

15 November 2020

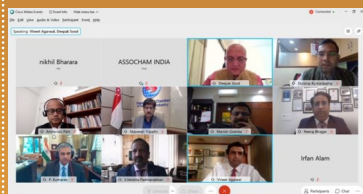
India Focus

SIDELINES

High Commissioner's meeting with Chairman of Enterprise Singapore Mr. Peter Ong



High Commissioner addressed an ASSOCHAM webinar on 'Discovering Future Opportunities for India-Singapore Cooperation Post Covid-19'



High Commissioner toured local companies Sea Group Headquarters and Nanyang Polytechnic.



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High Commissioner P Kumaran called on Mr Ong Ye Kung, Singapore's Minister for Transport

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TOP NEWS

Rs. 2-lakh-crore boost likely for economy as Cabinet clears decks for PLI scheme in 10 sectors

IBEF: November 12, 2020

The Union Cabinet issued its nod in principle to expand the Production-linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to 10 industries. Over the next five years, the change is likely to see sops worth Rs. 2 lakh crore (US\$ 161.64 billion) for 10 industrial sectors such as automotive, auto parts, battery production and white goods.

The automotive sector is likely to receive the bulk of the allocation of Rs. 2 lakh crore (US\$ 161.64 billion) sops to the proposed sectors at Rs. 57,000 crore (US\$ 7.68 billion), such as cell chemistry batteries, food products, textile products, solar PV solar products, etc.

Earlier this year, the government announced the PLI scheme for the cell phone, pharmaceutical, and medical equipment sectors in order to make India a manufacturing hub and raise exports.

Unlike other programmes, the PLI scheme is a result- and output-oriented programme where producers earn cash rewards for production over 5-7 years.

The PLI framework was introduced by the Centre to help many businesses consider diversifying their supply chains away from China in the midst of sustained friction between Washington and Beijing over trade.

The scheme has already been released in the electronics manufacturing sector for implementation. In the next few years, core electronics manufacturers such as Apple assemblers Foxconn, Pegatron and Wistron, as well as Samsung, and local players Karbonn, Lava and Dixon have secured strategic investments amounting US\$ 100 billion.

In the next 5 years, manufacturers are expected to produce goods worth Rs. 11.5 lakh crore (US\$ 154.90 billion) and to export products worth Rs. 7 lakh crore (US\$ 94.29 billion) through the electronics sector scheme itself.

The government had previously said it was considering expanding the policy to 7-8 sectors after it was collected from electronics manufacturers with great enthusiasm.

Last month, Secretary of Economic Affairs Mr. Tarun Bajaj said the government is planning to expand the scheme to 7-8 more sectors to encourage domestic manufacturing.

"I have a great deal of confidence and optimism in the PLI system that we have put out for cellular phones, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, and there are around 7-8 sectors in the offing where the PLI system will be expanded," Mr. Bajaj said while addressing a virtual CII conference.

Unlike other programmes, the PLI system is an output- and output-oriented programme where producers earn cash rewards for production over 5-7 years, he said.

Atmanirbhar Bharat 3.0: Total stimulus package announced is of Rs 29.87 lakh core, 15% of GDP, says FM Sitharaman

Moneycontrol News

The Centre and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have together provided total fiscal stimulus of Rs 29.87 lakh crore since the COVID-19 pandemic began. This amount is 15 percent of India's gross domestic product (GDP), Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said.

Sitharaman said this after announcing the Atmanirbhar Bharat 3.0 package on November 12, under which 12 measures worth Rs 2.65 lakh crore were listed.

The breakdown given was as follows:

>> Rs 192,800 crore allocated for Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP)

>> Rs 1,102,650 crore allocated towards Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan 1.0

>> Rs 82,911 crore for PMGKP Anna Yojana (which has been extended for five months till November)

>> Rs 265,080 crore allocated under today's set of announcements under Atmanirbhar Bharat 3.0

>> Rs 1,271,200 crore from RBI measures announced till October 31, 2020

>> Total is Rs 2,987,641 crore or 15b percent of GDP

Announcements made under Atmanirbhar Bharat 3.0 on November 12 (today):

- Rs 145,980 crore for Atmanirbhar Manufacturing – PLI scheme for 10 champion sectors

- Rs 65,000 crore support for agriculture in form of fertiliser subsidy

- Rs 18,000 crore for Housing for All under PMAY-U

- Rs 10,200 crore for industrial infrastructure, industrial incentives and domestic defence equipment

- Rs 10,000 crore towards boost for rural employment

- Rs 6,000 crore towards equity infusion in NIIF debt PF to boost infrastructure

- Rs 6,000 crore allocated to Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana (total allocation till date is Rs 36,000 crore)

- Rs 3,000 crore towards boost for project exports
- Rs 900 crore as R&D grant for COVID Suraksha i.e Indian vaccine development

Sitharaman further spoke on the economic status, saying there is "strong recovery."

"Quite a few indicators showing distinct recovery in the economy. Bank credit growth is up 5.1 percent and markets are at a record high. Forex reserves are like never before. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will now come out with a monthly report showing a strong growth," she said.

Sitharaman added that "we could be back to positive growth" as seen in the third quarter itself, adding that "government is maintaining an unrelenting reform pitch."

The finance minister also noted that Moody's has reassessed its growth numbers to -8.9 percent from -9.6 percent.

FM announces Atma Nirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana to incentivise job creation

IBEF: November 13, 2020

The government has implemented Atma Nirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana to promote job creation in the country in a significant boost to employment opportunities in the private sector after the pandemic.

Under the scheme, any registered corporation under the Employees' Provident Fund Organization that introduces new employees into its fold or rejoins employees who have lost employment between March 1, 2020 and September 30, 2020 will be eligible for a grant of 24% or 12% each of the contribution of employees and employers for each new registered applicant.

