

THE COMMUNIQUÉ

Amrita Toastmasters Club's Newsletter



WHY COMMUNIQUÉ?

The founders of Amrita Toastmasters Club in conception had a few goals in mind. To initiate a self-sufficient working Toastmasters club, to establish the power, influence and effect of public speaking on a professional level and most importantly to create a group of extraordinary people who are confident communicators and leaders. It is with immense pride that we publish our first newsletter, 'THE COMMUNIQUE' which serves as platform to share how much we've grown as a club and also how our members have developed and excelled as better communicators .

Attached to the newsletter are articles and poems written by our members, both past and present. The newsletter also contains events that were the highlights of our term, like club contests, combined meets, etc.,

The main purpose of this newsletter is to recognise and share the work done by our members. The newsletter is an assortment of important events, write-ups and articles from our members. We hope that this newsletter will be a good read and will encourage and motivate others to join and make the most out of this amazing club.

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A quick glimpse

- TM Shivarjan

BLINK

- TM Krishna

Shattering the Glass Ceiling or Societal Transgression?

- TM Aiswarya

A Cry for Tomorrow

- TM Ajay Krishna

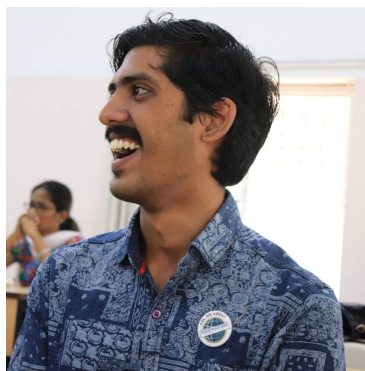
The Voice that lead me

- TM Mayur

President's Note

Toastmasters International is a wonderful platform for people who hope to become great speakers. Once you start the path to achieve that dream as a member, it's not just a skill of public speaking that is added, but a lot more than that. You are a part of a family; a group of people who will always bring out the best in you, in the form of mentoring, constructive feedback and guidance. Along this journey, you will get to connect with a lot of cheerful and wonderful Toastmasters from neighbouring clubs, areas, divisions, districts and even other countries. Moreover, your character will become more vibrant, you will become more of a responsible person and a true leader who will bring the best out of his fellow toastmasters and last but not the least, a great speaker! I welcome you all to the maiden edition of the newsletter of one of the 16,660+ power-packed clubs, Amrita Toastmasters Club!

Amrita Toastmasters Club has brought out the best of its members and it is continuing to do so. Every toastmaster will definitely have wonderful memories. Happy toasting!



TM Akaash Varatharajan

President

Editor's Note

From when I was a little kid, my affinity towards public speaking was immense and I would speak my mind at every chance I would get. But as I grew up, I rarely opened up and found it very difficult to communicate my thoughts and ideas. One fine day, I decided to do something about it and that's when I decided to try out a different arena all together - Toastmasters. And believe me there was no looking back. Amrita Toastmasters Club is a home away from home and we are all one big family. This newsletter stands as an example of hard work, dedication and most importantly team work. It wouldn't have been possible without the constant motivation and encouragement of all the members especially the Executive Committee and I am forever thankful for that. With that being said, I present to you the first newsletter of Amrita Toastmasters Club - 'The Communique'.



TM Gopika Sivasailam

Vice President
Membership

A QUICK GLIMPSE

The Amrita Toastmasters Club (ATC), chartered on 17th December 2016, has been active for two years now, and has been witness to some groundbreaking landmark meetings, which were all results of great dedication from ATC's Executive Committee members.



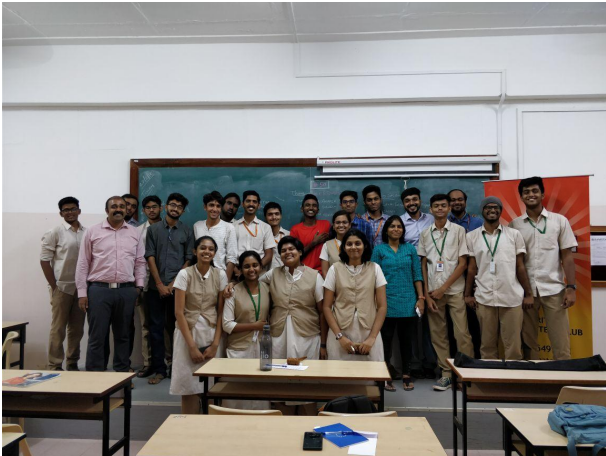
The Genesis

Our Club's very first meeting was held on 6th January 2017. It was an amazing meeting, graced by the presence of many stalwarts of the Coimbatore Toastmasters Club (CTC), such as TM Naren and TM Joe, and had 18 ATC members, 6 CTC members and 13 Guests (including two faculty members) in attendance.

