



ROTARY CLUB
OF MUMBAI

Neo Vista

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NEW BEGINNINGS...



ROTARY OBSERVES OCTOBER AS
**ECONOMIC AND
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
MONTH**



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MESSAGE FROM RI PRESIDENT



Stephanie A. Urchick

President, 2024-25
Rotary International

The Magic of Rotary is belonging, and it's a feeling that can appear when you least expect it.

Earlier this year, I was in Slovakia serving as a president's representative during a six-week trip through Europe. When I wrote to Katarina Cechova, governor of District 2240 at the time, I mentioned that my grandmother Veronica Zilka grew up in a small village in the area before settling in the U.S.

It wasn't long before Cechova tracked down my grandmother's village, Jakubova Vol'a. She even organized a visit for me, where I received an unforgettable Slovakian welcome.

When I entered the community center of Jakubova Vol'a, a small crowd of people dressed in traditional Slovakian clothing greeted me. They sang with beautiful and powerful Central European voices that reminded me of my grandmother.

A lot of families play cards or games when they get together. When I was young, my father would pick up his accordion and lead my family in song. My grandmother would sing along with her impressive voice.

When I walked into the community center and heard traditional music from my childhood — when I saw a woman play the accordion the way my dad played — I suddenly felt like a little girl sitting at my grandmother's house in Monessen, Pennsylvania. I burst into tears of joy at the memories.

But the magic didn't stop there. District Governor Cechova really outdid herself. A local genealogist worked with a videographer to make a short film about my grandmother. We watched the video together in the community center.

When the video ended, I turned around and saw a man standing in the back of the room. I quickly learned that this stranger, Frantisek Zilka, was my second cousin. His grandmother and mine had been sisters. I felt like I had been struck by lightning.

I visited my newfound cousin's home, which happens to be the home where my grandmother was born. There, he shared old photographs I had never seen of my dad, my uncle, and my grandmother.

Since then, I can't stop thinking about my family of Rotary. When I refer to you as my family, I'm not just being kind. I really think of everyone in Rotary as my family. But I never would have imagined that my Rotary family would introduce me to long-lost personal family.

Sitting in that community center listening to traditional Slovakian music from my childhood filled me with joy and a profound sense of belonging. I am so grateful to District Governor Cechova and everyone who helped create that magical experience.

As members of Rotary, we have a unique opportunity to share the same magic with each other and with the world. I encourage you to consider how you can help spread that magic and ensure other members of your club — other members of our Rotary family — feel like they truly belong.

Stephanie A. Urchick

Rotary International President, 2024-2025

FROM THE VIBRANT NEO PRESIDENT



Sridhar Ramasubramanian

Dear Neo-kars,

The first quarter for the Rotary year 24-25 ended with almost 75 projects completed across various avenues, involving many of our members in some form or other. As a President, I can't ask for anything more than this.

I always believed in mantra of 'Collaboration, Collaboration, Collaboration' for the success of any common goal. We Neokars demonstrated that through our voluntary and exceptional participation in District events like TRF Seminar, District CSR Conclave and Awards and District Onamadhuram 2024. We were the Gold cohosts in the first 2 events and the lead host in the third. The efforts put in by the team are commendable- be it submission of CSR award entries from Corporates, representation in the conclave, and be the lead in planning, designing and successful execution of the Onam Program and also huge participation. The Onamadhuram witnessed a massive 210

people attending from across 22 Rotary clubs. This has helped in building our public image amongst the Rotary world and also to Corporate world.

The youth is future of this Country's economic development and we were able to form the first Rotaract Club by chartering Rotaract Club of LS Raheja School of Architecture, Bandra. This is an unique and pioneering approach towards skilled courses like this and opens up doors for many more collaboration and formation in other skill areas.

The Annapoorna Kitchen and Meals project kicked off with all Neokars committing to more than 10000 meals over the year , demonstrated our ability not only to create but also support and execute big projects like this one.

The inauguration of Stray happy Clinic/Dispensary by Stray Happy Foundation at the cost of Rs 18 lakhs, shall lay the foundation for many benefits for stray animals in future.

We continued to deliver projects, across Medical (eye camp, blood donation camp, cpr camp) and non-medical areas (educational support for 15 girl children, provision of library, notebooks, laptops and specially abled people support in the form sewing machines, laptops to build their skills), on a more consistent and sustainable basis.

