



November 08, 2021 – Monday

## Key Developments

### **Covid's AY.4.2 variant not of concern in India at this time, says INSACOG**

Covid-19's AY.4.2 variant is less than 0.1 per cent of all variants of concern and variant of interest (VOC/VOI), and thus, too low to be of concern at this time, the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) has said. The INSACOG weekly bulletin said that with the low frequency of the new AY.4.2 variant, it is not the matter of concern at this time. "There is no change to the global scenario. Delta, including B.1.617.2 (AY) and AY.x sublineages, continues to be the main VOC globally," it said, adding that they are also the main VOC in India, where no variant has been noted. There is currently no biological basis for increased transmissibility of AY.4.2, as judged epidemiologically, and assays are in progress. The vaccine effectiveness does not seem to be different for AY.4.2 when compared to other Delta variants, it added.

The weekly bulletin said that AY.4.2 frequency in Indian data varies based on the definition used (PHE vs PANGO). Other than lineage-based tracking, Delta variants with immune escape mutations are also being tracked by INSACOG, some of which are also being seen by UKHSA, it added.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/covid-s-ay-4-2-variant-not-of-concern-in-india-at-this-time-says-insacog-121110700553\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/covid-s-ay-4-2-variant-not-of-concern-in-india-at-this-time-says-insacog-121110700553_1.html)

### **India reaches out to more countries to accept Covaxin**

Buoyed by the World Health Organization's approval of Covaxin for emergency use, India has launched a diplomatic initiative to expand the list of countries that would mutually recognise vaccine certificates enabling smoother travel for Indians. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and India's diplomatic missions globally have been holding negotiations with their interlocutors to secure mutual recognition of vaccine certificates and the WHO's decision on Bharat Biotech's locally made Covaxin has boosted their efforts, ET has learnt. Simultaneously efforts are ongoing to impress upon countries to recognise Covaxin, said people aware of the matter. The list of countries accepting Indians vaccinated with Covaxin is expected to rise following the WHO's decision, they said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-reaches-out-to-more-countries-to-accept-covaxin/articleshow/87558834.cms>

### **US backs India-UK led solar Green Grids Initiative launched by PM at COP26**

The US has partnered with the UK and India-led Green Grids Initiative of a global energy grid launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow. At a meeting of the Steering Committee of the Green Grids Initiative One Sun One World One Grid' (GGI-OSOWOG) earlier this week, US Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm said that the US is excited to be back in the climate conversation and to partner with the new initiative. All the energy humanity uses in a year is equal to the energy that reaches the earth from the sun in a single hour, said Granholm. The GGI-OSOWOG is focusing on the two most important pieces of the puzzle. We at the US Department of Energy are happy to be a partner with GGI-OSOWOG, she said. The International Solar Alliance (ISA) under India's presidency and the UK's COP26 Presidency had launched GGI-OSOWOG during the World Leaders' Summit of COP26 on Tuesday.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/us-backs-india-uk-led-solar-green-grids-initiative-launched-by-pm-at-cop26-121110700470\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/us-backs-india-uk-led-solar-green-grids-initiative-launched-by-pm-at-cop26-121110700470_1.html)

## Economy

### **PMEGP: Over 36,000 new enterprises set up in FY22 so far with employment to nearly 3 lakh people**

The government scheme to provide financial assistance to individuals setting up new enterprises — Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), which had FY21 as its best performing year since FY17, has enabled employment for 2.91 lakh people in the current financial year so far. According to the latest official data, 36,391 new micro enterprises were extended subsidy of Rs 1,150 crore, and 2,91,656 jobs were created through these units during the little over a seven-month period of the financial year 2021-22. Implemented by the Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC), PMEGP's FY22 performance so far managed to exceed 31,436 units set up under the scheme in FY17 with total employment of 2.51 lakh.

The maximum assistance of Rs 25 lakh is provided to only new units admissible in the manufacturing sector and Rs 10 lakh for the service sector. The scheme allows any individual, above 18 years of age and at least VIII grade pass, to apply for assistance.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/msme-fin-pmegp-over-36000-new-enterprises-set-up-in-fy22-so-far-with-employment-to-nearly-3-lakh-people/2364492/>

### **Sitharaman lauds India vax drive, scrapping of Art 370 at BJP national meet**

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday lauded the initiatives taken by the Centre to curtail the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and reaffirmed the commitment of the party to seek justice for the victims of the political violence in West Bengal. Sitharaman addressed a press conference at NDMC Convention Center in New Delhi. She had also attended the BJP's national executive meeting today. The Union Minister said, "While lauding the commendable work of vaccination done in India we also remember how the Opposition parties had raised many questions on vaccination carried by the government from the very beginning."

