

# THE LIGHTHOUSE

BOND | BUILD | BRING CHEER

WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF MADRAS | ISSUE 40 | April 06, 2025



**Big Smiles - Bigger Impact**  
Celebrating Nine Months of Purpose-Driven Progress

Dear RCMers,

The Club Assembly followed by the Governor's visit last week, set the stage for the Board to present its impressive report card for nine months - our Spotlight this week.



**Rtn.Shivkumar Eashwaran**  
Editor

**Rtn.A.R.Raghunandan**  
Chairperson

**Mr.Madhu Mathen**  
Co-Chairperson

# THE LIGHTHOUSE

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## Rotary Club of Madras

### 40<sup>th</sup> Weekly Meeting

## WHISTLE PODU STORY

Speaker

Chockalingam S

Co-founder/Director  
OPN Advertising  
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Tuesday, 8th April 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



Rotary Club of Madras (RCM)  
**District Governor Official Visit and 39th Weekly Meeting**  
 held on 01-04-2025 at Hotel Hyatt Regency, Teynampet, Chennai

**Call to Order:**

President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna called the meeting to order and requested all members to rise for a silent invocation.

**Confirmation of Minutes:**

The President sought confirmation for the 38th weekly meeting minutes, which were passed and adopted by the members.

**Welcome Address:**

President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna welcomed District Governor Rtn. N.S. Saravanan, District Secretary Rtn. Vidya Raghu, Past District Governors, Past Presidents, Rotarians from other clubs, distinguished guests, spouses and friends. He also welcomed his father Rtn. PDG C.N. Gangadharan and his mother Mrs. Geetha Gangadharan.

**President's Address:**

Rtn. G. Chella Krishna highlighted the club's accomplishments in its 96th year, including:

- Construction of WASH infrastructure
- Homes for the homeless project
- Launch of a new vocational centre
- Interact programs across 28 schools.
- A flagship cervical cancer initiative
- International projects, including partnerships with Uganda to conduct Paediatric Heart Surgeries.
- Successful fundraising efforts and leadership development
- Special appreciation was extended to various directors and teams for their contributions.

**Felicitation of Padma Bhushan Awardee:**

Padma Bhushan Rtn. Dr. Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti was felicitated by DG Rtn. N.S. Saravanan and President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna for his outstanding contributions and for being conferred the Padma Bhushan by the Government of India. Rtn. Dr. Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti addressed the gathering, expressed his gratitude and shared valuable insights.

**Project Inaugurations:**

High-impact projects were virtually inaugurated by DG Rtn. N.S. Saravanan and President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna:

- Balwadi at Kanathur: Sponsored by Aptus Value Housing Finance India Ltd. to support preschool children's nutrition, education and health.
- Touching Tiny Hearts in Uganda: A global grant project providing life-saving heart surgeries for 25 children in partnership with Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences.
- Mammogram Installation at Viluppuram Regional



Screening Center: Rs. 1 crore project funded by AXS Healthcare to enhance cancer screening services.

- Laparoscopic Equipment for RSRM Hospital: Equipment worth Rs. 94 lakhs, sponsored by SBI Mutual Funds, to improve women's healthcare services.
- RCM VHS Paediatric Palliative Home Care Program: A project supporting home-based care for children with critical illnesses in partnership with Voluntary Health Services.

**Secretary's Report:**

Honorary Secretary Rtn. Rajesh Mani provided an overview of the agenda. He reflected on the club's theme for the year, "Bond, Build, and Bring Cheer," explaining how it guided the club's initiatives and projects.

**Key Highlights of the Report:**

**Club Service Activities:**

- Eight fellowships were organized, including Hawaiian Night, Deepavali celebrations, Oktoberfest, Christmas, Pongal and International Peace Night.
- Conducted 20+ fireside meetings, engaging over 300 Rotarians and spouses.
- Hosted 37 curated sessions with renowned speakers like Arvind P. Datar, Manoj Kumar (Naandi Foundation) and Rajdeep Sardesai.
- Organized unique activities, including the Pulicat Flamingo Ride, St. Thomas Mount trek and Pickleball sessions.
- Held the RCM Royal Quiz at Amir Mahal with 125+ participants.
- Arranged a Mumbai getaway featuring a visit to Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) and an exclusive meeting with Anand Mahindra.

**Community Service Initiatives:**

- Upgraded school infrastructure through large-scale WASH projects, improving hygiene and facilities.



