



# The Mid Towner

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Bulletin of the Rotary Club of Chandigarh Midtown

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DR. V.J.S. VOHRA

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ASHISH AHUJA

## Programme



Please do attend

FRIDAY - SEPTEMBER 15, 2006 Volume : XXXI No. 11; September 13, 2006

### 'KYUNKI SAAS BHI KABHI BAHU THI'

- A panel discussion

Co-ordinators : Rtn. Arjan Singh & Rtn. Munish Jauhar

Venue : Hotel President, Sector 26, Chandigarh

Time : 7.00 P.M.

## RESERVATIONS - Chota or Mota Quota ?

The Ayes have it! That seemed to be about the general consensus of the voluble 'parliament' of Rotarians that had gathered in the last meeting of our club with Dir. Rtn. Atul Grover as the moderator for the panel discussion.

The really voluble voices belonged to AG PP Capt. Moni Kahlon, Rtn. Arjan Singh, PP Dr. Balram Gupta & Suraj Handa, with the end being brought up by our DGE Shaju Peter with his impeccable & eloquent summary.

Dir. Atul Grover had a reasonably tough time controlling the 'Parliament Rotarians', well at least for over the hour that the debate stretched into! Did I say debate? I'm sorry, as it was supposed to be, & did start off as a panel discussion, with four eminent panelists, viz. PP RDS Riar of the Rotary Chandigarh Central, Dr. Sukhmani Riar - Reader in the Dept. of History, P.U. and author of several books & papers on Politics in Sikh History, Dr. Shashi Jain - Principal, Dev Samaj College for Women and Ms. Shivani Gill, a final year student of Commerce, also the President of RC Chandigarh Midtown.

The good thing was that PP RDS Riar limited the topic to Reservation in Education only, and that too, only to schools. But that was enough to get the discussion (okay, so what if the volumes were loud!) going.

Let's start at the end, when Rtn. RTPS Tulsi in his vote of

thanks mentioned that if it had not been for Dr. Ambedkar, the caste issue would not have risen at all. Anyway, he (not Mr. Tulsi) had proposed a period of ten years for the reservations programs whatever they were.

The then PM, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru in a letter dated June 27, 1961 to the Chief Ministers, stated that "The only real way to help a backward group is to give opportunities of good education; this includes technical education which is becoming more & more important. Everything else is provision of some kind of crutches... I lay stress on the bright boys & girls because it is they who will raise our standards.

But if we go in for reservations on a communal & caste basis, we swamp the bright & able people & remain second or third rate.....this way lies not only folly, but disaster. How can we build the public sector or indeed any other sector with second rate people?"

An objection from the audience, I think it was Moni "But that was half a century ago. Things have changed, or rather NOT changed for the better" - stole the thunder.

The panelists started off with few facts - some basic facts of what's in store for the system :

- There is going to be 49% reservation of seats in schools.



PP Pallav initiating the discussion (or debate?)



PP Capt. Moni & Rtn. Arjan with their quota of opinions.  
Panelists (L to R) PP RDS Riar, Dr. Sukhmani Riar, Dr. Shashi Jain & Rtn. Shivani are all ears.

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- Such a student (49 out of every 100 students) will have the unqualified right to be passed through all classes till the eight (meaning he cannot be detained !) and / or until he reaches the age of eighteen. *Kuch Samjhe?*
- He or she will have to be taught in a language he can understand, or his mother-tongue.
- He/she does not get admitted on merit but in spite of the lack of it.
- The reserved student will not need a transfer certificate or any other proof of his capability to merit admission into a class of his choice or that of the Monitoring Committee. What it means is a country full of second & third class students who rule the roost.

And we have not gone into the realm of higher education as yet. You've seen the paralytic strikes all across the country against reservation in higher education in the last few months - the AIIMS, the medical students, the IIT students, the engineering students. What's up with the politicians? Why this brinkmanship?

Just for the record, if you are a doctor looking for a PG degree, you can try & get admission into the PGI with a minimum of 50% in your marksheet. But if you happen to be from the Reserved Category, your marks could go as low as 11% or as high as 20% to get admission.

Now for a look at the Constitutional provisions - what they were & what's been made of them :

*Art. 14 The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.*

*Art. 15(i) The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on the grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.*

*Art. 15(iii) Nothing in this article shall prevent the state for making any special provision for women & children.*

*Art. 16(i) There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the state.*

*Art 16(ii) No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, caste, sex, decent place of birth, residence or any of them, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of any employment or office under the State.*

*Art 16(iv) Nothing in the article shall prevent the State from making any provisions for the reservation of appointments or posts in favor of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the state, is not adequately represented in the services under the State.*

Now how come, what was explicitly forbidden by the constitution "classification based on caste" - became the rule?

But we had some voices in favour of the motion - reservations are needed !

It started off with Rtn. Arjan Singh saying that you might as well do whatever you can to uplift the underprivileged, or you will have to do so per force. They have the brains, but not the opportunity. And what has the last sixty years of Independence brought about anyway? What has their country given them? Only more misery & deprivation, snatched opportunities, living a wretched life at just subsistence levels?

I liked R'ann Parveen's analogy even better - every parent does a bit of reservation for the handicapped child of



PP Rtn. B.L. Ramsisaria wins Punctuality Draw

his family. All children are not born equal-you have to take from one to shore up the other. Like fingers on one's hands, they are not all equal.

