



July 23, 2021 – Friday

### Key Developments

#### **Union Cabinet approves Rs 6,322-cr PLI scheme for specialty steel**

The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved Rs 6,322-crore production linked incentive scheme for specialty steel, a move aimed at boosting domestic manufacturing and exports from the sector, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said. He said that incentives worth Rs 6,322 crore will be provided over five years and it would create over 525,000 jobs.

"It will boost manufacturing and help in reducing imports," he told reporters in New Delhi. The PLI scheme would cover coated/plated steel products; high strength/wear resistant steel; specialty rails; alloy steel products, steel wires and electrical steel. "These steel products are used in a variety of applications which are both strategic and non-strategic and include white goods, automobile body parts and components, pipes for transportation of oil and gas, boilers, ballistic and armour sheets meant for defence application, high-speed railway lines, turbine components, electrical steel meant for power transformers and electric vehicles," said government in a statement.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/union-cabinet-approves-rs-6-322-cr-pli-scheme-for-specialty-steel-121072200863\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/union-cabinet-approves-rs-6-322-cr-pli-scheme-for-specialty-steel-121072200863_1.html)

#### **Indian Finance Ministry officer among 25 global tax experts appointed to UN tax committee**

Rasmi Ranjan Das, a Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, is among a distinguished group of 25 tax experts from around the world appointed as members of the UN tax committee for the 2021 to 2025 term. The committee, formally known as the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters, guides countries' efforts to advance stronger and more forward-looking tax policies adapted to the realities of globalised trade and investment, an increasingly digitalised economy and worsening environmental degradation.

It assists countries in their efforts to prevent double or multiple taxation as well as non-taxation, broaden their tax base, strengthen their tax administrations, and curb international tax evasion and avoidance.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/indian-finance-ministry-officer-among-25-global-tax-experts-appointed-to-un-tax-committee/2295316/>

#### **Charitable trust running medical store required to register for GST, says Gujarat High Court**

The Gujarat High Court held that medical store run by a charitable trust is a 'business' even if medicines are sold at lower prices and hence it requires to register under Goods and Services Tax (GST).

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/charitable-trust-running-medical-store-required-to-register-for-gst-says-gujarat-high-court/article35466064.ece>

#### **Government departments: E-commerce rules to hit investor sentiment**

Several government departments have expressed concerns over the proposed consumer protection norms for e-commerce companies, arguing that it will impact ease of doing business and the overall investment sentiment. While some of the agencies have shared their feedback with the consumer affairs department, which is piloting the initiative, officials said the proposal creates multiple challenges for e-commerce players, beginning with Licence Raj.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/government-departments-e-commerce-rules-to-hit-investor-sentiment/articleshow/84630058.cms>

## Economy

### **Union Cabinet eases foreign investment rules to aid BPCL sale: Report**

Union Cabinet approved plans on Thursday to allow 100% foreign direct investment in state-run oil companies in which a strategic stake sale is announced, a move to help privatisation of Bharat Petroleum Corp, two government sources said, Reuters reported. "Foreign investment up to 100% under automatic route is allowed in cases where government has accorded in-principle approval for strategic disinvestment of the PSU (public sector undertaking) engaged in petroleum and natural gas sector," said one of the sources. India so far allows 49% foreign direct investment in state-run oil and gas companies. The government wants to sell its near 53% stake in BPCL, India's second-largest state-run refiner, in this financial year ending in March 2022, as part of plans to raise Rs 1.75 trillion from stakes in companies.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/union-cabinet-eases-foreign-investment-rules-to-aid-bpcl-sale-report-121072201004\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/union-cabinet-eases-foreign-investment-rules-to-aid-bpcl-sale-report-121072201004_1.html)

### **No likely impact of Cairn, Devas lawsuits on AI disinvestment process: Govt**

Air India is a separate corporate entity with its own management and board so there is "no likely impact" on its ongoing disinvestment process due to the lawsuits filed by Cairn Energy and Devas Multimedia in the US court, Minister of State for Civil Aviation V K Singh said on Thursday. Cairn Energy and Devas Multimedia, respectively, are seeking USD 1.725 billion and USD 1.2 billion -- which they won in international arbitrations -- from India.

