



◆ Presidential Communique



*Life....Let it be a poetry
Let it be a hymn of love.
Let it be the power of beauty
The beauty of truth alone.*

Hi friends,

New Year brings new hopes, new dreams and new aspirations. This is the time we set new goals and new strategies to make our dreams real. In Rotary, it is better that we realize our togetherness as our committed feeling for a "better world" through "Service above self".

January is the month for Rotary Awareness too. It is our duty to have a clear and deep awareness about Rotary.

The very first fortnight of this year was fruitful for Downtown and as we continue to work hard for our "Swapnotsav 2009", the District Youth festival and fellowship meet, we expect the same satisfaction in the next fortnight too.

We started the New year with a family meeting which was very unique, spectacular and memorable, sponsored and organized by our Director for International Service Rtn. PHF. Prince George and Rtnne. Chandini.

Road Safety is an area, Rotary is so concerned about. It is because of our own member Rtn. PHF Dr. Mathews P George and Rtn R Suresh of S T Reddiar and sons, we could launch a "Hearing Conservation Project" as well as the "Road Safety Awareness Programme".

Proficiency Finishing School was yet another novel and unique dream we could realize with the co-operation of many Rotarians, Associates and Well Wishers. Director for New Horizon Rtn PHF. Anil Joseph's involvement in this project is worth mentioning, as he has contributed his valuable resources enormously to make this dream come true.

Let me appreciate each and everyone for their good work and commitment to Rotary.

I wish you all Good Luck and God's Grace.

Yours affectionately
Rtn. PHF Ar. M. A. Sebastian
President

Life Watch

Fortnightly bulletin

Rotary Club of
Cochin Downtown

Vol 10, Issue 13 Jan 1-15, 2009

Rotary Awareness Month



Highlights

- ▶ **Jan 1-7** *Road Safety Week*
- ▶ **Jan 3.** *New Year and X'mas family Celebration at Rtn. Prince George and Rtnne. Chandini's Residence.*
- ▶ **Jan 4.** *Convocation and Valedictory Function of Proficiency- Finishing School for Construction Workers.*
- ▶ **Jan 7.** *Road Safety-Hearing Conservation Project launch and Release of Road Safety Leaflets by Hon'ble Minister Sri. Mathew T. Thomas.*
- ▶ **Jan 9.** *Rotary Information Talk on 'Rotary Awareness' by Rtn. PHF Dr. Ramesh Nair*
- ▶ **Jan 11.** *Club Participation in the Double Wicket Cricket Tournament organized by Rotary Club of Cochin Midtown.*

Rotary Club of *Cochin Downtown*
&
Cochin Thoracic Society [C T S]

invite you for the launch of :

Tobacco Free Initiative-Kochi
[Pukayila Vimukta Kochi] &
Quit Smoking Web Page

A public programme on the Sunday 08 Feb 2009 at Durbar Hall grounds at 5-45 pm

Inauguration by our District Collector
Dr. Mrs. Beena, IAS

There will be an Anti - smoking Pledge administered by famous Cine artist *Sri. Captain Raju* and felicitations by dignitaries
followed by a **Musical feast-Ganamela** by a prominent group from 7pm to 9pm.

Working with the youth

R.I. Dist. 3201



Make Dreams Real



Road Safety Hearing Conservation Project launch

In connection with the Road safety Awareness Week (01-07 Jan 09) organized by the Motor Vehicle Department, a valedictory function was held on 07-Jan 09 at the Ernakulam Collectorate. The Chief Guest was the Minister for Transport, Sri. Mathew T Thomas. District Collector Dr. M Beena welcomed the gathering. MLA Sri. K Babu presided over the meeting. Dy Commissioner of Transport Sri. P.K. Stephen also spoke on the occasion.

Rotary Club of Cochin Downtown in association with the Motor Vehicle Department sponsored Free ENT check up for the drivers, conductors and traffic constables. The Honorable Minister launched the "Hearing Conservation Project" by releasing the free Hearing test Coupons. The Minister also released the Road safety Awareness leaflets sponsored by Rotary Club of Cochin Downtown in association with S T REDDIAR & SONS, to be distributed in schools.

Rtn. PHF Prince George spoke on the occasion by briefing the gathering on the two sponsored Projects. President Rtn. PHF M.A Sebastian handed over the sponsored coupons and leaflets to the Transport Minister Sri. Mathew T Thomas. Rtn PHF Unnikrishnan handed over the leaflets to the District Collector Dr. Beena, MLA Sri. K Babu and other dignitaries.

[DREAM LIFE
SAVE LIVES]



Dear friends,

January, the start of a New Year, is the time to look upward in search of Peace and Hope, inward for the resources to love and give freely, and outward in reconciliation.

How is this year going to be for us! When we look at the world situation, there is very little reason to hope. But, we can certainly change situations through prayer and also influence everyone we come in contact with, through our attitude and action.

"If Everyone lit just one little candle, what a bright world this would be!" You may not be a light to the whole world, but you can light your part of the world. **"Yes, we can."**

A special thanks to Rtn. Akhilesh for his contribution to Life Watch.

