

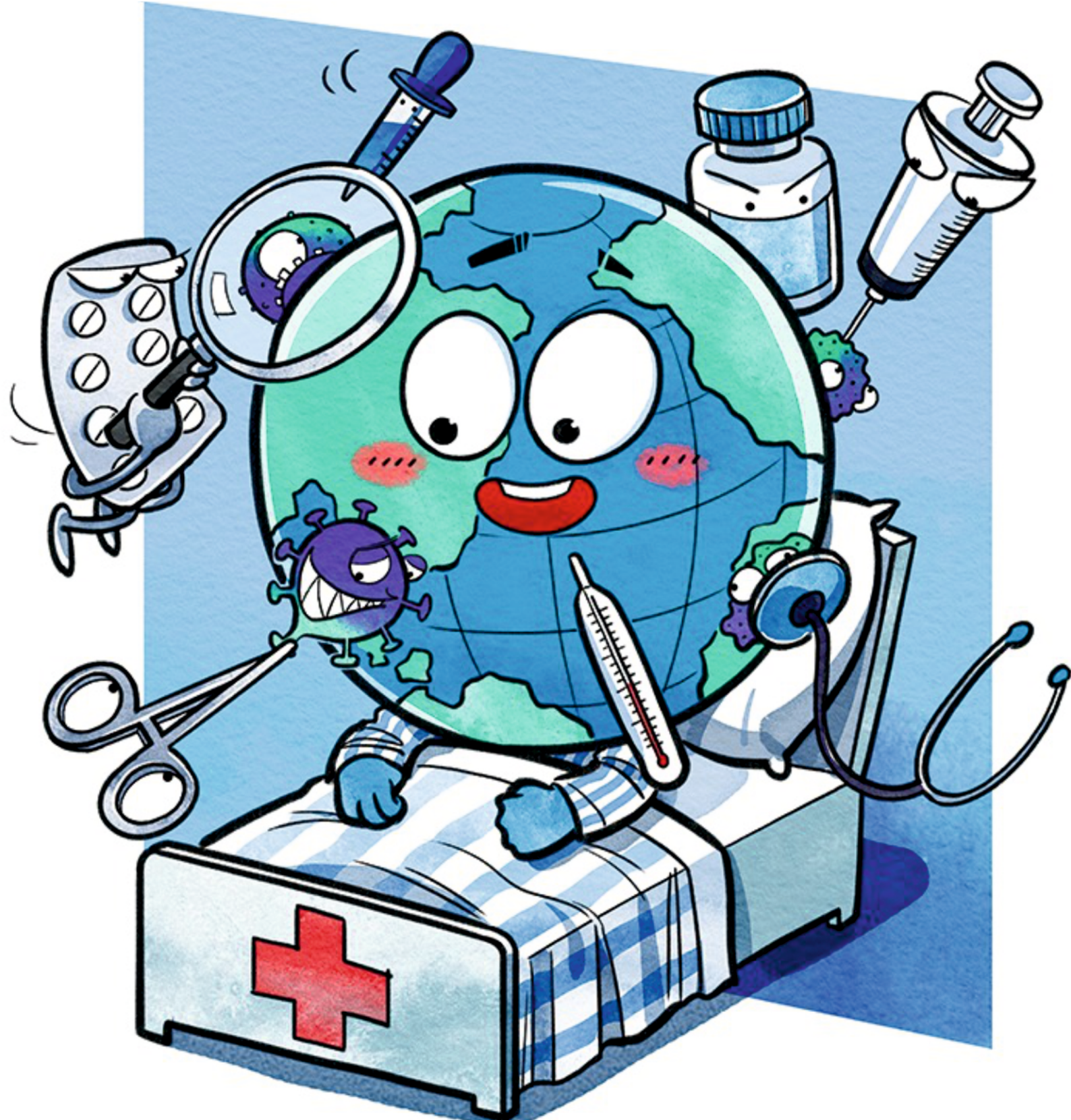


**"YOU ARE THE
LIGHT
OF THE WORLD..."**

RID 3291, Zone-16
Rotary
Garden Reach



2335th RWM





**"YOU ARE THE
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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

Dec 2nd : Spouse Puloma, Wife of PP Timir Roy

Dec 4th : Spouse Sabina, Wife of Rtn. Abbas A Haldar

Dec 6th : PP Dr. Arabinda Ray

A Look Back: Rotary's First Battle with Disease Prevention & Treatment

PP Tanu Roy

Long before health camps, vaccination drives, and banners saying "Rotary Cares" became familiar sights, Rotary was—believe it or not—mostly a group of professionals trying to improve their communities between tea breaks and business meetings.

Back then, no one imagined they would one day take on diseases that frightened entire nation. But every story has a moment when destiny taps the hero on the shoulder. For Rotary, that moment arrived decades ago.

