

Daily News Monitor: 21 July 2020

1. Amazon Global Selling programme hits \$2 bn in overall exports from India

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

E-commerce giant Amazon said cumulative exports through Indian sellers on the Amazon Global Selling programme have crossed the \$2 billion milestone. During the India trip of Amazon founder and Chief Executive Jeff Bezos in January, the company had pledged to enable \$10 billion in cumulative exports by 2025 helping Indian businesses grow by selling online worldwide. Amazon Global Selling now helps over 60,000 Indian exporters sell millions of Made-in-India products to customers worldwide through its 15 international websites in countries such as the US, UK and UAE. The other countries include Canada, Mexico, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, The Netherlands, Turkey, Brazil, Japan, Australia and Singapore. In 2019, over 800 of sellers on the programme did business of Rs one crore each in e-commerce exports.

2. Govt makes it a must for e-commerce platforms to display country of origin

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

The rules making it mandatory for e-commerce platforms and market places, like Amazon and Flipkart, to display the country of origin of products will be notified later this week, central government officials said. The display, according to the draft rules for e-commerce companies under the Consumer Protection Act (CPA), that came into force from Monday, will also be applicable for platforms and market places that are registered outside India. This has been introduced in an apparent bid to curb use of Chinese products. “The draft rules for e-commerce firms under the Act will be notified by the end of this week,” Union Consumer Affairs Secretary Leela Nandan told reporters on 20 July. The declaration of the country of origin of products will enable consumers to make an informed decision, she said. Action will be taken on firms for violating the rules according to the provisions of the Act, Nandan added.

3. Oxford coronavirus vaccine trial, manufacturing in India soon

Source: Livemint ([Link](#))

After the coronavirus vaccine being developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University produced positive results in early-stage clinical trials, Serum Institute of India (SII) said it will apply for licence from the Indian regulator to start clinical trials of the shot in a week's time. Serum Institute of India, the largest vaccine manufacturer in the world, is a partner in

the Oxford vaccine project and has been chosen by Oxford and AstraZeneca to manufacture the vaccine once it gets ready. "The trials have shown promising results and we are extremely happy about it. As soon as they grant us permission, we will begin with the trials for the vaccine in India," Serum Institute's Chief Executive Officer Adar Poonawalla said. "In addition, we will soon start manufacturing the vaccine in large volumes."

4. Consumer Protection Act rules for e-retailers to be effective by this weekend

Source: Livemint ([Link](#))

Consumer Protection Act 2019 came into force on 20 July as the Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Ram Vilas Paswan addressed reporters in a virtual press conference. He said, "the rules for prevention of unfair trade practice by e-commerce platforms will also be covered under this Act. However, e-commerce rules will get notified by the end of this week, while rules on direct selling will take some more time." Paswan is hopeful that the law will empower consumers and help them in protecting their rights. The Consumer Affairs Minister emphasised that the entities will face penal action for any non-compliance of the new rules for electronic retailers, including mandatory display of 'country of origin' on their products. The new rules will come into force by the end of this week.

5. E-commerce firms begin offering covid-19 insurance for delivery workforce

Source: Livemint ([Livemint](#))

With coronavirus case count soaring across the country, e-commerce companies such as Flipkart, Zomato, Swiggy, BigBasket, and Amazon have started offering insurance cover and income protection plans for their delivery partners, local vendors, and supply chain associates. Most have purchased medical insurance covers ranging from ₹50,000 to ₹5 lakh for their delivery workforce, both on-the-rolls and freelance staff. "Companies, mostly in the e-commerce sector, who have frontline workers and delivery boys, are now buying insurance plans with sum assured of up to Rs. 5 lakh per person to cover against covid-19 risks. The premium for such products is around ₹2,500," said Sanjay Datta, chief of claims, underwriting and reinsurance at ICICI Lombard General Insurance Co. Ltd.

6. Good news for workers! Won't let states suspend key labour laws, Centre tells panel

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

The attempts by some state governments to bring in sweeping changes in their labour laws, including extension of work time to beyond eight hours a day and suspend key labour laws for three years or more will not be entertained by the Centre, the labour ministry has told the relevant parliamentary standing committee on 20 July. "The labour ministry has said that

extension of working hours beyond eight hours is illegal and can't be allowed to happen. All states will have to adhere to the provisions of the labour codes which would be before Parliament in the monsoon season," BJD MP Bhartruhari Mahatab, who heads the committee, told FE.

7. FTAs have not served India's economy well: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar
Source: The Economic Times ([Link](#))

The free trade agreements (FTAs) that India entered into over the years have not been able to largely serve the country's economy well in terms of building its capacities, though all such pacts are not the same, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on 20 July. The external affairs minister said there are ways of engaging the world which do not necessarily have to be "FTA-centric". Jaishankar made the comments during an online interaction with leading industrialist Sunil Kant Munjal and strategic affairs expert Prof C Raja Mohan on CNBC-TV18. Replying to a question on New Delhi's ties with neighbouring countries, he said it is a complex neighbourhood and India is often like a "punching bag", adding creation of structural linkages could address the problem of "volatility" resulted by domestic politics of the countries.