

Bulletin of the Rotary Club of Chandigarh Midtown: R.I. Distt. 3080

R. I. President  
Ray Klingensmith

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Madhukar Malhotra

President  
Prem Anand

Secretary  
Deepak Sood

Editor  
Indrajeet Sengupta

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PROGRAMME

Musical Evening

Rotarians & R'anns are requested to come with children & grand children to enjoy the evening

Those who want to participate, please contact

*Coordinator:* Rtn. Dr. Anurag Sharma &

R'ann Dr. Manjushri

Bulletin Editor  
PP Rtn. Dr. V.J.S. Vohra

The meeting will be followed  
by Cocktails. Kind courtesy:  
Rtn. Salil Bali

Friday, June 17, 2011

Time: 7.00 p.m.

Venue: Hotel President, Sector 26, Chandigarh

## On to New Orleans and Beyond

On June 10, 2011 we had Powerpoint Presentation by PDG Rtn. Shaju Peter, who had recently returned from New Orleans after attending the 102nd Rotary International Convention at New Orleans, Louisiana, USA held on 21 - 25 May 2011. IPP Rtn. Gurdip S. Deep introduced him, but kept it short and crisp! He said, "How does one introduce Shaju? Do you really expect me to say a word or two about him? Is there any body who does not know him? The only thing that I can say is that Shaju is an extremely good professional. It is joy being with him and talking to him about commitment."

In his address Shaju said, "Attending RI Convention is an amazing experience. For me it was the third one. New Orleans was to have the Convention in 2005 but God did not let it happen that year. There was a devastating Katrina." The hurricane and floods destroyed large chunk of the city. The convention had to be shifted to Salt Lake City. But New Orleans was rebuilt in six years and was made more spectacular than the city that was



PDG Shaju Peter

destroyed by the hurricane. The 102nd RI Convention at New Orleans attracted 18000 Rotarians from all over the world. Shaju was one of them!

Shaju wanted to have some change from his business routine and Rotary activities, so before landing up in New Orleans, he decided to spend 3-4 days in Madrid.

Shaju pointed out that Madrid was right at the center of Spain which has its borders with France and Portugal. He said Madrid is the largest city and capital of the country. While showing us the beautiful pictures of Madrid he explained that the entire population of the Madrid metropolitan area is calculated to be nearly 5.8 million. It is the third largest city in the European Union, after London and Berlin, and its metropolitan area is also the third largest in the European Union after London and Paris. It is the seat of government and residence of the Spanish monarch, Madrid is also the political center of Spain.

While Madrid possesses a modern infrastructure, it has preserved the look and feel of its historic heritage. Shaju also talked about history of Spain and that in the 17th century it dominated as a major colonial power, which included Mexico and Latin America. Shaju also narrated that Madrid's diverse population makes it a dynamic and cosmopolitan city open to new cultures, where visitors quickly feel at home. It is a fun-



Madrid through Shaju's presentation

loving city where life is lived to the fullest. People of various nationalities now reside in Madrid, which speaks volumes of the city's ability to successfully integrate different communities. Shaju said, "Madrid is a city of museums. It has about 30 museums and the most important one is known as Museo del Prado." This is one of the most important art museums in Europe and amongst the best in the world. The collection includes sculptures, drawings, paintings and other art objects.

From Madrid Shaju took us to New Orleans. He said, "New Orleans is the largest city in the state of Louisiana. It was a French territory in the time of Napoleon who was in great need of money and he sold the colony of Louisiana to USA for the paltry sum of 15 million dollars." He added, "New Orleans is the most interesting city of USA." Shaju highlighted New Orleans as famous for Mardi Gras, which means fat Tuesday, which falls on the day before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. During the this period, many Christians forego the eating of meat. They also traditionally give up a favored food, drink or habit. Fat Tuesday is a fun-



The key speakers at RI Convention, from left: RI President Ray Klinginsmith, RI President Elect Kalyan Banerjee and the star attraction of the convention, Bill Gates

filled day of excitement for people of all ages before a six-week period of abstinence, and New Orleans, Louisiana, is famous for their Mardi Gras celebrations – parades, music, food, loads of fun and elaborate costumes on this occasion.

