

A Study on the Socio-economic impact of Covid 19 in Nagaland

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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of covid 19 pandemic has deeply impacted the socio-economic life of the global and Indian community as well. In India, the first wave of covid 19 pandemic has affected mostly the urban economy as manufacturing and businesses had come to standstill due to prolong nationwide lockdown while agri- allied activities in rural area were continue to move due to lower restriction and as such less impacted. However, the second wave of covid 19 that was started in March 2021 had badly hit on the health care system of India and even the rural economy as many new cases had been reported from rural area. In India, as the second wave of covid19 hit its peak, it had reported on 30th April 202, morethan 4 lakh of new fresh cases and death toll of morethan 3000 due to virus in 24 hour's period. The situation was become worst due to lack of health infrastructure particularly in the rural area and the hurry of patient to urban hospital from small town and villages, the hospital become overwhelmed and exhausted. The policy response was different in the second wave, as the government made localized and given autonomy to the state government to handle the spread of the virus. This research paper has an attempt to study the socio-economic impact of covid 19 on the economy of Nagaland. It also highlighted some of the policies and measures taken up by the Nagaland government in response to covid 19 pandemic.

Key words: Covid 19, social, cultural, Health care, education, employment and businesses.

1. Introduction

Amid of Covid 19 pandemic in India it has impacted seriously not only health care sector but the economy was adversely affected. Pandemic is a global challenge posing a serious threat on the humanity. The outbreak of covid 19 was first detected in Wuhan city of China in 2019 December and World Health Organisation declared as pandemic on 11th March 2020(Mohan Pathak, 2020). According to WHO, Covid 19 disease is an infectious caused by the novel coronavirus. Covid 19 virus is a respiratory illness which spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. As the nature of the virus is very infectious and transmit almost all the countries of the world has declared lockdown. Many of the activities globally have come to halt to contain the spread of the coronavirus. Subsequent to this, on March 22nd 2020, Prime Minister, Narindra Modiji announced one day 'Junta curfew'. Since then on, the first 21 days total lockdown was announced in India followed then extended to 19 days additional and thereafter it increases further with little relaxation. Since 1st June 2020, many economic activities were allowed to operate as the lockdown restrictions were eased but depending on the severity of the health care system some state boundaries were seal. Even though restrictions were eased after the complete lockdown, the 40 days total lockdown has done immense damage to the economy of India and has shaken

