



ROTARY CLUB OF CALCUTTA METROPOLITAN

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METRO VOICE

<https://rccalcuttametropolitan.rotaryindia.org>

RY : 2025-2026

**UNITE
FOR
GOOD**

Rotary

Rotary



President : RAJSHREE JAIN • Hony. Secretary : NAMRATA BENGANI

• Editor Emeritus : SASHI DHACHOLIA

1710TH REGULAR MEETING

VOL 40, NO. 07

20 SEPTEMBER 2025

**1ST PRESIDENTS, SECRETARIES,
ASSISTANT GOVERNORS (ADMN), ZONAL SECRETARIES
& DISTRICT OFFICIALS MEET ON 13.9.2025 & 14.9.2025
AT HOTEL SONAR BANGLA, TAKI**



SEPTEMBER - BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY MONTH

ANNUAL LITERACY MEET

The Rotary Club of Calcutta Metropolitan organized its Annual Literacy Meet on 6th September 2025, with District Governor Rtn. Dr. Ramendu Homchaudhuri (RID 3291) as the Keynote Speaker. He captivated the audience with his insightful address on his core subjects - Thalassemia and Literacy.

DG Dr. Homchaudhuri beautifully explained the urgent need for reforms in our marriage system, stressing that both the boy and the girl should undergo an HPCL test to check whether they are carriers of Thalassemia before marriage. He estimated that almost 22,000 units of blood are used annually for Thalassemia patients, many of whom face inevitable death as there is no cure to this man-made disease. He emphasized that prevention is possible only through awareness and education, which remain the most powerful tools to fight this crisis.

Rtn. Runjhun Gupta delivered an excellent presentation on the PACE Learning Centre (PLC) and its ambitious vision of growing to 1,000 students. Through her slides, she beautifully narrated the journey of PACE - from its humble beginnings in a small hut to its present stature. She also gratefully acknowledged the contributions of Rtn. Jayanta Chatterjee, Rtn. Jayanta Neogi, Rtn. Shipra Mehta, Rtn. Madan Mohan Mohanka, and Rtn. Pradeep Kumar Agarwal.

PP Rtn. Harsh V. Rungta shared a presentation on the three schools at Barasat and their future growth prospects, especially in terms of infrastructure development.

Rtn. Madan Mohan Mohanka, CMD of Tega Group, spoke passionately on literacy, women empowerment, and the PLC School. He further stressed the importance of addressing urgent social concerns around us - citing recent floods in Punjab and Uttarakhand - and reminded that it is the moral duty of the privileged sections of society to extend support to those in need.

Rtn. Pradeep Kumar Agarwal emphasized the collaboration between the Heritage Institute of Technology and PLC School in supporting students to pursue higher education. He highlighted the need for more schools and colleges in India and advocated for vocational and technical training to create a skilled workforce that can strengthen industries and improve national employment opportunities.

The Meet also marked the induction of Rtn. Tathagata Sengupta, renowned singer and disciple of the late Ustad Rashid Khan ji, into the Club by the District Governor. On his very first day, he enthralled the gathering with a soulful rendition of "Aaoge Jab Tum O Sajna".

The evening also witnessed the release of the Souvenir for RY 2025-26 by the District Governor, along with President Rajshree Jain, PP Rtn. Sashi Dhacholia, and Secretary Namrata Bengani.

The event was well attended by several PDGs, District Officials, and fellow Rotarians, making it a memorable and inspiring occasion.