"Cairn Energy and Devas Multimedia have filed lawsuits in the United States District Court for Southern District of New York seeking declaratory and money judgement against Air India Limited as an alter ego of the Republic of India," Singh said in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha. here is "no likely impact" of the lawsuits on the ongoing disinvestment process of Air India Limited as it is a separate corporate entity with its own management and board, he mentioned.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/no-likely-impact-of-cairn-devas-lawsuits-on-ai-disinvestment-process-govt-121072200899\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/no-likely-impact-of-cairn-devas-lawsuits-on-ai-disinvestment-process-govt-121072200899_1.html)

### **PMEGP: Loan disbursements, employment generation hit all-time high in FY21 since scheme's inception**

Despite Covid, Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), which offers credit-linked subsidies to micro-enterprises launched in the manufacturing and services sectors, has overachieved its target of the loan disbursement and subsequent employment generation for the financial year 2020-21. According to the government data, banks had sanctioned and disbursed loans to 84,793 micro units, thereby enabling employment for around 6,78,344 people against the target of assisting 78,625 entrepreneurs to set up micro units and as a result, generate estimated employment for 6,29,000 people.

"This is the best performance under PMEGP since its inception in 2008-09. Thus, the target fixed under PMEGP for the year 2020-21 has been surpassed despite COVID 19 challenges," said MSME Minister Narayan Rane sharing the data in reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha on Monday. In the current financial year, 1,42,864 jobs have already been created through 15,564 micro units, according to the available data as of July 22. The total jobs created since FY09 under PMEGP stood at 57.37 lakh.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/msme-skill-pmegp-loan-disbursements-employment-generation-hit-all-time-high-in-fy21-since-schemes-inception/2295541/>

### **Excise duty collections from petroleum products being used in infra development, says Nitin Gadkari**

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday said excise duty collected from petroleum products are being used for infrastructure development and other development items. The road transport and highways minister said this in the Lok Sabha while replying to a question on the impact of rising fuel prices on the logistics cost of transportation in the country. "The excise duty rates on petroleum products have been calibrated to generate resources for infrastructure and other development items of expenditure, keeping in view the prevalent fiscal situation," Gadkari said. According to the minister, the logistics cost of transportation through road depends on several factors such as capital cost of the vehicle, salaries, insurance, permit tax, maintenance, fuel, toll tax and other miscellaneous expenses.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/excise-duty-collections-from-petroleum-products-being-used-in-infra-development-says-nitin-gadkari/2295683/>

#### **No job loss in ports, shipping sector, says Union minister Shripad Naik**

There was no job loss in the ports and shipping sector despite the Covid-19 crisis impacting the major ports and causing a considerable decline in the total traffic and containers traffic, Union minister Shripad Naik informed Parliament on Thursday. In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shripad Naik said the ministry has given monetary compensation of Rs 50 lakh to the dependent members or legal heirs of the employees who lost their lives due to acquired COVID infection at work place. "The impact of Covid-19 at major ports started from March 2020. There was a considerable decline in the total traffic and containers traffic ... there is no job loss in this sector," Naik said. He said Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has issued necessary directions from time to time to ports to put in place a screening, detection and quarantine system of disembarking Seafarers or cruise passengers, to obtain self-declaration from arriving crews/passengers, to install thermal scanners.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/no-job-loss-in-ports-shipping-sector-says-union-minister-shripad-naik/2295707/>

#### **Consumer sentiment turns corner in July, rural India upbeat**

Consumer sentiment has turned around in July registering an improvement of 12.2% over the last three weeks since June 27 with rural India witnessing a significant improvement compared to urban owing to revival in monsoon, the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy said. Data from CMIE shows cumulative consumer sentiments improved by 17% cent during the past three weeks in rural India while the increase was a modest 1.7% in urban India during the same period.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/monsoon-effect-consumer-sentiment-turns-corner-in-july-rural-india-upbeat/articleshow/84639637.cms>

#### **Consumer demand during Phase II of the lockdown improved by 200%: Report**

Consumer demand has been up by more than 200 per cent in the second phase of lockdown (March-May 21), as compared to the lockdown last year (March to May 2020), according to a survey report by ZestMoney, the Buy Now, Pay Later platform. Customer applications for the BNPL credit limit on the platform itself went up by 5 times in the March-May 2021 period as more people took to planning their finances better. The BNPL platforms claim strong consumer behaviour around repayments, bounce rates signalled green shoots of recovery and a revival in consumer demand.

