

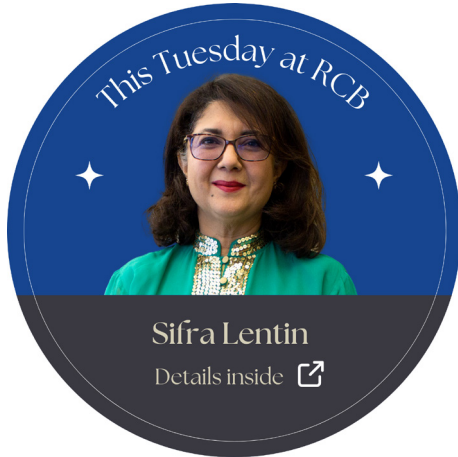
THE GATEWAY

**Rotary Club
of Bombay**



Volume 65
Issue No.18
November 28, 2023
For private
circulation

Bulletin of the Rotary Club of Bombay
<http://rotaryclubofbombay.org/>



**UPCOMING
EVENTS**



December 16th

Christmas Brunch at
The Clearing House,
Ballard Estate.
Further details
[inside.](#)



Ms. Andrea Kuhn, Consul General of South Africa & Dean of the Consular Corps in Mumbai

It's a great honour to be a speaker at this very distinguished Rotary Club in Mumbai. I'm also mindful that many distinguished speakers have sat here before me, including many of my colleagues in the diplomatic corps. The topic of my address today is growing together India and South Africa relations.

This topic is timely as we celebrate 30 years of diplomatic relations between India and South Africa, established on November 22nd, 1993. But our connection, as you are aware, of course extends much further. The South African Indian community were first brought to South Africa as indentured labourers in 1860. Their vibrant culture, traditions, and values have added to the rich tapestry that is our multicultural society.

[Article continues on Page 2](#)



“The South African Indian community were first brought to South Africa as indentured labourers in 1860. Their vibrant culture, traditions, and values have added to the rich tapestry that is our multicultural society.”

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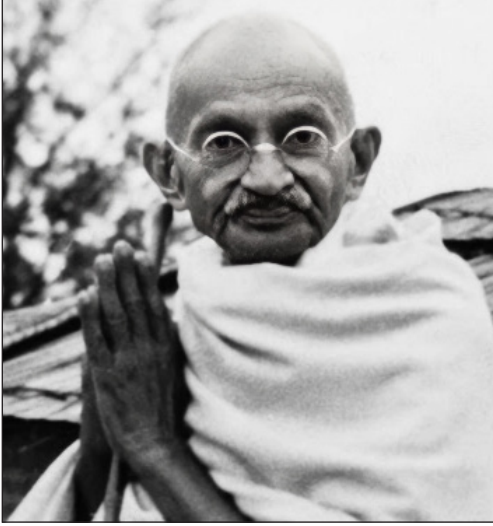
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Article continues from Page 1

Many of these men, women, and children who came in search of a better life were subjected to harsh and inhumane conditions in the sugar plantations in KwaZulu-Natal, as it's known today. After serving their indentures, a large percentage returned back to India, but many stayed on and made South Africa their new home. It is testimony to their patriotism and love for South Africa that so many of the luminaries of the anti-apartheid struggle were of Indian origin. It was the Indian Government that was the first to request the UN General Assembly to confront racism and racial discrimination in South Africa, and which banned trade with apartheid South Africa soon afterwards.

The Indian Government was also the first to recognise the new democratic South Africa at the dawn of our democracy. And a South African High Commission was established on November 1st in New Delhi in 1993. The South African Consulate in Mumbai opened shortly afterwards in April 1994. The South African Indian community

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played a formative role not only in the freedom struggle but also after apartheid ended, in the reconstruction of the new South Africa. A notable person was Mahatma Gandhi's granddaughter, Ela Gandhi, who played a leading role in the women's movement in South Africa and was one of the first members of Parliament of the new democratic South Africa.

Our histories are intertwined with the legacies of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. The legacies go far beyond this stature as the founding fathers of our two great independent nations. Nelson Mandela drew great inspiration from Gandhi, who he also referred to as his mentor. And the words that sound true for him that Gandhi said was, "Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."

The Red Fort declaration that set the formal framework for bilateral relations was signed by President Nelson Mandela during a state visit to India in 1997. It cemented relations that have since matured into a strategic partnership and includes political, cultural, trade, sport and strategic ties between our two countries.

