

**Button** 

Vol 3 Issue 14 Feb 1'2024

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# Rtn. Amarjit Singh Virk President (For Rotary Year 2023-2024)

World over it is considered as a Taboo and no one is ready to talk about problems of mental health. the club activities

#### The President Writes

# We must take up widely neglected but most important issue

Rotary International President Gordon R McInally and the First Lady of Rotary Heather visited Chandigarh on 17th & 18th of January, 2024. It was once in life time opportunity for any Rotarian to meet Rotary International especially the new Rotarians. This was first such occasion since Rotary Club of Mohali Midtown was Chartered in RY 2021-22. It was a wonderful experience to meet pleasing Rotary International President Rtn. Gordon R McInally and his equally charming wife Ann Heather. In his spell bound address RIP Rtn. Gordon appealed the Rotarians to take up the widely neglected but most important issue of mental health. World over it is considered as a Taboo and no one is ready to talk about problems of mental health. It is only when Rotarians address the issue of mental health hope can be created in the world. RIP Rtn. Gordon also addressed the issue of universal peace and role of Rotarians in promoting peace globally in this era of turbulence may be in part of globe. RIP also motivated the Rotarians to imbibe spirit of unconditional love and empathy. Rotary represents the continuity despite change of leadership every year. This is the magnificent beauty of the global community imbibing cardinal principle 'Service above self'.

# 57<sup>th</sup> Meeting Saugat!

The 57th meeting of Rotary Club of Mohali Midtown was held on Monday 22<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 at Zila Parishad Office, Jujhar Nagar; SAS Nagar.

Master of Ceremony PP Rtn. Sukhpreet Singh Giani installed the dignitaries on the dais, that included Club President Amarjit Singh Virk, Club Secretary Manjit Kaur, Director Community Service PP Rtn. Harjit Singh, Chief Guest Smt. Aashika Jain IAS, Deputy Commissioner and District Governor Nominee Rtn. Ravi Parkash.



Sergeant at Arms PP Rtn. Harcharan Singh Marwah collared the President. The President called the meeting to order. PP Rtn. Sukhpreet Singh Giani initiated the National Anthem which was sung by all, recited the 4 way Test. Charter President Rtn. Gurcharan Singh and IPP Rtn. Ravijeet Singh welcomed the Chief Guest and DGN respectively with a potted plant each.

Rtn. Harjit Singh in his welcome address apprised those present the importance of the project Saugat, where 20 Aganwadis were being provided essential items. President Amarjit Singh recalled the great work being done by

the Aganwadis in Punjab and how the need of the project was identified.



DGN Rtn. Ravi Parkash in his address recalled that Rotary Club of Mohali Midtown has been in forefront in carrying out meaningful projects and the project Saugat was the one feather in the cap of the club.

Chief Guest Shrimati Aashika Jain recollected that the members of the club have been available to the district administration whenever required. She made a special mention of PP Rtn. Harjeet Singh, as under his leadership Rotarians had worked relentlessly during the covid times. The work carried out by the club during the flood in August 2023 also was mentioned by her, as an act of service above self.

The club handed over the goods for the Anganwadis.

A token of appreciation was presented to the Chief Guest and the Guest of Honour by club president and club secretary. Also the visiting Past District Governors and Rotarians from the clubs nearby were duly acknowledged.

PP Rtn. Gurcharan Singh Arora proposed a vote of thanks.

# Glimpses of "Saugat"











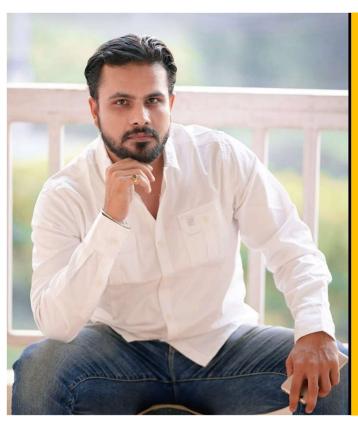












# Beyond the Like Button: – Tackling Social Media Rudeness and Negativity

By Rtn.Gurjot Singh Kaler

Rtn. Gurjot Singh Kaler is an honorary member of the club and is a senior officer with Punjab Police.

