



There's a serious side to the irreverent Cyrus Broacha

How does one report a talk by a guest speaker who is introduced as one who is going to be "lovably, irreverently, intellectually interesting"?

That's how Mr. Cyrus Broacha was introduced by Dolly Thakore at the last meeting – and she was as serious as a sober judge when she made the statement.

Perhaps the best way would be to attempt to reproduce the talk verbatim, without any embellishments but omitting words normally not used in family magazines, and leave it to the reader to pick and choose the portions at which to laugh, or to laugh out loud. LOL!

Of course, in the course of the question-answer session that followed he came across in a different avatar, as a serious person and with unexpected gravitas.

Otherwise, Mr. Broacha is a humorist, a political satirist, television anchor, columnist, author and perhaps one of the first stand-up comedians in India. He is also well known for his MTV show *Bakra* in which he performed some elaborate practical jokes on unsuspecting people and also for his programme, *The Week That Wasn't*, which is telecast on CNN-IBN.

And this is what he said at the last meeting...

What a long round of applause! Thank you so much. Don't stop, take your time! But first I would like to welcome arguably India's greatest fiction writer since Shobha De,



My introduction by Dolly Thakore was a piece of fiction, don't believe it, says Mr. Cyrus Broacha at the last meeting

Dolly Thakore. I don't know what the hell she was talking about. They were all lies.

I'm just a boy graduated from Cathedral School, went to Xavier's College, did one year's GLC and then got picked up by MTV because they wanted someone cheap. That's all, nothing much.

Before we start, I just want to say that whenever I talk, I always try to remember the things that I have to remember when I am in the audience. And the first thing is that we must have rules so that we don't behave like animals. All right?

The first rule is, please keep your mobile phones ON at all times, answer any call that comes, because I don't have anything important to say; I do not get distracted, so you can laugh, cough, sputter, make sounds. I grew up in a house full of mechanics, so all sounds are acceptable. So please keep the mobile phones on. And in case one of your bookies calls... are you placing bets today, anyone? No? Okay. Phones on please at all times.

And the second rule, which is very important. Kidneys are our treasure, we are the number one country when it comes to kidney disease, it's a serious problem.

So please, in the middle of the talk or the question-answer session, if you need to go, please go. It will not bother me or the august body on the stage.

Last but not the least, I don't know how many of you come from Wharton Business School or the very refined Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, you might quote Dostoevsky and Premchand, but all men have the same problem, rich or poor, sophisticated or from the roads – we need to scratch. So please, if you feel like it, please go ahead and do it. And if you want to freelance... This is Rotary, as long as you are rich and ambitious, that's all that counts. So please enjoy yourself.

I will now correct all the lies that have been set out... Lovely lies, by the way, Dolly. First, it was not 30 years ago (that I acted in a school play). I was about 7 or 8. I am now hardly 21.

But I want to begin by saying that my real name is Vindoo Dara Singh... and wouldn't it have been a pleasure to have him here today? There would be so much more that he could talk about. He's talking in the lock-up right now. There would be so much more that he could share with you.

This IPL thing, I think I will talk about it just for a second. I will then give you my background and tell you about my life and clarify things and then throw it open for questions and answers so that people don't get too bored too quickly.

Starting with the IPL, I was a bit disappointed with the whole bookie thing, but what really upset me was that we had a South Bombay person,

who grew up here, went to the same schools and colleges that most of the people in this room and their children and grandchildren have gone to, and is a bookie whose name is Sunil Colaba.

That really upset me because I was thinking that he probably went to Cathedral School, had two cars, two drivers, went to college and then to Harvard and came back and his parents had a cocktail party where they were talking to the other parents, saying things like, "Oh, Javed is a dentist?" "Yes, Percy is doing very well, he is an MBA." "And what about Sunil? Sunil's full name is Sunil Colaba and he's a bookie."

So I am a little upset about that. I just want to know if anyone here is involved with Sunil Colaba, because this is his area. Please put your hand up right now to clear the air. Anybody?

You're smiling, Ma'am? You don't know anybody? But you know Colaba and you know Sunil? Can we put it together, that you're the lady! Let's clear the air on that one!

The other scam we had from our area, about 11 dead members who came to life at the CCI. So again, are all our members alive here at the Rotary? Any dead members, hands up please! This is a good time to talk about it. Let's keep the air clean.

Okay, the preliminaries are over. People ask me all the time are your parents funny, because they presume that I'm funny for some reason. It's very difficult to tell them that my parents are hilarious. They don't intend to be, but they are ridiculous, absolutely ridiculous.

I'll start with my father. My dad is a very well educated man, a refined man; he loves his Mozart, he loves Don Bradman, he loves his dogs, these three are the father-son-holy ghost in his life. But he doesn't dress that well. At home he wears a *lungi* and a *sadra* with four holes and which probably was a present from the British in 1947. And the *lungi* of course is the Marilyn Monroe variety which rises up all the time! So our female staff leave very quickly; but the male staff, for some reason, stay. I don't know why.

