



August 26, 2021 – Thursday

Key Developments

Govt launches schemes to support 300 start-ups for creating 100 unicorns

The government on Wednesday launched a programme to support 300 IT start-ups under which it will provide seed funding, mentorship and market access with a view to creating 100 unicorns out of the selected start-ups. Ministry of Electronics and IT special secretary Jyoti Arora said that the concept of the Startup Accelerator of MeitY for Product Innovation, Development & Growth (SAMRIDH) has been developed on the lines of silicon valley based accelerator YCombinator. IT and Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that he has mentored over 20 start-ups earlier and understands the need of mentoring them during the most important part of their journey when their idea is getting converted into products. He said that lack of funds for start-ups is not a big issue.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/govt-launches-schemes-to-support-300-start-ups-for-creating-100-unicorns-121082500762_1.html

Banks to have nationwide credit outreach programme this year: FM

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday said that public sector banks (PSB) will adopt a nationwide credit outreach programme this year. Addressing the media in Mumbai, she said that banks will go about to exhibit loan offerings in every district of the country in a bid to enhance the credit demand.

A similar outreach programme was undertaken by the public sector banks in which some private sector banks also participated to boost credit offtake in the face of an economic slowdown. "With changed times, now industries have option of raising funds even from outside the banking sector. Banks themselves are raising funds through various avenues. These new aspects need to be studied to target credit where it is needed," she said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/banks-to-have-nationwide-credit-outreach-programme-this-year-fm-121082500764_1.html

Economy

e-portal for database on unorganised workers to come up on Thursday

For the first time, the country will have a database on unorganised workers. A portal for this purpose will finally be launched by labour minister Bhupender Yadav on Thursday to integrate social welfare schemes for these workers in coordination with the states and trade unions.

The government aims to register 380 million workers in the unorganised sector on the e-Shram portal, officials said. These workers are of many kinds such as migrant workforce, street vendors, domestic helps. The portal will also have a database on gig and platform workers. For this purpose, the labour minister had launched the logo of the portal on Tuesday. Workers from the unorganised sector can begin their registration from Thursday itself. That very day a national toll-free number, 14434, will be launched to assist and address the queries of the workers seeking registration on the portal, officials said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/e-portal-for-database-on-unorganised-workers-to-come-up-on-thursday-121082501131_1.html

Edible oil, pulses main contributors to inflation; price rise to slow once crops come: Govt

Major contributors to inflation are edible oil and pulses, and to boost their availability in the market, the supply side has been addressed through duty cuts, a senior finance ministry official said on Wednesday. On the issue of petrol prices, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday reiterated that the Centre will have to coordinate with states on ways to reduce the taxes and duties. Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj said inflation will come down once the crop harvests come into the market, and expected it to be within 4-6 per cent.

"The RBI has come out with a guidance on inflation and said that the inflation, which is a little on the up, will cool down in some time, and we also feel that once the crops come out, inflation should come down," he told reporters. <https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/edible-oil-pulses-main-contributors-to-inflation-price-rise-to-slow-once-crops-come-govt/2317579/>

PM Modi reviews eight projects, 'One Nation One Ration Card' scheme

Chairing the 37th PRAGATI meeting, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday reviewed eight projects having a cumulative cost of Rs 1.26 lakh crore and spanned over 14 states as well as the 'One Nation One Ration Card' scheme. While reviewing the ONORC scheme, he asked officials to explore the multiple utilities of the technological platform developed under the programme to ensure the provision of a wide array of benefits to the citizens, the PMO said. Commenting on the projects, Modi stressed on the significance of their timely completion. PRAGATI is the acronym for the ICT-based multi-modal platform for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation, involving the Centre and state governments.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/pm-modi-reviews-eight-projects-one-nation-one-ration-card-scheme/articleshow/85627497.cms>

Formal sector hiring rebounds significantly in June

Formal sector hiring rebounded significantly in June, after registering a dip in May, as the second wave of the pandemic ebbed out resulting in an uptick in economic activity. Payroll data by the ministry of statistics and programme implementation shows a higher number of net new enrolments under the Employees Provident Fund Organisation, the Employees' State Insurance Corporation and the National Pension Scheme in June. As per the data, released on Wednesday, 1.28 million net new subscribers were added to the retirement fund body EPFO in June, 0.50 million or 65.8% more than 0.77 in May.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/formal-sector-hiring-rebounds-significantly-in-june/articleshow/85619590.cms>

