



January 22, 2021 – Friday

Key Developments

SC-appointed panel starts consultation on agri laws with farm bodies

The Supreme Court-appointed panel on the new agri laws on Thursday started its consultation process and interacted with 10 farmer organisations from eight states, including Uttar Pradesh. The apex court had on January 11 stayed the implementation of the three laws, against which farmers are protesting at Delhi borders for nearly two months now, till further orders and appointed a four-member panel to resolve the impasse. Currently, there are three members in the panel as the fourth, Bhartiya Kisan Union president Bhupinder Singh Mann, has recused himself from the committee. The panel, in a statement, said that the interaction was held through video conference with various farmer unions and associations on Thursday. Ten farmer organisations from Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh participated in discussions with committee members, it said. "The farmers' unions participated in the discussion and gave their frank opinion including suggestions to improve the implementation of Acts," the statement said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/sc-appointed-panel-starts-consultation-on-agri-laws-with-farm-bodies-121012101042_1.html

RBI withdraws circulars on recovering excess payments made to pensioners

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday withdrew three circulars on recovery of excess payments made to pensioners, saying the documents didn't follow guidelines and court orders. In a circular issued on March 17, 2016, the RBI had said as soon as the excess payment made to a pensioner comes to the notice of the paying branch, "the branch should adjust the same against the amount standing to the credit of the pensioner's account to the extent possible including lumpsum (sic) arrears payment." If the entire amount of over payment cannot be adjusted from the account, the pensioner would be asked to pay forthwith the balance amount of over payment. In case the pensioner expressed his inability to pay the amount, the same was to be adjusted from future pension payments. For recovering the over-payment made to pensioner from his future pension payment in instalments one-third of net (pension + relief) payable each month was to be recovered unless the pensioner concerned gave consent in writing to pay a higher installment amount.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/rbi-withdraws-circulars-on-recovering-excess-payments-made-to-pensioners-121012101187_1.html

Centre approves construction of over 168,000 houses under PMAY-Urban

The government has approved the construction of over 1.68 lakh (168,000) houses in urban areas under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, taking the total number of houses sanctioned so far to 1.1 crore (11 million), according to a statement on Thursday. The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry said that the decision was taken at a meeting of the Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee (CSMC) where officials from 14 states and union territories participated on Wednesday. The statement said that the houses sanctioned by the CSMC are proposed to be constructed in verticals like beneficiary-led construction, affordable housing in partnership and in-situ slum redevelopment under the PMAY (Urban).

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/centre-approves-construction-of-over-168-000-houses-under-pmay-urban-121012100936_1.html

Economy

Economy getting over pandemic, growth headed for 'glorious summer': RBI

The economy has come out of the pandemic crisis and recovery is getting stronger, said the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The vaccination drive against the pandemic has brought in a new optimism, and "barring the visitation of another wave, the worst is behind us," the RBI said in its January Bulletin on Wednesday. "Recent high frequency indicators suggest that the recovery is getting stronger in its traction and soon the winter of our discontent will be made glorious summer," said the RBI, quoting William Shakespeare to describe the state of the economy in its bulletin. "Recent shifts in the macroeconomic landscape have brightened the outlook, with GDP in striking distance of attaining positive territory and inflation easing closer to the target. If these movements sustain, policy space could open up to further support the recovery."

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/economy-getting-over-pandemic-growth-headed-for-glorious-summer-rbi-121012100731_1.html

I-T refunds worth ₹1.76 lakh cr issued till January 18

The Income Tax department on Wednesday said it has issued over ₹1.76 lakh crore worth refunds to over 1.65 crore taxpayers so far this fiscal. Of this, personal income tax refunds of ₹58,631 crore have been issued in 1,62,39,742 cases and corporate tax refunds of ₹1.17 lakh crore have been issued in 2.11 lakh cases.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/i-t-refunds-worth-176-lakh-cr-issued-till-january-18/article33623057.ece>

Govt expects global oil majors will join race for \$6.5-bn BPCL sale

India expects global oil majors to team up with investment funds that are already in the race for the nation's biggest asset sale -- state-owned refiner Bharat Petroleum Corp.