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Forthcoming meetings

June 4, 2013

PP Haresh Jagtiani to address the issue of match-fixing, spot-fixing, bookies and players in cricket and whether the law has any role to play.

June 11, 2013

Mr. Ronnie Screwvala to address the Club.

June 18, 2013

To be announced.

June 25, 2013

Evening meeting, with Fellowship from 7 pm onwards. President Nowroze Vazifdar to present his report for the Rotary year 2012-13.

'My mom wore Martina Navratilova dresses even at 2 in the morning when she was 72'

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He's a lovely man, a great man, but he's got a few faults and unfortunately, the DNA is the same and so you imbibe what you get from your home. As a young boy, I got all the wrong messages. I remember he took me out and we got a beagle puppy. I was eight years old and he said you have to learn how to control the dog, show him who's the boss. He took me to Hanging Gardens and picked up a ball... my Dad is strange, he speaks to the dog only in Gujarati but to me only in English.

He would throw the ball and the dog would not move. Anybody has a beagle here? You would know that beagles have no sense of responsibility or love for the owner. They're like cats, they just hang around. So, for about 15 days we would go every morning, my dad would throw the ball and my dad would fetch the ball and all the urchins would watch and say wow, see Parsi middle-aged man fetching ball and he would fetch in the mouth, because he was trying to teach the dog! He would keep telling the dog in Gujarati, "See, see, see!" And he would go down on his hands and his legs.

At the end of 15 days I realised that people were coming and asking can we throw the ball so that your dad can go and fetch? An educated man, he could quote Hamlet all day. Very refined, knows his Italian like the back of his hand. But with beagles, a failure.

Another thing. While driving a car, and I picked this up from him, if a human being is crossing, an old woman or a young man, he would use the MCs and the BCs and all those three or four words that bring Parsis and Punjabis together. Yeah, it's true. I'm so comfortable in the North because they have

the same problem, except for the pronunciation part, especially the last syllable. When we Parsis pronounce it properly, people start laughing and the whole insult goes out of the window.

So when people are crossing the road, my dad would shout abuses because they had stopped the car or made him brake, but if a dog crosses, he will hold up 15 cars behind him and speak in Gujarati, "Yes, child, go with god, go with god". And everybody will wait till the stray dog crosses, scratches, raises its leg and then slowly crosses to the other side like a lion.

I picked up all these bad habits. The worst habit is about tax. This is amazing and again a Parsi thing. We are the only people in India who pay tax, I'm convinced, because when service tax became an issue, I had the number but everybody else in entertainment was laughing at me. I think they (the taxmen) attack us because they think Parsis are scared, they'll pay, so they have to go and catch us first.

I'll tell you why I am talking about this. We once were put in jail for drinking and driving. I don't know how that happens. We spent about three or four hours there, I was 19 or 20 years old. The bail money was Rs. 900 which somebody's mother had to pay. I came back home and went to my father. I was a little ashamed, it was 2 in the morning. I told him that we drank and drove and then somebody's mother came and paid the bail.

He looked at me and said, "Idiot, where is the receipt?" Morality is not the issue, he only wanted the bail receipt for tax purposes, because he had to file it in the morning.

People think that we try to be funny, but the people who are gifted are funny. That's my father in a nutshell,

I think he just does his thing. When I look at it from a distance, it's amazing.

Let's get to my mom. My mom is Catholic and they wear arguably the worst clothes as they get into middle age. When my aunt was in hospital and we had to go to see her late in the night, my mom wore Martina Navratilova dresses, that's the only way I can describe them, at 2 in the morning... And I suddenly realised that she is 72! Dressing like that is so embarrassing because people at Cumballa Hill recognised me and started talking to me and wondering who was the lady modelling for a Miss India from the 1950s.

But that's the least of the problems. The biggest problem is what she has done to the Hindi language. A lot of times, when I go to Delhi, people ask me, "Kya, Broacha, Hindi aati nahin hai? Baat nahin karta barabar?" (Broacha, don't you know Hindi, can't speak it properly?) And I tell them, you should hear my mother and father talk, especially my mom.

If you call up my house (I'm 41 years old), my mom will pick up the phone and say "Baba nahin hai. Peeche phone karo" (Baba is not here, call afterwards). Take your time, just think what that means to a North Indian guy when you say "peeche phone karo" – call from behind? Does she mean keep the phone between your legs and then call?

When I was a very young boy, I was scarred by a couple of incidents; one was at YMCA, not the safest place at 8.30 at night. We used to have one of those old Ambassador cars. My mom was a tough old lady and she would drive it, with her triceps hanging out, in the 1980s. If you remember, if you pressed the brake in Byculla, the car would actually stop somewhere near Tardeo. Not the greatest of machines, but it was a lovely car. I met my first girl friend in the Ambassador and she left in 30 seconds.

