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A rush of adrenalin

In recent times we have seen huge upheavals in the lives of India's younger generation, particularly Gen Zee, as we have now got to know them so well, connected to some very real concerns about the state of our entire education system... the monetisation, the corruption and other hanky-panky... that veers the entire systems towards benefitting only a certain section of our society.

But just as the clouds of gloom, despair, and protests across the nation were darkening our skies, came the heartening and cheerful news of the Indian athletes' performance at the 2026 Glasgow Commonwealth Games. Surprisingly, India finished fourth at the games with 30 medals (13 gold, 17 silver, 9 bronze), despite the absence of traditional core sports like shooting and wrestling, where our sportspersons excel.

Indian boxers claimed a first time ever historic 10 medals, including seven golds, which incidentally is a record by any one nation getting so many golds in a single event at a single Games.

While we got our first ever gold in judo, our ace weightlifter Mirabai Chanu bagged her third successive CWG gold, and Gulveer Singh becoming the first Indian track and field athlete to win one silver and one bronze medal at a single event.

Nothing is more satisfying than lustily cheering for your country's sportspersons, seated in front of your TV. Well, India will host the 2030 Commonwealth Games in Ahmedabad and one hopes that in the coming years our athletes continue to make us proud.

The adrenalin rush that a sports victory gives the fans cannot be easily matched, but while cheering and clapping come easily to the audiences, let's think for a moment about the hard work, sleepless nights, relentless early morning workouts and practice sessions, the toil and sweat, the tears and frustration when an athlete or cricketer fails on the playfield.

And when we talk about adrenalin, just ask those Rotarians who are completely, passionately and empathetically involved in executing community service projects. And there is no dearth of such Rotarians in India. As senior leaders keep repeating at events, this is the highest level of talent and technical expertise that Rotarians invest in the projects they do... be it building homes restoring water bodies, doing intricate and complex surgeries in either Africa or India, or putting up digital learning facilities in schools. And these people cannot be hired to do all this work, because they are all successful businesspersons or professionals engaged in their own thriving ventures.

That is why service or expertise, which is not paid for, reaches a higher level of excellence and moves towards the realm of perfection. And what is the return for the volunteering Rotarians? Satisfaction, pride and a dose of adrenaline that can be compared with the best that emanates from a sports field where an athlete is celebrating her victory. While that is commendable too and triggers thousands of dreams, the best projects done by Rotarians transform lives and livelihoods in an unimaginable manner. They make a tangible impact which is immediate, measurable and sustainable. Ask a tribal villager who lived in a thatched hut but has now got a pucca home, or a Maharashtra student, son of a bus driver, trained in the best of IT Innovative lab, who gets instant employment, or women trained in tailoring, beauty care and other skills.

If changing the face of India, tiny bit by bit, one little corner after another, cannot generate a rush of adrenaline, what else can? More strength to such work!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Rasheeda Bhagat'.

Rasheeda Bhagat



Members of a Rotaract club in RID 3206 with children at the Namma Special Park in Coimbatore.

Making every weekend special

Jaishree

A year-long commitment to a special park is giving Rotaractors in District 3206 an opportunity to build a relationship with the children who visit it.

Namma Special Park is an inclusive park built by the Coimbatore Corporation at Kalapatti, a suburb in the city, in 2025 for children with special needs. It is wheelchair-friendly and the play equipment are designed to suit children with various challenges. Some equipment such as a huge chess board and board games are included to develop their skills and talent.

Rotaract District 3206, through *Project Prem*, has adopted the wheelchair-accessible recreational space for the entire Rotary year 2026–27, ensuring that children with autism and developmental and intellectual disabilities have regular opportunities for play, learning and companionship.

Every weekend, more than 30 children take part in activities planned by Rotaractors from the district's 75-plus clubs. Games, storytelling, music, art and simple life-skill sessions keep the park lively, while giving volunteers a chance to interact with the children and understand their interests and abilities.

“Every week, Rotaract clubs design special programmes for the children. Clubs also join together to host them at the park and give them a memorable experience,” says project chair Shwetha Yazhini of Rotaract Club of Coimbatore Main.

The park itself is designed for inclusive play and includes a sensory park where children can explore through touch, sound, colour and movement. This provides Rotaractors with a range of ways to engage the children, while ensuring that those with different physical and developmental needs can participate comfortably.



July saw the project get off to an encouraging start, with more than 40 Rotaractors from five to six clubs taking part in the weekend engagements. One of the highlights was a music programme, which brought children and volunteers together through singing and dancing. Other weekends featured games, storytelling, art and skill-building activities.

“Some clubs organise music programmes, while others organise games. There is also a huge chess board at the park, and Rotaractors teach the children to play chess. Paintings of famous personalities such as Beethoven, Helen Keller, Steven Hawking etc are displayed on the walls on the park campus. It gives us opportunity to teach children about them,” says Shwetha.

The park can get particularly busy when institutions bring children on outings. “At least 30 children visit the



park daily, and if an institution brings children on a picnic, the number can go up to 75–100,” she adds.

For the Rotaractors, however, *Project Prem* is more about the experience created for each child. “The idea is to make every child happy and for

them to carry home joyful memories of their visit,” says Shwetha.

With clubs taking up scheduled weekends in the months ahead, the district hopes to make regular interaction and inclusivity the strength of *Project Prem*. ■

A Rotaract European Meeting experience

Harsh Thakkar

When I registered for the Rotaract European Meeting (REM) Karlsruhe 2026, Germany, I had one simple thought: I wanted to experience Rotaract in Europe. This was my first REM, and I was also the only Rotaractor attending from India.

While I was initially sceptical about how I would be able to fit in and manage all by myself in a foreign land, by the end of REM, I realised that I had earned a European Rotaract family.

Even the journey to Karlsruhe was adventurous; travelling on the famous German Autobahn, including

sections without a general speed limit, was quite an experience.

My first activities included a guided tour of Karlsruhe combined with a social project. While discovering the city, we also picked up litter from the streets. I loved this concept because it combined fellowship, exploring the host city and



community service in one activity. We also visited the beautiful Karlsruhe Palace, one of the city's most recognisable landmarks.

But the activity that truly changed the entire REM experience for me was 'Speed Friending'.

From strangers to friends

Speed Friending was much more than simply introducing ourselves. Rotaract Europe president Elise Nassif shared questions for us to discuss in small groups. What started as introductions soon turned into surprisingly deep conversations.

We discussed serious questions, shared our experiences, laughed together, and got to know each other

beyond the name, country and Rotaract designation.

The first evening continued with a DJ party themed around Technology and Art, lots of conversations, dancing and, of course, countless pretzels. In fact, pretzels seemed to follow us throughout REM!

Conversations about Peace

The next morning brought a completely different side of REM: learning.

I attended a workshop on Peace and Youth Engagement by Elise Nassif, who is a Rotary Peace Fellow. The session explored the role young people can play in building peace and why our involvement

matters beyond simply talking about it.

This was followed by 'Peace-making in times of Power Politics,' led by former Swiss Ambassador Walter B Gyger. We were divided into groups and given different scenarios. We had to discuss how peace could be created or maintained within those situations and then develop a pitch explaining what could practically be done. It made us think, debate and listen to perspectives from people coming from different backgrounds. I also received my REM Karlsruhe lapel pin, which became a special souvenir of my first REM.



Harsh Thakkar (kneeling, left), member of RAC Bharuch, at the Rotaract European Meeting held in Karlsruhe, Germany, with delegates from across the globe.

Another unforgettable experience was meeting PRIP Holger Knaack. Despite his years of leadership at the highest levels of Rotary, having a conversation with him felt incredibly natural.

He spoke about Rotary's polio eradication efforts, Rotaract's place within the wider Rotary family, and discussed the current scenario of Rotary and Rotaract, in a session titled 'Rotaract in the Rotary Family.'

As Holger had served as TRF chair in 2025–26, I updated him about the four Rotaract Giving Certificates received by clubs from District 3060 for RY 2025–26; he

congratulated the district for the achievement.

At the Country Booth, something similar to the House of Friendship found in Conventions, the diversity of Rotaract Europe came alive in the most colourful way. Booths from across Europe offered food, chocolates, snacks, juices and little pieces of their cultures. Participants came dressed in traditional attire, turning the venue into a celebration of countries, identities and friendships.

Being the only Rotaractor attending from India made that evening particularly special. I was not there with a large Indian delegation, but I still had

the opportunity to carry a little piece of India, Rotaract District 3060, Rotaract Bharuch and Rotary Bharuch with me.

That evening captured exactly what international Rotaract should feel like. We did not need to have the same food, clothing, language or traditions to enjoy each other's cultures. The differences were precisely what made the evening special.

Networking that turned into a volleyball gang

Because of Speed Friending and all the networking during REM, a few of us eventually formed a volleyball gang. We played volleyball and other





Thakkar with PRIP Holger Knaack.



games, or simply spent time together with snacks and drinks.

I also attended the Rotaract Europe General Assembly and a brief presentation about the 2027 RI Convention in Barcelona, Spain.

Representing our country and walking with our national flag at the flag march was one of the proudest moments of my entire REM experience.

REM taught me some invaluable lessons. I had gained a European Rotaract family. I went to Karlsruhe because I wanted to experience the European Rotaract movement. I returned with friendships, conversations, ideas and memories that went far beyond what I had expected. Now I am looking forward to yet another international experience at the Barcelona convention for which I have registered.

The writer is a TRF Committee member with Rotaract India MDIO. He is the district secretary and a member of RAC Bharuch, RID 3060

RID 3240 Rotaractors’ memorable trip to Bhutan

Rasheeda Bhagat

In a unique gesture of group bonding, around 80 Rotaractors from over 20 clubs in RI District 3240 recently undertook a one-day trip from Assam to the Gelephu area of Bhutan, taking advantage of special travel rules for Indians visiting Bhutan for a short spell.