adversely. After 21 days lockdown, it is projected that Indian economy is going to loss everyday morethan Rs.32,000 crores (The Hindu Business line, 2020). The most effected and vulnerable group are daily wage earner and informal sector (Das, 2020). Due to lockdown around 53% of enterprises will be affected (The Indian Express, 2020). Many food cultivators are meeting uncertainty. Amid of covid 19 restrictions, since 26 November 2020, hundreds of thousands of farmer have assembled on the borders of National capital Delhi to show their resentment to government (Subin Dennis, 2020). In India the stock market experiences their most significant drop in history (The Indian express, 2020). The International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicted that for the year 2020, the Indian economy is contracted by -10.3%. In 2020-21, India's GDP shrink by 7.3% to Rs.135.13 trillion, which was Rs.145.69 trillion in 2019-20 (Vivek Kaul, May,2021). India's export plunge to record low of 60.28% in April 2020 and had decline by 34.57% in March 2020(The Indian Express, 2020). Since, 2011-12, India's exports have been hovering around the US Dollar 300 billion (Business Standard, Dec, 2020). In 2017-18, the oversees shipment grow by almost 10 percent to USD 303 billion and advance to USD 330.08 billion in 2018-19 and in 2019-20 to USD 314.31 billion (The Indian Express,2020). During the year 2019-20, only in the month of July 2019 and February & September in 2021, have recorded positive growth in Export. Due to pandemic Shipments decline by over 60 percent and this hit the contraction record in India's export in the month of March, 2020(Business Standard, Dec 2020). The Indian export had decline to 34.57% in March 2020(Business Standard, 2020). "Exports during June 1-7 dipped by only 0.76% to \$ 4.94 billion, from \$5.03 billion in the same period last year" commented by Union Commerce and Industry Minister, Goyal. Experts have predicted the growth of India's Exports will be rebound in 2021 as the recovery of economic activities and demand globally. According to Commerce and Industry ministry report, imports sink 58.65 percent to USD 17.12 billion in April 2020, leaving a trade deficit of USD 6.76 billion as against USD 15.33 billion in April 2019 (Indian Express, May, 2020). This is the lowest trade deficit recorded since May 2016 which stood at 6.27 billion. Indian exports were recorded at \$30.63 billion in April 2021, as against \$10.36 billion in April 2020 (June 2021, The economic Time). India's foreign trade was weakening in April 2021 due to second wave of pandemic and as such trade deficit was widening to \$15.24 billion in April from \$ 13.9 billion in March 2021.According to data from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, merchandise exports have fallen to \$15.24 billion in April as against March 2021 and Merchandise imports fell to \$45.45 billion in April as compared to \$48.4 billion in March 2021(Pallavi Nahata, 2021,May). "We are confident that a V-shaped recovery will be witnessed in World Trade and we will be recover much more from what we lost in 2020" commented by Ajay Sahai, the Director General of FIEO (Business Standard,2020). Indian economy was showing sign of recovery in the early of January & February 2021 after the first wave of covid 19 however, the second wave of pandemic hit India in the early part of March 2021 and it progressively worse by late April and till the last part of May 2021. As such India's economic recovery was 'W- shape' not as anticipated 'V-shape' (Shagun Kapil, 2021). The Reserve Bank of India has projected economic growth of 10.5% in the current FY 2021-22. But due to second wave of covid 19, different rating agencies across globe have downgraded. The current FY 2021-22, Moody's Investor Service initially projected 13.7% but due corona later slashed to 9.8%. According to S&P Global rating, if it is moderate impact of second wave of covid 19, growth will be lower from 11% to 9.8% and for a worse case, it would be 8.2%(Financial Express, June, 2021). During the second wave of covid 19, rising unemployment is one of the biggest economic concerned as it is badly affected the poor people. According to the estimation of think tank center, one crore Indian have lost their jobs and still the numbers are rising due to second wave of covid 19. Rising in loan defaults and cheque bounces were reported by all the banks during second wave of covid 19 indicating that middle class people are under pressure to handle debts and liabilities. No doubt, "The Indian economy is showing a sign of recovery from the debilitating impact of the second wave of covid 19, bolster by targeted fiscal relief, monetary policy measures and a rapid vaccination drive" the finance ministry, Nirmala Sitharaman, said(Asit Ranjan Mishra, July, 2021).

1.1 Objectives of the present study

1. To study the socio-economic impact of covid 19 on Nagaland state.
2. To highlight the government measures and policies implemented in response to covid 19 pandemic in Nagaland.

1.2 Search methodology

The literature survey has been conducted through Google scholar, research gate, different websites, articles, journals, Government published periodical etc. to develop the present study.

1.3 Discussion

As per the Census 2011, the population of Nagaland is 19,78,502 with an area of 16,579 sq.km. Nagaland is an agricultural economy as 71% of its population depends on agriculture and allied activities for their livelihood as per 2011 census.

The Directorate of Economics and Statistics estimates that the GSDP at current price improved to Rs.28,20,661 lakhs during 2018-19 from Rs. 24,49,170 lakhs during 2017-18 recording an annual growth rate of 13.2% as against the last year growth rate of 6.1 % (Annual Administrative Report, Nagaland 2020-21). However, according to the Advance Estimate 2019-20, the estimated GSDP of Nagaland state is at Rs. 31,23,478 lakhs signifying a growth rate of 9.7 percent at current prices. The 2011 census data shows that the workforce participation rate for women is 44.7% against 52.3% men. In the category wise, the percentage of women cultivators (65.2%) and agricultural labour(7.3%) are more than the men cultivator(47.4%) and agricultural labour(5.8%) as stated by 2011 census of Nagaland. As per the 6th Economic Census 2013, women employees engaged in non-agricultural activities comprised of 33.23% and men 66.77%. During 2017-18, percentage of women employment out of the total employment in public sector constitutes 23.36% while it is 52.81% of women out of total employment in the private sector. Women employees of Government job comprised of 30.12% while men comprised of 69.88% during 2018 report (Annual Administrative report, 2020-21).

