



July 07, 2021 – Wednesday

## Key Developments

### Commerce Ministry seeks detailed inputs from stakeholders for proposed India-UK FTA

To maximise benefits from the proposed India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA), the Commerce Ministry has sent out a detailed consultation format to trade and industry associations and other stakeholders for listing out precisely their priority areas, specific areas of interest, justifiable suggestions on what the pact should achieve, existing positions & challenges and concerns related to the exercise.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/commerce-ministry-seeks-detailed-inputs-from-stakeholders-for-proposed-india-uk-fta/article35168331.ece>

### Centre may notify labour codes in 4 months

The labour ministry may notify the labour codes in the next three-four months, paving way for their implementation as it expects over 15 states to be ready with rules in their domain by that time. The implementation, however, could be partial as some of the provisions like the national floor-level minimum wage and gratuity payout could kick-in later, giving a breather to the employers to tide over the financial stress on their balance sheets due to the pandemic.

[https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/centre-may-notify-labour-codes-in-4-months/articleshow/84184252.cms?utm\\_source=ETTopNews&utm\\_medium=HP&utm\\_campaign=TN&utm\\_content=23](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/centre-may-notify-labour-codes-in-4-months/articleshow/84184252.cms?utm_source=ETTopNews&utm_medium=HP&utm_campaign=TN&utm_content=23)

### Narendra Modi government creates a new Ministry of Co-operation: Sources

Ahead of the much awaited cabinet rejig, the Narendra Modi government has set up a 'Ministry of Co-operation'. The separate 'Ministry of Co-operation' is to realize its vision of 'Sahkar se Samridhi', according to government sources. This ministry will provide a separate administrative, legal and policy framework for strengthening the cooperative movement in the country, according to news agency ANI.

The Ministry will work to streamline processes for 'Ease of doing business' for co-operatives and enable development of Multi-State Co-operatives (MSCS).

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/narendra-modi-government-creates-a-new-ministry-of-co-operation-sources/articleshow/84179389.cms>

### Aviation ministry sets up sub-group for suggesting ways to improve cargo-related infrastructure issues

The civil aviation ministry has set up a sub-group comprising members from domestic air cargo agents body DACAAI, AAI logistics arm AAILAS, various airlines and a joint venture airport, for suggesting ways and means to improve cargo-related infrastructure issues, a statement said on Tuesday. The sub-group will go into matters that are hindering the growth of domestic cargo by air, the Domestic Air Cargo Agents Association of India (DACAAI) said in its statement. The association on Monday hosted a virtual conference (VC) on 'Rebooting Aviation-DACAAI-Issues and Challenges of Domestic Air Cargo Logistics', which was attended by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Hardeep Singh Puri as chief guest.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/aviation-ministry-sets-up-sub-group-for-suggesting-ways-to-improve-cargo-related-infrastructure-issues/articleshow/84171446.cms>

## Economy

### **GST collections fall below Rs 1-trn mark after eight months in June**

Goods and services tax collections fell below the Rs 1-trillion mark for the first time in nine months in June to a 10-month low, as economic activity got disrupted due to the second Covid-19 wave, official data showed. However, experts say the collections are better than expected and will provide a cushion to the government to ramp up spending, going forward. GST collection stood at Rs 92,849 crore in June compared with Rs 1.02 trillion the previous month and a record high of Rs 1.41 trillion in April, data released by the ministry of finance showed on Tuesday. These figures pertain to transactions done in May, but collected in June. The collections in May are 2.1 per cent higher than the corresponding month of last year when the national unlocking process began after two months of intense movement curbs due to the pandemic. Meanwhile, this May saw localised lockdowns across the country due to the devastating second wave. The collections in June are on expected lines as e-way bill generation, which indicates supply in the economy, declining to a one year low level average of 1.2 million per day in May.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/gst-collections-fall-below-rs-1-trn-mark-after-eight-months-in-june-121070600883\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/gst-collections-fall-below-rs-1-trn-mark-after-eight-months-in-june-121070600883_1.html)