The TMOD for the meeting was TM Abiram (who chose to speak on the theme 'Legends') with TM Bharat as GE, and TM Puneet, the then Club President as the TTM. The prepared speakers for the day included TM Shiny, TM Gangatharan, and TM Jananika. In all, it was indeed a grand meeting to remember and look back on!

A Landmark Half-Century Meeting:

Our 50th official club meeting took place on 27th January, 2018. It was attended by TM Joe from Coimbatore Toastmasters Club, and was indeed a memorable affair, with TM Akaash as the TMOD and TM Ganesh as the TTM, and TM Ikram as the GE for the day. The theme for the day was 'Milestones', to commemorate the milestone crossed that day.



The attendees of the grand day



TM Ajay, making his voice heard

A Moment to Pause and Think:

Meeting #73, held on 13th July 2018, was another such landmark meeting for our club. In this meeting, we had arranged for three very important sessions:

1. An Educational Session on 'How to make the best use of Base Camp Resources' by TM Shivarangan.
2. A 'Moments of Truth' Session and a discussion of our Club Success Plan, conducted by our Club President, TM Akaash.
3. A Member Interest Survey by TM Purnima, to keep track of our members' aspirations and goals in Toastmasters.



Meet #73

The More, The Merrier:

ATC's first joint meeting of the current term was held on 15th August 2018. Our esteemed guests were the members of Sri Eshwar Toastmasters Club. The TMOD for the special Joint Meeting was TM Ganesh, who spoke on the theme 'Countries' and provided a surprisingly fresh perspective on the idea of a country and its purpose.



The poster for the meet



TM Ganesh making a point with fervour

TM Aishwarya, President of the Sri Eshwar Toastmasters Club, took up the role of General Evaluator. She had a lot of inputs to offer and handled the role with élan and grace. The Table Topics Master for the day was TM Abiram. He provided some amazing, witty Table Topics, and it is a testament to the abilities of the members of both clubs that the speakers handled the challenging topics with great enthusiasm and creativity.

In all, this term's Joint Meeting was a grand success, and a wonderful testimonial to the commitment of both the clubs' Executive Committees to improving their reach and experience.



ATC and Sri Eshwar's Toastmasters Club in one frame!

The Impromptu Challenge:

Our club went a bit experimental for our 74th Meeting. Instead of pre-determining the role takers for the meeting, we decided to make the entire process impromptu!

The TMOD for the day, chosen half an hour before the meeting started, was myself, TM Shivarankan, who spoke about 'Nothing In Particular', a very emotional theme quite close to my heart. TM Purnima, along with TM Sai Maitreya and TM Kausik, managed to come up with some very intriguing and funny topics that livened up the meeting greatly. The prepared

(note, not Impromptu) speaker for the day was TM Mithun. In all, for a meeting with roles taken up on a moment's notice, it was an amazing meeting.



Meet #74

Conclusion:

In conclusion, I would like to state that the strength of a club such as ATC, lies in the dedication and energy that its members invest in it. And I hope that it is evident from this article, that our members are a tenacious lot with great potential and big dreams.



TM Shivarankan Menon

Vice President
Education

BLINK

A blink and it all changed
 The bright lights that glowed bliss
 Dimmer they became as I stared ahead
 Waiting for a flare of hope

A blink and it all changed
 The din and music that echoed
 To that moment, died in the chaos
 Of my mind, wherein screamed silence

A blink and it all changed
 My chest heaved suddenly
 Unable to adapt to the grim changes
 Yearning was my lungs, for more air

A blink and it all changed
 Swayed the trees around me
 The leaves rustled and creaked, the trunks
 As though, reflecting my mind's turmoil

A blink and it all changed
 The quiet of the night whispered
 Found a home, the breeze in my bones
 And the smell of the air, stung my nose

A blink and now I know
 Know that change is inevitable
 That own I, nothing but myself
 And this moment for sure

A blink and now I feel
 That nexus of life is bound to break
 No soul stays eternally, no heart I own
 Life is all that and more

A blink and it all changed
 A blink and now the change, I feel
 A blink and now, the change I see
 The change I inhaled

TM Krishna Valsaraj

Member

IMPRESSIONS

"Toastmasters gave me an opportunity to mingle with like minded people. It gave me a platform to improve my communication skills which I aspired for my betterment. The concern and care given by each and every toastmasters makes me feel like I am with my family."

