



President's Message

Dear Friends,

Last week, we presented the Somchand Parikh Best Teacher Award to Kavita Anand. In the words of Brad Henry: "A good teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination, and instill a love of learning." Congratulations, Kavita, on your achievement.

On Sunday, we kicked off our Club's Annual Table Tennis tournament at YMCA. A detailed report will follow in the next Gateway.

Tomorrow, May 8th, 2019 marks the 90th Charter Day of the Rotary Club of Bombay. It was on this day, 90 years ago, that the Rotary Club of Bombay received its official certificate and was recognised as the first Rotary Club in Bombay.

May 12th is Mother's Day, I think of the love and compassion shown to us by our mothers all the time.

Everything they did enabled us to become future-ready citizens of India who are willing to do whatever it takes to help our fellow beings. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all mothers a very happy Mother's Day, a little in advance.

Thank You!

Rtn. Vijay Jatia
President



HANGING BY A THREAT

A day after casting their votes last Tuesday, Rotarians were in the mood to discuss the issues of the elections of 2019 with **Siddharth Varadarajan, founding Editor of The Wire**. He said, "Contrary to what you may have read, I still believe that the elections are wide open."

"When I talk of issues revolving around elections 2019, I set aside the issues that political parties highlight, in particular the idea that national security or the future of India is at stake. Many bogus issues are thrown up in order to polarise or confuse voters. However,

there are fundamental issues that need to be addressed and I am not sure that any of the contenders, including the opposition, are addressing them," he said.

He focussed on three threats, 1) to the institution 2) to social harmony and 3) to economic well-being. He reminded people concerned about communalism, corruption and the future of our institutions that they had to acknowledge that these problems had not emerged in the last five years but had a point of origin that went further into the past. This needed to be kept in mind

while thinking about possible solutions.

"In India, democracy is not simply an act of voting in an election. The Parliament and the MPs are an essential part of the Executive branch but, in their wisdom, the founding fathers and mothers of the Constitution envisaged a range of processes that would ensure a transparent, fair, equitable and just functioning of democracy.

Continued on Pages 2 and 3





Continued from Page 1

With these, it could be immunised from abusive power which, no matter how you design your system, the Executive is always prone to," he said.

"THIS ELECTION IS ABOUT NOTHING LESS THAN THE FUTURE OF ALL INSTITUTIONS OF THE COUNTRY WHOSE FUNCTIONING IS MEANT TO GUARANTEE THE ROBUSTNESS OF OUR DEMOCRACY!"

"For example, we have an independent Judiciary and an Attorney General to give objective legal advice, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), the Election Commission (EC), the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the media. The last of these is not formally a part of the Indian Government system but Freedom of the Press, as interpreted in Article 19 by the Supreme Court, is an essential part of democracy. A range of such institutions, many of which are staffed by decisions taken by the Executive, are meant

to operate objectively and not be coloured by politics."

For example, the EC is an institution which plays a vital role in the General Elections and has the right to take a decision on the violation, or an allegation of violation, of the Model Code of Conduct. Siddharth brought to notice how such an institution was unable to take a decision on any complaint filed against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. A case in point being how did the PM invoke the dead in Latur on April 9th? "The PM is reported to have said: 'I appeal to first-time voters that when you vote, remember the soldiers who committed the act of bravery in Balakot and those who sacrificed their lives in Pulwama.' By doing this, he went against the rules of the EC which say that candidates and parties cannot politicise what the armed forces do, in their campaign. Yet, a decision has not taken place on this complaint till date."

Not just this but Siddharth reminded Rotarians that the Representation of the People Act prohibited campaign advertising on TV by any political parties 48 hours before the closing of polls. "It is a punishable offence. Yet, for the last four phases,



something called NaMo TV has been allowed to broadcast which, the Election Commission acknowledges, is advertising. There is no sign of the EC filing a case against it."

