



THE GATEWAY

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'Politicians don't want you to vote – for you live in a high rise and you're not part of their vote bank'

The favourite punching bag of the media and of the chattering classes before and after every election is the well-to-do, apathetic citizen who lives in high rises and does not bother to cast his/her vote.

And the leading role in every battle of the ballot is inevitably played by the slum resident who makes it a point to exercise his/her democratic right by patiently standing in long queues before casting his/her vote.

The residents of high rises are usually far more literate than the slum-dwellers; and they are millions of rupees away from the below-the-poverty-line existence of those who comprise more than 60% of a city's population.

Is this an ideal situation? Are political parties satisfied about this state of affairs? Are they making efforts to ensure that educated, well-to-do people also exercise their franchise? Is a voting percentage of 40 or 50 (and that, mostly from the slums) enough for democracy?

A loaded question to this effect was posed at the last meeting by President-Elect Pradeep Saxena to the guest speaker, Ms Shaina N.C., who belongs to both the fashion as well as the political fraternities.

"What are the political parties doing to make Pradeep Saxena go out and vote?" he asked.

Ms Shaina's reply was equally challenging: "A lot of politicians do not want Pradeep Saxena to vote because their vote bank is intact. The less educated they (the vote banks) are and the poorer they are, the better it works for them."

But it was not a happy situation. Perhaps the answer lay in making it compulsory for citizens to vote, or offering certain "incentives" such as admission to college for the children of those who cast their votes.

She recalled the view of a Shiv Sena MLA, Mr. Sarpotdar, who pointed out that people struggled very hard to get a passport; they would go to great lengths to do everything neces-

sary to meet the requirements for a passport. If only they made a tenth of that effort to go and vote...

The Collector of Bombay had sent out mobile vans that issued laminated voter ID cards on the spot. But those who were apathetic remained unimpressed. Some felt it was very difficult to find out the time when it would turn up outside their homes. And some others wanted the van to park in their lanes at a time of their choice. This was taking apathy to new heights.

Ms Shaina, who is a member of the BJP and a spokesperson of the party in Maharashtra, was speaking at the last meeting on an unusual topic, "Fashion and politics", and impressed the members with her erudition and grasp over issues agitating society and the country as a whole.

Daughter of the well-known social activist and former Sheriff Nana Chudasama, she has a fashion designer, Munira Chudasama, for a mother and is herself now a leading

member of the fashion fraternity and of the political world, too.

In his introduction, Satya Bansal said that when he asked Ms Shaina about the connection between fashion and politics, she had said that while fashion was her profession, politics was her passion. She was the only person from the fashion fraternity who had taken the plunge into "the big, bad world of politics".

Ms Shaina started by thanking the Rotary Club of Bombay for selecting her many years ago for the Rotary Exchange Scholarship that took her to Vancouver when she was just 16 years old. That experience had done wonders for her self-confidence.

As a growing child, she always told her mother that she would never be a fashion designer. She believed that the profession was strictly for dumb girls and bored housewives. She wanted to grow up to be a lawyer, a politician or a journalist.

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I'm serious. Politicians don't want your vote because you are not a part of their vote bank, Ms Shaina N.C. tells the Rotary Club of Bombay at its last meeting. (Right) He's the man who asked the question. President-Elect Pradeep Saxena wanted to know 'What are political parties doing to make Pradeep Saxena go out and vote?' He was snapped with Ms Shaina after the meeting

Forthcoming meetings

August 11, 2009

Honorary member Mr. Ajay Pira-mal to speak on "The power of giving".

August 18, 2009

District Governor T.N. Raju Sub-ramanian to address the Club as part of his Official Club Visit.

Please see Page 3 for more details.

August 25, 2009

A presentation on wine tasting and wine-making by Reveilo Vintage Wine. Ms Sonal Holland to address the Club.

HOW A STOP-GAP ARRANGEMENT TURNED INTO A FULL-TIME CAREER FOR SHAINA

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By a strange twist of fate, it so happened that when she was barely 17 years old, her mother fell ill and she had to go to her boutique, *The Golden Thimble*, to fill in for her. She acted as Supervisor and gave directions to the tailors.

