

August 20, 2026 – Thursday

Economy

MPC Minutes: Members opt for 'wait and watch' as economy faces 'hazy' outlook

Even as all six Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) members opted for a "wait and watch" approach at their meeting earlier this month as the economy faces a "hazy" outlook, some of the members including Governor Malhotra and Deputy Governor Poonam Guptasent out smoke signals that a rate hike is within the realm of possibility, going by their statements at the meeting.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/mpc-minutes-members-opted-for-wait-and-watch-as-the-economy-faces-a-hazy-outlook/article71365962.ece

Finance

SEBI bets on trading reforms to reverse foreign capital flight

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is set to overhaul decades-old rules and stem soaring outflows of foreign funds, three sources said, in a move some investors say would help India beef up its weighting in global stock market indexes. The changes, if finalised, will come as foreign ownership of Indian stocks has hit a 17-year low and the rupee, down about 6% this year, ranks among one of Asia's worst performers, hit by worries about a steeper import bill and anaemic capital flows.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/markets/sebi-bets-on-trading-reforms-to-reverse-foreign-capital-flight/article71367654.ece

I-T unearths Rs 1.29 lakh cr foreign remittances

The income tax department has uncovered a massive overseas remittance trail involving 6,422 newly identified entities that collectively sent Rs 1.29 lakh crore abroad, triggering action against 394 firms and putting a wider network of companies and individuals under the scanner, people aware of the probe said. The development comes at a time when the rupee remains under severe pressure, with the Reserve Bank of India having to regularly intervene in the foreign exchange market through dollar sales to contain volatility and prevent disorderly moves in the currency.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/i-t-unearths-rs-1-29-lakh-cr-foreign-remittances/articleshow/133357158.cms

Public sector banks put ₹39,000 cr of bad loans up for sale again

Nearly four-fifths of the corporate bad loans offered for sale by public sector banks in the June quarter had been taken to the market previously, according to industry data, highlighting the difficulty lenders face in finding buyers for large legacy accounts at acceptable valuations.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/no-takers-public-sector-banks-put-39000-cr-of-bad-loans-up-for-sale-again/articleshow/133358198.cms

RBI deputy governor Murmu calls for focus on meaningful financial inclusion

Banks must measure the progress of financial inclusion not only by the number of accounts opened, but by how effectively they are used and whether customers have the information and confidence to make informed financial decisions, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) deputy governor Shirish Chandra Murmu said.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/rbi-deputy-governor-murmu-calls-for-focus-on-meaningful-financial-inclusion/articleshow/133352186.cms

Industry

Nine-judge Supreme Court bench to decide scope of 'industry' under labour law

A nine-judge Constitution bench of the Supreme Court is scheduled to deliver on Thursday its verdict on the contentious issue of defining the term "industry" under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices B V Nagarathna, P S Narasimha, Dipankar Datta, Ujjal Bhuyan, Satish Chandra Sharma, Joymalya Bagchi, Alok Aradhe and Vipul M Pancholi had on March 19 reserved its judgement in the matter.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/nine-judge-supreme-court-bench-to-decide-scope-of-industry-under-labour-law/article71366851.ece

CCI relaxes commitment norms, extends filing window to 60 days

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) on Wednesday relaxed its commitment regulations, allowing longer time-frames for filing and reviewing such applications, and wrapping up the whole process. The regulator has extended the deadline for enterprises to file such applications to 60 days from the current 45 days, retaining power to grant another 30 days at its discretion in cases that warrant further relief.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/cci-relaxes-commitment-norms-extends-filing-window-to-60-days/articleshow/133358007.cms

Ready-made food prices may stay high as input, packaging costs rise

Prices of ready-made food products such as savouries, sweets, and snacks are likely to remain elevated, as higher input and packaging expenses and rising costs of key ingredients continue to feed into retail rates. Inflation in ready-made food products accelerated to 9% year-on-year in July from 6.7% in June and 0.8% in January, according to statistics ministry data. Prices of key commodities such as tomatoes and edible oil rose 23% and 18%, respectively, year-on-year between April and July 2026 while sugar prices increased 3%.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/ready-made-food-prices-may-stay-high-as-input-packaging-costs-rise/articleshow/133329018.cms

