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**REVERBERATIONS OF COVID 19: ANALYSING POST PANDEMIC
PREDICAMENTS**

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Abstract

SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Corona virus 2) cause of the infamous, unprecedented and an ongoing pandemic named COVID-19. Covid-19 has hit humanity in all fronts possible from overwhelming the existing healthcare system, wrecking the commerce and trade, straining digital infrastructure all while pushing for a digital revolution, exacerbating social-psychological conditions etc. The public-health crisis like all things bad has a silver lining like the renewed attention and awareness towards the importance and hard work of an everyday task that numerous labourers perform such as cashiers and workers at your local grocery store, the problems with one of the worst-hit community of daily wagers and so on. This article will cover the problems in hand amidst this pandemic and the way forward in depth covering the nuances, analytics and reports from WHO, ILO, WEF and The Institute for Policy Studies (USA).

Aftermath of global scenario Vis a Vis Pandemic

The COVID 19 brought forward the lacunas in the global healthcare proofs of which can be found all over the internet in this digital age which includes the lack of presence of ventilators, shortage of PPE gears for the front liners both in quantity and quality, delay in making of a vaccine. The evident failure of the neoliberal policies of the right-wing governments worldwide to cater an efficient response to tackle the dual health and economic crisis- the US, Brazil, India being some of the most obvious. Where the neoliberal regimes have now been seen deterring from the norms by intervening in the market economies and medicinal services, optimists believe this pandemic may lead us to fairer societies. World-renowned French economist Thomas Piketty also seems to think so as in one of his interviews with *The Guardian*

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“In the book (Capital and Ideology) I argued that the two world wars were largely the result of the extreme inequality that existed in pre-first world war European societies – both within those societies and internationally, due to their accumulation of colonial assets. That inequality was not sustainable, and it caused those societies to erupt, but they did so in different ways – the First World War, the Russian revolutions, the 1918 pandemic. The pandemic preyed on the poorer sectors of society, with their poor access to healthcare, and it was exacerbated by the war. The result of these cumulative shocks was a compression of inequality over the next half-century”²

The pandemic has also highlighted the requirement for far better, prominent, and efficient cooperation worldwide to address global crises. The pandemic has uncovered the need for a global reaction and response and the ways in which similar reaction ought to extend to address other emergencies, such as climate change crisis and widespread systemic inequalities.

Humanitarian crisis: A by-product of pandemic

The ongoing unprecedented humanitarian crisis not only exposed the extant disparity of classes in the world but has exacerbated it. A report published by The Institute for Policy Studies (USA) recorded that while 44 million US workers filed for unemployment the wealth of the billionaires went up by \$637 billion between March 18 and June 11. The wealth grew from \$2.95 trillion to \$3.58 trillion- a 21.5% increase.³ Similarly in India, while Reliance owned Jio raised \$15.7 billion from investors the country faced one of its biggest migrant crises. The lockdown revealed the plight of the vulnerable migrant labour force. An estimate from the World Economic Forum reveals that there may be 139 million migrants in the country. A study titled ‘ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work (second edition)’ predicted that as a consequence of the pandemic and the lockdown 400 million workers are at a risk of falling prey to poverty. With no means of livelihood, shortage of food and uncertainty pertaining to their future millions had no choice but to break the rules of the lockdown as a way to return to their native villages. With social distancing as a bulwark method along with other precautions of constant sanitisation and the wearing of mask against COVID-19 was not a viable option for these people who were out on the streets walking or bicycling hundreds and thousands of

²Laura Spiney, Will coronavirus lead to fairer societies? Thomas Piketty explores the prospect, The Guardian, May 12 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/12/will-coronavirus-lead-to-fairer-societies-thomas-piketty-explores-the-prospect>

³Rosie Pepper, Over the past 3 months, 44 million US workers filed for unemployment while billionaires got \$637 richer, Business Insider, Jun 12, 2020. https://www.businessinsider.in/politics/world/news/over-the-last-3-months-44-million-us-workers-filed-for-unemployment-while-billionaires-got-637-billion-richer/articleshow/76338035.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

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kilometres moving in large groups. More than 300 migrants have been reported to have died due to the lockdown, reasons range from suicide, starvation, accidents, exhaustion to police brutality and denial and/or delay of proper medical care.

National Perspective

The economic impact due to pandemic in India has been mostly turbulent. India's growth within the fourth quarter of the financial year 2020 went right down to 3.1% per the Ministry of Statistics.⁴

The World Bank and rating agencies had ab initio revised India's growth for FY2021 with very cheap figures India has seen in 3 decades since India's economic alleviation within the Nineties. Unemployment rose from 6.7% on fifteen March to twenty-sixth on nineteen April so backtrack to pre-lockdown levels by mid-June. Throughout the lockdown, a calculable fourteen crores (140 million) individuals lost employment whereas salaries were cut for several others.⁵ Quite 45th of households across the country have reported a financial gain drop as compared to the previous year. The Indian economy was expected to lose over ₹32,000 crores (US\$4.5 billion) a day throughout the primary 21- days of complete lockdown, that was declared following the corona virus happening. Underneath complete lockdown, but 1/4 of India's \$2.8 trillion economic movements were functional.⁶

