

THE

# LIGHTHOUSE

BOND | BUILD | BRING CHEER



WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF MADRAS | ISSUE 50 | June 15, 2025





Dear RCMers,

As *The Lighthouse* marks its 50th issue, we pause to reflect on a remarkable Rotary year. From the RCM Board's perspective, it's been a journey of purpose, impact, and resilience. This milestone chronicles not just events, but the unwavering heartbeat of our Club—its spirit of selfless service. Each initiative, each act of giving, has lit lives and lifted hopes. Here's to a legacy built on action, compassion, and Rotary fellowship.



**Rtn.Shivkumar Eashwaran**

Editor

**Rtn.A.R.Raghu**

Chairperson

**Mr.Madhu Mathen**

Co-Chairperson

Rotary Club of Madras

49<sup>th</sup> Weekly Meeting

**Bigil**

Business and Bigger Dreams

Action! with  
**ARCHANA KALPATHI**

Creative Producer - AGS Entertainment &  
Director - AGS Cinemas

Moderated by **Rtn Samyuktha Bhaskar**

**Tuesday, 17th June 2025 | 1.30 pm**

**Lunch : 12:30 - 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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**Honorary Secretary**

Rtn. Rajesh Mani

**Immediate Past President**

Rtn. S. Ravi

**President - Elect**

Rtn. Nikhil Raj

**President - Nominee**

Rtn. S. Balakrishna

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Rtn. Dr. Anuradha Ganesan

**Director - Club Service**

Rtn. Shanno Ravi

**Director - Vocational Service**

Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti

**Director - Youth Service**

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**Rotary Foundation & International Service**

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Rtn. A. Gooch Kumar

**Director - Fund Raising & PR**

Rtn. Prasanna Rajagopalan

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**Editor :** Rtn.Shivkumar Eashwaran

**Chairperson :** Rtn. Akur Raman Raghu

**Co-Chairman :** Mr.Madhu Mathen

**Mentors :** Rtn.PP.N.K.Gopinath

Rtn. PP.Indra Subramanyam

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

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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

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Send in your articles, news and stories for consideration in the Lighthouse bulletin to:  
[editor@rcmlighthouse.com](mailto:editor@rcmlighthouse.com) Stay updated with our very own RCM magazine!

Rotary Club of Madras (RCM)  
**The 48th Weekly Meeting held on 10-06-2025**  
 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 47th 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. B. Santhanam, former Chairman of Saint Gobin India. He also welcomed the visiting Rotarians, Probus Club members, spouses and other guests present.

**Announcements and Updates:**

- **Medical Equipment Donation:** Appreciation was extended to Rtn. A.M. Visvanathan and Rtn. Bharat M. Pujara for successfully finalizing the donation of 10 dialysis machines to ACS Hospital.
- **WASH Initiative – Bio-Toilet Project:** Rtn. IPP. S. Ravi and Rtn. Usha Ajit Prasad (District WASH Chair) was thanked for their efforts in executing a bio-toilet project for women traffic police.
- **Installation Ceremony:** President- Elect Rtn. Nikhil Raj announced that the installation of the 97th President will be held on 8th July at 7 PM at Hyatt Regency.
- **Balwadi Project Update:** Rtn. Dr. Anuradha Ganesan informed members about the inauguration of two Balwadis at Kanathur and Padur, with the District Governor, Chengalpattu Collector and CSR Donor Mr. M. Anandan among the invitees. The third Balwadi is scheduled for inauguration on 28th June.
- **Art Auction Fundraiser:** Rtn. Hemant P. Chordia urged members to support the charity art auction on June 14th, with a preview on June 12th and 13th at Gallery Veda, copies of the auction catalog were made available and members were requested to assist in spreading the word and promoting the event.
  - **Rtn. Vikram Chesetty- Chairperson – (Membership Development & Classification):** He expressed great joy in celebrating the special moment as President G. Chella Krishna inducted his final member of the Rotary year, bringing the tally to 299 members. He applauded the President's exceptional tenure and the RCM team's dedication, noting that this 299 is worthy of a standing ovation. The audience responded with enthusiastic applause.


**Induction of New Member:**

Proposed by: Rtn. PP. Satyan C. Bhatt.  
 Introduction by: Rtn. PP. Gopinath N.K. (on behalf of the proposer)  
 Rtn. PP. Gopinath N.K. introduced Dr. Geetha Iyer, President Rtn. Chella Krishna G. formally inducted her into the club and Rtn. PP. Jayshree Sridhar facilitated the induction ceremony.

