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MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES AID FOR INDIA'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced that the City will tap into its stockpile to send COVID-19 test kits, swabs, ventilators, BiPap machines, pulse oximeters, and other medical supplies to India.

“Just over a year ago, New York City was the center of the global pandemic,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Now it is our turn to step up and help India in its moment of crisis. We are sending vital medical equipment to India to send a clear message: nobody is in the fight against COVID-19 alone. Together, we can save lives and beat back the pandemic.”

“As a global city that once was considered the “epicenter” of the COVID-19 pandemic, it would be unacceptable for New York City to ignore the devastating situation in India,” said **Deputy Mayor of Health and Human Services Melanie Hartzog**. “This horrible pandemic has taken too many lives, and we cannot stand idle as it continues to wreak havoc in another city. I stand with my colleagues in City government to make sure we provide any and all support possible to our fellow citizens in India.”

“Our city, home to thousands of Indian-born New Yorkers, and our country have a moral imperative to demonstrate global solidarity in order to overcome this devastating pandemic,” said **Health Commissioner Dave. A Chokshi**. We applaud the Biden administration’s support for COVID-19 vaccine patent waivers and call on the White House to take further action. India needs the lifesaving COVID-19 vaccines as soon as possible. We should publicly share all research, technology, and techniques for producing the COVID-19 vaccines.”

“Indeed when NYC was the epicenter of COVID-19 in the U.S., our diplomatic community rallied behind their host city and donated critically-needed personal protective equipment,” said **International Affairs Commissioner Penny Abeywardena**. “The news coming out of India is devastating and so we will work with our consular corps to help with this crisis. When it comes to battling COVID-19, we are all in this together.”

“During this critical time, our locally-made test kits along with a supply of PPE from the city’s stockpile will support families in India,” said **Rachel Loeb, president and CEO of New York City Economic Development Corporation**. “Innovations like these helped our city recover and we’re happy to lend a helping hand to battle COVID-19 in solidarity with India.”

“As a proud Indian immigrant with generations of family currently living in India, it breaks my heart to see the ongoing COVID-19 tragedy unfold. The Mayor is a leading citizen of the world,

and on behalf of the Indian community, I offer my deepest gratitude for his decision to commit life-saving resources to India,” said **Kapil Longani, Counsel to the Mayor**. “This pandemic highlighted our interconnectedness as a global community, and it’s imperative that we stand together in solidarity to defeat this virus.”

“When New York City was the epicenter of the pandemic one year ago, we were incredibly grateful for the generosity and support we received from people all over the country and the world. Today we are paying it forward to help ease the crisis in India,” said **Mersida Ibric, Deputy Commissioner for Citywide Procurement at the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services**. “We worked tirelessly to source the supplies and equipment our city needed to save lives and keep people safe, and now we are proud to donate some of those supplies to help the Indian people in their time of need.”

“Just a year ago, New York City was the COVID-19 epicenter of the United States,” said **Rep. Carolyn Maloney**. “To get through those darkest of days, we relied on our friends -- foreign and domestic -- for critical personal protective equipment and other supplies. Now, India needs our help. Our friends in India are not alone in this fight against the COVID-19 crisis. New York City is here to help.”

“I have underscored the need for the United States to provide assistance to India during this difficult time, and I support this latest effort by New York City as well,” said **Rep. Grace Meng**. “India is our dear our friend and ally and we must continue to be there for its people in their urgent time of need. I thank Mayor de Blasio for sending this critical aid, and ask all New Yorkers to keep India in their thoughts and prayers as the country battles the surge in COVID-19 cases.”

“Just as New York City experienced the severe toll of COVID-19, we could not have made our way through this crisis without the support of our local, state, national, and international community,” said **Rep. Adriano Espaillat**. “We know far too well that this pandemic requires iron-clad from many New Yorkers from India, the Indian Subcontinent, and multi-generational members of the diaspora to sustain the COVID-19 response here at home. What we see in India resonates deeply with New Yorkers because we too know the loss and toll of COVID-19. This is why we must marshal all of our resources to help those in need because it is right, moral and just.”

“In the epicenter of the epicenter of the pandemic in our city, the impact of the global support and resources we received meant more lives were saved. It is our moral duty to pay that kindness back and support India in every way possible to battle this virus,” said **State Senator Jessica Ramos**.

“India is experiencing one of the worst surges of COVID-19 cases since the pandemic began. If we truly want to see an end to the pandemic, we cannot ignore what is happening globally. I proudly support the Mayor's decision to provide the necessary aid to assist India's recovery and hope that it mobilizes more cities to do the same,” said **State Senator Luis R. Sepúlveda**

"The COVID-19 pandemic is a global public health crisis that can only be overcome by working together. In donating life saving medical supplies to India, New York City is doing its part to relieve the suffering of many. As an elected official representing one of the highest South Asian populations in New York City, I am grateful that the Mayor's Office recognizes how important its actions are to my constituents from the Indian diaspora," said **Assembly Member David Weprin**.

