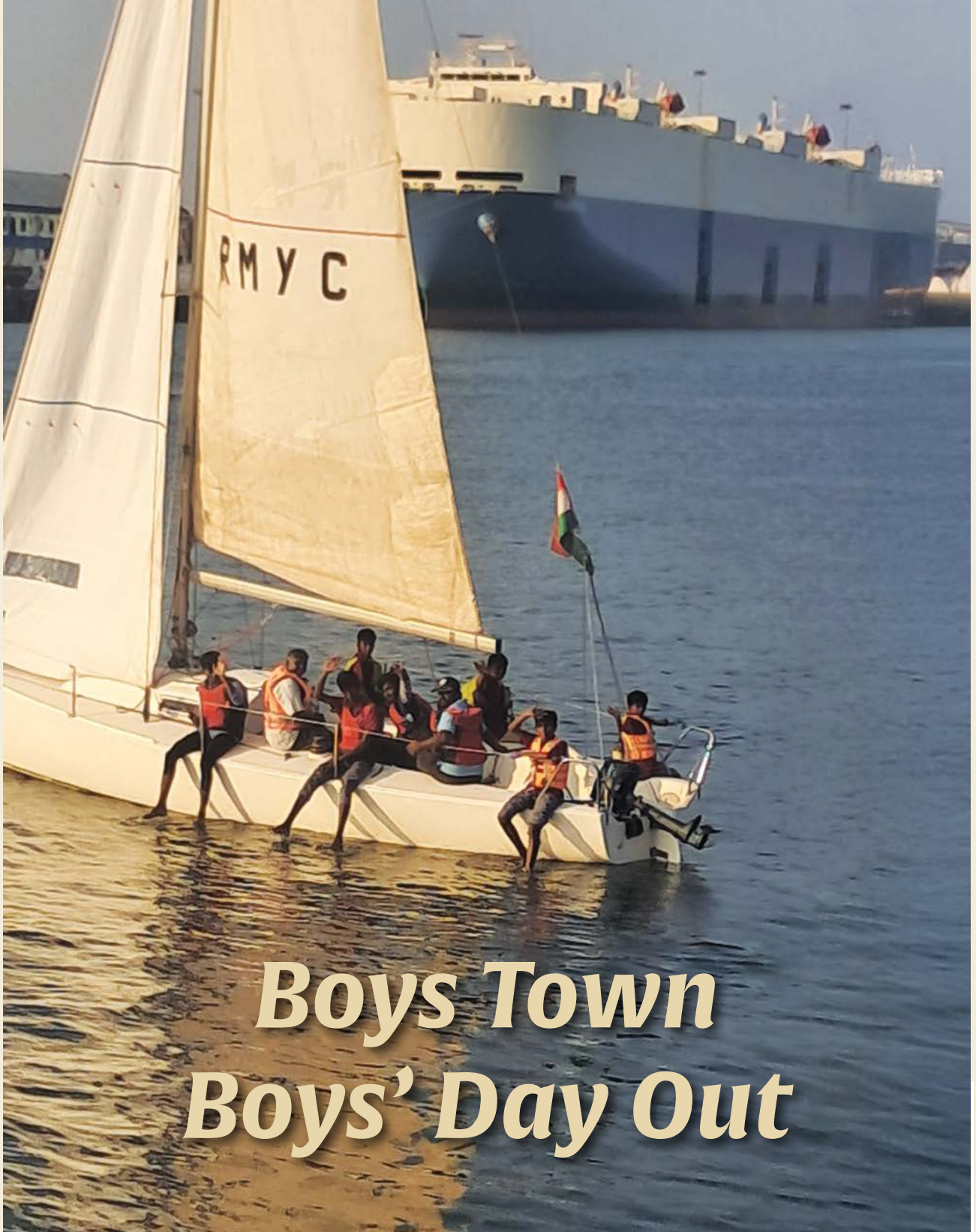


THE LIGHTHOUSE

Rotary Club of Madras THE MAGIC OF SERVICE BOND BUILD BRING CHEER

BOND | BUILD | BRING CHEER

WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF MADRAS | ISSUE 35 | March 02, 2025



***Boys Town
Boys' Day Out***



Dear RCMers,

Field experiences for school children that engage students intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically, promote all round development. RCM's sailing expedition for boys of Boys Town was a welcome step in this direction.



