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Rotary Club of Poona Downtown extends a Warm Welcome to DG Manjoo Phadke



District Governor Rotarian Manjoo Phadke is an exemplary figure, epitomizing diligence, intelligence and brilliance throughout her career. With two decades of dedicated service as a Rotarian and as a Charter Member of the Rotary Club of Pune Deccan Gymkhana, she has held a staggering 25 positions over the last years across various avenues within Rotary, including District Administration, Service Projects, Membership, Foundation and Leadership Development. Her portfolio includes roles such as Assistant Governor, District Director and District Secretary.

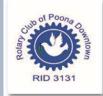
DG Manjoo has introduced innovative concepts such as Satellite Clubs, CSR Awards, International RYLA, IFRM (International Fellowship of Rotarians Musicians), Wellness Awards, and NGO Conferences. She has been recognized with prestigious awards - the Avenues of Service Award, Rotary Mahaguru and others for her exceptional performance and impactful contributions. She has received accolades for her professional achievements, including the Vocational Service Excellence Award and the Rana-Ragini Puraskar.

As a well-recognized motivational speaker and professional trainer, DG Manjoo has been invited to Rotary Districts across South Asia, serving as a trainer, keynote speaker and motivator for various events and conferences. She is also a certified faculty member of the Rotary Leadership Institute.

Beyond her Rotary commitments, DG Manjoo is the founder and CEO of Tracon Management Services and SkillArbor Consultancy, firms specializing in Corporate Training, Management Consultancy and Vocational Education. She has trained over 15,000 individuals and worked with renowned corporate clients. Her involvement extends to community service, where she has served on the Women Safety Committee under the Commissioner of Police, Pune and mentors young entrepreneurs at Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust. An accomplished athlete and adventurer, DG Manjoo has participated at National and State levels in Athletics, Lawn Tennis and Kabaddi and is an avid trekker and mountaineer. She has travelled extensively, visiting over 35 countries.

DG Manjoo hails from a distinguished family. Her father-in-law, Shri Gopalrao Phadke, was honored with the Dronacharya Award and Padmashree. Her husband, Vishwas, excels as a successful businessman, wildlife enthusiast, expert swimmer and talented artist. Continuing the legacy of accomplishment, her daughter Isha holds an MBA in Marketing and possesses a mastery of Kathak, having earned both an MA and Alankar in the classical dance form. Her son-in-law, Ambar, distinguishes himself as an IT professional and holds expertise as a Visharad in Tabla. Adding joy and completeness to the family, the recent addition of her granddaughter, Antara, further enriches DG Manjoo's life and brings her a sense of fulfillment.

DG Manjoo's positive attitude, passion and cooperative nature make her immensely popular among fellow Rotarians and friends. In her vision for Rotary, she aims to foster pride among Rotarians as true brand ambassadors and to position Rotary as the preferred partner for Corporate Social Responsibility, thus contributing to the development of a balanced society. She sees her role of District Governor as a significant opportunity to inspire Rotarians towards achieving these goals.







Enriching Experiences and Impactful Initiatives: A Comprehensive Overview of Rotary Club of Poona Downtown's Activities

Program Committee Events: Under Vice President Masarrat Tavawalla, the Program Committee has been diligent in organizing and presenting a series of engaging events aimed at enriching the experiences of our members. These events have been characterized by informative talks on a variety of topics, interactive quizzes, entertaining games, and captivating music and poetry sessions. Additionally, the Committee is gearing up for even more exciting programs in the near future, promising our members an array of memorable experiences.







Fellowships and Celebrations: The camaraderie among our members has been further strengthened through a series of memorable fellowships and celebrations. Notable events include installations, delightful lunches at the Golf Course, vibrant Diwali, Christmas, and Lohri Sankranti celebrations, with many more festivities on the horizon. These gatherings have fostered a sense of unity and joy within our club.