Having quite a long list of offences committed by the PM which have been neglected by our able institutions, the speaker brought to light another offence. "In Wardha, the PM's third offence was when he said, 'Rahul Gandhi has chosen a spot in India to fight elections where the majority is in the minority and then, he said, that I appeal to you (audience) to punish the Congress party to use the term Hindu Terror.' This, again, is a violation of Representation of the People Act which prohibits appeals made in the name of religion."

The EC has pulled up Mayawati and Yogi Adityanath, rightly so, but for the complaint filed against the PM, they are unable to take a call. This is a clear example of the failure of an essential institution of Indian democracy at a crucial time. "The EC is treating the PM as someone beyond the law which collapses the entire structure envisaged by

Babasaheb Ambedkar and the others who wrote the Constitution," said Siddharth.

Institution after institution is at threat. He further added, "One of the reasons why The Wire has come up in such a short time, with virtually no finances, is because people are dissatisfied with what they get from big newspapers and big TV channels."

"QUESTIONS ABOUT DEMOCRACY ARE NOT ASKED. QUESTIONS THAT I PUT TO YOU, SUCH AS 'WHY IS THE EC SILENT?' ARE NOT DEBATED EVERY EVENING AS THEY OUGHT TO BE."

To supplement his point he shared, with Rotarians, a story covered by the Business Standard which no other big newspaper wanted to cover. An Indian Air Force helicopter came down in Budgam on April 1, in which six people died. It has now emerged that the helicopter was shot down by an Indian missile. This happens, said Siddharth, and the best army can make such errors. A month later and the Air Force is yet to give family members of the six personnel an explanation of what



happened because, they (the IAF, said Siddharth) had been told that the release of the decision would affect the ruling party's chances. They had been asked to do it after the elections, he said.

“INSTITUTIONS ARE UNDER THREAT. THE CABINET, EVEN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN, IS BUILT AROUND THE CULT OF ONE INDIVIDUAL. EXCESSIVE POWER IS CONCENTRATED UPON ONE PERSON WITHOUT THE CHECKS AND BALANCES THAT THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH HAS, IN THE FORM OF THE CABINET.”

So you have irrational decisions like demonetisation, which has yielded nothing but pain, suffering and a two per cent fall in the growth rate and there is zero accountability to date. This tendency of the Executive, which also happened during the earlier PM's tenure, has been taken to another level where institutions have also been undermined. And this in a situation where the Government had absolute majority in the Parliament.”

Talking about the second issue, of social harmony, Siddharth said he believed that being a part of the Hindu majority meant that there was a certain sense of assuredness that one's nationalism was never suspected and identity never assailed. He said, “The 2014 election was not won on the basis of communal appeals, it was fought on the basis of promises of an economic kind. Today, it is very clear that the election is fought on the basis of religion and its proxies. So, when you have a high decibel propaganda against Pakistan and anti-nationals, often, street level politicians bridge that gap because by Pakistan they mean Indian Muslims.”

Siddharth recalls his first encounter with Modi in 2001 when he noticed his use of the words ‘Islamic Terrorism’. He wondered if it was ok for Modi to say Islamic terrorism, what was so offensive about anyone else using the words Hindu terrorism?

Siddharth said, “I am not offended if someone says ‘Hindu Terrorism’; it doesn't undermine my identity as a Hindu. While the allegations against Modi never led to charges being framed in a



court, in the case of Pragma Thakur, the court has taken cognizance under serious charges. Despite this, she is fielded as a candidate! Why!? When she was arrested, it became an attack on Hindus. It is important to remember that the first time Sadhvi Pragma was arrested, it was by the Shivraj Singh Chouhan BJP Government of Madhya Pradesh and the charges were of shooting an RSS leader. How times have changed! Someone has moved on from shooting an RSS person to RSS now mooted her candidature from Bhopal! She is being presented as someone respectable and as someone with whom every Hindu must associate.”

“THIS SOCIAL TENDENCY OF TELLING PEOPLE WHAT TO DO OR NOT DO AND TARGETING THEM FOR THEIR RELIGION IS, TO MY MIND, AN ISSUE.”

