



December 15, 2020 - Tuesday

Key Developments

Covid-19 vaccination drive: Centre issues guidelines; 100 to 200 people to be immunised in one session

Covid-19 vaccination drive: Government has already issued guidelines for Covid-19 vaccination drive and it advises on inoculation of 100 to 200 people each session per day. After the vaccine dose is administered, the beneficiary will be kept under observation for 30 minutes for any kind of adverse reaction and only one person will be vaccinated at a time in one center, directs the 'COVID-19 Vaccine Operational Guidelines'.

COVID Vaccine Intelligence Network (Co-WIN) system, a digital platform specially made for the vaccination purpose will be utilized to track enlisted beneficiaries on a real-time basis. There will be no provision for spot-registration. A beneficiary has to register beforehand and they will be vaccinated depending on the prioritisation. Centre has asked the states to designate one manufacturer to a district to avoid mixing of vaccines during transport.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/health/covid-19-vaccination-drive-centre-issues-guidelines-100-to-200-people-to-be-immunised-in-one-session/2149863/>

Pushing India to surpass China in mobile manufacturing: Ravi Shankar Prasad

Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Monday said that India has become the second-biggest mobile manufacturer in the world and has a clearly defined goal of surpassing China.

"When we had come to power in 2014, India had only two mobile factories, now India has over 260. India has become the second-biggest mobile manufacturer in the world. Now I am pushing to surpass China, that's my goal. And I am clearly defining it," said the Union Minister while addressing the FICCI's 93rd annual general meeting through video conferencing.

Speaking on the 'Leveraging ICT for Economic Revival in Post COVID-19 Era', Ravi Shankar said, "The Digital India ecosystem, which we conceived, finalised and which we sort to put on the ground, created a great enabling atmosphere to face the challenge of the COVID. Digital India simply put, is designed to empower ordinary Indians with the power of technology."

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/pushing-india-to-surpass-china-in-mobile-manufacturing-ravi-shankar-prasad-120121400401_1.html

Investment will not come in unviable power sector, says R K Singh

Poor finances of state-owned electricity distribution companies (discoms) is deterring investors and remains the biggest challenge for the government Power and Renewable Energy Minister RK Singh said on Monday. "I'm worried, because of the sustainability factor. A large number of our distribution companies are loss-making," Singh said at the annual general meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/investment-will-not-come-in-unviable-power-sector-says-r-k-singh/articleshow/79717441.cms>

No question of taking retrograde steps against agri sector: Rajnath Singh

As farmers intensified their protests against the newly enacted farm laws, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday asserted that agriculture was a "mother sector" and there was no question of taking any "retrograde steps" against it ever.

In an address at the annual general meeting of industry chamber FICCI, Singh also said the recent reforms in the sector have been undertaken with the best interests of farmers in mind and that the government is always "open to discussion and dialogue". "There is no question of taking retrograde steps against our agricultural sector ever. The recent reforms have been undertaken with the best interests of India's farmers in mind," he said. "We are, however, always willing to listen to our farmer brothers, allay their misgivings and provide them with assurances we can provide. Our Government is always open to discussion and dialogue," Singh said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/no-question-of-taking-retrograde-steps-against-agri-sector-ever-rajnath-singh-120121400623_1.html

FM Sitharaman holds pre-Budget consultations with top industrialists

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday held pre-Budget consultations with top industrialists in the national capital ahead of the forthcoming Union Budget 2021-22, informed the Ministry of Finance. Sitharaman has concluded a comprehensive review of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Package (ANBP) with the Secretaries of various Ministries/Departments, the Ministry of Finance said on Sunday.

