

THE LIGHTHOUSE

WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF MADRAS
ISSUE 09 | AUGUST 22, 2023

BUILDING RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITIES



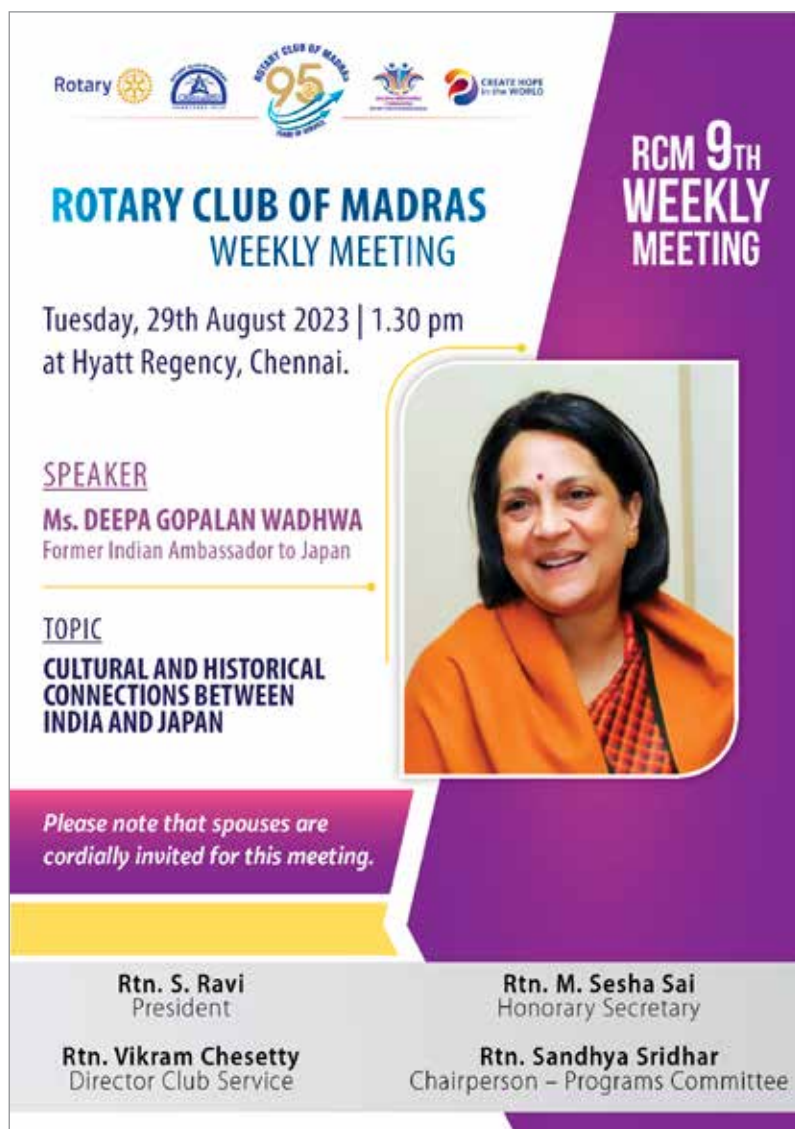
Dear RCMers,

Presenting to you the 8th edition of Lighthouse. While the whole of India rejoices over Chandrayaan landing on the moon and Praggnanandan's final gambit in the International Chess arena, RCM continues to shine in its stellar projects in health and community service and adding to the Interactor and Rotaractor families.

Why I Am A Rotarian by PDG. Krishnaswami is inspirational story and we hope you enjoy this edition.

Yours in Rotary,

Rtn. Sunita Suresh



ROTARY CLUB OF MADRAS
WEEKLY MEETING

Tuesday, 29th August 2023 | 1.30 pm
at Hyatt Regency, Chennai.

SPEAKER
Ms. DEEPA GOPALAN WADHWA
Former Indian Ambassador to Japan

TOPIC
CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND JAPAN

Please note that spouses are cordially invited for this meeting.

Rtn. S. Ravi
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Rtn. M. Sessa Sai
Honorary Secretary

Rtn. Vikram Chesetty
Director Club Service

Rtn. Sandhya Sridhar
Chairperson – Programs Committee

RCM 9TH WEEKLY MEETING

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Send in your articles, news and stories for consideration in the Lighthouse bulletin to:
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Stay updated with our very own RCM magazine!

