



May 24, 2021 – Monday

Key Developments

WTO's TRIPS Council to discuss revised proposal of IPR waiver to deal with COVID-19

The TRIPS Council of the World Trade Organization will discuss a revised proposal submitted by 62 co-sponsors, including India, South Africa, and Indonesia, seeking patent waivers to manufacture COVID-19-related medical products, an official said. In October 2020, India and South Africa had submitted the first proposal suggesting a waiver for all World Trade Organization (WTO) members on the implementation of certain provisions of the TRIPS Agreement in relation to the prevention, containment or treatment of COVID-19. The agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights or TRIPS came into effect in January 1995. It is a multilateral agreement on intellectual property (IP) rights such as copyright, industrial designs, patents and protection of undisclosed information or trade secrets.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/wtos-trips-council-to-discuss-revised-proposal-of-ipr-waiver-to-deal-with-covid-19/2257415/>

Record 2.12 million Covid-19 tests conducted in a single day: Centre

India has set a record of conducting the highest COVID-19 testing in a single day with more than 21.23 lakh fresh tests, the Union Health Ministry said on Sunday. This is also the fifth successive day that more than 20 lakh tests have been conducted in India, it said. Cumulatively, 21,23,782 tests conducted have been conducted in the last 24 hours in the country. The ministry also said that the cumulative number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the country exceeded 19.50 crore on Sunday. A total of 19,50,04,184 vaccine doses have been administered through 28,00,808 sessions, as per the provisional report till 7 am today," it said.

"These include 97,52,900 HCWs who have taken the 1st dose and 67,00,614 HCWs who have taken the 2nd dose, 1,49,52,345 FLWs (1st dose), 83,26,534 FLWs (2nd dose), 99,93,908 beneficiaries under 18-44 age group (1st dose), 6,06,90,560 (1st dose) and 97,87,289 (2nd dose) beneficiaries aged 45 to 60 years and 5,65,55,558 first dose beneficiaries and 1,82,44,476 second dose beneficiaries of more than 60 years old, the ministry said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/record-2-12-million-covid-19-tests-conducted-in-a-single-day-centre-121052300288_1.html

Leveraging AI/ML, new version of MCA21 to be launched on Monday

A data analytics driven version of MCA21, which was India's first mission mode e-governance project, will be launched on Monday.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/leveraging-aiml-new-version-of-mca21-to-be-launched-on-monday/article34627743.ece?homepage=true>

Economy

India challenges \$1.2 bn Cairn award, says never agreed on tax arbitration

India has challenged an international arbitration tribunal asking it to return \$ 1.2 billion to UK's Cairn Energy Plc on grounds that it had never agreed to arbitrate over a "national tax dispute", the finance ministry said on Sunday. While the government appointed a judge on the three-member arbitration panel and fully participated in the proceedings

against India seeking Rs 10,247 crore in back taxes from Cairn, the ministry said the tribunal "improperly exercised jurisdiction over a national tax dispute that the Republic of India never offered and/or agreed to arbitrate." India had seized and sold shares of Cairn in its erstwhile India unit, confiscated dividend due and withheld tax refunds to recover the tax demand it had levied two years after passing a law in 2012 that gave it powers to levy tax retrospectively.

In a statement, the finance ministry called the 2006 reorganisation of Cairn's India business for listing on the local bourses as "abusive tax avoidance scheme that were a gross violation of Indian tax laws, thereby depriving Cairn's alleged investments of any protection under the India-UK bilateral investment treaty."

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/india-challenges-1-2-bn-cairn-award-says-never-agreed-on-tax-arbitration-121052300482_1.html

GST Council may decide on easing levy on imported oxygen concentrators

The GST Council, in its upcoming meeting, scheduled to be held on May 28, is likely to take a call on levy of 12 per cent tax on import of oxygen concentrators for personal use. The Delhi High Court last week said that imposition of 12 per cent Integrated GST (IGST) on oxygen concentrators for personal use or those received as gifts is "unconstitutional". The Court's observation came on a plea filed by an 85-year old COVID patient whose relative had sent oxygen concentrator from the US. It also quashed a May 1 notification of the Finance Ministry which said that a 12 per cent IGST will be levied on oxygen concentrators imported for personal use or gift. Sources said the final decision on this issue would be taken by the Council in its upcoming meeting on Friday.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/gst-council-may-decide-on-easing-levy-on-imported-oxygen-concentrators-121052300294_1.html

