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23RD AUGUST 1937  
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## NEXT MEETING

Wednesday

26<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 07.00 PM  
at Rotary Cochin Balbhavan

*Speaker:*

**PDG Venugopal C. Govind**

*Topic:*

**Emerging roles of Rotary and the Rotarian**



BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF COCHIN

Volume 89, Issue 36, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025

# THE COCHIN ROTARIAN

## ROTARY CLUB OF COCHIN WELCOMES ROTARIANS FROM SOUTH AFRICA



The Rotary Club of Cochin recently had the pleasure of hosting a vibrant group of Rotarians and Anns from South Africa, strengthening international Rotary ties and fostering a spirit of global camaraderie. The visiting team, led by PP Bala Moodley from the **Rotary Club of Chatsworth, District 9370**, was on a multi-city friendship tour, with previous stops at the **Bangalore Cantonment Club** before making their way to Cochin.

The delegation, comprising **20 Rotarians and Anns**, engaged in an enriching exchange, sharing insights into their Rotary journey, community initiatives, and the impactful projects undertaken by their club. A key highlight of the meeting was the **exchange of club flags**, a symbolic gesture reflecting the enduring bond between Rotary clubs

worldwide.

The visiting Anns, distinguished by their vibrant kaftans, are actively involved in **charitable work** through their dedicated Anns Club. Their contributions towards community welfare were particularly inspiring, reinforcing the shared commitment of Rotarians globally toward humanitarian service.



## MEET YOUR 2025-26 ROTARY PRESIDENT: MÁRIO CÉSAR MARTINS DE CAMARGO

After a day of intense interviews with the nominating committee, Mário César Martins de Camargo anxiously awaited his fate. When he was called back to Rotary headquarters in Evanston, his first thought was that he had made a mistake. As he walked back, he mentally replayed everything he had said. When he arrived, the nominating committee stood and applauded. Overcome with emotion, he could only respond with a humble, “Are you guys sure?” Indeed, they were.

A dedicated Rotarian for over four decades, de Camargo has been a member of the Rotary Club of Santo André, Brazil, since 1980. His leadership journey began early, serving as Rotary Youth Exchange officer at age 24 and later as club president in 1992-93. Over the years, he has held numerous key positions, including District 4420 Governor (1999-2000), Rotary Foundation Trustee (2015-19), and Rotary International Director (2019-21). Along with his wife, Denise da Silva de Camargo, also a Rotarian, he is a Major Donor and Benefactor of The Rotary Foundation.

### A Life Beyond Rotary

Professionally, de Camargo was the president of Gráfica Bandeirantes, a leading printing company in Brazil, and has contributed extensively to the print industry through trade associations. He has also served on the board of Casa da Esperança (House of Hope), a medical center in Santo André that serves over 200,000 patients annually.

Beyond his official biography, there are many facets to de Camar-

go’s personality and passions:

- **A Pianist at Heart:** From ages 8 to 21, he was a devoted pianist, even attending a music conservatory. While in Germany for an apprenticeship, he played a Steinway piano at the Goethe Institute, his final public performance before work and family obligations took over. He regrets not continuing, calling music a “self-rewarding experience.”
- **A Printer with a Purpose:** De Camargo believes the printing industry has played a crucial role in reducing ignorance, citing its impact on education and the spread of knowledge. His company once printed up to 30 million items annually, from books to industry manuals, making him a proud “replicator of ideas.”
- **A Leadership Advocate:** According to de Camargo, “Rotary is the best school of leadership I’ve had.” It has taught him public speaking, active listening, and how to inspire and motivate volunteers. He considers volunteer leadership unique, as it requires inspiration rather than monetary incentives.

### Guiding Principles and Vision

De Camargo carries with him the valuable Rotary advice: “Never ask for anything, never refuse anything.” He has followed this throughout his Rotary journey, accepting every role with an open heart and offering his service without expectations.

Nicknamed “**Membership Mário**,” he refuses to accept stagnation in Rotary’s membership



numbers. While many believe Rotary has “stabilized” at 1.2 million members, he challenges that notion, arguing that the organization must actively adapt to retain and grow its global community. He understands that what works in one country may not work in another, emphasizing the need for regional strategies and humility in leadership.

For 2025-26, his presidential theme is “**Unite for Good.**” In a world increasingly divided, he sees Rotary as a force for connection, reminding members, “We are always looking for somebody’s defects. We should be looking for somebody else’s talents.”

### A Focus on the Environment and the Future

De Camargo believes environmental issues resonate deeply with younger generations. As a Rotary director, he played a key role in



making the environment a new Rotary area of focus. With COP30 set to take place in the Brazilian Amazon in 2025, he sees a golden opportunity for Rotary to take a leadership role in global environmental protection.

### **A Passion for Exploration**

An avid traveler, de Camargo immerses himself in new places by walking through city streets, soaking in local sights, sounds, and cultures. Whether in Chicago, New

York, or São Paulo, he believes walking allows him to truly connect with a place. He also loves hiking and breathing in the fresh air of the outdoors.