Rtn.Shivkumar Eashwaran
Editor

Rtn.A.R.Raghuandan
Chairperson

Mr.Madhu Mathen
Co-Chairperson

Rotary
Club of Madras

THE MAGIC OF ROTARY

BOND BUILD BRING CHEER

Rotary Club of Madras

35th Weekly Meeting

Speaker :
Sharanya Subramaniam
Casting Director

Topic:
Sharanya Spots Talent

Moderator :
Rtn. Prasanna Rajagopalan

Tuesday, 4th March 2025
Lunch 12.30 - 1.30 pm **Meeting Starts at 1.30 pm**
at Hyatt Regency, Chennai.

Please note that spouses are cordially invited for this meeting

Rtn. G. Chella Krishna
President

Rtn. Shanno Ravi
Director - Club Service

Rtn. Rajesh Mani
Honorary Secretary

Rtn. PP. Rani Muralidharan
Chairperson - Programs Committee

THE LIGHTHOUSE

BOARD 2024-25

- President**
Rtn. G. Chella Krishna
- Honorary Secretary**
Rtn. Rajesh Mani
- Immediate Past President**
Rtn. S. Ravi
- President - Elect**
Rtn. Nikhil Raj
- President - Nominee**
Rtn. S. Balakrishna
- Director - Community Development**
Rtn. Dr. Anuradha Ganesan
- Director - Club Service**
Rtn. Shanno Ravi
- Director - Vocational Service**
Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti
- Director - Youth Service**
Rtn. Balaji Chinni
- Treasurer - Club Funds & RCM BTS**
Rtn. Asha Mathen
- Asst. Secy./ Bulletin Editor**
Rtn. Shivkumar Eashwaran
- Director - CSR**
Rtn. Ganesh Ananthakrishnan
- Director - Rotary Foundation & International Service**
Rtn. Sabina Narayan
- Director - Community Health**
Rtn. A.M. Visvanathan
- Treasurer - RCMCT**
Rtn. A. Gooch Kumar
- Director - Fund Raising & PR**
Rtn. Prasanna Rajagopalan

THE LIGHTHOUSE COMMITTEE

- Editor** : Rtn.Shivkumar Eashwaran
- Chairperson** : Rtn. Akur Raman Raghunandan
- Co-Chairman** : Mr.Madhu Mathen
- Mentors** : Rtn.PP.N.K.Gopinath
Rtn. PP.Indra Subramanyam

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Rtn.E.As swath Kumar Reddy, Rtn.Himanshu Budhia
- Rtn.Vummidi Shailesh Raj, Rtn. Bhaswar Mukherjee
- Rtn.Indrani Krishnaier, Rtn.Shri Shakthi Girish
- Rtn.Reji Joseph, Rtn.Maya Thiagarajan
- Rtn.Fharzana Siraj, Rtn.Dr.M.Parkavi,
- Mr. Vikrm.S.Eashwaran, Rtn.Govind Parikh
- Rtn.Rakesh Jaiswal, Rtn.Dr.Rama Narasimhan

EDITED & PUBLISHED BY

- Rtn. Shivkumar Eashwaran, Asst. Secretary
- Rotary Club of Madras,
RAYALA TOWERS,
2nd Mezzanine Flr., 158, Anna Salai,
Chennai 600 002 Phone: +91 44 2859 1020

CONTACT THE EDITOR AT:
editor@rcmlighthouse.com

Bulletin Design:

CHARIS MEDIA WORKS

Visit RCM's official website
www.rotarymadras.in

CONTACT RCM SECRETARY AT:
office@rotarymadras.in

Rotary Club of Madras (RCM)
Minutes of the 33rd Weekly Meeting held on 25-02-2025
 at Hyatt Regency, Teynampet, Chennai

Call to Order:

The meeting commenced at 01.30 PM. Sergeant at Arms, Rtn. Jayant Hemdev collared President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna, who then called the 33rd weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Madras to order and requested all members to rise for a silent invocation.

Confirmation of Minutes:

The President sought confirmation for the 32nd weekly meeting minutes, which was passed and adopted by the members, by way of acclamation.

