

UNITE
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Rotary
Club of Thane Hills



10
TITEN

HILL ECHOES

FEBRUARY ISSUE

Francesco Arezzo
RI President - 2025-26

Harsh Makol
District Governor - 2025-26

Samir Limaye
Club President - 2025-26

Nilesh Pitale
Club Secretary - 2025-26

A group of diverse people, including a young man, a young woman, and an elderly woman, are holding a large white puzzle piece. The puzzle piece has a human silhouette cutout. In the background, other people are visible, some clapping. The overall scene is bright and positive, symbolizing community and peace.

**Peace Building &
Conflict Prevention**

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FEBRUARY IS

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**PEACE & CONFLICT
PREVENTION
MONTH**

"If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other"
Mother Teresa

FEBRUARY 2026



Reflections by Club President

The month of January was a blend of service, learning, celebration, and reflection for RC Thane Hills. While the club actively conducted impactful projects and events, the month also carried a somber undertone due to the loss of dear elders from the Hiller's family. The club observed the period with respect and solemnity, offering heartfelt condolences and emotional support to the grieving families

Despite this, the spirit of community service remained strong. Our flagship Triumph Run & Carnival was successfully organized at Shree Mavli Mandal School, reaffirming the club's long-standing commitment to children with special needs. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from 100+ Rotarians, 50+ volunteers, about 350+ parents, and 650+ special children, creating an atmosphere of inclusion, joy, and compassion. About

A thought-provoking panel discussion comprising of women Rotarians was conducted, focusing on leadership, service, challenges, prejudice and empowerment. The session provided good insight of how to engage women in Rotary projects and society, inspiring meaningful dialogue and engagement.

RC Thane Hills had the honor of serving as the host club for the second TRF (The Rotary Foundation) Seminar. The seminar enhanced awareness about TRF programs, grants, and contributions, reinforcing the importance of sustained support for Rotary's global initiatives. Chief Guest PRID Dr Manoj Desai delivered impactful address while motivating Rotarians.

The club celebrated Pongal & Sankranti with warmth and cultural enthusiasm. The celebration reflected Rotary's spirit of unity in diversity, bringing members together to appreciate tradition, gratitude, and fellowship.

An engaging session on Past Life Regression was conducted by an expert speaker by Dr Manjiree Gokhale. The talk generated curiosity and introspection among members, offering a unique perspective personal awareness.

The club continued its Anna Daan initiative, serving nutritious meals to the underprivileged. This initiative reinforced the club's commitment to basic human needs and compassionate service.

The Eco Quiz, now in its 9th consecutive year, was successfully conducted with enthusiastic participation from 68 teams from across MMRDA region. The event promoted environmental awareness and sustainability, strengthening the club's long-term focus on eco-conscious education. With total attendance of 325+ is testament of popularity of this initiative. Apart from Eco Quiz our club has a strong engagement with school sector with over 6 different initiatives. Rtn Radhika Padmanabhan has always played critical role for success of these initiatives.

Our lady of visitation church, Nerul organized republic day celebration with unfurling national flag with pride and patriotism. The occasion served as a reminder of constitutional values, unity, and responsibility toward nation-building. Our autism center has strong relation with MMVK trust run by same church. I had privilege to attend this ceremony.

As we all step into February month designated for peace and conflict prevention, reality hits hard with prevailing situation. A rapidly changing world, new world order is emerging. We are learning to cope up with new and often complex realities. Even today millions continue to need support and dignity. Economic and social disparities have only grown. It is imperative for Rotarians to pause, reflect and re imagine its role.

Must say Explorer group under experts' guidance of PP Rajeev Tipnis really provided wholesome content during January. Let's all get ready for illumination in upcoming February month.

Enjoy Rotary.

Samir Limaye

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Message by Club Bulletin Editor

Dear Hillers,

Happy to present February edition of Hill Echoes Bulletin of RCTH in TiTen year !

This issue has details of projects, meetings and activities done in January 2026 as well as what is coming in February. It also gives information related to Rotary International, District 3142. We have also published interesting articles contributed by our own members and spouses.

As we enter February, let us reflect on one of Rotary's core avenues of service "Peace building and Conflict resolution".

Rotary International plays a vital role in peacebuilding and conflict resolution through various initiatives aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict and fostering understanding within communities. Rotary International recognizes that peace is not merely the absence of conflict but involves justice, equity, and harmony. The organization is dedicated to promoting peace as one of its core areas of focus. This commitment is reflected in various programs and initiatives designed to create environments conducive to peace and conflict resolution.

Key Initiatives of Rotary International

Rotary Peace Centers: Established in partnership with leading universities, these centers train peace fellows in conflict resolution, diplomacy, and sustainable development. Over 1,800 peace fellows have been trained to become effective catalysts for peace in their communities and beyond.

Community based Projects: Rotary clubs engage in grassroots initiatives that address the underlying causes of conflict, such as poverty, discrimination, and lack of access to education. These projects aim to build bridges of understanding and reconciliation within communities.

Youth Engagement: Programs like Rotary Youth Exchange and Rotaract encourage young leaders to become ambassadors of peace. Workshops and leadership training for youth focus on conflict resolution skills, fostering a new generation committed to peace.