Club Magazine "ROTALINK": Our club magazine, "ROTALINK," continues to be a cornerstone of our communication efforts. The editorial team's dedication and talent are evident in the magazine's informative and engaging content, covering news of our Club, District, and Rotary International. "ROTALINK" serves as a valuable resource for our members, keeping them informed and connected.





Foundation and Grants: Director PP Yezdi Batliwala has been instrumental in driving our TRF Donations, Polio, fundraising and grant allocation efforts. As of 31st January 2024, our club has collected an impressive amount of Rs. 18,09,650 (US\$ 21814) through Annual Programs Fund (APF) and Polio contributions. Additionally, we have participated in a Radiation Centre Grant with a CSR donation of Rs.31,42,000 (US\$ 37855) from Duroshox Pvt.Ltd, donations to the Cow Donation Project of Rs. 1,05,000 (US\$1265) bring our total giving to The Rotary Foundation (TRF) for the year so far to Rs. 50,46,650 (US\$60934). We are in the process of finalizing an application for a

Global Grant titled "RCPD- Janseva Foundation Vocational Skilling Centre" of Rs. 47,50,000 (US\$ 57,230). We inaugurated a CSR Grant project titled "Shri Bahri Malhotra Residential & Vocational Training Home for Girls", with last year's AKS donation from Weikfield Foods Pvt.Ltd on 8th January 2024 at the hands Hon'ble Shri Ram Nath Kovid, former President of India. A generous donation for current District Projects of Rs. 20 lakhs towards Pediatric Cardiac Surgery plus Rs. 10 Lakhs towards Anganwadi Upgradation (Total Rs. 30 Lakhs) has been received from Rtn. Suresh Balani from the USA. Rtn Balani's Rotary Club has agreed to partner us as "Notional Partners" in the Pediatric Cardiac Surgery Grant project.

Public Image Enhancement Initiatives: Under the guidance of Public Image Director Rtn. Sujata Malkani, our club has made commendable efforts to enhance our public image and visibility. Through strategic dissemination of project write-ups and photos on various platforms such as District Chats, Rotary News, and the Governor's Monthly Letter, we have effectively showcased our club's initiatives and achievements. Initiatives like promoting tricycle shops with the Gift of Mobility Team, securing media coverage in prominent channels, placing standees at Metro Stations, displaying posters on rickshaws and organizing a blood donation camp with Mastercard have contributed significantly to raising awareness and garnering support for our projects. Our future plans involve continuing the promotion of tricycle shops, activating social media for wider reach, and seeking press coverage for major projects.











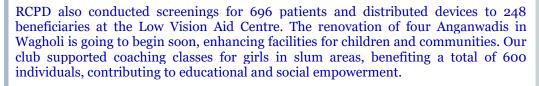




Community Service Medical Initiatives: Under the leadership of Director Rtn. Vinod Dua, our community service initiatives in the medical domain have made significant strides. Highlights include a successful Blood Donation Camp at MASTERCARD office that collected 634 units of blood, five LN4 Camps benefiting 228 individuals, three Eye Camps aiding 1011 beneficiaries, Distribution of Nutrition Kits to over 175 TB patients, Hepatitis Vaccinations at the Mental Hospital and the establishment of a well-equipped Dialysis Center at Khedekar Hospital. These efforts have positively impacted the lives of over 2200 individuals, underscoring our commitment to healthcare accessibility.

In the next few months, Rotary Club Pune Downtown (RCPD) plans on focusing on healthcare and mobility initiatives. These include organizing INALI Hands fitment camps in Gujarat and Rajasthan to benefit 300 individuals, distributing 25 tricycles to improve mobility and providing TB Nutrition to 200 beneficiaries starting February 2024. We are actively seeking contributions to bridge a fund deficit. Dental Checkup Camps for 800 children, Eye Camps for 500 children and Pediatric Cardiac Surgeries for 20 children are also scheduled in the coming months.

