



Udaipur's COVID Response and Limited City Level Actions



COVID response strategy adopted in cities in Rajasthan

Various cities in the state of Rajasthan have responded to the COVID crisis with a strategy which includes containment and welfare measures. The containment of virus includes lockdown measures, screening, testing, quarantine and treatment. Necessary welfare measures in cities like Udaipur are also being

taken to address the resultant problems because of the effect of lockdown on the daily wage workers and migrants in the city. However, such vital decisions and associated implementations are taken up at the state level and not at the local level.

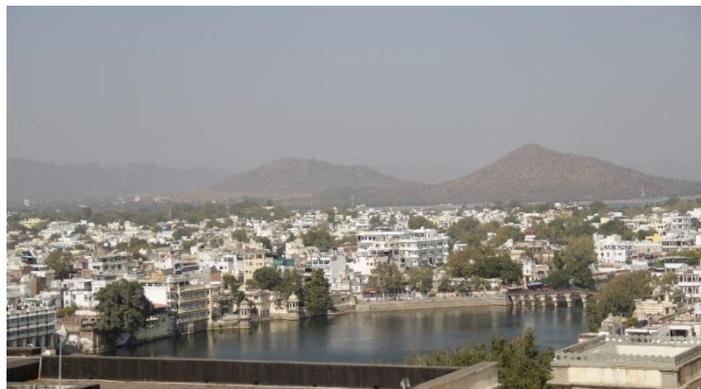
Grave impact on livelihood of citizens

Udaipur thrives on tourism and most of the citizens, craftsmen are also dependent on it. But, during the lockdown there was no strategy or measures to address the issue of livelihood. There are talks and discussion on opening tourism in Udaipur and other cities over the upcoming phases of unlocking the cities. The city government including the corporators and administration needs to be given the authority and power to take decisions and plan strategy to innovatively find solutions to the problems of the locals.

Ground level actions in the city

While some cities are forming local level task forces, Rajasthan has formed rapid response taskforces at the district level which implements the containment and welfare strategies.

The civil society groups in cities like Udaipur are taking up measures like sanitisation across the entire city.



Food is being provided to the people using ration cards whereas medical facilities and supplies were arranged and provided across the city. Apart from that, masks were made and supplied in bulk to the citizens, sanitizers were distributed and many other initiatives were taken by the people to help the community. The civil society also included local artisans and craftsmen for mask making to support them during these troubled times.

Limited involvement of city government in COVID crisis management

The city government, which mainly administers the city is not involved in implementing the strategies. The Udaipur Municipal Corporation was only involved in a survey to know the travel history and high-risk population along with the district administration.

The state government has, however, allotted 60 crore rupees to Panchayati Raj Institutions to help them conduct sanitisation, arrange for PPE kits and deal with local issues arising due to COVID. But no such financial assistance is provided to city governments because they have not been given any authority, nor responsibility, to address the issue independently.

There was very limited involvement of the Udaipur Municipal Corporation while planning or implementing strategies in the time of pandemic. The local governments are the closest to the citizens and understand the needs while also providing solutions to problems arising on a daily basis and thus need to be empowered as well as involved in decision making and implementation.