



December 17, 2020 - Thursday

Key Developments

Finance Ministry extends deadline for states to implement reforms to avail additional borrowing

The Finance Ministry has extended the deadline till February 15 for states to implement reforms like one-nation one ration card and those in the power sector to become eligible for additional borrowing in the current fiscal, a release said. To meet the extra fund requirements of states on account of COVID-19 pandemic, the Centre in May had decided to raise the borrowing limit of the states by 2 per cent of their GSDP, over and above the 3 per cent limit set under the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act.

However, states were required to complete four specific reforms — implementation of one nation one ration card, ease of doing business reform, urban local body/ utility reforms and power sector reforms — by December 31, 2020, to get the benefits.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/finmin-extends-deadline-for-states-to-implement-reforms-to-avail-additional-borrowing/2151208/>

Banks must focus on asset quality, capital for monetary policy impact: RBI

The credit channel of monetary policy transmission in India is robust, however, its effectiveness is hampered by asset quality of issues of banks, an RBI working paper on “asset quality and credit channel of monetary policy transmission in India” revealed. Hence, for monetary policy actions to have their full impact, banks need to strengthen their capital position and address quality issues. While asset quality issues have an impact on the credit growth of the economy, better capital position of banks can negate the effect. “Controlling asset quality, in the short-run, the credit channel of monetary transmission of public sector banks is stronger relative to that of private sector banks”, the RBI working paper said. The paper evaluates the impact of asset quality of scheduled commercial banks in India on the credit channel of monetary policy and has been authored by Janak Raj, Deba Prasad Rath, Pratik Mitra, and Joice John.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/banks-must-focus-on-asset-quality-capital-for-monetary-policy-impact-rbi-120121600453_1.html

NPCI adds reloadable wallet feature in RuPay cards for offline transactions

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), the umbrella body for payments and settlement in India, has launched RuPay contactless offline feature for retail payments on a pilot basis. It has features which provide reloadable wallets within the card for day to day transit payments. Essentially, the RuPay card, with the wallet feature, will enable customers to store money which they can use to make payments despite facing connectivity issues at POS machines.

“These additional features will augment the overall transaction experience for the RuPay cardholders and revolutionise the overall card payment ecosystem”, NPCI said in a statement. “The RuPay National Common Mobility Card (NPMC) offline wallet can be used to make ticket payments in transit including metros, bus tickets, cab fares etc enabling automatic quick cashless payments, thereby, reducing the wait time, traffic congestion and in turn the transit time,” it added.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/npci-adds-reloadable-wallet-feature-in-rupay-cards-for-offline-transactions-120121600628_1.html

Govt announces National Security Directive on Telecom Sector for secure networks

In a bid to tighten security of communications network, the Cabinet Committee on Security on Wednesday announced the National Security Directive on Telecommunication Sector, which will mandate service providers to purchase equipment from trusted sources. Law and Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said the directive has been framed from the perspective of national security. "Considering the need to ensure India's national security, the Cabinet has accorded approval for the National Security Directive on Telecommunication Sector," Prasad said. Under the provisions of this directive, the government will declare a list of trusted sources and trusted products for installation in the country's telecom network. "The methodology to designate trusted products will be devised by the designated authority, the National Cyber Security Coordinator. Telecom service providers are required to connect new devices that are designated trusted products," Prasad said.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/govt-announces-national-security-directive-on-telecom-sector-for-secure-networks/2151325/>

Next round of spectrum auction gets cabinet nod: I&B minister Javadekar

The Union Cabinet has approved the next round of spectrum auction, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said on Wednesday. The minister said that the cabinet has approved relief for sugarcane farmers, improvement in electricity infrastructure in North Eastern states and the auction of spectrum. The Digital Communications Commission, the apex decision making body of the Department of Telecom, in May approved the spectrum auction plan subject to the cabinet approval.

