

Daily News Monitor: 15 January 2021

1. French utility EDF sees opportunity in hydrogen fuel, battery storage space in India

Source: Financial Express ([Link](#))

French utility major EDF Energy is exploring business opportunities in the Indian market for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, hydrogen fuel and battery storage technologies, in line with its plans for the post-Covid-19 economy. Technologies such as hydrogen fuel and battery storage are in mature stages in France, and the company sees great value for them in the process to decarbonise the energy sector in India.

2. Centre wants states to review labour laws for harmony with new central codes

Source: Financial Express ([Link](#))

To bring uniformity in the labour laws across the country, the Centre is planning to ask the states to modify, if necessary, their laws to ensure that they are in consonance with the new central labour codes. Sources said the union labour ministry has decided to appoint legal advisors soon, mandating them to examine whether the state laws are in sync with the central codes. If the harmony is found to be lacking, then states will be asked to either amend them or take Presidential assent for their respective laws once again.

3. New consumer rights rules may hit rooftop solar capacity addition

Source: Financial Express ([Link](#))

The latest rules regarding the consumer rights laid down by the Union power ministry is seen to impede the pace of capacity addition of the rooftop solar in the country by disincentivising commercial and industrial users from installing such power generation capacities in their premises. While such consumers were earlier earning around Rs 7/unit by selling the surplus power generated from their rooftop solar plants to the state-run power distribution companies (discoms), under the new mandate they will be billed through “gross metering”, and compensated at rates close to the average power purchase cost of discoms which ranges around Rs 3.5– Rs 4/unit

4. India to start Covid-19 vaccine supply with 20 million doses to neighbours

Source: Business Standard ([Link](#))

India, one of the world’s largest manufacturers of inoculations, plans to offer 20 million doses of coronavirus vaccine to its neighbours as it draws up a policy to supply vials to countries across the globe, people with knowledge of the matter said. An Indian state-run company will buy vaccines from the Serum Institute of India Ltd. and Bharat Biotech

International Ltd. for supplying to Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Seychelles and Mauritius, the people said, asking not to be identified as the plan is still under discussion. Some of supplies may be free and treated as aid, they added. The first batch of the vials will be shipped over the next two weeks, the people said. The government will then offer the vaccines to countries in Latin America, Africa and the former Soviet republics. A spokesperson for Bharat Biotech couldn't immediately comment while a spokesman at Serum declined to comment.

5. Covid vaccination: 11 States say yes to Covaxin

Source: The Economic Times ([Link](#))

Eleven states, of which five are opposition-ruled, have agreed to deploy Bharat Biotech's Covaxin in the first phase of the Covid-19 vaccination programme, covering 10 million healthcare workers beginning January 16. For now, sources said, every state will dedicate six centres to Covaxin. Those familiar with the details told ET that this would roughly work out to 3-5% of the vaccination centres depending on the size of the state. These numbers could increase as the public immunisation programme broadens its scope and reach. Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Maharashtra, Bihar, Karnataka, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Haryana are the states which have given the nod to Covaxin.

6. US-India Business Council selects Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw as one of the vice chairs

Source: The Economic Times ([Link](#))

Kiran mazumdar-Shaw, executive chairperson, Biocon, has been selected as one of the vice chairs of the US-India Business Council (USIBC), with immediate effect. The US Chamber of Commerce's USIBC on 14 January announced vice chairs for its 2021 Global Board of Directors, strengthening its leadership team as the Council engages with a new US administration and advocates for stronger US-India commercial ties in an increasingly complex world. Milind Pant, CEO, Amway, and Edward Knight, Vice Chair, Nasdaq will join the Board's leadership team as vice chairs along with Mazumdar-Shaw.

7. Bengaluru now world's fastest growing tech hub for VC funding, ahead of London, Paris, others: Research

Source: Financial Express ([Link](#))

Bengaluru has emerged as the world's fastest-growing mature tech ecosystem in the world since 2016, followed by the European cities of London, Munich, Berlin and Paris, with India's financial centre of Mumbai in sixth place, according to new research released in London on 14 January. Dealroom.co data analysed by London & Partners the Mayor of London's international trade and investment agency reveals that investment in the Karnataka

capital of Bengaluru grew 5.4 times from USD 1.3 billion in 2016 to USD 7.2 billion in 2020, with the Maharashtra capital of Mumbai growing 1.7 times from USD 0.7 billion to USD 1.2 billion in the same period.

8. Sri Lanka revives port deal with India and Japan for sea terminal

Source: Business Standard ([Link](#))

Sri Lanka's President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on 13 January announced the revival of an Indian and Japanese investment project to develop a deep-sea terminal in Colombo harbour, next to a controversial \$500-million Chinese-run container jetty. A tripartite deal by Sri Lanka's previous government had been on hold amid trade union resistance, but Rajapaksa said the East Container Terminal (ECT) would proceed. Approval came after reviewing "regional geo-political concerns," Rajapaksa's office said, a reference to India's suspicion of China's role at the same port. The terminal will be developed with 51 percent ownership by Sri Lanka's government and the remaining 49 percent as an investment by Adani Group and other stakeholders including Japan, officials said.