Agriculture

India tightens sugar stock limits to tame record prices

The Indian government has ordered that no dealer using more than 10 metric tons of sugar per month shall hold inventories for more than 15 days, a government order showed on Wednesday as India looks to tame record prices of the sweetener. The official order will come into force on September 1 and remain in force until November 30, the notification said. The move comes after a day after Reuters reported that India was considering measures to bolster sugar supplies and rein in record prices, including limited duty-free imports and tighter stockholding limits for bulk traders, potentially allowing overseas shipments for the first time in nearly a decade.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/india-tightens-sugar-stock-limits-to-tame-record-prices/articleshow/133361644.cms

Kharif sowing recovers after July rains

India's kharif planting has staged a strong recovery after improved rainfall in July helped farmers make up much of the ground lost during the driest June in 12 years, raising hopes of easing pressure on food prices if rains remain supportive. Sowing of most major crops, including pulses, oilseeds and cotton, is progressing well, agriculture secretary Atish Chandra said. While acreage under some crops remains below last year's level, planting of others has increased.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/kharif-sowing-recovers-after-july-rains/articleshow/133358717.cms

India's crop insurers seek data protection law to expedite farm innovation

Five of India's largest crop insurers have jointly asked the government to include a provision for the protection of regulatory data in the draft Pesticides Management Bill, 2025, arguing that the absence of such a framework is slowing the entry of newer, safer pesticide molecules into the country.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/indias-crop-insurers-seek-data-protection-law-to-expedite-farm-innovation/articleshow/133346463.cms

Infrastructure

Consultants of faulty detailed project reports culprits: Nitin Gadkari

Consultants involved in preparing defective detailed project reports (DPRs) are "culprits" behind accidents and deaths on highways, road transport and highways minister Nitin Gadkari said Wednesday, warning contractors of blacklisting and other consequences for compromising construction quality. Addressing the industry body Ficci's 4th Edition of Tunnels & Bridges Conference 2026 in the national capital, Gadkari alleged that consultants prepared defective DPRs with the help of Google, causing loss of life and property.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/consultants-of-faulty-detailed-project-reports-culprits-nitin-gadkari/articleshow/133357773.cms

National Highway builders bat for BOT annuity model to avoid zero-bid scenario

Highway concessionaires have urged the road ministry to use the build-operate-transfer (BOT) annuity model for upcoming projects until key concerns holding back private participation in BOT (toll) projects are resolved. The National Highways Builders Federation (NHBF) said the current BOT (toll) model exposes private developers to an unacceptably high level of risk, citing recent tenders that received no bids.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/national-highway-builders-bat-for-bot-annuity-model-to-avoid-zero-bid-scenario/articleshow/133357618.cms

Cabinet approves one highway and four railway multi-tracking projects

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved one highway upgradation, and four railway multi-tracking projects worth Rs 13,041 crore Wednesday. Announcing the decisions, union information broadcasting minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said these projects will boost freight and passenger movement in the region. Upgradation of the 82.578-kilometre (km) Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi-Sonbarsa Section of NH-22 to four-Lane Standard in Bihar will be developed on Hybrid Annuity Mode (HAM) for Rs 3590.73 crore, an official statement said.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/railways/cabinet-approves-one-highway-and-four-railway-multi-tracking-projects/articleshow/133346848.cms

Eastern Railway's ongoing capacity expansion involves ₹12,000 crore investment

Eastern Railway's ongoing capacity expansion projects involve an investment of around ₹12,000 crore, with the works being taken up over the next four to five years, a senior official said on Wednesday. Speaking at the CII Rail Synergy & Bengal MSME Vendor Connect Summit 2026, Eastern Railway General Manager Gitika Pandey said the investment is aimed at creating additional route capacity.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/logistics/eastern-railways-ongoing-capacity-expansion-involves-12000-crore-investment/article71366858.ece

