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World Understanding and Peace Day – 23 February 2021

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In Focus

Report on 1st hybrid Club and World Understanding & Peace Day Meetings – 23 February 2021

February, designated by Rotary International as the month for World Understanding and Peace, was an occasion for us to recall the first Rotary meeting held on February 23, 1905. On that day, Paul Harris, Gustavus Loehr, Silvester Schiele and Hiram Shorey gathered at Loehr's office in Room 711 of the Unity Building in downtown Chicago. We commemorate it as the World Understanding and Peace Day.

Upon taking the Chair, President Dinesh Sharma warmly welcomed the Guest of Honour, His Excellency Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed, former Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and currently the Ambassador (Non-Resident) to the State of Kuwait. He further welcomed District Governor (DG) Rajamohan Munisamy and District Governor Nominee (DGN) Joanne Kam and fellow Rotarians.

President Dinesh noted that the Club's 31st meeting for the Rotary year was a hybrid meeting, followed by the World Understanding and Peace Day (WUPD) meeting with all the other Rotary Clubs in Singapore in different locations connected through the Zoom platform.

He noted the presence of new members at the Meeting and their active participation in Club activities and contributions to The Rotary Foundation (TRF). He acknowledged that the Club was a leader in Global Grant projects and stressed the importance to contribute to the TRF Annual Fund. President Dinesh also noted the presence of senior members and Past Presidents at the tables who were mentors to the new members and he added his appreciation for their time and expertise in the process of growing the membership.

To lighten up the warm atmosphere at the meeting, Honorary Member Rtn Rewa Mirpuri was invited to share some entertaining jokes before the start of the WUPD proceedings.

At about 8.00pm, Honorary Secretary Brigitte Holtschneider called the WUPD meeting to order and invited Rotarians to view a 5-minute video of the Rotary Clubs' activities compiled by Rtn Vineet Iyengar and Director Sonali Sinha.

President Dinesh once again welcomed dignitaries and Rotarians to the WUPD meeting celebrating the 116th Rotary Anniversary. He added that 21 Rotary Clubs in Singapore were present with a total of 414 members in attendance with more members joining virtually. President Dinesh advised that another District meeting was hosted by Rotary Club of Kuching led by District Governor Nominee Designate (DGND) John Chan. This was then followed by a roll call of all the Rotary Clubs in Singapore present in 10 different locations.



President Dinesh Sharma

Report on 1st hybrid Club and World Understanding & Peace Day Meetings – 23 February 2021... *contd.*

Next, three toasts were raised, the first to the President of the Republic of Singapore led by Honorary Member PDG Dr Ivor Thevathasan, followed by the toast to Rotary International by District Governor (DG) Rajamohan Munisamy and the last toast to all guests present, was given by PP Mansoor Hassanbhai.

President Dinesh then invited DG Rajamohan to give his opening address in which he spoke of Rotary's beginnings in 1905 with Founder Paul Harris and his 3 friends. He noted that it was Rotary's 116th anniversary and commemorate it as World Understanding and Peace day. He spoke of Rotary's impact and focus in creating change through its core values and seven areas of focus such as building economic opportunities for communities; providing education; sanitation and clean water; improvement of women and children's health; when we prevent and treat diseases; when we support the environment and focus on peace building and conflict prevention - Rotary builds peace. He spoke on how Rotarians and Clubs could continue to support Rotary's initiatives for peace and world understanding activities. He called on Rotarians to celebrate Rotary's history and the many ways goodwill and world understanding and peace as an ultimate mission. President Dinesh warmly thanked DG Rajamohan for his speech which gave a clear understanding of Rotary's mission of world understanding and peace.

President Dinesh invited PP Dr Shahul to formally introduce the Guest of Honour, Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed who served as the Singapore Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in 2006-2011 and is currently the Ambassador (Non-Resident) to the State of Kuwait.

Mr Zainul now serves on the Nanyang Technological University's Board of Trustees and the MediaCorp Board of Directors. He is also the Non-Executive Deputy Chairman of the Australian Stock Exchange-listed OM Holdings' Board of Directors. Furthermore, he is currently serving as Advisor to The National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) after serving for some time on its Board.