- **TM Mitun**

"Toastmasters has helped me gain confidence in public speaking and get to know a lot of people. I look forward to more meets and fun as well as learning!"

- **TM Purnima**

"The day I had attended my first meet of Toastmasters, I knew that I finally found a club I could call home. It introduced me to a community of some wonderful people. It was everything I had wanted and bolstered my passion of public speaking in perfect elegance and efficiency."

- **TM Krishna**

"Never have I ever heard of a club that concentrates on developing speaking skills rather than judging the speaker's content. When I got into Toastmasters, I could assess myself and now I'm on the verge of becoming a really good speaker. Thanks to the Toastmasters Club of Amrita!"

- **TM Sai Maitreya**

"As it always happens, initially I was very reluctant to step into the Toastmasters hall thinking that it's meant only for the trained or talented speakers. Moreover, I feared rejection - what if I stutter or make some inane statements? But, fortunately, one of the members, and my close friend too, realised this trend and told me all about Toastmasters and the congenial environment it provides for improvement. The day I attended the meeting, I was taken riveted and the rest of the story needn't be said. Every meeting has been a learning point for me and I take special note of the creativity in the speeches each member delivers. All in all, it's the most productive hour I spend every week."

- **TM Shrivatsan**

"My experience at Toastmasters has been awe-inspiring from the time I joined the club. Initially, I was nonplussed at how things are carried out systematically in every meeting, and the way people constantly have words of encouragement for everybody else. Toastmasters is definitely my place for equal share of fun and productivity!"

- **TM Aiswarya**

Shattering the glass ceiling or societal transgression?

March 8, 2018 - the world celebrated International Women's Day as an approbation to the women that make and sustain the various facets of the human population. We had all seen a great deal of venerable celebrities and a plethora of exalted brands plastering the common online, print and visual media with a frenzy of their wishes for women.

So naturally, you get this idea of "women for the win" and "how it's still a long way for women". Gender equality, or feminism, as we understand, is, simply put, bringing a gender to the same level of opportunities, appreciation and absorbency into corresponding workforces as the other. That being said, as several social growth indicators show that it is women who are deprived of most of these, it is only apposite that we work in favour of women. This movement has also garnered the support of governments, and eventually, laws have also been setup to aid women in crossing such barriers. The efforts by lots of groups and recognised institutions in this regard are also quite laudable.

But what doesn't catch your eye is the downside of how a certain, newly evolved, feminazi cult of the society finagles people without going against any law. As feminism reaches new heights, empowering and bringing up women from varied social strata, one cannot simply overlook how certain people imply feminist ideologies with wrong connotations. So you tell me that it is all fair and well, if a woman must be left to her will regarding her education and career goals, and it is justifiable to expect her spouse to pursue a well-paying career?

Or that it is alright when a healthy woman refuses to give up her seat in a bus for a frail, old man? Or how about the time when someone told the lanky-looking guy next door to "man-up"? Aren't all these situations familiar to us? What would happen if the genders were swapped in all of these said situations? An uproar would ensue, no doubt about that. It is in these scenarios that a person who truly believes in gender equality should rise to the situation and act accordingly. Gender equality definitely does not recommend that women be favoured "over" men. Or that they be given a much higher status than men. Or that they escape being reprimanded for their wrongdoings just because they're women. They should be seen equal in the eyes of law.

Moreover, feminism is not just about committing to treating both genders without disparity; it is also about being inclusive of women from all walks of life, ensuring that one woman does not put another down or deprives her of her rights, just because one happens to have quite a cachet. Women from different ethnicities, differently abled women, women from economically unstable backgrounds, all need to be accommodated for wellness and development. Indeed, it is rightly quoted by Victoria Principal,

"WHEN WOMEN WORK TOGETHER, IT'S A BOND UNLIKE ANY OTHER."