RID 3240 IPDRR Kumar Shivam Das, who organised the trip, from Bongaigaon in Assam to Gelephu in Bhutan says the trip, barely a 45-minute drive, turned out to be a memorable experience for all the Rotaractors.

For Indian visitors, the Bhutan government allows travel to a 10km periphery in the Gelephu township, which is absolutely beautiful with mountains,

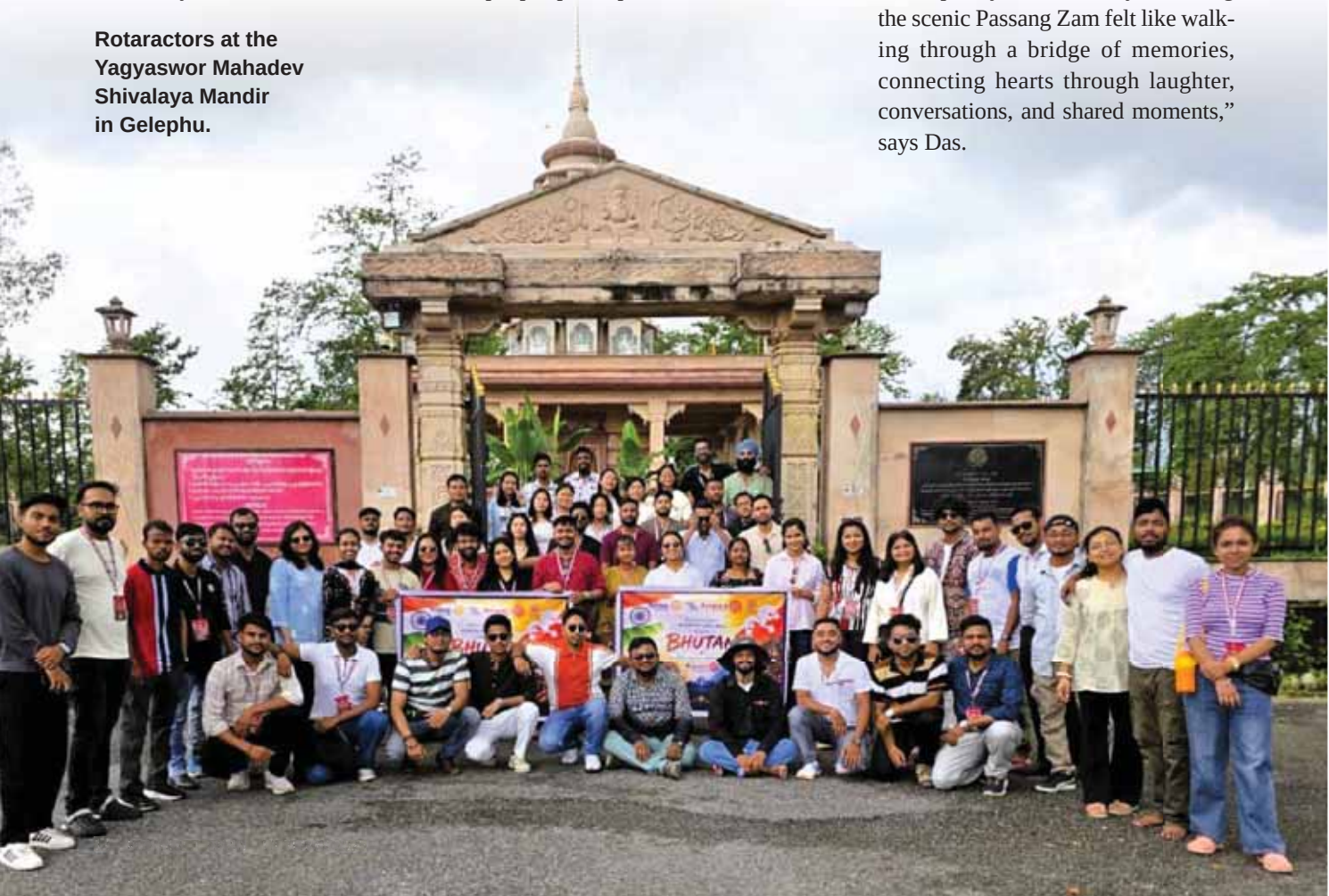
waterfalls, lots of greenery, hot springs etc. This region is on the border with Assam, and for a distance of about 8–10km Indian travellers can remain for 24 hours without permit for entering Bhutan. Just registration with ID cards at the Immigration point is required.

Gushing about “the first ever international trip for Rotaractors from District 3240,” Das said this trip was organised by the Rotaract District 3240 team (2025–26), with a lot of the groundwork done by the Rotaract Club of Bongaigaon, Assam. It was made possible, thanks to an awards ceremony for the Rotaractors of RID 3240 that was organised in Bhutan. Around 130 people participated in that event; the

district has a membership of around 850 Rotaractors. “It turned out to be an unforgettable trip and a journey filled with mountains, culture, spirituality and unforgettable companionship. The landscape of Gelephu is so serene and beautiful that we feel other Rotaractors should also experience this place by undertaking such a trip.”

The cost was next to nothing... just the registration fee of ₹749, but the experience was one to die for. “From the divine calm of Yagyaswar Shiv Mandir, where prayers echoed amidst peaceful hills, to the breathtaking beauty of Serzhong Gewog, every destination in Gelephu carried a story of simplicity and harmony. Crossing the scenic Passang Zam felt like walking through a bridge of memories, connecting hearts through laughter, conversations, and shared moments,” says Das.

**Rotaractors at the
Yagyaswar Mahadev
Shivalaya Mandir
in Gelephu.**





Sherjong Gewok Bridge.



From L to R: Semanti Singha, IPDRR Kumar Shivam Das, Didhiti Singha, Anikpati Roy, Debarshi Paul and Tultul Chakraborty inside the Tali Monastery in Gelephu.

On their most memorable moments from this experience, Das, who works with the food safety department of the Assam government, adds that more than a trip, “it was a collection of moments that will forever remain close to our hearts. Of the 80, for more than 60 participants it was their first international trip. The whole experience was mesmerising. The vibrant lanes of Gelephu Market welcomed us with the warmth of Bhutanese culture, local smiles, and colourful traditions that made every moment feel alive. Beyond sightseeing, this tour became a celebration of friendship, unity, and the spirit of fellowship that Rotaract stands for.”

The group included a president nominee and general secretary from the South Asian MDIO (Multidistrict Information Organisation), which is a term for a regional group made up of two or more Rotary districts. Its main job is to help clubs share news and build communication. The cost was so nominal — barely ₹750 — as it only included the transportation and food; an everlasting memory will be breakfast by the riverside as soon as they reached their destination. Lunch was also planned there but the rains

spoiled that plan and they halted at a restaurant for lunch.

The outgoing DRR, who has already become a Rotarian joining the Rotary Club of Northeast Catalyst, is ecstatic about the beautiful opportunity this trip provided the different members of the 20-odd Rotaract clubs to connect, bond, have meaningful conversations and make beautiful memories. “I think that when we have such a beautiful destination so close to our country, we should definitely visit it. And I was very keen to plan this trip because this region, so close to our district, has never been explored over the years by our Rotaractors. After all, Bhutan is such a beautiful country.” The deciding factors, apart from its proximity, were the low cost and no need to get a permit or visa, which is often a hassle.

When he keeps saying this was a golden opportunity for the Rotaractors to have meaningful conversations and make connections, I ask if the young are indeed interested in serious conversations. “Oh yes, they are. For instance,

people generally think that the younger generation is not into visiting temples. But you’d be surprised to know that the group took much interest in visiting the Yagyaswar Shiv Mandir... because however young or old, at the end of the day we all need peace.”

On his takeaway from his year as DRR, this 28-year-old says philosophically, “My main intention was that as a DRR, through the 365-day journey, I did not want to just run and reach the finishing line. I wanted to walk with all my Rotaractors, my batchmates, my seniors, juniors, everyone. I felt we should just walk, meet people, and at the end come together at the finish line. Because no individual can achieve much alone. He/she needs to involve everyone.”