Sharp uptick in blue-collar employment likely in 2nd half of 2021: Report

With the gradual easing of COVID-19-related restrictions and an increase in movement, over 50 per cent jump in demand for blue-collar workers is likely in the second half of this year across four major industrialised states Maharashtra, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka, according to a report. There is likely to be seven million new blue-collar jobs (50 per cent jump as compared to the first half of this year) in the second half of 2021 in Maharashtra, Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka to drive demand, according to a report by technology platform for blue-collar workforce management BetterPlace. Maharashtra is expected to be the largest contributor, accounting for 17 per cent of the demand, it added.

The report is based on data from the first six months of 2021 and spans hiring trends and projections across more than 1,500 customers, 10 million employees and 20,000 PIN codes.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/sharp-uptick-in-blue-collar-employment-likely-in-2nd-half-of-2021-report-121082501102_1.html

New India on hiring drive, uncertainty continues for other 3 non-life PSUs

Even as the public sector general insurer The New India Assurance Company Ltd is on a massive recruitment drive, suspense continues in the case of the remaining three government owned non-life insurers, said industry officials. The Mumbai based listed New India has decided to hire 300 officers in the generalists category.

The number of posts under the economically weaker section (EWS) and unreserved are 30 and 121 respectively.

"All the four public sector general insurers are expected to see a large number of employees retiring in a couple of years. The New India, a listed company has been hiring but not the other three companies," K. Govindan, General Secretary, General Insurance Employees' All India Association (GIEAIA) told IANS.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/new-india-on-hiring-drive-uncertainty-continues-for-other-3-non-life-psus-121082500636_1.html

Banking and Finance

RBI extends scope of tokenisation to laptops, wearable devices

The Reserve Bank on Wednesday extended the scope of 'tokenisation' to several consumer devices, including laptops, desktops, wearables like wristwatches and bands, as well as Internet of Things (IoT) devices. Tokenisation, which aims at improving the safety and security of the payment system, refers to the replacement of actual card details with a unique alternate code called the 'token', which is unique for a combination of card, token requestor and identified device. The RBI had earlier permitted 'tokenisation' services, under which a unique alternate code is generated for transaction purposes, on mobile phones and tablets of cardholders. "On a review of the framework and keeping in view stakeholder feedback, it has been decided to extend the scope of tokenisation to include consumer devices -- laptops, desktops, wearables (wristwatches, bands, etc.), Internet of Things (IoT) devices, etc," the RBI said in a circular.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/rbi-extends-scope-of-tokenisation-to-laptops-wearable-devices/articleshow/85629233.cms>

Won't exit fully, but will ensure minimum govt presence in insurance: FM

Reiterating the fact that the union government will have a bare minimum presence in the strategically important sectors, finance minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, on Wednesday said, banks, financial institutions, and insurance have been identified as strategic sectors, hence the government will not completely exit these sectors but will have a minimum presence.

Addressing the media, Sitharaman said, "During the budget, a public enterprise policy was announced, wherein we had identified certain strategically important sectors and in them, the bare minimum presence of the government will be there. Banks, financial institutions, and insurance are identified as strategic sectors, which means the government's minimum presence will be there in insurance".

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/won-t-exit-fully-but-will-ensure-minimum-govt-presence-in-insurance-fm-121082500853_1.html

NSE bans members from selling digital gold after Sebi flags concerns

National Stock Exchange (NSE) has directed its members, including stockbrokers, to discontinue the sale of digital gold on their platforms by September 10. The direction came after capital markets regulator Sebi said that certain members are providing a platform to their clients for buying and selling digital gold. Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), through a letter dated August 3, informed the exchange that the said activity is in contravention of Securities Contracts (Regulation) Rules (SCRR), 1957, and the members should refrain from undertaking any such activities. The SCRR rules restrict all members from engaging, either as principal or employee, in any business, other than that of securities or commodity derivatives, except as a broker or agent, not involving any personal financial liability.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/market/nse-bans-members-from-selling-digital-gold-after-sebi-flags-concerns/2317536/>

