

The COVID-19 crisis in India is getting worse. Here's how you can help.

"The virus is swallowing our city's people like a monster."

By **Maddie Mortell**

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As more in the United States get vaccinated and begin a return to some semblances of their former lives, a **catastrophic second wave** of the coronavirus is infecting India's population at alarming rates, overwhelming its health care systems, and putting millions more at risk.

On Monday, India broke a world record for the most cases reported in a single day, at nearly 353,000 people, for a fifth consecutive day. Mass funeral pyres are **lighting up the skies** at night with a grim glow.

"The virus is swallowing our city's people like a monster," **said Mamtesh Sharma**, an official at a crematorium site in Bhopal, "We are just burning bodies as they arrive...It is as if we are in the middle of a war."

Overwhelmed hospitals are running out of oxygen supplies, turning away sick patients in need of air and treatment. Some experts believe the mounting death toll there could be severely understated, with numbers much higher than reports indicate.

As infections surge, India is among many nations experiencing vaccine shortages and a lack of raw material needed to develop coronavirus vaccines, complicating a path toward herd immunity. *The New York Times* reports that in India, **only 2 percent** of the population has been fully inoculated.

Several Massachusetts health care professionals **signed an open letter** to President Biden's administration last month urging more equitable global vaccine distribution.

Faced with mounting global pressure to provide aid, the White House **pledged its support** and announced plans to export up to **60 million AstraZeneca doses** — pending

approval from the Food and Drug Administration — from its stockpile to other countries in the coming months.

Local doctors, politicians, and celebs have all called for support to India.

Dr. Ashish Jha, dean of the Brown University School of Public Health, weighed in with his recommendations in *The Washington Post*. Massachusetts Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey, **wrote to vaccine developers** Moderna, Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson urging expanded global vaccine access to India and other countries hit hard by the pandemic.

Cambridge native Mindy Kaling, known for “The Mindy Project” and “The Office,” **urged** anyone with the means to donate to non-profits like Association for India’s Development (AID).

Dr. Aditi Nerurkar, a physician at Harvard, worked with others on a recent Clubhouse panel to create a **vetted list of organizations and aggregate resources** for the public who want may want to lend their support.

If you’re looking for ways to help amid India’s COVID crisis, we’ve gathered a list of organizations named by local thought leaders, doctors, scholars, and our Boston.com community.

If you’d like to add a resource to the list below, please email us with the name and link at community@boston.com.

Support organizations responding to the COVID-19 crisis in India

Association for India’s Development: The Association for India’s Development is a non-profit volunteer movement with 36 chapters in the U.S., **including Boston**, and six in India. Their **COVID Relief to India fund** provides food and protective equipment distributed by its 30 partner organizations across the country.

CAF India: CAF India is part of a global network working on multiple initiatives to **combat the COVID-19 crisis**, including providing personal protective equipment, hygiene kits, and food to those in most need.

Give India’s COVID-19 Response Fund: Give India is a global fundraiser that launched first back in April 2020 during the first wave of the pandemic. Now, it has **relaunched its COVID-19 missions** amid a deadly second wave providing meals and raising funds for healthcare NGOs.

The Hope Foundation: The Hope Foundation aims to support children living on the street or in slums in the city of Kolkata (formerly Calcutta). They are currently providing 40 beds for COVID patients at HOPE Hospital, and **fundraising for PPE, medical equipment, and upgrades to their converted COVID ward.**

International Medical Corps: Founded in 1984, the International Medical Corps is a non-profit relief organization that responds to world emergencies. In response to the latest surge of COVID-19 in India, the organization activated their **Emergency Response Team** to provide medical supplies as well as hygiene supplies, and to educate about vaccine misinformation. They are **seeking donations** to provide medical care and supplies on the ground.

Oxfam America: The global charity organization, with U.S. headquarters in Boston, works to eradicate poverty and inequity and is **raising funds** to send medical supplies, PPE, food, and financial support to those in need in five different states across India.

Oxygen for India: Founded by director of the Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics & Policy Dr. Ramanan Laxminarayan, Oxygen for India is a collective organization raising funds to provide medical oxygen supplies to hospitals and citizens in India in dire need.

Project HOPE: Project Hope works to provide resources to health care workers across the globe. Their work has distributed over **14 million pieces of PPE since the start of the pandemic and aided 150 countries.** To procure aid to India during this time, the project is working with local governments in India to make sure they get the supplies needed **with a call for donations.**

Save The Children: Save The Children is a charity organization that operates in over 100 countries and advocate for **children's health, education, and protection.** To help the children during the deadly second-wave in India, **there is an emergency fund** to provide first aid kits, hand sanitizer, nutritious food for families in crisis, as well as other needed medical supplies.

Uday Foundation: Founded by social activist **Rahul Verma**, the Uday Foundation is a non-profit organization based in New Delhi that works to serve underprivileged communities in India. The organization is soliciting donations for **oxygen concentrators, food,** and “**wellness kits**” which will provide over-the-counter medicine and food to those experiencing homelessness.

UNICEF: The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, founded in 1946, is on the ground in India **working to curb the spread of coronavirus** in greatly-affected communities. The agency has provided 3,000 oxygen concentrators and critical medical supplies to overwhelmed healthcare facilities in India, according to a press release.