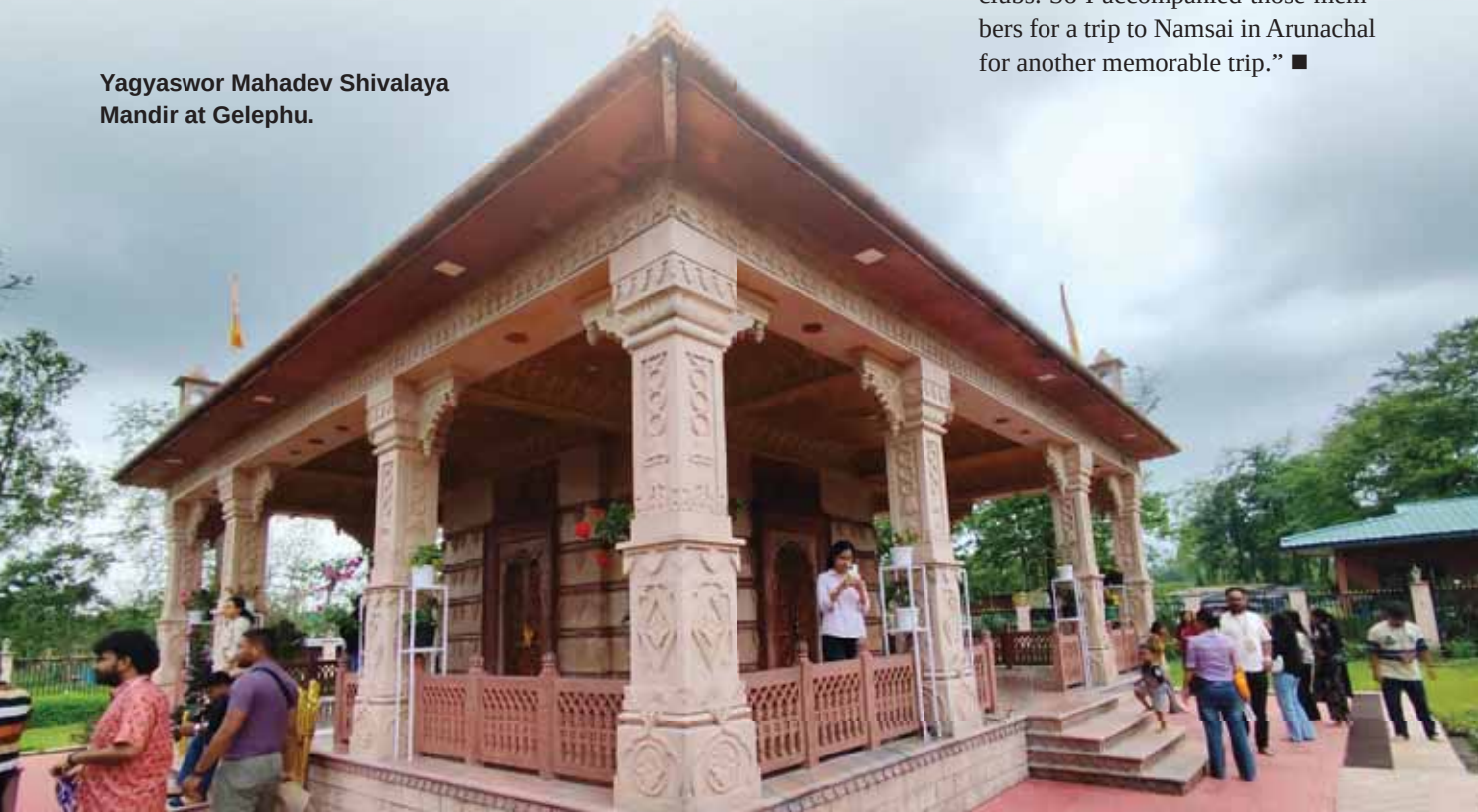
On how many from his district will eventually join Rotary, Das says that out of the 80 on the Bhutan trip, 25 had already joined Rotary. This district, he adds, has 56 Rotaract clubs, with most being community clubs and barely 5–6 university-based clubs. During his tenure as DRR, he says proudly, 17 new clubs were added.

On the kind of dialogues that Rotaractors have and if they talk seriously about their future, Das says, “Of course they are very serious about such issues.” The district leadership is already holding talks with companies about internship and job opportunities for these youngsters, as it is fully aware that only by giving such opportunities to their members, can they expect their membership to sustain or grow. A DPR (detailed project report) is being prepared on this aspect, he adds.

Asked if trips such as the one they undertook to Bhutan will be replicated, Das smiles and nods. Thanks to the South Asia MDIO representatives who participated in this trip, at a recent Rotaract awards event in Bengaluru, where 45 South Asian Rotaract districts participated, the MDIO president-elect shared his experience in Gelephu with the entire group, and said such beautiful trips provide a valuable bonding opportunities to the Rotaractors.

While the Bhutan trip was done in May, more recently, another group visited Arunachal Pradesh, “which falls in zone 4 of the five zones we have in our district. The people of our district are so diverse, and zone 4 has only two clubs. So I accompanied those members for a trip to Namsai in Arunachal for another memorable trip.” ■

**Yagyaswor Mahadev Shivalaya
Mandir at Gelephu.**





Children with clay Ganesha idols they created.

Small acts, wider impact

Jaishree

Fun and friendship, environmental awareness and road safety — the Rotaract Club of Karad City, RID 3132, has been taking up projects that combine community engagement with practical messages.

For the fifth consecutive year, the club organised *Masti Ki Pathshala* at the Sanjivani Institute's School for Specially Abled Children. Around 20 students with intellectual disabilities joined Rotaractors in games and interactive activities on September 12. The focus was on giving the children an opportunity to participate, have fun and spend time with the club members.

“The project is as much about interaction as it is about the activities. Spending time with the children and seeing them participate enthusiastically makes it special for our members,” says club president Divya P Lanjekar.

The club's environmental initiative, *Maja Eco-Friendly Bappa*, took the message of sustainable Ganeshotsav to schools. Workshops on making eco-friendly Ganpati idols were conducted at the Palkar Primary School and ZP School, Sadashivgad, while a third session was held for club members at the Centre Court Banquets. About 100 school students participated.

“We wanted children to understand that traditional celebrations can also be environmentally responsible. Making the idols themselves made the message simple and practical,” says club advisor Akanksha Tiwari. The project was funded collectively by club members, without using funds from the club account.

Road safety was the focus of the club's *Freedom Ride*, held on August 15 for the third consecutive year. About 100 riders took part in the ride from Karad to Gudhe, Panchgani, with an emphasis on wearing safety gear, following traffic rules and riding responsibly. Patel Petrol Pump and Speed supported the initiative.

The ride also brought Rotaractors in contact with young riders who showed interest in the club and its activities, opening up an opportunity for the club to engage with potential members. ■



Participants of the *Freedom Ride*.



Rotaractors with orphaned girls at the Radha Kishan Balika Bhavan, Hyderabad.

Rotaract services for orphanages

V Muthukumaran

A three-year-old RAC Mahindra University, RID 3150, has entered into a long-term service agreement with the Radha Kishan Balika Bhavan, an orphanage for girls in Hyderabad, “so that we can take up a series of welfare initiatives for the betterment of over 60 inmates,” says Maha Lakshmi Bekkem, secretary, Operations, of the Rotaract club. All of them are either abandoned or orphaned girls in the age group of 8–18 years, and “they are being actively engaged by our Rotaractors, presented with essential items or utility kits through the year,” she says.

The orphanage is being run by The Hyderabad Children’s Aid Society, a charity organisation that owns four special homes for children who are given proper education, apart from food and lodging. Rtn Jeny Gupta, youth affairs director at RC Lake District Moinabad, the parent club for Rotaractors, is also the secretary of the children’s society, “and she helped us to forge a tie-up with the Balika Bhavan so that we can reach out to the orphaned girls,” she says. Around a dozen Rotaractors visited the orphanage for the first time (July 4) and interacted with the girls “to understand their daily needs and know in what way we can help them in the coming months.”

Also, they had fun games and a dance programme during the maiden visit of Rotaractors. “We went around the orphanage, saw their rooms,

bathrooms and other facilities, and noted the requirements from their side. Later on, we had a joint breakfast with the girls, and had a group photo session at the end,” says Lakshmi.

On the second occasion at the Balika Bhavan, four Rotaractors took 42 girls on an educational trip to BM Birla Science Centre; “the visit (July 10) was aimed to kindle curiosity and scientific thinking among the young inmates through regular outings which will help them in their personality growth,” she explains. “We had an interactive session at the science centre in the end, and the girls were served refreshments.” The students discussed with one another, and Rotaractors, what they learnt from the museum exhibits, some event jotted down facts they wanted to remember, and “many were so excited to discover new facts and mysteries about the universe that led to the expansion of their thinking capacity.”

During the 80th Independence Day events at the Balika Bhavan, three Rotaractors were part of the delegates who were regaled with variety entertainment by girls. “We will continue to engage with the inmates at the orphanage through workshops, fun sessions and field trips.”

Kargil war memorial event

In tie-up with the Telangana State Forest Academy and parent Rotary club, the Rotaractors planted 527 saplings on the academy premises at Dulapally, a residential hub near Hyderabad, to mark the Kargil Vijay Diwas (July 26).

“As 527 soldiers had lost their lives in the Kargil war, we chose that number of saplings for the planting drive. We are going to take up greening missions for other noteworthy social and sustainable causes in the coming months,” says Lakshmi.

Telangana chief conservator of forests Priyanka Varghese, Maj Gen H S Gill, Maj Gen Ravi Rawada, RC Lake District Moinabad president Ramesh Patel and DGE Harihara Prasad were guests of honour at the State Forest Academy. Welcoming the delegates, RAC Mahindra University president Kaushal Talluri said, “it gives me immense pride to conduct the largest planting drive of Rotaractors in RID 3150, and making the initiative a truly significant one in terms of both scale, impact and purpose.”

The Rotaractors partnered with the Blood Warriors Foundation that is working for thalassaemia-free India to conduct *Backathon 2026* that saw a participation of 400 volunteers. The symbolic backward walk showed “our commitment to spread awareness on thalassemia prevention and voluntary blood donation.” The event featured a free HPLC (high-performance liquid

At the B M Birla Science Centre.





At the space museum in the Birla Science Centre.



Rotaractors with girl children.

chromatography)-testing booth, “that encouraged volunteers to undergo screening for thalassaemia with focus on early detection and prevention of this blood disorder.”

With 130 members, the Rotaract club has UG students of diverse streams from arts, science to engineering and management courses. Their Professional Development Avenue offers students numerous opportunities “for personal growth apart from contributing to society,” says Maha Lakshmi, a second-year BBA student. With two-year experience as Rotaractor, “I am looking forward to become a Rotarian once I complete my degree and leave my college.”

She is very thankful to her Rotaract club for supporting her, noting that “experimenting with creative initiatives has helped me to learn many new concepts in life,” smiles Lakshmi. ■

Making lives a little easier

Jaishree

From protecting traffic police personnel from the effects of pollution to helping people with disabilities live and work with greater independence, Rotaractors in RI District 3206 are finding practical ways to make a difference in their communities, responding to DRR VK Vijay Vignesh's call for the district's priority projects under the head *Embracing every ability*. Five recent initiatives reflect a common approach — identify a genuine need and respond with thoughtful, useful support.

At Coimbatore, the **Rotaract Club of Coimbatore Unique** turned its attention to traffic police personnel who spend long hours amid dust, vehicle emissions and pollution. *Respira*, a lung screening initiative conducted in collaboration with GMC Multi Speciality

Clinic, provided more than 35 traffic police officers with Pulmonary Function Test and other health screenings.