Our partnership is based on shared values and common interests for we share a common vision of freedom, development, peace, and prosperity. We share a commitment to realising a global community of nations at peace with each other and a world founded on social justice and human rights for all.

South Africa and India have come a long way

in addressing our respective challenges of underdevelopment, economic and political marginalisation.

As like-minded emerging economies, we recognise that we have a collective role to play in addressing and correcting the imbalances of the global economy.

Through our cooperation on a range of platforms such as BRICS, IBSA, the Indian Ocean Rim Association, the G77 plus China, the G20, and the Non-Aligned Movement, we will continue to work together in pursuit of a world free of poverty. South Africa advances a foreign policy of Ubuntu which means 'I am because you are'. So, the centre of our foreign policy is based on humanity. And key pillars include the promotion of human rights, peace and stability, and the strengthening of trade and investment ties with other countries.

Africa remains at the centre of our foreign policy, and we are committed to strengthening the African Union so that it increases its capacity to support the achievement of greater integration of the continent. The decision, therefore, taken by the G20 summit in New Delhi to include the African Union as a permanent member is welcomed by South Africa. As it had advanced this resolution,

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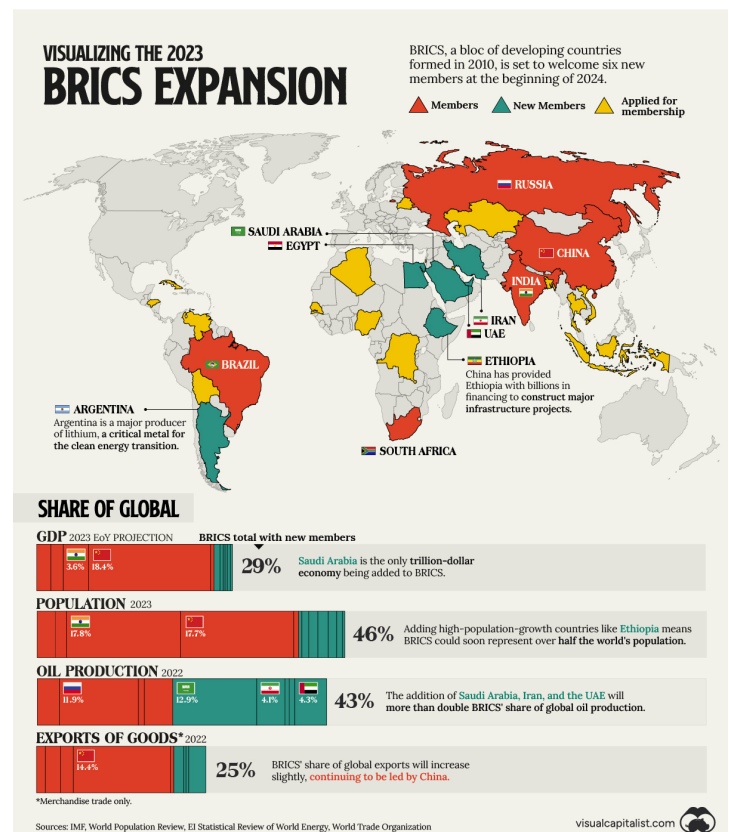
together with other African heads of state, stressing the importance of an inclusive discussion to address global challenges, South Africa also supported the expansion of the BRICS. and welcomed the decision of the 15th BRICS Summit held in Johannesburg to invite several new members including Argentina, the UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and their membership will take effect from January 1st, 2024.

As a formation, BRICS plays an important role in the world due to its economic power, market potential, political influence, and development cooperation.

The members before the BRICS expansion make up a quarter of the global economy, account for a fifth of global trade, and are home to more than 40% of the world's population.

The combined GDP of an expanded BRICS will represent 36% of the global GDP, encompassing 47% of the world's population. Being a BRICS member has created positive opportunities for South Africa. We have steadily strengthened trade and investment ties with BRICS countries, alongside collaboration in areas like development, skills, technology, security, and innovation.