In an official release, Finance Ministry said, the Ministries and Departments concerned have started implementing the announcements under the three Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Packages. The progress of implementation is being reviewed and monitored regularly.

https://www.business-standard.com/budget/article/fm-sitharaman-holds-pre-budget-consultations-with-top-industrialists-120121400479_1.html

RBI allows banks to open specific accounts without restrictions

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has permitted banks to open specific accounts relating to real estate projects, capital market transactions, and White Label ATM Operators and their agents for sourcing of currency, among others, which are stipulated under the various statutes and instructions of other regulators/ regulatory departments. The opening of current accounts by the aforementioned entities is without any restrictions placed in terms of RBI's August 6 circular on 'Opening of Current Accounts by Banks - Need for Discipline'.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/rbi-allows-banks-to-open-specific-accounts-without-restrictions/article33329907.ece>

Economy

Centre releases Rs 42,000 cr to states to meet GST compensation shortfall

The Centre has so far borrowed Rs 42,000 crore since October and released the funds to states to meet GST compensation shortfall, the Finance Ministry said on Monday. The latest instalment of Rs 6,000 crore was released to the states on Monday, out of which Rs 5,516.60 crore has been released to 23 states and Rs 483.40 crore has been released to 3 Union Territories (UT) with legislative assemblies (Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, and Puducherry). The remaining 5 states -- Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim -- do not have a gap in revenue on account of Goods and Services Tax (GST) implementation, the Finance Ministry said in a statement. The Centre had set up a special borrowing window in October 2020 to meet the estimated shortfall of Rs 1.10 lakh crore in revenue arising on account of implementation of GST.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/centre-releases-rs-42-000-cr-to-states-to-meet-gst-compensation-shortfall-120121401044_1.html

Retail inflation declines to 6.93% in Nov on softer food prices

Retail inflation declined to 6.93 per cent in November on softer food prices, though it remained above the comfort level of the Reserve Bank. Retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) stood at 7.61 per cent in October. According to the CPI data released by the government on Monday, inflation in the food basket was 9.43 per cent in November, down from 11 per cent in the previous month. The RBI, which mainly factors in retail inflation while arriving at key policy rates, has been mandated by the government to keep inflation at 4 per cent (+, - 2 per cent). The central bank had maintained status quo in the policy rate earlier this month due to high inflation.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/retail-inflation-declines-to-6-93-pc-in-nov-120121400972_1.html

November WPI inflation at nine-month high even as food prices moderate

The wholesale price index-based inflation rate rose to a nine-month high of 1.55 per cent in November even as the rate of food price rise narrowed substantially to 3.94 per cent from 6.37 per cent in October. In fact, onion, which bore the brunt of rising inflation rate in recent months, saw deflation or fall in prices in November at the rate of 7.58 per cent.

November was the fourth month in a row with WPI inflation. Before that there was deflation or fall in prices for months at a stretch. Within food inflation, all the important vegetable prices rose by 12.24 per cent in November, which was almost half the rate of 25.23 per cent in the previous month. However, the potato inflation rate rose to 115.2 per cent in November against 107.70 per cent the previous month.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/november-wpi-inflation-at-nine-month-high-even-as-food-prices-moderate-120121400646_1.html

“Retrospective amendment” in GST law: Time frame prescribed by tax department more of a direction says Delhi High Court

The tax department’s amendment around transition credit under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) framework was more of a direction, the Delhi High Court has said. The court would also hear more about 25 companies that had not been able to claim transitional tax credit had dragged the government to court over a retrospective amendment in GST framework. Time limit of 90 days prescribed by the government for taking transitional credit in cases where there was no technical glitch was more of a direction the court said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/retrospective-amendment-in-gst-law-time-frame-prescribed-by-tax-department-more-of-a-direction-says-delhi-high-court/articleshow/79720611.cms>

India's population is stabilising as total fertility rate declines across states

India's population is stabilising as per the Fifth National Family Health Survey as the total fertility rate has decreased across majority of the states. Of the 17 states analysed in the NFHS-5 data, except for Bihar, Manipur and Meghalaya, all other states have a TFR of 2.1 or less, which implies that most states have attained replacement level fertility. The first set of findings from the fifth round of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS), conducted in 2019-20 were released by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India on Saturday, December 12th, four years after the last survey (NFHS-4, 2015-16).

