



**R. I. President: Jennifer Jones**

**District Governor: Ashok Kantoor**

# ROTARY CLUB OF DELHI SOUTH NEWSLETTER "ASHOKA" April, 2023

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO THE CLUB



The month of April featured two exciting club meetings with a large participation, with very different experiences. The first event was the Thai Cookery Demonstration, with 5 Claridges' chefs joining in. The members loved the demonstration, especially the ladies. The meeting attracted more than 60 participants. And, this was followed by an excellent Thai Dinner, with all these dishes and many more.

The next memorable meeting was our 54th Club Anniversary, which is covered in detail in this Newsletter. This had by far the largest attendance this year - 80 members, spouses, guests including Past Presidents and Charter Members. We had Presidents from the Past, Sushil Ansal and Alok Mehndiratta, with his wife Rina; and two Charter Members, Satish Kapur and PDG Hemant Ahuja. It was an honour to welcome the

Charter Members with shawls. The meeting had lovely Sufi music and was compèred by Past President Pradeep Bahri. This was accompanied by French wine, Sangria and followed by lovely Avadhi and Lucknawi food, not to forget the Shahi Tukda for dessert.

And, one more important part of the meeting was three new members joining us, Manoj, our ex-RCDS Secretary Atroley ji and Dr. Alok Agarwal. They were accompanied by their wives Tanuja, Neeru and Chhaya. Obviously the Anniversary celebration had to include cake cutting. We had all the Past Presidents joining me and First Lady Jayshree in cutting a cake for the 54 years of our club's activities and achievements.

We also got another good news on the auspicious occasion of our Anniversary. Rotary International disbursed funds of USD 234,184 (Rs. 1.92 crores) for our Global Grant on Child Heart Surgeries the same day. This global grant covers 5 Rotary Districts, 2 District Designated Funds, 9 Rotary Clubs from India, USA and Germany and a total of 85 donors, out of which 7 donors are from Rotary Club of Delhi South.

We restored an old Club tradition on the Anniversary, signing the Attendance Register. My senior Arvinder Brara had reminded

me at the last meeting that we need to get this done; I was happy to re-start this from that day.

The day before, we had a Certificate handing over ceremony for the Nari Shakti project that we had for Skill Development with the NGO, ETASHA. It was great to see the excitement amongst the girls who had just completed the two month course and 34 of whom (70%) had already got jobs. In fact one student got a job with Starbucks that very day.

In fact the month had started with the good news that we had had 3 Child Heart Surgeries done at the Sathya Sai Hospital on 30th March, in the memory of our old Rot'anne Ira Bhargava. And, yet another good news was that our senior member, Dr. HK Chopra was honoured with the Legend Healthcare Changemaker Award on 2nd April by the Minister Mrs. Meenakshi Lekhi.

As I write this message, I am sipping tea with Jayshree in our Club Anniversary Mugs. Hope all of you have collected your Coffee Mug, designed by TS Shashinath.

Three cheers for another great month; this was really memorable !

**Lalit Sawhney**  
President, 2022-23

From the desk of the  
**E D I T O R**

## Aanamnesis of a brutal crackdown 104 years ago on a peaceful gathering...



**A anamnesis of a brutal crackdown 104 years ago on a peaceful gathering of the local citizenry celebrating Baisakhi and the subsequent firing on an unarmed crowd at the Jallianwala Bagh, in Amritsar on April 13, 1919 was the pilot light, that lit the steely resolve to vanquish the British empire's rule over the Indian Empire. The clarion call for freedom gained in strength, never wavered till the Indian tricolour was hoisted on the Indian soil on August 15, 1947. The brutalised nation, however, never forgave the perpetrator of the heinous shoot to kill order of an unarmed assembly of children, women and**

**men. The troops continued to fire till the last bullet had been exhausted . It's estimated that around 2000 rounds were fired, killing over 500 and injuring 1500 peaceful demonstrators. The Governor of Punjab, Michael O'Dwyer had ordered the firing, fearing a revolt against the draconian Rowlatt Act. Udham Singh an eleven year old Jat Sikh was one amongst many who was injured in the melee and survived. He resolved to avenge the massacre and twenty one years later, followed O'Dwyer to England and assassinated him on March 13, 1940 at Caxton Hall in London. Udham Singh refused to flee, triumphantly accepting in court, that he had avenged the death of his countrymen and smilingly accepted the verdict of death. These were the bedrock events on which the foundation of an independent India was laid!!**

We Indians are an amalgam of tolerance, of respect and deference to different religions that have thrived in the fertile and virtuous environment of this ancient civilisation. This year April is a festival studded month. On the one hand we celebrate Mahavir Jayanti, the birth of Lord Mahavira, an apostle of peace whose empathy for all living creatures is all encompassing. It's a philosophy which has no peers and their monks or 'munis' and the female counterpart the 'aryika' wage an ascetic battle to renunciate and conquer the desires and passions of the bodily senses to attain enlightenment, a journey of purification of the soul. Once the ascetics have renounced the world and it's luxuries, they cease bathing as well to protect the living organisms in water!! They derive comfort in a spartan and basic life, in fact pursuing a self punishing lifestyle.

Good Friday and Easter Sunday are Christian festivities to celebrate the resurrection of Christ who comes alive on Easter Sunday having been crucified on Friday!! Easter Egg is symbolic of renewal of life and is in vast demand during this period. Preceding Easter the devout Christians practice Lent which is a forty days period of fasting and praying, to prepare for the resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes on a Holy Thursday!! An interesting aside which some of us may not be aware, quite like the Hindus abstaining from non-vegetarian food on Tuesdays, the Roman Catholics abstain from meat of any kind of animals

on Friday, exception being fish.

Ramzan the holy month of fasting for Muslims is being celebrated in April this year, which is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. The fasting is from dawn to dusk, the summer months made more challenging by long day hours, and the oppressive heat extending the period of fasting, without a sip of water or food!! The fasting month culminates with the sighting of the new moon and celebration of Eid ul Fitr, which is a salutation to Allah, for blessing the fasting period with success!!

Baisakhi is a robust festival that heralds the beginning of the harvest season, not only in the states of Punjab and Haryana, but also in other agrarian states like Assam, Bengal, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. For the Sikhs however, it's a double celebration. Traditionally they, particularly the Jat Sikhs were into farming. After Guru Gobind Singh jee founded the Khalsa by baptising the Five Sikhs or Panj Pyare the five beloved in 1699, and thereby creating the warrior arm, they have served in the defence of the country with honour and immense heroism . An interesting fact is that the Panj Pyare came from different parts of the country Lahore, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat and Orissa as well as from different vocations and castes. The sanctifying of the Panj Pyaras was in a way symbolic of the Gurus teachings of oneness of man, as no one, regardless of cast, creed or vocation was better than the other!!

'The moving finger writes; and having writ moves



on; nor all thy Piety nor Wit shall lure it back to cancel half a line, Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it'. These are opening lines penned by the great Persian poet Omar Khayyam from his most famous collection, Rubaiyat. It's an attempt to paraphrase it in the context of the waning months of the current Rotary year. Nine healthy months of activity, with three more still to go, will add to the vintage value of a remarkable club!! History is fixed, and lives on, and we have much to commend the remarkable legacy of all the past presidents who have invested the club with abiding memories of a glorious past. President Lalit Sawhney is completing the lap in style and the baton is ready to slide effortlessly into waiting grip of PE Pramod Agarwal as he prepares for 2023-24.

