



NFO Period

28<sup>th</sup> Jan 2026 - 11<sup>th</sup> Feb 2026
**SBI MUTUAL FUND**  
 A PARTNER FOR LIFE

Sometimes,  
quality can be  
better than  
quantity.

Presenting,

## SBI Quality Fund

### Built for consistency

Invests in fundamentally strong, proven businesses aiming for steadier performance across market cycles.

### Lower volatility

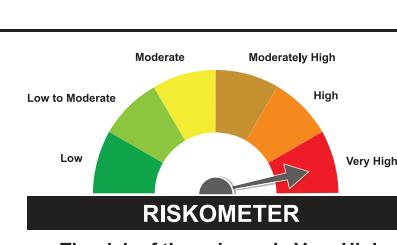
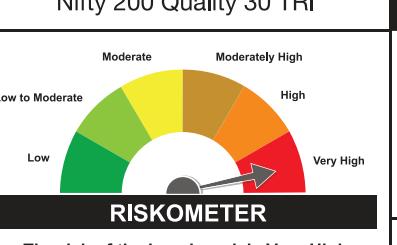
Emphasises on quality balance sheets and disciplined management to help limit downsides in uncertain markets.

### Quality-first approach

Applies a quality lens to identify resilient businesses with a long-term focus.

**SBI**  
**QUALITY FUND**

An open-ended equity scheme following Quality Factor theme

Scheme Riskometer	Benchmark Riskometer Nifty 200 Quality 30 TRI	Product Labelling:
 <b>RISKOMETER</b> The risk of the scheme is Very High	 <b>RISKOMETER</b> The risk of the benchmark is Very High	<b>SBI Quality Fund</b> is suitable for investors who are seeking^ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long term capital appreciation</li> <li>An open ended equity scheme investing in equity and equity related instruments based on the Quality Factor</li> </ul> <p><small>^Investors should consult their financial advisors if in doubt about whether the product is suitable for them.</small></p>

The above product labelling assigned during the New Fund Offer (NFO) is based on internal assessment of the scheme characteristics or model portfolio and the same may vary post NFO when the actual investments are made.

Contact your MFD/RIA | Visit: [www.sbmif.com](http://www.sbmif.com) | Follow us:

Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

# What Anthropic's latest launch means for India's IT industry

bl.explainer

Sanjana B  
Bengaluru

Anthropic's launch of new automation plug-ins for its Claude Cowork agent has rattled global technology markets, triggering a sell-off in software stocks and intensifying investor concerns that advanced AI could disrupt labour-heavy outsourcing models, with India's IT services sector emerging as one of the most exposed.

## What did Anthropic announce?

Anthropic on Friday launched plug-ins for its Claude Cowork agent to automate tasks across sales, productivity, product management, marketing, legal, finance, enterprise search, data, customer support, Bio Research, among others. Essentially, the plug-ins are built to automate specialised tasks across different functions within an organisation.

For example, Anthropic's legal plug-in is said to speed up contract review, NDA triage and compliance work-



**TECH SHOCK.** Experts observed that Anthropic's AI automation tools stoked global fears that advanced AI could quickly replace a range of outsourced services

flows for in-house legal teams. The Sales plug-in helps with prospecting, outreach, pipeline management, call preparation and deal strategy. Enterprise Search treats a company's tools as one searchable knowledge base; one query searches chat, email, cloud storage, wikis, project management, CRM and ticketing simultaneously.

Customer Support turns Claude into a support co-pilot; it triages and prioritises support tickets, researches queries across various sources and drafts tailored responses, while packaging escalations with full context and converting resolved is-

sues into knowledge base articles to reduce future ticket volumes.

## How did markets react to the announcement?

The Nifty IT index fell 6.6 per cent on the day, led by sharp losses in major stocks. Infosys dropped 7.99 per cent, Coforge 7.6 per cent, TCS 7.01 per cent, LTIM 6.52 per cent, HCLTech 4.85 per cent and Wipro 4.51 per cent.

The sharp sell-off in US tech stocks spilled over to Indian technology firms, dragging down their American Depository Receipts (ADRs). Infosys ADR declined 5.56 per cent on Tuesday,

while Wipro ADR fell 4.83 per cent.

## Why did the launch spook investors?

Experts observed that Anthropic's AI automation tools stoked global fears that advanced AI could quickly replace a range of outsourced services.

The launch sparked a sharp sell-off in global software stocks, with investors fearing that foundation models like Claude could bypass SaaS platforms and IT service providers.

## Why is India's IT sector vulnerable to this shift?

The negative sentiment spilled over to Indian IT stocks since IT services companies have traditionally handled such work. Anthropic's latest launch has amplified worries around rising competition, weaker demand for conventional outsourcing and margin pressure across software companies.

Markets are concerned that it could erode the core business of data and information services firms.

Indian IT companies have traditionally been services-

led rather than product-driven, with limited differentiation among peers.

The AI and automation wave is undermining the labour-intensive model these companies rely on, automating large parts of the work with far less human involvement. The prevailing view has shifted from AI being a tool that supports software companies to one where AI is seen as a potential replacement for them.

## What other areas are likely to be impacted?

The launch has also heightened fears across the legal ecosystem, hurting stocks of legal software and publishing companies. While AI start-ups like Harvey AI and Legora have attracted significant investor interest for automating legal work, Anthropic stands apart as a model builder that can customise AI for industry-specific needs.

This allows it to disrupt traditional legal data providers and AI start-ups that rely on its models, fuelling concerns that it could erode the core businesses of legal software and information services firms.

They listed four essential conditions for the foreign company.

"First is that the foreign company must be notified. Second, the data centre company in India from which services are taken must be an Indian company. Third, the data centre must be notified by MeitY. Fourth, the services by the foreign company to Indian users must be provided through an Indian reseller entity, being an Indian company," a source said.

"The profits on the income from domestic economic activities, that is, data centre services to the global entity by the resident data centre, and resale of cloud services to Indian customers by the resident reseller entity, will remain taxable as any other domestic company," another source said while clarifying where the Indian data centre is a related entity of foreign company (cost plus centre), safe harbour margin of 15 per cent is provided. The treatment of foreign cloud service entities is the same whether the data centre is Indian owned or a subsidiary of the global entity.

"So, there is a complete level playing field. Now, Indian data centres can confidently offer their services to global cloud entities, without the latter perceiving any tax risk if they use Indian data centres," the first source said.

from a national security perspective) should be 100 per cent reserved for Indian Cloud providers only. This allows Indian Cloud providers to increase their capacity and compete, else entire nations risk becoming a reseller economy," said Abhishek Bhatt, Secretary General of Bharat Digital Infrastructure Association, an industry body representing local data centre players.

"The profits on the income from domestic economic activities, that is, data centre services to the global entity by the resident data centre, and resale of cloud services to Indian customers by the resident reseller entity, will remain taxable as any other domestic company," another source said while clarifying where the Indian data centre is a related entity of foreign company (cost plus centre), safe harbour margin of 15 per cent is provided. The treatment of foreign cloud service entities is the same whether the data centre is Indian owned or a subsidiary of the global entity.

"So, there is a complete level playing field. Now, Indian data centres can confidently offer their services to global cloud entities, without the latter perceiving any tax risk if they use Indian data centres," the first source said.

## WHEN THE SUN IS OUT



**RELIEF FROM COLD.** Sheep are herded across a snow-covered field on a sunny day following a fresh spell of snowfall in Anantnag. Night temperatures in Gulmarg and Pahalgam in Kashmir fell several degrees below freezing point, while the rest of the Valley enjoyed a warmer night, officials said. Gulmarg recorded a low of -8 degrees Celsius, marking a drop of 2.7 degrees compared to Tuesday night. The rise in temperatures marks the transition into the 20-day 'Chillai Khurd' (small cold), which began on Saturday, following the end of 'Chillai Kalan'.

## SEBI moves to simplify 'fit and proper' norms for intermediaries

Akshata Gorde  
Mumbai

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed a sweeping overhaul of the 'fit and proper person' framework governing market intermediaries, seeking to ease compliance pressures while retaining safeguards around integrity and conduct.

The regulator proposed removing automatic disqualifications triggered merely by the filing of criminal complaints, FIRs or chargesheets in economic offence cases, arguing that such steps represent only the initiation of legal proceedings and should not, by themselves, bar individuals or entities from operating in the securities market.

Treating preliminary legal actions as rule-based disqualifications may run counter to the principle of "innocent until proven guilty" and could result in irreversible consequences such as forced exits of key personnel or divestment by controlling shareholders, even if the person is later acquitted, SEBI said in a draft paper on Wednesday, inviting public comments by February 25.

Instead, the regulator has proposed relying more on the principle-based assess-



ment of integrity, reputation and conduct, allowing it to exercise discretion on a case-by-case basis where criminal proceedings are of a serious or egregious nature.

SEBI also plans to tighten the conviction threshold by explicitly including economic offences and violations of securities laws within the disqualification framework, in addition to offences involving moral turpitude, aligning the norms with those applicable to stock exchanges, clearing corporations and depositories.

**COOLING RELIEF** SEBI plans to reduce the cooling-off period for fresh registration applications, following the issuance of a show-cause notice from one year to six months, where proceedings relate to regulatory directions.

The default five-year prohibition that automatically applies when an order does not specify a time bar may also be removed.

**IBC-RELATED RELIEF** The regulator also proposed easing norms linked to insolvency proceedings. Currently, intermediaries face disqualification once winding-up proceedings are initiated. This trigger may apply only when a wind-up or

## There is no AI bubble, says BlackRock CEO Larry Fink

Our Bureau  
Mumbai

There is a need to rapidly expand artificial intelligence (AI) opportunities, said Larry Fink, Chief Executive Officer, BlackRock Inc, adding, "I would first state that I don't believe there's an AI bubble. I believe the greatest risk we have is if we don't continue to invest, China will win."

He pointed out that there may be bankruptcies and failures among AI models, "but the opportunity that companies have in utilising AI is going to be present in everything we do."

He cited Anthropic's AI tool 'Claude', "now it's a new model, which is going to be threatening for some businesses, but it's going to be an opportunity for other businesses."

AI will be disruptive for some industries "but it's also going to be very advancing." The key for AI to be really successful in every society



**OMNIPRESENT OPPORTUNITY.** Larry Fink, Chairman & CEO, BlackRock Inc (left), at a fireside chat on artificial intelligence with Mukesh Ambani, CMD, Reliance Industries

"we need to make sure that AI broadens economic success, and it doesn't narrow economic success."

## INDIA'S ERA

Fink, who was in Mumbai to attend a Jio BlackRock event along with Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani, said this was the era for India and would be so for the next 20-25 years. "If you believe in the era of India, which I believe in, we need to get more people investing

alongside the growth of a country. And that's the role of the capital markets. That's the role of what we can be doing together. The focus should be on how we live, how we grow, how we educate ourselves. Those are subsets of the era of India, and the opportunity to be an investor alongside the growth of India."

Blackrock Inc is the world's largest asset manager with assets under management of around \$14 trillion, of which over half are in equities and just under a fourth in fixed income.

It established its presence in India in 2008 through a joint venture with the DSP group, exited that and then re-entered the mutual fund sector in 2023 in partnership with Jio Financial Services.

Stressing on the India growth story, Fink said he believed that the fundamental foundation of any country "is having the domestic economy being built

on the back of retirement savings, which can be invested".

India, he said, would grow at 8-12 per cent over the next 10-plus years "and that's a place where I personally want to invest in."

**DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH** Ambani said sustained double-digit growth for India was not ruled out, with stable leadership and investments in infrastructure.

In interactions with startups "we see 100 new Reliances in terms of where they are going and the aspiration".

The world is taking notice of India, said Ambani, adding that every month Reliance was getting partnership opportunities from 3-4 global majors.

"And I have always believed that for profit and for prosperity, nobody needs an invitation. That is why we are attracting all the people, and I think this is very, very sustainable over decades to come," he said.

## Agri, dairy interests secure in US deal: Goyal

Amiti Sen  
New Delhi

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal informed Parliament on Wednesday that India's sensitivities in the fertilizer and agriculture sectors, including dairy, have been secured in the India-US Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

The deal will be announced after the processes for finalisation of paperwork are done, he said. "Keeping the important interests of both sides in mind, it is natural that both sides would want to safeguard their respective important and sensitive areas and ensure the best possible results.

During the discussions, the Indian side was successful in safeguarding the interests of its sensitive sectors, especially agriculture and dairy," Goyal said.

This agreement will provide new opportunities to labour-intensive sectors, small and medium businessmen, MSMEs, industrialists, skilled workers and industries, the Minister noted.

"This will simplify the reach to advanced technologies and help in realising India's 'Make in India for the World', 'Design in India for the World' and 'Innovate in India for the World,'" he said.

On Monday, Trump announced lowering of tariffs on India to 18 per cent, adding that New Delhi would, likewise, move forward to re-



Union Minister Piyush Goyal in the Lok Sabha ANI

duce tariffs and non-tariff barriers on the US, to zero. This drew cheer from Indian exporters, especially in labour-intensive sectors, as the US was India's largest export market in FY 25 with exports at \$86.5 billion.

On the next course of action, the Minister said both sides will work together to fulfil important processes related to the trade agreement and finalise the paperwork so that benefit can be taken of its full capability at the earliest. "The details of the agreement will be announced soon after the conclusion of these processes," he said.

While Goyal did not directly refute Trump's claim that India agreed to stop Russian oil purchases, he emphasised that the government had publicly said several times that safeguarding the energy requirements of 140 crore Indians is its biggest priority. "In line with an objective market, circumstances and changing geopolitical situation, diversifying energy sources is the basis of our work style," he said.

The CCI also noted that by cancelling thousands of flights that constitute a significant portion of the scheduled capacity, IndiGo effectively withdrew its service from the market, creating an artificial scarcity, limiting consumer access to air travel during peak demand.

## CCI orders probe against IndiGo for 'prima facie abusing dominant position'

Our Bureau  
Mumbai

The Competition Commission of India has, *prima facie*, held IndiGo responsible for abuse of its dominant position in the domestic air travel sector and ordered an investigation against the airline.

The anti-trust regulator has directed its Directorate-General to investigate and submit a report in 90 days.

The order follows a preliminary inquiry following mass disruption of IndiGo's flights last December, which impacted lakhs of passengers.

"It is observed that passengers who had booked tickets were left with no real choice but to accept last-minute cancellations. Further, passengers were left to seek alternatives on their own, at significantly higher prices," the CCI said in its order on Wednesday.

It noted that given IndiGo's dominant position, consumers were effectively locked in and lacked viable alternatives, which appears to be in violation of relevant provisions of law.

The CCI also noted that by cancelling thousands of flights that constitute a significant portion of the scheduled capacity, IndiGo effectively withdrew its service from the market, creating an artificial scarcity, limiting consumer access to air travel during peak demand.

The impact of such conduct by a dominant enterprise may be viewed as restricting the provisions of services under the competition law.

The CCI carried out a preliminary inquiry following a passenger complaint.

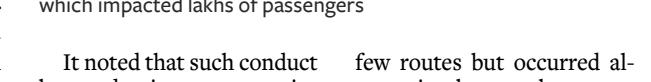
To the CCI's queries, IndiGo said issues raised in the complaint do not fall within the jurisdiction of the CCI and asked that no further action be taken in the matter. It further argued that under aviation law and rules, the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation had the exclusive jurisdiction to adjudicate on issues raised in the complaint.

It further contended that any residual individual consumer grievances relating to service outcomes, such as flight cancellations or consequential pricing concerns, are appropriately redressed under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, and do not give rise to a cause of action under the competition Law.

The CCI observed that the disruptions of IndiGo flights were not confined to one or a few routes but occurred almost simultaneously across a wide network of domestic origin-destination pairs. Cancellations and delays affected passengers flying between many different origins and destinations at the same time, creating a system-wide capacity shock. In such a situation, the harm is no longer confined to this route versus that route; rather, the conduct constrains the overall availability of consumers to use domestic air travel as a mode of transport, regardless of which specific pair of cities they want to fly between.

The impact was felt across multiple routes and hubs, and passengers on different routes were all affected by a common constraint. Hence, it is appropriate to treat the relevant product market as "market for domestic air passenger transport services" and to define the relevant geographic market as the whole of India. Hence, the relevant market appears to be "the market for domestic air passenger transport services in India".

The CCI observed that the disruptions of IndiGo flights were not confined to one or a



**UNDER THE LENS.** The order follows a preliminary inquiry following the mass disruption of IndiGo's flights last December, which impacted lakhs of passengers

few routes but occurred almost simultaneously across a wide network of domestic origin-destination pairs. Cancellations and delays affected passengers flying between many different origins and destinations at the same time, creating a system-wide capacity shock. In such a situation, the harm is no longer confined to this route versus that route; rather, the conduct constrains the overall availability of consumers to use domestic air travel as a mode of transport, regardless of which specific pair of cities they want to fly between.

The impact was felt across multiple routes and hubs, and passengers on different routes were all affected by a common constraint. Hence, it is appropriate to treat the relevant product market as "market for domestic air passenger transport services" and to define the relevant geographic market as the whole of India. Hence, the relevant market appears to be "the market for domestic air passenger transport services in India".

CM YK

J CH-CHE



**New Labour Codes have  
redefined Employer  
obligations on Gratuity and  
Leave Encashment.  
Our expertise will ensure  
the compliance becomes  
Simple, Reliable, and  
Future - ready.**



Presenting

## LIC's GROUP SCHEMES

New Group Gratuity Cash  
Accumulation Plan - UIN: 512N281V04

New Group Leave Encashment  
Plan - UIN: 512N282V04

New Group Superannuation Cash  
Accumulation Plan - UIN: 512N274V03

Group Post Retirement Medical  
Benefit Scheme - UIN: 512N352V01

Salient  
Features:

Scientific funding Attractive Returns Benefit of insurance protection

Income Tax Benefits as per Rules Multiple options for annuity payments

For more details, email to [groupbusiness@licindia.com](mailto:groupbusiness@licindia.com) or contact your Agent/nearest LIC P&GS unit

LIC/PGS/P1/2025-26/31/Eng



भारतीय जीवन बीमा नियम  
LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

Har Pal Aapke Saath

Call Centre Services (022) 6827 6827

Visit: [www.licindia.in](http://www.licindia.in)

Follow us : LIC India Forever | IRDAI Regn No.: 512

BEWARE OF SPURIOUS PHONE CALLS AND FICTITIOUS / FRAUDULENT OFFERS, IRDAI or its officials do not involve in any activities of insurance business like selling insurance policies, announcing bonus or investment of premiums, refund of amounts. Policyholders or the prospects receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint. For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.

CMYK

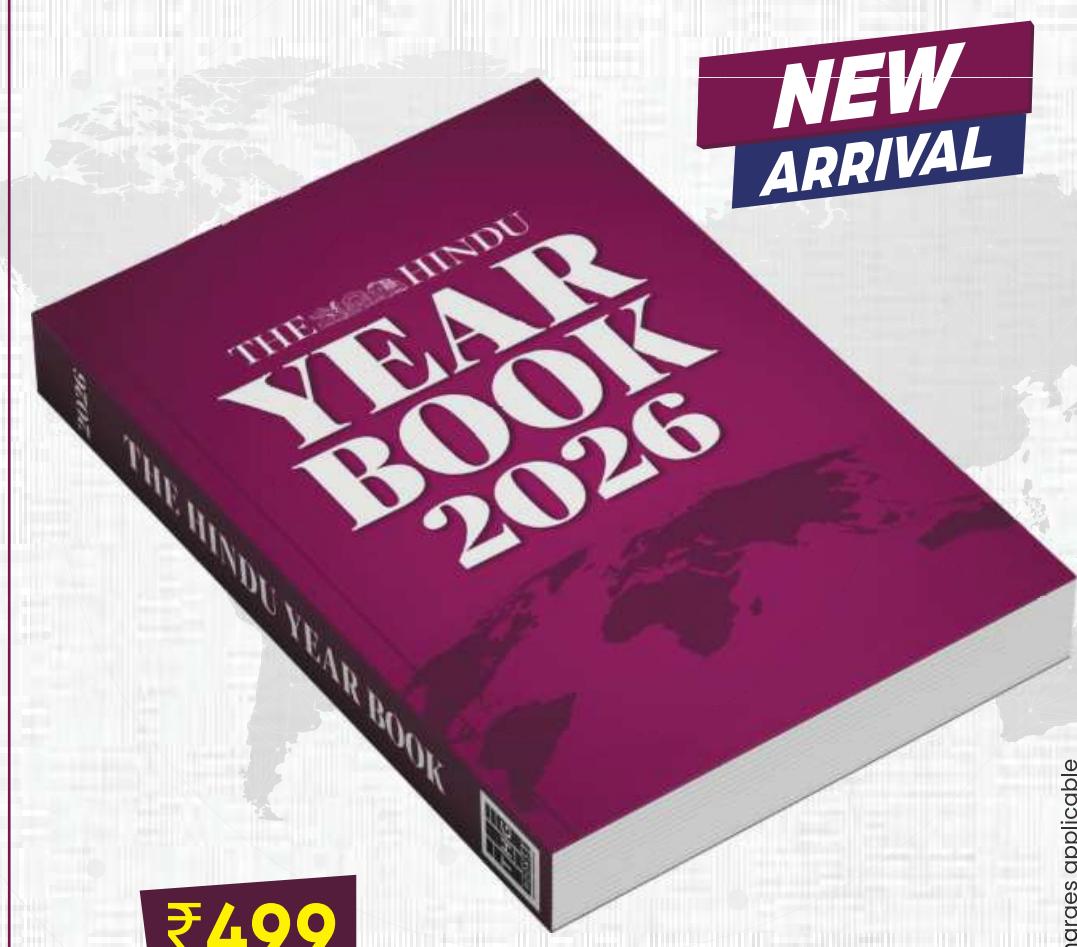


A SPECIAL PUBLICATION  
FROM THE HINDU GROUP

# The Hindu Year Book 2026

provides chronological, contextual, and factual information on the key events that occupied public attention **between January and December 2025.**

It features a Calendar of Events with Profiles of People, and Data on India and the World. Expert essays cover critical topics such as like AI and the Indus Waters Treaty, while dedicated sections analyse global governance, economy, and sports through evocative photographs and factual reporting.



**DATES 2025 | PERSONALITIES  
OBITUARIES | OVERVIEW  
DATA 2025 | COMMENTARY  
SPECIAL ESSAYS**

\*Terms and Conditions apply | Shipping charges applicable



**BOOK  
YOUR  
COPY**



To avail this limited period offer, scan QR code or visit  
[publications.thehindugroup.com](http://publications.thehindugroup.com)

For bulk booking and enquiries,  
contact us at [bookstore@thehindu.co.in](mailto:bookstore@thehindu.co.in) or **1800 102 1878**

# thehindu businessline.

**IN FOCUS**

	LATEST	CHANGE
Nifty 50	25776.00	+48.45
P/E Ratio (Sensex)	23.05	0
US Dollar (in ₹)	90.43	+0.17
Gold Std 10 gm (in ₹)	155998.00	+5076
Silver 1 kg (in ₹)	282462.00	+18497

**REFORM DRIVE.**

The **SASCI scheme** may see new reform measures to strengthen telecom networks: Expenditure Secretary V. Vualnam p5

**TECHNOPHILE.**

**Lenovo Legion Pro 7** delivers gaming performance, stellar display, build & power demands p4

BENGALURU - CHENNAI - COIMBATORE - HUBBALLI - HYDERABAD - KOCHI - KOLKATA - MADURAI - MALAPPURAM - MANGALURU - MUMBAI - NOIDA - THIRUVANANTHAPURAM - TIRUCHIRAPPALLI - VIJAYAWADA - VISAKHAPATNAM

Regd. TN/ARD/14/2012-2014, RNI No. 55320/94

QUICKLY.

