



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

RID 3291, Zone-16
Rotary
Garden Reach



2330th RWM



**COMMUNITY
SERVICE**



UNITE FOR GOOD



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



PEACEBUILDING
AND CONFLICT
PREVENTION



DISEASE
PREVENTION
& TREATMENT



WATER,
SANITATION
& HYGIENE



MATERNAL &
CHILD HEALTH



BASIC EDUCATION
& LITERACY



COMMUNITY
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



ENVIRONMENT

Greetings on Birthday

Oct 30th : Spouse Sharmishtha, Wife of PP Chinmay Pal

Oct 31st : Farheen, Daughter of Rtn. Abbas A Halдар

Rotary's Role in Bengal's Renaissance: Empowering Communities, Energising Economies

Bengal has long been a land of ideas, enterprise, and resilience. Yet, the path to sustainable economic and community development still holds challenges — from rural unemployment and urban underdevelopment to gaps in education, healthcare, and entrepreneurship. Rotary, with its global network and local heart is uniquely positioned to help script a new chapter in Bengal's progress story.

Rotary as a Catalyst for Change

Rotary's strength lies in connecting people of action with opportunities for transformation. In Bengal, this means:

- ❖ **Encouraging local entrepreneurship:** Creating microfinance initiatives and business mentorship programs that support women, artisans, and youth-led start-ups — helping them scale their ideas into livelihoods.
- ❖ **Skill development for employability:** Partnering with educational institutions and industries to provide vocational training in high-demand sectors like technology, renewable energy, and sustainable agriculture.
- ❖ **Sustainable rural development:** Supporting clean water access, smart farming, and eco-tourism initiatives that generate income while preserving Bengal's natural and cultural heritage.
- ❖ **Digital and financial literacy:** Empowering marginalised communities with digital tools and knowledge to engage confidently in today's connected economy.

The Power of Rotary Youth — Interactors and Rotaractors

Our young leaders are the heartbeat of this transformation. Interactors and Rotaractors can:

- ❖ **Drive innovation:** Launch social enterprises or tech-driven solutions for local problems — from waste management to education access.
- ❖ **Lead community engagement:** Organise awareness drives, health camps, and sustainability workshops in both rural and urban areas.
- ❖ **Build networks:** Collaborate across clubs, districts, and even borders to bring fresh ideas and resources into Bengal's development movement.
- ❖ **Mentor and be mentored:** Learn from senior Rotarians' experience while bringing youthful creativity, energy, and digital know-how to the table.

A Shared Vision for Bengal's Future

Imagine a Bengal where every village is self-reliant, every youth skilled, every woman empowered, and every community thriving in harmony. Rotary's mission of **"Service Above Self"** can transform that vision into reality — one project, one partnership, one person at a time.

By fostering collaboration among Rotarians, Rotaractors, and Interactors, we can spark a movement that redefines service — not just as charity, but as empowerment and economic inclusion. Together, we can ensure that Bengal's renaissance is not only cultural, but also economic, sustainable, and deeply human.



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ENVIRONMENT

A renewed fight against Leprosy

In India, Rotary members dispel myths and promote treatment.

On the outskirts of India's capital of New Delhi, the satellite city of Gurugram is a bustling technology and financial hub that's home to some of the country's largest companies, upscale residential developments, and popular entertainment districts. In the shadow of that wealth, there also lies a community of people with leprosy — one of hundreds that persist in India even though the disease is not highly contagious and is easily curable today.

A Gurugram businessman and Rotarian, **Tridibes Basu**, first visited the settlement several years ago. He knew such places existed yet was unprepared for the scale of poverty and suffering he encountered. "People were living without access to health care, clean water, and basic sanitation," he says. "Most of them had to beg for a living, because the very mention of leprosy sparked fear. It was seen as a curse and no one wanted to hire someone suffering from it."

Global efforts to eliminate leprosy have made tremendous strides in recent decades, with a 95% reduction in symptomatic case prevalence and the disease's disappearance from much of the world. However, India remains one of the few strongholds of the disease, with around 100,000 new leprosy cases detected every year, roughly half of the 200,000 cases recorded globally.

Also known as Hansen's disease, leprosy is caused by a bacterial infection that often starts with numb patches of discoloured skin and can progress to destroy nerves and muscles. It's curable with a multidrug therapy donated by the pharmaceutical company Novartis and provided for free through the World Health Organization. But if not treated in time, even patients who are cured can be left with serious permanent disability and disfigurement, leading to social ostracism and stigma so intense that some people in India self-exile in the country's more than 700 leprosy "colonies."