**Secretary's Announcements:**

Rtn. Shivkumar Eashwaran announced birthdays and anniversaries for the week. The upcoming meeting will be held on Tuesday, 17th, June 2025, in the afternoon at the Hyatt Regency. A Sunshine contribution of Rs. 2,000 was received from Rtn. Girdhar Hemdev.

**Chief Guest Session:**

Mr. B. Santhanam, Former CEO of Saint Gobain, was the guest speaker for the week. He spoke on the topic, 'Leading with Purpose in a Changing India.' The session was ably moderated by Rtn. Sudha Shivkumar.

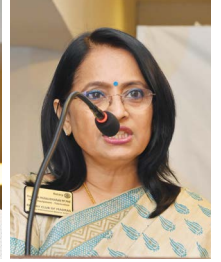
**Vote of Thanks:**

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks by Rtn. Gowri R. Shanker

**Meeting Adjournment:**

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







## Gallery - 48th Weekly Meeting



Issue 50

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 17th June.



### Issue 49 : Best Captions

1. "Hold on, Nikhil ! Before you take this seat of power.....Know it reclines only for drama, not for an hour!" - **Rtn. N.K Bhatia**
2. "Build 500 Homes for the Homeless? Even Taj never gave me such lofty targets!!" - **Rtn. Asha Mathen**
3. Prakash: "Hey hold on...where are you going with the good stuff?" - **Rtn. Sanjay Rao Chaganti**
4. " Chill , Nikhil!" - **Rtn. Shanno Ravi**
5. "Nikhil this is how you will need to balance your year ahead like a ballerina!" **Rtn.PP. Vivek Harinarain**



# THE MANUFACTURING RACE HAS A NEW TRACK

**W**hen B. Santhanam, Chairman of Saint-Gobain India and Asia-Pacific, says his only regret is being 68 and not 48. Because here's a man who's not lamenting age but opportunity. The kind of once-in-a-generation opportunity that India's manufacturing sector is about to grab or squander.

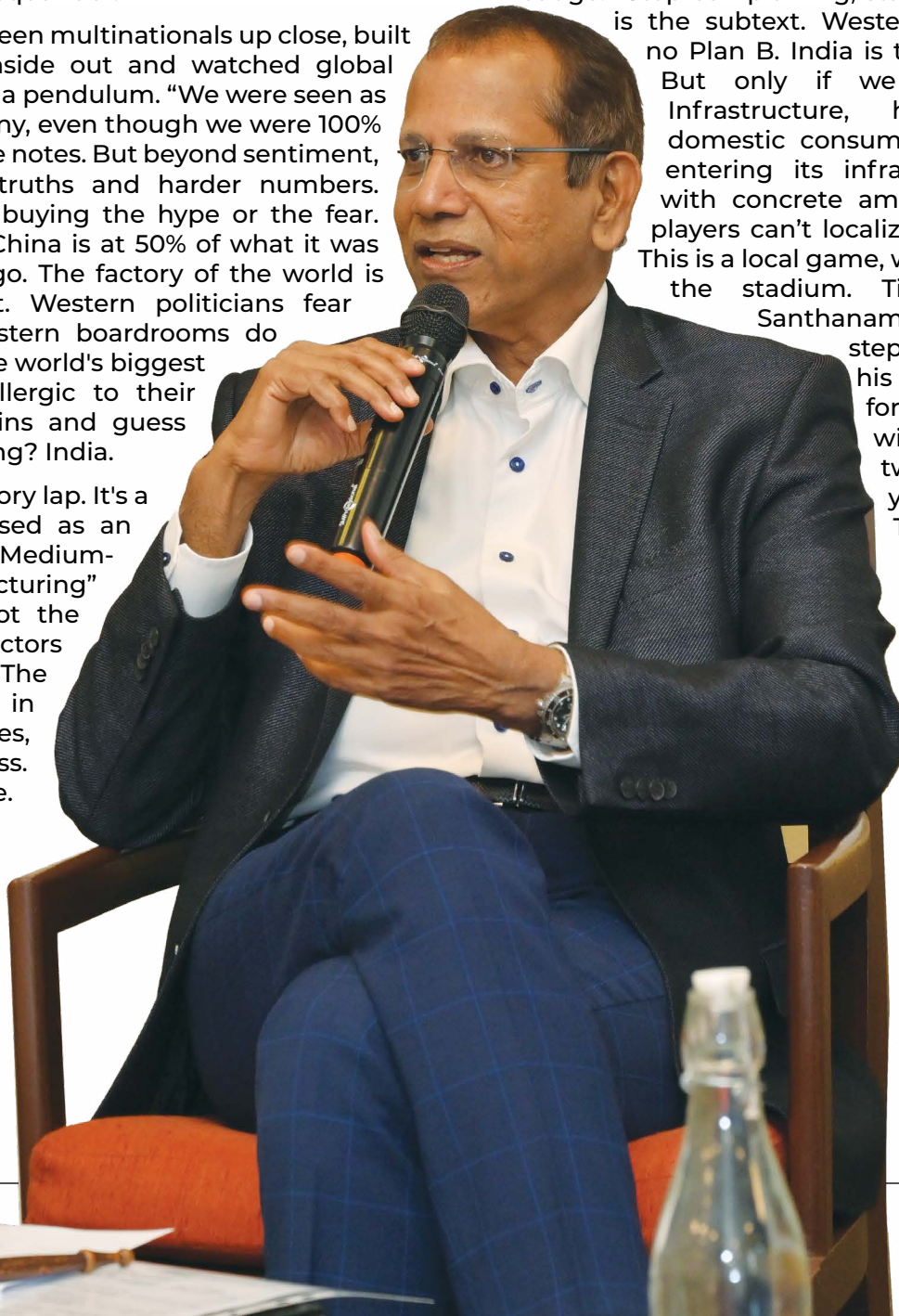
Santhanam has seen multinationals up close, built one from the inside out and watched global trends swing like a pendulum. "We were seen as an Indian company, even though we were 100% multinational," he notes. But beyond sentiment, he drops hard truths and harder numbers. China? He's not buying the hype or the fear. Construction in China is at 50% of what it was just two years ago. The factory of the world is slowing its shift. Western politicians fear China. Now, Western boardrooms do too. Suddenly, the world's biggest capitalists are allergic to their own supply chains and guess who's still standing? India.

