



ORDINARY MEN THAT ACCOMPLISHED EXTRAORDINARY THING

THE NEW ZONE FOR AFRICA ON THE FRONT BURNER



PRIP RAJENDRA SABOO



PRIP WILFRID J. WILKINSON



PRIP KALYAN BANERJEE



PRIP GARY C. K. HUANG



PRIP JOHN F. GERM



PRID TOM BRANUM SNR



PRID SAFAK ALPAY

Featuring

- ❶ A one of a kind RYLA organised by D9125
- ❷ Quotes honouring God almighty

The typical human nature yields to the temptation to move on with Life or on the alternative delve into an entirely new adventure once a mission is accomplished.

It has been the dream of African Rotarians to have a Rotary zone of its own. This dream was shared and to some extent made manifest by some friends of Africa who are passionate about the continent.

In our last but one edition we celebrated the good news that the RI districts in Africa now constitutes a zone but as at then the board of directors of Rotary international were yet to finalise the boundaries and zone numbering. I can now confirm to you that come 1st of July, 2019 all the districts in Africa will belong to zone 22.

This edition of your favourite newsletter is designed to celebrate those ordinary people who inadvertently accomplished extra-ordinary thing by transforming their dreams to reality. Some of them were

kind to contribute a piece in this treatise. In order of seniority they are

- 1, PRIP Rajendra Saboo
- 2, PRIP Wilfrid J. Wilkinson
- 3, PRIP Kalyan Banerjee
- 4, PRIP Gary C.K. Huang
- 5, PRIP John F. Germ
- 6, PRID Tom Branum snr
- 7, PRID Safak Alpay

I believe that there were some who contributed immensely but silently. We appreciate and celebrate them too. We are unable to mention everyone's name and certainly there are some that are not known to us.

Some Rotary leaders from Africa naturally made contributions towards realising this dream. We are not taking their inputs for granted. We are happy to celebrate them too.

We thank the chair of the zone review committee, all committee members, working groups, RI staff and RI Board that accepted the proposal of the zone review committee.

Dear Rotarians of African descent, the work has just started. This is wishing our



PDG LAWRENCE OKWOR

avid readers a merry Christmas and a spirit filled New Year! (Joyeux Noël et bonne année)

Happy reading!

PDG Lawrence Okwor
(lawrenceokwor@yahoo.com)
For: ROTA

Rajendra K.Saboo

Past President (1991-92)

Rotary International



'Look Beyond Yourself'

K A M L A C E N T R E

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Africa – Congratulations And Salutation

I extend my hearty congratulations to Rotarians and Rotary leadership of Africa. You have done it and you have earned the zone.

At the October 2016 meeting of the Board of Director of Rotary International, it was decided to review the zone structure as per the earlier mandate of reviewing the zones every ten years. Three committees were constituted to review the Pacific/Asia, Europe and Africa, Americas. In addition, the terms of reference and the guidelines for restructuring of zones were spelled out. The Europe/Africa Committee had all the current directors from Europe and since there was no director from Africa, I suppose PRID Safak Alpay was also made part of the committee. We can remember Safak's tremendous contribution in thinking of Africa and providing the needed motivation for reaching the higher goal.

One cannot but remember late Sam Owori who laid the foundation for membership growth. At every opportunity he projected the potential that the continent held. Credit needs to be given to PRIP Wilf Wilkinson who was part of establishing ROTA, (Reach Out To Africa). With the creation of this body and representation of all the sections of Africa in the deliberation of this committee a new path breaking direction was adopted which was greatly initiated and inspired by Past Chairman and PRID Tom Branum.

Through his imaginative concept, he brought the 'troika' in which the trio or trinity got involved which included current governors and the two following governors of each district. This led to setting the goals with a sense of urgency and commitment. We also recall the first Chairman of ROTA, PRID and The Rotary Foundation Trustee Orscelik Balkan who used his influence in bringing added awareness for Africa to start thinking of its own story.

It has been my privilege to attend most of the institutes in Africa and also attending ROTA meetings. I could sense the spirit of unity and even those French speaking districts aligned to French districts, showed their desire to be part of Africa. Africa was rising and waking up. I know that there has been a demand for the zone exclusive to Africa

and I remember my advice at one of the African breakfasts at the R.I. Convention that Africa would have to earn the zone or show that it has come close to earning the goal. In Rotary we don't have free lunch.

