

THE

# LIGHTHOUSE

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WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF MADRAS | ISSUE 41 | April 13, 2025



**Clean Schools.  
Healthy Students.  
Brighter Futures.**

“Renovation of infrastructure and inauguration of noon meal scheme at RK Mission School”



Dear RCMers,

Noon Meal Scheme in schools enhances student enrolment and attendance, provides adequate nutrition and promotes social inclusion.

Our cover story this week .



**Rtn.Shivkumar Eashwaran**  
Editor

**Rtn.A.R.Raghuandan**  
Chairperson

**Mr.Madhu Mathen**  
Co-Chairperson

**Rotary Club of Madras**  
41<sup>st</sup> Weekly Meeting

Topic: **Tariff and Trade wars**  
Panel discussion with

**Rtn. Krish Vijayan**

**Raghuvir Srinivasan**  
Editor , Hindu Business line

**Jai Subramaniam**

**Tuesday, 15th 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

# THE LIGHTHOUSE

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Rotary Club of Madras (RCM)  
**40th Weekly Meeting held on 08-04-2025**  
 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 39th weekly meeting minutes, which were passed and adopted by the members.

**Welcome Address:**

President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna extended a warm welcome to the Chief Guest, Mr. S. Chockalingam, Co-founder and Director of OPN Advertising. He also welcomed members of the Probus Club and other guests present.

**Announcements:**

President-Elect Learning Seminar (PELS) – Baku

- President-Elect Rtn. Nikhil Raj shared highlights of the PELS event held in Baku.
- The seminar was organized by DG Rtn. Vinod Saraogi and Chairman Rtn. PP. Sundaresan Ravi.
- The event witnessed the participation of 170 Rotarians from across the district.
- He acknowledged the presence and contributions of Rtn. PP. Satyan C. Bhatt and his spouse, Parul Bhatt, both of whom served as session leaders.
- He thanked Rtn. Ramji Natarajan for coordinating the travel arrangements.
- He noted that the event was a highly inspiring and successful experience for all incoming leaders.

**Full Club Fellowship:**

- Rtn. PP. Rajendran Sabanayagam announced a Mardi Gras-themed fellowship organized by the club's IIT alumni.
- The event is scheduled for Sunday, 20th April at The Leela Palace.
- He invited all members to attend and requested them to wear masks for the celebration.

**Summary of the Governor's visit and associated events:**

- The Public Convenience inauguration at Puzhuthivakkam, supported by Redington Ltd.
- Inauguration of the Rotary Nagar Vocational Centre near Marina Beach, designed by Architect Rtn. Rajit Mhetras.

Acknowledgment of Contributions:

- Rtn. Rohit Toshniwal – ₹7.5 lakhs
- Mr. Mehul Uday Nanavati – ₹2.5 lakhs
- Rtn. R. Ravishankar – Turnkey execution of both projects



- Rtn. Vardhaman Jain and Rtn. Mahinder Jain were acknowledged for their dedicated efforts during the visit to the Ramakrishna Mission, continued support is expected to exceed ₹1 crore in value.
- He also recognized Rtn. Rajesh Mani for a well-curated 16-minute audio-visual presentation.
- Special appreciation was extended to Rtn. Shanno Ravi and her team for excellent coordination of the event.
- Homes for the Homeless – Irumbedu Project: The inauguration of 25 homes is scheduled for Sunday morning, 20 April 2025. Members were requested to attend the inauguration and breakfast before returning to the city.

**Secretary's Announcements:**

- Rtn. Rajesh Mani announced Birthdays and anniversaries for the week.
- Sunshine Contribution received from Rtn. N. Subramanian.
- The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 15 April 2025, at the Hyatt. The topic of the session is "Impact of U.S. Tariffs under President Trump."

**International Engagement:**

President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna acknowledged Rtn. PP S. Gunashekar and his team for completing a Rotary Partnership Exchange in Nairobi, coordinated by Rtn. Sabina Narayan.

