



September 24, 2021 – Friday

## Key Developments

### Entitlement under SEIS for services exports during 2019-20 capped at Rs 5 cr: DGFT

The government on Thursday said it has imposed a limit on the total entitlement under services export incentive scheme SEIS for shipments made during 2019-20, at Rs 5 crore per exporter. The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has notified a list of eligible services and rates under the Services Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) for exports made during 2019-20 is being notified.

“A limit of total entitlement under SEIS has been imposed for service exports rendered in the period April 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020, and capped at Rs 5 crore IEC (import-export code),” the DGFT said in a notification. Further, it has been notified that the facility to claim benefits under SEIS on payments in Indian rupees would not be available for services rendered in 2019-20. The deadline for submission of SEIS for 2019-20 will be December 31, 2021, and SEIS applications for 2019-20 will become time-barred after December 31 this year.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/entitlement-under-seis-for-services-exports-during-2019-20-capped-at-rs-5-cr-dgft/2336369/>

### Defence ministry promulgates framework in utilisation of simulators

The defence ministry on Thursday said it promulgated existing norms to ensure synergy in utilisation of all types of simulators by the armed forces and it will also entail maintenance of the equipment by Indian companies. It said a detailed "action plan" with assigned responsibilities to all the constituents of the ministry and industrial associations will be followed to revitalise the exploitation of simulators by the armed forces with an aim of achieving a cost effective, efficient and smart training process. The ministry said the framework for "increased utilisation" of simulators by the three Services and the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) lays emphasis on indigenous design and development as well as outsourcing of operation and maintenance of the simulators to Indian companies.

The three services use a range of simulators to train its personnel to operate various military systems and platforms including fighter jets, transport aircraft and helicopters.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/defence-ministry-promulgates-framework-in-utilisation-of-simulators-121092300943\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/defence-ministry-promulgates-framework-in-utilisation-of-simulators-121092300943_1.html)

### Govt allows Covid vaccines at home to those with restricted mobility

The government on Thursday announced that differently-abled people and those with restricted mobility will be given Covid vaccine doses at their homes. Addressing a press conference here, Union Health Ministry officials also said the country is still in the midst of the second wave of COVID-19 even though the number of daily new cases are declining. However, they added, 62.73% of total infections reported last week were from Kerala alone, which is also the only state with over 1 lakh active Covid cases. Thirty-three districts in the country are now reporting over 10 per cent weekly positivity rate, while 23 are recording between 5-10 per cent, the officials said. "I am pleased to inform that an advisory has been issued to make arrangements for 'vaccination at home' for those who have disabilities or are differently challenged, in line with Covid SOPs," said Dr V K Paul, Member-Health, NITI Aayog.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/covid-vaccine-administered-to-at-least-66-of-india-s-adults-govt-121092301026\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/covid-vaccine-administered-to-at-least-66-of-india-s-adults-govt-121092301026_1.html)

### **Govt releases guidelines for health workers for post-Covid management**

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday released guidelines on the treatment of sequelae of COVID-19 which will help in building the capacity of doctors, nurses, paramedics and community health workers across India to deal with long-term effects of the coronavirus infection. The minister said that the modules have been prepared to provide guidance to doctors and healthcare workers to deal with the issue of long-term effects of COVID-19, the Health Ministry said in a statement. He said that proactive and comprehensive treatment of COVID-19 is required to ensure minimum side effects and no negative effect of the treatment. "We have witnessed the consequences of post-Covid effect in patients due to taking higher doses of steroids like cases of Mucormycosis. It is important to take medicines, with less or negligible side effects. If we are alert beforehand, it will be fruitful in tackling the future consequences of Covid," he was quoted as saying in the statement.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/mandaviya-releases-guidelines-on-treatment-of-sequelae-of-covid-19-121092300683\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/mandaviya-releases-guidelines-on-treatment-of-sequelae-of-covid-19-121092300683_1.html)

