went for my MBA. During IIM, we had a Summer Internship between the first and second year. So when I was looking at the Summer internship, I found that there was a request from a scientist in ISRO. He had said that "I am a rocket scientist and I am going to become the project manager in Rocketry, and therefore, I need someone from IIM to come and teach me project management." This person was a scientist, called Abdul Kalam.

AK: Ohhh, The President, WOW!

**Lalit:** So actually, I went to ISRO, Thumba, near Trivandrum to help him with Project Management, PERT/CPM, etc.

**AK:** Super. That is So Impressive. So How long were you associated with him?

**Lalit:** Three months Summer Assignment. After that he became Project Manager SLV-3, Satellite Launch Vehicle 3. Then he went to DRDO, and went on to become the President of India, the rest is history. When I knew him he was a Rocket Scientist. I remember him as being very nice and considerate.

**AK:** Jayshree now you tell me about your Childhood...About Your parents. Where did you grow up?

Jayshree: My Dad was a Scientist. He was in the Government

Service. I spent my first few years in Calcutta, then we moved to Hyderabad and then to Delhi. I must have been in the 8th Std. I joined Presentation Convent, after school, I joined Miranda House, did my Economics Honours and then my Masters at Delhi School of Economics. In my final year my Dad said *Shaadi karo Shaadi karo* - so in a very typical Arranged Marriage Fashion I was introduced to Lalit.

Lalit: And she said NO.

**Jayshree:** My idea of a typical husband was....I love Dancing. I told my Dad I'll marry someone from the Army, Club *Vlub Jayenge, Dance Karenge*, my Dad was shocked. He was a PhD in Chemistry...He said What Rubbish.

**Lalit:** Her father being from the CBI had gone and found out everything about me. He did his homework.

**Jayshree:** Lalit was in ICI in Madras. My father rang up his General Manager and said Dr Bami from CBI calling. His Boss was so nervous and wondered Why the CBI was calling him. My Dad was heading Forensic Science which was part of the CBI, and he said Sorry I've rung up for a personal reason. The GM was so relieved and he told my father, Lalit is a very nice guy, lust Go ahead.

Lalit: So her father said Go Ahead, But she said NO.

Jayshree: Because He was not my kind of guy.

**Lalit:** Actually.....

Jayshree: Lalit I am supposed to talk. You are not supposed to talk. So we met once in the family thing, then he called my Dad and told him that he'd like to meet me personally, this is more than 40 years back, My Dad said What the hell is this guy saying. So he said I'll send her on one condition...I'll send her elder sister along with her. So Lalit called us to the Oberoi, my Dad told my sister's husband also to go along. My brother in law and Lalit turned out to be classmates from Modern School, Same class, Same section. They were meeting after some X number of years.

So this guy says Raj Kumar Teluja?? He says Lalit Sawhney?? And they started talking. My sister and I were most upset because we were not to keen to proceed and these two kept talking. Then my sister and brother in law excused themselves to give us time to talk and my brother in law tells my sister, He's a very nice guy...topper in class.

**Lalit:** Not only that ..he also said he is totally 'dabbu' So you can boss over him. (Laughs)

**Jayshree:** No he said he is a very nice guy, and he was very bright, my brother in law was quite impressed with him, so he told my sister don't even think twice. My sister told her husband that Jayshree is very different ... Yeh toh Padaku Lagta Hai. And basically my sister and Brother-in-law were called by my Dad and had to Report to him.

My sister said I think we should go ahead, he's a nice guy and Raj knows him even though they haven't met in all these years, AND THE REST IS HISTORY. I married him, I never got my Army Club Wallah, I got this *Padaku* Guy. Good Guy but a *Padaku*. I am more fun loving. Had we met under normal conditions, maybe we would not have got married. *Arranged Marriage mein I adjusted a lot*.

Lalit: And I am still adjusting. (Laughter)

**AK:** It was one of my questions...Like how did you'll meet...and its all come out like this.

**Jayshree:** We got married thanks to my sister and brother-inlaw. I was 22, I didn't want to get married and a year and half later, I was expecting. I rang up my Dad and I was crying, I told him my life is finished...today when I see my own daughter, she had a baby 10 years after her marriage. I tell her, We were so young, we didn't know what we were getting into. We had the baby, the baby was crying, we were crying.

**AK:** Jayshree, tell me one memory or Anecdote of your childhood, with your parents, or after marriage, anything.

Jayshree: Okay, the best time we spent was when my sister and I would come home for vacations after we got married. My dad was a very good cook. He was good at Chinese, good at Indian. So, we would come home, put our feet up, dad would give us a drink, make chicken corn soup for us, make kebabs for us and we would make mince meat of the two sons-in-law. Crib, crib, crib. And my dad would say, "Spare those guys a little bit", and my mom would say, "Let the girls talk their hearts out". Lalit would say, "Don't tell my parents that you drink", I said, "How can I tell a lie? I had my first drink after I turned 18 and it was given to me by my dad. So, what is wrong with that?" Lalit said, "I have four sisters and they don't drink." I could not imagine why. See, this was the difference in family background. My father was in government service but he was a Ph.D. in Chemistry, exposed to the Scotland Yard, etc. My sister and I were brought up in a very liberated way for those times. And we had no brother. We are talking of forty years back. So we were treated as equals and we were both educated. My buas used to say, "Hai, please MA mat karao, Shaadi nahi hogi." In my case, I was 'lambi', 'ainak wali' and at that time, those clogs were in. I used to love wearing them. I am 5' 6.5", with those 2.5 inches clogs, I was 5' 9". My buas told my father, "Teri ladki ko toh koi nahi milega." Be all and end all was ki shaadi nahi hogi. And I was 22. When I tell this to my daughter, she says, "Why didn't you fight with Nana? Why didn't you tell him it's a NO?" I told her Darling, in our times, we never raised our voice against our parents. That was our generation. I tell her, the way you can talk to your dad, I couldn't talk to mine. Again, a generation gap.