E-commerce transactions were up by 200 per cent during this period, and the categories driving growth included online electronics, smartphones, Edtech, fashion, home decor among others. Bangalore, New Delhi and Mumbai were the top 3 metros witnessing the highest BNPL transactions, while Jaipur, Lucknow and Vishakhapatnam emerged as the top 3 non-metro markets. Top categories that respondents were likely to spend on in the coming months: Smartphones, electronics, fashion, home décor, water purifiers and air tickets. The survey also revealed that 62 per cent of people planned to splurge on big-ticket items in the coming months while opting for BNPL services.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/money/consumer-demand-during-phase-ii-of-the-lockdown-improved-by-200-report/2295672/>

### **Banking and Finance**

#### **Restructured MSME loan accounts worth over Rs 55k crore by PSBs double in 18 months**

MSME loan accounts restructured by the public sector banks (PSBs) have grown 2.1X in the nearly one-and-a-half-year period. From 6,19,562 accounts involving Rs 22,650 crore restructured as of January 31, 2020, 13.06 lakh accounts with an aggregate amount of Rs 55,333 crore were restructured as of June 26, 2021, MSME Minister Narayan Rane said in reply to a question in the Lok Sabha on Thursday. The last year's data was shared by former Finance Ministry MoS Anurag Thakur in the Rajya Sabha in March 2020. Since 2019, weakness in the MSME portfolio of banks and NBFCs has drawn regulatory attention, with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) permitting restructuring of temporarily impaired MSME loans up to Rs 25 crore.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/msme-fin-restructured-msme-loan-accounts-worth-over-rs-55k-crore-by-psbs-double-in-18-months/2295763/>

## Industry

### **Funding into battery storage, smart grid, efficiency firms up at \$10.4 billion in H1 2021**

Total corporate funding in the battery storage, smart grid and efficiency companies in first half (H1) 2021 was up exponentially year-over-year at \$10.4 billion compared to \$1.5 billion raised in the Covid hit first half of 2020.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/funding-into-battery-storage-smart-grid-efficiency-firms-up-at-104-billion-in-h1-2021/article35462694.ece?homepage=true>

### **TV advertisement volumes higher in June 2021 than pre-pandemic levels: BARC India**

TV advertisement volumes touched a new high in June this year recording a 6 per cent growth over pre-pandemic levels even as the country faced the second pandemic wave.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/info-tech/tv-advertisement-volumes-higher-in-june-2021-than-pre-pandemic-levels-barc-india/article35462105.ece?homepage=true>

## Agriculture

### **Q1 farm exports up 44% at \$4.8-billion**

Building on last year's robust growth, exports of agri-products under the portfolio of Agricultural and Processed Foods Export Development Authority (APEDA) registered a 44 per cent increase in the first quarter of current financial year on higher overseas demand. This is notwithstanding challenges such as the supply chain issues triggered by the Covid second wave induced lockdown during April and May across the country and higher freight rates.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/q1-farm-exports-up-44-at-48-b-apeda/article35466563.ece?homepage=true>

### **National Fishworkers Forum urges MPs to defer Indian Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021**

The National Fishworkers' Forum (NFF) has opposed the proposed Indian Marine Fisheries (IMF) Bill, 2021, saying that it is fundamentally against the interest of traditional marine capture fishers, fish workers and fisherwomen.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/national-fishworkers-forum-urges-mps-to-defer-indian-marine-fisheries-bill-2021/article35460189.ece>

### **Coffee output pegged at record 3.69 lakh tonnes for 2021-22**

India's coffee production for the crop year starting October 2021 has been projected at a record 3.69 lakh tonnes (lt), in the post-blossom estimates of the State-run Coffee Board.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/coffee-output-pegged-at-record-369-lakh-tonnes-for-2021-22/article35452310.ece>

## Infrastructure

### **Cabinet approves setting up integrated multi-purpose infrastructure development corporation for Ladakh**

The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved the establishment of an Integrated Multi-purpose infrastructure Development Corporation for the Union Territory of Ladakh. The Corporation will also work as main construction agency for infrastructure development in the UT.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/policy/cabinet-approves-setting-up-integrated-multi-purpose-infrastructure-development-corporation-for-ladakh/article35468099.ece>

### **'Work near home' lifts corporate leasing of co-working spaces by 73% in H1**

The leasing of flexible or co-working spaces by companies has seen a spurt in the first half of the year as companies took offices closer to their employees' homes during the second wave of the pandemic. The surge was as much as 73 per cent, with 31,538 seats taken on lease during the first half of 2021 on a yearly basis, property consultant

