



Public Finance

Union govt. releases disaster relief funds for Karnataka, T.N

Weeks after the governments of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka moved the Supreme Court seeking relief funds for calamities such as Cyclone Michaung, floods, and drought last year, the Union government on Friday ordered the release of ₹3,730.32 crore towards “relief assistance for natural calamity” from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF). An order by the Finance Ministry said the amount is being released to the State governments based on the recommendation of the Ministry of Home Affairs on April 24. [\(The Hindu\)](#)



Taxation

At ₹2.10-lakh cr, GST mop-up in April hits a new record

The trend of record-breaking collection from the Goods & Services Tax (GST) continued in April, surpassing ₹2-lakh crore for the first time since its inception. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman credited the “strong momentum in the economy and efficient tax system” for the milestone. April collection was over ₹2.10-lakh crore against ₹1.87-lakh crore a year ago, a growth of 12.4 per cent. The previous all-time high was ₹1.87-lakh crore. [\(BusinessLine\)](#)

CAG considering tax concessions as 'presumptive loss' not fair: Subbarao

If tax concessions announced by the government are treated as 'presumptive loss' by federal auditor Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), it would diminish democracy and not enhance it, opined former RBI Governor Duvvuri Subbarao. Arguably, Subbarao noted that it is possible to come out with a study that would in fact show a 'presumptive gain' to the government that the overall benefits to the government far exceed the revenue foregone by making assumptions that would be no less robust than those underlying the CAG methodology. [\(Business Standard\)](#)

Govt cuts windfall tax on petroleum crude to Rs 8,400 per MT from May 1

India has cut its windfall tax on petroleum crude to 8,400 Indian rupees (\$100.66) a metric ton from 9,600 rupees with effect from May 1, the government said on Tuesday. The tax, which is revised every fortnight, was left unchanged at zero for diesel and aviation turbine fuel. The government had on April 16 raised the windfall tax on petroleum crude to 9,600 rupees a metric ton from 6,800 rupees.

Indian multinationals have to pay 15% global minimum tax in Europe

Indian multinationals with a presence in 18 European Union nations, the UK, Vietnam and South Korea will be subject to a 15% global minimum tax rule after they implemented rules for the tax reform. Some 130 countries, including India, have signed off on the global tax reform. But the countries mentioned above have implemented domestic rules, which are effective from 1 January 2024 or later. [\(Mint\)](#)

Centre approves appointment of Sanjaya Kumar Mishra as President, GSTAT

The Appointment committee of Cabinet has approved the appointment of Sanjaya Kumar Mishra, former Chief Justice, Jharkhand High Court as President GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) for 4 years. *(The Economic Times)*

GST National Coordination meeting on Friday may discuss tightening noose on fake registrations

Central and state GST officers will convene to discuss various issues, including stricter registration norms to combat fake companies evading taxes. This meeting follows record-high GST collections of Rs 2.10 lakh crore in April, driven by economic momentum and enhanced scrutiny. Among the topics on the agenda are tightening GST registration to deter fraudulent companies and tracking the money trail of GST fraud masterminds. *(The Economic Times)*



National Accounts and State of the Economy

FinMin notifies 17% wage revision for over 1.10 lakh LIC employees

The Finance Ministry has notified the wage revision of LIC employees with effect from August 1, 2022, bringing relief to over 1.1 lakh employees of the Corporation. The move would lead to 17 per cent annual increase in wage bill for LIC. This wage revision could see an annual implication of around ₹4,000 crore, taking LIC's overall wage bill per year to about ₹29,000 crore. *(BusinessLine)*

OECD revises India's FY25 growth forecast upward to 6.6%

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Thursday, revised India's FY25 growth forecast upward to 6.6% from 6.2% projected earlier. OECD revised India's FY25 growth forecast to 6.6%, citing strong investment and business confidence. Public sector investment will be crucial, with inflation expected to decrease, leading to rate cuts. Emphasis on fiscal deficit, agricultural reforms, and global growth. *(The Economic Times)*

India to grow 6.8% in FY25, public investment to be the driver, says IMF

The IMF recently revised India's growth forecast upward to 6.8% from 6.5% projected in its January forecast. The fund also revised India's FY24 growth outlook upward to 7.8%, higher than the government's projection of 7.6%. "India and the Philippines have been the source of repeated positive growth surprises, supported by resilient domestic demand," IMF said in its report. *(The Economic Times)*

