



# THE GATEWAY



## BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF BOMBAY



### From the President's Desk



One of the India's biggest challenges today is literacy. It's an irony that in a country which has made a place for itself as one of the world's

fastest growing economies, only one state - Kerala boasts of 100% literacy. Attendance in municipal schools is poor and teachers are often missing despite the mid day meal scheme of the government being in operation. Attendance and enrolment of students in South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) schools in 2015-16 are the lowest in the past four years. Mumbai is no different. According to a report last year, a four-storey BMC school building in Dadar was functioning with just five students and two teachers.

Redefining our approach to education is imperative if we want a quantum change in the results. This was brilliantly explained by our very own member Dr. Indu Shahani at the last meeting. Taking 'board rooms' to 'class rooms' is certainly out-of-the-box thinking. This will make education interesting and meaningful. More than education, we need skill development, so that we may provide skillful workforce for the many jobs that will be created in the coming decades.

RCB is certainly on the right track with all our Bhavishya Yaan schools turning to E-learning and our focus on the night study centres. It was heartening to see so many students doing exceptionally well academically because of the opportunity that Rotary provided them. Thank You fellow Rotarians for upholding our motto of 'Serving humanity'.

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## Making our next gen 21st century ready

Not so long ago, India's population was considered a curse that weighed down prosperity and constricted available opportunities for advancement. However as the developed world led by USA, Europe and Japan begin to grey, countries faced with the prospect of lack of human resources within their borders, will be forced to look globally to fill the gap.

This is where the concept of a demographic dividend comes in. India, the world's second most populous country is also blessed to have a unique situation where its working age youth population is expected to swell over the same period. Potentially this opens up opportunities for employment and income earning which would resultantly boost government tax revenues too. However all of this hinges on making sure India's youth are not just educated but employable.

This distinction is something almost every single businessman and corporate is familiar with. Sadly those who complete their education with required technical skills, still



Dr. Indu Shahani

lack the ability to be immediately productive and have typically to be put through a period of formal or informal training before they can start contributing value meaningfully, to their employers.

The central government too has been alive to this looming crisis and has been attempting to solve this via the National Skill Development Agency and building partnerships with industry through the National Skill Development Corporation. However this is an effort that needs more than just a leg up given the scale at which India must

### Today's Meeting   Annual General Meeting



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create meaningful jobs for the underemployed and unemployed.

This is why Rotary Club of Bombay (RCB) decided to invite former Sheriff of Mumbai and noted academician Dr. Indu Shahani who is the founding Dean of Indian School of Management & Entrepreneurship (ISME) as the keynote speaker to address RCB members on the topic of 'Reimagining Education'.



Introducing Dr. Shahani, Rtn Poornima Advani said Dr Indu had stumbled into education almost by accident as she was initially interested in making a corporate career joining India's largest fast moving consumer goods company Hindustan Unilever Ltd. However her mother stopped her almost at the final interview saying, "you will never get as much satisfaction selling soaps and detergents as you will by taking up teaching and bringing a smile to people's lives," said Rtn. Advani.

Dr .Shahani complemented RCB President Dr. Batra on his jugaad of

getting her to attend meetings by inviting her to speak when, he found his multiple letters requesting her to attend, proved of no avail. She alluded to the demographic dividend saying 50% of India's population has an average age below 25. "At the time of independence almost 70 years ago, our first Vice President, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan had said, India's future will be shaped in her classrooms. This applied to India then and applies even more so now."

In terms of numbers the education sector in India has taken a quantum leap. Whereas India had around 47 universities in 1950 we have over 700 now. "The most dramatic growth in the higher education sector in the world is in India. Yet Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi said that India needs a 1,000 additional universities," said Dr. Shahani. Partly this is because while the population of youth in India is equal to the entire population of Australia and New Zealand, only 24% of these are in schools and colleges. Qualitatively too none of India's universities, most of whose teachers are overburdened with teaching loads, figure in the list of top 200 research universities of the world. "This begs the question of whether we are producing young men & women who are fit to be global citizens," queried Dr. Shahani. She said that the biggest gap between academia and industry was in India as just



16.22% of the graduates of even the reputed University of Mumbai are considered employable.

This possibly has its roots in the curriculum that is imparted to students that isn't keeping pace with the dynamic changes of the external environment. As a result teachers are often still teaching students what they first taught three or so decades ago. "We are teaching what was good for the 20th century not what is relevant in the 21st century," said Rtn. Shahani.

She outlined the important activities that parents of students need to perform such as:

- Getting children to do chores
- Teaching them social skills
- Having high expectations from their wards
- Teaching them maths early in their lives
- Valuing effort



- Being less stressed and developing relationships with their kids.

