

BIRTHDAYS 🚝	
Rtn M Pratap Kumar	8 th September
Rtn Ramasubramanian V	8 th September
Rtn Bharath Shetty	10 th September
PP Rtn Indra Subramanyam	12 th September
PP Rtn Shanker C Mangadu	13 th September
Rtn Dr Bhawana Sirohi	13 th September
Rtn Dr Venkatesh Munikrishnan	14 th September
Rtn Mehul Uday Nanavati	14 th September
K. Alamelu, Spouse of Rtn Nalli Kuppuswami Chetty	9 th September
Sangeetha, Spouse of Rtn Gooch Kumar A.	9 th September
Sara B Cherian Spouse of Rtn Vivek A Parachur	11 th September
Anna Madhavan, Spouse of Rtn Sanjay Madhavan	13 th September
ANNIVERSARY 🚝	(iii)
Rtn Siddharth Hande & Tanuja Ramani	8 th September
Rtn Nagarajan S & Chandra	12 th September
Rtn Sudha Raghunathan & Raghunathan	13 th September
Rtn Rinku Mecheri & Rajeev Mecheri	15 th September





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Rotary Club of Madras (RCM)

Minutes of the 12th Weekly Meeting, held on 9 September 2025

1.30 pm, Hyatt Regency, Teynampet, Chennai

CALL TO ORDER

President Rtn Nikhil Raj called the 12th weekly meeting to order.

The Rotary song was rendered, followed by the confirmation of the minutes of the 11th weekly meeting.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

- The President extended a warm welcome to Mr M Prabakaran and Mr V C Kannan from the Probus Club.
- Special guests from the Rotary Club of Chennai Legends—Rtn Kumar Rajendran, Rtn Dr. Durga, and Rtn Dr. Selvi Rajendran—were welcomed.

PRESIDENTIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- A directed gift of USD 250,000 has been made to Rotary International by Mr Anurag Jain (son of Rtn Mahinder Jain). These funds will enable RCM to implement various Global Grant projects.
- Ten infant heart surgeries are planned at Apollo Hospital, supported by funds from the AR Foundation (Mr Amarnath Reddy).
- An MoU with Kamaraj Port Trust is expected to be signed shortly, bringing 33 lakhs in funding to purchase equipment for RSRM Hospital.
- The "Touching Tiny Hearts" Infant Heart Surgery Project, in association with Rotary Club of Chennai Thiruvanmiyur, is progressing well.
- 25 children from Kampala, Uganda are undergoing surgery at Amrita Hospital, Kochi.
- Three surgeries have been successfully completed, and the children are now recuperating.
- Six dialysis machines were inaugurated in Namakkal through United Welfare Trust, donated by Rtn Rahul Saraogi (Atyant Capital).
- President Rtn Nikhil Raj and Rtn A. M. Visvanathan attended the event.

HOMES FOR THE HOMELESS:

 Construction is proceeding on schedule—18 houses at Perathur and 15 houses at Beerakupam.

- Completion is expected by year-end
- YOUTH FOR PEACE EVENT:
- Conducted for Interact Clubs at Sri Sankara Vidhyashramam School.
- Featured panel discussions for Classes 9–12 and a poster competition for Classes 6–8.
- Jeppiaar Matric School Interact Installation successfully conducted.
- RCM now has 29 Interact Clubs and 11 Rotaract Clubs under its umbrella.
- International Trip:
- 16 members will depart on the night of September 9 for a trip to Germany.
- ANNOUNCEMENT BY RTN DR. SHARONKRISHNARAU
- Alumni of the Selaiyur Tailoring Course are producing satin gift bags with Pichwai prints.
- Priced at Rs. 1,200 for a set of 10 bags.
- Available for purchase now.
- SECRETARY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
- RTN PRASANNA RAJAGOPALAN:
- Announced birthdays and wedding anniversaries for the week.
- Acknowledged a Sunshine contribution of Rs.5,089 from PP Rtn Shanker C Mangadu.
- Announced that the speaker for the next weekly meeting on 16 September will be Dr Nozer Sheriar, who will speak on Perimenopause – A Medical Perspective.