Guest of Honour, HE Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed

Prior to being a Member of Parliament of Singapore from 1997-2011, Mr Zainul had a fulfilling career in journalism which included the positions of Editor of Berita Harian, The Singapore Business Times, The Sunday Times and Associate Editor of The Straits Times. It was during his term as Editor of the Straits Times Group that he established the ASEAN Desk and that he first visited China in the 1980s to cover two of then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's early visits to China, and to many countries in the region and beyond.

Recently, he co-edited and launched a book "Beyond Bicentennial: Perspectives on Malays" to commemorate the Bicentennial celebrations. Five years ago, he also co-edited another book "Majulah" to commemorate Singapore's 50 Years of Independence.

Mr Zainul previously headed various Government and Community Organisations including as President of the Islamic Religious Council (MUIS), a Statutory Board; as CEO of the Council for Malay/Muslim Community Development, and Chairman of Malay Heritage Foundation. He served on the University of Singapore Council and as Corporate Advisor on the Temasek International Pte Ltd.

Following this introduction PP Dr Shahul quoted Mr Zainul stating that his "life journey" has given him the opportunity to follow Singapore's and the many world challenges, in particular, on multiculturalism, understanding and peace, and then finally invited Mr Zainul to the stage.

Report on 1st hybrid Club and World Understanding & Peace Day Meetings – 23 February 2021... *contd.*

HE Mr Zainul noted that the words understanding and peace were words which touched his heart and wanted to share his life's journey. With the shine and glamour of present day Singapore, many people, particularly the younger generation, might think that wealth and success were a given and have forgotten what the country went through.

Mr Zainul continued appreciating Rotary, as an organisation which deserved support, and was honoured to be invited for the event. He added that Rotary's concept of fostering peace with greater cohesion, inclusivity and involving a diverse set of people were key elements which resonated with him.

Mr Zainul recalled he and fellow students organising an International Understanding Night at Victoria Memorial Hall in 1966, which portrayed the different cultures to enhance better understanding. In this particular context, two years prior to that, he recounted witnessing ensuing racial riots and mayhem. This manifested in him the belief that this should not be repeated and that he wanted harmony and understanding for Singapore to prosper.

Mr Zainul remembered that a few years later, he was invited by President Gaddafi of Libya to an International Youth Conference, and heard the man's ideology. However, he was reassured that many of the South Asian youth leaders rejected Gaddafi's message of exclusivity and instead they believed in inclusivity as a strength. That added to reinforcing in him the belief in an inclusive Singapore.

Being in the media for 20 years, helped Mr Zainul in understanding how important inclusivity and forging multiracial relations are. He concentrated on gaining the trust of people and it took 20 years until he finally agreed to work with PAP political party. Similar to the Singapore leadership, HE Mr Zainul felt what Rotary was also understanding the needs of the people to foster peace. He noted better understanding beyond tolerance mattered and appreciating how to help others was important. He believes in the necessity to understand history which drove him to write the two books for Singaporeans sharing his thoughts and as such helping to create an inclusive future for Singapore.

Mr Zainul also spoke of the concerns of millennials which are different and asked if we understood them and their desires for the future. The current pandemic can be seen as a pause for all of us to ask if we have lightly taken things for granted. He was proud to hear of what Rotary has undertaken to help the community in this particularly challenging times.

He shared two events relevant for the day: first, his encounter with a young boy at his uncle's funeral; the boy just wanted his grandfather back. This clearly highlighted to Mr Zainul the meaning of life, and if we really do understand our youngsters. Another event was the MEI conference held on the same day, which reminded Mr Zainul of the necessity for Singapore to continue to play a strong and relevant role, particularly in the global context of disagreeing super powers.

To conclude, Mr Zainul stated that whether being almost killed in racial riots 65 years ago, or during his long tenure as journalist/editor, or in fact as Member of Parliament, the understanding for peace is essential. We must not take ourselves and others for granted and we must always reach out. And this is what Rotary is all about – Understanding and Peace!