God Bless You
Rtn. Major Donor J. Paul Raj
Editor



The Global Financial Meltdown & its Future (3)



By Rtn.PHF. Akhilesh Agarwal
Stock Broker
9388477788



Why did this crisis happen, who were responsible, is the worst over & what is the way forward?

Allan Greenspan, former Fed Governor once famously said **"It is in the best of times that the worst of decisions are taken"**. In the previous articles you read about how a financial bubble was formed in the US in particular and the world in general. You also read what caused the bubble to burst.

The main factors that possibly led to the meltdown can be listed as:

Greed & excessive leverage: Over confident from the growing economy, people became greedy. When you get greedy, you deviate from the fundamentals & end up taking big risks. That's exactly what happened. In their enthusiasm to show bigger and bigger profits & earn larger commissions every month, the long term picture was forgotten and short term "Next 90 day's profits" took the driver's seat. It was something like what Satyam's Raju said- Riding a tiger, not knowing how to get off without being eaten up.

Lack of sufficient Regulations: People ask if this could have been prevented & what insulated the Indian banks & institutions? One key difference is perhaps the lack of sufficient regulations. In India, Regulators are conservative and keep a close vigil on them. Banks cannot leverage like in the US and hence chances of default are very low. No major bank has ever gone bust in India while more than 100 banks have gone bust in the US in the last 10 years with more than 25 during the current crisis alone!

Excessive & easy availability of money: Too much floating money available too easily; encouraging wrong decisions in lending & spending.

Credit Rating Agencies: World renowned Credit Rating Agencies on whom the world depends gave wrong ratings to earn large fees. No one ever evaluated these agencies.

Present Scenario:

When you and I anticipate trouble, we begin to cut down on spending, so that we can save for the bad times, if and when things get worse. That works fine for individual families. But imagine if everyone in the country starts doing that? Reduced spending will result in lesser demand which will reduce sales, which in turn will force factories & organisations to cut down production. When production or services are cut down, companies run into losses, and they are forced to cut jobs. More people jobless mean lesser demand, lesser production, larger losses and larger job cuts. It just keeps feeding on itself...

The world was crashing; businesses closing down, lakhs of people losing jobs, tens of thousands homeless, and the picture getting worse. The crisis was as much a crisis of confidence as anything else. Something had to be done- Something very drastic and very quick!

The fundamental solution was to get back the confidence of people: The world was in trouble; it certainly would not come to an end. The solutions were basically:

1. Increase spending by the government on infrastructure: This would trigger fresh demand, causing production to rise, and create new jobs.

- 2. Increase confidence in banks and large institutions:** This would arrest huge withdrawal pressures that forced banks to sell assets at desperate prices and loose big money.
- 3. Give a life line & save large multinational organisations from going bankrupt:** They employ lakhs of people and their bankruptcy would create more problems than solutions.

So, the US government, after hectic but quick discussions with some of the best financial brains in the world came up with a bailout package that no one could have ever imagined. Almost **a trillion dollars!** (Just for your info, with that kind of money, you could, at current rates, buy out every large Indian company! If that does not satisfy you, with the balance money you can buy out all companies in Pakistan, Sri Lanka & Bangladesh! And with the pocket change that you would still be left with, have enough money to buy out the world's top automobile manufactures like Ford, GM etc!)

These trillion dollars will go into all the above mentioned areas. That the bailout package will positively impact the economy is definite. But it is too early to predict whether the trillion dollars would succeed in pulling back the economy from the seemingly bottomless pit that it had fallen into. There are larger issues of credit card defaults and Treasury markets still looming on the horizon, which no one can predict for sure. In the process of saving these blue-chip institutions, the government has purchased large stakes in them at prices that are the lowest in many decades. One thing is certain, if indeed the bailout package does work, the US government is in for a huge jackpot.

Looking back the crisis was inevitable. All factors were going against the fundamentals. Oil, commodity, property, rentals were all at historic peaks. Interest rates had climbed drastically. People were drawing unheard of salaries & commissions. Money seemed to have lost its value and no amount of money was large enough. 2009 is predicted to be worse than 2008 from the industry & common man's angle. This is because the impact of the crisis will be felt only in this year. Generally stock markets are the first to react to the bad news and also the first to recover. A correction is expected in the markets in the coming days after which the markets may move sideways or turn positive. Some of the fundamental positives signals today are:

- ? Interest rates have started reducing.
- ? Inflation seems to be taming.
- ? Crude & energy prices have cooled internationally.
- ? Commodity prices (agro, metals, etc) have cooled.
- ? Property prices and rentals are becoming affordable once again.

Sometimes the best time to buy a good asset is at the worst news. No one can buy at the lowest and sell at the highest. At 21000 index, people suggested buying while at 9000 they suggest a sell! It may be advisable to invest in small packets with every fall in a portfolio built across good sectors and companies. This is a good time to relook business models, costing & strategies.

Every crisis is pregnant with opportunities. There is one knocking at your doors right now. Are your doors open?

