

# The Mid Towner



BULLETIN OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF CHANDIGARH MIDTOWN : R.I. DISTT. 3080

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Club No. 15228

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## PROGRAMME

CoL Report—Some Legislative Changes in Rotary  
Chief Guest: PDG Rtn. J.P.S Sibia  
RID 3080 Rep. to the Council

Friday, May 14, 2010

Time : 7:00 P.M. Venue: Hotel President, Sector 26, Chandigarh

## The Wonderful World of Orchids



Prof. Dr. S.P. Vij

Prof. Dr. S.P. Vij, Chief Guest in the meeting on May 7, 2010 was introduced by fellow Botanist & Scientist, Rtn. Dr. I.S. Dua. Prof. Vij is an eminent Botanist who is NASI Senior Scientist, Platinum Jubilee Fellow and Founder Secretary of the Orchid Society of India. He is Former Chairman, Dept. of Botany, Panjab University, Chandigarh. He is a very well known scientist in India and abroad for his contribution to the world of orchids. He is a product of Panjab University with a PhD, a distinguished orchid biotechnologist, President Plant Science, Indian Science Congress 2005-06; Member Plant Biotechnology Task Force, DBT, GOI; Recipient of Lifetime Achievement Award for promotion of Indian orchidology, Visiting Professor Hiroshima University, Japan and Senior Consultant (Cytogenetics, Biotechnology, Developmental Biology) at Shoolini Institute of Life Sciences and Business Management, Solan.

Prof. Vij fascinated the Rotarians with a colourful Powerpoint presentation of a very large variety of orchids in different forms and characters. He impressively presented the various features of orchids.

Through these plants Prof. Vij also gave a message of worldly peace. He explained to us its therapeutic use

in rheumatic ailments, as a tonic, to cure nervous disorders, to cure cardiac problems, as expectorant, to enhance longevity and as anti-cancerous. The use of orchids in herbal medicines has a very long history. There is not a single ailment for which, therapeutic and curative elements are not found in one or the other orchid species. It is also reported that orchids were held in great repute as a medicine in 'Ayurveda'.

Orchids are in tremendous demand in the flower trade. They are known for the complexity and captivating beauty of their highly colorful and long lived flowers of diverse shapes, sizes and are considered as doyens among the ornamentally significant plants. Their long lasting and bewitchingly beautiful flowers as also their ability to travel long distances fetch high prices in the International market, hence making them one of the top traded cut flowers. The orchids comprise a group of highly evolved and successful flowering plants.

They are worldwide in distribution. In India they were known since ancient times as medicinal plants in Rigveda. Orchids represent the first horticultural crop propagated through tissue culture technique. They have been appreciated because of the exquisite quality of orchid blooms, variety of fragrance, brilliance in colours, remarkable range of sizes, manifold shapes, variations in the form and attractive habits, yet many species face threat to their survival because of habitat loss & unsustainable exploitation.

In nature the majority of orchid species flower only once a year. The flowering time may vary according to species and the climatic conditions of the area occupied by the species. So much so, there is no particular time of the year which can be quoted as the flowering time for orchids in general. But there are particular times of the year when a large number of orchids come into bloom all at once.

According to their different growth habits, orchids are generally divided into three main categories namely epiphytes, lithophytes and terrestrials. Epiphytes are suited for home culture and are grown perched high in the trees clinging to branches or in the trunk apex of the tree. They derive their nutrients from the air, rain, and any decaying vegetation which the roots can contact. They have specialised aerial roots which have a white spongy layer of cells called velamen. This protects the inner root tissues and absorbs water. These roots will also often dangle free in the atmosphere. Lithophytes can be seen covering the bases and forks of trees or filling crevices in rocks.

Orchids can absorb a maximum supply of nutrients from decaying mosses, humus and washed down soil. Terrestrials are soil loving plants growing in the ground, having a symbiotic relation with a special fungus. This fungus invades the cells of the root's outer layer, providing the plants with the nutrients and is essential for the seed germination of most orchids.