The DoT is yet to come out with any notification for the next round of auction in which airwaves worth Rs 5.22 lakh crore are to be sold. According to Jio, spectrum worth Rs 3.92 lakh crore is lying unused with the DoT for auction.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/next-round-of-spectrum-auction-gets-cabinet-nod-i-b-minister-javadekar-120121600705_1.html

Sebi tweaks public shareholding norms for companies under insolvency process

Markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday decided to tweak norms pertaining to 25 per cent minimum public shareholding for companies which undergo corporate insolvency resolution and seek relisting following the process. Besides, it decided to enhance disclosure for such companies, Sebi said in a statement after its board meeting. The move would ensure revival of the corporate debtor pursuant to the resolution plan and provide any listing gains over the next three years to shareholders.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/markets/stocks/news/sebi-clears-new-shareholding-norms-for-corporate-insolvency-resolution-process-cos/articleshow/79760689.cms>

Economy

GST revenues take a beating as Council tweaks rates far too often

According to the government's own admission, Rs 1.10 trillion out of the expected Rs 2.35 trillion shortfall in compensation to the states for implementation of the goods and services tax in the current financial year is due to the gaps in the existing GST system. The Centre paid compensation to the states from the cess levied for this purpose in 2017-18 (July-March) and 2018-19.

However, the compensation cess could not collect the required amount in 2019-20 and became a major bone of contention between the Centre and the states in the ongoing financial year.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/gst-revenues-take-a-beating-as-council-tweaks-rates-far-too-often-120121600627_1.html

SBI Research ups projections for economy, narrows GDP contraction to 7.4%

SBI Research has scaled up its projections for the economy, projecting gross domestic product (GDP) to contract 7.4 per cent during the current financial year compared to its earlier forecast of a 10.9 per cent fall. The author of the report, Soumya Kanti Ghosh, believes it would take seven quarters from the fourth quarter of FY21 for GDP to reach the pre-pandemic level in nominal terms. He said the revised GDP estimates are based on SBI 'Nowcasting Model' with 41 high-frequency indicators associated with industry activity, service activity, and global economy. Based on this model, the GDP growth for the third quarter would be around 0.1 per cent (with downward bias), Ghosh said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/sbi-research-ups-projections-for-economy-narrows-gdp-contraction-to-7-4-120121600956_1.html

India's HDI rank slips two places to 131, still gets UNDP praise

India's Human Development Index or HDI position has marginally dropped after improving last year. In the latest UNDP's HDI ranking, India stands at 131. Last year India's ranking was 129.

HDI is UNDP's annual assessment of the state of human development worldwide and includes the Human Development Index (HDI), which measures individual countries' progress. However, UNDP officials say this doesn't mean India didn't do well but others did better. UNDP Resident Representative Shoko Noda in fact praised India's commitment to reduce carbon emission and said that India can help other countries too. However, they agreed there's room for India for further improvements, in a webinar organized by the UNDP.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/india-s-hdi-rank-slips-two-places-to-131-still-gets-undp-praise-120121600551_1.html

Under the shadow of Covid-19 pandemic, inflation bites India the hardest

Among the many ways in which Covid-19 has affected the economy, the most tangible outcome, the one that affects each and every person, is the impact on inflation. Even before the pandemic struck, consumer inflation had crossed the upper tolerance level of six per cent in December 2019. India was in a tight situation with inflation higher than the mandate, but economic growth falling fast to levels of three per cent, a rare low.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/under-the-shadow-of-covid-19-pandemic-inflation-bites-india-the-hardest-120121600750_1.html

Mapping APMC reforms over the decades in the backdrop of farmers' protest

Amid the ongoing farmers' protest that has blocked Delhi borders, a debate rages about the APMC reforms as advocated by previous governments and the current set of acts, and the differences and similarities between the two. A few days back, the ruling BJP released a set of letters that then Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar had written to state chief ministers urging them to reform their APMC acts and encourage private participation in them.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/mapping-apmc-reforms-over-the-decades-in-the-backdrop-of-farmers-protest-120121600615_1.html

