



the lighthouse

Issue 14 • OCTOBER 6, 2020

Rotary
designated
month

October 2020
Economic and
Community
Development
Month



GENDER TALK: BRIDGING THE GAP & MAKING IT RIGHT





We need more gender conversations and less taboos!

Greetings dear Rotarians.

Last week saw one of the most vibrant and energetic guest speakers at our Forum - director Anu Menon, talking to us all the way from London, where she now lives.

The evening meeting started in the usual manner and the moderated session with Ms. Anu seemed to follow a comfortable path of Q&A about her life and work. But somewhere in the middle, the tempo and colour of our chat with her changed and we were chatting about gender issues, working hierarchy on movie sets, what's taboo and what's not in cinema, especially for the consumption of Indians, how cinema can influence and change thought and actions and a myriad other topics. It was an evening to remember and smile about, indeed; and with the added bonus of so many takeaways. It is a pleasure to bring you a glimpse of that evening in this edition of Lighthouse. Plus: Our women Rotarians gave us a peek into their thoughts and opinions on specific queries surrounding gender conversations. And more, as always. Hope you enjoy the read. See you all soon!

- Rtn. Shri Shakthi Girish

The President & office bearers of
ROTARY CLUB OF MADRAS
 (RI Dist 3232)

invite you to a
 special meeting
 with
Rtn John Hewko
 General Secretary & CEO
Rotary International & The Rotary Foundation

on Tuesday, 13th October
 at 6:30pm online.

Meeting Id on zoom: 864 9863 6212
 password: johnhewko

Rtn. Shanno Ravi
 Director - Club Service

Rtn. Ar. Kapil Chitale
 President

Rtn. P B Prasad
 Hon. Secretary

BIRTHDAYS

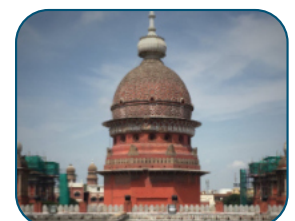
- 14th Oct – Rtn. Vijayshankar Balaji
- 14th Oct – Rtn. PDG Benjamin Cherian
- 15th Oct – Rtn. PP V. Ganesan
- 17th Oct – Rtn. Shaan Katari Libby
- 18th Oct – Rtn. Abdul Azeez
- 18th Oct – Rtn. N. Mahmud Jamal
- 16th Oct – Ann. Janak (Rtn. PDG S. Krishnaswami)
- 16th Oct – Ann. Uma (Rtn. PP Ranjit Pratap)
- 16th Oct – Ann. Susan (Rtn. Sapru Mathew)
- 16th Oct – Ann. Bhagyalakshmi (Rtn. PP M.C. Shanker)
- 18th Oct – Ann. S. Prabhavathi (Rtn. S. Srinivasan)
- 18th Oct – Ann. Krishnakumari (Rtn. T.K. Raman)
- 19th Oct – Spouse Dr. James Libby (Rtn. Shaan Katari Libby)

