



Let's Inspire!



PRESIDENT 2025-26

IR President's Message

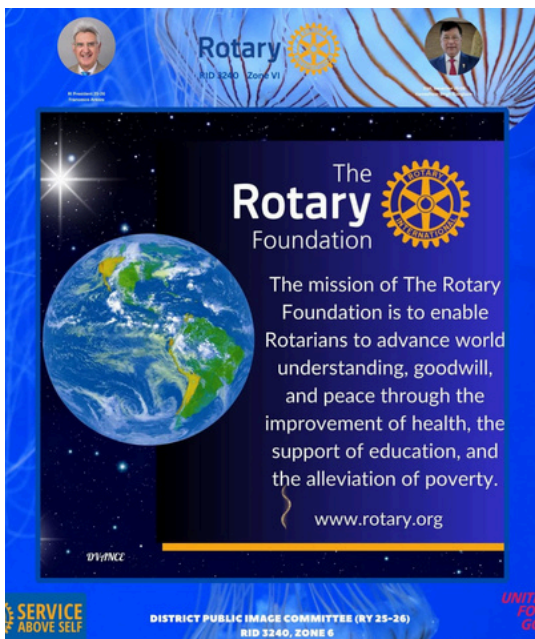
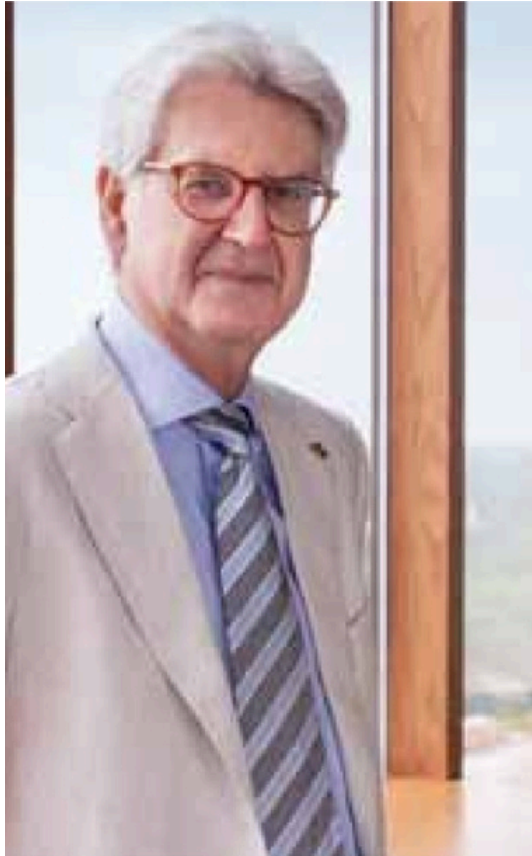
Count on preparation, not luck

Not long ago, in a small health centre in the village of Aaye in southwest Nigeria, a woman arrived in labour carrying twins. The facility was short-staffed. The nurse midwife in charge was not present. A community health worker stepped forward. She had participated in Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria, a Rotary Foundation Programs of Scale initiative. And though she was not formally trained as a midwife, she was equipped with essential emergency obstetric skills. Hours later, both babies had been delivered, one at the health centre and the other at a general hospital, where the mother had been referred after complications were quickly identified. The newborns and their mother were alive and safe. Women around the world face similar circumstances every day – moments when the difference between life and loss depends on well-trained medical staff and reliable systems and procedures.

Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria exists to increase the chances that those moments end in hope. By strengthening health systems and training frontline workers, this programme helps communities protect mothers and children even when circumstances are difficult.

This work reflects the very heart of Rotary service. Service is not only what we do when conditions are ideal. It is what we do when systems are strained, resources are limited, and the need is urgent. It is the commitment to prepare people before a crisis arrives and to stand with communities when it does. Maternal and child health is not an abstract goal. It is deeply personal. It is a mother who survives childbirth. It is a newborn who takes a first breath. It is a family that remains whole because someone was trained, ready, and cared enough to act. Rotary understands that service means investing in people and systems long before they are tested. Programmes like Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria show what is possible when Rotary brings together local knowledge, global partnerships, and sustainable solutions. By working alongside health professionals and local leaders, Rotary helps ensure that lifesaving care does not depend on luck or location. The story of the mother and her twins is at its core a story of service. It is a reminder that Rotary's impact is measured in human moments when people step forward to help others in their most vulnerable hours. When we Unite for Good, service becomes more than an ideal. It becomes a lifeline for families, a source of strength for communities, and a promise that Rotary will continue to go wherever help is needed most.

FRANCESCO AREZZO
President, Rotary International



THE FACE BEHIND THE ROLE

Rtn. Zohar Attaree.



Born and raised in Mumbai, I am Zohar Attaree – a simple, introspective individual with a deep passion for science and education.

My academic journey began at St. Xavier's College, where my fascination with physics took root. I was greatly inspired by the brilliant minds at TIFR and BARC, whose influence shaped my path profoundly. This connection led to my active involvement in the International Science Olympiad, where I had the privilege of representing India twice as a Team Leader, mentoring students who competed across different countries.

