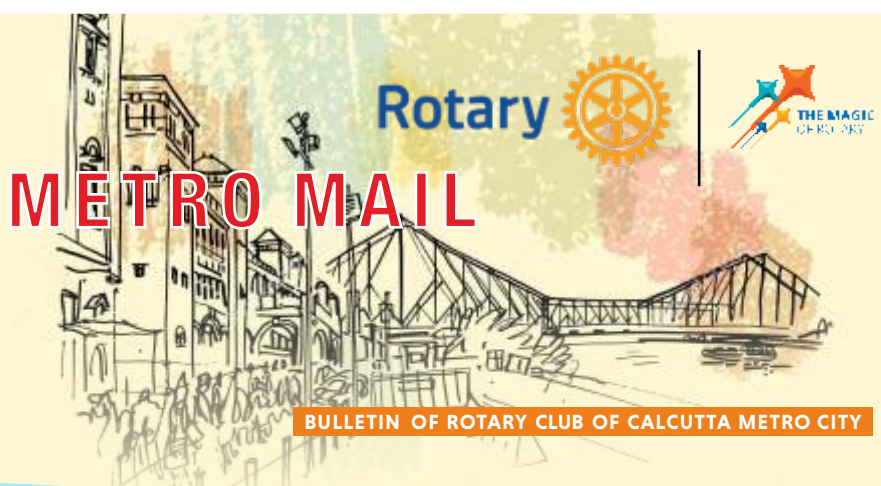


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Many of you are likely engrossed in the IPL, cheering for your favorite teams. However, I took a step back to explore a different side of franchise cricket—its impact beyond the field. A brief analysis revealed its immense scale, and I'm sharing some eye-opening data and insights on its far-reaching effects. The Indian Premier League (IPL) has significantly boosted the local economy, especially in remote regions of India, by generating employment and providing a platform for budding cricketers from lesser-known areas. The IPL contributes approximately **48,000 crore (\$5.8 billion)** to India's GDP, with its ecosystem spanning broadcasting, tourism, hospitality, merchandising, and local businesses.

Each IPL season creates nearly **1,50,000 direct and indirect jobs**, including roles in stadium management, ground staff, security, media, and logistics. Lesser-known talents like T. Natarajan from Tamil Nadu and Rinku Singh from Uttar Pradesh have risen to prominence, inspiring many aspiring cricketers from small towns. State cricket associations also receive financial support, aiding grassroots development in remote areas.

The league also benefits local vendors, small businesses, and tourism, with cities hosting IPL matches witnessing a surge in demand for hotels, transport, and food services. Additionally, local artisans and merchandise sellers profit from team merchandise sales.

Overall, the IPL has not only revolutionized Indian cricket but has also become a major economic driver, transforming the fortunes of cricketers and communities across India's heartland.

Subhojit Roy

An Immigrant Finds Belonging in Rotary

Far from home and seriously injured, a young man finds comfort and renewed purpose among his Rotary family

By **Andrés Briceño**

“¿Dónde estoy?” I thought, returning to the world, all white light, blurs of color, and muffled sound. “Where am I?” My lips were so dry. “¡Agua! ¡Agua!” I cried, asking for water. I struggled to get up, but my mother told me to lie still. I was in the hospital. Those blurs of color turned out to be balloons. There had been an accident, my Jeep versus a tree. The tree won. I’d been in a coma for two weeks.



Illustration by Hokyoung Kim I was lucky to be in a coma for only two weeks. It could have been months. I might never have woken up.

My life started coming back in patches. My name is Andrés Briceño. I was born in Venezuela, though today I live in Texas. I came to this country in November 2021 when I was 23 years old. I moved to The Woodlands, north of Houston, because an aunt and some of my cousins live here. But I also belonged to a larger, international family — Rotary — which I first joined when I was living in Venezuela as a member of both the Rotary Club of Las Delicias and the Rotaract Club of Las Delicias Leone Rossi.

When something is wrong, I want to change it. My dream was to see my country free. But freeing a country is not easy. When you defend freedom in a dictatorship, you become a target. Ultimately I had to leave.

A new club

After I arrived in Texas, I reached out to the Rotary Club of The Woodlands. It changed my experience as an immigrant. One month after my arrival in the United States, I attended the club’s Christmas party. I was far from Venezuela, yet the club’s members made me feel like I was home, that I belonged in their community. That was so valuable: being accepted, feeling like I belonged.

My accident was on 25 June 2023. The day before was a Saturday. It had been only three days since the Rotaract Club of The Woodlands, which I was instrumental in establishing, was officially chartered. I woke up very early. It was a hot summer day. Our club was helping the Woodlands Rotary club with an event for youth. It was like a scavenger hunt, with clues hidden here and there. The kids had fun, running around looking for them. That took most of the morning, and I went straight from there to work. Saturday is the busiest day of the week at the restaurant, and it was several hours after midnight when I was driving home. Five minutes from my aunt’s house, the accident occurred.

