



Rotary  
India Literacy Mission

# Literacy Times

Issue : 29 • January, 2024

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[www.rotaryteach.org](http://www.rotaryteach.org)

## Educating Inmates through 'Vidya' Program

Rotary India Literacy Mission (RILM) has already started working with various Correctional Homes in West Bengal in association with the Department of Correctional Services, Govt. of WB, and is ready to expand the volume of work in other Correctional Homes across India. The main objective to begin with such an initiative is to identify the non-literate inmates and transform them into literate individuals. As a part of the program, team RILM recently visited Presidency Correctional Home - one of the oldest Correctional Homes in India, with over 2,000 inmates living in the place. Despite their circumstances,



the Correctional Home authority supports them to engage in various activities for their development.

RILM has launched the 'Vidya' program as part of our Adult Literacy initiative for the inmates. On November 4th, 2023, we conducted an orientation of the 'Akshar Sathi' who will teach adult learners. The authority has identified 400 non-literate adults

to participate in the program, which will transform them into literate individuals.

To make this initiative even more impactful, the Correctional Home authority has selected 10 inmates to become 'Akshar Sathi' to teach 150 non-literate adult inmates in the first phase. We are thankful to Rotary Club of Calcutta Avyanna for making this collaboration successful.

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## 'Vidya' program reaches Howrah, WB

'Vidya' (Each One-Teach Many), is one of the important programs under the Adult Literacy initiative of Rotary India Literacy Mission. Through this program, a Community-based Teacher or Akshar Sathi identifies non-literate adults in the community and transforms them into literate individuals through adult literacy classes at a commonplace in the community.

Through the newly launched 5 centers at Howrah, West Bengal.



RILM in association with Kajla Janakalyan Samity is being transformed 150 non-literate adults into literate citizens.

We are thankful to Rotary Club of Calcutta Millennium for support this initiative.

# Message from PRIP Shekhar Mehta on Behalf of Team RILM



Dear Friends of Rotary India Literacy Mission (RILM)

As we embark on the journey of a new year, 2024, I extend my heartfelt greetings and gratitude to the incredible team at RILM and all our dedicated supporters. It is with immense pleasure that I reflect on the milestones we've been achieving in our collective pursuit of making India Totally Literate.

I want to express my sincere thanks on behalf of Team RILM for your continuous support and cooperation throughout this transformative journey. Your unwavering dedication has been instrumental in our efforts to contribute to the cause of literacy in India.

The Rotary India Literacy Mission has been playing a pivotal role in collaborating with central and state governments, corporates, Rotary clubs, grassroots organizations, and countless individuals who have been generously contributing their time and efforts. Together, we have made a significant impact on communities far and wide as of now. As we set our sights on the new year, let's make it a collective resolution to envision a Totally Literate India. I invite each one of you to join hands in this noble mission and continue to be a crucial part of our efforts. RILM remains steadfast in its commitment, working tirelessly in remote areas, forging partnerships, and empowering individuals to reach their utmost potential.

I am glad to share that, the Adult Literacy program has been successfully reached to more than 1,50,000 Adult Learners in India. Over 75,000 Adult learners have already been identified for the program and among them, more than 40,000 non-literate adults are being transformed into literate individuals in the first phase through 1000+ centers across the country.

Your ongoing support has been the cornerstone of our achievements, and I am confident that, together, we can overcome any challenges that may arise. May this new year bring renewed energy, passion, and a shared commitment to the vision of a Totally Literate India.

Once again, welcome, and thank you for being an integral part of the Rotary India Literacy Mission.

*Shekhar Mehta.*

With Warm Regards

Shekhar Mehta

(President, Rotary International, 2021-22)

Chief Advisor of RILM



# ‘Vidya’ - Each One Teach Many

## Ground Stories

Chandana Royani, a 34-year-old woman, desires to be an educated person. In the morning, she usually takes help from her child to read the newspaper, as he can read while she cannot.

When she heard about the program, she immediately expressed her interest and shared the information with her neighbors so that they, too, could learn to read.

During our visit to Sundarkhele, an interior pocket of Birbhum, West Bengal, Team RILM encountered many non-literate adults in the community like Chandana.



After conducting a thorough community survey, we have collaborated with a local NGO, Sayambar Nari, to establish over 20 'Vidya' centers. These centers aim to turn more than 900

adult non-literates into literate individuals over some time.

Over 75,000 Adult learners have already been transformed into literate individuals in the first phase and over 75,000 have been enrolled in the second

phase through more than 2,500 centres from across India.



