



Letter from Simon Arora, Incoming Chair of the Manchester India Partnership

28th April 2021

Dear Friends of the Manchester India Partnership,

As you will be aware from news reports, India is experiencing a Covid-19 emergency on a scale the world has not yet seen. Millions upon millions of people are suffering and the healthcare system in India is at breaking point, not to mention the challenges that the aftermath of this crisis will create.

As incoming Chair of the Manchester India Partnership (MIP) I wanted to set out our 3-point plan to help support India at this time of crisis, which I hope you will support.

1) Securing vital equipment

We are working with the “UK-India Covid-19 Taskforce” to help source a range of vital equipment that Indian authorities require to deal with the immediate emergency. I am hoping that some of this equipment may be available from suppliers or businesses in Greater Manchester and the North of England that we can connect into the India Government. Currently, the most need is for the following:

- (i) Empty, refillable Oxygen cylinders with 10 litres and 45 litres LMO capacity*
- (ii) Oxygen concentrators,*
- (iii) in situ Oxygen manufacturing plants for hospitals*

As the situation changes, we will update on what key equipment is needed most, based on advice from the Indian Government, and communicate this through the [MIP website](#). A more detailed list of required equipment is available [here](#).

2) The creation of a MIP India Emergency Relief Fund

The MIP has created the [MIP India Covid-19 Emergency Relief Fund](#) just giving page for people who would like to make a donation towards the crisis relief in India. This will be aimed at supporting both the immediate crisis as well as the immediate aftermath. We will be working closely with the British Asian Trust (BAT) in terms of aligning this with their own fundraising and how best to distribute and deploy funds raised.

The MIP would like to specifically reflect the close partnership we have developed with Bangalore and Karnataka in terms of support, but we will also look to track and support areas in acute need such as Delhi, UP and potentially emerging hot spots such as Maharashtra and Gujarat, based on advice from the UK-India Covid-19 Taskforce.

Manchester India Partnership

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3) Support from our own local Health System

The UK healthcare system owes much to India, with over 60,000 doctors of Indian descent currently practicing in the UK. Therefore, we will be working with BAPIO and local Foundation Trusts to offer remote support in terms of advice on treating Covid-19 from frontline to frontline. As part of this, I understand a call has already been arranged for this evening in which clinicians from MFT will be discussing this issue with colleagues in India.

I realise that Greater Manchester and the UK has only recently come out of our own period of severe hardship, but I hope that you will support us in our efforts to recognise the sheer scale of the crisis that our friends in India now face and that we can show our solidarity at this time of crisis.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Arora', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Simon Arora

CEO, B&M Retail and Incoming Chairman, Manchester India Partnership

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