Sadly she said, these days academicians such as her, have more problems with parents rather than with the students themselves.

According to her, students need to be made ready to deal with an external environment characterized by volatility, uncertainty, and ambiguity. This calls for developing certain skills such as communication, collaboration and critical thinking in students. To do this one needs an experience based, not a curriculum based education. The way ISME, which is merely two months old is going about it, is a synthesis of distance learning B.A. and B. Com. degrees from University of Mumbai, supplemented by imparting 21st century skills to its students.

However that alone isn't enough as India isn't producing enough new jobs in relation to the number of new children being born each year. "25 million babies are born every year in India but only two million new jobs are being created in India," she said. This is why Prime Minister (PM) Modi has not only been trying to step up job creation with programmes such as Skill India & Make in India but also foster entrepreneurship through programmes such as Startup India. By diverting our human resources to actually pursue the more rewarding economic activity of starting new businesses and thus creating new jobs rather than seeking them, PM Modi is trying to pursue value creation opportunities for our citizens.

Indians have traditionally been quite entrepreneur oriented as is illustrated by the millions of small traders scattered through the length and breadth of the country. However, "while entrepreneurship can't be taught, we can create an ecosystem fostering entrepreneurship," said Rtn. Shahani.

For example, she cited was how ISME is trying to bring boardrooms



to their classrooms by having students sit in, on company board meets, followed by interactive sessions between the board of directors and students. The first such board meeting was that of the Shapoorji Pallonji controlled, privately controlled Eureka Forbes. "Clariant (on whose board Dr. Shahani serves) and the Siemens global board will also be holding their board meets at ISME," she said.

She believes that the time has come to disrupt and redesign our education pedagogy. She said that Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) recently remarked that he would like to see ISME become one of India's world class universities. To do this the institution is integrating technology via the use of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) offered by the best institutions worldwide and synthesizing best practices from institutions such as London Business School, Wharton School USA etc. "Concepts can be

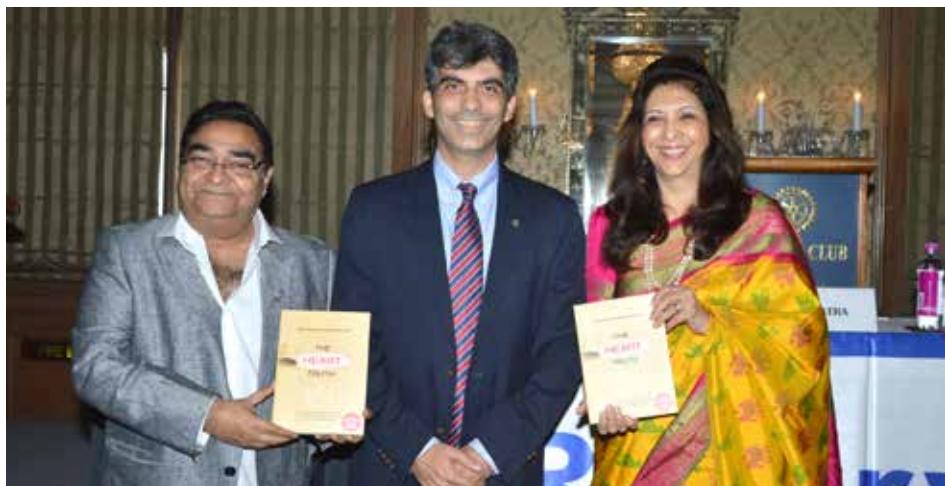
taught via MOOCs but we aren't done with the chalk and the talk to impart context," said Rtn. Shahani.

"If there can be Make in India, Skill India and Digital India then my dream is to have a Study in India," she added.

Dr. Shahani who has been associated with Rotary since 1996 said she saw the good work being done by Rotary and has grown with it. She remarked that she loved the way the current President was managing RCB and ensuring people mix with each other.

Rtn. Roda Billimoria, Hon. Treasurer, RCB who proposed the vote of thanks exclaimed that there was no voting needed, as the thanks were unanimous for the enlightening speech that was delivered. "Indu is an exemplar of women power with care, compassion and welfare of students," said Rtn. Billimoria. She surmised that the main thrust of the speech was that we need to make education more relevant so as to make students reflect on the needs of society and cultivate the powers of lateral and critical thinking.

"The old adage of, do not dream things that were and ask why but dream things that never were and ask why not, is most apt to describe the need for change," concluded Rtn. Billimoria.