Dialogue and Mediation: Rotary facilitates open dialogues within communities to discuss local issues, fostering understanding and conflict resolution. Trained mediators from within the Rotary network guide these discussions, ensuring a safe and neutral environment for all participants.

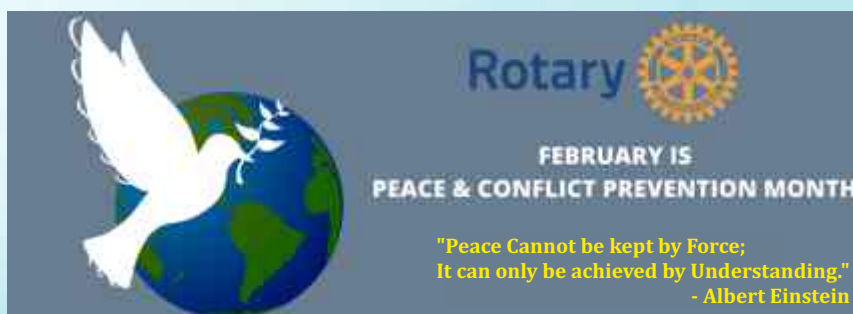
Support for Local Initiatives: Rotary identifies and supports existing local organizations that work towards peacebuilding and conflict prevention. This includes allocating resources, volunteer support, or grants to enhance their efforts. Through these initiatives, Rotary International not only addresses immediate conflicts but also works towards creating sustainable solutions that foster long-term peace and stability in communities worldwide.

Please keep sending inputs, content, feedback and comments !

PP Varsha Likhite

Bulletin Editor 2025-26

varshalikhite@rediffmail.com



INNER WHEEL UPDATES

By Innewheel Club President Nayana Gala



January was full of heart, hustle, and happy moments for our club!

We kicked off the month with a strong and meaningful beginning through Surakshit Bachpan Life Skills Class (SBLC) at BSSS School, where 52 girls participated with curiosity, confidence, and openness. The first session, led by IPP Neena Manchanda with Neela and Ranjni supporting, set a beautiful tone. With weekly Saturday 10 sessions now in place, this journey has truly begun on a hopeful note

Health initiatives continued to make a visible impact—35 cataract surgeries were successfully completed at Wavikar hospital. A heartfelt thank you to Girija for her consistent dedication and hands-on involvement and donors. We also signed an MOU with Jupiter Hospital for 20 paediatric cardiac surgeries, contributing Rs.25,000 per surgery on behalf of our donors—changing little lives in big ways. The surgeries will start from February 2026.

Our collaboration-filled month also included District joint projects, thought-provoking talks, therapeutic music sessions, and the unforgettable Adivasi Samuha Vivah, where witnessing 51 couples getting married together was nothing short of magical. We donated sarees, shirt pant piece, household utensils, bags, blankets, jewellery etc.

27 Children took centre stage during Bharat ke Superheroes, a joyful fancy dress competition on the occasion of republic day, bursting with patriotism and confidence. Our Mobile Addiction awareness programme at Shivai Vidyalaya touched hearts through skits, stories, and meaningful conversations. We wrapped up with WADA Anganwadi Training 2.0 – Sparsh Ek Ehsaas, training 122 Anganwadi Sevikas to create awareness on child safety—truly impact multiplied.

January reminded us why we do what we do—with teamwork, laughter, and lots of heart.



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Message by Rotaract Club of Thane Hills President

Sayali Korgaonkar



January: Fellowship and Creative Engagement

January marked a positive beginning to the year, with initiatives focused on fellowship, creativity, and collaborative engagement among members. The month reflected a balanced mix of informal bonding and skill-based interaction, helping members reconnect after the year-end break and ease into the new calendar year.

The Breakfast Club – Episode 4 was conducted on 18th January at Khurade Misal. Members came together to share breakfast and conversations. The relaxed atmosphere naturally encouraged casual interaction among those present, giving members the chance to unwind, connect freely, and enjoy each other's company beyond regular club activities.

On 24th January, Walk. Click. Connect, a photography-based workshop, was held at *Oxygen Park* from 8:00 a.m. onwards. The event was organized by the Rotaract Club of Thane Hills, in collaboration with the Rotaract Club of Hiranandani Estate and the Rotaract Club of Thane. Members participated in a photowalk across scenic and historic locations in Thane, exploring different photography styles and perspectives. The initiative encouraged creativity, hands-on learning, and inter-club interaction, while also allowing participants to observe their surroundings more closely.

In addition to these initiatives, club members are actively involved in ongoing preparations for R.E.D. (Rotary Entertainment Destination), Members participating both as performers and contributors, gaining exposure to large-scale planning and collaboration. Prajeet and Sayali are serving as (ACLs) for the event, while Noopur is contributing in the role of Mentor, supporting coordination and guidance for this year's edition.

Looking ahead, preparations are underway for Cut Above Happiness 4.0, planned for the following month, as the club continues its focus on meaningful and engaging initiatives.

Closing Note

January reflected how fellowship grows through shared moments, creativity, and collective preparation, setting a steady and positive tone for the year ahead.

"Creativity flourishes when fellowship brings people together."