**EARNINGS SURGE**

Cognizant Tech Q4 net up 18.7% on large deal wins



**Chennai:** Cognizant Technology Solutions on Wednesday beat its own revenue guidance in the fourth quarter ended December and for the full year 2025. The IT major now expects to clock 4-6.5 per cent growth in constant currency terms, a range lower than the 6.4 per cent growth it posted in 2025. The company follows calendar year accounting. p2

**EASING LIQUIDITY**

Banks park over ₹3 lakh cr at the RBI's SDF window

**Mumbai:** The amount parked by banks at the RBI's Standing Deposit Facility surpassed the ₹3-lakh-crore mark over the last couple of days, indicating easing of liquidity conditions in the wake of the RBI's infusion measures and a pick up in government spending. The extent of surplus liquidity can be gauged from the fact that banks deployed ₹3,64,627 crore on February 3 and ₹3,20,805 crore on February 2 at the RBI's SDF window for a day. p10

## Tech stocks tank as Anthropic AI tools raise questions on SaaS model

**WORRY LINES.** Investors worry about impact on legacy firms; IT industry leaders see gradual, evolving impact

**Sanjana B**  
Bengaluru

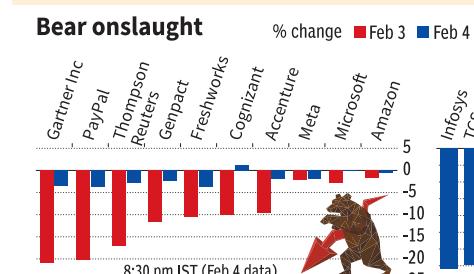
Fears that agentic AI tools, such as Anthropic's Claude Cowork plug-ins, could automate core enterprise processes and disrupt the traditional SaaS model triggered a sharp sell-off in global tech stocks, including US software majors, and wiped out over ₹2 lakh crore in market capitalisation of Indian IT firms. But Indian industry leaders argue the AI impact will be evolutionary rather than disruptive in the near term.

On Tuesday, Freshworks shares closed at ₹9,53, down 10.6 per cent from the previous day's close. Salesforce shares closed at ₹196.38, down 6.85 per cent, while ServiceNow went down 6.97 per cent to ₹109.77.

**NIFTY IT INDEX SINKS**  
The Nifty IT Index fell nearly 6 per cent on Wednesday, driven by rising concerns over AI's impact after Anthropic launched new workplace productivity tools. This marked the index's worst performance in six years. The development also sparked a sharp overnight sell-off in US tech

**Future tense**

**Anthropic launch:** Claude Cowork plug-ins will automate specialised tasks across enterprise functions  
**Core functions covered:** Sales, legal, customer support, enterprise search, marketing, finance, product, data and bio research  
**Key capabilities:** Contract review, sales pipeline management, ticket triage, and unified search across internal tools  
**Impact:** Positions Claude as a cross-functional AI co-pilot for workplace productivity



stocks, with spillover effects across European and Asian markets.

**GAME-CHANGER**  
Palantir's CTO Shyam Sankar, in a recent earnings call, said the company's AI-powered forward-deployed engineer (AI FDE) can reduce the time to complete "complex SAP ERP migrations" to just two weeks, which in large enterprises earlier would typically take two years. This sparked investor concerns

over the long-term viability of the SaaS business model.

Industry veteran Ashok Soota, Chairman and Chief Mentor of Happiest Minds Technologies, noted that these developments represent a significant opportunity for the company. "As an AI First company, we view Anthropic's innovation as a catalyst for growth, reinforcing the role of IT services in guiding organisations through technological transformation. There is excitement

around AI platforms and plug-ins since they drastically lower the entry barrier for creating software. However, this does not reduce the need for companies like ours and only enhances it," he said.

However, Pareekh Jain, Founder and CEO of EIIR Trend, a research and forecast firm, noted that the recent sell-off was primarily triggered by concerns around global SaaS companies as agentic AI challenges the traditional seat-based, mono-

With inputs from Rohan Das in Chennai

lithic software model. With agents building and operating software quickly, investors fear SaaS will be reinvented. Anthropic's strong performance with its legal plug-in served as a proof point, raising expectations that similar plug-ins could disrupt other enterprise functions.

Anthropic and similar players lack legacy businesses, allowing them to push agentic AI rapidly. In contrast, while legacy firms like Microsoft and Salesforce and Indian IT services players are developing agents alongside existing businesses, adoption and replacement will be gradual.

"The fallout extended to Indian IT stocks because of their dependence on SaaS clients. While demand for IT services will continue, particularly for integrating evolving software, hardware, and AI stacks, pressure could emerge if SaaS spending slows or clients demand lower billing as agentic tools automate more work. Over time, enterprises may scrutinise service providers on productivity and headcount efficiency. This may force them to adapt at a quicker pace," he said.

Goyal defends energy sovereignty even as US says no Russia oil flow



**Amiti Sen**  
New Delhi

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, in his statement to Parliament on the India-US trade deal on Wednesday, emphasised that ensuring the energy security of Indians was the "supreme priority" of the government.

The White House, however, is insisting that India had committed to halt purchase of Russian oil as part of the India-US trade deal that the negotiating teams will now "finish papering".

"Ensuring the energy security of 1.4 billion Indians is the supreme priority of the government. Diversifying our energy sourcing in keeping with objective market conditions and evolving international dynamics is at the core of our strategy to ensure this. All of India's actions are taken with this in mind," Goyal said in his statement.

**RED LINES**  
Goyal's assertion on safeguarding the interests of India's agriculture and dairy was upheld by USTR Jameson Greer, who said that the country will continue to "control protection" around certain key areas.

# Solid Performance. Steady Progress.

**TMB** Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd  
Be a step ahead in life

Scan QR to View Detailed Financial Results



### Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine Months Ended 31.12.2025

Particulars	Quarter Ended 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2025	Quarter Ended 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2024	Change / Growth%	SI. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Nine Months Ended		Year Ended
	31.12.2025 (Unaudited)	30.09.2025 (Unaudited)	31.12.2024 (Unaudited)			31.12.2025 (Unaudited)	30.09.2025 (Unaudited)	31.12.2024 (Unaudited)	31.12.2025 (Unaudited)	31.12.2024 (Unaudited)	31.03.2025 (Audited)
<b>CASA</b>	<b>15,847</b>	<b>13,788</b>	<b>14.94%</b>	1.	Total Income from Operations	1665.42	1621.46	1519.94	4904.35	4599.69	6141.75
<b>DEPOSIT</b>	<b>56,707</b>	<b>50,392</b>	<b>12.53%</b>	2.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	466.74	432.42	404.44	1303.08	1188.11	1574.89
<b>RAM</b>	<b>47,706</b>	<b>40,329</b>	<b>18.29%</b>	3.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax, (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	466.74	432.42	404.44	1303.08	1188.11	1574.89
<b>ADVANCE</b>	<b>50,763</b>	<b>43,650</b>	<b>16.30%</b>	4.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax, (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	341.50	317.51	300.24	963.90	890.71	1182.61
<b>TOTAL BUSINESS</b>	<b>1,07,470</b>	<b>94,042</b>	<b>14.28%</b>	5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and other comprehensive Income (after tax))	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>OPERATING PROFIT</b>	<b>468.22</b>	<b>407.71</b>	<b>14.84%</b>	6.	Equity Share Capital	158.35	158.35	158.35	158.35	158.35	158.35
<b>NET PROFIT</b>	<b>341.50</b>	<b>300.24</b>	<b>13.74%</b>	7.	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous Year	-	-	-	-	-	8850.34
<b>NIM (%)</b>	<b>4.04%</b>	<b>4.00%</b>	<b>4 bps</b>	a)	Earnings Per Share (of Rs.10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)	*21.57	*20.05	*18.96	*60.87	*56.25	74.68
<b>ROA (%)</b>	<b>1.97%</b>	<b>1.89%</b>	<b>8 bps</b>	b)	Diluted:	*21.57	*20.05	*18.96	*60.87	*56.25	74.68
<b>GROSS NPA</b>	<b>0.91%</b>	<b>1.32%</b>	<b>41 bps</b>	*Not annualised							
<b>NET NPA</b>	<b>0.20%</b>	<b>0.41%</b>	<b>21 bps</b>								

NOTE: 1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly / Half yearly Financial Results filed with Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/ Half yearly Financial Results is available on the website of the Stock Exchange(s) ([www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com) and [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com)) and on the Bank's Website ([www.tmb.bank.in](http://www.tmb.bank.in)). 2. Information relating to Total comprehensive income and other comprehensive income is not furnished as Ind-AS is not yet made applicable to banks. Place: Thoothukudi Date: 04.02.2026

For and on behalf of Board of Directors,  
**SALEES NAIR**  
Managing Director & CEO

Toll-free: 180 0425 0426 | [www.tmb.bank.in](http://www.tmb.bank.in)  
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd.,

Regd. Office: 57, V.E.Road, Thoothukudi, Tamilnadu - 628 002.

**TMB 456**  
Deposit Scheme  
Earn 7.50% p.a. Senior Citizens\*  
Earn 7.10% p.a. for General Citizens\*

SCAN TO INVEST



\*T&C Apply

QUICKLY.

Dr Agarwal's Q3 net grows 54.5% y-o-y in FY26



Dr Agarwal's Health Care on Wednesday reported a net profit of ₹44 crore for the quarter ended December 2025 (Q3 FY26), a 54.5 per cent y-o-y growth spurred by revenue growth by expansion. Revenue from operations at ₹530 crore, grew 23 per cent on year. The company's network boasts 272 facilities, with 14 new centres added during the quarter comprising nine secondary and 5 primary facilities. The company said it performed 81,000 surgeries in Q3 FY26, a growth of 11.2 per cent on year. OUR BUREAU

Visakhapatnam Steel Plant posts ₹54 cr profit



**Hyderabad:** Central public sector undertaking Rashtriya Ispat Nigam also known as Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is now back in the black by registering ₹54 crore profit in January marking a turnaround in 18 months. This was disclosed at a review meeting on the plant conducted by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu with officials from the Ministry of Steel and the plant in Amaravati. There was a significant uptake in the production of hot metals. It reached 19,401 tonnes per day compared with 9,215 tonnes in the second quarter of 2024-25, according to the steel plant officials. OUR BUREAU

# Cognizant Q4 net profit rises 18.7%, headcount increases 14,800 on-year

**NEAR-TERM PROSPECTS.** The IT firm expects 2026 revenue to grow at a rate of 4–6.5 per cent

Rohan Das

Chennai

Cognizant Technology Solutions on Wednesday beat its own revenue guidance for the fourth quarter ended December 2025 and for the full year 2025.

Despite beating its guidance in 2025, the IT major now expects to clock a 4–6.5 per cent in constant currency (cc) terms, a range lower than the 6.4 per cent growth it clocked in 2025. The company follows calendar year accounting.

Revenue for the fourth quarter ended December 2025 (Q4 2025) came in at ₹5.33 billion, a 3.8 per cent cc growth.

On a sequential basis, quarterly revenue was down 1.5 per cent. The growth was driven by signing of large deals.

The net profit of the US-

## Scorecard

	Quarter ended Dec-25	Dec-24	Growth
Revenue (\$ million)	5,333	5,082	6.40 %
Net profit (\$ million)	648	546	18.70 %
Headcount	3,51,600	3,36,800	14,000
Voluntary attrition - Tech Services (%)	13.8	15.9	(Trailing 12-month)

based IT services company, which has a major presence in Chennai, was 18.7 per cent at ₹648 million.

Cognizant signed 28 large deals in 2025 with large deal TCV growth of nearly 50 per cent year-on-year.

## BEATING PEERS

Cognizant beat its peers in the quarter in quarterly revenue growth (on a cc basis).

TCS clocked 0.8 per cent, Infosys 1.7 per cent, Wipro 0.2 per cent, and HCL Tech 4.8 per cent on a y-o-y basis in quarter ended December 2025.

For the full year 2025, revenue stood at \$21.1 billion, a 6.4 per cent growth in cc terms, just beating the upper end of the company's full year guidance.

This includes inorganic growth of 2.6 per cent.

Full-year net profit remained flat at \$2.2 billion. The IT major saw a 140basis-point year-on-year (y-o-y) increase in its adjusted operating margins of 16.1 per cent.

Cognizant reported a headcount of 351,600 as of December 31, 2025, an increase of 14,800 on a year-

on-year basis and 1,800 on a sequential basis. Voluntary attrition (on a trailing 12-month basis) was 13.9 per cent, compared to 15.9 per cent in the year-ago quarter.

"In 2025 we at Cognizant have put our AI builder strategy in motion and returned to the 'winner's circle' two years ahead of the target we set at our Investor Day. We have invested in our talent, strengthened our partnership ecosystem and advanced our AI platforms to help clients scale artificial intelligence across the enterprise," said S Ravi Kumar, the Chief Executive Officer of the firm.

## FULL YEAR 2026

For the full year 2026, the company expects revenue growth of 4.0 to 6.5 per cent in constant currency terms. For the first quarter of 2026, revenue growth is expected to be in the 2.7–4.2 per cent

range on a constant-currency basis.

## BOOKINGS GROWTH

On a trailing-twelve-month basis, the company's bookings increased 5 per cent year-on-year to \$28.4 billion, representing a book-to-bill ratio of approximately 1.3x. The company's bookings for the quarter included 12 large deals (over \$100 million).

For the December quarter,

North America recorded the highest growth at 4.2 per cent y-o-y (cc). Interestingly, financial services was the highest-growth vertical, growing revenue by 9.3 per cent y-o-y. Cognizant stated the new labour rules did not have a material impact on its P&L in the quarter but did result in a one-time increase to its defined benefit liability.

"We anticipate a modest increase in our defined benefit costs prospectively," it said.

Cognizant takes a bet on freshers; to grow graduate hiring by 20% in 2026

Sindhu Hariharan

Rohan Das

Chennai



At a time when most top-tier IT service firms have cut down on fresher hiring, and the sector is seeing non-linearity, IT major Cognizant is placing a bet on freshers. The company hired 20,000 fresh graduates in 2025, and expects to bump this up by a further 20 per cent in 2026.

It said its employee bonus payout has been the highest since 2018. Speaking to media after its Q4 earnings, Cognizant management reiterated that it was bullish on "bottom of the pyramid"

"Our thesis is that as we continue on our partnerships with Anthropic, Gemini, OpenAI and other AI platforms, the value can be drifted to the bottom and distributed to have a broader pyramid, improving the throughput for our junior staff," Cognizant CEO S Ravi Kumar said.

He added revenue growth is becoming increasingly non-linear with respect to headcount. Cognizant's revenue per person (employee) went up by 5 per cent on a trailing 12-month basis while margin per person went up by 8 per cent during 12 months, he noted.

CFO Jatin Dalal said out of the 20,000 fresher hires in 2025, 16,000 are already involved in projects, and the rest are undergoing training. In 2026, fresher hiring will land at around 24,000–25,000, he said.

## LEARNABILITY

When asked about what the company looks for in freshers and how they contribute to the growth, Kumar said they look for candidates with strong 'learnability' and those comfortable with AI. That counts more than

experience, he noted. Cognizant "will need people to work on classical software, agentic software and roles bridging the two".

"Every software engineer we hire from schools, we are teaching how to macro-delegate to agents and hence deliver more throughput at the bottom," he added, noting that the company was clearly seeing more productivity at the bottom than the top of pyramid. "So we will see broader pyramids," he said.

Cognizant, which revealed in the previous quarter about its plans to list in India, said it has initiated discussions with lawyers, financiers and regulatory institutions in India for the same.

The board is evaluating the next steps in this regard, the executives said.

# IndiGo curtails Europe flights due to airspace curbs

Aneesh Phadnis

Mumbai

has been closed to Indian carriers since April, recent tensions in West Asia have also resulted in Indian carriers avoiding Iran airspace.

## AIRPORT CONGESTION

In a statement, IndiGo said its widebody operations have been impacted by continuously changing airspace constraints due to geo-political circumstances, and congestion at airports both in India and abroad.

"These factors significantly increased flight and block times causing strain over the airline's 787-9 schedule that is operated with six widebody aircraft. With the objective of avoiding inconvenience to cus-

tomers due to misconnections and cascading delays, IndiGo has decided to take



**SCHEDULE REJIG.** The carrier has also cancelled flights to Central Asian destinations until February 28

some immediate measures to restore operational reliability in terms of on-time performance for its widebody operation," the airline said.

Other than cuts to European flights the airline has already cancelled flights to Central Asian destinations of Almaty, Baku, Tashkent and Tbilisi until February 28.

This move, it said, was "in view of the developing situation around Iran".

**Widebody operations impacted by changing airspace constraints due to geo-political circumstances'**

# Tata Power third quarter profit flat at ₹1,194 crore, revenue dips 4%

Anupama Ghosh

Mumbai

Tata Power Company reported a profit after tax of ₹1,194 crore for the quarter ended December 31, 2025 remaining nearly unchanged from ₹1,188 crore in the same period last year.

The country's largest integrated power company saw its revenue decline 4 per cent to ₹14,485 crore from ₹15,118 crore year-on-year.

However, the company's earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization grew 12 per cent to ₹1,448 crore from ₹1,188 crore in the third quarter compared to ₹3,481 crore in the previous year.

We have also seen that there has been an increase in demand of power in both December and January and we expect that this year will see a regular summer, and

there will be an increase in demand going forward," said Praveer Sinha, CEO, Tata Power.

In fact, he added, in the month of January, the peak demand went up to 245 gigawatts and hopefully in the summer months it should drop to 72 to 80 gigawatts. EBITDA for the period increased 12 per cent to ₹1,874 crore. "We do expect that our fourth quarter will see a robust performance as we have seen in the previous quarter and in the third quarter," he added.

The renewable energy business emerged as a strong performer with profit surging 156 per cent to ₹547 crore in the quarter. Revenue from renewables jumped 78 per cent to ₹3,785 crore. The company's solar cell and module manufacturing unit more than doubled its profit to ₹251 crore, up 124 per

cent year-on-year. The distribution business also showed robust growth with profit climbing 167 per cent to ₹746 crore

and



Wealth sets you free

# GOLD ETFs

BACKED BY

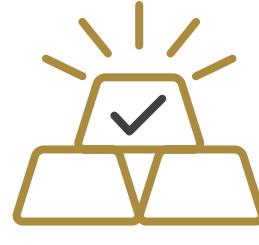
# REAL GOLD

A framework built on trust



## SECURE

Backed by physical Gold stored by SEBI-registered custodians



## PURE

Has a purity of 99.5% as per regulatory standards



## REGULATED

By Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

Want an investment that's truly worth its weight in gold?

Gold ETFs offer units backed by real Gold that's 99.5% pure, securely stored, and supported by a structure that operates under SEBI's regulatory framework. Plus, with the iNAV serving as a good measure of an ETF's fundamental value, it's best to place your order closer to it. That way, you can invest with confidence; having no concerns of purity and a hassle-free investment experience to back it.



| [mf.nipponindiaim.com/EdgeOfKnowledge](http://mf.nipponindiaim.com/EdgeOfKnowledge)

Contact your Mutual Fund Distributor or Investment Advisor | Give us a missed call on **8000112244**

An investor education and awareness initiative of Nippon India Mutual Fund.

Helpful Information for Mutual Fund Investors: All Mutual Fund investors have to go through a one-time KYC (Know Your Customer) process. Investors should deal only with registered mutual funds, to be verified on SEBI website under 'Intermediaries/Market Infrastructure Institutions'. For redressal of your complaints, you may please visit <https://scores.sebi.gov.in/> For more info on KYC, change in various details and redressal of complaints, visit [mf.nipponindiaim.com/InvestorEducation/what-to-know-when-investing.html](http://mf.nipponindiaim.com/InvestorEducation/what-to-know-when-investing.html) | ETFs are Exchange Traded Funds whereby investors can buy or sell Gold ETFs on the exchange during market hours. However, prices move as per market dynamics.

Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

## WHAT'S HOT: GADGETS.

## Sonic sculpture

The Devialet Phantom Ultimate is a new-generation high-end wireless loudspeaker that builds on the brand's iconic Phantom lineage, combining elegant design with advanced acoustic engineering. Designed and assembled in France, it features ADH New Gen amplification, SAM (speaker active



matching), Heart Bass Implosion for ultra-low frequencies and adaptive volume level. Running on the latest Devialet OS, the speaker supports a range of streaming protocols, including AirPlay, Google Cast, Roon Ready, Spotify Connect and Tidal Connect, with Wi-Fi 6 and Bluetooth 5.3 connectivity. It is offered in 108 dB and 98 dB variants. The loudspeaker is available in Deep Forest, Light Pearl and Opéra de Paris finishes, the latter featuring hand-applied 22-carat gold detailing. The price ranges between ₹1,99,999 and ₹4,82,999, depending on the decibel and design variant.

## Velvet smooth!

The OPPO Reno15c features a slim 8.14 mm profile, weighs 195 g, and comes with a coral fleece-like velvet texture back panel paired with



OPPO's Dynamic Stellar Ring Design. It sports a 6.57-inch flat AMOLED display with FHD+ resolution, 10-bit colour, 600 nits typical brightness and up to 1,400 nits peak brightness. Camera hardware includes a 50 MP main camera, 8 MP ultra-wide camera, 2 MP macro camera and a 50 MP ultra-wide selfie camera with 4K HDR video recording up to 60 fps on both front and rear cameras. It is supported by features such as Ultra-Steady Video, Dual-View Video and on-device Video Editing 2.0. The smartphone is powered by the Snapdragon 6 Gen 1 chipset, runs ColorOS 16 and is backed by a 7,000 mAh battery with 80 W SUPERVOOC fast charging. It is available in the Afterglow Pink and Twilight Blue colour variants and is ₹34,999 for the 8 GB + 256 GB model and ₹37,999 for the 12 GB + 256 GB model.

## Marathon runner!

The realme P4 Power 5G is a flagship-influenced smartphone with ultra-long battery life. The device sports a large 10,001 mAh battery for extended all-day use, making it one of the biggest in-class



cells and supports 80 W charging for rapid refuels. It features an immersive 6.8 inch AMOLED display alongside the MediaTek Dimensity 7400 Ultra chipset for smooth everyday performance and multitasking. Camera specs include a high-resolution Sony 50 MP OIS main camera with imaging enhancements. The phone supports 5G connectivity, offering modern network speeds and broad compatibility. With colour options such as Trans Orange, Trans Blue and Trans Silver, the smartphone is priced between ₹25,999 and ₹30,999, depending on the RAM and storage configuration.

## Snappy smartphone!

The REDMI Note 15 Pro+ 5G features a 6.83-inch near-borderless display with up to 3,200 nits peak brightness, 3840Hz PWM dimming and triple TÜV certifications, delivering clear and comfortable viewing across lighting conditions. Photography is led by a 200 MP MasterPixel camera with an f/1.65 aperture and up to 4x optical-level in-sensor zoom, enabling improved low-light performance. Creative tools include ultra-clear portrait algorithms, Dynamic Shots 2.0, AI Creativity Assistant, AI Remove Reflection and AI Beautify, along with direct sharing to Instagram and WhatsApp.



Powering the device is a 6,500mAh EV-grade silicon-carbon battery with 100W Xiaomi HyperCharge and 22.5W reverse fast charging. The smartphone runs on the Snapdragon 7s Gen 4 processor and introduces the Xiaomi IceLoop cooling system to the REDMI Note series, designed to deliver higher heat-transfer efficiency. Available in Coffee Mocha, Mirage Blue and Carbon Black colour finishes, the smartphone is priced at ₹37,999 onwards.

## Mac precision

The BenQ MA270UP is a 27-inch 4K IPS monitor designed specifically for MacBook users, featuring a 3840 x 2160 resolution Nano Gloss Panel that enhances contrast, clarity and colour depth while closely matching the native Mac display experience. Optimised for macOS, it supports iDevice Color Sync,



M-book Mode and ICCsync to ensure consistent colour reproduction across MacBooks and external screens without manual calibration. The monitor offers up to 450 nits peak brightness, VESA DisplayHDR 400 support and vibrant, accurate visuals suited for work, entertainment and everyday productivity. A single USB-C connection handles 4K video, data transfer and power delivery, complemented by dual USB-C ports with 90 W and 15 W power output, along with HDMI 2.0 and DisplayPort connectivity. Designed for comfort and clean desk setups, the MA270UP includes intuitive controls and an ergonomic stand with tilt, swivel, pivot and height adjustment, and is priced at ₹46,999.

## A rig designed for serious play

**LENOVO LEGION PRO 7.** With an OLED screen, RTX 5090 muscle and Intel's top-end Core Ultra 9, this one's for hardcore gamers

Siddharth Mathew Cherian

There's a certain kind of gaming laptop that doesn't try to be subtle. It doesn't chase thinness, whisper-quiet operation or all-day battery life. Instead, it plants its feet, turns the dials all the way up, and dares you to keep up. The Lenovo Legion Pro 7 firmly belongs in that camp. From the moment you power it on, it's clear this machine is built with a singular focus — to deliver an uncompromised gaming experience, even if that means making a few unapologetic demands of its own.

