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R.I. DISTRICT 3201

**OFFICE**  
ROTARY CLUB OF COCHIN  
BALBHAVAN  
PANAMPILLY NAGAR, KOCHI- 682 036  
PHONE: 0484 7963023  
email: rotarycochin2013@gmail.com  
website: www.rotarycochin.com

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## NEXT MEETING

Wednesday  
16<sup>th</sup> October 2024  
at 7.00 PM at Balbhavan

*Speaker:*  
**Navnit Nakra**  
Former member of Rotary  
Club of Cochin

*Topic:*  
**How AI will transform our  
lives and jobs**



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# THE COCHIN ROTARIAN

## ROTARY FOUNDATION MULTI-DISTRICT CONCLAVE @ KOCHI: A CELEBRATION OF SERVICE



The Rotary Foundation's Multi-District Conclave took place on September 24, 2024, at Le Meridien, Kochi, uniting Rotary leaders and members from Districts 3201, 3203, 3204, 3211, and 3212 for an inspiring evening focused on service, leadership, and community impact. The event began with a vibrant ceremonial procession, showcasing Kerala's rich cultural heritage, followed by the traditional lighting of the lamp, symbolizing the commencement of the festivities and the illumination of knowledge and service, infused with the spirit of Kerala's Onam festival.

The meeting was called to order by Conclave Chairman PDG Sunil K. Zachariah, along with DGs N. Sundaravadelu (3201), Dr. Suresh Babu (3203), Santosh Sreedhar (3204), Sudhi Jabbar (3211), and Meerankhan Saleem

(3212), followed by a warm hearted welcome address from the Conclave Chairman.

Prominent Rotary leaders later took the stage to deliver inspiring speeches, including Trustee Dr. Bharat Pandya, who highlighted the importance of collective efforts in advancing Rotary's mission, and Director Anirudha Roy Chowdhry, who emphasized the transformative power of Rotary projects on local communities. A special address was delivered by Mark Maloney, TRF Trustee Chair and former Rotary International President, whose insights into the organization's global impact deeply resonated with attendees. Director Elect M. Muruganandam outlined plans for 2025-2027, and Past Director C. Basker led a felicitation ceremony.

A significant highlight of the evening was the announcement of the Annual Fund Awards, recognizing outstanding leaders. The early achievers of the Mark Maloney Annual Fund Award – District 3203's DG Suresh Babu and District 3220's DG Sushena Ranathunga – were honored for their contributions. Governors and DRFCs from all five districts spoke of their respective district's Rotary Foundation plans and achievements, while major benefactors were also honored.

Regional Leaders RRFC Gowri Rajan, EMGA Madhav Chandran, and EPNC Chinnadurai Abdulla addressed the audience, discussing goals and successes.

The gathering also featured the inauguration of completed Global Grant projects, highlighting the meaningful work undertaken by various Rotary clubs to enhance community welfare. Among the key recognitions was the commendable work of the Rotary Clubs of Cochin Titans and Cochin Central in addressing the pressing issue of Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) in the region. With over 70,000 CKD patients in Ernakulam, many from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, these clubs made a significant impact. Supported by grants from the Rotary Foundation, they equipped the Government General Hospital Ernakulam's Dialysis Centre with 16 new dialysis machines.

This crucial upgrade enabled the hospital to perform 336 dialysis procedures weekly, significantly expanding access to life-saving treatment. The project, with a total cost of ₹2 crores, was highlighted by PDRFC R. Jayashankar, exemplifying Rotary's commitment to "Service Above Self."

As the evening progressed, attendees were treated to cultural performances showcasing Kerala's vibrant traditions, adding a festive touch to the event. A particularly heartwarming moment was the appearance of Mahabali, the beloved king from Kerala's Onam festival, who stayed back post-Onam to greet guests and showcase Kerala's beauty to Mark Maloney, which he couldn't fully experience during his short visit.

