

(This document comprises news clips from various media in which Balmer Lawrie is mentioned, news related to GOI and PSEs, and news from the verticals that we do business in. This will be uploaded on intranet and website every Monday.)

## **IMF to keep 2021 global growth forecast at 6%: MD Georgieva**

The International Monetary Fund is estimating this month that global growth for 2021 will be about 6%, the same as forecast in April, but with some countries growing faster and others more slowly, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said on Wednesday. Georgieva, speaking at an online event sponsored by the Peterson Institute for International Economics, said that economic recovery will be held back unless the pace of COVID-19 vaccination picks up, adding that a goal of ending the pandemic by the end of 2022 will not be reached at the current pace. The IMF projected in April that 2021 global growth would hit 6%, a rate unseen since the 1970s, as vaccine availability improves and economies reopen with the help of unprecedented fiscal stimulus, particularly in the United States. But Georgieva said the relative lack of vaccine access in developing countries and the rapid spread of the COVID-19 Delta variant was threatening to slow the recovery's momentum.

*Mint - 21.07.2021*

<https://www.livemint.com/economy/imf-to-keep-2021-global-growth-forecast-at-6-md-georgieva-11626880158534.html>

## **Business activity records V-shaped recovery in Jun**

Business activity in India witnessed a gradual V-shape recovery in June from the low seen in May showed data released so far, according to brokerage firm Nomura. However, a third wave of Covid-19 remained a key risk to economic recovery with slowing vaccination pace and increased mobility in July, the firm said in a note on Monday. The Nomura India Business Resumption Index (NIBRI), which tracked high frequency indicators such as mobility indices and power consumption, accelerated to 96.4 for the week ended July 18, from 94.9 the previous week. "The first flush of conventional monthly data for June suggest a gradual V-shaped recovery from the nadir in May," said Nomura economists Sonal Varma and Aurodeep Nandi in the note. Mobility indicators such as Google's workplace and retail and recreation mobility indices continued to rise

## **ADB downgrades India's FY22 economic growth forecast to 10%**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has downgraded India's economic growth forecast for the current financial year to 10 per cent on Tuesday, from 11 per cent projected earlier this year, mainly on account of the adverse impact of the coronavirus pandemic. India's GDP growth recovered to 1.6 per cent in the last quarter of fiscal year ended March 2021, narrowing contraction in the whole fiscal year from 8 per cent estimated in April to a revised 7.3 per cent, the multilateral funding agency said in the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) Supplement. "Then a second wave of the pandemic induced many state governments to impose strict containment measures. New COVID-19 cases daily peaked at more than 4,00,000 in early May, then fell to a little over 40,000 in early July. "Early indicators show economic activity resuming quickly after containment measures eased.

*Millennium Post - 21.07.2021*

<http://www.millenniumpost.in/business/adb-downgrades-indias-fy22-economic-growth-forecast-to-10-447210>

## **Covid-hit India Inc notches up two-digit growth on low base**

India Inc has notched up strong double-digit growth in both aggregate revenue and net profit in the June quarter, shows a sample of companies surveyed, riding a healthy recovery magnified by the low base of the Covid-hit year-earlier period. The early first-quarter trend shows sustained growth on a low base. Net sales of a sample of 240 companies analysed by ET rose 34.1% year-on-year in the June quarter while net profit rose 67.8%. However, the sample's profitability, as measured by operating margins, took a 290 basis point knock in the quarter due to higher raw material costs and increased wages from the year ago levels. One basis point is one hundredth of a percentage point. "Quarter-end updates from several corporates indicate a healthy revival in June '21 after a subdued April and May," Motilal Oswal

2.4 percentage points (pp) and 5.1pp week-on-week. Meanwhile, India's vaccination pace slowed marginally to 3.6 million doses per day in July from 3.8 million in June, it said. "With mobility continuing to pick up through July and broader vaccination coverage still a quarter away, the key risk to India's growth recovery is the threat of a third wave during this period," Nomura said.