He is also the author of books 'New India - The Reality Reloaded';and 'Grits, Guts, Glory'

The internet and social media have revolutionized human lives like never before. People can now communicate easily with each other even if they are sitting away miles apart in distance, space or time. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc., have become a household name as people have adapted themselves to their unique digital identities and feel proud of being a part of the ever-growing online community. No doubt, the social media has grown by leaps and bounds as people engage with each other on a 24×7 basis. Even when the normal world sleeps, people are always active on social media as they are hooked on to it, thereby posting latest tweets, sharing their recent pictures and commenting on everyday news and incidents.

Social media has invaded people's lives with a vengeance and it appears nobody wants to miss even a single notification on their Instagram or Facebook. The addiction to social media has

While social media has undeniably brought people

closer in the digital realm, it has also unveiled a darker side marked by increased rudeness and judgmental behavior,"

become a reality of today's times as even small children can be seen discussing their profile pictures in school's classrooms. While attending any family gettogethers, or dinners, it is a casual occurrence now-a-days that people are not even talking to each other as they used to do in earlier times.

Rather, everyone seems to be lost in the screens of their mobile phones as they are busy watching the newsfeed of their social media apps and engaging in conversations with netizens, many of whom are not even personally known to them in real life.

In the age of digital connectivity, social media has woven a vast tapestry of relationships, transcending geographical boundaries and bringing people together in ways unimaginable just a few decades ago. Yet, within the vibrant threads of this interconnected web, a disconcerting pattern emerges – a surge in rudeness and judgmental behavior that seems to tarnish the very fabric of online interaction.

As we scroll through feeds, our prevalence of cynical comments has become stark a reality, prompting a reflection on why social media. platform designed for connection. inadvertently become a breeding ground for negativity. Exploring this paradox unveils only not the challenges but also potential the



solutions to reclaim a space that was meant to foster understanding and camaraderie.

One worrying aspect which has come to the fore in recent times is also the fact that social media is actually not a sociable place anymore. If you have been using social media for a long time, you probably know that people do not come across as very kind, decent or respectful to each other on social media. All etiquettes, mannerisms, codes of moral and social conduct are thrown to the wind on social media as people indulge in scurrilous languages, vituperative comments and diatribe references in commenting, shaming and degrading others on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc. Online opinions have the capacity to trigger emotional outbursts if they run counter to our core beliefs, attitudes and worldviews.

People can be seen posting nasty comments and body-shaming others on social media just to defame and hurt those who do not agree to their point of view on any topic or issue of interest. Abusive and curse words are a routine matter and the Twitter war of words are an everyday occurrence which polarizes people. In fact, when vicious kind of hate campaigns get unleashed against some targeted individuals on social media, then some sensitive people get forced to even close their social media accounts temporarily or permanently to escape the dirty flow of abuse, defamation and malicious trolling. Social media has become unsatisfying and unhealthy due to the overly aggressive and insulting behavior of users as Twitter feuds and Facebook rants have become a daily norm.

What is the reason behind so much hate, scornful and filthy language that is usually used in social media discussions or debates? If we try to explore it in detail, we will agree to conclude that most of the people who use such kind of rotten language for others on social media are doing it through the cloak of secrecy and anonymity by making fake accounts on social media. People find it easy to vent out their frustration and stress on others through social media rather than facing them in real life. Mischievous elements in our society seem to derive a sarcastic pleasure by remaining anonymous on social media and targeting the reputed persons in an abusive manner. Trolling has become a hobby for certain individuals as they stand nothing to lose by remaining anonymous on social media through fake user profiles. People do tend to act differently online than they do in person. Character assassinations of people, especially the girls are a routine affair on social media as the anonymous users post rude, objectionable and lewd comments on their profiles to disrepute them. Now, the concept of deep fake videos has emerged which has further deteriorated the content on social media. Judgmental behavior and criticism are a part of human psychology and societal dynamics and these have existed even before the advent of social media. However, people used to feel inhibited in expressing their raw and unbridled anger or unjustifiable opinions to others in real face-to-face interactions. The invention of social media has given them the opportunity to speak or write anything deplorable about anyone without bothering about the accountability of their misdeeds.

Essentially, when people interact online, they have lesser inhibitions and due to the anonymity of internet, they can escape the responsibility of owning up to the nasty things they said or expressed.

