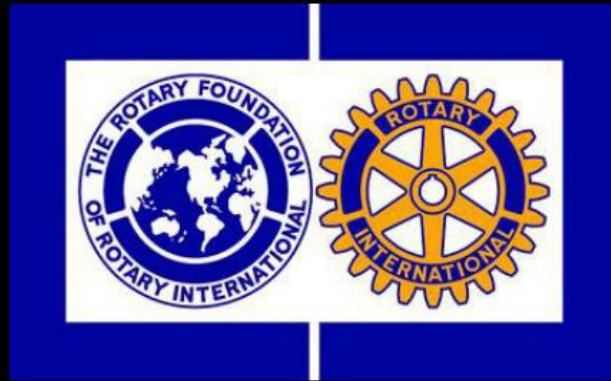




LIGHT
WEEKLY BULLETIN

March is Water and Sanitation

The Rotary Foundation



The Rotarian's Charity

**GOODNESS IS PART AND PARCEL OF WHAT IT
IS WE DO AS ROTARIANS.**

Today is our 2166th RWM
Members attended last RWM: 15



Sappy Birthday Greetings:

Mar 8th Rtn. Dr. Amitabh Ray



Swami Vivekananda and the 'Woman Question'

Swami Vivekananda, mostly taken to be a prophet for modern India, had some intriguing views on women and women empowerment.

Concept of Eastern and Western Womanhood:

Swami Vivekananda gave the concept of womanhood in a boarder sense. When he visited America in 1894, he saw absolutely amazing environment for women in society. Women were much liberal and independent then Indian society. Participation of women in all the aspects of society was very high.

Most important thing which attracted the Vivekananda's attention was the attitude of man towards women in America. There was no sense of discrimination in the society which is contrary to India.

After seeing all these positive attitudes of women in America, Vivekananda gave the concept of Western Womanhood and Eastern Womanhood. He described in western society, woman as a wife has much importance in the house or in society. In the western home, the wife is superior to any female member of home; she controls all the matters of home. But contrary to this in India, the mother is considered as the superior of any other female member of the house. She controls all the matter of house unlike wife does in western society. Mothers are more respected in home or society than any other person. Now the question is "what is the importance of wife in Indian society"? Vivekananda justified we live in the home and our mother is the first person who took care of us, so everyone should be subordinate to the mother in the home. Now the next concern is "what is the importance of the mother in American society"? Further, he added mother has a different position in western society compare to Indian society. There is no doubt they also respects mother but the level is a bit low then Indian society.



Women can be regarded as the base of family, worshiped in temples and the planet is called 'Mother Earth'. No doubt men are physically stronger than women but mentally women are more powerful than man. There is lots of difference between strength and power, strength is something like related physical exposure but power is related to mental intellectuality and ability to handle a difficult situation. Women are the dignity of any family and position of women in family shows the prosperity of the family. Swami Vivekananda glorified motherhood by stating mother is respected as god in our family because mother provide us, unconditional love, she bears all the suffering just to see a tiny smile on our face, the extreme pain a mother goes through while giving birth of a child cannot be compared with any other pain in this world, she sacrifices all his happiness for the

happiness of her child, he manages entire house without expecting any personal benefit in return, she always forgives her child, does not matter how much the child hurt her. All these attitudes except mother, only god poses. Thus no better place than the mother can be given rather than god. It is very much logical that why Indian society worships mother as the incarnation of god. The concept of motherhood of god gained more importance in Vivekananda's mind than the concept of fatherhood. That is why he remarked when someone in the West asked Vivekananda why he became a monk, he answered why we should get married when we can see only the divine and sacred mother in all women. It shows that his respect towards women reaches such a height that he saw every woman as respected as his mother. Vivekananda wrote "Jehovah', 'Jesus' and the Trinity are secondary. The worship should be for mother Mary who born Jesus and for that she had to go through so many challenges, but still, she holds Jesus in her arms. Further, he added when an emperor dies "'Mother" cries most, a field-marshal dies "'Mother" cries most', a soldier dies "'Mother" cries most, a seaman at helm dies "'Mother" cries most, the fisherman in his rags dies "'Mother" cries most. a beggar in the street dies "'Mother" cries most. It's nearly 150 years since Sri Ramakrishna worshiped Mother Kali. Today Kali is equated to the infinite creative power within "every woman. A feminist Judy Graham writes, "Woman can create; that is the power. Man can only control". Swami Vivekananda had a very great respect for Sita of the Ramayana and he was never tired of indicating her as the very idea of an Indian woman. Modern girls may think this ideal of an Indian woman, rather old-fashioned and unsuitable for the modern age. But really Sita was a very modern girl - firm, courageous, self-dependent and yet at the end she also was a typical wife like other Indian women. Every Indian woman should envy their ideology as "Sita". He further added Sita is a perfect example of complete women. Every woman should try hard to adopt all the attitude of Sita to attain prosperity in society.