IMF flags a common link between India and China's growth stories as it revises Asia outlook

The report said that in China and India, public investment made a significant contribution supporting growth. "In emerging markets, growth was supported primarily by strong private demand. In China and, especially, India, public investment made an important contribution," it said. *(The Economic Times)*

India growth may top 7% in FY25: NCAER

The National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) has suggested that India's economy could grow faster than 7% in the current financial year. Factors such as the projected acceleration in global growth and trade volumes, as well as an expected above-

normal monsoon, are seen as positive indicators for India's economic growth. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has also raised India's growth forecast for 2024-25 to 6.8%, up from the earlier. *(The Economic Times)*

Resilient economy, price stability to support India's promising growth story: FinMin report

Resilient growth, price stability and steady external sector outlook continue to support India's promising economic performance amid uncertain global conditions, a Finance Ministry report said on Thursday. Overall, India continues to be the fastest-growing major economy, with positive assessments of the growth outlook for the current financial year for India by international organisations and the RBI, the Monthly Economic Review for March said. *(The Hindu)*



Banking and Monetary Policy

NPCI inks pact with Bank of Namibia for developing UPI-like instant payment system

NPCI on Thursday said its overseas arm has signed a pact with the Bank of Namibia (BoN) for developing a UPI-like instant payment system for Namibia. By leveraging technology and experiences from India's UPI, the partnership seeks to help Namibia modernize its financial ecosystem. This includes improving accessibility, affordability and connectivity with both domestic and international payment networks, and interoperability. *(The Economic Times)*

Bank deposit rates rise, but yet to fully reflect repo hike

While the regulator and the market may not agree on the extent of transmission of policy rates to lending and deposit rates, central bank data show that the full transmission of the 2.5-percentage-point hike in the benchmark repo rate since May 2022 is still not complete, except in the case of fresh term deposits. While they don't reflect the full impact of the policy rate hike, lending and deposit rates on both fresh and outstanding deposits rose in the last fiscal year, putting pressure on banks' interest margins. *(The Economic Times)*

PSBs told to speed up recovery at tribunals

The Centre has directed state-owned lenders to avoid seeking unnecessary adjournments before debt recovery tribunals, a government official said. Banks have been asked to conduct monthly reviews to expedite the debt recovery process and reconcile cases that have already been settled. *(The Economic Times)*

Lending and deposit rates rise across segments in FY'24

Both lending and as well as deposit rates on both fresh as well as outstanding deposits rose in FY'2023-24 which put pressure on bank's interest margins during the year. The weighted average lending rate (WALR) on fresh rupee loans of the commercial banks stood at 9.37 per cent in March 2024 (9.36 per cent in February 2024). It rose 13 basis points or bps (one basis point is 0.01 percent) over the last one year. *(The Economic Times)*

Banking stocks lift Sensex by over 1%

Benchmark S&P BSE Sensex gained more than 1% on Monday led by banking stocks, closing 941 points, or 1.28%, higher at 74,671. Sensex stocks which gained the most included ICICI Bank (up 4.67%), State Bank (3.09%), IndusInd Bank (2.9%), UltraTech Cement (2.7%), Axis Bank (2.6%) and NTPC (2.07%). The NSE Nifty-50 index too surged 223.45 points to 22,643.40. *(The Hindu)*

RBI tells ARCs to maintain ₹300 crore in net owned fund by FY26

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday released a 'Master Direction' for Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) mandating them to maintain a minimum net owned fund (NOF) of ₹300 crore in a phased manner by FY26. The Master Direction came into effect April 24, 2024. "To commence the business of securitisation or asset reconstruction, an ARC is required to have a minimum net owned fund (NOF) of ₹300 crore and thereafter, on an ongoing basis," the RBI said. *(The Hindu)*

RBI orders Kotak Bank to stop adding customers online

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday directed Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. (Kotak Bank) to cease and desist, with immediate effect, from onboarding new customers through its online and mobile banking channels and issuing fresh credit cards. Kotak Bank is however allowed to continue to provide services to its existing customers, including its credit card customers. *(The Hindu)*

