

## Team 2015-2016

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**Secretary**  
  
Krishnan Venugopal

**Bulletin Editor**  
  
S Sasidharan

## The four Way Test

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

## Family Gallery

**Teacher:**

"Can u tell the names of 2 Kings who brought happiness & peace into people's lives?"

**Student:** "Smo-King & Drin-King"!!!  
**Teacher resigned.**

Regular naps prevent old age, especially if you take them while driving.

Having one child makes you a parent; having more, you are a referee.

Marriage is a relationship in which one person is always right and the other is the husband!



Try cracking this.

A \_\_\_\_\_ doctor was \_\_\_\_\_ to operate on a person as there was \_\_\_\_\_

Three words (same spelling 3 different ways) fills all 3 blanks.

## Three month calender of events

	<b>January, 10, 2016</b> FIRE (Family Involved Rotary Entertainment) Camelot Convention Centre Alappuzha	<b>February 06,07, 2016</b> District Conference Winsdor Castle Convention Centre Kottayam
<b>January, 20, 2016</b>	District Governor's visit to the club at Revi Karunakaran Rotary Hall, Alleppey	<b>June 19, 2016</b> Awards Night Trivandrum Club, Trivandrum



Happy Birthday	
Anupama Prakash Ponnun	06.01.2016
Mathew Aju Jacob	06.01.2016
Rosamma Jacob Neroth	07.01.2016
Anju Sreenivasan	07.01.2016
V.J. Alexander	10.01.2016

## Wedding Anniversary

Roy Raj	10.01.2016
Jacob Philipose	10.01.2016
Jula G. Zacharia	12.01.2016
Mohammed Saheer	12.01.2016
Vidhu Unnithan	14.01.2016
Shyam Kumar	18.01.2016

Contributions, suggestions can be sent to the editor: alleppeyrotaryclub@gmail.com



# Royalweeks

ROTARY CLUB OF ALLEPPEY DISTRICT 3211  
CHARTERED AS 7339TH CLUB ON 25.07.1949

We meet on Wednesdays at 7.00pm  
at Revi Karunakaran Rotary Hall, Alleppey

Vol : 67 | Issue 3461 Since 1 August 1949 | No. 27 (2015-16)



## My dear fellow Rotarians,

Happy New Year. I hope all of you had a wonderful beginning to the new year and are keeping up with resolutions each of you have taken this year. During this time, in this digital age with social media in full bloom many of us would have received loads of messages as forwards in the form of goodwill, feel good, things you could do, help etc. Each of them doing its own good in one way or the other to the recipients. I too received a lot of forwards and attachments during this time and one such attachment really made me sit back and it was a real source of inspiration in today's world. This I thought of sharing with you in this first issue of this new year and I am sure will inspire us and our inner self at this wonderful person's achievement under dire circumstances. Read on and let it tickle your philanthropic senses and inspire each of you as human beings and Rotarians to be compassionate and inspire every person who comes in our contact.

## Quote "The blind CEO who built a 50 crore company"

Srikanth Bolla is standing tall living by his conviction that if the "world looks at me and says, 'Srikanth, you can do nothing,' I look back at the world and say 'I can do

anything'."

When he was born, neighbours in the village suggested that his parents smother him. It was better than the pain they would have to go through their lifetime, some said. He is a "useless" baby without eyes... being born blind is a sin, others added.

Twenty-three years later, Srikanth Bolla is standing tall living by his conviction that if the "world looks at me and says, 'Srikanth, you can do nothing,' I look back at the world and say 'I can do anything'."

Srikanth is the CEO of Hyderabad-based Bollant Industries, an organisation that employs uneducated disabled employees to manufacture eco-friendly, disposable consumer packaging solutions, which is worth Rs 50 crores.

He considers himself the luckiest man alive, not because he is now a

Continued..

RI-President



K.R. Ravindran

President



Adv. V. Deepak

District Governor



C. Luke

Assistant Governor



Prof. S.Gopinathan Nair

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millionaire, but because his uneducated parents, who earned Rs 20,000 a year, did not heed any of the 'advice' they received and raised him with love and affection.