"Within 48 hours of announcing the lockdown, we came up with giving people food for free for eight full months - for 80 crore people. The 'PM-CARES for Children' programme for orphaned children showed how the PM and our government cares for the next generation and children. 'One Nation, One Ration Card' had also taken up and implemented speedily," the Union Finance Minister said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/sitharaman-lauds-india-vax-drive-scrapping-of-art-370-at-bjp-national-meet-121110700455\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/sitharaman-lauds-india-vax-drive-scrapping-of-art-370-at-bjp-national-meet-121110700455_1.html)

### **Over 15,000 free tourist visas issued till now**

International travel to India is a bit slow to pick up with just a little over 15,000 free tourist visas being issued so far out of the five lakh visas that were provisioned by the centre. In June 2021, the Ministry of Finance had announced a scheme to offer free tourist visas till March 31, 2022. The scheme was applicable for the first 5 lakh visas that will be issued.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/over-15000-free-tourist-visas-issued-till-now/article37367218.ece>

## Banking and Finance

### **Post demonetisation, notes in circulation on rise; so are digital payments**

Five years after the demonetisation, currency notes in circulation continue to rise albeit at a slower pace even as digital payments surge with more and more people embracing cashless payment modes. Primarily, banknotes in circulation went up in the last financial year as many people opted for the precautionary holding of cash amid the COVID-19 pandemic disrupting normal lives and economic activities in varying degrees. Official data points out a jump in digital payments through different modes, including plastic cards, net banking and Unified Payments Interface. UPI of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is fast emerging as a major medium of payment in the country. All said, currency notes in circulation are still in the upward curve. On November 8, five years ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced the demonetisation of old Rs 1,000 and Rs 500 banknotes and one of the key objectives of the unprecedented decision was to promote digital payments and curb black money flows.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/post-demonetisation-notes-in-circulation-on-rise-so-are-digital-payments-121110700404\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/post-demonetisation-notes-in-circulation-on-rise-so-are-digital-payments-121110700404_1.html)

### **Banks, HFCs on hiring spree amidst rising home loan demand**

Banks, housing finance companies and NBFCs are on a hiring spree amidst rising demand for home loans. Industry experts and players say that hiring for home loan departments is up by at least 20 per cent to 25 per cent in recent months as players look to expand their home loan portfolios in smaller towns and attract more customers through lower home loan rates.

"Hiring has gone up by 22 per cent to 25 per cent by banks, NBFCs and HFCs. This is especially the case in the last three to four months, especially after the second wave of the pandemic. A small portion seasonal in nature but we expect it to be largely sustained for the next few years. The requirement for additional staff is equally in urban and rural markets," said Amit Vadera, Vice President – Staffing, TeamLease Services.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/banks-hfcs-on-hiring-sprees-amidst-rising-home-loan-demand/article37366726.ece>

### **Finmin to start process for appointment of MD, DMDs of Rs 20K-cr NaBFID**

appointment of managing director (MD) and deputy managing directors (DMDs) of the newly set up Rs 20,000 crore development finance institution NaBFID, to catalyse investment in the fund-starved infrastructure sector. Last month, the government appointed veteran banker K V Kamath as the chairperson of the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) for three years. According to sources, the finance ministry will soon intimate the Banks Board Bureau (BBB) about the appointment of MD and DMDs of NaBFID.

The Bureau will issue advertisements and undertake a selection process, sources said. The BBB is the headhunter for state-owned banks and financial institutions. The MD, DMDs and whole-time directors would not hold office after attaining the age of 65 years and 62 years respectively.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/finmin-to-soon-start-process-for-appointment-of-md-dmds-of-rs-20-000-cr-nabfid-121110700258\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/finmin-to-soon-start-process-for-appointment-of-md-dmds-of-rs-20-000-cr-nabfid-121110700258_1.html)

## **Industry**

### **Rs 1.25 lakh cr Diwali sale strong reply to those who said e-comm will soon overtake retail trade: CAIT**

The record-breaking Rs 1.25 lakh crore Diwali sale for traders and retailers is a strong and credible answer to think tanks, economists, retail experts, and some sections in government quarters who said that gone are the days of offline trade as e-commerce will overtake retail trade in India soon, traders' body CAIT said on Sunday. Based on a study by its research arm — CAIT Research & Trade Development Society (CRTDS), the association had announced on Thursday that Diwali sales for traders across the country had generated sales worth over Rs 1.25 lakh crores and a business loss of over Rs 50,000 crore to China amid call to boycott Chinese goods.