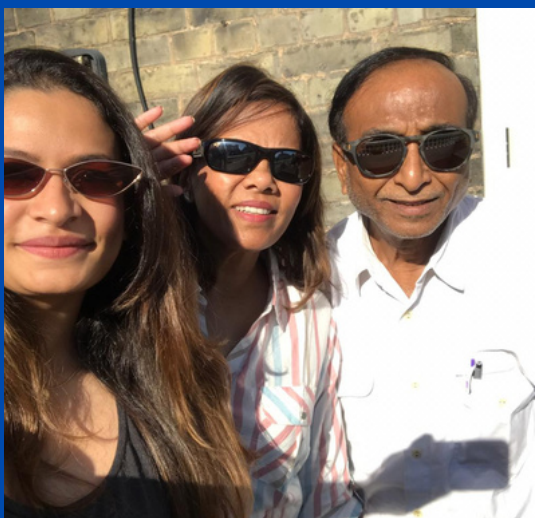
I went on to embrace teaching as a vocation, offering instruction in Physics and Mathematics across both National and International Baccalaureate curricula. My commitment has always extended beyond the classroom – particularly toward students who need that extra hand.

For over three decades, I have volunteered in free cataract eye camps, assisting doctors with IOL implant procedures in remote, underserved areas where access to medical care remains a distant reality.

Driven by a deep sensitivity toward the educational needs of the underprivileged, I joined RCBN to connect with like-minded individuals who share the same vision. I have delivered talks at various institutions alongside my professors and conducted Teacher Training Programs in Experimental Science through BASE, an initiative run by TIFR scientists.

I am also actively associated with Nehru Science Centre, working to develop affordable, accessible science experiments for students across the board.

text



ANN-TASTIC MOMENTS ...

Shirley Lazarus - A Journey Etched in Strength and Grace

An 'ABSTRACT' Essay that expresses a quality or characteristic apart from mentioning any events or instances !]

In a world filled with twists and turns, triumphs and challenges, Shirley's journey stands out as a testament to the resilience of the human soul.

Spanning four decades in Inner Wheel, amongst a fascinating life, this captivating story unfolds like a gripping documentary or a mega blockbuster, captivating audiences with its depth, emotion, and sheer magnitude.

In the grand tapestry of life.

Her journey stands as a shining example of the human spirit's capacity for growth, transformation, and renewal.

Of her determination to reach ultimate triumphs she has overcome & bravely embraced intriguing opportunities to forge & ensure a path that endures for eternity !

Shirley's measure of a meaningful life is not only in the destination, but in the journey itself— a journey filled with love, laughter, some sorrow & much joy & above all, the unbreakable spirit of one individual's quest for a purpose and its fulfilment.

Do not be fooled by her petite stature and demeanour, she is probably the most willingly transparent person who is ready to stand up, undefended, for truth, justice & inclusiveness sharing everything she has - Shirley is simply INCREDIBLE !

I have known her pretty much less than most of you -- but all I can say, such is her dedication to work ,her enthusiasm and eagerness to complete a task at hand.....I will indulge in just one fleeting example..... As part of Inner Wheel she has been the Hon. Secretary not once , not twice , not thrice but eight times.

She has been the President again not once, not twice but three times - the third time being the Centurion and Diamond jubilee President of IWCBN.

She stands tall to the testimony of time that woman can achieve anything.

And this is not the end.

She now enters a new chapter in her journey, filled with _promise and opportunity._

Her 'Mantra' being :

A strong woman knows she has strength enough for the journey, but a woman of strength knows it is in the journey where she will become strong."



🌸 Shirley the supernatural angel. 🌸

From the Editor's Desk

Nine editions in—and what a journey it has been.