South Africa has also benefited from the New Development Bank, which was established by the BRICS countries in 2015, and the bank has funded several road, water, transport and energy projects in South Africa. South Africa continues to advocate for an open and rules-based global governance, trade, financial and investment system. It must be a system that does not depend on the exercise of power of unilateralism, but by the advancements of the interests of the peoples of the world. We also look forward to deepening our relations with India bilaterally through stronger commercial and people-to-people ties. We enjoy strong economic relations that are driven by a joint



ministerial commission. The last round was held in January 2020 in New Delhi and the next round is scheduled to take place in Cape Town in South Africa in December this year. It will be co-chaired by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr. Naledi Pandor, and the Minister of External Affairs, Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar. The focus of the Consulate General in Mumbai is to deepen and advance trade and investment relations to the mutual benefit of both our countries; there is a clear commitment to ensure that the firm and solid relations result in significant improvement of our trade and investment relationships.

The legal framework to cooperate in key priority areas have been established. These key priority areas include the automotive sector, infrastructure and IT sector, defence, mining and mining equipment, renewable energy and specifically green and hydrogen energy, tourism as well as the pharmaceutical sector. We see enormous potential in the agricultural sector, and we see the growth of trade, especially of fresh fruit and vegetables between our two countries. And just on side, South

[Article continues on Page 5](#)



Article continues from Page 4

African pears have captured the market in India and over 70% of pears imported into India come from South Africa. So, the next time you see a pear, you can think of me.

South Africa is a 335.4 billion US dollar economy. It is the 33rd largest economy in the world and represents around 14% of the total African GDP. South Africa is a highly diversified economy from a sectoral point of view. It is the most developed and technologically advanced economy on the African continent. It is an export-oriented economy and one of the most open economies in the world. As a member of the WTO, it has gained preferential access to priority key markets. South Africa has a free trade agreement in place with the EU, with the UK. It has access to the US market on preferential terms through African growth and opportunity.

It also has access to certain Latin American countries. It has a free trade agreement with the regional economic bloc, SADC, or the Southern African Development Community, and it also is a part of the Continental Free Trade Agreement, the African Continental Free Trade Area that was established in January 2021 with the aim to boost trade by harmonising a market of 1.3 billion people in 55 countries with a GDP of 3.4 trillion US dollars.

South Africa remains a vibrant and growing economy which not only serves as a gateway for doing business into the African continent, but as a regional manufacturing hub that offers numerous investment opportunities. And this is where the

African continental Free Trade Area supports all these opportunities.

India is one of South Africa's top 10 trading partners. And total trade between South Africa and India has been registered at 12 billion US dollars.

The Indian figure is at 18 billion US dollars, but we don't include diamond and gold in our trade figures. We account for it in another space. But we like the 18 billion, so I must start using that more. This is significant if one considers that the total trade between South Africa and India in 1995 was a mere 604 million US dollars.

The main exports from South Africa into India are still raw commodities including coal, making up 41% of the trade basket, followed by manganese ore and concentrates and other PGMs (platinum group metals). The African continent has vast resources of critical minerals that will be used as the world embraces cleaner and greener growth. The demand for these minerals provides an opportunity to industrialise the South African and wider African economies. There are opportunities now for partnerships in renewable energy, storage technologies, such as battery manufacturing for energy grid systems and electric vehicles. With our sunlight and wind, we have growth potential in green hydrogen production. And South Africa

[Article continues on Page 6](#)



Article continues from Page 5

plans to link its massive platinum reserves to the green hydrogen market, which could be worth 2.5 trillion US dollars by 2050.

In terms of the Indian trade basket to South Africa, packaged medicaments are the biggest component at 23.9%, followed by automotive parts and vehicles. Around 180 Indian companies have invested in South Africa since 1994. And these investments are the biggest part of South Africa, have assisted South Africa in combating the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment, and economic transformation and have further contributed significantly to skills development and skills transfer in my country.

In conclusion, South Africa and India can be proud of the road our two countries have traversed.

Two sister countries separated by an ocean but bound by history, by the collective energies of our people and by the deep friendship and respect we hold for each other.

ROTARIANS ASK

South Africa is set to become the G20 president the year after next, correct? However, the integration of the African Union into the G20 must start this year. How actively is South Africa, possibly in collaboration with India and Brazil within the Troika, working to initiate this

process? This is crucial as your presidency will significantly impact the African Union.

