

Procuring medical equipments on priority

Emphasis on Make in India

Identifying and assisting domestic Manufacturers

Import substitution and moving towards export of medical equipments

Domestic production of PPEs enhanced from almost Nil to 1.87 lakh per day

Domestic production of N-95 Masks enhanced from almost Nil to 2.30 lakh per day

Domestic manufacturing capacity of HCQ enhanced by about 150 per cent

About 16 crore HCQ tablets released to Centre/ State Government Institutions and Pharmacies against requirement of 2.5 crore

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1. Empowered Group-3 was created vide MHA's order dated 29.03.2020 under convenorship of Dr P D Waghela, Secretary, Pharmaceuticals and including Secretary, DPIIT, Secretary, Textiles, Chairman, CBIC, Secretary, DRDO, senior officers of PMO, Cabinet Secretariat, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Department of Health Research etc. The mandate of the Group is to ensure availability of essential medical equipments such as PPEs, Masks, Gloves & Ventilators –

production, procurement, import and distribution.

2. The Group has been meeting regularly and 24 meetings have been held till today. The EG had constituted a Technical Committee to examine the proposals for manufacturing of various equipments. Based on requirements of various medical equipments as informed by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare & Department of Health Research till June, 2020, the Committee is constantly looking into expanding the capacities of existing manufacturers and identifying new manufacturers of various medical equipments. The hand holding and facilitation in resolving various constraints being faced by the domestic manufacturers in terms of raw material, spares, travel and logistics is being done. Very high global demand for medical supplies during current pandemic, lack of adequate domestic capabilities and most of the required medical supplies being largely imported ones were the major challenges. The Government is promoting domestic manufacturing and imports are being resorted to only if absolutely necessary to meet the timelines

for procurement of some critical items. Teams of officers, scientists and engineers are working 24*7 in unison in these times of national emergency.

Ventilators

M/o H&FW has indicated projected demand of 75,000 ventilators till June, 2020. Against the same, the present availability is about 19,398. On instance of the EG, orders for 60,884 ventilators have been placed by M/s HLL Lifecare Limited, a PSU under the aegis of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, which is acting as the central procurement agency. Out of the total orders placed, 59,884 ventilators have been ordered to domestic manufacturers and imports are to the tune of 1000 ventilators. The projected demand and orders placed include the requirements of the state governments also.

As part of Make in India initiative, local manufacturers of the ventilators have been identified and guided in meeting the specifications, finalizing the training and other protocols, creating new supply chains, helping them in logistics issues with suppliers and State Governments and deciding about arrangement of consumables etc. The major domestic players include M/s Bharat Electronics Limited (in collaboration with Skanray) to whom orders for 30,000 ventilators have been placed. M/s AgVa (in collaboration with M/s Maruti Suzuki Limited) to whom orders for 10,000 ventilators have been awarded and AMTZ (AP Medtech Zone) to whom orders for 13,500 ventilators have been placed. Number of domestic manufacturers have started the delivery as per the agreed time schedule and the same are presently at the stage of pre-dispatch inspection.

II Oxygen and Oxygen Cylinders

The country is self-sufficient in oxygen and oxygen cylinders. The total manufacturing capacity of oxygen is 6,400 MT, of which around 1000 MT is used for medical oxygen. There are 5 big and 600 small manufacturers of oxygen. About 409 hospitals have their own oxygen generation and there are about 1050 cryogenic tankers in the country.

About 4.38 lakh medical oxygen cylinders are available for supply. Further, orders for 1.03 lakh new medical oxygen cylinders have been placed. Five lakh industrial oxygen cylinders have also been identified for conversion, if required. Further, orders for conversion of 60,000 cylinders have already been issued.

III Personal Protective Equipments (PPEs)

The total projected demand of PPE kits till June, 2020 has been estimated to be Rs. 2.01 crore. Against the same, orders to the tune of 2.22 crore have already been placed, of which orders to the tune of 1.42 crore have been placed with domestic manufacturers and 80 lakh PPEs are being imported. Earlier, there was no domestic manufacturing of PPE in the country and almost all of them were imported. Within a short span of time, 107 manufacturers have been identified and facilitated, who have raised their daily production to about 1.87 lakh (As on 30.04.2020). As of now, about 17.37 lakh PPEs have been received. Additional domestic supply in next two months would be more than 1.15 crore.

Government institutes have been in forefront of developing new technologies, materials and testing facilities. In addition to the existing testing laboratory, viz., SITRA (South India Textile Research Association), Coimbatore; 9 new laboratories have been added by Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO)

and Ordinance Factory Board across various locations in the country. DRDO has also developed new PU coated nylon/ polyester for supply to domestic manufacturers.

IV N-95 Masks

The total projected demand of N-95 masks till June, 2020 has been estimated to be Rs. 2.72 crore. Against the same, orders to the tune of 2.49 crore have already been placed, of which orders to the tune of 1.49 crore have been placed with domestic manufacturers and about 1 crore N- 95 masks are being imported. There are four major domestic manufacturers in the country and more are in line, which have been identified and facilitated. The daily domestic production is about 2.30 lakh (As on 30.04.2020). As of now, about 49.12 lakh N 95 masks have been received. Additional domestic supply in the next two months would be more than 1.40 crore. In addition to the existing lab, viz., SITRA, more labs are being added through Quality Council of India (QCI).

V Diagnostic Kits

ICMR has reached a per day testing level of about 70,000 and has conducted more than 9 lakh tests as of now. The strategy is to take testing forward as a need based focussed tool. In order to ensure testing, back end availability of kits, accessories, reagents, etc. is critical. The Central Government has taken on the responsibility of assisting the State Governments with testing kits etc., they are also free to procure, and some of the State Government are also trying to procure their supplies.

DHR has assessed requirement of manual RT-PCR kits as 35 lakhs for which Probe, Primer and Mastermix have been ordered. As on today, material for about 16.4 lakh tests have been received. Against demand of 35 lakhs Combined RT-PCR kits, 19 lakhs kits have been ordered out of which orders for 2 lakh kits are awarded to the domestic manufacturers. As on today, total of 13.75 lakh Combined RT-PCR kits have been received. Further, DHR has ordered 2 lakh tests Roche's COBAS test kits, of which 60,000 kits have been received.

VI Drugs and Other Medical Equipments

In order to keep a tab on production and supplies of Drugs and Medical Equipments on continuous basis, two control rooms - at Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) and National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA) have been set up. The government is also in continuous interaction with the manufacturers, distributors and pharmacists. The State Governments are also monitoring and facilitating the industry. Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) production has increased from 12.23 crore to 30 crore per month. The country has released about 16 crore tablets of HCQ to Centre/ State Institutions as well as Pharmacies against requirement of about 2.5 crores.

VII Role of other Ministries/ Departments

Ministries of Textiles, Health & Family Welfare, DPIIT, External Affairs, DRDO and ICMR are part of the EG-3 and have supported in its functioning immensely. MEA has, in addition, proactively assisted in identifying & procuring through imports of essential medical supplies & spare parts for Indian manufacturers. Ministry of Civil Aviation has proactively helped in international as well as local movement of drugs and medical equipments and their spare parts etc. through cargo-air bridge and Lifeline Udaan projects. Various other authorities of the Ports, Customs, Railways and Posts have immensely helped in ensuring faster clearances and distribution of medical equipments. State Governments are also contributing actively in the efforts.

RCJ/RKM

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