*The Economic Times - 20.07.2021*

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TheEconomicTimes/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=ETKM%2F2021%2F07%2F20&entity=Ar00704&sk=D37651D0&mode=text>

### **Consumption up in June, investments take smaller hit in 2nd wave: Nomura**

Consumption in the country made a strong comeback and investments suffered a relatively smaller hit in June compared with May amid the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, Japanese brokerage firm Nomura has said. "The monthly Nomura India Normalisation Index (NINI) showed that after a shallow dent in May due to the second wave lockdowns, economic conditions in June have recovered to levels similar to April," Nomura said on Tuesday. It expects gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 10.4% in FY22, aided by faster vaccinations from August, steady global growth and easy financial conditions, with a severe third wave of Covid-19 a key downside risk. Investment, the external and industrial sectors have suffered a comparatively smaller hit during the second wave, with much of the impact on consumption and services, Nomura said. Growth indicators did deteriorate in May due to the second wave impact, but the damage has been much lesser compared with the first wave, it said. Also, the growth looks to have rebounded in June with the economic conditions looking similar to the situation in April, when a handful of states had started considering localised lockdowns.

*The Economic Times - 22.07.2021*

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TheEconomicTimes/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=ETKM%2F2021%2F07%2F22&entity=Ar00304&sk=3268E6DD&mode=text>

### **Sebi eases compliance rules for AGM, newspaper ads amid pandemic**

Market regulator Sebi on Thursday granted more time to listed companies for holding annual general meetings and exempted them from giving advertisements in newspapers in the wake of coronavirus pandemic. The regulator has been giving relaxation to listed companies and other market intermediaries as part of efforts to ease their compliance burden. In a circular, the

Financial Services said in a recent report. This is the second consecutive quarter of double-digit sales growth; the bottom line has been strong for the fourth quarter in a row. The low base of last year has boosted the numbers.

*The Economic Times - 26.07.2021*

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/Olive/ODN/TheEconomicTimes/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=ETKM%2F2021%2F07%2F26&entity=Ar00601&sk=C827AA5B&mode=text>

### **Exports rise 45% to \$22.4 bn during July 1-21: Commerce ministry data**

The country's exports grew 45.13 per cent to USD 22.48 billion during July 1-21 on account of healthy growth in sectors such as gems and jewellery, petroleum and engineering, according to the provisional commerce ministry data. Imports also rose 64.82 per cent to USD 31.77 billion in the said period, leaving a trade deficit of USD 9.29 billion. Exports of gems and jewellery, petroleum and engineering during July 1-21 stood at USD 424.5 million, USD 923.33 million and USD 551.4 million, respectively, the data showed. Imports of petroleum, crude and products rose by about 77.5 per cent to USD 1.16 billion. During the period, exports to the US, UAE and Brazil increased by 51 per cent to USD 493.24 million; 127 per cent to USD 373.36 million; and 212 per cent to USD 144.5 million, respectively. Recording positive growth for the seventh consecutive month, exports rose by 48.34 per cent to USD 32.5 billion in June on account of healthy growth in shipments of petroleum products, gems and jewellery, and chemicals, even as the trade deficit aggregated at USD 9.37 billion during the month.

*Business Standard - 23.07.2021*

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/exports-rise-45-to-22-4-bn-during-july-1-21-commerce-ministry-data-121072300949\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/exports-rise-45-to-22-4-bn-during-july-1-21-commerce-ministry-data-121072300949_1.html)

### **India betters ranking in ease of cross-border trade aided by reforms**

India has made significant progress in its ranking in terms of cross-border trade, according to a UN survey that tracked 143 countries on key trade facilitation criteria over two years. The improvement came about due to several reforms undertaken by various departments particularly customs under the Central Board of Indirect Taxes or CBIC. As per

Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has given a relaxation of one month till September 30 to top 100-listed companies by market capitalisation for holding their annual general meeting (AGM) for 2019-20. These companies were required to hold their respective AGMs by August 31. Under the norms, companies are required to hold the AGM within 5 months from the closing of financial year. In addition, Sebi has exempted companies from publication of advertisement in newspapers about their board meetings, financial results and other events till May 15. Sebi has noted that some newspapers are not bringing their print versions for a limited period, some that are still printing are not accepting a e-copy of the information to be published, which is a challenge in ensuring compliance with the regulation.