While spending time at the boutique, she created a collection of 12 to 15 garments with a clear understanding that it was just a stop-gap arrangement and that she would be there only till such time as her mother was unwell. But before she knew it, and to her utter surprise, the collection she had created sold out within a week.

“It’s strange how your life changes and how your thoughts change as you grow... At 18 I had seen the colour of money and suddenly my perception of the fashion world changed and it was no longer for dumb bimbos... it was good business, with lots of money and it offered me a future.”

As she completed her studies in political science from St. Xavier’s, she worked with the NGOs set up by her father and some at her college. She also went for higher studies and earned an Associate’s Degree in Fashion Design.

Soon after she resumed her business, Ms Shaina said, she realised that she had a rare talent to drape saris. She started with 10 to 15 different ways of draping a sari and eventually arrived at 54 different ways of draping six yards of fabric. She had absolutely no idea that she could achieve such a feat.

It soon became her USP and she travelled all over the country with a “show” teaching girls how to wear a sari. It was a time when most girls

abhorred saris and preferred jeans. They felt saris were traditional and uncomfortable, whereas jeans were modern and helped them “to look nice and sensuous” like film stars.

On the international stage, on the other hand, celebrities such as Cherie Blair, Jemima Khan and Zandra Rhodes wore saris and made them popular throughout the world.

“I took the show across the country and the response was overwhelming. I had never thought that people would get converted to wearing differently draped saris. And that became my fashion statement, my USP in the fashion design fraternity.

“I focused very hard on work. I had started working when I was 18 and I remember that while others used to hang out in the college canteen, I was working at my mother’s boutique.”

Her brand was soon established, she got married and life went on smoothly. Soon, she had her first baby.

But the thought of getting into politics was always at the back of her mind. She had been attracted towards public speaking, social issues and politics from her school-going days. Close interaction with NGOs was another feature of her early life.

In the course of discussions over socially relevant issues, she realised that most people preferred to sit on the fence. No one was willing to make a commitment. At cocktail parties, talk usually veered around what one party had done and what another party had not done.

At the same time, Ms Shaina said, she was apprehensive about the candyfloss world of glamour. Appearing on the society pages on a regular basis and having her photograph in

the newspapers every other day sometimes scared her. Fame, after all, was fickle. Thankfully, her family members did not allow her to get a bloated head. They always brought her back to earth.

“I consciously decided that I wanted to take the plunge and enter active public life by joining a political party. I did not want to sit on the fence and just be an NGO activist or a social activist. I wanted to be a part of the political fraternity, I wanted to make a difference.”

Her father did not deter her and asked her to go ahead and pick a party of her choice.

She seriously started scouting. She looked at both the positives and the negatives of the Congress, of the BJP and so on; and finally she decided that she wanted to join the BJP.

When her father asked her why she wanted to join the BJP, she told him that as a student of political science she had seen the country being run by the Congress and she felt that it practised nothing but appeasement politics. It had its vote banks and it made sure that those vote banks remained intact.

“If you truly believe that you want the country to progress, why can’t we have justice for all and appeasement of none? I was one of those truly impressed by Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, the former Prime Minister, and the NDA-led government, and I said my choice is going to be the BJP.

“I’m a product of a Hindu-Muslim marriage and most people said, Oh, you are so secular and (yet) you’re joining a bunch of fundamentalists. But I did my research on the RSS and I found that they are probably the most disciplined

organisation in the country and, contrary to what many people feel, the kind of social work they do and the kind of discipline they project is unparalleled.

“That’s my personal opinion. I’m not here to convince you to become BJP voters. But it was a personal choice and I joined the BJP. I believed in the Uniform Civil Code, I was happy with what the NDA had done and I was going to join the BJP.”

Ms Shaina recalled her first press conference in the presence of Mr. Gopinath Munde, Mr. Nitin Gadkari and other party leaders, and they said after she had finished speaking, “Hi muli election madhye pahijet!” (we want this girl in the elections).

And within two weeks she was told to be prepared to fight an election. She said she was not interested because she had just joined the party along with 200 youngsters, including professionals from the field of fashion, doctors, lawyers, chartered accountants and others and it was too early to plunge into electoral politics.

But the party insisted that as a disciplined soldier she had to give one month of her life to the party. She relented and contested the Assembly elections from the Bandra constituency. That was the biggest eye-opener for her.

