

I WANT TO END POLIO. JOIN ME.

ROTARY'S WORLD POLIO DAY



RID 3291
Rotary
Garden Reach



Light

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

October 22nd, 2024 - Vol. 47 No. 14

2285th Regular Weekly Meeting
Attendance: 11

Birthday Greetings
Oct 24thPP Tapan K Roy
Kabir, Son of Rtn. Abbas A Haldar
Oct 26thSpouse Archana, Wife of PP Naresh K Jain
Rtn. Dr. Saibal Naha
Oct 27thClub President, Rtn. Biswajit Saha

The five-day long Durga Pujo evokes a sense of pride, love and communal solidarity among Bengalis, in whichever part of the world they have chosen to call their home. The essence of the Goddess Durga's arrival on earth – her monumental fight against demons and putting the faith back into humanity – that good always necessarily triumphs over evil.



Shubho Bijoya! So, Durga Pujo is over and this is how we wish each other on Bijoya Doshomi, the tenth day of Durga Pujo, the day the goddess supposedly returns to her abode in Kailash.

As the vibrant hues of Durga Puja celebrations fade, the essence of Vijayadashami, or Shubho Bijoya, fills the air with warmth, festivity, and reflection. But beyond the spectacle of rituals, processions, and idol immersions, several deeper, lesser-known aspects of this festival make it an essential part of our cultural and spiritual heritage.

Although we celebrate the defeat of Mahishasura, the demon king was not entirely a villain in his origins. In Hindu mythology, Mahishasura was a devoted follower of Lord Brahma, and through intense penance, he was granted a boon that no

man could kill him.

This blessing made him overconfident, leading to his tyranny and destruction, which eventually necessitated Goddess Durga's intervention.

Mahishasura's tale serves as a cautionary reminder about the misuse of power and the perils of unchecked ambition.

Beyond the mythology, Vijayadashami invites us to think about the internal struggles we all face. We all deal with challenges like stress, negativity, or outside obstacles.

This festival encourages us to have the courage of Durga to overcome these difficulties, remain true to our values, and keep progressing.

One of the most heart-warming aspects of this ritual is its role in fostering social unity. Families and friends come together. It is a time for mending broken relationships, forgiving old grudges, and renewing social ties.

In today's world, where divisions and challenges seem more pronounced, Shubho Bijoya serves as a timely reminder that unity, kindness, and truth will always prevail.

The festival stands as a testament to the power of collective strength and the importance of community in overcoming adversity.

As we say goodbye to the goddess Durga for this year, we carry her blessings with us — a guiding light in our journey toward betterment.

Let this Vijayadashami be a symbol of **hope, strength, and unity for all of us.**

-EDITOR



PEACE AND CONFLICT
PREVENTION / RESOLUTION



DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT



WATER AND
SANITATION



MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH



BASIC EDUCATION AND
LITERACY



ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT



SUPPORTING THE
ENVIRONMENT

The Power to transform lives

Raju Subramanian, RI Director, 2023-25



Dear Rotarians,

As we progress through this Rotary year, I am filled with pride and optimism for the impact we are making in our communities. Each of you embodies the spirit of service that Rotary stands for, and together, we are lifting lives and creating lasting change. Our collective efforts are turning our vision into reality, and as we move into the next phase of the year, our focus shifts to one of the most critical areas: economic and community development.

Economic and community development is about creating opportunities for people to sustain themselves with dignity. While poverty has plagued our country for centuries, our enduring national spirit is slowly but surely driving us back to our past glory. The streets are filled with vendors — selling vegetables, fruits, snacks, repairing mobiles, stitching clothes, and crafting handmade goods — each a testament to the resilience of those striving to make a living, despite limited resources. Although they may cause disruptions and offend our sensibilities, their relentless

determination is something we must recognise and support.

For centuries, India has shaped the world with wisdom, offering knowledge and philosophies. Today, our people manage global enterprises and contribute to economies worldwide. Yet at home, while we see a revival of the entrepreneurial spirit, many still struggle to rise out of poverty. As Rotarians, we have the power to change this. Every opportunity we create not only lifts an individual out of poverty but also transforms entire families, paving the way for a future where our children can thrive in a secure and prosperous world.

I have witnessed first-hand the talent, compassion and dedication of Rotarians during my visits to districts and clubs. Our members are eager to surpass their previous efforts, with a natural desire to help others. Our leaders are focused on enriching the club experience, which builds stronger connections and leads to greater participation in events and projects. I can confidently say that not a moment passes in Rotary without someone, somewhere, benefiting directly from the efforts and contributions of a Rotarian. No other organisation can claim this kind of global impact.