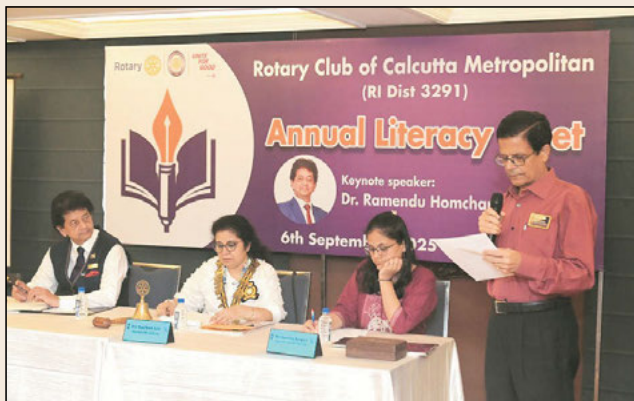
By Rtn Dr Poulomi Dutta



President Rtn Rajshree Jain conducting the Annual Literacy Meet in presence of DG Rtn Dr Ramendu Homchaudhuri (2)



PP Rtn Shayak Gupta reciting the National Anthem



IPP Rtn Sashi Dhacholia announcing the District Awards bagged by the Club for the RY-2024-2025



IPP Rtn Sashi Dhacholia holding the Trophy for Outstanding Club President for RY-2024-2025

ANNUAL LITERACY MEET



President handed over Polio Plus Society cheque of USD 100 to the DG and PDG
Rtn Mukul Sinha



Rtn Tathagata Sengupta was inducted as member of the Club pinned by PDG Rtn Ravi Sehgal in presence of DG



DG handed over the Membership Kit to Rtn Tathagata Sengupta



Rtn Tathagata Sengupta introducing himself



A view of PDGs attending the Annual Literacy Meet



Metropolitans attending the meet

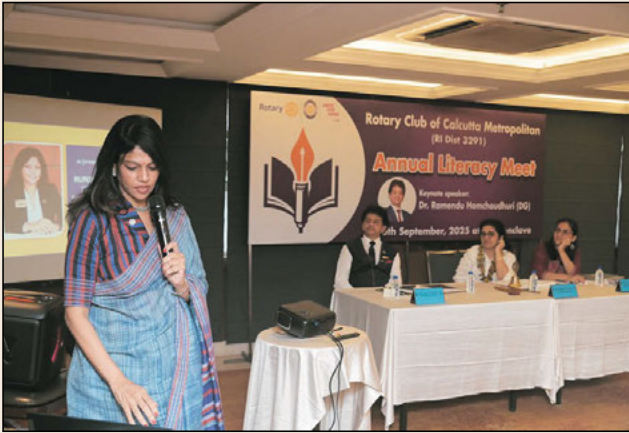


PP Rtn Dr Naresh Goyal conducting the meet & introducing Rtn Madan Mohan Mohanka



Rtn Madan Mohan Mohanka addressing the audience

ANNUAL LITERACY MEET



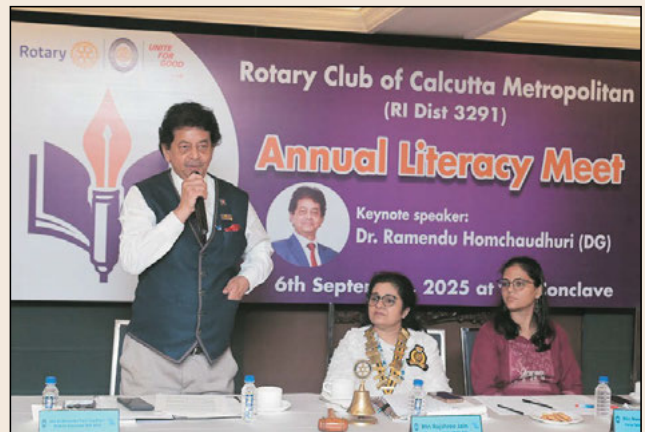
Rtn Runjhun Gupta making presentation of PACE Learning Centre



Principal of 3 Schools of Barasat with CSR Manager Ranjit Kr Das of Tega Inds Ltd were felicitated



Rtn Madan Mohan Mohanka with the Principals of 3 Schools



DG Rtn Dr Ramendu Homchaudhuri in his address



16 DG making presentation on Thalassemia



Rtn Pradip Kumar Agarwal & CEO of Heritage Institute of Technology addressing the audience



