**27 June 2021**

**Lecture by Jomo Kwame Sundaram**

**Suggested Readings**

**GSU Covid-19 pandemic readings**

Jun 15, 2021

[**Powerful States Push Tax Race to the Bottom**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/06/powerful-states-push-tax-race-bottom/)

The powerful G7 states, home to most major transnational corporations, agreed to a global minimum corporate income tax rate. But the deal will deprive developing countries of their just due yet again.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/06/powerful-states-push-tax-race-bottom/>

Jun 01, 2021

[**Pandemic Relief Policies Need More Resources, Better Design**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/06/pandemic-relief-policies-need-resources-better-design/)

Pandemic relief measures in developing countries have been limited by modest resources, fear of financial market discipline and policy mimicry. COVID-19 has triggered not only an international public health emergency, but also a global economic crisis, [setting back decades of uneven progress](https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/feb/03/decades-of-progress-on-extreme-poverty-now-in-reverse-due-to-covid), especially in developing countries.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/06/pandemic-relief-policies-need-resources-better-design/>

May 25, 2021

[**Developing Countries Desperately Need COVID-19 Financing**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/05/developing-countries-desperately-need-covid-19-financing/)

Failure to sufficiently accelerate comprehensive efforts to contain COVID-19 contagion has greatly worsened the catastrophe in developing countries. Grossly inadequate financing of relief, recovery and reform efforts has also further set back progress, including sustainable development.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/05/developing-countries-desperately-need-covid-19-financing/>

May 11, 2021

[**US Support for Vaccine Waiver Welcome, but More Needed**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/05/us-support-vaccine-waiver-welcome-needed/)

Thanks to President Biden, the US now supports a suspension of intellectual property (IP) rights to increase vaccine supplies. However, without vaccine developers sharing tacit technical knowledge for safe vaccine mass production, it will be difficult to rapidly scale up vaccine output.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/05/us-support-vaccine-waiver-welcome-needed/>

Apr 06, 2021

[**IMF, World Bank Must Support Developing Countries’ Recovery**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/04/imf-world-bank-must-support-developing-countries-recovery/)

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to take an unprecedented human and economic toll, wiping away years of modest and uneven progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Developing countries now need much more support as progress towards the SDGs was ‘[not on track](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/)’ even before the pandemic.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/04/imf-world-bank-must-support-developing-countries-recovery/>

Mar 23, 2021

[**End Vaccine Apartheid Before Millions More Die**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/03/end-vaccine-apartheid-millions-die/)

[At least 85 poor countries will not](https://www.eiu.com/n/85-poor-countries-will-not-have-access-to-coronavirus-vaccines/) have significant access to coronavirus vaccines before 2023. Unfortunately, a year’s delay will cause an estimated 2.5 million avoidable deaths in low and lower-middle income countries. As the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General has put it, the world is at the brink of a [catastrophic moral failure](https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-148th-session-of-the-executive-board).

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/03/end-vaccine-apartheid-millions-die/>

Feb 23, 2021

[**Developing Countries Struggling To Cope With COVID-19**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/02/developing-countries-struggling-cope-covid-19/)

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is adversely impacting most developing countries disproportionately, especially the United Nations’ least developed countries (LDCs) and the World Bank’s low-income countries (LICs). Years of implementing neoliberal policy conditionalities and advice have made most developing countries much more vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic by undermining their health systems and fiscal capacities to respond adequately.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/02/developing-countries-struggling-cope-covid-19/>

Feb 16, 2021

[**IP, Vaccine Imperialism Cause Death and Suffering, Delay Recovery**](https://www.ipsnews.net/2021/02/ip-vaccine-imperialism-cause-death-suffering-delay-recovery/)

Vaccine developers’ refusal to share publicly funded vaccine research findings is stalling broader, affordable vaccinations which would more rapidly contain COVID-19 contagion. The pandemic had infected at least 109 million people worldwide, causing over 2.4 million deaths as of mid-February.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/02/ip-vaccine-imperialism-cause-death-suffering-delay-recovery/>

Feb 09, 2021

[**Intellectual Property Cause of Death, Genocide**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/02/intellectual-property-cause-death-genocide/)