The four entertainment modules were conceived, curated, and performed by 50 all-women Rotary Anns, Inner Wheel Club of Cochin members, and Rotaractors, led by Rtn. Mini Menon. These performances showcased various art forms of Kerala, with anns from the Rotary Clubs of Cochin, Cochin City, Cochin Uptown, Parur, and the Rotaract Club of Laurus. The Rotary anns in the team from Rotary club of Cochin comprised of Dhanya Nair, Gita Krishnan, Cynthia Zachariah, Kavita George, Zeena Mathew, Madhavi Nair, Manju John, Mariam George, Gayatri Govind, Neha Aswani, Panna Gautam, Radhika Anil, Gargi Shelat, Sheila Saju, Nitha

George besides members from Inner wheel club of Cochin Asha Krishnan, Indu Nambiar and Anila Ninan. Their outstanding performance stole the show.

As the chair of registration for the conclave, Past President Sush-eel Aswani coordinated with clubs and ensured record attendance. Past President Algiers Khalid was entrusted the role of Chair of Program & Entertainment for the event and Past President Shweta Vasudevan was in charge of coordinating the arrangements for the overseas delegates from Sri Lanka & Maldives.

The event concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks by Conclave Secretary PDG T.R. Vijayakumar, acknowledging the collective efforts of all those involved in making the evening a success. As attendees stood for the national anthem, there was a palpable sense of unity and shared purpose. The conclave culminated in a fellowship dinner, providing an opportunity for networking and further strengthening the bonds among Rotary leaders and members.

This gathering not only celebrated past achievements but also set the stage for future initiatives aimed at improving lives and communities, embodying the true essence of Rotary's mission. The Multi-District Conclave was a remarkable occasion filled with service, recognition, and camaraderie, reflecting the profound impact of Rotary's work in the region and beyond.

**By Rtn. PP Algiers Khalid**

## RI PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE OCTOBER 2024

**W**ith World Polio Day on 24 October, I'm proudly rooting for Rotary as we team up around the world to End Polio Now.

I had the honor of attending a

Strike Out Polio event in July at PNC Park, home of the Pittsburgh Pirates MLB team. The Rotary Club of Delmont-Salem hosted the event, which raised \$1.3 million for

PolioPlus.

Later in the summer, I joined members of our Rotary family in supporting the Más Millas Menos Polio (More Miles Less Polio) bike

ride. Felipe Meza Chávez and his team rode all the way from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, to One Rotary Center in Evanston, Illinois, to raise money and awareness. The ride took 12 days, and Felipe and his team collected more than \$100,000 to support the fight against polio. It was a joy to greet them as they arrived in Evanston.

And I was thrilled to see Team End Polio raise global awareness around the 2024 Paris Olympics. This world-class roster of athletes, global leaders, and polio eradication supporters came together to advocate for a world where no child has to live in fear of being paralyzed by polio. Some of the athletes on Team End Polio are polio survivors themselves, adding weight to their advocacy.

These are just a few examples of the many ways Rotary has teamed up recently to End Polio Now. It is vital that we continue to seek out and recruit teammates in polio eradication, especially after the challenges our eradication efforts have faced this year.



The Rotary world was heartbroken to learn about the tragic passing in August of Aidan O’Leary, director for polio eradication at the World Health Organization.

I knew Aidan and worked with him directly. He was a tireless advocate in the fight against polio and a kind, genuine man. We will remember him both for his advocacy and his warmth.

But where there is hardship, there is also hope. I feel hopeful whenever I consider the countless ways Rotary supports the fight every day to eradicate polio.

As people of action, we don’t have the luxury of giving in to despair, even in the face of tragedy. The best way to honor Aidan’s memory is by teaming up and reaching our goal to End Polio Now.

We made a promise to the children of the world and their families. It is incumbent upon us, together with our global partners, to end this threat once and for all.

There are so many ways we can team up to eradicate polio. You can donate to the End Polio Now campaign, join or initiate a PolioPlus Society in your club or district, or take inspiration from the fundraisers I mentioned above.