**Guest Speaker Session:**

The guest Speaker, Mr. Chockalingam (Chocka), spoke on the "Whistleblower Campaign" – a marketing story that propelled CSK to global fandom and recognition.

**Vote of Thanks:**

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks by Rtn. PP. Rani Muralidharan.

**Adjournment:**

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



**"If you're not having fun creating content, you're doing it wrong!"**  
— Ann Handley



# Beyond Boundaries, Beyond Expectations Championing Cricket, Championing You!



Meet Mr. S. Chockalingam, the creative mastermind behind India's most iconic cricket fan movement: Whistle Podu. Not just an ad campaign, but a cultural phenomenon that flipped the coin and made

## ACT 1: The First over – A Lucky Break

It all began in Madras, circa 1988. The IPL wasn't even a thing yet, but India Cements had a dream: a cricket team that would one day become a religion.

With just three friends, one dog and a lucky call, Chocka and the team had two days to pitch a strategy that would launch a legacy.

## ACT 2: Let the People Decide

**"Great marketing makes the customer feel smart."**  
— Joe Chernov

They didn't just want fans, they wanted co-creators.

So they launched a contest, "Pera Kettala Adhirudhula" (Just hearing the name should give you goosebumps!) across newspapers and social media to let the public choose the team name.

25,000 entries later, one stood tall: Chennai Super Kings.

## ACT 3: Painting the Town Yellow

Corporate colors were blue and yellow — but Chocka made a bold call: yellow it was. Before the IPL began, during an India-South Africa match at Chepauk, everything turned yellow — the stands, the seats, the signs. The commentary even joked:

"Even the grass looks yellow!"

With a shoestring budget, CSK became impossible to ignore.

## ACT 4: Budget Blues, Creative Highs

After splurging on players, there was little left for ads. So instead of hiring stars, they turned the stadium into the hero. Strategic camera placements ensured yellow ruled the screen and the hearts.

## ACT 5: How to Cheer – Not Just What to Cheer

With IPL shifting to South Africa, CSK was away from home.

But Chocka believed:

"You don't have to tell Chennaites to cheer for CSK. You just need to show them HOW." Thus, Whistle Podu was born, a catchy tune, local flavor and raw fan energy.

Shot on a handycam, featuring real fans, folk music and players speaking Tamil, the video went viral. Even MS Dhoni got his iconic moniker, "Thala" from this campaign.

## ACT 6: From Chennai to the World

Uploaded to YouTube, the first comment came from New Zealand.

The video caught the attention of Channel V and then Sony, both wanted to air it for free. No expensive celebs, no ads spend just pure emotion and authenticity.

## ACT 7: Loss on the Field, Victory off It

Though CSK lost in the semis that year, the fan videos exploded. Some were even better than professional ones!

## Spotlight - 40th Weekly Meeting

One new anthem featured a massive Mexican wave at Marina Beach — the viral sensation that sealed the "Thala" title for Dhoni.

### ACT 8: Homegrown Heroes

Content included:

- Players attempting Rajinikanth-style glasses flips
- Pulled coffee ads with folk beats
- Sanitation workers, fans and everyday people — real Chennai

This wasn't just a campaign — it was Chennai's soul on screen.

### ACT 9: Fans Take the Wheel

Fans became the marketers.

They ran Facebook pages, created memes and flew across India — some even painted themselves yellow.

"It wasn't just marketing, it was a movement."

### ACT 10: The Comeback

After a two-year ban, 2018 was the comeback. With no budget again, Dhoni posted a silent Instagram photo - yellow shirt, No. 7, and "Thala."



That was it.

The internet turned #WhistlePodu yellow. No big launch. Just fan power.

### ACT 11: Whistle Podu Express

When matches were shifted to Pune due to the Kaveri riots, Chocka helped organize the Whistle Podu Express, a train filled with fans, fully sponsored, fully passionate.

### What We Learned from Chocka:

- Let your consumer own the brand
- Celebrate your fans constantly
- Speak their language
- Converse, don't broadcast
- Content = dialogue, not a calendar

*"Make the customer the hero of your story."*  
- Ann Handley.

