



Rotary Garden Reach



IMAGINE ROTARY



LIGHT

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Jumbo Majumdar

The Battle of Falais Pocket was a decisive battle in WWII Normandy campaign that swung the tide in favour of the Allies. A key contributor to the Allies' success was the recon done by an Indian flying Ace.



In 1932, a strapping young lad from Calcutta – 6 feet + in height and equally well built – walked through the doors at RAF College, Cramwell. His name was Karun Krishna Majumdar but he was better known as “Jumbo” – an apt nickname given his physique.

A year later, Jumbo Majumdar returned to India and joined the RIAF's Squadron no. 1 as a Flying Officer. By middle of 1941, Majumdar had been promoted to Squadron Leader and was appointed as Squadron commander at Miranshah. War came-calling in 1942 as Imperial Japan invaded British-held Burma. No. 1 squadron was ordered to mobilize and reached Taungoo on 31st Jan, 1942. The very next day, Japanese bombers

struck Taungoo but Majumdar's squadron escaped damage as they had hidden their aircrafts in the adjoining forests. Jumbo Majumdar was itching for payback. On 2nd Feb, he flew out on a solo mission, escorted by a couple of Buffalo fighters from New Zealand. Majumdar's squadron flew the Lysander – an army co-op aircraft not meant for use in an attack capacity.

Use of the Lysander for bombing was unheard of. But undeterred, Majumdar flew out, two 250 lb bombs strapped on each wing. At considerable personal risk, he flew low and unleashed his “package” at the Japanese base of Mae Hong Son. The next day, he led a full squadron sortie causing further damage to the Japanese. Till their withdrawal to India, No. 1 Squadron performed admirably in the Burma campaign for the loss of just 2 men. Their performance was commended by General Wavell, C-i-C, Indian Army. As CO, Jumbo Majumdar received the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) – the 1st Indian RIAF pilot to receive this honour.

Although the Squadron moved back to India, Majumdar stayed on to undertake recon flights over Thailand. This

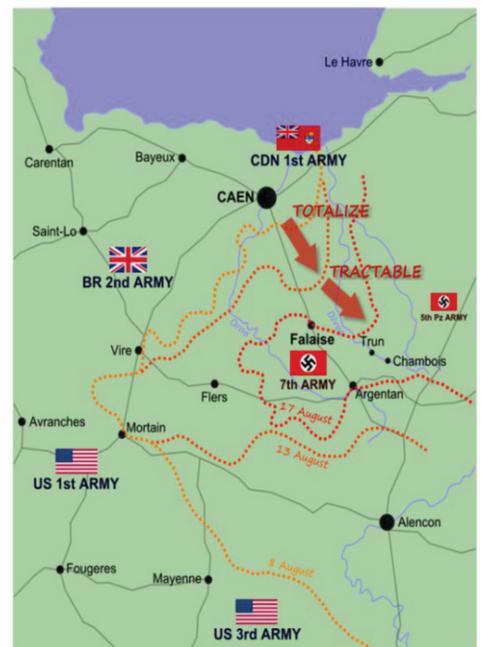


exposure would hold him good stead in the future. On one occasion, he was shot down over the dense Shan jungle. Majumdar survived four days in the forests till he was rescued by Shan tribesmen.

By 1944, Majumdar, stationed in India, was aching for a fight. He was now a Wing Commander in the RIAF – the 1st Indian to hold this rank. He volunteered to join the European campaign and even relinquished his rank – reverting down to Squadron Leader. Arriving in England in Mar, 1944 –

Majumdar was attached to RAF Squadron 268 in a recon role. From June to September, he flew 65 operational sorties in 100 days over German-occupied France.

During these sorties, he captured valuable images of the bridges over Seine and the Falais Gap. Majumdar's recon work formed a bulwark of the Allied operation in Normandy and played a key role in the success at Falais Pocket. He was even shot down once by AA gun fire but managed to survive. For his outstanding work, Jumbo was awarded a Bar to his DFC.



In late 1944, Jumbo Majumdar returned to India and was assigned to the Air Display unit – carrying out display

flights – a rather low position for a decorated officer like him. But the man who loved challenges flying jumped at it with no hesitation. On Feb 17th, 1945, he was performing a stunt at Walton airbase near Lahore. The Hawker he was to fly in was known to be faulty and he was warned off by the flight crew. Despite this, Majumdar took off for his stunt. Mid-flight, the craft developed a snag and crashed into the ground.