Guest of Honour:

President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna and Honorary Secretary Rtn. Rajesh Mani escorted the Guest of Honour, District Governor Rtn. N.S. Saravanan to the dais. Members extended a warm welcome.

Announcements and Acknowledgments:

Visiting Rotarians and guests were introduced and welcomed.

Rtn. M. Balasubramanian, a distinguished member with over 50 years in Rotary, was invited to announce the updates about the upcoming District Conference (Sangamithra).

- Rtn. IPP. Ravi Sundaresan is the Conference Chair.
- High-profile speakers were arranged by Rtn. PP. KK. Raman.
- Entertainment arranged by Rtn. Vikram Chesetty featuring Vidya Vox.
- The Media partner is The Times of India.
- Scheduled dates: 1st & 2nd March 2025.

Project Updates by President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna:

Bhoomi Pooja for the Third Balwadi was inaugurated with participation from Rtn. Arvind Kumar Sankar and Rtn. Rajesh Somasundaram, and it was funded entirely by Rtn. Mehul Uday Nanavati (INR 21-22 lakhs).

Rtn. Govind Vasanadu contributed \$10,000 to the Rotary Foundation.

Rtn. PP. N.K. Gopinath and Rtn. M. Sesha Sai, were commended for making a video clip on our club's activities for the Sun Never Sets on Rotary (SNSR).

Rtn. Shivkumar Eashwaran was acknowledged for organizing the Rotary Club of Madras Premier League (RCMPL). President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna encouraged Members to attend the final match.

Project updates by Rtn. A.M. Visvanathan:

Save a Little Heart Initiative was originally launched during Rtn. PP. Jayshree Sridhar's tenure, the initiative has expanded to support children from both Africa and India. A new partnership with Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital, Mumbai and Redington will help an additional 50 children. So far, 50 surgeries have been successfully completed at Apollo Hospital.



Induction of New Member:

Rtn. Arjun Ananth introduced Mrs. Samyuktha Bhaskar. She was formally inducted into the Rotary Club of Madras by DG. N.S. Saravanan and Rtn. PP. Jayshree Sridhar.

Secretary Announcements

Rtn. Rajesh Mani announced the birthdays and wedding anniversaries for the week.

Rtn. P. Ravishankar contributed Rs. 2,500/- towards the Sunshine.

The next meeting is scheduled for 26th February 2025, in the evening at Hyatt. This is a special meeting to felicitate Rtn. PP. Dr. Vijaya Bharathi Rangarajan, who has been elected as the District Governor Nominee Designate from our club. Members are encouraged to attend in large numbers to celebrate this achievement.

A survey has been shared with all Rotarians on the District Conference feedback and participation confirmation. Secretary Rajesh Mani requested everyone to respond.

Late. Rtn. V.P. Raman Memorial Living the 4 way test Award Ceremony:

The event commenced with a warm welcome by the host, acknowledging the presence of esteemed guests, including Rtn. PP. P.V. Mohan Raman, Rtn. Vikram. P. Raman and Vidyullekha Raman.

Opening Address

Rtn. Rakesh Jaiswal took the stage and welcomed the Chief Guest, District Governor N.S. Saravanan, fellow Rotarians, guests, interactors and school coordinators. He provided an overview of the 4-Way Test event for the year 2024-25.

Overview of the 4-Way Test Event:

- Explanation of the 4-Way Test
- The process involved sending invitations to the youth service team, which then forwarded them to the interactor clubs.
- Participants were asked to create videos showcasing the essence of the 4-Way Test.
- The best three projects were shortlisted for final selection.
- The winning team was awarded the V.P. Raman Rolling Trophy along with a cash prize.



Acknowledgments:

- Special thanks were extended to Rtn. PP. P.V. Mohan Raman for organizing a workshop to train interactors on filmmaking techniques.
- Appreciation for Rtn. PP. Jayshree Sridhar for arranging Speaker, 'Wide Angle' Ravishankar to conduct the workshop.
- Recognition of Rtn. Balaji Chinni and the Youth Service Team for coordinating with interactor clubs and ensuring participation.
- Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti was acknowledged for suggesting the title change from the 4-way Test to Living the 4-Way Test.
- Rtn. Anand Rengaswamy was thanked for arranging hotel facilities for the workshop.
- The club has 29 Interact clubs, only 14 clubs participated in the event, highlighting the need for increased engagement in future editions.