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Inauguration of the Rotary Peace Centre at Symbiosis Pune on 26th January 2026

Varsha Likhite - Rotary Action group for Peace, Membership Chair India Chapter

The Rotary Peace Centres program, a dynamic and ambitious project of The Rotary Foundation, identifies highly qualified professionals and trains them to become agents of peace. The tailor-made curriculum trains individuals devoted to peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

There are now eight Rotary Peace Centres throughout the world i.e. North Carolina, USA, Tokyo, Japan, Bradford, England, Brisbane, Australia, Uppsala, Sweden, Bangkok Thailand, Kampala, Uganda, and New one at Symbiosis International University Pune, India. The 8th Centre is located on Symbiosis International University's (SIU) scenic Lavale campus in Pune, Maharashtra. It will offer a one-year professional fellowship program in peace studies and conflict resolution.

It was a proud privilege to attend the inauguration of the Centre as a Board member of Rotary Action Group for Peace India Chapter along with India Chair Smita Vikhankar from D 3131, Secretary Kirti Vadalkar from D 3142 and few other members. PDG Dr Ashes Ganguly TRF regional leader, DGN Chandrahas Shetty incoming District leader were also present from D 3142..



The inauguration hosted by D 3131 n 3141 on 25th and 26th January 2026 was at the hands of Dr S B Majumdar Founder n President, Symbiosis, Chancellor SIU, Rotary International President (RIP) Francisco Arezzo and TRF Trustee Chair Holger Knack. Dr Bharat Pandya Trustee and Dr Mahesh Kotbagi Past Trustee who were instrumental in setting up the centre also graced the occasion.

Dr Majumdar was felicitated for his amazing journey. He explained his humble beginning and said that each person must strive to give his best to the world. Peace is the only way as war n weapons have no role to play!

RIP Francesco Arezzo highlighted the importance of peace centres in peace building through learning, training n partnership. He said Rotary is building peace centres not for today but for the generations forward. Peace is much more than absence of war. It is developing trust, resolution of conflict, restoring of human dignity and caring for others. We must face our fears and challenge our realities to overcome our internal challenges and external enemies.

Trustee chair Holger Knaack applauded the event as a historic day for Rotary and Symbiosis. Such partnerships are critical as they enable transformation of compassion into action through strong stewardship n empathy. Rotary helps in restoring Dignity n hope which should be normal conditions of any life. Peace centres play a very important role in promoting global peace. They exist because donors have faith in our foundation. This centre is the beginning of a lasting change for India and the world!



Dr Bharat Pandya Trustee TRF said it is matter of pride that the first Indian Rotary peace centre comes up in India after rigorous process of scrutiny among 17 proposals across Asia. Caring and sharing are the objectives of both Rotary and Symbiosis. It is the joint outcome of dream of Paul Harris and Dr Majumdar supported by their respective partners and friends.

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Easiest way to achieve peace is follow 'Live n let live'. Tolerance, integrity, cooperation lead to peace. As said by Rtn Archklumph, temples n churches will collapse, monuments will deteriorate but such centres will sow the seeds of peace through knowledge thereby creating a better world!

A Rotary peace alumni panel discussion was conducted by Rtn Rajendra Ruia. The peace scholars expressed their perspective and experience with Peace.

Swati Chauhan Attorney who has studied family law said the course gave her fresh perspective of women's issues and the realisation that women need to be involved in problem solving process for women related issues.

Rukmini Iyer 2013 peace scholar said the course provided nuanced Learning of business with peace. She works around conflict resolution such as Ukraine issues.



Saloni Lakhia has a degree in law and works for UN agencies. Currently she is working on AI and data centre training.

Roshan Dalvi is a retired judge Bombay High court. After taking the course she learnt that matters can be resolved across the table rather than litigation. She works on arbitration and mediation which is the way forward.

Rajiv Jalota from civil services has worked with BMC and GST Maharashtra. The 2 year course made him people centric from earlier service centric approach.

Former DGP Praveen Dixit retired from police department. He has implemented training of trainers programs in Maharashtra and IPS office.

Kishu Daswani was a professor at government law college for over 25 years. Rotary course provided quality education with a more human perspective.

It was a great experience attending the historic event. Rotarians can play a vital role in getting eligible candidates as we need peacebuilders to advance peace in the world.



UPDATES




HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS
PDG KAILASH JETHANI
 Congratulations on Being Awarded by Rotary International Highest Individual Award!
Service Above Self (2025-26)



DG Harsh Makol

PDG Kailash Jethani
 ARRFC Zone 4,
 Dist 3141 & 3053



Leadership Appointments
 Rotary Year 2026-27

We express our gratitude to the RI President-Elect
 Rtn. Yinka Babatoba (26-27)
 for entrusting us with esteemed leadership responsibilities for the RY 26-27.

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| #Rtn AKS Dr. Muruganandam M. (MMM) | #Rtn AKS FR Lt. KP Nagesh |
| Vice President - Rotary International | Member - RI Participant |
| Director Station - TRF Programs | Experiences Committee |
| Member - International PolioPlus Committee | Member - Board Council on Legislation |

Let's together Create Lasting Impact

#UniteForGood #SayYEStoRotary #CreateLastingImpact



DGE NILESH JAYWANT AND NUCLEUS CORE TEAM
 Organise
AGLS AND DTLs



प्रेरणा
 INSPIRE THE FIRE WITHIN

FEBRUARY 14th and 15th 2026
 NOVOTEL, KHOPOLI

Host Club : RC New Kalyan

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Rtn Dharendra Singh Club President | Rtn Dr Sushrut Vaidya Convenor |
| Rtn Namdeo Chaudhary Club Secretary | Rtn Kailas Deshpande Co- Convenor |



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- Patron Couple: ₹75,000 + 18% GST

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TRF SEMINAR

Club Meeting – 27 | Date: 10th January 2026 | Venue: Melior Inn, Airoli.

