

“YOU ARE THE
LIGHT
OF THE WORLD...”


2354th RWM

RID 3291, Zone-16
Rotary
Garden Reach



One Earth

ONE HOME. ONE FUTURE.



Let's be the *Change* our Earth needs.



INSPIRE
Stories that
move us



LEARN
Ideas that
empower us



ACT
Steps that
create impact



TOGETHER
Building a community
that cares

“The Earth is what we all have in common.” – Wendell Berry



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A Letter From Me—Your Earth

Hello, my dear Earthlings,

Yes, it’s me. The big blue-green ball you’ve been living on rent-free since... well, forever. I thought I’d finally write to you—on this occasion you call **World Earth Day**; (lovely idea, by the way. I do appreciate the annual reminder that I exist.)

I’ve watched you grow—from curious wanderers to builders of cities that sparkle like constellations on my skin. I’ve held your oceans, absorbed your storms, nurtured your forests, and patiently endured your experiments... some brilliant, some... let’s say “enthusiastically misguided.”

Don’t worry, this isn’t a complaint letter. If it were, trust me, I have volumes. But today, I want to talk—heart to heart.

You see, I don’t need saving in the dramatic sense. I’ve survived ice ages, meteor strikes, and tectonic tantrums. I’ll endure. The real question is—will you?

So here I am, offering you something simple. Not commandments, not rules—just my humble 7 AOFs (yes, I heard you humans love structured frameworks).

My 7 AOFs — Acts of Friendship

1. Acknowledge me, don’t just celebrate me.

A day of hash-tags is sweet. But I exist all 365 days. Notice me when you breathe, when you sip water, when you complain about the heat I didn’t entirely cause.

2. Own your footprint.

You don’t need to become a monk in the mountains. Just be aware. Every choice leaves a mark—some lighter, some... let’s just say, elephant-sized.

3. Fix what you can, don’t forward the blame.

Ah yes, your favourite sport: passing responsibility. Governments, industries, neighbours—everyone’s involved. So are you.

4. Appreciate small actions.

Planting one tree won’t turn the Amazon around overnight—but it’s a start. And between us, I quite like trees. They’re excellent tenants.

5. Opt for less, not just better.

“Eco-friendly” is good. “Less consumption” is better. You don’t need five versions of the same thing—unless you’re collecting sunsets. Those are allowed.

6. Foster curiosity in the next generation.

Teach your children to fall in love with me—not through lectures, but through muddy shoes, starry nights, and the occasional scraped knee.

7. Act like you belong here.

Because you do! You’re not separate from me—you’re a part of me. When you care for me, you’re really just taking care of yourselves. Convenient, isn’t it?

I must admit, I do find you amusing. You create air purifiers because you polluted the air, bottled water because you dirtied the rivers, and “nature retreats” to escape the very cities you built. There’s a certain... poetic irony to it.

But I also see your kindness, your innovations, your ability to change—slowly, stubbornly, but surely.

So this Earth Day, don’t just make promises. **Make habits. Quiet ones. Consistent ones.** I’m not asking for perfection. Just partnership.

After all, I’ve given you everything—mountains to climb, oceans to dream by, skies to lose yourselves in.

The least you can do is stick around long enough to enjoy it properly.

With enduring patience (and a hint of optimism),

Yours truly,

Earth



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PREVENTION



DISEASE
PREVENTION
& TREATMENT



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SANITATION
& HYGIENE



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CHILD HEALTH



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& LITERACY



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*On behalf of all members of Rotary Garden Reach, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to **PE Dr. BN Jha** on being conferred as a **Fellow of the American College of Cardiology** on April 18, 2026, at Gyeongju, South Korea—a prestigious recognition of his lifelong commitment to excellence in cardiovascular medicine, patient care, and research. We also proudly congratulate **Rtn. Dr. Amitabh Ray** on being invited to the ASCO Annual Meeting in Chicago on May 29, 2026, where he will represent and share powerful narratives from the global oncology community.*

Your achievements inspire us all and bring immense pride to our Rotary family!

Passport clubs offer ticket to flexibility

Marco Cecala and Rebecca Wilks had been Rotary members for years when the couple moved to Yarnell, Arizona, in 2019. Suddenly, they were more than 25 miles from the nearest Rotary club. “We were wondering what to do,” Cecala recalls.

Eventually, they stumbled upon the Rotary Club of Valley of the Sun Passport, a reinvention of a traditional club based in a Phoenix suburb. The club meets online only once per month, and its board meets monthly as well. Intrigued, Cecala and Wilks tried it out and found their new Rotary home.

Rotary’s Guide to Passport Clubs explains that this type of club gives members a more flexible experience by encouraging them to regularly visit other clubs, which is where the “passport” part of the name comes from. Passport clubs can relax the attendance policy or offer a variety of meeting formats.

As Cecala and Wilks set out recruiting members, they discovered the passport format was ideal for people who were on the verge of leaving Rotary. “We talked to friends of ours who were former district governors and current presidents and said, ‘Look, if you’ve got somebody who’s teetering, send them to us,’” Cecala recalls. “We’ll talk to them and show them this is an alternative.”