### **Allow food security schemes sans limits, end farm subsidies above \$10 billion in 3 years: India to WTO**

Ahead of a key ministerial conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) later this year, India has proposed that subsidies for food security programmes should be allowed without any limits and that members who give trade-distorting farm subsidies above \$10 billion, eliminate them within three years. India has sought to correct the asymmetries in the WTO's rules for agriculture in two submissions made last week.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/allow-food-security-schemes-sans-limits-end-farm-subsidies-above-10-billion-in-3-years-india-to-wto/articleshow/86452075.cms>

## **Economy**

### **CBIC sets one-year time limit to complete investigation on GST evasion/fraud cases**

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Custom (CBIC) has set a one-year time frame to complete the investigation on cases of GST evasion and fraudulent Input Tax Credit (ITC). Experts feel that such a move will help the department ensure that cases do not get time-barred.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/cbic-sets-one-year-time-limit-to-complete-investigation-on-gst-evasion-fraud-cases/article36635567.ece>

### **Indian economy has bottomed out; formal sector may get back to pre-Covid level by this year-end: Montek Singh Ahluwalia**

The Indian economy has bottomed out and the formal sector is likely to get back to pre-pandemic levels by the end of this year, former deputy chairman of erstwhile Planning Commission Montek Singh Ahluwalia said on Thursday. Addressing a virtual event, Ahluwalia said he is in favour of National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) that will look to unlock value in infrastructure assets across sectors ranging from power to road and railways.

"One of the main positives is that the economy has actually bottomed out. And the formal sector may be getting back to pre-pandemic levels by the end of this year, it will be different for different sectors, service sectors, etc," he said. Ahluwalia opined that if the formal sector sees economic rebound, then the informal sector will also follow it, adding that a healthy economic rebound happens, when private sector investments also pick up.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/indian-economy-has-bottomed-out-formal-sector-may-get-back-to-pre-covid-level-by-this-year-end-montek-singh-ahluwalia/2336444/>

### **Infosys says new I-T portal clocked 30 mn logins, 15 mn ITRs filed so far**

IT major Infosys on Thursday acknowledged that some users continue to experience difficulties in accessing the income tax portal and assured that it is working expeditiously, in collaboration with the Income Tax Department, to further streamline end-user experience. The Bengaluru-based company, which has drawn flak for glitches continuing months after the launch of the portal in June, said it has seen steady increase in usage over the last few weeks, and more than three crore taxpayers have logged into the portal and successfully completed various transactions. "Even as the portal makes sustained progress with crores of taxpayers successfully performing transactions, the company acknowledges the difficulties some users continue to experience and is working expeditiously, in collaboration with the I-T Department, to further streamline end-user experience," Infosys said in a statement.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/some-users-continue-to-face-problems-with-i-t-portal-says-infosys-121092300488\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/some-users-continue-to-face-problems-with-i-t-portal-says-infosys-121092300488_1.html)

### **Upper middle class to revive consumption cycle again soon: Report**

With higher consumer confidence following the rise in vaccination levels and sitting on already-built-up-savings through the pandemic months, the top 20 per cent of upper-income consumers will help recover the near-term consumption demand, as per a report. These consumers account for the bulk of the rural and urban demand. While the economy fared the worst last year, contracting a record 7.3 per cent due to the pandemic, the problem with the economy had begun much earlier in FY16 when consumption demand began to disappear from the economy. The pandemic only added to the contraction. The top 20 per cent of the consumer universe control 59 per cent of the discretionary consumption in rural areas and a much higher 66 per cent in urban areas, according to UBS Securities India.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/upper-middle-class-to-revive-consumption-cycle-again-soon-report-121092300980\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/upper-middle-class-to-revive-consumption-cycle-again-soon-report-121092300980_1.html)

### **Finance Ministry to seek ratings upgrade for India in meeting with Moody's**

Indian finance ministry officials plan to pitch for a sovereign rating upgrade from Moody's Investors Service when it meets with the firm, scheduled for Sept. 28, according to people familiar with the matter. Finance officials plan to provide details on how India will meet its budget targets for the current fiscal year, which runs through March, the people said, asking not to be identified as the details aren't public

- Moody's cut India's sovereign rating to Baa3 in June 2020, the lowest investment grade, citing policy challenges in addressing a prolonged economic slowdown and its deteriorating fiscal position
- Neither the finance ministry nor Moody's responded to requests for comment
- S&P Global Ratings in May said it sees no change in India's sovereign rating for the next two years

