

The Lighthouse

Rotary
Club of Madras



WEEKLY PUBLISHED BY THE ROTARY CLUB OF MADRAS

ISSUE 07
August 17
2025



SERVICE ABOVE SELF

BIRTHDAYS



Rtn Chidambaram M.Ct.P	11th August
Rtn Gupta N.R.	11th August
Rtn Hemu Ramalah	13th August
Rtn Harish Dhingra	14th August
Rtn Baba Shankar R	15th August
Rtn Balakrishna S	15th August
Rtn Chella Krishna G	15th August
Rtn Dr Nitesh Jain	15th August
Lalita, Spouse of Rtn Balasubramanian M	12th August
Chandrika, Spouse of Rtn Chidambaram M.Ct.P	12th August
Sheetal, Spouse of Rtn Rajit Mhetras	14th August
Rupal, Spouse of Rtn Sanjay V. Parikh	15th August
Vijay Narayan, Spouse of Rtn Sabina Narayan	15th August
Gayathri, Spouse of Rtn Mukund Subramanian	16th August
Sitamahalakshmi, Spouse of Rtn Ranjit Pendurthi	16th August
Saloni, Spouse of Rtn PB Prasad	16th August
ANNIVERSARY	
Rtn Iqbal Sait & Mahvash Sait	15th August
Rtn Antony Lobo & Vinolia Lobo	18th August



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YATRATECHS

NO MEETING ON TUESDAY

19 AUGUST 2025

Send in your articles, news and stories for consideration in the Lighthouse bulletin to: lighthouse@rotarymadras.in
Stay updated with our very own RCM magazine!

Rotary Club of Madras (RCM)

Minutes of the 7th Weekly Meeting, held on Saturday, 9 August 2025

7.00 pm, Hyatt Regency, Teynampet, Chennai

CALL TO ORDER

President Rtn Nikhil Raj formally called the 7th weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Madras to order.

CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the 6th weekly meeting was read and duly confirmed.

WELCOME ADDRESS

President Rtn Nikhil Raj extended a heartfelt welcome to all Rotarians, guests, and friends of RCM. He highlighted the special theme of the evening—the perfect blend of service and sport—as the club proudly hosted a living legend of world cricket.

He introduced the Chief Guest of the evening, Mr Glenn McGrath, the iconic Australian pacer known not only for his extraordinary statistics (563 Test wickets, 381 ODI wickets) but also for his impactful philanthropic work through the McGrath Foundation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Nikhil Raj announced the upcoming joint meeting with the Rotary Club of Madras Midtown, scheduled for Wednesday, 13 August 2025 at 5 pm, at the Madras Cricket Club.

The meeting will feature a presentation by two dynamic women travelling across India to raise awareness on the HPV vaccine—an initiative aligning with Rotary's commitment to healthcare and outreach.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CHIEF GUEST

Rtn Mohit Bajaj offered a warm and insightful introduction to Mr. McGrath, recalling memorable highlights from his storied cricketing career, unique records, and gracious personality both on and off the pitch.

Rtn Bharat Shetty further enriched the introduction by reflecting on Mr McGrath's legacy—964 international wickets, three ICC World Cup victories, and a lasting reputation for sportsmanship, humility, and resilience.

ADDRESS BY CHIEF GUEST – MR GLENN MCGRATH

Mr McGrath captivated the audience with stories from his early days in New South Wales, his journey through professional cricket, and the life lessons learned along the way.

He shared heartfelt reflections on discipline, character, and endurance, and spoke passionately about his wife Jane's legacy and the continued impact of the McGrath Foundation's cancer support and awareness programs.

The gathering was inspired by his humility, humour, and unwavering dedication to service beyond sport.

PRESENTATION OF MEMENTO

President Rtn Nikhil Raj presented a memento to Mr McGrath as a gesture of appreciation and admiration on behalf of RCM.

VOTE OF THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

President Nikhil expressed gratitude to all those who contributed to the evening's success:

Rtn Siddharth Chandrasekar – Video curation

Rtn Siddharth Ganeriwala – Stage, lighting, and sound coordination

Rtn Mohit Bajaj – Guest liaison

Rtn Sid Venkatesh – Event assistance

Rtn Bharath Shetty – Event moderation

Special appreciation was extended to the Rtn Vardhaman Jain family and PP Rtn Dr Shivkumar family for their generous financial support.

President Nikhil Raj also acknowledged the presence and support of Her Excellency Ms. Silai Zaki, Australian Consul General in Chennai, and Mc Grath's Trainer, Mr. Parin, who graciously presented the RCM Legacy Book to Mr McGrath on behalf of the Club.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting concluded with a note of celebration and inspiration, as President Nikhil Raj adjourned the 7th Weekly Meeting of the Rotary Club of Madras.

"All the World's a Pitch, And All the Players Merely Batsmen" and some of us just keep knocking 'em over, mate.



