



July 27, 2023 – Thursday

## Economy

### Bill in Lok Sabha for Centre's control over critical mineral auctions

The Centre on Wednesday introduced a bill in the Lok Sabha that seeks to empower it to exclusively auction mining lease and composite licence for 26 critical minerals in the country. The proposed amendments to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, "would facilitate, encourage and incentivise private sector participation in all spheres of mineral exploration for critical and deep-seated minerals". Under the existing framework, state governments auction mining blocks.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/metals-mining/bill-in-lok-sabha-for-centres-control-over-critical-mineral-auctions/articleshow/102148566.cms>

### One District One Product: 137 unique products from 713 districts notified

Prahlad Singh Patel, Minister of State in the Ministry of Food Processing Industries on Tuesday informed the parliament in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha that 137 unique products from 713 districts across 35 states and union territories as One District One Product (ODOP), based on the recommendations received from states and UTs.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/137-unique-products-from-713-districts-selected-for-one-district-one-product-mos-prahlad-patel/3187417/>

## Banking and Finance

### RBI permits banks to open vostro accounts from 22 countries for trade in rupee

The Reserve Bank has permitted 20 banks operating in the country to open 92 Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVAs) of partner banks from 22 countries as part of efforts to promote bilateral trade in local currencies, the government said on Wednesday. In a written reply to Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Som Parkash also informed that an MoU has been signed between the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Central Bank of UAE on July 15. This would enable exporters and importers to invoice and pay in their respective domestic currencies enabling the development of a bilateral foreign exchange market.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/rbi-permits-banks-to-open-vostro-accounts-from-22-countries-for-trade-in-rupee/articleshow/102144580.cms>

### RBI's rate cut timeline may be pushed to FY25: DBS

The Reserve Bank of India's interest rate cuts are likely to be pushed to the end of the current fiscal or the next fiscal year as the inflation picture gets muddled, said economists. "Our own expectation is that they aren't going to change anything on the rates front for the rest of this fiscal year," said Radhika Rao, economist at DBS in Singapore. "Cuts will mostly take place in March 2024, which will be preceded by a change in stance, and a much more cautious commentary on growth."

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/rbis-rate-cut-timeline-may-be-pushed-to-fy25-dbs/articleshow/102149391.cms>

### **Centre devolved more than Rs 3.09 trn to states till July: MoS Finance**

The Centre has devolved over Rs 3.09 lakh crore to states till July of the Rs 10.21 lakh crore budgeted to be transferred in the current fiscal, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said on Tuesday. "Out of Rs 10.21 lakh crore estimated to be transferred to states for the FY 2023-24, Rs 3,09,521.22 crore has been devolved till July 2023, in 4 instalments having double the normal amount in June'23 for FY 2023-24. There is no pendency on part of devolution payable to states...", Chaudhary said in the Lok Sabha.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/centre-devolved-more-than-rs-3-09-trillion-to-states-till-july-mos-finance-123072500719\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/centre-devolved-more-than-rs-3-09-trillion-to-states-till-july-mos-finance-123072500719_1.html)

## **Industry**

### **Discretionary demand on the mend in June-July; cos see full recovery in second half of fiscal year**

Discretionary consumption has been showing some signs of recovery since June, improving both on a year-on-year and sequential monthly basis, chief executives of several leading listed consumer companies said in their June quarter earnings calls. There has been a further acceleration in demand recovery in July, they added, attributing the pick-up to a slowing in inflation among other drivers. They are confident of a complete recovery in the second half of the fiscal year, as festive season spending kicks in. Shoppers Stop CEO Venugopal G Nair told analysts on Tuesday that sales in June improved and July is continuing along the same lines. He said the company saw a rise in footfall during the end-of-season sale that began in June. Electronic products company Havells India chairman and managing director Anil Rai Gupta said while April and May were muted, June saw growth in all product categories. He sees demand recovering, including in rural India, for products such as refrigerators, switchgear and wires in the second half of the year.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/discretionary-demand-on-the-mend-in-june-july/articleshow/102152992.cms>

