



ROTARY CLUB
OF MUMBAI

Neo Vista

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Through the Lens of Neokars

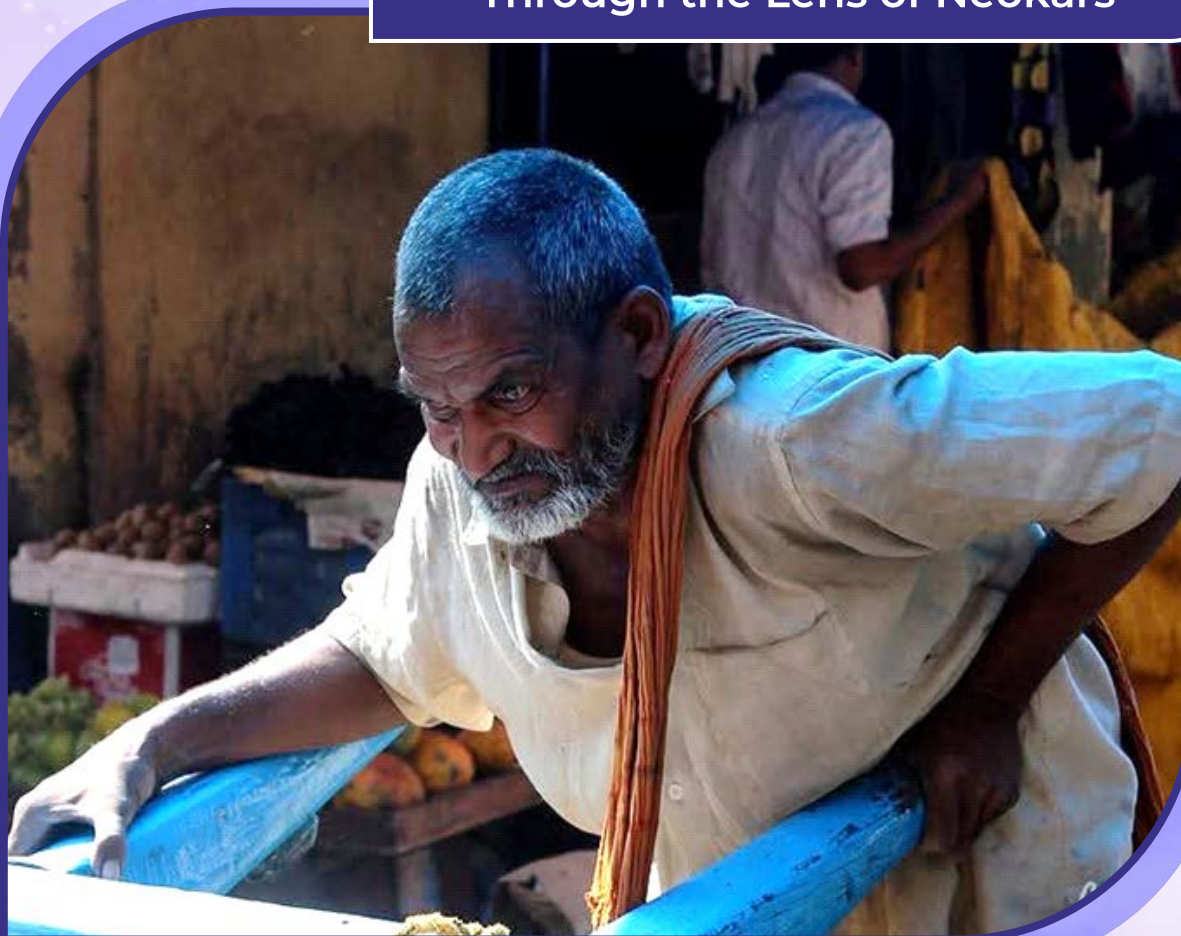
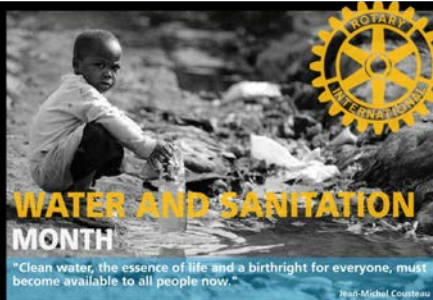


Photo by : Sharika Kaul

ROTARY OBSERVES
MARCH AS
**WATER AND
SANITATION MONTH**

MARCH IS



**WATER AND SANITATION
MONTH**

"Clean water, the essence of life and a birthright for everyone, must become available to all people now."
—Paul-Henri Courteau



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FROM THE VIBRANT NEO PRESIDENT



Sridhar Ramasubramanian

Dear Neo-kars,

February marks “Rotary Peace Building and Conflict Prevention Month”, a time for Rotary members worldwide to come together in celebration of their commitment to building peace and mitigating conflicts. With Rotary’s Birthday falling on February 23, coinciding with World Understanding and Peace Day, this month holds special significance for the Rotary community.

Here is how it all began...On 23 February 1905, four visionary men—Paul P. Harris, Gustavus Loehr, Silvester Schiele, and Hiram E. Shorey—gathered in Loehr’s office for what would become the first Rotary club meeting. This historic moment sparked the beginning of an organization dedicated to fostering fellowship, integrity, and service. From that small meeting, Rotary has grown into a global movement, bringing together individuals across borders to create lasting change and promote peace. What started with a few like-minded individuals now spans over 200 countries, with millions of members working together to serve humanity.

We, Rotary Club of Mumbai Neo, continued our support and service to the various needs of the society across various avenues. The support, to Specially abled in the form participation in wheel chair basketball tournament, Environment through Bottles to benches, blue bag project for dry wastes, Meals for the poor and the needy through Annapoorna meals collectively demonstrated our focus and ability in those areas.

The highlight of the month was our whole hearted support to “Free Pediatric Heart Surgery” led by Rotary Club of Bombay Airport. The project titled “Gift of Life” has successfully completed free pediatric heart surgery and touched 604 lives with a total donation of INR 9.74 crore. RCMN supported this cause through participation in the Juhu HRX Half Marathon run and also through donations by generous donors of the Club. In the celebration of 5th year completion, I witnessed the happiness in face of the family, whose children got benefitted from this and have no words to express my feeling and satisfaction on the impact of this project. This is an ongoing project and we must collectively look at encouraging support to this cause in some form or other.

Many of our members participated in the epic Discon 25 at Jio Gardens, which clearly demonstrated our support to District. We could also make some new friends and connect with them in future for the common goal achievements.

Our drive for membership continued with one new member joining us in the month of February.

We have 4 months to end this Rotary year under my leadership and am surely looking for a great bonding and fellowship and prepare ourself well for the next year 2025-26.

Sridhar Ramasubramanian

President, Rotary Club of Mumbai Neo 2024-25

CLUB MEETING ON FEBRUARY 27

By Rakesh Kumar

A meeting of RCMN took place at The Club on the evening of February 27. The highlight of the meeting was an engaging and interactive presentation by Neokar Alok Ranjan on artificial intelligence. His insights provided greater clarity on the potential applications and risks of AI, as well as its possible trajectory in the future. The meeting also saw the induction of Dr. Roshmi Roy as a new member, during which

she took the Rotary oath. Guest speaker Aditi Chandel shared her efforts in environmental conservation through the upcycling of multi-layer plastics. A cake was cut to celebrate the birthday of Neokar Narinder Madan. As always, the evening was filled with camaraderie, with dinner serving as the perfect setting for lively conversations and fellowship. Let the pictures tell the rest of the story.