### **RBI launches latest round of quarterly survey on manufacturing sector**

The RBI on Tuesday said it has launched the latest round of its quarterly Order Books, Inventories and Capacity Utilisation Survey (OBICUS) of the manufacturing sector, results of which are used in monetary policy formulation. The Reserve Bank (RBI) has been conducting the OBICUS of the manufacturing sector on a quarterly basis since 2008. "The survey provides valuable input for monetary policy formulation," the RBI said while announcing the launch of 54th round of the survey. The information collected in the survey includes quantitative data on new orders received during the reference quarter, backlog of orders at the beginning of the quarter, pending orders, total inventories with a breakup between finished goods (FG), work-in-progress (WiP) and raw material (RM) inventories, among others.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/rbi-launches-latest-round-of-quarterly-survey-on-manufacturing-sector/2285091/>

### **Most CFA Institute members predict K-shaped recovery from pandemic: Survey**

A significant percentage of CFA Institute members believe that a "K-shaped" economic recovery is forming, where different parts of the economy are recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic at different rates, times or magnitudes, as per a survey. According to the survey of 6,040 global respondents by CFA Institute, the global association of investment professionals, 44 per cent predicted a K-shape recovery, indicating a globally divergent recovery. The K-shaped recovery marks a distinct shift away from the "hockey-stick shaped" recovery predicted last year, when close to 75 per cent of respondents thought that any upturn would be slow or stagnant in the short term, before picking up in the medium term, the survey said. "The post-pandemic world is quite visibly a volatile one, and everyone is eyeing the nature of our economic recovery from the same. I believe the most predictable bounce-back would be of a K-shaped nature, wherein different parts of the economy would recover at different rates. "It is, of course, a certainty that COVID-19 is bound to affect all walks of life and will influence Government policies, Tax regulations, and the entire Indian financial landscape," said Vidhu Shekhar, CFA, CIPM, Country Head, India, CFA Institute.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/most-cfa-institute-members-predict-k-shaped-recovery-from-pandemic-survey-121070600451\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/most-cfa-institute-members-predict-k-shaped-recovery-from-pandemic-survey-121070600451_1.html)

### **India's hiring rate recovered from 10% in Apr to 35% in May: LinkedIn**

India's hiring rate has recovered moderately from 10 per cent in April to 35 per cent in May 2021, but the aftermath of the second COVID-19 wave has left professionals in India increasingly vulnerable to the economic uncertainty, as per LinkedIn data. India's hiring rate on LinkedIn dropped from 50 per cent in March 2021 to 10 per cent in April 2021. The hiring rate witnessed a modest revival to 35 per cent in May 2021, as localised curfews gradually lifted and economic activity partially resumed.

However, working women and young professionals still remain vulnerable to economic turbulence. "Working women are 4x less confident than working men, while the average time taken for new graduates to find jobs has increased from 2 to 3 months," according to LinkedIn.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-hiring-rate-recovered-from-10-in-apr-to-35-in-may-linkedin-121070601028\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-hiring-rate-recovered-from-10-in-apr-to-35-in-may-linkedin-121070601028_1.html)

## Banking and Finance

### Rural India sinks deeper into debt as Covid-19 pandemic wipes out work

The coronavirus and a lockdown aimed at stopping it last year saw millions of people thrown out of jobs in cities and towns and forced back to their villages, and ever higher levels of debt. Interviews with 75 households in a cluster of eight villages in India's most populous state showed household incomes have slumped nearly 75% on average. Almost two thirds of the households have taken on debt. Big debt and low income in the countryside will hold back any economic recovery the government is trying to generate and also dent private savings and investment for longer than expected, economists say.

"It will have a huge impact and prolong the recovery process. Private consumption and investments both will be hurt. There is merit in finding ways to put money in the hands of the people," said N.R. Bhanumurthy, economist and vice chancellor at Bengaluru-based B.R Ambedkar School of Economics. India's gross domestic product fell by a record 7.3% in the year that ended on March 31. The government has forecast 10.5% growth for 2021/2022 but a second wave of the pandemic has dented expectations and several economists have cut their forecasts. The poor have especially been hit hard.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/rural-india-sinks-deeper-into-debt-as-covid-19-pandemic-wipes-out-work-121070600304\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/rural-india-sinks-deeper-into-debt-as-covid-19-pandemic-wipes-out-work-121070600304_1.html)

### RBI to conduct Rs 20,000 crore open market bond purchase on July 8

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will conduct open market purchase of government bonds worth Rs 20,000 crore under the G-sec Acquisition Programme (G-SAP 2.0) on July 8. The RBI said in a statement that it reserves the right to decide on quantum of purchase of individual securities, accept bids for less than the aggregate amount, purchase marginally higher/lower than the aggregate amount due to rounding off and accept or reject any or all the bids either wholly or partially without assigning any reasons.