As a result, sometimes, people begin to behave meaner and ruder and this results in creation of hostile online environments where feelings of revenge sets in. It is called toxic online disinhibition effect which can be defined as the loosening of social restrictions and inhibitions that are normally present in face-to-face, eye contact-based interactions in real life. The anonymity provided by social media allows individuals to express opinions without the fear of immediate consequences. This often leads to a disinhibition effect, where people feel liberated to make rude and judgmental comments they might not make in face-to-face interactions. Cyberbullying has become a major phenomenon as people feel emboldened by the anonymity and invisibility of the internet which makes them escape the accountability of their actions and rudeness on social media. Continuous exposure to other people's lives on social media with a regular flux of information also leads to undesirable comparisons and unfair judgments. The culture of comparison is fostered by social media, where people showcase curated versions of their lives. This creates feelings of inadequacy and fuel judgment as individuals measure themselves against unrealistic standards.

The social media algorithms contribute to the formation of echo chambers, reinforcing preexisting beliefs and isolating individuals from diverse perspectives. This fuels judgmental attitudes as people become less tolerant of differing opinions. Also, the instant nature of social media encourages impulsive reactions. People hastily post judgmental comments without fully considering the consequences, contributing to a culture of rudeness.

What are the ways to avoid the negativity and dark cynicism of social media?

- 1) It is best to not indulge in any kind of communication with the rude, aggressive and judgmental people on social media. There is no need to reciprocate and reply to the abusers as it would give them the cheap thrill of instigating you and further provide them the required fodder for eliciting a response/reaction from your side. Do not tackle the negativity of trollers with the negativity of your own. Differentiate between illogical haters and genuine critics. Engage in constructive dialogue with people who have real accounts on social media and learn to ignore the fake trollers who hide their identities through fake profiles and feel invincible behind the anonymity of their computer screens.
- Simply, block the offenders and abusers without engaging in any sort of verbal duel of words or actions. You cannot win the negative people by convincing them through your rational and logical arguments. It will be a waste of precious time to allow yourself to be trapped into their biased cycle of accusations and play their blame game. Be objective in your replies and do not let yourself be emotionally drained by the rudeness. Do not stoop to their low level; just block them straightaway as you do not owe them any explanation or justification for your actions. It is prudent to subscribe to the option of comment approval feature on your social media platforms or disable potentially offensive comments. Learn to prioritize your mental health, peace of mind and personal happiness over proving yourself right to strangers and trollers on social media. Remember, most of the trollers have a weak personality as they suffer from personal insecurities and they don't have the guts and character to say the nasty things on your face in real life. Show mercy on the trollers, forgive them for their lack of confidence in real life and block them into oblivion. Their existence does not matter as they are just parasites of the darkness of social media.
- 3) Practice digital detoxification if the sarcasm and negativity of social media becomes too much to handle. Simply, press the pause button and deactivate your social medias for a few weeks or month and take a digital break from the internet. Get back into the real life, take a walk in the park, go to the mountains for a leisurely holiday and switch off the intimidating screens of your mobile phones.
- 4) If you feel something is bothering you deeply, it is really advisable to share your anxiety or concerns with your family and friends. Consulting the psychologists can be a good healing option as mental health should be protected and nourished at any cost. If needed, do not hesitate to approach the police authorities or court of law when somebody tries to blackmail you into extortion or character assassination on social media. Always take a screenshot of the nasty and abusive comments which can be helpful for the police in tracking down the miscreants. Also, equally good would be to report the profiles of abusers to the social media platforms for disabling of their accounts.
- 5) If you personally know the online abuser in real life, respond to such users on social media with a cool head and a dignified manner. The social media communication is designed in non-verbal and written manner which can sometimes exacerbate the way we misunderstand what is intended to be conveyed by the other person. When we are upset or angry, our cognitive processes and problem-solving abilities do not work to the best of their capacities. So, best way is to think and reflect upon what we are going to respond. Draft your reply and do not end it immediately. Wait for atleast half-an-hour to recollect your thoughts and remember you cannot fight fire with fire.

- Do not spew venom to genuine criticism but keep an open mind by asking yourself if you are able to add something of good value to the discussion. Practice empathy and invest your energy in sharing your point of view from the angle the critic can understand or appreciate. If any online communication with your friend or someone you know personally disintegrates into chaos and mud-slinging battle of emotions, simply excuse yourself out of it and leave the discussion gracefully. Discuss the matter offline or face-to-face and do not let the non-verbal mode of social media communication spoil your real-world relations with each other. Lack of eye contact in online debates makes people more comfortable in being rude and aggressive to others.
- It is also advisable to set boundaries and reduce the time spent on social media to mitigate exposure to negativity and unnecessary judgements. It is further suggested to being mindful of engaging only in constructive conversations and avoiding unnecessary arguments. Practice empathy, compassion and kindness. Do not become a troll or hater yourself while trying to deal with one.

