



R. I. President: Gordon R. McNally

District Governor: Jeetender Gupta

ROTARY CLUB OF DELHI SOUTH NEWSLETTER "ASHOKA" January, 2024

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO THE CLUB



Dear Members

What an eventful start to the year. Centuries of wait culminated into Pran Pratishtha of Shri RamLalla Mandir in Ayodhya. The vibration of the temple could be felt far and wide and certainly I was no exception. This is a rarest of the rare event which we are fortunate to view albeit on television. Jai Shri Ram.

Congratulations to our young, dynamic firebrand leader and Hon

Secretary Mr Sarvpreet Singh for assuming the role of President 2024-25. I am confident that under his leadership our club will go from strength to strength. Mini and I convey our best wishes and 1000% support to Sakshi and Sarvpreet.

Shailen has very nicely captured the gist of the talk by Dr G C Khilnani. I thought the talk did shake us all up to do something about pollution before we are consumed by pollution. We all need a personal action plan and as Rotary, we have to raise the decibel level on pollution and exert our collective influence to rein in on the life threatening issue.

The Lohri celebration was a delight and I thought the members had a great time. Certainly I had and especially enjoyed the burning of fire, popcorn, peanuts, revri etc. This was a very warm and lively get together, the first of the year 2024.

I was happy to see the smiling faces when primary children at Najafgarh school wore the specs. The smile on

their face when they were able to see the world clearly was contagious. Your club donated two laptops to Sankalp and it did not take more than a nanosecond for children to get on their feet and start learning new skills. Your club organized a first ever career guidance program at girls secondary school for 60 students in partnership with Etasha Society. The aim of the program is to help students understand the best career option they should pursue based on their aptitude. Club members generously donated 2500 blankets and the same were distributed in Delhi/Gurgaon by the members. We try to bring warmth via small steps for people in need in this wintry cold cold weather.

The small steps we take means a lot for many and changes their life forever. This is how we create hope in the world.

Happy Republic day. Stay blessed.

Pramod Agarwal
President, 2023-24



From the desk of the
E D I T O R



The dawn of the leap year 2020 had left the world tottering on its axis and shaken to its foundations. Calamitous videos emerging from China of people gasping for breath and collapsing in heaps on the streets had horrified the world, and left it wondering about the new visitation of the yet unnamed virulent disease, the genesis of which was kept under wraps by a strict and authoritarian regime. Whispers of an imminent outbreak of an aggressive virus had already started reverberating by late 2019, but it's coverup was blown only when it had spread violently across China, and it's otherwise impenetrable borders were unable to prevent the spread of the disease. By the time the official Chinese acceptance of the virus with roots in China was announced, it had already started aggressively manifesting itself in several countries. The world could only watch in dismay as COVID spread its highly infectious tentacles across the world. There was little or no understanding of it's evolution. It was a tsunami of gigantic proportions which felled millions, as it continued to spread and run across nations at a rapid and unprecedented pace. Whilst, vaccines developed in quick succession did emerge, COVID has come to stay and the similarity of its emergence in 2020 and the latest mutated variant in 2024 has spooky undertones, though the defining difference is that, it is not an unknown devil anymore.

With bated breath and trepidation, the country awaited Covid's mutated variant and its virulent thrust in the South of India to spread rapidly. However, its initial spike in Kerala and Karnataka seems to have been contained since the rest of the country has reported a very feeble contagion and which too seems to have petered out. Covid has come to stay and will continue to make its sporadic visitation like any other seasonal viral phenomenon. It will continue to strike terror as long as memories of its devastating impact and aftermath remain fresh. It has left an indelible impact on the global consciousness by leaving a trail of destruction and tragedy across oceans. No family, no community, no nation, remained unscathed. Human memory is fickle and in time it mellows the impact of suffering. The world in the last several centuries, has been impacted by many a terrible scourge like leprosy, bubonic plague, small pox, and tuberculosis. In the beginning of last century, the great influenza outbreak post the First World War, continued to add to the toll of millions who had already perished in the war between 1914-18. These lethal viruses and outbreaks remain in the textbooks, as a reminder of the historical medical exigencies and their impact on humanity. The theory of Malthus continues to prevail and is as relevant today, as it was when first postulated.

The year 2023 will be remembered for violence and strife, for unrest and depredation, nations struggling to cope with social upheavals, recalcitrant and defiant public and failing public services in the developed nations. The scourge of migrant defiance of local laws, violence, religious conversions and imposition of it's laws and practices of faith, is a matter of vast

concern and hope it does not overwhelm Europe and the UK which are at the crossroads. 2024 didn't have an auspicious beginning either. News of a devastating earthquake in Japan followed quickly by a queer accident involving two aircrafts, an Airbus 350 with 369 passengers and a Japanese Coastguard plane with 5/6 passengers, crashing on landing at the Haneda airport in Tokyo, were ominous signs of a year ahead. We pray not!! Saving grace was that all 369 passengers were extricated safely despite the plane being a burning inferno.

For RCDS the year began propitiously with the search for a President Elect finally coming to a closure. After a long hiatus, the club has finally harnessed youthful energy and enthusiasm. Rtn Sarvpreet Singh who has just turned forty is bursting with energy and overflowing with fresh ideas. His presidential year 2024-25 promises to be high voltage as well as year of consecration of new ideas and more importantly of consolidation of several projects, spearheaded by his predecessors, which have served the community well. No year has been without its challenges, either of finances, or those thrown up by club services. They have all received resolution by the combined will of the board and the support of the obliging members. Staring RCDS in the New Year, is the sceptre of change of venue from Claridges to an equally glamorous venue offering advantages of location, culinary excellence and the oomph that Lodhi and Claridges had offered. A caveat to this is the limited choice, if any, of similar five star venues at reasonable rates. Let me play the devil's advocate and caution that we need to revisit our annual fellowship and meeting charges, since hotels are registering heavy

footfalls and are, therefore, neither hostage nor obliged to offering of extra discounts for our custom. Pragmatism and reality check are really the need of the hour.

The club celebrated its first programme of the year by hosting a talk on pollution and its impact on health, more importantly on the lungs which are struggling to perform. Dr GC Khilnani the noted pulmonologist, held forth on the bane of a foul and poisonous environment, which is a cause for concern. Unfortunately, the citizenry of the Capital is caught in the crossfire of two Governments, which find it difficult to make common cause and take steps to forge a positive alliance to fight this pestilence. I will not dwell more on it since I had covered this extensively in my last editorial. The extracts of Dr Khilnani has been well documented by Rtn Shailen Verma and is covered in the issue of this newsletter. The talk was followed by the Lohri fellowship and which might have attracted more footfalls but for the last minute interjections by the Pandits of a change of Lohri from the 14th to the 13th - a familiar replay!! The Lohri spirit, in every sense of the word played out well, with Bacchus adding many decibels to the fun quotient and providing the pleasures of inner glow and warmth on an otherwise chilly night!! The food was exceptional, varied and many a dish consonant with the traditional Lohri menu!! The offals and the keema masala on the tawa was a new twist to an elaborate menu and elicited many a 'Wow', which it was!!

