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City bizmen set up fund for bodies fighting Covid-19

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Ludhiana: After promising to retain their workers and give them cash advances to combat the Covid-19 lockdown, Ludhiana businessmen have started a fund, proceeds of which will be donated to different organisations fighting the pandemic. On Tuesday, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), in association with Chamber of Industrial and Commercial Undertakings (CICU), started the fund, donations to which will continue till the curfew is in place in Punjab. The proceeds will be handed over to the beneficiaries after the curfew is lifted.

In a big boost to the campaign, Rs 80 lakh were pledged by several city businessmen on Day One. According to Rahul Ahuja, chairman of CII, Punjab, "CII and CICU have started this small initiative under which we are collecting money for several government organisations and other sectors, including Indian Red Cross Society and Police Welfare Fund, among others. Medical equipment, like ventilators, can also be purchased from the fund and donated to hospitals. As we are home due to the complete shutdown, we started this campaign on phone and WhatsApp. Interested businessmen and individuals can contact us at 9814027903 and 9815800622. City businessmen are contributing wholeheartedly. We are anticipating that by the time this campaign ends on March 31, we will be able to collect about Rs 2 crore. Besides this campaign, we are also thinking how to assist the administration and the government in sensitising and making masses aware about Covid-19."

Upkar Singh Ahuja, president of CICU, said, "Rahul and I floated this idea and started the corpus by contributing first. When we discussed it with our friends and in WhatsApp groups, we got a huge response. It's really incredible that it's been only few hours since we started the fund with just Rs 2 lakh and the figure has now touched Rs 80 lakh. We are thankful to everyone who has contributed."

A businessman who has contributed Rs 1 lakh said, "This is a great initiative for humanity as government departments and organisations will need major financial aid to battle coronavirus. As due to curfew and restrictions, we cannot go out and do anything for society, this is the best thing to do at the moment."

How to contribute

Interested persons can call/WhatsApp on numbers 9814027903 or 9815800622. They can pledge the amount to be contributed along with details, like name and address. The amount can be handed over to CII-CICU representatives after March 31.