Presidential Message-March 2022

We have overcome so many challenges these past two years and changed numerous lives. It brings me great joy that we have worked so hard this year to grow Rotary through the Each One, Bring One initiative. The result has been excellent growth in membership. Let us keep up the momentum. I am happy that you have put a spotlight on all we do by organizing projects around the world in our Rotary Days of Service. The future looks brighter than ever for Rotary and our 1.4 million members.

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization declared that COVID-19 constituted a pandemic, and two years later it is important that we continue to draw on our expertise in our disease prevention and treatment area of focus to help people worldwide cope with the continuing challenges. The pandemic continues to defy all expectations, but we cannot be frozen in fear. Our work is too important. It is also important that we make time for each other, and I urge you to register for the upcoming 2022 Rotary International Convention in Houston. It is a great way for all of us to safely celebrate Rotary service.

We can continue to build hope and spread peace in the world by using our resources to help the most vulnerable and keeping our faith in the future. The pandemic has had an especially devastating impact on girls worldwide. On the first anniversary of the pandemic, Henrietta Fore, the executive director of



UNICEF, said that “immediate action is needed to mitigate the toll on girls and their families.” This need, unfortunately, remains just as strong a year later. The ripples of the pandemic have affected girls in unique ways – stunting their educational attainment, weakening their job prospects, and contributing to other terrible results such as child marriages and increased human trafficking.

Data from UNICEF reveals why our action is so essential. In the 2010s, important progress was made toward eliminating the practice of child marriage, and UNICEF estimates that 25 million such marriages were averted worldwide. Unfortunately, the pandemic reversed those positive trends, and as a result an additional 10 million girls are vulnerable to becoming child brides by the end of this decade.

This is why our focus on Empowering Girls is such vital work, and I am delighted that at this year's virtual International Assembly, President-elect Jennifer Jones committed to continuing this initiative for another year. In my travels, I have witnessed many wonderful examples of club projects that back our Empowering Girls goals. But all Rotary members know that real change requires big efforts sustained over many years. This is the power of our global grants and actions taken within our areas of focus.

I encourage clubs to think of innovative ways to empower girls when designing their grant projects. Every step we take to improve education, health care, and economic opportunities for girls makes an important difference in helping them achieve their full potential. With opportunity we create hope, and with hope we address the root causes of conflict around the world, setting the stage for sustainable peace.

None of us know how long the COVID-19 virus will linger – and as an organization that has worked tirelessly for decades to eradicate polio, we understand better than most the difficult work that lies ahead for the world. That is why we need to remain focused on the future and on what is possible – not feeling nostalgic for the way our lives were, but looking hopefully to a future that uses this opportunity to Serve to Change Lives. I look forward to continuing this good work with you.

With Sign Language as her Tool, this Tribal Girl from West Bengal asks for Sanitary Napkin Vending Machine

Anisha Bhatia

In order to get a continuous supply of sanitary napkins and easy access to menstrual hygiene facilities, the hearing-impaired student asked the District Magistrate for a sanitary napkin vending machine

We live in an era, where menstruation is still considered a taboo subject. Till date every month women try to conceal the fact that they are going through periods. They don't talk about the subject openly, instead use code words to tell each other that their menstruation process has started like, 'It's my happy birthday' or 'A crow has touched me'. But, there are also girls like Bahamoni, who believe in breaking the age-old social taboos in their unique way.

Bahamoni is first year BA student at Rajnagar College from Jangalmahal, Birbhum district of West Bengal. Her hearing is impaired. But that has not deterred her from fighting for the cause of menstrual hygiene. With sign language, paper and pen as her weapon, Bahamoni writes down her messages to educate people about menstrual health and create awareness to ensure that girls do not leave schools when they hit puberty due to lack of toilets.