The walk on January 20, had to be deferred to another day, maybe in February, due to bitterly cold temperatures, fog and a severe pollution. A wise decision as there was no reprieve from either the pollution or the freezing temperatures till almost the month end. At any rate, February is a better month when the flower blooms are at their colourful and fragrant best!! Just a thought- the next speaker meeting, lighthearted in content of course, could well be amidst nature's primal glory, sitting cross legged, soaking in the wondrous sunshine and a burst of colourful fragrance. "A jug of wine, a loaf of bread and thou beside me" under the shady bough of a Sundar Nursery tree laden with the blossoms of spring, could make for an ideal setting for a club meeting!! Omar Khayyam's poetry might well lend itself as a trigger to a morning of metrical joy and excitement!!

It would be a travesty if, amongst the malefic events being witnessed around the world, the consecration of the Ram temple and its luminosity escapes attention of the world. It's often said faith should be childlike, unshaken and reverential, manifesting a feeling of complete veneration. Notwithstanding accusations of political overtones, it's an event of a lifetime which has aroused the conscience of people and sparked an integrity of faith of and deep belief in the spirituality and in the epic of Ramayana, a story of truth and faith prevailing over evil and immorality.

It's a befitting event celebrating the ethnic diversity of the predominant Hindu faith of this country!! Let's be proud and celebrate India's inherent values and it's old historic spiritual heritage, which for over five hundred years has struggled to restore the temple to its rightful Hindu foundations usurped by the Mughal Emperors in an attempt to impose their religious beliefs.

Close on the heels of the consecration of Ram Mandir at Ayodhya, the country celebrated its 75th Republic Day. Perhaps not many would be aware that the first Republic Day parade in 1950 was held at the National Stadium, India Gate and all subsequent celebrations and parades were held on Kingsway as it was called then, whose identity was subsequently changed to Raj Path and as recently as in the last couple of years to, Kartavya Path. I was all of 7 years of age and privileged to attend the first Republic Day parade in 1950 at the National Stadium. It was then just a military parade of men, folk dances but sans the military hardware. The country viewed in the background of it's massive challenges of diversity across regions, religious beliefs, languages, and multiple ethnicity is rightfully called a sub continent which has made strides across many estimable frontiers, and continues in its quest to forge an all round excellence. Its rapid progress and growth will officially witness it catapulting to the status of a developed country in the not too distant a future. To our wonderfully myriad country we wish a splendid future and its rightful role of leadership in the comity of leadership.

IMD's predictions of an El Niño impacted tame winter have been belied by the harsh realities of severe temperatures, heavy fog and feelings of a deep freeze. Winters in times past, were associated with nippy temperatures, crisp and sunny afternoons and an atmosphere of exuberance and joy de vivre!! Alas not so now. Environmental mutilation is evidence of international political indifference, greed and selfish policies to serve domestic interests and which is culpable for the deterioration of the environment. Nature is responding ferociously with angst, as is evident by the increasing frequency of climatic disturbances and disasters. Greta Thunberg the Swedish environmentalist is right when she says, 'The climate crisis is both the easiest and the hardest issue we have faced.' It says it all!! We must all stand up and fight for an early end to this malaise lest we are annihilated by the elemental forces of nature!! Rotary with its vast spread of footprints across most nations of the world, must eschew silence, and raise its banner for taming our greed and to restore the environmental balance and its health!!

It's good bye to what has been an unpredictable month of January '24 with hopes of February predictably a precursor of a pleasant spring. Till the next newsletter, cheers and happy tidings!!

Inderjeet Singh
Editor

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Blanket Distributions

Blanket Distribution Project was undertaken for the year 2023-24, with the aim of extending warmth and care to the underprivileged.

During the Blanket Distribution drive, our dedicated club members personally reached out to various marginalized communities, including slums, roadside beggars, the homeless, daily wage earners, and the poorest residents of Delhi NCR, specifically in areas such as Vasant Vihar, JJ Colony, Munirka, Govind Puri, Bharon Mandir, and Gurgaon.

Thanks to the generous contributions of our club members, a total of 2500 blankets were donated and subsequently distributed. This heartfelt effort is a testament to our commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of those in need, especially during the harsh winter months.

President Rtn. Pramod Agarwal, along with Rtn. Anil K Agarwal, R'anne Kiran Agarwal, Rtn. Lalit Sawhney, Rtn. R.S. Atroley, Rtn. Manoj Kumar, R'anne Tanuja Srivastava, Rtn. Rajeev Seoni, R'anne Vandana Seoni, Rtn. Sumit Makhija, Rtn. Kriti Makhija, Rtn. Shailen Verma, and R'anne Kaval Verma, played crucial roles in spearheading and coordinating this impact initiative. Together, we strive to bring warmth and compassion to those who need it most, one blanket at a time.

Shirin Khajuria



MARGDARSHAN:

Our club has been doing a great job in skill development and education of girls. One area that we have been discussing is career guidance to children in senior classes in school. That is the stage when students are generally confused. They are not aware of the options, and what would suit their strengths and desires. Therefore, we went in for a pilot with Etasha covering 75 girl students of class 10 of Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Sangam Vihar in South East Delhi. The first step was to sell the idea to the school principal, teachers and parents. The session was conducted on 29 Dec. It was good to see the focus and seriousness with which the students were responding to the questions in the app on mobile phones provided by Etasha. They will be provided with individual scores and advise on suitable career options based on their skills and hopes. If the pilot is successful and benefits the students, we will consider launching this as a regular program.

Rtn Rajeev Seoni



MCD PRIMARY SCHOOL, NAJAFGARH - SPECS DONATION AND EYE CHECK

The school is dressed in vibrant colours, clean and inviting.



Children at MCD primary school Najafgarh wearing the specs donated by your club. Eye check up was done for all and 38 were recommended specs.



At the MCD Primary school Najafgarh. Play area looks very vibrant thanks to our club

UNVEILING THE IMPACT OF POLLUTION

Insights from Dr. GC Khilnani

We are excited to share key insights from Dr. GC Khilnani, a renowned Pulmonologist and Chairman of the Institute of Pulmonary, Critical Care, and Sleep Medicine, PSRI Hospital and Research Institute, New Delhi. Dr. Khilnani now advises the WHO on health impacts from pollutants.