Project	Date	Type	Avenue	No of Beneficiary	No of Volunteers	Man Hours	Cost	Sponsor	Comments
1	01-02-25	Co hoofs Wthel Chair Basket Ball tournament held at Ghatkopar West, in collaboration with Disability district team and other Clubs	Non-Medical	30	5	16	750	ReMN	Kala, Rita, Meera, Daksha, Arun
2	02-02-25	Donated to Ngo through purchase of materials made by Tribals through "Seva Charitable Trust Foundation at Sanjay Gandhi National Park	Non - Medical	50	5	10	12000	Donation	RCMN Members
3	05-02-25	"Annapoorna Meals"- Distributed 100 meals to the poor and the needy @ Saki Naka. Sponsored by Rtn Sridhar Rajagopalan and coordinated by Rtn Hemang	Non - Medical	100	2	6	12,000	Donation	Sridhar Rajagopalan, Nendini Sridhar
4	06-02-25	Bottles to Benches - Awareness project at Pinnacle High International School, Malad. Rtn Natasha executed this project	Non-Medical	100	2	12	1,000	Donation	Rtn Natasha
5	07-02-25	"Bottles to Benches"" awareness project conducted @ Maharashtra English Vidyalaya School. Rtn Natasha drove the project	Non-Medical	250	2	6	1,000	Donation	Rtn Natasha
6	08-02-25	"Blue Bag Drive" - Rtn Natasha drove this awareness project and implementation at Vasant Galaxy, Goregaon West	Non-Medical	400	5	7	1,000	Donation	Rtn Natasha
7	09-02-25	Support to HRX Juhu Marathon towards the cause of Pacditric Heart Surgery from the surplus of the Marathon run	Medical	1	17	50	20400	Donation	Rtn Sridhar
8	10-02-25	Slow Fashion workshop by Natasha conducted @ Billabong high school, Goregaon, highlighting perils of textile waste and provoking them to the slow motion movement	Non-Medical	80	2	8	1,000	Donation	Rtn Natasha
9	24-02-25	Donation by Neokars towards the RC Bombay Airport global grant project for conducting 150-160 Paediatric Surgery. Total value USD 290k	Medical	1	6	12	92,046	Donation	Sridhar, Nandini, Arun, Anand, Meera, Datta
				1,012	46	127	1,47,946		

MESSAGE FROM ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT



Stephanie A. Urchick

President, 2024-25
Rotary International

Dear Neo-kars,

This month, as we come together for the International Assembly and the Presidential Peace Conference, we celebrate *The Magic of Rotary* — a unique blend of global connection, vision, and action that empowers us to create lasting change.

One of the most inspiring examples is our Rotary Peace Fellowship program, a cornerstone of Rotary's mission to build a more peaceful and just world.

For more than 23 years, Rotary Peace Fellowships have been transforming communities. Our Rotary Peace Centers, hosted at leading universities around the globe, have educated over 1,800 fellows who now work in more than 140 countries. These centers cultivate expertise in fields like conflict resolution, sustainable development, and peacebuilding, preparing fellows to tackle some of the world's most pressing challenges. This program exemplifies how Rotary turns vision into action, creating a ripple effect of hope and change.

This month during the Presidential Peace Conference, we celebrate a significant milestone with the opening of our newest peace center in Istanbul. This center will focus on training leaders to address peacebuilding challenges in the Middle East and North Africa, further extending Rotary's impact. Peace fellows are dedicated champions of transformation, addressing critical issues such as refugee resettlement, youth and women's empowerment, and reconciliation in conflict zones. Many founded vital organizations or hold leadership roles in governments, nongovernmental organizations, and international institutions like the United Nations and World Bank.

One inspiring story is that of Ntang Julius Meleng, a 2024 Rotary Peace Fellow at Makerere University in Uganda. Through his Social Change Initiative, Julius has worked to empower young people in Cameroon to take active roles in peacebuilding and leadership. His project provided training in conflict prevention, civic engagement, and leadership to youths and community officials in areas affected by conflict, equipping people to drive sustainable peace efforts.

Julius harnessed Rotary's global network to overcome obstacles, including limited funding and security risks, and make a meaningful impact. The Rotary Peace Fellowship gave Julius the tools and support to turn his vision into reality. His work embodies *The Magic of Rotary* — the transformative power of connecting people, sharing resources, and uniting for a common purpose.

As we reflect on the achievements of our peace fellows and celebrate Rotary's enduring commitment to peace, let us also recognize the role that everyone in our network of 1.2 million members plays in creating magic through service.

Together, we can amplify our impact, inspire new generations of leaders, and build a brighter, more peaceful future.

Stephanie A. Urchick

RI President 2024-25, February 2025

VERBALIZATION VS. VISUALIZATION: BRIDGING THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION



Rakesh Kumar

Neo Vista serves as a conduit for communication among our members – a pathway to understand one another and grow closer as a family. Traditionally, we have featured articles that articulate our members' thoughts, emotions, and experiences through words.

Quite accidentally, we discovered that many of our members are equally adept at expressing themselves visually. Last month, we showcased a collection of beautiful paintings created by our members. This month, we present a series of exquisite photographs captured by our members across various genres. We believe that exploring these photographs will offer deeper insights into the diverse facets of our members' personalities. In the realm of communication and creative thinking, the

interplay between verbalization and visualization forms a spectrum of expression and understanding. Both serve as powerful tools for articulating ideas, yet they function in distinct ways that can complement each other for deeper insight.

Verbalization is the process of translating thoughts into words. It leverages the precision and structure of language to convey complex emotions,

Quite accidentally, we discovered that many of our members are equally adept at expressing themselves visually. Last month we showcased a collection of beautiful paintings created by our members. This month, we present a series of exquisite photographs captured by our members across various genres.

experiences, and concepts. This method is effective in contexts that demand clarity and explicit detail, such as academic writing, debates, or everyday conversations. When we verbalize our ideas, we build a shared vocabulary that allows for nuanced discussions and collective understanding. However, language can sometimes constrain the full range of our inner experi-

ences, leaving certain abstract or complex thoughts just out of reach.

In contrast, visualization transforms our internal dialogue into vivid images. It bypasses the limitations of linear language by engaging the brain's visual centers, creating mental pictures that often capture the essence of an idea more holistically. This process is particularly effective for enhancing memory, sparking creativity, and clarifying complex problems. When we visualize, we not only see our goals and ideas but also gain insights that would have remained hidden in mere words.

While verbalization converts our abstract thoughts into language, visualization transforms them into images. By integrating these methods, we unlock the full potential of the human mind, effectively bridging the gap between thought and expression.

There are several ways to harness visualization effectively. Painting and photography are two of the several forms that enable us to share our thoughts visually. Do enjoy the flavour of photos presented in this issue of Neo Vista, and through them get an insight into the minds of your fellow Neokars.