On July 4, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das had announced that the central bank will conduct open market purchase of government securities of Rs 1.2 lakh crore under the G-SAP 2.0 in Q2 of the current financial year to support the market.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/rbi-to-conduct-rs-20-000-crore-open-market-bond-purchase-on-july-8-121070600410\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/rbi-to-conduct-rs-20-000-crore-open-market-bond-purchase-on-july-8-121070600410_1.html)

### Paytm launches small-ticket instant loans Postpaid Mini to help users manage monthly expenses

Paytm this week, announced the launch of Postpaid Mini, a need-based and consumption-based credit for users to help them manage their household finances. This product is an extension of its Buy Now, Pay Later service targeted at users who don't have a credit score. "The idea behind launching this product is to give an opportunity to a wider section of people to experience credit with smaller ticket size loans and learn fiscal discipline," Bhavesh Gupta, CEO, Paytm Lending told Financial Express Online.

He added, "Through Postpaid we are also making sincere attempts to help drive consumption in the economy. Our new Postpaid Mini service helps users manage their liquidity by clearing their bills or payments on time." Postpaid Mini will offer loans ranging from Rs 250 to Rs 1000 to users to pay their monthly expenses, including mobile & DTH recharges, gas cylinder booking, electricity & water bills, amongst others.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/banking-finance/paytm-launches-small-ticket-instant-loans-postpaid-mini-to-help-users-manage-monthly-expenses/2285061/>

### India has huge potential for growth of alternative lending: Study

India has a strong growth potential along with highest opportunities for alternative lending as compared to other countries in South and South-East Asia, according to a latest research by Singapore-based Robocash Group — provider of robotic financial services in the field of alternative lending and marketplace funding.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/india-has-huge-potential-for-growth-of-alternative-lending-study/article35171908.ece>

## Industry

### **GeM: Govt procurement sees over 5X increase in MSME seller base in 12 months amid Covid**

The number of MSME sellers on the government's business-to-business marketplace Government eMarketplace (GeM) has grown 5.2X in the past 12 months amid increased adoption of the online channel for buying and selling goods and services due to the Covid pandemic. According to the GeM's latest data, the marketplace currently has 21.29 lakh sellers and service providers. This was up from 4.04 lakh as of July 5, 2021. The share of micro and small sellers also increased from around 1 lakh to a little over 7 lakh during the said period with a 56 per cent share in total order value. The portal was launched in August 2016 for better transparency and efficiency in the public procurement process.

The marketplace currently has nearly 53,000 registered government departments, organisations, and PSUs as buyers procuring goods across 16,335 product categories and 172 service categories. So far, the portal has processed 69.61 lakh orders.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/msme-eodb-gem-amazon-of-govt-procurement-sees-over-5x-increase-in-msme-seller-base-in-12-months-amid-covid/2285112/>

### **COVID toll on finances: Survey says 3/4th of cos forced to look at asset divestments**

Reeling under the financial impact of the pandemic, three-fourths of companies have been forced to look at divestment of what they consider as non-core assets, an annual survey by a consultancy firm has found out. The divestments are being planned to mobilise funds for tiding over liquidity issues and also investments, the survey of 30 companies by EY said.

It can be noted that the economy contracted by 7.3 per cent in FY21 because of the reverses of the pandemic, and the continuing impact because of a newer wave means the economy is unlikely to achieve the low-base fuelled double-digit growth rate in FY22 either.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/covid-toll-on-finances-survey-says-3-4th-of-cos-forced-to-look-at-asset-divestments/2285008/>

### **IT hardware makers seek higher sops under PLI scheme to be globally competitive**

Laptop and tablet manufacturers have written to the electronics ministry to increase sops under the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for IT hardware to be able to compete against the likes of Vietnam. India Cellular and Electronics Association of India (ICEA), which represents the likes of HP, Dell, Lenovo, Acer and contract manufacturers Foxconn, Flextronics, Wistron etc, has written to the government last week that we must aim for at least 25% of the global market which stands at \$240 billion currently.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/electronics/it-hardware-makers-seek-higher-sops-under-pli-scheme-to-be-globally-competitive/articleshow/84170654.cms>

