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## Marathon feat: Individuals collect ₹1cr for city run

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Elite athletes could take a cue from the record-breaking abilities of individuals who have raised over Rs 1 crore for Tata Mumbai Marathon (TMM) 2020, taking its total philanthropy tally to Rs 33 crore so far. Among them is V S Parthasarathy, who inspired 2,000 people to support his cause on his social media page to become the highest individual fundraiser this year by collecting over Rs 1.4 crore.

While over 14,000 people are running to support a cause this year, over 2,000 runners have campaigned and raised over Rs 12 crore at TMM 2020 through charity partners United Way Mumbai. Four of these fundraisers—or “change legends” as they were called—came together at an event on Tuesday

that saw the term “virtuous circle” become the buzzword for the day. The term was Parthasarathy’s shorthand for the sentiment of giving back to society by paying it forward.

“The best form of prayer is giving,” said Parthasarathy, group CFO and CIO of Mahindra & Mahindra and active supporter of Project Nanhi Kali, which enables underprivileged girls to complete 10 years of schooling.

The event’s charity platform is also benefiting from the posthumous goodwill of seasoned fundraiser Dhaval Mehta of Shrimad Rajchandra Love and Care, the highest fundraising NGO for the last nine years.

Mehta—who was drawn to the cause of education of girls, children and tribals—passed away on December 3 last year in a car crash. His



Aashumi Varaiya, Dr Alok Shah, VS Parthasarathy, Priya Dutt, Anyssa Kothari, Dr Bijal Mehta, Meera Mehta, Aarti Kakatkar, KVS Manian, Jayanti Shukla and Vivek Singh with girls from Jai Vakeel Foundation

tribute page on social media has managed to draw Rs 1.6 crore from thousands of donors in the last 15 days. “He was a champion for the cause but preferred to stay in the background,” said Dr Bijal Mehta, who had worked

closely with Mehta in Dharampur.

“Our guru used to say he was like salt in the food, whose presence is taken for granted and absence felt greatly,” she said.

A key aspect of fundrais-

ing is shedding the initial inhibition that comes with asking for money by realizing that it’s okay to ask for a cause, conceded the panel of fundraisers, which included avid runner KVS Manian, president, corporate and investment bank at Kotak Mahindra Bank, whose team has raised Rs 1.3 crore so far; and Priya Dutt, whose family members, including sister-in-law Maanyata Dutt, have raised over Rs 25 lakh for the Nargis Dutt Foundation, which has been working in the area of health.

Over 100 schoolchildren are running on behalf of the NGO this year. While mobilizing them, Dutt said it was important to expose the children to the cause of the NGO which had used 100% of its funds recently towards furnishing rural hospitals with cancer care equipment.