Up to fifty-three of companies within the country were projected to be considerably affected. Supply chains are put out stress with the lockdown restrictions in place; ab initio, there was a scarcity of clarity in streamlining what an "essential" is and what's not. Those within the informal sectors and daily wage teams are at the foremost risk. An oversized range of farmers around the country grow foodstuff conjointly due to long-faced uncertainty.⁷

The Indian health care situation presents a spectrum of different landscapes. At one side of the spectrum are the glitzy steel and glass structures delivering high tech Medicare to the

⁴ <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/a-better-than-expected-q4-performance-pulls-fy20-gdp-growth-to-4-2-per-cent/articleshow/76091426.cms?from=mdr>

⁵ Goyal, Malini (22 March 2020). "Covid-19: How the deadly virus hints at a looming financial crisis" (<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/covid-19-crisis-how-the-deadly-virus-hints-at-a-looming-financial-crisis/articleshow/74752200.cms>). *The Economic Times*. Retrieved 23 March 2020.

⁶ "Lockdown relaxation — more than half of India's economy may reopen from Monday, says Nomura" (<https://www.businessinsider.in/policy/economy/news/lockdown-relaxation-more-than-half-of-indian-economy-may-reopen-from-monday-april-20/articleshow/75220299.cms>). *Business Insider*. Retrieved 18 April 2020.

⁷ Das, Goutam (30 March 2020). "136 million jobs at risk in post-corona India" (<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/136-million-jobs-at-risk-in-post-corona-india-11585584169192.html>). *Livemint*. Retrieved 2 April 2020.

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comfortable, largely urban Indian. On the opposite side are the damaged outposts within the remote reaches of the “other India” attempting urgently to measure up to their identity as health sub-centres, waiting to be remodelled to shrines of health and upbeat, a story that we'll wait to check to unfold. With the speedy pace of modification presently being witnessed, this spectrum is probably going to widen more, presenting even a lot of quality within the future.

In the 2019 world Health Security Index, that measures pandemic preparation for countries supported their ability to handle the crisis, India stratified fifty-seven, under us at one, the united kingdom at two, Brazil at twenty-two, and Italia at thirty-one, suggesting it's a lot of susceptible to the pandemic than countries that have seen a high variety of fatalities to this point.

With the growing range of corona virus cases in India (and worldwide), policymakers have sprung into action – additional info is being disseminated concerning preventive measures like hand washing and not touching the face. Social distancing has been urged as a tool to “flatten the curve”, or in different words, forestall the health system from being bowed down.

Private health care is pricey and untouchable for several poor households in India that leaves public health care facilities because the solely offered choice for them. For patients who are found to be COVID-19 positive, isolation wards are needed; in addition, for crucial cases, medical aid is required.

While demand is being unbroken down by activity interventions like social distancing etc, supply of beds and demanding care instrumentality like ventilators has to be quickly ramped up. During this regard, the govt. has already prohibited the export of vital care medical instrumentality. In addition, excess capability privately health care will be strategically employed by the govt. and emergency plans of fixing hospital beds in army camps ought to be executed as presently as attainable.

One of the worst affected sectors of the Indian economy due to the COVID-19 pandemic has been the MSME (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) sector. It is rather difficult for small businesses which make up a good chunk of the employers of the migrants to pay the migrants as these businesses have small cash reserves. The economic crunch has hit the low-income workers the worst. There is a need for governmental assistance to provide at least the basic necessities to those who are more vulnerable to the effects of the pandemic

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As noted by Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director, UNAIDS “The greatest risk will be for poor people in poor countries who have a much higher burden of existing illness, and of whom hundreds of millions are malnourished or immune compromised.”⁸. Half of the world’s populace has no access to essential healthcare even in normal times. The International Labour Organization predicts 5 million-25 million jobs will be eradicated, and \$860 billion-\$3.4 trillion will be lost in labour income. Lockdowns without compensation and economic support from the government are putting forward the cruel choice of hunger or danger to millions. During a virtual session of the UN Security Council on the Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Protecting Civilians Affected by Conflict-Induced Hunger David Beasley, UN World Food Programme (WFP) mentioned another crisis of ‘Hunger Pandemic’, he said

“135 million people on earth are marching towards the brink of starvation. But now the World Food Programme analysis shows that, due to the Corona virus, an additional 130 million people could be pushed to the brink of starvation by the end of 2020. That’s a total of 265 million people. The loss of tourism receipts will damage countries such as Ethiopia, where it accounts for 47% of total exports. The collapsing oil prices in lower-income countries like South Sudan will have an impact significantly, where oil accounts for 98.8% of total exports.”⁹

Free and quality healthcare is a necessity in such testing times. This also prevents the tragedy of 100 million people driven into extreme poverty by the cost of healthcare every year.

Unending Problems

Investors now will be on a lookout for robust investment plans, stable environment, competent leadership, and powerful institutions. Most of the developing countries or the third world countries will be excluded. To put it plainly, a monetary emergency is in the offing and without worldwide collaboration; beggar-thy-neighbour policies are probably going to deepen economic recession for all.

