

Journal of Bangladesh Studies
Call for Papers
Special Issue on COVID-19 in Bangladesh
One Year into the Pandemic: The Bangladesh Experience

Guest Editors

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Background

As of 16 December 2020, the COVID-19 virus had dramatically affected both the economic and social lives of Bangladeshis, with about half a million confirmed cases and more than seven thousand confirmed deaths. To contain the virus's first wave in early 2020, the government ordered limits on economic activities and travel from March to May. These measures to restrict the transmission of the virus, combined with widespread anxieties related to the pandemic, have had a substantial adverse impact on the country, and in particular, the economy. Bangladesh has suffered also from its connectedness to Western countries, which have seen a second surge in COVID cases and fresh rounds of lockdowns and other restrictions. The depressed demand in Europe and the US has reduced export volumes from Bangladesh. The pandemic has taught us that the future of the global value chain of RMG will likely be shorter and closer to the retailers. Is Bangladesh ready for this?

The government of Bangladesh has rolled out several bailout packages for the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and exporters. The effectiveness of these packages and the targeting efficiency of the government transfer programs in the pandemic remain an open question. Early evidences suggest that small businesses are affected most. However, little is known about the extent of the share of businesses that have been closed so far. Moreover, we have limited knowledge about the extent of job loss during the lockdown and in its aftermath. International migrants are also struggling as many of them have lost their jobs and have returned to Bangladesh, creating additional pressure on the already strained labor market.

Prolonged economic contraction may exacerbate widespread poverty and food insecurity for many. In addition, the schooling of children across the country has been severely affected. The introduction of remote learning/virtual classes has only widened the learning gap between the rich and the poor. Finally, the pandemic's psychological impact on adults and children will undoubtedly have long-lasting implications. These effects compound social distress from increased mortality and morbidity.

The vaccines that we hope will bring an end to the worst effects of the virus are themselves embroiled in global politics (e.g., 'vaccine nationalism'), whereby the access of the poorer countries will likely be costly and delayed. The overall governance of vaccines, particularly the fair distribution of vaccines within the country, cold-chain management, and targeting, have become pertinent issues worth studying.

Against this backdrop, *Journal of Bangladesh Studies* (JBS) is launching a special issue on COVID-19 in Bangladesh. Authors are encouraged to submit quality articles and short papers on the following broad fields.

1. Macroeconomic impacts (e.g., growth, poverty, food security, trade, aid, remittances, stock market, etc.)
2. Sectoral and sub-sectoral impacts (e.g., agriculture, service, SME, retail, informal sector, e-commerce, etc.)
3. Social impacts (e.g., education, child marriage, mental health, crime, domestic violence, etc.)
4. Behavioral impacts (e.g., risk, hygiene practice, social distancing, self-compliance, online life, etc.)
5. Government's response (e.g., bailout packages, safety-nets, targeting, etc.)
6. COVID and vaccine management (caseloads, hospital capacity, spread patterns, lockdowns, cold-chain management, etc.)

Note that JBS is a multi-disciplinary journal. Articles from economics, sociology, anthropology, political science, international relations, history, health and population sciences, environmental studies and other related disciplines are highly encouraged.

Article Type

We will accept two types of submissions:

- Full-length article (no more than 8000 words)
- Short papers (no more than 3000 words, maximum of five exhibits)

Submission and Review Method

Submitted papers must be unpublished and not currently under review by other journals. All submissions will go through the journal's standard peer-review process. Criteria for acceptance include originality, contribution, scholarly merit, and relevance to the theme of the Special Issue. For author guidelines, please visit the website of the journal at <https://www.bdiusa.org/journal-bangladesh-studies>

Please email your papers to the following addresses:

kiqbal@bids.org.bd, shonchoy@fiu.edu

Time-Line

Last date of submission: April 15, 2021.

Contact

For any queries, please get in touch with the special issue editors.