A collective effort is needed on the part of society to foster a more positive online environment. The social media has the great potential to be a platform for constructive dialogue and connection when used responsibly. In conclusion, while social media has undeniably brought people closer in the digital realm, it has also unveiled a darker side marked by increased rudeness and judgmental behavior. The anonymity, echo chambers, and instant gratification culture have contributed to a toxic online environment.

However, as users of these platforms, we hold the power to shape the narrative. By being mindful of our own online conduct, fostering empathy, and promoting constructive conversations, we can work towards a more positive and inclusive digital space.

In the face of cynicism, let us choose kindness. In the midst of judgment, let us choose understanding. As we navigate the complexities of the online world, let our interactions be guided by respect, empathy, and a collective commitment to making social media a place where meaningful connections thrive. Together, we can rewrite the narrative and create a virtual landscape that reflects the best of humanity.

#### Past President writes

Know The Mother Earth 10

Earth Mother & Indigenous People of
India

#### By PP Rtn. Harcharan Singh Marwah

This is eleventh part of series being written by Rtn. Marwah

Indian mystic approach to the Earth as viewed by B.V.

Venkatakrishna that the 'Earth' is the name given to the part of the universe where we, the human beings habitate mainly. The Earth is indicative of all the nature connected with it in the form of air, water, space, vegetation and forests, the animals and birds and the like along with the human race. The earth has been the topic of deliberations of thinkers of all times, be he a philosopher, theist, poet, scientist, politician or a mystic. The view of the Indian mystics regarding the earth is that she is a Mother Goddess and Divinity, immediately connected with the constitution of all life and especially the human body. The earth is an object of meditation to achieve special supernatural powers as well as the moksha (the summum bonum according to Indian mystic tradition).

"Why do we refer to India as our Motherland\_Bharat Mata? Connecting this to Mother Earth - the nurturing energy - a vital energy for the overall wellbeing and emotional balance of those who are her children.

A lion's share of the primeval people of India consider that their ancestors have appeared on earth as and when the Earth Mother gave birth to them; then she took care of them, fed them, protected them, developed them and finally called them back through the process of death. The Juangs of Orissa believe that the first Juang emerged out of the Earth Mother and all of their posterity are her children. They have a filial relationship with the earth. To the Muria Gonds of

Bastar, the human population is one of the crops of God raised by Earth Mother. These crops are in favour of the clan. As the crops depend on the soil, all the beings in the world rely on Earth Mother. Her presence is all pervading and all encompassing. She is the common mother to all. The Munda of Jharkhand revere the Earth as the goddess who gives birth to them; at the point of death she will take them back into her lap, In the Near Eastern tribal tradition the first human being is called Adam, meaning made out of earth or clay.

Sita means the furrow, daughter of the earth. As Vannucci points out that Sita the generous goes unscathed through the ordeal of fire and at the end she returns to Mother Earth, cleansed by water and purified by fire that originated from earth, humans have to return to earth. You are dust and to dust you shall return.

In fact the whole of a life cycle-birth, growth, occupation, marriage, death all are related to earth. The dead are commemorated by erecting memorial stones on the ground. The earth remains as a reminder to the tribals of their ancestors and of themselves. Since the tribal life revolves around the Earth Mother, they treat her as their own preserver, protector, progenitor and above all the most revered and respected Mother.

Why do we refer to India as our Motherland\_Bharat Mata? Connecting this to Mother Earth - the nurturing energy - a vital energy for the overall well-being and emotional balance of those who are her children.



Motherland refers to a *mother country*, i.e. the place in which somebody grew up or had lived for a long enough period that somebody has formed his or her own cultural identity, the place that one's ancestors lived for generations, or the place that somebody regards as home, or a Metropole in contrast to its colonies.

Fatherland is the nation of one's "fathers", "forefathers" or ancestors. The word can also mean the country of nationality, the country in which somebody grew up, the country that somebody's ancestors lived in for generations, or the country that somebody regards as home, depending on how the individual uses it. German, Dutch, Irish, Austrians, Greeks, Iranians, Arabs, East European Countries use Fatherland in reference to their countries.

