# FINANCE, TAXATION & THE INDIAN ECONOMY





# **Public Finance**

# Budget push likely for manufacturing, consumption, fiscal consolidation

The Budget, to be presented on July 23, is likely to accelerate the virtuous circle with a twin strategy of boosting manufacturing and pushing consumption, while ensuring a fiscal consolidation glide path aimed at achieving 4.5 per cent fiscal deficit by the end of FY26. This will be the 7<sup>th</sup> successive Budget for Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and with this, she will surpass late Morarji Desai's record of presenting six successive Budgets. Overall, Desai presented 10 Budgets. (*BusinessLine*)

### 16th Finance Commission constitutes five-member advisory council

The Sixteenth Finance Commission on Tuesday constituted an advisory council with five members to advise the Commission on any of the Terms of Reference (ToR) or related subjects, a press statement said. Poonam Gupta, Director General of the National Council of Applied Economic Research, has been appointed as the convenor of the Advisory Council. The other members include economists D.K. Srivastava, Neelkanth Mishra, Pranjul Bhandari, and Rahul Bajoria. (Business Standard)

# Economic Survey likely to be tabled in Parliament on July 22

The Centre is likely to table the Economic Survey in Parliament on July 22, a day before the Modi government's first full Budget is presented. The Economic Survey, overseen by Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran, provides an annual review of the economy. The document assumes significance as it provides outlook on growth, inflation rate and projection, forex reserves and trade deficits. It also highlights the policy initiatives of the Centre. (BusinessLine)

# Centre unlikely to shift from capex focus to welfare spending in upcoming budget: Goldman Sachs research

Foreign brokerage Goldman Sachs sees the upcoming first full Budget of Modi 3.0 Government "stick" to its earlier announced fiscal deficit target of 5.1 per cent of GDP (or slightly lower) for 2024-25. The Budget could announce further consolidation in fiscal deficit to below 4.5 per cent for 2025-26, reaffirming commitment to earlier announced fiscal consolidation glide path, according to a new research note that gives a preview of the upcoming Budget. (Business Line)

# AP to defer full Budget till Sept, awaits clarity on Central aid

The Andhra Pradesh government has decided to defer presentation of the full State Budget for 2024-25 by a month or so. The State Assembly sessions slated to commence from July 22 may see N Chandrababu Naidu-led NDA Government present a vote-on-account to buy more time to work on the full-fledged Budget proposals likely to be presented in September, an official told *businessline*.(*Businessline*)

# Rajasthan budget gives boost to health sector, pledges more jobs

Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari on Wednesday presented the State budget for 2024-25 and announced new policies and institutions in sectors such as finance, agriculture, urban development, tourism, transport, and tech-driven economy. Ms. Kumari, who holds the Finance portfolio, said the full budget with an outlay of ₹4.95 lakh crore would fulfil all major promises of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). (The Hindu)

# Job creation debate heats up ahead of Modi 3.0 govt's first full Budget

As the Modi 3.0 government's first full-fledged Budget approaches on July 23, the issue of job creation has sparked a heated debate. Economists are divided over the interpretation of publicly available data on how effectively the country has addressed unemployment. While some economists, using government and RBI data, argue that India has performed well in job creation over the last decade, others contend that the official employment data primarily reflects increased opportunities in agriculture over the last few years rather than the creation of "formal jobs with regular wages".(*BusinessLine*)

# PM Modi, FM Sitharaman meet top economists ahead of Union Budget 2024

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, along with senior bureaucrats, on Thursday discussed with economists matters concerning the Indian economy. This comes less than two weeks before the Budget. The meeting was chaired by the Prime Minister, and was attended by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran, Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, and NITI Aayog officials. (Business Standard)



**Taxation** 

#### Multi-state ED raids in Rs 10k cr VAT scam case

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Tuesday carried out searches at various premises situated in Haryana and Punjab in connection with an alleged VAT scam of ₹10,618 crore. According to the agency, various entities were incorporated by a syndicate of persons namely Amit Bansal, Harish Biyani, Kamal Bansal, Monil Bansal, Mahesh Bansal, Padam Bansal and Rishi Gupta for allegedly claiming false interstate sale of taxable commodities without any movement of goods. (*The Economic Times*)

