



## Public Finance

### Centre and States are in for a confrontation over redistribution of taxes: Thomas Isaac

Former Kerala Finance Minister T.M. Thomas Isaac on Monday said there would be a serious confrontation between the Centre and States over redistribution of the divisible pool of taxes when the issue came up before the 16th Finance Commission. The confrontation would be around the levy of cesses and surcharges by the Union government and discriminatory Central redistribution of divisible pool of taxes to the States, he said, speaking on the topic of “Union-State fiscal relations in India — challenges and the way forward” at an event organised by the Asian College of Journalism (ACJ) here and Bharathi Puthakalayam. (*The Hindu*)

### Manipur gov't's total liability as on 31st March 2024 is Rs 16,988 crore

Replying to a question, the chief minister who is in charge of Finance department stated about 75% of the total borrowing of the State is Open Market Borrowing (OMB). The above is inclusive of 50 year interest free loan from Government of India for Capital Expenditure/ Investment from FY 2020-21. (*The Economic Times*)



## Taxation

### Net direct tax collection surges 22 per cent to ₹6.93 lakh crore

With strong growth in personal income tax (PIT), net direct tax collection surged about 22 per cent to over ₹6.93 lakh crore during April 1 and August 11 of the current fiscal, data released by the Central Board of Direct Taxes released. However, growth in Corporation Income Tax was subdued. Net collection figure arrived after deducting refunds from gross collection. During the period under consideration, gross collection rose to over ₹8.13 lakh crore from ₹6.55 lakh crore. (*BusinessLine*)

### SC allows States to levy mines tax retrospectively from April 1, 2005

The Supreme Court on Wednesday declined pleas by assesseees, including public sector undertakings, to restrict its July 25 majority judgment upholding States' power to tax mines and minerals rights to have only prospective effect. The majority on the nine-judge Bench, with the exception of Justice BV Nagarathna who originally gave a dissenting opinion, held that the prospective application of the judgment would run the risk of invalidating many State laws. (*BusinessLine*)

### To debate insurance premium, GST Council may meet on Sept 8, 9

Days after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the debate around GST on insurance premium will be taken up by the GST Council, the designated body is expected

to meet on September 8 and 9 to discuss the issue. Other matters that the Council will be taking stock of include progress on rate rationalisation. The meeting will be held after the Fitment Committee and the Law Committee (sub-committees of the Council comprising officers from Centre and States) have met. *(BusinessLine)*

### **Cut GST for digital news subscription: I&B Ministry**

The Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Ministry has urged the Revenue Department to take initiatives for exempting digital news subscriptions from GST or bringing the tax rate down to 5% from 18%. The I&B Secretary has written to the Revenue Secretary in this regard. The demand may be taken up in the 54th GST Council meeting on September 9. *(The Hindu)*

### **Finance ministry exempts UIDAI from payment of income tax for 5 yrs**

The finance ministry has exempted the income of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) from payment of income tax for five years till fiscal 2027-28. Accordingly, grants/subsidies received from the central government; fees/ subscriptions, including RTI fee, tender fee, sale of scrap, PVC card; authentication, enrolment and updation service charges received; term/fixed deposits; and interest on bank deposits earned by UIDAI would be exempt from income tax. *(Business Standard)*

### **Tax evasion alert: CBDT targets foreign remittances exceeding Rs 6 lakh**

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), the top direct tax body, has reportedly initiated a thorough investigation into high-value foreign remittances exceeding Rs 6 lakh. This move is aimed at detecting discrepancies in remittance data and potentially uncovering instances of tax evasion. Essentially, the CBDT is examining financial transactions to ensure that individuals and businesses are accurately reporting their income and paying the correct amount of taxes. *(Business Standard)*

### **NRI cannot claim LTCG indexation benefit while selling property in India**

LTCG indexation benefit on sale of house property: The government has provided partial relief to the homeowners by providing an option of indexation benefit for properties bought before July 23, 2024. However, this benefit is available only to resident individuals and resident Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs). The capital gains indexation benefit on selling a property is not available to NRI for properties bought before July 23, 2024. *(The Economic Times)*