New candidates who joining between 1 October 2020 and 30 June 2021 can obtaining financing for a period of two years under the scheme.

Establishments of less than 50 employees are required to hire at least two new employees, and organisations with more than 50 employees are required to hire at least five new hires. The month of September will be treated as the foundation of the framework.

The 12% contribution of the workers and 12% from the employer for companies with up to 1,000 employees earning up to Rs. 15,000 (US\$ 201.56) per month and licensed under EPFO would be borne entirely by the central government, amounting to a total of 24%.

According to Finance Minister Mrs. Nirmala

Sitharaman, the Central Government will provide a two-year subsidy for new qualifying workers engaged on or after October 1, 2020.

"The subsidies will be credited in advance to the qualifying new employee's Aadhaar-seeded EPFO accounts," she said.

The government recently declared additional expenditure of Rs. 10,000 crore (US\$ 1.34 billion) for the unorganised workforce that could be used to improve job generation spoken under Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan or even under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme of Mahatma Gandhi.

"However, there were troubling reports on the work front, with October seeing another drop in payroll numbers. Participants in the survey who noted job shedding reported having observed containment steps to avoid the spread of the 2019 coronavirus disease," Ms. Lima said.

As was seen by a small rise in production costs and a mere marginal increase in selling prices, inflationary pressures remained subdued. In the meantime, expectations for an end to the COVID-19 cases and the reopening of other sectors in the economy have underpinned optimistic sentiment on the prospects for output ahead of the year.

Manufacturing Rises For Third Straight Month, Quickest Pace In 13 Years: Survey

IBEF: November 03, 2020

In October 2020, India's manufacturing sector operation improved for the third straight month, with businesses growing production to the greatest extent in 13 years in the midst of robust sales growth. The IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) increased from 56.8 in September to 58.9 in October, according to a monthly survey, and pointed to the greatest improvement in the health of the sector in over a decade.

In April 2020, after having seen growth for 32 consecutive months, the index slipped into contraction mode. A print above 50 signifies expansion in PMI parlance, while a score below that denotes contraction. Ms. Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at IHS Markit, stated that Indian manufacturers' levels of new orders and production continued to recover from the COVID-19 induced contractions seen earlier in the year, with October PMI results highlighting historically sharp monthly rates expansion.

She further noted that companies were persuaded that in the coming months the resurgence in sales would be maintained, as shown by a clear upturn in input purchasing in the midst of restocking efforts.

Manufacturers stated that in October, the easing of COVID-19 constraints, improving business conditions and improved demand helped them secure new jobs. On the job front, there was a further decrease in employment due to compliance with government guidelines relevant to the COVID-19 pandemic. The decrease was the seventh in successive months.

Exports show signs of improvement, up 22.47% during November 1-7: Official

IBEF: November 11, 2020

The country's exports increased 22.47% year-on-year to US\$ 6.75 billion in the first week of November, indicating significant progress, supported primarily by growth and development in the pharmaceuticals, gems and jewellery and engineering sectors, an official said on Tuesday.

Exports amounted to US\$ 5.51 billion in the first week of November last year.

Imports have improved by 13.64% year-on-year to US\$ 9.30 billion in November (1st-7th) this year, versus US\$ 8.19 billion, the official said.

The official added that imports, except petroleum, increased 23.37% in the week. The trade deficit stood at US\$ 2.55 billion throughout the week.

Pharmaceuticals, gems, and jewellery exports increased by 32% to US\$ 139.12 million and by 88.8% to US\$ 3,360.71 million, respectively.

Similarly, through the week, outbound shipments of engineering products improved by 16.7% to US\$ 215.13 million.

Petroleum, marine products, and leather goods are sectors which reported negative growth.

Exports to the US, Hong Kong and Singapore increased by 53.91%, 176.2% and 90.76%, respectively, in this period.

The country's exports also reported positive growth in September, however in October they decreased by 5.4% to US\$ 24.82 billion.

India can double manufacturing GDP: McKinsey report

IBEF: November 10, 2020

According to McKinsey, the manufacturing sector could become an engine for economic growth and jobs if it can specialise. India has a potential of US\$ 300 billion opportunity and could double its manufacturing gross domestic product (GDP) in the next few years if it can improve the effectiveness of value chains.

In a few years, 11 high-potential value chains have the potential to double their GDP in production, Mr. Rajat Dhawan and Mr. Suvojoy Sengupta estimate.

In the manufacturing industry, most companies and industries have not produced strong returns on investment, he noted.

The report argued that in the current pandemic situation, there could be inherent advantages the nation could take. And while it may look like a disadvantage, in the long run, this could also be a unique advantage, particularly given the disruption of the global value chains. The natural resources and low-cost labour of India could spruce up production value chains if well managed.

McKinsey data demonstrates that about 700 leading companies produced yields that were even lower than their 2028 operating cost. "Between 2016 and 2019, the sectors that generated stronger returns saw increases in invested capital," the report said.

The large number of well-trained workers in the country are lending strength to skill-intensive value chains such as pharmaceutical formulations, capital goods, and automotive components. And several India's value chains in manufacturing operate close to strong domestic markets. For example, manufacturers of fast-selling technology products enjoy ready access to millions of Indian customers," the report said.

In order to support the development of India's manufacturing value chains, the report established three priorities: increasing efficiency, securing know-how and technology, and analysing capital.

Mr. Piyush Goyal invites the global investors to invest in India

Press Information Bureau: November 12, 2020

The Union Commerce and Industry, Railways, and Food & public distribution Minister Mr. Pi-

yush Goyal has invited the global investors to invest in India, taking benefit of the huge domestic market, and conducive business environment in the country. In his Keynote Address today at Conference 'India: Drivers of Change' organized by the Bank of America, he said that the country offers fair value for their investments.