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/finance-ministry-plans-to-seek-ratings-upgrade-in-moody-s-sept-28-meeting-121092300310\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/finance-ministry-plans-to-seek-ratings-upgrade-in-moody-s-sept-28-meeting-121092300310_1.html)

## **Banking and Finance**

### **RBI ex-Guv Subbarao says Fed taper won't cause tantrums this time**

On Wednesday, the US Federal Reserve, at the end of its rate-setting meeting, left interest rates unchanged but set a quicker timeline for tightening monetary policy than earlier expected. Duvvuri Subbarao, a former governor of the Reserve Bank of India and the man who was at the helm of the central bank during the Global Financial Crisis and the Taper Tantrum of 2013, said it would be different this time.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/markets/stocks/news/exclusive-rbi-ex-guv-subbarao-says-fed-taper-wont-cause-tantrums-this-time/articleshow/86451708.cms>

### **Bank credit grows by 6.7 pc; deposits by 9.32 pc**

Bank credit rose by 6.7 per cent to Rs 109.12 lakh crore and deposits by 9.32 per cent to Rs 155.75 lakh crore in the fortnight ended September 10, RBI data showed. In the year-ago fortnight ended September 11, 2020, bank advances had stood at Rs 102.27 lakh crore and deposits at Rs 142.47 lakh crore, according to RBI's Scheduled Banks' Statement of Position in India as of September 10, 2021, released on Thursday. In the fortnight ended August 27, 2021, bank credit had increased by 6.67 per cent and deposits by 9.45 per cent. In FY2020-21, bank credit had grown by 5.56 per cent and deposits by 11.4 per cent.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/banking-finance/bank-credit-grows-by-6-7-pc-deposits-by-9-32-pc/2336404/>

### **After RBI's move, card networks may raise rates for tokenisation services**

The recent Reserve Bank of India (RBI) norms on tokenisation services, which will be offered by card networks, are likely to result in merchants and payment aggregators incurring a cost as they have to pay a fee to the networks. The merchants and the payment aggregators, in turn, may pass on the cost to the customers. The norms, which were issued by the banking regulator released on September 7, allow card networks like Visa and Mastercard to offer the tokenisation service.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/card-networks-jack-up-rates-for-tokenisation-services-121092300661\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/card-networks-jack-up-rates-for-tokenisation-services-121092300661_1.html)

#### **No plans to bring standard products for cyber liability insurance policy as of now: Member Irdai**

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) has no plans to bring standard products for cyber liability insurance policy as of now, a senior Irdai member said on Thursday. However, the member said that guidances are given to the insurers to evaluate the risks associated with these kinds of products. A working group was formed by the regulator for examination of bringing standardisation of cyber liability insurance policy. Irdai issued a circular earlier this month for product structure for cyber insurance.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/insure/no-plans-to-bring-standard-products-for-cyber-liability-insurance-policy-as-of-now-member-irdai/articleshow/86453100.cms>

#### **Industry**

#### **PLI for textiles: Govt to impose 30-60% as value-addition norm**

The Textile Ministry is considering imposition of a minimum value-addition criteria of 60 per cent for garment manufacturing, spinning and weaving activities, and a lower 30 per cent requirement for processing for industry to qualify for the ₹10,683-crore Performance Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for textile products, according to officials tracking the issue. Additionally, PLI beneficiaries will not be allowed to do outsourcing or opt for job work (getting part of the processing or manufacturing done by independent workers), a source told *BusinessLine*. "These specifications are likely to be part of the PLI guidelines for textiles that are being worked out," said the source.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/pli-for-textiles-govt-to-impose-30-60-as-value-addition-norm/article36635086.ece>

#### **Government gives more time to companies for holding annual general meetings**

Companies will get an additional time of two months beyond September to conduct their annual general meetings for the fiscal year ended March 2021. The corporate affairs ministry has asked Registrars of Companies (RoCs) to give two more months to companies for holding their Annual General Meetings (AGMs). The ministry has advised RoCs to accord approval for extending time by two months beyond the due date by which companies are required to conduct AGMs for 2020-21, according to a communication dated September 23.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/government-gives-more-time-to-companies-for-holding-annual-general-meetings/articleshow/86452494.cms>