The initiative, conceptualised by club president D Dharshini Shri and past president Yokesh, also focused on preventive healthcare, encouraging the officers to take greater care of their health and seek timely medical attention. Free follow-up check-up for a month and discounts on medicines extended the support beyond the screening camp, said Dharshini.

At *Tex Wonder* organised by the **Rotaract Club of Coimbatore Texcity**, held at the Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Dream Special School, more than 50 children with special needs came together for a day of music, dance, games and interaction.

The event gave the children an opportunity to participate at their own



Members of RAC Coimbatore Unique with traffic police personnel at a lung checkup camp.





Left: RAC Coimbatore Texcity president M Prabanjani engaging children with bubble play as part of the Tex Wonder event.



Below: A woman on a wheelchair provided to her by RAC Coimbatore Comito.





pace, said club president M Prabanjani. Live music, bubble play, group dances and other activities gradually drew even the initially hesitant children into the celebrations. “The emphasis was less on performance and more on creating a space where every child felt comfortable expressing themselves,” she added.

The club provided silambam sticks to 25 students from across three villages near Coimbatore. The girls are being trained in the martial arts by NMCT, an NGO in the city. In mid-October, the club is all set to organise a residential programme for students of Class 6–12 from 11 tribal schools in Coonoor, Nilgiris. Six sessions comprising career guidance, public speaking and cracking public exam are being planned, she said, adding that raincoats and uniforms will be provided to 150 students.

The **Rotaract Club of Coimbatore Uptown**, under its service initiative, *Wingman*, provided a specially designed mobility aid to a student of a school for the disabled in Thondamuthur village, and a sewing machine to a student with autism disorder in another school near the city. “We are making plans now to renovate the Thondamuthur school which is in a pathetic state,” said club president Poorvi Balakrishnan.

The **Rotaract Club of Coimbatore Comito** similarly addressed mobility challenges through *Enable*. With the support of the District Differently Abled Welfare Office, the club identified individuals in need and provided essential assistive devices, including wheelchairs and walking sticks. This is an ongoing project, said club president Paranthaman. “We are doing it in phases as and when we receive funds from our sponsors,” he added.

The emphasis was less on performance and more on creating a space where every child felt comfortable expressing themselves.

M Prabanjani
president, RAC Coimbatore
Texcity

The project aims to do more than distribute equipment. By enabling beneficiaries to move around more safely and carry out daily activities with less dependence on others, the initiative seeks to restore a measure of independence and dignity.

The **Rotaract Club of LIA** (Lead India Ahead) provided two table fans to improve ventilation for the members of the Deaf Leader Foundation through its *Project Visiri*.

For the Rotaractors involved, the larger lesson is simple: service is not always about doing something big. As Prabanjani reflected: “It is about noticing what can make another person’s life a little easier, and doing something about it.” ■



A child gets a wheel chair from members of RAC Coimbatore Uptown.

Project Janmshree, a flagship initiative of RAC Institute for Excellence in Higher Education, Bhopal, RID 3040, has distributed healthcare kits to 25 neonatal mothers at Dr Kailash Nath Katju Hospital which will ensure the well-being of the beneficiaries and their newborns.

Each basket contained nutritious edibles like protein powder, multivitamin supplements, and hygiene items including sanitary pads, diapers and wet wipes, besides a feeding bottle. “The neonatal welfare project costing `10,000 was funded by our members,” says Mariyam Khan, club president. Around 10 Rotaractors led by Mariyam visited the hospital, and interacted with the lactating mothers, providing them useful tips on how to take care of their health and infants, “as post-delivery, the babies need utmost care from mothers in the first 18–20 months,” she smiles.

In the first year of the project inception, Jan 2025, a team of 20 Rotaractors went to an anganwadi at Shyamala Hills, a neighbourhood in Bhopal, to deliver similar healthcare kits to 30 lactating mothers.

Sponsored by RC Lakes Bhopal, the Rotaract club celebrated its 11th Charter Day at Apna Ghar, an old age home, in July, along with 30 elderly inmates and 10 Rotarians from their parent club. “Music, dance and fun games made the occasion a memorable one for both Rotaractors/Rotarians and the elders who turned nostalgic recalling their life incidents and past joyful moments with their families,” explains Mariyam.

During the orientation programme for new members, all college students across various streams, Rotary’s global mission, its lineage, and milestone projects were narrated to 15 new Rotaractors who were inducted into the club following the protocol.

In August, “we will be painting the walls of Shiv Mandir, an ancient temple at Murli Nagar, Karond, with divine characters and natural scenery to enhance the aesthetic look of the surroundings,” says Mariyam. “Around 20 Rotaractors will paint the temple walls, and this work will boost our public image as it will be done in the underserved area of Bhopal.”

Into her third year as Rotaractor, Mariyam is keen to become “an educator in the academic line once I complete my masters in Economics this year.” She is looking forward to join Rotary, “I will be joining my parent club, RC Lakes Bhopal, to continue my service activity,” she adds. ■

A Rotaractor gives healthcare kit to a neonatal mother.

A photograph showing a Rotaractor, Mariyam Khan, standing next to a neonatal mother. The mother is sitting in a hospital bed, holding a newborn baby. A yellow basket filled with healthcare kits is placed on a table in front of her. The Rotaractor is wearing a blue patterned dress and glasses, smiling at the camera. The mother is wearing a white headscarf and a grey hospital gown, also smiling. The background shows a hospital room with a bed and some medical equipment.

Healthcare kits for neonatal mothers

V Muthukumaran

Look beyond outcomes, to lasting impact: **Babalola**

Jaishree

A visit to Goa by RI President Yinka Babalola, as part of his India tour in August, saw

35 new Rotaract clubs chartered in RID 3170. Addressing Rotaractors at a meet hosted by RC Porvorim, he congratulated the new clubs and reminded Rotarians that chartering was only the beginning.

“An empowered member is a member for life,” said Babalola, urging sponsoring Rotary clubs to orient, mentor and groom their Rotaractors. Recalling his own journey as a Rotaractor, he said, “Rotary found me and invested in me.” That investment has brought him to where he is today. “We have all benefitted from this organisation and it is about time we give back to Rotary. Let’s now groom



Above: RI President Yinka Babalola presents National Champion Award to a Rotaractor. From L: RID 3170 DRR Amey Varerkar, RI Director K P Nagesh (second from L), RRYAC chair Karthik Kittu, RID 3170 DG da Costa and PDRR Rohan Dalmiya are also present.



From L: DG Lenny da Costa, RI President Yinka Babalola, Goa CM Pramod Sawant and RI Director K P Nagesh.



the next generation to take on the reins so that Rotary continues its journey.”

To the Rotaractors, the RI President said, “Don’t wait for permission. Step forward, speak up and take the initiative. Leadership is about action.”

Later, at a TRF thanksgiving programme, Babalola thanked

We have all benefitted from this organisation and it is about time we give back to Rotary. Let’s now groom the next generation to take on the reins so that Rotary continues its journey.

Rotarians for their generosity towards “our Rotary Foundation,” stressing that it belongs to Rotarians. “If you refer to it as ‘the’ Rotary Foundation, it is as though it belongs to some people somewhere else, and we are just being asked to help. But it is *our* Rotary Foundation,” he noted.

He urged Rotarians to look beyond immediate outcomes to lasting impact. “Change is just the beginning. Impact is what endures,” he said, illustrating the difference through *Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria*, a 2022 TRF Programs of Scale initiative. The pilot, in northern Nigeria near the Cameroon border, aimed to reduce maternal and infant mortality by 25 per cent. After two years, maternal mortality had fallen by about 35 per cent and infant mortality by about 50 per cent.

During a visit to one of the health centres, the chief medical officer told him that Rotary had begun working there about 17 months earlier and that, in the preceding 12 months, no mother or child had died at the facility. “That is what impact means,” he said.

He shared a similar lesson from his own club. Initially, members donated mosquito nets, birth kits and anaemia tablets, but later realised that many recipients did not need them. The club changed its approach, identifying women who could not afford even the registration fee for prenatal care. It paid their fees, provided mosquito nets and promised newborn kits. At the next immunisation programme, “as we got there, the health workers pointed to the children and told us, ‘Rotary, that’s your baby.’ They were now ‘Rotary babies.’ It did not cost us extra in terms of money, but we created impact because we thought a little harder.”

Congratulating RID 3170 on its upcoming bifurcation, Babalola said its growth reflected a healthy organisation. He warned that clubs that do not induct new members have “a destined handshake with extinction,” while districts that do not create new clubs face “a destined handshake with merger.” In a lighter vein, he said continued mergers could eventually mean district conferences in neighbouring Pakistan or Bangladesh.



RI director K P Nagesh echoed the call for stronger engagement with young members. Rotarians should handhold Rotaractors through sports

and cultural events, RYLA, picnics and industrial visits, helping them sustain their interest in Rotary, he said. He also addressed the concern over Rotaract dues, pointing out that “the annual \$5 contribution was small

compared with the opportunities and lifelong lessons Rotary offers.”

Nagesh also announced an ambitious target of 1,000 new Rotaract clubs and one lakh Rotaractors in India by September 30, a commit-



From L: RID Nagesh, RID 3011 DG Ajeet Jalan, President Babalola, RID 3012 DG Amit Gupta, his wife Swati and RI VP Muruganandam at Delhi.



From L: PDRR Thansen, DRR Amey Varerkar, PDRR Kishore R, RRYAC chair PDRR Karthik Kittu, RID Nagesh, President Babalola, DG da Costa, PDG Deepak Purohit, PDRRs Rohan Dalmiya, Sahil Gandhi and Om Chawla.

ment he made along with co-director and Vice President M Muruganandam, as well as a plan for at least 10 medical missions to Africa. “We have sought the Prime Minister’s support to facilitate regular Indian medical teams to African countries, potentially one or two teams every month,” he said.

TRF trustee AS Venkatesh noted that India’s Foundation contributions had risen from less than \$20 million six or seven years ago to more than \$45 million last year, making India the world’s second-largest giving country. He challenged Rotarians to aim for \$100 million.