Over 23% of adolescent girls in the age-group 12 to 18 years drop out of school after they hit puberty, due to inadequate menstrual protection and hygiene practices. In India mere 12% of the 355 million menstruating women use sanitary napkins and recently, Bahamoni also met the District Magistrate,

where through sign languages and putting her thoughts on paper, she asked for a sanitary napkin vending machine. She signed, ***“We are fighting against prejudice.”***

Through sanitary vending machine, Bahamoni hopes for a continuous supply of low-cost sanitary napkins for all the girls of her area.

In her village, according to the data provided by the district officer, there are 132 families, out of which 113 girls are school drop-outs. The reason is - inadequate menstrual hygiene and facilities in schools.

Bahamoni together with local administration has convinced 9 girls to join school back and she

hopes to bring the number to 113 very soon. Though nine is a small number, but it is definitely a good start for her village and Bahamoni hopes to take her mission to all the tribal belts of the country. Her ultimate dream is a India where each and every women uses a sanitary napkin and is aware about menstruation, a natural phenomena that's in many parts of the country is covered with myths.



Digitalisation in Rotary

Dr. Mahesh Kotbagi, RI Director, 2021–23

Not so long ago, Rotarians had ever dreamt of meeting virtually. Rotary is an organisation connecting people worldwide. Life after the pandemic made us adapt to digital technology and we found a new way of bonding virtually. Whether an International Convention or Assembly, or other conferences, we have learnt to virtually attend these using our phones or laptops. This pandemic has helped to create a digital revolution in Rotary.

Another big mindset change in India was brought

in by the app and website – www.rotaryindia.org. This tool completely transformed the way a club functions; it modernised the manual process that clubs followed previously and automated the club and district leaders' lives easier and simpler. E-governance, public image and communication are the three key areas this tool helped modernise.

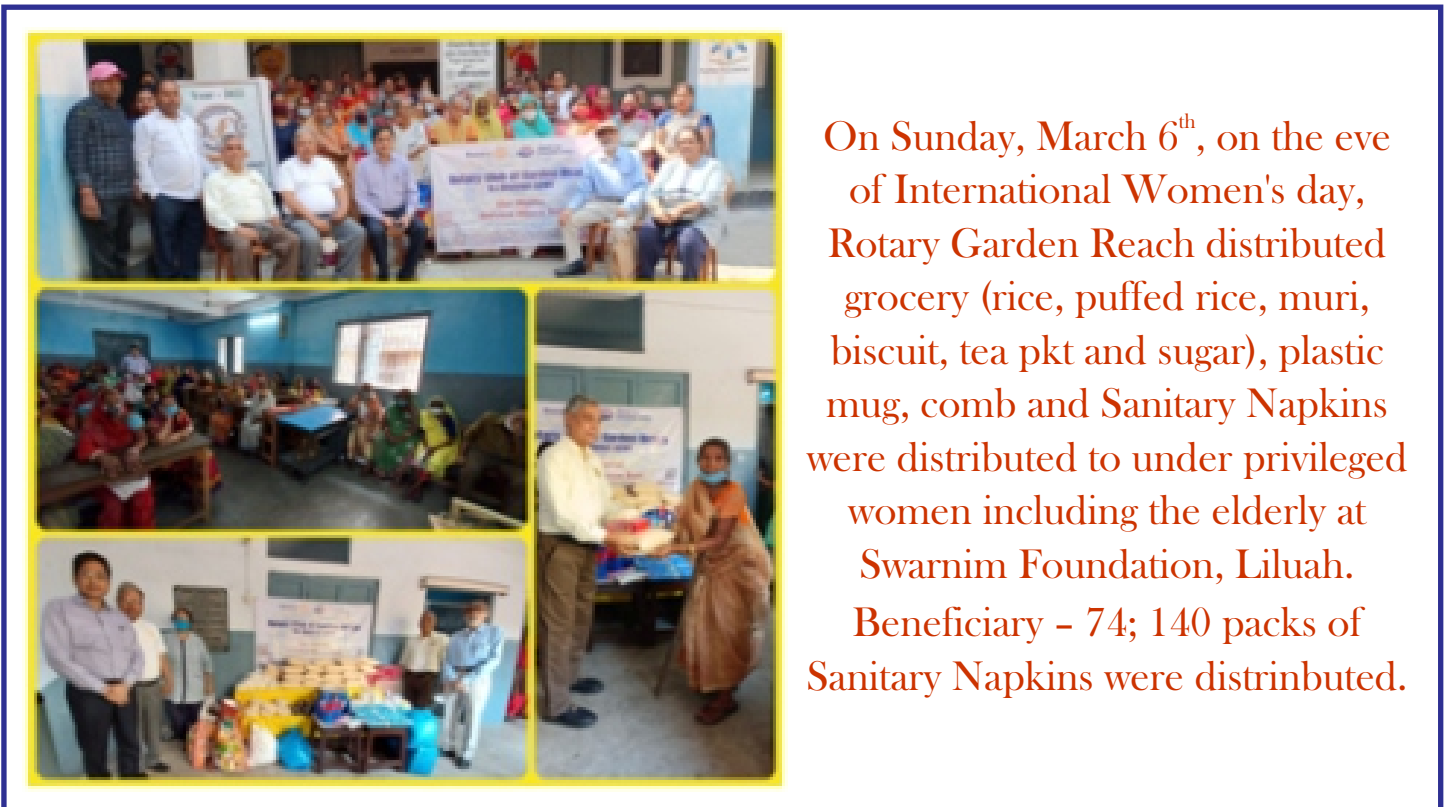
Rotarians and clubs in India are hooked to this beautiful mobile app, Rotary India, brought to us by Rotary News Trust, and a dream come true for RI President Shekhar Mehta who wanted to inculcate this change in all of us for a long time.

