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## Local Rotary Clubs celebrated and honored for COVID relief donations to Nagpur, India

Submitted by Alka Mulakaluri



Lighting the lamp ceremony, from left, outgoing District Governor Shabbir Shaikh (District 3030 in India), Ex. Union Minister Vilas Muttemwar, Rotary Club President Pritesh Chanda, and, lighting the lamp, incoming District Governor Ramesh Meher. Photo provided

A dedication and recognition ceremony was held recently in Nagpur, in central India, for installing newly acquired equipment for treating "black fungus," a rare COVID-related eye disease. This hour-long ceremony of thanks and recognition was based on Indian customs by lamp lighting, a symbol of purity and auspiciousness for blessing and recognizing accomplishment, and was recorded on online video. Rotary Clubs in the district, which includes Lamorinda, raised \$35,000 to fund the devices and the effort was spearheaded by leaders in Moraga, Lamorinda Sunrise, and Rotary District leaders.

Moraga Rotarian Alka Mulakaluri made an emergency flight to Nagpur, her home town, to visit a sister who had been in an automobile accident. She quickly found that COVID was surging there, the hospitals were not equipped to treat so many people, and local service clubs were making huge efforts to help. After contacting Nagpur Rotary, her first home club, she called Moraga Rotary President Brian South to see if her Club could raise donations for COVID relief. South quickly enlisted outgoing and incoming District Governors Mark Roberts and Kathy Suvia, and District International Chair Sheila

Hurst, to solicit donations from the 70 Rotary Clubs in the district, and to coordinate the funds transfer according to India government regulations. This effort was done at lightning speed - just three weeks from Alka's initial call to funds arrival in Nagpur.

The ceremony included participation by Ex. Minister Vilas Muttemwar, Rotary District Governors Shabbir Shaikh and Ramesh Meher, and Rotarian Promod Acharya and the devoted team of doctors from Indira Gandhi Government Medical College where the medical devices will be used.

Moraga Rotary is a 54-year-old service club within Rotary International, one of the four Clubs in Lamorinda, and one of about 33,000 Rotary Clubs in about 200 countries. Regular meetings are held at noon on Tuesdays at La Finestra restaurant. If you are interested in information about Rotary, or would like to donate to their worthy causes, please visit the website at moragarotary.org, or call Brian South, president, at (925) 888-7052.

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