"The purchasing pattern of the consumers has greatly prompted CAIT to demand the government to put an end to unholy nexus of foreign-funded e-commerce companies, big brands providing exclusivity, and banks providing cashback on purchase from online portals. This kind of discriminatory treatment will not be tolerated any further by the traders," Praveen Khandelwal, Secretary-General, CAIT said in a statement. CAIT has been alleging unfair business practices by Flipkart and Amazon such as preferential treatment to sellers, deep discounting, and more, creating an uneven playing field. However, both marketplaces have continuously claimed complete compliance with the Indian laws.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/msme-eodb-rs-1-25-lakh-cr-diwali-sale-strong-reply-to-those-who-said-e-comm-will-soon-overtake-retail-trade-cait/2364378/>

### **Commercial vehicle volumes set to pick up on economic revival**

Commercial vehicle volumes are set to pick up with the ongoing economic revival, ratings agency Acuite Ratings and Research said. According to the agency, the ease in restrictions on movement of goods by various state governments and the recovery in the core infrastructure sector continued to remain positive for the CV industry. "The combined domestic sales of Ashok Leyland, Tata Motors, and VECV witnessed a growth of 7.5 per cent YoY in September 2021," agency's Chief Analytical Officer Suman Chowdhury. "However, the domestic sales of M&M witnessed decline in sales of 26.8 per cent YoY during the same period owing to supply challenges." On sequential basis, the agency said that total sales of all the four CV manufactures showed an encouraging 14 per cent MoM growth in October 2021 compared against September 2021.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/auto/lcv-hcv/commercial-vehicle-volumes-set-to-pick-up-on-economic-revival/articleshow/87559446.cms>

### **Rural sales resilient, urban sales still not in line with pre-COVID growth: Dabur India CEO**

Urban sales are recovering and trending better than rural sales, which is presently 'very resilient' after the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic, and Dabur India is continuously investing in rural infrastructure as it is 'hopeful on the macroeconomics', a top company official said. Notwithstanding the uptick in sales, urban markets are still not in line with pre-COVID growth and are on a recovery path helped by the comeback of modern trade channels, e-commerce sales and improvement of mobility as restrictions are eased out, according to Dabur India CEO Mohit Malhotra. The sales network of Dabur India covers around 83,500 villages and the company aims to cover 90,000 villages directly by next year. "In my view, rural will keep trending well going forward as compared to urban at least for us, and we are also putting up infrastructure improvement in place," Malhotra said in an investors' conference call last week.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/fmcg/rural-sales-resilient-urban-sales-still-not-in-line-with-pre-covid-growth-dabur-india-ceo/articleshow/87565854.cms>

### **Laminate industry approaches NITI Aayog, DPIIT for inclusion in PLI scheme**

The Rs 8,000-crore laminate industry has approached the NITI Aayog and the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) for its inclusion in the the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. In a representation to the government think tank and the DPIIT, laminate manufacturers said they are one sector where India is at the forefront, but pressures from countries such as China present the need to maintain aggressive export pricing without compromising much on margins. The representation made by the Indian Laminate Manufacturers' Association (ILMA) said the PLI Scheme has announced practical but attractive benefits for the manufacturing sector with a clear intention to boost industrial development. Providing benefits to the laminate sector will not only cement its position in the world market, but also expand its horizon to newer shores, said Rashmi Deshpande (partner at Khaitan & Co), who assisted ILMA in its representation.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/laminate-industry-approaches-niti-aayog-dpiit-for-inclusion-in-pli-scheme-121110700346\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/laminate-industry-approaches-niti-aayog-dpiit-for-inclusion-in-pli-scheme-121110700346_1.html)

### **Travel companies see brisk business as more countries open up borders**

Wider acceptance of Indian vaccines and easing of restrictions by countries has opened up more choices for Indian leisure tourists. While Dubai and Maldives have been favourite destinations since last year, Indians are now planning trips to neighbouring countries such as Oman, Sri Lanka, Thailand and also to the UK and the US. "We have seen a significant jump in international travel bookings for November and as per the data on the platform the month is leading with maximum travel bookings during the quarter.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/travel-companies-see-brisk-business-as-more-countries-open-up-borders-121110700637\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/travel-companies-see-brisk-business-as-more-countries-open-up-borders-121110700637_1.html)

