



**"YOU ARE THE
LIGHT
OF THE WORLD..."**

RID 3291, Zone-16
Rotary
Garden Reach



2329th RWM

THE LAST DROP





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PEACEBUILDING
AND CONFLICT
PREVENTION



DISEASE
PREVENTION
& TREATMENT



WATER,
SANITATION
& HYGIENE



MATERNAL &
CHILD HEALTH



BASIC EDUCATION
& LITERACY



COMMUNITY
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



ENVIRONMENT

Greetings on Birthday

Oct 24th : PP Tapan K Roy

Kabir, Son of Rtn. Abbas A Haldar

Oct 26th : Spouse Archana, Wife of PP Naresh K Jain

Oct 27th : IPP Biswajit Saha

"The Last Drop" — A Tale of Eradicating Polio

Once upon a time, in a small village surrounded by fields of golden wheat, lived a little boy named Ravi. He was six years old — curious, playful, and always running barefoot with his friends. But one summer morning, everything changed.

Ravi woke up unable to move his legs. His mother cried out in fear, rushing him to the village clinic. The doctor's face grew heavy — "It's polio," he said softly.

The disease that had once haunted millions had found another victim. Ravi's laughter was replaced by silence, his running feet by crutches.

The Turning Point

Word spread through the village. The government health team arrived soon after, carrying small vials and dropper bottles — the polio vaccine. They went door to door, calling out:

"Do boond zindagi ki — two drops of life!"

Some parents hesitated.

"Why should we give medicine to healthy children?" they asked.

But Ravi's mother stepped forward, holding her baby daughter close. "I didn't know then," she said, her voice trembling. "But now I do. No other child should suffer like Ravi."

Her courage changed hearts. One by one, families lined up. Children opened their mouths, and the little drops fell — simple, silent protectors against a deadly enemy.

The World's Mission

Years passed. Health workers travelled through deserts, climbed mountains, and crossed rivers to reach every last child. Some rode on bicycles, others on camels or boats.

Leaders, teachers, and volunteers joined hands. Posters appeared in every language, every country echoing the same promise:

"We will end polio — everywhere, for everyone."

And slowly, the world began to heal. India was declared polio-free in **March 27th, 2014**, and only a few corners of the earth still fought the last traces of the virus.

The Future We Must Protect

Now, Ravi — grown and determined — works as a health worker himself. He visits villages, giving the same two drops that could have saved his childhood legs.

He smiles when he sees children run past him, strong and free.

But he also warns their parents:

"Polio is gone only because we never stopped fighting it. The virus can return if we stop protecting our children."

The lesson is simple yet powerful — **Eradication is not the end, Awareness is the shield.**

The Message

Polio may be almost gone, but our responsibility remains.

Each drop of vaccine is a promise — a promise of movement, laughter, and life.

Let's keep spreading awareness.

Let's keep every child safe.

Let's END POLIO NOW!!!



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Born of Friendship

Holger Knaack, TRF Trustee Chair

Friendship in Rotary often bears fruit that can change the world. When I was Rotary president-elect, I served on the Board of Directors alongside then Vice President Olayinka 'Yinka' Hakeem Babalola from Nigeria. My wife, Susanne, spent time with Yinka's wife, Preba 'Precy' Babalola. Yinka and Precy support The Rotary Foundation, not only as Arch Klumph Society members, Benefactors and Major Donors but also as Rotary members who are deeply involved in Foundation projects.

Susanne and Precy's friendship led to their clubs joining forces. For October, as Rotary marks Community Economic Development Month, I thought Precy Babalola could best capture the impact of their collaboration in her own words:



Obuama, Nigeria, was hit hard by Covid-19. Many families, especially women and young adults, were left without stable income or opportunity. The community urgently needed practical support and long-term solutions.

My club, the Rotary Club of Port Harcourt Passport, decided to respond. We partnered with the Rotary E-Club of Hamburg-Connect and our districts to launch a global grant project focused on empowering people with skills that restore hope and dignity.

Over 250 women and young adults were trained in farming fish, poultry, and snails as well as bead making. Local facilitators led hands-on workshops, equipping participants with skills to start enterprises.