The future looks resplendent, and in the coming weeks the President Elect will incrementally spell out his plans for the year 2023-24. The highlight of the beginning of a new Rotary year is the club assembly, which lays out plans comprehensively and in their component form. President Elect will also be sharing his thoughts and plans through the medium of this newsletter. Do keep a lookout to remain abreast of Rotary plans as they unfold.

Rajiv Gujral remains the master of all that he survey from which flow the good times for the club members. The speaker meeting on April 7 was with a twist, carrying boldly the Rajiv stamp!! The entire club meeting had swung a 180 degrees to a direction that was wafting a melange of culinary aromas managing to overwork the salivating glands !! It was a mesmerising hour! A symphony of the wok and the spatula, sizzling oil and the stir fried, all waltzing in the pan to the rhythm of the occasional tuk tuka tuk!! A battery of Thai cuisine chefs at The Claridges new restaurant The Erawan, specially curated a menu for the members that could easily be spun at home. This special meeting was followed by a sumptuous dinner of Far East cuisine, a mix of Chinese and Thai. Choice of dishes on offer complimented each other in taste, aroma and in visual appeal and left their tantalising mark and umami on the palette!! It's rare that a table -starters, main course and the dessert manages to satiate the epicurean sensual pleasures as a complete package!! This was one. Cheers Rajiv!!

Rajiv, was not done yet!! Club anniversary was the crowning glory on two excellent fellowships, even though technically the Thai food will be cast into the mould of a club meeting!! Be that as it may, the footfalls tell the full story of a remarkably successful April in the calendar of events so far!! Lalit of course leads from the front, as a President must, and with Jayshree the perfect consort and

as a First Lady must, their fine tuning is the icing on the cake!! It's a perfect team.

The newsletter this month has an interesting twist. We have been attempting to create an interesting module of our members interviews and who better than a spouse, who can unravel some hidden nuggets as well as step beyond the Lakshman Rekha, which may well be beyond the level of comfort of another!! The Ashoka has made several attempts to have a chat with an illustrious Rotarian Vivek Narayan Gour, but every attempt so far has been an exercise in futility!! An emergency of one kind or the other, with either the interviewee or the interviewer, short circuited the well laid out plans. In the initial phase we will cover the new members, prodigals excluded!! The older members are by now an open book as an extended family always is ,but we will still plan to reach to them with another twist!

Weather was the most discussed event in the life of the English. Accosting a stranger with a discussion on the weather, was completely au fait. It was the only aberration free of a withering response, normally directed towards unwanted familiarity!! The dreaded twitch of the upper lip and the disdain of a raised eyebrow were spared!! and not employed to a disastrous effect. Weather however now remains upmost the world around. The normal cycle has been extensively disturbed and El Niño and La Niña, the weather weighted expressions were alien to the common man for such was their sparse use in the decades gone by. We in India remain agog at the weather predictions and both the expression, El Niño and La Niña are now par for the course!! La Niña is music to the ears, promising more than average rainfall, a healthy harvest and overflowing water Reservoirs. El Nino on the other hand sends the minions in Krishi Bhavan and North Block scurrying to prepare plan two for a possible drought and looking for an alternate source of water!! For centuries the sub continent has been held hostage to the vagaries of a recalcitrant monsoon, with the populace suffering several cycles of drought and famine!! Such has been the fate of rural India poignantly shown in the decades old biopic 'Do Bigha Zameen' based on Rabindra Nath Tagore's book ' Dui Bigha Jomi'!! We are ending April as a month that has favoured us with pleasant temperatures!! Heavenwards are our eyes in thanksgiving!!

Stay safe and smiling till we meet again with the May newsletter.

Cheers

**Inderjeet Singh,**  
Editor

## MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT ELECT 2023-24



Dear Fellow Rotarians

First, a very happy birthday to each one of us for completing 54 years as members of elite RCDS club. Your commitment and dedication for the cause of Rotary has really been the key pillar of strength for us. I am also grateful to all our past and current President and their team who tirelessly worked for the club and continue to provide valuable guidance and support. I also want to take this opportunity to welcome our three new members Mr Manoj and Mrs Tanuja Srivastava, Dr Alok and Mrs Chhaya Agarwal and Mr Raghubar and Mrs Neeru Atroley to our club.

It was a delight to hand over the certificates to the girls who were trained at Etasha and then placed in good jobs under Project Nari Shakti. President Lalit Sawhney, Mr Som Dua and I spent a good time with the girls. District Chair Skill Development - Mr Umang Das too spent quality time to learn about the program for further application.

Fast forwarding to the preparation for next year, I put together a draft of the action plan and shared with the Board of Directors and Committee Chairs for their inputs and suggestions. I think we will have this in good shape for sharing at the Club assembly on May 27th. At this stage, all I would

say is that there is plenty to do to serve our society and each one of us can undertake some part of the project to lend a helping hand. And of course, we will have fun and games along the way which Jayshree ji is already planning with her team starting with GOV and Installation on July 14th, 2023. We plan to share the full year calendar with a small caveat that some dates may change but I feel it is critical to provide you visibility for the full year so you can plan your calendars well ahead of time.

Few initial thoughts on the projects - we would like to retain and continue with what is working well. Projects like Leprosy, Gift of life, Beti Bachao, Sankalp, Nari Shakti, Blood donation camps, debate competition, polio and clubfoot awareness. We will take the game to a whole new level in the area of Skill Building from mobilization to training for placement in meaningful jobs. We are working on various options including but not limited to partnering with other like minded clubs and/or creating our own centre for skill building. We will step up the game on cancer awareness, mammography and cervical vaccination in association with District leadership and Rotary Cancer Foundation.

I want to thank all members, their family and friends who have

generously donated to DSRSF for various causes. Programs we have done in 2022-23 would not have been possible without these contributions. We will continue to need the financial support from each one of you to up the game in a big way. We will bring forward a proposal before the Club Assembly for an increase in annual contribution to DSRSF which was fixed 7 years ago. While additional collection will help, it will not be sufficient to support all projects in a meaningful way and hence I will personally reach out to many of you to help raise funds for our projects to up the game. I look forward to your generous support and thanks in advance.

Finally, I would request each one of you to send me one item that you would like to continue, one that you would start doing and one that you would like to stop. Put simply start, stop and continue. I will try to incorporate the lead suggestions in the action plan and share the same with you during club assembly or during the course of the year. My email address is [pramodagarwal2562@gmail.com](mailto:pramodagarwal2562@gmail.com).

Look forward to working together the Rotary way, **"we create hope in the world"**.