Foreign banks seek leeway on LEF rules for Nostro accounts

At a time when overseas capital flows have been firm, foreign lenders have requested the banking regulator for flexibility in compliance with the central bank's Large Exposures Framework (LEF), particularly in handling certain types of accounts that facilitate global transactions. Banks have requested the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to consider excluding Nostro accounts from the exposures that are permitted under the LEF as sporadic instances of foreign flows that are meant for payouts over the next couple of days have resulted in breaches of the central bank's exposure norms, sources aware of the developments told ET. *(The Economic Times)*

Banks may have to slowdown loan growth in FY25: S&P

Indian banks' credit growth, profitability and asset quality would remain robust in current fiscal reflecting strong economic growth, but they may be compelled to slow down their loan growth as deposits are not growing at a similar pace, S&P Global Ratings has said. In the Asia-Pacific 2Q 2024 Banking Update, S&P Global Ratings Director SSEA Nikita Anand said the agency expects the sector's strong credit growth to moderate to 14 per cent in FY25, from 16 per cent in FY24, if deposit growth, especially retail deposits, remain tepid. *(The Economic Times)*

RBI sets eligibility rules for SFBs seeking universal banking licence

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday said that small finance banks willing to seek universal banking licence need to have at least ₹1,000 crore of net worth while the regulator laid down a detailed set of eligibility rules for such transition. RBI said that listed and profitable small finance banks with gross non-performing assets ratio less than 3% for last two fiscals can apply for universal banking licence. *(The Economic Times)*



'Don't take strong services exports story for granted'

While India's services exports had grown sixfold between 2005 and 2023 to about \$340 billion and were potentially poised to hit the \$800-billion mark in 2030, Goldman Sachs cautioned against complacency citing challenges such as the lack of skilled talent and resource stress in key hubs like Bengaluru. Goldman forecast services exports would reach 11% of GDP by 2030, from 9.7% in 2023, and if commodity prices and goods trade balances did not move much, this will help limit current account deficit to an average of 1% GDP between 2024 and 2030. *(The Hindu)*

Centre allows export of 1 lakh tonnes of onion to 6 countries

After allowing export of 2,000 tonnes of white onion earlier this month, the Union government on Saturday announced its decision to permit shipments of an additional 99,150 tonnes of onion to six countries — Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, UAE, Bahrain and Mauritius. Despite the ban on onion exports since last year, the government has been allowing shipments of specific quantities in response to diplomatic requests. *(The Hindu)*

Increasing global uncertainties may impact exports, says FIEO

The escalating geopolitical tensions may have implications for the country's exports as it is likely to impact global demand, apex exporters' body FIEO said. The uncertainties caused by the continuing war between Russia and Ukraine impacted India's outbound shipments in 2023-24, which recorded a dip of 3.11% to \$437 billion. Imports too slid by more than 8% to \$677.24 billion. *(The Hindu)*

Tiruppur garment exports show 'revival'

Garment exports from Tiruppur registered growth in February and March after facing a slump in demand for more than a year. As per the data with the Tiruppur Exporters' Association (TEA), Tiruppur knitwear exports rose 6.4% y-o-y in February and 5.6% in March in dollar terms. India's total garment exports grew 4.8% in February and 1.7% in March. K.M. Subramanian, President, TEA, said with India likely to sign a trade pact with the U.K., Indian garments will be competitive and hence, large retailers, looking for suppliers, are booking factories in India. *(The Hindu)*

India's Chinese import bill up 2.3 times in 15 years

India's imports from China crossed \$101 billion in 2023-24 from about \$70 billion in 2018-19, and the country's share of India's industrial goods imports has risen from 21% to 30% over 15 years, says a report by the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) which reckoned that Chinese imports will rise sharply in coming years. Goods imports from China have risen 2.3 times faster than India's total imports over 15 years, the GTRI study noted, adding that China is the top supplier in eight major industrial sectors, including machinery, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and textiles, belying the general perception that Chinese imports are high only in the electronics sector. *(The Hindu)*