Speech by Rtn. PP. P.V. Mohan Raman:

Expressed his gratitude to the Rotary Club of Madras for the opportunity to honour his late father, Rtn. V.P. Raman, who had served in multiple leadership roles in the club. He emphasized the noticeable improvement in the quality of the films produced this year, a testament to the success of the workshop. He further announced his commitment to increasing the prize money and continuing to support the workshop's funding in the future.

Speech by Mrs. Vidyullekha Raman:

She shared personal anecdotes, emphasizing the importance of perseverance and embracing opportunities.

She recounted her journey into the film industry, illustrating how an unexpected backstage opportunity led to her first audition.

She encouraged students to step out of their comfort zones and remain persistent despite initial failures.

She congratulated all participants and reminded them that success comes with continuous effort and determination.

Presentation of Awards:

The best three selected films were showcased, highlighting the creativity and dedication of the participants.

Winners:

1. Winner: Chandrodaya Interact Club Omega International School
2. Runner-Up: MCTM Chidambaram Chettyar School
3. Second Runner-Up: Sri Sankara Vidyashramam Matriculation Higher Secondary School

The awards were presented by Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti, Rtn. M. Sesha Sai, Rtn. PP. P.V. Mohan Raman and family, Rtn. Balaji Chinni, and Rtn. PP. Jayshree Sridhar.

Launch of the Annettes Club

Rtn. Nikhil Raj was invited to officially launch the Annettes Club.

Address by Rtn Nikhil Raj:

Rtn. Nikhil Raj welcomed all Rotarians, district officials, students and Annettes, expressing his honor in announcing the revival of the Annettes Club after a long time. He emphasized that this was not just a restart but a step toward strengthening the heart of the Rotary family. He extended gratitude to all Annettes present and provided an overview of the club, which is designed for children of Rotarians aged 12 to 22.

He requested Rotarians who are interested in enrolling their children to contact Rtn. M. Sesha Sai. He also acknowledged the role of district officials in setting up the office bearers and guiding the club's formation process. He highlighted the significance of the Annettes Club as a reflection of deep bonds of friendship and service and expressed hope for its long-term growth and success.

Address by District Annettes President, Haleema Sulaiman:

Haleema Sulaiman shared insights into the various projects undertaken by the District Annettes Council, including:

- Organizing a 3D movie screening of Mufasa: The Lion King for 100 orphanage children.
- Donating Diwali clothes to an old age home.
- Conducting CPR workshops and awareness sessions in schools.

Address by District Governor Rtn. N.S. Saravanan:

- DG. Rtn. N.S. Saravanan congratulated the Rotary Club of Madras on reviving the Annettes Club.
- Acknowledged PP. Rtn. P.V. Mohan Raman and his family for instituting a rolling trophy and praised the club's talent.
- Emphasized the importance of the Four-Way Test and urged members to embody its principles.
- Noted the strong presence of 26-27 Interact Clubs but was surprised at the absence of an Annettes forum, urging a target of 350-400 members.
- Advised against electoral disputes in the Annettes and encouraged them to continue their parents' Rotary legacy.
- Mentioned the upcoming Rotary District Conference, "Sanghamitra," on March 1st and 2nd, inviting members to participate.
- Thanked the club leadership for their hospitality and reaffirmed his commitment to supporting the Annettes Club.

Presentation of Memento:

Past President Rajendran Sabanayagam presented a memento to Rtn. DG Saravanan N.S.

Vote of Thanks:

The vote of thanks was delivered by Secretary Rtn. Rajesh Mani.

Adjournment:

The President Chella Krishna G. adjourned the meeting.

Walk The Talk *Living the* 4-way Test

The 33rd weekly RCM meeting featured the winners of the annual V.P. Raman Award for creative filmmaking, based on the concept of the Rotary Four-Way Test. This award, organized by the Rotary Youth Services, was instituted and sponsored by our Rtn. PP. P.V. Mohan Raman in honour of his late father, Rtn. V.P. Raman.

This year, Rtn. PP. Jayshree Sridhar came up with the bright idea of a workshop on filmmaking for the students from the participating schools and she arranged a brilliant speaker, "Wide Angle" Ravishankar. Rtn. Balaji Chinni helped with sending the invites to the Interact club members 14 out of 29 Interact clubs participated.