ANNIVERSARIES

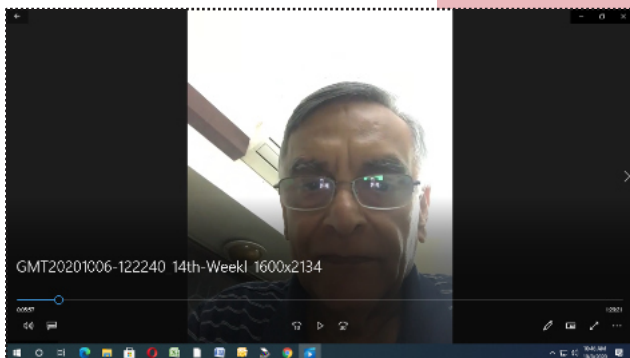
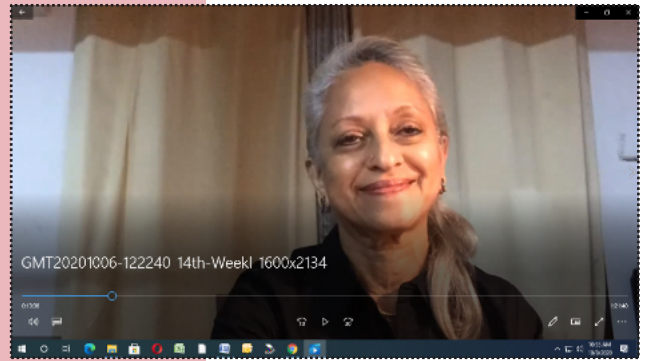
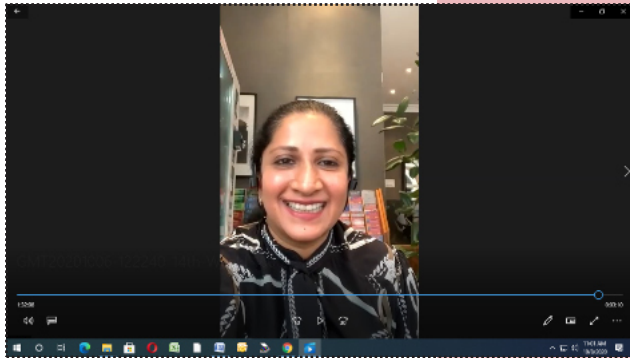
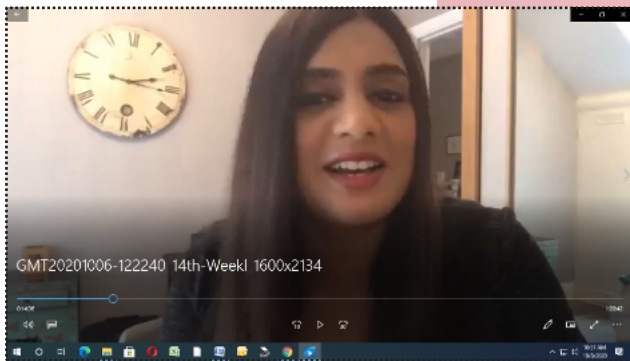
- 14th Oct – Rtn. Vipin Sachdev & Ann. Somna
- 16th Oct – Rtn. Archana Shri Sanjay & spouse Sanjay Balram
- 17th Oct – Rtn. Jacob Kurian & Ann. Achu

DID YOU KNOW?

The lighthouse in our Madras Greets logo, was designed based on the 3rd Lighthouse of Madras, which is the dome of the High Court building and that which exists even today. It functioned as the Lighthouse till 1975, from the time it was built in 1892.



FROM OUR MEETING OF OCTOBER 6, 2020



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2020

RCM JOINT MEETING WITH FICCI FLO

Sgt-at-Arms Rtn. Sandhya Sridhar drew the attention of all present, as President Kapil Chitale called the 14th meeting of RCM to order, after collaring himself.

President confirmed the minutes of the 29th September 2020 meeting.

This time the 4-Way Test was by Bulletin Editor Rtn. Shakthi Girish, who called it her “personal alarm clock” as well as a reminder and shining light to a path guiding her toward the right direction. Following the principles of the 4-Way Test makes her a better human and be a better citizen of the planet. She said that 4 tenets of the Test can foster wonderful friendships and the actions based on truth/ goodwill will be beneficial to all. She closed by likening the Test to a warning clock, cautioning to better oneself and think before taking any step forward.

President condoled the passing of mother of senior Rtn. Girdhar Hemdev & former member M. Gopalakrishnan last week.

President welcomed the speaker of the day Ms. Anu Menon, an eminent, young, dynamic film maker and screen writer. He complimented Ms. Anu for creating waves in the film industry, with her portfolio of work, from short films to feature films to a popular show on TV via an OTT platform.

President also welcomed Rtn. Rinku Mecheri, chairperson of FICCI FLO and its members, Probus Club members, visiting Rotarians and guests introduced by members
Rtn. Abhay Mehta introduced prospective member Ms. Anuradha Jhaver & Rtn. PP A.S. Venkhat Ramani introduced prospective member Mr. Govind Parikh.

President congratulated IPP Dr. Vijayabharathi and her team for being awarded the Presidential

Citation by the RI for their exemplary work and projects done in 2019-20.

President appreciated and acknowledged the amazing work done by Rtn. Nikhil Raj & Secy. Rtn. PB Prasad for updating the RCM Brochure. This revised brochure will be circulated amongst potential donors and others for promoting RCM and fund raising efforts, CSR activities.