Once again, I reiterate (don't mind repeating this every month) that the strength of our Club lies in the members' participation in projects, fellowship. And the result of this is astounding performance in all areas of Rotary. A big shout to each and every Neokar and more importantly the families of our Neokar for the support.

Sridhar Ramasubramanian

President, Rotary Club of Mumbai Neo 2024-25

Project	Date	Type	Avenue	No of Beneficiary	No of Volunteers	Man Hours	Cost	Sponsor	Comments
1	02-Sep-24	Inauguration of Library with 500 storybooks and reference books at Nutan Vidya Mandir, Goregaon, donated by Ratnanidhi Charitable Trust	Non Medical	100	2	6	50,000	NGO	Kala Ratnanidhi
2	05-Sep-24	Donation of annual fee to 15 Girls Education at Cosmopolitan Educational Institute, Barfiwallah, [Andheri West- Donated by 2 wellwishers (Ramki/Suguna, Ritika/Kishore)]	Non Medical	15	4	12	1,20,000	Donation	Sridhar, Kala Donors
3	05-Sep-24	CPR camp at Mumbai Central EMU carshed for Railway staff	Medical	65	2	10	32,500	NGO	Arun W, Hemang, SunTeam
4	05-Sep-24	Inauguration of the library at J M Patel College, Goregaon. Donated books, computer, library, by Ratnanidhi Charitable Trust	Non Medical	200	2	6	1,00,000	NGO	Kala, Ratnanidhi
5	05-Sep-24	Bottles to Benches project kick off at SIES college, Sion by Natasha	Non Medical	100	2	6		RCMN	Natasha
6	11-Sep-24	Donation of Clothes(80-85), Utensils (15), Sarees to Old age homes- Rathod Vrudharashram, Bhayender-	Non Medical	50	4	12	5,000	Donation	Meera, Rakesh, Anu, Arun, Kala
7	12-Sep-24	CPR camp at Dadar station for Railway staff, constables, station masters	Medical	75	2	8	18,750	NGO	Arun W, Hemang, Sun Team
8	13-Sep-24	Donation of 2 Sewing Machines, 3 Lenevo desktop/laptop to Speshally centre for specially abled skill development. Donated by Hemang, Jyoti, Hari,	Non Medical	100	6	12	1,15,000	Donation	Hemang, Jyoti, Hari
9	14-Sep-24	Inauguration of Stray happy clinic/dispensary at Goregaon west in association with Stray happy foundation	Non Medical	100	2	8	25,000	NGO	Madhavi, Stray happy
10	14-Sep-24	Distribution of grocery kits to 25 feeders of 8.5 kg ration to Sary feeders at Goregaon West	Non Medical	25	2	8	25,000	NGO	Madhavi, Stray happy
11	15-Sep-24	Provide Notebook, Pen, Geometry box, Chocolate, Orio Biscuit and main thing providing 300 Ltrs of Color to paint whole school at Jawahar, Adivasi area in dist. Palghar	Non Medical	100	2	10	1,53,000	NGO	Hemang
12	20-Sep-24	Mega blood donation camp at Andheri West station with multiple cohosts	Medical	9	2	6	1,800	RCMN	Sidhar
13	20-Sep-24	Launch of Bottles to Benches mega project at SIES college with more than 200 students attending it. Aim to reach 1000 buildings to connect 20000 families	Non Medical	200	2	10	5,000	RCMN	Natasha, Kala
14	20-Sep-24	CPR Camp at Borivali West station	Medical	160	2	10	40,000	NGO	Arun, Sun
15	21-Sep-24	Project Annapurna Kitchen- distribution of 150 meals sponsored by Meera R at Andheri West	Non Medical	150	3	12	9,000	Donation	Meera
16	23-Sep-24	"Battiest° Benches" project awareness by natasha @ RNS International school for primary, pre primary and secondary students	Non Medical	275	2	10	2,500	RCMN	Natasha
17	24-Sep-24	Donation of "Hospital Bed" to Adhar by a Donor, friend of Rtn Datta	Medical	2	3	12	50,000	Donation	Datta
18	27-Sep-24	Donation of 3 Sewing Machines to beneficiaries of Ma hakali Caves Road to make them independent- Donated by NGO of Hemang	Non Medical	3	2	8	65,000	NGO	Hemang
19	27-Sep-24	Eye check up camp at Rishi Valmiki School goregaon.	Medical	400	2	8	20,000	NGO	Hemang
20	27-Sep-24	Distribution of specs to the children (20) at Students academy post the eye check up camp	Medical	20	2	8	30,000	NGO	Hemang
21	30-Sep-24	Installation of Rotaract College of LS Raheja School of Architecture at Bandra East	Non Medical	100	4	15	10,000	RCMN	All
				2,249	48	181	8,77,550		

