

COVID 19 Lockdown and Measures Taken by Tamilnadu Government - A Study

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Abstract: *The global pandemic COVID-19, 19 revolves around the world. The first victim from India had been found on Jan 30, 2020 who happened to be a person from God's own country, Kerala. The first positive from the state under review had been found on Mar 7, 2020. The state had held fourth position in number of victims preceded by Karnataka, Andhra and Maharashtra. State sensitized the issue and initiated various measurements of which the paper would discuss in detail. It is an attempt to reflect upon the role of the government to curb the virus; break the chain; and offer remedy to the common public.*

(Key words: Covid 19, lockdown, Conditions, Relaxations, Welfare Scheme)

Introduction

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly revealed coronavirus. Since its appearance from China on March 8th we have been facing crucial challenges. Now we have reached the terrible signpost of one million deaths, and the human family is distressed under an almost unendurable trouble of loss. But the pandemic is to a great extent more than a wellbeing disaster. It is moreover an incomparable socio-economic crisis. This has made every country vulnerable in the socio economic and political effects. All day people are bringing up the rear jobs and earnings, with no means of knowing when regularity will come back. The International Labor Organization estimates that 400 million jobs have lasted every day. Hence each and every state of India introduces a welfare measures scheme for the benefit of the peoples. In this study it is mentioned that the Tamilnadu government responded for the spread of covid 19.

Review of literature

In this present critical review paper developed by the help of various reference database websites such as Science Direct, Google Scholar, Research gate, Academia etc., The statistical data were retrieved individually in the course of official websites of Indian state governments and Tamilnadu Government health department and revenue and disaster management department data up to 27.09.2020.

Research Methodology

Primary data have been collected using Tamilnadu government orders and secondary data through various reviews of literature, newspapers and related websites have been used. This study has been made to identify the socio-economic scheme of the Tamilnadu government and to create awareness on Government schemes to the people.

Covid -19 lockdown and restriction by the government

Initially, the state government screened all incoming passengers from various parts of the world and quarantined them. Later, in the view of breaking the spreader chain the government closed all places of learning, and crowded areas such as shopping areas, movie halls, malls and religious places. The state government closed all interstate gateways on Mar 15, 2020. On seeing the steady growth in victims in the adjacent states, the government made a pivotal yet crucial decision in order to save its seven million people. The state imposed a complete statewide confinement through Mar 24, 2020- Mar 31, 2020 under section 144 of Indian Criminal Code.

The first seven days of the following month has been crucial for the state in its fight against corona. The state witnessed a ten-time growth in the positive cases that the case count reached to 690 on the third day of the week from 67 by the end of the preceding week. The victims were linked to those returning from the Tablighi Jamaat meeting held in March at Islamic missionary group, headquarters in Delhi Nizamuddin.

In order to encourage social distancing and stop the spread of the virus, the prime minister announced a nationwide confinement from Mar 22, to Apr 14, 2020 which was later extended by the chief minister as the central left it to the call of state till May 31, 2020. He also added that more relaxations will be provided in the progress of people, goods and other commercial activities. People will be allowed to travel for essential services without e-passes. The relaxations included the addition of operating hours for standalone and neighborhood shops, and allowed private establishments to run with a partial number of employees.

In order to reduce the number of positives and stop the spreader chain, the confinement has been extended till the end of next month with various restrictions and relaxations. Under state disaster management act and union ministry announcement. To name a few relaxations are the relief of containment zones, permission to open up individual shops, electronics shops can be quoted. The State Transport Corporation was permitted to operate except cluster zones.

Statewide confinement was extended till July 30, 2020 despite the number of hikes in cases. The state under discussion continued the confinement till the end of following month. However, industries, medium enterprises were allowed to open. Hotels and restaurants were allowed to resume in house dining. Still, restrictions on places of worship, bus, transport, shopping area, movie hall, political; activities continued.

Tamil Nadu government has been extended till 30 September but with significant relaxations, announced the Chief Minister. Under relaxed norms, there will be no total lockdown on Sundays in September.

During this period of time, our chief minister announced several relaxations such as tea shops and restaurants to be kept open each day from 6 AM to 9 PM. Additionally, takeaway services are allowed to operate until 10 PM. films shooting also resume in the state during this lockdown, but not with more than 100 people. Viewers will not be allowed to meet for these shootings. In the meantime, at the Chennai airport, flight services will be increased from 50 to 100 from 1st October.