Complimenting RC Panaji Riviera’s international service project of setting up an NICU at a hospital in Kano, Nigeria, and training doctors there to handle emergencies, he said, “I am glad to see India evolve as a donor country from a recipient country. I recall those days when we would

carry to the international assembly a bunch of booklets detailing projects that we intend doing, seeking funds from developed countries.”

RID 3192 Governor Ravishankar Dakoju introduced *Dhanyavad* — an India-wide environment and education initiative of planting one million saplings, setting up one lakh water bowls for animals and birds, and support for 5,000 schools in tribal regions — to the Rotaractors. “Your generation must practise minimalism,” he told them, announcing that he and his wife Paola had pledged 85 per cent of their wealth to TRF.

DG Lenny da Costa pledged 100 new Rotaract clubs, 52 new Rotary clubs and more than 300 Interact clubs in RID 3170.

The Rotary leaders participated in the Independence Day event at the invitation of Goa CM Pramod Sawant.

Your generation
must practise minimalism.

Ravishankar Dakoju
RID 3192 District Governor

At Kolkata (RID 3291), Babalola, along with RI Vice President Muruganandam, distributed wheelchairs to 150 physically challenged people after visiting Rotary Sadan, the Children’s Library, Cultural Activity Centre and the Peace Pole. DG Tapas Bhattacharya welcomed the Rotary leaders.

In Delhi, an MoU was signed in the presence of President Babalola, RI VP Muruganandam and director Nagesh between Dakoju and RI districts 3011 and 3012, led by their respective DGs Ajeet Jalan and Amit Gupta.

The MoU creates a long-term framework to support *Project Dhanyavad* in the two districts in accordance with TRF policies. It emphasises continuity beyond individual Rotary leadership terms with joint district implementation, a coordination committee and the involvement of successive district leadership to ensure proper selection, monitoring and stewardship of projects.

In Varanasi, President Babalola, accompanied by RI VP Muruganandam and RI director Basu Dev Golyan, addressed a multidistrict membership summit for Rotarians of RID 3100, 3110, 3120, 3250 and 3261, and appreciated their contributions to TRF. ■

When surplus food becomes someone's meal

Kiran Zehra

In Bengaluru, a Rotaract club is turning food that might otherwise be discarded into meals for people in need.

A woman held Vinit Jain's hand and thanked him for the food he gave her. "She told me that, because of me, she would have something to eat that day." For Jain, past president of the Rotaract Club of BMS College of Engineering (BMSCE), RID 3191, "it was a moment of clarity. My team's work was not simply about collecting leftover food or organising weekly distributions. It was about making a difference to someone who might otherwise go without a meal."

Jain along with his parents has organised many *annadanam* (food donation drives), feeding over 400 people each month. Conversations with college friends living in paying guest (PG) accommodations brought to his attention the amount of food being wasted in their mess kitchens. He wondered "if that food could reach people who needed it. He approached his Rotaract club, and the members worked out a way to collect surplus food from nearby PG accommodations and distribute it in the surrounding neighbourhoods."

A Rotaractor distributing food in a slum area.

Launched in January 2025, the *Khushiyon Ka Dabba* initiative now runs every Thursday. Rotaractors collect freshly prepared surplus food, pack it and distribute it to people in need, including daily-wage workers, elderly residents and families facing financial hardship in areas such as Kempegowda Nagar and around Gavi Gangadeshwara Temple.

“The idea is simple. Putting it into practice is not,” he says. “The amount of food available varies from week to week. When the club first approached PG accommodations, the arrangement was for a weekly collection. But there was no guarantee of how much food would be left over each Thursday. The volunteers reached out to more hostels to increase the supply, yet the quantities remained unpredictable.”

Packaging brought another set of problems. “Roti, dal and other dishes cannot always be packed together conveniently like *khichdi* or *pulao*, and using separate boxes for every item would require too many containers.” The team currently uses silver foil packets and is looking at more sustainable alternatives.

“Such details rarely feature in accounts of community service, but they shape what can be accomplished. Food must be collected on time, packed appropriately and distributed while it is still suitable to eat. The number of meals available depends on what the PG kitchens have to spare,” he says and adds that RAC BMSCE “will figure things out!”

The club runs *Khushiyon Ka Dabba* without a dedicated project budget. Volunteers contribute their time, use their own vehicles when necessary and cover nearby areas on foot to keep expenses down. The initiative depends on the cooperation of the PG accommodations and the willingness of Rotaractors to return every week. “The quantity of food collected may change, and practical challenges remain unresolved, but the purpose does not,” he smiles.



Construction workers receiving the *Khushiyon Ka dabba*.



Schoolchildren waiting to get their meal boxes.



Club members packing food at a PG kitchen in Bengaluru.



A girl receiving a meal.

also gives us Rotaractors a direct role in reducing food waste and addressing hunger, in keeping with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 2, that is, Zero Hunger,” says Samyak R, the club’s secretary.

“The team cannot always predict how many food packets it will distribute on a Thursday. But it continues to collect what is available and take it to those who need it,” says Jain. ■

Nepal's Rotaractors to the rescue

Jaishree

For Suraj Bhandari, the flash floods in Nepal were not a distant disaster. He is from Chitwan, one of the affected areas, and watched with concern as the Narayani River, a tributary of the Trishuli, swelled and damaged crops and property.

As Rotaract secretary of RID 3292, which covers Nepal and Bhutan, Bhandari was also closely involved in the relief response. Following an emergency appeal from the Nepal Prime Minister's Office, he and other Rotaractors, guided by DRR Prakash Sharma Gaire, moved quickly to organise assistance.

"DRR Sharma called for a meeting with the Rotaract club heads in the district to formalise a plan of action," he said. District 3292 has around 6,000 Rotaractors in 192 clubs.

Collection centres were set up in Kathmandu, Chitwan, Bhairahawa and

eastern Nepal. Medicines, infant food, toiletries, groceries, fruits, noodles and biscuits were collected at these centres and sent through the Nepal Army to government relief camps in Rasuwa, Chitwan and Nuwakot.

The floods struck several communities along the Lende Khola and Trishuli river systems after an ice and rock avalanche on the Langtang Lirung peak in the Himalayas caused a sudden surge of water downstream on August 26. Rasuwa, Nuwakot, Dhading, Chitwan, Gorkha and Tanahun were among the affected districts. Roads and bridges were washed away, making rescue and relief operations difficult.

"It was devastating to see entire villages wiped away by the flash floods. In several places we had to walk over building debris and destroyed homes to deliver aid material to people," said Bhandari.



DRR Prakash Sharma Gaire and Rotaract district secretary Suraj Bhandari with flood-affected people.



DG Vishnu Karkee (R) with a Rotarian in front of a house that collapsed in the flash floods.





Household items being distributed at a disaster site.



Two phases of distribution had been completed when he spoke to *Rotary News* a week after the glacier collapse, with a third underway. This phase included tents, gas stoves, dustbins, mosquito nets, blankets, towels and bedsheets for families in Nuwakot.

“We just don’t know where to start and how to console people who have lost their entire homes and all their belongings in the flash floods. Many of them are still searching for their loved ones, hoping that they would hear from or about them soon,” he said.

Google Forms were shared among the Rotary fraternity to enlist volunteers, who were organised into teams for transport, delivery, blood donation and counselling. Rotarians and Rotaractors donated blood at Civil Hospitals,

while an emergency database listed members ready to donate blood in their neighbourhoods when required.

They also assisted in the recovery of bodies washed downstream. Some of these were found along the banks of the Trishuli and others in the Narayani River in Chitwan. “Around 300 bodies were collected and sent to mortuaries,” said Bhandari.

The Nepal Army played an important role in transporting relief supplies to areas where damaged roads made access difficult, while helicopters were used to reach places that could not be accessed otherwise.

As immediate relief continued, the Rotaract office, led by DRR Sharma, began mobilising funds for relief and rehabilitation. Rotarians from outside

Nepal, including India, also contributed. Flyers carrying QR codes were circulated for digital transfers done by overseas Rotarians through the Prime Minister’s Relief Fund.

In coordination with RIDE Basu Dev Golyan, a member of RC Biratnagar, Nepal, Rotary is working with its project partner ShelterBox to provide tents, tarpaulins, water filters, mosquito nets and cooking sets in the disaster-affected areas.

The ShelterBox team in Kathmandu met DG Vishnu Karkee, Dinesh Raj Manandhar and members of the Rotary Nepal District Disaster Relief Committees to assess the needs of affected communities. “Our Rotaractors and Rotarians are working with the team to identify and distribute the kits to the people,” said Bhandari.

DG Karkee said Rotarians visited affected sites on the third day after the floods, carrying supplies identified as necessary by local authorities, the Army and the Police. These included body bags, PPE kits, masks, gloves, medical kits, mattresses, sleeping bags and solar lamps.

“Teams of Rotarians visit the regions daily to assess the people’s needs,” he said. Rotary plans to establish temporary medical centres with a doctor and two nurses in affected localities. Twenty portable toilets with water facilities and filtration systems will be installed. Six motorbike ambulances will be sponsored to serve people stranded in hilly and road-inaccessible areas.

The relief effort is now looking beyond the immediate emergency. “We’ll work on rehabilitation and reconstruction once the government decides on the resettlement areas. We will join hands with the government to build schools and toilets, provide drinking water systems and income-generating projects for the needy,” said DG Karkee. ■



Relief supplies being loaded into a helicopter by the Nepal Army.



Rotaractors with the beneficiary.

A sewing machine helps a woman earn more

Team Rotary News

Knowing how to sew is one thing. Finding regular work and earning enough to support a family is another,” says Suvarna Laxmi, beneficiary of *Project Shakthi*, an initiative of the Rotaract Club of Jain Evening College, RID 3191. For many women, she says, “a lack of equipment and customers can make it difficult to earn a steady income, even when they have the necessary skills.”