### **New gold hallmarking rule silent on antique jewellery: Gold traders**

The new gold hallmarking rule is silent on antique jewellery, say gold traders, who want clarity on the matter so that such pieces can be resold in the market and need not be melted and made into new items. The rule that came into effect on June 15 requires old gold to be melted and remade before it is resold. Leading jewellers and gold trade executives said the rule had not provided any explanation on how to deal with estate, or antique, jewellery.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/fashion/-/cosmetics/-/jewellery/new-gold-hallmarking-rule-silent-on-antique-jewellery-gold-traders/articleshow/84172900.cms>

### **Draft rules for direct selling industry will bring in accountability, regulatory clarity: Experts**

The Consumer Affairs Ministry is proposing to make it mandatory for direct selling companies to register with the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, bring in norms for grievance redressal and prohibit charging of entry or registration fee from sellers. These are among the various provisions proposed by the Ministry in the draft rules for direct selling companies under the Consumer Protection Act.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/draft-rules-for-direct-selling-industry-will-bring-in-accountability-regulatory-clarity-experts/article35171449.ece>

### **Demand outlook for Indian tyre industry remains favourable: ICRA**

After two years of contraction, the Indian tyre industry's demand is poised to grow by 13-15 per cent in the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) segment and 13-15 per cent in the replacement market segment this fiscal, according to ratings agency ICRA.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/logistics/demand-outlook-for-indian-tyre-industry-remains-favourable-icra/article35164556.ece>

#### **IIM-A survey finds sales improving but margins shrinking for businesses**

Even as Covid-19 restrictions are being eased to trigger a post-lockdown economic revival in the country, businesses will continue to face deteriorated profit margins amidst escalation in costs, a latest Business Inflation Expectations Survey (BIES) by IIM-Ahmedabad revealed.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/iim-a-survey-finds-sales-improving-but-margins-shrinking-for-businesses/article35162380.ece>

### **Agriculture**

#### **Sugarcane production in Maharashtra may go up by over 200 lakh tonnes: NFCSF chief**

The sugarcane production in Maharashtra may go up by at least 237 lakh tonnes this year, and sugar factories in the state may have to work additionally for half a month to crush the produce, the president of the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories (NFCSF) Jayprakash Dandegavkar said on Tuesday. The federation's estimation was based on water availability and the monsoon predicted this year, the official said, adding that the production is expected to go up in Marathwada and western Maharashtra this year. "Last year, 100 cooperative and 92 private sugar factories in Maharashtra had crushed 1,012 lakh tonnes. The availability of water in various dams and in the ground will aid in the growth of sugarcane cultivation across the state. This year, we are expecting that factories may have to crush around 1,250 lakh tonnes of sugarcane," Dandegavkar told PTI.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/sugarcane-production-in-maharashtra-may-go-up-by-over-200-lakh-tonnes-nfcsf-chief/articleshow/84172180.cms>

#### **Maharashtra sugar mills plan compressed bio-gas plants**

Maharashtra sugar mills, which are facing a financial crisis due to glut in sugar production, less demand in the market, and a challenge to pay timely FRP (fair and remunerative price) to farmers, plan to establish compressed biogas (CBG) plants in an effort to find financial stability.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/maharashtra-sugar-mills-plan-compressed-biogas-plants/article35164905.ece>

#### **Don't use banned antibiotics in shrimp culture, MPEDA tells farmers**

Marine Products Export Development Authority Chairman, KS Srinivas has asked aqua-culture farmers to refrain from using any banned antibiotics in the shrimp culture system.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/dont-use-banned-antibiotics-in-shrimp-culture-mpeda-tells-farmers/article35163460.ece>

#### **Govt launches mobile app 'Matsya Setu' for aqua farmers**

Union Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Minister Giriraj Singh on Tuesday launched a mobile app 'Matsya Setu' to disseminate the latest freshwater aquaculture technologies to the country's aqua farmers. The app has been developed by the ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA), Bhubaneswar, with the funding support of the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB), Hyderabad, according to an official statement.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/govt-launches-mobile-app-matsya-setu-for-aqua-farmers/articleshow/84180416.cms>

### **Infrastructure**

#### **Covid pandemic hits housing supply, launches down 59% in April-June**

The economic uncertainty caused by the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic has forced real estate developers in India to adopt a more cautious approach towards spending, which is reflected in new supply numbers for the

April-June period (Q2) of 2021, said a PropTiger report. A total of 21,839 new units were launched in these markets during April-June, lower by 59 per cent compared to the launches in January-March. However, when compared to the same period last year, new launches show an increase of 74 per cent.

