



COVID-19'S IMPACT ON INDIA'S AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

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Abstract

Agriculture remains a central pillar of the Indian economy. The sector serves the food consumption needs of the whole country, while also placing among the top exporters of agricultural produce in the world. The sector has been facing its share of challenges in recent years, but few have been as severe as the domestic and international travel restrictions during Covid-19. Grant Thornton breaks the challenges down into two distinct categories: Labour scarcity and exports. Northern Indian states of Punjab and Haryana are among India's agricultural powerhouses, although farming work in these states is mostly carried out by migrant labour from East India. The progressing wellbeing emergency around COVID-19 has influenced varying society. Protecting the life of individuals experiencing the infection just as bleeding-edge welfare responders has been the need of countries. Governments have swung into activities since the Corona virus assault made an extraordinary circumstance. Rules gave by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India on 15 April 2020 after the expansion of lockdown till 10 May 2020, excluded agribusiness, agriculture, creature farming, poultry, and fishery, and partnered exercises from lockdown limitations; workers can go to work, markets are to open, acquirement is to occur and Agri-input shops and agro-handling focuses are to work. MNREGS work will likewise initiate. Powerful spread of the rules and usage on the ground will be urgent, as ranchers gather the rabbi yield and start arrangements for the Kharif season. Going ahead, one can predict numerous difficulties as ranchers and homestead workers set out to modify their lives and jobs. This has led to a fall in the world economy especially in developing countries like India. India with its suitable control has however tried its best to combat this crisis with a country wide lockdown to prevent the health implications. But agriculture being the backbone of the country and the GDP has been impacted in a negative way with enormous disruption in the provide series and cropping decisions for imminent agricultural seasons. All these have a negative implication on the farming group of people that is and will be undergoing serious inimical and mind losses.

Key words: GDP, MSME, Farmer Producer Organizations, MNREGS, Country Lockdown.



INTRODUCTION

When India's nationwide lockdown was announced in March, the knee-jerk reaction was a mass exodus of migrant labour back to rural hometowns, as workers moved to wait out the lockdown while at home. The harvesting process, which usually starts in mid-April, was thrown completely off balance, resulting in major liquidity issues. The June crop is among those that has been particularly hard hit, according to [Grant Thornton](#). The researcher also points out that the labour scarcity has also affected the supporting infrastructure around India's agriculture sector. For instance, storage units and milk processing plants are understaffed. Shackled operations in the manufacturing sector have affected the development of irrigation equipment in India, with irrigation-related manufacturing currently operating at 30% of its potential capacity. Then there is the transportation sector. Movement across state borders has been heavily restricted, which has blocked the movement of crops and consequently their sale. Add to this a lack of machine repairs mechanics and other such support staff, and one gets the picture of a sector in trouble.

India has made an early move to constrain the spread of COVID-19, requesting a 21-day across the country lockdown for its populace of 1.3 billion individuals beginning March 25. The epic corona virus has spread generally in India moderately as of late contrasted with different nations, and the quantity of detailed diseases is low up until this point, with 5,274 cases and 149 passing's as of April 8. In any case, as COVID-19 cases are expanding quickly, there is extraordinary worry about the ailment's latent capacity spread and effect. India must be prepared for a potential flood. Testing ought to be extended altogether. The administration sees the example of the spread of COVID-19 as like the 2009 H1N1 flu pandemic, which means the spread is probably not going to be uniform. After the 21-day time frame terminates, it wants to keep up the full lockdown in "hotspot" zones and loosen up it in different spots. India proclaimed a three-week across the country lockdown till mid-April in the underlying stage, which has along these lines been reached out till May 3 for accomplishing agreeable control of the infection spread. The global pandemic of Covid-19 that originated in the Wuhan province of China has stretched its arms in the entire world affecting each and each sector of the financial system.

