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# 101 The Chaka

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[thechaka001@gmail.com](mailto:thechaka001@gmail.com)

## TODAY'S GUEST SPEAKER



### **Arnab Goswami, Republic TV**

Mr. Arnab Goswami is the Managing Director and Editor-in-chief of Republic Media Network which beams to over 150- 200 million viewers across the country, in English and Hindi. The Network has viewers across the UK, the Middle East, the North Africa Region, Canada, Singapore and Australia.

Republic Bharat, Arnab Goswami's Hindi news channel, was launched in February 2019 and has stormed the genre with its breakthrough formats and razor focus on hard news, investigations, accountability seeking and impact driven journalism -- principles which have ensured that in a short span, Republic Bharat has soared to become the Number 1 Hindi news channel across India.

Republic on Digital on a daily basis, has more



readership than most of the highest circulated newspapers of India. The website publishes over 1000 stories across genres every single day, and is among the top 5 digital English news publishers in the country.

With an intense focus on investigative journalism and with the resolve to always put India and Indians first, Goswami's Republic Media Network has quickly transformed the news landscape in the country. With over 20 years of experience, Arnab Goswami has used his fierce belief in the power of Indian journalism and Indian journalists to ensure that breaking the silence has broken the established mould and resulted in a new news wave in India across languages. Goswami is also the current President of the governing board of the News Broadcasters Federation (NBF), which is India's largest association of over 78 news channels from every region of the country.

## In Conversation With:



### **HEMANT KANORIA**

**The Chairman, SREI Infrastructure Finance Limited**

Hemant Kanoria has reshaped India's infrastructure landscape with innovative ideas and a strong passion for excellence. Hemant conceptualised 'SREI' in 1989. The initiative marked the entry of private sector in the field of infrastructure, a domain hitherto restricted to public sector. Over the last two-and-a-half decades, SREI has developed into one of India's largest holistic infrastructure institution with USD 6.6 billion (around Rs 43,000 crore) of consolidated assets under management.

He is known for unleashing a new wave of rural entrepreneurship in India. A unique business model under the brand 'Sahaj' was created to bridge the urban-rural digital divide and make services like e-governance, e-commerce and e-learning accessible to millions in remote geographies.

Hemant is also the Chairman of India Power Corporation Limited, previously known as DPSC Limited. Under his guidance and leadership 'India Power' has become one of the leading integrated power utilities in the country.

He is a Trustee of Kanoria Foundation and is currently serving as Board Member in the Indian institute of Information Technology (Guwahati), Neotia University and New Delhi Institute of Management. He is a Member of the Advisory Committee of Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy and also a Member of Council of Advisors of Friends of Kolkata.

He has held several prestigious positions like President of Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, Chairman of the FICCI National Committee on Infrastructure and also served on the Board of Governors of Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta (IIM-C). He has also been a Member of Regional Direct Taxes Advisory Committee, Government of India.

He is a member of Rotary Club of Calcutta since May 1999.

**We Meet Every Tuesday At 1 p.m. At ROTARY SADAN**  
[www.rotacal.org](http://www.rotacal.org)  
E-mail: [rota2573@dataone.in](mailto:rota2573@dataone.in)

# FIRST CLUB ASSEMBLY

Date: 4th October 2020

Keeping restriction of pandemic in mind, the club assembly was conducted on Zoom on 4th October, 2020. All committee chairs with their team proved that pandemic could not dampen the spirit of serving society in the ongoing Rotary Year and all of them showcased their activities in the august presence of Asstt. Governor Rakesh Makwan and Zonal Secretary IPP Purnendu Roy Chowdhury. President Debashis Mitra flagged off the meeting with a brief message for the committee chairs and other members who attended the same and he also congratulated all the committee for braving the pandemic and serving the people who need our help during this critical phase. Honorary Secretary Bodhi Brata Das briefed everyone on the structure of the presentation and each committee chair exhibited its work and respective plan for the next quarter. The President requested ZS IPP Purnendu Roy Chowdhury and AG Rakesh Makwan to share their thoughts, which they did lucidly. The President concluded the session with Vote of Thanks!



Reported by Rtn. Bodhi Brota Das, Honorary Secretary

## Rotary Leadership Institute – 10th & 11th October

Rotary Club of Calcutta hosted the Rotary Leadership Institute courses held on 10th and 11th October at Rotary Sadan. The DG and many PDGs were among the Trainers. A large number of participants attended the course on the two days. The picture below is from the Inaugural Session held on 10th October.