Sebi asks depositories to use distributed ledger technology to monitor security creation

Markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday asked depositories to use distributed ledger or blockchain technology to record and monitor security creation as well as covenants of non-convertible securities. The distributed ledger technology has the potential to provide a more resilient system than traditional centralised databases. It offers better protection against different types of cyber-attacks because of its distributed nature, which removes the single point of attack, Sebi said in a statement. The regulator said that a platform for 'security and covenant monitoring system' hosted by depositories is being developed. The move is aimed at strengthening the process of security creation and monitoring of security created, asset cover and covenants of the non-convertible securities.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/markets/stocks/news/sebi-asks-depositories-to-use-distributed-ledger-technology-to-monitor-security-creation/articleshow/85635102.cms>

Family pension for bank staff hiked to 30% of last pay

Family pension for bank employees is set to increase with a uniform payout of 30 per cent of the last salary, Debasish Panda, Secretary, Department of Financial Services, said on Wednesday.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/family-pension-hiked-for-bank-employees/article36096967.ece?homepage=true>

Industry

Nitin Gadkari urges vehicle makers to discourage diesel engines, asks them to promote alternative technologies

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Wednesday asked vehicle manufacturers to discourage production and sale of diesel engine vehicles, and urged them to promote other technologies. Addressing industry body SIAM's annual convention virtually, Gadkari said the government is committed to delivering vehicles with flex engines that give the users an option to run a vehicle on either 100 per cent petrol or 100 per cent bio-ethanol. "The industry must promote alternative fuel technologies and fund R&D (research and development) for alternative fuels," he said. The minister said he is looking forward to the industry for quick roll-out of E20-compatible vehicles.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/auto/auto-news/nitin-gadkari-urges-vehicle-makers-to-discourage-diesel-engines-asks-them-to-promote-alternative-technologies/articleshow/85628933.cms>

Ecosystem for MSMEs requires complete overhaul

The pandemic has transited risks of the MSME sector to the uncertainty zone. Targeting their growth is now an imperative and no longer an option. What is required is an overhaul of the ecosystem to enable MSMEs to grow.

Definition change that was sought to be a gamechanger didn't have a lasting impact on the sector other than the reclassification by banks from one sector to the other. Also, lack of risk appetite for this sector despite lowest NPAs in micro and small manufacturing sector from the financial sector is too well known.

Reforms in six areas are key to increase productivity and competitiveness; more than half of which could be implemented rapidly via policy or law.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/ecosystem-for-msmes-requires-complete-overhaul/2317388/>

Agriculture

Centre hikes sugarcane FRP to Rs 290/quintal; rules out raising sugar price

The Centre on Wednesday hiked the minimum price that mills have to pay to sugarcane growers, also known as the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP), by Rs 5 per quintal to Rs 290 a quintal for 2021-22 (October-September) sugar season while ruling out any immediate commensurate increase in the sale price of sugar. The decision to increase the FRP of sugarcane for was taken in the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) held here. The FRP of sugarcane in 2020-21 season was Rs 285 per quintal. Just like in previous years, the Rs 290 a quintal FRP of sugarcane will be applicable on a basic recovery of 10 per cent. Over the basic recovery rate of 10 per cent a premium of Rs 2.90 per quintal will be provided for each 0.1 per cent increase in recovery over and above 10 per cent.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/centre-hikes-sugarcane-frp-to-rs-290-quintal-rules-out-raising-sugar-price-121082501027_1.html

Sugar season 2020-21 to end with lower stocks, Rs 7,000 cr unpaid dues

India is expected to start the 2021-22 sugar season beginning October with an opening stock of about 8.7 million tonnes, which will be lowest in the last four years. Despite that, Rs 5,000-7,000 crore will still remain to be paid to sugarcane farmers as arrears for the crop supplied by them in the season. The record drop in opening stocks has largely been due to bumper exports of almost seven million tonnes and diversion of 2.1 million tonnes of sugar towards the manufacture of ethanol.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/sugar-season-2020-21-to-end-with-lower-stocks-rs-7-000-cr-unpaid-dues-121082500616_1.html