**Pramod Agarwal**  
President, 2023-24



# INTERVIEW WITH SANJEEV KRISHAN

APRIL 23, 2023 BY MONICA KRISHAN

Rotary Club of Delhi, South



**Que: If you were not the Chairman of PwC today, what would you be doing?**

**Ans:** Join a private equity fund

**Que:** If you could redo one thing in life, what would it be?

**Answer:** Study anything but accounting

**Que:** What do you most appreciate about your parents?

**Answer:** Humility and being steadfast in hard situations.

**Que:** What values do you think were imbibed to you as a child?

**Answer:** Hard work, commitment to what we do and treating the organization you work for, as your "own"

**Que:** What are 3 hobbies that you would pick up once you retire?

**Answer:** Golf, Singing and writing a book.

**Que:** If you won the lottery tomorrow, what would you be doing with all the \$?

**Answer:** Adopt the girl child in 4 - 5 villages in India and make sure they get educated enough to stand on their own feet,

**Que:** What is the best city you have ever been to in terms of culture, people and vibes?

**Answer:** Barcelona and surrounding areas. New York's vibe is hard to match !

**Que:** One person: dead or alive you would like to have lunch with? Why?

**Answer:** Adolf Hitler - would really like to understand what drove his thinking to do what he attempted

**Que:** If you could go back and become 21 again, what are five things you would change?

**Answer:** Adventure a lot more and invest in thrilling experiences, backpack across the country, try my

hand at bollywood singing, make some more friends (particularly of the fairer sex !) and not specifically not walk out of an IIM group discussion, assuming my co - panelists will call me back (as you can imagine, I never made it there !)

**Que:** What advice would you give to your 20-year old self?

**Answer:** Not to think linear, and yet have the temperament to course correct if things are falling apart

**Que:** What is a rare and underrated social skill you have ?

**Answer:** I can make people around me feel really good about themselves !

**Que:** What besides basic discipline and routine, truly motivates you to perform in an almost obsessively disciplined and focused manner?

**Answer:** Be ready for the change, tomorrow may bring!

**Que:** If you could have one superpower, what would it be? And why?

**Answer:** I would love to have the ability to morph into any individual at any point in time !

**Que:** If you had to use a TV character to talk about yourself, who would you choose?

**Answer:** Doctor Ross Geller from the sitcom "Friends".... his nerdy yet quirky personality resonates with mine.

**Que:** A childhood memory you can't forget

**Answer:** Cricket was a favorite sport and I had possibly broken many glass panes - we used to always run away every time it happened, until I got turned in by a friend who thought I broke his "record" of sixes.

**Que:** Your guilty pleasure

**Answer:** Watching old Govinda movies on the loop!



# 54<sup>TH</sup> ROTARY CLUB DELHI SOUTH ANNIVERSARY

21st April , 2023



The RCDS Club Anniversary is a Gala Event which all Rotarians and their charming Annes look forward to with great anticipation!! An event which has to be grand and befitting of the elite stature of the Club!

To commemorate the 54 th Anniversary this year a "Sufi Musical Night" was organised at the Viceroy Hall, The Claridges.

The Hall was dressed up regally for the occasion with rich golden hued tablecloths, contrasting black chair covers with gold trimmings! The elegant centrepieces with candles and flowers added a touch of glamour to the table setting!!

Our grateful thanks to Rtn Rita Bhasin who went all out to create a beautiful ambience with unique props like Antique Surais, Lamps and a floral back drop! The soft..est comfortable Gaddas with accents of colourful cushions set the mood for the evening!!

It was wonderful to see the overwhelming and joyful participation of members and their spouses who all came elegantly dressed in their formal best adding some glitter and sparkle to the event!!

Thanks to RAnne Archana Katariya, who organised the Sufi singers Mustafa and his team who performed exceptionally well and kept the audience mesmerised with soulful numbers like "Kun Faaya Kun", "Mast Kalandar " among many more!

Rtn Pradeep Bahri as MC steered the evening effortlessly like a seasoned sailor!

It was a delight to have founder members Rtn Satish Kapur, Rtn Hemant Ahuja and Rtn Sushil Ansal with us.

They were given a warm welcome and presented with shawls.

Rtn Hemant Ahuja added humour to the evening recalling old memories and sharing anecdotes from the past .

The Birthday Cake was cut and everyone cheered to wish the club many joyful healthy, robust and productive years ahead!!

Our biggest thanks to the entire Claridges team- the Management, Chefs, Bartenders, Servers, who all rose to the occasion and offered an exceptional experience with a delectable array of curated dishes and drinks!! Must add the special Sangria was a much sought after Cocktail!!

Thanks to Rtn Lalit, Rtn Shashinath who arranged for the momento Coffee Mugs. Rtn Rohit for his support as Club Services Director.

Above all thanks to each one who came and with their presence made the evening delightful and memorable! Your vibrant energy and joyful spirit made the event one of the highest participated and enjoyable one!!

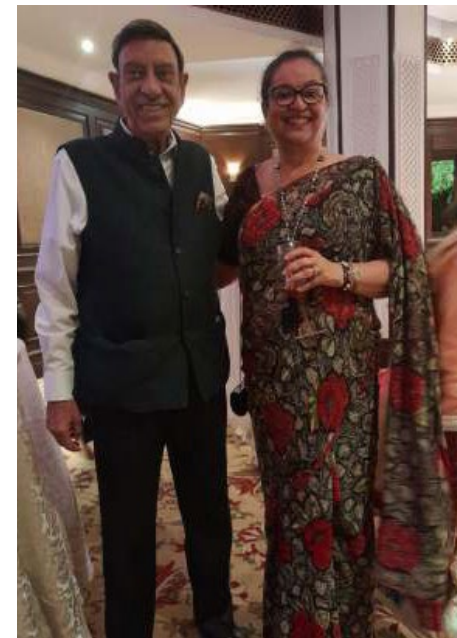
Kudos to President Lalit and First Lady Jayashree for their support always to ensure that the members and spouses have a great fellowship experience!!

Finally a big thanks to Rtn Rajiv Gujral for his painstaking efforts of several days to oversee every minute detail and aspect of the event to make it a successful one!!

**Geeta Gujral**

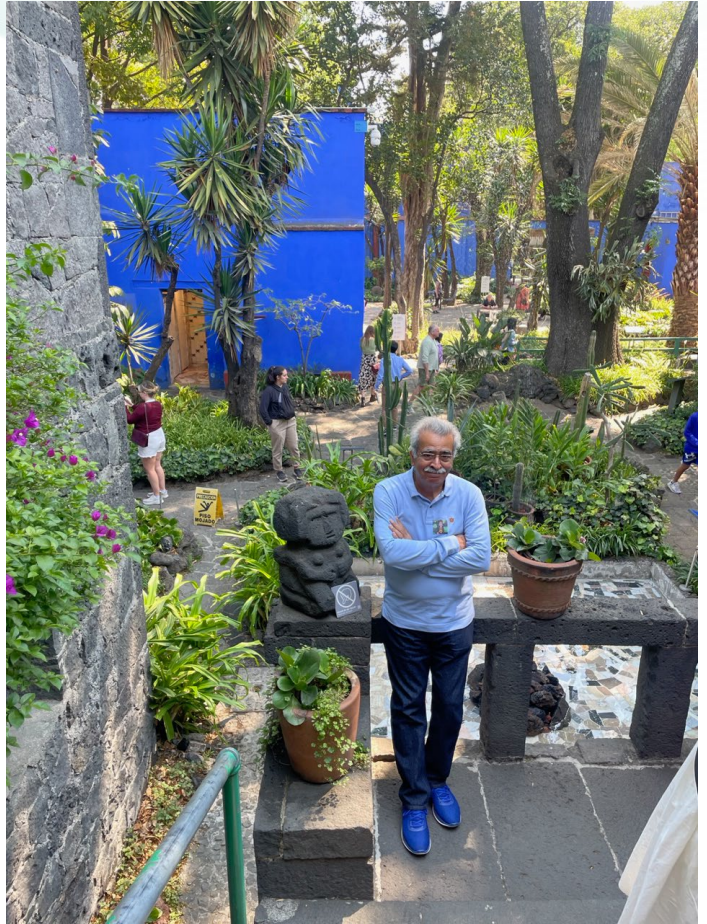








## OUR HOLIDAY IN MEXICO CITY



It was at a spur of the moment that we decided to take a vacation in Mexico City (the capital of Mexico) as our daughter and son-in-law were full of praise for the place where they had been some months ago.