The club identified Suvarna, who knew tailoring but lacked the resources to grow her business. Through *Project Shakthi*, she also gained access to a new industrial sewing machine and connected with a local fashion boutique that is providing her with regular tailoring orders. Her daily earnings have increased from about ₹300 to 1,500.

“For people who work from home, finding customers and getting regular orders can be difficult. By connecting

her directly with a boutique, we hope to help her earn a more stable income instead of depending on occasional jobs,” says Jai Kishan, the club’s immediate past president.

The support does not stop with the sewing machine. The boutique is expected to help maintain the equipment, while the club plans to guide the woman in keeping accounts, managing expenses and saving money.

The club also plans to train more women in tailoring. “Suvarna is already training a few women under the initiative,” says Kishan. He adds that *Project Shakthi* aims to help women build a network of customers, including boutiques and individuals.

The project’s success, he says, will depend on whether the women can continue earning a steady income. ■



Suvarna Laxmi working with her new sewing machine.



Members of RAC VES College of Pharmacy with children holding stationery items.

A lasting impact through Seva Mahotsav

V Muthukumaran

Project Seva Mahotsav has created positive vibes across Rotaract clubs of RID 3141 (Mumbai region) in July, the first month of new Rotary year. “For, we came together to do a clutch of high profile service activities reaching out to beneficiaries across age groups in different parts of this metro city,” says Anushree Sandip Yadav, editorial director, RAC VES College of Pharmacy.

Her club has done eight initiatives, catering to different sections of society, in a sequential order one after the other. “Around 40 Rotaractors were

involved in executing these projects, all of which were funded by member contributions, and completed in July itself,” she says. A two-hour online session on ‘Mind matters’ was curated by Hema Mandavia and Ruby Kaur from MasterG Community, an NGO that offers counselling and other forms of treatment for mental health issues. The duo spoke on diverse issues affecting mental health including exam stress and anxiety, peer pressure, career anxiety, and drugs addiction among youth. “The virtual meet was attended by 30 Rotaractors who also interacted with

the resource persons to clarify their doubts and concerns.”

Food packets consisting of snacks and other nutritious edibles were distributed to 50 people, mostly children and elders from an underserved community, near Hema Park, Bhandup, in the second leg of *Seva Mahotsav*. “We observed Gratitude Day in our college by presenting Thank You letters to 34 non-teaching and support staff for their valuable efforts in shaping our lives,” says Anushree. The recipients thanked Rotaractors, letting them “know that no one has expressed till now their



Rotaractors at a 'Good touch, bad touch' session for children at a slum colony.



Gratitude Day was observed by Rotaractors at their college.



With an elderly inmate at the V V Caring Centre, Thane.



A small trader engaged by a Rotaractor.



Eco-friendly bags distributed to roadside vendors.



Rotaractors at a 'Mind Matters' wellness session.

Our Rotaractors have made us proud by reaching diverse people across Mumbai through different initiatives in July.

Akshata Gadge
president, RAC VES College of Pharmacy



A food packet given to an underprivileged family.

token of appreciation in this simple, but nice manner.”

Under *Project Baaghbaan* (elders), five Rotaractors visited V V Caring Centre, Thane, and engaged 21 elderly inmates in fun games and lively interaction. “We talked and listened to the senior citizens as they recalled some interesting vignettes of their lives, walking down memory lane.” Stationery kits were distributed to 23 children from a slum colony near Hema Park, Bhandup, and “we urged them to make full use of these study materials in their class and home study.” A video clip from the mobile phone was shown to the children to educate them on ‘Good touch, bad touch’ issues.

With the help of colourful posters, Rotaractors taught the “young minds how to speak out boldly when they feel uncomfortable in certain situations. Also, they were guided on how to identify the culprits pretending to be do-gooders when in fact they harbour evil designs on the young boys and girls.”

Local Campaign Hero

Around 8–10 street vendors were given useful tips and suggestions for improving their retail business at the Mulund and Ghatkopar Railway Stations by a

team of four Rotaractors. “We listened to their daily problems and challenges, and advised them ways and means to overcome those issues with a systematic plan of action,” says Anushree. “We named this initiative as *Local Campaign Hero* as these small vendors have the potential to succeed big in life with some minor corrections in their approach and mindset.”

Environment-friendly paper bags were distributed to 20 roadside vendors and shoppers, urging them to avoid plastics and “use nature-friendly products for a healthy, sustainable lifestyle.” Around 45 Rotaract clubs in RID 3141 have taken up multifarious projects under *Seva Mahotsav*, a brainchild of DRR Shreehari Nair, and was done for the first time across the district. Happy with the positive feedback they have got from their July projects, RAC VES College of Pharmacy president Akshata Gadge says, “our Rotaractors have made us proud by reaching diverse people across Mumbai through different initiatives.”

According to her, the 10-year-old Rotaract club with 50 members “does not just celebrate years; but also the number of lives touched, new friendships formed, and every leader being nurtured by our club.” ■

50 years, still serving

Jaishree

The Rotaract Club of Satna, RID 3120, formed in 1976, is the oldest active Rotaract club in the district, with a record of community service, leadership development and friendships that have endured across generations.

The club was conceived by the Rotary Club of Satna in January 1976, when the Rotary district was still undivided District 311. It received its charter on July 11, 1976, at the first Rotaract Assembly of District 311, hosted by the club. Ajay Jain became its charter president.

The club became part of District 312 following the bifurcation of District 311 in 1984. The district now covers parts of eastern Uttar Pradesh and the Vindhya region of Madhya Pradesh.

Over the years, RAC Satna has contributed to several community initiatives. In 1984, it collected around ₹25,000 to support victims

of the Bhopal gas tragedy. Two years later, it set up a free vaccination and polio centre as part of RI's PolioPlus programme, launched in 1985. Blood donation drives in the 1980s and 1990s were another regular initiative.

Road safety has also been a recurring concern. The club organised an 'OK Pass' certificate distribution camp in 1999–2000 to promote awareness about traffic rules among youngsters. The *Motoract with Rotaract* bike and car rally in 2018 aimed to spread awareness on safe driving.

Some of the club's initiatives have gone on to become long-running community programmes. 'Best Mind of Satna,' an inter-school quiz conducted jointly with the Rotary Club of Satna in memory of past Rotaractor Priyanshu Khurana, has been held for

25 years. The club has also partnered with its parent Rotary club in organising Rotary Youth Month for nearly four decades.

In 2016 and 2017, the club organised the *Rotaract Heart Run*, described by the club as Satna's first marathon, attracting more than 1,500 participants in each edition.

Its service extends to supporting underprivileged children as well. During Rakshabandhan, Rotaractors celebrate with the girls at the Upkar Hum Hain Society, an NGO run by Sonia Jolly that provides education, coaching and co-curricular activities to more than 100 underprivileged girls.

The club has produced six DRRs — the highest number from any club in the district. Several former

Former presidents of RAC Satna honoured at the *Golden Gala* event held recently to commemorate the club's 50 years.



Rotaractors have gone on to join the Rotary Club of Satna, with some later serving as Rotary club presidents. The club also had the district's first Rotary-Rotaract dual member, Kushagra Bansal, following the introduction of dual membership by RI; it now has three dual members.

"For us, 50 years is not just a number. It is a reminder of the people who built this club, the friendships that have lasted for decades and the service projects that have connected generations of members," says PDRR Bansal.

The club marked its golden jubilee with *Golden Gala* on July 11, 2026, its 50th Charter Day. Past presidents and PDRRs were felicitated at the celebration, which was attended by DGN PDRR Mankeshwar Nath Pandey, charter president Ajay Jain, DRR Garima Singh and DRC Sachin Upadhyay.

"Reaching our golden jubilee is a springboard for our future. We are proud of the legacy built by our alumni and remain committed to inspiring the next generation of leaders to create lasting change," says Bansal. ■



Club members at a fundraising campaign to support Bhopal gas tragedy survivors.



Club members at an immunisation booth during a Polio NID event.



A Rotaract clean-up at Mumbai beach

V Muthukumaran

A mega beach clean-up was organised at the Girgaon Chowpatty beach by RAC Adv. Balasaheb Apte College of Law, RID 3141, in partnership with ConnectFor, a pan-India NGO involved in community development and livelihood restoration through joint action.

The second edition of the beach clean-up (Sep 27) under *Project Shore Seva* collected around 35 bags of garbage and litter which were loaded on a Brihanmumbai Corporation truck that disposed them in a safe manner, says club president Paarth Mali.

Just two days before the event, the beach was swamped with floral

waste, and tonnes of debris from the Ganesh idols that were brought here in processions for the *Visarjan* ceremony. “Around 42 Rotaractors, along with ConnectFor volunteers, with hand gloves on and carrying garbage bags, collected all sorts of litter, debris, plastic waste, broken bottles, cloth shreds, and other discards to



: Rotaractors at the Prabhadevi beach, Mumbai.

clean up the entire beach,” explains Mali. A few members of RAC Thane Northend also joined the clean-up at the beach, their second edition following the first one at Prabhadevi beach on August 25 last year.

For the maiden clean-up in 2025, “we tied up with the Eco Army, that is focused on environmental protection and restoration. At that time, we decided to make beach clean-up a regular activity by roping in like-minded NGOs, students and Rotaractors from other clubs to make the initiative a larger and shared endeavour,” says Sana Imran Sayed, the club’s editorial director. They also wanted to record how much waste is collected each time, so that “we can track our progress and measure its impact over time.”

A Garba music and dance event titled *Dholida* was held at the Siddhi Vinayak hall of the college as part of



During the clean-up drive near the shore.

Navratri celebrations. “We had a strict ceiling of 100 Rotaractors and students with a ticketed entry of ₹199 per head. The dance programme was meant only for our club Rotaractors and college

students,” says Mali. For the debating contest, 16 college teams (of two members each) from across Mumbai took part to exhibit their skills in “fierce arguments, counter views and analytical reasoning on issues related to fundamental rights as guaranteed in the Indian Constitution.” The final round to decide the winning teams was open to the public.

