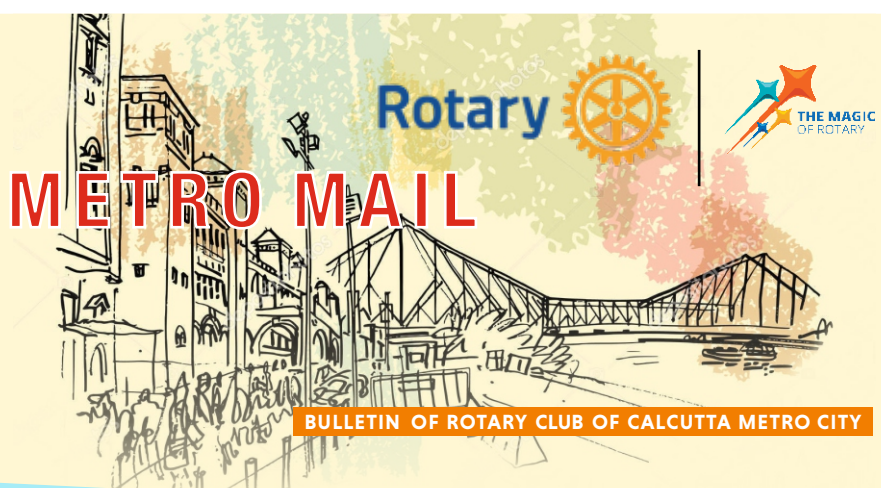


RI President: Rtn. Stephanie Urchick
Dist. Governor: Dr. Krishnendu Gupta
Club President: Rtn. Sunando Sen
Club Secretary: Rtn. Dipu Mullick
Club Editor: Rtn. Subhojit Roy

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The Union Budget significantly influences the functioning of voluntary organizations like Rotary, Lions, and similar non-profits. These organizations serve as crucial catalysts in nation-building by addressing societal issues, such as health, education, and community welfare. Budgetary provisions that foster financial support and streamline operational regulations are pivotal to their success.

Earlier budgets have offered mixed outcomes. The enhanced tax exemptions for charitable donations under Section 80G of the Income

Tax Act were a welcome step, incentivizing individual and corporate contributions. Similarly, reduced GST rates on essential services and equipment procured for social projects eased financial burdens. However, stringent regulatory frameworks under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) and delays in fund approvals have posed challenges, particularly for organizations reliant on international funding.

Voluntary organizations look forward to **Simplified FCRA Norms** with a more transparent and time-bound approval process for foreign contributions would empower organizations to undertake impactful projects without bureaucratic hurdles, **Enhanced Tax Benefits**; Increasing the current 50% tax deduction limit on donations to voluntary organizations could encourage more philanthropic contributions, **Infrastructure Support** : Allocating grants for rural and urban community centers managed by these organizations can boost their outreach, **Green Initiatives** : Providing subsidies for projects aligned with sustainable development goals (SDGs), such as renewable energy or clean water initiatives, could amplify their impact and **Digital Inclusion**: Funding for digital infrastructure in voluntary sectors can improve transparency, efficiency, and reach.

The Union Budget 2025 has the potential to empower voluntary organizations further, enabling them to complement government efforts in driving inclusive and sustainable development. A collaborative approach will strengthen the fabric of India's social welfare ecosystem, ensuring a brighter future for all.

Subhojit Roy

RI President's Message January 2025



I always walk into meetings at my home club of McMurray, Pennsylvania, with a smile on my face.

A few years ago, someone arrived late. Instead of scolding the person, we cheered. Since then, we've made it a tradition to applaud all members when they arrive for meetings. It's tough not to smile with a greeting like that.

There's nothing more powerful for engaging and retaining members than a club that's vibrant, welcoming, and — yes — fun.

Think back to what drew you to Rotary. Chances are, it wasn't just the service projects or professional networking. It was the people — the friendships, the shared laughter, and the joy of working toward a common purpose. That's what keeps us coming back.

If you're looking for that sense of joy in your meetings, don't be afraid to ask yourself and your fellow members some tough questions. If you were a prospective member, would you join your current club? It's a powerful question but don't stop there.

Do members of your club feel that they belong? Are your meetings fun? If not, what can you do about it together?

At your next meeting or event, try something new to bring out a few extra smiles. It's the simple things that create lasting bonds and make clubs simply irresistible.

Here's one example of a club moving in the right direction. The Rotary Club of Fukushima, Japan, has been combining environmental responsibility with community fun since 2021. In Japan, people have made picking up trash into a sport known as SpoGomi, and every year the club hosts a game. This year, more than 400 participants cheered each other on while they came together to improve their community.

This event is an excellent example of how Rotary clubs can have fun, make a difference, and raise awareness for broader global challenges all at the same time. And the inclusive, family-friendly format allows people of all ages to participate.

When we enjoy what we do, that energy becomes contagious. It's what attracts new members and keeps our clubs strong and engaged. It helps people feel that they belong.

Retention and culture go hand in hand. The healthier our club culture, the more likely members are to stay. *Rotary* magazine is an outstanding resource for inspiration on how to enhance our club culture and deepen member engagement. I encourage you to explore the stories and strategies in these pages, drawing from other clubs' successes to find ideas that work for you.

Together, we can create a more engaged, enjoyable, and inclusive Rotary that every member can feel proud to be part of. Let's continue with renewed commitment and enthusiasm, living *The Magic of Rotary*.

Stephanie A. Urchick
President 2024-25

Art for advocacy's sake



Student artists in Egypt spread the word about cervical cancer

led program United to End Cervical Cancer in Egypt, recipient of a \$2 million Programs of Scale grant from **The Rotary Foundation** in 2023.