Rakesh Kumar
Editor, Neo Vista

PAUL HARRIS – THE FATHER OF ROTARY



Rotary was founded on February 23, 1905, when Paul Harris and three business associates—Gustave Loehr, Silvester Schiele, and Hiram Shorey—held the first Rotary Club meeting in Chicago, Illinois. A

visionary attorney and philanthropist, Harris (1868–1947) built Rotary on civic responsibility, ethical conduct, and social unity, laying the foundation for what is now Rotary International.

Originally a networking group for business professionals, Rotary soon embraced humanitarian service under Harris's leadership. His belief in "Service Above Self" inspired members to take on literacy programs, health initiatives,

disaster relief, and peace-building efforts—turning Rotary into a global force for good. The club's tradition of rotating meeting locations symbolized equality and mutual respect, reinforcing its inclusive philosophy.

As Rotary expanded across the United States and worldwide, it united professionals from diverse backgrounds, fostering international camaraderie. Harris's vision not only promoted professional growth but also championed humanitarian causes on a global scale.

Today, Rotary International remains a testament to Harris's enduring legacy. With hundreds of thousands of members worldwide, it continues to thrive on his principles of service, integrity, and fellowship, proving that one dedicated individual can make a profound impact.

DISTRICT DIARY

WOMEN'S WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

By Meera Ramachandran



A women's wheelchair basketball match was held on 1st February 2025. As our club was a co-host and Kala was a chief organizer as District Avenue Chair for Disability to Ability, I went to the event purely for moral support. Little did I realize how exhilarating the evening was going to be. About a 200 strong audience and many on the street outside, witnessed an extremely entertaining women's wheelchair basketball match between Mumbai Wheelers and Pune Ryders.

The speed, energy and dexterity of the players were simply awesome. Kartik Iyer's running commentary emotionally charged the audience as they watched in bated breath the ball's trajectory towards the suspended basket. The crowd in unison cried oooh in joy if the ball fell in, or aaaah in disappointment if it didn't. The

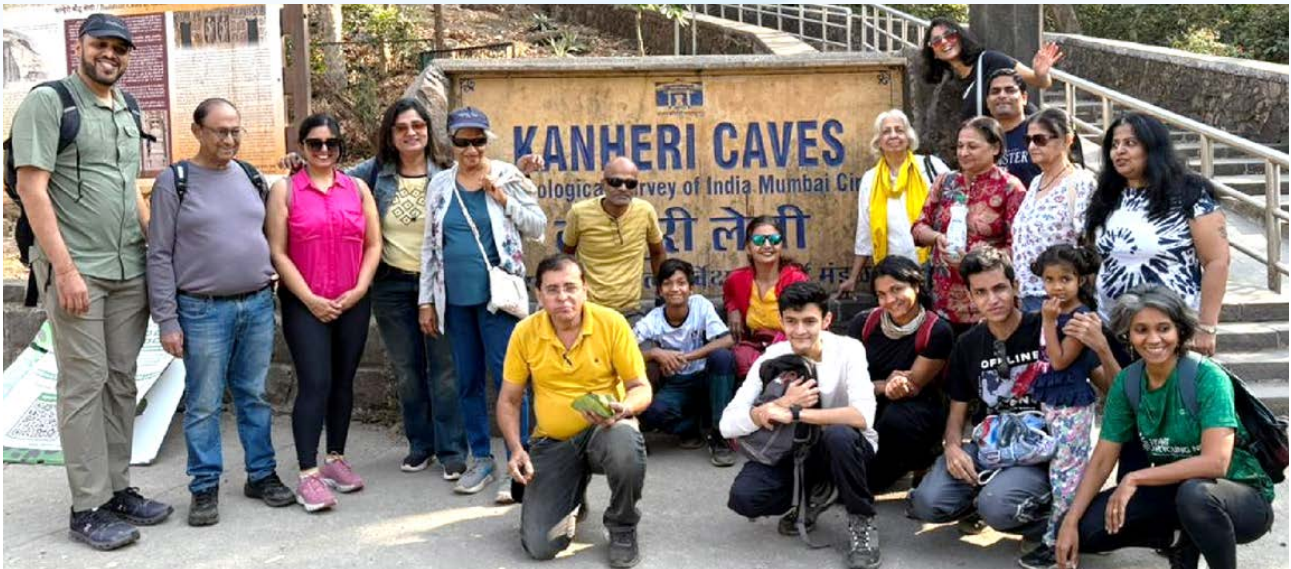


Mumbai team thrashed their opponents by 24:08; and I learnt that Mumbai's captain Geeta Chauhan was also captain of the All-India Women's Wheelchair Basketball team and has played in international matches.

Chief Guest DGN Rajan Dua announced a personal award of INR 11,000 for the best performer, which brought a lot of cheer. Many District dignitaries including Zonal Chair AV Suresh attended the event. Thirty special people from Gyanamganga were also present. Neo was represented by Kala, Rita, Arun, Daksha and myself. Kala was everywhere, in charge of just about everything. She received special appreciation along with a memento from Indian Wheelchair Basketball Association. Daksha arranged catering from her college canteen. The bonhomie and sporting spirit made it an evening to remember.

A TREK THROUGH NATURE AND HISTORY: NATIONAL PARK AND KANHERI CAVES

By Kirti Mishra



On February 2nd, Neokars embarked on a journey to explore the rustic, natural, and scenic beauty of Mumbai with a visit to the Kanheri Caves. This visit to an ancient center of learning was not only a chance to relive the past but also a day to deepen friendships and create lasting memories.

Surrounded by the serene beauty of Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Neokars enjoyed a delightful morning stroll, complemented by the delectable, fiber-rich Poha prepared by the tribal community, supported by the SEVA Charitable Trust. A special note of gratitude goes to Ameesha Parikh, Trustee of SEVA Charitable Trust, whose coordination with the tribal community made this experience possible.

The fun-filled bus ride to the historic Kanheri Caves set the stage for the first major highlight of the day. Mrs. Sandhya, an experienced guide, led an engaging and insightful tour of the caves, constructed between the 1st century CE and the 10th century CE. These caves once served as universities during the reign of the Kushana and Maurya dynasties and were home to a thriving Buddhist community for over a thousand years. As she shared the caves' historical significance, Neokars were transported back in time, reliving the legacy of ancient monks and marveling at the architectural grandeur carved into the stone. The adventure continued as Neokars went trekking around the caves, discovering hidden beauty and appreciating the site's timeless splendor.