Ah, fair Chennai! Upon the ninth eve of August, the noble Hyatt Regency was host to a gathering most rare, where the mighty Glenn of McGrath, bowler supreme and scourge of willow-wielders, was to regale the masses. Yet, lo! The heavens, in mischievous mood, did conspire against this grand revelry. Rain, that fickle jester of cricketing lore, descended uninvited, tapping upon the windows as if to mock our eagerness. The assembly waited, as patient as fielders at fine leg, whilst McGrath stood, like a colossus, unbowed by the elements. "Fear not," quoth he, "for I have outlasted English summers — this too shall pass." And so, it did, the clouds retreating in sulky silence, leaving behind puddles fit for minnows. Thus, the evening's discourse began, dripping not with rain, but with wit, wisdom, and tales of yorkers so true they could humble even the stoutest heart.

Setting the Stage

It was a Rotary evening charged with expectation. Mohit Bajaj, Chairperson of the Programs Committee, opened the proceedings with warmth and wit. He reminded everyone that the Programs

Committee had one mission: to bring speakers who would both inspire and entertain, and in Glenn McGrath, they had a man who could do both without breaking a sweat (or, as it turned out, bowling a no-ball).

**"We wanted someone who's not just a cricketing legend, but also a storyteller who can keep us hooked — and we found him."
— Mohit Bajaj**



Bajaj's introduction flowed into a glowing welcome for the day's interviewer, Rtn Bharath Shetty, a Green Rotarian well-versed in both cricket and conversation, perfectly placed to bowl the right questions and field the unexpected answers.

Bharath vs. Glenn — The First Over

From the outset, Shetty proved he wasn't here to lob soft deliveries. He kept McGrath on his toes, drawing out the highs, lows, and hilarious in-betweens of a career that spanned 124 Tests, 563 wickets, and as

McGrath was proud to point out, never once overstepping the crease for a no-ball. McGrath took the audience back to his early days, his debut against New Zealand, the steep learning curve in England ("none for 120, dropped for the next three Tests"), and the unforgettable 8 for 38 at Lord's that earned him a spot on the hallowed honours board.

"If it ain't broke, don't fix it, stick to what got you picked in the first place." — Glenn McGrath

Mates, Mentors & the 'Ruthless' Years

The conversation flowed from his relationships with captains, Mark Taylor's quiet aggression, Steve Waugh's ruthless mindset, Ricky Ponting's balance under pressure to his enduring partnership with Shane Warne. Warne, he recalled, was "part genius, part monthly phone-number-changer," and a bowler who could build pressure from one end while McGrath did the same from the other. Together, they claimed over 1,000 Test wickets.

There were lighter moments too, like Jason Gillespie's famous double hundred and McGrath's insistence that his own batting "was best left at number 11, where it belonged."



The Rivalries That Defined Him

Sachin Tendulkar and Brian Lara emerged as the most formidable foes, each requiring different strategies. Lara, flamboyant and unpredictable. Sachin, mentally unshakable and technically immaculate. And then there was Michael Atherton dismissed 19 times by McGrath, a stat that still sparks banter in commentary boxes today.

**"I nearly felt sorry for Atherton... nearly. But I got over that very quickly."
— Glenn McGrath**



Tough Days, Turning Points

Shetty steered the discussion to Calcutta, 2001, the Test where VVS Laxman's 281 ended Australia's 16-match winning streak. McGrath admitted it was a humbling reminder that cricket can change in a day. He also spoke about the physical and mental battles of playing in extreme heat, bowling on flat Indian pitches, and the camaraderie that helped him through personal tragedies.

The Modern Game & Timeless Lessons

McGrath tipped his hat to contemporary greats like Dale Steyn, Kagiso Rabada, and Jasprit Bumrah, praising Bumrah's unique

action and deceptive pace. His advice to young players was simple: know yourself, believe in yourself, and keep improving.

"The difference between a good player and a great one isn't skill — it's attitude and mental toughness." — Glenn McGrath

Closing with a Classic Aussie Smile

As the session drew to a close, McGrath reflected with typical Australian understatement. "Well, I've had a decent run, plenty of wickets, a few laughs, and some mates for life. And if you're batting against me? Good luck, mate. You'll need it." The crowd rose to applause, having witnessed not just a legend's cricketing journey, but the humour, humility, and hard truths behind it masterfully guided by Bharath Shetty's questions and framed by Mohit Bajaj's perfect opening delivery.

"Still playing on the front foot — in print, not on pitch."

- Rtn Manasa T Pillai



"The best Q&A I have ever seen"

These words came from Kevin, the physical trainer at the MRF Pace Academy, who accompanied Australian legend Glenn McGrath at yesterday's Pitch Perfect event at RCM.

Curious, I asked Kevin what made it so special. His answer: the amazing preparation.