"They are the richest people I know," says Srikanth.

**Underdog success story**

What is it about stories like Srikanth's that so inspire and fill one with hope?

Could it be the multiple zeroes after a currency sign or the belief that you and I can achieve similar success if we set our minds and hearts to it?

Underdog success stories touch a raw nerve. After all, everyone faces adversity, they dream, and they work hard.

It is another matter that only a few cross the threshold of limits set by society.

In his case, it is his sheer tenacity that shines through the dark clouds of his misfortune. Being born blind was just one part of the story. He was also born poor. And you know what that means in a society like ours. In school, he was pushed to the back bench and not allowed to play. The little village school had no way of knowing what inclusion meant. When he wanted to take up science after his class X, he was denied the option because of his disability.

All of 18, Srikanth not only fought the system but went on to become the first international blind student to be admitted to the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the US.

As author Paulo Coelho says, "We warriors of light must be prepared to have patience in difficult times and to know the Universe is conspiring in our favour, even though we may not understand how."

Today, Srikanth has four production plants, one each in Hubli (Karnataka) and Nizamabad (Telangana), and two in Hyderabad (Telangana). Another plant, which will be one hundred percent solar operated, is coming up in Sri City, an integrated business city in Andhra Pradesh, 55 kms from Chennai.

An investor, who met him about two years ago, was so impressed with his business acumen and vision for his company that he not only decided to mentor him but also invested in his company.

"It was a small, tin-roof shack in an industrial area near Hyderabad. There were eight employees and three machines under the shed. I expected him to talk about how he wanted to make a social impact, but was surprised by the business clarity and technical knowhow in someone so young," he says. A vision to build a sustainable company with a workforce comprising 70 percent people with disability is no mean task. "His vision is inbuilt in the company. It is not just a lip service to CSR,"

**Isolation a big curse**

"The isolation of differently-able people starts at birth," Srikanth said in his first public speech on the INK Talks stage in Mumbai. According to him, "Compassion is a way of showing someone to live; to give someone an opportunity to thrive and make them rich. Richness does not come from money, it comes from happiness."

When he was growing up, his father, a farmer, would take him to the fields but the little boy could not be of any help. His father then decided that he might as well study. "In my parent's entrepreneurship model, I was a failure. In entrepreneurship, we have a lean business model where we evaluate an enterprise and say how quickly it fails." Since the nearest school in his village was five kilometers away, he had to make his way there mostly on foot. He did this for two years. "No one acknowledged my presence. I was put in the last bench. I could not participate in the PT class.

That was the time in my life I thought I was the poorest child in the world. It was not because of lack of money but because of loneliness."

When his father realised that the child was not learning anything, he admitted Srikanth to a special needs school in Hyderabad. The boy thrived in the compassion he was shown there. He not only learnt to play chess and cricket but excelled in them. He topped his class, even embracing an opportunity to work with late President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam in the Lead India project.

But none of this mattered much because Srikanth was denied admission to the science stream in class XI.

He cleared the Andhra Pradesh class X state board exams with over 90 percent marks, but the board said he could only take Arts subjects after that. "Was it because I was born blind? No. I was made blind by the perceptions of the people." Having been denied the opportunity, he decided to fight for it.

"I sued the government and fought for six months. In the end, I got a government order that said I could take the science subjects but at my 'own risk'. "Thus not 'risking' anything to chance, Srikanth did whatever he could to prove them wrong.

He got all the textbooks converted to audio books, worked day and night to complete the course and managed to secure 98 percent in the XII board exams.

**Fortune favours the brave**

Sometimes, life mimics a steeplechase. Especially when it comes to those it has big plans for. It did not give him enough time to bask in his victory when it threw another spanner in the works. He applied for IIT, BITS, and other top engineering colleges, but did not get a hall ticket. Instead, "I got a letter saying 'you are blind, hence you are not allowed to apply for competitive exams.' If IIT did not want me, I did not want IIT either. How long can you fight?"