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THE MONK WHO HASN'T SOLD HIS FERRARI



Kiran Khalap, Co-founder of Chlorophyll, a brand consultancy firm, is a unique blend of spirituality and corporate success. The spiritual side being very evident when he started his talk by asking the members to close their eyes and visualize the 'I' within. Much like the famous 'atma vichara' technique of "who am I" propagated by Ramana Maharishi.

"Disturbing or liberating, there is no I," he said.

He believes there is no versus where corporate life and spirituality is concerned and stressed that each individual is only ONE reality and the rest were concepts in one's head. He pooh poohed the concept of work - life balance and reiterated that one cannot separate life and work from each other.

He explained about the lizard brain, which is the reactive part of the brain, and how it reacts to both physical and emotional dangers. The reaction could be a suppression or expression of emotion, both of which could be detrimental to one's life. The former could cause disease and the latter could ruin one's reputation.

So, what is the way out for humans to lead a happy and peaceful life?

"Observation is the only action of the human mind which doesn't cause suppression or expression".

His third mantra for seeing one's own reality was "slow it down and observe one's self".

Slowing down could be done by prayer, chanting, pranayama, meditation.

Each has to find his own path.

During the Q and A session, he spoke about his

foray into branding and how He believes that it's not only about communication but about understanding psychology and consumer behavior. He said, "the only way to build a brand is to behave properly; what the brand does is far more important than what the brand says".

This is because consumers today only believe and rely upon peer opinion and not what the brand communicates. He cited the Unilever mercury poisoning case in Kodaikanal to prove his point.

He further explained how brands catered to the highest common factor (what everyone wants) whereas advertising has to cater to one specific audience and it surely is a tightrope walk.

"Observation is the only action of the human mind which doesn't cause suppression or expression".

Upon being questioned about an organization's discipline, he stressed the importance of having a proper induction process to instill the principles and culture of the organization in the new entrant.

The members noticed his deep insight, thinking and passion when he explained why he chose chlorophyll as the name of his company.

EFFICIENCY, CREATIVITY, AND NOT DRAWING ATTENTION TO SELF are the 3 principles on which his company was founded.

Kiran Khalap is a corporate success story steeped into spirituality and proving that the twain can meet.

- Rtn. Fharzana Siraj .■

Minutes of the 8th Meeting of Rotary Club of Madras August 22nd, 2023

Sgt-at-arms, Rtn. Rajenderan R, formally called the 8th Weekly meeting of RCM to order. President Rtn. Ravi Sundaresan led a moment of Silent Invocation.

During the meeting, President Rtn. Ravi Sundaresan confirmed the minutes of the prior board meeting and extended a warm welcome to attendees, including:

- Mr. Sandesh
- Mr. Rajesh Vummidi
- Mr. Vardhaman Jain
- Mr. Ravishankar
- Mr. Mohith Bajaj

Appreciation was expressed to Probus club members for their presence.

Moving on to announcements, PP Rtn. Ranjit Pratap shared the following:

Conveyed anniversary wishes to the President and birthday wishes to the Secretary.

Reminded members about the upcoming heritage car show and its promise of camaraderie and bonhomie.

Encouraged attendance at the heritage car show on August 27th.

Rtn. Sabina Narayan addressed attendees about the International Tour, emphasizing sign-ups for the Japan tour and domestic travel to Trivandrum.

Rtn. George reported on Independence Day celebrations across various centers.

Rtn. Paul provided details about upcoming domestic travel and Onam celebrations.

Rtn. Aswath Reddy reported on the launch of the Interact children program.

Rtn. Fharzana Siraj of the Wellness Committee announced the upcoming wellness workshop on Western dance.

Rtn. Sesha Sai, the Secretary, shared a list of upcoming birthdays and anniversaries.

The President announced gratitude for an anonymous donation of Rs. 3.42 lakhs.

Guest Speaker Introduction: Mr. Kiran Kalap, the guest speaker, was introduced by the President.



President's remarks - President Rtn. Ravi Sundaresan concluded the announcements, transitioning to the introduction of the guest speaker, Mr. Kiran Kalap. Members were encouraged to

engage and listen attentively to the upcoming guest speaker's presentation.

