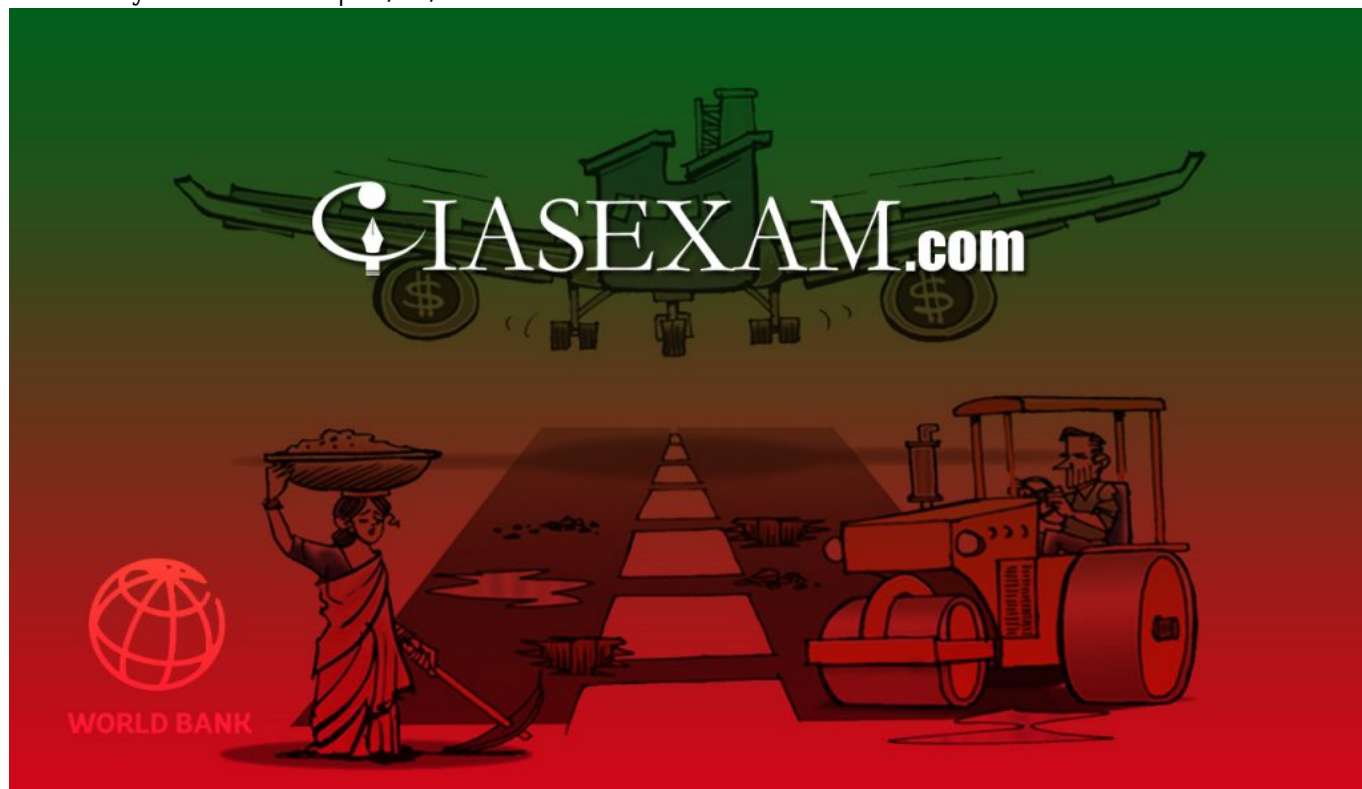


# No preference for 'Make in India' in World Bank project to curb coronavirus

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The \$1 billion World Bank loan to prevent, detect and respond to the threat of coronavirus and strengthen national health systems for preparedness as India combats the ongoing pandemic comes with a condition of “universal eligibility” in procurements.

This would mean that all preferential market access policies, including Public Procurement (Preference to Make in India) Order, Micro Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) Policy, certain benefits to start-ups, shall not be applicable on purchases made while implementing the national project.

## **Key Highlights**

- Confirming this, the Ministry of Railways, in a note to all Zonal Railways, production units and other major establishments, said the tender documents should be amended to remove such references and ensure that contractors explicitly agreed to comply with the relevant provisions of the World Bank’s anti-corruption guidelines and prohibited policies of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

- Besides paving the way for universal eligibility in the supply system, the World Bank would have the right to review the procurement documents, inspect/audit all accounts, records and other files relating to the project. Compliance to these conditions has been made mandatory for the funding.
- The Railways will spend 399 crore across its network to strengthen health infrastructure in the combat against COVID-19 in this financial year. The focus will be on creating more isolation facilities with medical equipment such as ventilators, oxygen cylinders etc.
- This is part of the “India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health System Strengthening Project,” a joint initiative of the Government of India and the World Bank that has \$1 billion loan disbursed by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). The Railway Ministry is one of the implementing agencies of the project.
- While the Northern Railway has got the highest allocation of 45.59 crore this year followed by the Eastern Railway with 42.56 crore, the Southern Railway has been given 30.95 crore. The Integral Coach Factory, the largest coach maker in the world, got a sanction of 3.17 crore. The total allocation to 16 Zonal Railways, Metro, production units and others stands at 399.36 crore.
- The Railways, one of the largest employers in the country, has reported 14,714 COVID-19 cases among its employees and 336 deaths. The Central Railway has topped the list with 67 deaths and 1,323 cases followed by the South Central Railway with 54 deaths and 2,202 cases. |
- While the Southern Railway, headquartered in Chennai, has reported 21 deaths and 1,145 cases, the ICF had 9 deaths and 422 cases among its employees.

**SOURCE:** *The Hindu*