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Executive Summary

The Indian government's response to COVID-19, changes, and domestic and international implications

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*This article is written based on the author's personal opinions
and does not reflect the views of the Sejong Institute.*

Executive Summary

■ The COVID-19 shock in India

- During the first wave of COVID-19, since the first COVID-19 confirmed case on February 2020, India effectively prevented the spread of COVID-19 through its nationwide blockade. However, during the outbreak of the second wave of COVID-19, the number of confirmed cases exceeded 400,000 on April 24, and India had to face its collapsed healthcare system and expect the worst economic downturn.

※ India's economic growth rate recorded the lowest for the fiscal year 2021 (April 2020 to March 2021), which was -7.3%.

■ The Modi government's response strategy toward COVID-19

- Prior to the second wave of COVID-19, the Modi government had emphasized △ 'Strong India' of Hindu nationalism and local elections, △ self-reliant economy and the lift of blockade measures to revive the economy, △ vaccine diplomacy and all together ended up putting India in a state of crisis.
- In order to cope with the second wave of COVID-19, however, the Modi government began to △ prioritize vaccination, △ promote economic stimulus and industrial policies to encourage consumption and investment in order to drive economic growth, △ recover global supply chain.

■ Implications of major changes caused by the COVID-19 in India

- India plans to complete the second round of vaccination of all Indians within this year by fully operating India's five COVID-19 vaccine productions and by adopting international technology transfer.
- Prime Minister Modi will △ continue his Strong India and self-reliance policies, △ be able to expect strong economic recovery of India when the control of COVID-19 becomes more tangible, △ keep China in check, engage in the QUAD, and form a partnership with Europe and make the idea Strong India more concrete.

■ Policy Implications

- As India is expected to undergo major changes in areas of its politics, economy, and foreign

policy due to COVID 19, South Korea must △ closely analyze the progress of India's economic recovery, △ devise a more detailed trade strategy to work with the idea of self-reliant and protective India, and △ upgrade the New Southern Policy as a regional strategy and devise various measures to cooperate with India.

※ Translator's note: This is a third party's unofficial translation of the original paper that was written in Korean. All references should be made to the original paper.