



Edition 27  
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Dear All,

**Greetings from Praja Foundation!**

Hope everyone is safe and doing well in these difficult times of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We reached out to the stakeholders across our network in states across the country to understand how the cities have been responding during the crisis. Below are some of the interesting responses mapped across some of the cities and few highlights on the challenges faced.

### Unique responses mapped in various cities



City governments across the country have responded differently to the ongoing pandemic and the crisis it brought along with it. While some cities took proactive measures to address problems at hand, some cities also planned for the upcoming difficulties and started working towards it.

**Agartala**, the capital city of the Indian state of Tripura, witnessed rising cases of

Covid-19 as the countrywide lockdown was eased and travel for migrants was permitted. The city was struggling with the supply chain of food and ration, sanitation and the prevention of spread of Coronavirus. While the matters related to the virus were taken care of by the district and state administration, the local affairs of sanitation, cleaning and food supply chain were dealt with by the city government.

**Aizawl**, capital of the state of Mizoram, has used its active decentralised governance structures i.e., Local Councils for management of Covid-19 crisis in the city. The city has formed task forces in its Local Council areas wherein the Local Council chairman, members, Young Mizo Association volunteers and the local church have been actively involved in taking measures such as spread of awareness, enforcement of social distancing norms, identifying and conversion of amenities to quarantine centres and distribution of food and sanitary items to the communities. The respective ward councillor and City Government officials continuously coordinate with these local task forces to provide necessary administrative support.



*Guwahati, Assam*

**Guwahati**, being the gateway to the North Eastern region, also has been facing steep rise in number of cases with the natives belonging to different part of the region, returning from other states. The District Administration has been cautious and has been testing all the returnees and not just resorting to thermal screenings. Interestingly, Nagrik committees formed in local areas in each ward has become active during this crisis. Resident members of the area, former councillors, volunteers and police official are jointly taking hold of the situation spanning across the area being monitored.

In **Gangtok**, the capital and the largest town of the Indian state of Sikkim, the Hotel Association members and tourism-based business stakeholders have been part of an economic revival committee formed lately due to the crisis by the State Government. The Government is planning on how to proceed ahead along with monetary support. The State Government has also provided monetary support to the natives staying in other states which includes compensation for any medical treatments if undergone during this period, and by doing so, also have urged natives to avoid any inter-state travelling at this time.

Overall, city governments across the country are responsible for limited roles such as sanitisation of streets, roads and amenities. All COVID-19 related healthcare services are mostly being managed under the control of the District Administration in most of the cities barring a few major cities such as Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Coimbatore, Bengaluru etc. The larger commonalities in the crisis responses in most cities have been the joint effort and the voluntary spirits shown by City based NGOs, religious institutes and the police in organising and supporting all forms of relief support while enforcing strict guidelines.

### **Challenges faced by cities during the COVID crisis**

Cities such as Dharamshala, Panaji, Udaipur and Amritsar are facing a huge shortfall across its major economic sector i.e., tourism. Udaipur city government has not had any council meetings, or any decisions taken to review and plan for the economic upliftment of the city which thrives on tourism. Although, Goa and Himachal Pradesh have opened to tourists in the name of 'Quarantine Tourism', however, there has been mixed reactions across tourism sector stakeholders.



Warangal is facing a different challenge due to the centralisation of the Covid-19 related healthcare service. All Covid-19 positive patients in the city are being sent to Hyderabad for treatment as there is no dedicated hospitals for Covid-19 treatment in the city.

The crisis needs to be converted into an opportunity for all kinds of reforms in strengthening urban governance in the country. Empowering City Governments is the fundamental precursor towards

building resilience within communities, economy, services and governance within the city against any future crisis that will unfold.


We would like to know your insights based on the information. Feel free to reach us at [urbandialogue@praja.org](mailto:urbandialogue@praja.org)



### Op-Ed at India Development Review

Praja Foundation launched a pan-India study to understand the implementation of the 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment, challenges faced by the city governments and possible solutions. Meghna Bandelwar and Milind Mhaske wrote about policy reforms that were identified.

Read the article here: <https://www.praja.org/media-room/3318>



### Webinar on "Leveraging Technology in Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic"

Praja is hosting an online webinar on "Leveraging Technology in Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic" on 16th July 2020 (04:00 PM - 05:00 PM IST) with the objective of finding practical solutions to the problems posed by the pandemic.

Webinar Registration Link: <http://tinyurl.com/PrajaWebinar>



### Annual Report

While the year 2020 has not been particularly kind to any of us yet, it gives us immense pleasure to look back at the year gone by and retrospect on the achievements and successes that we have had. This year, the Annual Report lists down the past accomplishments for each of the teams and the impact that they have had in the community. It details Praja's long and history as well as peeks into Praja's future. We are also particularly proud of the revamped website! Click on the link below to read.

Annual Report Link: <https://bit.ly/2ALAk60>  
Newly Designed Website Link: [www.praja.org](http://www.praja.org)

Kind Regards,

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Milind Mhaske  
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