



Public Finance

NPS Vatsalya launched: Rules regarding eligibility, investment amount, withdrawals, how to buy online

The Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, launched NPS Vatsalya, a pension account for minors. The FM also launched an online platform for subscribing to NPS Vatsalya and issued Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN) cards to newly registered minor subscribers. This new program represents a significant advancement in India's pension system, aims to start early in safeguarding children's financial future.

(The Economic Times)

States cut back on capital spends in first quarter of 2024-25

Data from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) monthly bulletin for States show that in the first quarter of FY25, out of the 15 largest States by their Gross State Domestic Product, 10 States experienced a sharp decline in capital expenditure. Sujan Hajra, Chief Economist & Executive Director, Anand Rathi Shares and Stock Brokers, explained, "The General Election is the primary factor behind the subdued State capital expenditure. Data from April to June show that the aggregate capex of 27 States was 20 per cent lower than the previous year. "However, July 2024 marked a recovery, with a 6.8 per cent increase. A similar trend was observed during the 2019 elections, where State capex decreased 6.5 per cent, only to rebound in July." *(BusinessLine)*

Out of ₹1.5L Cr, Govt Approves ₹46k Cr as Capex Loans to States

The Centre has sanctioned ₹46,000 crore as capex loans to states so far out of the total ₹1.5 lakh crore allocated for FY25. "So far, ₹46,000 crore has been approved for sanction under the capex loan to states, out of which ₹25,000 crore has been released," a senior government official told ET. Of the ₹95,000 crore conditional loan, ₹25,000 crore is linked to the capex performance of states. States will get half of the corresponding share only after reporting capex growth of 10% or more in FY24, and the remaining 50% after achieving a 10% growth in capex this fiscal. *(The Economic Times)*

FY26 Budget Consultations to Kick Off in Oct

The finance ministry has initiated the budget-making process for 2025-26. It will start pre-budget meetings in the second week of October, according to a circular issued by the ministry. Every year, the process formally starts with meetings with the ministries and departments. These will be chaired by expenditure secretary Manoj Govil. "The budget estimates (BE) for 2025-26 will be provisionally finalised after the completion of pre-budget meetings," the department of economic affairs (DEA) said in a circular dated September 17. *(The Economic Times)*

'Will fight for more powers and financial resources for States'

DMK president and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Tuesday said his party would continue to fight for measures to amend the Constitution to devolve more powers and financial resources to the States. At a meeting to mark the party's 75th anniversary, he said the DMK government, with limited funds, had made the State excel; it could propel Tamil Nadu to the top position in all fields if it got more funds. *(The Hindu)*



Taxation

Top Ministers meet with packaged food industry, discuss issues around ease of doing business, taxation

The government on Thursday held a round-table discussion with CEOs and representatives of leading packaged food companies over their concerns surrounding the ease of doing business, GST rates, the PLI scheme and other regulatory challenges. Over 100 senior executives and CXOs attended the closed-door meeting, which was chaired by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, along with Minister of Food processing Industries Chirag Paswan on the sidelines of World Food India 2024. *(BusinessLine)*

GST Meeting: Online gaming companies unlikely to get relief on 28%, other issues

Online gaming companies are unlikely to get any relief from the GST Council in its meeting on Monday. Along with casinos, horse racing clubs the online gaming companies have to watch out for Tuesday as the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear a bunch of 44 petitions of online gaming companies, casinos and turf clubs related with GST demands. *(BusinessLine)*

GST Council to consider rate re-jig on health, life insurance in November

The GST Council will consider rate re-structuring for health and life insurance premia in its next meeting to be held in November, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced here on Monday. The Council has decided to set up a Group of Ministers (GoM) to look at reduction tax rate on life and health insurance. *(BusinessLine)*

No GST on R&D grants; past demands to be regularised

Research and development grants from private or public sector to recognised educational institutions will not attract GST, the GST Council recommended on Monday. It also recommended lowering the levy on cancer drugs and namkeens and extruded or expanded savoury food products. "R&D grant to three categories of research institution, college or university will be exempted from GST. These include recognition under State laws, Central Laws or one which has got exemption under Income Tax," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said. *(BusinessLine)*

