

TEAM SWEDEN STANDS WITH INDIA

Swedish industry, businesses, agencies and individuals along with government, support India during Covid-19 surge -

New Delhi. May 13, 2021: Team Sweden - which comprises Swedish government, Swedish industry, businesses, and agencies – has joined forces to help India fight the current devastating Covid-19 surge.

There are approximately 220 Swedish companies present in India which employ close to 200,000 directly and another 2,200,000 indirectly. Like the rest of the country, almost every company has lost employees, or their family members, to Covid. The Swedish Chamber of Commerce India (SCCI) has launched an initiative under *Kraftsamla* (which in Swedish means to join forces), to coordinate all efforts being made locally that can broadly be classified under saving lives, livelihood, prevention and building for the future.

“The second wave of Covid-19 in India has been highly virulent and fast spreading, and this can truly overwhelm the best of administrations or healthcare systems anywhere. It is indeed gratifying to see the willingness and coordinated response of the Swedish companies in supporting lives and livelihoods with an outreach to employees, families, and communities. The Swedish companies are engaged in creating Covid Care Centres, bringing Oxygen Concentrators, Vaccination Campaigns and will continue to do more, together with the local administration,” said Kamal Bali, Managing Director of Volvo India, Chairperson of SCCI.

The Swedish Chamber is also working with issues around livelihood for migrant workers, women and children, as well as mental health and trauma counselling.

Whilst the Chamber manages efforts in India, the Sweden-India Business Council (SIBC) in Stockholm is coordinating with headquarters of Swedish businesses.

According to Robin Sukhia, Secretary General & President of SIBC, from Sweden, industry will fund medical supplies, distribution, medical care and support to urban and rural India. This is being done through established Indian NGOs such as

Pratham, Indian Red Cross Society and Doctors without Borders, among others, via their Swedish or international organisations. This far the total amount raised outside India is 43 MSEK (USD 5.2 Million).

“The rapid and substantial response from Swedish industry to the sad situation in India affecting our friends, families and colleagues was notable and encouraging. The companies and their head offices have mounted a great response to support the medical situation,” said Marcus Wallenberg, Chairman of SEB.