My mom was driving the car and the car stopped and she was trying to fix it and didn't know what to do. There were some of these *tapori* guys hanging around in their track pants and *ganjis* and in India, it's a rule that if you are a *tapori*, you have to stand with one hip cocked out... There were two or three of them standing like that and looking at us. My mom was oblivious to all this, she was in her strange outfit, wearing her tennis gear. She went up to them and said, "Baba, baba, idhar aao, jara mujhe peeche se dabao".

When you are ten years old and your mother is talking like that! Those two *tapori* guys, suddenly their hips go straight and a lot more people start lining up to help with the car. And she said, "Peeche se dabao". That also scarred me a lot, having these kinds of influences in my life.

I honestly feel that whatever people think about our family, I'm the least funny of all and I think the most responsible of them all in many ways.

I also would like to mention my pretty wife, I haven't decided if it's Ayesha or Tara, okay, I will go with Ayesha. Ayesha will you stand up? She hates being seen, she's there with the diamond jewels that I never bought her. Lovely lady and we had a bit of a culture clash when we got married. Her dad was from the London School of Economics, well-bred and a very interesting man. He was with ITC. The first time I went to Hyderabad and we sat at the dinner table.

Now I come from a family where dinner is different, my dad is scratching and my mom is singing and everyone is making food sounds, eating our food very loudly. It's a very different culture.

In Hyderabad, that *tameez* thing was going on and they would all talk only one at a time and all short, crisp sentences and Anglicised. My father-in-law would ask, would you have some tea? I could barely hear. And my mother-in-law would speak even more softly, no. And somebody else would say, thank you, and the conversation would be very different.

When I first went there I was completely scandalised that there were people who were so polite and well-behaved. I only bring this up because I think my wife deserves a round of applause. Honestly, I can't think of any other woman who would stay with me. The thing is I can't hear anything she says, so that works very well for me and I think she ignores me. I think these are the two ingredients to a good marriage. So another round of applause for Ayesha.

Instead of boring you with more details... I've got a lot of stories which I can tell all evening, including many about these strange names that Dolly mentioned, such as Bill Clinton, lovely man, Bill Gates, Richard Gere, I met all the film actors, not always a good thing, in Bollywood. And plenty of other people as well. So I'll throw it open for questions, if anybody is interested.

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My father would hold up 15 cars to allow a dog to cross the street, but would curse any man or woman who held him up, says Mr. Cyrus Broacha



Welcome to the Rotary Club of Bombay. New member, Anar Ashok Shah, who has been loaned the Classification 'Consultant: Health and Fitness', is formally inducted at the last meeting. At left is President-Elect Nirav Shah, who introduced her

'Be the Change' on June 14

The Club has arranged a preview of the show "Be The Change" at the Nehru Centre from 6 to 7 pm on Friday, June 14.

Hon. Secretary Sitaram Shah informed members at the last meeting that there was a limited number of seats for the show and advised them to reserve these as early as possible.

Office-Bearers' meetings

The following are the attendance statistics of the meetings of Office-Bearers during the month of May, 2013:

Number of meetings held	4
President Nowroze Vazifdar	4
Nirav Shah	4
IPP Paul George	3
Shailesh Haribhakti	1
Sitaram Shah	3
Hiren Kara	4
Ishraq Contractor	1

NEW MEMBER ANAR SHAH IS FORMALLY INDUCTED

New member Anar Ashok Shah was formally inducted at the last meeting. She has been loaned the Classification "Consultant: Health and Fitness".

President-Elect Nirav Shah, who introduced her to members, said that she was his cousin and, like him, worked in the Piramal group. While she was attached to the wellness field, he was in the pharma-logistics space.

Anar was in charge of the wellness centre at the Piramal Clinic at Lower Parel and had been actively associated with various organisations including the ladies' wing of the Indian Merchants' Chamber.

Following the introduction, President Nowroze conducted the formal

induction ceremony. He offered the new member a Rotary lapel pin and also presented her with a copy each of the Club Roster, Four-Way Test placards and other Rotary literature.

Nowroze thanked Anar for agreeing to serve on the *Bhavishya-Yaan*, Programme, Bulletin and Fellowship Committees for the rest of the year.

Welcome to the Club, Anar.



And how have you been keeping, Arun? PP Dr. Rahim Muljiani with Arun Mehta at the last meeting



Remembering the good old days and making plans for the ones to follow. Sandeep Dasgupta (left) with S.K. Mitra. Are the two eminent men of medicine at right discussing a medical case? PP Dr. Zerkis Umrigar snapped with Dr. Anand Somaya



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Having said his piece, Mr Broacha then took questions from the floor. Most of these were posed without the use of a microphone (and so politely that they were inaudible) but he spoke about some of the interesting people that he had met or interviewed.

The first name he tackled was that of Vindoo Dara Singh (now behind bars for involvement in the IPL spot-fixing and bookie racket). He said he was ashamed that even at the age of 50 Vindoo was still known as his father's son.

"He hugs a lot, that won't be a good thing in jail. But it's strange, because when you look at all these guys, they have a standard of living that they have to keep up. So perhaps that's why all this (fixing and so on) is happening. I can't say for sure, maybe yes, maybe no."