Growth of GST compensation cess outpaces overall GST in FY24

As the 54th GST Council Meeting last week formed a Group of Ministers (GoM) to decide the future of the GST compensation cess, data show that the tax component contributes substantially to the government coffers and merits continuation in new form once its levy ends in March 2026. The businessline analysis of the annual GST compensation cess collections from FY18 to FY24 shows that the tax contributed average 8 per cent to the total GST collections during the said years, and has been growing at almost the same rate as rise in overall GST collections. *(BusinessLine)*

Advance tax collection for H1 swells 22.6% to Rs 4.36 lakh crore

The government's Advance tax collections in India increased by 22.61% to ₹4.36 lakh crore in the first half of the current financial year, indicating strong corporate performance and a robust economy. Net direct tax collections rose 16.12% to ₹9.95 lakh crore, with personal income tax showing significant growth over corporate income tax. *(The Economic Times)*



National Accounts and State of the Economy

Govt. plans to review wage limit for EPS contribution

Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday said the Centre was trying to remove the wage ceiling for contributions towards the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) run by the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation. He said 92% of the subscribers paid a consolidated amount and the Centre was thinking to ease the upper limit so that they could invest more money in the EPS. *(The Hindu)*

Simultaneous polls plan gets Union Cabinet nod

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday accepted the recommendations of the high-level committee, headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind, that had proposed simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies as the first step, and municipal and panchayat polls within 100 days of the general election in the next phase. *(The Hindu)*

With eye on 2025 Bihar election, Nitish sets July deadline for land survey

Keeping next year's Assembly election in mind, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has initiated a comprehensive land survey, aiming to digitise land records of 45,000 villages in the run-up to the poll, due in late 2025. Mr. Kumar has set a July deadline for the Revenue and Land Reforms Department to complete the exercise, the first of its kind in over 100 years. *(The Hindu)*

Central PSUs to adopt nearly 5 lakh spots for cleaning, beautification

Nearly five lakh very dirty spots across the country, to be known as Cleanliness Target Units (CTU), will be adopted by various institutions, majorly Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs), and turned into facilities for public use. *(The Hindu)*

Indian economy will probably be 90 to 100% larger than China by end of century: John Chambers

John Chambers, who heads the India US Strategic Partnership Forum and is Chairman Emeritus of CISCO is highly optimistic about the future of the Indian economy, the current share market situation and the growth of innovation in the country. In an interview with ET, Chambers discusses the upcoming US elections, PM Modi's third term and prospects of Indian and US companies working together in the coming years. *(The Economic Times)*

Govt mulls change in base year for computation of GDP to 2022-23 from 2011-12

The government is considering to change the base year for computation of the GDP to 2022-23, from 2011-12 at present, to reflect an accurate picture of the economy, sources

said on Thursday. This will be the first revision in over a decade. It was last done in 2011-12. *(The Economic Times)*

There's a trap on India's road to high-income economy status

Niti Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyam has called the middle-income trap the biggest threat to India's growth. "Do nothing, no strategy, and you will fall into the middle-income trap," he said. The government and NITI Aayog need to work together to formulate an economic growth strategy to avoid such a trap, he said. *(The Economic Times)*



Banking and Monetary Policy

RBI to infuse Rs 25K cr via VRR as liquidity turns deficit after two months

Banking system liquidity fell into deficit mode on Tuesday after more than two months on the back of GST outflows and advanced tax payments, market participants said. The last time liquidity was in the deficit was on June 27. On Wednesday, the liquidity deficit stood at Rs 2,626 crore, according to the latest data by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). *(Business Standard)*

Foreign banks in regulatory standoff seek RBI relief on trading rules

Foreign banks operating in India, caught in a regulatory dispute between the European Securities and Markets Authority (Esma) and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), have approached the Indian central bank for clarity on certain trading norms, according to a report by The Economic Times. *(Business Standard)*

SBI raises Rs 7,500 crore through issuance Basel III-compliant bonds

The State Bank of India (SBI) on Wednesday said it has raised Rs 7,500 crore through issuance of Basel III-compliant Tier 2 bonds to qualified institutional bidders. In a regulatory filing, SBI said the issue attracted overwhelming response from investors with bids in excess of 3 times against the base issue size of Rs 4,000 crore. "The investors were across provident funds, pension funds, mutual funds, banks etc," SBI said. *(Business Standard)*

'Growth of credit outpacing deposits can tighten liquidity'

India's banking system could face liquidity challenges if credit growth continues to outpace deposits and raising deposits to keep the credit costs low remains bankers' top agenda, a survey by FICCI-IBA shows. *(The Hindu)*