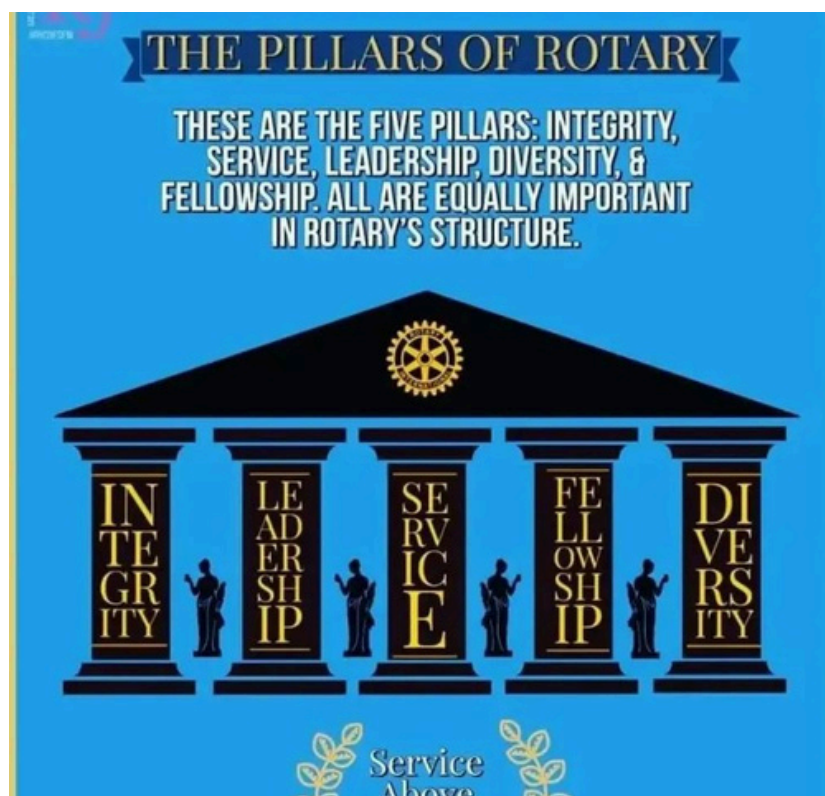
Somewhere along the way, these pages have transformed into more than just a collection of words. They have become a mirror of our moments, our milestones, and the quiet passion that binds us together. Each edition now carries a sense of belonging—a reminder that every voice matters and every story adds value.

With every release comes a different emotion—less of hesitation, more of pride. A confidence that we are building something meaningful, something that resonates and stays.

What makes this journey truly special is the togetherness behind it. The willingness to share, to express, to contribute, and to keep showing up—edition after edition.

Nine editions later, this is no longer just a beginning. It is a rhythm we have found, a space we have nurtured, and a journey we continue to cherish.

Here's to growing stronger, deeper, and more connected with every edition ahead.



25th April'26- NATIONAL BURN CENTRE - OPERATION RESTORE.

A Joint Initiative by RCBN and RC Deonar



Once a week - Rendezvous



11th April'26- Raj Nair on AI a boon or bane ?



18th April'26- Mohini Sharma , Founder and National Director of Mrs India Inc. spoke on her journey that she walked to be where she is now.

Vivekananda Netralaya (VN) A Crown Jewel of RCBN Community Service An article by - Hitesh Sharma



With almost 140,000 patients screened in OPD and Camps and more than 46,600 free surgeries done since it's commencing operations in April 2017 and supported by RCBN, clearly, "The Vivekananda Netralaya", RKMA Dehradun, is indeed, one of the Crown Jewels of Community Service done by RCBN.

Vivekananda Netralaya at Ramakrishna Mission Dehradun, under the leadership of Swami Asimatmanandaji Maharaj, continues to perform exceedingly well and serving selflessly the poor and needy.

A 50 bed eye hospital, with help from the Rotary Foundation, was set up in 2017 to do 5,000 cataract surgeries a year (minimum 70 % surgeries free for patients) and conducted 5,078 eye surgeries in the year 2019-20 itself (4587 surgeries free for patients). The hospital has been expanding and, a few months back, it has been converted to a 100 bed hospital with added ENT and Dental departments.

VN now performs Cataract, Retina, Glaucoma and Cornea surgeries. Till December 2023 VN conducted 46,655 (41,084 free to patients, including 5,773 under Ayushman Bharat Scheme) surgeries. Interestingly, while it is based in Uttarakhand, true to RKM mission of serving all needy patients, it supports several patients from Uttarakhand and also neighbouring states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. They have done 868 camps in villages in the neighbourhood territory in Uttarakhand and the neighbouring states, with 88,470 camps out patients – more than 56,000 treated at camp site and distributed more than 15,000 spectacles. Rotarians and The Rotary Foundation are recognised as one of the largest donor for VN. A huge number of our large hearted and generous donors have been contributing for this noble cause. We as Rotary have contributed over Rs. 9 crores for this project till date and are highly satisfied with utilisation of our donations for a good cause.

VN plans to conduct 15,000 to 18,000 free surgeries in 2023-24 depending on our donations. RCBN is planning a global grant of almost US\$ 200,000 to support patients in VN for free surgeries.

Background

A great project conceptualised and implemented by RCBN, all thanks to the Prime Mover and RCBN's AKS member Baldev Arora and Usha Arora under the Aegis of Ramakrishna Mission! A project which has deeply impacted the lives of thousands of people and hopefully will impact more than 3 lakh people, who, as per census done by the Uttarakhand Government, suffer blindness and eye related severe problems. It will also help reduce the incidence rate by detecting problems early and providing solutions like providing free glasses, medicines to patients identified in camps by the Hospital.