People often refer to Mother Russia as a personification of the Russian nation. Within the British Empire, many natives in the colonies came to think of Britain as the mother country of one, large nation. India is often personified as Bharat Mata (Mother India). The French commonly refer to France as "la mère patrie"; Hispanic Americans and 19th century-upper-class Filipinos, commonly referred to Spain as "la Madre Patria". Romans and the subjects of Rome saw Italy as the motherland (patria or terrarum parens) of the Roman Empire, in contrast to Roman provinces.

The concept of Bharat Mata as the personification of the Indian subcontinent came into existence starting in the late 19th century, especially after the Indian Rebellion of 1857 against the British. Bharat Mata as a concept was first perceived to be an image of the land of India as depicted by Bankimchandra Chatterjee in his book Anand Math in 1882. Sister Nivedita remains one of the most influential female figures of India. Her book Kali, the Mother influenced Abanindranath Tagore who painted Bharat Mata. Abanindranath Tagore portrayed Bhārat Mātā as a four-armed Hindu goddess wearing saffroncolored robes, holding the manuscripts, sheaves of rice, a mala, and a white cloth. The image of Bharatmata was an icon to create nationalist feeling in Indians during the freedom struggle. Sister Nivedita, an admirer of the painting, opined that the picture was refined and imaginative, with Bharatmata standing on green earth and blue sky behind her; feet with four lotuses, four arms meaning divine power; white halo and sincere eyes; and gifts Shiksha-Diksha-Anna-Bastra of the motherland to her children. Mother Nature (sometimes known as Mother Earth or the Earth Mother) is a Greco-Roman personification of nature that focuses on the life-giving and nurturing aspects of nature by embodying it, in the form of the mother. GAIA as she is referred to belief that Gaia is the Earth to the belief that she is the spiritual embodiment of the earth or the goddess of the Earth. In Inca mythology, Pachamama is a fertility goddess who presides over planting and harvesting. Pachamama is usually translated as "Mother Earth" but a more literal translation would be "Mother Universe" (in Aymara and Quechua mama = mother / pacha = world, space-time or the universe). Bhūmi, Bhudevi, Bhūmi Devi is the goddess representing Mother Earth. In later scripts like Puranas, she is considered to be an avatar of Mahalakshmi.

She is known by various names such as Bhuma-Devi, Bhuvati, Bhuvaani, Bhuvaneshwari, Avni, Prithvi, Varahi, Dharti, Dharti, Dharani, Vasudha, Vasundhara, Vaishnavi, Kashyapi, Urvi, Ira, Mahi, Ela, Vasumati, Dhanshika, Hema and Hiranmaya. Indian Independence activist Subramania Bharati saw Bharat Mata as the land of Ganga. He identified Bharat Mata as Parashakti. He also says that he has got the Darsana of Bharat Mata during his visit with his guru Sister Nivedita. Nivedita was a prolific writer and extensively toured India to deliver lectures, especially on India's culture and religion. She appealed to the Indian youth to work selflessly for the cause of the motherland along the ideals of Swami Vivekananda. Initially, Nivedita, like contemporary intellectuals from Europe, was optimistic about British rule in India and believed that it was possible for India and England to love each other. However, in the course of her stay, she came to witness the brutal side of the British rule, the repression and oppression and the division between the ruling elite and the ruled; she concluded that it was necessary for India to gain independence to prosper. Therefore, she devoted herself wholeheartedly to the cause of opposing the British rule. In February 1902, Mahatma Gandhi, or Mr.M.K.Gandhi as he was known then, visited Nivedita in Calcutta. The Bharat Mata temple is located in the Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth campus in Varanasi. The temple houses a marble idol of Bharat Mata along with a marble relief map of India.

#### **Intercity with RI President**

Rotary International President, Gordon McInally, along with his gracious spouse Heather, was in District 3080 with a two-day visit. Under the leadership of DG Arun Mongia and gracious A'nn Charu left no stone unturned to make their stay memorable.



January 18<sup>th</sup> On Intercity Meeting and Recognition was held at Judicial Academy, Sector 43 Chandigarh. Rotary Chandigarh's President, Anil Chadha, extended a warm welcome to all guests, setting a tone of hospitality and friendship. District Governor Arun Mongia presented report

highlighting the year's achievements. RI President McInally shared his experiences and observations from his visit, providing valuable insights and commendations for the district's efforts. Past Rotary International President Raja Saboo took the opportunity to felicitate the Arch Klumph Society (AKS) members, honouring their significant contributions to The Rotary Foundation.

For the members of the club, this was the first such experience.



Rotary International President-elect Stephanie Urchick announced that the 2024-25 presidential theme is *The Magic of Rotary* and called on members to recognize and amplify the organization's power to save lives.



