THE GATEWAY





August 7th, 2023: Inauguration of medical equipment at Masina Hospital, Byculla, from 4 pm onward. Details inside.

August 9th, 2023: RCB Bowling Challenger, a joint fellowship with our Satellite Club, Smaaash, Lower Parel, 7 pm onwards. Details inside.

August 25th, 2023: Parsi Nite with music, cocktails & dinner, at Beaumonde Clubhouse, Prabhadevi, from 7:30 pm onwards. Details inside. Rotary Club of Bombay







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Bulletin of the Rotary Club of Bombay

VASUDHAIVA KUTUMBAKAM — ONE EARTH, ONE FAMILY, ONE FUTURE

President Manoj Patodia



Truly "National" in our hearts, we are fast becoming "International" in our deeds by early adopting global ideas that make a global impact. Globalisation means basing our lives on the core principle "Vasudhaiva"

Kutumbakam" that unites the entire civilisation.

Meaning 'The World Is One Family,' the phrase supports the principles of *Satya* (truth), *Ahimsa* (non-violence), *Asteya* (no desire to steal) and *Aparigraha* (non-possessiveness).

Navigating our tasks, let us continue to network, exchange ideas, and assure ourselves that "We may not have it all together, but together we have it all". For being successful, let us keep it SIMPLE — *S*pontaneous, *I*nexpensive, *M*ake it easy, *P*rioritise tasks, *L*et go of the unwanted and keep *E*veryone involved.

Last word: To be simple is to be great. — Ralph Waldo Emerson.

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RCB PRESENTS THE
TARU LALVANI AWARD
FOR ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION TO
DR. RAJU KASAMBE,
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR AT
BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY
SOCIETY (BNHS) &
AUTHOR

I am from Yavatmal, a district of cotton growers. When I was 21, I joined a pharmaceutical company before finally landing on Novartis, a company from Sweden. I spent my days visiting doctors to give them samples, but I carried a camera and binoculars. And after finishing my rounds, I would go into some forest and spend time there till the evening; I would be the last person to reach home.

I couldn't speak English after graduation, so I continued my studies. I did my BA and MA in English Literature.

Then, I decided to be a good manager, so I did a diploma in business management. Then, I thought I should be a good teacher, so I did my Bachelor of Education, and then I thought, let's go back to the environment. So, I did my MSc, MPhil, and PhD.

When I submitted my thesis, The Three Idiots movie had just been released. I was still working in Novartis then, and everyone told me that the movie had mad people like me who left their jobs and did something else. I went to the film with my wife, and she asked me what I was thinking, and I said, "A lot." And I resigned.

I didn't have a job for four months but wanted to work for birds, butterflies, and wildlife. After four



months, I was picked up by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and moved to Mumbai. I have been here for 13 years and am happy that I've been working for the cause of birds, butterflies, wildlife, and everything. I've been travelling all across.

For the first seven years of my career at BNHS, I was appointed manager of the important bird areas programme, and I had to find important bird

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areas in India. That information is published so the government can protect those areas and declare them as wildlife sanctuaries, national parks, or community conserved areas.

Most of you may know we have 1000 national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in India. A lot of bird information is available because many people have worked in this area, like BNHS's Sálim Ali (Indian ornithologist and naturalist). So, I needed to find places on which there was not much information.

These are known as data-deficient sites and data-deficient species. We put all the available information on a map to discover these data-deficient sites. It turned out that there needed to be more information about Jharkhand, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Meghalaya. I went to Manipur three-four times and discussed bird tourism's importance. I told them that selling a dead bird would fetch them Rs 10 or 20 but showing the same bird alive to a bird photographer or watcher might bring you Rs 1000, just a tip, apart from the daily wage. This was in 2010-13.

We got beautiful data across three-four important locations, one of which was for the amur falcons. One village had 100,000 amur falcons one morning, and they stayed for 15 days. The people there hunted the amur falcons for meat. So, we started a campaign, the amur falcon festival in Manipur. Nagaland has 15 lakh amur falcons which stay for 15 days. We could declare those places as important.

I was at Kaziranga for a month. When you go as a tourist, you go to the tourist areas. The rhinos and elephants are familiar with moving vehicles. But I went into the core area where the rhinos had possibly not seen a car for the last 10-15 days. I wanted to get down and walk, but the rhino was too close. Finally, one of the bodyguards took a slingshot from his pocket and hit the rhino on the nose with two small stones, and the rhino ran away.

I did an excellent survey of birds, and we published a research paper. After seven years, I was promoted to Assistant Director of Education and given charge



of the Education Centre in Goregaon in Mumbai, between Film City and the National Park.