Community Service Non-Medical Initiatives: Under the leadership of Rtn Bageshree Gogate, RDPD embarked on numerous non-medical initiatives to support disadvantaged communities. 20 school kits were distributed to children in a local community and goody bags, board games, and floor mats were provided to children at the HOPE Daycare Centre. Laptops to 20 visually impaired students were donated at SP College and ten scholarships were established at Anjuman Islam Polytechnic - five each for computer applications and basic fashion designing.









Youth Services: Director Shailendra Abhyankar has ensured that Youth Service initiatives remained active and impactful across four Interact Clubs: Sunder Ji Stars, Pujya Kasturba Gandhi School, Erin Nagarwala School and the Community-based Interact Club. Particularly noteworthy is the exceptional progress made by the Interact Club at Sunder Ji Stars, with neuro-diverse children, who have excelled in various activities including participation in the Interact District Assembly, District Conference and Upcycling Workshop. The club has been engaged in projects such as Traffic Rules Awareness, Clean Your City campaigns and Upcycling projects. Under the guidance of Rtn. Phiroze, the Erin Nagarwala Club members visited the INDIC Science Museum. In the Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE) program, both inbound student Giovanna and outbound participant Sunesh Jain are thriving. Plans are also underway to organize a RYLA tailored for special children, emphasizing inclusivity and youth empowerment.

The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention.







From the President's Desk



Dear Downtowners,

The old saying is, "Time flies"! I feel, "Time flies when you are doing good work and have a great team!"

Together we have ventured through two-thirds of this Rotary year. The initial tentative plans have gradually taken shape. Today, as we take stock of our achievements and ongoing efforts, there's a palpable sense of accomplishment among us.

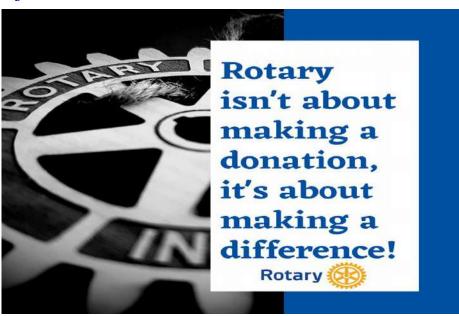
We have also faced some hurdles and challenges on the way, but have moved on steadily – steadfast in our purpose of creating positive impact in our community.

The District Governor's Visit is marked as a red-letter day in our Rotary calendar. The feeling it evokes is reminiscent of report card day at school. It's a day to showcase our work, to feel good about our achievements; it is also a day to track our progress, to introspect and to do course correction where required.

The District Governor's official visit to clubs in the District is mandated by Rotary International. The purpose of the visit is laid out as "Motivating Rotarians to participate in Service Activities" and "Personally recognizing the outstanding contribution of Rotarians in the District". We look forward to receiving both.

A dynamic leader, District Governor Manjoo Phadke, is also known to be an excellent motivational speaker. Listening to her will indeed be a treat. And I trust it will further enhance our dedication to Rotary's ideal of Service and our commitment to keep the Downtown banner flying high.

Aruna Rathi President 2023-24



Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love.







Inali Prosthetic Hand Camp at Gandhidham

On the 9th of February 2024, a team comprising Pradeep, Manoj Disale, Shaikh Hassan from RCPD, and Payal Patel from Inali set out for Gandhidham. Concurrently, a seven-member team from Inali had departed early that morning via road. The entire contingent converged in Gandhidham on Saturday morning, and all requisite arrangements for the camp were promptly organized throughout the day. A handful of outstation beneficiaries were already present at that juncture and material necessary for the camp was unloaded from the van

The camp began at 7 am on Sunday 11th February. Pre-registration procedures were promptly initiated and the event commenced with the rendition of the National Anthem. Anticipating approximately 50 to 60 fitments as per pre-camp registration, the overwhelming response from beneficiaries far surpassed expectations. The day concluded around 9 pm, yielding an exceptionally gratifying tally of 92 Hand Fitments. Notably, the team exhibited unwavering dedication, ensuring that no beneficiary was turned away.