### **Super Mario in Rotary**

Trustee Akira Miki nicknamed him “**Super Mario**” during his time on the Board in 2019-20, and the name stuck. At the 2024 Rotary Institute in Toronto, he even dressed as the Nintendo character in a playful fundraiser that raised \$115,000

for The Rotary Foundation. “I put the mustache on upside down,” he jokes. “But I’ll get better. Whatever it takes to raise money for Rotary.”

As Mário César Martins de Camargo prepares to lead Rotary International into 2025-26, his passion, dedication, and innovative spirit promise to bring fresh energy to the organization. With a focus on unity, leadership, and environmental sustainability, he is poised to inspire Rotarians worldwide to “Unite for Good.”

## **TRUSTEE CHAIR’S MESSAGE**

*Mark Daniel Maloney, Trustee Chair 2024-25  
February 2025*

**B**y some measures, great progress has been made in building more peaceful societies around the world. Yet the reality of ongoing regional wars, skirmishes, and violence globally reminds us how far we still have to go. These conflicts affect the humanity of us all, whether they occur far from us or in our own communities.

So, what can Rotary do to build peace?

As a global force for peace and conflict prevention, Rotary addresses the root causes of conflict. Our role at the 1945 United Nations charter is a testament to this enduring commitment.

Another cornerstone of this work is the Rotary Peace Centers program. Through The Rotary Foundation, these seven centers provide fully funded fellowships, empowering individuals to address the complex challenges of conflict and development.

More than 1,800 alumni now work in over 140 countries as champions of peace, creating lasting change in their communities.

Consider alumni like Pablo Cuevas, a 2015 peace fellow who leads the Paraguay office of the International Organization for Migration, aiding those displaced by crises. Leni Kinzli, a 2023 graduate, advocates for Sudan’s humanitarian needs with the United Nations World Food Programme. Yuki Daizumoto, a 2007 peace fellow, supports life-changing agricultural and livelihood projects in Afghanistan with the Japan International Cooperation Agency. These individuals embody Rotary’s investment in peace.

This month, the Foundation Trustees will consider a plan to establish our eighth Rotary Peace Center, in Asia, as part of our vision to have peace centers on every inhabited continent by 2030.

But our commitment extends beyond the peace centers. Through Rotary’s partnership with the Institute for Economics and Peace, we have trained over 300 Positive Peace Activators from 60 countries. Our forgiveness and social cohesion curricula help members heal communities. Through our Foundation

grants and service, Rotary members are fostering peace by engaging with youths, strengthening civil society, and resolving core issues that can lead to conflict.

At President Stephanie Urchick’s Peace Conference in Istanbul this month, we will celebrate this work and the first class of the Otto and Fran Walter Rotary Peace Center at Bahçeşehir University.

Remember that you are also ambassadors of peace through service projects, exchange programs, and as supporters of The Rotary Foundation.

My wish for 2025 is for peace to take root and flourish ever more widely, with Rotary playing an increasingly meaningful role in that noble pursuit.

*Source: <https://my.rotary.org/en/trustee-chairs-message>*



## THE STONES OF STENNESS: A GLIMPSE INTO ORKNEY'S NEOLITHIC PAST

*By Mr. Steven Sage (Our former member)*

Among the ancient wonders of the Orkney Islands stands the **Stones of Stenness**, an awe-inspiring Neolithic monument believed to be one of the earliest henge structures in the British Isles. These towering megaliths, erected between 3100 and 2900 BC, offer a fascinating window into the lives and traditions of Orkney's early inhabitants.

A **henge** is characterized by a circular or oval area enclosed by a bank and an internal ditch, often containing large upright stones or burial chambers. The precise function of the Stones of Stenness remains

unclear, but archaeologists speculate that they played a significant role in rituals and ceremonies connecting the living with ancestral spirits.

Carbon dating of bones found in the surrounding ditch—originally an impressive 4 meters wide and 2 meters deep—suggests that the site was used for communal gatherings and sacred rites. The surviving stones are remnants of a once-complete arrangement of twelve towering monoliths, each standing up to 6 meters in height, forming an oval with a maximum diameter of 30 meters. At the heart of this ancient structure lies a central hearth, still faintly visible today, which served as a focal point for activities.

Archaeological discoveries, including pottery and animal bones, suggest that Neolithic visitors not only conducted ceremonies here but also prepared and consumed food, indicating that the site may have been a hub for communal feasting and social interaction. A paved path, stone settings, and a dolmen—a prehistoric structure resembling a stone table—line the approach to the hearth, reinforcing the idea that this was a place of great cultural and spiritual significance.

The architectural achievements of the Neolithic



population of Orkney speak to a highly advanced society, whose ingenuity and craftsmanship rivaled contemporary civilizations in Mesopotamia and North Africa. The Stones of Stenness stand as a testament to their remarkable skills and enduring legacy, offering a glimpse into the sophisticated social and ceremonial practices of Britain's early settlers.

As we celebrate humanity's shared history, sites like the Stones of Stenness remind us of the ingenuity and resilience of our ancestors. These ancient stones continue to inspire awe, inviting us to connect with the past and reflect on the enduring power of collective heritage.



Rtn. Dhaval Mehta

21 Mar



Rtn. PP Raveendra Krishnan / Rtne. Gita

20 Mar