

COVID-19 : Implications of Entrepreneurship in North-East India

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Abstract

In a recent event, a deadly pandemic commonly known as the Covid-19 or Coronavirus, has made an immense nationwide invasion after its intercontinental exploration. With the motive to curtail this enormous outbreak of the global pandemic, the Indian government declared a country-wide lockdown, that commenced from the March 25, 2020. Such unanticipated temporal shutdown had created severe challenges for the Indian economy, which had been witnessing a significant slowdown over the recent quarters before the crisis struck. Therefore, the massive outbreak of the global pandemic and imposition of the temporary lockdown have created daunting challenges and stumbling blocks in the regularity of the Indian businesses. Therefore, in the current study, the researchers throw light on the impact of the massive outspread of a global pandemic, on the most vital sectors (agriculture & allied, medical & healthcare, beauty & wellness, education, IT & ITES, textile & apparel, tourism & hospitality) of North East India and identify various entrepreneurial opportunities emanating in the post-pandemic scenario.

Keywords : Business, Covid-19, entrepreneurial opportunities, impact, North-East India

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Covid-19, commonly known as Corona-virus is a devilishly contagious disease that has taken a drastic turn worldwide. This global pandemic erupted at the end of 2019 from Wuhan, the capital city of Central China's Hubei province.

In the massive intercontinental spread of the virus, India has not been spared from its ascendancy. With the view to curtail the enormous outbreak of the global pandemic, the Indian government declared a country-wide lockdown that commenced from March 25, 2020. Such unanticipated temporal shutdown has created severe challenges for the Indian economy, trade, and businesses that had been witnessing a significant slowdown over the recent quarters before the crisis struck. According to a report by the Ministry of Statistics, Government of India, India's growth witnessed a depletion of 3.1% in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year 2020. The World Bank observed a pre-pandemic slowdown by India, and the current outbreak of the global epidemic has magnified pre-existing risks to India's economic outlook. The disruption in businesses has resulted in tremendous increase in unemployment, that is, the unemployment rate rose from 6.7% on 15th of March to 26% on 19th of April and then waved down at pre-lockdown levels mid-June. The supply chains have also been put under stress with the lockdown and post lockdown restrictions in place. Initially, the authorities faced adversity in establishing clarity on streamlining what an 'essential' is and what is not ("Economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in India," 2020).

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Therefore, Indian startups and small businesses, especially those at the budding or mid-stage are the worst-hit sectors in the global pandemic. An industry body's month-long e-survey conducted to study the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indian startups found that around 40% of startups have either temporarily shut operations or are on the verge of shutting down. According to a survey conducted by NASCOMM, 90% of startups faced revenue decline (Pema, 2020).

Thus, most startups have to undertake severe cost-cutting measures such as laying off employees, deducting salaries, ceasing expansion plans, and projects to retain cash in the business.

Research Objectives

The research objectives were as follows :

(1) To discuss the impact of the massive outbreak of a global pandemic, commonly known as the Coronavirus, on the vital sectors (agriculture & allied sectors, medical & healthcare, beauty & wellness, education, IT & ITES, textile & apparel, tourism & hospitality) of North East India.

(2) To identify the various entrepreneurial opportunities emerging in the post-crisis situation within these sectors of the region.

Research Methodology

The study is an Applied research in nature, which is also known as practical research or need based research. The main intention of this research was to understand the impact of the massive outbreak of a global pandemic, commonly known as the Coronavirus on the vital sectors (agri & allied, medical & healthcare, beauty & wellness, education, IT & ITES, textile & apparel, tourism & hospitality) of North East India and find solutions for curtailing the prevailing challenges faced by these business of North East India, that is, by identifying the various entrepreneurial opportunities emerging in the post-crisis situation within these sectors of the region. The study is mainly based on secondary data which were collected from online articles and virtual focused group interviews conducted by Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) as a part of its programme - North Eastern Region Entrepreneurship & Startup Summit (NERES-1.0).

Impact of Covid-19 on Business Operations in North-East India

With the massive outburst of the Covid-19 pandemic, a nation-wide lockdown and restrictive movements were imposed by the state governments to curb further spread of the virus in the country.