Jumbo Majumdar, unconquered by Japanese and German guns, died on the spot. He was 31. He was buried at the graveyard at Lahore. The poignant epitaph on his grave reads “Go, passers-by And do if you can as he did A Man's part In defence of liberty”.

Weekly Bulletin

Members attended last RWM: 11

Birthday Greetings :

- Oct 1st Shreshth, Son of PP Sanjay
- Oct 4th Spouse Purba, Wife of Rtn. Jayanta
- Oct 6th PP Dr. Sumanta Dasgupta
- Oct 7th Spouse Dr. Sharda, Wife of PP Dr. Arabinda
- Oct 8th Spouse Sheela, Wife of IPP Amitav, Chiranjeevi, Daughter of Rtn. Mohan
- Oct 11th Spouse Jyotsna, Wife of PP Tapan
- Oct 12th Spouse Rita, Wife of PP Dr. Sumanta
- Oct 14th Spouse Sagarika, Wife of PP Subir
- Oct 15th Spouse Priyanka, Wife of PN Biswajit
- Oct 16th R'let Suhaani, Daughter of Rtn. Capt. Mritunjay



Persistence is an Art

Good humour springing from addicts at times gives lessons.

It's often humoured that quitting smoking is easy; I have done it so many times.

It means that while it's easy to start any activity, more so good activity; it's difficult to continue and sustain the same.

Persistence is the key to success.

It is a personality that enables them to weather adversity.

Persistence coupled with a strong determination, is omnipotent.

A little more persistence, a little more effort, and what seemed hopeless failure may turn to glorious success.

Patience, persistence and perspiration are a winning combination for success.

They make us look each failure as another opportunity to learn.

With each failure, you'll become more resilient.

You'll also learn how you can overcome any challenges.

While it's said the wise and persistent never leave the works started, A *German saying* goes to say 'Starting is easy; persistence is an art'.

Presidential Message

October 2022

In August, I was proud to visit Pakistan and highlight Rotary's top goal, eradicating polio. It was also a tremendous opportunity to spotlight female health workers who are playing a critical role in protecting children from this vaccine-preventable disease.

This month, as we celebrate World Polio Day, we are shining a spotlight on our more than 30-year effort to lead the first global



polio eradication campaign and our success in forming partnerships capable of completing this massive goal. We all know that this is one of the most ambitious global health initiatives in history and that we've reduced polio cases by more than 99.9 percent worldwide.

Pakistan is one of only two countries in the world where wild poliovirus remains endemic. (The other is neighbouring Afghanistan.) I was able to witness and take part in vaccination campaigns in Pakistan, and soon after I left, a monumental nationwide immunization campaign took place, focused on 43 million children under the age of 5. I saw the incredible work of Rotary members on the ground. More than 60 percent of vaccinators in Pakistan are women, and they are doing a remarkable job building trust and convincing mothers to vaccinate their children.

Seeing it all firsthand, I know that the will exists across the Rotary world to end polio, and I'm confident that we have the strategy. The Pakistani media has been very supportive of our efforts as well, and this is making a difference. This month, a new global pledging moment at the World Health Summit in Berlin promises to pull together more resources to fund these time-sensitive eradication efforts. Now it is up to us to do our part and raise \$50 million this year to earn the full 2-to-1 match from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

There's great cause for optimism on the polio front — but also some staggering new events that have further raised the stakes. Over the past few months, new polio outbreaks have occurred in Israel, the United Kingdom and, most recently, in the New York City area. These stories are frightening, but in every case, the response is clear — vaccines work, and if polio is spreading, we need to make sure the most at-risk people have kept their vaccinations up to date.

Most importantly, we need to eradicate this virus now. If polio exists anywhere, it can spread everywhere. What I saw in Pakistan convinced me that we can and must finish the job, but it will only happen if we remain committed to a strategy that's working and back it with all necessary resources.

Through our commitment, generosity, and sheer determination, we will #EndPolio.

The Eradicator: Former WHO Polio Chief looks to young members for last push

Dan Jakes

When Michel Zaffran became Director of Polio Eradication at the World Health Organization in 2016, the forecast for crossing the finish line on a three-decade-long mission was optimistic. "We thought that Africa was out of the woods," he says, "and we would just be focusing on Pakistan and Afghanistan."