PRESERVING TRADITION AND EMBRACING JOY



Rakesh Kumar

Welcome, Neo-kars!

Preserving Tradition and Embracing Joy

Onam, the vibrant festival of Kerala now celebrated in many parts of India, is not just a celebration of harvest but a deep-rooted symbol of India's cultural and historical richness. This colorful festival is marked by a series of joyful activities — from the traditional *Pookalam* (floral designs), the graceful *Thiruvathira* dance, to the spirited *Vallam Kali* (boat races) and the grand feast known as *Onam Sadhya*. Yet, beyond the beauty of these rituals lies a deeper truth: Onam reminds us of the importance of preserving and celebrating our traditions, which emphasize the merry spirit of life and the togetherness of our community.

At the heart of Onam is the folklore of King Mahabali, the benevolent ruler who was loved by his people for his fairness and generosity. It is believed that during his reign, there was no poverty, deceit, or sorrow — a golden era of happiness and equality. The annual return of

King Mahabali, as celebrated during Onam, serves as a reminder of these ideals. However, the significance of this legend goes beyond the story itself. The folklore behind Onam, like many Indian festivals, is a reason to celebrate — an excuse to come together, share joy, and create memories that bind us to our heritage. Festivals like Onam emphasize the lighter, pleasant aspects of our civilization. In an era where the pace of life can often seem overwhelming, they give us a much-needed break to pause, reconnect with our roots, and embrace the simple pleasures of life. Whether it is through preparing traditional dishes for the Onam Sadhya, or participating in community festivities, the festival reinforces the message that happiness lies in togetherness, and in celebrating our shared cultural values.

Onam, like other festivals, also plays a crucial role in ensuring that traditional customs are passed on to future generations. In today's world, where the lure of modernity can often pull us away from our heritage, celebrating these festivals helps preserve our culture in its truest form. It teaches the younger generation the importance of tradition, family, and community, reminding them that our festivals are not just rituals, but living representations of our civilization's joy and unity.

While the folklore of Onam is fascinating, it is important to recognize that the celebration itself is the essence of the festival. It reminds us that life's greatest delight often come from the simplest acts of kindness, sharing, and togetherness. In celebrating Onam, we carry forward not just traditions, but a philosophy of happiness and community that has defined our culture for centuries. Through Onam, we preserve the essence of our civilization — one that cherishes life's joyful moments and teaches us to celebrate, together, with open hearts.

Rakesh Kumar
Editor, Neo Vista

RCM NEO HOSTS DISTRICT ONAMADHURAM

By Meera Ramachandran

The District Onamadhuram 2024 held on September 22, with RCM Neo as one of two lead hosts, was a veritable feast to all the five senses! One's eyes were dazzled with the floral décor, women shimmering in a variety of white and gold saris and exquisite antique jewelry and the men looking cool in their white *veshtis* and shirts of varying hue; some even sported dark glasses to complete the Mallu chic. The scent of jasmine flowers filled the air. Hearing energetic percussion and cymbal beats accompanying a rendition of kathakali

dance compelled the bodies to sway and the feet to tap and spring to the rhythm. And there was Mahabali in royal attire, ready to oblige for photo-ops, or give a ride in the racing snake boat on the Punnamda Lake surrounded by coconut trees. After enjoying the various songs and folk dances such as Kaikottikali (translates as 'hand clapping dance') associated with Onam, which included a *jhalak* from Anaiya, one then sat down to pamper the taste buds with the sumptuous Onam *Sadhya*.



In short, we were transported to Kerala for a few hours to enjoy warm fellowship and enrich our cultural sensibility.