**AK:** Okay, now tell me one negative memory. I know you'd want to forget it, but tell me something. That one thing that you'd like to just forget about. It could be grief, some experience you went through, or anything.

Jayshree: It's not grief, but I never wanted to move to Delhi. When Lalit took this decision seven-eight years' back, it was in a personal fashion. He is an only son. His parents were not keeping well. We were very well settled, happily in Bangalore. Now it is hard when you are well settled, and you have to uproot yourself. I had a lovely home and a lovely set of friends. Delhi was nowhere on the cards. I cried a lot. Lalit did not listen to me. We had a lot of differences on that. But where I lost out was, when my kids sided Lalit. It was 3 versus 1, and my son said, "Mom, (this was seven years back, we were younger then) you can move NOW, 5 years later, you will not be able to move." So I was out numbered. 3:1.

**Lalit:** Her mother was also not keeping so well, my parents were in hospital, her mother was staying with her sister. The 3 parents who were in Delhi, were all between 85 to 90 years of age.

**Jayshree:** I was so well settled, but we shifted to Delhi for the sake of 3 parents. And, and all 3 of them went within 3-4 years. So it made me wonder why did we move, we should have just stayed on in Bangalore.

**Lalit:** The good thing was that in the last few years of our parents' lives, we were able to look after them. Like her mother stayed with us for 2 years, she was bed-ridden.

I did a few more things, I contacted all my Modern School friends and we got together, after 50 years of leaving School, we started meeting again.

**Jayshree:** That's the difference between Lalit and me, I don't adjust very easily, wherever Lalit goes, he gets into his social circle, and adjusts faster.

**Lalit:** So I have friends from Modern School, IIM Ahmedabad, Delhi College of Engineering, and my time in Hindustan Levers.

**AK:** Now tell me Lalit, have you got any fond memories of your childhood which you'd like to tell, Anything that you want to talk about, A Happy one, or A Life Changing One or about A Negative one. Tell me any one thing that you'd like to share.

**Lalit:** Life changing one was moving into a hostel, I was only 10 when I went to the hostel, first few evenings I cried because I had left my parents and come away. That's when I started standing on my own feet. Then I realized what was home, I had 4 sisters, my grandparents were there.

**AK:** Now tell me How did you first join Rotary. Who introduced you to it first?

**Lalit:** I first joined Rotary in 1983 in Bangalore. My office was in a multi storied building, I was working for Brooke Bond - which got taken over by Unilever in the UK, and then we became a part of Hindustan Lever. There was a person I used to meet in the lift often, a very nice person called O P Khanna and he worked for Hindustan Motors. One day he took me after office, to Taj Hotel close by, to one of his Rotary meetings; he introduced me to Rotary and I joined.

AK: At what age?

**Lalit:** I was 33 at that time. If I now look back, this gentleman set up a Needy Heart Foundation. This Foundation has done 10,000 heart surgeries for children in the last 20 years. He set it up 20 years ago....like we are doing child surgeries in our club now. We are getting everything done with the help of one surgeon. What he did was - he expanded the scope to include 22 Rotary Clubs in Bangalore, and signed up deals with 12 hospitals in Bangalore...

He was very ambitious, and that really impressed me. So that's why I am talking about expansion of Gift of Life.

Another friend of mine who was member of Indian Cancer Society told me that they wanted to work with Rotary, to look after Cancer patients. I introduced Indian Cancer Society to my Rotary Club and we decided to form a Cancer Hospice. Cancer Hospice is a hospital for terminally-ill cancer patients and so we formed it 28 years' back. 2-3 years, I was called by my old club in Bangalore, they were celebrating the Silver Jubilee of that Hospice, and they thought that the person who helped in forming that, which was me, should be present. There was only one outsider who was called on stage, and that was ME. The only DG there was the current DG. What impressed me the most was that they gave TWO PHFs to two employees of that hospital because they thought that, the right thing to do, was to give PHFs to people who were looking after their patients. It was based on PHF points from their Club. These were the people who were actually working for Rotary, even though they were not Rotarians, and they decided to recognise them.

**AK:** So you've been President twice before and this is you third term?

Lalit: I've been President of Rotary Club once before, of a club in Gurgaon. The reason I've never taken responsibility in Rotary before is because I was very active in another Society and that is the Computer Society of India. I actually rose to become President of the Computer Society Of India. This is my second time as President of a Rotary Club. I've been Secretary of another club in Gurgaon. I never took up Rotary responsibility earlier, because I had a major IT responsibility in the Computer Society of India and it was a very large society comprising of 100,000 members. So it was a major All India Society.

