



## QUICKLY.

RBI to start deliberations on interest rate from today

**Mumbai:** The Reserve Bank of India's rate-setting panel will start its three-day brainstorming for the next bi-monthly monetary policy on Wednesday. Experts are of the view that the Reserve Bank of India has already reduced the key short-term lending rate (repo) by 125 basis points since last February, and may go for status on rates as there are no pressing concerns on either growth or inflation. **PN**

**India and Bhutan to boost cooperation in power sector**

**New Delhi:** India and Bhutan will strengthen cooperation in the power sector, an official statement said. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Bhutan Lyonpo Gemb Tshering met Indian Power Minister Manohar Lal. "Both sides deliberated on the commercial optimisation of power output from the Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project," it said. **PN**

# 'Next GST Council meeting likely to focus on registration, audit, refunds'

**THE AGENDA.** Finance Ministry signals trust-based compliance reforms; GST meet expected in March or April

**Shishir Sinha**

New Delhi



**GST RESET.** The last GST Council meeting, which took place on September 3, recommended a revamp of the rate structure

The GST Council, in its next meeting, is likely to further ease the process of registration, refund and audit, a top Finance Ministry official told *businessline*. He said the new provisions for direct taxes in the Finance Bill are meant to honour the trust.

"Our officers have held two rounds of extensive meetings. Basic agenda has been prepared. Once we get more concrete suggestions, we will finalise the agenda for the GST Council meeting," he said, adding that the next meeting could take place once the Budget is passed either during the last week of March or early April.

The last GST Council meeting, which took place on September 3, recommended a revamp of the rate structure. Asked about key issues likely to figure in the next meeting, the official said these could be related to registration, refund and audit, besides others.

According to tax experts, the artificial distinction between goods and services for the purpose of refund has led to significant working capital blockages for various industries. The GST Council

should consider allowing refunds of such accumulated ITC on services, thereby ensuring seamless flow of credit and improved liquidity for businesses, they said.

#### BUDGET TAX PROPOSALS

Talking about the key message behind new tax proposals announced in the Budget or proposed in the Finance Bill, the official said: "Let the taxpayers be in control of

things." In other words, the effort would be to facilitate those who have a better compliance record. "For example, if an assessee has been issued a show cause notice under Section 148 of the Income Tax Act, and the assessee can pay the disputed tax along with interest and penalty, and file revised or updated returns within the specified time, the assessing officer can close the process based on that," he said.

Under the new provision, returns can be revised by non-audit assesses and can be filed any time within 12 months from the end of the relevant tax year or before the completion of the assessment, whichever is earlier.

However, for filing a revised return after December 31, a fee will be imposed between ₹1,000 and ₹5,000. Updated return can be filed within

four years from the end of the financial year succeeding the relevant tax year. Such a return may be furnished even if no original, belated or revised return was filed earlier.

The official gave another example about the ease of taxation.

The scope of granting of immunity under Section 440 of the Income-tax Act, 2025, is proposed to be expanded to cover all such cases where penalty proceedings are initiated for under-reporting in consequence of misreporting of income, provided the taxpayer pays an additional income tax as specified in lieu of such penalty.

The official said that now the key will be implementation, as detailed rules and regulations are in place.

"This means big work for the officials in the pipeline," he said.

# 'India-UK FTA offers strategic benefits for rules-based trade'

**Press Trust of India**

London

Trump. "The UK has reached a landmark deal with a key strategic partner at a time of considerable geopolitical turbulence," said Lord Peter Goldsmith, who was chair of the committee during the inquiry period.

The committee, which reviewed evidence from stakeholders, found that the FTA will be helpful to UK businesses. However, it did highlight some shortcomings in areas of legal services, investment protection and "new market access" for financial or professional services.

The report, which will now be debated by the Upper House early next month as the India-UK CETA progresses towards parliamentary ratification and implementation, struck a cautionary tone that the FTA agreed between India and the European Union (EU) last month may have future implications for the pact.

# 'New baggage rules to ease bringing jewellery, re-import of equipment'

**bl.interview**

**Shishir Sinha**

New Delhi

Carrying costly equipment for both professional and personal use will now be easier, says Vivek Chaturvedi, Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs.

He also outlined details of key trade facilitation measures.

*Edited excerpts:*

#### What are the key changes introduced in the Budget's Authorised Economic Scheme (AES)?

AEO clients have a very good compliance record. They also have an equally good track record with the customs and get facilitation in terms of customs clearance and deferral of duty.

This time, we have extended the duty deferral period

from 15 days to once a month.

Since it is a trust-based system and we have a few thousand entities operating as AEOs, it is also imperative that, going forward, the footprint of such trusted entities is also increased.

We are creating a class of entities that will be eligible for similar benefits as an AEO, as far as duty deferral and other measures are concerned. We will be rolling out the implementation of the scheme in the next few days.

The idea is to identify entities that inspire trust and with whom the government can also do business in the same way as AEOs.

This means that the facilitation levels extended to AEOs should be made available to this class as well. This will be for two years till March 31, 2028. The idea is to give them a gentle nudge so that they, too, can move into the AEO fold, allowing

the ecosystem of trusted clients with whom customs does business and vice versa, to expand over a period of time.

It also translates into benefits such as faster and automated cargo clearance for these entities from the time that the container lands from the ship into the factory. Along with deferred duty, this results in faster turnaround time of cargo and ease of congestion. In this way, businesses gain a greater degree of certainty and predictability in planning their activities from the time an order is placed to the time the goods are received at the factory.

#### What is the proposal for E Seal scheme?

The plan is to run a pilot at Nhava Sheva using an Electronic Cargo Tracking System (ECTS) for exports. Under this system, factory-stuffed containers

We are prioritising the reduction of procedural delays by ensuring customs officials have clarity on duty-free allowances

**VIVEK CHATURVEDI**

Chairman, CBIC

are secured with electronic seals; upon arrival at the port, an RFID reader verifies seal integrity. If no tampering is detected, a 'let export' order is automatically triggered through a risk-based approach, eliminating the need for manual intervention.

#### What are new measures for fisheries sector?

There are two parts. The first is on the rate front, aimed at promoting aquaculture units in local fisheries. The plan is

to provide impetus to seafood exports.

The value limit of duty-free import of specified inputs has been raised from the earlier 1 per cent of the FOB value of seafood products exported in the preceding financial year to 3 per cent. This provides an enhanced duty-free limit for importing inputs used in processing, making it easier to export the final products.

The other part is amending Section 1 of the Customs Act, 1962 to extend jurisdiction

#### cap on bringing jewellery, which has now been removed.

#### What is the rationale behind that?

This was a facility extended to residents and tourists of Indian origin returning after a minimum one-year period of stay abroad. The earlier provisions had both weight and the value-based criteria.

If you now look at the value of gold compared to earlier levels, there has been a significant increase.

Any catch brought from these areas into the mainland will not be treated as an import and will not be subject to customs duty. The other facility is that fish harvested at EEZ and beyond can also be exported. This is a significant amendment because it expands the scope of the territorial waters of India beyond 12 nautical miles, going into the EEZs and even beyond for fish harvesting.

We are prioritising the reduction of procedural delays by ensuring customs officials have clarity on duty-free allowances.

For women meeting the residency criteria, the 40 g gold jewellery allowance is now subject only to weight, with no ceiling on its total value. Also, jewellery was earlier excluded from the definition of personal effects. We have now made the definition of personal effects more encompassing.

#### What is the new provision under baggage rules for temporary imports of equipment?

There were issues about paying duty on high-value equipment and then taking it out of the country or having a detention certificate and leaving the items at the airport, which made little sense. For instance, if someone is a wildlife photographer, they need to carry a camera. What we have done now is, the passenger must approach the customs, submit a declaration, which can be manual or electronic. The customs officer, after verifying the goods, will issue a certificate.

Based on this, the passenger can bring the goods into the country. At the time of departure, he/she needs to produce the certificate to the customs officer. The identity of what came in and what is going out is established by way of that certificate.

# 'Seaplane VGF likely to provide hybrid subsidies, guarantees'

**Rohit Vaid**

New Delhi

The proposed Seaplane Viability Gap Funding (VGF) scheme is expected to include a range of structural measures to support the early-stage viability of commercial seaplane operations, industry sources said.

Speaking to *businessline*, sources said that the framework is expected to focus on subsidy design, aircraft access and regulatory streamlining during the initial phase of seaplane deployment in the country.

The proposed framework is likely to include special capacity-based subsidies for small aircraft with seating capacities ranging from 9 to



sources told *businessline*. Besides this, sources said the scheme is likely to recognise aircraft access as a more significant constraint than passenger demand in the initial years of operations.

#### OPERATING COSTS

"This approach is expected to acknowledge that operating costs are primarily aircraft-based rather than demand-based and is likely to help operators remain viable during the market-building phase," sources added.

According to industry sources, seaplanes are capital-intensive assets and carry elevated risks for private operators in a nascent market such as India. To address this, the proposed

framework is expected to advocate limited sovereign guarantees to be extended to aircraft lessors. "These measures are likely aimed at reducing upfront risk, accelerating route launches, and treating seaplanes as long-term national infrastructure assets," sources noted.

However, sources said the scheme is also expected to highlight fragmented regulation as a key bottleneck for seaplane operations.

"Despite pilot projects, seaplane operations are likely to continue facing multiple overlapping approvals, unclear accountability and regulatory uncertainty unless addressed through policy intervention," sources said.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced measures aimed at strengthening regional connectivity through seaplane deployment. Notably, the Union Budget outlines initiatives linked to seaplane manufacturing as well as route development.

#### CONNECTIVITY BOOST

"To enhance last-mile and remote connectivity, and promote tourism, I propose to give incentives to indigenous manufacturing of seaplanes," Sitharaman told Parliament on Sunday. "A Seaplane Viability Gap Funding scheme will also be introduced to provide support for operations," she added.

Notably, the pay scale of executives (up to mid-level) of the world's largest coal miner has been upgraded nationally with effect from January 1, 2017.

"The financial effect of this upgrade is payable from 23 August 2023. The total estimated financial im-

# Pay hike to cost Coal India ₹3,400 cr; BCCL reports ₹22.88 cr loss in Q3

**Our Bureau**

Kolkata

State-run coal behemoth Coal India's estimated financial impact on account of upgradation of the pay scale of its executives would be around ₹3,400 crore for the period up to December 31, 2026.

Notably, the pay scale of executives (up to mid-level) of the world's largest coal miner has been upgraded nationally with effect from January 1, 2017.

"The financial effect of this upgrade is payable from 23 August 2023. The total estimated financial im-

pact of this upgradation for the period up to 31 December 2026 is approximately ₹3,400 crore," Coal India said in a stock exchange filing on Tuesday.

BCCL declared its quarterly numbers for the first time after listing on the stock exchanges in January this year.

**BCCL REPORTS LOSS** Meanwhile, Bharat Coking Coal Ltd (BCCL), a subsidi-

ary of Coal India, has reported a net loss of ₹22.88 crore for the third quarter of this fiscal year compared to ₹424.99 crore net profit for the same period last fiscal year.

Revenue from operations for BCCL, one of the largest coking coal producers in the domestic market, witnessed a 24.5 per cent y-o-y fall at ₹2,782.80 crore in Q3FY26 compared with ₹3,688.23 crore during Q3FY25, it said in a stock exchange filing on Tuesday.

BCCL declared its quarterly numbers for the first time after listing on the stock exchanges in January this year.

# Budget doubles nuclear research funding to ₹2,410 cr

**M Ramesh**

Chennai

The Budget has nearly doubled its support for nuclear research, allocating ₹2,410.48 crore to R&D projects across various institutions under the Department of Atomic Energy, compared with ₹1,284.77 crore last year (revised estimate), marking an 88 per cent increase.

Notably, support for capital expenditure has gone up. The Budget allocates ₹1,977.20 crore for capital expenditure for nuclear research projects, compared with ₹928.95 crore in 2025-

26 (RE), reflecting a 113 per cent jump.

Support under the 'revenue' head has gone up modestly, from ₹355.82 crore to ₹433.38 crore.

#### BULK FOR BARC

Budget allocation to the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has been increased by ₹830 crore for its research projects

read in the context of the research body's remit of developing three small modular reactors — the 200 MW Bharat small modular reactor (BSMR-200), the 55 MW small modular reactor (SMR-55) and the 5 MW (thermal) high temperature gas cooled reactor for producing hydrogen.

However, the Budget papers do not indicate that the enhanced allocation is necessarily for these projects.

#### BONANZA FOR ICGAR

The India Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research, Kalpakkam, near Chennai, has received a substantial boost. Support to ICGAR's

R&D projects has jumped to ₹226 crore, compared with ₹67.86 crore earlier. Of this, the bigger chunk has been given to capital expenditure for these projects — ₹183.82 crore, against ₹59.79 crore.

Under 'revenue' too, the budget allocation has increased to ₹42.18 crore, from ₹17.07 crore.

#### SUPPORT TO DAE FLAT

While the Budget has made higher allocations to R&D projects under the DAE institutions, the total budgetary support to the department has come down slightly to ₹24,123.92 crore, from ₹24,411.47 crore earlier (RE 2025-26).

This is clearly because of a sharp decline in the capital expenditure of Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL) — ₹5,500 crore, compared with ₹8,242 crore (RE 2025-26).

This is presumably because NPCIL is doing financially well and does not need budgetary support.

The allocation for revenue expenditure has also increased to ₹855 crore from

# FEMINA EXPANDS FEMINA ACHIEVERS AWARDS TO THE SOUTH WITH DEBUT EDITION IN CHENNAI



L to R - Selvi Apoorna (IAS), Nikita Porwal, Tamanna Das and Dr Republica Sridhar



Dr Palanivel Thiaga Rajan, Minister for Information Technology & Digital Services, Government of Tamil Nadu

Nikita Porwal and Mr CK Kumaravel



L to R - Primrose Monteiro-D'Souza, Thangamalar Jaganath, Selvi Apoorna (IAS), and Dr Smyrna G



Priyanka Mohan

Anitha Mohan - Excellence in Financial Planning and Wealth Management - Investment Solutions Pvt Ltd



Archana Chandhok - Excellence in Entertainment

Basheer Ali - Excellence in Women's Accessories - DIFA

Bharathi Sridhar - Excellence in Astrological Counselling - Astrologer

Dr Aruna Ashok - Excellence in Advanced Fertility and Reproductive Medicine - A4 Hospitals & Fertility Centre Pvt Ltd

Dr G Sangeetha - Excellence in Paediatric Nephrology - Maa Kauvery, Women & Children's Hospital, Radial Road, Chennai

Kalpana D Kumar - Excellence in Child Development and Inclusion - Kare Therapy Center

Kasthuri Rajamurthy - Excellence in Sports

Krithika Challani - Excellence in Jewellery Design & Entrepreneurship - Arckz



Prof. Dr. M M Kavitha - Excellence in Rheumatology - Kauvery Hospital, Radial Road, Chennai

Shyamala Natraj - Excellence in Social Activism

Sri Devi Mandayam Krishnakumar - Excellence in Power Technology - Taurus MKS

Swetha Challani - Excellence in Jewellery Design & Entrepreneurship - Lille by Challani

T.A. Thaaraigai Aarathana - Excellence in Motivation & Social Activism

Thangamalar Jaganath - Excellence in Entrepreneurship - Vasanth & Co

Uma Mohan - Excellence in School Education Management - National Model Group of Schools

Vidya Gajapathi Raju Singh - Excellence in Adventure Sports

## FEMINA ACHIEVERS 2025

SOUTH

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Dr Parimala Devi - Excellence in Obstetrics & Gynecology - Maa Kauvery, Women & Children's Hospital, Radial Road, Chennai



Dr Sheela M - Excellence in Obstetrics & Gynecology - Maa Kauvery, Women & Children's Hospital, Radial Road, Chennai



Dr Thendral K - Excellence in Obstetrics & Gynecology - Maa Kauvery, Women & Children's Hospital, Radial Road, Chennai



Dr Vasantha Gowri - Excellence in Children's Holistic Well-being - Director, Aadithya Eye Care and Guru Aadithya Hospital



Dr Dorothy Thomas - Excellence in Women Leadership - Casagrand International Group of Schools and Corporate Attorney



Dr Meenakshi Sundaram - Excellence in Gynecological Laparoscopic and Robotic Surgery - Shri Health Care Clinic



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K Veena - Excellence in Women Entrepreneurship & Empowerment - Naturals Salon Pvt Ltd



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# World is looking at India, Modi tells NDA MPs after landmark trade deal

**ANOTHER FEATHER IN THE CAP.** PM felicitated for successfully concluding trade deals with 39 countries

**Our Bureau**  
New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday reportedly told NDA MPs at a Parliamentary party meeting that India's trade agreement with the US is the result of sustained patience.