## DESIGN

The Lenovo Legion Pro 7 is a premium gaming laptop that measures 14.35 x 10.86 x 0.86-1.05 inches and weighs 2.56 kg. Despite its size, the weight is well distributed across the sturdy aluminium chassis, making it reasonably comfortable to carry. The black metal finish is prone to picking up oil smudges, and a microfibre cloth proves useful for upkeep. The display hinges and body frame edges are well-rounded and feel solid, with minimal flex or wobble.

## DISPLAY

The Lenovo Legion Pro 7 features a 16-inch OLED gloss display with a resolution of 2560x1600 ppi. Colours pop on the display, with *Cyberpunk 2077*'s neon-soaked Night City rendering vividly on the 240 Hz panel, where the contrast between day and night remains striking even when playing at Ultra settings. The panel also handles more restrained landscape visuals to close-up shots of Ranveer's stoic expressions in Netflix's *Durandhar*.

With full sRGB and DCI-P3 colour coverage, it doubles as an excellent screen for watching films and long-form content. Despite having a glossy display, the reflections are kept to a minimum while indoors and near windows. The Legion Pro 7 features a specialised four-speaker array, combining two 2 W woofers and two 2 W tweeters powered by a Smart Amplifier. The Nahimic Audio tuning does justice to this high-end machine, providing a well-balanced sound profile. The speaker placement is particularly clever; upward-firing speakers are integrated into the rear exhaust bezel, while two tweeters sit at the



**ALL ROUNDER.** With immersive sound and 80 Wh battery, it delivers on almost every front from basic video editing to a heavy round of *Cyberpunk 2077*

front-left and front-right of the chassis. This configuration creates a rich, immersive stage that I found impressive during ambient music-heavy sessions in *Cyberpunk 2077*.

While the maximum volume might not fill a large room, the audio remains a gem for personal listening. The balance between the rear-firing depth and front-facing detail ensures you stay anchored in the game's atmosphere.

## PERFORMANCE

The Legion Pro 7 is a powerhouse, pairing an Intel Core Ultra 9 275HX processor with 64 GB of RAM and 1 TB of storage. This combination makes it a formidable machine for both high-end gaming and demanding content creation.

In CineBench 2026, the laptop delivered a score of 90,030 — the highest on the charts, trailing only the Apple M3 Ultra and M4 Max. On the CPU-specific front, the Ultra 9 275HX hit 526 in single-thread and 7,446 in multi-thread performance, sitting just behind the Ultra 9 285K and Apple's top-tier silicon.

Gaming performance is equally impressive thanks to the NVIDIA RTX 5090, which delivers a blistering 330 FPS in Counter-Strike 2 at high settings and a respectable 62 FPS in *Cyberpunk 2077* on Ultra settings.

Even in performance mode, the laptop remains surprisingly quiet

with only a minimal fan hum that is easy to speak over, even at full speed. The cooling system distributes heat effectively across the chassis, keeping the keyboard area cool while expelling the majority of hot air through the rear exhausts.

All gaming functions are managed via the Lenovo Legion Space app, a well-organised interface that allows for quick adjustments to performance profiles, GPU modes and extensive RGB lighting, including the keyboard, logo, rear accents and front ambient strip.

The integrated AI features, such as Game Companion for real-time reactions and Game Clip Master for automated highlights, are promising additions but currently result in a slight performance hit. While these tools are in their early stages, they are likely to become more efficient as Lenovo refines the algorithms.

## CONNECTIVITY

The Legion Pro 7 offers a robust port selection. The left side houses the slim tip power connector, an HDMI 2.1 port, two USB-C ports (one with USB-PD and one with Thunderbolt 4/DisplayPort), and a USB-A 3.2 port.

The right side includes an RJ-45 Ethernet port, two SuperSpeed USB-A ports, a 3.5 mm audio jack, and a physical webcam kill switch. While comprehensive, adding a

USB-C port to the right side would have been a welcome convenience for modern dual-sided setups.

The 720p webcam is adequate for casual calls but struggles with colour noise and grain in indoor lighting. Similarly, the built-in microphones are sufficient for basic communication but lack the clarity required for professional streaming.

The per-key RGB keyboard is a highlight, featuring a full number pad and properly spaced directional keys. The travel feels excellent — tactile enough for strafing in *Counter-Strike 2* yet quiet enough for comfortable long-form typing.

## BATTERY

The Lenovo Legion 7 Pro features an 80 Wh battery, a standard capacity for this category. In hybrid mode, handling basic video playback, browsing and light Photoshop work, I managed about 3.5 to 4 hours unplugged. Switching to the dGPU (discrete graphics processing unit) mode for heavy lifting, including *Cyberpunk 2077* and Premiere Pro editing, dropped that endurance to roughly 55 minutes to an hour.

Charging is handled by a massive 400 W power brick weighing nearly half a kg, which takes about 1.5 to 2 hours for full charge. While a rapid charge feature helped get to 30 per cent in 10 minutes, the laptop cannot be charged via USB-C. While

not a dealbreaker, USB-C charging would have been a welcome addition for casual movie watching without needing the cumbersome 400 W brick. Given the charger's bulk, this machine is best suited for a desk rather than frequent transport.

## VERDICT

The Lenovo Legion Pro 7 stands as one of the best gaming laptops in the market, rivalling the likes of ASUS ROG Strix 16 and Dell Alienware Area-51 in both price and configuration. With a stellar display, immersive sound and elite performance, it delivers on almost every front. While it suffers from the typical weight niggles of the category and a massive power draw — necessitated by a 400 W charger to fuel the RTX 5090 — the results are undeniable. As the highest-spec model I have tested to date, its blistering performance makes it a definitive win for pro-gamers seeking a top-tier configuration. However, if you are hunting for a budget-friendly option, look elsewhere.

## © SNAPSHOT

**Price:** ₹4,89,580  
**Pros:** Great display, good sound, generous I/O and great keyboard  
**Cons:** Expensive and heavy

## BINGEWATCH

A round-up of the most hype-worthy shows you need to watch next

Mahananda Bohidar

## THE PIT

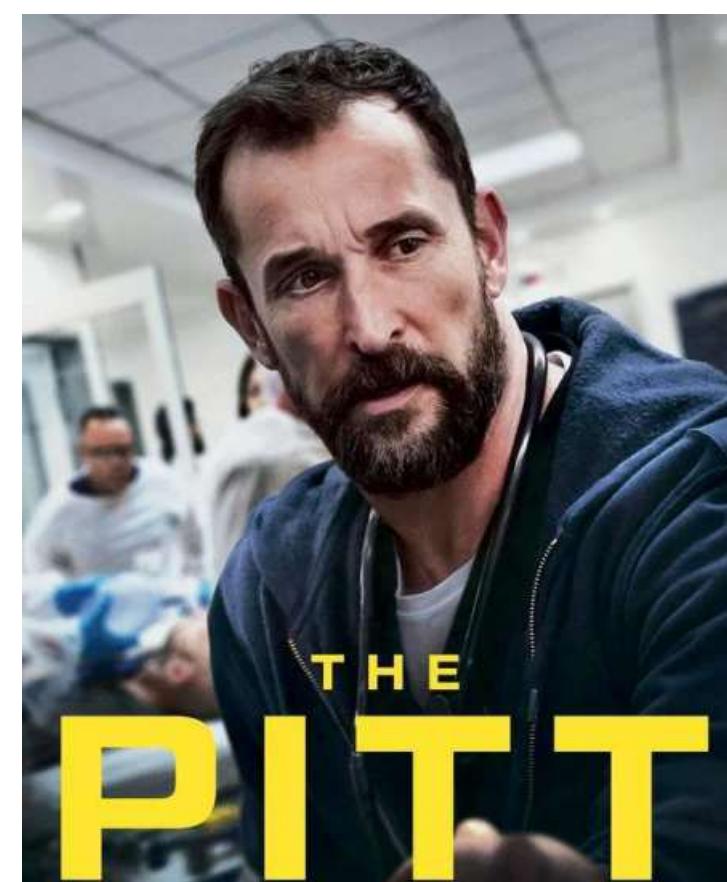
Dive into the relentless chaos of a public hospital's emergency department, where every minute is a razor-edge battle between life, death and burnout in this pulse-racing yet deeply humane medical drama. Every season tracks the emergency room team as they battle the chaos of a single grueling 15-hour shift, while grappling with staff shortages and chronic underfunding. Each episode unfolds roughly one hour of that intense shift, tracking myriad characters all of them deeply complex, many of them astonishingly competent, and most of them holding up a mirror to how hard it can be to demarcate the personal and the professional, while working in a system that sometimes feels is working against you.

Leading the charge is Dr Michael "Robby" Robinavitch (Noah Wyle, channelling his ER roots with grizzled intensity), a veteran trauma doc who starts off the day — and the show — taking charge of four new trainee doctors who've shown up at the hospital.

Over the next 15 hours, we see each of the doctors and trainees on the floor doing their best to balance showing up for their patients and wards to the best of their medical training and knowledge, and yet struggling to cope with the emotional toll that patient care, difficult wards and human limits impose on them.

Rounding out the ER crew are the brilliant and self-assured Dr Heather Collins (Tracy Ifeachor), the cocky but supremely competent Dr Frank Langdon (Patrick Ball), and the super empathetic, observant and competent Dr Samira Mohan (Supriya Ganesh), and more!

Showrunner R. Scott Gemmill has crafted characters who are gloriously messy — doctors who aren't just saviours but also weary warriors teetering between compassion and collapse. It's interesting how a show about one endless shift grips



you tight like a suspense or thriller would, while highlighting multiple systemic failures, such as understaffing, organ donation processes and insurance nightmares.

The cinematography involving the harsh glare of the trauma bay lights, frenzied emergency teams running into the ER with their stretchers, the overcrowded, sweaty and chaotic waiting rooms that tests the patients' patience and the momentary calm and triumph of the right diagnosis and successful treatment are executed so accurately and realistically that you tend to forget this is fiction and not real footage from a hospital during its day shift.

*The Pit* is very clearly not just another show about doctors and medicine, and their personal and

private lives. There's something so engaging in its narrative and portrayal that you're left wondering about what this *je ne sais quoi* is that keeps you so deeply hooked on the characters and storyline.

The drama captures the adrenaline spike of crisis medicine with surgical precision, but its real gut-punch is confronting the toll of a broken system on those fighting to keep it alive.

## © OVERVIEW

**Platform:** Jio Hotstar  
**No. of seasons:** 2  
**No. of episodes:** 15  
**Average length of episode:** 45-60 minutes

## Apple's new AirTag Tracker is better, but not upgrade-worthy

The device's loudness has increased by 50%, better emitting its location in a crowded place

Bloomberg

Apple Inc's new second-generation AirTag is basically slightly better do-over of the original. At \$29 for a single item tracker or \$99 for a four-pack, it also costs the same. Upgraders can expect slightly better wireless range, a louder chime and the ability to pinpoint an item's location with their Apple Watch: no iPhone necessary.

Considering the original was released almost five years ago, some Apple fans and techies might have hoped for more. But after a few days of testing, the updated AirTag hasn't changed the calculus for how and where I use Apple's tracker. And I think that's exactly the point.

The AirTag is the rare Apple item that you're never supposed to think about. Having been an early adopter of the original \$29 device, I've kept the tiny circular tracker on my keychain, tucked it away in my backpack and hidden it in my guitar case. And for most of that time, the AirTag has dutifully (and uneventfully) served its purpose, continually pinging nearby iPhones, Macs and other devices in Apple's vast Find My network to report its whereabouts.

That location is almost always right where I expect it to be. But as someone with an unfortunate history of losing wallets and keys, I've found the AirTag invaluable on multiple occasions. The AirTag is there when I need it, even if I rarely ever do, slowly trickling down its year-long endurance before the CR2032 coin cell battery inside needs replacing.

These gaps in connectivity might be one reason Apple still insists the AirTag is "designed exclusively for tracking objects, and not people or pets".

But for a gadget that's meant to attach to something and (mostly) be forgotten about, the second-generation AirTag still gets the job done and is an affordable way to locate whatever it's tethered to or at least get you pretty close.



Apple AirTag

biggest improvement. Whereas I sometimes struggled to hear the original AirTag emit its location in a crowded restaurant or on a city street, this one cuts through clearly in those environments. (Phones, Android phones now alert users if an unknown AirTag is found to be travelling with them.)

Under the hood, one new feature is the ability to use Precision Finding — a feature where on-screen arrows guide you to an AirTag's exact spot — on an Apple Watch.

The second-gen AirTag's range enhancements have been less noticeable. Then again, I live in a dense city where Apple devices are always in close proximity, so this has never been a problem. The tracker still lacks GPS and on-demand location reporting, so if you're in more rural environments or out in the wilderness, an AirTag isn't going to be nearly as helpful as it is to us city dwellers.

These gaps in connectivity might be one reason Apple still insists the AirTag is "designed exclusively for tracking objects, and not people or pets".

But for a gadget that's meant to attach to something and (mostly) be forgotten about, the second-generation AirTag still gets the job done and is an affordable way to locate whatever it's tethered to or at least get you pretty close.

# More reforms likely under SASCI scheme, says Expenditure Secretary

**THE CRITERIA.** If a State fails to implement necessary reforms, it will not be eligible for the incentive-based funds: Vualnam

bl.interview

Shishir Sinha  
New Delhi

The Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SACI) scheme may see new reform measures to strengthen telecom networks, Expenditure Secretary V Vualnam has said. He expressed the hope that States will be able to provide their share for VB-G RAM G scheme.

Edited excerpts:

**We have 55 Central Ministries and Departments and funds are distributed among them through 102 demands. For some Ministries/Departments, revised estimate is notably lower than Budget Estimates and yet they get higher funds in the next year's Budget. What is the rationale behind that?**

There may have been some specific reasons for expenditure not going up to the expected levels for some schemes in the current financial year. For instance, the Drinking Water Department has streamlined their functioning and are fully geared up to scale up implementation of their schemes which is why we have provided them ₹67,000 crore in the BE of FY27. If departments underutilise funds, we adjust allocations downward.

However, during detailed reviews in October and November, we evaluate every project and scheme in-



**66** A State's inability to execute justified reforms is not an excuse for us to relax standards; States must gear up because these reforms are essential for both the citizenry and the nation

V VUALNAM  
Expenditure Secretary

ividually. Based on these discussions, we recalibrate funding for the upcoming financial year. It is a collaborative adjustment process, and we remain confident in their ability to meet utilisation targets.

**Is it correct to assume that the Revised Estimates are based on the expenditure trends of the first six months, while the Budget Estimates for the upcoming fiscal year are informed by the nine-month spending data of the current year? Furthermore, has this same principle been applied to the current Budget?**

Yes and no in the sense that it is one criterion we adopt. While the half-year expenditure trend is a vital indicator, our allocation process is far from mechanical.

We look beyond mere numbers to conduct a deeper analysis, evaluating whether a scheme has reached saturation or if specific operational hurdles exist for the coming year. This culminates in pre-Budget meetings where we consult with departmental secretaries, financial advisors, and program heads to rigorously review and finalize the estimates.

**For the current fiscal, ₹1.5 lakh crore was allocated for the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SACI). What is the progress on that?**

Current disbursements stand at approximately ₹1 lakh crore, with the balance expected to be utilised by the end of the fiscal year. This timing is strategic: 60 per cent of the SACI fund is reform-linked, and States are given time until December to

achieve specific milestones. Once compliance reports are verified by the respective central line ministries, the remaining funds are released. We remain confident of full utilisation by March 31, mirroring last year's performance.

**With the SACI allocation increasing to ₹2 lakh crore for FY27, is there any scope to adjust the 60:40 reform-to-united ratio, given that some States are struggling to accelerate their reform agendas?**

Definitely not for that reason. If a State fails to implement necessary reforms, it will not be eligible for those incentive-based funds. However, we may review whether certain long-standing SACI reforms have served their purpose or if new sectors require fresh incentives.

A State's inability to execute justified reforms is not an excuse for us to relax standards; States must gear up because these reforms are essential for both the citizenry and the nation. The specific percentage and the list of reforms for the FY27 SACI scheme will be finalised in the coming weeks.

**Are there any new reform areas planned for the FY27 SACI allocation, similar to the natural disaster initiatives of FY26?**

In FY26, we expanded SACI to include the mining sector, identifying five key reform areas in coordination with the Ministry of Mines. For the upcoming year, we are consulting with various cen-

ral line ministries to identify new sectors that require State-level incentives. For instance, we are considering a reform linked to the telecom sector's 'Right of Way' (RoW) regulations.

While some States are highly supportive, others face bottlenecks that delay tower installations. Standardising and streamlining these rules through SACI will ensure the smooth, nationwide expansion of India's telecom network.

**For FY27, the total funding required for the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) exceeds ₹1.52 lakh crore. With the Budget providing ₹95,600 crore, States must contribute over ₹57,000 crore. Given that some States cite a lack of resources, will this funding gap affect the scheme's implementation?**

Cost-sharing is a long-standing principle in centrally sponsored schemes, as it fosters mutual ownership and accountability. We have provided ₹95,600 crore based on precise Central calculations, and we look to the States to provide their matching shares. Beyond funding, we expect States to ensure rigorous ground-level implementation, identifying eligible households, maintaining accurate accounting, and prioritising works that align with the Viksit Bharat vision.

I am confident that States will prioritise these resources to meet the employment needs of their rural citizens.



## WHAT'S NEW

- Insurance Act, 1938, the Life Insurance Corporation Act, 1956, and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999, have been amended
- Though the Act hikes FDI in the insurance sector to 100%, the top leadership of the insurance company must be Indian citizens

GDP, well below the worldwide average of 7 per cent. Allowing full ownership can attract stable long-term capital and advanced risk-management practices," said Kapil Garg, Managing Director at Mufin Green Finance.

policyholders, a dedicated 'Policyholders' Education and Protection Fund' will be set up to spread awareness about insurance. Policyholders' data would now be required to be collected and protected in alignment with DPDP Act 2023.

Regulatory governance is being strengthened by introducing standard operating procedure for regulation making and mandating the process consultative. IRDAI is being given the power to disgorge wrongful gains from insurers and intermediaries. Penalties are being rationalised and factors for imposition of penalties are being introduced.

Key measures such as the creation of a dedicated policyholder education fund, alignment with the DPDP Act for data protection, and a more consultative regulatory approach point to a clear shift towards a consumer-centric and trust-based market. As the sector attracts increased global participation, these safeguards will be essential in maintaining credibility," Hanut Mehta, CEO at Bimapay Finsure, said.

**PROTECTION FUND**  
To protect the interest of

## 'FY27 Budget provides ample liquidity for govt procurement'

Our Bureau  
New Delhi

Expenditure Secretary V Vualnam on Wednesday assured that the FY27 Budget has provided sufficient liquidity in the system for government procurement, and bidders do not need to worry about payment issues.

He said the public finance management system has moved almost entirely online, and that all transactions are fast, transparent and trackable.

"The focus is on predictability in government procurement," he said while addressing the Global Procurement Summit organised by All India Management Association (AIMA) in partnership with the Finance Ministry.

The Secretary promised simple procurement documentation to make it easier for bidders, vendors and evaluators.

**The Secretary promised simple procurement documentation to make it easier for bidders, vendors and evaluators.**

public procurement to reduce disputes and arbitrations.

During the summit, the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) announced an MoU with AIMA to build management capacity, conduct research and promote innovation in public procurement.

Speaking on the occasion, Mihir Kumar, CEO, GeM, said that price and quality are key challenges in procurement and invited ideas for balancing equity and quality in government procurement.

Artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML) technologies are being inducted into government procurement, and a new AI-enabled GeM platform would be introduced next year," he said.

In his address, the World Bank's Country Procurement Lead for India, Shankar Lal, highlighted that the bank would mobilise \$10 billion each year for the next five years for Indian projects. He said the World Bank would link its financing to sustainability, inclusion, green energy, and local development, as it is focusing on outcomes rather than just products.

He added that the World Bank is now more open to financing private development projects.

### ADB FOCUS

Speaking on this occasion, Arti Mehra, Deputy Country Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), said that in 2025, ADB lent to 16 projects in India, including those for renewable energy, skills, urban infrastructure and healthcare.

To promote emerging technologies and innovations in government projects, the bank is getting involved at an early stage, she said.

She added that local labour requirements and sustainable procurement are now included in the bank's financing criteria.

## Jaishankar, Rubio discuss co-operation on critical minerals and mining

Amiti Sen  
New Delhi

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar have welcomed the trade deal reached between US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The two also discussed formalising bilateral co-operation on critical minerals exploration, mining, and processing in their meeting in Washington DC, according to US Principal Deputy Spokesperson Tommy Pigott.

Jaishankar is on a three-day official visit to the US to participate in the Critical Minerals Ministerial convened by Rubio.

"The Secretary and External Affairs Minister discussed formalising bilateral co-operation on critical minerals exploration,

new economic opportunities and advance our shared energy security goals," Pigott said.

### QUAD COOPERATION

They also expressed their commitment to expanding multilateral cooperation through the Quad and acknowledged that a prosperous Indo-Pacific region remains vital to advancing shared interests.

On Monday, Trump spoke to Modi on the phone and then announced that the two countries had reached a trade deal. Trump said US would lower its 50 per cent tariffs on India to 18 per cent adding that New Delhi would, likewise, move forward to reduce tariffs and non-tariff barriers against the US, to zero. The details of the deal are still being worked out by the two negotiating teams.

Marco Rubio, US Secretary of State, with S Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister

mining, and processing," Pigott said. The two welcomed the trade deal reached between Trump and Modi, he added. "The two leaders emphasised the importance of our democracies working together to unlock

## New insurance Act allowing 100% FDI comes into force

Shishir Sinha  
New Delhi

The government has set February 5 as the date for implementation of the new insurance Act that allows 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI), besides other provisions.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (2) of section 1 of the Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha (Amendment of Insurance Laws) Act, 2025, the Central government hereby appoints the 5th day of February, 2026, as the date on which the provisions of the said Act, except section 25, shall come into force," a notification by Finance Ministry said.

Section 25 deals with the prohibition of common officers and the requirement for whole-time officers.

### EXISTING ACTS

The new legislation amends three existing Acts: Insurance Act, 1938, the Life Insurance Corporation Act, 1956 and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999.

Though the Act hikes FDI in the insurance sector to 100 per cent, the top leadership of the insurance company—Chairman, Managing Director or CEO—must be Indian citizens.

It also paves the way for the merger of a non-insurance company with an insurance company.

The FDI limit in the insurance sector has been gradually increased—from 26 per cent to 49 per cent in 2015, 57 per cent in 2021 and now to 100 per cent.