*Business Insider - 26.07.2021*

<https://www.businessinsider.in/business/news/sebi-eases-compliance-rules-for-agm-newspaper-ads-amid-pandemic/articleshow/74829230.cms>

### **Central govt issues order to implement DA, DR benefit for employees, pensioners from 1st July**

The Ministry of Finance has issued order to implement cabinet decision to implement the revised Dearness Allowance (DA) and Dearness Relief (DR) benefit for the central government employees and pensioners respectively from 1st July 2021. The decision has come as big relief to around 1.12 crore central government employees and pensioners, whose DA and DR benefit was frozen from 1st January 2020 to 30 June 2021. The Department of Expenditure at the Ministry of Finance issued an Office Memorandum (OM) in this regard on Tuesday i.e. 20th July 2021. The OM said that the DA hike announced for 1st January 2020 (4%), 1st July 2020 (3%) and 1st January 2021 (4%) will be subsumed in the revised DA. So, the new DA rate applicable from 1st July 2021 to central government employees will be 28 per cent of their monthly basic salary — leading to rise of 11 per cent from their current DA rate of 17 per cent.

*Mint - 21.07.2021*

<https://www.livemint.com/money/personal-finance/finance-ministry-orders-implementation-of-da-dr-benefit-from-1st-july-11626855572651.html>

### **Sebi consent not mandatory for compounding offences under section 24A of Act: SC**

the latest UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation, India's ranking jumped from 78.49% in 2019 to 90.32% in 2021. The bi-annual survey deals with trade facilitation measures taken by countries. "India has scored 90.32% in United Nation's Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific's (UNESCAP) latest Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation. The Survey hails this as a remarkable jump from 78.49% in 2019," the Union Finance Ministry said in a statement on Friday. The Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation is conducted every two years by UNESCAP. The 2021 survey includes an assessment of 58 trade facilitation measures covered by the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement.

*Business Today - 26.07.2021*

<https://www.businesstoday.in/latest/economy/story/india-betters-ranking-in-ease-of-cross-border-trade-aided-by-reforms-302173-2021-07-23>

### **Fewer new EPF registrations in May**

Despite the provident fund subsidy scheme aimed at incentivising new recruitment, both net and new additions to the subscriber base of the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) fell in May. This is owing in part to the pandemic, but a plateauing of the EPFO subscription base has been evident in recent months after the government's efforts at formalisation of the work force caused a jump in the subscription base of the retirement fund body for a certain period. While there was a net addition of 11,00,145 to the EPFO subscribers' base in April, the number declined to 9,19,772 in May, registering a 16.4% decrease. Similarly, only 5,72,634 new subscribers joined the scheme in May, down 22.8% from 7,41,270 in April, EPFO's latest payroll data showed. The EPFO subscription numbers are often subject to big revisions; a clearer picture of a period emerges after such changes. EPFO arrives at the net number deducting the total of the subscribers' who exited from the sum of new subscribers and those who left earlier but rejoined during the period. In May, the number of subscribers who exited and those who rejoined both fell compared with April, 2021.

*The Financial Express - 21.07.2021*

<https://www.financialexpress.com/money/fewer-new-epf-registrations-in-may/2294414/>

### **Dividend windfall may help stretched govt finances as PSUs' financials strengthen**

The Supreme Court Friday held that the consent of regulator Sebi is not mandatory for compounding offences under section 24A of the Sebi Act but taking views of the expert body is necessary for stability in the securities market as well as investor protection. A bench headed by Justice D Y Chandrachud said though Sebi is not conferred with any authority to veto a decision for proceeding in trial offences, it is a regulatory and prosecuting agency and the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) and the courts must obtain its views since it is an expert body. The bench said it is clear that Sebi's consent cannot be mandatory before SAT or the Court before which the proceeding is pending, for exercising the power of compounding under Section 24A. The apex court, which elucidated some guidelines that SAT or such courts must take into account while adjudicating an application under Section 24A, said however that eliciting of views of Sebi was necessary in the interest of the stability of the securities market and protection of investors.