But this is no victory lap. It's a challenge disguised as an open door. "Medium-complex manufacturing" in his words. Not the flashy semiconductors or space tech. The real gold lies in ceramics, abrasives, polymers and glass. Mundane? Maybe. Profitable? Absolutely.

India beats the world on cost structures in these sectors. The world just hasn't woken up to it yet. Forget the Vietnam hype, he says. Land there costs four times more than in Tamil Nadu. Electricity in Shanghai is pricier than in Chennai. And yet, many Indian entrepreneurs still wear victimhood like a badge. "Stop complaining, start competing,"

is the subtext. Western capital has no Plan B. India is the alternative. But only if we act like it. Infrastructure, housing and domestic consumption. India is entering its infrastructure age with concrete ambitions. Global players can't localize fast enough. This is a local game, we're already in the stadium. Time to play.

Santhanam may be stepping back, but his words are forward-facing. "I wish I had twenty more years," he says. The next twenty won't be kind to the passive. But for those bold enough to build.



# Mission Metrics

## THE ROTARY YEAR IN REVIEW

### *From the President's Desk*



Dear Rotarians,

It gives me immense pride and joy to pen this message on the occasion of the 50th consecutive weekly issue of The Lighthouse. This milestone is not just a celebration of consistency but of creativity, commitment and community.

A standing ovation to the editorial trio – Editor Rtn. Shivkumar Eashwaran, Mr. Madhu Mathen and Rtn. Akur Raman Raghunandan – who, with flair and foresight, has curated content that strikes the perfect balance between promptness and purpose. Their effort has been seamlessly supported by regular contributors like PP. Rtn. N.K. Gopinath, Rtn. Rama Narasimhan and our Directors, each of whom brought their voice to our collective narrative.

The brilliance of The Lighthouse lies in its dual focus – always engaging for our members, yet unfailingly centered on those we serve. Be it inter-club, district or global Rotary happenings, the coverage has been relevant, timely and rich in context. The inclusion of features like the caption contest and archival deep-dives into our Club's history gave every issue both charm and depth – they were my personal favorites. Our landmark achievements this year – over \$2 million in community impact, relentless legal and governance documentation, and a suite of service activities across avenues – were chronicled with care and clarity. This is journalism with heart and heritage.

The effort behind this series has been monumental; the results are magnificent. The Lighthouse team has done the Rotary Club of Madras proud. And so has the Board, whose tireless efforts ensured that the Club's mission was not just carried forward but amplified week after week. As we mark 96 years of continuous information dissemination and service, it is only fitting to say that RCM and The Lighthouse are made for each other – perfect partners in vision, values and the voyage ahead.

Let the light keep shining brighter.

**Rtn. G. Chella Krishna**

President, Rotary Club of Madras (2024–25)





## BOND

**What is the one-line purpose/goal of your vertical this year?**

To professionalize our offerings.

## BUILD

**2. What was one moment or event where people really came together?**

A weekly RCM meeting celebrating Republic Day at the Selaiyur campus — a first for RCM — and showcasing multiple events during the RI Vocational Services Month - January. These brought together members, students, partners, and the local community in a truly meaningful way.

