

MINDFULNESS



MEDITATION



BREATHE



BALANCE



STRESS REDUCTION



AWARENESS



BODY



SOUL



RID 3291
Rotary
Garden Reach



Light

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

March 11th, 2025 - Vol. 47 No. 33

2304th Regular Weekly Meeting
Attendance: 17

Birthday Greetings
Mar 24th : Rajdeep, Son of Rtn. Debasis Das

Swachhata Sanskriti

From the historic to the Holy: India's Swachhata Legacy

Like the waves of an ocean, time ebbs and flows, yet is always constant. From one era to the next, waters may appear calm and clean, until new winds blow forth alternate tidings with each successive current. Yet the sea is always the sea. So it is that India, akin to the maritime depths, remains a constant. One out of many, and many out of One. From this rises our Sanskriti. Our Culture. Our Heritage. Drill down into the streets of ancient cities such as Delhi, and one will find layer upon layer of languages, styles, hopes, and desires, once brilliantly brought to stage, before taking final bows that form strata upon strata over which new dreams are forged. There was a time, 5,000 years ago that great cities rose, shining, clean, beautiful, advanced beyond imagination. And then, in a blink of the eyes of the universe, all vanished, and the sages rose. Another blink, and kingdom upon kingdom ascended. Another blink, and Empires emerged. Another blink, and India is independent and unified. Yet the soul of India has remained the same, heralding forth visions of serene waters, green vistas, and cleanliness all around. We find allusions to it in our ancient texts; we write about it in our love stories.... It is the dream that is India. A Sanskriti that is clean. A heritage that is ours.

The world's first flushing toilets

Besides the brilliance of its sewage systems, the Indus Civilization can also be credited for the world's first automatic flushing toilets. These used flowing water from rainwater, rivers or wells that safely sent waste into household terra cotta piping and, more often than not, to the covered drains and sewer systems of the cities. The risk of disease, foul odours and threats from insects and vermin were swept away below. As scholars in the Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in **Archaeology** noted: "India has a glorious past as the earliest flushed toilet system was reported during archaeological studies from Indus Civilization." According to the multinational collaboration, the Historical Development of Sewers Worldwide, "Civilization (ca. 3200–1900 BCE) in the Indus Valley developed sophisticated, comfortable, and hygienic lifestyle, as manifested from long term very efficient sewerage systems, bathrooms and flushing toilets, which can only be compared to the techniques developed in Europe and North America a century and half ago." Remarkably, researchers are now postulating that the availability of the highly-sophisticated toilets and sewage systems of the Indus Civilization were dependent, from city to township, not by size of the municipality, but by the politics.

Cleanliness of the Body and Soul: Bathing, worshipping & water engineering in the Indus Valley Civilization

From home to hamlet, village to city, without clean and healthy water, civilization cannot be sustained. For the ancients of the Indus Valley, water was not only essential for agriculture, cooking and bathing, but also for religious purposes. It was thus likely with reverence that the great water and sanitation engineers of the civilization brought forth what are said to be the largest public baths, reservoirs, and step wells of the time, some of which have been identified as special places of worship. Public bathing pools were a mainstay of the civilization. Beautifully reflecting the hallowed shades of the sun and sky, they were kept clean and sanitary through advanced indigenous engineering. Raised and sloped bathing platforms were common in most homes, demonstrating the culture's reverence for personal cleanliness as essential for their wellbeing. These feats of innovation incorporated raised elevations, planned slopes and piping that ensured drainage away from the household and bather and into civic drains or other clean and hygienic areas. The household washrooms were complimented by public baths, which were likely visited by family, friends, citizens and visitors alike, not only for cleanliness, but for socializing, peaceful relaxation and children's play.

The population of the Indus Valley was likely quite proud of its beautiful cities, and keeping them clean seems to have been a key civic duty. Homes came equipped with built-in trash chutes, similar in concept to those found in today's high-rise buildings. Household waste fell through the chute into dustbins below. Archaeologists have also found public trash bins located throughout the metropolises, thereby sparking the beginning of a Swachhata Sanskriti for India.



PEACE AND CONFLICT
PREVENTION / RESOLUTION



DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT



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SANITATION



MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH



BASIC EDUCATION AND
LITERACY



ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT



SUPPORTING THE
ENVIRONMENT

A glass half full

Mark Daniel Maloney, TRF Trustee Chair

After joining Rotary, you never look at a glass of water the same way again.