The concept of "Living the 4-Way Test" was introduced by Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti. The event was held at Hotel Maris and organized by Rtn. Anand Rengaswamy. Snapshots and videos of the workshop, as well as fun and interactive sessions, captured the rapt attention.

PP. Rtn. P.V. Mohan Raman appreciated the films made by the participants and felt that the standard was remarkably creative. So, he generously added to the prize money to encourage and generate more interest to continue this endeavour.

His daughter Ms. Vidyullekha Raman, a well-known film actor, addressed us on behalf of her family. She spoke from her heart and shared she did not know her grandfather as he had passed on early in her life, but hoped her grandfather was watching over her in this joyous moment. She reminisced about her childhood, recalling how she rarely went out during summer vacations due to her father's commitments. As a result, she joined a theatre workshop and quickly became drawn to it.

Contrary to popular belief, her path to a career in the film industry was not easy despite her father being in the same industry. Her first job was backstage, running a myriad of errands and she missed being in front of the audience.

Luckily, she caught the attention of a senior director, who noticed her talent and offered her an audition for a role in the movie. With a great deal of encouragement from her dad, she set off. Sadly, the audition was not a success. She shared that she stumbled, stuttered,



fumbled and broke down! However, her dad advised her not to give up but to call for a second chance.

So, she squashed her embarrassment and tried again. And this time, it was a massive success. The directors saw all of 20 seconds and immediately signed her on!

Despite her first job being off-track, she persisted and achieved success, now with 80 films her story demonstrated her persistent attitude, which she encouraged the youth to adopt: never give up and give it your best shot.

She presented the awards with great happiness and encouraged the participants who were not awarded to keep trying, hoping they might one day become film directors.

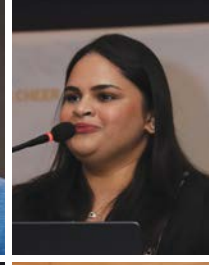
Created by school students, the three short films beautifully captured the concepts of the Four-Way Test. Through their storytelling and filmmaking skills, they wove engaging narratives and enacted compelling short stories that captivated the audience and left them impressed.

The winners were:

1. Sri Sankara Vidyashramam
2. M.C.T.M. Chidambaram Chettyar International School
3. Chandrodaya Interact Club Heartfulness International School

It was a thought-provoking, fun and interesting afternoon, a reminder for every Rotarian to live the 4-Way Test!

- Rtn. Dr. Rama Narasimhan





Fair winds & following seas!

The Rotary Club of Madras, the third oldest Rotary Club in India, remains young at heart—especially when its members engage with the boys from Boys Town.

Rtn. Nalini Radhakrishnan, like she did a year ago, masterminded a sailing outing for 26 of our Boys from Boys Town. Excellent planning and execution saw the students enjoy the water and the sailing experience. They were thrilled and it showed on their faces. This was the first time they came to the Madras Port and got into a sailing boat. Six boats ferried all of us to the seas. Unfortunately, we could not go into the ocean because two ships were coming in and one was going out. But this did not dampen the spirits of the youngsters who had a whale of a time. Apart from Capt. Nalini, Rtn. J. Kishor Dandekar and I were present and thoroughly enjoyed it.

The following Rotarians eagerly sponsored the Sailing on the Ocean:

1. Rtn. Kunal Patel
2. Rtn. Arunachalam Palaniappan
3. Rtn. Krishna Kishore
4. Rtn. Harbinder Singh Rattha
5. Rtn. D. Harikrishna
6. Rtn. Govind Vasnadu

- Rtn. PP. Satyan C. Bhatt



Rice Donation by Interactors of Vidya Mandir Estancia



Birthdays		3rd Mar to 9th Mar 2025
Rtn. Krishna Kishore		5/3
Rtn. Vijay Narayanan		8/3
Rtn. Himanshu Budhia		9/3
Spouses' Birthdays		
Ann. Erika Patel, Spouse of Rtn. Kunal Patel		5/3
Ann. K. Sridhar, Spouse of Rtn. Sandhya Sridhar		6/3
Ann. Rashmi, Spouse of Rtn. Sunil Sudhakar Shanker		8/3
Ann. Komal Singh, Spouse of Rtn. Harbinder Singh Rattha		9/3
Ann. Rajshri, Spouse of Rtn. Linesh Sanatkumar		9/3
Wedding Anniversary		
Rtn. T. Shivaraman & Anupama		3/3
Rtn. Dr. Karthik Mathivanan & Rushalini Rajkumar		7/3
Rtn. Madhav Sehgal & Simran Sehgal		7/3
Rtn. Manu Reddy & Priya Reddy		8/3
Rtn. Bhaswar Mukherjee & Dr. Saswati		9/3

