



flame

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Francesco Arezzo
Rotary International
President



Dr Ramendu Homchoudhuri
Rotary District 3291
Governor



Dr (CA) Joydeep Mookerjee
Rotary Ballygunge
President



Subhankar Chakraborty
Rotary Ballygunge
Secretary



Arko Bhattacharjee
Rotary Ballygunge
Editor

Editor : Arko Bhattacharjee

President's Message



Dear Fellow Rotarians,

One of the greatest strengths of Rotary lies not merely in its projects, meetings, or institutional framework, but in the enduring spirit of fellowship that binds its members together. Fellowship is the

invisible force that transforms an organisation into a family, converts participation into commitment, and inspires individuals to remain connected to Rotary with pride, purpose, and a sense of belonging.

In today's increasingly demanding professional and personal environment, retaining committed members requires far more than administrative efficiency or periodic meetings. Members remain engaged when they feel valued, respected, heard, and emotionally connected to the Club and to one another. Genuine fellowship creates this connection. It nurtures trust, mutual respect, camaraderie, and shared purpose. It strengthens intergenerational bonding within the Club and enables members to collaborate not merely as Rotarians, but as friends united by service above self.

A vibrant fellowship culture also directly impacts membership growth and retention. Prospective members are naturally attracted to Clubs where warmth, inclusiveness, dignity, and meaningful interaction are visibly present. Existing members continue their Rotary journey when they experience friendship, recognition, intellectual exchange, family participation, and a sense of collective achievement. Fellowship, therefore, is not an optional social component of Rotary. It is a strategic pillar for sustaining membership engagement, preserving institutional continuity, and strengthening the long-term vitality of our Club.

As Rotarians, we must consciously cultivate a culture where every member feels welcomed, respected, and involved. A simple conversation, a supportive gesture, a shared moment of celebration, or standing beside a fellow member during challenging times often creates stronger bonds than formal proceedings alone. Rotary flourishes when fellowship flourishes.

Let us therefore continue to build a Club environment rooted in friendship, empathy, collaboration, and purposeful service. Strong fellowship creates strong Rotarians, and strong Rotarians create stronger communities.

World Thalassaemia Day, 8th May

World Thalassaemia Day, observed annually on 8th May, serves as an important global reminder of the urgent need for awareness, prevention, early diagnosis, and sustained support for individuals affected by Thalassaemia and other inherited blood disorders. In India, where the prevalence of Thalassaemia remains significantly high, awareness and preventive screening assume immense importance from both a public health and humanitarian perspective.

Rotary has historically played a meaningful role in supporting Thalassaemia awareness programmes, blood donation initiatives, carrier screening camps, and patient support systems. A particularly important aspect of Thalassaemia prevention is the early detection of Thalassaemia carriers through timely blood screening of adolescent children and young adults. Since Thalassaemia is a hereditary blood disorder, many individuals remain completely unaware that they are carriers until a child in the family is diagnosed with Thalassaemia Major. Simple and affordable blood investigations, including Complete Blood Count (CBC) and Haemoglobin Electrophoresis or HPLC testing, can effectively identify carrier status at an early stage. Conducting awareness programmes and voluntary screening initiatives among adolescents, college students, and young adults before marriage can significantly reduce the incidence of Thalassaemia Major in future generations. Early detection, therefore, is not merely a medical intervention, but a powerful preventive and social responsibility measure that can protect families from immense emotional, physical, and financial hardship.

Warm Rotary wishes,

Dr (CA) Joydeep Mookerjee

President

Rotary Club of Ballygunge

Editor's Message



There are two kinds of people in this world: those who think change arrives with drumrolls and headlines... and those who have attended a Rotary meeting at 7:30 p.m. and know it usually begins with chai, a slightly confused agenda, and someone asking, "Can we keep this brief?"

Because real change is rarely dramatic. It doesn't announce itself. It doesn't wait for perfect conditions. It happens in rooms where ideas keep moving, people keep showing up, and somehow, things get done.