RC Thane Hills had the privilege of hosting the Second TRF (The Rotary Foundation) Seminar, a significant district-level event dedicated to recognising donors and inspiring Rotarians to contribute more meaningfully for higher societal impact.

The seminar was ably convened by Past President Rtn Varsha Likhite, whose leadership and meticulous planning with the valuable guidance of PP Rtn Vikram Mane, PP Rtn Nilesh Likhite and untiring support by President Samir and Club Secretary Rtn Nilesh Pitale ensured the club successfully delivered a well-coordinated and impactful event. The unwavering support of District TRF Team played a crucial role in making this seminar a grand success. Event commenced and concluded strictly on time. The new venue and the overall arrangements were appreciated by all those present.

The seminar featured highly inspiring addresses by Chief Guest PRID Manoj Desai, ARRFC PDG Rtn Shrikant Indani, EMGA Rtn Ashish Ajmera, EPNC PDG Dr Ashes Ganguly. Donor recognitions were done by DGND Srijith Poothen, PHS Neha Nimbalkar, Global grant chair Nilesh Likhite & teams.

The event witnessed an impressive participation of 160 attendees (including 18 hillers), 24 clubs co-hosting the seminar. Overall, Second TRF Seminar stood as a testimony to Rotary's commitment towards service, further strengthening the bond between clubs and the Rotary Foundation.



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The Rotary International Convention

PP Nilesh Likhite



International Convention is the largest program for Rotarians across the world who gather together to listen to the Rotary's world leaders and best of the achievers in various fields. Global announcements are made and then Rotarians also enjoy break out sessions to know more about their choice of Rotary topics.

As far as my knowledge goes, the District Governor organises a district conference, Rotary International Directors organise Rotary Institute (which also includes dedicated days for Governor Elect/Nominee training programs), and Rotary International President organises International Convention.

For Indian Rotarians, the Convention is at an international location, and India is yet to get the hosting of the International Convention. This is because of the huge convention centre and associated infrastructure required for organising a convention. The average attendance at the Convention is approx 25,000. So the venue needs to have a single location to accommodate these many Rotarians to be seated in a Convention Hall. So far two conventions viz Osaka, Japan in 2004 and Seoul, South Korea in 2016 have witnessed the highest attendance of over 44,000 Rotarians.

One of main attractions of the Convention is Friendship Centre, a fellowship and bonding place for Rotarians to know each other, exchange Club flags, know about various Rotary Action Groups, Fellowship Groups, buy a variety of Rotary merchandise and attend click photos for lifetime memories. Its a most happening place at any Convention. The select Rotarians can also participate at Foundation dinners and other official programs, which are on 'paid' basis in addition to convention.

The first international convention was held in 1910 where 16 clubs in the United States were united to become the National Association of Rotary Club, as all the clubs were from the US. Immediately, after this convention, the 1st club outside the US was formed in Canada viz Rotary Club of Winnipeg. Thus the name was changed to International Association of Rotary Clubs. The 1st convention outside the US was held in Edinburg, Scotland in 1921.

Considering the huge planning and infrastructure requirements, Rotary conventions are announced at least 4 to 5 years in advance.

The details of upcoming Rotary conventions is as under:

- 2026: Taipei, Taiwan (June 13-17)
- 2027: Honolulu, Hawaii (June 5-9)
- 2028: Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 2029: Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 2030: Chicago, Illinois

As per the RI By-laws, the international convention is required to be organised within last 3 months of the Rotary Year (ie between April and June).

During COVID times, the 2021 convention was held online. It was originally scheduled to be held at a very exotic place in Hawaii, Honolulu.

Hillars have attended few conventions. The 1st was attended at Bangkok in 2012, when an Indian was leading Rotary as International President viz Rtn Kalyan Banerjee. As my memory goes, we were 8 members and families attended the Bangkok convention. In 2024, the Singapore convention was attended by many Hillars.

Attending a convention makes us understand the internationality of Rotary very closely. Every Rotarian should attend at least one convention to get lifetime memories.

The registrations for Taipei conventions are on and we can register online at <https://convention.rotary.org/en-us/registration> .

FEBRUARY 2026

The Magic of the "Dhurandhar" Club : A Celebration of Excellence

IPP Harshad Divekar



Rotary Year 2024–25 will be remembered as a milestone year in the journey of the Rotary Club of Thane Hills. The recently concluded District Awards Ceremony was not merely an evening of trophies and applause—it was a moment of collective reflection, validation, and quiet pride. For those who lived through every meeting, project review, site visit, and deadline, the results told a powerful story: **RC Thane Hills emerged as the club with the highest number of District Awards and was conferred the specially instituted title of "Dhurandhar Club."**

This recognition was not accidental. It was earned—through consistency, scale, credibility, and a deeply shared belief that Rotary, when done right, can be transformative.

Excellence Across All Avenues of Service

What made this year truly special was balance—not excellence in one area, but sustained performance across *every* Avenue of Service.