MAIN PROGRAM

- Presentation of the 'For the Sake of Honour' Award to Mr S. Nambi Narayanan
- President Rtn Nikhil Raj praised Mr Nambi Narayanan's extraordinary courage, perseverance, and service to the nation, lauding both his brilliance as a scientist and his resilience as an individual
- Rtn PP Mohan Raman shared the history of the award and fondly recalled distinguished past recipients, including:
- Dr S. S. Badrinath
- Dr B. Ramamurthy
- Smt.Padma Subramaniam

- Smt Rukmini Devi Arundale
- Sri K. Parasaran
- Sri Harish Salve
- Smt M. S. Subbulakshmi
- A special audio-visual presentation, curated by Rtn Siddharth Chandrasekar, showcased key milestones in Mr Narayanan's illustrious journey.
- Award Citation:
- Prepared by Rtn Sandhya Sridhar and read out by Rtn Dr. Sharon Krishna Rau, emphasizing Mr Narayanan's groundbreaking contributions to India's space program, along with his courage, integrity, and indomitable spirit.
- Award Presentation: President Rtn Nikhil Raj and President-Elect Rtn S. Balakrishna jointly conferred the 'For the Sake of Honour'

Award on Mr S. Nambi Narayanan.

Moderated Session

- An engaging 45-minute interactive session was jointly moderated by Mr Sameer Bharat Ram and Mr Madhu Mathen, featuring thought-provoking questions and personal anecdotes.
- The session provided rare insights into Mr Narayanan's pioneering scientific work and his reflections on navigating India's public sector environment.

Closing Formalities

- The Timeless Legacy Book was presented to the Chief Guest.
- Vote of Thanks was delivered by President-Elect Rtn S. Balakrishna.
- Adjournment: The meeting was formally adjourned by President Rtn Nikhil Raj.

ROTARY CLUB OF MADRAS HONORS DR. S. NAMBI NARAYANAN



The Rotary Club of Madras had the distinct privilege of hosting a historic and inspiring afternoon, one that will be etched in the collective memory of all present. It was a day when science, courage, and the indomitable human spirit came together as the Club celebrated Dr. S. Nambi Narayanan, a pioneering scientist whose vision and

determination shaped India's space program.

Dr. Narayanan, a pioneering figure in India's liquid propulsion technology, spearheaded the realization of the Vikas engine, a technological marvel that continues to power the PSLV and GSLV missions, including India's pathbreaking Chandrayaan and

Mangalyaan missions. As Project Director, he led the development of the second and fourth liquid stages of the PSLV and laid the groundwork for India's foray into cryogenic propulsion, working alongside stalwarts like Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, Prof. Satish Dhawan, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, and Prof. URRao. In recognition

of his extraordinary service to science and the nation, President Nikhil Raj and President-elect Dr. Balakrishna had the honor of felicitating Dr. Narayanan with the prestigious "For the Sake of Honor Award." That moment was met with thunderous applause, a fitting tribute to a man whose resilience has inspired millions.

THE MODERATORS AND THE SESSION

The session was moderated by Mr. Sameer Bharat Ram, a dynamic first-generation entrepreneur with interests spanning cinema, technology, sports publishing, and start-up incubation, and Mr. Madhu Mathen, former Executive Director of Air India. Together, they

created a seamless flow of conversation, Sameer delving into the "rocket science" of Dr. Narayanan's journey, while Madhu navigated the "earthly turbulence" of working within government structures.

THE EARLY DAYS OF ISRO

In a fascinating narration, Dr. Narayanan took the audience back to the modest beginnings of India's space program. When he joined, ISRO was still known as the Tumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station (TERLS), with a team of just 23 individuals, three buildings: a church, a bishop's house, and a school building and a total of three vehicles: one jeep, one car, and a bus.