*Outlook India - 24.07.2021*

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/sebi-consent-not-mandatory-for-compounding-offences-under-section-24a-of-act-sc/2126812>

### **India seeks lower oil prices as high pump prices bite**

India is in talks with crude producers about securing more affordable oil prices after tax-laden pump prices of gasoline and gasoil surged to record highs in Asia's third-largest economy, adding to inflation. India, the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer, ships in over 80% of its oil needs from overseas. "The government has been taking up the issue, bilaterally with crude oil-producing countries as well as with the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) for affordable crude prices for consuming countries like India," junior oil minister Rameswar Teli told lawmakers in a written reply. India's new oil minister Hardeep Singh Puri recently flagged the issue of high oil prices to Saudi Arabia's oil minister and the chief executive of Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. Oil prices in the global market this month hit their highest level in more than two years as the global economy recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, prices fell on Monday after OPEC and other key producing countries agreed on Sunday to increase oil supply from August to cool prices.

*The Economic Times - 20.07.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/india-seeks-lower-oil-prices-as-high-pump-prices-bite/84552898>

The dividend windfall from government's holding in public sector undertakings will provide much needed relief to the treasury hard pressed on account of falling revenue and rising expenses for Covid relief work. According to estimates, with the economy coming back on rails after getting ravaged in the two waves of Covid, dividend income for the government from PSUs may shoot up again in FY22 close to the original budgeted levels for FY21 at over Rs 60,000 crore. Government sources said that most PSUs are performing well and numbers for the first quarter are indicative of rising revenues and profitability. If this is sustained, the government may get higher income as PSUs dividend this year. Though official sources maintained that no numbers had been worked out as yet, it could be close to double of Rs 30,000 crore garnered from roughly two dozen PSUs in FY21.

*Sarkaritel.com - 21.07.2021*

<https://www.sarkaritel.com/dividend-windfall-may-help-stretched-govt-finances-as-psus-financials-strengthen/>

### **Crude import bill rises 190% to \$25 billion in Q1FY22**

The country's crude oil import bill has increased 190.6% year-on-year to \$24.7 billion in Q1FY22 with rising prices of the commodity in the international market and higher procurement volumes with demand for auto fuels returning. The volume of crude oil imported in the quarter, at 51 million tonne, was 14.7% higher than the same period last year. The average price of the Indian basket of crude oil in Q1FY22 was \$68.6 per barrel, against the average rate of \$30.4 per barrel recorded in Q1FY21. The rise in crude prices was mainly supported by global demand recovery and voluntary production cuts until July end from major oil exporting nations. Global crude prices have started to come down after the Opec plus group, on Sunday, agreed to increase crude oil output by 0.4 million barrels per day from August to December end. Following the announcement, crude has corrected from the recent highs of \$77/barrel a week back to the current level of around \$68/barrel.

*The Financial Express - 23.07.2021*

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/crude-import-bill-rises-190-to-25-billion-in-q1fy22/2295051/>

## **India refiners' June crude processing bridled by virus curbs**

Indian refiners' crude throughput in June was little changed from the previous month when it fell to multi-month lows as a severe second wave of coronavirus restrained demand, forcing refiners to reduce runs. Refiners processed 4.50 million barrels per day (18.4 million tonnes) of crude oil in June, provisional government data showed on Friday. This compares with 4.49 million barrels per day (bpd) processed in May, which was the lowest since October 2020. Crude oil imports also fell to a 9-month low in June as refiners curtailed purchases amid higher fuel inventories due to low consumption and renewed lockdowns in the previous two months, data obtained from trade sources showed. Refineries' crude oil throughput last month was still 4.7% higher than June 2020 levels. India's fuel demand also inched higher after slumping to a nine-month low in May as many states in the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer started easing restrictions and mobility picked up. Indian state fuel retailers' gasoline sales also exceeded pre-pandemic levels in the first fortnight of July, preliminary industry data showed last week.

