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Report on Socio-Economic Impact of COVID 19 on Migrant Workers with Reference to Kerala State

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Abstract: ***Kerala is one of India's main destination regions for immigrants, and migrants make up a large percentage of Kerala's workforce. Migrant workers all seem to be in all occupations and sectors of the regional economy because of high pay levels and growing demand for manual labor jobs. Immigrants and their children have been attracting tea and coffee plantations, construction, tourism and the hotel industry from other states in the region. Unqualified immigrants in this state can be narrowly defined as those employed on a contract basis, under a contractor or agent for a fixed period, and those employed on a day-to-day basis as regular wagers finding jobs in the labor market. Centered on the data collected via the survey method in Kerala's districts, this research aims to explore the social effect of lockdown. The sampling evidence indicates that the whole population, except the government employees, has suffered the brunt within terms of declining well-being. Self-employed people, too, have been able to boost their family stability significantly.***

The article also aimed to investigate and analyze the response of state policy to the crisis. The Kerala government's efforts, to tackle the pandemic show that they have been creative and exceptional. Even then, it is unlikely that reductions in the state's tax and non-tax revenue would sustain and retain these measures. Many of these migrants are compelled to take their families with them to their place of relocation, without as much social or community commitments to take care of their families while they are far gone. They are regarded as outcasts and are neither valued nor equally viewed as an integral part of their destination's community. Many immigrants are illiterate and ignorant, belong to disadvantaged communities and are mainly active in the informal or unorganized field. During regular and overtime work, they are abused, prejudiced by the payment of salaries and other benefits, the allocation of jobs, and employment terms. They are not coordinated, and they do not secure their labor standards.

I. INTRODUCTION

The world is facing a severe and worldwide epidemic of corona virus pandemic since December 2019. Most of the world countries are implementing containment and quarantines. COVID-19 has spread to over 215 countries in the world. Scientists cannot foresee the disease's outcome, the control of it, the duration of the outbreak, or the magnitude of the deaths it might cause. The COVID-19 has led to many current challenges in various areas of society: health; transport; economy; finance; employment and unemployment; price levels; emigration and remittances; the economic situation, etc. According to the latest World Economic Outlook released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in April, the global economy will experience a growth rate of

3 percent in 2020. The International Monetary Fund reports that it is the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

The disruptions caused during the national lockdown in India were very damaging to state and federal governments. There will be a negative GDP in the fiscal year 2020-21. Domestic economic activity has been severely impacted by the security lockdown and subsequent curtailment of personal liberties. The top six industrialized states in India account for 60% of the country's industrial output. The primary damage of this is to household consumption that accounts for 60 per cent of domestic spending. According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economic (CMIE), India's unemployment rate was 24 percent for the week ended May 17, 2020. The rural unemployment rate was 23%, and the urban unemployment rate was 27%. Various reports from Kerala indicate that COVID-19 was responsible for the unprecedented economic recession of the state.

Researchers aim to investigate the effects of the COVID-19 on the economy in Kerala. Here we discuss the impact on the gross domestic product, work opportunities, underemployment and net migration. We use national statistics and international reporting for the report. We have communicated with a few colleagues about health, trade, industry, construction, IT, agriculture, etc.

II. Outbreak of COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 Cases in the World

COVID-19 has started to spread rapidly across the globe and was detected in December 2019. In a global world in which foreign travel is frequent, the virus spread to a wide variety of countries within a short period. Total patients with COVID-19 rose to 259.08 lakh from 14,553 in February 2020 to 1 September 2020 (Table 1). The death toll is up to 8, 65 lakhs. The industrialized world has not stopped the pandemic's increasing prevalence. Contemporary health care services in developing countries cannot handle the unprecedented rise in the number of incidence and mortality of COVID-19. In both developed and underdeveloped countries, this has generated a panic situation. Many nations in the globe used lock-down of their economies in the lack of any vaccination to prevent the disease. The COVID-19 has grown in 215 nations.

Table 1

Spread of COVID-19 across the World

Month/Date	Total No. of Cases	Active Cases	No. of Deaths
1 February	14,553	13,921	304
1 March	88,586	40,414	3,050
1 April	9,40,002	6,96,376	49,442
1 May	33,53,067	20,14,686	2,41,377
1 June	63,49,585	30,26,172	3,82,487
1 July	1,07,73,123	42,88,687	5,22,071
1 August	1,79,92,754	59,72,372	6,91,359
1 September	2,59,08,375	68,68,699	8,65,470
Month/Date	**Growth Rate (%)**		
1 February	-	-	-
1 March	508.7	190.3	903.3
1 April	961.1	1623.1	1521.0