Shaju then diverted his presentation towards the RI Convention. He mesmerized his audience, making them feel

as if they were traveling along with him! Talking about the convention Shaju said, "The session started in the morning on 22nd May with an inter-faith prayer. This is the tradition in all RI Conventions. We have scripture reading from all major religion of the world including Bhagwat Gita." He added, "All major religions of the world are represented in this a very solemn ceremony which lasted for an hour." Shaju observed that in the earlier conventions there used to be very poor attendance for the inter-faith prayers because it was held very early in the morning, but this time it was at 11 am and out of 18000 delegates almost 10000 Rotarians were present in the auditorium. Shaju said, "It was a fascinating experience!"

Then came the inaugural session, with an audio visual by the Governor of the State of Louisiana, who is none other than Bobby Jindal, whose parents came to the United States as immigrants from Punjab, India, over three decades ago. Mr. Jindal, in his recorded speech, welcomed the 18000 Rotarians from all over World, to the State of Louisiana. It was a proud moment for Shaju to listen to the Governor of Indian origin, and he told other delegates, "Jindal is from a place close to my house!" This was followed by an opening address by RI President Ray Klinginsmith who made a tremendous impression on the audience. Shaju also showed us the pictures of his RI President Wilfrid J. Wilkinson and his batch mates who served as District Governors along with Shaju in 2007-08, and who were present at the Convention.

Shaju said, "The most important event and the star attraction of the RI Convention was the presence of Bill Gates." The Microsoft Founder and Co-Chair of Bill & Mellinda Gates Foundation spoke on polio for 40 minutes. Bill Gates even took the names of the villages in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and said that in the current year there was only one polio case reported from India against 700 last year. 18000 Rotarians stood on their feet and started clapping for nearly 5 minutes. Shaju said, "This was the greatest moment for Indian Rotarians." He added, "Bill Gates got the longest and the

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loudest ovation from 18000 Rotarians.

Shaju said all RI Conventions have a House of Friendship which has large number of stalls of commercial nature in a very big hall. Even some Rotary stalls are there. The House of Friendship is full of Rotarians, who enjoy meeting each other here, and exchange friendship and flags.

Mehta. Shaju said, "In the Convention people say 2011-12 will be the year of Indian Rotarians."

On his way back home Shaju made a business visit to Peru in South America. Peru has a very ancient civilization, as old as Indian civilization. Shaju said they have preserved their cultural heritage in museums. It does not have the glamour but



Shaju's visit to Peru



Rtn. B.M. Gulati presents a memento to PDG Shaju Peter. Looking on is President Prem Anand



PDG Shaju Peter presents a gift to birthday boy PP Rtn. Capt. M.S. Kahlon. Looking on is Secretary Deepak Sood



Shaju presents wedding anniversary gift to PP Rtn. Pallav Mukherjee, to carry it home for R'ann Dr. Joginder



On behalf of R'ann Sharda, PP Rtn. R.S. Chandgothia gets her birthday gift from Shaju



Secretary Elect Rtn. Amarjit Singh bags the punctuality award which is presented to him by Shaju

With effect from 1st July the 19 member Rotary International Board of Directors would be having three Indians; RI President Kalyan Banerjee, Directors Yash Das and Shekhar

is culturally very rich. It is known for its various landscapes; mountains, coastal desserts, rivers and jungles. It reminded Shaju of his home state Kerala. Shaju concluded his talk quite amusingly by distributing the 'necklaces' as it is done in New Orleans, by tossing these all over the audience!

Expression of gratitude was offered by Rtn. B.M. Gulati, who said, "Whenever Shaju gives a presentation there is nothing he forgets. He remembers the names of persons he had met and the names of places he visits. He is our ambassador who will continue to bring glory to our club and inspire us to be better Rotarians with dedication to the cause of Rotary."

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