

Impact of COVID-19 on Indian Economy with special reference to North-East India

Department of Economics, J.D.S.G. College, Bokakhat has organized a National Webinar on **“Impact of COVID-19 on Indian Economy with special reference to North-East India”** on 9th July, 2020. In this webinar, Prof. Biswambhara Mishra, Deptt. Of Economics, NEHU, Shillong ; Dr. Rubab Nomani Fatehma, DHSK College, Dibrugarh and Dr. Trailokya Deka, B.P. Chaliha College, Kamrup have participated as Resource Persons. Mr. Bichitra Hira and Mr. Mintu Tokbi, J.D.S.G.College, Bokakhat have participated as Coordinator and Technical Person respectively. Prof. B. Mishra has presented the overall view on the current scenario of the Indian economy outlining the major facts and events of how the COVID-19 has degraded and devastated. In his speech, he has pointed that the growth rate of the Indian economy has drastically declined during the period of COVID pandemic. Owing the frequent lockdown, social distancing and other restrictive measures, the production of almost all the industries have decreased to a large extent and in many cases have experienced recession. The quantity of consumer goods has fallen down to such an extent that is not amenable to satisfy the current demand of the vast population in the country, for which the inflation rate have had a hike both a wholesale and retail level. This hyper inflation has made a huge strain on limited income of the poor section of the society by increasing their cost of living. Hence, the COVID pandemic has intensified the incidence poverty among the population of the country. It has particularly hurt much the poor and middle-class people in the country. The government’s revenue has come down drastically to such an extent that is not sufficient to finance the important programme and projects. The government is bound to take loan from both internal and external sources in huge amount to cover the budgetary and fiscal defiits. The foreign exchange earning of the country has declined to a much small amount consequently, for the restriction on the international movement of people and capital. Major portion of the labourforce of the country, especially employed in the informal sectors, have been displaced due to the close down of the establishments and have had intensified unemployment problem among them.

Dr. Rubab Fatehma Nomani has delivered her speech on the industries. She has pointed out that due the COVID-19 pandemic, not only the large and heavy industries have had a worse experience, the small and cottage industries of the region have been hurt worse. Due to the social distancing and lockdown, such industries could not able to produce output owing to the shortage of basic inputs, basically the raw materials supplied through outsourcing. Due to social distancing and the restriction on the movement of people, the labour service is not sufficient to operate properly the production processes, for which the production of such industries has come down drastically. Moreover, it becomes much difficult to sell what so amount produced due to the lockdown and close down of the markets, which leads to the situation of industrial recession in the region.

Dr. Trailokya Deka has analysed the impact of COVID-19 on the agriculture sector of the economy. He has highlighted several events where the farmers are unable to sell their output and hence, the perishable agriculture products become destroyed. Among others, the farmers have had a heavy challenge in selling their products due to the close down of the daily and weekly markets. However, they are unable to sell their products through home-delivery to a significant extent. Hence, the marketing problems become more acute for these poor farmers. Mainly due to the inter-district travel restrictions, the intermediaries such as wholesalers and associations could not come to their cultivation fields to collect their output. Though the transportation of the essential commodities has been allowed in subsequent phases, the production of the agriculture has disturbed significantly due to the shortage of the basic inputs. So, the income of the farmers comes down to a poor level gradually with which most of them could not maintain their families. The owners of the livestock and fishery have also had a worse experience during the pandemic period. They could not furnish the required amount of the food items for the cattle and fish, for which the output has come down drastically. The contribution of the agriculture to the gross state domestic product of the state (Assam) has declining rapidly. For recovery the agriculture sector, the speaker has sought the active government cooperation in the forms of concessional loans and subsidy and direct intervention in the form of the purchaser of the huge agriculture product.