**AK:** Is that what you brought into Rotary when the Zoom calls were set up?

Lalit: No, that is because I was in the IT, I knew. There are other things to the question you asked me. 3 years back when Covid hit us, I was part of the District IT Committee and they said Look, Our members are having problems in how to hold meetings, because Covid has suddenly struck and people do

not want to attend meetings. So we suggested a new solution, which was Video Conferencing. Point is whilst our Delhi South Club has a lot of Corporate members, most other Rotary Clubs have many more businessmen, who did not know what is Video Conferencing. In Hindustan Lever more than 25 years ago, we had 16 locations connected with Video Conferencing. So what we did was, we took a License from CISCO. We took a CISCO Webex License for the whole District. There were 110 Clubs and we took a license for all the 110 Clubs. We also took a license for the District Conference which was going to be held within a month. The mistake we however made was that we took the license only for 3 months. We didn't imagine that Covid would last for 2 years and more. Since I was the first customer of CISCO in India 25 years back, they gave me a free license for all Rotary Clubs in District 3011. So as part of the District IT Team we went to all the Clubs and told them that we had a solution for them to meet and to take a CISCO Webex License which we would transfer in their name, and that they could call a meeting and people could join on the Internet, and that's how it started. We also had to train and teach some Clubs how to use video conferencing.

**AK:** So, District 3011 got it, what happened to the rest of the country?

**Lalit:** They saw what other people were doing and took Zoom Licenses. Even in our District after the initial 3 months, clubs took Zoom licenses, we all learnt from one another. Many Districts did not have a District Conference that year. We had the District Conference with Video conferencing.

**AK:** Ok now tell me, I can understand you left your Bangalore Club when you moved to Gurgaon, and you joined a club in Gurgaon, but what made you leave the Gurgaon Club and join RCDS?

**Lalit:** I actually joined another Club, and became Secretary of Rotary Gurgaon Qutub Enclave. Then 5 of us left and formed another club, Rotary Gurgaon Harmony Iberis. We managed to get 25 members together. Within less than a year, I became President. In the very first year we applied for a Global Grant for conducting Child Heart Surgeries. The Global Grant added up to Rs One Crore and we did 65 Surgeries in six months.

**AK:** Is there something You want to achieve in your present tenure, something that is left incomplete in your service to Humanity?

Lalit: Ya, to achieve, rather, something we can build on. I am not saying it is left incomplete, see what we did in that Club is, we raised some money, then we appealed to the District Governor and we got money from the District, DDF. But today DDFs are very less and you can't get very much from the District, but at that time we got the money. We then approached a Club in the USA. We had a member in the Club who knew people in the US and we took help from a Club there. We took money from a DDF in that District in the USA and based on that applied for a Global Grant. We started with US Dollar 20,000 and then we finally got a Grant of One Crore of Rupees, with which we got about 65 Surgeries done in about 6 months.

AK: Wow, Really Impressive.

Lalit: See, We are Leaders in Leprosy, Leaders in Polio, Leaders in Club Foot. 3 Years ago we built an alliance with Lepra UK, 10 years back we started a project on Club Foot. When I became President, I started trying to find out what our senior members had done in the past and I discovered that Amar Nath Goyal ji had started Club Foot project, so I met him. I had never met him before, but I met him as part of my homework of getting to know club people. I approached a lot of people one by one. So Amar Nath Ji told me that he was involved with the Club Foot project and would like to revive it. Today we have a situation where Amar Nath Goyal ji is The District Chair for Club Foot. Tomorrow we have a meeting where a lot of people from the District are joining in and we are asking PDG Sanjiv Mehra to help us involve more Clubs. We want to see how our Club can

do more with Leprosy, Polio, Club Foot, Gift of Life, and then prevention of cancer.

**AK:** You know when you explain it like this, one understands it so much more, which most members and Spouses do not know.

**Lalit:** As part of my getting to know people, I was told we have one member who was very active in the Club but for the last two years he has not been so involved. I found out he has high potential, who was involved earlier but not any longer. As part of my homework of getting to know people I got to know Dr. Manish Dhawan. I had never known Manish Dhawan earlier.

AK: So these are challenges you faced and overcame...

**Lalit:** From the time I became President, I tried to get involved with everybody, and to involve everybody.

**AK:** It must have come as quite a shock to have been named PE in the very first year of joining.

**Lalit:** It was a great shock.

**Jayshree:** I told him don't take it, too much work, but then Lalit loves Challenges.

**Lalit:** She didn't say Don't take it, She only said Don't take it NOW.

**AK:** Also you didn't even know the people, Who belongs to whom, in the sense which guy belongs to which lady and vice versa....(laughter)

**Lalit:** And although, we may say we disagree, but the fact is also, that Jayshree has been a great support throughout. In the sense, even though she had a B.Ed. degree and she was going to join teaching, when our 2 children needed to be looked after - she never took up a career.

AK: Weren't you in Infosys?

Jayshree: Part time. I would work from 9 to 3.

**AK:** Delhi School of Economics is something to be proud of.

Jayshree: (Looking at Lalit) But it's not IIM (Laughs)

**AK:** There is no comparison, They are both Parallels. I am sure you both consult each other for everything.

**Lalit:** Her inputs are invaluable. All our Financial Investments are now also dealt by her. Any discussion I have with my Financial Advisor, I invite her to join in. So even if she was not involved earlier, today she is involved with everything and being a Master from Delhi School of Economics, she can understand Eco and Finance, better.

Jayshree: Understanding and Learning.

**AK:** With that input, may I take the liberty of asking a question. Don't answer if you don't want to. Jayshree is now a member in her own right. Now that she is involved with everything, Do you see her, a few years down the line as a Potential President of RCDS?

**Lalit:** I have been asked that question before, Yes, I do. She is a leader in her own right and I can see her getting involved.

**AK:** Now tell me, Every Club has its own Ethos, Culture, Values, Traditions, considering you've been a member of so many Clubs...How did you Amalgamate and Align everything for Delhi South. Obviously our Club is different from maybe your previous Clubs.

