
WHO IS HUSSAIN BANGALORE OXYGEN CRISIS APPEAL

WHOISHUSSAIN.ORG

e. admin@whoishussain.org
w. whoishussain.org
t. (0)203 123 4567

a. The Who is Hussain Foundation,
Islamic Centre, Wood Lane, Stanmore,
United Kingdom, HA7 4LQ

A SHORTAGE OF OXYGEN

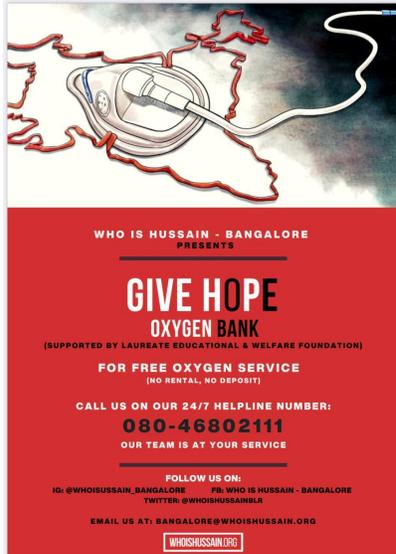
As of late 2021, with **over 34 million positive Covid cases and nearly half a million deaths**, India still continues to battle COVID-19.

Towards the end of March 2021, India was hit with a second wave of COVID-19. The number of cases was rapidly increasing every day. By the end of April 2021, the number of new cases reported **in Bangalore Urban alone was almost 13,000**, contributing to a large proportion of the total cases in the entire state of Karnataka.

With the country facing an intense and devastating situation, there was also an acute shortage of oxygen machines. In India, over the 18 months since the pandemic struck, both hospitals that treat COVID-19, and those that do not, suffered a shortage of medical oxygen.

The **cost of medical oxygen increased rapidly to as much as ten times that before the pandemic**. Cylinders quickly disappeared from circulation, as individuals and black-marketeers alike began to hoard supplies. The hospitals and private oxygen suppliers were finding it extremely difficult to refill cylinders due to acute oxygen shortage.

Within a few weeks, oxygen shortage continued to hit patients in the city of Bangalore, with several hospitals asking them to shift to other facilities as they ran out of stock. There was a need for Who is Hussain to intervene.



WHAT COULD WIH BANGALORE DO?

Wanting to bring about an impact and solve the issue faced by locals, Who is Hussain Bangalore stepped up. With an intention of procuring just a few oxygen concentrator machines initially, the Who is Hussain Central Team on being approached by Who is Hussain Bangalore initiated an online crowdfunding campaign entitled “*Emergency oxygen crisis appeal for India*”. A target was set for £16,500. There was an overwhelming response from generous donors across the world, **reaching the target in less than 24 hours!** A final remarkable total of **over £20,000** was raised which helped us procure **51 oxygen concentrator machines**. This consignment was sourced with the efforts of Laureate E&W Foundation, based in Bangalore, who also managed to organise air freight logistics.



THE ‘GIVE HOPE OXYGEN BANK’

Our team set up the ‘Give Hope Oxygen Bank’ at a prominent location in Bangalore which was easily accessible to the general public.

This oxygen bank is fully functional with a 24/7 helpline number direct to the Bangalore team to take calls and answer queries at any given time. We provided door to door delivery of oxygen concentrators **at no extra cost** as we believe there shouldn't be any price for the right to breathe. This sent a great message across the city as almost all organisations were charging a mandatory amount before handing over the oxygen machine. We employed an auto rickshaw driver for delivering oxygen concentrator machines door to door. We named the autorickshaw as the ‘Vehicle of Hope’.



When the team received a call via the helpline, necessary details of the patient were taken down and a coordinator was assigned to the case immediately. The coordinator then followed up with the logistics team to ensure delivery of the oxygen concentrator machine at the earliest possible opportunity, minimising delay.

We also had specialist doctors on board who were available for emergency consultation in serious cases where the patient's oxygen saturation was below 85%. In such situations, the patient's family was advised for immediate hospitalisation of the patient. Our team of doctors assisted in booking a hospital bed which was a very difficult task due to shortage of beds during that time. Our logistics team helped to arrange an ambulance and made sure they followed up with the patient's family until the patient was admitted to hospital safely.

The Give Hope Oxygen Bank managed to set up enough resources in difficult times to fill the gaps of the existing system to support the city. Our team smoothly helped and **assisted over 130 patients in the city of Bangalore.**



A BENEFICIARY'S STORY

Balakrishna is a 77 year old man who had oxygen saturation levels of 84% when his son called our helpline number panicking. He said his entire family of five was Covid positive and his father was almost unconscious as his oxygen saturation was falling fast. His son was helpless as he couldn't step out of his house. Our team faced two challenges:

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1. Exposing our team to a Covid positive family
 2. We were unable to find a hospital bed as this case had to be managed with specialist doctor supervision in a tertiary medical care facility and we would be risking his life by managing it at home.

We immediately loaded our Vehicle of Hope, with two oxygen concentrator machines, got our auto driver and team doctor suited up in PPE, and deployed them to Balakrishna. Our team reached just in time, with the patient's oxygen saturation falling to 80% in just 30 minutes.

Our team doctor immediately connected the oxygen machine and instructed the family to use the other machine alternatively every 3 hours to avoid over exhaustion of the machine. The doctor also prescribed steroids, and antibiotics along with regular Covid medications.

Meanwhile, our team was able to find a bed at a government hospital and all arrangements were made to shift the patient. After a week in the ICU, Balakrishna was shifted to the ward and he made great progress.

The local police station lauded our efforts and promised their full support by issuing emergency security passes to our team who had free access to travel across the city during the strict lockdown.



After this entire experience, our team is prepared to face the third wave *if* it arrives!



MEDIA COVERAGE

This project was extensively covered by the leading national urdu channel, [News 18 Urdu](#) & [Channel WIN](#).