

# Review on Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan: A step towards self-reliant India

**Running title:** Review on Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan

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## Abstract

The main aim of the present study is to elaborate various measures adopted under Atmanirbhar Abhiyan to make India a self-reliant country. All the five pillars of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan have been outlined as this play important role to make country efficient, competitive and reliant. Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan focuses on the theme “self-reliant India” and its main aim is “make in India for world and vocal for local”. The key vision is to enhance the economy of India by creating global markets to export goods including agriculture, defence, mining, fishing, textiles, clothing, health infrastructure, pharmaceuticals etc.

**Keywords:** Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, self-reliant, economy, GDP, India.

## Introduction

The concept of self-reliance developed earlier from one of India's most successful pre-independence “Swadeshi movement”. Swadeshi movement was started on 7th August 1905 from Town Hall, Calcutta to boycott foreign goods and to rely on domestic production (Sarukkai, 2020). This movement was described as “soul of Swaraj” by Mahatma Gandhi. The movement led to foundation of Khadi and Gram Udyog societies which result in production of cloth in every household. It further included village industries also so as to make villages self-reliant and self-sufficient. Self-reliance is also defined in terms of nation and of the self by great personalities like Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. Efforts for achieving self-reliance in education were made by Tagore with opening of various Educational Institutes such as Vishwa Bharati University. In 1930, M.S. Swaminathan said in his youth, “young and old shared the dream of a free and self-reliant India. Purna Swaraj (total freedom) and Swadeshi (self-reliance) were our goals” (Gopalkrishnan, 2002).

Under presidentship of Subhash Chandra Bose, the national planning committee of Indian National Congress was framed in 1938 (Chakrabarty, 1992). This committee made efforts to make independent India a strong economic unit which was industrialized as well as self-sufficient. Following this, Bombay plan was another effort done before independence to plan the economic development of independent India (Mohanty, 2021). It aimed to make India a self-reliant country by enhancing the accountabilities of the states in all aspects of the economy. The Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948 was the first major policy document of independent India. It resonated “national consensus” regarding how India was to move ahead. The national consensus was framed for a mixed economy and self-reliance in India. In 1965, Prime minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri perceived the need for self-reliance in India, and raised the slogan “Jai Jawan, Jai Kissan”. He promoted the White Revolution and Green Revolution which helped India to become self-sufficient at that time and India become a leading producer of agricultural products such as milk and tea in the world. In 1976, during a National Development Council, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, addressed “Self-reliance in food and energy” and “Economic self-reliance” (Niti Aayog, n.d.). The fifth five-year plan of India (1974-1978) introduced self-reliance as one of the important objectives along with gross domestic product (GDP) and Poverty in India (Mishra, 2020). The seventh five-year plan highlighted the increase in self-reliance in various fields such as oil production, atomic energy capabilities, space technologies and medical as well as agricultural research. In 1990, Prime minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao realised and redesigned the concept of self-reliance for country in comparison with concept adapted during Nehru's era (Baru, 2020). The tenth five year plan (2002-2007) echoed “Excessive reliance” and also stated that “Science and Technology... Plays a lead role in contributing self-reliance” (Niti Aayog, Planning Commission, n.d.). The next five-year plan aimed to attain and sustain self-reliance in some sectors of economy. In 2005, Prime minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh said, “self-reliance is not simply a policy of autarky or isolating the

country; worldwide relationships, interdependence and negotiating power are associated features” (Dr. Manmohan Singh, 2005). Prime minister Narendra Modi in June 2014 related “self-reliance” with manufacturing of defence products for self-reliance in the National security of the country. He restated this over the years and in 2018, he emphasized to make its own weapons in defence sector. He further connected self-reliance to Digital India. Pre-independence aspirations that had been forgotten are revived by Hon’ble Prime minister Narendra Modi. According to him, self-reliance means to achieve a larger and important part of world economy. To achieve this India requires various policies that are efficient and resilient which encourages equity and competitiveness. Self-reliance means self-sustenance and self-generation and creation of “wealth and values not only for ourselves but for the larger humanity”. In 2020, Prime minister launched Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (Self-reliant India Campaign) and announced the special economic and comprehensive package of INR 20 lakh crores equivalent to 10 percentage of India’s GDP to tackle the situations arose due to Covid-19 Pandemic in India (India Brand Equity Foundation, n.d., PIB Delhi, 2020, Indian Economy, 2022 and Bisht, 2022).