The exhibition got its start after a presentation by Amal El-Sisi, a member of the Rotary Club of El Tahrir and a pediatric doctor, about the cervical cancer initiative that emphasizes vaccines for girls and screening for women. The four-year campaign to reduce the number of cervical cancer cases in Greater Cairo will inform the Egyptian government's national strategy. Doaa El-Saati, an art professor at Ain Shams University, thought that creating awareness through visual art would be a fitting activity for her students.

The curved walls of an art gallery on the Cairo Opera House grounds are lined with posters picturing lab beakers, syringes, and uteruses, alongside bold, empowering images of women caring for each other. Who knew artwork depicting the fight against cervical cancer could look so beautiful?

The artists, fourth-year students at Ain Shams University in Cairo, stand nearby to explain the thinking behind these 36 medical illustrations, which they've created through the Rotary member-

The young artists began by learning about cervical cancer and its causes and symptoms, as well as the key to prevention: the HPV vaccine. Until then, none of them had heard about the disease. “Rotary introduced this disease to the students; nobody had talked about it before,” El-Saati says. “The students were very excited and wanted to be vaccinated.”

After spending a few weeks brainstorming, they came up with concepts and began working with El-Saati to produce the works. “I was happy with the results, the excitement, and the energy of the students,” El-Saati says.

In March 2024, local Rotary members, public figures, and artists attended the exhibition. Rotaractors pitched in by transporting the art and placing it, ushering guests, and awarding prizes to the seven artists selected by judges. “This Programs of Scale initiative is a very big project. It means a lot for Rotary in Egypt,” says Yassin Shenawy, a medical student and then the president of the Rotaract Club of Gezira Sporting. “Every member of Rotary or Rotaract tries to participate and have a part in delivering this message.”

Organizers hope to make the exhibition an annual event over the four years of the initiative.

This story originally appeared in the January 2025 issue of [Rotary](#) magazine.

Unforgettable Evenings in Calgary



Image credit: Calin Charles

Get your cowboy hat. Your Rotary pals in friendly Canada are excited to welcome you to signature convention events, including dinner in their homes, a country music jamboree, and boot-stompin’ celebrations of the Western culture in Calgary.

“We’re a big small-town city, and so the hospitality we have, the ticketed events, the experiences — they will be fantastic,” says Mark Starratt, co-chair of the Host Organization Committee for the **Rotary International Convention 21-25 June**. Buy tickets at rotarycalgary2025.org.

Grandstand Spectacular, 21 June

This night of showmanship includes Indigenous hoop dancing, toe-tapping music, and horseback relay races.

Rockin’ the Big Tent, 22 June

Country music fans and people who want to sample Calgary’s Western charm will enjoy the honky-tonk beats and twangy guitars. The concert is billed as the night “Rotary rocks the roadhouse” in the Nashville North tent.

New Blood with the Calgary Civic Symphony, 22 June

The dance show features Peter Gabriel’s music and explores Blackfoot traditions through the story of a man who survived a government residential school for Indigenous children.

Host hospitality evening, 23 June

For this convention favorite, members invite Rotary visitors to their dinner tables, restaurants, or other venues to “break bread and share in fellowship,” Starratt says.

Western Ranch Showcase, 24 June

You may notice you’re holding your breath from excitement when you watch bronc riding of the “wildest, orneriest, out-of-line” horses. The organizers advise, “Pull down that hat brim and hold on tight.”

This story originally appeared in the January 2025 issue of [Rotary](#) magazine.

Club News

Support for Thalassaemia Treatment



Thalassaemia involves just not creating awareness but also taking care of patients through treatment support and Rotary Club Of Calcutta Metro City has been providing and facilitating monetary support for medicines, blood kit testing reagents for the treatment of patients at the Thalassaemia Society of India (TSI).

contd. to pg. 4



On Tuesday 14th January on the auspicious occasion of Makar Sankranti, the club facilitated donation of Rs 70,000 to TSI. The club arranged funds from M/s Ramawatar Charitable Trust (Rs 50,000) and Mrs Anita Shankar from USA (Rs20000) for the donation.

PDG Shyamashree Sen, President Rtn Sunando Sen, PP Rtn Subhojit Roy, Rtn Dipanwita Banerjee and her daughter Avishi Banerjee represented the club at the venue.

E-commerce Platform for Supporting Charity

Rtn Sandip Kar



Starting February 1, 2025, Rotary Club Metro City Calcutta is launching an innovative initiative designed to amplify visibility and public engagement for Rotary Projects. This initiative provides a valuable outreach platform, enabling Rotary and partner NGOs to showcase their work and create greater awareness. Through the online sale of everyday items of utility like leisurewear and accessories, it also offers an opportunity to generate additional funding, with a portion of the proceeds reinvested directly into Rotary's causes.

Visit www.Merch4Good.com to explore how this platform can benefit Rotary's mission, and join us in bringing this vision to life. The inaugural collection celebrates a delightful theme: pets!

#sustainability.

Rotary Metro City in the Media



Aajkal



Times of India

Forthcoming Programs

29th January 2025, 3pm - Cervical Cancer Awareness at IIM&C, Sonarpur with Soroptomist International.

Greetings

Anniversary Greetings to Shyamashree & Sunando Sen for 18th January!

Anniversary Greetings to Dipanwita & Rajasrhi for 30th January!

Birthday Greetings to Sunetra Dasgupta for 31st January!

Anniversary Greetings to Sunetra & Tilak Dasgupta for 31st January!



Edited & Published by PP Rtn Subhojit Roy

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