According to sources, the PM told the MPs that the trade deal has created a positive economic environment, reflecting the government's consistent and measured approach to global trade negotiations.

He said the Opposition criticised the tariffs, but the government remained patient with the results now visible. The PM said the world order is changing and that its trajectory is increasingly tilting towards India.

#### 'LANDMARK DEAL'

From the ruling coalition, the trade agreement – whose contours have not yet been explained by the government – the political message was self-congratulatory, with the



**WINS ACCOLADES.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi leaves after attending the NDA Parliamentary party meeting in New Delhi on Tuesday. Union Minister JP Nadda is also seen (ANI)

NDA MPs felicitating the PM for what they described as a landmark deal.

BJP National President Nitin Nohin, Union Ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath

MP Anupriya Patel and other NDA MPs were present at the meeting.

All top Union Ministers and BJP Chief Ministers joined in the drive to create a celebratory mood with congratulatory messages on social media. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath described it as a "landmark moment" for India-US economic partnership, reflecting rising global confidence in 'Make in India', while Union Ministers Ashwini Vaishnav, Piyush Goyal and others joined in with similar social media posts.

At the NDA Parliamentary party meet, the PM is learnt to have told the MPs that "the world is now tilting towards India... these trade deals have showcased India's strength despite the global uncertainty". Later, giving details of the trade pacts that India has signed with different countries, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said, "There is excitement among the MPs that these trade deals have been con-

cluded under the leadership of PM. The trade deals have been signed with a total of 39 countries. This is historic. All these 39 countries are developed countries... This is historic. There has been a very good atmosphere in the country."

The PM also commended Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for presenting her ninth consecutive Budget, adding that it was a Budget that charts the roadmap for the country's development towards 2047 when India completes a century as a modern independent state.

Shiv Sena MP Milind Deora said, "PM Modi explained to all the MPs that the government works in favour of India, be it a trade deal or Budget."

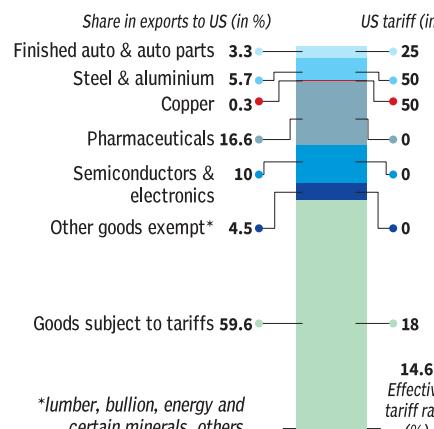
"The credit for the trade deal between India and America and India and India-Europe goes to PM Modi. This has happened because of his determination. The trade deal will give benefits to small-scale businessmen," he asserted.

## VISUALLY.

A boost for tariff-hit sectors

President Trump and Prime Minister Modi are indicating that the US-India trade deal that reduces tariffs on Indian goods to 18% from 50% will be signed soon. Around a third of India's exports to US were out of the scope of tariffs anyway like electronics, pharmaceuticals and mineral oils. Nine per cent of India's exports are still tariffed under Section 232 in US, which includes metals and auto finished & parts. The remaining, close to 60% of export commodities erstwhile under the 50% tariff coverage, will enjoy tariffs at 18%.

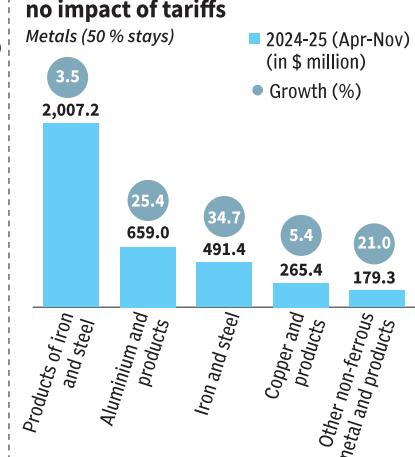
### India's effective tariff rate and sectoral share in exports to US



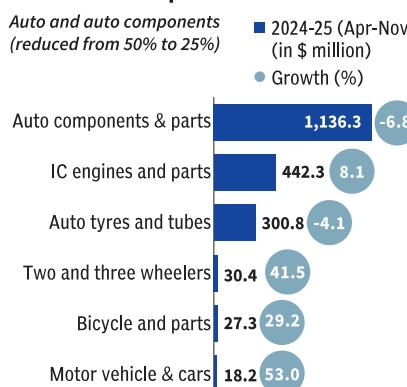
\*lumber, bullion, energy and certain minerals, others

Compiled by Sourashis Banerjee | Graphic: Visveswaran V

### Exports of metals to US show no impact of tariffs



### Auto and auto components show mixed impact



### Most items with zero tariffs recorded growth in exports

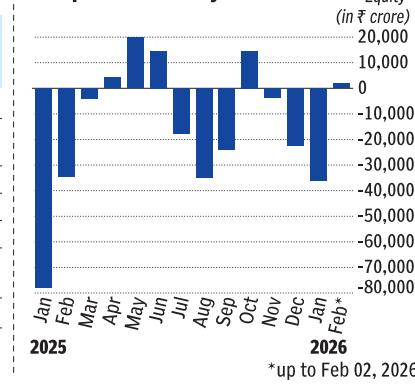
Commodities with no tariffs	2024-25 (Apr-Nov) (\$ million)	Growth (%)
Telecom instruments	12,799.4	191.5
Drug formulations, biologicals	5,847.7	0.1
Petroleum products	2,723.3	-7.3
Electric machinery and equipment	2,059.5	14.6
Electronics components	1,662.9	21.6
Electronics instruments	1,090.0	26.4
Medical and scientific instruments	323.2	8.6
Bulk drugs, drug intermediates	360.2	18.5
Computer hardware, peripherals	288.1	316.5

### Rates reduced for most exports worst hit by tariffs

Source: Ministry of Commerce, NSDL, Nomura Asia Insights, Bloomberg

Commodities (tariffs reduced 50% to 18%)	2024-25 (Apr-Nov) in \$ million	Growth (%)
Ready-made cotton garments	1,958.8	-1.8
Gold and other precious metal jewellery	1,850.0	-24.3
Marine products	1,699.0	-5.7
Pearl, precious, semiprecious stones	1,647.6	-57.1
Cotton fabrics, made-ups etc.	1,604.6	-11.1
Ready-made garments of other material	785.0	-0.2
Organic chemicals	708.6	-9.0
Residual chemicals and allied products	700.0	-3.4

### With the trade deal, FPI sell-off of equities is likely to ebb...



**JUICY DEAL.** Dry fruits exporters are expecting import at zero duty, with a quantitative limit for pistachio and hazelnut

soy oil is very negligible. The US is not a big exporter of soy oil, while it exports a lot of soybean, which is genetically modified (GM) and not allowed in India. Though India offered to reduce duty on soy oil, the US was insisting on allowing GM soybean and also GM corn. Importers of fresh fruits are expecting India to allow fresh apples from the US at either zero duty, or with 25 per cent duty for a quantity up to 1 lakh tonnes.

Similarly, dry fruits exporters are expecting import at zero duty, with a quantitative limit for some dry nuts such as pistachio and hazelnut, which are either not produced or grown in very insignificant quantities in India.

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# India to continue buying crude oil from non-sanctioned entities, including Russia

**NOT A FULL STOP.** Near complete halt of supplies extremely unlikely at least in next 2-3 months: Sources

Rishi Ranjan Kala  
New Delhi

Despite US President Donald Trump's assertion that India has promised to halt Russian crude oil imports, government sources said that New Delhi will continue to procure the geopolitically-sensitive commodity from "non-sanctioned entities", including from Moscow.

Moreover, analysts, trade sources and refiners told *businessline* that a near complete halt of supplies is "extremely unlikely" at least in the next 2-3 months, adding that there is "no official order" from the government "so far" to stop buying crude oil from non-sanctioned Russian entities.

Logistics also supports their claim: typically, cargoes from Russia are booked about 10 weeks in advance.

Currently, vessels ferrying the commodity are at various stages of loading and transporting, which means that cargoes booked 10 weeks prior will continue to offload crude oil at Indian ports, mostly on the west coast, till March end-April 2026.

Sumit Ritolia, Kpler's Lead Research Analyst for Refining & Modeling, said the trade deal announced on February 2 (2026) is unlikely to result in a near-term reduction in India's Russian crude imports.

"Russian volumes remain largely locked in for the next 8-10 weeks and continue to be economically critical for India's complex refining system, supported by deep discounts on Urals relative to ICE Brent. Imports are expected to stay broadly stable in around 1.1-1.3 million barrels per day (mb/d) range



**THE CONSEQUENCES.** If India completely halts Russian cargoes, the implications for the world's fastest-growing emerging economy could be disruptive, experts said

through Q1 and early Q2 (2026), with any recent moderation offset by higher Middle East inflows rather than a structural shift away from Russian barrels," he added.

Refiners are technically capable of operating without Urals, but a rapid disengagement will be commercially challenging and politically sensitive, making any policy-driven recalibration gradual

rather than immediate, Ritolia stressed.

#### ECONOMIC IMPACT

However, trade sources and refining sector executives cautioned that if India completely halts Russian cargoes, the implications for the world's fastest-growing emerging economy could be "disruptive".

Moody's Ratings said: "Even though India has re-

duced its purchase of crude oil from Russia in recent months, it is unlikely to cease all purchases immediately which could be disruptive to India's economic growth. A complete shift towards non-Russian oil could also tighten supply elsewhere, raise prices and pass through to higher inflation given that India is one of the world's largest oil importers."

However, Prashant Vasishtha, Senior V-P and Co-Group Head of Corporate Ratings at ICRA, said: "Discounts on Russian crude oil were marginal prior to US announcing sanctions on some Russian crude suppliers in October 2025, and ICRA estimates that replacement of Russian crude with market priced crude would lead to an increase in import bill of the country by less than 2 per cent."

## 'Deal to boost FY27 GDP rate to 7.20%'

**Our Bureau**  
Mumbai

buy much more from the US and, potentially, Venezuela. This will help END THE WAR in Ukraine, which is taking place right now, with thousands of people dying each and every week.

"Out of friendship and respect for Prime Minister Modi and, as per his request, effective immediately, we agreed to a trade deal between the US and India, whereby the US will charge a reduced reciprocal tariff, lowering it from 25 per cent to 18 per cent. They will likewise move forward to reduce their tariffs and non-tariff barriers against the US to ZERO," per the post.

**PURCHASE PUSH**

US President Donald Trump posted on his social media handle that he and Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke about many things, including trade and ending the war between Russia and Ukraine.

"He [Modi] agreed to stop buying Russian oil, and to

**VOICES.**



“

India has now secured several strategic trade deals with key economic partners around the world.. We look forward to a stronger India-US partnership that expands market access



“

Lower trade tensions and a stronger currency support capital inflows and foreign investment confidence, which historically helped property markets

**SUDARSHAN VENU**,  
Chairman and Managing Director,  
TVS Motor Company

**SAMANTAK DAS,**  
Chief Economist and Head –  
Research and REIS, India, JLL

## Rupee has its best trading session in 7 years, gains 125 paise vs dollar

**Our Bureau**  
Mumbai

The rupee on Tuesday had its best trading session in about seven years, notching up a huge single day gain of 125 paise against the US dollar.

It was buoyed by the overnight announcement of the US-India tariff agreement, which kindled hopes that foreign portfolio investors' will step up purchase of Indian equities and debt. The Indian currency (INR) appreciated about 1.4 per cent to close at 90.2650

per US dollar compared with the previous close of 91.5125.

US President Donald Trump later on Monday announced the US-India trade deal on his social media handle.

He said: "...Out of friendship and respect for Prime Minister Modi and, as per his request, effective immediately, we agreed to a trade deal between the US and India, whereby the US will charge a reduced reciprocal tariff, lowering it from 25 per cent to 18 per cent. They will likewise move forward to re-



duce their tariffs and non-tariff barriers against the US, to ZERO...."

#### STRONG GAINS

Amit Pabari, MD, CR Forex Advisors, observed that the strong gains made by the rupee reflect not just short-term relief, but a broader reassessment of India's medium-term trade outlook, capital flows, and geopolitical risk premium.

The agreement meaningfully reduces trade uncertainty.

"With US tariffs on Indian goods now set at 18 per cent,

chain reallocation and improves prospects for export-oriented sectors.

Against this backdrop, foreign portfolio flows, which have been a persistent drag in recent months, are increasingly likely to turn supportive," he said

V Rama Chandra Reddy, Head-Treasury, Karur Vysya Bank, noted that the rupee opened with a sharp gap-up at 90.40 against the previous close of 91.5125, trading in a range of 90.0450-90.5150, driven by confirmation of the Indo-US trade deal.

"The deal has removed the

previous close of 6.77 per cent.

Reddy said the bond market responded positively to the improved risk sentiment, with G-Secs yields easing. However, the outlook remains cautious amid the demand-supply imbalance following the higher gross market borrowing announced in the FY27 Union Budget.

The bond market will closely track RBI's guidance on liquidity conditions and the interest rate trajectory in the forthcoming MPC meeting, he added.

## Pricing advantage for leather exporters

T E Raja Simhan  
Chennai

The leather industry, which has been among the most impacted sectors due to the US tariffs, heaved a sigh of relief on Tuesday as US President Donald Trump announced reduction of tariffs.

Sanjay Lulla, Managing Director of Chennai-based SM Lulla Industries Worldwide, said buyers will finally pay the full price now.

"We will have a good sleep tonight," said another official. Since August 27, we have been having sleepless nights thinking on how to face the US tariff with orders slipping and workers becoming jobless," he said.

Giving discounts ranging between 15 per cent and 40 per cent was the only way out for exporters to retain clients in the US, the largest market for Indian leather products. Of the \$3 billion in leather goods exports between April and November

ber 2025, exports to the EU were around 40 per cent and to the US around 22 per cent.

**POSITIVE GROWTH** The deal will help the leather and leather product industry to overcome current challenges and return to a path of positive growth, said A Ateeque Rahman, Managing Director, Habeeb Tanning Company, based in Gudiyatham, Tamil Nadu.

The reduced duty of 18 per cent is lowest when compared to other countries such as China, Vietnam, Indonesia and Bangladesh, said Rahman, who is also the chairman of Indian Finished Leather Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

According to Lulla, the deal is a big win for India. "The first thing we earned during the high-tariff phase was the trust of our clients. Instead of passing the entire burden on to buyers, we chose to share part of the tariff impact with them. That approach strengthened long-

term relationships and showed that we are partners, not just suppliers," he added.

"Now that tariffs have been reduced, we are in a much stronger position. Indian leather garment exporters like us can once again be truly competitive on pricing compared to other sourcing countries. That competitiveness will help us win back business, expand existing programs and generate additional revenue—not just for individual companies, but across the sector," he added.

Israt Ahmed, Director of the Chennai-based Farida Group, a major leather goods manufacturer, said wherever possible, most exporters were holding on to their US clients, bearing the brunt of the tariffs by offering heavy discounts.

These discounts will now disappear, or at least be reduced to low single digits, industry players noted.

This is very positive. We are all elated and back on track.

Now, we have the mother [EU] & father [US] of all trade deals," said Rajkumar Ramasamy, Vice-Chairman & Managing Director, BEST Corporation Pvt Ltd, Tiruppur.

The amalgamation of a tariff cut, favourable policies like PLI, PM Mitra park and focus on man-made fibres will help the domestic textile sector to combine scale, speed and sustainability to

fully leverage global trade opportunities, he said.