## **National Accounts and State of the Economy**

### **Poor insurance, diagnostic access in rural areas: study**

Only 50% the rural households have government health insurance, 34% lack any health insurance and 61% have no life insurance, revealed the State of Healthcare in Rural India, 2024 report released recently. This is coupled with limited access to diagnostic facilities and affordable medicines, further posing challenges, the survey undertaken by the non-government organisation Transform Rural India's Development Intelligence Unit. *(The Hindu)*

### **Statistical effects pulled inflation to 59-month low of 3.54% in July**

Inflation in India's consumer prices cooled dramatically from 5.1% in June to an almost five-year low of 3.54% in July, with food price rise moderating to a 13-month low of 5.4% from a six-month high of 9.4% a month earlier. However, this was driven by the base effect from last July when retail inflation stood at 7.4% and the food index was up 11.5%, rather than a tangible relief for consumer wallets with overall prices rising 1.4% over June and food prices ticking up by 2.8%. *(The Hindu)*

### **PM calls for 'secular civil code' in Independence Day speech**

In his 11th successive Independence Day address from the ramparts of the Red Fort, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday gave a renewed push to the BJP's ideological aim of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC), reframing the idea as a "secular civil code" enshrined in the Constitution and a way of ensuring equality before the law for all. Modi seeks to do away with a 'communal civil code' and end discrimination on the basis of religion; he flags issue of women's safety, says forces of anarchy want to destabilise country. *(The Hindu)*

### **Maharashtra govt. to roll out ₹1,500 monthly aid for over 1 crore women**

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Thursday announced that over one crore eligible women in the State will start receiving ₹1,500 per month under the government's 'Mukhyamantri Ladki Bahin' scheme, which is set to launch on Saturday, two days ahead of the Raksha Bandhan festival on August 19. He said that some eligible women had already received ₹3,000, covering two months (July and August), during the scheme's trial run on Wednesday. *(The Hindu)*

### **India's slowing consumer demand fuels calls for rate cuts**

The Reserve Bank of India has kept interest rates unchanged for more than 18 months, with Governor Shaktikanta Das saying last week that food prices remain a worry and would keep inflation above its 4% target. While data Monday showed inflation dipped below that level in July, that was largely due to statistical reasons, and unlikely to prompt the RBI to ease. *(The Economic Times)*



## **Banking and Monetary Policy**

### **Bank deposit, locker holders can soon name up to 4 nominees**

Soon, deposit and locker holders can name up to four nominees, according to a provision in a new Bill introduced in the Lok Sabha on Friday. The Bill also has provisions for new reporting dates among others. "The Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill "seeks to improve governance standards, provide consistency in reporting by banks to the RBI, ensure better protection for depositors and investors, improve audit quality in public sector banks, and extend the tenure of the directors (other than Chairperson and Whole-Time Director) in co-operative banks," a government source said. *(BusinessLine)*

### **Consumer confidence is dipping, finds second consecutive RBI survey**

Consumer confidence declined in July for the second consecutive survey round, snapping a long rising trend, according to the RBI's bi-monthly Consumer Confidence Survey. Consumer sentiments on major parameters, except spending, moderated and as a result,

the current situation index (CSI) declined to 93.9 in July from 97.1 two months earlier. *(BusinessLine)*

### **RBI tightens norms for deposit-taking HFCs**

Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) accepting public deposits will face the same regulatory rigour as deposit-taking Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs), with the ceiling on the quantum and the maximum period for which they can accept deposits halved. Further, HFCs will be required to maintain a higher minimum percentage of liquid assets. *(BusinessLine)*

### **Indian banks among select strong banks globally, PM Modi says in Independence Day speech**

Indian banks are among the few banks that are strong globally, owing to major reforms undertaken by the NDA-led government, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday. Addressing the nation from the ramparts of historic Red Fort, the Prime Minister said a strong banking system gives strength to the formal economy. He said that earlier the banking sector was going through tough times, but there is growth in the segment. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Banks need to be cautious with 3rd-party vendors: RBI's Swaminathan**

