

CABINET APPROVES RS. 15,000 CRORE FOR "INDIA COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND HEALTH SYSTEM PREPAREDNESS PACKAGE"

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Cabinet

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The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has approved significant investments to the tune of Rs. 15,000 crore for 'India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Package'. The funds sanctioned will be utilized in 3 Phases and for immediate COVID-19 Emergency Response (an amount of Rs. 7,774 Crore) has been provisioned and rest for medium-term support (1-4 years) to be provided under mission mode approach.

The key objectives of the package include mounting emergency response to slow and limit COVID-19 in India through the development of diagnostics and COVID-dedicated treatment facilities, centralized procurement of essential medical equipment and drugs required for treatment of infected patients, strengthen and build resilient National and State health systems to support prevention and preparedness for future disease outbreaks, setting up of laboratories and bolster surveillance activities, bio-security preparedness, pandemic research and proactively engage communities and conduct risk communication activities. These interventions and initiatives would be implemented under the overall umbrella of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

In Phase 1, the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare with the support of all the other line ministries has already undertaken several activities like:

- i. Additional funds to the tune of Rs 3,000 Cr have been released under the Package to State/UTs, for strengthening of existing health facilities as COVID Dedicated Hospitals, Dedicated COVID Health Center and Dedicated COVID Care Centers. Detailed guidelines, protocols and advisory for quarantine, isolation, testing, treatment, disease containment, decontamination, social distancing and surveillance. Hotspots have been identified and appropriate containment strategies are being implemented.
- ii. Diagnostics laboratories network has been expanded and our testing capacity increasing

every day. In fact, leveraging on the existing multi-disease testing platforms under National TB Elimination Programme, orders for procurement of 13 lakhs diagnostic kits have been placed to augment COVID 19 testing.

- iii. All health workers including Community Health Volunteers (ASHAs) have been covered with insurance under the "Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package: Insurance Scheme for Health Workers fighting COVID-19". Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), N95 masks and ventilators, testing kits and drugs for treatment are being procured centrally.

The major share of the expenditure will be used for mounting robust emergency response, strengthening National and State health systems followed by strengthening pandemic research and multi-sector national institutions and platforms for One-Health, community engagement and risk communications and implementation, management, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation component. M/o Health & Family Welfare has been authorized to re-appropriate resources among components of the package and among the various implementation agencies (National Health Mission, Central Procurement, Railways, Dept. of Health Research/ICMR, National Centre for Disease Control) as per the evolving emergent situation.

VRRK/SH

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