The annual legal seminars and legal drama festivals having competitive performances are “eagerly awaited by the Rotaractors across our district clubs. For, we are the only law college-based Rotaract club in RID 3141, and have earned a reputation for hosting such legal contests between college teams,” says Mali. All 35 law student members of this 13-year-old Rotaract club contribute their time and effort to organise events that serve as an “intellectual feast for participants.”

For club president Paarth Mali, a fourth year law student and his second year in Rotaract, the Rotary’s youth movement has “honed my public speaking skills.” Even after graduating from the college, he wants to continue as a Rotaractor by joining a community-based club. On becoming a Rotarian, “I have a timeline of 10 years for formally joining a Rotary club in Mumbai,” he smiles. ■



Clearing the beach litter, teamwork at its best.

Making a difference

Ration kits for children in RID 3131

Ration kits were distributed to 223 children by members of Rotaract District 3131 at the Punarutthan Samarsata Gurukulam, a residential school for those from nomadic and underprivileged families, as part of relief efforts in the aftermath of recent floods. This initiative was the first one under a novel *Project 31.31* designed to connect every district event with meaningful community impact.

An amount equivalent to 31.31 per cent of the registration value of the Rotaract events is raised separately through voluntary contributions which are then used for community initiatives. The project was kick-started with the District Assembly and DRR installation, which had received 223 registrations. Ration kits distribution was the first execution under *Project 31.31*.



Rotaractors distribute ration bags to children at a gurukulam school.



A blood donation drive in progress.

Blood donation camps at RID 3142

Under *Project Drop of Hope*, more than 35 Rotaract clubs in RID 3142 came together to organise over 35 blood donation camps which collected 1,350 units of blood in the first week of July. Apart from these camps, the Rotaractors fulfilled seven urgent blood donors, one platelet donor and two single donor platelet requirements, thus providing critical support to patients.

The project supports thalassaemia patients while ensuring that every patient in need of blood gets timely assistance. DRR Himanshu Dapurkar and his team went beyond blood collection as they created awareness on thalassaemia through on-ground initiatives and social media campaigns.



Mega planting drive in Jamshedpur

In the first week of July, members of RAC DBMS College of Education, RID 3250, organised *Project Eco-Echos*, a mega greening mission to mark *Van Mahotsav*. More than 250 saplings of diverse species were planted at the homes of Rotaractors across Jamshedpur.

Also saplings were planted on the college campus in the presence of celebrities, faculty members and Rotarians. The project focused on environmental protection and ushering in a greener future. The planting drive will increase the green cover of the city, thus enriching its biodiversity. The Rotaractors created awareness among the public on the need to nurture the environment.



A sapling being planted on the premises of DBMS College, Jamshedpur.



Rotaractors tie a reflector on a stray dog.



Caring for stray animals

Reflective collars were fitted on more than 250 stray dogs and cows by members of RAC Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, RID 3011, to prevent them from being hit by vehicles on the highways due to poor visibility.

Project Pawtection was aimed to improve the road safety of stray animals across Pitampura, Shalimar Bagh and Rohini in the national capital region of Delhi. Feeding drives were also conducted, and Rotaractors visited animal shelters to donate essential supplies including bread, milk, dog food and other necessities.

Reflective collars were designed with high-visibility material that reflects vehicle headlights, making animals visible from a much greater distance. Those few extra seconds of visibility allow drivers to slow down, change lanes safely, or stop before a collision occurs.



Members of RAC Ahmedabad Prahladnagar at a food distribution drive.

Anti-hunger drive in Ahmedabad

V Muthukumaran

Around 3,500 food packets (groundnut snacks) were distributed to children and elders from underprivileged families and those living in underserved communities under *Project Sankalp* from Jan 2026 when it was first initiated by the then club president Vandan Khushal Shah of RAC Ahmedabad Prahladnagar, RID 3055.

On the project genesis, Shah recalls, “during our frequent travels for routine work across the city, we find beggars at traffic signals and road

intersections pleading for alms, money or food with their outstretched hands and pathetic face. It was then that I thought about why not giving these beggars small food packets worth ₹20 each through a Rotaract drive, and also in personal capacity while travelling in our car or two-wheeler.” Before their first drive, the club members pooled in ₹52,000 with small donations from Rotarians, friends and their family members, and purchased groundnuts in bulk quantities from a wholesale market. “We got together in my house, sorted the piled-up snacks into neat

food packets for easy delivery to people on the roads, at shanties and slum colonies,” he says.

Each month Rotaractors meet at the club president’s house to sort and arrange the food packets for distribution across the city, particularly in areas where the children of migrant and homeless families live. When new club president Harsh Bhalani took charge in July, he complimented Vandan Shah for “devising a novel idea of *Annadhaan* as it reaches out to thousands of indigent families in an effective manner.” At present over 100

Rotaractors from 20 Rotaract clubs in Ahmedabad are involved the food packet distribution, “each one consisting of nutritious snack that will provided immediate relief from hunger for children,” says Shah.

Manzil talent show

Every year, a team of Rotaractors visits around a dozen government and blind schools to hold audition test among children in the age group of 6–18 years for a multi-talent show, a competitive event called *Manzil*. “We have been hosting the talent competition for the last five years, and our team is getting ready to conduct the same in the next three months (Oct-Dec) with fanfare,” explains Shah.

During the audition test at the schools for selection of talented singers and budding artistes, stationery kits

are distributed to all the participants. “We invite a panel of four experts to judge the performances of children in different streams of vocational arts... and they shortlist 20 candidates for the finals.”

The top five winners are given cash prizes of `45,000, while the remaining 15 finalists are presented with stationery items and school essentials. “A well-known Rotarian, a social celebrity or politician is invited as the chief guest for the grand finals,” he says. All the children and their parents are served dinner and refreshments at the finals of the *Manzil* show.

The 10-year-old Rotaract club has 45 members including lawyers, doctors, teachers and auditors who pool in their resources and efforts for community projects. Looking back at his six-year Rotaract journey, Vandan Shah

Every year, a team of Rotaractors visits around a dozen government and blind schools to hold audition test among children for a multi-talent show called *Manzil* which is held in Oct-Dec period.

says, “I was able to develop a professional mindset and a discipline through my stint in the organisation.” While a growing network of Rotaract friends is something he cherishes forever, he is keen to join his parent Rotary club, RC Ahmedabad Prahladnagar, within the next 5–6 years. ■



Rotaractors sorting and packing raw groundnuts before distribution.



At a roadside shanty settlement.



Family members including girls are given snacks packets.



Children happy to receive snacks at a construction site.

Service without borders

Jaishree

The Rotaract Club of St Xavier's College, Ranchi, RID 3250, took community service across borders and into neighbourhoods through *Voyage 3250: Around the Globe*.

The project was conducted in two phases. In the first, 111 community service activities were



Above: A Rotaractor interacting with students in a school in Africa, as part of the Voyage 3250: Around the Globe project.



Rotaractors distributing notebooks to school students.



organised over 320 hours, or 13 days, in collaboration with more than 80 Rotaract clubs across seven continents. Participating clubs included RAC Presidente Prudente Sul and RAC Itatiba from Brazil, RAC Mahabouda from Nepal, and the Rotaract Club of Toronto, Canada, among others.

The second phase brought the initiative to the local community in Ranchi. More than 180 student volunteers and NGO members joined hands to conduct 100 service activities in just three hours and two minutes. Clothes, food, groceries, stationery, sanitary pads and footwear were among the essentials distributed to beneficiaries.

The initiative reached approximately 70,000 people, with material support valued at nearly ₹5 lakh. It also mobilised over 1,000 volunteers across the initiative, generating more than 5,000 volunteer hours.

“Voyage 3250 showed us what young people can achieve when they work together, irrespective of geographical boundaries. The idea



A game of Tug of War cheers children.



A Rotaract member adorns a school wall with colourful paintings.



was to turn the spirit of international fellowship into meaningful service for communities,” says Afreen Islam, president, RAC St Xavier’s College, Ranchi.

The club continued its focus on basic needs through *Project Tript*, a 10-month food donation campaign conducted from July 2025 to April 2026 in collaboration with Ranchi-based Smile Welfare Circle. More than 20 food donation drives were organised across India, with the two organisations investing ₹50,000 in the initiative.

Members prepared and packed fresh meals, which were distributed to more than 20,000 people. The campaign also included feeding drives for animals, extending the initiative’s reach beyond human beneficiaries.

“*Project Tript* was about making food accessible to people who need it, through consistent efforts rather than a one-day activity. Including animal feeding drives was another way of putting compassion into practice,” says club secretary Pragya Bharti. ■



Rotaractors at the interactive Q&A during the career and opportunity awareness drive.

Rotaract club guides students on career opportunities

Team Rotary News

The Rotaract Club of Young Uptown, RID 3040, conducted *Lakshya*, a career and opportunity awareness drive, at the Government Higher Secondary School, Indore. The programme reached more than 80 students from Class 9–12. The initiative aimed to help students make informed career choices, understand the opportunities available to them, and plan for their future.

Students received guidance on choosing academic streams such as science, commerce and arts based on their interests and career goals. They were also informed about government schemes, scholarships and financial assistance available for higher education.

The session highlighted career options beyond conventional degrees, including vocational courses, Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and polytechnic programmes. Students were also encouraged to develop communication, leadership and other soft skills.