Secretary PB Prasad listed out the members and spouses who celebrate their birthdays and wedding anniversaries that week and greeted them. Secy. announced that the next weekly zoom meeting is on the 13th Oct., 2020 at 6.30 pm. The speaker would be John Hewko, the general secretary and CEO of Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation, and he will talk about exclusively about Rotary. Secy. Prasad requested members to log in and attend in large numbers. President added that this is an rare opportunity to have such a high-ranked RI member address us.

Rtn. Usha Umamathi introduced the speaker Ms. Anu Menon. Ms. Anu is a film director renowned for her movies like Shakuntala and her TV show Four More Shots Please. The speaker shared her life and work experiences in a Q&A session with Rtn. Shakthi Girish and responded on comments and questions posed by the virtual audience.

Rtn. Rinku Mecheri thanked the Ms. Anu Menon for her inspiring talk and applauded her candid manner and forthright speech. She commended Anu for making movies that are trying to change the narrative of women on screen. She also thanked Rtn. Shakthi Girish for moderating the lively interaction with Ms. Menon, Rtn. Dhananjayadas for inviting Ms. Menon, and FICCI FLO members for being a part of the meeting.

The meeting was then adjourned.

THE TIMES OF RCM...



PRESIDENT KAPIL CHITALE

My Dear RCMers,
Isn't it a paradox that "Now is not the right time to surround yourself with +ive people"! Be that as it may, I find it my good fortune to be surrounded by so many positive people this Rotary year. The apprehensions of these Covid times almost seem like illusions now.

There are a few things I really miss, though (besides golf, haha). One is the thrill and anticipation of meeting with all of you - my fellow members; exchange pleasantries and deliberate (sometimes vociferously!) on what common good we can achieve together.

However, despite the forced distancing of these first four months, it is just so wonderful to have been able to participate in several of the avenues that have found ways to engage, this Rotary year.

Our Youth Services Director Balaji Chinni and his very involved team have tirelessly pursued their objectives and various clubs team formations, as well as reviewing their respective projects. They have embraced this New Normal and taking inspiration from the International relations Committee and are reaching out to Rotaract and Interact clubs around the world!

The International Services Director Jayshree and her dynamic and ever-young team are creating history!

Starting with a plan formulated with our expansive Charter Nite, they have meticulously brought on board about 21 JWD Clubs from across 14 time zones together. This could perhaps be the another first for RCM in the Rotary world! Our forging of relationships with RC Bombay and other clubs across the world that will bring RCM tremendous goodwill in the years ahead. Do expect more news as the year goes by.

Our Projects directors are getting each of their avenues ready to start as soon as it becomes possible and safe to venture out and start operations.

Fund raising has quietly seen some movement. Most of the funds raised are committed towards Covid Relief and Testing, which should see light soon. The Lake Cleanup projects and TTC are progressing at a fair pace towards completion along the expected timelines. Several of the GGs will be closed this year, along with two hamlets that will be taken up and provided with toilets under the Water & Sanitation Programme.

The committee that very effectively continues to unify and provide us the much needed exchange, however, is the programmes committee under the able Directorship of Rtn. Shanno Ravi. We have engaged week on week, uninterrupted and undeterred; and have been enthralled by a bevy of speakers to keep every palate satiated with varied topics and specialities to suit our diverse membership. Perhaps the real "POSITIVE" of this pandemic, is that we all have so quickly embraced this technology to deal with and make best use of these times.

So then. More next time.

I would have told you a Covid joke but will not, as you would have to wait 2 weeks before you got it, haha!

WHAT WOMEN WANT!

A CANDID & ENERGETIC CHAT WITH DIRECTOR MS. ANU MENON COVERED EVERYTHING FROM FOLLOWING ONE'S DREAMS TO EMPHASISING GENDER-POSITIVE ROLES IN OUR SOCIETY.

It was delightfully easy to draw Ms. Anu Menon, multifaceted and outspoken director into conversation. Smart, savvy and not afraid to follow her dreams or speak her mind, all we had to do was lead the flow of our chat through a question here and there.

Our special speaker of the weekly meeting of October 6 spoke to us from her home in London. From engineering to advertising to film school at London, Anu had charted quite a diverse path in her life, from shuttling between Bangalore, New Delhi and London, to trying her hand at different career paths to see which suited her best.

