

The Light House

Rotary
Club of Madras



ROTARY CLUB OF MADRAS

ISSUE 14
OCTOBER 05
2025



SERVICE ABOVE SELF

BIRTHDAYS



Rtn Vineet Prakash Munjal	30 th September
Rtn Balraj Vasudevan	30 th September
Rtn Kannan B	1 st October
Rtn Sarada Sriram	1 st October
Rtn Reji Joseph	2 nd October
Rtn Navneet Agarwal	4 th October
Rtn Divya Poduval Menon	5 th October
Parikshith Jhaver, Spouse of Rtn. Anuradha Jhav	1 st October

ANNIVERSARY



Rtn Bhatia N.K. & Amita Bhatia	29 th September
Rtn PDG Kamdar J.B. & Marlene J Kamdar	29 th September
Rtn Balakrishna Rao & Dr Jayashree Potty	30 th September



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Bulletin Design:

YATRATECHS




Rotary Club of Madras
Invites you and your spouse to the
15th Weekly Meeting
presentation of the
4 Way Test
VP Raman Award
&
Youth Service Award
on
Tuesday, 7th October 2025 | 1.30 pm
Lunch : 12:30 - 1:30 pm
at Hyatt Regency, Chennai.

Rtn. Nikhil Raj President	Rtn. Prasanna Rajagopalan Honorary Secretary
Rtn. Rajesh Mani Director - Club Service	Rtn. S. Balakrishna Chairman - Awards Committee
Rtn. Dr. Sharon Krishna Rau Director - Vocational Services	Rtn. Suman Voora Director - Youth Services

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Rotary Club of Madras (RCM)

Minutes of the 14th Weekly Meeting held on 30-09-2025

1.30 pm, Hyatt Regency, Teynampet, Chennai

President Nikhil Raj called the 14th meeting of the Rotary Club of Madras to order.

Four-Way Test

Rtn Dr Rama Narasimhan delivered the Four-Way Test with an insightful message on its relevance in daily life, sharing examples from her medical profession and urging the audience, particularly the youngsters, to adopt it as the fabric of their ethos.

Confirmation of Minutes

The 13th weekly meeting minutes were confirmed.

Welcome & Introductions

Probus Club members Probian R. Mohan Raj and Probian A. Muthukrishnan were welcomed.

Visiting Rotarians included Rtn Kumar Rajendran (RC Legend) and Rtn Balaji (Rotary Club of Galaxy).

President's Announcements

Germany Visit: 16 members visited Germany, with cuisine, sightseeing, fellowship, and learning experiences being the highlights of the tour.

Donations

Rtn Shri Shakthi Girish contributed Rs.5,00,000 for projects.

AR Foundation donated Rs.5,00,000 for children's heart surgeries at Apollo Hospital.

Medical Initiatives

Surgeries at Kokilaben Hospital (Mumbai) and Amrita Hospital (Kochi) are progressing well. A review was conducted by Rtn Dr Sangeetha Viswanathan and PP Rtn S Ravi

Partnerships

Kamaraj Port Trust MOU has been finalized and funds have been released for supply of equipment to RSSM Hospital. This is significant, as our Charter President was the Chairman of Port Trust and it is after 97 years that we are making the connection with Port Trust again, thanks to the efforts of Rtn Vivek Harinarain and PP Rtn N K Gopinath.

Hyperbaric 1.98 crores received; Chamber Project initiated by PP Rtn S Ravi is now funded and equipment procurement is underway.

Technicas Project has been completed with machines installed.

Skilling Centre MOU has been signed, 41 lakhs received, and equipment procurement is in progress.

Fellowship Event

The Holistic Committee organized a pickleball event with enthusiastic participation.

Upcoming Fellowship

Rtn Arunachalam Palaniappan invited members for the Diwali Full Club Fellowship at his residence on 3 Oct 25 (7 PM onwards).

Flag Exchanges

- RC Deonar
- RC Krakow, Poland
- RC Berlin International

Secretary's Announcements (Rtn Prasanna Rajagopalan)

Announced members' and spouses' birthdays and wedding anniversaries for the week.

Next Meeting: 7 Oct 25 – Regular afternoon meeting with VP Raman and Youth Services Awards Function.

New Member Induction

Two new members were inducted.

Rtn Haresh Kishore (introduced by Rtn. Pranay Gambhir).

Rtn H E Sriprakash Shastry (introduced by Rtn Shyamsunder P C)

Induction Ceremony

President Nikhil inducted them formally, charging them with the responsibilities of Rotary. Badges were pinned by PP Rtn S Ravi and IPP Rtn Chella Krishna G.

International Service Month Highlights

World Peace Day Summit (21 Sept 25) was held at Sri Sankara School, Thiruvannamiyur with various competitions and participation of 17 schools and 250 students from Interact Clubs.