Yes, as I mentioned, South Africa was one of the countries that promoted the idea of the African Union taking a permanent seat at the G20 because we were the only African country that was a member of it. So, it was important for us when we participated in the G20 to look after Africa's interests. We say the African Union is 55 countries; I know at the UN it's 54, but we cannot speak on behalf of 55 countries on all issues. And considering also that Africa forms such a critical part in solving global challenges, they need a seat at the table. So, of course, South Africa is mindful that we are one of many countries. We take the leadership role if it's given to us and if we feel we can contribute. In this case we have, together with Senegal, who's also played a major role in getting the African Union as a permanent member. We look forward to taking over the chair ship or presidency of the G20 in 2025 and joining the Troika now from December 1st. So, the exact programme and what is going to happen and how the African Union will contribute and incorporate, will become clear once we become part of the Troika. But it's a very timely decision. It was the right decision. We applaud India also for taking up this issue. Really, it was Prime Minister Modi and the action he took by writing to all the G20 heads of State of Government to also assist them to support this initiative. So, it will change

[Article continues on Page 7](#)



Article continues from Page 6

the G20 for the better. As we said, we're looking towards a more inclusive and more equal world order.

South Africa, I believe, is the second largest economy of Africa, but it is still sluggish in its growth. What do you think are the challenges it is facing?

The biggest economy on the continent is Nigeria. Of course, a lot of that is driven by the oil reserves that they keep on discovering – new fields day by day.

We've had a period of sluggish growth. Of course, we suffered under the global pandemic like the rest of the world. I think a lot of the challenges that we are addressing as a key priority also have to do with the legacies of the past, the legacies that were left over just in terms of infrastructure and development policies.

So, a major challenge for us at the moment is the issue of energy supply. We grew much faster than what the energy infrastructure that was provided can supply. So, a lot of effort has gone to address the issue of energy supply.

Since January this year, we've appointed a Minister of Electricity and changed the whole energy makeup of South Africa. Previously only 10% of what was sold from the grid came from renewable

energy. We've now increased that to 30% with the aim to increase that to 40%. Which is of course the right thing to do also in line with the commitments that we made in COP (UN's Conference of the Parties). But, at the moment, I would say that that is a big hurdle for us and as we address the issues and as the energy supply stabilises and becomes secure, we will also see the effect that it will have on our economic growth.

There used to be a direct flight between South Africa and India, do we see that happening soon?

Yes. There used to be a direct flight between South Africa and India. It was a codeshare with Jet Airways, and it got cancelled not because it was not profitable, but there were some other issues and I think you also know some of the issues was on this side as well. We've worked very hard to re-establish the direct flight. When I arrived at the end of December 2019, we were about to make an announcement of an Indian carrier that was going to fly or take up this route. Of course, the whole world was hit by the pandemic and the carriers at that point then changed their business model. And then, as we recovered, a lot of the challenges had to be dealt with by the tourism and travel sector. But we've worked extremely hard to get there and all I'll say is watch this space. And we're also looking forward to South Africa's own airline, they have started the international flights to Sao Paulo, into the continent and London. So, yeah, as I said, just watch this space.



TUESDAYS WITH THE ROTARY CLUB OF BOMBAY



Rotary Club
of Bombay



Christmas

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Revolutionising environmental education: RCB's landmark initiative

PP Vineet Bhatnagar last week announced a significant achievement of the Rotary Club of Bombay – the creation and implementation of a new environmental science curriculum. This groundbreaking project, conceptualised under the leadership of PP Sree Nandy of the Rotary Club of Mumbai Kalakar, was first introduced last year.

The curriculum comprises three levels of textbooks in English, Hindi, and Marathi, supplemented by multimedia clips.

Spearheaded by RCB's Rtn. Nikhil Bhatia, the programme was initially rolled out across 20 schools in Palghar, impacting

1700 students. This year, the curriculum has been extended to include eighth-grade students, enhancing its reach and impact.