Then, a storm of setbacks: outbreaks in multiple WHO regions, a new proliferation of vaccine misinformation, a rogue vaccine-derived strain, and the COVID-19 pandemic, which temporarily halted vital door-to-door immunizations. And yet during Zaffran's tenure, remarkable progress was achieved: The worldwide eradication of type 3 poliovirus. The certification of wild polio eradication in WHO's African region. A brighter outlook for Afghanistan and Pakistan. And the on boarding of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, as a full partner in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative — a major development in financing the inactivated polio vaccine (IPV).



Inspired by his work with Rotary, Zaffran joined the Rotary *Gex-Divonne (Pays de Gex), France, in 2017*, and shortly after his retirement from WHO in 2021, he was appointed as an End Polio Now, Coordinator. "The force of Rotarians, clubs all over the world, and The Rotary Foundation — these are extraordinary tools," he says, "that can be used to serve humanity beyond what we've done with polio."

Zaffran sees the youngest Rotary members taking some of the strongest ownership of the mission. "They are fascinated," he says, "that we are about to eradicate a human disease on earth for only the second time."

RILM helps NCERT receive UNESCO Award

NCERT was awarded –UNESCO’s King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the e-learning content for Classes 1–12 being aired on 12 ‘PM e-Vidya’ DTH TV channels. The content, –comprising 2,000 episodes of 30–minute slots, was put together by Rotary India Literacy Mission (RILM) after an MoU was signed between Rotary India –Humanity Foundation (RIHF) and NCERT in June 2020 in the presence of the then Union HRD minister Ramesh –Pokhriyal Nishank and education secretary Anita Karwal.

RILM also created the audio-visual content for GoI’s ‘Diksha’, the national platform for school education.

Amarendra P Behera, Joint Director of CIET–NCERT, received the award at Paris in July this year. In an interview he thanked the Rotarians “who had worked tirelessly across the years in promoting e-learning. The UNESCO award and Rotary’s contribution is a matter of pride for the country.”

Earlier in his letter to PRIP –Shekhar Mehta, he had said that the initiative will bridge the digital divide for the vast majority of underprivileged children who do not have access to online education through Smartphone, but have a TV at home.



In the Container Village of “Poliopolis” a Vaccine Trial Like No Other

For nearly a month, 30 strangers locked down together to test the first major update to the Polio vaccines in decades.

In mid-2017, two groups of 15 strangers lived together for 28 days each in a ring of shipping containers assembled in the parking lot of Antwerp University Hospital in Belgium. They had access to books and movies, a small courtyard for barbecues, a common kitchen and dining room, and a fitness room — all of it behind secure interlocking doors and under the watch of personnel in protective gowns.



What sounds like a reality TV or sci-fi scenario was, in fact, a remarkable clinical trial of the latest weapon in the battle to eradicate polio — a reengineered vaccine called the novel oral polio vaccine type 2, or nOPV2. The study aimed to evaluate whether the altered formula, the first major update to polio vaccines in about six decades, could help end

outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus, also known as variant poliovirus. Such cases arise in rare instances when the live but weakened virus contained in oral polio vaccines circulates in areas of low vaccine coverage and mutates back into a dangerous form that can infect people who have not been fully vaccinated.

These variant poliovirus outbreaks have emerged over the past two decades as a significant stumbling block in the effort by Rotary International and its partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) to wipe out the disease. The outbreaks are different from those driven by wild poliovirus, which circulated naturally in the environment for millennia and remains endemic in just two countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan. But the outcome is the same — the virus in either kind of outbreak can, in rare instances, cause paralysis.

In 2011, staff at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, one of the GPEI partners, wondered if the live virus in the traditional oral vaccine could be tweaked to limit its ability to mutate. “The first challenge was purely scientific,” says Ananda Bandyopadhyay, a deputy director of the polio team at the Gates Foundation, which funded and led the effort. “How do you make the vaccine more genetically stable without compromising its immunogenicity [ability to provoke an immune response]? That was really, really challenging.”



Even then, researchers would need to figure out how to test vaccine candidates. Any attempt would require strict isolation of study participants. At a 2015 meeting in Brussels, Bandyopadhyay pitched the audacious idea to Pierre Van Damme, director of the Centre for Evaluation of Vaccination at the University of Antwerp. “We had to be very creative,” says Ilse De Coster, who would lead the clinical trial team with Van Damme in Belgium, “because at that time we didn’t have any facility that was developed for containment.”

