

DAILY NEWS MONITOR: 28 APRIL 2021

1. Indian real estate sector attracts \$922 m investments in Q1

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

Institutional investments continued the momentum during the first-quarter (Q1) of calendar 2021, registering a 21 per cent growth in volumes at \$922 million (\$763 million), indicating sustained investor interest in the domestic real estate market. According to JLL's Capital Markets Update for Q1 2021, among the cities Hyderabad saw investments with 42 per cent share, followed by Mumbai at 21 per cent. Hyderabad witnessed the highest capital flows of \$384 million (\$100 million), Mumbai \$193 million (\$54 million), Delhi NCR \$107 million (\$171 million), Pune \$7 million (\$8 million), Bengaluru - - (\$385 million) and Chennai (\$35 million). "Investments during the quarter were driven by more activity from funds and closed development stage deals and were further supported by external macroeconomic factors. However, the pandemic surge during the second-half of March 2021 is expected to delay the investment pipeline in the second quarter," revealed JLL's Capital Markets Update.

2. COVID relief: Govt allows biz to verify monthly GST returns through EVC till May 31

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

The government has allowed businesses to verify through electronic verification code monthly GST returns filed till May 31. In a notification, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said any registered person during the period from April 21, 2021, to May 31, 2021, will be allowed to furnish the return in Form GSTR-3B and details of outward supplies in Form GSTR-1 verified through electronic verification code (EVC). Currently, businesses are required to digitally sign the GSTR-3B form while filing the monthly return and paying taxes. However, with offices shut due to the lockdown, businesses are unable to generate a digital signature that has led to delay in filing returns.

3. Over 14,400 hectare area in Andaman & Nicobar becomes first large territory to get organic certification

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

About 14,491 hectare (ha) area in Andaman and Nicobar has been certified as organic, the first large contiguous territory to be done under a government scheme, Agriculture Ministry said on 27 April. After Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) Islands, Lakshadweep and Ladakh are proactively taking steps for the transformation of their traditional organic areas to certified organic, it said. There are traditional areas in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, north-eastern states and tribal belts of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh and desert districts of Rajasthan which

can be transformed to certified organic, it said. The organic certification has been given under the Large Area Certification (LAC) Scheme of the PGS-India (Participatory Guarantee System) certification programme.

4. With \$188 mn boost, Urban Company turns unicorn

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

Urban Company has raised a fresh \$188 million (Rs 1,410.16 crore) in funding from a clutch of investors led by Prosus Ventures (formerly Naspers), according to the company's filings with the Registrar of Companies sourced from business intelligence platform Tofler. The investment is believed to have valued the nearly seven-year old startup at close to \$2 billion, making it the latest entrant to India's unicorn club. The company is believed to have hit a valuation of over \$900 million August 2019 when it raised about \$75 million in a round of funding led by Tiger Global Management. It did not comment on the funding.

5. India's organic food products exports rise 51% to USD 1bn in 2020-21

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

The country's exports of organic food products rose by 51 per cent year-on-year to USD 1 billion (Rs 7,078 crore) in 2020-21, the commerce ministry said on Tuesday. The main goods which recorded healthy growth in exports include oil cake meal, oilseeds, fruit pulps and purees, cereals and millets, spices and condiments, tea, dry fruits, sugar, pulses, coffee, and essential oil. India's organic products have been exported to 58 countries including the USA, European Union, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, Switzerland, Israel, and South Korea. Organic products are currently exported from India only if they are produced, processed, packed, and labelled as per the requirements of the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP).

6. Korean Auto firm Kia unveils a new brand identity in India, drops 'Motor

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

In line with its global strategy, the India arm of South Korean major Kia has dropped 'Motors' from its name. This is to reflect the transition from an automaker to a provider of advanced and eco-friendly mobility solutions, the company said. With a new brand identity and slogan, the fourth-largest car maker in India by sales aims to accelerate growth and strengthen its premium positioning. Close to 60 per cent models that Kia sells in India are top trims of the models, the company claims. Kia has updated its compact SUV Seltos and the subcompact crossover SUV Sonet with the newly stylized logo. The models, with the refashioned logo, will go on sale in the first week of May. It also unveiled a new slogan —

Movement that inspires'. Tae-Jin Park, executive director and chief sales and business strategy officer, said the new identity goes beyond just the logo change and will manifest in various ways, from the kind of product it brings in the future to the way it goes about the business.

7. Registration for Covid vaccines for those above 18 starts at 4 pm today. How to book appointment

Source: Livemint ([Link](#))

All citizens above the age of 18 years can register themselves for getting Covid-19 vaccine jabs starting 4 pm 27 April as the government gears up to launch the third phase of vaccination drive from 1 May. "Registration for 18 plus to begin on <http://cowin.gov.in>, Aarogya Setu App & UMANG App at 4 PM on 28th April. Appointments at State Govt centers & Private centers depending on how many vaccination centers are ready on 1st May for Vaccination of 18 plus, Aarogya Setu informed in a tweet.

8. ADB provided \$1.5-billion fiscal support to India for pandemic response

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

Asian Development Bank (ADB) had provided a fiscal support of \$1.5 billion to India in support of the latter's pandemic response, showed the latest Annual Report (2020) of the multilateral bank released on 27 April. This fiscal support of \$1.5 billion to India formed part of the \$16.1 billion that ADB had specifically set aside for pandemic response in 2020, it noted. In 2020, the ADB had committed a record \$31.6 billion to help Asia and the Pacific swiftly tackle the coronavirus disease outbreak: support a green, sustainable recovery from the pandemic and address long-term development challenges.