The Problem Rotarians Couldn't Ignore

In the 1960s and 70s, as Rotary clubs expanded across India and the world, members began to notice a troubling pattern: no matter how many schools they built or wells they dug, communities continued to suffer from the same silent enemy—disease. In Kolkata, Suresh Mehta would visit a village school only to find half the children missing because of fevers. In Pune, Dr. Rekha Patil, a young Rotarian doctor, would treat the same waterborne infections again and again. In Chennai, Subramanian, a proud community volunteer, joked,

"What's the point of giving children notebooks if they're too sick to write in them?"

The humour was light, but the reality was not. Rotarians realised that real progress required more than service projects—it required confronting diseases head-on. This was Rotary's first step toward its greatest battle.

Polio: The Enemy That Forced a Transformation

And then came the disease that changed everything: **Polio**. It attacked without warning. It struck children—cruelly and silently. Entire communities lived in fear.

Rotarians everywhere felt the same helpless frustration. The turning point came in 1979, when Rotary—almost experimentally—supported a small vaccination drive in the Philippines. It was meant to be a simple project.

It became the beginning of a revolution.

India soon joined the effort. Rotarian Dr. Patil summed up the resolve: "If a drop of vaccine can change a life, then we will carry those drops to every doorstep." And they did. Rotarians trudged through monsoons, crossed muddy fields, navigated crowded lanes, bribed stubborn pumps to work, and convinced equally stubborn parents to trust the vaccine.

One Rotarian in Uttar Pradesh joked, "I've never walked this much even during my school picnic." Yet he walked more the next day. They weren't superheroes.

They were ordinary people who simply refused to give up. This was Rotary's first global war against disease... and they were winning.

The Legacy of the First Battle

Rotary's first real battle with disease wasn't fought with grand speeches or elaborate strategies. It began with simple human observations:

"People are falling sick. Their lives matter."

"We can help. So we must."

From those basic truths emerged one of the most successful public health movements in history.

The fight against polio taught Rotary how to serve humanity with precision, dedication, humility—and occasionally a sense of humour to survive the tough days.

Today, whenever a Rotary club organises a medical camp, installs a water filter, trains healthcare workers, or supports a hospital, they are continuing the legacy of that very first battle. The battle that changed Rotary forever. The battle that proved prevention is powerful. The battle that whispered a truth still relevant today: **"Healthy people build a healthy world."**



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Presidential Message

Francesco Arezzo, President 2025-26

This month's special issue of Rotary magazine is all about happiness, that most elemental of human yearnings. More than a feeling, though, this state of positive well-being, and the conditions necessary to create and sustain it, should be considered a universal right.



December also marks Rotary's Disease Prevention and Treatment Month, when we highlight our members' work to promote health and wellness, including mental wellness. Globally, nearly 1 in 7 people have a mental health disorder, according to a recent World Health Organization report. Yet only 9 percent of people with depression receive adequate treatment.

We are fortunate in Rotary to have a powerful way to support emotional well-being and happiness: friendship. The connections we build in Rotary can be a powerful force for change. I know this from personal experience.

When my fellow members first proposed that I become club president, I demurred. I had a stutter. I was terrified of speaking.

But having club members who supported me and surrounded me with affection enabled me to face my fear, and I found a way to stand confidently before a crowd.

Today, I regularly address audiences — some numbering in the thousands — in a language that is not native to me. The Rotary members in my life helped me create lasting change within myself.

That fellowship gives us the courage and means to create lasting change in the world as well, and mental health services are in desperate need of improvement. The WHO reports that governments on average devote only 2% of their health budgets to mental health, and only 11 percent of that funding reaches community-based services. In some countries, only one trained mental health professional is available for every 100,000 people. The WHO has called for strategic and urgent action to close the gap.

Rotary can answer that call by championing mental health awareness in our clubs, working with local health systems, funding training for community health workers, and supporting initiatives that bring care to places where none exists. Even small investments in mental health yield enormous returns in productivity, public health, and happiness.

While we are creating lasting change in the world, we cannot forget to take care of each other. Past RI President Gordon McInally wisely reminds us that we must go beyond asking, "How are you?" We owe it to each other to instead ask, "How are you really?"

As we transition to a new year filled with new possibilities, let us Unite for Good — for healing, friendship, and access to happiness.



Rotary Garden Reach had its Official Assistant Governor Visit on November 30th, 2025 at Rotary Sadan. AG Arindam Pakrashi had a wonderful interactive session with the members present. Later he checked the club's documents & project reports before the District Governor's OCV on December 9th, 2025.

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On a Grander Scale

Holger Knaack, TRF Trustee Chair

As 2020–21, Rotary President, I shared our hopes for a new initiative: **Programs of Scale**. The seeds we planted then are now bearing remarkable fruit.

After the success of Rotary's first Programs of Scale grant recipient, Partners for a Malaria-Free Zambia, the Gates Foundation and World Vision approached us to do more and bigger projects. They know Rotary can make great things happen. From that partnership grew the Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge, now Rotary's most significant disease prevention initiative after polio eradication.



The Healthy Communities Challenge aims to combat pneumonia, malaria, and diarrheal diseases, the leading killers of children under 5 in many parts of Africa. Despite progress, these diseases still claim 1 million young lives annually.