#### **India at nascent stage in industrial engineering research: Piyush Goyal**

Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Thursday said India is at a "nascent stage" in industrial engineering study and research, which is essential for creating robust supply chains. Speaking at the National Institute of Industrial Engineering (NITIE) here, Goyal said "we need to do a lot on this front and there exists a high scope for the same". Goyal, who was earlier the Minister for Railways, recounted that the Indian Railways was struggling to get solutions on the organisation research front till IIT-Bombay came up with solutions. IIT's work will help the railways and soon it will be coming out with a revised time table structure which has its roots in the research. Goyal said the closely interconnected global economies require significant value addition on the supply chains front, like improving the processes on packaging and warehousing.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/india-at-nascent-stage-in-industrial-engineering-research-piyush-goyal-121092300738\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/india-at-nascent-stage-in-industrial-engineering-research-piyush-goyal-121092300738_1.html)

#### **Amit Shah to address first mega cooperatives meet on Saturday; to outline govt's roadmap**

Cooperation Minister Amit Shah will address the first mega conference on cooperatives to be held on Saturday in the national capital, where he is likely to outline the government's vision and roadmap for development of the sector. This is the first Sehkarita Sammelan, or National Cooperative Conference, that Shah is scheduled to address as minister in-charge of the new Ministry of Cooperation, which was created in July this year with an aim to strengthen the cooperative movement in the country. The conference -- to be held at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium -- is being organised by cooperative bodies IFFCO, National Cooperative Federation of India, Amul, Sahakar

Bharti, NAFED, KRIBHCO, among others. Minister of State for Cooperation B L Verma and International Cooperatives Alliance (Global) President Ariel Guarco will also be present at the event.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/amit-shah-to-address-first-mega-cooperatives-meet-on-saturday-to-outline-govts-roadmap/articleshow/86458068.cms>

#### **FMCG, retail showing resilience to grow and evolve post-pandemic: Deloitte-FICCI Report**

FMCG companies should redefine the channels to create a digital ecosystem to reach end-consumers and focus more on sustainable initiatives, including responsible sourcing, sustainable production, and packaging to conduct business responsibly, according to a report.

The FMCG and retail industry is exhibiting “resilience” to grow and evolve in ways that create more value in the future for the entire chain and bounced back from the second wave, said the latest Deloitte-FICCI report released on Thursday. Companies are consciously identifying blind spots across their operations to incorporate flexible and sustainable initiatives as an integral piece of their business model, it said. The COVID-19 has fundamentally changed consumer demand, challenged the integrated supply chains, and altered some category dynamics forever, thus defining a “new normal” for businesses,” it said.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/fmcg-retail-showing-resilience-to-grow-and-evolve-post-pandemic-report/2336377/>

#### **Direct to retail app based ordering by kiranas surged post covid**

Kirana stores ordered nearly \$4 billion worth of groceries and daily essentials either from organised cash and carry companies or directly from companies through online apps, circumventing traditional distributors after last-mile delivery were disrupted due to Covid-19 restrictions. In fact, most companies including Hindustan Unilever, ITC and Marico launched their internal ordering app and have since onboarded millions of mom-and-pop stores on the platform, generating sales of about \$1 billion last fiscal, according to latest report by Bizom, which tracks the sales of 7.5 million retail stores across the country.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/retail/direct-to-retail-app-based-ordering-by-kiranas-surged-post-covid/articleshow/86453622.cms>

#### **Hallmarking centres across India to go on token strike next Tuesday**

Hallmarking centres across India have decided to go on a token strike on next Tuesday protesting against the newly introduced hallmarking policies of the government. The government has said that hallmarking centres need to be located at the jewellery manufacturing centres only. This move will lead to closure of many hallmarking centres that are located outside the manufacturing hubs, the hallmarking trade said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/fashion/-/cosmetics/-/jewellery/hallmarking-centres-across-india-to-go-on-token-strike-next-tuesday/articleshow/86456265.cms>