President Dinesh then invited PP Sajjad Akhtar to extend the vote of thanks. PP Sajjad shared that Mr Zainul is an amazing person whom he has known for 30 years and that his speech speaks for itself and warmly thanked him for sharing his thoughts and for his presence at the evening's event.

Report on 1st hybrid Club and World Understanding & Peace Day Meetings – 23 February 2021... *contd.*

President Dinesh thanked the Organising Committee of different Rotary Clubs, Presidents Roger Ng (RC Bugis Junction), Heinrich Grafe (RC Marina City), Corrina Chang (RC Suntec City), Chen Teck Shing (RC Jurong Town) and Advisor DG Rajamohan Munisamy. He further included his thanks to the Club's team comprising Hon. Secretary Brigitte, Rtn Vineet Iyengar, Director Sonali Sinha, all the Board Directors and Secretariat staff.

To conclude the evening, President Dinesh presented a token of appreciation to Mr Zainul - a series of Books of Humour compiled by Hon. Member (HM) Rewa Mirpuri, mentioning that the books were sold for many years, proceeds amounting to \$600,000 which so far supported many projects. The funds are administered by the BOH Trust, chaired by PP Dr Shahul Hameed, HM Mohan Vaswani and Director Varun Gulati.

Meeting was closed at 9.15pm.

Photo Album of the 1st hybrid Club and World Understanding & Peace Day Meetings



Photo Album of the 1st hybrid Club and World Understanding & Peace Day Meetings... *contd*



Our 3 Toastmasters – HM PDG Dr Ivor Thevathasan, DG Rajamohan Munisamy & PP Mansoor Hassanbhai (left to right)



PP Dr Shahul Hameed introducing the Guest of Honour



PP Sajjad Akhtar extending the vote of thanks to
HE Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed



Hon. Member Rtn Rewa Mirpuri
adding laughter to the event

Last Week

32nd Club Meeting for Rotary Year 2020-2021 held on 3.3.2021

OPENING REMARKS



Rtn Brigitte
Holtschneider

Honorary Secretary Brigitte Holtschneider started the meeting with a reminder to members of the Zoom meeting etiquette rules. After which, she handed the Chair to President Dinesh Sharma to open the meeting.

President Dinesh warmly welcomed Honorary Member PP Bhagwan Melwani, Past Presidents and members. He further welcomed visiting Rotarians – President Chen Teck Shing (RC Jurong Town) and AG Goh Hee Seng (RC Pasir Gudang Mandarin) as well as Guest Speaker, Mr Andrew Stein who is the Founder and Executive Chairman of Orphaned Starfish Foundation.



President Dinesh Sharma

TOAST TO ROTARY INTERNATIONAL



Rtn Jasbir Koh

President Dinesh invited Rtn Jasbir Koh who called on members to join her in raising a toast to the Rotary Club of Pasir Gudang Mandarin coupled with the toast to Rotary International.

President Dinesh also invited AG Goh Hee Seng to address the Club. AG Hee Seng advised that his club was a Mandarin-speaking one, chartered in January 2020.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

President Dinesh noted the eventful week, starting with:

- **1st Physical Meeting & World Understanding & Peace Day Meeting** – held on 23 February at Conrad Centennial Singapore (reported in this week's In Focus article)
- **Launch of the K S Mehta Essay Writing Competition** – on 25 February, which is opened to all Interactors. Topic for the essay is "World Understanding & Peace". Closing date is 31 March 2021. Please contact Chair, Rtn Uttam Kripalani for more details.
- **Jolly Walkers** – on 27 February, the Jolly Walkers took a healthy walk at Quay Side Isle. Record participation of 27 Rotarian and spouses enjoyed the fellowship.
- **Urgent Help Request from Bhakti Luhur Orphanage, Indonesia** – received on 27 February for assistance for Covid19 antigen swab and tests for 700 children and staff as well as supply for PPE, sanitisers, masks, soap and food rations. The Club responded with donations amounting to S\$50,000 of which S\$26,000 was donated by our members on 27 February and S\$24,000 from available funds, auction proceedings and other efforts. President Dinesh added that further donations were received from PP Thomas Ngu from RC Kuching Central and \$10,000 from RC Shanghai, thanks to the efforts of PP Dr Shahul Hameed, ISC Director Varun Gulati and PP Mark Wang. "Thank You" to all generous Rotarians!



