

## RBI Board 2019-20

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PP Rtn. Dr. Nagesh Simha

### WEEKLY MEETING VENUE & TIME:

Rotary House of Service  
2143, 16E Main, HAL II Stage,  
Indiranagar, Bengaluru - 560008

**Time 19:00, Monday**

rotary.indiranagar@gmail.com  
Ph: 080 25267014

## From the Editor's desk



Dear Reader,

RBI's unceasing drive to empower individuals and improve their lives fills up most of this issue of SEVA. News of some of this work reaches people well beyond the Rotary world and gives us a positive push in the public eye.

And while putting our efforts in, we take some time out to rejuvenate ourselves through some fun, interact with other clubs in the district, before charging ahead yet again.

In this issue of SEVA, we chronicle the following for you:

Our yearly cricket tryst with Rotary Bangalore Cantonment

RBI's Annual picnic – a well-earned breather

Vidya Daan RBI's helping hand to those who wish to learn

Spirit of Rotary team visits Rtn. Venkat Reddy

A behind-the-scenes account of RBI's cracker of a fund-raiser—**Kusur**—that befits a SIX SIGMA certified professional set-up with its adept handling.

IFMR 3190 Bikers Ride for Literacy – a long ride for a worthy cause

Lending a healing touch through WINS

Water Wheels that help lives of rural women to roll on

Understanding startups - a close-up view

Launch of RBI's 2nd Adult Literacy Centre

We bring all of this information to you, only with active support of our many Rotarian colleagues who diligently document activities for us.

We do hope this issue of SEVA meets up with your expectations, and would love hearing from you. It keeps us going.

For earlier SEVA issues, visit <https://www.rotaryindiranagar.org/newsletters/>

Please do send your comments on this issue to SEVA.RCBI@gmail.com

Happy Reading,

Vidyut Shenoy  
Bulletin Editor, 2019-20



## RBI - RBC Bonhomie over Cricket match

A cricket match between RBI and Rotary Bangalore Cantonment is an annual affair. The match featuring Rotarians, Annets and sometimes Anns is an opportunity for both clubs to compete fiercely on the field and yet demonstrate camaraderie. On 9th Feb 2020, the two teams met on the field and played a 12-overs a side match at the Clarence High School Ground off Assaye Road.

Interesting rules backed by a vibrant running commentary on proceedings by RBC's Rtn. Jasbeer Singh, made it a very memorable morning. The RBC team this year was more than ready for RBI's wiles, having practiced seriously for this all-important match up.

The two captains Rtn. D Ashok (Dash) and Rtn. Sujith Joseph agreed on boundaries and match rules before tossing the coin. RBI chose to bat first on a sunny morning. However, RBI openers appeared unnerved by Rtn. Mithun Pai's brisk pace, and just could not muster many runs. Rtn. Karthik, with his wily spin and occasional faster one, kept a tight leash on RBI batsmen as well. It was left to batsmen down the order Rtn. Nayeem, Annet Yash Koppikar and Rtn. Bhaskar to lift RBI to a not too mean 110 for 7. Nayeem top scored for RBI.

RBC's batsmen were more than ready and looked to overhaul RBI's score within just a few overs with their scoring rate. Introduction of Annets Yash and Savio helped slow down the run rate in the 3 overs that they could bowl. RBC, who were decidedly the better team in this year's encounter, won with an over and more to spare. The RBC team shared that they had a couple of practice sessions in the prior fortnight, which they believed made the difference.

The victors and the vanquished met for fellowship and lunch at Indian Gymkhana. Wonderful hosts, RBC, were there with a ready peg of liquor or a mug of beer for Rotarians and their family members. A few rounds of friendly games and Antakshari paved the way for a Sunday lunch.

Our Rotarian Nayeem was declared the best batsman of the day (for the 2nd year in succession). All other cricketing laurels went RBC's way.

Three cheers to the RBC - RBI bonhomie.

Thank you, Rotary Bangalore Cantonment for being such gracious hosts.