Every single person she met during the campaign said he/she would be voting for her; she was welcomed with open arms and she heard people saying, “Yes, finally we’ve got a person from a clean, clear background, someone not interested in being in politics only for money; we have someone who truly believes and now we now believe that there is hope”.

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The many faces of an erudite speaker. Ms Shaina pictured in various moods while speaking at the last meeting and explaining how a stop-gap arrangement turned into a full-time career for her

District Governor Raju's Official Club Visit on August 17 and 18

As already announced, District Governor Raju Subramanian will make his Official Visit to the Rotary Club of Bombay on August 17 and 18.

Making a repeat announcement to this effect at the last meeting, Hon. Joint Secretary Nirav Shah said that the second Club Assembly for the current Rotary year would be held in the presence of the DG at 6 pm on Monday, August 17, in the Babubhai Chinai Room of the Indian

Merchants Chamber, Churchgate.

DG Raju would utilise the occasion to interact with Directors and Committee Chairpersons on the projects being undertaken during the year.

This would be followed by a get-together at President Nandan's residence where DG Raju and First Lady Vidhya will join the Directors, Committee Chairpersons and their spouses for dinner at 8 pm.

On the next day, that is, Tuesday, August 18, the Governor will make his Official Visit to the Rotary Club of Bombay and interact with the Office-Bearers and the Club's partners in service at the Secretariat.

DG Raju will conclude his Official Visit by addressing the Rotary Club of Bombay's weekly meeting to be held at the Taj Mahal Hotel the same afternoon (Tuesday, August 18).

At the last meeting

(Held on August 4, 2009)

PRESIDENT Nandan called the meeting to order and welcomed the guest speaker, the visiting Rotarians, Rotaryans, guests and others.

BIRTHDAYS

Members and Rotaryans celebrating their birthday during the week were felicitated.

ATTENDANCE

Members	149
Visiting Rotarians	4
Spouses/Rotaryans	8
Guests	29
Total	190
Svc. box collection	Rs. 7,540

Display of talent on I-Day eve by students of 'Bhavishya-Yaan'

The Education – Values and Ethics Committee, which has Alok Sekhsaria as Chairman, has planned an Independence-eve programme at the Dr. Ambedkar Municipal School, Worli Naka, from 4 pm to 5.30 pm on Thursday, August 13.

Alok has appealed to all members to attend the programme along with their families and friends.

One of the highlights of the event will be a brief presentation by children who have benefited from the Committee's increasingly popular *Bhavishya-Yaan* project.

The Committee is confident that those who attend the programme on August 13 will return impressed by the talent and abilities of the young students being groomed by the Rotary Club of Bombay.

**Service
Above
Self**

'Michael Jackson Night' on August 28

The Fellowship Committee has got cracking. It has already arranged one successful event and is now poised to host another, more ambitious, programme.

And this time the Committee, which has Madhusudan Daga

as Chairman, is arranging a very unusual event – it is planning a tribute to the late legend "MJ" by organising a "Michael Jackson Night" on Friday, August 28.

The venue will be the popular "Blue Sea" at Worli Sea Face

where the music will start blowing and the victuals will start flowing at 7.30 in the evening.

All members are invited. While donor passes for members will cost just Rs. 1,250, for guests these will be available at Rs. 1,500.

And, as with anything to do with "MJ", the dress code will be one of these two: **Black & White** or **Black & Red**.

With a hyperactive DJ, live dances and video projections, the event is poised to be a memorable one. Apart from fun, dance and drinks, there will be dinner, too.

So make sure you're there, says Madhusudan in his appeal to all members.

BIRTHDAY DONATIONS RECEIVED

Bharat Kumar Taparia has made a birthday donation of Rs. 11,000. And Hormazdiyaar has sent a contribution of Rs. 1,001.

Speaking at the last meeting, President Nandan thanked both the members for their contributions which were received during the week gone by.

‘Whether you are elected or not, if you really want to deliver (and do good for the community), then the sky is the limit’

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Ms Shaina said she was very happy with the campaign and with the way people responded to her appeal for votes. She interacted with people from all walks of life, from slums to high-rises, from students to youth, with women, the aged and so on.