These measures may help in restricting the wellbeing emergency, yet—as in different nations—the total shutdown of every financial action aside from basic administrations will make a



monetary emergency and wretchedness for poor people, with enormous occupation misfortunes and rising nourishment frailty. The financial stun will probably be substantially more extreme for India, for two reasons. Initially, pre-COVID-19, the economy was at that point easing back down, aggravating existing issues of joblessness, low wages, provincial trouble, ailing health, and far-reaching disparity. Second, India's enormous casual segment is especially helpless. Out of the national aggregate of 465 million specialists, around 91% (422 million) were casual laborers in 2017-18. Lacking ordinary pay rates or salaries, this horticulture, vagrant, and other casual laborers would be hardest-hit during the lockdown time frame. Here, I center around the reasonable effects on farming, supply chains, nourishment, and sustenance security and vocations. Transient workers who have figured out how to return won't have the option to return right away. Some may not wish to return additionally, given the travails many may have persevered through after the lockdown.

The sector has faced a number of enactments and amendments in the policies and programmers between the first Industrial Policy and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act for better performance. It has acquired a highly regarded rest in the socioeconomic giving of India even after a variety of shortcomings in the strategy proposal, poor infrastructure, inadequate training, incomplete credit facility, higher sickness rate and so forth¹. There is a requirement for both mitigation and recovery measures, to help the influenced and pick the strings once more, defeat the misfortune supported, and revamp their lives. Careful steps like keeping up social removing and hand washing should proceed as COVID-19 proceeds. Proactive measures by the state with helpful point of view are called for as we start working in 'another typical': more alleviation in kind (for example making the PDS all inclusive, guaranteeing whoever is poor gets the important help and isn't left starving because of bureaucratic obstacles like absence of apportion card); and money (for example expanding the sum under the PM Samman Kisan Nidhi from the current INR 6,000/- to INR 15,000/- and discharging the main portion before Kharif); measures to control charging of extravagant enthusiasm by casual division moneylenders, waiver of enthusiasm for the quarter on term credits and overdraft agribusiness and MSME accounts; remunerating misfortune brought about because of harm to short-lived crops like blossoms, natural products, vegetables and fish; and growing the extent of MNREGS to remember the gather of harvests for ranchers' fields by work and worth expansion to deliver by women. E-horticulture strategy guide was produced



by the Food and Agriculture society and the global Telecommunication amalgamation with aid from accomplices, including the Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural assistance as a system for nation in building up their national E-Agribusiness tactic/ end- all policies.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. S. Mahendra Dev and Rajeswari Sengupta,(2020)² in their paper entitled “Covid-19: Impact on the Indian Economy” On the health risk in rural areas, it is true to currently the problem is much more solemn in inner-city areas since of high compactness. But, it can spread to 70% of the India’s inhabitants who live in rustic areas. Some migrant workers have already gone back to rural areas.
2. There is a risk of Covid-19 dispersion to the grower, agricultural laborers, workers and others working throughout the food supply chains. The wrap up material used for agricultural merchandise can also carry the virus. The cultivation and rural inhabitants have to be sheltered as societal aloofness will be experienced comparatively less in rural areas.
3. Prangya Paramita Sahoo & Suvangi Rath (2020)³ in their paper Potential Impact of Corona Virus on Agriculture Sector concluded that Nonetheless, it very well may be fought with the coordinated endeavors of the focal and state governments alongside the examination establishments and augmentation administrations.
4. To stay away from the antagonistic effect of Covid-19 flare-up and to keep the agribusiness section unaffected the legislature should give specific rules for horticulture activity, the value structure ought to be thought about and changed such that the ranchers are not under any sort of monetary misfortunes, the cultivating network alongside the workers ought to be shielded from Corona infection by keeping up social separating alongside help with managing the frenzy and mental misfortunes during this time and obviously giving the ranchers a stage for direct advertising to fulfil the need of the shoppers by home conveyance of the farming create and evade any sort of wastages in the reaped items.