Enjoy these few memories of the event.



## RBI's Annual Picnic

RBI's Annual Picnic at Rtn. G J Raja's farmhouse on 16th Feb 2020 was a fun riot. A bus lot of RBlans and more were easily accommodated at the farmhouse on Bangalore's outskirts. The house set on a 120-acre plot was spacious enough for us to picnic with abandon.

After breakfast at RHOS a chirpy bunch of RBlans and family members boarded the bus. As the bus edged towards Bengaluru's edge, it suddenly was Antakshari time. RBlans found different ways of making their songs count, and loudly so. With President Manoj's encouraging presence, RBlans turned out a jolly lot of songs - mostly in tune, but often out of it. Not that it made a difference to the ultimate enjoyment quotient.

Soon we were into farm lined roads. Expert navigation saw the bus remain inside the Karnataka boundary, without touching TN roads that would have meant horror for the '*Karnataka road permit only*' bus.

Within 1 ½ hours of driving we stepped onto and began enjoying hospitality of Rtn. G J Raja and family at their Farmhouse. A soothing welcome drink was more than welcome. Road weary picnickers congregated under the shamiana for more fun.

Quickly we were into party mode. The RBI ladies brigade of Pavitra Reddy, Vidhya Pradeep, Sharada Shenoy and Rtn. Kavita Kekre had cooked up fun games for us. Dumb Charades of movie names had animated chatter but few answers. Some that even game organizers found difficult to mime for success.

How could singing remain under wraps with so many RBI Rotarians? Rtn. Nayeem's tracks and music system ensemble were on from the start. A host of Rotarians and Anns gave it their full-throated selves. The singing went on in tandem with other sundry activities such as lunch, beer and cocktails.

The singing gave way to an inevitable Tambola. All of RBI won that day in a wonderful environment not too far away from home. Did we want to leave the picnic spot? No. Did we have to? Yes ... in order to beat the Sunday evening traffic.

Thank you Rtn. G J Raja and family for opening your new abode and making all of us feel at home. Here is a sample of the enjoyment at that great location. The event pictures below cannot express the fun that we had.





### **Spirit of Rotary team visits Rtn. Venkat Reddy**

A group of 15 Rotarians and Anns led by IPP Rtn. M. Jagadeesh, visited Rtn. Venkat Reddy at his home in Bellandur on the evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. The dapper senior Rotarian is recovering from a spinal surgery. His close family has been looking after him extremely well. Mr. Reddy felt confident of complete recovery soon, as he believes the most difficult part of the healing process has now passed. He was happy that so many from his Rotary family came to visit.

The group chatted and had tea with him. The team also regaled him with a few songs before returning to home base.

Rtn. Reddy and his family were ever so hospitable and ensured that we were all well taken care of in that short visit. We had a tough time explaining that we were only there to cheer Mr. Reddy up and would not be staying for dinner.

Here are a few pictures from that evening.



### **Behind the scenes of *Kusur***

Efforts to make *Kusur* succeed commenced more than three months prior to the event. There was so much to do - Selling around 1000 tickets, bringing the entire troupe to Bangalore, arranging their stay, getting props ready for the show, collecting money, organising sponsorships, coordinating with Bookmyshow, organising PR for the event, coordinating with the DG and the district Rotarians, planning for VIPs attending the show and a 100 other things. Whew!

An event Core Committee comprising President Rtn. Manoj Agarwal, Event chair Rtn. Kavita Kekre, Rtn. Fazal-ur-Rahman and Rtn. K Narssimhan was formed. Responsibilities were assigned thereof. Liaison with Amol Palekar, Sandhya Gokhale and their troupe was to be done by President Manoj. He was in constant touch with both Sandhya Gokhale and Amol Palekar. There were several occasions, when the situation became so difficult that he felt that the play may not happen. He was also coordinating with the PR agency responsible for creating a buzz about the play and interview Amol Palekar when he was in Bengaluru.