Here, are some of the vital sectors of the North East region which have faced disruption due to the imposition of temporary lockdown and restrictive movements:

A. Impact on Agriculture and Allied Sectors

The Coronavirus scare has adversely hit the agriculture and allied activities sector in the region. According to the Advisory Committee for Revitalization of the Economy of Assam, the estimated loss in agriculture is ₹ 8,175 crores ("Assam economy suffers loss," 2020). The Agriculture Minister of Assam has stated that the lockdown has hit the farm sector hard (Karmakar, 2020). According to government assessment, commercial farmers have suffered a loss of ₹ 40.8 crores on perishables, but small farmers have benefited from selling fruits and vegetables worth ₹ 113 crores locally.

(1) **Tea sector** : One of the worst-hit agricultural markets is the tea industry. Assam accounts for more than 50% of the

country's tea output and employs about one million people in the plantation sector. State Minister of Industries from Assam stated that the industry lost revenue of ₹ 500 crores due to the pandemic ("Assam tea suffers Rs. 500 crores loss," 2020). However, tea industry body NETA (North Eastern Tea Association (NETA) estimated a loss of 80 million kg of tea valued at ₹ 1, 218 crores ("Assam to lose 80 million kg," 2020).

(2) Poultry sector : The poultry sector in Assam has incurred a loss of around ₹ 263 crores during Phase-I of the lockdown. Around one crore broiler birds, each with ready-to-sell weight of two kg died of starvation as restrictions were imposed on the movement of feed, resulting in the loss of around ₹ 150 crores. Another one crore birds suffered stunted growth, and 75% of these died, resulting in a loss of around ₹ 100 crores. According to All Assam Poultry Farmers and Traders' Association and Assam Hatchery Association, first phase of the lockdown also affected the hatchery sector by injuring around 75 lakh hatching eggs, leading to a loss of around ₹ 13 crores.

B. Impact on Education Sector

(1) School sector : In the pre-school and school sections, students are reluctant to study in the home environment and show an unwillingness to cooperate with the teachers. The parents of the pre-primary section especially face difficulties in coping with the situation because they need to manage education of their and their regular profession. Primary and secondary education in rural areas of the region faces severe damage as these schools lack technological advancements (Choudhary, 2020). The senior teachers who always preferred the traditional one-to-one and chalkboard teaching methods are now facing trouble in adapting to technology.

(2) Higher education : The higher education sector is also facing hurdles in coping with the situation. Most institutions of the region haven't adopted e-learning management programs and ERP systems, although it is the mandate of the UGC. It has created a problem for the faculty as well as the students to adjust to e-learning platforms. The sudden adaptation of the e-learning program has given insights into a faulty management system.

C. Impact on Tourism and Hospitality Sector

The tourism and hospitality sector of India's northeastern region has been hard hit by the impact of the global pandemic, COVID-19. The tourism and hospitality industries of the North Eastern region were already struggling with issues like connectivity with the rest of the world, including lack of adequate and decent infrastructure.

Assam is one of the hard-hit states. The whole tourism value chain across hotels, restaurants, resorts, travel agencies, tour operators, and fast food businesses directly or indirectly associated with the state's tourism sector has been largely affected. There is an estimated loss of ₹ 200 crores of income by the tour agencies alone in the state and this can go up substantially. The government has estimated a loss of revenue of around ₹ 500 crores from the state tourism industry (Nath, 2020a). Assam tourism engages directly or indirectly around one million of its population. Therefore, the pandemic will leave a huge surge in the state's unemployment rate in the coming days.

D. Impact on Textile and Apparel Sector

The North Eastern Region of India is well known for its pre-eminent contribution to the National Textile industry. The region is globally famous for the production of various high-quality silk since ancient times. Some of the prominent indigenous silks produced in the region are Golden Muga, White Pat, and Warm Eri. Sualkuchi, a small town in the Kamrup district in the state of Assam is known as the hub of the state's silk industry (Das, 2020).

Coronavirus global epidemic and statewide lockdown within the region to curtail further spread of the virus has severely affected the operational functioning of the regional silk industry. Reports suggest that the region has incurred a massive financial loss of at least ₹ 100 crores (Nath, 2020b). Over 20,000 weavers and workers of Sualkuchi are facing uncertainties (Nath, 2020b).

E. Impact on Beauty and Wellness Sector

The beauty and wellness sector is one of the most vital sectors of the region and has eminently contributed towards the economic development and revenue generation in the region. The Northeast India is also one of the biggest contributors to the migrant labour force for beauty and wellness industry in India.