All this happened because of the meticulous planning by First Lady Kala, who sprung a delightful surprise with a cameo in madisar (the South Indian style of wearing the nine-yard sari), along with the District team in-charge of

Events. President Sridhar's compering gave the whole function a smooth flow. A find of the morning was the singer in Neokar Hariharan. The rock star of the morning was Arun Wadhwa as Mahabali. DG Ketan Desai gave a big thumbs up to the well-organized function. A big hip-hip for Neokars who helped in the conduct of, and participated in, the festival.





THE HUMAN TOUCH: AI AND ITS IMPACT ON EVERYDAY LIFE

By Dr. Pradeep K Mukherji

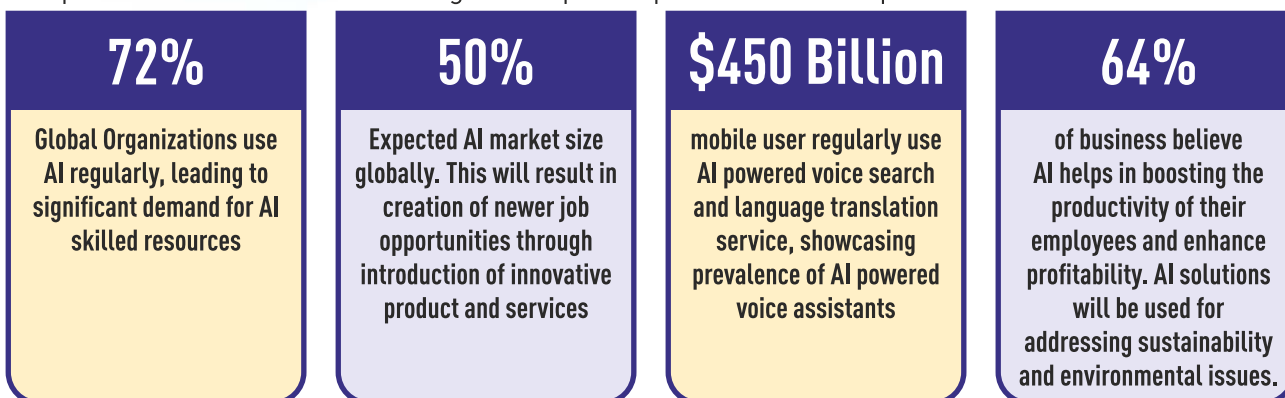
Imagine waking up to a world where your coffee is already brewing, your car effortlessly drives you to work, and your doctor can predict health concerns before they even surface - that's the magic of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in action. While it might sound like something from a sci-fi movie, AI is already woven into the fabric of our everyday lives, often in ways we don't even realize. Whether it's

helping us navigate the quickest route home, recommending our next favorite read, or streamlining our routines, AI is quietly making life simpler and more efficient. It's essential that we not only recognize how AI is shaping our daily experiences but also understand both the incredible benefits it offers and the potential risks that come with embracing AI-powered solutions.

EVERYDAY BENEFITS OF AI	
<div>Healthcare</div> <div></div>	AI is transforming healthcare by giving doctors a powerful tool to diagnose diseases with greater accuracy and speed. Today AI can scan medical images and spot early signs of conditions like cancer—sometimes even before symptoms appear. This means patients can receive treatment sooner, increasing the chances of successful outcomes and making healthcare more proactive and efficient.
<div>Education & Training</div> <div></div>	Platforms like Khan Academy, Coursera, and Duolingo are now powered by AI to change the way we learn by getting to know each student's unique learning style, strengths, and areas where they need a little extra help. These platforms tailor lessons to fit each learner, offering personalized feedback and tracking their progress along the way. With interactive elements like quizzes, games, and videos, AI makes learning more engaging and fun, keeping students motivated. What's even more amazing is how AI adapts to different learning needs, including those with disabilities, by providing alternative formats like audio, visual aids, or simplified text, ensuring that education becomes more inclusive and accessible for everyone.
<div>Shopping & Customer Support</div> <div></div>	Online shopping platforms such as Amazon, and Flipkart use AI to recommend products based on an individual's browsing history and previous purchases. This makes it easier to find items one may like and discover new products. Many companies use AI chatbots to provide customer service. These chatbots can answer common questions, help you troubleshoot problems, and even process orders, making customer service more efficient.
<div>Entertainment</div> <div></div>	Streaming services like Netflix and Spotify use AI to suggest movies, TV shows, and music based on your preferences. This personalized experience helps you find content that suits your taste.
<div>Security</div> <div></div>	AI-powered security systems can recognize faces and detect unusual activities, alerting you to potential security threats. These systems can also be integrated with smart home devices for added convenience.