On the other hand, tamilnadu government announced the limitations that were in place in September would continue in October also. Suburban train services also stay floating and religious, social, political, entertaining, cultural, educational, and other such meetings and gatherings stay excluded.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister has definite that educational, research institutions and hostels will be permitted to regenerate from November 16th but realizing the nature of the virus educational institution was not opened. He has extended the lockdown till 30th November with some relaxation in which suburban train services will be allowed to function as per the Central government's standard operating procedure. Movie theatres are permitted to reopen from November 10, and function only with 50 per cent seating capacity. Religious functions, political meetings and others are also permitted subject to a maximum of 100 persons.

Similarly, amusement parks, zoos, museums, conference halls are allowed to reopen. From November 10th gyms can allow only people those over 60 will be allowed. Finally, Tamil Nadu government has extended the general Covid-19 confinement in Tamilnadu Dec 31, 2020. Though he declared some relaxations too E registration is compulsory for all people's incoming in Tamilnadu. But people coming from Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka were exempted. The Marina beach which was closed from March will be opened to the public from 14th December. All undergraduate final year classes will begin from December 7th with strict order of the COVID-19 standard operation procedure. Tamilnadu government accelerated many steps to curb from the first month till the eleventh month of the year.

The Tamilnadu government reacted seriously in the months of severity. The response was rapid at the state and district level. They had established control rooms; started screening with thermal scanners. They made quarantine wards in all hospitals and major cities. Awareness campaigns were made. Governor of the state announced COVID-19 as a statewide pandemic under the state public health act, 1939. He geared up the government officials to initiate activities to control the spread of the disease. On Mar 15, 2020 the state established COVID-19 Regulations, 2020.

Those regulations assumed different roles for hospitals, government officials in tracing, dealing and reducing the containment zones. The measures included making isolation wards, and compulsory two-week quarantine for the people of containment zones and incoming passengers from various nations. To meet the crisis condition, medical officers, nurse and other paramedical personnel who retire on superannuation on 31.03.2020 to be appointed on contract basis for a period of two months with effect from 01.04.2020 to 31.05.2020 also issued treatment protocol for clinical manifestations of COVID-19 infection by constitution of expert committee.

Through another G.O, a sum of 16.66 crore was sanctioned from the State Disaster Response Fund to Tirupur, Chengalpattu, Madurai, Ranipettai districts and the Commissioner of Greater Chennai Corporation for quarantine facilities and further COVID-19 connected actions in these regions. As per the allocations, Tirupur has been agreed 3.87 crore, Chengalpattu 1.10 crore, Madurai 93.89 lakh, Ranipettai 75 lakh and Greater Chennai Corporation 10 crore.

The proposals raised by the Collectors for feeding and transportation charges for migrant laborers of Tirupur, Chengalpattu, Madurai and Ranipettai. The Chennai Corporation raised a proposal seeking funds to settle the food bill for COVID-19 Care Centers.

Tamilnadu government planned to monitor home-quarantined people, at a rate of 500 per day for sanctioning a sum of ₹40.32 crore as honorarium to be paid to 6,720 volunteers, occupied for a period of four months. In Tiruvallur district to help block medical officers, the self-help group's people also engaged in COVID-19 jobs in which a sum of ₹1.17 crore, at a rate of ₹575 per member was fixed. A total of 680 SHG members were engaged for this work. Those People in slum areas were deprived of under institutional quarantine at 1,000 per person for 60,000 persons. The government also sanctioned ₹6 crore sought by the Greater Chennai Corporation as relief fund.

Tamilnadu government made it compulsory a two-week home isolation on Mar 15, 2020 to control the disease from incoming passengers of various nations. The state accelerated test camps, and sanitized measurements at the district borders. The state made it public the list of available hospitals where treatment offered to the patients in newspapers. Government officials were instructed to direct all victims to get admitted in the approved hospitals. Some people at their own risk were allowed to go to private hospitals. In order to cater to the rising needs of the virus and regular fever, hospitals were instructed to establish separate centers for COVID-19 and regular fever.

The government circulated new guidelines on Apr 4, 2020 in order to prevent the spread of disease in local areas. People were instructed not to gather in groups. Hospitals were instructed not to show any religious concern while admitting or treating patients. Doctors were requested to club with health inspectors and monitor victims through digital mode.

Tamilnadu government dictated new guidelines on Apr 2, 2020 in treatment; handling of suspect cases; burial process of the deceased dealing of hotspots and instructions for the use of rapid antibody test in hotspot areas; and social distancing process. The government placed orders for hundred thousand test kits from clinics to get quick responses and could be used for testing of large populations in non-major municipalities and villages. Of which a quarter of kits arrived at the capital of the state on Apr 17, 2020. Government used all testing equipment for the cluster areas and people who are related to victims and belong to affected areas. The results were confirmed again through PCR. The government bought additional five hundred thousand kits along with one hundred thousand new RT-PCR equipment. However, ICMR directed the government to return a quarter of equipment bought earlier as they were found to be ineffective to the Guangzhodfo, Chinese seller. Prior to a meeting with the prime minister of the nation on April 11, 2020, the Chief Minister requested the center to aid the state with rapid test equipment and 1,000 crores towards relief funds. But it arrived in the state by the end of June.