"This remarkable increase in launches in Q2 over the same period the previous year could be explained by the fact that during a large period of Q2CY2020, India continued to remain under a national lockdown that adversely hit the economy, forcing Asia's third largest economy to slip into recession in 2020," said the report.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/covid-pandemic-hits-housing-supply-launches-down-59-in-april-june-121070600869\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/covid-pandemic-hits-housing-supply-launches-down-59-in-april-june-121070600869_1.html)

#### **Warehousing transactions in 8 cities to grow at 19% CAGR over five years: Knight Frank India**

The country's annual warehousing transactions across top eight cities is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 19 per cent to 76.2 mn sq ft by Financial Year 2026, from 31.7 mn sq ft in FY 2021.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/warehousing-transactions-in-8-cities-to-grow-at-19-cagr-over-five-years-knight-frank-india/article35164284.ece>

#### **Domestic air passenger traffic back to growth trajectory in June**

Domestic air passenger traffic was back to the growth trajectory in June amid the falling number of COVID-19 cases in the country with around three million passengers flying on local routes in the previous month as against around two million in May, a report said on Tuesday.

Though there is some recovery observed in June, stress on demand continues, driven largely by the second wave of the pandemic, limiting travel to only necessary travel, credit rating agency ICRA said in its report. On a sequential basis, domestic passenger traffic was up 41-42 per cent in June over May. The domestic passenger volume, however, rose 51 per cent on a year-on-year basis, it stated.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/domestic-air-passenger-traffic-back-to-growth-trajectory-in-june-121070600938\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/domestic-air-passenger-traffic-back-to-growth-trajectory-in-june-121070600938_1.html)

#### **Delhi Metro launches India's 1st FASTag/UPI based cashless parking & MMI facility at Kashmere Gate station**

Now Delhi Metro commuters can use convenient cashless parking facility at Kashmere Gate metro station. For the first time in India, a FASTag/UPI based cashless parking facility has been launched at Kashmere Gate metro station today. According to Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), as part of the Multi-Model Integration (MMI) initiative, dedicated Intermediate Public Transport (IPT) lanes for Taxi, E-Rickshaw, Auto were also launched at the metro station. As many as 55 four-wheelers and 174 two-wheelers can be accommodated at this exclusively cashless parking facility, which is located at Gate Number 6 of the Kashmere Gate metro station.

According to DMRC, entry/exit, as well as payment of 4-wheelers, can be done through the FASTag. Through FASTag, the parking fee will be deducted, thereby reducing the time for entry and payment. Vehicles with FASTags will only be permitted to park in this facility. The 2-wheelers' entry can be done by only swiping the Delhi Metro smart card.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/infrastructure/delhi-metro-launches-indias-1st-fastag-upi-based-cashless-parking-mmi-facility-at-kashmere-gate-station/2285025/>

### **Telecom**

#### **DoT secretary to meet satellite companies, telcos on local manufacturing of satcom gear**

Department of Telecommunications (DoT) secretary Anshu Prakash will next week meet diverse industry stakeholders, including telcos, tech startups, IoT players and global satellite companies such as Bharti-backed OneWeb, Hughes Communications and Inmarsat to discuss a comprehensive roadmap for locally manufacturing satellite communications gear such as gateways and related infrastructure like IoT devices, customer premise equipment (CPEs), antennae systems and sensors.

[https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/dot-secretary-to-meet-satellite-companies-telcos-on-local-manufacturing-of-satcom-gear/articleshow/84168357.cms?utm\\_source=ETTopNews&utm\\_medium=HP&utm\\_campaign=TN&utm\\_content=23](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/dot-secretary-to-meet-satellite-companies-telcos-on-local-manufacturing-of-satcom-gear/articleshow/84168357.cms?utm_source=ETTopNews&utm_medium=HP&utm_campaign=TN&utm_content=23)

### **Telecom Watchdog asks DoT to stop OneWeb, Starlink and Amazon from getting free 5G spectrum through backdoor**

Telecom Watchdog, a consumer forum and an NGO, has called on telecom secretary Anshu Prakash, to stop the three global LEO satellite operators -- Bharti-backed OneWeb, Elon Musk's Starlink and Jeff Bezos-founded Amazon -- from grabbing potential 4G/5G spectrum for free through the backdoor.