## BRING CHEER

**What will you personally walk away with at the end of the year?**

A renewed admiration for how hard RCM's Board members work across all verticals to keep this beautiful machine going. Forging deeper bonds with a few RCMers.

### What actions or changes made the biggest difference this year?

- Partnering with domain experts like NIIT Foundation, Apparel Council, ANEW and ANJU, Vidya Vidhai, Aid India, and Mehul/VJAL (AI training) to professionalize our programs
- Discontinuing outdated courses and introducing high-demand ones like spoken English
- Empowering care persons to lead initiatives based on their passions
- Completing the new Rotary Nagar building under the leadership of Rtn. Ravi Shankar.

### What numbers or data points are you proud of?

- Over 500 women trained and certified from Selaiyur and Rotary Nagar
- 20 women trained as auto-rickshaw drivers
- 25 women trained as nurse aides in partnership with ANEW and ANJU
- Nearly ₹10 lakhs in scholarships to students from Boys Town and Rotary Nagar — much of it raised by RCM members.
- Rebranded factory visits as “new learning” — including AI training, visits to a sustainable luxury hotel, and the High Court
- Innovative collaboration with Youth Services on “Living the Four-Way Test”

**Was there an important decision that proved to be right in hindsight?**

Yes — charging a nominal fee to course participants. There was some internal hesitancy. This shifted the model from pure charity to one of dignity, ownership, and sustainability.

### What Gave You the Most Joy This Year?

Seeing the Selaiyur women speak in English with newfound confidence — knowing we delivered exactly what they had asked for and needed.

**One word to describe your year?**  
Fulfilling.

### 9. What message would you like to leave your successor?

Be bold. There will always be naysayers. If you believe in something, follow it passionately and push for it.

# Landmark Achievement

## TRF

Worldwide, RCM is the 4th largest contributor to TRF, out of 37,000+ clubs spanning 200 countries in Rotary Year 2024-25.

## CSR

Rs. 12.35 crore (provisional) for RY 2024-25.



**BOND****BUILD****BRING  
CHEER****Impact in Numbers**

- Global Reach: Engagement across multiple countries
- Beneficiaries: Over 1,000 individuals impacted
- Volunteer Hours: 100+ team hours/month
- Outcomes: Measurable impact through education, service, and connection
- Funds Raised: Significant resources through member support and goodwill

**Key Habit Introduced**

Introduced a simple check-in on previous action points at the start of each meeting — a small practice that improved accountability and consistency.

**Vision That Guided the Year**

Building bonds through authenticity, peace, cultural connection, and compassionate action.

**Key Collaborations That Strengthened Impact**

Gratitude in Action: Building Bridges Through Global Collaborations  
Our year was defined by meaningful partnerships:

- Holistic Committee – wholehearted support for Art for Peace
- Youth Services – consistent backing for Cultivating Peace essay contest & Youth Exchange to Malaysia
- RC Peponi & RC Nairobi – for a warm and enriching Club-to-Club exchange
- RC Accra West – for active support during the Ghana Eye Surgeries

These collaborations transcended agendas and borders, leaving behind lasting impact and joyful memories.

**3. Defining Moments That United Us**

The Art for Peace project stands out—members of all backgrounds painted a collective canvas for peace.

The Peace Day event reinforced the need for timely planning and gut instinct.

The Ghana project was a lesson in patience, teamwork and persuasion—an unforgettable experience that showcased unity and purpose.

**4. Signature Projects**

- Cultivating Peace – 4-part celebration of the International Day of Peace
- Youth Exchange to Malaysia – RCM's first, empowering 65 students from underserved communities
- Club-to-Club Exchange – with RC Nairobi & Peponi, combining service and cultural bonding
- Ghana Eye Surgeries – 366 cataract operations, reviving a legacy of service and vision

**9. Message to the Successor (Optional)**

You're in for a ride filled with heart and purpose. Focus on building bridges, bonding through service and spreading joy. This role will immerse you in a powerful, committed RCM community — enjoy every moment.

**What Gave You the Most Joy This Year?**

"The joy this year wasn't in one big, show-stopping moment — it was in the little things: shared laughter, last-minute scrambles, an "always-up-for-it" crew of volunteers, and that constant feeling of having each other's backs. From the President and Secretary to the entire Board, there was this unspoken harmony — a team stitched together with purpose, passion, and open minds — which fueled my journey this year. So if I take just one thing forward, it's the magic of that camaraderie — where alignment wasn't just about strategy, but about heart. ❤️❤️"

**8. Personal Insight to Carry Forward**

Leadership is about knowing when to let go. Inspired by President Chella, I learned that trusting the team and sharing the spotlight invites surprising strength and synergy.