- Rtn. Dr. Rama Narasimhan



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.

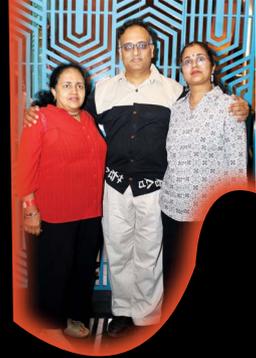
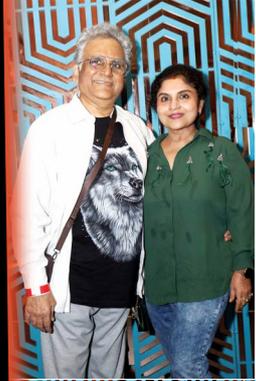
Mail your captions to  
[editor@rcmlighthouse.com](mailto:editor@rcmlighthouse.com)  
on or before 15th April.

Issue 41



Issue 40 : Best Captions

1. Narsi, you are the vanilla frosting with four red velvet cupcakes! - Rtn. Hemant P. Chordia
2. It's all happening with RED...ING...TON! - Rtn. Rajib Kumar Hota
3. White cool wisdom in the middle of Red-hot power... like a marshmallow in a bowl of spicy chutney! - Rtn. N.K Bhatia
4. Narsi: - Ladies I will dance with each one of you.... Don't worry. - Rtn. Archana Shri Sanjay
5. Narsi soars and lifts all around him with joy - Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti
6. Last man standing ( or tottering) in the eye of the Red Brigade Storm. - Mr.Madhu Mathen



- Rtn. Dr. Anisha Ashok**  
**Rtn. Dr. Anuradha Ganesan**  
**Rtn. Dr. Arulmozhi Varman N.V.**  
**Rtn. PP Dr. Biswakumar**  
**Rtn. Dr. R. Chandrasekar**  
**Rtn. Dr. T S Chandrasekar**  
**Rtn. PP Dr. Gauthamadas Udipi**  
**Rtn. Dr. Gururaj Rao**  
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**Rtn. Dr. Sharon Krishna Rau**  
**Rtn. Dr. Srinath Yeswanth P.V.**  
**Rtn. Dr. Sudha Ramachandran**  
**Rtn. Dr. Supriya Dabir Gautam**  
**Rtn. Dr. Vani Vijay**  
**Rtn. Dr. Venkatesh Munikrishnan**  
**Rtn. PP Dr. Vijaya Bharathi Rangarajan**  
**Rtn. Dr. Yashwant Kumar Venkataraman**





**O**n April 1, the Rotary Club of Madras (RCM) held the Bhoomi Pooja ceremony for the construction of a new staircase and also officially inaugurated the Noon Meals Kitchen at Sri Ramakrishna Math National Primary School in Mint, Parrys. The ceremony was graced by the presence of several dignitaries, including District Governor Rtn. N.S. Saravanan, District Secretary Vidya Ragu and RCM President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna, Director of Community Services I Rtn. Dr. Anuradha Ganesan, Co-Chair of WASH Rtn. M.M. Philip, Director of Community Health, Rtn. A.M. Visvanathan, Rtn. Mahinder Jain, Rtn. N.K. Bhatia, Rtn. Anil Srinivasan, Rtn. Prasanna Rajagopalan and Rtn. G. Ravindran and school officials.

The first item on the agenda was the Bhoomi Pooja, which was conducted by the RK Math Seers. During the ceremony, Mr. Mathivanan, the project's contractor, demonstrated the betel leaf tradition, in which water was poured towards the northeast to symbolize the invitation of harmony and stability. Next, the Noon Meals Kitchen was officially inaugurated; the kitchen provides hygienic and nutritious mid-day meals to 460 students. Following the inauguration, the Rotarians inspected the new toilet blocks, which were almost complete.

Following the ceremony, the event continued at the Prayer Hall, where the Headmistress



delivered the Welcome Address. She emphasized the significance of the new developments in supporting the students' personal growth, academic success and overall well-being and how these improvements would contribute to their future achievements.