"When the price bidding comes up, I am hopeful some of the major players will come through this fund route," Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said in an interview with Bloomberg Television on Thursday. Billionaire Anil Agarwal's Vedanta group has confirmed it submitted an initial bid for Bharat Petroleum, while newspaper reports have said two U.S. funds -- Apollo Global and I Squared Capital -- have also shown interest. An official said in February last year that several top oil producers from the Middle East and Russia's Rosneft PJSC had shown interest in buying India's third-biggest refiner and second-largest fuel retailer, lured by the South Asian nation's oil consumption growth. But they stayed away from submitting initial bids that closed on Nov. 16 after several months of delay.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/govt-hopes-global-oil-cos-will-join-race-for-6-5-bn-bharat-petroleum-sale-121012100854_1.html

Parliament panel to question Facebook on WhatsApp's privacy terms: Report

Facebook executives will field questions from an Indian parliamentary panel on Thursday about the changes to WhatsApp's privacy, a source said, days after the messaging platform was asked by the country's technology ministry to withdraw them. The panel will ask why Facebook needed to change WhatsApp's privacy policy and how it will impact users, the source said. WhatsApp did not immediately respond to Reuters request for comment. The messaging platform earlier this month kicked off a storm when it informed users it was preparing a new privacy policy, under which it could share limited user data, including phone number and location, with Facebook and its group firms. Demand for rival applications such as Signal and Telegram surged on privacy concerns and WhatsApp last week decided to delay the new policy launch to May from February.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/parliament-panel-to-question-facebook-on-whatsapp-s-privacy-term-report-121012100563_1.html

World is surprised at Indian economy's 'V-shaped recovery': Shah

The Indian economy is undergoing a "V-shaped recovery" and the world is watching the same in surprise, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Thursday. Shah, one of the senior most members of the cabinet, also said the COVID-19 vaccination drive is progressing well and once everyone is vaccinated, "we will attain victory over the pandemic". He made the comment while joining through video-conference the inauguration of a four-lane over-bridge in Shilaj here by Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel. "Economies of all countries in the world were

affected due to the coronavirus. But, the world is surprised and watching the V-shaped recovery of the Indian economy," Shah said. The GDP contracted by 23.9 per cent in the June 2020 quarter due to the lockdown, and the contraction narrowed down to 7.5 per cent in the September quarter as compared to the same in the year-ago period, as the unlock process began.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/world-is-surprised-at-indian-economy-s-v-shaped-recovery-shah-121012100739_1.html

Judiciary, agencies like CBI, ED should act independently: Bombay HC

The Bombay High Court on Thursday said the judiciary and agencies like the RBI, CBI and ED should act independently, and asked "what heavens are going to fall" if an interim protection from coercive action is granted for a few days to NCP leader Eknath Khadse in an alleged land grab case of 2016. A division bench of Justices S S Shinde and Manish Pitale was hearing a petition filed by Khadse, seeking to quash the Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) registered by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in October last year. Khadse's counsel Aabad Ponda sought the court to grant the former state revenue minister interim protection from any coercive action, pending hearing of the plea. The ED's counsel, Anil Singh, told the court that the agency would not take any action till Monday (January 25).

