

## Daily News Monitor: 17 August 2020

### **1. Vistara likely to resume flight operations to UK, Germany, France**

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

Private carrier Vistara is likely to start flight operations between India and the UK, Germany and France under the bilateral air bubble arrangements that have been signed with these countries, sources in the aviation industry said on 16 August. Earlier this month, India and the UK signed a bilateral air pact, under which the airlines of both the countries can operate international flights with certain restrictions. India had signed similar bilateral pacts with Germany and France in July. Vistara got its second B787-9 wide-body aircraft on Saturday. It had received its first B787-9 aircraft in February. “Vistara has already got the slots at the Heathrow airport in London. The flights between Delhi and London are likely to be announced in the next few days,” an industry source told PTI.

### **2. All communication with taxpayers to be from National e-Assessment Centre under faceless assessment**

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

The Income Tax department has issued guidelines for the demarcation of roles of officers for the implementation of faceless assessment, making the National e-Assessment Centre (NeAC) as the main gateway for communication with a taxpayer. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has notified the National e-Assessment Center (NeAC) at Delhi and various Regional e-Assessment Centres (ReACs) across 20 cities for implementing the faceless assessment scheme. In detailed guidelines on implementation of the scheme the CBDT said, The NeAC/ReACs hierarchy will be tasked with management of Faceless Assessment proceedings.

### **3. China’s loss may be India’s gain; Samsung, Foxconn show interest after govt’s incentives to shift supply chain**

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

India’s latest set of incentives to entice businesses moving away from China seem to be working, with companies from Samsung Electronics Co. to Apple Inc.’s assembly partners showing interest in investing in the South Asian nation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government in March announced incentives that make niche firms — electronics manufacturers — eligible for a payment of 4%-6% of their incremental sales over the next five years. The result: about two dozen companies pledged \$1.5 billion of investments to set up mobile-phone factories in the country. Besides Samsung, those that have shown interest

are Hon Hai Precision Industry Co., known as Foxconn, Wistron Corp. and Pegatron Corp. India has also extended similar incentives to pharmaceutical businesses, and plans to cover more sectors, which may include automobiles, textiles, and food processing under the program.

#### **4. Reliance Industries may buy Urban Ladder, Milkbasket: Report**

**Source: Livemint ([Link](#))**

India's Reliance Industries Ltd is in talks to buy online furniture retailer Urban Ladder and milk delivery firm Milkbasket to strengthen its e-commerce business, the Times of India newspaper reported on 17 August. The oil-to-telecoms conglomerate's talks with Urban Ladder are at an advanced stage, the report said, citing four unnamed sources briefed on the matter. A deal could be pegged at around \$30 million, it said, citing one of the sources. Representatives at Reliance, Urban Ladder and Milkbasket did not immediately respond to Reuters requests for comment. The news comes as the COVID-19 pandemic forces many Indians indoors, spurring a wave of online shopping, including for daily groceries such as milk. Reliance, led by Asia's richest man, Mukesh Ambani, launched an online grocery service JioMart in May, a move rivalling Amazon.com Inc and Walmart Inc's Flipkart in India, a key growth market for e-commerce.

#### **5. Negative import list for defence: Govt's landmark announcement to help the private sector**

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

India has embarked on the drive of self-reliance and indigenisation in the Defence sector with the focus via Make in India. The potential of the Indian industry along with the technological capabilities developed in-house is vital for achieving the objective of a strong and sustainable ecosystem in the Defence Sector manufacturing in the country. The defence ministry has set a goal of a turnover of USD 25 billion (Rs 1.75 lakh crore) in defence manufacturing in the next, five years that included an export target of USD 5 billion (Rs 35,000 crore) worth of military hardware. With this as the overarching objective and the vision of PM Narendra Modi for India, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Aug 9, 2020, announced that India will stop import of 101 military systems and weapons to begin with and subsequent additions to the list, year on year by the DMA under General Bipin Rawat in consultations with the Services and Ministry of Defence and External Affairs.

## **6. India's key Central European partner Poland keen to increase two-way investments in post-Covid scenario**

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

Central Europe's biggest nation and India's traditional partner in the region is keen to invest in India and simultaneously keen to expand basket of Indian investments in the country. PM Narendra Modi is keen on creating new investment opportunities in India in the post-COVID period and on facilitating the inflow of foreign investments. India is the primary location in Asia for Polish investors (currently 270 mln USD). Poland would encourage its entrepreneurs to invest in India India and also would like to invite more Indian investors to make business in Poland, sources informed ET. "However, for Poland – and many other European states – the lack of bilateral investment treaty is a serious obstacle. We regret that there is no agreement in place between the EU and its member states," a Polish government source said.

## **7. Finance ministry working on norms for salaries of retired central govt officials re-appointed on contract**

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

The finance ministry is working on norms to regulate salary paid to retired central government employees re-appointed on contract and has proposed keeping nomination-based appointments at "bare minimum". In an office memorandum dated August 13, the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, said that ministries/departments appoint retired central government employees on contract basis, including as consultants, but there are no uniform guidelines for regulating the salary payment in case of appointment of retired central government employees and has invited comments of ministries/departments within 10 days.