#### **E-commerce cos to log 23% rise in gross GMV at over USD 9 bn during festive sale this year: RedSeer**

E-commerce platforms are expected to potentially clock over USD 9 billion gross GMV (Gross Merchandise Value) during the festive season this year as against USD 7.4 billion last year – a growth of 23 per cent, consulting firm RedSeer said on Thursday. For the full year, the overall online gross GMV is expected to touch USD 49-52 billion, which is around 37 per cent higher than last year (USD 38.2 billion), primarily driven by strong consumer funnel expansion and the high adoption of online shopping post-COVID across the categories, RedSeer said in its eCommerce Festive Season Report.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/e-commerce-cos-to-log-23-rise-in-gross-gmv-at-over-usd-9-bn-during-festive-sale-this-year-redseer/2336299/>

### **Agriculture**

#### **Government's pulses production estimate is overstated**

The first advance estimate of Kharif crop production released by the Ministry of Agriculture on September 21 has placed the Kharif 2021-22 pulses crop production at 9.45 million tonnes, lower than the production target of 9.82 million tonnes for the season. The planted area for pulses this season has increased by about 300,000 hectares to a new high of 14 million hectares.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/governments-pulses-production-estimate-is-overstated/article36626910.ece>

#### **Stakeholders expect soyabean output to be up by 1-million tonne**

Stakeholders in the oilseed sector are expecting the production of soyabean at 10 million tonnes (mt) during the kharif season. Speaking at a panel discussion on 'Domestic kharif oilseed crops situation', organised by Solvent Extractors' Association (SEA) of India in Goa on Thursday, Atul Chaturvedi, SEA President, said the soyabean production is likely to go up by one mt during this season.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/stakeholders-expect-soyabean-output-to-be-up-by-1-million-tonne/article36637437.ece>

#### **Coffee sector revival: Growers seek special package over weak prices, freak weather patterns**

Reeling under the impact of weak prices and crop losses triggered by freak weather patterns in recent years, coffee growers have urged Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to consider a special package for the revival of the coffee sector. A delegation of representatives of Karnataka Planters Association (KPA), United Planters Association of South India, Codagu Planters Association and Karnataka Growers Federation met the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday. The delegation was led by BJP National General Secretary & Chikmagalur MLA, CT Ravi, and Chairman Coffee Board, Boje Gowda.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/growers-urge-fm-to-consider-special-package-for-revival-of-coffee-sector/article36627115.ece>

### **Infrastructure**

#### **DFCCIL moots de-risked pvt participation for developing freight corridors**

The Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India (DFCCIL) has proposed de-risking the private concessionaire that develops the Sonnagar (New Chirailapauthu) to Andal section of the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC). DFCCIL intends to develop this portion of the DFC through a Design, Finance, Build, Operate and Maintain & Transfer (DFBOT) model on Public Private Participation (PPP) basis. "Private players said they were skeptical of the projected traffic at the proposed section of the freight corridor over the 30 year contract period," said R K Jain, Managing Director at DFCCIL. "To address this issue, the Indian Railways and DFCCIL shall take over the traffic and tariff risk which will largely reduce the quantum of risk on the part of the Concessionaire. The Concessionaire shall be responsible for Design, Construction, Finance and Operations and Maintenance of the project," Jain added.

This section is expected to serve major power houses, industrial corridors and Multi-Modal Logistics Parks (MMLPs) in Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh. "Increasing trends in finished steel consumption and production will drive growth of steel traffic on the route. Further, to attract more traffic and achieve targeted rail share of freight, DFCCIL plans to develop MMLPs, sidings and feeder routes for last mile connectivity along the section alignment," an official statement said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/dfccil-moots-de-risked-pvt-participation-for-developing-freight-corridors-121092301067\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/dfccil-moots-de-risked-pvt-participation-for-developing-freight-corridors-121092301067_1.html)