I spent 33 days in the hospital. For the first week, they didn’t know if I was going to survive. My mother never gave up hope —

I tried to think back. I remember driving my car after a long shift at the restaurant where I worked. Then nothing: no crash, no tree, no ambulance. No three major surgeries to drill a hole in my skull to reduce pressure on my brain and to repair my broken left hip and right clavicle. The doctors said that

and the members of Rotary were there all the time for my mom, keeping her company and supporting her. Kay Boehm-Fannin, the 2023-24 president of the Rotary Club of The Woodlands, visited me in the hospital every day. Every single day, even though I wasn’t awake and didn’t know she was there. Other Rotary members would line up in the lobby, waiting for their turn to see me.

When I woke up, one of the nurses asked me, “Are you famous?” I said no, not yet. Why? She said, “You have so many visitors, all the people coming every day. That’s not normal.” I felt so loved. As did my mother. My dear friend Dr. Lucian Rivela, a member of the Woodlands Rotary club, frequently checked in with my doctors and shared any updates about my status with my anxious mother, who doesn’t speak English. The day I awoke from my coma was my mother’s birthday, and my Rotary family held a party for her in the ICU waiting room.

Four days after being discharged from the hospital, I attended a Rotary After Hours event and, two days after that, a meeting of the Woodlands Rotary club. I couldn’t wait any longer to be back among my Rotary family. I felt an urgent need to thank them. Which I did, tearfully.

The road to recovery

Right away I had to face the changes in the little things we take for granted. Things like using the bathroom or climbing the stairs — sitting on the steps and using my arms rather than my legs — to get to my room in my aunt’s two-story house.

I rushed too quickly into trying to get my life back. I didn’t realize the magnitude of what had happened to me. I learned that sometimes you can’t rush things. You have to take it one step at a time.

And every step I took, Rotary was there for me — even before I could actually take steps. I was in a wheelchair for months. My Rotary family provided the wheelchair, and the walker and the cane that followed. They even hosted a fundraiser to help me cover my physical therapy costs as I learned to walk again.

During my recovery, I had two wonderful therapists, Stephanie and David, who worked with me at a Houston-area clinic. Stephanie was an Interactor in high school and later spent a year studying in England as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar. What she experienced over that year inspired her to come back to the United States and earn a doctorate in physical therapy. Stephanie and I became friends thanks to that Rotary connection, and I invited her to accompany me to the elegant gala thrown in February 2024 by the Rotary Club of The Woodlands. The day of the gala, I decided I no longer needed my cane and left it at home. For the first time in months, I was walking freely. And that night at the gala, surrounded by my Rotary family, Stephanie and I danced.

Feeling as if I’d received a second chance at life, I returned to college this year. I’m studying political science and eventually hope to get a master’s in economics. I’m preparing myself to return to Venezuela and help rebuild my home country. Until then, I’m looking for work with a nonprofit here in the United States. My dream job would be helping others — just as I’ve tried to do ever since I have belonged to Rotary.

Andrés Briceño is a founding member and president of the Rotaract Club of The Woodlands in Texas.

Nobel Laureate Leads Speaker Roster for 2025 Rotary International convention

Yemeni journalist Tawakkol Karman promotes peace and women's rights

By Etelka Lehoczky



The first woman from the Arab world to win the Nobel Peace Prize will address Rotary International's 2025 convention, which takes place from 21-25 June in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Tawakkol Karman has endured persecution and imprisonment for speaking out in favor of democracy and women's empowerment.

"In the most trying circumstances, both before and during the Arab Spring, Karman has played a leading part in the struggle for women's rights and for democracy in Yemen," said Thorbjørn Jagland, chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, announcing the Nobel Prize in 2011. Karman shared the award with Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Leymah Gbowee.

A journalist and human rights activist, Karman organized numerous protests against the repressive regime of Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh from 2007-2011, acquiring the nicknames "mother of the revolution" and "the iron woman." In 2005 she founded Women Journalists Without Chains, which trains journalists, reports on efforts to silence the media, and promotes women's rights.

"Women's rights' means democracy, means freedom of expression, means freedom to choose your ruler," Karman said at the 2023 Munich Security Conference. She says Western governments

have supported anti-revolutionary efforts in the Middle East, undermining democratic movements in the region.

Karman also founded the Peaceful Revolutionary Youth Council. During the Arab Spring movement in the early 2010s, she called for peaceful dialogue rather than violence and worked for reconciliation between Shia and Sunni Muslims. She believes Islam should peacefully coexist with other religions and that it presents no barrier to women's full participation in every sphere of society.

Time magazine included Karman on a list of 17 of "History's Most Rebellious Women" and named her one of its 100 Women of the Year in 2011. Foreign Policy magazine has included her among its Top 100 Global Thinkers. The Tawakkol Karman Foundation builds schools, fights poverty, and supports health care in Yemen.

A Person-to-Person Global Grant Resource

Need help with a grant? Your district Rotary Foundation chair has the answer.