Competitions:

Letter Writing to UN Secretary-General

1st Prize – Sri Niket Thiru Narayanan (Sri Sankara Sr. Sec. School)

2nd Prize – Vishesh Roshan (Sri Sankara Vidyashram)

3rd Prize – Anushka Prasanna (Heartfulness Int. School)

Poster Making

1st Prize – Sai Sandhyavati Ratnaya karthik

2nd Prize – Sathya (Chand rodiya Int. / Heartfulness School)

Special Recognitions – Devesh Sri (Sri Sankara Vidyashram), Arun S. & Srinivasan (Hindu Sr. Sec. School)

Panel Discussion

Panel 1 Winners – Advait & Janavi (MCTM Int. School), Lavanya Mahesh & Sean Deepak (Heartfulness Int. School)

Best Speakers – Sean Deepak & Advait Chidsi

Panel 2 Winners – Joint First: Mahatri Raghavendra & Sanjana (Sri Sankara Sr. Sec. School), Meera Badrin Narayanan & Tarun Sanjay (Heartfulness Int. School)

Best Speakers – Pranav (Heartfulness Int. School), Vasumati (Sri Sankara Vidyashram)

Faculty coordinators from participating schools were felicitated.

Guest Speaker Session

Introduction: PP Rtn N K Gopinath introduced the guest speaker Ms. Kirthi Jayakumar, a peace and conflict resolution expert, activist and author.

Address by Ms. Kirthi Jayakumar

Ms. Kirthi Jayakumar shared perspectives on peace beyond conflict resolution and conducted interactive exercises, engaging members and student guests.

Closing

Vote of Thanks by Secretary Prasanna Rajagopalan.

Token of Appreciation: Guest speaker was presented with the Club's book Timeless Legacy.

Adjournment: President Nikhil Raj adjourned the meeting.

AN AFTERNOON OF REFLECTION: WHY PEACE IS THE EXCEPTION AND CONFLICT THE NORM



The warm afternoon meeting began with an unusual burst of energy. Instead of a post-lunch lull, members were immediately pulled into an exercise that reminded everyone that this would not be a passive session. On every chair lay a notepad and pencil—tools that would soon transform into windows of self-discovery. The speaker, Kirthi, a scholar of peace studies, conflict resolution, human rights activist, author, and theatre artist, demonstrated right from the

outset why she has been recognized on global platforms. With a career that spans law, international peace building, feminist foreign policy, and youth advocacy, she brought with her not just academic depth but also lived experience and creativity. She has worked with the United Nations, founded the Gender Security Project, authored books, and used art and theatre to amplify voices. To say she was multifaceted would be an understatement.

SHAPES, SYMBOLS, AND PERCEPTIONS

The first activity was deceptively simple: draw a circle, a line, a triangle, more lines, and a semicircle. Members laughed, compared their sketches, and discovered that despite receiving identical instructions, no two sheets looked the same. Interpretations varied wildly, some saw peace symbols, some saw people, even a tiger made an appearance! The big reveal: the set of shapes was meant to form a girl child. The lesson was immediate and powerful—when given fragments, we interpret them from “our seat at the table.” Without context, we stop questioning, reducing complexity into assumptions. This, Kirthi explained, mirrors how societies often treat peace and conflict.





REDEFINING PEACE

The session then moved into dialogue. “What comes to mind when you hear the word peace?” she asked. Members responded: no war, no violence, calmness, building bridges not walls. Kirthi challenged the audience to reflect on why peace is so often defined as the absence of conflict, rather than a positive state of flourishing. Using the analogy of a sports injury, she explained that most societies treat peace as pain relief—removing conflict temporarily rather than building systems that prevent harm in the first place. She introduced the concept of positive peace: a proactive investment in fairness, justice, and wellbeing, not just the elimination of violence. Otherwise, unresolved tensions merely fester beneath the surface, awaiting a spark.



POWER AND ITS FACES

At the root of conflict, she emphasized, lies power and how we use or misuse it. She unpacked three forms of power:

- **Power over: domination, where one side silences or controls another.**
- **Power within: the individual’s agency, capacity, and choice.**
- **Power to: the collective ability to create and change.**

Through relatable examples ranging from the UN Security Council to everyday classroom dynamics, she showed how failing to recognize others’ agency is a breeding ground for conflict.

THE SPACESHIP EXERCISE

The audience was then plunged into a thought-provoking activity. Imagine the world ending, with only 15 people left: a doctor, farmer, teacher, artist, grandmother, engineer, child, and more. Each participant had to choose seven to take on a spaceship to rebuild society.

Lists varied: some prioritized utility (doctor, engineer, farmer), others values (teacher, mother, priest, singer). Then came the twist: a second list revealed hidden traits. The engineer was a serial killer, the singer had lost their voice, the doctor had been arrested, the mother hated her children. Now choices had to be re-evaluated. The room buzzed with debate. Should utility override morality? Could biases be challenged? What values mattered most for humanity’s survival?