The President then Requested PP.Rtn. Venkhat Ramani to Introduce the speaker.

The speaker gave insights of a balanced life and was well articulated. There were 14 questions and the Speaker patiently answered all of them.

The Vote of Thanks was Brilliantly delivered by Rtn. Fharzana Siraj and she thanked the speaker, Kiran Khalap and all the Rotarians who were present at the meeting.

The President Adjourned the 8th weekly meeting of the Rotary club of Madras.

The meeting was adjourned.■

BIRTHDAYS

- Aug 29th - Rtn. Sumit Kumar Kalra
- Aug 29th - Rtn. Usha Umapathi
- Sept 1st - Rtn. Harish K. Murthi
- Aug 29th - Ann. Preethi (Spouse of Rtn. Ranjit Bakshi)
- Aug 31st - Ann. Archana Kalyana Sundar (Spouse of Rtn. Anil Srinivasan)
- Aug 31st - Ann. Valsa (Spouse of Rtn. PDG Benjamin Cherian R.)
- Sept 2nd - Ann. Sudha (Spouse of Rtn. S.B. Goenka)
- Sept 3rd - Ann. S.L.Ratnam (Spouse of Rtn. Gopal Ratnam)

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

- Aug 30th - Rtn. Capt. G.Ramaswamy & Ann. Kaushalya Ramaswamy
- Aug 30th - Rtn. Mohan Kumar Subramaniam & Ann. Meena Mohan Kumar Subramanyan
- Sept 2nd - Rtn. Ranjit Bakshi & Ann. Preeti Ranjit Bakshi





77th Independence Day Celebrations at ROTARY NAGAR

Independence Day at ROTARY NAGAR was special. It was also a celebration of Freedom through Education. Distribution of School Kits to the students of our Tuition Centre was the highlight of the day.

To start with, the flag was hoisted in the brand new flagpole by all our special guests, followed by Oath taking, Tamizh Thaaai Vaazhthu, National Anthem and Flag Song. In that small little space, it was so heartening to see so many of our Tailoring Students, Tuition class students, Rotarians, and guests, pinning the national flag to their chest, patriotism in their hearts, taking the oath, repeating after a young boy.

It was a very festive occasion with so many Rotarians- some of them with their spouses joining the celebration.

The Chief Guest Mr Syed Hassan, COO of CAMS, spoke very well about the 5 most important habits to follow, to become a successful leader. He was very inspiring and made a mark. Our District Governor Elect Rtn Saravanan, the Guest of Honour for the day, highlighted the importance of education and spoke about the good deeds by Rotary for society. Our President was very encouraging as he presided the function.

The event was well concluded with distributions of sweets and chocolates.



Rtn PP Rani Muralidharan

Chairperson – ROTARY NAGAR .■

77th INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS AT SELAIYUR ON AUGUST 17TH, 2023

The 77th Independence Day was celebrated in the centres at Selaiyur and Sembakkam on the 17th of this month with customary pomp and gaiety.

President Rtn. Ravi Sunderasan unfurled the National flag in the presence of IPP Rtn. Jayshree Sridhar, Director Vocation Service Rtn. Vijay Balaji, Honorary Secretary Rtn. Sesha Sai and Chairman Rtn. Rajib Kumar Hota with more than 200 enthusiastic attendees including those from VAMPL and WorthTrust, all dressed in shades of green, white and saffron.



The Chairman in his welcome address briefly discussed the activities and initiatives in both the centres. The President highlighted that the Rotary Club of Madras is in its 95th year and has been supporting the empowerment of women by running the centres at Selaiyur and Sembakkam and encouraged the members to bring in more participants who can take advantage of the facilities and training being offered to learn a skill that will benefit them and their families. To motivate the participants, he announced free tailoring machines for those trainees with attendance of 90% and subsidies for those aspiring to buy their own privately owned computers. IPP enthused the participants with live examples of trainees who were running their businesses successfully. Director, while taking note of areas to strengthen the on-going curriculum, offered to tap into newer vocations, such as lab assistant with the potential of generating employment. Honorary Secretary infused positivity and energy in his address, underlining the importance of respecting one another.