Turning to batting legend Sachin Tendulkar, he described him as very nice, extremely short and touchy about it; he probably wore inner heels to obtain some height. The first thing he had noticed the first time he met him, was that he spoke in an almost child-like voice. But over the years his voice had changed and become deeper.

But the one thing that stood out about him was that when he came out to bat at the Wankhede Stadium and when everybody was standing up and clapping, the greatest batsman of his generation constantly adjusted his box-guard. Children all over India did the same thing!

"I mean no disrespect, I just find it amazing when you have real talent, real genius, these things don't matter but it's amazing... if he wasn't a good batsman, you would think he was a paedophile or something very dangerous. Imagine when he bats so well, scoring 240 runs, but how many times has he actually played with the 'little Sachin'!

The man who made a 'Bakra' of many,

"But a great man, very nice, very humble. We've interviewed him a lot of times, no change from the first to the last and the only thing is that like L.K. Advani he is going to go on forever, it doesn't look like he is going to retire from Tests. And don't ask me about L.K. Advani."

His experience with former US President Bill Clinton was different. While working with MTV, he went to Barcelona for a UNAIDS short, to create awareness about AIDS. The Chairman was Bill Clinton. His group was told that Mr. Clinton would arrive at 3 o'clock sharp and he had given just 11 minutes when he would talk with a lot of children.

Mr. Broacha said he was very nervous, after all, he was the most powerful man in the world. But he had to visit the men's room. He went there and noticed that it was very huge, the size of New Bombay. He kept saying to himself that it was Bill Clinton and he should not do anything stupid or use bad language and be very careful about the sex, drugs, homosexual angles.

Suddenly, many huge men, all of them 7 feet tall, came into the room. He was so tense that he nearly froze. Besides, he was feeling crowded in that huge men's room.

And then a man entered singing and whistling the song "Out in the West Texas town of El Paso, I fell in love with a..." There were dozens of urinals in the room, but that man, Bill Clinton, came and stood at the one next to him. He was 6 feet and 2 inches tall, whereas he, Mr. Broacha, was a mere 5 feet and 8 inches. And Mr. Clinton rocked front-to-back while emptying his bladder.

Suddenly, he noticed Mr. Broacha and said, "Hello, little guy". That

froze him even further and his bladder suddenly dried up!

"He was great. And what I liked about him, I can't tell whether it's political or he's really good with people, but he remembers your name, he calls you by your first name. When he spoke about a country's problem, he spoke to the politicians from that country by their name. So he did his homework very well, a very impressive man. But I would not like to be caught in a urinal with him again, that's for sure. And this was before Monica Lewinsky, mind you!"

Angelina Jolie, Richard Gere and Nelson Mandela, Mr. Broacha recalled meeting only the latter two. He met Mr. Gere at a very crowded function but managed to approach him with his camera team and said, "Mr. Gere, I'm your biggest fan, I have seen all your movies and I love everything you do". But the actor looked at him for a second and said, "Can you get off my foot?" That was his only interaction with the sexiest man of the 80s.

Even with Nelson Mandela, the meeting lasted just a few seconds while doing a programme on AIDS awareness. He just said, "Hello, Sir, I'm from the land of Gandhi". At which Mr. Mandela said, with a twinkle in his eye, "Land of Gandhi? And lots of pretty girls". In spite of all the racial discrimination, in spite of all kinds of problems and 27 years in jail, his ideas and his mind were still fixated on women which was something to remember and respect. He was about 78 or 79 years old at that time.

Asked about his most famous show, MTV's *Bakra*, Mr. Broacha said that he had come to hate the show. Recently, he was at Kemp's

Corner trying to park his car when a parking attendant pulled a fast one on him. He had just parked for 15 minutes but was asked to pay Rs. 100. Are you serious, he asked. Yes, said the boy, at which stage he lost his temper and started using bad language.

The attendant looked at him for some time and then said, dead-pan, "What's so great? We also do *Bakra* sometimes!" That was very embarrassing for him; he felt like an idiot and a loud. So he just smiled and paid.

On another occasion, when he went to a hospital to see someone, the staff surrounded him and started asking about *Bakra*, taking his pictures and so on. That was another embarrassing episode.

But his team soon turned paranoid, so that after shooting they started attacking each other and trying to make a *Bakra* of each other with a camera. Everyone was always worried that something was going wrong or something was happening, so it was best to keep calm.

Pointing at a member, Mr. Broacha said, "I think you are the first person who has yawned. Can you please put your hand up and can we give him a round of applause, please? No, it's not sarcastic. I want you to just relax and have a good time in this room. I don't like rules. And if this is the time to rest, by all means please rest. Only for this meeting, for the next meeting you can do what you want."

Roda Billimoria wondered whether it was fair to say that 11 out of 10 Parsis were *ghela* (not quite there).