At the District level, RC Thane Hills was honoured with awards for **Most Effective Club, Best Bulletin, Best Community Service, Best Project in Rotary's 7 Focus Areas, and Highest Registration for DISCON.**



Equally significant were our achievements in Rotary Foundation giving, where the club set new benchmarks with **Highest Annual Fund, Endowment, and Polio Fund Contributions**, along with recognition as the **2nd Highest PolioPlus Giving Club.**

Together, these honours reflected not just activity, but discipline—strong systems, transparent governance, and clear alignment between intent and execution.

Community Impact at Meaningful Scale

At the heart of our success lay impactful, needs-based community service. Our flagship **Project EmpowHer**, focused on HPV vaccination, reached nearly **6,000 adolescent girls**, backed by sustained CSR partnerships and meticulous execution. Our **water conservation initiatives**, including the check dams at Vandre Khor, created long-term water security for entire villages.

Projects spanning hunger alleviation, eye care, sanitation, disability inclusion, environmental sustainability, and education together touched **over 50,000 beneficiaries across more than 110 initiatives** during the year. What mattered most was not just scale, but sustainability—projects designed to endure beyond the Rotary year.

Leadership, Giving & Global Credibility

Rotary is also about leadership and values, and this year saw rare individual distinctions that elevated our club's standing. It is a matter of immense pride that **PP Shirish Songadkar** received the **Rotary International "Service Above Self" Award**, and **PP & District Secretary Nilesh Likhite** was honoured with the **Rotary International "Five Avenues of Service" Award**. Receiving both of Rotary

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International's top individual recognitions in a single year is a rare distinction for any club.

On the Foundation front, focused leadership and extraordinary generosity resulted in **record-breaking TRF contributions exceeding USD 120,000**, including landmark Endowment and PolioPlus support—strengthening RC Thane Hills' global credibility as a trusted and grant-worthy club.

The Spirit Behind the Success

Awards celebrate outcomes—but behind every outcome lies effort. This year's journey was powered by the unwavering commitment of the **Board of Directors**, the relentless execution by my trusted partners-in-crime—**Secretary Kumar and Treasurer Vasant**—and above all, the infectious enthusiasm of every Hiller who raised a hand and said, *“Let's do this.”* The “Dhurandhar” recognition belongs to each one of you.

On a deeply personal note, none of this would have been possible without the strength behind the scenes. My heartfelt thanks to my wife **Prachi** and daughter **Prisha** for their love, patience, and understanding through an exceptionally hectic year. They were my rock while I was out there chasing the *Magic of Rotary*.

Rotary teaches us that leadership is temporary, but legacy is collective. **RY 2024–25 stands as proof of what is possible when commitment meets collaboration.**



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Muscles . . . Use It or Lose It !!

Dr. Seetha Raju



Muscle strength is the key to aging well and healthily. We lose 10% of our muscle mass every decade after age 40. By the time we are 70 years old, we have lost 30% of our muscle mass. This means we lose strength leading to falls and have issues with mobility and develop frailty.

But here is the good news. You can preserve your muscle strength and reduce risks of fall and maintain your day-to-day activity, even dancing and mountain, climbing and lead an active fruitful life if you exercise.

Why is muscle so important?

- Muscles help us maintain balance and mobility and keep our joints stable and functional. If the muscle strength is good, we can avoid falls and fractures. With regular exercise our metabolism boosts up and we feel energetic.

How then do we preserve muscle strength?

- Resistance training, light weight bands or bodyweight exercises 2 to 3 times a week
- Gradually increase intensity and resistance of these exercises
- Daily walking, gardening, and even household chores. (men need to help your wives)
- Have adequate protein 1 g per KG body weight per day
- Go out in the sun

Here are some simple yet effective exercises for elderly folks to build strength:



- **Squats:** Use a chair for support if needed. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, then bend knees and stand up.

- **Wall push-ups:** Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, hands on the wall at shoulder height. Slowly lower yourself toward the wall, then push back



- **Leg lifts:** Hold onto a chair, lift one leg off the ground, and hold for a few seconds. Switch legs.

- **Arm curls:** Use light weights or cans. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, curl arms up, and lower back down.

- **Seated:** Use a resistance band or light weights. Sit with back straight, pull arms back, and squeeze shoulder blades.



Tips: Before starting an exercise programme.

- Start slow and gentle, especially if new to exercise.
- Breathe naturally and avoid straining.
- Do 8-12 reps, 2-3 times a week.
- Consult a doc or physio before starting any new exercise routine.

I would strongly urge everybody to not let age get you down.

MOVE MORE AND LOSE LESS.

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All is 'WELL'

CA Mahesh Madkholkar



It is easy to say that everything is well when things are going smoothly. However, when one actually reflects on the concept of a well in real terms, it becomes evident that constructing one involves a tremendous amount of effort and planning.

Approximately 65 kilometers away from our hometown, Thane, we decided to construct a well for agricultural purposes. Although being farmers makes us eligible for government subsidies and cost reimbursement, the possibility of future commercial activities led us to bypass the subsidy and consider constructing the well independently.

There was already a small pond on the land measuring approximately 10 × 10 × 10 feet. Typically, several traditional and modern methods are used to identify underground water levels before constructing a well.