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/judiciary-agencies-like-cbi-ed-should-act-independently-bombay-hc-121012100921_1.html

Govt can look to provide tax deduction for employees working from home: Pwc India

The government could look at providing deductions for expenses incurred by salaried employees while working from home in the upcoming Budget as it looks to boost demand, consulting firm PwC India said on Thursday. Addressing a pre-budget session, PwC India senior tax partner Rahul Garg said demand creation is particularly focussed on money being given or left in the hands of the individuals. "One clear thinking is at the level of small to medium taxpayer can we look at, in view of the COVID, a deduction to them particularly for salaried employees when they work from home.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/govt-can-look-to-provide-tax-deduction-for-employees-working-from-home-pwc-india/articleshow/80388488.cms>

Banking and Finance

Turnaround hopes for rupee fade over RBI's stance on forex reserves

Bets on the Indian rupee's rebound this year are already facing headwinds. The Reserve Bank of India signaled recently it won't relent on dollar purchases that pushed the currency to the bottom of Asia's currency rankings in 2020. Analysts had forecast for the rupee to rise for the first time in four years on hopes the RBI may slow its foreign-currency accumulation after the stockpile rose to a record. The RBI's comments suggest "the large FX intervention that the central bank undertook in 2020 totaling almost \$120 billion will continue in 2021," said Khoon Goh, head of research at Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd. in Singapore. "Persistent FX intervention will see INR underperforming regional currencies," he said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/reserve-bank-s-stance-on-forex-reserves-pips-turnaround-hopes-for-rupee-121012100471_1.html

RBI remains net purchaser of US dollar in November, buys \$10.261 bn

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) continued to remain a net buyer of the US currency in November after it bought USD 10.261 billion from the spot market, data showed. During the reporting month, the central bank purchased USD 14.289 billion and sold USD 4.028 billion, according to the monthly bulletin released by the RBI for January. In October this year, though the RBI had purchased USD 15.64 billion from the spot market, it did not sell the US currency. In November 2019, the RBI had bought USD 7.458 billion and sold USD 530 million in the spot market. In FY20, the central bank had net purchased USD 45.097 billion. It had bought USD 72.205 billion and sold USD 27.108 billion in the spot market.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/rbi-remains-net-purchaser-of-us-dollar-in-november-buys-10-261-bn-121012101057_1.html

Pandemic-induced lockdowns boost household savings to 20-yr high: Report

The pandemic-driven lockdown has a surprise winner in household savings that have been falling steadily between 2014 and mid-2019 but have scooped up a hefty USD 200 billion in extra savings - which is a 20-year high, according to a foreign brokerage report. Surprisingly, a vast portion of this savings is in cash only, which soared by a whopping 135 per cent during the lockdown months, a report by UBS said, adding now household savings constitute as much as 58 per cent of the gross capital formation while that of corporates is only 32 per cent. According to analysts at UBS Securities India Sunil Tirumalai and Dipojjal Saha, the slowdown in spending by the households through the lockdowns has resulted in USD 200 billion extra net savings in financial assets, which is as a percentage of GDP is close to the peak seen post-global financial crisis of 2008-09 and is still growing and is granular and broad-based, and not concentrated in the hands of the rich.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/pandemic-induced-lockdowns-boost-household-savings-to-20-yr-high-report-121012101098_1.html

RBI imposes Rs 2 crore penalty on Standard Chartered Bank

The Reserve Bank on Thursday imposed a penalty of Rs 2 crore on Standard Chartered Bank-India for delays in reporting of frauds to it. The monetary penalty has been imposed on the bank for non-compliance with certain directions contained in the 'Reserve Bank of India (Frauds - Classification and Reporting by commercial banks and select FIs) Directions 2016'. "The penalty has been imposed... for delays in reporting of frauds to RBI, revealed during the statutory inspection of the bank with reference to its financial position as on March 31, 2018 and March 31, 2019," the central bank said in a statement. A notice was issued to the Standard Chartered Bank-India advising it to show cause as to why penalty should not be imposed on it for such non-compliance with the directions.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/rbi-imposes-rs-2-crore-penalty-on-standard-chartered-bank/articleshow/80389325.cms?utm_source=ETTopNews&utm_medium=HPTN&utm_campaign=AL1&utm_content=23