"As the first Indian American woman elected to state office in New York, I stand in solidarity with the people of India at their time of need," said **Assembly Member Jenifer Rajkumar**.

"The largest Indian American population in the Western Hemisphere is here in New York City. It was the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who said, 'Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly,' and that has never been more true than during the COVID-19 pandemic. If there is a COVID crisis in India, then New Yorkers are in crisis. I applaud Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Chokshi for recognizing that we are all in this pandemic together and for sending supplies to the people of India so they can fight this deadly virus."

"New Yorkers know all too well what it is like to be in the epicenter of the pandemic," said **Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal**. "We stand with the people of India and anything that we can do that is within our power should be done to help them in their time of need."

"As we continue to move in a positive direction in the U.S. on getting this pandemic under control, we must turn to quickly providing medical aid to places like India that are facing devastating waves of contagion with few resources to fight them," said **Council Member Carlina Rivera, Chair of the New York City Council's Committee on Hospitals**. "As New York City leads our country in addressing this public health challenge at home, we must also lead in assisting our global family with the tools they need to beat back COVID-19."

"New York City stands with India during this critical time in the COVID-19 pandemic," said **Council Member Adrienne Adams**. "I applaud Mayor de Blasio and Health Commissioner Chokshi for tapping into our City's resources, including test kits, swabs, ventilators, and pulse oximeters, to send to India. We are sending a message of solidarity that we will work together to defeat this virus."

"New Yorkers understand the hardships of living within the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak, so it is incumbent upon us to provide aid to our friends in India who are now facing a huge demand for medical supplies," said **Council Member Peter Koo**. "COVID-19 is a worldwide crisis that demands a unified response if we are to stop the spread and ensure everyone has a path to recovery."

"When New York faced the darkest hour of the pandemic, we benefited from the generosity of donors and volunteers," said **Council Member Barry S. Grodenchik**. "Now New Yorkers are being vaccinated and starting to return to post-pandemic life, but the virus is still wreaking havoc in many parts of the world. Sending supplies to India at this critical time is a kind and humane gesture."

"We greatly appreciate the generous gift by New York City to the Government of India. The ventilators, bipaps and testing kits which have been donated by New York will be immensely useful in fighting the pandemic in India. The supplies being sent will further add to the robust assistance provided by the US government to India. The empathy shown by this great City is admirable," said **Mr. Randhir Jaiswal, Consul General of India.**

"We are pleased to see New York City providing humanitarian assistance to our global neighbors in India to fight COVID-19" said **Murad Awawdeh, Executive Director, New York Immigration Coalition.** "New York City is home to the largest Indian American population, and there are many New Yorkers who are hurting because of the pain and suffering their families are experiencing back home. We will not win our fight against COVID-19 without all of us working together to safeguard the health and security of each and every one of us, which is why NYC's action is an important step on the road to global recovery."

"India, overwhelmed by the pandemic, is in desperate need of vaccines. A country with a population of 1.4 billion, and only about 26 million people so far have been vaccinated. I am extremely happy to hear the city is helping India. The vaccines can help prevent deaths from covid and also slow the infection rate and save lives. It's very critical for the people of India to receive this life saving vaccine," said **Patricia Raghunandan, Queens Community Lions Club.**

"The news about Covid-19 from India has left so many in our communities reeling with anxiety and grief. For Indian-born New Yorkers who are worried about their loved ones back home, this generous gift of ventilators, bipaps, and testing kits from New York City will provide a measure of relief. At this moment of extreme crisis for our Indian brothers and sisters, we are grateful that New York is demonstrating solidarity with our global community. The Sanskrit phrase "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," meaning "the world is family," is inscribed on the entrance to the Indian Parliament building, and it is moving to see our city mobilizing to hold up that ideal," said **JoAnn Yoo, Executive Director, Asian American Federation.**

"New York's thousands of Indian-Americans are filled with anger and helplessness as they witness the unnecessary tragedy back in the country that shaped each of us as a child," said **Harpreet Singh Toor, Co-Founder & President of South Asians for Global Empowerment.** "Especially when our own situation has become so full of hope, it is the right time to join Mayor Bill de Blasio in calling for a full-scale effort to donate vaccines, COVID-19 test kits, swabs, ventilators, pulse oximeters, and every other type of relief possible to India."