OBJECTIVES

1. To study on Challenges of the agriculture in COVID 19
2. To list out the Reaction of the Government of India.
3. To determine the Utilizing social wellbeing nets as a scaffold between wellbeing stun and Financial stun.

METHODLOGY

This research is mostly descriptive in nature. Secondary sources of data have been used for this Secondary data has been collected from different published sources like books, journals, newspapers and magazines, and web sites.

Challenges of the agriculture in COVID 19

1. Interruptions in the acquirement of nourishment grains by government organizations.
2. Disturbances in the assortment of harvests from the homesteads by private dealers.
3. A lack of labourers to collect the rabi crop.
4. A deficiency of drivers in the transportation area.
5. Barricades in the development of rural products over the significant expressways.
6. Conclusion or restricted tasks of APMC mandis.
7. Shutdowns in the retail farming markets. These elements have prompted an emergency in a scope of yields as well: wheat, grapes, watermelons, bananas, muskmelon, chana, Cotton, chillies, turmeric, cumin, coriander, onion, and potato.

Immediate Challenges

Disregarding every one of these measures and taking into account proceeding with limitations on developments of individuals and vehicular traffic, concerns have been raised in regards to the negative ramifications of COVID19 pandemic on the homestead economy. This is the pinnacle of rabi season in India and harvests like wheat, gram, lentil, mustard, and so forth (remembering paddy for flooded tracts) are at the harvestable stage or nearly arriving at development. This is additionally when the ranch harvests come to the mandis (advertise yards) for guaranteed acquisition activities by assigned government organizations. Additionally, any serious interruption to the stockpile of transitory foods grown from the ground, dairy items, fish, and so forth having prepared to satisfy the expanding need from a swelling working class just as urban and country purchasers may make hopeless harm to all entertainers in the production network.



The movement of labourers from barely any parts to their local spots has likewise activated signals for an emergency response, as they are significant for both reaping tasks and extremely noteworthy move, has informed to reject development of ranchers, ranch workers and collecting and planting related machines from the domain of lockdown. Making the nourishment grains, products of the soil and other basic things accessible to shoppers, both in provincial and urban regions, is the most basic test for Government hardware during the lockdown time frame. Smooth working of the inventory network, with satisfactory wellbeing measures for the individuals in question, is of fundamental significance. Transportation of open appropriation framework (PDS) things to last mile conveyance operators, by both rail and street, must be guaranteed by separate Government offices. Circulation of the wares to helpless populace, while keeping up endorsed rules and convention, especially of social separating, must be adequately checked.

As the continuous lockdown concurs with the rabi reaping season, ranchers the nation over admire the Government to guarantee continuous collecting of the harvests just as smooth obtainment tasks. The Union Home Ministry's round deferring limitations on the between and intra-State developments of ranchers/workers, just as collecting and related homestead machines, is to be sure a stage right way. While guaranteeing accessibility of workers for basic homestead activities, their wellbeing (from any COVID contamination) and government assistance must be organized by the Government frameworks.

The offer of dairy items; fish; poultry, and so forth has additionally been hit during the lockdown time frame as the take-up by the sorted out industry players has been influenced because of deficiency of workforce and transport issues. As climate has been unpredictable over recent months in numerous parts, gathered produce should likewise be shielded from such dangers.

Alleviation Measures

The poor segments of society are consistently the hardest hit in any fiasco or pandemic circumstance. With around 85 percent of Indian homestead family units being little and minor ranchers, and a huge piece of the populace being landless ranch workers, government assistance measures to contain any harm from COVID are certainly going to assist them with true usage. The focal point of the Government accordingly must be to secure the lives of each resident. In any case, individuals living on horticulture and partnered exercises, generally those losing their salary from casual work at this lockdown period, must be furnished with elective roads (money



moves) till the economy ricochets back (when this wellbeing emergency is effectively survived).