When people asked what the “N.C.” in her name stood for, she said it was Shaina “Non-Corruptible”.

She lost the election.

And then she started wondering what had happened to all those people who had told her that they had voted for her. Where had their votes gone?

It turned out that the voting percentage was a measly 43. “People like you and I who live in the high-rises had not even come out to vote.”

But she had taken away two positives from her first election. The first was an encounter with an old woman who had held her hand and said in Marathi, “You are the candidate? (I know) you will do good work”.

That woman had tremendous faith in her and wanted her to make a difference.

And then, on the day of the counting of votes, her opponent, Baba Siddiqui of the Congress, said to her, “You know, you really had me worried because the day before the election, my daughter came up to me and said, ‘Papa, all my friends’ parents are voting for her because she looks like an honest, good girl!’”

“That was my victory!” said Ms Shaina.

On further analysis, she realised that many people had this to say about her: “She has come from the fashion fraternity. What does she understand about politics? What is she going to contribute? She is like all the others from the glamour world

who come to fight an election, who want a party post and who leave.”

But that had not happened in her case. She had stayed on in the party. She became a Secretary of the BJP and was the youngest, and the only woman, to reach that position. At present she was the spokesperson of the BJP in Maharashtra, and again she was the youngest and only woman spokesperson that the BJP had ever had in Maharashtra.

Ms Shaina confessed that the combination of fashion and politics was not always advantageous because many people did not think that she was serious or that she could make a difference. But this was not true. Professionals like her did not look at politics as a “business” but as a way of giving back to society through tangible projects and not just tall claims.

She recalled that she had motivated students from the J.J. School of Applied Art to beautify all the paediatric wards in the municipal hospitals. The youngsters willingly gave their time and energy and a corporate had happily offered the required paint.

Soon, the paediatric wards of 12 municipal hospitals in Bombay were completely transformed, “just by connecting people”.

The most difficult task was getting permission from the municipal corporation which was worried more about the spot where her name would be put up!

There were many other tasks that could be taken up, she said, whether simple ones like tree-planting, segregating garbage, working for spastic children and so on, or suggesting a change in the Education Bill being considered by Parliament (so that it included a provision saying that disabled children would also be covered).

Fortunately, people like her were in a position to make a difference. Two days before her talk, she received a call from Dr. Mithu Aloor of the Spastics’ Society who suggested that it was necessary to have a clause to cover disabled children in the Education Bill.

She had called her colleagues in Delhi, including the party President and the leader of the opposition, Mr. L.K. Advani. They had done the needful and the clause had been included.

“Therefore, irrespective of whether or not you are elected, if you really want to deliver, then the sky is the limit. And you really can deliver. The advantage of being in politics is that you can deliver from a different level as well.”

Further, Ms Shaina said, there was no point in labelling all politicians as scamsters or as a bunch of corrupt people and saying that it was better to keep a safe distance from them.

After the terror attacks in Bombay on November 26, 2008, many politicians came with their security details, made statements before the media and disappeared.

But there were many youngsters like her – and from different political parties – who had stayed on at various hospitals, such as J.J. and Cama, to help the victims as much as possible.

Some used their connections to have victims treated at Bombay Hospital, others helped them to return home after treatment. While a few liaised with the police, others ensured that various agencies co-operated with one another. And one group was busy raising money.

“If you ask me, have you made a difference? I will say I definitely have. Can everyone here make a difference? Yes, you can. But you need to have

the will and the fire in your belly to make sure that you are going to be out there doing something, not just making tall claims that you are going to eradicate AIDS, get rid of poverty, ensure that illiteracy disappears and so on.”

Referring to Sunita Yadav, a victim of the 26/11 carnage, she said the woman had lost her husband and her livelihood in the firing. She had nobody except her little daughter and had gone back to her father’s house.

This man bemoaned that Sunita and her daughter were now a millstone round his neck. He had got her married with great difficulty and yet she was back with him, a widow and with a little girl to boot. Who would educate the girl, take care of her and get her married?

“I said to him, don’t you dare talk like that! But he insisted that he would now have to carry the additional load of his daughter and granddaughter. I again said, don’t you dare talk like that.