- Backdrop magic – Thank you, @Rtn Siddharth Ganeriwala
- Creative videos – Thank you, @Rtn Sid
- Brilliant curation & moderation – Hats off to @Rtn Bharath Shetty for crafting excellent questions and holding the entire conversation so beautifully.
- The Sutradars – @Rtn Mohit Bajaj Chairperson Programs, and @Rtn Rajesh Mani,

Director of Club Services — two master weavers who brought it all together seamlessly. And the generosity of few fellow RCMers for their financial contributions Rtn Rtn PP Shivkumar @Rtn Bharat Shivkumar, Rtn Bikram and a few others (please add if you recall).

All this meticulous groundwork created the perfect stage for Glenn's magic. Over the course of an hour, we journeyed deep — exploring Glenn the person, the cricketer, and now the man dedicated to giving back in more ways than one.

I'm not entirely sure why, but there was a bit of moisture in my eye by the end of this tête-à-tête.

Take a bow, RCMers.

It was, in every sense, truly Pitch Perfect.



Rtn Rachna Muralidharan

FRESH FUEL



Q1. Think of a significant lesson you've learned in life that didn't come from a classroom, a mentor, or even a book. It might have come from a surprising person, an unexpected event, or even a moment of quiet reflection. What was that lesson, and how did it fundamentally change your perspective on something important?

A1. It's Never Too Late I grew up a shy, introverted kid. I'd never stepped foot in a gym, never played a sport, and never travelled alone. For the longest time, I thought certain experiences just weren't for me.

In my mid-30s, I discovered strength training, tennis, and trekking. Each was something I once believed I couldn't do. These experiences have taught me more than physical skills — they've instilled discipline, persistence, and the belief that growth happens outside your comfort zone. Travelling /Trekking (the mountains) showed me that when there's no one else to rely on, you discover just how capable you truly are. Today, I'm in the best shape of my life, more confident than ever, and excited to see how else I'm going to surprise myself as I grow older.

Q2. Every Rotarian has that "aha!" moment, that one experience that truly shifted their perspective on what Rotary is capable of. Since becoming a part of RCM, what's been that most surprising, challenging, or deeply moving experience that's redefined Rotary for you?

A2. My Aha Moment with Rotary For years, my mother, Rtn. Rani Muralidharan had been gently nudging me to join Rotary. I would smile, nod, and put it off with the same reasoning: "The average age of members is about 60. I'm not sure if I'll fit in." Fast forward to my 40th birthday. My mother gifted me a trip to Baku — a trip organised by Rotary. What I experienced there was nothing short of an eye-opener. The camaraderie, the warmth, and the effortless bonds that transcended generations were remarkable.

Somewhere between the laughter, the shared stories, and the joy of doing things together, I realised that age was, in fact, just a number. What mattered was the spirit — the shared purpose, the fellowship, and the joy of making a difference.

That was my aha moment. The moment I knew Rotary was not just for “people of a certain age,” but for people of a certain spirit.

Q3. Forget the typical “why Rotary.” What’s the story behind your decision to join the Rotary Club of Madras? Was it a lightbulb moment, a nudge from a friend, or a deep-seated desire to make a specific impact?

A3. Beyond Expectations – My Rotary Experience

I had always heard wonderful things about our club — its social service, its strong fellowship, its ability to bring people together for a cause. But

it was at one of my very first meetings as a new member, held at the iconic Gymkhana Club, that I truly understood the depth of it.

That evening, I listened as members spoke about the various fundraising efforts, CSR contributions — from both corporates and our own members — and the impactful projects RCM was involved in. They shared updates on the status of initiatives for the first half of the Rotary year, and I was in complete awe.

The scale, the organisation, and the way every project was managed left me deeply impressed. Most of all, I was moved by the tangible difference our club was making in society.

I’ve been part of a few clubs before, but this experience has gone far beyond anything I expected. It’s not just a club — it’s a force for good, and I’m proud to be part of it.



LARRY LUNSFORD SELECTED TO SERVE AS ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT IN 2027/2028



Larry A. Lunsford, a member of the Rotary Club of Kansas City-Plaza, USA, is the choice of the Rotary International President's Nominating Committee for 2027/2028. Larry A. Lunsford, a member of the Rotary Club of Kansas City-Plaza, USA, has been named the nominating committee's choice for 2027-28 Rotary International President. He will officially become President-Elect on September 15 if no opposing candidates are nominated.

Larry Lunsford attended Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri, on a full scholarship, earning bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting. He was introduced to Rotary when he received a Rotary Foundation scholarship to spend the 1981/1982 academic year at the University of Newcastle in Australia.

A certified public accountant, Larry Lunsford worked for Ernst & Young for seven years before joining a family business, Bernstein-Rein Advertising, in 1990. He currently serves as executive vice president and chief financial officer of the Bernstein Group of Companies.