#### **Vizhinjam port will be operational in December 2023: Kerala Ports Minister, Adani Group**

Kerala Minister for Ports Ahamed Devarkovil and the Adani group on Thursday said the Vizhinjam port, part of a multi-crore International Deep water Multipurpose Seaport project, would be operational by December 2023. However, the entire Rs 7,525 crore project, including providing national highway connectivity to the port and carrying out land acquisitions, would be completed by December 2024, an Adani official said. The joint announcement was made to the media after a meeting of the Adani Group with the minister with regard to completion of the project which was scheduled to be finished by 2021.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/shipping/-transport/vizhinjam-port-will-be-operational-in-december-2023-kerala-ports-minister-adani-group/articleshow/86455271.cms>

### **Telecom**

#### **Mobile services see recovery in rural markets**

Rural markets finally start to show recovery from the second wave-induced subscriber decline for both telephones as well as wireless subscribers in July, after a three-month stint of subscriber decline from April to June. Reporting a positive growth rate, the rural market boasted a monthly growth rate of 0.42 per cent for telephone subscribers, with telephone subscribers increasing in the hinterlands from 536.47 million at the end of June 2021 to 538.70 million at the end of July 2021. Rural wireless subscribers also grew by 0.41 per cent, from 534.54 million to 536.74 million in July. The data was provided by the telecom monthly subscription rate reports released by the regulator Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/info-tech/mobile-services-see-recovery-in-rural-markets/article36636808.ece>

## Energy

### **Petrol prices not coming down as states don't want it under GST: Puri**

Petrol prices in the country are not coming down as the states do not want to bring fuel under the ambit of the GST, Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said. "If your question is do you want the petrol prices to come down then the answer is yes. Now, if your question is why the petrol prices are not coming down, then the answer is because the states don't want to bring it under GST," he told PTI in an interview. "The Centre charges Rs 32 per litre (as taxes on petrol). We charged Rs 32 per litre when the fuel price was USD 19 per barrel, and we are still charging the same even when the price rose to USD 75 per barrel. With this Rs 32 per litre, we provide free ration, free housing and Ujjawala, among several other schemes, to the people," he said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/petrol-prices-not-coming-down-as-states-don-t-want-it-under-gst-puri-121092300412\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/petrol-prices-not-coming-down-as-states-don-t-want-it-under-gst-puri-121092300412_1.html)

### **Power Minister discusses new 'reforms-linked distribution sector' scheme with the States/UTs**

Power, New and Renewable Energy Minister RK Singh on Friday said that the new reforms-linked distribution sector scheme has been designed as a bottom-up scheme and the discoms/States are empowered to prepare their own detailed project reports (DPRs) based on their need assessments prioritising the loss reduction works. In a virtual meeting held with the States' Energy Ministers, Singh highlighted that the modernisation works such as system augmentation, renovation and modernisation of substations can also be carried out by discoms under this scheme.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/power-minister-discusses-new-reforms-linked-distribution-sector-scheme-with-the-statesuts/article36636426.ece>

### **Next round of coal mines auction for commercial mining in October or November: Pralhad Joshi**

Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi on Thursday said the next round of auction of coal mines for commercial mining will be launched in October or November. The details of most of these mines are already available in the public domain, and some more mines will be added in the list, the coal ministry said in a statement. "...the next tranche of commercial mines auction would be launched in October/ November 2021," it said. Meanwhile, the coal ministry will very soon come out with tender document for the second attempt of sale of 11 coal mines in the ongoing auction round for the mines which have received single bids, it added.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/metals-mining/next-round-of-coal-mines-auction-for-commercial-mining-in-october-or-november-pralhad-joshi/articleshow/86460213.cms>

## States

### **Centre holds meet with states to discuss air pollution in Delhi**

To reach a common ground over tackling Delhi's air pollution, a joint meeting of the states of Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana was held under the chairmanship of Union Minister Bhupender Yadav on Thursday. "Each state put forth its own proposals. We reiterated that Delhi's pollution level rises due to its neighbouring states. After monitoring the air quality for the past few weeks, we have found that the PM2.5 and PM10 level starts rising post October 15 - a time when crop residue in the neighbouring states is burnt," Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai said in a presser. Delhi, in total, presented 12 suggestions in the meeting.