Project

What started as an aspiration for Baldev to pursue his dream of building a Charitable Eye Hospital in the Mystic Himalayas, really had him pursue it in a true Corporate Style of Execution. While the dream was clear, Baldev really travelled several parts of the country and met several institutions to identify a sustainable institution to build a super speciality eye hospital. Baldev approached our own Dr Quresh Maskati for

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guidance, he not only provided guidance, he also connected Baldev to Arvind Eye Institute, Madurai. Several Rotarians like Nick Israni, Suresh Gandhi and Babulal Todi helped identifying and organising meetings with various other institutions. Also Rotarians like Habil Khorakiwala offered technical support in how such an institution can be built. After several months of meetings and thinking, Ramakrishna Mission (RKM) was identified as the place to fulfil the dream. RKM as a philosophy, believes in taking care without the commercial aspect, more sustaining it through donations. Also, RKM don't take up projects which they cannot handle on a long term basis through donations, etc. Discussions were held with Swami Nityasuddhanandaji Maharaj, Head of Ramakrishna Mission Ashram Kankhal, Haridwar to set up the hospital. While he supported the idea, he advised to approach RKM Dehradun. RKM Dehradun met the criteria of an institution which could own the hospital and make it sustainable. Also, Dehradun and the Uttarakhand mountains (popularly known as Dev Lok by the locals) offered patients which needed treatment. Swami Asimatmanandaji Maharaj, Head of RKM, Dehradun had in depth discussions and examined various aspects of the proposal and finally agreed to support the project. He took the project proposal to the Head Quarters at Belur Math. After discussions with Trustees and review by the Managing Committee, HQ gave green light to proceed, including, giving it the most respected name 'Vivekananda Netralaya'. Kudos to Swami Asimatmanandaji Maharaj for the hard work in getting this approved at a time when Belur Math was generally not in favour of starting new hospitals in view of very large commitments at the existing hospitals and all the charity that they are doing.

At the time of signing MOU between RKM and Baldev, 25% of his total financial commitment for the project was paid by Baldev and Usha Arora as initial payment. This was approximately Rs 40 million that Baldev paid for construction of the building in his personal capacity beyond the aegis of RCBN. As Rotary does not fund any building or land cost, Swami Asimatmanandaji Maharaj, duly assisted by Swami Dhyanasthanandaji Maharaj, other Swamis, took the leadership in collecting funds from Corporates, Individuals, Devotees and Friends and were able to collect Rs.110 Million (including Rs 40 million donated by Baldev and Usha in his personal capacity) to construct the building at RKM's own 11 acre land.

It was clear that the project would require additional funds. Some of Baldev's personal friends came forward and contributed significant amounts. Baldev then discussed with friends in Rotary. PDG Vijay Jalan and PP Firoz Kachwalla, who suggested going for a global grant. The then President Suhit Jahveri arranged a meeting with DG Gopal Mandhania. The DG also agreed that the project is fit for Rotary to participate at a District and Global level. Thereafter, it was Baldev's wish that all RCBN members be involved in this noble project. A group of Rotarians led by Baldev and President Suhit went and saw RKM in 2017. The group comprised both doctors and other fellow Rotarians. And in true RCBN spirit, along with a great fellowship (which included getting Darshan of Lord Badrinathji), with great enthusiasm, these seeds of RCBN's involvement in Vivekananda Netralaya were laid. With commitments from District and RCBN, Baldev and Usha paid up the first US\$ 30,000 to start the process. The real action then followed with Ashok Ajmera (the following President) supporting Baldev and the core team of RCBN and RKM in putting the entire details of the overall project that RCBN and Rotary would participate in and then pursuing it with a lot of passion and vigour. The details and quantum required, what Rotary would support were identified and detailed out. The entire team that led, included Trustees Like Firoz Kachwalla, Zain Quettawalla and PP like Mahendra Thacker to prepare the Global grant applications. Quresh and Jinish supported the identification of equipment vendors and helped negotiate prices. These efforts culminated in signing an MOU with RKM. What followed was the largest Global Grant project by RCBN of more than US\$ 424,000 to provide all the medical equipment and instruments for the RKM VN hospital to become a super speciality eye hospital. Large hearted RCBNites pulled in donations to meet the entire fund collection for RCBN contribution of US\$ 205,000. The entire funds collection task was led by the TRF Committee Chair Suresh Gandhi along with President Ashok and Baldev. 51 members came forward to donate funds. Also, we had kind hearted member like Krishna Kumar Agarwal, who decided to donate medicines, which were made at his plant at Dehradun, as free of cost to the Hospital. Equally, Nick Israni donated Rs 1 million directly to the hospital – this was in addition to the US\$ 16,000 that he contributed as part of RCBN contribution.

Thanks to the negotiations with equipment vendors by Quresh, Jinesh and RKM, we actually saved money and with TRF approval, the money was used to fund a Bus for the Hospital. PDG Vijay Jalan not only donated but also helped and guided in how TRF works and the correct procedure for the Global Grant application.

Vivekananda Netralaya (VN)

A Crown Jewel of RCBN Community Service

An article by - Hitesh Sharma

The entire work of construction to setting up all the equipment was completed in record time of less than a year. Even the Swamiji's at RKM acknowledged that this was only possible thanks to the perseverance and involvement of Baldev that RKM could build the VN in record time with no compromises on quality. The starting premise of the institution is to serve all on an equal basis – irrespective of whether the patient is a paid patient or whether it is a free procedure. Equally, we had the fastest clearance of the GG application (keeping in mind that past applications needed to be regularised to get this cleared). In true RCBN style, and with perseverance and dedication of the leaders, this daunting challenge was also met. RCBN WAS ON ROLL!