The entertainment programme witnessed a potpourri of presentations by the women members including solo dance, a patriotic song, folk dances, songs, poetry recitation and recounting of their own stories of success and empowerment which these centres and the dedicated faculty of RCM have made possible. Ms Vimalaswari, Ms Anusuya, Ms Bakyalakshmi and all support staff in both the centres came in for special mention for the manner and dedication they were stewarding both the centres.

Rtn. Vijay Balaji .■

Why I am a Rotarian

When I landed in Visakhapatnam as a 27-year-old Branch Manager of Tubes and Malleables Ltd., in 1967 I had a chance meeting with our leading distributor of Tata pipes who was a Rotarian. He proposed my name in his Rotary Club of Visakhapatnam. The very next day two gentlemen PDG Hanu and PDG Arya came to my office referring Rtn. Jagannatha Rao's name and spent an hour informing me about Rotary and its ideals. After going through 14 steps as part of member induction procedure I was informed about my acceptance in the club in district 315 that extended from Visakhapatnam to Bombay, a distance of 1300 km from west to east of India. There were only six Rotary Districts in 1967 in our zone (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh & Nepal) and today we have 38 districts in India alone.

After joining as the youngest Rotarian at that time I attended the first three meetings but I had to give the 4th meeting a miss due to my business commitments. The very next day the President and the Secretary picked me up from my office to travel 60 kilometres for a makeup attendance meeting as there was only one club in Visakhapatnam. In all it took me 5 hours and yet I was so impressed by the trouble taken by my proposer Rtn. Jagannatha Rao and the President & Secretary had taken. Since then I had 100% attendance for 34 years until I got exemption.

Within 3 months I was among the 10 board members who are elected through an unique secret ballot system. The very next year I was given the opportunity to be the Treasurer of the club. At this juncture I was transferred to Coimbatore and I was quick to join the Rotary club of Coimbatore West and very soon became the club president in 1978-79.

As part of doing projects as President I used to visit the missionaries of charity of Mother

Teresa regularly to give away materials of immediate need in their home for the Destitute. One day a sister called to inform of Mother Teresa's visit to Coimbatore and I immediately went to the airport to meet her. When I requested Mother to accept the Rotary "For the sake of honor" award she refused and after a lot of insistence a small insertion was made in the newspaper mentioning about the award ceremony in February 1979.

More than five hundred attended the function and as the President I had the honor of handing over the award. Later, she went on to receive several awards from rotary and even the Nobel prize but her words 'give until it hurts' and "the family that prays together, stays together" reaffirmed my Rotary journey and I decided to give my time and money to rotary from that day on.



Soon after, the then Governor Venugopal C Govind wanted me to be the GGR and coordinator for the measles immunization programme, which started in 1980, in District 320. For 12 years from then I continued to do work in that area and over 85 percent of children in District 320 were immunised against measles and polio by 1992.

When Governor Joseph Jacob made me his special representative to form a new club in Coimbatore, I started Rotary Club of Coimbatore Metropolis and joined this club in 1985 that was inaugurated by PDG Ken Hobbs.



Krish with Prime Minister Denmark Paul Schluter in his office receiving Polio Vaccine on Wednesday 23 April 1986 when he was the GSE team Leader from RI District 320 to RI District 147 & 148. In the centre PDG Knud Hodel of RI District 147



Krish as President Rotary club of Coimbatore West in 1978-79 handing over "For the Sake of Honor Award" to Mother Theresa on Friday 2 February 1979.



When I travelled to Denmark as a team leader in 1986 for a unique GSE program I made it a point to mention about India and the Rotarian's involvement in the immunization programme. They organized a fund-raising programme and collected over Danish kroner 100,000/- within a month and shipped the vaccines to India. The then Prime Minister of Denmark Paul Schluter made a token presentation and handed over this to me at a function in his office in 1986. The journey continued with me home hosting Rotary volunteers and GSE members not only from Denmark also from US and Canada which created a lasting friendship.

300,000 doses of measles and 1.50 million doses of Polio vaccines from the Danish Rotarians and 200,000 of polio and 60,000 doses of measles vaccines from Japanese Rotarians were brought into district 320 after clearing many government procedures and this was the first time UNICEF had accepted such an order called reimbursable procurement.