[https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/telecom-watchdog-asks-dot-to-stop-  
oneweb-starlink-and-amazon-from-getting-free-5g-spectrum-through-  
backdoor/articleshow/84170505.cms?utm\\_source=ETTopNews&utm\\_medium=HP&utm\\_campaign=TN&utm\\_content=23](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/telecom-watchdog-asks-dot-to-stop-oneweb-starlink-and-amazon-from-getting-free-5g-spectrum-through-backdoor/articleshow/84170505.cms?utm_source=ETTopNews&utm_medium=HP&utm_campaign=TN&utm_content=23)

## **Energy**

### **MoP clarification enables BSES discoms to exit NTPC PPA for the first time**

The Union power ministry has allowed BSES Delhi discoms to exit power purchase agreement with NTPC's Dadri-I unit, in a first of its kind move that is likely to trigger many such requests. In a clarification to its March notification, the power ministry on Tuesday said power distribution companies can exit entire allocation from a particular project after completion of 25 years. "In case of bulk power supply agreement also, the state/discoms may relinquish entire allocated power from such project after completion of 25 years."

[https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/mop-clarification-enables-bses-discoms-to-exit-  
ntpc-ppa-for-the-first-time/articleshow/84175660.cms](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/mop-clarification-enables-bses-discoms-to-exit-ntpc-ppa-for-the-first-time/articleshow/84175660.cms)

### **India's coal-fired power plants face prospect of stranded asset risk: IEEFA report**

India's future coal-fired power project pipeline carries a massive stranded asset risk due to the collapse in the average utilisation rate of its coal-fired power fleet, leading to an underestimation of financial risk for new projects, according to a report from the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA).

[https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/indias-coal-fired-power-plants-face-prospect-of-stranded-asset-risk-  
ieefa-report/article35164718.ece](https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/indias-coal-fired-power-plants-face-prospect-of-stranded-asset-risk-ieefa-report/article35164718.ece)

## **States**

### **Exorbitant freight rates adds to woes of industrial units in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand**

High logistics costs weigh heavily on the engineering goods exporters and unavailability of containers have added to the woes of manufacturers based out of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The exorbitant freight rates could render the industrial units in these states uncompetitive not only against the domestic peers but also in international markets, said EEPIC India convenor (Baddi Chapter) Mr Arun Shukla.

[https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/engineering/exorbitant-freight-rates-adds-to-  
woes-of-industrial-units-in-himachal-pradesh-uttarakhand/articleshow/84174669.cms](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/engineering/exorbitant-freight-rates-adds-to-woes-of-industrial-units-in-himachal-pradesh-uttarakhand/articleshow/84174669.cms)

### **Maharashtra govt introduces 3 bills to counter Centre's farm laws**

The Shiv Sena-led MVA government in Maharashtra on Tuesday introduced three amendment bills in the assembly related to agriculture, co-operation, food and civil supplies, in a move to counter the new farm laws enacted by the Centre that are facing stiff opposition from a section of cultivators. The bills have provisions for higher than MSP rate for produce in farming agreement with traders, timely payment of dues, three-year jail term and Rs 5 lakh fine or both for harassment of farmers.

They also have provisions to give power to the state government to regulate and prohibit production, supply, distribution and impose stock limits on essential commodities. Revenue Minister Balasaheb Thorat said the central farm acts were passed without discussion and several of their provisions encroach on rights of state governments.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/maharashtra-govt-introduces-3-bills-to-counter-  
centre-s-farm-laws-121070601035\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/maharashtra-govt-introduces-3-bills-to-counter-centre-s-farm-laws-121070601035_1.html)

### **Maharashtra passes resolution seeking three crore vaccine doses from the Centre**

The Maharashtra Assembly on Tuesday passed a resolution seeking three crore Covid-19 vaccine doses per month from the Centre.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/covid-19-maharashtra-seeks-from-the-centre-three-crore-vaccine-dosesmonth/article35172049.ece>

#### **Delhi govt unveils new excise policy; allows bars to operate till 3 am**

The Delhi government on Monday announced the new excise policy for 2021-22, which allows bars in hotels, clubs and restaurants in the national capital to operate till 3 am except those licensees who have been given license to operate round the clock service of liquor. The government also allowed hotels, clubs and restaurants in Delhi to serve Indian or foreign liquor in any area within the licensed premises, including the terrace, balcony or lower area, so long as the liquor serving is screened off from public view.