DG decorated Rtn Madan M Mohanka with Thalassemia Pin



Rtn Pradip Kumar Agarwal honoured with Thalassemia Pin by DG

ANNUAL LITERACY MEET



Group photograph



President felicitating DG



Release of Souvenir for RY-2024-2025 & Metro Voice



President, Secretary, PP Rtn Dr Naresh Goyal with DG Rtn Ramendu Homchaudhuri

INDUCTION OF NEW MEMBER

Rtn Tathagata Sengupta was inducted as Metropolitan by PDG Rtn Ravi Sehgal in presence of DG Rtn Dr Ramendu Homchaudhuri on 6.9.2025. Rtn Tathagata Sengupta is versatile singer and travelling widely with his singing assignments. We hope by his presence, the club will be hugely enriched.



SERVE TO CHANGE LIVES



WHAT IS THALASSEMIA, HOW IT OCCURS

1. Definition

Thalassemia is a genetic, inherited blood disorder, in which the body makes either insufficient amounts or defective forms of haemoglobin (the protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen).

Because of faulty haemoglobin, red blood cells are either destroyed prematurely or made in less number, causing anaemia.

2. Types

Beta-thalassemia and alpha-thalassemia, depending on which haemoglobin chain is affected. Severity ranges from trait/carrier (mild or no symptoms) to "intermedia" (moderate), to "major" (severe).

Severe thalassemia often appears early in life (e.g. within first 2 years) with severe anaemia, growth problems, enlarged spleen, risk of organ damage.

3. Genetic basis

Inherited from parents. Each parent may carry a mutated gene; if both are carriers, the child has a high risk of severe disease.

Carriers often are asymptomatic or have mild anaemia. They pass the mutation on. Carrier detection is therefore crucial.

4. Pathophysiology & Complications

Because of repeated destruction of red blood cells and/or insufficient haemoglobin, there is chronic anaemia - fatigue, breathlessness, growth retardation, paleness, increased heart rate etc.

Regular blood transfusions are often needed. But frequent transfusions cause iron overload - iron accumulates in organs like heart, liver, endocrine glands, which can lead to organ failure.

Other issues: bone deformities (because the bone marrow expands to try to produce more RBCs), enlarged spleen, risk of infections.

TREATMENT & CURE OPTIONS

1. Management / Treatment

Blood transfusions are the mainstay for moderate and severe cases (especially β -thalassemia major). Frequency may be every few weeks.

Iron chelation therapy to remove excess iron due to repeated transfusions, to prevent damage to heart, liver, etc. Drugs include deferoxamine, deferiprone, deferasirox.

Folic acid supplementation and good nutrition to support red cell production.

2. Cure / Advanced Treatments

Bone marrow transplant / hematopoietic stem cell transplant is currently the only well-established cure for many severe cases, provided a compatible donor is available.

Gene therapy - newer methods are being developed, including recently approved therapies (e.g., CASGEVY™ / exagamglogene autotemcel) for transfusion-dependent β -thalassemia in certain

countries. These can potentially reduce or eliminate the need for frequent transfusions.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Because thalassemia is genetic, preventing new severe cases (i.e., children born with major disease) is key to reducing the burden.

1. Carrier screening

Screening people (especially before marriage) to detect carriers (those who have one mutated gene).

Screening programs in schools, colleges, community health centres etc.

2. Genetic counselling / premarital counselling

When both partners are carriers, being informed helps them understand risks and options.

3. Prenatal diagnosis / antenatal screening

Detecting affected fetus early (via amniocentesis, chorionic villus sampling etc). Some choose therapeutic options, or carry forward or manage pregnancy.

4. Public education / awareness

Awareness about the disease, risks, how inheritance works, importance of testing.

5. Policy / Legal frameworks

Policies to ensure availability of testing, incentivizing screening, ensuring safe transfusion supply, organizing centers for counselling and treatment.

