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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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Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.

Albert Einstein

From the Editor



August is membership and club development month, a time to focus on and appreciate our members, celebrate their devotion to the club and the impact they have made. It is also a time to think about developing strategies around growing our membership. The reason why Rotary is such a successful organization is because it is full of members that have one trait in common - the passion to make a difference in the world. All of us share this passion and that is what drives us to work together.

Today, a growing population of youth are not even aware of what Rotary is or does, while those that do are unable to join for a variety of reasons. It is true that many changes have been made to combat this challenge such as the introduction of e-clubs, relaxed attendance requirements, more meeting time options, etc. but we still have a long way to go. Therefore, one of the priorities of Rotary

International's Strategic Plan is to support and strengthen clubs. This can be achieved by improving recruitment and through the retention of qualified, enthusiastic members.

All Rotarians are ambassadors of Rotary and their clubs. This is especially relevant during this month when the focus is on building strong, vibrant clubs, emphasizing on membership development and the creation of new Rotary clubs. But perhaps what makes a club really attractive is a friendly, welcoming atmosphere. And in order to create such an ambience, each one of us has to make a special effort.

The month of August is, of course, very significant for us for another reason as well. As we usher in another year of India's independence, we must bear in mind that as citizens of our nation, we have certain fundamental responsibilities and moral obligations along with our rights. We are all aware of the major challenges that our country faces, and as Rotarians, it is our duty to try our best to turn these challenges into opportunities for the welfare of all. For isn't Tagore's vision of a Nation, as portrayed in his poem "Where the Mind is Without Fear" as relevant today as it was then?

Rtn. Priyam Goswami



**Charting the Ethical Landscape : Tagore's Vision of Nation in
*Where the Mind Is Without Fear***

*Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls
Where words come out from the depth of truth
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit
Where the mind is led forward by thee
Into ever-widening thought and action
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.*



(The original poem was published in 1910 and was included in the 1910 collection *Gitanjali* and, in Tagore’s own translation, in its 1912 English edition. “Where the mind is without fear” is the 35th poem of *Gitanjali*, and one of Tagore’s most anthologised poems.)



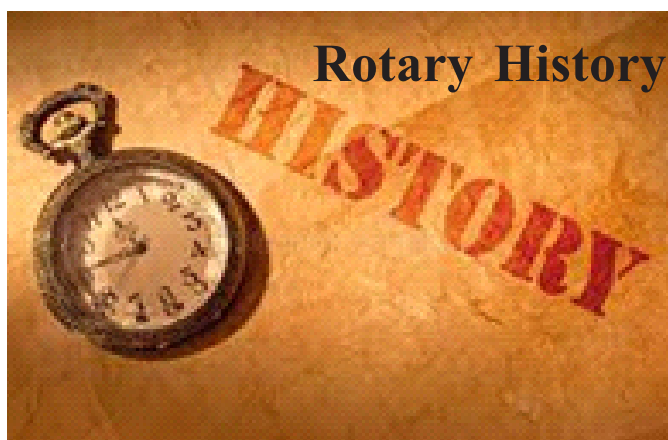
***The members of the Rotary Club of Gauhati South pay their respectful homage to
Late Rtn Dev Das Kakati. We pray for the eternal peace of the departed soul***



1938- 2023

***“The body will die,
but he who dwells within it is said to be
deathless and immeasurable”***

Bhagawat Gita



ROTARY IN INDIA

Calcutta was home to the first Rotary club in the mainland of Asia. R.J. Combes, the manager of a steel products company, while on a business trip to U.S.A. was so impressed by the “friendship, fellowship, and service” aspects of the movement called Rotary that he wanted to introduce the idea to his friends in Calcutta.

The first meeting was held in Calcutta on 26 September, 1919, and the new club was chartered on 1 January 1920.

All the twenty charter members were non-Indians. The first Indian member was S.C. Rudra who was inducted in

1921. In the same year, Sir Surendranath Banerjee was made an honorary member. The first Indian to become the club secretary was Nitish C. Laharry (1926) who went all the way up to become R.I. President in 1962-'63. Except for the lone club chartered in Lahore (in Pakistan now) in 1927, for about a decade India had to be content with only one club, i.e. R.C. of Calcutta.

