



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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For immediate release

March 31, 2016

## MWRD officials take lessons learned in water treatment to India



*MWRD Associate Electrical Engineer Syama Pappu (from left) and Dr. Narayan Tata were presented with a resolution from MWRD Commissioner Frank Avila for their contributions in educating communities in India on water treatment issues. Dr. Tata's father, Dr. Prakasam Tata, who was still in India at the time of the resolution presentation, had coordinated the trip to India by enlisting the service of MWRD experts.*

A team of current and retired engineers and plant managers from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) along with Commissioner Frank Avila traveled to the other side of the world to show how improvements in local water quality at home in Chicago can make a world of difference to the people handling water treatment in India.

The group of MWRD representatives participated in the trip that was organized and sponsored by the Rotary Club of Naperville and Bharathi Theertha, a non-profit organization that aims to improve the education, environment and health of the poverty-stricken in India and the United States. The organization strives to conduct cultural and educational programs by collaborating with organizations in the U.S. and India and connect with passionate individuals who left India and want to return and use their experiences and resources to improve conditions for the poor and their health.

One of those is Dr. Prakasam Tata, retired assistant director of the MWRD's Monitoring and Research Department and current executive director of the Center for Transformation of Waste Technology in Naperville. Dr. Tata also serves as president of the Bharathi Theertha's Naperville chapter and vice president of the organization's chapter in his hometown of Vizianagaram in the Andhra Pradesh State of India. Tata recruited Commissioner Avila, MWRD chairman of finance; along with Hitesh Shah, man-



*In the photo (L-R): Sherry Avila, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) Commissioner Frank Avila, retiree Dr. Prakash Tata, retiree Mohamedusman Baki, and current MWRD employees Sam Pappu and Hitesh Shah were part of the MWRD team who traveled to India to share their knowledge with impoverished communities looking to improve local conditions following water treatment operations.*

aging engineer of the John E. Egan Water Reclamation Plant in Schaumburg; Syama Pappu, MWRD electrical engineer at the Egan Plant; and Mohamedusman Baki, retired plant manager of the Kirie Water Reclamation Plant in Des Plaines, as volunteers. The group traveled to the southeastern Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to share their wisdom through vocational workshops that promoted best management and operational practices of sewage and water treatment plants and created a clean water environment in India.

"We are grateful for the opportunity presented by the Rotary Club of Naperville and Bharathi Theertha to impart our knowledge and share our experiences in the water treatment industry," said MWRD Commissioner Frank Avila. "We believe our message will resonate and make a lasting impact into helping improve conditions in India. We were proud to learn that the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago is well-respected in India, and making this trip will strengthen both our reputation and relationship with these communities."

The group conducted a vocational training workshop for sewage and water treatment plant operators and engineers in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana by covering the basics of the treatment processes and focused on troubleshooting problems that occur due to upsets caused by toxic wastewater discharges or due to poor

*(continued)*



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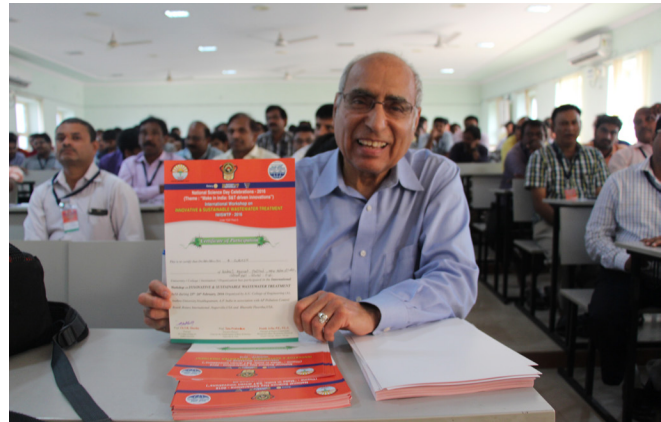
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## India visit *(continued)*

operation and maintenance of the treatment plants. MWRD officials worked with water experts from local treatment plants in India along with Andhra University, the Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board and Green Brigade organization, both based in Hyderabad, India, the Telangana State Pollution Control Board, Rotary Club 3150 of India and the Rotary Club of Visakhapatnam and student members of the India chapters of Engineers Without Borders and Rotaract clubs. India is experiencing a building boom in wastewater treatment facility construction, and organizers felt that such workshops will create positive awareness.

Volunteers from the area's engineering community and staff from the MWRD volunteered as instructors at the vocational training workshops. For their work, the team from the MWRD and Rotary Club of Naperville and Bharathi Theertha were honored by the MWRD Board of Commissioners with a resolution presented at the March 3 Board meeting.

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*Commissioner Frank Avila participated in a series of workshops in India to discuss water treatment processes and signed hundreds of certificates for municipal water professionals participating in the workshops. The reputation of the MWRD, which owns and maintains the world largest water treatment plant, is well regarded in India based on MWRD's expertise in providing billions of gallons of clean water in an environmentally sound practice.*



*Sherry Avila, wife of MWRD Commissioner Frank Avila, met with students and professors from Andhra University in Visakhapatnam, India, as part of the MWRD's outreach to India to discuss best management practices for water treatment.*



*Retiree Mobamedusman Baki, Commissioner Frank and Sherry Avila and others visited D.S. Toddlers Corner pre-school.*

**Recovering Resources, Transforming Water**

*Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwrdd.org](http://www.mwrdd.org)) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.*