



Weekly Precious Metals News Articles: August 28, 2020

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Below is a cross section of relevant news article to the world of Precious Metals:

Markets, Supply & Demand, Investment, and Industrial Applications. Enjoy-

Gold

- **Gold steady as economic worries counter stronger Treasury yields**
 - Fed Chairman Jerome Powell on Thursday said the central bank would adopt an average inflation target - meaning rates are likely to stay low even if inflation rises a bit in future.
<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/08/28/gold-markets-federal-reserve-coronavirus-pandemic-in-focus.html>
- **Gold ends at lowest in a month as potential COVID-19 treatment boosts the stock market**
 - Gold futures fell Monday as global equity markets saw sharp gains fueled by optimism over a potential COVID-19 treatment, pushing prices to its lowest settlement in about a month.
<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/gold-and-silver-prices-move-higher-on-bargain-hunting-2020-08-24>
- **Discounts By India's Physical Gold Dealers Highest In One And Half Months**
 - Discounts of up to \$20 an ounce were offered against official domestic prices including 12.5% import and 3% sales levies versus the \$2 premiums last week.
<https://www.ndtv.com/business/gold-jewellery-price-india-discounts-by-india-physical-gold-dealers-highest-in-one-and-half-months-2283680>
- **Colombia sold two-thirds of its gold weeks before metal hit record high**
 - 'OPTIMIZATION': The central bank sold 67 percent of its gold reserves in June and made a profit of about US\$1.6 billion on its reserves in the first half of the year
<https://www.taipetimes.com/News/biz/archives/2020/08/23/2003742119>
- **Breaking down a cell's barriers with a medicine-carrying nano-submarine**
 - Researchers have designed a gold-coated nanomotor that can be controlled by infrared irradiation for the precise drug delivery in cells.
<https://www.advancedsciencenews.com/breaking-down-a-cells-barriers-with-a-medicine-carrying-nano-submarine/>

Semiconductor Related Articles (impacting Precious Metals electronics):

- **Global Smartphone Shipments Expected to Drop Nearly 10% in 2020, But a Strong 5G Push Is Expected to Bring the Market Back to Growth in 2021, According to IDC**
 - The worldwide smartphone market is forecast to decline 9.5% year over year in 2020 with shipments totaling 1.2 billion units, according to the International Data Corporation (IDC) Worldwide Quarterly Mobile Phone Tracker.
<https://www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=prUS46802520>
- **What's Next For Semis?**
 - The Semico 2020 total semiconductor forecast calls for +3.3% growth in dollars to \$430 billion. Units will decline -2.3%.

- Semiconductors have benefited from the stay-at-home economy and our forecast is back into positive territory. One surprise is the strength of PC, notebook, and tablet upgrades. <https://semiengineering.com/whats-next-for-semis/>
- **Samsung tops smartphone production in Q2 amid pandemic**
 - Samsung led the industry in terms of smartphone production with 55 million units in the April-June period, accounting for 19.2% market share. <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20200825009400320>
- **China Still Buying \$300 Billion of Chips From U.S., Elsewhere**
 - China will import \$300 billion of semiconductors for the third straight year, underscoring how the world's No. 2 economy remains tied to America despite billions invested in local chip-making know-how. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-08-26/china-still-buying-300-billion-of-chips-from-u-s-elsewhere>
- **Intel Delves into African Mineral Supply Chain for Responsible Sourcing**
 - Intel's Supply Chain Sustainability and Manager of Responsible Minerals Program, visited six mines and refining facilities in Rwanda last December. The conflict minerals tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold that the silicon manufacturing industry relies on are mined in this part of Africa, including the DRC. <https://www.environmentalleader.com/2020/08/intel-mineral-supply-chain-sourcing/>
- **Power Amp Wars Begin For 5G**
 - The total GaN RF market will increase from \$740 million to more than \$2 billion by 2025, with a CAGR of 12%, according to Yole.
 - Matt: Although article does not mention GaAs, this bodes well for gold PVD target makers and sputter shield recyclers that serve the electronics sectors. <https://link.edgepilot.com/s/30f63b1e/mhToThsjq0Gri9V0ps9OTQ?u=https://semiengineering.com/power-amp-wars-begin-for-5g/>