The Reserve Bank of India seems concerned about the risks from increasing dependence of financial institutions on third-party vendors. Speaking at a convention organised by the International Association of Deposit Insurers, RBI deputy governor J Swaminathan called upon banks to exercise caution to guard them against potential vulnerabilities while working with third-party vendors. He also urged deposit insurers to tie insurance premiums to the level of risk posed by individual financial institutions. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Banks bat for frequent Lok Adalats to settle small-value loans**

Banks have reached out to the government, making a case for more frequent Lok Adalats to be held through Debt Recovery Tribunals, or DRTs, to settle distressed loans out of court. A representation was made by a few public sector banks (PSBs) last month on the matter, two executives aware of the matter told ET. Under existing laws, banks can take cases where the loan outstanding does not exceed ₹20 lakh to the Lok Adalat forum to try to settle it amicably with the borrower. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Revenues growth from corporate banking moderates to 4% in 2023: CRISIL unit**

The pace of growth in the revenue pool from corporate banking services for banks in India moderated to 4 per cent year-on-year in calendar year (CY) 2023, down from 15 per cent in CY 2022, according to Coalition Greenwich, a research unit of CRISIL. *(Business Standard)*

### **PSU banks raise loan rates as deposit costs rise**

Public sector lenders Bank of Baroda (BoB), Canara Bank and UCO Bank on Sunday announced an increase in their benchmark marginal cost of fund-based lending rate (MCLR), a day after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released its monetary policy statement. BoB and Canara Bank have increased their lending rates by 5 basis points on six-month and one-year tenures with effect from August 12. UCO Bank, too, has raised its lending rates by 5 bps, effective from August 10. One bps is 0.01 percentage point. *(The Economic Times)*

## **Nirmala Sitharaman urges banks to boost deposits as credit gap widens**

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said lenders need to focus on raising smaller deposits that come in “trickles,” but are the “bread and butter” of the banking system. She commented on the widening gap between deposits and credit, which has become a cause for concern, at a media briefing after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) board meeting in the capital on Saturday. *(The Economic Times)*



## **External Sector**

### **Hope Indian investments in Bangladesh are safe: Nirmala**

The unrest in Bangladesh has created some uncertainty for Indian textile firms' investments there, and the Indian government is hopeful that those investments will remain safe and the situation in the neighbouring country will return to normalcy soon, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Saturday. *(The Hindu)*

### **Falling prices, low consumer trust, imports issues for lab-grown diamond: GTRI**

India's lab-grown diamond industry has been struggling due to a 65% price drop over the past year caused by overproduction and high imports. GTRI suggests implementing quality regulations and investing in research to improve production processes and enhance the product's quality. The financial strain on manufacturers is also a significant concern. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Merchandise exports to hit \$111.7 bn, non-oil exports at \$89.8 bn in Q2 FY25: Exim Bank**

India Exim Bank projected that India's total merchandise exports could reach USD 111.7 billion in Q2 FY2025, a 4.2% y-o-y growth. Non-oil exports are anticipated to touch USD 89.8 billion, showing a 6.26% growth. The forecast highlighted economic momentum but also noted risks from geopolitical tensions and supply chain issues. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Q2 goods exports seen 4.2%: EXIM Bank**

“Positive growth in India's exports could be as a result of India's continued strong economic activity backed by sustained momentum in manufacturing and services sector, expected global monetary easing and improving demand prospects in trading partners,” the bank said in a statement. *(The Economic Times)*

### **India's imports from China up 13%; exports dip 9.44% in July**

India's exports to China dropped by 9.44% in July, while imports surged by 13.05%, amplifying a trade deficit. Cumulative data from April-July 2024-25 revealed a deficit of USD 31.31 billion. However, exports to the US and several other nations showed growth, according to commerce ministry data. *(The Economic Times)*

### **India, Russia discussing rupee-rouble trade; reducing non-tariff barriers: Commerce Secretary**

India and Russia have engaged in discussions to enhance bilateral trade by using local currencies and reducing non-tariff barriers. Indian officials emphasized easing trade barriers affecting exports, such as meat and pharmaceuticals. The goal is to diversify trade beyond petroleum and reach a bilateral trade target of USD 100 billion by 2030. *(The Economic Times)*