Cushman & Wakefield said. Enterprises had leased 36,255 seats in the whole of last year. In contrast, leasing of office spaces in six Indian cities in H1 of FY21 fell 22 per cent year-on-year to 10.1 million sq ft.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/work-near-home-lifts-corporate-leasing-of-co-working-spaces-by-73-in-h1-121072201016\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/work-near-home-lifts-corporate-leasing-of-co-working-spaces-by-73-in-h1-121072201016_1.html)

#### **Sentiments in property market turns pessimistic in April-June: Report**

Sentiments in the real estate market turned pessimistic during the April-June quarter because of the outbreak of the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic but the future outlook for the next six months remains optimistic, according to a survey by Knight Frank, FICCI and Naredco. In the 29th edition of Real Estate Sentiment Index Q2 2021, the consultant said the current sentiment score dropped to 35 in April-June 2021 from 57 in the first quarter of this calendar year. However, it said that the drop is less intense than it was during the first COVID wave (Q2 2020) when the score had hit an all-time low of 22. The Future Sentiment score has inched down marginally to 56 in Q2 2021 from 57 in Q1 2021 but continues to remain in the optimistic zone.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/sentiments-in-property-market-turns-pessimistic-in-april-june-report-121072200720\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/sentiments-in-property-market-turns-pessimistic-in-april-june-report-121072200720_1.html)

#### **Road ministry built 13,327km of highways in FY21: Nitin Gadkari**

The Road Transport and Highways ministry has constructed 13,327 km of National Highways in 2020-21, which works out to about 37 km per day, Parliament was informed on Thursday. In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Gadkari said to mitigate COVID-19 pandemic effect, his ministry took initiatives under Atmanirbhar Bharat and provided several COVID-19 relief measures to contractors, concessionaires and consultants, including extension of time for 3-9 months. He also noted that the cost of ongoing projects may increase due to site, local and project specific factors or other factors including price escalation during the project time cycle. In BOT projects, escalation cost is absorbed by the concessionaire, while in other projects, price escalation is payable as per contract conditions, and the actual amount of price escalation and inter-alia the actual increase in project cost, if any, is known only on actual completion of the project and final settlement of bills.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/road-ministry-built-13-327km-of-highways-in-fy21-nitin-gadkari-121072200827\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/road-ministry-built-13-327km-of-highways-in-fy21-nitin-gadkari-121072200827_1.html)

### **Telecom**

#### **DoT mulls sending reference to Trai on 5G auction**

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is likely to shortly seek the sector regulator's recommendations on all issues such as related to the auction of 5G airwaves. "The government is considering sending a reference to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai), seeking its recommendations on issues involved in auction of spectrum available for International Mobile Telecommunications (read: 5G) services," minister of state for communications Devusinh Chauhan told Rajya Sabha Thursday.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-policy/dot-mulls-sending-reference-to-trai-on-5g-auction/articleshow/84647492.cms>

#### **Govt OKs up to Rs 15,000 crore FDI investment proposal from Voda Idea**

The government has approved a proposal from Vodafone Idea (Vi) for an investment of up to Rs 15,000 crore via the foreign direct investment (FDI) route, a person familiar with the matter said. The struggling telco's stock rose over 6% on the news. The person added that the government's nod is an enabling approval and no fund-raising deal has been sealed yet.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-policy/govt-oks-up-to-rs-15000-crore-fdi-investment-proposal-from-voda-idea/articleshow/84637956.cms>

### **States**

#### **Forest and Horticulture Departments to formulate tea and horticulture policy: Arunachal Deputy CM**

Arunachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister, Chowna Mein said that the Forest and Horticulture Departments will formulate a Tea Policy and Horticulture Policy. He also asked the Agriculture secretary to modify the wine policy to

facilitate marketing of the locally-produced kiwi wines from the state. Mein reviewed the Industrial Policy of Arunachal Pradesh with the Commissioner and Secretaries from Planning & Investment, Industries, Agriculture, Forest and Tax & Excise Departments today.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/forest-and-horticulture-departments-to-formulate-tea-and-horticulture-policy-arunachal-deputy-cm/articleshow/84618298.cms>

#### **Small tea growers can avail benefits under the PM-KISAN scheme**

Small tea growers can avail benefits under the PM-KISAN scheme. Assam Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday decided farmers having annual patta (Eksonia Patta), Touji Patta, farmers cultivating in devottar land, farmers eligible to get land patta under Forest Rights Act, small tea growers and horticulture farmers will also be eligible to get benefits under PM-KISAN.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/small-tea-growers-can-avail-benefits-under-the-pm-kisan-scheme/articleshow/84646748.cms>