“It is a matter of dismay that the Opposition is unable to have an honest discussion about this. They also feel that if such an issue is raised, Hindus might feel alienated. So, somewhere down the line, it is fair to say that the social fabric of the country is being torn.”

The third issue, economic well-being, is a key issue which the Modi Government has recognised but not done enough about. The Congress party also recognised that not enough has been done historically by anyone, including itself, added Siddharth. So, many proposals have been made by the Congress and BJP. “Some of them are quite imaginative. Modi's measure of introducing Rs. 2000 per quarter for farmers now, just at the time of elections, and the NYAY scheme by Congress – which they never did when they were in power for 10 years. But I am glad they have flagged these issues.”

Siddharth concluded, “No matter who wins, policy that focusses on basic support for the common person has to be prioritised and the institutions of democracy have to be safeguarded. Whatever encroachment has taken place has to be reversed. Social harmony has to be maintained at all costs because if we lose that, we lose everything. The common man, his family and their concerns have to be placed at the centre of policy making. If these issues are taken care of, it will help us to stand in strength even after election results.”



E-learning for 90 schools in Washim and Mumbai

Adding one more feather to its glorious cap, the Rotary Club of Bombay has provided e-learning kits to 90 schools in Washim and Mumbai under the Rotary India Literacy Mission.

With the increasing competitive spirit of children to survive in today's modern and fast-changing world, using technology not only motivates them but also engages them by enhancing their learning experience and resulting in higher learner confidence. The provision of e-learning kits to the schools will encourage young minds to empower themselves with knowledge and skills that will prepare them better for higher education.

The audio-visual e-learning

presentations aim to make learning more exciting, thus ensuring greater attendance in schools, reduced dropout rates and increased attentiveness. Approximately 14,000 children will benefit from this project along with more than 200 teachers who have been equipped with hardware and software training to improve the standard of education in each of the schools.

The Rotary Club of Bombay is extremely proud of its role in achieving this milestone in the Digital Classroom Project. Heartiest Congratulations to Project-in-Charge and new member Rtn. Laxmi Maneklal who was ably supported and guided by our President Vijay Jatia and PP Rtn. Sandip Agarwalla.

ROTARIANS GO FOR LOVE LETTERS



FOUR STATES, DIFFERENT CULTURES – ONE INDIA

Over 40 students from classes one to four attended the summer camp from April 10th to 24th at Lighthouse. The idea was to utilise the summer vacations and expose children of the machimaar community to four different states of India via a summer camp that was organised with the following objectives:

- ~ To acquaint children with the states of India and their rich culture and heritage.
- ~ To improve students' English language skills (both spoken and written).
- ~ To increase their general knowledge, especially about India.

APPROACH & ACTIVITY:



Children were first familiarised with the map of India and its 29 states. The four cardinal directions – North, South, East & West – were also introduced to enable the children to understand/ describe the location of various states. Jigsaw puzzles, a treasure hunt based on directions, a game of bingo (Housie)

on Indian states and map-drawing activities were organised to make learning enjoyable.

Finally, each of the four states – Punjab, Gujarat, Kerala and West Bengal – was covered in detail. Children learnt about the food, dances, festivals, dressing, tourist attractions and famous personalities of each state through audio-visual aids.

Each student was assigned any one of four states/ groups and members of each group prepared colourful charts showcasing the culture of their chosen state. They even created the replica of a handicraft typical of their state.

RCB collaborates with Salaam Bombay

Salaam Bombay Foundation, in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Bombay (RCB), has embarked on a journey to empower young girls from resource-challenged backgrounds with 21st century relevant skills. These skills motivate them to continue their education, gain internships and aspire for better careers.

They also have the opportunity to use the skills to get part-time jobs which help them support their families and save up for higher education, without dropping out of school. RCB has supported the training of 154 girls in beauty and wellness, mobile repair, home appliance repair, graphic design, computer hardware repair and robotics, across seven municipal secondary schools. The selection involved a rigorous initial assessment, both written and oral. The event, on Monday, April 15th, at the Prabhadevi Municipal Secondary School,



felicitated the young trainees, in particular the top three performers from each trade. Present at the inauguration were RCB President Vijay Jatia, Rtn. Ravi Fotedar, Chairperson, Gender Equality committee, Nandina Ramchandran (CEO, Salaam Bombay Foundation) and Shevale (Principal, Prabhadevi Municipal Secondary School), BY chairperson Rtn Jamshed Vakharia, Rtn. Ptn. Avaan Vakharia and Rtn. Ptn. Priyanka Jatia both members of BY Committee were also present amongst others.