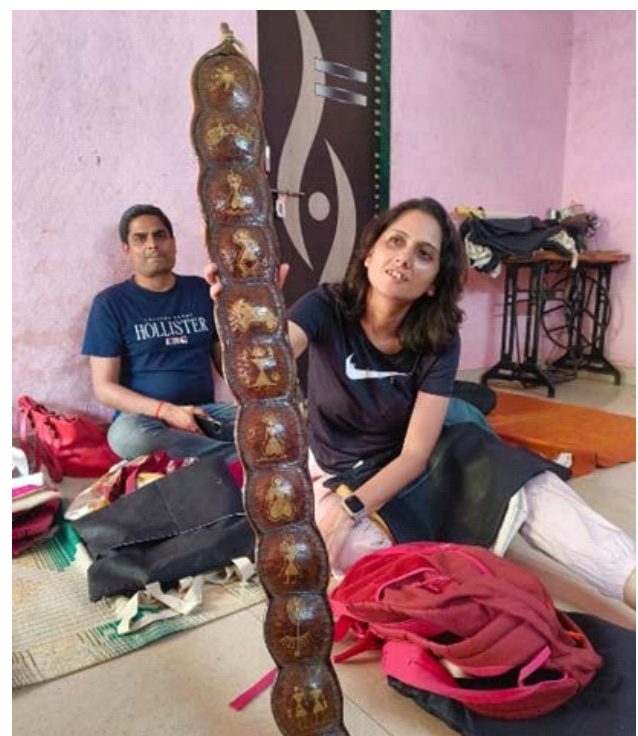


Following the trek, Neokars gathered for a captivating session on Warli Art, presented by internationally recognized artist Dinesh Barap. The session was a chance to learn about this ancient art form, with Dinesh explaining the meaning behind its distinctive characters and symbols. Neokars learned how Warli Art narrates the stories of rural life, nature and traditional rituals, making it an essential part of India's cultural heritage.



A mouthwatering traditional lunch, prepared by the tribals of SEVA Charitable Trust, added to the day's delight. Neokars also explored handcrafted bags and accessories made by tribal women using waste fabric, supporting their craftsmanship. The warmth and hospitality of the tribal communities made the experience even more special, fostering a sense of connection and appreciation for their culture and way of life.

A heartfelt thanks and a big round of applause to Natasha, our fellow member, for her outstanding efforts in organizing and coordinating the event.



SANTOSH MAHADEV SANSARE



I am grateful to the club members for making me an honorary member of the Neo Rotary Club Mumbai. I also thank Meera Ji and Rakesh Bhai for encouraging everyone to write about themselves in Neo Vista.

I was unsure about what to write about myself. I didn't know where to start or how much to write. Ultimately, Meera Ji guided me on how to write.

I was born in 1964 into a humble family in the Worli BDD Chawl. My father was a mill worker, and later, we moved to a slum in Ghatkopar. I grew up with one brother and two sisters, studying in a municipal school until the seventh grade. I completed my tenth grade while living with my uncle in Shivaji Park.

By day, I worked at a newspaper stall in Ghatkopar; by night, I attended college, earning my B. Com. degree. Alongside my studies, I began engaging in social work—taking people to hospitals, offering help wherever needed, expecting nothing in return. This sense of service was ingrained in me, as my

education beyond tenth grade was funded by the Mahalaxmi Trust, Siddhivinayak Trust, and the Lions Club. I felt an immense responsibility to give back.

Despite financial hardships, my passion for trekking and nature never faded. I completed a journalism course in Marathi, and in 1983, I was selected as a technical apprentice at The Times of India. By 1989, I secured a stable job as an Electrical Technician, which finally gave me the financial means to chase my dreams. I completed the Basic Mountaineering Course at the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi, and set out to explore the mighty Himalayas and the Sahyadri ranges. After that, the vast Himalayan peaks—stretching over 3,500 kilometers—beckoned me. The Sahyadri mountain range started feeling much closer.

I had missed out on school and college excursions due to financial constraints, but now, I traveled on minimal budgets, making up for lost time. Working for eight years at a newspaper vendor's shop, Eventually, I started my own newspaper agency with my younger brother, later handing over the business to him while continuing my job at The Times of India.

Life took a devastating turn when my father passed away in a train accident. The entire weight of my family's responsibilities—managing household expenses and arranging my sisters' marriages—fell on me.

But with God's grace, faith, perseverance, and the support of well-wishers, I overcame these struggles.

Through it all, I realized one thing: kindness always comes full circle. The love and support I received were priceless, and I vowed to help others whenever possible. That effort continues to this day.

I got married, and my wife—a graduate with a stable job—became my partner in trekking. However, after our daughter was born, she left her job and trekking behind to focus on family.

Over the years, I explored 260 forts in the Sahyadris and led countless treks. But the Himalayas continued to call me. Every year, I took a 15-day leave and spent nearly 30 years venturing into the remote and uncharted landscapes of the Himalayas, sometimes completely alone. Fear was never a factor.

I successfully completed sacred pilgrimages like the Kailash Mansarovar Parikrama, Adi Kailash Parikrama, Kinnaur Kailash Parikrama, Mani Mahesh Kailash, Shrikhand Kailash, and eight Amarnath Yatras. I also led groups to places like Panch Kedar, Hemkund Sahib, Valley of Flowers, Yamunotri via Darwa Pass, Gaumukh-Tapovan, and Vasudhara Falls, always traveling on a shoe-string budget.

During my Himalayan travels, I encountered extraordinary individuals—highly educated ascetics, sages, Naga sadhus,

Aghoris, and Lamas, some of whom were doctors and engineers. Their wisdom and energy left a lasting impact on me. Some of these enlightened souls remained in touch with me to this day.

If I were to document every experience, every journey, I could fill volumes. Each moment was an adventure, each step a lesson.

In 2001, a news article about the Kargil War caught my attention. The Indian Army, under Operation Sadbhavana, was providing educational support to 16 border villages and needed public assistance. Since I was already traveling in the Himalayas, I thought, "Why not contribute?"

I published an article requesting donations, and the response was overwhelming. We collected five large cartons of supplies. That year, during the Amarnath Yatra, I gathered a group of volunteers and carried the supplies to Leh via Baltal. With the guidance of the Indian Mountaineering Foundation, we successfully delivered everything to the Operation Sadbhavana office—a moment of immense pride and fulfillment.

Around the same time, I met Dinesh Patil, a physically challenged trekker whose determination inspired me to involve more differently-abled individuals in trekking. I firmly believed that trekking could instill leadership skills, decision-making abilities, and confidence, making them independent rather than dependent on society.

Many organizations donate wheelchairs, calipers, and prosthetics, but who builds their courage? Who shows them they are capable of much more? I decided to take up this mission, seeking Lord Shiva's blessings.

For the past 25 years, through organizations like Youth Hostels, Mudra Trekkers, Phoenix Foundation, BeingUp Foundation, Rotary Clubs, Arvind Bavdekar Memorial, Nayan Foundation, and the Indian Mountaineering Foundation, I have enabled 2,538 differently-abled individuals to trek through the Sahyadri and Himalayas.

In 2007, I held a solo photography exhibition, Moods of Adi Kailash, at P.S.I. Art Gallery, featuring 40 photographs and drawing 438 visitors.

I am affiliated with various organizations:

1. Member of the Anti-Ragging Committee, AIIPMR (All India Institute of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation)
2. Former Trustee of The Times of India PF Trust
3. Member of Youth Hostels Mumbai, NIM, Mudra Trekkers, Charkop Adventures, Sleeper Hikers, Holiday Hikers, and Prabuddha Divyang Sanghatana
4. Member of the Mumbai Photographers Association and the All India Photographic Trade & Industry Association

I have contributed to short films and documentaries on Raigad, Rajgad, Kalsubai, and Korigad, handling editing, storytelling, and filming. My work has been recognized by awards at the Girimitra Sammelan in Mumbai, and I have published 22 Marathi articles on mountaineering in The Times Family Magazine.