#### **Karnataka's Data Centre Policy: Investors seek tweaks in building codes, clean energy**

Tweaks in building regulations and supply of power from clean energy sources are some of the queries Karnataka's information technology and biotechnology (IT/BT) officials have come across from potential investors as they get onto drafting the data centre policy. With India's digital economy estimated to touch \$1 trillion by 2025 and the Centre pushing for localising storage of data, states are vying with each other to get big ticket investments in the fledgling data storage sector.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/karnatakas-data-centre-policy-investors-seek-tweaks-in-building-codes-clean-energy/articleshow/84641373.cms>

### **Healthcare**

#### **Over a quarter of health subsidy cornered by the wealthiest 20%: PHFI**

In 1946, the Bhore Committee report recommended that India adopt a three-tier health system to provide preventive and curative care. The main contention of the report was that India should ensure access to health care independent of socioeconomic conditions. The Bhore report has since served as the foundation of India's health care reforms. Although the first National Health Policy was only formulated in 1983, its focus was primary health care for all by 2000.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/over-a-quarter-of-health-subsidy-cornered-by-the-wealthiest-20-phfi-121072200250\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/over-a-quarter-of-health-subsidy-cornered-by-the-wealthiest-20-phfi-121072200250_1.html)

#### **Delta variant continues to be dominant in Covid cases across India: INSACOG**

The Delta variant of SARS-CoV2 continues to be the dominant lineage for new cases across the country, while the other Variants of Concern (VoC) are at a lower rate and declining, INSACOG, a consortium of government panels involved in the genome-sequencing of the coronavirus, has said. There is currently no evidence of any new Delta sub-lineage that is of greater concern than Delta, it has said. "Delta continues to be the dominant lineage for new cases across all parts of India in recent samples and remains the most rapidly rising lineage globally that is responsible for multiple outbreaks, including across Southeast Asia, which shows the fastest growth in new cases globally," the INSACOG said. Regions with high vaccination and strong public health measures, such as Singapore, continue to do well, it noted.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/delta-variant-continues-to-be-dominant-in-covid-cases-across-india-insacog-121072200759\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/delta-variant-continues-to-be-dominant-in-covid-cases-across-india-insacog-121072200759_1.html)

#### **Given robust reporting system, missing out on Covid deaths unlikely: Govt**

Refuting media reports that alleged India's COVID-19 death toll was "vastly undercounted", the government on Thursday said the reports assume that all excess mortality figures are Covid deaths, which is not based on facts and totally fallacious. Given the robust and statute-based death registration system in India, while some cases could go undetected as per the principles of infectious disease and its management, missing out on the deaths is unlikely, the Union Health Ministry said. There have been some recent media reports alleging that India's toll of excess deaths during the pandemic could be in millions, terming the official COVID-19 death toll "vastly undercounted", the

ministry said in a statement. In these news reports, quoting findings from some recent studies, the US and European countries' age-specific infection fatality rates have been used to calculate excess deaths in India based on the seropositivity.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/given-robust-reporting-system-missing-out-on-covid-deaths-unlikely-govt-121072200443\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/given-robust-reporting-system-missing-out-on-covid-deaths-unlikely-govt-121072200443_1.html)

#### **More than 3.20 crore vaccine doses currently available with states, UTs, private hospitals: Centre**

More than 3.20 crore COVID-19 vaccine doses are currently available with states, union territories and private hospitals for inoculation, the Union Health Ministry said on Thursday. States and union territories have so far received a total of 43,79,78,900 vaccine doses through all channels and a further 7,00,000 doses are in the pipeline, it said. The total consumption, including wastage, so far is 40,59,77,410 doses, the ministry said, citing data available at 8 AM on Thursday. More than 3.20 crore -- 3,20,01,490 -- balance and unutilised doses are still available with states, UTs and private hospitals to be administered, the ministry said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/more-than-3-20-crore-vaccine-doses-currently-available-with-states-uts-private-hospitals-centre/articleshow/84631747.cms>

#### **High court order on diabetes drug patent may reduce prices**

The cost for treating diabetes is expected to come down with the Delhi high court having dismissed an appeal by AstraZeneca, which had sought the restraining of the generic versions of a blockbuster drug. The global pharma firm was also suing a host of domestic companies for the infringement of patents covering the drug. The HC order paves the way for more affordable versions soon by domestic companies of the blockbuster anti-diabetes drug Dapagliflozin in the market.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/high-court-order-on-diabetes-drug-patent-may-reduce-prices/articleshow/84629263.cms>

