

Hindustan Times

Page No: 11  
Page Name: Business  
Size: 154 sq. cm  
AVE: INR 461,893

Type: Newspaper  
Language: English  
Circulation: 352,905  
Frequency: Daily

Mumbai - Apr 13, 2020

News monitored for: Force Motors

## Doctor at your doorstep scheme launched to help Pune's needy

**PUNE:** For Vilas Rathod, 65, the humanitarian crisis brought about by the Covid-19 global pandemic is nothing he hasn't seen before. In September 1993 when the Latur earthquake struck Maharashtra killing over 9,000

people, Rathod was among the first lot of relief workers to reach the site to provide assistance.

At the time, Rathod was part of the Maharashtra Jain Sanghatana which later became the Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana

(BJS) — a collective of volunteers established in 1985 to do social work, but primarily focused on issues pertaining to the Jain community.

Having become familiar with relief work over the last 30 years

— the organisation helped rebuild 335 schools after the Bhuj quake in Gujarat in 2001 — Rathod approached Pune district collector Naval Kishore Ram for permission to launch mobile dispensaries after the

21-day national lockdown was announced. "We created a programme along with the Pune Municipal Corporation and Force Motors to launch mobile clinics/ambulances on 1 April," Rathod said.

Called Doctor at your doorstep, the initiative is aimed at residents of slums, homeless shelters and old age homes. With most private physicians closing their clinics, and government dispensaries spending all their

available resources on fighting the coronavirus, these mobile clinics have begun to cater to at least 2,500 people daily.

For this initiative, 15 buses and tempos were retrofitted within 24 hours and turned into

mobile clinics and makeshift ambulances. The front seats were removed to make space for a stretcher and for doctors to move inside. A loud speaker system has also been fitted.

**PRACHI BARI**