Rotaryindia.org, a parent website for all the clubs in India, has live information on all the projects done by clubs across the subcontinent. This website showcases the beautiful work done by Rotary clubs across the country in various focus areas to the rest of the world! It also helps corporates find the right clubs and projects for their CSR funds. Every Rotary club does amazing projects to benefit the community, but due to the lack of focus on public image and inadequate technological support and knowledge, the outside world never knew the power of the service we do. Rotary India completely revolutionised this. With its key features it has helped increase awareness about our activities.



This digitalisation has helped the clubs and districts to communicate with members more effectively and ensured maximum participation for various projects and meetings, and ensured that members are notified of upcoming club events. It also sends out automatic reminders on every member's birthday or anniversary. Features like digital OCV/GOV have saved sleepless nights of club leaders who have to prepare for the governor's official visit. Digital newsletters by the clubs and governor's monthly letter (GML), and *Rotary News* magazine reach every Rotarian in just the click of a button today. Even the digital directory of a club or district is really handy to connect with members.

Clubs and districts are going paperless due to the implementation of digital tools. Audio-video digital district conferences and showcasing virtual reality will get us on par with international conventions. Digitalisation of Rotary in India has not only helped the members, but the environment as well !



On Sunday, March 6th, on the eve of International Women's day, Rotary Garden Reach distributed grocery (rice, puffed rice, muri, biscuit, tea pkt and sugar), plastic mug, comb and Sanitary Napkins were distributed to under privileged women including the elderly at Swarnim Foundation, Liluah. Beneficiary - 74; 140 packs of Sanitary Napkins were distributed.

PREPARE YOUR ROTARACT CLUB FOR MEMBERSHIP DUES CLUB AND DISTRICT SUPPORT

It's an exciting time for Rotaract clubs as we continue making updates and enhancements to support your Rotary membership. This includes new benefits, such as opportunities to receive and manage membership inquiries and referrals, participate in Rotary Foundation grants, be nominated for Rotary International and Foundation service awards, and receive direct communications from Rotary leadership on important issues. There are new responsibilities as well. Beginning in Rotary year 2022-23, one of the key Rotaract club responsibilities will be paying membership dues to Rotary International.

While this process is still being finalized, here are some key details :

- ⚙️ **Timing - An invoice to collect dues will be sent to clubs once a year. The timing of the annual invoice is still under consideration.**
- ⚙️ **Amount - Annual dues will be US\$5 per member for university-based clubs and US\$8 per member for community-based clubs.**

- 🌀 **Distribution - The invoices will be distributed in an email to club officers. We also plan to make the invoices available for clubs to access on My Rotary as part of the administrative updates we're working on.**
- 🌀 **Payment - Rotaract club officers will be able to use the same payment methods as Rotary clubs, including credit card, wire transfer, online payment, and cheque.**