PE investments in real estate down 40% at \$4.06 billion in 2020

Private equity investments in real estate fell 40 per cent year-on-year to USD 4.06 billion in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Knight Frank India. Private equity (PE) investments in 2019 stood at nearly USD 6.8 billion. "India attracted private equity investments to the tune of USD 38,149 million in the calendar year 2020. Of the total PE investment, the real estate sector claimed 11 per cent share in 2020 with USD 4,068 million, closing 21 deals during the year," Knight Frank said in a statement. As per the data, investments in office assets fell to USD 2,509 million last year from USD 3,258 in 2019.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/pe-investments-in-real-estate-down-40-at-4-06-billion-in-2020-121012100975_1.html

Industry

India Inc on recovery path; 53 pc companies to raise headcount in 2021: Report

Even as India's hiring activities declined last year due to the coronavirus pandemic, there is a sudden increase in demand with about 53 per cent of companies saying they are planning to increase their headcounts in 2021, according to a survey. The pandemic adversely impacted economies across Asia-Pacific, including India, which had entered 2020 with robust hiring activities, according to professional recruitment services firm Michael Page India's 'Talent Trends 2021 Report'. It added that the pandemic led to a dip in hiring activities by 18 per cent in 2020. The survey-based report, however, added that optimism is already starting to show, with about 53 per cent of companies in India looking to increase their headcounts in 2021.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/jobs/india-inc-on-recovery-path-53-pc-companies-to-raise-headcount-in-2021-report/2175915/>

Govt working with SBI to launch e-commerce portal for MSMEs; to take on Amazon, Flipkart, others

The MSME Ministry is working with the State Bank of India to launch the e-commerce portal for MSMEs that will help them market and sell their products in India and internationally similar to platforms such as Amazon and Alibaba, MSME Nitin Gadkari said in a webinar. The e-commerce portal called Bharat Craft was announced by the

government around mid-2019 and since then has been in the works. "For the marketing support of MSMEs, we are going to create an e-portal like Alibaba and Amazon. This is a live gateway for MSMEs to take products to the world and global market. We are working with the State Bank and as early as possible we will make this," Gadkari said.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/msme-eodb-msme-min-working-with-sbi-to-launch-e-commerce-portal-for-msmes-to-take-on-amazon-flipkart-others/2175884/>

Farmers' agitation has caused business loss of Rs 50,000 cr in Delhi-NCR: CAIT

Traders' body CAIT on Thursday said the ongoing farmers' agitation in Delhi-NCR has caused a business loss of nearly Rs 50,000 crore. Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) Secretary-General Praveen Khandelwal said the government's fresh proposal to keep farm laws in abeyance for one-and-a-half year and constitute a joint committee with farmer leaders "is quite justified and reasonable which indicates its willingness to resolve the crisis". Khandelwal said that therefore, now, the farmers should accept this proposal in the larger interest of farming community and those engaged in agriculture trade, and call off their agitation. If farmers still do not accept the proposal of the government, it will be construed that they are not interested in solution but certain divisive forces are more willing to create problems, he added.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/farmers-agitation-has-caused-business-loss-of-rs-50000-cr-in-delhi-ncr-cait/2175924/>

Recent upsurge in spending in US and China to help arrest decline in Indian diamond industry

The recent upsurge in spending on diamonds, riding on a combination of pent-up demand and recovery in retail offtake in key markets such as the US and China, is expected to help India's diamond industry contain its decline and close this fiscal with revenue of over \$15 billion, said Crisil on Thursday. Once the Covid-19 pandemic took hold, the industry was expected to see a third shaved off its top-line this fiscal. However, this could now get arrested at around 20%. Sluggish demand and extended lockdowns globally saw exports plunge to \$5.5 billion in the first half, almost halving on-year. In the third quarter, however, exports have risen to an estimated monthly average of \$1.6 billion, setting the industry up for a tryst with the \$15 billion mark for the full year.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/fashion/-/cosmetics/-/jewellery/recent-upsurge-in-spending-in-us-and-china-to-help-arrest-decline-in-indian-diamond-industry/articleshow/80382934.cms>