“With the help of NDTV we ran a campaign for the little baby, Sheetal Yadav, saying anybody who wants to donate for her should contribute to *I Love Mumbai* and we will make sure that the girl’s education is taken care of. You will be amazed to know that we got 170 cheques directly in the name of Sheetal Yadav.

“And suddenly the grandfather’s attitude changed. He started saying, this little girl is everything for us and there is no life without her!”

Finally, Sunita Yadav went home with about Rs. 16 lakhs as a fixed deposit for her child; it would ensure that her child would have an existence she could not even have dreamt of.

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Hearing her out intently and patiently. Two sections of the front rows at the last meeting, when Ms Shaina N.C. (seen at extreme right in the second photograph) was speaking on ‘Fashion and politics’. She confessed that the combination of fashion and politics was not always advantageous because often people did not think that she was serious or that she could make a difference

INTERACTORS DO THE CLUB PROUD, WIN FIVE TOP AWARDS

Shivshankar Wadke of St. Xavier's High School, Fort, and Manasi Jhaveri of Gopi Birla Memorial School have won top honours (all-India level) at the Fourth National Essay Competition held during the last Rotary year.

Apart from them, three other students, Sehal Shah of Gopi Birla and Meghna Mehta and Isha Shah, both of St. Anne's Girls' School, Dabul, have won awards at the District level.

While Shivshankar and Manasi received cash prizes of Rs. 2,000 and a certificate each, the others, Sehal, Meghna and Isha, won Rs. 1,000 and also received a certificate.

All these prizes (as also several others listed below) were presented at the last meeting of the Club by President Nandan Damani along with IPP Ashish Vaid and Interact Chairman Mehul Sampat.

These five students were among the 36 from 12 Bombay schools who took part in the essay competition meant for students of Classes VIII to XII organised by PDG Yogananda S.R. (of District 3190), the National Coordinator and Awards Administrator.



And they're all winners. President Nandan and Interact Chairman Mehul Sampat are crowded out by the young Interactors who received awards for their entries in the National Essay Competition on the Four-Way Test. Ms Shaina, who is in the centre, said that the youth are not the future of the country, they are the present

The topic for the essay contest was an off-beat one, "Can the Rotary 4-Way Test be my mantra for success?"

Enthusied by the eager participation of children in the essay contest, the Club's Committees for Interact (Chairman Mehul Sampat) and the Four-Way Test (Sitaram Shah) announced another set of awards and incentives.

Under this plan, three students received prizes of Rs. 1,000 each

in the shape of book vouchers from M/s Crosswords. And four students received prizes of Rs. 500 each, again in the shape of book vouchers from M/s Crosswords.

The first three winners were Manasi Jhaveri of Gopi Birla, M. Shirazi of Bharda New High School and Surabhi Gupta of G.D. Birla Memorial School.

The final four winners were Zahabia Nalwalla of Gopi Birla, Sehal Shah of Gopi Birla,

Shivshankar Wadke of St. Xavier's and Ria Gandhi of Villa Teresa High School.

Apart from all these, the two Committees, for Interact and the Four-Way Test, also offered a certificate of participation and a set of books to all the children who took part in the essay competition.

A certificate of participation was presented to each of the 12 participating schools. The Moderators of the Interact Clubs at these schools received a set of books.

Students from the following institutions took part in the essay competition: Bharda New, Convent of Jesus & Mary, G.D. Somani, Gopi Birla, Holy Name, St. Anne's, St. Xavier's Boys' Academy, St. Xavier's High School, Alexandra Girls' School, Alexandra Girls' English Institution, Villa Teresa and H.P.T. Girls' High School.

District 6400 of Southeastern Michigan (USA) and Southwestern Ontario (Canada) and the Rotary Club of Windsor (also in Canada) were the official sponsors of the essay competition.



Just what was it that brought these wide smiles on the faces of the young winners and their Moderators, family members and friends who attended the last meeting? Even Interact chairman Mehul Sampat and Coordinator Ms Cymbeline Pereira did not remain unaffected by Ms Shaina's talk

Shaina admits that she gets a 'kick' out of being in public life and is almost 'addicted' to it

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Everything eventually boiled down to connecting people. There were many people who wanted to do good but didn't know how to go about it. "People like us are there as a medium to channelise."