India, Chinese Taipei ask WTO body to delay ruling on ICT levy

India and Chinese Taipei have asked the WTO's dispute settlement body not to adopt any ruling against New Delhi's import duties on certain information and technology products till July 26, an official said. The issue came up during a meeting of the dispute settlement

body (DSB) in Geneva on April 26. In the meeting, the two countries asked DSB to delay consideration of a dispute panel's reports until July 26, 2024 in order to help facilitate resolution of the disputes. *(The Hindu)*

Govt allows export of 1 lakh tonnes of onion to six nations on govt-to-govt basis; NCEL buying the bulbs

Soon after allowing export of 2,000 tonnes of white onion, the Union government on Saturday announced its decision to permit shipments of an additional 99,150 tonnes of onion to six countries — Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, the UAE, Bahrain, and Mauritius. Despite the ban on onion exports since last year, the government has been allowing shipments of specific quantities in response to diplomatic requests. The ban was imposed to ensure adequate domestic availability as kharif and rabi harvest in 2023-24 was lower. *(BusinessLine)*

Exporters urge government to extend interest equalisation scheme

Exporters have urged the government to extend the interest equalisation scheme (IES) that is set to expire on June 30, to offer a lifeline to small exporters grappling with high interest rates and faltering exports. Through the IES, banks provide loans to exporters at reduced interest rates, and the lenders are thereafter compensated by the government. IES was launched close to a decade ago to reduce stress among exporters, particularly in labour-intensive industries as well as micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). However, before deciding on the extension of the scheme, the government has begun the assessment of how the scheme is helping exports. *(Business Standard)*

Private refiners' crude oil imports from Russia at 12-month high in April

Private refiners, Reliance Industries (RIL) and Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy, imported around 770,000 barrels per day (b/d) of crude oil from Russia in April 2024, the highest in a year. Analysts and trade sources attribute the higher numbers to more export volumes being shipped out of Russia and lifting of lower cargoes by Chinese refiners. Sensing the opportunity to procure more barrels, public refiners such as Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation (HPCL) too imported 1.02 million barrel per day (mb/d) last month, which is a 7-month high. *(BusinessLine)*

India's oil import bill could rise to \$101-104 billion in FY25, says ICRA report

India's net oil import bill could touch \$101-104 billion in FY25 if the current low discounts on purchases of Russian crude persist, ICRA said in its report on India's oil imports. The projected increase from \$96.1 billion in FY24 suggests higher expenditure on oil imports, assuming an average crude oil price of \$85 a barrel, it said. *(Mint)*

Spices Board issues norms for exporters to prevent ethylene oxide contamination

The Spices Board has come up with detailed guidelines for exporters on preventing ethylene oxide (ETO) contamination in spices after Singapore and Hong Kong recalled some packaged spice products exported from India while the US and Australia are also examining the matter. The guidelines advise exporters against using ETO as a sterilising agent to reduce the microbial contamination in spices consignments and suggests alternatives such as steam sterilisation and irradiation (not applicable to organic products under NPOP). *(BusinessLine)*

India-Chile FTA 'must cover mines acquisition, key mineral import'

The Mines Ministry has suggested that the discussions on India–Chile Free Trade Agreement (FTA) must cover securing of critical minerals, acquisition of copper and lithium mines and commercial offtake agreements at the G2G (government -to-government) level, an official aware of the matter told businessline. Currently, both countries have a preferential trade agreement (PTA), which is a limited trade arrangement, and not an FTA. *(BusinessLine)*

Urea imports decline for third year in a row

India's urea import has dropped 7 per cent in 2023-24 fiscal, for the third consecutive year, thanks to increase in its domestic output and launch of nano-urea. Besides urea, there is also a decline in import of Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP) and complex fertilizers, which led to overall imports falling 10 per cent in 2023-24 fiscal. However, despite the reduction in import, the fertilizer subsidy last fiscal reached near ₹2-lakh crore, more than the ₹1.89-lakh crore Budgeted in the revised allocation. *(BusinessLine)*

'China's share in India's industrial goods imports up 30% in 15 years'

With increasing India's dependence on Chinese industrial goods like telecom, machinery and electronics, Beijing's share in New Delhi's imports of such goods rose to 30 per cent from 21 per cent in the last 15 years, a report said. According to the report by the economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), the growing trade deficit with China is a cause of concern and the strategic implications of this dependency are profound, affecting not only economic but also national security dimensions. *(BusinessLine)*