In those early days, rockets were transported using bullock carts and public buses, with

young scientists like Dr. Narayanan and Dr. Kalam often improvising with limited resources. The audience was enthralled by anecdotes of their shared struggles, including humorous memories of Kalam himself offering to climb coconut trees to fetch tender coconuts for the team! Dr. Narayanan recalled how the first rockets were as small as 75 cm, and yet from these humble beginnings grew the world-class space agency ISRO as it is today, employing over 17,000 people.

PRINCETON, NASA, AND A DREAM FOR INDIA

The session delved into Dr. Narayanan's years at Princeton University, where he became ISRO's first Ivy League scientist, studying under Prof. Luigi Crocco, a global authority in rocket propulsion and the father of the Moon mission. He shared anecdotes of rubbing shoulders with legends like Neil Armstrong, a serendipitous encounter that left the audience spellbound.

Despite being offered lucrative opportunities at NASA and other U.S. aerospace companies, Dr. Narayanan chose to return to India, driven by a passion to build indigenous capabilities.

"It wasn't about money," he said, "it was about proving that India could stand shoulder to shoulder with global powers."

This passion culminated into the development of the Vikas engine, named as a tribute to Vikram A. Sarabhai and symbolizing "progress." Today, the Vikas engine remains the backbone of India's launch vehicles, indigenized with 99% local materials, ensuring no dependence on foreign suppliers.



RESILIENCE AMIDST INJUSTICE

Perhaps the most moving segment of the session was Dr. Narayanan's recounting of the infamous ISRO spy case, a fabricated espionage scandal that falsely accused him of selling non-existent cryogenic technology to Pakistan. From 1994 to 1998, he endured a grueling legal battle until the Supreme Court declared him innocent. But his fight did not end there. Driven by conviction,

Dr. Narayanan spent the next 20 years, until 2018, relentlessly seeking justice and ensuring the real culprits were exposed. His resilience is now legendary, a story of truth prevailing over deceit.

"It was never just my case," he said. "It was a national case."

His courage has since inspired generations of scientists and patriots.

WORDS OF WISDOM FOR THE YOUTH

The interactive session saw enthusiastic participation from young students and Rotaractors. When asked for advice, Dr. Narayanan emphasized pursuing passion over obligation:

"Study a subject that you love whether it's singing, sports, or science.

Your conviction and passion will take you to greater heights. Never compromise on what you believe in."

His humorous anecdotes about early

experiments with Dr. Kalam, including the names of the first rockets like Dreamer 2 and Menaha, delighted the audience.

When asked about extraterrestrial life, Dr. Narayanan smiled and said,

"Just as we came into existence, there must be others elsewhere in the universe.

Whether they are more intelligent or less intelligent is a question for the future.

Interplanetary travel will reveal these answers one day."



Dr. Narayanan spoke about India's current advancements, highlighting the ambitious Gaganyaan project, India's first human spaceflight mission, slated for 2027–2029. While not a space station itself, this mission will lay the groundwork for India's future space

station ambitions. He also encouraged private ventures like Agnikul and other start-ups, stating that India's intellectual capital is immense and only needs adequate funding and focus to revolutionize the industry.

CLOSING MOMENTS

As the session drew to a close, PE Rtn Balakrishna delivered a heartfelt Vote of Thanks, expressing gratitude to Dr. Narayanan for sharing his invaluable experiences. Special appreciation was extended to moderators Madhu Mathen and Sameer Bharat Ram, the organizing committee comprising President Nikhil Raj, Hon Sec Rtn Prasanna Rajagopal, Rtn Dr Sharon Krishna Rau, Rtn Rajesh Mani, Rtn Sandhya, and Rtn Asha Mathen, who coordinated Dr. Narayanan's late-night arrival and the AV team for their flawless execution.

President Nikhil Raj summed up the essence of the day with a quote by Mark Twain:

"Find a job you enjoy doing, and you will never have to work a day in your life." Dr. Narayanan's journey embodies this philosophy, proving that passion, resilience,



Founding Force



- 1. Behind every great leader is an unspoken influence. Can you share a lesser-known individual—perhaps not even a Rotarian—who significantly shaped your approach to leadership or service? What specific trait or moment of theirs still echoes in your decisions?
- **A.** I grew up in a family where many were involved and committed to the Indian Independence Movement. Both my parents, as college students, took part in the Quit India Movement demonstrations and were behind bars for several months! Their focus was always in doing service for the country. They were my role models, more so with my mother who worked for the betterment of women in the villages of Kerala educating them and starting self-help groups and skilling them to earn a living and setting up a school to emphasize the importance of education. All this way back in the 1940's and 1950's!