Commerce Ministry suspends seven sections of Tea Act to hike output

The Union Government has suspended operations of Sections 12 to 16, Section 39 and Section 40 of the Tea Act, 1953.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/commerce-ministry-suspends-seven-sections-of-tea-act-to-hike-output/article36104712.ece>

Infrastructure

Cabinet approves FDI proposal of Rs 15K cr in Anchorage Infrastructure

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on Wednesday approved the FDI proposal for an investment of up to Rs 15,000 crore in Anchorage Infrastructure Investment Holding Ltd, an India investment holding incorporated specifically for the purpose of investment in infrastructure and the construction-development sectors. The FDI will also be used for investments to be made in transport and logistics sectors along with downstream investment in the airport sector and aviation related businesses and services. The investment also includes transfer of share of Bangalore International airport Limited to Anchorage, and investment of Rs 950 crore in Anchorage Infrastructure Investment Holding Ltd by 2726247 Ontario Inc, a wholly-owned subsidiary of OAC which is the administrator of OMERS', one of Canada's largest defined benefit pension plans.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/cabinet-approves-fdi-proposal-of-15k-cr-in-anchorage-infrastructure-121082500848_1.html

Aviation ministry signs MoU with Adani group for providing services at three airports

The Civil Aviation Ministry on Wednesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Adani group for providing services, including customs, immigration and security, at the Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram airports, an official statement said. The Centre had in February 2019 privatised six major airports of the country -- Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Mangaluru, Jaipur, Thiruvananthapuram and Guwahati -- and through a competitive bidding process, the Adani group won the rights to run all of them for 50 years. The Adani group took charge of the Lucknow, Ahmedabad and Mangaluru airports in October and November last year. It is yet to take charge of the remaining airports.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/aviation-ministry-signs-mou-with-adani-group-for-providing-services-at-three-airports/articleshow/85630362.cms>

Scindia seeks personal intervention of CMs of 5 states in expediting airports' development

Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has requested chief ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar and Chhattisgarh for personal intervention on matters such as land allocation for airports so that their development can be expedited. In his letters to the CMs, Scindia requested them to instruct the officers concerned to initiate action on matters such as deposition of funds with the Regional Air Connectivity Fund Trust and viability gap funding support for international UDAN flight operations, according to a statement by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA). Under the regional connectivity scheme UDAN, financial incentives from the Centre, state governments and airport operators are extended to select airlines to encourage operations from unserved and underserved airports, and keep airfares affordable.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/scindia-seeks-personal-intervention-of-cms-of-5-states-in-expediting-airports-development/articleshow/85633192.cms>

61% of mid income homebuyers feel prices to rise in next 1yr: Survey

Over 60 per cent of middle-income homebuyers in India expect prices of their primary residences to rise in the next 12 months, according to a survey by Knight Frank. Around 30 per cent of respondents in the survey expect rates to rise up to 9 per cent, while 25 per cent hope prices to rise by 10- 19 per cent and 6 per cent feel rates to appreciate by more than 20 per cent. The consultant on Wednesday released the Global Buyer Survey that analysed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on residential buyers' attitudes to purchasing homes around the world. Knight Frank also conducted a two-part primary survey for India, having a total sample size of more than 550 people.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/61-of-mid-income-homebuyers-feel-prices-to-rise-in-next-1yr-survey-121082501029_1.html

Energy

India's new LNG plant starts next year, to boost import capacity by 12%

India will boost liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports from next year as private firm Swan Energy starts its floating terminal, raising the country's capacity to ship in the super chilled fuel by 12% to 47.5 million tonnes per annum (mtpa). New demand for LNG from India is expected to support Asian gas prices which rose to record highs earlier this year, partly aided by the transition from coal or oil to gas in developing countries.