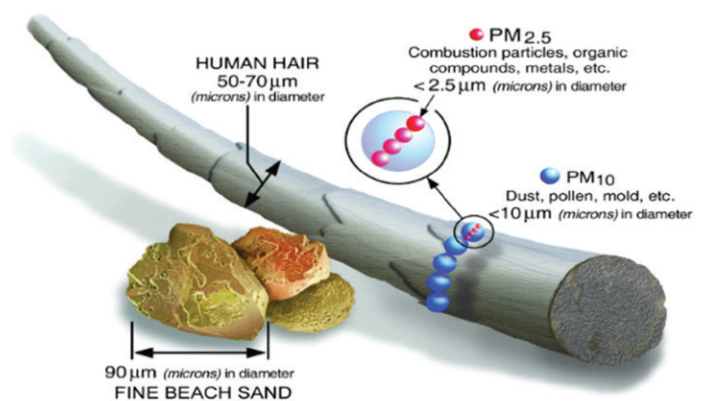
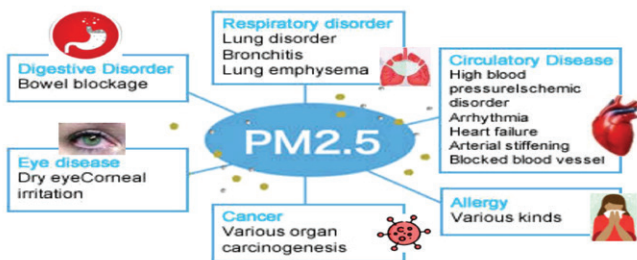
Understanding Pollution: Causes and Effects

Dr. Khilnani highlighted pollution intricacies, focusing on PM2.5 and PM10 as significant contributors. Causes, ranging from industrial emissions to vehicle exhaust, were discussed, requiring need for coordinated actions.

Category	PM 10 Summer	PM 10 Winter	PM 2.5 Summer	PM 2.5 Winter
Solid Waste Burning	13%	11%	2%	3%
Vehicles	4%	7%	23%	29%
Industry/Restaurants/Diesel Generators	15%	18%	15%	21%
Biomass Burning	9%	20%	16%	28%
Coal/Fly Ash	24%	18%	16%	10%
Construction Material	3%	2%	4%	2%
Soil and Road Dust	32%	24%	24%	7%

Delhi Pollution:

In winters, PM2.5 soars to 375 - 500 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in Delhi, surpassing the limit of 60 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. Major contributors include waste burning, vehicular emissions, industrial activities, and crop burning.



Size comparisons for PM particles

Statistics on PM2.5 and PM10:

Dr. Khilnani explained the microscopic threat of pollution, focusing on PM2.5 and PM10:

PM2.5: These inhalable particles, with diameters around 2.5 micrometers, pose severe health risks. Winter concentrations in Delhi reach 375 - 500 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, starkly contrasting the 60 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ limit.

PM10: Inhalable particles around 10 micrometers contribute significantly to Delhi's air pollution crisis, especially during winter.

Impact of Pollution:

Dr. Khilnani discussed the far-reaching consequences of pollution on health, causing 4.2 million premature deaths globally in 2019, exacerbating air quality issues.

Taking Action: Strategies to Combat Pollution

Dr. Khilnani proposed multi-faceted strategies:

Road Dust and Construction Activity: Stressing timely sweeping, dust dispersion methods, and green barriers.

Vehicular Emissions: Proposing measures like increased parking fees, restrictions on private vehicle use, and incentivizing clean fuels.

Crop Burning: Recommending incentives to prevent burning and promoting alternative uses for crop residue.

Waste Burning: Addressing the waste disposal system and advocating for stringent implementation of rules.

Industrial Emission: Focusing on enforcement, water sprays, and upgrading diesel generator engines.

Public Action: Protecting Our Community

Dr. Khilnani emphasized public roles:

AQI Level Systems (GRAP): Urging adherence to guidelines, especially for vulnerable groups.

Air Quality Masks: Encouraging N95 mask use outdoors.

Indoor Protection: Advising air purifier use during high pollution periods and recommending vulnerable individuals stay indoors.

Conclusion: A Call to Collective Action

In conclusion, Dr. Khilnani urged collective action against pollution. Implementing these strategies and fostering awareness can create a healthier environment for generations.

Stay informed, stay involved!

Rtn Shailen Verma

LOHRI CELEBRATION

13th January, 2024

The Club evening of 13th January started with an excellent speaker, Prof. (Dr.) G C Khilnani, a senior pulmonologist of New Delhi. His excellent presentation explained the subject of Air Pollution in simple language and gave very good advice on dealing with this important topic. Then we had PP Deepak Kapoor pinning President Pramod Agrawal for his PHF Major Donor recognition, and Rtn. Vinod Poddar pinned for additional PHF Contribution.

We had a great turn-out this evening, with everyone in a festive mood, not only to listen to the subject of great topical interest, but also to get together for celebrating Lohri, the harvest festival. We had a bonfire in the cold, chilly weather, in the open quadrangle outside the Viceroy Hall, where our members went and threw pop corn and peanuts into the fire.

This was followed by a round of Drinks, including Malt Whiskey and another sumptuous dinner, which included Gajar ka Halwa and Rabri & Jalebi.

We had special Hot toddy at the bar ,sarson ka saag & makki roti, live pav bhaji, keema kaleji counter, sund panjiri, Egyptian warm dessert - Umm Ali

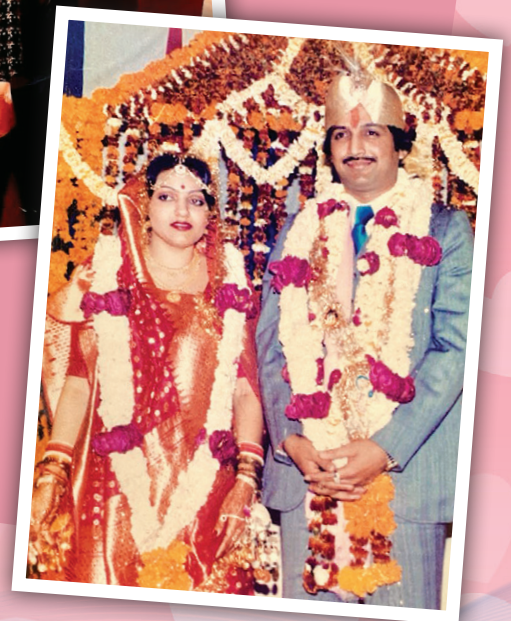
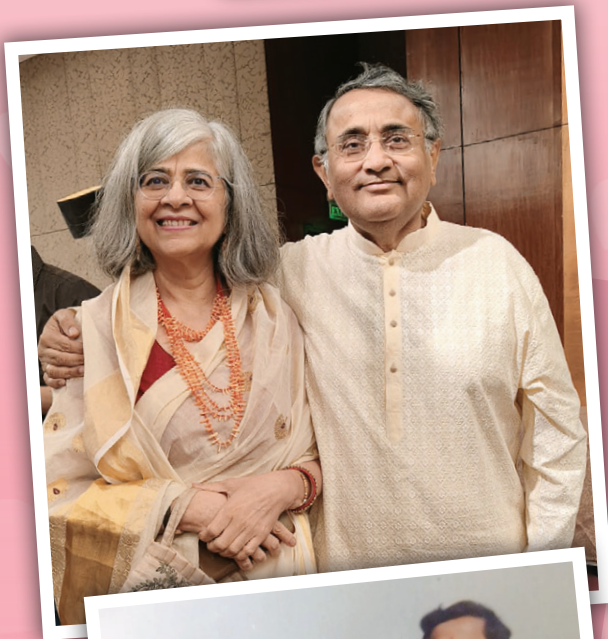
Jayshree Sawhney