By Arnold R. Grahl

Peace Geoffrey Taremwa has more than 20 years' experience implementing grants through his work for an overseas development agency. So during some of his visits to Rotary club projects, he noticed a problem.

"Clubs would receive their money but would end up doing something else that they thought was good," says Taremwa, a past governor of District 9214 in Tanzania and parts of Uganda. "At the end of the day, this becomes a stewardship issue because it was not what was discussed in the grant application.

"The biggest problem we had was a lack of knowledge," he adds. "Many Rotarians do not have sufficient knowledge of how to complete a global grant application."

Consult your district Foundation chair

District **Rotary Foundation** chairs can bridge that gap. These advisers help clubs by explaining grant eligibility and procedures, building relationships with districts around the world as potential project partners, securing funding, and creating connections with mentors who can help with grant applications and reports. By working with their district Rotary Foundation chair, clubs can have a smoother global grant experience and ultimately support more communities in a more effective, sustainable way.

Taremwa, now the district Foundation chair, is working to streamline the grant process in his district, implementing changes he launched as governor in 2022-23. The new process clusters clubs together for grant applications, activities, and training events. The district's outgoing Foundation chair and grants team conduct the training rather than incoming leaders. And grant support officers (a new role) mentor the club clusters on all grant applications, making sure money is spent according to plan and reports are filed on time.

The new process is working. "We have many more global grant applications," Taremwa says. "And many clubs have been inviting our

teams to go to them and do a training at the club level. Our stewardship teams are busier than before.

Consider a review committee

District 3292 in Nepal and Bhutan modified its grant process to address a different problem: Within clubs involved in global grant projects, many members lacked critical information about the grant.

M.K. Jha, a past district Foundation chair from Nepal, recalls an example from when two Rotary club presidents, from Nepal and India, met at a conference and decided to pursue a global grant together. But after it had been approved, the Nepalese Rotarian moved on, and no one else in his club knew anything about the grant.

To prevent issues like this, the district created a review committee, which includes the district Foundation chair, to screen all grant applications. To be considered, clubs complete a community assessment and fill out an authorization form and District Designated Fund request form. Projects must have been selected by the club's service project committee and approved by both its Rotary Foundation committee (which identifies funding) and board. The club is then required to hold an assembly to discuss the project with all its members.

The district review committee pores over minutes of the club's meetings and verifies the data in the community assessment. If it all looks good, the team then helps the club through the rest of the application and reporting process.

Additional resources

Between administering grant applications, overseeing fundraising efforts, and managing district grant funds, district Rotary Foundation chairs have a lot on their plate. Rotary International has created many resources, including online learning courses and downloadable guides, to help district Rotary Foundation chairs understand and relay information about the grant application process. These resources help the leaders serving in this role to work with clubs to produce projects that have an even greater impact.

RI's regional grants officers are also available to help districts with their grant processes. These Rotary staff members can provide guidance on project eligibility, address common problems, and offer tips for success. Clubs are strongly encouraged to contact their regional grants officers in the early stages of project planning.

Club News

District Governor's Official Club Visit



The District Governor's Official Club Visit to Rotary Club of Calcutta Metro City was held on 16th March 2025 at the Outram Club. DG Dr Krishnendu Gupta, the first lady Dr Simran Gupta along with Assistant Governor, PP Rtn Indra Goenka was present during the formal visit. They were accompanied by DES PP Rtn Amitava Chakraborty and DS PP Rtn Bhaswati Ray.

The DG expressed his satisfaction at the health of the club and appealed for more members adding the 24 member strength. He appreciated the club's work in Thlassaemia, Polio and promotion of Public Image in particular. The club also handed over 400USD on the occasion to the Polio Plus Fund of TRF.

The vote of thanks was offered by PDG Shyamashree Sen.

The Rotary guests were also handed over paintings of PDG Shyamashree Sen.

Rotary Asadharon Samman 2025



On 23rd March, evening, Rotary Asadharon Samman 2025- Vocational Excellence Awards ceremony was held at the Rotary Sadan. 14 awards were given to persons and organisations from various vocations. The ceremony was very well organised by Rtn Ravindra Khandelwal of RC Calcutta and attended by more than 100 Rotarians and well wishers.

Our club proposed the following who received the Vocation Excellence Award:

- Mr. Utpal Panda for his work with Thalassaemia.
- Mr. Suhrid Chandra for his work on the Environment.
- Dr. Aditi Bandopadhyay for her work with Autism.

The awards ceremony was followed by fellowship and dinner organised by RC Calcutta.

PDG Shyamashree Sen, PP Subhojit Roy, PP Arindam Ghosh, PP Sunetra Dasgupta, PP Navnit Banerjea attended the program on behalf of the club.

(Reported by Club President Rtn Sunando Sen)

Coming Up...

25th April 2025, 6 pm, ICCR- Swayam Siddha 16



Edited & Published by PP Rtn Subhojit Roy

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