On April 22 hundred per cent centrally funded COVID-19 19 towards emergency response and health system preparedness packages under national rural health mission for the year 2020-21 for a sum of 12,64,00,000 were agreed.

Government made ready a few special corona hospitals including government medical college in Chennai which consisted of five hundred common wards. Besides, all government medical colleges and government hospitals at the head quarter of the districts were converted into COVID-19 19 treatment centers. Further, quarantine centers were made to isolate incoming passengers from various parts of the world. These centers were established where there is an international airport. The department of people welfare and health was ready with 17000 beds including 3,018 ventilators.

The Health Department has earmarked about 17,000 beds in isolation wards; 3,018 of those are ready with ventilator facilities. Also ensured the Tamil Nadu government scaling up the procurement of essential medical equipment protective gear for health workers, and drugs and medicines.

The Health Department has managed to found COVID-19 testing laboratories to cover all the regions of the State. Ambulance services have also been increased by 200. The challenges in providing adequate masks and other personal defensive tools for health-care staff is being met.

Frequently being disinfected the areas are highly populated and crowded areas, market places, bus stands, other open places and residential areas. In public places and government offices thermal screening is being done. As well to create alertness, on regular hand washing in the course of advertisements, hand washing and sanitizing platforms have been installed in places of open gathering. In identification of the untiring work by frontline health staff Tamil Nadu government announced further one month's salary.

Tamil Nadu government since March has distributed 7.19 crore reusable cotton face masks across the State at free of cost. 47.8 lakhs masks have been distributed in Chennai alone.

The state decided to increase the number of physicians and technical assistants in labs to cater to the needs of ever-growing COVID-19 19 positive cases on Mar 27, 2020. Government appointed five hundred and thirty physicians and ten hundred nurses and fifteen hundred and eight technicians. Newly recruited people were insisted to take charge of duty in three days. The numbers of nurses were also increased to 1,323 later.

The State Government-initiated activities to safeguard doctors and nurses who were not allowed or asked to vacate by certain crucial house owners. Government also made a decision to offer zinc and vitamin tablets along with herbals to all frontline COVID-19 warriors in order to increase their immunity.

The amount to be charged by hospitals to treat COVID-19 19, positive cases was determined by the government. It was duly announced on Jun 1, 2020. As per the guideline higher grade hospitals were allowed to collect within a range of Rs 7,500-15000 for all wards. The A3 and A4 grade hospitals were allowed to charge Rs 5,000-15,000 per day. A separate 19 specialty center with 400 beds was established near Rapine by Christian Medical College.

June 9th Tamilnadu government allotted 574 non service post graduates for the time being for a period of three months on contract basis with consolidated pay of Rs 75,000 per month to direct COVID-19 19 patients in government medical institutions. In the month of June 75.28 crore was allotted for temporary buildings bed, oxygen pipe

July 29th tamilnadu government gave permission to the directory of public health and protective medicine to carry out a zero-survey using CLIA kit and IgG ELISA test in tamilnadu. in chief minister comprehensive health insurance plan agreed to expense to private hospitals for enclosure of new package treatment and testing of covid with the hold up of World Bank, procurement of 500 new ambulances Rs. 3,36,65,400 allotted to hire spare ambulances from for a period of three months. The government announced that the workers on covid task if they died would be paid Rs 10 lakh

The government instituted nearly eleven various committees to manage various affairs including welfare programs in covid 19. Similarly, district level crisis handling committees were instituted under the supervision of collectors.

Voyaging and Regression

The government sensitized that movement of people is the main cause of increased number of victims. Hence, it has decided to curb people's movement inside the state. Hence, it has decided to keep all activities like closing schools, movie halls, malls closed. They also banned going out of state for a fortnight initially.

The government followed with other announcements on Mar 14, 2020. As per the new order the people welfare staff was instructed to visit the home of children and offer the raw materials for preparing foods. Further all crowded places like swimming pools, parks, zoological parks, museums, bars, and clubs were closed. Government closed all places of learning. However, Class X, XII and practical exams were permitted.

Further the state borders were closed with exceptional permission for the movement of essential goods, common transport like bus; urban train and metro were closed till Apr 30, 2020. The essential things needed for the public were permitted to move. Common sections like police, government, treasury, public department, bank, media, communication sector people and people who are into the food industry were allowed to work. Similarly, the primary economic sector and activities related to which were permitted on Mar 28, 2020.