- Built classrooms, toilet complexes and kitchens in government schools and Sri Ramakrishna Math National School.
- Restored lakes at Old Perungalathur and Kadaperi, benefiting 4.5 lakh residents.
- Completed 60 homes under the "Homes for the Homeless" initiative, aiming for 100.
- Promoted green initiatives with tree plantations and recycling programs.

### Health Initiatives:

- Conducted an HPV vaccination drive with Adyar Cancer Institute, benefiting 1,000+ young girls.
- Donated mammogram machines to Tiruvannamalai and Villupuram for breast cancer screening.
- Sponsored nearly 100 paediatric heart surgeries in partnership with top hospitals.

### Vocational Services:

- Conducted skill development programs, including AI training and certified courses.
- Provided financial aid for tuition and scholarships, benefiting 70-100 children.
- Trained 350+ graduates in computers, apparel and English with NIT and the Apparel Council.
- Opened a new vocational training center at Rotary Nagar.

### Youth Services:

- Partnered with 25 schools to promote leadership and collaboration.
- Launched the "Streetscape Project" to create greener learning spaces.
- Organized an International Youth Exchange Program in Malaysia.
- Held a RYLA camp in Kumbakonam.
- Conducted peace essay competitions and industrial visits.

### International Services:

- Strengthened global ties through sister clubs and international events.
  - Supported an eye surgery project in Ghana and donated an ambulance to Burundi.
  - Promoted peace through sensitization programs, essay competitions and art for peace campaigns.
- Publicity and Public Relations:
- Published "Lighthouse" magazine on time, showcasing RCM's activities and achievements.
  - Featured nostalgic reflections on the club's milestones.

### Recognition and Appreciation:

Honorary Secretary Rajesh Mani acknowledged the contributions of various directors and teams leading the different service avenues. Special recognition was given to:

- Director of Club Services, Rtn. Shanno Ravi and team.
- Director of Community Services, Dr. Anuradha Ganesan and team.

- Director of Health Initiatives, Rtn. A.M. Visvanathan and Rtn. Dr. Sangeetha Viswanathan.
- Director of Vocational Services, Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti and team.
- Director of Youth Services, Rtn. Balaji Chinni and team.
- Director of International Services, Rtn. Sabina Narayan and team.
- Lighthouse magazine team, led by Rtn. Shivkumar Eashwaran, Mr. Madhu Mathen and Rtn. A.R. Raghunandan

### Introduction of District Governor Saravanan:

Rtn. V.P. Raman was invited to the stage to introduce DG N.S. Saravanan.

He highlighted DG N.S. Saravanan's contributions to the Rotary community, including his role as Chartered Governor. He acknowledged DG Saravanan's success in organizing the district conference, Sangha Mitra, which saw record participation.

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

DG Rtn. N.S. Saravanan appreciated the warm welcome and hospitality from President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna and his family. He praised the club's service, fundraising efforts and leadership in global grants and CSR initiatives. He encouraged collaboration with other Rotary clubs to maximize impact.

DG commented on the following presentations made during the Club Assembly in the morning.

Club Service Director Rtn. Shanno Ravi presented an overview of the club's service activities. Highlighted the participation and enthusiasm of members in various events and showcased the impact of club service through a visual presentation.

- Fundraising Director Rtn. Prasanna Rajagopalan reported on the successful fundraising drive, noting an increase in pledged contributions.
- CSR Director Rtn. Ganesh Ananthakrishnan emphasized corporate sponsorship involvement.
- Vocational Service Director Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti presented an update on recent vocational training programs.
- Global Grant Committee Rtn. Nikhil Raj discussed ongoing and upcoming grant projects.
- Treasurers Rtn. Gooch Kumar A. and Rtn. Asha Mathen provided a financial summary, ensuring transparency and accountability.
- Rtn. Sivakumar Eashwaran presented updates on the Lighthouse Project and introduced new initiatives such as a Rotary Cricket League.

### Closing Remarks:

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks by Rtn. Nikhil Raj.

### Adjournment:

The President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna adjourned the meeting.





# Congratulations

## Rtn. Dr. Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti



**W**e are proud to announce that our esteemed member, Rtn. Dr. Nalli Kuppuswami Chetti has been awarded the prestigious Padma Bhushan by the Government of India this year.

This remarkable achievement is a source of immense pride for the Rotary Club of Madras, as we celebrate one of our own receiving such a distinguished honour.