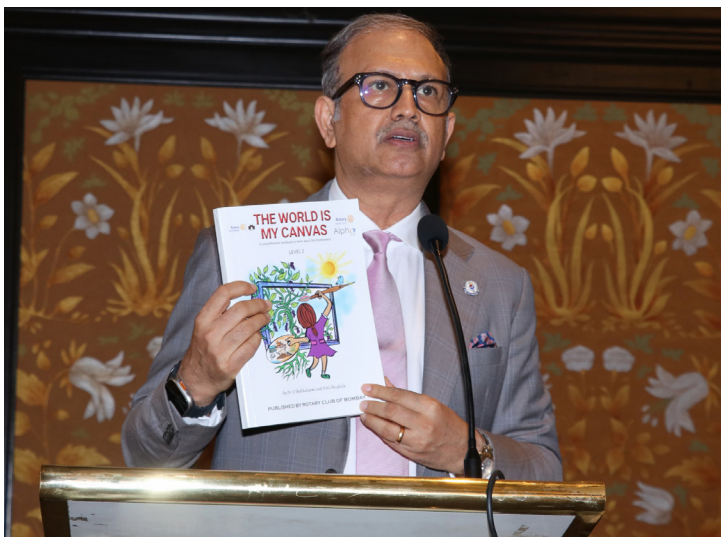
PP Sree Nandy, with her background in software systems from BITS Pilani and a career shift towards environmental education, played a pivotal role in this initiative. As the CEO and editor of 'Saevus' magazine and a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, her expertise was invaluable. She was also actively involved in the governor's monthly letter during the Alpha year and served as the Avenue Director for Environmental Sciences Curriculum.

This year, she continues her contribution as the Avenue Chair for Public Image, balancing her professional skills as a dancer, choreographer, and theatre

performer.

The curriculum, containing nine handbooks over 1,400 pages, covers 45 topics and is available in three languages. It is designed to provide a comprehensive and engaging approach to environmental education, addressing the gaps in the existing system. The content is digitised into 27 animated audio-visual modules, making it accessible and engaging for students.

The project team, led by PP Nandy, included Rotarians, researchers, linguists, designers, animators, and video editors, who collaborated for over 18 months. The handbooks, authored by senior scientist Dr. V. Subhalaxmi and her team, feature innovative cover designs by Arzan Khambhatta and scripts for digital modules developed by wildlife writer Katie Bagli.









The Oxford India Centre for Sustainable Development and the Bombay Natural History Society were also key contributors.

The curriculum was piloted in Palghar under Rtn. Nikhil Bhatia and continues to expand. Its potential for widespread adoption, including by schools in Bombay City, has been recognised.

The e-modules have garnered interest from the government of Nagaland and have been submitted to the NCERT for review, with the potential to reach over 10 crore children across India if broadcast on Doordarshan channels.

This initiative stands as a testament to the Rotary Club of Bombay's commitment to environmental education and sustainable development, with the support and mentorship of key figures like PDG Sandip Agarwalla and Rtn. Vineet Bhatnagar. Their vision and dedication have been instrumental in bringing this transformative educational programme to life.



ROTARY CLUB OF MADRAS

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WEEKLY VIRTUAL MEETING**
on Tuesday, 28th November 2023
**Zoom Meeting at 7pm IST
10:30 AM BRT**

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**Rtn. MÁRIO CÉSAR
MARTINS DE CAMARGO**

will address us on Zoom from São Paulo, Brazil

TOPIC
MY VISION OF ROTARY

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District Governor

Rtn N S Saravanan
District Governor - Elect

Rtn. S. Ravi
President

Rtn. Vikram Chesetty
Director
Club Service

AKS Rtn Vinod Saraogi
District Governor - Nominee

Rtn. M. Sessa Sai
Honorary Secretary

Rtn. Sandhya Sridhar
Chairperson
Programs Committee

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from
**6.30 pm IST
10:00 am BRT**
onward

Ananda Seva throughout the year



Health is our most precious wealth, and prevention is better than cure. At Ananda Yaan, we endeavour to provide various awareness sessions, fall prevention lectures, yoga, and therapies for senior citizens to maintain their fitness and well-being. This year, Yajat Sekhsaria, son of Rtn. Alok Sekhsaria, has generously decided to gift our seniors with free doctor consultations as his birthday offering.

We are grateful to Dr. Saumyaranjan N. Pandey, BAMS, PGDEMS, RAS (North America), FCT (UK), for agreeing to visit all three centres once a month. This initiative will benefit 200 senior citizens by addressing their health concerns. For elders, discussing their issues, whether big or small, can be a great relief. Sometimes, even a simple blood pressure check can provide immense comfort.



BY's journeys through Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

From November 6th to 21st, 2023, the Rotary Club of Bombay's Colaba Bhavishya Yaan Centre celebrated the power of storytelling with a Literature Festival. Centred around the enchanting world of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory', the festival was brought to life by teachers Ms. Sylvia, Ms. Ruchi, Ms. Neha, and Mr. Prasad.