The toxicity in already toxic politics could increase as governments fail or battle to rapidly control the pandemic, to ease lockdowns securely, or to communicate their decision making and the reasoning behind it. As worded accurately -:

⁸Winnie Byanyimna, Health: Providing Free Health for All, Everywhere, The World Economic Forum, *Challenges and Opportunities in the Post-COVID-19 World*. May 19, 2020.

⁹ <https://www.wfp.org/news/wfp-chief-warns-hunger-pandemic-covid-19-spreads-statement-un-security-council>
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“The COVID-19 pandemic is exposing the quality of governance and competence of the world’s leaders. In times of crisis, most people instinctively turn to their governments for protection and assistance. When politicians and civil servants fail to deliver, they quickly lose credibility and legitimacy.”¹⁰

After Covid-19 there looms the risk of the world being more divided, conflictual, and nationalistic. Pattern of these can be seen in the rise of xenophobia across the world against China or the strong repulsion against anything remotely Chinese. The religious washing of the incidents to feed into the jingoistic nationalist agenda of the government and the media to deter from the failures of the nation will also make international cooperation more difficult. This is one of the scenarios political and economic forces fuelling fear and conflict, deepening economic damage, eviscerating the possibility of growing out of the crisis.

Another scenario, a better one is within reach. In this scenario, collective action within communities and, where essential, internationally, will make a more rapid and peaceful exit from the crisis possible. As pointed out by Ngaire Woods

“The world has managed extreme conditions before. Leaders of the 1940s reflected on their failure to cooperate after the First World War, how it drove the world into economic catastrophe (the Great Depression) and conflict (the Second World War) and resolved to do better. They started planning during the war. They knew that cooperation would be essential to rebuild afterwards and to redevelop a global economy within which each country could grow. So, too, global leaders must begin to plan post-pandemic cooperation”¹¹

The majority seems to be going with this idea of how nature is healing but these reports and instances are misleading to the condition of the planet. The environment does seem to better in the urban area, but it is the rural area that bears the brunt. There are reports of increased deforestation in [Asia](#), [Africa](#) and [Latin America](#). The rise in non-biodegradable waste of contaminated medical protective gear, the increase in packaging waste due to an increase in the use of e-commerce platforms etc. may lead us to a new crisis after the pandemic.

The increased and not sustainable digitization of the is concerning. The world works with certain disparities being deep-rooted that they come out as a crucial element for its existence. A

¹⁰Robert Muggah, Urban Governments: Cities in a Time of COVID-19, The World Economic Forum, *Challenges and Opportunities in the Post-COVID-19 World*. May 19, 2020.

¹¹Ngaire Woods, Global Governance: Planning for the World After COVID-19. The World Economic Forum, *Challenges and Opportunities in the Post-COVID-19 World*. May 19, 2020.

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well-known fact is that not everyone has access to the internet or to the means of it and will have no excess to something as basic as education. This kick millions out of the opportunities that the would've had previously. This will result in worsening of the pre-existing struggles of the historically marginalized groups. World-renowned researcher Samir Saran explains this well

“Processes that were once subject to national jurisdictions – be it political conversations, trade and commerce, or national security considerations – are increasingly migrating to ungoverned digital spaces, creating what I have earlier called a “platform planet”. It is clear that the corona virus will accelerate this process and more permanently fuse our technological and social systems while encoding inequities and cleavages therein.”¹²

This fusing may result in increased monitoring and stronger censorship regimes to curb the spread of misinformation. Equally disturbing is the thought power of the technology platforms and of this power affecting the collaborations or confrontations between technology companies and governments.

Conclusion

The social-psychological effects arising from this outbreak are worrying too. From mental depression and domestic conflicts where several people are tapped with their abusers, forcing the victims to choose between their personal safety, housing stability and the health risks the virus poses, to racist attacks and nationalistic behaviours. Social isolation has shattered support networks furthering the suffering.

At this time, when the question of putting one on priority between health and other scenarios in total it is impossible to make one as priority but it is required to maintain each aspect at its best for the betterment of the country. Economic situation is equally important as the health of the citizens in the country. So it's impossible to take care of one thing and neglect the other. It would be better if the government should maintain equal balance in healthcare infrastructure along with the economy of the country.

The response to the COVID crisis cannot be de-linked from these other economic, social, and environmental fault lines. The risks are interconnected, and the solutions need to be part of

¹² Samir Saran, Technology: Digital Epiphany? COVID-19 and Our Tech Futures, The World Economic Forum, *Challenges and Opportunities in the Post-COVID-19 World*. May 19, 2020.

coherent for rebuilding a resilient future.¹³The pandemic has given rise to a polarisation in public opinion in many parts of the world but with universal cooperation and collaboration, the end seems reachable.



¹³ Sharan Burrow, Work: The Pandemic that Stopped the World, , The World Economic Forum, *Challenges and Opportunities in the Post-COVID-19 World*. May 19, 2020.

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