Event Chair Rtn. Kavita Kekre and President Nominee Fazal-Ur-Rahman managed tickets sales meticulously. Scores of people would call Kavita each day for tickets. Fazal and she would patiently assign tickets for each request, go to Rotary House to get the physical tickets and organise for their pickup or drop. Fazal on his part, maintained records of ticket deliveries in digital form helped by Raju, our Admin In-charge.

Fazal had primary responsibility of stage props as well. The *Kusur* troupe had a longlist of props to be made in Bangalore, such as a huge work table, pantry table, shoe rack, dust bins, umbrella, desktop computers, computer chairs, landline phones etc with exact dimensions. Fazal got in touch with furniture rental companies and found that none had tables with the needed dimensions. Finally, he decided to get them made by his own carpenters. It was a huge challenge as the entire set was to be made in one week. But, super Fazal managed it.

As we approached the event date, a flurry of activity commenced. Noting that Bookmyshow was doing a stellar job in selling tickets, President Manoj and Fazal constantly added more tickets to the portal. We sold more than 500 tickets through Bookmyshow. Sensing the demand, our own members and Anns started picking up more and more tickets from Kavita. It was a full house. Meanwhile, President Manoj had to organise for the stay and transport of the entire troupe. As is his wont, it was another storm that he sailed through with elan.

A day before the show, President Manoj organised a press conference at the hotel where Amol Palekar was staying. It was well organised and the maestro enthusiastically replied to all questions from the press. The press was well represented and hence their coverage was also equally impressive.

Finally, on event day, President Manoj managed overall arrangements, while Fazal took care of tickets. Kavita was in charge of the VIPs and Narssimhan controlled the backstage. All four were present at the event venue from early morning to ensure that everything went as per plan. Fazal had organised for all props to arrive at the venue by 11 am. After they saw that everything was in place, they all returned, only to be back at the venue by 4 pm.

Just before the show also we had some minor challenges, such as missing connecting cables for the telephones, jam sandwiches that had not been cut into two triangles and the quarter bottle of rum ought to have been just small enough to fit into ones back pocket, but wasn't. Fortunately, we solved all those challenges and the program started on time. In the meanwhile, Kavita was ushering in all the VIPs and Fazal was ensuring that all the tickets were being distributed to the right people.

President Manoj Agrawal spoke about the fund raiser's cause - a Cath Lab at Jayadeva Hospital. DG Rtn. Dr. Sameer Hariani followed with an inspiring speech after the President. Without further ado, the play started. It was mesmerising to see Amol Palekar perform after 25 years. It was further awe-inspiring to see the star whom we had all seen in movies live on stage getting into the character of the retired Commissioner.

The slow-paced play was grippingly intense. Only at the very end, did we realize that the lady's mistake (Kusur), had inspired the commissioner to atone for his own mistake (Kusur). After the dramatic ending, where the actor walks off stage into the audience, he and Sandhya Gokhale fielded audience questions. A small felicitation ceremony was conducted before the Q&A where Amol Palekar, Sandhya Gokhale and all the members of the troupe were presented a token of our appreciation and gratitude.

*All's well that ends well*, they say. It was very true in this case as well. We all heaved a collective sigh of relief as we did not make any mistake (Kusur) on our part!

The evening was magical and replete with luminaries as you can see from these pictures.



By Rtn. Narssimhan Kannan

## Business + Innovation = Entrepreneurship

Balkishen Birla by his own admission is a fake Marwari. None of his family members before him had ever ventured into business. In fact, he had traversed the oft trodden path of a chosen few to acquire a Computer Science degree from IIT Kanpur before joining the employed world. For a decade and half and more, he worked at Infosys and Amazon, two shining stars of India's corporate world. On 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020, he enlightened us with an interesting talk.



A chance thought drove him to be a true Marwari. While on the way to work one morning he realized that his long-cherished love for retro Hindi music was gradually receding into the background. He had just no time to listen to those wonderful old songs. Thus was born Bhule Bisre Geet (BBG) - an idea to savour those old gems for at least 15 minutes of each busy day. He created an e-platform that people could log into while traveling or at work just to get that daily booster dose of good old retro music. And he did it to rejuvenate himself. BBG was the first of the case studies that he discussed that evening - a personal idea that went public.