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/indias-population-is-stabilising-as-total-fertility-rate-declines-across-states/articleshow/79725193.cms>

Crisil revises FY21 GDP contraction projection to 7.7 per cent on higher economic activity

Ratings agency Crisil on Monday revised upwards its FY21 GDP contraction estimate to 7.7 per cent from the earlier expectation of 9 per cent, and termed lower government spending as a “constraint” for growth. The agency, which is a unit of Standard & Poor’s, said a faster than expected revival in the economic activity in the second quarter, which continued in the festival season, is the prime reason for the upward revision in its estimate.

It said the pandemic, which has pushed the economy into contraction mode, will result in a permanent loss of 12 per cent in real GDP terms.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/crisil-revises-fy21-gdp-contraction-projection-to-7-7-per-cent-on-higher-economic-activity/2149864/>

India's recovery process gains strength in December, shows survey by Nomura

Business activity in India surged to another post-lockdown high with the Nomura India Business Resumption Index (NIBRI) hitting 92.9 for the week ended December 13. The weekly business resumption tracker showed a strong gain from the 89.6 recorded in the previous week, Nomura said in a note on Monday.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/indias-recovery-process-gains-strength-in-december-shows-survey-by-nomura/articleshow/79717807.cms>

Economy grows but households’ sentiment hit in November; consumers face a double whammy

The double whammy of fall in employment and household incomes have together hit the consumer sentiments in the month of November 2020. While employment fell by 0.9 per cent or 35 lakh during the month, only 4.3 per cent of the households reported an increase in their nominal incomes compared to a year ago, according to the Centre

for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE). Higher inflation is believed to be one of the major reasons behind the shrinking household income. Lesser income has restricted households from buying consumer durables. The fall in income has also hit another nail in the household conditions while there was a resurgence of coronavirus infections in the month. About 30 per cent of the households, before the lockdown, had expressed confidence that their incomes would improve in a year. However, during the lockdown, this optimism nosedived. While it saw an uptick in August, it dropped back to nearly pre-August levels again in November. An increase in perceptions of a deterioration of household incomes is accompanied by an increase in a lack of confidence in the future too. The proportion of households that believed that their incomes would be better a year later fell from 6.6 per cent in October to 5.2 per cent in November 2020.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/economy-grows-but-households-sentiment-hit-in-november-consumers-face-a-double-whammy/2149518/>

Banking and Finance

NBFCs expect higher credit loss on Covid-19 woes, says study

Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) are expecting higher credit loss as well as an increase in provision coverage rates, mainly due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, according to a study. The study by leading consultancy EY is based on an analysis of the standalone financial statements of 42 NBFCs, including 14 Housing Finance Companies (HFCs), for the year ended March 31, 2020. The companies have reported an "increase in Expected Credit Loss (ECL) allowance by 33 per cent and an overall increase in provision coverage rate by 26 per cent as at 31 March 2020 compared to the year ended 31 March 2019".

Further, COVID-19 impact accounted for 19 per cent of the ECL allowance as on March 31 this year. As per the study titled 'Expected credit loss analysis for non-banking financial companies' released on Monday, there has been an overall increase in gross loans of NBFCs by 7.63 per cent and HFCs by 2.44 per cent.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/nbfc-expect-higher-credit-loss-on-covid-19-woes-says-study-120121400918_1.html

India sets high benchmark for global MF industry on disclosure: Report

India has set a high standard for the global mutual fund industry with monthly portfolio holdings disclosure requirement, a Morningstar report said on Monday. This has been further strengthened with the fortnightly portfolio disclosures for fixed-income funds, it added.