### **With average room rates rising, hospitality industry hopes to improve revenue streams**

The pandemic-hit Indian hospitality industry can hope to improve their revenue streams with the average room rates (ARRs) rising by at least 10-15 per cent compared to 2019. Data shared by Online Travel Aggregator (OTA) EaseMyTrip showed that New Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Goa, and Kolkata are the top destinations witnessing the highest jump in average room rates.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/variety/with-average-room-rates-rising-hospitality-industry-hopes-to-improve-revenue-streams/article37367446.ece>

## **Agriculture**

### **Rainfall in October highest in the month in last 120 years: IMD**

In the last 120 years, the month of October has received heavy rainfall -- as it did this year -- on three other occasions, the weather department has said and added that the downpour in 2021 was the highest since then. According to data released by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Kerala received 589.9 mm rainfall in October this year, the highest since the year 1901 and more than double what the state got last year during this month.

The heavy rainfall in October this year was due to remnants of the south west monsoon which were prevalent till October 25, after which the north-east monsoons commenced, P S Biju, a Director in IMD, told PTI.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/rainfall-in-october-highest-in-the-month-in-last-120-years-imd/articleshow/87566447.cms>

#### **Need to increase income of marginal, small farmers: Venkaiah Naidu**

ice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday said the agriculture sector in India is characterised by small and marginal farmers, and there is a need to increase their income. Addressing the convocation of Dr Rajendra Prasad Central Agricultural University, Pusa at its Piprakothi campus in Motihari in Bihar's East Champaran district, Naidu said it should be ensured that the sector is given all the support it needs for development and sustenance.

Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) can immensely help small and marginal farmers with forward (processing, marketing and export) and backward (input and extension services) linkages in the food supply chain, he said. He emphasised the need to promote FPOs through handholding and capacity building.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/need-to-increase-income-of-marginal-small-farmers-venkaiah-naidu/articleshow/87568407.cms>

#### **Cotton growers celebrate a different, stress-free Diwali**

For Jagadish Patel, a cotton farmer from Gujarat's Rajkot district, Diwali this year has been one to cherish. "We no longer feel burdened under financial stress this time," he says. In neighbouring Maharashtra's Marathwada region, Asaram Shinde from Beed says: "Cotton farmers are lucky compared to soya farmers. This is the time to celebrate for cotton farmers."

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/cotton-growers-celebrate-a-different-stress-free-diwali/article37356507.ece>

### **Telecom**

#### **SOPs on IT rules needed as 'guardrails' for consumers, investors; govt will deliver on it: Rajeev Chandrasekhar**

Standard Operating Procedures -- which will provide further clarity on the new IT and intermediary rules -- are required as "guardrails" for consumers and investors, and the government would certainly deliver on it, Minister of State for IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar has said. The SOPs involve inter-ministerial consultation and are about "sensitising" many ministries, Chandrasekhar said, adding those conversations are already on. In an interview to PTI, Chandrasekhar further said the IT Ministry is also planning a massive outreach next year in form of a dialogue with public, consumer forums, academia, industry and others on the fast-evolving online space and what more needs to be done to ensure that internet is open, safe and trusted.

Chandrasekhar said the outreach by the IT Ministry will be "broad-based" and across various states. These dialogues will happen "where power of internet is transforming lives of people."

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/sops-on-it-rules-needed-as-guardrails-for-consumers-investors-govt-will-deliver-on-it-rajeev-chandrasekhar/articleshow/87564649.cms>

#### **Telecom to do better in next 2 yrs, don't miss digital companies: Raamdeo Agrawal**

One should not be anti digital companies. In the next five-seven years, the digital companies will explode. Once they are successful, they will scale up at a crazy pace and hence that space will be much bigger. What will be those companies and how fast they will grow, nobody knows, says Raamdeo Agrawal, Chairman, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

Given that you have observed Bharti for a long time, how are you assessing the industry dynamics and whether or not Bharti will be able to brave out the might that Jio brings with it?