**10. The Journey in One Word**

Enriching





Rtn. Balaji Chinni

Director, Youth Service

**BOND**

**BUILD**

**BRING  
CHEER**

**One-line Vision Statement for Your Portfolio**

Empowering youth through leadership, global exposure and value-driven initiatives.

**Key Projects / Initiatives Undertaken**

Fostered student leadership through school partnerships and the Streetscape Project. Organized a Youth Exchange Program in Malaysia and a RYLA camp in Kumbakonam. Held peace essay contests and industrial visits to expand youth horizons.

**In One Word: Describe the Journey**  
Uplifting

**Lessons Learned / Insights Gained**

Youth thrive when given platforms to lead, explore and express. Creating opportunities outside the classroom fosters real-world skills and confidence.

**Message to the Incoming Director**

Keep innovating for the youth, give them voice, vision and a sense of purpose. Every initiative plants the seeds of leadership.

**Impact in Numbers**

- 25 schools partnered
- 1 international exchange program
- 1 RYLA camp conducted
- Multiple essay competitions and industry visits reaching hundreds of students
- 27 Interact clubs & 10 Rotaract
- A Streetscape Project to promote awareness and creativity among school students.

**A Defining Moment / Highlight of the Year**

The International Youth Exchange Program in Malaysia, which provided students with invaluable exposure to global cultures and leadership practices.

**Partnerships or Collaborations That Elevated Impact**

Collaborated with educational institutions and international Rotary partners to deliver enriching programs and global experiences for students.

**A Defining Moment That Brought People Together**

With the calm and collected leadership shown by President G. Chella Krishna, I would say let the Board members and other Rotarians come together and work as a Team.

**What Gave You the Most Joy This Year?**  
Working with an extremely cooperative and well-knit Board. ●●

**In One Word, Describe the Journey**  
Transformative and Humbling

**A One-Line Vision That Guided You**

The highly impactful projects lined up served as a central mission to raise funds through corporate social responsibility (CSR).

**Key Collaborations That Strengthened Your Impact**

The extraordinary support from RCM members in either giving their funds or leading us to potential Donors made an impact on a healthy CSR fundraiser. The ability of our Project Directors to execute the projects in a short time was a key element and serves well for future CSR fundraising.

**BOND**

**BUILD**

**BRING  
CHEER**

Rtn. Ganesh Ananthakrishnan

Director, CSR

**One Key System, Process, or Habit You Helped Set Up**

Set up a back office to provide documentation support for CSR and field support for projects. This will have a lasting impact, enabling directors to work more efficiently.

**One Personal Insight or Lesson You'll Take Forward**

Ask for help, and you will get it from RCM members.

**Message to Your Successor (Optional)**

My successor is Rtn. Krish Vijayan, who was my mentor. I have no advice or tips to offer. He needs none of it from me.

**Impact in Numbers**

As of today, Rs. 12.35 Crores has been raised in CSR funds this RY.





## BOND

## BUILD

## BRING CHEER

### What Actions or Changes Made the Biggest Difference This Year?

We were prompt in conducting a Rotary Information session for new Rotarians, with concise presentations on Rotary and RCM. The Membership Development Committee tweaked and adhered to processes while working on inducting new members. Processes were built to suit the needs of changing times. Today, we are a club strong at 299 members.

### Was There an Important Decision That Proved to Be Right in Hindsight?

The By-laws Committee handled issues brought to them with clarity and gave sound recommendations, helping the Board when needed. The TARIA Committee has been working on setting up SOPs to make handover for Directors smooth. It is still a project in its initial stages. The Rotary India website and app are updated with all the latest information on RCM.

### A One-Line Vision That Guided You?

Being Club Services, the theme of the year was that one line to follow – Bond & Bring Cheer amongst fellow RCMers and their families.

### A Defining Moment That Brought People Together

I loved the way the RCM Quiz brought so much fun amongst RCMers, their families and especially the Green Rotarians – a true member engagement moment of BONDing. I also loved the Art for PEACE evening, drawing and bringing this huge canvas to life – again, bringing RCMers and families to work together.

### Key Collaborations That Strengthened Your Impact

Being choosy about every single element, we ensured that there was a takeaway for the audience at speaker meetings. Fellowships were all about fun and getting to know each other. The intimate firesides were occasions for more camaraderie. The trek up St. Thomas Mount, eating below Kathipara junction and opportune moments of learning from a centenarian – all added to the bonding.

### Message to Your Successor (Optional)

It's an exciting, huge role. You will do it effortlessly! I will stay out of your way (most important) but will be there to watch your back when needed.