When I took up office as Governor in 1989-90 14 rotary clubs, 28 Rotaract clubs, 51 interact clubs and 58 RCC were started. The district received 2 teams of group study exchange members 5 youth exchange students, one graduate scholarship, two scholarships for teachers of the handicapped and five freedom from hunger scholarships and first 3-h grant 'gift of vision' for \$187000/- for Sankara eye society, Coimbatore.

I am proud to share that I have attended more than fifty district assemblies and conferences across many District, all of the Asia Zone institutes from 1988 to 2022 and 33 International Conventions all over the world

With my friend PDG Bill Gray from district 7040 in Canada over 25 Global Grant projects have been done worth over 3 million USD.

When I return to Chennai after 28 years of my Rotary journey I had the proud privilege of joining the prestigious club of Rotary Club of Madras.

After 56 years I can proudly tell that the lonely man in Vizag now has friends all over the world and that was made possible by two Rotarians who went on to become District Governors PDG Hanumantha Rao (Hanu) and PDG Arya who invited me to their club Rotary Club of Visakhapatnam. This lasting friendships beyond borders is why I am a Rotarian.

Rtn. PDG S Krishnaswami DG-1989-90
Rotary Club of Madras - RID 3232 .■



Interact Club SRI SANKARA VIDYASHRAMAM MAT. HR.SEC SCHOOLTHIRUVAMIYUR

AN INSPIRATIONAL SPEECH BY Mrs. Preethi Srinivasan

On 14th August 2023, we were honoured with the presence of Guest Speaker Ms Preethi Srinivasan, co-founder of Soulfree, India's first Integrated Spinal Rehabilitation Centre. This Inter- Interact Event was hosted by the Interact Club of our school. Rtn Venkhat Ramani, past president and mentor of RCM, Rtn Jayashree Sridhar, past president and chairman of zone 3 RCM and well-wishers of Soulfree graced this momentous occasion. Ms. Preethi enlightened the gathering with her open-minded and humorous approach. She gave us an insight about her foundation by saying that one needs to do things with happiness and whole-heartedness. She is truly a gifted person, having broken the barriers of her disability and continues to fill people's lives with confidence and joy. For the participants of the six Interact

Clubs there were many take away - BEING FEARLESS IN THE FACE OF CHALLENGES...THINKING, ACTING AND MAKING A CHANGE. It was indeed a magnificent and prolific occasion to celebrate togetherness.

Rtn. Rajam CK .■



FEEDBACK FROM THE INTERACTORS:

Srinath: Ms. Preethi's speech was truly an eye-opener. She is a person who has reached out to people who didn't have anything but were given hope.

Raj Narayanan: Truly an inspirational speech. Her confidence is remarkable. I really enjoyed her amazing sense of humour.

Tushar: It was truly enlightening. She taught us the way to advance in life and how to remain true to oneself and make life useful. I want to become a scientist and find ways to help disabled people.

Prassana Lakshmi: She has a way with words that is absolutely stunning. She taught us how to encourage disabled people. She also explained to us about the real meaning of 'success'.





RCM Digital Education Project Tata Class Edge System Demonstration

August 12th 2023



We are off and running with the RCM and Partner Club Digital Education Project being executed throughout District 3232. We now have 12 Partner Clubs that have provided the Consent forms and the Board Resolution Extracts, confirming that they are participating in the program, and we are awaiting two more. Each of these clubs identifies one corporation, government or government-aided school that will participate in this program. Each school will receive one digital classroom system as part of this program. We have identified Tata Class Edge as the “system of choice” for providing the digital classroom system to the schools in this program.

On August 12th, RCM organized a demonstration session for Tata Class Edge, where the Tata Class Edge Digital Education System was presented to the Partner Clubs and the Selected Schools. We had twelve Club Presidents and/or Club Representatives as well as HMs and Teachers from the Selected Schools present. After an introduction by President Rtn. Ravi Sundaresan and the Digital Learning team, Mr. Aji Sampson, Senior General Manager, Tata Class Edge, had the audience’s complete attention with an excellent audio-visual presentation of the Tata Class Edge system, including content, software and infrastructure. The high level of engagement from the Club Presidents, Representatives and the Teachers and HMs was evident. It is clear that the Tata Class Edge system provides a great tool for teachers to engage the students and teach complex concepts using audio, visual, video, simulation and animation aids to convey the topical content. The session was a smashing success, with the Partner Clubs and Selected Schools excited to implement the program.



