

*"Ask not what your nation can do for you;
ask what you can do for your nation"*

- Hon'ble Finance Minister, Punjab - Sardar Manpreet Singh Badal



President Prem Anand was formally installed as the 34th President of the Rotary Club of Chandigarh Midtown, at a solemn but glittering ceremony of Saturday, July 31, 2010 in the presence of Sardar Manpreet Singh Badal, Hon'ble Minister of Finance, Planning and Program Implementation, Punjab, a galaxy of R.I. Officers, Rotarians from neighboring Clubs, members of our own Club and guests, at PHD House, Sector 31, Chandigarh.

True to his reputation, Sardar Manpreet Singh Badal arrived in the totally packed venue dot on time, and was introduced to the VIP Guests present by the Reception Committee comprising of the Past Presidents of the Club. In a typically ceremonious fashion he was accompanied by the now Immediate Past President Gurdip Singh Deep, who arrived in the nick of time, to the dais. Others including Immediate Past Secretary, now Vice President Ritu Singal, President Prem Anand, Secretary Deepak Sood followed him, to the announcements in his own distinctive voice and style by PDG Shaju Peter, the Master of Ceremonies.

While First Lady Indu Anand presented a bouquet of

flowers to the Chief Guest Sardar Manpreet Singh Badal, Urmil Luther, wife of President Elect Raj Kumar Luther, presented a bouquet to Assistant Governor Praveen Goyal.

The 1729th and Installation Meeting was called to order by the Sergeant-At-Arms Past President Ajit Gulati, while Madhu Dhawan and Mala Sengupta led the National Anthem.

Madhu Dhawan, also sang the "*Ganesh Vandana*" in a lilting sweet voice.

Invocation was followed by Lighting of the Lamp, by all the six dignitaries on the dais, marshaled by PP B.L. Ramsisaria, assisted by Mala Sengupta, Shaju, a linguist, recited a Sanskrit "sloka" while lighting the lamp was in progress, lending to the function an aura of spirituality.

It is customary that the Immediate Past President presents a brief annual Report to the audience at such a function. Amarjit Sohal, our IT Consultant, who had been coordinating with Gurdip as well as Prem for the Audio-Visual presentation did a commendable job in coordinating



with Gurdip's speech. In spite of the effort, by the time Gurdip finished, the program had been delayed by just about seven minutes. Paul Harris Fellow Pins were presented to P. K. Verma, Harpreet Gill, A.K. Puri, Aaliyah Bindra, Aadrit Sachdeva, Aaryav Sachdeva, Dr. Rita Kalra, Dr. Anureet Bhatti, Karanjit Singh Arora, Rajiv Aggarwal, Parveen Khosla.

The exchange of Collar ceremony is a solemn one, signifying passing the baton. It was with grace that Gurdip passed on the collar to Prem. The handing over of the Club Charter by Immediate Past Secretary Ritu Singal to Secretary Deepak Sood, signifying the handing over of responsibility of administrating the Club, was another solemn activity carried out with grace.

Indrajeet, who is long time friend of Prem, introduced him. His friendship with Prem, he said, was cemented on two counts. Firstly, it was Prem's inability to think ill of others; secondly, the several years of "hands on service", which both indulged in as young persons, a quality, which permeates Prem's professional life too.

He enunciated his ambitious objectives within 10 minutes, A Membership growth of 10%, recognizing the role of Spouses, Family of Rotary promotion during regular Club meetings were included in his objectives for Club Service. What stood out in his presentation was the use of technology-driven methodology to administer the Club

efficiently. The Vocational Service Project being carried out over past decade would continue, said Prem. The addition to these would be the Computer Education Project for economically weaker un-employed girls of Khudda Ali Sher. The Employment Fair for the differently abled would be an added feature this year, Four Multi-Specialty Medical Aid Camps, a Glaucoma Detection Camp, making the AASRA Project at Government Medical College and Hospital, Sector 32, Chandigarh, usable in warm weather, Night School for Brick Kiln Workers in Sarangpur, Blood Donation and Disability Detection Camps with the help of the RCC were some of the points on Prem's Agenda. Two World Community Projects – one for Water Harvesting, and the other for Hearing Aid for the hearing impaired children within the age group of 0-5 years are expected to be executed this year. Participation in the Group Study Exchange Program, and disbursement of Micro Credits through our collaborative Projects with Milano Sud Est, Milano Fierra, and all the 10 Districts of Italy will be continued. These Micro Credits would be extended throughout the district 3080. One Project envisaged to be done through the Rotaract was the ICE, or, In Case of Emergency.

Two new Members, Mohan Singh Cheema, a Criminal Lawyer, who had also attended the Membership Development Seminar at Barog in end-June; and, Nitin Kanojia, Head of Marketing, Corporate, Airtel, Punjab, were inducted into the Rotary fold. Both were accompanied by their wives, Amarjeet Kaur and Sonika Kanojia



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respectively when PDG Major Som Dutt presented the Lapel Pins on them,

The high point of the program had arrived. Every member of the audience had a look of expectancy on their face, when Arjan Singh, strode to the podium to introduce the Chief Guest.

A four time Legislator from Gidderbaha, Mr. Badal, is no ordinary politician, having been educated in the elite Doon School and St. Stephens' College, with deep interest in Basketball, having earned his spurs for his School, College and the State of Punjab. As Finance Minister he has the onerous responsibility of balancing the budget, as well as political balancing. He has diverse interests in Military History, developmental economics, Urdu poetry, though he is Law Graduate from the University of London. One of his varied interests includes the restoration of old cars. As a social activist, he crusades for environmentally friendly farming methods, spread of education and the eradication of Cancer in the Malwa region. He is a different personality, accepts a token salary of Rupee One, refuses security, and is an inspirational speaker, who brings to politics a breath of fresh air. Presenting Sardar Manpreet Singh Badal, Arjan exclaimed – May his tribe increase!