Dr. Indu Shahani & President Dr. Mukesh Batra launch Dr Ashish Contractor's book 'The Heart Truth'

# Making next gen future ready- Bhavisha Yaan

## Delegates of Global Citizen Foundation visited the Byculla Centre

**A** 15 member contingent representing Global Citizen Foundation visited the Byculla Centre of the RCB



funded Bhavisha Yaan project on 17th November 2016. The delegates hailing from U.K, U.S.A, Canada, Australia & Scotland were welcomed by coordinator Rashmi Bapna who was aided by our education partner Vidya foundation.

Like Rotary which defines its mission as, 'neighbors, community leaders, and global citizens uniting for the common good,' the Global Citizen foundation defines its members as 'above all philanthropy , useful to men'. Since their members share common

values with Rotary they chose to visit our Mumbai city centre, to glean insights that could aid their objective to bring about change in the lives of children and youth and to empower them through education.

Keeping foremost the Indian adage of 'Atithi Devo Bhava', the delegates were accorded a traditional welcome with Rangoli at the entrance and applying vermilion on their forehead. As a bonus the foreign delegates received origami roses made by the students. The centre staff was quizzed on: what are the current problems which plague them and what do the students like the most? Students were asked a

wide swathe of questions ranging from what they learn at the centre, who are their favourite singers and what would they want to become when they grow up?

One of the students told them the story of Sadako & the 1000 cranes. Namrata from the 6th standard recited a poem on peace while the students from 8th standard performed a skit on peace which was very well appreciated.

Students were curious to know how the global citizens celebrated festivals in their countries, their most important festival and whether loudspeakers are an essential accompaniment in their culture too. The delegates then spoke about their foundation and what work they do and attempted to inspire students to work towards social causes.



## Workshop by Mahindra Special Services Group

**M**ahindra Special Services Group SSG conducted workshops on Making Sustainability personal for 740 students as part of the Rotary School of Bombay program at Municipal Schools. The programme, which ran through November, is supported by Pidilite. The company provided paints and also awarded art kits for the top five children in each school.

The painting on tender coconut shells is being showcased to leaders of the industry. These engagements have received very good response from organizations like Johnson & Johnson, ICICI, Bombay Scottish School and leaders like Dr. Mashelkar, Mr. Deepak Parekh, Ms. Bala Deshpande and many others.



## Inter-school Art Competition at CCI

The RCB pioneered Bhavishya Yaan - skills enhancement programme for less privileged children studying at Municipal Schools in India's business capital, is going from strength to strength. It's evoking the interest of Global Citizens and earning accolades from Rotary International as the most innovative project in the field of literacy.

So it's no surprise that ten Bhavishya Yaan students from GK Marg municipal school participated and competed in the inter-school, annual Art competition at CCI on 25th November. This competition was organised by the CSR committee of CCI under the supervision of Rotarian Ramesh Dassani and was judged by Poonam Agarwal, Kekoo Nicholson, Principal Amarsingh and Rotary

Anne Ekta Shah.

With full committee members Rtn. Silloo, Rtn. Kartik and the President present, to encourage students, for two hours, is it any surprise that Bhavishya Yaan students won second prize in the girls category and third prize in boys? All students received a certificate of participation and were given art kits and packed refreshments.

## Mini Assimilation

On Sunday 25th November, Rotary Anne Nandita and Rtn. Manoj Patodia very generously hosted the Assimilation Committee's 4th Mini Fellowship at Willingdon Club's, The Pub. It was an early evening gathering of about 22 members, mixing veteran and newly inducted members. All present had an enjoyable evening with spirited conversations over cocktails and a choice of delicious snacks.

In attendance to welcome the new members were President Dr. Mukesh Batra, Rtn. Dr. Devendra & Hemlata Saksena, Rtn. Pritam Sanghi, Rtn. Ashish & Gopi Vaid, Rtn. Darius & Ayesha Soonawala, Rtn. Sameer & Arwa Tapia, Rtn. Rekha Tanna. The newly inducted Rotarians were Rtn. Kasimali & Samira Merchant, Rtn. Mohit & Radhika Jain, Rtn. Sanjiv Mehra, Rtn. Vivek & Amisha Himatsingka, Rtn. Sohrab Khushrushahi and Rtn.

Sherebanu Baldiwala . We would like to say a special thank you to our magnanimous hosts Manoj & Nandita for this wonderful mini-fellowship.

RCB endeavours to have this event once a month. If any Member is interested in holding a mini-fellowship dinner or high tea for 20 to 40 invitees at their home or any other suitable venue, please feel free to please contact the Assimilation Committee.