Refusal to temporarily suspend several World Trade Organization (WTO) intellectual property (IP) provisions to enable much faster and broader progress in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic should be grounds for International Criminal Court prosecution for genocide.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/02/intellectual-property-cause-death-genocide/>

Feb 03, 2021

[**Road to Hell Paved with Good Intentions**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/02/road-hell-paved-good-intentions/)

Access to COVID-19 vaccines for many developing countries and most of their people will have to wait as the powerful and better off secure earlier access regardless of need or urgency. More profits, by manufacturing scarcity, will surely cause even more loss of both lives and livelihoods.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/02/road-hell-paved-good-intentions/>

Jan 19, 2021

**[Nothing to Learn from East Asia?](http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/01/nothing-learn-east-asia/" \o "Nothing to Learn from East Asia?)**

Covid-19 infection and death rates in the Western world and many developing countries in Asia and Latin America have long overtaken East Asia since the second quarter of 2020. Perhaps unsurprisingly, considering prevailing Western accounts of the Asian financial crises, there have been no serious efforts to draw policy lessons from East Asian contagion containment.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2021/01/nothing-learn-east-asia/>

Dec 15, 2020

**[Intellectual Property Monopolies Block Vaccine Access](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/12/intellectual-property-monopolies-block-vaccine-access/" \o "Permalink to Intellectual Property Monopolies Block Vaccine Access)**

Just before the World Health Assembly (WHA), an 18 May [open letter](https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/pressreleaseandstatementarchive/2020/may/20200514_covid19-vaccine) by world leaders and experts urged governments to ensure that all COVID-19 vaccines, treatments and tests are patent-free, fairly distributed and available to all, free of charge.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/12/intellectual-property-monopolies-block-vaccine-access/>

Nov 17, 2020

[**COVID-19 Compounding Inequalities**](https://www.ipsnews.net/2020/11/covid-19-compounding-inequalities/)

The United Nations’ renamed [*World Social Report 2020*](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/02/World-Social-Report2020-FullReport.pdf) (WSR 2020) argued that income inequality is rising in most developed countries, and some middle-income countries, including China, the world’s fastest growing economy in recent decades. While overall inter-country inequalities may have declined owing to the rapid growth of economies like China, India and East Asia, national inequalities have been growing for much of the world’s population, generating resentment.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/11/covid-19-compounding-inequalities/>

July 30, 2020

[**Only Governments Can Prevent Covid-19 Recessions Becoming Depressions**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/07/governments-can-prevent-covid-19-recessions-becoming-depressions/)

Covid-19 threatens economic life the world over. The most urgent and important need is for governments, businesses and families to survive. Governments must revive economies and livelihoods to prevent Covid-19 recessions from becoming protracted depressions. The Covid-19 crisis is clearly a ‘black swan event’, threatening both public health and livelihoods. Both the pandemic and containment efforts are not due to business operations and decisions, but nonetheless have compelling consequences for them.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/07/governments-can-prevent-covid-19-recessions-becoming-depressions/>

July 28, 2020

**[Fight Pandemic, Not Windmills of the Mind](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/07/fight-pandemic-not-windmills-mind/" \o "Permalink to Fight Pandemic, Not Windmills of the Mind)**

With uneven progress in containing contagion, worsened by the breakdown in multilateral cooperation due to mounting US-China tensions, recovery from the Covid-19 recessions of the first half of 2020 is now [expected to be more gradual than previously forecast](https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2020/06/24/WEOUpdateJune2020). In the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, many governments, especially of [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development](http://www.oecd.org/gov/budgeting/initial-budget-and-public-management-responses-to-covid19-in-oecd-countries.pdf) (OECD) economies, have introduced massive fiscal and monetary packages for contagion containment, relief and recovery.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/07/fight-pandemic-not-windmills-mind/>

July 23, 2020

**[Covid-19 Compounds Developing Country Debt Burdens](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/07/covid-19-compounds-developing-country-debt-burdens/" \o "Permalink to Covid-19 Compounds Developing Country Debt Burdens)**