Swami Shashishikananda, the spiritual leader of RK School, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Rotarians for their unwavering support. He recognized the crucial role of RCM in supporting underprivileged students and expressed his eagerness for continued collaboration for future needs.

He especially appreciated President Rtn. G. Chella Krishna for promptly endorsing the WASH proposal, reflecting RCM's strong



commitment to education and community welfare. He also thanked Rtn. Dr. Anuradha Ganesan for her efforts in bringing the project to fruition.

Swami Satyajnananandaji Maharaj (Adhyaksha, RKM, Mylapore), a senior leader, presented a memento to District Governor Rtn. N.S. Saravanan and all Rotarians involved. DG Saravanan, President Chella and Director Dr. Anuradha Ganesan presented a cheque to Contractor Mr. Mathivanan for the staircase project.

A cultural program followed with students' performance, including a singing program, a solo Thirukkural recital and a dance.

In her speech, Rtn. Dr. Anuradha Ganesan spoke with reverence about RK School and its role as an oasis of hope for underprivileged students. She stressed the importance of education and how the new WASH facilities would help reduce sick days among students. "Education is wealth; no one can take it away."

DG N.S. Saravanan shared several insights on how Rotary's WASH projects aim to help students believe in themselves and inspire them to replicate the service they have received.

The event concluded with a Vote Of Thanks from a Senior Teacher, who thanked District Governor Saravanan, RCM President Chella Krishna, every Rotarians and the community for their unwavering support towards the development of RK School.



**SANGHAMITRA:  
An Unqualified Success**

The first District Conference of our newly formed district, held on March 1 & 2, was a remarkable success. Special applause to Rtn. IPP S. Ravi, Conference Chair, whose dedication and vision set a new benchmark. With months of meticulous planning, the event stood out for its ambiance, speakers, entertainment and flawless execution. Kudos to all members who supported this monumental effort and to DG Rtn. N.S. Saravanan for enabling such an exceptional experience. — Rtn. PP. N.K. Gopinath



**Fireside 18** : Hosted by Rtn. Hemant P. Chordia and Pinky on Fri, Mar 7, 2025. **Total Rotarians & spouses attended: 26**



**Fireside 19** : Hosted by Rtn Vijay Kumar Kadel and Pratibha Kadel on Tue, Mar 18, 2025. **Total Rotarians & spouses attended: 20**



**Fireside 20**: Hosted by Rtn Hemu Ramaiah and Jai Subramaniam on Sun, Mar 30, 2025. **Total Rotarians & spouses attended: 40**

**Birthdays** 14th April to 20th April 2025

Rtn. Bharat M. Pujara	15/4
Rtn. Bhaswar Mukherjee	15/4
Rtn. Bharat Shivkumar	20/4
Rtn. Narasimhan V.S.	20/4