'Centre not in favour of door-to-door vaccine'

The Centre's disinclination for door-to-door Covid vaccination was determined by the complexity of the operation needing supply chain management and monitoring of AEFI (Adverse Events Following Immunisation) reporting that is not the case with established inoculations like polio, P K Mishra, principal secretary to the PM, has said. "We must recognise that Covid vaccination is under emergency use authorisation, requiring vaccination supply chains, local infrastructure and equipment, trained medical manpower and links to AEFI reporting. This is not akin to the door-to-door immunisation programme we are now familiar with for long known diseases such as polio," Mishra told TOI.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/centre-not-in-favour-of-door-to-door-vaccine/articleshow/82874347.cms>

PM Narendra Modi chairs high-level meeting to tackle Cyclone Yaas

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday called for timely evacuation of those involved in off-shore activities as he chaired a high-level meeting to review the preparedness of states and central government agencies to deal with the situation arising out of cyclone Yaas. He asked officials to work in close coordination with states to ensure safe evacuation of people from high-risk areas, and stressed the need to ensure that time duration of outages of power supply and communication network are minimum and restored swiftly, a PMO statement said. He also asked officials to ensure proper coordination and planning with state governments to ensure that no disruption is caused to COVID-19 treatment and vaccination in hospitals.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/pm-narendra-modi-chairs-high-level-meeting-to-tackle-cyclone-yaas-121052300370_1.html

Banking and Finance

IBA reaches out to govt for refund of compound interest waiver by banks

The Indian Banks' Association (IBA) on behalf of lenders has approached the finance ministry to refund the burden fallen on their shoulders due to a recent Supreme Court judgment on the waiver of compound interest on all loan accounts which opted for moratorium during March-August 2020. The March judgment of the apex court directed the banks to waive off compound interest on loans above Rs 2 crore availing moratorium as loans below this got blanket interest on interest waiver in November last year. Compound interest support scheme for loan moratorium cost the government Rs 5,500 crore during 2020-21, and the scheme covered all borrowers including the prompt

one who did not avail moratorium. Various banks are at the different stages of executing the order. Punjab & Sind Bank Managing Director S Krishnan said the burden on the bank due to waiver works out to be around Rs 30 crore. https://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/iba-reaches-out-to-govt-for-refund-of-compound-interest-waiver-by-banks-121052300330_1.html

SBI temporarily raises ceiling for cash withdrawal by customers at 'non-home' branches

State Bank of India (SBI) has temporarily upped the ceiling for non-home cash withdrawal for self and also enabled non-home cash withdrawal by third-parties at its branches so that customers don't have to travel far to meet their urgent cash requirements amid the raging Covid-19 pandemic.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/covid-19-sbi-temporarily-raises-ceiling-for-cash-withdrawal-by-customers-at-non-home-branches/article34627400.ece?homepage=true>

Industry

Covid impact on retail: Health, hygiene, instant food products sales surge

Retailers are having continued growth in health and hygiene category products as well as in food, personal care and home care items, but discretionary categories like beauty and cosmetics, fashion and apparels have been affected adversely during the second wave of the pandemic. Now, there is a renewed focus on healthy alternatives such as ayurvedic toothpaste and juices, while instant foods and ready-to-eat snacking items with nutritional offerings are also seeing larger penetration. Moreover, value packs are doing well this time as smaller packs of Rs 5 and Rs 10 have witnessed a rise of up to 20 per cent across categories like biscuits, ketchup and jams, while the large and premium packs have been affected as people are cautious about their disposable income.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/covid-impact-on-retail-health-hygiene-instant-food-products-sales-surge-121052300300_1.html

Industry body IPMA seeks govt intervention to regulate rising steel prices

Industry body Indian Pipe Manufacturers' Association (IPMA) has sought government intervention to regulate the prices of steel, which are trading at an all-time high in India. In a letter to Union Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, the body has also sought a temporary ban on its export, a move which will prevent steel players from diverting their produce to the international markets.