Members of passport clubs often engage with people from other clubs whose interests match their own. “Many of us go to places and see projects we have supported for years,” Cecala says. “As a passport club, we are ambassadors for passion projects and creative ways to fund them.”

The Rotary Club of Ōtautahi Passport in New Zealand began intentionally as a passport club at a time when COVID-19 restrictions were in place, and the group held its first meetings virtually. Like the Valley of the Sun passport club, the group grew as members found other individuals who had either recently left Rotary or were unhappy in their clubs.



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"Our model is very flexible. If something isn't working, with club members' input, we change it," says Deb Gimblett, charter president of the New Zealand club. "Our meetings are less time-consuming. Members are encouraged to do what they can."

The club meets every other week at varied locations throughout the Canterbury region. There are no meals to pay for, although when the club meets at a local McDonalds, members can grab a burger or fries if they want. "We don't expect people to come to every meeting," notes Club President Martin MacLean. "Sometimes we'll have a meeting as part of an event, like a project. We might take half an hour at the beginning for a formal meeting and then go into our service."



DISEASE PREVENTION & TREATMENT

The Frederiksberg-Falconér Passport club near Copenhagen, Denmark, began as a traditional club but transitioned to the passport form in 2023, as the club and others in its district were experiencing a decline in membership. Club member Maiken Hallingskov, the district's membership chair, says a workshop with members of clubs in the Copenhagen area determined most wanted to stay in Rotary but weekly meetings had become too much.

The passport club has grown from 14 to 22 members, largely from active promotion on the LinkedIn networking site. Hallingskov says the limited time commitment is the major selling point.

"People want to keep it easy, and they want to do a special thing for the local community or someone else," says Hallingskov. "We are all very active, have our own companies, and don't have much time. Two hours a month is enough for us to get it done."



WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE

Tête-à-tête with Venky

Rasheeda Bhagat

Rotary Foundation may take time to move and make decisions but acts quickly in times of crises, emergencies or urgent needs, incoming TRF Trustee AS Venkatesh said in a freewheeling chat with

RID 3141 PDG Sandip Agarwalla at a meeting organised by Rotary Bombay. (Excerpts)

Sandip Agarwalla: How is TRF adapting its funding priorities of global grant structure to address emerging world challenges such as climate change or post-pandemic recovery that might not fit neatly into the current seven areas of focus?

AS Venkatesh: Adaptability is one of our Action Plan's focus areas; we are capable of adapting to emerging needs and requirements. However, let's not forget that The Rotary Foundation is an elephant which takes time to move. It's not a cheetah that can turn around quickly. It takes time to move because we are a large establishment present in over 200 countries with our 12 lakh membership. So, it takes time to make some changes.

But we've never been found wanting in times of crisis, emergencies, or urgent needs. For example, post-Covid, we had Covid grants dispersed immediately. Almost 175 districts got Covid grants immediately. So, we were quick to adapt. Similarly, we had created a fund for Ukraine on humanitarian and not political grounds. So, we have demonstrated our ability to adapt in the past, and will do so in the future as well.

Coming to your point on areas of focus, honestly, till date, I have not come across a project, other than building/construction, which they could not fit into an area of focus because these are so all-encompassing, including what you mentioned about climate change, which fits into Environment.

If you do come across any project which doesn't fit into an area of focus, except building/construction, I will be happy to take it to the trustees and create another area of focus if need be. Our aim is to ensure humanitarian needs are met; whatever it takes to do so, we will do.



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SA: What is the Foundation doing to make the impact of grants more visible and accessible to new and younger members who may be more digitally focused, helping them connect local fundraising efforts directly to global results?

ASV: Fundraising efforts are not the starting point for any Rotarian's engagement in Rotary or TRF. Engagement should start with being a part of a project, not necessarily fundraising, which will come automatically the moment you are engaged and have an experience of what a project

does to the community, the beneficiaries, and the difference it makes. So starting point should be engagement in some activity.

Let me relate a story from my IIM days, about Betty Crocker's cake mix. In the 1950s, when she launched this cake mix, it was a beautiful and tasty product, was placed on every supermarket, but the sales didn't take off. Then somebody had a bright idea. They removed the egg from that mix and the manual said: Crack an egg, add it to this mix and then bake it. Now the sales zoomed. The only difference was that without the egg, it became my cake. Before that it was Betty Crocker's cake. That was the difference.

This is applicable to Rotary. It will become my Foundation only if I get involved, not just by giving money, but through a hands-on experience of a project. So give the younger generation a chance to play a part in a project. Let them experience the joy of making a difference personally... through "my project". Fundraising will come later.

SA: Beyond PolioPlus, are there plans for another signature campaign?

ASV: Till we are completely out of polio, it is not fair to talk about other projects and dilute our efforts towards this cause, for which we have been struggling for over 35 years.

Once Polio is done... and here I can only guess... the way I see TRF's functioning in the last few years, there is more emphasis on moving towards regionalisation. What works in the US may not work in Japan, what works in Japan may not work in India. Rotary realises that one size doesn't fit all. I'd think in the future there may be a menu of options for different regions.