The beauty and wellness centers involve high levels of human interactions, which can be a serious threat to safety of clients and employees. Therefore, an impromptu visit to a salon for pedicure, waxing, eyebrow styling services or hair cut for a toddler could be a bygone tale post the lockdown (Balram & Anand, 2020). The market has witnessed grave losses in the entire lockdown period. Therefore, the estimated losses are atleast ₹ 9.3 billion in the salon businesses and ₹ 7.5 billion in the spa section. Fitness centers have estimated a loss of atleast ₹ 6.5 billion in the region. Such losses shall be continued even after relaxing the lockdown status in the region as clients might develop a germophobic attitude and may avoid visiting salons and beauty centers frequently.

F. Impact on Medical and Healthcare Sector

To curtail the outspread of the virus in the North Eastern region, the state authorities arranged for special medical facilities and quarantine centers for treatment and quarantine of the virus-infected patients. Therefore, interstate exploration of the global epidemic in this region is no different from the impact in India as a whole.

The region has an underdeveloped infrastructural facility in the medical and healthcare sector (Bhattacharjee, 2020). With massive outbreak of the virus in the region, the situation has become grave.

Insufficient existence of quality diagnostic centres has created another struggle to sustain the fight against the Novel Coronavirus. This problem has resulted in untimely issuance of test results. As a result, hospitals are reluctant and sometimes deny admission to patients with symptoms. It creates another struggle for the patients as they don't receive the appropriate treatment on time and this has resulted in many deaths.

G. Impact on IT & ITES

Compared to all the other vital sectors of NER, COVID-19 seems to have the least impact in the IT & ITES sector. It appears to have paved in a lot of promising opportunities in which technologies like IoT, ML, AR, Data Analytics, Hyperspectral Imaging, Gamification, etc. will provide scope for entrepreneurs or startups to venture.

Post Covid-19, challenges will be mostly in agritech, fisheries & livestock, handloom & handicraft, tourism & hospitality, education and skill development, repairs and installation etc. These challenges are likely to be in the form of transfer of information, decision making, physical presence, experience etc. With the help of technologies like Data Intelligence (Machine Learning, Big Data, Video Analytics etc.), Smart Sensors (Sensors, Low Power, Wireless etc.), Simple UX (Multimodal, VR/AR, Touchless etc.), such challenges can be solved.

For North East India which lacks proper infrastructure and logistics, the pandemic can rather be a boon as most of the communication is done virtually instead of physical meetings.

Emerging Entrepreneurial Opportunities

The enormous outbreak of the global pandemic COVID-19 has not only affected the performance of business operations of various sectors, but it has also staged down the various significant scopes in the field of entrepreneurship and startups. Thus, some of the promising entrepreneurial opportunities are suggested below:

A. Agriculture and Allied Sectors

(1) Aggregation and distribution of farm produce from the point of collection to consumption centres : Startups can connect farmers with buyers, including retailers, e-commerce, food processors, cloud kitchens, and even directly with

consumers. During the COVID lockdown, about ten organizations at Guwahati provided home delivery of vegetables and fruits directly from the farmers. The services were availed mainly through mobile-based apps.

(2) Building storage, warehouse, and processing units near farms : A significant proportion of food produce is lost after harvest due to poor infrastructure and cold storage resulting in high post-harvest wastage. There is a need for near-farm, modular, and affordable storage, and processing solutions. These storage facilities can help farmers avoid distress sales. The government has recently approved setting up an agri-infra fund with a corpus of ₹ 1 lakh crore to provide financial support to agri-entrepreneurs, start-ups, agri-tech players, and farmer groups for infrastructure and logistics facilities. It will create immense opportunities for entrepreneurs and startups of the region.

(3) Farm mechanization through low-cost equipment and pay-per-use models : Farm labour is in scarcity both for harvesting and sowing, and mechanization is the need of the hour. Migrant workers have returned to their home States in COVID circumstances, many may not return (“COVID-19 lockdown: Migrant workers from Northeast,” 2020). Hence, farm mechanization in agriculture and greater automation in processing is likely to trend. Equipments like seed transplanter, machines for deep urea placement, and machines for grading and sorting, low-cost equipment for solar dehydration are some examples of innovations for farm mechanizations. The business model on the pay-per-use models, also known as FaaS (Farming as a Service) through custom hiring services can also be explored to help smallholding agriculture. (Singh et al., 2018).

(4) Farmer advisory for crop monitoring includes institutional credit and crop insurance : Agritech startups can also help in sowing and crop monitoring solutions. These include capturing and analyzing multiple data points including weather, farm, soil and crop data, all of which can facilitate decision making and enable access of farmers to institutional credit and crop insurance.