Following the Nationwide total lockdown announced in India by the Government of India on 24th March 2020, so also Nagaland State Government has imposed total Lockdown to contain the spreading of coronavirus. The first Covid 19 positive case was detected on 12th April, 2020 as per the report of Health and Family welfare Minister, S. Phangu Phom. Total lockdown had brought massive damage and challenges to the economy of Nagaland, as almost all economic activities were paralysed and come to closure. The socio-economic impact of covid 19 on Nagaland is discussed below:

i. Social Impact

By virtue Nagaland is a tribal state where society and community plays a vital role in building up a vibrant state. Since immemorial Nagas are social oriented and community loving people. This pandemic has brought a sudden change in the heart of social domain in Nagaland. The first wave of covid 19 pandemic has badly impacted the social lives of the people of Nagaland. However the second wave hit India and since April 2021 first week Nagaland also reported increases in the positive cases. Therefore, to contain the surge in covid cases since April 20, 2021, the Nagaland Government was necessitate to announced total lockdown from 14th May to 21st May which later extended to 30th June 2021. Both the first wave and second wave of corona virus pandemic has disrupted normal life in every aspect. With the outbreak of covid 19, social stigmatization was somehow developed against suspected and positive covid patient, health care workers and police personnel, returnees and death bodies of covid related. These social stigmas were reduced in the second wave of pandemic. The saddest part experience during this pandemic is not allowed attending the funeral service of love ones if the individual is happen to death by covid 19 as it has to absorb coronavirus SOP. This behavior meted out to the death body is very unusual and unprecedented in Naga society which could bring mental instability for the family members of covid 19 victims. The consequences of these social stigmas are mental illness, psychological disturbance and depression that are observed among the victims. Amid lockdown, Social gatherings are prohibited and yet as unlock started with more relaxation allowing 50% gathering in public, people are reluctant to join any or more in the fear of covid 19 spread unlike before the pandemic. As a result sense of commonness or community feeling was observed to be deteriorating in the society. But it is anticipate that such change in society will only be temporary and come back to normal like before when the pandemic situation gets over.

Health care: Health care in Nagaland have badly affected by the second wave of covid 19 and putting much pressure on the medical professional and quality health services. The covid positive cases and fatalities are increasing massively in the second wave of covid 19. As per the Outlook bulletin, 13th July 2021, covid 19 cases tally rose to 26,140 and the corona related death toll rose to 514. Nevertheless, Covid 19 has positive implication on

the health care system and consider as blessing in disguised. The coming of covid 19 has improved the condition of health care sector in Nagaland. As per the report, The Sentinel (16th July, 2021), at the time of pandemic, the Nagaland has got three Bio-safety Level laboratories. Currently Nagaland has 1986 beds in the covid care units and Ventilator increased to 68 in number. In government hospitals, number of Ambulances has increased to 110. Before Pandemic such rehabilitation in Medical health care center was not reality.

Culture and religion: Covid 19 Pandemic has greatly influence the cultural and religious life of the Nagaland people. To combat the covid 19 disease, all cultural activities and religious institution were closed down. Nagaland is a tribal state and every year colourful traditional and cultural events were hosted by different tribes. The grand Hornbill festival which undertake every year from 1st to 10th December was held complete virtual mode in 2020 due to pandemic, showcasing the state rich cultural heritage and tradition to the rest of the world. During the year 2019, the Hornbill festival fetched a business worth Rs. 100 crores and generates morethan 8000 jobs and also home to morethan 500 events across Nagaland of 10 days celebration (The sentinel, June 2021). Hornbill festival is the flagship event of Tourism department and according to department report the festival had recorded a total of 2,82,811 visitors including 3,015 international tourist and 55,584 domestic tourist during the year 2019(The Telegraph,2020) have visited and contributed to Nagaland economy an huge amount. But because of covid 19 pandemic in 2020, the revenue generated and job creation through Hornbill festival was accounted lost. Therefore, covid 19 has greatly affected the tourism industry in Nagaland.

Education: Covid 19 has given us a new normal in Education sector. As all the educational institution were closed down due to covid 19 first wave and second wave, it has force to go online mode of teaching. This has created a digital divide among the students in respect of economically and geographically. Economically poor families are affected worst as their families could not afford a smart phone for their children particularly to those big families for attending online classes. Student lives in far flung places from the town were suffered the most as they were unable to attend the online classes due to network issue. With the poor internet connectivity, economic status and educational difference and digital platform illiterate could be more challenging in the field of education sector during this pandemic.