Things changed when James Wheeler Davidson of Calgary, Canada, arrived in India with a firm determination to spread Rotary in India. Jim Davidson set up Rotary clubs in Bombay (Mumbai) as well as Madras (Chennai) in 1929. Of the 38 charter members of the club in Bombay, 37 were non-Indians. The only Indian was Sir Phiroz Sethna, a legislative member, who later served as District Governor (1937-'38). Similarly in Madras, all the thirty charter members, were non-Indians. Later in the year, Raja Sir. M.A. Muthaiah Chettiar was inducted into the club. By the time India became independent, there were 71 Rotary clubs (14 in Gujarat, 10 in Maharashtra, 10 in UP, 7 in Tamil Nadu, 7 in Karnataka and 23 in another 10 states) with a total membership of 3121 members. Today, India is among the top countries in membership growth.



OUR ACTIVITIES

DISTRIBUTION OF WHEELCHAIRS

Assam State Legal Service Authority and Kamrup District Legal Service Authority, in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Gauhati South, organised a programme on handing over of 10 wheel chairs to ten differently abled people in the Kamrup District and Session Judge Court premises on 9 August, 2023 at 1.30pm. In this programme President Rtn. Nawajyoti Sharma, Rtn. Minoti Borthakur and Rtn. Manjushree Baruah were present. The meeting was presided over by the District and Session Judge, Sri Gautam Baruah. Secretary Legal Services Authority, Sri Binode Prasad, was also present.



DONATION OF STEEL ALMIRAH AND BOOKS

A steel Almirah and some books were donated by Rtn. Minoti Barthakur to New Guwahati Adarsha Sishu Vidyalaya. Some books and a globe were also donated by Rtn. Indira Bardoloi on that occasion.

A meeting, held in this connection on 7 August,2023 at 11 am at the school premises, was presided over by the President of the School Management Committee, Sri Girindra Talukdar. Students of Class V, Teachers, Head Master and a few Rotarians namely Rtn. Minoti Barthakur, Rtn. Indira Bardoloi, Rtn. Manjushree Baruah, Rtn. Priyama Goswami, Rtn. P.M.Goswami and Rtn. Nawajyoti Sharma were present in the meeting. A chorus and a solo dance performed by the students of class V were the attraction on that occasion. After brief speeches by the Rotarians, the Head Master and the President of the School Management Committee, thanked the Rotary Club of Gauhati South for their continuous support to the school.



PROGRAMME ON PLANTATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF SAPLINGS

A programme on the plantation and distribution of Jamun fruit saplings to the students of Chadrapur High School near Guwahati was organised in collaboration with RCC Tatimara Village on 12 August,2023, at the school premises. About 200 saplings prepared and donated by Rtn. Bijay Ketan Baruah of RCGS were distributed in a meeting presided over by the Head Master of the school in presence of the President RCGS Rtn. Nawajyoti Sharma, Secretary Rtn. Priyama Goswami, Rtn. Chandan Rajkhowa, Rtn. Bijay Ketan Baruah, Rtn. Dr. P.M.Goswami and President of RCC Tatimara Sri Prabhat Kalita besides a large number of school students. In his speech Rtn. Bijay Ketan Baruah explained to the students how these saplings are to be planted and maintained like one of their family members. He also said about the usefulness of the Jamun fruit and how it is helpful for curing many diseases like Diabetes etc. Two saplings were also planted in the school compound. The school authority thanked and expressed

deep gratitude to the Rotary Club of Gauhati South and the RCC Tatimara for giving away the Jamun saplings to the students of their school.



MINUTES OF THE 2253RD WRM OF RCGS HELD ON 28 JULY 2023

President Rtn. Nawajyoti Sharma called the Weekly Meeting, number 2253, of the Rotary year 2023–2024 to order at 7:00 PM. The National Anthem was sung before the meeting started. In his Welcome Address, Rtn. Rajesh Bhatra gave a hearty welcome to all and recounted some of his favorite Rotary moments. The meeting's guests, Devojiyoti Hazarika and his wife, were then introduced by Rtn. Atanu Choudhury. The birthday card was then presented to Rtn Anjana Goswami.