Retiring after a career in teaching I was keen to help lesser privileged children to get opportunities to study and move ahead. Rtn V K Chandrakumar suggested that I join the Rotary Club of Madras. I got involved in the Rotary Nagar project and set up an evening study group for the children as well as a mixed age group learning initiative with a small library. Just a small beginning.

2. We often focus on visible achievements. But is there a silent initiative, a behind-the-scenes effort you led or supported in RCM that you feel deserves recognition today?



and patriotism can propel a nation to greatness. The afternoon concluded with the presentation of RCM's Timeless Legacy book to Dr. Narayanan, marking a day of profound inspiration and collective pride for all who attended.



A. In Rotary it is always about teamwork. It is not to take ownership of an initiative or project but to implement it effectively.

For the first time we had over 50+ RCM members attending the RI Convention at Bangkok in 2012! It was initiated and planned by the incoming then President Rtn Rajendran Sabanayagam and Rtn Hemant P Chordia.

The "Sparklers" group was started in 2011! All the lady members of RCM were invited to the Madras Gymkhana for tea to get a perspective on what we can do for RCM as a group. There were only 20+ lady members then. The name sparklers was suggested by one of the members. We are now a lovely group reaching out to each other and for the Club.

- **3.** If Rotary's values were to be taught to a child through a single story from your life, what story would you choose and what core value does it embody?
- **A.** Unity is strength is what Rotary has emphasized both in service and fellowship. Gummidipoondi, Rotary Nagar and Selaiyur had Rotarians always putting up their hands to work and taking projects forward. Affirming the good intentions of service to the community through the efforts of senior RCM members, working together with senior mentors to take projects forward and constantly assessing and fine tuning to get the best results that's the strength in Unity.

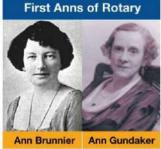
The opportunity given to lead a club like RCM is a privilege and an honor. Leadership does not mean you let the members follow what you prescribe. Here you are actually beside the group supporting and helping and facilitating in implementing projects and programs. Leadership is getting things done by being alongside and with the members working as a team. Working to the strengths and preferences of each member is the key. People's skills, patience, being flexible, being accommodative, understanding and most of all realizing that this is not a job but a service from every member! We are together in working towards the betterment of the community. The 4 way-test of Rotary is always applied in all our endeavors.

R@TARY RADAR

DID YOU KNOW?

In many Rotary Clubs throughout the world, wives of male members are affectionately called "Rotary Anns." This designation was never one of disparagement, but rather graw out of an interesting historical occasion.

In 1914 San Francisco Rotarians boarded a special train to attend the Rotary convention being held in Houston. In those days few wives attended Rotary events,



and until the train stopped in Los Angeles, the only woman aboard was the wife of Rotarian Bru Brunnier. As the train picked up additional convention-bound delegates, Mrs. Ann Brunnier was introduced as the Rotarian's Ann. This title soon became "Rotary Ann." Since the clubs of the West were inviting the Rotarians to hold their next convention in San Francisco, a number of songs and stunts were organized which would be performed in Houston. One of the Rotarians wrote a "Rotary Ann" chant. On the train's arrival at the Houston depot, a delegation greeted the West Coast Rotarians. One of the greeters was Guy Gundaker of Philadelphia, whose wife was also named Ann. During the rousing demonstration, someone started the Rotary Ann chant. The two petite ladies, Ann Brunnier and Ann Gundaker, were hoisted to the men's shoulders and paraded about the hall. The group loved the title given to the two women named Ann. Immediately the same term of endearment was used for all of the wives in attendance, and the name "Rotary Ann" was here to stay.

