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FORTNIGHTLY BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF GAUHATI SOUTH (RI DIST 3240)

RI PRESIDENT Rtn G. R. McNally	DISTRICT GOVERNOR Rtn Nilesh Kumar Agarwal	PRESIDENT Rtn Nawajyoti Sharma	SECRETARY Rtn Priyama Goswami
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The more I learn, the more I realise how much I don't know.

Isaac Newton

From the Editor



July is the first month of the Rotary year and this is when new leadership takes over at Clubs, Districts and at Rotary International. It is also the time when all clubs chalk out their yearly programmes in line with Rotary's ideals and areas of focus. One of the focus areas of Rotary is Maternal and Child Health Care, and according to the new Rotary calendar, July has been designated as *Maternal and Child Health Month*.

Every year mothers risk their lives giving birth and millions of children die each year from treatable, preventable causes. It is estimated that at least 7 million children under the age of five die each year worldwide due to malnutrition, poor health care, and inadequate sanitation.

The Government of India has been focusing on initiatives to improve maternal health indicators. However, coverage of life-saving health interventions and practices remains low due to gaps in knowledge, policies and availability of resources. In India, an estimated 50,000 mothers continue to die every year due to causes related to pregnancy, childbirth and the post-partum period. Assam, unfortunately, has one of the highest maternal and infant mortality rates. The major medical causes of these deaths are hemorrhage,

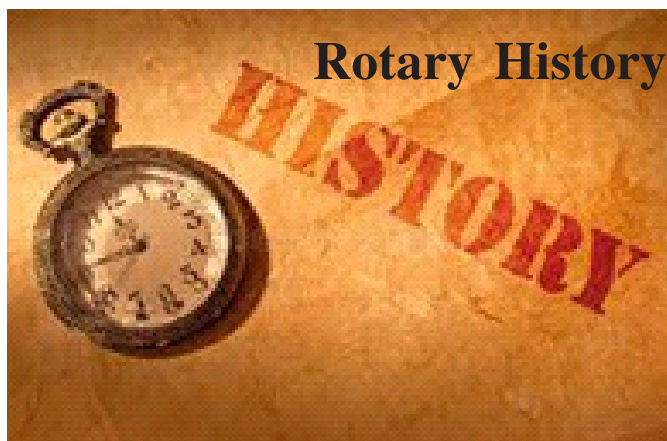
sepsis, abortion, hypertensive disorders, obstructed labor and anemia. A host of socio-economic and cultural determinants like illiteracy, low socio-economic status, early age of marriage, low women's empowerment, traditional preference for home deliveries, are also factors that contribute to delays leading to these deaths. This is true not only in India but in most developing and underdeveloped countries across the world.

In an attempt to alleviate the situation, Rotary provides education, immunizations, birth kits and antibiotics to babies, improved access to essential medical services in the form of mobile health clinics, and supports trained health care providers for mothers and their children. Women are taught how to prevent mother-to-infant HIV transmission, how to breast-feed, and how to protect themselves and their children from disease. These are indeed vital for the reduction of maternal and child mortality rates. James L. Bomar, RI President 1979-80, once said: "What is the value of the life of one child saved? No one will ever know, but if the child were our own, the price tag would be marked: *Not for sale. This life is invaluable.*"

By empowering the local community to take ownership of health care training programmes, Rotary's projects try to ensure continuity and sustainability.

Rtn. Priyam Goswami





ROTARY THEMES

Each January, Rotary members enthusiastically await the incoming Rotary International president's announcement of the next Rotary theme. The president announces the theme at the International Assembly, an annual training event for incoming leaders.

The tradition of crafting a theme is credited to Percy C. Hodgson, Rotary's president in 1949-50. When Hodgson addressed the International Assembly in 1949, he impressed

upon the incoming leaders that they had a "glorious opportunity to impart Rotary knowledge" and that "lack of Rotary knowledge can be a deterrent to the successful operation of a Rotary club." Hodgson's 83-word theme, which included a list of four objectives, was substantially longer than today's punchier themes, but it captured his hope that incoming leaders have essential knowledge of Rotary. Rotarians' desire to celebrate and support their president's annual programme of service has continued. Other early themes include *Rotary Is Hope in Action* (Joaquin SerratosoCibils, 1953-54), *Kindle the Spark Within* (Nitish C. Laharry, 1962-63), and *Good Will Begins With You* (Ernst G. Breitholtz, 1971-72).

In the decades that followed, RI presidents introduced theme logos, lapel pins, ties, and scarves. Theme ties were introduced in the 1990s, and are now crafted annually. Scarves first appeared in 1998-99. Many designs incorporate the theme logo for the year. Others, such as those selected by William Boyd from New Zealand and Sakuji Tanaka from Japan, use colours or imagery that reflects their home country.