Transportation 	<p>AI is at the heart of navigation apps that suggest the fastest routes and alert you to traffic conditions. Self-driving cars, which are being tested and improved, also rely on AI to navigate roads safely.</p>
Personal Assistant 	<p>Devices like smartphones and smart-speakers come with AI-powered personal assistants such as Siri, Alexa, or Google Assistant. These assistants can help you set reminders, play music, check the weather, and even control smart home devices with simple voice commands. AI translation tools, such as Google Translate, can instantly translate text or speech into different languages, making communication easier when traveling or interacting with people who speak different languages.</p>

The perceived benefit of AI is leading to its rapid adoption across all aspects of our life and livelihood:



While AI offers many benefits, it's important to be aware of the potential risks, while using AI:

Risks Associated with the use of AI

- **Privacy Concerns:** AI systems often collect and analyse large amounts of personal data. If not properly managed, this data can be misused or may get exposed to bad actors, leading to privacy breaches
- **Job Displacement:** As AI systems become more capable, there's a risk that they could replace human workers in certain jobs, leading to unemployment in some sectors.
- **Bias and Fairness:** AI systems can sometimes make biased decisions if they are trained on biased data. Fake news and Deepfake are examples which can lead to unfair treatment of individuals or groups, and result in conflicts.
- **Security Risks:** AI systems can be vulnerable to hacking and other cyber threats, which could have serious consequences. As example, if a self-driving car or a medical device is compromised, can lead to grave situations.

Responsible Use of AI: To ensure that AI benefits everyone, it's crucial to use it responsibly and adopt few guidelines:

- **Transparency:** AI systems should be transparent about how they make decisions. This helps build trust and allows users to understand and challenge decisions if necessary.
- **Ethical Standards:** Developers and users of AI should adhere to ethical standards that prioritize fairness, privacy, and security.
- **Continuous Monitoring:** AI systems should be continuously monitored and updated to ensure they remain accurate and fair.
- **Public Awareness:** Educating the public about AI, its benefits, and its risks can help people make informed decisions about how they use AI in their lives.

There is a need to embrace AI to automate mundane tasks and increase process efficiency in the way we work. AI has the potential to greatly enhance our everyday lives, but it's important to be aware of the risks and use it responsibly. We should stay informed about the benefits, ask question on the risks, and advocate for ethical use of AI. Together, we can harness the power of AI to create a better, more connected world. We Rotarians can play a significant role to propagate knowledge regarding ethical use of AI.

A WELL-DESERVED AWARD

By Rita Rego

Neokar Rita Rego is an entrepreneur, Founder and CEO at Speshally NHS Private Ltd. This NGO caters to the needs of the differently abled, providing them training in vocational skills so that they can become financially independent. She also places them in jobs. A brief report of her institution was presented in an earlier issue of Neo Vista.

For her passionate, path-breaking initiatives and for the commendable community services she is engaged in, she has deservedly been bestowed with a prestigious award, Alfa Awards 2024, by Alfa Communications. It was presented at a gala function by the former Union Minister of Home Affairs, and the former Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Hon. Sushilkumar Shinde.

Hearty congratulations Rita. RC Mumbai Neo is fortunate to have you as a member and to take part in some of your activities. Read below her musings on her journey and its goals.



My journey has been a long & interesting one; spanning from being a budding corporate aficionado and over the years of dealing with the specially abled, which supports the visually impaired youth through upskilling, training and support. I realized that even after upskilling and training, very few of them get good jobs. This

led to the idea that in our company jobs could be created wherein all categories of specially abled can work in different departments along with the ones who can make products and financial empowerment could be within their grasp. That's when I created a Social Enterprise Speshally NHS Pvt. Ltd.

"Speshally" is a social enterprise that creates a sustainable ecosystem for specially-abled individuals to measure and multiply the impact on the society by making it more Sustainable, Inclusive and Environment friendly, focusing on recruitment creating equal opportunities, pop ups, corporate gifting & sensitization workshops.

Our Mission is to positively impact the lives of 500 specially-abled individuals in 5 years by celebrating exceptional experiences and products, leveraging the senses of the specially-abled individuals worldwide.