Mr. Broacha said that living in the present times, with Naxalite insurgency, communal tensions, bookies going mad and destroying a beautiful



I think Anil Harish will make an excellent Prime Minister.
Mr. Cyrus Broacha with Anil and President Nowroze Vazifdar



Mr. Cyrus Broacha recalls the culture shock when he went to his in-laws' in Hyderabad. He was just not used to their 'tameez'

has been made one on several occasions

game and all the other problems like breathing, living, parking cars, “if we were not mad, we would have left the country by now. I think we’re fine. We’re okay”.

Asked about his experience with MTV, he said he had believed that he would meet a lot of girls, but he was put on shows with nobody around. He ended up shooting taxi, rickshaw and bus drivers, waiters, people on the road, people one would never see again. But most of them were offended and angry, therefore it was not always the best experience. But he could not complain. There were some good moments, too.

In those days (at MTV) when the budgets were low, they had to share rooms (they called it rooming). One of the boys in the team was a certain Cyrus Sahukar from Delhi who was not as uninhibited as him (Mr. Broacha). When he (Mr. Broacha) got into a hotel room, he normally undressed and lay nude on the bed and switched on the television.

His new colleague kept pacing up and down and finally blabbered, “At least wear your underwear!”

On one of their tours, they met the late Rajesh Pilot in a hotel and quickly decided to interview him. His idea about politicians changed after that. Hailing from South Bombay, he used to look down on them and found them dull. Mr. Pilot was talking to Star News at that time in chaste Hindi; he spoke well, made his points and moved on.

When the MTV team approached him, he changed his clothes, wore jeans and a T-shirt. Asked why he did that, he said it was because of the MTV audience. Something like different folks, different strokes. He then narrated a story which won over the en-

tire team and it believed that he would have made a good Prime Minister.

Mr. Pilot said he always wanted to get into politics. His grandfather in Rajasthan was the local milkman, providing milk to the entire village. The milk was adulterated in the ratio of 60:40. But he decided that the day he became the boss, he would end this and would give the people good, proper milk. That would be the stepping stone for him to go forward.

The day his grandfather was no more, he took up the business and started supplying proper milk. The next day, there was diarrhoea in the village and the people burnt his house and chased him out of the village.

“And he said something very interesting, that after that he learnt that whatever is there, you don’t touch it, you don’t fix it, you leave it the way it is, that is the story of politics. He won us over, we were all from cities, urban areas, with elite backgrounds, looking down at politicians. But I thought that he had the right mix of class and mass where he would have reached out to people. But unfortunately he died in a road accident.”

About his weekly show, *The Week That Wasn’t*, he said that the feedback had been quite good. When he met Finance Minister P. Chidambaram recently at SEBI’s 25th anniversary, he had been very nice and even told his boss, Rajdeep Sardesai, sarcastically, to let him (Mr. Broacha) replace him (Mr. Sardesai).

A few people had been offended. One of them was the cricket legend Kapil Dev, who complained that the programme was making fun of his language and his style of speaking. He had then called him and apologised “because he is a very nice guy. But other than that, I think we have been

okay so far. But if I disappear you know what happened...”

Mr. Broacha then sighted Burjor Poonawala and asked members to applaud him for organising an excellent *Bakra* programme at a Club meeting about ten years ago. It was announced in the Club bulletin that a Sheikh would attend the meeting to talk about economic ties between India and the UAE. He even gave an excellent introduction.

Burjor chipped in with, “Let me say, for the benefit of those who were not present at that meeting, that you hardly spoke, except for a few Arabic-sounding words and nothing else. But you went back on your word to pay the Club a million dollars!”

Mr. Broacha agreed that he had not worked out the gag completely. Everything had gone very well, except for the fact that he could not speak in Arabic with any conviction for more than 30 seconds. The gag could not be held for very long. But many of the members had a great deal of fun. A few were perhaps offended at the waste of time.

“But honestly, you don’t expect to come to the Taj Mahal Hotel with all the movers and shakers of society sitting in front of you and get away with something like that. So that is something that I am slightly proud of, if I may say so.”

Burjor then turned to the Prime Minister and noted that those who could not sleep at night would benefit if they listened to Dr. Manmohan Singh. Agreeing with him, Mr. Broacha said he took a lot of shots at him. He felt really bad but with the UPA in power with no policies and doing nothing, everybody was taking potshots at it. Inflation was at an all-time high, which made it even easier.

But the point he made was that Dr. Manmohan Singh was misplaced. He was not a statesman or a leader but an academic, intelligent and nice human being. “But what can we do? You’re the Prime Minister of the country and you don’t have much to say most of the time, so it’s a standing joke... what will he do once he is done with the Prime Ministership? He will become a librarian.”

He felt bad about the Prime Minister because there were many more, vicious targets, people who had committed horrendous acts, who had caused lots of trouble, destroyed states and more but couldn’t be touched because they were sacred cows. But the PM was made the butt of jokes week after week because he had failed to say anything over issues. It was terrible to see people laughing, making jokes at one. “It’s a bit sad, but I wish one day I could apologise to him and say that it’s only because of the job.”