Guy Gundaker became President of Rotary International in 1923 and Bru Brunnier was elected President in 1952. Thus, each of the two original "Rotary Ann"s became the "First Lady of Rotary International."





Rotary Community Corps (RCCs) are teams of non-Rotarians who work alongside Rotary clubs to bring sustainable solutions to local challenges. They know their communities best — and with the guidance and resources of Rotary, they turn that local knowledge into lasting impact.

From helping families prepare for disasters in Japan, to supporting youth homes in Kenya, to partnering with teens and adults in Colorado to serve people with special needs, RCCs make Rotary's reach even greater. With more than 12,700 RCCs in over 100 countries, these teams multiply our ability to create meaningful change.

Want to make a difference right where you live? You don't have to be a Rotarian to serve. Join or help form a Rotary Community Corps today. Together, we can combine local passion with Rotary's global network to tackle the challenges that matter most.

A Historic Milestone: The Grand Inaugural Installation of Jeppiaar Matric School Interact Club



The first-ever Installation Ceremony of the Interact Club of Jeppiaar Matric School unfolded on 8 September 2025 @ 11 am marking a momentous chapter in the school's journey towards leadership and service.

The event was graced by the illustrious presence of Rtn Shymala Jayaprakash, District Interact Chairperson, RI District 3234, who kindled the spirit of service among the young Interactors with her inspiring words.

Adding to the grandeur were the Guests of Honour – Rtn Prasanna Rajagopalan, Secretary of the Rotary Club of Madras, and Rtn Suman Voora, Youth Service Director, whose motivational addresses electrified the audience, urging the students to dream big, lead with compassion, and create ripples of change in their community.

The atmosphere further ignited with the stirring words of Rtn Sesha Sai, District Rotaract Chairperson, who called upon both the students and the dedicated faculty to embrace active participation, making the club a vibrant hub of service and innovation.

The ceremony was not just an installation, it was a declaration of purpose, heralding a new era of youth-driven service and leadership.



Youth for Peace Summit 2025: A Symphony of Harmony and Hope

In a world often divided by borders and barriers, the Rotary Club of Madras, in collaboration with Sri Sankara Vidyashramam Matriculation Higher Secondary School, orchestrated a spectacular celebration of unity namely the Youth for Peace Summit 2025 on 6 September. This landmark event brought together young visionaries, igniting minds with the ideals of peace and harmony.

The summit unfurled with insightful panel discussions for students of Classes IX to XII, exploring topics that shape our modern world:

- Peace and Security in the 21st Century: Opportunities and Threats
- · Technology in the Service of Peace





For the bright sparks of Classes VI to VIII, exhilarating inter-school competitions added color and creativity to the day. From vibrant poster-making themed "Living in Harmony – Lessons from Nature" to heartfelt letters penned to the UN Secretary-General on "Building Bridges, Not Walls", the young participants showcased their boundless imagination and empathy.

The inaugural ceremony shone brightly with the presence of District Governor Nominee Rtn D. Suresh Jain and Rtn Nikhil Raj, President of the Rotary Club of Madras, whose inspiring words stirred the hearts of all present, emphasizing the transformative power of peace.

Behind the scenes, the unwavering dedication of Rtn Shivkumar Eashwaran, Rtn Kamala Ramakrishnan, and the ever-supportive Principal Mrs. Sashirekha laid the foundation for this monumental success. Their vision and guidance ensured that the summit wasn't just an event, but a movement for change.

As the day drew to a close, a stirring peace pledge was taken, prizes were bestowed upon deserving winners, and hearts were filled with a renewed commitment to harmony. The valedictory ceremony, graced by the eloquent District Governor Elect Dr. Vijaya Bharathi Rangarajan, inspired participants with a motivational address before she personally distributed the awards.

The finale came with a gracious Vote of Thanks by Rtn Prasanna Rajagopal, Hon. Secretary of Rotary Club of Madras, followed by a sumptuous lunch, a fitting conclusion to a day dedicated to nurturing young ambassadors of peace.















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