Agriculture

Govt plans to expand summer-crops area by 50%

The government plans to expand area under cultivation for summer-crops by 50% from 3.4 million hectares in 2020 to 5.1 million hectares in 2021. "The focus is on increase the output of pulses and oilseeds which require less water and give value addition to food basket," said a senior agriculture ministry official. The union agriculture ministry will unveil strategy and planning for enhancing the yield of summer crops, also known as zaid crops, on Friday at the National Conference on Agriculture Summer Campaign.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/govt-plans-to-expand-summer-crops-area-by-50/articleshow/80390316.cms>

UP cane arrears balloon to over ₹12,000 crore

Almost four months into the 2020-21 crushing season, the Uttar Pradesh Government is yet to announce the state advised price (SAP) for sugarcane, while millers have so far, crushed about 40 per cent of the cane grown in the largest producing State. The delay in the SAP announcement has also surprised the industry. Mills have so far crushed 455.4 lakh tonnes (lt) of sugarcane to produce 46.04 lt of sugar in the sugar season that began on October 1.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/up-cane-arrears-balloon-to-over-12000-crore/article33628255.ece>

Infrastructure

Average apartment sizes in top 7 cities grew 10% in 2020, says study

Average apartment sizes in the top 7 cities have risen by 10 per cent on a yearly basis – to 1,150 sq ft in 2020 from 1,050 sq ft in 2019, said a new study. Trends for the past four years indicate that average apartment sizes were

declining y-o-y since 2016. The year 2017 saw the maximum yearly decline of 13 per cent in average apartment sizes in the top 7 cities against the year before – from 1,440 sq ft in 2016 to nearly 1,260 sq ft in 2017, said a report by Anarock Property Consultants. "A fairly sudden change in consumer preferences against the backdrop of Covid-19 exigencies in 2020 first halted, then reversed the 'honey, I shrunk the flat' effect," the report said. The average apartment size is still highest in Hyderabad at 1,750 sq ft among the top cities – nearly two times bigger than that in MMR where, at 932 sq ft, average sizes continue to be the lowest.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/average-apartment-sizes-in-top-7-cities-grew-10-in-2020-says-study-121012100613_1.html

Indian real estate attracted \$5 billion institutional investments in 2020: Report

Institutional investors continued to show interest in Indian real estate with a total \$5 billion investments, equivalent to 93 per cent of transactions witnessed in the previous year, despite a sudden halt brought on by the pandemic, showed data from JLL India. The annual performance received major support from the fourth quarter's \$3.5 billion investments, while office assets accounted for a major share of investments during the year. The uncertainty over income and yield stability of commercial properties due to the pandemic had led to pull back in investments. However, large global funds have rather used this as an opportunity to negotiate portfolio deals with developers who offered quality rent yielding assets in cities with a high-quality tenant profile.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/property/-/construction/indian-real-estate-attracted-5-billion-institutional-investments-in-2020-report/articleshow/80381972.cms>

Telecom

Telecom sector AGR in FYQ2 up 3.6% on qtr: Trai data

The telecom sector recorded a near 3.6 % sequential growth in adjusted gross revenue (AGR) in the fiscal second quarter FY21, helped by higher mobile recharge volumes and data consumption growth as Covid19 lockdown curbs were eased and mobile broadband customer adds stayed strong. Latest data put out by the telecom regulator showed all the Big 3 telcos – Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea – notched sequential AGR gains in the September quarter.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/markets/stocks/news/telecom-sector-agr-in-fyq2-up-3-6-on-qtr-trai-data/articleshow/80388656.cms>

Telcos urge for regulating taxes in Budget

The telecom operators in their Budget wishlist have urged the Finance Minister (FM) Nirmala Sitharaman to regulate taxes including removal of GST on license fees, spectrum usage charges (SUCs) and payment of spectrum acquired in auction. In its recommendations letter to the FM, Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) that represents the telcos said that currently, the total license fee (LF) having a rate of 8 per cent of adjusted gross revenue (AGR) is uniformly applicable to all licensees, of which 5 per cent goes to the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) and the remaining 3 per cent is levied as LF.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/telcos-urge-for-regulating-taxes-in-budget/article33623781.ece>