EXAMPLE - CYPRUS MODEL

To show how effective prevention can be:

- In Cyprus, thalassemia was endemic. A very high carrier rate (~1 in 6 people is heterozygous, i.e. a carrier) and about 1 in 1,000 births would have thalassemia major.
- Cyprus introduced widespread carrier screening, premarital counselling, publicly available prenatal diagnosis, and strong public awareness programs.
- As a result, they succeeded in drastically reducing the number of babies born with thalassemia major over time.
- Also, improvements in treatment (transfusions, iron chelation) increased life expectancy for existing patients; many now live past 50 years.

Why Awareness & Action is the Need of the Hour

Blood is a scarce, critical resource. Thalassemia patients require frequent and regular blood transfusions, which consume large volumes of safe blood. If fewer new thalassemia major cases are born, more blood can be freed for other serious patients (accident victims, cancer, surgery).

The cost, medical burden and emotional/financial stress on families and health systems is very high. Frequent transfusions + chelation therapy + managing complications = lifelong treatment.

Early awareness allows for prevention, which is far more cost-effective than treating severe disease over years.

ANNUAL LITERACY MEET

Without intervention, in high-prevalence areas the number of patients and associated demand on healthcare (blood supply, beds, specialists) will continue to rise, possibly overwhelming services.

Suggested Strategies to Reduce the Number of Thalassemia Patients (Applicable to India / Regions)

- 1. Establish mandatory or strongly encouraged carrier screening before marriage or in early adult life.
- Make prenatal diagnosis accessible, affordable and socially acceptable.
- Provide genetic counselling services in colleges, health centres, maternal & child health clinics.
- Build awareness campaigns - via media, schools, religious / community groups - to educate about

inheritance, carrier status, implications for children.

- Ensure safe, adequate supply of blood, with infrastructure for transfusions and chelation therapy.
- Invest in curative treatments (stem cell transplant, gene therapy) by making them more accessible / affordable.
- Policy support: government subsidies, health insurance coverage, maybe even legal regulations similar to Cyprus or Greece where certain certificates (carrier status) are required or strongly recommended in certain marriages (subject to ethical/cultural acceptance).

Submitted by: Rtn Dr Poulomi Dutta

Source: Dr Ramendu Homchaudhuri 's PPT and web research.

THALASSEMIA AWARENESS SESSION AT HERITAGE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ON 10.9.2025

When we were engaged with Blood Donation Camp with Heritage Institute of Technology (HIOT) on 9.9.2025, we came to know through Shri Arvind Srivastava, Joint Registrar of HIOT that on 10.9.2025, District Governor (DG) Rtn Dr Ramendu Homchaudhuri will hold Thalassemia Awareness session at the college in association with Rotary Club of Calcutta Metropolitan.

This was a well-kept surprise for us from Rtn Pradip Kumar Agarwal and CEO of Heritage Institute of Technology. After knowing this, we were quite excited and decided to join the session in large numbers. This would have been possible without the thoughts of our very own Rtn Pradip Kumar Agarwal. We are immensely grateful to Rtn Pradip Kumar Agarwal as the session was for Students and parents of Heritage Institute of Technology.

As we all know, our DG is very passionate about creating awareness of Thalassemia and to make it

Thalassemia free in our Country. DG started with various presentation which enlighten the students and parents about the disease. He was particularly giving the attention to the parents that they should get tested and to the students before getting married, both the partners should get tested for the Thalassemia.

The session was very engrossed and he ensured that audience understand the importance of the disease. The entire 40 minutes session was listened with rapt attention.

There was large gathering of 1150 audience which includes 550 students and 500 parents. We are overwhelmed with their presence. RCCM was represented by President Rtn Rajshree Jain, IPP Rtn Sashi Dhacholia, PP Rtn Dr Naresh Goyal, PP Rtn Rakesh Kumar Goel, PE Rtn Runjhun Gupta and Rtn Poulomi Dutta.

By Rtn Dr Poulomi Dutta



GLIMPSE OF THALASSEMIA AWARENESS SESSION ON 10.9.2025



GLIMPSE OF THALASSEMIA AWARENESS SESSION ON 10.9.2025



DROPS OF HOPE- BLOOD DONATION CAMP

Rotary Club of Calcutta Metropolitan in collaboration with Heritage Institute of Technology for the second consecutive year organized the "DROPS OF HOPE"- Blood Donation Camp ON 9.9.2025 and the students shown keen interest to donate blood which includes several first timer.