He has held positions on the boards of the Kansas City

Spirit Festival and the Variety Club, as well as serving as a director of a local bank and treasurer of the Epilepsy Foundation for the Heart of America. He has also served on the Truman State University Alumni Office and Foundation Board and is a recipient of the university's Distinguished Service Award. Larry Lunsford joined the Rotary Club of Kansas City-Plaza in 1991 and has since served as Governor (2001/2002), RI Trustee (2013/2015), and Rotary Foundation Trustee (2021/2025; Vice President in 2024/2025). He has served on several RI committees, including the Executive Committee (Chair in 2014/2015), the Membership Development Committee (Chair in 2016/2018), and the RI President Nominating Committee (Chair in 2023/2024). He also served on the Rotary Foundation Executive Committee (Chair in 2023/2024).

the Finance Committee (Chair in 2022/2023 and 2024/2025), and the Participant Experience Committee (Chair in 2023/2024). Larry Lunsford has received The Rotary Foundation's Distinguished Service Award, The Rotary Foundation's Meritorious Service Citation, and Rotary's Service Above Self Award. He and his wife, Jill Lunsford, have two children and one grandchild. They are Major Donors, members of the Bequest Society, multiple Paul Harris Fellows, Benefactors, and Sustaining Members of The Rotary Foundation. The members of the Rotary International 2027/2028 President Nomination Committee are: Ann-Britt Åsebol, Rotary Club of Falun-Kopparvågen, Sweden (President); Mahesh Kotbagi, Rotary Club of Pune Sports City, India (Secretary); Basker Chockalingam, Rotary Club of Karur, India; Jose Sepulveda Fayad,

Rotary Club of Pachuca Plata, Mexico; Hans-Hermann Kasten, Rotary Club of Aachen-Frankenburg, Germany; Muhammad Faiz Kidwai, Rotary Club of Karachi Karsaz, Pakistan; Katerina Kotsali-Papadimitriou, Rotary Club of Pendeli, Greece; Roger Lhors, Rotary Club of Pont-Audemer, France; Chi-Tien Liu, Rotary Club of Yangmei, Taiwan; Anne Matthews, Rotary Club of Columbia East, USA; Pat Merryweather-Arges, Rotary Club of Naperville, USA; Akira Miki, Rotary Club of Himeji, Japan; Julio Silva-Santisteban Ojeda, Rotary Club of El Rímac, Peru; Vicki Puliz, Rotary Club of Sparks, USA; Nicki Scott, Rotary Club of Hub of West England District 1100, England; Elizabeth Usovicz, Rotary Club of Kansas City-Plaza, USA; Young Suk Yoon, Rotary Club of Seoul Hoehyon, Republic of Korea.

HPVax Awareness Session

Chintadripet Kalyanam Girls Higher Secondary School On 5 August 2025, we had the opportunity to conduct a HPVax awareness session for the teachers of Chintadripet Kalyanam Girls Higher Secondary School, one of the Interact schools under the RCM fold. The aim was simple yet important, to share clear, practical information about Human Papillomavirus (HPV), its connection to cervical cancer, and how vaccination can help prevent it. The session was designed to be interactive and was attended by around 24 teachers who made the session truly engaging with their questions, reflections, and personal observations. Dr. Sangeetha Viswanathan spoke about what HPV is, how it spreads, why prevention matters, and addressed common myths that often cause confusion. What stood out was the openness of the discussion. Teachers didn't hesitate to bring up doubts, both medical and social, which led to a healthy exchange of ideas. All the stakeholders promised to work towards conducting awareness sessions for the students and parents as the next step towards achieving vaccination of the young girls.

Kerala Vidyalayam Higher Secondary School On 7 August 2025, a HPVax awareness session was conducted for the students and teachers of Kerala Vidyalayam Higher Secondary School, another of RCM's Interact schools.

The event was made more special by the presence of President Rtn Nikhil Raj, who engaged warmly with 180 girl students of the school who were in attendance. In his address, he spoke about the increasing spread of HPV in India, the urgency to act, and strongly emphasized that "Prevention is better than cure." His interaction encouraged students and teachers alike to view vaccination not just as a choice, but as an important responsibility for safeguarding health. The session covered basics of HPV, how it spreads, its health implications, and how vaccines can protect against it. The atmosphere was open and engaging, allowing both students and teachers to discuss the topic without hesitation.

By the end of the session, there was a visible sense of awareness and willingness to take proactive steps towards prevention.



Twelve schools, ninety students, and one powerful message: the art of storytelling can transform values into action.

The Maris Hotel buzzed with creative energy as approximately 100 attendees, including 90 enthusiastic students from 12 schools across the city, gathered for an innovative film-making workshop organized by the Rotary 4-Way Test Committee. The event, designed to inspire young minds to create films illustrating the 4-Way Test principles in action, exceeded all expectations with attendance surpassing the initially anticipated 60 participants.

CINEMA MEETS VALUES

WHERE STORYTELLING WEARS A MORAL COMPASS

THE MISSION

- Is it the truth?
- Is it fair to all concerned?
- Will it build goodwill and better friendships?
- Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

THE MASTER CLASS

Architect-turned-film director Mr. Manjunathan—decorated at Indian Panorama IFFI Goa, IDSFFK, and Cannes—took centre stage. His acclaimed works, *Kal*, *Podhum Ponnu*, and *Senthooram*, set the tone before he screened a gripping short film. “Film is a powerful medium to communicate values,” declared Manjunathan, speaking with the authority of a National Film Awards jury member.