On April 18, 2018, this 50-bedded, 26000 square feet super speciality Eye Hospital, “The Vivekananda Netralaya” was inaugurated along with the centenary year celebrations of Ramakrishna Mission's Dehradun Ashram. A large group of Rotarians went to participate in the Inauguration of the Hospital and to donate a Bus to Vivekananda Netralaya. What a memorable ceremony done by RKM! VN was inaugurated at the Holy hands of Swami Gautamanadaji Maharaj, Vice President, RKM BelurMath. All the medical equipment donated by Rotary Club of Bombay North in partnership with the RC Towsontowne USA under the Global Grant of TRF was inaugurated at the Holy hands of SwamiSuviranandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, RKM Belur Math. About 200 Swamiji's from India and abroad, a large number of devotees, local people and members of RC of Dehradun Central (our local Rotary partner in this project) attended the inaugural function. A two day event which included spiritual bhajans and discourse by the Maharaj's and a great feast for everyone graciously hosted by Baldev and Usha Arora ended with deep satisfaction of service and loads of memories to be cherished. RCBN MADE IT!

RCBN then decided to partly fund the VN Hospital for free cataract surgeries for the poor. What followed is a 2nd Global grant application for US\$ 96,473, entirely funded from RCBN by the Benevolent Baldev and Usha Arora. The hospital incurs a cost for holding camps, screening patients, treating patients at site and providing free spectacles to the needy and thereafter actually bringing the patients needing surgery to the hospital for treatment. They also provide 2 days of stay to these patients. The 2nd Global grant was to support free cataract surgeries. Again, President Sanjiv Kulkarni and prime mover Baldev were supported by Mahendra Thacker and the Trustees Firoz and Zain in making the GG application and helping obtain the funds from TRF. In addition to the global grant of US\$ 96,500, RCBN also donated another bus to VN thanks to the donations of big hearted Dr Sonal and Rajendra Agarwal (Rs 15 lakhs) and donations from Hemendra Shah, Hitesh Sharma and Pradip Shroff. Also Ajeet Arenja brought in contribution from Titan (as part of the fund raising efforts that RCBN undertook under President Sanjiv Kulkarni) of Rs 5 lakhs for free surgeries. A group of 30 rotarians and spouses visited VN hospital on 25th May 2019 and once again, in a great ceremony, donated the Bus and handed over the first cheques for funding the free surgeries. This was combined by a great Fellowship at Kanathal. This Global Grant was completed in early 2020.

What followed was a scaling up of support from RCBN through new Global grants. Hemendra Shah (who became president in 2020) decided to scale up the project support. A 3rd global of US\$ 321,500 followed for supporting surgeries at VN. We supported more than 5200 surgeries for Cataract, Retina and Glaucoma under this grant. The large hearted donors included Baldev and Usha (US\$ 90,000), Nick Israni (US\$ 29,500), Gautam Gandhi (US\$15,000), Sonal and Rajen Agarwal (US\$ 10,000), Hemendra Shah (US\$5,000), Chandrakant Gandhi (US\$ 4,500), Krishnakumar Agarwal (US\$ 4,225), Hitesh Sharma (US\$2,500) and Zain Quettawalla and Pradip Shroff with US\$ 1,000 each. The balance donations came through District 3141, Rotary Foundation, Rotary Club of Townson Towne (US\$6,300) and RCBN Trust. In spite of COVID when there was hardly any surgeries during a 6 month period, VN managed to complete the project by mid 2021.

Vivekananda Netralaya (VN) A Crown Jewel of RCBN Community Service An article by - Hitesh Sharma

This was followed by a 4th global grant in excess of US\$ 152,000 for surgeries under President Ruksana. The large donors this time included Baldev and Usha Arora, Sonal and Rajen Agarwal, Suresh Gandhi, Satya and Leela Agarwala, Chandrakant Gandhi, Ajeet Arenja, Hemendra Shah, Hitesh Sharma, Haradhan Purohit and AK Viswanathan. Interesting, through the support of Hemendra Shah, we also got more than US\$ 13,500 from Executor of Late Freny Kaikhushru Parakh Trust. The balance support came from Rotary Foundation and District 3141. All the surgeries have already been completed under this Global Grant.