P2P lenders mull winding down post RBI diktat; seek clarity on new norms

After stopping onboarding new customers post the RBI's August 16 amended Master Directions on peer-to-peer lending platforms, large P2P players are looking to wind down business and seeking clarity on certain aspects of the diktat, multiple officials told businessline. *(The Hindu)*

Banks may face cash deficit on tax outgo

After experiencing two-and-a-half months of surplus liquidity conditions, the banking system witnessed a steep decline in excess cash early this week due to quarterly advance tax payments, and analysts expect upcoming GST payment to push liquidity to deficit

mode. With banks' surplus liquidity dwindling sharply, rates in the overnight segment of money markets—a gauge of near-term cost of funds—have climbed. *(The Economic Times)*

RBI's draft LCR norms could hit lending: Banks to FinMin

Banks have given feedback to the finance ministry about changes proposed by the Reserve Bank of India on a key liquidity ratio, with lenders expressing concern about the impact the new norms could have on their ability to drive credit in the economy. "Banks have said to the DFS that if the LCR circular were to be implemented with the current increases in run-off factors, there could be a strong impact on lending ability as funds worth around ₹4-5 lakh crore would have to be kept aside to meet the new LCR requirement," the source said. *(The Economic Times)*

Das flags non-bank expansion risk in financial intermediation

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das said the proliferation of non-bank institutions in financial intermediation may create risks to financial stability due to size, complexity and interconnectedness with local and global financial systems. *(The Hindu)*

Fixed deposits growth outpace savings deposits growth for last two years, raising cost of funds

Growth in banks' fixed deposits, also known as term deposits, which are much costlier than demand deposits, have outpaced the savings bank deposit growth for the past two consecutive fiscal years, latest data from Reserve Bank of India showed. This pushed banks' cost of funds up and put pressure on their net interest margin, senior bank executives said. *(The Economic Times)*

Retail users power up e-Rupee transactions

The Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), or e-rupee, has seen significant growth among retail users. As of March 2024, e-rupee circulation reached ₹234.12 crore, up from ₹16.3 crore a year earlier. The increase is attributed to big banks promoting CBDC wallets and the RBI allowing interoperability with the Unified Payments Interface. *(The Economic Times)*

NBFCs witness higher deposit growth than banks, records 21% rise in FY24

Non-bank lenders have collectively managed to expand their deposit base by 21% in FY24 while banks are struggling with a modest 13.5% rise year-on-year in the fiscal ending March 30, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data showed. Major non-banking finance companies (NBFCs), such as Bajaj Finance and Shriram Finance, offer about 150 basis points more than banks making them attractive choices for savers. *(The Economic Times)*

Banks may play safe in aligning study loans with follow-up loans

Banks may turn more circumspect when considering student borrowers' application for a second education loan. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has rejected Banks' request to not treat realignment of the existing tenure of an education loan with the repayment period and moratorium of a second education loan as restructuring. *(BusinessLine)*

Bankers rush to fuel deposit growth

Credit growth should not outrun deposits by miles, Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das cautioned in July, as that may lead to structural liquidity issues. According to the latest RBI data, banks' credit grew 14 per cent year-on-year (YoY) to ₹169.5 lakh crore during the fortnight ended August 23, while deposits grew 11 per cent

to ₹213.2 lakh crore. Since this trend remains unchanged since March 2022, the regulator's concern appears justified. *(BusinessLine)*



External Sector

Shipments via courier too may get export scheme benefits

The government has extended benefits to exporters using courier services, supporting smaller sellers on online platforms. Amendments by the CBIC to various tax neutralisation schemes will boost e-commerce exports. The new rules, effective September 12, aim to enhance flexibility and efficiency in supply chains, aligning with the Foreign Trade Policy 2023. *(The Economic Times)*

India's August trade deficit widens to \$29.65 bn after imports hit all-time high of \$64.36 bn

India's trade deficit widened to \$29.65 billion on an annual basis in August from \$24.2 billion in the same month last year, data from the Commerce Ministry showed on Wednesday. In July, the trade deficit was \$23.50 billion. India's merchandise exports declined to \$34.71 billion in August from \$38.28 billion a year ago, while imports were at a record high of \$64.36 billion, up from \$62.30 billion in August 2023, government data showed. *(The Economic Times)*

