

## Daily News Monitor: 27 April 2021

### **1. Commerce ministry starts COVID-19 helpdesk to resolve import, export issues**

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

The commerce ministry on 26 April said it has started a COVID-19 helpdesk to help resolve issues of exporters and importers pertaining to international trade such as customs clearance delays and banking matters. The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), an arm of the ministry, took this initiative to monitor the status of exports and imports, and difficulties being faced by trade stakeholders in view of the surge in COVID-19 cases. "DGFT has accordingly operationalised a 'COVID-19 Helpdesk' to support and seek suitable resolutions to issues arising in respect of international trade," the ministry said. It added that the helpdesk would look into issues relating to import and export licensing, customs clearance delays and complexities arising thereon, import/export documentation, and banking matters.

### **2. Indo American Chamber urges US to move quickly on raw materials supply for vaccines**

**Source: The Hindu Business Line ([Link](#))**

The Indo American Chamber of Commerce (IACC) has urged the US authorities to provide raw material required for vaccine production in India. IACC National President Purnachandra Rao Surapaneni in a statement said, "We appeal to the USA government to reciprocate India's goodwill towards USA by accelerating raw materials supply for manufacture of vaccines in India. And both India and USA must go beyond protocol to meet this pandemic challenge to humanity by making available the vaccine doses to those needy in both countries." IACC is the principal bilateral chamber committed to the promotion of Industrial, Economic, Business and Commercial activities between the US and India. It encourages bilateral trade, investment and technology transfer, facilitates business collaborations, joint ventures, marketing tie-ups and strategic alliances through a set of proactive business-oriented initiatives.

### **3. Centre may give free jabs to adults in phase 4 of vaccination drive**

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

The Centre is likely join the states to inoculate those below 45 years at an appropriate time, maybe in the fourth phase of the vaccination drive, by freeing up age restriction on 50% of its procurement quota of doses with sufficient money already allocated for the FY22 budget. The Centre is likely join the states to inoculate those below 45 years at an appropriate time, maybe in the fourth phase of the vaccination drive, by freeing up age restriction on 50% of its

procurement quota of doses with sufficient money already allocated for the FY22 budget. This is likely to significantly reduce the financial burden on states.

#### **4. RBI fixes private bank MD, CEO tenures at 15 years; compliance by Oct 1**

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

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 26 April capped the tenure of managing directors (MDs) and chief executive officers (CEOs) of private banks at 15 years. Promoters or major shareholders, however, cannot hold these posts for more than 12 years, but the RBI can choose to give them a three-year extension under extraordinary circumstances. In its draft guidelines issued last year, the central bank had proposed a maximum of 10 years for promoter shareholders as MD and CEO. According to the RBI's latest guidelines on corporate governance in banks, after the completion of their term, professional MDs & CEOs or whole-time directors will be eligible for re-appointment in the same bank after a minimum gap of three years. During the cooling-off period, they should not be associated with the bank or its group entities in any capacity, either directly or indirectly.

#### **5. India to receive first batch of Russia's Sputnik V covid vaccine on May 1**

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

India will receive a first batch of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine against COVID-19 on May 1, the head of the Russia's sovereign wealth fund, told Reuters. However, he did not specify how many vaccines would be in the first batch or where they would be made. "The first doses will be delivered on May 1," Kirill Dmitriev, said, adding he hoped Russian supplies would help India navigate its way out of the pandemic in time India is battling the second wave of coronavirus that its healthcare system. On Monday, India reported more than 352,000 new COVID-19 cases, a global record for the rise in daily cases for the fifth straight day.

#### **6. Gilead announces steps to expand availability of remdesivir in India**

**Source: The Hindu Business Line ([Link](#))**

American biopharmaceutical company Gilead has announced steps to expand the availability of remdesivir, a key therapeutic medicine used in the treatment of Covid-19 patients, in India. Remdesivir is approved in India for restricted emergency use for the treatment of suspected or laboratory-confirmed Covid-19 in adults and children hospitalised with severe disease. "The recent surge of COVID-19 cases in India is having a devastating impact on communities and has created unprecedented pressure on health systems," Johanna Mercier, chief commercial officer of Gilead Sciences said on Monday. The company announced that it was providing its voluntary licensing partners technical assistance, support for addition of

new local manufacturing facilities and donation of active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) to rapidly scale up the production of remdesivir.

### **7. CEOs of 40 US companies create global task force to help India fight Covid-19**

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

In a show of solidarity, CEOs of some 40 top American companies have come together to create a global task force to mobilise resources to help India fight the battle against Covid-19. A collective initiative of the US-India Business Council of the US Chambers of Commerce, and the US-India Strategic and Partnership Forum and Business Roundtable, the task force during its meeting here on Monday committed to getting 20,000 oxygen concentrators to India in the next few weeks, Deloitte CEO Puneet Renjen said. The new US public-private partnership to provide India critical medical supplies, vaccines, oxygen and other life-saving assistance amid an unprecedented surge in coronavirus cases is called the Global Task Force on Pandemic Response: Mobilizing for India.

### **8. World Health Organization reserves judgement on Indian coronavirus variant**

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

The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned against jumping to conclusions about a new coronavirus variant discovered in India, saying it had not yet classified it as worrying. A WHO spokeswoman said that it was not clear at this point to what extent the variant was responsible for the rapid increase in cases in India in recent months, DPA news agency reported. There are many factors that could have contributed to this, she said. For example, festivals and other events with many participants may have accelerated infections. The British coronavirus variant may also be affecting India's epidemiological situation. In India, more than 350,000 infections were reported within 24 hours on Monday, more than any country has reported in that timespan. With its 1.3 billion inhabitants, India has recorded a total of more than 17 million infections.

### **9. Ministry of Ayush issues Covid guidelines for Ayurveda, Unani practitioners**

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

Responding to the need for fresh guidelines amid the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Ayush has released revised guidelines for Ayurveda and Unani practitioners for COVID-19 patients in home isolation and Ayurveda and Unani preventive measures for self-care. In a media release, the ministry said the main focus of the guidelines is on self-care and home management of COVID-19, as the vast majority of COVID-affected families in the country are forced to negotiate the pandemic out of hospitals. "These guidelines for COVID-

19 patients in home isolation and preventive measures for self-care are based on leads from classical Ayurveda and Unani texts, the outcome of research studies, reports and recommendations of the interdisciplinary committee and which will further strengthen our fight in combating COVID-19 in the emerging situation," the ministry said.