Last Week

32nd Club Meeting for Rotary Year 2020-2021 held on 3.3.2021

INDUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

President Dinesh called on Membership Chair, VP Suresh Keerthi to introduce the new members, Rtns Bruno Pinto Massote, Narasimhan Narayanan (Nara) and Marcelo Duarte Monteiro before inducting them to the Club.



Rtn Bruno Pinto Massote

Place of Work: Hilti Asia Pacific

Classification: Business Development: Manufacturing Industries

Recommended Committee: International Service (ISC)

Proposer: Rtn Camila Andrade

Mentor: PP Philip Leong

Rtn Bruno is Brazilian and moved to Singapore in 2019. He is the Regional Head of Industrial Segment of Hilti Asia Pacific, a company which provides products, softwares and services to the construction industry. In 2000, Rtn Bruno was a Rotary Exchange student and spent a year in Sydney.

Rtn Bruno added that he was honoured and humbled to be a member of the oldest Rotary Club in Singapore. He further introduced his wife, Adriana who was present.



Rtn Narasimhan Narayanan (Nara)

Place of Work: Essilor Amara Pte Ltd

Classification: Optical Industry: Manufacturing & Distribution

Recommended Committee: Vocational Service (VSC)

Proposer: PP Tapan Rao

Mentor: PP Paliath Mohandas

Rtn Nara is a Singaporean and is the Senior VP South Asia Business and CFO AMERA region (Asia, ME, Russia and Africa). He is a guest lecturer at Satya Sai Colleges and ex-advisor of University of Victoria, Canada. His brother and uncle are long-standing Rotarians in India and has inspired him to be a Rotarian.

Rtn Nara thanked President Dinesh, PP Tapan and PP Mohan for their guidance and noted that the induction process has been phenomenal. He also introduced his wife, Sasirekha, a special needs teacher.



Rtn Marcelo Duarte Monteiro

Place of Work: Asia Brazil Agro Alliance

Classification: Agribusiness

Recommended Committee: International Service (ISC)

Proposer: Rtn Luiz Andrade

Mentor: PP Stan Low

Rtn Marcelo is Brazilian and is the Director of International Relations of Abrapa (Brazilian Cotton Growers Association) and CEO of Asia Brazil Agro Alliance. He was a Rotary Exchange student to the US, where he was a visiting scholar at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and attended executive programs at Harvard University.

Rtn Marcelo first joined Rotary with the Rotary Club of Cuiaba, Brazil in August 2020. He added that he was a third-generation Rotarian. His wife, Daniela joined him at the meeting.

Last Week

32nd Club Meeting for Rotary Year 2020-2021 held on 3.3.2021

GUEST SPEAKER: MR ANDREW B. STEIN

TOPIC: HELPING THE MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN ESCAPE THEIR CYCLES OF POVERTY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

President Dinesh called upon Rtn John Goeres to introduce Mr Andrew Stein who is the Founder and Executive Chairman of Orphaned Starfish Foundation (OSF). Rtn John advised that he had contacted Mr Stein earlier and requested for 10 minutes in order to make a relevant introduction. He added that Mr Stein was so gracious that the 10 minutes turned to 35 minutes, inspite of the time difference in the US. Rtn John noted that he was struck by Mr Stein's great conviction and compassion.



Speaker
Mr Andrew Stein

Mr Stein is also currently President and CEO of Makopastreet Partners LLC., which provides senior debt financing for luxury and ultra-luxury hotel, and mixed-use developments, as well as infrastructure projects worldwide. Prior to forming Makopastreet Partners, Mr Stein was Managing Director in Investment Banking Division of WestDeutsche Landesbank in New York. From 1993 to 1996, Mr Stein was based in Philippines as the Joint Head of Corporate Finance for Chase's (formerly Chemical Bank's) Manila Bank.