So while we seek to shatter the glass ceiling, we must actually make attempts to focus on the big picture, like bridging the gender pay gap, assisting minority women in advancing in their workplaces, and the like. It is our responsibility to repudiate any ventures that fail to consider all such aspects of equality. Unless we do so, we would end up causing human discord and societal transgression.



TM Aiswarya Sunil

Member

A Cry for Tomorrow

A distance voice in misery cries out,
 "Oh, why hast thou broken me?"
 Waking to the noise in my head,
 I see that fair maiden cloaked in black.
 Locked into her eyes,
 I see a thousand images flash by.
 I ask, for the first time after countless
 sights,
 "What say you, Oh fair maiden?
 Why has the dark adorned you?"

She replies,
 "The sound sleep in the bosom of the
 tree,
 The hymns of nature that sets you free,
 The fragrance of a thousand petals in the
 air,
 The blooming of the flower within thee,
 The wind keeping your company,
 When your troubles
 disturb the tranquility,

Don't you remember the time you
spent with me?

Oh! Who is there to hear this
soliloquy?"

"A far cry from what I have seen,

As time grew old,

they lost their sheen.

The slaughter of my kin,

They did in merciless inequity.

Happiness, they found not in me,

But pieces of metal forged in greed.

Why have you come to hate me?

Oh! Who is there to hear this
soliloquy?"

"With tall scrappers burying me,

With the devil's blood drowning me,

With the breath of machines
smothering me,

With thy venom tainting me,

Now, the scars of torture cape me.

Oh! Who is there to hear this soliloquy?"

"Drenched in sorrow, overcome by grief,

I stand beside the pyre of the forgotten
me,

I grieve not for the carcass that lies here

But for lost souls who abandoned their
mother,

Do you know what I speak of?

Oh! Have you heard this soliloquy?"

Aghast, I run back to reality,

With no time to lose, I look for the green
that still surrounds me

But the ghost of the lady, I also see

Guilty, I know I am, forgive me, I plead
With a smile that of a mother, she
forgives me.

As she fades into the dark, all she leaves
behind is a voice in my head...

"My, son. You know what must be done
for a tomorrow as bright as the sun"

TM Ajay Krishna

Member

A Tale

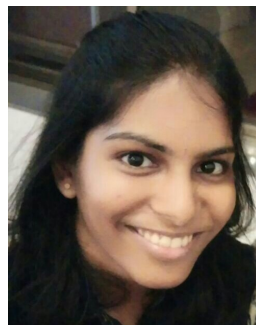
He poured into her goblet, his words, wisdom and thoughts till it was replete. She in no time developed a taste for the drink, soon becoming an addict. She hardly realised what was happening to her.

“POUR IN MORE!”

“POUR IN MORE!”

became her usual words that rang in his ears.

He did as she asked even when he felt himself getting depleted and needing to recharge. She knew not how time flew, drinking his words while filling his goblet with banter, gossip and words he didn't want to listen to. For her, minutes became hours of intoxication while he remained sober wishing to get back his vigour and wasted hours. His age of forbearance was depleting as well till there was not a shred of it left. When he started to refuse to fill up her flagon, her words became, "Just one drink a day! Please!", which never once ended with one. For a couple of days, he told her that he didn't have any left which was answered days later with heartbreaking, distressing tears that softened him forcing him to concede immediately. This repeated a few more times till his heart hardened turning into an unfeeling stone, refusing to give in to the demand of filling up the glass of a woman disguised as a friend who cared, who called herself his best friend. This supposed friendship ended with her spitting spiteful words, calling him an emotionless man who did nothing for his friend. He pondered if it was worthwhile filling up the goblets of others with happiness and words, while emptying his goblet of stamina. He loved being alone, meeting different people and living his life to the utmost. He made a promise to himself that day, when it all ended, never to pour too much into one goblet.



TM Shiny

Member

VOICES

We had Toastmasters from other clubs visiting us to whom we asked a couple of questions and here are a few interesting responses.

QUESTIONS:

1. What motivated you to visit Amrita TM club?
2. How was your experience at Amrita TM club?
3. How has your journey in TM been?
4. What's your message for new members of Amrita TM club?