Holding it, you are humbled by the privilege of access to drinkable water. Then, you recall how Rotary brings communities and water experts together to deliver safe drinking water to places in need of it, transforming lives.

According to the United Nations, 2 billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water, and 3.6 billion lack safely managed sanitation. During March, we focus on our commitment to addressing water, sanitation, and hygiene challenges through our clubs and The Rotary Foundation.



District and global grants, made possible by the Foundation, provide a direct way for members to engage in water and sanitation projects. My wife, Gay, and I have seen the transformative power of these grants. Our clubs, the Rotary Clubs of Decatur and Decatur Daybreak, Alabama, partnered with the Rotary Club of Ecatepec, Mexico, to sanitise cisterns and tanks for about 300 schools.

We are also launching a new global grant to provide rainwater collection systems for 50 Indigenous families in the Sierra Madre Mountains of Chihuahua, in partnership with five organisations.

Globally, Rotary employs comprehensive approaches to these initiatives. In Mexico, the global grant-funded programme Niñas

Sabias, or Wise Girls, empowers girls by providing education on menstruation, building self-esteem, and purchasing reusable menstrual products.

Our partnership with USAID in Uganda has shown how small-scale piped water systems can deliver cost-effective, sustainable solutions. By investing in local governance and technical capacity, this initiative ensures long-term access to clean water for entire regions.

Rotary's Programs of Scale also demonstrate the power of interdisciplinary strategies. In India's water-scarce regions, Rotary promotes solutions such as rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge, integrating water management with agricultural productivity to enhance sustainability and resilience.

Moving forward, we will continue improving how we deliver water and boost sanitation, focusing on regional planning, strengthening delivery systems and fostering partnerships.

Be proud to be part of this meaningful work — and please consider supporting it.

When you give to The Rotary Foundation, you not only help us reach our 2024–25 fundraising goal of \$500 million, you also play a role in ensuring Rotary can make clean water, effective sanitation and hygiene accessible for generations.

More than numbers, let's increase our impact

RI President Nominee Sangkoo Yun feels that Rotary needs to forge more partnerships and through sponsorship make big events such as conventions and Zone Institutes more affordable to Rotarians. His vision is also to make Rotary an online platform for service, which can be used by any organisation interested in doing various kinds of service. In an interview he talked about his dream and vision for Rotary, how to attract younger members and make it more sustainable.

Can you tell us a little about your educational background? You're an architect; why did you choose to become one?

I'm not practising architecture but deal in architecture materials. I went to the Syracuse University in New York and did my bachelor's and master's in the school of architecture.

Coming to Rotary, when did you join it, and why?



I joined Rotary when I got back to Korea in 1982. As I told you, my family did not have any business at all, so I had to make connections and network. One of my father's friends was a Rotarian, told me about Rotary and I said, maybe that's a good way to make some connections. So, I joined Rotary purely for my personal gain, I had no inkling of doing any service at that time. That's how I think most people get in.

When did you get hooked to Rotary and doing service projects?

I guess many different things were there, but if you talk about one single moment, it was while going to Mongolia to do projects. I was taking some PDGs for a project to plant trees in the Gobi Desert in Mongolia, when one of the cars met with a terrible accident and fell into a ditch. One of the PDGs, who was very outspoken, had earlier questioned me about planting trees in Gobi Desert, saying it's just not going to work. He had a lot of reservations, and as it happened, he was hurt the most in that accident and broke his back.

I felt responsible because I had taken them there and couldn't face his wife. I felt I should resign from Rotary and forget about everything. But when I went to see him at the ICU a couple of

days after his surgery to tell him, he grabbed my hand and before I could say anything, asked me in a weak and shaky voice to ensure that the tree planting project was a success.

How many Rotarians are there in Korea, which is a growing country for the organisation. What attracts Koreans to join Rotary?

We now have 67,000 members and we are growing. As for what makes Rotary attractive in Korea, after the Korean War, the country was completely devastated, and many NGOs came to support us with clothing, food, etc., and several NGOs used Rotary and Red Cross as a conduit to send and distribute the aid. So, I guess many Koreans still feel that we owe a lot to Rotary.

What is your vision for Rotary which you will be heading from July 2026?

As I said at the Kochi Institute, for 20 years, we've been asking people to join Rotary and increase our membership and it has just not worked. Correct? So, I say maybe we should ask different questions.

What kind of different questions?