Subsequently, after watching the series 'Al Chapo' on OTT and after hearing from friends and 'well-wishers' that Mexico was not safe, with headlines filled with the macabre news of 2 of the 4 kidnapped American tourists killed Mexico, our hearts were full of trepidation when Sonya and I stepped into the Aero Mexico flight 669 to take us on a 4 ½ hour journey from San Francisco to Mexico City. We were pleasantly surprised to see that the aircraft was clean, the entertainment system worked efficiently, the staff was courteous, both on ground and in air, the food was warm and delicious, and the Corona beer was chilled to the correct temperature.

The driver of the taxi, which we had pre-booked with the hotel, was at the arrival lobby of the Mexico City airport with a placard with my name written in bold letters. After 30 minutes, we were safely and efficiently dropped at our hotel – The Kali Centro and allocated a neat and clean room on the 3rd floor.

In this travelog I will add some helpful 'tips' for travelers to Mexico (and specifically Mexico City) for the first time, so that they could benefit from our experience.

**Tip 1** – Take a roaming option on your mobile and have data available for WhatsApp (for calling), Google Translate and Google Maps. Very few people here understand English and converse in Spanish. The Google Translate App is a big help for communication.

**Tip 2** – It is better to prebook a taxi from the hotel where you are staying. It is great to see a reception team at the airport rather than struggling with the language to find out where taxis and Ubers are available.

**Tip 3** – When going from place to place, Ubers are easy to get. We were advised to avoid the crowded public transportation system of metros and buses.

### Food

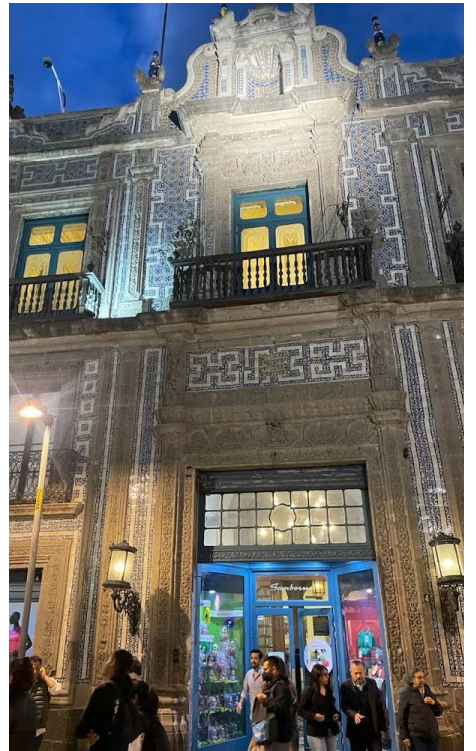
After quickly settling down in our hotel room, we decided to take a walk to the nearby Tacos El Huequito, a hole in the wall Tacos place, a 10 minutes' walk from the hotel. This was our first taco experience in Mexico and it was a great place to start! We also tried some mouth-watering burritos. A taco is traditional Mexican food consisting of a small sized corn (mostly) based tortilla ('roti') topped with a filling (chicken, pork, fish, etc), dressed up with condiments including salsa, onions, tomatoes, cheese; then folded and eaten with hand. A burrito on the other hand, consists of a flour ('maida') tortilla wrapped into a sealed cylindrical shape around various ingredients, mostly meat, vegetable, beans, cheese, etc. A taco dish consisting for a single taco would be about 30 to 50 Mexican pesos represented by the symbols MXN. The rate of a US dollar vs the MXN is approximately 1 US\$= 17 MXM and 1 MXN = INR 4.5.

**Tip 4** – In addition to your Credit/ Forex Card, carry MXN as cash for using in smaller eating and shopping places.

Some other types of traditional Mexican food consist of the following:

1. **Al pastor** – The Lebanese immigrants brought the method of cooking to Mexico. It is a preparation of split grilled slices of pork on a vertical rotisserie, very similar to that used for lamb shawarma. Once fully cooked, the meat is removed from the spit in thin slices and served on tortillas with toppings like lime juice, onions, and salsa. This was one of the dishes we had when we had the pleasure of being hosted by Debashish (son of my course mate Ashim Kumar Bhadra) and his lovely American wife Alex at La Casa del Pastor, an upmarket









restaurant, in Polanco. This was an amazing restaurant with excellent ambience and service. We also had Tacos Dorados here. These are fried tacos, with crunch (like the Indian fried papads), generally rolled with various fillings and served with cream, cheese, lettuces on top.

2. **Enchiladas** – Very similar to burritos but with tortillas made of corn and not flour. These are usually covered with tomato and chili pepper sauce.
3. **Quesadilla** – Pronounced ‘Kasidiya’ (rhyming with the Hindi word Kesariya) consists of two tortillas that hold a layer of cheese between them and sometimes meats, spices and other fillings.
4. **Tamales** – The dish is made of cornmeal dough, filled with chicken, pork, beef, beans or vegetables and spices, wrapped up in corn husk or banana leaves and cooked in a steamer.
5. **Churros** – This is an ideal dish as dessert. It is made with a delicate pastry dough (with ingredients like butter, water, flour, eggs, etc) pipe dropped into hot oil (like we Indians make Jalebi). These fried Churros are coated with cinnamon sugar (reminds one of Beignets available in the famous coffee shops of New Orleans, the most famous being Café du Monde) and then you get a choice of dips like molten chocolate, condensed milk, or caramel. If you are not calories conscious, you could also order a mug or tall glass of hot or cold chocolate respectively, for dipping your Churros. We found the oldest place (we understand) where these churros started, called Churreia El Moro, where we had to wait in line to get a seat inside. Reminds you of the India Coffee Houses in Delhi. But for the novelty, the wait was worth it.

There are many other dishes which we relished like, Chilaquiles, Pozole, Tostadas, Elote, Moles and many more! Mexico is a foodies paradise.

While I have written about a few eating places on different ends of the price spectrum, let me mention another one at the Anthropology Museum called Sala Gastronomica. Lovely location, expensive, average food but great ambience and service. But then, their pineapple salad was excellent!

