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Tuberculosis Burden in the Tea Gardens of Assam: A Discussion on the Risk Factors and Social Determinants

C.J. Sonowal

Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai 400 088, Maharashtra, India
E-mail: moina@tiss.edu

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ABSTRACT Tuberculosis (TB) is one of the deadliest diseases identified as the 'disease of the poor'. India has the highest yearly incidence of TB in the world. Besides bio-medical determinants and risk factors, social determinants increase the risk factors of exposure to TB germs and after-exposure effects on a population. Growing experiences in TB control advocate more focus on intervention in social determinants as a complementary measure to the curative TB control regimen, as the curative TB control programme alone has been unable to control TB effectively. There is a high TB burden in the tea gardens of Assam despite the presence of a TB monitoring mechanism in place. This paper explores the extent of risk factors and social determinants prevalent among the tea garden worker population, which might help policy planning for controlling TB in Assam's tea gardens.