Through this, Kirthi highlighted how quickly we dismiss people by a single label—mother, farmer, billionaire—without considering nuance, context, or their full humanity. She urged the group to reflect: when we exercise power, do we honor the agency of others, or do we overwrite them?



A CALL TO INTROSPECTION

The conversation closed with an urgent reminder. Peace will remain an exception as long as individuals, communities, and nations refuse to hold power accountable. From fake news that feeds conflict to the global arms industry that thrives on fear, systems perpetuate violence unless challenged.

But change, Kirthi stressed, begins with each of us. If individuals pause, reflect, and ask: Is my power empowering or disempowering? Then peace can become the norm, not the anomaly.

Her talk left the audience with not only activities to ponder but also a deep sense of responsibility. As one member remarked in the discussion:

"I used to think peace was the absence of conflict. Now I see it as so much more."

The afternoon ended not in silence but in



conversation exactly as Kirthi intended. She had sparked curiosity, provoked self-reflection, and left every person present with a renewed commitment to build bridges rather than walls.

FOUR-WAY TEST

The Rotary Four-Way Test is just 24 words, but it has the power to transform the way we live and lead.

Before we act, before we speak, before we even decide we are asked four simple questions:

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

The beauty of the Four-Way Test is that it isn't complicated. It can be used in a boardroom, in a classroom, or even at the dinner table.

As a doctor, I face moments where this test becomes my guide. For example, I once had a patient's family insist on an unnecessary, expensive test, influenced by fear and misinformation.

First, I asked myself: Is it the Truth? No—the test was not needed.

Is it Fair to all concerned? No—because it would burden the family without helping the patient.

Would it build Goodwill and Better Friendships? Yes—if I explained with honesty and compassion.

Would it be Beneficial to all concerned? Absolutely—because the patient received the right care, and the family saved stress and money.

By following the Four-Way Test, I could stand by the truth, be fair, preserve trust, and ensure the best outcome.

It should be our daily habit, our daily compass for integrity compassion and service.

Businesses would be more ethical. Families would be more understanding. Communities would be more united.

Truth would replace rumors. Fairness would replace bias. Goodwill would replace conflict. And benefit would replace selfishness.

Whether in a hospital, a home, or a boardroom, the Four-Way Test reminds us to pause and choose wisely.

Because when we do, we don't just change ourselves, we change the world around us.

The Four-Way Test is not just Rotary's principle—it should be the fabric of our ethos. Let's live it, and in doing so, let's inspire the world around us.

- Rtn Dr Rama Narasimhan

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT-NARI SHAKTI



RCM Digital Literacy Centre – 14th Anniversary Message

The RCM Digital Literacy Centre was started on 2 Oct 2012 with 15 computer systems and an intake of 45 women trainees.

Initially, we introduced the MS Office Package, a 3-month course designed for housewives, college students, and others in the 18–60 years age group.

With tremendous support of RCM dignitaries, we have successfully trained 1,740 women thus far.

In 2022, RCM introduced the Tally package to

expand learning opportunities. In 2024, RCM collaborated with NIIT Foundation, Delhi, upgrading the syllabus with authorized certification for both CCMO and Tally. Thus far, 75

students have been certified in CCMO and 45 students in Tally under NIIT Foundation Delhi. NIIT Foundation also provided courseware, and our trainers received special training and certification through their support.

In 2024 we started partnering with Skill Council for self-employed Tailoring and Embroidery verticals.

There are more initiatives in the pipeline.



A special note of gratitude to:

Ms. S. Vimalaswari, site manager, who has been serving as a dedicated trainer since the inception of the Centre.

Ms. Shanmuga Rekha, an alumnus, one of our early students, who was appointed as a

trainer in 2013 and continues to contribute.

With the unwavering guidance and encouragement of all RCM members, the Digital Literacy Centre has successfully completed 13 years and is stepping into its 14th year - 2 Oct 2025.

**-Rtn Rajib Kumar Hota, IRS (Retd)
Chairperson, Selaiyur
Vocational Services Center**

HOLY PICKLE



Sunday mornings got better with fitness, laughter, and some good old pickleball to Rtn Dhananjay for setting up the MCC court.

28 Sept 25, 645 am, a few Rotarians came together at the Madras Cricket Club to try their hand at pickleball. While the game may have been raw and unpolished, the energy and camaraderie was simply awesome. The fun continued over a delicious South Indian breakfast, adding warmth to the morning. With such a spirited start, we're sure that many more RCMers would join in for future pickleball sessions!

- Rtn Vipin Sachdev





Poster welcoming attendees from the U.S. and Canada to the convention



Luggage tag used by convention goers traveling to Edinburgh



Rotarians parade through the streets of Edinburgh, Scotland, during the 1921 Rotary Convention.

Edinburgh Rotarians and spouses and 1920-21 RI President Estes Snedecor (center) are flanked by men in traditional Scottish attire at the convention.





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