The inaugural ceremony of the certification distribution commenced with the lighting of the lamp. For the benefit of the audience that included other members of the Rotary, the training programme, its scope, and impact were presented. An interesting highlight of the event was a first-hand account of the experience by two trainees. Both acknowledged the role of RCB and were grateful for the opportunity to hone their talent and widen their horizons.

With great pride, the trainees

received their certificates from President Vijay Jatia, who was full of praise for their endeavours and expressed his pleasure at the outcome. He acknowledged the dedication of the Salaam Bombay team and expressed his desire to see the partnership grow from strength to strength. Nandina Ramchandran thanked the Rotary Club of Bombay for its support and assured them that the Salaam Bombay Foundation would always work with them to achieve their mutual objectives.

On site were stalls put up by the graduate trainees. An E-Smart dustbin and a wi-fi controlled car created by them was on display. The trainees had assembled these themselves and a demonstration left the visitors visibly impressed. Also present were the beauty and wellness kits given to chosen girls in the course, to further their trade-related ambitions.

FIRST-EVER ROTARY FAIR TABLE IN INDIA

On April 17th, the Rotary Club of Bombay hosted the first-ever Rotary Fair Table in India. More than 45 Rotarians from 27 Clubs in various Districts and four countries, attended.

The Rotary Fair Table is a concept that brings together Rotarians from all over the world that attend the same tradeshow. They are thus not only like-minded in terms of service to Rotary but also to one industry, thus allowing to further strengthen bonds.

While, at the event, the symbolic table was converted into a Rotary Hall that drew a lot of attention – also from



non, and thus prospective, new, Rotarians. During the Fellowship, tea, coffee and snacks were served. Soon, everyone found themselves in a curious “what-is-this-new-concept” atmosphere.

This first event took place at Goregaon during Chemspec, the leading Indian fair for chemicals and intermediates in two decades. President

Vijay Jatia welcomed all the guests after which Ravi Raghavan, Editor, Chemical Weekly, shared a detailed insight into the chemical industry in India. The chemical industry in India is continuously growing and still has a long way to go for it to come close to other heavyweights such as US, China or Europe. There is good scope for growth,

and to make the framework suitable for such growth is a task at hand that needs to be carefully drafted. The Q&A session was accordingly lively and long. Most importantly: it was meaningful!

It was nice to see so many Rotarians engaging in this format for the first time ever. The Rotary Club of Bombay will follow up with a second Fair Table along similar lines next year. We also plan to host similar Rotary Fair Tables at different fairs in the future so that like-minded Rotarians from different Clubs and Districts are brought together in a common context.

Another year has gone by at Bhavishya Yaan's GK Marg School and it has been like its previous years, memorable. The year began on a joyous note with the primary section being added to BY for the first time. Teaching fundamentals of English to the enthusiastic primary students through the year has been satisfying for the teachers and mentors of BY.

English and Computer classes at BY for secondary grade students were conducted as scheduled, with spoken English being taught in an integrated way. Tenth standard students were guided by BY teachers in preparing for their board exams. Apart from academics, children participated in extracurricular activities like yoga, art and dance. Field trips to the Zoo and Museum enhanced their exposure.

As the year came to an end, a Summer Camp was conducted wherein the teachers

PARTY AT GK MARG SCHOOL AND THE YEAR GONE BY!



discussed the adventure novel Around the World in 80 Days by Jules Verne. The children enjoyed the book and gave oral presentations on the topics they learned during the camp.

At the end of the year, the children were treated to

a party in school with a unicyclist, juggler, games, music, dancing, delicious snacks and a return gift. Student volunteers from Bombay International School and HR College have played an important role in GK in bringing new ways of learning

to them through interactions with them.