Welcome to Rotary.

At Rotary International, we like to say "Service above Self." In practice, this translates to answering calls you didn't plan to take, attending meetings you almost skipped, and volunteering for tasks you definitely didn't see coming. It's a beautiful system—slightly chaotic, deeply human, and surprisingly effective.

We are, if we're honest, a fascinating species.

Give a Rotarian a simple idea, and within minutes it evolves into a full-fledged project with timelines, budgets, subcommittees, and at least one person saying, "Let's scale this." We don't just think outside the box—we form a committee to redesign the box, improve it, and present it at the next meeting.

And yet, beneath all the humor, there's something serious—something worth pausing for (briefly, of course).

Because the truth is: none of this works unless everyone shows up—not just physically, but mentally, emotionally, intentionally.

Rotary is not powered by a few enthusiastic individuals. It is sustained by collective effort. The quiet contributor matters as much as the confident speaker. The person who organizes logistics is as important as the one who leads the project. The member who listens carefully may be the one who understands best what the community actually needs.

This is not a one-person show. It was never meant to be.

If we want meaningful impact, we cannot afford passive participation. "Someone will do it" is the most dangerous sentence in any service organization. Because "someone" is not a strategy. It's an assumption—and assumptions don't build schools, fund surgeries, or change lives.

People do.

You do.

All of us, together.

And here's the part worth remembering: service is not just about what we give—it's about what we become. A little more patient. A little more aware. A little more willing to act when it would be easier to stay comfortable.

Yes, we will still have long meetings. Yes, we will still underestimate how much time "just one more point" takes. And yes, there will always be that one moment where everything feels slightly disorganized.

But if, at the end of it, we move one step closer to solving a problem, helping a person, or improving a community—then its working. Perfectly. So the message is simple, and it's not meant to sound poetic—it's meant to be practical:

Show up. Take ownership. Do the work.

Not occasionally. Not when it's convenient. But consistently.

Because the real magic of Rotary isn't in big speeches or perfect plans. It's in ordinary people choosing, again and again, to do something that matters.

And if we all do that—properly, sincerely, together—then these "minor miracles" we joke about won't be minor at all.

They'll be everywhere.

Now, let's get back to the agenda. I'm sure we'll finish in five minutes.

Arko Bhattacharjee

Editor, Rotary Club of Ballygunge

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Rotary Club of Ballygunge



Minutes of the 2549 Regular Meeting held on 16th April 2026 At Cozy Room, International Club, Kolkata

- The President kicked things off like a boss, immediately making everyone stand up—yes, even the ones still mentally in bed—for the National Anthem. Sung with full enthusiasm (and varying degrees of pitch accuracy).
- Then came the plot twist: in the President's absence, PP Amitava Chakraborty casually said, "I'll handle it," proving that in Rotary, leaders are always on standby like emergency snacks.
- Last week's meeting confusion was finally cleared—because nothing haunts Rotarians more than an unclear meeting schedule.
- Big news: **Baisakhi Adda on 7 May!** Expect laughter, fellowship, and food—because let's be honest, attendance doubles when dinner is involved. Friends and family welcome (but yes, they must pay—Rotary has standards).
- Members were gently reminded about **Rotary Protocol**—aka "how to look dignified even when you're eyeing the dessert table."
- New members are being trained in meeting decorum, while the Editor has been advised to make "*The Flame*" shorter—apparently, not everyone has the stamina for a novel between meetings.
- Membership drive forms are in, and the final list is on the way—because growth is great, but organized growth is even better.
- The Secretary brought the happy vibes with birthday and anniversary announcements (proof that Rotary tracks everything—even your cake days).
- The President wrapped up by inviting everyone to future meetings and projects—date TBD, suspense guaranteed.
- **Meeting adjourned. Mission continues.**
- Behind the jokes, the goal remains real—teamwork, timely action, and meaningful service to the community. Because laughter is great... but impact is better.

Members Present 8

Happy Announcements