Silver

- **Scotiabank to pay over \$127 mln for precious metals price manipulation**
 - Authorities said that over more than eight years, four Scotiabank traders placed thousands of unlawful orders for gold, silver and other metals futures contracts to deceive other traders and benefit their employer. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-bank-of-nova-scotia-settlements/scotiabank-to-pay-over-127-mln-for-precious-metals-price-manipulation-idUSKCN25F26H>
- **Silver Price Daily Forecast – Silver Consolidates Near \$27.00**
 - On Monday, silver rebounded from the nearest support level at \$26.20 & tries to settle near \$27.00. <https://www.fxempire.com/forecasts/article/silver-price-daily-forecast-silver-consolidates-near-27-00-668410>
- **Silver Outshines Gold As Long As Gold Maintains Its Bull Run**
 - Summary: Silver has been outperforming gold in recent months. The news of the EU's plan to allocate a part of its recovery fund towards green energy helped revise up market expectations of the demand for silver. Therefore, as long as gold remains a crowded trade, silver investors will continue to purchase silver and keep silver outshining gold. <https://seekingalpha.com/article/4370618-silver-outshines-gold-long-gold-maintains-bull-run>

Precious Metals Mining:

- **South Africa's Northam Platinum annual earnings more than double**
 - South Africa's Northam Platinum on Friday posted a 150% rise in full-year earnings, fueled by higher metals prices, increased sales revenue and a weaker rand currency.

<https://www.nasdaq.com/articles/south-africas-northam-platinum-annual-earnings-more-than-double-2020-08-28>

- **Sibanye-Stillwater profit jumps on bullion prices**
 - Sibanye-Stillwater on Thursday reported a half-year profit boosted by higher precious metals prices and a weaker rand currency. Production from all the company's operating segments increased year-on-year despite the disruptions posed by the pandemic.
<https://www.mining.com/sibanye-stillwater-profit-boosted-by-bullion-prices/>
- **Implats CEO says Covid-19 will hasten hydrogen economy by two to three years**
 - Implats has not seen a meaningful change in requirements for our metals. While it will take some months (if not years) for the full economic impact of the pandemic to be revealed, market deficits for both palladium and rhodium are likely to persist in our view.
<https://www.miningmx.com/news/platinum/43319-implats-ceo-says-covid-19-has-spiced-up-hydrogen-economy-by-two-to-three-years/?ocid=uxbndlbng>
- **Strong Amplats performance brings forward transfer of community shares**
 - Amplats is set to transfer R2 billion of share value to its labour-sourcing communities a year earlier than expected thanks to the strong performance of its shares.
 - The JSE-listed platinum group metals (PGM) giant said the money was a settlement to Alchemy, its community share scheme that was established in December 2011.
<https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/companies/strong-amplats-performance-brings-forward-transfer-of-community-shares-7e497f3c-f843-4981-9a39-f071e784c4b4>
- **Wheaton Precious Metals: Stellar Performance On High Metals Prices**
 - WPM's results were driven higher due to rising precious metals prices. The market is still good for precious metals due to the continued money printing. We continued to see production declines at many of the company's mines, although two being able to re-open actually did offset this. The company signed a fairly nice deal to receive royalties from a mine in Colombia.
<https://seekingalpha.com/article/4370239-wheaton-precious-metals-stellar-performance-on-high-metals-prices>

E-Waste & Precious Metals Recycle Related:

- **Britain to get first commercial refinery for extracting precious metals from e-waste**
 - Cheshire-based facility will be world's first to use bacteria-based recycling processes
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/aug/22/britain-first-commercial-refinery-extracting-precious-metals-e-waste-mint-innovation>
- **Solar Panels Are Starting to Die, Leaving Behind Toxic Trash**
 - The dilemma: A recycler taking apart a standard 60-cell silicon panel can get about \$3 for the recovered aluminum, copper, and glass. The cost of recycling that panel in the US is between \$12 and \$25—after transportation costs, which “oftentimes equal the cost to recycle.” At the same time, in states that allow it, it typically costs less than a dollar to dump a solar panel in a solid-waste landfill. If we don't mandate recycling, many of the modules will go to landfill.
 - If a solar panel's more valuable components, namely, the silicon and silver, could be separated and purified efficiently, that could improve that cost-to-revenue ratio.
<https://www.wired.com/story/solar-panels-are-starting-to-die-leaving-behind-toxic-trash/>
- **I priced selling my husband's gold wedding ring — again**
 - Over the years, I've written columns about the "sell-your-gold" frenzies. Each time, I priced my husband's wedding band to use as a standard measure to comparison shop. So last week, I turned to my husband once again and said: "I'm going to need your wedding band."
<https://www.freep.com/story/money/personal-finance/susan-tompor/2020/08/18/golds-prices-rise-sell-jewelry/3367019001/>
- **Thefts of catalytic converters from cars increased SIX FOLD last year**
<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/cars/news/thefts-of-catalytic-converters-from-cars-increased-six-fold-last-year/ar-BB18IRBG>