A 5th grant (this time part of CSR India Grant) to support equipment followed under President Nafisa Kanchwala for US \$ 73,000 and has been completed. Major donors include

Application for the 6th grant (Global grant) of almost US\$ 195,000 has been made by the President Nafisa Kanchwala. We will talk about this grant, but before that let's get to know RKM and VN a little better

Ramakrishna Mission Ashram

Ramakrishna Mission Ashram is a worldwide, non-political, non-sectarian spiritual organization which has been engaged in various forms of humanitarian, social service activities for more than a century. Inspired by the ideals of renunciation and service, the monks and devotees of the Math and Mission serve millions of men, women and children, without any distinction of caste, religion or race, because they see the living God in them. The mission is named after and inspired by Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886), the great 19th century saint from Bengal who is regarded as the Prophet of the Modern Age and was founded by Sri Ramakrishna's Chief Disciple, Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), one of the foremost thinkers and religious leaders of the present age. RKM's MOTTO formulated by Swamiji Vivekananda is "ATMANO MOKSHARTHAM JAGAD HITAYA CHA" which means "For one's own salvation and for the welfare of the world".

Work as worship, potential divinity of the soul and harmony of religions are three of the noteworthy RKM IDEALS on which the organisation is based. The service activities are based on the message "Jiva is Shiva" by Sri Ramakrishna & Swami Vivekananda's message of "Daridra Narayan" to indicate that service to poor is service to God. It is this ideal of service to man as service to God that sustains the large number of hospitals, dispensaries, mobile medical units, schools, colleges, rural development centres and many other social service institutions that RKM runs.

Today Ramakrishna Mission runs around 1200 education institutes, 14 hospitals, 116 Dispensaries, 57 Mobile-Medical Units, 7 Nursing Training Institutes and major relief works. Medical camps and eye camps are organized regularly for rural and needy patients. Apart from that, Leprosy case detection and treatment is being done by their dispensaries. Maternity and child welfare services are provided by their hospitals as well as through some of their dispensaries. Significant amount of work is being done in rural and tribal areas.

RKM Dehradun owns and is situated on an 11 acre facility at Dehradun and has constructed the said Eye care centre at this site. RKM Dehradun was established in 1919 and is involved in selfless service and runs a charitable dispensary in addition to Vivekananda Netralaya and also provides mobile medical service.

Why Dehradun?

The State of Uttarakhand was formed in 2000 by combining 10 hilly districts of former Uttar Pradesh. It has a population of more than 10 million with 93% in hilly areas with very little industrial development. This has resulted in poverty in majority of population. Health care is a major problem facing the population.

According to National Program for Control of Blindness, prevalence of blindness in Uttarakhand is 0.96. Considering that there are very few charitable eye hospitals and that the government infrastructure is grossly inadequate for the eye care in the hilly areas and that at the current rate the back log of cataract surgeries may take 20 years, Dehradun seemed to be an apt place.

Operations and work at VN

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The Vivekananda Netralaya hospital provides Advance Ophthalmic Medical Treatment of all kinds to benefit underprivileged patients. RKM, at its OPD and through medical camps at various locations identifies patients for cataract, glaucoma and retina surgeries to be done at its Eye Hospital. During the process, patients identified for other eye diseases are taken by bus to Vivekanand Netralaya for cataract, glaucoma and retina surgeries. Patients identified for other diseases are referred to other government hospitals or hospital managed by the RKM at Kankhal, Haridwar for free of charge treatment. The statistics below show what a commendable work the Institution has been doing for now just a little more than only 6 years. BRAVO!! BRAVO!!

Chart of surgeries till Dec 2023 is attached as Pdf.

Clearly with 3 buses at their disposal, VN is now fully utilising the facilities for community service. A record number of almost 1000 surgeries were done in the month of October 2023[HS1]. RKM Dehradun has done several enhancements to the facilities. They established Vision centres (or satellite centres) in Sahaspur, Rudraprayag and Guptkashi thereby extending their reach and impact in the remote regions of Uttarakhand. RKM also enhanced the capacity at Dehradun by adding 50 beds and a 4 bedded OT adjoining to the VN Hospital. This new hospital called "Maa Sarada Sevalaya" was inaugurated on March 29, 2023.

In addition to In April 2021, RKM Dehradun also introduced an ENT clinic with a mission to offer affordable yet exemplary care for ear, nose, and throat diseases. Since its inception, the ENT department has served over 3,000 patients, with the numbers steadily increasing. The synergy between ophthalmology and ENT is crucial, as diseases of the eyes often have connections to ear, nose, and throat conditions. For instance, during the COVID-19 period, cases of BLACK FUNGUS necessitated consultations between ENT surgeons and ophthalmologists. Moreover, conditions like lacrimal drainage pathway diseases may require endoscopic surgery via the nose, making the expertise of ENT surgeons essential, especially before performing cataract surgery for patients with lacrimal diseases.

Recognizing the significance of maintaining a holistic balance between the eyes and ears, RKM Dehradun is now dedicated to providing audiological and speech assessment facilities within the ENT centre. Previously, close to 1,200 patients per year were referred outside for these essential tests, which proved financially burdensome for the lower socio-economic income groups, with almost 40% unable to afford them. By making these services available RKM Dehradun hospital, the aim is to significantly benefit these patients and improve their disease outcomes.