Mr. Goyal said that India is being seen as a trusted partner in the global value chains. He said that India has a transparent system and open democracy. India is targeting to achieve rightful place in the comity of nations. He said that the Government is working as a team, breaking departmental silos. Mr. Goyal said that there are large business opportunities in the country. Bold decisions are being taken to empower the businesses to think big and bold, and explore uncharted territories and businesses, he added.

Talking about today's cabinet decisions, Mr. Goyal said that approval has been given to introduce the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme in the 10 key sectors for Enhancing India's Manufacturing Capabilities and Enhancing Exports – Atmanirbhar Bharat. He said that the PLIs announced earlier for the telecom, APIs and medical devices have got encouraging response. The incentives will help India in becoming strong, self-sufficient, self-reliant, and meeting our domestic needs as well as for exporting. The Minister said that the government will do the handholding for these sectors over the next 5 years. He also mentioned about other initiatives for various other sectors like cluster development and logistics support. On the Viability gap funding scheme for the social sectors, he said that it will bring in private investment in the social sectors like drinking water, health, and education, and help in meeting the needs of the people.

Mr. Goyal said that the Indian economy is coming out of the Covid setback, and several datasets indicate that the country is returning back to the business. The PMI index is at a high level, not seen for a long time. Similarly, the Services index has also gone up. The GST collections in October were 10% more than the corresponding period of last year. Similarly, Indian exports were up by 5% in September. After a small dip in October, the exports in the first week of November have also shown 22% growth. He said that the imports are also picking up, showing that economic activity is normalizing. The Minister said that the railway freight in last two months has been 15% more than the corresponding period of the last year. The recent results of the Indian companies

for the last quarter also show that things are returning back to normalcy.

The Minister said that the Start-up culture in the country has really gained pace, giving impetus to the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship, and now people of India are aspiring to become job-creators rather than jobseekers.

Mr. Goyal emphasised on 4 Cs-Courage, Confidence, competence, and compassion. He said that India is set to become US\$ 5 trillion economy by 2025 and set the bar to US\$ 10 trillion in next 7 to 8 years.

On the issue of the Atamnirbharbharat campaign, he said that this is meant to not only make India self-reliant, but also engage with the world from a position of strength. He said that under the leadership of Prime minister Mr. Narendra Modi, we have liberalized several sectors including defence, Agriculture, coal, Mining, space technology. More private investment is welcome in these sectors. He said that the government should be out of consumer-oriented businesses and non-core sectors.

National Jal Jeevan Mission holds consultation meeting with over 50 Sector Partners including Trusts, NGOs & UN agencies for making the mission truly a 'people's movement' as envisioned by Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi

Press Information Bureau: November 03, 2020

Jal Jeevan Mission, the flagship programme of Union Government aims to provide tap water connections to all rural homes of the country by 2024. The mission aims to improve the lives of people and bring 'ease of living'. While launching the programme on 15 August 2019, Hon'ble Prime Minister appealed that the campaign on water conservation should not just remain a government initiative - it should become a 'people's movement'. For the successful implementation of the mission to achieve the stated goal of providing 100% potable drinking water in every rural home of the country, various stakeholders have to come together and join hands and put up a concerted and sustained efforts to ensure water security for all.

In this endeavour, National Jal Jeevan Mission, Ministry of Jal Shakti had sought expression of interest seeking applications from foundations,

trusts, NGOs, UN agencies, R&D institutions, etc. to work as Sector Partners for the ambitious programme on voluntary and no-cost basis. These are the organizations which are proactively working in water sector with wide outreach and impact.

An interactive video conferencing with more than 50 such organizations was organized by the National Mission, chaired by Additional Secretary & Mission Director, NJJM. Representatives from these organizations interested in partnering with NJJM participated and discussed their role and responsibilities in supporting the implementation of the programme.

Through the sector partners, JJM aims to harness the huge potential of local community by reaching out to the voluntary organizations, NGOs, social service & charity organizations and professionals working in drinking water sector who are willing to work towards mobilizing and enhancing the capacity of the communities to achieve the goal of the Mission in a time-bound manner.

Through the VC, National Jal Jeevan Mission impressed upon the possibility of collaboration by assessing the strength of various organizations, their presence in specific States/ regions and specialization on different themes be it community mobilization, baseline survey, capacity building, skill based training, participatory rural appraisal, water conservation, monitoring, documentation, advocacy, etc.

The decentralized, demand-driven community-managed implementation of the programme instils 'sense of ownership' and pride among the local community, create an environment of trust and bring in transparency leading in better implementation and long-term O&M of water supply systems. JJM envisages that the Gram Panchayats and the sub-committees like the user groups and the Paani Samiti are to plan, build, manage, operate & maintain in-village water supply systems ensuring that the schemes last the full design period.

The Mission plans to holistically address the challenges, like depleting water sources, increasing water-quality issues, lack of in-village infrastructure, poor operation & maintenance, lack of resource efficiency and competing water demands from various sectors. For the success of the life changing mission, it is imperative that government and private sector/ corporate houses including voluntary and charity organizations join hands to develop synergy for efficient output. Following the clarion call of the Prime Minister

to 'make water everyone's business', the mission strives to build partnerships and work together with various institutions to achieve drinking water security for all.



MARKETS

Fresh bonds Rs.8 trillion expected in this fiscal year

Fiinews

Fresh bond issuances are expected to rise to Rs.8.0-8.2 trillion during this fiscal, up from Rs.6.55 trillion during FY2020, estimates ICRA Ratings.

With estimated redemption of Rs.4.95 trillion in FY2021, the volume of corporate bonds outstanding is estimated to rise to Rs.35.5-35.8 trillion, translating in a Y-o-Y growth of ~9.2-10% for FY2021.

Meanwhile, the spreads on corporate bonds over government securities (G-sec) of similar tenure has declined to pre-COVID-19 levels by the end of Q2 FY2021, according to ICRA Ratings.