"As a company, we will be looking at a growth of 25 per cent for a few years," he added.

Rajeev Gupta, Joint MD, RSWM Ltd, said the India-US trade deal provides India with cost advantage over major competitors like Bangladesh and Vietnam.

#### TO SPARK REVIVAL

The long-pending agreement will help revive orders from the US, he noted. Most exporters were holding on to their US clients, offering heavy discounts.

These will now disappear, or at least be reduced to low single digits, industry players noted.

Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) Chairman Shri Ashwin Chandran said that the textile and apparel exporters will now once again be in a position to compete effectively in the US market—the single-largest market for the sector.

pared to competitors, such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, Vietnam and China.

Overall, the textile sector is currently entering a "Goldilocks Phase" with these developments which should lead to increased investment and higher employment, he added.

Prabhu Dhamodharan, Convenor, Indian Entrepreneurs Federation (ITF), Coimbatore, said that from FY27, the sector will likely see a month-on-month double-digit growth in apparel and home textile exports, lifting the monthly apparel export run rate to about \$1.5-to \$1.6 billion from the current \$1.27 billion.

"It is commendable of Indian exporters for their resilience—adopting survival strategies, offering discounted prices and protecting India's export market share during a challenging phase," he said.

With inputs from Suresh Piyangar

## Tariff reduction cheers shrimp sector, but search for newer markets will continue

KV Kurmanath  
Vishwanath Kulkarni  
Hyderabad/Bengaluru

The shrimp ecosystem is elated as US President Donald Trump announced a reduction of tariffs to 18 per cent on Monday evening. The sector, which reeled under severe stress over the last few months, is relieved.

"The business will be back on track soon. We are happy. The system can easily absorb it [18 per cent tariff]," Ravi Kumar Yellanki, Managing Director of Vaisakhi Bio-Marine and Vaisakhi Bio-Resources and President of the All India Shrimp Hatchery Association (AISHA), told *businessline*.

increase the feed prices by ₹4 a kg with immediate effect.

"The price hike news comes the same day we heard about the reduction in tariffs by the US. We are both happy and sad," Gopinadh, who is also the General Secretary of the district Prawn Farmers Association, told *businessline*.

Feed costs occupy a major portion of the cost of shrimp production. "Over 60 per cent of the total spending by us will go into the feed. If a kilogram of prawns is sold at ₹250, about ₹160-70 will go into buying feed," he said. The farmers are expecting an additional burden of ₹8-10 a kg due to the hike in MRP.

A few feed companies wrote to dealers and retailers on February 2 informing them about the price increase. "We are increasing the prices in the wake of a sharp rise in raw material over the



gun to look at alternative export markets, including Australia and the recently opened EU market.

Asked whether the sector will switch back to the US, the easier market, or will continue to explore the alternatives, he said it will continue to focus on the old and newer markets.

While welcoming the move that will pull them out of a deep financial crisis, farmers are, however, upset about a decision by feed manufacturing companies to

last six months," a top feed company said in the letter.

**DOUBLE WIN** Rajamanohar Somasundaram, Founder & CEO, Aquaconnect, said the US tariff reduction is a significant tailwind and a double win for the industry, especially when paired with the recent EU Free Trade Agreement.

"It moves us decisively from recovery mode to actively re-engaging with the US market at a greater scale. At the same time, we must not lose momentum on market diversification, including a focus on promoting domestic consumption," he said.

Divya Kumar Gulati, Chairman, CLFMA of India, said the tariff reduction materially improves price competitiveness against key rivals, including Vietnam and Indonesia, in the US market.

India's marine products exports to the US are expected to rise in the wake of the trade deal and reduction in tariffs to 18 per cent.

"We are confident that with the conclusion of the trade deal and lowering of tariffs to 18 per cent, the quantum of export of seafood from India to the US will show an increase and soon reach back to the previous levels," said G Pawan Kumar, President, Seafood Exporters Association of India.

He said the US is the largest market for Indian seafood and that the country had exported produce valued at ₹2.78 billion in 2024-25. This year, the quantum of exports dropped by about 6.3 per cent (in value terms) and close to 15 per cent (in quantity terms) between April and November when compared with the corresponding period of the previous

year on account of the imposition of high tariffs of 50 per cent from August 2025.

#### VOLUME OF EXPORTS

The volume of exports during the period was 2,01,501 tonnes, compared to 2,36,061 tonnes in the corresponding period and was valued at ₹1,835.46 million.

It is expected that Indian seafood consignments to the US will have a level playing field with competitors, as their tariff rates are 15 per cent for Ecuador, 19 per cent for Indonesia and Thailand, and 20 per cent for Vietnam, said KN Raghavan, Secretary General of SEAI. "We are back in business," a veteran seafood exporter in Kochi told *businessline* on the US tariff reduction.

"Many seafood exporting units in the country are on the verge of shutdown mode as orders from the US dried up after November after catering to the Christmas and New Year season demand. Now all these will come back as the announced rates have given the sector a level playing field on par with competing countries in the US market," he added.

Deepanshu Manchanda, MD, Zappfresh, said eliminating tariffs on US imports improves access to advanced cold storage systems, processing equipment and quality-control technologies that play a key role in food safety, shelf life and consistency. For organised fresh food and meat platforms, cold-chain infrastructure is foundational. Better access to proven global technologies can help improve reliability across sourcing, processing, and last-mile delivery, especially as businesses expand across cities and regions.

**WELCOME RELIEF** "While this is certainly a welcome relief, it is mission-critical for us to build resilience across the value chain so that the industry can truly insulate itself from geopolitical shocks and external vulnerabilities going forward," said Rajamanohar Somasundaram, Founder & CEO, Aquaconnect.



**ADDING VALUE.** India exported produce valued at \$2.78 billion in 2024-25 REUTERS

A CH-CHE

## Fair balance

16th Finance panel formula awards 'efficient' States

**I**n its award for the sharing of tax resources for the 2026-31 period, the 16th Finance Commission has managed to strike a fair balance between rewarding equity and efficiency. It sought to address a longstanding grievance of the 'better performing' southern and western States by carving out a slightly larger share of the resource pie for them as a reward.

So, in the 'horizontal devolution' formula, equity parameters such as 'income distance' from the richer States and area have been pared, while contribution to GDP, introduced for the first time, has been accorded generous emphasis. As for 'vertical devolution', the 15th finance panel's formula of 41 per cent share of the divisible tax pool has been retained, but revenue deficit grants have been done away with, to boost fiscal rectitude. Grants to local bodies have been raised sharply. Arguing that the needs of States can be met by rationalising expenditure, the panel has said that unconditional cash transfers as well as financing of subsidies through off-budget borrowings should stop. Therefore, the nearly ₹3 lakh crore grants awarded by the 15th finance panel to eliminate revenue deficit have been done away with. But grants to urban local bodies have nearly doubled to ₹9.47 lakh crore. Ideally, the ratio of finance-panel transfers to discretionary non-finance panel transfers should rise. An approach that pushes rights-based transfers with enforcement of fiscal discipline is the best one.

Southern States have been griping over successive finance panel awards. Their grouse is valid, but overstated. In their success, the labour from northern States has had a role to play. Nevertheless, the latest award does well to reward their governance without going overboard. In the horizontal sharing formula, the distance of the per capita income of a State from the average of the per capita incomes of the three richest States or 'income distance' has been accorded a weight of 42.5 per cent, against 45 per cent in the 15th panel award. In a notable perspective shift, the weight given to demographic performance has been reduced from 12.5 per cent to 10 per cent, taking into account the rising share of elderly population. This is a realistic course correction. As a result of these shifts, Karnataka, Kerala, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana are the dominant gainers, while Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh have lost out. However, UP, Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh get to keep the major chunk on account of poverty, area and population.

The latest award does not come down as harshly on cesses and surcharges as the previous ones. While urging the States to exercise fiscal discipline, the award should also have argued for a Central limit to cesses and surcharges, that erode the divisible pool. That would have seemed even-handed. But in all, the 16th finance panel formula does well to promote cooperative federalism.

## POCKET



## LINE &amp; LENGTH.



TCA SRINIVASA RAGHAVAN

**T**he pattern is as unmistakable as it is extraordinary. Where India and the US are concerned, India first defies and then concedes. All prime ministers have done this. None has learnt from the mistakes of the predecessors.

In 1962, 1965, 1966, 1991, 2001, 2009, 2015 and 2026 we made a big show of standing up to America and then quietly gave in. As my good friend Brijeshwar Singh reminds me, if you live in Rome, you don't fight with the Pope. Or as they say in Hindi, you don't fight with the alligator if you live in the river.

The Indian record goes back to the late 1940s when the US offered a hand of unqualified friendship which Nehru haughtily refused to shake. It must be said to his credit, though, that he stuck to his anti-American stance throughout the 1950s and had to beg for help only after the Chinese had walloped us in 1962.

The 1960s and the 1970s, mostly under Indira Gandhi, were an unmitigated disaster for Indo-US relations. But India did have to give in to American pressure in 1966 when Mrs Gandhi personally negotiated the 36 per cent devaluation with the World Bank president — strangely not the IMF — in return for a billion dollar aid package, which never materialised.

Can you imagine that? An Indian prime minister haggling with the World Bank president, who actually wanted a 45 per cent devaluation? Mrs Gandhi didn't bother to tell her Cabinet what she had agreed to for three long months.

It took two decades for Indo-US relations to recover because in 1971 India went into the Soviet tent.

**HALF PREGNANT RELATIONSHIP**  
Then came the late 1980s. America was once again fluttering its ample eyelashes at us. In 1988 for example, via the IMF, it kept asking us to take a loan to prevent a balance of payments problem.

But guess what? We said what Gandhiji had said to Mountbatten in 1947: leave us to our fate.

And what a fate it was, my countrymen. First Rajiv Gandhi in 1988 and 1989, and then VP Singh in 1990, told the US to take a walk. Not just that. We came down firmly on the side of Saddam Hussein in 1990. The US was infuriated.



## Twists and turns in our ties with America

**TRADE DEAL.** We can spin it like a top but the fact remains: Trump has got what he wanted

Soon, in 1991, India found itself with just one billion dollars of foreign exchange, and had to crawl back to the IMF. It thus became quite evident that you couldn't cock a snook at the US for very long, you know, if you live in Rome, you can't afford to fight with the Pope.

Things started going well until May 1998 when India conducted its second nuclear test. Caught unawares, America was incensed and immediately imposed economic sanctions. It took four years and a lot of pleading for them to be lifted

**The 1960s and the 1970s were an unmitigated disaster for Indo-US relations. But India did have to give in to American pressure in 1966**

in 2002. Then came the nuclear deal of 2005. You should read what all India agreed to. It was what is now called a comprehensive economic agreement. But India could not deliver and over the next few years the US once again took a strong dislike to India. Barack Obama was especially rough on Manmohan Singh.

Trump I and Modi I seemed to hit it off splendidly initially but once again India remained defiant. It wouldn't open its markets. Besides, we had four years to gauge Donald Trump but sat around the pool scratching our bellies.

In 2021 came Joe Biden. His efforts were stonewalled by us in the belief that the US needed us more than we needed them. Talk about being complacent and delusional.

Then, last year, Trump 2 called us out. Initially and true to form we once again defied America. That has lasted for

about seven months only.

We can spin it like a top but the fact remains: Trump has got what he wanted.

**WHY THIS DEATH WISH?**

Even governments that try to kiss and make up end up with serious lovers quarrels. The one exception was Indira Gandhi. She never became friends with America.

It is legitimate to ask therefore: why do we have this great continuity in our American policy? Absolutely no one can figure it out.

Many scholars have tried to understand this anti-American impulse in our politics which runs completely contrary to our social orientation.

Shakespeare got it right when he said "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves that we are underlings." Read America for stars and confused for underlings.

## Address mental health issues early

The Budget and Economic Survey have stressed the importance of mental health, for good reasons

**Sadaf Choudhary**  
Prasur Jain

**A**cross cities and towns, many in the younger generation are quietly battling loneliness, anxiety, and emotional fatigue — often while looking perfectly functional. Rapid urbanisation and migration for work or education have brought opportunity, but also a peculiar kind of fragmentation: new colleagues, new flats, new neighbourhoods, and yet fewer relationships that feel safe enough to hold your worst days. Social media, meanwhile, gives us constant contact without guaranteeing connection. As a result, we are all perennially online, but hardly connected; always visible, but hardly remembered.

This situation is also corroborated by research findings on the loneliness epidemic in India. A global survey by Ipsos in India's major cities reported 43 per cent of urban Indians feeling lonely most of the time, placing India among the top three countries in terms of reported loneliness.

The National Mental Health Survey (NMHS) estimates that 10.6 per cent of adults live with a diagnosable mental disorder, and it reports a large treatment gap; its summary also notes that prevalence is nearly twice as high in urban metros (13.5 per cent) as rural areas (6.9 per cent).

Suchide data reinforces how urgent this is for young people: NCRB analyses show that young adults (18-30) form the single largest share of suicides in India. Apart from impacting the psychological

and emotional well-being of people, studies have shown that loneliness puts people at risk of physical diseases like diabetes, hypertension and obesity, eventually leading to shortened life spans.

**'CODE REDS'**

But alongside distress, there is something else happening: young people are inventing their own small, practical ways of reaching out — "code reds" — a gesture small enough to make, but big enough to get noticed. For some, it's deactivating Instagram for a day. For others, it's removing a WhatsApp profile picture, sending a late-night "Hi", dropping a missed call, or asking, "Are you free for five minutes?" These signals are intentionally understated. They allow someone to reach out on a hard day without feeling exposed, and they allow friends to recognise that "nothing" might actually mean "something".

It is also why the "eight-minute" idea resonates. You may have seen a clip of bestselling American author Simon Sinek describing how a short, focused conversation can help someone feel heard, valued and less alone. Whether the exact number is five or eight is not the point. The point is that attention — real attention — can interrupt "the spiral".

However, we should be careful not to romanticise peer support. Talking to friends cannot replace therapy, medication, or clinical care when needed. Therapy is a privilege in many parts of India — costly, urban-centred, and often confusing to navigate. And yet,



**LONELINESS.** Puts people at risk of physical diseases, too GETTY IMAGES

the growing willingness to seek it is a hopeful sign. So what do we do beyond telling people to "reach out"?

First, we treat community as public infrastructure, not a personal hobby. If loneliness is a public health problem, then social connection deserves deliberate spaces: local libraries that are accessible, public parks that are safe, community centres that host clubs, and neighbourhood events where you meet familiar faces.

**EARLY SUPPORT**

Second, we institutionalise early support. Schools and colleges should treat counselling as a part of core curriculum, not optional. Trained counsellors, referral systems, and life-skills curricula that teach students how to handle stress, rejection, and comparison are essential. Workplaces, especially in high-pressure domains, should move beyond one-off "wellness sessions" to real mental health support: employee assistance programmes, confidential counselling tie-ups, and

managers trained to respond without stigma. The successful implementation of mandatory POSH training at workplaces is a good example to follow for normalising mental health support as well.

Third, we make help-seeking easier and cheaper. A stronger network of community mental health services — through district hospitals, tele-consultations, and affordable clinics — matters just as much as awareness.

It is also important to note that this growing conversation around mental health is beginning to find reflection in public policy. The Economic Survey has drawn attention to rising concerns related to digital addiction, loneliness and mental health.

One response already underway is Tele-MANAS, the 24x7 national mental health helpline, which has handled over 32 lakh calls so far. The Survey describes the expansion of Tele-MANAS as a natural evolution of India's national tele-mental health programme. In the Budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman explicitly reaffirmed the commitment to mental health and trauma care while announcing the setting up of a new national mental health institute on the lines of NIMHANS, along with the upgradation of existing centres at Ranchi and Tezpur.

Finally, it is our collective responsibility as a society to pay attention — to take "code reds" seriously.

Choudhary is Officer, Indian Foreign Service, and Jain is Officer, Indian Statistical Service. Views are personal

**LETTERS TO EDITOR**

Send your letters by email to bleditor@thehindu.co.in or by post to "Letters to the Editor", The Hindu Business Line, Kasturi Buildings, 859-860, Anna Salai, Chennai 600002.