Lalit: Some of the Clubs that we have been involved with are Clubs with a shorter History. So in the Club that I was introduced to, there are people like Tridibes who lives in my building, there is Pradeep Bahri who I have a personal relationship with...and they are all part of a Club called Delhi South. I was told Delhi South has a lot of Golfers, you want to learn Golf, come here... There are a lot of people from the Corporate world....so that's how I joined this Club. I realized that this club has an Ethos of Fellowship which is much stronger than many other Clubs.

AK: Yes in fact that was my next question, that here in this

Club, we take great pride in meeting up and in mini fellowships like what we are having right now. We meet over Breakfast, Lunch, Tea, Drink or Dinner, at people's homes.

Somehow when you break bread together there is another kind of bond that one forms.

**Lalit:** You are absolutely right, in fact my plan is that all the committees that we have formed, and we have formed a lot of committees can all have Mini Fellowships.

Some people have Committees in name, but being from the Corporate Culture, I am used to delegation, so I formed these committees with great interest. In fact these committees should take their own decisions and I am going to try and see that these committees meet regularly. This is something I learnt from a Rotary Club in Bangalore. I have written to all the Committee Chair Persons, that if you think you want to meet in your house, Fine. If you want to meet in a Club and you think there will be an expense and you want the Club to meet that Expense...I am willing to meet that Expense, but I am keen that the Committees should meet frequently.

**AK:** So did this kind of thing happen in your previous Clubs? Was this Bonding there, Did you meet in each other's homes, Did the Spouses get along well with one another?

Jayshree: Oh Yes, Every month.

**Lalit:** Also our Club set up a building of its own.

**AK:** The Club set up its own building? Here there is a Rotary Building in Saket where we did have a couple of Fellowships.

**Lalit:** The Bangalore Rotary Club set up its own building and the Karnataka Govt has actually named the road after The Rotary Club of Bangalore Indira Nagar.

Leprosy Foundation is doing a lot of work. One of the things they want to do is maintain a Database of all the Leprosy Patients. We want to keep all the records in one place. We want to make sure that the involvement with the Delhi Govt is kept constant. We want to meet with the State Leprosy Officer, and other Leprosy technical people. We want to have an office for the Leprosy Foundation of RCDS. We have asked 2 members, to get us a room where we can set up the Leprosy Foundation office. We are trying to do long term things, so the next thing would be to set up infrastructure for Leprosy treatment.

**AK:** OK Next question. What are your impressions of RCDS. You don't have to give a politically correct answer.

Lalit: We have a great number of friends. I would like to see that they all take up an equal amount of Rotary responsibility. One thing that I am very keen on is that we build a long term establishment like the Cancer Hospice I spoke about. We are looking for options to build something like that for Leprosy or for Cancer. Lets see what we can build but I would like to see our Club involved with something that stays for a long time. I am not keen to score great points. I am not looking to become a DG or take any District Positions. I have done enough of that. Many people in our Club have been involved in long term projects. Like PDG Hemant Ahuja's father was involved in setting up The Cancer Society in AlIMS. I would like to go in the long term direction of putting up Charitable Organizations which our Club supports.

**AK:** So tell me how did you get to know about Hemant Ahuja.. You mentioned about his father. Did you know him from earlier. You mentioned Manish Dhawan...so basically you've been working on and meeting people.

**Lalit:** I started with the PDGs Deepak Kapur and Hemant, they are obviously the senior people...

**AK:** Then they gave you some references....

**Lalit:** They gave me some references. I worked on that. One PDG I knew from Modern School, The second PDG was also a Modernite.

**AK:** So these are challenges that you faced and overcame.

Lalit: Actually even before I became PE, Because I had come to the Club, I wanted to get to know people. So I started and built on that. When I joined the Club I probably knew about 10 people. Tridibes, Pradeep Bahri, Ganesh. The people I knew were basically Golfers. They said join the Club and play Golf. I thought I would relax and play Golf. I didn't know I would get so caught up in work.

**AK:** Haha, caught up in Quick Sand....Ok, You are a PHF+6. What is the Driving Force behind it? What makes you donate so much?

**Lalit:** Jayshree is also a PHF.

**AK:** That is included in your +6?

Lalit: No, that is separate.

**AK:** Oh WOW...What is your driving force behind it?

Lalit: I can see that Rotary is an Organisation that supports a lot of Charitable Causes with the help of Volunteers. We have limited Administrative Costs and a lot can be done. Since many of our members are professionals, and many ladies are also professional in their own rights, many ambitious plans can be thought of, and worked upon. We can see that Rotarians are doing a very good job and that's why I invest in Rotary Foundation rather than other charities. I do give to other charities too, like the Earth Saviors Foundation, but I feel giving to Rotary is cleaner, sensible and benefits many.

**AK:** OK, Now some Personal Trivia. We've been talking about it and a little Birdie tells us that Opposites attract, and I believe you are strong Proponents of that, but Lalit you just mentioned that you have Jayshree's support in everything.

**Jayshree:** We are definitely very different from one another.

AK: So opposites attract....What makes you Both Tick?

Lalit: What makes us TICK? Respect for each other.

AK: Oh Fantastic. What a Fantastic Answer.

**Jayshree:** Our generation was conditioned to Adjust. I have this argument regularly with my daughter who had a love marriage. I had an arranged marriage. She believes in Equality. 50:50. We knew each other just for 48 hours and our marriage was fixed, we of course got married after 5 months. They got married after knowing each other for 5 years. I keep telling her just adjust. We were conditioned to adjust. That's why statistics prove that Arranged Marriages last longer than Love Marriages.

**AK:** What are the two similarities between the two of you?

Jayshree: Both of us are very social. We both love meeting people. We love entertaining people...