"The Caribbean Voice joins with all those expressing deep concern about the current COVID-19 crisis in India," said **Annan Boodram of The Caribbean Voice.** "Our empathy goes out to our brothers and sisters in India. We hope and pray that with the global help being harnessed, India will soon bring this crisis under control and move forward to deal with its remnants."

"The members of the Richmond Hill-South Ozone Park Lions Club are pained at the suffering of the people in India due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We stand ready to offer our services as Lions in an effort to prevent further loss of life," said **Romeo Hitlall of the Richmond Hill-South Ozone Park Lions Club.**

"Through collective power we can create a sustainable environment where there is enough for all of us. It is very saddening to see the current state of the world, however COVID-19 has taught us the importance of working as a global family to ensure the safety and preservation for everyone," said **Pandita / Yogini Pratima Kushmani S. Doobay of Shridevi Arts**. "May we continue to be resilient in togetherness to make the world a safer place. May healing and light reach India, and the rest of our Beloved World family during these times."

"Children's Hope India, a New York-based organization which supports underserved communities in many Indian cities, has reached out with donations, oxygen concentrators and other equipment and with its partners on the ground has created makeshift hospitals, triage stations and vaccination camps. The scope of our COVID-19 relief is individualized to each community where our projects are located, as the need in each community is different," says **Dr. Dina Pahlajani, President of Children's Hope India**.

"We are gratified to see this decision made by Mayor Bill de Blasio's Administration and the undoubtably positive impact this medical aid will provide for Indian families," said **Shivani Parikh, Board Member of Sadhana: Coalition of Progressive Hindus**. "As the number of daily cases in India continues to rise, any and all support is welcome and needed, particularly for India's most vulnerable and marginalized communities."

"On behalf of The Hindu Temple Society of North America, I want to express my appreciation and deepest gratitude to Mayor Bill de Blasio and Health Commissioner Dave A. Chokshi for their decision to send COVID-19 test kits, swabs, ventilators, and pulse oximeters which are all urgently needed to deal with the present COVID-19 crisis in India. We are also very thankful to President Biden's administration for its support in dealing with the present COVID-19 crisis in India," said **Dr. Uma Mysorekar, President of The Hindu Temple Society of North America**.

"I am saddened by the situation in India. Our families are suffering from this pandemic. We pray to the Almighty to heal our Indian nation with a speedy recovery. We also appreciate our US government for extending their helping hands to assist India with all necessary medical supplies," said **Dr. Neeta Jain, President of the International Ahimsa Foundation, Inc.**

"India has always been an unselfish and vital global partner in our universal fight to advance global health security and fight outbreaks before they become pandemics," said **Albert Baldeo of United Communities Alliance**. "They also sent assistance to us when our hospitals were strained early in the COVID-19 pandemic, and we must reciprocate and help India in its time of need."

"We recognize the whole human race as one and we embrace everyone. We lend a hand of support to all humanity on behalf of South Asian New Yorkers," said **Harpreet Singh Wahan, Board Member of the Flushing Interfaith Council**. "We all are one and we all are members of one family, under One God."

“Our prayers are with our Brothers and Sisters of India. May our sweet Lord continue to provide the strength and courage that is needed to overcome this trying time,” said **Ravina Jadubans of The Shaanti Bhavan Mandir**.

"We NRIs will stand and support all people in India in any level," said **Guru Dileepji, founder of the World Yoga Community**. "Our prayers are for those who suffering amidst the COVID-19 pandemic."

"It will be a great gesture on the part of the Mayor of the City of New York to send much needed supplies to India. Indians living in the USA especially in New York are greatly appreciative," says **Shiv Dass, President of the Jackson Heights Merchants Association**.

"We want our brothers and sisters know we stand together and pray that God will give the frontline workers the strength to stand strong as they help the people of India through this horrific and devastating time, said **Sandra Chuakong of the Queens Community Lions Club**. "We pray to God to heal each one that has been infected with the virus. With disheartened hearts we love."

"India is going through an extremely critical time, and it is heartening to see that both the Biden Administration and Mayor Bill de Blasio have stepped up their efforts to help India with life-saving medical equipment in its hour of need," said **Dr. Renee Mehrra, Chair of Public Relations and Media, Association of Indians in America**.

"The America Sevashram Sangha is very happy to hear that our Mayor Bill de Blasio took on this great initiative to help India through its COVID-19 crisis," said **VJ Bisram, Board Member at the America Sevashram Sangha of Queens**. "The pandemic has spiraled out of control in India."

“With India and its surrounding communities being the birth place to hundreds of thousands New Yorkers, it warms our hearts knowing that that our nation is aiding in their fight against their deadly COVID-19 variant,” said **Hindu Ambassador the Vishnu Mandir and Founder of The Bharati Foundation, Bharati Sukul Kemraj**. “This is community and humanity at its best during the worst times.”

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