

## *The Actions That Spoke Loud...*

Dear friends of MAUK,

2020 must have been the most unprecedented and exceedingly challenging year in our living memory. It certainly was for us as an organisation. While the challenges of the Pandemic starts to ease, I am confident that both MAUK and our community will come out of it much stronger and more resilient

The Pandemic had taught us that despite our different backgrounds, we are all interlinked and that only through a sense of individual responsibility and collective community responses can we overcome adversities. It reminded us of humanity's ability to recognise the harmony in all that exist and that in spite of our wealth or social status, it is simple human interactions that make our hearts smile. Despite the might of advanced weaponry or the enduring belief in the Almighty, COVID-19, an invisible virus attacked us indiscriminately and brought us to our knees. We've realised that it is human resilience, scientific advancement and basic compassion were the only way back to normality.

As the title of this annual report for an extraordinary year indicates- Actions Speaks Louder Than Words - the altruistic actions of MAUK volunteers spoke volumes, inspired other individuals and organisations to rise to the challenges posed by COVID-19 and highlighted that hope is stronger than fear. We were at the forefront of supporting the community to lessen the burden of the Pandemic from day one.

Taking stock of the worsening health and safety conditions, we paused our regular activities at Kerala House two weeks before the U.K government announced the national lockdown on 26 March 2020 and focused on supporting those in quarantine and self-isolating. During the early days of the Pandemic, our dynamic vision and thoughtful actions were instrumental in bringing together like-minded individuals and Malayalee organisations from across the UK to address the unprecedented and unpredictable demands of the UK Malayalee community. Through prompt communication via social media and dedicated volunteers, we reached out to Malayalees even in the remote parts of the UK.

Meanwhile, closer to home, in Newham, we started a Foodbank, which to date have supplied over 22,000 food kits to thousands of local families and international students. In addition to food kits, our food bank also provided sanitary products, dealt with accommodation issues, and referred many for NHS services, school enrolment and immigration advice. We partnered with British Red Cross Hardship Fund and referred 58 deserving families to receive up to £1080 over three months. We were the primary means

of survival for over 300 hundred undocumented migrant families- victims of economic deprivation and greedy human traffickers who suddenly lost their cash in hand jobs.

Our efforts have been appreciated and acknowledged by many global media outlets and commended by many prominent personalities, including Stephen Timms, MP for East Ham, who highlighted our services in the Houses of Parliament, a recognition of great honour.

Despite the threat of the Pandemic, immense scrutiny, and wide commendation, MAUK volunteers stayed focused on serving, became a beacon of hope and set the standards for other community organisations to follow. It is my honour and privilege to have worked with such dedicated and noble individuals.

In a year when most of the world spent in relative quarantine MAUK was an embodiment of the vital role that voluntary sector organisations play in bringing people together to support each other, speak for and uplift those left behind and improve the moral fabrics society. I dedicate this achievement of MAUK to our brave and thoughtful volunteers whose compassion and dedication epitomised the resilience of humankind. I also take this opportunity to thank all our members, sponsors and well-wishers for their trust and the invaluable support they continue to bestow upon MAUK. We are humbled by your help and support.

Following a very testing year, we are now getting accustomed to living with COVID and similar viruses. At the start of our COVID Relief Campaign back in March 2020, we passionately declared that 'Hope is Stronger than Fear'. Through our undeterred courage and conviction in serving our community- and humanity, we have bettered the lives of many, reaching greater heights and proving ourselves right. We do not envisage the road ahead to be smooth, but I can assure you that MAUK will be at the forefront to support and assist our community members whatever the challenges the future brings.

Yours sincerely,

Sreejith Sreedharan  
Chairperson | MAUK