Rtn Pradip Kumar Agarwal, CEO of Heritage Group of Institutions and also our member of the Club again invited us to hold the Blood Donation Camp in Collaboration with Heritage Institute of Technology. Lions District-322B1 Blood Centre run by Lions Club of North Calcutta readily agreed to provide all infrastructure for collecting the blood with proper check-up etc. We are grateful to Rtn Pradip Kumar Agarwal for providing this opportunity. This is the second year in running.

The Blood Donation Camp was held on 9th September, 2025 at the premises of Heritage Institute of Technology. Students were eagerly awaiting to donate the blood. The initial registration was more than 175 but after proper check-up, we could manage check-up for 125 donors but eventually 110 units were collected as 15 were rejected due to BP, Haemoglobin problem etc.

We are also grateful to Shri Arvind Srivastava, Joint Registrar of Heritage Institute of Technology for making all arrangement and the members of Lions Club of North Calcutta, who arranged infrastructure or collection of Blood through Lions District-322B1 Blood Centre.

President Rtn Rajshree Jain, IPP Rtn Sashi Dhacholia and PP Rtn Dr V K Nevatia, who took initiative for the Blood camp, attended the above camp.



Students at registration desk



Check-up Counter for eligibility as donor



Donor giving blood



Several donors



With donors, Heritage, Lions and Metropolitans members



President Rtn Rajshree Jain with donors and others

DROPS OF HOPE- BLOOD DONATION CAMP



Another view of donors



Female students shown keen interest as donor



Full view of donors with President



View of donors



Smiling donor with President



All beds are full with donors



President Rtn Rajshree Jain with the members of Lions Club of North Calcutta



President cheering the Help Desk volunteers

DISTRIBUTION OF MOSQUITO NETS

On 15. 9.2025, we have distributed 50 Mosquito nets to the Senior Citizens (women) at Ladies Old Age Home under All Bengal Women's Union situated at 89, Elliot Road, Kolkata-700016 by President Rtn Rajshree Jain. The women inmates were very happy to receive the mosquito nets as this save them from the bite of mosquitos etc.



KNOW YOUR MEMBER- PP RTN DR NARESH GOYAL



Dr Naresh Goyal by Profession is a doctor Holding degree in MBBS, Diploma in Tropical Medicine & Hygiene and Fellow College of General Practitioners.

He is widely known as a doctor, who brings solution to his patients and comforts for last four decades.

He is an active Rotarian since 2001 and was President of Rotary Club of Calcutta Metropolitan in the RY-2011-2012.

He has participated in many Matching grants and Global grants as primary contact. Many of these projects have been successfully completed and closed.

He also served the RI District-3291 in various capacities. He was District Chair Special project, Child Heart

Surgery. In this project, more than 800 children suffering from congenital heart disease were operated in various hospitals of Kolkata e.g., B M Birla Heart Research Centre-Multi Speciality Hospital, R N Tagore Mission Hospital etc.

Presently he is serving as Chairman of Grants under The Rotary Foundation. He is an active Cadre and technical advisor for The Rotary Foundation and Faculty Member of Rotary Leadership Institute. He is Major donor level+2.

He also served as the President of The Calcutta Swimming Club in the year 2022-2023. He is member of The Calcutta Club and The Royal Calcutta Turf Club also.

He is happily married to Rtn Rajshree Jain, who joined him shoulder to shoulder. She is successful entrepreneur and presently President of Rotary Club of Calcutta Metropolitan. She is a Paul Harris Fellow. Dr Goyal is blessed with two sons. Elder Prateek is a software engineer. Younger Anuj is liver transplant surgeon. Both sons are happily married.