"This change is expected to unlock greater foreign capital and global expertise at a time when insurance penetration in India stands at only about 3.7 per cent of

**VERITAS FINANCE**

## VERITAS FINANCE LIMITED

(formerly known as Veritas Finance Private Limited)

CIN: U65923TN2015PLC100328, RBI Regn No: N-07.00810

Regd. Office: SKCL Central Square 1, South and North Wing, 7th Floor, Unit C28-C35, CIPET Road, Thiru Vi Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai – 600 032. www.veritasfin.in

Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter ended 31 December 2025 and year to date from 01 April 2025 to 31 December 2025 (All amounts are in INR lakhs, unless stated otherwise)

S.No	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Nine Months Ended		Year Ended
		31.12.2025 Unaudited	30.09.2025 Unaudited	31.12.2024 Unaudited	31.12.2025 Unaudited	31.12.2024 Unaudited	
1	Total Income from Operations for the period / year	46,162.77	43,889.75	39,970.94	1,33,042.69	1,11,656.41	1,55,067.93
2	Net Profit for the period / year (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	10,856.54	8,848.46	9,064.96	27,859.88	26,785.22	38,832.32
3	Net Profit for the period / year before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	10,856.54	8,848.46	9,064.96	27,859.88	26,785.22	38,832.32
4	Net Profit for the period / year after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	8,175.59	6,765.44	6,893.00	21,106.08	20,204.06	29,511.16
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period / year	7,901.47	6,765.45	6,873.88	20,697.20	20,022.90	29,219.17
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital	13,136.42	13,136.42	13,135.82	13,136.42	13,135.82	13,136.42
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	2,87,311.60	2,78,978.52	2,55,304.01	2,87,311.60	2,55,304.01	2,65,181.04
8	Securities Premium Account	1,71,989.46	1,71,989.46	1,71,979.66	1,71,989.46	1,71,979.66	1,71,989.46
9	Net worth (equity and preference share capital + reserve and surplus excluding revaluation reserve)	3,00,448.02	2,92,114.94	2,68,439.83	3,00,448.02	2,68,439.83	2,78,317.46
10	Paid up Debt Capital / Outstanding Debt (debt securities + borrowings)	6,59,604.19	6,13,496.94	5,10,625.66	6,59,604.19	5,10,625.66	5,62,974.20
11	Debt Equity Ratio (Refer note d)	2.20	2.10	1.90	2.20	1.90	2.02
12	Earnings per share (of INR 10 each) (Refer note e)						
- Basic		6.23	5.15	5.25	16.08	15.35	22.44
- Diluted		6.18	5.11	5.21	15.95		

## Tariff cheer

But nothing is final until the agreement is signed

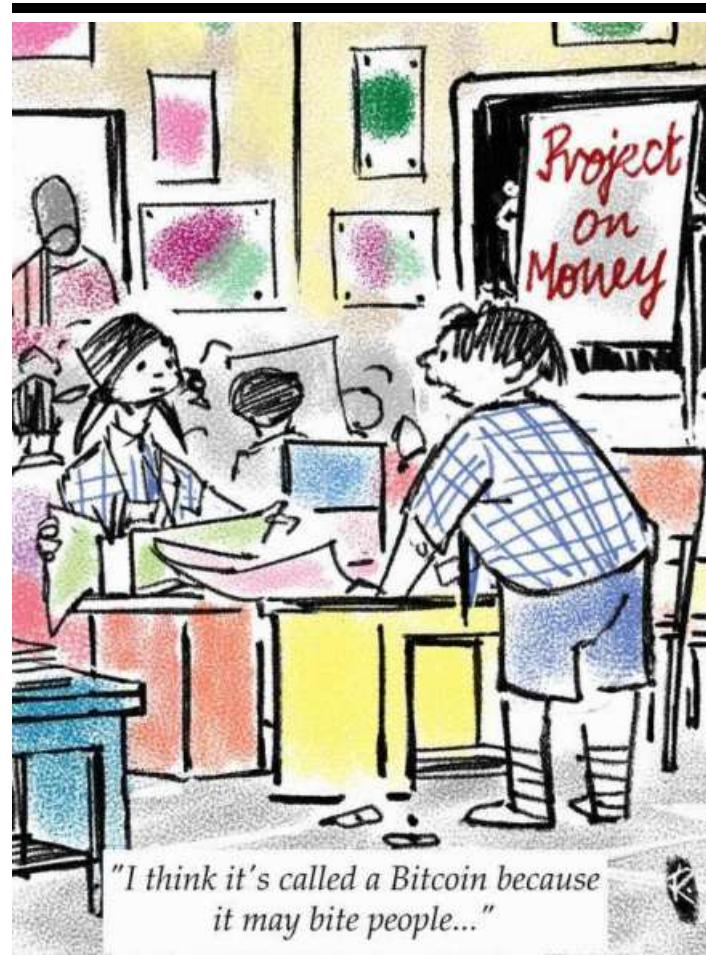
**A**fter months of uncertainty, there appears to be good news on the India-US trade front. US President Donald Trump has announced that tariffs on Indian goods will be lowered from 50 per cent to 18 per cent, a pronouncement acknowledged by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

This could materially enhance the competitiveness of Indian exports in the US market and put India in a better position vis-à-vis its regional competitors such as Bangladesh, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, all of whom face US tariff rates of 19-20 per cent; the new rate is also far below China's tariff level of 34-37 per cent. Yet, the real situation is far from clear. First, there is no indication that the new tariff levels are coming into effect immediately. India has since asserted that the details of the deal must still be worked out by negotiating teams and embodied in a joint statement that would then be formally signed. Consequently, the timing and mechanics of any tariff reduction remain undefined. Second, Trump's claim that India has agreed to significantly open market access for US agricultural goods, has been disputed. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal underlined that agriculture and dairy are protected in the emerging deal. However, within hours of Goyal's statement, White House officials repeated the claim that India has agreed to greater access for US farm exports. This contradiction underscores the need for a formal joint statement that would clarify what has and has not been conceded.

Third, Trump's unilateral declaration that India has agreed to stop buying Russian oil as part of the *quid-pro-quo* for lower tariffs flies in the face of the reality that India's oil imports from Russia are unlikely to come to a complete halt any time soon. Although gradually coming down, the Russian oil imports to India are still steady at 1.1-1.3 million barrels per day. News reports quote unnamed government sources to argue that India will continue to import from non-sanctioned Russian entities. But uncertainty persists about whether India has surrendered autonomy in this important strategic decision. Fourth, there is no confirmation from India that it has agreed to reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers against the US to zero and committed to buying \$500 billion worth of American goods as Trump has claimed. Indian government sources have suggested American buys of \$500 billion could be staggered over a five-year period. This deserves clarification as well, especially since India's total import basket from the US remains at about \$45 billion at present.

Clarity is required in this hodgepodge of assertions, counter-assertions and hearsay. Tariff cuts are welcome news but businesses need to know not just that tariffs will fall, but when, because contracts, pricing and supply chains are negotiated months in advance. Until the text is on paper and signed, uncertainty will continue to weigh on the very businesses that this purported deal is meant to help. A social media post and hurried official clarifications are not a substitute for a formal treaty text. As the slang goes, 'It ain't over till the fat lady sings'!

## POCKET



# Budget borrowing casts a shadow on rate transmission

**DISCONNECT.** The surge in govt borrowing is likely to put further pressure on liquidity and push up interest rates at a time when the RBI is trying to stimulate the economy

SAUMITRA BHADURI  
SHUBHAM ANAND

**B**udget 2026 has put borrowing concerns front and centre for India's financial markets. The government's plan to raise ₹17.2 lakh crore through dated securities this fiscal is higher than expected, immediately raising flags for investors and policymakers alike.

Such elevated borrowing is set to weigh heavily on the bond market, with analysts warning that it could push 10-year Government Security (G-Sec) yields by another 5-10 basis points (bps), further tightening financial conditions at a time when the RBI is trying to stimulate the economy.

This surge in government borrowing comes on top of already challenging market dynamics. Central banking theory suggests a simple chain reaction: when the RBI cuts the policy repo rate, banks' funding costs should fall, government bond yields should drop, and borrowing should become cheaper for businesses and households. Over the past year, the RBI has delivered a cumulative 125 bps in rate cuts since early 2025 to counter slowing GDP growth.

Yet, has this approach worked as expected? Surprisingly, the answer is no. Instead of falling, both short-term and long-term interest rates have risen, with long-term rates outpacing short-term rates. More recently, the G-Sec yield spiked to an 11-month high of 6.72 per cent, prompting the RBI to advance its open market operation (OMO) purchase auctions and infuse ₹1 lakh crore in liquidity earlier than planned. This steepening of the yield curve — where

long-term rates rise faster than short-term rates — signals a breakdown in monetary transmission. The RBI is trying to stimulate the economy, but the bond market is tightening financial conditions by demanding higher yields for long-term lending.

**RISING SHORT-TERM RATES**  
The disconnect is not just limited to long-term yields. Short-term borrowing costs have also surged. For instance, commercial paper rates jumped from 9.71 per cent in November to 13.35 per cent by the end of December, while certificates of deposit rates rose from 6.46 per cent to 6.87 per cent. This situation has become more acute as the banking system's liquidity surplus shrank to just ₹0.57 lakh crore by late January — well below the usual comfort range of ₹1.5-2 lakh crore.

What explains this sharp rise? Well, persistent tight liquidity is the culprit. System liquidity turned deficit in December and has only managed a tight surplus in January. Subdued government spending, sustained foreign exchange market intervention, and a pick-up in credit demand have all contributed.

At the heart of the problem is the imbalance between credit and deposit growth. As of December 31, the credit-to-deposit ratio hit a record 81.75 per cent, with credit growing at 14.5 per cent year-on-year and deposits at just

**The overall interest rate environment could become less accommodative, especially for corporates and sub-sovereign entities, as the market digests the larger supply of bonds**

12.7 per cent. This implies that banks are forced to compete aggressively for deposits, leaving little excess capital for government securities and pushing up short-term rates, even as the RBI attempts to ease conditions.

Will more RBI liquidity infusions solve the problem? Temporarily, yes, but these measures alone cannot restore transmission unless deposit mobilisation improves. The race for deposits is intensifying, and without more savings, pressure on short-term rates will persist. Therefore, liquidity support can only provide temporary relief unless underlying deposit growth strengthens.

**GOVERNMENT BORROWINGS**  
Borrowing pressures are not just limited to the Centre. States and UTs plan to borrow about ₹5 lakh crore in Q4 FY26, much higher than in previous quarters. This surge will likely push up State Development Loan (SDL) yields by 10-15 bps and may lift corporate bond yields as investors reassess risk and return across the credit spectrum. Does this mean additional pressure? While G-Secs are relatively more insulated due to their benchmark status and broader investor base, they are not immune.

The overall interest rate environment could become less accommodative, especially for corporates and sub-sovereign entities, as the market digests the larger supply of bonds.

**GLOBAL FORCES**  
The challenges do not end with domestic liquidity and borrowing. External factors have further complicated the picture. The rupee's weakness, uncertainty over the India-US trade deal, and Bloomberg's decision to

delay the inclusion of Indian bonds in its Global Aggregate Index have all contributed to market jitters. Indian yields are also influenced by global trends, particularly US Treasury yields. Despite the US Fed's own pivot, US 10-year yields have remained above 4.2 per cent due to concerns over US fiscal deficits. Foreign portfolio investors demand a spread of at least 300-350 bps over US Treasuries to compensate for currency risk and emerging market volatility. To prevent further capital outflows, market forces have kept Indian 10-year yields elevated.

Is there more to the story? One can argue that long-term yields are rising due to inflation expectations or fiscal slippage, not a transmission breakdown. The evidence, however, points to a complex interplay: liquidity constraints, deposit competition, government borrowing, and global risk premiums all contribute. Both cyclical and structural factors are at work, but the persistence of these pressures suggests its mainly structural.

**WAY FORWARD**  
What should be the next steps? Liquidity infusions and OMOs can provide short-term relief, but they cannot substitute for stronger deposit growth, more disciplined government borrowing, and credible inflation management. The RBI should continue to support liquidity and encourage banks to mobilise deposits more aggressively. Fiscal discipline by the government is a prerequisite, and borrowing needs must be contained to ease pressure on the bond market. Only with such coordinated and sustained efforts can monetary transmission be restored, and policy rate cuts translate into lower borrowing costs for the economy.

Bhaduri is Professor, and Anand is PhD Scholar, Madras School of Economics, Chennai



## Big vision, but little relief for agriculture

Rather than address present income distress, the Budget focuses on diversification and tech advancement

## A Narayananamoorthy

**T**raditionally, Union Budgets rarely generated much excitement among farmers. Unlike corporate houses, manufacturers or taxpayers, who can quickly assess gains or losses, farmers have often found Budget announcements too distant from their immediate concerns. However, this has been changing in recent years. With rising costs, volatile markets and declining profitability in cultivation, farmers now keenly watch every Budget, hoping for some relief. Budget 2026, therefore, carried expectations from the farming community.

The agriculture-related announcements in this year's Budget reiterate a familiar set of priorities. The stated focus on targeted efforts to raise farmers' income, support for high-value crops such as coconut, cashew and sandalwood and the promotion of AI-supported agricultural development signal the government's intent to modernise agriculture and improve its long-term prospects. There is little doubt that such initiatives can contribute to higher productivity, diversification and income growth over time.

Support for high-value crops is particularly important in a context where traditional cereal-based farming has become increasingly unviable for many small and marginal farmers.

Encouraging diversification towards horticulture and plantation crops can help farmers tap better market opportunities and reduce income risks. Similarly, the emphasis on artificial intelligence and digital technologies reflects an attempt to bring Indian agriculture in line with global technological trends. In principle, precision farming, improved advisories and better risk management tools can make agriculture more efficient and climate-resilient.

## THE MAIN CONCERN

Yet, the central concern for a vast section of farmers today is not about future technologies or long-term transitions, but about present income distress. On this count, the Budget remains largely silent. At a time when farmers across regions are grappling with poor market prices, rising input costs and unstable markets, there was a strong expectation that the Budget would announce concrete measures to strengthen market support and procurement mechanisms.

The problem is particularly severe for farmers cultivating nutri-cereals, pulses and oilseeds. Although higher minimum support prices (MSPs) are officially announced for these crops, weak and uneven procurement systems prevent most farmers from realising MSP in practice. Unlike paddy and wheat, where

procurement is relatively well established, procurement of pulses, oilseeds and nutri-cereals remains limited. Consequently, farmers are often compelled to sell below MSP, exposing them to market exploitation. Given the government's stated intent to promote diversification away from the paddy-wheat system towards less fertilizer and water-intensive crops, the absence of specific supporting programmes in this Budget is a notable omission.

Market intervention schemes, price stabilisation measures and decentralised procurement could have provided much-needed relief to farmers facing immediate income stress. Strengthening procurement infrastructure beyond a few crops and regions would not only support farm incomes but also encourage crop

diversification in a meaningful way. Without assured market support, calls for diversification towards nutri-cereals, pulses or oilseeds remain largely rhetorical.

Another missing element in the Budget discourse is a clear acknowledgment of the widening gap between cultivation costs and farm-gate prices. Even productivity-enhancing or technology-driven interventions take time to yield results. Farmers struggling to recover their basic costs today cannot wait indefinitely for the promised benefits of future reforms.

In sum, Budget 2026 presents a vision of agriculture oriented towards long-term transformation, diversification and technological advancement. While these objectives are undoubtedly important, they do little to address the pressing income-related problems confronting farmers at present.

For Budgets to truly matter to farmers, they must strike a better balance between preparing agriculture for the future and providing tangible support to farmers in distress today. Without credible measures to strengthen market support and procurement, the promise of higher farm incomes will remain elusive for a large section of the farming community.

The writer is an economist and former full-time Member (Official), Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices, New Delhi. Views are personal



FARMERS. Struggling to recover basic costs of cultivation

## LETTERS TO EDITOR

Send your letters by email to [bleditor@thehindu.co.in](mailto:bleditor@thehindu.co.in) or by post to 'Letters to the Editor', The Hindu Business Line, Kasturi Buildings, 859-860, Anna Salai, Chennai 600002.

## Truce, not a climb-down

The US retreat from its tariff face-off is less a capitulation by India, and more a convergence of constraints. We conceded selectively. Market access in specific agricultural items, limited easing on digital trade frictions, and calibrated procurement openings being tactical, not structural. Our core industrial policy, subsidy framework, and data sovereignty are intact. Of significance, we avoided across-the-board tariff dismantling to preserve policy space for MSMEs and manufacturing-linked incentives.

The US, by contrast, secured modest commercial gains in retreating from a hard line that risked domestic inflation and supply-chain disruption. In that sense, Washington needed the deal as much as New Delhi. Our recent FTAs with others may well have made the US see reason. The real test lies not in concessions made, but in leverage retained.

R Narayanan

Navi Mumbai

Rewarding efficient States  
Apropos 'Fair balance' (February 4), the 16th Finance Commission strikes

a reasonable balance by slightly rewarding better-performing southern and western States through the new GDP contribution criterion (10 per cent weight) and a modest reduction in income distance weight to 42.5 per cent from 45 per cent. At the same time, it keeps equity intact with population at 17.5 per cent and income distance still dominant, ensuring poorer States are not unduly penalised. This gradual shift promotes efficiency without drastic changes, addressing long-standing grievances. To strengthen cooperative federalism

further, the Centre should limit cesses and surcharges that shrink the divisible pool and encourage States to improve own revenue mobilisation through better governance. Such steps would build trust and fiscal discipline.

SM Jeeva

Chennai

## Mental health issues

This is with reference to 'Address mental health issues early' (February 4). The Budget has finally recognised the importance of mental health. However, hardly any attention is paid

to the mental health of students. Due to gruelling academic sessions, students are often under stress and hence harassment of any type may drive them to committing suicide. Hence whenever any student shows signs of depression or differential behaviour they should be immediately counselled by qualified counsellors. The government should appoint counsellors in all educational institutes, and if need be also take the help of psychiatrists and NGOs to assist the students.

Veena Shenoy

Thane

## A deal sans details

Both India and the US are claiming victory

Sridhar Krishnaswami

The best thing about the trade deal between the US and India is that no one is sure of the details. As usual the announcement has brought forth the expected noise from government and opposition quarters in India; and upbeat tones from officials in Washington.

US President Donald Trump set the ball rolling on his Truth Social: tariffs on India is being brought down to 18 per cent from 50 per cent because New Delhi would stop buying Russian oil; tariffs and non-tariff barriers against American goods to zero.

But the punchline in Trump's Truth Social post was that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had committed to "BUY AMERICAN, at a much higher level, in addition to over US\$ 500 BILLION DOLLARS of U.S. Energy, Technology, Agricultural, Coal and many other products. Our amazing relationship with India will be even stronger going forward". And in what must have given critics in India ammunition is the statement of US Secretary of Agriculture who said, "New US-India deal will export more American farm products to India's massive market, lifting prices and pumping cash into rural America". Brooke Rollins wrote on X.

"In 2024, America's agricultural trade deficit with India was \$1.3 billion. India's growing population is an important market for American agricultural products, and today's deal will go a long way to reducing this deficit", the senior administration official maintained, blunting assertions in Indian official circles that somehow agriculture had been spared.

In what appeared to be high praise for the accord, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said, "It will protect the sensitive sectors — the interests of our agriculture and dairy sectors" going on to make the point that the agreement would open up huge opportunities for India's labour oriented and export sectors. "This is truly a deal every Indian can be proud of."

**OPPOSITION IRE**  
But the political opposition did not buy into this positive spin. "The main thing is that our PM is compromised. The public needs to think about this. Narendra Modi ji has sold your hard work in this trade deal because he is



TRADE DEAL. The first step GETTY IMAGES

compromised. He has sold the country," said Congress Party leader Rahul Gandhi. Analysts were reminding New Delhi that having to fork out 18 per cent in tariffs and in return agreeing for duty free on American products is nothing to rejoice about.

India came away with being better placed than Pakistan at 19 per cent and Bangladesh and Vietnam at 20 per cent. Of course China tops the Asian list at 31 per cent. Also it is being pointed out that clarity is needed if this 18 per cent is the last word on the subject or if this has to be added to the sector specific tax that is being levied by Washington on certain products.

The confusion over the purchase of Russian oil is likely to continue for sometime for questions will arise if stopping purchase by India "immediately" is putting the brakes now or at the end of the existing contracts period. A question further arises if "purchase" is not permitted from all Russian outlets or just from the sanctioned ones. And in the context of India holding out the promise of \$500 billion purchase from the US, the question of a time frame arises: New Delhi's global import bill in 2025 is estimated at \$750 billion; and US exports are expected to be a little over \$42 billion. A 12-fold increase in American exports will be seen as too optimistic or wishful thinking.

Undoubtedly the lowering of political temperature between the US and India augurs well not only for bilateral relations but also for the Indo-Pacific and the world at large. But there is no guarantee that tariffs will not raise its head again. It is Russia today; perhaps BRICS tomorrow. Or a sober reminder that a 500 per cent tariff bill with the full blessings of Trump is pending in the US Senate.

The writer is a senior journalist who has reported from Washington DC on North America and United Nations



CKG NAIR  
V SHUNMUGAM

**T**he Budget 2026-27 did not feature any headline-grabbing reform announcements for the capital markets. Predictably, the initial market response was disappointed, indicating the desire for more substantial reform. However, the core question is not whether the Budget lacks dramatic measures, but whether it effectively enhances incentives for long-term capital accumulation rather than just controlling excesses at the margin.

India's capital markets have clearly matured, with increased retail participation, stabilised systematic investment plan flows, and a steady shift of household savings from bank deposits to market-linked instruments. Nonetheless, this progress is not yet complete.

Trading volumes, leverage, and speculative trading still outweigh genuine equity ownership. The Budget subtly recognises this imbalance, but its response falls short.

### SPOT-DERIVATIVES IMBALANCE

The most visible intervention is in raising the Securities Transaction Tax (STT) on derivatives. Increasing STT on futures and options aims to curb speculative activity, especially amid high retail involvement and increasing leverage. From a financial stability standpoint, this measure is justified. Derivative trading, driven more by momentum than hedging, can increase volatility without strengthening capital formation.

However, this correction only tackles one aspect of the imbalance. Although derivatives have become costlier, cost on equity cash market, which supports long-term ownership, has not fallen. STT on delivery-based equity trades remains the same and is applied equally at both entry and exit, regardless of holding duration or investment goal. Consequently, a structural bias that favours frequent trading over lasting ownership persists.

This asymmetry is significant. A household investor purchasing shares to build long-term wealth pays more transaction tax than a short-term trader, who also does so in leveraged derivatives, despite their fundamentally different economic roles.

Delivery-based equity investing provides patient risk capital, encourages new listings, enhances corporate balance sheets, and stabilises price discovery.

In contrast, leveraged trading, which is useful for liquidity and hedging, does not perform the same developmental functions. When the system rewards financial engineering over



# Cooling speculation, ignoring ownership

**TRADING BLUES.** The Budget's hike in STT penalises long-term household investors more than short-term speculative traders

straightforward ownership behaviour predictably follows incentives, not intent.

### REDESIGN SECURITIES TAXATION

Globaly, capital market policy distinguishes clearly between speculation and investment. Long-term ownership is typically encouraged through lower transaction costs, tax deferrals, or preferential treatment, while leveraged activity carries higher friction. India's current STT framework blurs this distinction. The Budget's decision to raise derivative STT without addressing equity cash transactions corrects excess at the top, but does little to reward behaviour at the base.

The same incompleteness is visible in the treatment of long-term capital gains. While stability in capital gains taxation is welcome, stability alone not reform. India continues to tax long-term equity gains in a manner that is neither especially competitive nor clearly aligned with its goal of deepening equity ownership. For a market seeking to

**The Budget's decision to raise derivative STT without addressing equity cash transactions corrects excess at the top, but does little to reward behaviour at the base**

channel household savings into productive enterprises, the absence of incentives for longer holding periods remains a gap.

This matters even more in light of the policy emphasis on moving savings out of bank deposits into markets and market-based instruments. Deposits offer certainty, simplicity, and low friction. Markets, by contrast, demand risk tolerance and long-term commitment. If transaction costs and exit taxes remain relatively high for delivery-based equity, households will continue to gravitate toward products that offer leverage, optionality, or short-term gains—ironically, the very behaviour regulators seek to restrain.

The Budget makes positive advances in other areas. Measures to strengthen corporate bond markets, promote market-making, and expand municipal bond issuance, are all part of a broader effort to diversify financing through markets. Over time, these steps can reduce reliance on bank credit and expand investment options for institutions and households. However, their effects will be slow and indirect.

What is needed is a clear move from simply cooling speculation to actively incentivising ownership. If STT is to continue as a policy tool, it should be restructured to better reflect its purpose. Delivery-based equity transactions could be taxed at significantly lower rates than derivatives, or taxed only upon exit.

Another option is to explicitly exempt delivery-based trades, offsetting this by raising levies on leveraged products. This strategy would better align transaction costs with economic purpose.

Similarly, policy on long-term capital gains should explicitly promote the importance of holding duration. Reduced rates for extended holding periods or indexation benefits that incentivise patience would reinforce the idea that equity ownership is not merely accepted but actively supported.

Such changes would not threaten market stability; instead, they would strengthen it by encouraging fundamental-based participation rather than momentum trading.

### RIGHT DIRECTION; INCOMPLETE JOURNEY

Budget 2026-27 signals caution and stability while resisting excessive leverage. However, capital market reforms must go beyond mere restraint. India's growth relies on markets that incentivise ownership and curb speculation simultaneously.

Until tax and transaction policies distinguish between these, transition from trading to investing will stay unfinished. The Budget provides a direction but stops short of completing the journey.

Nair is former Director, National Institute of Securities Markets; Shunmugam is Partner, MCQube

## thehindu businessline.

### TWENTY YEARS AGO TODAY.

February 5, 2006

#### Cos may have to speak with Govt only in Hindi

Companies in India, including multinationals, beware! The Government might soon engage you all in a new conversation, and this time the pleasantries could seriously test your skills in the national language – Hindi. A quiet move is on to make it compulsory for all companies that take recourse to Hindi as the language medium to sell or promote their products.