1 May	256.7	189.3	388.2
1 June	89.4	50.2	58.5
1 July	69.7	41.7	36.5
1 August	67.0	39.3	32.4
1 September	44.0	15.0	25.2

Source: https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/

Initial Impact on Global economy

There have been low health services in the emerging and developed markets (EMDEs). Those who depend heavily on foreign trade, tourism, and international transfers rely on exports of commodities that are seriously affected by lock-up and other constraints. The fall since March 2020 in oil prices has harmed EMDEs that export oil. In the light of the alarming emergence of COVID-19, governments worldwide have taken drastic steps to contain the spread of the pandemic – including lock-outs and quarantines, school and business suspensions and travel bans. These initiatives have triggered significant operation disturbances in many industries, along with spontaneous reactions of customers, staff, and companies and a deep global economic downturn.

The following findings were drawn by a study of COVID-19's macroeconomic impact by the World Bank. As results tend to be declining in most advanced economies, the pandemic is quickly spreading through EMDEs, including low-income countries (LICs). In addition to the public health crisis, the EMDE's financial conditions are more challenging, the prices for oil and other resources are dropping steeply, and foreign trade is declining. EMDEs most vulnerable to the pandemic are those with inadequate, global trade and tourism-driven, health-related frameworks that depend on oil and other world trade, which are prone to economic disruption. In countries that experience an economic meltdown and in energy exporters due to declining oil prices, the long-term harm would be especially severe. Within five years, a downturn associated with an economic meltdown could reduce the average EMDE's potential production by nearly 8 percent.

COVID-19 Cases in India

India reported in Kerala on January 30 2020, the first confirmed case of coronavirus infection. The individual was travelling from Wuhan, China, to the district of Thrissur. The overall number of patients with COVID-19 rose from 2 to 37.66 lakh on February 2, 2020, on September 1 2020 (Table 2). During August, the number of patients with COVID-19 more than doubled. The death toll rose to 66,460. The following are reported cases from a state-by-state analysis of COVID-19 and the number of death. As of September 1, Maharashtra's state has the most reported number of cases of COVID-19, including death. Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka also occupy the second, third and fourth positions on confirmed cases. Kerala has a lower confirmation rate in the initial process than in other major States. The low test rate performed to detect COVID-19 instances in the first step is a worrying problem concerning the spread of COVID-19 in the states. Moreover, the country's reporting structures are far from accurate, and a high propensity for reporting at all levels could occur in a situation such as COVID-19. India may therefore have a slightly, if not much more, the actual number of COVID-19 instances.

Table 2

Status of COVID-19 Cases in India

Month/Date	Total	Active	Death
2 February	2	2	0
2 March	5	2	0
1 April	2,059	1,829	58
1 May	37,263	26,007	1,231
1 June	1,98,371	97,008	5,606
1 July	6,05,221	2,27,405	17,847
1 August	17,52,171	5,67,419	37,408
1 September	37,66,108	7,99,534	66,460
Month/Date	**Growth Rate (%)**		
2 February	-	-	-
2 March	150.0	0	0
1 April	41080.0	91350.0	0
1 May	1709.8	1321.9	2022.4
1 June	432.4	273.0	355.4
1 July	205.1	134.4	218.4
1 August	189.5	149.5	109.6
1 September	114.5	40.9	77.6

Source: https://www.COVID 19india.org/

COVID-19 Cases in Kerala

In the Thrissur district of Kerala, the first Case COVID-19 was registered in India. The growth rates of the COVID-19 cases were marginal between January and May 2020. However, the number of COVID-19 cases increased sharply during July and August. The overall number of cases of COVID-19 rose to 76,526 and deaths to 299 on 1 September 2020 (Table 3). The factors that contribute to a reduced rate of infection and mortality in Kerala during an early period include: first, the Central Government carried out a 68-day national lock-down, to stop the pandemic's spread (25 March to 31 May 2020), and Kerala did so. Second, in May and June 2018, Kerala has had experience with Nipah virus outbreak. Third, the healthcare system of Kerala is efficient and consists of panchayat, taluk and district hospitals.