The “House of Tiles” or Casa de los Azulejos is an 18th-century palace, built by the Count of the Valle de Orizaba family. The building is distinguished by its facade, which is covered on three sides by blue and white colonial tiles. This House of Tiles houses a restaurant called Sanborns which is special because of its history and beauty. The dining room is gorgeous with views of the surrounding landmarks. The waitresses wear a special dress and the china in the restaurant is beautiful and has a tragic story! We loved our dinner here on the eve of our departure.

### Drinks

How can we visit Mexico City and not have the local alcoholic drinks like Mezcal and Tequila?

**Mezcal** (can also be spelt Mescal) is made from any kind of Agave plant. A colorless or slightly yellow tinged liquid can be had as a shot (straight) or in cocktails like Margaritas. A saying in Mexico regarding Mezcal, loosely translated in English is “For all bad, mezcal, and for all good, as well; and if there is no remedy, litre and a half”! Mezcal straight in bars is served with slices of orange,

salt, or something like our Indian Chat Masala. You could sprinkle the salt/ chat masala on the orange slices and bite into them after ever sip of the Mezcal.

**Tequila** is also made from agave plant, however only from one variety of this plant called the Blue Weber. Another difference is that the way Mezcal and Tequila are produced.

**Margarita** – a perfect blend of sour, sweet, salty and bitter flavours made possible with lime juice, tequila, orange liqueur and sweet syrup with crushed ice. Different varieties, ranging from Classic to different flavours are available.

**Local beers** – Corona is the most famous one. Modelo also is very famous. There is a famous beer cocktail which blew me away, called Michelada; wow! It is made with beer, lime juice, assorted sauces (chilli, tamarind based), spices and chilli peppers. I had this in a cave restaurant after our visit to the Teotihuacan pyramids.

### Sightseeing

We, thanks to our daughter Aditi, had planned our visits to the must-see places well in advance. One such place is the Frida Kahlo Museum.



**Frida Kahlo Museum** – Frida, considered as Mexico’s greatest artist best known for her brilliantly colored self-portraits, was born in 1907 in Coyocoan, Mexico City. She grew up in a family home, now called Casa Azul or the Blue House, which is now her museum. One is moved by the struggle of this girl who was in poor health in her childhood, contracted polio when she was 6. She was bed ridden for months and limped. When she was a teenager, she was involved in an accident where her spine and pelvis were injured leaving her in severe pain. On her four-poster bed in her bedroom, she had a mirror on the ceiling to help her paint self-portraits. She married the famous artist Diego Rivera in her twenties. She died at the age of 47. This museum gives us an insight into her works, her way of thinking and her struggles against her physical limitations. We loved it and would recommend it as a must watch for visitors to this city. We left the museum very moved by Frida’s work and her struggles and also with some souvenirs from the Museum Souvenir shop.

**Tip 5** – Book tickets to the museum online many days in advance as we saw a lot of visitors, including a Khalsa father and son duo





from Canada, go back disappointed as tickets were not available at site and had a waiting period of at least a fortnight. Remember that senior citizen tickets are cheaper here.

**Teotihuacan** – We had booked the ‘Air bnb Experiences’ tour to take us to Teotihuacan. A taxi picked us up early morning from our hotel and took us to the Monument of Revolution, where, along with other 21 international tourist, were taken by two mini vans for a trip to Teotihuacan, about 50 kms away.

Teotihuacán has been captivating, intriguing people and archaeologists as it still has its secrets and mysteries buried. The vast settlement with its pyramids, temples and platforms lining a central ‘avenue of the dead’ still leaves us wondering who built these and how did these people disappear. Built between the 1st and 7th centuries AD, it was home to at least 25,000 people. There is still much that remains a mystery about the people who built and lived at Teotihuacan. They were clearly a powerful society. It is thought that these people perished in a fire in about 750 AD. Much later Aztecs gave the ruined city the name of “Teotihuacan,” which meant “the place where the gods were created.” Teotihuacan is a listed UNESCO World Heritage Site. The pyramids which stand out are the Citadel (we scaled this pyramid by climbing up its high and narrow steps), the Sun and the Moon. These pyramids looking magnificent and majestic, hold in them some secrets which will take us human many years to unravel and fathom.

**‘Air bnb Experience’ English speaking guides** – Jane (the leader), Gabriella and Steffi made our trip to Teotihuacan memorable. The cherry on the cake was our lunch, towards the end of the tour, in one of the excavated caves which was a beautiful and novel experience.

**Diego Rivera**, the husband of Frida Kahlo, was an excellent painter. While some of his works are displayed in the Frida Kahlo Museum, one has to visit the Ministry of Public Education building (or Secretaria de Educacion Publica) on the Republica de Argentina street in the Centro Historical District, to appreciate his scores of murals which were painted from 1923 to 1928. These murals depict the theme of Nation building and are thought to be the foundation of Mexican Mural Renaissance. These murals are beautiful and seem to celebrate the overthrowing of the dictator in the 10 year revolution which ended in 1920. The good part about this building is that entry to watch these murals is free. One just has to show one's ID and go in!

**The National Museum of Anthropology** – What impressed us most, as we got off our Uber and headed towards the Museum was its unique and impressive architecture! The museum houses comprehensive collection of exhibits which tell the story of Mexico from ancient times to the present. While it has various spaces concentrating on different times, from early man to

Mayans, Aztecs, etc the civilizations at Teotihuacan pulled us towards that section. It houses some great archaeological items and reproductions. However, one missed out on important information as only a few artifacts were explained in English, rest of them being in Spanish. One must visit this Museum to make your trip to Mexico City complete.

In the heart of the historic district, Zocalo or Plaza de la Constitucion, is one of Mexico City's most popular spots that dates back to the Aztec era. It's a large and historic public plaza, always buzzing cultural events, and even political demonstrations. The square is surrounded by beautiful architecture and landmarks, such as Palacio Bellas Artes and the Templo Mayor..

Take a walking tour in the historic Zocalo & Palacio de Bellas Artes - hold your purse close because it's very crowded so you could get pickpocketed.

There are so many other places to see, depending on what you are interested in. Some of things recommended are:

1. Walk inside the castle at the top of the hill in Chapultepec Park.
2. Bike on Reforma avenue on Sundays when road is closed for traffic from 8am-2pm
3. Walk around Parque México and Parque España in Condesa
4. If you have more time, go on a day trip or a weekend day trip to Guanajuato, Taxco, Puebla, San Miguel de Allende, or Queretaro.

**Shopping** – How can you leave Mexico City without shopping for souvenirs. Two places that stole our hearts were:

*Mercado de Coyoacan*, not too far from the Frida Kahlo Museum, is one of Mexico City's most iconic markets. It has a maze of stalls selling everything from textiles, art, woven bags, fruits and vegetables to handmade trinkets. There are plenty of local food stalls for a bite and also a few bars for parched throats of tired travelers.

Debashish and Alex told us about another shopping area called *Mercado de Artesanías La Ciudadela* which was a 5 minutes' walk from our hotel. If you love folk art, handicrafts, and the like, this market is a dream come true. It's massive and is a ‘bhul bhulaiyan’ (as you say in Hindi).

Before we realized, it was time to head back to San Francisco. Full of fond memories in our hearts, a bottle of Mezcal from the Duty-Free shop at the airport and some souvenirs in our bags, we said good bye to Mexico City after a short and interesting holiday, with plans to get back to this beautiful country, sometime in the future.