#### Anil Ambani group questions gas deal

The Anil Ambani-controlled Reliance Group today questioned the terms of the gas supply agreement signed between Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) and Reliance Natural Resources Ltd (RNRL). A statement issued by Mr J.P. Chalasani, Director, RNRL, said the gas supply agreement contains significant deviations, such as term of the agreement, scope of gas block etc from the agreed position at the time of the de-merger of the group.

#### AAI employees call off strike

The four-day old agitation by employees of the Airports Authority of India opposed to the Government's modernisation plan for Delhi and Mumbai airports was called off this afternoon.

Reuters

**T**he Washington Post informed its staff on Wednesday that it was starting a widespread layoff that would gut its sports department and shrink the international footprint, a source familiar with the matter told Reuters.

The job cuts were announced by Executive Editor Matt Murray on a call with employees, the source said, requesting anonymity as the matter was private.

"We will be closing the sports department in its current form," Murray said in a company-wide call that began at 8:30 a.m. ET. The call transcript was shared with Reuters by the source.

"All departments are impacted. Politics and government will remain our largest desk and will remain central to

## Washington Post starts massive layoff

Guts sports and shrinks foreign coverage, says source



our engagement and subscriber growth."

The Post did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

The move comes days after the news-

paper scaled back its coverage of the 2026 Winter Olympics amid mounting financial losses.

News outlets are struggling to maintain a sustainable business model after the internet upended the economics of

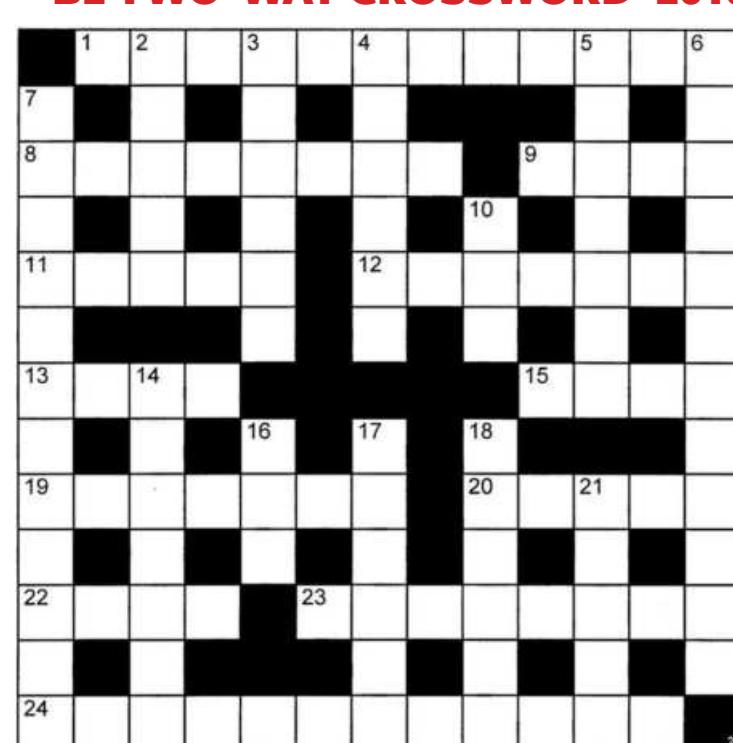
journalism, shifting trust toward creators and causing digital ad rates to tank.

The more than 145-year-old newspaper made changes across several business functions to navigate those challenges by announcing job cuts last year, saying the reductions would not impact its newsroom.

The Washington Post, owned by Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos, has been cutting costs in recent years. It offered voluntary separation packages to employees across all functions in 2023 amid losses of \$100 million.

In a letter to Bezos last week (January 29), The Post's White House staff said their most impactful coverage depends heavily on collaboration with teams at risk of job cuts and that a diversified newsroom is essential at a time when the paper faces financial challenges.

## BL TWO-WAY CROSSWORD 2610



### EASY

#### ACROSS

- 01. Down-to-earth (6-2-4)
- 08. May be copied (8)
- 09. Role (4)
- 11. Social division in India (5)
- 12. Testing, decisive (7)
- 13. Foolish or irritating person (4)
- 15. Chair (4)
- 19. Roughly sketch (7)
- 20. Vision (5)
- 23. Bolide, ball-lightning (8)
- 24. Oppressive, demanding too much (12)

#### DOWN

- 02. Wrong, unsuitable (5)
- 03. Device by which projectile leaves smoke-trail (6)
- 04. Widow (archaic) (6)
- 05. Eager desire for wealth (7)
- 06. Idle, empty talk (6-6)
- 07. Despairing, without comfort (12)
- 10. Source of merriment (3)
- 14. Withdrawal (7)
- 16. Attack of epilepsy (3)
- 17. Florentine family of Renaissance art patrons (6)
- 18. Behind, at sea (6)
- 21. Junction of stock and scion (5)

### NOT SO EASY

#### ACROSS

- 01. It is not fanciful craft to me, fat though it may be (6-2-4)
- 08. One cooking timbale that can be copied (8)
- 09. Leave one another something to play (4)
- 11. Class of actors in India, to the audience (5)
- 12. It is essential for it to be made like a cross (7)
- 13. Irritating person sent half the children back (4)
- 15. One's country abode in a position of authority (4)
- 19. General statement will leave out the shading (7)
- 20. It enables one to see a good deal (5)
- 22. Topmost point anthropoid gets to ten (4)
- 23. A bolide might be brief with everything that comes after (8)
- 24. Very highly priced tree : no taxi to shift it (12)

#### DOWN

- 02. There's something wrong with a female teacher (5)
- 03. Bullet one can see making a crater (6)
- 04. Old widow got fifty in a trice perhaps (6)
- 05. Cupidity with which I crave a version of it (7)
- 06. Gossip brings about little battle for rhymesters (6-6)
- 07. Very sad, it takes but a second to sail out of it (12)
- 10. Amusement is not completely defunct (3)
- 14. Fall back on the buying of another round of drinks? (7)
- 16. In good condition it will conform to one's shape and size (3)
- 17. Florentine family I'm playing dice with (6)
- 18. Flower Noah initially left behind him (6)
- 21. It's hard work, having a transplant (5)

## SOLUTION: BL TWO-WAY CROSSWORD 2609

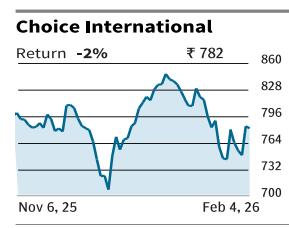
**ACROSS** 1. Ballad 8. Prize 9. Panacea 11. Draughts 12. Stone 15. Chin 16. Egg 17. Ease 19. Divan 21. Prospect 24. Eastern 25. Redan 26. Needle

**DOWN** 2. Avast 3. Learning 4. Deed 5. Spout 6. Wish 7. Less 10. Arrogance 12. Sock 13. Belittle 14. Fern 18. Spank 20. Aural 21. Port 22. Odds 23. Tarn



## QUICKLY.

Choice International net doubles to ₹65.6 cr in Q3



**Mumbai:** Choice International posted strong financial results for the quarter ended December 31, 2025, with total revenue reaching ₹309 crore, marking a 46 per cent y-o-y increase. The firm's profit after tax more than doubled to ₹65.62 crore from ₹30.74 crore, representing a 114 per cent increase. The company's EBITDA for Q3 FY26 stood at ₹117 crore, up 90 per cent y-o-y, with margins expanding to 37.92 per cent from 29.17 per cent. For the nine-month period ending December 2025, revenue grew 25 per cent to ₹830.66 crore, while PAT increased 56 per cent to ₹170.05 crore. Stock holding contributed 58 per cent of revenue, followed by advisory services at 28 per cent and NBFC operations at 14 per cent. OUR BUREAU

## NSE launches Nifty MidSmallcap 400 50:50

**Chennai:** NSE's index services subsidiary, NSE Indices, on Wednesday launched a new broad market index – Nifty MidSmallcap 400 50:50. According to a press release, it said the Nifty MidSmallcap 400 50:50 Index is a capped version of the Nifty MidSmallcap 400 Index. "The mid cap segment represented by stocks forming a part of the Nifty Midcap 150 Index and the small cap segment represented by stocks forming a part of the Nifty Smallcap 250 Index are equally weighted. The weight of each stock within the segment is based on its free-float market capitalisation," the release added. OUR BUREAU

# SEBI rules out fresh F&O curbs for now, to push bond market reforms

**POLICY MOVE.** Regulator to consult stakeholders on corporate bond deepening measures announced in Budget

**Akshata Gorde**  
Mumbai

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is not considering any immediate regulatory action in the equity derivatives segment and will continue with the existing framework, including the weekly expiry structure, Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said on Tuesday, following the hike in transaction tax in the Budget to rein in speculative trading.

"At this point of time, we are not contemplating any measures and whatever framework that we have put in place, that will continue," Pandey said at the inaugural event of SEBI's pan-India outreach programme for corporate bonds. He added that

there would be no fresh curbs in futures and options (F&O) trading and no change in weekly expiries, ruling out any near-term regulatory tightening.

The comments came soon after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman increased Securities Transaction Tax (STT) on derivatives in Budget 2026-27. The STT on futures contracts has been raised to 0.05 per cent from 0.02 per cent, while the tax on options premium and on exercise of options has been increased to 0.15 per cent from 0.1 per cent and 0.125 per cent respectively. Other STT rates remain unchanged.

## BOND PUSH

While the derivatives segment faces tax tightening,



**MORE HEADROOM.** Corporate bonds account for only about 16% of the GDP, well below levels seen in South Korea and Malaysia, says SEBI Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey

SEBI is sharpening its focus on deepening the corporate bond market. Pandey said India's growth ambitions cannot be funded by bank credit alone and require a deeper, more liquid debt market.

Corporate bond issuances have expanded sharply over

the last decade, with outstanding bonds rising from about ₹17.5 trillion in FY15 to nearly ₹58 trillion by December 2025, roughly 60 per cent of bank credit to industry and services.

Despite this growth, corporate bonds account for

only about 16 per cent of GDP, well below levels seen in markets such as South Korea and Malaysia, he said.

Pandey flagged a narrow issuer base and low retail participation as key challenges. While over 5,600 companies are listed in equities, only around 770 have accessed the debt market. SEBI's investor survey also showed awareness of corporate bonds at just about 10 per cent, lower even than cryptocurrencies.

He said SEBI had adopted an "optimum regulation" approach, easing compliance for high-value debt listed entities, lowering minimum investment threshold to ₹10,000, enabling online bond platforms, and strengthening market infrastructure such as repo clearing and liquidity windows.

# Despite IT stocks' rout on AI scare, Sensex remains resilient

**Anupama Ghosh**  
Mumbai

The markets closed marginally higher on Wednesday as a sharp selloff in information technology stocks, triggered by fears of artificial intelligence disrupting traditional software business models and weigh on industry-wide profitability," said Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money.

On the gainers' side, Trent surged 5.18 per cent, Eternal jumped 4.90 per cent, ONGC advanced 3.5 per cent, NTPC rose 2.3 per cent and Adani Ports gained 2.25 per cent. Infosys led the losers on the Nifty 50, crashing 7.37 per cent, followed by TCS which tumbled 6.99 per cent.

## TOP MOVERS

"While oil & gas, consumer durables, metals and automobile stocks recorded strong gains, IT stocks faced sharp selling pressure, tracking weakness in global technology shares. Sentiment in the sector deteriorated after AI start-up Anthropic

vealed an end-to-end workflow automation productivity tool, rekindling concerns that rapid advances in AI could disrupt traditional software business models and weigh on industry-wide profitability," said Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money.

On the gainers' side, Trent surged 5.18 per cent, Eternal jumped 4.90 per cent, ONGC advanced 3.5 per cent, NTPC rose 2.3 per cent and Adani Ports gained 2.25 per cent. Infosys led the losers on the Nifty 50, crashing 7.37 per cent, followed by TCS which tumbled 6.99 per cent.

Broader markets outperformed the benchmark indices, with the Nifty Midcap 100 rising 0.63 per cent and the Nifty Smallcap 100 surging 1.27 per cent.

Market breadth remained positive, with 2,726 stocks advancing against 1,477 declines on the BSE.

ation in the unfair market access case, an important development seen as paving the way for the exchange's IPO.

The NSE filed its settlement plea in June 2025. The exchange's IPO plans were stalled due to the co-location case, in which certain brokers were accused of receiving preferential access to the exchange's trading systems.

After years of litigation, the NSE in 2025 offered to pay ₹1,388 crore to settle the charges. The proposed IPO is expected to be among the largest in India's capital markets. The NSE, which has about 1.77 lakh shareholders, is valued at over ₹5 lakh crore in the grey market, analysts believe.

## SEBI relaxes order-to-trade ratio norms for options by market makers

**Akshata Gorde**  
Mumbai

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has relaxed its order-to-trade ratio (OTR) norms for option trading by excluding orders placed within plus or minus 40 per cent of the option premium, or within ₹20, whichever is higher, from penalty calculations.

OTR is a surveillance measure used by stock exchanges to curb excessive order placement and cancellations, particularly in algorithmic and high-frequency trading, by imposing economic disincentives on

trading members with very high order volumes relative to executed trades.

SEBI also decided that algorithmic orders placed by designated market makers will not be counted towards OTR. Market makers are required to continuously quote buy and sell prices to provide liquidity in securities and contracts, a process that naturally involves frequent order updates.

**EQUITY OPTIONS**  
For other segments, including the cash market and derivatives beyond equity options, the existing exemption remains unchanged. Orders placed

within 0.75 per cent of the last traded price will continue to be excluded from OTR penalty calculations.

The broader OTR framework will still apply across equity and derivative segments, including orders placed under liquidity enhancement schemes. Only the newly specified option price bands and market-making algorithmic trades have been carved out.

SEBI has directed the exchanges to amend their by-laws to implement the revised framework and to disseminate the changes to market participants. The updated norms will come into effect from April 6, 2026.

**NSE board to declare results, form IPO panel tomorrow**  
**Press Trust of India**  
New Delhi

The board of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) is set to meet on February 6 to formally initiate the process of its long-awaited initial public offering following the regulatory clearance from markets watchdog SEBI.

During the meeting, the board is expected to constitute a specialised IPO committee to serve as the central authority for the listing, market sources said on Wednesday.

**LISTING FRAMEWORK**  
This committee will be tasked with defining listing procedures and establishing the criteria for appointing

the merchant bankers and legal advisors required to draft the Red Herring Prospectus, they added.

Additionally, the board will review and approve the exchange's unaudited financial results for the quarter and nine-month period ending December 2025.

On Friday, SEBI granted a no-objection certificate to the NSE to move ahead with its IPO after a decade of delays over regulatory concerns and co-location controversy.

The NSE's listing plans have remained on hold since 2016, when the exchange first filed draft offer documents to raise around ₹10,000 crore through an offer for sale by existing shareholders. SEBI, however,

withheld approval due to regulatory concerns arising from governance lapses and the co-location case. Since then, NSE has approached the regulator multiple times seeking clearance.

Last month, SEBI Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said the regulator granted "in-principle" approval to the NSE's settlement applica-

tion in the unfair market access case, an important development seen as paving the way for the exchange's IPO.

The NSE filed its settlement plea in June 2025. The exchange's IPO plans were stalled due to the co-location case, in which certain brokers were accused of receiving preferential access to the exchange's trading systems.

After years of litigation, the NSE in 2025 offered to pay ₹1,388 crore to settle the charges. The proposed IPO is expected to be among the largest in India's capital markets. The NSE, which has about 1.77 lakh shareholders, is valued at over ₹5 lakh crore in the grey market, analysts believe.

## Motilal Oswal Private Wealth advises balanced approach with large-cap tilt

**Our Bureau**  
Mumbai

Motilal Oswal Private Wealth expects investors to be better off by adopting a balanced approach with a higher tilt towards large caps and hybrids, and a staggered, selective allocation to mid- and small-caps this year.

It expects Nifty earnings to grow 12-14 per cent in the next fiscal, compared to 8-9 per cent in FY26. Domestic policy tailwinds, improving relative valuations, and the conclusion of trade deals should strengthen the outlook for the next fiscal year.

Indian markets lagged their emerging-market peers in CY25, as MSCI India underperformed MSCI Emerging Markets by 31 per cent in dollar terms.

**EARNINGS GROWTH**  
Several concerns, including elevated valuations amid tepid earnings growth, the absence of a direct AI-led

**Mid- and small-caps** may create selective accumulation opportunities

vestment theme in India amid global markets chasing the AI narrative, and rupee depreciation, which contributed to the underperformance of Indian markets, are beginning to normalise.

Ashish Shanker, MD & CEO, Motilal Oswal Wealth, said large caps enter 2026 on a stronger footing with reasonable valuation and earnings visibility. Mid & small caps are in the downward momentum, which may create selective accumulation opportunities during the March quarter, he said.

It expects the rupee to consolidate at the current level and FPIs to return to the market after staying away for the last two years.

Sandipan Roy, Director and Chief Investment Of-

ficer, Motilal Oswal Private Wealth, said that after two strong performance years, last year saw India's equity market consolidate, with returns diverging across market capitalisations.

**MIXED SHOW**  
While large caps delivered modest returns, mid-caps remained volatile, and small caps witnessed corrections.

However, domestic policy tailwinds, including interest rate cuts, tax relief to boost consumption, GST slab rationalisation and sustained RBI liquidity support, are expected to translate more meaningfully into growth and earnings, he said.

The advisory firm believes that investors should stay true to their investment charter, remain neutral on strategic asset allocation, and stay patient through short-term volatility, while being driven by long-term investment objectives.

Investors should partially book profits in silver, it said.

## BROKER'S CALL

## Anand Rathi

**FIRSTSOURCE (BUY)**

Target: ₹415  
CMP: ₹305.05

Firstsource Solutions Ltd (FSL) continued to deliver a strong performance in Q3FY26 with CC revenue rising by 4.6 per cent q-o-q and 10.6 per cent y-o-y (8.6 per cent y-o-y in organic CC). EBIT margin rose 120 bps q-o-q to 12.8 per cent (excluding other operating income), aided by execution, due to an accelerated move towards offshore/nearshore delivery (43.4 per cent; +180 bps q-o-q); and mix (active pruning of low-margin/low-growth payer accounts).

Telecom and the UK with contribution from PastDue acquisition led growth among verticals and geographies, respectively. Demand remained solution-led with the clients prioritising compliance, customer experience (CX) and cost takeout. Deal momentum (pipeline of over \$1 billion) remained healthy with five large deals (annual contract value of over \$5 million) and new logo wins across CX/onboarding/account servicing and operations outsourcing, reinforcing demand for its differentiated commercial constructs.

About 80 per cent of gross hiring is now happening offshore/nearshore with the mix is expected to improve further.

At CMP, the stock trades at FY27/28E P/E of 23.4/20.2x. We maintain Buy rating on the stock with a 12-month target price of ₹415.

**Key Risks:** Weakness in UK demand environment and delay in ramp-up of large HLS win.

## TODAY'S PICK.

## IOCL (₹172.75): BUY

**Gurumurthy K**  
bl. research bureau

The short-term outlook is bullish for Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL). The 3 per cent rise on Wednesday has taken the share price well above the key resistance level of ₹166. It also confirms the end of the corrective fall that was in place earlier. Strong support is now in the ₹167-168 region which can limit the downside.

Fresh buyers are likely to come into the market around this support zone. IOCL share price can rise to ₹188-₹190 in the coming weeks. Traders can buy IOCL shares now at ₹173.

Accumulate on dips at ₹169. Keep the stop-loss at ₹162

## Nifty 50 Movers

	Close(R)	Pt	PE	Wk%
ICICI Bank	1408.40	29.29	17.79	8.56
Reliance Ind	1456.80	29.17	20.16	8.37
Eternal Ltd.	294.15	22.61	128.85	1.80
Bharti Airtel	2025.80	17.41	25.85	4.80
HDFC Bank	953.10	14.76	18.94	12.40
L&T	4087.10	12.44	29.63	4.08
Trent Ltd.	4012.60	9.23	88.80	0.76
NTPC	367.45	9.04	14.34	1.48
M&S	3574.00	9.02	28.66	2.71
ONGC	246.80	8.96	7.04	0.58
Maruti Suzuki	1507.00	8.32	31.73	1.68
Titan	4144.00	6.82	89.10	1.46
Powergrid Corp	289.40	6.16	17.34	1.12



**FINSERV**

## Performance Highlights Q3 FY26



**FINSERV**

Consolidated Results						
Particulars	Q3 FY26	Q3 FY25	% Change	9M FY26	9M FY25	FY25
Total income	39,708	32,042	24%	1,12,562	97,226	1,33,822
Profit before tax	5,926	5,812	2%	19,955	17,746	23,748
Profit after tax (attributable to owners of the Company)						
- After the accelerated ECL provision, one-time charge of New Labour Codes and tax thereon	2,229	2,231	-	7,262	6,456	8,872
- Before the accelerated ECL provision, one-time charge of New Labour Codes and tax thereon	2,936	2,231	32%	7,969	6,456	8,872



**FINANCE**

Consolidated Results						
Particulars	Q3 FY26	Q3 FY25	% Change	9M FY26	9M FY25	FY25
Total income	21,214	18,059	17%	60,923	51,256	69,725
Profit after tax (attributable to owners of the Company)						
- After the accelerated ECL provision, one-time charge of New Labour Codes and tax thereon	3,978	4,246	-6%	13,553	12,158	16,638
- Before the accelerated ECL provision, one-time charge of New Labour Codes and tax thereon	5,227	4,246	23%	14,802	12,158	16,638
Net NPA	0.47%	0.48%		0.47%	0.48%	0.44%
Return on average equity (annualised)	18.5%	19.1%		17.9%	19.3%	19.2%
Assets under management	4,84,477	3,98,043	22%	4,84,477	3,98,043	4,16,661



**HOUSING  
FINANCE**

Standalone Results						
Particulars	Q3 FY26	Q3 FY25	% Change	9M FY26	9M FY25	FY25
Total income	2,887	2,449	18%	8,259	7,068	9,576
Profit after tax	665	548	21%	1,891	1,576	2,163
Assets under management	1,33,412	1,08,314	23%	1,33,412	1,08,314	1,14,684



**GENERAL**

CARINGLY YOURS

Standalone Results						
Particulars	Q3 FY26	Q3 FY25	% Change	9M FY26	9M FY25	FY25
Gross written premium	7,389	6,626	12%	19,004	17,257	21,583
Profit after tax						
- After the one-time charge of New Labour Codes and tax thereon	399	400	-	1,576	1,470	1,832
- Before the one-time charge of New Labour Codes and tax thereon	430	400	8%	1,607	1,470	1,832
Combined ratio	97.9%	101.1%		100.8%	101.8%	102.3%
Return on average equity (annualised)	12.6%	14.0%		16.5%	17.4%	16.0%
Assets under management	36,417	32,633	12%	36,417	32,633	33,115



**LIFE**

LIFE GOALS. DONE.

Standalone Results						
Particulars	Q3 FY26	Q3 FY25	% Change	9M FY26	9M FY25	FY25
Gross written premium	7,854	6,361	23%	21,698	17,923	27,160
New business premium	3,501	2,761	27%	9,829	8,504	12,293
Net value of new business	405	254	59%	917	603	1,152
Shareholders' profit after tax						
- After the one-time charge of New Labour Codes and tax thereon	(31)	222		153	467	508
- Before the one-time charge of New Labour Codes and tax thereon	12	222		196	467	508
Assets under management	1,38,028	1,22,023	13%	1,38,028	1,22,023	1,23,734

**Bajaj Finserv Limited** | CIN: L65923PN2007PLC130075 | Website: [www.aboutbajajfinserv.com/about-us](http://www.aboutbajajfinserv.com/about-us)

**Bajaj Finance Limited** | CIN: L65910MH1987PLC042961 | Website: [www.bajajfinserv.in/finance](http://www.bajajfinserv.in/finance)

Registered Office: C/o Bajaj Auto Limited Complex, Mumbai - Pune Road, Akurdi, Pune - 411 035

Corporate Office: Bajaj Finserv Corporate Office, Off Pune - Ahmednagar Road, Viman Nagar, Pune - 411 014

**Bajaj Housing Finance Limited** | CIN: L65910PN2008PLC132228 | Website: [www.bajajhousingfinance.in](http://www.bajajhousingfinance.in)

Registered Office: Mumbai-Pune Road, Akurdi, Pune 411 035 | Corporate Office: B2, Cerebrum IT Park, Kumar City, Kalyani Nagar, Pune 411 014

**Bajaj General Insurance Limited** | (formerly known as Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company Limited) | CIN: U66010PN2000PLC015329

and IRDA Registration No. 113 dated 2 May 2001 | Website: [www.bajajgeneralinsurance.com](http://www.bajajgeneralinsurance.com)

**Bajaj Life Insurance Limited** | (formerly known as Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company Limited) | CIN: U66010PN2001PLC015959

and IRDA Registration No. 116 dated 3 August 2001 | Website: [www.bajajlifeinsurance.com](http://www.bajajlifeinsurance.com)

Registered and Corporate Office: Bajaj Insurance House, Airport Road, Yerwada, Pune - 411 006

Insurance is the subject matter of solicitation.