I never hesitate to seek support for initiatives benefiting the blind and differently-abled. Trekking gives them confidence and a sense of equality. They also contribute by cleaning historical sites, which they find fulfilling.

Seeing our initiative, many similar organizations have since emerged across Maharashtra, and I take pride in this collective progress.

I have also been invited multiple times to Tata Cancer Hospital to speak, uplift and inspire cancer patients. Helping differently-abled individuals conquer personal struggles and depression has been one of my greatest achievements. Now, after 25 years, I do feel a sense of exhaustion, but my journey is far from over.

Since childhood, I have been drawn to spirituality. Spirituality has been a guiding force in my life. My friends call me a devotee of Lord Shiva; I simply say I am his child. At 61, now retired, I continue my spiritual journey, embarking on pilgrimages like the Shirdi Padayatra, Akkalkot Padayatra, and the Pandharpur Wari.

I despise politics in friendships and relationships. My life's philosophy is simple: *"Think good, do good, and the universe will stand by you. You will lack nothing, and there will be nothing to fear."*

SHARIKA KAUL



I am a born and bred Mumbaikar. I went through the same grind that crores of people go through – school, college and then work. I did an MBA in Marketing from KJ Somaiya Institute of Management Studies and then started working for startups. My work-life has never been a 9 to 5 and has been filled with extremely challenging and innovative work that's given me a lot of strength and joy.

My corporate life was filled with a plethora of strategic work – mostly scaling up and turnaround projects in Media and Consumer Sector. A lot of my projects generated 100X the revenues and recognition. The ability to build something from ground up and see it flourish, at times becoming the industry standard, has been personally and professionally satisfying. One example, www.moneycontrol.com, which I am sure many of you equity investors would be using, that's become an industry benchmark in equity tracking, came out from my portfolio when I was working with CNBC-TV18. Post my corporate stint, I became focussed on growing startups

and developing ideas for companies. My 20+years of strategy and business development work, has been filled with amazing experiences and helped me grow as a person for better.

Being on your own forces you to learn and unlearn a lot of things. My street photography journey began with a desire to learn more about business at ground level and how people live and work on the streets. (Insta: @iamsharikakaul) When you walk for long, at times 6-8 hours, to capture one moment somewhere, you end up seeing a world that you would have never come across, had you been seated in a warm office somewhere. The dusty and busy roads of Mumbai have given me a different perspective about everything – people, life and business too.

Alongside my work, I have also been associated with various initiatives to help women and girls combat with home violence. I started Eksaath Foundation informally, to address this issue of home trauma with larger communities at schools, colleges and workplaces. We help victims understand their abusive or stressful situation and give them tools to evaluate it and take their own decisions. The advice and coaching we give has empowered many to take steps to

manage their stress and trauma and resolve conflicts at home and at work.

My sessions on managing home violence with college girls, have resulted in girls discussing the abuse they face – physical, emotional and sexual, even from their own family. One time a girl came to me and said, 'after listening to your session, I felt encouraged and I went to my mother and told her my cousin had sexually assaulted me few years ago. My family told his family about it and I feel so much better'. This is just one case. More than 1,500 college girls have gone through my programs on how to manage home trauma & stress.

Due to my work with women, I was invited to work with the Maharashtra State Commission for Women in 2018 to help victims of domestic violence. I became a Cherie Blair Foundation Mentor Alumnus in 2021, when I mentored women in growing their business. Three years ago, we expanded our work to support girls study for their 10th-11th-12th Standard, and have been able to provide financial aid to 22 girls.



My corporate skills got put to use for the greater good at Rotary itself. In 2016, with the help and collaboration of my fellow Rotarians, I raised funds to distribute 20,00,000 liters of water in rural Maharashtra which was facing serious water problems. For this I was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation in July 2016 by Rotary. My hope is to continue to do such work that can help communities, and create long term impact. After joining Rotary Club of Mumbai Neo, I feel joyful to be surrounded by

people who are doing such fantastic and impactful work. One needs a healthy dose of motivation and the club is creating this in abundance for its people.

Through my work, my travels and my street photography, I have found that there is no such thing as 'small' or 'little', everything helps to progress towards a goal, no matter what that may be. I hope that I can do my bit and contribute towards the progress and wellbeing of my club, my fellow Rotarians and my community.

RAKESH KUMAR



RAKESH KUMAR

This is not the story of my life, but an attempt at going into the recesses of my mind and trying to figure out what defines me and why.

Born in Agra in 1951. Did my schooling in Jalandhar in a government school – a sprawling property with lots of gardens, plants and trees. Plucked and ate mulberries whenever they were in season. Played lots of cricket, hockey, football, volleyball, badminton, table tennis, hand cricket and hand tennis (the last two invented by my school-mates). On a sunny winter day, the teacher would ask us to pick up our chairs and sit under a tree for the class. Perhaps that is where I learnt not to get constrained by boundaries.

I was good in most subjects except drawing. Good at verbalizing my thoughts, but efforts to express my thoughts visually were a failure till I discovered that I had a flair for photography. More of that later.

Dad was an English lecturer. Mom was M.A. in Hindi and Punjabi. Home had a scholarly atmosphere. I became a voracious reader. From Charles Dickens, George Bernard Shaw, Charlotte Brontë, Henry Fielding and Leo Tolstoy to Perry Mason, Sherlock Holmes and Agatha Christie... I savored them all while in school. I never tired of reading P. G. Wodehouse. I read Vrindavan Lal Varma's *Mrignayani* and Kalidasa's *Abhigyan Shakuntalam* in Hindi. Plus, a bit of Greek and Roman mythology, world history by H. G. Wells, psychology, psychoanalysis, philosophy and Karl Marx. I have always been interested in diverse subjects.

I was deeply interested in Bollywood music of the 1950s and 1960s. Used to hum along while listening to songs on All India Radio. Dad noticed this and found a Guruji to teach me music. He used to come home thrice a week. I tried my hand

at the harmonium, *tabla* and vocal. I never got past '*paayo ji maine ram ratan dhan paayo*', '*teen taal*' and '*keherwa*'. After four months, *Guruji* told Dad with folded hands, "*Aapke suputra ko sangeet sikhana mere bas ki baat nahin hai*." My dream to sing in the silky voice of Talat Mahmood in concerts all over the globe was shattered. But I still retain my unrequited love for music of the Golden Era.

For some unknown reason, I wanted to get into an IIT. That too, only mechanical engineering in IIT Delhi. Perhaps the thrill of trying to crack JEE lured me. With an all-India rank of 115, I did get into mechanical in IITD. Then followed five years of hostel life – sometimes exciting, sometimes dreary. Played pranks on unsuspecting 'scholars' to add some spice to life and to be able to regale my grandchildren with the tales one day. Hostel life hammered me into shape, and had tremendous influence on my later life. The independence I enjoyed in the hostel, exercised with a sense of responsibility, has shaped my life.



As a student, I refused to be branded as a 'scholar'. While I kept getting good grades and my final year project on 'Application of Pneumatic Gaging to Machine Control' got the best project award, I also did plenty of swimming, badminton and table tennis. The common room in the hostel had a wide range of newspapers and magazines. I read the Times of India for the news, and the Statesman for its brilliant editorials. I admired the editorials, and dreamt that one day I would write such editorials myself. I am not quite there, but my dream remains. Dreaming big and trying to convert my dreams into reality has been a driving force for me.

