

**Success or Failure: An Overview of Initiatives and Actions taken by Government of Gujarat during Covid 19 Pandemic**

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**Abstract:**

Covid 19 is an exceptional problem which has created havoc to peoples' life and has damaged economy all over the world. Even though a number of steps have been suggested to fight against this pandemic and to reduce its outcomes, this is the most horrible problem. Fight against Covid 19 pandemic requires a dedicated policy associating protective and aggressive steps. This pandemic has not only affected health of general people but also has impacted food production, financial system and socio-cultural domains also. This paper reviews the policies, strategies and measures taken up by the Government of Gujarat to fight against Covid 19. The study has revealed that the steps implemented are good but insufficient in nature. It has been endorsed in this paper that national and state-level disaster management policies should be made in such a way that whenever this type of problem arises we have concrete action plan available to fight against it.

**Key Words: Covid 19, Government of Gujarat, Atmanirbhar Gujarat**

**Introduction:**

Covid 19 is a pandemic which must be handled differently. Covid 19 cannot be treated in the same way as other medical diseases because this is novel disease and we are yet to discover drug to fight against it. Covid19 administration deserves a diverse and dedicated strategy as it is an exceptional pandemic with tricky steps affecting different aspects affecting economy and humanity. Pandemic administration policy must be state specific and has to be outlined and executed in consultation with the particular state. Because any adversity can be countered competently if the state has full dominance over vigilance as well as on assistance policies.

In his speech to nation on 12th May 2020 Prime Minister Narendra Modi encouraged the people of nation to become self-reliant (Atma Nirbhar) and shared 5 pillars that will make India self-reliant. According to him this Five Pillars are: Economy, Infrastructure, Governing systems, Vibrant Demography and Supply chain.

1. **ECONOMY:** We need an economy that doesn't bring incremental change but makes quantum jumps.
2. **INFRASTRUCTURE:** We need infrastructure that will become the identity of modern India.
3. **SYSTEM:** We need a system that is no longer based on the rules and rituals of the past but one that actualises the dreams of the 21st century. This system needs to be technology-based.
4. **DEMOCRACY:** We are the world's biggest democracy. A vibrant demography is our strength. It is the source of energy for our efforts to make India self-reliant.
5. **DEMAND:** The cycle of demand and supply in our economy is an asset. We need to utilise this power fully.

In a big push to revive the Covid-hit economy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on also announced massive new financial incentives on top of the previously announced packages for a combined stimulus of Rs 20 lakh crore, saying the coronavirus crisis has provided India an opportunity to become self-reliant and emerge as the best in the world and converting the crisis into an opportunity (<https://www.indiatoday.in>, 2020). In line with it Government of Gujarat also announced package for Rs. 14,000 Crores on 4th June 2020 and named it Gujarat Atmanirbhar package. Main objective of any Government is reduction in Number of

Cases and decrease the spread of Covid 19 among general public and for that Government has tested Highest Testing of General Public

**Literature Review:**

**According to The Advisory Council of the 15th Finance Commission of India** “The Indian economy is showing a slowdown due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis which requires a well-designed financial aid package will be required to deal with the situation. The council noted that the economic impact of the COVID-19 lockdown will lead to changes in how we deal with matters of finance and if no sustainable course of action is pursued, it will cause a slowdown in domestic activity, impact on cash flows of financial institutions and business enterprises (2020).

**According to Warwick McKibbin and Roshen Fernando** “A range of policy responses will be required both in the short term as well as in the coming years. In the short term, central banks and Treasuries need to make sure that disrupted economies continue to function while the disease outbreak continues. In the face of real and financial stress, there is a critical role for governments (2020).”

**According to Amanda Glassman** “COVID-19 aid aims at two ambitious goals -- to minimize COVID-19 and other excess mortality, preserving the health system and its providers, and to cushion the economic shock and avoid fiscal collapse. But despite the transcendent importance of measurable impact against these goals, funds must also be executed rapidly as revenues run out in real-time. The only workable financial modality given the constraints: repeated rounds of budget support with minimal conditions for disbursement (Glassman, 2020)

**Objective of Study:**

The objective of this paper is to understand steps taken up by Government of Gujarat for fight against Covid 19. In this paper, the initiatives, action, disaster management strategies and existing policies adopted by Gujarat have been judiciously analysed to verify if (a) pre-emptive as well as combative measures are included to combat Covid 19, (b) if incorporated then whether they are being executed or not (c) or if the measures taken are unproductive and/or amateurish. The authors highlight the call for greater compliance to fight against Covid 19 so that with prompt actions and proper execution of policy Government of Gujarat will be able to decrease the widespread of the disease.