One traditional method involves carrying a coconut across the plot. It is believed that when the coconut changes direction or tilts upward—along with indicators such as anthills or the presence of black ants—it suggests the existence of underground water springs. The underlying logic is that springs create a cooler environment, which attracts such natural indicators.

Another commonly used technique involves copper wires, where changes in direction or alignment are interpreted to identify a suitable location for a borewell or well. Additionally, a more scientific approach is geological analysis using machines with two poles, where readings crossing 140 degrees indicate a favorable point for excavation.

Ideally, combining traditional knowledge with scientific methods yields the most reliable results.

Fortunately, we were able to hire a 45-foot Poclain machine, which was used to excavate sand and rubble after digging approximately 10–16 feet. Eventually, excavation reached a depth of about 41 feet, with dimensions of roughly 29 × 29 × 41 feet.

The water storage capacity of the well is substantial—calculated as cubic feet multiplied by 28 liters per cubic foot—amounting to over 8 lakh liters. With consistent usage and the presence of strong underground springs, the well is expected to replenish water from the surrounding area.

After completing the digging part it's required to clean the water with all debris in well and for that we have to reach to around 41 feet to clean well as ultimately it required as drinking water ! Ultimately, the success of a well depends on the strength of nearby springs and the quality of the soil, rubble, and rock layers, which together determine both the quantity and purity of the water. This initiative will significantly contribute to meeting drinking water requirements. After completing this well before rains in Hillers style had a dinner party with around 45 Labourers at Farm house with their families as it ensured the existence for next 25 years !



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Happy to share Lata Gwalani's "A Tale of Two Kitchens"

Lata Gwalani



A book that celebrates two mothers - Tamilian and Sindhi, two kitchens, and a bountiful spread of food and memories. A Tale of Two Kitchens - your trip down memory lane in 2026. The perfect gift for your loved ones. A keepsake for sure.

Every recipe here is more than a meal—it is a memory, a bond, a celebration of the love that lingers long after the last bite. Two reigning queens of their kitchens, a Tamilian mother and a Sindhi mother-in-law, turned an exchange of recipes into a lifelong bond. What began with a handful of spices grew into a friendship that transcended language, culture, and geography.

A Tale of Two Kitchens is not just a book of recipes—it's a memoir of love, resilience, and the magic of food. From tangy tamarind rasam to comforting Sindhi kadhi, every dish carries a story, a memory, a moment of laughter shared between two remarkable women. As their daughter and daughter-in-law, Lata Gwalani had the privilege of inheriting both their kitchens—and blending them into her own. These pages are her tribute: a collection of flavours and stories that show how food can unite, heal, and celebrate.

Buy now on Amazon!!! <https://amzn.in/d/iNxJGOg>



CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY 2026 - VOCATIONAL SERVICES MONTH

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|----------------------------------|--------|-----------------|--|--|--|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Shweta Ojha Workshop | 6 | 7 |
| 8 Guest Speaker Nilesh Oak | 9 | 10 | 11 Visiting Canadian Families RFE | 12 | 13 Valentine Day Celebration Fashion Show | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 Anna Daan | 18 | 19 Yogi Hills Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 Guest Speaker Thirani | 27 | 28 |

RI THEME

RCTH OFFICIAL
MEET

FELLOWSHIP &
FESTIVALS

PROJECTS

EVENTS

DIST. EVENT &
PROJECT

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Life Through Her Lens

Dr. Seetha Raju

1. Describe yourself in two words

Answer - Subtly persuasive and adaptable.

2. What's a life lesson you have learned the hard way

Answer - There is no short cut to success but hard work n perseverance.

3. What creative activity makes you lose track of time

Answer - Doodling

4. What's your comfort food—and the story behind it

Answer - Curd rice with sambar. My mom always told me that it's a panacea for all woes.

5. If your life were a book, what would be its name

Answer - Open Secrets

6. Rotary project is closest to your heart, and why

Answer - Could'nt be anything but the autism centre run by RCTH because it's truly noble and it carries my father's name n his values.

Anuja Kulkarni

1. Describe yourself in two words

Answer - Committed, Fun loving

2. What's a life lesson you have learned the hard way

Answer-Taking care of seniors throughout married life is not a burden; on the contrary it keeps us young n blessed.

3. What creative activity makes you lose track of time

Answer- Singing, Painting

4. What's your comfort food—and the story behind it

Answer- Jowar bhakari with thecha and loni- when i first relished on our native place farm made with love.

5. If your life were a book, what would be its name

Answer- Happiness within

6. Rotary project is closest to your heart, and why

Answer-Polio eradication. Most fruitful n results oriented project.

Seema Khurana

1. Describe yourself in two words

Answer - Avid Learner and Compassionate.

2. What's a life lesson you have learned the hard way

Answer - Life taught me not to depend on others for my struggles, but to trust my own strength and the Almighty's guidance

3. What creative activity makes you lose track of time

Answer - I described myself as an Avid learner, driven by a consistent desire to acquire new knowledge, skills, and insights. This pursuit often engages me so deeply that I completely lose track of time.

Currently, I am exploring the power of Memory Techniques and how they can support students in improving their learning and academic performance. Researching, understanding, connecting ideas, attending workshops, and engaging deeply in



Compiled by IP First Lady
Prachi Divekar



the subject with full focus and passion is where I am absolutely involved these days losing complete track of time.