According to Morningstar biannual Global Investor Experience report on disclosure, India, along with the US, received "top" grades due to their robust disclosure practices. The two markets feature global best practices for the disclosure of portfolio manager names, fund ownership and compensation. "India earns a top grade for disclosure given the strength of its requirements for monthly portfolio holdings disclosure, portfolio management disclosure, and specifications for the simplified prospectus," the report noted.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/india-sets-high-benchmark-for-global-mf-industry-on-disclosure-aspect-report-120121401025_1.html

Despite five-fold increase, India's deposit insurance cover among lowest globally

The Budget 2020-21 had brought some respite to depositors by increasing the deposit insurance cover to ₹5 lakh (effective February 4) from ₹1 lakh earlier. Yet the latest annual survey by the International Association of Deposit Insurers (IADI) reveals that India ranks in the bottom 20 among the 110-odd countries in terms of insurance cover. The coverage limits range from below \$1,000 to \$300,000; India's ₹5-lakh cover works out to about \$7,000, according to the IADI Survey (around \$6,800 as per current exchange rate). Countries such as Philippines (\$9,875), Mexico (\$1,35,222), Argentina (\$25,130), Russian Federation (\$22,615), Turkey (\$25,253), Malaysia (\$61,080) and Brazil (\$62,033) rank way higher than India, according to the latest IADI Survey.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/despite-five-fold-increase-indias-deposit-insurance-cover-among-lowest-globally/article33327009.ece?homepage=true>

Industry

DPIIT releases quality control norms for refrigerating appliances

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has come out with quality control norms for refrigerating appliances, a move that would help contain import and production of sub-standard products in the country. According to a DPIIT notification, household refrigerating appliance - refrigerators with or without low temperature; and freezers - would have to conform to the specified standards and bear the standard mark under a licence from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). The item cannot be produced, sold/traded, imported and stocked unless they bear BIS mark. The order will come into force with effect from January 1, 2022. BIS "shall be the certifying and enforcement authority for the goods," according to the notification.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/durables/dpiit-releases-quality-control-norms-for-refrigerating-appliances/articleshow/79724089.cms>

Sebi proposes relaxing norms for listing start-ups

Seeking to boost listing of start-ups, markets watchdog Sebi on Monday proposed a slew of relaxations to norms, including reducing holding period for pre-issue capital, providing differential voting rights to promoters and allowing discretionary allotment to all eligible investors. The changes have been proposed to the framework for listing on the Innovators Growth Platform (IGP). Other proposals include retaining superior voting rights for existing institutional investors holding over 10 per cent of the capital, and easing delisting requirements.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/markets/stocks/news/sebi-proposes-relaxing-norms-for-listing-start-ups/articleshow/79726324.cms>

FSSAI withdraws order prohibiting blending of mustard oil

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has decided to withdraw its earlier order that prohibited the blending of mustard oil in the country. The order, which had asked edible oil companies to stop the sale and manufacture of blended mustard oil from October 1, had sparked concerns in the edible oil industry. In September, the FSSAI had decided to operationalise the Draft Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Amendment Regulations, 2020, which stated that "no manufacturing or sale of blended edible vegetable oil with mustard oil as ingredient will be allowed with effect October 1".

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/fssai-withdraws-order-prohibiting-blending-of-mustard-oil/article33326723.ece>

Food service establishments to mention calorific value in menu card: Labelling & Display norms

Food service establishments with central license or outlets at 10 or more locations will have to mention the calorific value (in kcal per serving and serving size) against the food items displayed on the menu cards or boards or booklets, according to the government of India's newly notified labelling and display regulations. "Additionally, reference information on calorie requirements shall also be displayed clearly and prominently as "An average active adult requires 2,000 kcal energy per day, however, calorie needs may vary", the notification said. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) was in the process of overhauling the labelling regulations for packaged food products, which have now been notified.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/food/food-service-establishments-to-mention-calorific-value-in-menu-card-labelling-display-norms/articleshow/79727903.cms>