Apart from liquidity infusion measures announced by the regulator since the onset of pandemic, improved investor appetite for corporate bonds has also supported the decline in the spreads, said ICRA on 2 Nov 2020.

Improved investor appetite is also reflected in strong bond issuance of Rs.2.2 trillion (+53% on Y-o-Y basis) during Q2 FY2021, which followed an equally strong issuance of Rs 2.3 trillion during Q1 FY2021.

With two robust consecutive quarters, the bond issuances rose to Rs.4.47 trillion during H1 FY2021 (+174% on Y-o-Y basis).

"Though the targeted long-term REPO operation (TLTRO) funding was largely utilised by the banks in Q1 FY2021, the momentum in bond issuance during Q2 FY2021 reflects improved appetite across investor segments," said Anil Gupta, ICRA Sector Head – Financial Sector Ratings, giving further insights into the market.

"Given the regulatory stance of maintaining an accommodative stance of monetary policy and surplus liquidity environment, the issuances could remain strong and spreads are likely to remain narrow over the next few quarters," he said.

"With improved investor appetite and vibrancy in the debt capital market, the certainty on availability of funding at competitive rates has improved," said Gupta.

"This could also reduce the need for maintaining high on-balance sheet liquidity by corporates and non-banks as was witnessed during H1 FY2021, amid the prevailing uncertain funding environment."



BUSINESS

Mercedes-Benz aims to boost Make-In-India programme

IBEF: November 09, 2020

To benefit from lower tax rates and improve sales, Mercedes-Benz, the country's biggest luxury car producer, aims to assemble more cars in India.

The company rolled out its first AMG vehicle from its Pune factory earlier this week, making India one of the brand's group of countries to manufacture.

AMG cars are vehicles that have been entirely imported for sale in India, so far. The AMG GLC 43 Coupe became India's first AMG car to be partially manufactured. The AMGs are also produced outside of Germany in Thailand, the US and Malaysia.

In India, BMW and Audi also have assembly facility that have been operational for over a decade. From its Chennai-based factory, BMW currently produces eight models. One of the models assembled by Audi from the Auran is the A6 sedan, in Aurangabad.

Mr. Martin Schwenk, managing director and CEO, Mercedes-Benz India, said, "In the last couple of years, we saw that AMG has performed really well in the success category. We feel that there is a great likelihood of further expanding AMG's footprint and making it acceptable to the public at the same time."

"That's why we were thinking about localising the AMG brand, so we introduced the GLC 43 Coupe. It is a commodity that would cost about Rs. 1 crore (US\$ 135.13 thousand) (if completely imported), but it comes to Rs. 76.7 lakh (US\$ 103.64 thousand) after localization," added Mr. Schwenk.

There are two plates in India for import duties on fully constructed cars — 60% and 100%, depending on the value. The import duties are 15% and 30% for partially assembled units.

Mercedes-Benz has already manufactured 10 models in India, including the C-Class, E-Class and Maybach, sourcing engines from Force Mo-

tors of Pune. Compared with 2018, the eight AMG cars imported by the carmaker recorded a growth of 54% during 2019. Mercedes did not share the AMG's absolute figures.

"When we introduce the car in India and the AMG version of it, we are hoping to take this further with the A-Class Limousine. With that launch, we will be able to boost the portfolio size," added Mr. Schwenk.

Amid weak demand conditions, Mercedes-Benz has ramped up investment in India over the last two years. The investments poured into the localization of more goods and the assembly plant.

We have invested Rs. 400 crore (US\$ 54.05 million) in India in the last 12-18 months, mainly to begin preparing to produce the new GLE, GLS, GLC and now AMG models. The A-Class and GLA entry segments will also be manufactured in the future. So far, India has witnessed an investment of Rs. 2,600 crore (US\$ 351.33 million)," added Mr. Schwenk.

Mercedes-Benz logged sales of 13,786 units in India in 2019, a fall of 11% from 15,538 units in 2018. According to the company, India's demand for luxury cars is starting to recover and that is evident from the momentum seen during the time of Navratri and Dussehra. During those 10 days, the company sold 550 vehicles.

"We're very truly happy with the growth in demand. Since July, we have seen growth coming in every month. Currently, we are in a normal year at 80-90%. So, we had a powerful ramp-up leading into the holiday season. It is better than what we were hoping for. "Diwali is going to be even better and (sales) must be similar to Diwali last year," Mr. Schwenk added.

Idemitsu forays in the lubricant market with multiple products

By Fiinews

Japan's Idemitsu, one of the leading manufacturers and suppliers of high-performance lubricants in India, has recently launched a premium semi-synthetic product, Idemitsu 4T 20W-40 MA Engine oil for 4-stroke two-wheelers, which as an industry is expecting 3.7% CAGR.

The new engine oil was launched keeping in mind the increasing demand for more efficient two-wheelers that deliver higher fuel economy without affecting overall performance & protection, said Idemitsu on 4 Nov 2020.

"Idemitsu is accelerating efforts to strengthen its

business footprint in India by providing more innovative, tailor-made solutions that add value to the country's proficiency in more efficient vehicles," said Yoshitaka Shiraga, Deputy Managing Director, Idemitsu's India Plans.

"We continue to support the country's aspiration to grow sustainably by pushing the boundaries of its expertise and technological advancements."

To suffice the current demands, Idemitsu's state-of-the-art facility having fully automated manufacturing and blending mechanism for manufacturing high-quality performance lubricants is set up in Patalganga in Maharashtra.

"Moving ahead, we are confident enough to strengthen our position as a leading lubricant company by providing energy-efficient and high-performance lubricants, synchronizing with demand from the consumers. We will continue to operate with Safety, ethical behaviours, compliance and social responsibilities that are fundamentals to how we do business," Shiraga said.