There are only two, three players and yet the telecom industry is struggling to barely break even. If you add up all three, there is barely any profit on the table and that is a very sad part of it. This is one of the largest data consuming countries in the world. I think we are far the largest or maybe number two in the world. So everybody is hopeful that some day it will make money. The current valuations are based on price to book rather than reality but that hope is well placed and I am sure in the next 24 months, we will see much better prospects than what we have seen in the last two, three years.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/telecom-to-do-better-in-next-2-yrs-dont-miss-digital-companies-raamdeo-agrawal/articleshow/87563420.cms>

## Energy

### **Total tax on petrol down to 50%, diesel to 40% after excise duty cuts**

The total incidence of taxes on petrol has come down to 50 per cent and that on diesel to 40 per cent following a reduction in excise duty by the central government, and by a slightly higher proportion in states that have also cut local sales tax or VAT on the fuel. The retail price of petrol and diesel is decided after adding central excise, commission paid to dealers and value-added tax (VAT) to basic oil prices. The basic oil price is the prevailing international benchmark rate plus freight. On November 1, prior to the duty cuts, central excise of Rs 32.90 a litre and VAT of 30 per cent in Delhi made up for 54 per cent of the retail selling price of diesel, according to price build-up of the fuel available from state-owned fuel retailers. This, after the Rs 5 per litre reduction in excise duty, has come down to 50 per cent in Delhi. Two dozen states and UTs have matched the central government's excise cuts with a VAT reduction. And, in those states, the percentage of taxes in retail price will be marginally lower. Delhi has not yet lowered the VAT.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/total-tax-on-petrol-down-to-50-pc-diesel-to-40-pc-after-duty-cuts-121110700332\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/total-tax-on-petrol-down-to-50-pc-diesel-to-40-pc-after-duty-cuts-121110700332_1.html)

### **Coal dispatch to power sector rises 27 pc to 59.73 MT in October**

Coal dispatch to the power sector has increased by 27.13 per cent to 59.73 million tonnes (MT) in October, owing to a spurt in power demand amid unprecedented rise in import prices. The country's several thermal power plants were facing a crisis in the wake of low coal stock positions at their end. Coal supply to the power sector was 46.98 MT in October last year, according to government data.

However, the supply of coal to the sponge iron sector last month declined by 29.2 per cent to 0.46 MT, over 0.65 MT in the corresponding month a year ago. The fuel dispatch to the cement sector dropped to 0.47 MT in October, over 0.68 MT in the year-ago period. In other sectors also, barring steel and cement, coal supply also declined to 4.19 MT last month, from over 6.71 MT in the year-ago period.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/coal-dispatch-to-power-sector-rises-27-pc-to-59-73-mt-in-october/2364313/>

## States

### **Delhi govt calls upon Centre to hold emergency meeting on stubble burning**

The Centre must hold an "emergency" meeting of states neighbouring Delhi to devise a mechanism to deal with crop residue burning due to which the city's air quality has deteriorated, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai said on Sunday. The city's air quality index (AQI) stood at 437 in the severe category at 8 am on Sunday. It was 449 on Saturday. Incidents of crop residue (parali) burning in other states and the air quality in Delhi are linked as deteriorating air quality figures show, Rai said at a press conference.

"There was also effect of cracker bursting on Diwali but it's waning now. The effect of parali' burning, however, continues to worsen air quality in Delhi," he said. Rai said he has written to the Union environment minister asking for an "emergency" meeting of states, including Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, and Delhi to find a mechanism to address the perennial issue of crop residue burning and high level of air pollution in the national capital.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/delhi-min-call-upon-centre-to-hold-emergency-meet-on-crop-residue-burning-121110700453\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/delhi-min-call-upon-centre-to-hold-emergency-meet-on-crop-residue-burning-121110700453_1.html)

### **UP govt starts interest waiver scheme for electricity consumers on bill arrears**

The Uttar Pradesh government has started an interest waiver scheme for electricity consumers on their bill arrears, the state's Energy Minister for Srikant Sharma has said. "Under the scheme, interest on arrears would be waived off for certain category of consumers," Sharma, UP Minister for Energy and Additional Source of Energy, told reporters. He said the money realised will pave the way for improvement as the department is already running at a deficit of Rs 90,000 crore. The loan waiver scheme has been introduced as roughly 70 per cent of rural consumers are not able to deposit their bills in time, while 25 per cent of urban consumers have turned defaulters due to the non-payment

of bills in time, the minister said. He added that timely payment of bills by all will pave the way for an uninterrupted cheap power supply. In this regard, interest on arrears has not only been waived off but the facility to pay the arrears in six easy instalments has also been extended for domestic consumers, the minister said.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/up-govt-starts-interest-waiver-scheme-for-electricity-consumers-on-bill-arrears/2364465/>

## Healthcare

### **Kerala reports 7,124 new coronavirus cases, 201 deaths in last 24 hours**

After crossing the 50-lakh mark in the total COVID-19 cases two days ago, Kerala recorded 7,124 fresh coronavirus infections and 201-related deaths which raised the caseload to 50,15,505 and the fatalities to 33,716. With 7,488 more people recovering from the virus since Saturday, the total recoveries touched 49,08,857 and the active cases reached 72,310 on Sunday, an official press release said.