Belonging to a fisherman family, Namita Mandal, a resident of Bhangor, South 24 Pgs, West Bengal, never got an opportunity to study. When Team RILM visited the place, we met with hundreds of non-literate adults like Namita.

"I came to know about the program from one of my neighbors. I started attending classes and, day by day, I came to know, how to write and read words. It is impacting my life and helping me

transform from a non-literate adult to a literate individual..." Namita said with a child-like smile.

Rotary India Literacy Mission has been working to transform more than 1,000 non-literate adults into literate citizens through 27 centers in this area under the 'Vidya' program of our Adult Literacy initiative.

Implementing partner: Bhangor Nabadoy Samity, a local NGO.



Recently Team RILM opened 50 brand new 'Vidya' centers at Koderma, Jharkhand in partnership with Rashtriya Jharkhand Seva Sansthan, a local NGO under the Adult Literacy Program. Now, more than 3100 adult non-literates will be transformed into literate individuals from the place.

Although the numbers may seem small, it is a significant step towards making India a completely literate nation.



"I had never thought that one day I would get an opportunity to learn, how to sign... And now, I am practicing my signature regularly so that I can do it on my own during my bank visit..." Sumitra

Mandal, a 45-year-old lady from Jibontola Block, South 24 Pgs shared with tears in her wet eyes.

After an intensive survey and interaction with



the locals, Team RILM has initiated 40 centers in this block in association with South Isswaripur KH Madrasa, a local NGO.

Now, more than 900 adult non-literates like Sumitra Devi will be transformed into literate citizens through these centers.

Saraswati Kanuley, a resident of Amta Block in Howrah, shared with us her joy of attending over 50 classes at the local 'Vidya' center. She can now confidently identify all Bengali letters and numbers, read small words, and even write her name. This may seem simple to someone, but for people like Saraswati, it is a significant breakthrough.

When Team RILM visited the place, we met with hundreds of adult non-literates like Saraswati, who had never had any opportunity to study due to unforeseen circumstances. Now through 9 centres, RILM will transform more than 250 adult non-literates into literate individuals in association with the Gabberia Rural Development Society, a local NGO.



Rotary Club Partner: Rotary Club of Calcutta Chowringhee





Sampa Ghosh, a 25-year-old woman, resident of Jodh Bireshwar, a village in Howrah, West Bengal, never had an opportunity to attend school. When Team RILM introduced her to the 'Vidya' program of our Adult Literacy initiative, she was extremely excited to be a part of this program.

She has already attended 25 classes in a local Vidya center. Now she can easily identify all Bengali letters, and numbers up to 50, and also can write her name.

Through 9 centers, Rotary India Literacy Mission in association with Khordah New Age Society (a local NGO) will transform 30 non-literate adults into literate individuals like Sampa.



"I had to drop out of school after standard II due to my critical socio-economic condition. It was a long time

ago, and at the age of 63, I never imagined I could get another opportunity to learn how to read and write," shared Ranjan Giri, a resident of Kumarmari, one of the interior pockets of West Bengal under Sundarban Coastal, during an interactive conversation with Team RILM.

Rotary India Literacy Mission, in association with Sathi Seva Sandeshkhali Alaka Guchha Samity, a

local NGO, has established 36 'Vidya' centers in this area as part of our Adult Literacy initiative.

Now, through these centers, more than 1000 non-literate adults will be transformed into literate citizens.

Gradually, Team RILM will identify more non-literate adults in this area through a rigorous process and involve them into our 'Vidya' program to make them literate.



When one of our Akshar Sathis, Sayani Samanta met with Bechi Bala to discuss the 'Vidya' program, she didn't receive a positive response. But after a frequent visit to her place, motivating her about the salient features of this program, she started attending classes at a local 'Vidya' center in Howrah.

Bechi, a 48-year-old woman had never had an opportunity to join school. 'I have completed 25 classes here and I would like to learn more... Now, I can identify all Bengali letters and numbers up to 20... and also can write my name. I am exploring a new way of life at this age..' she shared with a child-like smile.



More than 280 non-literate adults will now be transformed into literate individuals like Bechi from Howrah, West Bengal through 9 centers in association with Khordah New Age Society, a local NGO.

## ‘Diksha’ - Each One Teach One Stories from Schools



Recently Shekhar Mehta, the President of Rotary International for the year 2021-22 and Chief Advisor of Rotary India Literacy Mission, interacted with the students of Him Jyoti School in Dehradun.

We are pleased to announce that the students of this school will now have access to world-class educational content on their mobile phones through our Digital Learning initiative.