Budget 2021 Expectations: Modi govt may speed up infra building but states' limited capacity can hinder growth

The government is expected to boost spending in the next fiscal year 2021-22, in an effort to push India's growth and make the call of Atmanirbhar Bharat to reap more fruits. Infrastructure, arguably the mainstay of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, could see heightened push. However, there are chances that the Centre's effort may face roadblocks due to the states' limited capacity to spend. A higher spending in the budget due in February will lay the foundations for even stronger growth in the next four to five years, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had recently said. FM Sitharaman had suggested the government could open purse strings in the months ahead to boost the growth rate.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/budget/budget-2021-expectation-state-capacity-centre-spending-infrastructure-building-infra-creation-atmanirbhar-bharat/2151127/>

India signs \$1 billion loan with NDB to support MGNREGS and rural infrastructure

The government signed a loan agreement worth \$1 billion with the New Development Bank (NDB) to support the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and India's rural infrastructure, on Wednesday. The loan will aid India's economic recovery from the pandemic "by supporting expenditures on rural infrastructure related to natural resource management (NRM) and rural employment generation under Government of India's Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme," a finance ministry statement said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/india-signs-1-billion-loan-with-ndb-to-support-mgnregs-and-rural-infrastructure/articleshow/79762453.cms>

India may need to spend \$1.8 billion on COVID-19 vaccines in first phase, documents show

India will have to spend \$1.4 billion to \$1.8 billion in the first phase of a coronavirus vaccination programme, even after getting support under the COVAX global vaccine-sharing scheme, according to estimates by the GAVI vaccines

alliance. India, which has the world's second highest caseload of coronavirus behind the United States, plans to inoculate 300 million people over the next six to eight months, likely with vaccines from AstraZeneca, Russia's Sputnik, Zydus Cadila and India's own Bharat Biotech. Documents reviewed by Reuters underline the scale of the funding challenge India faces to immunise its vast population, with 600 million shots required in the first wave alone for critical workers and people most at risk from COVID-19.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-may-need-to-spend-1-8-billion-on-covid-19-vaccines-in-first-phase-documents-show/articleshow/79764204.cms>

Fork in the road for Indian economy ahead: Covid a major deciding factor, says Deloitte report

Indian economy is facing a situation where either it could just bounce back in the next few months or face more problems. What will decide this is how Covid pandemic plays out from here on and how the government policies tackle the situation, a Deloitte research report has said. The report predicted three scenarios panning out in the future, ranging from optimism to extreme pessimism.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/fork-in-the-road-for-indian-economy-ahead-covid-a-major-deciding-factor-says-deloitte-report/articleshow/79761585.cms>

Banking and Finance

RBI identifies cross border payments for the second leg of 'sandbox' innovation

The Reserve Bank of India has identified cross-border payments as the second cohort of its regulatory sandbox (RS) program in a bid to make international remittance channels and make them more accessible and affordable. Under the program which commenced earlier this year, banks, fintech and technology companies can collaborate and run real-time experimental pilots under the supervision of a central bank team who can then determine the efficacy of mass-market applications based on the results.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/rbi-identifies-cross-border-payments-for-the-second-leg-of-sandbox-innovation/articleshow/79764527.cms?utm_source=ETTopNews&utm_medium=HPTN&utm_campaign=AL1&utm_content=23

Banks should focus more on cash-flow based lending, says RBI Governor

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday said banks must focus more on cash-flow based lending instead of relying on collaterals for their lending decisions. "To improve the credit to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio, access to credit and cost of credit need to be addressed by lesser reliance on collateral security and greater cash-flow based lending," the RBI governor said at a webinar on investor education organised by National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER).