"Pipe manufacturers and MSMEs are struggling for a long time due to increased prices and shortage of steel in the domestic market. We had approached your (Steel Minister) office, requesting your kind intervention for regulating prices and imposing a temporary ban on steel export," the letter dated May 20, 2021 said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/industry-body-ipma-seeks-govt-intervention-to-regulate-rising-steel-prices-121052300220_1.html

Lack of succession planning greatest long-term risk to Indian MSMEs, say experts

While the Indian government has instituted many initiatives to support the Indian MSME sector in the post-crisis world, one key factor for the longevity of any MSME is succession planning and sustainability even as a lack of it is the greatest long-term risk to such businesses, according to experts. India has a vast base of around 6.33 crore MSMEs, many of which are family-run enterprises with the second and third-generation entrepreneurs carrying forward their business legacy.

"India's MSMEs, employing more than 45 percent of the country's workforce, are working relentlessly to make an impression in the global market, with risk-taking being a part of their entrepreneurial DNA. However, the disconnect between passion and reality, the challenge in managing black swan and grey rhino events, and the lack of a structured framework to pass on the business legacy to the next generation are placing these MSMEs at risk of survival," said Hersh Shah, CEO, IRM India Affiliate at a webinar organised by the institute.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/lack-of-succession-planning-greatest-long-term-risk-to-indian-msmes-say-experts/2257382/>

Drone deployment by Coal India arm delayed by COVID-19

Deployment of high-end drones at coalfields by CMPDI, a subsidiary of Coal India, is getting delayed due to COVID-induced lockdowns and other restrictions in several states, even though the company has secured approval for using

the equipment from the Centre, an official said. Central Mine Planning and Design Institute (CMPDI), the research and technical arm of the miner, is one of the organisations in the country to introduce drones for conducting coalfield survey. The company has planned to deploy drones at Coal India mines for specialised survey applications such as generation of high-resolution images, 3D terrain mapping and volumetric measurement of excavation, the official said. "We are ready to deploy drones as permission from Directorate General of Civil Aviation has been given. Training for operations and maintenance of data was scheduled from April 25 but it couldn't be held due to lockdown," CMPDI GM (Geomatics) Rajneesh Kumar told.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/metals-mining/drone-deployment-by-coal-india-arm-delayed-by-covid-19/articleshow/82882701.cms>

Agriculture

Soybean meal prices doubled; govt should permit import at zero duty: AIPBA

Expressing concern over rise in animal feed prices in the domestic market, the All India Poultry Breeders Association (AIPBA) on Sunday demanded the government to reduce import duty on soybean meal to zero for at least five months. Soybean meal remains the most common protein source for all compound feeds for poultry, dairy cattle and pigs in the country and worldwide. In a letter to Union Minister for Animal Husbandry, Livestock, Dairying and Fisheries Giriraj Singh, AIPBA Chairman Bahadur Ali said, "There is an acute shortage of soybean in the supply line, leading to massive price escalation. The only option is now to ensure import to cool down the prices to save livestock farmers."

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/soybean-meal-prices-doubled-govt-should-permit-import-at-zero-duty-aipba-121052300574_1.html

12 opposition parties extend support to farmers protest call on May 26

Twelve major opposition parties have extended their support to the call given by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha to observe countrywide protest on May 26, marking six months of the farmers protest at Delhi borders against the Centre's farm laws. The joint statement has been signed by Sonia Gandhi (Congress), H D Deve Gowda (JD-S), Sharad Pawar (NCP), Mamata Banerjee (TMC), Uddhav Thackeray (SS), M K Stalin (DMK), Hemant Soren (JMM), Farooq Abdullah (JKPA), Akhilesh Yadav (SP), Tejaswi Yadav (RJD), D Raja (CPI) and Sitaram Yechury (CPI-M). On May 12, we had jointly written to Prime Minister Modi saying the following: Repeal farm laws to protect lakhs of our annadatas becoming victims of the pandemic so that they can continue to produce food to feed the Indian people.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/12-opposition-parties-extend-support-to-farmers-protest-call-on-may-26-121052300618_1.html