# The impact of India's 1% TDS on Virtual Digital Assets: A call for reform

In February 2022, India introduced a significant change to its tax policy by imposing a 1% Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) on the transfer of Virtual Digital Assets (VDAs), alongside a flat 30% tax on income from these transactions. The Budget also did not allow for set off and carry forward of losses. The taxation framework aimed to monitor VDA transactions, discourage speculative trading, and ensure steady tax revenue. However, recent analyses indicate that these objectives have not been met, prompting calls for urgent reform. (*The Economic Times*)

# Bank deposit taxation needs immediate parity with competing avenues: SBI's eco research

Parity on the taxation front for bank deposits (both Demand and Time) vis-à-vis other investment avenues is an immediate need, given the shifting preference of select cohorts of investors to alternate asset classes whose returns have been trumping bank deposits,

according to State Bank of India's economic research department (ERD). Basis, its analysis, the ERD opined that the impact on revenue foregone for the Government of any such move would not be significant. (BusinessLine)



# National Accounts and State of the Economy

# Bank, power stocks shine on growth prospects

The positive outlook on the power and banking sectors leading to the recent rally in the benchmark indices is expected to sustain with substantial stimulus in the Budget to boost manufacturing activity in the country. The BSE Bankex rallied 8 per cent to 60,444 on Thursday against 55,998 in April. Similarly, BSE Energy index has jumped 5 per cent to 12,957 on Thursday against 12,384 points in April. (BusinessLine)

# India has only 38 years before its population starts shrinking: UN Report

India's peak population is likely to be 1.701 billion, and the country is expected to reach that mark in 2062, according to the United Nations (UN) World Population Prospects report released on Thursday. This means it has 38 years before it hits its population peak. Currently, India is the most populous country in the world and is likely to remain so until the end of the century, it added. (Business Standard)

# GeM procurement hits Rs 1.24 trn in Q1, set to be world's largest in FY25

With the procurement of goods and services through government's portal GeM crossing Rs 1.24 trillion in first quarter of 2024-25, the platform will become world's largest by the end of this fiscal, a senior official said on Thursday. The Government e-Market (GeM) portal was launched on August 9, 2016, for online purchases of goods and services by all central government ministries and departments. (*Business Standard*)

# India's path to economic success lies in powering services sector: Rajan

Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Raghuram Rajan has called on India to prioritise the enhancement of its services sector over the expansion of manufacturing to achieve sustainable economic growth and create jobs. Speaking at the Annual World Bank Conference on Wednesday, Rajan argued that manufacturing is not the "holy grail" for India's economic success. (Business Standard)

# Retail inflation for industrial workers eases to 3.86% in May: Govt

Retail inflation for industrial workers eased to 3.86 per cent in May compared to 4.42 per cent in the same month a year ago. The Consumer Price Index-Industrial Workers (CPI-IW) was 3.87 per cent in April 2024, a labour ministry statement said. According to the statement, year-on-year inflation for May 2024 moderated to 3.86 per cent against 4.42 per cent in May 2023. The All-India CPI-IW for May 2024 increased by 0.5 points and stood at 139.9 points. It was 139.4 points in April 2024. (Business Standard)

# Need to find out practical solutions of problems facing states

NITI Aayog member Arvind Virmani on Wednesday made a case for finding 'practical' solutions to problems faced by states, as many of them like Rajasthan and Odisha have done well without getting the special category status. Virmani further said in a democracy one has to recognise specific problems and find out pragmatic solutions. Andhra Pradesh

has been demanding special category status after its bifurcation in 2014 on the grounds of revenue loss as Hyderabad became the capital of Telangana. Bihar has also been seeking the special status since 2005 when Nitish Kumar was sworn in as its chief minister. The state also suffered revenue loss after the mineral-rich Jharkhand was carved out of it in 2000. (Business Standard)

# Official employment data masks India's jobs problem, say economists

India's growing employment stems largely from self-employed individuals, unpaid workers and temporary farm hires, whose jobs are not equivalent to formal positions with regular wages, private sector economists said on Wednesday. The comments follow labour department figures released this week showing 20 million new employment opportunities generated each year since 2017/18, countering a Citibank report that said only 8.8 million jobs were added each year since 2012. (Business Standard)