1ST PRESIDENTS, SECRETARIES, ASSISTANT GOVERNORS (ADMN), ZONAL SECRETARIES & DISTRICT OFFICIALS MEET FOR THE RY-2025-2026 ON 13.9.2025 & 14.9.2025

For every year for any District Governor 1st Presidents, Secretaries, Assistant Governors (Admn), Zonal Secretaries & District Officials meet is very important as he gives the road map of the activities to be done during his year. This meet was for the RY-2025-2026 and was held on 13.9.2025 & 14.9.2025 Hotel Sonar Bangla, Taki.

Ichamati River (also spelt as Ichhamati) is a transboundary river which flows through India and Bangladesh and also forms part of boundary between the two countries. From Hotel Sonar Bangla, Taki, Bangladesh is visible on the far bank of Ichamati River. After reaching the destination, the first thing we did, was a ride in Boat in the Ichamati River and could see the border of Bangladesh. The river ride was quite exciting.

DAY-1- 13.9.2025

After Lunch, the session started by Rtn Debi Prasad Basu on Membership. He invited various Presidents to update about the induction of new members from July-2025. The response was very good adding 100 new members so far. The target to reach 4000.

DG handed over the Charter of New Club to Rotary Club of Manbhum. He is hopeful to register 10 new clubs.

PDG Rtn Ravi Sehgal informed about the Rotary India National CSR Awards-2025- Eastern Zonal Round. The last date for submission online application was 15.9.2025. The Club can show their flag ship project, if selected, on 23.10.2025 at Hyatt Regency, Kolkata.

PDG Rtn Ravi Sehgal also spoke about the contribution to The Rotary Foundation (TRF). To be become PHF,

any Rotarian contribute USD 500, the District-3291 will match USD 500 to become PHF for the total USD 500. He further informed that the target for TRF will be 15 million.

DG announced that Holi meet to be held on 7.3.2026 will be at Purulia. He also spoke about Rotary Learning Institute (RLI) part- I, II & III and the target is for 500 participants. He also emphasized on eradication of Polio & strict vigil so that this disease does not re-appear. Presently two countries are still affected by Polio are Pakistan and Afghanistan. He made passionate appeal about the Thalassemia eradication and suggested various ways how to prevent it.

DAY-2- 14.9.2025

Rtn Dipa Roy of RC of Calcutta Majestic spoke about the District Award Criteria 2025-2026 with each category will carry points etc and recognitions will be strictly based on that. Everything will be strictly online and No hard copies will be accepted. The last date for submission of District Awards online will be 15.5.2025. To know how to operate, please login Rotary Zone 4,5,6,7 for the manual.

Rtn Subhojit Roy, District Public Image Chair outlined how to publicize the Club projects especially through social network.

Rtn Ashif Shah, Chair-Governor's Monthly letter spoke about the submission of the projects with the first week of every month for the previous month activities.

DG Rtn Dr Ramendu Homchaudhuri released the District Directory 2025-2026. A round of applause was given to Rtn Amrita Paul- Chair- District Directory.

DG also announced that District Conference-2026 will be held on 9th, 10th & 11th January, 2026 at Nicco Park. The registration fees will be Rs.3000/- till Diwali and after that it will be Rs.4000/- without foods. For foods or snacks, the Each Rotarian has to pay separately. He also appealed that Clubs should focused on Thalassemia, Life Beyond Cancer and Cervical Cancer.

The attendance to the above meet was more than 125. The fellowship was well entertained with Rotarians and Rtn Subhasish Roy of RC of Salt Lake Calcutta lead the group. The ambience and hospitality were excellent.



1ST PRESIDENTS, SECRETARIES, ASSISTANT GOVERNORS (ADMN), ZONAL SECRETARIES & DISTRICT OFFICIALS MEET FOR THE RY-2025-2026 ON 13.9.2025 & 14.9.2025



LIVING THE FOUR-WAY TEST: A LEGACY OF INTEGRITY AND IMPACT

In 1932, amidst the uncertainty of the Great Depression, Rotarian Herbert J. Taylor penned 24 words that would become a timeless guide for ethical living. His goal was simple yet profound: to save a struggling business by restoring trust, fairness, and goodwill. Today, those same words—The Four-Way Test—continue to shape how Rotarians lead, serve, and connect.