"Leprosy is one of the world's oldest diseases, but in many parts of the world, the greater suffering comes not from the illness itself, but from the stigma and discrimination that follows. Though curable, those affected are too often isolated, misunderstood, and denied basic dignity," says Nayan Patel, a long-time Rotarian in England who is an ambassador for Lepra, a UK-based international charity that diagnoses, treats, and rehabilitates people with leprosy.

Because the leprosy bacteria cannot be cultured in the lab, it's a challenge to study and remains something of a mystery. Scientists believe it is spread by droplets from the nose and mouth. But it is not highly contagious and around 95% of the population is naturally immune and able to fight off infection. Still, stigma, misinformation, and fear remain.

Rtn. Basu, a member of the Rotary Delhi South, saw the outcomes of this first-hand on his visits to the leprosy settlement in his home city. There he became friendly with a man in his 50s who stood out for his cheerful disposition and the fact that he was one of the few people there with a well-paying job, as a security guard at a nearby establishment. One day, Basu learned the man had lost his job and started needing a wheelchair. Six months later, he was bedridden. "His condition had grown progressively worse," says Basu, who became his Rotary District's Chair for Leprosy Control and alleviation in 2024. "I learned that once he started working, he had stopped taking his medication, a common problem we see among patients who just aren't aware enough of how to manage their condition."

In 2019, Basu's club and two others, Delhi South End and New Delhi, formed an alliance with **Lepra**, the charity, to raise awareness about how to identify early symptoms, to advocate, and to support those with disability caused by the disease. Soon the Rotary Delhi Regency Next joined as well.

Deepak Kapur, a member of the Rotary Delhi South who, as Chair of the India PolioPlus Committee, played a pivotal role in India achieving polio-free status a decade ago, was surprised during a meeting with Lepra representatives in 2019 to learn that leprosy was still a problem. "I had always thought that leprosy was relegated to the pages in history books, and the last I'd heard about it was in the film Ben-Hur," says Kapur. "I was shocked."

Working with Lepra, Rotary members began to tackle relief efforts in India under what Kapur calls "the four pillars." First was an effort to create awareness of leprosy among the public and dispel myths to let people know it is curable and is not spread through casual contact. "We spoke about the nature of the disease," says Kapur. "For instance, not too many people know that the government of India gives the multidrug therapy for free to patients. And within 72 hours of its administration, the person who's taking it stops being a spreader of the disease."

They extended their awareness drives to health care workers, including some doctors. So far, they have trained 500 of India's community health workers, the frontline force of trusted community members who deliver basic care, to identify signs of leprosy.



Finding cases was the next priority. Through clinics and awareness drives; they did community outreach to identify individuals with signs of leprosy who may have been unaware or afraid to seek treatment, encouraging them to get care. The disease can be hard to diagnose and is often missed. It also has a very long incubation period with symptoms sometimes emerging up to 30 years after exposure.

In the fourth pillar of the plan, the Rotarians helped those left disabled. For instance, they arranged for ulcer management and mobility aids like specialized footwear and wheelchairs, as well as reconstructive surgery, Kapur says.

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The Rotary partnership expanded to collaborate with the Leprosy Mission Trust India, which runs 15 hospitals across the country, as well as residential homes and vocational training centres that help around 1,200 people find jobs each year. Through a centre in the city of Noida, east of New Delhi, the Rotary clubs have worked with the nongovernmental organization to train around 120 people affected by leprosy and other disabilities to qualify to work as cosmetologists and IT professionals.

One of the first students to enrol was Disha Santhosh, 17. She grew up in a leprosy settlement in the Dilshad Garden area of Delhi, one of the largest of its kind in India and home to thousands of people affected by leprosy and their family members. Here most households face persistent financial hardship. Her father was affected by leprosy, but he had long been the sole breadwinner, working tirelessly as a plumber to provide for the family. To meet even basic needs, her father had to take out a loan, deepening the family's financial crisis. But through the training centre, Santhosh completed certification in cosmetology in March and is now employed, offering a vital lifeline to support herself and her parents.

Though leprosy stubbornly persists, there is hope for prevention. A possible vaccine called LepVax is in development and has shown promising results in preclinical tests against the *Mycobacterium leprae* bacteria that cause the disease. But until a vaccine materializes, much support is required.