Students from 4th to 9th grades across both mediums attended the event. We kicked off the festival by introducing the concept of a Literature Fest, sharing past experiences through photos and videos. The first activity saw students engaging in art and craft, creating paper lanterns and diyas.

Over the next two days, we delved into the world of Roald Dahl, starting with a biography of this celebrated author. The journey through 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' began on the fourth day. The students were captivated as the book was narrated, supplemented by a PDF version, and parts of the movie adaptation.

The narration spanned three days, with 10 chapters covered each day. The students' engagement was remarkable, participating in art and craft activities, solving puzzles and riddles, and even crafting their own chocolates. A highlight was a student-enacted skit based on the 'Chocolate Room', watched by esteemed guests Ms. Vandana and Jagdish Sir.

This festival was a vibrant celebration of literature, igniting the imaginations and creativity of all who participated.



Creative crafting: NMJ BY students transform paper into chocolates

As part of their 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' Diwali camp, the enthusiastic students of classes 3 and 4 at NMJ Bhavishya Yaan undertook an innovative activity, reports Nisrin teacher from the primary section. The activity involved crumpling, stuffing, and twisting different coloured gelatine papers and waste papers to create chocolate-like shapes. This imaginative project not only fostered creativity among the young learners but also highlighted the importance of recycling and reusing materials. The students' handcrafted paper chocolates were a testament to their ingenuity and artistic talent.

Quote

Caring has the gift
of making the
ordinary special. ”

— George
R. Bach

RCB launches coconut plantation drive

In a significant move towards environmental sustainability, the Rotary Club of Bombay RID and the Rotary Club of Mumbai Ghatkopar have joined forces for a noble initiative. This November and December 2023, they are set to distribute coconut trees free of charge for plantation in the villages of Gatesh, Gale, and Dhanoshi. The project is coordinated by the Diganta Swaraj Foundation and

generously sponsored by HDFC Bank Ltd. Under the guidance of Dr. Rajkumar Diwakar, of Green Solutions, this project aims not only to enhance the green cover in these areas but also to contribute to the local economy and ecosystem. The coconut tree, known for its versatile use in various industries and its role in ecological balance, is an ideal choice for this initiative.



Rotary
DISTRICT 3141



Environment Project of Free Distribution of Coconut Trees For Plantation

By

**Rotary Club of Bombay RID 3141 &
Rotary Club of Mumbai Ghatkopar - RID 3141**

Coordinated By

Diganta Swaraj Foundation, HDFC Bank Ltd. (Sponsored)

Through : **Green Solutions - Dr. Rajkumar Diwakar**

November - December 2023

At Village : Gatesh, Gale and Dhanoshi.





Interact at St. Agnes empowers community with an awareness rally

On November 2nd, 2023, Grade 7 and 8 girls of Rotary Club of Bombay's Interact Club at St. Agnes High School (proposed ICSE), organised a dynamic activity focused on community awareness. The event centred around a poster-making session themed 'Kar Mumbai Kar', aiming to inspire and

educate. Following the creative session, the students took to the streets in a rally, actively spreading awareness and engaging with the community. This initiative by the young learners of St. Agnes High School exemplifies their commitment to social responsibility and community involvement.



Members, please note that we have tied up with Masina Hospital for a great discount for our members, family, and friends.

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Rotary Club
of Bombay



SPEAKER SESSIONS



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BOMBAY HISTORY FELLOW

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Work Visas for Foreign Students

