

# 02

*The Government of India's COVID-19 response efforts were supported by a competent fleet of Frontline Workers, which included among others the ubiquitous ambulance drivers even as they supported the country's emergency medical services 24x7, during these unprecedented times.*

*As thousands of ambulances were pressed into service, they often became the face of a responsive system that successfully reached out to multitudes during the pandemic.*



Ambulance services became critical to combat the pandemic. It was not just one role that they performed during this time. The ambulance drivers ferried and attended to COVID patients, they along with the paramedic staff monitored their condition and even motivated them along the way. They thus became the caretakers and often even confidants.



Pravin S Baria- an ambulance driver from Gujarat lost both his parents to the deadly COVID-19. Even as the family attended to the last rites, they spurred him to go on and attend to his duties.



“There were non-stop calls for help”, recalls Pravin when talking about the patient load during the pandemic.



Nisar Malik, another ambulance driver from Gujarat reminiscences how families handed over their loved ones with choked voices. It was such moments that made him realize the significance of his profession.

These ambulance drivers, even at the risk of infection to themselves and their families, put duty above all and worked round the clock.



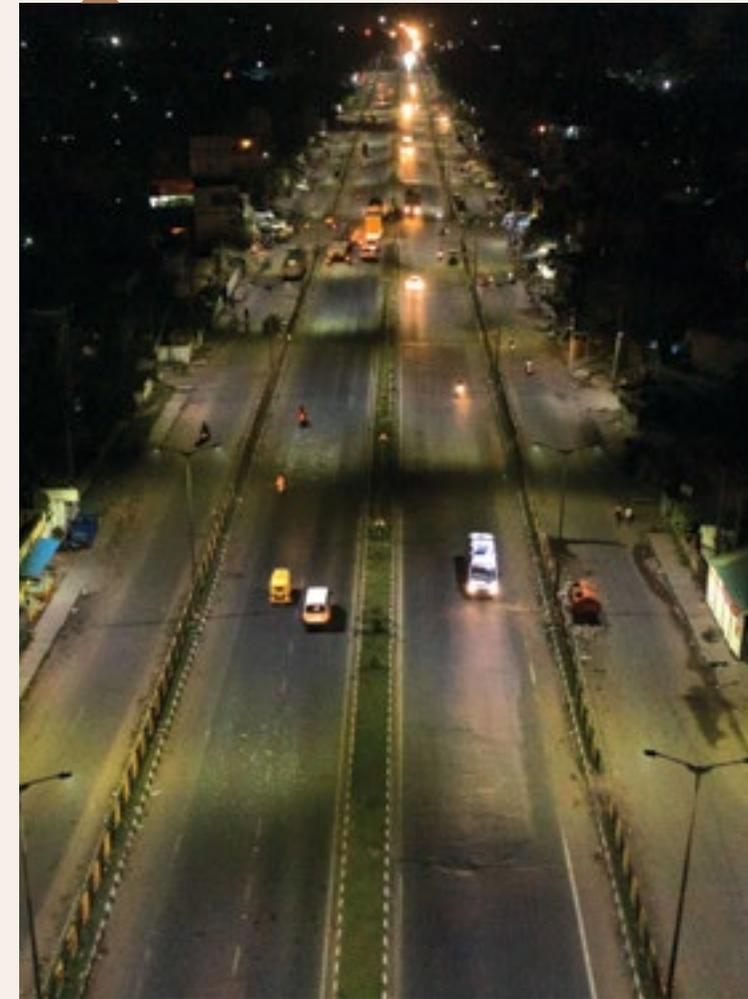


The rush to ferry patients to hospitals, often going without meals and the need for constant vigil became a way of life for the ambulance drivers. Here, Nisar is seen getting ready for another mission as he puts on the personal protection equipment.

For many patients, it was the first such experience and they were overwhelmed at the thought of their separation from families. The patients had to be consoled and persuaded to be hopeful of quick recovery.



Miles and miles were covered even as the streets echoed the sound of sirens during the pandemic. Indeed, without these ambulance drivers behind the wheels, the reach to critical care would have been longer for most.





**“The Government is working round the clock to save lives. Why should I not support the country in our greatest hour of need”, said Nisar Malik.**



“I wanted humanity to win the war against the pandemic”, says Nisar Malik, who works with 108 Emergency Service of the State.