Table 3

Status of COVID-19 Cases in Kerala

Month/Date	Total	Active	Death
30 January	1	1	0
2 February	2	2	0
2 March	3	0	0
1 April	265	237	2

1 May	498	102	4
1 June	1,327	708	11
1 July	4,594	2,130	26
1 August	24,743	10,862	82
1 September	76,526	22,512	299
Month/Date	**Growth Rate (%)**		
30 January	-	-	-
2 February	100.0	100.0	0
2 March	50.0	-100.0	0
1 April	8733.3	0	0
1 May	87.9	-56.9	100.0
1 June	166.5	594.1	175.0
1 July	246.2	200.8	136.4
1 August	438.6	410.0	215.4
1 September	209.3	107.3	264.6

Source: https://www.COVID 19india.org/

Table 4
Number of COVID-19 cases: Kerala (District wise) (as on September 9, 2020)

No	District	Confirmed cases	Active cases	Death
1	Thiruvananthapuram	19,260	4,590”	129”
2	Malappuram	11,327	2,192”	26
3	Ernakulam	8,087	2,572	43
4	Kozhikode	7,421	1,827	38
5	Alappuzha	7,041	1,734”	15
6	Kasaragod	6,677	2,123”	36
7	Thrissur	5,935	1,734”	19
8	Kollam	5,903	1,712	26
9	Palakkad	5,588	932	4
10	Kottayam	5,394	1,838	3

11	Kannur	5,093	1,532	35
12	Pathanamthitta	4,368	1,092	3
13	Idukki	2,014	345	3
14	Wayanad	1,810	327	5
Total		**95,918**	**24,550**	**385**

Sources: https://www.COVID-19india.org/

A study of the Covid-19 district by September 2020 reveals that the district of Thiruvananthapuram has the highest patients and mortality rates of CO VID-19 (Table 4). Malappuram, Ernakulam and Kozhikode are second, third and fourth districts. Wayanad is the district that has the smallest number of incidents.

In the lockout of 4 May 2020, the central government declared further flexibilities. Individuals have been granted more independence for travelling, vehicles and commercial and economic firms. It is allowed to return to Kerala by the Keralis stuck in other Indian states and neighbouring governments. As a result of this, many Keralites, particularly Gulf countries, returned from other states and abroad. Since July 2020, the number of COVID-19 patients has been considerably higher. In contrast to the criteria, the number of tests carried out in the state is low. This is a big failure in the disease control plan.

Shift of activities from work place to home

The outbreak of COVID-19 has contributed to extreme household limits on individual's mobility. To avoid the spread of the pandemic, stringent restrictions have been imposed to discourage people from moving outside their property. Both public hearings have been suspended. Transport system of all kinds is a necessity. There have been no stops or limits on private motor transportation, public transit, the road, train and air transport. This created unparalleled transportation difficulties for individual travelling 24 hours a day from one location to another. Social distance and quarantine have also been implemented to prevent disease transmission.

The manufacturers, retailers, restaurants, training institutes, etc. have implemented new business models in order to solve this recession (1). Rather than joining a job, the government and private institutions, IT units, etc., started to order their workers to operate from residence. (2) Online instruction was used by schools, universities and other educational organizations. Students are requested not to attend classes. (3) The goods started to be distributed to consumers' residences by stores, hotels etc. (4) The autonomous staff who carried out smallscale production in their units started moving their productions to their homes. Thus, the way people live in the post-COVID-19 era is unprecedented. The difference is that the family of a person has become a home, a school and a production facility, even a core of quarantine. This requested many improvements in the available space for non-residential applications in the homes. The accessibility of power, water, internet and TV has become a prerequisite. The house must be converted for quarantine purposes. It is also significant.

Here are the proposals (1) The Electricity Board should urgently take steps to ensure that all electric households in Kerala uninterruptedly receive ample electricity 24/7. Electricity is often failing for several hours or much of the day in most remote regions. (2) The Water Authority

should take immediate measures to ensure that all houses with a water link are constantly supplied with water supplies. The water supply in many municipalities and GPs in Kerala is currently erratic and too insufficient. (3) The internet infrastructure should be extended to allow all houses to access the internet. The government should take decisive measures to boost the facilities for private and public Internet providers. Concessions and subsidies can be given to those supplying remote forest areas with internet facilities. Banks and financial institutions should provide students and parents with loans to buy computers, laptops and smartphones. (4) The houses can require changes and additional room buildings to meet the new COVID-19 requirements. The owners can make minor changes and create additional rooms without GP, Municipalities or MCs' consent (up to one or two extra room subject to a maximum floor area). (5) The banks, state financial institutions, credit unions, etc., shall provide the needy owners of houses with loans to improve the homes. (6) The State Government should plan and introduce a COVID-19 reconstruction package to deal with the above-mentioned crucial issues. The government, electricity board, water authorities and local authorities should be given the highest priority to deal with the problem.