Finally, Ms Shaina appealed to her audience to give back to and to make a difference to society. It was always better than to sit on the fence and criticise politicians. It was even more important that those who were successful and better off stepped into public life because they would not be doing so to make money through corrupt means.

Every drop in the ocean made a difference and, contrary to all the negative propaganda and the disillusioned fence-sitters, there was hope for a better tomorrow.

Before signing off, Ms Shaina said that she had attended the launch of the Club's computer training programme at the Dr. Ambedkar Municipal School at Worli and had found it to be "fabulous" (she was referring to the *Bhavishya-Yaan* project).

The floor was then thrown open for questions.

And first off the block was Bharat Kumar Taparia who wanted to set the record straight about Ms Shaina's statement that victims of the terror attacks of 26/11 were admitted to and treated at Bombay Hospital through "connections".

He said 105 patients, most of them policemen, were treated at Bombay Hospital without "connections". There were about 20 foreigners among the 105.

When the guest speaker said she was not disputing his facts but saluting him, Bharat Kumar insisted that the patients were admitted without any "connections".

Ms Shaina said she agreed with him and added that after the hospital had stopped taking patients of 26/11, she had called Dr. Tiwari at Bombay Hospital and he had obliged by admitting a patient from J.J. Hospital with a cyst in the stomach; no doctor at J.J. was willing to look at him and he could have died.

Bharat Kumar came back with another comment: "We accepted many serious patients from J.J. Hospital. You will be happy to know that Jharna Narang, who was injured in this hotel (the Taj Mahal), was treated for eight months and she walked out of Bombay Hospital only last week."

When Shyyamniwas Soman asked her to suggest three projects for the Rotary Club to undertake, Ms Shaina said she could think of two off the cuff.

The first was tree plantation. Growing more trees was the best way to combat global warming. Many people complained that there was no space to plant trees. But this was not true. Trees could be planted in every compound, on every footpath, in hospitals, schools, colleges and so on.

Since the survival rate was only 50%, it was necessary to continue planting even more trees. Plants were available from the municipal corporation for a mere Rs. 1.50. The *I Love Mumbai* Foundation had 33 centres for the distribution of saplings all over the city. Rotary could also establish such centres for distribution.

And the second cause, which was close to her heart, was that of the girl child. She appealed to the Club to help educate the maximum number of girls.

When a guest asked what could be done about gender discrimination as a whole, Ms Shaina told him to wait for the Bill for 33% reservation for women to be enacted. Her party was committed to it.

"For your information, the BJP is the only party that has implemented 33% reservation for women in its organisational posts... (and this is far more than) what the Congress has done, considering that it has a woman as its President."

When PDG Manibhai Doshi asked how Rotarians, who were well-to-do people, could help in her projects, Ms Shaina said the easiest thing was to sign a cheque! On a more serious note, she said the best contribution was setting aside time for a particular

cause. Whether it was visiting an organisation or a hospital, distributing certain items or helping raise points in Parliament, the most important requirement was of time.

PP Arun Sanghi asked how she managed to split her time.

Ms Shaina said it was something only a woman could do and added that the women in the audience would agree with her.

She had started with an advantage because she had been at work ever since she was 18. Usually, she worked 12 hours a day, dividing her time equally between fashion and politics. During elections she had to devote much more time and also lost out on sleep (she usually got four or five hours' sleep during election time).

"But I must be frank and honest, that there is a certain high about it, a certain kick. My husband always jokes that just as a drug addict is addicted to drugs, a politician is addicted to this kind of high or kick, where you enter the public (arena) and the public roars and that gives you unbelievable energy. And that is the honest truth. I'm not going to say that I do it for this or for that (altruistic purpose).

"Everyone has a different mental make-up. I divide my time in half. And whatever free time I get is for my two children. Fortunately, I have a strong support system in my mother and my mother-in-law; without them, I wouldn't have been able to survive.

"If I had had an insecure husband who was a typical male chauvinist, it would not have been possible. So more than my parents, I give credit to my husband because he has never felt insecure about my success and the time I spend away. When he was

needed to fill in for me, he has done so without feeling that it is not his job."

Ms Shaina added that those who felt that she led an enviable life were mistaken. Her work was taxing. It drained her and sometimes she wondered whether it was worth the while. At other times, she wished she could give it all up.

