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Self Reliant India : Initiatives and Progress

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Abstract:

To overcome from the financial crises occurred due to lockdown during COVID-19; Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced a financial package of Rs. 20 Lakh crore on 12th May, 2020. Prime Minister announced the slogan 'Vocal for Local'. The central government announced three packages ANB1.0 ANB2.0 and ANB3.0 to maintain the progress of India. It introduced various schemes like, Production-linked Incentive, Strengthened Healthcare infrastructure, *Pradhan Mantri Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana*, Increased focus on women entrepreneurship, Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy, Self-reliance in the defence sector, etc. As per World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business 2020' survey, India ranked 63rd out of 190 countries, indicating a favourable business environment in the country. The recent government reforms, such as allowing private companies to operate in key industries, introducing agriculture initiatives and labour reforms and enabling commercial coal mining, serve as strong pillars to aid development of India's economy and present huge opportunities for the country to become self-reliant.

Keywords: COVID 19, self reliant, Vocal for local, key indicators.

Introduction:

Corona virus (COVID 19) was discovered in Wuhan of China in December 2019. As per the WHO report, as on 27th November, 2022, 637 million confirmed cases and 6.6 million deaths have been reported. The discovery of corona virus resulted in lockdown in all over the world. In India, the first case of COVID-19 was found on 30th January, 2020. In India, Southern India, Kerala was initially the most affected states. These states first banned on mass gatherings on 10th March, 2020. All places of mass gathering such as bank, shopping centers, theatres, etc. were closed throughout the country from 16th March, 2020.

The first national lockdown in the country was made on 22nd March, 2020 for fourteen hours. Then after, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced a complete lockdown for 21 days in the country was announced on 24th March, 2020, which was essential to break the chain of infection. The Health Ministry of Government of India directed to the state governments to allocate hospitals solely for the treatment of corona virus patients. The lockdown reduces the transport and industry emissions. Due to sudden lockdown, the GDP of India had crashed 23.9% in the year 2020-21. India's GDP shrank 7.3% during the year and this was the worst performance of the Indian Economy in any year since independence.^[1]

To overcome from this financial situation, on 12th May, 2020 Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced a financial package of Rs 20 trillion. At the time of announcement Prime Minister said that, 'I am announcing a special economic package, which will play an important role in making India 'self reliant' and which would be beneficial for labourers, farmers, honest tax payers, MSMEs and the cottage industry. His expectations were to make India self-reliant was the only way to make 21st century belong to India.'^[2]

At the time of announcement, the prime minister also urged the people to buy and promote local products and brands. He announced the slogan 'vocal for the local'. The time of lockdown has taught us that we have to make the mantra of our lives 'local.' Global brands that are there today were once local too, but when people there started supporting them, they became global. That's why every Indian has to become vocal for our local people from today.

Objectives :

The objectives are -

1. To study the key initiatives and progress under self reliant program.
2. To study the key achievements of self-reliant India.
3. To study the challenges due to COVID-19.

**Research Methodology:**

The objective of the article is to study key initiatives and progress under self-reliant scheme. The present study is related to the achievements of the scheme 'self-reliant India'. For this purpose secondary data is used. Various sectors and the impact of self-reliant package have been considered in this article.

Challenges due to COVID 19:

Due to lockdown various work places were closed, they lose their income and the effect of this had been shown in economic damage. The revenue of the government revenues also drastically fallen during this period. Many businesses had lost income on a large scale. There are also challenges related to inadequate public health infrastructure, poor working conditions, lack of protective kits and overburdened manpower in healthcare facilities. The challenges are more severe in small cities and rural areas. Most of the countries were faced the crises of public health and economic downturn. India had an additional challenge of migrant workers crisis. Following problems were found during the pandemic period –

- a) There were no work opportunities for the migrant workers due to saturated workers in agriculture sector.
- b) Majority of the states don't have major rural agro-based industries.
- c) Lack of earnings pushed the people into poverty.

Key objectives of the 'Self-reliant India' :

- To develop India into a global supply chain hub.
- To build the government's trust in the private sector capabilities and prospects.
- To establish 'good force multipliers' for Indian manufacturers.
- To enter the global markets to export goods including agriculture, textiles, clothing and jewellery.
- To determine adequacy of each sector (e.g., defence, agriculture, healthcare, infrastructure, etc.), with the help of budget-22, to achieve self-reliance.