### **Edible oil prices fall up to 29 per cent since last year**

The retail prices of refined sunflower oil, refined soyabean oil and refined palmolen have fallen by 29 per cent, 19 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively, in the last one year due to steps taken by the central government and a decline in global prices. In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Food and Consumer Affairs Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti said the central government is "closely monitoring the domestic retail prices of edible oils to ensure that the full benefits of a decrease in international prices are passed on to the end consumers". She informed that regular meetings are being held with leading edible oil associations and industry, and they are being advised to decrease the retail prices in line with falling international prices. "As on July 20, 2023, the international prices of major edible oils such as crude soyabean oil, crude sunflower oil, crude palm oil and refined palm oils have decreased drastically since last year.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/food/edible-oil-prices-fall-up-to-29-per-cent-since-last-year/articleshow/102144488.cms>

### **Malls coming up exclusively to house factory outlets**

At least half a dozen factory outlet malls are being planned in India, like in the US and UK, as developers of retail facilities attempt to fight ecommerce rivals in a market increasingly driven by deep discounting. While such retail space, where brands are offered on discount round the year, is popular globally, the segment is unorganised in India. "We have opened one such mall in Delhi's Jasola where all the premium brands have their factory outlets. Some brands have opened their first such store in the country. It is still an early stage, but the concept is expected to gain popularity," said Abhishek Bansal, managing director of Pacific Malls.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/property/-cstruction/malls-coming-up-exclusively-to-house-factory-outlets/articleshow/102148835.cms>

## **Agriculture**

### **FCI sells 100,000 tn wheat, 100 tn rice in 5th e-auction to control price**

State-owned Food Corporation of India (FCI) on Wednesday sold 1.06 lakh tonnes of wheat and 100 tonnes of rice in the 5th e-auction of 2023-24. In order to control the retail price of rice, wheat and atta, the FCI organises weekly

e-auctions. The government is committed towards price stabilization and its market intervention is aimed at providing relief to the consumers, the food ministry said in a release. "A quantity of 1.16 lakh tonne wheat from 361 depots and 1.46 lakh tonne rice from 178 depots were offered from across the country," it said.

[https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/fci-sells-100-000-tn-wheat-100-tn-rice-in-5th-e-auction-to-control-price-123072601309\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/fci-sells-100-000-tn-wheat-100-tn-rice-in-5th-e-auction-to-control-price-123072601309_1.html)

#### **Sale of wheat, rice to states under OMSS stopped for buffer, control prices**

The Centre on Wednesday said it has discontinued the sale of wheat and rice to states under Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS) with effect from June 13 to maintain adequate buffer stock and control price rise amid concerns of kharif crop being impacted due to expected shortfall in monsoon rains. This was informed by Minister of State for Food and Consumer Affairs Sadhvi Niranjana Jyoti said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/sale-of-wheat-rice-to-states-under-omss-stopped-for-buffer-control-prices-123072600661\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/sale-of-wheat-rice-to-states-under-omss-stopped-for-buffer-control-prices-123072600661_1.html)

#### **Sugarcane shortage likely to dilute ethanol blending**

India's ethanol blending programme is likely to face challenges next year as sugarcane and food grain availability is expected to decline due to the uneven spread of monsoon rains, according to experts. Erratic and uneven rainfall this year has affected sugarcane and rice cultivation in the country, which means less will be available for the distilleries. State-run Food Corporation of India (FCI) has already stopped supply of rice for ethanol production owing to an expected shortfall of rice for general consumption.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/monsoon-woes-sugarcane-shortage-likely-to-dilute-ethanol-blending/articleshow/102149271.cms>