# Consumer price inflation seen up in June due to soaring vegetable prices

India consumer price inflation probably edged up in June, snapping five months of declines, largely because of a jump in vegetable prices caused by the damage to crops wrought by extreme weather, according to a Reuters poll of economists. Prices of tomatoes, onions, and potatoes - staples in every Indian kitchen - surged by double digits last month as extreme heat and heavy floods in India's northern states disrupted agricultural production. (Business Standard)

### 168 million workforce added since FY18, 46.6 million in FY24: RBI data

The total number of employed people as a ratio of the total population has increased to 44.2 per cent in FY24 from 34.7 per cent in FY18, with the workforce growing by 168 million during the period at 643.3 million, according to the Reserve Bank of India's KLEMS database. Total employment was 596.7 million in FY23, thereby adding 46.6 million in FY24. (Business Standard)



# **Banking and Monetary Policy**

### RBI permits banks to use ratings of Brickwork Ratings subject to conditions

The Reserve Bank of India has permitted banks to use the ratings of Brickwork Ratings India Private Limited, two years after the central bank had instructed its regulated entities that no fresh ratings would be obtained from the firm, which was pulled up by regulators for discrepancies. Listing out certain conditions, the RBI said that in respect of fresh rating mandates, rating may be obtained from Brickwork Ratings for bank loans not exceeding Rs 250 crore. (*The Economic Times*)

# Banking sector in good financial health to support growth: RBI dy guv

The banking sector, which is at a decadal high in terms of financial parameters, is all set to support the growth of the Indian economy, Reserve Bank deputy governor Swaminathan J said on Tuesday. Addressing a conference of statutory auditors and chief financial officers of commercial banks and all Indian financial institutions here, the deputy governor also said the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has undertaken several initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of the auditing process. (*The Economic Times*)

# Finmin ask private banks to give more thrust on serving the marginalised sections of society

Financial Services Secretary Vivek Joshi on Tuesday chaired a review meeting on the progress of financial inclusion schemes with senior executives of private sector banks and exhorted them to give more thrust on serving the marginalised sections of the society and fulfilling their banking needs. During the meeting with private sector banks, the performance of Financial Inclusion Schemes, including PM SVANidhi, PM Vishwakarma and Jan Samarth Portal were reviewed, according to an official statement. *(The Economic Times)* 

# RBI to send strict 'zero tolerance' message to banks' bosses

RBI met CFOs and auditors to enforce zero tolerance for compliance lapses. Deputy governors stressed accurate balance sheets, aggressive lending risks, and ever-greening of loans. Recent CEO talks included credit-deposit growth gaps. Digital banking restrictions on Kotak Bank, IIFL Finance, and others were due to regulatory lapses. (*The Economic Times*)

### Incremental credit slows down until mid-June

Bank lending slowed down in the June quarter compared to last year's levels, likely reflecting a wait and watch attitude by the investors pending election results during the quarter. Incremental loans increased Rs 2.79 lakh crore or 1.7 % this fiscal year up to June 14 compared to Rs 3.48 lakh crore or 2.5 percent a year ago reflecting a slowdown in credit demand for investments as well as working capital needs- an indicator of level of economic activity. (*The Economic Times*)

# SBI raises ₹10,000 crore from infra bond issue

State Bank of India (SBI), said it raised ₹10,000 crore at a coupon rate of 7.36% payable annually for a 15-year term, through its sixth infrastructure bond issue. "The issue attracted overwhelming response from investors with bids in excess of ₹18,145 crore and was oversubscribed by around 3.6 times against the base issue size of ₹5,000 crore," it said. (*The Hindu*)



# **External Sector**

### **Proposed FEMA rules to impact GCC operations**

These entities will transition from a self-compliance model to being subject to regulatory oversight, with the primary objective of simplifying and streamlining processes related to remittances and invoicing. Under the new framework, authorised dealer (AD) banks will be granted enhanced powers and responsibilities to ensure a more efficient and transparent system for managing foreign exchange transactions. GCCs will need to adapt to these changes and work closely with their respective AD banks to ensure compliance. (*The Economic Times*)