Project Positive Health is a national initiative aimed at raising awareness about the importance of walking, exercising and eating right. I encourage you all to embrace these healthy habits and promote them among your family and friends. Another crucial focus for us is DEI — Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. While we are a diverse nation, equity and inclusion still need attention. It's time we take deliberate steps to embed these values into our clubs and communities. A more equal and inclusive society is our safeguard against internal conflicts.

In closing, I want to express my deep gratitude for your support. Rotary's impact is felt across the globe, and it's your commitment that makes this possible. As we continue our journey, let's stay united in our mission to serve, uplift and inspire. We will make this year one of remarkable achievements and lasting change, and continue crafting the *Magic of Rotary*.



Rotary Club of Madras donates new houses to Irular community



Rotary Madras on Sunday handed over keys to 29 new houses to the members of the Irular community in Boomanjikulam village near Gummidipoondi. According to a press release, the initiative is a part of the Rotary's larger mission to support underserved communities and enhance their living standards through sustainable development. This project aims to replace makeshift, unsafe dwellings with permanent, secure homes that promise privacy, all-weather protection, and better health and hygiene. All the donated houses are equipped with solar power systems. The

Rotary's District Governor-elect Vinod Saraogi, Club President G Chella Krishna, Club Secretary Rajesh Mani, Director of Community Services, Anuradha Ganesan were among those present.

Scaling Adolescent Health in India

Arogya World Aims to Recognize 400 'Arogya Schools'

Arogya World announced today a new Commitment to Action at The Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) 2024 Annual Meeting, to help the next generation in India lead healthier lives. The global health non-profit is committed to reaching 5 million adolescents (11-14-year-old middle school children) from rural and urban India, and helping them improve their health. Over the next 4 years, the non-profit has also pledged to get 400 schools to become Arogya Schools, and promote health throughout the school community on a sustainable basis. Joining Arogya World on this Commitment to Action are several leading organizations: Rural India Supporting Trust, a well-regarded funding partner, as well as longstanding implementation partners Child in Need Institute, (CINI), and SRU Innovations. In addition, new mission-aligned partners Rotary India Project Positive Health, The Edward and Cynthia Institute of Public Health and Roundglass Foundation have also joined the effort.

"We have designed this ambitious public health initiative to scale our proven adolescent health program, leverage the school setting as a platform for change, and teach millions of young adolescents the basics of healthy living before their lifestyle habits are fully set," said Dr. Nalini Saligram, Founder & CEO of Arogya World. "Changing their health behaviours now is critical so that we can set the young adolescents up for a lifetime of health. These young people will fuel India's growth and this initiative will help ensure a healthy and productive next generation and cement India's position as an economic powerhouse on the global landscape."

"The Rural India Supporting Trust (RIST) is proud to continue our commitment to reaching the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by partnering with Arogya World. Our joint efforts on reducing preventable health





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issues in India can lead to people living healthier and more productive lives. Arogya World's approach brings us closer and closer to winning the war against Non-Communicable Diseases,” said Paul Glick, Executive Director, RIST.

“Arogya’s adolescent health program is a very good fit with Rotary India’s Project Positive Health and we are pleased to leverage the huge mobilizing power of our Rotary Clubs and the thousands of schools they already work with, to positively impact the health of these young people, now and in the future,” said *Dr. Bharat Pandya, renowned Rotary leader and one of the Principals of Rotary Foundation India.*

“We are proud to be a partner of Arogya World for many years, and are so pleased we have been able to bring their innovative program to hundreds of thousands of children already in West Bengal. Quality implementation marks our work and we are committed to bringing our expertise and district-wide deployment strategies to help Arogya World meet their bold goal,” said *Dr. Indrani Bhattacharyya, CEO, Child in Need Institute.*

“We have grown with Arogya World over the years and are pleased to continue to scale their school health program in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar,” said *Dr. Imteyaz Akhtar, Director, SRU Innovations.*

“We will leverage our available institutional public health practitioners to supervise and support the implementation of this program in parts of Karnataka and other regions of India. This initiative aligns with our own priorities on health and education and will help secure a hopeful future for India's children,” said *Dr. Edmond Fernandes, Honorary Director, Edward & Cynthia Institute of Public Health (ECIPH) - a unit of CHD Group.*

Arogya means ‘good health’ in Sanskrit or living life without disease. Arogya Schools are Healthy Schools with a mandate to promote health in the school, and the communities around them, year after year. Core to health becoming part of the DNA of the Arogya school, is the establishment of parent, teacher, student committees on health. The implementing partners will nominate the schools, score them on their preparedness, train and nurture them, and build capacity to roll out health programs and recognize these leading Schools in meaningful ways. Criteria for Arogya Schools have been developed with the input of implementing partners.