In this regard, credit bureaus and the proposed Public Credit Registry (PCR) framework can improve the flow of credit as well as credit culture in the country, according to the governor. In order to improve digital financial services the RBI has taken several initiatives, including pilot projects to make at least one district of every state or Union Territory 100 per cent digitally enabled by March 2021. Forty-two such districts are part of this initiative, the governor said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/banks-should-focus-more-on-cash-flow-based-lending-says-rbi-governor-120121600774_1.html

Indian wealth-tech segment to be \$60 bn opportunity by FY25: Report

Indian wealth-tech market is expected to grow three times to about USD 63 billion by FY25 from USD 20 billion in FY20, driven by increasing adoption of digital platforms and growing base of investors, a report by RedSeer Consulting said on Wednesday. The report, titled Wealthtech market in India, noted that only 2 per cent Indians invest in stocks at present, compared to developed economies like the US, where 55 per cent Americans invest in stocks.

"This shows a significant gap between India and developed economies, and therefore, presents a significant headroom for growth. Over the years, there has been a steady growth in the Indian equity markets, MF Folios and Demat accounts," it added.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/indian-wealth-tech-segment-to-be-60-bn-opportunity-by-fy25-redseer-report-120121600766_1.html

Industry

PM Modi's Startup India: Govt-recognised startups jump 60% in 12 months; this many registered so far

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pet scheme to make India a startup hub – Startup India has crossed the 40,000-mark for startups recognized by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). The number of recognized startups so far – 40,729, as per the government data, has increased 63.4 per cent over the past 12 months from 24,927 startups recognized by DPIIT as of November 17, 2019. In fact, the government investment promotion agency Invest India had tweeted the same day that 26 startups are being recognized by DPIIT every day. Moreover, the government's citizen engagement platform MyGovIndia had tweeted that each recognized startup employs an average of 12 people. Launched in January 2016 by PM Modi, DPIIT startups under the Startup India programme had created 1,54,558 jobs in 2019 up from 95,338 jobs in 2018 and 49,648 in 2017.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/pm-modis-startup-india-govt-recognised-startups-jump-60-in-12-months-this-many-registered-so-far/2151227/>

White goods companies may see margin headwinds in the financial year 2021-22: Report

White goods companies may see margin headwinds in the financial year 2021-22, as per the latest report due to increase in input cost and duties to avoid any major impact on demand. The report by Motilal Oswal said the risks to margins are relatively higher in white goods on a relative basis. "The White Goods space is quite competitive. Even prior to COVID-19, brands resisted price increases despite import duty hikes as well as a rupee depreciation to the dollar. This rightly reflected in a decline in margins from peak levels for various companies in the past," it said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/electronics/white-goods-companies-may-see-margin-headwinds-in-the-financial-year-2021-22-report/articleshow/79761449.cms>

Tax on cigarette: India doesn't tax them enough, below best international practices, says report

Amidst all the cacophony of smokers cribbing about rising prices in India, the country's tax burden on cigarettes is far below the standard of best international practice, a study has shown. India got an overall score of 1.88 out of 5 possible points, which is slightly better than the South-East Asia average (1.82), but lower than the global average (2.07) and scores of top performing countries (4.63), a Tobacconomic report said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/tobacco/tax-on-cigarette-india-doesnt-tax-them-enough-below-best-international-practices-says-report/articleshow/79761252.cms>

Auto components industry to see double-digit decline in growth this fiscal: ACMA

Demand for auto components have grown sequentially post lockdown, and the growth momentum is expected to sustain into the next financial year, said Deepak Jain, President of Automotive Component Manufacturers' Association (ACMA).

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/auto/auto-components/auto-components-industry-to-see-double-digit-decline-in-growth-this-fiscal-acma/articleshow/79757482.cms>

Tyre demand in FY21-24 may be insufficient to absorb capacities created in current capex cycle: India Ratings