The main objective of this Campaign is to make India as well its citizens self-reliant and independent in all senses. The five pillars of Atmanirbhar Bharat are outlined as:

1. **Economy:** For attaining self-reliance, this Abhiyan intends to create an economy which brings quantum change instead of incremental change.
2. **Infrastructure:** This Abhiyan aims to create infrastructure facilities which are at par with global standards and represents modern India. Strengthening of rural infrastructure strengthens agro based industries, create markets for farmers and job opportunities in rural area.
3. **System:** Abhiyan aims to adopt a technology-based system that realises the dreams of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It should be free from previous customs and policies.
4. **Vibrant Demography:** The most significant pillar which is responsible for successful execution of the other four is the largest democracy of India. Largest democracy is the source of energy that can provide strength to self-reliant India campaign. Brains of energetic youth population available for the betterment of the nation will faster the development.
5. **Demand:** This promotes the strengthening of all stakeholders in the supply chain to increase and fulfil the demand.

#### **Prime sectors of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (self-reliant India Campaign)**

Self-reliant India Campaign 2021 promoted growth of various industries related to primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary sector. Agriculture, mining and fishing are the important industries in primary sector. For empowering farmers and land cultivation activities, government introduced various schemes under this campaign such as PM kisan Yojana, PM fasal Bima Yojana, PM Krishi Sinchai Yojana and established various fisheries department to strengthen fishing (India Brand Equity Foundation, n.d.). As India is known for its agriculture, therefore to make agriculture a viable career option, this campaign applied huge investments in modernization of agriculture with automation and smart farming techniques.

This will help in making our farmers more efficient and increase the income of farmers as well as increase the economy of the country. Mining sector includes mining machinery, commercial vehicles, railways transportation, ports, shipping, power generation etc. Therefore, advancements in mining sector generates employment in all the connected sectors. Several announcements have been made under Atmanirbhar Abhiyan for enhancing private investments in mineral sector. Fishing is another important sector covered under this Abhiyan. According to a recent report by National fisheries Development Board, fisheries alone have generated employment for 145 million people and has a contribution of 1.07 percent in GDP along with export earnings of Rs. 334.41 billion. Various measures adopted under PMMSY (Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana) for fisheries sector will generate an additional 55 lakh direct or indirect employment opportunities in this sector (Shankar, 2023). In this Yojana more initiatives have been taken to improve infrastructure modernization, production, post-harvest management and quality control. These initiatives expected to double the income of farmers and also increase the export up to Rs. 1000 billion.

Secondary sector in self-reliant India includes industries such as manufacturing, MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), construction, utilities etc. MSMEs are considered as the backbone of Indian Economy (Government of Tripura, n.d.). More than 6 crore MSMEs operating in country have a very crucial role in the development of a strong and self-reliant India. These MSMEs have a contribution of 29 percent in GDP of the country and contribute to almost half of the exports from the country. A large population of the country are employed in these MSMEs sector. Several efforts are made under self-reliant India campaign to attract investors in the MSME sector. To provide safety to MSMEs from overseas competitors, global tenders of upto Rs. 200 crores have been prohibited in Indian government procurement tenders. Under this scheme a collateral-free automatic loans up to Rs. 3 lakh crores are to be provided to every micro, small and medium enterprise to meet their various liabilities. In order to ensure the release of payments to MSMEs within 45 days, directions have been issued at the level of MSME Cabinet Secretary, Expenditure Secretary and Secretary. Moratorium on repayment of loans has extended for another three months by RBI to ease burden on MSMEs. Tertiary sector includes banking services, media and entertainment, tourism, telecommunication and information technology. Under self-reliant India Campaign, Department of telecommunications aims to make India a global hub of

technologies and manufacturing of telecom equipment which includes Core transmission equipment, Customer Premises Equipment, 4G/5G Next Generation Radio Access Network and Wireless Equipment, and Enterprise equipment like switches, routers, etc (Ministry of Communication, 2022). To construct a strong ecosystem for 5G, seventeen companies has been sanctioned under design-led manufacturing. Centre for development of Telematics has launched 5G Alliance and IoT Innovation Centre to support multiple Indian Startups and MSMEs for the development of open RAN compliant 5G equipment.

Quaternary sector includes key services like education, research and development and various public sector industries. To make India self-reliant under this campaign the National Education Policy 2020 plays an important role. Under Atmanirbhar Abhiyan, fourteen colleges across India will provide engineering courses in 11 regional languages. Official language symbol has been provided to Indian Sign language; Artificial Intelligence Online Courses have been launched in regional languages also. Vidya Parvesh Programme will ensure playschools in remote areas. The new initiatives like National Digital Education, Architecture and the National Education Technology Forum will provide quality in education and supports educators all over the world (Businessworld, 2021).