The 5-mtpa floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU), located at Jafrabad in western Gujarat state, will be commissioned in April, said P Sugavanam, director at Swan Energy and chairman of Swan LNG Ltd, which is developing the project. The FSRU was initially expected to be commissioned in the first quarter of last year, but the pandemic and two cyclones have delayed construction of a breakwater, needed to make it an all weather facility, Sugavanam told Reuters on Wednesday.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-new-lng-plant-starts-next-year-to-boost-import-capacity-by-12-121082501037_1.html

Renewable energy sector set to add 65 GW over four to five years: ICRA

The country's renewable sector is poised to add about 65 gigawatts capacity over the next four to five years supported by strong project pipeline and government's policy backing.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/science/renewable-energy-sector-set-to-add-65-gw-over-four-to-five-years-icra/article36095734.ece>

States

Haryana Government decides to re-open schools from Sept 1 for classes 4 and 5

Haryana government on Wednesday has decided to open schools from September 1, for classes IV and V in all government and private schools in the state, informed the state government. Education Minister, Kanwar Pal informed that classes will be organized for these students while strictly following the Standard operating procedure (SOPs) issued by the state department.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/haryana-government-decides-to-re-open-schools-from-sept-1-for-classes-4-and-5/articleshow/85633967.cms>

At 58% deficit, Gujarat desperately awaits rains

Uncertainty looms over kharif crops prospects in Gujarat, where erratic monsoon has left the State with 58 per cent deficient rainfall as on August 25.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/at-58-deficit-gujarat-desperately-awaits-rains/article36104804.ece>

Healthcare

CAIT urges govt to take action against e-pharmacy firms

Domestic traders body CAIT on Wednesday alleged malpractices and violation of rules by e-pharmacy firms, and urged the government to take action against them. In a memorandum to Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said it "has strongly raised the issue of malpractices being conducted in online pharmacy trade and alleged" that firms including "Pharmeasy, and 1Mg" are conducting business practices in contravention of provisions of Drug and Cosmetics Act, 1940. CAIT also alleged that these firms are misusing the e-commerce landscape by operating on low prices with 30-40 per cent discount and free shipping. "It's a case of capital dumping in these e-pharmacies by foreign behemoths. Which can prove extremely detrimental to the sustenance and future of the lakhs of small chemists across the country," it said in a statement.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/cait-urges-govt-to-take-action-against-e-pharmacy-firms/articleshow/85633330.cms>

Over 60 crore Covid vaccine doses administered in India: Govt

The cumulative number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the country surpassed the 60-crore mark on Wednesday, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said. "Under PM @NarendraModi ji's

#SabkoVaccineMuftVaccine initiative, India crossed the 60 crore vaccination mark. Congratulations everyone!" he said in a tweet.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/over-60-crore-covid-vaccine-doses-administered-in-india-govt/articleshow/85623528.cms>

Not enough data, doses for booster dose, says AIIMS Director Guleria

Exploring the idea of booster doses when enough shots are not available in the country to vaccinate everyone is unnecessary, said Randeep Guleria, Director, All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) Delhi.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/not-enough-data-doses-for-booster-dose-says-aiims-director-guleria/article36104758.ece?homepage=true>

External

Cabinet approves pact between ICAI and Institute of Professional Accountants of Russia

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved signing of a pact between the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) and the Institute of Professional Accountants of Russia (IPAR) to strengthen cooperation in matters of accountancy profession. The pact would help in establishing mutual co-operation in the areas of professional accountancy training, professional ethics, technical research, advancement of accounting knowledge, professional and intellectual development, according to a release. "The aim of MoU is to work together to develop a mutually beneficial relationship for the best interest of ICAI members and the two respective organizations. With MoU, ICAI would be able to help strengthen the partnership with Russia by providing the Export of Services in Accountancy profession," it said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/cabinet-approves-pact-between-icai-and-institute-of-professional-accountants-of-russia/articleshow/85621946.cms>

India stitches gains in tufted mats export market at China's cost

China's loss is India's gain at least in terms of tufted mats shipments exports during 2020-21. This is mainly because of the higher cost for similar Chinese door mats due to tariffs on their products.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-stitches-gains-in-tufted-mats-export-market-at-chinas-cost/article36094057.ece>

COUNTRY'S FIRST & ONE OF ITS KIND ANNUAL VIRTUAL EXPO on MANUFACTURING & SERVICES SECTOR

FICCI ANNUAL EXPO 2020
11 December 2020 to 11 December 2021

EXHIBITION | WEBINARS | B2B Meetings | LISTING IN DIGITAL DIRECTORY | OPEN FOR 365 days

FREE ENTRY FOR BUSINESS VISITORS. REGISTER NOW!
<http://registrations.ficci.com/annualexpo2020/attendee-registration.asp>