"In its main points, Delhi government has yet again appealed to the Centre to consider air pollution problem on an emergency basis and devise an action plan for the usage of bio-decomposer in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab," he added.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/centre-holds-meet-with-states-to-discuss-air-pollution-in-delhi-121092300845\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/centre-holds-meet-with-states-to-discuss-air-pollution-in-delhi-121092300845_1.html)

#### **40 percent work of Mumbai coastal road project complete: Civic chief**

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation has completed 40 per cent physical work of the Rs 12,000 crore-worth coastal road project from Marine Drive to Worli, including a one-km-long tunnel, BMC Commissioner Iqbal Singh Chahal said on Thursday. The project will be completed in November 2023, he said in a statement. The work completed so far includes a tunnel of one-km length and 40-feet diameter under the Malabar Hill in south Mumbai. Only work on 900 metres of the tunnel is remaining now, Chahal said. It is the "first-of-its kind" under-sea tunnel project of 40-feet diameter executed in the country, he claimed.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/40-percent-work-of-mumbai-coastal-road-project-complete-civic-chief/articleshow/86449061.cms>

#### **Telangana sanctions ₹5,000 cr for sewerage master plan**

The Telangana government has announced a Sewerage Master Plan, seeking to set up 62 Sewerage Treatment Plants (STP) in Hyderabad, keeping in view the current and future requirement for sewer water treatment infrastructure. The State Government has announced a support of ₹5,000 crore to the GHMC (Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation) to increase its sewage water treatment infrastructure.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/telangana-sanctions-5000-cr-for-sewerage-master-plan/article36637905.ece>

### **Healthcare**

#### **Govt committed to ensuring top quality, affordable healthcare: PM Modi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said it is the government's commitment to ensure top quality and affordable healthcare for citizens. His comments came as the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, also known as Ayushman Bharat scheme, completed three years. "The importance of healthcare has been even more clearly understood in the year gone by. It is our commitment to ensure top quality and affordable healthcare for our citizens. Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY is key to realising this vision," he said. The scheme provides health insurance of up to Rs 5 lakh to the poor households. Modi will also be launching nationwide rollout of Pradhan Mantri Digital Health Mission on Monday. Under this, a unique digital health ID will be provided to people which will contain all their health records, Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/govt-committed-to-ensuring-top-quality-affordable-healthcare-pm-modi-121092300902\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/govt-committed-to-ensuring-top-quality-affordable-healthcare-pm-modi-121092300902_1.html)

#### **Talks on to make Zydus Cadila's COVID-19 DNA vaccine part of inoculation programme: Govt**

Preparations are on to make Zydus Cadila's COVID-19 DNA vaccine available to people and although the price is a "clear issue", a decision will be taken soon to make it a part of the country's vaccination programme, the government said on Thursday. Responding to a question at a press conference, NITI Aayog Member (Health) Dr V K Paul said to bring Zydus Cadila's DNA vaccine in practical shape and implementation, preparations are going on and repeated discussions have been held. "The price is also a clear issue. Talks are going on and a decision will soon be taken. With full preparation, it will become a part of the country's national vaccination programme. We are looking forward to receiving recommendations of the NTAGI on the beneficiary or target group to which the vaccine has to be given. The work is in progress and you will hear more about this in the times to come," he said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/talks-on-to-make-zydus-cadilas-covid-19-dna-vaccine-part-of-inoculation-programme-govt/articleshow/86459260.cms>

### **External**

#### **India's palm oil imports to drop 9% as farmers expand oilseeds area**



India's palm oil imports in 2021/22 are likely to drop 9% from a year earlier on a rise in domestic supplies, as farmers expand the area planted with oilseeds in response to record high prices, a leading industry analyst told Reuters. The lower imports by the world's biggest palm oil buyer could limit a rally in benchmark Malaysian palm oil prices, which are trading near record highs hit in August. Palm oil imports in the new marketing year starting on Nov. 1 could fall to 7.6 million tonnes from 8.35 million this year, Govindbhai Patel, managing director of trading firm G.G. Patel & Nikhil Research Company, said on Thursday. Lower palm oil imports would pull down total edible oil imports to 13.3 million tonnes in 2021/22 from 13.7 million tonnes, said Patel, who has been trading edible oils for more than five decades. India buys palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia, with its soybean mainly imported from Argentina and Brazil. It purchases sunflower oil from Ukraine. Edible oil supplies are likely to rise nearly 6% to 8.5 million tonnes as domestic soybean and rapeseed production rises, Patel said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-palm-oil-imports-to-drop-9-as-farmers-expand-oilseeds-area-121092300535\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-palm-oil-imports-to-drop-9-as-farmers-expand-oilseeds-area-121092300535_1.html)