"As Rotarians, committed to service and inclusion, we must come together to raise awareness, support early diagnosis and treatment, and challenge the harmful myths that still surround leprosy. Let us unite to end both the disease and the injustice," says Patel. "Together, we can restore hope, dignity, and opportunity."

Polio eradication explained

Do you have questions about Rotary's pledge to End Polio? We've got answers.

You've likely heard a lot about polio in recent weeks. Rotary members talk about it all year, but never more than in the month leading up to World Polio Day on 24 October. It's one of the most important days of the year for Rotary — a time to reaffirm our nearly four-decade commitment to eliminating this disease from the world.

Polio eradication may seem complicated, but it's actually fairly straightforward. If you've ever wondered about the science of the disease, the history of Rotary's fight against it, or the progress of the global eradication effort, find the answers to those questions and more below.

What is polio, and why is it such a threat?

Poliomyelitis, also known as polio, is a highly infectious disease that mainly affects nerves in the spinal cord and brain stem. Most people infected with the virus don't show any symptoms, but a small number become paralyzed. Polio primarily targets children under age five.

Polio can spread rapidly from person to person, such as through a cough or a sneeze. If an infected person doesn't wash their hands after coughing or using the toilet, they can transmit the virus even if they don't know they're infected. Polio can also spread through contaminated water in areas with poor sanitation.

Wild poliovirus occurs naturally in the environment and has three types. Type 2 and type 3 were declared eradicated in the 2010s, but type 1 remains. Variant poliovirus occurs when the weakened strain of virus contained in the oral vaccine circulates for a long time and mutates into a form that can cause paralysis like wild polio. Variant poliovirus cases are rare.

Why does Rotary care about polio eradication?

Rotary members are determined to end polio for many reasons — including that its effects are terrible, and its main victims are young children. Rotary International began working to vaccinate children against polio in 1979. In 1985, Rotary created its PolioPlus program to amplify these efforts. Then in 1988, Rotary and our partners launched the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI).

We've come a remarkably long way since then. Polio was endemic in 125 countries in 1988; that's down to two now. The global effort to eradicate polio has prevented an estimated 20 million cases of paralysis.

Wiping out this disease is possible. We are very close to ensuring that no child suffers from polio ever again.

How widespread is polio? Can it affect me?

Wild polio remains endemic in only Afghanistan and Pakistan. But because it spreads so easily, one or two cases can quickly multiply. In our world of global travel, an infected person can carry the disease to the other side of the world even if they aren't sick themselves. In 2022, an adult in New York, USA, contracted polio and was paralyzed. Genetic testing of the virus infecting that person linked it to polio viruses found in London and Jerusalem. This shows that as long as polio exists somewhere in the world, nobody is truly safe.

How do we fight polio?

Polio is fought primarily with vaccines and environmental surveillance. The GPEI promotes both routine and supplementary campaigns to immunize young children. Surveillance consists of identifying and promptly reporting polio cases and monitoring sewage water for the presence of the virus.

What role does Rotary have in the GPEI?

Rotary helped create the GPEI, whose other core partners include the World Health Organization, the Gates Foundation, UNICEF, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

Rotary members fight polio in many ways, including:

- ✓ **Raising funds**
- ✓ **Soliciting support from governments, nongovernmental organizations, and corporations**
- ✓ **Immunizing children**
- ✓ **Raising awareness in their communities**

Rotary has helped immunize 3 billion children against polio, contributed more than US\$2.9 billion to global polio eradication efforts, and helped secure more than US\$11 billion from donor governments.



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World Polio Day is only a reaffirmation of Rotary's pledge to Keep India Polio Free and take the last step towards a Polio Free World. On October 24th, 2025 RI District 3291 under the leadership of DG Dr. Ramendu Hom Chaudhuri along with DPPC PDG Mukul Sinha & EPNC PDG Uttam Ganguli and 44 Rotary clubs conducted several outreach programmes. The program was supported by the District Public Image Committee and 91.9 Friends FM. Car rallies by Rotary Howrah, Belur, and rally by Rotary Contai need a mention; a very high impact Public Image outreach by Rotary District 3291.



Reflections from a new father

The following is an open letter written by Brian King, Director of Membership Development for Rotary International, nearly 20 years ago. King, Membership Chair of the Rotary Evanston, Illinois, shares it annually to thank staff and Rotary members for their efforts to eradicate polio. I am sharing in honour of World Polio Day.