4. What's your comfort food—and the story behind it

Answer - My comfort food is actually a drink—Coke. Whenever life feels low & overwhelming, a few fizzy sips of Coke give me a moment to breathe. They take me

back to childhood memories of family gatherings, fun & simpler times where a bottle of Coke was a small but a special joy. The 25-paise bottle of those days, with the same taste and same fizz, reminds me of a life with fewer worries and more smiles. These small, unforgettable memories comfort me and help steady my emotions... I just can't imagine my life without Coke!!!!

5. If your life were a book, what would be its name

Answer - "Never too Late"

6. Rotary project is closest to your heart, and why

Answer - Though all the projects of our Club are commendable, the one closest to my heart is Triumph Run, our Club's Signature Project.

Triumph Run is not about running; it is about life, being a celebration, in every step.

Watching specially-abled participants move forward with a strength that humbles everyone watching them —Right from the March past to the Races and Prize distribution—is deeply moving. The joy and excitement on their faces speak volumes.

Extremely touching is the sight of these children playing games, dancing, enjoying music and joyfully eating their snacks & food packets. The warmth and happiness that fills the venue creates an atmosphere of true Celebration.

I feel truly blessed to be a part of this project and this Club, where every moment offers an opportunity to witness courage & joy, and live the Rotary motto of Service Above Self.

Lata Gwalani

1. Describe yourself in two words

Answer - Solitaire - like the diamond!

2. What's a life lesson you have learned the hard way

Answer - Life lesson: the most predictable thing about life is that it is unpredictable.

3. What creative activity makes you lose track of time

Answer - Reading and writing

4. What's your comfort food—and the story behind it

Answer - Curd rice. The love that my Amma served it with.

5. If your life were a book, what would be its name

Answer - Phir milenge...to be continued

6. Rotary project is closest to your heart, and why

Answer - Autism Centre



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Club Projects

Project 26 : Triumph Run & Carnival – 25th Edition

25th edition of the Triumph Run and Carnival was successfully conducted on Sunday , 4th January 2026 , at Shree Mavli Mandal School, Charai , Thane.

This flagship project continues to uphold the spirit of inclusion by providing special children and their parents an opportunity to participate together in sports and recreational activities. The event featured track and field competitions for deaf and dumb students, while visually challenged students presented melodious songs and orchestral performances, highlighting their exceptional talent and confidence.

The program was inaugurated by District Governor Harsh Makol . The gathering was further inspired by a motivational address from PRID Ashok Mahajan , our guide and Guest of Honour. The event was also graced by DG-Elect Dr. Nilesh and DGND Rtn. Chandrahas Shetty . The celebration witnessed participation of approximately 650+ students, 500 parents , 50 support staff , over 100 Rotary volunteers and several guests, taking the total attendance to around 1,350 participants. The new venue and New Year enthusiasm added renewed energy to this milestone 25th edition.



The club places on record its sincere appreciation of President Nominee Sujit Gawayi and all zone wise leaders specially Sunil Gwalani, Anuradha Sukhatankar , Registration desk team, volunteers, supporting institutions and benevolent corporate partners who continue to support this meaningful cause. As always PP V Chandrasekaran and Pawan Adnani, AS Kumar played important role in organizing and providing support.

Team TiTEN

Project 27 – Annapoorna (Anndaan)

Sunday, 18th January 2026 | Yogi Hills, Mulund

Annapoorna is not just a project—it is an emotion, a reminder of our shared humanity. Every month,



through this Anndaan initiative, we reach out to the poorest of the poor, with special care for visually challenged citizens, by providing essential grocery and daily-need items .

The sight of thousands gathering with hope, patience, and dignity is truly Adbhuta—mesmerising . It reminds us that service is not about numbers, but about touchpoints of compassion, empathy, and love. As always Pawan, Prashant and Satish Shetty

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are main driving force to persuade by sending gentle reminders . About 34 Hillers attended today's service project . Many who cannot come ensure to send donation.

Project- 28 Saturday 24th January 2026

Smt. Sulochana Devi Singhania School, Thane

Eco quiz based on theme of ecology, nature , wildlife and sustainability has been popular for last 8 years. As always we were amazed by brilliance of young minds. Rotarians are guided by the Four-Way Test. We practiced what we preach by ensuring every child gets a fair chance. We deeply appreciate the parents who turned up in large numbers, despite it being a long weekend. Many Hillers and Anns came together to successfully execute various workstreams of the event. Keeping intact soul we presented 9th edition in a new avatar.

Environment being one of Rotary's seven focus areas, our deep and sustained engagement with the school sector reflects our conviction and confidence in the purpose of what we do. This year, 68 teams from across the MMRDA region participated in this contest of competence and opportunity. With two semi-finals and a grand finale, the event witnessed a gathering of 325+ attendees. The Singhania School auditorium was packed. True to Rotary discipline, we started on time and ended on time . Yamini, as MoC, and Radhika Padmanabhan, as Quiz Master , were outstanding and led the event with confidence and grace. Gautam Banik's creativity gave a new identity to the event.

Results:

Winner: Euro School, Thane . First Runner-Up: New Horizon School, Kolshet Road, Thane

Second Runner-Up: Sou. A. K. Joshi School, Thane



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Club Meetings

Weekly Meeting – 26 | Date: 08 January 2026 | Venue: Thirani School

Program: Panel Discussion | Attendance:38

RC Thane Hills once again showcased its greatest strength. A rich and diverse talent pool within the club — through an inspiring panel discussion featuring accomplished women professionals from different fields and age groups.