The Rotary Club of Gandhidham extended exemplary hospitality throughout the camp. President Rohit Thacker, Secretary Jaswant Ahir, Project Coordinator Jaydevsinh Vaghela, Ravin Madaiyar alongside other Rotarians actively participated providing invaluable assistance to our team. The camp was hosted at the Rotary Bhawan, the dedicated premises of the Rotary Club of Gandhidham.

The Rotary Club's commendable initiatives include the operation of a Medical Service Center offering investigations at a nominal fee of Rs 50, supplemented by free medicine. Rotary Gandhidham has also been entrusted with 31 acres of land for the development of a 'Rotary Forest' alongside the ongoing construction of a 2.5-acre lake.

Rtn Pradeep Munot















Unveiling the Shri Bahri Malhotra Residential & Vocational Home for Girls

On the auspicious date of 8th January 2024, a momentous occasion graced the annals of the esteemed Rotary Club of Poona Downtown as the venerable Shri Ram Nath Kovind, Former President of India, ceremoniously inaugurated our most ambitious endeavour — the unveiling of the "SHRI BAHRI MALHOTRA RESIDENTIAL & VOCATIONAL HOME FOR GIRLS."

This monumental undertaking took root when our esteemed Past President, Rtn Ashwini Malhotra, pledged a generous sum of US\$ 250,000 in honour of Shri Bahri



Malhotra, thus cementing his status as an AKS member. Collaborating with The Janaseva Foundation, renowned for its tireless efforts in uplifting destitute and underprivileged girls, seemed a natural progression, given Shri Bahriji's close affiliation with their noble cause.



The donation, facilitated by Rtn Ashwini through his company Weikfield Foods Pvt Ltd as a CSR initiative, was earmarked exclusively for furnishing and equipping the home. Designed to accommodate 400 girls aged between 5 to 18 years, the overarching objective was to liberate these unfortunate souls from the harrowing grips of destitution, sparing them the indignity of begging or inhabiting squalid slums.

Ensuring a nurturing environment replete with proper nutrition, educational facilities in municipal schools, and vocational training tailored to their aspirations became the

cornerstone of this initiative. The vision was clear: by the time these girls reached adulthood, they would possess the skills and resilience necessary to navigate life's challenges, thereby breaking free from the vicious cycle of poverty.

The meticulous planning manifested in a meticulously furnished abode featuring 40 dormitories, each housing a maximum of 10 girls, along with ample amenities such as modern bathrooms, well-equipped study areas and solar panels providing both hot water and electricity. Security measures, recreational facilities, a fully functional kitchen and vocational training workshops rounded out the comprehensive infrastructure.



The ultimate goal was to imbue these girls with a sense of dignity and self-worth, ensuring that the comfort and cleanliness of their surroundings instilled a desire for a better future, free from the shackles of destitution. As the project nears its completion, with partial functionality already underway, the anticipation swells for its full-scale operation by June 2024, promising to transform the lives of 400 young girls and heralding a brighter tomorrow for generations to come.

PP Yezdi Batliwala







Collision or Cooperation

Miss Aarti Patil delivered a talk on "Conflict Resolution & Inner Peace" on February 15th at our club, drawing from her personal experiences ranging from sorrow due to dowry deaths in her family to the joy of astronaut training at NASA.

She emphasized the importance of unbiased perception, empathy, and maintaining inner calm to resolve conflicts. Conflict often arises from extreme perceptions leading to complaints, criticism, and opposition. Ego can disrupt inner peace by tipping the balance between self-respect and arrogance. Effective communication involves patiently listening to others' viewpoints, fostering cooperation, mutual respect, and harmony.

Interrupting others and displaying hypersensitivity can escalate conflicts. Miss Patil highlighted the distinction between arguments,



which focus on who is right, and debates, which aim to determine what is right, with the former characterized by heat and noise and the latter by politeness and logic. Maturity entails maintaining composure, which facilitates conflict resolution and peace. Being unoffendable is considered a great virtue.