Team RILM has recently reached out to DAV School Noida and DAV School Faridabad to meet the students and discuss our Adult Literacy initiative. Over 150 students have shown their eagerness to be a part of this mission to make India a completely literate nation.

Each of these students will teach one non-literate adult from their neighborhood under the 'Diksha' program (Each One-Teach One).

Ramesh Chander, the Chair of the Adult Literacy

National Committee of Rotary India Literacy Mission, led the interaction.





Rotary India Literacy Mission (RILM) continues to pave the way for a brighter and more informed India, and the enthusiastic participation of students from leading schools is a testament to the power of education in transforming lives.

In yet another remarkable event, RILM, along with Senior Rotarians, had the distinct pleasure of visiting Khalsa Model Senior Secondary School, located in Dunlop, Kolkata, to distribute adult literacy kits. This event marked an important milestone in the mission to make India Totally Literate.

What's truly exceptional is that, on a single day, over 25 students from Khalsa Model Senior

Secondary School took a solemn pledge, vowing that each of them would personally transform one adult non-literate into a literate individual. These dedicated students received adult literacy kits through RILM's "Diksha" program, which falls under the umbrella of the Adult Literacy Initiative.

The collective efforts of RILM and the students from Khalsa Model Senior Secondary School emphasize the transformational impact of education on individuals and communities. Together, we are forging a path towards a more literate and

enlightened India, and they invite all to join hands with them to make this mission a resounding success.



In the month of November Rotary India Literacy Mission in association with the Rotary Club of Mohali Midtown of the Rotary International District 3080 has launched the 'Diksha' program under our Adult Literacy initiative at The Tribune School, Chandigarh, India.

Rotary India Literacy Mission continues to work

tirelessly towards creating a more educated and enlightened society, fostering positive change through initiatives like 'Diksha'. This collaborative effort with The Tribune School is poised to set a precedent for future educational endeavors to transform non-literate adults' lives through literacy.



# World Food Prize Winner Heidi Kuhn Explores Collaborative Initiatives with Team RILM in Kolkata



Heidi Kuhn, CEO and Founder, Roots of Peace, a superwoman who won the World Food Prize 2023 and was also awarded the Mother Teresa Memorial Prize for Social Justice, recently visited Kolkata.

Team RILM had a wonderful time with her and Shekhar Mehta (Rotary International President, 2021-22) Chief Advisor of Rotary India Literacy Mission.

We hope such a discussion will lead to an impactful partnership to Make India Totally Literate!

## ‘Annapurna’ Food Project

Rotary India Literacy Mission has become one of the forefronts in supporting children with dry foods, snacks, and chocolates across West Bengal in association with the Indian Food Banking Network.

Recently, we have reached Singur in Hooghly, WB, and supported more than 300 children with chocolates.

The event was organized by the Rotary Club of Calcutta Centenary.





# Swing to Make India Totally Literate



## PHILLIP CAPITAL 8TH SAFGR GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP KOLKATA, INDIA

In a harmonious blend of sport, camaraderie, and philanthropy, the Rotary Club of Calcutta Mahanagar proudly hosted the much-anticipated event

### THE FUNDS RAISED WILL ENSURE THAT THOUSANDS OF ADULTS AND CHILDREN BECOME LITERATE

The event was hosted by the Rotary Club of Calcutta Mahanagar. The proceeds generated from this prestigious event will notably contribute to the literacy programs of the Rotary Club of Calcutta Mahanagar in close association with the Rotary India Literacy Mission (RILM).

Rotary India Literacy Mission has been playing a pivotal role to transform 5 crore Adult Non-Literates into Literate Citizens in India by 2027.

The presence of esteemed dignitaries amplified the significance of this gathering. Mr. Shekhar Mehta, President of Rotary International (2021-22), was the event's Chief Guest, while Mr. Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury, Director, of Rotary International, graced the occasion as a Guest of Honor.



### THE EVENT CREATED A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

From November 24th to 25th, 2023, this prestigious event promised an exhilarating display of talent and goodwill at the esteemed Royal Calcutta Golf Club and the picturesque Tollygunge Club in Kolkata.

The SAFGR, a wing of The International Golfing Fellowship of Rotarians (IGFR), an assembly of Rotarians from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, is a testament to fostering fellowship and goodwill among golf enthusiasts. More than 70 enthusiastic Golfers came across from these countries to make this event significant.





## WHAT DISTINGUISHES THIS GOLF TOURNAMENT IS ITS PROFOUND PHILANTHROPIC CAUSE

A large number of sponsors came forward across India to not only make this event successful but also to support the cause of making India Totally Literate.

