

## Daily News Monitor: 26 October 2020

### **1. Who all can fly abroad and which countries from India? New international travel rules here**

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

Amid coronavirus pandemic, scheduled international passenger flights continue to remain suspended in India since March 23. However, the aviation regulator has permitted special repatriation flights, and India has also formed bilateral air bubbles with various countries under which airlines of both the countries are allowed to operate international flights with certain restrictions. The government has decided to restore with immediate effect all existing visas, except electronic, tourist and medical categories, almost eight months after their suspension following the coronavirus outbreak. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) also announced giving permission to all Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) and Person of Indian Origin (PIO) card holders and all other foreign nationals to visit India for any purpose, except on a tourist visa. India has so far established air bubbles arrangements with Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bahrain, Oman, Canada, France, Germany, Iraq, Japan, Maldives, Nigeria, Qatar, the UAE, Kenya, Ukraine, Bhutan, the UK, and the US.

### **2. PM Modi tells people to remember Vocal for Local while shopping; highlights khadi's growth outside India**

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

Even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 25 October continued to urge people to “exercise patience, observe constraint” amid Covid, he also requested them to give priority to Made in India goods while shopping this festive season. In his monthly radio programme Mann ki Baat, Modi said “when you go shopping, do remember our resolve of ‘Vocal for Local’. While purchasing items from the market, we have to accord priority to local products.” He also highlighted the rising prominence of khadi outside India. “Not only is the popularity of khadi rising it is also being produced in many places of the world.,” he added.

### **3. Govt taking steps to strengthen agriculture sector: PM Modi**

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

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 24 October said his government is taking initiatives to strengthen the agriculture sector in the country so that farmers do not have to face any trouble. His statement comes amid opposition to the new farm laws by farmers’ groups and political parties. Modi was speaking after inaugurating three projects in Gujarat- one each related to agriculture, healthcare and tourism development- via video conference from New Delhi. “In

order to double the farmers' income and to reduce the production cost and their troubles, we will have to increase our efforts with the changing times," he said.

#### **4. All citizens in the country to get free COVID-19 vaccine: Union Minister**

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

Union Minister Pratap Sarangi on 25 October said that all people of the country will be given free COVID vaccine, amidst the demand by opposition parties in the country for it and not only in poll-bound Bihar as announced by the BJP. The BJP announcement of free COVID vaccine for Bihar, where assembly polls begin this week, had kicked up a controversy with the opposition parties tearing into the NDA government alleging that the ruling party was using the pandemic for political reasons. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said the announcement was in order as it was an election manifesto announcement. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced that all people will be provided free of cost vaccines. An estimated ₹500 odd will be spent on vaccination of each person, Sarangi told reporters after addressing a campaign meeting for the November 3 assembly by-poll in Balasore.

#### **5. Amazon wins interim relief; Future-Reliance Retail deal put on hold**

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

Amazon.com has won an interim order against partner Future Group selling its retail business to Reliance Industries (RIL) for Rs 24,713. The order, passed in a Singapore-based arbitration panel on October 25, effectively puts a pause to the Future-RIL deal. Amazon had taken the case to the panel alleging violation of contract by the Kishore Biyani-owned group. As per the deal, Future Retail signed off stake to Reliance Retail Ventures (RRVL) in August 2020. "RRVL has entered into the transaction for acquisition of assets and business of Future Retail under proper legal advice and the rights and obligations are fully enforceable under Indian Law," RRVL said.

#### **6. PM Modi to disburse SVANidhi loans to 300,000 street vendors on Tuesday**

**Source: Hindustan Times ([Link](#))**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi would virtually distribute loans to nearly 300,000 street vendors under the PM SVANidhi Scheme (Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's Atmanirbhar Nidhi Yojana) on 27 October. He would also virtually interact with the beneficiaries, additional chief secretary, information, Navneet Sehgal said on 24 October. Under PM SVANidhi scheme, street vendors can get working capital of up to Rs 10,000 at subsidised rates. Uttar Pradesh has so far received 557,000 applications from vendors, the highest across the country. Sehgal said the state government was working on 'Mission Employment'. "Special effort is on to fill up

vacancies in the government and recruitment process is being expedited. Efforts are also on to generate employment in the private sector and industry,” he said.

### **7. Tata Motors is actively scouting for a partner for passenger vehicle business**

**Source: Hindustan Times ([Link](#))**

Tata Motors is actively scouting for a partner for its passenger vehicle business in order to be ready for growth in the next decade which would see huge investments going into new technologies, regulations, according to a top company official. The auto major is looking for collaboration even as the process to carve out passenger vehicle (PV) business as a separate standalone unit gathers steam. Earlier this year, the auto major's board had approved to form a separate entity which would house the PV business, including the EV vertical, by transferring relevant assets, IPs and employees directly relatable to the vertical for it to be fully functional on a standalone basis.

### **8. India and Philippines commence negotiations on investment treaty**

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

India and the Philippines have commenced negotiations on a new bilateral investment treaty even as there has been a recent upswing in economic engagement that both sides are keen to accelerate. The first round of talks on a new treaty took place last week in a virtual meeting between the Department of Economic Affairs and the Philippines department of trade and industry. “Both sides had exchanged their respective drafts a few years ago after India had decided to work on a new model Bilateral Investment Treaty text. With the recent upswing in economic engagement with the Philippines, both sides are seeking to reach early agreement on a range of initiatives,” an official said.

### **9. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) likely to be attached with department of commerce**

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

Railway ministry has issued a policy to develop goods sheds at small, road side stations via private sector investment, it said 14 October. The move is expected to enhance its terminal capacity through private sector participation by revamping existing goods-sheds as well as setting up of new facilities that the national transporter has not been able to execute due to lack of resources. Indian Railways has been trying to increase the modal share of its freight business, which also requires augmentation of line and terminal capacity. “The policy shall be applicable for setting up of new (green-field) goods-shed, and can also be applied for development of

existing (brown-field) goods-sheds as decided by zonal railway," according to a railway ministry circular.