### One Personal Insight or Lesson You'll Take Forward

Collaboration – within the team, across other teams in other verticals and then the buy in of the Rotarians.

### What Gave You the Most Joy This Year?

●● Every event done right – weekly meetings, fellowships, firesides and even the two domestic outstation visits. The fabulous bonding in Mumbai, with its cherry-on-the-cake moment of meeting Mr. Anand Mahindra and the most enjoyable Brahmaputra river cruise – both were memorable. My joy was in seeing the commitment of the team who orchestrated this – their end goal was to ensure that the Rotarians and families who came had a memorable experience and that was achieved. Happy that some committees had no roles. Safer that way. Guess which one... SH! ●●



**A One-Line Vision That Guided You**

Health challenges among the underserved have deep, long-term impacts—any support Rotary offers to ease this suffering is worth every rupee and every drop of effort.

**Key Collaborations That Strengthened Your Impact**

While many hands join in providing relief, the most meaningful partnerships are with medical professionals who selflessly serve humanity.

**A Defining Moment That Brought People Together**

Each project we took up this year felt like 'disaster relief' - our efforts seemed small in the face of the magnitude of the issue we were addressing - yet, collectively we delivered meaningful impact. Every project, every act of kindness was deeply humbling and fulfilling.

**Impact in Numbers**

Each life saved secures a family. When it's a girl or woman, the impact multiplies. The real value goes beyond numbers.

**One Word to Describe the Journey**

Fulfilling. We aimed for transformation and achieved it.

**BOND****BUILD****BRING  
CHEER****Signature Projects or Initiatives**

We began the year with a clear focus: address deep rooted, high-impact issues, not token efforts. Some key initiatives:

- HPV Vaccination: Among the first to launch this effort, we adapted as we progressed—laying a strong foundation and setting long-term goals.
- Mammogram Donation: Early detection saves lives. Supporting the Cancer Institute improve women's health outcomes across Tamil Nadu.
- Cardiac Procedures for Children: Partnering with Apollo (Chennai) and Kokilaben (Mumbai) to support life-saving heart surgeries for underprivileged children.
- Support to RSRM Hospital: Donated critical equipment to aid complex deliveries, helping a dedicated team ensure safe maternal care.

**What Gave You the Most Joy This Year?**

●● When you work in the area of child health, there are many moments of joy, when the program is accepted by the beneficiaries. Like the blind faith of the parents when told about cervical cancer vaccination and they giving consent for their child. I stood quietly in the doorway as parents exited the hall after a talk on vaccination. Their talk amongst themselves expressing confidence in our project is a moment of quiet satisfaction. ●●

**BOND****BUILD****BRING  
CHEER****One-line Vision Statement for Your Portfolio?**

Complete all projects

**Lessons Learned / Insights Gained?**

Keep following up !

**3. Key Projects / Initiatives Undertaken?**

- Closure of old global grant
- Closure of CSR grants
- Visiting of project sites
- Learning from Board members and others.

**Message to the Incoming Director (Optional)?**

Keep following up !

**In One Word: Describe the Journey?**

Gratifying

**Impact in Numbers?**

A lot

**5. A Defining Moment / Highlight of the Year?**

Closing out all but 1 global grant

**6. Partnerships or Collaborations That Elevated Impact?**

With all the Board Members and numerous Club Members





Rtn. Anuradha Ganesan

Director, Community Service

**BOND****BUILD****BRING  
CHEER****Impact in Numbers**

- 60 homes built (towards a 100-home target)
- 2 lakes restored, benefiting 4.5 lakh residents
- Multiple schools upgraded with enhanced sanitation and infrastructure
- Numerous trees planted and ongoing recycling programs implemented

**A Defining Moment / Highlight of the Year**

Restoring the lakes of Old Perungalathur and Kadaperi, directly impacting the lives of 4.5 lakh people and transforming local ecosystems.

**Partnerships or Collaborations That Elevated Impact**

Collaborated with local authorities, Sri Ramakrishna Math and community volunteers to deliver infrastructure and sustainability projects at scale.

**Message to the Incoming Director**

Keep listening to the needs of the people. The most impactful service comes from empathy, persistence and partnerships.

**One-line Vision Statement for Your Portfolio**

Transforming communities through sustainable development, dignity and inclusive impact.

**Key Projects / Initiatives Undertaken**

Upgraded infrastructure in government schools with large-scale WASH projects. Built classrooms, toilets, kitchens and 60+ homes under the "Homes for the Homeless" initiative. Restored lakes at Old Perungalathur and Kadaperi. Promoted sustainability through tree planting and recycling.