SARMISTHA DE



I am one of the founding members of De Zalmi & Associates, a law firm specializing in entertainment laws, alongwith my husband, Sunil Zalmi. After 13 years of marriage and raising two wonderful children, we took the leap to establish our law firm earlier this year—a journey that feels akin to welcoming a third child! I have come to realize that while

starting something new can be exhilarating, nurturing it to reach its full potential is a profound journey.

Balancing my professional responsibilities with motherhood is both a challenge and a joy, as I navigate life with

my two kids, ages 9 years and 6 years. This experience constantly teaches me the importance of time management, resilience, and creativity. When I do find a moment to myself, I love immersing myself in reading, listening to music, and watching films, which inspire and recharge me.

I also cherish my amateur gardening pursuits. Though there are times I feel like giving up, my family's encouragement always reignites my passion. Each small success in the garden reinforces my belief that, despite setbacks, we must always strive to grow—life is indeed a continuous journey. Through this blend of professional dedication and personal passion, I aim to cultivate a fulfilling life that honours both my career and my role as a mother.

“Each small success in the garden reinforces my belief that, despite setbacks, we must always strive to grow—life is indeed a continuous journey.”



HARIHARAN SIVARAMAKRISHNAN



“I grew up surrounded by the lush greenery and cultural richness of the region. Childhood was filled with the sounds of temple bells, the aroma of home-cooked meals, and the warmth of family gatherings.”

Born into a traditional Iyer family in the serene town of Palakkad, Kerala, I grew up surrounded by the lush greenery and cultural richness of the region. Childhood was filled with the sounds of temple bells, the aroma of home-cooked meals, and the warmth of family gatherings.

As I grew older, a passion for commerce and business began to take shape. This passion led to completing a graduation in commerce, a significant milestone that opened new doors. With a degree in hand and dreams in mind, I made a bold decision to move to Delhi, a bustling metropolis that promised opportunities and new experiences.

The transition from the tranquil life of Palakkad to the fast-paced environment of Delhi was challenging yet exhilarating. In Delhi, I embarked on a professional journey, navigating the complexities of a new job and adapting to the vibrant culture of the city.

In Delhi, I started a career in

advertising media, diving into the dynamic world of marketing and communication. The fast-paced environment of the city and the challenges of the job were both exhilarating and rewarding.

In 2010, a new chapter began as Head of Compliance moved from Middle East and joined GroupM, a global leader in media investment. This move not only expanded professional horizons but also brought new cultural experiences and personal growth.

A career spanning over 30+ years of media experience in India and MENA region with leading Creative & Media companies Ogilvy, Mudra, Sabco ART (Muscat), Axis Integrated & Mediaedge (Dubai & Jordan) & Groupm INDIA.

My ambition is to traverse the path of being a true Business Partner to a Trusted Financial Advisor.



CLUB MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 12

A regular meeting of RCM Neo was held on September 12 at 7:30 PM at The Club. The highlight of the meeting was the presence of a large number of prospective members, who were introduced by President Sridhar followed

by their self-introduction.

Sridhar added an interesting twist to the proceedings by conducting KBC - a game on the lines of the famous TV show with the same initials.

OFF TO A GREAT START: THE INSTALLATION OF ROTARACT CLUB OF LS RAHEJA SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

By Meera Ramachandran

Youth have the power and energy, imagination and idealism and these were in abundant evidence at the Installation of the first Rotaract Club of RCM Neo at the LS Raheja School of Architecture on 30th September. As an exam-

assistance to the students to engage in diverse service activities. Neo President Sridhar dwelt on the various life-long benefits that can be enjoyed by being a Rotaractor and gave an overview of projects that can be taken up.