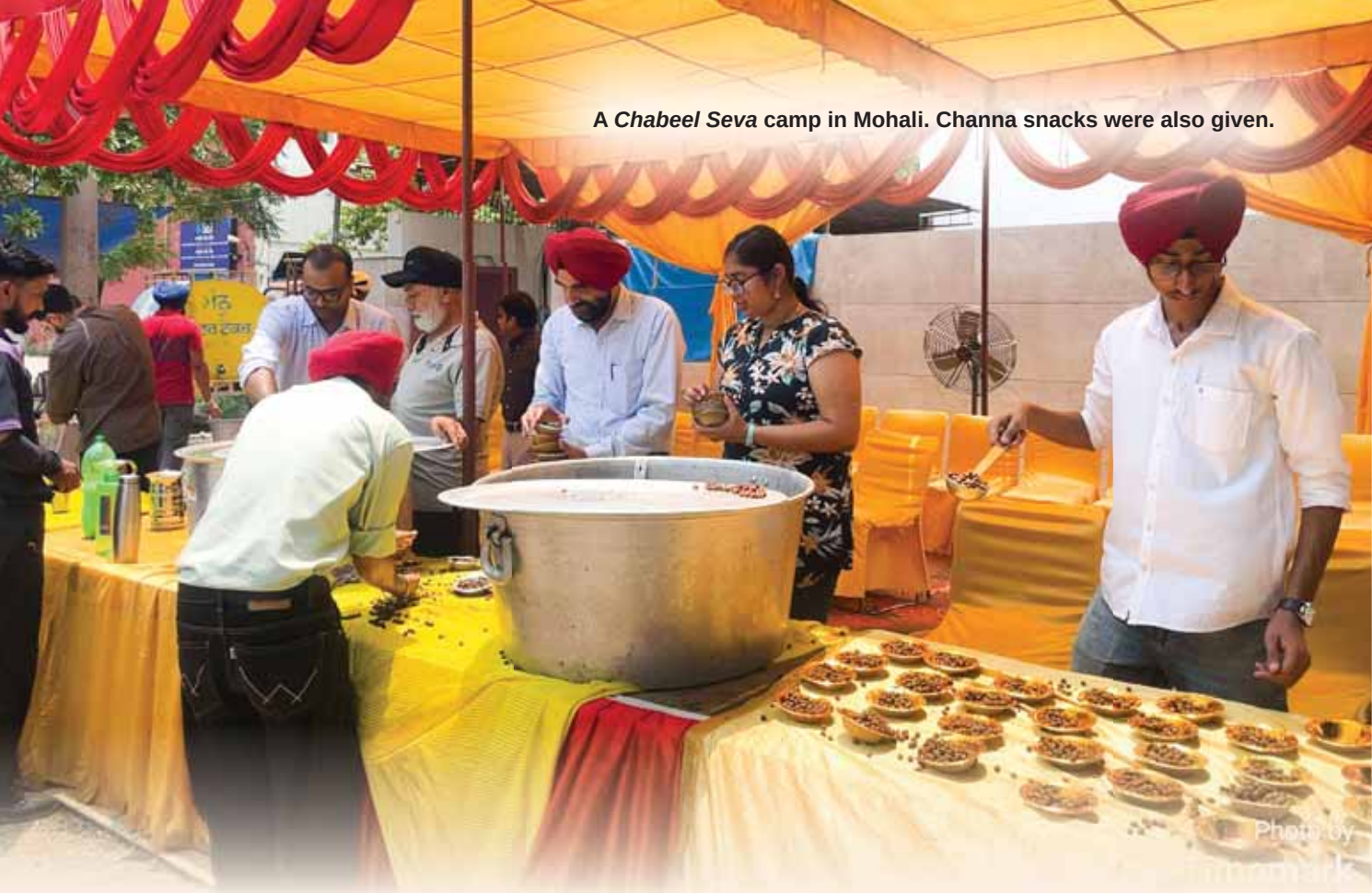
As part of the initiative, sanitary pads were distributed, followed by a session on menstrual hygiene and health awareness. A self-defence session for boys and girls introduced basic safety techniques and helped build confi-



Sanitary napkins being handed over to the students.

dence. This was followed by an interactive question-and-answer session that allowed students to seek guidance on subject selection, job security and career opportunities abroad. ■





A Chabeel Seva camp in Mohali. Channa snacks were also given.

‘Raahat’ summer relief from Rotaractors

V Muthukumaran

Chandigarh and surrounding urban areas bordering Punjab and Haryana had a scorching summer with mercury touching 42–43 degrees Celsius this May–June. Reaching out to the public and commuters facing daily hardships on the road, the Rotaract Club of Chandigarh Midtown, RID 3080, in tie-up with their parent Rotary club distributed 4,000 chilled lassi sachets under *Project Raahat*, thus providing instant relief to beneficiaries from sizzling summer heat.

The 10-day humanitarian drive saw a participation of 35 Rotaractors and 10 Rotarians from RC Chandigarh Mid Town. Lassi packets were

distributed to traffic police, delivery partners, construction workers, auto drivers, frontline workers and

We will be organising our next fundraiser at CP-76 Mall in March this Rotary year, and expect at least 500 participants including 200 Rotaractors to register and compete in the tournament.

Aman Garg

Event chair and dual member

sanitation staff, among others.

“Though the mercury hovered around 42 degrees, we felt as if it was 50 degrees because of humidity in the air during peak summer. The heatwave was merciless as people were exposed to hot sun whenever they came out of their homes... people suffered from heat exhaustion, dehydration, and some even had heat strokes, and had to be hospitalised,” said Aman Garg, event chair and a dual member.

The third edition of *Project Raahat* also hosted *Chabeel Seva* camp for three days in which sweetened rose milk was given to 5,500 beneficiaries. “The project was initiated by Rtn Jeeten Bhambri

when he was president of the Rotary club three years ago, and ever since, Rotaractors used to join hands with them to provide summer relief to the public during May-June by giving chilled refreshments,” he explained. Some members from the Rotaract Club of Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS) also chipped in at the summer relief project.

Project Raahat cost ₹60,000, which was part-funded by Sanjay Pahwa (₹30,000), charter president of the Rotaract club, and the balance amount came from Rotarians. “Amul company gave us lassi sachets on a no-profit basis which helped us to reach out to maximum beneficiaries,” said Garg. Recently, a team of Rotaractors visited a government primary school at Nayagaon village, and donated tables and chairs worth ₹5,000, funded by members, which would benefit 55 children.



Reaching out to patients at the Advanced Paediatrics Centre, PGI Hospital, Chandigarh.

Bowl Out Cancer

Come March, the Rotaractors will pull all stops for their annual flagship event, *Bowl Out Cancer*, a two-day bowling tournament, which raises funds for cancer patients and Rotaract projects for the incoming year. “We will be organising our

next fundraiser at CP-76 Mall in March this Rotary year, and expect at least 500 participants including 200 Rotaractors to register and compete in the tournament,” said Garg. He is hopeful of raising ₹4 lakh from the event through ticketing, sponsorship and private donations.

Last year, they raised ₹3 lakh from the bowling event, and had around 300 participants including 150 Rotaractors at the fundraiser contest. The proceeds go to treating cancer patients, and also for staging a marathon, open mic, and other Rotaract events for the year. Chartered 44 years ago, the community-based Rotaract club has 35 members drawn from various trades and professions.

Having become a Rotarian on July 1, Garg is “overwhelmed by the love and unconditional support I am receiving from my club members, though I am still a Rotaractor.” His stint as a Rotaractor for six years in the past, he said, “will help me to be an active Rotarian, and become a board member of the Rotary club soon.”

He is now looking after his family’s hardware and plywood business, and “though 23 years old, I have a desire to become a governor of my RI District 3080 in the next 20 years or so.” Garg has done MCom at the DAV College, Chandigarh. ■



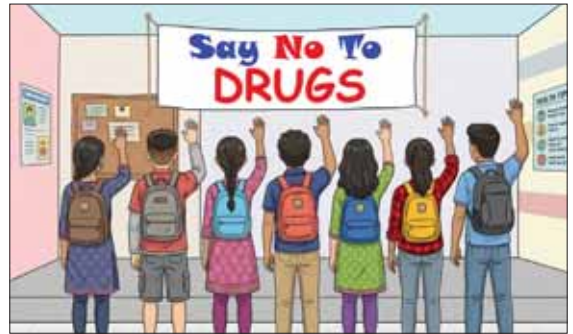
Lassi sachets being distributed to children at a labour colony.

Making a difference

An online pledge against drugs

On July 1, the start of a new Rotary year, the Rotaractors at RAC Kangeyam Institute of Technology, RID 3203, took an online pledge to shun drugs as part of a virtual campaign under *Project Mission Zero Drug*. Their online campaign also deliberated on the need to create awareness among the youth and other vulnerable groups to ward off addiction to drugs.

The virtual pledge and online interaction fostered a spirit of solidarity among Rotaractors of RID 3203.



Toothbrushes are distributed to students.



A WinS session at rural school

As part of WinS (Wash in Schools) project, a hygiene and health awareness event was conducted by the Rotaract Club of Kadi, RID 3055, for over 250 students at Sharchao Primary School. The students were educated on the correct method of brushing their teeth, the benefits of oral hygiene, and the problems that may arise due to improper brushing.

The WinS session covered seven steps of handwashing, its importance and the health issues arising out of poor hygienic practices. Toothbrushes were distributed to the students.

Rice bags donated to special homes

Rice bags were donated to inmates at the Don Bosco Care Home and Undrukol Old Age Home by RAC Salem Gems, RID 2982, in the presence of DRR Manikandan M, DRR-nominee Deepan Raj and PDRR Gowtham S.

The initiative focused on supporting families in need through the distribution of essential food supplies while encouraging members to uphold the spirit of service and generosity. Club president Balamaneekandan R with the help of secretary Shankari J coordinated the distribution of rice bags at both these special homes.



Rotaractors donate rice bags to children at a special care home.



Rotaractors with children at a creative arts workshop.



Empowering children with skills

Project Teach One, Inspire One of RAC United Ranchi, RID 3250, aims to empower children through education, skilling and creative learning.

In tie-up with eight other Rotaract clubs across India, the project has reached more than 800 children till date and they were trained in creative arts and skills, apart from grounding in basic language skills. Thanks to the collective efforts of the partnering clubs, the project has contributed to the personal and academic development of children from underserved communities across the country.



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