I glanced at the last page of Hindustan Times every Sunday. It always featured a half page black-and-white photograph by Raghu Rai in landscape orientation. Raghu Rai became my idol. And the photography bug bit me. Armed with a Yashica 720 twin-lens reflex camera in which the speed, aperture and focus had to be adjusted manually depending upon the speed of the film, intensity of light and distance from the subject, I went on frequent scooter expeditions to click pictures. Then I booked two-hour slots in the dark room in the Students' Activity Center (typically from midnight to 2 AM) to develop and dry the film, load the negatives in the enlarger, crop and compose the image and highlight the subject using dodging, expose and develop and fix the image on Kodak photographic paper (generally matt), dry and glaze it on a hot plate, and switch on the light to experience the thrill of seeing a baby being born. I won the Best Photographer of IITD award in the final year. This is how I overcame the challenge of expressing my thoughts visually, and learnt to keep trying alternate ways to achieve my objectives. I still retain a sense of mood, composition and light-and-shade.

I was recruited for Voltas Bombay in a campus interview in 1972. Bombay (now Mumbai) was

the city of my dreams. And Voltas ranked, along with Tata Motors and L&T, as a top employer for engineers in those days. Bombay welcomed me with open arms – always friendly, warm, helpful and hospitable.

The big moment came in 1978 when I decided to get married to Anu. After moving from one rented house to another, we moved into our own flat at Juhu in 1981, where we have been living till now. Rohit was born in 1979, and Deepali in 1983. Rohit is happily married and settled in the USA and has a lovely daughter. Deepali is ditto in Singapore. Each milestone kept changing the focus of my life, and each phase left its footprint in various corners of my mind.

My life at Voltas kept resembling more and more of a rat race. I tried hard to maintain a balance between work and family, though not very successfully. I played all the diverse roles in corporate life that someone possibly can, finally retiring in 2009. After a couple of years of consultancy, I got an offer from ISHRAE that I jumped at – to edit a technical journal on air conditioning and refrigeration (AC&R). This was a subject I was extremely familiar with. It was a godsent opportunity to use my technical knowledge as well as writing skills acquired over a lifetime, to educate – on an ongoing basis – engineers who choose AC&R as their profession. Being useful to the community, doing something I was passionate about. It was my *Ikigai* moment! I had finally found my true calling, the purpose of my life.

And that's what I have been doing for 14 years. For the last 10 years, I have also been writing monthly articles for a Japanese magazine, *JARN*, that is published in five languages and is read in about 80 countries by AC&R professionals.

I have been a Rotarian for 25 years. Rotary also gives me a platform to actualize my need to be useful to the society. And I love the fellowship, the *bonhomie*, the family bonding.

ANURADHA KUMAR



I was born and raised in Delhi, a city that was my home after my parents migrated from Multan – a vibrant part of undivided Punjab that eventually became part of Pakistan during India's partition. They settled in Patel Nagar, West Delhi, carrying with them the rich traditions and resilient spirit of our heritage.

Growing up in Delhi, I received my early education at Lady Irwin School, where I developed a strong foundation in values and learning. I later pursued my undergraduate studies in Home Science at the Institute of Home Economics, an institution that not only sharpened my academic skills but also kindled my passion for creative and practical pursuits. Eager to deepen my expertise, I followed up my graduation

with a post-graduate diploma in Dietetics and Public Health Nutrition from the same esteemed institute.

Family has always been the cornerstone of my life. My eldest sibling is my brother, a distinguished graduate in Mechanical Engineering from IIT Delhi. His academic excellence perhaps influenced my own journey, playing a part in my marriage to Rakesh, who is a co-alumnus of my brother. I am also blessed with an elder sister and two younger sisters. Together, we shared countless joyful moments during our childhood, forging bonds that continue to enrich our lives today.

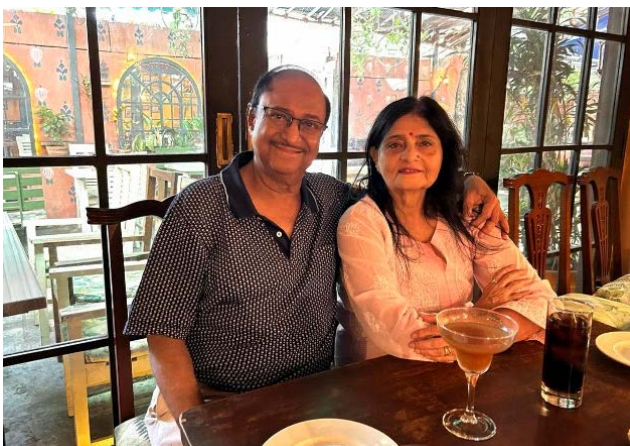
In 1978, I embraced a new chapter as I married Rakesh and moved to Bombay – now known as Mumbai – a bustling metropolis that quickly captured my heart. Bombay's dynamic culture, diverse people, and abundant opportunities have shaped my life, making the city a constant source of inspiration.

Our family's happiness grew with the arrival of Rohit in 1979. A graduate in Electronics Engineering from SPCE, Rohit furthered his education in the USA by earning an MS degree.

He later married Melissa, a US citizen who seamlessly became part of our family. Together, they raised a wonderful daughter, Madison, who, at 10 years old, proudly embraces her Indian heritage. Rohit went on to complete his MBA and now works for SAP – a renowned German multinational specializing in enterprise software and cloud hosting – while Melissa, an MS as well as MBA, has made her mark in the pharmaceutical industry.

Our second joy, Deepali, was born in 1983. After graduating in Commerce and working at JM Financial, she married Yatin, an engineer settled in Singapore, and migrated there. Deepali now works with Brazil-based Vale, the world's largest iron ore mining company, while Yatin serves as Marketing Director for South East Asia at Richardson, a Winnipeg-based commodities trading firm. They have also blessed us with an adorable granddaughter, Anishi, who is 6 years old.

In my leisure time, I relish reading, listening to music, staying active at the gym, and practicing yoga – activities that nurture my mind, body, and spirit.



THROUGH THE LENS OF NEOKARS

Introduction by Rakesh Kumar

Bold, brilliant, and bewitching – these snapshots shine as splendid symbols of India's soulful spirit. Every photograph conveys a universe of aesthetic beauty, compelling chronicles, and stirring emotions. Our collection is a testament to the power of a single click. Each image weaves together tales of nature's resplendent hues, dynamic action, and intimate moments, offering a glimpse into the heartbeat of our diverse Neokars.

India's photographic heritage is rich with visionaries whose work has not only captured history but has also inspired generations. Among these luminaries is Raghu Rai, whose lens has chronicled the vibrant tapestry of India through moments of triumph and turmoil. Rai's evocative images remind us that a photograph is not just an aesthetic delight but a powerful storyteller that captures the pulse of a nation.

Equally inspiring is the trailblazing Homai Vyarawalla, India's first female photojournalist. Her poignant portrayals of post-independence India reveal the resilience and everyday beauty of its people. Vyarawalla's legacy endures in every candid moment that reflects the humble yet profound narratives of our shared history.