#### **Schemes under self-reliant India Campaign:**

**Introduction of Production-linked incentive (PLI):** PLI schemes are basis of the government's push for accomplishing the vision of self-reliant India. The main objective of the scheme is to make domestic champions in manufacturing. The strategy behind the scheme is to offer financial incentive to boost electronics manufacturing and attract large scale investments. PLI scheme is in line with the Make in India. The Scheme has been a gamechanger in attracting industries from certain geographic locations to countries, where they can participate in both the domestic and export markets. While it invites foreign companies to set up their units in India, the scheme also encourages domestic enterprises to expand their production units. The flourishing of local manufacturing will enable India to be able to compete in global markets in the long run. By increasing manufacturing in various sectors, India can also reduce the unemployment ratio and create skilled manpower. Under self-reliant India campaign, the government launched PLI scheme across 13 sectors at Rs. 1.97lakh crore for the next five years in Union Budget announced for 2021-22 (India Brand Equity Foundation, n.d.). This includes an additional fund of Rs. 40, 951 crores (allocated budget) for PLI large scale Electronics Manufacturing and Rs. 7,325 crores for PLI IT hardware. These PLI schemes attracts various foreign investors to invest in India. For example, electronic devices manufacturing plant has been established by Amazon and Apple has also started assembling its iphone-12 in India ((India Brand Equity Foundation, n.d.)

**Healthcare Infrastructure:** The government of India introduced a new health care scheme in the union budget 2021-22 which will improve the country's health care infrastructure over the next six months. Under Pradhan Mantri Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana, a fund worth Rs. 64,180 crores have been allocated to strengthen the existing "National Health Mission". It also aims to create an IT based disease surveillance system by creating a network of surveillance laboratories at national, regional, district and block levels (InsuranceDekho, n.d.). A fund of Rs. 8,000 crores have been allocated for the National Mission on Quantum Computing and Technology to promote private companies' investment in Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence and Robotics to support Healthcare sector.

**Self-Reliance in Defence sector:** The defence sector is considered as an important area which has numerous opportunities to make India self-reliant as Indian economy critically depends on this sector. By generating a large employment and reducing the import burden, it would strengthen the economy of India. Under Atmanirbhar Abhiyan to make country self-reliant, the government has initiated numerous actions for manufacturing of defence equipment and to boost indigenous design in the country (Nagial, 2022). Government of India has increased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy in defence manufacturing which allows 74% FDI under automatic route and 100 % through government approval and banned the import of 101 military items for encouraging the production of military items in the country. Indigenisation portal like SRIJAN has been launched to promote "Make in India" by MSMEs together with private industries. Two defence industrial corridors one in Tamil Nadu and other in Uttar Pradesh has been created. The defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 aims to achieve a turnover of Rs. 1 Lakh 75 thousand crore along with export of Rs. 35 thousand crores in the aerospace and defence goods and services by 2025 (India Brand Equity Foundation, n.d.).

**Strengthening other Infrastructure:** To make India self-reliant, under this campaign a higher budget has been provided for the upgradation of roads, airways, railways and power delivery system in the country. Through Public Private Partnership model world class airports will be built and Government of India also aims to improve the highways which will strengthen India's competitiveness by improving the network between the production and consumption markets in domestic as well as at international level. "PM Formulation of Micro food Processing Enterprises" scheme has been launched by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries. This scheme aims to promote the growth of existing micro food processing enterprises by providing financial, technical and business support for which Government allocated a fund worth Rs. 10,000 crores (between FY21 & FY25).

### **Vocal for Local, will definitely make India a Self-Reliant Country:**

India has an abundance of natural as well as food resources to fulfil the demands of national as well as of international market. India has largest youth population in the world. Along with having abundant resources and large youths, India needs to create opportunities for employment by inculcating entrepreneurship and skill development among the youths to become self-reliant. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, “if the people of India use local goods for next 25 years, then India will not have to face the unemployment” (INN & Agencies, 2022). It is the dire need of the nation to become vocal for our local products to make these products global also.

The products should not only be “Make in India”, but these products should be promoted so as to make them competitive at international level also. Promotion of local products will strengthen the economy of India by establishing India as a manufacturing hub (Media Division PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2020). Vocal for local, made for world, local for global are the slogans adopted for attaining self-reliance in India. “Make in India” is the need of the hour in sectors such as defence, electric, IT, medical equipment etc (Bisht, 2022). By substituting the imports from the key sectors like automobile industry, electronics, defence, drug formulations, chemicals, handicrafts and cosmetics the country could reduce US \$8.4 billion trade deficit with China. Private companies and their products such as Amul, HDFC, Maruti 800, Thumb up beverage, Patanjali Group, Pharmaceutical companies Bharat Biotech and Serum Institute of India are considered as examples of self-reliance in India (Khanna, 2021).

### **Conclusion**

Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan is equipped to create quantum jump in economy by adopting various structural reforms such as commercialisation of mineral sector, redefinition of MSMEs, agriculture development initiatives and land reforms, privatisation of public sectors, one nation one ration card initiative, GST and FDI reforms, ease of business reforms, recapitalisation of public sector banks and production-linked incentive schemes. The introduction of these reforms serves as strong pillars which help in the development of India’s economy and will create huge opportunities for India to become self-reliant country. India will become self-reliant under Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan with its youths, the only need is to create a focused and sustained effort to reform education system, which not only creates employment but employability and entrepreneurial skills.

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