I encourage Rotary members around the world to continue to seek out new teammates, so that together, we end polio.

**Stephanie A. Urchick**  
*President 2024-25*

## ROTARY CLUB ONAM CELEBRATION: A DAY OF TRADITION, MUSIC, AND TOGETHERNESS



The Rotary Club of Cochin’s Onam celebration this year was nothing short of spectacular, blending traditional customs, engaging activities, and heartfelt community spirit. Held amidst a warm and festive atmosphere, the event captured the true essence of Onam, Kerala’s beloved harvest festival. Onam, celebrated in honor of the mythical King Mahabali, represents a time of abundance, unity, and prosperity—and this year’s celebration embodied all of these themes.

The day commenced with an

official meeting, where members and distinguished guests were welcomed with open arms. The meeting kicked off with warm greetings and thoughtful remarks, reflecting the camaraderie that binds the Rotary community together. A special Onam message followed, invoking the spirit of unity and inclusivity that the festival represents, inspiring all present to embrace its values in their daily lives. The words were a timely reminder of the importance of togetherness, especially during times of celebration.

Soon after, the entertainment portion of the day took center stage, starting with a lively men's fashion show. Members proudly showcased their traditional *mundu* at-

tire, the classic white and gold garments associated with Kerala's culture. The colorful display was both fun and elegant, offering a nod to the region's sartorial heritage. The show was followed by a graceful performance of *Thiruvathira*, a traditional dance form

usually performed by women, moving in circles around a lamp. The dancers, dressed in white saris with golden borders, displayed rhythmic movements that captivated the audience, their gracefulness a true reflection of Kerala's rich cultural artistry.

Adding to the atmosphere was live music performed by the *Heart2Heart* orchestra, an inspiring band exclusively composed of visually challenged musicians. Brought together by SRVC, an NGO, the band has performed at over 400 shows across Kerala. Their soulful music resonated throughout the event, creating an atmosphere of joy and inclusion. The three-piece ensemble, which has become renowned for their talent, often performs at prestigious venues like the Le Meridien Hotel and Aster Medcity. Their involvement in the Rotary Onam celebration added a special touch, symbolizing how music transcends boundaries and brings people together.

The day's energy continued with a series of fun and engaging games that drew both laughter and competitive spirit. Traditional games like Tug of War brought the crowd together, with members enthusiastically joining

in. *Uriyadi*, a popular game where participants attempt to break a hanging pot with a stick while blindfolded, was another crowd favorite, showcasing both skill and fun. These activities invoked nostalgia for simpler times and fostered a sense of camaraderie among the participants, reflecting the collective joy that Onam brings to all communities.

The climax of the day's events was, of course, the grand Onam Sadhya—an elaborate feast served on banana leaves, featuring an array of vegetarian dishes that form the heart of the festival. The Sadhya is much more than a meal; it is an expression of tradition, generosity, and the spirit of sharing. Dishes such as *avial*, *sambar*, *olan*, *kootu curry*, and the beloved *payasam* (a sweet pudding made with milk and jaggery) were savored by

all. The variety of flavors, ranging from sweet to spicy, celebrated the richness of Kerala's culinary heritage, with each bite offering a taste of Onam's festive warmth.

As the day drew to a close, there was a palpable sense of joy and fulfillment

among the attendees. The Rotary Club of Cochin's Onam celebration not only brought together its members but also served as a beautiful reminder of the importance of cultural traditions, inclusivity, and community spirit. The event embodied the true essence of Onam, leaving everyone with memories of a day filled with love, laughter, and the beauty of Kerala's traditions.

This year's Onam celebration was a perfect blend of cultural homage, festive fun, and community togetherness, demonstrating once again the Rotary Club of Cochin's commitment to fostering unity and joy among its members and the wider community. The celebration will be remembered as one that honoured tradition while also embracing modern-day values of inclusivity and compassion.



Rtn. Gautam Sreedharan

15 Oct