Several RCM team members attended, including President Rtn. Ravi Sundaresan, Honorary Secretary Rtn. Sesha Sai, PP Rtn. Arulmozhi Varman, Director Vocational Services Rtn. Vijay Balaji, Rtn. Rahul Saraogi, Rtn. Krish Vijayan, Rtn. Sangeetha Viswanathan, and Digital Learning Team Members Rtn. AM Viswanathan, Rtn. Sumit Kalra and Rtn. Ravi Bhatkal.

Certain clubs and team members were not able to attend the session and we will be organizing a follow-up demonstration session for them.

Thanks to Rtn. Anand Rengaswamy, Hotel Maris, for providing the space for the event and delicious snacks to kick off the demonstration session.

Rtn. Vijay Balaji .■

SRI SANKARA VIDYASHRAMAM MAT. HR.SEC. SCHOOL THIRUVANMIYUR BLOOD DONATION CAMP

A REPORT

I am hereby sharing the first initiative of Rotary Club of Madras the "Blood Donors Group" organized by the Interact Club students of Sri Sankara Vidyashramam Mat.Hr.Sec. School.

First and foremost it was a pleasant sight to see the interactors of Sri Sankara Vidyashramam dressed up in red t-shirts signifying the Blood Donation. Three faculty members along with the Principal welcomed the President. Sundaresan Ravi and Past President Rtn. Jayshree Sridhar. President. Sundaresan Ravi along with all of us inaugurated the Blood Donation Camp.

This Blood Donation camp has been initiated after a gap of nearly three years by the Interact Club due to Covid. The said camp is very special the reason being none of the

Interactors can individually donate blood. They can only encourage and motivate either a friend or a family member who could come and donate towards this worthy cause. They also canvass the donors by standing on the sides of the road, holding pluck cards and figurines to motivate and encouraged the citizens to donate blood.

The Blood Donation Camp nearly had 150 plus donors who intended to donate but only 85 qualified to donate. Apart from the Blood Donation, Jeevan Blood Bank did the Stem Cell registry and had 17 people donate for the same.

Every blood donor was well received and guided by every stage of Blood Donation process and were provided with a Certificate by Tamil Nadu State Blood Transfusion Council. Rtn. Sangeeta along with father dropped in to witness this event.

I had the opportunity to donate blood to kick start the initiative of the RCM Blood Donors Group. Apart from donating blood I had also facilitated getting the Interact Club connect

with MMRT42, who readily agreed to sponsor the breakfast and other incidental cost for organizing the camp.

The Blood Donation camp started at 9.00am and concluded at 5.00pm with all stake holders pleased with the outcome.

I would like to thank the Principal of Sri Sankara Vidyashramam Mrs. S. Sashirekha, Counsellor Mrs. Rajam and other Faculty coordinators who worked on the same. Also, I would like to thank Tr. Sathappan and other Tabler's who sponsored for this wonderful initiative.

Special word to mention: The interactor who was the President of Sri Sankara Vidyashramam in the past has joined the school as a Faculty after finishing her graduation. She is currently serves as the Additional Interact Coordinator for the school and it is definitely a proud moment for the School and for the Interact Club.

I would like to wish each and every Interactors who had strived this far to make this a successful event, the faculties who supported them to do a noble drive and the donors

who donated blood to **"SAVE A LIFE"**.

Rtn. PP. George B. Cherian - Blood Donor..■



FEEDBACK OF THE INTERACT VOLUNTEERS:

Sanjay (XI B) - Canvassing for donors was challenging but an incredibly fulfilling experience for me. There was a positive energy and enthusiasm in the camp.

Srinath (XI A) - The enthusiastic presence of the primary students with their donor parents was a proud sight. Although there were many who registered, some of them were unable to donate due to various health reasons. It was an eye-opener that one should maintain good health.

Joanna (XI C) - The process of canvassing with my fellow interactors, designing charts about blood donation and learning in detail about the beneficiaries was such as great opportunity for youngsters like us.

Roshni (XI D) - It was inspirational capturing moments of the blood donation camp where people were enthusiastically willing to donate their blood to help the needy.