Export share of manufacturing companies' sales nears a record low

The share of exports in the sales of manufacturing companies has dropped by nearly two-thirds over a ten-year period ended financial year 2022-23 (FY23). The numbers so far for FY24 suggest it might have fallen further. Exports accounted for over 18 per cent of manufacturing sales in FY13, but this figure dropped to 6.8 per cent in FY23, and stands at just 1.8 per cent so far for FY24, according to data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE). *(Business Standard)*

Red Sea crisis, logistical challenges impacting India's exports: Experts

India's exports contracted by 9.3 per cent in August due to Red Sea disruptions and logistical challenges, with petroleum product exports dropping 37.56 per cent. The trade gap widened to USD 29.65 billion. Exporters face issues like lack of shipping space and irregular schedules. Measures like extending the RoDTEP Scheme are suggested to support exporters. *(The Economic Times)*

Job losses, factory closures haunt India's diamond sector as trade shine fades

India's diamond sector is experiencing a major downturn, marked by significant declines in imports and exports over the past three years, according to the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI). This crisis has led to defaults, factory closures, and considerable job losses, particularly affecting workers in Gujarat. *(The Economic Times)*

Govt caps interest subvention amount at Rs 5 crore per IEC for MSME manufacturers

The commerce ministry has imposed an interest subvention cap of Rs 5 crore per IEC (import-export code) for MSME manufacturers till September 30, 2024 for the current fiscal. In a trade notice on September 17, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)

announced the amendment under the Interest Equalisation Scheme (IES) with immediate effect “for rationalisation of the scheme.” *(Financial Express)*

India, S Korea start sharing bill of lading electronically to promote trade: DGFT

India and South Korea have started sharing the bill of lading in an electronic transfer mode between the customs of both sides, a move that will help promote ease of doing business, a senior official said on Thursday. A bill of lading is a legal document that serves as a receipt, contract, and proof of ownership for shipped goods. *(The Economic Times)*



Agriculture and Rural Economy

Replacing rice with other crops could help recover groundwater lost since 2000: Study

Replacing 40% of rice cultivation with other crops in north India could recover significant groundwater lost since 2000, a study finds. Current rice-dominated cropping patterns may lead to further groundwater depletion under global warming. The study suggests crop switching for groundwater sustainability and increased farmers' profitability. *(The Economic Times)*

Digital revolution in agri sector to help arrest exodus of youth from farming: FAIFA

FAIFA has welcomed the government's digital initiatives in agriculture, stating that the Rs 14,000 crore schemes will help retain youth in farming. The Digital Agriculture Mission aims to create jobs and reduce urban migration by integrating technology and addressing agrarian distress caused by climate variations and market uncertainties. *(The Economic Times)*

Prices of major agri commodities to stay stable: Govt

The government assures that prices of key agricultural commodities will remain stable during the festive season. Wheat distribution for PMGKAY will be restored, and easing restrictions on rice exports is under consideration. A credit guarantee scheme has been introduced to support farmers against distress sales and post-harvest losses. *(The Economic Times)*

India's wheat curbs insufficient; traders demand stock release

India's recent measures to curb wheat stock limits for traders and processors have not been effective in reducing prices. With festival season approaching, industry officials urge the government to release wheat stocks to meet rising demand and stabilize prices. Wheat prices remain high, with further increases expected if government action is delayed. *(The Economic Times)*

Union Cabinet approves subsidy worth ₹24,475 crore on nutrient-based fertilizers

The Union Cabinet has approved a ₹24,475 crore subsidy for phosphatic and potassic fertilizers to aid farmers during the rabi season. Effective from October 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, this move aims to provide fertilizers at reasonable prices amidst global market fluctuations. The subsidy will cover 28 grades of these fertilizers. *(The Economic Times)*

Revenue growth of basmati industry to moderate to 4% this fiscal from 20% seen last fiscal, says Crisil

India's basmati industry is set to see a revenue growth of around 4% this fiscal, reaching nearly Rs 70,000 crore. This growth is driven by policy support, rising demand, and lower input costs. The removal of the minimum export price will boost exports, while domestic sales are expected to rise due to increased demand from the HoReCa segment. *(The Economic Times)*