They considered sequestering study participants at isolated holiday resorts or vacant

centres that had been used to house asylum seekers, eventually settling on the idea of a purpose-built modular container village, dubbed Poliopolis by Van Damme's wife.

For much of the developed world, polio is a distant memory. Long gone are the days of the summertime terrors in Europe and North America in the 1940s and 1950s when children went to bed with what their parents thought was a mild flu only to wake up rubber-limbed and burning with fever. Thousands were paralyzed. Some ended up in the dreaded iron lung device that enclosed the body up to the neck and helped them breathe. There is no cure for polio, but with the development of vaccines in the 1950s and subsequent routine immunization, many countries have not seen a case of wild poliovirus in decades.

In 1988, wild poliovirus paralyzed hundreds of children every day, with an estimated 350,000 polio cases across more than 125 countries that year. Since then, cases have plummeted 99.9 percent. That progress would not have been possible without the oral polio vaccine. "It's a critically important tool and has saved millions of lives," Bandopadhyay says.



The oral polio vaccine, or OPV, was developed in the late 1950s by physician Albert Sabin. It's become the vaccine of choice for polio eradication because it's safe, inexpensive and easy to administer, and the live but weakened vaccine virus replicates in the gut and produces strong intestinal immunity. As a result, vaccinated children can shed the weakened vaccine virus in their stool for several weeks. In areas with poor sanitation, the weakened virus spreads,

stimulating an immune response in the unvaccinated. But this ability of the weakened virus to circulate carries the risk of seeding vaccine-derived or variant, outbreaks in areas of low immunity.

Most variant cases involve type 2 poliovirus, one of two strains that have been eradicated in the wild. The number of children paralyzed by the type 2 variant poliovirus surged from two in 2016 to more than 1,000 at its peak in 2020 spread over two dozen countries, most of them in Africa.

The existing oral polio vaccine containing only type 2 virus has been effective in stopping most variant poliovirus outbreaks. Still, that vaccine carries the risk of the virus mutating. At the Gates Foundation, there was a realization that a new type 2 oral polio vaccine was needed, and fast.

The foundation established and funded a scientific consortium to develop the new oral vaccine, including the UK's National Institute for Biological Standards and Control and the University of California San Francisco. Researchers at those two institutions altered part of the old type 2 vaccine virus's genome to make it more genetically stable while preserving its ability to produce strong immunity in the gut.

But the challenge of how to test it in humans without risking environmental spread remained.

The team at Poliopolis was moving fast. The 66 containers, which were prefabricated off-site, were assembled in just three days in April 2017 and were ready for operation a month after that. To the researchers' knowledge, no one had ever attempted a containment study in such a purpose-built facility and for so long.

Because of the length of time the virus can continue to be excreted, trial participants would have to stay sequestered for at least 28 days. Volunteers had to undergo medical and psychological screening to ensure they were up to the challenge and could function as a group.

Volunteers, most from neighbouring Netherlands, got along well despite occasional friction. "Put some people together and there will be friction, like on the reality TV show Big Brother," explains Caro Bouten, one of the volunteers. "I was writing a book, so I didn't care. I'd go back to my room. I had a focus. So that helped me."

Polio left Bouten's aunt with a limp, a leg brace, and a difficult life at a boarding school, separated from a family that felt ashamed of the condition. Those memories, along with her work as a nurse and counsellor for refugees, motivated her to join the study. She realized just how important it was afterward when she was invited to meet the queen of Belgium.

The vaccine trials were a success and NOPV2 was rolled out in March 2021, first in Nigeria and Liberia. Through the first half of 2022, more than 370 million doses were administered in more than 20 countries.

"It's looking very promising, and it's looking like it's doing what it is supposed to do: induce population immunity and interrupt transmission in most settings and with a much lower risk of seeding new outbreaks," Bandopadhyay says.

The new vaccine, by itself, is not a silver bullet. It won't stop transmission if immunization campaigns cannot reach close to 90 percent of children in the response zones. Under-immunization remains an obstacle, allowing cases of variant polio to leap across the globe and pop up in places where the disease hasn't been seen in years. Officials detected polio in London and New York City sewage this year, for instance. And in July 2022, health authorities announced an unvaccinated man in New York State had been sickened with variant poliovirus genetically linked to the spread in London.