To support the interest for horticultural products, interests in key coordination's must be improved. In addition, web based business and conveyance organizations and new companies should be supported with appropriate arrangements and motivating forces. The little and medium endeavours, running with crude materials from the agribusiness and unified division or something else, additionally need unique consideration so the provincial economy doesn't fall. To forestall the prompt worries of shortage of homestead work, approaches must encourage simple accessibility of hardware through state elements, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) or custom employing focuses (CHCs) with reasonable motivators. It is likewise proposed to investigate utilizing NREGS assets to pay some portion of the ranch work (with ranchers paying the equalization wage add up) to diminish the financial weight on the rancher, while guaranteeing wage work to the landless workers and laborers. To answer inquiries identifying with the reported proportions of Government and tending to complaints of ranchers, other than giving warnings on ranch activities; accessibility of agri-inputs, devoted cost free help lines/call focuses (in neighbourhood/vernacular dialects) must be built up by the Government.

Agribusiness in India is a State subject, and as has been seen in past years, approaches and projects fluctuate from one State to the next. Be that as it may, rural exercises, being interconnected in neighbouring areas, agri-sops or advantages must not contort the market situation. Waiver of ranch credits, confirmations recommend, have not completely profited most of little and minor ranchers. Or maybe, it influences the future credit conduct of the borrowers and in this manner contrarily impacts the horticultural credit culture by and large. As the kharif (stormy/wet) season is quick drawing nearer, institutional loaning of harvest advances ought to be extended and encouraged for smooth (and adequate) progression of credit to acquiring ranchers. Agri-inputs – seeds, composts, agro-synthetic substances, and so forth – must be presituated for simple accessibility. Private segment must assume a noteworthy job with vital arrangement support.

Unwinding of the standards by Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs) permitting ranchers to sell their items past the assigned mandis will absolutely facilitate the weights of ranchers. State Governments must apparatus up their hardware for smooth acquisition activities of ranchers' attractive surpluses at MSP (least help cost) or through other value bolster plans.



Under the COVID19 pandemic, is a wellbeing emergency of exceptional extents, the significant portion of future Budget assignments clearly (and coherently so) would be distributed for the wellbeing part. Be that as it may, ventures ought not be packed out of the essential division to forestall irreversible harm to the homestead economy. Assembling and administrations divisions might be seriously hit in the short run till the time the economy ricochets back. It will be therefore exceptionally suitable to concentrate consideration on the horticulture part as a development motor and furthermore to acquire flexibility nourishment (and sustenance) security. At this basic stage, where environmental change is as of now antagonistically affecting the agribusiness area, beneficial ventures, remembering for research and development, would be exceptionally intentional. Basic changes, for example, land renting, contract cultivating, and private horticultural markets, and soon have for quite some time been upheld to carry improved ventures into the farming part and to push its development. In any case, there has not been uniform usage of these enactments by State Governments thus the maximum capacity of the segment is undiscovered.

There have been worldwide concerns, rather theories, on the limitation of fares of rural wares by a couple of worldwide players. India, being exchange surplus on items like rice, meat, milk items, tea, nectar, agricultural items, and so forth may take advantage of the lucky breaks by sending out such items with a stable agro-trades strategy. India's agrarian fares are esteemed at 38 billion US Dollars in 2018-19 and can ascend further with helpful strategies. Advancement of fare strong foundation and coordination's would require ventures and backing of the private division, which will be in the drawn out interests of ranchers in boosting their pay. The Indian retailers almost certainly won't most likely become accustomed up to the increasing rivalry from the exterior retailers who are solid and stable with improved base and the executives' method. Gradually this might punctual the substitute of the Indian retailers to an imposing level.

Numerous atmosphere models foresee an ideal storm in the 2020 season (the India Meteorological Department has additionally since formally declared) as the El-Nino climate wonder, that upsets precipitation in India, isn't obvious. This is in reality uplifting news in the COVID situation, accepting horticulture can rehearse to a great extent solid. Uplifting news is that Government of India has now expanded its emphasis on nourishment (other than nourishment)- security and raising ranchers' pay (instead of upgrading ranch efficiency). Changing the shopper conduct with appropriate projects and impetuses is now in the



motivation. For all these to occur, the current scene of strategy motivations that favor the two major staples of wheat and rice needs to change. Structuring agrarian approaches, post-COVID19 situation, must incorporate these goals for a nourishment frameworks change in India.