**In One Word:**  
Describe the Journey  
Transformative

**What Gave You the Most Joy This Year?**

"Homes for the Homeless. It's the joy of seeing someone sleep peacefully under a roof, lighting her first stove in a home, and the relief that this monsoon, they will be safe and dry. The lady beneficiary proudly invited me into their newly built homes and offered me a sweet. That sense of having changed the course of a family's life forever is a wow moment."

**2024-25 Top 5 Giving Clubs from South Asia - As on 31 May 2025**

Zone	District	Club Name	Total Contribution in US\$	Worldwide Rank
7	3150	Lake District Moinabad, TS, India	\$943,875	3
5	3234	Madras, TN, India	\$758,926	4
4	3141	Bombay Pier, MH, India	\$602,705	5
4	3012	Delhi Ananta. DL. India	\$534,678	6
4	3141	Bombay, MH, India	\$505,942	9



# Rooted in Tradition, Driven by Impact

Celebrating 97 Glorious Years as the  
Jewel of District 3234 and a Beacon of  
Rotary Heritage in Southern India

1987, launched in Madras by then RI President M.A.T. Caparas and Union Health Minister Mrs. Saroj Khaparde, with RI approving a \$2.6 million grant that year.

## Together Naturally

From World War II to the 2004 Tsunami and the 2015 Chennai floods, the club has always risen to the occasion. After the 2004 Tsunami, it executed a \$1.5 million rehabilitation project with RC Bombay and constructed a state-of-the-art school for the affected communities, assisting over 50,000 displaced families.

## Igniting the Flame of Service

In December 2014, the club launched the Rotary End Polio Flame to celebrate India's Polio-Free status. The flame traveled across 35 countries and was received at the RI Convention in São Paulo and later at RI Headquarters in Evanston in April 2015. This campaign remains one of the most successful PR initiatives in Rotary history, raising millions for the Polio Fund of TRF.

## A Foundation of Giving

RC Madras has donated over \$5 million to The Rotary Foundation, with seven AKS members and more than 50 Major Donors. Every member has contributed, earning the club the status of a 100% Paul Harris Fellow Club. In both 2023-24 and 2024-25, the club donated over \$1 million annually, placing it among the top donors globally. It has received several global and matching grants, including \$680,000 for a Children's Hospital and \$500,000 for a Rehabilitation Centre for polio-affected individuals.

## Changing Lives

In the last decade alone, the club has:

- Built over 2,500 toilets in rural areas and conducted behavioral change campaigns to support Open Defecation-Free villages.
- Set up a Technical Training Centre on 35 acres in Chennai's suburbs (via a \$500,000 global grant), which also houses Boys Town, providing free shelter, education and healthcare to destitute boys aged 11-16 since 1988.
- Rebuilt a library in Rotary Nagar (est. 1944) into a modern 3-story facility with space for computer and evening classes.
- Empowered women through training centers in Selaiyur and Sembakkam.
- Played a vital role during COVID-19 by supplying cold chain equipment, organizing vaccination camps, and deploying a mobile vaccination unit—which was later converted into a dental van for schoolchildren.

## The History

Founded on May 10, 1929 and chartered on July 19, 1929, the Rotary Club of Madras is the third oldest Rotary club in India and the oldest in Southern India, preceded only by the clubs of Calcutta and Bombay. For 31 years, it remained the sole Rotary club in the city of Madras.

## Born Into Its Own

The club is one of only 34 Rotary clubs founded by the late Rtn. James Wheeler Davidson of the Rotary Club of Calgary, Canada, was honored by Paul Harris as the "Marco Polo of Rotary." Unlike many clubs formed with a sponsoring partner, the Rotary Club of Madras is self-manifested, sharing this rare distinction in India only with the Rotary Club of Bombay.

## Members From Around the Globe

Now in its 97th year, the club has 300 members and has seen 97 Presidents take office, one of whom served two consecutive terms (1931-32 and 1932-33) and one year (1946-47) saw two Presidents. At its inception, the 30 charter members included 27 British nationals, two Swiss and one American. Notably, Rtn. Sir F. E. James, the first RI Director from India (1933-34), was a member of RC Madras.