Environment: Perhaps environment is the single segment that got huge positive impact from the covid 19 pandemic. The pandemic and the subsequent lockdown most of the primary sources of air pollution activities like industry, mode of transportation and air flight were remain closed. Even in the partial lockdown, regular movement of vehicles and automobiles are restricted. Hence, there is massive improvement in air and water quality of the environment. However, the huge amount of generation of hospital waste like face masks, hand gloves etc. and the general disposal public will keep on having a negative effect on the environment if not properly managed.

ii. Economic impact

Agriculture and allied activities: The Country wide lockdown during the first wave of covid 19 pandemic has badly affected and have deteriorated the performance of agriculture and allied activities in Nagaland. Those agri-allied sectors include livestock and horticulture or floriculture. Agricultural supply chain was badly affected due to lockdown with no or less transport facilities as a result perishable vegetables were got rotten for the farmers and shortage in the market leading to prices rise high. This situation compels the consumer to paid high price, creating existential misery to farmers and consumers. Before lockdown many rural women earned huge income from vendor businesses and agricultural product marketing. Rural Women brought their agricultural output to urban town twice or thrice a week subject to their harvest either to trade in the market or giving away at wholesale rate to different agents. In such a way they accumulate huge amount of money and assist in family income but due to lockdown restriction on vehicle movement, the rural women who undertook this kind of pity businesses have incurred loss or realize low profits. Among allied activities livestock sector have adversely affected due to certain factors. The declining in the demand for livestock like pork, amid the covid 19 pandemic, report were there on the sudden death of pigs due to African Swine flu disease in some parts of Nagaland and adversely effected neighboring state like Assam. There was a declining in the consumption of chicken during the pandemic due to the widespread fear prevail that covid 19 spread through chicken and bat among the people. Another factor could be closure of hotels, restaurants and social gatherings due to lockdown that demand livestock. As a result the income of the livestock farmers were reduced substantially. Therefore, covid 19 pandemic has badly hit the agri and allied activities.

Employment and Business: During the first wave of covid 19 pandemic Nationwide lockdown following the closure of factories in India, it was estimated that morethan one crore migrant workers have returned to their native

places as per Union Minister Labour and Employment, Shri. Santosh Kumar Gangwar (The Wire, Feb 2021 report). The Union employment minister, Gangwar opined that in the organized sector there are 10 crore labourers and in the unorganized sector there are 40 crores labourers who have lost their job during the first wave of covid 19 lockdown in India. While during second wave of covid 19 India lost around 3 million regular jobs. Therefore, in May 2020, the rate of unemployment in India was hovering around 27.11% while in June 2021, it is recorded 9.17% and despite decline the unemployment rate in June month, will start increasing if satisfactory actions are not taken right away. As per the estimate of Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation during 2017-18, has reported that Nagaland recorded the highest unemployment rate among the state in India. Chief Minister, Rio has mentioned that 13,226 workers have returned to the Nagaland state during the first wave of covid 19 pandemic. Nagaland is a consumer economy as many of the population depend on government salary for their livelihood. The returned migrant workers have added up more problems to the unemployment issue and might have accelerated unemployment rate in Nagaland. It's not possible to provide employment to the returnees since in Nagaland we have very industry and private sector apart from government jobs. Many of the resident of Nagaland who are engaged in private company and unorganized sector have lost their job either temporarily or permanently except in private educational institution. The income of the business community also adversely affected but with the partial relaxation on the lockdown it shows a ray of hope in coming days.

Construction activities: Most of the construction workers are daily wage labourer that hit hard by the subsequent lockdown restrictions of covid 19 pandemic affected thousands livelihood of labourer, compelling to move to their native places. Several residential work projects were delayed and unable to finished in time due to shortage of labour even after the lockdown being lifted. In some instances, skilled and unskilled workers are unable to found works because the owner's or employer's are reluctant to employee any or less in the fear of a possible spread of Covid 19 among the labourer and covid 19 SOP guidelines in some places. Thus, the covid 19 crisis has cause a large dislocation of day by day wage earners and lead to slaughter of earning causing extreme adversity. Based on this, on dated 21st June 2021, the Nagaland Government has decided to pay Rs.2000 each to registered construction workers of 30,979 as a relief package who have lost their livelihood because of lockdown in the state(July, 2021 Nagaland Page).

State finances: As per the budget 2021-22, Chief minister Shri. Neiphiu Rio has reported that the state finances were adversely affected by the covid 19 during 2020-21 due to lockdown. Consequently, the state's revenue receipt-both share of union taxes & duties as well as our own resources have fallen below the opening estimations from the anticipated in the budget. The present trend continuing shows, now budget estimated at Rs.1197.17 crores, as against budget estimate figure of Rs.1283.36 crores, a shortfall by about Rs.86.19 crores, which is fall by about 10 percent. The major slow down has been the reduce in the share of union taxes and duties, as against the Budget estimate of union budget shown at an amount of Rs.4493.37 crores, is now a deficit of Rs.1341.99 crores, which is reduce to Rs.3151.38 crores as per the revised estimate.