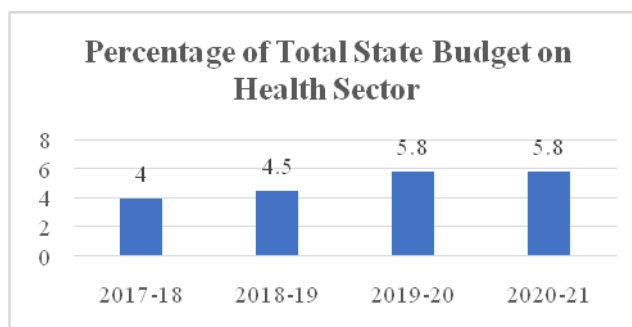
### **Research Methodology:**

Secondary source of data is used for the Research Paper. Which includes information collected from different websites, official websites of Government of Gujarat etc.

### **Special Initiative and Expenditure of Government of Gujarat for Health**

In order to institutionalize Quality Assurance, Gujarat is the only state of India which has set up the District Quality Assurance cell & State Quality Assurance cell for implementation of its State Quality Improvement Programme (SQIP). State Quality Improvement Programme proposes to develop and institutionalize the use of the field based, practical and feasible indicators in quality assessment and to transform existing supervision practices into a more standardized and structured process. Any sustainable change in terms of institutionalization of Quality Assurance (QA) will come from within the system and not from outside. It is hoped that interventions from demand side (for example, community and individuals demanding better services) will also put pressure on the system to deliver quality services which will in turn give impetus for investing in Quality Assurance (<https://nhm.gujarat.gov.in>, 2020).

Budget Allocation on health is increasing. Following diagram shows Government of Gujarat's expenditure on health.



### **Distribution of Financial Aid by Government of Gujarat under Atmanirbhar Gujarat**

Government of Gujarat arranged for beds, medicine, medical equipment, PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) kits, and had implemented the most severe lockdown to contain the outbreak. (<https://scroll.in>, 2020) The Atma Nirbhar Gujarat packages are in the form of support and encouragements, subsidy, exemptions, payment of taxes, including GST and VAT, extra time of payment, arrears of electricity and water bills, property tax, moratorium, etc.

<b>Beneficiary</b>	<b>Aid Amount</b>
Commercial establishments, businesses, offices, hotels, restaurants, shops, hospitals get a rebate of 20% and residential property owners will get 10% rebate in their annual property Tax Bills	Rs 744 Crores
Electricity consumers using less than 200 units per months will get rebate till first 100 units of consumption	Rs. 200 Crores
Subsidy for various industries	Rs 3,038 crore
Relief given to GIDC (Gujarat Industrial Development Corp) for promotion of industries.	Rs 458 crore
Revival of housing sector	Rs 1,000 crore
Loan interest subsidy of 4 per cent for loans of up to Rs. 2.5 lakh for business and shop owners	Rs 525 crore
Labour welfare benefits including Rs. 35,000 to each tribal labourer who works in different parts of the state and wants to build a house in his hometown	Rs 466 crore
Free ration to poor families during the period of lockdown and direct transfer of Rs. 1,000 in their accounts	Rs 5,044 crore
Health department and another	Rs 100 crore
Four municipal corporations - Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara and Rajkot - from the Chief Ministers Relief Fund	Rs 100 crore
Agriculture Sector	Rs.1190Crores

**Conclusion:**

It is assumed that Atmanirbhar Gujarat Abhiyan economic package is likely to have a nominal impact on Gujarat's economic growth in this financial year. With worries of starting of a novel recession due to novel virus, we require robust policy and Rapid Aid actions. Planning is needed to take economy on track. A comprehensive socioeconomic growth policy for different segments of economy that encourages Atma Nirbhar Bharat is also needed. There must be proper synchronisation between the central and state government regarding different policies and initiatives so that collective efforts of Central as well as State Government converted into actual concrete result.

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