### Forthcoming Events

#### • Dec 13, 2016

**Don Gardner - Principal, B.D. Somani International School**  
– 'Learning from Shakespeare'

#### • Dec 20, 2016

**X'mas Dinner** - Sofitel Hotel,  
Bandra Kurla Complex

#### • Dec 27, 2016

**Housie**

#### • Jan 3, 2017

**New Year's celebration**

**DISTRICT CONFERENCE '17 at  
Hotel Sahara Star, Vile Parle (East)  
on 7th & 8th January 2017.**

To register contact Mr Eruch Irani

# Amritsar, the tank of nectar of immortality



**23** Rotarians from our Club made it to Amritsar for 2 nights and 3 days for an outing that many of us might not have chosen as a prime travel destination. The history of Amritsar is full of anecdotes. 3 days were obviously too short to check all those anecdotes, but it was enough to dive back in time and get a good flair of this place.

The city was once called Ramdaspur and later Ambarsar. Located in western Punjab and today just 28 km away from the Pakistan border, the city is the seat of the Sikh Religion and headquarters of the Amritsar District. The city is surrounded by lush green fields on all sides and is famous across the world for its traditional cuisine.

## Golden temple

After touching down on time at the international airport Amritsar (all in one plane), we made it to the hotel in white Innova's (98 % of the cars in Amritsar seemed to be white). Quick lunch and off to the highlight of any Amritsar trip: the Golden Temple.

The Harmandir Sahib literally means the Temple of God. Guru Amar Das had ordered Guru Ram Das to create a nectarous tank as a place for worship for the Sikh religion. Guru Ram Das instructed all his Sikhs to join in the work, under Bhai Budha's superintendence, and engaged labourers to assist them. He said that the tank of nectar should be God's home, and whoever bathed in it shall

obtain all spiritual and temporal advantages. During the progress of the work, the hut in which the Guru first sheltered himself was expanded for his residence. It is now known as the Guru's Mahal, or palace.

## Jallianwala Massacre

Before seeing the Golden Temple marvel, we paid tribute to a place that represents one of the lowlights of Indian history: we went to the memorial of the martyrs of the infamous Jallianwala Bagh Massacre. It stands in close proximity to the Golden Temple & remains a sad testimony to the violent colonial past of the city and to the valour of the Sikhs.

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, also known as the Amritsar massacre,

took place on 13th April 1919 when a crowd of nonviolent protesters gathered in Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, were fired upon by troops of the British Indian Army under the command of Colonel Reginald Dyer. The civilians had assembled to participate in the annual Baisakhi celebrations - both a religious and cultural festival for the Punjabis. Coming from outside the city, they may have been unaware of the martial law that had been imposed.

The Bagh-space comprised 6 to 7 acres and was walled on all sides with five entrances. On Dyer's orders, his troops



fired on the crowd for ten minutes, directing their bullets largely towards the few open gates through which people were trying to flee. The British government released figures stating 379 dead and 1200 wounded. Other sources place the number of dead at well over 1000. In their desperation, many pilgrims jumped into a well for



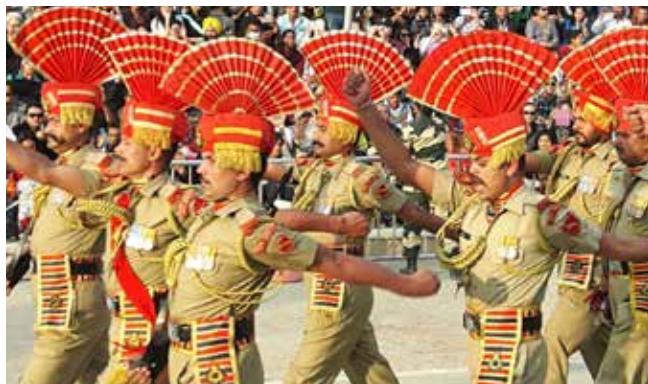
shelter, today known as the martyrs well. This "brutality stunned the entire nation", resulting in a "wrenching loss of faith" of the general public in the intentions of Britain.

### **Radha Swami Satsang, Beas**

Some of us took the opportunity to visit the world's largest Ashram, a place that is amazing in more than one way: it is spread over more than 1,400 acres, has some 25,000 people permanently living there, but can comfortably accommodate (bed and food) another 15 lakh people at any point of time! The Ashram has the world's largest hall, sitting some 7 lakh people under one single roof and is spic and span. Also we enjoyed the 'langar food' before we headed back to see the...

### **Changing of the guards at the Attari-Wagah-border**

Wagah is the only road border



crossing between Pakistan and India.