Covid-19 is expected to take a heavy human and economic toll on developing countries, not only because of contagion in the face of weak health systems, but also containment measures which have precipitated recessions, destroying and diminishing the livelihoods of many.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/07/covid-19-compounds-developing-country-debt-burdens/>

July 16, 2020

[**Covid-19 Cannot Be Defeated by a Divided World**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/07/covid-19-cannot-defeated-divided-world/)

Announcing an independent evaluation of the global Covid-19 response on 9th July, World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General [Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus](https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-opening-remarks-at-the-member-state-briefing-on-the-covid-19-pandemic-evaluation---9-july-2020) asked why it has been “difficult for humans to unite and fight a common enemy that is killing people indiscriminately?”.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/07/covid-19-cannot-defeated-divided-world/>

July 02, 2020

[**Rethink Food Security and Nutrition Following Covid-19 Pandemic**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/07/rethink-food-security-nutrition-following-covid-19-pandemic/)

The Covid-19 crisis has had several unexpected effects, including renewed attention to food security concerns. Earlier understandings of food security in terms of production self-sufficiency have given way to importing supplies since late 20th century promotion of trade liberalization.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/07/rethink-food-security-nutrition-following-covid-19-pandemic/>

June 09, 2020

**[Economic Ghosts Block Post-Lockdown Recovery](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/06/economic-ghosts-block-post-lockdown-recovery/" \o "Economic Ghosts Block Post-Lockdown Recovery)**

As governments the world over struggle to revive their economies after the debilitating lockdowns they imposed following their failure to undertake adequate precautionary containment measures to curb Covid-19 contagion, neoliberal naysayers are already warning against needed deficit financing for relief and recovery.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/06/economic-ghosts-block-post-lockdown-recovery/>

June 04, 2020

**[Covid-19 Recessions: This Time It’s Really Different](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/06/covid-19-recessions-time-really-different/" \o "Permalink to Covid-19 Recessions: This Time It’s Really Different)**

The world economic contraction so far this year is largely due to measures, especially at the national or local level, to contain or prevent Covid-19 contagion, particularly those restricting business operations, thus reducing economic activity, output, incomes and spending.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/06/covid-19-recessions-time-really-different/>

May 26, 2020

[**Politics, Profits Undermine Public Interest in Covid-19 Vaccine Race**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/05/politics-profits-undermine-public-interest-covid-19-vaccine-race/)

With well over five million Covid-19 infections worldwide, and deaths exceeding 340,000, the race for an effective vaccine has accelerated since the SARS-Cov-2 virus was first identified as the culprit.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/05/politics-profits-undermine-public-interest-covid-19-vaccine-race/>

May 19, 2020

[**Covid-19 Straw Breaks Free Trade Camel’s Back**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/05/covid-19-straw-breaks-free-trade-camels-back/)

Economic growth is supposed to be the tide that lifts all boats. According to the conventional wisdom until recently, growth in China, India and East Asian countries took off thanks to opening up to international trade and investment.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/05/covid-19-straw-breaks-free-trade-camels-back/>

May 13, 2020

**[Why Some National Health Care Systems Do Better than Others](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/05/national-health-care-systems-better-others/" \o "Why Some National Health Care Systems Do Better than Others)**

In public health discussions, it is generally recognized that the social returns to health care investments are greater than the private returns, and much of such investments should be financed by the state.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/05/national-health-care-systems-better-others/>

May 12, 2020

**[‘Passing the Buck’ Becomes Reckless ‘Conspiracy Blame Game’](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/05/passing-buck-becomes-reckless-conspiracy-blame-game/" \o "‘Passing the Buck’ Becomes Reckless ‘Conspiracy Blame Game’)**

Although Wuhan local authorities undoubtedly ostracized local medical whistle-blowers, notably [Dr Li Wenliang](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Li_Wenliang), who suspected a new virus was responsible for flu-like infections in Wuhan in late 2019, [official responses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_the_COVID-19_pandemic_from_November_to_December_2019#1_December) were apparently not delayed, and possibly even expedited, as the novel character of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, responsible for Covid-19 infections, was not immediately self-evident.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/05/passing-buck-becomes-reckless-conspiracy-blame-game/>