Govt says report of MSP panel to be made public soon

Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced the upcoming release of the MSP committee report and introduced new initiatives to modernize agriculture. These include 'Adhunik Krishi Choupal' on Doordarshan and All India Radio, and weekly 'Kisan Samvad' interactions. The government is also focusing on climate-resilient crops, fertiliser subsidies, and crop insurance schemes. *(The Economic Times)*

Amit Shah launches 'White Revolution 2.0' to boost dairy sector

Union Minister Amit Shah has launched 'White Revolution 2.0', an initiative to transform India's dairy cooperative sector. The programme aims to empower women farmers, enhance milk production, strengthen dairy infrastructure, and boost exports. It includes the rollout of RuPay Kisan Credit Cards and micro-ATMs for dairy farmers, along with computerisation of Primary Agriculture Credit Societies. *(The Economic Times)*

2.5 million farmers added to PM-KISAN: Union agriculture minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan

The government has introduced several farmer-friendly policies in its first 100 days, focusing on productivity, cost reduction, fair pricing, and technology use. Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan emphasized collaboration with state governments and announced initiatives like 'Lab-to-land' to connect scientists and farmers. The PM-KISAN scheme has also disbursed ₹20,000 crore to farmers. *(The Economic Times)*



Industry, Manufacturing, Services and Technology

'Renewable energy sector will power India's growth'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday inaugurated the fourth Global Renewable Energy Investors Meet and Expo (RE-INVEST) in his home State of Gujarat, and said that India was at the forefront of harnessing renewable energy sources, including solar power, to fight climate change. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Modi said 140 crore Indians had pledged to make the country the world's third largest economy, and the renewable energy sector would power the country's rapid economic growth in the years to come. *(The Hindu)*

electronica India, productronica India, and SEMICON India 2024 Elevate India's Electronics Ecosystem as Southeast Asia's Largest Industry Platform for Electronics

The 2024 edition of electronica India, productronica India and SEMICON India 2024 concluded with a historic success as Southeast Asia's largest platform for electronics industry. The three-day trade fair was a hive of activity as visitors eagerly explored the latest products and technologies from leading suppliers. 839 companies from 29

countries showcased their innovations, while the trade fairs drew 45,532 trade visitors and facilitated over 2,000 buyer-seller meetings. *(Business Standard)*

What does the global shipbuilding industry look like, and where is India?

India's nascent shipbuilding industry is poised for significant growth, attracting interest from major economies like Japan and South Korea. Union Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal revealed that these countries are exploring opportunities to invest in India's shipbuilding sector. *(Business Standard)*

Services sector helps Karnataka, Telangana up their share in GDP

At a time when services sector has become the bulwark of India's overall economic growth, businessline analysis shows that States that have grown services GVA and diversified into services sector relatively higher than peers, lead in performance. The recent EAC-PM working paper shows Karnataka, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu have recorded the biggest jump in their contribution to India's GDP from FY11 to FY24 among large States. *(BusinessLine)*

Securing India's semiconductor future

India depends on electronics to drive its agenda of inclusive growth via technology. Its reliance on semiconductor imports has long exposed it to global supply chain vulnerabilities. Like many other countries, India also depends on Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea for semiconductor supplies. To counter these risks and to boost self-reliance, the government is promoting domestic semiconductor fabrication. *(BusinessLine)*

Bridging the gap between theory and practice of AI

The Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT-D) recently launched the fourth batch of its Certificate Programme in Machine Learning and Deep Learning, aimed at equipping professionals with the skills required to excel in the rapidly evolving domain of machine learning (ML). The global ML size was valued at \$19.45 billion in 2022 and is projected to reach \$188.34 billion by 2030. *(BusinessLine)*

India's gems, jewellery sector vulnerable to money laundering, terrorist financing: FATF

The ease with which the trade of precious metals and stones can be used to move "large amounts" of funds without leaving an ownership trail shows this sector in India is vulnerable to be used as a tool for money laundering and terrorist financing, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has said. *(The Economic Times)*

Telcos oppose 'service authorisation', see threat of regulatory uncertainty

India's top telecom operators decried the sector regulator's suggestion that the government grant service authorisation to companies offering communication services instead of entering into a contractual agreement, warning that such a move would ring in regulatory uncertainty and undermine investor confidence. *(The Economic Times)*

Logistics cost will be in single digits in 5 years: Nitin Gadkari

India's logistics cost will come down to single-digit within the next five years as the country builds a network of world-class highways and expressways, road transport and highways minister Nitin Gadkari said on Thursday. *(The Economic Times)*