**India-US trade deal**

The announcement of a trade deal between India and the US marks the conclusion of a turbulent phase that tested the bilateral relationship across trade, defence and geopolitics. The reported reduction of reciprocal tariffs on Indian goods from 50 per cent to 18 per cent, coupled with the possibility of lifting the 25 per cent punitive tariffs imposed over India's purchase of Russian oil, could place India among the least-tariffed economies in the Indo-Pacific. Coming soon after the conclusion of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement, the deal underscores India's strategy of

holding firm in negotiations while diversifying its trade partnerships.

**M Jeyaram**

Sholavandan, TN

**Hiking FDI in PSBs**

This refers to 'Govt mulls raising FDI in public sector banks to 49%' (February 3). In her exclusive interview to *businessline*, the Finance Minister categorically mentioned that the Budget speech didn't cover anything on divestments or mergers in banking, pending receipt of report from a select committee appointed for the purpose. No doubt, increasing foreign investments in PSBs may

bring the required transparency, efficiency. However, it may derail large-scale implementation of social and welfare programmes meant for the small borrower community, with inadequate support from private sector banks so far on this front.

**Sitaram Popuri**

Bengaluru

**Simplify tax ecosystem**

Several citizens are likely disappointed at not getting any further direct tax breaks. However, it is good that the Budget has avoided frequent tinkering of tax slabs and rates. But has an opportunity been lost? In the interests of a Viksit Bharat, a move towards greater simplicity is needed. All income must be treated the same — salaries, interest, capital gains, and others. And the total must be taxed at a single rate of say 12 per cent, without slabs. Maybe only the first ₹5 lakh of all income could be tax-free. ITR form must contain just one side of an A4 sheet rather than the 30+ pages of ITR 2 presently.

**V Vijaykumar**

Pune

Bharat, a move towards greater simplicity is needed. All income must be treated the same — salaries, interest, capital gains, and others. And the total must be taxed at a single rate of say 12 per cent, without slabs. Maybe only the first ₹5 lakh of all income could be tax-free. ITR form must contain just one side of an A4 sheet rather than the 30+ pages of ITR 2 presently.

**M Barathi**

Bengaluru

Tax (STT) on derivatives is a necessary, albeit bitter, pill for the markets. While the initial volatility reflects investor discomfort, the long-term goal of curbing excessive speculation among retail traders is sound. High-frequency trading in the F&O segment often leads to significant capital erosion for small investors who lack the institutional tools to manage such risks. To ensure these measures are effective, the government should consider reinvesting a portion of the increased STT revenue into robust investor education programmes.

**C M Y K**

A CH-CHE

## Skills gap mismanaged

IT industry should revisit its earlier skilling success

Prabir Kumar Bandyopadhyay

**T**oday, as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, data engineering, and cybersecurity reshape the economy, India's skills gap has returned to the centrestage of policy debate. Industry leaders argue that graduates are not job-ready; governments respond with skilling missions; universities promise reform. Yet missing from much of this discussion is an uncomfortable truth: skill gaps are not new — and India once addressed them far more purposefully than it does today.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, India's IT industry expanded rapidly despite an obvious shortage of "ready-made" talent.

Companies such as TCS, Infosys, and Wipro recruited graduates from diverse academic backgrounds through aptitude-based screening, not because they were fully skilled, but because they demonstrated learning potential. This was followed by structured training programmes lasting three to six months, closely aligned with business needs.

Industry estimates suggest that large IT firms trained tens of thousands of fresh graduates annually, creating a scalable and resilient talent pipeline.

Private institutions like NIIT and Aptech complemented this effort, forming an ecosystem in which industry demand and workforce supply were actively bridged.

Two decades later, the picture looks very different. Despite louder complaints about talent shortages, most large organizations show limited appetite for trainee hiring or long-term skilling investments. This shift has happened at a time when India is undertaking its most ambitious education reform in decades.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 explicitly encourages industry-institute partnerships, flexible curricula, credit-based internships, practitioner-led courses, and applied learning. Universities are revising syllabi, setting up innovation cells, inviting industry experts as adjunct faculty, and actively seeking collaboration. Yet the response from industry has been far more muted.

To be fair, the context has changed. First, the nature of work is more complex. Earlier IT services involved standardised tasks that could be trained at



**SKILLS.** Bracing for the future

GETTY IMAGES

scale. Today's roles — AI engineering, cloud security, advanced analytics — require deeper specialisation. According to NASSCOM, some emerging digital roles can take 12-24 months to reach full productivity. This increases corporate risk in training fresh graduates.

But modular learning, apprenticeships, and stackable credentials — co-designed with institutions under NEP frameworks — can reduce risk while preserving entry-level access.

Second, attrition concerns loom large. Firms worry that training investments may benefit competitors. Yet studies consistently show that early-career hires with structured growth pathways demonstrate higher long-term retention than lateral recruits.

Third, higher education must shoulder responsibility. India produces over four million graduates annually (AISHE), yet employability studies indicate that only about half are immediately employable for formal-sector roles. Outdated curricula and limited industry exposure are real challenges.

But this is precisely why industry participation is indispensable. NEP has opened the door; industry must now walk through it.

Finally, the issue of corporate responsibility must be addressed candidly. India's earlier IT success was not achieved by outsourcing skilling entirely to individuals — it was built on shared investment in human capital.

The way forward is clear: Incentivize corporate trainee and apprenticeship programmes; reward deep industry-institute partnerships, not symbolic ones; enable consortia-based training infrastructure; align public funding with employment outcomes, not just enrolment.

The writer is a retired management professor

Prabir Kumar Bandyopadhyay is a retired management professor

## thehindu businessline.

### TWENTY YEARS AGO TODAY.

February 4, 2006

#### AAI workers hold talks with PM

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# Economy: Reading the fineprint

The upbeat tone of the Economic Survey cannot hide the contradictions and problems in the more detailed data provided

MACROSCAN.



CP CHANDRASHEKHAR, JAYATI GHOSH

**I**t is probably only to be expected that the official account, in the Finance Ministry's just-released Economic Survey 2025-26, would be generally upbeat about the Indian economy and the current policy direction of the Modi government. We have also come to expect that data will be cherry-picked to provide the best and most optimistic outlook.

Yet, even within this document, it is possible to find intimations of the serious problems facing the economy, and the urgent need for a policy reset.

The most obvious question that emerges from the reading of the Survey is: if the economy is really doing so well and being so dynamic, why is private investment not increasing more? And why are both domestic and foreign investors choosing to put their funds abroad rather than investing in the country?

The Survey chooses to highlight recent increases in Gross Fixed Capital Formation (investment) that "indicate a strengthening of the investment cycle, supporting growth" (page 12). Yet even a slightly longer look would reveal a genuine weakness, particularly in private investment.

#### INVESTMENT BLUES

Figure 1 shows that there has been a decline in investment rates, which peaked at nearly 36 per cent of GDP in 2007-08, and that the rate stabilised, but did not recover to earlier levels, in the period after 2015. Indeed, the investment rate over the years of the UPA government (2004-25 to 2013-14) averaged at 34.3 per cent, whereas the average rate for the subsequent NDA government (2014-15 to 2023-24 — the latest year for which data are provided) was only 24.2 per cent. Significantly private investment did not recover, despite the many blandishments and incentives like the significant and unwarranted cut in corporate tax rates in 2019.

It could be argued that, notwithstanding high GDP growth rates, there was significant leakage abroad through imports. India's trade deficit has been rising significantly in absolute US dollar terms. Yet, as Figure 2 indicates, while imports as a share of GDP rose sharply in the UPA years, they have come down since and remain at much lower levels. It is also true that exports have declined and then stagnated relative to GDP — so they have not generated additional net demand from the trade sector.

#### KEY QUESTIONS

So what explains the sluggishness of domestic investment, especially private investment? A new set of "High Frequency Indicators" helpfully provided for the first time in the Survey can provide some clues. These are particularly important since it is now more widely acknowledged both inside and outside the country, that GDP itself is a problematic indicator of economic progress, but also India's GDP data are less reliable and more open to question.

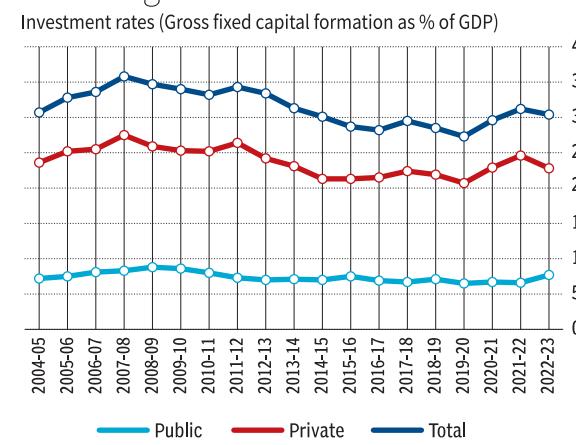
Figures 3 and 4 show the movement of some of these indicators relative to real and nominal GDP, from 2019-20 onwards. (The numbers are calculated as annual averages from the monthly data provided in the Statistical Appendix of the Economic Survey.) The figures show the total change (in percentage terms) over the four years for which the data are available.

From Figure 3, we can see that both electricity consumption and rail freight volumes generally tracked GDP growth, showing if anything slightly higher increases. But the port cargo traffic increase was significantly lower, and domestic air freight traffic increased only marginally over the four-year period.

From Figure 3, we can see that both

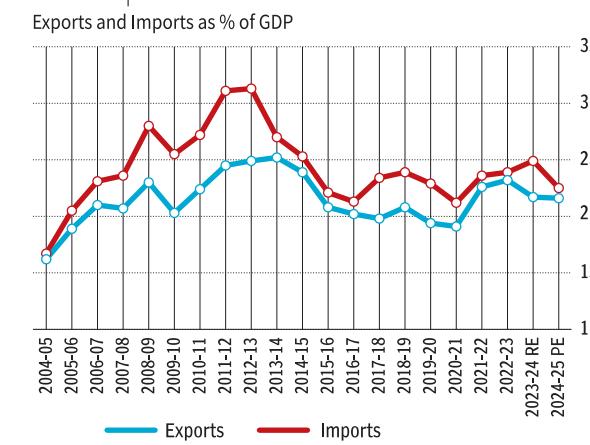
#### CHART 1 Declining trend

Investment rates (Gross fixed capital formation as % of GDP)



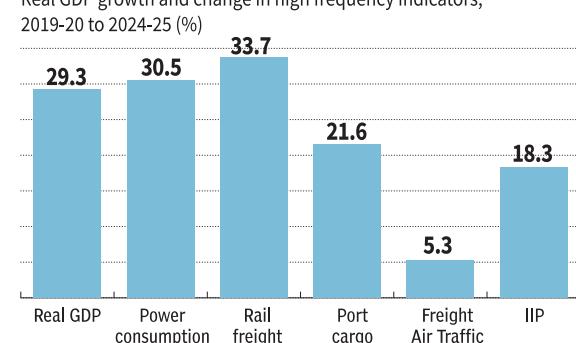
#### CHART 2 Trade profile

Exports and Imports as % of GDP



#### CHART 3 Rail surge

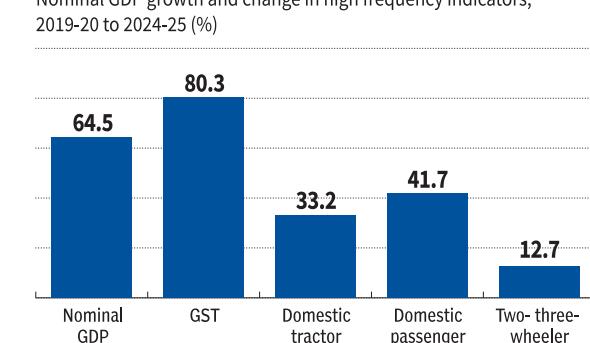
Real GDP growth and change in high frequency indicators, 2019-20 to 2024-25 (%)



Source: ILO WESO update May 2025; World Bank WDI database

#### CHART 4 GST spike

Nominal GDP growth and change in high frequency indicators, 2019-20 to 2024-25 (%)



how the real GDP and real per capita national income increased over the period 2017-18 to 2023-24, along with data on wage and self-employed incomes in constant prices over the same period. The years are chosen because those are the years for which data from the Periodic Labour Force Surveys are available.

Figure 5 reveals beyond doubt that economic growth in India has been increasingly unequal, that wage incomes and incomes of the self-employed have not increased along with GDP growth. Female casual workers in rural areas are the only worker category for whom real wages have increased in tandem with GDP and slightly more than per capita NNI — but such workers comprise less than 8 per cent of those recognised as employed in rural areas, compared to around 18 per cent who get no remuneration at all, since they are described as "unpaid helpers in family enterprises".

Rural male regular workers are the other category whose wages showed broadly commensurate increases over this period, but even this is a very small proportion of rural male workers. Women workers in "regular" jobs experienced absolute declines in real wages on average.

In general, most wage increases were significantly below the increase in both aggregate and per capita national income over this period, indicating that overall wage income growth was well below the change in GDP. The most shocking pattern is evident for self-employed incomes, which declined significantly for women over the period. Even for self-employed men in rural areas, real incomes barely increased.

This explains what might otherwise appear to be a paradox: declining or stagnant mass consumption demand despite rising aggregate GDP. This inequality is not just a sad reflection on the Indian growth trajectory; it also helps to explain why private investment is lacklustre and mostly responds to government contracts rather than domestic mass demand. This also explains the employment crisis that is becoming more evident with every passing day.

This is the real problem that the Economic Survey should have identified, and that the Budget and other policies of the government should seek to address.

## thehindu businessline.

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## BL TWO-WAY CROSSWORD 2609

### EASY

#### ACROSS

- 01. Popular song (6)
- 02. Hold fast! (naut) (5)
- 03. Ship taken by force in war (5)
- 04. Universal medicine (7)
- 05. Checkers (8)
- 06. Pebble (5)
- 07. Front of lower jaw (4)
- 08. Self-confidence (3)
- 09. Freedom from pain (4)
- 10. Type of bed (5)
- 11. Chance of success (8)
- 12. From the orient (7)
- 13. Fieldwork with two faces forming salient (5)
- 14. Pine leaf (6)
- 15. Lazy (10)</li

# Window of opportunity for semicon industry

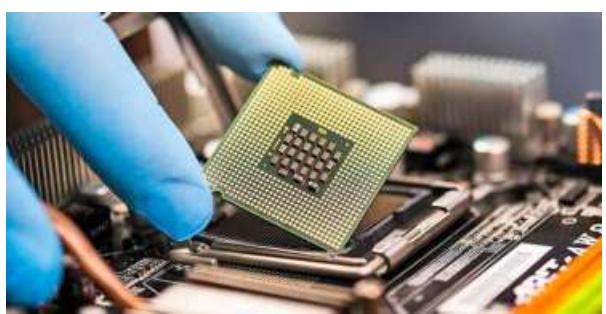
**THE GAINERS.** The tariff cut can be a major catalyst for India's electronics and tech ecosystem, say experts

**Sanjana B**  
Bengaluru

The India-US bilateral trade deal is being seen as a catalyst for deeper technology and semiconductor collaboration, strengthening India's role across chip design, backend manufacturing and advanced electronics supply chains.

US President Donald Trump said on Monday that the country will lower reciprocal tariffs on Indian goods to 18 per cent from 25 per cent and remove non-tariff barriers, while India will ease its own trade restrictions and increase imports of US energy, technology, and agricultural products under a bilateral trade agreement.

**REGAINING SPEED**  
According to Tarun Pathak, Director of Counterpoint Research, semiconductor ambitions benefit from greater trust and smoother trade in skills, while initiat-



**SECTOR WINDFALL.** The \$500 billion bilateral trade target could translate into more than \$100 billion in trade for the electronics and semiconductor sector

ives like ICET on critical and emerging technologies will regain momentum. Engineering goods, one of India's largest export categories, spanning auto-components and electrical equipment, also stand to gain from this improved trade climate.

