

Issue No. 1518

Date: 15 Shrawan 2080 / 31 July 2023

Today's Programme:

Regular weekly meeting with as a presentation on the RCP's recently approved Global Grant Project on RHD treatment by Rtn. Prakash R. Regmi

Congratulatory Events

Birthdays & Wedding Anniversaries: Nil

Minutes of Meeting No. 1864

Date: 8 Shrawan 2080 / 24 July 2023

1. President Rtn. Mahendra S. Rawal called the RCP's Meeting No.1864 to order with 15 seconds of 'Silent Invocation' for world peace, health, and happiness.
2. Guests welcomed by the President: Guest speaker Mr. Dipendra Bikram Thapa; Education Chief of Mahalaxmi Mr. Chiranjibi Poudel; Headmasters of the RCP supported schools Mrs. Prabha Laxmi Amatya, Lubhu; Mr. Surya K. Rai, Balkumari; and Mr. Min B. Achhami, Sano Gaun; & Prof. Krishna Hachhethu.
3. President Rtn. Mahendra S. Rawal welcomed former RCP member Mr. Som Paneru for rejoining the RCP.
4. The last meeting minutes were reviewed and adopted.
5. 'Happy News' Contribution Pledges:
 - PDG Rtn. Tirtha M. Sakya – for 'Happy Birthday' (NRs. 1,000).
 - Rtn. Shiv P. Khemka (NRs. 500), Rtn. Ganga R. Gautam (NRs. 500), Rtn. Bishnu P. Sigdel (NRs. 500), Rtn. Mahendra B. Thapa (NRs. 500 + 100 on Rota Quiz) - for today's talk programme by guest speaker Mr. Dipendra B. Thapa.
 - Rtn. Pushkar M. Shakya – for welcoming the birth of his granddaughter (NRs. 1,000).
 - Rtn. Som Paneru – for homecoming to the RCP as its member (NRs. 500).
 - Rtn. Kedar B. Shrestha – for good attendance of the RCP members in today's meeting (NRs. 500).
 - Rtn. Prakash R. Regmi – for his paper on RHD with important data of 107,000 screening done with Nepal Heart Foundation published in Indian Heart Journal (NRs. 1,000).
 - Rtn. Mukti N. Shrestha – for today's talk prog. & having 2 Humphrey Fellows' participation today (NRs. 500).
 - Rtn. Mahendra S. Rawal – for having his friend as guest speaker today and for participating in the TOT on Quest arranged by Rtn. Ganga R. Gautam (NRs. 500).
6. Other Contributions:
 - Rtn. Ganga R. Gautam briefed on the Student Quality Circle (SQC) concept of total quality management (TQM) to address the issues of school students by themselves. He coordinated a TOT on this with QUEST Nepal, which had five participants from the RCP supported schools. He also sponsored the participation of two Rotaracts from the Rotaract Club of Patan for which he contributed NRs. 8,000 through the RCP.
7. Rotary Information:
 - President Rtn. Mahendra S. Rawal informed about the receipt of a draft MOU from Dr. Hemu Kafle of Kathmandu Institute of Applied Sciences on possible collaboration on 'girls' empowerment' programmes.
 - The revised By-Laws of the RCP was endorsed by its Board and was shared with all the members for the 'House' approval. Following the required period of 21 days, the 'House' approved it as presented in consensus.
 - Rtn. Jamuna K. Tamrakar briefed on the successful completion, together with Rtn. Ramesh L. Maskay, of the RCP's PEEF scholarship distribution and selection for grades 7-10 for this year at two schools.
8. Salutation: By Rtn. Ganga R. Gautam - RC Amman, Jerash, Jordan; Chartered: 1993; & Members: 26. District: 2450, Clubs: 142, & Members: 4499. He also gave some highlights about Jordan.

9. Before the adjournment of the meeting by the President, Secretary Rtn. Shiv P. Khemka announced: happy news contribution pledges of NRs. 7,150 including for one telephone ring (50% or NRs. 3,575 each for the Sunshine Fund and the Operational Fund) plus NRs. 5,700 for attendance to the Operational Fund), and the meeting attendance of, 6 guests, 26 members and 9 make-ups.

Rotary Questions/Answers presented by Rtn. Mahendra B. Thapa

- Q.** Who was the second Indian to serve as the RI President? **A.** Rtn. Raja Saboo.
- Q.** Which was the first Rotaract club of Nepal and when was it chartered? **A.** Rotaract Club of Birgunj, chartered on 13 March 1991.
- Q.** What does RAGAP stands for? **A.** Rotary Action Group for Addiction Prevention.

Talk programme by Mr. Dipendra Bikram Thapa, Past Education Secretary on school education in Nepal-challenges and way forward

President Rtn. Mahendra S. Rawal welcomed past Education Secretary of Nepal, Mr. Dipendra Bikram Thapa and Rtn. Khadak S. Bisht introduced him.

Mr. Thapa did his M.Sc. in Plant Ecology, and MPA on Rural Development and Project Administration in Nepal. He also did a M.Sc. in National Development and Project Planning in the U.K. He is a Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow. Mr. Thapa's career spans several levels of civil service jobs in various ministries of the government of Nepal. He has been the Secretary of Ministry of Labour and Transport Management, Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, and Ministry of General Administration. Prior to retirement in 2010, he served as Education Secretary while concurrently serving as the Secretary-General of National Commission for UNESCO, Nepal, Ministry of Education. Mr. Thapa has written widely and has done many consultancies and training both in country and internationally. He is also recognised for his talent in singing, music, and sport, winning several national level awards.

Mr. Thapa appreciated the opportunity to share his thoughts on challenges and way forward on school education in Nepal with the RCP family, currently led by his friend President Mahendra S. Rawal. He introduced the current situation of 29,000 public schools in Nepal, which represents some 81% of total schools.

Mr. Thapa gave an overview of governance and management of education system in Nepal and summarised his talk programme in four areas. Firstly, Nepal public education system is having a budget of 10% of the national budget, which is half the global covenant's suggestion of 20%. Among the challenges and way forward he noted a need to reduce dependency on donor-funding and political interference in the education sector as a whole.

Secondly, Mr. Thapa emphasised the importance of Head Teacher in public school education. H/She should have a combination of academic, professional and management expertise with a very good non-political selection mechanism.

Thirdly, he talked about the government's criteria for schools, which is there, but needs to be implemented without politicisation. The importance of intent in this regard can not be over-emphasised.

Finally, Mr. Thapa highlighted the issues associated with school management committees. With the federalism and decentralisation, it has become even more difficult to manage with one policy fitting all. He further noted a reduction of training centres for teachers from 29 to 7. One example of Ward Chair automatically becoming the chair of the school management committees may not be the most effective mechanism. The diversity and differences in the management of schools in the regions should be recognised.

In summary, Mr. Thapa appreciated the need for commitments at all the three – political, professional and people levels for an overall improvement of the school education system in Nepal.

Following an interesting Q/A session and comments from the representatives of the schools and local education official, on behalf of all the participants, President Elect Rtn. Preeti Khemka thanked Mr. Dipendra Bikram Thapa for his excellent talk programme and sharing of his thoughts on the questions raised. President Rtn. Mahendra S. Rawal also gave his own words of thanks before concluding the session.