If one were to follow stereotypes, the “South Indian” in many of us would wonder how someone who’s landed a much-coveted seat at the much-respected BITS-Pilani Engineering college would want to quit that background and seek a creative path. But that is exactly what Anu Menon did. She rode the well-trodden road and after her undergrad, got into a regular tech. job. Life was comfortable, nothing to complain about, but something was missing. To cut a long story short, she started feeling the ennui of a regular day job gnawing at something inside her and she felt she needed to explore another avenue. Cut-to-scene, she had moved to the world of advertising and time flew, as it’s wont to, and she’d spent a decade in advertising!





That gnawing feeling of something missing didn't go away, though and suddenly Anu felt that she could make films; she could be a storyteller! To be doubly sure, she attended a workshop at the prestigious New York Film Academy and the die was cast - she moved to study filmmaking at the London Film School. Endless short films - a mandatory part of her study, she says - later, Anu rose to fame with two innocuous but delightful short films Ravi Goes To School, and Baby, a documentary on a Bengali domestic help who wrote a bestseller.

Anu was ready for the world and her first commercial feature film was London Paris New York, which may seem like a fluffy rom-com at, first, but if one looks closely, there are shades to every character that showed Anu's mark as a storyteller who has thought through every character in her movie.

"No floozies in my movies", she tells us, unless she meant to specifically give them that sort of character.

The big talk happened when Anu directed the stalwart and inimitable Naseeruddin Shah in Waiting, a movie she says everyone would relate to in some manner or the other. The movie, which Anu co-wrote with James Ruzicka, was at once melancholy and heart-warming; a story about two spouses who are waiting for their partners to come out of a coma, find closeness in each other. The movie underwrote a skill in Anu to make movies that are smart, sensitive and yet can balance the "commercial" angle of cinema as well as the creative and artistic.

"I don't make films just for passion or artistic release. I want it to do well at cinemas and on viewing platforms. I want people from all walks of life to like them. I want them to be viable for a producer to take up. I don't want them boxed into an obscure canister called 'Art Cinema'. But a commercial film doesn't mean a silly film with silly characters, so all of mine on-screen are - no matter how unreal or glittering the backdrop is - real people trying to find their way and their place in life." Even in the wildly popular TV show Four More Shots Please, Anu pushes the boundaries of what's acceptable on Indian TV screens and for Indian viewers with bold storylines and conversation topics; but still manages to bring humanity to each character.

In the Q&A session that followed, Anu fielded questions that ranged from gender issues as a woman director, like managing stereotypes and misogyny, to working with a veteran actor like Naseeruddin Shah, to being friends with the equally outspoken and bold Vidya Balan, to whether she plans a character with an actor in mind or vice versa, to even responding to requests for career advice from parents in the audience whose children wanted to move from a science study background to filmmaking.

Anu Menon responded to all of these queries with a big smile and honest opinions. One very interesting takeaway from the interaction was when she said: We need to talk about more and more things currently taboo in Indian households - growing up pains, sex, menstruation, gender issues, quirky career paths and following dreams. Only then will these be normalised and only then can we be a truly open-minded, harmonious society.

"THERE ARE NO REDUNDANT WOMEN IN MY FILMS. THEY'RE REAL, THEY'RE TRYING TO FIND THEMSELVES AND THEIR PATH AND IN NO WAY LESS THAN ANY MAN."

VIDYA BALAN IN &
SHAKUNTALA DEVI
A SONY PICTURES NETWORKS PRODUCTIONS &
ABUNDANTIA ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTION



CRACKING THAT BALANCING ACT

Let's talk to some of our women Rotarians on the ways they handle, toggle and expertly manage their personal and work lives, keeping their self-love intact.