Adding a contemporary flair to this illustrious lineage is Dabboo Ratnani, renowned for his dynamic celebrity portraits that merge glamour with raw human emotion. His ability to encapsulate both the glittering and gritty facets of modern India has set a benchmark, inspiring countless enthusiasts to look beyond the obvious and explore the depths of visual storytelling.

In this article, we celebrate the extraordinary images captured by Neokars – each frame a fusion of art and life, echoing the aesthetic elegance, heartfelt chronicles, and emotive power intrinsic to photography. Join us on this visual journey as we explore how every picture not only immortalizes a moment in time but also speaks volumes about the enduring beauty and spirit of India.

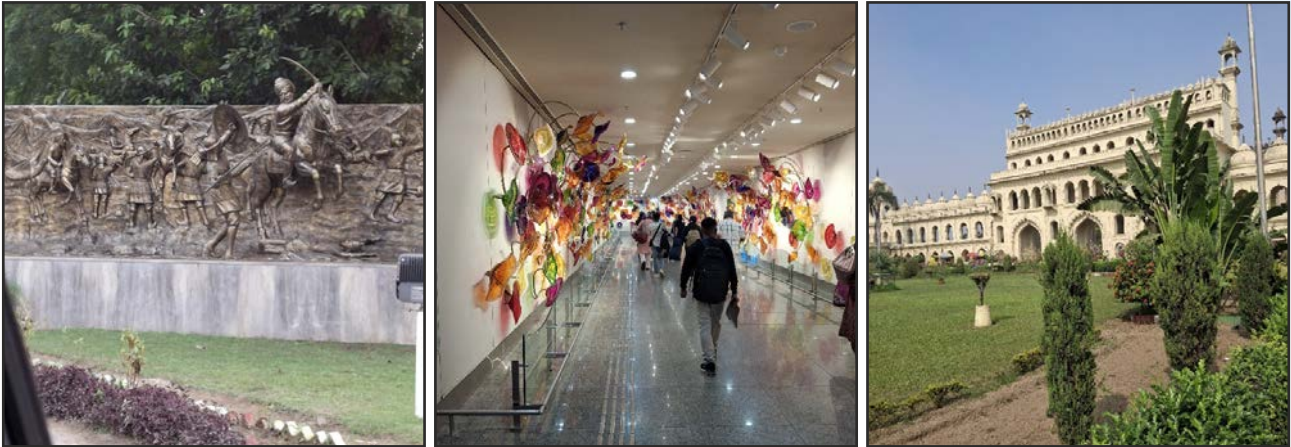
1. Sharika Kaul's Street Photography

My street photography journey began with a desire to learn more about business at ground level and how people live and work on the streets. (Insta - @iamsharikakaul) When you walk for long, at times 6-8 hours, to capture one moment somewhere, you end up seeing a world that you would have never come across, had you been seated in a warm office somewhere. The dusty and busy roads of Mumbai have given me a different perspective about everything – people, life and business too.



2. Exploring Architecture by Narinder Madan

I first started appreciating this hobby when I was in my college. I used my friend's camera to click. It became more intense at IIT Delhi because we had our own dark room. I learnt it from my friend. It was only when I started travelling abroad on business, I developed the taste for it. You will be surprised that my collection of pictures taken and later printed crossed 1500 mark during my overseas travel. One the reason was that I could afford it now. It grew more on me when the mobile phones got the Camera in it. It had become virtually free with an option to immediately see the clicked photo. If you didn't like it just erase it. Now I am looking at this hobby to catch up very unusual moments of life.



3. Nature by Jyoti Hariharan

Nature photography is a magical way to capture the beauty and wonders of the natural world. Capturing moments and emotions in photography is what truly brings photos to life. Here is my small step towards that.



4. Nature by Santosh Sansare



Waterfall repelling action



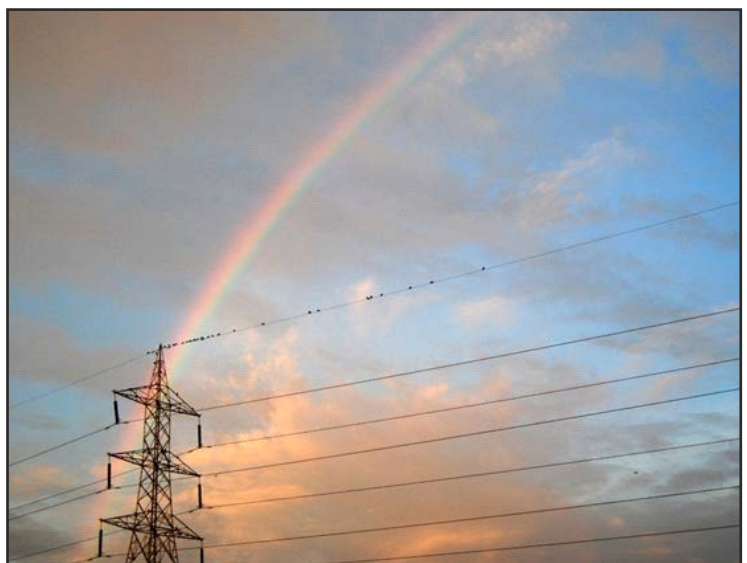
Flying flamingo



Lamp competes with sun in the evening



Adi Kailas in Pithoragadh District on Nepal border



Rainbow and power transmission

5. Shadows Meet Hues in a Canvas of Contrasts, by Rakesh Kumar

I have always been fascinated by silhouettes. Photographer Raghu Rai, my idol, painted hundreds of exquisite black-and-white silhouettes with his camera on photographic paper. In this era of colour photography, I present you some silhouettes and near-silhouettes clicked by me over several years.



NEO CONTEST

Hello Neokars!

This month we are presenting to you two public personalities. You have to get into their minds and speak for them. Here is your chance at mind reading. Since they appear in cartoon form, you are free to let your imagination run. Hope you are going to rise to the challenge.

Cartoon one:



What is Trump telling Musk?

Cartoon Two:



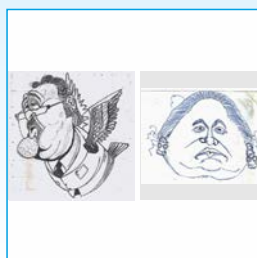
What is Virat hyper about?

Answers to the Contest Featured in the February Issue of Neo Vista

The editors thank all those who responded to the contest and boosted our morale by their participation. However, we decided that only the correct or the most humorous entries shall be published.



Daksha Bhagwat's response was adjudged as the best:
"Aas paas gulabjamun lampas"
 Jyoti Hariharan's response was also interesting.



The caricatures depicted Vijay Mallya and Mamta Banerjee. There was no correct answer. The editors extend their appreciation and felicitation to Daksha!

HASTA MUDRAS

By Mehek Wadhwa



We enter the month of March, a month filled with the festival of colors – Holi, the end of Fiscal Year, a month that celebrates “International Women’s Day”.

Like our traditional aspect of *Ardhanarishwar*, some of you may have also come across the concept of Yin and Yan, basically even though according to the physical body we may be of a particular gender, viz, male or female, yet energetically each one of us has both the feminine as well as the masculine energy. This month sharing with you all Hasta Mudras that enhance the feminine dimension in us.