For more than a decade, Arogya World has been empowering people to lead healthier lives. Realizing the importance of focusing on adolescents, the non-profit launched its Healthy Schools program in 2012. The two-year Arogya program uses age-appropriate compelling games and activities to teach 11-14-year-olds the basics of healthy living, at an impressionable age, before their lifestyle habits are set. This well-thought-through science-based effective program instils healthy living in middle school children in rural and urban India. It has shown >15% increase in awareness and about 10% improvement in behaviour change. In COVID times, the content was digitized and has been deployed in >1 million kids through 2023, in traditional, digital, and hybrid modes in the school and community setting. Impact analysis of knowledge and behaviours from thousands of kids from 2015 to 2022 was done with the Stanford Center for Asian Health Research and Education.

India is a diabetes capital with >100 million diabetics and 136 million pre-diabetics. However, type 2 diabetes is largely preventable with 3 lifestyle changes according to WHO and landmark clinical trials – one must eat right, increase physical activity, and avoid tobacco. Prevention through behaviour change is a smart solution to the diabetes tsunami. Adolescents are a prime target for Arogya’s diabetes prevention efforts as adolescence is when lifestyle habits are acquired, and there are 250+ million adolescents in India. Some of the health trends in this population are staggering - 10% of India’s adolescents are already pre-diabetic. 3 out of 4 of them get insufficient physical activity. And 1/3 of them are estimated to have high blood pressure.



Renewing the fight against Polio

Deepak Kapur, Chair, India National PolioPlus Committee

The occurrence of two Vaccine Derived Polio (VDPV) cases in India has alarmed all of us. India has been free of the wild polio virus (WPV) since January 14, 2011. The two WPV-endemic countries in the world are Pakistan with 17 cases and Afghanistan with 18 cases to date.

Unfortunately, VDPV cases are prevalent in many parts of the world. A new vaccine, nOPV has helped address outbreaks of VDPV. But the job is not yet done. It is time that all Rotarians rededicate themselves to Rotary's goal of a polio-free world, which is very much in sight. From more than 3,50,000 cases globally of wild polio, we are down to just 35. The end of the dreaded wild polio virus is very much on the horizon.

The National Polio Surveillance Project (NPSP) is conducting special surveillance of immunodeficient children, who are at enhanced risk of contracting polio in Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, etc. This is a unique surveillance activity in India. The detection of the variant polio in an immunodeficient child each in Kerala and Shimla (Himachal Pradesh) is not too alarming a development, since this is to be expected in such children whose bodies do not make antibodies even after administration of the vaccine. Such children, unfortunately, do not normally live beyond two years of age. The variant case detected in Meghalaya has presented with ambiguous VDPV.

The biggest dangers in India are:

- ☀ **Possibility of importation of the WPV from Pakistan and Afghanistan**
- ☀ **Possibility of importation and circulation of VDPV2**
- ☀ **Sub-optimal immunisation levels in 270 revenue districts across the country. The national average of polio immunisation is around 90 per cent, which still leaves 10 per cent of the cohort of 26 million children who have never received a dose of the polio vaccine**
- ☀ **Missed new-born children (out of around 2.5 million) who have not received the birth dose**
- ☀ **Several pockets in various parts of the country where immunisation levels are well below the national average of 90 per cent. NPSP is currently making a list of such pockets, which would be shared with Rotary once it is ready**
- ☀ **The national average of 90 per cent immunisation is likely to be diluted by migrants from Myanmar, -Bangladesh, etc.**

Rotarians in India must concentrate on keeping the wild polio virus out. We must work in collaboration with the government and our partners — WHO, UNICEF, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and GAVI to keep our immunisation levels at 100 per cent, so that no child falls prey to the vaccine derived polio virus. To do this, we



should go back to the principles that we have so efficiently employed in the past: Collaborate with the government at the state and district level to achieve 100 per cent immunization; meet regularly with the partners at the state and district level for concerted action; keep up our advocacy efforts with political and religious leaders and bureaucrats; and set up immunisation booths on NIDs and SNIDs.

PRID Michael McGovern, chair of the International PolioPlus Committee, has constituted the following Ad Hoc India National PolioPlus Operations Committee to help districts in India face the challenge posed by polio:

Chairman: PDG Deepak Kapur



Advisors: RI Director Anirudha Roychowdhury and PRID Ashok Mahajan

Members: RID 3132, PDG Dr. Rajiv Pradhan, Lokesh Gupta, RID 3182, PDG Dr. P Narayana, Ajay –Saxena & RID 3291, PDG –Shyamashree Sen.

Let us resolve to not fritter away the gains from the dramatic progress that we have made in trying to eradicate polio from the world. We must keep up the promise of a polio-free world that we have made to the children of the world.