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TUES | 28 | NOV

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NEXT WEEK

TUES | 05 | DEC

THE DEBATE IS HERE



INDIA

BHARAT

SHOULD INDIA BE CHANGED TO BHARAT

Rotary Club
of Bombay



V/S

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Rotarian Member Birthdays



NOVEMBER 29

Rtn. Charu
Agrawal



NOVEMBER 29

Rtn. Dr.
Ashish
Contractor



NOVEMBER 29

Rtn. Amay
Merchant



NOVEMBER 30

Rtn. Bipin
Vazirani



DECEMBER 1

PP Nandan
Damani



DECEMBER 2

Rtn. Dr.
Sharukh
Golwala



DECEMBER 3

Rtn. Rahil
Shah

Rotarian Partner Birthdays

NOVEMBER 28

Rtn. Ptn. Chanderkanta
Juneja

NOVEMBER 29

Rtn. Ptn. Alpana Chinai

NOVEMBER 29

Rtn. Ptn. Arti Sanghi

NOVEMBER 30

Rtn. Ptn. Kashmira Dalal

NOVEMBER 30

Rtn. Ptn. Prashans Chowdhary

NOVEMBER 30

Rtn. Ptn. Devaki Trivedi

DECEMBER 1

Rtn. Ptn. Renu Chokhani

DECEMBER 2

Rtn. Ptn. Malini Agarwalla

DECEMBER 2

Rtn. Ptn. Ayesha Soonawalla

DECEMBER 3

Rtn. Ptn. Vandana Kakar

Anniversaries

NOVEMBER 28

Rtn. Ptn. Chhaya &
Kaushal Mehta

NOVEMBER 29

Rtn. Ptn. Vandana &
Madhusudan Daga

NOVEMBER 30

Rtn. Ptn. Anita &
Satyanarayan Bansal

NOVEMBER 30

Rtn. Ptn. Priyanka &
Mudit Jatia

NOVEMBER 30

Rtn. Ptn. Meher &
Khurshed Poonawala

DECEMBER 1

Rtn. Ptn. Pritisha &
Amay Merchant

DECEMBER 1

Rtn. Ptn. Arnaz
& Dr. Phiroze
Soonawalla

DECEMBER 2

Rtn. Ptn. Vasudha &
Abhin Alimchandani

DECEMBER 3

Rtn. Ptn. Smita &
Naresh Pachisia

DECEMBER 4

Rtn. Ptn. Dr. Sonu
& Dr. Saumil Kothari

DECEMBER 4

Rtn. Ptn. Nandita
& President Manoj
Patodia



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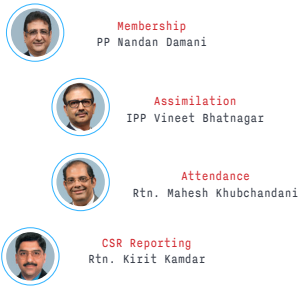
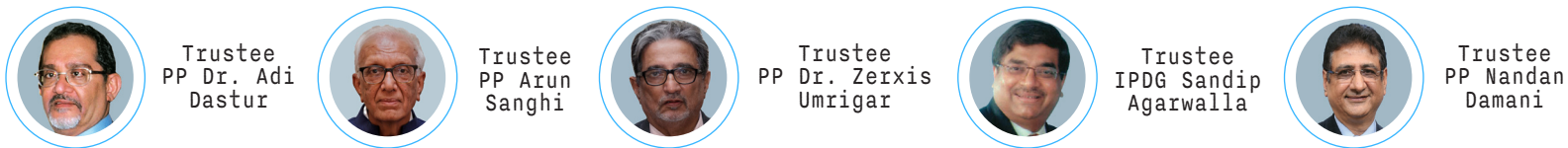
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OFFICE-BEARERS



President
Manoj Patodia



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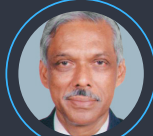
President-Elect
Satyan Israni



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Bimal Mehta



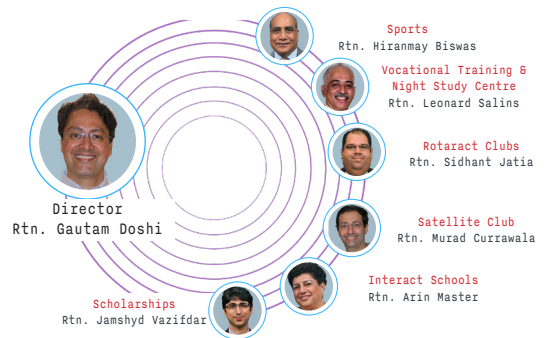
Hon. Secy
Pradeep Gupta



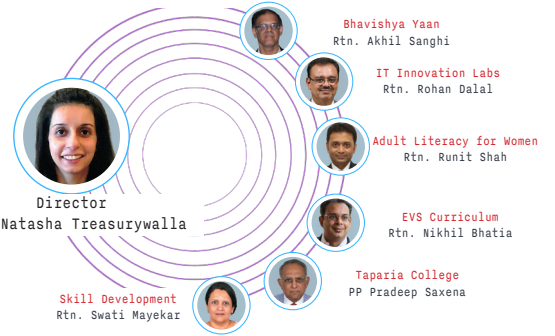
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Sunny Pariyaram