### **Exports contract in July; trade deficit widens**

India's export growth for July fell to an eight-month low due to decreased global demand and declining prices of crude, commodities, and metals. Goods exports contracted by 1.47% to \$33.98 billion, mainly due to lower petroleum product exports. Imports increased by 7.45% to \$57.48 billion, widening the trade deficit to \$23.5 billion. *(The Economic Times)*

### **India's medicine, antibiotics exports gaining share in US, Italian markets: Govt data**

India's exports of medicines have gained significant market share in the US, standing as the third-largest import source in 2023. With exports worth USD 9 billion, India's share rose to 13.1 per cent. The country also saw notable growth in antibiotics exports to Italy and MRI apparatus exports to Germany, reflecting efforts in boosting domestic manufacturing. *(The Economic Times)*

### **New product-market mix may deliver the goods for India's exports**

Finding new items to sell overseas is crucial as muted global demand, geopolitical challenges and a drop in crude, commodities and metal prices dragged India's goods export growth to an eight-month low in July, with outbound shipments contracting 1.47% to \$33.98 billion. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Electronic goods exports surge 37 pc; dairy and poultry products by 56 pc in July 24 (YoY)**

India's electronic goods exports surged by 37.31 per cent in July, reaching USD 2.8 billion, reflecting growing global demand. From April to July 2024, electronic goods exports totaled USD 11.24 billion. Meat, dairy, and poultry exports also saw a substantial increase of 56.18 per cent. India's total exports in July were USD 62.42 billion, up 2.81% from last year. The government aims to achieve a full-year export target of USD 800 billion. *(The Economic Times)*



## **Agriculture and Rural Economy**

### **Rural economy is driving India's growth, Govt capex in infra will stimulate it: Report**

The rural economy of India has emerged as a significant driver of economic growth, outpacing urban areas largely due to increased government spending in the recent quarters, highlighted a report by Anand Rathi, a financial service company. "Rural India continues to outpace urban areas in growth, largely due to a significant rise in government spending in rural regions in the last quarter," said the report. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Telangana CM announces ₹12,000 financial assistance to landless agriculture labourers from this year**

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has announced that his government would extend financial assistance of ₹12,000 per year for the landless agriculture labourers from this year as they had been leading miserable lives. Reiterating his government's commitment to farmers' welfare, he said that financial assistance of ₹15,000 for the farmers under Rythu Bharosa would be provided soon since the preparation of modalities for implementation of scheme was under process. *(The Hindu)*

## **Sustainability Initiative for Financing Climate Resilience Technologies in Agriculture**

India, with its vast agricultural landscape, stands as a global agricultural powerhouse. Despite employing over half of the country's workforce, the agricultural sector contributes only 20.2 per cent to India's GDP, according to the Indian Economic Survey 2020-21. Recent studies suggest that India could comfortably feed its growing population and even supply global exports if it could tackle food wastage, improve infrastructure, and boost farm productivity to levels seen in other developing nations. (*Business Standard*)

### **There is a need to transform agriculture sector: PM Modi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday stressed on the need to transform the agricultural sector and said the government is making comprehensive efforts to make the lives of farmers better. Addressing the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort on the 78th Independence Day, he also expressed concerns on deterioration in soil health due to use chemical fertilisers. "It is very important to transform our agriculture system. This is the need of the hour," he said. (*The Economic Times*)

### **Agriculture a key focus area of development strategy in India: Niti member Ramesh Chand**

Agriculture has been a key focus area of development strategy in India, and the country has achieved the highest growth rate of 5 per cent in the farm sector during the seven years from 2016-17 to 2022-23, Niti Aayog member Ramesh Chand said on Saturday. Addressing the 32nd International Conference of Agricultural Economists (ICAE), Chand said that according to the World Bank data, India achieved the highest growth rate in GDP agriculture in the world in the last 10 years. (*The Economic Times*)

### **PM Modi releases climate-resilient seed varieties to increase productivity, farmers income**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday released 109 high-yielding, climate-resilient and biofortified seed varieties of agricultural and horticultural crops, aiming to enhance farm productivity and farmers' income. Developed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, these varieties span 61 crops, including 34 field crops and 27 horticultural crops. (*The Economic Times*)