"Don't misunderstand me

– we are not going to end
polio or bring peace to the
world by waving a wand
and saying some funny
words," Urchick told
incoming district
governors at the Rotary
International Assembly on
8 January. "It's up to you.
You create the magic with

every project completed, every dollar donated, and every new member."

Urchick, a member of the Rotary Club of McMurray, Pennsylvania, USA, said she saw the magic of Rotary on display when she was helping install water filters in the Dominican Republic. Two boys were watching as dirty water entered the filter, then ran out clean at the other end.

"One of the boys grabbed my sleeve and said, 'Show me the magic again," she said. "Obviously, the water filter wasn't magic. We worked hard to transport those filters, install them, and work with community leaders in the area to maintain them. But those boys knew that easy access to clean water would change their lives. Knowing that I played a small part in that certainly changed my life."

#### **Know Rotary Even Better**

#### **International Responsibilities of a Rotarian**

As an international organization, Rotary offers each member unique opportunities and responsibilities. Although each Rotarian has first responsibility to uphold the obligations of citizenship of his or her own country, membership in Rotary enables Rotarians to take a somewhat different view of international affairs. In the early 1950s a Rotary philosophy was adopted to describe how a Rotarian may think on a global basis. Here is what it said: "A worldminded Rotarian: looks beyond national patriotism and considers himself as sharing responsibility for the advancement of international understanding, goodwill and peace; resists any tendency to act in terms of national or racial superiority; seeks and develops common grounds for agreement with peoples of other lands; defends the rule of law and order to preserve the liberty of the individual so that he may enjoy freedom of thought, speech and assembly, and freedom from persecution, aggression, want and fear; supports action directed toward improving standards of living for all peoples, realizing that poverty anywhere endangers prosperity everywhere; upholds the principles of justice for mankind; strives always to promote peace between nations and prepares to make personal sacrifices for that ideal; urges and practices a spirit of understanding of every other man's beliefs as a step toward international goodwill, recognizing that there are certain basic moral and spiritual standards which will ensure a richer, fuller life."

#### **Did You Know?**

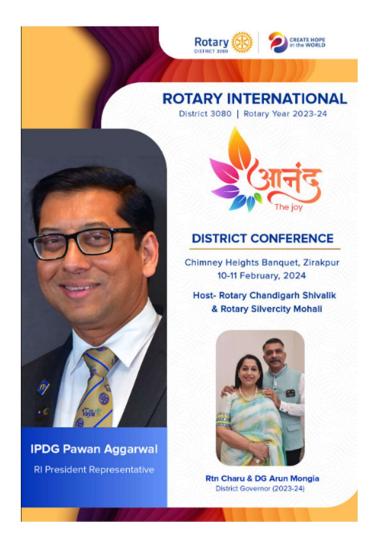
- Rotary first presented "Significant Achievement Awards" in 1969 to clubs with outstanding International or Community Service projects.
- Rotary's first Interact club was organized in Melbourne, Florida, in 1962 to become the pioneer for about 6,000 Interact clubs in 96 countries. •
- Rotary's first convention held in the Southern Hemisphere was in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1948.
- Rotary was assigned **the copyright on "The 4-Way Test" in 1954** when its author, Herbert Taylor, became president of Rotary International.
- Rotary's first Community Service project took place in 1907 when Chicago Rotarians led a campaign to install a public "comfort station" in the city hall.
- 1964-65 was the first year The Rotary Foundation received total contributions of a million dollars in a single year Today more than US\$65 million is given annually Contributions since 1917 total more than US\$950 million.

## In Service of the Community



Financial Assistance of Rs 25000/- provided to Sh. Balwinder Singh under RCMMFAC

#### Forth Coming Events



• Handing over of 20 water filters -Date, time and venue will be shared on club's what's app group

# Congratulations Birthday Wishes

Rtn. Bhupinder Singh Feb 19

# Marriage Anniversary Wishes

Rtn. Aameep Singh & Ann Prateeksha Sinha Feb 2

Rtn. Saru Kaushík Feb 17

Rtn. Kulwant Singh & Ann Jagiit Kaur Feb 2

Rtn. Kuldíp síngh Dhody & Ann Gurdeep Kaur Dhody Feb 4

#### PLEASE NOTE

This newsletter is not to be used commercially or for any non-Rotary solicitation. This is for each member's private use, which intent to inform the events happening in the club.