To help your club prepare for paying dues and other membership processes, here are some steps you and your club members can take :

- 🌀 Ensure you have an accurate membership list. Check with each member to confirm they meet the club's membership criteria and wish to remain an active member.
- 🌀 Identify and appoint current and incoming club officers. It's now possible to appoint these additional club roles through My Rotary to make managing your club easier: Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Chair, Public Image Chair, Service Projects Chair, and Foundation Chair.
- 🌀 Update your club's membership on My Rotary by 30 June 2022. This will ensure that your club's annual membership figure is accurate and make it easier to adjust membership prior to the invoice. All club officers can update membership on My Rotary.
- 🌀 Determine how your club will collect and hold dues from your members. Who will collect the dues? Does the club have a bank account, or will one need to be opened? Is there another option that works better for your club? Consider updating your club's bylaws with this new process after discussion with and approval by the club members.
- 🌀 Decide how your club will pay the invoice each year. What is the best payment method for your club? Which of your club members will be responsible for making the payment ?

Taking these steps now will prepare your club for when Rotary begins collecting Rotaract membership dues next Rotary year. The future dues collected from Rotaract clubs will support new and existing products and services, and help Rotary deliver even greater value to Rotaract members.

Watch for more information. Meanwhile, your Club and District Support (CDS) team is always here to help. Find your team, and let them know if you have any questions.



DID YOU KNOW ?

Article 2.050 of By-Laws of Rotary International prohibits Members and their guests from smoking during meetings and other Rotary events.

Minutes of the 2165th RWM & AG Visit held on March 1st, 2022 at BNR Officers' Club, Garden Reach

1. President called the meeting to order and members were asked to rise for the National Anthem.
2. President Amitav welcomed the Assistant Governor (Zone-25) Rtn. Tanu Roy, and felicitated him with a token of appreciation.
3. President felicitated PP Mousumi & spouse Debasis Bhattacharyya on their marriage anniversary (March 1st) with tokens of appreciation.
4. Regarding the DG's visit scheduled on March 15th, 2022 members proposed to hold it at 'Tamarind', subject to availability. PP Dr. Arabinda suggested that it can be organised at BNROC, followed by a dinner at one of the BNR guest houses.
5. To mark the occasion of International Women's Day, grocery & sanitary napkins will be distributed to 70 under-privileged women including the elderly, at Swarnym Foundation, Liluah, on March 6th.
6. International Women's day will be observed by recognising few women achievers of SE Railway, proposed - Ms. Archana Joshi (GM, SE Rly), Ms. Mahua Verma (PCPO, SE Rly), and Dr. Anjana Malhotra (MD, Central Hospital, SE Rly), subject to their availability. AG Tanu suggested inviting Inner Wheel Garden Reach, President Reeta Dasgupta & members; and have a joint meeting if possible. PP Mousumi was requested to invite President-Secretary of Rotaract Garden Reach.
7. President informed that an appeal to sponsor outfits for 100 underprivileged children has been sent by Vivekananda RK Mission, Barrackpore. The distribution will be held on March 13th, Sunday.
8. A Thalassaemia Awareness & Screening Camp is being planned at RCC Champa, Sunderbans, on March 20th. Mr. Sanjib Acharya of Serum Thalassaemia Prevention Society will be contacted.
9. A virtual seminar on Cervical Cancer Awareness & Prevention will be planned for March 27th, if possible, for students/RCC (Badartala, Joypur).
10. As per last RWM's discussion, Rotavision will be organised after DG's visit. PND Biswajit to coordinate it at Maheshtala.
11. In absentia of Club Secretary Rtn. Tamal, Club Trainer PP Mousumi conducted club business.
12. Minutes of the RWM were confirmed.
13. The proceeding was handed over to AG Tanu Roy. He informed that Rotary Garden Reach is heading Zone 25 in respect of documentation & uploads in Rotary Club Central, Rotary Showcase & Rotary India. He discussed about the goals & achievements of the club, My Rotary registration status, service projects, and few other points. He suggested to put stress on Rotaract & to form an Interact club. AG Tanu requested all the members to register for the District Conference.
14. One minute's silence was observed for unfortunate demise of PRIP Bhichai Rattakul & DS Rtn. Jayati Ghosh.
15. AG Tanu concluded his official visit and handed over the proceedings to the Club President.
16. There being no other matter to discuss, President terminated the meeting.