Of the 201 deaths, 21 were reported over the last few days, 153 were those which were not confirmed until June 18 last year due to lack of adequate documentation and 27 were designated as COVID deaths after receiving appeals based on the new guidelines of the Centre and Supreme Court directions, the release said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/kerala-reports-7-124-new-coronavirus-cases-201-deaths-in-last-24-hours-121110700644\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/kerala-reports-7-124-new-coronavirus-cases-201-deaths-in-last-24-hours-121110700644_1.html)

### **Over 157.7 mn unutilised vaccine doses still available with states: Centre**

More than 116.58 crore COVID-19 vaccine doses have been provided to states and UTs so far, the Union Health Ministry said on Sunday. Over 15.77 crore balance and unutilised vaccine doses are still available with the states and UTs to be administered, it said. The vaccination drive has been ramped up through availability of more vaccines, advance visibility of vaccine availability to states and UTs for enabling better planning by them, and streamlining the vaccine supply chain, the ministry said.

As part of the nationwide vaccination drive, the Government of India has been supporting the states and UTs by providing them COVID-19 vaccines free of cost.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/over-157-7-mn-unutilised-vaccine-doses-still-available-with-states-centre-121110700349\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/over-157-7-mn-unutilised-vaccine-doses-still-available-with-states-centre-121110700349_1.html)

### **Centre places purchase order for one crore doses of Zydus Cadila's needle-free Covid vaccine**

Zydus Cadila's three-dose Covid vaccine ZyCoV-D is set to be included in the national anti-coronavirus inoculation programme this month with the Centre placing a purchase order with the Ahmedabad-based firm for one crore doses, official sources said on Sunday. The Union Health Ministry is learnt to have given the go ahead to initiate the preparatory work for the introduction of the indigenously developed world's first DNA-based Covid jab, which in all probability will be given to adults initially under the country's vaccination drive, sources in the know of developments said. ZyCoV-D is the first vaccine cleared by India's drug regulator for inoculation of those aged 12 years and above.

"The Centre has already placed a purchase order with Zydus Cadila for supply of one crore doses of ZyCoV-D, each costing around Rs 358 excluding taxes, at the earliest. This price includes the cost of a disposable painless jet applicator which has to be used for administering each dose," an official source said. Zydus Cadila is in a position to provide one crore doses of ZyCoV-D per month, company officials are learnt to have conveyed to the ministry.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/centre-places-purchase-order-for-one-crore-doses-of-zydus-cadilas-needle-free-covid-vaccine/articleshow/87565905.cms>

## External

### **India at COP26 says solar energy capacity increased 17 times; now at 45 GW**

India on Sunday told the UN climate summit here that its solar energy capacity stands at about 45 gigawatts after it increased 17 times in the last seven years, asserting that although the country represents 17 per cent of the global population, its historical cumulative emissions are only 4 per cent. India said this while giving a presentation on its third Biennial Update Report (BUR) during the 11th Facilitative Sharing of Views (FSV) at the ongoing COP26 climate summit here. The BUR was submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in February. The key highlight of the discussion on India's third BUR was the achievement of 24 per cent reduction in

emission intensity of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the period of 2005-2014, and the significant increase of its solar programme.

Making a statement on behalf of India, J R Bhatt, Adviser/Scientist in the Ministry of Environment, highlighted that India represents 17 per cent of the global population but its historical cumulative emissions are only 4 per cent, while current annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are only about 5 per cent.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/india-at-cop26-says-solar-energy-capacity-increased-17-times-now-at-45-gw-121110700543\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/india-at-cop26-says-solar-energy-capacity-increased-17-times-now-at-45-gw-121110700543_1.html)

### **Sri Lanka, Nepal & Bangladesh offer bright prospects for Indian renewable firms**

Three neighbouring countries – Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal – present substantial opportunities for Indian companies in the renewable energy space due to renewable project pipelines of up to 1 GW each. These countries are also likely to add 10 GW put together over the next 10 years.

Bangladesh and Sri Lanka together plan to add 8 GW of renewable power capacity by 2030 while Nepal aims to increase its share of renewable power from 5 per cent to 15 per cent in the same period.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/sri-lanka-nepal-bangladesh-offer-bright-prospects-for-indian-renewable-firms/article37347927.ece>

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