In 2022, the US-India partnership inaugurated the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET), focused on cooperation in semiconductors, AI, quantum computing, wireless communication, especially for defence and secur-

ity applications.

Transforming the Relationship Utilizing Strategic Technology (TRUST) is the evolved form of iCET. Announced in 2025, TRUST retains iCET's core focus on semiconductors, AI, quantum technologies, and expands into domains like critical mineral supply chains, biotechnology, energy and space technologies.

Ashok Chandak, President, SEMI India and IESA, echoed that the India-US trade deal could be a major catalyst for India's electron-

ics, semiconductor and tech ecosystem.

"By improving market access, enabling smoother flow of capital equipment and advanced technologies, and — when complemented by the iCET and TRUST — strengthening trusted supply chains and deepening technology collaboration, the agreement enhances India's attractiveness as a global manufacturing and innovation hub. It will accelerate semiconductor design and manufacturing, boost electronics value addition, and expand cooperation across AI, data centres and advanced manufacturing, creating high-skill jobs and positioning India as a reliable partner in the global technology value chain," he said.

The \$500 billion bilateral trade target could translate into more than \$100 billion in trade for the electronics and semiconductor sector.

For US chip companies, reassessing supply-chain concentration risks, cost

predictability and long-term economics is critical, said Shetal Mehta, Co-founder, Suchi Semicon.

## SEMICON FACILITIES

"Semiconductor firms are diversifying assembly and testing operations beyond traditional hubs. Indian outsourced semiconductor assembly and test (OSAT) facilities today offer scalable capacity, improving yields, and quality systems aligned with international standards. A clearer tariff framework reduces friction in commercial negotiations and enables structured discussions around volume commitments and long-term partnerships. This policy shift improves India's chances of being included in multi-year back-end manufacturing programs rather than short-term pilot engagements. It supports higher utilization of domestic OSAT capacity, encourages fresh capital investment, and strengthens India's role in global semi-

conductor supply chains," he said.

Lower US tariffs may also improve the commercial viability of Indian-designed chips as American companies reassess sourcing strategies.

Nikul Shah, Co-founder & CEO, IndieSemiC, explained that Indian fabless firms possess strong design talent, domain expertise and cost efficiency. Improved tariff economics make collaboration with US customers more practical and competitive.

The decision to eliminate tariffs on US technology imports may grant better access to semiconductor IP, EDA tools and design ecosystems, enabling Indian companies to move beyond mature nodes toward more complex and application-specific designs. This supports deeper engagement with US OEMs and tier-1 suppliers.

With inputs from Sindhur Hariharan in Chennai



The Nifty 50 surged 639.15 points to settle at 25,727.55

versal still hinges on corporate earnings, macro environment and global stability," he said.

**NIFTY50 SURGES**  
The Nifty 50 surged 639.15 points or 2.55 per cent to settle at 25,727.55, while the Sensex soared 2,072.67 points or 2.54 per cent to close at 83,739.13, marking its biggest single-day gain in terms of points since November 22, 2024. Despite a strong opening rally, markets cooled from the day's highs, indicating that panic-driven short covering was limited, analysts said.

Foreign investors had entered Tuesday's session holding record bearish positions in index futures and options. Data showed FPIs were carrying a net short exposure of 8,26,636 index options contracts at the end of Monday's trade, while net short positions in index futures alone stood at 2,27,144 contracts. Short positions accounted for nearly 90.8 per cent of their total derivatives exposure.

FPIs cover short positions as Nifty 50 rebounds

**Akshata Gorde**  
Mumbai

A wave of short covering by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) helped push the Nifty 50 nearly 3 per cent higher on Tuesday after a surprise India-US trade agreement cut tariffs on Indian exports.

Dealers said the positive news forced overseas investors, who were carrying record bearish positions in derivatives, to rapidly unwind shorts, but a flow reversal is yet to take shape.

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With inputs from Sindhur Hariharan in Chennai

When markets surged following the announcement of the US-India trade deal that lowered tariffs on Indian exports, many of these large short positions were forced to close, intensifying buying pressure and pushing benchmark indices sharply higher.

Feroze Azeez, Joint CEO of Anand Rathi Wealth Ltd, said the rally was primarily a technical reaction to positioning rather than a shift in sentiment. "Foreign investors had built very large short positions in index futures ahead of the Budget. When the market unexpectedly rallied because of the US-India trade deal announcement, many of these positions were quickly closed, leading to short covering and adding to the upward move."

"While the price action indicates meaningful short covering rather than simple unwinding, long-term re-

lationship between two of the world's largest democracies. For the Indian industry, and for Bharat Forge, this is a game-changer," said Baba Kalyani, Chairman & MD, Bharat Forge Ltd.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said that "Maharashtra has always been a leading state in exports. Therefore, this agreement will open up new horizons for businesses in the State."

However, provisional data from the NSE showed FPIs were net buyers of ₹5,426 crore in the cash market on Tuesday, while domestic institutional investors bought ₹345 crore, indicating that some fresh buying accompanied the derivatives covering. While the finalisation of the long-drawn trade deal invites some foreign inflows into the Indian equity market, FPIs remain cautious and are awaiting recovery in corporate earnings.

# Deal eases job loss fears in Pune's automobile cluster

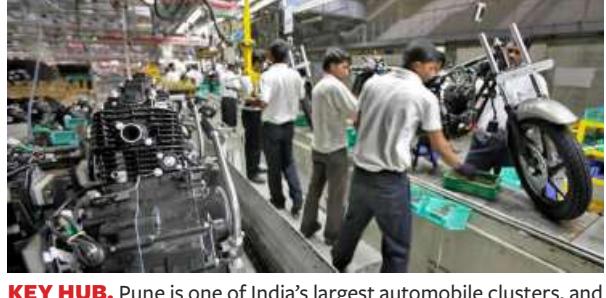
**Our Bureau**

automotive and ancillary sectors in the region if the tariff stalemate continued.

Maharashtra contributes 49 per cent of the country's two- and three-wheeler exports, 27.4 per cent of motor vehicle and car exports, 22.3 per cent of auto components and parts, and 11.6 per cent of auto tyres and tubes.

**AUTOMOBILE HUB**  
Maharashtra alone accounts for 35.1 per cent of the country's automobile output by value.

The Pimpri-Chinchwad belt, which forms the core of this hub, houses more than 4,000 manufacturing and ancillary units that sustain the



**KEY HUB.** Pune is one of India's largest automobile clusters, and home to domestic and global players BLOOMBERG

sector's complex supply chain. About 12,000 small and medium industries depending on original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) operate in the Pimpri Chinchwad area.

Indian auto component

manufacturers, many based in Pune, Chakan and Pimpri-Chinchwad, faced competitive disadvantages against rivals from countries with lower tariffs.

"Margins were under severe pressure as US buyers

sought price concessions or explored alternative sourcing because of higher landed costs. Many of us were losing business and getting priced out of US supply chains which, in turn, posed a serious threat to local jobs," said an industry player in Pune.

Sandeep Belsare, President of the Pimpri Chinchwad Small Scale Industries Association (PCSSIA), said when original equipment manufacturers are affected, the impact inevitably cascades down to smaller suppliers.

"There was a fear in the market that many small players would be forced to shut operations. However, with

this latest move, the industry has breathed a sigh of relief," he said.

## GAME CHANGER

"The India-US trade deal is not just about trade; it is about a long-term relationship between two of the world's largest democracies.

For the Indian industry, and for Bharat Forge, this is a game-changer," said Baba Kalyani, Chairman & MD, Bharat Forge Ltd.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said that "Maharashtra has always been a leading state in exports.

Therefore, this agreement will open up new horizons for businesses in the State."



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**Chennai | Hyderabad | Kochi  
Bengaluru | New Delhi | Mumbai**

## Regional Finale - Kochi

February 07, 2026

Time : 09.00 am Onwards

Venue : St. Teresa's College, Kochi, Park Avenue,  
Marine Drive, Ernakulam, Kerala 682011.

## Regional Finale - Bengaluru

February 08, 2026

Time : 09.00 am Onwards

Venue : Kristu Jayanti University, K.Narayananapura,  
Kothanur, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560077.

Presenting Partner



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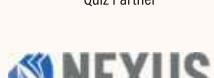
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- (a) TO ACCESS THE FULL DETAILS OF THE PUBLIC NOTICE (Loan, Jewellery, Gross weight, Place & date of auction) BY SCANNING THE QR CODE ASIDE.
  - (b) TO READ THE COMPLETE BIDDER TERMS AND CONDITIONS ("T&CS") PERTAINING TO THIS PUBLIC AUCTION, BY ACCESSING THE WEBLINK <http://172.30.1.235:3000/?WOUJB2QG9WU>
  - (c) TO UNDERSTAND THE T&CS AND THEREAFTER DEPOSIT EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT OF ₹ 25,000/- BY WAY OF FUND TRANSFER (NEFT/RTGS/BAJAJ GOLD AUCTION APP) ON OR BEFORE THE DATE OF AUCTION.
  - (d) ATTEND IN PERSON AT THE AUCTION VENUE 10AM; AND
  - (e) TO CARRY THEIR VALID PROOF OF IDENTITY & ADDRESS AT THE AUCTION VENUE.
  - (f) BIDDERS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN AUCTION PROCESS POST 12 NOON ON THE DATE OF AUCTION.
  - (g) BRANCH MANAGER/AUCTIONEER RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ADMIT OR REJECT BIDDERS WHO DO NOT PARTICIPATE WITHIN THE SPECIFIED TIME FRAME EVEN AFTER EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT (EMD) PAYMENT.

CHANGE IN VENUE AND DATE OF AUCTION, IF ANY, WILL BE DISPLAYED AT THE AUCTION CENTRE. YOUR SUBMISSION OF BID IS CONSTRUED AS A DEEMED ACCEPTANCE TO THE ABOVE-MENTIONED TERMS. IN THE EVENT OF SUSPENSION/CANCELLATION OF PUBLIC AUCTION SALE, BFL MAY, AT THE INSTANCE OF THE BORROWER(S) ALSO RESERVES ITS RIGHT TO SELL THE JEWELLERY THROUGH PRIVATE SALE. FOR ANY ENQUIRIES, YOU MAY REACH US ON EMAIL ID – gold.auction@bajajfinserv.in



**SCAN ME**

QUICKLY.

Tata Chemicals to set up ₹515 crore facility in TN



**Chennai:** The board of Tata Chemicals has approved the setting up of a greenfield facility at Valinokkam in Ramanathapuram district. The facility, which will be built on an investment of ₹515 crore, will produce iodised vacuum salt dried with an annual capacity of 210 kilo tonnes per annum. OUR BUREAU

**Reliance group firm picks up 50% stake in Sikhya Ent**

**Mumbai:** Reliance Strategic Business Ventures has acquired 50.1 per cent equity stake in Sikhya Entertainment production house through primary and secondary transactions. The stakes of the globally-recognised production house were acquired for an aggregate cash consideration of ₹150 crore. OUR BUREAU

**India Yamaha forays into EV segment with EC-06**



**Chennai:** India Yamaha Motor forayed into the EV segment with the launch of an electric scooter, EC-06, priced ₹1.67 lakh (ex-showroom, Delhi). The Yamaha EC-06 electric scooter is being manufactured by River at its manufacturing facility in Bengaluru. OUR BUREAU

# Airports, new energy businesses lift Adani Enterprises Q3 revenue

**EXCEPTIONAL GAINS.** Profit gets a ₹5,632 crore boost from the Adani Wilmar stake sale during the quarter

**Our Bureau**  
Mumbai

Adani Enterprises reported a 8.6 per cent rise in consolidated net profit, weakness in the coal management business being offset by airports and new energy businesses. Revenue came in at ₹24,820 crore, while net profit got a substantial boost from exceptional gains of ₹5,632 crore due to sale of stake in Adani Wilmar.

It reported net profit of ₹5,627 crore compared to ₹58 crore a year ago. EBITDA for the quarter grew 15 per cent to ₹4,297 crore, while nine-month EBITDA fell 3 per cent to ₹11,985 crore.

The airports business of the company saw a 28 per cent increase in income at

## Scorecard (Amount in ₹ crore)

	Q3 FY25	Q3 FY26	Change
EBITDA	3,723	4,297	15.00%
Profit after tax	58	5,627	90x
Exceptional gain	-	5,632	-

₹3,770 crore, with aero revenue rising 22 per cent and non-aero revenues 28 per cent. Aero revenue contributed to a third of total airport revenue, and over half from non-aero.

Non-aero revenues included duty-free, food and beverages, lease and rentals, car park and passenger services.

The airport vertical's EBITDA rose 42 per cent to ₹1,568 crore in Q3.

The company announced that its greenfield Navi Mumbai International Air-

port commenced operations on December 25, 2025, with a Phase-I capacity of 20 million passengers per annum.

## NEW ENERGY BIZ

The new energy business under Adani New Industries

saw a 7 per cent rise in revenue to ₹3,161 crore on higher volumes.

Revenues in the coal management business fell by a fourth due to low volume and prices, while mining services saw a 16 per cent rise.

## Adani Ports raises EBITDA guidance for FY26

**Our Bureau**  
Mumbai

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone reported a profit after tax of ₹3,043 crore for Q3, up 21 per cent on year, led by revenue growth on higher cargo volumes and logistics business. Revenue rose 22 per cent to ₹9,705 crore, while EBITDA rose by a fifth to ₹5,786 crore.

The strong performance prompted the company to raise its full-year EBITDA guidance to ₹22,800 crore, ₹800 crore above its previous top-end estimate, while revenue guidance has been raised to ₹38,000 crore at the upper of its previous guidance of ₹36,000-38,000 crore. The upward revision stems from stronger-than-anticipated operational growth contributing approx-

imately ₹500 crore, with the remaining ₹300 crore coming from the fourth-quarter inclusion of the recently-acquired North Queensland Export Terminal in Australia.

## NEW CFO

The company also announced the appointment of Sreedhar Krishnan Menon as Adani Port's CFO from March 1.

## Varun Beverages net up 33% in Q4

**Our Bureau**  
New Delhi



**HEALTHY NUMBERS.** Sales volumes in India grew 10.5 per cent and in international markets grew 10 per cent in Q4

Varun Beverages, the leading bottler for PepsiCo, posted a consolidated net profit of ₹260 crore in the quarter ended December 31, 2025, up 32.9 per cent over the previous fiscal. Revenue from operations for the quarter stood at ₹4,334.7 crore, up 13.5 per cent.

The company, which follows the calendar year for the financial period, posted consolidated sales volume growth of 10.2 per cent for the December quarter. Sales volumes in India grew 10.5 per cent, and International markets grew 10 per cent in Q4, it added.

Ravi Jaipuria, Chairman, Varun Beverages, said,

"CY25 was marked by steady execution, despite weather-related disruptions in India during the peak Summer season. Volume growth in India was impacted during parts of the year due to unprecedented heavy rainfall through-

out the year. However, performance improved meaningfully in Q4."

"The greenfield plants and backward integration facilities commissioned during the year are progressively stabilising and are expected to

support higher volumes and operating leverage in the upcoming season. Our international operations continued to scale well, led by Africa," he added.

## FINAL DIVIDEND

The company's board has recommended a final dividend of ₹0.50 per equity share, subject to shareholders' approval. In December, it announced the proposed acquisition of Twizza in South Africa, subject to regulatory and other approvals.

"Our balance sheet remains strong, supported by healthy cash flows, providing flexibility to support organic expansion, invest in cold chain and distribution infrastructure, and pursue value-accretive strategic opportunities," he added.

## Advent arm to pick 14% in Aditya Birla Housing Finance for ₹2,750 crore

**Our Bureau**  
Mumbai

Indriya, an entity of private equity firm Advent International, will pick up 14 per cent stake in Aditya Birla Housing Finance for ₹2,750 crore, according to an exchange filing.

The completion of the transaction is subject to shareholder and regulatory approvals.

gross stage 3 ratio stood at 0.54 per cent and net stage 3 ratio of 0.23 per cent.