RESPONSES:

TM Sindu, Coimbatore Toastmasters Club

1. Having been a Toastmaster for sometime, I was curious to see the budding Toastmasters. Also, I was intrigued by their enthusiasm.
2. I visited once and I found that the Toastmasters were very enthusiastic, possessed good speaking skills and were energetic.
3. My journey at Toastmasters has been one filled with lots of knowledge sharing, friendship, and learning. It's been a place where we bond as a family, are open to receiving feedback and grow.
4. Do take the spirit of Toastmasters outside in your other spheres as well. At Toastmasters we are open and receptive to feedback without being judgemental. Such an attitude, when taken into other areas of our life will help us evolve.

TM Naren, Coimbatore Toastmasters Club

1. This was the first collegiate club in Coimbatore. I had already visited corporate and community clubs. I was interested to know a club can be effectively run by college students. This motivated me to visit the club.
2. Good, close to perfect. Each member knew the roles very well and they needed no prompting; something even experienced clubs find difficulty in.
3. It has been pretty good. I am considering each and every meeting as a platform for me to learn.
4. Keep continuing the good effort and I would like to see one World Champion emerge from Amrita Toastmasters Club.

TM Shandip, Coimbatore Speakers Forum

1. The passion with which you, the management and the students were striving to pull it off prodded me to visit the club.
2. The energy and quality was amazing!
3. Toastmasters has been more of a pilgrimage than a journey! I'm discovering myself here and that's a humbling and enchanting experience!
4. Toastmasters is indeed a place where leaders are made! The question is "How badly do you want it?" Tread the path with lots of passion & reverence and experience the magic!!! Good luck friends!

The Voice That Lead Me

In 2010, I was going through the most testing times of my life. A road accident had left me crippled. When I got back to University in my 4th semester, my health had deteriorated so much that I had lost 25 kg. My vision was blurring and the ever-so challenging engineering syllabus looked like a Himalayan challenge before me. It was then that cricket was widely followed. The year-long international tours and IPL were engaging to watch. But what caught my attention was the voice of a cricket commentator - Harsha Bhogle. I used to look forward to his commentary segments in each game. He had enumerable likeable attributes.

Put the others before oneself

Whenever he is on the mic, he would make other commentators feel at ease by discussing about their opinion and occasionally have his say. He would put the limelight on the others and see to it that their opinion is heard.

Entrepreneurial spirit

Unlike all the other cricket commentators Harsha Bhogle was not a professional cricketer. He had played for his University cricket team but his passion for the sport fuelled his desire to become a sports journalist. The videos in which he recollects his days when he used to work for All India Radio and newspaper are indeed a treat to watch.

Stay neutral

Harsha Bhogle often takes a neutral stand and supports good talent irrespective of which team the players belong to. During the T20 World Cup in Bangladesh, he had spoken in praise of Bangladesh and was penalised. But recognising talent and wholeheartedly appreciating others is indeed a great characteristic.

With these admirable attributes, Harsha Bhogle inspired me to talk. As a speaking role model he has guided me to an awesome avenue. I got to know about Toastmasters when I was watching one of his videos and journey has been truly enriching. So, if we all have a role model for our ventures, we can benefit greatly from their teachings.



TM Mayur Venkatesh

Member, CTC

It's a wrap

You must have seen many of your peers telling you things that they're going to do but never really did. You must have seen some people at least try something but gave up soon or YOU could be this person. A person with a lot of dreams who never does anything to change those dreams to reality; a person who gives up easily. Well, let me tell you something. You won't be the same guy always. You'll change one day. A day when someone close to you dies or a day when your friend leaves you. And you'll talk about this day that changed your life when you're successful.

But do you think only such situations should change people? Do you think everyone has 'his own day'? Not necessarily. You don't need that special day that changes your life. You don't need that someone to lose his life for you to change your mind; for you to be successful. All that you need to do is believe in yourself and live life without regrets. Nothing can stop you from doing what you're doing unless you have no interest in doing it. Listen to yourself, take charge of your life and be responsible for your actions. It's never late, and it never will be. (Alright. I know. Enough of these clichéd sentences. But remember, there is a reason why people keep telling it. Read the paragraph again and you'll understand).

With that said, I'm glad you came to the end of this newsletter. I'd want to thank everyone who made this possible, including YOU who are reading it. Now, you can go back and read it once again or tell to a friend about this. It is not going to cost you anything. Until then, be excited for our next newsletter.

TM Abiram Anbu

Immediate Past

We meet at **C104, AB1, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Coimbatore**. Feel *free* to drop in at 4:45PM every week, Mondays and Thursdays.



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