

## DAILY NEWS MONITOR: 20 MAY 2022

### **1. Govt shifts focus as covid cases stay low**

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

With relatively few reported covid cases, the government is recalibrating its public health strategy to focus on eliminating leprosy, cataract and tuberculosis by 2025. The health ministry has prepared a roadmap and has directed the State/UTs to address these on a priority basis, said a government official requesting anonymity. In the last two years, the burden of these diseases -- cataract is an age-related complication -- has increased as the government focussed on fighting the covid-19 pandemic. While leprosy is endemic in several states and union territories, with the annual case detection rate at 4.56 per 10,000 population, the country also has a large number of TB and cataract patients. According to the Annual Tuberculosis report 2022, covid-19 had a major impact on the National TB Elimination Programme as patients could not visit hospitals due to lockdown restrictions. TB cases in India jumped 19% to 1.93 million in 2021 after declining in the previous year.

### **2. Indonesia to lift palm oil export ban, likely giving India 'big relief'**

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

Indonesia, the world's biggest supplier of palm oil, said on 19 May it will lift a ban on exports from 23 May, likely helping India and other importers. India annually imports around 13-13.5 million tonnes of edible oils, of which around 8-8.5 million tonnes (around 63 per cent) is palm oil. Of this, 8-8.5 million tonnes of palm oil, 45-50 per cent comes from Indonesia and the rest from neighboring Malaysia. The decision will go despite bulk cooking oil having not yet receded to the targeted 14,000 rupiahs per litre price, as the government considers the welfare of 17 million workers in the palm oil industry, Indonesian President Joko Widodo said in a video statement, agencies reported. Jokowi, as the president is known, said the supply of bulk cooking oil has now reached a level greater than what the domestic market needed.

### **3. Dr Reddy's plans new brands in Russia, says no issue with funds in country**

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

Dr Reddy's Laboratories (DRL) continues to focus on Russia, where it grew its market share in financial year 2021-22 (FY22), and plans to launch new brands there. As for Ukraine, the company is trying to deliver medicines and is working out logistics solutions, the firm said. Speaking to the media after the quarterly results, GV Prasad, co-chairman and managing director of DRL, said: "Our Russian operations continue as usual. There was some stocking

up of inventory by our customers during the initial period of this ongoing crisis. From the next quarter we expect that to normalise.” He added that the firm will continue to launch brands in the Russian market. The Russian business posted revenue of Rs 686 crore in the fourth quarter (Q4FY22), a year-on-year growth of 70 percent. “Growth [was] majorly attributable to traction in base business and new product launches,” DRL said.

#### **4. Indian government in talks with Russian over cut-price oil deal: HPCL**

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

India is in talks with Russia over a deal to buy oil at discounted rates, the chairman of India's state-run Hindustan Petroleum Corp. said on 19 May, at a time when much of the West is shunning Russian crude over the conflict in Ukraine. India, the world's third biggest oil importer and consumer, is struggling like much of the rest of the world with inflation at multi-year highs, and is keen to cut its import bill and protect consumers from soaring fuel prices. The country has already bought more than twice as much crude from Russia since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24 as it did in the whole of 2021, according to Reuters calculations, with sources saying Indian buyers were getting discounted prices.

#### **5. Russia offers to export 25 million tonnes of grain from August 1**

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

Russia can offer 25 million tonnes of grain for export via the port of Novorossiysk starting from August 1 and until the end of this year, Russian Permanent Representative to the UN Vasily Nebenzya said, speaking at UN Security Council meeting on conflicts and food security Thursday. According to Nebenzya, Russia "continues to remain a responsible supplier of food and energy." "This year, we expect a record high wheat harvest. In this regard, we can offer 25 million tonnes of grain for export from the port of Novorossiysk starting on August 1 and until the end of this year," the envoy said.