

Suggestions and Inputs
on

Covid Control Measures to deal with Covid 2.0

Sl. No	ISSUES	RATIONALE / RECOMMENDATION
1.	<i>BUILDING CAPACITY FOR VACCINE PRODUCTION - IDENTIFYING THE ROADMAP FOR INCREASING THE DOMESTIC CAPABILITY</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As we understand center has permitted Mumbai's Haffkine Institute to produce Covaxin. Similar Government / PSU institutions with existing facilities for vaccine productions (like Bio Reactors) should be identified by the State and Central Government. Private players producing the vaccines or intending to manufacture can utilize or repurpose the existing facilities. We know Serum Institute, Bharat Biotech, J&J (BioE), Zydus, DRL and 7 other players have tied up for manufacturing as announced in public domain. Government support will play a crucial role here as private players will have challenge in investing in new facilities / bioreactors due to the CAPEX and ROI unless there is a long-term commitment of buying the vaccines given by the Government.
2.	<i>CREATE INFRASTRUCTURE TO DEAL WITH THE PANDEMIC ON A SUSTAINABLE BASIS</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During onset of pandemic, COVID facilities were created, but were dismantled and are now again being created. Rural areas lacked the infrastructure. Also, most states only focused on bed requirements, but not related medicine or oxygen, etc. requirements indicating lack of robust sustainable infrastructure. There should be separate Government teams for vaccination and for dealing with the infrastructure for pandemic.
3.	<i>SET UP AN EMPOWERED TASKFORCE FOR LONGER TERM SOLUTIONS</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up an empowered task force - fast track cures for corona as vaccines alone may not be enough as well as set up an innovation council for newer vaccines to tackle the mutations in the strains.
4.	<i>NEED FOR SOFT LOANS / INCENTIVES TO PRIVATE VACCINE PLAYER TO INCREASE THE PRODUCTION</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GOI can provide soft loans and incentives to private vaccine manufacturers to significantly enhance production.

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5.	TECHNOLOGY DRIVEN SOLUTIONS TO TRACK AVAILABILITY OF HEALTHCARE FACILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modify the Aarogya Setu app to provide Covid Bed and ICU availability and allow patients to register. That way instead of a hospital-wise waiting list, we can optimize across a city or district. • Provide online ordering for Remdesivir and Tocilizumab based on doctor prescription and patient Aadhar card. In fact, only hospitals should be allowed to procure these and only doctors be allowed to administer these rather than have the family buy from outside which creates a black market.
6.	OBSERVE THE PANDEMIC PATTERN FROM OTHER COUNTRIES AND HAVE A PROACTIVE APPROACH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A committee within the Government should be tasked to look at how the pandemic is behaving in the rest of the world. India seems till date to be having a lag effect in the waves. This gives the Government the opportunity to action the infrastructure in advance rather than be reactive. While one can never have clear predictions, it may still be better to monitor.
7.	SUSTAINABLE AND EFFECTIVE MECHANISM FOR PROCURING VACCINES FOR PRIVATE SECTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government has just allowed State Government and private sector to procure vaccines directly for the age group 18 years to 44 years. While this will facilitate greater vaccination of the country, it may be good if the states and the private sector (at least the large healthcare and corporates) give their requirements for a year to the Central Government and the Central Government helps negotiate the schedule and prices. • As, Government has allowed private sector involvement in vaccination, any contribution for vaccination strategy should be included as part of CSR spending. Private involvement will help in removing vaccine hesitancy. Private involvement will also speed up the vaccination.
8.	STONGLY INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED "JOINT TASK FORCE" COMPRISING CENTER & STATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In areas or states with very high incidence of Covid 2.0 e.g., Maharashtra, MP, Chhattisgarh (red zones), there should be a "Joint task force" to manage the situation comprising state and center representatives so that the ownership and accountability is shared. • Respective CMs and Health Minister can be the oversight body.
9.	CLEARLY DEFINED RESPONSIBILITY AND PROPER ALLOCATION MECHANISM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central government should take full ownership to ensure that medical products (vaccines, drugs, oxygen etc.) are made available to state administration as best as possible using a transparent system of allocation. • Delivery of care and vaccine will be the responsibility of state governments except in red zones where it will be shared responsibility.