The Interactors of Vidya Mandir Estancia showed incredible generosity by donating rice and lentils to the children of the Rotary Club of Boys Town Society. Our boys visited Vidya Mandir Estancia to receive the donation, making it a beautifully organized and heartfelt event.

A special thanks to the Youth Services team, led by Rtn. Balaji Chinni, for their efforts and to Rtn. Rakesh Jaiswal for his seamless coordination. It was a touching moment for the Interactors from both Boys Town Society and Vidya Mandir, fostering a bond of kindness and compassion. This wonderful initiative was made possible by the dedication of Ms. Uma, the teacher coordinator from Vidya Mandir Estancia.

- Team Youth Service

RCM Brahmaputra Cruise

Carried Away By a River

Day 1

Other than waking up at 3 a.m., a time that would become eerily familiar during our forthcoming adventure, it was an unremarkable day—on the surface.

Arrival in the cute little military airport in Jorhat and then being greeted by Ashish's full-on military-style convoy of white Innova cars gave us a taste of the efficiency with which our entire trip was run.

At the end of this somewhat hair-raising ride, we had our first view of the MV Mahabaahu and it was a splendid sight indeed. Elegant but solid, she looked like a safe vessel to be in. And she was.

We were carefully shepherded into motorized tenders that whisked us to the Mahabaahu and up the gangway to our home away from home for the next four days.

We were met by our cruise director, the redoubtable Nina Morada, of the gimlet eyes, stern disciplinarian and quirky humour. Later, we sat down for a briefing on our programme on the following day. The 'Mungri Mungram' became the gathering point for talks, music and dance during our entire stay.

Between Nina, Rajesh and our admin manager Sandip, we were given a very clear picture of the ship, the planned program, the dos and don'ts, etc.

That first evening set the tone for the rest of this fun-filled trip.

Before we knew it, it was off to bed and ready for that early morning 3 a.m. wake-up hooter!

And so, it went. Fun and learning for the next few days on that awesome inspiring river, or should we say Sea?

- Rtn.PP.Ravi Katari

Day 2

It was one of those days where the day felt long, but the hours slipped away in a blink. We kicked off at 4 AM, assembling in the dining area—sleepy-eyed yet buzzing with excitement for our visit to the Hoollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary.

No sooner had we begun our walk than we spotted a charming gibbon family lounging in the treetops, while another gibbon



indulged in an all-you-can-eat berry buffet.

Our guides enthusiastically pointed out the towering hollong tree, the pink-leafed Nagod tree and lush ferns. We marvelled at towering worm hills, fluttering moths, dazzling butterflies and an impressive lineup of birds, from the dapper common hill myna—sporting what looked like a yellow necktie—to the majestic kalij pheasant. We even spotted a Malayan giant squirrel, who deftly balanced on the branches high above.

Signs of elephants were everywhere—giant piles of dung (nature's landmines) and broken branches marked their recent presence. Halfway through the trek, we were treated to a stunning acrobatic display by another male gibbon, swinging effortlessly through the canopy.

After this exhilarating jungle jaunt, we were whisked away to a tea estate, where a feast awaited

us—poori bhaji, idli, pumpkin fritters, eggs, porridge, mishti doi with fruits and, of course, the finest Assam tea. Fully fed and feeling content, we left with packets of tea leaves as our delicious souvenirs.

Back on the boat, post refreshing baths, we indulged in yet another delightful meal, this time peppered with animated conversations with our fellow travellers. But there was no time to laze around; soon, we were off to Majuli Island—a vibrant epicentre of Vaishnav culture and the world's largest river island, steeped in history, tradition and art.