Agriculture

Kerala voices concern over proposed dissolving of commodity boards

Kerala has taken strong exception to the proposed move to dissolve commodity boards, fearing it could have a long-term negative impact on the agriculture sector in the State. "The PMO is learnt to have taken steps in this direction and we are expecting an order to this effect shortly", said VS Sunil Kumar, State Agriculture Minister. "The move is in continuation with the recently introduced farm laws and could be viewed as part of the larger policy to drive privatisation", he told *BusinessLine*.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/kerala-voices-concern-over-proposed-dissolving-of-commodity-boards/article33325733.ece>

Unseasonal rains worry grape farmers in Nashik

Untimely rain in parts of Maharashtra has posed a threat to grape cultivation in Nashik, while cotton procurement in North Maharashtra was interrupted. Nashik is one of the major grape cultivation zones. Cloudy atmosphere and rain are damaging the crop, said farmers. Maximum grapes cultivated in Nashik are exported to European countries. Farmers fear that the quality of grapes will be affected due to rains and will also incur more production cost with additional spending on pesticides to protect grapes.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/unseasonal-rains-worry-grape-farmers-in-nashik/article33326148.ece>

Infrastructure

International flights on mind, aviation ministry to meet airlines today

As the UK, the US and Canada start their Covid-19 vaccination programmes, India's aviation ministry has called a meeting with airlines on Tuesday to discuss resuming international flights. "The issue of resumption of international flights and expansion of existing air bubble flights will be discussed with all airlines," said a person aware of the matter who did not want to be identified.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/international-flights-on-mind-ministry-to-meet-airlines-today/articleshow/79730414.cms>

Tata Sons among multiple bidders to buy national carrier Air India

Salt-to-software conglomerate Tata Group was among "multiple" entities that on Monday put in preliminary bids for buying the government's stake in loss-making carrier Air India. "Multiple expressions of interest have been received for strategic disinvestment of Air India. The Transaction will now move to the second stage," Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey tweeted.

He, however, did not reveal either the identity of the bidders or the number of bids received for buying the national carrier. Sources said Tata Sons, the holding company of the Tata Group, has put in an Expression of Interest (EoI) at the close of the deadline on Monday.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/tata-sons-among-multiple-bidders-to-buy-national-carrier-air-india-120121400978_1.html

209 Air India employees submit EoI for 51% stake in national carrier

A group of 209 Air India employees has submitted an expression of interest for the national carrier in partnership with a private financier. The bid process is being led by Meenakshi Mallik, who is the current commercial director at Air India.

"We have submitted an EoI along with a partner who will give us financial backing," Malik confirmed to Business Standard refusing to disclose further details as they are confidential. While rules allow bid by Air India employees, disinvestment guidelines mandate that the company will not be able to partner any private company. It has to partner with either a bank or a financial institution. Apart from the financier's backing, each employee willing to participate in the bid will be asked to contribute Rs 1 lakh towards the bid.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/209-air-india-employees-submit-eoi-for-51-stake-in-national-carrier-120121400386_1.html

Major toll plazas in Mumbai now on FASTag platform, Dahisar to go live soon

After Rajiv Gandhi Sea Link plaza and Vashi toll plaza, three more major toll plazas in Mumbai -- Airoli, Mulund Eastern Express Way and Mulund (LBS Marg) -- have gone live on National Payments Corporation of India's (NPCI) FASTag platform. The toll plaza in Dahisar is currently working on implementing FASTag and is expected to go live soon.