When I went there, the guards told me there was a leopard. So, we got some camera traps, automatic cameras you put in the jungle at the base of the trees along the roads, and they click pictures. Just around the BNHS centre, we found seven leopards! And we had thought there was just one.

We came to understand their movement. They come and drink water just around the building, behind the kitchen. So if I sit on the kitchen ota (platform), I can see the leopard. We are more careful now because we get 10 to 20,000 visitors at our BNHS education centre in Mumbai, and we educate them.

We have to be very creative to get people to come. I went to Sanjay Gandhi National Park on Sunday, where there were 15,000 visitors, chaos, and a traffic jam. Meanwhile, there were hardly 20 visitors at BNHS that day. So we organise Breakfast with Butterflies, Brunch with Birds, a Butterfly Festival, etc. It was going well pre-Covid, and we had 10-20,000 visitors. We started webinars within ten days of the lockdown of March 22nd, 2020; I had 19 people working in the centre, and we needed money to pay the salaries of the staff!

Initially, we held free talks and started brainstorming on what would get people to pay to join a webinar and what people would expect for free. So, we have a small webinar for some common birds, and everybody will join. And we have a serious webinar,

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Article continues from Page 3

a crash course on birds, like seven webinars. And I ask for some money, and we raise some money. We discussed it with friends and those who had joined BNHS courses or programmes; we did some studies and introduced free and paid webinars. And we earned Rs 40 lakh from home. We didn't go out; I didn't meet my team. In 2020, we earned Rs 40 lakhs. That was more than 50-60% of the entire salary of my staff. And I had not seen a single team member for the whole of the Covid period.

During the lockdown, we reached out to 31,000 people across 28 states. We organised drawing competitions and sent prizes through couriers. Everything was from home, and we reached out to more people, and we realised that the world is big, and instead of reaching out only to people in Mumbai, we could reach out to the entire country. We also had participants from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bhutan, and we didn't charge them because it was challenging to transfer the money. The transfer charges were more than the course fees. So we said we would give free admission to any participants from neighbouring countries. So, our courses became international courses.

Working with wildlife companies and organisations, especially an NGO which sustains itself on funding, and we have no outside funding like the government giving our salary, we raise funds through innovative ideas and projects. Like we have the Biodiversity Project, and we ask for some administrative charges, which are the staff's salary. That's how the NGO works; that's how a great organisation like BNHS works. Of course, many people donate to BNHS without any restrictions. You may get a few donors yearly, but most activities work on CSR and other funding.

At the Conservation Education Centre of the Bombay Natural History Society in Goregaon, encounters with leopards have become common. You may see a leopard at 09:00 while having breakfast; the leopard may pass in front of you. They have become so fearless in our area that whether I am



on a Scooty, in a vehicle, or walking, they just stand and stare. Of course, they don't attack. They look at you and walk away. As long as you are standing, they won't attack you.

Nowadays, we say leopards get the food directly delivered to them through Swiggy, meaning stray dogs which enter Film City and the slums around the National Park. What the leopard does is enter the slum, pick up that dog and go back; it's like a hot dog for him. They are not worried about you; you are not food. Even if you are sleeping and the dog is sleeping next to you, it will just pick up the dog and take it. That is what they are interested in because it saves their effort. It is so easy to kill and take a dog away. So that's how they are getting more food, and that's how we have a bigger and more significant population of leopards in Mumbai. They don't attack humans. When it does, it is accidental. Sometimes people go into the forest early morning, and when it is dark, the leopard thinks you are a small animal, and it can manage, so it will attack you. Most conflicts and attacks happen, like when the person is sitting. Once you are standing, you are a big animal for the leopard to manage; it will never attack you.

Our education centre gets 20,000 visitors, of which 5 to 10,000 are kids, which are very easy for the leopards to kill. But we have had this centre in the forest for almost 30 years, and there has not been a single attack on any kid or staff in our area. That's why I say the leopards are gentlemanly. They have

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their ways. They are very shy. They don't want you to see them. They will look at you. They will ensure that the humans don't see them. So that's how they are very nearby, like 200ft. They're always there, watching you, watching every movement of the humans. How they are doing, the trails, the chaos, everything they are watching, but they don't want themselves to be revealed or seen by you. So, it's tough to photograph them unless you put camera traps.

For birds, we created a waterhole, a small pond. We have kept it shallow so that the birds can sit in it and bathe in the summer. Also, in summer, we get wild boars at night, which jump and create chaos in the water. But the birds, they literally dance in the water. We have organised a hideout so you can sit on a chair, have a cup of tea, and take photographs of the birds.