India is the largest two-wheeler market in the world. The two-wheeler industry is expected to grow at CAGR of 3.7 percent. Over the course of time with the advancement in technology, OEMs are gradually shifting towards high-performance low viscosity engine oils, noted Idemitsu.

The new engine oil will provide benefits such as superior protection of the engine's critical parts, higher oxidation stability reducing oil thickening & sludge formation resulting in better reliability and engine cleanliness.

Idemitsu, a pioneer of low viscosity engine oil, offers various grades of high-performance engine oil including OEM recommended viscosity grades, such as 10W-30, 10W-40 and more.

"While our major focus will remain on low viscosity products which are recommended and preferred by major OEM's in India, Idemitsu 4T 20W-40MA is our additional offering in the high viscosity segment and has been launched keeping in mind its popularity & demand especially for the older vehicles," said Kapil Gandhi, Head – Technical and Marketing in India.

It is available in 0.9L and 1L options and is available through Idemitsu Lube India's Pan India Distribution network.

Elaborating, Idemitsu said the Indian automobile industry is going through one of the biggest technological transformations in recent years because of the BS-VI implementation.

The BS-VI emission norms have now come into effect and in order to meet the new regulations, manufacturers have had to go to great lengths to

comply with these norms.

Idemitsu already has the technology & know-how to support OEMs with the latest lubricant technology since Idemitsu has its hands-on experience as a Global Lubricant developer and is already partnered with various OEM's available in India for their Factory Fill and Service Fill applications.

Since years, there have been headways in technological elevation with a focus on creating environment-friendly and futuristic products. With this foundation, it is easy to launch this new product with an intent to increase market reach and to promote a complete 2W product range; thereby increasing brand presence in metros as well as tier 1 & tier 2 cities.

As part of reforms oriented towards providing cleaner auto fuels in the country, the government has launched a slew of pilot projects that will improve efficiency and reduce emissions drastically as the market is seeing a significant transition with the need to move towards cleaner fuels like CNG, biodiesel, EV, etc.

India is already a big lubricants market and now, with high performance and hybrid quality requirements, it has become a more interesting and competitive market, said Idemitsu.

Manufacturers are seeking best-in-class technical expertise to lower Environmental impact, develop technically advanced lubricants, futuristic products, and work for the development of society.

Amazon Web Services expands to second infra region in India

By Fiinews

Amazon Web Services, Inc. (AWS), is expanding its services to include a second infrastructure region in India by mid-2022 which will benefit ERP customers in the Indian market.

The new AWS Asia Region, which will consist of three Availability Zones at launch, will join the existing nine AWS Regions and 26 Availability Zones across Asia in India, Australia, Greater China, Japan, Korea, and Singapore.

Globally, AWS has 77 Availability Zones across 24 infrastructure regions, with announced plans to launch 15 more Availability Zones and five more AWS Regions in India, Indonesia, Japan, Spain, and Switzerland.

The new AWS Asia Pacific (Hyderabad) Region will enable even more developers, startups, and enterprises as well as government, education, and

non-profit organizations to run their applications and serve end-users from data centers located in India.

"Businesses in India are embracing cloud computing to reduce costs, increase agility, and enable rapid innovation to meet the needs of billions of customers in India and abroad," said Peter DeSantis, Senior Vice President of Global Infrastructure and Customer Support, Amazon Web Services. "Together with our AWS Asia Pacific (Mumbai) Region, we're providing customers with more flexibility and choice, while allowing them to architect their infrastructure for even greater fault tolerance, resiliency, and availability across geographic locations."

"We are pleased that AWS has chosen Telangana as the location for its second region in India. Hyderabad is an important talent hub for IT professionals and entrepreneurs, and with the increased adoption of cloud computing, we are set to see a transformation in the way businesses in south India harness the power of IT," said K.T. Rama Rao, Minister for Information Technology, Electronics & Communications, Municipal Administration and Urban Development and Industries & Commerce Departments, Government of Telangana.

"Combining the unique resources of Telangana with AWS, the world's leading cloud, will boost economic development, power digital-led innovation, and establish a cloud centre hub for the rest of the country."

AWS Regions are comprised of Availability Zones, which are technology infrastructure in separate and distinct geographic locations with enough distance to significantly reduce the risk of a single event impacting customers' business continuity, yet near enough to provide low latency for high availability applications.

Each Availability Zone has independent power, cooling, and physical security and is connected via redundant, ultra-low-latency networks. AWS customers focused on high availability can design their applications to run in multiple Availability Zones to achieve even greater fault tolerance.

The launch of the AWS Asia Pacific (Hyderabad) Region will provide customers with even lower latency across southern India. Additionally, hundreds of thousands of Indian organizations, from startups to enterprises and the public sector, will have additional infrastructure to leverage advanced technologies from the world's leading cloud with the broadest and deepest suite of cloud services including compute, storage, analytics,

artificial intelligence, database, Internet of Things (IoT), machine learning, mobile services, serverless, and more to drive innovation.

D&B India, NSIC ink pact to boost growth of MSMEs

IBEF: November 06, 2020

An agreement with the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) has been signed by Dun & Bradstreet Information Services India to create an ecosystem to encourage, finance and promote the growth of micro, small and medium enterprises, a statement said.

"This partnership would enable Indian MSMEs increase their exposure, extend access to international markets, identify potential customers, explore new suppliers and channel partners, manage risk and identify opportunities for growth," he added.

The collaboration would provide Indian MSMEs with access through NSIC's nationwide network of offices and technical centres to Dun & Bradstreet wide array of data and analytics solutions. MSMEs will also be able to use platforms such as D&B Credit to make credit choices, monitor customers' financial health, evaluate credit risk and identify trends in the portfolio.

In order to help MSMEs better manage the ever-changing global business climate, Dun & Bradstreet India will also collaborate with NSIC to provide tailored training and certification programmes, the release said.

