

Precious Gift

Blood is a mixture of cells and a watery liquid called plasma that the cells float in. It also contains other things like nutrients, hormones, clotting agents and waste. The need for this blood is felt by many especially during surgeries. Rotary clubs have been giving top priority in establishing blood banks and collection facilities. Over 80 million units of blood are donated every year in the world but only 38 percent of it is collected from developing countries where 82 percent of the global population lives. Rotary's effort in popularising blood donation camps will create wider awareness of the importance of voluntary blood donation and encourage more people to become regular blood donors.

The matching grant project of Bombay Ghatkopar, RI District 3140, in association with RC Topeka North, RI District 5710 Kansas, RI District 6060, Missouri, USA, RI District 5710 and RI District 3140 has helped in augmenting blood collection. A state of the art blood collection unit has been assembled in an air-conditioned van. There are five beds for donors, two LCD TVs, chemical toilet and other allied facilities. The van is fitted with the equipments to gently vibrate the blood to stabilize the red blood cells. The big screen provides entertainment for people waiting to give blood and retractable shades are fitted in the van to provide shelter to the people. The project, which was completed at a cost of over Rs.25 lakhs had the support of The Rotary Foundation. The van has sufficient storage facility. One hundred bottles of blood can be collected in an hour. In case of emergency the attendants are equipped to test blood, cross match groups and dispense blood. Facility to separate blood into cells, plasma and platelets also exists.

Rotary club of Bombay –Ghatkopar handed over this van to Sarvodaya



A view of the blood donation van.

Samarpan Blood Bank in Ghatkopar. The project has started benefitting the residents of the area and those surrounding it. In this fast paced world, people cannot wait indefinitely for help in the form of blood to reach the patients who need transfusion urgently. Many lives are lost for want of blood. There is a huge gap between demand and supply of blood, not only for accident victims but also for people affected by thalassaemia, kidney problems and other major illness needing blood transfusion. Platelet loss is high among cancer patients and by separating the blood into components, the bank is able to extend timely help.

The city of Mumbai has been facing the onslaught of terrorist attacks for quite some time at periodic intervals. Precious lives have been lost in bomb blasts and grievously injured victims have died for want of blood. The van, which has been equipped with foldable stretcher, can play a vital role in reaching the spots and evacuating the victims.

This van is available for any organisation that wishes to organise a blood donation camp. At the simple function organised to inaugurate this

project, it was a great satisfaction to see over 250 residents of Ghatkopar assembled at the venue to cheer Rotary's achievement. In addition, the Member of the Legislative Assembly of the area and local administration authorities participated making the event a good public relations exercise for Rotary.

Such noble projects are only possible when you support The Rotary Foundation with your generous contributions. Every Rotarian must realise that his or her donation to TRF is saving millions of lives everyday. Most of us only have to look as far as our circle of friends and neighbours to find someone whose life was touched by the generous gift of a volunteer blood donor. Donating blood is quick, simple and relatively painless. Millions of people owe their lives to people they will never meet — people who donate their blood freely and without any reward. Rotarians are people who say, "Safe Blood Starts With Me."



*Rtn. Ashok Mahajan
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