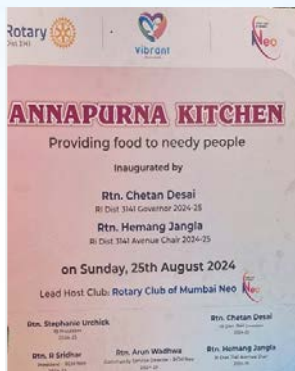
ple, the ceremony was aptly named 'Renaissance' and a beautiful logo was part of the banner, which encased a blue moth. The moth is a creature that undergoes metamorphosis, that is, it grows and transforms, and hence resonates with the theme of renaissance. Its connection with celestial elements also stands for aspiration. The moth had inspired 83 students, who have already signed up to be Rotaractors! Charter President Ankita Patanwadia in her inaugural address named the various people in her life, who have given her the confidence and competence to be a leader and pledged her commitment to the success of the new club. The Principal Mandar Parab thanked RCM Neo for giving his over-seventy-year-old institution the opportunity for the formation of a Rotaract Club and extended full support. He also thanked Dattatray Bhagwat for introducing our club to him and for the follow up by Kala Sridhar. He also said henceforth 30th September will be celebrated as the Rotaract Foundation Day at the College. Faculty coordinator Harish Nayar promised to lend full

Others who addressed the gathering were DRR (District Rotaract Representative) Nikita Sunil, PDRC (Past Dist Rotaract Chairman) and Current Dist. Avenue Chair Pankaj Phatarphod and ZRR (Zonal Rotaract Representative) Adnan Vahavati. Neo's Director of Youth Service announced that henceforth a digital copy of Neo Vista will be sent to the Faculty Coordinator/President and invited the Rotaractors to contribute write ups to it.

President Ankita introduced her Board and badges were pinned by President Sridhar and DRR Nikita. The team consists of an impressive array of seven office bearers and eleven Directors with impressive portfolios such as HRD, Editor, PR Marketing, Entrepreneurship Development, Social Media Management, Sports Development, Digital Communications, Partnership in Service, Community Service and Sports Development. Certainly, a commendable beginning and a promising onward journey. The Editorial Committee and all Neokars extend best wishes and blessing.

FOOD FOR THE NEEDY

By Meera Ramachandran



Neekar Hemang established the Annapurna Kitchen for providing hot meals to those in need. A brief report of this appeared in the previous issue of Neo Vista. The actual roll out began on September 21 with a spread to feed 150, made possible by a sponsor. It was gratifying to see the clean kitchen, the wholesome

food and the joy in the faces of the children, the adults and the aged who were being served. More Neokars have come forward to donate to this worthy cause. It is indeed a humbling experience as one bows to the heaven for the privileges bestowed on one, as well as for the opportunity to serve others, even if in small ways.

BOTTLES TO BENCHES

By Natasha Dcosta

Mumbai, the city of dreams, is also a city grappling with the nightmare of waste. Every day, over 7,500 metric tons of garbage are generated, and yet, only a mere 10% is treated. The rest lies in massive landfills, an ever-growing threat to the environment and the city's future. In the face of this alarming reality, the Bottle to Bench initiative by SUN Start Upcycling Now Pvt Ltd, in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Mumbai Neo, is a breath of fresh

air—and a call to action.

This project exemplifies how grassroots efforts can address global problems like waste management. Through a simple yet powerful idea—collecting a 1000 kg of plastic and paper waste from schools and colleges; in turn for upcycled plastic benches—the initiative is not only fostering a culture of sustainability but also empowering the next generation to be change-makers. By educating students on the impor-



tance of waste segregation and offering a tangible reward, the project transforms what would have been waste into something useful for the community.

What makes this initiative stand out is its scalability and potential for long-term impact. With every *1,000 kg of waste collected*, a school or college receives an *upcycled bench*—a symbol of how small efforts, when combined, can lead to significant change. These benches, placed in schools, parks, and societies, serve as constant reminders that sustainability is within our grasp.

But the true brilliance of Bottle to Bench lies in how it extends beyond the school gates. Take the case of SIES College of Arts, Commerce, and Science, which has taken this project to new heights. Their students have pledged to reach *1,000 societies*, impacting over 80,000 people in the process. This community-driven approach amplifies the project's message, showing how individual actions, when united, can lead to widespread environmental and societal change.

The statistics are staggering. The initiative aims to collect *80,000 kg of waste* in just *6 weeks*. That's 80,000 kg of plastic and paper that would have otherwise clogged our streets, polluted our oceans, and filled our landfills. Instead, it will be transformed into 80 benches, which will benefit schools, societies, and public spaces. The initiative's success demonstrates that sustainable practices can be implemented on a large scale—and fast.

Moreover, the project doesn't just focus on the environment; it builds civic responsibility, fosters community engagement, and promotes practical, sustainable solutions that resonate with all age groups. It's a model that can—and should—be replicated across cities and communities everywhere.