Exports seen higher in April, order inflows robust

Exporters who witnessed a 3.1% annual decline in shipments last fiscal are again upbeat as order inflows have seen a significant rise in April, the first month of new fiscal year. Orders have risen across key sectors in April as compared to March and April of last year, sources said. The sectors like textiles and apparel and leather are reporting an increase in orders which points to a healthy first quarter, director general and chief executive officer of Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO). *(Financial Express)*

India, Nigeria agree to early conclusion of local currency settlement system agreement

India and Nigeria have agreed to conclude a local currency settlement system agreement to strengthen economic ties. The agreement, signed during a joint session of the India-Nigeria Joint Trade Committee, aims to promote the use of the Indian Rupee and Nigerian Naira for cross-border transactions. The agreement will enhance bilateral trade and mutually beneficial investments in sectors such as crude oil, natural gas, pharmaceuticals, power, renewable energy, agriculture, education, transport, railway, aviation, and MSMEs development. *(The Economic Times)*

Quality concerns may threaten over half of India's spice exports: GTRI

Economic think-tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) Wednesday said that nearly \$700 million worth of India's spice exports to critical markets are at stake due to cascading regulatory actions in many countries, as concerns are being raised about the quality of Indian spices. It cautioned that if the EU follows suit with a rejection across the bloc, it could impact an additional \$2.5 billion of India's spice exports. *(The Economic Times)*

From spices to steel to drugs, India's exports are being hammered

India's path to becoming a developed country hinges on boosting exports, as demonstrated by China's growth. Leveraging bilateral agreements and FTAs, India is expanding into new markets like Africa and Latin America. Yet, quality issues and trade restrictions pose challenges, such as recent bans on Indian spices in Hong Kong and Singapore. Additionally, green trade barriers like the EU's CBAM could impact key sectors like steel, potentially affecting Indian exports to the EU. Strengthening regulations and meeting global standards are crucial for India to realize its export potential. *(The Economic Times)*

India, New Zealand to focus on collaboration in pharma, agriculture, food processing

India and New Zealand are likely to set up working groups in sectors such as agriculture, food processing, storage & transportation, forestry and pharmaceuticals to facilitate ongoing collaboration on key trade and economic issues, per an official statement. Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal, who headed the Indian delegation, met Minister for Trade of New Zealand Todd McClay and Acting Chief Executive and Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand Brook Barrington. *(BusinessLine)*



Agriculture and Rural Economy

Agriculture exports need to be stepped up

The impact of the Red Sea crises and Russia-Ukraine war is visible on the Indian agriculture sector, especially on exports. India's agriculture exports slipped nearly 9 per cent between April and February in FY24 to \$43.7 billion due to the Red Sea crisis, the Russia-Ukraine war, along with domestic restrictions. According to a CRISIL report, the impact of Red Sea crises will be significant on the agricultural sector due to the perishable nature of the goods and lean margin profiles, which limit the ability of the sector to absorb the risks from rising freight costs. For instance, India is the largest exporter of rice globally. In 2022, the export *(BusinessLine)*

Vegetable farmers rue decline in yield as crops wither due to searing heat

The searing heat in the region has impacted the vegetable farmers who see a decline in yield besides withering of new crops in the absence of adequate moisture and water. As a result vegetable prices have also increased but farmers do not benefit as it is the middle men who corner bulk of the benefits. Vegetable cultivation has taken a hit as no water is being released through the canals while the yield from the borewells is also less as the groundwater table has plummeted," said Mr. Nagaraj, a vegetable farmer and member of a farmers' producers cooperative called Raitamitra. *(The Hindu)*

Farmers seek steps to thwart Karnataka plan to build dam at Mekedatu

Members of various farmers' organisations staged a picketing agitation in front of an office of the Water Resources Department (WRD) in Thanjavur urging the State government to take steps to prevent Karnataka from going ahead with its proposal to build a balancing reservoir across the Cauvery at Mekedatu. The protest was called by the Coordination Committee of All Farmers Association of Tamil Nadu. *(The Hindu)*

Chennai-based agtech startup joins hands with farmers to produce rice meeting European standards