**AK:** And we are being entertained ....

**Lalit:** You are not being entertained, You are doing your Homework.

AK: No, No. This is half the fun and we are thoroughly enjoying it.

**Jayshree:** I was shocked, when Lalit said, Archana wants to meet us, can we meet in the Coffee Shop. I said what rubbish. Archana and Ganesh are going to come home and the added pleasure is Mandira joining us. I said *Main Bahar Nahi Bulaungi, Main Ghar Par Bulaungi.* 

**Lalit:** Its great that Mandira is also here, because seeing her reminds us of our daughter who is in Singapore.

**Jayshree:** We do not have too many youngsters coming to our house. For us it's a great pleasure.

**AK:** What are the two major differences between the two of you?

**Jayshree:** Can I say first. Can I say first. Lalit is a multi-tasker. He can do 5-10 things simultaneously. I can do 2 or 3 with great difficulty. My daughter and son are also like Lalit. So this is something I admire in him and definitely this guy is bright.

He says everybody gets into IIM and I tell him you had a little more brains, so you got into IIM.

**Lalit:** Point is Today even I won't get into IIM. I can't get today's high scores. In my Higher Secondary I topped the board in one subject called Higher Hindi. I got 60%. Today with 60% I would be far behind.

**AK:** One more difference. Multi-tasking is one. Tell me one more major difference.

Lalit: Actually there is no difference.

Jayshree: Hello, I have a Temper. Lalit doesn't get hassled. I get

hyper and hassled.

**AK:** Tell me your favorite Holiday Destination. **Jayshree:** We both love the hills, not beaches.

AK: And who decides the Holidays

Jayshree: Me Me Me.

**AK:** Who plans and organizes the Holiday, the Itinerary?

Jayshree: Lalit. He's also got the finances Na...

**AK:** What's your favorite Cuisine?

Jayshree: Mine is Chinese.

Lalit: Anything.

**AK:** No tell me something. Are you Experimental with food? Are you a fussy or a finicky eater?

Lalit: I was in the hostel so in the hostel every Saturday they gave us a banana.

AK: So you are quite chilled out about food.

Jayshree: He likes good food but he is not fussy.

**AK:** Do you see your children joining Rotary anytime soon.

**Jayshree:** They have no time, too busy, still struggling.

**Lalit:** My answer is Yes. My daughter has already joined The Indus Entrepreneurs . This was set up by people in the Silicon Valley but based on Entrepreneurs of Indian Origin, TIE. I was one of the Founder Members in India, but our daughter has joined it in Singapore.

Jayshree: Our son has joined AWS, Amazon Web Services.

**Lalit:** So our daughter has joined TIE, our son is already an Indian Entrepreneur, he is in the Bay Area. He is working in new areas - so frankly, in times to come, both of them have the potential to join Rotary.

**AK:** Ok Lalit tell me what would you consider as a single personal achievement of yours.

**Lalit:** Friends. I have a large number of friends.

AK: Single Professional Achievement?

Lalit: IT.

**AK:** Rotary Achievement? You have already mentioned the Cancer Hospice, So would that be your Rotary Achievement.

Lalit: Yes.

**AK:** We've already been talking about it but tell me for the record, one positive quality you admire in Jayshree.

**Lalit:** She is very Family Oriented.

**AK:** Family Oriented, and if there was one thing that you could change about her, what would you change.

Lalit: Nothing.

**AK:** You would not change anything. Ok what's your ME Time? What are your personal hobbies.

**Lalit:** At the moment my personal hobby is RCDS. I'd like to leave Fellowships stronger than what they are today. I've talked of long term projects. I am not talking of large number of projects, but large number of projects where people are participating.

**AK:** Are you'll fond of watching movies, listening to music? Do you like reading? Fiction, Non Fiction? RCDS is of course there.

**Lalit:** I like reading, both Fiction and Non Fiction. A bit more of Non Fiction.

But I do movies. We love theatre.

AK: Do you have the time?

**Jayshree:** We love theatre. We have all the time. We are retired. When we are in the USA we see a movie once a week.

Lalit: When we go overseas, we spend a lot of time in Theatre.

**AK:** Jayshree tell me one quality that you admire in Lalit.

**Jayshree:** He is a good husband, a good father. I think he's a better Dad than a husband.

**AK:** And if there was one thing you could change in him what would it be?

**Jayshree:** Less *Padaku.* More fun loving, *Thoda jyada Dancing Karta toh achcha hota.* 

AK: Army wala Dancing.

AK: Ok Jayshree, what's your Me Time. What are your hobbies?

**Jayshree:** I love Bridge. We play Bridge every afternoon Monday to Saturday.

**AK:** Really where do you play?

**Jayshree:** We play online. Sometimes we go to the Club, otherwise generally Online.

AK: Do you have any OCDs. Obsessive Compulsive Disorders.

Lalit: No Jayshree: No

**AK:** What is the single quality that you admire in another human being. What is the single quality that you think defines another human being?

Lalit: Friendship.

AK: No, in a human being.

Lalit: Consideration for others.

**AK:** Compassion is what you are talking about.

Lalit: Compassion.

**AK:** Jayshree what is the one single thing that you would look for in a human being?

Jayshree: Someone who is dependable. Reliability. Someone to fall back on, whether it's a friend or family member or Sibling

**AK:** Ok, in my Introduction of you, Lalit, at your Installation, I did mention DO not be deceived by his Silent Demeanor. He is a guy who packs a silent punch. You are one Of The Silent Movers and Shakers. Any Comments.