TAFE offers 16,500 tractors under free rental scheme

Tractors and Farm Equipment Ltd (TAFE) has offered 16,500 tractors under a free rental scheme for farmers in Tamil Nadu who own agricultural land of two acres or less, as part of its contribution towards COVID-19 relief measures. The scheme was aimed at benefitting about 50,000 farmers and will cover about 1.20 lakh acres of agricultural land. TAFE would offer its 16,500 Massey Ferguson and Eicher tractors to small farmers owning two acres or less, a company statement said on Sunday. The scheme was in addition to the earlier contribution of oxygen contributors, procurement of oxygen cylinders and support to mass immunisation programmes, TAFE said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/auto/auto-news/tafe-offers-16500-tractors-under-free-rental-scheme/articleshow/82880046.cms>

Infrastructure

Private terminal operators seek revival measures as policy changes clip cargo

A lobby group of India private terminal operators have sought the government's policy intervention for permitting single cargo handling terminals to handle multi commodities at major ports.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/logistics/private-terminal-operators-seek-revival-measures-as-policy-changes-clip-cargo/article34626201.ece>

Telecom

5G to spur contractual staffing requirement in telecom; hiring sentiment positive: TeamLease

The much-awaited 5G services roll-out is expected to spur telecom contractual staffing over the next two years and will emerge as a key driver for hiring activities in the sector, according to a senior official at TeamLease. The Department of Telecom (DoT) already set the ball in motion for 5G trials earlier this month, when it approved applications of telecom companies including Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea for conducting the trials. According to Deval Singh, Business Head- Telecom, IT and ITES, Media and Government, TeamLease Services, the outlook for contractual hiring in the sector remains positive, notwithstanding some ambiguities on account of the second severe wave of COVID-19.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/5g-to-spur-contractual-staffing-requirement-in-telecom-hiring-sentiment-positive-teamlease/articleshow/82878027.cms>

Energy

Discoms' outstanding dues to gencos fall 3 pc to Rs 78,379 cr in March

Total dues owed by electricity distribution companies to power producers fell 3.4 per cent to Rs 78,379 crore in March 2021 as compared to the year-ago period, showing a reversal of discoms' growing outstandings. Outstanding dues of discoms towards electricity producers have been increasing year-on-year as well as month-on-month for years showing perennial stress in the power sector till February this year.

Distribution companies (discoms) owed total Rs 81,116 crore to power generation firms in March 2020, according to portal PRAAPTI (Payment Ratification And Analysis in Power procurement for bringing Transparency in Invoicing of generators). The dues in March also declined from Rs 98,673 crore in February and Rs 99,023 crore in January this year.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/discoms-outstanding-dues-to-gencos-fall-3-pc-to-rs-78379-cr-in-march/2257347/>

'Clean Data Room' with sensitive info on BPCL to open for bidders signing additional pact

Bidders vying to buy government stake in Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) will be given access to a 'Clean Data Room' containing commercially sensitive information on the firm subject to their signing an additional confidentiality agreement, sources said. A virtual data room, mostly containing financial information on BPCL, was opened in the second week of April and qualified bidders signing Confidentiality Undertaking (CU) have been given access, three sources with direct knowledge of the matter said. Bidders which include mining-to-oil conglomerate Vedanta and private equity firms Apollo Global and I Squared Capital's arm Think Gas will also be allowed physical inspection of assets such as refineries and depots in the coming weeks as part of the due diligence process.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/clean-data-room-with-sensitive-info-on-bpcl-to-open-for-bidders-signing-additional-pact/2257293/>

Oil companies, sugar mills work in sync to put India's ethanol blending programme on track

India seems to be on track with its ambitious plan to blend up to 20 per cent ethanol in petrol. In April, public sector oil refiners-cum-retailers have been able to achieve an ethanol blending of 7.63 per cent at the national level. In fact, as many as 11 States across the country have managed to touch 10 per cent blending.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/indias-ethanol-blending-programme-on-track/article34628853.ece>