Keeping the students' overall health in mind, this year also, dental camps and eye check-up camps were organised by BY for all its students and conducted by Rotaract volunteers and Aditya Jyot Foundation, respectively. BY at GK Marg looks forward to the academic year 2019-2020 and is all set to make it another fruitful and gratifying year for the students and their mentors.

A special mention: This year, a wonderful gesture on the part of some GK alumni proved that the BY programme builds a bond with its students not just during, but also after they have passed. Some of the BY alumni of GK have started to regularly help teachers in classrooms and on field trips. A heartfelt thank you for their contribution to the common good.



THE TAJ MAHAL PALACE
MUMBAI

MENU (INDIAN)

May 14, 2019

SOUP

Bhune makai ka shorba, Assorted bread rolls & butter

SALAD BAR

Sev papdi chat, Hara chana chat, Shakarkandi chat

VEGETARIAN MAIN COURSE

Paneer khatta pyaaz, Sookha lasooni palak, Dum aloo benarasi, Vegetable jalfrezi, Dal tadka

NON-VEGETARIAN MAIN COURSE

Machli hara masala, Dhania murg

ACCOMPANIMENT

Jeera rice, Assorted Indian breads, Cucumber & mint raita, Papad/ Pickle/Kachumber

DESSERT

Kesari ras malai, Apple pie with vanilla ice-cream, Fresh-cut seasoned fruit platter



All Directors and Committee Chairpersons are requested to send their project write ups with high resolution pictures to Rtn. Satyan Israni for publishing in the Gateway at the following email id: rotary.satyanisrani@gmail.com

**this
is your
world.
shape it or
someone
else will.**

UPCOMING **EVENTS**



May 14: Speaker
Dr. Quresh Maskati.



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Next Week's Speaker : Dr. Quresh Maskati

Dr. Quresh Maskati did his graduation and post graduation from KEM Hospital, Bombay University, obtaining his M.S. & D.O.M.S & F.C.P.S. Degrees, all in 1983, with a gold medal in DOMS. He is superspecialised in diseases of the cornea and anterior segment microsurgery from Rochester and Boston, USA.

Dr. Maskati was a lecturer at Nair Hospital for a year, before starting a private practice in 1986. He has over two dozen scientific publications to his name in national and international journals. He is the co-author of chapters on "Ophthalmology" in 12 books and has published a book Simplifying Eye Care.

He joined the Rotary in 1986 and served as the President of the Rotary Club of Bombay North (95-96). He was the youngest in the history of his club.



He will deliver an interesting talk on "Humour in Medicine".

BIRTHDAYS FROM MAY 7TH TO MAY 13TH, 2019



**RTN. SITARAM
SHAH**



**RTN. ASHWIN
THAKKAR**



**RTN. VINAY
SANGHI**



**RTN. ATEEQ
AGBOATWALA**



**RTN. SAM
KATGARA**



**RTN. (DR.)
PRAKRITI PODDAR**

RTN. PTN. BIRTHDAYS

MAY 7

Rtn. Ptn. Radhika Jain

MAY 9

Rtn. Ptn. Thrity Javeri

MAY 12

Rtn. Ptn. Reshma Vazirani

ANNIVERSARIES

MAY 7

Rtn. Ptn. Mina & Rtn. Shyamniwas Somani

MAY 9

Rtn. Ptn. Madhavi & Rtn. Suhail Nathani

Rtn. Ptn. Asha & Rtn. Rajesh Shah

MAY 10

Rtn. Ptn. Manjula & Rtn. Pritam Sanghai

STATISTICS

FOR THE LAST MEETING

Club Members	60
Visiting Rotarians	1
Rotaractors	2
Total	63
SERVICE BOX COLLECTION	₹ 750



We are active on social media with over 5,000 followers. Find us on facebook, twitter and instagram with the handle @rcb1929. Find us on linkedin and youtube with the handle rotary club of bombay. Please follow us and like/share the posts

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