

Daily Economic News Summary: 19 November 2018

1. 5 Issues That'll Dominate The RBI Board Meeting Today

Source: Livemint ([Link](#))

The RBI board meeting on 19 November is a crucial one that may alter the course of relations between the government and the Reserve Bank of India. The bitterness between the finance ministry and India's central bank has reached a new high, with both camps at a standoff. Board members belonging to various parts of the industry are torn between these two camps. At stake is an economy that seems at last to be on the road to a recovery, but which also faces several headwinds. If media reports are any indication, the government and RBI are aware of the dire consequences of a standoff between them. It is time they bury the hatchet so that the economy can go surely on the path of growth.

2. Govt Gives Ministries Autonomy In Hiring PSU Directors Sans PESB Nod

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

The government has provided flexibility to ministries and departments in the selection of functional directors of companies under their administrative control without seeking approval of Public Enterprises Selection Board in a bid to give them autonomy in hiring, sources said. The ministries are also exempted from seeking nod from the nodal agency Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) for undertaking exercise to fill vacancies of managing director or other directors on the boards of companies under their administrative control, they added.

3. ADB Inks Loans Agreements Worth \$574 Million For Various Projects In India

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

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on 16 November signed three loan agreements with the government to provide debt of \$574 million for on-lending, electricity transmission and water supply infrastructure projects. ADB and the government signed three separate loan agreements for USD 300 million, USD 169 million and USD 105 million. As part of the loan agreements, ADB will provide USD 300 million to support lending by India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL).

4. PM Modi Aims Spot In Top 50 In ‘Ease Of Doing Business’ Index, To Chair Meet With India Inc On Monday

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

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair a meeting with top industrialists and policy makers on 19 November to brainstorm on measures required to realise his vision of India breaking into the top 50 in the World Bank’s ease of doing business index, sources said. The meeting ‘Reflections on Ease of Doing Business’ is being organised by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion as the government gears up for India’s ranking to leapfrog on the ‘Doing Business’ index next year and boost the country’s investment attractiveness, the sources told PTI.

5. Australia Takes India To WTO Over Sugar Subsidies

Source: Livemint ([Link](#))

Australia said on 16 November that it was taking legal action against India at the WTO over sugar subsidies, alleging that it caused a “significant downturn” in world prices and hurt Australian producers. Australia alleges that the subsidies, which have seen Indian sugar production leap from an average 20 million tonnes to 35 million tonnes this year, far exceed the level of farmer assistance permitted under WTO rules. The action, known formally as a counter notification, comes after Australia has repeatedly raised the issue with India directly, ABC News reported.

6. WTO: India Opposes Singapore’s Proposal To Exempt Export Curbs On Food For Humanitarian Aid

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

India has objected to a proposal made by Singapore at the World Trade Organization (WTO) to exempt food purchases made for humanitarian purposes from export restrictions arguing that the move could limit its policy space. Jamaica, representing the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP), and Egypt, on behalf of the African Group, also opposed Singapore’s proposal while the EU, New Zealand, Philippines, Canada, Argentina, Costa Rica and Australia supported it, a Geneva-based trade official told *BusinessLine*.

7. CIC Asks RBI To Divulge List Of Wilful Defaulters In 45 Days

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

The Central Information Commission has pulled up the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for its “anti-RTI (Right to Information) policy” and asked the banking regulator to divulge the list of wilful defaulters of loans within 45 days as ordered by the Supreme Court in its 2015 judgement. Information Commissioner M Sridhar Acharyulu had issued the notice on November 2, giving Patel time till November 16 to explain. Acharyulu, who is set to retire on 20 November, heard the matter on 16 November and gave the central bank time till November 26 as sought by it.

8. E-Commerce Policy Soon, Says Suresh Prabhu; Expresses Optimism On Ease Of Doing Business Rankings Next Fiscal

Source: Firstpost ([Link](#))

From e-commerce policy to free trade agreements to government’s decision on Air India, Union Minister for Commerce and Industry and Civil Aviation spoke on a slew of issues at the *Money control Wealth Creator Awards* 2018, in Mumbai on 16 November. Regarding the much-awaited e-commerce policy, Prabhu said the government would release it in the near future. A draft policy was released late August. However, few concerns were raised regarding the draft e-commerce policy following which Prabhu had directed officials to conduct another round of consultation with stakeholders to address them.

9. Narendra Modi to inaugurate Kundali-Manesar-Palwal expressway: Will it help cut pollution, traffic jams in Delhi?

Source: Firstpost ([Link](#))

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Western Peripheral Expressway, popularly known as Kundali-Manesar-Palwal (KMP) expressway, on 19 November in Haryana's Gurugram district. The project, which was originally expected to be completed in 2009, has missed multiple deadlines. Meant to divert heavy polluting vehicles from Delhi, it has taken 15 years to complete the project. The completion of expressway comes at a time when the pollution levels of the capital have skyrocketed and the government authorities are mulling drastic options to cut vehicular traffic including a ban on diesel vehicles on days when air quality becomes severe.