## FUND-RAISE PROCEEDS

The company plans to utilise the fund-raise proceeds to increase market share. "We enter the next phase of expansion for our housing finance arm and Advent will hold the rest. The assets under management of Aditya Birla Housing grew by a CAGR of 48 per cent over the last three years to ₹42,204 crore as of December 31, 2025. Its

needs across countries and geographies."

## ASIA-PACIFIC FOODS

In a regulatory filing, the company also noted that India was among the markets that contributed strongly to the organic volume growth of the Asia-Pacific Foods unit. Asia-Pacific Foods includes the company's food businesses in markets including China, Australia and New Zealand, as well as India.

The global major has been expanding its presence in the country through enhancement of manufacturing footprint and new launches.

"We continue to see a long runway for profitable growth in our International business as we aim to significantly increase its size and scale, tailored by the differentiated

## India among markets that led growth for PepsiCo's international snacks biz in 2025

**Meenakshi Verma Ambwani**  
New Delhi

PepsiCo, which announced its Q4 earnings for CY25, said its international business revenue growth in snacks segment during the year was led by markets, including India. Talking about the performance, its management, in its prepared remarks, noted that for the full year, "convenient foods" organic revenue growth was led by markets including India, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Egypt, Germany, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Thailand".

It added that during 2025, it either held or gained share in the savoury snack segment in markets including

## Western Railway runs with Mumbai at Tata Mumbai Marathon 2026



Central Bank of India, engaged with members of the Parsi community as part of its efforts to strengthen long-standing relationships with key stakeholders, at a time when the Bank has reported improved financial performance for the quarter ended December 31, 2025. Central Bank of India shares deep historical links with the Parsi community. Founded in 1911 by Sir Sorabji Pochkhanawala, who described the institution as the "property of the nation and the country's asset." The Bank's first Chairman Sir Phorozezeshah Mehta was also from Parsi community. Over its 114-year history, the Bank has navigated multiple economic cycles while remaining anchored to its core philosophy of being a "people's own bank." The Bank acknowledged the significant role played by Parsi community in India's economic development, particularly in industry, finance, trade and philanthropy, contributing to the creation of several iconic enterprises and institutions that have shaped the country's corporate landscape. The programme was well attended by prominent members of the Parsi community, including descendants of the Bank's founder and Bank's first chairman, Mr. Keki Mistry, former vice chairman and CEO of HDFC, Mr. Jimmy Mistry, Mr. Mickey Mehta, Mr. Dinesh Mehta, former chairman of Bombay Parsi Panchayat, Mr. Viraf Mehta, Present Chairman of Bombay Parsi Panchayat, Padma Shri Ms. Penaz Masani and Mr. Ratan Luthi lending a special historical significance to the interaction. Senior leadership of the Bank reflected on the founder's extraordinary vision of creating a truly Indian Bank owned and operated by Indians, at a time when banking in India was dominated by foreign interests. They also highlighted how the values of trust, resilience and excellence, hallmarks of the Parsi ethos, continue to guide the Bank's journey even today. The interaction with the Parsi community provided a valuable opportunity to exchange views and better understand their evolving banking expectations. The keen interest shown in our products and services reinforces our commitment to continue serving the community and strengthen long-term relationships," said by Shri Kalyan Kumar, MD & CEO, Central Bank of India. Central Bank of India plans to hold similar interactions from time to time, as it continues to strengthen its retail banking franchise through sustained customer engagement.

## Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) Celebrates Republic Day with Patriotic Fervour; Observes Theme "150 Years of Vande Mataram"



Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) marked the Republic Day with solemn pride and patriotic fervour at its premises, reaffirming its unwavering commitment to strengthening India's maritime defence capabilities and advancing national progress. The ceremony commenced with the unfurling of the National Flag by GSL's Chairman and Managing Director, Shri Brajesh Kumar Upadhyay, followed by a Guard of Honour presented by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). This was followed by the National Anthem, after which the celebrations continued with a vibrant cultural programme featuring patriotic renditions by the GSL Serenade group, cultural performances by school children, and display of Drill by CISF personnel. Shri Brajesh Kumar Upadhyay addressed the GSL fraternity. In his address, he reflected on the constitutional ideals of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity that continue to guide India's democratic and developmental journey. He noted that the Republic Day celebrations this year are being observed under the National theme "150 Years of Vande Mataram", commemorating the enduring spirit of patriotism and unity inspired by the national song.

## Buoyed by US, EU trade deals, Exide Industries looks to generate additional exports of ₹500 crore

**Our Bureau**  
Kolkata



Buoyed by India's trade deals with the US and the EU, storage battery major Exide Industries is eyeing to increase its overseas business to around 8.9 per cent of its turnover by the next fiscal end from around 5 per cent currently.

The company is looking to generate additional exports of around ₹400-500 crore between this financial year and the next, backed by high-value exports due to an exclusive tie-up with a European partner and the benefits coming from the trade deals.

## UPL expects to benefit from US tariff cut in Q4 and beyond, says Group CFO

**Our Bureau**  
Bengaluru



The reduction in US reciprocal tariffs is expected to improve the competitiveness of Indian agrochemical companies against Chinese suppliers. With India's effective duty now significantly lower than China's on several molecules, UPL expects a positive impact in Q4 and beyond, said UPL Group CFO Bikash Prasad.

Indian chemical exporters compete directly with China across most generic agrochemical products. Earlier, US tariffs stood at 50 per cent for India and 55 per cent for China. A subsequent 10 per cent reduction in fentanyl-related tariffs brought China's duty down to 45 per cent. With India's tariff now at 18 per cent, and assuming the proposed 25 per cent penalty duty linked to Russian oil imports is removed, the overall duty differential could widen to as much as 27 per cent, Prasad explained. He added that while some molecules are duty-exempt, others con-

tinue to attract tariffs.

"This will allow us to compete against China in most of the molecules and definitely help UPL for the rest of Q4 as well as for the year ahead. But let's see how it pans out," Prasad told in a post-earnings virtual interaction.

On Monday, UPL reported a consolidated net profit of ₹490 crore for Q3, on revenues of ₹12,361 crore. "The momentum we built in Q1 and Q2 continued into Q3, despite a very strong base last year," Prasad said, citing gains in cost management, capital productivity and plant utilisation.

Pricing across agrochemicals remains largely stable, with growth primarily driven

domestic business growth (excluding Telecom) during Q3 was 10 per cent. Auto OEM business grew more than 25 per cent, leading to increased market share across multiple segments.

## GLOBE EXPORTS

He said the company had entered into an exclusive arrangement with a European entity as part of its global exports expansion strategy.

According to him, in the

next financial year, the auto replacement market would grow in double-digit, while OEM would be strong in the domestic market.

"In the first half of this year, OEM growth was slow," Roy said. Overall, the

Ambuja Cements MD Ajay Kapur steps down on superannuation

**Our Bureau**  
Mumbai

Ajay Kapur has stepped down as Managing Director of Adani Cements on superannuation, effective January 31.

Kapur joined Ambuja Cements in 1993 and has spent more than 25 years in various strategic roles. The company announced Vinod Bahety, Whole-time Director & CEO; Rohit Soni, Chief Financial Officer; and Manish Mistry, Company Secretary & Compliance Officer, as key managerial personnel.

Kapur leads the cement business of the Adani Group that comprises Ambuja Cements, ACC, Penna Cements, Orient Cements and Sanghi Industries with cumulative market capitalisation of ₹15 billion. Between 2014 and 2019, he held the position of the company's CEO and Managing Director. He most recently worked for Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone as CEO of Special Economic Zone as CEO of Special Economic Zone.

## Enterprise Connect

Central Bank of India engages Parsi community, highlights growth momentum and Customer Centric approach



Central Bank of India, engaged with members of the Parsi community as part of its efforts to strengthen long-standing relationships with key stakeholders, at a time when the Bank has reported improved financial performance for the quarter ended December 31, 2025. Central Bank of India shares deep historical links with the Parsi community. Founded in 1911 by Sir Sorabji Pochkhanawala, who described the institution as the "property of the nation and the country's asset." The Bank's first Chairman Sir Phorozezeshah Mehta was also from Parsi community. Over its 114-year history, the Bank has navigated multiple economic cycles while remaining anchored to its core philosophy of being a "people's own bank." The Bank acknowledged the significant role played by Parsi community in India's economic development, particularly in industry, finance, trade and philanthropy, contributing to the creation of several iconic enterprises and institutions that have shaped the country's corporate landscape. The programme was well attended by prominent members of the Parsi community, including descendants of the Bank's founder and Bank's first chairman, Mr. Keki Mistry, former vice chairman and CEO of HDFC, Mr. Jimmy Mistry, Mr. Mickey Mehta, Mr. Dinesh Mehta, former chairman of Bombay Parsi Panchayat, Mr. Viraf Mehta, Present Chairman of Bombay Parsi Panchayat, Padma Shri Ms. Penaz Masani and Mr. Ratan Luthi lending a special historical significance to the interaction. Senior leadership of the Bank reflected on the founder's extraordinary vision of creating a truly Indian Bank owned and operated by Indians, at a time when banking in India was dominated by foreign interests. They also highlighted how the values of trust, resilience and excellence, hallmarks of the Parsi ethos, continue to guide the Bank's journey even today. The interaction with the Parsi community provided a valuable opportunity to exchange views and better understand their evolving banking expectations. The keen interest shown in our products and services reinforces our commitment to continue serving the community and strengthen long-term relationships," said by Shri Kalyan Kumar, MD & CEO, Central Bank of India. Central Bank of India plans to hold similar interactions from time to time, as it continues to strengthen its retail banking franchise through sustained customer engagement.

# Worldwide IT spending likely to rise 10.8%, hit \$6.15 t in 2026: Gartner

**PICKING UP PACE.** Data centres fastest-growing segment; total spend is expected to increase 31.7 per cent

**Our Bureau**

Bengaluru

Worldwide IT spending is expected to reach \$6.15 trillion in 2026, up 10.8 per cent from 2025's \$5.55 trillion, according to the latest forecast by Gartner.

"AI infrastructure growth remains rapid despite concerns about an AI bubble, with spending rising across AI-related hardware and software," said John-David Lovelock, Distinguished VP Analyst at Gartner.

"Demand from hyperscale cloud providers continues to drive investment in servers optimised for AI workloads."

Data centre systems are the fastest-growing segment; total data centre spending is expected to increase 31.7 per cent, surpassing \$650 billion in 2026, up

from nearly \$500 billion the previous year.

Meanwhile, software spending growth for 2026 has been slightly revised downward to 14.7 per cent from 15.2 per cent for both application and infrastructure software.

Outlays are expected to grow from \$1.25 trillion in 2025 to \$1.43 trillion in 2026.

IT services, the largest segment by value, are projected to expand steadily.

**SPENDING SURGE**

Spending is expected to rise from \$1.72 trillion in 2025 to \$1.87 trillion in 2026, with growth improving from 6.4 per cent to 8.7 per cent.

Devices are seeing more moderate growth, with spending forecast to increase from \$788.3 billion in 2025 to \$836.4 billion in 2026, while growth slows



**SIGNIFICANT JUMP.** Outlays are expected to grow from \$1.25 trillion in 2025 to \$1.43 trillion in 2026

from 9.1 per cent to 6.1 per cent. Communications services remain the slowest-growing category. Spending is expected to edge up from \$1.30 trillion in 2025 to \$1.36 trillion in 2026, with growth increasing slightly from 3.8 per cent to 4.7 per cent.

"Despite the modest revi-

sion, total software spending will remain above \$1.4 trillion," said Lovelock.

"Projections for generative AI (GenAI) model spending in 2026 remain unchanged, with growth expected at 80.8 per cent. GenAI models continue to experience strong growth,

and their share of the software market is expected to rise by 1.8 per cent in 2026."

Shipments of mobile phones, PCs and tablets continue to grow steadily. Total spending on devices is projected to reach \$836 billion in 2026. However, market-demand constraints will slow growth to 6.1 per cent in 2026.

**SELLING PRICES**

"This slowdown is largely due to rising memory prices, which are increasing average selling prices and discouraging device replacements," said Lovelock.

"Additionally, higher memory costs are causing shortages in the lower end of the market, where profit margins are thinner. These factors are contributing to more muted growth in device shipments."

## We have ambitious plans for India: Thai Airways CEO

**Aneesh Phadnis**

Mumbai



Chai Eamsiri, CEO,  
Thai Airways

Thai Airways will introduce flights to four destinations and deploy its latest Airbus A321Neo aircraft to cities in India as a part of its ambitious expansion plan, Chief Executive Officer Chai Eamsiri told businessline.

Currently, Thai Airways flies 78 flights per week to eight cities in India. This will increase to 100 weekly flights this year with extra frequencies to Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai and Kolkata. Also on the cards are services to Amritsar, Jaipur and Kochi from the winter schedule. The airline is also keen to start flights to Pune from next year. "We have ambitious plans to put more capacity to India," Eamsiri said.

The airline will receive 16 Airbus A321Neo aircraft, featuring lie-flat business

class seats this year. These planes will be deployed on flights to Hyderabad (July), Ahmedabad (August), Kolkata, Mumbai and Bengaluru (September).

**POLITICAL RELATIONS**  
While good political relations and people-to-people connect remain important factors, Thailand is also a popular tourist destination for Indians. Thai Airways' capacity expansion comes amid a growth in air traffic between India and Thailand.

## SC sends Flipkart-CCI case back to NCLAT

**Press Trust of India**

New Delhi

—

Overall flights between the two countries increased by 15 per cent over last year. Last year Thailand received 32.9 million foreign visitors. This included 2.48 million visitors from Indian — the third largest source market after Malaysia and China. Eamsiri said the addition of flights to China would also provide more travel options to Indian passengers.

A bench, comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Dipak M Pancholi, remanded

the matter back to the NCLAT for fresh adjudication. It held that the NCLAT must reconsider the case after taking into account Flipkart's contention that the tribunal had relied on observations made by an assessing officer in income tax proceedings, which were subsequently set aside by the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal. The court clarified that all issues have been left open for reconsideration by the NCLAT. "We request the NCLAT to decide the appeal afresh," it ordered.

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#### BUSINESS OFFER

##### BUSINESS

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### COCHIN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LIMITED

#### TENDER NOTICE 04.02.2026

Online Item rate E-tenders are invited from reputed agencies for the work mentioned below at Cochin International Airport.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimate Amount	EMD	Completion Period
1.	Supply of Microsoft 365 Business Premium Licenses at Cochin International Airport.	Rs.1.67 Crores + GST	Rs.3,50,000/-	8 Weeks

Interested firms may register themselves on the online E-Tendering portal <https://etenders.kerala.gov.in> and then download the Tender documents. For eligibility criteria and other details, visit our website [www.cial.aero](http://www.cial.aero). For further updates on this tender, please visit <https://etenders.kerala.gov.in>. Sd/- Managing Director

Cognizant and Uniphore to co-create SLMs

**Rohan Das**

Chennai

IT major Cognizant has announced a partnership with business AI company Uniphore focused on the joint development of industry-specific small language models (SLMs).

The collaboration will aim to help enterprises deploy targeted, governable AI capabilities for real business workflows and help turn AI into a durable part of how they run.

The partnership will combine Uniphore's Business AI Cloud, which helps unify enterprise data, knowledge, models and AI agents with built-in security and governance, as the foundation for building and fine-tuning small language models (SLMs), while Cognizant will lead the solution development, deployment and client delivery.

**PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS**

"By combining domain-specific SLMs developed with Uniphore's Business AI Cloud with AI agents managed through Cognizant's platforms, this partnership seeks to incorporate our industry expertise into solutions that are practical, governable and ready to operate at scale," said Ravi Kumar S, Chief Executive Officer of Cognizant.

"Partnering with Cognizant enables us to combine Uniphore's Business AI platform, embedded across the business stack, with deep industry expertise to deliver secure, scalable solutions designed for real-world enterprise execution," Umesh Sachdev, CEO and Co-founder of Uniphore said.