He metaphorically likened Entrepreneurship to jumping off a cliff and then looking for a parachute for a soft landing. The thrilling experience is wonderful as long as customers get what they expect from your set-up. An entrepreneur must have crystal clear vision of what to create and offer to users/customers. E.g. what does Facebook offer - "Everyone wants to feel like a celebrity without being one!". He epitomized entrepreneurship wonderfully as a constant tussle between Profit and Value on one dimension and Brain and Heart on another.

He discovered an opportunity to help students at his Alma Mater IIT by founding '*IITians for Life*', a platform for sharing feelings and ideas. A typical IITian fails for the first time in life at an IIT and needs to discover ways of recovering. He also felt the need to sensitize people about failure being an essential part of an individual's growth. Ahem, parents need to be tolerant of failure too. *IITians for Life* enables connect between erstwhile students of IIT to help build a greater connect with the world, and use technology for enhanced impact.

The next case study '*RJ with Radiowalla*', was a chatbox based techRJ. The venture weaved old Hindi songs with classic literature of greats such as Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. It made people bring their thoughts and ideas together through song and literature.

*Slack* was the next case study. A chatbox that began as a gaming company's internal tool, it helps organizations work more effectively. The simple tool received a 21 Billion \$ valuation at IPO, and did not bother about funding, preferring to go the IPO way. Even simple ideas can strike a chord and riches for the originator. Just follow your belief and gut feeling he says.


He took up *Gramin Bank* as a non-technology start-up case. It was started in poverty ridden Bangla Desh in 1974. At the height of the 1974 famine, Mohammad Yunus made social collateral as security for loans. The success of Gramin bank and its profitable outcome was sufficient to win a Nobel Prize for Mohammad Yunus. The repayment rate of close to 100% especially when over 97% of the borrowers were women was just one more remarkable statistic.


*Christopher Columbus* was the last start-up case study. The explorer did not let 12 earlier failures deter him, and got funded one more time by Spain and discovered the American continent in his quest to find a western route to India.

He then led a freewheeling discussion and shared how businesses change their character over their lifetime. To begin with they are driven by ideas, and once it takes root, they find more efficient ways of satisfying customers, and only later do they think of revenue. The thinking at each stage needs different structures, and organizations morph themselves accordingly.



RBI's epochal project Vidya Daan was the topic of our weekly meeting on 17th Feb 2020. PP Rtn. Raja Kaura, a leading light of this long-term project, spoke passionately on how the project is scaling great heights. He spoke about the project mission and its aim to reach out to a much larger set of needy students who may be hampered by lack of support. Vidya Daan covers deserving BPL students from PU to their Degree. A student needs to satisfy identified performance criteria each year for the scholarship to be disbursed.

On that evening, RBI felicitated  partners. Key partners Menda Foundation (trustees Arjun and Chatru Menda), JSS Foundation (Mr. Vinod Advani), Fuel-a-Dream (Ranganath Thota) and RBians who contributed in the corpus crowd-funding effort were covered.

The icing on the  cake were confident talks by scholarship recipients Dhanalakshmi (now an Accenture employee), our office manager Raju's son Karthik (working on a project at National Aerospace Laboratories) who completed a Mechanical Engineering degree and Bahadur's daughter Rambha who received a Vidya Daan scholarship to complete a BCom degree. They spoke of Vidya Daan's important role in their lives, and the confidence it has imparted to them. In the previous scholastic year, Vidya Daan supported 506 students disbursing Rs. 118 Lakhs. Those numbers are expected to swell to 1000 students with an equivalent rise in the amount by 2023.

Mr. Arjun Menda released the Vidya Daan Raffle appeal. The raffle will be held later this year.

We wish Vidya Daan even greater success in lighting up lives of more needy students.