Introduction: Ms. Deeba Khan, Moderator: Ms. Vidya Pradhan

Panelists: Dr. Sheetal, Ms. Sonu Dhakan, Ms. Akanksha Ghotkar,

Vote of Thanks: Aniket Kanade

The program was conceptualized, anchored, moderated, and enriched entirely by Hillers, reflecting the club's strong culture of leadership, participation, and collaboration. Ms. Vidya Pradhan excelled as Moderator, steering the discussion with confidence and depth. Ms. Sonu Dhakan shared her journey in her inimitable and engaging style, while Dr. Sheetal and Ms. Akanksha Ghotkar spoke about discovering their passion and converting it into purposeful professions.

Appreciation for Explorer group facilitator PP Rajeev Tipnis for providing guidance. Explorers had brainstorming session followed by dinner at PP Rajiv's home recently.



Club Meeting – 28 Saturday, 16th January 2026 | Venue: Kuvega Music Enclave

Celebration of Makar Sankranti & Pongal

Club Meeting was a vibrant celebration of Makar Sankranti and Pongal — festivals deeply rooted in India's agrarian culture and celestial science. Thank you Rtn Senthil to support Pongal Sankranti traditional meal (sapadam). Similarly thanks PP Atul Bhide for additional support with sweet gul poli. The evening was further enlivened by members dressed in traditional attire, colourful sarees, peppy

musical performances by Rotal winners, and high-energy dance performances by Rotaract members, all of which added vibrancy and joy to the celebration.


Compliments to January month Explorer group and facilitator PP Rajeev Tipnis. Festivals and fellowship are the glue that bind a club together, and the enthusiastic participation of 112 members and guests stood as a strong testimony to the unity and strength of RC Thane Hills.



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Weekly Meeting

PAST LIFE REGRESSION



Ever wondered how digging into your past memories can be a great healer? Music soothes our minds, but can it also be therapeutic in literal sense? Let's find out from our guest speaker Dr. Manjiree Gokhale.

Dr. Manjiree Gokhale is an accomplished scholar and practitioner in Yoga, Indian Classical Music, and Holistic Therapies with over 30 years of experience. She holds a Ph.D. in Music and a Master's in Yogashastra. A QCI Certified Yoga Teacher and Reiki Master, she's trained in Hindustani Classical Vocal Music and Sound Healing.

Thursday 22nd January 2026
7:30 pm

Thirani High School, Vartak Nagar, Thane



Club Meeting – 30 | Antakshari Night

Saturday, 31st January | Venue: Kuvega, Thane

By the Hillers, for the Hillers, and with the Hillers — that perfectly summed up our vibrant Antakshari evening. Five melodious teams took the stage: Sitar | Shehnai | Bansuri | Veena | Mridangam. The result was a high-energy contest enjoyed by a strong attendance of 51 Hillers and family members. Kuvega proved to be the perfect venue—comfortable, warm, and just right for such an engaging evening.

Winners: Shehnai stole hearts and gold while Mridangam claimed a well-deserved silver

Star Performers Behind the Scenes

Two couples truly owned the evening with their flawless planning and execution:

Shreyasi – Shailesh and Madhavi – Aniket

This fantastic four designed engaging rounds, ensured high energy throughout, and never compromised on rules. They were ably guided by PP Sucheta and PP Rajeev. A big shout-out to Dhanashree, our knowledgeable judge—her experience is truly unparalleled. Explorer Group led by Facilitator PP Rajeev led from the front and made it an enjoyable evening.

Team TiTEN



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Condolences



Celebrating the Life of Padmakar "Anna" Nagavkar

Our beloved Anna departed for his heavenly abode on January 1, 2026, at the age of 96. He was a man of iron will, remaining active and spirited until the very last moment. From his glory days as a Body builder (Mr Bombay) and weightlifting champion and to his expert hand with engines and mechanics he was our ultimate handyman. We find peace knowing his pious soul is at rest.

Fondly remembered by:

Jayant & Nileema, Inda, Karan, and Aashay.

We will always love you and miss your presence.



Dr Rajashree (Asha) Vijay Karkhanis

04/09/1942 - 06/01/2026

Remembering her fondly, her loving son Dr Armit Karkhanis, loving daughter-in-law Dr Anagha Karkhanis, and beloved grandson Adiv Karkhanis.

Prayer meeting:
Saturday, 10 January, 4-7 pm,
Federation House (TMA),
Plot No.6, Next to Hotel Dwarka,
Wagle Estate, Thane

Karkhanis, Madgavkar and Walavalkar family

With deep sorrow, we announce the passing
of our beloved mother

* Smt. Sumathi S. Shetty *

who left us peacefully
this evening.



Funeral Details:

Date & Time:
Saturday, 10th January 2026
at 1:00 p.m.

Venue: Jawahar Baug
Crematorium,
near Dadoji Konde
Stadium

Friends and family may pay their respects at her residence:

Flat No. 2
Greeshma Residency, Tower No. 1
Dharmaveer Nagar
Mental Hospital Road, Thane (W) - 400604
Landmark: Near Teen Haath Naka

We request your prayers for the departed soul.