This is an abridged representation of the unaudited financial results of Q3 FY26 and is not for the purpose of legal compliance.

As required by regulations, the results for Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance and Bajaj Housing Finance Limited have been prepared as per Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS).

The results of Bajaj General and Life Insurance Limited are as per Indian GAAP.



**New Logo.  
Same Commitment.**

QUICKLY.

Tamilnadu Petroproducts  
Q3 profit rises 66%

**Chennai:** Tamilnadu Petroproducts Ltd reported a 66 per cent increase in net profit to ₹20 crore for the quarter ended December 31, 2025, compared with ₹12 crore for the same period last year. Revenue was down by 8 per cent to ₹421 crore (₹459 crore). The Chennai-based TPL manufactures industrial intermediate chemicals. **OUR BUREAU**

**Bajaj Life, Mirae Asset Sharekhan enter pact**

**Pune:** Bajaj Life Insurance has entered into a partnership with Mirae Asset Sharekhan. Under the alliance, customers of Mirae Asset Sharekhan will gain access to Bajaj Life products like term insurance plans, unit-linked insurance plans, and retirement-focused offerings. The pact leverages Mirae Asset Sharekhan's presence across urban centres and tier-2 and tier-3 markets. **OUR BUREAU**

## Rural demand, winter sales drive Emami Q3 net up 14.5%

**Our Bureau**

Kolkata

FMCG major Emami Ltd on Wednesday reported a 14.5 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) increase in its net profit at ₹319.48 crore for the third quarter this fiscal (Q3FY26), backed by 9.75 per cent y-o-y growth in its revenue.

The company posted a net profit of ₹278.98 crore for Q3FY26. Its revenue from operations during the third quarter of FY26 stood at ₹1,151.81 crore compared with ₹1049.48 crore for the corresponding period of FY25, according to a stock

## Liquidity eases as banks park over ₹3 lakh cr at RBI's SDF window

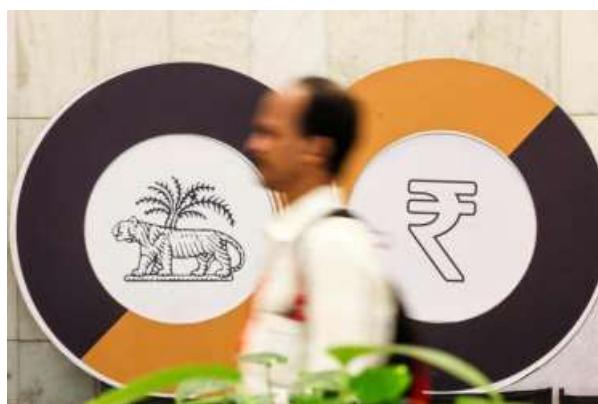
**'CASH'ING IN.** OMO auction of G-Secs for purchasing ₹50,000 crore today**K Ram Kumar**  
Mumbai

The amount parked by banks at the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Standing Deposit Facility has surpassed the ₹3 lakh crore-mark over the last couple of days, indicating easing of liquidity conditions in the wake of RBI's liquidity infusion measures and a pick up in government spending.

The extent of surplus liquidity can be gauged from the fact that banks deployed ₹3,64,627 crore on February 3 and ₹3,20,805 crore on February 2 at RBI's SDF window for a day, according to latest RBI data. Their deployment was at ₹1,98,361 crore on February 1.

Funds parked at this window fetch banks an interest rate of 5 per cent per annum — 25 basis points (bps) below the repo rate of 5.25 per cent. Repo rate is the interest rate at which RBI provides banks funds to overcome short-term liquidity mismatches.

In the latest round of liquidity infusion measures

**PARKING DISCOUNT.** Funds parked at this window fetch banks an interest rate of 5% per annum — 25 basis points (bps) below the repo rate of 5.25% **REUTERS**

undertaken by the RBI (in the last one week), the Central bank injected ₹1,11,500 crore via a 90-day variable rate repo (VRR) auction; ₹50,000 crore via open market operation (OMO) purchase of government securities (G-Secs), and about ₹90,000 crore via the dollar/rupee three-year buy-sell swap auction.

The RBI will be conducting an OMO auction of G-Secs for purchasing ₹50,000

crore on February 5. Gopal Tripathi, Head of Treasury and Capital Markets, Jana Small Finance Bank, observed that banking system's liquidity surplus has increased due to the Central bank's liquidity infusion measures and rising government spending in the run-up to the financial year-end. Hence, banks are temporarily parking the surplus at the SDF window.

V Rama Chandra Reddy,

Head-Treasury, Karur Vysya Bank, noted that the system liquidity remains comfortable, with the RBI further reinforcing liquidity assurance through longer-tenor VRR operations beyond the overnight segment.

Abundant overnight liquidity and muted demand from banks have pushed TREPS (tri-party repo dealing system) rates below SDF rate.

**EYES ON MPC MEET**

However, term money market rates, especially in the one-year and March-crossing tenors, continue to remain elevated, reflecting a high-term premium amid lingering uncertainty on durable liquidity conditions. Reddy said.

Market participants are now keenly awaiting the outcome of the Monetary Policy Committee's upcoming meeting, which is expected to address liquidity concerns and provide clearer guidance on liquidity management, helping temper expectations of further hardening in term money market rates.



novation, premiumisation and portfolio expansion continued to translate into tangible outcomes.

**INTERNATIONAL BIZ**

Its domestic business delivered a growth of 11 per cent, driven by a volume growth of 9 per cent. International business recorded

overnment initiatives, while urban demand showed gradual improvement, supported by easing inflation and stable employment conditions.

The quarter in review witnessed a sequential improvement following the GST 2.0-induced disruptions that impacted the early part of the period.

A favourable winter season supported stronger off-take across the winter portfolio and health supplements. Rural demand continued to be resilient, aided by stable agricultural incomes and supportive gov-

erment initiatives, while urban demand showed gradual improvement, supported by easing inflation and stable employment conditions.

**INTERNATIONAL BIZ**

Its domestic business delivered a growth of 11 per cent, driven by a volume growth of 9 per cent. International business recorded

sales growth of 9 per cent, led by steady performance in the SAARC and CIS regions.

During Q3FY26, gross margins expanded to 70.6 per cent, an improvement of 30 basis points. EBITDA for the quarter stood at ₹384

crore, registering growth of 13 per cent, while EBITDA margins improved to 33.4 per cent, an expansion of 110 basis points.

Harsha V Agarwal, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director, Emami Ltd, said the company's strategic priorities around purposeful in-

novation, premiumisation and portfolio expansion continued to translate into tangible outcomes.

"EBITDA grew by 13 per cent, with margins expanding 110 basis points to 33.4 per cent, reflecting operational excellence and disciplined cost management. We remain focused on strengthening our core brands while selectively investing in new-age growth opportunities to build future scale," said Agarwal.

The board of directors declared a second interim dividend of 600 per cent, amounting to ₹6 per share for FY26.

The quarterly profit growth was driven by a 16 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) rise in advances on the back of MSME loans and fixed-rate gold loans, which also helped improve yield on advances. Total advances as of December 2025 stood at ₹50,763 crore.

Deposits grew 12.5 per cent y-o-y to ₹56,707 crore. Total business grew by 14.3 per cent y-o-y to ₹1,07,470 crore as of December 2025. The bank also saw a healthy

\$₹ buy-sell swap: Banks seek to deploy \$25 billion against notified \$10 billion

**Our Bureau**  
Mumbai

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) bid to absorb dollars and provide durable rupee liquidity to the banking system via a three-year US dollar/rupee buy/sell swap auction on Wednesday saw robust demand, with market participants seeking to deploy \$25.03 billion against the notified amount of \$10 billion.

The Central bank absorbed the notified amount of \$10 billion thereby, providing the banking system rupee liquidity amounting to about ₹90,000 crore. The auction was part of RBI's liquidity infusion measures.

The cut-off premium at the latest auction was higher at 748 paise against the previous auction's 728 paise.

A dollar/rupee buy/sell swap involves RBI buying

Sweden's Bulten Group to invest ₹525 cr in Tamil Nadu

**Our Bureau**  
Chennai

Sweden's Bulten Group, through its Indian arm PSM Fasteners, signed an MoU with the Tamil Nadu government on Wednesday to establish a fasteners manufacturing facility in Oragadam.

This will see an investment of ₹525 crore and create employment opportunities for around 2,000 people, said Industries Minister TRB Rajaa in a social media post.

The facility will manufacture the full range of micro-fasteners for both domestic supply and exports, primarily to Europe and the US. This significantly reduces India's dependence on imports in a critical segment of electronics and precision manufacturing. Major customers include leading electronics manufacturers, the minister said.

## TMB Q3 net rises 14% to ₹342 cr

**Sindhu Hariharan**  
Chennai

Tamilnad Mercantile Bank on Wednesday reported a 14 per cent rise in net profit at ₹342 crore for the quarter that ended December 2025 (Q3FY26). Total income for Q3 stood at ₹1,655 crore, compared to ₹1,520 crore in the same quarter last year.

The quarterly profit growth was driven by a 16 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) rise in advances on the back of MSME loans and fixed-rate gold loans, which also helped improve yield on advances. Total advances as of December 2025 stood at ₹50,763 crore.

Deposits grew 12.5 per cent y-o-y to ₹56,707 crore. Total business grew by 14.3 per cent y-o-y to ₹1,07,470 crore as of December 2025. The bank also saw a healthy

Salee S Nair, MD & CEO, Tamilnad Mercantile Bank

CASA increase to ₹15,847 crore with a growth rate of 14.9 per cent on y-o-y basis.

**FY26 GUIDANCE UP**

"We have seen growth momentum in this quarter with growth in total business, profitability and reaching highest-ever quarterly net profit levels," Salee S Nair, MD & CEO, Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd, told media persons. For full fiscal FY26,

the bank expects to grow total business by over 15 per cent, a tad higher than their original guidance.

The MSME loan segment growth, especially, has been a "turnaround story", said Nair. "We expect the recent US and EU trade deals as a definite boost to this segment," he added. A robust 60 per cent growth in personal gold loans portfolio (secured), which help shield banks from the impact of 'repo rate cuts' have also helped, he noted.

On the asset quality front, Gross NPA had decreased to 0.91 per cent in Q3FY26 from 1.32 per cent in Q3FY25. Net NPA had decreased to 0.20 per cent, improved by 21 bps y-o-y.

TMB said it has established a "state-of-the-art call centre with AI calling facility" to enhance customer service.

## Shriram General Insurance Q3 net jumps 26%, aims to grow bancassurance channel



**OVERALL GROWTH.** The agency channel contributes around 60% to the company's gross premium, while contribution from the bancassurance channel stands at only 1-2% **iSTOCK**

**Mithun Dasgupta**  
Kolkata

Shriram General Insurance on Wednesday reported a 26 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) growth in net profit at ₹165 crore for the third quarter this fiscal (Q3FY26), as its gross direct premium grew 19 per cent y-o-y during the period.

The general insurer's net profit stood at ₹131 crore in Q3FY25.

Its gross direct premium rose to ₹1,258 crore in Q3FY26 from ₹1,061 crore in Q3FY25, backed by around 19 per cent growth in the motor segment. Gross direct premium of personal accident and fire segments witnessed 15 per cent and 3 per cent y-o-y growth, respectively, in Q3FY26.

Anil Aggarwal, MD & CEO, Shriram General Insurance, said the gross premium growth for the company during the first nine months of the current financial year was 24 per cent, which was much ahead of the non-life industry's growth of 8.69 per cent during the period.

"Continuously for the last three years, our growth has

**BAJAJ HOLDINGS & INVESTMENT**

## Performance Highlights Q3 FY26

**Consolidated Results**

Particulars	Q3 FY26	Q3 FY25	9M FY26	9M FY25	FY25
Total income	300	158	1,048	599	831
Profit before exceptional item and tax	251	119	898	435	616
Exceptional item of income - Profit on sale of equity shares of Bajaj Finserv Limited	-	-	1,522	-	-
Share of profits of associates	1,833	1,662	5,344	4,524	6,132
Profit before tax	2,084	1,781	7,763	4,958	6,748
Profit after tax	2,016	1,748	7,062	4,795	6,521

**Standalone Results**

Particulars	Q3 FY26	Q3 FY25	9M FY26	9M FY25	FY25
Total income	294	151	3,115	1,433	1,600
Profit before exceptional item and tax	245	114	2,969	1,294	1,413
Exceptional item of income - Profit on sale of equity shares of Bajaj Finserv Limited	-	-	1,983	-	-
Profit before tax	245	114	4,952	1,294	1,413
Profit after tax	181	84	4,397	1,201	1,292
Investments (at cost)	21,570	13,008	21,570	13,008	16,183
Investments (at market value)	2,42,920	2,05,541	2,42,920	2,05,541	2,23,734

**BAJAJ HOLDINGS & INVESTMENT LIMITED | CIN: L65100PN1945PLC004656 | Website: www.bhil.in**

Registered Office: C/o Bajaj Auto Limited Complex, Mumbai - Pune Road, Akurdi, Pune - 411 035

Corporate Office: 6th Floor, Bajaj Finserv Corporate Office, Off Pune - Ahmednagar Road, Viman Nagar, Pune - 411 014

This is an abridged representation of the unaudited financial results of Q3 FY26 and is not for the purpose of legal compliance.

As required by regulations, the results have been prepared as per Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS).



# 'Budget proposals related to TReDS platform to boost business volumes'

**CASHFLOW CATALYST.** Linking GeM with TReDS may unlock early payments at scale, says CEO of M1xchange

## bl.interview

Piyush Shukla  
Mumbai

The proposals made in the Budget, including mandating TReDS platforms to be a transaction settlement platform for all purchases made from MSMEs by CPSEs (central public sector undertakings) and linking of government e-market place, (GeM) will give a major fillip to business volumes of TReDS platforms, said Sundeep Mohindru, Founder and CEO of M1xchange. Even as the Centre is yet to share the finer details on credit guarantee support mechanism for invoice discounting on TReDS platform and using TReDS receivables as asset-backed securities, M1xchange is confident of achieving ₹1.25-1.30 lakh crore of volumes in FY26 and around ₹1.75 lakh crore next fiscal.

Edited excerpts:

**The Centre has announced a ₹10,000-crore SME growth fund and a ₹2,000 crore top-up to the self-reliant Indian**

### fund. Will these schemes have a large impact on small enterprises?

Government-backed funds have been very active in supporting small businesses. Typically, the government allocates capital to private equity and venture capital (PE/VC) funds, which then deploy it among SMEs.

These investors have established mechanisms to identify high-potential companies, guide them on efficient capital deployment and support adoption of new-age technologies.

Such equity capital is critical for SMEs, which otherwise have limited access to PE/VC funding. In fact, M1 itself used equity support from SIDBI in 2017, which helped the company get off the ground. These funds, therefore, are an effective tool to deepen equity availability for the SME ecosystem.

**The Centre has mandated TReDS to be transaction settlement platform for all purchases made from MSMEs by CPSEs. How many CPSEs are on TReDS and how many**



**66**  
The key benefit of the new mandate is that awareness and access can now extend to the entire CPSE supplier ecosystem. Vendors can opt for early payments by paying a nominal fee. This is expected to drive higher participation

**SUNDEEP MOHINDRU**  
Founder and CEO of M1xchange

### are expected to join?

Close to 100 CPSEs are already registered on TReDS platforms. Once a CPSE is onboarded, its entire supplier base is mapped to the platform and invoices approved by the CPSE are uploaded. However, only suppliers that are aware of TReDS and choose to use invoice discounting actively onboard themselves.

The key benefit of the new

mandate is that awareness and access can now extend to the entire CPSE supplier ecosystem. Once vendors know their payments are routed through TReDS, they can opt for early payments by paying a nominal, non-recourse discounting fee. This is expected to drive much higher participation.

The awareness process has already begun with three CPSEs last week, with early

results showing all vendor payments being routed through the M1xchange TReDS platform.

### Do you expect a material up-tick in invoice discounting/ financing due to the linking of GeM with TReDS?

There is already strong traffic coming in from GeM, as a significant share of PSU purchases happens through the platform. Currently, even though 75-100 CPSEs are live on TReDS, purchases made through GeM follow GeM's mandatory payment mechanism and cannot be routed via TReDS.

With the proposed integration, these payment flows can also move onto TReDS, enabling vendors selling through GeM to access early payments by discounting their invoices.

### With these Budget related announcements, are you expecting any pick-up in volumes?

This fiscal year, we expect to clock volumes of around ₹1.25-₹1.30 lakh crore. The new measures should help us scale this up to at least ₹1.75 lakh crore in the next fiscal.

# 'MF space to more than double in 5 yrs'

**Our Bureau**  
Mumbai



The mutual fund industry is seen more than doubling over the next five years, with the economy growing at 10 per cent annually and a shift in money from savings accounts with low interest rates into investment accounts which give higher returns, said KV Kamath, Chairman, Jio Financial Services.

"I think there is going to be a reallocation of money from savings to investment," he said at a Jio BlackRock event 'Investing for a new era.'

The India mutual fund industry currently has assets under management of close to \$900 billion, largely powered by systematic inflows into equity schemes.

KV Kamath, Chairman, Jio Financial Services

"If you look around us, we know how it is to be done. That gives you the runway... you have a pathway for the next 20 years which is definitely going to be at least 10 per cent year-on-year growth. Within that we stitch our story."

### 1 MILLION INVESTORS

Within just seven months of its launch, Jio BlackRock Mutual Fund already has 1 million customers. "There are very few places in the world where that would even be a thing, that would even be an aspiration," said Rob Goldstein, Chief Operating Officer at Blackrock.

He added that the MF space in India was open and combining Blackrock's technology with the distribution reach and Jio brand would enable it to deliver "something unique."

India was a compelling story of transformation that started just 4-5 years back.

Kamath said that product design and use of technology were key drivers in attracting investors. About a fourth of the investors in Jio BlackRock mutual fund were new investors, and they were investing through online modes, he added.

India was a compelling story of transformation that started just 4-5 years back.

## THE ANDHRA PETROCHEMICALS LIMITED

Regd. Office: Venkatarayapuram, TANUKU - 534 215  
CIN:L23209AP1984PLC004635 : Website:www.theandhrapetrochemicals.com  
Tel: 08819-224075,224755 Fax: 08819-224168 E-mail: info.tnk@theandhrapetrochemicals.com

### Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine Months ended 31.12.2025

The detailed format of financial results for the three months and nine months ended December, 2025 were filed with the Bombay Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 and the same are available on the Company's website www.theandhrapetrochemicals.com. The same can be accessed by scanning the QR code provided below:

Place : Tanuku  
Date : 04th February, 2026

P. Narendranath Chowdary  
Managing Director  
DIN: 00015764

## Maersk, Hapag-Lloyd resume Suez Canal route

**TE Raja Simhan**  
Chennai

Danish shipping major AP Moller-Maersk (Maersk) and Germany's Hapag-Lloyd have decided to change the routing of one of their shared services under the Gemini Cooperation, transitioning it through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal. All transits will be secured by naval assistance, Maersk said.

This will cut sailing time by nearly a week compared with the route via the Cape of Good Hope in southern Africa. For almost two years, ships were forced to divert via the Cape after Houthi attacks on commercial vessels disrupted traffic along this



with the vessel Astrid Maersk.

**GEMINI COOPERATION**  
When possible, Hapag-Lloyd and Maersk will also implement changes to the AE12 and AE15 services to go through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal at a later stage.

Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd

launched their operational collaboration 'Gemini Cooperation' on February 1, 2025, covering 29 shared mainliner and 29 shared shuttle services.

Hapag-Lloyd said that the adjustment will begin with Westbound sailings on the vessel *Albert Maersk* (voyage 605W), en route from Jebel Ali to India, departing Mundra on February 4 and Eastbound sailings of vessel *Astrid Maersk* (voyage 605E), departing Valencia, Spain, on February 3.

J Krishnan of S Natesa Iyer Logistics LLP, a Chennai-based freight forwarder, said transit time reduction is a huge advantage for the Indian supply chain.

## Google parent gains exclusive option on more space at Bengaluru's Alembic City

**Our Bureau**  
Bengaluru

Google-parent Alphabet has secured exclusive rights to lease additional office blocks at Alembic City in Bengaluru, according to lease documents dated October 2024 reviewed by businessline.

Documents accessed via real estate analytics firm Propstack show that Clause 24 of the registered deed grants Alphabet a right of first refusal on future inventory within the development. This prevents the lessor from offering the space to other tenants unless Alphabet declines.

The provision does not involve any upfront payment or premium, with commer-



Mahadevapura, RMZ Infinity on Old Madras Road, and the Kyoto campus at Bagmane Capital.

This latest arrangement appears to be part of Google's ring-fencing strategy, allowing it to secure future expansion capacity without immediate balance-sheet exposure.

Whitefield and its surrounding corridors have seen sustained office demand, driven by technology majors and global capability centres (GCCs), with companies such as SAP and TCS maintaining a presence in the area.

Responding to a detailed questionnaire from businessline, a Google spokesperson reiterated that the company had leased a single tower in 2024, totalling 650,000 sq ft, as previously disclosed.

cial terms to be negotiated if and when the option is exercised.

**SCOPE TO SCALE**  
Alphabet has already leased a 650,000 sq ft tower at Alembic City and holds options on two additional towers — Tower G and Tower B — giving it the flexibility to significantly scale its presence.

The company currently operates three offices in the city: the Ananta campus in

Management (DIPAM) and the Ministry of Coal.

The approval covers CIL's equity contribution towards its promoter stake in the joint venture. BCGCL is a JV between Coal India, which holds 51 per cent equity, and BHEL, which holds the remaining 49 per cent.

In another stock exchange filing, CIL said the proposed investment in BCGCL will be made through subscription to equity shares in cash at face value. The JV aims to set up a coal-to-ammonium nitrate project in Odisha with an annual capacity of 0.66 mtpa.

**SUBSIDIARY INVESTMENT**  
Separately, the board approved an investment of ₹3,189.54 crore in its subsidiary Bharat Coal Gasification and Chemicals Ltd

(BCGCL) to fund a coal-to-ammonium nitrate project.

The approval covers CIL's equity contribution towards its promoter stake in the joint venture. BCGCL is a JV between Coal India, which holds 51 per cent equity, and BHEL, which holds the remaining 49 per cent.

In another stock exchange filing, CIL said the proposed investment in BCGCL will be made through subscription to equity shares in cash at face value. The JV aims to set up a coal-to-ammonium nitrate project in Odisha with an annual capacity of 0.66 mtpa.

## Coal India board clears Chile holding firm for lithium, copper foray

**Our Bureau**  
Kolkata

The board of State-run Coal India Ltd (CIL) on Wednesday approved a proposal to incorporate an intermediate holding company (IHC) in Chile to explore and develop opportunities in critical minerals, particularly lithium and copper.

In a stock exchange filing, the coal major said it will hold 100 per cent equity in the proposed IHC.

The incorporation will require regulatory approvals from the Department of Investment and Public Asset

Management (DIPAM) and the Ministry of Coal.

The approval covers CIL's equity contribution towards its promoter stake in the joint venture. BCGCL is a JV between Coal India, which holds 51 per cent equity, and BHEL, which holds the remaining 49 per cent.

In another stock exchange filing, CIL said the proposed investment in BCGCL will be made through subscription to equity shares in cash at face value. The JV aims to set up a coal-to-ammonium nitrate project in Odisha with an annual capacity of 0.66 mtpa.

## BOBCARD

CREDIT REIMAGINED

A wholly owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda

### BOBCARD LIMITED

Registered Office: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Baroda House, Behind Dewan Shopping Centre, Jogeshwari (West), Mumbai - 400 102.