**Jayshree:** Very True. Very True. Iron Hand Velvet Glove.

Lalit: I cannot disagree with that.

**AK:** Finally, my last question. Are you the Proverbial Rolling Stone. Considering that RCDS is your 4th or 5th Port of Call in your Rotary Journey. Is this your final Stopover or does The Journey continue?

Lalit: No, No This is Final.

Jayshree: No but it was different cities.

**Lalit:** We were in different cities. Eg. in Bombay I found I could not join Rotary, because many of them met in the daytime.

**AK:** Thank you very much for a lovely chit chat. I have really enjoyed this.

Jayshree: Archana, Thank you.

**Lalit:** Thank you very much for coming over and Thank you for bringing Mandira.

### **Gift of Life**

#### **CHF-DSRF HEART WARRIORS - AUGUST 2022**



### CHIRAYU SINGH

Chirayu Singh is a sweet child with great acting skills, he can pose very well for the camera. He is second child of his parents. He can bring a smile on anyone's face anytime. The family belongs to a small village in District Alwar, Rajasthan.

From his birth, he has been in and out of hospitals as at the age of one month, he was diagnosed with Hernia by doctors at J.K LONE Hospital, Jaipur. During his investigations for Hernia surgery, the doctors suspected some cardiac abnormality, on more investigations, the mother told the doctors that he has trouble during feeding, excess sweating and crying spells since the day he was born. He was advised for echo test which confirmed a major heart defect, the diagnosis and the treatment cost involved shattered the family.

Then they visited the Satya Sai Hospital by doctors' reference and after waited so long (6-7 Months) they didn't get any proper response for further treatment.

Someone from their village searched on web and found about Child Heart Foundation and they contacted us, at our centre, his cardiac disease was confirmed after echo and was diagnosed with "Tetralogy of Fallot's" and required Total Repair Surgery which costed around Rs 4.25 Lakhs. The estimated cost was beyond the family capacity as his father's monthly earning is just Rs 7,000 so for him to organize money for his treatment is not possible. CHF & DSRF saved his life and he is well.

her parents as well as for us.



### **BABY AKSHA**

Chandni took her child Aksha to a general hospital as her daughter was running a high fever. The doctor diagnosed Aksha with pneumonia. The mother said she could hear whispers of doctors talking about the possibility of her daughter having a hole in her heart. The doctors, oblivious about her daughter's health, discharged her from the hospital.

After a week passed, Chandni noticed her daughter had a high fever. Worried, Chandini took her daughter to the general hospital. To her surprise, they denied admission. Panicking about her child, they took her daughter to Urban Hospital. The doctors performed an echo procedure on Aksha, which confirmed that Aksha had a hole in her heart. The doctor said Aksha needed an operation on her heart and arranged a large sum of money. Judging by Chandni's desperate condition, the doctor discharged her daughter. Misery struck Chandini as her daughter's health was deteriorating at a rapid pace. Aksha's uncle told them about Dr. Kohli, as his son had been under the care of Dr. Kohli and his initiatives (NGO). Dr. Kohli diagnosed her with moderate PDA and told Chandini her daughter would need a PDA device as an intervention. Chandini works as a house help, and her husband is a hawker. They are in desperate need of monetary funds to help their daughter out of her misery. They are optimistic that Dr. Kohli and Child Heart Foundation will come to their rescue. Aksha got registered under the HRIDAAN programme. She got her procedure on an urgent basis thanks to CHF-DSRF partnership.



### **PRIYANSHI**

Priyanshi is first baby girl born in her joint family. Her parents belong to Loni, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. She was just 10-15 days old when her parents noticed that she was getting fever almost every week and high respiratory rate as if she was gasping for air. After visiting multiple Govt. Hospitals and not being able to know any definite cause, they finally reached Sri Ganga Ram Hospital where the doctors suspected cardiac problems and advised for 2 surgeries which would cost around Rupees 5 lakhs.

The estimated cost was beyond the family finances as her father is the only earning member of his family with 5 dependents and currently working as a street hawker and earns a monthly income of Rs. 10,000-12,000 /- per month.

The family contacted Child Heart Foundation with the reference of their relative's friend whose child had been treated through CHF. Her cardiac disease was confirmed after echo at our center and she was diagnosed with Ventricular septal defect and requires VSD Device Closure which costs around Rs 4 Lacs. Her family has organised Rs 40,000 but are unable to raise more so, rest was organised by CHF& DSRF and she is free from heart disease and growing well.



### NIHAN

Nihan Sk was suffering from cold and flu, his father Julias took him to a local physician in Bildana Gorakhpur. His condition did not get better so he took his son to a Pediatrician Dr.Salawati. The doctor asked him to get an echo done on the child. Dr. Noorul Islamic a cardiologist in the same hospital did Nihan's echo and confirmed he has a hole in his heart and he needs to undergo Balloon Angioplasty surgery. He was terrified about his son's surgery at such a young age. Later he took Nihan to the local physician and recommended Dr.Bholanat in Berhampur. The doctor took an echo of the child and confirmed the condition and recommended Nihan to PG hospital in Kolkata. In PG hospital the doctor prescribed Nihan some medicines for 3 months. After 3 months when he took his son back to Kolkata, the doctor suggested surgery. He along with his son came back to Gorakhpur and Dr.Bholenath recommended Dr.Kohli to Nihan. They met Dr.Kohli in Siliguri and the doctor did Nihan's echo and found the same diagnosis. They have been in touch with Dr.Kohli regarding Nihan's condition as he needed Angioplasty surgery. He is a poor man and he did not have money to cover the cost of the surgery. CHF& DSRF helped with Nihan's treatment and he is doing well.