Dr. Shashi Jain gave out the startling fact that although we had only 1257 Scheduled Castes & Tribes in 1931, we now have a staggering 3743 of them now! And the figure is growing not only in numbers of OBCs but also in their finite population numbers. Dr. Jain also told us of the efforts of a school in sector 46, called "Sikhya" which is imparting quality education to children of parents earning less than a thousand rupees a month. The audience reacted by saying that all schools could have a second shift for the under-privileged.

Our Rotaract President Shivani informed us of the Navodaya Schools, set up under the initiative of Late PM Sh. Rajiv Gandhi. These residential schools are top rated & cater to the best students from various schools in the rural hinterlands of the country for free. But she came in for a lot of flak from our 'naval captain' Moni when she let out that her parents were spending lakhs on her education. Moni wanted her to pay for tuitions by Chitkara to some of the underprivileged. Rtn. Vinod Sobti suggested an amount as well Rs 50,000/-!

The debate was getting hot with practically all present deeply involved in it. So to cool things off, an adjournment of the meeting was proposed and Pres. Dr. Vohra gladly implemented it, with a suggestion that we continue to have such topics for panel discussions now that the appetite had been whetted!

Recommended reading - FALLING OVER BACKWARDS - by Arun Shourie (Rupa & Co.)

 - PP Pallav Mukherjee

## 350 Eye Donation Forms filled at Eye Donation Camp



*DGE Shaju appreciatively gazes at the Posters & Slogans*

Rotaract Chandigarh Midtown.

To promote awareness among the students and motivate them towards donating eyes, poster-making and slogan writing competitions on the topic of "Eye Donation" were held in the college. The response of the students, especially members of the Rotaract Club of the college, was heart warming as 350 eye donation forms were filled and students pledged to donate their eyes. The prizes for slogan competition were sponsored by our club and refreshments for participating students was provided by IWV Chandigarh Midtown.

"Let Eye Donation be your family tradition", "Eye Donation makes your eyes immortal", "Eye Donation- a gift of beauty, a return for eternity" were some of the winning slogans that were written by the students on the occasion of the Eye Donation Camp at Dev Samaj College for Women, Sector:45-B, Chandigarh. This camp was organized by the State Blindness Control Society, Chandigarh Administration in collaboration with our Rotaract Chandigarh Midtown, Inner Wheel Chandigarh Midtown and



*Packed hall at Dev Samaj College - Pres. Dr. Vohra, Dr. Mrs. Meera Modi (Rtr. Co-ordinator) & enthusiastic students.*

Dr. Manjeet Singh Bains, Director Health Services, U.T., who was the Chief Guest at

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Dr. Sudesh Arya with his 'eye - opening' presentation

this function, said that there was no greater gift to human beings than eyes and eye sight was the most precious gift that one could give to another human after death. Dr. Sudesh Arya, Reader, Department of

Ophthalmology, GMCH-32, while delivering the keynote address apprised the students of the vast gap that existed between the demand and supply of cornea. He stated that there were around 1.5 million corneal blind people in India and every year 40,000-50,000 more are added to this number. However, eye donations all over India were not more than 25000. Dr. Areet, State Programme Officer of National Programme for Control of Blindness, informed that at least 1000 eye donations were required in Chandigarh alone but eye banks at PGI and GMCH received only 200 voluntary donations. Dr Rana and other renowned eye doctors from State Blindness Control Society, U.T. Administration answered queries of the students and tried to remove the prevalent myths and misconceptions about donating eyes. The camp rounded off with the students who won prizes in the poster-making & slogan-writing competitions being awarded by the Chief Guest who lauded their efforts."

Dr. Jawahar Luthra managed the stage very well and also explained the importance of holding such a camp. DGE Shaju Peter also graced the occasion and gave a brief talk on the subject. IW President Jitender Rai welcomed the Chief Guest, Dr. Bains and Ann Indu Vohra welcomed the Keynote Speaker Dr. Arya, with bouquet of flowers. Secy R.K. Luther, PP Pallav Mukherjee, Rtn Atul Grover & Office Secy V.P. Sharma were also present. President Dr. V.J.S. Vohra while giving vote of thanks, appreciated the motivation of the the Principal Dr Shashi Jain, her college staff and students in making the function an eye opener, an educative and informative programme.



- Report by Pres. Dr. V.J.S. Vohra

## District Conference at Hardwar

District Conference 2007 "Swadeshe Bhanwantrayam" is scheduled to be held at BHEL Convention Hall, Hardwar on 24th & 25th Feb. 2007, hosted by Rotary Club of Kankhal.

Registration charges:-

Upto 30th Sep 2006 - Rs 700 (Single); Rs 1300 (Couple)  
 Upto 31st Dec 2006 - Rs 800 (Single); Rs 1500 (Couple)  
 After 31st Dec 2006 and on the spot :  
 - Rs 900 (Single); Rs 1650 (Couple)

Great expectations from our club in the coming year. We have to attend in large numbers. Avail the concession and register before 30th Sep. Please deposit the registration charges with the Office Secy. V.P. Sharma.

### BIRTHDAY GREETINGS:

Rtn. Surjit Kumar



Sept. 21



### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

R'ann Indu & Rtn. Prem Anand

Sept. 17

R'ann Rashi & Rtn. Parveen Khosla

Sept. 18

### PUNCTUALITY DRAW :

Won by PP Rtn. B.L. Ramsisaria



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