

## DAILY NEWS MONITOR: 20 JANUARY 2022

### **1. India reports 3.17 lakh new Covid cases, highest in 249 days**

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

India logged 3,17,532 new coronavirus infections, the highest in 249 days, taking the total tally of COVID-19 cases to 3,82,18,773, which includes 9,287 cases of the Omicron variant, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Thursday. The active cases rose to 19,24,051, the highest in 234 days, while the death toll climbed to 4,87,693 with 491 fresh fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated. There has been a 3.63 per cent increase in Omicron cases since Wednesday, the ministry said.

### **2. India extends international passenger flight ban till February 28 amid Omicron surge**

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

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on 19 January extended the suspension on international flights from and to India till February 28 in view of rising coronavirus cases across the world. In a circular on 19 January, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) stated: "The competent authority has decided to extend the suspension of scheduled international commercial passenger services to/from India till 2359 hrs IST of February 28, 2022." Flights under the air bubble arrangements will continue. India currently has a bilateral air bubble arrangement for the operation of special international passenger flights with 28 countries, including Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Bahrain, Canada, France, Germany, Iraq, Japan, the Maldives, Nigeria, Qatar, the UAE, the UK and the USA. The other countries with which India has such a pact are Bangladesh, Bhutan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Kuwait, Nepal, Netherlands, Oman, Russia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Tanzania, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

### **3. Expert panel suggests regular market authorisation for Covishield, Covaxin**

**Source: Money Control ([Link](#))**

Covishield and Covaxin, the two COVID-19 vaccines granted emergency use nod last year, have been recommended for regular market authorisation by a government expert panel. The recommendation was made by the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) of Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), whose views are factored-in by the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) before taking the final decision. "SEC of CDSCO has recommended for upgrade of Covishield and Covaxin status from restricted use in emergency situations to grant of new drug permission with conditions in adult population. DCGI will evaluate the recommendations and give its decision," CDSCO said.

#### **4. FinMin asks ministries to restrict expenses within prescribed limit**

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

In a bid to maintain fiscal deficit within the targeted limit, the finance ministry has asked ministries and departments to restrict their expenses with the revised estimates. The communication comes ahead of the Union Budget 2022-23, likely to be unveiled on February 1. In an office memorandum seeking proposals for the third and final batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants, the economic affairs department under the finance ministry asked the ministries and departments to submit their proposals by February 10

#### **5. Any website, YouTube channel spreading lies, conspiring against India will be blocked: I&B minister Anurag Thakur**

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

Days after 20 YouTube channels and two websites were blocked for spreading anti-India propaganda and fake news, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur on 19 January warned that the government will continue to take such action against those “hatching conspiracy” against the country. “I had ordered for action against them. I am happy that many big countries across the world took cognisance of it. YouTube also came forward and took action to block them,” Thakur told reporters in Delhi while replying to queries on the issue.

#### **6. FDI flows to India slip 26% in 2021: UN report**

**Source: Money Control ([Link](#))**

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows to India in 2021 were 26 per cent lower, mainly because large M&A deals recorded in 2020 were not repeated, the UN trade body has said. The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Investment Trends Monitor published on Wednesday said global foreign direct investment flows showed a strong rebound in 2021, growing 77 per cent to an estimated USD 1.65 trillion, from USD 929 billion in 2020, surpassing their pre-COVID-19 level. Recovery of investment flows to developing countries is encouraging, but the stagnation of new investment in the least developed countries in industries important for productive capacities, and key Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) sectors – such as electricity, food or health – is a major cause for concern, said UNCTAD Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan.

#### **7. Glenmark Pharma inks exclusive licensing agreement with Lotus International**

**Source: Money Control ([Link](#))**

Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd on 20 January said its Swiss arm has entered into an exclusive licensing agreement with Lotus International Pte Ltd for commercializing its innovative nasal spray Ryaltris in Singapore, Hong Kong and Vietnam. Under the agreement signed between

Glenmark Specialty SA and the wholly-owned subsidiary of Lotus Pharmaceutical Co, Ltd (Lotus), Glenmark will be responsible for manufacturing and supply of Ryaltris. On the other hand Lotus will be responsible for its commercialization subject to receipt of regulatory approvals, in these markets, the company said in a statement. Glenmark will receive an upfront payment as well as regulatory and sales-based milestone payments from Lotus, it added.

#### **8. Three R&D projects approved under India-Israel tech innovation fund**

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

Deliberating on widening the scope of India-Israel Industrial R&D and Technological Innovation Fund (I4F), the two countries have approved three joint R&D projects worth \$5.5 million and suggested measures to create a broader India-Israel collaborative ecosystem. The projects are 'Centrally monitored IoT nano-sensors for molecular diagnostics in healthcare and screening applications'; 'NoMoreMos' - a mosquito control biological solution; and 'IoT enabled satellite communication for real-time collection of agriculture and environment data across India'.