But while the initiative's immediate impact is laudable, its long-term effects may prove even more transformative. By instilling sustainable habits in today's youth, Bottle to Bench is creating a generation that understands the value of waste segregation, recycling, and responsible consumption. The lessons learned today will shape tomorrow's leaders and policymakers.

Yet, to make a lasting change, we need more schools, colleges, and communities to join in. The participation cost for schools is just **Rs. 3500/-** a small price to pay for a cleaner, greener future. It's a project that not only gives back to the environment but also educates and equips future generations to care for it.

As this project grows, so does the hope for a more sustainable Mumbai. The Bottle to Bench initiative is a reminder that waste is not a burden but a resource waiting to be tapped. It's a shining example of how innovative thinking, community action, and youthful energy can combine to tackle one of the city's most pressing challenges.

Let's not wait for the problem to become too big to solve. Let's act now, with projects like Bottle to Bench lighting the way. Together, we can turn Mumbai's waste into something wonderful.

Sensitizing RNS International Students on the Environment



On September 23, I spoke to 272 pre-primary, primary and secondary students of RNS International School on the Bottle to Bench project.

CPR CAMPS AT RAILWAY STATIONS ACROSS WESTERN RAILWAY

By Kala Sridhar and Sridhar Ramasubramanian

The CPR and first aid training session held at the EMU car shed at Bombay Central was a satisfying project. More than 65 supervisor grade engineers attended the session and sat through the entire session with rapt attention.

Dr. Hetan Shah delivered an effective lecture on the need of CPR and how it helps to revive a person. The section of differences between a cardiac arrest and a heart attack drew maximum attention of the audience. The questions were related more to prevention of heart disease, its proper management, and the

things one should watch out for in heart disease. Diabetes and heart disease were the other common questions. The session had almost all the participants including women demonstrate their learnings and try the same on the mannequins.

The Sun team was quite skilled, informative, and supportive. The Railways have given permission to conduct the camps across 17 railway stations. Subsequently the camp was held at Borivali Station too. Project coordinated by Rtn Arun Wadhwa.



DISTRICT PARTICIPATION AS CO HOSTS



September 13, 2024- Rtn Kala and Rtn Arun represented RCM Neo at the TRF seminar where our club was the Gold co host.



September 27, 2024- At the CSR Conclave where RCM Neo was Gold Co Host represented by Pres Sridhar and Rtn Arun and our CSR Partner.

PROJECT ROUND-UP

By Kala Sridhar and Sridhar Ramasubramanian



September 5, 2024- Recognition of educational support to 15 girl students at SCDB High School on the occasion of Teachers Day,



amounting to Rs 1,20,000. The donors were B Ramakrishna, Ms Suguna and Kishore Iyer, and Ms Ritika.



September 13, 2024- Donation of 3 desktops and a Sewing machine to Speshally. Donation of sewing machine coordinated by Rtn Hemang and Rtn Hari and Rtn Jyoti donated the desktops.



September 27, 2024- 3 sewing machines were donated at Mahakali caves road for the underprivileged to become self-reliant.



September 27, 2024- Eye check-up camp at Rishi Valmiki School Goregaon for 400 students.



September 27, 2024- Distribution of specs to the children (20) at Students academy post the eye check-up camp.





September 2, 2024 - Inauguration of Library at Nutan Vidya Mandir and J M Patel College. Apart from books and shelf, Ratnanidhi Foundation also donated a desktop to J M Patel College.



September 20, 2024- Blood donation camp at Andheri Station where 112 units of blood were collected.

September 14, 2024- Inauguration of Stray Happy Clinic by Rajya Sabha MP Priyanka Chaturvedi.



September 14, 2024- Distribution of Provision kits for 25 stray animal feeders at the inauguration of Stray Happy Clinic.



September 15, 2024- RCM Neo provided educational necessities such as notebooks, pens, and geometry boxes, along with chocolates and Orio biscuits. Also contributed 300 litres of paint for school renovations in Jawahar's Adivasi area, Palghar district. Project valued at 1.53 lacs coordinated by Rtn Hemang Jangla.

September 24, 2024- Mr Vasudevan donated this bed to Adhar Centre at Badlapur. Project co-ordinator Datta Bhagwat.



To Know More: :

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