Platinum

- **WPIC: Is Platinum As Good As Gold?**
 - Gold is a special investment asset in high demand due to COVID-19, but has the pandemic made platinum more precious?
https://platinuminvestment.com/files/sixtysecs/WPIC_60seconds_Isplatinumasgoodasgold_08262020.pdf
- **Scientists get atomistic picture of platinum catalyst degradation**
 - Scientists elucidated the movements of the platinum atoms that lead to fuel cell catalyst surface degradation.
<https://phys.org/news/2020-08-scientists-atomistic-picture-platinum-catalyst.html>

Fuel Cells/Hydrogen Economy Related Articles:

- **Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) releases hydrogen report**
 - The IEEFA report analysis of the 50 new green hydrogen projects, the supply is likely to be only 3 million tpy. Yet demand for green hydrogen has been forecast at 8.7 million tpy by 2030, showing an incredible supply shortfall.
<https://www.hydrocarbonengineering.com/special-reports/24082020/ieefa-releases-hydrogen-report/>
- **Siemens Energy to deliver green hydrogen plant in China**
 - 1MW electrolyser will be installed in May 2021
<https://renews.biz/62543/siemens-energy-books-order-for-1mw-green-hydrogen-plant-in-china/>
- **Fuel cells for hydrogen vehicles are becoming longer lasting**
 - Hydrogen vehicles are a rare sight. This is partly because they rely on a large amount of platinum to serve as a catalyst in their fuel cells—about 50 grams.
 - "We have developed a catalyst which, in the laboratory, only needs a fraction of the amount of platinum that current hydrogen fuel cells for cars do. We are approaching the same amount of platinum as needed for a conventional vehicle.
 - Due to the scarcity of platinum, it is impossible to simply replace the world's vehicles with hydrogen models overnight.
<https://phys.org/news/2020-08-fuel-cells-hydrogen-vehicles-longer.html>
- **Cummins Using Hydrogen Technology to Enable Renewable Energy for Public Utilities in Washington with the Largest Electrolyzer in the United States**
 - Expected to be operational in 2021, the new renewable hydrogen facility allows the Douglas County, Washington will manufacture commercial hydrogen using a 5MW PEM electrolysis to harvest hydrogen from water from Wells Dam on the Columbia River. Low cost hydroelectric energy from the Columbia River will enable low cost hydrogen.
<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20200826005455/en/Cummins-Hydrogen-Technology-Enable-Renewable-Energy-Public>
- **WoodMac: 2020s Will Be the 'Decade Of Hydrogen'**
 - In markets like Germany, green hydrogen production costs will equal fossil-fuel-based hydrogen by 2030, new research indicates.
https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/woodmac-2020s-to-be-the-decade-of-hydrogen?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Daily&utm_campaign=GTMDaily

Palladium

- **August Auto Sales to Perk Up, but by How Much?**
 - US new vehicle sales in August are projected 1.3 million units, vs. 1.63 million August 2019. The seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR) of sales is now 14.9 million, vs 17.1 million in August 2019.
<https://www.msn.com/en-us/finance/companies/august-auto-sales-to-perk-up-but-by-how-much/ar-BB18qLrU>
- **LG's transparent OLED displays are on subway windows in China**

- Scientists from the SNS FEFU Laboratory for Thin Film Tech propose to control the functionality of a magnetic nanosystem through the surface roughness of a magnetic film sandwiched between heavy metal and a capping layer.
- Magnetic system consisting of a Pd layer 0-12 nm, covered with a 2-nm-thick Pt layer, and a 1.5 nm thick ferromagnet (CoFeSiB alloy). The multilayer structure covered with MgO, Ta, or Ru..
https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-08/fe-fsa082720.php

PGM Minor Metals (Rhodium, Iridium, Ruthenium)

