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**Press Release**

**An IIMA Report[[1]](#endnote-1) on Management of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Gujarat**

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

* Fresh initiatives for curbing the spread of infection: Mobile medical vans (Dhanvantari Raths), Anna Brahma Yojana, hydrogen balloon-based surveillance, direct monitoring through CM dashboard, active awareness campaigns, Migrant Labour Support Team, fee waiver for essential utilities
* The proactive decision of establishing dedicated COVID-19 hospitals in 4 major cities helped in timely treatment and recovery rate
* Unhindered supply of food grains and essentials across the state ensured normalcy during the lockdown
* Schemes introduced to ensure migrants and those outside food security act also received regular rations
* 96% of the Corona Warriors received the necessary protective gear
* Gujarat Police did exemplary work during the lockdown
* 26% of all India’s migrants were transported safely back home through 1008 Shramik trains from Gujarat alone
* Citizens are mostly satisfied with the government’s approach
* More than 80% of people surveyed expressed satisfaction in CM’s leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic

The full report can be accessed from: <https://www.iima.ac.in/web/faculty/faculty-profiles/ranjan-kumar-ghosh>

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**SUMMARY:**

The report aims to provide an overview of the COVID-19 situation in Gujarat and the dynamic yet effective strategies adopted by the Government of Gujarat (GoG) with a caveat that the pandemic is far from being over. Hence, initiatives are still being devised and implemented as the report was drafted. Divided into four sections, the report is based on primary and secondary research and highlights the significant steps adopted by the Gujarat Government. The information curation has been appended by an online survey with a random sample of citizens and administrative & health workers to evaluate their opinions on the state’s response. The study also brought out recommendations for the Government for future discourse.

**KEY INSIGHTS/FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY:**

Although incomplete, since the crisis is ongoing and overwhelming, here is a brief account of what the assessment found:

**Public Health**

The report appreciates the efforts of the government in establishing a 2200 bed dedicated COVID-19 hospital within a few days of the announcement in four cities namely Ahmedabad-1200 beds, Rajkot- 250 beds, Surat-500 beds and Vadodara with 250 beds. The report also highlights the efforts made by the state government in collaborating with private hospitals to increase dedicated COVID-19 beds across Gujarat. The public-private partnership model used to strengthen the health infrastructure of the state further helped the government in increasing the availability of COVID-19 beds across Gujarat.

The Gujarat Government’s drive to distribute safety kits like masks, sanitizers etc. was effective as 96% of COVID-19 warriors received the necessary protective gear.

The pro-active holistic approach adopted by the state government was instrumental in curbing the spread of infection to a great extent. For example, the introduction of Mobile Medical Vans, also known as Dhanvantari Raths, was pivotal in providing primary healthcare.

An interesting aspect highlighted by the report is the there is an improvement in awareness amongst people as a result of the efforts made by the state government for health, sanitation and hygiene for the self and community. 89% of the people think that spitting in public is an offence and 81% from them consider that spitting should not be a personal right.

**Law & Order**

The report mentions in detail the role of Gujarat police. Quickly adapting, the police force supplemented their strategy with technology to expand its capacity for enforcement and surveillance. Drones, hydrogen balloons, patrolling cars were seen at every nook and corner of the state. Such presence made the police force the face of the government for the citizens. In addition to performing their regular duties of enforcing the lockdown, the police force monitored community kitchens, ration shops and public distribution system to minimise the risk of transmission.

According to the report, more than 80% of the surveyed people expressed satisfaction in the Government’s initiatives, especially in the communication of CM with the administrative bodies relating to the effective imposition of rules and regulations for the betterment of citizens. The CM’s leadership and guidance for effective communication and coordination helped build trust and efficient handling of the crisis.

**Experiences of various stakeholders with administration**

The state government showed reasonable proactiveness in dealing with several challenges arising due to the pandemic in coordination with the administration at all levels. The measured and timely approach at each level was instrumental in balancing the pandemic menace.

The report also highlights the complementing role of technology in implementing the state government’s response strategy, especially in reaching out to people and administering the day to day activities. The Chief Minister used the CM Dashboard effectively to monitor the implementation of various guidelines. The state government urged people to download and use the Aarogya Setu app to safeguard themselves from COVID-19. 97% of administrative workers surveyed had installed and were using the Aarogya Setu app.

Apart from this, the report highlights that the state government has been actively engaging in the distribution of immunity booster to the health workers and administrative staffs. Further, it highlights the aggressive testing strategy adopted by the government to identify COVID-19 patients and put them under necessary care.

**Migrant Labour**

The report also appreciates the massive mobilisation of labourers and workers through Shramik trains. In May, over a span of 15-20 days, Gujarat arranged over 1000 Shramik trains for 14.8 lakh migrant workers, made possible through mobilising an extensive network of local administrations, NGOs, police, and social groups. The fact that Gujarat administration could reach out to such a vast number of migrant population and arrange for their safe travel along with sufficient supply of food and water is a case worth studying for public administration.

**Supply of food and other essential commodities**

The report highlights the success of the state government in providing free of cost food grains to the people through Public Distribution System and ensuring a steady supply of essential items across the length and breadth of Gujarat to over 80% of state’s population and migrants, including those outside food security act.

In the context of the study on the management of COVID-19 crisis in Gujarat, the report has also briefly summarized the best practices by states like Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Rajasthan and North Eastern states for better cross-learning. For example, in the state of Uttar Pradesh, country’s first COVID-19 cluster was institutionalized in Agra wherein, actions were taken at the ground level by the district administration, state government, and frontline workers.

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1. ***Prof. Ranjan Kumar Ghosh of The Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) and his research team recently published a report titled ‘Management of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Gujarat: Understanding the government initiatives, leadership processes and their impact’. The Press Release provides a brief insight on into report.***

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