### Invesco Mutual Fund

#### Invesco Asset Management (India) Pvt. Ltd.

(CIN: U67190MH2005PTC153471), 2101-A, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor, A Wing, Marathon Futurex, N. M. Joshi Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai - 400 013

Telephone: +91 22 6731 0000, Email: [mfservices@invescoindia.com](mailto:mfservices@invescoindia.com); [www.invescomutualfund.com](http://www.invescomutualfund.com)

### NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that Invesco Trustee Pvt. Ltd., (the Trustee to Invesco Mutual Fund) has approved the declaration of Income Distribution cum Capital Withdrawal ('IDCW') in the following scheme, the particulars of which are as under:

Name of the Scheme	Plan(s) / Option(s)	Amount of IDCW* (Rs. per unit)	NAV as on February 2, 2026 (Rs. per unit)	Record Date*
Invesco India Balanced Advantage Fund, an open ended dynamic asset allocation fund	Regular Plan - IDCW Option	0.15	18.54	February 6, 2026
	Direct Plan - IDCW Option		23.02	

\*Distribution of the above IDCW is subject to the availability of distributable surplus and may be lower to the extent of distributable surplus available on the record date. IDCW payable to the unit holder(s) will be lower to the extent of tax deducted at source, at applicable rates.

#or immediately following Business Day if that day is not a Business Day.

Face Value per unit is Rs. 10/-.

#### Pursuant to payment of IDCW, the NAV of the IDCW Options of the scheme would fall to the extent of payout and statutory levy, if any.

Unit holders of the aforesaid scheme, whose names appear in the records of the Registrar, KFin Technologies Limited, as at the close of business hours on **Friday, February 6, 2026** or immediately following Business Day if that day is not a Business Day (including valid purchase/switch-in application received till 3.00 p.m. on the record date, subject to the entire amount of subscription/ purchase as per the application / switch-in request is available for utilization by the scheme before the cut-off time on the record date) will be entitled to receive the IDCW.

Unit holders holding units in dematerialized (electronic) form whose names appear in the statement of beneficial owners maintained by the Depositories under the aforesaid scheme as at the close of business hours on **Friday, February 6, 2026** will be entitled to receive the IDCW.

With regard to Unit holders under IDCW options of the aforesaid scheme, who have opted for IDCW Reinvestment facility, the IDCW due will be reinvested by allotting units for the IDCW amount (net of applicable taxes and stamp duty) (on the next Business Day after the Record Date) at a price based on the prevailing ex-IDCW NAV per unit on the record date.

For Invesco Asset Management (India) Pvt. Ltd.  
(Investment Manager for Invesco Mutual Fund)

Sd/-

Saurabh Nanavati

Date: February 3, 2026

Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer

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

## Adani Group, Leonardo team up to build military helicopters

**Aneesh Phadnis**

Mumbai



proof helicopter ecosystem in India. Merging global excellence with our industrial momentum, we will drive enduring value, high-skill employment, and alignment with *Atmanirbhar Bharat* to position India as a global aerospace powerhouse."

**DEFENCE AUTONOMY**

"This strategic partnership redefines India's aerospace landscape, strengthening defence autonomy and position the country as a trusted global hub for helicopter manufacturing and sustainment," Gian Piero Cutillo, Managing Director, Leonardo Helicopters, said.

Other OEMs like Airbus and Bell Textron have already announced tie-ups with local partners to bid for armed forces' requirements. While Airbus has partnered with the Tata Group to offer H125 helicopters, Bell Textron has teamed up with Max Aerospace to offer Bell 407 helicopters.

offshore purposes in India. While the AW109 is single-engined, AW169 is powered by twin engines.

While Leonardo's civil helicopters are flown by top industrial houses, it has had a controversial past with defence contracts in India.

The company (previously known as Finmeccanica) was blacklisted in 2014 over allegations of kickbacks. The ban was lifted in 2021.

Jeet Adani, Director, Adani Defence & Aerospace, stated, "This alliance with Leonardo is a pivotal stride toward a resilient, future-

### NEWSPAPER PUBLIC NOTICE FOR AUCTION OF GOLD JEWELLERY

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- TO READ THE COMPLETE BIDDER TERMS AND CONDITIONS ("T&CS") PERTAINING TO THIS PUBLIC AUCTION, BY ACCESSING THE WEBLINK <http://172.30.1.235:3000/?WOUB2Q9WU>
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- ATTEND IN PERSON AT THE AUCTION VENUE 10AM; AND
- TO CARRY THEIR VALID PROOF OF IDENTITY & ADDRESS AT THE AUCTION VENUE.

f) BIDDERS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN AUCTION PROCESS POST 12 NOON ON THE DATE OF AUCTION.

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## QUICKLY.

Muthoot FinCorp launches ₹600 crore NCD issue



**Kochi:** Muthoot FinCorp has announced the launch of tranche-1 of secured and redeemable NCDs with a face value of ₹1,000 each. The offering is intended to support lending and financing activities, repay interest and principal on existing debt and meet general corporate needs. It aims to raise up to ₹600 crore within the approved shelf limit of ₹3,000 crore, said a press release. The NCD tranche-1 issue comprises a base size of ₹200 crore, with a green shoe option of ₹400 crore, aggregating up to ₹600 crore ("NCD tranche-1"). The NCDs offer effective annual yields ranging from 8.70 per cent to 9.10 per cent across multiple tenure options of 24, 36, 60 and 72 months. The NCD tranche-1 will be open to the public till February 16. OUR BUREAU

Brandman Retail to raise ₹80 crore via NSE-Emerge

**Mumbai:** Brandman Retail plans to raise ₹80 crore through an initial public offering on NSE Emerge. The company will issue 48,911 lakh shares at ₹167-₹176 a share. The IPO will open for subscription on February 4. The net proceeds from the IPO will be used for expansion of new retail network by launching 15 exclusive brand outlets and multi-brand outlets, working capital requirements for EBOs and MBOs and general corporate expenses. Gretex Corporate Services will be the book running lead manager, while Bigshare Services has been appointed as registrar. OUR BUREAU

# Sensex posts biggest single-day gain since November 2024 on US trade deal

**BULL PARTY.** All 22 sectoral indices end in green, FPIs turn buyers; BSE-listed firms' m-cap zooms ₹12.10 lakh cr

Anupama Ghosh  
Mumbai

Markets witnessed a sharp rally on Tuesday, with the Sensex soaring 2,072.67 points to close at 83,739.13, marking its biggest single-day gain in terms of points since November 22, 2024, when it had jumped 1,961.32 points. FPIs returned as big buyers on Tuesday, thanks to Indo-US trade deal.

The Nifty50 surged 639.15 points to settle at 25,727.55, driven by a landmark India-US trade agreement that significantly eased tariff concerns.

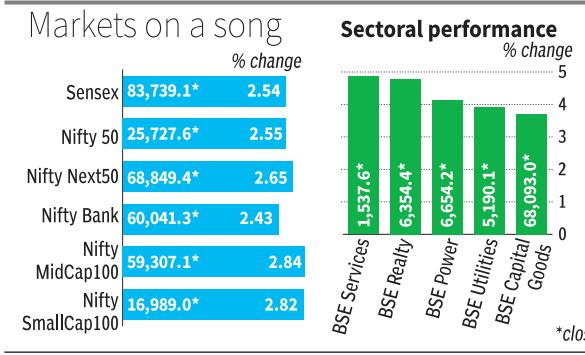
The Nifty, in fact, opened higher at 26,308.05 and rose further to 26,341.20, almost near its all-time high of 26,373.20, before turning

weak from the peak. Ravi Singh, Chief Research Officer at Master Capital Services, said for a prolonged period, uncertainty over delay in trade negotiations and the risk of elevated tariffs acted as an overhang for Indian equities, particularly for export-oriented sectors.

That overhang now appears largely tackled. Lower tariffs now improve the competitiveness of Indian exports and enhances visibility of earnings across sectors such as engineering goods, fisheries, textiles, chemicals and auto ancillaries, he said.

## BROAD PARTICIPATION

According to exchange provisional data, FPIs pumped in ₹5,426.24 crore worth shares on Tuesday.



Market breadth turned decisively positive with 3,279 stocks advancing against 1,015 declines on the BSE, while 121 stocks touched 52-week highs and 117 hit 52-week lows. The Nifty Midcap 100 surged 1,639.50 points to 59,307.10, while the Nifty Smallcap 100 jumped 465.60 points to

16,988.95, reflecting strong broad-based participation. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms surged around ₹12.10 lakh crore to ₹467.03 crore. All the 22 sectoral indices ended in the green.

Sectoral gains were led by realty stocks, which rallied nearly 4.8 per cent, followed

by infrastructure, energy, pharma and banking. The Nifty Financial Services index gained 875.05 points to 27,674.05, while the Nifty Bank rose 1,422.30 points to 60,041.30 after touching a fresh all-time high of 61,764 during the session.

Among Nifty 50 constituents, Adani Enterprises emerged as the top gainer, surging 10.58 per cent, followed by Adani Ports, which jumped 9.19 per cent and Jio Financial Services climbed 8.15 per cent. Only four stocks in the Nifty 50 ended in the red, with Tech Mahindra leading losses with a marginal decline of 0.66 per cent, followed by Bharat Electronics (-0.16 per cent), SBI Life Insurance (-0.08 per cent) and Nestle India (-0.07 per cent).

**Fractal Analytics reduces IPO size by over 40% to ₹2,834 cr**

Our Bureau  
Mumbai

Enterprise AI solutions unicorn Fractal Analytics reduced its initial public offering (IPO) size by 42 per cent to ₹2,833.9 crore on February 2, according to the prospectus filed with SEBI.

Fractal detailed fresh issue size of ₹1,023.5 crore and an offer for sale of ₹1,810.4 crore. Quinag Biobio Ltd, managed by Apax Partners, will sell shares worth ₹880.9 crore while TPG Fett Holdings and GLM Family Trust will each sell shares worth ₹450 crore through the offer for sale.

The IPO opens on February 9 and closes on February 11. Anchor bidding will open on February 6.

Earlier it had filed for a IPO size of ₹4,900 crore.

According to Kranthi Bathini, Director, Equity Strategy, WealthMills Securities, the reduced size may in-

**The IPO opens on February 9** and closes on February 11. Anchor bidding will open on February 6

dicate good market conditions as companies typically decrease equity dilution when market momentum is good which typically brings down IPO size. Bathini noted there is currently a lot of craze for AI in the ecosystem.

Meanwhile, businessline reached out to Fractal for a comment but the company refrained from commenting.

Fractal's IPO in November had made quite a buzz as one of the largest public issues in India's AI solutions space. The company is selected by the Indian government to build India's first large reasoning model under the India AI Mission.

## Jio BlackRock launches wealth management platform at ₹350/year

Press Trust of India  
Mumbai

Rock's Aladdin technology, will offer advice on mutual fund bets with a backend investment team regularly updating the tool to ensure that clients are advised to take best bets in a given situation.

## MAIDEN FORAY

This is the maiden foray by BlackRock, a global entity managing over \$14 trillion of assets and equal partner with Jio in India, to offer an investment advisory platform aimed directly at consumers. After registering, the platform will seek to know a user's risk profile, investment objectives and

dish out advices, the company said, adding that there will be daily monitoring with nudges to rebalance a portfolio.

The company's Managing Director and Chief Executive Marc Pilgrim said the company feels the addressable market, after considering the 215 million direct equity holders and 60 million mutual fund accounts, is about 200 million.

This is a platform which will democratise wealth management and is also very scalable while also being very personalised on the back of technology use, he said.

Adani Enterprises led the Nifty 50 pack to settle 10 per cent higher at 2,202.60,

## Adani Group stocks' m-cap jumps ₹1.06 lakh crore

Madhu Balaji  
Bengaluru

Shares of Adani Group companies rallied sharply on Tuesday, rising 2-11 per cent, tracking a broader market surge after news of an India-US trade deal agreement lifted investor sentiment across risk assets.

The surge added about ₹1.06 lakh crore to the conglomerate's total market capitalisation in a single session, with brokerage Jefferies noting that the Adani Group is likely to emerge as one of the key beneficiaries of the trade deal.

Adani Enterprises led the Nifty 50 pack to settle 10 per cent higher at 2,202.60,

jumping as much as 12 per cent to ₹2,233.40 intraday from its previous close of ₹1,995.40. The company posted a standalone net profit for the quarter ended December 2025 at ₹6,295.99 crore compared to ₹534.59 crore year ago.

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone closed 9 per cent positive at ₹1,530.80, hitting an intra-day high of ₹1,537 against the previous close of ₹1,403.10.

It recorded a gain of over ₹27,000 crore in market capitalisation, supported by its strong Q3 FY26 results. It reported a consolidated PAT of ₹3,042.93 crore in Q3, up from ₹2,518.39 crore a year earlier.

Renewable and utility

## Strong rally

Category	BSE close (₹)	% Gain
Acc	1,669.9	2.08
Adani Energy	974.60	10.23
Adani Green	932.25	10.61
Adani Ports	1,530.9	9.12
Adani Power	143.65	6.76
Adani Total Gas	542.3	4.52
Ambuja Cement	528.25	3.45
Sanghi Industries	62.39	3.60
NDTV	83.35	2.91

7.5 per cent to ₹558 before closing 4 per cent positive at ₹542.35, and Adani Power 7 per cent to ₹143.62.

AWL Agri Business shares were up 1 per cent to ₹215.12. Its consolidated net profit for the quarter ended December 2025 declined 34.5 per cent y-o-y to ₹269.03 crore compared to ₹410.93 crore in the same quarter last year.

The sharp move across Adani counters came as optimism over easing trade tensions between India and the US boosted equities broadly, encouraging investors to rotate into infrastructure, energy and capital-intensive stocks that are seen as key beneficiaries of stronger cross-border economic activity.

## Tiger Analytics eyes IPO as firm inches closer to \$1 b revenue



**FUTURE PLANS.** Mahesh Kumar (left), Founder & CEO, Tiger Analytics, and Pradeep Gulipalli, Co-founder & Chief Executive - India BIJOY GHOSH

"We can go for bigger bets, and also the individual work hard for wealth creation," he added, noting that it is also useful to go after newer markets and for inorganic growth plans. He did not rule out a pre-IPO round along the way.

Tiger Analytics helps Fortune 1000 companies solve their technology transformation challenges by offering full-stack AI and analytics services. Its team of over 6,000 experts worldwide serve clients across retail, CPG, banking, insurance, manufacturing, and healthcare industries.

In India, their teams are based in Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Delhi and Pune. Globally they have centres in the US, Canada, Mexico,

and invest in top performing equity schemes in the most tax efficient manner. Investors usually rejig their portfolio to chase the best performing equity schemes but in that process incur capital gain tax once they exit the schemes.

**ASSET ALLOCATION** DSP Multi Asset Omni FoF, which will invest up to 75 per cent of its portfolio in equity, will track the best performing fund manager across the industry and invest in those schemes to deliver best return to investors.

It will use the stock picking ability of the best equity fund managers in the industry along with asset allocation strategies of DSP Netra.

The fund will help investors in asset allocation

## BROKER'S CALL.

## Centrum Broking

## CHOLA FINANCE (BUY)

Target: ₹1,807  
CMP: ₹1,695.95 Cholamandalam Investment & Finance Co has delivered a better-than-expected quarter, with operating income in line and stable net interest income (NII), while easing credit costs driven by asset-quality stabilisation supported higher earnings.

On the business front, disbursements grew 16 per cent y-o-y and 23 per cent q-o-q, led by a 17 per cent y-o-y increase in Vehicle Finance, aided by improving CV/PV demand, GST-led price corrections and better fleet utilisation, strengthening visibility on achieving the 20-21 per cent AUM growth target. The management highlighted continued improvement in asset quality, with vehicle delinquencies plateauing, early-bucket indicators trending better and NCLs in unsecured portfolios declining on tighter underwriting and portfolio clean-ups.

Against this backdrop, we increased our estimates slightly. From a valuation perspective, the stock has corrected over 12 per cent over the past two months and now trades near mean +1SD multiples, offering room for upside. Accordingly, we upgrade the stock to Buy rating (from Neutral) with a revised target price of ₹1,807 (earlier ₹1,622), based on 4.0x P/ABV on FY28E.

We also position Cholamandalam Investment & Finance as our top pick in the auto finance space.