**Pradeep Bahri**



## THAI CUISINE DEMO

The first club event of April – a Thai Cuisine Demo by a special team of the Executive Chef of Claridges, Ankur, which included the charming Thai Chef, Tarathip Nooreingsai - had all the ladies eagerly seated in the front row with the men backing them enthusiastically - hoping for a Thai treat back home?! Thai cuisine is known for its complex flavor profiles, which often balance the primary tastes - sweet, spicy, sour, and salty, as was vividly demonstrated. Interestingly, the five exotic dishes demonstrated were all vegetarian- the times are a changing! - refreshing 'Pomelo salad', the evergreen, raw Papaya 'Som Tam Salad', Thai Green Curry with the secret ingredient 'Krachai', the must have-Veg Pad Thai Noodles and the beautiful red rubies water chestnut dessert- 'Tub Tim Grob'.

The elaborate Thai dinner laid out after the demo was a 'culinary delight'. The event inspired the formation of a WhatsApp group by the same name! – men are welcome to join.

Rajiv Gujral outdoes himself every time! The exciting events planned have been attracting a large turnout at the fellowships- those who have been missing, do check out for yourselves!

- Shirin





## NARI SHAKTI MEETING

by Pramod Agarwal on behalf of RCDS

"Nari Shakti phase 1 project concluded with the awarding of certificates to girls who successfully completed their training. Nari Shakti was about bringing girls out from the four walls of their house by persuading the parents, relatives, training them on basic computer skills, communication and build their confidence to face the real world and to place them in jobs. Out of 50 girls sponsored, 34 were already placed. Remaining are in process of finding the right role. Several girls shared their journey of success and their stories were truly inspirational. Our one time investment of Rs 12000/- per girl has made them ready to earn more every month thus taking first big step towards financial independence. Sanskriti Agarwal 17 year old, played the pivotal role in raising over Rs 4.5 lakhs for the project including her own contribution of 1 for every 4 donated by others. Our Naman and Neeti too contributed generously to make this project happen.

Now we will double the size of project and offer the same for 50 girls under Nari Shakti phase 2 and 50 boys under Atmanirbhar phase 1. We will need generous support from our club members to make a real difference in people's life and bring about a decisive change.

**Pramod Agarwal**



## BOOKS DISTRIBUTION AT NAI DISHA

Books distributed by Pramod Agarwal on behalf of RCDS at Nai Disha. Students are super excited to receive the new books free of cost.





## APRIL SUCCESS STORIES

### CHF-DSRF HEART WARRIOR – APRIL 2023

#### SANDEEP SINGH

PRE-SURGERY



POST SURGERY



POST FOLLOW-UP



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 was 6.5 lakhs. Rajendra hails from Punjab and works as a tailor. Sandeep got Angioplasty procedure done on 28/08/2022 with help from CHF&DSRF.

Now he needed the life-saving surgery called FONTAN. The target cost was Rs. 4,00,000/-. Rajinder Singh were in dire need of financial support. He has exhausted all their savings and were struggling to come up with the funds required for Sandeep's surgery. Our CHF team gave them our assurance and started fundraising for Sandeep with CHF efforts her funding was arranged with the part funding support of DSRF.

Sandeep Singh was operated on 15/04/2023 and surgery was successfully done. He has come here 2 times for follow-up and will take further follow-up in Jalandhar opd. It was an emotional moment for his parents as well as for us. The family has thanked DSRF and CHF for saving their child's life.

## GIFT OF LIFE



**Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Centres for Child Heart Care**  
Chhattisgarh | Haryana | Maharashtra

### HEALING LITTLE HEARTS

Gratitude to  
**Delhi South Rotary Service  
Foundation**

For the kind support of  
**3  
Pediatric Cardiac Surgeries**

#### **GOL report for Delhi South Rotary Service Foundation**

Dear Lalit ji and Pradeep ji,

On behalf of the Sai Sanjeevani hospitals and our Trust please accept our gratitude for your support for 3 child heart surgeries all performed on 30th March 2023 as requested by you. Our deepest thanks to DSRF and Mr Alok Bhargava for your support and kindness.

All three children have been discharged. We will be monitoring their health over the next one year at the least. And if any follow up is needed that too will be provided.

With kind regards,

**Vivek**

Trustee, Sai Sanjeevani Hospitals  
Sri Sathya Sai Health & Education Trust



## GIFT OF LIFE



### MYARA BANSAL

7 months old (F)  
Palwal

Father: Shri Shivam Bansal (Labourer)  
Operated on 30 Mar 2023  
Discharged on 2 Apr 2023

#### Type of Surgery

VSD Surgical Closure + PDA Ligation & Clipping



### PREM SAGAR

2 years & 7 months old (M)  
Raipur

Father: Pankaj Kumar Yadav (Labourer)  
Operated on 30 Mar 2023  
Discharged on 6 Apr 2023

#### Type of Surgery

VSD Closure + PDA ligation



### PRIYA SHARMA

14 years & 5 months old (F)  
Raipur

Father: Rajendra Sharma (Private Job)  
Operated on 30 Mar 2023  
Discharged on 4 Apr 2023

#### Type of Surgery

Doubly committed VSD closure



### SRI SATHYA SAI SANJEEVANI CENTRES FOR CHILD HEART CARE

TOTALLY FREE OF COST PAEDIATRIC CARDIAC CARE

#### Centre Locations



Nava Raipur Atal Nagar  
Chhattisgarh

Nov 2012



Palwal  
Haryana

Nov 2016



Mumbai  
Maharashtra

Nov 2018



srisathyasaisanjeevani.org



SriSathyaSaiSanjeevaniHospital



# ...and they lived happily thereafter!!

by popular request we are creating a theatre of the newlyweds then, and happily ensconced now with each other



**In the month of April we have the following anniversaries:**

**Neerja and Lakshmi Khanna | Shirin and Sanjay Khajuria/Meenakshi and Pankaj Chadha and Neena and Sam Bhandari.** We covered Neena and Sam Bhandari- they were amongst the pioneers who spontaneously amongst a few other couples, shared photos of their nuptials, last month which were published in the previous issue of the newsletter. We wish them all many many more years of joy and happiness together.

**We invite members who celebrate their anniversaries in May to please share their photos of the wedding day and a latest one, which will be covered in the next newsletter. Cheers.**



## SNIPPETS HISTORICAL AND INTERESTING...

### HISTORY OF CHURCHGATE AREA - HISTORY OF FORT AREA, BOMBAY

One of the gates of Bombay Fort was known as Church Gate and the street leading out of that gate was known as Church Gate Street.

It derived its name from St. Thomas Cathedral in the vicinity.

When the walls of Bombay Fort were demolished for development & expansion of the city, in 1864 Flora Fountain was built exactly at the same location where Church Gate once stood.

When built in 1870, Churchgate Station derived its name from Church Gate & Church Gate Street.

In those days, sea was very near Churchgate station. (Now also known as C.D.Deshmukh Station).

In good old days of BB & CI Railway (Bombay Baroda & Central India Railway), both Local Trains & Long Distance Trains originated from Colaba Terminus, and Churchgate station was known as "Next Station" or Second Station.

