



MAY IS YOUTH SERVICE MONTH



HOLGER KNAACK
Trustee Chair 2025-26

Trustee Chair's Message May 2026

Our largest program at The Rotary Foundation is PolioPlus, followed by a significant new initiative called the Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge, which emerged from the first Programs of Scale initiative in Zambia. Through this work, we are combating malaria, pneumonia, and diarrheal diseases — the three leading killers of children under 5 in Africa.

A healthy child still needs an education, and education is where futures are built.

Rotary is finding ways to invest in the next generation through partnerships and creative approaches. **Johan Denolf**, of the Rotary Club Damme, Belgium, and **Nirmal Rijal**, of the Rotary Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town, Nepal, share one remarkable example:

In the mountains of Nepal, the children of Melamchi Ghyang village had no school. In 1985, a teacher named Purna Gautam set out to change that, founding a school on the promise that no child would ever be turned away. For many girls and boys, it became a lifeline against threats such as child labor, early marriage, and human trafficking.

In 1999, Hilde Kuypers, a Belgian humanitarian, was so moved by Gautam's mission that she founded KetaKeti, a nonprofit, to support it. KetaKeti and the Rotary Club of Damme built a partnership while the club helped the community recover from a 2015 earthquake.

In 2024, the Rotary Club of Damme — working with the Rotary Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town and 15 clubs from Belgium and Germany, with support from District 2130 — united around a \$175,000 global grant.

The project brought solar energy to the school, eliminated dependence on firewood for cooking, powered a medical post, and launched reforestation and environmental education.

By 2025, enrollment had climbed to 440 students. Rotary clubs committed to three years of teacher salary contributions. By 2027, the school aims to be self-sustaining through an alumni fund, matched dollar-for-dollar by KetaKeti Belgium. What began as one teacher's promise has become a story of global friendship and the power of education.

Through a Rotary Foundation global grant, hundreds of Nepalese children now have a genuine shot at the future they deserve. Most remarkable of all: The school's own alumni are now helping secure that future for the next generation. That is the sustainable, generational impact Rotary endeavors to create.

There are countless such stories waiting to happen. With your commitment and The Rotary Foundation behind you, you can be part of one.



Rotary, Rotaract empower extraordinary change

By Roshan Karki, Rotary Club of Rudramati Kathmandu and the Rotaract Club of Manohara, Nepal

blog.rotary.org :: May 05, 2026



Roshan Karki, right, at the opening ceremony of a President-Secretary meet in Hetauda, Nepal, with Rotaractor Shrisha Dhakal.

My journey began with the Rotaract Club of Manohara as a charter member. Like many young members, I joined to learn, connect, and contribute. Over time, Rotaract became far more than a club — it became a training ground for leadership and service. I had the privilege of serving as club president in 2013-14 and again in 2014-15, experiences that taught me responsibility, teamwork, and the power of collective action. Most importantly, they showed me that leadership is not about titles, but about serving others with purpose.

As my involvement deepened, so did my vision. In 2023-24, I served as district Rotaract representative for District 3292 (Bhutan and Nepal). This role challenged me to think beyond individual clubs and focus on nationwide impact. During my tenure, we organized nationwide cleaning campaigns, uniting Rotaractors across districts to care for our environment. Seeing young leaders come together with a shared mission remains one of the most fulfilling moments of my Rotary journey.

Another defining milestone was our nationwide blood donation campaign. Blood donation is one of the simplest yet most powerful acts of service, and the response was extraordinary. Together, we successfully collected 1,385 units of blood. That number represents lives saved, families supported, and communities strengthened. It reinforced my belief that when service is well-organized and driven by passion, its impact can be truly transformational.

While continuing my Rotaract journey, I also embraced Rotary. In March 2019, I joined the Rotary Club of Rudramati Kathmandu, marking a new chapter in my service life. Rotary broadened my perspective, allowing me to work alongside experienced professionals who shared the values of integrity, fellowship, and Service Above Self. I served as club secretary in 2020-21, gaining deeper insight into organizational leadership, governance, and sustainable service practices.