## Choice International

## GLENMARK PHARMA (ADD)

Target: ₹2,175  
CMP: ₹1,955.85 Glenmark Pharmaceuticals' revenue grew 15.1 per cent year on year and de-grew 35.5 per cent quarter on quarter to ₹3,900.60 crore (vs. our estimate: ₹4,227.20 crore). EBITDA grew 44.9 per cent y-o-y and de-grew 63.1 per cent q-o-q to ₹869.70 crore (vs. CIE estimate: ₹887.70 crore); margin expanded 458 bps y-o-y and contracted 1,672 bps q-o-q to 22.3 per cent (vs. CIE estimate: 21 per cent). APAT increased 53.4 per cent y-o-y and contracted 64.1 per cent q-o-q to ₹533.60 crore (vs. CIE estimate: ₹556.90 crore).

We maintain a positive view on GNP, supported by its strong product pipeline, sustained launch momentum and continued growth in key markets, such as India and North America. We expect a sharp about 500-bp EBITDA margin expansion in FY26 to around 23 per cent, primarily driven by a reduction in R&D expenses, as ISB is now fully funded following the AbbVie deal. Additional margin upside is likely from FY28E, as operating leverage from new launches at the Monroe facility begins to accrue. That said, we have marginally revised our PAT estimates downward by 2.9/2.4 per cent for FY26/E27E to factor in a higher effective tax rate. We continue to value the stock at 25x FY27-28E EPS, resulting in a revised target price of ₹2,175 (from ₹2,235). A PEG of 0.6x (based on adjusted EPS) further supports the valuation, leading to a revised Add stance.

businessline is not responsible for the recommendations sourced from third party brokerages. Reports may be sent to: [blmarketwatch@gmail.com](mailto:blmarketwatch@gmail.com)

## TODAY'S PICK.

## Ather Energy (₹676.30): BUY

Gurumurthy K  
bl. research bureau

The short-term outlook is bullish for Ather Energy. The stock has surged over 11 per cent on Tuesday and has closed on a strong note. This rise has happened after forming a good base above ₹600. This base formation indicates the presence of strong buyers around ₹600. Cluster of supports are now there in the ₹655-₹635 range. Intermediate dips are likely to get new buyers around this support zone. Ather Energy share price has potential to target ₹750 in the coming weeks.

Traders can buy Ather Energy now at ₹676. Accumulate on dips at ₹660. Keep the stop-loss

## Day trading guide

## 25823 ➡ Nifty 50 Futures

S1	S2	R1	R2	COMMENT
25720	25650	25960	26040	Go long on a bounce from 25720. Keep the stop-loss at 25690

## ₹947 ➡ HDFC Bank

S1





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STATEMENT OF CONSOLIDATED UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS  
FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025

(₹ in Millions, except per share data)

Particulars	Quarter Ended		Nine Months Ended		Year Ended
	31-Dec-2025 (Unaudited)	31-Dec-2024 (Unaudited)	31-Dec-2025 (Unaudited)	31-Dec-2024 (Unaudited)	31-Mar-2025 (Audited)
Total Income from Operations	6,240	5,034	15,015	14,678	20,058
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before Tax (before Exceptional items)	1,426	1,246	3,544	3,565	4,886
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before Tax (after Exceptional items)	1,269	1,246	3,387	3,565	4,886
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after Tax	917	926	2,475	2,640	3,586
Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after Tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after Tax)]	1,052	978	2,522	2,687	3,604
Equity Share Capital	318	318	318	318	318
Other Equity					11,846
Earnings per share of ₹1/- each (not annualised)					
(a) Basic (in ₹)	2.89	2.92	7.79	8.29	11.28
(b) Diluted (in ₹)	2.89	2.92	7.79	8.29	11.28

## Notes :

1. Summarised Standalone Unaudited Financial Performance of the Company is as under:

Particulars	Quarter Ended		Nine Months Ended		Year Ended
	31-Dec-2025 (Unaudited)	31-Dec-2024 (Unaudited)	31-Dec-2025 (Unaudited)	31-Dec-2024 (Unaudited)	31-Mar-2025 (Audited)
Total Income from Operations	5,840	4,406	14,072	13,048	17,952
Profit/(Loss) before Tax (before Exceptional items)	1,452	1,140	3,618	3,283	4,581
Profit/(Loss) before Tax (after Exceptional items) (Refer note 3)	1,295	1,500	3,461	3,643	4,941
Profit/(Loss) after Tax	952	1,213	2,578	2,807	3,744
Total Comprehensive Income	1,043	1,281	2,491	2,821	3,715

2. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine Months ended December 31, 2025 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine Months ended December 31, 2025 are available on the Stock Exchange's websites ([www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com) and [www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com)) and on the Company's website ([www.triventurturbines.com](http://www.triventurturbines.com)).

3. The Government of India has merged various existing labour laws into a unified framework comprising four labour codes, collectively referred to as the "New Labour Code". Accordingly, the Company has recognised a one-time impact of ₹157 million in compliance with Ind AS 19, relating to changes in employee benefit obligations, and has presented this amount as an exceptional item in the Statement of Profit and Loss for the Quarter and Nine Months ended December 31, 2025. The Government of India is in the process of notifying the corresponding rules under the New Labour Code, and any further impact will be accounted for in the period in which such rules are notified.

4. The Board of Directors of the Company have approved payment of Interim dividend @ 225% (i.e., ₹2.25 per equity share of ₹1/- each) for the financial year ending March 31, 2026.

For TRIVENI TURBINE LIMITED

Sd/-

Dhruv M. Sawhney  
Chairman & Managing DirectorPlace: Noida (U.P.)  
Date: February 3, 2026Registered & Corporate Office: 401, BPTP Capital City, Sector-94, Noida, Uttar Pradesh - 201 301  
Website: [www.triventurturbines.com](http://www.triventurturbines.com) | CIN: L29110UP1995PLC041834

## WhatsApp, Meta face SC heat over data sharing

Krishnadas Rajagopal  
New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said it will not permit instant messaging platform WhatsApp and its parent company Meta to breach the right to privacy of millions of their "silent consumers" in India through the sharing and commercial exploitation of personal data.

At one point during the hearing, a three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, addressing Meta and WhatsApp, compared the sharing of private data to a "decent way of committing theft", saying by now "you must have taken away millions of bytes of data".

They said prior consent was cardinal. WhatsApp stressed that messages sent and received on its platform were end-to-end encrypted.

Justice Joymalya Bagchi, who along with Justice Vipul M. Pancholi formed part of the Bench, pointed out that every silo of data regarding an individual, irrespective of whether it was private or not, had value.

The Chief Justice gave an example of a person communicating online with his doctor about medicines, only to get advertisements or notifications about medical services available minutes later.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, present in the court room, said, "Our private data is not only sold, but it is commercially exploited. We are

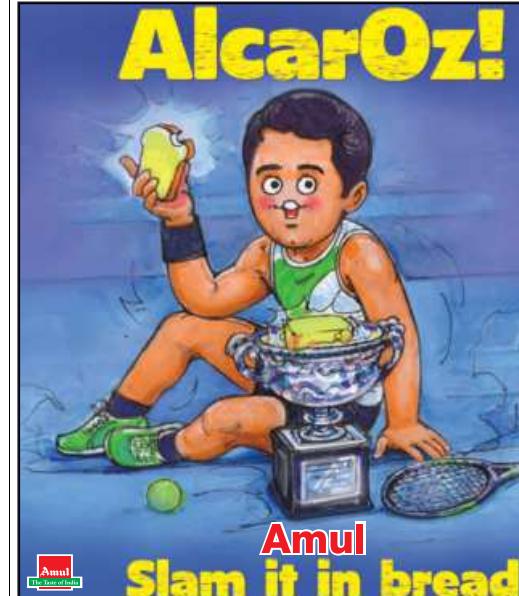
not only consumers, but also products." The Bench impleaded the Centre, through the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, as a party in the case.

The court was hearing petitions filed by Meta and WhatsApp against a National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) decision last year to uphold a ₹213.14 crore penalty imposed by Competition Commission of India.

The anti-competition regulator had found WhatsApp's 'take-it-or-leave-it' approach in its 2021 privacy policy an abuse of its market dominance. It found the prior consent sought from users to share their data with Meta "manufactured".

Rohatgi said users did have a choice to opt-out. "What 'opt out'? Then you opt out of the country," Chief Justice Kant retorted.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**  
"We will examine everything from the perspective of a common consumer of this country. How many people will understand the legal implications you impose. Where is the question of 'opt out'? In actuality, there is no such option. By now you must have taken out millions of data. In a way, this is a decent way of committing theft in a way. We will not allow this to happen... You have to give an undertaking or we will impose very strict conditions," Chief Justice Kant told the online entities.



## No faults in Air India's Boeing 787 fuel switches, say DGCA officials

Aneesh Phadnis  
Mumbai

Boeing recommended procedures for operation of the fuel control switch.

On its part, Air India is also re-inspecting the fuel control switches on all its 33 Boeing 787 planes. "Our engineers — out of abundance of caution — have initiated precautionary fleet-wide re-inspection of the fuel control switch latch to verify normal operations.

Fuel control switches manage fuel flow to engines and have been in focus following the Air India 171 accident in Ahmedabad last June.

## UNDER SUPERVISION

In a note, DGCA said Air India engineers carried out checks on the aircraft under their officers' supervision. It said applying external force in an incorrect direction caused the switch to move easily from "run" to "cutoff" mode.

The DGCA has also advised Air India to circulate

the preliminary report on the Air India 171 crash released by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau had highlighted the transitioning of the fuel cut off switch from "run" to "cutoff" mode, indicating cut in fuel supply to the engines.



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Company	Prev	Close	Open	High	Low	Qty	52 Wk	52 WL	PE	BSE CI	Company	Prev	Close	Open	High	Low	Qty	52 Wk	52 WL	PE	BSE CI	Company	Prev	Close	Open	High	Low	Qty	52 Wk	52 WL	PE	BSE CI									
20 Microns [5]	168.86	172.88	178.80	178.80	170.40	108.01	284.10	150.50	10	173.15	Canara Bank [2]	146.47	147.34	152.50	157.50	146.88/405/10.68	160.80	78.58	7	147.25	GMR Airports	94.01	95.22	96.01	97.58	94.31/52/15.89	110.36	67.75	-	-	K.P.R. MILL [1]	859.00	988.50	995.80	1003.00	890.30	1030.80	1445.58	1395.40	758.80	58.91 99.00
360 One WAM	1110.50	1167.60	1150.00	1188.50	1150.00	1208.60	1273.70	1273.70	79.50	-	Canara HSBCL [2]	148.29	149.98	153.00	157.00	143.60	1049.95	157.80	106.00	-	GMR P&U Inf.	101.95	106.48	105.40	108.60	103.90	108.73	141.01	89.36	-	KabraExtrus [1]	159.77	192.22	197.40	204.80	220.00	204.00	229.1	477.85	188.40	219.75
31 Tech	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	Cantab. [2]	90.98	92.10	95.00	95.00	92.00	100.00	95.00	95.00	13	92.65	GNFC	468.70	470.50	485.35	479.00	481.20	465.10	179.75	584.80	442.50	11 416.50									
3M India	3449.00	3502.00	3500.00	3550.00	3470.05	3593.59	3784.85	3525.13	3750.20	55.55	31.00	Cantab. [2]	291.05	301.55	306.00	306.00	293.55	421.43	334.85	213.00	32	301.90	Capilano [2]	108.00	112.00	112.00	112.00	108.00	112.00	112.00	112.00	112.00	-								
5PAISA	331.10	334.05	339.80	357.05	329.40	172.42	431.80	287.95	24	334.80	CapilanoTec	603.40	617.55	617.80	634.00	612.00	105.70	78.95	570.05	-	Go Digital	313.80	320.80	339.45	394.50	387.05	378.05	94.37	347.35	-	Kalpataru Pro [1]	112.70	132.70	111.00	117.80	109.00	109.00	112.50	135.60	109.00	-
63 Moonts [2]	638.20	650.65	646.00	662.00	643.00	642.74	601.90	575.00	57.05	65.50	Carpe Rating	1150.40	1165.00	1163.00	1162.00	105.50	27.19	19.64	107.65	30	1613.90	Carpe Rating	186.00	186.00	186.00	186.00	186.00	186.00	186.00	186.00	186.00	-									
A *****	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	-	Carreiro Ind	496.35	519.20	512.00	524.55	507.30	378.22	573.70	525.15	-	Godavari p [1]	245.80	252.52	260.00	260.00	246.20	130.93	290.00	145.55	22	134.65										
Aartiflame	77.15	79.15	76.15	77.00	76.15	76.08	71.00	76.08	75.00	-	Carreiro Tch	244.78	261.50	264.00	264.40	256.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	Godfrey Phil [2]	191.86	197.80	200.05	200.89	192.90	335.42	394.00	151.85	24	197.25										
Aarti Surfac	40.20	41.18	44.80	44.90	40.95	22.76	65.53	45.30	35.00	-	CarryOn [2]	810.00	810.00	800.00	800.00	567.00	567.00	567.00	567.00	567.00	-	Goody Agric [2]	117.00	110.00	114.00	113.00	110.00	110.00	110.00	110.00	110.00	-									
Aarti Svcs	1447.80	1420.40	1459.90	1500.00	1442.00	529.88	222.85	135.20	19	149.30	CastROL [5]	185.11	184.80	187.00	187.94	184.30	24.50	25.00	19	184.85	CastROL [5]	185.11	184.80	187.00	187.94	184.30	184.30	184.30	184.30	184.30	-										
Aarti Svcs	383.55	390.60	395.00	422.00	385.10	62.00	59.71	59.71	29	34.55	Catib [2]	90.89	92.10	95.00	95.00	92.00	100.00	95.00	95.00	13	92.65	Catib [2]	109.00	112.20	111.00	117.80	109.00	109.00	112.00	111.00	109.00	-									
Aarti Svcs	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	Catalyt [2]	291.05	301.55	306.00	306.00	293.55	421.43	334.85	213.00	32	301.90	Catalyt [2]	108.00	112.00	111.00	117.00	108.00	108.00	112.00	111.00	108.00	-									
Aarti Svcs	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	CAPACITE	603.40	617.55	617.80	634.00	612.00	105.70	78.95	570.05	-	Go Fashion	385.30	389.65	394.00	394.50	387.05	179.48	94.37	347.35	-	Kalyan Jwl [1]	703.50	709.00	745.00	745.00	704.00	179.00	179.00	179.00	179.00	179.00
Aarti Svcs	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	CAPACITE	603.40	617.55	617.80	634.00	612.00	105.70	78.95	570.05	-	Go Fashion	385.30	389.65	394.00	394.50	387.05	179.48	94.37	347.35	-	Kalyan Jwl [1]	703.50	709.00	745.00	745.00	704.00	179.00	179.00	179.00	179.00	179.00
Aarti Svcs	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	CAPACITE	603.40	617.55	617.80	634.00	612.00	105.70	78.95	570.05	-	Go Fashion	385.30	389.65	394.00	394.50	387.05	179.48	94.37	347.35	-	Kalyan Jwl [1]	703.50	709.00	745.00	745.00	704.00	179.00	179.00	179.00	179.00	179.00
Aarti Svcs	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	CAPACITE	603.40	617.55	617.80	634.00	612.00	105.70	78.95	570.05	-	Go Fashion	385.30	389.65	394.00	394.50	387.05	179.48	94.37	347.35	-	Kalyan Jwl [1]	703.50	709.00	745.00	745.00	704.00	179.00	179.00	179.00	179.00	179.00
Aarti Svcs	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	CAPACITE	603.40	617.55	617.80	634.00	612.00	105.70	78.95	570.05	-	Go Fashion	385.30	389.65	394.00	394.50	387.05	179.48	94.37	347.35	-	Kalyan Jwl [1]	703.50	709.00	745.00	745.00	704.00	179.00	179.00	179.00	179.00	179.00
Aarti Svcs	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	CAPACITE	603.40	617.55	617.80	634.00	612.00	105.70	78.95	570.05	-	Go Fashion	385.30	389.65	394.00	394.50	387.05	179.48	94.37</td													