News & Events

New Year & X mas Celebrations



The New Year was welcomed with a grand family meeting on 03 Jan 09 . New Year and X'mas celebrations at the plush residence of Rtn.Prince George and Rtnne Chandini was distinctionally unique!. President Rtn. M.A Sebastian addressed the gathering. Rtn.PP A. T Thomas delivered the New Year message.

Mrs.Caitlin Murphy and Ms.Nadia , our guests of Rotary Youth Exchange Programme shared their happiness and joy. The newly weds Vivek and Shefali were specially felicitated . First lady Annie handed over a gift on behalf of the club to the newly weds.

Secretary Rtn Vivek Govind proposed the vote of thanks . The meeting was then adjourned for entertainment, fellowship and dinner.

The night sky was colorful and radiant with a spectacular display of fireworks!!! The evening began with Christmas Carols by our Rtnnes and Annets followed by a "Gazal Evening " which was a great delight to everyone. The classy ambience, style, music, fun, sumptuous food and warm hospitality added a lot of gaiety to the gala evening. The Children enjoyed the group games organized for them. Hostess Chandini Prince gave away the prizes to the winners.



Proficiency Valedictory Function

The curtain came down on 04 Jan 09 at the Proficiency Finishing school of Rotary Club of Cochin Downtown after its

successful completion. The 3 months Vocational Excellence Course for Construction workers commenced on 28th Sep 2008. Technical sessions, every Sunday from 2.00pm to 5.00 pm was conducted by eminent resource persons including many outstanding Rotarians. Rtn. PHF Anil Joseph ,with his support to the Proficiency Finishing school had meticulously co-ordinated and handled the technical sessions successfully throughout the course. Remarkable effort indeed !!!

The Valedictory function was held at the ESSS hall , with Dr. Sebastian Paul M.P, as the Chief guest of the evening . President Rtn M A Sebastian presided over the meeting. Rtn. PHF Anil Joseph, Rtn Ramesh from Zuary Cements and one of our sponsors gave the felicitation speech .

All the participants of the course were handed over Certificates by the Chief Guest. Special prizes were handed over to the winners of the Quiz Competition. Rtn.Vivek C Govind gave away Mementoes to the Staff coordinators of the project. The Director ESSS, Rev.Fr.Mathew Kallinkal, Kerala Labour Movement President Sri. Joseph Jude, Mr.Babu Thannikkotu and Rev. Fr. Jaison Vadassery were the other dignitaries present on the occasion.



Rotary Information Talk

Weekly meeting was held on 09 Jan 09 at the Wytefort Hotel which was chaired by President Rtn PHF M A Sebastian . Rtn PHF Dr Ramesh Nair delivered the Rotary Information Talk on Rotary Awareness which was very informative GGR Rtn PHF Madhav Chandran briefed the members about the Dist Youth Festival 'SWAPNOLSAVAM ' and urged all members to put in their best to make the event a grand success .



EVENTS For the Next Fortnight

Jan 15 -31

Jan 16. SWAPNOTSAV 2009.

Review Meeting at Gokulam Convention Centre

Jan 17. SWAPNOTSAV 2009.

District Youth Festival and Fellowship Meet at Gokulam Convention Centre

Jan 23. Board Meeting

Jan 23. Closed Meeting.

Jan 25. Football match organized by Cochin East

Jan 31. Family Meeting

Life Watch



A little girl goes to see the doctor. She's got a pea in one nostril, a grape in the other, and a bean stuck in her ear. She says to the doctor, "I don't feel good." The doctor replies, "The problem is clear to me. You're not eating right!"



The math teacher saw that little Johnny wasn't paying attention in class.



She called on him and said, "Johnny! what are 4, 2, 28 and 44?" Little Johnny quickly replied, "Pogo, Animal Planet, HBO and the Cartoon Network!"

Riddles

- 1) What did the chewing gum say to the shoe?
- 2) What is black and white and pink all over?
- 3) What did one mountain say to the other mountain?
- 4) What bird steals from the rich to give to the poor?
- 5) What did the toilet say to the other toilet?
- 6) Why did the woman wear a helmet at the dinner table?
- 7) What time is it when an elephant sits on a fence?
- 8) Which word in the dictionary is spelled incorrectly?
- 9) What is the cannibals favorite game?
- 10) Why are Teddy Bears never hungry?



Answers
 1) I'm stuck on you
 2) An embarrassed zebra!
 3) Let's meet in the valley
 4) Robin Hood
 5) You look a little flushed
 6) She was on a crash diet.
 7) Time to get a new fence.
 8) Incorrectly
 9) Swallow the leader.
 10) Because they are always stuffed.



Congrats....

Vivek & Shefali

(Vivek is the son of Rtn PHF Cmde John Abraham & Mini Abraham of Cochin Downtown)

May the memory of this day turn out to be dearer with every passing year and May you never forget things that will keep your love glowing, beaming and sweet always.

We Bless the New couple

Many Happy Returns ...!!!



Jan 21 : Raji Giri Menon
 Jan 22 : A T Thomas, Sidharth Salil Gupta
 Jan 25 : Prince George



Jan 21 : Viju Mathew
 Jan 23 : Dr. SAju Raju
 Jan 26 : Anil Joseph



Birth Days

Jan. 15-31

Wedding Anniversaries



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