I would like to see if Rotarians can bring in prospective members, not by saying come to my club or join Rotary, but asking them to come to participate in our service activities. And once they do so, and like volunteering for our service activities, then maybe we could ask them, what is your idea of service? And if that person says, well, I want to serve the elderly or work in healthcare, or whatever, then we could support him. And once he takes ownership of a service project, and feels a sense of belonging then we could invite him/her to join our club. What I'm trying to say is do not put Rotary in the front, put Rotary in the backseat and say, hey, let's do service. And once they find Rotary attractive, they can join, and stay on.

We can grow Rotary by keeping it at the back and put a service activity in the front.

Because, after all, service and friendship are two sides of the coin for a Rotarian.





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Symbiosis University to host the Asia Peace Centre

Bharat Pandya, TRF Trustee

Peace is important for society because it allows people to live safely and without fear of violence. It also promotes economic stability, national security and the sustainable development of nations.

Peace building matters today; because the effects of conflict are far reaching, shattering lives and stunting development.

Peace building approaches, including mediation and diplomacy, dialogue and participation, are an essential part of the toolkit of Rotary's Peace Scholar programme. These scholars are and will continue to make a difference to the communities they work with.



The TRF trustees have selected the university and country in Asia which will host the new Asia Peace Center starting from 2027. I am excited and happy to report that the trustees have selected Symbiosis University, Pune, India to host the new Rotary Peace Center in Asia. That is great news and a feather in the cap for Rotary in India. Compliments to the Symbiosis team for putting up a superb application and thanks to the Symbiosis management for all their support. Congratulations to Rotarians and leadership of RID 3131 for

their dedicated efforts for this. Compliments to PP Rajendra Ruia (RID 3141) who initiated the process, and to the peace alumni and leadership of RID 3141 for their support. Well done all!

In today's world peace is needed more than ever. The new center will be a boon not just for scholars from India but from all over Asia. Now is the time to put our might to support the Endowment Fund of TRF. This will ensure a bright future for the peace scholar programme and for TRF too.

The joy of giving lasts longer than the joy of receiving. Studies conducted at the Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management found that participants' happiness did not decline or declined much slower if they repeatedly bestowed gifts on others versus receiving those same gifts themselves.

The intention behind our giving and receiving is the most important thing. The act of giving is joyful when it is unconditional and from the heart, and the energy behind the giving increases many times over.

One of the best giving is to The Rotary Foundation. It's effective, efficient, transparent and can do most good in the world.

As we approach the last quarter of the Rotary year, now is the time to give our 'all' to TRF. Let's do it to create the Magic through TRF.



Kerala Rotarians get Padma Bhushan

Two Rotarians of RI District 3201, Kerala – **Dr. Jose Chacko Periappuram** of Rotary Cochin Global and **PR Sreejesh** of Rotary Kizhakkambalam received Padma Bhushan Award from the President of India Droupadi Murmu this January. Sreejesh was the captain and goalkeeper of the national hockey team. Since 2024, he is the head coach of the India men's national U-21 team. He played a vital role in the Indian team's bronze medal wins at the 2020 and 2024 Summer Olympics, and won the best male goalkeeper award at the FIH Awards in 2020, 2022 and 2024. He was a part of the teams that won gold at the 2014 and 2022 Asian Games. He got the Padma Shri in 2019 for his contribution to sports.



Cardio-thoracic surgeon Dr. Periappuram is credited with performing the first successful heart transplant in Kerala, and the first successful heart re-transplant in the country. His other achievements include the first beating heart, awake bypass and total arterial revascularisation surgeries in Kerala. He is the founder-chairman of the Heartcare Foundation that sponsors heart treatment for marginal groups across Kerala. He got the Padma Bhushan for 'revolutionising surgical cardiac care in his state.'





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Minutes of the 2303rd RWM held on March 4th, 2025 at BNR Officers' Club, Garden Reach

- 1. President Biswajit Saha called the RWM to order and requested the members to rise for the National Anthem.**
- 2. Since this RWM was followed by the visit of District Governor, AKS Dr. Krishnendu Gupta, and his District team were present, the President invited him to take his seat at the podium.**
- 3. The normal agenda was set aside, and only family business was presented by the Secretary of the club. The minutes of the previous RWM No. 2302 were then confirmed.**
- 4. The President requested the District Governor to take over the meeting for the continuation of the proceedings.**
- 5. PP Tanu conducted the felicitation ceremony.**
- 6. PP Dr. Sumanta presented the Vote of Thanks to the District Governor and the District Team.**
- 7. After the OCV of DG, President Biswajit terminated the meeting and invited everyone for Fellowship.**