# Despite telecom PLI, '24 imports sevenfold more than exports

India's imports of telecom products exceeded its exports by seven times in FY24. According to the data provided by the Department of Telecommunications, India imported telecom products exceeding ₹1,46,000 crore in the last fiscal year, while export

of telecom products was valued at approximately ₹20,000 crore during the same period. In fact, India's export of telecom goods has been falling for the last three years as perDoT's data. (*The Hindu*)

# India, Russia to boost bilateral trade to \$100 billion by 2030

India and Russia agreed to increase bilateral trade to \$100 billion dollars by 2030, including the use of national currencies to circumvent Western sanctions, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin sat down for the 22nd Annual Summit here on Tuesday. The leaders agreed to a cooperation statement on projects in Russia's Far East that Mr. Putin has been focused on developing. (*The Hindu*)

# Red flags raised over silver imports from UAE through GIFT City

In a major disruption for the bullion market, almost all of India's silver imports are now being handled by a few private players bringing the white metal from Dubai through the GIFT City exchange, which could cause significant revenue losses for the exchequer over time. India's imports of gold and silver from the UAE had jumped 210% in 2023-24 to \$10.7 billion. Total silver imports stood at \$5.4 billion. (*The Hindu*)

# Tyre makers' body seeks duty-free imports of natural rubber to bridge demandsupply gap

The Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA) has sought duty-free imports of natural rubber (NR) to plug the demand-supply gap in the country. Nearly 40 per cent of the tyre industry's natural rubber requirement are met by imports due to the non-availability of domestically manufactured NR. The competitiveness of the industry is impacted by the high rate of duty on the import of NR, ATMA said in its Budget wishlist. (BusinessLine)

### Basmati exports up 13% in April-May at \$1.03 billion on rising demand

India's basmati rice exports increased 13 per cent during the first two months of the current fiscal on growing demand from traditional West Asian buyers such as Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Exports stood at over \$1.03 billion during April-May 2024-25, up 13 per cent over \$917 million a year ago on higher volumes. In volume terms, shipments were up 16 per cent at 9.65 lakh tonnes (lt) over 8.3 lt a year ago, per the latest data from the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (Apeda). (BusinessLine)

# Centre likely to fix a floor price of \$500/tonne on non-Basmati rice exports

The Committee of Ministers, headed by Home Minister Amit Shah, may decide this week on a proposal to fix a minimum export price (MEP) of \$500/tonne on non-basmati rice and also defer the proposal to reduce the MEP of \$950/tonne on Basmati rice, sources said. Last week, the Commerce Ministry held a meeting with exporters to understand their concerns and, accordingly, some proposals have been finalised for the ministerial panel to consider, official sources said without disclosing the proposed changes. (BusinessLine)

### India, ASEAN to review trade agreement; finalize changes by year-end

India will seek to take a second look at the zero-tariff concessions granted by New Delhi to mobile phone imports in talks to review its free trade agreement (FTA) with the 10-nation bloc of Southeast Asian nations later this The review talks will be held in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta on 29-31 July. India aims to finalize the deal before the end of the year, two people aware of the matter said. (*Mint*)

# Drug makers pin hopes on Budget for import duty cut in raw materials; research incentives

Drug makers are pinning hopes on the forthcoming union budget for more tax incentives for research, import tariff reduction on raw materials and easing of procedures for tax refunds. The Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmaccil), a trade promotion agency set up by the commerce ministry, has sought a reduction in basic customs duty (BCD) on imported raw materials for making antibiotics from 7.5% to 5% and enhanced tax incentive for companies to invest in research. (*Mint*)

# **India tops China in billion-dollar realty companies**

India's thriving property market achieved a major milestone, surpassing China in the tally of homegrown realty companies valued at \$1 billion. The South Asian nation is home to 36 such realty companies, climbing from just 7 six years ago, showed latest data compiled by Hurun Research Institute. The list includes market leader DLF, besides Macrotech Developers and Adani Realty. (*The Economic Times*)



# **Agriculture and Rural Economy**

# Budget 2024: Agriculture & FMCG sectors seek better infra & tech to help farmers tackle climate change, inflationary pressures