'Maa Sarada Sevalaya,' spans an area of 26,300 sq. ft., encompassing four floors dedicated to the ENT and Dental Departments, along with Eye Operations. Through the 5th RCBN Grant (CSR), the facility was upgraded with advanced equipment for ENT services. The dental clinic has expanded to four chairs attended by five dentists. On the people front, VN has grown to a dedicated team of 8 Eye Surgeons, 2 visiting consultants, 1 ENT Surgeon, 1 Physician, 100 Paramedical professionals, 24 Administrative Staff members and 80 Other Supporting Staff. Many of the doctors now speak at events and VN is well acknowledge in the area for their expertise. Apart from this, VN periodically has doctor devotees who volunteer their time and services to serve people at the hospital.

Through these efforts, Vivekananda Netralaya continues to exemplify its dedication to providing comprehensive and compassionate care, transforming the lives of countless individuals in need. While statistics are great, one needs to really meet the patients to understand the true value of the work being done. Most patients who have been treated had given up hope of having a clear vision. For them, it was a fate of God or age, but the Joy and Gratitude that they had for VN and RCBN when they could actually clearly see things cannot be described. The age group of the patients is quite diverse and equally many of them are support or bread earners for the family. The ENT and dental part have added to the providing a better life to many more patients

While we have summarised the statistics of VN above, what needs equal recognition is what RKM Dehradun did during the COVID time. The entire VN facility was converted into a dedicated Covid Care Centre. Also centres were created in Augustmuni and Rudraprayag by VN and their staff of 90 people supported their 6 doctors and the visiting Doctors to support patients. RKM was honoured by an award by the State Government for all the efforts they put in supporting COVID patients and also administering 35,000 vaccination doses. RKM Dehradun also supported 800 families in nearby villages by providing essential ration to help them during challenging times. Makes RCBN proud of supporting an organisation so well knit in the well being of the community and going far beyond their means to help and support.

Vivekananda Netralaya (VN) A Crown Jewel of RCBN Community Service An article by - Hitesh Sharma

6th Global Grant

For the RCBN members, the satisfaction and joy of the good work happening is so much that we are doing one more Global grant application - a 6th grant (global grant) for a combined value of about US\$ 195,000. In discussions with RKM, RCBN plans to finance cost of free cataract, glaucoma and retina surgeries for poor and needy patients. Our Club has decided to support this noble cause by sponsoring 2900 cataract surgeries, 10 glaucoma surgeries, 10 Cornea surgeries and 30 retina surgeries at their on-campus Charitable Eye Hospital, Vivekananda Netralaya. [HS1]

President Nafisa Kanchwala with the able support of RCBN's global grant committee led by Hemendra Shah is now working with the entire RCBN team to get the Global Grant of about US\$195,000 approved by TRF. At a great Charter Day Event, [HS2] the Club's contribution was collected [HS3] in less than 5 minutes thanks to the donors who include Sonal and Rajen Agarwal (prime movers and a contribution of US\$60,000), Baldev Arora (US\$30,000), Suresh Gandhi (US\$10,000), Gautam Gandhi (US\$10,000), PDG Vijay Jalan (US\$10,000), Executors of Estate of Feny Parakh (US\$20,000), Chandrakant Gandhi (US\$2,000), Satya Agarwal (US\$2,000), President Nafisa Kanchwala (US\$1,000), AK Viswanathan (US\$1,000), Hemendra Shah (US\$1,000), Prakash Shah (US\$1,000), Hitesh Sharma (US\$1,000), Sanjiv Kulkarni (US\$501), Mahendra Thacker (US\$500), Rashmi Chokshi (US\$500), Kamal Chadda (US\$500), Ashok Doshi (US\$250), Kamal Chokshi (US\$250), Ajeet Arenja (US\$183), Nick Israni (Rs 500,000) and Dr Lalit Kanodia (Rs 200,000)

The application for the Global Grant has already been submitted and all formalities are done from RCBN side. Interestingly, because we have 10 global grants open, we need to close one of them for RCBN to get a clearance from Rotary foundation to proceed with this new grant to VN.

RCBN has not only been supporting in a financial way (which is visible to all), but the members have been pillars supporting in various ways. Quresh and Jinesh have helped on the medical front. Krisna Kumar Agarwal continues to support by providing free medicines manufactured by his plant. Baldev's contribution continues in building a Strong Social Foundation for Vivekananda Netralaya. Hemendra continues to support with interacting with VN and Rotary Foundation and its cadre to close the queries and support in getting grants closed.

Rotary Largesse

Clearly, the kind hearted Baldev and Usha Arora would have gone ahead and set up the hospital on their own, but with the Rotary world, RKM's VN Hospital is actually serving the needs of the region in a multi fold manner compared to what it would have been able to do on a stand-alone basis. This truly brings out the power of how Rotary World (TRF, District, foreign and local clubs along with the sponsoring club) adds almost 2-5 times of what Prime Mover contributes to the project. What may have taken several years to serve so many poor patients is now happening at a much faster and needed pace.

THAT'S THE POWER OF ROTARY FOUNDATION!!