Here are a few memories of the evening when PP Rtn. Raja Kaura led the talk.






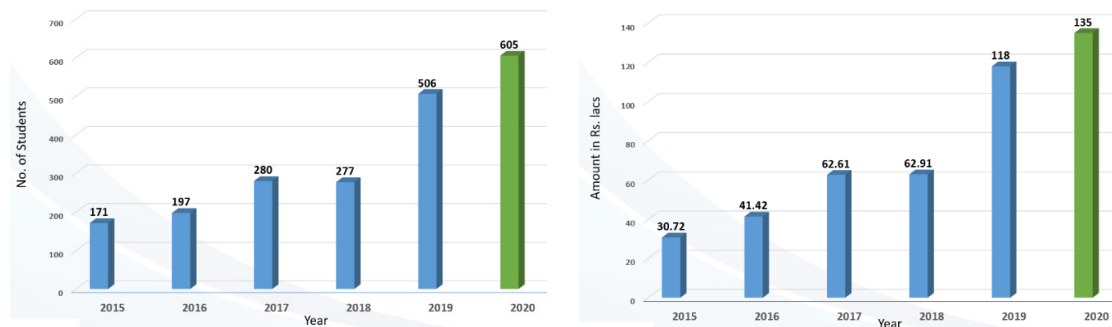
## What is Vidya Daan?



is a Rotary Bangalore Indiranagar initiative that supports education of needy & deserving students from PUC-I onwards to Graduation. Education is catalyst of change in society, through which harmony, mutual tolerance and social upliftment is achieved. Vidya Daan provides an opportunity to our society's underprivileged sections to meet their aspirations.

Initiated in 1999 by RBI, to support one child, the scholarship program for higher education has grown steadily over the years. In the previous Rotary year,  supported the education of 506 students, disbursing Rs. 1 Crore 18 Lakhs.

Trace Vidya Daan's growth story over the years through the following graphs ..



The needed funds are raised through RBI members' contributions. It is also generously supported by Menda Foundation, JSS Foundation and other Rotary Clubs of our district. Karnataka Offset Printers Association helped last year, and is expected to continue this year as well.

Vidya Daan recipients are selected on merit i.e. marks obtained in the 10th Standard board exam. The financial background of students is checked through various means such as BPL cards. A panel of RBI members interviews each candidate before sanctioning the scholarship. Continuation of scholarship each year is subject to students securing good marks in the annual examinations. The scholarship amount is via cheque / DD directly to the educational institution.

Besides financial support, RBI also provides following additional support to our students

- Career Counselling
- Public Speaking
- English Proficiency
- Placement after graduation

Plans are underway to form a Vidya Daan Alumni association so that they can help by supporting other deserving students as well.

The Vidya Daan target is to support at least 1000 students each year by 2023. You can help Vidya Daan by helping enhance the scholarship corpus, identifying students who need scholarships, helping in interviews and also in the training of students in various aspects.

The process of initiating impact assessment of  by an independent agency is underway.

With inputs from PP Rtn. Raja Kaura

### Water Wheels Roll on

Eight Rotarians and a spouse invested the best part of 5th March 2020 to travel to Kogunde Village for handing over 100 water wheels to women. President Rtn. Manoj Agarwal led the group which included IPDG Rtn. Suresh Hari, and 3 directors from the RBI Board. The group left at 07:00 A.M. and returned only late that evening. DG Rtn. Nayan Patil (District 3160) welcomed the RBI group at Brahamasagara and accorded them wonderful hospitality.

Water wheels recipients at Kogunde village (about 8 km from Brahamasagara) were delighted with the new accessory that would significantly lighten their load. The water wheels help women to transport water from distant locations without having to actually carry it.

DG Rtn. Nayan Patil addressing the local gathering hoped that RBI would help more rural women of his District. DG Nayan Patil evinced hope that RBI would continue partnering with his district to support up to 4000 women in other areas of his district (3160), namely in Gulbarga, Yadgir, Bidar and Raichur District. The 45 litre capacity water wheels are manufactured by NILKAMAL at Rs 2500 apiece. We bring you some bright moments from that day. Super job RBI !!