**Spouses' Birthdays**

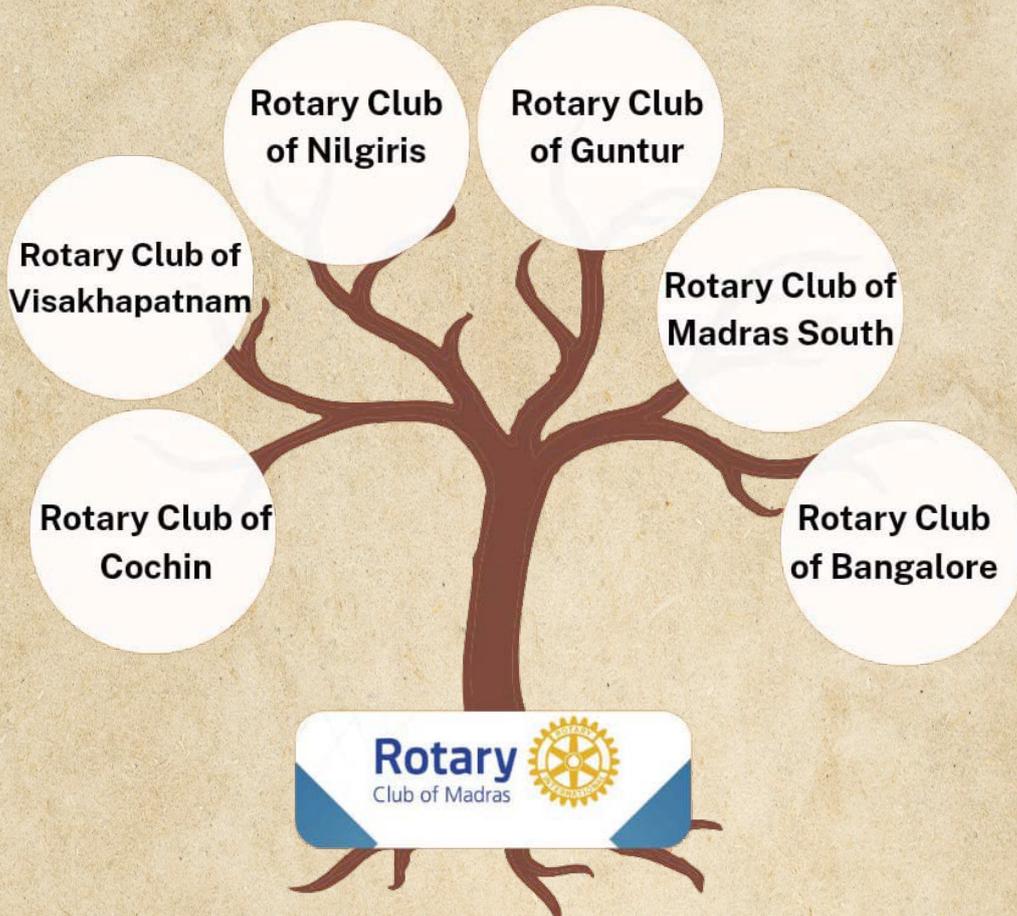
Ann. Seema Bhargava, Spouse of Rtn. Alok Bhargava	15/4
Ann. A.S. Ganesan, Spouse of Rtn. Dr. Anuradha Ganesan	16/4
Ann. Selvi, Spouse of Rtn. Dr. K. Rajan	20/4
Ann. Nanda, Spouse of Rtn. Suresh Kumar S.	20/4

**Wedding Anniversary**

Rtn. Shoukath Sherif & Dr. Rubia Sherif	19/4
Rtn. PP. George B. Cherian & Karina	20/4

# Rotary Nostalgia

## Did You Know?



- The Rotary Club of Madras sponsored the Rotary Club of Cochin in 1937. Diwan Bahadur R.K. Shanmukham Chetty, then Diwan of Cochin, served as the Charter President. Later, he became India's first Finance Minister in the Central Cabinet headed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.
- In 1958-59, during the presidency of Rtn. K.V. Srinivasan (Managing Director, Standard Motors) at the Rotary Club of Madras, the then District Governor T.S. Rajam (of TVS Group, Madurai) appointed Rtn. PP. Kalluri Gopal Rao as the Governor's Special Representative to establish a new Rotary club. As a result, the Rotary Club of Tirupati was formed in 1959, with the Rotary Club of Madras serving as its sponsoring club.
- Chevalier Rtn. PDG J.L.P. Roche Victoria served two half-terms as Director of Community Service of the

Rotary Club of Madras in 1953-54 and 1954-55. He was elected District Governor in 1948-49 while he was a member of the Rotary Club of Tuticorin. Much later, he joined the Rotary Club of Madras.

- Rtn. Kalluri Gopal Rao, who served as President of the Rotary Club of Madras in 1957-58, became District Governor in 1959-60. During his tenure, the Rotary Club of Madras South was sponsored. At that time, the President of the Rotary Club of Madras was Rtn. A.R. Narayana Rao, who had joined the club in 1944.
- Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Ayyar, a member of the Rotary Club of Madras, later joined the Rotary Club of Nilgiris, which was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Madras in 1941. At the age of 73, he went on to serve as District Governor in 1952-53.