Mr Stein thanked the Club of the invitation, adding that the meeting brought back wonderful memories of his Rotary membership in Philippines (he was a member of our sister club, Rotary Club of Makati). He highlighted the work undertaken by OSF which was founded in 2001 which has help more than 15,000 orphans and at-risk children worldwide escape their cycles of poverty and abuse through education and job training in 29 countries. He added that OSF was committed to the children for life with their training which includes robotics, coding, life skills and has also extended to the arts.

Mr Stein also spoke of the concerns brought about by the global pandemic in trying to keep the children connected as well as provide necessities. He added that whilst there were hurdles to overcome, the Foundation would like to expand to Vietnam and South East Asia.

Mr Stein showed three videos and graciously answered questions posed by members.

President Dinesh invited Vice President Colin Miles to extend the Club's vote of thanks to Mr Stein. VP Colin warmly thanked Mr Stein for his talk and his past 20 years of work with OSF. He added that he would follow up with Mr Stein on the use of NFT (non-fungible tokens) and blockchain technology for donations as well.

Following are two video links which highlights the programmes of Orphaned Starfish Foundation and its fund-raising efforts:

1. 2020 Virtual Gala Highlights (less than 9 minutes)

<https://vimeo.com/480941729>

2. CNN Piece - Still Running Worldwide every day for next three months (less than 2 Minutes)

<http://www.cnn.com/video/data/2.0/video/tv/2020/11/16/cfp-andy-stein-spc.cnn.html>

Mark Your Diary

Birthday Celebrants

RC sends best wishes to Birthday celebrants:

IPP Deepak Nagrani

Mamta Shahani

Anniversary

RC sends best wishes to Wedding Anniversary celebrants:

Bharat & Alka Mandloi
Fredrick Ee & Khar Wai
Saeed & Sajda Khan
Sean & Ilse Leas
Sunny Loh & Lay See
MM Patel & Lily
PP Mark & Tracey Wang
PK & Sapna Walia

Committee Meetings

All Service Committee Meetings will be held on Thursdays from 7.00 to 8.00pm

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE:
Thursday, 18 March 2021

YOUTH SERVICE:
Thursday, 25 March 2021

This Meeting

17 March 2021
From 7.00 to 8.30pm

Speaker: Mr Colin Downie, Sales and Partnership Director, WildHearts Group

Topic: Global Social Impact of WildHearts Group



GIFT OF LIFE

Children with cardiac problems to get help from Rotary's District 3300 & 3310

A full set of 3 editions - Book of Humour, Best of Humour & Bank of Humour, come in a beautifully designed box housing this set for only \$25.00

Please order a few sets of books for the Gift of Life Project, and place your orders with:
Hon. Member Rtn Rewa Mirpuri @
tel: 6241 9157 or
email: rewamirpuri@gmail.com

Next Meeting

24 March 2021
From 7.00 to 8.30pm

Speaker: Ms Cheryl Chung, Programme Director, Executive Education Singapore Futures, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore

Topic: Technology and Governance - How They Evolve

Coming Rotary

March
Water and Sanitation Month
29 Mar to 5 Apr – PETS

April
Maternal and Child Health Month
18 Apr to 27 Apr – DISTAS

May
Youth Service Month
21 to 23 May – District Conference

June
Rotary Fellowships Month
19 Jun – Installation of the 87th Board

The Four-Way Test

Of the things we think, say or do:

- Is it the truth?
- Is it fair to all concerned?
- Will it build goodwill and better friendship?
- Will it be beneficial to all concerned?



Rotary Opens Opportunities

The Guide to Daily Living

Before doing the things we want to do, consider first, the Precepts of the guide. Ask ourselves these 4 questions and act upon them:

First: *Have I spent some time in self-examination?*

Second: *Have I spent quality time with my family?*

Third: *Have I given my best to my work?*

Fourth: *Have I given some time to someone near and far?*

The Guide, in fact, encompasses the 4 parts of the Object of Rotary.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020/2021

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