Goods and services tax: The main source of our own revenue is from GST collection and it is severely affected by the pandemic. So far the taxes department has collected Rs.506.20 crore in November 2020, as against the budget estimates of Rs.844.49 crore which is shortfall of Rs.338.29 crore for 2020-21. A revenue collection during 2020-21 is behind compare to the same period collections in 2019-20. However, due to partial lifting of lockdown regulations and thorough drive carry out by the taxes department, in the second quarter, it shows little improvement in the collection of GST.

1.4 Government measures and policies in response to covid 19 pandemic

Some of the measures undertaken by Nagaland Government are briefly discuss below:

- Agri- allied activities is the most important aspects to achieved self-sustaining economy. The food grains production during 2019-20 is 7,48,870 MT, expected production to increase 8,33,770 MT during 2020-21 in Nagaland. In the wake of covid 19 pandemic, the agriculture department has given selected Rabi and Kharif crops to the farmer's, support on local needs.

- The tourism sector has a great potential to boost local economy and generate employment. Therefore the budget 2021-22 has provided to the tourism department with Rs.750 lakhs. Out of which Rs.450 lakhs was earmark for Hornbill festivals and Rs.250 lakhs for mini Hornbill festivals in Nagaland. Since Hornbill festival is the most

eminent global brand, the government is giving a maximum effort to this up so that Nagaland economy can infiltrate to every element of the state.

The covid 19 pandemic has provide an opportunity to meet the challenges in the health sector and have able to improved and upgraded the health facilities in Nagaland. A BSL III and a BSL II laboratory were installed and fully operational in Kohima and Tuensang. District hospital including health centres were provided with emergency facilities, power backup, ventilators and ambulance services. In 10 district hospital the medical department is setting up medical oxygen generation plant that has a capability to produce 1680 ltrs per minute and the government has obtain 32 TrueNat machines over a period of moment(the Morung Express, Feb.2021).

➤ To keep the budget deficit at a manageable level cause by the corona pandemic, the state government has follow a reduction of 15 percent in the developmental outlay, provided to various departments. Salary payment to its government employees consumed huge amount of funds as a result limiting the funds available for development activities and therefore the state government is giving an effort to reduce the salary outlay such that more resources can be allocate for the development.

➤ In the wake of covid 19 pandemic and consequent lockdown, around 20,000 migrant workers are returns to Nagaland state. The Investment and Development Authority of Nagaland(IDAN) in partnership with IT and the Employment Department have designed 'Digital Employment Exchange' and launched an e-commerce platform known as 'Yellow chain' to aid the 'returnees' to try for their own online business. In the long run, to guarantee re-employment of returnees for self supporting, the government of Nagaland has set up a strategic committee on economic affairs to prepare a road map for economic development with primarily focus on self-employment, agri-allied activities, skill training and entrepreneurship. The department of employment, skill development and entrepreneurship has launched 'Nagaland job link portal' to aid connect employment seeker and employers for placement in the private sector (*The Morung Express, Feb.2021*).

1.5 Conclusion

From the above discussion, the global coronavirus pandemic has widespread effect on the social, culture, health, education, environment and an adverse impact on the economy of Nagaland. The second wave of covid 19 pandemic has more impacted on the public health care system. As a result it gave an eye opening for the government of Nagaland particularly towards health care. There is a magnificent transformation in the infrastructural facilities of health care sector. On the midst of covid19 challenges, the recovery of the economy lies on the health care system and collective management of the virus. As per the data available, the covid recovery rate in Nagaland is high and many of the patients are recovering from the disease with less intervention at their homes. So One strategy is to inoculate the mass to stop from further spread of covid 19, alongside with an easily accessible covid testing and strict practice of covid appropriate measures may help to boost the economy to recovery in the long-run, as economic recovery is directly associated to the course of pandemic. The end of pandemic is uncertain, internet connectivity and modern technology should improve so that people can easily work from home conveniently without closed contact at this pandemic time. The massive nature of the pandemic demands all the support from the stakeholders. The government should know pretty clear that it alone cannot control the pandemic. The government should instill a sense of responsibility among the general public, industrialist, private business, workers, NGOs etc.

Declaration of conflicting interest

The authors declare that no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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