#### **Dairy companies' gross margins to improve sequentially in FY24, says new report**

The gross margins for dairy companies will improve sequentially in FY24, according to rating agency ICRA. A report released by ICRA said that domestic milk supply was impacted in FY2023 due to the incidence of Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) in cattle and its impact on the milk yields during the flush season, thus resulting in a demand-supply gap as demand remained steady.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/dairy-companies-gross-margins-to-improve-sequentially-in-fy24-says-new-survey/articleshow/102128696.cms>

### **Infrastructure**

#### **PMAY (U) mission completed by Goa, Delhi; Bihar and Andhra lag behind**

While only one State (Goa) has completed the targeted construction of houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY-U) along with two Union Territories Delhi and Chandigarh, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh have failed to construct even 40 per cent of the sanctioned houses. Telangana, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh are among the top States that have completed more than 75 per cent of sanctioned houses. Himachal Pradesh, Tripura and Madhya Pradesh have achieved more than 70 per cent of the target while Kerala, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan are among the States completing 60 per cent of the sanctioned houses.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/pmay-u-mission-completed-by-go-delhi-bihar-and-andhra-lag-behind/article67122786.ece>

#### **674 road projects worth ₹2.81 lakh crore delayed as of June 2023**

A total of 674 road projects worth ₹2,81,730 crore have been delayed as of June 2023 with the highest number of projects being delayed in Maharashtra followed by Andhra Pradesh and Uttarakhand, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. "As on June 30, 2023, there are 674 projects wherein construction works are behind original completion schedule to some extent," Road and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari told Rajya Sabha in a written response.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/674-road-projects-worth-281-lakh-crore-delayed-as-of-june-2023/article67122895.ece>

### **Energy**

### **Indian OMCs set to register 3x pre-tax profit of Rs 1 lk cr in FY24: Report**

Indian oil marketing companies are set to register a record pre-tax profit of at least Rs 1 lakh crore in the current fiscal (FY24), reported PTI, citing a report by Crisil on Wednesday. In a note, it said that the oil marketing companies (OMCs) may see operating profit rebounding to Rs 1 lakh crore this fiscal, compared with an average of Rs 60,000 crore between fiscals 2017 and 2022, and thrice of the last fiscal's low of Rs 33,000 crore. According to the report, the move comes amid higher retail prices in the domestic market and stable but considerably low crude prices overseas. Meanwhile, the price of crude has fallen over 30 per cent in FY24 so far. This is in comparison with the year-ago period, yet oil companies have not reduced retail prices which have been unchanged since May 2022.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/oil-companies-pre-tax-profit-seen-jumping-three-times-to-rs-1-lakh-cr-this-fiscal-report/articleshow/102126784.cms>

## **Telecom**

### **DoT eases norms around shifting of wireless equipment**

To promote ease of doing business, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has allowed telecom firms to shift or re-deploy their wireless equipment from one service area to another, just by giving an intimation to its wireless planning and coordination (WPC) wing and a formal approval would not be required. The DoT Wednesday said in a notification that telecom operators can inform the WPC wing online through the Saral sanchar portal. The department added that till the time an online facility is made available, telecom operators can submit the details of shifting through email. The telcos, however, have to give an undertaking that such details will be updated subsequently, as and when online facility is made available by the DoT, the notification said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-policy/dot-eases-norms-around-shifting-of-wireless-equipment/articleshow/102146171.cms>

### **Govt's ambitious projects worth ₹50,000 cr under USOF moving at snail's pace**

While the government is pushing for 5G launch across the nation, several ambitious telecom projects of Prime Minister Narendra Modi are moving at a snail's pace. These include connectivity in aspirational villages, North East, Left Wing Extremism areas, and other international-bordering States. These projects are being funded by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), under the Department of Telecommunications. Leading telecom operators, including Bharti Airtel, Reliance Jio, and Bharat Sachar Nigam (BSNL) are undertaking these projects worth ₹50,000 crore.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/govts-ambitious-projects-worth-50000-cr-under-usof-moving-at-snails-pace/article67124162.ece>