Chennai-based agtech startup Svastha Ecoharvest has joined hands with farmers to produce rice that meets European standards. The company has roped in 10,000 farmers, primarily in Tamil Nadu, to improve the quality of rice and in return, improve the growers income. To comply with the standards, Svastha has implemented a specific information technology tool optimising chemical usage at the village level, "said V Balamuthukumar, Project Coordinator of Svastha Ecoharvest. In order to ensure transparency of its products, the company has come up with quick response (QR) codes which provide the complete history of the product from farm-to-fork. *(BusinessLine)*

Rice procurement tops 47 million tonnes, down 6% from a year ago

On the back of a significant increase in rice procurement from the rabi crop in Telangana, the total procurement in the 2023-24 season (October-September) was 47.03 million tonnes (mt) until April 30 against 49.88 mt a year ago, down by 6 per cent. Experts said the fall could have been even more this year as there has been 38 per cent drop in purchases in West Bengal, a leading producer. However, as the government needs about 40-41 mt annually to run all the welfare programmes including the obligation under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), even if procurement reaches around 51 mt by the end of the season, there will still be a carry over of 10 mt for next year. *(BusinessLine)*

Basmati rice exports rose 22% till February FY24 on West Asia demand

Exports of high-quality basmati rice from India grew by 22 per cent to \$5.2 billion during April 2023-February 2024, amid robust demand, primarily from West Asia. According to data compiled by the commerce department, exports of basmati rice increased to 4.68 million metric tonnes (MMT) in April-February, from 4.1 MMT during the same period a year ago, registering a growth of 14 per cent. In July, the government banned the export of non-basmati white rice to boost domestic supply and help control inflation. *(Business Standard)*

Rice prices at three-month low on shrinking demand, ample supplies

Top exporter India's rice export prices fell to their lowest level in more than three months this week on subdued demand and ample supplies, while Thailand's prices remained largely flat. India's 5 per cent broken parboiled variety was quoted at \$528-\$536 per ton this week, down from last week's \$538-\$546. Prices hit a record high of \$560 last month. Demand is very weak from Asian and African countries. Some exporters are paying lower duties on exports and offering rice at a lower price to overseas buyers," said an exporter based in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh. *(Business Standard)*



Industry, Manufacturing, Services and Technology

'Centre mulling major scheme to push electronics component manufacture

Building on the initial successes India achieved in electronics manufacturing, there is an ambitious plan to increase local value addition from the current 18-20 per cent to 38-40 per cent. The Centre is working on identifying the top five electronic components for which incentives can be offered to attract investments and build a strong electronic components manufacturing base in the country, said S Krishnan, Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). *(BusinessLine)*

Core sector growth eases to 5.2% in March

India's core sector growth slowed to 5.2% in March 2024, impacted by various industries. The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is likely to see a moderate growth of 3.5-5% in the same month. The slow growth in eight core industries — cement, coal, crude oil, electricity, fertilisers, natural gas, refinery products and steel — which have a 40% weight in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), is likely to lead to slower industrial growth as well. *(The Economic Times)*

India's coal production rises 7.4 pc in Apr to 78.69 MT

India's domestic coal production rose 7.41 per cent to 78.69 million tonnes (MT) in April. The country's coal output was 73.26 MT in the corresponding month of the previous fiscal year. "India's coal production for April 2024 reached 78.69 MT (provisional)," the coal ministry said in a statement. *(The Economic Times)*

New policy to promote critical minerals in works: Mines Secy

The Centre has begun work on a new policy to promote exploration and processing of critical minerals in the country by offering incentives at each stage of the production process, said VL Kantha Rao, secretary, mines ministry. *(The Economic Times)*

No intention to seek change of 2012 spectrum ruling, only to inform top court, says govt

The government, through its application over spectrum allocation before the Supreme Court, merely wanted to highlight possible future exceptional circumstances for allocating bandwidth administratively, and did not have any intention of seeking a change in the top court's order of 2012 mandating auction for bandwidth allocation, top officials said. *(The Economic Times)*

In top gear: Telecom parts output crosses Rs 45,000-crore milestone

Telecom equipment manufacturing and exports is emerging as a new success story after smartphone exports. Telecom equipment production for FY24 crossed the Rs 45,000 crore milestone with exports of around Rs 10,500 crore, backed by the Centre's production linked incentive (PLI) scheme. *(The Economic Times)*