...and they lived happily thereafter!!

by popular request we are creating a theatre of the newlyweds then,
and happily ensconced now with each other



In January three of our members took vows of matrimony and the photos printed alongside tell their story of a blissful and a blessed alliance. We wish them many more decades of happy, healthy and joyful lives.

HISTORY OF PUNJABI LANGUAGE AN INTERESTING TRIVIA

Punjabi is an Indo-Aryan language spoken by inhabitants of the historical Punjab region both in Pakistan and India as well as in their Diasporas. Punjabi is spoken by approximately 88 million native speakers, making it the 11th most widely spoken language in the world. Punjabi is a significant language for the Sikhs and Punjabi speaking population is one of the greatest of the Indian subcontinent and, indeed, the world. The majority of Punjabi speakers live in Pakistan, but the language has gained no official status in Pakistan at all. In comparison to Urdu, it is not much used as a written language. Punjabi is the official language of the Indian state of Punjab and the shared state capital Chandigarh. It is one of the official languages of Delhi and the second language of Haryana. Punjabi is the provincial language of Punjab (Pakistan), the largest province of Pakistan.

History

A successor of Sauraseni Prakrit, the chief language of medieval northern India, Punjabi emerged as an independent language in the 11th century from the Sauraseni Apabhramsa. Many ancient Sufi mystics and later Guru Nanak Dev ji, the first Guru of the Sikhism started the literary tradition in Punjabi. The early Punjabi literature has had a very rich oral tradition and was principally spiritual in nature. Muslim Sufi, Sikh and Hindu writers composed many works in Punjabi between 1600 and 1850. Baba Bulleh Shah was the most famous Punjabi Sufi poet who put Saraiki language Culture into the Punjabi Language

Major Punjabi dialects

Majhi

It spans the Lahore, Sheikhpura, Kasur, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Narowal, Gujrat and some parts of Jhelum in Pakistani Punjab and Amritsar District and Gurdaspur District of the Indian State of Punjab.

Jhangochi or Rachnavi

It is the oldest dialect of the Punjabi which is spoken throughout the area, starting from Khanewal and Jhang at both ends of Ravi and Chenab to Gujranwala district. It then goes down to Bahawalnagar and Chishtian areas, on the banks of river Sutlej.

Shahpuri

This dialect is spoken in Pakistani Punjab. This language has been spoken by the people of District Sargodha including Dera Chanpeer Shah, Khushab, Jhang, Mianwali, Attock, parts of Faisalabad (formerly Lyallpur), parts of Dera Ismail Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Bahawalnagar, Chakwal, Mianwali, Sargodha, Khushab and Mandi Bahauddin districts.

Pothowari

This dialect is spoken in north Pakistani Punjab. The area extends in the north from Muzaffarabad to as far south as Jhelum, Gujar Khan, Chakwal and Rawalpindi.

Hindko

This dialect is spoken in north-west Pakistani Punjab and NWFP. This dialect is mainly spoken in districts

of Peshawar, Attock, Newshehra, Mansehra, Balakot, Abbotabad and Murree and the lower half of Neelum District and Muzafarabad.

Malwi

This is spoken in the eastern part of Indian Punjab. Main areas are Ludhiana, Ambala, Bathinda, Ganganagar, Malerkotla, Fazilka, Ferozepur. It also includes the Punjabi speaking northern areas of Haryana like Ambala, Hissar, Sirsa, Kurukshetra etc.

Doabi

Doabi spoken in Indian Punjab between the rivers of Beas and Sutlej. It includes Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur districts.

Pwadhi

Kharar, Kurali, Ropar, Nurpurbedi, Morinda, Pail, Rajpura and Samrala are the areas where the Pwadhi language is spoken.

Contributed by: **Geeta Gujral**

SHAKESPEAREAN SHAKESPEARE

Beautifully compiled names of all Shakespeare's plays to create a little paragraph of a story, brilliant, clever and talented Gives a little chuckle too

Who were the bride and the bridegroom?

Romeo and Juliet.

When did he propose?

Twelfth Night.

What did he say?

As you like it.

From where was the ring obtained?

The Merchant of Venice.

Who were the chief guests?

Antony and Cleopatra, Troilus and Cressida.

Who were the bridegroom's friends?

The Two Gentlemen of Verona.

Who prepared the wedding breakfast?

The Merry Wives of Windsor.

What was the honeymoon like?

A Mid Summer Night's Dream.

How would you describe their quarrel?

The Tempest.

What was their married life like?

Comedy of Errors.

What was the bridegroom's chief occupation?

The Taming of the Shrew.

What did she give him?

Measure for Measure.

What did their friends say?

All's Well that Ends Well.

What's the moral of this story?

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

Contributed by: **Geeta Gujral**

HUMOUR IN UNIFORM - ON A GOLF COURSE....

Twists in Jalebi...

The Commanding Officer (CO) wore a worried look. The new Corps Commander was scheduled to play a round of golf over the weekend. Well maintained fairways and greens playing true were least of the worries confronting the CO entrusted with the task of maintaining the golf course. The cause of worry was the particular kind of snack the old General relished after a round of golf. It wasn't anything exquisite to be fair. The General Officer loved syrupy jalebis. Now, why should simple ubiquitous snack like jalebi worry anybody, one may ask!

The six feet plus tall, burly sardar had a craving for a particular size of the jalebis. He liked them of a diameter that would just fit his open mouth, not a millimeter more, not a millimeter less! And therein was the catch, how to get the ruddy exact diameter of the General's open mouth?