Our Majuli experience began with a captivating dance performance on 'Dashavatara,' followed by a theatrical spectacle from the Ramayana. From there, we visited a satra—a Vaishnavite monastery that serves as a centre for religious, cultural, and artistic traditions—where we witnessed energetic and mesmerizing dances in praise of Lord Vishnu.

Back in the boat, awaiting us was a fully set-up BBQ party on a deserted island where our boat was docked. With music, bonfires and the rhythmic beats of conversation and laughter, the energy soared again. The crew had set up a 'fish a beer bottle' game, where we had to deftly slip in a round hook into the beer bottle to win it.

To top it off, we each set little lamps afloat in containers made from banana tree bark, watching them drift away into the mighty Brahmaputra—our prayers, gratitude, and wishes riding along with them. It was a moment of quiet reflection amid the joyful chaos.

A sit-down dinner back on the boat felt like a warm embrace, wrapping up what had been a day of wonder, adventure and indulgence. Carpe diem was definitely coined for days like these. And with smiles in our hearts, we drifted into sleep, ready for whatever magic awaited us next.

- *Ann.Prunna Kalra*



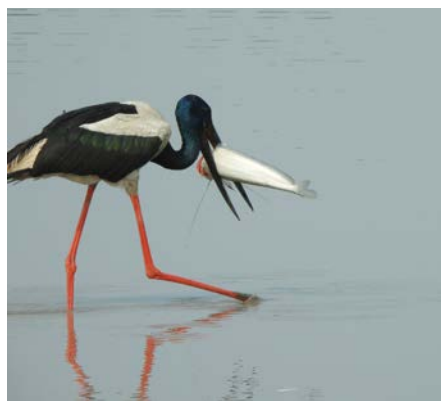


Day 3

Day three of our river cruise promised a relaxed morning and it delivered in the most delightful way. Drifting down the Brahmaputra, we were treated to breathtaking vistas under a canopy of perfect weather. While some of us joined Nina for a soothing yoga session, others opted for leisurely coffee on the upper deck or indulged in a well-earned sleep-in.

By 10 a.m., we anchored near a Mishing village, home to the indigenous community known for their rich traditions of fishing and weaving. Tenders from the MV Mahabaahu ferried us to the shore, where we explored stilted bamboo homes, admired the intricate looms tucked beneath them and visited the local kindergarten and school—where a donation was made as a token of goodwill. We returned to the cruise with not just fond memories but also exquisite handwoven fabrics in a riot of colours, proudly purchased from the skilled village artisans.

Post a sumptuous lunch and some downtime, we set off once again—this time for an exhilarating safari at the East Kaziranga Range. Nature did not disappoint! We spotted fascinating birdlife and were



awe-struck by a magnificent tusker, a truly unforgettable sight.

Back on board, a delightful surprise awaited us. Beautifully laid out were traditional Assamese Mekhela Chadors for each of the women and dhoti-kurtas for the men—our ensembles for the much-anticipated Ethnic Night.

Before the grand transformation, we were treated to a quick cooking class by the cruise chef, with our very own Shalini demonstrating how to make Ghevar, the beloved Rajasthani delicacy.

Dressed in our elegant ethnic finery, we reunited to dance the night away, swaying to Assamese rhythms and infectious laughter. Dinner was a lavish Assamese feast, made even more special by soulful melodies from Chandan. As the night wound down, we retired to our cabins with hearts full of joy and bellies happily content.

- Ann. Anisha Nanavati

Day 4

It was a lazy morning and our day began with a refreshing yoga session on the sundeck; the cool breeze from Brahmaputra gently caressing as we stretched our muscles.

Our first destination for the day was Biswanath Ghat. After a short ride on the tender, we were greeted by the sight of the idol of Biswanathji, proudly perched atop a pole. As we strolled along the ghat, we marvelled at local women displaying handwoven sarees and dupattas for sale along the streets; we even observed some engaged in traditional weaving. A truly divine moment awaited us at the 17th century Shiva temple. Despite the bright sunshine outside, the sanctum sanctorum was cool and serene. Out of nowhere, a kind woman appeared, handed me a vessel of water, and invited me to perform an abhishekam on the Shiva lingam. As we left, I couldn't help but think, "I wish I could stay a little longer."