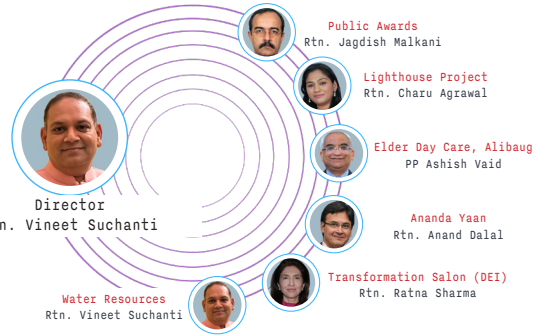
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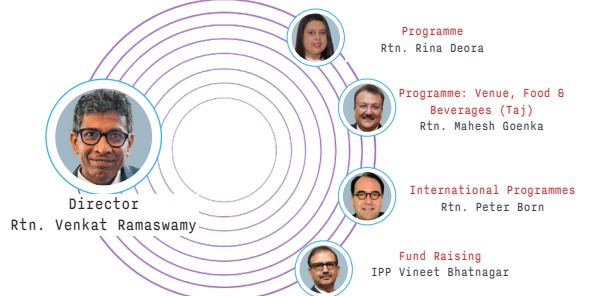
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Rtn. Gautam Doshi



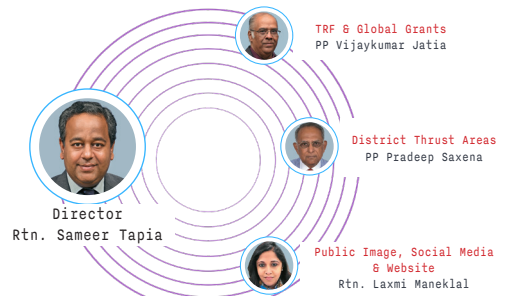
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Rtn. Natasha Treasurywalla



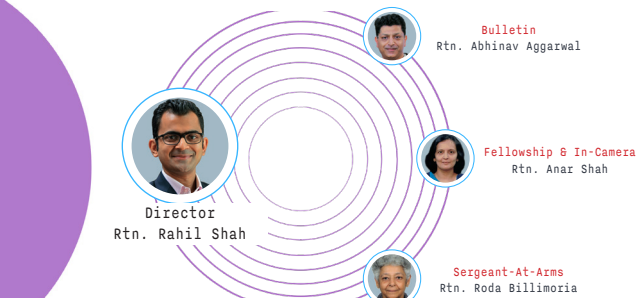
Director
Rtn. Vineet Suchanti



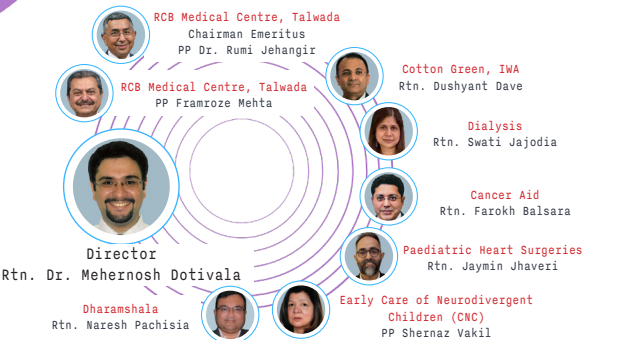
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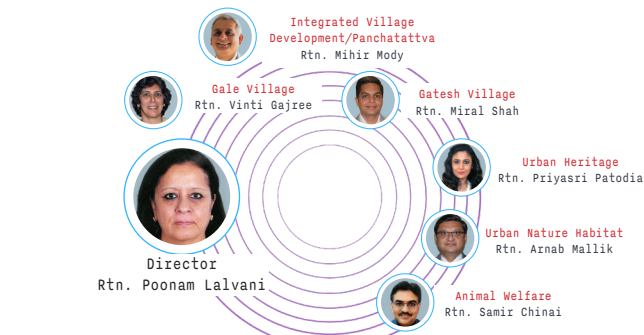
Director
Rtn. Sameer Tapia



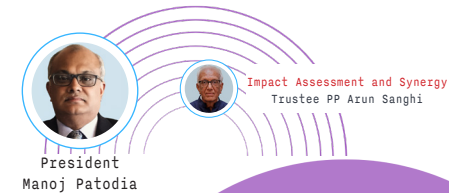
Director
Rtn. Rahil Shah



Director
Rtn. Dr. Mehernosh Dotivala



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