Impact of 69 days lockdown on GSDP of Kerala (March 24 to May 31)

The 69-day lock-up can be divided into three phases based on imposed limitations and relief allowances. A lockdown equivalent to a curfew was enforced in the state during the first 27 days (March 24 through April 19). Both state and central government offices, industrial, private and transportation institutions were shut down. It halted all forms of transport of passengers – road, rail, air and water. All schools, places of worship, events and meetings have been stopped. All other manufacturing operations, utilities and trade came to a halt apart from a few essential services such as stores, grocery store, fruit, ration store, banks and ATMs, telecom, food and medicines supplies, petroleum pumps, GSP distribution, energy supply etc. By examining the mobility of persons and vehicles on the roads, the police specifically forced the lockdown in the country like a curfew. In the second period of the lockdown of 14 days (April 20 to May 3), economic recovery came to a halt as the curfews abruptly stopped nearly all economic activities – citizens travel, transportation of products, the goods and services, jobs, trade, etc., and the third phase of 28 days (May 4 to May 31), which brought more relief. In total products and services or GSDP output, the loss rate is different in the three parts, and separate losses are calculated.

Estimation of Loss of GSDP for 69 Days

Our approach to estimating the loss of GSDP from lockdown has been following: For instance, we have taken the sector-specific GSDP for 2018-19, which was released by the Economics and Statistics Department (DES), as the basis for the absence of the GSDP data for 2019-20.

Secondly, based on data, for each sector and subsector, we have created GSDP for one day (average). Thirdly, based on research released in electronic and print media about the 69-day economic lockdown and our assessments, the rate of loss of government revenue for each subsector and sector is created. Fourthly, three different phases of GSDP loss were estimated. Fifthly, the total amount of money for final commodities and services within the state's geographical limits without repeat over one year is known as the GSDP or state income. Sixth, as

GSDP data for 2018-19 is taken as a basis, the estimate is around 10% lower. The present 2018-19 GSDP is valued at Rs 7, 81,653 crore, according to rapid estimations.

Table 5 displays the calculation of the GSDP loss rate for the 69-day lockdown of the third process. It also includes the GSDP, which is used to measure loss per day, for one day during 2018-19. In the first stage, we estimate the total GSDP loss to 82%, in the second stage to 72% and in the third stage to 61%. The primary sectors with GSDP losing 74% during the first period, 55% during the second stage and 47% during the third phase are agriculture, agriculture, the fisheries industry, the mining sector and the quarry. The secondary sector is industry, electricity, gas and water sources, with significant lockdown building losses. The first stage of the loss was 88%, the second stage was 82%, and the third stage was 71%. Building losses were 100% in the first phase, 95% in the second and 85% in the third level. The tertiary sector consists of business, reparation and hospitality, transport, storage and communications services, financial services, land and property ownership, public administration, etc., lost 79% in the first phase, 69% in the second and 58% in the third.

Table 5
Loss of GSDP due to 69 day lockdown in Kerala

No	Item	GSDP for one day (₹ in crore)	% of loss for 27 day with strict restrictions	% of loss for 14 day with small relaxation	% of loss for 28 day with large relaxation
1	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	204.75	73	53	46
2	Mining and quarrying	8.38	100	95	80
Primary		**213.13**	**74**	**55**	**47**
3	Manufacturing	206.49	80	70	65
4	Electricity, gas, water supply & other utility services	24.30	40	40	30
5	Construction	252.02	100	95	80
Secondary		**482.81**	**88**	**82**	**71**
6	Trade, repair, hotels and restaurants	368.29	76	61	41
7	Transport, storage, communication	125.30	82	77	66
8	Financial services	75.54	70	65	60
9	Real estate, ownership of dwelling & professional services	312.52	90	85	78
10	Public administration	74.96	40	30	30
11	Other services	266.11	80	70	60
Tertiary		**1222.73**	**79**	**69**	**58**
12	**TOTAL GSVA at basic prices**	**1918.66**	**81**	**71**	**60**
13	Taxes on Products	241.97	80	71	60
14	Subsidies on products	19.11	80	71	60
15	**Gross State Domestic Product**	**2141.52**	**82**	**72**	**61**

Note: Based on GSDP 2018-19, Quick Estimate for Kerala, Q: quick estimate

Complete GSDP losses for 69 days are shown in Table 6 and division into three periods. The entire GSDP loss is estimated as Rs 105431 crore for 69 days. For one year, this loss is equal to 13.5% of GSDP. The assessment is underestimated (about 10%) as we took GSDP data as a basis for 2018-19. A sector-specific breakdown in losses shows that Rs 8718 crore, secondary sector Rs 26633 crore and tertiary sector Rs 57475 crore have been lost in the primary sector.
Manufacturing and construction experienced major losses in the secondary sector. The tertiary sector has suffered substantial losses in the manufacture of goods and services in the transport, repair, hotels, financial services, real estate, technical services and other services.