I know that there has been some tardiness in the upward growth of membership in some areas. And yet one could see that there was always the determination to remove the constraints and have the graph rise northwards speedily. I believe that this acceleration was one of the factors which must have convinced the committee and Board of Directors to recognize the eligibility of a zone for Africa. Rotary leaders from Europe also recognize that in wake of the growth, Africa has the potential it has shown and they wholeheartedly supported the balancing of the zones.

This structuring will enable Africa to get a one R.I. Board Director with a gap of two years which itself is a big achievement.

To have one zone is the first step.

At our ROTA meetings there always was an objective to have a director from Africa every time. Even a proposal for an additional director was mooted. I do hope that the first level achieved will be the springboard for the higher goal. I have no doubt that with presence of an African on the R.I. Board every alternate term, will provide great boost to the African Rotarians and great hope to those who feel connected to Africa.

If the recent past has been the time of Asia, then the next decades will belong to Africa. However, it will not come automatically. The Rotarians in Africa will have to work for it. If they can do so, they will be able to share the growing influence of Rotary worldwide in the spirit of Ubuntu. I saw the game the children play during my visits to Africa when they used to share their prize booty together. It means humanity is one: we are because you are.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. Saboo".

Rajendra K. Saboo

THE ROTARY FOUNDATION

Wilfrid J. Wilkinson
Trustee, The Rotary Foundation, 2009-13
President, Rotary International, 2007-08

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November 27, 2017



Dear Friends of ROTA:

Year-ends are good because they make us stop and think...what have we accomplished as Rotarian's in the first six months of this Rotary year?

- (1) Have we been successful in introducing at least one new member to our club or to a neighboring club?
- (2) Have we shared our fellowship, our knowledge, our enthusiasm and hard work with other Rotarians or non-Rotarians?
- (3) Have we participated physically or financially in a club project to help the many disadvantaged persons that can be found everywhere in this world?

If you can truthfully say "yes" to one of these questions, I congratulate you and thank-you because you have made my 2017 year, somebody's 2017 year and hopefully your 2017 year much happier!

All the best in 2018,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Wilfrid J. Wilkinson'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wilfrid J. Wilkinson, CM, FCPA
President of Rotary International 2007/08
Chair of The Rotary Foundation 2012/13

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MESSAGE

I have been privileged to have been associated with ROTA since almost its inception because I have always felt that the continent of Africa has many great Rotarians to whom service and friendship come naturally. And despite this many challenges – of distress, of differences, of different diseases, they keep on doing a magnificent job, being together, keeping together, working together & achieving together. More power to their elbows. More support to their magnificent efforts. More smiles on more faces.

Good luck. May the Almighty bless you all.

Regards,

Kalyan Banerjee



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Dear Fellow Rotarians in Africa,

It is a great pleasure to give my greetings for the last edition of ROTA for 2017. It is time again to bring in the New Year. Wish the merriest of Christmas to you and your loved ones, and wish you happiness and prosperity in the year ahead.

Under Rotary in Africa Chair Patrick D. Chisanga's able leadership and the hard work from the entire editorial team, ROTA newsletter is outstanding. It always provides the updated Rotary news and warmest stories about Services and Projects in Africa. Great job! Congratulations!

This year's Rotary theme is **“Rotary: Making a Difference.”** RI President Ian Riseley is inspiring us to innovate. We need to take Rotary to a new level and to do so it needs new idea, new methods and more engagement by more Rotarians. I encourage you to over achieve this goal and show to the world that the power of Rotary is strong and united in Africa.

Sincerely Yours,

Gary C.K. Huang
RI President (2014-15)

ROTA has been and is an exceptional organization that assist Rotarians and communities throughout Africa. As a result of those efforts Rotary has continued to grow in Africa and has become a zone. As PRIPE Sam Owori would desire we must continue to grow membership in Rotary so more service can be provided to all communities in Africa and around the world.

While Africa has reached the goal of becoming a zone there is still much that needs to be done. Africa must continue to develop strong leadership at the Club, district, and international levels. I know Rotarians in Africa are committed to doing this by Making a Difference while Serving Humanity.

Congratulations on the Great Work.

