

World Enguled by COVID-19 Pandemic

People had never imagined that the whole World can be shutdown for any reason other than the World War III or alien invasion. We never thought that the invasion by a virus could be so severe that it would bring down the World economy to almost standstill. In this modern era where science and technology are so advance that we are planning our habitats on other planets, to witness millions of people lose their lives due to COVID-19 infection is definitely a reality check. India was worst hit during the second wave of the COVID-19 in May 2021 with the highest death toll than any other Country.

The pandemic has disrupted lives across all countries and communities and negatively affected global economic growth in 2020-2021 something not experienced in nearly a century. Invaded by the virus and the subsequent economic shutdown, the World economy melds down with an estimated loss of \$ 20 billion. Estimated forecast envisioned a 5.2% contraction in global GDP in 2020, using market exchange rate weights—the deepest global recession in decades.

In India, the rate of contraction was 7.3% for the whole 2020-21 financial year. In the post-Independence period, India's national income has declined only four times before 2020 – in 1958, 1966, 1973 and 1980 – with the largest drop being in 1980 (5.2%). This means that 2020-21 is the worst year in terms of economic contraction in the country's history and much worse than the overall contraction in the World.

Since the pandemic, unemployment rate has increased drastically due to the economic lockdown. The most affected ones were wage labourers and contract-based workers in India. Farmers suffer as they did not have the outlet to sell out their products during the lockdown.

In this issue, we have articles on how the Indian government has given compensation to the farmers and small business owners to mitigate loss in their business; the role of a veterinarian in the emerging menace of COVID-19; enhancing small-marginal farmers' livelihood through crop diversifications, technology adoption in rainfed agriculture, artificial insemination in pig, soil acidity management, agrotourism, and women empowerment.

To mitigate the pandemic, ICAR has initiated numerous initiatives and formed advisory committees such as Rice Stakeholders' Advisory on COVID-19; Advisory for Staff Members, Ginning Industries and Textile Industries; State level advisories to farmers during lockdown due to COVID 19; FAO includes ICAR Advisories as Voluntary Guidelines for the benefit of fisheries sector across the globe; Prevention of Corona Pandemic (COVID-19) for staff working in Research Institute and Veterinary Units and also for Livestock farmers; CIFT-COVID 19 Advisory for Fishermen; and Guidelines applicable for farmers and farming sector during lockdown period due to COVID-19; and eBooks was published on ICAR Initiative during pandemic, and *Kharif* agro-advisory for farmers. For further information, you can check our official website in <https://icar.org.in/content/advisories-during-covid-19-pandemic>.

After the hard-hid economic slowdown, Indian economy is positively picking up in all sectors with significant efforts made by the government. During this pandemic, we realised that farmers are the most essential in reviving the morale and economy as we all rushed to buy food items when the lockdown was declared. Therefore, let us all join hands in supporting our farmers!

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