Govt may Review Tax Sops Offered to IFSC

The government may have to take a relook at the tax incentives being offered to units in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), a new financial hub in Gujarat, in view of Pillar Two of the Base Erosion Profit Sharing framework, according to a Deloitte report. "MNE groups having operations in the GIFT (Gujarat International Financial Tech) City will need to evaluate the overall tax impact in India, pursuant to the Pillar Two Globe Rules," the report said. *(The Economic Times)*

India plans subsidies, tax sops to boost synthetic yarn manufacturing

A global leader in the 1990s, India's textile sector, which employs nearly 50 million, has been struggling for a while now. It grapples with limited capabilities for synthetic yarns, a market currently dominated by China, and for which global demand has been steadily rising. To address these issues, the government is considering measures to boost domestic production capabilities of synthetic yarns by offering subsidies and tax incentives to set up advanced manufacturing units, and strengthen the sector's overall competitiveness, according to two people aware of the matter. *(Mint)*

Centre to allocate higher sales quota may sugar mills in May to tame prices

The Centre aims to allocate sugar mills a higher sales quota for May, which will cumulatively be 100,000-200,000 tonnes more than that in the same month a year ago, to tame prices of the sweetener, Union food and public distribution secretary Sanjeev Chopra said. The government fears that rising prices at the mill level may lead to a spike in retail prices if not curbed immediately by releasing higher stocks of sugar. *(Mint)*

Top listed developers to see 10-12% volume growth in FY25, says Crisil

Continuing premiumisation, favourable affordability, along with rising per capita incomes, should facilitate 10-12% volume growth for large, listed residential developers this financial year, following an estimated growth of ~14% on a high base in FY24, Crisil Ratings said. *(Financial Express)*

Sugar content in Cerelac lower than FSSAI limit: Nestle

Nestle India on Monday rejected the charges relating to the company selling baby food products like Cerelac with higher sugar content in less developed countries like India. Chairman and managing director Suresh Narayanan said the allegation is racially stereotyped, unfortunate and untrue. *(Financial Express)*

Hydrogen Technology Expo 2024: Nornickel presents palladium developments for India's hydrogen industry

India is one of the key countries in the development of hydrogen energy. The country is expected to produce at least 5 million tonnes of pure hydrogen per year by 2030 and at least 25 million tonnes by 2050 will be required to fuel transport, steel and ammonia production. However, to achieve these goals, India needs innovative solutions to modernise production and scale up green hydrogen applications. *(Business Standard)*

Sebi makes mandatory registration of PMS providers with industry body APMI

Markets regulator Sebi on Thursday decided to promote collective oversight of PMS distributors by making registration with the Association of Portfolio Managers in India (APMI) mandatory for them. The move is aimed at promoting ease of doing business initiatives for portfolio managers. The new directive would come into effect from January 1, 2025, and APMI would issue the criteria for registration of distributors by July 1, this year, Sebi said in a circular. *(Business Standard)*

Bank credit to industry grows by 8.5% annually in March: RBI

Bank credit to industry grew by 8.5 per cent annually in March while there was moderation in the personal loans segment, as per Reserve Bank data released on Tuesday. The growth in credit to industry and personal loans segment in March 2023 was 5.6 per cent and 21 per cent, respectively. "Among major industries, growth in credit (year-on-year) to 'chemicals and chemical products', 'food processing', and 'infrastructure' accelerated in March 2024 as compared with the corresponding month of the previous year, while that to 'basic metal and metal products' moderated," the RBI said. Credit growth to services sector improved to 20.2 per cent annually in March 2024 from 19.6 per cent a year ago. *(Business Standard)*

Aluminium industry needs additional capex to reach net-zero emission: Study

The aluminium sector in India would need an additional capital expenditure (capex) of about Rs 2.2 lakh crore to attain net-zero carbon emissions, an independent study on Tuesday said. The study released by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water

(CEEW) said that green energy can abate 49 per cent of the total emissions from the industry. *(Business Standard)*