"Khuda ke bande to hain hazaron, bano me firte hain mare mare,

Main to uska banda banoonga, jisko khuda ke bandon se pyar ho"

Mr. Badal began by quoting Allama Iqbal's couplet in original, to sum up Rotarian ethos, and stole the hearts of the audience, to say the least.

Acts in his own life, he said, was inspired by the indomitable spirit of Russian soldier-patriot Nikolai Ostrovski, when he said, "Mans dearest possession is his life, given to him but once, and he must live this, so that he has no regrets of a petty past". In essence, a man's life should be dedicated to alleviation of poverty and deprivation.

This is what the Rotary movement throughout the world stood for, which is why he cannot refuse an invitation to a Rotary meeting. He established instant rapport with the audience, to the sounds of their thunderous applause.

Born as he was in the early 60's, he said, when the "Green Revolution" was taking roots, the Punjab Agricultural University was being built, as was Chandigarh, and the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences, and the Bhakra Dam, for the young people of his generation, it was exciting times. There was a spring in everybody's walk. There was hope that poverty, hunger and deprivation would be annihilated. Yet, today, as Finance Minister, he faced the same challenges.

So where did we go wrong? We have political independence, with the great sacrifices our father's and grandfather's generation made, facing British "batons and bullets", so that we could live a life of honor and dignity. Today, nearly 30 percent of India's population earns less than Rs. 25.00 a day. Large number of children go hungry or on a half empty stomach. After 63 years of independence, by no means a short time, our dreams have not been



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realized.

Were the sacrifices made by extraordinary leaders like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Ram Prasad Bismil, Shaheed Bhagat Singh, without demands on the nation, made in vain? Sacrifices came naturally to these heroes.

For him, balancing the budget was the least of his problems; it was motivating young persons of this country to work for the country. Citing the case of Sanik School, Kapurthala, where he was once a Chief Guest, it was with "great anguish and searing pain" that the Commandant said that the recruitment from Punjab into the Armed Forces from Sainik Schools had fallen from 1700 to 5. Was the high value employment in a multinational more attractive than working for your country? Had it been so, he said there would not have been a Mother Teresa or a Mahatma Gandhi!

"Khuda ne uskaum ki halat nahi badli,

Na ho khayal jise apni halat ki"

he said again quoting Allama Iqbal. So what we are fighting for is the enemy within and not countries like Pakistan and China. We are fighting poverty, hunger, lack of housing, lack of medical facilities, lack of education, even lack of leadership. He confessed that he said what he did, only to prick our conscience. The winds of change, he said, was favorable, These are exciting times, when our population growth has fallen from 2.5 % for 40 years since the 50's to 1.5 percent now. The growth rate has geometrically grown from 3.5 percent in the same period to double figures now.

It is possible to bring change now, with our own mortal hands. The cutting edge to achieve this lies in our resolve and our leadership.

The house rose to give Sardar Manpreet Singh Badal a standing ovation.

It was after the applause dwindled that PP B.L. Ramsisaria, could speak his formal vote of thanks in chaste Hindi. I missed some of the words, but PP Ramsisaria while doing so, he lightened the atmosphere in the hall, which made the responsiveness to the fellowship great in building up the camaraderie, which preceded the sumptuous dinner immaculately organized by PP Subhash Bindra.

Get Well Soon

Madhu Sudan Manaktala, was diagnosed of a growth on his right kidney, and was operated upon at Medicity, Gurgaon on July 08, 2010, which is also his birthday.

He is recovering well and has been advised complete rest at home.

We wish him a speedy recovery.

Rajnish Ahuja Bereaved

Mrs. Chander Kanta Kukkar, mother of Ann Savita Ahuja passed away at Sri Ganganagar on July 27, 2010. She was 76. We offer our condolences to all members of the bereaved family.

Change in Mobile Number

Please make a note of the new mobile Number of PP. Dr. Mrs. Vanita Gupta - 8968108320

Greetings





Birthday of Rotarian Spouse

Naresh K. Jain  August 09

Birthday of Rotary Ann's

Aruna Agarwal  August 08
Gurinder Dua  August 09

Birthday of Rotarians

Suresh Dhawan  August 07
Ashok Kumar Sharma  August 09
Mrs. Deepa Bhar  August 09
PP B. L. Ramsisaria  August 12

Wedding Anniversary

Beena & Viney B. Aggarwal  August 12



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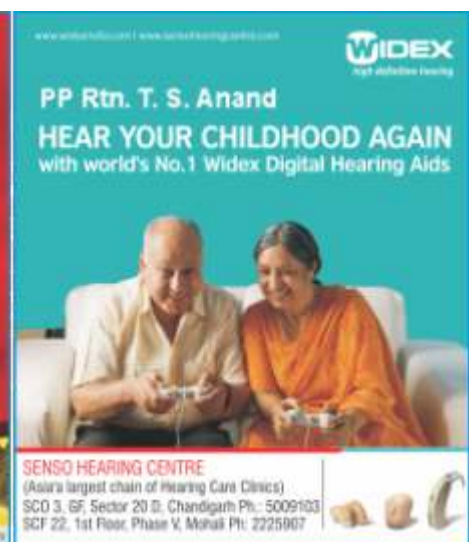


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