Table 6

Total Loss of GSDP for 69 day lockdown in Kerala

No	Item	Amount of loss for 27 day (strict restrictions)	Amount of loss for 14 day (small relaxation)	Amount of loss for 28 day (large relaxation)	Total loss for 69 days
1	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	4035.69	150 19.28	2637.32	8192.29
2	Mining and quarrying	226.26	111.44	187.6	525.30
Primary		**4261.95**	**1630.72**	**2824.92**	**8717.59**
3	Manufacturing	4460.13	2023.56	3758.16	10241.85
4	Electricity, gas, water supply & other utility services	262.44	136.08	204.12	602.64
5	Construction	6804.54	3351.88	5632.48	15788.90
Secondary		**11527.11**	**5511.52**	**9594.76**	**26633.39**
6	Trade, repair, hotels and restaurants	7557.30	3145.24	4228.00	14930.54
7	Transport, storage, communication	2774.25	1350.72	2315.6	6440.57
8	Financial services	1427.76	687.40	1268.96	3384.12
9	Real estate, ownership of dwelling & professional services	7594.29	3718.96	6825.28	18138.53
10	Public administration	809.46	314.86	629.72	1754.04
11	Other services	5748.03	2607.92	4470.76	12826.71
Tertiary		**25911.09**	**11825.10**	**19738.32**	**57474.51**
12	**TOTAL GSVA at basic prices**	**41700.15**	**18967.34**	**32158.0**	**92825.49**
13	Taxes on Products	5226.39	2391.62	4065.05	11683.05
14	Subsidies on products	412.83	188.86	321.16	922.85
15	**Gross State Domestic Product**	**47339.37**	**21547.82**	**36544.20**	**105431.39**

The unprecedented 69-day lockout and GSDP failure will have a significant adverse economic

effect on the state economy. Firstly, the loss of GSDP is immense, and the current crisis will quickly become a depression. Second, GSDP will report a negative growth rate during the 202021 financial years (below zero). Thirdly, the production, operation and closure activity of several small, medium-sized firms, trading companies and service units will most probably decrease drastically. Fourthly, depression leads to an unparalleled rise in unemployment across all categories and increased state poverty. Fifthly, because of Keralite migrant employees' return from other countries and abroad, especially from Gulf countries, the employment frontier situation becomes more severe.

Impact on employment and unemployment

Impact on Employment

NSO survey 2017-18 reveals that Kerala employed 20.11% of total employees in the primary sector, 31.07% in the secondary sector and 48.82% in the third sector (Table 7). A division of workers into urban and rural areas would provide a different view of the wise share of workers in the industry. The primary sector constitutes 27 percent in rural areas. The proportion of secondary and tertiary staff was 30, 38%. In urban areas, on the other hand, the share of primary workers is slightly lower and the proportion of tertiary workers is much higher. There is increased migration of workers to urban centres due to the more frequent and lucrative jobs available in the urban areas.

With the state lockdown, the job losses in all economic fields have been unprecedented. The state economy is moving towards recession because of its extended lockout, quarantine, physical distancing and other insulating steps to avoid COVID-19 transmission. The lockdowns that lead among other things, to a decrease in working hours and job losses affected non-essential services and goods. There were higher initial job losses for the State that was more dependent on the services sector, more informality and weaking promises against the end of jobs. The lock-down led to tremendous loss of all kind of employment – independent, ordinary and recreational workers. The loss of production and construction employment was more than 50 percent according to our overall estimate (Table 8). In the tertiary market, subsectors with a loss of more than 50% were traded; car repair; transportation and storage; lodging;

Table 7 Distribution of usually working persons (ps+ss) by Industrial category 2017-18, Kerala (in %)

Broad Industry Division	Rural	Urban	Rural+ Urban
Primary	27.01	11.03	20.11
Secondary	30.38	31.96	31.07
Tertiary	42.59	57.03	48.82
Total	100.00	100.00	100

Source: NSO (2019) Periodic Labour Force Survey 2017-2018

Table 8

Loss of Employment due to 69 days lockdown

Industry Division		Total Workers* (%)	loss of employment (more than 50%)
Total Primary		20.11	
1	Manufacturing	11.31	✓
2	Construction	19.11	✓
Total Secondary		31.07	✓
1	Trade, repair of motor vehicles	14.02	✓
2	Transportation and storage	9.21	✓
3	Accommodation and Food service	2.74	✓
4	Information and communication	1.47	
5	Financial and insurance	2.97	✓
6	Administrative and support service	1.68	
7	Public administration and defence	2.11	
8	Education	4.96	✓
9	Human health and social work	3.46	
10	Arts, entertainment and recreation	0.60	✓
11	Other services	2.70	✓
Total Tertiary		48.82	✓
Total		100	✓

*usually working persons (ps+ss) as per NSO survey Source: NSO (2019) Periodic Labour Force Survey 2017-2018

Informal Sector

The informal sector domination made up of self-employed staff who are casual and part of daily employees who have casual jobs are a characteristic feature of employment. The informal sector is responsible for all self-employed, casual jobs and a substantial proportion of daily salary / wage employment (nearly 84 percent). 32.9% of total jobs are the national statistical office

(NSO) survey shows' daily wage. Jobs include public and private sector jobs and earn regular salaries – monthly pay, daily wage or part of the salary (Table 9). The proportion of selfemployed employees is 37.8% and casual workers 29.3%. A breakup of jobs in rural and urban areas reveals that the proportion of self-employed or casual work in rural areas is much higher than in urban areas.