*The Economic Times - 25.07.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/india-refiners-june-crude-processing-bridled-by-virus-curbs/84697396>

## **India's natural gas production jumps 19.5% in June on back of KG-D6**

India's natural gas production jumped 19.5 per cent in June, as Reliance Industries Ltd and its partner BP Plc ramped up output from their eastern offshore KG-D6 block, government data released on Friday showed. India produced 2.77 billion cubic meters of natural gas in June, up from 2.32 bcm in the same month last year, as per the data released by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. This is the fifth straight month of output rising on a year-on-year basis. "Increase in gas production is through contributions from D-34 field of KG-DWN-98/3, which commenced from December 18, 2020 (and) wells from satellite cluster (commenced with effect from April 25, 2021)," it said. Reliance is the operator of block KG-DWN-98/3 or KG-D6 in the Krishna Godavari basin, off the east coast. The firm started producing from the second wave of discoveries in the block in December. D-34 or R-Series was the first field to start, followed by Satellite Cluster. Peak production from R-Cluster will be 12.9 million standard cubic meters per day, according to the operators.

*Business Standard - 23.07.2021*

## **The world's road fuel demand to peak years earlier than expected**

Demand for gasoline and diesel to fuel cars and trucks will peak in 2027 -- four years earlier than expected -- as more fuel-efficient autos and increasing adoption of electric vehicles curb global consumption, according to Bloomberg. Decline in demand for road fuel will be steepest in Europe and the U.S. and an anticipated rise in fuel use in countries such as India and China will fail to materialize, Bloomberg's energy data and analysis firm said in a report published Tuesday. Bloomberg, which forecast just a year ago that road fuel would peak in 2031, sees the change as bringing a significant drop in sales to those regions for fuel producers during the next decade. The accelerated time frame comes as global automakers shift toward less-polluting vehicles while some of the world's largest economies look to impose new rules in a bid to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions in a move away from fossil fuels. The European Union last week unveiled an ambition climate plan that would ban new combustion-engine cars by 2035, while countries including China and the U.S. have been pushing for greater adoption of electric vehicles.

*The Economic Times - 20.07.2021*

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/the-worlds-road-fuel-demand-to-peak-years-earlier-than-expected/articleshow/84594066.cms>

## **LNG imports dip 17 per cent in June as prices soar, local output rises**

Import of liquefied natural gas (LNG) dropped 17% in June over the last year as prices soared and local gas production expanded. LNG prices in the spot market have risen as high as \$14 per metric million British thermal units (mmBtu), curbing demand and prompting many consumers to switch back to cheaper fuel oil. The spot prices had dropped to a record low of \$2 per mmBtu last year but have been above \$10 for the past few months. "Barely any spot cargoes have been imported in the past 2-3 months," said an executive at GAIL, the country's largest gas marketer. Spot and short-term cargoes comprise about half of India's total LNG demand. Currently, prices under long-term contracts are a few dollars lower than the spot market and are being preferred by consumers, industry executives said. However, long-term LNG, too, has become expensive in the past few months as it's mostly linked to crude oil prices that have climbed above \$70 a barrel with a return in global demand amid an artificial supply curb by key producers.

*The Economic Times - 23.07.2021*

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/india-s-natural-gas-production-jumps-19-5-in-june-on-back-of-kg-d6-121072300972\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/india-s-natural-gas-production-jumps-19-5-in-june-on-back-of-kg-d6-121072300972_1.html)

## **Reliance to start gas production from MJ field in Oct-Dec 2022**

Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) will start natural gas production from the MJ field — the third and the last set of discoveries that the company is developing in the eastern offshore KG-D6 block — in the last quarter of 2022 to raise the overall output by about two-thirds. In an investor presentation announcing first-quarter earnings, RIL said it has completed its first offshore installation campaign and a second one would begin in November. "Drilling and completions of wells (are) underway," it said. "First gas expected by Q3 of FY23." Financial year 2023 starts in April 2022 and the third quarter would be October-December 2022. RIL and its partner BP plc of the UK plan to use a floating production system at high-sea in the Bay of Bengal to bring to production the deepest gas discovery in the KG-D6 block. The MJ-1 gas find is located about 2,000 metres directly below the Dhirubhai-1 and 3 (D1 and D3) fields — the first and the largest fields in KG-D6 block. MJ-1 is estimated to hold a minimum of 0.988 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of contingent resources.