### **SAHIL ALOK**

Sahil's father Sanjeet Kumar, was worried about his child's health from the moment of his birth. As a child, Sahil has faced numerous complications from breathing difficulties to more serious complications like typhoid and pneumonia. The local physician referred Sahil to AIIMS New Delhi as luck would shine upon Sahil's family met Rahul Gandhi. With the help of Rahul Gandhi, Sahil got admitted to Apollo Hospital and met Dr. Joshi, who helped him with his underlying conditions. Dr. Joshi referred Sahil to Dr. Vikas Kohli for further treatment. Under Dr. Kohli's care, Sahil had undergone his first surgery on his lungs in 2008. He still needs one more surgery to undergo for his COMPLEX CYANOTIC CHD. His GLENN surgery costed 3.5 lakhs. Sanjeet Kumar travels from Patna to meet Dr. Kohli every year for check-ups. Sahil's father is a farmer and is very thankful for the love and kindness shown by Dr. Kohli and Child Heart Foundation. Sahil got treatment in Delhi with CHF&DSRF partnership and he is going back to Patna soon.



### SANDEEP SINGH

Sandeep Singh was six months old when the doctors performed surgery on him. The doctors advised Rajendra that his son would need another surgery. Life was cruel to Rajendra as he couldn't afford the other surgery.

As life went by, Sandeep's childhood was nothing but full of crises, from being unable to play with his friends to even carrying his school bags. Due to shortness of breathing, he couldn't walk for a long distance. Devastated by this, Rajendra took his son to a local physician Dr. GD Sharma who again referred Sandeep to Dr. Kohli.

Upon meeting Dr. Kohli, Sandeep's health had hit rock bottom. Dr. Kohli diagnosed Sandeep with Double Inlet Single Left Ventricle and advised Sandeep would need an Angioplasty within a month. And FONTAN procedure in the next six to twelve months.

The entire cost of the procedures is 6.5lakhs. Rajendra hails from Punjab and works as a tailor. Sandeep has presently got Angioplasty procedure done with help from CHF&DSRF. His further treatment is going to happen in coming months.



### **HAMZA**

Hamza was six months old the parents noticed their young baby's nails and lips turned blue. Worried, they took Hamza to a local pediatrician, who confirmed that Hamza had a hole in his heart. The parents ran from pillar to post for treatment of Hamza. The Palwal hospital they visited suggested the family wait until Hamza puts on weight for the operation. Time went by, but Hamza still could not put on the weight.

Anxious, the parents took Hamza to AllMS New Delhi for further treatment for their kid. Misfortune had struck the Rahman family again, with the waiting list reaching star high. With no hope in sight, the family took Hamza to their local pediatrician for treatment as his health was deteriorating at a rapid pace. The pediatrician referred them to Dr. Kohli by sharing his address and phone number.

Hamza is diagnosed with PDA PAH and he needs PDA Device closure intervention. The family said that Dr. Kholi gave them assurances about their child's health. They have high hopes for Dr. Kholi for taking them out of their misery and giving the child a new chance to experience this beautiful world. Hamza got registered under the HRIDAAN programme. Through CHF&DSRF partnership, she got her treatment.

### **Member's News**









Maj General BN Raizada, father of Monica Krishan hoisting the national flag on Independence Day which was also his 85 th Birthday. A memorable occasion indeed celebrated at Taj Chia near Bagdogra!! We wish the General a long and healthy life.

### अमरोहा के लाजपत राय थे बाबूलाल वैश्य

दी थी गिरफ्तारी

जेल में पिटाई के बाद नहीं हुए ठीक

अवस्था नीवाद्वात, आस्तेष्ठा : विश्वीमधे की स्थानी साम सामान कर्मा की स्थित सामान कर सामान कर

उनके परिवार में बेटे ने कन्य शित्या। माम रखा गया बाबूलाल वैश्य। पढ़ाई शिखाई के बाद बाबूलाल वैश्य को पुश्रिस अधीकक कार्यालय में खार्याची की में खार्याची की

वर्ष 1919 में मनतार जाए ने वर्षात्ववाध्या व्याप में स्वाप्त कर तिर्माध भारति में प्राप्त में स्वाप्त में स्वाप्त कर तिर्माध भारति में स्वाप्त में स्वाप्त कर का मन तिर्माध भारति में स्वाप्त कर स्वाप्त कर स्वाप्त स्

अंग्रेजों ने बहाजउद्दीन को मारी थी गोली



हागरा संवादकात, तुरुवाय : अधीवां कृमता मुस्सिमें के कार महा रममान! । भी करकेशाम दले से बाब नहीं

का इससे बड़ा मीलत से नेधे मुशकर गांधी मर आपपार और क्या भी जी दूपना कोशी जाते करा हो सकता है कि करायें है जाते भी सरकारों का का होते कह अतिकारी किया गांध सामताहरीन के करा उर्थ मन्तु को ओसी जाने के बाद क्रांतिकरों का दी भी। बातावहरीन परक देश । एक के बाद एक कार्ति हैन तितावते परक के करतेश्वाम के बाद भी जीवाया के है के कि जारी ओसी से मंत्री लेने को हटे हो, देश जाती

था। फिर भी यह लगातार सक्रिय रहे तथा साथी क्रांतिकारियों की रणनीति में सामिल रहते थे। विदेशी वस्तुओं का बहिष्कार करते हुए उन्होंने स्थरेती यस्तु भंडार की स्थापना को थी। वर्ष 1944 में लाला बाबुलाल वैश्य