After futile consultations with his second in Command (2IC) the CO decided to exploit the fresh mind of a youngster who had joined the unit a fortnight back. He asked this Ex NDA officer to find out the exact diameter of Corps Commander's open mouth. Having given a serious thought to the task in hand all through the afternoon and coming cropper the youngster sauntered into the bar in the evening and perched himself atop the bar stool.

Ever cheerful barman, Bhola, greeted him with a broad smile to be met with a blank look of the sulking youngster. Now if ever you drew out a list of parents who had gone wrong in naming their kids, Bhola's parents would top the list. He was anything but a 'bhola'. A youngster with a forlorn look was an easy prey for Bhola and he sensed a huge opportunity to strike a "rum mine" there. So he began digging for it. One thing led to another and a plan to get the exact diameter of the General's mouth was formulated by Bhola. He promised to execute it as well in exchange of a small "parchi" for a bottle of rum from the canteen.

Bhola's "grahi"(place type) working in the Flag Staff House (FSH) kitchen was to be approached by Bhola with a plateful of jalebis of varying diameters prepared by the unit Baniya. The FSH inmate was then to place the jalebis size wise in different serving dishes and serve them to the General for his tea time snacks. He was then to keenly observe the plate from which the General would pick up a jalebi that fitted his open mouth perfectly, bring back at least one from that plate and hand it over to Bhola hiding in the FSH Kitchen who would then carry the proto type jalebi to the young officer waiting in his jeep outside the FSH. The fool proof plan worked perfectly and the triumphant youngster came back to his room and made a measuring stick of card board with length matching the diameter of the precious jalebi, something like the L stick he had used so extensively in NDA.

Next day the confident youngster walked into the CO's office, showed him the L stick proudly and explained the plan conceived after a successful trial in the FSH. A very pleased CO called the 2IC and predicted a very bright future for the youngster. He also expressed total satisfaction with the high training standards being maintained by the NDA.

On the D Day the youngster positioned himself next to the Baniya's Kadhai with the L stick in his hand and began measuring the diameter of jalebis coming out of the frying

pan. The ones that were of perfect diameter were tossed into the syrup and the others rejected. An observant CO's chest was swelling with pride every moment and the youngster's stock rising in his eyes.

In due course the General finished his round of golf and commenced his walk towards the makeshift 19th for a well earned bite of his favourite jalebis and a hot cup of tea. The anxious eyes of the CO and the youngster were transfixed on the General, who was slowly approaching the table. The steaming hot golden coloured jalebis were beckoning him. The burly sardar looked lovingly at his favourite snack while the tense CO observed a sparkle in the former's eyes. The youngster thought he heard a slurpy sound from the big man and the entire world seemed to be a beautiful place to both of them. The General picked up a juicy jalebi and put it in his mouth or rather tried to put it in his mouth but found the diameter more than that would fit his open mouth. He just took a bite, left the rest in his plate and walked away with a frown.

All hell broke loose thereafter and the youngster was abused by the CO and condemned by the 2IC. Both did not see any future for the young man and lamented the appalling standard of training in NDA. They left the scene asking the youngster to wind up the flop show.

The distraught young man had the jalebis distributed to the caddies, sat in a chair staring blankly with the thought of a dark future gnawing at his heart. It was getting dark, so he rose from his chair and began walking towards the officers' mess bar to drown his sorrows. He was fiddling absent mindedly with the L stick, his main armament that had failed him miserably in his maiden mission. He entered the mess building, saw a dust bin near entrance and realizing the futility of that silly L stick threw it into it. He headed straight to the bar from where Bhola was watching his movements. The young man gave Bhola a bit of his mind blaming the latter for the fiasco. He ordered a drink. Bhola fixed him a stiff one with the procedure repeating itself and pushing the youngster into depression.

Just when everything seemed lost the mess telephone rang. It was an highly elated CO on line. He told the young officer that the Corps Commander was very pleased with the taste of one bite of jalebi but regretted that though the jalebis were of perfect diameter he couldn't stuff one whole in his mouth for he couldn't open it fully since he had tied his beard tight that afternoon. He went on to request the CO to send him some fresh steaming hot jalebis for breakfast next morning. CO tasked the youngster to do the needful, not forgetting to mention that the young man has a very bright future and the NDA does maintain a very high standard of training.

With spring in his feet the young fellow ran to the dust bin to retrieve his life saving L stick only to find it missing. A smiling Bhola who had overheard the tele conversation had beaten him to it having watched earlier the young officer throw the L stick into the dust bin. Negotiations ensued and the ever helpful Bhola graciously agreed to part with the prized L stick in an exchange for a small 'parchi' for a bottle of rum from the canteen...

Contributed by: **Inderjeet Singh**

IT WILL MAKE YOU GLOW

Many would have read it before : A bit too long but please read it

Of Bugles, Polished Shoes and Elephants

The year was 2014. I was to fly on an early morning long haul returning home to Bangalore from New Delhi. The Delhi air being notoriously nippy in early Jan, I wore my leather brogue shoes instead of the denim slip ons that was derigeur. Warm feet traps heat being the logic.

I came through the security lines quite early, hoping to get a spot of brekker. Picked up a hot and surprisingly tasty egg roll and moved back to sit in the lounge while trying to finish off a crossword in the Hindu.

A few minutes later I heard a set of squeaking wheels and didn't give much notice till the wheels came to a stop right in front of me. On an usher assisted wheelchair sat an elderly gentleman wrapped up in a shawl. Twinkling sharp eyes poked through the brim of a fedora accompanied by a walrus silver grey moustache. Accompanying him was an exceptionally delicate and pretty steel grey haired lady carrying her handbag and what was possibly his bag...a leather satchel, wrinkled, but one could note the top quality shiny leather it was made from.

She intended to sit in the seat on the right of me but then there would be no space for the bags. I unconsciously got up, moved one more seat to the left, and said..."allow me Ma'am".. took the bags from her and placed them on the seat. I continued to stand till she sat and the usher had placed the wheelchair in the passageway next to her. I nodded as the gentleman smiled and said "Thank you" and went back to my crossword.

A few moments later I could hear the two mumble. The lady's voice rose and said "I can't. He will think we are nosy". A few mumbles later she patted me gently.."excuse me...My husband wanted to ask you something. I apologize if you find us rude." I shrugged and said "sure". I looked into those querying twinkly eyes..."you Army or NDA?".. I laughed. "Neither Sir. Something worse." As his eyes quizzed up, I said "Army kid. Dad was an Infantry Colonel...but how did you guess?". Almost simultaneously both spoke...He said "the shoes" and she "you stood up for a lady".

The next 45 minutes went on in a breeze. The gentleman was a retired Lt Gen from the army, himself an army kid. His wife came from an Air Force family and had lost a brother in 1971. We talked about the "old days and old ways" and how it was so easy to spot out faujis and fauji kids. The General then made a statement "army kids have more paltan in their DNA than their fathers who served the flag".

