

L.O.: To understand how Covid-19 has affected South America

The COVID-19 pandemic is considered as the most crucial global health calamity of the century and the greatest challenge that the humankind faced since the 2nd World War. In December 2019, a new infectious respiratory disease emerged in Wuhan, Hubei province, China and was named by the World Health Organization as COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019). A new class of corona virus, known as SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) has been found to be responsible for occurrence of this disease. As far as the history of human civilization is concerned there are instances of severe outbreaks of diseases caused by a number of viruses. According to the report of the World Health Organization (WHO as of April 18 2020), the current outbreak of COVID-19, has affected over 2164111 people and killed more than 146,198 people in more than 200 countries throughout the world.

How Covid-19 has changed South America

CONFIRMED cases of covid-19 have surged in South America in recent weeks. As daily infections surpassed those in Europe and the US, the World Health Organization declared the region the pandemic's "new epicentre" on 22 May.

More than a million cases of coronavirus and 60,000 deaths had been registered as of 7 June in Latin America, which includes countries in Central and South America and Mexico. Many are struggling with poor healthcare systems and vast economic inequalities.

While countries across Europe are **slowly lifting lockdown restrictions** and **reopening borders**, coronavirus cases are still surging in South America despite lockdowns across most of the region.

Brazil being the 'most' affected

If South America is the new centre of the virus, Brazil is its key battlefield. The country's patient zero, a man returning to São Paulo from Italy, tested positive on 25 February. By 7 June, Brazil accounted for 672,846 of the region's reported 1,119,575 cases of covid-19, and nearly 74 per cent of the region's deaths.

"Deaths from covid-19 in Brazil are expected to reach **125,000** by the first week of August"

The virus has taken a firm hold in cities such as São Paulo, where football stadiums have been converted into emergency hospitals to treat the crush of covid-19 patients. The city had reported 143,073 cases of covid-19 and 9145 deaths by 7 June.

Other cities being affected

The disease is also hitting regions of the country inhabited by indigenous communities, such as the Amazon, where mass graves have rapidly been dug. Such areas tend to have less access to hospital critical care units, and indigenous populations have a higher rate of poverty and less access to clean water.

In early May, the state of Amazonas had registered nearly 19.4 coronavirus deaths per 100,000 residents, compared with 4.4 per 100,000 residents for all of Brazil, according to Reuters.

Task

1. Research and write down three reasons why South America, especially places like Brazil, have been affected severely by the coronavirus.

2. *“Coronavirus set to push 29 million Latin Americans into poverty”*
Explain how the economy of South America will rise from this mass poverty breakout.

3. Circle true/false for the statements below:
 - a) Brazil has the most cases of deaths due to Covid-19. **True/False**
 - b) Fingers are being pointed at *Bolsonaro*, Brazil’s president, for the rise of deaths in Brazil. **True/False**
 - c) The COVID-19 pandemic was confirmed to have reached South America on 30th February when Brazil confirmed a case in São Paulo. **True/False**
 - d) The **WHO** has declared South America as the epicentre for Covid-19.

4. **Plot the raw data below on a bar chart:**

Brazil	1 344 143
Peru	279 419
Chile	271 982
Mexico	216 852
Columbia	91 995
Argentina	59 933
Ecuador	55 255
Panama	31 686
Bolivia	31 524
Dominican Republic	31 373
Honduras	18 082
El Salvador	5 934
Haiti	5 847
Guatemala	16 930