#### **Australia's Trade Minister Dan Tehan to visit India next week; to intensify discussions on Free Trade Agreement**

Australian Trade Minister Dan Tehan will visit India next week to explore sealing of an early harvest trade pact to be followed by a comprehensive economic cooperation agreement (CECA) in line with the overall policy approach by the two sides to ramp up economic ties. It will be the first ministerial visit from Australia after it joined a new security alliance with the UK and the US that triggered sharp reactions from France and raised apprehensions about its possible impact on the Quad.

Tehan announced his visit to India, Indonesia and the United Arab Emirates, the UK and Europe in a speech at the National Press Club in Canberra. "While in India, I will seek to further advance our recent progress towards a free trade agreement, or what is called the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement, CECA," he said.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/australias-trade-minister-dan-tehan-to-visit-india-next-week-to-intensify-discussions-on-free-trade-agreement/2336217/>

#### **India, UAE discuss deepening of trade, investment ties**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday held a meeting with visiting UAE minister for foreign trade Thani Bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi and discussed ways to further boost trade and investment relations between both the countries. "Both sides discussed the strong economic and commercial engagement between the India-UAE and the comprehensive strategic partnership which is driving the multifaceted bilateral relations," the finance ministry said in a statement. A high-level UAE delegation, led by Thani Bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, is in India to hold talks aimed at improving bilateral economic relations, including expanding the existing trade and investment relationship, it said. The first round of Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations is underway. "The regular exchange of high-level bilateral visits even during COVID-19 pandemic reflects close friendship between the two countries," it added.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/india-uae-discuss-deepening-of-trade-investment-ties/2336317/>

#### **India likely to allow export of Sputnik Light COVID shot this month, say sources**

India is likely to allow the export of domestically produced doses of Russia's Sputnik Light COVID-19 vaccine this month, as the shot has yet to be approved in India, two sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters. Local media have reported that Indian drugmaker Hetero has already manufactured 2 million doses of the single-shot vaccine, for whose approval the country's drug regulator has sought a separate "immune-bridging clinical trial" in its residents. "Sputnik Light exports are expected to begin from this month," said one of the sources, both of whom declined to be named. "Light is not an approved vaccine in India and stocks are available. There's pressure on the government to export."

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-likely-to-allow-export-of-sputnik-light-covid-shot-this-month-say-sources/articleshow/86454770.cms>

#### **India's exports to EU declined in the last 20 years, accounts for mere 0.9% of the total imports of EU**

India's exports have seen a steady growth over the last six months, but bucking this trend trade with the European Union (EU), which is the second largest export market for India after the USA, has seen a steady decline. According to an analysis by MVRDC WTC Mumbai, the share of the European Union in India's merchandise exports has declined in the last 20 years. The share of the European Union in India's overall goods exports declined from 18% in 2001 to

14% in 2020, even though there was growth in the absolute value of shipments. India's exports to the European Union stagnated around \$45 billion since 2011 after rising from \$8.1 billion in 2001.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/indias-exports-to-eu-declined-in-the-last-20-years-accounts-for-mere-0-9-of-the-total-imports-of-eu/articleshow/86450599.cms>

### **India sugar mills pause export deals in bet price will rise more**

Sugar exporters in India are holding off signing any more export contracts, in a bet that global prices will rally further after bad weather damaged crops in top grower Brazil. Raw sugar in New York would need to climb to 20.5 cents a pound to again attract mills from the western Maharashtra state and the southern region, Abinash Verma, director general of the Indian Sugar Mills Association, said by phone. The second-biggest sugar producer has already inked deals to ship 1.2 million tons from the next year's crop, taking advantage of a recent rally in prices, he said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/india-sugar-mills-pause-export-deals-in-bet-price-will-rise-more/articleshow/86450648.cms>



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