THE DREAM TEAM



THE OUTCOME

- Against the elegant backdrop of Maris Hotel, students left brimming with ideas, ready to weave the 4-Way Test into their own cinematic creations.
- The result? A vibrant reminder that when cinema meets purpose, the impact can echo far beyond the screen.



To ignite young minds by blending the craft of cinema with the ethical power of the Rotary 4-Way Test



The brilliance behind the curtain:

- Ms. Roshan Poncha – Chair, 4-Way Test Committee
- Mr. Rakesh Jaiswal – Co-Chair
- Dr. Sharon Krishna Rao – Director, Vocational Services
- PP Jayshree Sridhar – Brought the guest speaker
- PP Mohan Raman – Guidance and insight
- Chetan Acharya & Sabina – Precision backstage work
- Sessa Sai – Youth Services Director, District 3234; mobilized Interactors
- President Nikhil – Visionary leader and steadfast supporter



ROTARACT CLUB OF NEW COLLEGE



The 50th Installation Ceremony of Rotaract Club of New College of Rtr Aneez Ahamed as the 50th President & Rtr Mohammed Ayaz as the 50th Secretary along with their team of office bearers for the Rotary Year 2025–26 was concluded on 6 August 25 @ Haas Auditorium, The New College. The event was well presided by Chief Guest, President Nikhil Raj of RCM, Guest of Honour, Rtn Ravi Verma, District YSD, RID 3234 and the following Special Invitees namely Rotaract Chair Rtn Arunachalam Palaniappan, Director, International Services Rtn Shivkumar Eashwaran, Past Rotaract Committee Chair and Rtn Dr Parkavi Mahalingam. The Rotary Club of Madras wishes to acknowledge the great work of the faculty co-ordinator Dr Sulaiman for his amazing efforts and dedication over the last 2 decades exceeded all expectations with attendance surpassing the initially anticipated 60 participants.



Rotary Club of Madras (RCM)

Minutes of the 8th Weekly Meeting Joint Meeting with Rotary Club of Madras Midtown held on Saturday, 13 August 2025 530 pm, Madras Cricket Club (MCC), Chepauk, Chennai

CALL TO ORDER & CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

President Rtn Nikhil Raj called the 8th Weekly Meeting to order. He confirmed the minutes of the 7th Weekly Meeting.

WELCOME ADDRESS

President Nikhil Raj warmly welcomed members of the Rotary Club of Madras Midtown, guests from the Probus Club, and distinguished invitee PDG Sanjeev Rai Mehra from the Rotary Club of New Delhi. He expressed his pleasure in participating in this joint speaker meeting with the parent club, appreciating the shared spirit of service and fellowship.

GUEST ADDRESS – PDG SANJEEV RAI MEHRA

In a heartfelt address, PDG Sanjeev Mehra shared a personal anecdote that revealed how Rotary's work in cancer care led him to join the organization.

He recounted a moving experience from 1971, when fundraising efforts for Delhi's first cancer hospital saw contributions from all walks of life including a beggar, underscoring the power of collective compassion.

He lauded Rotary Club of Madras for its exemplary projects and encouraged its members to continue their impactful work.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hon Sec Rtn Prasanna Rajagopalan shared greetings and wishes for members celebrating birthdays, spouse birthdays, and anniversaries during the week.

UPCOMING EVENT

Members were invited to attend Independence Day Flag Hoisting on 15 August 2025 at Rotary Nagar (New Building) at 7:30 am, followed by breakfast at Hotel Maris and a visit to Boys Town Society, Gummidipoondi.

HPV VACCINATION PROGRAM UPDATE

Rtn Shankar, Managing Trustee of the Rotary Cancer and Research Foundation, shared a powerful overview of the Foundation's 30-year

journey in advancing cancer care and awareness.

Key highlights included:

- Their role in early childhood cancer treatment via the "Gift of Smiles" global grant program.
- The collaboration on HPV vaccination, aimed at creating large-scale preventive healthcare impact.

HP VAX INITIATIVE

PRESENTATION BY RTN DR SANGEETHA VISWANATHAN

Rtn Dr Sangeetha Viswanathan presented the progress and vision of HPVax, a vaccination initiative launched in July 2024, targeting underprivileged girls to prevent cervical cancer.

2024–25 Achievements

Awareness sessions conducted for approx. 10,000 individuals

2,004 girls vaccinated in partnership with Cancer Institute, Adyar

Challenges

- Limited participation from government schools
- Requirement of parental consent
- Social stigma surrounding the vaccine

Goals Ahead

- Scale up to 10,000 vaccinations in 2025
- Vaccinate 1 million girls by the Rotary Club of Madras centenary in 2029
- Raise Rs.250 crores through corporate and philanthropic partnerships

Acknowledged Donors:

- Multivista Global Pvt. Ltd.
- KH Wentworth India Pvt. Ltd.
- Infosys Foundation

FELICITATION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

President Nikhil Raj welcomed Mrs. Meenakshi and Rtn. Priya, two inspiring women journeying across India to raise awareness on HPV vaccine.