Families are now generating income and mothers can send their children to school. Youths are earning, teaching others, and contributing to the local economy.

Women, once stuck, are now leading their own businesses, training others, and finding a new sense of purpose. The project continues to ripple, creating not just jobs but confident community leaders.

This is what change looks like when dedicated Rotarians work together with the support of The Rotary Foundation.

Community economic development is an area of powerful projects for many reasons. We have experts in our clubs who know how businesses can strengthen their local economy. Such projects can be adapted nearly anywhere and often show early signs of success.

Our Foundation, too, provides the expertise of an engaged professional staff and the Cadre of Technical Advisers.

What began as dinner conversation led to a life-changing global grant. Isn't it remarkable that in Rotary, the friendships we make can create opportunities that transform lives for generations?

The quantum of Service by Rotary in India highest in the world

You expect any Italian male to be charming... for after all charm is built into the Italian DNA. RI President Francesco Arezzo does ooze charm... but he is much more than charming... he is both cerebral and witty, but at the same time so easy to talk to as he wears his power lightly. He may falter a little while searching for difficult English words, or stumble a bit pronouncing the long ones... but his disarming smile and spontaneous laughter more than make up for it. When he delivers a speech, it takes a couple of minutes to cut through the heavy Italian accent, but once you've done that, its content leaves you thinking.

Having done several olive oil tours around Europe, Turkey and North Africa, I quiz him on his family farm in Sicily, Italy, and producing olive oil for 200 years. "That farm is close to my heart because my mother, father of my mother, grandfather of my mother... was involved in the production. But today, more than me, Anna does all the hard work."

Arezzo grew up in Sicily where his family has lived for 800-900 years. "We are completely Sicilian. I was born in a little city of 70,000 people... for you it's a very tiny city. My childhood was great; the 1960s and '70s were a wonderful time to be in Italy."

He lost his father, a radiologist, at 10, and grew up with his mother. After training as a dentist elsewhere in Italy, he returned home to open his practice as a dentist. When and how did he meet Anna? "I met her when I was 2 years old," he grins. "Our families are very close and I'd call her parents uncle and aunt! We grew up together!"

So, who was the one who proposed? With a mischievous twinkle in his eye, he says, "Well, what can I say; she did a very strong campaign!" They got married in Oct 1979, and have two daughters and two grandchildren, one named after him and the other after Anna. "Just like you do in India," quips Anna.

Yes, there are so many similarities between India and Italy, I comment, like family bonhomie, sharing food when dining in restaurants etc. "Both countries have a long history and culture, so we are very similar... but we are also very different in some aspects," he adds.



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Asked when and why he joined Rotary, Arezzo says that soon after returning home after his education, his father's friends, members of the Rotary Club of Ragusa, proposed his name in 1989. "I have to confess that when I joined Rotary, I didn't know exactly what Rotary was. But as all friends of my father, and many people in the city I knew, were members of that club, so when they proposed my name, it seemed like a good thing to join. But as usual, you begin to understand what Rotary really is when you become club president. Then you understand how complex, beautiful and useful Rotary is for the community."

It took him 10 years to become club president and another 10 to become governor, and he gradually developed "a network all over Sicily, Italy and the world. I met a lot of people who were very interesting, very passionate and very close to my soul! And now I have many of my best friends coming from Rotary."

I ask Arezzo to spell out his vision and priorities for Rotary as RI President, even though he had virtually no time to plan his year. He responds: "Well, I just had a few days before I became President... such a short time to prepare. There are some things which are very important for Rotary, two of them are historical. One, the eradication of polio, it is so vital for our organisation. India did a great job, and was able to eradicate polio; doing something they said all over the world was impossible! It was a great, great job."

But now Rotary needs to finish the job as polio cases still remain in two countries, "where we are engaged — Afghanistan and Pakistan — and we have to complete the job."

The second one is the problem of membership "which probably India ignores because you are growing. At the Lead25 Conclave in Chennai they are going to present 250 new clubs, something that is impossible in Europe. Membership all over the world is a big problem, so that is my second priority."