The incremental tyre demand generated in the fiscals 2021-24 could be insufficient to absorb the new capacities created in the current capex cycle, while the overall capacities could be unutilised to the extent of 20 per cent, ratings agency India Ratings (Ind-Ra) has said. Also, Ind-Ra expects a mid-single-digit decline in the tyre industry volumes despite a sharper decline of 20-25 per cent in original equipment makers' (OEMs) volumes, as the replacement market would continue to support the industry. The agency expects that segment-wise, two- or three-wheeler tyre capacities will be utilised 70-75 per cent and passenger car radials by 80-85 per cent by 2023-24, after factoring in the additional capacities under set-up or ramp-up.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/auto/tyres/tyre-demand-in-fy21-24-may-be-insufficient-to-absorb-capacities-created-in-current-capex-cycle-india-ratings/articleshow/79761668.cms>

Infrastructure

The surprising truths the pandemic has exposed about Railways' functioning

First the good news. The Indian Railways could show a far better performance this year because it hardly ran any passenger trains. If the social distancing norms persist beyond March 2021, the Railways could actually get a positive net revenue in FY22 than those achieved so far by suppressing costs. The bad news is that even then the key performance metric of the Railways, the operating ratio (OR), a measure of how much it costs them to earn every single rupee (the percentage of total working expenses to gross earnings) shall not improve to less than 90 per cent. https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/the-surprising-truths-the-pandemic-has-exposed-about-railways-functioning-120121600670_1.html

Telecom

Spectrum auction decision welcome; lower reserve prices would've allowed more resources: COAI

Industry body COAI on Wednesday welcomed the government's decision to auction spectrum by March 2021 but said lower reserve prices would have freed-up additional resources for network expansion by telcos. Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) - whose members include Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea - said high reserve prices in the past auctions have resulted in large amounts of spectrum remaining unsold. "We welcome the government's decision to auction spectrum by March 2021. This will enable the industry to cater to the exponential increase data usage and continue supporting the Digital India vision," COAI Director General SP Kochhar said in a statement.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/spectrum-auction-decision-welcome-lower-reserve-prices-wouldve-allowed-more-resources-coai/articleshow/79765087.cms>

Energy

Oil companies hike cooking gas price by Rs 50 per cylinder for the second time in a fortnight

State oil companies have hiked the rates of cooking gas by Rs 50 per cylinder, the second rise in a fortnight, making the fuel dearer by Rs 100. This is the biggest ever monthly rise for cooking gas in the country, especially at a time most consumers aren't receiving fuel subsidies. The cumulative price hike for a customer eligible for subsidy in the country has been Rs 197 since June last year.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/oil-companies-hike-cooking-gas-price-by-rs-50-per-cylinder-for-the-second-time-in-a-fortnight/articleshow/79760972.cms>

CCEA approves Rs 6700 crore NE power system strengthening scheme

The government on Wednesday approved Rs 6700 crore scheme for power system improvement in the North East Region. The move aims at economic development of North Eastern Region through the strengthening of intra-state transmission and distribution systems. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the revised cost estimate of the scheme, an official statement said on Wednesday.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/ccea-approves-rs-6700-crore-ne-power-system-strengthening-scheme/articleshow/79760531.cms>

Healthcare

Plea against all medical devices being notified as drugs: HC seeks Centre stand

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday sought response of the Centre on a plea challenging its decision to notify all devices, like blood monitoring devices and digital thermometers, intended to be used specially for human beings or animals as drugs. A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Prateek Jalan issued notice to the Health Ministry and sought its stand on the petition by the Surgical Manufacturers and Traders Association (SMTA). The plea claimed that the representations of SMTA and other stakeholders were not considered at the time of taking the decision.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/plea-against-all-medical-devices-being-notified-as-drugs-hc-seeks-centre-stand/articleshow/79757348.cms>

Repurposed anti-protozoal drug emetine effective against Covid: Indian scientists

Scientists at the Haryana-based National Centre for Veterinary Type Cultures of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) have found that emetine, an anti-protozoal drug, can be repurposed to treat Covid-19. Emetine is

an FDA-approved drug which is used to treat amebiasis, a parasitic disease. Besides, it is also used to induce vomiting in the cases of poisoning. A team led by senior scientist Dr Naveen Kumar identified Emetine as one of the candidate drugs.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/repurposed-anti-protozoal-drug-emetine-effective-against-covid-indian-scientists/articleshow/79761936.cms>

External

Covid wiped out 81 mn jobs in Asia-Pacific; women, youngsters affected: ILO

The economic blow from coronavirus has wiped out 81 million jobs across Asia-Pacific this year, with women and young people disproportionately affected, according to the International Labour Organization.