RTN. PP NANDITA KRISHNAN

ON THE RCM ENVIRONMENT AND BONHOMIE AS A WOMEN PRESIDENT

The Rotary Club of Madras is a dynamic club that is evolving and growing constantly. Ten years ago, it was very different. Honestly, it was a gentlemen's club with a mere sprinkling of women! That said, I must also add that we were all given our due respect and relevance. I deem it a great privilege to have been the President of this Ace of all Rotary Clubs. Those were times when raising funds for all our projects was the main focus and also the most difficult, I think! We worked under several constraints with decision-making and allotting funds proved to be a balancing act in itself. And yes, it wasn't always easy, because as a President, I would listen to everyone's opinions but take a call on what I thought would be the best avenues to pursue. But it was not a "women" thing; these are decisions any President would have to take, man or woman. The RCM flag flies higher each year with the President in office raising the bar. During my year I did not take on any new projects, but instead focused on continuing and strengthening the many existing ones. In the end it was a very satisfying year with all our projects doing extremely well. The baton then passes on... I enjoyed my year as President in our beloved and prestigious club and hope that it will be remembered as a year when friendships were forged through fellowships. Our club's first overseas trip to attend the RI Convention at Bangkok was the icing on the cake!



RTN. ROOPA SHETTY

ON BALANCING A BUSINESS AND RUNNING A FAMILY AND BELIEVING IN ONESELF

Yes, I have run a successful business. And raised a loving family. And built a warm home. And luckily, I have had no experiences where people told me I couldn't do it all. I personally believe we all - especially women - have a lot of inner strength, which we can tap into when we need it. We also should believe in ourselves and not feel vulnerable or less than capable. In fact, I have never let any of such issues dictate my life. I strongly believe that we women are capable of multitasking and we do it very well!

Gender equality - I am a complete proponent of this, as you well know. We balance things as a family, indeed. We each have our own responsibilities and try to fulfil each of them. And then we have parenting responsibilities which we split and handle. There is no question of one parent having more or less work in this relationship and it's pretty much an even split. Jim is good at some things, I am good and together, we form a complete picture. There's really no secret formula but one thing that helps in a big way is that Jim is as much feminist as I am. I should also add that the equality is not unique to my generation in our family. I have grown up with a very strong mother who has always had a career AND a family. And her mother before her was the first woman director of J. Walter Thompson!



RTN. SHAAN KATARI LIBBY WITH HER MOTHER ANN, TEHZEEB KATARI ON BALANCING RESPONSIBILITIES AS A FAMILY



THE ROTARACT JUGGERNAUT ROLLS ON...

The Rotaract Clubs Of SDNB Vaishnav College For Women and Jeppiaar Engineering College continue to do outstanding work with their Club projects, that involve generations of happy beneficiaries, from children to senior citizens...



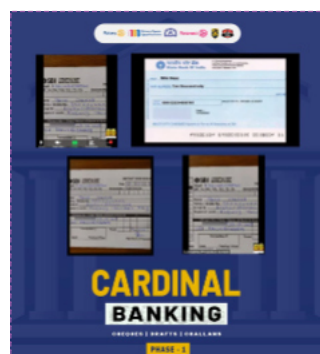
CREATIVTRAIL: CREATING CRAFTED PARADISE FOR GOD'S CHILDREN

An arts and crafts workshop for young children.



CARDINAL BANKING: BANKING BASICS AND HOW TO FILL UP MANDATORY FORMS

Teaching people from our community to fill up bank challans and other necessary forms.





SECOND CHILDHOOD: KIDS TOUCH MENTAL HEALTH

Connecting senior citizens and children through interaction, on World Mental Health Day.



VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR

A fun and interactive session over coffee and conversations amongst Rotaractors on International Coffee Day.



TRAFODAETH: PHASE 2

An event for Rotaractors interested in a "parley" on current affairs. In other words, a debate organised by the International Service team. It was an International cum Professional service project done with the Rotaract Club of Coimbatore Texcity, RI District 3201 on 30th of September, 2020.

EVOLUTION OF THE ROTARY EMBLEM

TURNING BACK THE WHEELS OF TIME...

A wheel has been the symbol of Rotary since our earliest days. The first design was made (in 1905) by Chicago Rotarian Montague Bear, an engraver who drew a simple wagon wheel, with a few lines to show dust and motion. The wheel was said to illustrate "Civilization, Movement and Service work in action." Most of the early clubs had some form of wagon wheel on their publications and letterheads.