ROTARY CALENDAR 2023-24

July	:	<i>Maternal and Child Health Month</i>
August	:	<i>Membership and New Club Development Month</i>
September	:	<i>Basic Education and Literacy Month</i>
October	:	<i>Community Economic and Development Month</i>
November	:	<i>Rotary Foundation Month</i>
December	:	<i>Disease Prevention and Treatment Month</i>
January 2024	:	<i>Vocational Service Month</i>
February 2024	:	<i>Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention Month</i>
March 2024	:	<i>Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Month</i>
April 2024	:	<i>Environmental Month</i>
May 2024	:	<i>Youth Service Month</i>
June 2024	:	<i>Rotary Fellowships Month</i>



MINUTES OF THE 2251ST WEEKLY REGULAR MEETING HELD ON 14.07.2023

Meeting number 2251, which was the first meeting of the Rotary year 2023-24, was called to order at 7.00 PM by the President Rtn Nawajyoti Sharma. The meeting began with rendering of National Anthem followed by a welcome speech by Rtn Gayatree Goswamee. Rtn. Gayatree Goswamee also shared her happy moments in Rotary, by expressing a moment of joy when President Rtn Rajesh Bhatra offered her the opportunity to give the vote of thanks on the very first week of her joining the Rotary Club of Gauhati South. It made her so happy that it worked like Sanjivani to her. The next item as per agenda was the birthday greetings offered to Rtn. Dipak Bhagawati by Rtn. Tarun Ch. Bordoloi and to Rtn. Dr. Indira Bardoloi by Rtn. Minoti Barthakur

The President then gave a brief on the Zoom meeting on Literacy Level 2 seminar and requested Club Literacy Chair to join the same on 16th July. IPP Rtn. Rajesh Bhatra handed over the flag he received during the Exchange with Rotary Club of Mumbai Airport Club which he had visited recently. He shared his joyful experience of visiting Mumbai Airport Club, where he met the famous Bollywood music director Vishal Shekhar.

Rtn Manjusri Barua gave a brief introduction of the visiting Rtn Dr. Deepasree Das Sarkar of the Rotary Club of Digboi, who was then felicitated by the president with Gamocha, a rose bud and a card.

Rtn Dr. Deepasree Das Sarkar delivered a speech on Cervical Cancer and Breast Cancer. She emphasized on the importance of HPV vaccine for girls in preventing Cervical Cancer. She also spoke about different rights for women, particularly those suffering from abuse by their husbands in rural areas and tea gardens. She made a PowerPoint presentation entitled 'Red Revolution' demonstrating a simple method of making eco-friendly and hygienic sanitary pads at home.

Rtn Dilip Sarkar and Rtn Anurekha Borkakati were felicitated by the visiting Rotarian Guests with a Rose Bud for the Fellowship of the evening.

The next item on the agenda was the Club Assembly where the annual plan of the club was placed by the respective directors and chairs.

Club administrator Rtn Dr. Indira Bardoloi gave an overview of the club's programme for the year. Membership Director, Rtn Dipak Bhagawati briefed the members about the membership matters emphasizing that enhancing the number of members is not our priority but a personal behaviour and maintaining the standard of Rotary are equally important matters. He encouraged bringing quality members. Director of Rotary foundation, Rtn, P. D. Chaudhury, delivered a captivating PowerPoint presentation narrating various types of contributions to the Rotary Foundation like polio eradication fund, Annual fund etc. Director of service project Rtn Rajkamal Bhuyan gave an update on the district grant under which we can apply for the wheel chairs, sewing machines and others. A drinking water supply project in a women and girls rehab centre near Mirza was also in the pipeline.

An interactive discussion among the members was held during the assembly. Since a few Directors were unable to be present, the President said that they would present their plans in the next wrm.

The President then discussed about the modification of the office bearers list 2023-24 and after a few suggestions from the members the list was modified which will be published in the next fortnightly bulletin of the club.

The Secretary, Rtn Priyama Goswami, reported the statistics of the members present as below-

Total Members Present: **31** {Rotarian- 24, Anne – 3, Rotaractor – 1 and Guests- 3}

Sunshine Collection: **Rs 910/-** (Rupees nine hundred and ten only)

Rtn Anurekha Borkakati offered the Formal Vote of thanks followed by the 'Jatiya Sangeet'

The meeting was adjourned by the President at 8:20 PM.





MINUTES OF THE 2252ND WEEKLY REGULAR MEETING HELD ON 21.07.2023

The 2252nd Weekly Meeting of the Rotary year 2023-24 was called to order at 7.00 PM by the President, Rtn Nawajyoti Sharma. The meeting began with rendering of National Anthem. Rtn Manjusri Baruah extended a warm welcome to all attendees through her introductory speech. She also shared her happy moments in Rotary, by recounting poignant moments from January 2018 when her husband Late Rtn Dr Pranab Baruah suddenly passed away, leaving her in profound grief. During this traumatic period, she received overwhelming solace and support from her fellow Rotarians and relatives. She specially mentioned Late Rtn Prasanta Goswami who encouraged her to come to Rotary meetings and continue her Editorial responsibilities. Eventually she mustered the courage to attend Rotary meetings and on her wedding anniversary, she offered a fellowship commemorating the 43 happy years she spend with her husband..This experience, she found healing and expressed heartfelt gratitude to Rotary for its role in her life's journey. She added that Rotary has been a great learning experience for her.