Like many polio campaigners, Nana Yaa Siriboe, a member of the Rotary Club of Accra Labone, Ghana, has a personal stake in crossing the finish line. Her cousin is a survivor who once needed crutches but now walks unaided, with only a limp.

Siriboe became chair of the Ghana PolioPlus Committee in 2019, just as variant polio cases were emerging in the country, about a decade after it was declared polio-free. She mobilized Rotary volunteers to visit homes, schools, mosques, churches, and markets to find and immunize children, and the outbreaks were suppressed for two years. But polio paralyzed one person this June, prompting another mass immunization campaign that was to start in August.

The arrival of nOPV2 gives her hope. So do the mothers she has watched over the years bringing their children to be vaccinated. "It's a joy," she says of meeting the children. "You get to play with them. Some like to see their little finger marked with the pen to show this child has been immunized. We give them toffee. It's a wonderful experience."

Rotarian shares memories of the Queen

Rotarian Judith Diment has met the Royal Family a number of times as Rotary's representative to the Commonwealth. Here Judith reflects on the life and times of Queen Elizabeth II.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth has been a steadfast, inspirational presence throughout my entire life.

I remember the day Her Majesty acceded the throne in 1952 on the death of her father George VI. As I was leaving my primary school in Gilwern in Breconshire, Wales I saw a billboard outside the newsagents saying KING DEAD - it was so stark, so unexpected and so sad.

A year later, I watched the new Queen's coronation at my aunt's house on a 12-inch black and white television and later on Pathe News in colour at the cinema in Abergavenny, the images indelibly imprinted in my memory but never dreaming that one day I would meet her.

In 1981 I was working at the Natural History Museum in London and had the privilege of meeting HM The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh who were there to celebrate the museum's its centenary.



In 2004 I joined the Rotary Windsor St. George where the Duke of Edinburgh was an Honorary member and I met the Duke many times. In 2012, the year of The Queen's Diamond Jubilee, I was asked by the Windsor & Eton Society to help organise a fitting memorial in Windsor which was supported by Windsor Rotary clubs.

A competition was held and the winner was a 14 year old school girl who designed a sculpture comprising of 60 steel balls - one for each year of The Queen's reign.

In October of that year, The Queen unveiled the sculpture in Windsor's King

Edward Court and I met her again. The Queen was delighted with the sculpture and it has become a focal point for photos for visitors to Windsor.

*In 2013 I was appointed **Rotary Representative to the Commonwealth** and every year since, on Commonwealth Day, I have been privileged to attend the Commonwealth Day Reception, attended by HM The Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and, in recent years, by King Charles III.*

Rotary International recognised Her Majesty The Queen in December 2013 with the Rotary International Award of Honour to celebrate the 60th anniversary of her Coronation.

I took the award to Buckingham Palace with Rotary International Director, Mike Webb, on behalf of Rotary International President Ron Burton.

Her Majesty The Queen, who graciously accepted the prestigious honour, has been a supporter of Rotary's polio eradication and humanitarian programmes. She sent her good wishes for the year ahead to all Rotary club members in Great Britain and Ireland and throughout the Commonwealth and applauded Rotary for its polio eradication program and advocacy efforts.

Her message said: "I am pleased that Commonwealth governments are playing their part in tackling disease and improving health for all. Polio for example, used to cast its shadow across many countries and today, thanks to concerted international action, just a handful still need to eliminate polio."



MINUTES OF THE 2193RD RWM HELD ON SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2022 AT BNR OFFICERS' CLUB, GARDEN REACH

1. President Abinash called the RWM to order and requested to rise for the National Anthem.
2. Pre-Pujo clothes distribution was organised at BNR Club. 50 sarees were given to aged women in vicinity of the club.
3. President announced that on October 4th, 2022 there would be no RWM due to the Durga Puja holidays.
4. RotaVision projects were cancelled. Further dates will be announced by the District Office.
5. The heart Operation of Vivan Jana, aged 5 yrs, was discussed and arrangements were at BM Birla Hospital. The cost of the same will be Rs. 2, 50,000 and it will be jointly done by Rotary Garden Reach and Patrons of the Club.
6. Winter project at Daranda and along with the project we will have our Club picnic on January 20th and 21st respectively.
7. In absentia of Club Secretary, Rtn. Tamal conducted Club business.
8. Minutes of the last RWM were confirmed. President terminated the meeting.



May you and your family receive all the happiness stay delighted with the blessings of Maa Durga. Subho Bijoya!