That is how we are trying to introduce birds and wild animals to the people of Mumbai. We run lots of courses and other activities, so we also want more people to come there and enjoy Mumbai's birds, butterflies and wildlife, which is so near and in the middle of this chaos, this big metropolitan city with one crore people. So please do visit. Again, thank you for considering me for this award.

Please tell us about the Black-Tailed Godwits that you have been tracking.

A small transmitter was ringed to a Black Tailed Godwit in Bhandup. The bird flew off to Russia. On its way, it took a lot of stops and took a lot of time. It made a nest there in Russia, and maybe the chicks flew, and after that, the bird wanted to return. So, it flew from Russia to the Bhandup Pumping Station in Mulund in just four and a half days. Just four and a half days. It took 28 days to get to Russia, with many stops. So that's a fascinating finding. The transmitter is 3.5 grams, costing around Rs 3.5 to five lakhs for both the transmitter and the data. The only problem is knowing where the bird is and going with your laptop and WiFi within range. The



entire data is downloaded to your computer when the bird comes in range. So as soon as our scientists found that it had come back to Bhandup, where it was ringed, the scientists went with the laptop and downloaded the entire data and made a map which you might have seen on social media.

The bird has been named after Dr. Raju by a student in his honour.

Where can we find out about BNHS programmes?

Our website, BNHS.org, on which we announce all our programmes. We also have the Facebook page and the Bombay Natural History Society official page. We have lots of nature trails. Not only in Sanjay Gandhi National Park and our BNHS land, that is BNHS Conservation Education Center, but we also have Flamingo Sanctuary at the Thane-Airoli Creek, where 120,000 flamingos come every year. Maybe you should do the safari if you haven't done it. Perhaps in one safari of 1 hour, you can see 20-30,000 flamingos. You can see them from December to April, and if you get some Koli fishermen to take you, you can see 50,000 flamingos. We have places like this in Navi Mumbai and places like TS Chanakya Wetland, where you can see 5000 flamingos just walking. So it's very lovely. So there are a lot of places. Karnala is, of course, there, and there are others, and besides this, we organise programmes all over India.













TUESDAYS WITH THE ROTARY CLUB OF BOMBAY









Inauguration of Medical Equipment



Rtn. Manoj Patodia

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BY ALUMNUS WRITES BACK

BY SHRADDHA BABAR

Hello everyone, I am Shraddha Babar, an alumnus of Bhavishya-Yaan and also a Rotary Scholar from N. M. Joshi Marg Municipal Secondary High School. After completing my 10th grade in 2016 with 91.20%, I enrolled myself in the Science stream to pursue my dream of becoming an engineer. Moreover, I secured 80.92% in my HSC examination and got admission to the Vidyalankar Institute of Technology (VIT) to pursue a degree in engineering. My overall grade at VIT was 9.37/10 when I graduated in 2022 as an engineer. Currently, I work as a Product Engineer at LTIMindtree, formerly LTI (Larsen & Toubro Infotech), a subsidiary of L&T (Larsen & Toubro).

Throughout my journey to become an engineer, the Rotary Club of Bombay and Bhavishya-Yaan have played a major role and I will be forever grateful for it. I thank Jaya ma'am for having my back and helping me in my odds, advising me, and giving me opportunities to improve my personality. She has always motivated me to achieve great things in my life.

One such opportunity she gave was to be a Buddy to the students of Bhavishya-Yaan and help them in areas that are different from their studies as well as if they have any doubts regarding any subject then help them to understand it. I accepted the opportunity and started taking sessions online every Sunday. I taught different topics to students such as how to write an email, how to play Sudoku, the basics of Chess, Indices, crosswords to improve vocabulary, grammar topics, quizzes on online platforms, and many more. The response from students was good. They enjoyed learning new things and I enjoyed giving back to society. All this happened when schools were online.

Last academic year Jaya ma'am suggested to me that why don't I come to school and teach them. I was ready to go to school and then we had a meeting with the principal of our school (N. M. Joshi Marg Municipal School). The principal was also happy to know that an alumnus of their school is keen to come to school and teach students. In the meeting, we found out that there was a need for a teacher to teach Maths to the 10th-standard students of 22/23 batch who were lagging behind due to Covid.

Also, since their board exams were going to be held in March 2023. I was happy to take maths for them.

Immediately after the meeting, I started going to school and teaching the students of 10th standard every Saturday and Sunday (the only days I have a break from my office work).

It was heartening to see that all our students passed and the school got 100% pass result.

I feel blessed to do such a kind of work that helps the students to learn, ask their doubts, and get knowledge of the concepts from me.

