

# Shaffi Mather bags 'start-up of the year' award at Silicon Valley for medical emergency app

MUrgency sends alerts to neighbourhood doctors, nurses and paramedics

**KPM BASHEER**

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Kochi-born social entrepreneur Shaffi Mather's MUrgency, a mobile-based emergency medical response app, has been chosen as the 'start-up of the year' at the prestigious Startup Grind 2016 conference held at Silicon Valley in California.

MUrgency, launched in Chandigarh last month, is an app that connects people in need of emergency medical aid with doctors and paramedical staff. It has the potential to save thousands of lives across the globe. "Our app was selected from among 1,100 start-ups from 200 cities around the globe that had applied," Shaffi Mather, founder and CEO of the San Francisco-based MUrgency Inc., told *BusinessLine* over the phone from Austin, Texas.

Startup Grind is a Silicon Valley-based organisation that networks with more than two lakh start-ups across the world. Founded

in 2010, it educates and inspires start-ups through business events and monthly conferences and also partners with Google For Entrepreneurs. Grind's events are now organised in 20 cities around the world.

"Startup Grind is a prestigious event and winning the 'start-up of the year' prize is a major achievement for any entrepreneur," said Pranav Kumar Suresh, CEO of the Kochi-based Startup Village.

Mather, 45, a lawyer, business executive and public policy analyst, had launched the 'Dial 1298 for Ambulance' project in Kochi a few years ago. "It was the experi-

ence I gained from the Dial 1298 project that inspired me to conceive MUrgency," he said.

### How it works

Explaining the concept, which has been put to use in Israel, apart from the Chandigarh-Panchkula-Mohali tri-city, Mather said it functioned almost like the Uber and Ola cab-hailing apps.

In a medical emergency, such as a heart attack or stroke, the app sends emergency alerts to the doctors, nurses and other paramedical staff in the neighbourhood. The nearest one rushes to the patient and helps to save his/her life.

"In Chandigarh, the app is able to get medical responders in under ten minutes,"

Mather noted. "There are 37 doctors, 40 ambulances and 358 other medical responders signed on to the network."

The facility will be available in Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Amritsar in 2-3 weeks. "We plan to cover the entire Punjab by April 30. Later it will be extended to southern States. Those who sign on as emergency responders will be given training," he added.

Explaining the business model, Mather said that in Chandigarh, ₹370 is charged for each emergency response (doctors and paramedics reach the patient in their own cars/vehicles). The responder is paid ₹280 and the company keeps ₹70.

Mather said the biggest advantage of the Grind prize was his company's access to world's-leading investors.

Since the app has been extremely useful in giving emergency medical aid in both developing and developed countries, there is a high level of interest from investors. "But I am more interested in the app's potential to save thousands of lives," he said.



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**SHAFFI MATHER**  
Founder, MUrgency