During the visit of our District Governor on April 1, 2025, the club had the privilege of honouring him with a Citation and a Plaque, recognizing his exceptional contributions and dedicated service to society, as well as his success as a businessman.

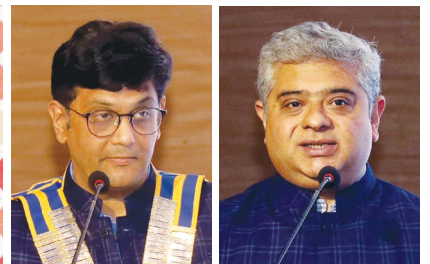
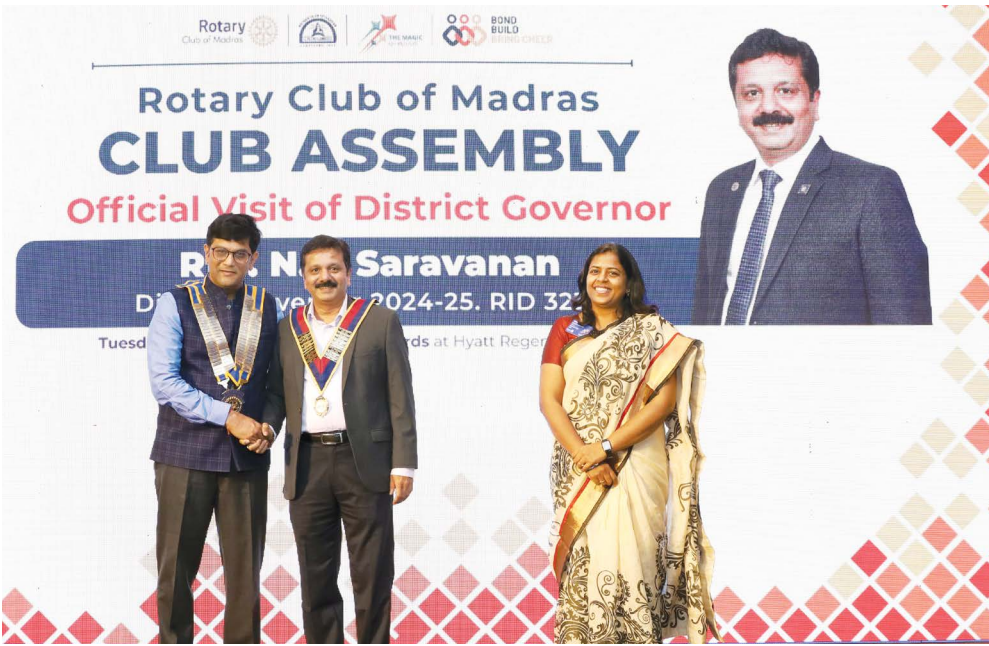
Dr. Chetti's philanthropy is commendable, particularly his efforts in promoting classical music and dance in Chennai, the Cultural Capital of India.

It is also noteworthy that we are privileged to have two other Padma Awardees among us: Rtn. Sudha Raghunathan, Padma Bhushan, and Rtn. Dr. T.S. Chandrasekar, Padma Shri.

May their numbers continue to grow!

**- Rtn. PP. N.K. Gopinath**













# BOND BUILD BRING CHEER

## A Year of Purpose - Driven Progress

The Rotary Club of Madras gathered for the Official District Governor's visit. It wasn't just another evening; it was a moment to reflect on a year of relentless service and the impact of a community bound by purpose. As the President took the stage, the theme of the year—Bond. Build. Bring Cheer resonated through every word. It was more than a slogan; it was a commitment that shaped every initiative, project and life touched by RCM.

Building strong relationships within the club has always been a cornerstone of its success. This year, the bonds of fellowship were strengthened through vibrant gatherings that blended culture and camaraderie. From the Hawaiian Fellowship to a Deepavali celebration infused with Chettinad traditions and the high-energy "Let's Get Rocked" musical night, every event helped build connections that went beyond formalities.

More than 20 fireside meetings engaged over 300 Rotarians and their families, turning casual conversations into friendships and collaborations. The Mumbai getaway, featuring an exclusive meeting with Mr. Anand Mahindra and a mesmerizing show at NMACC, exemplified how meaningful interactions can enrich lives.