Reported by Rtn. Debashis Mitra, The President

## MEMBERS' BOX

## A HISTORIC SPEECH

[Following is a scanned copy of report on the speech delivered by Mahatma Gandhi as the Chief Guest of Rotary Club of Calcutta on 18 August 1925 published in *The Englishman* in its Vol. 32 ( 17 June 1925 – 24 September 1925), with excerpts from that historic address by the great man.]

Contributed by *Rtn. Subhaji Guha Mazumbar*

194. SPEECH AT ROTARY CLUB<sup>1</sup>

CALCUTTA,  
August 18, 1925

After thanking the Rotarians for the delicate courtesy that they had extended to him in making their luncheon a Bengali widow's luncheon—a mere potato-and-cabbage luncheon—and for inviting him to speak to them on a subject which was perhaps as uninteresting as the menu spread before them, Mr. Gandhi said:

“Charkha” is not an inviting word though I see that your magazine is called *Charkha*. I did not know that this was an Indian word you had copied. That means charkha—a wheel. I have also come to represent the potency of the wheel, the spinning-wheel or the spindle I hold in my hand (showing a little instrument), and I have so often humorously said to my mill-owning friends that I propose to compete with them with this little spindle. But beyond that humour it has a seriousness all its own.

First of all, as to its economic value. You know that the surface of India is 1,900 miles long from north to south and 1,500 miles broad from east to west and it includes 700,000 villages over this vast surface. The majority of the villages are not served by any railway system at all. There was a time in India when the spinning-wheel was a supplementary occupation of this vast agricultural population. The present agricultural population of India as the Government statistics

<sup>1</sup> The reference seems to be to Gandhiji's treatment of the Phoenix Settlement and the Tolstoy Farm in the chapters relating to them in the *History, of Satyagraha in South Africa* in Gujarati which was serially published in *Navajivan* from April 13, 1924 onwards.

<sup>2</sup> J. P. Bhansali

<sup>3</sup> Gandhiji was the chief guest and speaker at the Rotarians' meeting held in the Grand Hotel.



## A HISTORIC SPEECH *Continued*

tell us is nothing less than 85 per cent. The Government statistics also tell us that this 85 per cent of the population of India has at least four months in the year absolutely idle. Some of them who are in the know tell me that in Bengal there are agriculturists who have nothing to do for six months in the year. You can imagine what will happen to a man who takes four months' or six months' holiday without pay. Not even the Viceroy of India can afford that vacation. Businessmen, I think, even though they may be millionaires never give themselves all that holiday and do no business. Much less can this vast agricultural population which the historian of India, the late Sir William Hunter, told us 30 years ago was living a hand-to-mouth existence. He said that one-tenth of the population of India was living on one meal only per day and that meal consisted of dry bread and a pinch of dirty salt. They did not know what milk or ghee was. Nor did they get any vegetables.

As you know, famine is chronic in India, It is a money famine. I suggest to you, as business people, that for such people a supplementary occupation is an absolute necessity, and if it is an absolute necessity it must fulfil certain conditions to apply to this vast mass of mankind. It must, therefore, be a universal occupation. It must be an occupation whose products can be easily taken over by the whole of the population. Therefore it will be idle to suggest that they should make articles of luxury. It must be one that they could easily learn. If it requires a good deal of skill or if the instrument of production requires a great manufacturing skill or if it was expensive, it would not answer.

Showing a small spindle in his hand Mr. Gandhi said that that little simple device could produce 50 yards of yarn per hour. A spinning-wheel on an average could give 400 yards per hour. The highest output of a spinning-wheel was 850 yards per hour. No mill spindle had yet produced 850 yards of 10 counts per hour. That could only be done by the human hand. What the mill could do was that thousands of spindles could be worked by a few women with a great power behind it. It was good, it had its place. He did not want to displace the machinery from its proper place. He ventured to suggest that for these few millions of peasantry of India there was no other cottage occupation of that universal character as the spinning-wheel. Any body going to the villages would find some remnants of spinning-wheel. Women throughout the length and breadth of India were taking it up without the slightest difficulty because they were born to it. They knew what it was. But one other condition had to be fulfilled. Who would use the product of that wheel? Naturally the