John F. Germ
President, Rotary International,
2016-17



My heartfelt congratulations to the energetic Rotarians whose efforts have resulted in the recognition of Africa as a Rotary Zone. This first step opens the door to even more influence in the future. My own small involvement with hundreds of African Rotary leaders over the past decade has transformed my thinking from Africa as “the dark continent” of American history books. I have learned that the continent is vibrant and ripe with the promise of assuming its place as the **“Powerhouse of Rotary”** and in the world. I have often said that being involved with ROTA has been my best Rotary assignment ever and I will forever value my many friends there.

Through the ROTA connection, we have seen members who live

thousands of miles apart come to feel a bond with each other, joined in a common purpose. Best wishes to ROTA for continued success.

Thomas (Tom) Branum, Sr.
Rotary International Director 2007-2009
Reach Out To Africa Chairman 2008-2009
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Dream Realized

During these days we are all sharing the happiness of seeing Africa as a ZONE in Rotary world. There is no doubt that especially in between 2014 to 2016 “The Reach out to Africa” Committee and the leadership in Africa played an important role in reaching this goal.

As we all know ROTA was established with a vision to enhance Rotary with an emphasis on service projects development, partnerships with Rotary clubs and districts in other countries, utilization of RI and TRF resources, involvement in Rotary programs, and membership growth in Africa. I meet with ROTA Committee and Leadership of Africa first time in April 2014 ROTA meeting at Dar Es Salaam Tanzania. At the end of this important meeting I understood very clearly that among the top two goals of the leadership besides Eradicating Polio in Africa was healthy membership growth to be a ZONE in the near future. During the following ROTA committee meetings in Marrakesh and Mombasa with the leadership of Africa, we observed a very high motivation and cooperation among the “troika” of the districts. Participants strongly have believed that Africa has the greatest future for Rotary and therefore membership should grow in the continent.

During years 2014-16 as the serving Director of RI representing ZONE 20 following the efforts of District Governors, especially creative methods of some Governors in increasing membership were remarkable. I feel proud with all of them! And it was great honor and pleasure for me to support them by any means. Finally in Accra Rotary institute it was possible to note that Africa was slowly but surely approaching to reach its goal of becoming a ZONE especially after listening to a very important message of RIPE Sam Owori.

No doubt that those Regional Rotary leaders and Rotary coordinators played important role to

have critical impact on membership and extension of Rotary in Africa and ROTA Committee was an integral part of this effort.

I had an honor and privilege to serve as the member of the 2016-17 Zone Review Committee and also Co-Chair of Regional Group B with RID Mikael Mikael Ahlberg, responsible for Europe-Middle East and Africa. After careful study on the structures of the ZONE's by considering given criteria, committee made its proposal to RI Board regarding the new ZONE structures. RI Board decided to make African continent a ZONE(22) by including two district namely D.2451 – Egypt and D.9010 – covering Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Mauritania from ZONE 20B in North Africa.

Naturally this decision of the Board made all of us very happy. After visiting several districts in Africa and observing the passion of Rotarians to Rotary project they realized and the membership growth trend in many districts, I can easily say that Africa, without any doubt, deserved to be a ZONE in Rotary World. With this understanding I would like to congratulate by heart all dedicated Rotary Leaders and Rotarians of Africa for their commitment and tireless effort to increase effectiveness of Rotary in the continent and also membership in their districts. There is no doubt that with the addition of two very active districts to the family, Rotary will be much more relevant, vibrant and responsive to the needs of the communities in the continent.

At this point we have to remember again our dear Friend PRIPE Sam Owori. I am extremely happy that he was able to see the day that Africa became a ZONE in Rotary world which was one of his dreams for his continent. I bow respectfully before his memory and thanks to God that his dream realized together with all my Rotary Family in Africa.

Safak Alpay
PRID 2014-16
ZONE 20 and 19b

RYLA ABUJA 2017

AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE

The Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) organized for youths within the age bracket of 16 – 30 years by Rotary International District 9125 with the theme - RYLA: An Empowerment Tool for Shaping Tomorrow's Leaders remains a remarkable experience. The 6 day camping session was held on Sunday, September 17 – Friday, September 22, 2017 at the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Academy, along Airport Road in Abuja, with 456 participants sponsored by Rotary Clubs across the 23 states and FCT, which falls under the purview of District 9125.

The colourful flag-off was performed by the District Governor, Engr. Mbanefo Nnoka, with the support of the Honourable Minister of the FCT, Alhaji Mohammed Bello, who was represented by the Chief Executive Officer of Abuja Investment Enterprise Limited, Mr. Chudi Ezirigwe and Professor Iliya Dongs, Provost, NSCDC Training Academy.