### **Government to launch 'Kisan Ki Baat' to bridge farm-Science gap**

The government is set to launch 'Kisan Ki Baat', a monthly radio programme aimed at bringing scientific knowledge to farmers, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced on Thursday. This initiative seeks to modernise agricultural practices and empower farmers with cutting-edge scientific information. The programme will feature agricultural scientists, department officials, and the minister himself, providing crucial information on best practices and scientific advancements. (*The Economic Times*)

### **Govt invites over 1,000 farmers to special prog on I-Day, to launch AI-powered pest mgmt system**

The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has invited more than 1,000 farmers and their spouses to the National Capital for a special two-day programme coinciding with the 78th Independence Day celebrations. The invitees, beneficiaries of central schemes like PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana and PM Fasal Bima Yojana, will interact with Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan at PUSA's Subramaniam Hall on August 15. (*The Economic Times*)

### **Govt launches ASEAN-India Agri fellowship; 50 slots up for grabs**

In an effort to strengthen agricultural cooperation with Southeast Asian countries, the government introduced the ASEAN-India fellowship programme for higher education in agriculture and related fields on Wednesday. Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced that 50 fellowships will be granted to students from ASEAN nations over a period of five years, beginning with the 2024-25 academic year. Union Minister Chouhan emphasised the "immense possibilities" for agricultural cooperation, citing similar agro-climatic zones between India and ASEAN nations. (*The Economic Times*)

### **Newly-launched 'Pusa Gaurav' wheat variety suitable for making chapatis and pasta**

The newly-launched Durum wheat variety, Pusa Gehun Gaurav, has been developed in such a way that it can be used to make chapatis with better texture and also pasta, capable of satisfying desi as well as foreign palates. The Pusa Gehu Gaurav (HI 8840), was one of the 109 climate-resilient and bio-fortified varieties of crops dedicated to the nation recently by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. (*The Economic Times*)



## **Industry, Manufacturing, Services and Technology**

### **June industrial output growth slumps to 5-month low of 4.2%**

India's industrial output growth slumped to a five-month low of 4.2% in June, with manufacturing output growth dipping to a seven-month low of 2.6%, almost half the previous month's growth, and power generation easing 2.8% from a record high in May as the heat wave receded. On end-use basis, production growth fell in all six segments compared with May, with consumer non-durables' output shrinking 1.4% from last June - the second such contraction in three months. (*The Hindu*)

### **Design in India, design for the world: PM Modi urges boost in manufacturing**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered his 11th speech from the ramparts of the Red Fort on Thursday, commemorating the 78th Independence Day. In his address, the Prime Minister highlighted several key topics, emphasising the importance of enhancing the quality of Indian products to ensure they meet global standards. (*Business Standard*)

### **WPI inflation comes in around 2% in July, manufactured products prices soften**

The annual rate of inflation based on all India Wholesale Price Index (WPI) number is 2.04% (Provisional) for the month of July, 2024 (over July, 2023). Positive rate of inflation in July, 2024 is primarily due to increase in prices of food articles, manufacture of food products, mineral oils, crude petroleum & natural gas, other manufacturing etc. The month over month change in WPI index for the month of July, 2024 stood at 0.84% as compared to June, 2024. (*Business Standard*)

### **FDI in manufacturing rises 69% to \$165 bn during 2014-24: Jitin Prasada**

Foreign direct investment inflows in the manufacturing sector during 2014-24 rose by 69 per cent to \$165.1 billion, Parliament was informed on Friday. In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Jitin Prasada said that India is rapidly emerging as a preferred country for foreign investment in the manufacturing



sector" FDI equity inflow in the manufacturing sectors in the last ten financial years (2014-24) has increased by 69 per cent to \$165.1 billion as compared to \$97.7 billion in the previous ten financial years (2004-14)," he said. *(Business Standard)*

### **India to boost helicopter manufacturing, says aviation minister Naidu**

Expanding the helicopter industry presents a significant opportunity and the government is set to advance towards manufacturing helicopters, Union Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu said on Friday. India is poised for a significant transformation in its aviation sector with the introduction of the Bhartiya Vayuyan Vidheyak Bill, 2024, he said. *(Business Standard)*