### WINS

March is Water & Sanitation Month. On 2nd March 2020, Rotary Bangalore Indiranagar inaugurated WINS (Wash in School) in 9 Govt Schools in Hoskote Taluk. These schools are located at Hasicala, Alapanahalli, Lakondahalli, Kamasandra, Hasicala 2, Vabasandra, Sangdillipura, Shankaripura, & Varadapura. All these wash stations are permanent with concrete, shiny tiles & granite. Water supply has also been ensured to these stations. High five Hygiene Ambassadors were appointed at each location. Snazzy WINS kits were also distributed.

The commendable work was accomplished by Rtns. Bijith, Fazal-ur-Rahaman and Philip George. Here are a few memories of that day.





## **RBI's 2<sup>nd</sup> Adult Literacy Centre inaugurated**

After the success of our first Adult Literacy Centre at Little Flower High School, RBI chose to launch a 2<sup>nd</sup> one at Thippasandra on 11th March 2020. The second one too is in association with Forum for Former LRDEians (FFFL). It will operate from the premises of The Government Primary School in New Thippasandra.

The centre was inaugurated by RBI President Rtn. Manoj Agarwal in the company of many former LRDEians who have been the key to success in our Adult Literacy project. Secretary Rtn. A K Sugunan, RBI's link to the FFFL, explained the project context and its goal to help achieve 100% literacy in our part of the world. He shared how Mr. Kesava, head of the local vegetable vendors' association has been drafted into the activity. He has been promoting the cause and recommends all vendors who are not literate to enroll in the program.



Many students from RBI's first Adult Literacy program at Little Flower High School were present at the event. These ambassadors of our well-run Adult Literacy program, were effusively grateful to the various teachers who made them literate. They were proud at being able to read destination of buses, make their own choices, and also thrilled at being able to read product labels. One student, Mrs. Varalakshmi, a housemaid who has graduate children of her own, was elated to be in the company of people who can read and write. She spoke

to the gathering with great passion about her achievement. *You can see her in the picture alongside President Rtn. Manoj Agarwal.*

PP Rtn. P C Haran and Rtn. Guruganesh represented RI Dist 3190 at the event. Rtn. Guruganesh, Chair of the District Literacy Committee lauded RBI and former LRDEians for helping Rotary work towards 100% literacy. He was particularly impressed with the confidence of the newly literate adult students who addressed the audience with ease. He felt that if RBI churned out literate students at the same rate, we could help Karnataka achieve it's 100% literacy goal well ahead of schedule.

The Government Primary School headmistress appealed to those present to invite their friends' and acquaintances to join the program. She promised to open up new classrooms to accommodate more students.

Upon witnessing so much excitement at the inauguration, it is likely that the program at this new location will be another huge success.

Great going Secretary Rtn. A. K. Sugunan.





#### MAR-APR BIRTHDAYS

Rtn. Seetharam H.R.	17
Ann Malathi Jagadeesh	19
Rtn. R.K.Shetty	19
Ann Neetha Harish Kumar	21
Rtn. Jayashree Prabhakar	22
Ann Parvathy Bijith	28
Rtn. Jagmohanlal Maheswari	31
APRIL	
Rtn. G J Raja	01
Ann Kavitha Joseph	01
Ann Sowmya Srikanth	03
Rtn. Manoj Agarwal	04
Ann Sushama Karnawat	04



#### ANNIVERSARIES IN MAR-APR

Annie & PP Rtn. Gurmeet Singh Randhawa	23
Shalla & Rtn. Seetharam H R	24
Parvathy & Rtn. Bijith	28
APRIL	
Radha & Rtn. Krish Kumar	04
Nalini & Rtn. Muniraju	14

## EVENTS

#### KEY DATES IN MARCH - APRIL

As per RI Guidelines and Governmental regulations, please await messages from the President & Secretary regarding events.