R'Ann Sheila Iyer

Visit of AG Mahesh Makhija to RCPD







On February 22, 2024, RCPD had the honor of hosting Rtn Mahesh Makhija, Assistant Governor, for a thorough evaluation of the club's activities and achievements.

The evening commenced with a meeting involving all directors on the Board, where discussions centered around the club's goals, attendance, financial status, and contributions to the Rotary foundation. This session, lasting an hour, provided an opportunity for a comprehensive review of pertinent documents, all while fostering a pleasant atmosphere with tea, coffee, and pakoras.

Following this, the club convened its regular weekly meeting, with President Rtn Aruna Rathi leading the proceedings. She welcomed AG Mahesh Makhija, outlining the club's objectives and goals before directors presented reports on past accomplishments and future aspirations. AG Mahesh Makhija expressed his admiration for the club's vibrancy and commendable projects, specifically praising RCPD's Foundation Status.

The visit concluded with President Rtn Aruna Rathi extending gratitude to AG Mahesh Makhija for his invaluable time and insights, reaffirming the club's commitment of upholding its standards of excellence.

Rtn Shikha Mitra

Kindness is free to give, but priceless to receive.







Eye Check -up Camp













On February 23rd, the Gift of Vision & Community Eye Care Foundation Team organized an Eye Camp at Eureka International School in Dhyari, Pune. The primary objective of the camp was to provide eye check-ups to the students, teachers, and staff of the school.

245 students, 22 teachers and 7 staff members participated in the camp. The team from Gift of Vision & Community Eye Care Foundation diligently examined each participant's eyes to assess their vision and identify any potential issues.

Rtns PNN Iyer, Vinod Dua, PP Asis Ray, Shashank Jauhari R'Anns Smita Jauhari and Anita Dua and R' Spouse Ulhas Bhosale participated and contributed to the success of the event.

The Eye Camp at Eureka International School proved to be a valuable opportunity to promote eye health and raise awareness about the importance of regular eye check-ups. We look forward to continuing our efforts to improve the vision health of our community.

Rtn Vinod Dua

Honour for IPP Dr Zimra Israel

IPP Dr. Zimra Israel, an eminent figure in global health policy, especially in Vaccines, has been honored with inclusion in the Encyclopedia of Bene Israel Women Achievers. With over 30 years of extensive experience, she has significantly influenced the international pharmaceutical landscape. Beginning her career at the National Institute of Virology, Pune, her passion for research grew as she pursued her Master's degree in viral hepatitis and later earned her Doctorate in HIV/AIDS from the same institute. She then held pivotal roles in academia and the pharmaceutical industry in the United States, notably as Director at Pfizer Vaccines, New York.



Returning to India in 2012, she continued impactful work in a Senior Executive role at a Vaccine Research Institution in New Delhi. Alongside her professional pursuits, she has dedicated herself to social service, contributing significantly to various initiatives. Zimra's academic journey is adorned with accolades, including being the first woman international scientist honored by the Viral Hepatitis Foundation of Japan. Zimra is also a talented artist, showcasing her work in a solo exhibition in Manhattan, NY. She acknowledges her late husband, Raymond Joseph Israel, for his unwavering support throughout her journey.

Zimra has held honorary roles such as Vice Presidency at Conexus Social Responsibility Services, Mumbai, and leadership positions in the Rotary Club of Poona Downtown, where she led numerous medical projects for the underprivileged. Her exemplary service has garnered her multiple awards, including recognition as the Best Woman Rotarian and for raising the highest funds for Global Polio Eradication. Zimra's remarkable journey stands as a testament to her dedication, expertise and commitment to both professional excellence and social responsibility.

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.











Rotary Public Image Recognition

On February 24th, 2024, Ms Jyoti Rai, the Public Image Lead from the Rotary South Asia Office paid a visit to our Dialysis Centre at Khedekar Hospital. Enthralled by the remarkable work being done, she hailed it as a noteworthy Public Image endeavour. Accompanying her on this insightful visit was none other than PDG Pankaj Shah, adding further gravitas to the occasion.