### **RBI says manufacturers' assessment of growth in demand conditions moderated**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the results of 106th round of its quarterly industrial outlook survey (IOS). The survey encapsulates qualitative assessment of the business climate by Indian manufacturing companies for Q1:2024-25 and their expectations for Q2:2024-25 as well as outlook on select parameters for the subsequent two quarters. In all, 1,351 companies responded in this round of the survey, which was conducted during April-June 2024. *(Business Standard)*

### **Bank credit to large industries picks up, led by infrastructure, chemical and metal sectors**

In early signs of fresh capital investments by private sector and increased demand for loans, bank credit to industries (micro, small, medium and large) has expanded 8 per cent year on year in June 2024 compared with 7.4 per cent growth in 2023. Further, businessline's analysis over the last five years showed that while credit offtake by micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) is growing at a slower pace in the last two years, lending to large corporate has picked up steam. *(BusinessLine)*

### **Andhra to announce new industrial, liquor policies soon**

The new industrial policy will be unveiled for a period of five years from 2024-29 with an aim to compete with the top five states in the country. Pharma, automobiles, mining and energy, and shipping are likely to be given a special thrust by the State Government in the upcoming policy. *(BusinessLine)*

### **Industry welcomes RBI move of Delegated Payments feature on UPI**

Industry executives have welcomed the move by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on the proposed introducing Delegated Payments feature on Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

### **Home care products witness 27% surge from 2015-23: Study**

Home care products like toilet cleaners, floor cleaning products and mosquito repellents (insecticides) have witnessed a significant increase in demand since 2015, fuelled by the government's cleanliness campaign Swachh Bharat Mission. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Demand in slow lane, Auto Inc deploys discounts to clear inventory gridlock**

Car discounts have doubled from August last year and are likely to stay high through the festive season, till end of December, as carmakers and dealers rush to liquidate a huge pile-up of inventory amid slowing sales. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Over 5 lakh homes stuck across 44 cities: Report**

One in five under-construction homes totalling to over 5 lakh units have not been delivered as 1,981 projects across 44 cities are stalled in the last 8 years, according to listed data analytics firm PropEquity. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Textiles, apparel exports rise 4.73% in July on improved demand: CITI**

India's textiles and apparel exports in July grew by 4.73 per cent to USD 2,937.56 million compared to the same month last year mainly driven by an increase in demand for apparels, the Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) said on Thursday. Textiles and apparel exports stood at USD 2,805.01 million in July 2023, CITI said. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Untangling the Budget impact on mutual funds**

Over a fortnight has passed since the presentation of the Union Budget. However, confusion still seems to be reigning on proposals to 'simplify and standardise' capital gains taxation. Here's a simplified account of what changes for retail investors in mutual funds (MFs), after a deep dive into the budget documents. Prior to Budget, there were multiple rates and methods of calculation applied to capital gains made on MFs, depending on the equity-debt mix of a fund. *(The Hindu)*.



## **News on Kerala**

### **Kerala Bank writes off loans of landslide-hit persons in Wayanad**

The Kerala Bank, a consolidation of district cooperative banks in the state, announced on Monday that it would waive loans of those impacted by the devastating landslides of July 30 in Wayanad. In the aftermath of the disaster in the hilly district, the bank management has decided to write off the loans of deceased borrowers who had availed loans from its Chooralmala branch, as well as those who lost their houses and properties pledged as securities, according to an official statement. *(The Economic Times)*

### **Wayanad landslides: Agriculture department to take a closer look at farming methods in Western Ghats regions**

The deadly July 30 landslides in Wayanad district have prompted the agriculture department to have a closer look at the farming methods employed in regions that form part of ecologically important Western Ghats. Agriculture Minister P. Prasad said here on Wednesday that the department planned to hold a workshop in September on this topic. *(The Hindu)*.