Agriculture and FMCG sectors say that the budget must prioritise funding for climatesmart agriculture and creating better infrastructure facilities for farmers and other stakeholders. The requests were made during pre-budget consultations with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. (*The Economic Times*)

# Assam based tea planters get into value chain of tea business

Rujani Tea, the online brand of Aideobarie Tea Estate in Jorhat, is making waves in the tea industry with new CTC variants and a focus on sustainability. The company, founded in 1897, has expanded globally to Australia, Sweden, the USA, and more. Director Raj Barooah highlights the challenges faced by the tea industry but emphasizes the company's innovative approach. Assam and West Bengal are experiencing a decline in tea production due to weather conditions. *(The Economic Times)* 

# Will resume agitation on pending demands of legal guarantee to MSP, farm loan waiver: SKM

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), which led the 2020-21 farmers' protest, made the announcement a day after its general body met. "The general body has decided to resume the agitation demanding implementation of the agreement, dated December 9, 2021, that the Union government has with the SKM, signed by the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Government of India, and other key demands affecting the livelihood of farmers," the SKM said. (*The Economic Times*)

# India, Taiwan pact to facilitate trade of organic agricultural produce comes into force

An agreement between India and Taiwan to facilitate trade in organically-produced goods, including tea and medicinal plants, has come into force from July 8," the Commerce Ministry said on July 10. The Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) will ease the export

of organic products by avoiding dual certifications, thereby reducing compliance cost, simplifying compliance requirements by adhering to only one regulation and enhancing trade opportunities in the organic sector. (*The Hindu*)

# India to sell wheat from state stocks to flour millers, biscuit makers

India plans to sell wheat from state reserves to bulk consumers like flour millers and biscuit makers to control local prices by boosting supplies. The government has allowed the Food Corporation of India to offer wheat at a lower price, aiming to attract private players and potentially import wheat. (*The Economic Times*)



# Industry, Manufacturing, Services and Technology

# UP's sops for hybrid vehicles irk EV companies, add to industry's June sob story

The Uttar Pradesh government's recent decision to provide incentives for hybrid vehicles has irked electric vehicle (EV) manufacturers, especially as it comes hard on the heels of a plunge in June sales. It's also divided the industry, pitting those that are betting on pure electrics such as Tata Motors against those that prefer the hybrid route, like Toyota and Maruti Suzuki. (*The Economic Times*)

# Nutraceuticals may get cheaper as panel looks to regulate prices

The Centre is considering bringing nutraceuticals, usually sold without prescriptions, under price control to make them affordable for the consumer. A panel formed to address regulatory challenges with regard to nutraceuticals is looking at ways to regulate their prices, people in the know told ET. At present nutraceuticals come under the ambit of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and there are no such price regulations. (*The Economic Times*)

# Auto component industry to see moderate growth this fiscal: ICRA

The Red Sea crisis is likely to impact the margins of the auto component industry over the next few quarters amid higher container rates and shipping time, credit ratings agency ICRA said on Thursday, projecting a moderate growth for the industry this fiscal. Close to two-thirds of the auto component exports are made to North America and Europe, and one-third of the imports is made from these regions, as per the ratings agency. (*The Economic Times*)

# Commercial vehicle sales volumes may degrow by 3-6% in FY25: CARE Ratings

Following muted growth in FY24, Commercial Vehicle (CV) sales volumes are expected to register a degrowth by 3-6% in FY25 due to a slowdown in demand in both the Medium and Heavy Commercial Vehicle (MHCV) and Light Commercial Vehicle (LCV) segments, as well as high inventory levels with dealers, CARE Ratings has said. (*The Economic Times*)

# Price rise takes sheen off gold, Q1 demand dips 15%

Gold demand in India fell up to 15% year-on-year in the April-June quarter, with consumers shying away from the precious metal as prices escalated. With very few wedding dates in July, demand for gold jewellery has not picked up this month either, although some jewellers said certain markets saw sporadic sales increases due to the Rath Yatra festival, an auspicious event in the Hindu calendar. (*The Economic Times*)

# Real estate sales in H12024: Mumbai luxury housing deals drive growth, most buyers in 35-55 age bracket

The real estate market of India is going through premiumisation and the luxury housing segment accounted for 41 per cent of sales growth in the first half of 2024 (January to June), according to a Knight Frank India real estate sector report. (*Mint*)