According to the 2021-22 excise policy, every liquor outlet in the city will provide a walk-in experience to its customers who will have multiple choices of brands, and the entire selection and sale process will be completed within the vend premise.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/delhi-govt-unveils-new-excise-policy-allows-bars-to-operate-till-3-am-121070600275\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/delhi-govt-unveils-new-excise-policy-allows-bars-to-operate-till-3-am-121070600275_1.html)

#### **Delhi launches financial assistance scheme for families of Covid victims**

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday launched a social security scheme and a portal to provide financial assistance to families who lost their loved ones to COVID-19. Under the 'Mukhyamantri COVID-19 Pariwar Aarthik Sahayata Yojana', Rs 50,000 ex gratia will be given to every family that lost a member to COVID-19 and an additional Rs 2,500 per month will be given if the deceased was the sole breadwinner. Addressing a virtual press conference, Kejriwal said Delhi has faced four waves of coronavirus. The fourth one affected almost every family and many people died. "Many children were orphaned, many families lost their sole breadwinner. In such a case, being a responsible government, we conceptualised this scheme," he said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/delhi-launches-financial-assistance-scheme-for-families-of-covid-victims-121070600550\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/delhi-launches-financial-assistance-scheme-for-families-of-covid-victims-121070600550_1.html)

#### **States urge Centre to reduce vaccine quota for private players**

Several state governments have asked the Centre to slash or scrap the Covid-19 vaccine quota of 25% for private hospitals. Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Odisha and north-eastern states have asked the ministry of health and family welfare to reduce the vaccine share earmarked for private hospitals as a majority of the beneficiaries are using government's healthcare facilities.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/states-urge-centre-to-reduce-vax-quota-for-private-players/articleshow/84154992.cms>

#### **Punjab, Haryana witness alarming dip in groundwater level: Study**

Groundwater level in northwest India has dipped to alarming levels, especially in Punjab and Haryana, according to a new study. The research paper published by IIT Kanpur has used more than 4,000 groundwater well data from northwest India to demonstrate that groundwater levels in the states of Punjab and Haryana have fallen to alarming levels in the last four-five decades. India is the largest user of groundwater in the world for irrigation, domestic and industrial needs. The total annual groundwater abstraction in India is about 245 km<sup>3</sup>, out of which about 90 per cent is consumed for irrigation.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/punjab-haryana-witness-alarming-dip-in-groundwater-level-study/articleshow/84167585.cms>

#### **Assam announces total lockdown in 7 districts with high COVID positivity rates**

The Assam government on Tuesday announced a complete lockdown in seven districts where the positivity rates of COVID-19 cases are high. The government imposed a round-the-clock curfew in Goalpara, Golaghat, Jorhat, Lakhimpur, Sonitpur, Biswanath and Morigaon as the number of coronavirus cases in these districts continued to increase despite imposition of certain restrictions earlier, Health and Family Welfare Minister Keshab Mahanta said. These districts have been brought under the containment zones, he said at a press conference. Rural and tea garden areas in these districts have been reporting a substantial number of COVID-19 cases, the minister said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/assam-announces-total-lockdown-in-7-districts-with-high-covid-positivity-rates/articleshow/84173186.cms>



## Healthcare

### Sputnik V Vaccine: Morepen Labs commences producing test batch at Himachal facility

Morepen Laboratories has commenced producing the test batch of the Russian Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine in an exclusive facility in Himachal Pradesh .

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/sputnik-v-vaccine-morepen-labs-commences-producing-test-batch-at-himachal-facility/article35168614.ece>

## External

### Kashmir exports first commercial shipment of Mishri cherries to Dubai

A first commercial shipment of *Mishri* variety of cherries from Kashmir valley has been exported to Dubai from Srinagar.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/kashmir-exports-first-commercial-shipment-of-mishri-cherries-to-dubai/article35169489.ece>



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