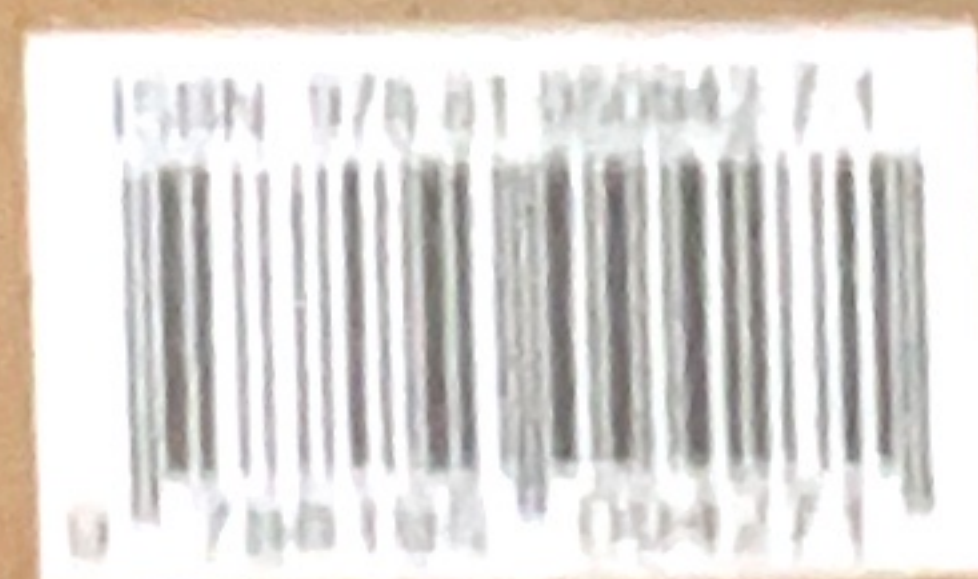


SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19

This is a collection of 14 thought provoking articles by academics on socio-economic impact of Covid-19 pandemic with reference to the North Eastern Region including Assam. These well researched articles will set the background for further research on the subject to formulate the future plan of action to fight the pandemic which till now has shown no sign of abetting. The book will not only fulfil the needs of the students and inquisitive readers but also help the researchers and policy makers.

The book is edited by Dr. Rumia Begum, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Ratnapith College, Dhubri.



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Editor
Dr. Rumia Begum

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FOREWORD

The United Nations rightly alerts us against the fallouts of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID19) and says its impact will not be confined to the health sector and will engulf many other socio-economic aspects of our lives in future. It will especially deteriorate the conditions of the poor and increase the economic imbalances that already prevails in the societies. When the nations of the world are striving hard to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, the COVID-19 has thrown a heavy blow to those efforts in terms of reallocation of the limited resources of the governments towards controlling the pandemic. It will make it harder to reach the SDGs as envisaged earlier. Countries should now re-assess the situation not only in terms of saving lives of its citizens in the short term but also think in terms of long-term development goals so that at least their socio-economic conditions improve, *albeit* late, over some time.

Globally, as reported to the World Health Organization (WHO), there have been 57,274,018 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 1,368,000 deaths (as on 21 November 2020). As per the Government of India official database, as of 22 November 2020, the total number of COVID-19 cases stands at 90,95,806, with 4,40,962 active cases and 1,33,227 deaths so far. We are sure these numbers will go up exponentially by the time this volume is in your hand. Like the world economy as a whole, India's domestic economy has been hit hard and the preventive measures such nation-wide lockdown have also impacted the society with a large number of people losing their jobs or forced to take up jobs at a much lower salary. Closure of transport systems, as well as international travel, have adversely affected the domestic sectors like tourism, trade and financial markets.

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Covid-19 Crisis in India and the Varied State Responses: A Study of Assam and Kerala

Parvin Sultana

Introduction

With continued increase in the number of infected persons almost at an alarming rate, a post-Covid era has become the new normal. This also makes it crucial that states across the globe learn from each other, co-operate and share adequate information to reign in this pandemic. This has already impacted the global economy with large countries projecting poor Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate. India's first quarter GDP showed a massive contraction of 23%. This began as an outbreak in Wuhan in December, 2019 and till date there are more than 3.4 million confirmed cases worldwide.

Coronaviruses represent a major group of viruses mostly affecting human beings through zoonotic transmissions. In the past two decades, this is the third instance of the emergence of a novel coronavirus, after Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003 and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in 2012 (Chatterjee et al, 2020). While the outbreak initially seemed like a local one, it soon took the shape of a pandemic. The World Health Organisation declared it a pandemic in January (Bhutto et al, 2020).

The Indian government like many other countries also started responding to the crisis in the first part of February. Apart from ensuring safe return of hundreds of Indians from China, Iran and