As we reflect on our mission of Service Above Self, let us recommit to these principles:

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

These questions are more than a checklist—they are a call to action. Whether we're launching a new initiative, celebrating a milestone, or simply lending a hand, the Four-Way Test reminds us that integrity is the foundation of lasting impact.

Let's continue to lead with heart, speak with honesty, and act with purpose. Together, we honor Herbert Taylor's vision—not just in words, but in the way we live and serve every day.

What guides your actions?

At Rotary, we live by 24 powerful words known as the Four-Way Test—a timeless code for truth, fairness, friendship, and impact.



THE FOUR-WAY TEST

1. IS IT THE TRUTH?
2. IS IT FAIR TO ALL CONCERNED?
3. WILL IT BUILD GOODWILL AND BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. WILL IT BE BENEFICIAL TO ALL CONCERNED?

Born in 1932 to save a struggling business, these words now inspire millions of Rotarians to lead with integrity and serve with heart.

Let's keep living the test—every meeting, every message, every moment.

WHAT IS ROTARY COMMUNITY SERVICE

Rotary community service involves members of local Rotary clubs acting to improve their communities through service projects that address local needs, such as education, health, clean water, and poverty, guided by Rotary International's six areas of focus. This is accomplished through hands-on projects, partnerships with non-Rotarians via Rotary Community Corps, and efforts to ensure sustainability and community empowerment.

What is Rotary Community Service?

An Avenue of Service:

Community service is a core part of Rotary, encouraging members to dedicate time and effort to improving their local areas.

Local Focus:

Projects are tailored to address specific needs within a community, ranging from providing basic necessities to enhancing local infrastructure.

"Service Above Self":

Community service exemplifies Rotary's guiding principle of "Service Above Self," emphasizing selfless service for the betterment of others.

Key Areas of Focus

Rotary's community service efforts align with Rotary International's global initiatives:

Promoting Peace: Supporting efforts to prevent conflicts and foster understanding.

Fighting Disease: Working to eradicate diseases like polio and improve public health.

Providing Clean Water: Ensuring access to safe water and sanitation.

Saving Mothers and Children: Focusing on health and well-being for mothers and children.

Supporting Education: Improving literacy and educational opportunities for communities.

Growing Local Economies: Fostering economic development and job creation.

Protecting the Environment: Undertaking projects to protect natural resources and promote sustainability.

How Rotary Service is Carried Out

Club Projects:

Rotary clubs initiate and manage local projects, such as building schools, conducting health camps, or feeding the hungry.

Rotary Community Corps (RCC):

These are groups of non-Rotarians, sponsored by a Rotary club, who work together on community projects, fostering sustainable solutions and empowering community members.

Rotary Foundation:

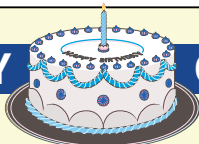
The Foundation provides funding for sustainable global and district projects, increasing the ability of Rotary to undertake larger and more impactful initiatives.

Impact

Rotary members contribute millions of volunteer hours annually to global and community projects.

Their work helps to improve the quality of life for people in need and to build stronger, more resilient communities.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS



25.09.2025

Rtn Mukesh Sethi

01.10.2025

Rtn Arundhati Chatterji



05.10.2025

Rtn Ashoo Tibrewal



09.10.2025

PP Rtn Roshni Beriwal



Forthcoming Events

CLUB

20.09.2025 Co-Host to Breast Cancer Awareness Interactive session at Rotary Sadan at 6.30 PM organized by RC of Behala

12.10.2025 Regular Meeting and Bijoya Get together at Main Land China at Ballygunge Circular Road at 2.00 PM



**WORLD
POLIO DAY**
24 OCTOBER

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE – SEPTEMBER 2025



Francesco Arezzo
President 2025-26

When I stepped into the role of Rotary International president, the moment came swiftly and unexpectedly. It got me thinking how the world can change in an instant, and how Rotary has the power to be a steady force for good in that change. This month, Rotary's Basic Education and Literacy Month, we have a clear call to action: to strengthen the foundation of learning in every community we serve.