What about cricket and the BCCI? Mr. Broacha said it was the Board of Control for Corruption in India. But then the sub-continent was very nepotistic, people employed fathers, sons, uncles, aunts, and that was the way it went.

Anywhere else in the world, the person at the helm would have resigned. Besides, the whole idea of owning a team and yet being the head of the BCCI which was running the game, threw the concept of neutrality out of the window. But Mr. Srinivasan had a lot of guts. He had stood up and decided to continue. “I think this is the great thing about India. Our politicians and people in power never give up. We should learn from them.”

But would the IPL survive? Would it be cut down to 10 overs? Mr. Broacha felt that the strategic timeout of two and a half minutes made no sense to him, but perhaps it did to those who wanted to place bets.

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You got my resume all wrong. Mr. Cyrus Broacha chats with Dolly Thakore, who introduced him, Farhat Jamal and Roda Billimoria



When three is not a crowd. Mr. Cyrus Broacha, the guest speaker at the last meeting, with Renu Basu and Pankaj Baliga

CYRUS BROACHA THANKS THE CLUB FOR GIVING HIM THE OPPORTUNITY TO WEAR A SUIT

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“But why two time-outs – two and a half minutes long? It almost looks like, I hate to say it, but there’s a mafia running our country and they’ve devised this whole game and they’re making a lot of money out of it. I hope this is not true, but it’s a distinct possibility. And Dolly, I’m also an amateur sociologist, putting all this together.”

What about the Gujarat Chief Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi? Had he interviewed him?

Mr. Broacha said he had tried his luck, because there were always two sides to a coin. But so far there had been no negative feedback from him. He had been made fun of, about the time being right and so on.

“I think he would be a good leader for the country, but then when you have a stain on you, how can you go forward? It’s one of those things... one step forward, one step backwards. I think if we can elect a leader for the country who is without any blemish, someone who can lead the country effortlessly and in the right direction, I think Anil (Harish) would be the right person. Anyone seconding the opinion?”

Asked to narrate some stories about his friend and colleague Kunal Vijaykar, Mr. Broacha said he sometimes made slightly scary statements. For example, when some roads were dug up outside Cuffe Parade and some people were sleeping on the pavement, they had to move their car three to four inches with a physical effort. He did that and was

upset; he looked up and said, “Tell me honestly, if I ran over these people, wouldn’t I make their lives better?”

On another occasion, he and Kunal went on a double date because he was really scared of girls. The foursome included a girl called Farah who was into music. She came from Africa and loved Parsi food. So Kunal suggested they go to Paradise and try the kid *gosht* which was a succulent lamb preparation with yogurt sauce and so on.

Soon, they were seated at Paradise. But the waiter said he could serve only one plate of kid *gosht*. “Okay, fine,” said Kunal and he then looked at Farah and said, what will you have? He’s a great man, a wonderful person. Almost a father to my kids.”

Turning to film star Shah Rukh Khan, Mr. Broacha said he was one of the easiest persons to interview because he could speak non-stop. On the other hand, actors like Akshay Khanna and Ajay Devgan were not very talkative. The latter, in fact, was known for mumbling and for keeping his tone very, very low. So much so that sound recordists wondered whether anyone else was talking (apart from Mr. Broacha).

But while Ajay Devgan was not the greatest person to interview, Shah Rukh Khan was the exact opposite; once he started off, the interviewer had to figure out a way to stop him. He normally went on and on and went from the question to some other story all together. As he was a big superstar, it was not easy to cut him off.

“But always fun to work with. He loves pulling your leg, we pull each other’s leg. I’m almost his friend, I would say. That’s not true, though. I can’t think of any negative stories about him right now. Very cool.”

Finally, Mr. Broacha ended by thanking the Club for inviting him and said that the watchman in his building would be a happy man because he had normally seen him going out only in short pants. “So when I wear a suit in the day and go out, I know he’s impressed – and believes that I have finally landed a job!”

A litter-buster who keeps her city clean

Wendy Marcus calls herself a “bag lady”. On her frequent walks around her neighbourhood, she is never without a plastic bag which she fills with everything from plastic wrappers to bottle caps and paper clips.

“Litter has always bugged me. Maybe I take after Lady Bird Johnson,” she says, referring to the conservationist (and wife of U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson) who, like Marcus, was a Texas native.

When the Rotary Club of Providence celebrated its centennial in 2011, Marcus and other members of the Club’s Environmental Committee persuaded 100 Rotarians to join a campaign to reduce litter.

In the now-annual month-long event, culminating on Earth Day, April 22, Rotarians recruit friends and family members to pick up trash – in their neighbourhood, at their children’s soccer games, wherever they can – for 100 minutes each.

Like Lady Bird Johnson, Wendy Marcus also believes in beautification through planting. In 2012, she planted trees in Providence. Her Club donated eight London plane trees to the city and high school students helped plant them in a park across from city hall.