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	<i>BETWEEN THE CENTRE AND STATE</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an oversight board at National level to ensure integrated, impartial and inclusive process of analysis, assessment and allocation of resources to state level including increase in Government spending on Pharma and Healthcare. • Request to consider diverting the unclaimed amount of Provident Fund (PF) and with other insurance companies, which is well past the limitation of time to Government to be invested in public healthcare and manufacturing and supply chain of vaccination. • Please include essential industries (like Pharma) to get all their employees vaccinated to let these industries operate at peak levels.
10.	<i>VACCINATION</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right now, vaccination is on an equitable basis. We can probably implement Ring Vaccination which we used successfully to control small pox and chicken pox. Ring Vaccination is where an affected cluster is targeted for vaccination. Private sector can be incentivized for Ring vaccination. • Private sector participation in Vaccination is critical; including permission to import vaccines (allow approved vaccines of developed countries to be imported). • Different vaccination policy- vaccinates the large economic hubs on priority, especially the productive working population. • The Tribal Communities and informal workers are highly neglected. They need to be vaccinated at the earliest. Food, as well as social security, is important for the marginalized and so there should be appropriate provisions made for the same. • Pavement entrepreneurs like vegetable vendors, hawkers, retail outlet workers, farmers, farm laborers should be vaccinated on a priority basis. Local NSS students can be engaged to educate the pavement entrepreneurs on practicing appropriate COVID 19 prevention protocols. • Suggest PESO - Petroleum & Explosive Safety Organization (under DPIIT) permit flexibility in transportation of Oxygen in cryogenic tankers other than those dedicated for Oxygen and similarly allow bottling in cylinders other than those permitted for medical oxygen. • Publicize widely against the indiscriminate use of drugs like Remdesivir except under hospital medical supervision and the conditions when this should be used.
11.	<i>FINANCE</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important for government to raise resources from asset monetisation and privatisation to achieve budgeted numbers and reassure markets. • Release of pending payments by PSUs and Government departments to various infrastructure companies to ensure fund flow.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support small organisations to retain the labours by giving a % of salary for next 3 months. This will help to offer consistency of employment and also reduce migrant exodus.
12.	<p align="center">MSME's & START-UP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request RBI to ensure credit flows especially to the MSME sector, Real Estate and Construction etc. continues. Some of the measures announced Rs. 20 trillion stimulus packages last year like Refinancing package for NBFC and MSMEs, Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs should be launched early rather than late. The Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTSME) scheme to be simplified and faster approval needed for the same. Many Banks are still denying the same to MSMEs with existing deployment of Collateral Property. Interest deferrals including loan prepayments for all MSMEs to be deferred (to ensure supply chain is not disrupted). Start-ups to be supported by the Banks vide special booster credit on a tapering mode for the first 3 years of inception. Capital Investment for modernization of Production Facility may be supported with a special category facilitated by the Banks with reduced margin and Interest rate. Export loans to be simplified, especially for 100% Export Oriented Units.
13.	<p align="center">SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR/ AWARENESS CAMPAIGN</p>	<p>Greater communication and education on common mistakes, proper mask etiquette and Covid appropriate behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proliferation through billboards, advertisements, posters, WhatsApp, YouTube – visuals, so that understood by all irrespective of literacy. Use all regional languages and regional celebrities – Rajnikanth in Tamil Nadu, YesuDas in Kerala, Prasenjit, Aabir for Bengali speakers, Adil Hussain for Assamese, etc. Videos, messages and endorsements by politicians, respected Doctors, celebrities, school curriculum (e.g. Previous template Dr. Harsh Vardhan led Pulse Polio campaign during NDA 1 featuring Amitabh Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai). <p>Use videos/billboards/posters to educate about common mistakes and Covid appropriate behaviors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interacting with people outside household bubble without mask.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • False sense of security and discarding masks and social distancing outside bubble, but familiar acquaintances e.g., social events, inside offices, etc. • Abandoning masks and pulling it down while talking. • Organizing mini-super spreader events at home with extended family and friends, not realizing grave error. • Delay in recognizing symptoms. <p>Leverage Indian Premier League (IPL)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players from all around the country who speak a wide-variety of languages are there, if needed, international stars also there explaining science of spread and risky behaviors in simple messages / videos / graphics, example. • Singing in mass gatherings like religious places of worship. • Talking loudly. • Explaining how one person masking reduces risk somewhat and how both parties masking dramatically reduces risk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use educational positive measures in addition to punitive measures. • Get this through states in the schools so that children can teach their parents.