#### **External**

#### **India 'challenging place' to do business, must ease hurdles: US State Dept**

India "remains a challenging place" to do business, the US has said, urging it to foster an attractive and reliable investment climate by reducing barriers to investment and minimising the bureaucratic hurdles. The State Department, in a report '2021 Investment Climate Statements: India' released on Wednesday, said that India remains a challenging place to do business and also referred to the removal of the special constitutional status from the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

New protectionist measures, including increased tariffs, procurement rules that limit competitive choices, sanitary and phytosanitary measures not based on science, and Indian-specific standards not aligned with international standards, effectively closed off producers from global supply chains and restricted the expansion in bilateral trade, the report said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/us-says-india-challenging-place-to-do-business-urges-to-minimise-hurdles-121072200277\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/us-says-india-challenging-place-to-do-business-urges-to-minimise-hurdles-121072200277_1.html)

#### **Fearing export ban, traditional onion buyers abroad switch to other origins**

With traditional buyers of Indian onions hesitating to place orders in view of the Centre banning exports in September last year and in December 2019, onion prices have dropped about 10 per cent since the beginning of July.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/fearing-export-ban-traditional-onion-buyers-abroad-switch-to-other-origins/article35462982.ece?homepage=true>

#### **India should reduce import tariffs on high-end alcohol in phased manner: ICRIER report**

To meet the demands of import duty reduction on wines and spirits made by potential free trade agreement (FTA) partners like the UK, the EU and Australia, and enhance domestic value-addition, the government should focus on a phased reduction of tariffs and duties on such items above a threshold price level, a study conducted by Delhi-based research agency ICRIER has proposed.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/policy/india-should-reduce-import-tariffs-on-high-end-alcohol-in-phased-manner-icrier-report/article35467871.ece>

#### **Rise in India's tea import continues in current fiscal**

The rising trend witnessed in tea import in fiscal 2020-21 over the previous year continues with greater accent in the current fiscal.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/rise-in-indias-tea-import-continues-in-current-fiscal/article35464780.ece>

#### **India's textile sector needs more support to arrest shrinking market share**

India's share in global exports of cotton yarn shrunk 600 basis points to 23 per cent in calendar year 2020 (CY2020) from 29 per cent in CY2015, while in readymade garments (RMG), its share has stagnated at 3-4 per cent over the past decade. Lack of free trade agreements (FTAs) and significant improvement in peer competitiveness are the main reasons for this fall. Textiles is important to India's \$313 billion merchandise exports as it accounts for 11 per cent of the pie. The sector is also a significant employment generator. Given its economic importance, the sector has seen a slew of measures from the government of late, including the textile parks announced in Union Budget 2021-22 and inclusion of the sector for allocations under the Production-linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. While these are steps in the right direction, a CRISIL Research's analysis indicates more is needed to address the issues and spur a revival.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/garments-/textiles/indias-textile-sector-needs-more-support-to-arrest-shrinking-market-share/articleshow/84633085.cms>

#### **India's smartphone market falls 13 pc sequentially in Q2 amid 2nd COVID wave: Canalys**

Smartphone shipments in India fell 13 per cent to 32.4 million units in the April-June 2021 period over the previous quarter as the second wave of COVID-19 stifled demand, according to research firm Canalys. Given that the April-June 2020 had an almost two-month nationwide lockdown (amid the first wave of the pandemic), the year-on-year comparison was "extremely favorable" with shipments up 87 per cent, Canalys said in its report. Xiaomi continued to remain the top player with 29 per cent market share (9.5 million units shipment) in the June 2021 quarter, followed by Samsung stayed in second place with 17 per cent share (5.5 million) and Vivo with 5.4 million.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/electronics/indias-smartphone-mkt-falls-13-pc-sequentially-in-q2-amid-2nd-covid-wave-canalys/articleshow/84634979.cms>

#### **India, Vietnam could emerge as key pillars of global supply chain initiative**

A major impact of the US-China trade war and the global pandemic has been disruption of traditional global supply chains originating from China. The disruption of international trade has necessitated a rethink on the supply chain. Earlier, supply chains were designed to keep costs low. In the post pandemic era, supply chains are being reworked to reduce the risks of future disruptions. The international community is looking to move towards relocating supply chains away from China to India and Vietnam.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-vietnam-could-emerge-as-key-pillars-of-global-supply-chain-initiative/articleshow/84630746.cms>



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