### Financial Results: Q3/FY 2025-26

### STATEMENT OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULT FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2025

(In ₹ Millions)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended			Nine months ended		Year ended
		31-12-2025 (Unaudited)	30-09-2025 (Unaudited)	31-12-2024 (Unaudited)	31-12-2025 (Unaudited)	31-12-2024 (Unaudited)	31-03-2025 (Audited)
1.	Total Income from Operations	4,584.29	4,526.95	4,284.39	13,580.75	12,341.32	16,804.13
2.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items#)	7.53	89.46	119.03	384.18	619.94	1,164.96
3.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items#)	7.53	89.46	119.03	384.18	619.94	1,164.96
4.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items#)	(4.06)	60.65	89.12	267.33	394.40	730.95
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/ (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	(2.02)	23.60	88.69	223.24	389.42	725.06
6.	Paid-up equity share capital (Face Value of ₹10 each)	12,750.00	12,750.00	9,750.00	12,750.00	9,750.00	12,750.00
7.	Reserves excluding Revaluation Reserves	1,918.93	1,920.96	1,360.06	1,918.93	1,360.06	1,695.70
8.	Share application money pending allotment	Nil	Nil	3,000.00	Nil	3,000.00	Nil
9.	Securities Premium Account	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
10.	Net worth	14,034.27	14,335.95	10,626.10	14,034.27	10,626.10	14,089.54
11.	Paid up Debt Capital/ Outstanding Debt	2,244.42	2,244.23	8,391.50	2,244.42	8,391.	



# Services PMI rises to 2-month high of 58.5 in Jan on new orders

**STRONG START.** Business confidence also climbed to a 3-month high

**Shishir Sinha**  
New Delhi

The services sector performed well in January, as the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose to a two-month high of 58.5 compared to 58 in December, S&P Global reported on Wednesday. The most notable feature was an improvement in the job scenario during the month.

Highlighting the sustained momentum in the sector, Pranjal Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC said: "Robust output growth was driven by a steady influx of new orders, including increased international demand from South and South-East Asia."

**NEW CLIENTS**  
Further she said that business confidence climbed to a three-month high, supported by efficiency gain.



**JOB REBOUND.** Rising intakes of new work prompted service providers in India to resume hiring in January

According to S&P Global, survey participants reported new business gains from clients in Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

Rising intakes of new work prompted service providers in India to resume hiring in January.

The pace of job creation

was only marginal, however, as the vast majority of firms opted to leave workforce numbers unchanged amid sufficient resources for current requirements.

"The latest results showed a broadly stable volume of pending workloads across the service economy, with the respective seasonally adjusted index registering only

fractionally above the neutral mark of 50 in January," the report noted.

## MAJOR FACTORS

Talking about business confidence rising to a three-month high, the report said that among the factors supporting optimistic forecasts were efficiency gains, marketing efforts and new client wins.

Services firms signalled more costly prices for eggs, electronic items, meat, paper, parts and vegetables. Overall, input costs increased at the fastest pace since last September, while output charges also rose to a greater extent during January, with the rate of inflation at a 3-month high.

"Service providers reportedly sought to better balance cost rises and profitability. The overall increase was nevertheless mild in the context of historical data," the report said.

Force Motors posts best-ever Q3, profit vrooms over 260%

## Our Bureau

Pune

Force Motors Ltd reported its strongest-ever third-quarter performance for the quarter ended December 31, 2025, posting record earnings and extending its strong growth momentum in FY25-26.

The Pune-based automaker recorded a 13 per cent year-on-year increase in revenue to ₹2,155 crore in Q3, while EBITDA surged 63 per cent to ₹401 crore, reflecting improved operating leverage and volume-led growth.

Profit after tax, after exceptional items, rose sharply by 266 per cent year-on-year to ₹403 crore.

For the nine months ended December 2025, revenue increased 14 per cent to ₹6,583 crore, while EBITDA grew 43 per cent to ₹1,145 crore. Profit after tax for the period more than doubled to ₹938 crore, up 153 per cent year-on-year. The company maintained a zero-debt balance sheet.

Announcing the launch of its initial public offering (IPO) on Monday at a price band of ₹857-900 per equity share of face value ₹1 each, Fractal Analytics said it will pump in over a third of the capital raised towards AI and research and development.

On Tuesday, the company reduced its IPO size from ₹4,900 crore to around ₹2,834 crore. Fractal said it lowered pricing in line with stronger investor confidence.

"Based on a lot of good advice from some of the top funds in the country, we agreed on the ₹857-900 price range. Then some of the selling shareholders wanted to stay on instead of selling at that price, because saying they are pretty confident on where Fractal is going," said Velamakanni, Co-Founder, Group CEO & Executive Vice-Chairman, Fractal Analytics.

About ₹355 crore or 35 per cent of the capital raised from this IPO is earmarked for AI revenue, R&D and alpha-related investments. According to Velamakanni, AI revenue and R&D is crucial for Fractal's future success as it is an evolving space and "only the most innovative companies willing to invest in AI, R&D have a strong chance of success."

**About 35% of the capital** raised from this IPO is earmarked for AI revenue, R&D and alpha-related investments. According to Velamakanni, AI revenue and R&D is crucial for Fractal's future success as it is an evolving space and "only the most innovative companies willing to invest in AI, R&D have a strong chance of success."

cent of the capital raised from this IPO is earmarked for AI revenue, R&D and alpha-related investments. According to Velamakanni, AI revenue and R&D is crucial for Fractal's future success as it is an evolving space and "only the most innovative companies willing to invest in AI, R&D have a strong chance of success."

Rest of the IPO proceeds will be towards repayment of loan and some basic capex.

The anchor investor bidding date is February 6. The offer will be open from February 9. Bids can be made for a minimum of 16 equity shares of face value ₹1 each and multiples of 16 equity shares of face value ₹1 each there-

after. Fractal will primarily focus on home-grown Co-genetic platform to build AI solutions for margin expansion like invoice-to-cash solution, customer experience, revenue growth and make the platform a greater contributor to company revenue.

Co-genetic revenues are significantly higher margin than rest of the business, that will improve our margin.

"We have a long way to go in terms of making people understand AI and AI companies, and having a few public AI companies is going to help market understanding," he said.

**INDIA AI MISSION**

Fractal is planning to build an AI system for the healthcare sector by developing a model that meets or exceeds global healthcare AI benchmarks, and then using it to roll out healthcare AI solutions at scale.

However, those expenses will be not budgeted in the IPO proceeds.

# Fractal Analytics sets IPO price band in the range of ₹857-900

**About 35% of the capital** raised from this IPO is earmarked for AI revenue, R&D and alpha-related investments. According to Velamakanni, AI revenue and R&D is crucial for Fractal's future success as it is an evolving space and "only the most innovative companies willing to invest in AI, R&D have a strong chance of success."

cent of the capital raised from this IPO is earmarked for AI revenue, R&D and alpha-related investments. According to Velamakanni, AI revenue and R&D is crucial for Fractal's future success as it is an evolving space and "only the most innovative companies willing to invest in AI, R&D have a strong chance of success."

Rest of the IPO proceeds will be towards repayment of loan and some basic capex.

The anchor investor bidding date is February 6. The offer will be open from February 9. Bids can be made for a minimum of 16 equity shares of face value ₹1 each and multiples of 16 equity shares of face value ₹1 each there-

after. Fractal will primarily focus on home-grown Co-genetic platform to build AI solutions for margin expansion like invoice-to-cash solution, customer experience, revenue growth and make the platform a greater contributor to company revenue.

Co-genetic revenues are significantly higher margin than rest of the business, that will improve our margin.

"We have a long way to go in terms of making people understand AI and AI companies, and having a few public AI companies is going to help market understanding," he said.

**INDIA AI MISSION**

Fractal is planning to build an AI system for the healthcare sector by developing a model that meets or exceeds global healthcare AI benchmarks, and then using it to roll out healthcare AI solutions at scale.

However, those expenses will be not budgeted in the IPO proceeds.

# High taxes on cigarettes may fuel illicit trade, hurt collection

**Our Bureau**  
New Delhi

The hiked rates of cigarettes from this month could lead to a surge in illicit cigarette trade and put pressure on tax collection, a report said.

The revised rates from February 1, as announced earlier, were due to the implementation of the additional excise duty on cigarettes and tobacco products, and a health cess on pan masala, over and above the

highest 40 per cent GST. Cigarette prices have increased by a minimum of ₹22-25 per pack of 10 sticks following the implementation of additional excise duty.

**SOCIAL IMPACT**  
"The current increase in cigarette tax rates will not only likely stimulate illicit cigarette trade and consumption that is already flourishing due to high tax arbitrage, but it will also lead to significant socio-economic impacts,"

**TOBACCO FARMERS HIT**  
The report estimated that

Artha Arbitrage Consulting said in the report, released at an event organised by Federation of All India Farmer Associations (FAIFA) in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Impact of high tax rates on the entire cigarette value chain, and on the economy, will be significant and difficult to alter later, according to the report titled "new tax regime on cigarettes and its impact".

This will be a blow to FCV (Flue-Cured Virginia) tobacco cultivators, agricultural labourers and other associated activities of tobacco cultivation, at a time when the employment situation in India is already under sharp distress, it said.

Rising prices are expected to push up demand for illegal tobacco products by nearly 39 per cent, taking total illicit consumption of cigarettes to over 46 billion sticks.

The report added that the FCV tobacco agrarian sector is under intensifying structural stress and that even before the new tax regime, FCV-based products were taxed disproportionately — over 30-50 times higher per kg than non-FCV tobacco used in bidis and chewing products.

## SUPPLYCO

The Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation Ltd.

Maveli Bhavan, Gandhi Nagar, Kochi - 682020

Ph: 0484-2207923, 8281770814

E-mail: cpckd@keralasupplies.com

16/CPD/ENGG DATE CODING/2025-2026 05/02/26

## E-TENDER NOTICE

(FORTIFIED RICE KERNELS)

Supplyco invites E-Tender

(Ref. No. KSCSC/470/2026-PADDY)

from Companies/ Traders dealing

with FRK for the supply of

**Fortified Rice Kernels** through

e-Tender system.

Last date: 09/02/2026 at 2.00 PM.

Digital signature is mandatory for

participating in e-tender.

For further information visit

website : www.etenders.kerala.gov.in

## Classifieds

### BUSINESS OFFER

#### BUSINESS

Etd. businesses looking to enter Canadian markets, contact Indigo Consulting.

President in Chennai till mid

February. www.consultainindigo.com.

indigo@indigoworldwide.com

To advertise visit

www.thehindus.com

Toll Free: 1800 102 4161

## milma

Malabar Regional Co-Operative Milk Producers' Union Ltd.

Central Products Dairy, Naduvattom, North Beypore

Kozhikode-673 015, Phone: 0495-2414117

E-mail: cpkdk@malabarmilma.coop

16/CPD/ENGG DATE CODING/2025-2026 05/02/26

## RE-ETENDER NOTICE

Re-etender is invited for the Supply of Inkjet Date Coding Printers (2 nos.) for Central Products Dairy & Kozhikode Dairy. The bid document with technical specification, terms and conditions are uploaded in the Kerala Govt e-portrait www.etenders.kerala.gov.in, with tender ID:2025\_KCMFF\_821699. For more details contact Ph-7012154091 Ancillary Unit i/c



**TATA POWER**

(Corporate Contracts Department)

Sahar Receiving Station, Near Hotel Leela, Andheri (E), Mumbai 400 059, Maharashtra, India

(Board Line: 022-67171868) CIN: L28520MH1919PLC00567

## NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Tata Power Company Limited hereby invites Expression of Interest for Supply of conveyor belts for Coal Handling Plant at Maithon Power Limited (MPL), Maithon, Dhambad, Jharkhand.

Details of pre-qualification requirements, bid security, purchasing of tender document etc. may be downloaded from the tender section of our website URL: <https://www.tatapower.com/tender>.

Eligible parties willing to participate in above tender may submit their Expression of Interest along with the tender fee for issue of bid document latest by 16 Feb 2026.



**COCHIN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LIMITED**

CIAL/COML/ROBOTS/2026

05.02.26

## EOI NOTICE

SITC OF PRODUCT DELIVERY, PASSENGER GREETING & ASSISTANCE ROBOTS AT CIAL

Expression of interest is invited from OEMs or authorized partners/dealers/system integrators/technology service providers for Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning of Product Delivery, Passenger Greeting & Assistance Robots at CIAL. For more details, visit [www.cial.aero/tenders](http://www.cial.aero/tenders) or email to jithin.paul@cial.aero

Sd/- Managing Director



**CIAL COCHIN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LTD**

CIAL/OPS/TENDER/1/2026

05/02/26

## TENDER NOTICE

Tenders are invited for SITC, OPERATION & MAINTENANCE OF SOLID WASTE TO REFUSE DERIVED FUEL (RDF) / ENERGY PLANT AT CIAL.

The Tender document will be issued from 10/02/2026 to 26/02/2026 on payment of Rs 2950/- (GST inclusive) by Bank Transfer / demand draft favouring CIAL from the Operations Department of CIAL.

For eligibility criteria and other details, visit our website [www.cial.aero](http://www.cial.aero)

Sd/- MANAGING DIRECTOR

## swelect

Powering the world responsibly

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding Special Window for Transfer and Dematerialisation of Physical Securities

Pursuant to Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Circular No.HO/38/13/11(2)/20

QUICKLY.

Palm oil tracks Dalian  
rivals higher

**Jakarta:** Malaysian palm oil futures edged higher on Wednesday after two straight sessions of falls, tracking gains in Dalian vegetable oils, while expectations of declining Malaysian palm oil stocks in end-January added support. The benchmark palm oil contract for April delivery on the Bursa Malaysia Derivatives Exchange gained 7 ringgit to 4,222 ringgit (\$1,074.57) a tonne at closing. REUTERS

Copper falls on stronger dollar, inventories outlook

**London:** Copper prices fell on Wednesday, pressured by a stronger dollar and rising metal availability in exchange stockpiles while traders played down Chinese plans to expand strategic reserves. Benchmark three-month copper on the LME was down 0.7 per cent at \$13,384.50 a tonne by 1043 GMT. REUTERS

Crude oil prices rise on US-Iran tensions



**London:** Crude oil rose on Wednesday after the US shot down an Iranian drone and armed Iranian boats approached a US-flagged vessel, rekindling fears of an escalation between Washington and Tehran. Brent crude oil futures were up 17 cents at \$67.50 a barrel by 1327 GMT. US West Texas Intermediate crude was up 20 cents at \$63.41. REUTERS

# Centre plans to transform agri sector via co-ops

**FARMER FRIENDLY.** Budget allocates ₹450 cr for National Cooperative Export Ltd and gives a thrust to computerisation of PACS

**Subramani Ra Mancombu**  
Chennai

was utilised, as per the revised Budget Estimates.

According to the experts, if the allocation for NCEL and PACS is seen together, then the government's strategy becomes clear. "PACS are the backbone of co-operative societies in the country, and the government is keen on their computerisation. This will help the government take informed policy decisions and make market interventions as and when needed," an expert said.

## LEAD IN EXPORTS

The Finance Ministry allocating ₹364 crore for the computerisation of PACS despite last year's funding not being utilised shows that it is a thrust area for the government, and the money had not been utilised due to the slow progress of the project.

The allocation has continued even when the Finance Minister pared funds for non-starter schemes announced in the last Budget.

Pointing out the allocation for NCEL, the expert

said that the co-operative export body will now take the lead in agriculture exports and ship out more products.

The allocation is more than four times the money that has been given for the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (₹81 crore).

New Delhi-based trade analyst S Chandrasekaran said, "The government's strategy is to make NCEL grow on a large scale. This will help the gains of NCEL, a co-operative, to percolate to the rural economy." The policy support for NCEL is to help co-operatives and make the organisation a social export institution.

## NCEL TRACK RECORD

NCEL has mainly been exporting rice and wheat. It has also shipped out other commodities, such as sugar and coarse cereals. "Cereals are the starting point for NCEL to emerge as a big player in the export market. NCEL will likely add more commodities in its list of ex-



**BELLOW PAR.** Last year, the government allocated ₹560 crore to PACS computerisation but only ₹150 crore was utilised, as per the revised Budget Estimates

ports," said Chandrasekaran.

Data show that the co-operative body exported 10.83 lakh tonnes (lt) of foodgrains in the 2024-25 fiscal, while overall, since its inception, the co-operative has shipped out 13.5 lt.

It played a significant role in rice and wheat exports when the government banned their shipments and said only government-to-government consignments will be permitted.

The exports have helped NCEL to work along with various multinational trading organisations. The co-operative export body, in which co-operatives such as Amul, IFFCO, Nafed, Kribhco and NCDC are founders,

will be able to get leverage from this to emerge stronger, the expert said.

The government strategy is to tap the database that will now be made available through the computerisa-

tion of PACS. It will give a picture of the ground in real time, including the availability of fertilizers. They will also give market intelligence on production, prices and demand.

## EXPORT IMPETUS

The National Co-operative Development Corporation (NCDC) will look into the infrastructure aspects, such as storage and warehousing.

"There will be synergy in the co-operative sector through this strategy," said Chandrasekaran. With the government keen on 10,000 farmer-producer organisations (FPOs) being set up, it will create an export impetus for NCEL along with PACS.

"The strategy will create more supply chains through access of co-operatives, farmers and FPOs," said the trade analyst.

Experts say that NCEL will likely become an important institution in the era of free trade agreements, the way organisations such as APEDA ascended post-globalisation.

Gold, silver gain for second consecutive day

**Subramani Ra Mancombu**  
Chennai

The precious metals complex continued to gain for the second day in a row as geopolitical uncertainties over the US shooting down an Iranian drone worried investors.

Prices in the domestic market followed the global trend with spot and futures prices rising.

"Geopolitical tensions added to haven demand (for gold and silver) after the US Navy shot down an Iranian drone in the Arabian Sea, even as the markets await a fresh round of nuclear talks scheduled for Friday," said Renisha Chainani, Head of Research at Augmont.

Gold crossed \$5,000 an ounce in early trade before sashaying around the region. At 2025 hours IST, gold was quoted at \$5,009.07 an ounce, while gold April futures on the COMEX ruled at \$5,032.24 an ounce.

## INDIAN PRICES

In India, the spot price of gold in the Mumbai market ended at ₹1,56,625 per 10 g compared with ₹1,51,529 on Tuesday.

On the MCX, gold April futures ruled at ₹1,57,323 against ₹1,53,809 in the previous trade.

Silver topped \$90 an ounce but dropped to \$89.82. On the COMEX, silver March futures were \$89.61. In the Mumbai spot market, silver ended at ₹2,82,462 a kg against ₹2,63,965.

On the MCX, silver March futures quoted at ₹2,86,000 a kg against ₹2,68,015 on Wednesday.

On the Shanghai Futures Exchange, silver March futures increased to 24,018 yuan per kg (\$107.57 per ounce).

Platinum gained nearly one per cent at \$2,255 an ounce, and palladium was up nearly 3 per cent at \$1,807 an ounce.

# Accuracy of severe weather forecast up 30-40% in 10 years

**Our Bureau**  
Mangaluru

The Centre on Wednesday said weather forecasts in the country have become much more accurate over the last 10 years. The accuracy of forecasts made 1-5 days in advance for severe weather events has improved by 30-40 per cent.

In a written reply in the Lok Sabha, Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (independent charge) for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, said the key improvement achieved in weather forecasting accuracy is the overall increase of



**GREAT FEAT.** IMD has been using a MME-based forecasting strategy from 2021 to prepare monthly and seasonal forecasts of temperature and rainfall

a five-day lead period.

For south interior Karnataka, the accuracy improved to 70 per cent in 2025 from 58 per cent in 2021 for a

one-day lead period, 65 per cent from 51 per cent for a two-day lead period, 67 per cent from 45 per cent for a three-day lead period, 63 per

cent from 39 per cent for a four-day lead period, and 63 per cent from 39 per cent for a five-day lead period.

For coastal Karnataka, the accuracy improved to 92 per cent in 2025 from 80 per cent in 2021 for a one-day lead period, 89 per cent from 75 per cent for a two-day lead period, 87 per cent from 77 per cent for a three-day lead period, 80 per cent from 68 per cent for a four-day lead period, and 79 per cent from 72 per cent for a five-day lead period.

**SEASONAL FORECAST**  
The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has been using the Multi-Model En-

semble (MME)-based forecasting strategy from 2021 to prepare monthly and seasonal forecasts of temperature and rainfall.

The accuracy of monsoon prediction over the country has shown marked improvement with the average absolute error of all-India forecast of 2.28 per cent of the long period average during 2021-2024 compared to that of 7.5 per cent in 2017-2020.

The MME approach uses coupled global climate models from different global climate prediction and research centres, including the IMD's Monsoon Mission Climate Forecasting System model.

for 40 per cent of India's exports, making these tariff adjustments crucial for the industry's stability.

The 50 per cent tariff, which came into effect on August 27, 2025, made Indian coir products significantly more expensive for US buyers, causing a ₹400 crore loss for the industry in just one quarter. The tariff increase also hit the competitiveness of Kerala's coir in the US market as exports from the State account for about 57 per cent of the total shipment to the US.

The high-tariff scenario also forced exporters to look at diversifying to markets in Europe and other parts of Asia. While the previous 50 per cent tariffs made products like coir mats uncompetitive, the reduction to 18 per cent is expected to revive demand and help exporters recover from earlier losses, the sources added.

# Setback for UP sugar mills as Jan output dips

**Prabhudatta Mishra**  
New Delhi

Sugar production in Uttar Pradesh, the country's largest sugarcane grower, has dropped for the first time this season in January due to lower crushing. A mill of the biggest-producing firm Bajaj group closed its crushing operations on January 27 due to a lack of cane availability. Besides, farmers are complaining about lower yield, which is around 30 per cent in some areas for the old crop and 10 per cent in the fresh crop.

"There will be lower production in Uttar Pradesh this year from what was earlier estimated. But it will be in line with last year's production," said Vijay S Banka, President of the UP Sugar Mills Association and MD of Dwarikesh Sugar Industries.

Farmers in western Uttar Pradesh complained about



private firm, out 52 sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh from which data was gathered, 67 per cent are using the C-Heavy route and the remaining 33 per cent are using the B-Heavy route to process sugar. The C-Heavy route gives higher sugar as there is hardly any sucrose content in the C-Heavy molasses when compared with the B-Heavy molasses.

**119 MILLS OPERATIONAL**  
Sugar production in January was 19.45 lakh tonnes (lt) against 20.1 lt, taking the total output this season to 55.10 lt during October-

January, against 52.70 lt year-ago in Uttar Pradesh, as per the data compiled by the National Federation of Co-operative Sugar Factories Ltd. It also shows that mills in the State crushed 191.86 lt cane in January against 212.83 lt year-ago.

Data show 119 mills were operational in Uttar Pradesh till January 15 and 118 mills were crushing cane as of January 31. Trade sources said the Pratappur sugar mill in Deoria district, having 6,000 tcd capacity and owned by the Bajaj group closed operations on January 27 after crushing 1,42,052 tonnes this year against 1,80,980 tonnes until February 2, 2025. A query to Bajaj Hindusthan went unanswered.

As per the first advance estimate of the ISMA, pan-India gross sugar production is estimated to be 343.5 lt in the 2025-26 season, as against 349 lt in 2024-25.

# Coir exports set to gain from US tariff cut

**V Sajeet Kumar**  
Kochi

Coir and coir product exports are expected to gain significantly following the US' decision to reduce import tariffs to 18 per cent, enabling exporters to recover the losses incurred in 2025.

The earlier tariff of 50 per cent, combined with other duties, had severely affected the competitiveness of Indian coir products in the US market.

Calling the move long overdue, Sajan B Nair, Secretary General of the Federation of Indian Coir Exporters' Associations (FICEA), said the tariff reduction had already triggered a positive response from buyers. "It is a much-awaited relief for the coir industry. Buyers are rushing to ship orders that were put on hold, and fresh orders are also being placed.

Overall, it has injected renewed vigour into the industry after a prolonged slowdown," he said.

**LONG-TERM IMPACT**  
On the long-term impact, Nair said the decision would provide a boost to future shipments, particularly for the upcoming Christmas and New Year season. "It will en-

courage sustained exports in the months ahead," he added. Coir exports earned India ₹4,343 crore in revenue during the last fiscal, of which the US market accounted for around ₹1,400 crore.

Overall, it has injected renewed vigour into the industry after a prolonged slowdown," he said.

**LONG-TERM IMPACT**  
On the long-term impact, Nair said the decision would provide a boost to future shipments, particularly for the upcoming Christmas and New Year season. "It will en-

sure growth.