States

Vaccine drive to get faster after adequate supply starts from June: Maha CM

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday expressed confidence that the vaccination drive would be expedited after the state starts getting adequate supply of doses from June. Inaugurating a field training workshop titled Pediatrics COVID-19, Thackeray said his government was relentlessly pursuing the issue of vaccine supply, adding that his government was ready to make one-time payment for 12 crore doses for beneficiaries in the 18-44 age group, who account for six crore of the state's total population. "I am confident the vaccination drive will pick up once the supply is smooth after June," the CM asserted. He said the state witnessed oxygen shortage during the

second wave of infections but it was now well equipped to tackle a possible third wave since effective steps had been taken to make the state self-sufficient in the vital gas.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/vaccine-drive-to-get-faster-after-adequate-supply-starts-from-june-maha-cm-121052300398_1.html

Covid-19: Delhi govt approves Rs 5,000 assistance to auto, taxi drivers

Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot on Sunday said his department has approved more than 1.5 lakh cases under a scheme to provide one-time assistance of Rs 5,000 to each para-transit vehicle driver during the COVID-19-induced lockdown."I am happy to inform you that the transport department has approved 1,55,301 cases. Para-transit vehicle drivers/owners will start receiving Rs 5,000 in bank accounts linked to their Aadhaar from Monday," he tweeted in Hindi. Earlier this month, the Delhi government had decided to extend its scheme of one-time financial assistance to cover e-rickshaw owners.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/covid-19-delhi-govt-approves-rs-5-000-assistance-to-auto-taxi-drivers-121052300297_1.html

COVID-19 lockdown in Haryana extended till May 31, some restrictions eased

The Haryana government on Sunday extended the coronavirus lockdown till May 31, according to an order issued here.State Chief Secretary Vijai Vardhan in the order said the lockdown, which was earlier imposed till May 24, has been extended by a week till 5 am on May 31.In a bid to contain the coronavirus spread, the state government had first imposed the lockdown on May 3, which was extended every week since then.The Haryana government has termed the lockdown as "Mahamari Alert/Surkshit Haryana (Epidemic Alert/Safe Haryana)".

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/haryana-govt-extends-coronavirus-lockdown-till-may-31-121052300577_1.html

Haryana to launch anti-Covid 'Sanjeevani Pariyojana' for quick medicare access at home

Haryana will launch on Monday an anti-Covid "Sanjeevani Pariyojana" to provide for supervised and quick medical care at home largely for people in rural areas with mild to moderate symptoms of the disease. "Sanjeevani Pariyojana" will extend medical care to rural areas where awareness of the second wave of COVID-19 and how to treat it remains low, an official spokesperson said here on Sunday. Chief Minister M L Khattar will roll out the initiative on May 24, through video conferencing, he added. The spokesperson described the programme as an important step in bringing much needed medical care to the people "who need it most, when they need it most".

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/haryana-to-launch-anti-covid-sanjeevani-pariyojana-for-quick-medicare-access-at-home/articleshow/82878985.cms>

Cyclone with wind speed of 155-165 kmph may hit WB-Odisha coasts on May 26

A depression in east central Bay of Bengal is very likely to intensify into a very severe cyclonic storm with a possible wind speed of 155 kmph to 165 kmph and make landfall on May 26 evening between Paradip in Odisha and Sagar island in West Bengal, the Met department said on Sunday. The system, which lays 670 km south-southeast of Digha in West Bengal and 590 km east-southeast of Paradip, will cause heavy to very heavy rain in the coastal and interior districts of the two states as it progresses, said Sanjib Bandopadhyay, the deputy director of the Regional Met Centre in Kolkata. The depression will intensify into a cyclonic storm by May 24 morning and move in a north-northwesterly direction.