SA: Coming to your Rotary journey, what inspired you to join Rotary, and kept you engaged to become a governor, RI director and now trustee-elect?

ASV: To be honest, I did not join Rotary to do any service; that was the last thing on my mind. I joined Rotary to make friends outside my profession, outside my business. That is why I joined Rotary. But the difference that I personally make to people's lives is what keeps me in Rotary. My IIT fees were less than ₹2,000 for the entire B Tech course, which means thousands of taxpayers have paid to educate me; they didn't know who the beneficiary was. If I have the right to take advantage of several people's contribution, I have a duty to give back to the community, when I am in a position to return that favour. And TRF has given me an opportunity to donate without knowing who the beneficiaries (of my donation) are. I thought that was the best form of clearing my debt to the community.

SA: How can Rotary, bridge the gap between CSR and the grassroots service model of our clubs?

ASV: For any organisation to grow, not by small margins but exponential growth, partnerships are essential. You can't hope to double what you are doing all by yourself in a short span of time. In corporate world, they



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call it mergers and acquisitions; in Rotary we call it partnerships. You need to join hands with like-minded people or people who fill the void in your plan of things. Here corporates come in; they complement our strengths. Together we can do wonders. They don't have the foot soldiers that we have. We don't have the kind of money that they have. So if we join hands and there is a beautiful marriage, both can meet our aspirations. Corporates want to make a difference. They don't have the foot soldiers, and we don't have the kind of resources.

As it was possible to raise more money through CSR in India, TRF made an amendment to make it India's specific activity, and adapt to emerging needs.



On Friday, April 17th, 2026 our Interactors **Sayajeet Bhakta** and **Saptadipa Samanta** from Julien Day School, Howrah represented their Interact Club at the "Inter-School Musical Hunt", Indus Valley School, Ajoynagar.

The event was organised by RI District 3291 Chapter of International Fellowship of Rotarian Musicians in association with the District Interact Council.

Our heartiest congratulations to both our Interactors for participating!



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An environment care event for children

The Rotary Chennai Anchorage, RID 3234, hosted Rotakidz, a vibrant inter-club event that brought together young Annettes aged 3 to 13 years. Competing across three categories, the children explored the theme 'Environment – Project Planet' with enthusiasm, blending creativity with awareness on pressing environmental issues.

Whether it was a tiny tot dressed as a tree or an older participant articulating the need for renewable energy, each child demonstrated a genuine concern for the planet. "Their energy transformed the event into more than a competition; it became a celebration of young voices committed to change," said Bharati Saravanan, the event Chair.

The contests included painting and fancy dress, with topics ranging from nature and water conservation to recycling, wildlife protection, renewable energy and pollution control. The

children expressed these themes with imagination and clarity.

Adding to the festive atmosphere was an environment-themed photo booth that welcomed children and parents alike, offering instant framed photographs as cherished keepsake. Every participant received a goody bag and a certificate, while parents were also acknowledged with tokens of appreciation for their encouragement and support.

A magician's lively performance kept the excitement high, engaging the children with interactive magic and mentalism between sessions, ensuring there was never a dull moment.

"The young participants impressed everyone with their confidence, costumes and thoughtful presentations, truly reflecting the spirit of Gen Z – the future custodians of a sustainable planet," said Bharati.

The event was judged by Sesha Sai, a member of Rotary Madras; entrepreneur Kavya Reddy; and Divya, a teacher from the National Public School, Chennai. Meticulously planned by Club President Vinita Venkatesh, Rotakidz was a seamless blend of competition and joy; "a heartening reminder that the future of the planet is in capable and caring hands."



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Minutes of the 2353rd RWM held on April 14th, 2026 at BNR Officers' Club, Garden Reach

- 1. The President Bandaru called the meeting to order & requested all members to rise for the National Anthem.**
- 2. Members observed a minute of silence in memory of Asha Bhosle, Padma Vibhushan awardee, praying for her eternal peace.**
- 3. The President informed members about the Poila Baisakh Adda to be held on April 19th, 2026 from 7 pm at BNR Officers' Club. Members were requested to attend along with their families. A musical programme will be presented by Rtn. Santosh Kumar Singh.**
- 4. As decided earlier, a tree plantation drive will be conducted at Bharatgarh Rotary School in the last week of April 2026. 70 Betel Nut trees will be planted as per the school's request. 5 fruit saplings will be donated by PP Mousumi. PE Dr. Jha has confirmed a contribution of D2,500 towards saplings. Fencing will be arranged to protect the plants.**
- 5. A joint meeting with Rotary Calcutta Midtown & Rotary Calcutta Park Point has been proposed. The proposal was welcomed by members. Tentative Schedule, 1st week of May 2026**
- 6. On May 8th, 2026, the Thalassemia Society of India will organise a Blood Donation Camp. Our Club will support the initiative. Members will be present, and refreshments will be sponsored by the Club.**
- 7. Club Secretary, PN Shubhayan conducted the club business.**
- 8. President Bandaru confirmed the minutes of the last meeting and terminated the meeting.**



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WE MEET EVERY TUESDAY AT 7.30 P.M. AT B.N.R. OFFICERS' CLUB, GARDEN REACH, KOLKATA - 700 043

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