By around 1930, the whole Churchgate area as we know today, took shape after reclamation.

Local Trains began to start from Churchgate and were going up to Virar. And Long Distance Trains originated from Bombay Central Station.

Train services from Colaba to Churchgate station were discontinued.

The structure of Churchgate Station changed several times.

In the Photo, is the structure of Churchgate station that we came to love, and it was changed again few years ago, which we love to hate.

Tremendous amount of passenger traffic is handled by Churchgate Station and slow as well as fast trains depart from Churchgate station with remarkable accuracy as to Time Table.

Churchgate Station serves Churchgate area, Marine Drive, Nariman Point, Fort/Flora Fountain area etc.

Eros Theater which was just opposite Churchgate Station, which recently closed down, was one of the important Landmark of the area. Many residential as well as office buildings which came up after 1930, made the whole area, posh.

So many upscale restaurants are located near Churchgate station on Veer Nariman Road and in nearby areas, which used to keep night life humming in this whole area. K. Rustom became famous throughout the city for its Ice Cream and Cricket Matches were played at legendary Brabourne Stadium, which saw its decline after Wankhede Stadium came up. So many well known Colleges are also located in this area. Bombay University, famous Rajabai Tower, Bombay High Court, Sessions Court, Oval Maidan, Flora Fountain, etc. etc. are located at a walking distance from Churchgate Station. (Now C.D.Deshmukh Station).

#### HISTORY OF FORT AREA

The central business district of Bombay is called the Fort area after the long-vanished British fortifications around the harbor which were built in the seventeenth century.

A British town ship grew up inside the fort walls even as the Portuguese, in their mainland enclave of Bassein, were fighting for survival against the Marathas. A few wealthy

Indian merchants were allowed to build houses inside the fort.

With control assured over India, the fort walls were torn down, and the area was converted into the central district of Bombay city. Many of the landmarks date from this period--the Flora Fountain, the Victoria Terminus, the Municipal Corporation building, the University, etc. During the cotton boom and after the transformation of this area into the central business district was complete, and the process of splitting off the suburbs into residential districts had begun.

Businesses moved into the Fort area, displacing residents. More of Bombay's landmarks were built in this and adjoining areas. The Fort area took on the character that it still has.

Fort is a Business District in Bombay. The area gets its name from the defensive fort, Fort George, built by the British East India Company, around Bombay Castle. The area extends from the docks in the east, to Azad Maidan in the west; Victoria Terminus in the north to Kala Ghoda in the south. This area is the heart of the financial area of the city. Many British era structures are located here.

Fort George was an extension to the fortified walls of Bombay built in 1769; and it was in the present-day Fort area.

The post independent years were exciting ones as Fort became the CBD (Central Business District) of Bombay and Bombay became the commercial capital of a newly independent country.

So many Heritage Structures & Buildings in Fort Area, VT/CST BMC Building, Former Capitol Theater, so many Heritage Buildings on D.N. Road, formerly known as Hornby Road, Horniman Circle Buildings, which were built in 1860's, St. Thomas cathedral opened for Church Services on Christmas Day in 1718 and it completed 300 Years of existence, on Christmas Day in 2018, Flora Fountain itself was built in 1864 at the same place where Church Gate of the old Fort once stood. so many Heritage Buildings to the south of Flora Fountain are still standing proudly, Esplanade House, which was once Bombay's Luxurious Hotel and was known as Watson's Hotel, Army & Navy Building, David Sassoon Library, Elphinston College, Prince of Wells Museum, St. Andrews Church, which is also known as Scotch Kirk, Great Western Building, and in between these two, there was an Ice House. are all relics of British era. Photos of all these Heritage Structures & Buildings have been posted in our "Old Bombay" Group already. Town Hall which is now known as Asiatic Society, is still standing proudly. Mint as well as Customs House, Bombay Port Trust Building, Stock Exchange Building, which started as Brokers meeting under a Banyan tree, in the beginning of third quarter of 19th Century, have all played an important part in economic development of the City. Buildings on Ballard Estate were sort of new kids on the Block and they were built in the beginning of 1900's. And of Course University of Bombay Building, which provided and is still providing top education in the country. Rajabai Tower still standing tall with its clock repaired & in working condition, Superb architecture of High Court, Sessions Court, which was used in 19th Century as Government Secretariat, Etc. Etc. Examples of Heritage Structures & Buildings in Fort area are countless and tell us the stories of the Fort Area & of Old Bombay. They all collectively remind us of Bombay's glorious past.

**Prakash Shroff**



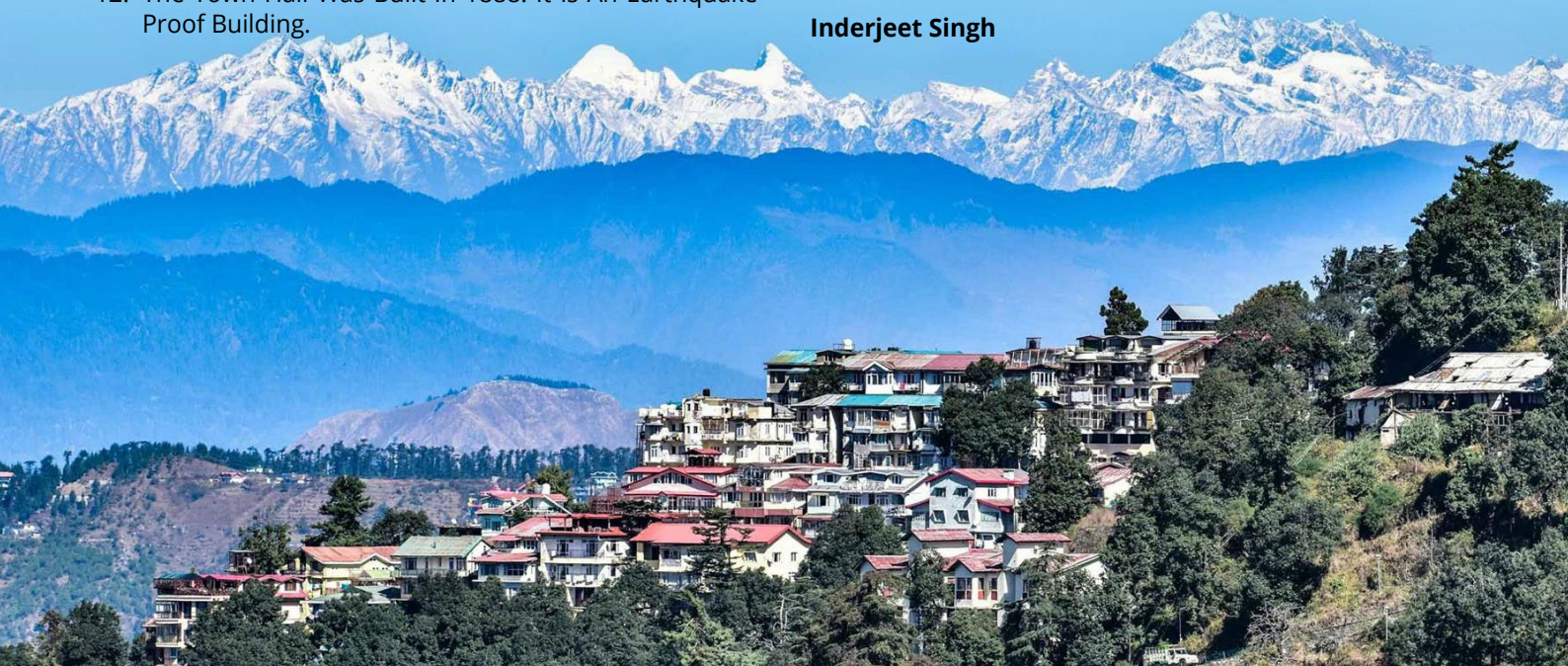
## SNIPPETS HISTORICAL AND INTERESTING...