The RCM Timeless Legacy Book was presented to both in recognition of their dedication to breaking societal barriers, educating communities, and promoting preventive healthcare for young girls.

Their powerful talk was followed by an engaging Q&A session, leaving the room both informed and inspired.

“That was a wonderful talk. I think everybody in this room is much wiser now about the HPV vaccine. Probably take it out and find ways to create more awareness out here.”

VOTE OF THANKS & CLOSING REMARKS

Hon Sec Rtn Prasanna Rajagopalan delivered the vote of thanks. President Nikhil Raj concluded the meeting with a call to action, encouraging members to connect Rtn Dr Sangeeta with local schools to strengthen future awareness campaigns. The meeting ended with warm appreciation to all participants.

FOUR CORNERS, ONE MISSION

DRIVING INDIA TOWARDS HPV-FREE FUTURE

The Rotary Club of Madras recently welcomed two extraordinary women namely Rtn Priya and Mrs. Meenakshi Sai who embarked on a 40-day, 16,000 km road journey across India with a single, powerful mission: to raise awareness about the HPV vaccine and prevent cervical cancer.

A ROAD TRIP WITH PURPOSE



From Mumbai to Gujarat’s Kote Eshwar, Kashmir’s Keran Valley, Arunachal’s Kibithoo, and down to Kanyakumari, their route covers 15 states and countless hearts. They are breaking barriers, replacing myths with facts, and sparking life-saving conversations in communities where women’s health is often shrouded in silence.

“The longer we wait, the more lives will be cut short by a preventable disease.” — **Rtn. Priya**

For Mrs Meenakshi Sai, the mission is deeply personal; she lost a friend to cervical cancer and has been advocating prevention for eight years. Her NGO has vaccinated 350 girls in underprivileged areas. Priya sees this as Rotary’s next great unifying cause, akin to the fight against polio. Together, they have already enabled 900+ vaccinations during this drive, with 10,000 more planned in the next three months.

THE ROTARY CANCER & RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Rtn Shankar, Managing Trustee, shared the foundation’s 30-year legacy in supporting low-income patients with treatment funding, screenings, nutrition, and awareness. Their “Gift of Smiles” program for early childhood leukemia is a Rotary global grant first, and they have pioneered HPV vaccination in Tamil Nadu, despite government restrictions on accessing certain schools.





MOMENTS OF IMPACT

Not all awareness is where you'd expect it. In Bhuj, Meenakshi met a corporate professional whose mother had died of cervical cancer yet his 18-year-old daughter was unvaccinated. Encounters like these highlight the urgent need for education across all social levels. In Amritsar, the Rotary Civil Lines Club set a gold standard with rallies, digital hoardings, community-crafted festive corners, and seamless vaccine delivery.

CHALLENGES ON THE ROAD

The Northeast's monsoon-hit "chicken neck" corridor tested their resilience with landslides and isolation. Yet, they recalled the beauty of Kashmir's Keran Valley, standing just 100 meters from the Line of Control, as one of their most unforgettable moments. "It's not just about kilometres travelled; it's about barriers being broken."

— **Mrs. Meenakshi Sai**



BOYS NEED PROTECTION TOO

HPV is not just a women's issue. Abroad, boys are routinely vaccinated, but awareness in India remains minimal. While the focus is currently on girls, the vision is clear; prevention must be inclusive.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

The locally produced Serum Institute HPV vaccine, now Health Ministry-approved, has reduced costs and created an opportunity for mass vaccination. Rotary's nationwide network is perfectly positioned to lead this change. With 200 clubs already involved in cervical cancer initiatives, the Four Corners India Drive is one crying for Rotary unity, shared resources, and national advocacy.



LOOKING AHEAD

When their Isuzu returns on 19 August 25, the mission will continue. This road trip is only a chapter in a larger movement to make India HPV-free powered by Rotary's reach, community trust, and the unstoppable drive of two women who turned a cause into a crusade.

BACK TO SCHOOL

- REPORT CARDS & RUM: RCM FAILS TO ACT ITS AGE (AGAIN)

On 10 August, RCMers valiantly marched into Secret Stories for a “Back to School” fellowship—because clearly, adulting was getting boring. Dressed like overgrown 8th graders who discovered their parents’ liquor cabinet, they traded homework for highballs and discipline for DJ drops.



The starters vanished faster than attention spans in math class, while Bollywood hits triggered dance moves last seen in PTA nightmares. No lectures, no uniforms (well, technically yes—but irony counts), just pure nostalgic chaos served with a twist of sarcasm and possibly lime. School was never this wild. Or tipsy. Or... loud. Attendance: 100%. Maturity: still pending.