Rotary is about action and this year's initiatives have been nothing short of transformative. Community Service projects led by RCM have made the landscape of education, sanitation and water conservation. Classroom construction, improved sanitation facilities and the introduction of a noon meal kitchen at Sri Ramakrishna Math National School have ensured better learning environments for children. The club's ongoing lake restoration projects have revived important water bodies and provided clean water to hundreds of thousands of people.

Projects were also virtually launched during the Governor's visit, marking another milestone in RCM's commitment to service. Initiatives such as the inauguration of the Balwadi at Kanathur, the installation of a mammogram unit at the Cancer Institute's Rural Screening Center in Villupuram and the launch of Paediatric Palliative Home Care are extending RCM's reach to those in critical need.

Perhaps the most heartwarming endeavour has been Homes for the Homeless, giving marginalized families the security of a permanent roof. With nearly 60 homes completed, this initiative is changing lives one foundation at a time.

### CLUB SERVICE

**Fellowship and Bonding**

- 8 Fellowships that fostered deep camaraderie and joy;
- 20 plus firesides with over 300 Rotarians and spouses engaged
- 37+ curated sessions, highlighting diversity and depth

Holistic / Wellness programs like:

- Seven Slices of Happiness – mental wellness.
- Ramayana from a 100-year-old elder – wisdom and storytelling.
- Pulicat Flamingo Ride, St. Thomas Mount Trek, Pickleball

Domestic Outstation trips to Mumbai and Brahmaputra cruise

The infographic includes photos of various social events, group photos, and a collage of people smiling.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE 1

**Community Services 1**

**WASH Projects**

- Completed Projects: Construction of 4 Schools
- Ongoing Projects: Sanitation, Water, Education
- Environment Initiatives: Tree plantation, Glass bottle collection, Recycling of waste, Sanitation training, Sustainability Day

**Community Services 1**

**Lake Restoration**

- 20 Perungudi Lake Restoration: 64 acres, 2.35 km bund, ₹55 Lacs
- Madhav Lake Restoration: 42 acres, 1.11 km bund, ₹60 Lacs
- Waterbody Restoration: 100+ acres, ₹100+ crore

**Community Services 1**

**WASH – Balwadi**

- Completed Project: Construction of 4 Schools
- Ongoing Projects: Sanitation, Water, Education
- Environment Initiatives: Tree plantation, Glass bottle collection, Recycling of waste, Sanitation training, Sustainability Day

**Community Services 1**

**Homes for the Homeless**

- Completed projects: 60 homes, ₹1.25 crore
- Ongoing projects: 20 homes, ₹40 crore
- Education & Livelihood Projects: Skill training, Vocational training, Mammogram unit

The infographic features photos of school buildings, lake restoration sites, and people engaged in various community service activities.

Vocational training, skill development programs and scholarships continue to empower individuals with education and employment opportunities. From AI training to supporting women in becoming auto drivers and nurse aides, the club is building a future of self-sufficiency and dignity.

What's service without joy? The club's healthcare initiatives have given families hope and healing. The HP Vax campaign, in collaboration with Adyar Cancer Institute, has provided HPV vaccinations to over 1,000 young girls, taking a crucial step toward cervical cancer prevention.

Two donated mammogram machines are ensuring early breast cancer detection in underserved areas, while nearly 100 pediatric heart surgeries have given children a new lease on life. These initiatives are proof of RCM's commitment to public health.















# Inauguration of the New Rotary Centre

On the 31st of March, the Rotary Club of Madras (RCM) celebrated a significant milestone in its decades-long journey of service with the inauguration of a brand-new centre at the Rotary Nagar. The occasion was made even more special by the presence of District Governor Rtn. Saravanan, who graciously presided over the proceedings.

The newly constructed 3,000-square-foot building, spread across three floors, is designed to serve the diverse needs of the Rotary Nagar community. The ground floor now houses a government-run library, offering a much-needed resource hub for learners of all ages. The first-floor features two tuition rooms for schoolchildren, while the second floor hosts a digital literacy lab and a multi-purpose vocational training room.

This excellent, spacious and thoughtfully designed building was brought to life by our very own Rotarian Rajit Mhetras. His architectural vision and dedication have resulted in a space that not only meets functional needs but also inspires all who visit. The building stands out as a bright beacon of possibility, symbolizing hope and opportunity for the underserved communities it is built to serve.







The centre reflects RCM's long-standing commitment to building capacity in underserved communities through education and skills development.