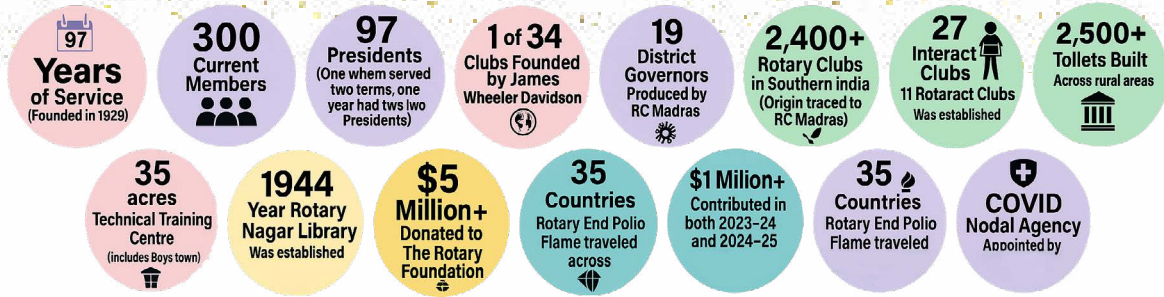
## The Mother of All South Indian Clubs

The club has produced 19 District Governors and directly sponsored many other Rotary clubs. Every Rotary club in Southern India can trace its origins to RC Madras. It has played a foundational role in Rotary's expansion in the region, which now includes over 2,400 clubs and more than 85,000 Rotarians, accounting for nearly 49% of India's total Rotary membership as of November 2024. The club also supports 27 Interact and 11 Rotaract clubs.

## The Polio Project and Its Precursor

In 1979, RC Madras partnered with the Rotary Club of Whitby (RID 7070, Canada) to eradicate Red Measles in India—a pioneering project that laid the groundwork for India's Polio Eradication campaign. The national initiative began on May 1,





### The club has:

- Revamped numerous government schools, rebuilt classrooms and constructed gender-specific toilets, improving attendance and reducing dropouts.
- Desilted temple tanks and lakes to boost water tables and benefit over 800,000 people through enhanced rainwater harvesting.
- Partnered with ACS Medical College, Hindu Mission Hospital and NADI & TOLIA Centre to establish multiple dialysis centers and donate over 30 dialysis machines. It also donated a mobile mammography unit and a machine worth ₹7.5 million to ACS Hospital for underprivileged women.

### Members of Repute

RC Madras has long attracted prominent personalities from various sectors. Distinguished honorary members include Rtn. C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji), Rtn. Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Ayyar and Rtn. Dr. M. G. Ramachandran (MGR). The club has hosted high-profile fundraisers like the Merchants and Bankers Golf Tournament (held for 18 consecutive years) and prestigious art

auctions. Member engagement thrives through initiatives like fireside gatherings and outstation trips.

### Deserving Validation

In recognition of its stellar work during the pandemic, the Rotary Club of Madras was appointed as the Nodal Agency by the Government of Tamil Nadu to coordinate statewide COVID-19 vaccination logistics—an acknowledgment of its lasting impact on public health.

### A Rich Legacy

The Rotary Club of Madras has been instrumental in the spread of Rotary across five states and two Union Territories in Southern India. Alongside the Rotary Club of Bombay, it has shaped Rotary's expansion across India, with nearly 70% of clubs tracing their lineage to these two institutions.

A successful club depends on a compelling vision, effective execution, transparent accounting and welcoming new members with fresh ideas. As RC Madras moves toward its 100th year, it remains rooted in its values of service and community transformation. Over nine decades, the club has touched millions of lives and remains a guiding light for Rotary in India.

Birthdays 16th to 22nd June 2025		Wedding Anniversary	
Rtn. Ishwar Achanta	16/6	Rtn. Ashok Doshi & Rekha Doshi	17/6
Rtn. Goenka S.B.	18/6	Rtn. Chella Krishna .G & Swetha	20/6
Rtn. Chetan Acharya	18/6	Rtn. Tarun Seth & Suniti Seth	20/6
Rtn. Govind Vasanadu	19/6	Rtn. Chidambaram M.Ct.P. & Chandrika	21/6
Rtn. PP. Raman K.K.	20/6	Rtn. Harish Dhingra & Ritika Dhingra	22/6
Rtn. Srinivasan.M	21/6	Rtn. Rajesh Vummidi & V. Jayasree	13/6
Rtn. Lala Mathai	22/6	Rtn. Gopalan Kannan & Sujata	14/6

### Spouses' Birthdays

Ann. Priya Tulsyan, Spouse of Rtn.Sanjay Tulsyan	17/6
Ann. Sandhya Jaichandren, Spouse of Rtn. Justice Dr. M.Jaichandren	17/6
Ann.T.C.Sharmila, Spouse of Rtn. T.S.Chandrasekar Dr.	20/6
Ann. Priya Ramachandran, Spouse of Rtn. B. Ramachandran Dr.	21/6
Ann. Rubia Sherif, Spouse of Rtn. Shoukath Sherif	21/6
Ann. Thangam, Spouse of Lala Mathai	22/6

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