Agribusiness and supply chains

COVID-19 is disturbing a few exercises in agribusiness and supply chains. Fundamental reports show that the non-accessibility of transient work is interfering with some gathering exercises, especially in northwest India where wheat and heartbeats are being collected. There are interruptions in supply chains due to transportation issues and different issues. Costs have declined for wheat, vegetables, and different yields, yet buyers are regularly paying more. Media reports show that the conclusion of inns, cafés, sweet shops, and coffeehouses during the lockdown is as of now discouraging milk deals. In the interim, poultry ranchers have been severely hit because of falsehood, especially via web-based networking media, that chicken are the bearers of COVID-19.

Here are a few measures are required to keep the agrarian area and supply chains working easily:

The administration has effectively given lockdown rules that excluded ranch activities and supply chains. Be that as it may, execution issues prompting work deficiencies and falling costs ought to be redressed. Keeping supply chains working great is significant to nourishment security. It ought to be noticed that 2 to 3 million passing's in the Bengal starvation of 1943 were because of nourishment supply disturbances—not an absence of nourishment accessibility. Ranch populaces must be shielded from the corona virus to the degree conceivable by testing and rehearsing social separating. The Farmers are more likely than not preceded with access to business sectors. This can be a blend of private markets and government obtainment. Small growers and dairy ranchers need more focused on help, as their pandemic-related info supply and market-get to issues are dire. Ranchers and farming laborers ought to be remembered for the administration's help bundle and any social assurance programs tending to the emergency.

As lockdown measures have expanded, request has ascended for home conveyance of staple goods and E-trade. This pattern ought to be empowered and advanced. The administration ought to advance exchange by maintaining a strategic distance from trade bans and import limitations.



Utilizing social wellbeing nets as a scaffold between wellbeing stun and financial stun

The lockdown has interfered with practically all financial movements. Gauges by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy show that joblessness shot up from 8.4% in mid-March to 23% in the principal seven day stretch of April. In urban zones, joblessness took off to 30.9% as of April 5. The shutdown will cause untold hopelessness for casual laborers and poor people, who have dubious existences confronting yearning and ailing health. The most ideal approach to address this earnest need is to utilize social security nets widely to settle their lives with nourishment and money. The Indian government has immediately reacted to the emergency and reported a \$22 billion help bundle, which incorporates nourishment and money moves. A few state governments have reported their help bundles.

The focal government's alleviation bundle, called Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (Prime Minister's arrangement for the prosperity of poor people), is planned for giving security nets to that hit the hardest by the COVID-19 lockdown. In any case, it is deficient contrasted with the gigantic size of the issue. Nobel Prize market analysts Esther Duflo and Abhijit Banerji state that the administration ought to have been a lot bolder with the bundle's social exchange plans. The \$22 billion in spending is just 0.85% of India's GDP. This is a lot of lower than the bundles passed by the United States, Europe, and some Asian nations. India should think greater, and be spending in any event 4% to 5% of GDP. The focal and state governments must spend increasingly, regardless of whether there is a one-time climb in the monetary shortage.

The following are some extra estimates required notwithstanding the administration bundle:

Nomadic laborers: There are around 40-50 million occasional vagrant specialists in India. Lately, worldwide media have communicated pictures of a huge number of transient specialists from a few states walking for a significant distance and miles on roadways; some strolled in excess of 1000 kilometers to come back to their home towns. They ought to be given both money moves and nutritious nourishment. COVID-19 is an extraordinary test for India; its enormous populace and the economy's reliance on casual work make lockdowns and other social separating measures immensely problematic. The focal and state governments have perceived the test and reacted forcefully—however this reaction ought to be only the start. India must be set up to scale it up as situations develop, facilitating the monetary effects through much more noteworthy open program backing and approaches that keep markets working. During these difficult occasions, how does Indian Agriculture react to the emergency and how



do government estimates influence 140 million homestead families the nation over and from that point sway the economy of a significant nation in the creating scene? We evaluate the prompt difficulties that COVID19 has presented to the ranch area and recommend alleviation measures to guarantee an economical nourishment framework in the post-emergency period. Following the across the country lockdown was reported, the Indian Finance Minister announced an INR 1.7 trillion bundle, for the most part, to secure the helpless segments (counting ranchers) from any unfavourable effects of the Corona pandemic.

The declaration, among a huge number of advantages, contained a development arrival of INR 2000 to financial balances of ranchers as pay support under the PM-KISAN conspire. The Government additionally raised the pay rate for laborers connected under the NREGS, world's biggest compensation ensure conspire. Under the extraordinary plan to deal with the helpless populace, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (Prime Minister's plan for government assistance of poor people), has been reported. Extra grain assignments to enrolled recipients were additionally declared for the following three months. Money and nourishment help people occupied with the casual area, for the most part, transient workers, have additionally been reported for which a different PM-CARES (Prime Minister Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations) subsidize has been made.

Reaction of the Government of India

The reaction of the Indian government in farming has included three arrangement measures.

1. It has reported that most agrarian exercises will be on the basic rundown. It has excluded farm workers in the fields, cultivating activities by ranchers, offices occupied with obtainment of agribusiness items including MSPs, and is informed by the State Governments, between and intra-state development of reaping and planting related machines and assembling, bundling units of composts, pesticides, and seeds among others.
2. . It has reported that the primary portion of the PM-Kisan instalment to ranchers, I. e., Rs 2000, will be paid forthright to ranchers. It has likewise declared that the wages under MGNREGS will be raised from Rs 182 to Rs 202 every day.
3. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported a ban on rural term credits (counting crop advances) for a time of a quarter of a year.

On the off chance that we think about the reactions of governments over the world, these Intercessions seem immaterial. Truth be told, the forthright instalment to ranchers from the PM



Kisan plot isn't even worth calling a bundle, as this cash was at any rate going to be paid to the ranchers among April and June.

CONCLUSION

The eruption of Corona virus happening in Wuhan region in China in December 2019 has now become a global pandemic affecting nearly 20 Lakh residents with a death toll of nearly 2Lakh populace. Though nearly all of the citizens are recovering daily, this natural disaster has poorly surprised the world financial system and has had a huge unenthusiastic insinuation on the same. The most responsive cultivation sector which is the spine of our nation is also hit with the externalities of Covid-19 eruption. Although not directly, but circuitously the result of corona virus scattering effect i.e. lockdown across the kingdom have twisted out to be a black opening for the farming community. The growers are likely to feel a dip in their returns. Mostly due to lockdown the restrictions on the movement of agriculture commodities from its place of production to the ultimate consumer has been hampered. Another problem lies with the shortage of labour force due to the fear of viral transmission which ultimately leads to the wastage of harvested commodities, mainly fruits and vegetables which are perishable in nature, in the farmer's field itself. Despite the fact that not straightforwardly, however by implication the outcome of crown infection spreading impact for example lockdown the nation over has ended up being a dark opening for the cultivating network. The ranchers are probably going to feel a dunk in their pay.

Generally because of lockdown the limitations on the development of agribusiness wares from its place of creation to a definitive shopper have been hampered. Another issue lies with the deficiency of work power because of the dread of viral transmission which eventually prompts the wastage of reaped items, for the most part foods grown from the ground which are transitory in nature, in the rancher's field itself. The Corona infection pandemic has put a potential effect on the agribusiness item store network which is a mind boggling web of maker, transporter, distributor, retailer lastly the customer. Likewise the arranging of the Kharifand rabi crops has been placed into an end which will cause a significant halt in the up and coming agrarian seasons.



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