Rotary Club of Madras (RCM)
Minutes of the 9th Weekly Meeting, held on Friday, 15 August 2025
11 am, Boys Town Society

CALL TO ORDER

President Rtn Nikhil Raj called the 9th weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Madras to order, setting the tone for a morning of celebration, service, and community engagement.

FOUR-WAY TEST

Hon Sec Rtn Prasanna Rajagopalan led the gathering in reciting Rotary's Four-Way Test. Children from Boys Town enthusiastically participated, reinforcing Rotary's core values of truth, fairness, goodwill, and mutual benefit.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting was not received yet and will be confirmed during the next scheduled meeting.

WELCOME ADDRESS

Rtn Rajesh Vummidi extended a heartfelt welcome to the day's dignitaries and attendees, including:

Chief Guest Mr. Milind Gotpagar, representing Wärtsilä India

Fellow Rotarians of the Rotary Club of Madras

Committee members of Boys Town Society

Residents of nearby villages

And most importantly, the students of Boys Town

He acknowledged the significance of celebrating Independence Day in such a meaningful setting and recognized Wärtsilä's enduring partnership in supporting Boys Town's education and development efforts.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

President Rtn Nikhil Raj addressed the gathering with warmth and conviction, highlighting:

Boys Town's 37-year journey of nurturing and empowering underprivileged boys

The deeper meaning of 79th Independence Day — beyond freedom, it is about instilling courage, discipline, and compassion. The transformative power of education in enabling youth to make

informed decisions

A heartfelt appeal to students to stay curious, question freely, and embrace learning as a lifelong journey

CHIEF GUEST'S ADDRESS

Mr. MILIND GOTPAGAR, WÄRTSILÄ INDIA

Mr Milind Gotpagar shared his delight at attending the event for the second consecutive year, expressing admiration for the spirit and mission of Boys Town.

He reiterated Wärtsilä India's strong CSR commitment to inclusive, accessible, and sustainable education, and appreciated the partnership with RCM since 2017.

He reaffirmed continued support for the next three years, reinforcing a shared vision for education and empowerment.

CULTURAL PERFORMANCES & CONTRIBUTIONS

A vibrant series of performances and gestures of generosity added colour to the celebration:

Kodi Patti Dance by the Panchalai Village Group

Song and Dance by the students of Boys Town

Donation of rice and dal by Ms Supriya, Intra-Club President, Sri Shankara Vidyashram, collected by the school's students

Solo performance by Ananya, also from Sri Shankara Vidyashram

Folk presentations including:

Tamil Nimura song and dance from Siruvada village

A vocal performance from Amarambedu village

A yoga demonstration by Boys Town students, showcasing physical discipline and mental focus

INAUGURATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Following the formal program, President Nikhil Raj announced several infrastructure and facility developments:

Bhoomi Puja ceremony for a new toilet block

Unveiling of 10 plaques for homes built for Boys Town residents

Ribbon-cutting of the newly refurbished water treatment (auto) plant

RECOGNITIONS

The meeting proudly recognized students Vetrivel, Saktivel, Surendar, Sudhakar, and Harikrishnan for securing first and second place in various competitions as a testament to the talent nurtured at Boys Town.

VOTE OF THANKS

Rtn Suresh Amirapu delivered a warm vote of thanks, expressing sincere appreciation to all contributors, performers, organizers, and supporters for their involvement in a memorable and impactful Independence Day celebration.

SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hon Sec Rtn Prasanna Rajagopalan announced birthdays, spouse birthdays, and anniversaries for the week of 18–24 August 2025.

He also informed the members that the next meeting would be held on 26 August 2025, and that there would be no meeting on 19 August.

ADJOURNMENT

With gratitude and enthusiasm, President Rtn Nikhil Raj adjourned the meeting, bringing to a close a day marked by patriotism, performance, and purpose.

INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS AT BOYS TOWN

The morning sun lit up the Boys Town campus with an air of pride and reverence as the Rotary Club of Madras gathered to celebrate India's 79th Independence Day. Children, Rotarians, villagers, and guests assembled under the fluttering tricolour, their hearts swelling with patriotism and gratitude.

A PROUD BEGINNING

The ceremony began with the Rotary 4-Way Test, led by Krishna, and echoed by the children with enthusiasm. Soon after, Rajesh Gandhi extended a warm welcome to the gathering, reminding everyone of the sacrifices of India's freedom fighters and the responsibility each citizen bears in shaping a strong, inclusive, and compassionate nation. "Independence Day is not only a celebration of liberty but a reminder of our duty to build a nation that is strong, inclusive, and compassionate." – **Rajesh Gandhi**



A PRESIDENT'S CALL TO ACTION

President Nikhil's address carried both warmth and urgency. He spoke of Boys Town's 37-year journey, nurturing children into confident, capable young men.

"Independence," he reminded, "is not just about waving the flag, but about courage, discipline, and kindness." Stressing the centrality of education, he urged the boys to ask questions, seek clarity, and embrace learning without fear.

