

Rotary
RI 3240



HARMONY

UNITE
FOR
GOOD



Francesco Arezzo
RI President 2025-26



Dr. Kameswar S. Elangbam
District Governor RI 3240



Chandana Das
President, Rotary Club of Shillong

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER / ROTARY CLUB OF SHILLONG

Vol 65, Issue 26 | Date 2 January 2026 | Editor : Rtn. S.R.Joshi



President of the club Rtn. Chandana Das exchanging club flag with the
President of Rotary Club of Gauhati South



President's Message : More than job training

Rtn. Francesco Arezzo President, Rotary International

In a garage outside Salinas, California, young people who are learning to restore classic cars are doing more than developing a skill — they are reclaiming their futures. This training programme provides mentorship and, for some, a path away from gang involvement toward meaningful employment. Graduates leave with certifications, practical experience and hope. This is what Rotary's Vocational Service Month celebrates each January — the power of bringing together people with unique skills to do good in the world. It reminds us that integrity isn't just about our actions matching our words. Integrity is in everything we do. The California automotive programme has been such a success because it was built on integrity. Members of the Rotary Club of Carmel-by-the-Sea didn't assume they knew what the community needed. They listened. They learned there was a shortage of skilled mechanics as well as a large number of young people lacking job training. They recognised that technical skills alone wouldn't be enough, so they partnered with Rancho Cielo, a nonprofit offering counselling and support services alongside vocational training. That is The Four-Way Test in action. Those four simple questions help us not judge others but guide us toward genuine, effective service. Consider our commitment to ending polio. For nearly 40 years, we have promised the world's children we will eliminate this disease. Despite obstacles, we persist, and today we are closer to defeating the virus. Keeping this promise is the very definition of integrity. The same integrity must drive our vocational service. With 1.2 billion young people in emerging economies reaching working age in the next decade and only 420 million jobs projected, we face a critical gap. Communities long excluded from economic opportunities need our support. But support doesn't mean imposing our will. It means listening to local needs, building partnerships, and designing projects that communities can sustain themselves. You have knowledge that can transform lives. Whatever your profession, your expertise combined with Rotary's values creates lasting change. The question isn't whether you have something to offer, it's how you'll use your skills to serve. This January, I encourage you to ask how your club can address vocational needs in your community. What skills do your members have that could change someone's life? How can your networks open doors for young people? What partnerships can create sustainable jobs? Let integrity guide you. Let The Four-Way Test light your path. And let the young people in California and the multitudes worldwide who need job skills remind you why vocational service matters. Let us celebrate putting our professional skills to work for humanity with integrity at the heart of everything we do.

Keep glowing, keep growing: *Rtn. M Muruganandam, RI Director, 2025–27.*

As 2026 dawns, let's start with thankful hearts and renewed passion to serve through Rotary. Rotary, to me, is a movement of light — and every Rotarian, a torchbearer. When we let this light shine, Rotary glows. And when we share that glow widely, Rotary grows. After becoming an AKS member, I once thought to myself — maybe now I can slow down, maybe I can focus on other Rotary work. But then came a moment that changed everything. My home club, Rotary Club of BHEL City Tiruchirapalli, invited me for the inauguration of a global grant project at the Government Hospital in Manapparai, a small town about 50km from Trichy. The hospital serves nearly 80 villages and welcomes hundreds of mothers every month. But for years, it had no Neonatal ICU facility.



When a newborn fell critically ill, families had to travel all the way to Trichy — and heartbreakingly, many infants never survived that journey. Through Rotary's global grant, the neonatal ward was equipped with life-saving equipment — turning an empty ward into a lifeline. In the last five years, that single project has saved thousands of newborn lives. Standing there, watching these fragile yet determined lives breathing and thriving, I realised something profound: this is the magic of Rotary. That experience also reminded me of the true power of public image. Because when people see what Rotary actually does, their belief in Rotary grows deeper. Visibility builds trust. Trust creates participation. And participation expands impact. Public image is one of the significant pillars of Rotary, alongside membership, Foundation and service. It is equally vital to Rotary's growth. For the world to support us, the world must first see us and understand us. In India, 83% of the population is aware of Rotary, placing us second in the world. But awareness alone is not enough. Understanding is what truly matters — people knowing why Rotary exists, how it works, and what difference it makes. In that, India leads the world with 73% understanding. Let me share a thought from one of the greatest treasures of Tamil literature — the Thirukkural. It says, *Naraa malar* — flowers without fragrance. The meaning is simple yet profound: even the most beautiful flower loses its essence without its scent. Similarly, no matter how much we achieve in Rotary — if our work is not known, if our light does not reach others — it is like a flower without fragrance. Through Interact and Rotaract, we are already taking Rotary's story to newer generations. Our Polio Eradication Initiative, too, has made Rotary a name recognised and respected in every corner of India. Rotary is seen very well in our country — now let us ensure in 2026 that it is celebrated in a larger way. Every photograph shared, every project inaugurated, every human story told — adds to that fragrance. When Rotary's public image glows, Rotary itself grows — in membership, in Foundation giving, and most importantly, in the faith people place in us. So my dear friends, as we step into this new year, let our projects speak loudly, and let our stories spread widely. Let us keep glowing, and keep growing.

The Pressure Cooker Temple

In Andhra Pradesh, there is a temple called the Chilkur Balaji temple, better known as the Visa temple, called so because aspirants for a US visa, come here after the application, and do 10 rounds of the temple. And another 110 rounds once the visa comes. "I don't know why it works, maybe it's a branch office or something, but it works!" Similarly, in the central sector of the Siachen glacier, there's a temple called the Pressure Cooker Baba Mandir. "Do you know why," asked Capt Raghu Raman? Legend says that once from a Pakistani ridge when a heat-seeking missile was fired, it came to the hottest part of the post, which was a pressure cooker on top of a stove, and blew that up, saving the 28 men who were sleeping in the barracks close by. "Ever since that day, the fragments of that pressure cooker are kept in a shrine, and *pooja hoti uski dinmein do baar... subah shaam aarti hoti hai uski*" (Pooja of the pressure cooker remnants is done twice a day, complete with *aarti*)

Rtn. C Basker, Past RI Director says,

"For generations, nature has nourished us with air, water, food, energy and beauty. But our impact on earth has reached a point where gratitude must run into responsibility... to value, protect and safeguard the fragile ecosystem" (source: Rotary News, January 2026)



GREETINGS

Rtn. (Dr.) Kamaljit Singh Sehdev celebrates his birthday on 8th January.

Members of the Rotary Club of Shillong wish him many happy returns of the day.