Self-reliant India (Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan) : Key Initiatives and Progress :

The Government of India announced an Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan package (ANB 1.0) in May 2020 and launched two additional Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan packages in end-2020 (ANB 2.0 and ANB 3.0) to maintain the progress. The overall Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan package, including the RBI initiatives, was estimated at 27.1 lakh crore or greater than 13% of the GDP.

Through the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan package, the Government facilitated structural reforms in the sector like redefinition of MSMEs, commercialization of the mineral sector, agriculture and labour reforms, privatization of public sector undertakings, One Nation One Ration Card initiative and production-linked incentive schemes.

Under the Self-reliant India (Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan), the government implemented the following schemes:

1. Introduced Production-linked Incentive (PLI) scheme: To establish India's manufacturing global leadership and boost the self-reliant India scheme, under the Union Budget 2021-22, the government launched a production-linked incentive scheme (PLI) across 13 sectors, at Rs. 1.97 lakh crore for the next five years.

The allocated budget is an additional fund to Rs. 40,951 crore, which was for PLI electronics manufacturing schemes. In addition, these PLI schemes have attracted foreign players to invest in India. For example, in February 2021, Amazon announced to establish a manufacturing plant for its electronic devices in India; in March 2021, Apple started assembling iPhone 12 in India.

2. Strengthened Healthcare infrastructure: In the Union Budget 2021-22, the government introduced a new central healthcare scheme that will be implemented over the next six years to improve the country's healthcare infrastructure.

3. Under Pradhan Mantri Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana (PMANSY), the government allocated funds worth Rs. 64,180 crore over six years to strengthen the existing 'National Health Mission' and develop capacities of primary, secondary and tertiary care and healthcare systems and institutions to detect and cure new and emerging diseases.

4. Strengthened other infrastructure: Under the Union Budget 2021-22, the government pushed for higher capital expenditure to focus on infrastructure upgrades for roads, rail and power delivery.



The government aims to improve 8,500 kms of highways by March 2022; this will boost India's competitiveness by lowering transportation costs and improving the network between production and consumption markets, in both domestic and international.

5. Increased focus on women entrepreneurship: In 2015-16, the government, under the Department of Science & Technology's 'Science & Technology for Women' scheme, launched women technology park (WTP) programmes to empower women by training them in skills to set up their own microenterprises and become self-reliant. In the last five years (until March 2021), 10,000 rural women have benefited from this programme, 28 WTPs have been successfully completed and 12 parks are under progress across the country.

6. The Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 (DPEPP 2020) highlights a framework to achieve a turnover of Rs. 1.75 crore, including exports of Rs. 35 thousand crore, in the aerospace and defence goods and services by 2025.

7. Achieving self-reliance in the defence sector: Under the self-reliant India scheme, the government launched policies to promote self-reliance in defence manufacturing. For example, the government increased FDI limit to 74% in defence manufacturing, placed 'import embargo' on 101 military items and introduced the Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020.

8. PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises : As part of the Self-reliant India mission, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries launched the 'PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME)' scheme to provide financial, technical and business support to upgrade the existing micro food processing enterprises. The government allocated funds worth Rs. 10,000 crore for this scheme, which will be implemented between financial year 2021 and 2025.

Key Achievements of Self-reliant India :

- The mission has helped reduce dependence on imports of air conditioners, as between October 2020 and November 2020, India reported 65% reduction in imports of split ACs or air conditioners; this bodes well for the government's 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' policy of self-reliance. In October 2020, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) released a regulation restricting imports of air conditioners with refrigerants.

- Within 60 days of the mission's launch, India's domestic producers were able to generate an indigenous supply chain of personal protective equipment (PPE) kits, demonstrating the country's self-sufficiency in PPE kits.

- In January 2020, the country launched the world's largest vaccination drive with two 'Made in India' vaccines—Covaxin and Covishield—and demonstrated its determination to become self-reliant.

- **Domestic supplies:** As of April 14, 2021, India's cumulative vaccination coverage crossed 110 million.

- **International supplies:** As of April 15, 2021, the country exported 65.5 million indigenous COVID-19 vaccines to more than 90 countries.

Conclusion : As per World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business 2020' survey, India ranked 63rd out of 190 countries, indicating a favourable business environment in the country. The recent government reforms, such as allowing private companies to operate in key industries, introducing agriculture initiatives and labour reforms and enabling commercial coal mining, serve as strong pillars to aid development of India's economy and present huge opportunities for the country to become self-reliant. In addition, strong budgetary push for the manufacturing sector, MSMEs, along with supportive PLI reforms, will boost the domestic manufacturing companies and attract foreign companies to invest in the country; thereby, foster India's path to achieve self-reliance.

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