

COVID-19 IN THE 15 MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE LARGEST CONTINGENTS OF INDIGENOUS POPULATION IN THE BRAZILIAN STATE OF AMAZONAS (*)

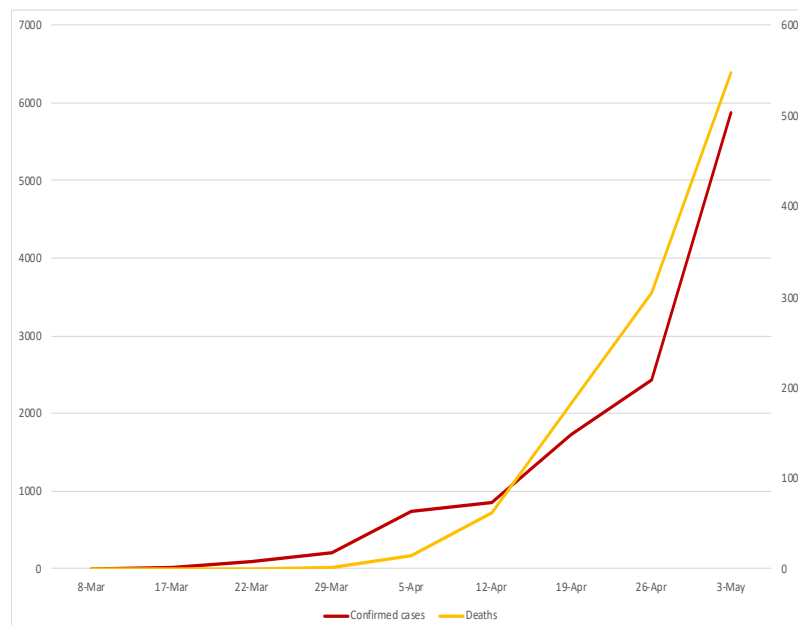
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On May 3, 2020, Brazil reached 101,147 COVID-19 cases and 7,025 deaths, with a fatality rate of 6.9%. The Southeast made up the largest number of confirmed cases at 47.6%, followed by the Northeast at 29.7%, the North at 14.5%, the South at 5.5%, and the Midwest at 3.1% (Ministry of Health, 2020).

The percentage of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the North is unsettling. It is the fourth most populous region of Brazil with 8.4% of the country's population (IBGE, 2020; Ministry of Health, 2020) but stands as the third-highest region in number of confirmed cases. In the North, the state of Amazonas stands out with the highest incidence rate of confirmed cases (1,612/1 million) and of deaths (132/1 million) among Brazilian states (Ministry of Health, 2020). According to the 2016 survey by the Associação de Medicina Intensiva Brasileira (Brazilian Association of Intensive Medicine - AMIB), the state of Amazonas contained only 489 ICU beds (249 adult beds, 16 coronary beds, 105 neonatal beds, and 119 pediatric beds), all of which are located in its capital city of Manaus (AMIB, 2016). The state's health care system collapsed in April 2020 with only 346 ICU patients due to COVID-19, having no vacancies for new patients (Manaus City Hall, 2020).

The 2010 Census showed a population of almost 170,000 indigenous peoples within the state of Amazonas, about 20% of the country's indigenous population (IBGE, 2020). Amazonas is also home to the largest number of Indigenous Lands in the country (ISA, 2020). Indigenous people are the most vulnerable population to diseases in Brazil (Dias Jr. et al, 2009), have restricted access to public health care (Azevedo et al, 2020), and live in regions where COVID-19 is quickly spreading out of control (Graph 1). Therefore, it is imperative to act quickly to protect them.

Azevedo et al (2020) reports that only 108 of the 1,228 municipalities with indigenous lands in Brazil have ICU beds, a figure that reveals the severity of the situation. In the state of Amazonas, with all of its ICU beds in the capital city, indigenous lands are in varying moderate to critical situations in regard to their vulnerability to COVID-19 (Azevedo, 2020).



Graph 1. Number of cases and deaths (COVID-19) confirmed in the state of Amazonas until May 3, 2020. Source: Ministry of Health, 2020

Data collected on May 3, 2020, showed that all 15 municipalities with the largest indigenous populations in Amazonas had confirmed cases, and there were deaths reported in 11 of these (Table 1). Of these, Autazes was the municipality with the highest mortality and lethality rates: 22.75/100,000 and 10.23/100 respectively. The likely further spread of the virus in the state may cause an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in indigenous lands.

There is an urgent need for a contingency plan for the indigenous population. Such plan should prevent the spread of the virus to other municipalities where cases have not yet been reported and assist indigenous populations where cases have been registered. The state of Amazonas cannot deal with the pandemic on its own, and the federal government must take dramatic measures to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 within the indigenous population.



Municipality	Population		Indigenous Territory	COVID19 (May 3, 2020)		Mortality rate /100,000	Lethality rate /100
	Total (2019)	Indigenous population(2010)		Confirmed cases	Deaths		
São Gabriel da Cachoeira	45,564	29,017	Yes	16	1	2.19	6.25
São Paulo de Olivença	39,299	14,974	Yes	77	3	7.63	3.9
Tabatinga	65,844	14,855	Yes	113	9	13.67	7.96
Santa Isabel do Rio Negro	25,156	10,749	Yes	5	0	0	0
Benjamin Constant	42,984	9,833	Yes	41	2	4.65	4.88
Barcelos	27,502	8,367	Yes	4	1	3.64	25
Autazes	39,565	6,877	Yes	88	9	22.75	10.23
Santo Antônio do Içá	21,602	6,445	Yes	117	2	9.26	1.71
Atalaia do Norte	19,921	6,274	Yes	1	0	0	0
Borba	41,161	5,931	Yes	8	1	2.43	12.5
Maués	63,905	5,138	Yes	125	12	18.78	9.6
Barreirinha	32,041	4,940	Yes	7	0	0	0
Manaus	2,182,763	4,040	Yes	4072	396	18.14	9.72
Lábrea	46,069	3,330	Yes	21	0	0	0
Tonantins	18,755	3,072	Yes	34	2	10.66	5.88
Total	2,712,131	133,842		4729	438	174.36	9.26

Table 1. COVID-19 cases in the 15 municipalities with the largest indigenous population in the state of Amazonas (May 2020). Source: IBGE, Ministry of Health, 2020.

Notes

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