My son received his polio vaccination yesterday.

I took little Dillon to the paediatrician for his 2-month check-up. As many of you may recall, the 2-month check-up is a monumental one; not just for developmental benchmarks, but also, unfortunately, because it marks the first round of (many) immunization shots.

First, a sit on the scale then to measure his length and finally his head circumference.... then.... the shots; Pneumococcal Conjugate, Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis, Haemophilus, Influenzae Type B, Hepatitis B and last but certainly not least, Polio.

All administered so efficiently; effortlessly; so routinely. I held his hand, and calmed his cries, feeling bad for the pain he experienced, but knowing it was for his own good. These shots will protect him from diseases that we forgot even existed.

I then began to think of our experience in the context of what you, as Rotary members and friends of Rotary, are doing.

My son received his polio vaccination yesterday.

No political or geographic terrain to negotiate – just the sharp turns in the office parking garage...

No little pinkie being dipped in ink – just a Sesame Street Band-Aid over the injection site...

No National Immunization Day – just meagre insurance co-pay.

But he is now safe from a crippling, life-threatening disease. Boy, what I have taken for granted...

My son received his polio vaccination yesterday. He is now safe – like millions of children around the world, thanks to you.

Once his cries subsided and I dried his tears, I couldn't help but smile – for what you have and continue to accomplish. I will never again take for granted what we have; and I will never be able to articulate with words how much your efforts mean to me.

I am personally moved by your selfless gestures of generosity. It shows your thoughtfulness, compassion and commitment to our global community. You help ensure that kids less fortunate will lead healthier, happier, and more rewarding lives. Please don't ever lose sight of what we, collectively, are doing. I sure won't.



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

1. The President Bandaru called the meeting to order and requested the members to rise for the National Anthem.
2. In the absence of the Treasurer, it was informed that the detailed expense sheet for the Installation Ceremony and Charter Day celebrations will be shared in the next meeting.
3. The President Bandaru reported that approximately 50% of members have paid their dues. Efforts are ongoing to collect the remaining dues at the earliest.
4. The cost incurred for the distribution of dress material during Durga Puja was Rs. 72,845. A detailed statement, including pledged donations and pending contributions, will be submitted in the next meeting.
5. Application from Daspur Ramakrishna Sebashram was received for a Medical Camp. 150 mosquito nets for distribution and it was decided to conduct the medical camp on December 14th, 2025. Final decision on the mosquito nets will be taken in the next meeting after assessing the total expenses involved.
6. A medical camp is proposed at Sanghati Old Age Home, Santragachi, as requested by PP Prosenjit. The date will be finalised shortly (tentatively in November).
7. A combined RWM and Board Meeting is scheduled for October 29th or 30th, 2025, subject to availability of the venue at BNROC. The meeting will be held with High Tea. Confirmation from BNROC is awaited.
8. The Club Bijoya-Diwali Meet is tentatively scheduled for November 11th, 2025. Final details to be discussed and confirmed in upcoming meetings.
9. PE Dr. BN Jha presented a detailed report on the Cervical (HPV) Vaccination Programme held on October 12th, 2025, jointly organised by Rotary Calcutta Midtown, Rotary Garden Reach, and Rotary Park Point. Approx. 200 girl children were vaccinated.
10. Proper arrangements were ensured, including observation rooms post-vaccination. Rotary Garden Reach is planning a similar initiative targeting schools like Sanghamitra Vidyalaya, Arya Parishad Vidyalaya, and Kendriya Vidyalaya, all located in the BNR Colony vicinity. BNR Hospital premises may be requested as the venue for the upcoming vaccination drive.
11. In absentia of Rtn. Shubhayan, Rtn. Dr. Subrata conducted the club business.
12. President Bandaru confirmed the minutes of the last meeting and terminated the meeting.

Francesco Arezo
President, Rotary International

Rotary
District 3291

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Dr. Ramendu Monchoudhuri
District Governor, RLC 3291

Roshnai

District Bijoya & Diwali Meet

TRIBUTE TO
**SALIL CHOUDHURY &
BHUPEN HAZARIKA**
IN THEIR CENTENARY YEAR

And enjoy
Dohar Band

Fireworks

Registration
Rs. 1,500/- only

Saturday | 1st November, 2025 | 6:00 pm
WET-O-WILD, Nicco Park, Salt Lake, Kolkata