"ICICI Bank is the first bank to integrate with the FASTag technology at plazas at Vashi, Airoli, Mulund Eastern Express Way, Mulund (LBS Marg) and Dahisar", NPCI said in a statement. "The bank will continue to work closely with MEP Infrastructure, operator of the toll plazas, to bring in the best practices implemented at national highways," it added. The Mumbai -- Pune expressway toll plaza is already on the FASTag platform and has, recently, migrated to latest technological specifications. Currently, more than 720 toll plazas across the country are live on the FASTag platform.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/major-toll-plazas-in-mumbai-now-on-fastag-platform-dahisar-to-go-live-soon-120121400674_1.html

Greater Noida authority to take over stuck housing projects

Greater Noida authority will take over stuck housing projects in the region to ensure timely delivery to homebuyers. The authority said that the funds and companies are taking over such projects at low valuation and as a result homebuyers, lenders and even the authority has to take a haircut. "We will inform the state government about our intent. We don't have the manpower to complete the projects but we will outsource the construction once we take the project through the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)," said Narendra Bhooshan, chief executive officer, Greater Noida authority.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/property/-/construction/greater-noida-authority-to-take-over-stuck-housing-projects/articleshow/79723262.cms>

NAREDCO requests UP government to cut stamp duty on property registration

The National Real Estate Developers Council (NAREDCO), has requested the Uttar Pradesh government to reduce the stamp duty charges on property registration for minimum of 12 months to encourage buyers to invest in the sector. In a letter to the UP Chief Minister, RK Arora, president of Naredco-UP has said that the developers body is ready to work with the government to finalise the reduction in stamp duty charges. "As we have seen in Maharashtra, stamp duty charges were brought down to 2% till 31st Dec 2020 and to 3% from 1st Jan 2021- 31st March 2021 (earlier stamp duty charges were 5%). As a result, Mumbai property registrations has increased to at 8-year high in November 2020, up 67% on year," the letter says.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/property/-/construction/naredco-requests-up-government-to-cut-stamp-duty-on-property-registration/articleshow/79723825.cms>

Energy

India's fuel demand climbs for third straight month in November

India's fuel consumption rose for a third straight month in November, helped by reviving transportation and business activity, although a year-on-year fall pointed to a sluggish economic recovery. Consumption of refined fuels, a proxy for oil demand, in November rose 0.4% from the previous month to 17.83 million tonnes, data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas released on Saturday showed. Diesel consumption, a key parameter linked to economic growth and which accounts for about 40% of overall refined fuel sales in India, edged up 0.6% month-on-month, but fell 7% to 7.04 million tonnes on an annual basis.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/indias-fuel-demand-climbs-for-third-straight-month-in-november/articleshow/79715665.cms>

Coal PSUs to adopt alternate transport methods to replace road transport in large mines: Pralhad Joshi

Coal and Mines Minister Pralhad Joshi on Monday said public sector coal companies, including state-owned Coal India, will adopt alternate transport methods, including mechanised conveyor systems, computerised loading onto railway rakes, among others, for movement of coal in large mines, replacing road transport. The minister, who chaired a meeting of the Consultative Committee on Coal & Mines Ministries on First Mile Connectivity projects, said first mile connectivity will promote ease of living in coal mine areas by reducing traffic congestion, road accidents and adverse impact on environment. "Coal PSUs will adopt alternate transport methods like mechanized conveyor systems, computerized loading onto railway rakes etc. replacing road transport in large mines," the minister said in a tweet.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/metals-mining/coal-psus-to-adopt-alternate-transport-methods-to-replace-road-transport-in-large-mines-pralhad-joshi/articleshow/79721561.cms>

States

Tamil Nadu signs 18 MoUs worth Rs 19,955 cr, projects to create 26,500 jobs

Tamil Nadu government on Monday signed 18 MoUs worth Rs 19,955 crore with an employment potential of 26,509 persons. Companies which signed the MoU include the Crown Group Of Companies, representing a Russian defence

organisation, Ola Electric and Mahindra CIE among others. The MoUs were signed in the presence of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami.