(5) Urban agriculture has gained prominence due to shortage of vegetables in the initial period of lockdown. Farming can be done in the kitchen garden or terrace, depending on the availability of space. Hydroponics and Aquaponics including Microgreens open another opportunity

(6) Indigenous crops of the region : Many of the region's local crops including lemon, ginger, turmeric, black rice, minor crops, medicinal and aromatic crops, and tea have major health benefits. There is immense scope to increase production and the market value chain. Commodity base Farmer Produced Company (FPCs) should be promoted for effectiveness.

(7) Agriculture credit and microfinance : The microfinance sector is growing at 45% CAGR and startups can explore opportunities in this sector for the agriculture credit system. Crop Insurance can also be included as a part of the loan. Innovative credit cards for input purchase with Unique Identification Number (UID) is another option with rolling credit for farmers. Follow on Public Offer (FPO) in the region are not organized. There exist opportunities for startups to digitize books of FPO and help the organization to access institutional credits.

(8) Reimagining tea sector : E-commerce has created opportunities for various types of tea, including specialty tea. Even small tea growers are attempting to sell through online channel. Tea can also be used for preventive healthcare and as an immunity booster like turmeric and ginger. During COVID, research organizations of China and Tea Board of Sri Lanka promoted immunity tea boosters. There is immense scope in this sector with Ayurveda.

(9) Agriculture and rural extension activities : At present there are no community meetings or Below the Line (BTL) activities. Hence, there must be an alternative plan to create awareness among farmers about various government policies and schemes. In this scenario, e-commerce startups operating in the agricultural sector can be game-changers.

They have a targeted base of farmers that can be directly leveraged by the government, thereby reducing the time gap and increasing effectiveness in reaching out to them. The startups can also help in ensuring that the agri-input needs of the farmers are met effectively. Given the adequate support, these e-commerce players can deliver the goods to the farmers at their doorsteps, post sanitization at the warehouse level.

B. Education Sector

(1) Developing e-Learning App : Many existing and aspiring entrepreneurs of this sector can develop e-learning apps for schools and colleges. They can adopt cross-subsidy pricing structure or a multi-level differential pricing strategy for enticing the schools and colleges of rural areas.

(2) Virtual online awareness programs :

(a) Parental prospect : Parents, especially at pre-schools and school level are facing challenges in managing their professional work and children's education. Online awareness, motivation, and stress management programs can be conducted.

(b) Teacher's prospect : The senior teachers and professors find it difficult to adjust to e-learning programs. Supportive and elaborative training and awareness program on e-learning platforms can be conducted for them virtually.

(3) Developing a teaching curriculum : With the view to maintain social distancing, constructive teaching and learning curricular can be programmed which involves online problem solving home assignments and assessments.

(4) Online tutoring and coaching classes : Parents and students across the country are trying online learning in this difficult time and realize that the mode is more powerful than an offline coaching class.

(5) Supply of Tabs and digital devices at the Panchayat level : There is an opportunity to introduce community digital connectivity through CSR activities of corporates. Some of the existing news channels can be converted to educational channels at the community level.

(6) New age courses like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Deep Learning (DL), Big Data, Data Science, Internet of Things (IoT) are the need of the hour. Career opportunities will also increase in the areas. There is an opportunity to develop a high-quality curriculum and teaching modules in these specialized courses.

C. Tourism and Hospitality Sector

(1) Identifying new and offbeat destinations : The state government in the region should start a campaign to promote various destinations in the region among domestic travelers. In the state of Assam, offbeat destinations like Haflong, Garampani etc. should be promoted.

(2) Promoting eco-friendly or community-based tourism : Community-based or eco-friendly tourism is tourism in which residents of the region (often rural, poor, and economically marginalized) invite tourists to visit their communities with the provision of overnight accommodation. It can be an ideal source of income for the residents, in the role of land managers, entrepreneurs, service and produce providers, and employees. Such tourist income can be set aside for projects which are expected to benefit the community as a whole.

(3) Annual events and festivals : Annual events like Dirt and Mud Bike Racing Grand Prix, International Theatre

Festival, Northeast Textile Fashion Festival, Food and Traditional Wine Festival, Tea Festivals, Golf and Polo events can be conceptualized and introduced with low investment.

(4) Self-driven rental cars : Keeping in mind the emerging germophobic attitude of travelers, self-driven rental car services can be a great solution in the post lockdown scenario. The self-drive car rental market is in a nascent stage and is expected to grow at a CAGR of over 72% during the forecast period (Technavio, 2016).

