

**Hon'ble Chief Minister's Speech in the
Video Conference Meeting with
Hon'ble Prime Minister 23.09.2020**

**Hon'ble Prime Minister, Hon'ble Union Ministers,
Hon'ble Chief Ministers and Officers, Vanakkam.**

At the outset, I sincerely thank you for your continuous guidance and support in tackling the Corona pandemic. I also thank you for enacting 3 pro-farmers legislations, which would go a long way in bringing stability to the agriculture sector. Sir, I have so far personally visited and reviewed the performance in 26 districts which has proved very effective in controlling the pandemic. In these meetings, I have emphasised the importance of focused testing, contact tracing and patient management. Agriculture activities, food processing and other industries are almost back to full operation throughout the State.

I would like to highlight that Tamil Nadu is continuing its strategy of aggressive, targeted testing and is currently conducting the maximum number of RT-PCR tests in the country. From the beginning, we have been using only RT PCR Test, which is a gold standard test to identify affected persons. Tamil Nadu presently has 176 labs for COVID testing, with 66 Government and 110 private labs, with an average testing capacity of 85,000 RT-PCR tests per day. As on date, 66,40,058 samples have been tested for COVID-19, out of which 5,52,674 persons were tested positive and there are only 46,350 active cases in the State currently. These tests cost nearly 6.8 crore rupees a day. I request Government of India to fund 50% at least of the cost of the PCR tests from the PM – CARES fund as the State

is facing financial difficulties for incurring such expenses continuously.

Tamil Nadu provides effective medical treatment, due to which the State has maintained a low death rate, which is now at 1.62%, one of the lowest in the country. As on date, 4,97,377 patients have recovered, which works out to a recovery rate of about 90%, one of the highest in the country. I also wish to state that because of the comprehensive action of my Government, the positivity rate in the State has come down from a high of 10.47% in July to 6.2% currently. As on date, in no district, the positivity rate is above 10%.

The deaths due to COVID have also been reduced from an average of 100 deaths per day to around 70 deaths per day. Moreover, the positive cases per day in Chennai have now been reduced below 1000 from around 2,300 in the month of June 2020. From the beginning, Tamil Nadu promoted Indian Medicine System to supplement our treatment procedures.

All front-line workers are being given Kabasura Kudineer, Zinc and Multi vitamin tablets. The capacity of COVID Hospitals, COVID Health Centres and COVID Care Centres have been increased to 1,40,091 beds. 6,431 ventilators have been made available, including 630 in the private sector. Sufficient funds for procurement of consumables have been sanctioned from SDRF and State budget. Orders have been placed by the State Government for **5.25 crore** Triple layer face masks, **48.05 lakh** N-95 masks, **44.61 lakh** PPE kits and **63.25 lakh** RT-PCR testing kits.

In order to handle the emergency situation, 2,751 Doctors, 6,893 Staff Nurses, 1058 Lab Technicians, 334 Health Inspectors, 2,751 Multipurpose Health Workers and 2,000 Paramedical Workers have been additionally drafted.

We are continuing intensive door to door survey, all over the State. Around 3,000 Fever Camps are conducted daily. So far 2,88,714 Fever

Camps have been conducted and 1.60 crore people were screened in these camps. **This proactive and aggressive approach has resulted in a declining trend of new positive cases all over the State.**

In order to strengthen health care services at grassroot, I have announced that 2000 "mini-clinics" will be established in the State to cater the immediate medical needs of the poorest sections of the society living in the urban and rural areas. These clinics will be provided with a Medical Officer, Staff Nurse and an Assistant. During this pandemic time, this initiative is expected to fill the gap in field level health and consultation services.

I am happy to state that Tamil Nadu is implementing the eSanjeevani OPD Scheme very successfully and ranks first in the country, with more than 1,26,525 consultations till date.

Chennai Corporation has distributed free re-usable masks to 47 lakh slum dwellers. We have placed orders for supply of 4.5 crore free re-usable masks in other Corporations, Municipalities and Town Panchayats and as on date have supplied 1.95 crore numbers.

I have announced a special incentive package including capital subsidy, interest subvention etc. to promote manufacturing of COVID-19 related medical equipment and drugs in Tamil Nadu. **At present, 50 such companies have started their production. A high level committee headed by Dr C.Rangarajan, former RBI Governor, has submitted its recommendations on the economic revival measures in the State and suitable action will be taken on it.**

I have conducted meetings with the bankers at Chennai and in the districts and requested them to sanction maximum loans to the MSME units. Due to this, as on date, we have sanctioned 8,019.51 crore rupees loans, covering 2,46,125 MSME units, thus becoming the leading State in the country and we would continue our efforts in this direction. The State machinery is also alerted to the ensuing monsoon and we are fully prepared to deal with it.

I WOULD LIKE TO PLACE THE FOLLOWING REQUESTS TO THE HON'BLE PRIME MINISTER FOR KIND CONSIDERATION.

We have received 511.64 crore rupees from Government of India in two tranches under the Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness package out of an envelope of 712.64 crore rupees allotted to Tamil Nadu. I request this package for Tamil Nadu may be stepped up to 3,000 crore rupees as per my earlier request. This will help us to further strengthen our health infrastructure.

As we have fully exhausted the State Disaster Response and Mitigation Fund, I also request an ad-hoc grant of 1,000 crore rupees from NDRF immediately to fight the pandemic.

Releasing pending CMR subsidy of 1,321 crore rupees at this time, will facilitate paddy procurement.

I wish to state that the Tamil Nadu State Assembly has unanimously passed a bill to provide 7.5% internal reservation to the UG medical courses for the NEET qualified students who have studied in State Government schools from this academic year based on the recommendations of the Commission headed by a retired Judge of the High Court. Now, the Bill has been sent for the assent of the Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu. This is expected to bring equity and social justice to students who are mostly poor.

Thank you,

Vanakkam.

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