Energy

India's July crude oil imports rise over 9% month-on-month

India's crude oil imports in July rose more than 9% from the previous month to 21.41 million metric tons, government data showed on Wednesday. On an annual basis, crude oil imports were up 13%, from 18.89 million tons in July last year, data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell showed.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/indias-july-crude-oil-imports-rise-over-9-month-on-month/articleshow/133345059.cms

Government offers cheaper domestic gas to city gas distributors to boost PNG connections

The government will offer cheaper additional domestic gas to city gas distributors to incentivise them to convert households with installed but inactive piped natural gas (PNG) meters into working connections. The scheme, effective from 1 September, was approved on Tuesday, the oil ministry said in a statement on Tuesday. India aims to expand PNG customers so that the burden on largely imported LPG can be reduced.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/government-offers-cheaper-domestic-gas-to-city-gas-distributors-to-boost-png-connections/articleshow/133335686.cms

Indian refiners face crude cost surge as Gulf premiums rise, Russian oil discounts vanish

The cost of crude oil for Indian refiners is rising faster than global benchmarks as tightening physical supplies drive premiums higher for Gulf and West African barrels. At the same time, discounts on Russian oil have vanished and those on Venezuelan crude have narrowed sharply.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/indian-refiners-face-crude-cost-surge-as-gulf-premiums-rise-russian-oil-discounts-vanish/articleshow/133330603.cms

Telecom

Telecom department starts process to disband Digital Communication Commission

The Department of Telecom has begun the process of disbanding the Digital Communication Commission, formerly known as the Telecom Commission, the apex inter-ministerial body formed to make decisions on policy matters and subjects with significant financial implications. The body comprises the Telecom Secretary as its Chairman, four full-time members, who are ex-officio Secretaries to the Government of India in the Department of Telecommunications and four part-time members who are the secretaries to the Government of India in the concerned Departments.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/telecom-department-starts-process-to-disband-digital-communication-commission/articleshow/133351841.cms

DoT directs telcos to deny new SIMs to subscribers with nine connections

The Department of Telecommunications has directed telecom operators to decline new connections to subscribers already having nine mobile SIMs in their name, according to an official circular. Telecom operators have been asked to put in place appropriate technical and organisational measures from August 24 onwards to identify each subscriber seeking to obtain a connection beyond the prescribed limit and deny them new SIM cards.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/info-tech/dot-directs-telcos-to-deny-new-sims-to-subscribers-with-nine-connections/article71367213.ece

Musk's Starlink reapplies for India’s approval of satellite network: Reports

Elon Musk's Starlink has reapplied to India's space regulator for approval to deploy its satellite constellation, including direct-to-device connectivity services, a news report said on Thursday, citing people familiar with the matter.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/musks-starlink-reapplies-for-indias-approval-of-satellite-network-reports/article71367596.ece

States

Delhi's master plan proposes solar, hydro power generation from canals, drains

To enhance the renewable energy capacity of the national capital in the future, the Master Plan of Delhi for 2047 (MPD-2047) proposes utilising existing canals and drains to generate renewable energy. Approved by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) last week, the draft plan has been sent to the Centre for further approval. It also proposes the use of more greenfield areas under the 'agriculture-cum-solar farm scheme', and that bus depots and metro stations should meet their power requirements through renewable energy sources.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/renewables/delhis-master-plan-proposes-solar-hydro-power-generation-from-canals-drains/articleshow/133322077.cms

External

Commerce minister Piyush Goyal leads 70-member business delegation to Singapore

Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal is leading a 70-member business delegation to Singapore to strengthen trade and investment ties between the two countries, the government said Wednesday. The engagements, during the three-day visit, which began Wednesday, will focus on partnerships, investment, market access, technology collaboration and talent development.
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/commerce-minister-piyush-goyal-leads-70-member-business-delegation-to-singapore/articleshow/133351143.cms