Energy

Govt assures Coal India of 'full support', stresses learning 'new things'

Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi on Thursday assured Coal India of full government support, even as he said the PSU needs to learn "new things" for improvement in its future prospects. The minister, who was speaking during the launch of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) of Coal India Ltd (CIL), said there will be full support to the company because it is the "backbone of the country". "But having said that the improvement is a continuous process, learning is a continuous process....let us learn new things, new ideas, new approach, and new goal. And in this, the image of coal (sector), Coal India needs to be changed. We have to change the image of Coal India," Joshi stressed. The ERP of CIL will help improve business performance and growth of the company with enhanced data integrity.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/govt-assures-coal-india-of-full-support-stresses-learning-new-things-121012100865_1.html

Indian Oil Corporation seeks to build pipeline up to Jewar airport to supply aviation turbine fuel

Indian Oil Corp is seeking to build a pipeline to supply aviation turbine fuel at the upcoming Jewar airport in Uttar Pradesh. Indian Oil, the nation's largest refiner and supplier of jet fuel, has submitted an expression of interest to the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board in this regard. The board has launched a public consultation and will accept comments from everyone on Indian Oil's proposal until February 18. Indian Oil plans to build 36-km pipeline from its supply centre at Palwal in Haryana to Jewar airport. The fuel will be sourced from Indian Oil's refinery at Mathura. The company expects the planned pipeline to meet an estimated ATF demand of 0.7 million tonnes a year by 2029-30, and 1.8 million tonnes a year by 2039-40.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/indian-oil-corporation-seeks-to-build-pipeline-up-to-jewar-airport-to-supply-aviation-turbine-fuel/articleshow/80385180.cms?utm_source=ETTopNews&utm_medium=HPTN&utm_campaign=AL1&utm_content=23

Solar industry hopes the Budget will pave way for tariff barriers on imports

The renewable energy industry is hoping that the upcoming Union budget will provide clarity on implementation of the long-pending basic customs duty on solar cells and modules, which they said would fast-track investments in the sector. "We look forward to clarity on schemes that would attract investment towards capacity creation in the solar PV supply chain in India," said Sujoy Ghosh, vice president – APAC & India Region at First Solar, a leading US solar panel manufacturer that has been considering setting up a production unit in India.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/solar-industry-hopes-the-budget-will-pave-way-for-tariff-barriers-on-imports/articleshow/80386876.cms>

Healthcare

9.99 lakh healthcare workers received vaccine shots till Thursday 6 pm: Centre

The number of healthcare workers who have received COVID-19 vaccine jabs in the country till the evening of the sixth day of the nationwide immunisation drive has reached 9,99,065 as per provisional reports, Union Health Ministry said on Thursday. It also said on Thursday, 1,92,581 beneficiaries were vaccinated till 6 pm through vaccination sessions held across 27 states and Union Territories, while adding the final report would be completed by late in the night. "The cumulative number of healthcare workers vaccinated against COVID-19 has touched 9,99,065 (till 6 pm Wednesday) through 18,159 sessions, as per the provisional report," Dr Manohar Agnani, additional secretary in the health ministry, said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/9-99-lakh-healthcare-workers-received-vaccine-shots-till-thursday-6-pm-centre/articleshow/80390505.cms>

Vaccine hesitancy 39 per cent in Delhi-NCR: Survey

COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy is as high as 39 per cent in the Delhi-NCR with about one-fifth of the respondents saying that they will not take the jab, according to a telephonic survey conducted by the NCAER. The government launched the world's biggest vaccination drive on January 16 to protect people from COVID-19. The findings of the fourth round of the Delhi-NCR Coronavirus Telephone Survey (DCVTS-4) conducted by the economic think-tank NCAER showed that about 20 per cent respondents were certain about not taking the vaccine. Of this, 22.4 per cent were from rural areas and 17.5 per cent from urban locations.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/vaccine-hesitancy-39-per-cent-in-delhi-ncr-survey/articleshow/80390227.cms>