Back on board, after lunch, I joined Ashish and Sumit on the sundeck—a book in hand and eyes on playful dolphins and birds dancing along the river.

At 3 o'clock, we headed to Silghat. The lush, green tea plantations spread before us, a breathtaking sight that filled our hearts. Amidst these serene landscapes, a group of young boys and girls performed the spirited Bihu dance, an experience that will be etched in my memory forever; some of us even joined in, dancing with carefree abandon.

Our adventure continued as we visited one of Assam's largest jute bag manufacturing facilities. From soaking the jute plants and extracting the fibres to compress the gunny bags for packaging, we witnessed it all. The enormous machines and expansive factories were mind-boggling, but what I loved most was watching some smart young girls operate these gigantic machines with remarkable panache.

What a satisfying day it was! We wrapped up our day with a heartfelt

farewell dinner, reminiscing about our wonderful sojourn along the Brahmaputra.

- Rtn. PP.Rani Muralidharan

Day 5:

There could not have been a better way to round off the cruise – a visit to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Kaziranga National Park for an early morning Elephant Safari.

Four to an elephant, we gingerly stepped atop the pachyderm from a specially erected platform and settled into our seats. As the elephant ambled away, expertly guided by our mahout, a rather disconcerting thought crossed my mind - a viral video of a tiger charging towards an elephant safari and leaping high up to the mahout's perch and injuring him. (Later, while on the jeep safari, our forest guide addressed the elephant in the room. He told us that the viral video was indeed from Kaziranga, but assured us that even though there were 100 odd tigers in this National Park, they had never been sighted in the outer area of the Park, which we were traversing.)





Inexplicably, our elephant stopped and the mahout explained that it wanted its best friend elephant to walk alongside! And thus, we had two elephants sauntering abreast, on the narrowest of mud tracks, while we the riders clung on for dear life, deftly keeping our feet from tangling with the feet of the riders atop the friend elephant!

Kaziranga's moniker as the "Serengeti of India" is well-earned. Rhinos, including babies, were all over the place, grazing calmly like cows in a pasture, while we feasted our eyes on the rare sight.

After rewarding our safari elephants with bananas and sugarcane, we retreated to a nearby resort for breakfast, which was followed by a jeep safari, covering a much larger area and revealing Kaziranga's amazing grassland ecosystem.

It was soon pack up time and the crew of the boat lined up to bid us farewell as we boarded our cars to set off for the four hour drive to Guwahati airport.

- Ann.Madhu Mathen



Suggest the most quirky, whacky or creative caption/blurb for this photo (Maximum 15 words). The best entries will be reproduced in the next week's edition of Lighthouse.

Mail your captions to editor@rcmlighthouse.com on or before 4th March.

Issue 35



Issue 34 : Best Captions

1. "Just a family photo with a distant cousin"
- **Rtn. N.K. Bhatia**
2. Perna is ready to move mountains, cross oceans, for her Sumit.
- **Rtn. Dr. Anuradha Ganesan**
3. Monkey business at its finest! Hanuman joins the fun while we borrow his gada.
- **Rtn. Vipin Sachdev**
4. Sumit presents his latest fitness equipment!
- **Rtn. Asha Mathen**

Rotary Nostalgia

Did You Know?



In 1962, when the country was attacked by China, Rs.11,111 was collected by voluntary contributions from members in an open meeting and presented to the Prime Minister's National Defence Fund.

During 1962-63, the Rotary Club took on hand two ambitious schemes - one, to put up a youth transit hostel in the city for young women, to be named after Nitish Chandra Laharry, the first Asian/Indian to become President of Rotary International and at the YWCA, the second to set up a Students Aid Society.

A sum of Rs.30,000 was collected for the construction of the hostel by staging a Drama and the hostel was handed over to the YMCA for maintenance. There was a slight delay in the construction of this hostel, but the club made up for it by spending additional amounts furnishing the hostel in later years.

The Nitish Laharry block is still there and is very well maintained even today by the YWCA, but we have no news on the Hall constructed for the YMCA.


- Rtn.PP.N.K.Gopinath

WHERE ELEGANCE MEETS THE

 **ellements**[®]
welcome to outdoor living



 www.ellements.in

 +91 96770 47073

 11, Dhandayudapani Nagar 2nd Street, Kotturpuram, Chennai - 600085