Cut to November 2021 and one of our Banks sent in a wealth manager to talk to us. As the gentleman crossed the threshold of our home the thought was on my mind..."another fauji kid", the giveaways being the shoes, the haircut and the way he addressed my wife.

It's been decades since my Dad left the army. For him age has dimmed the ability to recall clearly many of his postings. But in no way has it dimmed the fervor for the paltan in my brother and me....and in millions of army brats who over time have moved into careers in civvy street and still bore their millennial children with tales and memories of days gone by.

Who can forget the early morning bugle call as you snuggle under the razai in the cold, damp walls of MES officers housing and your Dad grumbles and hunts for his blancoed PT shoes in the dark not wanting to wake up his unofficial CO from her bed,... or the cycle convoy as a Bhaiya leads a troop of eager beaver chatty brats from the unit lines on their way to school..if you were in a larger station there was the Shaktiman School Bus where you made friend for life, early romances and in 3 cases I know went on into marriages.

The Unit was everything to you. The cookhouse or langar being the startpoint for an addiction to rustic food...my Dad served and commanded a Madras unit and I still prefer Sambhar with Chapatis and another combination of Rotis/Dosas and fried eggs...and Yes...Chai is still tastier in a tall steel tumbler.

As you inched into your teens there was the shift to allowing you more liberty in the Unit lines... you got to accompany your Dad for PT and even the evening games and if you went into a private school, students there slowly got to respect the fact that you knew to play most games moderately well. They didn't know that you didn't do it for the honor of the school...heck you changed schools every two years... but for the izzat of the PT ustads and company sportsmen in the unit who made your evenings hell teaching you everything they knew... "Tu Bravo Company Tiger ka beta Hai, tu CO Saab ki sherni ho".... it was Bravo company, 4 Madras (Wallajabad Light Infantry), 121 Brigade... all the formation structures of your father's unit, it's demigods and its pedigree that had to be honored. It did not matter if your team lost the match...what mattered was whether you played like a Sher or a sherni and gave it all you got.

And they would know it. The bhaiya who was your Father's No 1 man was also the unit spook who would be the first line of information on your Father's mood for the day to what were his kids marks in school...and woe befell you if you hit bottomline... I remember a time when my Hindi grades slipped and suddenly there was the Education JCO making a visit home and offering to teach me enough not to shame my parents... that was the sell in to Mom... the real issue of course being paltan ka izzat...

The army taught us kids something for free, what our Dad's swotted and sweated out in NDA and IMA to imbibe...loyalty and bonding. All army kids grow up with

a belief that their paltan was the best one in the Indian Army.... no questions asked. The blind faith is unshaken even today. The Assaye elephant in the Madras Regiment crest became a charm. It extended to my always being a collector of Ganesha idols and elephant figurines. Maybe a way of staying in constant unconscious touch with what were the best years of one's life.

Bonding was something that got ingrained as one spent time with the young officers of the unit... in a way they were the elder brothers and extended family...and funnily even today when in doubt...or a spot of trouble...they are the first port of call..not to mention the fellow faujikids... siblings.from another parent...and given a special place in one's life way over cousins, aunts and uncles.

And then there was the etiquette one learnt from everyone in the unit. Love for the flag, respect for ranks and respect for elders. You stood up and wished when an elder person or lady entered a room...no questions asked. You combed your hair. You never wore unironed clothes....and Yes, you bloody well polished your shoes

to a mirror shine.

Years later even when I went into advertising and post that onto the client side, where informal wear and corporate attire rules blended and jeans became acceptable...my shoes were always a giveaway... as the General and his wife honed on.

Much water has passed under the bridge of time. One doesn't hear the call of the bugle anymore. But 6.00 am is still wakey wakey time. The fetish for a neatly ironed and stacked clothes cupboard continues...even during Covid, which drove my unofficial lady CO round the bend as every evening I commandeered the ironing table at home. The Regiment stays in focus on the regimental faujikids group..the most recent excitement being one of a sister unit 7 Madras exercising in the US snows... Ganeshas and Elephants get their morning dusting...

And you will never catch me dead in unpolished shoes...

I am a son of the Paltan. I am a Wallajahbadi.

Contributed by: **Name**

CELEBRATING KOLKATA TRAM'S 150TH YEAR

Asian Paints has done a magnificent transformation of Kolkata's iconic tram from Tollygunge to Ballygunge into a living canvas, celebrating Kolkata tram's 150th year.



FOOD FOR SMILES!

I have received this delightful and satirical piece of humour culled from street signs, restaurant signboards, hoarding all of which liven the mood without intended malice!! Mrs Anupam Mani is a journalist and blessed with an articulate quill. Her husband Mr Sudhanshu Mani, a dear friend, is a celebrated design engineer and General Manager (Retd) of the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai whose creation of Train 18 Vande Bharat Express is keeping our PM busy criss crossing the country in flagging them off and with Sudhanshu Mani in the news for good measure!! Food for smiles!



Am I reading too much in this proof of creativity? Is it merely an innocent, straightforward description?

I understand that signboards are meant to guide, provide information about the wares being sold and attract customers. Yet sometimes, signboards in restaurants catch one's attention for other reasons. The place may or may not promise to tickle your taste buds or satiate your hunger, but it does offer you a reason to smile.

My sincere thanks to my friends and readers for sending me these pearls, proudly 'made in India'.



Do not frown. Bless this mess for extinguishing the heat of the fiery spices used in Andhra food with so much buttar and Punjabi food, if you please!



These seem like wise suggestions! Has anyone ever tried either? I could take names of overweight filthy rich people but with their treasures they would drag me to court, so I leave it to your imagination and general knowledge.



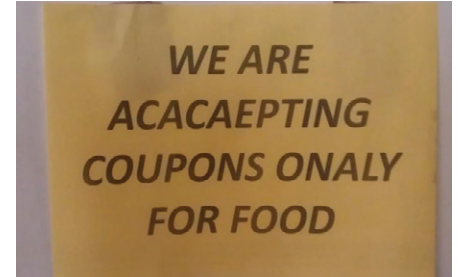
Somebody please advertise for this shop. The place selling GPT with perhaps adrak (ginger) and elaichi (cardamom) too, does not have any customers, that too in this intense cold!



Something for the grammar police-spot the mistakes.



For those who appreciate free gifts, please enrich our knowledge after the purchase!



Do you know what he wants to do with the coupons?

Croissant 🤔
Kwa-son Kwah-saun
Crusso-n Cru-sonh
Cruss-ant Krw-so
Oh, these French and Austrians!