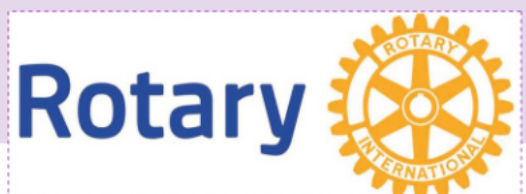
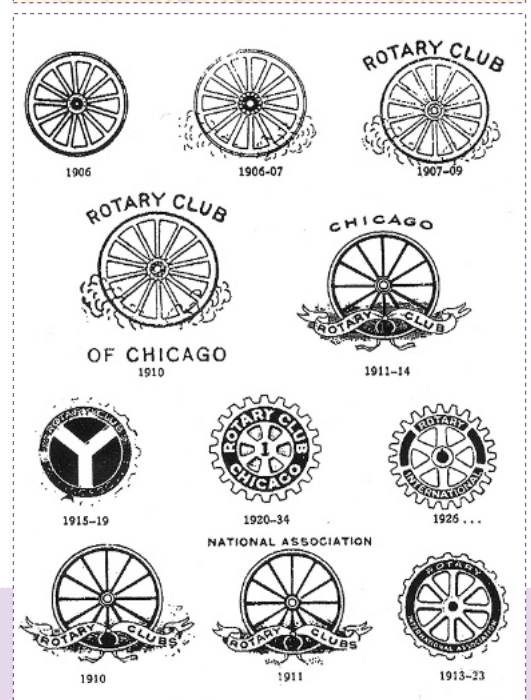
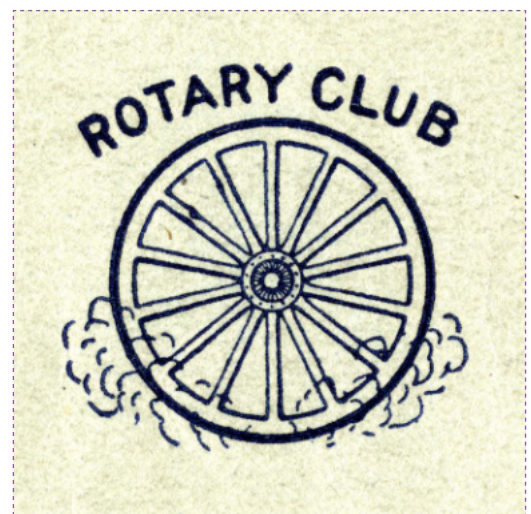
In 1922, it was decided that all Rotary clubs should adopt a single design as the exclusive emblem of Rotarians. So, the present gear wheel, with 24 teeth and six spokes was adopted by the "Rotary International Association." The gear teeth around the outside represent the fact that work is to be done. The six spokes represent the inner direction and path of our Vocational Service, through the representation of our membership via the classification system. Similarly, these same spokes represent an outward distribution path of Rotary's ideals of service and the Four Way Test... going out toward the community, vocations and businesses that our members represent.

A group of engineers advised that the geared wheel was mechanically unsound and would not work without a "keyway" in the centre of the gear to attach it to a power shaft. So, in 1923 the keyway was added to signify the wheel was a "worker and not an idler". The keyway in the centre of the hub is of great significance, because it represents the individual Rotarian member, who is the key factor in every club. Quality members are the keys, needed for the hub to engage with the shaft and turn, putting the energy into motion and creating the power for the gears to do their work.

At the 1929 Rotary International Convention, it was determined that blue and gold would be the official colours of the organisation, so the wheel was designed with these colours. The four blue bands within the outer radius of the gear represent our four avenues of service. And the design which we now know was formally adopted as the official Rotary International emblem.

The Rotary wheel is also referred to as "The Mark of Excellence".

*** Info sourced from the Clubrunner portal of Rotary International



THE CIRCLE OF SERVICE AND FELLOWSHIP

Browsing through the pages of Rotary worldwide, be it individual clubs or the RI official sites, is a veritable rabbit hole of interesting information! This week, as we delved into the history of the Rotary emblem, we also came across some beautiful Rotary coins...



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PRESIDENT-ELECT

Rtn. P.V. Mohan Raman

PRESIDENT-NOMINEE

Rtn. Jayshree Sridhar

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Rtn. Shanno Ann Ravi

DIRECTOR-YOUTH SERVICES

Rtn. Balaji Chinni

DIRECTOR-PUBLIC IMAGE & FUND RAISING

Rtn. Hemant Chordia

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Rtn. Gooch Kumar

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Rtn. Nimish C. Tolia

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