She also planted trees in India, where from January to March of that year, she led a Group Study Exchange. When the Rotary Club of Jalandhar Central donated fruit trees to local farmers, Wendy and her team were at hand to help plant them as a living reminder of their visit.

A ‘litter walk’ a day keeps the garbage at bay

By Robin Roberts, a member of the Rotary Club of Mobile West, Mobile, Alabama

Would you like an easy way to change the world? What if there was a project you could start today, in your own neighbourhood regardless of where you live? Implementing it requires no fund-raising and no committee approval. You can take part starting today. It improves your mind, body and spirit and improves your environment, too.

Here’s the idea: Every day, take a daily “litter walk”. You will be happier, you will be leaner and your community will be cleaner.

R.I. President Sakuji Tanaka described his personal commitment to cleaning up litter in the July 2012 issue of *The Rotarian* magazine. The idea of a daily “litter walk” brings community clean-up down to the grassroots level of one person and a daily routine.

Annual litter clean-up campaigns take an army because they clean once a year. But everyone can clean up their community if it’s done every day. Here are a few things I have learned from more than a year of daily “litter walks”:

- (1) Daily walks improve the mind and the spirit, as well as the body.
- (2) It doesn’t require a lot of effort to pick up a little litter each day as you walk.
- (3) You don’t need fancy tools. You can use a small plastic bag from a local merchant and a gardening glove. If you want, employ a grabber.
- (4) Make it a routine. Make an appointment with yourself each day.
- (5) Each day, leave at the same time and return at the same time. Consider walking five miles a day.
- (6) Encourage others to join the effort. Just think what would happen if each town had a thousand daily “litter walkers”.
- (7) By cleaning up litter, you will be keeping it out of streams and storm sewers, improving our water as well.
- (8) You can have an impact immediately – clean land, clean water, better health, one street and one person at a time.



Wendy Marcus takes a breather during one of her litter-busting expeditions. (See report at left)



With the man who helped make a ‘Bakra’ of the Club. Mr. Cyrus Broacha and Burjor Poonawala recall a decade-old caper

PEACE BEGINS WITH YOU, SAYS THE HIROSHIMA PEACE FORUM

In a ceremony heavy with symbolism, R.I. President Sakuji Tanaka joined other Rotary and community leaders on May 17 in laying a wreath at the Hiroshima Memorial Park, dedicated to the victims of the atomic bomb dropped on the city during World War II.

The subject of peace has been at the heart of Sakuji's year as Rotary President. A member of the Rotary Club of Yashio, Japan, he had selected *Peace Through Service* as R.I.'s Theme for his year and organised three Global Peace Forums to motivate Rotarians and others, particularly youth, to work for peace in their daily lives.

The wreath-laying ceremony took place during the third of these Forums, held in Hiroshima, Japan, in late May. Sakuji also visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and signed the guest book which contains messages of peace from many past and present world leaders.

More than 2,700 people attended the Forum, including Rotarians, community leaders and students and alumni of Rotary's Peace Centres programme – an initiative that provides future leaders with the skills needed to resolve conflicts and promote peace. The Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture, Hidehiko Yuzaki, and the Mayor of Hiroshima, Kazumi Matsui, also attended.

The two previous Forums were held in Berlin, Germany, and Honolulu, Hawaii, USA. Sakuji selected all three sites because they had been affected by the events of World War II and now represented the healing power of sustainable peace between nations.

"Every Rotary project, every act of service, is an act of love and kind-

ness," he said in his closing address. "When we serve in the right ways and for the right reasons, we bring people together, in peace and in harmony. How could it be otherwise?"

Participants at the Forum also adopted a declaration, "Peace Begins With You", which serves as a call to action for individuals to make a conscious effort in their daily lives to promote harmony with their neighbours and create friendships that transcend the divisions of nationality, politics, religion and culture.

"Today, as we leave this last Rotary Peace Forum, I ask you to understand that peace, in all of the ways that we can understand it, is a real goal and a realistic goal for Rotary," Sakuji said. "Peace is not something that can only be achieved through treaties, by governments, or through heroic struggles. It is something that we can find and that we can achieve – every day and in many simple ways."

Rotary has been in Japan since 1920 with the formation of the Rotary Club of Tokyo. Other Rotary Clubs soon followed in Osaka, Kyoto, Yokohama and several other cities. Today, there are about 88,000 Rotary members in Japan belonging to 2,285 Clubs.

In March, 2011, a massive earthquake off the coast of Japan and the resulting tsunami brought devastation to much of the nation. Rotarians around the world responded with moral and financial support, raising millions of dollars for disaster recovery efforts in Japan and Pacific island nations.

Rotary has a long-standing commitment to peace. At the grassroots level, members have worked to address basic causes of conflict and violence, such as hunger, poverty, disease and illiteracy. Ten years ago, Rotary decided to take a direct approach to promoting world understanding by providing future leaders with the tools they need to "wage peace" on the global stage.