By working with the NSIC, we expect to play a pivotal role in enabling the eco-system needed to accelerate MSME growth and help achieve the government's GDP contribution goal of 50% of GDP by FY 2025, "said Mr. Julian Prower, chairman of the board and MD, Dun & Bradstreet India."

Pharma exports soar 15% in first half of FY21

IBEF: November 04, 2020

The country's pharmaceuticals exports are on course to cross US\$ 23 billion for the first time this fiscal year after rising 14.85% yoy at US\$ 11.78 billion in the first half, a senior ministry of commerce official said.

Mr. Ravi Uday Bhaskar, DG, Pharmexcil, said, "India is likely to sustain similar growth in phar-

maceutical exports in the second half of the fiscal period, following the indications of demand for our pharmaceutical products worldwide, as well as close the fiscal with exports of at least US\$ 23 billion and may even touch US\$ 24 billion".

The growth is driven by drug formulations and biologicals, whose shipment grew a record 21.85% year-on-year to US\$ 8.99 billion in the April-September period as countries around the world turned to India to meet a rise in demand in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic that in many parts of the world triggered lockdowns and production disruptions.

For the first time in the history of Indian pharmaceutical exports, the first half accounted for 76.3% of overall pharmaceutical exports, up from around 72% a year earlier.

Last fiscal year, India exported US\$ 20.58 billion worth of pharmaceuticals.

Mr. Uday Bhaskar told ET, "We expected India to record US\$ 22 billion in pharmaceutical exports last fiscal year, but we fell short and ended up at US\$ 20.58 billion, due to logistics disruptions and lockdowns in different importing countries in the Covid-19 pandemic in the last fiscal quarter ended March 2020".

Herbal products also saw a record increase of 20.77% year on year in the first half, in addition to formulations and biologicals, at US\$ 168.87 million. Less than 1.5% of Indian pharma exports are accounted for by herbal products.

In the first half, exports of bulk medicines, medication intermediates, Ayush, vaccines and surgical products decreased slightly, due to the transition in countries around the world's immediate healthcare focus to managing the Covid-19 pandemic.

In the first half, bulk drugs and drug intermediates reported a decline of 4.5% to US\$ 1.87 billion, down from US\$ 1.96 billion last fiscal year.

"The decrease in bulk drugs and intermediate drug exports can also be seen as a positive development as most Indian companies have used them to manufacture high-margin and high-value formulations for value addition, contributing to Indian pharmaceutical exports' overall growth," said Mr. Uday Bhaskar.

Vaccine exports dropped 7.27% to US\$ 359.05 million in the first half, while surgical exports and Ayush goods remained nearly unchanged, falling 0.11% to US\$ 317.07 million and 0.65% to US\$ 72.1 million, respectively.

India exports vaccines mainly to fulfil the various countries' scheduled immunisation programmes

for infants, and with the shift in the healthcare priority of these countries to counter the Covid-19 pandemic, India has seen a decrease in exports of vaccines, said Mr. Uday Bhaskar.

However, the country "will see a substantial increase in the export of this fiscal vaccine if the launch of the Covid-19 vaccine is successful before the fiscal end," he added.



START UP SNIPPETS

Start up Funding

- **Leena AI:** Gurugram-based HRtech startup Leena AI has raised \$8 Mn in a Series A funding round led by Greycroft to expand its go-to-market programme and accelerate product development.
- **LivFin:** Delhi-based fintech startup LivFin has raised \$4.7 Mn (INR 35 Cr) from German development finance institution DEG, which is a subsidiary of KfW Group. It will use the fund to strengthen the supply chain finance segment as well as expand its reach to the un-banked and under-banked segments of the SME eco-system of the country.
- **Charge+Zone:** Electric Vehicle charging startup Charge+Zone has raised funding of \$3 Mn in a pre-series A funding round led by Venture Catalysts. The round saw participation from Mumbai Angels, Keiretsu Forum and Ramakrishnan Family Office. It will use this funding to scale its operations and work towards building one million unmanned charging points in the country within 10 years.
- **Charcoal Eats:** Mumbai-headquartered quick service restaurant (QSR) startup Charcoal Eats has raised \$2.1 Mn (INR 16 Cr) in a round of funding led by Lokmat Investments, a division of multi-platform media company Lokmat Media.
- **Ather Energy:** Bengaluru-based electric two-wheelers maker Ather Energy has raised an investment of \$35 Mn in its latest round of Series D funding, led by Flipkart cofounder Sachin Bansal's who pitched in \$23 Mn.
- **Neptra:** Ahmedabad-based dry waste management company Neptra Resource Management Private Limited has raised \$18 Mn in Series C funding from Aavishkaar

Capital and Circulate Capital. It plans to expand its capacity and manage dry waste across the country.

- **Wellness Forever:** Mumbai-based retail pharmacy chain Wellness Forever has raised \$17 Mn (INR 130 Cr) from Serum Institute CEO Adar Poonawalla and UAE-based Allana Group. The round saw participation from existing investors which include banker and investor Rajiv Dadlani and venture capitalist Sajid Fazalbhoy. The company is promoted by Gulshan Bakhtiani, Ashraf Biran and Mohan Chavan.
- **Furlenco:** Bengaluru-based furniture rental startup Furlenco has raised \$7 Mn (INR 53 Cr) in fresh debt financing from Rangoli Resorts, Beeline Impex, Aditya Burman and Crescent Enterprises.
- **slice:** Bengaluru-based fintech platform slice received \$5.2 Mn (INR 39 Cr) in debt funding from multiple financial institutions including Vivriti Capital, Northern Arc Capital and InCred Financial Services.
- **Winzo:** Delhi-based online gaming platform WinZO has announced a \$5 Mn (INR 37.50 Cr) fund for the Indian Game Developer ecosystem. Recently, it raised \$18 Mn (INR 132.1 Cr) in a Series B funding round led by Makers Fund based in Singapore and New York-based Courtside Ventures. Both funds made their first-ever investment in India through WinZO.
- **Stones2Milestones:** Gurugram-based edtech startup Stones2Milestones (S2M) has raised \$2.5 Mn led by Unreasonable and its LP Goldhirsh Foundation. The round saw participation from a Singapore-based investment banker along with a few lawyers and three angel platforms Angel-List US Syndicate, LetsVenture and FaaD Network.