(5) Sanitary travel services : With the outbreak of the global pandemic, tourists have become ultra-conscious about their hygiene habits and prefer quintessential sanitary essentials during their travel. Public transportation authorities can consider hiring sanitary service agencies to look after the facilities' sanitary activities in exchange for fees. The corporates can also employ such services for their various business trips.

D. Textile and Apparel Sector

(1) Use of silk in medical applications : There is an increased use of silk in medical applications. It can be used to manufacture various range of biomaterial elements such as sponges, gels, and films for medical purposes. Therefore, silk scaffolds are also used in wound healing treatments and in tissue engineering of cartilage, tendon, bone, and ligament tissues (Technavio, 2020).

(2) Production of masks out of silk : Masks can also be made of silk, targeting the elite section of consumers. These masks can be made out of silk wastes which remain after the production of the apparels. These masks can be set at high prices as the product shall target mostly the price of unconscious consumers.

(3) Production and processing of Mushroom Leather or Muskin : Mushroom cultivation is one the most important agricultural activities of the region. Apart from its edible properties, it can turn into leather under suitable baroscopic conditions. It can be a great replacement for animal processed leather (Madonia, 2019). Therefore, it can be the best alternative for consumers who use and consume vegan products.

(4) Sustainable fashion in retail : The effects of COVID-19 are new for peoples. It has made them realize the importance of artisans, local economy, handmade products etc. As consumers, they have become more responsible and conscious and have started to go for more locally made products. Handmade products will be in trend.

(5) Natural dye and non-synthetic colors : There is a market demand for using natural dye and non-synthetic colors for textiles. Since Northeast India is rich in various tribes, it is necessary to show and focus on the various tribes' craftsmanship. Fashion entrepreneurs should look for a way in which the local artisans can scale up. Most of the industries are using unsustainable materials like synthetic dyes that impact the environment and have health hazards (few of the dyes are carcinogenic). The fashion entrepreneurs should spread the awareness that the ethnic textiles are not only for tourist attraction but can be used in daily wear for a better sustainable livelihood.

E. Beauty and Wellness Sector

(1) Promote local herbs/going local : The Northeastern region of India has at least 526 varieties of herbs and aromatic plants that have beauty and therapeutic applications. Promotion of these herbs can help entrepreneurs of the region acquire business supplies at cheaper rates and reduce the supply of imports from outside the region.

(2) Home services : The existing and aspiring entrepreneurs of this sector can provide salon and spa services. Since the present outspread of the pandemic has created an acute sense of hygiene among beauty clients, they might be reluctant to visit salon and spa centres.

(3) DIY (do it yourself) blogging : In the present scenario, most people might avoid impromptu visits to salons and spa centres and prefer self-care at home. It can be because of the hygiene concern escalating among people or low level of income among the consumer base, and they might avoid visiting pricy and expensive beauty treatments at salons and spas. It can be a great opportunity for the DIY blogging professional to use Youtube platforms to offer DIY recipes and self-care suggestions.

(4) Virtual fitness training : Fitness centers like gyms use various types of equipments for cardio training or weights training and can provide virtual fitness training sessions. In this process, the gym authority can lend the required equipment and allow home access for the same to customers.

(5) Nutrition expert advisory services : After the global pandemic outbreak, people have become conscious about their hygiene and safety, nutrition intake, and dietary supplements. It can pave the way for opportunities for nutrition advisory services by certified nutritionists. These services can be provided offline as well as online.

(6) Scope of setting up of institutes for nutrition and dietetics : The nutrition and dietetics industry is a fast-growing both as an academic discipline and in practical application, both in India and abroad. Nutrition and dietetics play an immense role by carving a customized, healthy routine for us. To meet this demand, initiatives can be taken up to set up institutes for nutrition and dietetics, especially in the Northeastern region.

F. Medical and Healthcare Sector

(1) Online medical consultation services : In the new normal scenario, medical appointments can be scheduled and attended online, and personal visits should be initiated only when necessary.

(2) Incorporating medical management consultancies : The medical facilities lacking in structural management in the organization can hire or consult a third-party medical management firm to conduct the management functions on their behalf.

(3) Providing medical devices and equipment on rental basis : One of the major infrastructural inadequacies of the region is the unavailability of necessary medical equipments and devices to treat patients.

(4) Telemedicine : Platforms that connect patients with doctors and offer customized care plans including consultation, follow-up visit reminders, tests, medicine reminders, and detailed answers to patient FAQs.