Shakti Mudra:

The mudra is sometimes referred to as Shakti Chalana Mudra, with “Chalana” meaning “movement” or “flow” in Sanskrit.



Method

Tuck your thumbs into the center of your palms.

Bend your index and middle fingers to lightly wrap around the thumb, creating a secure hold. Extend your ring and little fingers outward. Bring the ring and little fingers of both hands close together. Touch the tips of your left hand’s ring finger to the tips of your right hand’s ring finger, and do the same with the little fingers. Connect the outer middle segments of your index and middle fingers from both hands together. Bring your hands close to your chest while maintaining the finger arrangement. Focus on clearing your mind and deepening your breath.

Note: If sitting poses are uncomfortable, you can perform Shakti Mudra while standing in Tadasana or sitting on a chair.

Time and Duration

Ideal Time: Shakti Mudra can be performed at any time that suits your schedule. However, it is especially effective if practiced just before bedtime to promote better sleep. Additionally, morning practice can help set a positive tone for the day.

Duration: Each session should last between 10-12 minutes. For optimal benefits, aim to practice Shakti Mudra 2-3 times a day.

Precautions

Apply gentle pressure with your fingers.

Wear comfortable clothing and remove jewelry or accessories.

Practice in a quiet, calm environment by turning off mobile phones, TVs, and radios. Limit the duration to avoid lethargy; adhere to recommended time.

Side Effects

While Shakti Mudra is generally safe, potential side effects may occur if not practiced properly. Over-practicing or holding the mudra for extended periods can lead to fatigue. It’s important to adhere to recommended practice times to avoid such issues.

Contraindications

Consult a healthcare provider if pregnant or recently had surgery.

Avoid if you have severe or chronic health conditions, particularly related to hands, wrists, or respiratory system.

Benefits of Shakti Mudra

Prevents sleep disorders or sleeplessness, improves the immune system.

The perfect remedy for pelvic area disorders. Shakti Mudra's stimulating and energising effects help counteract the qualities of Kapha, which include heaviness, coldness, and sluggishness. By enhancing the flow of prana (life-force energy) and promoting vitality, it helps reduce excess Kapha, alleviating symptoms such as lethargy, congestion, and fluid retention. The mudra's ability to energise and balance the body aligns well with Kapha's need for increased activity and warmth.

Kali Mudra:

Kali Mudra can be practiced in a seated, standing, or supine position. It can also be practiced during asanas where the hands are not actively engaged, allowing flexibility in hand movements.



Method

Bring your palms together in front of your chest in Prayer Posture.

Interlock all fingers except the index fingers. Cross your left thumb over the right thumb. Keep the index fingers straight, pointing downward.

Time and Duration

Practice for a minimum of 30-45 minutes daily. This can be done in one session or split into two or three sessions of 10-15 minutes each.

Ideal Time

The best time to practice is in the morning between 4 am and 6 am. If mornings are difficult, you can also practice in the evening.

During Meditation: Maximize the benefits by incorporating Kali Mudra into your meditation practice with the intention of removing negativity.

Precautions and Contraindications

Ensure sufficient rest to avoid physical and mental fatigue.

Stay hydrated by drinking water before and after the practice. Practice gently, especially with your hands, to prevent strain or discomfort.

Avoid long durations of practice to prevent the loss of positive energy. Choose comfortable postures to prevent any physical discomfort.

Be mentally and emotionally prepared, as Kali Mudra can bring up deep-rooted emotions.

Practice mindful breathing to avoid hyperventilation and maximize the benefits.

Maintain a focused and positive intention during practice to release negativity effectively.

Stop the practice if you experience any physical or emotional discomfort, especially when combining it with yoga asanas.

Individuals with high metabolism should avoid prolonged practice as it may increase excessive elimination of waste from the body.

Benefits

Removes negative energy, boosts emotional intelligence, increases inner strength, detoxifies the body; Kali Mudra promotes internal detoxification by enhancing the body's natural processes of eliminating toxins.

Destroys stress, anxiety, and depression: Regular practice helps calm the nervous system and reduces the impact of stress and anxiety. This mudra stimulates the throat and third eye chakras. The calming effect of Kali Mudra can help alleviate insomnia by reducing mental restlessness.

ANNAPOORNA MEALS DISTRIBUTION

February 5, 2025 – “Annapoorna Meals” – Distribution of meals to 100 poor and needy people at Sakinaka, Andheri East. The amount

was donated by Rtn Sridhar Rajagopalan and Rtn Nandini Sridhar in memory of their Mother. Rtn Hemang Jangla coordinated on the project.



BOTTLES TO BENCHES AWARENESS

February 6, 2025 – “Bottles to Benches” – Rtn Natasha conducted this awareness project at Pinnacle High International School, Malad. More than 100 students participated in the project and got benefit of the safety environment need and pledged to work towards it.



February 7, 2025 – Rtn Natasha continued the “Bottles to Project” and environment awareness project at Maharashtra English Vidyalaya. More than 250 students participated in the session and got benefitted.



BLUE BAG PROJECT- ENVIRONMENT

February 8, 2025 – “Blue Bag Project- Environment” – This environment awareness drive and implementation was initiated by Rtn Natasha in the Vasant Galaxy Complex. More than 400 residents attended this. The perils of dry wastages and the environment challenges briefed and also the project blue bag was launched in the complex. The Children were quizzed on the environment area and prizes distributed by Natasha.



RUN TO SUPPORT FREE PAEDIATRIC HEART SURGERY

February 9, 2025 – Run to Support Free Paediatric Heart Surgery – RCMN members participated in the Juhu HRX Half marathon. The host club was Rotary Club of Mumbai Airport, wherein more than 5000 runners participated in Half Marathon (21 Kms), 10KM and fun run 4km. The surplus from this project will be utilised for conducting free paediatric heart surgery for the needy family. From RCMN,

the following members did participate in the marathon in support of the cause “Free paediatric Heart Surgery” viz Sridhar, Hariharan, Jyoti, Datta, Daksha, Alok, Kriti, Rakhi, Chandresh, Anand, Pallavi, Arun, Mehek, Dhiti, Natasha, Ajay and their Children. District AG Kala flagged off the 4km fun run along with other members of the district team and team RC Bombay Airport.



SLOW FASHION WORKSHOP

February 10, 2025 – “Slow Fashion Workshop” – Rtn Natasha conducted this workshop at Billabong high school, Goregaon highlighting perils of textile waste and provoking them to the slow motion movement. More than 80 students participated in this workshop and benefitted.



GLOBAL GRANT PROJECT FOR FREE PAEDIATRIC HEART SURGERY

February 24, 2025 – “Global Grant Project for Free Paediatric Heart Surgery” – RCMN contributed US\$ 1058 towards the cause. The “Gift of Life” Global Grant project, numbered GG2569173, total amount of grant is US\$

282,608. This project aims to provide free pediatric heart surgery at the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital in Kharghar, and it is being participated in by several clubs from District 3141. From RCMN, Sridhar, Datta, Anand, Nandini, Meera, Arun contributed the amount towards this noble cause. RC Bombay Airport is the lead club, who felicitated all the Club Presidents towards this, on their 5th year completion on the said project.



ROTARY CLUB
OF MUMBAI

Neo Vista

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