RIPE Mario Camargo inaugurates Rotary Global Youth Exchange Leadership Conclave

Mario Camargo, Rotary International President-Elect for year 2025-26, arrived on two-day visit in connection with **Rotary Global Youth Exchange Leadership Conclave, 'RESONANCE'**, to be held on September 28th & 29th, 2024.

RIPE Mario, was the Chief Guest at the event that brings together young leaders from around the globe to exchange ideas, foster leadership, and inspire global citizens. The programme was hosted by Rotary District 3030 for first time under leadership of District Governor, Rajinder Singh Khurana. Incidentally, RIPE Mario himself was Rotary Youth Exchange student in his young days.

He will be accompanied by Guests of Honour, Directors of Rotary International, Anirudha Roychowdhury, TN Subramanian, along with Flt. Lt. KP Nagesh, Rotary International Director Elect. This landmark event will feature participants from various countries, all of whom have been part of the esteemed Rotary Youth Exchange Programme, along with Rotary Youth Exchange officers, Rotaractors and Rotarians from various Districts of country. The conclave aims to cultivate leadership skills, enhance cultural understanding, and promote peace by encouraging youth to take an active role in shaping their communities and the world, said a Rotary release.

Keynote speakers include esteemed Rotarians, global change makers, and alumni of the Rotary Youth Exchange

Programme who have made significant contributions to their respective fields. The agenda also includes interactive workshops, leadership development sessions, and cultural exchanges designed to foster a sense of unity and collaboration among the participants. Rotary International has a long-standing commitment to developing youth leadership, The Global Youth Exchange Leadership Conclave builds upon this foundation, offering a unique opportunity for young leaders to network, collaborate, and expand their horizons. Rotary believe in the power of young people to drive positive change. This conclave is a testament to Rotary's commitment to nurturing leadership skills in the next generation, ensuring they are well-equipped to address global challenges. "Youth are the architects of tomorrow's world and at Rotary, we believe in providing them with the right tools and opportunities to shape a brighter future. The Global Youth Exchange Leadership Conclave is a space where young leaders can come together to share their ideas, learn from one another, and collectively address the challenges of our time", said a release issued by Tarun Patel, PR Chair, Rotary International District 3030. At the event, attendees will engage in thought provoking discussions and speeches on issues, including, power of youth leadership, importance of cultural exchange, enduring values of service, compassion and peace.



Minutes of the 2284th RWM held on October 4th, 2024 at residence of PP Dr. Arabinda Ray's, Parnasree Greens

1. President Biswajit Saha called the RWM to order and requested the Rotarians to rise for the National Anthem.
2. Flood relief material were distributed at RCC Joypur on September 28th, 2024. Members present President Biswajit Saha, Rtn. Abbas & Rtn. Santosh Singh.
3. IPP Shweta & PP Prosenjit Barua visited Sanghati, Jagacha on September 28th, 2024 and donated 20 kgs of rice, 10 kgs each of atta and maida, 3 liters of white oil and 3 kgs of sugar.
4. President Biswajit will visit Sanhati Old Age Home on October 2nd, 2024 to distribute 11 sarees, 5 nighties and rations.
5. President Rtn. Biswajit Saha visited Sanhati, Jagacha on October 2nd, 2024 and handed over 11 sarees, 4 nighties and 10 Kgs of mustard oil, atta, soybean, suji to the inmates.
6. PP Tapan Roy, PP Prosenjit Barua, PP Kumud Kar donated 152 kgs of rice, 50 kgs of mustard oil, 50 kgs of soybean were distributed among 450 families of Tiger victims during the Milan Mela at RCC Champa Mahila Samity on September 29th, 2024.
7. A Water Purifier (RO) was handed over to RCC Champa Mahila Samity for the girls' hostel. An amount of Rs. 1000 collected as token charges.
8. Pre-Puja Clothes Distribution was held at RCC Badartala. 25 sarees, 25 lungis & children's outfits were sponsored. Members attended the programme were PPs Dr. Arabinda Ray, Mousumi Bhattacharyya, Sanjay Bhatt, Abinash Singh, PE B Mohan, Rtn. Santosh Singh and IWC Garden Reach PP Dr. Sharada Ray.
9. Puja Porikrama for specially-abled children and Senior Citizens organised by NIP. Rotary Garden Reach will co-host the event and our contribution will be Rs. 5000. The program will be on October 6th, 2024 and lunch will be provided by the Organisers.
10. Next RWM & 2nd Club Assembly will be held on October 22nd, 2024 after the Pujio holidays.
11. Acting Secretary PP Mousumi conducted the club business.
12. On confirmation of the minutes, President Biswajit terminated the meeting.