My service journey has since expanded beyond national boundaries. I currently serve as a council member of South East Asia Rotaract Information Center MDIO and have the honor of serving as chair of the Nepal Summit 2025. This role allows me to contribute at a regional level, connecting leaders across South East Asia and strengthening collaboration within the Rotaract movement.

What makes my journey unique is that I never had to choose between Rotaract and Rotary. I remain actively engaged in both. Rotaract keeps me connected to youth energy, innovation, and grassroots action. Rotary provides long-term vision, mentorship, and wider community reach. Together, they form a complete and powerful service ecosystem.

If there is one lesson my journey has taught me, it is this: service does not end with age, position, or title — it evolves. Rotary and Rotaract are not just organizations; they are platforms that empower ordinary people to create extraordinary change.

Learn more about Rotaract and join the global movement of young leaders developing innovative solutions to our world's most pressing challenges.

Happy Birthday

Rtn. Soumya Chattopadhyay
falling on May 22

Mrs. Madhumita Maity, spouse of
Rtn. Rajarshi Ranjan Maity
falling on May 30

Ms. Ashim Dutta spouse of
PP Rtn. Paromita Das Dutta
falling on June 01

Hello!

In course of our RCM today at Casa Broadway, we have a Special attraction: "Bengali Word Game"

Meeting starts at 6:30 PM followed by **Bengali Word Game** at 7 pm. Each correct answer will get you a prize!. So please do not miss it

See You!

Rtn. Sudipta Kundu
President

Two Indian Conservationists Win 'Green Oscars' For Protecting Endangered Species

Published By -Hency Thacker

thecsrjournal.in :: May 05, 2026



Two Indian women, Parveen Shaikh and Barkha Subba, have gained international recognition for their significant contributions to conservation at the 2026 Whitley Awards, commonly referred to as the 'Green Oscars'. They were among six winners awarded for their dedicated efforts in protecting endangered species and ecosystems. Presented by the UK-based Whitley Fund for Nature, these prestigious awards not only honour grassroots conservation work but also provide essential funding, training, and enhanced global visibility for the winners.

Conservation of the Indian Skimmer

Parveen Shaikh's ongoing campaign focuses on the Indian skimmer, a distinctive river bird notable for its unique feeding method. This species has seen a drastic decline in numbers due to habitat loss, pollution, and various river development projects, with India hosting over 90% of its remaining population. Shaikh's innovative approach involves the establishment of a network of local "nest guardians" along the Chambal River who actively monitor and protect nesting sites, ensuring the survival of the bird's eggs and habitat.

The impact of Shaikh's initiative has been significant, as the survival rate of nests has nearly doubled in recent years. The local community has begun to embrace their role, with many guardians now referring to the skimmers as "our birds." This subtle shift in terminology reflects a deeper sense of stewardship and connection to the species. Following the recognition through the Whitley Award, Shaikh's team aims to implement this successful model further across the Ganga basin and explore safer nesting methods.

Efforts to Protect the Himalayan Salamander

In the Darjeeling hills, Barkha Subba is committed to the conservation of the Himalayan salamander, a remarkable amphibian that has existed for millions of years but is now facing habitat destruction. Wetlands critical to the salamander's survival are diminishing due to factors such as tourism, urban development, and alterations in land use. Currently, only around thirty out of numerous breeding sites remain intact, and many of these lack official protection.

Subba's work extends beyond merely tracking the species; she is actively engaged in wetland restoration, invasive species removal, and collaboration with local populations, including tea garden workers and authorities, to safeguard essential habitats. Her efforts also include monitoring for diseases, particularly a lethal fungal infection that poses a significant threat to amphibian populations globally.

A core principle of Subba's strategy is fostering community involvement. Over 200 individuals are being trained to participate in conservation efforts, aiming to intertwine ecological protection with local livelihoods and cultural practices.