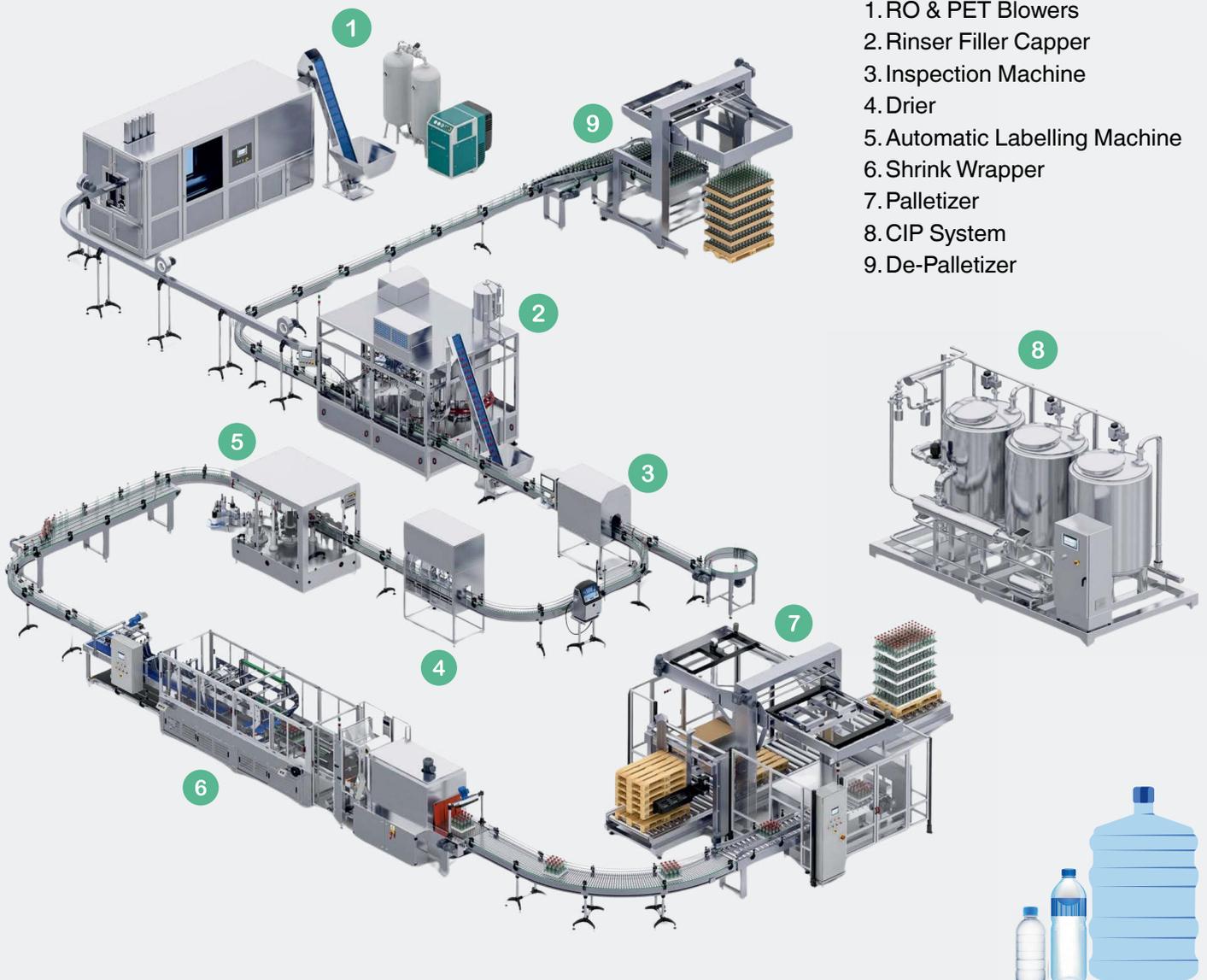
- **Rtn.PP.N.K.Gopinath**

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