May 05, 2020

[**Argentina Responds Boldly to Coronavirus Crisis**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/05/argentina-responds-boldly-coronavirus-crisis/)

Like much of the West, Argentina did not take many early precautionary actions after the Covid-19 epidemic was confirmed in January, but became the first Latin American country to act decisively with a 12 March public health emergency declaration. The presidential decree came a day after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global pandemic, just over a week after the first case was detected in the republic on 3 March.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/05/argentina-responds-boldly-coronavirus-crisis/>

Apr 28, 2020

[**All-of-Government, Whole-of-Society Involvement Needed to Fight Virus**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/government-whole-society-involvement-needed-fight-virus/)

The Covid-19 pandemic is now widely considered more threatening than any other recent viral epidemic. Most believe that many more have been infected or even died than officially confirmed.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/government-whole-society-involvement-needed-fight-virus/>

Apr 21, 2020

[**Covid-19: Brazil’s Bolsonaro trumps Trump**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/covid-19-brazils-bolsonaro-trumps-trump/)

Brazil’s President Jair Bolsonaro appointed medical entrepreneur Nelson Teich his new health minister on 17 April. The businessman quickly [echoed](https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/04/17/jair-bolsonaro-brazil-fires-heath-minister-mandetta-coronavirus-inections-grow/) his boss’ desire to resume business as usual regardless of its potentially lethal consequences.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/covid-19-brazils-bolsonaro-trumps-trump/>

Apr 14, 2020

[**Vietnam Winning New War Against Invisible Enemy**](https://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/vietnam-winning-new-war-invisible-enemy/)

Vietnam, just south of coastal China, is the 15th most populous country in the world with 97 million people. According to its Ministry of Health (MoH), as of 13 April, there were [262 confirmed cases of COVID-19](https://www.vietnam-briefing.com/news/vietnam-business-operations-and-the-coronavirus-updates.html/), with 144 recovering or discharged from hospitals, and no deaths.

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/vietnam-winning-new-war-invisible-enemy/>

Apr 09, 2020

[**Kerala Covid-19 Response Model for Emulation**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/kerala-covid-19-response-model-emulation/)

Within weeks, the Covid-19 epidemic was classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an epidemic of international significance, triggering a pre-agreed WHO response. By the end of the first week of April, more than [1.3 million people had been confirmed as infected, with over 65,000 deaths](https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/) across the world.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/kerala-covid-19-response-model-emulation/>

Mar 26, 2020

**[East Asian Lessons for Controlling Covid-19](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/03/east-asian-lessons-controlling-covid-19/" \o "Permalink to East Asian Lessons for Controlling Covid-19)**

By the third week of March 2020, the number of Covid-19 deaths in Italy had overtaken the number of deaths in China. Authorities all over the world are restricting the movements of their populations as part of efforts to control the spread of Covid-19.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/03/east-asian-lessons-controlling-covid-19/>

Mar 24, 2020

[**Stronger UN Leadership Needed to Cope with Coronavirus Threat**](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/03/stronger-un-leadership-needed-cope-coronavirus-threat/)

The economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic is hard to predict as events are still unfolding, and estimates vary dramatically. [UNCTAD](https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/03/1059011) estimates lost output in the order of US$1 trillion, just over a third of[Bloomberg](https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2020-coronavirus-pandemic-global-economic-risk/)’s expectation of US$2.7 trillion in losses. The [OECD](https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/oecd-economic-outlook/volume-2019/issue-2_7969896b-en#page3) expects global economic growth to halve from already anaemic levels.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/03/stronger-un-leadership-needed-cope-coronavirus-threat/>

Mar 04, 2020

**[Coronavirus Exposes Global Economic Vulnerability](http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/03/coronavirus-exposes-global-economic-vulnerability/" \o "Permalink to Coronavirus Exposes Global Economic Vulnerability)**

As the outbreak of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 threatens a global pandemic, major stock markets around the world have suffered their worst performance since the 2008 financial crush.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/03/coronavirus-exposes-global-economic-vulnerability/>