Measures such as the continued focus on retail-led demand, the ₹1.4 lakh crore allocation towards growth-oriented priorities and the ₹10,000 crore SME Growth Fund under the 'Champion SMEs' initiative are expected to improve access to capital for innovation-driven businesses.

Tapan Patel, Fund Manager, Commodity, Tata Asset Management, said commodity prices may follow broad global geo-economic factors, focusing more on the US FOMC stance, upcoming economic data and shift in geopolitical factors. Investors may reassess asset allocation and look for relative stability and consolidation in commodities to invest.

Chetan Thadashwar, Chairman and MD, Shringar House of Mangalsutra Ltd (Gold & Jewellery), said Budget 2026 reinforces the importance of macro-economic stability and disciplined fiscal management at a time when domestic consumption remains the primary growth driver for the jewellery industry.

Mangesh Chauhan, Managing Director of Sky Gold & Diamonds, said the Budget reinforces economic stability and long term growth, creating a positive environment for the jewellery industry.

and operational efficiency of co-operative institutions.

The income tax deduction currently available to primary co-operative societies supplying milk, oilseeds, fruits and vegetables has been extended to include cattle feed and cotton seed produced by their members. This is expected to benefit the dairy co-operative sector in Gujarat, he said.

The reform will simplify accounting and tax compliance for 18,600 Village Co-operative Societies in Gujarat and offer similar relief to thousands of dairy co-operatives across the country.

The Budget also allowed inter-cooperative society dividend income as a deductible expense under the new tax regime. This measure is expected to provide financial relief of around ₹80-100 crore per year to dairy co-operatives in Gujarat alone, Mehta added.

**TAXATION REFORMS**  
A key highlight of the Budget is a set of major taxation reforms designed to improve the financial sustainability

# Copper futures: Avoid taking fresh positions

**Akhil Nallamuthu**  
bl research bureau

Copper futures have seen higher than usual volatility since early last week. It is now being quoted at ₹1,290 per kg.

**COMMODITY CALL.**  
Last week, it broke out of a resistance at ₹1,340 and marked a record high of ₹1,480.30. But the rally could not sustain where the contract immediately fell. On Monday, it slipped to a six-week low of ₹1,156 before recovering to the current level of ₹1,290.

At the current juncture, there is a lack of clarity in the path of the next swing in price. In case copper rallies, it will face resistance at ₹1,340. A breakout of this can lift the price to ₹1,450.

**Our Bureau**  
Mangaluru

While welcoming measures supporting MSMEs and lab-grown diamonds (LGD), stakeholders from the gems and jewellery sector said their requests for a cut in import duty on gold and GST rationalisation did not materialise in the Budget.

Kirit Bhansali, Chairman, Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC), said, "We thank the government for a positive, growth-focused Budget that addresses key bottlenecks and gives fresh momentum to India's gems and jewellery sector. It improves liquidity, supports manufacturing and strengthens exports across the value chain."

**TRADE STRATEGY**  
Given the uncertainty, traders can avoid taking fresh positions. That said, traders with high risk appetite can short copper futures if it inches up to ₹1,330. Target and stop-loss can be ₹1,215 and ₹1,380 respectively.

Prithviraj Kothari, Managing Director at Ridi-Siddhi Bullions Ltd and President of the India Bullion and Jewellers Association Ltd, said the industry expected a cut in import duty on gold, GST rationalisation, export incentives and

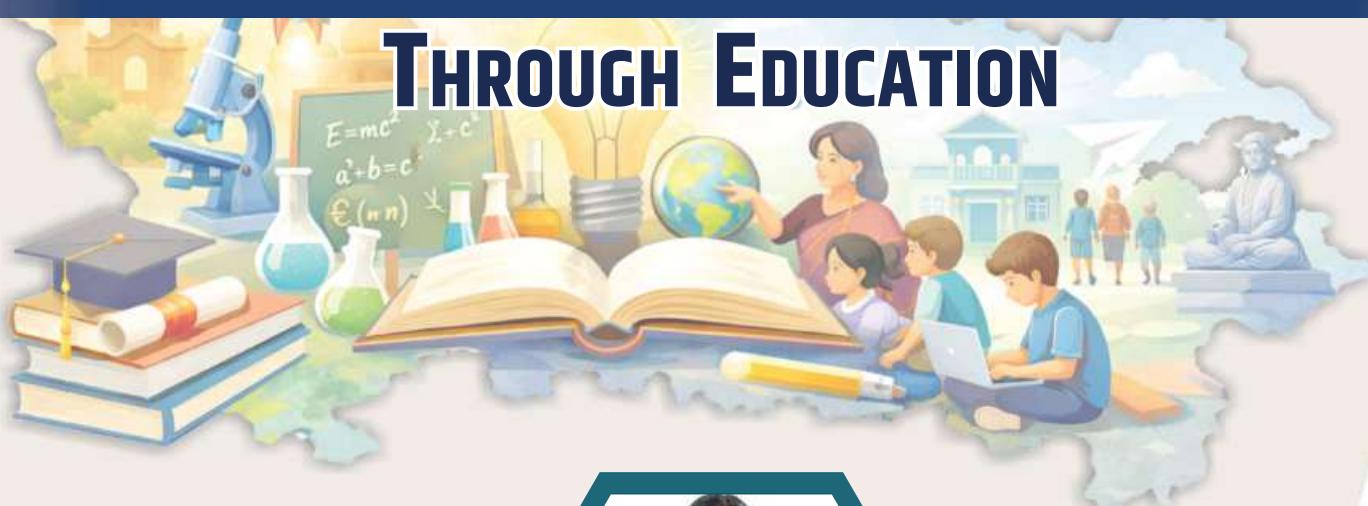
# UTTAR PRADESH

## NURTURING A FUTURE-READY GENERATION THROUGH EDUCATION



“An ideal society and a strong nation are built only on the basis of education. Culture has special importance in education. The path to success in life can begin from where it is actually education”

**Yogi Adityanath**  
Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh



“Education is not only the foundation upon which our civilization has been built, but it is also the architect of humanity's future”

**Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister



### AN ERA OF SMART BASIC EDUCATION

- Through innovative initiatives like the School Chalo Abhiyan and the Sharda Program (School Attendance Every Day), an additional 40 lakh children have been enrolled, leading to a significant reduction in dropout rates
- Under the Sharda Program, 88,700 children were enrolled in council schools in 2025-26
- Under RTE, 22,040 children were studying in the year 2016-17, this number increased to more than 4.30 lakhs in 2024-25, whereas in 2025-26 the number is about 1.41 lakhs
- Under Operation Kayakalp, 19 essential infrastructure facilities are being upgraded in primary and upper primary schools
- Digital learning is being strengthened by ensuring:
  - Smart classes in 25,790 council schools
  - 880 Block Resource Centers (BRCs)
  - ICT labs in 5,817 schools
  - Distribution of over 2.61 lakh tablets for teachers
- All 746 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas were upgraded, providing free residential education up to Class 12 to girls from weaker sections
- The first Sainik School of Purvanchal is operational in Gorakhpur
- Atal Residential Schools have been launched in all 18 divisions
- Selected schools under the PM-SHRI scheme are being upgraded and developed as Green Schools
- 377 council schools from Pre-Primary to Class 8 are being upgraded as Chief Minister Abhyuday Composite Schools
- With a budgetary provision of around Rs 4,500 crore, 150 Chief Minister Model Composite Schools (two per district) are being established. These schools will provide education from Pre-Primary to Class 12, with a capacity of 1,500 students each



### DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT

- Students are being provided mobile phones/tablets to connect them with digital education.
- 41.7 lakh students have been registered in the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC).
- Establishment of e-content studios, e-suvidha centers, smart classrooms, and e-libraries.
- Smart classrooms have been set up in all universities, government aided colleges, and most self-financed institutions.
- Through the SMARTH/SAMARTH (ERP) Enterprise Resource Planning system, admissions, promotions, NOCs, and faculty related services have been fully digitized
- Libraries of government degree colleges are being strengthened by providing pre-loaded tablets enriched with academic material, thereby promoting digital learning.
- A paperless classroom has been launched as a pilot project with the objective of environmental conservation and digital empowerment



### ADVANCEMENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- Since 2021-22, Uttar Pradesh has played a leading role in the implementation of NEP-2020
- Choice Based Credit System (CBCS), multidisciplinary education, state-exit options, and flexibility in subject selection have been introduced
- Promotion is being given to Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), value-based education, and research-oriented undergraduate programs
- A uniform academic calendar has been implemented across all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
- Students are now provided the facility to complete a three-year degree program in two years through online credits

### EMPOWERING SECONDARY EDUCATION

- A total of 34,074 teachers were selected in aided secondary schools
- Creation of 7,540 new teaching posts
- Teaching arrangements for the academic session have been made on a honorarium basis against vacant posts by engaging retired teachers. Requisitions have been sent for 780 Government, 3,222 Aided, and 419 Aided Sanskrit vacancies
- Selection of qualified teachers on the basis of written examination
- Appointment letters/postings have been issued to a total of 8,966 selected candidates including 6,808 selected assistant teachers, 1,939 lecturers and 219 principals by the Public Service Commission



### CAREER-FOCUSED HIGHER EDUCATION

- CMAPS-HE: Paid internships for final-year students with a dedicated budget of ₹100 crore
- AEDP Yojana: One-year apprenticeship integrated into the academic programme
- Uttar Pradesh is a leader in developing the implementation roadmap for the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020
- The vision of One Division One State University is a reality
- UP Higher Education Promotion Policy- 2024 implemented to boost domestic and foreign investment in the education sector
- Construction of the NCC Training Academy initiated in Gorakhpur district
- Skill courses made mandatory, benefiting 23.9 lakh under-graduate students across 760+ skill-based trades
- Uttar Pradesh Education Service Selection Commission, Prayagraj constituted to ensure transparency in teacher recruitment



SEAFOOD EXPORTERS  
ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

## SEAI thanks The Hon'ble Prime Minister

For historic trade agreements and support extended through the Union Budget 2026, that strengthen India's seafood industry globally.



Blue economy and ocean resources are central to India's growth, and we are exploring high-potential opportunities that define future economic expansion.

**SHRI NARENDRA MODI**  
Hon'ble Prime Minister

On behalf of India's seafood community, the Seafood Exporters Association of India expresses its sincere gratitude to the Hon'ble Prime Minister for his visionary leadership and resolute efforts in successfully concluding the India-EU Free Trade Agreement and the India-US Trade Deal.

### India-EU FTA: a milestone for India's seafood sector by:

- Expanding access to high-value EU seafood markets
- Strengthening India's global seafood export competitiveness
- Advancing standards on quality, sustainability, and traceability
- Building trusted, long-term India-EU trade partnerships

### The agreement will create meaningful impact for:

- Fishers and aquaculture farmers
- Processors and exporters across the value chain
- Coastal communities and allied livelihoods
- Sustainable growth of India's blue economy

The efforts by the Government to facilitate exports will be a game-changer for Indian seafood. The agreements signal global trust in Indian seafood and a clear pathway for sustainable, export-led growth.

—Shri Pawan G Kumar  
President, Seafood Exporters Association of India

[seai.org.in](http://seai.org.in)

Follow us on:



Presents

thehindu businessline.

# [ DECODING THE BUDGET ] 2026-2027

In Association with



Associate Partners



## JOIN US AS WE DELVE INTO THE KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS IN OUR POST-BUDGET ANALYSIS.

### KEYNOTE ADDRESS



V. Anantha Nageswaran  
Chief Economic Advisor  
Government of India

### SPECIAL ADDRESS



V. Vualnam  
Secretary, Department of  
Expenditure

### SPECIAL ADDRESS



Anuradha Thakur  
Secretary, Department of  
Economic Affairs

### MICRO ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE BUDGET



R. Kavita Rao  
Director, National Institute of  
Public Finance and Policy



Praveen K Jha  
Professor of Economics and Chairperson of the  
Centre for Economic Studies and  
Planning, School of Social Sciences, JNU



Rajni Sinha  
Chief Economist, CareEdge Ratings



Sitikantha Pattanaik  
Chief Economist, NABARD



Shishir Sinha  
Associate Editor, businessline  
(Moderator)

### BUDGET AND TRADE



Biswajit Dhar  
Trade and Economic Policy Expert  
and Former Professor, JNU



Prerna Prabhakar  
Fellow, Centre for Social and  
Economic Progress



Jyoti Vij  
Director General, FICCI



Bharat Kaushal  
Corporate Officer, Hitachi, Ltd.,  
Executive Chairman, Hitachi India



Amiti Sen  
Associate Editor, businessline  
(Moderator)

Friday, February 06, 2026 | 4:00 PM onwards

Federation of Indian Chambers of  
Commerce and Industry.  
Federation House, New Delhi



Scan the QR code or visit  
[tbl.news/BLDCB2026](http://tbl.news/BLDCB2026)  
to register for the event.

For trade/sponsorship enquiry, call: +91 98994 28794

Company	Prev	Close	Open	High	Low	Qty	52 WH	52 WL	PE	BSE CI	Company	Prev	Close	Open	High	Low	Qty	52 WH	52 WL	PE	BSE CI	Company	Prev	Close	Open	High	Low	Qty	52 WH	52 WL	PE	BSE CI											
20 Microns [5]	172.68	170.59	171.88	175.85	168.36	207.81	254.10	158.80	10	170.15	Gardatech [5]	261.60	239.29	250.00	250.00	190.00	534.00	239.50	190.00	192.50	-	Godawari p [1]	252.50	252.50	254.49	260.35	251.37	2008.85	390.00	145.50	22	260.40	KeruVaya [2]	304.65	317.25	305.00	318.15	302.50	237	322.65	193.67	13	317.05
309 One WM [1]	116.70	116.50	114.50	117.00	113.00	119.00	119.50	112.00	119.50	119.50	Gavin [1]	957.85	1000.10	994.00	1045.00	922.00	1087.00	1045.00	920.00	1059.00	119.00	Godfrey Phillips [2]	1919.80	204.70	191.00	204.70	190.00	2054.40	250.00	252.50	252.50	252.50	KAVERI SEED [2]	911.50	936.20	914.50	999.40	911.85	125.10	1601.85	798.40	17	936.20
31 Infotech [5]	15.08	15.49	15.23	15.50	15.60	15.50	15.50	15.50	15.50	15.50	CASTROL [5]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00	Godfrey Ind [1]	1006.35	1008.50	1004.00	1018.05	997.75	117.35	139.50	764.45	-	KaiveriDives [1]	48.21	66.26	66.36	67.89	66.50	65.99	104.80	105.80	105.80	105.80	
31 India [2]	3502.50	3576.00	3481.00	3510.00	3456.00	3455.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	GMM Prod [2]	981.45	1002.80	984.00	1023.00	980.50	103.32	107.65	475.00	117.00	73.00	Godfrey Ind [1]	1006.40	115.50	117.00	114.00	110.00	114.00	260.50	102.85	102.85	102.85											
5PAISA [1]	334.05	341.25	334.00	345.00	331.00	331.00	73.63	43.10	287.95	25.37	CE Info Sys [1]	134.00	135.66	134.40	137.20	129.60	278.53	182.90	104.75	45	100.00	Godfrey Ind [1]	1006.35	1008.50	1004.00	1018.05	997.75	117.35	139.50	764.45	-												
63 Moonste [2]	650.61	653.50	652.00	655.30	642.40	69.48	113.00	108.00	57.50	79.65	CDSL [2]	129.30	126.00	129.30	132.80	123.80	132.80	132.80	120.00	19.25	Godfrey Ind [1]	1006.35	1008.50	1004.00	1018.05	997.75	117.35	139.50	764.45	-													
A [*****]	477.25	472.60	477.25	479.00	472.20	454.00	547.00	361.60	-	-	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00	Godfrey Ind [1]	1006.35	1008.50	1004.00	1018.05	997.75	117.35	139.50	764.45	-												
Aarti Drugs [1]	390.60	370.90	356.30	374.95	356.30	93.00	59.00	574.95	312.50	18	370.20	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00	Godfrey Ind [1]	1006.35	1008.50	1004.00	1018.05	997.75	117.35	139.50	764.45	-											
Aarti Inds [1]	401.30	429.70	442.20	470.00	448.00	425.00	380.00	49.00	344.20	44.20	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00	Godfrey Ind [1]	1006.35	1008.50	1004.00	1018.05	997.75	117.35	139.50	764.45	-												
Aarti Pharm [1]	796.15	776.65	785.00	791.35	773.55	98.18	97.10	573.95	-	-	Cemindia Pro [2]	673.50	700.15	678.40	700.15	650.00	725.33	94.00	476.00	-	Centrum C [1]	25.01	25.51	25.00	25.70	24.63	31.25	41.90	22.41	25	40.00	Centrum C [1]	25.01	25.51	25.00	25.70	24.63	31.25	41.90	22.41	25	40.00	
Aavas [1]	142.40	142.20	142.00	143.20	142.10	142.00	142.00	142.00	142.00	142.00	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00											
AB [*****]	47.50	47.20	47.50	47.50	47.50	47.50	47.50	47.50	47.50	47.50	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00											
Abdul Hsgn [1]	477.25	472.60	477.25	479.00	472.20	454.00	547.00	361.60	-	-	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00											
AB Sun Life [1]	81.00	82.33	81.10	82.85	80.50	188.00	90.00	59.00	55.50	-	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00											
AB Sun Life [1]	56.60	57.50	55.60	56.60	55.60	55.60	55.60	55.60	55.60	55.60	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00											
AB Powerpo [1]	197.00	194.00	193.00	196.00	193.00	188.00	188.00	188.00	188.00	188.00	CHALCOP [1]	89.65	87.80	89.00	89.90	83.00	87.80	87.75	81.00	-	Chamal Set [1]	265.20	266.00	256.00	271.00	250.00	103.30	395.75	87.80	-	Chamal Set [1]	265.20	266.00	256.00	271.00	250.00	103.30	395.75	87.80	-			
ABFRU [1]	65.74	66.84	65.00	66.34	65.77	66.81	66.81	66.81	66.81	66.81	Chamal Fert [1]	430.70	438.00	428.00	440.00	393.00	427.00	415.00	345.00	-	Centrum C [1]	26.01	26.50	26.00	26.50	25.00	10	140.00	23.00	-	Centrum C [1]	26.01	26.50	26.00	26.50	25.00	10	140.00	23.00	-			
ABML [1]	125.22	129.11	123.99	131.00	122.00	122.00	122.00	122.00	122.00	122.00	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.00	187.25	19.00	CEAR [1]	184.80	187.39	185.00	189.65	164.80	188.95	185.00	180.													

For BSE/NSE live quotes, scan the QR code or click the link  
<https://bit.ly/2FosKk>

Company Prev Close Open High Low Qty 52 WH PE BSE CI

Orexx Min [1] 4483.40 457.30 4775.10 4538.10 4775.00 12.78 6423.45 4900.30 - 4561.70

Orexx India [1] 4583.50 551.10 551.05 562.00 547.25 120.22 760.00 546.00 -

Oswal GrnTech 28.07 28.65 28.20 28.20 28.20 24.10 50.10 27.50 -

OswalPumps 386.65 395.30 387.80 398.65 381.10 571.36 888.40 360.50 -

P \*\*\*\*\*

P&G Health 5261.50 5250.50 5241.50 5285.00 5241.00 13.16 6739.00 4903.85 -

Pars Digitek 520.00 510.00 509.00 517.43 110.00 500.00 500.00 -

Page Int'l 3274.00 3425.00 3400.00 3426.00 3300.00 28.31 5047.60 2123.95 30 3424.00

Pakka 88.44 92.99 88.90 96.85 88.89 19.57 589.21 280.40 85.17 -

Panacea Bio [1] 370.45 380.90 375.00 382.50 370.85 91.57 589.75 281.21 80.85 -

Panama Pe [2] 303.74 301.15 303.70 303.70 296.60 28.53 411.15 263.90 15.20 299.85 -

Paradiso Phm 130.70 131.00 133.00 133.00 128.75 20.00 310.00 81.25 -

Paramit Min 250.30 250.50 251.00 251.00 250.00 21.30 262.80 50.70 -

PARMOU [1] 30.40 31.00 30.40 31.40 30.00 21.60 37.00 25.00 -

Parsons Defen 659.80 659.90 656.00 664.15 653.00 400.21 194.50 608.00 -

Park Hotels 128.17 128.70 125.10 126.98 126.07 180.90 207.98 116.85 -

PARK MED 157.41 157.35 154.50 157.00 157.00 187.84 165.80 130.40 -

Passenger A/c 46.44 46.44 46.44 46.44 46.44 46.44 46.44 -

Patanjali Jyoti 50.55 50.40 50.00 50.00 51.00 500.45 103.01 201.00 48.00 -

Patel engg [1] 28.59 29.31 28.40 29.40 28.26 457.96 47.24 26.16 8 29.34 -

Patel Retail 20.75 20.31 20.75 20.00 21.67 20.00 88.10 165.91 -

PayTm 1198.10 1206.50 1195.00 1215.00 1206.00 20.75 113.00 201.88 138.80 151.50 -

PB FinTech 140.00 140.00 140.00 140.00 140.00 140.00 140.00 140.00 -

PC Jeweller [1] 10.41 10.41 10.41 10.41 10.25 304.14 17.47 10.41 -

PCBLL 299.75 282.70 292.00 292.00 277.35 473.05 444.15 254.50 -

PDS 349.75 350.20 347.00 346.00 340.40 217.50 504.30 289.95 -

PEMAR IND [5] 178.04 183.68 180.00 185.00 177.96 363.00 279.80 136.50 -

PERSTANT [1] 157.41 157.35 154.50 157.00 157.00 187.84 165.80 130.40 -

Petrojet LNG 247.99 250.80 250.00 250.35 250.00 262.95 367.70 12.20 298.30 -

Pfizer Ltd 4667.60 4743.50 4700.00 4779.50 4620.10 31.49 598.75 653.20 31 473.75 -

PG Electr [1] 562.20 591.35 561.30 590.50 560.70 463.82 1008.40 471.15 15.3 591.53 -

PGIL [5] 1772.10 1917.40 1974.00 1926.00 1782.40 506.32 1993.80 384.00 134 191.95 -

PNR Mill 130.00 130.00 130.00 130.00 130.00 130.00 130.00 130.00 -

PhysicalW 119.41 120.00 119.41 120.41 117.36 412.60 16.19 119.20 -

PIC INDUS [1] 3167.50 3150.10 3167.50 3190.00 3143.00 88.20 4329.00 292.05 25 317.45 -

PiccadillyAgr 588.90 585.30 586.00 586.00 580.10 52.54 80.50 533.15 -

Piddle [1] 142.70 146.30 142.40 147.20 143.00 147.00 145.00 145.00 -

Pin Labels 22.85 22.85 22.85 22.85 22.85 22.85 22.85 22.85 -

Piramal Phm 181.00 180.00 180.00 180.00 180.00 180.00 180.00 180.00 -

Piramal Pfr 16.22 16.22 16.22 16.22 16.22 16.22 16.22 16.22 -

Pit Engg [1] 87.55 87.55 87.50 89.00 84.00 45.44 112.00 100.00 -

Pitney Bow [1] 20.75 20.75 20.75 20.75 20.75 20.75 20.75 20.75 -

PlatinumD 230.88 234.68 232.74 236.59 228.15 51.17 342.40 213.00 -

Plaza Engg 39.88 40.28 39.80 40.28 39.90 54.68 17.35 34.63 -

Pm Gdwill Jw 55.20 55.20 55.20 55.20 55.20 55.20 55.20 55.20 -

PnB Crtt 78.95 80.72 79.00 82.00 82.00 57.84 119.84 73.55 6 80.74 -

PNU Busin 82.80 85.10 82.30 85.20 82.15 106.42 114.85 74.60 10 85.60 -

PNC Infra [2] 225.71 256.85 220.75 251.35 223.16 61.82 313.00 69.25 -

Pokarna Ltd [2] 87.03 95.20 90.00 99.44 88.00 243.27 145.71 69.25 -

Polyca Ind [1] 150.00 150.00 150.00 150.00 150.00 150.00 150.00 150.00 -

Polyca Ind 150.00 150.00 150.00 150.00 150.00 150.00 150.00 150.00 -

Polyplex 85.70 85.40 85.00 86.60 87.00 139.36 139.90 77.50 85.50 -

PonavalliPh 40.49 42.20 41.00 42.50 40.75 205.30 267.20 15.20 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 163.48 157.80 94.00 -

Pondy Oxides 130.90 130.80 132.50 133.40 129.60 16