Prime minister requested his millions of publics to confine themselves in their homes from seven o'clock in the morning till nine o'clock in the evening on Mar 22, 2020. This was pushed till five o'clock in the next morning by the state government. The country confined itself in all nooks and corners from Mar 24, 2020 till Apr 14, 2020 as per the central government order.

The migrated worker's health from various parts of the nation was taken into account and the government offered relief activities. An expert committee was designated to device guidelines to lift confinement in multiple phases. The governments then permitted workers involved in MNGREA, with respect to the primary economic sector, were permitted to resume normal life.

Within a view to completely break the chain a strict confinement was enforced in cluster districts such as Chennai, Chengalpattu, and Tiruvannamalai which insisted even the essential shops to operate on hourly basis. It was later expanded to few more districts like Salem, Coimbatore and Madurai. A complete lockdown was imposed from Apr 26-28, 2020 in districts like Tirupur.

Public Remedy

On March 15, the government aided financial help of approximately Rs 60 crore to its citizens to get rid of the impact of covid 19. State issued a G.O. on Saturday sanctioning a sum of ₹133.52 crore from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for allocation of cash assistance of ₹1,000 each for NIDC holders. The Chief Minister had announced cash support for 13.35 lakh NIDC holders in view of their source of revenue during the lockdown period.

The government issued a G.O. on sanctioning a sum of ₹133.52 crore from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for allocation of cash assistance of ₹1,000 each for NIDC holders. The Chief Minister had announced cash assistance for 13.35 lakh NIDC holders considering their livelihood during the lockdown period.

On 30th march the State government has appointed district collectors as nodal officers for distribution of money to differently abled people who hold the National Identity and Disability Certificate (NIDC) in Tamil Nadu.

The government offered third gender people without ration cards the following items: rice 12 kg; sunflower oil-1 liter, public distribution shops. Besides, a 1000/- was also given to all ration card holders through PDS. Workers who belong to unorganized industrial sectors such as auto drivers, civil workers, cinema workers, were also entitled to receive Rs 1000/-. Government assured Rs 5000000/- to the families of employees from important sectors as compensation in the event of a sad

demise. They were also covered with Rs 200000/- assistance for treatment in the event of positive. They were also assured a government job to the heir of certain cases.

The government urged all members of the legislative assembly to utilize MLALAD funds for covid 19 relief measurement and other activities. They were permitted to use up to 1.25 million for prevention, containment, treatment, and medical equipment.

Further, the government aided people with 30 percent of initial subsidy to a maximum of 20 million for investment. It was to be disbursed annually for five years. Government had configured a new URL (<https://stopcorona.tn.gov.in/>) to keep people posted on the updates and other relevant messages. It also had taken action against those who spread false messages.

Government nominated special volunteers to survey home isolation. Around forty thousand volunteers have joined the state government to fight against covid 19 in the peak period. There was a steady growth in the number of volunteers. In order to execute lockdown so as to attain its goal in all respect the government instituted eleven teams that consisted of senior IAS officers.

The government in order to ensure the well being of children under Anganwadi raw provision for a fortnight was offered to them. The people under isolation, patients were served with food rich in vitamins and minerals. The senior citizens under the care of Anganwadi were also offered good food.

The national confinement has made a huge effect on the common life and mainly that of farmers. Many crops were left unattended. It was estimated by the Federation of All farmers Association that nearly five hundred thousand acres of rice and eighty hundred thousand acres of ground nuts was left unharnessed or damaged. Fruits, vegetables were rotten in the fields as they could not be moved to the markets in the absence of logistics.

The government offered wages for a couple of days as a bonus to the downtrodden workers of MGNREGA scheme to enable them to cater to food requirements. Government also paid a bonus of Rs 1000/- for 1, 50,000 conceived women to meet their minimum living grants. They also delivered patients who are already under treatment for various illnesses with free medicine for sixty days.

The government postponed the end semester exams for universities for an indefinite period. Further, private institutions were instructed not to force parents to either clear fees pending of the current year or to pay the advance for the upcoming year. In order to avoid large gatherings, the government decided to move markets to a temporary locality. Government also decides these places with digital disinfectors. However, later it was removed as it was found in effective.

As the state reached the Stage II of Covid 19 the government elaborated its local surveillance plan. They mapped each and every home from the areas of victims and traced them through various active methods. Further, they also monitored people who were outside the victim locality still related to the victim.

Conclusion

The spread of covid-19 had made the livelihood and health of the people of tamilnadu very vulnerable. Even though the tamilnadu government has devised many strategies and development projects, most of the people are still suffering and that the welfare measures provided should reach all people. Therefore I reveal through this study that the government of tamilnadu should come forward to provide more welfare assistance in the interest of the people.

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