

Factsheet by SDC Foundation on

Maha Kumbh 2021 : Covid19 Test and Death Audit

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Maha Kumbh Covid19 Data in Maha Kumbh Mela Area:

Till today, it's been over a month and a half since the completion of the Maha Kumbh 2021 and there is no data in public domain on total number of tests conducted, positive patients, recoveries, deaths, positivity rate etc in the Maha Kumbh Mela area.

Maha Kumbh Mela Area:

We have highlighted this many times earlier and do it once again. It is extremely crucial to point out that the Kumbh Mela area is not the same as the district of Haridwar.

The authorities have not once provided data on Covid testing in the Kumbh Mela area. The health bulletin of Uttarakhand provides district wide data which is adequate for normal times. However, the same format did not provide the required information from the point of view of the Maha Kumbh Mela.

The Kumbh Mela area includes large parts of the Haridwar district and the Rishikesh Region that spans into Rishikesh town in Dehradun district, Muni Ki Reti in Tehri district and Swargashram in Pauri district.

Data Collection and Dissemination:

Mela authorities in collaboration with the Health Department in the Government of Uttarakhand should have planned, structured and organised data collection, data review and data dissemination for the Kumbh Mela area.

However, for reasons best known to them; either this was not done or if done, then this information was not shared in the public domain. There were at-least three mediums through which this information could have been disseminated with the public at large, with media, with civil society organizations and all other stakeholders:

1. The daily Uttarakhand state health bulletin
2. Uttarakhand government website <https://covid19.uk.gov.in>
3. Kumbh Mela website <https://www.haridwarkumbhmela2021.com/>

Haridwar Covid19 Test Data:

Based on the state health bulletin, a total of 600,291 tests were conducted in the district of Haridwar between April 1-30, 2021. This is 20,008 tests a day compared to the direction of 50,000 tests a day given by the Hon'ble High Court of Uttarakhand.

There were 17,375 positive results from the above grand total of 600,291 tests resulting in the one month positivity rate of 2.89%.

The single highest day test tally in the district of Haridwar is 34,768 tests on April 17, 2021 while 1,873 tests on April 3, 2021 is the lowest single day test tally.

Haridwar Covid19 Death Data:

682 deaths were reported in the district of Haridwar in the months of April and May 2021. 591 of these were reported in May and 91 in April.

The total of 682 deaths also includes the 65 backlog deaths that were reported from Haridwar based Baba Barfani Hospital, a government facility on May 14, 2021. Backlog deaths were reported from Haridwar on several other days as well.

Uttarakhand has so far reported a total of 957 backlog deaths. The vast majority of these were reported in May 2021.

What Next:

a) Covid 19 Test Information

We ask Mela authorities, Haridwar district authorities and Health Dept Uttarakhand to release the following data within the next few days.

This recap should include all data in the available records (including both allegedly fake and genuine). In order to make corrections, we anyways need to make a start and the best possible manner is to first release the available data (including both allegedly fake and genuine)

1. Total tests from April 1-30, 2021 by both govt labs and private labs
2. Total tests from April 1-30 by all govt labs
3. Total tests from April 1-30 by all private labs
4. Total private agencies and labs engaged by Mela authorities for Maha Kumbh
5. Total private agencies and labs engaged by Haridwar district authorities for Maha Kumbh
6. Total tests with antigen/RTPCR tests breakups and positive rates for all agencies and labs (govt and private) from April 1-30, 2021

b) Covid19 Death Audits

Apart from consolidated information on tests, authorities also need to conduct in-depth death audits in the Kumbh Mela area. There have been no reports on death audits being done either in the Kumbh Mela or Haridwar district in the wake of mass scale fake test allegations.

Summary:

Unfortunately, the fake Covid19 tests reported during the Maha Kumbh Mela have severely damaged the reputation of Uttarakhand. We need to make amends. Sharing of all test and death audit data is a positive, welcome step in the right direction.

It is important to finally keep in mind that incorrect conclusions on the basis of false figures weaken the fight against the pandemic. It is equally vital to note that public participation is key in the fight against the pandemic. Complete transparency is the need of the hour to lift morale and encourage people to adopt covid appropriate behavior.

About SDC Foundation:

SDC Foundation is Dehradun based not-for-profit engaged in research and communication on issues of climate change and public health in Uttarakhand. Write to us at contactsdcuk@gmail.com

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