

## Daily News Monitor: 4 January 2021

### **1. New work from home rules in 2021? Govt readies proposal to formalise WFH facility for services sector**

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

The government has proposed to formalise work from home (WFH) facility for the services sector, but left the manufacturing sector outside the ambit of the concept for now. “Subject to conditions of appointment or agreement between employer and workers, employer may allow a worker to work from home for such period or periods as may be determined by the employer,” the labour ministry said in the draft model standing orders for the services sector. However, regulatory parameters for WFH have not been prescribed. Separately, it has also issued draft model standing orders for the manufacturing and the mining sectors seeking comments from stakeholders.

### **2. Serum, Bharat Biotech vaccines get restricted use approval from DCGI**

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

India’s drug regulator on 3 January gave its final approval to the Oxford-AstraZeneca and Bharat Biotech coronavirus vaccines for restricted use in an emergency situation, giving the country its first two shots for immunising its vast population in the coming weeks. While the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine, manufactured by Serum Institute of India (SII), has 70.42 per cent efficacy, the indigenous vaccine from Bharat Biotech does not have efficacy details because the trials are underway. It is doing a study of 25,800 volunteers and around 22,500 participants have been given at least one jab. Both vaccines can be stored at 2-8 degrees Celsius and the companies have been stockpiling them for dispatch once the approvals come.

### **3. Prasar Bharati digital channels grow 100% in 2020, Pak second biggest user**

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

Digital channels of Prasar Bharati have registered more than 100 per cent growth in 2020, with Pakistan being the second highest digital audience for Doordarshan (DD) and All India Radio (AIR), the government said on 3 January. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting said the channels across Doordarshan and Akashvani clocked over a billion digital views and over six billion digital watch minutes in the year. Interestingly during 2020, Pakistan accounted for the second highest digital audience for DD and AIR content after domestic audience from within India, with the United States close behind, the ministry said in a statement. It said during 2020, Prasar Bharati's mobile application 'NewsOnAir' added more

than 2.5 million users with the platform registering over 300 million views. Live Radio streaming broadcasting over 200 streams emerged as the most popular feature, it said.

#### **4. FAU-G made in India PUBG Mobile-rival will launch on January 26; makers confirm game's LAC setting**

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

FAU-G, short for Fearless and United Guards, a 'made in India' mobile game based on 'real-world scenarios' will launch on January 26, nCore Games announced on 3 January. The confirmation was also shared by Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar, who has been actively promoting the game since news that something like it was in development broke cover. FAU-G is currently available for pre-registration on Android. For quick context, FAU-G is a made in India shooter game developed by Bengaluru-based nCore Games that "pays tribute to the heroes of our nation's armed forces." The game was announced shortly after the government of India banned 118 Chinese mobile apps including PUBG Mobile over privacy concerns in September last year.

#### **5. Six states with 33% of India's population have 52% cold-chain points**

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

With official approval accorded to two candidates for emergency use, India has entered the last leg of vaccine rollout for the first phase of inoculation, shifting the focus on to delivery mechanism and infrastructure. And, key to this would be the large network of cold chain points and equipment. While the union ministry had earlier said the country has 28,932 cold chain points and 85,622 equipment, state-wise data accessed by TOI now shows that just six states with only a third of India's population have more than 52% of the cold chain points and nearly 40% of all the equipment. Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh together have 15,072 cold chain points and 33,126 equipment, while in terms of population — 2020 projections — these states together have 46.7 crore of the 137 crore people in India.

#### **6. Govt works on measures to handle business stress**

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

The Centre is working on measures to deal with the stress in the corporate sector once the suspension of the bankruptcy proceedings against defaulters expires on 24 March. The corporate affairs ministry has also not ruled out extending the suspension of bankruptcy proceedings against defaults that occurred during the pandemic and is likely to assess the situation in early March before taking a final call. The ministry is also considering raising the capacity of bankruptcy courts to deal with the rise in petitions, said a government official on

the condition of anonymity. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Act, 2020, which was notified in September, barred fresh bankruptcy action for a year starting 25 March 2020. The defaults during this period will never be placed before a tribunal.

**7. No plans to enter contract farming, won't purchase any agricultural land, says Reliance Industries**

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

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) said on January 4 it has no plans to enter contract or corporate farming and it is committed to empowering farmers. It never bought agricultural land for corporate or contract farming and had no plans to do so either, the conglomerate said in a statement. RIL said it does not purchase food grains directly from farmers and its suppliers buy grains at the Minimum Support Price (MSP). The company had never entered into long-term procurement contracts at low prices. In recent weeks, there have been reports of around 1,500 mobile towers and telecom gear owned by RIL's Jio being vandalised in Punjab, allegedly by farmers protesting against the new farm laws that seek to liberalise the market for agricultural produce and commodities.