- **Pt and Ir: Ammonia synthesis goes electric**
 - The outlook for renewables-powered electrochemical ammonia production is beginning to brighten.
 - The main barrier to wide uptake of second-generation ammonia production is no longer the cost of renewable electricity, says MacFarlane. ‘The barrier is the capital cost of the electrolysis cells,’ he says. The best-performing electrodes for water splitting use precious metals (Pt and Ir).
<https://www.chemistryworld.com/features/ammonia-synthesis-goes-electric/4012190.article#/>
- **Ruthenium Non-Volatile Memory R&D: New four-state MTJ architecture may lead to multi-level MRAM**
 - The four-state design uses a structure that is in the form of two crossing ellipses instead of one of the standard magnetic layers of the MTJ. Such a design could be used to create multi-level MRAM which stores data more densely compared to current MRAM memories which only have two states in each MTJ.
 - Matt: This four-state MTJ technology, if proven scalable, dramatically increases the probability of broadscale MRAM deployment.
<https://www.mram-info.com/new-four-state-mtj-architecture-may-lead-multi-level-mram>

BEV / Li-Ion Battery Market News

- **Cobalt Miners News For The Month Of August 2020**
 - Summary: Cobalt spot prices rose strongly for the month and LME cobalt inventory was lower. African supply bottlenecks fuel cobalt price surge.
 - Cobalt market news - Friedland: “The new oil is copper, nickel, cobalt.” Roskill & Fastmarkets forecast cobalt market to remain balanced in H2 2020. China plans to boost cobalt reserves.
 - Cobalt miners news - Huayou temporarily suspends cobalt purchases from two Congo mines. Australian Mines demonstrates ability to produce NCM battery materials.
<https://seekingalpha.com/article/4370474-cobalt-miners-news-for-month-of-august-2020>
- **Elon Musk Is Going to Have a Hard Time Finding Clean Nickel**
 - Recent accidents such as Noirnickel’s diesel spill in Arctic Russia and a burst waste pipeline in Papua New Guinea suggest the industry will struggle to meet Musk’s request for a large quantity of the metal produced in an “efficient” and “environmentally sensitive” way.
 - As Tesla extends manufacturing arms to China and Germany, its billionaire owner may have to rely increasingly on the biggest supplier of nickel: Indonesia. Yet miners there are being criticized for plans to pump waste into the open sea, meaning Musk and other carmakers may need to compromise on sourcing standards while trying to compel the industry to clean up its act.
<https://finance.yahoo.com/news/elon-musk-going-hard-time-040000806.html>
- **Tesla Air? Elon Musk Hints Tesla Could Mass Produce 400 Wh/kg Batteries In 3–4 Years**
 - Elon Musk suggested on Twitter last night that Tesla may be able to mass produce batteries with 50% more energy density in three to four years.
 - Matt: This significance of this is as much in the scalability of materials sourcing as it is on the cost impact \$/kw that this accomplishment would have.

<https://cleantechnica.com/2020/08/25/tesla-air-elon-musk-hints-tesla-could-mass-produce-400-wh-kg-batteries-in-3-4-years/>

- **Where Does Tesla Go From Here?**

- Tesla's improved share price is not just based on the company's outstanding performance; it reflects the markets' growing interest in electric vehicles, to the point that a company like GM is considering spinning off its electric division.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/enriquedans/2020/08/24/where-does-tesla-go-from-here/#6d7208292a08>

- **A new US bill would provide grants to support recycling batteries**

- Battery & Critical Mineral Recycling Act: Legislation aims to incentivize the recycling of rechargeable and electrochemical batteries in the US to meet green energy needs and decrease mineral imports.
- \$150 million/5 years to support research into recycling and to establish a US-wide collection system.

<https://electrek.co/2020/03/19/new-us-bill-grants-recycle-batteries/>

- **Can Lithium Keep Up With the EV Boom?**

- To meet the EV sales and battery manufacturing targets, greater investments in the lithium space are needed. OEMs and miners might have to get creative, but at present, an undersupplied market looks possible.

https://www.globalxetfs.com/can-lithium-keep-up-with-the-ev-boom/?utm_source=LinkedIn&utm_medium=cpc&utm_content=lithium-EV

- **Electric trucks could make a "significant dent" in carbon emissions**

- There's lots of buzz — and a lot of money — around electric trucks these days. California, one of the states, also recently approved mandatory regulations on greatly increasing zero-emissions truck sales between 2024 and 2045.

<https://www.axios.com/electric-trucks-oil-demand-carbon-emissions-9ccc1129-00ae-4b33-bfef-8a8eae15c45d.html>

Regards –