Start up Acquisition

- Ecommerce giant Flipkart has acquired of Bengaluru-based mobile gaming startup Mecha Mocha for an undisclosed valuation to strengthen its foray into the gaming segment. The Walmart-owned platform has acquired the Intellectual Property of Mecha Mocha and team, the company said in a statement.
- Car-care service startup AutoBrix has acquired Xenon Automotive-owned Cartisan. With this acquisition, AutoBrix entered the

car periodic maintenance and repairs business, allowing it to offer doorstep car services to its customers.



Other Developments

- Delhi-based online gaming platform WinZO has announced a \$5 Mn (INR 37.50 Cr) fund for the Indian Game Developer ecosystem.
- US-based early-stage startup accelerator programme Y Combinator has finalised 16 Indian startups that will be participating in its winter batch of 2021, which is scheduled to be conducted between January and March. The interview process is ongoing, and there will be more additions to the list in the upcoming months.
- Zomato, which has planned its IPO in 2021, is looking to hire bankers and has brought in Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas and Indus Law as legal advisors.
- T Rowe Price has cut down the valuation of its shares in Vijay Shekhar Sharma-led Paytm by 26% as of June 2020, while Vanguard has revised the valuations of its shares in Ola by nearly 50% as of August 31, 2020.
- Global investment firm KKR launched a new platform, Virescent Infrastructure, to acquire renewable energy assets in India. Virescent will be headed by Sanjay Grewal as chief executive officer and will be headquartered in Mumbai.
- Tata Group is reportedly looking to acquire a majority stake in Gurugram-based startup 1mg to enter the epharmacy segment and expand its offerings. With this, the Ratan Tata-led company wants to create its dominance over the online retail segment.
- The Kerala government has inaugurated an accelerator facility for electronic startups. The facility will help startups scale up as a sustainable enterprise.
- Punjab government has signed a MoU with The Global Alliance for Mass Entrepreneurship (GAME), supported by social impact investment firm Omidyar Network India under its recently announced Re-Solve Initiative.

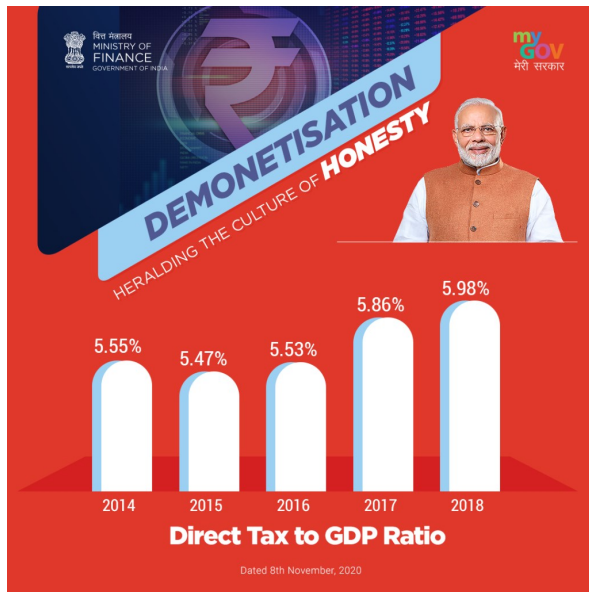
HCI Singapore celebrated Ayurveda Day 2020 with a discussion on Ayurveda from a lens of Modern Medicine and its role in a post Covid19 world



High Commissioner toured local companies Sea Group Headquarters and Nanyang Polytechnic.. Cont from P. 1



Transforming India: All Sectors



BOOSTING IT/ITeS/BPO INDUSTRY, FURTHERING EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

New Guidelines Issued for 'Other Service Provider' Industry in BPO & ITeS Sectors

Key highlights:

- Remove unnecessary bureaucratic restrictions, allowing industry to focus on innovative new products & solutions
- Encourage investment in IT Industry particularly BPO & IT enabled services
- Will unleash the potential of our talented youth by making India a preferred destination for Information & Knowledge Outsourcing Industry

SCALING UP'S INFRASTRUCTURE TO NEW HEIGHTS PM Modi Inaugurates VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN VARANASI

- Upgradation of Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital, Ramnagar
- Sarnath Light and Sound show; Sewerage related works
- Infrastructure facilities for protection & conservation of cows
- Multipurpose seed storehouse, agriculture produce warehouse of 100 MT, IPDS phase 2
- A housing complex for players in Sampurnanand Stadium
- Varanasi city smart lighting work
- 105 Anganwadi Kendras & 102 Gau Ashray Kendras

PM MODI ADDRESSES SCO SUMMIT, Says Need to Respect Sovereignty, Territorial Integrity

20th Summit of SCO Council of Heads of State
10 November 2020

We are moving ahead with a vision of a 'Self-reliant India' in the post-pandemic world

'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' will prove to be a Force Multiplier for the global economy & accelerate the economic progress of the SCO region

As the world's largest vaccine producing country, India will use its vaccine production and distribution capacity to help the entire humanity

PM Modi to Dedicate 2 Ayurveda Institutions to the Nation on 5th Ayurveda Day 2/2

National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA), Jaipur

- Conferred with Deemed to be University status by UGC, NIA runs numerous courses ranging from certificate to doctoral level
- Inheritor of a 175-year legacy, it possesses 14 different departments presently
- A pioneer in research activities, it is presently conducting 54 different research projects