Since 2002, Rotary Clubs have annually sponsored up to 110 scholars who embark on one to two years of study, earning either Master's degrees or professional certificates in peace and conflict resolution at Rotary Peace Centres at universities around the world. Seventy peace fellows have graduated from the Rotary Peace Centre in Tokyo and another 21 are currently enrolled; 25 peace fellows from Japan have studied abroad at Rotary Peace Centres.

His clients include Tendulkar, Mohinder Amarnath, Pesi Shroff

PP Hareesh Jagtiani, who will address the issue of match-fixing, spot-fixing, bookies and players in cricket and whether the law has any role to play, at the meeting of June 4, is a high-profile and successful attorney with extensive experience in litigation and arbitration.

He is the founder of the law firm Hareesh Jagtiani & Associates which is now called Oasis Counsel & Advisory.

Oasis specialises in litigation, civil, criminal and constitution and indirect tax and appears on Electricity Tribunal and SEBI matters and also does arbitration (both domestic and international). It has offices in Bombay, Goa and Pune.

Hareesh completed his Masters' in constitutional and international law from Government College in 1971 and was admitted to the Bar in the same year. He was designated a senior advocate in 1994 (equivalent to Queen's Counsel in England).

He is a member of the Supreme Court Bar Association of India, the Bombay Bar Association and the Bar Council of Maharashtra and Goa.

He is also a member of the board of trustees of ING Investment Management and the Indian division of ING Bank, among other prestigious institutions.

During the course of his career spanning four decades, he has been

counsel for several large foreign and Indian banks and multinational corporations. He recently served as an independent director on the board of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd.

Hareesh has represented clients in commercial, criminal, constitutional, civil, maritime and matrimonial disputes, as well as in disputes relating to income tax, power and electricity, intellectual property rights, and customs, excise and other indirect taxes.

He has successfully represented clients at various fora, including the Indian Council of Arbitration, the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA), the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) and the Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC).

Hareesh's corporate clients have included prominent names such as Unitech, Pantaloon Retail, Indian Overseas Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce, BNP Paribas, Crompton Greaves, Cable Corporation of India and Lupin.

He has also represented numerous public figures, including the late Madhavrao Scindia, cricketers Sachin Tendulkar and Mohinder Amarnath, jockey Pesi Shroff and several film personalities.



R.I. President Sakuji Tanaka (right) and Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair Wilfrid J. Wilkinson lay a wreath in front of the Hiroshima Memorial

June 4 to June 10, 2013



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From the beach party capital of the world. Visiting Rotarian Ajay Shrinivas from the Rotary Club of Coral Gables, Florida, USA, exchanges banners with President Nowroze Vazifdar at the last meeting

WHERE HAS ALL THE TYPE 3 POLIO GONE?

April 18, 2013: It has been 12 months since Asia reported its last case due to wild poliovirus (WPV3), occurring on April 18, 2012, in Khyber Agency in the Federally-Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in Pakistan.

Over the last six months, only one case due to this strain was reported worldwide (from Yobe, Nigeria, on November 10, 2012). These are the lowest-ever recorded levels of WPV3 transmission and the world is beginning to ask: is this strain on the verge of eradication? If so, it would be the second wild poliovirus strain to be eradicated, following wild poliovirus type 2 (WPV2) in 1999, leaving only wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1).

"I don't think it's gone, but it's definitely at its lowest ever levels and if we keep up the pressure, it's on its way out," according to Chris Maher, Senior Scientist for Polio Eradication at the World Health Organisation (WHO).

But the danger with WPV3 is that it is less virulent than WPV1, he explains. It causes cases at a rate of approximately 1 in 2,000 infections, compared with 1 in 200 infections for WPV1.

Causing fewer cases is a good thing, of course, but it also means that the virus can transmit more widely and longer, without being detected. "It's a sneaky virus, in that sense, so we have to be cautious not to let it surprise us."

The other challenge is that the last known remaining WPV3 reservoirs (Khyber Agency, and Borno and Yobe states in northern Nigeria), are areas where access is compromised due to insecurity. Undetected circulation cannot be fully ruled out. Efforts are going on to address these and other challenges, as part of national emergency action plans in both countries.

So for now it is too soon to say that WPV3 is on the verge of eradication. But what is clear is that with the current historic low levels, the world has a unique opportunity to get rid of the second strain of wild poliovirus. It would be a significant milestone for the global eradication effort and would have significant operational benefits.

Leaving only one wild poliovirus strain to target, the eradication of WPV3 would allow an all-out assault on the remaining strains of WPV1.

Happy Birthday



Premnath
June 6



Suresh Mehta
June 6



Haso Thadani
June 6



Anuj Arenja
June 8



Shekhar Bajaj
June 8

Spouses

Erika Born
June 3
 Hasmina Khan
June 4
 Zarin Chothia
June 8
 Mr. Noshir Desai
June 10

At the last meeting

(Held on May 28, 2013)

ATTENDANCE

Members	121
Visiting Rotarians	3
Rotaryans	8
Guests	1
Total	133
Svc. box collection	Rs. 2,500

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THE FOUR-WAY TEST

Of the things we think, say or do...

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?