The day began with DG. N.S. Saravanan formally inaugurating the building and the library, followed by the unveiling of a donor recognition plaque. The club gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the following donors who made this construction possible:

- Rtn. Pratap M.R.
- PP Rtn. Mohan Raman P.V.
- PP Rtn. Ravi Sundaresan
- M/S Rialto Enterprises, Chennai

The event was immaculately planned and executed by Rotarian mentor Rtn. R. Ravishankar, whose calm leadership and eye for detail ensured everything ran like clockwork.

The program commenced with a warm welcome from Vocational Services Director, Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti. Following this, Rtn. R. Ravishankar shared insights into the building's history and its current operations. President Rtn. Chella Krishna then delivered an inspiring address on the Rotary Nagar journey, highlighting its growth and outlining the vision for an exciting new phase.

The prize distribution for winners of an art competition featuring



young talent from Rotary Nagar followed. District Governor N.S. Saravanan, clearly moved by the vibrancy and purpose of the initiative, praised RCM's enduring commitment and urged the club to invite other Rotary Clubs to witness and learn from this remarkable model.

Behind the scenes, many hands and hearts made the event a success:

- Rtn. N.K Bhatia provided steady oversight of the logistics
- Rtn. Vijay Kumar Kadel managed refreshments with efficiency and cheer
- Rtn. Arunachalam Palaniappan thoughtfully arranged sweets and floral bouquets

- Rtn. Anjali Ponni Rajkumar delivered a vote of thanks and coordinated thoughtful gifts for the children
- Rtn. Shankari brought the children's art competition to life with creativity and care.

This event was not just an inauguration, it was a reaffirmation of the power of collective effort and heartfelt service. It stands as a proud chapter in the legacy of RCM's longest-serving project—Rotary Nagar and lays a strong foundation for an even more impactful future.

**- Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti**





# Knowledge is the Best Medicine

On February 25, 2025, the Rotary Club of Madras and Rotary Club of Del Mar Solana Beach, in association with ICCW-TN, organized the 14th diabetes awareness program at RBANC Higher Secondary School, Pudupet, Chennai.

Two hundred students from grades 6-10 participated in the event, which began with the school prayer. Ms. Helen, Headmistress of RBANC Higher Secondary School, delivered the welcome address.

Rtn. Abdul Kareem Sait emphasized the importance of diabetes awareness, balanced diets, physical activity and RCM initiatives in the health system. He also presented an awareness poster to the headmistress.

Ms. Abirami from ICCW-TN, a seasoned social worker with over 10 years of experience, led the presentation. She covered topics such as diabetes types, modernization, obesity, calculating BMI, healthy diets, burning calories and the importance of physical activities.

Students actively participated by asking questions and sharing positive feedback. The student vice chairman delivered the vote of thanks.

As a token of appreciation, healthy almond snacks were distributed to the students at the end of the event.



Birthdays		8th April to 13th April 2025
Rtn. Roshan Poncha		8/4
Rtn. Tareen A.K.		10/4
Rtn. Prasad P.B.		12/4
Wedding Anniversary		
Rtn. Srinivas Garapati & Jyothsna		8/4
Rtn. Nidhi Kapoor Thadani & Ashish R. Thadani		8/4
Rtn. Ramachandran B. Dr. & Priya Ramachandran		12/4
Rtn. Aditya Agarwal & Madhu Agarwal		13/4





“An opportunity to see everything in a nutshell in 2 hours. With ppts! Behind each program, there is at least four days of hard work and you see 1000s of days’ work in the presentation.”

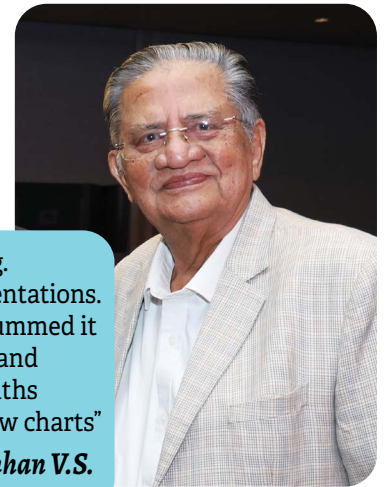
– Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti

## Club Assembly in the Words of Rotarians



“Super meeting. Excellent presentations. As president summed it up - blood, toil and sweat of 9 months presented in few charts”

– Rtn. Narasimhan V.S.