This event witnessed such generosity from the participants as well as from the Print, Electronics, and Digital Media. We have also received a huge engagement rate from the Netizens (Net-Citizens) of different social media platforms.

The PhillipCapital 8th Annual SAFGR Golf Tournament in Kolkata served as a reminder that beyond the greens lies a canvas for change, and through collective efforts, we can drive meaningful transformations in our communities.

## PROMOTING GOLF: EMERGING AS THE CAUSE TO MAKE INDIA TOTALLY LITERATE

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# New Collaboration

On Children's Day, November 14, 2023, Rotary India Literacy Mission in collaboration with UNICEF has conducted a thought-provoking session on Facebook Live at 5 p.m IST.

Subject: 'Commemorating Children's Day through Learning about Child Rights'

Distinguished Speakers;

1. Shekhar Mehta, Rotary International President (2021-22) and Chief Advisor of Rotary India Literacy Mission.
2. Ms. Sudeshna Roy, Chairperson, West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights
3. Mr. Snehasis Sur, President, Press Club, Kolkata



4. Mr. Amit Mehrotra, Chief a.i. UNICEF Office for West Bengal

Moderator: Ms. Suchorita Bardhan, Communication Specialist, UNICEF Office for West Bengal

## RILM & UNICEF Host Engaging Events in Celebration of Children's Day



In a noteworthy celebration of Children's Day on November 14, 2023, Rotary India Literacy Mission, in collaboration with UNICEF, orchestrated a thought-provoking session broadcasted on Facebook Live at 5 p.m IST. The event, themed 'Commemorating Children's Day through Learning about Child Rights,' brought together distinguished speakers who shared their insights on crucial issues.

The esteemed speakers included Shekhar Mehta, Rotary International President (2021-22) and Chief Advisor of Rotary India Literacy Mission; Ms. Sudeshna Roy, Chairperson, West Bengal Commission for Protection of Child Rights; Mr. Snehasis Sur, President, Press Club, Kolkata; and Mr. Amit Mehrotra, Chief a.i. UNICEF Office for West Bengal. The session was

expertly moderated by Ms. Suchorita Bardhan, Communication Specialist at the UNICEF Office for West Bengal.

Fast forward to November 20, 2023, Rotary India Literacy Mission and UNICEF renewed their collaboration to organize a compelling conversation on World Children's Day. At 5 p.m., a dynamic Facebook Live event unfolded, featuring students from various schools engaging with a panel of influential figures.

The subject of the event was 'Children Interacting with Influencers on World Children's Day: Pledge Equality For All Girls and Boys.' Distinguished speakers for this occasion included Shekhar Mehta, Rotary International President (2021-22) and Chief Advisor of Rotary India Literacy Mission; Ms. Sudeshna Roy, Chairperson, West Bengal Commission on Protection of Child Rights; Ms. Ananya Chakraborty, Advisor WBCPCR & PAVLOV; and Mr. Jayanta Bose, Director, EnGIO & Environment Correspondent & Columnist, The Telegraph.

The collaboration between Rotary India Literacy Mission and UNICEF continues to make strides in raising awareness about child rights and promoting equality for all children.



# Our Media Section



Media is one of the most significant stakeholders for us in disseminating news through various forms and connecting people worldwide. In this edition, we have showcased some snapshots of recent releases on traditional platforms, such as newspapers and radio.

Check out the successful collaboration between Rotary India Literacy Mission and SCERT, Nagaland, which is now featured on TT-Edugraph.

This partnership has taken a significant step towards providing NCERT-approved high-quality educational content to thousands of students in the region, from standard I to standard XII, through this platform.



## Enriching Radio Conversation

As we are embarking on our journey to a new height, Rotary India Literacy Mission and Fever FM Bangla have joined hands to present a captivating dialogue featuring our distinguished Chief Advisor, Shekhar Mehta, who served as the President of Rotary International for the year 2021-22.

The engaging discussion took place in a lively exchange with RJ Manali. The special show was aired on Fever 104 FM Bangla on November 9th at 8 p.m. IST, providing listeners with an insightful and enriching experience. The collaborative effort aims to promote meaningful conversations and contribute to the community through engaging content.



## Let's Be a Part of Our Journey

We have been working on different verticals, and reaching the most interior pockets of our country, thus, we need your support to make sure that all parts of the country are getting



basic support to live their life. We need your financial support to operate seamlessly. You can contribute to us by scanning the link.

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