

**Issue No. 1442****Date: 17 Magh 2078 / 31 January 2022****Today's Programme**

Regular weekly meeting with '5<sup>th</sup> Monday entertainment programme'.

**Congratulatory Events****Birthdays:** Nil**Wedding Anniversaries:**

Rtn. Lochan and Sangita Gyawali – 30 Jan.

**Minutes of Meeting No. 1789****Date: 10 Magh 2078 / 24 January 2022**

1. President Rtn. Mahendra B. Thapa called the regular weekly meeting number 1789 to order virtually by Zoom with 15 seconds of 'Silent Invocation' for world peace, health, and happiness.
2. Guests welcomed by the President: Guest speaker Dr. Krishna Dev Joshi, IRRI Country Representative in Nepal, and Rotaract Peshal Bhattarai from the Rotaract Club of Patan.
3. The last meeting minutes were reviewed and adopted.
4. Contributions/pledges for 'Happy News':
  - Rtn. Bishwa B. Sharma & Dr. Aruna Uprety - for 'Happy Wedding Anniversary' in absentia (ha.ba.).
  - Rtn. Mahendra S. Rawal (NRs. 500) and Rtn. Shiv P. Khemka (NRs. 500) – for the successful completion and inauguration of Anandakuti School Reconstruction project.
  - Rtn. Piyush B. Bajracharya – for his grandson's singing of the full version of national anthem (NRs. 500).
  - Rtns. Gabriele and Bijaya Mallapaty – for 'Happy Landing' from Sydney, Australia (NRs. 2,000).
  - Rtns. Padam L. and Kamala Maharjan – for internal travel in the USA and engagement of his brother's son Paribesh in USA (NRs. 500).
  - Rtn. Khadak S. Bisht (NRs. 500) and Rtn. Mahendra B. Thapa (NRs. 500) – for having a renowned scientist in agriculture field, Dr. Krishna D. Joshi, as today's guest speaker.
5. Other Contributions: Rtn. Bijaya Mallapaty announced a contribution pledge of NRs. 20,200 to the PEEF Trust Fund from Mrs. Manuela Mücke, Rtn. Gabriele Mallapaty's sister in Germany.
6. Rotary News/Information:
  - Rtn. Siba B. Rajbhandary informed about the new RI policy that Rotaract Clubs may apply for District and Global Grants from July 2022. He also informed that Rotaract Peshal Bhattarai from the Rotaract Club of Patan has been nominated as a member of the District Grants Sub-Committee.
  - President Rtn. Mahendra B. Thapa informed that due to the ongoing pandemic there has not been much interest from RCP members to join the 10 days trip planned to coincide with the District Conference. Therefore, this trip has been suspended for now.
7. Salutation: By PP Rtn. Siba B. Rajbhandary - Rotary Club of Dhaka North, Bangladesh; Chartered: 1968; and Members: 39. District: 3280, Clubs: 158, and Members: 4415. He also briefed on Bangladesh, history of Rotary there and about this club.
8. Before the adjournment of the meeting by the President, Joint Secretary Rtn. Khadak S. Bisht announced: contribution pledges of NRs. 5,000 to sunshine fund of the RCP, and the meeting attendance of 2 guests, 1 Rotaract, and 24 members.

**Rotary Questions/Answers presented by Rtn. Padam L. Maharjan**

- Q:** In 1921 Rotary Clubs were first organised in continental Australia. Name the clubs that celebrate 100 years in Australia? **A:** RC Melbourne, RC Auckland, RC Wellington, and RC Sydney.
- Q:** What is the name of the Manager of the RISAO office? **A:** Rajeev Ranjan, member of RC Delhi Southeast
- Q:** Who is the District Treasurer of District 3292 for the RY 2021/22? **A:** Rtn. Juddha Raj Oli, RC Balaju.

**Talk programme by Dr. Krishna D. Joshi, Country Representative of International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), on 'Changing landscape of Agri food systems in Nepal'.**

President Rtn. Mahendra B. Thapa welcomed guest speaker Dr. Krishna D. Joshi and Rtn. Khadak S. Bisht introduced him. Dr. Joshi from Baitadi, Nepal, has obtained a PhD from the University of Wales and a MPhil from Cambridge University. He is a senior scientist in agriculture field and International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) Country Representative in Nepal since 2018. Prior to this, he worked as a senior scientist with International Wheat and Maize Improvement Centre (CIMMYT), first in its regional office in Kathmandu and then in Islamabad, Pakistan. He has worked and contributed to the research and development of various agricultural products and published over 30 articles and book chapters in his field.

Dr. Krishna D. Joshi thanked the RCP, where he has several friends, for inviting him as a guest speaker, and made his presentation with the support of power point on changing landscape of agri-food systems in Nepal.

Dr. Joshi talked about the changes in livelihood and land use as well as educational, institutional and policy changes over time in Nepal. Giving the context of the changes, he mentioned that there has been a rapid conversion of premium agricultural lands into 'Ghaderi' without much efforts to stop it. While land use act 2019 was enacted, it remains to be implemented. Another area of change is out-migration, which induced underutilization and abandonment of agricultural land (almost 50% of hilly and mountainous region land) resulting in changing pattern of economy. While remittances have increased to about 25% GDP, overall agricultural products have reduced with import dependency and food insecurity.

While there have been some positive changes with youth migrant returnees engaged in Agro-enterprises and other skill-oriented professions, improvements in productive cereals sector have not materialized. There is a particular lacuna in the analytical skills and critical thinking to have a strategic growth model. While there are policy instruments, very few of them are implemented. Similarly, Dr. Joshi acknowledged the mushrooming of agriculture colleges without qualified fulltime faculties and necessary infrastructure resulting in a chain of disruptions. He also noted that the regulatory body, i.e., the Ministry of Agriculture itself is engaged in project implementation instead of making the implementing partners such as Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC) responsible for managing the projects.

Dr. Joshi talked about the changing protein source Nepalese consume and the problems associated with high dependence on polished rice. At current land holding of 0.68% hectare, it is small and scattered. He compared it with other countries, where despite smaller landholding than Nepal an uniform agriculture production mechanism ensures very high yield. Nepal has a net food deficit (only 10% of farmers cultivate to sell) and Dr. Joshi emphasized the need to increase production by two and a half times to avoid the current scenario of big economies converting Nepal into merely a trading country. He noted that during the current pandemic, supply chains of India and China were never interrupted while Nepalese products hardly found markets.

Dr. Joshi mentioned about the richness of healthy Himalayan foods e.g., amaranth, buckwheat, finger millet, beans, black gram, local cowpea, horse gram, rice bean, and alas (now branded by developed countries as flax seed). However, we lack enough knowledge of these home-grown super foods and increasingly depend upon 'exotic' items. He pointed out that Nepal would be facing severe food and nutrition security risk as may be seen from the value of 13 agricultural products export at US \$40 million while importing rice valued at US \$253 million in 2019. If due attention is not paid to the agriculture sector as a whole, Nepal would be facing serious economic problems. He emphasized the need for food self-sufficiency as key to economic development as practiced in countries such as Bangladesh and Vietnam.

Following a Q/A session moderated by Rtn. Khadak S. Bisht, President Rtn. Mahendra B. Thapa, on behalf of the RCP family, thanked Dr. Krishna D. Joshi for his excellent presentation and responses to the questions of RCP members.