*The Telegraph - 26.07.2021*

<https://www.telegraphindia.com/business/reliance-industries-ltd-to-start-gas-production-from-mj-field-in-oct-dec-2022/cid/1823933>

## **Govt's excise collections on petrol, diesel jumps 88% to Rs 3.35 lakh cr**

The union government's tax collections on petrol and diesel jumped by 88 per cent to Rs 3.35 lakh crore in the year to March 31, after excise duty was raised to a record high, the Lok Sabha was informed on Monday. Excise duty on petrol was hiked from Rs 19.98 per litre to Rs 32.9 last year to recoup gain arising from international oil prices plunging to multi-year low as pandemic gulped demand. The same on diesel was raised to Rs 31.8 from Rs 15.83 a litre, according to a written reply to a question given by the Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Rameswar Teli in the Lok Sabha. This led to excise collections on petrol and diesel jumping to Rs 3.35 lakh crore in 2020-21 (April 2020 to March 2021), from Rs 1.78 lakh crore a year back, he said. Collections would have been higher but for fuel sales falling due to

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/lng-imports-dip-17-per-cent-in-june-as-prices-soar-local-output-rises/84669126>

## **India overhauls petroleum reserve policy to boost private interest**

India has decided to commercialise half of its current strategic petroleum reserves (SPRs) as the nation looks to enhance private participation in the building of new storage facilities, two government sources told Reuters on Thursday. The shift in policy was approved this month by the federal cabinet, they said. Allowing commercialisation of SPRs mirrors a model adopted by countries such as Japan and South Korea which allow private lessees, mostly oil majors, to re-export crude. India, the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer, imports over 80% of its oil needs and has built strategic storage at three locations in southern India to store up to 5 million tonnes of oil to protect against supply disruption. Private entities taking storage on lease will be allowed to re-export 1.5 million tonnes of oil stored in the caverns in the case of Indian companies refusing to buy the crude, they said. Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd, a company charged with building of SPRs, will be allowed to sell 1 million tonnes of crude to local buyers, they added. So far Abu Dhabi National Oil Co (ADNOC) has leased 750,000 tonnes of oil storage in the 1.5-million-tonne Mangalore SPR.

*The Economic Times - 23.07.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/india-overhauls-petroleum-reserve-policy-to-boost-private-interest/84664854>

## **Excise duty collections from petroleum products being used in infra development: Nitin Gadkari**

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday said excise duty collected from petroleum products are being used for infrastructure development and other development items. The road transport and highways minister said this in the Lok Sabha while replying to a question on the impact of rising fuel prices on the logistics cost of transportation in the country. "The excise duty rates on petroleum products have been calibrated to generate resources for infrastructure and other development items of expenditure, keeping in view the prevalent fiscal situation," Gadkari said. According to the minister, the logistics cost of transportation through road depends on several factors such as capital cost of the vehicle, salaries,

lockdown and other restrictions imposed to curb the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, which muted economic activity and stalled mobility. In 2018-19, excise collections on petrol and diesel were Rs 2.13 lakh crore.

*The Economic Times - 20.07.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/govts-excise-collections-on-petrol-diesel-jumps-88-to-rs-3-35-lakh-cr/84547618>

### **Goldman cuts Q3 Brent forecast to \$75 a barrel**

Goldman Sachs on Tuesday reduced its forecast for Brent crude oil to \$75 a barrel for the third quarter, \$5 lower than its previous estimate, as a surge in Delta variant COVID-19 cases takes a toll on demand. Oil prices fell \$5 a barrel on Monday in response to fears over the hit to demand from rising Delta coronavirus infections and an OPEC+ agreement to boost output. "Our oil balances are slightly tighter in 2H21 than previously, with an assumed two-month 1 mb/d demand hit from Delta more than offset by OPEC+ slower production ramp-up," Goldman said. The bank now projects a third-quarter deficit of 1.5 million bpd versus 1.9 million bpd forecast previously. Goldman expects Brent oil prices to average \$80 per barrel in the fourth quarter from its previous forecast of \$75 and sees a deficit of 1.7 million bpd in the final quarter of this year.