But then there were days when she was so charged that she felt that all the hard work was really worth it. The time factor could only be balanced by family support.

Ashok Minawala asked how successful had she been in dressing up her fellow politicians.

"Very unsuccessful!" she replied. She had had hardly any impact on the Yadavs but did feel that some of the people in her party such as Sushma Swaraj, Arun Jaitley and L.K. Advani were better turned out. Even Narendra Modi had turned his half-sleeved linen *kurta* into his signature style.

Younger members of all parties were conscious of the electronic media watching them and what they were wearing.

Slowly, the perception that a politician looked best in an awful, crushed *khadi kurta* and *chappals* and with a *paan* in his mouth had disappeared. He was slightly more sophisticated now.

The *kurta* was still there but it was more likely to be a linen, starched *kurta*, with loafers instead of *chappals* and no *paan* in the mouth.

It also depended on the constituency. A good facade mattered in urban constituencies but in rural ones it was only work that mattered. A good dress sense, if at all, could actually act as a disadvantage in a rural milieu.

Ms Shaina related one of the positives of being in both fashion and politics.

She said she had organised an exhibition of work done by the Adivasis of Bastar district. They had had no access to the fashion fraternity earlier, but the exhibition had opened new avenues and thus helped generate a livelihood for them.

The final question was asked by Pradeep Saxena. That, and Ms Shaina's response, appears in the introductory portion of this report.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Programme Chairman Nanik Rupani.



That was an excellent presentation and this is a memento to remind you of the afternoon you spent with us. President Nandan and the guest speaker

Spending quality time with orphans and street children

They are known for organising innumerable projects and programmes during every Rotary year. Normally, their final tally is in excess of 400.

With the new Rotary year having dawned on July 1, the members of the Rotaract Club of H.R. College have already got into the groove. On July 24, they organised a Community Service project called *Lamhe* (or Moments) which sees

them reaching out to orphans and street children in different parts of the city.

That day, they went to the Pavement Club for orphans and street children at CST (or Victoria Terminus) at 2 pm. Soon, they were surrounded by children and together they played various games and participated in team-building exercises.

The Rotaractors were surprised to note that some of the children had rehearsed a few dances which they asked their guests to witness and judge. They performed so well that the Rotaractors were moved to give them prizes (in the shape of sweetmeats and chocolates).

By organising such events, the Rotaractors ensured that the participating children got an opportunity to know themselves and also to make friends with the members of other Pavement Clubs.

“Seeing those kids enjoy themselves made us feel very satisfied. The happiness and beautiful smiles on their faces made us realise that our project was successful. They told us that they will never forget this day. Our aim to create some beautiful *Lamhe* in their lives was achieved.”

Rotaractors Aagam Mehta and Prerna Kankaria, who are the Club’s Community Service Directors for 2009-2010, sent this report.

FELLOWSHIP AT THE CLUB



And just what is the topic of discussion between these two members at the last meeting? Perhaps the guest speaker’s choice of subject? In the picture above are Ashwin Ramesh and Mudit Jain



And what is this duo talking about? The rise in the stock market and the Nifty index hovering around the 4,700 mark? Shailesh Patkar and Vijay Meghani alone know the answer to this question

Lights, camera, action – only for Interactors

Rotary International has organised its first official Interact video contest.

It provides an opportunity to all youngsters to become film-makers. All that they have to do is to grab a camera and make a video – of three minutes or less – about what Interact means to them.

The deadline for submitting original videos is October 1, 2009.

The contest is open to Interact Clubs and individual Interactors and to Rotarians whose Club sponsors an Interact Club. Participants must be over 14 years of age and can submit only one video.

To enter the contest, Interactors can join the 2009 Interact Video Contest group on YouTube. They can follow the instructions to create or log into their YouTube account and also to upload and submit their videos. Next, they have to complete the entry form and e-mail it to Rotary International.

And the winner of the grand prize will have his/her video appear in the November, 2009, issue of *Interactive*, a monthly online multimedia publication, which will coincide with World Interact Week. The two first-place winners will be featured on YouTube.