# India plans ship building JV between state-run refiners and Shipping Corporation of India

The Union ministry of shipping has proposed a joint venture between state-run Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) and a public sector oil marketing company for manufacturing very large oil tankers, said three people aware of the development. (Mint)

# Industry for rethink on Chinese FDI curbs, high import tariffs

Indian industry has urged the government to revisit its restrictions on investment inflows and the movement of skilled personnel from China, and slash high import duties on electronics components as they have made Indian electronics goods globally uncompetitive vis-à-vis rivals such as Vietnam and China rather than boosting localisation of critical inputs. (*The Hindu*)

### Tyre makers facing severe crunch in domestic natural rubber availability: ATMA

Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association on July 3 said its members are witnessing a 'severe crunch' in the availability of domestic natural rubber and it may disrupt production unless supply issues of the raw material are addressed. *(The Hindu)* 



# **News on Kerala**

# Kerala teams up with IBM to host Gen AI conclave at Kochi on July 11-12

The Kerala Government will, in collaboration with IBM, hold a two-day international Gen AI conclave at Kochi from July 11. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan will open the event in the presence of several industry leaders. The event is aimed at advancing AI in Kerala and the rest of India and explore its transformative potential and impact on society and the economy, the State's Law, Industries & Coir Minister P Rajeeve said. (*The Economic Times*)

# Vizhinjam port greets first mothership calling-in with water salute

The Vizhinjam International Seaport, Thiruvananthapuram, received mothership MV San Fernando, owned by SFL Corporation and chartered by Maersk (AP Moller Group), Denmark, as the massive vessel reached the outer anchorage around 7 am on Thursday, and berthed in by 9.30 am, signalling start of trial operations at the mega container transshipment port. (BusinessLine)

### Cabinet subcommittee to coordinate between govt. departments

On Thursday, the government created a Cabinet subcommittee for inter-departmental coordination. The committee members are the Finance Minister, Revenue Minister, and Law Minister. The Cabinet also asked various departments to submit proposals for increasing non-tax revenue. The government will recalibrate Plan fund allocation to tide over the

financial crisis caused by the Centre's attempt to financially strangle States. It will prioritise the implementation of projects. *(The Hindu)* 

# IGST: Kerala Public Expenditure Review Committee urges State government to address issue of revenue loss

"The committee based on certain assumptions regarding value addition within the State and the return filing behaviour of traders estimated the gross loss on account of IGST from July 1, 2017, (when GST came into effect) to till date could be about ₹20,000 crore to ₹25,000 crore," the sixth committee chaired by D. Narayana said in its first report on the 2019-20, 2020-21 fiscals tabled in the State Legislative Assembly on July 11. (*The Hindu*)

# No bid to privatise drinking water supply in Kochi: Minister

Minister for Water Resources Roshy Augustine has denied any bid to privatise drinking water supply in Kochi. Replying to a submission by G.S. Jayalal on concerns of the Kerala Water Authority (KWA) employees and the public about the proposed ₹2,511-crore Kerala Urban Water Services Improvement Project (KUWSIP) in the Assembly on Wednesday, the Minister said there was no government or KWA move to privatise drinking water supply. (*The Hindu*)

# Rubber Board urges growers to raise profit potential through sheet production

Taking note of the growing demand for domestically produced Ribbed Smoked Sheets (RSS grades), the Rubber Board has urged growers to concentrate more on sheet processing than selling latex. In a statement here recently, M. Vasanthagesan, Executive Director of the Rubber Board, noted that consumption of sheet rubber rose by 8.34% and 5.37% in 2022-23 and 2023-24 respectively. Sheet rubber accounted for 41.6% of the overall domestic consumption while that of the latex concentrates was just 7.7%. (*The Hindu*)

# 5,067 SC/ST graduates appointed in govt departments under TRACE programme, says Minister

A total of 5,067 persons from the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST) categories have been appointed for a period of two years in various departments under the Training for Career Excellence (TRACE) programme of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe Development department, Minister for the department O.R. Kelu told the Kerala Assembly on July 10. (*The Hindu*)

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