*The Economic Times - 21.07.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/goldman-cuts-q3-brent-forecast-to-75-a-barrel/84614306>

### **Cabinet eases FDI rules to aid BPCL sale: Sources**

India's federal cabinet approved plans on Thursday to allow 100% foreign direct investment in state-run oil companies in which a strategic stake sale is announced, a move to help privatisation of Bharat Petroleum Corp, two government sources said. "Foreign investment up to 100% under automatic route is allowed in cases where the government has accorded in-principle approval for strategic disinvestment of the PSU (public sector undertaking) engaged in petroleum and natural gas sector," said one of the sources. India so far allows 49% foreign direct investment in state-run oil and gas companies. The government wants to sell its near 53% stake in BPCL, India's second-largest state-run refiner, in this financial year ending in March 2022, as part

insurance, permit tax, maintenance, fuel, toll tax and other miscellaneous expenses. The excise collections on petrol and diesel jumped by 88 per cent to Rs 3.35 lakh crore in the last fiscal ended March 31, 2021, after excise duty was raised to a record high.

*The Economic Times - 23.07.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/excise-duty-collections-from-petroleum-products-being-used-in-infra-development-nitin-gadkari/84665026>

### **Govt may involve other PSUs in PLL, IGL open offer**

The government is examining yet another proposal to see whether other PSU oil promoters of Petronet LNG (PLL) and Indraprastha Gas Ltd. (IGL) could participate in the mandatory open offer to shareholders of these entities triggered post-privatisation of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL). Sources said that along with BPCL, other oil PSUs Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and GAIL India are joint promoters of PLL and IGL. These entities would reduce their shareholding in these companies if only BPCL goes ahead with the open offer post privatisation. This would change the PSU status of IGL and PLL, which the government does not intend to pursue at this juncture. As part of the solution, it is being explored whether IOC, GAIL, ONGC can participate along with BPCL in the open offer triggered post sale of government's 52.98 per cent equity in BPCL.

*The Economic Times - 22.07.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/govt-may-involve-other-psus-in-pll-igl-open-offer/84640869>

### **BPCL, Humsafar join hands for doorstep delivery of diesel in Delhi**

Privatisation-bound Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) has joined hands with Humsafar India - a Delhi-headquartered start-up - for doorstep delivery of diesel in 20-litre jerrycans in the national capital for customers seeking diesel in quantities as low as 20 litres. The doorstep diesel delivery in jerrycans, titled 'Safar20', is expected to benefit small housing societies, malls, hospitals, banks, construction sites, farmers, mobile towers, education institutes along with small industries. Bulk supply of diesel at the doorstep has already started some time back. The new initiative will benefit small requirement customers. BPCL also plans to launch this 20-litre jerrycan service in the hill states of Himachal Pradesh and

of plans to raise 1.75 trillion rupees (\$23.5 billion) from stakes in companies.

*The Economic Times - 23.07.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/cabinet-eases-fdi-rules-to-aid-bpcl-sale-sources/84644716>

Uttarakhand as most resorts hotels, industries and farms are in remote areas and this service which can be delivered on a motorcycle will be of great help to these tourist states.

*The Economic Times - 20.07.2021*

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/bpcl-humsafar-join-hands-for-doorstep-delivery-of-diesel-in-delhi/84563926>

### **31.13 lakh domestic air passengers in June, 47% higher than in May: DGCA**

Around 31.13 lakh domestic passengers travelled by air in June, 47 per cent higher than the 21.15 lakh who travelled in May, the country's aviation regulator said Monday. According to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), 57.25 lakh people had travelled within the country by air in April. The drop in domestic air traffic in May was due to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic that had badly hit the country and its aviation sector. While IndiGo carried 17.02 lakh passengers in June, a 54.7 per cent share of the domestic market, SpiceJet flew 2.81 lakh passengers, accounting for a nine per cent share of the market, according to the data shared by the DGCA. Air India, GO FIRST (previously known as GoAir), Vistara and AirAsia India carried 5.14 lakh, 2.58 lakh, 2.25 lakh and 1.07 lakh passengers, respectively in June, the data showed. The occupancy rate or the load factor of the six major Indian airlines was between 54.4 per cent and 71 per cent in June, it stated.

*The Indian Express - 20.07.2021*

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/air-passengers-domestic-june-dgca-7412517/>