Ola Electric will invest Rs 2,354 crore, Torrent Gas - Rs 5,000 crore, First Solar - Rs 4875 crore, SSEM - Rs 2,500 crore, Crown - Rs 2,500 crore, Tata Group's Voltas - Rs 1,001 crore and Mylan - Rs 350 crore among others. Crown Group plans to establish an aerospace cluster park, manufacturing aircraft components and sub systems and drones in the Salem District with an investment of Rs 2,500 crore and an employment potential of about 5000 persons.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/tamil-nadu-signs-18-mous-worth-rs-19-955-cr-projects-to-create-26-500-jobs-120121400563_1.html

UP plans medical colleges in every district, CM Yogi Adityanath woos investment from diaspora

The Uttar Pradesh government plans to have a medical college in each of the 75 districts in the state, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has told potential investors based in the US. Addressing an investment and tourism event organised under the banner of Uttar Pradesh Association of North America (UPANA) on Sunday night, Adityanath assured "every facility" to those who planned to invest in the state's development. "We will provide them every facility. Uttar Pradesh will do everything possible to fulfil Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream of self-reliant India (Atmanirbhar Bharat)," he said. During the event held through video conference, the CM also highlighted the construction of new roads, development of tourism, opportunities in the food processing industry and the "one district, one product" programme in his state.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/education-2/up-plans-medical-colleges-in-every-district-cm-yogi-adityanath-woos-investment-from-diaspora/2149886/>

Worsening economics of sugar industry worries mills, administration in Maharashtra

Sluggish domestic demand, subdued prices, no exports and an increase in price of sugarcane without commensurate rise in the sugar price have added to the worries of sugar millers and the administration that has to ensure that the standing sugarcane gets crushed on time. Sugar mills are selling sugar below the minimum selling price of Rs 31/kg ex-mill as demand is subdued due to winter, while exports have not started yet due to delay in announcement of the new export policy for 2020-21.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/worsening-economics-of-sugar-industry-worries-mills-administration-in-maharashtra/articleshow/79723344.cms>

Healthcare

Health ministry's telemedicine service eSanjeevani records 1 million teleconsultations

The Union Health Ministry's national telemedicine initiative eSanjeevani has crossed 1 million teleconsultations on Monday. The eSanjeevani is being used by patients in over 550 districts of India, the health ministry said in a statement. Over 10 per cent of the users of eSanjeevani are aged 60 and above. Close to around one fourth of the total patients have used eSanjeevani more than once. "These stands as a testimony to the fact that public has started preferring telemedicine over visiting hospital OPDs for consulting a doctor," the ministry said. The roll-out of eSanjeevani in India is supposedly the first-of-its-kind of digital transformation in the delivery of health services at national scale by a developing country.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/health-ministrys-telemedicine-service-esanjeevani-records-1-million-teleconsultations/articleshow/79721625.cms>

NITI Aayog proposes surveillance platform to strengthen India's public health system

NITI Aayog has proposed setting up of a Surveillance Information Platform as it plans to strengthen India's public health surveillance system, a need strongly felt after the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. The platform will store, analyse, and auto-generate relevant reports and will remain a repository for further analysis and research while complementing the available surveillance information, it has proposed in the white paper.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/niti-aayog-proposes-surveillance-platform-to-strengthen-indias-public-health-system/articleshow/79719140.cms>

External

India to send 10 MT of life saving drugs to Sudan to help cope with COVID situation

India on Monday informed Sudan that it would be sending 10 Metric Tonnes of life-saving drugs to the African nation in coming weeks to help it cope with the COVID situation. This was conveyed by Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan to Sudan's Acting Foreign Minister Omar Gamar Aldin Ismail during a meeting held through video conferencing. The meeting afforded an opportunity to comprehensively review the bilateral relations since the transitional government took office in Sudan, a Ministry of External Affairs statement said.

Muraleedharan congratulated the transitional government and the people of Sudan on the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement, welcomed the removal of Sudan from the US' State Sponsors of Terrorism List, and the normalization of its relations with Israel.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-to-send-10-mt-of-life-saving-drugs-to-sudan-to-help-cope-with-covid-situation/articleshow/79726386.cms>