

DAILY NEWS MONITOR: 22 AUGUST 2022

1. Centre cuts windfall tax on domestic crude

Source: Livemint ([Link](#))

The union government has reduced the windfall tax on sale of locally produced crude oil to ₹13,000 per tonne. For the past two weeks, the sale of crude oil produced in India attracted an additional duty of ₹17,750 per tonne. Centre has also revised the cess on export of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) to ₹2 per litre. For the past two weeks, ATF exports did not attract the cess. The special additional excise duty on export of diesel has been increased from ₹5 to ₹6 per litre, and including a cess it would ₹7 per litre. Export of petrol would continue without the levy of the windfall tax. The new rates are effective from 19 August.

2. L&T to invest \$2.5 billion in green energy push

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

In a bid to cement its presence in clean energy, Larsen & Toubro (L&T) plans to invest up to \$2.5 billion in its green portfolio in the next 3-4 years and supply components to offshore wind farms. Subramanian Sarma, senior executive vice-president (energy) at L&T, said the world was moving towards green energy and it was only natural that the company take a leadership position in this space. “We plan to invest up to \$2-2.5 billion to start with, over the next 3-4 years, depending on how the markets evolve. This would be across green hydrogen, solar and wind projects,” he said.

3. Ikea to open small city outlets along with mega formats in India

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

Swedish furniture retailer IKEA plans to open small city outlets along with its mega format stores in India supported by online channel, tweaking its strategy in the wake of changing consumer behaviour, according to a senior company official. The company, which had in 2013 received government approval for its Rs 10,500 crore investment for opening stores in India, had envisaged setting up 10 furnishing and home-ware stores as well as allied infrastructure in over 10 years in India. Subsequently, it planned to open 15 more stores. So far it has set up three mega format stores in Hyderabad, Navi Mumbai and Bengaluru and two city centres in Mumbai.

4. Rising prices, rupee gain hurt tea exports to Europe, Japan

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

India's tea exports to the traditional markets of Europe and Japan have declined following an increase in tea prices and appreciation of the Indian currency. The impending fear of

recession amid increasing inflationary pressure is also making buyers in Europe cautious about buying tea at higher prices. But even as good quality Indian tea prices have soared 40-50% over the past year, exporters are witnessing more enquiries from newer markets such as Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

5. India in advanced stage of talks with US for procurement of MQ-9B drones

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

India is in an "advanced stage" of negotiations with the US to procure 30 MQ-9B Predator armed drones for over USD 3 billion to crank up its surveillance apparatus along the frontier with China as well as in the Indian Ocean region, people familiar with the developments said on Sunday. The MQ-9B drone is a variant of the MQ-9 "Reaper" which was used to launch a modified version of the Hellfire missile that eliminated al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri in the heart of Kabul last month. Authoritative sources in the defence establishment said talks between New Delhi and Washington are underway for the government-to-government procurement of the General Atomics-built drones, and rejected reports that the deal is off the table.

6. BIMSTEC Secretary-General to visit India next week

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

Tenzin Lekphell, the secretary general of the seven-nation grouping BIMSTEC, will pay a four-day visit to India beginning 22 August to explore ways to take forward the bloc's cooperative agenda. India has been making concerted efforts to make BIMSTEC a vibrant forum for regional cooperation as initiatives under SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) were not moving forward for a variety of reasons. Announcing Lekphell's visit from August 22 to 25, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said he will hold discussions with senior Indian officials on how to take forward cooperation in sync with the mandate of its leaders.