"In subsequent 24 hours, it will intensify into a very severe cyclonic storm and reach north Bay of Bengal near West Bengal-Odisha coasts on May 26 morning," Bandopadhyay said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/cyclone-with-wind-speed-of-155-165-kmph-may-hit-wb-odisha-coasts-on-may-26-121052300579_1.html

Karnataka puts in place SMS-based Remdesivir allocation and information system to check misuse

Karnataka which is battling the second wave of COVID-19, has put in place a SMS-based Remdesivir allocation and information system, aimed at curbing its blackmarketing and misuse. "In order to bring transparency in the allocation of Remdesivir a tech-driven system has been developed and now the patient will get a SMS informing which hospital is provided the medicine against the SRF ID," Health Minister K Sudhakar said on Sunday. "In case if the #Remdesivir is allocated against the SRF ID & the hospital has not provided it to the patient, a facility is provided in the same link

to report it to the government. This will help govt in curbing black marketing & misuse of Remdesivir," he said in a tweet. Citizens can also check information on Remdesivir using the link <https://covidwar.karnataka.gov.in/service2>. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/karnataka-puts-in-place-sms-based-remdesivir-allocation-and-information-system-to-check-misuse/articleshow/82877976.cms>

Healthcare

Diaspora doctors, professionals launch 'Project Madad' to combat COVID-19 spread in rural India

As the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic batters rural India, a voluntary group of doctors and professionals from the diaspora in the US and from India has launched a unique initiative that will provide virtual time-sensitive information to healthcare workers in rural areas on treating COVID-19 patients, real-time details on hospital bed availability and counter vaccine misinformation. 'Project Madad' has been created with a mission that "proper education and training" of local healthcare workers and Registered Medical Practitioners (RMPs) will be "fundamental" in controlling COVID-19 spread in rural India. The Madad team is initially working with RMPs in rural Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and hopes that its model will be scaled in other areas and assist healthcare workers to recognise COVID-19 symptoms, treat mild cases at homes and provide advice on vaccination, dangers of overmedication and other best practices.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/diaspora-doctors-professionals-launch-project-madad-to-combat-covid-19-spread-in-rural-india/articleshow/82876261.cms>

21.80 crore Covid vaccine doses provided to states, Union Territories so far: Centre

More than 21.80 crore vaccine doses against COVID-19 have been provided to states and Union Territories so far and over 1.90 crore jabs are still available with them, the Union Health Ministry said on Sunday. In a statement, the ministry said 40,650 COVID-19 vaccine doses are in the pipeline and will be received by the states/UTs within the next three days. "The government has so far provided, both through the free-of-cost category and through direct state procurement category, more than 21.80 crore vaccine doses (21,80,51,890) to states/UTs," the ministry said in a statement. Of this, the total consumption, calculated based on average up to May 22, 2021, including wastages is 19,90,31,577 doses (according to data available at 8 am on Sunday).

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/21-80-crore-covid-vaccine-doses-provided-to-states-union-territories-so-far-centre/articleshow/82877153.cms>

External

Apparel exporters from Noida face acute labour shortage amid Covid surge

Apparel exporters from Noida, Delhi's south-eastern neighbourhood that helps stock the shelves of Zara and Mango stores either side of the Atlantic, are facing an acute labour shortage with more than half a million mill-hands and artisans returning to their homes in rural Uttar Pradesh to escape the urban covid surge. Some factory staff also left the city to vote in the local-body polls, which were held last month to choose officials that would run the grassroots-level elected offices in Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state sending the majority of needle-workers and embroiderers to the textiles industry. Given the labour shortage and its likely impact on output, buyers from the US and Europe are shifting a portion of their orders from India to alternative sources in the neighbourhood - Bangladesh and Vietnam.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/garments-/textiles/apparel-exporters-from-noida-face-acute-labour-shortage-amid-covid-surge/articleshow/82879877.cms>

Government steps in to expedite WHO approval for Covaxin

India's Covaxin may have proven and adequate efficacy but its lack of endorsement from the WHO remains a cause of concern for the government. What has aggravated the situation is the fact that only a handful of countries, as has been reported, have confirmed they will allow entry to those vaccinated by Covaxin. ToI has learnt that foreign secretary Harsh Shringla will hold a meeting with Bharat Biotech, the manufacturer of Covaxin, on Monday to expedite the process of WHO approval for the indigenously manufactured vaccine which has been administered to close to 2 crore Indians until now. With the US, and also many countries in Europe looking to reopen soon, it's

important for the government to ensure that those vaccinated with Covaxin, particularly students, are not denied entry by these countries.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/government-steps-in-to-expedite-who-approval-for-covaxin/articleshow/82875008.cms>



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