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**RBI Working Paper No. 01/2026:  
Data Gaps in State-Level Inflation: An Assessment for the Covid Period**

Today the Reserve Bank of India placed on its website a Working Paper titled, "[Data Gaps in State-Level Inflation: An Assessment for the Covid Period](#)" under the Reserve Bank of India Working Paper Series<sup>1</sup>. The paper is co-authored by Purnima Shaw and R. K. Sinha.

The collection and compilation of official statistics was affected during the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic due to the resulting restrictions across the world. In India, imputed price indices for the official inflation were released at the aggregate level for the months of April and May 2020. However, the State-wise official inflation figures remain unavailable for four of the pandemic months viz., April and May 2020 and April and May 2021.

In this context, this paper uses RBI's Inflation Expectations Survey of Households (IESH) granular data to derive State-wise CPI-U inflation estimates for these four pandemic months. The paper describes the importance of IESH, which continued to be conducted bimonthly and disseminated during the pandemic months. Using the distributions of centre-wise urban consumers' inflation perceptions, three months ahead inflation expectations, and past State-wise realised CPI-U inflation figures, the paper derives estimates for the State-wise official inflation pertaining to the specified Covid months. These State-wise inflation estimates when aggregated, closely follow the all-India official CPI inflation series.

State-wise inflation data are crucial in the current inflation targeting regime, and therefore, providing estimates for the specific months (for which the official CPI data remains unpublished) can be potentially useful for future research involving State-level inflation time-series data.

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**(Brij Raj)**  
Chief General Manager

<sup>1</sup> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) introduced the RBI Working Papers series in March 2011. These papers present research in progress of the staff members of the RBI and at times also those of external co-authors, when the research is jointly undertaken. They are disseminated to elicit comments and further debate. The views expressed in these papers are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the institution(s) to which they belong. Comments and observations may please be forwarded to the authors. Citation and use of such papers should take into account its provisional character.