

## DAILY NEWS MONITOR: 18 MAY 2021

### **1. Apollo Hospitals, Dr Reddy's announce vaccination drive with Sputnik V**

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

Apollo Hospitals and Dr Reddy's Laboratories on 17 May said they are collaborating to initiate a COVID-19 vaccination programme in the country with Sputnik V. The first phase of the programme will kick off with vaccinations in Hyderabad on Monday and in Visakhapatnam on Tuesday (May 18) at Apollo facilities. The vaccinations would follow the SOPs as recommended by the government including registration on CoWIN. Apollo Hospitals' Joint Managing Director Sangita Reddy said the healthcare major would receive 10 lakh doses of the COVID-19 vaccine over a period of one month. For the pilot programme, Apollo would receive the Sputnik V vaccines from the first batch of 1.5 lakh doses imported by Dr Reddy's so far. After Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam, the pilot programme will be extended to Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Kolkata, and Pune.

### **2. CoWIN website to be available in Hindi and other regional languages soon**

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

The government is planning to make the CoWIN platform available in Hindi and 14 regional languages by next week, health minister Harsh Vardhan said on 17 May. This follows criticism of the government that CoWIN was a barrier in vaccinating people in rural India. In the 26th meeting of the group of ministers on Covid-19, he said 17 new labs were going to be added to the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortia (Insacog) network to increase the number of samples screened and allow for more spatial analysis. The network is presently served by 10 labs across the country.

### **3. KKR invests \$95 mn in Lenskart, says will help eyewear firm's growth**

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

KKR, a global investment firm, said on 17 May it would invest \$95 million in Lenskart, an online eyewear seller, through a secondary stake acquisition. TPG Growth and TR Capital, which first invested in Lenskart in late 2014, will each divest a portion of their holding in the company, KKR said about the transaction. KKR said it would use its experience working with leading companies to help Lenskart grow in India and abroad. KKR is making its investment from its Asian private equity fund. Avendus Capital advised Lenskart on the transaction. Mode details of the transaction were not disclosed.

#### **4. Credit Suisse to hire 1,000 techies in India**

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

This is part of its vision to establish India as a centre for technology innovation across the bank globally. The hires will comprise developers and engineers who have capabilities in emerging technologies such as cybersecurity, data analytics, cloud, API development, Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence that are anchored in Agile and DevOps delivery methods, to support the bank's digital aspirations. This is a continuation of Credit Suisse's India growth strategy that has seen the bank hire 2,000 IT employees in the last three years. Credit Suisse's goal is to leverage the large pool of skilled technology talent available in India, to further enhance its in-house core capabilities. India now accounts for nearly 25 per cent of the bank's global IT staff, the largest footprint of any Credit Suisse location globally.

#### **5. Eli Lilly inks pact with Natco Pharma for Covid-19 drug baricitinib**

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

Drug firm Eli Lilly on 17 May said it has signed a voluntary licensing agreement with Natco Pharma to further expedite the availability of baricitinib for COVID-19 patients in India. The company has issued an additional royalty-free, non-exclusive voluntary license to Natco Pharma and the Hyderabad-based company will be collaborating with Eli Lilly to further accelerate and expand the availability of baricitinib in India during this pandemic. The move will improve the local treatment options available and will positively impact the lives of people who are currently battling COVID-19 in India, Eli Lilly said in a statement. Earlier, the company had announced signing of six voluntary license agreements with Cipla, Lupin, Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Dr Reddy's, MSN Laboratories and Torrent Pharmaceuticals.

#### **6. WhatsApp privacy policy not conforming to Indian IT laws: Centre to Delhi HC**

**Source: The Indian Express ([Link](#))**

The Centre on 17 May told the Delhi High Court that it views the new privacy policy of WhatsApp as a violation of the Indian Information Technology (IT) law and rules, and sought directions to the social media platform to make it clear whether it was conforming to the same. The central government's claim was made before a bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh during hearing of several pleas challenging WhatsApp's new privacy policy, which according to the platform has come into effect from May 15 and has not been deferred.

**7. Coronavirus second wave hit aggregate demand more than supply, says RBI bulletin**  
Source: The Economic Times ([Link](#))

The Reserve Bank of India said on 17 May that the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in India has had a bigger impact on aggregate demand than on aggregate supply, and it believes the economic slowdown was not as severe as a year ago. India reported a further decline in new coronavirus cases on 17 May but daily deaths remained above 4,000 and experts said the data was unreliable due to a lack of testing in rural areas where the virus is spreading fast. The central bank said although it is "extremely tentative" at this stage, it believes that the loss of momentum is not as severe as at this time a year ago