## **States**

### **Maharashtra govt says no stamp duty on redeveloped housing society apartments**

The government of Maharashtra has stated that a member of a housing society that undergoes redevelopment need not pay stamp duty on the allotted permanent accommodation as part of the project. Following this, the member of the housing society undergoing redevelopment is expected to pay only Rs 100 as stamp duty, while the principal agreement between the development and the housing society will be charged as per the conveyance. On Wednesday, the state government issued a notification to this effect in line with the Bombay High Court's ruling pronounced in February. This has put an end to long-drawn litigation pending since 2006 and is a major relief for the real estate sector, especially the redevelopment segment.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/property/-cstruction/maharashtra-govt-says-no-stamp-duty-on-redeveloped-housing-society-apartments/articleshow/102147520.cms>

### **Maharashtra mulls transfer of cooperative industrial estate land to private players**

The Maharashtra government is considering transferring land patches of non-functioning and liquidated cooperative industrial estates (CIE) to private players, based on demand. "The State has received demands to acquire the land of non-functional CIEs and provide it to new industrialists and existing industries," State Industry Minister Uday Samant told the legislative council recently in reply to a written question on CIEs. However, the Minister did not say whether

the State government has taken any action on the demand to transfer CIE land to industrialists; he added that the government has sought all information related to the CIEs.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/maharashtra-mulls-transfer-of-cooperative-industrial-estate-land-to-private-players/article67122428.ece>

## External

### India readies for talks with EU on refurbished items

India has begun thrashing out its plan of action on the issue of import of remanufactured goods such as cars, electronics and plastics as part of its free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations with the European Union. Brussels has insisted that such items should be treated at par with new ones and be eligible for tariff concessions, while New Delhi has concerns it will lead to dumping of e-waste and impact India's domestic manufacturing. People privy to the development said there is also a view that import of plastic waste should be discouraged as India already has enough plastic that can be recycled.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-readies-for-talks-with-eu-on-refurbished-items/articleshow/102148418.cms>

### Telecom PLI: Companies clock Rs 6,911 crore exports till May 2023

Companies under the Production Linked Incentive scheme for local manufacturing of telecom and networking products have done exports worth Rs 6,911 crore till May 2023, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. Production Linked Incentive scheme was launched on February 24, 2021, to promote domestic manufacturing of specified telecom and networking products, including 4G, 5G products and also design-led manufacturing in the country.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/telecom-pli-companies-clock-rs-6-911-crore-exports-till-may-2023-123072600839\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/telecom-pli-companies-clock-rs-6-911-crore-exports-till-may-2023-123072600839_1.html)

### Chinese Taipei agrees to solve WTO dispute with India

After the European Union, Chinese Taipei has agreed to resolve the dispute at the World Trade Organisation with India regarding tariffs on some information technology and telecom products by India bilaterally. "The EU and Chinese Taipei have made a request to the Dispute Settlement Body at WTO to defer the adoption of the Panel report until 19 September 2023. This deferral is intended to create an opportunity for all parties to work towards a Mutually Agreed Solution (MAS)," Minister of State in the ministry of Commerce and industry Anupriya Patel told Lok Sabha in a reply to a question.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/chinese-taipei-agrees-to-solve-wto-dispute-with-india/3188455/>

### First Rupee trade shipment from Bengal's Petrapole border to Bangladesh

The first Rupee trade shipment from West Bengal's Petrapole border to Bangladesh took place on Tuesday, an official said. Petrapole, located in North 24 Parganas, is the major land port for bilateral trade with the neighbouring country. The Indian government has been promoting Rupee trade with several countries to save forex, aiming at reducing dependence on the US Dollar and strengthening regional currency and trade. This will have a similar impact on the neighbouring country.

[https://www.business-standard.com/world-news/first-rupee-trade-shipment-from-bengal-s-petrapole-border-to-bangladesh-123072501041\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/world-news/first-rupee-trade-shipment-from-bengal-s-petrapole-border-to-bangladesh-123072501041_1.html)