क्रांतिकारियों को ऐसी यह दिखा गए जो स्वतंत्रता पर जाकर ही समान्त हुई। वर्तमान में उनकी समाधि राजकीय इंटर कालेज के पास है, परंतु लोग उन्हें भूल चुके हैं। शहर के अधिकांश लोगों को उनकी समाधि तक का पता नहीं हैं।

गिरफ्तार कर मुरादाबाद कारागार से जाया था। गया। साला काबुतात वैस्थ को नो माह साथी की सजा सुनाई गई थी। धक्का-मुक्की में रहते पायस होने के बाद जेस में भी उन्हें प्रताहित हुए , किता हुए जो स्वास्थ्य कार्यों गिर चक्का विस्त

## India@75 years young

### **Azadi ka Mahautsav**

### **Proud of our Heritage:**

Our grand father Lala Babu Lal Vaish of AMROHA fought against the British and participated in India's independence struggle & freedom movement during 1921. He was arrested in 1922, was sent to jail and he spent 9 months in a jail in Moradabad. Our father Shri Shashi Shankar Agarwal also participated in freedom struggle, inculcated in us good moral values and we are so proud of our freedom & our heritage.

We are happy to have been born and living in free India. We dedicate ourselves to the cause of our loving country and the people of India .

Jai Hind : Jai Bharat Kiran & Anil Ashima Gul & Anubhav

### Mr. Vinod and Rekha Poddar are on cloud nine as they shared two wonderfull news this month:

Their daughter Shivani has been awarded "Women Entreprenuer of the Year 2022" award by Franchise India in Retail Sector for Garment Brands "Faballey" & "Indya".

They become Proud Dadi & Dada on 28 th august

Heartiest congratulations & best wishes from the RCDS family !!!





Green curry, red curry, pad thai noodles and of course the crisp spring rolls with sweet chilli sauce.... is what makes our mouths water when we think of Thai food.

My recent visit to this marvellous country proved me wrong. Ignorance is bliss they say, but had I followed this, I would have missed sampling such amazing treats, the names of which were as exotic as their taste.

Trip advisor is the tourist bible, and we follow its advice quite sincerely. This was true for us too, which led to us making reservations at a must eat restaurant. Luckily for us, and I say this with much pleasure, we lost our way in the myriad turns that google map directed us too. Our grumbling stomachs forced us to sensibly ditch the google map and simply trust our instincts and ask the locals. With much apprehension, we went down the narrow street with kittens playing in one corner and a baby bathing in the other. But we were pleasantly surprised, as the path led us to a delightful and quaint place right on the riverfront.

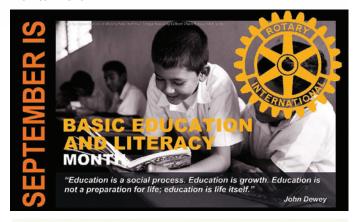
Steve's Cafe and Cuisine proved to be a culinary jewel literally hidden in the multiple bylanes of Bangkok. The door sign "Unless you are God, please remove your shoes' was such a comforting contrast to the fancy restaurants with their strict dress codes and a judgemental maitre'd. Smiling warm faces greeted us with handwriten menus. The food served in simple chinaware was beyond our expectations, the tastes expanding our palates with each mouthful. No fancy tongue twisting names were required for the dishes served to us, their flavours had a language of their own.

We began our culinary journey with a chilled hut of coconut water which along with its tender "malai" was so refreshing that all the usually ordered cocktails were forgotten. Next came the humble Som Tum which us hard core crustacean consumers would have totally ignored, had it not been for the freshness it exuded visually. The papaya strands were as sweet and crisp as the dressing tangy, with the burst of Thai chilli in between. Our delightful journey continued with Pad See Eui, Pad Thai and an array of sauces with names as unique as their flavour. For the unversed these are just noodles but each scrumptious bite made us salivate for more. Our overfed stomachs were complaining, but the aromas around us inspired us and we eagerly ordered fish and prawns in their signature preparations. Delicious flavours hit us with each mouthful and casual conversations were put on hold. Green curry brimming with colourful vegetables was a surprising treat for my vegetarian sister who till then had been surviving on rice !!!

For dessert, our king of fruit, the mango was served on a pile of rice with fresh coconut cream poured on it... yes, it's a weird combination but our taste buds exploded with each hesitant bite that not a single morsel was left on the plate.

Never had we thought that the highlight of our whirlwind trip to multiple cities of Thailand would be a delectable meal at a non descript cafe that we stumbled upon in a small fishing village in Bangkok. From the traditional decor to authentic Thai food served by staff humbly wearing shirts saying "our English is not so good but the Taste of our food is", it was here that we truly experienced the Touch of Thailand.

#### Monica Krishan



### **SEPTEMBER**

<b>—</b> — ·			•	
Kalia, Nishant			01-	Sep
Kumar Rita			01-	Sep
Poddar, Vinod			02	-Sep
Agarwal, Kiran			08	-Sep
Indu Mahajan			09	-Sep
Kumar Pradeep			11-	Sep
Mehta, Chitra			13-	Sep
Krishan, Sanjeev			14-	Sep
Bhandari, Tarsem	La	al	20	-Sep
Bahri, Cdr Pradee	p		25	-Sep
Kapur, Deepak			26	-Sep





Makhija, Sumit Kriti 10-Sep Bhatia Raju Simi 21-Sep Kapoor, Deepak Sarita 21-Sep Brara, Arvinder S Dolly 29-Sep Kapur, Deepak Vaneeta 30-Sep