### **Draft CRZ plan ready, development controls along Kerala coast to be eased**

The Kerala government on Wednesday decided to forward the state's Draft Coastal Zone Management Plan 2019 for the approval of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Once the approval is secured, strict regulations that govern development along coastal areas will be relaxed in many grama panchayats. *(onmanorama)*

### **Kerala govt to collect plastic waste from households weekly**

Minister for Local Bodies in Kerala M B Rajesh has said that the fees to be charged by Haritha Karma from business establishments to collect waste would be decided by the

government. He also said that steps would be taken to ensure that plastic waste is removed from houses and establishments every week. *(onmanorama)*

### **Kerala govt formulates rental policy to rehabilitate Wayanad landslide survivors**

The state government has formulated a rental policy for the survivors of the Wayanad landslides and has vowed to complete the process of temporary rehabilitation this month. Revenue Minister K Rajan said the government aims to rehabilitate every affected individual scientifically. *(onmanorama)*

### **KWA to act tough as unpaid water bills of public water taps go over Rs.1000 crores**

The Kerala Water Authority (KWA) is taking stringent measures to recover outstanding revenues from local governing bodies, following the accumulation of unpaid water bills for public water taps, which have exceeded Rs. 1,000 crores. *(Mathrubhumi English)*

### **Kerala govt extends construction permits to 15 years; eases parking, licence rules**

The Kerala government has announced relaxations in building regulations aimed at easing construction and parking requirements. Under the new rules, the duration of construction permits can now be extended up to 15 years. Another major change is relaxation in parking requirements. Previously, commercial establishments were required to provide parking on the site itself. The new provision allows for up to 75% of the required parking space to be located on the owner's land within 200 metres of the site. *(Mathrubhumi English)*

### **KSEB advises to upgrade to 3-phase connection if load is over 5000 watts**

The Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) has issued an advisory to single-phase electricity consumers whose connected load exceeds 5,000 watts, recommending a switch to a 3-phase connection. This move is aimed at ensuring the safety of electrical wiring and extending the lifespan of household. *(Mathrubhumi English)*

### **Kerala police seek creation of 15,075 new posts to address workload, stress**

In a recent development, recommendations have been made to add 15,075 new positions to the State police to address the workload. The proposal includes creating new roles for Civil Police Officers (6,476), Senior Civil Police Officers (6,195), Assistant Sub-Inspectors (1,819), Sub-Inspectors (580), and Station Officers (5). *(Mathrubhumi English)*

### **Kerala faces financial strain; only Rs 3,700 cr left to borrow amid growing Onam expenses**

As Onam approaches, the financial crisis of the state government remains acute. With only ₹3,700 crore left available for borrowing until December, this is the only source of funding for the increased expenditures during Onam and for the remaining three months of the year. Kerala was allowed to borrow Rs. 21,253 crore till December. Of this amount, only Rs. 3,700 crore remains to be taken. It is now uncertain how much the Center will allow after December till March. *(Mathrubhumi English)*

### **Saturdays will not be working days for schools till final decision on academic calendar**

The Director of General Education (DGE) on Tuesday issued a circular that Saturdays will not be a working day for State schools till a decision is taken by the government on the number of working days for the 2024-2025 academic year. This follows a Kerala High Court judgment setting aside an order of the DGE declaring Saturdays as working days in the school calendar. *(The Hindu)*

## **Eye on summer 2025, KSEB to speed up 'Dyuthi 2.0' aimed at strengthening power distribution network**

The Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) will step up the pace of work on Dyuthi 2.0, a scheme designed to equip the electricity distribution network in the State to handle uninterrupted supply and peak demand situations, especially in the summer. Keeping an eye on summer 2025, works planned under 'Dyuthi 2.0' for the 2024-25 financial year will be completed before March 2025. *(The Hindu)*

## **Kerala government implements 'Fake News detection' in school textbooks**

The Kerala General Education Department introduces 'Fact-Checking' modules in ICT textbooks for Classes 5 and 7, aiming to empower students to identify fake news and conduct fact-checking online. This move precedes the UK's plans to incorporate a similar curriculum change. Earlier, Kerala implemented a Fake News prevention training for 19.72 lakh students, focusing on digital media literacy and raising awareness about the impact of misinformation. *(The Economic Times)*

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