Every day at dusk, Indian and Pakistani border guards put on a show of one upmanship at the Wagah border crossing on the road between Amritsar in India and Lahore in Pakistan. Thousands on both sides of the border show up to watch, from the stands, everyday as the soldiers try to outdo the other side by marching and performing drill in an exaggerated fashion, with impressively high leg kicks.

One soldier stands at attention on each side of the gate. As the sun sets, the iron gates of the border are thrown open (literally) and the two flags are lowered simultaneously. The flags are folded and the ceremony ends with a retreat that involves a brusque handshake between soldiers from either side, followed by the closing of the gates.

### **Amritsari food and Bombay foodies**

Both evenings had culinary highlights:

Thursday night - after another legendary "room party" (Thank you Malti for taking so good care of everyone), we had all sorts of Punjabi starters, mains and deserts at the Hyatt Gardens. The Chef did

his best to embrace all sorts of local Punjabi village cooking styles.

The local cuisine of Punjab is heavily influenced by the agriculture and farming lifestyle prevalent from the times of the ancient Harappan Civilization. Locally grown staple foods form the major part of the local cuisine. Distinctively Punjabi cuisine is known for its rich, buttery flavours along with the extensive vegetarian and meat dishes. Main dishes include Sarson Da Saag and Makki Di Roti.

Along these lines, most of us "daring ones" went out Friday evening to try 5 different Amritsar Dhabas. No trip to Amritsar is complete without tasting the famous fish and chicken recipes. With the initial part of our tour happening in the new city, we also went to the old city where we had a huge repertoire of the famous Dhabbas.

Most of us returned Saturday afternoon to Bombay after a trip full of beautiful memories, full stomachs and full suitcases, wondering why it took so many years to actually make it to Amritsar. I, too being among the first timers, already look forward to returning to this buzzing city...

A big thank you especially to Ritu, Mudit and the fellowship team that made this trip possible!

-Write-up & pictures by  
Rtn. Christopher Bluemel



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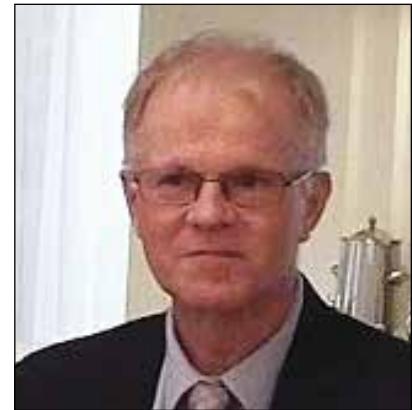
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## NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER

# Don Gardner

*Principal - B. D. Somani International School*

Don Gardner was born in the UK and completed his university studies at the Institute of Education in London and then the Australian National University in Canberra, Australia. He has taught in Australia, Belgium and India. Don Gardner is presently the Principal of BD Somani International school in Cuffe Parade, Mumbai. He has had a lifelong love of Shakespeare and spends at least two weeks of his summer vacation each year at Stratford upon Avon watching plays in the theatres of the Royal Shakespeare Company.



## Birthdays & Anniversary Greetings



Mahesh Khubchandani  
6 December



Abhinav Aggarwal  
7 December



Huzaifah Bagasrawala  
9 December



Tara Deshpande  
9 December



Vikram Kamdar  
10 December



Hiranmay Biswas  
12 December



Nanik Rupani  
12 December

## Rotaryanne

6 December	Meenakshi Kumar
8 December	Rakhee Reshamwala
9 December	Subhabrata Basu

10 December	Shreelekha Damani
	Niti Desai
	Shailaja Mogul

## Anniversaries

06 Dec	- Susmita & Subrata Mitra
07 Dec	- Amita & Shailesh Haribhakti
08 Dec	- Rekha & Ravindrakumar Ruia
09 Dec	- Miloni & Mehul Sampat
11 Dec	- Khorshed & Nanu Daruvala

11 Dec	- Honey & Anil Harish
12 Dec	- Sarmistha & Parvinchandra Bhansali
	Kanan & Ravindra Fotedar
	Divyaa & Mayank Kummar
	Poonam & Ajit Surana

Printed, Published by President Rtn. Dr. Mukesh Batra on behalf of Rotary Club of Bombay, and printed at: Indigo Press, Plot No.1C/716, Off Dadoji Konddeo Cross Road, Between Sussex and Retiwalla Ind. Estate, Byculla (E), Mumbai 400027.

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### Statistics for last week's meeting

Members present	117
Rotaryannes	05
Guests	19
Rotaractors	21
Total attendance	162
Community Service Box Collection	₹2,500/-