Millions of people worldwide remain unable to read. Millions of children lack access to basic education. And yet, we know the solution: sustainable, inclusive, and equitable education, especially for girls and marginalized youths. Literacy is more than the ability to read and write. It is the key to human dignity, economic mobility, and peace. Every book opened, every classroom supported, and every teacher trained becomes a building block of peace.

This year, our message is Unite for Good. "Unite" speaks to the strength we find in each other. When we unite our talents and resources - not only among our clubs but across partners, organizations, and communities - we expand our reach. And when we do so consistently over time, we create lasting change. Rotary service cannot be measured only in annual goals. Our work in education must extend beyond a single year. Literacy projects take time to take root, grow, and bear fruit.

Now is the time to think boldly and creatively. New types of clubs can help us engage educators, students, and advocates in new ways. Let us use this month to welcome new members with a passion for education and empower existing ones to lead service projects that reflect local needs. Whether you're building libraries, distributing textbooks, or mentoring students, your actions matter.

Education is also peacebuilding. Every scholarship we provide, every early childhood program we support, every adult literacy class we fund is an act of peace. And Rotary has been building peace in this way for more than a century.

Let us not forget that the fight for literacy is not only about access, it's about equity. It is about ensuring every learner, regardless of background, has the opportunity to reach their potential. And it is about standing together - across borders, languages, and generations - to say that education is a right, not a privilege.

Let's Unite for Good by committing to literacy that lasts. Let's dream of a world where every child learns to read. And then, as people of action, let's work together to make that dream a reality.

Together, we can change lives, starting with the power of education. Together, we Unite for Good.

TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE – SEPTEMBER 2025



Holger Knaack
Trustee Chair 2025-26

Education is the most powerful tool we have for changing the world, and during Basic Education and Literacy Month, I want to remind everyone why our work matters.

Education breaks the cycle of poverty, opens doors to opportunity, and empowers individuals to transform their communities. But education doesn't exist in a vacuum. We must also address peace, health, clean water, economic opportunity, maternal and child health, and the environment.

This is why Rotary has these areas of focus. Lasting change requires a comprehensive approach. When we collaborate across these areas through The Rotary Foundation, we raise up communities sustainably and with dignity.

Today, I have asked Lynne Paradis from the Rotary Club of Red Deer, Alberta, to share her passion for literacy:

"I believe that literacy is a human right. When I joined forces with the Rotary Club of San Ignacio, Belize, over a decade ago, we set out to improve reading instruction, but we had no idea how far this journey would take us.

Literacy Alive! has been supported by eight Rotary Foundation global grants since 2011. Using a straightforward approach based on phonics and science, we updated how teachers teach and focused on how students really learn. We collected data on reading skills improvement over six months.

After demonstrating that teachers had integrated new practices into daily instruction, the project snowballed. The Belize Ministry of Education took notice.

Today, over 1,300 teachers have been trained and more than 20,000 students have benefited. We've achieved over 90 percent success rates, with many students making more than a year's worth of improvement in just five months.

The program is now compulsory in Belize primary schools. What moves me most is hearing teachers say how confident they are that they can change students' lives.

Our greatest success is working ourselves out of a job. When local educators take the lead, we know lasting change is underway."

Lynne's story exemplifies the power of Foundation grants. Through partnerships spanning six Rotary clubs and three countries, Literacy Alive! reminds us how good Rotary is at creating systemic change.

When our members' passion meets Foundation support, we don't just improve individual lives, we change entire communities. By supporting the Foundation, you can put your passion to work this month and every month.

Sponsored by : PP RTN RAKESH KUMAR GOEL

We meet every Saturday at 2.00 pm at The Calcutta Swimming Club, 1, Strand Road, Kolkata-700 001
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