The president's quiz was the next item on the agenda. "When was Rotary founded and what was its first service project?" was the query. Rtn. Gayatri Bhattacharya was declared the winner.

The President then informed the audience about the modifications made in the list of club officers which was updated and published in the first fortnightly bulletin of the club. He also stated that as 2 members have submitted their resignation, we currently have 78 active members. Then he informed that our club has to pay the District dues @ Rs.1000 per person and that it had been decided to subscribe Rotary News in E-version and Print version in equal numbers. The President reminded the members that there were only two days left to pay annual dues having a discount of Rs.500.00. He also stated that the District Governor had recently released an app for uploading the projects and Club monthly report.

The club literacy goal, which includes training of at least 25 teachers /instructors and giving 10 NBA awards to 10 different teachers from different schools, as well as e-

learning and club adult literacy, was then discussed. A government school's library is also to be built. Additionally, Rtn. Minoti Borthakur will donate an almirah in one of the happy schools as soon as the school reopens after the summer vacation..

Rtn. Atanu Choudhury, Director Public Image, then spoke about the overall plan for the year, and Rtn Dr. R, N. Majumdar also spoke on the pollution of the river Bharalu and Bahini and the steps taken by the organization called "Save Bharalu Abhiyan" so far. Then Rtn. P.M. Goswami was requested by the President to conduct the proceedings of the "Family Friday Programme".

The participants, which include Rotarians, Rotary lets and Annes performed various items like Devotional song, Modern song, Dance, Recitations etc. The programme was very good and Rtn. P. M. Goswami compered it in an excellent way.

The Executive Secretary, Rtn. Anish Debbarma, then reported the statistics of members present as follows - Rotarian - 29, Anne - 6, Guest -2, Rotaractors - 1, Rotarylet- 5 **Total no 44**

Sunshine Collection was **Rs 120/- (Rupees One hundred twenty only)**

Rtn. Jayanta Madhab Baruah offered the Formal Vote of thanks followed by rendering of Jatiya Sangeet.

The meeting was adjourned by the President at 9 pm Fellowship was offered by Rtn. Anjana Goswami and Rtn. Nawajyoti Sharma.





MINUTES OF THE 2254TH WRM OF RCGS HELD ON 4 AUGUST, 2023.

The President Rtn. Nawajyoti Sharma called the 2254th Weekly Meeting to order at 7:00 PM, commencing with the singing of the National Anthem. A minute’s silence was observed to pay condolences to the late Rtn. Dev Das Kakati. Rtn. Bhupendra Nath Das then shared touching words in memory of Rtn. Dev Das Kakati, highlighting his significant contributions to our society.

Following this, Rtn. Tarun Ch Bordoloi extended a warm welcome to all attendees and shared cherished Rotary experiences, particularly his involvement in the HTFI program. He expressed his privilege in being a part of RCGS.

An anniversary card was presented to Rtn. Dilip Sarkar and Anne Lipika Sarkar by Rtn. Tejinder Bordoloi. A puzzle

quiz engaged the audience, and Rtn. Minoti Barthakur emerged as the winner, receiving a pen and a chocolate from the President.

Rtn. Dipak Bhagawati emphasized the importance of membership growth, underscoring August as the membership month.

The President then informed the members about upcoming projects, including the donation of a steel almirah and box to New Guwahati Adarsha School on August 7, donated by Rtn. Minoti Barthakur. Further, the plans for a Jamun saplings plantation on August 12 and the August 15 programme were discussed.

The meeting proceeded to recognize four outstanding

Rotarylet academic achievers. Rtn Gayatree Goswamee introduced each Rotarylet:

Rotarylet **Donna Sarkar**, daughter of Rtn Dilip Sarkar and Anne Lipika Sarkar, who secured 8.8 CGPA and first position in Gauhati University's MBA entrance exam.

