

## Causes and consequences of higher COVID-19 cases in India

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### Abstract

As of February 5, 2021, India ranks second in terms of total Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) with more than 10 million positive cases in the world. This has a huge negative impact on the poorer almost 30% of its population severely. In this backdrop, the present study tries to understand why the spread of COVID-19 cases is higher compared to other countries and its consequences on the economy. The study suggests that state-level higher total urban population has a positive impact on the total confirmed (or total active or total deaths) COVID-19 cases. However, the relationship between the state-level percentage of urban population and urban population densities with total COVID-19 cases are not robust. The relationship between state-level urban population and the total number of returned migrants is positive but the relationship between the state-level percentage of urban population and the total number of returned migrants to that state is negative. This indicates that states with the percentage of the higher urban population received a lower number of reverse migrations from urban to rural. Festivals such as Onam and the Vande Bharat Mission are also responsible for spreading COVID-19 cases in India. Furthermore, the lack of remote work opportunities is also supportive for the same. The consequences of higher COVID-19 cases are enormous that includes the significant number of job losses, an increase of higher poverty, and reduction of a higher amount of GDP. Therefore, for a quick recovery of the Indian economy, we need to promote higher state-level urbanization with higher opportunities for formal jobs and remote work opportunities.

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### 1. Introduction

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The first known human infections were discovered in Wuhan, Hubei, China in December 2019. The human-to-human transmission was confirmed by the WHO and Chinese authorities on 20 January 2020. On 11 March 2020, the WHO announced the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic. The United Nations Development Programme stated that the COVID-19 pandemic is the defining global health crisis of our time and it is the greatest challenge humankind has faced after World War Two. As of 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020, almost 219 countries in the world have suffered from 48 million confirmed COVID-19 cases with 1.2 million dead. Many countries in the world not only suffered life losses but also economic destruction with job loss, GDP contraction, and extreme poverty.

The first COVID-19 case in India was reported on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020. But the continuous rise in COVID-19 cases started from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 onwards. Though initially, the number of cases was very small but later on it has started to rise steadily. As of 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020, India has 8.36 million positive confirmed COVID-19 cases with 0.12 million deaths. In terms of the number of cases, India ranks second in the world after the United States that has about 9.6 million confirmed cases on the same date.

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