Table 9

Distribution of workers in usual status (ps+ss) in Kerala (2017-18) (%)

Category	Category of employment			
	Self employed	Regular wage/salary	Casual labour	All
	Rural			
Male	40.7	24.7	34.6	100.0
Female	30.5	41.3	28.2	100.0
Person	38.0	29.2	32.9	100.0
	Urban			
Male	40.9	31.3	27.8	100.0
Female	28.5	55.7	15.8	100.0
Person	37.6	37.8	24.6	100.0
	Rural +Urban			
Male	40.8	27.5	31.7	100.0
Female	29.6	47.5	22.9	100.0
Person	37.8	32.9	29.3	100.0

Source: NSO (2019) Periodic Labour Force Survey 2017-2018

For self-employed and casual employees in all sectors of the economy, the lockdown effect was most severe. Because of the curfew situation, almost all informal sector activities, except the trade in commodities and agricultural operations, were stopped altogether. A decent proportion of employees who work in the private sector routinely have lost their jobs. Only those employees of the public sector are the groups not affected. Based on GSDP losses for various industries and the redistribution of jobs into several industries, we conclude that the sixtieth-day lockdown has brought acute unemployment, a financial crisis, debt and economic hardship to over two-thirds of self-employed and casual workers.

Return of Non-Keralite Migrant Workers to their Native States

On the one hand, a surplus of professional workers is marked by the Kerala labour market and, on the other, a scarcity of manual labour. Young, intelligent workers are unwilling to do work manually in house, carriage, agriculture etc. The workers' shortage led to a steady rise in wages. Many migrant workers have migrated to Kerala from West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, and many others due to high wage rates of workers and unskilled people, the increased working environment and living conditions in Kerala. The Government of Kerala, the total number of migrant workers registered with AAWAZ, a free insurance policy designed for migrant workers and activists in this scheme according to the Department of Jobs and Functioning has 5,09 lakh (Table 10). Many migrants have possibly not registered because of lack of interest, a temporary return to the places of origin or some other excuse. Unregistered migrant employees in the system are roughly 1 to 2 lakhs, according to labour department sources. The Labor Department reports that in the Kerala migrant total jobs are between 6 and 7 lakh before the lockdown is carried out (March 23, 2020).

Table 10

Number of Migrant Workers registered for Aawaz Assurance Scheme in Kerala.

No	District	Total cards issued till date	% share of total cards
1	Thiruvananthapuram	61551	12.1
2	Kollam	24849	4.9
3	Pathanamthitta	24059	4.7
4	Alappuzha	36926	7.2
5	Kottayam	19551	3.8
6	Idukki	32908	6.4
7	Ernakulam	112567	22.1
8	Thrissur	41900	8.2
9	Palakkad	24694	4.8
10	Malappuram	29856	5.9
11	Kozhikode	44363	8.7
12	Wayanad	11558	2.7
13	Kannur	28723	5.6
14	Kasaragod	15858	3.1
	Total	**509363**	**100.0**

Source: Department of labour and skills, Government of Kerala

Due to the lockdown of almost 90% of migrants who worked in manufacturing and other industries, they had lost their jobs and remained unemployed in their first two phases (41 days). The Government opened refugee camps for migrant workers following the lockout declaration of March 23, 2020, and offered food and lodging. For their lodging purposes, three camp forms were arranged. The workers were still staying in shelter camps organized by the state government, the workers' camps and the places they provided. The overall number of migrant labour has been calculated as 434,280 from a list of employees from the above three countries' labour department officers. It is noted that before Ramadan, almost one lakh laborer returned home. On June 5, 2020, the Government of Kerala told the Supreme Court that Kerala had 4, 34 lakh, migrants, from other countries at the time of a lock-up announcement. 1.2 lakh laborers returned from this 1, 53 lakh worker and 1.61 lakh workers may not wish to leave the province, which effectively verified the spread of COVID.