### SOME UNKNOWN FACTS ABOUT SHIMLA



1. 'Shimla' is One Of The 'Youngest' Cities in The Country....55% of the population is in the 16- 55 age group. And 28% of the rest is below the age of 15.
2. Before the British, Shimla Region Was Ruled by the 'Nepalese'. Shimla Was A Part Of The Kingdom Of Prithvi Narayan Shah Of Nepal Before The British. It was declared the summer capital of India in 1864.
3. Nathuram Godse's trial Took Place at (Now) Peterhoff Hotel. The building was the residence for seven Viceroys and the location for the Punjab High Court.
4. Indian Institute Of Advanced Studies - 'IIAS' Had Power Supply Way Back in 1888. It was built as a residence for Lord Dufferin in 1884 and now houses the IIAS.
5. 'Shimla' is Located On 7 Hills. Prospect Hill, Observatory Hill, Summer Hill, Inverarm Hill, Bantony Hill, Jakhoo Hill and Elysium Hill.
6. Shimla Hosts The MTB Himalaya, The Biggest Mountain Biking Race In South East Asia.
7. The Kalka-Shimla Railway Is Recognized As A World Heritage Site By UNESCO.
8. Shimla Has The Only Natural Ice Skating Rink In South Asia.
9. The Durand Football Tournament Was Held at Annandale Ground In 1888.
10. Lord Combermere Was The First Commander-In-Chief Of The Indian Army To Visit Shimla In 1828.
11. The Founder of Indian National Congress Lived at 'Rothney Castle' in Shimla
12. The Town Hall Was Built In 1888. It Is An Earthquake Proof Building.
13. Mahatma Gandhi first came to Shimla on 11th May, 1921.
14. Shimla is the Birth Place Of Anupam Kher, Prem Chopra, Balraj Sahni, Priya Rajvansh.
15. The 'Jakhoo' Temple Shrine, Believers Say, Holds the Foot Prints Of Lord Hanuman.
16. The Houlme Is The Birth Place Of Amrita Shergill, One Of India's Most Well Known Artists. The house also has a studio that her father very lovingly constructed for her.
17. Shimla had its first newspaper - Simla Akhbaar in 1848. It was run by the Muslim Community but was soon shut down by the British.
18. The first shop opened in Shimla was a butchery run by Messers Barret & Co.
19. Auckland House School Is The Only Girl School In India To Introduce Scuba Diving.
20. The Jonang Takten Phuntsok Choeling Monastery In Sanjauli Is One Of Its Kind In India. There is only one other in Tibet that teaches the practice of 'Kalachakra'.
21. Bishop Cotton School, Shimla Is One Of The Oldest Boarding Schools In Asia. The school has been operational since 1863. They actually have a closed door in the building from where 100 Muslims students left at partition.
22. The First Road Of Shimla Was Constructed In 1828. The Mall was actually called the 'Thandi Sarak' in the British Era.
23. Shimla Falls In Seismic Zone IV. According to officials, even 2% of the buildings will not be able to withstand an earthquake of high intensity. Shimla is bursting at the seams with residents, as it was only planned for 16000 residents.
24. The NORTHERN slope of RIDGE is 'SINKING'. The Grand Hotel west, Lakkar Bazaar are going DOWN. Alarmingly Shimla has 187 buildings with more than five floors.
25. The Shimla Convention Is A Century Old. Tibetans Are Still In Exile.
26. From the North Side of Ridge the Rain water drains into Sutlej River and is carried into ARABIAN SEA, South side drains into Yamuna and flows to BAY of BENGAL.

**Inderjeet Singh**





## RCDS - SANKALP CENTRES

APRIL 2023

RCDS Sankalp focuses on high-quality, low-cost and replicable interventions to address gaps in the education system. It works Working directly with children and youth as well as through collaborations with various organizations. RCDS Sankalp intends taking up more initiatives which would be beneficial for the underprivileged children. The mission is to see a quantum and a visible change in the learning levels of children. In the next five years,

Sankalp plans to open doors of learning to more underprivileged children by taking up more child centric initiatives. RCDS Sankalp Centres are innovative in learning aiming to improve the quality of education.

The Centres provide education to children in the slums of South Delhi, RCDS- Sankalp has grown in both scope and scale, with programs today reaching children and

youth across 4 locations. More than 425 children are currently enrolled across all RCDS Sankalp Centres.

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.

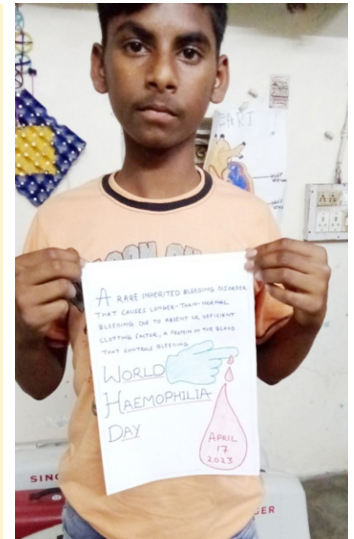
The following special events were undertaken the Centres in April 2023:

- World Autism Day on 2nd
- World Health Day on 7th
- World Hemophilia Day on 17th
- World Earth Day on 22nd



### WORLD EARTH DAY-22 April

The first Earth Day was celebrated on April 22, 1970. The event was organised by Gaylord Nelson. He realized that there was a need to become more environmentally aware and active in preserving our planet and hoped that Earth Day would be a way to educate people about that importance of environmental protection.



Rotary  
Club of Delhi South



SERVE TO  
CHANGE LIVES

### THE FOUR WAY TEST

of the things we think, say or do

1. Is it the **TRUTH**?
2. Is it **FAIR** to all Concerned?
3. Will it build **GOOD WILL** and **BETTER FRIENDSHIP**?
4. Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all concerned?

Lalit Sawhney

RCDS President: 2022-23

MAY

Malhotra, Aarti	01-May
Kalia, Shruti	05-May
Kapoor, Sarita	06-May
Srivastava, Vinay Kumar	10-May
Bhandari, Nina	16-May
Gupta, Pushp	18-May
Kapur, Vaneeta	20-May
Anand, Sumchit	22-May
Wadhwa, Anil	26-May
Katariya, Ganesh	27-May
Singh, Inderjeet	28-May
Raji Sehgal	30-May

HAPPY  
Birthday



HAPPY  
Anniversary

Sadana, Rohit  
Chopra, Dr HK

Rachna  
Vinita

11-May  
12-May