

## Sansad TV Perspective: Road to Self-Reliance

In the series Sansad TV Perspective, we bring you an analysis of the discussion featured on the insightful programme 'Perspective' on Sansad TV, on various important topics affecting India and also the world. This analysis will help you immensely for the [IAS exam](#), especially the mains exam, where a well-rounded understanding of topics is a prerequisite for writing answers that fetch good marks.

In this article, we feature the discussion on the topic: Road to Self-Reliance

Video link: <https://youtu.be/Su5QHrv3oHU>

**Anchor:** Vishal Dahiya

### Participants:

1. Deepshikha Sikarwar, Senior Editor, The Economic Times
2. Ashima Goyal, Member, Monetary Policy Committee, RBI & Former Member, PMEAC
3. Dilip Chenoy, Former Secretary-General, FICCI

**Context:** In the wake of the pandemic, the Prime Minister of India introduced a futuristic initiative of Atmanirbhar Bharat with the prime objective of making India self-reliant in various sectors.

### The Background:

- Under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, a special economic and comprehensive package of rupees 20 lakh crores was announced to combat the disastrous effects of the pandemic.
- The major objective of Atmanirbhar Bharat was to bolster the Indian economy and increase the competitiveness of Indian products in the global market with the underlying objective of self-reliance.
- The five pillars of Atmanirbhar Bharat include:
  - Economy
  - Infrastructure
  - System
  - Vibrant Demography
  - Demand
- Various reforms have been undertaken by the government under the aegis of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. For example:
  - Supply Chain Reforms for Agriculture
  - Rational Tax Systems
  - Simple and Clear Laws
  - Capable Human Resource

- Strong Financial System
- Reforms to establish self-reliance in defence

Read more about the [Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan](#) in the linked article.

### The Atmanirbhar Bharat Campaign: Exploring Further

- Freedom fighter [V. O. Chidambaram Pillai](#), in 1906, pioneered the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company challenging the monopoly of the British India Steam Navigation Company on the trade route between Tuticorin and Sri Lanka.
- Amidst the economic challenges, Chidambaram Pillai stood firm to create this indigenous company.
- The futuristic doctrine of self-reliance finds its roots in the colonial era.
- The [Swadeshi movement](#) and other remarkable movements of our freedom struggle have conveyed an underlying message of Atma Nirbharta (self-reliance) that gathered momentum at the onset of the campaign of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- It was emphasised that a self-reliant India must be distinguished from a self-centred India.
- This message became more precise when India's praiseworthy vaccine manufacturing potential during the pandemic spoke the language of compassion and shared the [COVID-19](#) vaccines with many countries that were in need.
- India's self-reliance in vaccine production reached the shores of vaccine diplomacy upholding the ethical behaviour of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the entire world is one family).
- The Production Linked Incentive ([PLI](#)) Scheme has played a pivotal role in taking forward the aspirations of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- The glimpses of self-reliance can be exemplified through various initiatives of the government like [MGNREGA](#) (improving the social security benefits to the rural population), Ease of Doing Business, [PM e - Vidya](#) (reforming the education system), indigenisation of defence technology ([Atmanirbhar in Defence](#)) and so on and so forth.

### Challenges:

- The Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan has been criticised as a way to promote protectionism despite the clarification given by the government. This might affect the international trade interests of India and reduce the chances for international companies to carry out business in India.
- It is alleged that the Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign is a revised version of the [Make in India](#) and lacks originality.
- There is inadequate availability of capital for infrastructure development to actually boost self-reliance.
- As the global economies were hit by the pandemic, the investments to promote business have been reduced.

- The [MSMEs](#), which are envisaged as an integral part of the vision of self-reliance, were major victims of economic slowdown and it will take a long time and effective policy interventions for their recovery.
- The slowdown of aggregate demand
- Multiple issues related to liquidity
- Widening fiscal deficit
- Difficulty in mobilising finances
- High import dependence on solar panels, Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients, semiconductors, chips for electronic devices and so on.
- Lack of skilled workforce
- The large gap between industry and academia
- Insufficient funds to boost research and development

**Heading towards self-reliance:**

- There have been considerable efforts put forward by the government to establish self-reliance in various sectors. The policies must prioritise to ensure resilience towards upcoming challenges to retain the competitiveness of India in the global supply chain.
  - The entire strategy of Atmanirbhar Bharat is perceived as a progressive step by the experts to encourage a supply-side push by enhancing the availability of capital on flexible terms and by supporting the agriculture and business sectors.
  - The purchasing power of the people for the increase of demand must be addressed to bring back the normal rhythm of liquidity.
  - It is recommended that the government must develop a meticulous approach to implement the policies in an effective manner that will enable the citizens to reap the benefits of a self-reliant India with sustainability, resilience and inclusiveness.
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