Employment, Benefiting Farmers

Government Approves 29 Projects in Food Processing Industry

21 projects approved under Scheme for Integrated Cold Chain & Value Addition

- Will leverage investment worth ₹443 crore, with a grant of ₹189 crore
- To generate employment of nearly 12,600 people and benefit 2,00,592 farmers

8 projects approved under Backward and Forward Linkages Scheme

- Will leverage investment worth ₹62 crore, with a grant of ₹15 crore

FORTHCOMING EVENTS >>>> INDIA

I. NAMASTE BHARAT

Date: 29 October – 30 November 2020

Venue: Virtual Platform , www.namastebharat.world

Organizer: De Ideaz Pte Ltd (<https://namastebharat.world/faq/>)

Details: De Ideaz, has been hosting an annual exhibition in Singapore since the last 10 years for the MSME sector in India. The exhibition is organized with the support of Singapore Press Holdings. Each year, around 150 Indian exhibitors have been participating in the event, which is very popular in Singapore and draws customers from other Southeast Asian countries. From India, FIEO has been participating in the event, with the support of Ministry of Commerce. Due to the recent pandemic, this year the exhibition named “ Namaste Bharat” is being organized on a virtual platform to create a much larger global engagement. Namaste Bharat, the biggest global online L2G (Local to Global) exhibition aims to create an ecommerce ecosystem for MSME, cottage industries, artisans and rural-urban women entrepreneurs to build a sustainable livelihood by promoting "Made in India" products globally. The Federation of The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) is the nodal agency in India. The Australian Indian Business and Trade Foundation, Gulf Maharashtra Business Forum, UK-USA business chambers and other prominent organisations are supporting the event.

II. GLOBAL VIRTUAL HEALTHCARE & HYGIENE EXPO 2020

Date: 23-26 November 2020

Venue: Virtual Expo

Contact: <https://vhhe.in>, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry

Details: Global Virtual Healthcare & Hygiene Expo 2020 (G-VHHE) is being organized from 23-26 November 2020 with the aim of generating foreign investments and promoting exports from India. It is India's largest Virtual Exhibition & Conference on Healthcare and Hygiene Sector. Over 100 domestic and international exhibitors will display their brands, products, services, and credentials digitally on their booth (through corporate videos, brochures, and catalogues), prefix meetings with registered visitors from over 100 countries across the globe, and meet them through text/video chat 24x7 during the Expo.

The exhibitors and visitors will get immersive experience of participation, will reach out to their target audience seamlessly, without traveling, and from the comfort of their office or home through laptop, tab, or mobile device with internet connectivity. Webinars and Live Sessions during the Expo will help communicating simultaneously to larger buyer groups.

Notifications

Securities and Exchange Board of India

Circular on Investments by AIFs Incorporated in IFSC

https://www.sebi.gov.in/legal/circulars/aug-2019/circular-on-investments-by-aifs-incorporated-in-ifsc_43867.html

Guidelines for Liquidity Enhancement Scheme (LES) in Commodity Derivatives Contracts

https://www.sebi.gov.in/legal/circulars/jul-2019/guidelines-for-liquidity-enhancement-scheme-les-in-commodity-derivatives-contracts_43699.html

Ministry of Corporate Affairs

Companies Amendment Rules, 2018

http://www.mca.gov.in/Ministry/pdf/CompaniesXBRL0803rule_15032018.pdf

Reserve Bank of India

Change in Bank Rate

<https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=11705&Mode=0>

Priority Sector Lending (PSL) – Classification of Exports under priority Sector

<https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=11692&Mode=0>

Expanding and Deepening of Digital Payments Ecosystem

<https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=11707&Mode=0>

Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion

Industrial Policy Statement 1991

https://dipp.gov.in/sites/default/files/IndustrialPolicyStatement_1991_15July2019.pdf

Consolidated FDI Policy Circular of 2017

http://dipp.nic.in/sites/default/files/CFPC_2017_FINAL_RELEASED_28.8.17_0.pdf

PSLV successfully launches EOS-01 and nine customer satellites from Sriharikota

ISRO, 7 Nov 2020

Today, India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, in its fifty first flight (PSLV-C49), successfully launched EOS-01 along with nine international customer satellites from the First Launch Pad of Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) SHAR, Sriharikota.

PSLV-C49 lifted-off at 1511 Hrs (IST), after a delay of nine minutes because of inclement weather conditions observed during countdown. After 15 minutes and 20 seconds, EOS-01 was successfully injected into its orbit. Subsequently, nine commercial satellites were injected into their intended orbits. After separation, the two solar arrays of EOS-01 were deployed automatically and the ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network at Bengaluru assumed control of the satellite. In the coming days, the satellite will be brought to its final operational configuration.

"PSLV-C49 successfully placed all ten satellites precisely into their orbit" Chairman, ISRO, Dr. K. Sivan declared. He congratulated both the launch vehicle and satellite teams for rising to the occasion amidst the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Dr. K. Sivan also briefed about the upcoming missions. EOS-01 is an earth observation satellite, intended for applications in agriculture, forestry and disaster management support.

Issue No 291, 15 November 2020

FAQs on Foreign Investments In India

The fortnightly FAQs will broadly cover the following areas

- I. Foreign Direct Investment*
- II. Foreign Technology Collaboration Agreement*
- III. Foreign Portfolio Investment*
- IV. Investment in Government Securities and Corporate debt*
- V. Foreign Venture Capital Investment*
- VI. Investment by QFIs*

III. Foreign Portfolio Investment

Q. Whether cash is a permissible mode of payment for making foreign direct investment in Indian company.

Answer: No, refer to Para 7.13 of [Master Direction-Foreign Investment in India](#).

Q. Are the investments and profits earned in India repatriable?

Answer: All foreign investments are repatriable (net of applicable taxes) except in cases where the investment is made or held on non-repatriation basis.

Source: RBI

For Feedback & Comments, please contact:

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