“I never miss a club assembly. It’s so important and useful. In fact I have even come straight from the airport. Inspiring to see this level of commitment”

– Rtn. PP. Indra Subramanyam



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](mailto:editor@rcmlighthouse.com) on or before 8th April.

Issue 40



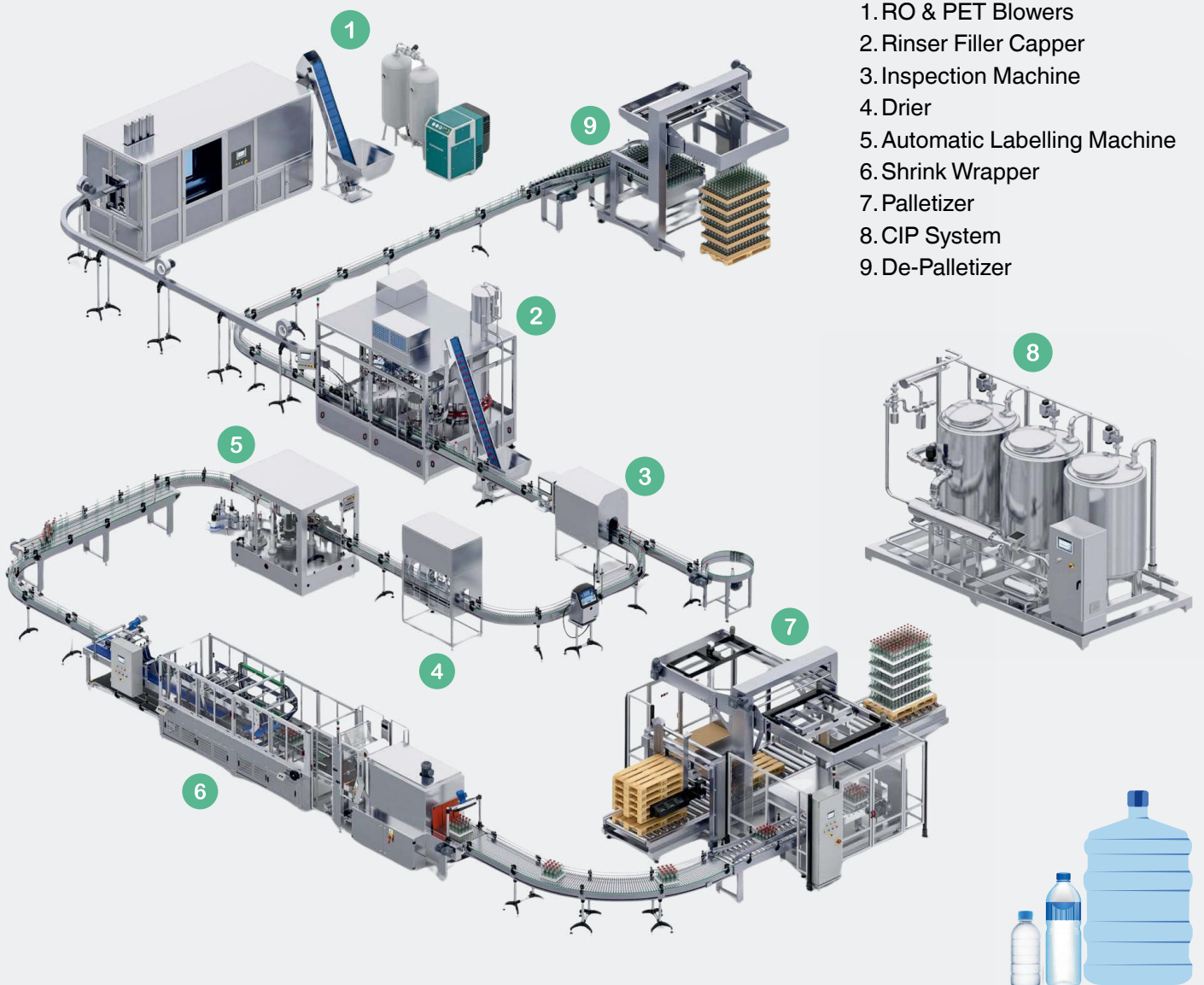
Issue 39 : Best Captions

1. Why fear when I am here! - Rtn Manasa T Pillai
2. “Some pray; some slay. I do both—with style!” – Rtn. N.K. Bhatia
3. Vetrivel Muruga - Ulagam Sutrum Valiban Engal Sai’iye Vazthungal.” -Rtn. PP. Shanker C. Mangadu

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