"The future of our country is in the hands of the youth, and the future of the youth is in education." – President Nikhil Raj



CHIEF GUEST'S REFLECTIONS

Taking the dais, Chief Guest Mr. Milind Gotpagar, representing Wartsila, expressed joy at being part of the celebrations for the second year. Highlighting the company's partnership with Rotary since 2017, he spoke of how their joint efforts made education more inclusive and sustainable for underprivileged children. "On this Independence Day, let us celebrate not just our freedom, but our responsibility to uplift, educate, and empower." – **Mr. Milind Gotpagar** His words underlined the power of partnership and the transformative impact of community-driven CSR.



A DAY OF DEDICATIONS

The flag unfurling and the national anthem stirred patriotic fervor, followed by vibrant cultural performances by the Boys Town students. Their talents reminded everyone of the true purpose of the initiative to nurture young minds into India's future leaders.

Several dedications marked the day's significance:

- **New Toilet Block – Bhoomi Puja was performed for a larger facility.**

- **Ten New Homes – Plaques were unveiled, recognizing generous Rotarian contributions.**
- **Refurbished Auto Plant – Restored to working order and formally inaugurated.**

Each inauguration symbolized Rotary's commitment to building not just infrastructure, but dignity and opportunity.

A CELEBRATION OF TOGETHERNESS

Villagers from nearby areas joined hands in the celebration, reflecting inclusivity and unity. The Rotary staff, led by Mr. Varadarajan, received heartfelt thanks for being the backbone of Boys Town's efforts. Most importantly, the boys themselves—smartly turned out, disciplined, and shining in academics, yoga, and competitions—stood at the very heart of the occasion. "You remind us why we gather, why we serve, and why we strive to make a difference."



A FITTING FINALE

As the event drew to a close, the gathering brimmed with pride, gratitude, and renewed purpose. With photographs, laughter, and cheerful camaraderie, Independence Day at Boys Town ended not just as a commemoration of the past, but as a living reminder of India's future—bright, inclusive, and resilient. Jai Hind.



INSPIRING YOUNG MINDS: INDEPENDENCE DAY AT ROTARY NAGAR

The morning of August 15th was alive with patriotism as the Rotary Club of Madras gathered at Rotary Nagar near Marina Beach to celebrate India's 78th Independence Day. This was more than a flag hoisting. It was a celebration of dreams, opportunities, and the boundless potential of young hearts.

A LEGACY OF SERVICE

Founded in 1944, Rotary Nagar is the Club's oldest community project, supporting over 150 children with education and care. For eight decades, it has stood as a beacon of "Service Above Self", transforming countless lives.



THE CEREMONY

President Nikhil Raj and his wife Laura, along with distinguished Rotarians including Director, Vocational Services, Rtn Dr Sharon Krishna Rao, Rtn Anjali Ponni, and Hon Sec Rtn Prasanna Rajagopalan, President Elect, Rtn Balakrishna S, President Nominee, Ganesh Ananthakrishnan, PP Rtn George Cherian, Rtn Chetan Acharya,

Rtn Shankari Subbiah and Rtn Arjun Ananth Director, Community Services unfurled the tricolor as the National Anthem rang out with pride. The gathering then moved to the renovated library block, now equipped with classrooms, computers, and a well-stocked library, an investment in 21st-century learning.



A SCIENTIST'S INSPIRATION

The highlight was the address by Chief Guest Dr D. Gokul, Senior Scientist at ISRO. Linking India's freedom struggle to its space triumphs, he shared milestones from Aryabhata to Mangalyaan, culminating in the Chandrayaan-3 success at the Moon's South Pole.

"They had dreams bigger than their circumstances, and through hard work, they reached for the stars—literally!" – Dr Gokul

He paid tribute to Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, the "Missile Man of India," whose journey from humble beginnings to Presidency still inspires millions.

library, an investment in 21st-century learning.

EMPOWERING THE FUTURE

PP Rtn Rani Muralidharan, Chairperson of Rotary Nagar, urged students to seize every opportunity. Dr Sharon Krishna Rao delivered a heartfelt vote of thanks.

Special recognition went to M. Anjali Ponni, whose innovative initiatives like IISc campus tours and teaching coding opened new horizons. It was her efforts that brought Dr Gokul to Rotary Nagar, making the day unforgettable.



As the celebrations ended, children went home with hearts full of pride and minds buzzing with possibility. They heard from a real ISRO scientist that their dreams were valid and with courage, education, and Rotary's support, they too could touch the stars.

A DAY OF HOPE

This Independence Day at Rotary Nagar was not just about remembering freedom, it was about shaping India's future, one child, one dream, one success story at a time. Jai Hind!



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APARTMENTS, VILLAS & PLOTS ACROSS CHENNAI



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Parandur

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Madhavaram

Lifestyle 2&3 BHK Homes
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DRA CLOVER

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1097 Sq.ft - 1362 Sq.ft



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Avadi

Kids Centric 2&3 BHK Homes
915 Sq.ft - 1349 Sq.ft



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3 BHK Boutique Residences
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