(5) Women healthcare platforms : Health issues specific to women in their local languages (Assamese, Bengali, Hindi, Boro, Meitei, Manipuri, Mizo, English, Nagamese, Kokborok, Khasi, etc.) can connect users to reliable healthcare providers for specialties like maternity, infertility, cosmetic interventions, etc. at affordable prices.

G. IT & ITEX

(1) New Age Technologies : There are many new opportunities for technologies like Internet of Things (IoT), Machine Learning (ML), Augmented Reality (AR), Data Analytics, Hyperspectral Imaging, Gamification, etc. to provide a scope for entrepreneurs/startups to venture into.

(2) Software as a Service (SAAS) based solutions and Affiliate Marketing : Entrepreneurs/startups can also look into the prospects of SAAS based solutions and affiliate marketing which is in huge demand now.

(3) Cyber security professionals : With every industry stepping into digitization, cybercrime can be one of the biggest

threats to a company. In almost all sectors like agriculture, banking, and e-commerce, the North-eastern states are slowly moving towards digitization. It demands a good number of cybersecurity experts who can keep our digital data safe.

(4) Web developers : Several small and medium companies are increasingly setting up a business in various parts of the North East. Professionals having good knowledge of web development can make a career by building apps and websites for such growing companies.

(5) Agriculture and modern technologies : Assam is heavily dependent on the agricultural sector. Some examples of how technology can be used to improve agriculture are monitoring and controlling irrigation systems via smartphones instead of driving to the fields, using ultrasound to check the quality of meat before selling it in the market, using crop sensors that help apply fertilizers in an effective way.

(6) Virtual consulting : It is one of the developing industries amidst the crisis. It could help people get diagnosed, treated, and operated without physical presence of a physician. Many apps have been built in the past few months to help achieve this. Therefore, many patients chose home quarantine facility, that is, these people are treating themselves at home and need medical supervision and assistance every day ; thus, these applications can help them achieve this.

Limitations of the Study

(1) The research was purely based on secondary data and not on primary data.

(2) There were constraints of coverage of geographical location.

(3) Time period was limited.

Conclusion

The Coronavirus pandemic has brought the world to a standstill. In Northeast India, the major sectors contributing to employment and revenue generation include tourism, agro and allied, handloom and handicraft, and the tea industry. With the enormous outbreak of the pandemic, the sectors have felt a sharp jolt with such consequences. It not only caused disruption in the productivity of the sector but also negatively impacted various aspects of the business, that is, from fundraising to customer orientation, to employees, and to suppliers. Therefore, a special bailout package for the sustainability of the sectors is highly recommended.

With Covid-19 being one of the most disruptive health challenges in recent history, India putting in all efforts in navigating the complex odyssey with great agility, flexibility, sensitivity, and tenacity. It aims to discover possibilities for spurring inclusive, equitable growth, to discover new value chains that would make the country self-reliant. The Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan is a mission to galvanize the growth forces across the country in various sectors of the economy (Atmanirbhar Bharat, 2020). It is a launchpad for fostering entrepreneurship, nurturing innovation, and creating an eco-system for rural-urban symbiotic development. The challenges imposed by the disruption in the global supply chain can be converted into opportunities.

A crisis has begun and it will continue to remain in force. On the brighter side, this situation has paved-in various innovative opportunities in the field of entrepreneurship. Now, the entrepreneurs must consider whether the pandemic is an unmitigated disaster or it is a bestower of entrepreneurial opportunities for them which they can make the best use of.

It is believed that every crisis comes with a solution and this is the time for the existing and aspiring entrepreneurs to identify opportunities and formulate plans. History has shown that great companies emerge during crisis. Companies like Airbnb and Uber were founded during the peak of the financial crisis of 2008.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the entrepreneurs of the Northeastern region must consider this situation as a propitious chance, and make the best use of the opportunities hurled on them with the pertaining challenges of the COVID 19 crisis.

Thus, as far as the government is concerned, along with facilitating entrepreneurs to capitalize on opportunities, the government must increase investment in the social sector, including healthcare, education, environment, and rural infrastructure.

Scope for Future Research

For the future research either two separate approaches or both the approaches can be simultaneously considered :

(1) The first approach is to understand the impact and identify the emerging opportunities on a larger scale like considering all the sectors of India.

(2) The second approach is to study the impact and implications of each sector individually, and include the quantitative aspects present in it.

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