The orchids represent the first floricultural crop successfully mass propagated through Tissue Culture technique and the commercial application of micro propagation is being increasingly realized in this group of great ornamentals.

The orchids are marketed both as potted plants and as cut-flowers. In the past few years, the orchid trade

has increased both in volume and value throughout the world.

Many developing countries including Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia have established their own orchid Industries. A large export market is available if the products are right and marketed properly.

Despite the fact that India has diversified climate, low cost of labor, and progressive farming technology, the orchid industry is not even in an infant stage both in terms of micro propagation and commercial cultivation. This has been mainly due to non-availability of suitable planting material for large scale cultivation, lack of technology for commercial multiplication, lack of post-harvest handling technology for cut-flower export, and lack of incentives, appropriate Government policies for exporters, and commercial approach in cultivation.

Fortunately, the country has all the potentials for development of a successful orchid industry on scientific basis; it has varied and suitable climate and almost all the important commercial varieties of orchids can be grown for cut-flower production.

At present, the internal demand for cut-flower and ornamental plants is mainly met through production at coastal areas of Kerala mainly Cochin & Trivandrum. However, with the development of efficient low cost shade houses and post harvest technology, the ornamental plants for cut-flowers can be grown in a number of other parts of India as well.

Today a large diversified Hybrid population is available. All the growers seem to be very happy with the product with some growers complaining for the need of a canalized marketing for distribution of flowers and uniform price alternative.

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The contribution and services of experts like Prof. Vij can be of great importance in this 'Wonderful World of Orchids' which has immense global potential, not only due to its fragrance, beauty and variety but also because of its tremendous international trade value!

Formal vote of thanks was proposed by former DIU of Panjab University PP Rtn. Dr. S.K. Sharma who highlighted the popularity of Prof. S.P. Vij in the University amongst his colleagues and students. He

said, "Only a person like Prof. Vij with fifty years of hard work on orchids, could give such a wonderful presentation. It was very interesting." He thanked Prof. Vij on behalf of Rotarians of Chandigarh Midtown.

Meeting was followed by Cocktails sponsored by Rtn. Amandeep Syali. With the presence of his wife R'ann Dr. Tanvir, we welcome a new member to Rotary Chandigarh Midtown family.



Newly wed couple R'ann Dr. Tanvir & Rtn. Amandeep Syali.  
Great happy moments!



R'ann Dr. Tanvir & Rtn. Amandeep Syali receive a bouquet from Prof. S.P. Vij



R'ann Madhu & Rtn. Suresh Dhawan get wedding anniversary gift from Prof. S.P. Vij



PP Rtn. R.S. Chandgothia and R'ann Sharda (not in pic.) gets wedding anniversary gift from Prof. S.P. Vij

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Prof. S.P. Vij is presented a memento by PP Rtn. Dr. S.K. Sharma



PP Rtn. Anil Mehan gets punctuality award from Prof. S.P. Vij

### Contributions for TRF

President Gurdip S. Deep made a pleasant announcement, "Contributions for The Rotary Foundation has been pouring in." The latest to contribute to TRF and become a Paul Harris Fellow, is our very young Rotarian Karanjeet S. Arora.

The contributions to TRF this year has been good but more Rotarians are expected to come forward, as there is a very heavy 'discount' of 60%. Similarly, funds are expected for the Rain Harvesting project which also would be accounted towards TRF.

### District Assembly at Dehradun

As mentioned in the last bulletin, District Assembly is scheduled to be held on Sunday, 16th May 2010. The venue is Hotel Ajanta, Rajpur Road, Dehradun. All members of the Board of Directors Elect, along with all Committee Chairs for 2010-11 should attend this event. Those who have not yet registered shall get on the spot registration for Rs. 750.

### Punctuality Draw

Won by PP Rtn. Anil Mehan

### Wedding Anniversary Greetings

R'ann Chanchal & Rtn. C.J. Rai

R'ann Gurinder & Rtn. Dr. I.S. Dua



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