Path Ahead

For VN Hospital, the next 1-2 years would be to stabilise the Hospital and become self-sustaining. This involves Doctors and the rest of Administration being stable and being well recognised – a journey already started with many doctors being called to speak at events. The journey thereafter, would be to convert the institution into a Training cum Educational Facility to help and support in developing the healthcare needs of the region while they continue to do the social charitable work. Post that an eye bank should be on the cards.

Need correction as we will be supporting full cost. It was not on the charter day. We got commitment by approaching individuals.

Vivekananda Netralaya (VN)
A Crown Jewel of RCBN Community Service
An article by - Hitesh Sharma

Most Corporates hunt for participating in great CSR projects. Given the work being done by VN, it is important that we also get the Hospital connected to many more Corporates so that more good of the community can be donethere. While focus is on the hospital, we also need to recognise the support that RCBN through prime mover Baldev Arora, have made in also helping set up a school for children of labourers in the area.

Vivekananda Netralaya, a project very dear to RCBN and a partnership worth not just cherishing but ensuring it blossoms. A Great Satisfying Community Service

Legacy started by RCBN in 2017/18 by inaugurating the VN should be continued and we hope the initiative reaches an even more grander scale in coming years in supporting the great work

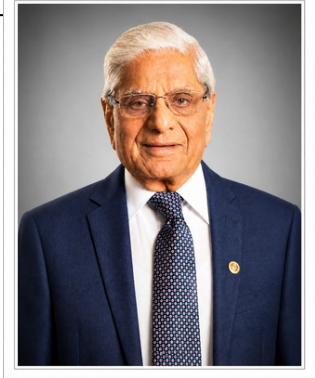
Upcoming events

**Deepak Rao's
Extra Sensory Perception
show & experience
28th May 2026
Bellisima Banquets, Opera House.**

Service Without Spotlight

Article by

PP Rtn. Dr. Satya Agarwala



Last year, during one of our Rotary service visits, we met a small group working quietly in a neglected corner of the city. There was no signboard, no branding, no formal structure—just a few committed individuals teaching underprivileged children in a modest space. Their resources were limited, but their dedication was limitless.

They did not ask for recognition. They did not present a proposal. They simply continued their work, day after day, with sincerity. That day, a simple thought stayed with me: sometimes, the most powerful service is already happening—we just need to notice it. This reflection connects deeply with a remarkable story.

MacKenzie Scott's journey is often associated with one of the most powerful companies in the world. A Princeton graduate, she was part of the early days of Amazon, working alongside Jeff Bezos when it was still a garage startup. Over time, Amazon grew into a global force, and following her divorce in 2019, she received a significant stake in the company, placing her among the wealthiest individuals in the world.

What followed, however, was not a story of accumulation—but of giving.

In a remarkably short span, she directed billions of dollars toward thousands of organizations working across education, healthcare, and social development. But what truly stands out is not just the scale of her giving—it is the philosophy behind it.

She chose not to control. She chose to trust.

Instead of building systems around her name, she identified people already doing meaningful work and empowered them with unrestricted support. No conditions. No reporting burdens. No demand for visibility.

Service Without Spotlight

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Just trust.

This approach challenges our conventional understanding of service. It invites us to ask a powerful question: Who needs this more than I do?

For us in Rotary, this question carries deep meaning.

We are builders. We create projects, lead initiatives, and take pride in structured impact. And rightly so—this is our strength. But there are moments when true service asks us to go beyond leadership.

It asks us to step back.

It asks us to strengthen others.

It asks us to trust.

I recall another instance within our own Rotary journey. Instead of launching a new project, we chose to support an existing grassroots initiative working in healthcare. With minimal intervention and without imposing structure, we extended support and simply allowed them to continue their work.

The results were extraordinary—not because we led, but because we enabled.

This is where service becomes deeper, more meaningful, and more human.

Too often, we associate service with ownership. We want to see our name, our system, our structure. But real impact is not always about visibility.

Sometimes, it is about belief.

There are countless individuals working silently, with integrity and commitment. What they need is not direction—but support.

When we provide that support without conditions, we remove barriers. We create speed. We allow impact to grow naturally.

This is service in its purest form.

It requires humility. It requires trust. And above all, it requires letting go of recognition.

Service Without Spotlight

Article by PP Rtn. Dr. Satya Agarwala

As Rotarians, we are blessed with resources—financial strength, networks, influence, and experience. But the real question is not what we can build. The real question is where we can make a difference without interfering. This shift—from doing to enabling—can multiply our impact far beyond what we imagine.

It also aligns us deeply with the essence of Service Above Self.

Because service is not always about standing in front. Sometimes, it is about standing behind—and ensuring that the work continues stronger than before. There is a quiet dignity in such service.

It may not be seen. It may not be applauded. But it transforms lives.

And perhaps, that is what true service is meant to do.

Quietly. Selflessly. And with lasting impact.

ensuring that the right work continues without interruption.



Under the Flag Exchange program, our club received a flag from RC Bharuch District: 3060, handed over by their Past President Rtn Rizwana, on 25th April at MCA Club.

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