Rotarylet **Tasmim Yushra Ahmed**, daughter of Rtn Arman Ahmed and Anne Mahamuda Ahmed, who achieved 86% in the ICSE 2023 exams from Assam Valley School Balipara Tezpur. Rotarylet **Medha Mishra**, daughter of Rtn. Apurba Mishra and Anne Shomya Mishra, cleared class 12 from DPS Guwahati and secured admission in the University of Guelph, Canada, with a scholarship of CAD \$18,500. Rotarylet **Manyashree Parashar**, daughter of Rtn. Palavi Sharma Bordoloi and Mr. Biraj Sarma, completed her 12th grade with 95% from NPS International School Guwahati. She plans to pursue a BA with a major in psychology at the University of Guelph, Canada, with a scholarship of CAD \$19,500. All

four Rotarylets were felicitated with a Gamosa, certificate, and a pen.

Rtn. Manjusri Baruah introduced the guest speaker, Ms. Prerna Changkakati, Executive Director of ACRD. Rtn Priyama Goswami felicitated the guest speaker with a Gamosa. Ms. Changkakati delivered an informative presentation on Human Trafficking, discussing challenges faced during rescues and rehabilitation, in collaboration with police and NGOs. The Secretary Rtn. Priyama Goswami reported the statistics as follows: Rotarians - 28, Annes - 8, Guests - 2, Rotaractors - 3, and Rotarylets- 3. Total 44 attendees.

The Sunshine Collection for the day amounted to Rs 230/- Rtn. Nivedita Baruah offered the formal Vote of Thanks, followed by the rendition of the Jatiya Sangeet.

The meeting concluded with the President adjourning proceedings at 8:40 PM.

Fellowship was offered by Rtn. Apurba Mishra and Rtn Ranjan Bhuyan





My SPACE

BAN ON PACKAGED WATER BOTTLES

Rtn. Barun Barpujari

The noble objective behind the recent announcement on ban on packaged water bottles of 500ml is reducing pollution. Will it work? And, why blame these inanimate objects when these conveniences have little potential to create pollution if used responsibly? Points to ponder upon!

There is little focus on the actual perpetrators of pollution that we see around us – the citizens and their irresponsible behavior in public places with respect to disposal of these conveniences. Focused and sustained effort is called for changing this irresponsible behavior of littering, spitting and throwing garbage all over the place. One suggestion for corrective action would be to sensitize children / youth on the ills of littering, defacing public property through spitting etc. and get them to become *ambassadors of public cleanliness and hygiene*. Children / youth can be **highly impactful change agents**. Enlist the services of schools / colleges in this initiative to change habits / mental make-up of adults. Also reach out to authorities of Mosques, Temples, Namghars and Churches to participate in this crusade.

Another potent strategy would be to encourage “*segregating*

solid waste at source” and creating pressure on government (GMC) to transport waste to recycling facilities in segregated manner to unlock the inherent values in waste. Initially, institutions, large commercial establishments and residential societies need to be enrolled into this effort.

RCGS could, perhaps, play a leading role in this direction. This would complement its on-going effort, “Save Bharalu” abhiyaan. RCGS programmes associated with schools / colleges may include sensitization sessions with students / faculty members to convert them to become ambassadors of public cleanliness and hygiene. Another aspect to be addressed is “Segregation of solid waste at source” as the first and important step towards management of solid waste and its recycling for a sustainable future. Perhaps, *Earthful Foundation*, an NGO working in this space could be requested to join hands with RCGS in this endeavor.

Till we can present a cleaner picture, thankfully, Guwahati – the much publicized “Gateway to the North Eastern states” should continue only as a *pit stop* for tourists coming to this region. The lesser they see the filth we create and live in, the better.

INSPIRATION DERIVED FROM BOOKS

Rtn. Gayatree Goswamee

Many persons have been saved from suicide and mental breakdown by reading inspiring books. The books of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda have inspired thousands of people. A young working man could not find any meaning in life and so contemplated suicide while sitting on a bench at the Delhi Railway station. But suddenly he remembered that his sister was to get married shortly. So he decided to postpone his suicide mission till after the marriage of his sister. Next day, he went to a book shop to purchase a newspaper when he came across a book by Swami Vivekananda which contained many

inspiring thoughts. “This life is short, the vanities of the world are transient. They alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive”.

The young man was so inspired that he made up his mind to live for others. As a Rotarian we can purchase small books with positive thoughts and gift them to our friends. Swami Vivekananda advised devotees to open their eyes, look around and serve humanity specially the needy and get peace of mind. Only unselfish acts can transform the Society.