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Old Age Home/ Senior Citizens Naresh Kumar Jain
Women Empowerment Poonam Lalvani
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Night Study/Voc. Jacob Abraham

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Education - Values & Ethics (Dist. Thrust) Alok Sekhsaria
TEAC Junior College IPP Ashish Vaid

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Rotary Public Awards Nelum Gidwani
Legal Aid Akil Hirani
Four-Way Test Subash Gogia

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Rotary Foundation PP Arvind Jolly
Fund-Raising Manoj Israni
Promotion of Arts, Music and Dance Priyasri Patodia
Disha (Dist. Thrust) PP Kalpana Munshi
Water Management (R.I. and Dist. Thrust) Suresh Goklany

Committee invites suggestions for Rotary and Public Awards

The Rotary and Public Awards Committee has requested members to forward suggestions to help it pick the most deserving persons for the following awards during the year 2009-2010.

Shyam Munshi Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Performing Arts: This award is generally given to an eminent personality who demonstrably has a lifetime's achievement in the performing arts. Previous recipients include Mr. Amitabh Bachchan, Mr. Dev Anand and Pandit Jasraj.

Citizen of Mumbai: This award is bestowed on a person who has a record of outstanding contribution to the citizens and the city of Bombay. Past recipients include (Dr.) Indu Shahani, Fakhruddin Khorakiwala, Mr. Julio Ribeiro, the late Mr. J R D Tata, the late Mr. Nani Palkhiwala and the Tata Trusts.

Sohrab Godrej Award for Science & Technology: It is awarded to an outstanding scientist who has made a significant contribution to the nation. Its past recipients include Mr. Anil Kakodkar, Mr. Jayant Narlikar, Mr. C.N. Rao and Prof. M.S. Swaminathan.

Ramakrishna Bajaj Award for Good Governance: The recipient should be a person who is acknowledged to have practiced good governance and/or contributed significantly to improvement in governance. This award was instituted only recently and Mr. F.C. Kohli has been the first to receive it.

Award for Social Service: Another newly-instituted award, it is intended to honour those who have made outstanding contributions in service to society. The sole recipient so far is Ms. Raksha Mehta.

Taru Lalvani Award for Protection of the Environment: The person to be honoured should be one who has contributed significantly to protection of the environment and spreading awareness about the necessity to do so. Past recipients

include Ms Sumaira Abdulali, Mr. Debi Goenka and the Bombay Natural History Society.

Somchand Parikh Award for Best Teacher: This award is presented to a person in the field of education who has achieved much more than just teaching a subject with the objective of passing a public examination. He/she should have contributed to the development of students and/or the system of education for the betterment of academic performance, social responsibility and contribution to society. This year, the Committee would be willing to consider college teachers as well.

Anita Parikh Award for Empowerment of Women: The selected candidate is likely to be a person who has contributed in this field and established a record of helping those in need of assistance and achieved results in women being able to exercise their rights and not being exploited.

Bravery Award: The selected candidate would have shown extraordinary bravery, over and above the call of duty, in saving/protecting a life or lives and/or property at some personal risk to himself/herself. The person selected could be a civilian or a man/woman in uniform. Last year, the award was given to the policemen at C.S.T. and Chowpatty for their bravery on the night of the terrorist attacks on the city on 26/11 (November 26, 2008).

Nelum Gidwani, Chairman of the Rotary and Public Awards Committee, has urged all members to forward their suggestions for the above awards as soon as possible (preferably before August 31) and to send them to the Rotary Secretariat.

Indru Lalwani
August 11Nowroze Vazifdar
August 11Dr. Shailesh Raina
August 15Sunny Pariyaram
August 17**Spouses/Rotaryanns**Amita Haribhakti
August 11Savita Mansukhani
August 11Mira Mehta
August 11Vera Umrigar
August 12Shalini Advani
August 13Mrudula Biswas
August 13Aradhana Mehta
August 13Minal Vaghani
August 13Mona Lalwani
August 14Sangita Advani
August 15Ketayun Irani
August 15Kulsum Dubash
August 16

Visiting Rotarians

Bombay Cuffe Parade: PP Darshana Doshi; **Bombay East:** PDG Manibhai Doshi; **Bombay Mid-Town:** Navin Mohatta; **Bombay North:** Firoze Kachwalla.

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