“Covid-19 has inflicted a hammer-blow on the region’s labor markets,” Chihoko Asada Miyakawa, the group’s regional director for Asia and the Pacific, said in a statement Tuesday. “Low levels of social security coverage and limited institutional capacity in many countries have made it difficult to help enterprises and workers back on their feet.”

Employment in Asia-Pacific showed a 4.2% decline compared with the pre-crisis trend, with the gap at 4.6% for women and 4% for men, the ILO said in a report. Young people have been especially affected by working-hour and job losses, the ILO said, with the youth share of employment losses three to 18 times higher than their share of total employment.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/covid-wiped-out-81-mn-obs-in-asia-pacific-women-youngsters-affected-ilo-120121600325_1.html

Few economies ready for long-term prosperity through improved public services: WEF study

Few economies in the world are ready for long-term prosperity through improved public services, green investments and digitization, a study by the World Economic Forum showed on Wednesday. The special edition of the WEF’s Global Competitiveness Report, which examined how the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis can build productive, sustainable and inclusive economic systems, found that the countries with advanced digital economies, strong social safety nets and robust healthcare systems have managed the impact of the pandemic more effectively.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/few-economies-ready-for-long-term-prosperity-through-improved-public-services-wef-study/articleshow/79764470.cms>

Cabinet approves Rs 3,500 cr sugar export subsidy for 2020-21: Javadekar

The government on Wednesday approved a subsidy of Rs 3,500 crore to sugar mills for the export of 60 lakh tonnes of sweetener during the ongoing marketing year 2020-21 as part of its efforts to help them clear outstanding dues to sugarcane farmers.

Briefing media after the meeting, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved a subsidy of Rs 3,500 crore on exports of 60 lakh tonnes of sweetener and the subsidy amount will directly be given to farmers. The minister said both “sugar industry as well as sugarcane farmers are in crisis” because of high domestic production at 310 lakh tonnes as against the annual demand of 260 lakh tonnes.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/cabinet-okays-rs-3-500-cr-sugar-export-subsidy-120121600712_1.html

Import of black tea up 24% year-on-year in January-September period

Import of cheap black tea increased 24% year-on-year in the first nine months of this year to 16.03 million kg, according to the Tea Board of India data, although India is the largest producer of black tea in the world. The industry is worried about the end-use of this imported cheap tea since there is no clarity on whether this tea has been imported for re-exports.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/import-of-black-tea-up-24-year-on-year-in-january-october-period/articleshow/79760631.cms>

India’s grape exports will continue to shrink in 2021 as pandemic keeps demand subdued

Indian grape exporters are expecting a fall in shipments to Europe in 2020-21 as the pandemic keeps demand subdued. Increase in costs of exporting is making the top exporters divert their attention to the domestic market for premium quality fruits. The annual rate of growth of grape export to Europe has been declining from 32% registered in 2016-17 to a negative 12% in 2019-20.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/indias-grape-exports-will-continue-to-shrink-in-2021-as-pandemic-keeps-demand-subdued/articleshow/79756736.cms>

Cabinet clears pact between India, US for exchange of information in electricity sector

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a pact between India and the US for exchange of information in areas of mutual interest in the electricity sector. "Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given its approval for the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission's (CERC) proposal for entering into an MoU... (with) the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, United States of America, for exchange of information and experiences in areas of mutual interest," according to an official statement. The memorandum of understanding (MoU) will help in improving regulatory and policy framework for developing efficient whole sales power market and enhancing grid reliability, according to the statement.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/cabinet-clears-pact-between-india-us-for-exchange-of-information-in-electricity-sector/articleshow/79760416.cms>