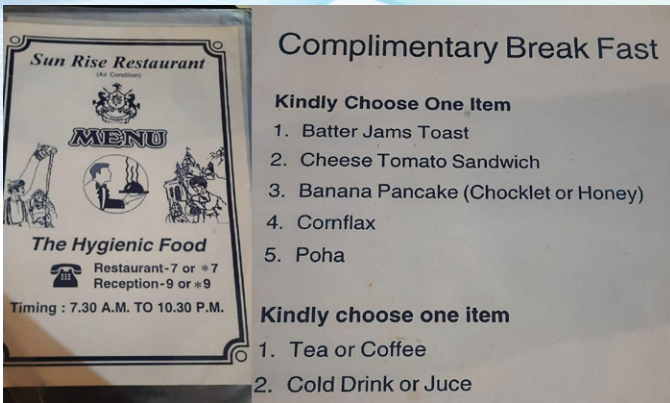
English language made simple in India



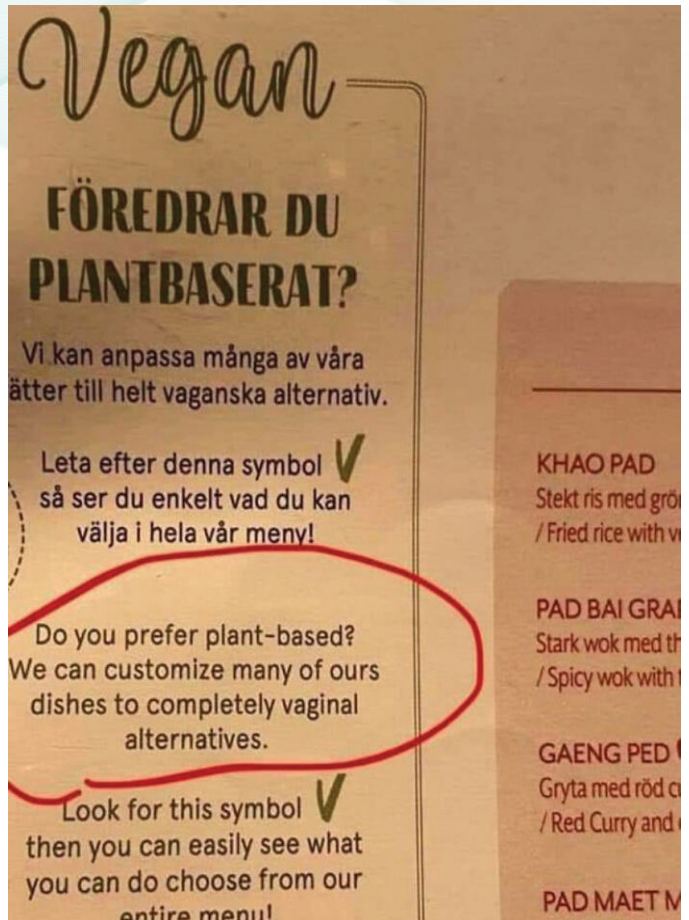
Such a simple name, we all now know what this is.



Hey girls, this is the time to be a woman in India. Did you even realise that there has been a revolution taking place in our own country? Splendid news. Finally, the gender ratio is so dangerously skewed in reverse that the going rate for a whole male is a mere.48 USD?



A niece found this gem in a hotel in Jammu. The name is mentioned in case you want to enjoy the batter/cornflax/chocklet/juce.



Not the place I'd expect this slogan to be at! For the benefit of my non-Hindi speakers, the sign outside the ladies toilet says let us have something sweet for Cadbury's chocolate.

It is impressive that they have such unique alternatives, but tell me what do the genders who have not been blessed with this body part, eat? Besides, what do plants have got to do with this organ?

-Anupama S Mani

WHY 15 JAN : ARMY DAY

You may be in the know of ironic situation that existed in 1947-48 with Gen Rob Lockheart as C-in-C of Indian Army later succeeded by Gen Roy Bucher, while Gen Douglas Gracey was C-in-C of Pak Army during India-Pak 1947-48 war (J&K).

Gen Lockheart was of course later sacked at the instance of Sardar Patel for keeping in touch with Pak offers, possibly "squealing" Indian Army plans to them. Situation did not become any better with Gen Roy Bucher succeeding Gen Lockheart.

Could we then have ever hoped to get the better of Pak army with Mountbatten and his team working on Nehru and the two British Army Chiefs on either side possibly sharing respective army plans, over a drink sitting by their respective fire places!! This unfortunately was the Indian Army's command structure in the Govt of the day.

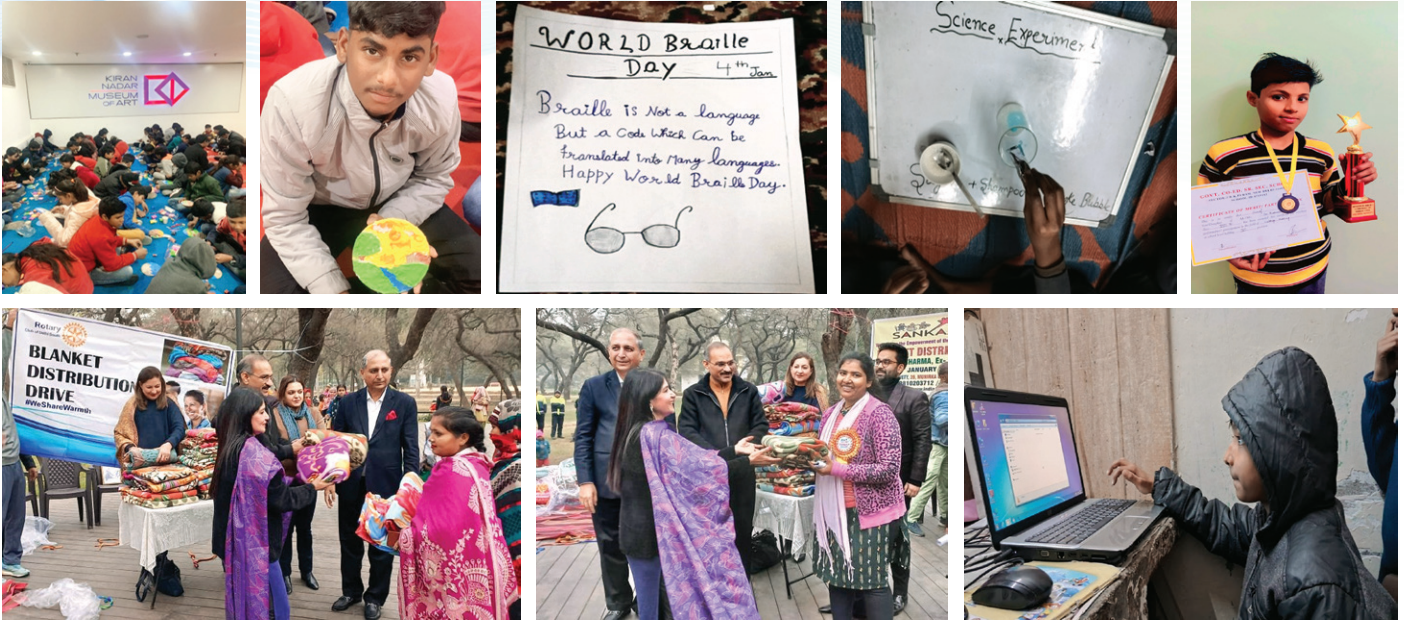
15 January is celebrated Army Day because on this date in 1949 General Cariappa took over from Gen Roy Bucher and was appointed C-in-C of Indian Army. The Gazette Notification mentioned that Cariappa with a substantive rank of Lt Colonel, temporary rank of Brigadier and Acting rank of Lieutenant General had been given the acting rank of General and appointed Chief of Army Staff and C-in-C of the Indian Army. It is to the acumen and leadership of young Cariappa, elevated to be the C-in-C and Chief of Army Staff, who led the Indian Army to victory & successfully liberated part of J&K from the Maudering Pak troops and tribals. The entire state of J&K could have been retaken had Govt of the day not sought Cease Fire; a move unheard of in military logic of a winning side seeking "Cease Fire." Generations continue to suffer the folly of that decision.