Healthcare workers can get vaccine ahead of scheduled date, says Delhi Health Minister Jain

Seeking to encourage people to get vaccinated against COVID-19, the Delhi government has made a provision whereby healthcare workers will have an option to get shots at a registered centre ahead of their scheduled day for vaccination, Health Minister Satyendar Jain said on Thursday. Interacting with reporters, he also said that all efforts will be made to ensure minimal wastage of vaccines. "We have reached a milestone of one crore COVID tests, meaning nearly half of Delhi's population we have tested so far. The cases are coming low now, it was 228 yesterday with a positivity rate of 0.36 per cent. So, we can say the pandemic situation is under control," Jain said. Asked if

Delhi will eventually see zero cases of COVID-19, he said that swine flu subsided but cases still get reported, so the pandemic will go away but it is very difficult to say no cases will be recorded.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/healthcare-workers-can-get-vaccine-ahead-of-scheduled-date-says-delhi-health-minister-jain/articleshow/80385000.cms>

QR code-based healthcare cards for everyone in Delhi may be reality by August, this year

Delhi government has set the ball rolling for ensuring that by August every Delhiite has a QR code-based health card with his or her basic clinical details to easily access public healthcare facilities. The health card would be linked to the government's ambitious cloud-based Health Information Management System (HIMS), which would make information like location of public healthcare facilities, availability of beds in government hospitals, doctors' qualification, specialisation and availability, medicines in stores, etc, just a click away.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/healthcare/qr-code-based-healthcare-cards-for-everyone-in-delhi-may-be-reality-by-august-this-year/articleshow/80379431.cms?utm_source=ETTopNews&utm_medium=HPTN&utm_campaign=AL1&utm_content=23

External

India's secondary steel producers, trade see decline as China price falls

As steel prices fall in China, the Indian market is weakening even though primary producers have not reduced mill prices. According to data from SteelMint, week-on-week, prices of hot rolled coil (HRC)--a benchmark for flat steel--showed some softening in the trade segment for markets like Delhi, Faridabad, Ahmedabad, Chennai and Kolkata.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/india-s-secondary-steel-producers-trade-see-decline-as-china-price-falls-121012101076_1.html

India 5G smartphone shipment to touch 38 million units in 2021: Counterpoint

5G smartphone shipment is expected to rise more than nine times to reach 38 million units in 2021, driven by a strong portfolio of products from brands like OnePlus and Apple, according to research firm Counterpoint. Counterpoint noted that India's smartphone market was one of the fastest to recover after COVID-19-induced restrictions were lifted all over the world in the third quarter of 2020. The market recorded its best quarter ever in the September 2020 quarter in terms of shipments, riding on the pent-up demand and the emergence of newer use cases. "Q1 2020 witnessed the first 5G smartphone launch in India. However, high prices and non-availability of 5G networks ensured slow pick-up in 5G smartphone sales.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/electronics/india-5g-smartphone-shipment-to-touch-38-million-units-in-2021-counterpoint/articleshow/80390123.cms>

Budget 2021: Jewellers want Centre to slash import duties and GST on gold, curb smuggling

Jewellers want reduction in import duty and GST on gold in the Union Budget 2021 to bring down smuggling of gold into the country. At present, gold attracts an import duty of 12.5% and GST of 3%. Talking to ET, Ahammed MP, chairman, Malabar Gold & Diamonds said "The government must reduce import duty on gold and GST to 7 percent to curb large scale gold smuggling in the country, boost gold trade and strengthen consumer confidence and demand for gold jewellery.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/fashion/-/cosmetics/-/jewellery/budget-2021-jewellers-want-centre-to-slash-import-duties-and-gst-on-gold-curb-smuggling/articleshow/80383338.cms>

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