RI President gives the example of his visit to India, where he has met not only existing friends but made new ones. "For me, India is a country where my friends live. If we have millions of people around the world who can comprehend the feelings, problems and challenges that people in other countries near them face, it is another small step towards peace. We have to enhance the comprehension between people. That is my aim... to improve what we can do, and have pacifist dialogues between countries."

This was Anna and Arezzo's third visit to India; the first was when he was RI President's representative at a meet in Lucknow, and the second during the Rotary Centennial in India celebrations in Kolkata. Expectedly, Anna is disappointed that she had no time for shopping! "Both of us love the culture, history and food of India and hopefully when we come for the Zone Institute this November, we will have some time for all this," he says.

"Oh yes, I would love to go shopping in India and I have told him to give me some time for shopping during the next visit," Anna says firmly!

Coming to Rotary in India and the kind of community service projects that Rotarians do here, Arezzo says, "The good thing, the very good thing, is what we saw earlier today... the number of projects that were launched is unbelievable and in so many different fields. We saw 100 pink autos for women... through this you are giving 100 women the opportunity to earn and maintain their livelihood. It was an excellent project and so moving. In the House of Friendship there were so many projects on health, water, sanitation. The quantum of service that Rotarians in India do is probably the highest in the world. It is amazing."

The other thing is the money the Rotarians in India give to The Rotary Foundation; it is huge. "Yesterday we had 29 new AKS members; that is amazing and probably possible in the US. But this is impossible in other parts of the world. In Europe it is absolutely impossible. So that is great. It is a vibrant Rotary in India with a lot of good projects, a lot of enthusiasm and passion among the Rotarians."

What about the negative aspects the last few RI Presidents have been talking about? "What is bad in India? In some places Rotarians are fighting each other. When we are in a Board meeting, we receive a lot of complaints about elections. In Evanston, if 10 complaints come, eight are from India. This is a problem. The level of internal fighting in Rotary in India is something that we have to find a way to reduce. It is a pity, because the Rotarians here are so active, enthusiastic and passionate."

Asked for a possible solution, Arezzo shrugs and says, "I don't know. It is not easy to find a solution. It is a cultural problem and we have to work on the Rotarians to convince them that there is room for everybody. If you don't become a club president or governor this year, you can wait. It is not such a big problem. But it is not easy to find a solution. The only way is to talk to the Rotarians and convince them!"

Turning generosity into lasting change

Bharat Pandya, TRF Trustee

The Rotary Foundation changes lives every day. From bringing the world to the brink of polio eradication, to giving communities clean water, educating children and empowering women, its reach is global and its results are lasting. It trains positive peace activators, fights disease, grows local economies and rebuilds lives after disasters. The Foundation turns our generosity into lasting change — creating hope, health and opportunity for millions.

TRF is a key partner in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. Since 1985, Rotary has reduced polio cases by 99.9 per cent, vaccinating over three billion children and preventing millions from paralysis. TRF helps in **advancing peace and conflict**



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resolution by training peace fellows who go on to mediate conflicts, build community trust and promote human rights globally.

TRF's high efficiency (over 90 per cent of funds go directly to programmes) ensures donor contributions have maximum impact and inspires trust. Its global network amplifies its reach and effectiveness. In essence, the Foundation creates a ripple effect — through programmes in the Areas of Focus, while empowering local communities to take ownership of their progress.

It is a reflection of our belief and commitment to TRF that in the 2024–25 Rotary year Indian districts contributed over \$38.2 million to TRF. District 3141 led by DG Chetan Desai was No 1 in the world and three Indian districts were in top 10 worldwide. Thirteen districts crossed the \$1 million mark in total giving to TRF. That's truly remarkable. I salute the dedication and generosity of Rotarians and Rotary families of India for this magnificent achievement. Compliments to the 2024–25 district governors and their TRF teams, and compliments to the zonal leadership teams — RRFCs, ARRFCs, E/MGAs and EPNCs — for this outstanding achievement which enabled India to be the Number 2 contributor in the world. Thank you one and all.

But when we are at the top we have to work harder to remain there. I encourage the 2025–26 TRF teams to put in their best efforts as we aim for bigger, better and bolder projects and support to TRF. Let's Unite for Good as we lead the way.