Discussions on how to protect domestic steel industry going on: Union Minister

The steel ministry is in discussions with the finance ministry to explore policy measures aimed at curbing increasing imports of steel, including imposition of a minimum import price and protecting the domestic industry, Union minister HD Kumaraswamy said on Wednesday. *(The Economic Times)*

Trai tightens quality of service norms

Notwithstanding opposition from telecom companies to the new quality of service rules, the regulator has gone ahead and directed them to submit compliance reports with effect from October 1. Telcos had termed the new service quality rules set by the regulator as stringent and said they would increase their cost and compliance burden. *(The Economic Times)*

Department of pharmaceuticals doubles financial incentives for drug makers to their upgrade plants

The department of pharmaceuticals has doubled the financial incentive to ₹2 crore for drug manufacturers to upgrade their facility. The financial incentive cap for modernizing units in keeping with Indian attempts to sync with global good manufacturing practices has been upped from ₹1 crore to a maximum of ₹2 crore for plants, based on their annual revenue. *(Mint)*



News on Kerala

Nipah virus claims another life in Kerala district, masks up, schools shut: Symptoms, treatment and transmission explained

The government has taken swift action to control the potential spread of the virus, which has claimed many lives in Kerala since its first outbreak in 2018. Following the death of a 24-year-old male from Nipah virus infection on September 9, 2024, the Kerala government quickly declared five wards in two panchayats of Malappuram district as containment zones. *(The Economic Times)*

NTPC Kayamkulam to pioneer methanol-based power generation in India

The Rajiv Gandhi Combined Cycle Power Project (NTPC Kayamkulam) is set to launch a pilot project to generate electricity using methanol, marking a first-of-its-kind initiative in India. The NTPC recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited to demonstrate methanol firing in the plant's existing gas turbine system. *(The Hindu)*

Kerala Police seizes 150 kg of gold and Rs 123 crore in five-year crackdown

The Kerala Police has seized 150 kg of gold, valued at Rs 81 crore, and confiscated Rs 123 crore in hawala funds over the past five years. This significant operation is part of an ongoing effort to curb smuggling in the state, a problem that has persisted for years. According to reports, CM Pinarayi Vijayan has instructed the state police to take strict action against the network of gold smugglers, and the recoveries and detections are a result of this crackdown. *(The Economic Times)*.

Kudumbasree registers turnover of ₹28.47 crore from Onam fairs

The State- wide Onam sales fairs launched by the Kudumbasree Mission this year registered a turnover of ₹28.47 crore. While sales of products manufactured by Kudumbasree micro enterprises clocked ₹19.58 crore, agricultural products worth ₹8.89 crore were sold during the festival season. As many as 2,014 Onam fairs contributed to the total turnover. The entire sales proceeds would be shared by Kudumbasree enterprises. *(The Hindu)*

Suspected mpox infection reported from Kerala, samples sent for testing

A suspected case of monkeypox infection has been reported from Malappuram district of Kerala after a man who recently returned from abroad showed symptoms of the disease. "From there he was admitted to the Manjeri Medical College. On suspecting that it might be a case of monkeypox, we sent his samples to the Kozhikode Medical College for testing. The results are awaited," the official said. *(Business Standard)*

Kerala Women's Commission proposes local body-level pre-marital counselling services

Kerala Women's Commission Chairperson P. Sathidevi on Thursday said the launch of pre-marital counselling services at the local body-level would go a long way in addressing growing marital discord among couples. Addressing the media after a district-level adalat in Kozhikode, Ms. Sathidevi said the nature of complaints handled by the commission till date endorsed the fact that couples badly missed pre-marital counselling support and guidance to ensure harmony in their life. *(The Hindu)*

World Bank experts meet Kerala CM Vijayan, praise state's education reforms

In a significant boost to Kerala's efforts to revamp its higher education system, a team of World Bank experts on Monday met with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, praising the state's reforms and expressing interest in a collaborative initiative to draw international students to the state. *(Business Standard)*

KSUM invites EoI to offer services to start-ups

With the aim of enhancing the ease of doing business for start-ups in Kerala, the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) has invited Expression of Interest (EoI) from providers of a range of professional services, including chartered accountancy and legal firms, as part of its initiative under the Startup Commons Hub programme. *(The Hindu)*

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