Significance of the Whitley Award

The Whitley Award signifies much more than acknowledgment; it provides £50,000 in funding that can be transformative for conservation initiatives that often face financial challenges. In an era where environmental degradation is accelerating, these narratives highlight the essential role of local individuals in conservation alongside governmental and organisational efforts. From the rivers of Chambal to the wetlands of Darjeeling, the projects led by these two women exemplify how small scale actions can lead to substantial global impacts.

This moment serves as a reminder of the critical role that grassroots actors play in environmental protection, illustrating a growing recognition of their valuable contributions within wider conservation dialogues.

Minutes of the 2172nd RCM of RC Calcutta Jadavpur held on May 06, 2026, Wednesday at Casa Broadway, Kolkata, 6.30 PM onwards.

President Rtn. Sudipta Kundu called the meeting to order and welcomed the members present.

- National Anthem was led by Rtn. Manas K. Ghosh and joined by all.
- Then, President Rtn. Sudipta briefly talked about the projects that have been carried out, in between:
 - The ongoing tailoring training course at Santoshpur Rishi Aurobindo Balika Vidyapith has been completed in March 2026. This was a training course for three months to train needy parents of the students of the school, to help them develop basic tailoring skills and for their employment opportunities.
 - The graphic designing course at Santoshpur Rishi Aurobindo Balika Vidyapith has also been going on satisfactorily, led by Rtn. Subrata Kundu.
 - The next batch of beautician training course at Sarenga village is continuing as planned.
- Further, President Rtn. Sudipta announced a few upcoming projects and requested the members to make it convenient to participate:
 - In commemoration of World Thalassaemia Day, the club will support and conduct a program at Kolkata Police Hospital on May 08, 2026 for the kids fighting thalassaemia, to provide them a day of joy and emotional support through events like magic show, puppet show, talent showcase etc. This will be a District 3291 event organised by RC Calcutta Jadavpur & RC Calcutta Universe in association with LBC.
- Next, President Rtn. Sudipta thanked all members and well-wishers of RC Calcutta Jadavpur for their generous support and donations all throughout and discussed about few future projects. He urged members for donation to be able to continue doing the good work that the club has been doing. The following projects would need immediate support and contributions:
 - Beautician & Tailoring s at Sarenga, Bankura
 - Donation of a Generator at Godapiashal MGM High School, Midnapore
 - Creation of a Rose Garden at Godapiashal MGM High School, Midnapore
 - Donation of 5 Havells water pumps for getting water from a nearby water pump at Lat Sashadhar Sardar Smiriti Sishu Niketan at Kultali, South 24 Parganas for the supply of potable water at the precincts. As many as 110 children would be benefitted with this support.
- PP Rtn. Pausali Paul donated a cheque of Rs. 12,000/- to Rtn. (Dr.) Asim Sil, and assigned the same for the club's Glaucoma project which has been taken care of, almost single handedly by Rtn. (Dr.) Asim Sil. The attendees thanked PP Rtn. Pausali Paul for her contribution and wished Rtn. (Dr.) Asim Sil for his future endeavors.
- Regarding District Learning Assembly (DLA) 206: President Rtn. Sudipta and Secretary Rtn. (Dr.) Saiful Anam Mir requested members to register for the event, scheduled at Hyatt Regency Kolkata on May 17, 2026.
- Secretary Rtn. (Dr.) Saiful Anam Mir conducted the club business and extended birthday greetings to Rtn. Shakhi Banerjee falling on May 08, Honorary Member Rtn. (Dr.) Dhruvajyoti Chattopadhyay falling on May 11, IPP Rtn. (Dr.) Mainak Sengupta falling on May 11, Mr. Anshuman Dutt spouse of Rtn. Koyeli Dutt falling on May 15, Honorary Member Rtn. (Dr.) Arup Ratan Dutta falling on May 18. Further, he extended anniversary greetings to Mrs. Sumita & Rtn. Santanu Bera and falling on May 07, Mrs. Sreyashi & Rtn. Manoj Bhaumik and falling on May 12.
- Minutes of the 2171st meeting, was confirmed by the members present and the same was concluded, with thanks to everyone.