Are we attuned to our members' needs?

PDG Gurjeet S Sekhon, Member of the RI Membership Growth Committee

In the business world, there's a common understanding: knowing your customers is essential for success. Companies invest significant resources in understanding their clients' needs, preferences, and behaviours, not just out of generosity but because their future depends on it.

So, here's an important question: How can we extend the same level of care and support to our Rotary members?

After the initiation

Many Rotary clubs celebrate the induction of new members with fanfare. We shake hands, hand out pins, and take group photos. But after the initial welcome, something often goes missing.

Too often, Rotary clubs don't take the time to ask their members — especially newer ones — what brought them there and how we can help them succeed. The result is predictable: members drift, disengage, and eventually disappear. Some leave quietly. Others stay but stop contributing. The energy fades. The passion dims. And we may find ourselves wondering why our membership stagnates or declines.

Members as stakeholders

Every member who joins does so with expectations — some spoken, many silent. They may seek professional networking, opportunities for community service, personal growth, or global impact. But when we assume that one-size-fits-all programming will satisfy everyone, we do a disservice to those we claim to serve.

Our members are not just participants in Rotary — they are our internal customers. Just like successful businesses nurture their customers, we must nurture our members.

Serving our members, too

Imagine if each Rotary club embraced the mind-set of a service organisation, both to the community and its members.

What if we onboarded new members with personalised discovery sessions, instead of handing out orientation packets?

What if we regularly surveyed our members to understand what's working, what's not, and what they hope to achieve through Rotary?

What if we paired members with projects that align with their passions, rather than just their availability?

Taking care of our members improves morale and fosters growth. When members feel valued, they are more likely to stay engaged and become ambassadors for our clubs.

The importance of belonging

While Rotary isn't a business, it can learn from the best ones. Organisations like Apple, Amazon, and Zappos excel because they understand that the customer experience defines their brand. Similarly, the member experience defines our clubs.

It's not enough to expect members to show up and serve. We need to continually reflect on how we can improve their experience. If we invest in their experience — genuinely, consistently, and thoughtfully — they'll take care of everything else: projects, partnerships, and, yes, even membership growth.

A call to club leaders

If you're a club president, director, or committee chair, make this your legacy: know your members. Treat them like the valued members they are. Build systems that listen and respond to their needs. Celebrate not just service, but belonging.

Rotary is not just about what we do — it's about who we do it with and how we make them feel along the way.

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Minutes of the 2328th RWM held on October 14th, 2025 at BNR Officers' Club, Garden Reach

1. Acting President PP Dr. Sumanta Dasgupta called the meeting to order and welcomed the members and requested to rise for the National Anthem.
2. The Charter Day programme was reviewed. PP Dr. Arabinda Ray opined in the meeting that this year's Charter Day Celebration was different than the usual Charter Day celebrations held in past years. Motion to pay an advance to the decorator towards his outstanding payments was made by the Secretary but it was decided that the President would return and clear the decorator's bill. No further details regarding Charter Ceremony were discussed.
3. Cloth distribution program successfully completed. Positive feedback received from members who attended.
4. Acknowledgement to spouse Shweta & PP Prosenjit Barua for their initiative in completing the railing-guard work at Bharatgarh Rotary School.
5. A medical camp at Santragachi has been proposed by PP Prosenjit & spouse Shweta to be organised after Diwali.
6. PP Timir Roy updated on the Golf Fundraiser for Cervical Cancer —
 - 2500 children targeted for double-dose vaccination (ages 9–14).
 - 88 registered participants (target 100).
 - D25,000 per player.
 - Total fund raised: D1 Crore. The first medical camp was held on Sunday, October 12th, 2025 at Maniktala, attended by PP Timir Roy, IPP Biswajit Saha & PE Dr. BN Jha. Members to decide locations for upcoming medical camps.
7. Further decisions regarding medical camp locations and beneficiary identification to be taken after the President's arrival.
8. Rtn. Shubhayan, conducted the club business.
9. VP Dr. Sumanta Dasgupta confirmed the minutes of the last meeting and terminated the meeting.