China's share in industrial goods imports jump to 30% from 21%: GTRI

With increasing India's dependence on Chinese industrial goods like telecom, machinery and electronics, Beijing's share in New Delhi's imports of such goods rose to 30 per cent from 21 per cent in the last 15 years, a report said. According to the report by the economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), the growing trade deficit with China is a cause of concern, and the strategic implications of this dependency are profound, affecting not only economic but also national security dimensions. *(Business Standard)*

The poultry industry needs urgent reforms

The current outbreak of H5N1 was a disaster waiting to happen, as experts have been sounding alarm bells on the unsafe conditions at industrial livestock production for more than 10 years now. There has never been a more pressing time to discuss the welfare of farmed animals in the Indian enviro-legal perspective. India's environmental laws and regulations must reflect what the public health crisis is showing us: that animal welfare is closely interlinked with public health, ecosystem health and biodiversity conservation — the One Health principle. *(The Hindu)*

'Manufacturing witnessing an uptick in fresher hiring'

Fresher hiring in the manufacturing sector is seeing an uptick currently, in the first half of calendar 2024, and the trend coincides with an increase in capital investments, mergers and acquisitions activities in automobile, electronics and textiles and an increased focus on manufacturing, according to third-party hiring firms. They typically get into the roles of design and engineering, automation, embedded and mechanical engineering, assembly line, production planning and control and supply-chain management. *(The Hindu)*

RBI proposes tighter project finance rules

Reserve Bank proposes stricter lending rules to prevent stress on bank books during project implementation. Provisioning increases to 5% during construction phase, with reductions based on project phase and conditions met. Public feedback accepted until June 15. *(The Economic Times)*



News on Kerala

Kerala not for load shedding; KSEB directed to explore new ways to resolve power crisis.

Thiruvananthapuram: In a good news to the electricity consumers in the scorching weather, the Kerala Government has decided against implementing load shedding in the State. A decision in this regard was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Electricity Minister K Krishnankutty here on Thursday. The KSEB is facing a serious crisis as power consumption steeply rose in the Summer. The power grids are under stress with the rise in the consumption during peak hours. Many transformers stopped functioning. Also the decrease in the water level in the dams aggravated the crisis. *(mathrubhoomi)*

Amid protests, Kerala to switch to revised driving test format on May 2

Amid protests against the revised format of the driving tests, Kerala's Motor Vehicles department (MVD) will switch to the new format of the driving test on May 2. However, the department will not implement all the reforms suggested in the revised test procedures as the authorities have yet to arrange driving test venues for light vehicles needed for the revised test format. *(The Hindu)*

AI training to familiarise teachers with deepfake, privacy concerns

An artificial intelligence (AI) training programme for teachers is getting under way in the State. Likely to be the first such comprehensive exercise in the country, the programme will be held for 80,000-odd teachers from May 2 to August 31. The module for the training was released recently in Munnar, Minister for General Education V. Sivankutty said. The training aims at equipping teachers to use the latest technology in classrooms. *(The Hindu)*

Tribal settlements in Kerala forests struggle amid rising temperatures

Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala is experiencing its worst summer, with temperatures soaring high and affecting the normal lives of people not only in towns and villages but also in tribal settlements in dense forest regions of the state. The Kani tribal settlement in Chenampara near Kottoor and situated in the valley of the Agasthyarkoodam Hills is considered one of the coolest spots in Thiruvananthapuram district. However, the situation is far from good in this tribal settlement nestled deep inside the forest. *(The Economic Times)*

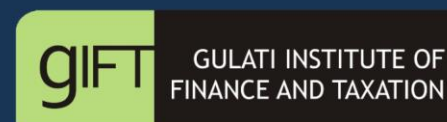
Kerala Governor gives assent to five pending bills

Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan has given his assent to five Bills passed by the state assembly, which had been pending for a long time. The Bills include amendments related to land assignment, cooperative societies, paddy wetlands, dairy cooperation, and the Abkari law. Governor Khan mentioned that the assent was given a few days ago, and details were revealed after the conclusion of the general elections in the state. The Congress party criticized the assent, suggesting that the Governor comes to the rescue of the Left government when it is in trouble. *(The Economic Times)*

Kerala's polling percentage for 2024 Lok Sabha elections is 71.27%

Chief Electoral Officer Sanjay Kaul on Monday pegged Kerala's polling percentage during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls at 71.27%. *(on manorama)*

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