The 456 participants were evenly allocated to 8 houses named after Nigeria's founding fathers; Sir Ahmadu Bello, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Rotary living legend and Past Rotary International President, Jonathan Majiyagbe, Dr. Kazeem Mustapha (District 9125 first District Governor, the current District Governor and Host; Engr. Mbanefo Nnoka and sponsors – Nigeria Postal Service (NIPOST) and National Biotechnology Institute (NBTI). Colourful designs of the biography and photographs of the founding fathers, Rotary Icon and District Governors, and the history and vision of the sponsors were on display at the parade ground.

The assemblage of youths which undisputedly was the largest recorded by the District since inception was a potpourri of high-flying and young graduates, undergraduates and high school graduates, who were desirous to avail themselves of the opportunities intrinsic to the event, with programmes skewed towards skill acquisition and leadership skills.

Speakers were drawn from government, public and private sectors, but with a deliberate bias to youthfulness, so as to strike a chord of connection between the participants and the speakers. Honorable Omosede Igbinedion, Deputy Chair, Committee on House Services, House of Representatives spoke on the participants igniting their dream, Mrs. Tosin Dokpesi, MD, AIT spoke on public speaking, with Mrs. Keziah Okonofua, Deputy Director on Skill Acquisition, NYSC also speaking on the need for a self-reliant youth.

The paper presentation segment also had other youthful presenters like Rotarians Soochi Katiens (RC Abuja Asokoro Diamond), Medina Abubakar (RC Kaduna) and Ofe Imomoh (RC Abuja Federal) all speaking on diverse issues.

Rotary knowledge was imparted on the participants by PDGs Joshua Hassan and Mike Omotosho, with Rotns. Jumoke Bamigboye (District Chair, Rotaract) and Jumoke Olaleye (District Chair, PolioPlus) speaking on the path to Rotary and End Polio Now Campaign respectively.

The skill acquisition bouquet had 8 skills on parade; Digital Photography and film making, blogging, online marketing, soap making, bag and shoe making, baking, catering

services etc. And the event had tremendous support from Mr. Oladotun Roy (Dotunroy blog) and Solomon Soja (RC Kaduna), who did excellently well, and also in the production of the video clips of the event and transferring knowledge to the participants, who chose digital photography and film making.

The event climaxed in a gala/awardnight of beauty and colour, with the runway and pageantry segment lighted by very pretty and enthusiastic Rylarians, with colourful costumes from Kento Couture.

Highlights of the gala night was the presentation of awards to deserving clubs in the District for their support with RC Abuja Metro coming tops, while RC Kaduna shared 2nd place with RC Abuja Federal and RC Wuse Central sharing the 3rd spot with RC Garki – Abuja.

In the category of participants, Rylarian Gbande- Mr RYLA, Theresa Igwe – Miss RYLA and Grace Kaslong – Miss Big, with Chukwudi Onijo and Hephziba Olakode as most outstanding male and female participants.

The joy and fulfilment on the sides of the participants and the central planning committee knew no bounds for the hitch-free event, as well as the bonding, camaraderie and knowledge acquired, albeit intangibles but could be felt by all.

See you all at RYLA 2018!

Assistant Governor Elvis

Agbonifo Obaseki,

Assistant Rotary Public Image Coordinator, Zone 20A,
District 9125 RYLA Chair 2017-18

IMAGES FROM THE RYLA EVENT



Quotes Honouring God Almighty

- ✓ Whatever comes from God is impossible for any man to change.
- ✓ Though our feelings come and go, God's love for us does not.
- ✓ Today, I am thankful to God for good friends.
- ✓ Sometimes God closes doors because it's time to move forward. HE knows we won't move unless circumstances force us to.
- ✓ Conscience is the voice of God in the nature and heart of Man.
- ✓ God allows all things to happen for valid reasons. Some will be revealed to us some won't. We need not seek nor understand those reasons, but to have faith in HIS wisdom.
- ✓ Your past should not define you. God is ready to work on you.
- ✓ Life may be tough, but I've got a God that is tougher.
- ✓ If you can find the God inside of yourself, you can find the God inside everybody.
- ✓ The favour of God will change your life.
- ✓ God may not come exactly when you call HIM but HE is always on time.
- ✓ When the enemy tries to get me down, the LORD will lift me up.
- ✓ Keep your head up. God gives HIS hardest battles to HIS strongest soldiers.