This strategic partnership between The Rotary Foundation, the Gates Foundation, World Vision, and PATH, a global nonprofit dedicated to health equity, is now saving lives in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Nigeria and Zambia.

Let us not forget that our partnerships are made up of people — volunteers, Rotary members, and professionals — striving to make a difference. One of them is Gisela Bettencourt Mirção, of the Rotary Club of Chimoio-Planalto, Mozambique, Healthy Communities Challenge national coordinator and assistant governor for District 9210, who reports:

In Mozambique, preventable diseases remain leading causes of death of children.

With support from our partners, District 9210, and the Ministry of Health, the Healthy Communities Challenge mobilizes resources, technical expertise, and volunteers to strengthen community health systems in two provinces in the country's west. Community health workers are trained to deliver lifesaving education, prevention tools, and early treatment to families in hard-to-reach areas. The program expands access to testing, diagnosis, and treatment, ensuring children receive timely care. Rotary co-ordinates advocacy, procures essential supplies, and ensures local ownership alongside government health structures. In its first year, the Healthy Communities Challenge reached thousands of households across four districts, supporting more than 4,400 community health workers to protect children.

I have been involved since the planning stages, but I hadn't grasped the true impact until seeing it first-hand.

Through the Healthy Communities Challenge, Programs of Scale, and polio eradication, Rotary proves that partnerships, community engagement, and vision can transform global health and save lives.

Your support of The Rotary Foundation makes you part of this life-changing work.



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The Interact Club of Julien Day School, Howrah, successfully organised a Community Service Welfare Activity, reaffirming the club's commitment to Service Above Self. An Interactive Visit to the Missionaries of Charity – Nirmala Shishu Bhavan on November 28th, 2025 stood out as a particularly heart-warming experience for both the Interactors and the children.



The Interact Club members spent a memorable afternoon with the underprivileged children at Nirmala Shishu Bhavan. The session was filled with warmth, enthusiasm and shared joy. Interactors conducted a series of engaging activities including free-hand exercises, basic yoga, breathing techniques and origami.

In addition to the activities, biscuits and packaged food items were lovingly distributed among the children, adding to their happiness and delight.

The children participated wholeheartedly and their smiles, laughter and pure excitement reflected how much they cherished the attention, affection and time spent with them. The visit served as a reminder that even small acts of kindness can bring immense happiness and hope to young lives.

The combined efforts of all students, teachers and parents transformed these initiatives into a resounding success. The children at Nirmala Shishu Bhavan were overwhelmed with joy, and their heartfelt reactions showed how deeply they appreciated the kindness extended to them. Every contribution—big or small—helped spread compassion, hope and comfort.

This initiative beautifully reflected the Interact Club's dedication to nurturing empathy, responsibility and leadership among students.

-Report by Ms. Ponami Chakraborty, Interact Club Coordinator, Julien Day School, Howrah

*A Rotarian stands where Service calls; lifting others so none may fall.
With heart and hands in everyday deeds— they plant hope's seeds and meet the world's needs.*



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Minutes of the 2334th RWM held on November 30th, 2025 at Rotary Sadan

1. The President Bandaru called the meeting to order and requested the members to rise for the National Anthem.
2. PP Mousumi, Executive Secretary, would officiate as Secretary in the absence of Club Secretary Rtn. Shubhayan Sengupta.
3. The President extended a warm welcome to the Hon'ble Assistant Governor, Rtn. Arindam Pakrashi, on the occasion of his annual visit to the club.
4. The President also welcomed PP Iva Gupta and Rtn. Pradip Sen from Rotary Calcutta Sun City. They were on a visit to promote the forthcoming District Conference.
5. PP Mousumi briefed the members on the visit to Panchanan Roy College for the Thalassemia Awareness Camp. PP Dr. JK Singh informed the house that over 150 students attended the session. The Principal expressed strong support and requested early organisation of HPLC tests for students. College authorities confirmed full cooperation for conducting the tests.
6. The club's Annual Picnic is scheduled for January 18th, 2026, at Rohini Gardens, Nodakhali, West Bengal. Members are encouraged to participate in large numbers.
7. PP Amitav Ganguly proposed organising a Medical Camp at Parnasree Club on February 8th, 2026. The proposal will be deliberated upon receipt of the formal appeal and in presence of doctor members during the next meeting.
8. It was resolved that Sports Day at Bharatgarh Rotary School will be held on January 4th, 2026. Lunch for students will be generously sponsored by guests of PP Prosenjit Barua. Members are requested to attend the event in good numbers.
9. PP Sanjay V Bhatt informed that Rotary Calcutta has proposed a joint meeting. The matter will be discussed in the next RWM.
10. The floor was handed over to the Assistant Governor, who conducted his annual review and inspection of club records and offered his guidance and observations.
11. Club Executive Secretary, PP Mousumi conducted the club business.
12. President Bandaru confirmed the minutes of the last meeting and the vote of thanks was proposed by PP Dr. JK Singh. President terminated the meeting.