Furthermore, she highlighted our Dialysis Centre with photos during her presentation at the District Team Training held in Lonavala on February 24th and 25th.

I extend my gratitude to Downtowners Rtns PP Anil Goel, President Aruna, Shashank Jauhri, PP Pallavi Sable, Rajiv Wakhle, and Dr Sameer Gosavi for joining me at the Centre.

IPP Zimra Israel

AGAC Learning Seminar

The AGAC Learning Seminar held on February 25th and 26th, 2024, marked the inaugural gathering of the District Leadership Team for the term 2024-25 under the guidance of DGE Shital Shah. This enlightening event brought together Assistant Governors, District Avenue Leaders, and Learning Facilitators at the scenic Rhythm Resort in Lonavala.

Representing RC Poona Downtown were three incoming District Officers: PP Pallavi Sable, serving as Learning Facilitator; PP Asis Ray, fulfilling the role of Assistant Governor and IPP Dr. Zimra Israel, serving as Co-Director for Maternal and Child Health initiatives.

The seminar encompassed a rich array of activities, including motivational talks delivered by seasoned District Leaders and interactive sessions tailored to the specific needs of each category of leaders.

Among the esteemed speakers was Ms. Jyoti Rai, Public Image Lead from the RI South Asia office in New Delhi. In her presentation at the seminar Ms. Rai shared insights garnered from her visit to our Dialysis Centre at Bopodi on February 24th. Impressed by the Centre's work, Ms. Rai showcased slides depicting its impact and excellence in recognition of RCPD's success story.

During the seminar, Rtn PP Pallavi Sable showcased her remarkable luck and Rotary knowledge by clinching three prizes in the Rotary Information Tambola, the Musical Tambola and Rotary Information Quiz.













RCPD International Nite An Evening of Bonhomie and Fun

The members of Rotary Club of Poona Downtown met on the terrace of the Poona Club Golf Club on the evening of 24th February 2024, for the International Nite. An annual event on the calendar of RCPD, the evening is hosted to felicitate the inbound students of the Rotary Youth Exchange Program who are residing in Pune.

The setting was perfect and the mood just right as the evening began to the gentle movements and beats of the Five Elements ---The Pancha Mahabhutas, brought on stage by the students of the Sundarji Institute of Special School. Under the able guidance of their teachers, these confident young teenagers brought alive the fierce passion of fire, the fluidity of water, the stability of the earth, the freedom of air and the boundless expanse of space.

This item was followed by a performance by the evergreen, graceful Pervin Sadekar dancing to the old favourite "Piya Tose Naina Lage Re" from the Waheeda Rehman starer 'Guide'.

The RYE students were on stage next with a foot stomping medley of numbers from Bollywood, Punjabi pop and a Marathi favourite. Music and dance certainly cut across borders and languages as Gabi, Clara, Mariana, Valeria and Giovanna from Brazil and Mexico showed! Truly deserving of the cheers and applause they received.

The group of singers of RCPD were on stage next highlighting the essence of friendship in Rotary. Anns Sheela, Pammi and Chhaya were accompanied by Ann Ipsita on the harmonium and Rtn. Nanu on the table as they sang a beautiful medley of old favourites bringing alive the true value and meaning of friends and friendship. The medley was interspersed with quotes on friendship.

The melodies were followed by energetic and rhythmic twirling and graceful movements by Pritee, Navya and Nayna as they set the stage on fire with "Ghoomar". This popular Rajasthani dance has been an integral part of any celebration ---- and could this one be any less?

The grand finale was "Gondhal", a traditional dance form of the Gondhali tribe of Maharashtra performed at temples or homes on auspicious occasions. The RCPD troupe of dancers was led by Meena Latey and choreographed by Neelima Gogate. The dancers included Dr Bageshri and Dr. Parikshit Gogate. Jitu Mehta, Rajendra Nahar, Vidya Naik, Pervin Sadekar and Dr. Jyoti Sanzgiri. Rtn. Pradeep Munot accompanied them on the Tutari and Siddhant Joshi played the Sambal. The performance was truly breathtaking in its rhythm, movements, colour and music!