## A HISTORIC SPEECH *Continued*

people of India, as they did 200 or even 100 years ago, when every Indian was clothed in garments spun by Indian women and woven by Indian weavers. The weaving industry had not died out entirely but the spinning industry had all died out and there was a reason for it. The spinning industry could not support a large body of people by itself. It could only be a supplementary industry and therefore there was not that resistance to its destruction which the weaving industry offered, for the simple reason that the weavers lived purely upon weaving as their sole occupation whereas the peasantry had their agriculture as the backbone. India imported Rs. 60 crore worth of foreign yarn and adding a similar quantity to it produced by local mills, they could easily imagine what it meant to a poor country like India whose average income, according to Lord Curzon, was in his time Rs. 30 to 33 per year. The late Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji calculated the average annual income to be Rs. 26. The late Mr. R.C. Dutt challenged Lord Curzon's figure, and Mr. Gandhi thought that it was successfully proved that Mr. Dadabhai's figure was more reliable and more correct. Even taking Lord Curzon's figure what did it signify? Less than Rs. 3 a month. If the spinning-wheel could add even Rs. 5 or Rs. 6 per year to their income, was it not a fortune to them? It was, said Mr. Gandhi. That was the economic aspect of the spinning-wheel. That would solve largely the problem of the economic distress. It would solve the problem of famine. It would solve the problem of poverty. People need not live on charity which must be shameful to the giver as well as to the taker who had his limbs unimpaired.

As for the spiritual aspect of the charkha, Mr. Gandhi said that it flowed naturally from the former. If they must industrialize India in the English and American fashion by covering it with factories, they could do with a small population but could not deal with a vast population in a summary fashion. He asked :

Do you want the people to congregate in boxes where men and women are huddled together in a manner which I could not picture to you. I save them from such an immorality by giving them this occupation. There is another spiritual aspect about it. A man is often known by his occupation. There is a great deal of truth in the proverb 'When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?' That was the time when men were really contented and there was real brotherhood.<sup>1</sup>



## Minutes of the 4783rd Regular Weekly Meeting Held online on 10 October 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

- 1 President, Rtn. Debashis Mitra welcomed all members and guests and called the 4783rd regular weekly meeting of the Club to order.
- 2 National Anthem led by Rtn Malika Mukherjee Sarkar
- 3 Minutes of the 4782nd meeting of the Club held on 6th October, 2020 on zoom.
- 4 The President welcomed the day's guest speaker Ms. Barkha Dutt, Senior Journalist and the moderator Mr. Anuvab Pal, to the meeting. The President also welcomed all visiting Rotarians and guests who were present and conveyed greetings to their Clubs.
- 5 President Reported :  
The Club donated one Electric Car to Institute of Neurosciences at Park Street, Kolkata. The total cost of the project was 7.5 Lakhs donated by Rtn. Lata Bajoria. On behalf of the Club, The President thanked to Rtn. Bajoria for her donation.
- 6 At the request of the President, Hony. Secretary, Rtn Bodhi Brata Das thereafter conducted the Club business thus :
  - a. Hony. Secretary welcomed all members and guests.

- b. He then announced names of Rotarians celebrating their Birthdays and Wedding Anniversaries during the week ending 13th October and conveyed best wishes to them.
- c. He informed that the next Weekly Meeting of the Club will be held on Tuesday, 14th October at 11:45 a.m, on zoom.
- d. Hony Secretary also announced that the Regular Weekly Meeting schedule to be held on Tuesday, 20th October at 12 noon has been re-scheduled on 14th October at 11:45 a.m. on zoom.
- 7 At the request of the President, Ms Barkha Dutt took the stage and spoke on "Is TV Dead? The future of News "while conversing with Anuvab Pal, the moderator. This was followed by a Q&A session.
- 8 Rtn. Renuka Shah proposed a formal vote of thanked to Ms Barkha Dutt on behalf of the Club.
- 9 The Club remembered with Good wishes Rotary Club of Khulna North, Bangladesh, RI Dist. 3381
- 10 The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

*Rtn Debashis Mitra*  
**President Hony.**

*Rtn. Bodhi Brata Das*  
**Secretary**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS & REPORTING

### NEXT WEEKLY MEETING (Virtual)

**28th October 2020**

The next RWM (virtual) will be held on **28th October 2020 Wednesday at 12 noon** rescheduled from 20th October.

**Speaker:** Atul Satya Koushik, CA, LLB, Author, Playwright, Director, Motivational Speaker

**Topic:** Chanakya Niti for You

### Happy Birthday

Lalji Mehrotra	14 October
Deepak Agarwal	15 October
Raj Kumar Agrawal	17 October
Anjali Saraogi	17 October
Ritu Singh	19 October
Anusua Das	19 October
Prof. Indira Chakravarty	21 October
Subhajit Guha Mazumdar	27 October

*Wish you many happy returns of the day*

### Wedding Anniversary

Satnam S Ahluwalia & R-Ann Gurbir Kaur 18 October

Tara John & Dr. Mathew P. John 25 October

*Wish you many happy returns of the day*

### ATTENDANCE REPORT (10/10/20)

Total Members	238
Members Present	55
Exempted Members	75
Visiting Rotarians & Guests	10

## ONE WORLD

We remember with good wishes Rotary Club of Dhaka North East, Bangladesh, RI Dist. 3282