Following this, the President requested a minute's silence to pay tribute and grant peace to the departed soul of Rtn. Arman Ahmad's brother who recently passed away.

The next item of the agenda was a quiz, presented by President. The question was " In which year was RCGS chartered and what is the present number of installation?". Rtn. Priyam Goswami emerged as the winner by providing the correct answers.

The President then informed the house about an upcoming webinar and asked everyone to attend the same. Subsequently Rtn Dr.Chandan Rajkhowa gave a brief introduction of guest speaker, Dr Aditi Barua.Rtn Giti

Bujarbarua felicitated the esteemed guest speaker with a *Phulam Gamosa* .

Dr. Aditi Barua, a specialist in Pediatrics, delivered an informative talk on child care and parenting. She emphasized the significance of mental health and social well-being in children, highlighting that they are the future of our nation. Therefore, ensuring the proper development of children is of utmost importance; they should be mentally and socially well-adjusted to contribute more productively to their communities. While the government plays its role, building a healthy nation cannot be solely their responsibility; it requires the collective efforts of common people, social workers, NGOs, and others. During her speech, Dr. Aditi also discussed the varying needs of children in different age groups. Additionally, she focused on the essential role of grandparents and how they can engage with their grandchildren through storytelling and meaningful interactions.

After the speech, several Rotarians and Annes interacted with Dr. Aditi Barua, sharing their own experiences with their children and grandchildren.

The Secretary, RtnPriyama Goswami, reported the statistics of members present: Rotarians - 30, Annes - 8, Guests -3 ,**Total no 41**

Sunshine Collection was **Rs 480/- (Rupees four hundred eighty only**

Rtn Priyam Goswami has offered the Formal Vote of thanks followed by rendering of Jatiya Sangeet.

Fellowship was offered by Rtn Dipak Bhagawati and RtnManjshri Baruah

The meeting was adjourned by the President at 8:25pm







My Space

The value of Friendship ...Old is Gold

Rtn. Anurekha Barkakoti

Today I met up with three friends at Bangalore, friends who were my colleagues at a school in Kolkata (M.P. Birla Senior Secondary School) two decades ago. Thanks to modern electronic media, particularly WhatsApp, we kept in touch over the years and now we are thirty teacher retirees in our 'Second Innings' group from the same school, settled in different parts of the country. Sadly, three are deceased. Four such friends are settled in Bangalore, some are in Pune, some in Mumbai and some in Kolkata.

Since I was in the city, we four ex- colleagues decided to meet.

Sunanda Chakraborty was teacher of Bengali, now 75+, Usha Dorairaj teacher of Sanskrit, now 70+, Sunita Upadhyay teacher of Biology now 62+ and myself teacher of Economics, 66+.

We were bonded in our work place, worked like a family in this huge School (of 3000+ students), and were so close that the years of our not meeting did not matter at all. It was like old times, laughing, giggling, sharing our stories

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and re- connecting. In true friendship, the years in between just does not matter. We were meeting after nearly two decades.

Today, one thing was clear. We were all so happy...happy that we could all look back in contentment of a life well lived. We are, by the grace of the Almighty, still living a life of contentment, peace and acceptance of all that life has given us. We joked about old times, laughed at our school stories, lamented over some misfortune befalling

us, discussed health and wellness issues, shared pictures of our families, generally life after retirement and so much more. Not to forget, the mandatory photo sessions to share with the others. Time just flew...

This kind of unconditional friendship seals the bond forever. I am blessed to have been given such pure friendship that has made me look at life with a meaningful perspective as we shared our stories.



A LETTER WHICH CREATED HISTORY

Date: 02 - 07 - 1909

Divisional Railway Officer, Sahibgunj,

Respected Sirs,

I am arrive by passenger train Ahmedpur station and my belly is too much swelling with jackfruit. I am therefore went to privy. Just I doing the nuisance that guard making whistle blow or train to go off and I am running with lotaah in one hand and dhoti in the next when I am fall over and expose all my shocking to man and female women on platform. I am got leaved at Ahmedpur station. This too much bad, if passenger go to make dung that dam guard not wait train five minutes for him. I am therefore pray your honour to make big fine on that guard for public sake. Otherwise I am making big report to papers.

*Your faithful Servant,
Okhil Chandra Sen*

(This letter, written by Okhil Babu on 2.7.1909 to the Divisional Railway Officer, Shahibgunj, is on display at the Railway Museum in New Delhi.)

Any guesses why this letter is of historic value?

It led to the introduction of toilets in trains in India...So when using a train toilet, thank Okhil Babu for his hilarious letter.

Moral : If you feel strongly about something, always speak up...however bad or good you may be at the language!

Contributed by Rtn Priyam Goswami