The above estimation by the labour department of migrant workers is undoubtedly an understatement. However, the exact number of migrant workers in Kerala has no other facts. This reveals that migrant workers are losing massively. In Kerala's post-locking cycle, the return of migrants to their native States would not create a labour shortage for the following reasons. Second, 1.61 lakhs do not want and will not leave the state among the migrant workers. Secondly, when the constraints enforced due to lockdown are lifted, and the economy regains normal status, many migrant workers return to their native states in Kerala. Third, a substantial number of unskilled and semi-trained workers return from the gulf, and migrant workers' employment in other countries is expected to occur. Fourth, owing to COVID-19, many industries and the individuals likely to transfer to positions occupied by migrants have substantial work loses.

Return of Emigrants from Gulf and other Countries to Kerala

Due to COVID-19 outbreak, Keralite emigrants returned to Kerala in the Gulf and other countries in panic. NORKA and other agencies have reported a significant number of emigrants to Kerala. As of May 3, 2020, the total number of international students registered, including refugees, their dependents and short-time tourists, students and so on, was 4,13 Lakh. Include the cumulative number of emigrants who have lost jobs, 41.236 who have visited visas, 27.100 who have expired visas, or revoked visas and 7276 pupils. Of these, in the six Gulf countries Keralites share was viz. There was roughly 3.2 lakh in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar.

Keralite immigrants have to go back to Kerala because the number of Keralite deaths due to COVID-19 (186 ending June 6, 2020), shortage of medical facilities, lack of hospital beds to admit pain to COVID-19, failure in private health care facilities to receive expensive treatment, lack of room and quarantine facilities in labour camps, etc. The drop in crude oil prices to a low level at all times and the economic shutdown triggered by the lockdown in the Gulf countries contributed to a significant short-term loss of jobs. However, conditions are supposed to change until the lockout is eliminated. During the COVID-19 crisis in the Gulf, two to three laq migrant workers are expected to lose employment and return to Kerala.

In the past four decades, Kerala's economic growth has been affected by the wide-scale movement of contract personnel from Kerala to the Gulf countries and the steady influx of many transfers. Studies on the economic effect of Kerala's economic migration in the Gulf have shown that gulf migration and migrant funds have been a significant factor in the Kerala economy since the mid-1970's – especially in labour, employment, savings, expenditure, development, income distribution and economic development. Emigration and remittances have been one of Kerala's foundations of growth in the last four decades. The pandemic of COVID- 19 began the pillar destruction process.

Emigration and Remittances in Kerala

Studies regarding recent developments in emigrants' destination includes district wise distribution of emigrants, and trends in transfers. Kerala has 21, 22 lakh refugees, according to a migration study by the Centre for Development Studies (Table 11). 18.94 of them moved to the countries of Western Asia. UAE, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia. The proportion of non-Gulf countries is just 11%. The United States, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Singapore and Malaysia represent many non-Gulf emigrants. A pattern of country specific emigration reveals that the number of migrants in all Gulf countries, except Qatar, fell between 2013 and 2018. This indicates that emigration to the Gulf has decreased. ”

“A summary of the immigration rate (emigrant population per 100 households) reveals that Malappuram is the district with the highest levels. For emigrants, their variations and emigrants for every 100 families, Table 12 includes a geographical estimate. Kannur, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Kottayam and Thrissur develop from other districts of heavy emigration rate. The emigration rate in 7 districts has been decreasing at an alarming rate. Ernakulam is the district with the lowest emigration intensity. The economic impacts of emigration depend on the rate of emigration between districts. ”

Table 11

Country of Residence of Emigrants

Destination	Number		Increase/ Decrease (%)	Emigrants in 2018 (Share %)
	2013	2018		
UAE	8,98,962	8,30,254	-7.6	39.1
Saudi Arabia	5,22,282	4,87,484	-6.7	23.0
Oman	1,89,224	1,82,168	-3.7	8.6
Kuwait	1,83,329	1,27,120	-30.7	6.0
Bahrain	1,49,729	81,153	-45.8	3.8
Qatar	1,06,107	1,85,573	74.9	8.7
Other West Asia	2,12,21	0	-	0.0
Total Gulf Countries	**20,70,854**	**18,93,752**	**-8.6**	**89.2**
USA	69,559	46,535	-33.1	2.2
Canada	11,200	15,323	26.9	0.7
United Kingdom	38,316	38,023	-0.8	1.8
Other Europe	19,453	0	-	0.0
Africa	15,327	5,657	-63.1	0.3
Singapore	8,842	12,485	41.2	0.6
Maldives	2,947	6,243	111.9	0.3
Malaysia	9,432	11,350	20.3	0.5
Other SE Asia	53,643	0	-	0.0
Australia/New Zealand	38,316	30,078	-21.5	1.4
Other Countries	62,485	62,441	-0.1	3.0
Total	**24,00,375**	**21,21,887**	**-11.6**	**100.0**