Contributed by: **Brig Biren Chibber**

RCDS - SANKALP LITERACY CENTRES

January, 2023



January 2024 started with children pledging to be regular in the Centres. The key highlights of this month are as follows:

Visit to Kiran Nadar Art Museum: Children visited the Kiran Nadar Museum of the Art on 3rd January 2024. The visit to the Museum exposed them to various forms of Art. An art workshop was also conducted for the children. Children displayed their creativity in various forms and drew from their own imagination.

Specific Days: January is a month with very important days having significant themes. A notable feature of the RCDS Sankalp Centres is that they celebrate specific days in each month. The month of January raised awareness on the following days among the children:

- World Braille Day
- Indian Army Day
- National Road Safety Week
- National Girl Child Day
- World Leprosy Day
- Republic Day

Distribution of Blankets by Rotary Club of South District: This was held on 9th January 2024. This was a major event with more than 200 blankets distributed in the communities of Koolie and Shiva Camps covered through Sankalp Society. This was very well welcomed by both the Communities. The event was attended by Sh. Anil Aggarwal, Past President, RCDS, Sh. Shalen and Kaval Verma, Sh. Anil Sharma, ex – MLA and Dr. Anupriya Chadha, Founder, Sankalp Society and other dignitaries.

Science Experiment: In continuation of the innovative experiment series, this month's experiment was on Smoke and Bubble. These experiments are surely developing analytical skills in children.

Donation by Rotarian Sh. Pramod Aggarwal: Sankalp runs computer classes for children from Grade 5-8 in all its centres. Due to some chemical imbalance in the air, desktops in Shiva camp didn't function and needed repair every month. This led to unnecessary expenditure.



This issue was brought to the notice of Sh. Pramod Aggarwal, President, RCDS. He immediately donated 2 laptops so that the classes could go on smoothly. The happiness of children knew no bounds.

Visit by Students of Fore School of Management:

Students from FORE School of Management visited Sankalp. They did a case study on Sankalp as a part of their course requirement. They interacted with various stakeholders - teachers, students, etc. They made a comprehensive report on Sankalp.



Achievers of Sankalp: Over the last 15 years, Sankalp Society has developed a unique culture blending programmatic growth with a commitment to positive change. "For us, winning is not only about achievements; but also about learning humbly, touching lives, winning hearts and embracing change. Sankalp focuses on high-quality and impactful replicable interventions to address gaps in the education system by working directly with children, women, youth and communities. Our children have proved their excellence in every aspect of holistic development, be it academics, sports or co curricular activities. These are the shining rising stars of Sankalp will support them at every step."

Snippet Historical and Interesting...



INDIA GOLDEN TEMPLE, c1907. 'Entrance gate and causeway over the sacred tank, Golden Temple, Amritsar, India.' Stereograph, c1907.

FEBRUARY IS

PEACE AND CONFLICT PREVENTION/ RESOLUTION MONTH

"Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict -- alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence." Dorothy Thompson



TAKE ACTION: Engage Rotary. Change Lives

Peace and conflict prevention/ resolution

The month of February is very special in the Rotary calendar because it includes the anniversary of the first meeting of Rotary held on February 23, 1905, in Chicago. That day is now designated as the "World Understanding and Peace Day".

On February 23 Rotary celebrates the 109th anniversary of the first Rotary club meeting. This is an opportunity for Rotary clubs and districts to promote Rotary's public image.

ROTARY CLUB OF DELHI SOUTH

THE 4-WAY TEST OF THE THINGS WE THINK, SAY OR DO:

IS IT THE TRUTH?

IS IT FAIR TO ALL CONCERNED?

WILL IT BUILD GOODWILL AND BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?

WILL IT BE BENEFICIAL TO ALL CONCERNED?

FEBRUARY

- | | |
|--------------------|--------|
| Sehgal, Rajinder | 06-Feb |
| Javali, Kirit | 12-Feb |
| Neena Chhibber | 12-Feb |
| Shirin Khajuria | 12-Feb |
| Taneja, Devendra | 16-Feb |
| Gulati, Dr Parveen | 17-Feb |
| Dua, Som Nath | 20-Feb |
| Khajuria, Sanjay | 24-Feb |



HAPPY Anniversary

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|--------|
| Mehta, Arjun | Chitra | 03-Feb |
| Goyal, Amar Nath | Shashi | 07-Feb |
| Kalia, Nishant | Shruti | 07-Feb |
| Agarwal, Naman | Priyanka | 11-Feb |
| Jag Mohan | Indu Mahajan | 14-Feb |
| Atroley RS | Neeru | 15-Feb |
| Sehgal, Rajinder | Raji | 15-Feb |
| Malhotra, Manoj | Aarti | 16-Feb |
| Gupta, Dr Anand P. | Pushp | 17-Feb |
| Sriyastava, Vinay Kumar | Yoko Hirokawa | 18-Feb |
| Poddar, Pankaj | Aarti | 21-Feb |
| Singh, Gurinder | Pavan G Singh | 22-Feb |
| Bhasin, Suneel | Rita | 23-Feb |
| Dhawan, Dr Manish | Sheetal | 24-Feb |
| Agarwal, Alok | Chhaya | 27-Feb |