This academic year I have already started my classes and get to school for 3 hours each on Saturdays and Sundays teaching Maths and Science to both 9th and 10th std.

I feel very lucky to be part of the Bhavishya-Yaan and Rotary Club of Bombay, which helps students like me to go ahead and achieve their dreams. I also want to thank you Jaya ma'am once again for being my mentor and always supporting me.



"I taught different topics to students such as how to write an email, how to play Sudoku, the basics of Chess, Indices, crosswords to improve vocabulary, grammar topics, quizzes on online platforms, and many more."

BHAVISHYA YAAN GIVES BACK

BY PP RAMESH NARAYAN

Nirmala and Simran are inspiring stories. Nirmala is an alumnus of Bhavishya Yaan, the student enrichment programme of RCB being run for 13 years in 6 municipal schools.

She was a good student and the Club handheld her through her college days. With a two-month break in between her higher studies, Nirmala volunteers daily at RCB's Lighthouse Project being run for five years at



Machchimaar Nagar for their tiny tots. Nirmala wants to do a B.Ed. course. She's teaching us about life and how to give back already.

Simran is from the Koli community, doing a travel and tourism course in France. She's here on a vacation and she, too, has signed up to volunteer at the Lighthouse Project for a month. A true indicator of the real impact that ongoing projects at RCB have had on the lives of real people. A little bit of good goes a long way.







BOWLING CHALLENGER

Calling all RCB members to bowl their hearts out! Join in for the fun filled RCB Bowling Challenger.

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WEDNESDAY









🤰 7.00 pm - 9.00 pm

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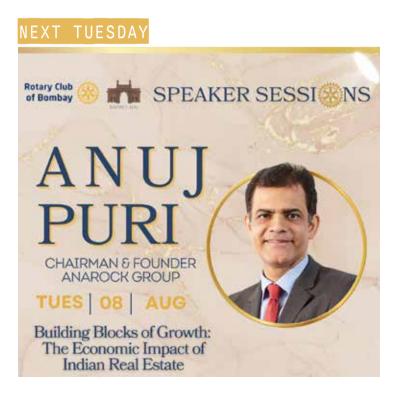
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PROFILE OF ANUJ PURI

Anuj Puri is the Chairman and Founder of ANAROCK. He has over 30 years' experience in Indian and global real estate markets and is a trusted advisor to developers, occupiers and investors. Anuj is widely acknowledged for revolutionising the real estate sector with his visionary outlook and technology-based solutions. He has won numerous awards both within India and internationally for his contribution to the real estate sector.

Anuj's experience and expertise encompass multidisciplinary advisory and transactions in real estate, planning and executing demand and feasibility assessment studies, transactional services, fund and investor sourcing and technology-based real estate marketing strategies. As an industry veteran, he has successfully handled marketing of projects within the office, retail, hospitality and residential domains.

Rotarian Member Birthdays



AUGUST 3 Hon. Rtn. Ajay Parimal



AUGUST 3 Rtn. Sandipan Roy



AUGUST 3 Rtn. Abhishek Sharman



AUGUST Rtn. Darabshaw





AUGUST 4 Rtn. Sabira Merchant



AUGUST 5 Rtn. Bharat Taparia

Davar



AUGUST 7 Rtn. Camellia Panjabi

Rotarian Partner Birthdays

AUGUST 2

Rtn. Ptn. Avaan Vakharia

Anniversary

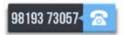
AUGUST 3

Rtn. Ptn. Radhika & Rtn. Ghanshyam Sheth AUGUST 5

Rtn. Ptn. Bijal & Rtn. Hiren Kara















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Trustee PP Dr. Adi Dastur



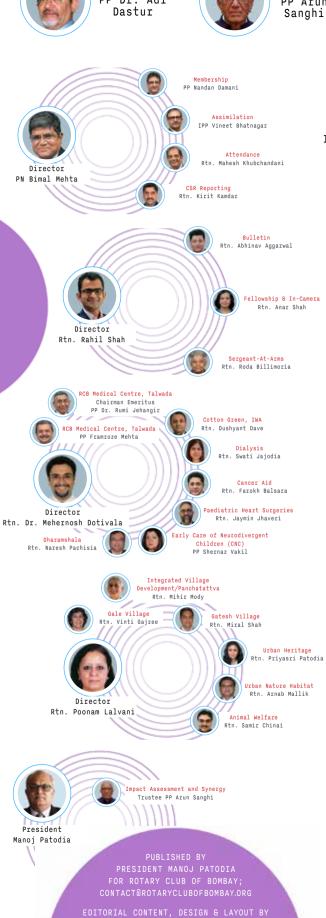
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