Source: S. Irudaya Rajan, K C Zachariah (2019). Kerala migration survey

Kerala has obtained from Keralite emigrants a substantial number of international transfers per year. Complete remittances from emigrants in Kerala, from Rs 13652 crore in 1998 to Rs 85092 crore in 2018, have estimated to rise (Table 13). During the time excluding two years, Kerala's annual transfers are higher than the government's overall yearly spending. Kerala got roughly one lakh of crore rupees a year in exchange for the spread of COVID-19. Given the current crisis, approximately Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000 crores are projected to decrease in 2020 in Kerala. Migration surveys of total migrants from Kerala is 20, 70 lakh, according to the Centre for Development Studies (CDS). 18, 93 of those immigrated to the Gulf. For many years in Kerala, the gross migrants received were more than the average costs of Kerala (Table 13)

Table 12 Estimated emigrants from Kerala, 2018

No	District	Number of Emigrants		Increase/ Decrease (%)	EMI* per 100 households in 2018
		2013	2018		
1	Thiruvananthapuram	2,41,727	1,37,007	-43.32	15.2
2	Kollam	1,99,933	2,40,527	20.30	32.8
3	Pathanamthitta	1,41,343	1,09,836	-22.29	31.9
4	Alappuzha	93,096	1,36,857	47.01	23.6
5	Kottayam	1,07,931	1,66,625	54.38	31.3
6	Idukki	23,967	32,893	37.24	11.3
7	Ernakulam	1,91,373	53,418	-72.09	5.8
8	Thrissur	2,30,081	2,41,150	4.81	27.9
9	Palakkad	70,506	89,065	26.32	12.2
10	Malappuram	4,55,696	4,06,054	-10.89	42.1
11	Kozhikode	2,26,499	1,60,691	-29.05	19.7
12	Wayanad	22,568	30,650	35.81	14.5
13	Kannur	2,91,321	2,49,834	-14.24	38.8
14	Kasargod	1,04,334	67,281	-35.51	21.3
Kerala		**24,00,375**	**21,21,887**	**-11.60**	**24.0**

*: Emigrants Source: S. Irudaya Rajan, K C Zachariah (2019). Kerala migration survey

Table 13

Remittances and Total Expenditure of Government of Kerala

Year	Remittances (Rs Crore)	Total Expenditure (TE)* of Govt.	Remittances as % of TE
1998	13,652	9,880	138.2
2003	18,465	17,427	106.0
2008	43,288	30,904	140.1
2011	49,695	50,896	97.6
2013	71,142	66,244	107.4
2018	85,092	1,20,070	70.9

*total expenditure for fiscal year ending March next year

Source: S. Irudaya Rajan, K C Zachariah (2019). Kerala migration survey

The overall number of citizens returning to Kerala from foreign countries and elsewhere in India on September 3, 2020, was 9.1 lakh according to one estimate (Malayala Manorama Daily, September 4, 2020). Among them, 5.62 lakh people came back from other countries in India, and

3.47 lakh people came from abroad. Returned foreigners include people who have lost jobs due to a pandemic, teachers, foreign stranded people and guests with short-term stay.

The decline in payment sums is detrimental for property, houses and other buildings, consumption, schooling, health care and the repayment of loans to the banks in the heavily emigrated districts. Perhaps, the economy faces extreme pressures for thousands of households who only rely on their livelihood funds. In those districts that have a high degree of emigration, the contraction will take place. Malappuram, Kannur, Kasargod, Thrissur, Kottayam, Alappuzha, Pathanamthitta, and Kollam are the districts that are likely to witness recession. Almost half of returning emigrants in the labour market in Kerala is expected to be absorbed. Large percentages would be without jobs. And for many returning migrants to achieve self-employment, the state government must provide financial and other assistance.

CONCLUSIONS

The pandemic epidemic and a 69-day lockdown in the state led to an alarming depletion of GSDP and jobs in the state economy. The slowdown would potentially quickly become a downturn. The GSDP is predicted to record negative growth during the year 2020-21. The lockdown has triggered a significant work loss in all industries. It ranged from 50 to 80 per cent in industries such as industry and construction. More than 50 percent of the jobs have been eliminated in most sub-sectors of the tertiary sector. The livelihood of informal sector employees was significantly lost as a result of a curfew-like situation. The effect on self-employed and casual employees in the state of the lack of employment was severe. The 69-day lockdown has brought about the acute unemployment, financial crisis, debt and economic hardship for more than two-thirds of self-employed and casual employees. There are around 6 to 7 lakh migrant workers from other countries in Kerala, and a large part has been returning to native countries because of the pandemic. However, owing to the return of Keralite migrant workers from other states and Gulf countries, unemployment, and the mobility of labour workers unemployed into the jobs of migrants, they would not create a shortage of jobs. In Kerala, there are significant

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