He chose his battles carefully and did his homework searching the internet to find the best engineering programme for

someone like himself. He applied to schools in the US and got into the top four -- MIT, Stanford, Berkeley, and Carnegie Mellon.

He went to MIT (with a scholarship) as the first international blind student in the school's history. It wasn't easy adjusting to life there, but by and by he started to do well. Towards the end of his bachelor's course when the 'what next' question came up; it brought him back to where he had started. "Many questions bothered me. Why should a disabled child be pushed to the back row in the class? Why should the 10 percent of the disabled population of India be left out of the Indian economy?

Why cannot they make a living like everyone else with dignity?"

He decided to give up the 'golden' opportunity in corporate America and came back to India in search of answers to his questions. He set up a support service platform to rehabilitate, nurture and integrate differently-able people in society. "We helped about 3000 students in acquiring an education and vocational rehabilitation. But then I thought what about their employment? So I built this company and now employ 150 differently-able people."

**Good always rebounds**

Entrepreneur brave hearts like the warriors always find one unflinching support, an anchor to keep them afloat. In his case, it is his co-founder Swarnalatha.

"She was his special needs teacher in school. She has been his mentor and guide through all these years. She trains all the employees with disabilities at Bollant thereby creating a strong community where they feel valued. "He is a true source of my inspiration. He is not only my young friend and protégé but is also my mentor who teaches me daily that anything is possible if you set your mind to it."

**The boy who was born blind is today showing many the path to real happiness.**

He says his three most important life lessons are: "Show compassion and make people rich. Include people in your life and remove loneliness, and lastly, do something good; it will come back to you." Unquote

Now that is true hard work and inspiration success story for all of us emulate.

Rtn. PHF S Sasidharan

**Club Business**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 30th December 2015**

The meeting was called to order by the President Rtn. Adv. V Deepak. Rtn. Cherian invoked the blessing of Almighty.

In Presidential address Rtn. Adv. Deepak informed the members about District Initiative FIRE(Family involved Rotary Entertainment) happening on 10th January 2016 at Camelot Convention Center, he requested members to register in good numbers. He congratulated Rtn. R Krishnan on becoming president of Alleppey Management Association. President also informed members about our X'mas New Year Dinner happening on 02/01/2016. He then declared meeting as closed one, and invited Rtn. Adv. K N Venugopala Panicker and handed over proceedings of Election of Office Bearers for 2016-17.

Returning officer Rtn. Adv. K N Venugopala Panicker after establishing quorum called for Nomination. Since there was not more than one nomination for each post officers were elected unanimously.

Post	Name	Proposer	Seconded
President	Rtn. George Thomas	Rtn. Gopinathan Nair	Rtn. Kumaraswami Pillai
Vice President	Rtn. Antony Malayil	Rtn. Raju Chandy	Rtn. Sasidharan Nair
President Elect	Rtn. Kumaraswami Pillai	Rtn. D Vijayalakshmi	Rtn. Ajithkumar R N
Secretary	Rtn. George Samuel	Rtn. Tomi Eapen	Rtn. Prakash Ponnu
Director	Rtn. R Sreenivasan	Rtn. N A M Kunju	Rtn. Cherian
Director	Rtn. Biju Sathyan	Rtn. Raju Chandy	Rtn. Sajan Nair
Director	Rtn. Ajithkumar T S	Rtn. Cherian	Rtn. Subramaniya Iyer
Director	Rtn. S Murugan	Rtn. Kumaraswami Pillai	Rtn. Moncy Varghese
Director	Rtn. T Sivakumar	Rtn. Prakash Ponnu	Rtn. Sajan Nair

Rtn. George Thomas in his acceptance speech thanked all for electing as incoming president, and assured he will do justice to the office. And also informed about "Bon Voyage" function for DG elect Rtn. John Daniel to be held at Kollam.

Secretary Rtn. Krishnan Venugopal thanked all Rotarians for attending meeting, and special thanks for Rtn. K N Venugopala Panicker for the meticulous conduct of election. He extended a special thanks to Host for the day Rtn. Fancis V J, and then the meeting was adjourned by the President.

Rtn. Krishnan Venugopal

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