The RYE students were then called back on stage for a presentation of mementos from the Club by the President Rtn. Aruna. Antoine from France and Matheus from Brazil spoke of their experiences in India over the past few months and the memories they would be carrying back home.

A celebratory cake was cut to commemorate the 119th anniversary of the founding of Rotary International in 1905. RI has indeed come a long way and touched thousands of hearts and lives since its establishment over a hundred years ago and we should all be proud to be a part of this organization.

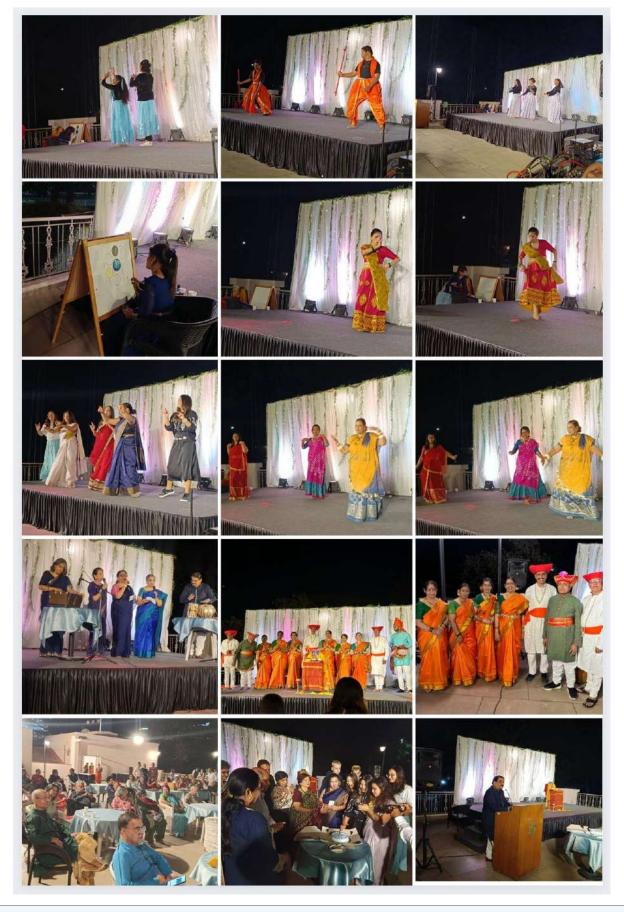
The evening ended with Fellowship with hot snacks enjoyed by all and a delicious dinner to follow. Indeed, an evening to remember ---- a beautiful venue under a moonlit sky, pulsating beats and rhythmic dance moves and most importantly to see the Downtown family together keeping the spirit of Rotary and friendship alive!

R'Ann Shereen Masters









Fellowship isn't just what we do for each other. It is what we do together for the world.







Greetings On Your Special Day

May your days be filled with Sunshine, Happiness and Love



Rtn Dr Rama Sivaram	2 nd March	
Rtn Dr Sangeeta Wagh	2 nd March	
Mr Noshir Tarapore	2 nd March	
Rtn Dr Laila Garda	3 rd March	
Rtn Rabindra Behara	4 th March	
Mr Bireswar Mitra	8 th March	
Mr Tanmay Agashe	9 th March	
Rtn Sameer Gosavi	20 th March	

Wishing you a lifetime of Cherished Moments and Beautiful Memories

Rtns Anil and Neeru Goel	11 th March
Rtn Rajiv & R'Ann Nutan Wakhle	18 th March



Programs for the Fortnight

Giving A Helping Hand	An Event by the Gift of Mobility Team	Thursday, 14 th March
Branded vs Generic Medicines	Rtn Vinod Dua	Thursday, 21st March

To ease another's heartache is to forget one's own.